

Land adjacent to 2 Park Lane North Newington Oxfordshire



Archaeological Watching Brief Report



May 2009

Client: Johnson Controls Ltd

Issue No: 1

OA Job No: 7045

NGR: SP 420 398

Planning Reference: 05/01912/F

Client Name: Johnson Controls Inc

Client Ref No:

Document Title: Land adjacent to 2 Park Lane, North Newington,
Oxfordshire

Document Type: Watching Brief

Issue Number: 1

National Grid Reference: NGR: SP 420 398
Planning Reference: 05/01912/F

OA Tender Number: 7045
Site Code: NONPL 06
Invoice Code: NONPLWB
Receiving Museum: Oxfordshire County Museum Service
Museum Accession No: OXCMS:2006.89

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Document File Location S:\PROJECTS\Oxfordshire OX\Cherwell CH\Banbury
BA\7045 North Newington WB\wbREOP.doc

Graphics File Location Severgo:/oaupubs 1_IthruQ*NONPL06*NONPLWB*2
Park Lane, North Newington*jm*21.05.09

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North Newington, Oxfordshire*****ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT*****CONTENTS**

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SUMMARY

In July 2006 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief on land adjacent to 2 Park Lane, North Newington, Oxfordshire (NGR: SP 420 398). The work was commissioned by Johnson Controls Inc in advance of the demolition of a garage and construction of a single new detached house and garage. The watching brief revealed a stone wall, possibly part of an earlier boundary wall and a second, later, stone wall subdividing the plot.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of work

1.1.1 In July 2006, Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at The Old School, Shenington, Oxfordshire (NGR: SP 420 398). The work was commissioned by Johnson Controls Inc in respect of a planning application for the demolition of an existing garage and the erection of a single detached house with garage (Planning Application No. 05/01912/F). Due to the potential for disturbance of archaeological deposits, a condition requiring an archaeological watching brief be undertaken during the period of groundworks was attached to the planning permission.

1.1.2 A project brief was set by Paul Smith, the County Archaeologist representing Oxfordshire County Council detailing these requirements (OCAS, 2005).

1.1.3 OA prepared a Written Scheme of Investigation detailing how it would meet the requirements of the brief (OA, 2005).

1.2 Location, geology and topography

1.2.1 The village of North Newington is located approximately 2 km west of Banbury. The development area is located close to the junction of, and lying between, School Lane to the north and Park Lane to the south. The site measures 307 square metres and is currently in use as a garage and a garden. The site lies between 121.5 m and 124.5 m above OD, sloping from the south to the north. The underlying geology is Middle Lias clays and silts (Geological Survey of Great Britain, sheet no 201).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 The archaeological background to the watching brief was prepared for the WSI for the project (OA 2006) and is reproduced below.

1.3.2 The proposed development site lies within the medieval core of North Newington. Evidence to support this was indicated by an archaeological watching brief carried out at Willow Bank, School Lane in 2003. This produced evidence of a 12th - 14th

century rubbish pit, 14th - 15th century pottery, and a probable medieval wall foundation on the frontage of School Lane.

2 PROJECT AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 To identify and record the presence or absence, extent, condition, quality, character and date of archaeological remains in the areas affected by the development.
- 2.1.2 To preserve by record any archaeological remains which the groundworks will remove or damage within the development area.
- 2.1.3 To make available the results of the archaeological investigation.

2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 The watching brief consisted of two visits to the site to monitor the progress and extent of the excavations and to record any remains exposed during the works.
- 2.2.2 These works consisted of the machine excavation of engineering trial pits, the removal of modern foundations and ground reduction.
- 2.2.3 A plan showing the extent and location of the excavations was maintained at a scale of 1:100 (Fig. 2) and where excavated their sections drawn at scales of 1:20 (Fig.3). All excavations and sections were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film. A general photographic record of the work was also made. Recording followed procedures detailed in the *OA Field Manual* (ed D Wilkinson, 1992).

3 RESULTS

3.1 Description of deposits

- 3.1.1 Prior to the excavation of the foundations an overall topsoil strip was conducted over the development area removing approximately 0.25 m depth of dark brown silty clay loam.
- 3.1.2 As part of the new construction foundations for a new retaining wall were dug along the southern edge and part way up the eastern side of the plot. This trench measured 0.8 m wide and was excavated to a maximum depth of 2.3 m.
- 3.1.3 During the excavation of the trench along the southern edge of the plot the underlying natural, a light grey clay (5) was encountered at a depth of between 0.9 m and 1.25 m below the original ground level (Fig. 3, Sections 1, 2 and 3).

- 3.1.4 Along the southern and eastern sides of the trench this was overlaid by a 0.2 m deep layer of dark grey silt clay (4) (Section 2 and 3). This possibly represents a buried soil horizon.
- 3.1.5 This layer was cut by a robber trench or possible construction cut, (7) (Fig. 2, Site plan, Sections 1 and 3). This ran parallel to the eastern boundary of the site, and returned along the southern boundary for approximately 3.5 m before terminating. The full width of this feature was not exposed in the foundation trench. The feature was filled by loose stone rubble in a clay silt matrix (6), the probable remnants from robbing out the feature.
- 3.1.6 Sealing 6 and 7 was a layer of light brown sandy silt containing angular fragments of sandstone (3). This deposit measured up to 0.75 m in depth, with the thickness decreasing towards the north and east.
- 3.1.7 Cutting this deposit was a north-south running construction cut (8) measuring 1.1 m wide and 0.4 m deep (Section 1). This appears to respect the alignment of the earlier wall represented by Cut 7. Constructed within this trench was a roughly built sandstone wall (1). The majority of the stones were very roughly dressed although occasionally faced stone was observed. This wall had been truncated down to the level of layer 3.
- 3.1.8 Sealing wall 1 and layer 3 was a layer of grey-brown sandy loam (2) (Sections 2 and 3).

3.2 Finds

- 3.2.1 Finds recovered from the surface of Layer 2 consisted of late post-medieval tile and pieces of broken brick. These were recorded and evaluated on site, but not retained. No other dating evidence was recovered.

3.3 Palaeo-environmental remains

- 3.3.1 No deposits suitable for paleo-environmental sampling were encountered during the watching brief

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1.1 The watching brief encountered a buried soil horizon (4). This probably represents a layer of worked soil. No dating evidence was recovered but it may predate the construction of No 2 Park Lane.
- 4.1.2 Cut 7 and its fill 6 represents the truncated remnants of an earlier boundary/retaining wall running round the south-eastern corner of the plot. The current plot boundaries appear to have been built outside this wall and the wall robbed out, suggesting that the earlier wall may also predate the construction of No. 2.

- 4.1.3 Layer 3 is a probable layer of made ground. No dating evidence was recovered to suggest that this is associated with the construction of No 2. Wall 1 may have been a boundary wall subdividing the plot which was demolished/truncated subsequent to the construction of No.2.
- 4.1.4 Layer 2 is a probable layer of worked soil possibly indicative of a garden soil.
- 4.1.5 No residual dating evidence or truncated medieval features were observed during the course of the watching brief.

APPENDICES**APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY**

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Depth</i>	<i>Width</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Finds</i>	<i>Date</i>
1	Structure			Truncated base of a north-south running stone wall	-	-
2	Layer	Up to 0.5 m deep	-	Subsoil/ Earlier worked soil	-	-
3	Layer	0.75 m	-	Made ground/ Landscaping layer	-	-
4	Layer	0.25 m	-	Bio-perturbation layer	-	-
5	Layer	> 1 m	-	Natural clay	-	-
6	Fill	1.45 m	> 0.3 m	Backfill of robber trench	-	-
7	Cut	1.45 m	> 0.3 m	Robber trench, possible original construction cut ?	-	-
8	Cut	0.4 m	1.1 m	Construction cut for Wall 1		

APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

- IFA, 2001 Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs
- OA, 1992 Field Manual (ed. Wilkinson D)
- OA, 2006 Land adjacent to 2 Park Lane, North Newington, Oxfordshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief
- OCAS, 2006 Land adjacent to 2 Park Lane, North Newington, Oxfordshire: Design Brief for an Archaeological Watching Brief

APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: Land adjacent to 2 Park Lane, North Newington, Oxfordshire

Site code: NONPL 06

Grid reference: SP 420 398

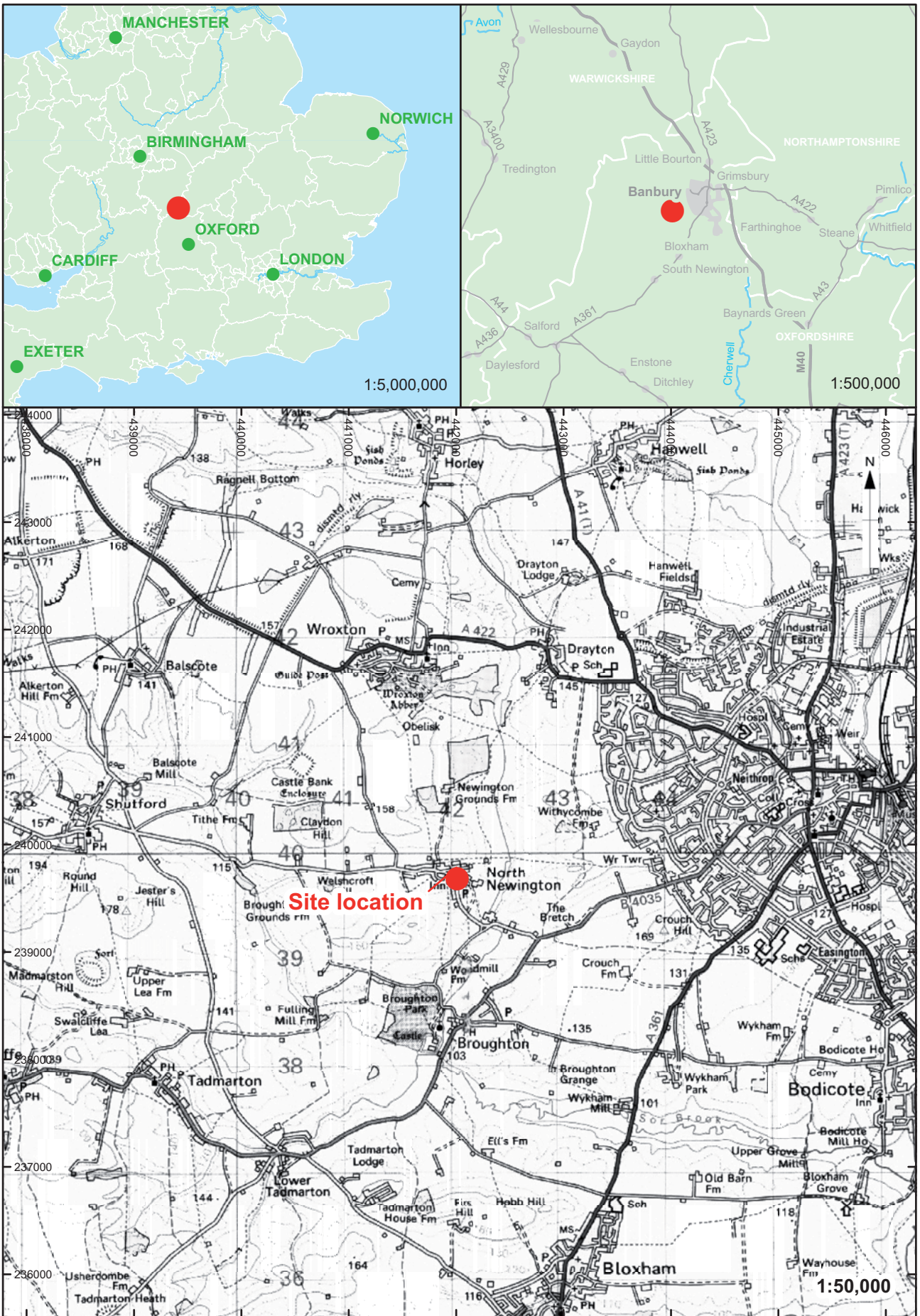
Type of watching brief: Monitoring of foundation trenches.

Date and duration of project: 1 site visit, 18/07/06

Area of site: 307 m²

Summary of results: Undated stone wall, possibly an earlier boundary wall

Location of archive: The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museums Service in due course, under the following accession number: OXCMS:2006.89



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Figure 1: Site location

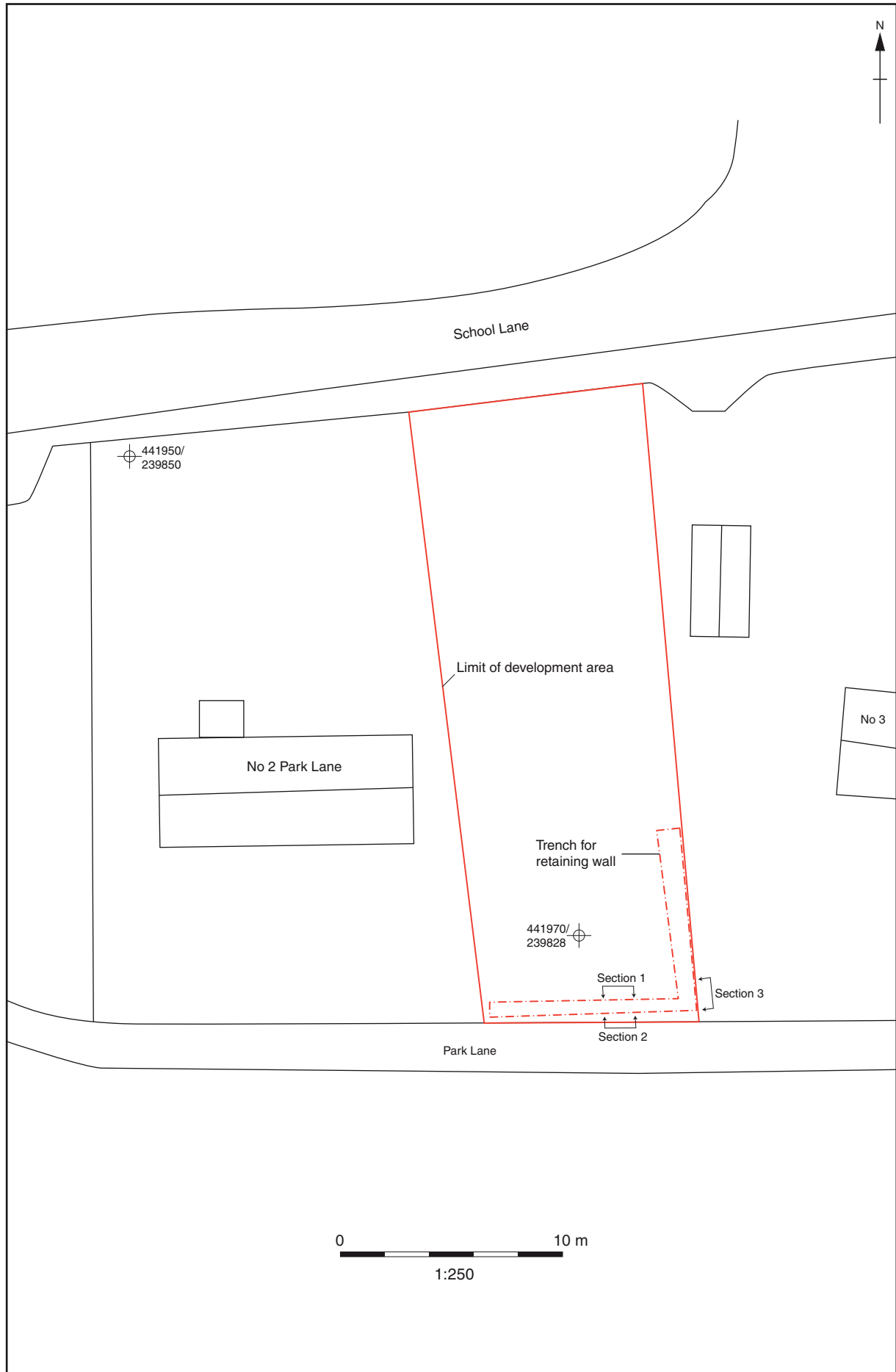
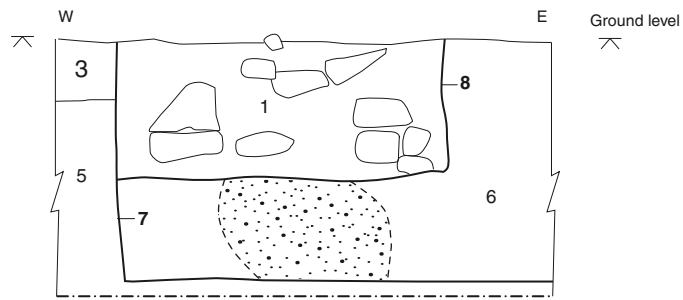


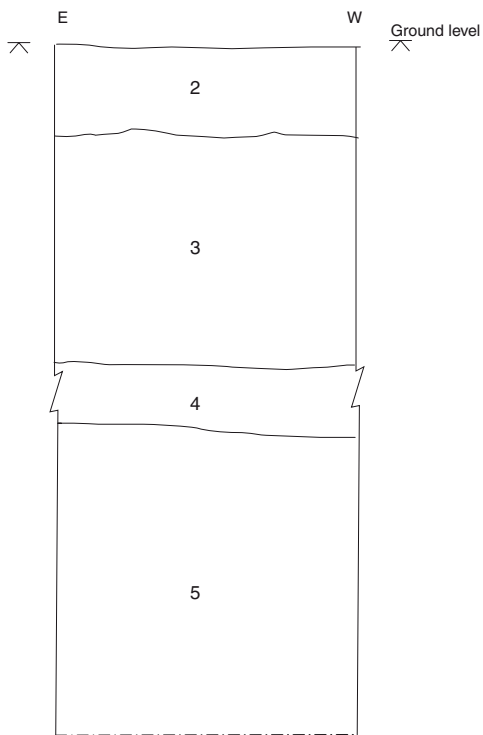
Figure 2: Site plan

Section 1



 40-50% sandstone fragments

Section 2



Section 3

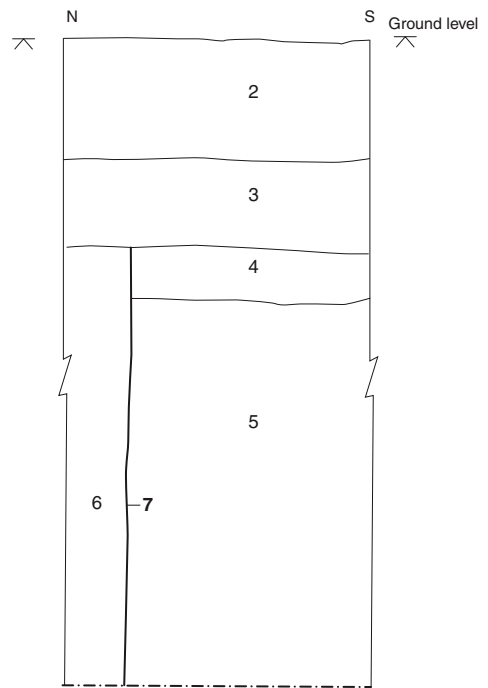


Figure 3: Sections