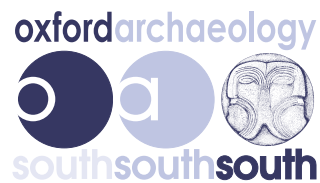


Odney Heritage Site  
Grove Farm  
Cookham  
Berkshire



Archaeological  
Evaluation Report



September 2011

**Client: John Lewis Partnership**

Issue No: 1

OA Job No: 5146

NGR: SU 9003 8542





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 Client Ref No:  
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## Report Title

*Archaeological Evaluation Report*

*Written by Paul Leader*

*Illustrated by Markus Dylewski and Emily Plunkett*

## Table of Contents

<b>Summary.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>4</b>
1 Location and scope of work.....	4
2 Geology and topography.....	4
3 Archaeological and historical background.....	4
4 Aims.....	5
5 Methodology.....	5
<b>Results.....</b>	<b>7</b>
1 Introduction and presentation of results.....	7
2 General soils and ground conditions.....	7
3 General distribution of archaeological deposits.....	7
4 Trenches 1 and 2.....	7
5 Trenches 3, 4 and 5.....	8
6 Trenches 6,7 and 8.....	9
7 Finds.....	9
<b>Discussion.....</b>	<b>10</b>
1 Reliability of field investigation.....	10
2 Evaluation objectives and results.....	10
1 Interpretation.....	10
2 Significance.....	10
<b>Appendix A. Trench Descriptions and Context Inventory.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Appendix B. Bibliography and References.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Appendix C. Summary of Site Details.....</b>	<b>16</b>



## List of Figures

- Fig. 1. Site location map
- Fig. 2. Trench location plan
- Fig. 2a. Plan of Trenches 1 and 2
- Fig. 2b. Plan of Trench 4
- Fig. 3. Sections 100, 400 and 600



## Summary

*During late August and early September 2011 Oxford Archaeology undertook a field evaluation within the grounds of the Odney Club and the former Grove Farm, Cookham, Berkshire, prior to determination of Planning Application 011/01859 FUL submitted by John Lewis Partnership for redevelopment of the farm as the Odney Heritage Centre. An initial Desk Based Assessment (Little 2011) demonstrated that a lack of archaeological remains had been discovered within the immediate vicinity of the site, but there remained potential for buried archaeology dating from the Prehistoric, Roman, Saxon and Medieval periods (Grove Farm is thought to date from the late 16th century). The evaluation which consisted of eight trenches to investigate the three areas impacted by the proposed development, the Walled Garden, the Courtyard and the Grassed Area. In the Courtyard a substantial level of building rubble contained roof tile of 17<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> century date and probably derived from the demolition of earlier post-medieval farm buildings in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A single element of buried wall foundation survived in the Courtyard that probably dates to the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The presence of sands in the southern part of the area (Courtyard and Walled Garden) perhaps indicate a derelict, but archaeologically sterile, channel of the River Thames with a higher area of gravel in the Grassed Area, possibly representing an eyot to the north (which was perhaps the originating higher ground for what is now called Odney Island). No other finds, features or deposits containing potential for environmental sampling were revealed.*

## INTRODUCTION

### 1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1 Between 30th August and 5th September 2011 Oxford Archaeology (OA) undertook a field evaluation within the grounds of the former Grove Farm and the Odney Club, Cookham (Fig. 1). This was commissioned by the John Lewis Partnership to fulfil a brief set by Berkshire County Council, designed to inform determination of Planning Application 011/01859 FUL for redevelopment of the existing site as a Heritage Centre.
- 1.2 The farm, which consists of a large Walled Garden, and a smaller walled Courtyard garden attached to the remaining now derelict buildings, is located within the grounds of the Odney Club, a hotel and country club owned by the John Lewis Partnership. The farm is located to the east of Cookham on the south side of an island, called Odney Island, within the river Thames, centred on NGR SU 9003 8540. The site is relatively flat with recorded surface heights between 25.60 to 26.10 mOD (data from FSP Drawing No. 574 L(0-)100 PO).

### 2 Geology and topography

- 2.1 The site is located on a gravel island, known as Odney Island, on a bend of the river Thames. The island is naturally derived but has been greatly altered with the construction of a weir and lock to the north of the site.
- 2.2 The natural underlying geology, stated by the British Geology Society, is formed of Lewes Nodular chalk with superficial Alluvial deposits of clay, silt, sand and gravel. Although not mapped as extending into the site area the BGS indicate that Shepperton gravels lie immediately to south-west (BGS Sheet 255).

### 3 Archaeological and historical background

- 3.1 The information in this section has been taken from the desk based assessment, History and Archaeological Report for Planning Application for Grove Farm, Cookham (Steve Little Research, 2011).

#### Prehistoric

- 3.2 No prehistoric archaeology has been recorded within 150m of the site although the HER records two stone axes found at Lullebrook manor, c.400m to the west (HER 00246.00.000). Prehistoric artefacts have also been recorded from the River Thames around the area of Cookham.

#### Roman

- 3.3 No Roman archaeology has been recorded within 150m of the site, however it has been suggested that the Roman road from St Albans to Silchester may have crossed the Thames at Sashers island c.1km to the north. There is also a possible Roman building and cemetery to the north.

#### Saxon

- 3.4 The village of Cookham is believed to date from the Saxon period. The church is thought to date from the late Saxon period onwards with settlement focussed to the west of it, a Saxon burh ("*Sceafteſſige*") is probably located on Sashes Island, c.1km north of the site.



## Medieval

- 3.5 Occupation of the village of Cookham continues throughout the medieval period. In 971AD the area was given to the King and it remained in Royal hands throughout the medieval period. The centre of the medieval town lay along High Street, the area was divided into burgage plots with some later sub-dividing. There were two mills to the east of the town that dated back to the medieval period, one was fed by the Odney stream and the other stood on the banks of the Lullebrook possibly on the west bank. The town was a borough by 1225 but suffered a slowing of its development when the Thames bridge at Maidenhead was erected in 1280.
- 3.6 The Manor of Lullebrook (also known as Cookham Manor) lies within a Royal estate and appears to have been granted to Adam son of Ralph de Burnham in 1205. having formally been held by William de Buggehesel.

## Post-medieval

- 3.7 The land at Grove Farm was in the ownership of the owners of The Grove, the house opposite Lullebrook Manor on Odney Lane. The connection between The Grove and the land at the Farm appears to date from at least 1748. Grove Farm changed hands on a number of occasions during the C18th and C19th before finally coming under the ownership of John Spedan Lewis during the 1930's as part the Odney country club for the staff who worked at his store, Peter Jones, in west London.

## 4 Aims

### 4.1

- (i) To determine or confirm the general nature of any remains present.
- (ii) To determine or confirm the approximate date or date range of any remains, by means of artefactual or other evidence.
- (iii) To make available the results of the investigation to inform the planning application and the potential for any further mitigation strategy.

## 5 Methodology

- 5.1 Eight trenches (Nos. 1 - 8) measuring, where possible, 2m by 5m were opened across three areas due to be impacted by the renovation and extension of the farm. The three areas were located in the south west corner of the Walled Garden; the Courtyard to the west of the derelict farm buildings; and a Grassed area, c 35m to the north of these buildings (labeled on Fig. 1).
- 5.2 The number of trenches and their distribution and size were agreed with Berkshire Archaeology. Exact locations were subsequently recorded by GPS, TST and hand recording where relevant.
- 5.3 The overburden was removed under close archaeological supervision by a 360' mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket. Machine excavation ceased at the uppermost archaeological horizon or natural geology depending upon which was encountered first.
- 5.4 The trenches were cleaned by hand and the revealed features were sampled to determine their extent and nature, and to retrieve finds. All archaeological features were planned and where excavated their sections drawn at scales of 1:20. All features were photographed using black and white print film and digital photography. Recording followed procedures laid down in the *OAU Fieldwork Manual* (ed D Wilkinson, 1992).

## RESULTS

### 1 Introduction and presentation of results

- 2.1.1 This report outlines the findings from each trench. Each evaluation trench has been described accompanied by the relevant illustrated plans and sections where archaeological deposits and features were encountered. The 'context' inventory is provided in Appendix A.

### 2 General soils and ground conditions

- 2.1 During excavation ground conditions were generally dry. All of the trenches showed evidence of made ground or levelling deposits often overlying a buried subsoil, these deposits were mechanically removed under archaeological supervision.
- 2.2 Within the Courtyard access was restricted by mature fruit trees, this limited access for the excavation of the trenches and for spoil storage. Due to this trenches 1 and 2 only measured 1.3m wide.
- 2.3 Trenches 6 – 8 revealed natural gravel deposits at c. 0.65m b.g.l. In Trenches 1 and 2 gravel was encountered at 1.2m b.g.l., and in Trenches 4 and 5 gravels were not encountered and light brown sands were encountered extending between depths of c. 0.5 1.2m b.g.l. In Trench 3 the gravel was encountered at 0.68m b.g.l.

### 3 General distribution and interpretation of archaeological deposits

- 3.1 Besides two post-medieval wells and a post-medieval wall no cut features were found in any of the trenches.
- 3.2 Significant levelling deposits were found in the Courtyard containing high quantities of building material, these are thought to relate to a significant rebuilding of the farm in the early C19th.

### 4 Trenches 1 and 2

- 4.1 Trenches 1 and 2 were located within the south east corner of the Courtyard and measured 1.3 by 5m (Fig 2.1). Natural gravel was established at an average depth of 1.2m in both trenches (Fig 3). Trenches 1 and 2 contained very similar sequences of ground raising and levelling deposits.
- 4.2 The lower deposits consisted of a mixed, dirty, grey-yellow buried subsoil measuring 0.3m thick, suggesting that the courtyard had been previously reduced to this level. In Trench 1 the subsoil was cut by a construction cut for a wall, 109, running north-south across the trench, measuring 0.30m wide and 0.30m high. The wall was constructed of un-frogged, hand made, red bricks measuring 215mmx105mmx60mm and was bonded with a soft, gritty, yellow mortar. The walls location corresponds with one seen on a plan of the Broome Witt estate, believed to date to c.1800 and is probably an out building belonging an earlier phase of Grove Farm.
- 4.3 The wall and subsoil were overlain by consecutive deposits of crushed chalk with flint inclusions 0.20m thick, a yellow-grey silt-sand deposit with demolition waste and gravel inclusions 0.15m thick, another crushed chalk deposit with flint inclusions 0.25m thick and a layer of fired clay building materials (CBM) that measured 0.1m thick and predominantly consisted of 16th-17th century roof tile. This was overlain by a modern mixed topsoil deposit with stone and CBM inclusions, parts of the courtyard were also covered by c.0.10m thick layer of poor quality concrete.

- 4.4 In Trench 2 all of the deposits were truncated by a post-medieval well which had been altered for use as a soak away for the guttering of the barns. Modern alterations included a cast iron grid cover and brick chamber which affected the stratigraphy of the deposits making the original cut for the well hard to define, it appears likely however that it cuts the make up deposits in the courtyard and would only have been overlain by the modern topsoil.
- 4.5 At the southern end of Trench 2 a post-medieval wall ran along the back edge of the trench. This had been demolished to ground level, surviving to 0.24m depth it measured 0.35m wide and was constructed in a trench that cut through the current topsoil. The wall appears to date to the 19th or even 20th century and formed a larger out building in the corner of the courtyard, although overgrown the majority of the floor plan of the out house can be seen in the ground (Fig. 2a).
- 4.6 The similarity between these deposits indicates that at least the south-eastern corner of the courtyard has been significantly built-up using deposits relating to demolition on the site; although the full extent of these deposits is unknown, their consistency between the trenches suggests they may cover a large area of the courtyard.
- 4.7 The origin of these deposits is hard to confirm. Although the chalk deposits may have been deliberately brought on to the site to raise the ground level, it is more probable that it is demolition rubble from chalk foundations or walls of an earlier structure. The layer of peg tile certainly indicates that a significant amount of roof was demolished and laid across the courtyard as make up. This also ties with the buried wall in trench one and the Broome-Wit estate map of c.1800, which shows a larger structure in place of the eastern side of the current building and different out buildings to the south. The alterations to the eastern end of the current farm house are believed to date to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century when the estate went through a series of modifications. Although only a preliminary study of the existing structure had been carried out when this report was written, the evidence all seems to confirm that during the early 19th century the farm went under fairly major alterations and the majority of deposits seen in the yard relate to this phase of activity.

## 5 Trenches 3, 4 and 5

- 5.1 Trenches 3, 4 and 5 were all located to the south-western corner of the walled garden (Fig. 2). All three trenches measured 2.0m x 5.0m and contained no archaeology besides a post-medieval well which partly extended into the northern edge of Trench 4 (Fig. 2b).
- 5.2 Trench 5 was machine excavated to natural gravel at a maximum depth of 0.68m. Trenches 3 and 4 were machined to a fine natural sand with an overlying, irregular, mixed orange clay-sand deposit, it has been suggested that these may well be Holocene and Pleistocene sand and gravel deposits similar to those seen at Chazey Court Farm, Berkshire (B Ford *pers comm*). These deposits possibly indicate the presence of an early prehistoric channel of the Thames located to the southern side of the site.
- 5.3 Overlying these natural deposits was a reddish-brown, sandy-silt measuring 0.2m thick and representing a buried subsoil (e.g. Fig. 3 Section 400). In Trench 3 this was overlain by a make up deposit of modern brick and rubble 0.5m thick whilst in Trenches 4 and 5 a dark-brown, sand-silt make-up layer overlies the subsoil. A vertical cut, 405, for a probable well (although there was no lining) was recorded in Trench 4; it cut the buried subsoil and was overlain and infilled by the same levelling deposits. All the trenches were then overlain with the current topsoil.

## 6 Trenches 6, 7 and 8

6.1 Trenches 6, 7 and 8 were all located c. 35 - 40m to the NNE of the main Grove Farm buildings in an open, lawn area (Fig 2). All three trenches measure 2.0m x 5.0m and were machine excavated to the level of the natural gravel c. 0.65m below current ground level. No archaeology was encountered in any of the trenches and all three revealed a similar sequence consisting of a buried, yellow-brown subsoil 0.30m thick, overlain by a dark grey deposit with a high quantity of gravel inclusions 0.05m thick, thought to be a make-up or drainage deposit for the lawn and the existing topsoil, which measured 0.30m thick (Fig. 3 Section 600). The subsoil deposit showed evidence of disturbance, possibly through tree roots/bioturbation or the laying of the levelling deposit above.

## 7 Finds

7.1 The only finds recovered were a sample of the CBM from the levelling deposit seen in the courtyard (post assessment this was discarded). The peg and ridge tile recovered is thought to date from the 16th-C17th centuries, this ties with the theory that it originated from an earlier structure to the East of the Grange Farm building which itself is thought to originate in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. No other finds were encountered.

## 8 Discussion

### Reliability of field investigation

8.1 Although there is evidence for a relatively high level of disturbance at Grange Farm it seems unlikely that this would have impacted on any earlier deposits. In all of the trenches a buried subsoil horizon survived, although disturbed and this should have protected any underlying archaeology if present.

### Evaluation objectives and results

- (i) To determine or confirm the general nature of any remains present.
- (ii) To determine or confirm the approximate date or date range of any remains, by means of artefactual or other evidence.
- (iii) To make available the results of the investigation to inform the planning application and the potential for any further mitigation strategy.

8.2 These objectives have all been met, although no remains dating to the 17<sup>th</sup> century or earlier were located it has been shown that due to comprehensive demolition activity the likelihood of their survival is low. The make up deposits have, where possible, have been dated and their origins understood.

## 9 Interpretation

9.1 The archaeological evaluation at Grove Farm has shown a lack of evidence for human activity prior to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, although building materials that attesting to structures on the site pre-dating this were revealed in the 19<sup>th</sup>? century 'demolition' levelling deposits in the Courtyard. Since this time the farm has been further modified. A greater understanding of the rebuilding phases of the farm will be detailed in the buildings report (Little, forthcoming).



## **10 Significance**

- 10.1 The significance of the archaeological findings at Grove Farm are moderately low. Little more information has been established apart from the confirmation of the continued alterations to the structure and surrounding yards and gardens. Again, a greater understanding of this will be gained from the buildings report when issued.



## APPENDIX A. TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1						
<b>General description</b>					<b>Orientation</b>	E-W
Trench consists of post medieval make up deposits and a late/post medieval wall overlying gravel natural					<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	1.3
					<b>Width (m)</b>	1.3
					<b>Length (m)</b>	5.5
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
100	Layer	-	0.2	Topsoil	-	-
101	Layer	-	0.1	Levelling deposit	-	-
102	Layer	-	0.12	Make up deposit	CBM C16th- C17th	Post-medieval C19th
103	Layer	-	0.25	Make up deposit	-	-
104	Layer	-	0.12	Make up deposit	-	-
105	Layer	-	0.22	Make up deposit	-	-
106	Layer	-	0.3	Buried Subsoil	-	-
107	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
108	Cut	0.32	0.3	Construction cut	-	-
109	Str	0.36	0.3	Wall (brick dimensions 215mmx105mmx60mm)	-	Post-medieval – C18?

Trench 2						
<b>General description</b>					<b>Orientation</b>	N-S
Trench consists of post medieval make up layers, post medieval well and post-medieval wall overlying gravel natural					<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	1.2
					<b>Width (m)</b>	1.3
					<b>Length (m)</b>	5.5
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
200	Layer	-	0.48	Topsoil	-	-
201	Layer	-	0.08	Subsoil	-	-
202	Layer	-	0.1	Levelling deposit	-	-
203	Layer	-	0.16	Make up deposit	-	-
204	Layer	-	0.1	Make up deposit	-	-
205	Layer	-	0.09	Buried Subsoil	-	-
206	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
207	Cut	1.25	<1	Construction cut	-	Post-medieval -



						C19th?
208	Fill	1.25	<1	Backfill	-	Post-medieval C19th? -
209	Str	0.35	0.24	Wall	-	Post-medieval C19th? -
210	Cut	0.4	0.24	Construction cut for 209	-	Post-medieval C19th? -

Trench 3						
<b>General description</b>					<b>Orientation</b>	N-S
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil, make up deposit and subsoil overlying a natural of sand.					<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	1.3
					<b>Width (m)</b>	2
					<b>Length (m)</b>	5
<b>Contexts</b>						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
300	Layer	-	0.35	Topsoil	-	-
301	Layer	-	0.5	Make up deposit	-	-
302	Layer	-	0.2	Buried Subsoil	-	-
303	Layer	-	0.15	Natural	-	-
304	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 4						
<b>General description</b>					<b>Orientation</b>	E-W
Consists of soil, make up deposits and subsoil overlying a natural of sand. Contains post-medieval well					<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	1.25
					<b>Width (m)</b>	2
					<b>Length (m)</b>	5
<b>Contexts</b>						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
400	Layer	-	0.36	Topsoil	-	-
401	Layer	-	0.3	Make up deposit	-	-
402	Layer	-	0.38	Make up deposit	-	-
403	Layer	-	0.24	Buried Subsoil	-	-
404	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
405	Cut	1.5	<1	Construction Cut	-	Post-medieval C19th? -
406	Fill	1.5	<1	Well backfill	-	Post-medieval C19th? -

Trench 5						
<b>General description</b>					<b>Orientation</b>	N-S



Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of soil, make up deposits and subsoil overlying a natural of gravel	<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	0.68				
	<b>Width (m)</b>	2				
	<b>Length (m)</b>	5				
<b>Contexts</b>						
<b>context no</b>	<b>type</b>	<b>Width (m)</b>	<b>Depth (m)</b>	<b>comment</b>	<b>finds</b>	<b>date</b>
500	Layer	-	0.3	Topsoil	-	-
501	Layer	-	0.22	Make up deposit	-	-
502	Layer	-	0.1	Make up deposit	-	-
503	Layer	-	0.08	Buried Topsoil	-	-
504	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

<b>Trench 6</b>						
<b>General description</b>	<b>Orientation</b>	N_S				
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of soil, Make up deposit and subsoil overlying a natural of gravel	<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	0.68				
	<b>Width (m)</b>	2				
	<b>Length (m)</b>	5				
<b>Contexts</b>						
<b>context no</b>	<b>type</b>	<b>Width (m)</b>	<b>Depth (m)</b>	<b>comment</b>	<b>finds</b>	<b>date</b>
600	Layer	-	0.3	Topsoil	-	-
601	Layer	-	0.06	Levelling deposit	-	-
602	Layer	-	0.36	Buried subsoil	-	-
603	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

<b>Trench 7</b>						
<b>General description</b>	<b>Orientation</b>	N-S				
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of soil, levelling deposit and subsoil overlying a natural of gravel	<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	0.75				
	<b>Width (m)</b>	2				
	<b>Length (m)</b>	5				
<b>Contexts</b>						
<b>context no</b>	<b>type</b>	<b>Width (m)</b>	<b>Depth (m)</b>	<b>comment</b>	<b>finds</b>	<b>date</b>
700	Layer	-	0.23	Topsoil	-	-
701	Layer	-	0.18	Levelling deposit	-	-
702	Layer	-	0.26	Buried subsoil	-	-
703	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

<b>Trench 8</b>		
<b>General description</b>	<b>Orientation</b>	E-W





Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of soil and subsoil overlying a natural of gravel		<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	0.46			
		<b>Width (m)</b>	2			
		<b>Length (m)</b>	5			
<b>Contexts</b>						
<b>context no</b>	<b>type</b>	<b>Width (m)</b>	<b>Depth (m)</b>	<b>comment</b>	<b>finds</b>	<b>date</b>
800	Layer	-	0.26	Topsoil	-	-
801	Layer	-	0.22	Subsoil	-	-
802	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-



## APPENDIX B. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

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## APPENDIX C. SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

<b>Site name:</b>	Grove Farm, Cookham
<b>Site code:</b>	COGRF11
<b>Grid reference:</b>	SU 900 854
<b>Type:</b>	Evaluation
<b>Date and duration:</b>	30 <sup>th</sup> August to 5 <sup>th</sup> September 2011
<b>Area of site:</b>	c. 2,000msq development area with 80msq of trenching
<b>Summary of results:</b>	No archaeology present besides post-medieval deposits and structures relating to Grove Farm
<b>Location of archive:</b>	The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with an appropriate Museum, when one becomes available.

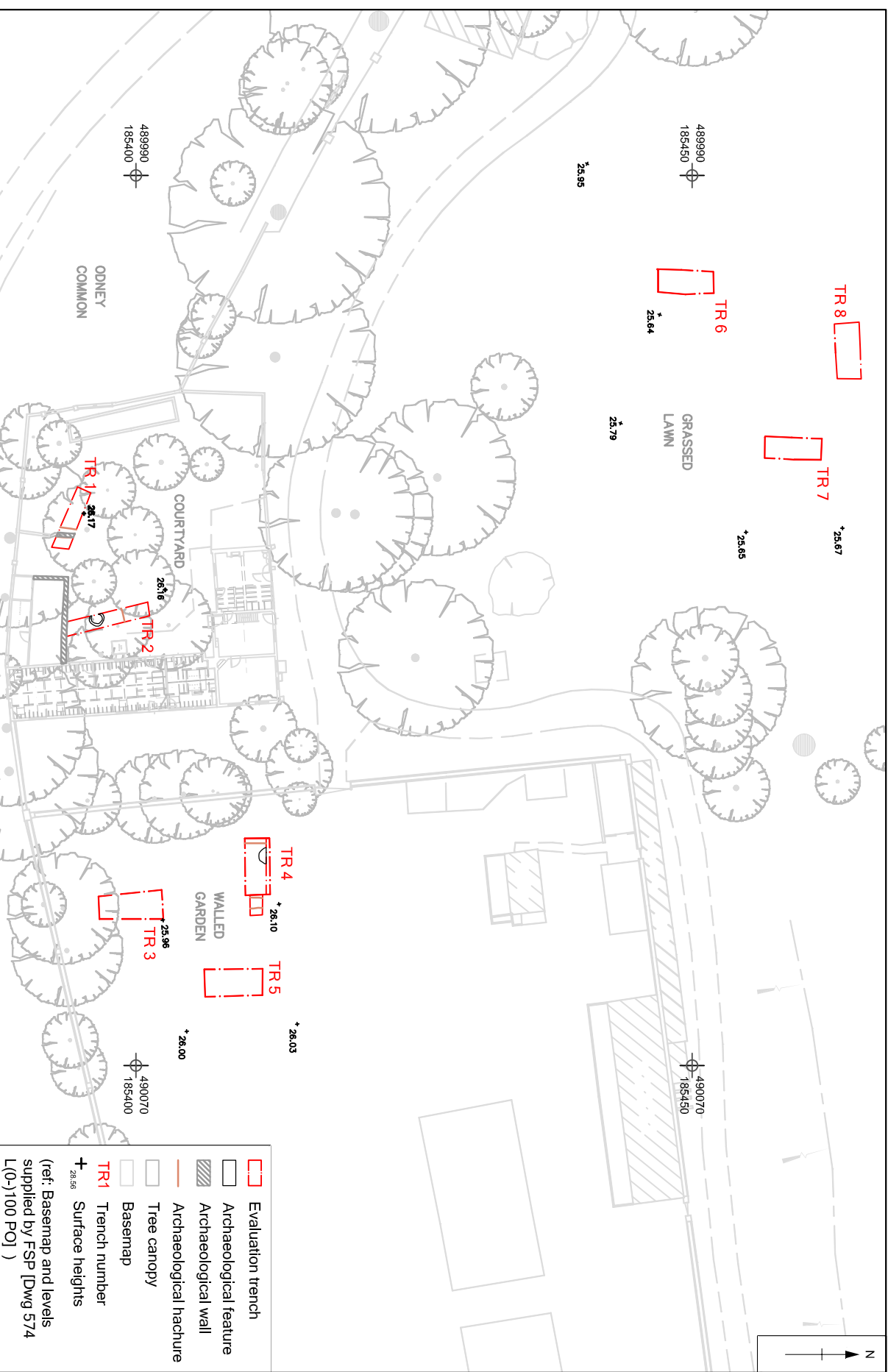




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Figure 1: Site location





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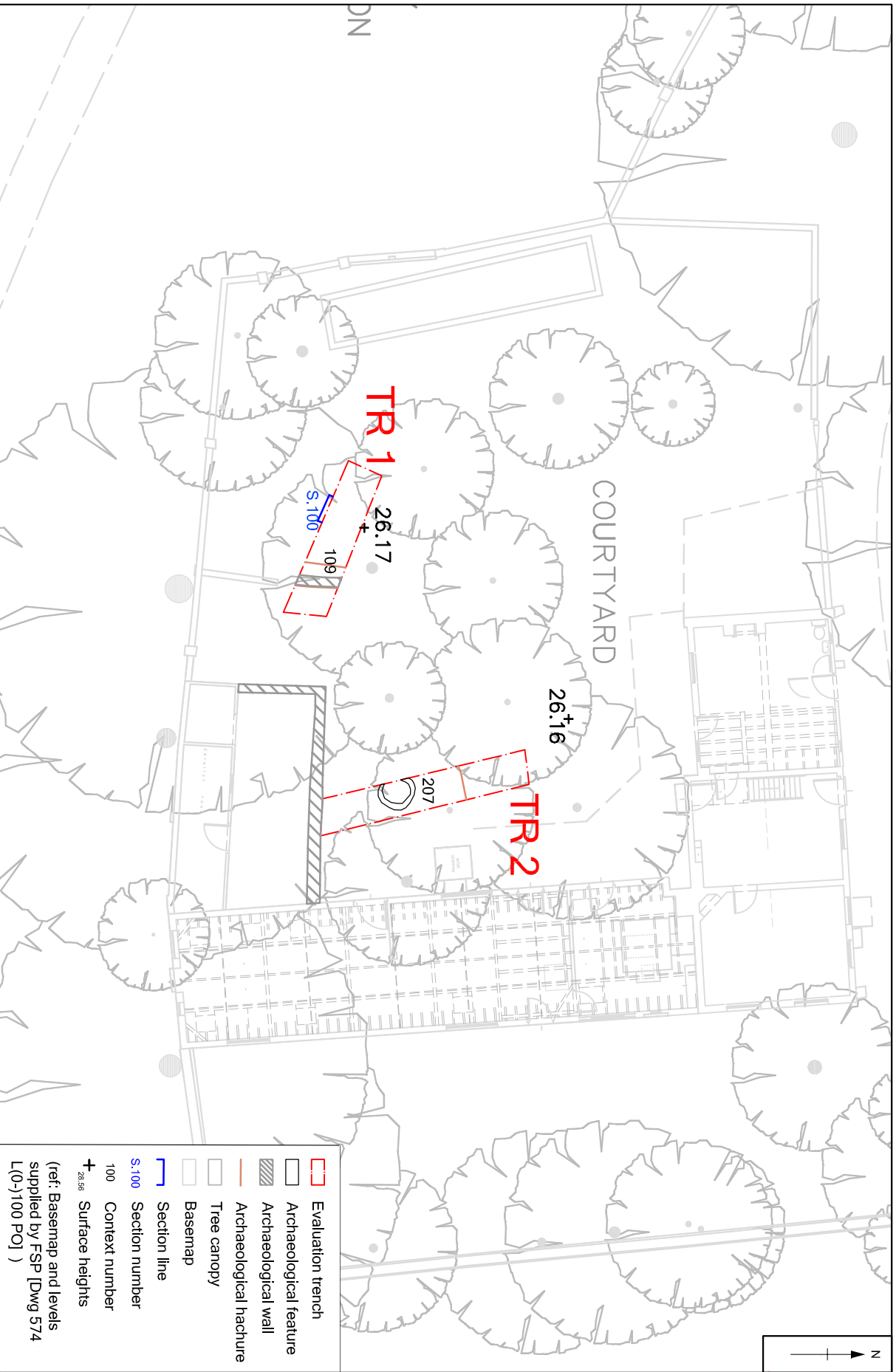
Figure 2: Trench locations

Survey Data supplied by :  
E\_Plunkett, Oxford Archaeology South

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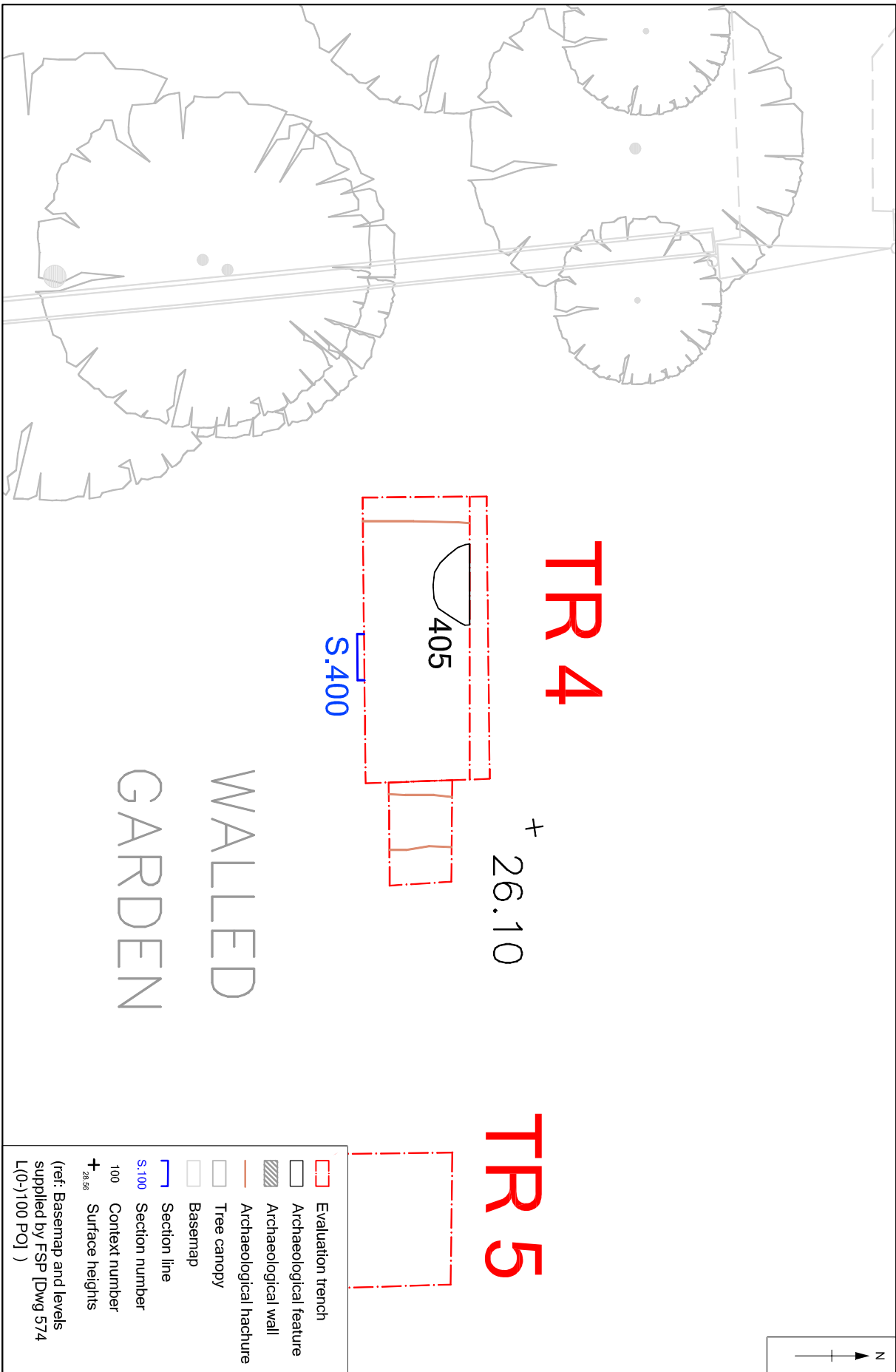
Figure 2a: Trench 1 and 2

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Figure 2b: Trench 4



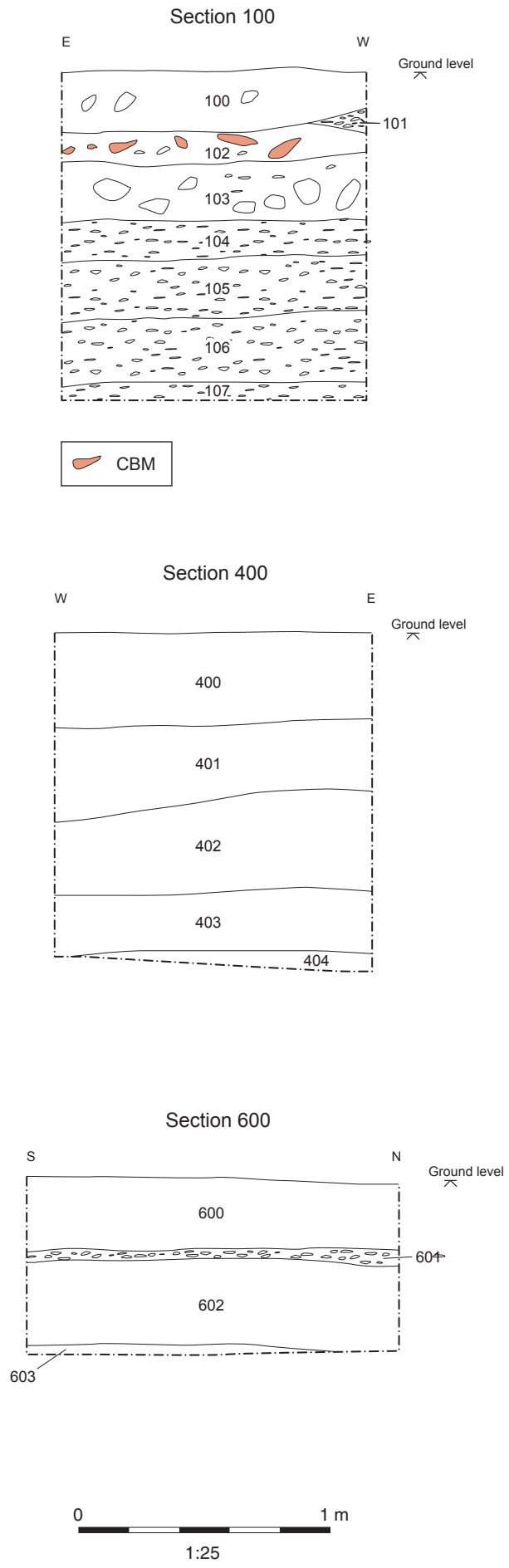


Figure 3: Sections 100, 400 and 600







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