Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological evaluation at the Cintel Site, Watton Road Ware, Hertfordshire

Northamptonshire Archaeology
2 Bolton House
Wootton Hall Park
Northampton NN4 8BE
t. 01604 700493 f. 01604 702822
e. sparry@northamptonshire.gov.uk
w. www.northantsarchaeology.co.uk

Jim Burke & Simon Carlyle

Report 10/30

February 2010

STAFF

Project Manager:	Simon Carlyle BSc MSc MIfA MIEnvSc
Fieldwork:	Jason Clarke BSc MA AIfA (Supervisor)
	Jim Burke
	Angela Warner BSc
Text:	Jim Burke and Simon Carlyle
Pottery:	Iain Soden BA MIfA
Illustrations:	Amir Bassir BSc

QUALITY CONTROL

	Print name	Signed	Date
Checked by	Pat Chapman		
Verified by	Simon Carlyle		
Approved by	Andy Chapman		

Front cover: General view of Trench 3 after backfilling, facing north-east

OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project title	Cintel Site, Watton Road, Ware, Hertfordshire.	
Short description	A trial trench evaluation was carried out at the Cintel Site, Watton Road, Ware, Hertfordshire. No archaeological features were encountered, with the exception of a possible pit that contained an abraded sherd of 18th-century pottery. The sequence of deposits was broadly similar in all three trenches, with terrace gravels being located at a depth of *c* 0.8-1.2m below modern ground level. Overlying the gravel was a subsoil horizon, in places comprising two distinct layers, and vestiges of topsoil. These were sealed by made-ground that had been laid down to form a base for tarmac surfaces, or concrete hard-standing that was subsequently surfaced with tarmac. These surfaces were associated with the former factory building that stood on the west side of Watton House, prior to its demolition in the 1990s, or the current car park.	
Project type	Trial trench evaluation	
Site status	-	
Previous work	Desk-based assessment (Dawson 2006)	
Current land use	Industrial	
Future work	Unknown	
Monument type/period	-	
Significant finds	None	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Hertfordshire	
Site address	Cintel Site, Watton Road, Ware	
Study area	2.08 ha	
OS Easting & Northing	TL 35320 14650	
Height OD	44m	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA)	
Project brief originator	-	
Project Design originator	CgMs Consulting Ltd (CgMs)	
Director/Supervisor	Jason Clarke / Jim Burke (NA)	
Project Manager	Simon Carlyle (NA) and Simon Mortimer (CgMs)	
Sponsor or funding body	CgMs	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	8th February 2010	
End date	12th February 2010	
ARCHIVES	Location	Content
Physical	Ware Museum Project code: WWR 10	1 sherd of pottery
Paper		1 small archive box of site records and photos plus 1 sheet of drawings
Digital		Copy of report, digital photos
BIBLIOGRAPHY	Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (NA report)	
Title	An archaeological evaluation at the Cintel Site, Watton Road, Ware, Hertfordshire	
Serial title & volume	10/30	
Author(s)	Jim Burke and Simon Carlyle	
Page numbers	7 text, 9 figs	
Date	24th February 2010 (amended 21st September 2010)	

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AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AT THE CINTEL SITE, WATTON ROAD WARE, HERTFORDSHIRE FEBRUARY 2010

Abstract

In February 2010, Northamptonshire Archaeology excavated three trial trenches at the Cintel Site, Watton Road, Ware, Hertfordshire. No archaeological features were encountered, with the exception of a possible pit that contained an abraded sherd of 18th-century pottery. The sequence of deposits was broadly similar in all three trenches, with terrace gravels being located at a depth of c 0.8-1.2m below modern ground level. Overlying the gravel was a subsoil horizon, in places comprising two distinct layers, and vestiges of topsoil. These were sealed by made-ground that had been laid down to form a base for tarmac surfaces, or concrete hard-standing that was subsequently surfaced with tarmac. These surfaces were associated with the former factory building that stood on the west side of Watton House, prior to its demolition in the 1990s, or the current car park.

1 INTRODUCTION

In February 2010, Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA) carried out an archaeological evaluation, comprising the excavation of three trial trenches, at the Cintel Site, Watton Road, Ware, Hertfordshire (NGR: TL 35320 14650; Fig 1). The work was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd (CgMs), acting on behalf of ASDA, and was carried out prior to the submission of a planning application for the development of the site for retail premises.

The site lies on the projected route of Ermine Street, a major Roman road, and archaeological investigation to the south of the site in the 1990s identified remains of Iron Age and Roman date. The site is identified in the East Hertfordshire Local Plan as 'An Area of Archaeological Significance' by the local planning authority.

Previously, a desk-based assessment was prepared by CgMs (Dawson 2006) in support of a planning application by Endeavour Ware for the residential development of the site.

This report, which presents the results of the trial trench evaluation, has been prepared in accordance with Appendix 4 of the English Heritage procedural document *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (EH 1991), relevant sections of *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (EH 2006), and appropriate national standards and guidelines, as recommended by the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA). On completion, the project archive will be deposited with Ware Museum (notified 3/2/10).

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives of the project, as outlined in the specification (CgMs 2010) were to:

- Determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any archaeological remains within the development site,
- Assess the artefactual and environmental potential of the archaeological deposits encountered,
- Determine the degree of complexity of the horizontal and/or vertical stratigraphy present,
- Provide sufficient information on the archaeological potential of the site to enable the archaeological implications of the proposed development to be assessed,
- Assess the impact of previous land use on the site,
- Inform formulation of a strategy to avoid or mitigate impacts of the proposed development on surviving archaeological remains,
- Produce a site archive for deposition with an appropriate museum and to provide information for accession to the local receiving museum.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 Topography and geology

The proposed development site, which covers an area of 2.08ha, is situated on the north-west side of Ware, approximately 400m from the historic centre of the town (Fig 1). The site is bounded by Watton Road (B1004) to the east, houses and gardens along Fanshawe Crescent to the north and west, and industrial and commercial buildings along Park Road to the south. The site currently contains office buildings, workshops, a gymnasium and car parking areas.

Topographically, the site lies on a south-facing slope overlooking the valley of the River Lea, the ground descending from 44m aOD at the northern edge of the site to 38m on Park Road. The underlying geology comprises Upper Chalk of Cretaceous date, overlain by pre-Anglian terrace gravel deposits, laid down by the proto-Thames (BGS 1996).

3.2 Historical and archaeological background

The historical and archaeological background of the site has been presented in detail in the desk-based assessment prepared by CgMs (Dawson 2006). This identified a range of sites within the study area, dating from the Mesolithic period onwards, although there are no known sites predating the 19th century within the proposed development area.

In brief, Mesolithic and Neolithic remains, comprising worked flint and ephemeral traces of temporary settlement, have been found on the GlaxoSmithKline site to the

south of Park Road. The remains of Bronze Age barrows have been identified from aerial photographs at Bury Field, *c* 300m to the south-west of the site. A barrow has also been recently excavated within one of the building footprints on the GlaxoSmith Kline site (Alison Tinniswood, pers comm).

In the Roman period Ermine Street, the major Roman road that linked *Londinium* (London) to *Eboracum* (York), crossed the River Lea at Ware. By the end of the 1st century AD a small settlement was established on the north bank of the river, possibly developing around a *mansio* or military posting station. By the 4th century AD the settlement had expanded to cover an area of *c* 2 ha and had almost certainly spread to the south bank of the river. Archaeological investigation in the general area has located the remains of Roman buildings along Ermine Street, wharves near Ware Lock and at least two main cemeteries. A possible temple or shrine has been located near to the river and pottery kilns, as well as evidence of other industrial activities, has been found in the area.

There is scarce evidence for early and middle Saxon activity in the vicinity and it was not until the late Saxon period that settlement in the area began to develop to any extent, with buildings and associated plots being laid out along Baldock Street and High Street. In 1199 a market was granted to Robert de Quincy and in the 13th century the fortunes of the town improved decidedly with the construction of a bridge that placed Ware on the main route from London to the north, thereby attracting further settlement and industry. An alien Benedictine Priory was established in Ware, close to the parish church of St Mary's, and a Friary was founded in 1338 by Thomas Wake, Lord Liddell.

From the later medieval period until the early 20th century the main industry in the town was malt making and Ware has been described as 'one of the chief malt producing towns of England' (Page 1913, 384). Other industries included brick making, with brick pits being established to the west of the town, several of which are located close to the current site. Within the site, a large quarry pit was excavated prior to 1845 to extract clay, gravel or chalk; the scar in the hillside is now occupied by a derelict multi-storey car park. On the east side of the old quarry pit a malting kiln was built between 1828 and 1845 by Caleb Hitch, whose father owned the brick pits to the north-west of the site; this building still survives amidst the surrounding complex of 20th century buildings.

4 METHODOLOGY

Three trenches (38 linear metres; 72m^2) were excavated in suitable areas of the car park, which was still in use at the time of the fieldwork (Fig 2). The trenches were marked out using hand tapes, in accordance with the trench location plan provided by CgMs, and a CAT scanner was used to detect the presence of buried services not shown on current service plans. Operating under continuous archaeological supervision, a JCB-type mechanical digger fitted with a breaker was used to break up the tarmac and concrete surfaces, and then a 1.8m toothless ditching bucket was fitted and the trench was taken down to archaeological levels or the natural substrate, whichever was encountered first. The tarmac and concrete was stored separately from the underlying soils, adjacent to the trenches, and the trenches were secured with HERAS fencing.

Archaeological excavation and recording followed the guidelines outlined in the NA *Archaeological Fieldwork Manual* (2003). Trenches containing archaeological remains were cleaned by hand, sufficient to define the features. Each feature or deposit was given a unique number consisting of the trench number and an individual context number (e.g. 302, Trench 3, context 2). The details of each context were recorded on *pro-forma* sheets. The trenches were planned (scale 1:50) and section drawings were made at an appropriate scale (1:10 or 1:20). Levels, which were related to Ordnance Datum, were taken on the trenches at appropriate points, on section datum and on all major features. Trench locations were related to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. A photographic record was made of the excavation, using both 35mm colour transparency and black and white negative films, supplemented by digital images.

The spoil heaps and features were scanned with a metal detector to ensure maximum finds retrieval. Unstratified animal bones and modern material were not retained. There were no archaeologically significant deposits with the potential for environmental analysis. The artefacts were collected by hand and retained, receiving appropriate care prior to removal from site (Watkinson and Neal 1998). The guidelines of the Society of Museum Archaeologists (SMA 1993) will be followed in the preparation of the archive.

All works were carried out in accordance with the specification (CgMs 2010) and the Institute for Archaeologists' (IfA) *Code of Conduct* (1985, revised 2008) and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (1994, revised 2008). All procedures complied with Northamptonshire County Council Health and Safety provisions and Northamptonshire Archaeology Health and Safety at Work Guidelines. The project was monitored by Alison Tinniswood, Senior Archaeologist, Hertfordshire Historic Environment Unit, and managed for CgMs by Simon Mortimer.

5 TRIAL TRENCH RESULTS

5.1 Summary

Three trial trenches (38 linear metres; 72m^2; Fig 2) were excavated in the car park to assess the archaeological potential of the site and determine the degree of modern truncation, extent and depth of made-ground and disturbance to the original land surface.

No significant archaeological features were encountered in any of the trial trenches, with the exception of a possible pit in Trench 3 that contained an abraded sherd of 18th-century pottery. The sequence of deposits was broadly similar in all three trenches, with terrace gravels being located at a depth of *c* 0.9-1.2m below modern ground level. The gravel was overlain by subsoil, in places comprising two distinct layers and measuring up to 0.6m thick, and vestiges of topsoil mixed with building rubble. These deposits were sealed by made-ground that had been laid down to form a base for tarmac surfaces, or concrete hard-standing that was subsequently surfaced with tarmac. These surfaces were associated with the former factory building that stood on the west side of Watton House, prior to its demolition in the 1990s, or the current car park.

5.2 Trench 1

Trench 1, which measured 10m long by 1.8m wide and was aligned roughly north to south, was located in the car park at the front of Watton House, near the main entrance to the site (Figs 2, 3 and 6).

Terrace gravel, consisting of mid orangey-brown silty clay with bands of sandy gravel (105), was encountered at approximately 1.1m below modern ground level (43.8m OD). Overlying this was a layer of subsoil, *c* 0.45m thick, comprising dark reddish-brown silty clay (104) with occasional to moderate pebbles (Fig 4, Section 4). This was sealed by a compacted layer of crushed stone, brick rubble, metal scrap and sand (103), over which was a layer of concrete (102) that had been used to provide a base for the tarmac surface of the car park (101).

5.3 Trench 3

Trench 3 measured 20m long by 1.8m wide and was aligned north-north-west to south-south-east. It was positioned in the car park to the west of Watton House, approximately 3m from the west wall of the building, and lay within the area of the former factory building that once stood on the site (Figs 2, 3 and 7).

Terrace gravel (312) was encountered at between 0.76m (42.62m OD) and 1.21m (41.88m OD) below the surface of the car park, the greater depth occurring at the southern end of the trench (Fig 3). The gravel was overlain by a layer of subsoil, up to 0.26m thick, that consisted of mid brownish-orange clayey silt (309) with moderate to frequent pebbles (Fig 4, Section 3).

Cut into the subsoil at the southern end of the trench was an irregular, feature with poorly defined edges, 311 (Fig 4, Section 2; Fig 8). It measured up to 1.1m wide by 0.45m deep and tapered to a narrow point at its north-west end. It was filled with mid orangey-brown silty clay (310) with occasional pebbles and contained an abraded sherd of Midland Blackware dating from the 18th century (Iain Soden, pers comm). The pottery indicates that the feature, probably a roughly excavated pit, dates to the 18th or 19th centuries or later.

The linear feature was sealed by a second layer of subsoil (308) that was up to 0.4m thick and indistinguishable from the fill of the underlying feature. Overlying this upper subsoil were remnants of the topsoil (307), mixed with brick and tile fragments.

Near the centre of the trench the foundations of a modern, 20th-century brick structure cut through the soils, down into the natural gravels. The west wall of the structure was 5.2m long and the returns extended to the west, beyond the limits of the trench. An iron pipe and steel plates, possibly covering former buried services, were associated with the structure, which is thought to be the remains of the switch room that was located inside the former factory building that stood on the site (Fig 5).

Abutting the building and overlying the remains of the topsoil (307) at the southern end of the trench was a thin layer of sharp sand (306), with an average thickness of 0.06m. The topsoil and sand were sealed by a layer, approximately 0.1m thick, of reinforced concrete (305) that formed the floor of the former factory building. This was subsequently covered with a further layer of concrete (304), with a thickness of 0.06m,

and then sealed with a thin layer of bitumen (303). Following the demolition of the factory building in the 1990s the area was converted into a car park, and for this a layer of compacted sand was laid down and surfaced with tarmac (301).

5.4 Trench 5

Located close to the boundary wall that separates the site from the gardens in Fanshawe Crescent, Trench 5 measured 8m long by 2.5m wide and was aligned roughly east to west (Figs 2, 3 and 9).

Terrace gravel, occurring as mid brownish-orange silty clay with yellowish-orange sandy gravel patches (506), was encountered at 0.90m below the surface of the car park (42.4m aOD). Overlying the gravel was a layer of subsoil, *c* 0.4m thick, comprising mid brownish-orange clayey silt (505) with an even distribution of pebbles (Fig 4, Section 1). This was sealed by a similar though less stony subsoil (504), approximately 0.2m thick, and the remnants of a topsoil horizon (503). The latter was mixed with demolition rubble and had been levelled and compacted to form a base for a layer of concrete (502) that was subsequently covered with tarmac (501).

6 DISCUSSION

With the exception of a possible 18th- or 19th-century pit, identified in Trench 3, no archaeological features were encountered in any of the trial trenches. Reference to the Ordnance Survey 1923 (3rd edition) 25" map of the area, and earlier maps, shows that the pit-like feature would have been located near the centre of the field to the east of the 19th-century malting kiln. It does not correspond with any recorded boundary or feature. Irregular in size and shape and poorly defined, the feature has been interpreted as a roughly excavated pit.

The desk-based assessment (Dawson 2006) has shown that apart from the quarry on the western side of the site and the 19th-century malting kiln, a large part of the site remained as open fields until at least the 1920s. The industrial development of the site in the mid to late 20th century will undoubtedly have impacted on buried deposits, but the evaluation has shown that the relatively deep subsoil cover and the creation of made-ground to level parts of the site may have protected archaeological features in a number of areas.

Despite the absence of archaeology in the trial trenches, given the small area that was available for investigation there is therefore still the possibility that archaeological remains survive elsewhere on the site, particularly in the southern and south-eastern part, close to the projected line of Ermine Street and the Iron Age and Roman remains investigated on the GlaxoSmithKline site.

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Northamptonshire Archaeology
A service of Northamptonshire County Council 25 February 2010 (amended 2/9/10)

APPENDIX 1: SUMMARY OF FEATURES AND DEPTHS

Trench	Context	Feature type	Date of feature	Depth [1] (m)
1	101	Tarmac	-	1.1
	102	Concrete	-	
	103	Made-ground	-	
	104	Subsoil	-	
	105	Terrace gravel	-	
3	301	Tarmac	-	0.8-1.2
	302	Sand	-	
	303	Bitumen	-	
	304	Concrete	-	
	305	Reinforced concrete	-	
	306	Sand	-	
	307	Topsoil	-	
	308	Subsoil I	-	
	309	Subsoil II	-	
	310 [311]	Pit??	18th/19th century	(0.98) [2]
	312	Terrace gravel	-	
5	501	Tarmac	-	0.9
	502	Concrete	-	
	503	Topsoil	-	
	504	Subsoil I	-	
	505	Subsoil II	-	
	506	Terrace gravel	-	

[1] Average or range of depths of natural substrate below ground level
[2] Depth of top of feature below ground level

APPENDIX 2

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD SUMMARY SHEET

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3">Site name and address: Former Cintel site, Watton Road, Ware</td></tr>
<tr><td>County: Hertfordshire</td><td colspan="2">District: East Hertfordshire</td></tr>
<tr><td>Village/Town: Ware</td><td colspan="2">Parish: Ware CP</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Planning application reference: pre-application</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Client name, address, and tel. no.: CgMs Consulting Ltd, Newark Beacon, Beacon Hill Office Park, Cafferata Way, Newark NG24 2TN</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Nature of application: Proposed retail development</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Present land use: Industrial/commercial</td></tr>
<tr><td>Size of application area: 2.08ha</td><td colspan="2">Size of area investigated: 72m^2</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">NGR (to 8 figures): 535320 214650</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Site code (if applicable): WWR10</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Site director/Organization: Jim Burke/Northamptonshire Archaeology</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Type of work: Trial trenching</td></tr>
<tr><td>Date of work</td><td>Start: 8/2/10</td><td>Finish: 12/2/10</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Location of finds & site archive/curating museum: Ware Museum</td></tr>
<tr><td>Related HER Nos: None</td><td colspan="2">Periods represented: Modern</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Relevant previous summaries/reports: Desk-based assessment (Dawson 2006)</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Summary of fieldwork results: Three trial trenches were excavated at the Cintel Site, Watton Road, Ware, Hertfordshire. No archaeological features were encountered, with the exception of a possible pit that contained an abraded sherd of 18th-century pottery. The sequence of deposits was broadly similar in all three trenches, with terrace gravels being located at a depth of c 0.8-1.2m below modern ground level. Overlying the gravel was a subsoil horizon, in places comprising two distinct layers, and vestiges of topsoil. These were sealed by made-ground that had been laid down to form a base for tarmac surfaces, or concrete hard-standing that was subsequently surfaced with tarmac. These surfaces were associated with the former factory building that stood on the west side of Watton House, prior to its demolition in the 1990s, or the current car park.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Author of summary: Simon Carlyle</td><td colspan="2">Date of summary: 21/9/10</td></tr>
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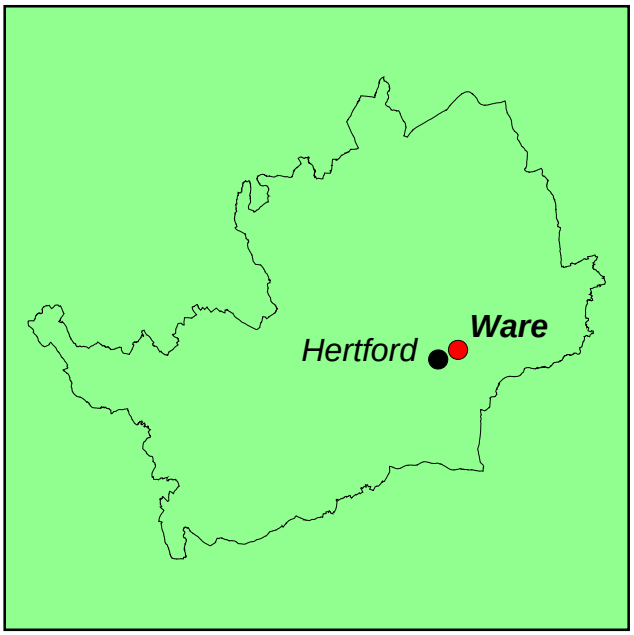

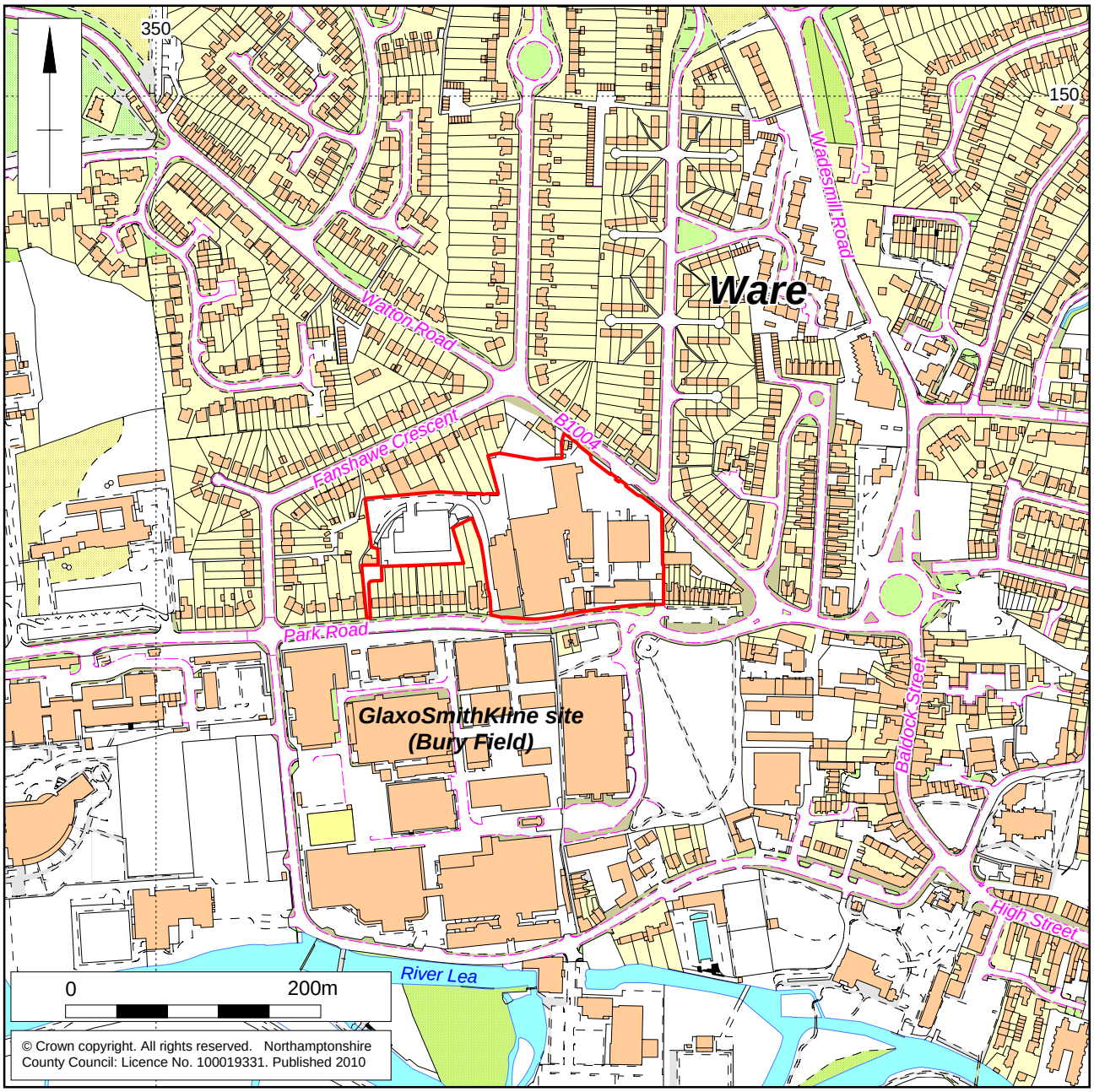

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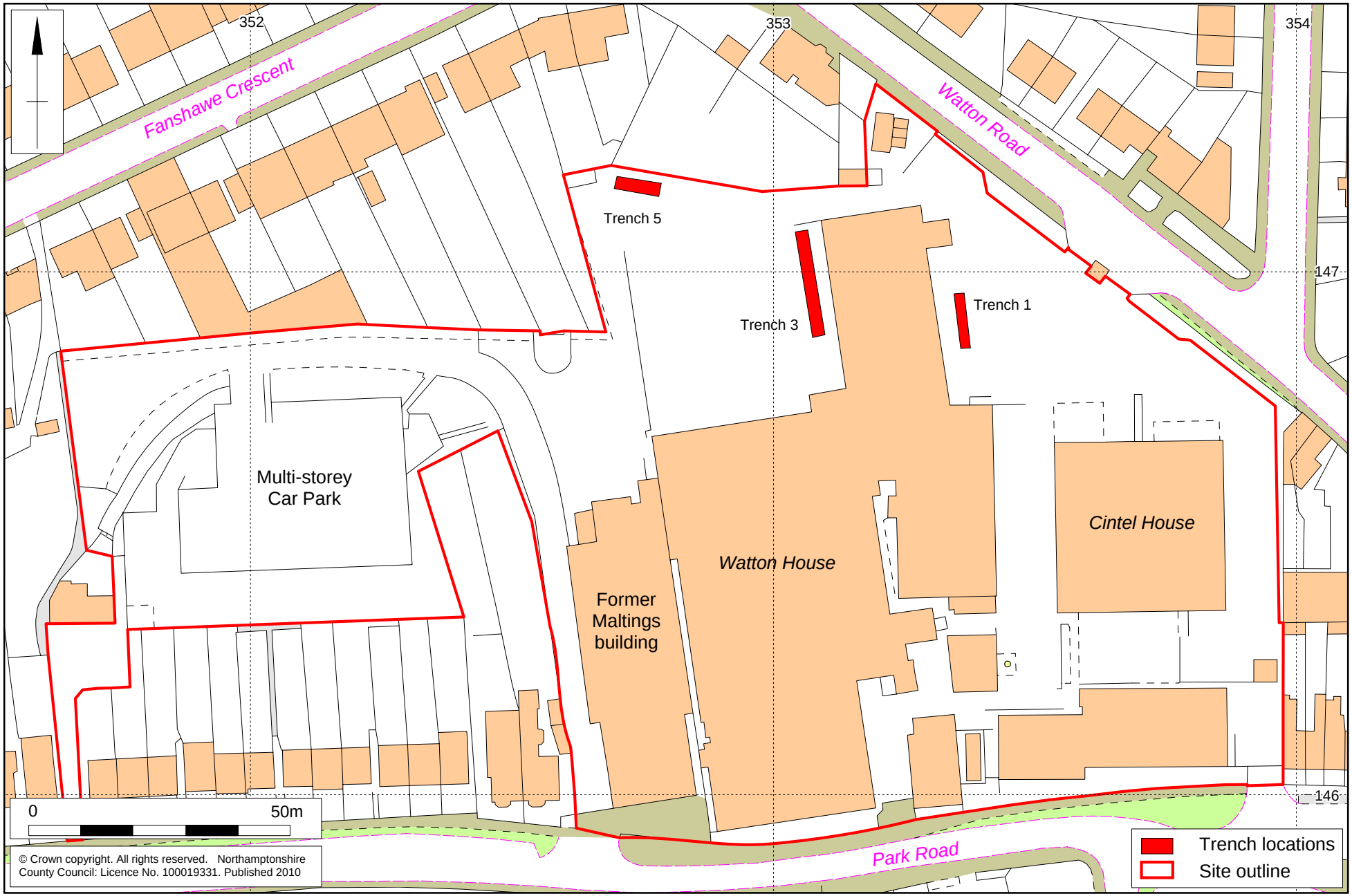
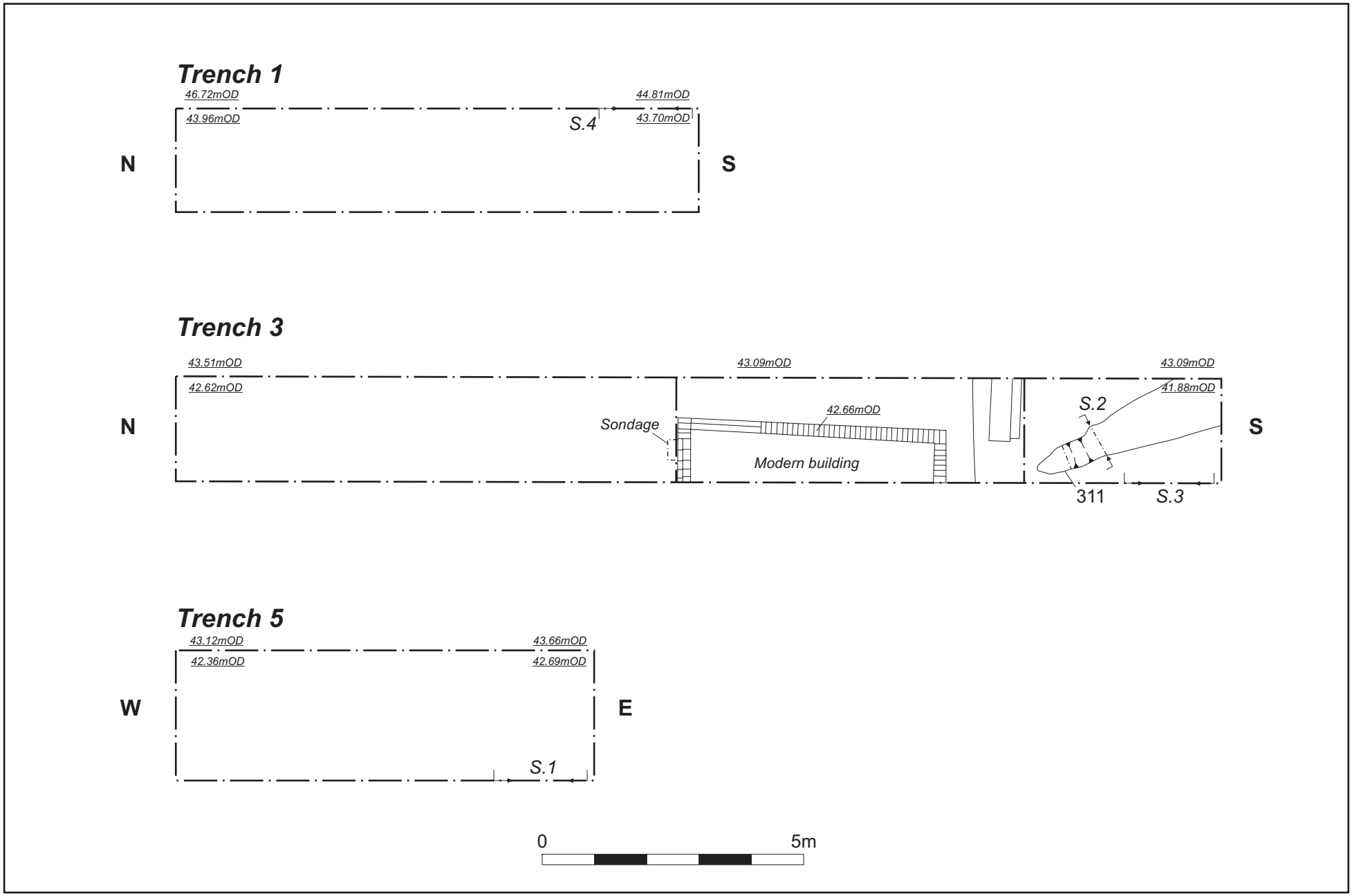
Site location Fig 1

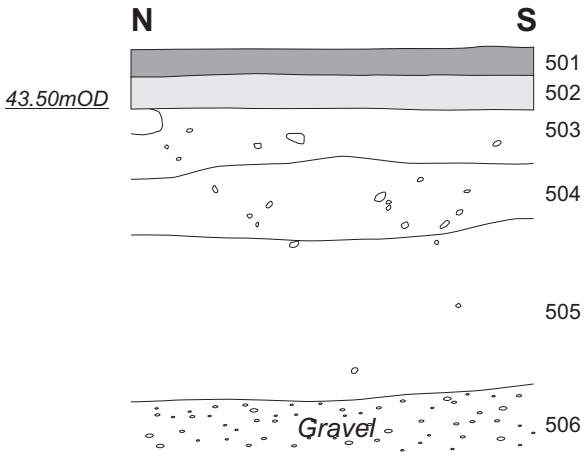


Site plan showing trench locations Fig 2

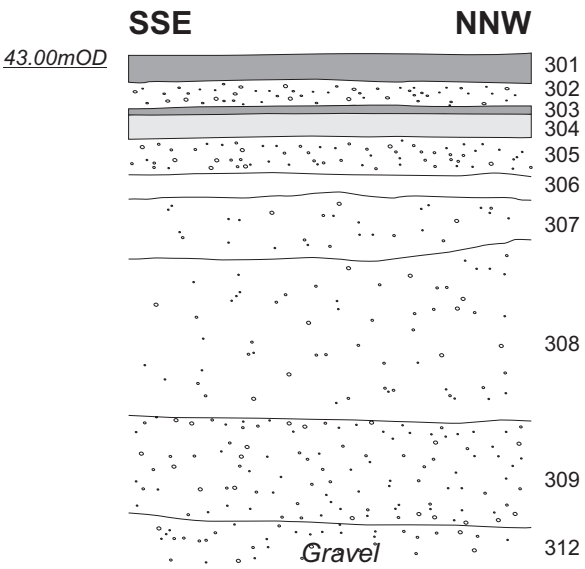


Plans of Trenches 1, 3 and 5 Fig 3

Trench 5, Section 1



Trench 3, Section 3



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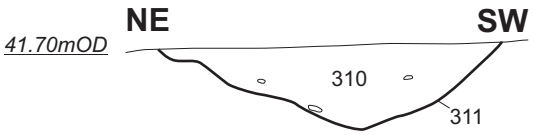
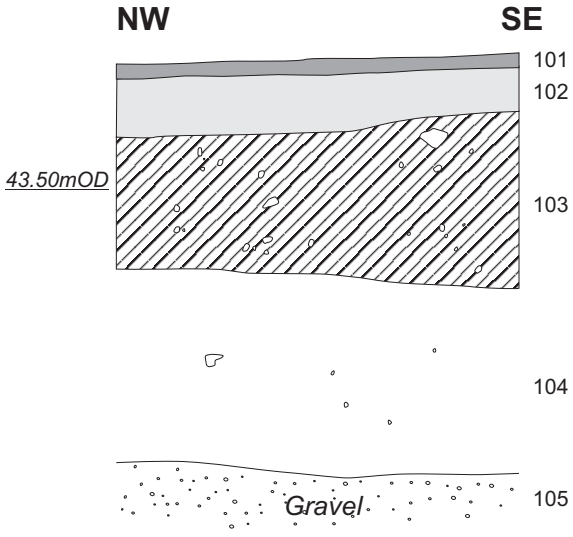


Trench 1, Section 4



Tarmac/ bitumen
Concrete
Sand
Made ground

0 1m

Sections 1 to 4 Fig 4

Not to scale

Detail from Ordnance Survey map of 1991 showing the original layout of Watton House

Fig 5

Trench 1, general view facing south Fig 6

Trench 3, general view facing north Fig 7

Possible 18th- or 19th-century 311, facing south-east Fig 8

Trench 5, general view facing east Fig 9

Northamptonshire County Council

Northamptonshire Archaeology

General view of Trench 3, facing north-east

Northamptonshire Archaeology
2 Bolton House
Wootton Hall Park
Northampton NN4 8BE
t. 01604 700493 f. 01604 702822
e. sparry@northamptonshire.gov.uk
w. www.northantsarchaeology.co.uk