BISHAM (BR)

BITEV

Manor Cottage and Temple Cottage Temple Lane Bisham Berkshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

Oxford Archaeology

July 2003

Client: Lief Designs

Issue N^{O}: 1
OA Job N^{O}: 4567
Planning Ref N^{O}: 03/38619
NGR: SU 8383 8420

Client Name: Lief Designs

Client Ref No:

Document Title: Manor Cottage and Temple Cottage, Temple Lane, Bisham, Berkshire

Document Type: Evaluation

Issue Number: 1

National Grid Reference: SU 8383 8420
Planning Reference: 03/38619

OA Job Number: 4567
Site Code: BITE 03
Invoice Code: BITE EV
Receiving Museum: Reading Museum
Museum Accession No: REDMG: 2003.279

Prepared by: Andy Simmonds
Position: Site Supervisor
Date: 16th July 2003

Checked by: Andrew Holmes
Position: Assistant Manager - Smallworks
Date: 16th July 2003

Approved by: Nick Shepherd
Position: Head of Fieldwork
Date: 17th July 2003

Signed.....

Document File Location H:\PROJECTS\Berkshire BE\Windsor & Maidenhead W&M\4567 Temple Estate, Bisham nr Marlow ev\evalRepdraft.doc

Graphics File Location

Illustrated by Amy Tiffany Hemingway

Oxford Archaeology

Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford OX2 0ES
t: (0044) 01865 263800
f: (0044) 01865 793496
e: info@oxfordarch.co.uk
w: www.oxfordarch.co.uk

MANOR COTTAGE AND TEMPLE COTTAGE
TEMPLE LANE
BISHAM
BERKSHIRE

NGR: SU 8383 8420

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

SUMMARY

Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out a field evaluation at Manor Cottage and Temple Cottage, Temple Lane, Bisham, Berkshire on behalf of Lief Designs of Wooburn Common, Buckinghamshire. The evaluation revealed probable Neolithic activity at Temple Cottage in the form of a pit and a tree throw hole back-filled with burnt flint. At Manor Cottage a range of features were found indicative of a middle to late Iron Age settlement, comprising pits, a ring-gully and a ditch. A sherd of Italian amphora retrieved from a pit may suggest that the settlement was of higher status than a simple farmstead.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 Between 30th June and 3rd July 2003, Oxford Archaeology (OA) conducted a field evaluation at the sites of Manor Cottage and Temple Cottage, Temple Lane, Bisham on behalf of Lief Designs of Wooburn Common, Buckinghamshire. This work was carried out in advance of the determination of a planning application for the demolition of the existing houses and the construction of replacement dwellings (Planning ref: 03/38619), according to a brief set by and a WSI (OA 2003) agreed with Kevin Beachus, Planning Archaeologist for Babtie, representing the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.

1.2 Geology and topography

1.2.1 The development site consists of two disused properties, Temple Cottage and Manor Cottage. These sites are located approximately 75m south of the River Thames and 200m apart. Both areas lie at approximately 29 m OD and are 0.25 hectares and 0.16 hectares in area respectively. The geology is alluvium and Flood Plain Gravel overlying Upper Chalk and Middle Chalk.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 The site is in an area of archaeological potential. Trial trenching by TVAS in the early 1990s, approximately 500 m north-east of the site at Bradenham Lane, Temple, revealed a series of Roman features dating from the 2nd to 4th centuries (Archaeology in Berkshire, 1991, 10) while to the north at Stubbings House in Bisham, Bronze Age flints, Iron Age pottery and part of a burnt flint mound were revealed during trial trenching (ibid.).

1.3.2 To the north of Temple, the Church of All Saints at Bisham dates to the 12th century and it is likely that a small medieval hamlet grew up around the church. Bisham Abbey is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM, no. 148) that includes the remains of a monastic and manorial complex located on the south bank of the River Thames. It was founded as a preceptory of the Knights Templar during the reign of King Stephen (1135-64) and was occupied by that order until their dissolution in 1307.

1.3.3 In 1337 an Augustinian Priory, dedicated to Jesus Christ and St Mary, was founded on the site and the monastery remained Augustinian until its dissolution in 1536. It was briefly re-founded in 1537 as a Benedictine Abbey, but again surrendered in 1538, subsequently becoming the private residence of the Hoby family. Earthwork remains consist of the surviving part of a surrounding rectangular moat, enclosing an area some 400 m sq. Although most of the moat has been infilled, it can be seen to be steep sided with an earthen inner bank.

1.3.4 To the south west of the Abbey is Temple Mills dating to the 1790s and attributed to Samuel Wyatt. A large manor house which formerly stood to the south of Temple Cottage facing the river that was lost to fire in the 1950s (Pevsner, 1966, 89-90).

2 EVALUATION AIMS

2.1.1 The aims of the evaluation, as laid out in the WSI (OA 2003), were to determine the location, extent, date, character and state of preservation of any archaeological remains surviving on the site. This included assessing the preservation of artefactual and palaeo-environmental as well as stratigraphic evidence. The evaluation also sought to clarify the nature and extent of any modern disturbance and intrusion onto the site.

3 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

3.1 Scope of fieldwork

3.1.1 The evaluation comprised machine-dug trenches excavated in the gardens surrounding the existing buildings (Fig. 2). The positioning of the trenches was constrained by the presence of these buildings and by the overgrown nature of the site, which limited access to certain open areas. It was therefore decided to use a combination of linear, L- and T- shaped trenches to achieve the best spatial distribution possible within these constraints.

3.1.2 At Temple Cottage it was intended to excavate a total of three trenches, Trenches 1 and 2 being located on the west side of the existing building and Trench 3 on the east. However, on commencing excavation of Trench 3 it was discovered that significant deposits of Post-Medieval made ground had raised the ground level by 1.9 m. After consultation with the Planning Archaeologist, it was therefore agreed to curtail excavation of Trench 3 and to not excavate Trenches 1 and 2 due to the health and safety implications of working in trenches this deep.

3.1.3 Two trenches were excavated at Manor Cottage, Trenches 4 and 5, located to the south and west of the current building. Scanning with a cable detector prior to commencing excavation revealed the presence of a buried cable running approximately east to west across the area under evaluation and necessitated the insertion of a break in Trench 4 4.3 m wide 4 m from the south-west end of the trench.

3.2 Fieldwork methods and recording

3.2.1 The trenches were excavated by a mechanical excavator (JCB) using a toothless ditching bucket, directed by an archaeological supervisor. Excavation proceeded to the first significant archaeological horizon, which in this case coincided with the surface of the natural geology.

3.2.2 A representative sample of the features thus revealed were excavated by hand to determine their depth, extent and nature, and to retrieve finds and environmental samples. Where finds were visible in the surface of unexcavated features these were retained. All features and deposits encountered were issued a unique context number. A plan was drawn of each trench at a scale of 1:50, and each excavated feature was recorded in section at 1:20. Colour transparency and black-and-white photographs were taken of each feature, as well as more general shots of each trench. All recording was conducted in accordance with the practices detailed in the OA Fieldwork Manual (OAU 1992).

3.2.3 The trenches were surveyed in by hand using 30 m tapes and levels taken relative to Ordnance Datum utilising survey stations left in place by Warner Land Surveys Limited after their topographic survey of the site.

3.3 Finds

3.3.1 Finds were recovered by hand during the course of the excavation and generally bagged by context. Finds of special interest were given a unique small find number.

3.4 Palaeo-environmental evidence

3.4.1 Environmental samples were taken to assess the survival of palaeo-environmental evidence and to enhance retrieval of smaller artefacts such as micro-debitage.

3.5 Presentation of results

3.5.1 The results of the evaluation are presented below with separate sections devoted to the stratigraphic, artefactual and palaeo-environmental aspects. In the stratigraphic section each trench is described individually. Following these descriptive accounts, these three strands of evidence are brought together in an overall discussion and interpretation.

4 RESULTS: GENERAL

4.1 Soils and ground conditions

4.1.1 The site is located on the River Gravels of the Thames Valley, overlain by patches of silty clay alluvium. Although the gravel is naturally free draining, the alluvium is not and was subject to puddling when rained on. As is often the case with archaeologial features cut into alluvial substrates, the edges of features were found to be poorly

defined, with a certain amount of mixing between the fills and the surrounding natural material.

4.2 Distribution of archaeological deposits

4.2.1 A high density of features were discovered in all three excavated trenches. The only trench at Temple Cottage revealed three pits of probable prehistoric date, although given the limited excavation at this site it is difficult to say a great deal about the distribution of features here.

4.2.2 A concentration of Iron Age features, in the form of pits, ditches and gullies was uncovered at Manor Cottage. These features extended throughout trenches 4 and 5 with no obvious concentration or clearly defined limits, although it may be significant that the features were all cut into alluvium, with none on the gravel exposed at the east end of each trench.

5 RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS

5.1 Description of deposits

Temple Cottage

Trench 3 (Fig. 3)

5.1.1 Trench 3 was located in the garden on the west side of the existing dwelling at Temple Cottage. It was 8.2 m long, but due to the health and safety considerations only the easternmost 4.2 m was excavated to full depth, the rest of the trench comprising a series of steps to provide safe access to and egress from the base of the trench. Undisturbed geology, an orange silty clay alluvium (324), was encountered at 27.53 m OD, at a depth of 1.92 m below the current ground level. This was cut by four archaeological features, three of which were excavated in the evaluation.

5.1.2 Feature 315 was only partly revealed in the trench but was irregular in shape with an uneven base and is probably a tree throw pit. It was 0.75 m wide by at least 1.2 m long, continuing beyond the end of the trench, and had a depth of 0.36 m. Its fill (314) was a dark charcoal soil containing large amounts of burnt and fire-cracked flint and three unburnt flint flakes, one of which was datable to the Mesolithic or Neolithic periods.

5.1.3 Pit 319 was also only partly revealed but appeared more regular in shape. It was an oval, concave pit 0.41 m deep with a maximum dimension of 0.76 m. It was filled by a stiff brownish grey clay (318) with rust-coloured mottling indicative of a period of water-logging. Two worked flint flakes were retrieved from this feature, and it is probable that this feature too is prehistoric in date. Its shallow, bowl-like shape is typical of Neolithic and early Bronze Age pits found elsewhere along this part of the Thames floodplain at the Maidenhead, Windsor and Eton Flood Alleviation Scheme (Foreman 1998) and Eton Rowing Lake, Dorney (Allen 2000).

5.1.4 Immediately adjacent to pit 319 on its north-east side lay a round-bottomed posthole, 321. The posthole was 0.28 m in diameter and 0.13 m deep, and was filled by deposit 320, a similar material to 318.

5.1.5 Between pits 315 and 319 was a slightly irregularly shaped deposit of grey clay silt (323) containing fragments of burnt flint. This deposit was not excavated due to time constraints, but is probably the fill of a third pit.

5.1.6 These features were sealed by made ground (317) formed by a layer of clay 0.6 m thick extending throughout the trench. Recent pits 311 and 316 were cut into this layer. Both these features were clearly quite large, and only part of their total area was exposed within the confines of the evaluation trench. Consequently their shapes and full dimensions could not be established. This was particularly the case for the earlier of the two, pit 316, as it was partly cut away by pit 311. Pit 316 was 0.6 m deep, its sides sloping gently down to a flat base. A mixture of coal, clinker and brick fragments (313) had been dumped into it up to a thickness of 0.35 m, after which the rest of the pit was back-filled with a brown clay (312) which also contained patches and lenses of clinker. Pit 311, which truncated pit 316 on it south side, may have been circular, to judge from that part of its circumference observed within the trench. It had steeper sides than 316 and a less flat base, but was approximately the same depth. It contained a single fill (310), a dump of demolition material comprising modern brick fragments, brick dust, lumps of mortar and a few pieces of roof tile.

5.1.7 These pits were overlain by a layer of made ground (309) 0.75 m thick with a very similar composition to layer 317, and containing modern pottery. This deposit was cut by bedding trench 322, which ran on exactly the same north-west to south-east alignment as the evaluation trench. It occupied almost the full width of the trench at this level with only a thin sliver of layer 309 surviving along the north-east edge of the trench. The bedding trench was 0.3 m deep and its base was lined with a deposit of loose sand and coal fragments 0.1 m thick (308), presumably to enhance its drainage properties. The rest of the trench was filled by a silty loam cultivation soil (307).

5.1.8 Wall foundation 304 ran along the entire length of the south-west side of bedding trench 322, the face of the foundation having been exposed in the face of the evaluation trench. It was set in a construction trench (306) 0.3 m deep which extended 0.2 m beyond the face of the wall. A deposit of mortar and brick fragments 60 mm thick (305) had been set in the base of this trench and the wall constructed on this. The foundation itself consisted of four courses of bricks bonded with a hard off-white mortar. The construction trench had been back-filled with a mixture of mortar and loamy soil derived from layer 307. This part of the garden had formerly been occupied by greenhouses, so it is likely that foundation 304 is the footing for the wall of one of these structures while bedding trench 322 is a cultivation bed within it. The wall had been demolished down to ground level, leaving the below-ground component of the foundation in place, and the resultant demolition material levelled out *in situ* to form a layer of brick rubble (302) 0.12 m thick. A layer of topsoil 0.15 m thick had formed over this and at the time of excavation was under grass.

Manor Cottage

Trench 4 (Fig. 4)

5.1.9 Trench 4 was located to the west of the existing building at Manor Cottage, and was L-shaped. It was 15 m north-west to south-east and 20 m north-east to south-west with a break of 4.3 m located 4 m from its south-west end due to a buried cable running through this area. It was excavated to the surface of the natural geology at 28.75 to 28.95 m OD, a depth of between 0.6 m and 0.8 m below ground level.

5.1.10 River gravel (404) was exposed for 8 m at the south-east end of the trench, overlain throughout the rest of the trench by a layer of orange clay silt alluvium (415). Into this natural substrate were cut a total of four pits and a gully, as well as a feature interpreted as a tree throw hole. One pit (406) was excavated while the others were recorded in plan.

5.1.11 Gully 414 crossed the south-west end of the trench on an east-west alignment. The gully was V-shaped in profile with a width of 0.5 m and was 0.3 m deep. Its only fill (413) was a slightly greenish silt with chalk flecking. The gully appeared to be curving slightly and so may be a ring-gully, a type of feature commonly associated with Iron Age roundhouses. If this were the case, the other side of the gully should have been seen returning through the trench, but its absence could be explained by truncation by pit 418. This would give the gully a diameter of c.10 m, which is within the expected range for roundhouses.

5.1.12 Pit 406 was a typical bell-shaped Iron Age storage pit, with a depth of 0.7 m. It was 0.9 m in diameter at the top, increasing to a maximum of 1.15 m due to the undercutting of the sides. It contained two fills, the lower of which (416) was a fairly sterile back-fill of light brown clay silt composed of re-deposited natural material 0.45 m thick. The upper fill (405) was dark grey in colour with charcoal flecking and contained a number of pieces of pottery of late Iron Age date and animal bone. This is likely to represent dumping of domestic refuse.

5.1.13 The rest of the pits were not excavated but were all recorded in plan. Pit 408 was located less than a metre from pit 406 and appeared very similar to the latter feature in plan. It was almost circular, with a maximum diameter of 0.95, and was filled by a greyish brown clay silt containing flint gravel (407).

5.1.14 Pit 412 lay at the south-west end of the trench and could be a posthole associated with gully 414. Again its fill (411) was a greyish brown clay silt.

5.1.15 The largest pit exposed in this trench was pit 410, roughly half of which was within the area of the trench. It was circular with a diameter of approximately 2.1 m and was filled by a similar material (409) to the other pits.

5.1.16 All of these features produced pottery from the surface of their upper fills dating to the mid- to late Iron Age, with the exception of pit 412, which yielded only a single sherd of Roman pottery.

5.1.17 Feature 418 was roughly oval in plan and at least 2.3 m across. Its fill (417) consisted of an irregularly shaped central area of re-deposited natural gravel surrounded by a halo of greyish brown soil. On analogy with similar features excavated on other gravel sites, this feature is interpreted as a tree throw hole (Moore and Jennings 1992).

5.1.18 The archaeological horizon was sealed by layer 403, a gravely dark brown silty clay 0.12 - 0.25 m thick which may be a buried ploughsoil. This is overlain by a silty light brown subsoil (402) with an average thickness of 0.2 m, overlain in turn by the modern topsoil (401), a greyish brown loam 0.1 m thick.

Trench 5 (Fig. 5)

5.1.19 Trench 5 was a T-shaped trench measuring 15 m north-west to south-east and 10 m north-east to south-west. Undisturbed natural geology was reached at between 28.78 m and 29.13 m OD, at a maximum depth of 0.52 -0.81 m below the current ground level. As with Trench 4 both gravel (505) and alluvium (504) were present, with the gravel again confined to the east end of the trench. This trench contained six pits, a ditch and a tree throw hole.

5.1.20 Pits 507, 509, 517 and 519 were all very similar in size, form and date. All four were shallow flat-based circular pits with projected diameters ranging from 1.0 m to 1.5 m, and none had a depth greater than 0.3 m. They all contained orangey brown silty fills (506, 508, 516 and 518) presumably representing re-deposited natural alluvium. All yielded pottery of the mid to late Iron Age and are likely to be roughly contemporary.

5.1.21 Pits 509 and 519 were both cut by the much larger pit 511, which is probably a bell-shaped storage pit. This pit was roughly circular in plan with under-cutting side and measured 1.9 m in diameter with a depth of more than 0.5 m deep, although its full depth was not established. The earliest fill encountered in this feature was a dump of burnt material (512), dark pink in colour and containing flecks of charcoal and burnt soil, overlain by a layer of back-fill (510). The upper fill contained late Iron Age pottery including a single imported amphora sherd.

5.1.22 Toward the west end of the trench, pit 517 was cut by ditch 515, which ran across the trench on an east-west alignment. This ditch was 0.9 m wide and 0.55 m deep with a steeply V-shaped profile. Its primary fill (514), was a stiff orangey brown silty clay 0.15 m thick probably resulting from natural silting while the ditch was in use while the remaining depth of the ditch was filled by a brown stoney silt (513) which was probably a deliberate back-fill. The finds from the ditch indicate a similar mid to late Iron age date to that of the pits, although this material could be residual, derived from pit 517.

5.1.23 Ditch 515 also intercut with a circular pit (521) at the west end of the trench. This pit was 1.65 m in diameter and was filled by a greyish brown clay silt (520). Due to time constraints this feature could not be investigated, and so the relationship with ditch 515 was not conclusively established. In plan however it appeared that the ditch cut the pit.

5.1.24 A large tree throw hole (523) 2.5 m in diameter filled b a pale yellowish brown silt (522) was also uncovered at the east end of the trench.

5.1.25 These features were overlain by a similar sequence of overburden to that recorded in Trench 4. A buried ploughsoil (503) 0.3 m thick was overlain by a subsoil (502) 0.1 to 0.2 m thick and the modern topsoil (501) which was 0.15 m thick.

5.2 Finds

Prehistoric Pottery

5.2.1 The evaluation produced 54 sherds of pottery, weighing a total of 738 g. The majority of this assemblage dates to the middle to late Iron Age and derives from features in trenches 4 and 5. A single fragment possibly of Bronze Age date was retrieved from an Iron Age context in pit 521, while pit 412 yielded a sherd of Romano-British course ware which was not closely datable. A sherd of modern pottery came from made ground deposit 309.

Animal Bone

5.2.2 The animal bones and teeth excavated during this evaluation survived in good condition. The remains consists primarily of sheep/goat remains, represented mainly by juvenile mandibles from context 405, which on further analysis may be aged more accurately. Also present were the remains of juvenile cattle and pig, some of the latter of which had been burnt, possibly an indication of cooking activities on the site.

Lithics

5.2.3 A total of 12 pieces of worked flint were recovered during the evaluation, of which only one was chronologically diagnostic. This was a blade from context 314, the fill of pit/ tree throw hole 315, and indicates a Mesolithic or Neolithic date, which would be consistent with the nature of the feature. The blade was one of three pieces of flint from this feature. Pit 319 yielded two flakes and is also thought to be prehistoric in date. The rest of the flint assemblage derives from Iron Age contexts in which it is likely to be residual, although its generally fresh condition would indicate that it has not experienced a great deal of disturbance and redeposition.

Fired Clay

5.2.4 Pieces of fired clay were recovered from a number of Iron Age contexts. A noteworthy piece was a lump of hearth or furnace lining retrieved from the fill of gully 414.

5.3 Palaeo-environmental remains

5.3.1 Environmental samples were taken from two pits (315 and 319) believed to be prehistoric in date. Wood charcoal was present in the sample from pit 314, much of it large enough to be identified. Non-wood remains were very sparse, but this would be consistent with the assumed date of these deposits. No molluscs were preserved in either of the samples.

6 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

6.1 Reliability of field investigation

6.1.1 It was only possible to carry out a very limited amount of trenching at Temple Cottage. As a result of this, the sample size was inadequate to provide a reliable indication of the archaeological potential of this site. At Manor Cottage both the proposed trenches were excavated, giving a more representative coverage of the area of the proposed development.

6.1.2 The presence of more than 1.5 m of recent made ground in Trench 3 shows that landscaping has been carried out here on a large scale, which may have resulted in an unknown amount of truncation of the archaeological remains. However, it is more likely that such groundwork will have primarily comprised the addition of material to raise the ground surface relative to the level of the adjacent Thames. In this case little truncation will have occurred, and indeed the resultant overburden may have protected the underlying archaeology from being damaged by subsequent cultivation of the Cottage garden. Indeed, prehistoric features do survive sealed beneath the made ground deposits.

6.1.3 At Manor Cottage, the archaeological features had been truncated by ploughing, as is evidenced by the absence of occupation surfaces and by the buried ploughsoil (403, 503) recorded in both trenches. Elsewhere in the immediate area, the previous digging of two swimming pools, one located between the trenches and the other north of Trench 4, may have removed archaeological deposits. A service trench was also noted running diagonally across the area of Trench 4.

6.2 Overall interpretation

6.2.1 Features were found at the Temple Cottage site indicative of a Neolithic presence in this area. Pit 319, with its shallow, bowl-like shape and alluvial fill is typical of features of this date recorded elsewhere along this part of the Thames floodplain, while feature 315, a tree throw hole back-filled with burnt material including much fire-cracked flint also has parallels from this period. Due to the limited excavation at this site it was unfortunately not possible to establish the extent of the Mesolithic/Neolithic activity. If more such features are present, they have the potential to significantly add to our knowledge of the contemporary environment, as plant assemblages of this period are rare. A small assemblage of struck flint from later contexts at Manor Cottage hints at prehistoric activity at this site also.

6.2.2 Both trenches at Manor Cottage revealed substantial evidence for Iron Age occupation in the form of pits, a ditch and a gully. The curving gully (414) may be part of a ring-gully, usually interpreted as a drainage feature associated with a

roundhouse. The presence of structures contemporary with the Iron Age features is also indicated by the presence of fired daub in a number of contexts, while the gully contained a piece of vitrified clay deriving from a hearth lining. Several of the pits excavated were shallow and flat-based with similar dimensions suggesting that they are involved in a single activity, while others were clearly bell-shaped storage pits typical of the Iron Age. Pits 509, 511 and 519 intercut, demonstrating that they represent more than a single phase of activity.

6.2.3 The pottery assemblage from the evaluation indicates that occupation spanned a period beginning in the late 2nd or early 1st centuries BC and not continuing much if at all beyond the Roman conquest. The presence of an imported sherd of pre-conquest amphora in pit 511 suggests that the occupants of the settlement may have been of higher than average status, as such vessels are normally found on oppida and other high status sites rather than on typical farmsteads.

6.2.4 Ditch 515, which ran east-west across the south-west end of Trench 5, cuts Iron Age pits 517 and 520 and may belong to a later phase of activity, possibly representing an agricultural boundary post-dating the abandonment of the settlement. The pottery from the ditch was all Iron Age in date, but this material may be residual, deriving from the pit.

6.2.5 Further excavation is likely to add substantially to the assemblage of animal bone collected in the evaluation. This material has the potential to provide information regarding the diet and husbandry practices of the site. It is recommended that any further work should consider sampling for environmental remains to recover smaller bones such as small mammal, bird and fish bones that may contribute to our understanding of the environment and the diet of the inhabitants at the time.

6.2.6 A large depth of overburden was encountered in Trench 3 resulting from modern made ground deposits, and was also associated with two large pits (311 and 316) containing twentieth century demolition rubble. Pevsner reports that a building close to the site burnt down during the 1950s, and it is possible that both the pits and the landscaping are associated with this event. The layer of overburden may have protected the archaeological features sealed beneath it from subsequent damage. However, it is also possible that such a volume of earth-moving may have caused damage to archaeological deposits elsewhere in the vicinity.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

Table 1:Trench 3

Ctxt no.	*Type*	*Width (m)*	*Thick (m)*	*Comments*	*Finds*	*No./ wt (g)*	*Date*
301	Layer		0.15	Topsoil			
302	Layer		0.12	Subsoil			
303	Fill		0.3	Fill of 306			
304	Masonry		0.3	Foundation			
305	Fill		0.06	Fill of 306			
306	Cut	> 0.2	0.36	Construction cut for 304			
307	Fill		0.2	Garden soil			
308	Fill		0.1	Fill of 309			
309	Layer		0.75	Made ground	Pottery Bone	1/68	19-20C
310	Fill		0.6	Fill of pit 311	CBM	3/1878	19-20C
311	Cut	> 2.3 x > 0.6	0.6	Pit			
312	Fill		0.3	Fill of pit 316			
313	Fill		0.35	Fill of pit 316			
314	Fill		0.36	Fill of pit 315	Flint	3	
315	Cut	1.2 x 0.75	0.36	Pit			
316	Cut	2.0 x 1.15	0.65	Pit			
317	Layer		0.7	Made ground			
318	Fill		0.41	Fill of pit 319	Flint	2	
319	Cut	0.76	0.41	Pit			
320	Fill		0.13	Fill of posthole			
321	Cut	0.28	0.13	Posthole			
322	Cut	1.25	0.3	Bedding trench			
323	Deposit			Unexcavated pit			
324	Layer			Alluvium			

Table 2: Trench 4

Ctxt no.	Type	Width (m)	Thick (m)	Comments	Finds	No./ wt.	Date
401	Layer		0.15-0.2	Topsoil			
402	Layer		0.2	Subsoil			
403	Layer		0.12-0.25	Buried ploughsoil			
404	Layer			Natural gravel			
405	Fill		0.25	Fill of pit 406	Pottery Flint	8/80 2	MIA
406	Cut	0.9	0.7	Pit			
407	Fill			Fill of pit 408	Pottery Flint	1/9 1	IA?
408	Cut	0.95 x 0.8		Pit (unexcavated)			
409	Fill			Fill of pit 410	Pottery	3/31	MIA
410	Cut	2.1		Pit (unexcavated)			
411	Fill			Fill of pit 412	Pottery	1/3	RB
412	Cut	0.8		Pit (unexcavated)			
413	Fill		0.25	Fill of gully 414	Pottery	5/141	LIA
414	Cut	0.46	0.25	Gully			
415	Layer			Alluvium			
416	Fill		0.45	Fill of pit 406	Pottery	1/41	M/LIA
417	Fill			Fill of tree throw hole 418			
418	Cut	2.3 x 1.5		Tree throw hole			

Table 3: Trench 5

Ctxt no.	***Type***	***Width (m)***	***Thick (m)***	***Comments***	***Finds***	***No./ wt.***	***Date***
501	Layer		0.15	Topsoil			
502	Layer		0.1-0.2	Subsoil			
503	Layer		0.3	Buried ploughsoil			
504	Layer			Alluvium			
505	Layer			Natural gravel			
506	Fill		0.3	Fill of pit 507	Pottery Flint	6/57 2	M/LIA
507	Cut	1.5	0.3	Pit			
508	Fill		0.24	Fill of pit 509	Pottery	3/44	M/LIA
509	Cut	1.0	0.24	Pit			
510	Fill		0.35	Fill of pit 511	Pottery Flint	13/208 1	LIA
511	Cut	1.9	>0.5	Pit			
512	Fill		>0.12	Fill of pit 511			
513	Fill		0.4	Fill of Ditch 515	Pottery	3/18	M/LIA?
514	Fill		0.15	Fill of Ditch 515			
515	Cut	0.9	0.55	Ditch			
516	Fill		0.23	Fill of pit 517	Pottery Flint	4/28 1	MIA
517	Cut	1.25	0.23	Pit			
518	Fill		0.24	Fill of pit 519	Pottery	1/2	LIA?
519	Cut	1.0	0.24	Pit			
520	Fill			Fill of pit 521	Pottery	3/8	MIA?
521	Cut	1.65		Pit (unexcavated)			
522	Fill			Fill of tree throw hole 523			
523	Cut	2.5		Tree throw hole			

APPENDIX 2 POTTERY AND OTHER CERAMICS AND FIRED CLAY

By Paul Booth

INTRODUCTION

The evaluation produced some 54 sherds of pottery (738 g) with a chronological range from middle Iron Age to post-medieval periods inclusive. In addition there were 22 fragments (189 g) of fired clay and three fragments (1878 g) of 19th-20th century brick and tile from a single context (310) in Trench 3. The pottery was recorded rapidly by context group, mainly using standard codes in the Oxford Archaeology Iron Age and Roman pottery recording system. Excluding post-medieval/modern finds the material came from 13 contexts in Trenches 4 and 5. It was generally in moderate condition, surfaces being quite well preserved but a number of sherds being very small. The great majority of the material was of middle to late Iron Age date. One small fragment (3 g) was possibly of Bronze Age date and there were two Roman sherds and one post-medieval/modern sherd (81 g and 68 g respectively). The post-medieval material, pottery and brick and tile, is not discussed further.

FABRICS

The Iron Age and Roman pottery was assigned to fabric or ware groups as defined in the OA system for recording pottery of these periods. For the purposes of this report most Iron Age fabrics were characterised only broadly, in terms of their principal inclusion type, but significant secondary inclusion types were noted on the pottery recording sheets (in archive). The inclusion types present were:

A	quartz sand
F	flint
G	grog
I	iron oxides
P	clay pellets
S	shell
V	organic
Z	uncertain voids

Six sherds were primarily tempered with flint and four (one possibly Bronze Age) with grog, while the remainder of the Iron Age material (41 sherds) was sand tempered. Sand and flint tempering traditions were in use in both the middle and late Iron Age phases of activity, whereas grog-tempering was confined to the late Iron Age (for further discussion of chronology see below). Fabrics were generally fairly fine to fine, except for a few of the flint-tempered pieces, in which the tempering was coarse.

The two Roman sherds were an amphora fragment (ware group A20) and a sandy reduced coarse ware (R30).

FORMS, DECORATION AND CHRONOLOGY

Only four Iron Age vessels were represented by rim sherds. These were a simple bucket shaped vessel in a fairly fine sand-tempered fabric and a small, undiagnostic slightly everted rim fragment, also sand-tempered, both from context 413, and two fairly crude bead-rim jar forms in flint-tempered fabrics, one each from contexts 405 and 510. The bucket shaped form is of middle Iron Age date whereas the bead rim jars are of late Iron Age or possibly even early Roman type. The presence of characteristic late Iron Age jar types such as cordoned neck jars was indicated by body sherds. There was only one notable decorated sherd - a fragment from context 416 in a fine sand-tempered fabric with paired oblique burnished lines having linear impressions between them. This was perhaps from a globular bowl, but the

sherd was too small for certainty. Otherwise decoration was largely confined to burnishing, which was relatively common, particularly on the finer sand-tempered fabrics.

The relative lack of diagnostic sherds makes precise dating of the assemblage uncertain. However, with the possible exception of a single Bronze Age sherd the character of the fabrics present strongly suggests a middle Iron Age and later date. A number of the context groups contained sherds assigned to both 'middle' and 'late' Iron Age periods. While this could just indicate the presence of mixed groups, it may also suggest that some groups represent a period of overlap of ceramic traditions. It is also possible that the middle Iron Age component in the assemblage only spanned the later part of that period - the presence of vessels such as the decorated ?globular bowl would be consistent with such a view. The ceramic transition from middle to late Iron Age is not well dated, but may lie in the later 1st century BC in this area. Relatively little of the late Iron Age pottery -broadly speaking of 'Belgic type', though by no means all wheel thrown - was in the grog-tempered fabrics characteristic of this tradition. It is notable that established sand-tempering traditions seem to have continued, supplemented also by flint-tempered vessels, including bead rim jars with affinities to Silchester ware. It is possible that this material continued in use beyond the Roman conquest, but the general absence of Romanised coarse wares is striking - only context 411 is potentially dated by a single sherd of such material. The only other 'Roman' sherd from the site is of considerable interest. This is an amphora fragment, in fresh condition, assigned to ware group A20, probably of Italian origin. The form is most probably Dressel 2-4, a wine amphora. There is no reason to suppose that this sherd was intrusive in the otherwise late Iron Age group (510) in which it was found, which potentially carries implications for the status of the site at this period.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The assemblage is indicative of domestic settlement on the site within the middle and late Iron Age periods. The date range of this activity could have been relatively short, however, perhaps beginning no earlier than the 2nd century BC and barely continuing past the time of the Roman conquest, if at all. The pottery is consistent with regional traditions and with changes in them reflecting the introduction of new ceramic technologies in the late Iron Age. The presence of an imported amphora in a probable late Iron Age context might suggest that some inhabitants of the site were of higher than average status, as such material is generally rare in rural settlement contexts.

Table 4: Summary of pottery and other ceramic material by context

Context	No. sh	Weight (g)	Ceramic date	Comments	CBM/fired clay etc
309	1	68	19-20C	Flower pot	
310	3	1878	19-20C		Brick (2) and peg tile
405	8	80	LIA	Some ?MIA also. Sand tempered and flint tempered fabrics, 1 bead rim jar	
405	4	59			Fired clay
407	1	9	Iron Age?	Flint tempered	
409	3	31	MIA	Sand tempered	
411	1	3	RB	Sand tempered reduced coarse ware (R30), not closely datable	
413	5	141	LIA	Sand tempered. MIA 'bucket' form	
413	1	82			Furnace/hearth lining with vitrified surface
416	2	41	M/LIA	Sand tempered. 1 sherd decorated	
506	6	57	MIA or M/LIA	Sand tempered	
508	3	44	M/LIA	Sand tempered, 1 sherd flint tempered and very hard fired	
510	13	208	LIA	Sand tempered, flint tempered and grog tempered fabrics. Bead rim jar, also 1 amphora sherd (A20)	
510	13	38			Fired clay
513	3	18	M/LIA?	Sand tempered	
513	3	9			Fired clay
516	4	28	MIA	Sand tempered	
518	1	2	LIA?		
520	3	8	MIA?	1 fragment (3 g) possibly Bronze Age	
520	1	1			Fired clay

APPENDIX 3 WORKED FLINT

by Kate Cramp

A total of 12 flints, mainly flakes, were recovered from seven contexts (Table 1). In general, the material is in a fresh, uncorticated condition. Most pieces appear to be manufactured from a gravel-derived flint, which is characterised by a thin, abraded cortex and a mottled grey interior.

Table 5: Flint from Temple Estate, Bisham.

Category:	Context:							Total:
	314	318	405	407	506	510	516	
Flake		2	2	1	2	1	1	9
Blade-like flake	1							1
Blade	1							1
Irregular waste	1							1
Total:	3	2	2	1	2	1	1	12

The flintwork is chronologically undiagnostic, with the possible exception of the tertiary blade from context 314. This piece, which exhibits platform edge abrasion, may be broadly Mesolithic or Neolithic in date.

Although the flint assemblage is limited in size, its fresh condition implies minimal redeposition. Further excavation may provide a larger assemblage with greater potential for dating and interpretation.

Table 6: Flint catalogue

Ctxt	Category	Burnt	Broke	Total	Weight	Comments/description:
314	Blade			1		Tertiary blade with platform edge abrasion. Mesolithic/Neolithic.
314	Blade-like flake			1		Tertiary blade-like flake, terminating in
314	Irregular waste			1		A couple of flake scars. May have shattered from larger core.
318	Flake			1		Gravel flint preparatory flake.
318	Flake			1		Side-trimming flake. Good use-wear right-hand side. Gravel flint.
405	Flake		1	1		Side-trimming flake with distal snap. Gravel
405	Flake		1	1		Thin tertiary flake.
405	Natural (thrown			1		
407	Flake			1		?Hard-hammer, distal-trimming flake.
506	Flake		1	1		Broad tertiary flake with distal break. Faceted platform - possible rejuvenation?
506	Flake			1		Secondary flake in very fresh condition. Probably hard-hammer struck with no platform preparation. Gravel flint.
510	Flake			1		Distal-trimming flake with rough platform edge abrasion.
510	Natural (thrown			1		
516	Flake		1	1		Fresh distal-trimming flake with proximal break. Possible use-wear to right-hand

APPENDIX 4 ENVIRONMENTAL DATA

By E.C.Stafford

INTRODUCTION

2 samples were made available for the assessment of the preservation of palaeoenvironmental indicators. They derive from pit fills thought to date to the prehistoric period.

METHODOLOGY

The soil samples, ranging in size from 34 to 36 litres, were processed by mechanical flotation in a modified Siraf-type machine, with the sample held on a 500µm and the flot collected on a 250µm mesh. The flots were then air-dried and a brief assessment was carried out. The flots were scanned under a binocular microscope at x10 and x20 magnification. Any seeds, chaff or molluscs were noted and an estimate of abundance made. Charcoal caught on the 2mm sieve was considered identifiable and quantified. The heavy residue fractions from the samples were also air-dried and scanned for abundance of charred material and artefacts.

RESULTS

Table 1 is a summary of the results of the assessment.

- Modern contamination, in the form of roots, weed seeds and pupa cases, were present in both flots although these were more abundant in sample <2>.
- Wood charcoal was present in sample <1>, a good proportion of which was large enough to be identified (>2mm). The charcoal in sample <2> however was sparse and too comminuted for identification.
- Non-wood remains were very sparse in both samples consisting of occasional (1-5 items) cereal grain and weed seeds. The condition of the grain however was poor and probably not identifiable. A single fragment of indeterminate nutshell was noted in sample <1>
- No molluscs were preserved in the samples.

DISCUSSION

Of the feature fills examined, charred plant remains, apart from wood charcoal, were poorly preserved and no further work is recommended for these samples. However since only two samples were available, from features of uncertain date, it is recommended that if an excavation is to be carried out in the future, and large numbers of features are uncovered, that a targeted sampling strategy is employed on well dated features in consultation with a relevant specialist. Sampling should cover a range of feature types for each period represented in accordance best practice Ditches in particular do not usually produce rich charred plant remains assemblages and sampling should focus on charcoal rich deposits and termini. Cereal grain was present in very small numbers in the prehistoric pit fills. It is quite possible that these exist as intrusive elements given the presence of modern roots. The presence of nutshell, probably hazelnut, in sample <1>, and scarcity of cereal grain however is characteristic of Neolithic deposits in the region. It is recommended that sampling should be undertaken particularly on any features thought to date to the Neolithic or Bronze Age due to the rarity of plant assemblages from this period, as well as for the recovery of artefacts such as flint microdebitage.

Table 7: Assessment results

Feature type	Sample no.	Ctx no.	Vol. processed (Litres)	.>10mm residue	Flot vol. (ml)	Charcoal	Grain	Chaff	Nut shell	Weeds
Pit	1	314	34	Burnt flint	35	++++	+	-	+	+
Pit	2	318	36	-	2	+	+	-	-	-

+ 1-5
++ 6-25
+++26-50
++++ >50

APPENDIX 5 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

Allen, T 2000 *Dorney, Eton Rowing Lake*. South Midlands Archaeology 30, 21.

English Heritage 2002 *Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods from sampling and recovery to post-excavation*. English Heritage CfA report 2002.

Foreman, S 1998 *Excavations in Advance of the Environment Agency Maidenhead, Windsor and Eton Flood Relief Scheme.* South Midlands Archaeology 28, 26-31.

Moore, J and Jennings, D 1992 *Reading Business Park: A Bronze Age Landscape*. Oxford.

OAU 1992 *Fieldwork manual* (1st edition, ed. D Wilkinson)

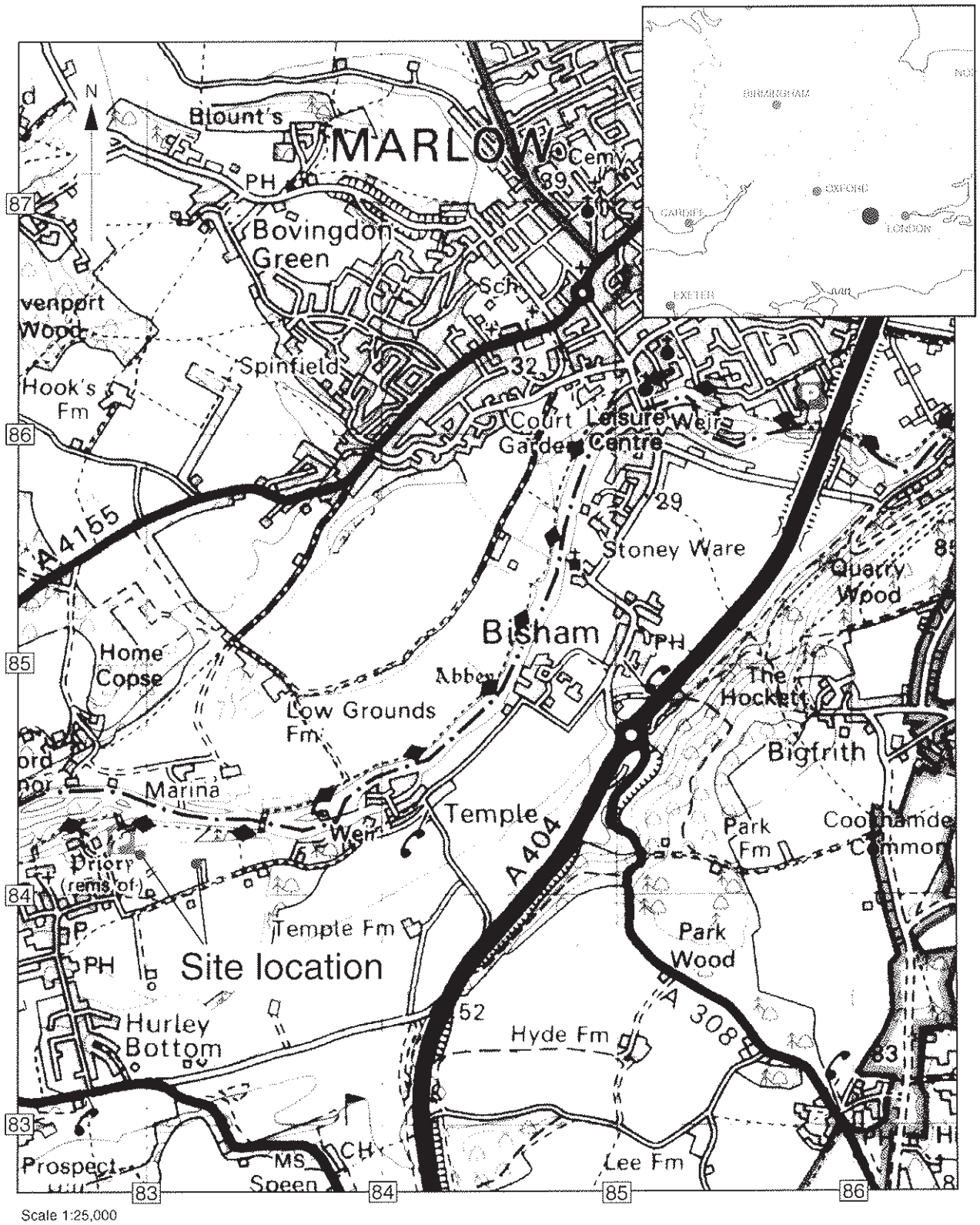
OA 2000 *Environmental sampling guidelines and instruction manual*. Oxford Archaeology, Unpublished.

OA 2003 *Manor Cottage and Temple Cottage, Temple Lane, Bisham, Berkshire. Written Scheme of Investigation*. Oxford Archaeology

Pevsner 1966 *The Buildings of England, Berkshire*. Penguin, London.

APPENDIX 6 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: Manor Cottage and Temple Cottage, Temple Lane, Bisham, Berkshire.
Site code: BITE 03
Grid reference: SU 8383 8420
Type of evaluation: Three machine-excavated trenches at two sites.
Date and duration of project: 30/6/2003 - 3/7/2003
Area of site: 0.25 and 0.16 hectares.
Summary of results: Two pits of probable Neolithic date were found at Temple Cottage. At Manor Cottage there were a range of features comprising pits, a possible ring-gully and a ditch indicating the presence of a middle to late Iron Age settlement.
Location of archive: The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Reading Museum in due course, under the following accession number: REDMG: 2003.279



Scale 1:25,000

Figure 1: Site location

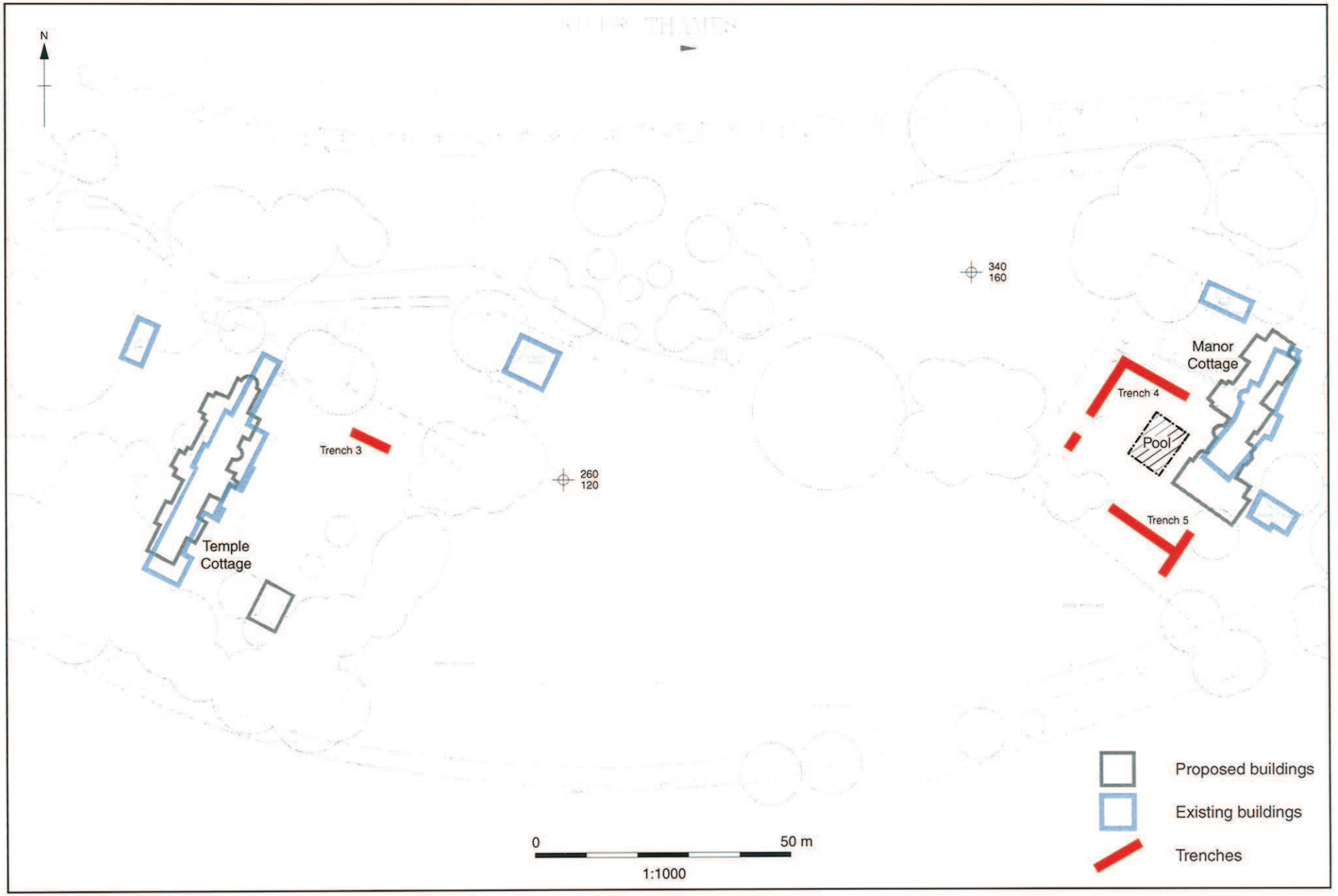


Figure 2: Trench Location Plan

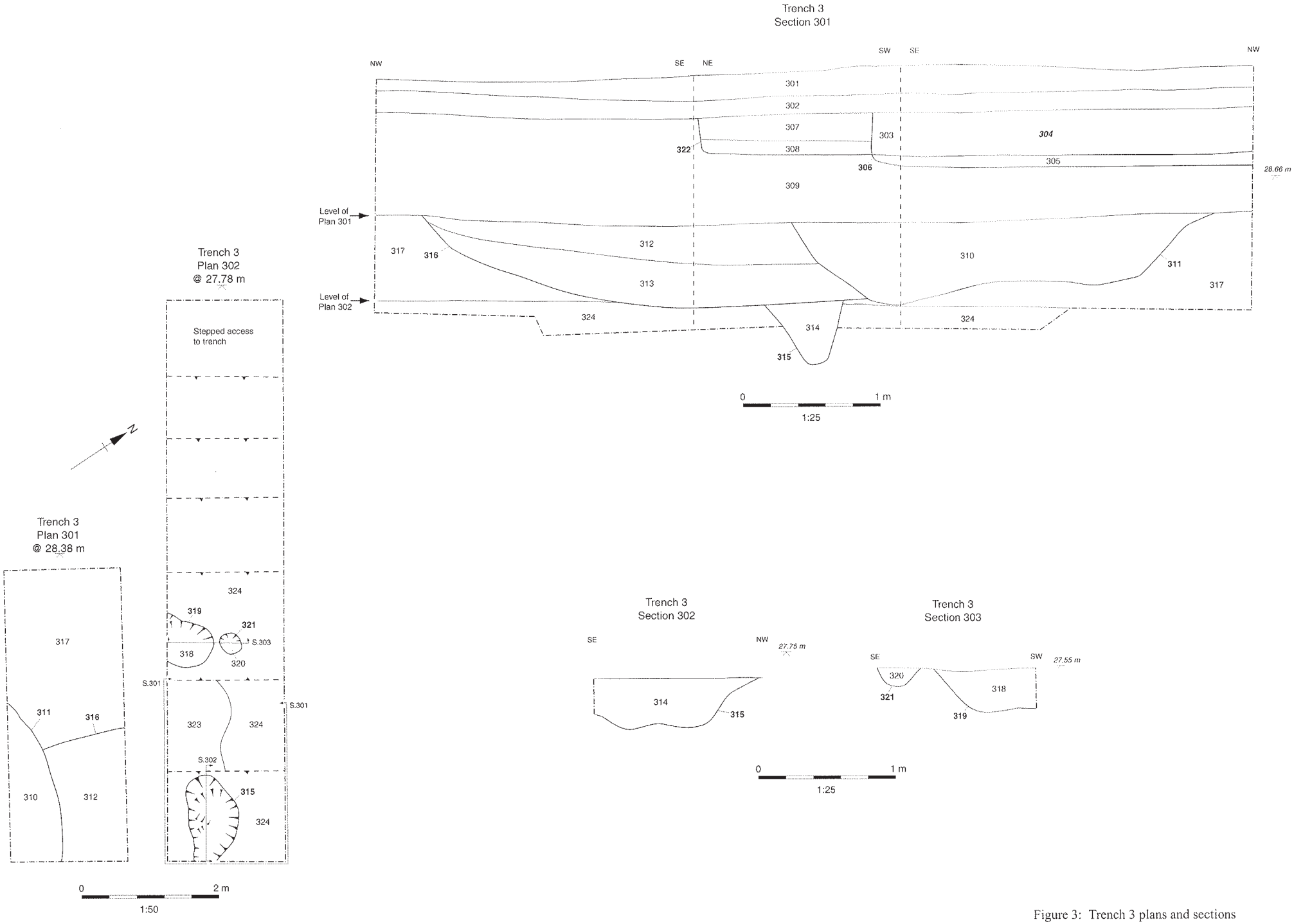


Figure 3: Trench 3 plans and sections

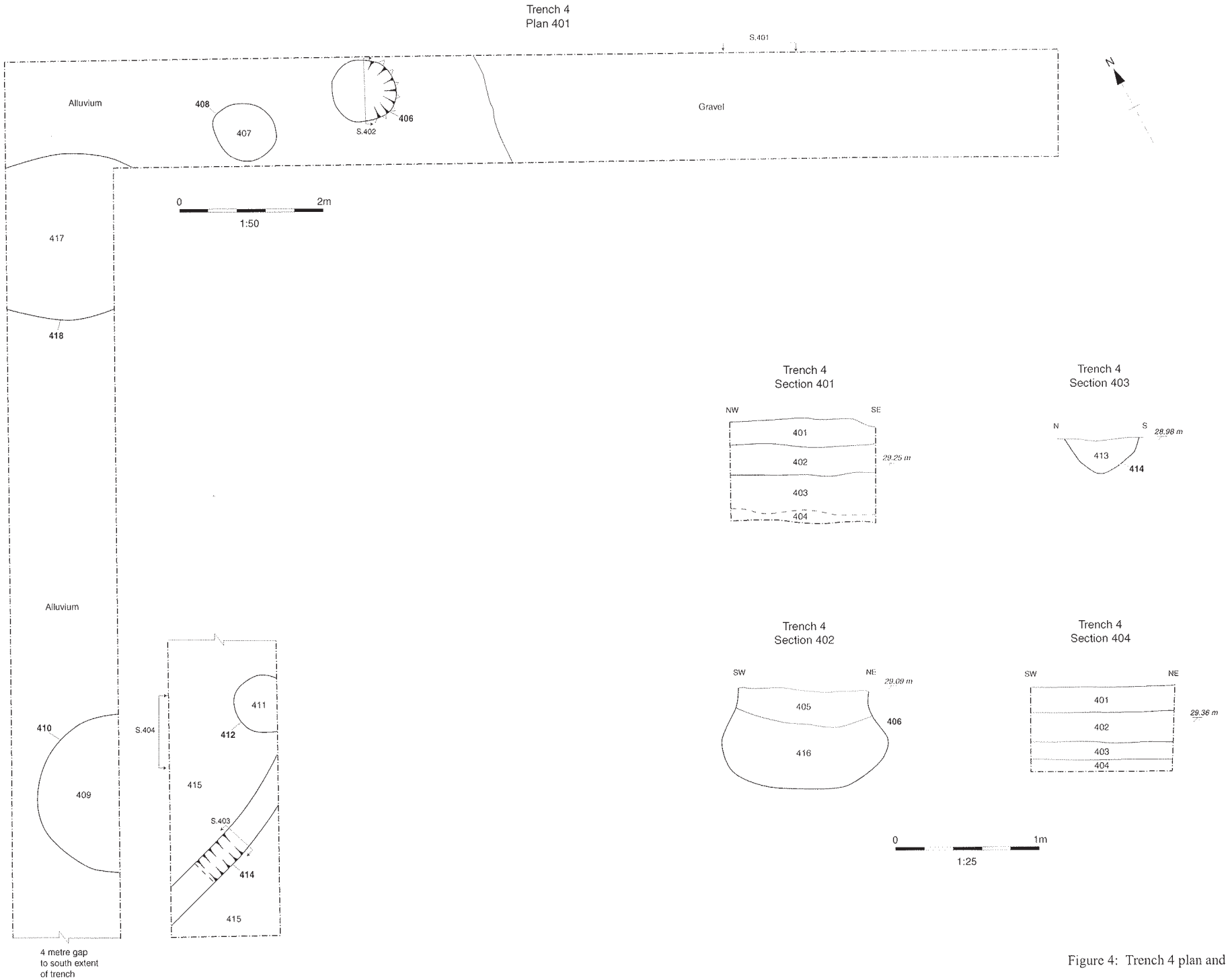


Figure 4: Trench 4 plan and sections

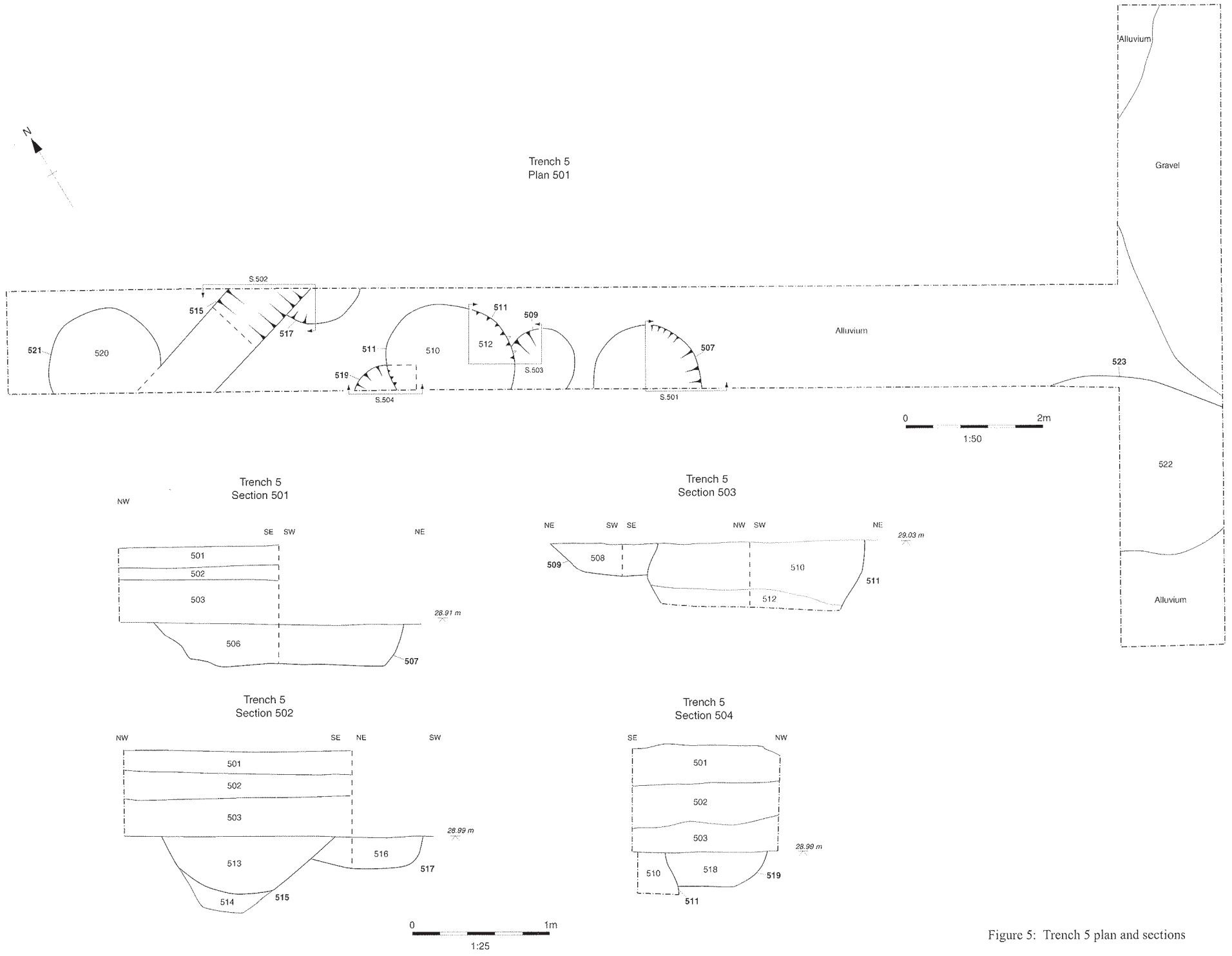
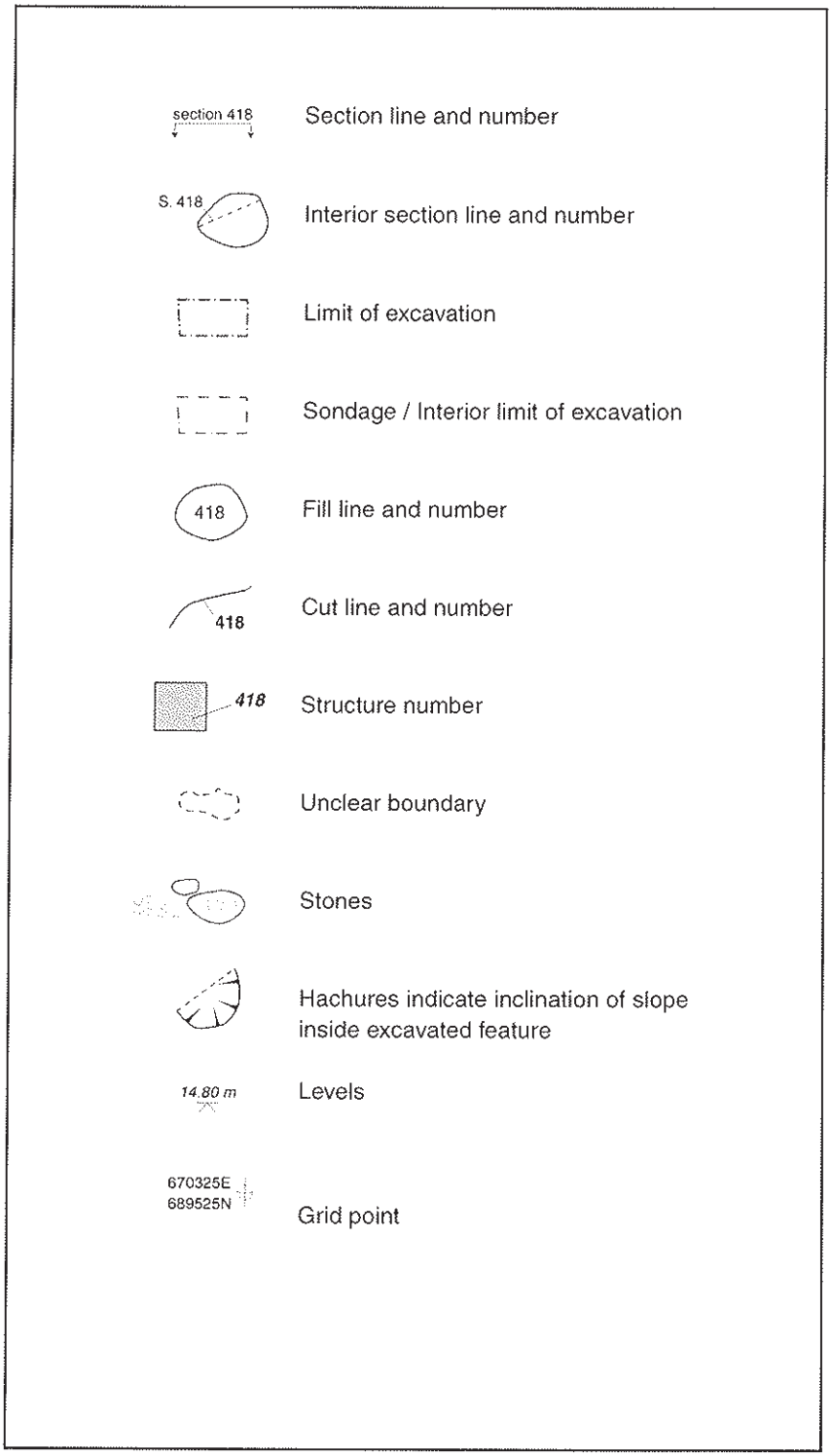


Figure 5: Trench 5 plan and sections



Key to Oxford Archaeology plans and sections

Oxford Archaeology

Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford OX2 0ES

t: (0044) 01865 263800
f: (0044) 01865 793496
e: info@oxfordarch.co.uk
w:www.oxfordarch.co.uk

Oxford Archaeology North

Storey Institute
Meeting House Lane
Lancaster LA1 1TF

t: (0044) 01524 541000
f: (0044) 01524 848606
e: lancinfo@oxfordarch.co.uk
w:www.oxfordarch.co.uk

Director: David Jennings, BA MIFA FSA

Oxford Archaeological Unit is a
Private Limited Company, N°: 1618597
and a Registered Charity, N°: 285627

Registered Office:
Oxford Archaeological Unit
Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford OX2 0ES