

PARKERS MILL, MILL STREET, MILDENHALL, SUFFOLK

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
INCORPORATING A PALAEO-ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

PARKERS MILL, MILL STREET, MILDENHALL, SUFFOLK

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
INCORPORATING A PALAEO-ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

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NGR: TL 7093 7436	Report No: 2930
District: Forest Heath	Site Code: MNL 590
Approved: Claire Halpin MIFA	Project No: 2914
Signed:	Date: August 2007

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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET			
Project name	<i>Parkers Mill, Mill Street, Mildenhall, Suffolk: Archaeological Evaluation Incorporating a Palaeo-environmental Assessment</i>		
<i>In July 2007, Archaeological Solutions conducted an archaeological evaluation of land at Parkers Mill, Mill Street, Mildenhall, Suffolk (NGR TL 7093 7436). The evaluation was undertaken in response to a planning condition (F/2006/1030/FUL) applied to residential redevelopment of the site.</i>			
<i>Parkers Mill is situated on the north side of the river Lark, on a leat running roughly parallel to the river. Domesday Book refers to a mill in Mildenhall, possibly in this location (SMR MNL455). The present mill building is still standing, as is Mill House, which is scheduled.</i>			
<i>The trial trench evaluation found features ranging from Saxo-Norman (c. AD 850 -1150) to late medieval/ early post-medieval (AD 1400 – 1600) in date. These were concentrated mainly in the northern corner of the site (Trenches 1 – 4) and comprised ditches, gullies, pits and postholes. There were generally few finds, suggesting that the area was on the periphery of the medieval settlement. However, one later medieval (c. AD 1400) rubbish/ cess pit yielded a large animal bone assemblage including articulated elements from at least six cattle. The centre of the site (Trenches 5 – 9) was found to be heavily truncated from the buildings which formerly occupied the site. The southern edge of the site, adjacent to the mill stream, was devoid of archaeology, although only a small portion of this area was investigated. A palaeo-environmental assessment undertaken during the fieldwork found that peat deposits adjacent to the mill channel were relatively shallow; no waterlogged deposits were encountered.</i>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	<i>July 2007</i>		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	<i>Y</i>	Future work (Y/N/?)	<i>Y</i>
P. number	<i>2914</i>	Site code	<i>MNL 590</i>
Type of project	<i>Archaeological evaluation</i>		
Site status			
Current land use	<i>Mill</i>		
Planned development	<i>73 residential dwellings</i>		
Main features (+dates)	<i>Saxo-Norman – late medieval (c. AD 850 – 1600) ditches, gullies, rubbish/ cess pits, postholes</i>		
Significant finds (+dates)	<i>Late Saxon/ early medieval pottery; one possible early Anglo-Saxon decorated sherd; late medieval (15th century?) CBM and daub; animal bone (60kg)</i>		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Suffolk</i>	<i>Forest Heath</i>	<i>Mildenhall</i>
SMR for area	<i>Suffolk</i>		
Post code (if known)			
Area of site	<i>1.56ha</i>		
NGR	<i>TL 7093 7436</i>		
Height AOD (max)	<i>4.48 – 7.81m AOD</i>		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	<i>Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service – Conservation Team</i>		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	<i>P Weston</i>		
Funded by	<i>Freshwater Estates U.K. Ltd.</i>		
Full title	<i>Parkers Mill, Mill Street, Mildenhall, Suffolk: Archaeological Evaluation Incorporating a Palaeo-environmental Assessment</i>		
Authors	<i>Sparrow, P., Weston, P. & Woolhouse, T.</i>		
Report no.	<i>2930</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>August 2007</i>		

PARKERS MILL, MILL STREET, MILDENHALL, SUFFOLK
AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
INCORPORATING A PALAEO-ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

SUMMARY

In July 2007, Archaeological Solutions conducted an archaeological evaluation of land at Parkers Mill, Mill Street, Mildenhall, Suffolk (NGR TL 7093 7436). The evaluation was undertaken in response to a planning condition (F/2006/1030/FUL) applied to residential redevelopment of the site.

Parkers Mill is situated on the north side of the river Lark, on a leat running roughly parallel to the river. The site is located on the edge of, and extends into, the Lark floodplain, straddling the divide between loam over chalk (to the north) and fen edge peat deposits to the south.

The wider location of the site is significant, with fenland to the west and the light sandy soils of the Breckland to the east. This location would have been an attractive position to prehistoric farmers; there is some evidence of prehistoric activity to the east of the site. Domesday Book refers to a mill in Mildenhall, possibly in this location (SMR MNL455), and a spot find of an Anglo-Saxon iron spearhead has been recorded in the field adjacent to the site (SMR MNL061). The site therefore had a particular potential for prehistoric and/or Anglo-Saxon remains. The mill building is still standing, as is Mill House, which is scheduled.

The trial trench evaluation found features ranging from Saxo-Norman (c. AD 850 - 1150) to late medieval/ early post-medieval (AD 1400 - 1600) in date. These were concentrated mainly in the northern corner of the site (Trenches 1 - 4) and comprised ditches, gullies, pits and postholes. There were generally few finds, suggesting that the area was on the periphery of the medieval settlement. However, one later medieval (c. AD 1400) rubbish/ cess pit yielded a large animal bone assemblage including articulated elements from at least six cattle. The centre of the site (Trenches 5 - 9) was found to be heavily-truncated from the buildings which formerly occupied the site. The southern edge of the site, adjacent to the mill stream, was devoid of archaeology, although only a small portion was investigated due to modern disturbance and an electricity substation in this area. A palaeo-environmental assessment undertaken during the fieldwork found that peat deposits adjacent to the mill channel were relatively shallow; no waterlogged deposits were encountered.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In July 2007, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) conducted an archaeological evaluation of land at Parkers Mill, Mill Street, Mildenhall, Suffolk (NGR TL 7093 7436; Figs. 1 - 2). The evaluation was undertaken in response to a planning condition (Ref. F/2006/1030/FUL) applied to the residential development of the site. It is

proposed to build 73 new homes. The evaluation was commissioned by Freshwater Estates U.K. Ltd to mitigate the potential archaeological impact of the development.

1.2 The evaluation was conducted in accordance with a Brief issued by Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Conservation Team (SCCAS; dated 12/06/07) and a specification compiled by AS (dated 18/06/07). The project adhered to the procedures outlined in the Institute of Field Archaeologists' (IFA) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations* (revised 2001) and the relevant sections of *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 14 (Gurney 2003).

1.3 The objectives of the evaluation were, as set out in the Brief (Section 2.1):

- To establish whether any archaeological deposits exist in the area, with particular regard to any which are of sufficient importance to merit preservation *in situ*;
- to identify the date, approximate form and purpose of any archaeological deposit within the application area, together with its likely extent, localised depth and quality of preservation;
- to evaluate the likely impact of past land uses, and the possible presence of masking colluvial/alluvial deposits;
- to establish the potential for the preservation and survival of environmental evidence; and
- to provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological conservation strategy, dealing with preservation, the recording of archaeological deposits, working practices, timetables and orders of cost.

Planning policy context

1.4 The relevant planning policies which apply to the effect of development with regard to cultural heritage are Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 'Planning and the Historic Environment' (PPG15) and Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 'Archaeology and Planning' (PPG16) (Department of the Environment).

1.5 PPG16 (1990) is the national Planning Policy Guidance Note which applies to archaeology. It states that there should always be a presumption in favour of preserving nationally important archaeological remains *in situ*. However, when there is no overriding case for preservation, developers are required to fund opportunities for the recording and, where necessary, the excavation of the site. This condition is widely applied by local authorities.

1.6 PPG15 (1994) is the national Planning Policy Guidance Note which applies to the conservation of the historic environment by protecting the character and appearance of Conservation Areas and protecting listed buildings (of architectural or historical interest) from demolition and unsympathetic change and safeguarding their settings as far as is possible. This condition is also widely applied by local authorities.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE (Figs. 1 - 2)

2.1 Mildenhall is located *c.* 13km north-west of Newmarket in Forest Heath District, north-west Suffolk. Parker's Mill is situated on the west side of Mill Street, *c.* 0.5km south of Mildenhall town centre. Cutting across the southern edge of the site is a channel of the river Lark, which rejoins the main river 100m to the south-west.

2.2 The site comprises an irregular parcel of land covering approximately 1.56ha. It is bounded to the east by Mill Street and to the south by a channel/millstream of the river Lark.

3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY & SOILS

3.1 Parkers Mill is situated on the north bank of the river Lark (Figs. 1 & 2). A leat flows east to west across the southern end of the site, before rejoining the main river 100m to the south-west. The site is located at the edge of, and partially within, the Lark floodplain, sloping very gently upwards to the north. Spot heights taken during a site survey range from 4.48m AOD in the south to 7.80m AOD in the north. The site borders onto low-lying agricultural land to the west, with similar land-use to the east of Mill Street. Areas immediately north and south of the site are developed and form part of Mildenhall town.

3.2 The site lies on a solid geology of Middle Chalk, with no overlying drift (BGS 1985). There is a layer of alluvium running along the southern side of the river valley, which is clipped by the southernmost part of the site. There is also a strong likelihood of some peat deposits in the lower-lying southern extremity of the site.

3.3 The area around Parker's Mill comprises soils of the Swaffham Prior Association. These are described as well-drained, calcareous coarse and fine loamy soils over chalk rubble, with some similar shallow soils (SSEW 1983). There is a likelihood of deep non-calcareous loamy soils in places and local striped and polygonal soil patterns (SSEW 1983). These soils can be associated with a slight risk of water erosion. They are suitable for the cultivation of cereals, sugar beets and potatoes (SSEW 1983). The land to the north, east and south of the site has soils of the Methwold Association, which is also chalky, but is vulnerable to wind erosion (SSEW 1983).

4 BACKGROUND

4.1 Archaeological and historical background

An archaeological desk-based assessment of the site has been undertaken (Sparrow 2007). In summary:

4.1.1 Little early prehistoric material is known from the immediate vicinity of the site, but a few Iron Age finds suggest permanent settlement by this time. Iron Age material has been recovered from fields to the east and north-west of the site.

4.1.2 Finds of metalwork from close to Wamil Walk, 400m north-west of the site (SMR MNL141), and pottery from Jubilee Fields to the east, point to continuing occupation after the Roman Conquest. Important Roman remains are also known in the wider area.

4.1.3 The Lark valley saw significant early Anglo-Saxon settlement. A possible Saxon spearhead has been found near the river *c.* 200m west of the site (SMR MNL 061), although there is some uncertainty over the object's date (it could be Iron Age). A second SMR record of a spearhead found 'near Mildenhall Mill' could refer to another chance find, but could equally be a duplicate record (MNL Misc MSF9335). A mill is mentioned in Mildenhall in Domesday Book, suggesting that the mill stream on which the site is located could have already existed by the late Saxon period. The pre-Norman Conquest mill could feasibly have been on the present site, although this is conjectural.

4.1.4 As noted in the project Brief (Section 1.4), the area of the Lark floodplain has considerable potential for the recovery of palaeo-environmental and geoarchaeological deposits, and has the potential for former land surfaces buried by later sedimentation. There is a high potential for preserved palaeo-environmental remains, such as peat deposits, within the southern part of the site that is situated within the floodplain.

4.2 Archaeological potential

The site has potential for remains of several periods:

- **Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic, Bronze Age – Low Potential.** Despite the geographical position of the site between the fen edge and the light soils of the Breckland, both areas known to have been attractive to prehistoric settlers, there have been relatively few prehistoric finds in the area. A field to the east of the site has produced a number of Neolithic objects, suggesting a slight possibility of finds/ features of similar date within the site.
- **Iron Age and Roman – Moderate Potential.** There have been a number of Iron Age and Roman finds discovered in areas to the north and west of the site, probably attesting to a level of settlement at this time.
- **Anglo-Saxon – Moderate Potential.** Mildenhall was a fairly rich manor by the time of the Norman Conquest and a church and mill are recorded in Domesday Book. The Anglo-Saxon mill may have been in the vicinity of the current mill. Spot finds of Saxon metalwork are recorded in the SMR close to the site.
- **Medieval – Moderate Potential.** The site was in use as a mill during the medieval period, but little is known about the ownership of the site or the extent of the land associated with the mill.
- **Post-medieval and modern – High Potential.** Improvements to the waterways in the 18th century and the increased population of the 19th century suggest that Mildenhall was economically successful during the post-medieval period. The mill site was in use during this time, with a number of alterations made to the existing mill buildings. The mill was in use until 1948, therefore there is a high probability of discovering features and finds from this period.

4.3 Previous ground disturbance

4.3.1 The rebuilding of the mill in 1908 will have affected archaeological remains if present, possibly truncating or completely destroying any within the immediate vicinity of the mill in the south-east of the site. The construction of a sub-station to the west of the mill is associated with a considerable dip in ground level, suggesting that archaeological features in this area, if present, will have been destroyed by this interference. Until recently, hardstanding covered the majority of the site and it is likely that this was levelled and underlaid by made ground. The construction of the hardstanding will have impacted upon archaeological features, if present. There are no apparent services running through the site. The garden of Mill House has a high potential for medieval and post-medieval features associated with the construction and development of the building. The north-western area of the site, which is currently overgrown with tall grass, may have escaped significant truncation. No buildings are shown in this area on historic maps, and none have been constructed in this area in recent years, although local residents suggest it once contained a tennis court. Parts of the west of the site also appear undeveloped on 19th and early 20th century maps, and may have also escaped truncation from more recent buildings.

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 Eleven trial trenches were excavated (Fig. 2), totalling 235m. The individual trenches varied in length between 16 and 32m; all were 1.8m in width. Trenches 10 and 11, in the south of the site, were 7 and 6m long, respectively, by 3.5m wide. All the trenches were linear, with the exception of Trench 5, which consisted of two intersecting trenches forming a 'T'-shape. In addition, four 2 x 1.5m test pits were excavated in the north of the site, just south of Trench 1. Trenches were positioned to avoid areas of known ground disturbance identified by the desk-based assessment and those likely to have been truncated by recently-demolished structures.

5.2 Undifferentiated overburden was removed under close archaeological supervision using a 360° degree mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. Thereafter, all further investigation was undertaken by hand. Exposed surfaces were cleaned as appropriate and examined for archaeological features and finds. Deposits were recorded using *pro-forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale and photographed. Excavated spoil was checked for finds and the trenches were scanned by metal detector.

5.3 Bulk soil samples were taken according to a purposeful sampling strategy with the aims of investigating the palaeo-environment and past economy of the site. The sample from Pit F1054 L1055 (Trench 3; see below) was taken in order to help establish the use/ function of this large feature.

Context	Feature	Sample no.	Volume (litres)	Spot date
L1055	Pit F1054	1	30	AD 550-700/1000
L1067	Pit F1066	2	30	Undated
L1071	Pit F1069	3	30	Undated
L1145	Ditch F1141	4	30	Undated
L1180	Pit F1092	5	30	AD 1200-1400
L1093	Pit F1092	6	30	AD 1200-1400
L1062	Pit/ Ditch F1058	7	30	Undated

Table 1: Bulk environmental samples

6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS (Figs. 3 – 7)

6.1 Trench 1 (Fig. 3)

<i>Sample section: SE end, SW facing</i> 0.00 = 7.57m AOD	
0.00 – 0.36m	L1000. Topsoil. Mid – dark grey/brown sandy silt with sparse chalk fragments
0.36 – 0.80m	L1001. Subsoil. Mid grey/brown sandy silt with occasional chalk fragments
0.80m +	L1002. Natural. White chalk

<i>Sample section: NW end, SW facing</i> 0.00 = 7.51m AOD	
0.00 – 0.25m	L1000. Topsoil. As above
0.25 – 0.60m	L1001. Subsoil. As above
0.60m +	L1002. Natural chalk. As above

Description:

A medieval potsherd was found within the topsoil.

Gully F1159 (1.10m+ long x 0.70m wide x 0.20m deep) cut Ditch F1141 and ran south-south-west to north-north-east on a perpendicular alignment to the larger ditch, extending beyond the northern edge of Trench 1. It had moderate to steep sides and an uneven base and contained a single fill, L1160, a mid grey sandy silt of variable consistency, which contained no finds.

?Ditch Terminal F1006 (length 1.56m+, width 1.10m, depth 0.29m) was aligned N/S. It had relatively steep sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1007, was a light grey/brown sandy silty. It contained no finds.

Ditch F1141 (length 3.00m+, width 1.40m+, depth 0.65m) was aligned NE/SW. It had steep sides and a narrow base. The ditch may have formed an enclosure with Ditch F1115, which ran on a perpendicular alignment a short distance to the south-east. Ditch F1141 contained six fills, tabulated below:

Context*	Description	Finds
L1152	Light grey sandy silt with frequent chalk frags	-
L1144	Grey sandy silt with occasional chalk frags and charcoal	Animal bone (244g), daub (97g)
L1145	Dark brown sandy silt with frequent charcoal. Burnt deposit within ditch	Daub (98g)
L1146	Dark grey sandy silty clay with occasional chalk frags	Animal bone (2g), daub (7g)
L1147	Mid – dark grey sandy silt with occasional chalk frags	-
L1148	Mid – light brown sandy silt with occasional chalk frags and charcoal	Animal bone (214g), shell (21g), daub (138g)

Table 2: Fills of Ditch F1141 (Trench 1)

* In all feature description tables, fills are listed from basal or lowest encountered to uppermost

Gully F1158 (length 1.30m+, width 0.33m, depth 0.17m) was aligned N/S. It had moderately sloping sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1155, was a mid brown sandy silt with chalk fragments and sparse charcoal. Its relationship with Ditch F1141 was uncertain because of the presence of Posthole F1142. The gully became shallower as it extended away from Ditch F1141.

Posthole F1142 (length 0.42m, width 0.23m, depth 0.26m) had moderately steep sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1143, was a mid – light grey/brown sandy silt with occasional chalk fragments. It contained no finds. Its relationship to Ditch F1141 was uncertain. It is recorded as abutting Ditch F1141

A scatter of 11 possible shallow postholes, without any apparent structural configurations, were recorded in the central portion of Trench 1 and are tabulated below (Table 3). The features were irregular, possibly the result of root disturbance. Their fills were all very similar, comprising a homogenous mid grey/brown sandy silt. None contained finds.

Context	Fill	Type	Dimensions (m)†	Description	 Finds
F1117	L1118	?PH	0.41+ x 0.38 x 0.12m	Mid grey/brown sandy silt Profile irregular	None
F1123	L1124	?PH	0.30 x 0.30 x 0.14	Mid grey/brown sandy silt Profile irregular	None
F1125	L1126	?PH	0.53 x 0.35 x 0.09	Mid grey/brown sandy silt Sides moderately sloping, flattish base	Med (1400-1600) pot (374g), Animal bone (168g), Mussel Shell (6g)
F1127	L1128	?PH	0.30 x 0.18 x 0.06	Mid grey/brown sandy silt Profile irregular	None
F1129	L1130	?PH	0.30 x 0.30 x 0.06	Mid grey/brown sandy silt Steep sides, flattish base	None
F1131	L1132	?PH	0.25 x 0.30 x 0.15	Mid grey/brown sandy silt Profile irregular	None
F1133	L1134	?PH	0.25 x 0.20 x 0.10	Mid grey/brown sandy silt Steep sides, flattish base	None
F1135	L1136	?PH	0.37 x 0.34 x 0.04	Mid grey/brown sandy silt Profile irregular	None
F1137	L1138	?PH	0.26 x 0.19 x 0.07	Mid grey/brown sandy silt Profile irregular	None
F1139	L1140	?PH	0.60 x 0.65 x 0.13	Mid grey/brown sandy silt Profile irregular	None
F1153	L1154	?PH	0.40 x 0.43 x 0.04	Mid grey/brown sandy silt Profile irregular	None

Table 3: Possible postholes in Trench 1

† In all feature description tables, dimensions follow the order length x width x depth

Ditches F1115 and F1150 were broadly parallel, and aligned NW/SE. F1115 (length 3.00m+, width 1.20m, depth 0.30m) had relatively steep sides and an irregular base. Its fill, L1116, was a mid grey/brown sandy silt with occasional chalk fragments and charcoal. It contained medieval (AD 1000-1200/1300) pottery (4 sherds; 12g), CBM (68g), animal bone (157g) and oyster shell (112g). Ditch F1150 (length 3.00m+, width 0.30m, depth 0.30m) had relatively steep sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1151, was a mid grey/brown sandy silt with occasional chalk fragments and charcoal. It contained animal bone (27g).

Posthole F1121, based on its proximity, may have been associated with Ditches F1115 and F1150 (length 0.48m, width 0.44m, depth 0.13m). It had moderately sloping sides and a narrow base. Its fill, L1122, was a mid grey/brown sandy silt with occasional chalk fragments. It contained no finds.

F1008 and F1010 were possible postholes (tabulated below). Each was shallow and contained directly comparable fills. Neither contained finds.

Context	Fill	Type	Dimensions (m)	Description	Finds
F1008	L1009	?PH	0.31 x 0.36 x 0.06m	Light grey/brown sandy silt with occasional chalk and stones. Moderately sloping sides, concave base	None
F1010	L1011	?PH	0.34 x 0.36 x 0.06m	Light grey/brown sandy silt with occasional chalk and stones. Moderately sloping sides, concave base	None

Table 4: Postholes at south-east end of Trench 1

Pit F1004 (length 1.10m, width 1.06m, depth 0.19m) had steep sides and a flattish base. Its fill, L1005, was a mid grey/brown sandy silt with occasional chalk fragments and charcoal flecks. It contained animal bone (81g) and a spindle whorl (37g).

6.2 Trench 2 (Fig. 3)

<i>Sample section: SW end, NW facing</i>	
<i>0.00 = 7.73m AOD</i>	
0.00 – 0.28m	L1000. Topsoil. As above Tr.1
0.28 – 0.60m	L1001. Subsoil. As above Tr.1
0.60m +	L1002. Natural chalk. As above Tr.1

<i>Sample section: NE end, NW facing</i>	
<i>0.00 = 7.81m AOD</i>	
0.00 – 0.27m	L1000. Topsoil. As above Tr.1
0.27 – 0.57m	L1001. Subsoil. As above Tr.1
0.57m +	L1002. Natural chalk. As above Tr.1

Description:

Posthole F1156 lay close to the north-east end of the trench. It was sub-circular, with a steep 'U'-shaped profile (0.44 x 0.38 x 0.18m). Its fill, L1157, was a dark brown sandy silty clay of variable consistency. It contained no finds. The posthole may have been associated with Ditch F1165, which lay just to the north.

Ditch F1165 occupied much of the trench (length 10.00m+, width 2.00m (max.), depth 0.32m). It had moderately steep sides and a concave base and ran on a north-east to south-west alignment. It contained three fills. The upper fill, L1168, was a light grey sandy silt with occasional chalk. It contained medieval (AD 1100-1400) pottery (1 sherd; 18g), animal bone (102g), struck flint (4g) and daub (3g). The middle fill, L1167, was a dark grey sandy silt with moderate chalk. It contained no finds. The basal fill, L1166, was a dark grey silty clay with occasional chalk. It contained no finds. Ditch F1165 cut Pit F1169.

Pit F1169 was irregular in plan (length 0.73m+, width 0.72m, depth 0.49m). It had relatively steep sides and a concave base. It contained two fills. The upper fill, L1171, was a reddish-brown sandy silt with sparse chalk. It contained animal bone (9g). The basal fill, L1170, was a pale grey silty clay with frequent chalk. It contained no finds. Ditch F1165 cut Pit F1169.

F1183 (4.00m+ long x 0.62m+ wide x 0.52m deep) was partially revealed within the trench, and extended beyond the north-western baulk. It was possibly curvilinear in plan, running north-east to south-west. It had steep undercutting concave sides and an irregular rounded base. It contained a single fill, L1184, a mid brown sandy silt of variable consistency with occasional chalk inclusions, which was devoid of finds.

Ditch F1174 was located at the south-western end of the trench (length 3.40m+, width 1.36m+, depth 0.67m). It had moderately steep sides and a concave base. It contained two fills. The upper fill, L1176, was a dark brown sandy silt. It contained medieval (AD 850-1150) pottery (1; 2g), CBM (1096g), animal bone (2067g), shell (22g) and daub (540g). The basal fill, L1175, was a light grey clay with frequent chalk. It contained no finds. Ditch F1174 was cut by F1181.

?Ditch F1181 was orientated N/S (length 3.40m+, width 0.60m+, depth 0.30m). It had steep sides. Its base was not excavated as it lay beyond the edge of the trench. Its fill, L1182, was a reddish-brown sandy silt. It contained animal bone (50g), shell (18g) and struck flint (12g). Ditch F1181 cut Ditch F1174.

F1172 was an irregular hollow identified at the south-west end of the trench. It was likely caused by natural root action. Its fill, L1173, was a friable mid grey sandy silt containing no finds.

6.3 Trench 3 (Fig. 4)

<i>Sample section: W end, S facing</i>	
<i>0.00 = 7.37m AOD</i>	
0.00 – 0.45m	L1000. Topsoil. As above Tr.1
0.45 – 0.78m	L1001. Subsoil. As above Tr.1
0.78 – 1.08m	L1003. Mid to light grey/brown sandy silt with moderate chalk fragments.
1.08m +	L1002. Natural chalk. As above Tr.1

<i>Sample section: E end, N facing</i>	
<i>0.00 = 7.65m AOD</i>	
0.00 – 0.35m	L1000. Topsoil. As above Tr.1
0.35 – 0.60m	L1001. Subsoil. As above Tr.1
0.60m +	L1002. Natural chalk. As above Tr.1

Description:

F1058 was a large pit or ditch. It had steep sides and an irregular base. It contained seven fills, tabulated below. F1058 contained a relatively large quantity of animal bone.

Context	Description	 Finds (count; weight)
L1059	Light grey/brown chalky clay with moderate charcoal	A. bone (843g), pumice (3; 70g)
L1060	Compact light grey/brown clayey silt with moderate charcoal	A. bone (273g)
L1061	Compact dark grey clay	
L1062	Dark brown silty sand with frequent charcoal	A. bone (1036g), daub (9; 157g)
L1063	Friable light grey silty sand with moderate charcoal	A. bone (934g)
L1064	Firm dark grey/brown silty clay with frequent charcoal	-
L1065	Yellow/ brown sandy silt	A. bone (165g)

Table 5: Fills of Ditch F1058 (Trench 3)

F1058 was cut by F1161, a pit or ditch (length 0.50m+, width 0.32m+, depth 0.17m), aligned ?N/S. F1161 had steep sides and a flattish base. Its fill, L1162, was a mid brown sandy silt with chalk fragments. It contained animal bone (5g). F1161 cut F1058 and F1163.

F1163 was much truncated and was either a pit or ditch (length 0.65m, width 0.80m, depth 0.35m). It had moderately sloping sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1164, was a mid brown sandy silt. It contained medieval (AD 850-1150) pottery (1; 16g) and animal bone (51g). It was cut by F1161 and F1092.

F1092 was a large pit (length 2.55m+, width 1.80m+, depth 0.93m). It had steep sides and a concave base. F1092 cut F1163. It contained five fills, tabulated below:

Context	Description	Finds (count; weight)	Spot Date
L1177	Mid to dark brown clayey silt with moderate chalk	A.bone (330g)	
L1178	Yellow/brown sandy silt	CBM (141g), daub (672g)	
L1179	Mid to dark brown silty clay	-	
L1180	Yellow-brown sandy silt	A.bone (62g)	
L1093	Mid brown/yellow silty clay with occasional chalk and charcoal	Pottery (1; 6g), A.bone (52,491g)	AD 1200-1400

Table 6: Fills of Pit F1092

Pit F1054 was a large pit (length 2.45m+, width 1.20m+, depth 1.20m+). It had steep sides. Excavation ceased at a depth of 1.20m for health and safety reasons. It contained three fills, tabulated below:

Context	Description	Finds (count; weight)	Spot Date
L1055	Light pinkish-grey/brown sandy silt with occasional chalk	-	
L1056	Light – mid brown sandy silt with moderate chalk and occasional flint	Struck flint (68g)	
L1057	Mid grey/brown sandy silt with occasional chalk	Pottery (1; 3g)	AD 550-700/1000

Table 7: Fills of Pit F1054

Ditch F1035 was curvilinear (length 3.80m, width 0.76m, depth 0.14m). It had irregular sides and an irregular base. Its fill, L1036, was a dark brown sandy silt with occasional chalk. It contained fired clay (2g)

Ditch F1045 was curvilinear (length 2.00m+, width 0.90m, depth 0.24m). It had stepped, moderately sloping sides and a flattish base. It had two fills. The upper fill, L1047, was a mid – dark grey/brown sandy silt with occasional chalk fragments. It contained no finds. The basal fill, L1046, was a light brown sandy silt with occasional chalk. It contained pottery (AD 850 – 1150) (1 sherd; <1g), animal bone (94g) and daub (5g).

A scatter of six shallow postholes, with no discerning structural configurations, were recorded and are tabulated below (Table 8). Their profiles were more regular than the postholes recorded in Trench 1, and interpretation as postholes is therefore considered more convincing. Their fills were directly comparable, in each case consisting of mid brown sandy silt. None contained finds.

Feature	Context	Type	Dimensions (m)	Description	Finds
F1039	L1040	PH	0.82 x 0.36 x 0.09m	Mid – dark grey/brown sandy silt Irregular profile	None
F1041	L1042	PH	0.25 x 0.27 x 0.11m	Mid – dark grey/brown sandy silt Steep sides, flattish base	None
F1043	L1044	PH	0.20 x 0.15 x 0.14m	Mid – dark grey/brown sandy silt Steep sides, concave base	None
F1048	L1049	PH	0.18 x 0.17 x 0.17m	Mid – dark grey/brown sandy silt Steep sides, narrow base	None
F1050	L1051	PH	0.50 x 0.34 x 0.23m	Mid – dark grey/brown sandy silt Steep sides, narrow base	None
F1052	L1053	PH	0.20 x 0.19 x 0.16m	Mid – dark grey/brown sandy silt Steep sides, concave base	None

Table 8: Postholes in Trench 3

In plan, Ditch/Pit F1112 was linear (length 1.80m, width ??m, depth 0.50m). It had irregular sides and an irregular base. It had two fills. The basal and principal fill, L1113, was a mid grey/brown silty clay. It contained animal bone (50g). The upper fill, L1114, was a grey/brown sandy silt. It contained animal bone (56g) and daub (98g).

6.4 Trench 4 (Fig. 5)

<i>Sample section: NE end, NW facing</i>	
0.00 = 7.58m AOD	
0.00 – 0.28m	L1000. Topsoil. As above Tr.1
0.28 – 0.44m	L1001. Subsoil. As above Tr.1
0.44m +	L1002. Natural chalk. As above Tr.1

<i>Sample section: SW end, NW facing</i>	
0.00 = 7.74m AOD	
0.00 – 0.30m	L1000. Topsoil. As above Tr.1
0.30 – 0.54m	L1001. Subsoil. As above Tr.1
0.54m +	L1002. Natural chalk. As above Tr.1

Description:

Numerous (17) irregular features were recorded and are tabulated below. The features may represent pits, but are more likely the result of natural root action. The features were commonly irregular in plan and section. They were shallow and had the same homogenous fill, generally containing no finds.

Feature	Context	Type	Dimensions (m)	Description (count; weight)	Findings
F1072	L1073	?Pit	0.45+ x 0.44 x 0.16m	Mid – dark brown sandy silt Irregular profile	Animal bone (33g)
F1076	L1077	?Pit	1.05 x 0.80 x 0.09m	Mid – dark brown sandy silt Moderately sloping sides, slightly irregular concave base	Daub (7g)
F1078	L1079	Pit	1.10 x 0.50 x 0.18m	Mid – dark brown sandy silt Irregular profile, flattish base	None
F1080	L1081	?Pit	0.55 x 0.41+ x 0.07m	Mid – dark brown sandy silt Irregular profile	None
F1082	L1083	?Pit	1.60 x 0.55 x 0.16m	Mid – dark brown sandy silt Moderately sloping sides, concave base	None
F1084	L1085	?Pit	0.70 x 0.41 x 0.09m	Mid – dark brown sandy silt Moderately sloping sides, slightly irregular concave base	None
F1086	L1087	?Pit	0.75+ x 0.40m x 0.07m	Mid – dark brown sandy silt Irregular profile	Animal bone (26g)
F1088	L1089	?Pit	0.65 x 0.55+ x 0.08m	Mid – dark brown sandy silt Irregular profile	Struck flint (1g)
F1090	L1091	?Pit	0.55 x 0.40 x 0.14m	Mid – dark brown sandy silt Irregular profile	None
F1094	L1095	?Pit	1.15 x 0.30+ x 0.20m	Mid – dark brown sandy silt Irregular profile	None
F1096	L1097	?PH	0.30 x 0.30 x 0.13m	Mid – dark brown sandy silt Moderately sloping sides, concave base	None
F1098	L1099	?Pit	0.50 x 0.25 x 0.04m	Mid – dark brown sandy silt Irregular profile	None
F1100	L1101	?Pit	0.30 x 0.40+ x 0.09m	Mid – dark brown sandy silt Irregular profile	None
F1102	L1103	?Pit	0.65 x 0.24 x	Mid – dark brown sandy	None

			0.11m	silt Irregular profile	
F1104	L1105	?Pit	0.90+ x 0.40 x 0.07m+	Mid – dark brown sandy silt Moderately sloping sides, slightly irregular concave base	None
F1108	L1109	?Pit	1.70 x 0.95 x 0.11m	Mid – dark brown sandy silt Irregular profile	Animal bone (6g)
F1110	L1111	?Pit	1.50 x 3.00+ x 0.20m	Mid – dark brown sandy silt Irregular profile	Medieval pottery (AD 1000- 1200/1300 (1; 5g))

Table 9: Possible natural features in Trench 4

Four regular features, comprising two deep pits (F1066 & F1069), a ditch (F1074) and a posthole (F1106) were recorded

Pit F1066 was a deep circular pit (length 1.50m, width 1.40m, depth 0.92m). It had a bell-shaped profile. It contained two fills. The upper fill, L1068, was a mid grey/brown sandy silt with occasional chalk fragments. It contained animal bone (100g) and daub (4g). The basal fill, L1067, was a mid – light brown sandy silt with occasional chalk fragments. It contained animal bone (1g) and daub (2g).

F1069 was a large deep circular pit (length 2.20m, width 0.82m+, depth 0.92m). Its sides were very steep and its base flattish. It had two fills. The upper fill, L1070, was a mid to dark sandy silt with occasional chalk fragments. It contained daub (34g). The basal and principal fill, L1071, was a light to mid brown sandy silt with occasional chalk fragments. It contained animal bone (6g) and shell (2g). Pit F1069 was cut by Ditch F1074.

F1074 was a linear ditch/gully (length 2.50m+, width 0.82m, depth 0.19m), orientated E/W. It had moderately sloping sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1075, was a mid - dark brown sandy silt with occasional chalk fragments. It contained medieval (AD 1000-1300) pottery (1; 9g) and animal bone (61g). Ditch F1074 cut Pit F1069.

F1106 was a posthole (diameter 0.35m, depth 0.07m). It had moderately sloping sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1107, was a mid – dark brown silty sand with occasional chalk fragments. It contained CBM (<1g).

6.5 Trench 5 (Fig. 6)

<i>Sample section: E/W aligned arm, S facing</i>	
<i>0.00 = 6.99m AOD</i>	
0.00 – 0.26m	L1012. Demolition debris. Rubble and backfill from grubbed-out walls of recently-demolished buildings. Evident over southern two-thirds of site.
0.26 – 0.51m	L1001. Subsoil. As above Tr.1
0.51m +	L1002. Natural chalk. As above Tr.1

<i>Sample section: N end, W facing</i>	
<i>0.00 = 6.73m AOD</i>	
0.00 – 0.28m	L1012. Demolition debris. As above
0.28m +	L1002. Natural chalk. As above Tr.1

Description:

Trench 5 was T-shaped. Areas of truncation were evident (Fig. 6).

F1037 was a tree hollow or former hedge row (length 2.20m, width 1.20m+, depth 0.28m). It was irregular in plan and profile. Its fill, L1038, was a light grey/brown clayey silt with occasional chalk fragments. It contained medieval (AD 1200-1400) pottery (1 sherd; 6g).

Ditch F1032 was linear (length 2.00m+, width 1.10m, depth 0.30m), orientated NNE/SSW. It had moderately sloping sides and a concave base. It had two fills. The upper fill, L1034, was a light grey chalk. It contained animal bone (49g). The basal fill, L1033, was a light grey/brown clayey silt with occasional chalk. It contained medieval (AD 1200-1400) pottery (2; 42g), animal bone (23g) and shell (1g).

F1030 was a possible pit, largely overlain by the trench baulk (length 1.50m+, width 0.39m+, depth 0.33m). Its sides were irregular and its base was flattish. Its fill, L1031, was a mid grey/brown clayey silt with sparse chalk fragments. It contained animal bone (41g).

F1027 was an irregular shallow pit (length 2.11m, width 1.63m, depth 0.25m). Its profile was irregular. Its fill, L1028, was pale grey/brown clayey silt. It contained no finds.

Three circular postholes, F1021, F1023 and F1025, were recorded, and are tabulated below (Table 10). Based on their proximity, they may have been contemporary, perhaps forming a fenceline or one side of a timber structure. However, they yielded no dateable finds.

Context	Fill	Type	Dimensions (m)	Description	Finds
F1021	L1022	PH	0.74 x 0.31 x 0.15m	Pale grey chalky clay Moderately sloping sides, concave base	None
	L1029			Light brown clayey silt	None
F1023	L1024	PH	0.30 x 0.30 x 0.13m	Light brown/grey clayey silt Moderately sloping sides, concave base	None
F1025	L1026	PH	0.50 x 0.30 x 0.09m	Light brown/grey clayey silt Relatively steep sides, flattish base	None

Table 10: Postholes in Trench 5

6.6 Trench 6 (Fig. 6)

<i>Sample section: W end, S facing</i> <i>0.00 = 7.19m AOD</i>	
0.00 – 0.30m	L1012. Demolition debris. As above Tr.5
0.30 – 0.62m	L1000. Topsoil. As above Tr.1
0.62 – 1.04m	L1001. Subsoil. As above Tr.1
1.04m +	L1002. Natural chalk. As above Tr.1

<i>Sample section: E end, S facing</i> <i>0.00 = 6.40m AOD</i>	
0.00 – 0.35m	L1012. Demolition debris. As above Tr.5
0.35 – 0.55m	L1001. Subsoil. As above Tr.1
0.55m +	L1002. Natural chalk. As above Tr.1

Description:

Large areas of the natural chalk (L1002) within the trench were truncated. A shallow pit, F1016, was recorded.

F1016 was a pit (length 2.10m, width 1.13m+, depth 0.20m) in the middle of Trench 6. Its sides were slightly irregular and sloped moderately steeply. Its base was concave. Its fill, L1017, was a light - mid grey clayey silt with sparse chalk fragments. It contained no finds.

6.7 Trench 7 (Fig. 6)

<i>Sample section: E end, N facing</i> <i>0.00 = 7.18m AOD</i>	
0.00 – 0.25m	L1013. Re-deposited chalk.
0.25m - 1.21m+	L1012. Demolition debris. As above Tr.5

<i>Sample section: W end, N facing</i> <i>0.00 = 7.29m AOD</i>	
0.00 – 1.01m	L1013. Re-deposited chalk
1.01m +	L1014. Sand and gravel backfill. Modern disturbance?

Description:

Trench 7 was largely truncated and the natural chalk was barely discernible. An area of sand and gravel, L1014, may represent the backfill of a modern trench

6.8 Trench 8 (Fig. 6)

<i>Sample section: S end, W facing</i> <i>0.00 = 7.39m AOD</i>	
0.00m - 1.20m+	L1012. Demolition debris. As above Tr.5

<i>Sample section: N end, E facing</i> <i>0.00 = 7.01m AOD</i>	
0.00 – 0.38m	L1012. Demolition debris. As above Tr.5
0.38 – 0.70m	L1001. Subsoil. As above Tr.1
0.70m +	L1002. Natural chalk. As above Tr.1

Description:

The area revealed in Trench 8 was severely truncated. No archaeological features or finds were present.

6.9 Trench 9 (Fig. 6)

<i>Sample section: N end, E facing</i> <i>0.00 = 7.24m AOD</i>	
0.00m - 0.43m	L1012. Demolition Debris. As above Tr.5
0.43m+	L1002. Natural chalk. As above Tr.1

<i>Sample section: S end, W facing</i> <i>0.00 = 7.07m AOD</i>	
0.00 – 0.54m	L1012. Demolition debris. As above Tr.5
0.54m +	L1002. Natural chalk. As above Tr.1

Description:

Trench 9 was intermittently truncated. A modern service trench was present

Ditch F1018 was linear (length 1.80m+, width 1.48m, depth 0.82m), orientated E/W. It had steep sides and a narrow base. It had two fills. The upper fill, L1020, was a very light grey/brown clayey silt with chalk fragments. It contained animal bone (156g). The basal fill, L1019, was a light grey/brown clayey silt with occasional chalk. It contained animal bone (129g).

6.10 Trench 10

<i>Sample section: S facing</i> <i>0.00 = 5.71m AOD</i>	
0.00m- 0.40m	L1000. Topsoil. As above Tr.1
0.40 – 0.70m	L1001. Subsoil. As above Tr.1
0.70 – 1.05m+	L1015. Dark brown / black peat

<i>Sample section: N facing</i>	
<i>0.00 = 5.70m AOD</i>	
0.00 – 1.01m	L1012. Demolition debris. As above Tr.5
1.01m +	L1002. Natural chalk. As above Tr.1

Description:

No archaeological features or finds were present.

6.11 Trench 11

Description

No archaeological features or finds were present.

6.12 Test pits 1 – 4 (Fig. 7)

<i>Sample section: Test Pit 1, SW facing</i>	
<i>0.00 = 7.54 m AOD</i>	
0.00 – 0.31m	L1000. Topsoil. As above Tr. 1
0.31 – 0.69m	L1001. Subsoil. As above Tr. 1
0.69m +	L1002. Natural chalk. As above Tr. 1

Four 2.00 x 1.50m test pits were excavated in the north of the site, immediately south of Trench 1. Only Test Pit 1 contained archaeological features. Gully F1185 was a narrow and shallow linear feature (1.70m+ long x 0.70m wide x 0.28m deep) running north-north-east to south-south-west across Test Pit 1. It had fairly steep concave sides and a flat base (Fig. 7) and contained a single fill (L1186), a firm pale to mid brown/grey sandy silt which yielded four sherds (53g) of late medieval/ early post-medieval pottery (AD 1480-1550/1600). It is thought to have continued to the north-east, perhaps forming a perpendicular boundary or drainage channel associated with Ditch F1141 in Trench 1.

7 CONFIDENCE RATING

7.1 It is not felt that any factors substantially inhibited the recognition of archaeological features or finds during the project.

8 DEPOSIT MODEL

8.1 The topsoil, L1000, was a mid to dark grey/brown sandy silt with occasional chalk inclusions. It was 0.25 – 0.45m deep in the north (Trenches 1 – 4) and far south (Trench 10) of the site, but in the centre, it had been truncated by the construction and demolition of recent buildings. As a result, it was entirely absent from Trenches 5, 7,

8 and 9. In Trench 6, it was present, but was sealed beneath a layer of demolition rubble (L1012, see below).

8.2 The subsoil, L1001, was a mid grey/brown sandy silt containing occasional chalk fragments. In the north (Trenches 1 – 4) and far south (Trench 10) of the site, it was encountered below the topsoil and was present at between 0.25 and 0.80m below ground level. In Trenches 5, 6 and 8, in the centre and west of the site, L1001 was sealed beneath a layer of demolition rubble (L1012, see below).

8.3 In the north of the site (Trenches 1 – 4), the top of the natural chalk geology (L1002) was generally encountered at a depth of 0.44 – 0.80m below ground level. The exception to this was at the west end of Trench 3, where a layer of light to mid grey/brown sandy silt (L1003) approximately 0.30m deep lay beneath Subsoil L1001; consequently the natural chalk was not encountered until 1.08m below ground level. In the centre and west of the site, the stratigraphy had been disturbed by modern construction and demolition activity. In this area, the natural chalk was either encountered at a very shallow depth (0.28m below ground level at the northern end of Trench 5) or was sealed beneath intact topsoil and subsoil which were in turn overlain by demolition rubble (e.g. at the west end of Trench 6). Disturbance from the buildings which formerly occupied the centre of the site meant that L1002 was not encountered at all in Trench 7.

8.4 The central portion of the site was severely truncated by the construction and demolition of modern buildings. Demolition rubble (L1012) was encountered in Trenches 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10. It was relatively shallow (0.26 – 0.54m) in Trenches 5, 6 and 9, and at the northern end of Trench 8, and sealed the underlying topsoil, subsoil and natural chalk. Elsewhere (at the east end of Trench 7 and the southern end of Trench 8), L1012 was up to 1.20m+ deep, perhaps where it backfilled deep foundations or cellars associated with the former buildings. There was some slight variation in these recent demolition deposits: at the east end of Trench 7, a thin layer of redeposited chalk (L1013) sealed L1012, while at the west end of Trench 7, L1013 was much deeper (1.01m) and sealed a sandy gravel layer (L1014), possibly the backfill of a modern service trench.

8.5 In the far south of the site, adjacent to the mill channel (Trench 10), the topsoil (L1000) and subsoil (L1001) sealed a dark brown/ black peat (L1015), which was present between 0.70 and 1.05m+ below ground level. Core samples taken during a palaeo-environmental and geoarchaeological assessment revealed that the peat deposits did not extend to more than *c.* 1.5m in depth and that they overlaid fluvial sands of Holocene or glacial origin (Allen, see Appendix 3). Despite lying within the Lark floodplain, and adjacent to a mill leat, no waterlogged deposits were present in the south of the site.

9 DISCUSSION

9.1 Summary of the archaeology

9.1.1 The trial trench evaluation of the Parkers Mill site revealed a large number of archaeological features, comprising 16 ditches, three gullies, 11 pits, 26 possible postholes and around 20 natural hollows and areas of root disturbance.

9.1.2 Archaeological features were concentrated in the north of the site (Trenches 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 and Test Pit 1), with notably dense concentrations in Trenches 1, 2 and 3. Features were sparse in the centre and southern portion of the site (Trenches 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9), although this is fairly likely to be a consequence of truncation from the construction and demolition of the recent buildings on the site rather than reflecting a genuine absence. Trenches 10 and 11 in the extreme south of the site, adjacent to the mill stream, were also devoid of archaeology. It should be borne in mind that this does not necessarily reflect a lack of activity in this part of the site, as only small areas were investigated in these two trenches.

9.1.3 There was little dating evidence associated with any of the excavated features. Where pottery was recovered (from 13 of the 76 features), it was of broad medieval date, ranging from Saxo-Norman (*c.* AD 850 – 1150) to late medieval/ early post-medieval (*c.* AD 1400 – 1600). Sherds were generally small and undiagnostic, hindering more precise dating. A single small sherd (3g), from Pit F1054 (L1057), could at the earliest be middle Saxon (AD 550-700).

9.1.4 The small quantities of pottery recovered from features on the site could easily be residual. However, given the fairly consistent medieval date range and the almost complete absence of later post-medieval and modern finds in any of the features containing medieval pottery, it is fairly safe to assume that the finds are contemporary with their contexts rather than residual in later features.

9.1.5 The site thus seems to represent an area of medieval activity on the southern outskirts of Mildenhall. The limited quantities of pottery suggest a peripheral area away from the focus of occupation. However, in opposition to this, moderate quantities of daub could indicate the presence of buildings on or near the site, while the animal bone, particularly the very large assemblage from Pit F1092 (Trench 3), suggests inhabitation nearby.

9.2 Interpretation of the site: archaeology and history

9.2.1 As discussed above, the remains identified in the trial trenches seem to indicate an area of medieval activity, possibly adjacent to areas of inhabitation. Dating evidence was sparse, but a broad Saxo-Norman (AD 850 – 1150) to late medieval (AD 1400 – 1600) date range is suggested by the small pottery assemblage. Based on the associated pottery, Pit F1163 and Ditch F1045 (both Trench 3) may be late Anglo-Saxon to Norman in date. Ditch F1115 (Trench 1), Ditch F1165 (Trench 2), possible Pit F1110 (Trench 4), Ditch F1074 (Trench 4) and Ditch F1032 (Trench 5) may be medieval (*c.* AD 1000 – 1400) and Posthole F1125 (Trench 1) and Gully F1185 (Test Pit 1) may be late medieval/ transitional (AD 1400 – 1600). The late

medieval CBM (see below) associated with Pit F1092 (Trench 3) and Ditch F1174 (Trench 2) suggests that these also belong to the latest phase of activity.

9.2.2 The types of features encountered, consisting of small ditches, gullies, pits and postholes, are consistent with this interpretation. The linear features may have demarcated property boundaries, while at the same time assisting the drainage of the enclosed plots of land. The pits probably represent cess pits or rubbish pits for disposing of domestic refuse, also consistent with 'backyard' activity carried out on the periphery of inhabited areas. Although they did not appear to form structural configurations, the postholes could have been related to small outbuildings, with the quantities of daub recovered from some features (e.g. 110 fragments weighing over 1kg from Ditch F1141) perhaps deriving from the destruction of outbuildings. Pit F1092 (Trench 3) contained a very large animal bone assemblage and might hint at butchery or some other activity involving animal bone being carried out in the area on more than a 'domestic' scale.

9.2.3 The ditch and gully features consistently followed broadly similar alignments, generally running roughly north to south or east to west (or very slightly offset from these axes) at approximate right angles to each other. It may be possible to draw conclusions about the layout and morphology of this part of the medieval settlement.

9.2.4 Few excavations have taken place close to Mildenhall village, so the present trial trenching offers intriguing, if only partial, insights into the late Anglo-Saxon and medieval development of the village. Despite the documented presence of a watermill in Mildenhall, very possibly on the site of the modern Parkers Mill, from at least the mid-11th century (Williams and Martin 2003), no direct evidence for a mill was found during the evaluation. This may in part be due to the locations of the trial trenches, which avoided areas of significant recent disturbance and service trenches in the south of the site, adjacent to the mill stream. Nevertheless, a watermill would have presumably been an important economic focus in the medieval village, providing employment for some and a vital service for others. The features found during the trial trenching offer some support to the idea that there was significant medieval activity in the vicinity of the site.

9.3 Interpretation of the site: geology and topography

9.3.1 Medieval features were concentrated in the far north of the site, in Trenches 1-4. This picture may simply be the result of contemporary features in the centre of the site having been destroyed by modern construction and demolition. However, this distribution might reflect a 'real' focus of medieval activity in the north of the site, on slightly higher ground away from the river Lark and the mill stream. This area was presumably less at risk from flooding and with its chalk substrate, would have been well-drained. The small gullies in this area (e.g. F1158, F1115 and F1150; Trench 1) all ran on the same broadly north to south alignments, perhaps carrying surface water southwards to the mill channel.

9.4 Finds and environmental evidence

9.4.1 The evaluation recovered a small assemblage of pottery (42 sherds; 546g). The majority of sherds are small and abraded. They mainly date from the Saxo-

Norman to early medieval period (Thompson, this report) and are largely in locally-produced wares from Suffolk (e.g. Hollesley), the southern part of the Cambridgeshire Fens (Ely ware) and nearby just over the Norfolk border (Thetford-type ware). An interesting small decorated sherd from Pit F1054 (Trench 3) could be early Anglo-Saxon, although further research is necessary to rule out a later Saxon date. The latest pottery from the site, which included the moderately-large assemblage (20 sherds; 374g) from possible Posthole F1125 (Trench 1), was late medieval to early post-medieval red earthenware and Cistercian ware (AD 1400 – 1600).

9.4.2 Twelve fragments of CBM (1414g) and just over 200 fragments of daub (2.5kg+) were recovered from stratified contexts. The characteristics of the CBM suggest a 15th century date, perhaps slightly earlier or later; the daub is considered likely to be contemporary (Peachey, this report). The daub and CBM could indicate the presence of buildings or other structures on the site in the late medieval period; however, the daub did not exhibit any diagnostic features or impressions to shed light on this possibility.

9.4.3 A total of 607 fragments of animal bone were recovered during the evaluation of the site. Particularly notable was the very large assemblage of animal bone from Pit F1092 (52kg+), which included semi-articulated bones from at least six cattle and a number of pig skulls. One of the pig skulls exhibited cut marks possibly caused by the removal of cheek meat (Phillips, this report). It is possible that the cattle bones were similarly utilised prior to deposition, but the poor condition of the bone hinders detailed analysis of any butchery marks present.

9.4.4 A spindlewhorl (not yet analysed by a specialist) recovered from Pit F1004 (Trench 1) adds to the picture of domestic activity on the site. Although from an undated context, specialist examination may well reinforce a date contemporary with the medieval features found nearby in Trench 1.

9.5 Preservation of the archaeology

9.5.1 The evaluation indicates the presence of fairly well-preserved Saxo-Norman to late medieval features in the northern part of the Parkers Mill site (Trenches 1 – 4). The central area (Trenches 5 – 9) has been almost entirely truncated by the construction and demolition of modern buildings, removing most of the archaeology which may originally have been present. The southern portion of the site, adjacent to the mill stream (Trenches 10 and 11), does not appear to contain archaeological features. Only a small area in the south of the site was investigated in these two trenches, but it is likely that any features not revealed in Trenches 10 and 11 will have been damaged or destroyed by the former building and present electricity substation in this area (see the desk-based assessment for the site; Sparrow 2007).

9.6 Research potential

9.6.1 Prior to the evaluation, it was thought that the site might contain remains relating to the watermill that is known to have existed in Mildenhall since at least the late Anglo-Saxon period. Remains of Anglo-Saxon watermills are extremely rare and if found, would be of national importance. The lower sections of a watermill

preserved at Tamworth (Staffordshire) (Leahy 2003, 48) have afforded an unparalleled insight into what was probably an essential building in many villages.

9.6.2 The trial trenching did not reveal any remains directly associated with a mill. However, locally-important evidence of Saxo-Norman and medieval activity, consistent with a peripheral area on the outskirts of a settlement, was identified. Few excavations have been undertaken in Mildenhall itself and the Parkers Mill site therefore makes a valuable contribution to understanding of the early development of the village.

9.6.3 The site has little wider importance beyond local questions of village development, morphology and economy. The large animal bone assemblage from late medieval Pit F1092 (c. AD 1400?) is interesting. Wade (in Brown and Glazebrook 2000, 25) has highlighted the need for more animal bone assemblages from medieval rural sites, although given the poor condition of the bone from Pit F1092, it is unlikely that wide-ranging conclusions can be drawn.

10 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

Archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited with the finds from the site, at the Suffolk County Archaeological Store. The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross-referenced and checked for internal consistency. In addition to the overall site summary, it will be necessary to produce a summary of the artefactual and ecofactual data.

11 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions Limited would like to thank Freshwater Estates (UK) Ltd for commissioning and funding this project, in particular Mr Jeremy Nicholson.

Archaeological Solutions is also pleased to acknowledge the input and advice of Jess Tipper and Jude Plouviez of Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service.

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APPENDIX 1 CONCORDANCE OF FINDS

Feature	Context	Trench	Description	Spot Date	Pottery	CBM (g)	A.Bone (g)	Other
1000		1	Topsoil	1100-1300	(1) 3g			
1003		3	Layer				256	Oyster Shell (1) 11g Daub (3) 21g
1004	1005	1	Pit Fill				81	Spindle Whorl (1) 37g
1018	1019	9	Ditch Fill				129	
	1020	9	Ditch Fill				156	
1030	1031	5	Pit Fill				41	
1032	1033	5	Ditch Fill	1200-1400	(2) 42g		23	Shell (2) 1g
	1034	5	Ditch Fill				49	
	1035	5	Ditch Fill				1	Charcoal (3) <1g Fired Clay (1) 2g
1037	1038	3	Tree Bole Fill	1200-1400	(1) 6g			
1045	1046	3	Ditch Fill	850-1150	(1), <1g		94	Daub (3) 5g
1052	1053	3	Fill of Posthole					
1054	1056	3	Pit Fill					Struck Flint (2) 68g
	1057	3	Pit Fill	550-700/1000	(1) 3g			Daub (1) 3g
1058	1059	3	Ditch Fill				843	Oyster Shell (2) 18g Daub (1) 9g Pumice (3) 70g
	1060	3	Ditch Fill				273	
	1061	3	Ditch Fill				3	Snails (4) 42g Daub (1) 6g
	1062	3	Ditch Fill				1036	Daub (9) 157g Charcoal (6) 4g
	1063	3	Ditch Fill				934	Charcoal (1) 3g Daub (1) 42g

	1065	3	Ditch Fill				165	Struck Flint (1) 8g
1066	1067		Pit Fill				1	Daub (3) 2g
	1068		Pit Fill				100	Daub (3) 4g
1069	1070	4	Pit Fill					Daub (1) 34g
	1071	4	Pit Fill				6	Shell (1) 2g
1072	1073	4	Pit Fill				33	
1074	1075	4	Ditch Fill	1000-1300	(1) 9g		61	
1076	1077	4	Pit Fill					Daub (3) 7g
1086	1087	4	Pit Fill				26	
1088	1089	4	Pit Fill					Struck Flint (1) 1g
1092	1093	3	Fill of Cess Pit	1200-1400	(1) 6g		52491	Daub (3) 26g Worked Flint (1) 52g Oyster Shell (1) 84g SF 1 Pot (1) 5g
	1177	3	Fill of Cess Pit				330	
	1178	3	Fill of Cess Pit			141		Daub (23) 672g
	1180	3	Fill of Cess Pit				62	
1106	1107	4	Fill of Posthole			<1		
1108	1109	4	Pit Fill				6	
1110	1111	4	Pit Fill	1000-1200/1300	(1) 5g	3		
1112	1113	3	Ditch Fill				50	
	1114	3	Ditch Fill				56	Daub (7) 98g
1115	1116	1	Ditch Fill	1000-1200/1300	(4) 12g	68	157	Oyster Shell (6) 112g
1125	1126	1	Fill of Posthole	1400-1600	(20) 374g		168	Mussel Shell (2) 6g

1141	1144	1	Ditch Fill				244	Daub (16) 97g
	1145	1	Ditch Fill					Daub (18) 98g
	1146	1	Ditch Fill				2	Daub (2) 7g
	1148	1	Ditch Fill				214	Scallop Shell (2) 20g
								Charcoal (2) 1g
								Daub (20) 138g
								Shell (1) <1g
	1149	1	Ditch Fill				3	Daub (54) 727g
1150	1151	1	Ditch Fill				27	
1161	1162	3	Pit Fill				5	
1163	1164	3	Pit Fill	850-1150	(1) 16g		51	
1165	1168	2	Ditch Fill	1100-1400	(1) 18g		102	Struck Flint (1) 4g
								Daub (2) 3g
1169	1171	2	Pit Fill				9	
1174	1176	2	Ditch Fill	850-1150	(1) 2g	1096	2067	Scallop Shell (1) 20g
								Daub (9) 85g
								Mussel Shell (2) 2g
								Snail (1) 2g
								Daub (15) 455g
1181	1182	2	Ditch Fill				50	Mussel Shell (3) 18g
								Struck Flint (2) 12g
1185	1186		Gully Fill	1480-1550/1600	(4) 53g		110	Scallop Shell (3) 41g

APPENDIX 2 SPECIALISTS' REPORTS

The pottery

By Peter Thompson

The evaluation recovered 42 sherds weighing 546g. The condition is generally poor, with most sherds being small and abraded. The pottery all dates between the Early Saxon and very early post-medieval periods, but is predominantly of Saxo-Norman to early medieval date.

The pottery of intrinsically the most interest, and possibly the earliest date, is a small decorated sherd from Pit F1054. The decoration, only part of which survives, comprises three lines of three or four small rectangular impressions which could be part of a Saxon stamp from the late 6th century onwards, although the decoration is unusual for stamps. Alternatively, it is roulette decoration which is found on Late Saxon Thetford-type ware, although the fabric and decoration is not typical of Thetford ware. A date of *c.* AD 550-1100 is indicated, but further research should enable refinement. Ditches F1174 and F1045 and Pit F1163 contained one or two sherds of Saxo-Norman pottery (AD 850-1150), with no later pottery. A residual Early to Middle Saxon grass-tempered sherd came from Ditch F1115.

Tree Hollow F1037 contained a medieval coarseware sherd in a distinctive buff fabric with orange outer surface and lenses of chalk and clay, which is quite similar in appearance to Hollesley II-type ware from Stowmarket. A similar sherd came from Pit F1092, which was associated with a Thetford-type ware sherd (with unusually pale surfaces), suggesting a date centred on the 12th century, although it could be a little later.

One of the few diagnostic sherds is an Ely ware jug rim with patchy green glaze and large rounded chalk inclusions dating to the 13th - 14th century.

The remaining contexts can all be dated to the early medieval period, with two exceptions which are late medieval/early post-medieval. Posthole F1125 contained 20 late medieval/transitional sherds (*c.* 1400-1550/1600) mostly from a red ware jar base with very coarse quartz fabric. Gully F1185 contained similar pottery, along with a sherd of Cistercian ware (*c.* 1480-1600).

The ceramic building materials

By Andrew Peachey

The evaluation produced a total of 12 fragments (1414g) of late medieval CBM and 202 fragments (2594g) of daub. All the material is substantially abraded. The CBM and daub was quantified by fragment count and weight (g), with any extant dimensions recorded. Fabrics were examined at x20 magnification and defined a single CBM fabric and a single daub fabric (described below). All data was entered into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet that will be deposited as part of the archive.

Fabric descriptions

Fabric 1 (CBM): Oxidised red (10R 4/6-5/6) throughout, moderate to hard fabric. Inclusions are of common well-sorted, rounded, calcareous and quartz inclusions (<0.25mm) with sparse to occasional flint and quartzite (2-5mm), occasional clay pellets (3-15mm) and occasional organic voids, probably straw/twigs (elongate 5-30mm long, 3-8mm long).

Fabric 2 (Daub): This soft fabric may appear as pale off-white, orange or red oxidised clay throughout or with a dark grey reduced core and a thin oxidised surface, probably related to preservation conditions, but the fabric remains relatively consistent. Inclusions are of sparse, poorly-sorted quartz (0.2-0.5mm), sparse red or white clay pellets/grog (3-15mm) and sparse organic voids (<10mm).

Commentary

The CBM was principally distributed in Pit F1092 L1178 (3 fragments; 250g) and Ditch F1174 L1176 (8 fragments; 1096g), with an additional fragment (68g) present in Ditch F1115 L1116. All fragments are in Fabric 1. Both Pit F1092 and Ditch F1115 contained fragments of 55mm thick brick and 12mm thick flat tile. All the CBM is substantially abraded and fragmented but some characteristics can be defined. The 55mm thick brick has a smooth base with some straw marks and appears to have rounded arrises. The 12mm thick flat tile appears relatively crudely-made, with slightly uneven surfaces. These characteristics suggest a late medieval date, probably in the 15th century, but possibly fractionally earlier or later.

The daub (Fabric 2) is present in a total of 16 features, but generally in low quantities of small fragments. Small concentrations were present in Pit F1092 (in total 25 fragments; 589g) and Ditch F1174 L1176 (25 fragments; 540g), in both cases occurring alongside small quantities of CBM (above). A slightly larger concentration of daub is present in five fills of Ditch F1141: L1144, L1145, L1146, L1148 and L1149 (in total 110 fragments; 1067g). The preservation of the daub in these three concentrations is generally comparable to the poor preservation in the remainder of features, but a few more substantial fragments are intact, including occasional fragments up to 50mm thick. However, no impressions or surfaces are intact, which may have suggested a function. The daub is probably contemporary with the CBM.

The animal bone

By Carina Phillips

Introduction

A total of 607 fragments of animal bone were hand excavated from the site. The assemblage is of varied preservation; moderate preservation is common; however, Pit F1092 contained a large amount of bone in a 'cessy' condition. The bones were excavated from 23 features, eight of which have medieval to early post-medieval spot dates. The assemblage has not been analysed separately by spot date in the following analysis.

Results and discussion

Species	Excluding F1092	F1092			Total
		L1073	L1177	L1180	
Cattle	47	192	3	0	242
Sheep/goat	28	10	0	0	38
Sheep	1	0	1	1	3
Goat	0	1	0	0	1
Pig	14	13	0	0	27
Domestic Fowl	8	0	0	0	8
Dog	7	0	0	0	7
Horse	5	3	1	0	9
Cat	1	0	0	0	1
Red Deer	0	1	0	0	1
Large sized	74	84	1	2	161
Small sized	56	7	0	0	63
Unidentifiable	44	0	2	0	46
<i>Total</i>	<i>285</i>	<i>311</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>607</i>

Table 11: The number of fragments (NISP) of animal bone

Fifty-three percent of the assemblage came from Pit F1092 (L1093, L1177 and L1180) (Trench 3), dated to AD 1200-1400 on the basis of the associated pottery. Of the 322 bone fragments, 311 came from L1093. A large number of these are substantially complete. Analysis indicates that the bone from F1092 consists mainly of cattle bones. These come from a minimum of six incomplete cattle skeletons. The majority of the bones are substantially complete and consist of both heavy meat-carrying bones such as femora and humeri and low meat-providing bones such as skulls and metapodials.

A small number of pig, sheep/goat and horse bones are also present. It is noted that the 13 pig bones include four skulls, one of which exhibits cut marks suggestive of the removal of cheek meat. Very few butchery marks were observed on the bone from F1092, although this could be a result of the catty condition of the bone. It should also be noted that butchery does not always leave recognisable marks on the bone. Considering the completeness of the majority of the bones, cut and scrape marks (the result of skinning, disarticulation and filleting) are likely to be the only forms of butchery that may have marked these bones.

The presence of a large number of articulating vertebrae, in addition to long bones from the same animal (as indicated by size/measurements), suggests that a number of the cattle bones from Pit F1092 were articulated and from the same animal. A minimum of six cattle carcasses are represented, which appear to have been deposited in a semi-articulated state. This is supported by observations made during the excavation of the feature. It is interesting that articulated parts of a minimum of six cattle should be deposited at the same time within this feature. It can be speculated that they were utilised to some degree for skins and meat before deposition; however, this cannot be ascertained with certainty. The inclusion of several pig skulls, which are likely to have been butchery waste, could imply that the cattle remains were also discarded after the meat had been removed. It is unfortunate that the bones were not in a good enough state to facilitate detailed analysis of cut and scrape marks.

A red deer skull fragment, with attached lower antler, represents the only wild species in the entire assemblage.

The other 47% of the assemblage also consists of bones from domestic species, including domestic fowl, dog and cat. Eighteen of the 285 bones exhibit butchery marks, including smashed fragments, chop and cut marks suggestive of domestic waste.

Potential

It is possible that further excavation would also provide a large amount of animal bone; however, a large proportion of the trial trench assemblage was contributed by bones from a single feature, Pit F1092. It would be interesting to see if further features yielded bone of similar composition, which could contribute to understanding this deposit. F1092 appears to be a deposit of semi-articulated cattle elements from a minimum of six individuals. It is not possible to ascertain if these carcass parts were utilised for skin and meat before deposition due to the cassy and wet condition of the bone in analysis.

Further excavation at the site might provide more animal bone from which to assess the species present and utilisation of these species on site, which could indicate the husbandry pattern in use in the area. If this is possible, comparisons of these results to other sites in the region and national trends during the medieval and post-medieval periods could take place.

The shell

By Carina Phillips

A total of 32 fragments of marine shell were hand excavated during the trial trench evaluation. Oyster (*Ostrea edulis*) shell accounts for 20 fragments, coming from a minimum of nine oysters. Twelve fragments of common mussel (*Mytilus edulis*) shell were also recovered. No other marine shell species are present. Oyster, mussel and other shellfish were a popular food in the medieval and post-medieval periods in Britain, as the spot dates for this site suggest. It is therefore likely that further excavation of this area will also produce a small marine shell assemblage.

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX

DP 1



F1006 ?Ditch terminus in Trench 1

DP 2



F1045 Ditch in Trench 3

DP 3



F1054 Pit in Trench 3

DP 4



F1066 Pit in Trench 4

DP 5

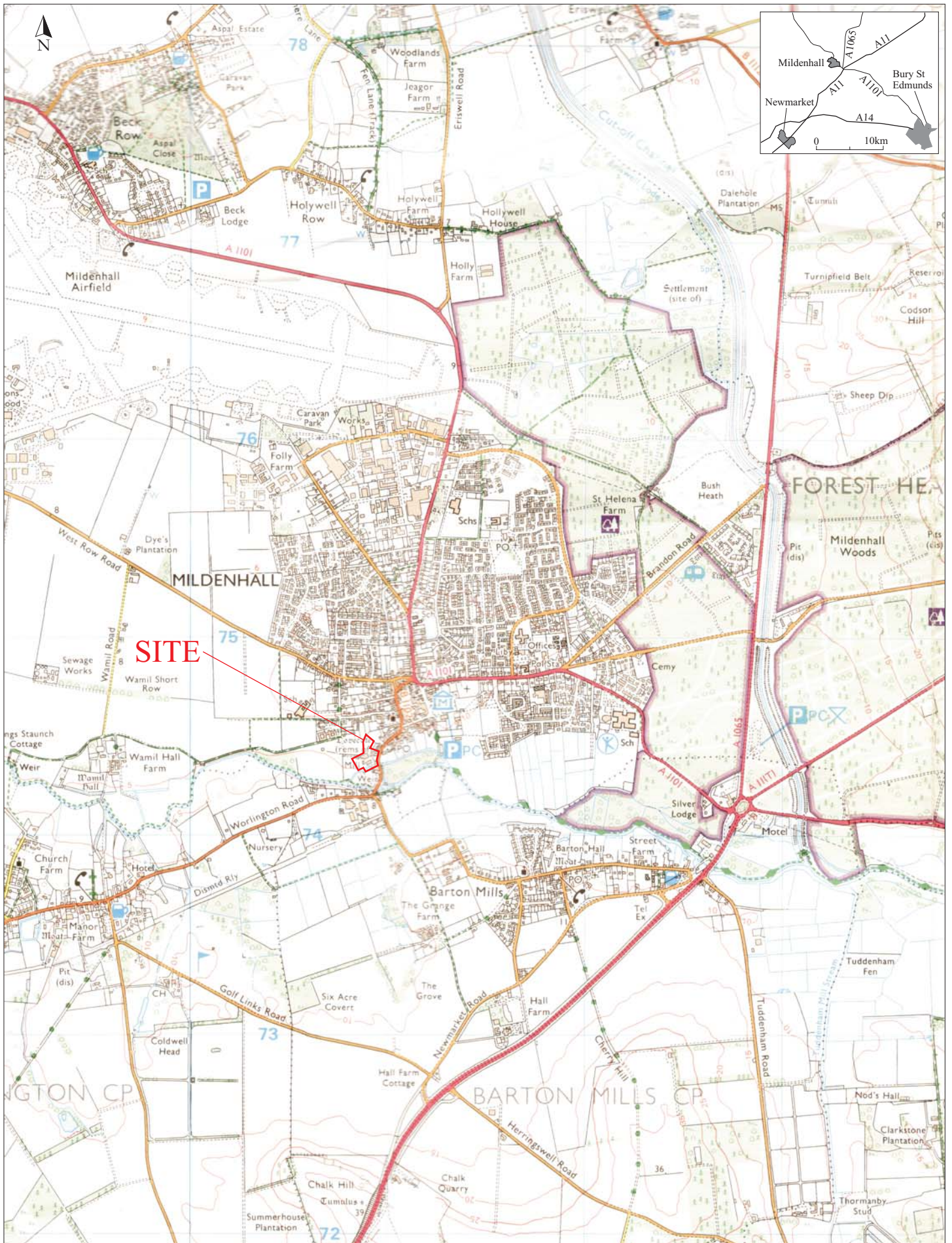


F1092 Pit containing animal bone in Trench 3

DP 6

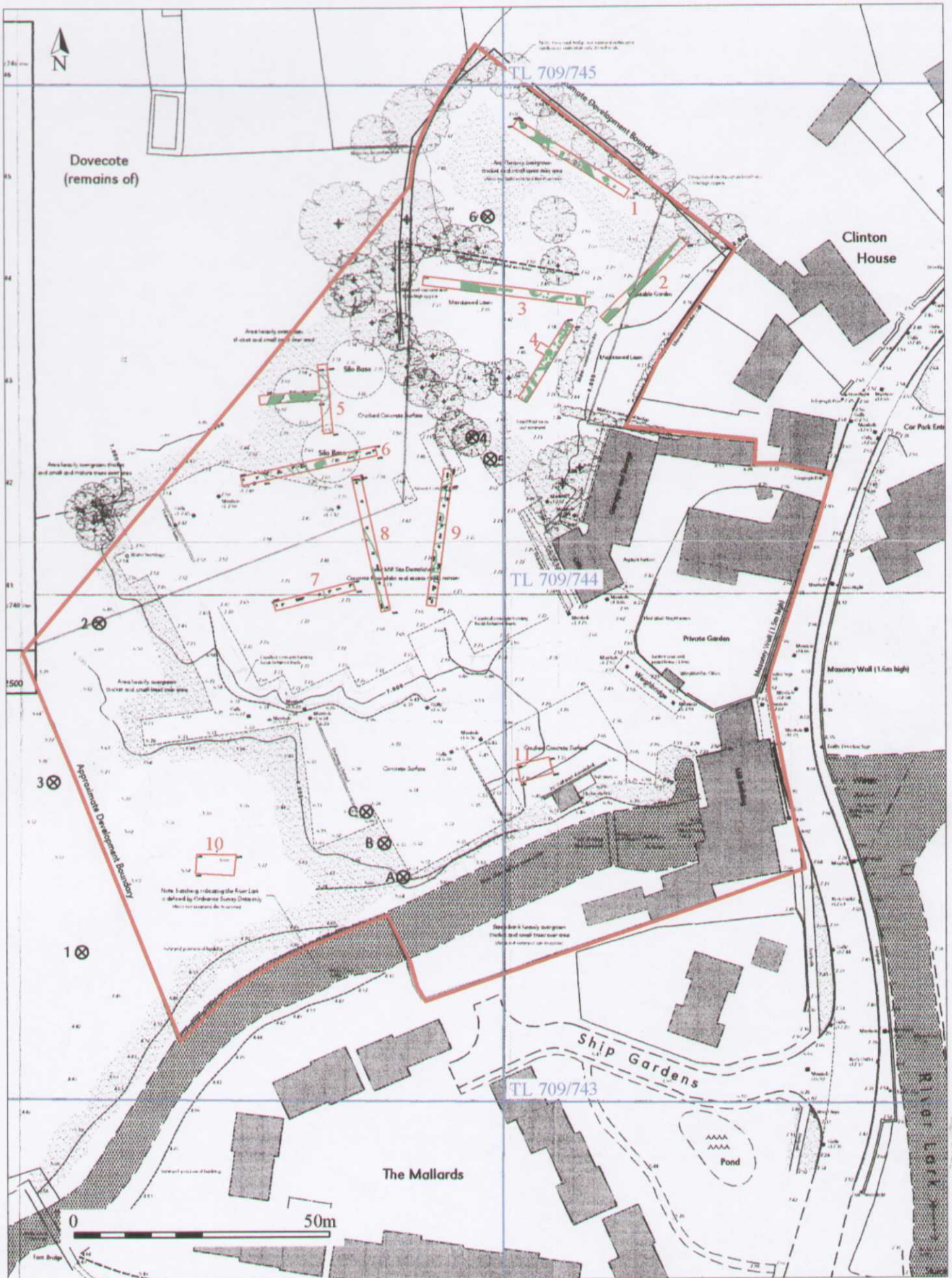


F1092 Section through pit containing animal bone in Trench 3

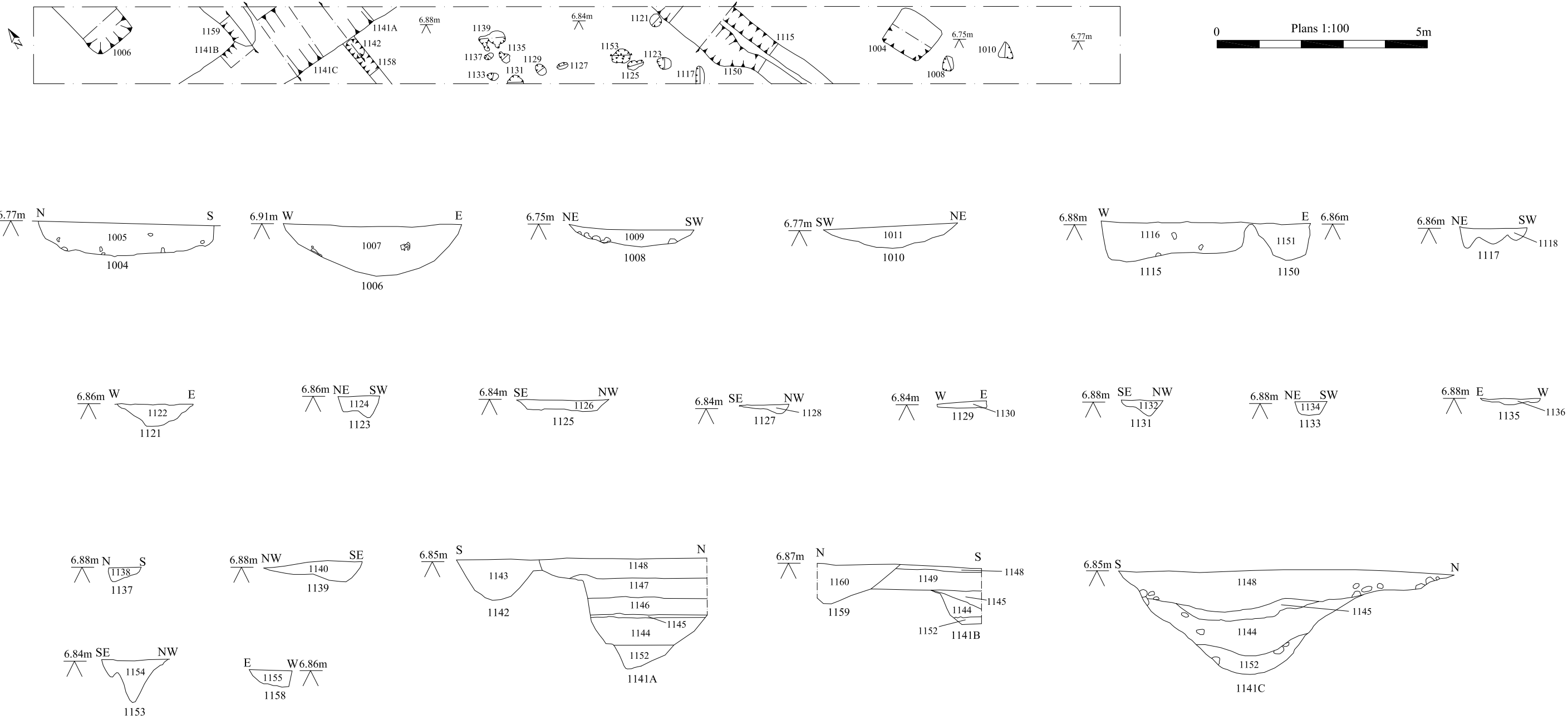


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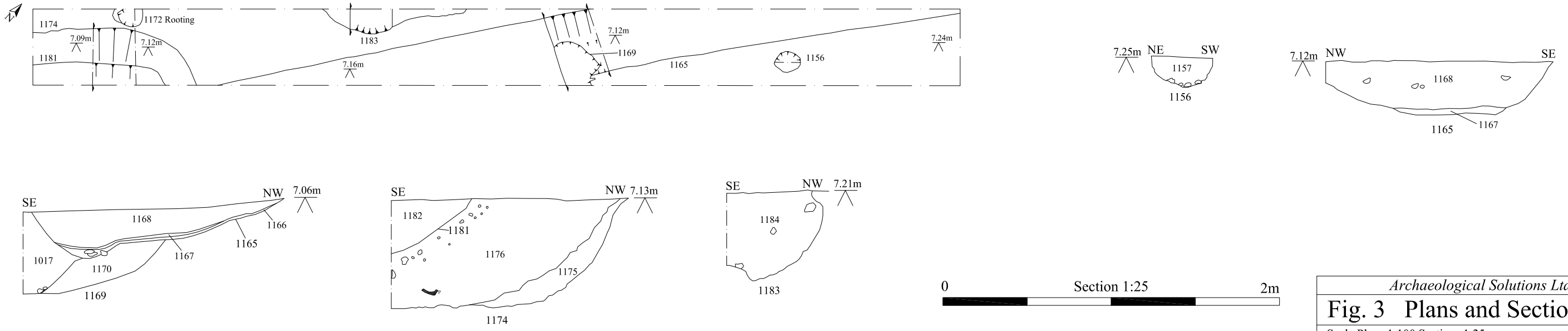
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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000



Trench 1

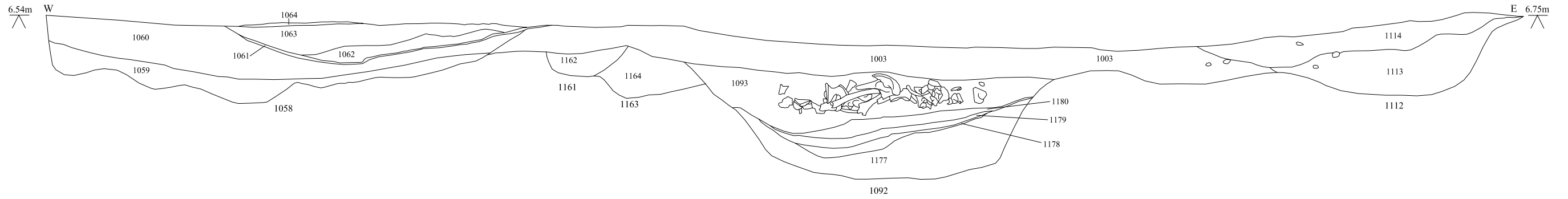
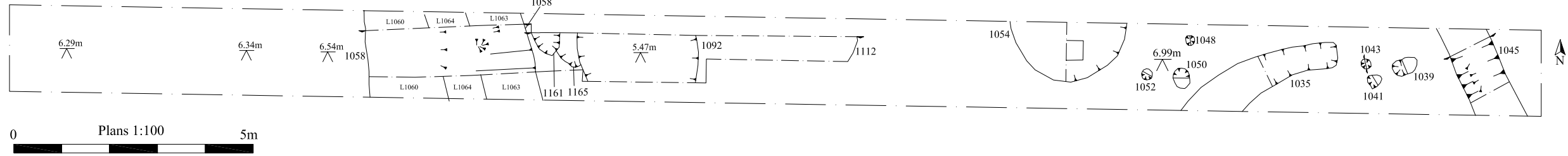


Trench 2

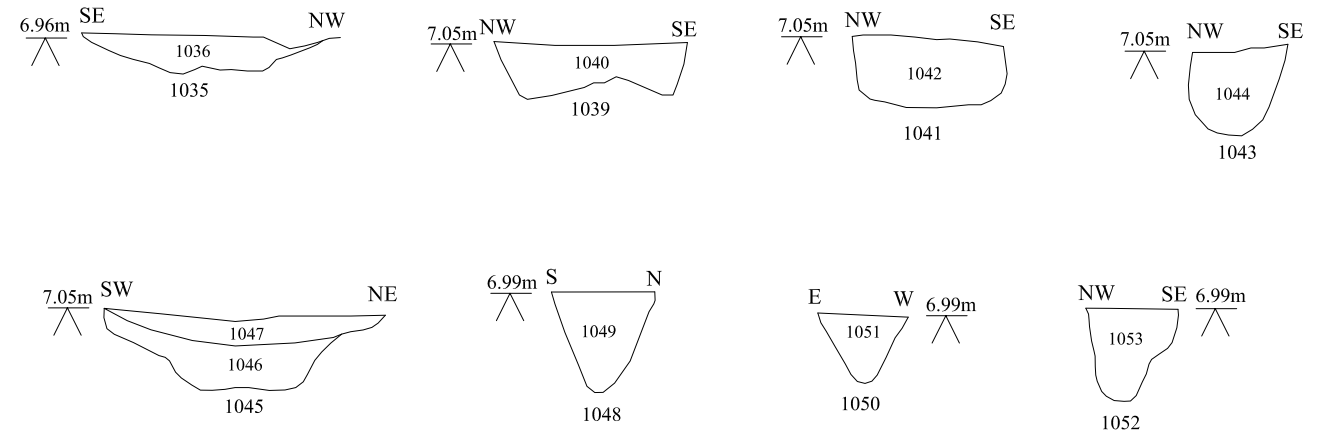


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Fig. 3 Plans and Sections
 Scale Plans 1:100 Sections 1:25

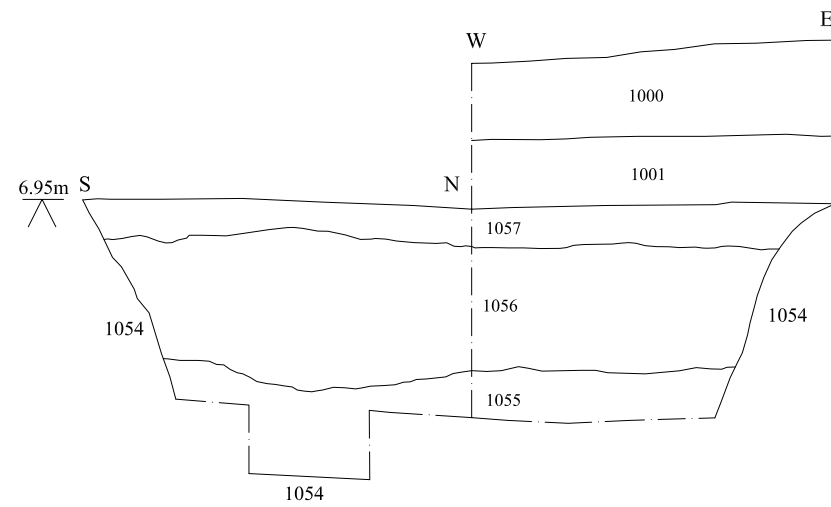
Trench 3



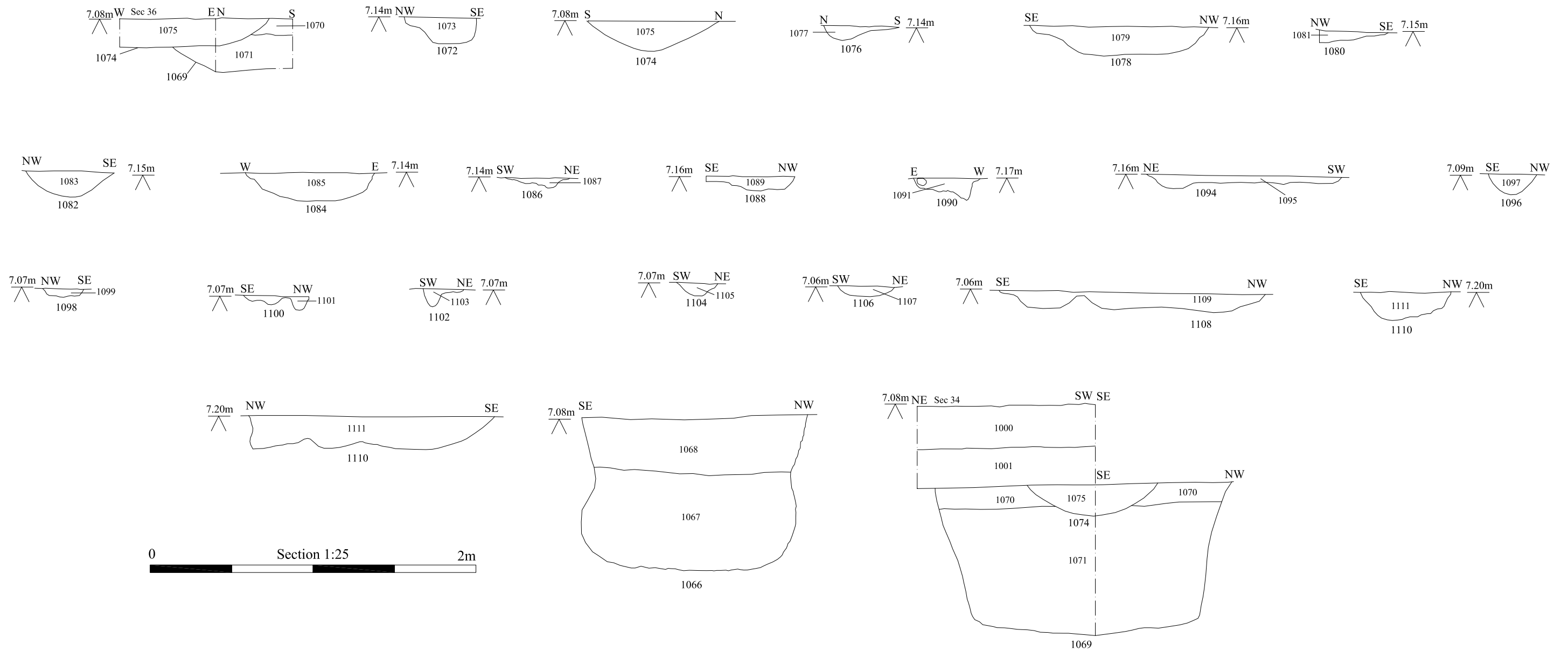
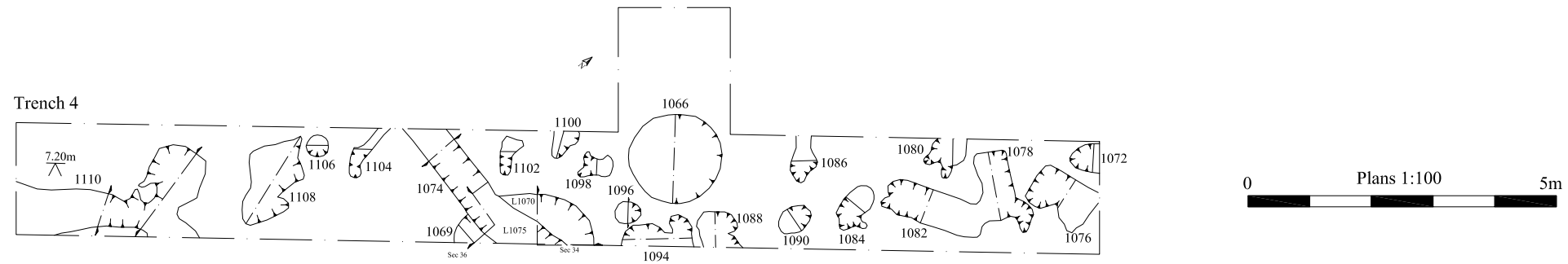
Plan of pit 1092 1:40



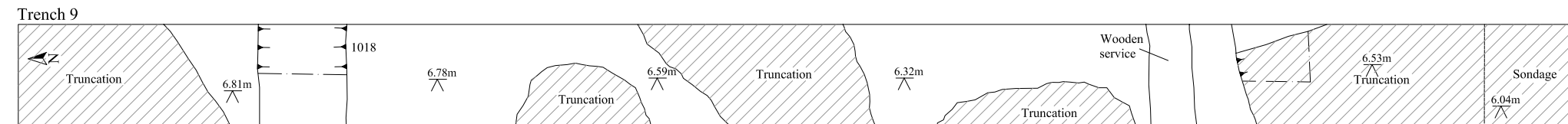
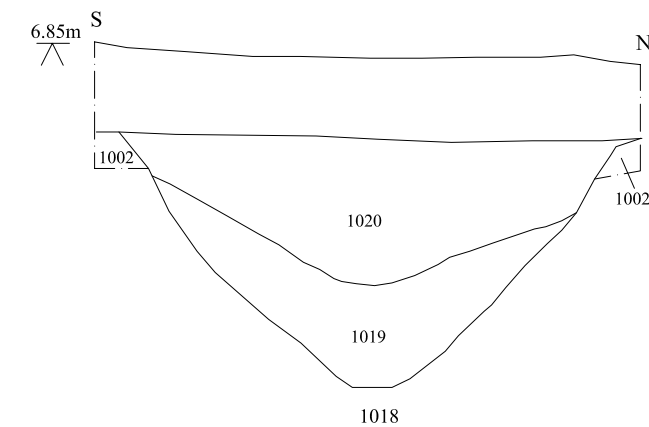
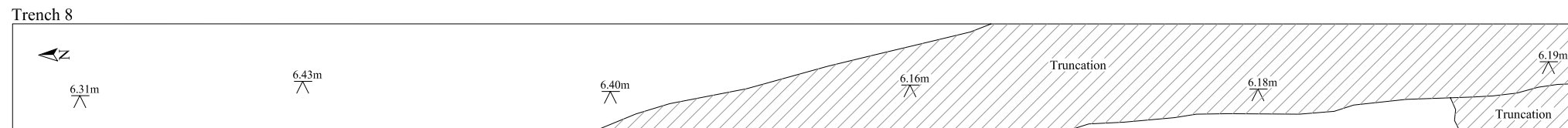
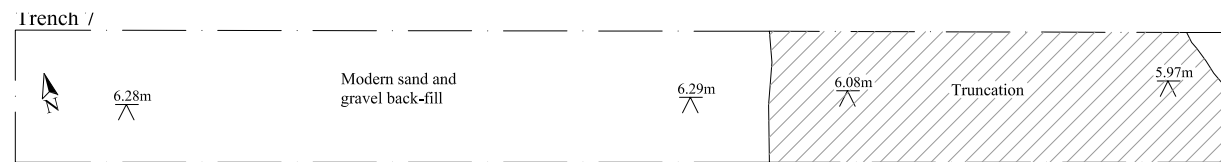
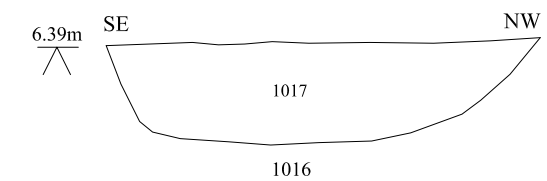
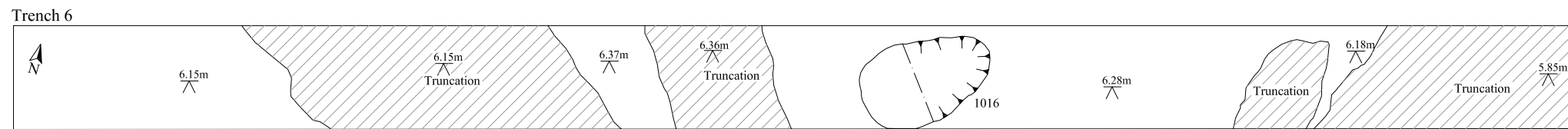
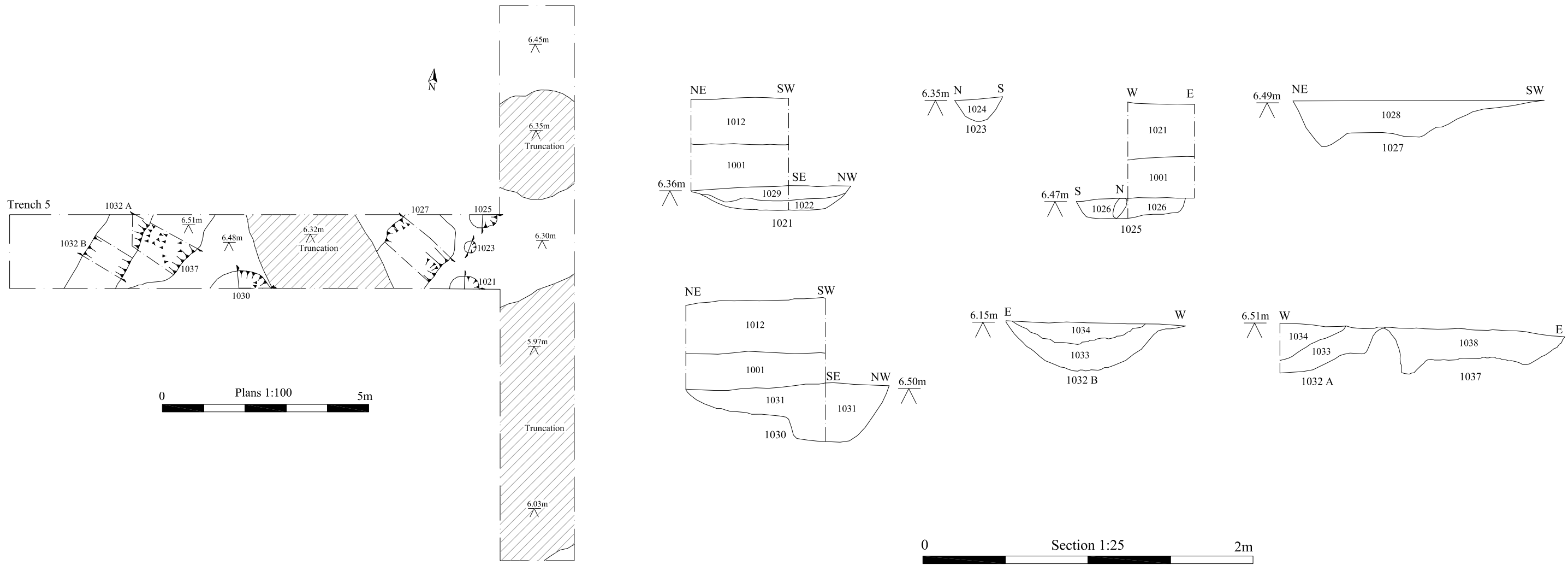
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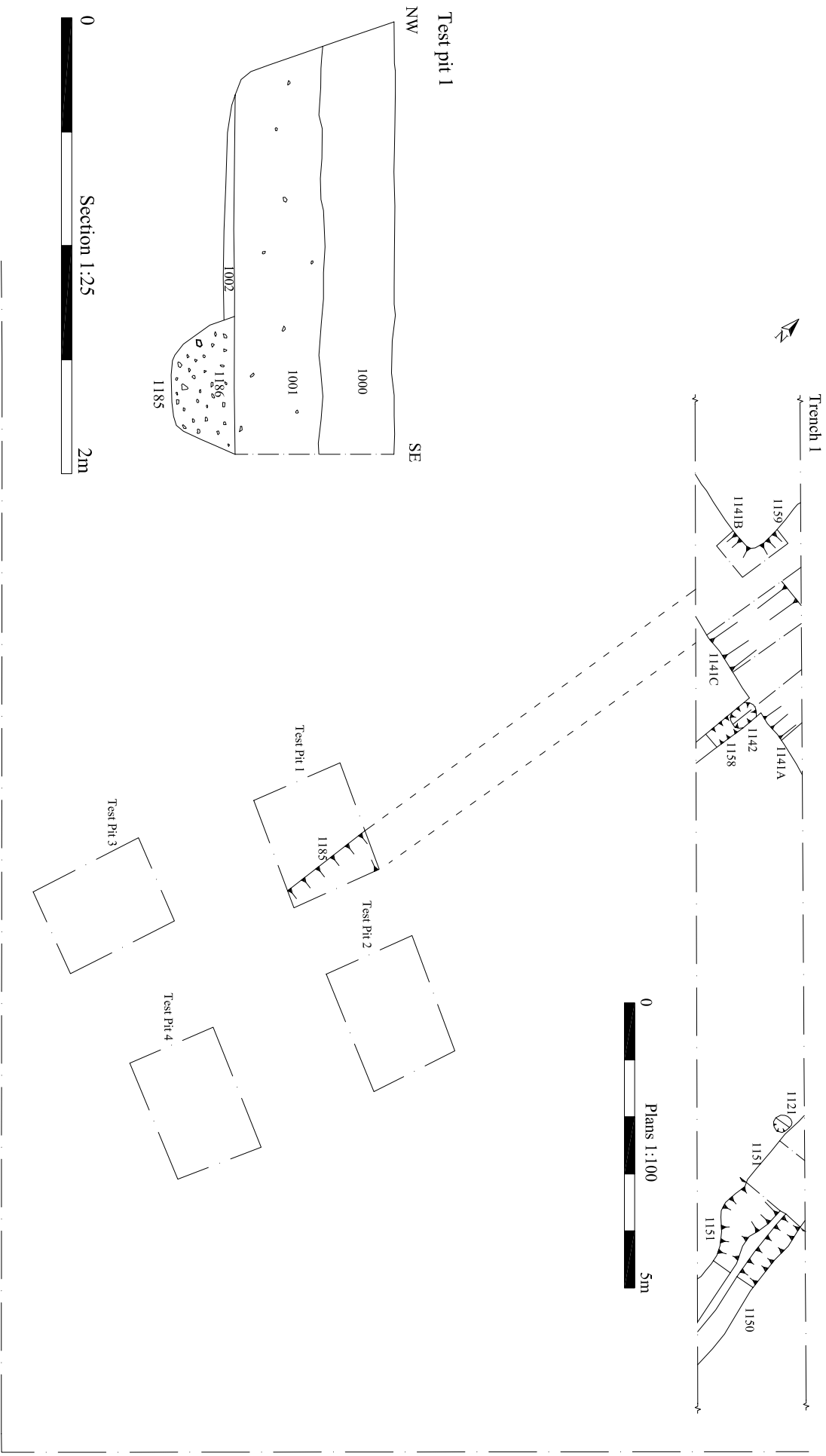
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Fig. 4 Plans and Sections
 Scale Plans 1:100 Sections 1:25



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Fig. 5 Plans and Sections
 Scale Plans 1:100 Sections 1:25



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Fig. 6 Plans and Sections
 Scale Plans 1:100 Sections 1:25



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Fig. 7 Test pit location plan
 Scale Plan 1:100