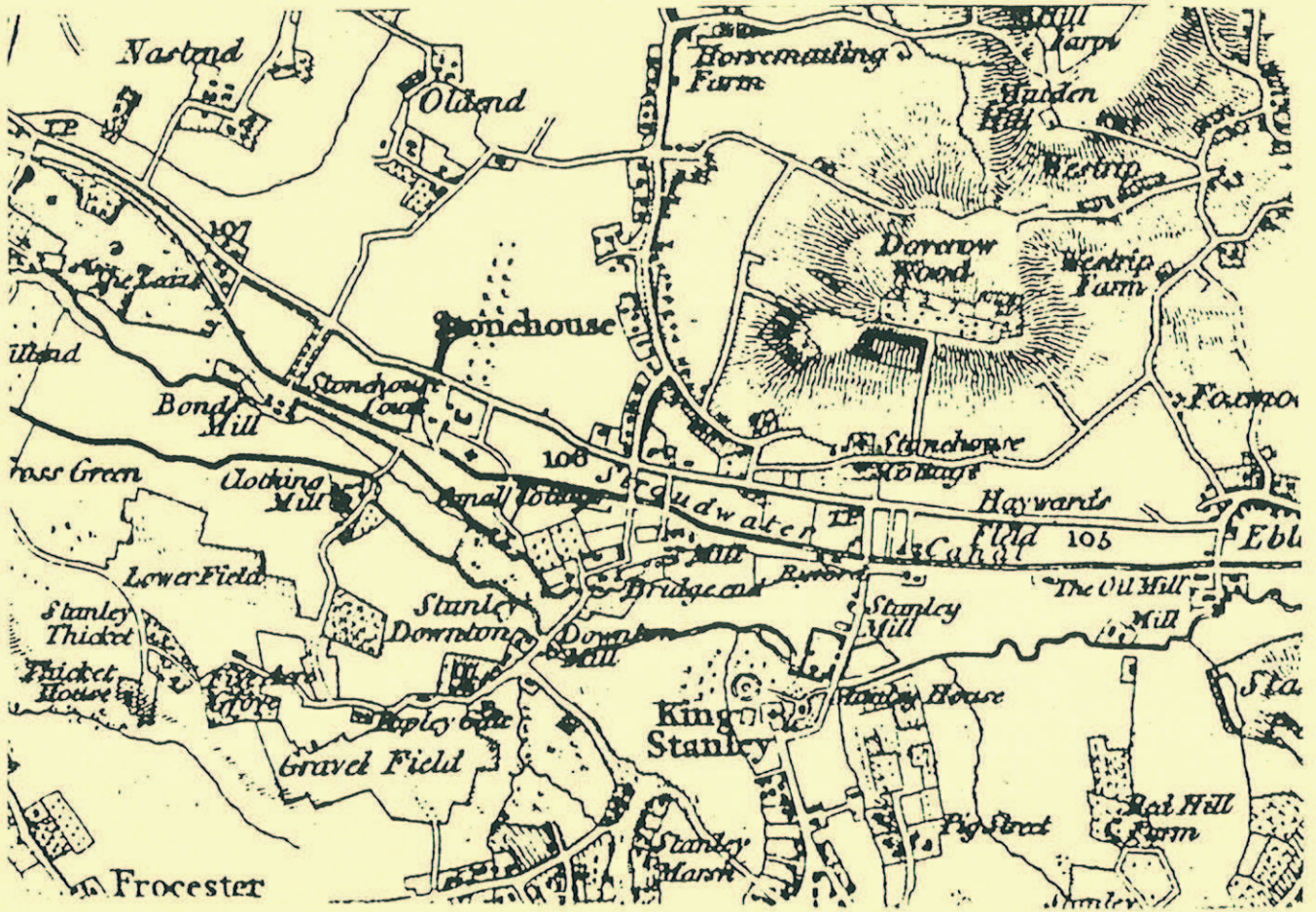


Land at Bond's Mill, Stonehouse, Gloucestershire

NGR SO 792055

Archaeological Field Evaluation Report



Oxford Archaeological Unit

September 1997

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Summary

The Oxford Archaeological Unit (OAU) undertook an archaeological field evaluation in advance of development on an area of land north of Bond's Mill, Stonehouse, Gloucestershire. The evaluation was carried out in August 1997. Fifteen trenches were archaeologically excavated. The majority of the trenches contained no archaeological features, although a number of treeholes were recorded in some of these trenches. All trenches revealed that the site had been cultivated since the medieval period using the technique of ridge and furrow. Cut features containing bricks of 18th to 19th century date were observed in one trench, and a field boundary of comparable date recorded in the north-west corner of the site. Modern postholes were observed in one trench. A large gravel extraction pit which had been infilled in the late post-medieval period, was located towards the centre of the site. Few artefacts of any date were recovered from the evaluation trenches and the overall lack of archaeological features suggests that the site has been historically used for agricultural purposes rather than for settlement. This report describes the results of the fieldwork.

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD EVALUATION REPORT

1 Introduction

The Oxford Archaeological Unit (OAU) carried out an archaeological field evaluation consisting of 15 archaeological trenches on land north of Bond's Mill Estate, Stonehouse, Gloucestershire (Fig. 1) in August 1997. Cristie Electronics Ltd, who are presently located at Bond's Mill Estate, obtained outline planning consent at an appeal to the Planning Inspectorate in November 1996, to relocate their premises and develop a parcel of land between Bond's Mill and the A419, for a Business Park and a Bowls facility (OS Land Parcel 2245). In support of the appeal, Bond's Mill Estate Limited had commissioned the Cotswold Archaeological Trust to carry out a desk-based archaeological assessment of the application area (Barber, 1996). The assessment identified a low level of archaeological activity on the site (see archaeological background below).

Condition 6 of the appeal judgement stated that:

"No development shall take place until the applicants, their agents or their successors in title have secured the implementation of Archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved by the local Planning Authority".

A brief for archaeological investigation of the site was drawn up in accordance with Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (PPG 16) by the Archaeology Service Environment Department, Gloucestershire County Council in 1996, which highlighted the area subject to the development proposal as being within an area of archaeological interest. The brief recommended that an archaeological field evaluation should be carried out by a recognised archaeological contractor, as part of the pre-development process, in order to determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains likely to be destroyed by the development.

The OAU drew up a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) in August 1997, detailing how the requirements of the County Archaeological Brief would be met by the evaluation being undertaken by the OAU. This WSI was approved by the Local Planning Authority (Stroud District Council) and the County Archaeological Service Environment Department in August 1997, and the evaluation commenced on August 26th, 1997. Copies of this report will be sent to the client, the Local Planning Authority and the County Archaeological Officer. The site archive will be deposited with Stroud District Museum.

2 Project Background

In June 1996 Cotswold Archaeological Trust was commissioned by Bond's Mill Estate Limited to undertake a desk-based archaeological assessment of land adjacent to Bond's Mill. The results of this assessment are summarised below:

2.1 Location and Geology

The development site is situated on the western edge of the parish of Stonehouse, c. 5 km west of Stroud and 1 km south-west of the centre of Stonehouse. The site is situated immediately north of the Bond's Mill Estate complex, and is bounded by the A419 to the north, a minor road to the west, and to the south by the Stroudwater Canal (Fig. 2). Land use is currently pasture, and the site lies between 27 and 31 m above Ordnance Datum, sloping gently from north to south. The underlying geology of the site is Lower Lias Clay, which is overlain by the third-terrace gravels of the River Severn.

2.2 Archaeological and Historical Background

There are no reported remains of prehistoric date within the parish of Stonehouse. The Roman period is sparsely represented: possible Romano-British occupation to the south of the development area consists of a few 3rd century AD pottery sherds (in OS land parcel 1133, PRN 13163) which were found during the construction of a new Severn Trent water pipeline between Newton Stonehouse and the Stonehouse Sewage Works in 1991. A watching brief during the topsoil stripping for the pipeline easement (PRN 13162) revealed no evidence of archaeological features (Hoyle, 1991). The new pipeline crosses the western side of this development area.

The site is situated approximately 600 m west of the assumed primary core of the late Saxon settlement, and it is likely that Stonehouse evolved in the late-Saxon period. Prior to 1066 the manor here was held by *Tovi* (Moore, 1982). No archaeological features or finds of this date are known in the vicinity of the development area.

The name of the parish is first recorded in Domesday as *Stanus(e)*, and in AD 1287 was recorded as *Stonhus(e)*. The name Stonehouse appeared in the 14th century. The name is generally accepted to derive from a manor house which was located on the site of the present day Stonehouse Court (PRN 5691) itself built in the 17th century (Elrington and Herbert, 1972). Domesday records that William of Eu had two 'arpents' of vineyard at Stonehouse, an unusual occurrence at the time, as no other vineyard is mentioned in the Gloucestershire Domesday (Finberg, 1955, 66).

The parish settlement appears to have developed either side of a village green on the road leading north towards Gloucester. The parish was enclosed piecemeal between the 15th and 19th centuries, and by the 18th century land use was principally arable. The inhabitants of three parishes claimed common pasture rights of a large field near Stonehouse. In 1631 they stated that "the greatest part of the ground hath bene of old tyme arable, as appeareth by the ridges and

furrows yet clearly to be seen" (Finberg, 1955, 85). Aerial photographs show two alignments of ridge and furrow of medieval and possibly post-medieval date on the development area. A 19th century tithe map (1839) labels the development area as 'Collier's Leaze' and 'Gravel Ground', which may indicate that gravel extraction has occurred here (Fig. 3). The field to the south of development area is labelled as 'Brick Kiln Ground'.

Bond's Mill (PRN 6936) dates to the 18th century or earlier. The earliest direct reference to this mill occurs in a deed of 1714 relating to Stonehouse manor, which was owned by clothier John Ball. The mill was maintained as a clothing mill until production ceased in 1934. The mill is located near to three major lines of communication which developed in the post-medieval period. The main Stroud-Eastington road (A419) was turnpiked in 1726, and the Stroudwater Canal (PRN 11154) was completed and opened in July 1779. The Bristol-Gloucester Railway opened a station at Stonehouse in 1844 (PRN 1269).

In recent times the development area has been occupied in part by a field barn. A possible feature in the south-east corner of the field is visible on aerial photographs taken in 1964, though this cropmark does not show on later photographs. The date and function of the feature is unknown, but it may have been a trackway.

3 Strategy and Methodology

The evaluation consisted of fifteen 30 m long archaeologically excavated trenches, which constituted a 2% sample of the development area. As there was minimal archaeological information about the development area, the trenches were randomly positioned but related to the Ordnance Survey grid, to produce a comprehensive sample of the whole site (Fig. 2). The trenches were excavated by a 360° Hymac machine equipped with a 1.5 m wide toothless ditching bucket. Topsoil was removed by machine to the level of the first archaeological horizons, or in their absence, to the level of the underlying natural geology (gravel).

Excavation of archaeological features was undertaken to fulfil the objectives required by the County Brief for the project. Each trench was allocated a block of context numbers, and all features and deposits were issued with unique context numbers within the trench blocks. Context recording was carried out according to standard OAU procedures (OAU Field Manual - ed D. Wilkinson 1992). A full written and photographic record of each trench was made: trench plans were drawn at a scale of 1:100 or 1:50 and section drawings of features and sample sections of trenches were drawn at a scale of 1:20. The complete set of photographs and site drawings can be found in the site archive, whilst selected site drawings and plans can be found at the end of this report.

4 Results: Trench Descriptions and Interpretation

Each trench is described together with an interpretation of the deposits and features. All trenches

were 30 m in length, and were 1.6-1.8 m in width. On-site hazards such as drains meant that some of the trenches had to be moved from their original proposed location. Trench 14 was moved from its proposed location to the south corner of the field in order to locate a possible cropmark seen in aerial photographs.

Trench 1

Trench 1 was aligned north-south and was located towards the centre of the development area. At the base of the trench was a layer of loose whitish-yellow gravel (103), with patches of blue-grey clay appearing in the gravel matrix. Layer 103 was sealed by 102, a friable mid-dark brown layer of fine silt loam with 40% gravel inclusions. This layer was 0.3 m deep and extended fully along the length of the trench. The base of the layer undulated slightly along the trench. No finds were recovered from 102. Above 102 was a 0.27 m thick fine dark brown clay loam (101), which contained a small proportion of gravel. The layer extended for the length of the trench, and formed the topsoil of the field at the time of the evaluation. No archaeological features or finds were present in trench 1.

Interpretation of deposits in Trench 1

Layer 103 represented the natural gravel, mixed with patches of natural Lias Clay. This layer was present at the base of all subsequent trenches. Layer 102 was a mixed undulating soil layer formed by plough activity, of medieval or later date. In some of the other trenches the furrows and ridges formed by the ploughing were more clearly defined.

Trench 2

The same sequence of layers seen in Trench 1 was recorded in Trench 2, which was aligned east-west. The trench was 0.55 m deep. Natural gravel (202) lay below ploughsoil 201, here 0.3 m thick, which in turn was sealed by 0.25 m of topsoil (200). No features were observed and no finds recovered from the spoil heaps.

Trench 3

Trench 3 (Fig. 4) at the west of the site was 0.61 m deep and was aligned east-west. Natural gravel (303) was sealed by a 0.1 m thick layer of dark brown silt loam (304). Pottery of eighteenth or nineteenth century date was recovered from the layer, which also contained charcoal flecks and brick fragments. Layer 302, a 0.25 m thick deposit of brown loam and brick fragments sealed 304. A single sherd of post-medieval pottery was recovered from layer 302. To the west end of the trench and cutting layer 302 was a north-west - south-east aligned cut feature (305). The feature was 0.3 m wide, 0.15 m deep with a flat base and vertical sides. The feature was filled by 306, a light to mid-dark brown silty clay with gravel inclusions. No finds were recovered from 305. Layer 302 and the fill of 305 were overlain by topsoil 301.

Interpretation of deposits and features in Trench 3

Layer 304, originally a ploughsoil as seen in other trenches, probably became contaminated with brick fragments as a result of the industrial activity seen in Trench 7, situated to the south-east of this trench (see below). The linear feature was thought to be modern, and may have held a land drain or service pipe which has been subsequently removed. No datable features were observed in this trench.

Trench 4

Trench 4 was sited in the northern part of the site aligned approximately north-south and was excavated to a depth of 0.45 m. Natural gravel and clay (403) at the base of the trench was sealed by a 0.15 m thick layer of light reddish-brown clay loam (402) with substantial inclusions of gravel. Above 402 lay 401, a similar coloured deposit, but containing less gravel. Layers 402 and 401 were cut by feature 404 which extended east-west across the trench (Fig. 5). Feature 404 was 0.27 m deep and 4 m wide and was filled at its base by 405, a 0.19 m thick deposit of brown clay silt. This was in turn sealed by fill 406, a shallow blue-grey clay. Neither fill was datable, though 406 lay directly below topsoil 400, suggesting a relatively recent date for the final infilling of the feature.

Interpretation of features and deposits in Trench 4

Two distinct ploughsoil layers were present in this trench, and though undated, suggest different phases of ploughing activity, with the plough running on a north-south axis. Feature 404, perhaps a plough furrow cut into the earlier ploughsoils, suggesting a third phase of ploughing, but on a different (east-west) alignment. Alternatively the feature may have been a trackway, or hollow way across the field, of post-medieval date.

Trench 5

Trench 5 was situated to centre-east of the site aligned north-south, and was 0.49 m deep. Natural (503) was overlain by ploughsoil 502, which was sealed by topsoil 501. No features or finds were observed in the trench.

Trench 6

Trench 6 was situated to the centre-north of the site, aligned approximately east-west, and was 0.65 m deep. Natural gravel and clay (603) was overlain by 602, a 0.17 m thick layer of brown clay loam with a high gravel content. Layer 601 above was 0.18 m thick and more silty with less gravel. A tile sherd of post-medieval date was recovered from layer 601, which was overlain by topsoil 600. Layers 602 and 601 were formed by ploughing, and the trench contained no features.

Trench 7

Trench 7 (Fig. 6), located in the south-west part of the site, was aligned approximately east-west, and was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.05 m. Natural clay (717) was present below the natural gravel (702). Towards the west end of the trench, a pit feature cut into the natural gravel: pit 713 (Fig. 7) was located against the north baulk of the trench and extended beneath it. The feature was ovoid, with 60° sloping sides and a wide flat base. Pit 713 was 0.3 m deep, and at least 1.7 m wide, and was filled by a mid-dark-brown friable clay silt (712). This fill contained frequent patches of charcoal, brick fragments and a quantity of gravel. Fill 712 was cut by a further pit feature (714) located immediately east of pit 713. Pit 714 was sub-circular in plan with a steep north-east edge and a gentler tapered edge to the south-west. The feature was 0.42 m deep and 2.4 m wide against the baulk of the trench. At the base of the pit was a loose fill of silty gravel (715), 0.14 m thick, which was undated. Fill 716 above 715 was a 0.28 m thick deposit of burnt silty material including lenses of charcoal, brick fragments and a small quantity of iron slag waste. The pit appears to have contained waste from a form of industrial process.

The upper fill of pit 714 was overlain by a general layer of mid-dark brown sandy loam (701) which included gravel, brick fragments and charcoal, and extended fully along the length of the trench. The layer was c. 0.25 m deep, and in places overlay an earlier soil horizon (707), which was discontinuous along the length of the trench, and was not seen in the north baulk of the trench. Layer 707 was similar to the earliest ploughsoils observed in other trenches, and overlay the natural.

Layer 701 was cut by a number of features. Pit 711, located to the east of pit 714, was a sub-circular feature situated against the north baulk of the trench (Fig. 7). The pit was 0.5 m deep and 3.45 m wide east-west, and had concave sides descending to a flat regular base. At the south edge of the pit was a ring of apparently 'in situ' bricks, including two whole bricks, though no bonding mortar was observed. The remainder of the pit 'fill' (705) consisted of broken half bricks and brick fragments in a matrix of reddish-brown clay loam.

Some 4.5 m east of 711 was another substantial cut feature (710) which extended beneath the north baulk of the trench, and was up to 0.6 m deep and 4.4 m wide east-west (Fig. 8). The feature had concave sides descending to an irregular undulating base. The fill of the feature (704) consisted of a loose reddish-brown clay loam with substantial quantities of half bricks and brick fragments. Iron slag, coal and charcoal were included with the fill, again suggesting industrial activity. A single sherd of white china pottery (18th-20th century date range) was recovered from fill 704. No 'in situ' bricks were observed at the base of the cut.

Two further pit features were recorded cutting layer 701. Pit 709 was situated to the east end of the trench against the south baulk. This pit was smaller than those in the west part of the trench and was 1.1 m wide and 0.35 m deep forming a circular shape with concave sides leading to a rounded base. The pit fill (708) comprised a loose red-brown clay loam with brick fragments, charcoal and iron slag. Tile pieces of post-medieval date were incorporated in the fill. At the east end of the trench against the south baulk was a further pit (706). This pit was an

irregular linear shape with a rounded west end and vertical east edge. The feature was 0.35 m deep with a flat base, and was filled by 703, dark-brown clay loam including half bricks, iron slag and charcoal.

The fills of the later pits in the trench were overlain by topsoil 700.

Interpretation of features and deposits in Trench 7

The earliest features (713, 714) in the stratigraphic sequence in Trench 7 both contained burnt material and brick waste, indicating that they were dug in order to dispose of material accruing from industrial processes, in this case the production of bricks. There were no structures identified in the trench which could be directly related to the earliest pits, the fills of which were sealed by a homogeneous layer of soil (701). This layer contained quantities of brick material and charcoal, suggesting that it was formed during the brick-making process. The 'pit' features cut into 701 also relate to brick production. Pits 711 and 710 may have been kiln structures originally, which were later demolished. However, the limited exposure of the features within the trench makes this speculative at best. There was little evidence of bonded bricks associated with either feature, and few whole bricks. It may be, then, that both features were dug in order to dispose of brick wasters, and that the kilns lie outside the limit of Trench 7. Pits 706 and 709 were similar in nature to 713 and 714 in terms of their fills, and again seem to have been dug to dispose of industrial waste. The extent of the brick-making area extended north-west and can be seen in Trench 3 (layer 304). Several bricks from the features were retained for analysis (see Finds section below).

Trench 8

Trench 8 was located towards the centre of the site and was orientated east-west. Natural gravel (803) was cut by a roughly circular feature (804) which extended beneath the south baulk of the trench. The feature was 0.5 m wide and 0.22 m deep, and was filled by 805, a clean brown clay silt which contained no finds. The feature was thought to be part of a tree throw hole, which was sealed beneath ploughsoil 802, in turn overlain by topsoil 801. Two abraded sherds of pottery were recovered from the spoil heaps, but these were very small and not closely datable.

Trench 9

This trench was aligned north-south and was 0.57 m deep. Natural (902) was sealed by the ploughsoil (901) in turn covered by the topsoil (900). No archaeological features or finds were observed in this trench.

Trench 10

Trench 10 (Fig. 9) was located close to the eastern edge of the site, orientated approximately east-west and was dug to an average depth of 0.7 m. Natural clay (1008) was overlain by the natural gravel (1007). A 0.54 m thick layer of yellowish-brown silty clay (1006) overlay the gravel.

The layer contained greater quantities of gravel towards its base, which undulated along the length of the trench, indicating ploughing activity (ridge and furrow). At the east end of Trench 10 cutting layer 1006 was a NNE-SSW aligned linear feature which extended across the trench (Fig. 10). The feature, a ditch (1005), was 1.27 m wide and 0.64 m deep, with 40° sloping sides and a narrow concave base. The base fill of the ditch was a 0.14 m thick compact greenish-brown clay (1004) with gravel inclusions but no dating material. Above 1004 was fill 1003, a compact brown silty clay with a small amount of gravel, but no other inclusions. The feature was undated. Fill 1003 was cut by a ditch (1002) which maintained the alignment of 1005. Ditch 1002 had a broad concave profile, and was 1.62 m wide and 0.24 m deep. The ditch fill (1001) comprised a friable light grey ash deposit including flecks and small pieces of clay. The fill was overlain by topsoil (1000). No other features were present within the trench. Both ditches 1005 and 1002 continued north-west and appeared in Trench 15 (see below for interpretation).

Trench 11

Trench 11 (Fig. 11) was situated towards the centre-south of the site and was aligned approximately east-west. Natural gravel (1103) at the base of the trench was cut by three small features, interpreted as postholes. All three features were exposed after machining and it is probable that they were originally dug from a higher level (ie through the ploughsoil 1101). At the east end of the trench was posthole 1104 (Fig. 12), which was square in plan and was 0.1 m deep and 0.48 m wide with sloping sides and a flat base. The fill of the posthole (1105) comprised a dark grey-brown silty clay with charcoal flecks. The remains of a modern wooden post were situated in the centre of the feature, surrounded by several small pieces of limestone, used as packing stones for the post. No datable finds were recovered from the fill. South-west of 1104 was a second posthole, perhaps associated with it, but of different size and profile. Posthole 1106 (Fig. 13) was sub-circular with steep sloping sides and a rounded base, and was 0.18 m deep and 0.4 m in diameter. The fill (1107) consisted of a light grey clay silt. The 'shadow' of the post could be seen in the section of the feature.

A third posthole (1108) was present in the centre of the trench. This feature (Fig. 14) was circular with steep sloping sides rounding to a concave base, and was 0.4 m wide and 0.17 m deep. The profile of the feature was similar to that of 1106, though the fill consisted of dark grey-brown silty clay with charcoal flecks. A small fragment of undatable brick or tile was recovered from the fill together with a modern nail. Ploughsoil (1101) was sealed by topsoil 1100.

Trench 12

This trench was located at the south of the site, and orientated approximately east-west. The natural (1203) was a mixture of clay, gravel and sand and was cut by four undated features (Fig. 15). To the west of the centre of the trench was 1204, a ?circular feature with gently sloping sides and flat base, which was 0.24 m deep and 0.9 m wide. The feature extended beneath the north baulk of the trench. The fill (1205) consisted of a tenacious brown clay silt with gravel, but contained no finds. The fill of the feature was sealed beneath ploughsoil 1202, and thus

predated it. South-west of 1204 was 1206, a similar feature which extended beneath the south baulk of the trench. The feature was ovoid in plan and was 0.6 m wide and 0.24 m deep. The feature cut the ploughsoil (1202), and was therefore of post-medieval date. The fill of 1206 was a grey silty clay with gravel, but contained no dating material.

At the west end of the trench were two further features whose fills were sealed by the ploughsoil: feature 1208 extended beneath the north baulk of the trench, and was ovoid in shape. The feature was dug to a depth of 0.11 m, and had a visible width of 0.48 m. The sides sloped down to a broad shallow base. The fill (1209) was undated and comprised a brown silty clay with gravel. The final feature in Trench 12 was a linear cut to the south of 1208. Feature 1210 was 2.4 m long (east-west) within the confines of the trench, and had gently sloping sides leading to a wide flat base. The cut was 0.58 m wide and 0.19 m deep. The fill (1211) was identical to that of cut 1208.

The ploughsoil was 0.35 m thick in Trench 12, and lay beneath the present topsoil. An unstratified sherd of post-medieval tile and a piece of post-medieval clay pipe were recovered from the spoil from Trench 12.

Interpretation of features in Trench 12

Three features in the trench were sealed beneath the ploughsoil, and could be of any date prior to the medieval period. No precise date can be assigned to them, however, and the clean nature of the feature fills together with the inclusions of gravel suggests that they could well have been parts of tree-throw holes, whose full extent lay outside the trench. The function of feature 1206 was similarly problematic, but the absence of dating material from the feature fill might suggest that it too was a tree-throw hole, but of post-medieval date.

Trench 13

Trench 13 (Fig. 16) was aligned east-west in the centre-east of the site. The natural gravel and clay (1303) was overlain by a 0.2 m thick layer of brown clay loam (1307), which undulated across the base of the trench, with the lowest parts of the layer filling shallow furrows in the gravel. The furrows were aligned north-south. Layer 1307 was overlain by a 0.3 m thick layer of yellow-brown clay loam (1302) with gravel inclusions. At the centre of the trench was a cut feature (1304) whose west edge cut diagonally across the trench.

The feature was substantial, and extended for a length of 13 m to the east, and outside the limit of the trench. The west edge of the feature (Fig. 17) was seen in section to cut layer 1302, and the edge sloped at an angle of 15° down to the excavated limit of the trench. The earliest observed fill in 1304 was a tenacious brown clay loam (1305), between 0.2 and 0.35 m in thickness. Occasional fragments of brick and fired clay were present in the deposit. Fill 1305 was sealed by 1306, a reddish-brown clay loam with charcoal inclusions, which was up to 0.52 m thick. This fill was overlain by 1308, a blue-grey clay, which contained frequent pieces of post-medieval brick and tile and a piece of post-medieval clay pipe. Fill 1308 represented the

upper fill of 1304, and this was sealed by the topsoil.

Interpretation of features and deposits in Trench 13

The bases of north-south aligned furrows were seen in section and across the base of the trench. Feature 1304 is likely to have been a gravel extraction pit, which appears to have been infilled in the post-medieval period. The bricks in the upper fill of the pit may have derived from the brick production site to the west.

Trench 14

Trench 14 (Figs. 18, 19) was moved from its proposed position to the south-east corner of the site, in order to locate the position of a linear cropmark seen on aerial photographs. The trench was aligned north-south, and was 0.48 m deep. Natural gravel (1402) was cut by a shallow feature (1403) which extended beneath the east edge of the trench beneath ploughsoil 1401. The visible part of the feature was circular in plan, with 45° sloping sides and a flat base. 1403 was 0.9 m wide and 0.2 m deep. The fill, 1404, was a reddish-brown silty clay with gravel inclusions, but contained no dating material. The fill was sealed by the base of the ploughsoil (1401), which as in other trenches, undulated across the top of the gravel interface. The bases of the furrows were scored into the natural gravel surface (see Fig. 18), and here the furrows were aligned east-west. A single sherd of very abraded Roman pottery was recovered from layer 1401, and a single sherd of unstratified medieval black burnished-ware was recovered from the spoil heap.

Interpretation of Trench 14

Feature 1403 was similar to those in Trench 12, and was sealed by the ploughsoil. The feature was undated and its function unknown, but may have been part of a tree-throw hole. No other features were present within the trench, which was notable for the east-west orientation of the plough furrows. There was no archaeological evidence for the cropmark seen on aerial photographs.

Trench 15

This trench was located in the north-east corner of the site and was aligned approximately east-west (Fig. 20). The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.8 m. Natural gravel (1507) was sealed by 1501, a layer of dark yellow-brown silty clay and gravel (1501) up to 0.3 m thick. The bases of several furrows were observed at the base of the layer, and these cut into the natural gravel. The furrows here were aligned north-south.

Layer 1501 was cut by a linear feature (1505), itself a continuation of ditch 1005 in Trench 10. Here ditch 1505 (Fig. 21) had steep sloping sides leading to a flat base, and the ditch was at least 1 m wide and 0.65 m deep. The fill of the ditch (1506) consisted of a friable dark brown

silty clay with gravel, but contained no dating material. The fill was cut by a further ditch (1502) which was aligned north-east - south-west and cut across the west side of the earlier ditch fill. Ditch 1502 (a continuation of ditch 1002 in Trench 10) had a broad concave profile, and slightly rounded base, and was 1.4 m wide and 0.34 m deep. The ditch was filled by 1503 at its base, which consisted of a loose deposit of ash, cinders, and fragments of burnt brick, suggesting a modern date for the deposit. This fill was overlain by 1504, a light grey deposit of ash with fired clay flecks. Topsoil (1500) overlay fill 1504 and ploughsoil 1501.

Interpretation of Trench 15

The north-south alignment of the furrows was identified in this trench. Ditches 1505 and 1502, a 're-cut', presumably acted as field boundaries and maintained the drainage of the site. The first phase ditch was undated, but as it cut the ploughsoil, is of post-medieval date. The ashy nature of the fills of the secondary ditch, dug to maintain the original ditch alignment, suggests nearby industrial activity, possibly brick-making, as seen in the area of trenches 3 and 7.

5 The Finds

The evaluation was remarkable for the scarcity of finds recovered.

Pottery and building material are reported below, followed by a summary of other finds types.

The Pottery

A total of seven sherds of pottery was recovered during the evaluation:

Context	Sherd count	Comments
302	1	Red earthenware, red glazing, post-medieval
304	1	White painted china, 19th century date
704	1	White china, 18th-20th century
Trench 8	2	Unstratified, undated abraded sherds
1401	1	Abraded footing of bowl, Fabric OXCC, AD 240-400, residual
Trench 14	1	Medieval black burnished ware, unstratified

The Building Material

Brick samples were retained from contexts 704 and 705 in Trench 7, which contained several pits filled with brick wasters. The bricks, which were not complete, were distinctive in that they were larger than the standard modern house brick. The bricks were hand-made and un-frogged, and were 111 mm wide and 65 mm thick, and of the samples retained, the longest was 185 mm. A tithe map of 1839 indicates that the field immediately south of this site was known as 'Brick Kiln Ground', and it is possible that further localised brick production occurred at this site. Pottery from context 704 dates to 18th-20th centuries, so it seems likely that these bricks were locally produced and date to the 18th or 19th century. Eight pieces of tile were recovered from the evaluation. The sherds were found in contexts 1308, 402, 601, 708, 1109 and from the spoil heap in Trench 12. All the sherds were of a fine sandy fabric, and are of post-medieval date.

The Other Finds

Type	No.	Context and Comments
Clay pipe	2	1308, Trench 12 - post-medieval
Nail	1	1109, modern
Iron Slag	6	705, 708 - associated with 18th/19th century features containing bricks
Charcoal	-	Samples retained from contexts 1308, 705, 708 - 18th/19th century date

6 Discussion and Conclusions

The recent investigation appears to have confirmed the results of the desk-based assessment of the site (Barber, 1996). No certain remains of prehistoric date were observed, although several undated features interpreted as tree-throw holes may date to this period. No features of Roman or Saxon date were found, although a single sherd of Roman pottery was recovered from Trench 14. Roman occupation south of this site was inferred by the discovery of some Roman pottery during the installation of a new water pipeline in 1991.

The medieval settlement focus of Stonehouse centred on the manor house 600 m distant from this site. The present evaluation has demonstrated that land use here has been historically agricultural, with intensive ridge and furrow activity taking place from the medieval period onwards. At the north of the field the ridges and furrows are aligned north-south, and to the south of the field the alignment changes to east-west. The low density of pottery and other artefacts recovered suggests it is unlikely that the ploughing has disturbed underlying features or deposits.

Evidence of 18th or 19th century brick production was found in Trench 7, though it is uncertain if the pit features containing bricks were the remains of demolished kilns, or pits dug for the disposal of waste bricks. If they represent structures, then it would be reasonable to expect more bricks to have remained bonded and 'in situ' than were found in the features. On balance it seems likely that the features are rubbish pits, with the kilns situated nearby - the field south of this site is referred to as 'Brick Kiln Ground' by 1839. The earlier pits in the sequence in Trench 7 contained quantities of burnt material and iron slag residue together with brick fragments, suggesting that brick production was ongoing in the immediate vicinity.

Evidence of gravel extraction was found in Trench 13, confirming the 1839 historic reference to the field as 'Gravel Ground'. Other features found, including a boundary or drainage ditch in the north-west of the site and the possible 'hollow way' or plough furrow in Trench 4, were clearly of post-medieval or Victorian date, as they cut into the medieval ploughsoil.

J. Hiller
Oxford Archaeological Unit
September 1997

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Bond's Mill, Stonehouse, Gloucestershire Evaluation Report
Table of Context information

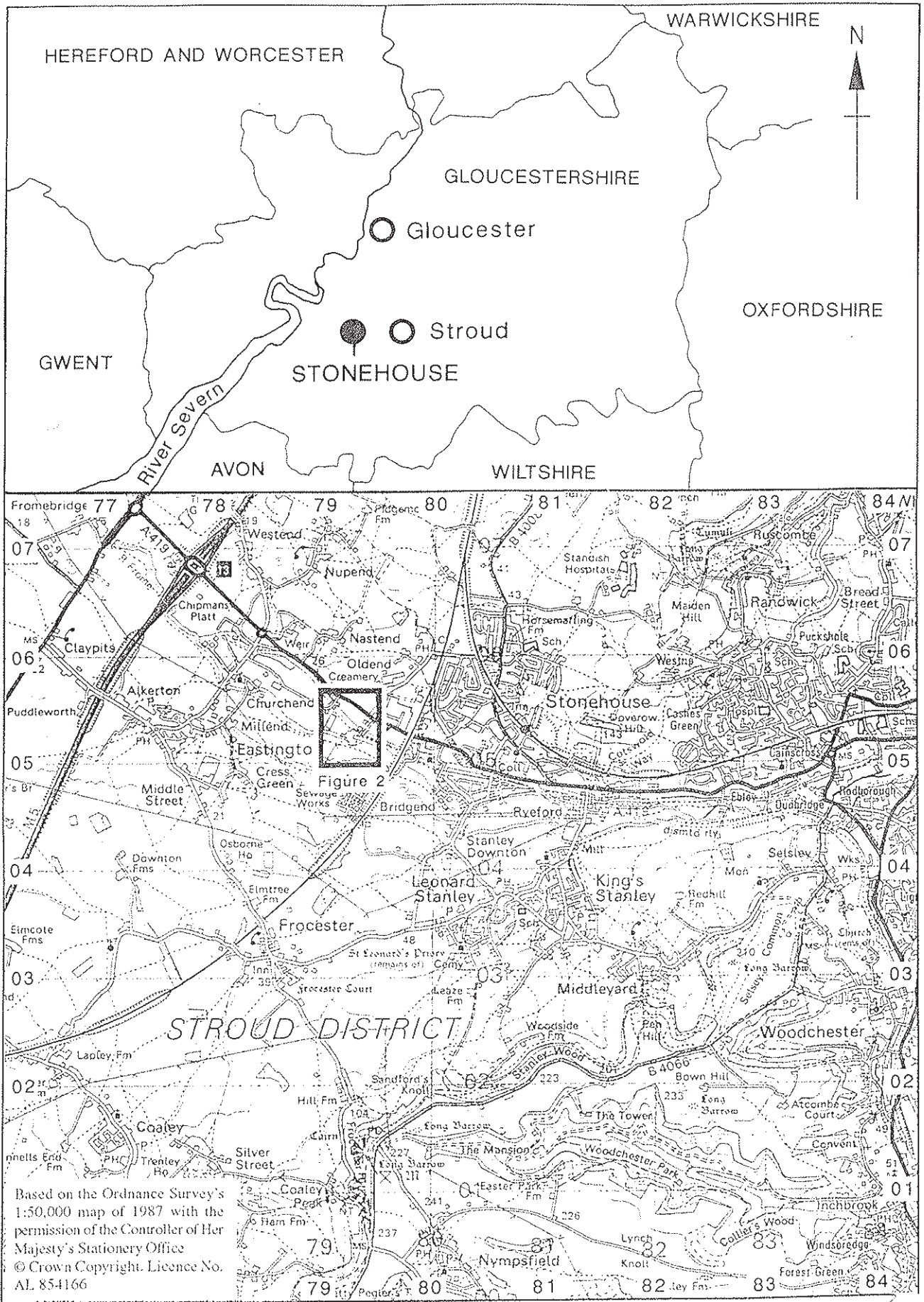
Trench	Context	Type	Depth	Width	Comments
1	101	Layer	0.27 m	-	Topsoil
1	102	Layer	0.3 m	-	Ploughsoil, undated
1	103	Layer	-	-	Natural gravel with clay outcrops
2	200	Layer	0.25 m	-	Topsoil
2	201	Layer	0.3 m	-	Ploughsoil
2	202	Layer	-	-	Natural gravel
3	301	Layer	0.26 m	-	Topsoil
3	302	Layer	0.25 m	-	Ploughsoil
3	303	Layer	-	-	Natural gravel
3	304	Layer	0.1 m	-	Ploughsoil incorporating charcoal, brick fragments and some post-medieval pottery
3	305	Cut	0.15 m	0.3 m	Cut for modern land drain
3	306	Fill	0.15 m	0.3 m	Fill of cut 305
4	400	Layer	0.2 m	-	Topsoil
4	401	Layer	0.1 m	-	Ploughsoil
4	402	Layer	0.15 m	-	Earlier ploughsoil beneath 401, contained some tile
4	403	Layer	-	-	Natural gravel with outcrops of clay
4	404	Cut	0.27 m	4.0 m	Distinct plough furrow seen in trench section
4	405	Fill	0.19 m	-	Primary fill of furrow 404
4	406	Fill	0.06-8 m	-	Upper fill of furrow 404
5	501	Layer	0.26 m	-	Topsoil
5	502	Layer	0.23 m	-	Ploughsoil

5	503	Layer	-	-	Natural gravel with clay
6	600	Layer	0.25-0.3 m	-	Topsoil
6	601	Layer	0.18 m	-	Ploughsoil, some tile
6	602	Layer	0.17 m	-	Earlier ploughsoil beneath 601
6	603	Layer	-	-	Gravel with outcrops of clay
7	700	Layer	0.12 m	-	Topsoil
7	701	Layer	0.25 m	-	?Ploughsoil/levelling layer, containing brick fragments from underlying features below
7	702	Layer	-	-	Natural gravel with patches of clay
7	703	Fill	0.38 m	1.7 m+	Fill of cut 706, containing some half bricks
7	704	Fill	0.6 m, max.	-	Fill of cut 710, containing 30% brick fragments, iron slag, coal and charcoal
7	705	Fill	0.5 m	2 m	Possible in situ remains of a brick kiln, covered with demolition material
7	706	Cut	0.35 m		Cut feature filled by 703
7	707	Layer	0.12-0.17 m	-	Ploughsoil beneath 701
7	708	Fill	0.35 m	1.1 m+	Fill of cut 709
7	709	Cut	0.35 m	1.1 m+	Cut feature filled by 708
7	710	Cut	0.6 m, max.	-	Cut feature, possibly the remains of a demolished brick kiln within it, or a pit for brick wasters from nearby kiln production

7	711	Cut	0.5 m	3.45 m	Cut feature filled by 705, possible construction cut for kiln represented by in situ bricks at south edge
7	712	Fill	0.3 m	-	Fill of 713 consisting of charcoal, brick fragments and gravel - industrial waste material
7	713	Cut	0.3 m	1.7 m	Cut for industrial waste represented by fill 712
7	714	Cut	0.42 m	2.4	Pit, filled by industrial waste material
7	715	Fill	0.14 m	0.5 m	Base fill of pit 714
7	716	Fill	0.42 m	-	Burnt soil over 714, containing up to 4 lenses of charcoal
7	717	Layer	-	-	Natural clay below gravel
8	801	Layer	0.24 m	-	Topsoil
8	802	Layer	0.27 m	-	Ploughsoil, undated
8	803	Layer	-	-	Natural gravel
8	804	Cut	0.22 m	0.5 m	Probable tree-throw hole
8	805	Fill	0.22 m	-	Fill of 804, no finds
9	900	Layer	0.27 m	-	Topsoil
9	901	Layer	0.3 m	-	Ploughsoil
9	902	Layer	-	-	Natural gravel
10	1000	Layer	0.26 m	-	Topsoil
10	1001	Fill	0.24 m	-	Fill of modern ditch cut 1002
10	1002	Cut	0.24 m	1.62 m	Ditch, re-cut of 1005 below and probably same as ditch 1502 in Trench 15
10	1003	Fill	0.52 m	-	Secondary fill of ditch 1005, no finds

10	1004	Fill	0.14 m	-	Primary fill of ditch 1005, no finds
10	1005	Cut	0.64 m	1.27 m	Ditch, fills re-cut by 1002. Same ditch as 1505 in Trench 15
10	1006	Layer	0.54 m	-	Ploughsoil, undated
10	1007	Layer	-	-	Natural gravel
10	1008	Layer	-	-	Natural clay beneath 1007
11	1100	Layer	0.3 m	-	Topsoil
11	1101	Layer	0.25 m	-	Ploughsoil, undated
11	1102	Not used	-	-	-
11	1103	Layer	-	-	Natural gravel
11	1104	Cut	0.1 m	0.48 m	Modern posthole
11	1105	Fill	0.46 m	-	Fill of 1104
11	1106	Cut	0.18 m	0.4 m	Modern posthole
11	1107	Fill	0.18 m	-	Undated fill of posthole 1106
11	1108	Cut	0.17 m	0.4 m	Modern posthole
11	1109	Fill	0.17 m	-	Fill of 1108, tile and modern Fe nail recovered
12	1201	Layer	0.24 m	-	Topsoil
12	1202	Layer	0.35 m	-	Ploughsoil, undated
12	1203	Layer	-	-	Natural gravel mixed with sand and clay
12	1204	Cut	0.24 m	0.9 m+	Undated cut, probable treehole
12	1205	Fill	0.24 m	-	Only fill of probable treehole 1204
12	1206	Cut	0.24 m	0.6 m+	As 1204, treehole
12	1207	Fill	0.24 m	-	Only fill of treehole 1206
12	1208	Cut	0.11 m	0.48 m+	Probable treehole
12	1209	Fill	0.11 m	-	Fill of treehole 1208

12	1210	Cut	0.19 m	0.58 m	Elongated treehole
12	1211	Fill	0.19 m	-	Fill of treehole 1210
13	1301	Layer	0.18 m	-	Topsoil
13	1302	Layer	0.3 m	-	Ploughsoil, undated
13	1303	Layer	-	-	Natural gravel with pockets of clay
13	1304	Cut	0.8 m+	11 m+	Backfilled gravel quarry
13	1305	Fill	0.2-0.35 m	-	Lowest exposed fill of 1304
13	1306	Fill	0.52 m max	-	Fill of 1304, over 1305
13	1307	Layer	0.2 m	-	Ploughsoil
13	1308	Fill	0.55 m	-	Upper fill of quarry, included clay pipe, brick and modern tile
14	1400	Layer	0.18 m	-	Topsoil
14	1401	Layer	0.2 m	-	Ploughsoil
14	1402	Layer	0.1 m	-	Natural gravel
14	1403	Cut	0.2 m	0.9 m	Natural feature or animal burrow
14	1404	Fill	0.2 m	-	Fill of feature 1403
15	1500	Layer	0.25 m	-	Topsoil
15	1501	Layer	0.2 m	-	Ploughsoil
15	1502	Cut	0.34 m	1.4 m	Ditch, same as 1002 in Trench 10
15	1503	Fill	0.24 m	-	Base fill of ditch 1502
15	1504	Fill	0.08 m	-	Upper fill of ditch 1002
15	1505	Cut	0.65 m	1.0 m	Ditch, re-cut by 1502, probably same as 1005 in Trench 10
15	1506	Fill	0.65 m	-	Fill of ditch 1505
15	1507	Layer	-	-	Natural gravel

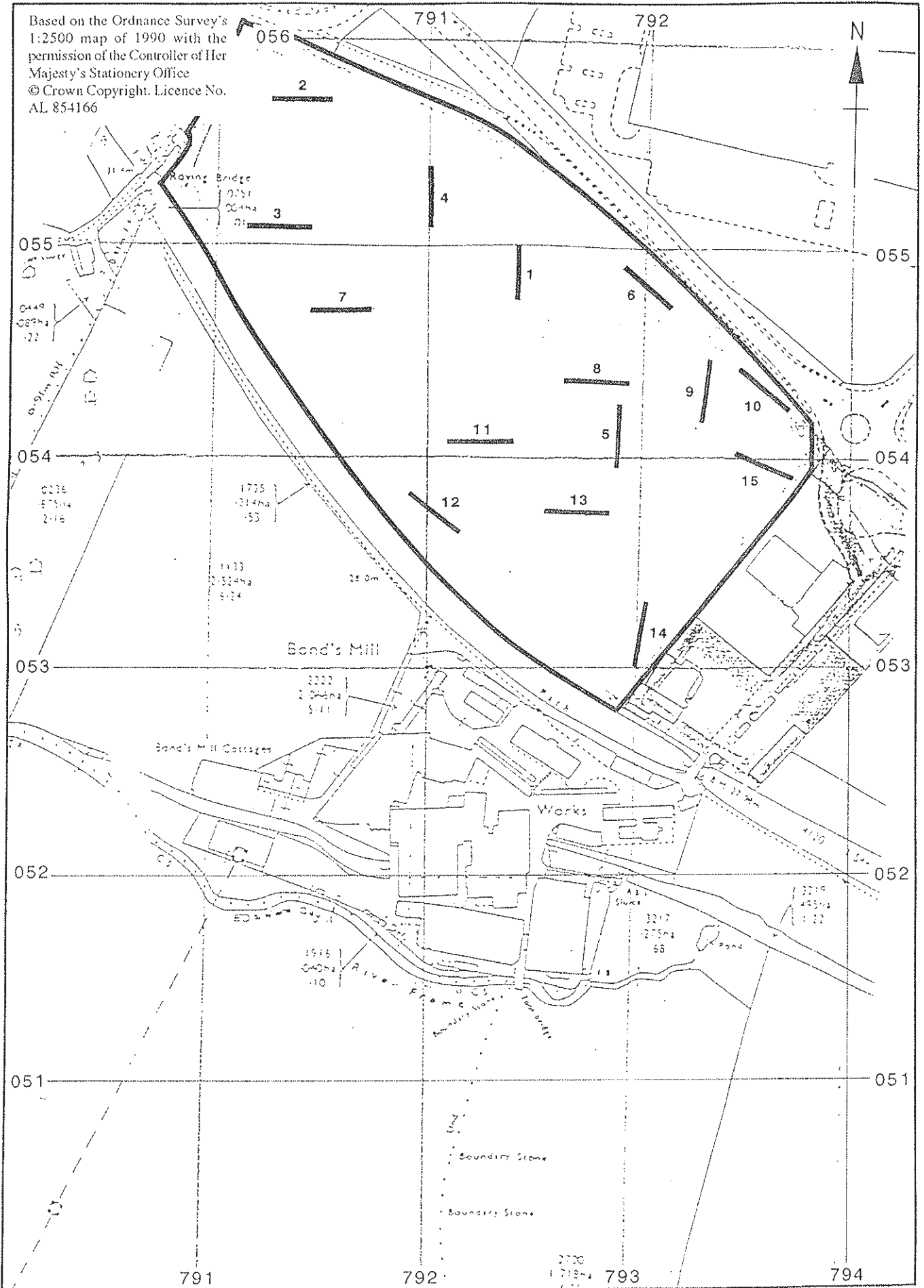


scale 1:50 000

Site location

Figure 1

Based on the Ordnance Survey's 1:2500 map of 1990 with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office
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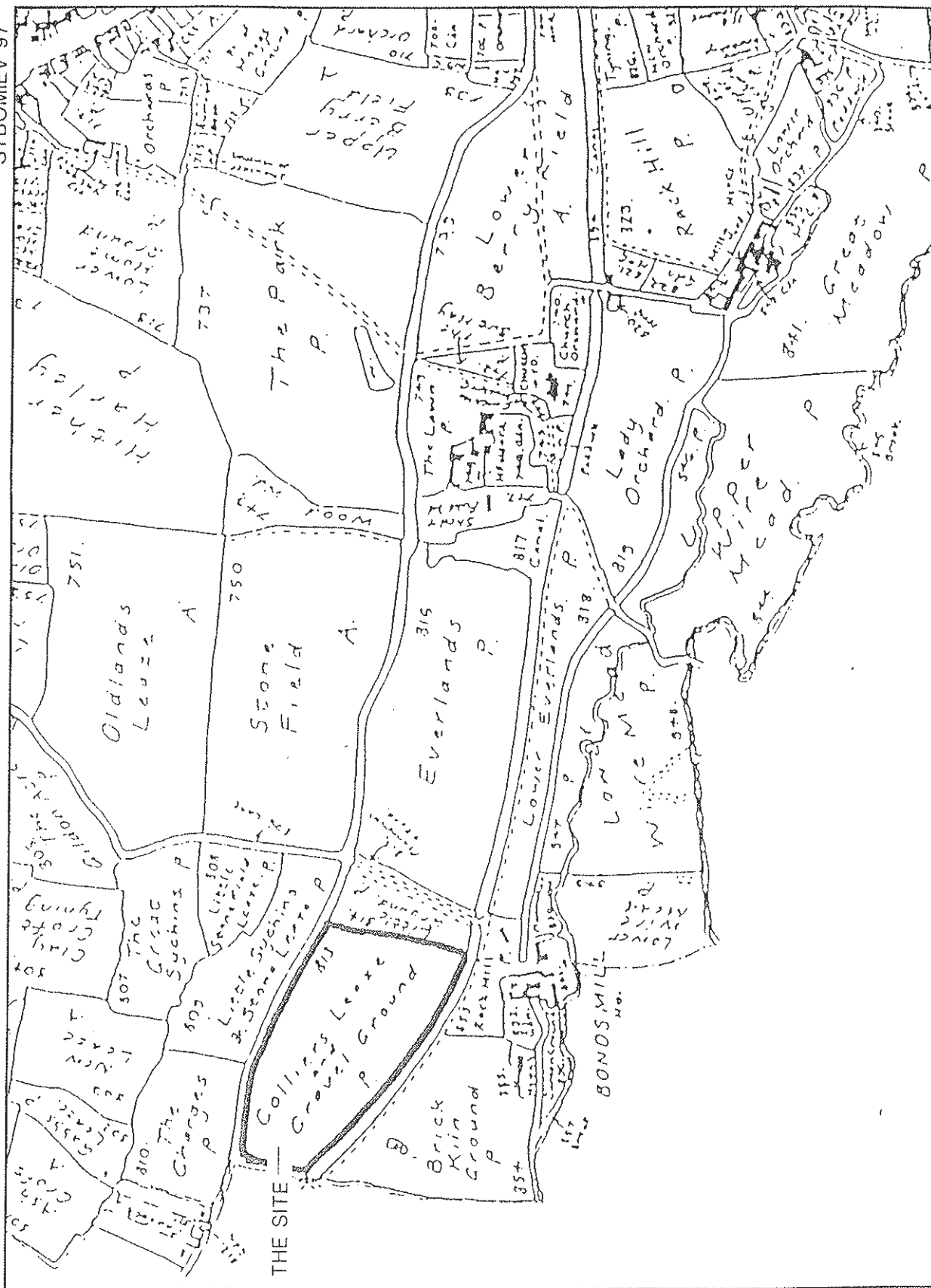


scale 1:2500

Trench location

Figure 2

STBOMIEV 97



1839 draft tithe map (not to scale; reduced from original 26.6" to 1 mile)

Figure 3

Figure 4

Trench 3 plan scale 1:100

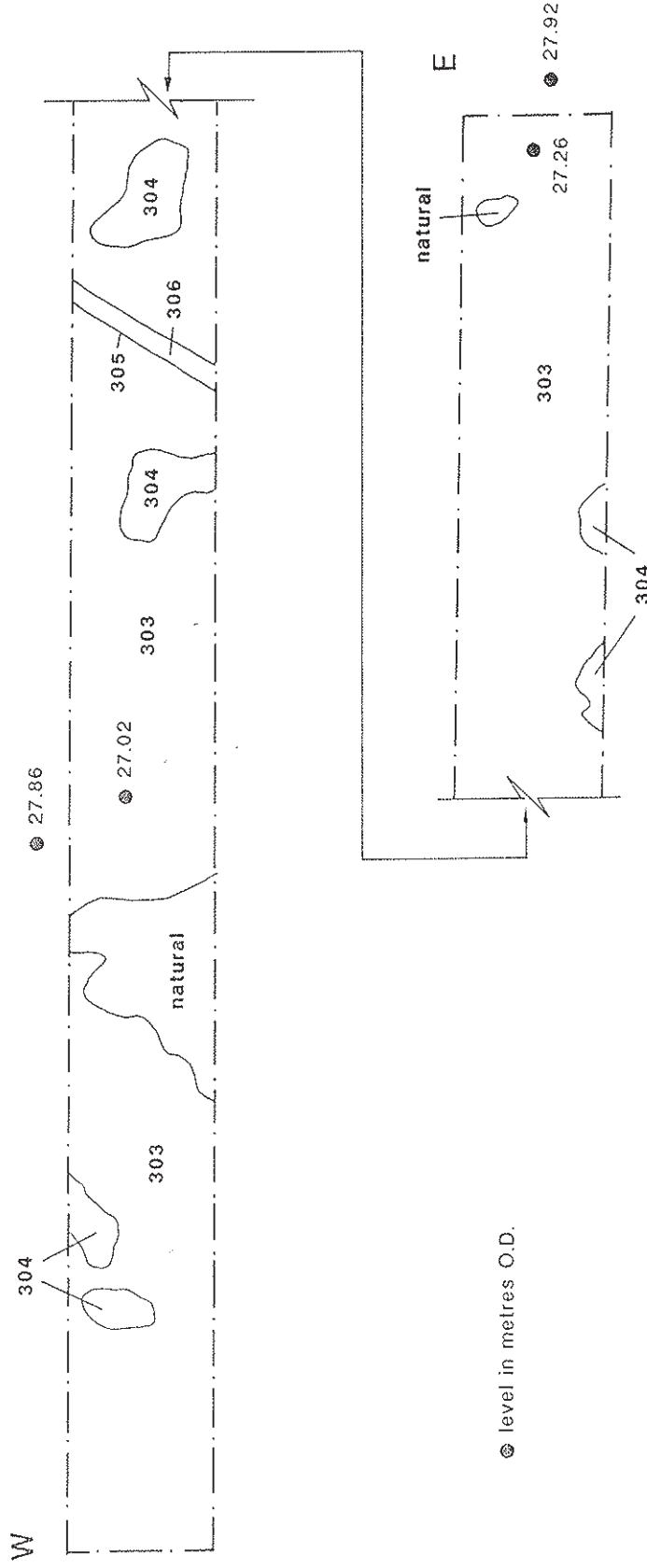


Figure 5

Trench 4 section scale 1:50

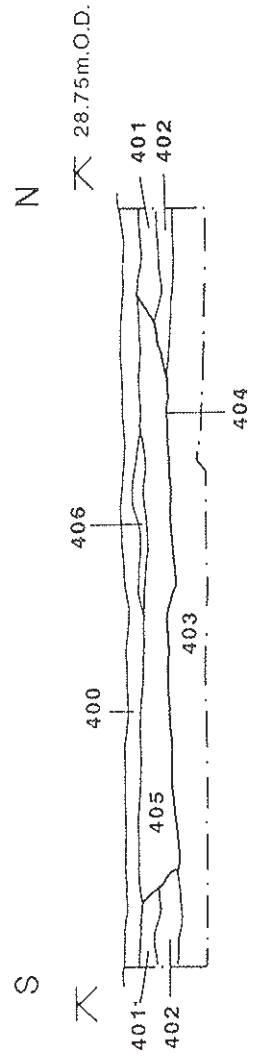


Figure 6

Trench 7 plan scale 1:50

SW

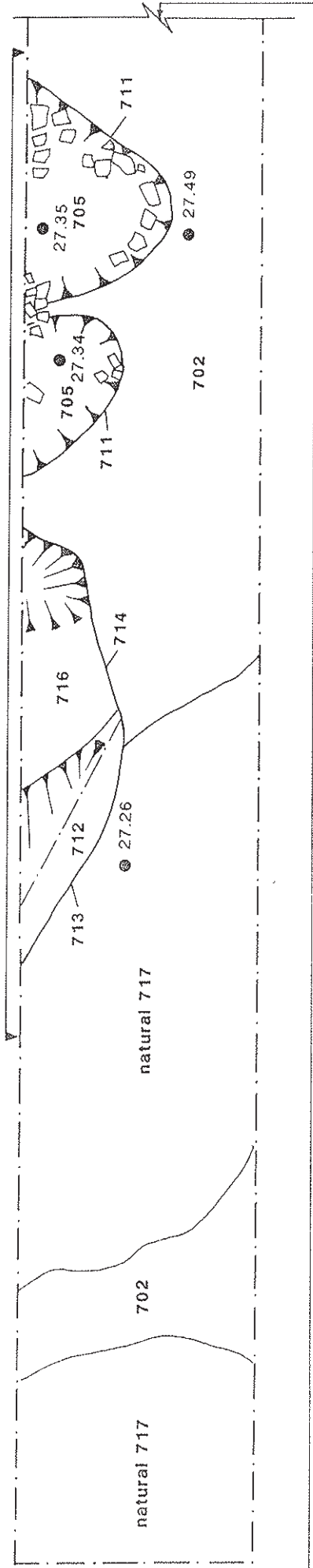
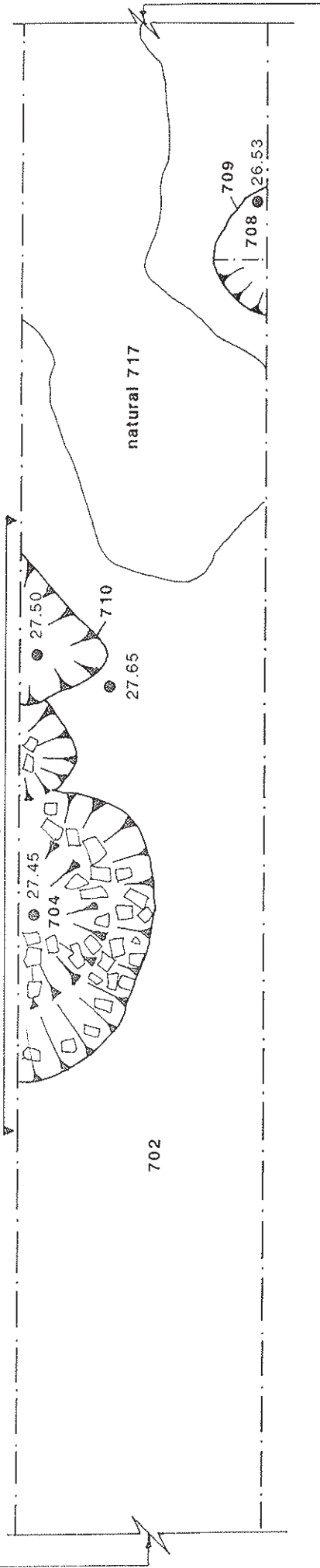


figure 8



brick rubble

⊙ level in metres O.D.

NE

Figure 7

STBOMIEV 97

Trench 7 section scale 1:50

28.50m.O.D. \nwarrow SW NE \nearrow 28.50m.O.D.

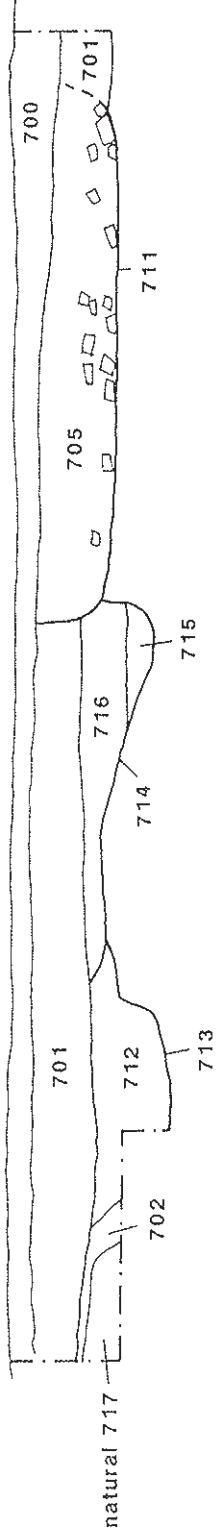


Figure 8

Trench 7 section scale 1:50

28.50m.O.D. \nwarrow SW NE \nearrow 28.50m.O.D.

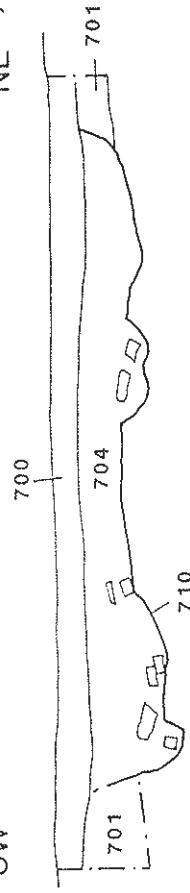


Figure 9

Trench 10 plan scale 1:100

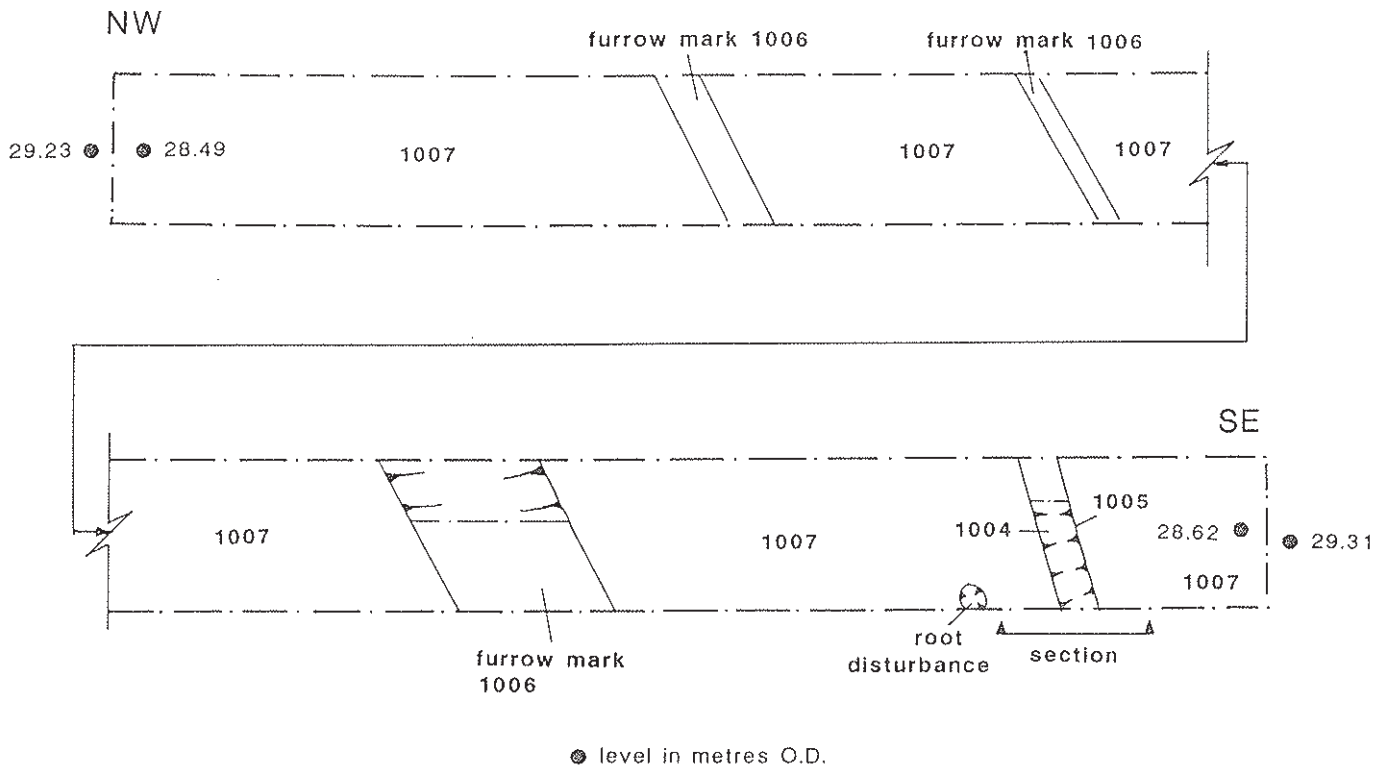
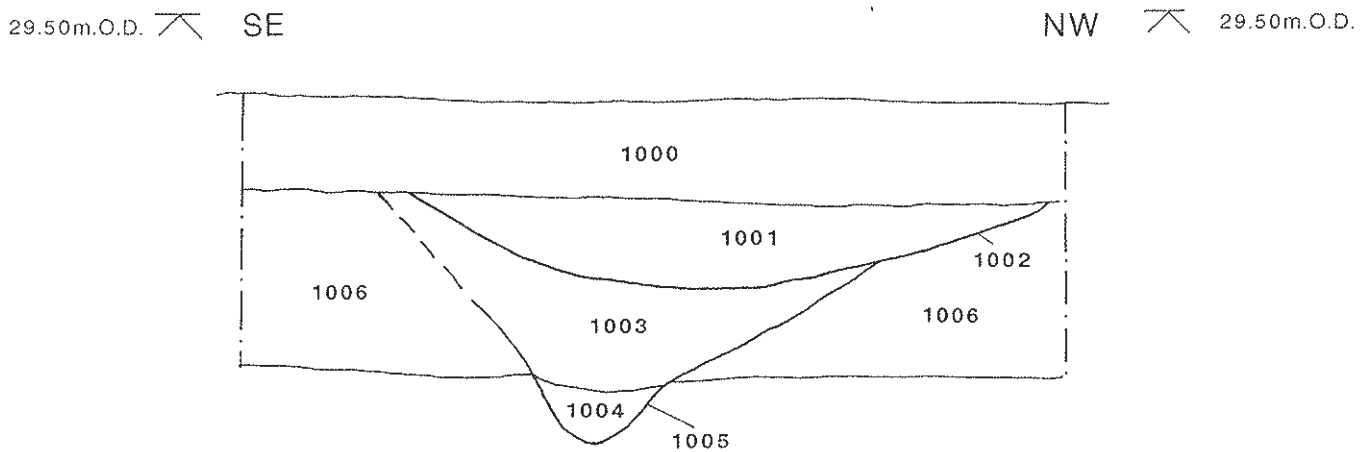


Figure 10

Trench 10 section scale 1:20



Trench 11 plan scale 1:100

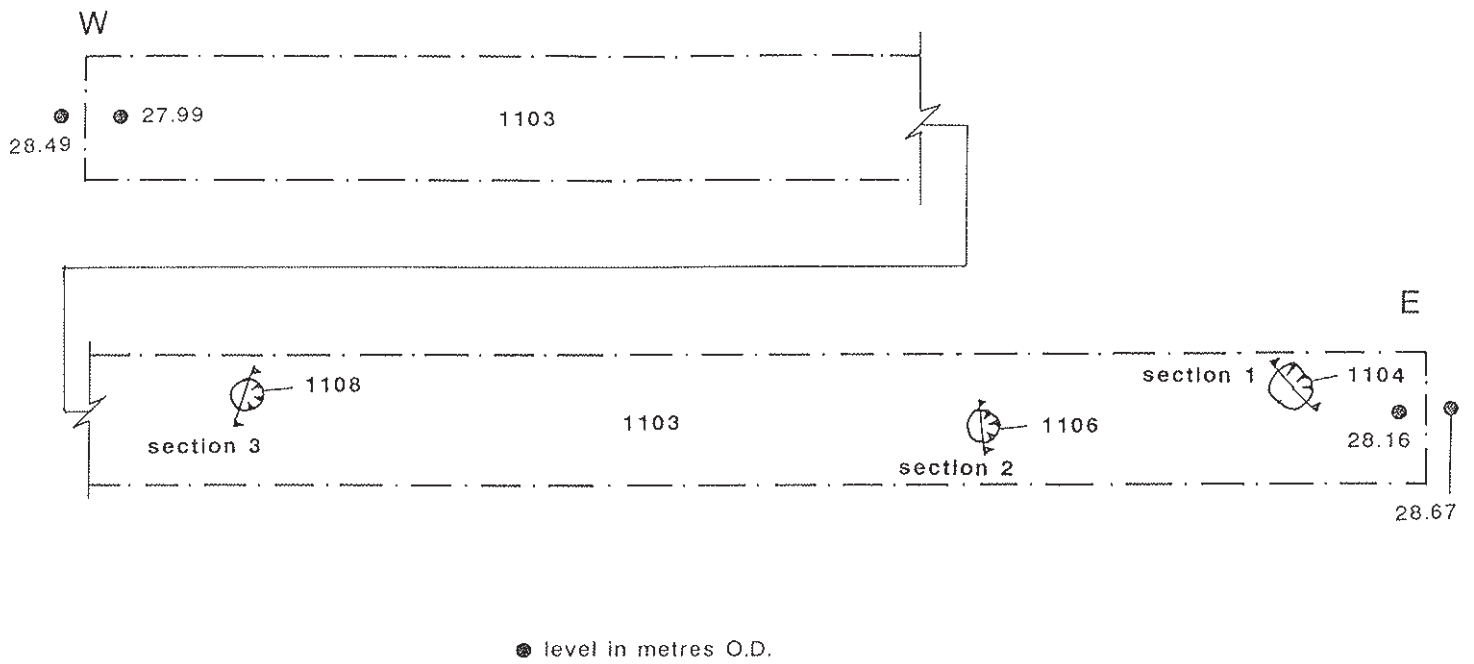


Figure 12

Trench 11 section 1

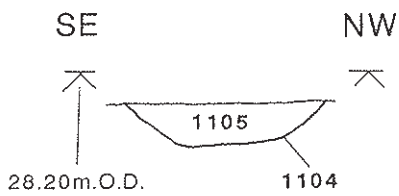


Figure 13

section 2

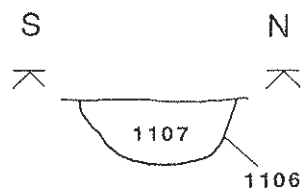
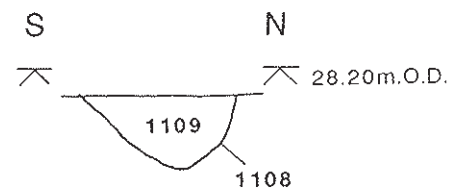


Figure 14

section 3



scale 1:20

Trench 12 plan scale 1:100

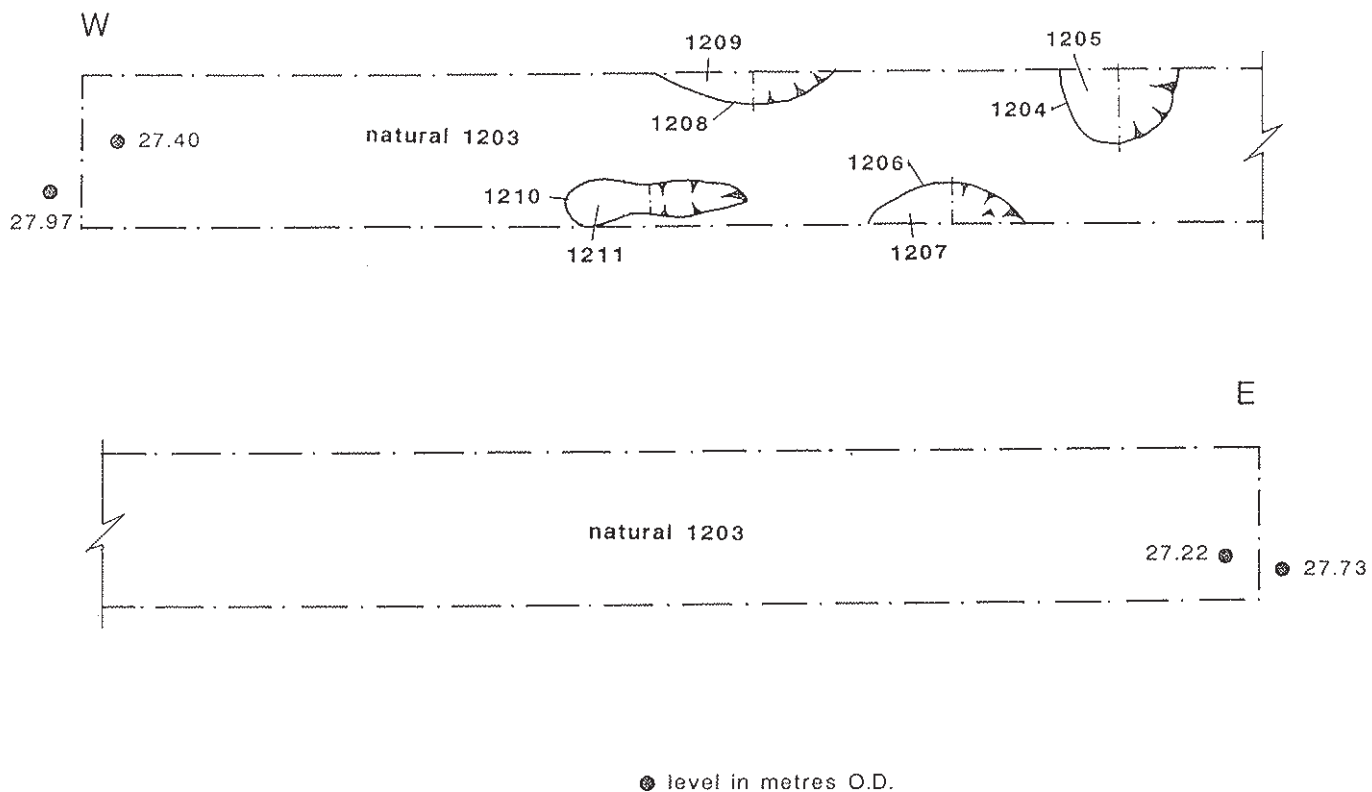
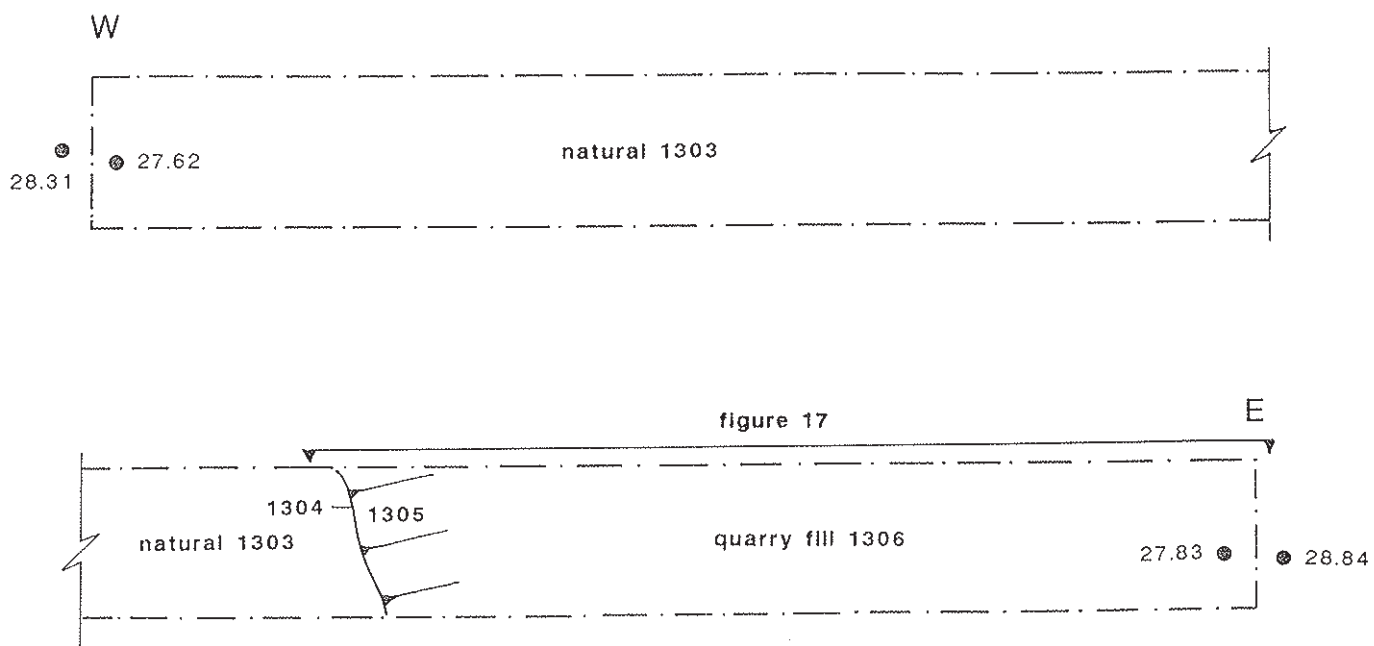


Figure 16

Trench 13 plan scale 1:100



Trench 13 section

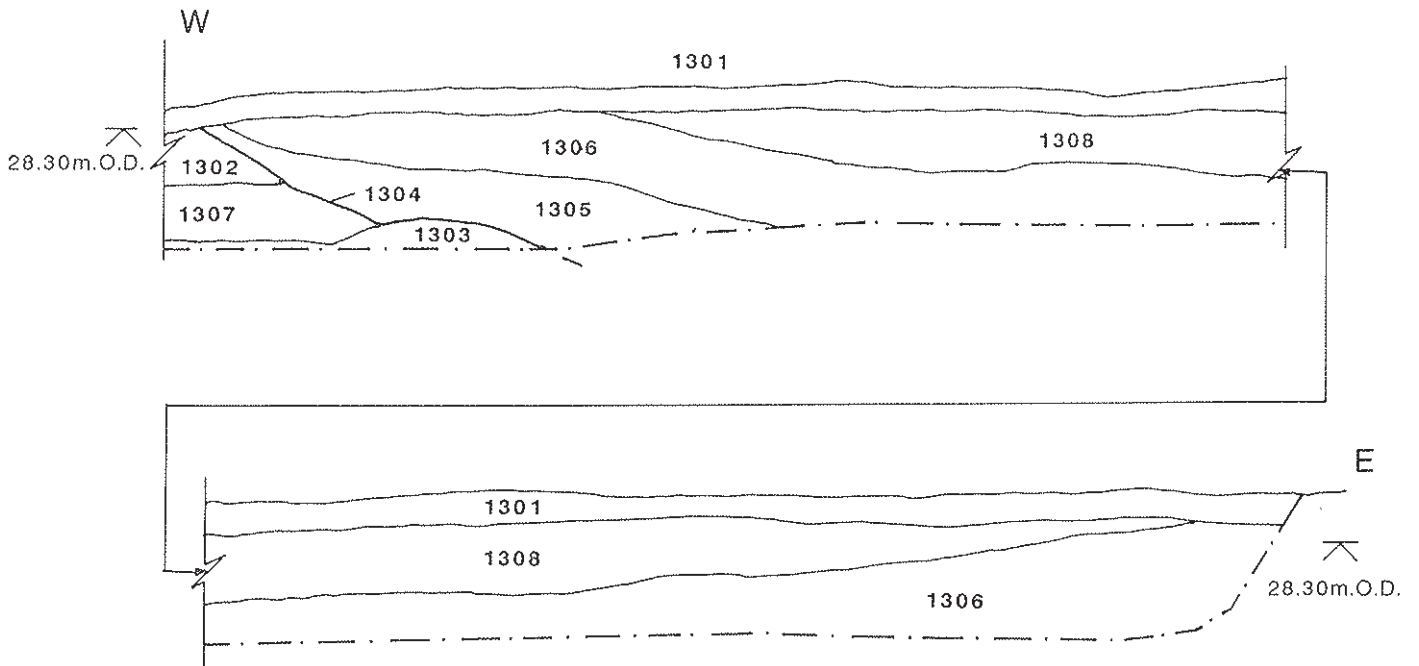


Figure 18

Trench 14 section

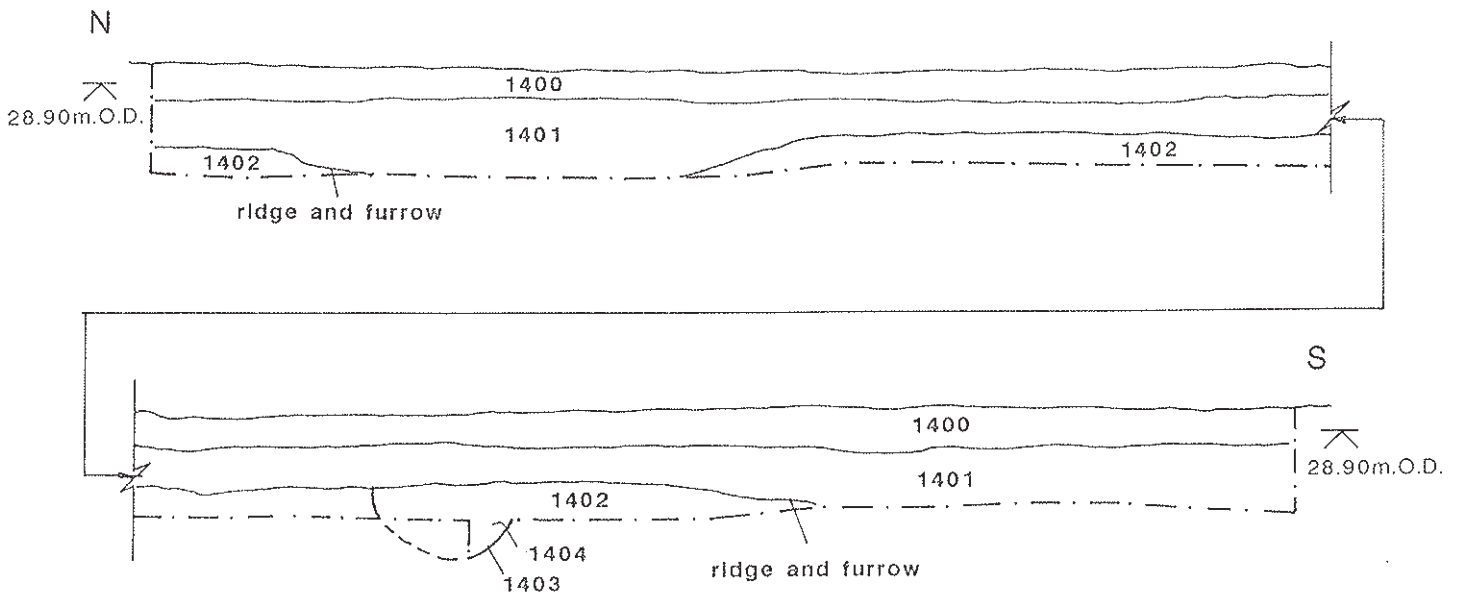


Figure 19

Trench 14 plan scale 1:100

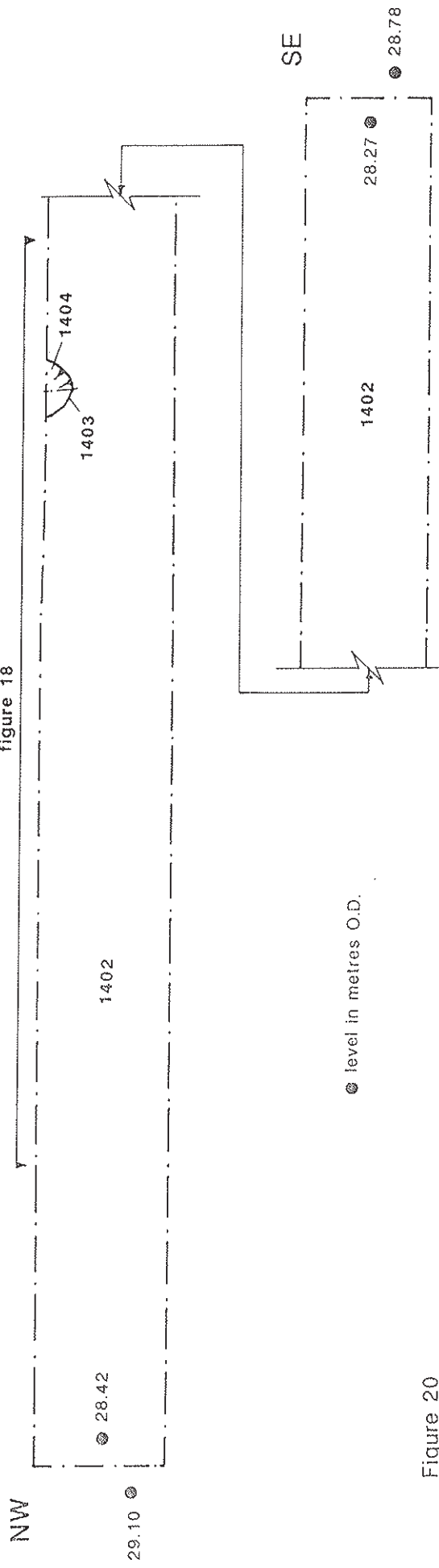


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Trench 15 plan scale 1:100

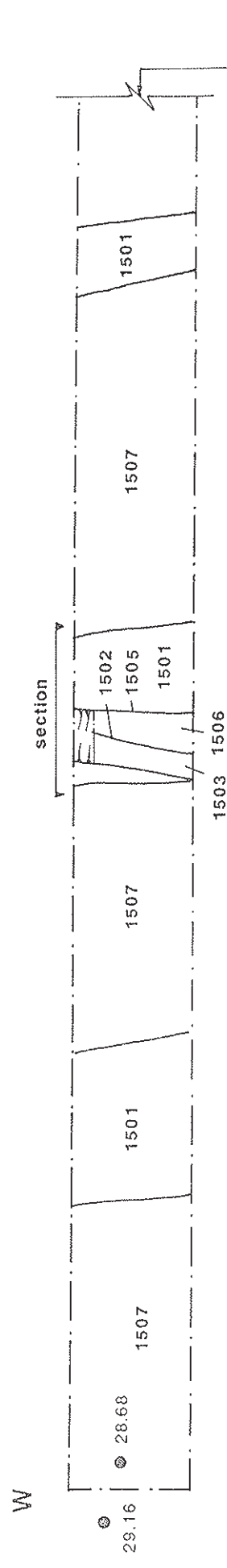
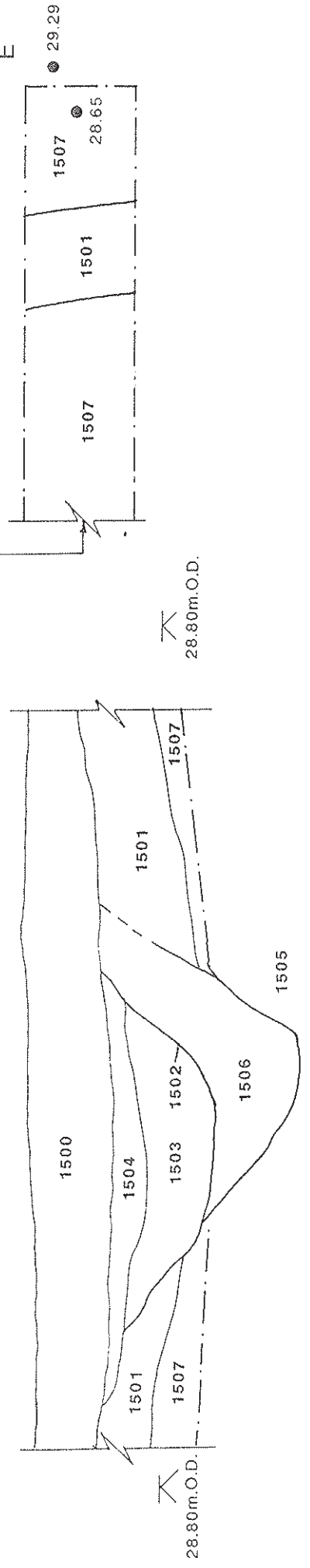


Figure 21 Trench 15 section scale 1:20





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