

# Riverside Square Bedford Bedfordshire



## Archaeological Evaluation Report



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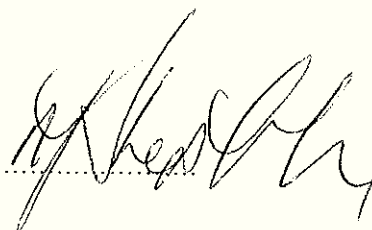
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## Riverside Square, Bedford Bedfordshire

NGR TL 04823 49584

### *ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT*

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## SUMMARY

*In May and June 2006, Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out a field evaluation at Riverside Square, Bedford, Bedfordshire (NGR TL 04823 49584) on behalf of CgMs Consulting. The evaluation revealed river terrace gravel across the site, in places capped by alluvium. Medieval cultivation or garden soils were seen across the site. Post-medieval postholes/pits, a soakaway and a possible beam slot indicated the presence of a property fronting Horne Lane; a post-medieval boundary ditch was seen to the east of the property. The concrete and brick foundations of the 19th-century Horne Lane Brewery (later known as the Charles Wells Brewery) were exposed. An iron tank and part of a tiled floor were also revealed. A large undated gravel quarry was excavated and part of a riverside structure, possibly a boathouse, was recorded.*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 In May and June 2006, Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out a field evaluation at Riverside Square, Bedford (Fig. 1) on behalf of CgMs Consulting. The work was undertaken as part of the pre-planning process for the development of the site.
- 1.1.2 A Specification for an Archaeological Evaluation was prepared by CgMs Consulting on behalf of Midlands and City Developments (CgMs 2006). The Specification was compiled following discussions with Martin Oake, County Archaeologist for Bedfordshire County Council and with advice from Midlands and City Developments. OA produced a detailed Project Design outlining how it would undertake the evaluation (OA 2006). The results of the evaluation would inform the local planning authority, Bedford Borough Council, of the archaeological potential of the site.

### 1.2 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The development site lies in the western part of the historic core of Bedford. It is sited mainly on river-borne alluvium and gravels overlying corn brash (Albion Archaeology, 2001). The site is commonly known as Riverside Square, lies at c 27 m OD and is 0.567 ha. in area.
- 1.2.2 The site is bounded by Horne Lane to the north, the Riverside House development to the east, the River Great Ouse to the south and a Salvation Army hall to the west. The present land use is as a ground level car park. Previously part of the site was occupied by a brewery that was built c 1816-18 and used by brewers Charles Wells from 1885 until the early-mid 1970s.

### 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The archaeological background to the evaluation has been the subject of a separate desk-based study undertaken by CgMs, incorporating the results of a map regression exercise (CgMs 2005), the results of which are summarised below. As part of the CgMs research, a draft version of the *Extensive Urban Survey for Bedfordshire*, undertaken on behalf of English Heritage and Bedfordshire County Council, was consulted (Albion Archaeology, 2001).
- 1.3.2 Historically the place name Bedford or 'Bedenforda' probably derives from 'Beda's Ford' – Beda being a personal name of Anglo-Saxon times. Bedford was an important trading centre in the 10th and 11th centuries when in the reign of Eadwig there were at least five moneyers in the town. Most had Anglo-Saxon names, but Grim, Gunni, and Ulcetel hint at a Danish population component. By the 14th century Bedford was primarily an agricultural-based town and was ravaged by the Black Death, such that the growth and prosperity of the town declined. After the Civil War, the River Great Ouse was made navigable throughout its length to the sea, opening Bedford up to water-borne trade with the likes of Newcastle (coal) and wood from Scandinavia. Increased river traffic brought new wharves and increased trade. Growth continued throughout the 19th century with the coming of the railways and the expansion of the Harpur Trust schools, affording relatively cheap public education to mainly middle class families; resulting in further expansion of the town (Albion Archaeology 2001).
- 1.3.3 The site is located to the west of the castle and lies within the western limits of the medieval (and possibly the Saxon) town. Speed's plan of 1610 shows a street frontage along the present Horne Lane with two buildings located within the site. Open ground is shown to the south; a similar picture is portrayed on Jeffrey's map of 1765. The enclosure map of 1795 shows two different properties under the same ownership, with allotments. The historic Saffron Ditch is depicted on this map to the east of the site. A plan of 1836 shows that the building depicted on the eastern land parcel had gone and an additional enclosure added. The 1841 map by Reynolds shows these two areas as being open ground, but with the building on the eastern area reinstated. A small boathouse structure appears to the south-east of the site, at the mouth of the channel that formed the Saffron Ditch. Mercer's map of 1876 shows buildings in the north-west corner of the site, probably associated with the cattle market further west; Horne Lane is now Commercial Road. By the time of the 1901 OS map, the Horne Lane Brewery buildings are shown on the north of the eastern land parcel, which by 1968 was largely covered with Charles Wells brewery buildings; to the west was a car park. By 1978's OS map the Brewery had gone and by 1991 the site was a market place.
- 1.3.4 The Map Regression report did not include detailed analysis of the site's archaeological context. However, it has established that the proposed development site lies to the rear of two properties fronting onto Horne Lane. These properties have

been in existence since at least 1610; the area to the rear of the properties was depicted as allotments as late as the 19th century.

- 1.3.5 The Extensive Urban Survey (for Bedford) provides a comprehensive account of the archaeological work carried out within Bedford. It shows that the development site lies within an archaeologically sensitive area, where it was thought that there would be a moderate to high potential for archaeological remains. The full extent and impact of 19th and 20th century developments and levelling were unknown, but the Survey concluded that archaeological remains could include regionally important Saxon, medieval and early post-medieval waterlogged material.
- 1.3.6 Works to straighten the river in the mid-19th century and landscaping ahead of 20th-century car parking were thought likely to have impacted on archaeological deposits. Martin Oake, County Archaeologist for Bedfordshire County Council, has highlighted the results of recent archaeological investigations on the north bank of the River Great Ouse (close to the existing bridge over the river just to the east of the site), where deep waterlogged deposits were recorded close to the river frontage.

#### 1.4 Acknowledgements

- 1.4.1 OA extends its thanks to Cathy Patrick of CgMs Consulting and Martin Oake of Bedfordshire CC for advice during the fieldwork. OA's Austin Ainsworth and Neil Lambert supervised the evaluation, which was managed by Andrew Norton.

## 2 EVALUATION AIMS

### 2.1 Aims and objectives

The aims and objectives of the evaluation were to:

- 2.1.1 Clarify the presence/absence and extent of archaeological evidence at the site.
- 2.1.2 To identify, within the constraints of the evaluation, the date, character, conditions and depth of any surviving remains within the site.
- 2.1.3 Specific aims were to establish the presence/absence of Saxon riverside activity and to determine the earliest date for properties fronting Horne Lane.

### 2.2 Planning and research framework

- 2.2.1 The field evaluation was conducted within the general parameters defined by PPG16 *Archaeology and Planning*, and Bedford Borough Council's archaeological policies.
- 2.2.2 The evaluation was carried out with reference to the East of England Regional Research Framework (Brown and Glazebrook 2000, Glazebrook 1997) and the draft Research Framework for Bedfordshire.

### 3 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Scope of fieldwork

- 3.1.1 OA's Project Design outlined a detailed methodology for each Evaluation Trench in relation to the known or predicted archaeological levels, taking into account previous land use and structures likely to be encountered. Strategies for spoil storage, preservation *in situ* issues, consultation procedures, finds retrieval and environmental sampling were also detailed in the Project Design.
- 3.1.2 Six evaluation trenches were proposed within the site, each measuring 10 m by 5 m (Fig. 2).

#### 3.2 Fieldwork methods and recording

- 3.2.1 Within each trench footprint the brick surface of the car park was removed and a breaker used to loosen the underlying tarmac surface. Modern overburden was carefully removed by mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless, or toothed bucket, as necessary. Excavation stopped at 1.2 m - 1.5 m below ground level or the top of the first significant archaeological horizon, whichever was reached first. The base of the trench was cleaned by hand.
- 3.2.2 If the archaeological horizon was not revealed within the upper 1.5 m of the trench, a stepped area was mechanically excavated at the base of the Trench, down to the top of the archaeological horizon or to natural geology whichever was reached first. All machine work was under archaeological supervision.
- 3.2.3 The trenches were cleaned by hand and the revealed features were sampled to determine their extent and nature, and to retrieve finds and environmental samples. All archaeological features were planned and where excavated their sections drawn at scales of 1:20. All features were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film. Recording followed procedures detailed in the *OAU Fieldwork Manual* (ed. D Wilkinson, 1992).

#### 3.3 Finds

- 3.3.1 Finds were recovered by hand during the course of the excavation and bagged by context. Finds of special interest were given a unique small find number. The Finds are reported in 5.2 below.

### 4 RESULTS: GENERAL

#### 4.1 Soils and ground conditions

- 4.1.1 The site is located on river terrace gravel overlain by cultivated soils. No evidence for waterlogged deposits was revealed, the natural gravel was exposed at 25.2 m OD (1.3 m below ground level) in the north of the site and 24.8 m OD (1.9 m below ground level) in the south.

- 4.1.2 The upper levels of the stratigraphic sequence comprised make up for the present car park and material from the brewery buildings demolished in the 1970s.

## 5 RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS

### 5.1 Trench descriptions

#### *Trench 1 (Figs 3 and 5)*

- 5.1.1 Trench 1 was located in the north of the site and aligned W-E. It was excavated to investigate the survival of any properties fronting Horne Lane and locate any structures associated with the brewery. It was excavated to a general depth of 1.2 m below ground level (BGL), or 25.3 m OD. A machine dug trench was excavated at the eastern end to investigate deeper deposits. Natural sand and gravel (1019) was revealed at 25.2 m OD (1.3 m BGL).
- 5.1.2 The gravel was overlain at the east end of the trench by a 0.19 m thick layer of undated sandy mortar (1018), possibly the remains of a floor surface. This was overlain by an undated clay layer (1025) or feature fill that was 0.37 m thick. The mortar was also overlain by an extensive soil layer (1002) that was observed throughout the trench. This was probably a garden soil, up to 0.65 m thick that contained pottery of late 17th/18th century date and a small quantity of iron slag.
- 5.1.3 The clay was cut by two pits or large postholes (1022 and 1020) that measured *c* 1 m wide and 0.5 m deep, and were filled by undated silts (1021, 1023 and 1024). The upper fill of pit 1022 was cut by a third pit/posthole (1005 - not excavated) that was of similar width. Pottery dating from the 17th -18th century was recovered from the upper levels of its fill (1006). A fourth pit/posthole (1007) cut 1006, and also measured *c* 1 m wide and 0.5 m deep. It was filled by clay (1008) that contained residual pottery of 13th or 14th-century date and animal bone.
- 5.1.4 A stone-lined well or soakaway (1009), in the NW corner of the Trench, measured 1.48 m wide and 0.98 m deep. The fill (1004) contained pottery dated from *c* 1710 to 1750, early-mid 18th-century clay pipe and 14 pieces of iron slag, indicative of limited industrial activity.
- 5.1.5 A small linear L-shaped slot (1016) that extended outside the trench was observed to the south. It was 1.5 m long and 0.3 m wide, the fill (1017) was an undated reddish-brown silty clay. The function of the feature was unclear but it may be the remains of a beam-slot for a small structure.
- 5.1.6 The remaining features in the trench were service trenches (1010 and 1012) and a modern concrete raft (1015). These were overlain by make-up layers for the present car park (1001).



**Trench 2 (Figs 3 and 6)**

- 5.1.7 Trench 2 was located in the NE part of the site and aligned NW-SE. It was designed to evaluate the survival of features immediately behind any properties fronting Horne Lane, and locate the northern extent of any structures associated with the brewery. The trench was excavated to an average depth of 25.6 m OD (1.2 m BGL). Natural gravel (2011) was revealed at 25.1 m OD (1.6 m BGL) within a machine excavated slot at the western end of the trench.
- 5.1.8 The gravel was sealed by an undated layer of sandy clay (2002), presumably an early soil as seen in Trench 1. To the west end of the trench was a NNW-SSE aligned ditch (2003) that was 2.2 m wide and around 1.1 m deep. It had steep sides and a concave profile and extended outside the trench limits. It was filled by a silty clay (2004) that contained animal bone and metal. A single sherd of very abraded medieval pottery and a piece of post-medieval roof tile were recovered by sieving. The pottery is likely to be residual. The ditch was possibly a boundary to the east of tenements fronting Horne Lane.
- 5.1.9 In the east end of the trench was the cut for a large metal tank (2009) with attachment for a conduit. This structure is probably part of the brewery arrangement that once stood on the site. The cut had been infilled with gravel (2010) that was overlain by a concrete raft (2008). A modern service trench (2005) cut this - the whole trench sequence was overlain by car-park make-up (2001).

**Trench 3 (Figs 3 and 7)**

- 5.1.10 Trench 3 was located within the centre of the southern part of site. It was aligned NE-SW and designed to evaluate the survival of a 19th-century structure, and backyard features/riverside industry associated with the western structure fronting Horne Lane. The trench was excavated to an average depth of 1.1 m BGL (25.6 m OD), a machine and hand excavated sondage was located to the south to evaluate deeper deposits. Alluvium overlying natural gravel was revealed at 24.9 m OD (1.8 m BGL).
- 5.1.11 The alluvium was overlain a layer of very dark grey clay (3018 - not illustrated) up to 0.56 m in thickness. Above lay a thin spread of dark brown silty clay (3021) that contained early 20th-century pottery and 19th-century clay pipe fragments.
- 5.1.12 Layer 3021 was cut by a series of construction cuts and rubble layers for structures that formed part of the brewery. At the northern part of the trench these comprised a concrete wall footing or possibly a path (3019). This was cut by the construction cut for a concrete floor equipped with a gutter (3016 and 3015).
- 5.1.13 Probably contemporary with 3019 was the cut for a concrete pillar (3009) and a stone floor (3006); there was a suggestion that 3006 may have sealed a backfilled structure, possibly a cellar.

5.1.14 Pillar 3009 was truncated by the foundation trench for a concrete raft or floor (3008), in turn cut by the foundation for concrete layer 3005 upon which a white tiled floor (3004 - not illustrated) had been laid.

5.1.15 Layers of building debris (3013) and demolition rubble (3017) overlaid the deposits. A modern service trench (3022) cut both the tiled floor and concrete 3016, the trench was sealed by the car park and make-up (3001).

#### **Trench 4 (Figs 4 and 7)**

5.1.16 Trench 4 was located in the SE corner of site, aligned NW-SE. It was designed to evaluate the survival of a 19th-century boathouse and backyard features/riverside industry associated with the eastern structure fronting Horne Lane. The trench was on average 0.8 m deep (26 m OD), sondages were excavated in the northern end to evaluate deeper deposits.

5.1.17 A layer of grey clay (4010) was revealed at 24.7 m OD (2.1 m BGL), geotechnical investigations demonstrated that it was more than 1.26 m thick and probably formed by natural river silting. This was overlain by a spread of mixed red bricks, yellow mortar and limestone pieces (4003), measuring 0.5 m wide and at least 2.7 m in length. This was probably a truncated wall foundation, possibly associated with a demolished boathouse by the river edge.

5.1.18 The possible footing was overlain by a layer of grey silty clay (4002) containing oyster shells, brick fragments, lenses of yellow clay and gravel. Two sherds of 18th-century pottery were recovered from the deposit. The layer was 1.9 m thick extending the length of the trench and appears to have been deliberately dumped to raise the ground level. An undated copper alloy disc was also recovered.

5.1.19 Layer 4002 was cut by a linear trench (4006) interpreted as a robbing event. The trench was between 0.5 and 1 m wide and at least 7 m long, within the confines of the evaluation trench. Its fill (4007) was a mix of 18th- or 19th-century red bricks, mortar and pebbles; some of the bricks appeared to have remained *in situ*. The robbed wall may also have been associated with the post-medieval/Victorian boathouse. The brickwork had been cut by a later modern service trench (4008) making interpretation difficult.

5.1.20 Layer 4002 was also cut by a foundation trench for a modern brick wall (4005) bonded with hard grey mortar - possibly a wall associated with the former brewery. All the structures and the service trench fill were sealed by make-up deposits for the car park (4001).

#### **Trench 5 (Figs 4 and 8)**

5.1.21 Trench 5 was aligned NE-SW in the SW corner of site. It was designed to evaluate the presence of Saxon riverside remains, and the survival of backyard features/riverside industry associated with the eastern structure fronting Horne Lane.

The trench was 1.5 m deep (25.3 m OD), with a sondage in the centre to evaluate deeper deposits. Natural gravel (5010) was revealed at 24.8 m OD (1.9 m BGL).

- 5.1.22 Gravel 5010 was overlain by two layers of clay silts (5007 and 5004) with a combined thickness of 0.56 m. Layer 5004 was overlain by a thick layer of mixed clay silts (5003) that contained pottery of late-12th to early 13th century date and animal bone. The soils were probably part of a cultivation/garden soil seen throughout the site.
- 5.1.23 A further undated soil layer (5002) sealed this, in turn overlain by modern layers of gravelly and silty clays (5006 then 5005). A modern service trench (5008) was also noted beneath car park material (5001).

### ***Trench 6 (Figs 4 and 8)***

- 5.1.24 Trench 6 was aligned NW-SE and located in the NW corner of site. It was designed to evaluate the survival of 19th-century structures associated with the Cattle Market, and backyard features to the rear of the western structure fronting Horne Lane. The trench was excavated to an average depth of 1.3 m BGL (25.09) where natural gravel (6013) was revealed. A sondage was excavated at the SE end of the trench to evaluate deeper deposits.
- 5.1.25 Gravel (6013) was cut by a large pit (6004), measuring 5 m in diameter and 1.96 m deep, with concave sides leading to a flat base. The pit was infilled with successive bands or tip lines of gravel, sandy gravels and silt clay layers (6005 - 6012 and 6018-6021), none of which produced any dating evidence. The pit was probably dug for gravel extraction.
- 5.1.26 Of note was fill 6011 that contained a concentration of charcoal - this was probably remnants of domestic waste tipped in a convenient location. Pit fill 6012 above contained cess-like material. The final fill of the gravel pit (6018) was sealed by a layer of red-brown sandy clay (6016 - not illustrated) containing stones and pebbles, probably a former topsoil deposit. A layer of silty clay with roots (6015 - not illustrated) overlay this. Above lay a rubble deposit sealed by another layer of silty clay garden -type soil. Car park material capped the sequence.

## **5.2 Finds**

### ***The pottery by John Cotter (OA)***

- 5.2.1 A total of 107 sherds of pottery weighing 1756g was recovered from ten contexts. All of this material is of medieval and post-medieval date - mostly the latter. All the pottery was examined and spot-dated, with reference to the Bedfordshire Ceramic Type Series, which is maintained by Albion Archaeology. See Table 1 below.
- 5.2.2 The pottery was generally in a fresh condition with medium to large sherds being common. The post-medieval assemblage included two or three re-constructable

profiles. The medieval material included a few worn sherds, though in general was also quite fresh.

- 5.2.3 The earliest pottery consists of early medieval shelly wares, probably of fairly local origin and with a potential date range from the 11th to early 14th century. The earlier pieces, including cooking pots and at least one bowl, are tempered with abundant finely crushed fossil shell. The fabric is visually similar to St Neots-type ware - the predominant late Saxon wheel-thrown tradition of the south-east Midlands during the period *c* 850-1150.
- 5.2.4 The early medieval wheel-thrown forms present here almost certainly evolved out of this tradition. On typological grounds and associated evidence, however, none of the pottery here is likely to date before the 12th century. One cooking pot rim has typical early medieval thumbled decoration and appears to be handmade rather than wheel-thrown. Within Bedfordshire shelly wares of similar appearance are known to have been made at Harrold in both the Roman and early medieval periods, and perhaps also in the late Saxon period.
- 5.2.5 A second type of shelly ware fabric here is much harder-fired and thinner-walled and contains finer and sparser shell. This is probably a later, 13th to 14th-century, development and has some similarity with fabrics from the Olney Hyde kilns in north Buckinghamshire.
- 5.2.6 Also present, and sometimes in association with the shelly wares, are sherds of cooking pots in a fine grey sandy ware. This is also likely to be a fairly local product and would appear to date from around the late 12th to the 14th century. At least one jug rim in 13th-14th century Brill/Boarstall ware from west Buckinghamshire is also present. This is a fairly common type in Bedfordshire.
- 5.2.7 However, the bulk of the pottery recovered is of post-medieval date with local and regional wares of the first half of the 18th century being particularly well represented. These include well-known tablewares from Staffordshire, Nottingham and London and a single piece each of German Frechen stoneware and Chinese porcelain. No later (post-1780) Staffordshire types are present.
- 5.2.8 All these later contexts also produced residual medieval pottery. No obvious 19th-century wares are present although there is a single piece of industrial ceramic, possibly an electrical insulator, of early 20th-century date.

Table 1: Pottery by context and date

Ctx	Spot-date	Sherds	Wt	Comments
1002	L17-18C	29	229	Mixed dates. 11x post-med red earthenwares (PMRE) incl 3 jar rims. Speckled 18C-style brown glaze on some. 1x green glazed post-med in buffer fabric. Residual but fresh med greyware bss. thin-walled wheel-thrown (not Roman). 5x early med poss Olney-type shellywares incl ?12-E13C thickened bowl rim (v large diam)
1004	c1710-1750	46	814	1x intrusive 20C frag asbestos (extracted, see CBM). Mostly 18C pot, large fresh sherds incl prob 1-2 profiles. Incl 1x Staffs-type white-slipped pale grey salt-glazed stoneware c1710+. 2x tin-glazed incl dish rim w polychrome dec. 1x small ?saucer rim Chinese porcelain. Staffs slipware small brown-spotted cup or jar base. Early-style Nottingham stoneware bowl & tankard handle. Brown iron-speckled Midlands ware, PMRE. 1x bs Frechen stoneware. 3-4 medieval incl Olney, greyware & 1x poss unglz Brill/Boarstall?
1005	L16-17C	7	104	2x joining PMRE jug rim, squared with neck cordon, unglz except splash on shoulder. Rest med prob L13-14C incl 3 joining Olney-type thin-walled ?jug bss with fine shell. 2x local fine greyware sagging cspot base
1006	18C	1	57	Rim Staffs combed slipware dish
1008	13-14C	4	80	Prob Olney-type shellywares, sagging cspot bases & 1 bs
2004	13C+	1	2	From sieved sample <3> ditch fill. Date on scrap med/post-med roof tile (extracted). 1x v worn bs pot - St Neots-type ware c850-1150 or similar 11-13C shelly ware
3021	E20C	2	206	Mod brown salt-glazed stoneware knob-like object with screw thread inside ?electrical insulator or sanitary element such as drainpipe inspection cover or water filter accessory 'No. 90' stamped on side, reddish deposit on screw thread. 1x v worn PMRE base
4002	18C	2	67	1x 18C Midlands-type brown iron-mottled ware bs. 1x 13-14C jug rim with slashed handle in Brill/Boarstall ware, splash of green glz on handle
5003	L12-E13C	13	188	4x wheel-thrown local grey sandywares incl cspot rim. Mostly early med shellyware, mostly 2 vess, incl 2 cspot rims - 1 thumbbed (int/ext) poss handmade. Other paler brown wheelthrown with simple thickened/clubbed rim & finer shell - Olney?
5004	18C	2	9	1x 18C Midlands-type brown iron-mottled ware bs, prob tankard? 1x 12-14C shellyware bs
<b>Total</b>		<b>107</b>	<b>1756</b>	

### *The Clay Pipes by John Cotter (OA)*

- 5.2.9 A total of fourteen pieces of clay pipe weighing 66g was recovered from three contexts. As with the pottery, most of these were from the fill of a soakaway (1004) and consist of a mixture of late 17th and 18th-century bowl fragments and stems. Apart from a complete pipe bowl of c 1680-1720, all the material is fairly fragmentary.
- 5.2.10 One stem fragment, probably of late 17th- or early 18th-century date, bears a circular maker's mark which appears to include the initial 'WS'. None of the pipe fragments need be later than the 18th century, and certainly there are no obvious 19th-century pieces present.

***Ceramic Building Material by Cynthia Poole (OA)***

- 5.2.11 Ceramic building material amounting to 28 fragments and weighing 1970 g was recovered from six contexts. The assemblage is summarised in Table 2 below. The fabrics were broadly characterised with the aid of x10 hand lens and divided into sandy/gritty (1, 4, 6, 7), vesicular (3), shelly (2) and laminated with clay pellets (5).
- 5.2.12 The assemblage was dominated by roof tile, mainly flat tile ranging in thickness from 12 to 14 mm. Two pieces had perforations of 6 and 11 mm diameter, possibly for nails rather than wooden pegs, suggesting a late post-medieval date. Overall the roof tiles ranged from medieval to 19th century in date. The medieval tiles were more crudely made, of greater thickness and with variation in the quality of finish. The post-medieval were more standardised, even and regular. In addition there was a single fragment each of ridge tile of medieval date and pantile of 19th-century date.
- 5.2.13 Three fragments of brick, all post medieval, were recovered from context 4002. One measured 100 mm wide by 58 mm thick and had longitudinal pressure marks from stacking. This is a typical characteristic of 18th-19th-century bricks.
- 5.2.14 A fragment of asbestos was found in context 1004 mixed with earlier building materials. Asbestos was not produced until after c 1910.
- 5.2.15 Most of the material derives from post-medieval structures, no doubt relating to building/demolition activity in the area. Fragments of roof tile from Trenches 3 and 5 indicate the possible presence of earlier structures in the medieval period. The brick and roofing material from Trench 4 indicated an 18th- or 19th-century date for the structure.

*Table 2: CBM by context*

Cntxt	Nos	Wt (g)	Fab	Form	Date of Obj
1002	2	25	1	Roof: flat	Late Med-early PM
1002	2	43	1	Roof: flat	Late Med-early PM
1004	2	15	1	Unid	Med-PM
1004	4	535	3	Roof: flat	Late Med - PMed
1004	1	140	3.1	Roof: flat	Late Med - PMed
1004	1	22	3	Roof: flat	18th-19th C
1004	1	6	Asbestos		20th C
2004	1	3	7?	Roof: flat	Med-PM
3021	1	15	2	Roof: ridge	Med
3021	1	25	3	Roof: pantile	19th C
3021	1	14	7	Roof: flat	Med-PM
4002	4	238	3	Roof: flat	PMed
4002	3	154	4	Roof: flat	PMed
4002	1	644	5	Brick	PMed
4002	1	9	5	Brick?	PMed
4002	1	30	6	Brick	L18th-19th C
5004	1	52	2	Roof: flat	Med

***Fired Clay, Shell, Glass and Slag by Rose Grant (OA)***

5.2.16 A total of three unidentified fragments of fired clay were recovered. One fragment from context 1008 weighing 8 grams and 2 fragments from context 6018 weighing 15 grams. One fragment of shell was recovered from context 4002 weighing 16 grams. A total of five fragments of glass were recovered from site. One from context 1004 and four from context 3021. All five fragments are post-medieval bottle glass. A total of 17 fragments of slag were recovered from site. Table 3 quantifies slag per context.

*Table 3: Iron slag by context*

Context	Fragment Count	Weight (grams)
1002	2	27
1004	14	366
5004	1	56

***Animal bones by Lena Strid (OA)***

- 5.2.17 A total of 72 animal bones were recovered (Table 4). Most bones were in a good condition. Burnt bones were absent, and only one bone displayed gnaw marks. The bone assemblage seems to be household refuse.
- 5.2.18 The predominance of cattle and sheep/goat in the assemblage is to be considered normal, regardless of time period. The presence of dogs is evidenced by gnaw marks on a cattle pelvis. Of the eleven sheep/goat bones, two bones - a skull and a metacarpal - could be determined to be sheep. Judging by the epiphyseal fusion, the cattle and sheep/goat bones derived from adult animals. The fowl ulna derived from a juvenile bird.
- 5.2.19 Butchering marks were found on seven bones. Horizontal cut marks were found proximally on a sheep metacarpal, indicating skinning. A rib from a large mammal had been sawn off mid-rib. Cut marks were found mid-rib on ribs from medium and large mammals.
- 5.2.20 A vertebra from a large mammal had a cut mark on the dorsal spine. This suggests the filleting of meat. A pig atlas displayed cut marks suggesting removal of the head. Pathologies were found on two cattle bones. A skull displayed woven bone growth at the orbit, which suggests an infection.
- 5.2.21 There was some bone absorption on the edge of the glenoid surface on a scapula. The aetiology for this is uncertain. Full tabulated analysis of the assemblage is with the project archive.

Table 4: Bone assemblage: number of bones and weight per context.

Context	Species	No. of bones (refitted)	Sum of weight (g)
1002	Cattle	5	303
	Pig	1	3
	Large mammal	1	3
	Indeterminate	3	45
1004	Cattle	4	360
	Sheep	1	116
	Sheep/goat	5	46
	Pig	1	9
	Fowl	2	0
	Medium mammal	6	19
	Large mammal	3	126
	Indeterminate	5	14
1008	Pig	1	61
	Medium mammal	1	2
2004	Pig	1	9
	Medium mammal	1	3
	Large mammal	2	36
	Indeterminate	4	5
4002	Cattle	1	85
	Sheep	1	15
	Pig	1	13
	Medium mammal	3	3
	Large mammal	2	35
5003	Medium mammal	2	6
	Large mammal	4	57
	Indeterminate	2	6
5004	Sheep/goat	4	22
6015	Pig	1	13
6018	Cattle	1	16
	Large mammal	1	92

### ***The Metalwork by Ian Scott (OA)***

- 5.2.22 The metalwork assemblage comprises 13 fragments, and probably 12 objects. Ten objects are of iron and two of copper alloy. A piece of an iron pan from Trench 1 (Ctx 1004) has been omitted from the discussion. Six objects, including one copper alloy fragment were from Trench 1, one object from trench 2, four objects from Trench 3 and one object from Trench 4.
- 5.2.23 *Trench 1* - the finds come from dumped deposit 1002 (one nail) and soakaway fill 1004 (two nails, two frying pan fragments, and two sheet fragments, one copper alloy). None of the objects is closely datable.
- 5.2.24 *Trench 2* - the single metal find is an encrusted fragment of a possible washer from ditch fill 2004. It is not closely datable.
- 5.2.25 *Trench 3* - the metal finds are all from soil horizon 3021 and comprise part of a handle, probably modern, two rod fragments and a nail stem.



- 5.2.26 *Trench 4* - the single find from context soil 4002 is a copper alloy disc, or possibly a coin. There are no clear impressions on either face of the disc. None of these objects need date earlier than the 19th century.

#### ***The Flint by Rebecca Devaney (OA)***

- 5.2.27 A single flint flake was recovered from a dumped clay layer (1002). The flake has suffered moderate post-depositional damage, in particular to the left side of the dorsal surface, and has a slight distal break.
- 5.2.28 The clear bulb of percussion and pronounced ripples on the ventral surface suggest the flake has been hard hammer struck and may therefore date from later prehistory.

### **5.3 Palaeo-environmental remains**

- 5.3.1 A total of five samples were taken from five contexts (See Appendix 2, below). In general, little of value can be said from the contents of samples of uncertain date or mixed provenance. As a result only two samples were processed.
- 5.3.2 Charred plant remains were well preserved in Sample 3 (from boundary ditch fill 2004). No cereal chaff was identified and the character of the assemblage suggests this is the remains of domestic activity rather than crop processing. The residue also contained small fragments of pottery, animal bone and both tap and fuel ash slag. Sample 1 (from layer 5003) contained abundant cattle and occasional fish bones, pottery, tap and fuel ash slag - again indicative of domestic refuse.

## **6 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION**

### **6.1 Reliability of field investigation**

- 6.1.1 The fieldwork was undertaken in good weather conditions with no significant rainfall. Despite the proximity of the River Great Ouse the water table was only encountered in Trench 5, below the lowest archaeological horizon. The depths of the trenches was less than had been anticipated, any deeper deposits were investigated through the use of stepped excavations/sondages.
- 6.1.2 Due to the presence of services the orientation of Trenches 4 and 5 deviated from that proposed by the WSI. Services and large concrete foundations also limited the space available in which to conduct deeper investigations.

### **6.2 Overall interpretation**

- 6.2.1 River terrace gravel was noted across the whole site. To the south of the site it was overlain by river silts and river alluvium, indicating that the river has been wider than in the recent past. Limited evidence of prehistoric activity was noted in the form of a flint flake.
- 6.2.2 No evidence of Roman or Saxon occupation was recovered from the trenches. Cultivation or garden soils with pottery of 12th-13th century date indicate that there

was certainly medieval activity here. It is likely that the land was pasture on the very outskirts of the medieval town, the pottery and roof tile derived from manuring. It is possible that the finds originated from a property to the north. An undated mortar surface was revealed within Trench 1 that was overlain by a 17th or 18th century garden soil.

- 6.2.3 Evidence for a 17th or 18th century structure was represented by large postholes or pits, a soakaway and possible beam slot within Trench 1. These were probably associated with a property fronting Horne Lane, perhaps the eastern property shown on Speed's map of 1610. The undated ditch in Trench 2 is perhaps a boundary ditch on the eastern side of this property. Dating evidence was limited, but it was probably of post-medieval date. The large quarry pit in Trench 6 was undated but could be associated with the western property.
- 6.2.4 An 18th- or 19th-century brick footing and a robber trench were revealed in Trench 4. These probably related to a boathouse structure seen on the 1884 and 1901 OS maps. This was later demolished and the ground level raised prior to further buildings being constructed. Maps indicate that the 20th-century brewery extended closer to the river, so the modern brick wall is probably associated with the later brewery buildings.
- 6.2.5 The brick footings, concrete/metal structures (including a type of holding tank) and tiled floor, seen within the eastern half of the site, all relate to the Brewery. The limited exposures and the lack of close dating evidence precludes detailed interpretation.
- 6.2.6 The pottery assemblage indicates activity from the 12th-14th centuries followed by an apparent dearth of activity until the post-medieval period; structures probably fronted Horne Lane from at least the 17th century. The hiatus could be an indicator of the effects of the 14th-century Black Death, when the town contracted.
- 6.2.7 The absence of Victorian pottery in the assemblage could suggest that the construction of the modern car park (with its deep make up layers) has removed much of the archaeology associated with 19th-century brewery.
- 6.2.8 The animal bone assemblage is indicative of domestic activities, as might be expected of a sub-urban site - there was no evidence for animal husbandry or slaughtering from the assemblage. The environmental evidence is likewise indicative of domestic refuse, with little sign of crop processing.

## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench	Context	Type	Width (m)	Thick/depth (m)	Finds	Date	Comments
1	1001	Layer		0.42			Carpark material
1	1002	Layer		0.65	Pot, CBM, glass, bone, Fe, Flint	L17-18th	Clay layer
1	1003	cut	1.4	0.98			cut for 1009
1	1004	fill		0.98	Pot, clay pipe, CBM, glass, slag, bone, Fe, Cu	1710-50	fill of 1009
1	1005	cut	1.2	0.55	pot	L16-17th	pit
1	1006	fill		0.55	pot	18th	fill of 1006
1	1007	cut	0.96	0.32			pit
1	1008	fill		0.32	Pot, fired clay, bone	13-14th	fill of 1007
1	1009	fill		0.9			stone lining of 1003/soakaway
1	1010	cut					modern service trench
1	1011	fill					in 1010
1	1012	cut					modern service trench
1	1013	fill					in 1012
1	1014	cut					cut for concrete raft
1	1015	structure					concrete raft in 1014
1	1016	cut					cut for wooden beam?
1	1017	fill					un-excavated beamslot
1	1018	Layer		0.19			mortar floor/layer
1	1019	layer					natural river gravel
1	1020	cut	0.38	0.5			pit
1	1021	fill		0.55			fill of 1020
1	1022	cut		0.53			pit
1	1023	fill		0.32			fill of 1022
1	1024	fill		0.2			lower fill in 1023
1	1025	deposit		0.37			?layer
2	2001	Layer		0.4			Carpark material
2	2002	Layer		0.7			Soil horizon
2	2003	cut	2.2	1.09			Ditch/boundary
2	2004	fill		1.09	Pot, CBM, bone, Fe	13th+	fill of 2003
2	2005	cut					modern service trench
2	2006	fill					in 2005
2	2007	cut	4				construction cut for tank 2009
2	2008	structure					concrete cap over 2009
2	2009	structure					metal holding tank
2	2010	deposit					gravel in 2007
2	2011	Layer					natural river gravel
3	3001	Layer		0.3			Carpark material
3	3002	Layer					natural river gravel
3	3003	cut					cut for concrete raft
3	3004	Layer					tiled floor
3	3005	Layer					concrete layer
3	3006	Layer					stone? Floor
3	3007	Layer	0.7				cut for concrete path/wall
3	3008	Layer					concrete raft
3	3009	cut					cut for pillar 3012
3	3010	fill					fill of 3009

Trench	Context	Type	Width (m)	Thick/depth (m)	Finds	Date	Comments
3	3011	fill					fill of 3009
3	3012	structure					concrete pillar
3	3013	Layer					building debris
3	3014	cut					cut for floor 3015
3	3015	Layer					concrete floor
3	3016	Layer					concrete raft
3	3017	Layer					Rubble layer
3	3018	Layer					part of 3021
3	3019	cut					cut for concrete path/wall
3	3020	Layer					concrete path/wall
3	3021	Layer			Pot. clay pipe, CBM, glass, Fe	E20th	Soil horizon
3	3022	cut					modern service trench
3	3023	fill					fill of 3022
3	3024	Layer					part of 3002
4	4001	Layer					Carpark material
4	4002	Layer		1.9	Pot, CBM, shell, bone, Cu	18th	Soil horizon
4	4003	structure					?boathouse wall
4	4004	cut	0.55				cut for 4005
4	4005	structure					brick wall
4	4006	cut					robbing of 4003
4	4007	fill					in 4006
4	4008	cut					modern service trench
4	4009	fill					fill of 4008
4	4010	Layer					natural river clay/silt
5	5001	Layer		0.42			Carpark material
5	5002	Layer		0.3			Soil horizon
5	5003	Layer		0.6	pot, bone	L12-E13th	Soil horizon
5	5004	Layer		0.45	pot, clay pipe, CBM, glass, bone	18th	Soil horizon
5	5005	Layer		0.11			Soil horizon
5	5006	Layer		0.27			Soil horizon
5	5007	Layer		0.11			Soil horizon
5	5008	cut					modern service trench
5	5009	fill					in 5008
5	5010	Layer					natural river gravel
6	6001	Layer					Carpark material
6	6002	void					void
6	6003	void					void
6	6004	cut					Large gravel pit
6	6005-6012	Fills					Gravel pit fills
6	6013	Layer					natural river gravel
6	6014	Layer					Soil horizon
6	6015	Layer		0.2	bone		Soil horizon
6	6016	Layer		0.33			Soil horizon
6	6017	Layer		0.2			Soil horizon
6	6018-6022	Fills			Fired clay, bone		Gravel pit fills

## APPENDIX 2 ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC DATA

By Rebecca Nicholson and Dawn Irving (OA)

### Introduction

Five bulk soil samples were taken as part of the evaluation at Bedford Riverside Square. The samples were taken for the recovery of charred plant remains, snails and small bones, from a selection of features, most of which appeared to be post-medieval in date:

Sample 1 :from a cultivation horizon (5003) which contained 12th and 16th century pottery.

Sample 2: from the fill of an 18th century stone-lined well/soakaway (1004)

Sample 3: from ditch fill (2004).

Sample 4: from a quarry pit fill (6011)

Sample 5: from a quarry pit fill (6004)

As part of the evaluation process the integrity of the samples was considered in terms of datability and taphonomy. In general, little of value can be said from the contents of samples of uncertain date or mixed provenance. As a result only two samples were processed: sample 3 from ditch fill (2004) was processed by flotation using a modified Siraf-type machine, the flot being collected onto a 250 micron mesh. The remaining material was then wet sieved through a column for the recovery of small bones and artefacts. Sample 1 (context 5003) was wet-sieved to 500 microns for the recovery of bones and artefacts.

### Results

Charred plant remains were well preserved in sample 3. In the 50ml flot charred plant material was abundant and well preserved in the form of frequent wood charcoal, the majority of which measured >2mm. The flot was also rich in charred cereal grain consisting largely of *Hordeum* (barley) but also with some *Triticum spp.* (wheat). No cereal chaff was identified and the character of the assemblage suggests this is the remains of domestic activity rather than crop processing. The residue contained small fragments of pottery, animal bone and both tap and fuel ash slag.

Sample 1 contained abundant mammal bone (mainly from cattle) and occasional fish bone (small pike, *Esox lucius*), in fair-poor condition. Snail shells were abundant and well preserved. Pottery was also frequent and both tap and fuel ash slag present. In general terms, the residue finds were very similar to those from sample 3, possibly suggesting a degree of dumping and mixing of deposits across the site.

The well-preserved charred plant and snail assemblages, as well as the abundant animal bone demonstrates the potential of the site for providing data for both palaeo-economic and palaeoenvironmental reconstruction, even in the absence of water-logging. However, future excavations in the area should target well sealed and datable deposits and features for sampling in accordance with guidelines published by English Heritage (2002) and Oxford Archaeology (2000) since little of value can be said about samples whose provenance is unclear.

**APPENDIX 3 BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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Glazebrook, J 1997 *Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties – 1 Resource Assessment* (East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 3)

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Oxford Archaeology 2000 *Oxford Archaeology Environmental Sampling Guidelines*. Internal Document.

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**APPENDIX 4 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS**

**Site name:** Riverside Square, Bedford.

**Site code:** BEDRSQ 06

NGR TL 04823 49584

**Type of evaluation:** Six-trench field evaluation

**Date and duration of project:** 22nd May to 16th June 2006




**Area of site:** 0.567 ha.

**Summary of results:** The evaluation revealed evidence of medieval cultivation or garden soils. A post-medieval boundary ditch to the east of properties documented on Horne Lane. Post-medieval pits/postholes, a well/soakaway and a possible beam slot structure were identified to the rear of these properties. The structural remains of a 19th-century brewery were also revealed. A large undated gravel quarry was excavated and part of a riverside structure, possibly a boathouse, was recorded.

**Location of archive:** The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Bedford County Museum in due course, under the following accession number: BEDFM:2006.272





-  Site boundary
-  Evaluation trench
-  OS coordinate

Survey Data supplied by  
Oxford Archaeology

N

0 20 m  
Scale at A4 1:1000

Oxford Archaeology



Janus House,  
Osney Mead,  
Oxford,  
OX2 0ES.  
Tel: 01865 263800 Fax: 01865 793496  
email: mail@oxfordarch.co.uk  
web: www.oxfordarch.co.uk

**BEDRSQ06**

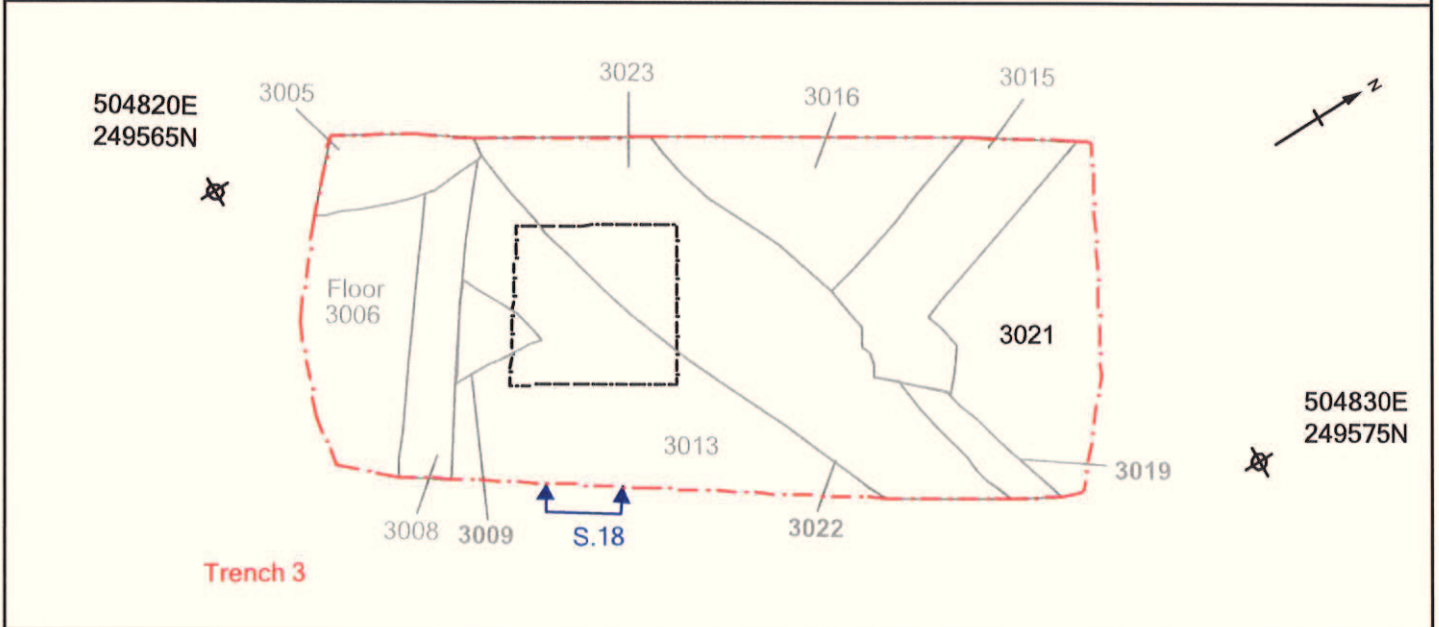
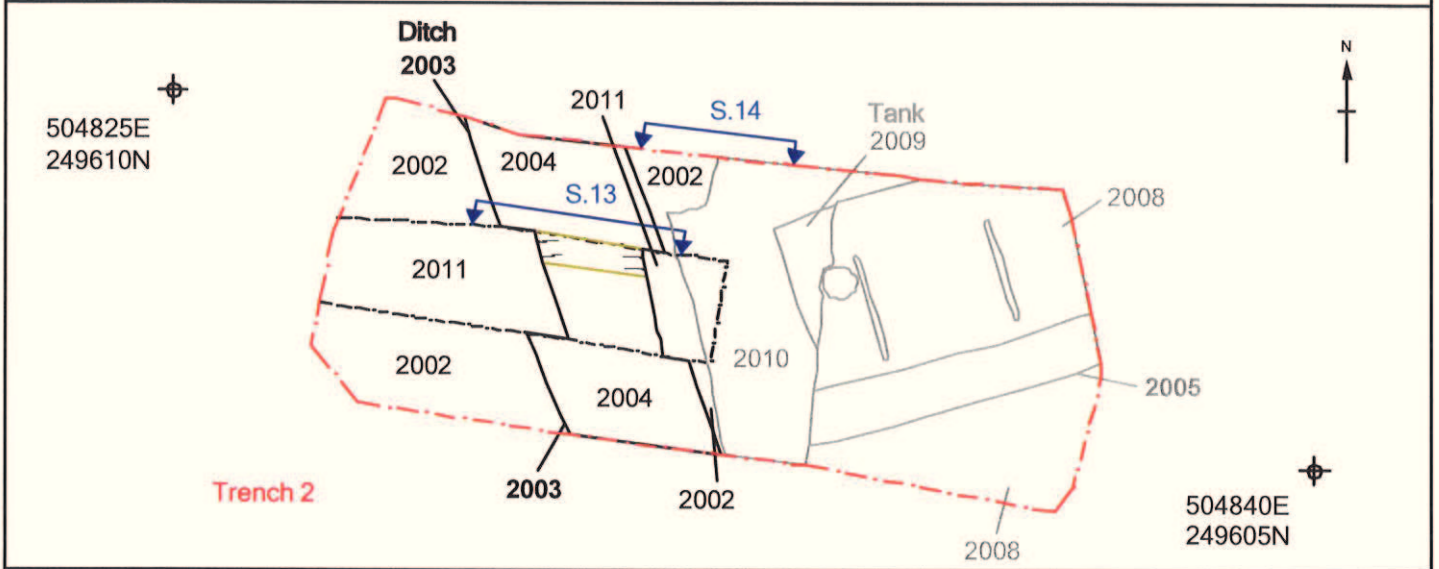
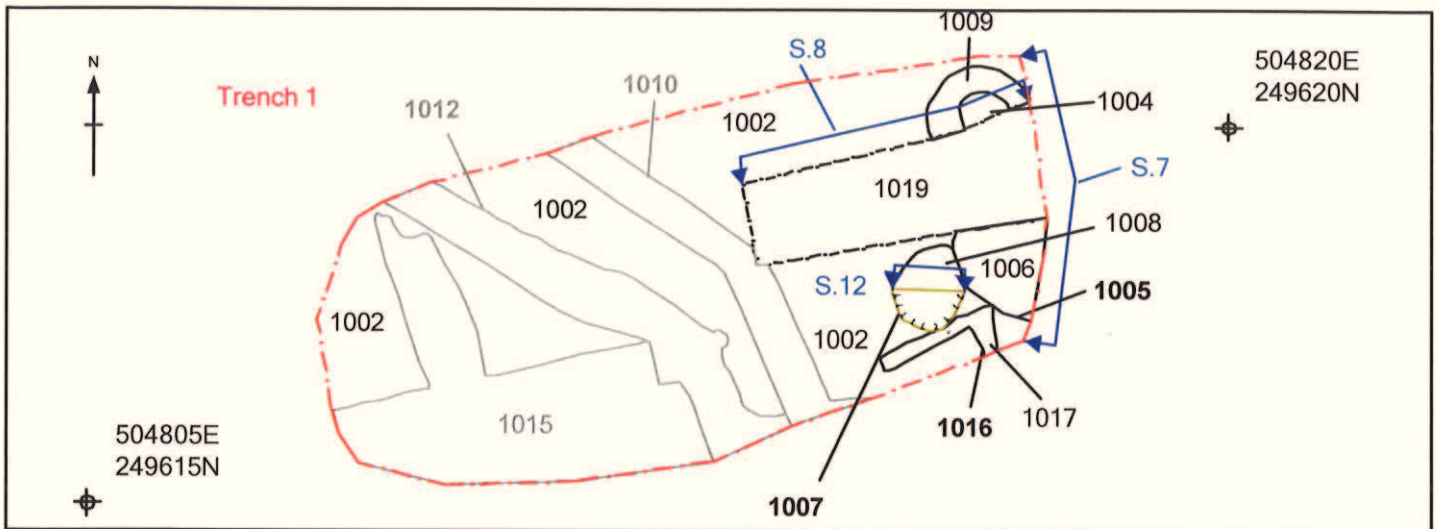
Bedford Riverside

Drawing No.	OA2
Date printed	04 Jul 2006
Drawing title	

**Figure 2:**  
Trench layout over  
1991 OS map



X:\Riverside Square, Bedford \Geomatics \CAD\current\BEDRSQ06\_230606.dwg(Figure 3\_Trenches 1\_2\_3)\*\*\*Bedford Riverside\*leo.heatley\* 05 Jul 2006



- - - Evaluation trench
- Archaeological intervention
- Internal limit of excavation (sondage)
- Archaeological feature
- Area of modern disturbance
- ↔ Section line
- ⊕ OS coordinate

Oxford Archaeology  
 Jenus House,  
 Osney Mead,  
 Oxford,  
 OX2 0ES.

Tel: 01865 263800 Fax: 01865 793496  
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 web: www.oxfordarch.co.uk

<b>BEDRSQ06</b>	
Bedford Riverside	
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Drawing title	

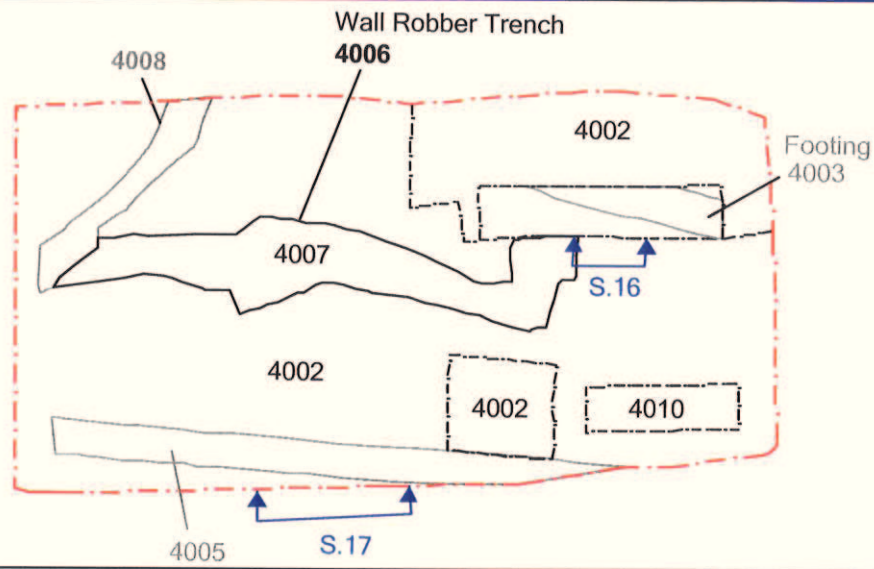
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**Figure 3:**  
 Evaluation trenches  
 1, 2 and 3

Survey Data supplied by  
 Oxford Archaeology

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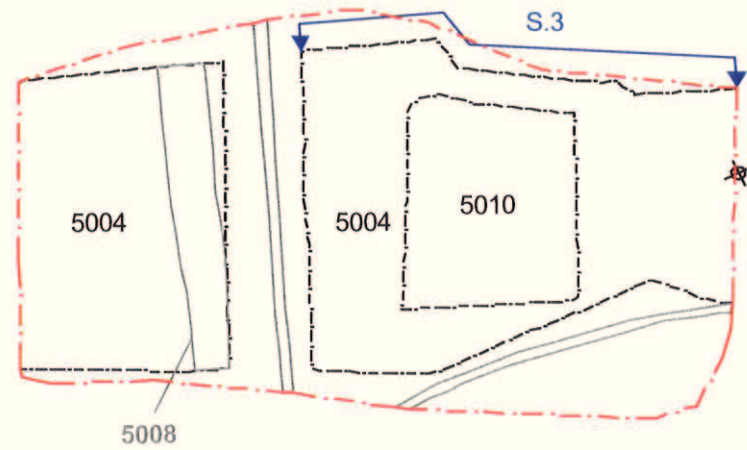
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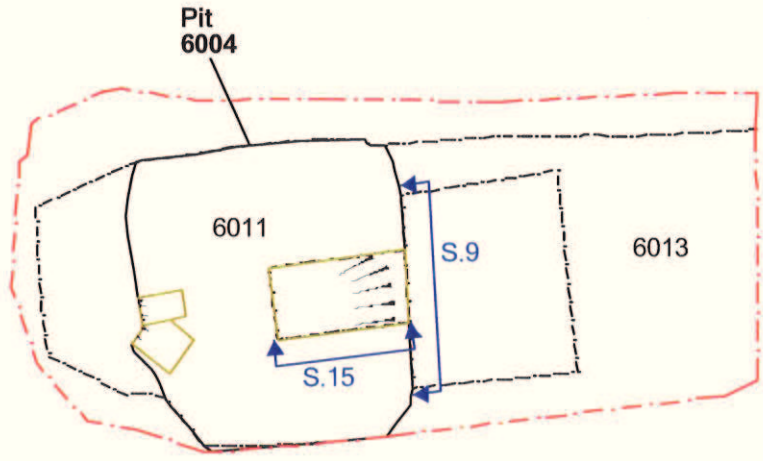
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**Trench 5**



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**Trench 6**



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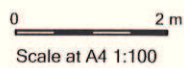
- - - Evaluation trench
- Archaeological intervention
- - - Internal limit of excavation (sondage)
- Archaeological feature
- Area of modern disturbance

- ↔ Section line
- OS coordinate

Oxford Archaeology  
Janus House,  
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**BEDRSQ06**  
Bedford Riverside

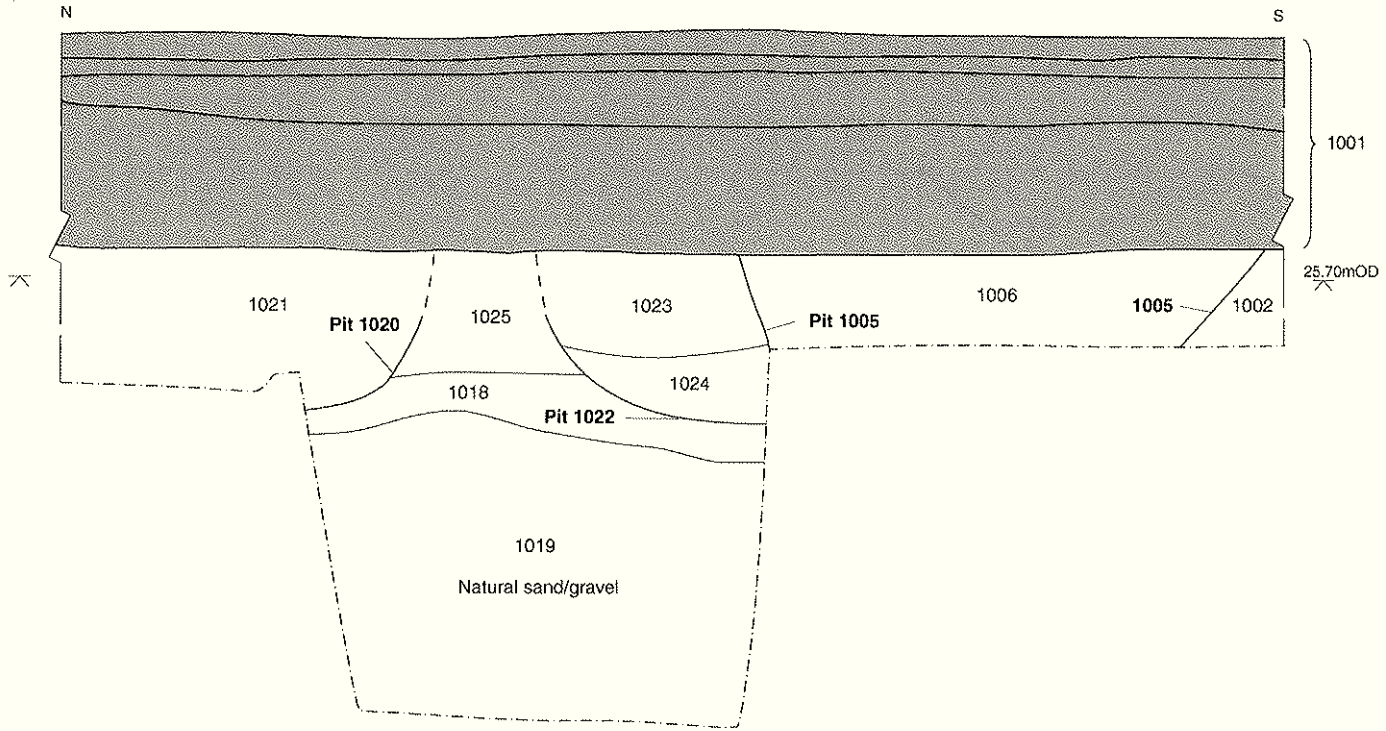
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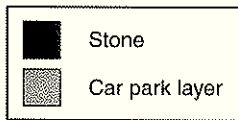
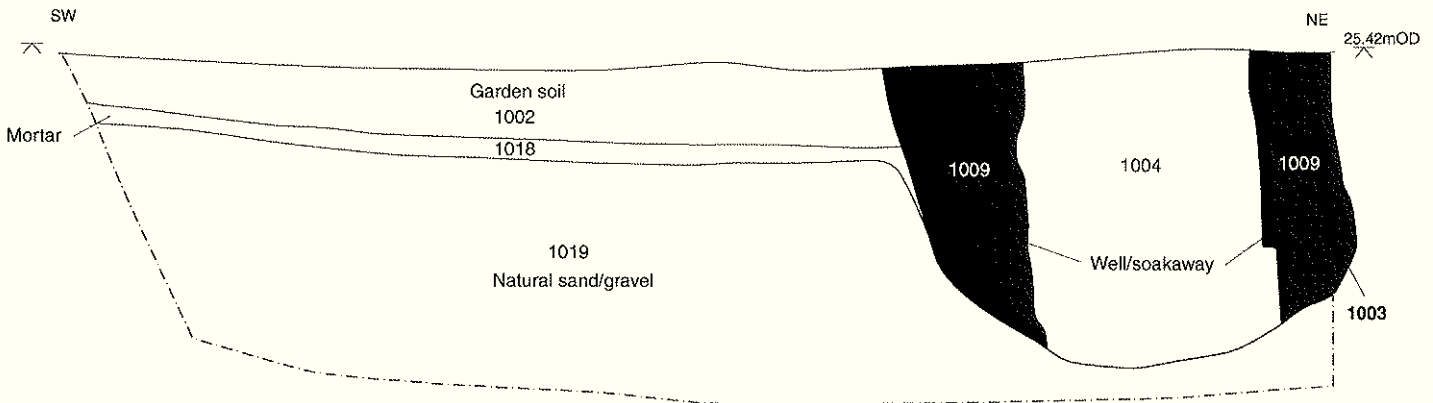
**Figure 4:**  
Evaluation trenches  
4, 5 and 6

Survey Data supplied by  
Oxford Archaeology

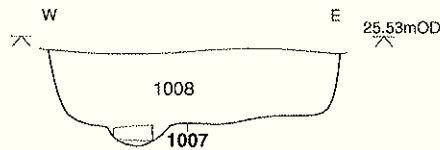
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Section 7



Trench 1  
Section 8



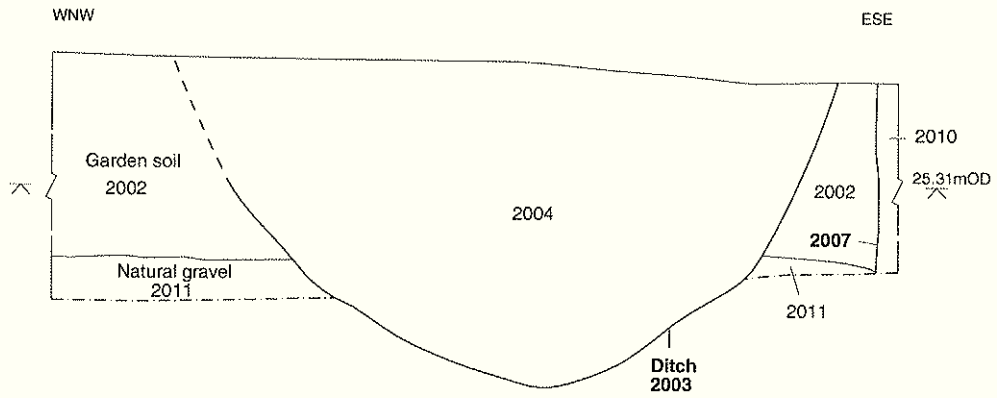
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Section 12



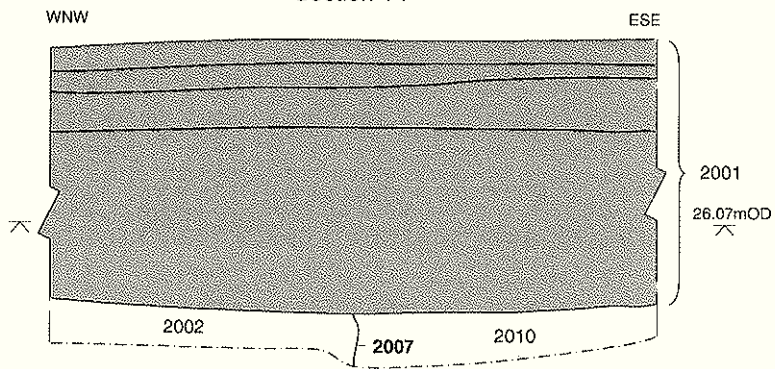
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Figure 5: Trench 1, sections 7, 8 and 12

### Trench 2 Section 13



### Trench 2 Section 14



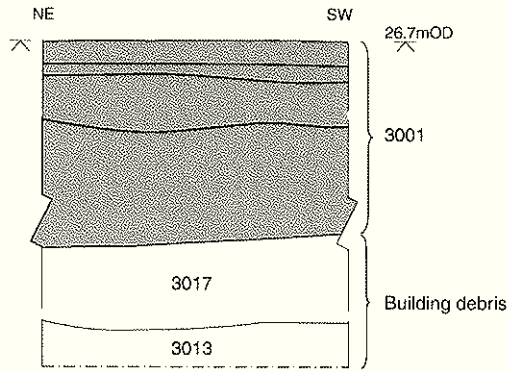
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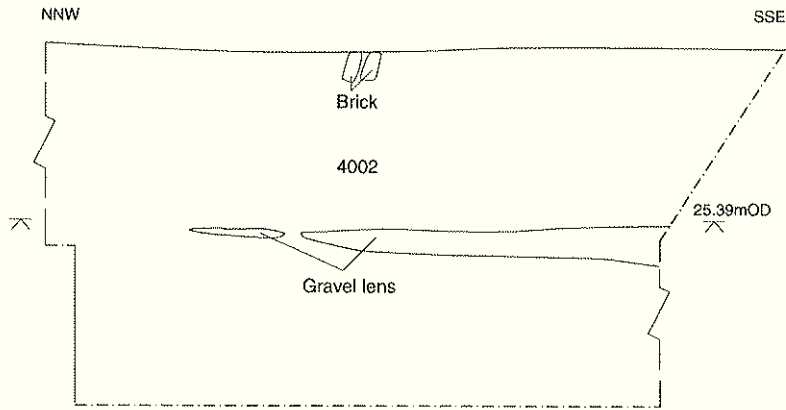
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Figure 6: Trench 2, sections 13 and 14

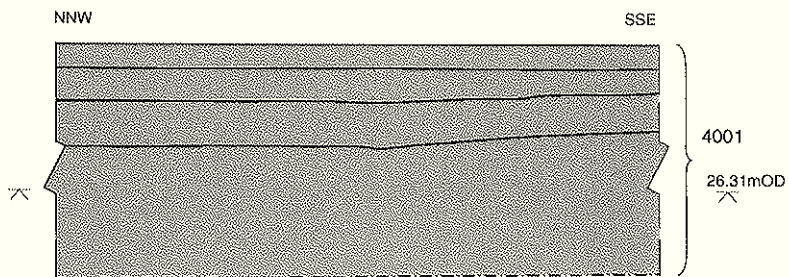
### Trench 3 Section 18




### Trench 4 Section 16



### Trench 4 Section 17



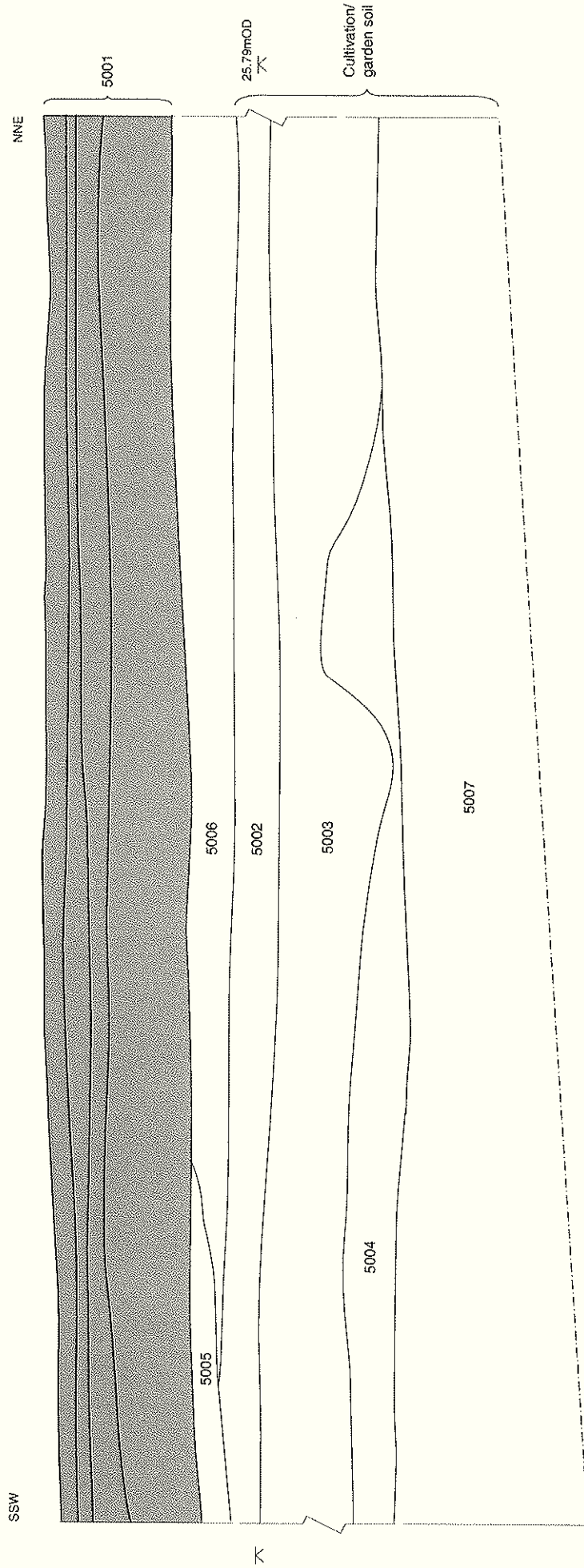
 Car park layer

0 1 m

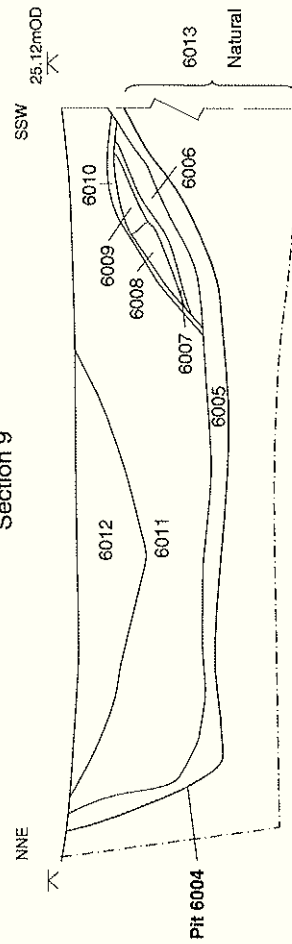
Scale at A4: 1:25

Figure 7: Trenches 3 and 4, sections 18, 16 and 17

Trench 5  
Section 3



Trench 6  
Section 9



Trench 6  
Section 15

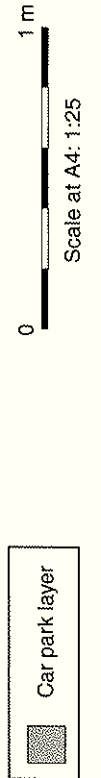
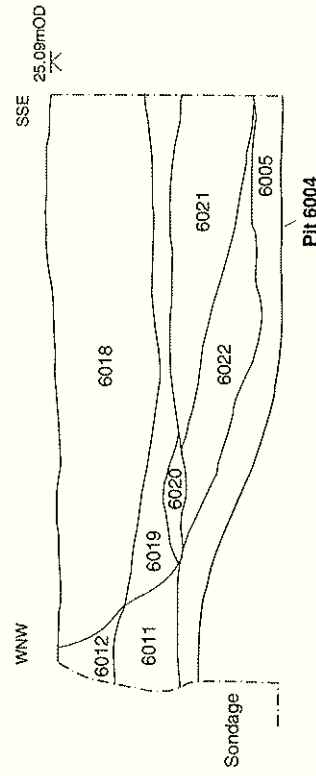


Figure 8: Trenches 5 and 6, sections 3, 9 and 15



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