

**GAYNES PARK MANSION
THEYDON GARNON
ESSEX**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION BY TRIAL TRENCHING



Essex County Council

FIELD ARCHAEOLOGY UNIT

June 2010

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As part of our desire to provide a quality service, we would welcome any comments you may have on the content or the presentation of this report. Please contact the Archaeological Fieldwork Manager at the

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GAYNES PARK MANSION, THEYDON GARNON, ESSEX

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION BY TRIAL TRENCHING

Client: IAB Consultants on behalf of AWC Ltd

Planning application no.: EPF/1007/09 and EPF/1008/09

Dates of fieldwork: 10/3/10

National grid reference: TL 548322 201525

Site code: TGGP 10

ECC FAU project no.: 2166

Oasis reference: essexcou1-74665

SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation, consisting of five trenches, preceded the construction of four houses and a pond in a small valley to the south of Gaynes Park Mansion, near Theydon, Garnon, Essex. The current mansion was built in the 18th century and substantially extended and remodelled in the 19th century. It was preceded by at least one earlier house, the location of which is recorded by the first four editions of the Ordnance Survey as having been the eastern side of the high ground overlooking the valley.

The trenching found a gully and sequences of layers, all of post-medieval and/or modern date. No firm evidence for the former house was uncovered, perhaps indicating that the location of the house is incorrectly or only very generally indicated by the Ordnance Survey.

Most of the layers lie in the valley floor and probably represent deliberate infilling, possibly in order to soften the appearance of the valley and/or make it more useable and accessible. The gully runs between the earlier house and the valley and is possibly a former boundary.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

An archaeological evaluation by trial trenching preceded construction on land to the immediate south of Gaynes Park Mansion, Theydon Garnon, Epping. The archaeological work was carried out by the Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit and was commissioned by IAB Consultants on behalf of AWC Ltd. The work was recommended and monitored by the Essex County Council Historic Environment Management team and was undertaken in accordance with an archaeological brief and a written scheme of investigation (ECC HEM 2009; ECC FAU 2010). The development work will consist of the building of four new houses and a small pond.

Copies of this report will be supplied to AWC Ltd / IAB Consultants, the Essex County Council Historic Environment Management team and the Essex County Council Historic Environment Record. The site archive will be stored at Epping Museum. A pdf version of this report will be added to the Oasis Access to Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) at www.oasis.ac.uk/.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location and geology

Gaynes Park lies in hilly countryside 2km to the east of Epping and is the site of a large 18th and 19th-century house called Gaynes Park Mansion (Fig. 1). The development site sits in a small, fairly steep-sided valley to the south of the house and is used for the grazing of sheep. At the head of the valley is large man-made pond, situated within the landscaped grounds of the house (Fig. 2).

The surface geology of the site comprises a glacial deposit of pale brownish yellow silt clay beneath c. 0.25m of topsoil.

2.2 Archaeological and historical

The following information has been sourced from the archaeological brief (ECC HEM 2009) and the Essex County Council Historic Environment Record (EHER).

The manor of Gaynes Park was probably founded in the 13th century (EHER 3740). The original house of the manor was situated within a deer park and was known as *Gaines with the House*. An early house on the site, although possibly not the original, was the venue for a council held by Queen Elizabeth I. The location of the house visited by the queen is not

known for certain, although the first four editions of the Ordnance Survey record a large house as having been sited on the east side of the high ground overlooking the small valley (Figs 1 and 2, 'Gaynes Park - site of'). By 1740 it had been demolished, reputedly following a fire, and by 1777 a new house had built on the site of the present-day mansion. This later house was subsequently acquired by the Chisenhale-Marsh family in 1792 who then set about modifying it in 1818 and enlarging it in 1870.

3.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The general aim of the archaeological evaluation was to determine the presence or absence, condition, date, character, extent and significance of any archaeological remains threatened by the proposed development which had the potential to impact upon the recorded site of the former Gaynes Park manorial house to the immediate east.

The objectives of the evaluation were to identify any earlier structures and assess their importance, and to understand the history and development of the Gaynes Park site from the medieval period through to the modern day.

4.0 METHOD

The footprint of the four houses and the pond were sampled by five trenches, each measuring 15m long by 1.8m wide (Figs 1 and 2). The trenches were located by using a directional GPS with on-board map-based software and were stripped of their topsoil by using a wheeled excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket. The error margin of the GPS varies, but is always less than 0.2m.

The archaeological field evaluation was carried out in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologists' Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation and the Association of Local Government Officers' Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England (IFA 2008; Gurney 2003). The ECC FAU is a registered archaeological organisation with the Institute of Field Archaeologists. The ECC FAU uses its own recording system to record all archaeological deposits and features.

5.0 FIELDWORK RESULTS

The trial trenching revealed archaeological remains beneath the topsoil in trenches 3, 4 and 5. There were no archaeological remains in trenches 1 and 2. The remains comprised two layers (9 and 10) in trench 3, a gully (7) in trench 4, and a sequence of layers (2 to 5) in the valley floor in trench 5 (Figs 3 and 4).

Sections were dug by hand across the gully and layers in trenches 3 and 4, and by machine across the sequence of deposits in trench 5. The full depth of the sequence was unable to be exposed because it extended beneath the water table.

Layers 9 and 10 extended across the eastern half of trench 3 and had a combined thickness of c. 0.2m (Plate 3). Layer 9 contained a small piece of post-medieval roof tile, and layer 10 frequent small flecks and pieces of charcoal. Both deposits contained occasional small fragments and flecks of post-medieval brick.

Gully 7 in trench 3 ran parallel with the line of the valley (Plate 1). It had moderately-sloping sides, a concave base and was c. 0.5m wide by 0.18m deep. The single fill of the feature produced a small sherd of medieval pottery, twenty-three small fragments of post-medieval roof tile and brick, and infrequent flecks of charcoal.

The sequence of layers in trench 5 lay at the eastern end of the trench and was more than 0.7m thick (Plate 2). It consisted of four different layers extending across the base and part way up the western side of the valley (Figs 3 and 4, layers 2 to 5). Layers 2 and 5 were similar to the surrounding natural, and layer 3 to the existing topsoil. Layer 4 consisted of a dump of charcoal. Layer 5 contained a piece of slate and a large lump of post-medieval brick. There were no other finds.

6.0 FINDS, by Joyce Compton

Finds were excavated from two contexts, one each in trenches 4 and 5. The finds have been recorded by count and weight, in grams, by context. Full quantification details can be found in Appendix 3. The finds are described briefly by category below.

6.1 Pottery, by Helen Walker

A single sherd (4g) of medieval pottery was recovered from trench 4. It is very abraded but appears to be Medieval Harlow ware, in the form of a curved-over rim as found on jars and

cooking-pots of the 13th to 14th centuries. Medieval Harlow ware is relatively common in West Essex; Theydon Garnon is only about 10km south of the supposed location of the medieval kiln sites, just to the east of Harlow.

6.2 Building material

Both contexts produced building materials. Layer 5 in trench 5 contained a piece of slate and a brick fragment. This is in a red fabric and irregularly made; the dimensions and its appearance suggest an 18th or 19th-century date. A number of small, abraded and undiagnostic post-medieval brick and roof tile fragments were recovered from the fill of gully 7 in trench 4.

6.3 Comments on the assemblage

Very few finds were recorded and, except for the medieval rim sherd, all are relatively recent. It is interesting that medieval pottery, albeit very small, was collected from the vicinity of the previous Gaynes Park house.

No further work on any of the finds is required. Most of the recent material has already been discarded. The pottery should be retained in the archive.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

The trenching has revealed a sherd of 13th/14th-century pottery, a post-medieval or modern gully, and sequences of post-medieval and/or modern layers. There are no in situ structural remains and the number of archaeological finds is low, probably indicating that the development site has not been previously occupied.

The pot sherd is contemporary with the manor's suggested 13th-century foundation and is a indicator that people were living and working within the wider area during that period.

Gully 7 is conjectured to represent a former boundary running along the eastern side of the valley. The date of the feature is uncertain, although the pieces of brick and tile from it indicate that it must have been in use during the post-medieval period or later. If the gully was in use before the mid 18th century then it was perhaps associated with the pre-1740 house and its garden.

The discovery of the sequence of layers in trench 5 has revealed that the bottom part of the valley was originally deeper and steeper. The large fragment of post-medieval brick from

layer 5 indicates that the accumulation of the sequence must have taken place during the post-medieval period or later. The infilling of the valley floor was probably deliberate and perhaps undertaken in order to soften the appearance of the valley and/or make it more useable. The earth for the infilling could have been spoil generated by one or more of the three phases of building work that are known to have taken place after 1740. Layer 3 is similar to topsoil and is possibly a former ground surface. If this is correct then the infilling of the valley floor must have been broken by a hiatus and have been carried out in two stages. Layers 9 and 10 in trench 3 perhaps represent dumping of spoil from groundworks down the east side of the valley, rather than within the valley floor.

The trenching has found no remains that can be firmly attributed to the former manor house which is recorded by the Ordnance Survey to have been present on the high ground of the eastern side of the valley. The location of the house as recorded by the Ordnance Survey is either possibly wrong or only broadly indicative. If the location is correct then it is possible that the house was constrained to a small area. Regardless, it is now evident that the house was not located within the valley itself.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The archaeological trial trenching was commissioned by IAB consultants on behalf of AWC Ltd and was carried out by the Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit with the help and co-operation of Harvey Conroy and Tony White.

The fieldwork was carried out by Mark Germany and Andy Lewsey. Figures 1 to 4 were drawn by Andy Lewsey and the finds were analysed by Joyce Compton and Helen Walker. The project was managed by Adrian Scruby, and was initiated and monitored by Adam Garwood of the Essex County Council Historic Environment Management team.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- | | | |
|------------|------|---|
| ECC FAU | 2010 | <i>Written scheme of investigation for archaeological evaluation by trial trenching. Gaynes Park Mansion, Theydon Garnon, Essex. ECC FAU wsi 2166</i> |
| ECC HEM | 2009 | <i>Archaeological desk-based assessment, historic building recording and archaeological evaluation at Gaynes Park Mansion, Theydon Garnon.</i> |
| IFA | 2008 | <i>Standard and guidance for archaeological evaluation.</i> Institute of Field Archaeologists |
| Gurney, D. | 2003 | <i>Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 14 |

APPENDIX 1: TRENCH LOCATIONS

All of the trenches are 1.8m wide and 15m long. The coordinates refer to the two ends of the central axis.

Trench 1

X = TL 548267.52 Y = TL 201559.93
X = TL 548277.10 Y = TL 201548.39

Trench 2

X = TL 548314.71 Y = TL 201593.43
X = TL 548320.85 Y = TL 201579.74

Trench 3

X = TL 548385.74 Y = TL 201551.31
X = TL 548400.71 Y = TL 201552.19

Trench 4

X = TL 548393.99 Y = TL 201500.61
X = TL 548408.42 Y = TL 201504.72

Trench 5

X = TL 548322.54 Y = TL 201525.59
X = TL 548337.54 Y = TL 201525.59

APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT DATA

No.	Tr.	Category	Description	Date
1	5	Topsoil	Brown friable silt clay with infrequent small stones. c. 0.25m thick. Above 2	Modern
2	5	Layer	Brownish orange plastic silt clay with infrequent small stones. c. 0.2m thick. Above 3. Below 1	Post-med / modern
3	5	Layer	Brownish grey plastic silt clay with infrequent small stones. c. 0.37m thick. Above 4. Below 2	Post-med / modern
4	5	Layer	Brownish grey plastic/sticky silt clay with infrequent small stones and frequent flecks and pieces of charcoal. 0.05m thick. Above 5. Below 3	Post-med / modern
5	5	Layer	Yellowish brown plastic/sticky silt clay with infrequent small stones. 0.1m+ thick. Extends below water table. ?Above 6. Below 4	Post-med / modern
6	5	Natural	Pale brownish yellow plastic silt clay with infrequent small stones. ?Below 5	
7	4	Gully	Linear with moderately sloping sides and a concave base. 2.1m+ long, 0.5m wide, 0.18m deep. Filled by 8	Post-med / modern
8	4	Fill	Brown friable silt clay with occasional small stones and infrequent flecks of charcoal. Single fill of 7	Post-med / modern
9	3	Layer	Yellowish brown friable silt clay with occasional small stones and flecks and small fragments of post-medieval bricks. 0.18m thick. Above 10	Post-med / modern
10	3	Layer	Dark greyish brown friable silt clay with occasional small stones and frequent flecks and small fragments of charcoal and post-medieval brick. 0.11m thick. Below 9	Post-med / modern

APPENDIX 3: FINDS DATA

Context	Feature	Count	Weight	Description	Date
5	Layer	1	74	Slate fragment (Discarded)	- Post med.
		1	505	Brick fragment, depth 60-65mm	
8	7	11	34	Brick fragments (Discarded)	Post med.
		12	78	Roof tile fragments (Discarded)	Post med.
		1	4	Pottery; rim sherd, abraded, Medieval Harlow Ware, showing typical curved-over rim	Medieval

APPENDIX 4: CONTENTS OF SITE ARCHIVE

Contained in this folder:

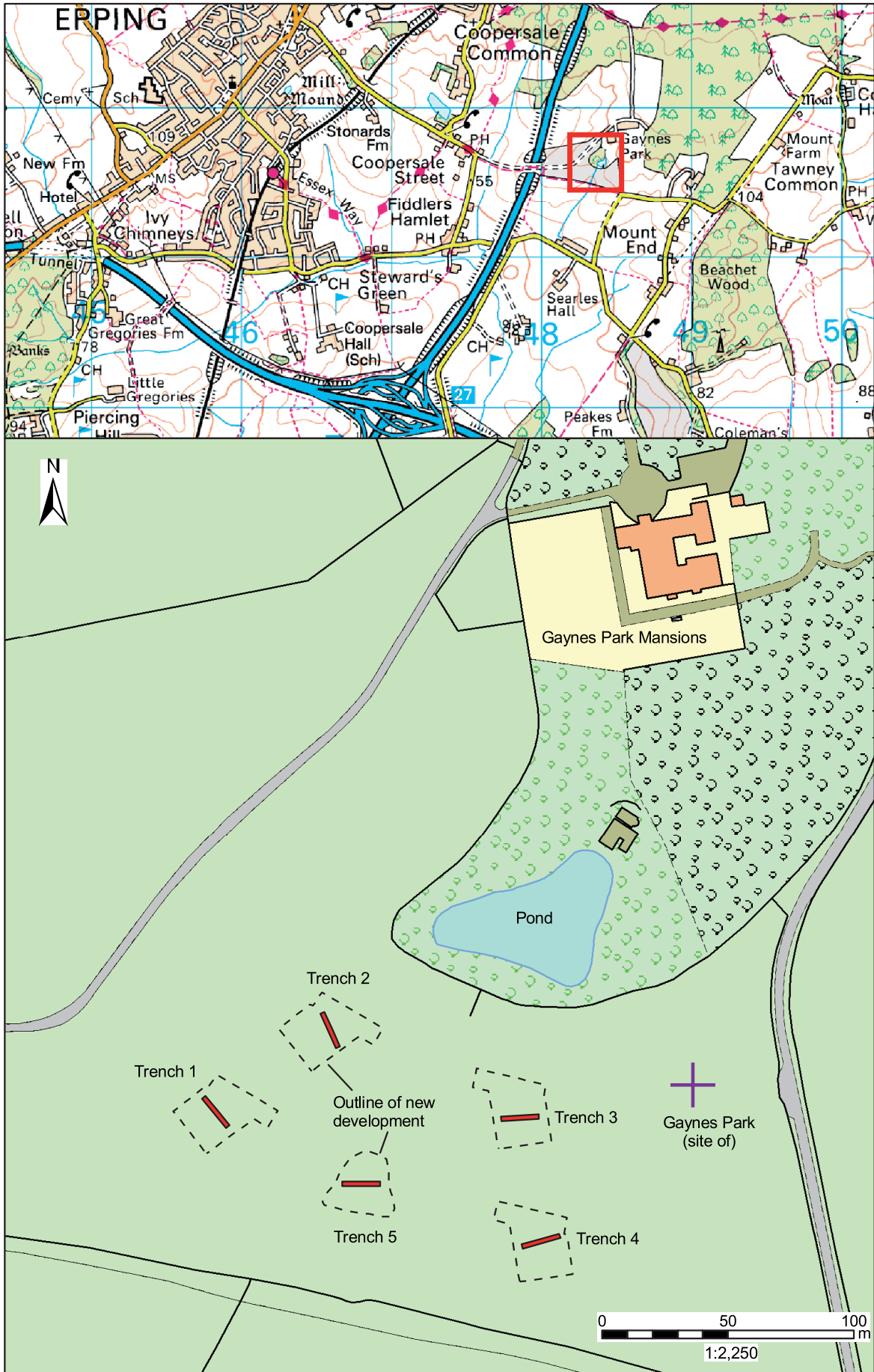
1. Client report
1. Archaeological brief
1. Written scheme of investigation
1. Finds report
1. Medieval pottery report
1. Context register
10. Context sheets
1. Photographic register
1. Computer disk containing digital copies of most of the above and twenty-five digital photographs
1. Sherd of medieval pottery

Stored separately:

1. Large sheet of site plans and section drawings

APPENDIX 5: SITE SUMMARY FOR ESSEX HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD

Site name/Address: Gaynes Park Mansion, Theydon Garnon, Epping	
Parish:	District: Epping
NGR: TL 548322 201525	Site Code: TGGP 10
Type of Work: Archaeological evaluation by trial trenching	Site Director/Group: Mark Germany, Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit
Date of Work: 10/3/10	Size of Area Investigated: Five trenches, totalling 135m ²
Location of Finds/Curating Museum: Epping Museum	Client: IAB Consultants
Further Seasons Anticipated?: No	Related HER Nos.: 3740
Final Report: Essex Archaeology and History (summary)	
Periods represented: Post-medieval Modern	
SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:	
<p>An archaeological evaluation, consisting of five trenches, preceded the construction of four houses and a pond in a small valley to the south of Gaynes Park Mansion, near Theydon, Garnon. The current Gaynes Park Mansion was built in the 18th and 19th-centuries and was preceded by at least one predecessor, marked on the first four editions of the Ordnance Survey as having been located on the high ground overlooking the valley.</p> <p>The trenching found a gully and sequences of layers, all of post-medieval and/or modern date, but no firm evidence for the former house. The results of the trenching suggest that the location of the house as recorded by the Ordnance Survey maps is either incorrect or only broadly indicative.</p> <p>Most of the layers sit in the valley floor and probably represent deliberate infilling, possibly in order to soften the appearance of the valley and/or make it more useable. The gully possibly represents a boundary separating the valley from the grounds of the house.</p>	
Previous Summaries/Reports:- Germany, M. 2010 <i>Gaynes Park Mansion, Theydon Garnon, Essex. Archaeological evaluation by trial trenching.</i> ECC FAU report 2166	
Author of Summary: Mark Germany	Date of Summary: June 2010



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Fig.1. Site location

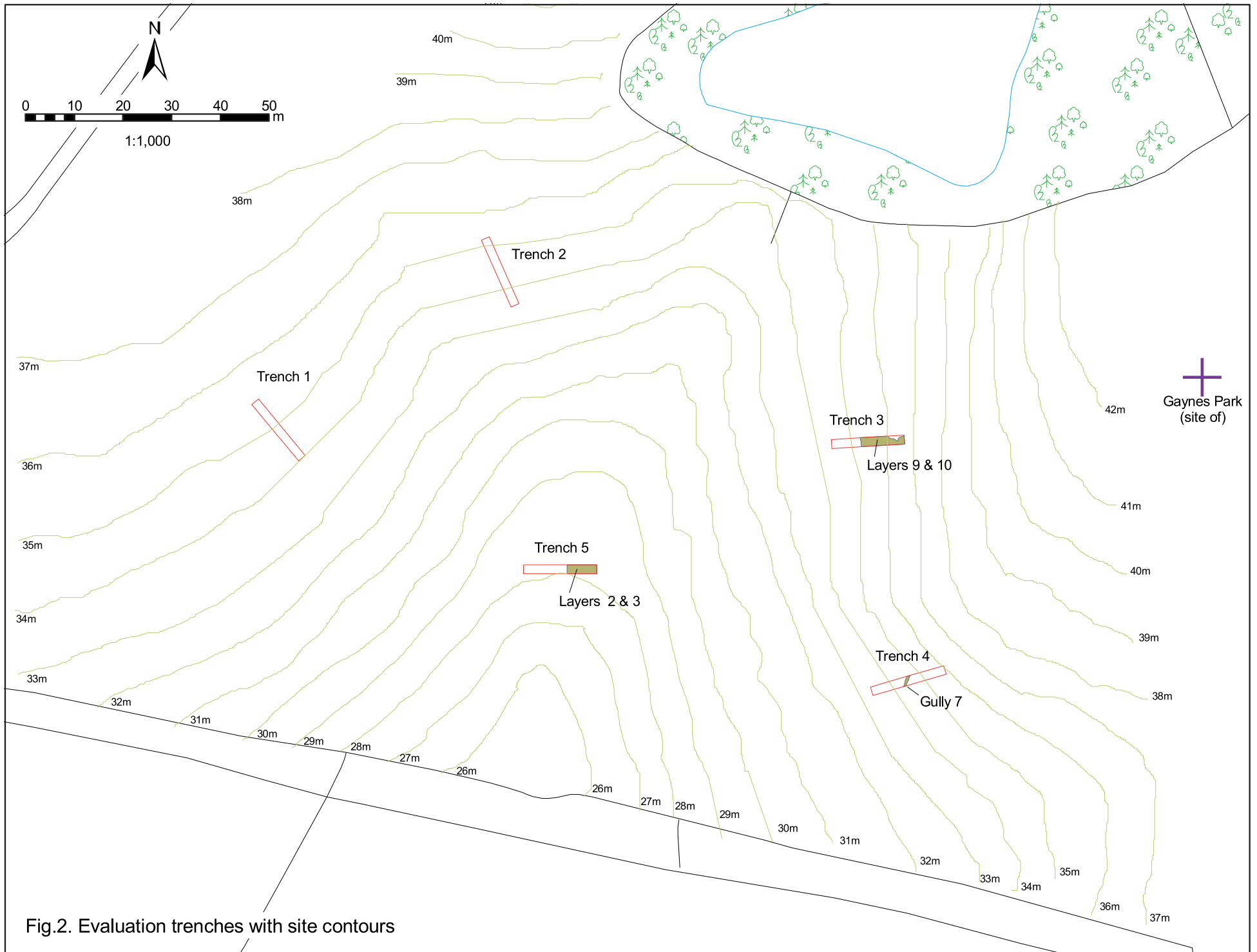


Fig.2. Evaluation trenches with site contours

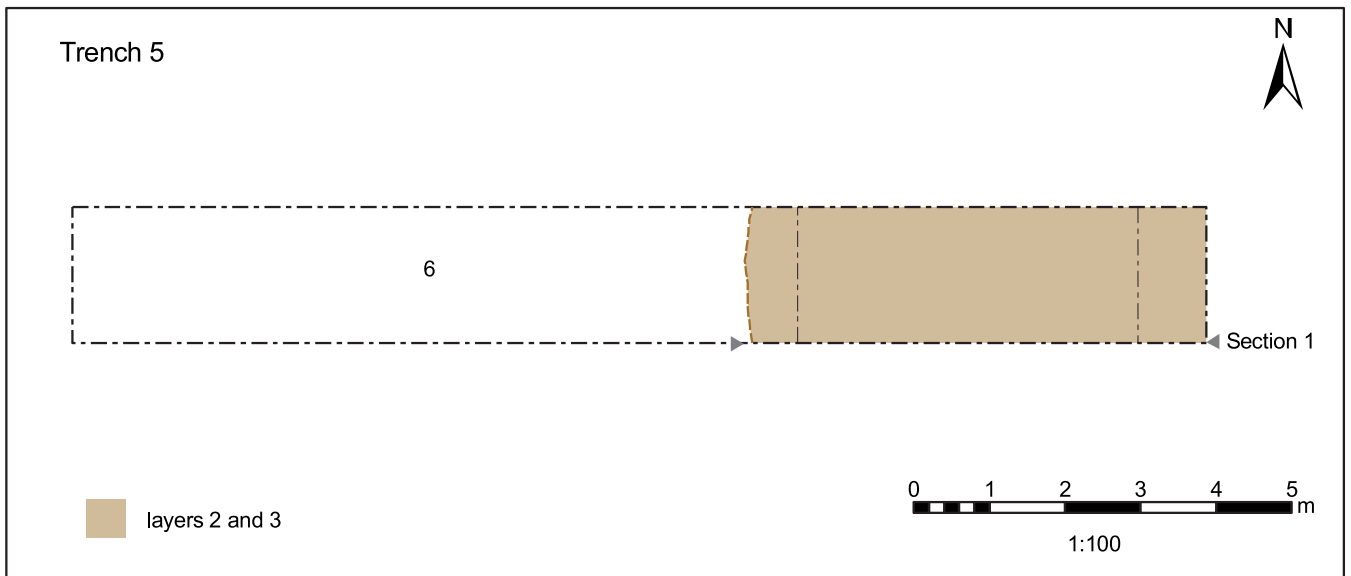
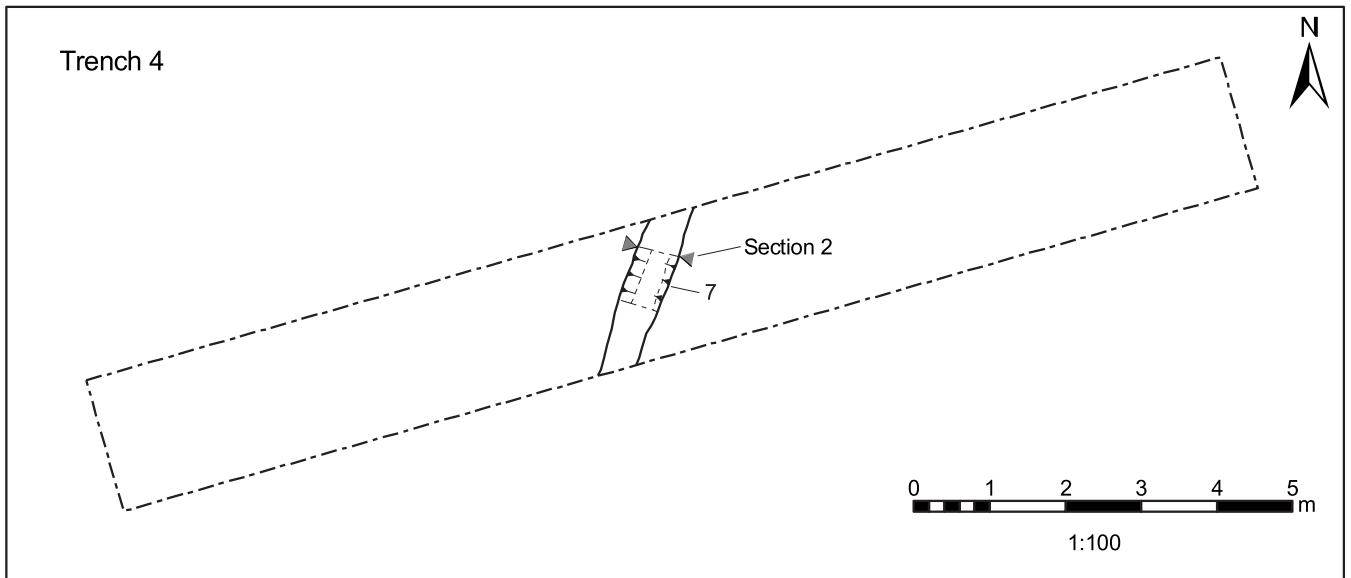
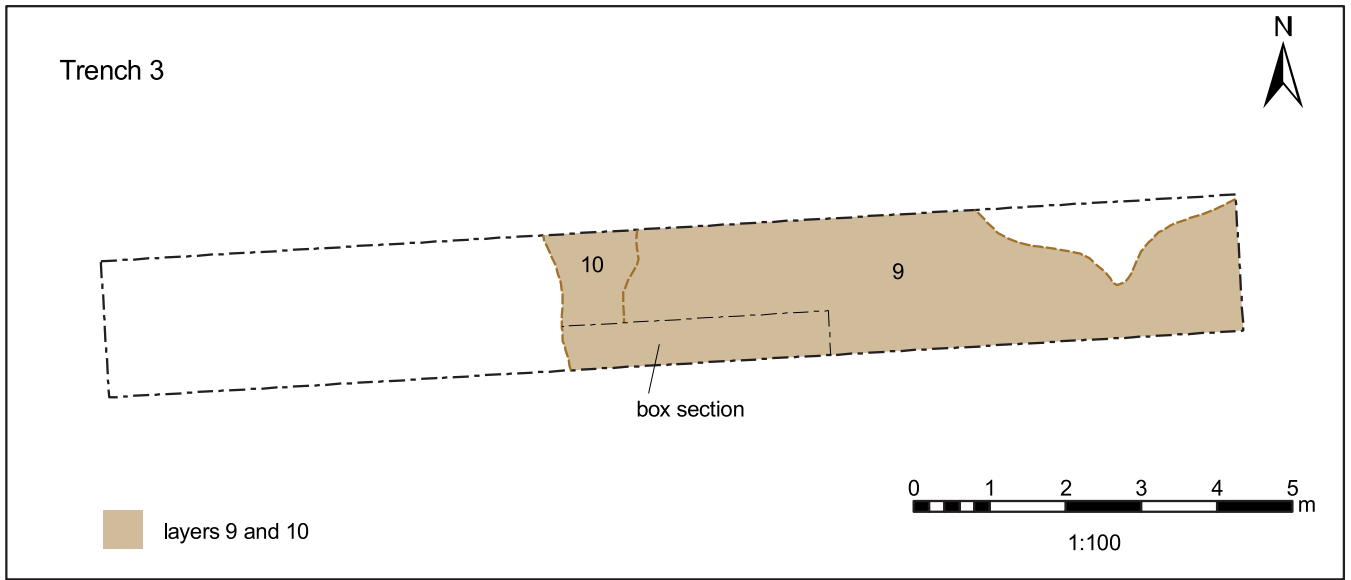


Fig.3. Trenches 3, 4 and 5 - all features

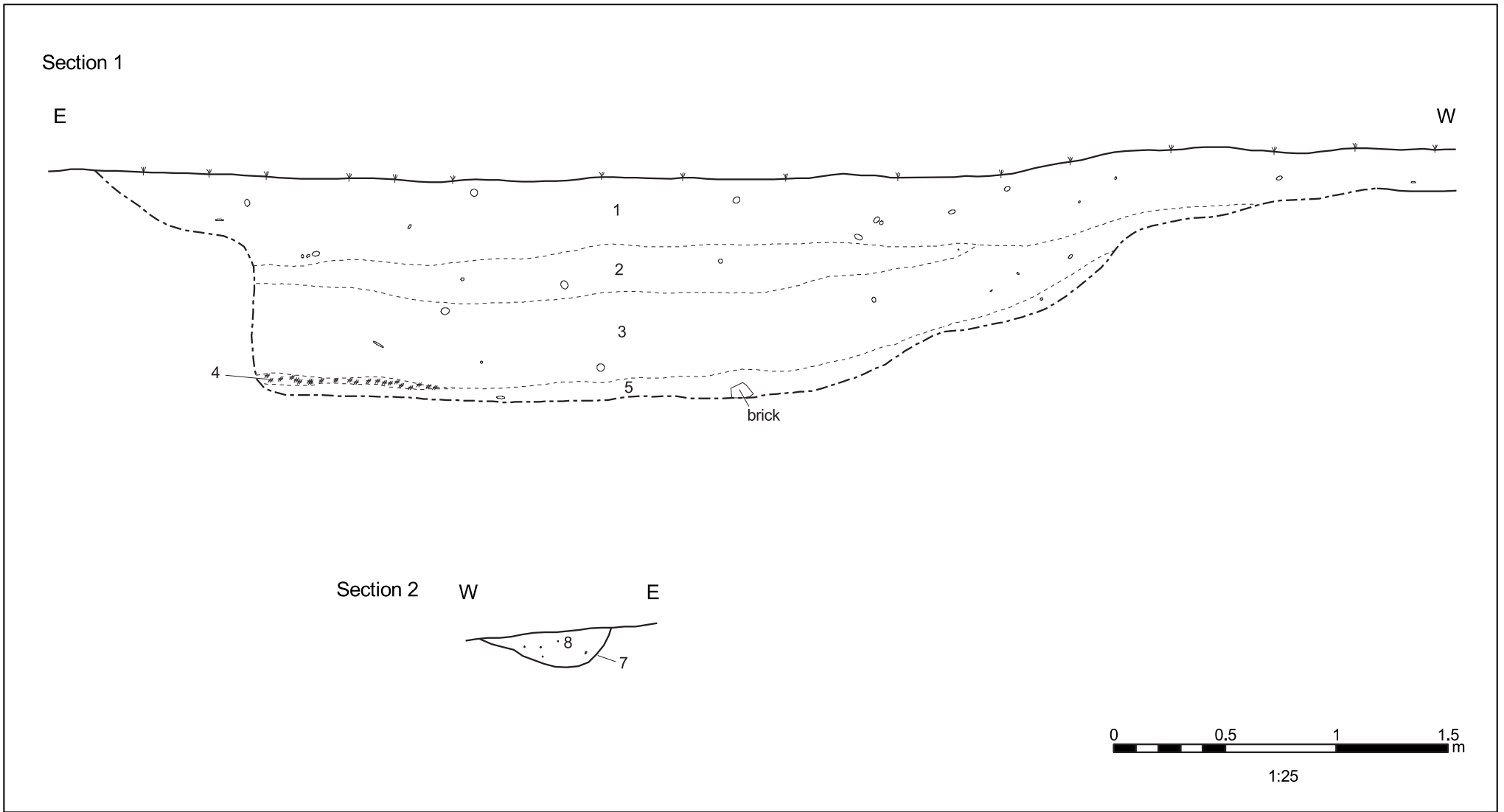


Fig.4. Sections 1 & 2



Plate 1. Gully 7, trench 4, looking south-east



Plate 2. Layers 2 to 5, trench 5, looking south



Plate 3. Layers 9 and 10, trench 3, looking east