

# Cotswald Fasteners 6-8 Siddington Road Cirencester Gloucestershire



## Archaeological Evaluation Report



**Oxford Archaeology**

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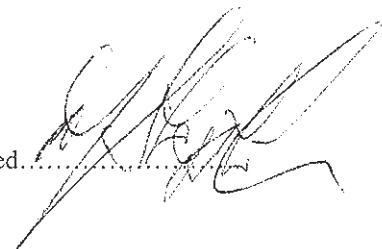
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Signed.....

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## Cotswold Fasteners, 6-8 Siddington Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire

### *ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION*

#### CONTENTS

Summary.....	1
1 Introduction .....	1
1.1 Location and scope of work .....	1
1.2 Landuse, geology and topography.....	1
2 Archaeological and historical Background .....	1
3 Evaluation Aims .....	2
4 Evaluation Methodology .....	2
4.1 Scope of fieldwork .....	2
4.2 Fieldwork methods and recording.....	2
4.3 Finds .....	3
4.4 Palaeo-environmental evidence.....	3
4.5 Presentation of results .....	3
5 Results: General.....	3
5.1 Soils and ground conditions .....	3
5.2 Distribution of archaeological deposits.....	3
6 Results: Descriptions .....	3
6.1 Description of deposits .....	3
6.2 Finds .....	4
7 Discussion and Interpretation .....	5
7.1 Reliability of field investigation.....	5
7.2 Overall interpretation .....	5
8 Appendix 1 Archaeological Context Inventory.....	6
9 Appendix 2 References.....	7
10 Appendix 3 Summary of Site Details.....	7

#### LIST OF FIGURES

- Fig. 1 Site location  
 Fig. 2 Trench location plan  
 Fig. 3 Trench 1, Plan and Sections  
 Fig. 4 Trench 2, Plan and Sections

## SUMMARY

*On August 30<sup>th</sup> 2003 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an evaluation at the Cotswold Fasteners factory, 6-8 Siddington Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire (NGR: SP 030 010) on behalf of Bloor Homes. The evaluation revealed evidence of post-medieval ridge and furrow and a system of post-medieval drainage culverts. No evidence for earlier archaeological remains was encountered.*

### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 On 30<sup>th</sup> August 2003 OA carried out a field evaluation at the Cotswold Fasteners factory site, 6-8 Siddington Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire (NGR: SP 030 010)(Fig.1) on behalf of Bloor Homes. The evaluation was undertaken in respect of a planning application for demolition of the existing industrial premises and construction of 21 apartments.
- 1.1.2 A brief was set by, and a WSI (OA 2003) agreed with Charles Parry, Senior Archaeological Officer for Gloucestershire County Council.
- 1.1.3 The development site is presently an active industrial business of approximately 0.1 hectares in area. It is located roughly midway between two major roundabouts and immediately south of the A419 Bristol Road. The site is bounded to the south and west by private houses, to the east by Siddington Road and to the north by a public footpath running alongside the Bristol Road, which rises over three metres above the level of the site.

#### 1.2 Landuse, geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The level of the site is approximately 104 m OD. The site is presently an active industrial business approximately 0.1 of a hectare in area and the underlying geology is Forest Marble including Kemble Beds overlain by clay alluvium.

### 2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1.1 A summary of the archaeological background has been provided below from the WSI (OA 2003). The site itself is believed to overlie the site of a medieval house. There are several known sites with archaeological remains adjacent to the development site.

#### *Prehistoric*

- 2.1.2 There have been few finds dating to the prehistoric period from Cirencester and there is no recorded evidence of prehistoric activity within the immediate vicinity of the proposed development site.

#### *Romano-British*

- 2.1.3 The Site lies on the south-eastern side of the Roman town of Corinium (c. AD 75/80-AD 400), external to the defensive circuit, and within 200 m one of several

areas of burials (SMR 9144, 45, 46 and 47) suggesting a substantial extra-mural cemetery. Further to the west and north is the Scheduled site (SAM 361) containing the remains of the Roman town and defences and earlier Roman Fort (c. AD 45/50-AD 75).

### *Anglo-Saxon and medieval*

- 2.1.4 No Anglo-Saxon finds or deposits have been identified within the development area. This reflects a general paucity of material from this period from within Cirencester. The site does, however, encompass the site of pre-16th century Watermoor House (SMR 8930), owned by the de Mora family from Chesterton. This was recorded as still standing in 1837 before becoming a dwelling and later a public house.

### *Post-medieval*

- 2.1.5 The site lies within 50 m of the 19th century Watermoor Station and sidings for the Midland and South Western Junction Railway (SMR 4944/31,32,33). The railway extended in an arc, north-south of the site, immediately west of which was the station. The Midland and South Western Junction Railway was an independent line from the Midlands and the North to Southampton, which was eventually taken over by the Great Western Railway in 1923 and in 1961 the line closed.

## **3 EVALUATION AIMS**

- 3.1.1 To identify and record the presence or absence, extent, condition, quality and date of archaeological remains in the area affected by the proposed development.
- 3.1.2 To make available the results of the investigation.

## **4 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 Scope of fieldwork**

- 4.1.1 The evaluation consisted of two trenches representing just over 2% sampling of the site. Trench 1 measured 12 m by 1.6 m wide, aligned east-west, and was located parallel to the Bristol Road along the northern edge of the development site. Trench 2 measured 9 m by 1.6 m wide, aligned north-south, and was located running parallel to Siddington Road between the front of the office building and the edge of the road (Fig 2).
- 4.1.2 The existing car park and yard surfaces and any overburden were removed under close archaeological supervision by a mechanical excavator (JCB). Trench 2 contained numerous live services, which meant full excavation was abandoned for most of the length of the trench. Trench 1 was not affected by services and was fully excavated.

### **4.2 Fieldwork methods and recording**

- 4.2.1 Where accessible the trenches were cleaned by hand and the revealed features were sampled to determine their extent and nature, and to retrieve finds and environmental samples. All archaeological features were planned and where excavated their

sections drawn at scales of 1:20. All features were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film. Recording followed procedures laid down in the *OAU Fieldwork Manual* (ed. D Wilkinson, 1992).

#### 4.3 **Finds**

- 4.3.1 Finds were recovered by hand during the course of the excavation and bagged by context.

#### 4.4 **Palaeo-environmental evidence**

- 4.4.1 No deposits suitable for environmental sampling were identified during the evaluation.

#### 4.5 **Presentation of results**

- 4.5.1 The results of the evaluation are presented below, with the stratigraphic accounts of each trench described individually, followed by an overall discussion and interpretation.

### 5 **RESULTS: GENERAL**

#### 5.1 **Soils and ground conditions**

- 5.1.1 The site was located on level ground, comprising modern tarmac and brick surfaces overlying layers of made ground and buried soils. The boundaries of the layers and the edges of the cut features were clearly defined. The water table was not encountered in either of the trenches.

#### 5.2 **Distribution of archaeological deposits**

- 5.2.1 Distribution of the archaeological deposits and features was equally sparse between the two trenches with no concentrations encountered.

### 6 **RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS**

#### 6.1 **Description of deposits**

##### ***Trench 1 (Fig.3)***

- 6.1.1 The natural (104) was a reddish brown and grey clay containing small limestone fragments at a depth of 1.1 m below present ground level. The natural had been disturbed by post-medieval ridge and furrow activity, which was observed running north-south across the trench and could be seen both in the base of the trench and in profile (Fig.3, Plan and section 101). This was overlain by a layer of a mid brown silty clay (103), which varied in depth from between 0.18 m up to 0.3 m and represented the remains of post-medieval ridge and furrow ploughing.
- 6.1.2 Deposit 103 was cut by the corner of a vertical sided pit (105) (Fig.3, section 100), measuring at least 4.4 m x 1 m x 1.1 m deep. This post-medieval feature was filled by a friable reddish brown silty clay (106), containing patches of gravel, limestone

and dark greyish brown clay. Pit 105 was sealed by a layer of a friable dark brown silty clay buried soil (102) which varied in depth from 0.2 m up to 0.4 m.

- 6.1.3 Layer 102 was cut by a ditch (107) measuring 1.5 m wide by 0.9 m deep, which sloped down towards a narrow rectangular slot at its base where a north-south aligned culvert ran (Fig. 3, section 101). This slot was 0.3 m in deep and 0.45 m wide with vertical sides and a flat base the sides of which were lined with wooden planks (108) set on edge and capped by a series of large tabular oolitic limestone slabs (109). The culvert had then been backfilled with a compacted dark greyish brown silty clay (111), consisting of redeposited mixed soils.
- 6.1.4 A layer of compacted yellowish brown gravel ballast (101) up to 0.14 m thick sealed all features and deposits and was sealed by a layer of reinforced concrete 0.18m thick (100).

### **Trench 2 (Fig.4)**

- 6.1.5 This trench was only partially excavated below the old topsoil layer because of the presence of numerous, modern, live services. At the northern end of the trench it was possible to excavate down to a depth of 0.85 m below the surface. This cut into the base of a dark brown silty clay (208) an old plough soil, similar to 103 in Trench 1. Overlying layer 208 was a 0.22m thick layer of a dark greyish brown clayey silt (207). This was a layer of buried topsoil, a probable continuation of layer 202. Cut from the top of this layer was the vertical sided cut (206) measuring 1.16 m wide, which was excavated to a depth of 0.5 m but not to its base. This cut contained a drystone culvert of oolitic limestone (205), of which only the capping slabs were exposed. It was aligned east-west across the trench. The construction cut for the culvert was backfilled with a dark greyish brown clayey silt (204) which contained many post medieval finds. Sealing this backfill and the cut was a 0.15 m thick deposit of pale grey compacted clay and limestone fragments (203) which was the base of a floor associated with the truncated remnants of a concrete footing running east-west across the trench.
- 6.1.6 To the south of this footing the trench cut into the top of a layer of a friable dark greyish brown clayey silt (202), an old topsoil which had been cut by four service trenches between the industrial buildings and the mains in Siddington Road. These were all sealed below a 0.25m thick layer of a compacted yellowish brown sandy gravel ballast (201) which formed the base for the brick car park surface (200).

## **6.2 Finds**

- 6.2.1 All the finds recovered were of post-medieval origin, dated to the late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries and included bottle glass, animal bone, transfer printed pottery, brick, tile and many fragments of clay pipe. The fragments of brick and tile were evaluated on site and were not retained.

## 7 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

### 7.1 Reliability of field investigation

- 7.1.1 Although it was impossible to fully excavate the entire length of Trench 2, the similarity of deposits exposed and projected continuation of stratigraphy between the two trenches suggests that the interpretation can be equally applied between the two.

### 7.2 Overall interpretation

- 7.2.1 The evaluation showed that only a limited amount of archaeological activity had taken place within the area of the site. The absence of pre-historic finds or features is consistent with the previous lack of evidence, whilst the lack of Roman features or finds suggests that the area was not subject to extra-mural settlement or use for cemeteries, and was probably open ground at that time.
- 7.2.2 This site was still open in nature when turned over to ridge and furrow cultivation during the post-medieval period. The first full intensive use of the site, for industry was not begun until the modern period.
- 7.2.3 This lack of activity may be due to waterlogging of the site, as demonstrated by the fact the site was the originally part of an area known as Watermoor and by the later insertion of a network of stone and wooden culverts in the late 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century.



## APPENDICES

## 8 APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Ctxt No</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Width (m)</i>	<i>Thick. (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>	<i> Finds</i>	<i>Date</i>
1							
	100	Layer	-	0.18m	Modern concrete yard surface	-	Modern
	101	Layer	-	0.15m	Gravel base for concrete	-	Modern
	102	Layer	-	0.15m up to 0.3m	Buried topsoil	-	Post-medieval
	103	Layer	-	0.18m up to 0.4m	Ridge and furrow working	Glass, Clay pipe, Pottery, Brick, Tile	Post-medieval
	104	Layer	-	0.2m	Plough disturbed alluvium	-	Post-medieval
	105	Cut	>1.5m	>0.4m	Rubbish pit	-	Post-medieval
	106	Fill	-	>0.4m	Backfill of rubbish pit	Pottery, Iron, Brick, Tile	Post-medieval
	107	Cut	1.1m	0.9m	Construction cut for culvert	-	Post-medieval
	108	Struct	0.4m	0.3m	Wooden sides of culvert	-	Post-medieval
	109	Struct	0.9m	0.18m	Stone capping of culvert	-	Post-medieval
	110	Fill	0.35m	0.3m	Silting up of culvert	Glass, Pottery	Post-medieval
	111	Fill	1.1m	0.4m	Backfill of culvert trench	-	Post-medieval
2							
	200	Layer	>1.6m	0.12m	Brick surface of car park	-	Modern
	201	Layer	-	0.15m up to 0.25m	Gravel and sand base for brick paving	-	Modern
	202	Layer	-	>0.2m	Buried topsoil, probably a continuation of layer 207	Bone, Clay pipe, Pottery, Brick, Tile	Post-medieval
	203	Layer	-	0.12m	Compacted surface	-	Post-medieval
	204	Fill	1.2m	0.45m	Backfill of culvert trench	Bone, Clay pipe, Pottery	Post-medieval
	205	Structure	1.2m	0.12m	Stone capping for culvert	-	Post-medieval

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Ctxt</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Width (m)</i>	<i>Thick. (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>	<i>Finds</i>	<i>Date</i>
	206	Cut	1.2m	>0.45m	Construction cut for culvert	-	Post-medieval
	207	Layer	-	0.25m	Buried topsoil	-	Post-medieval
	208	Layer	-	>0.2m	Earlier worked soil	-	Post-medieval

## 9 APPENDIX 2 REFERENCES

OA 1992 *Fieldwork Manual* (1st edition, ed. D Wilkinson)

GCC 2003 *Brief for Archaeological Field Evaluation - Cotswold Fasteners, 6-8 Siddington Road, Cirencester*

OA 2003 *Cotswold Fasteners, 6-8 Siddington Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire Written Scheme of Investigation*

## 10 APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

**Site name:** Cotswold Fasteners, 6-8 Siddington Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire

**Site code:** CICF 03

**Grid reference:** NGR SP 030 010

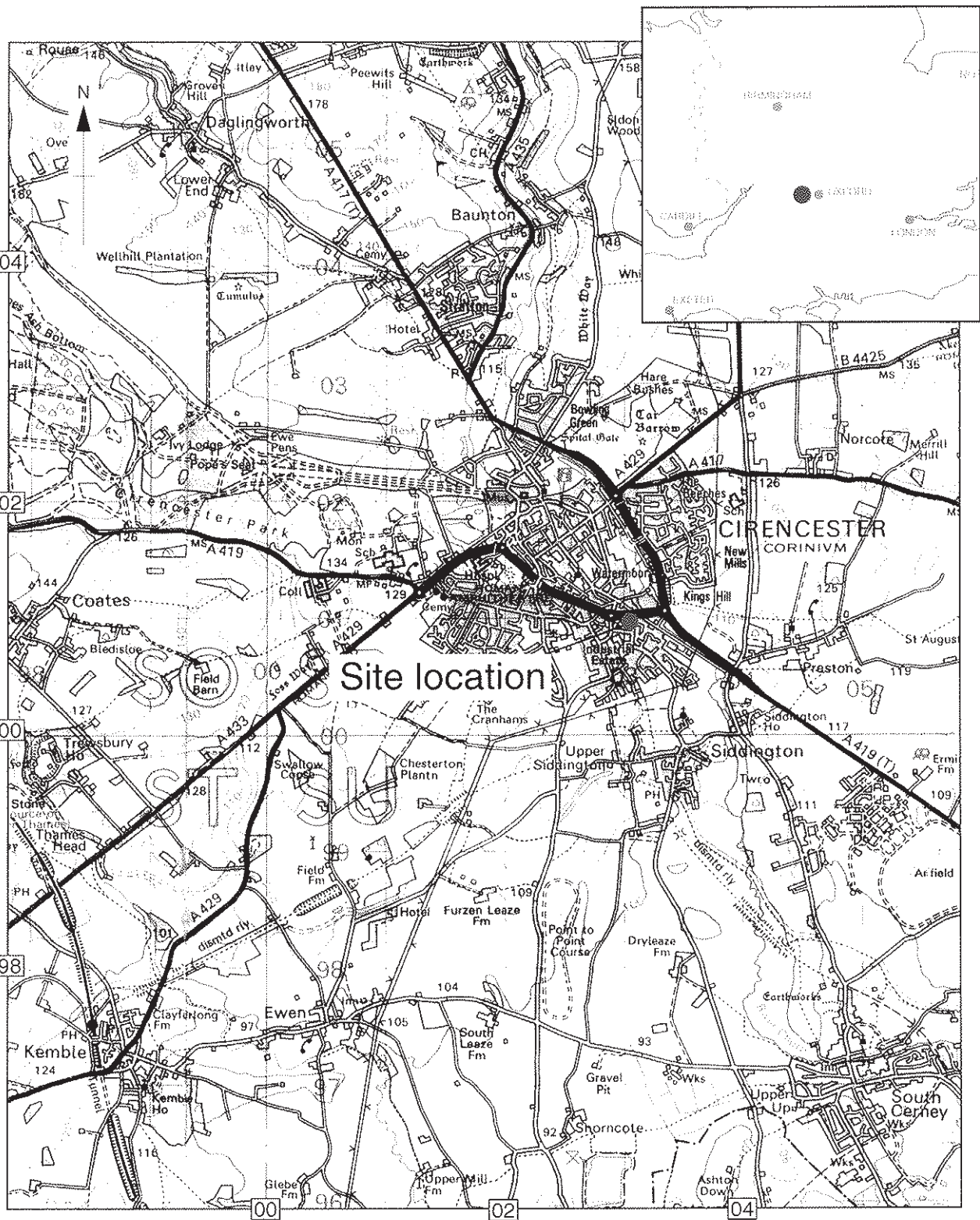
**Type of evaluation:** Two machine excavated evaluation trenches.

**Date and duration of project:** One day on the 30th August 2003.

**Area of site:**

**Summary of results:** The trenches exposed post medieval drainage culverts and post medieval ridge and furrow.

**Location of archive:** The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with the Corinium Museum, Cirencester in due course.



Scale 1:50,000

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Figure 1: Site location

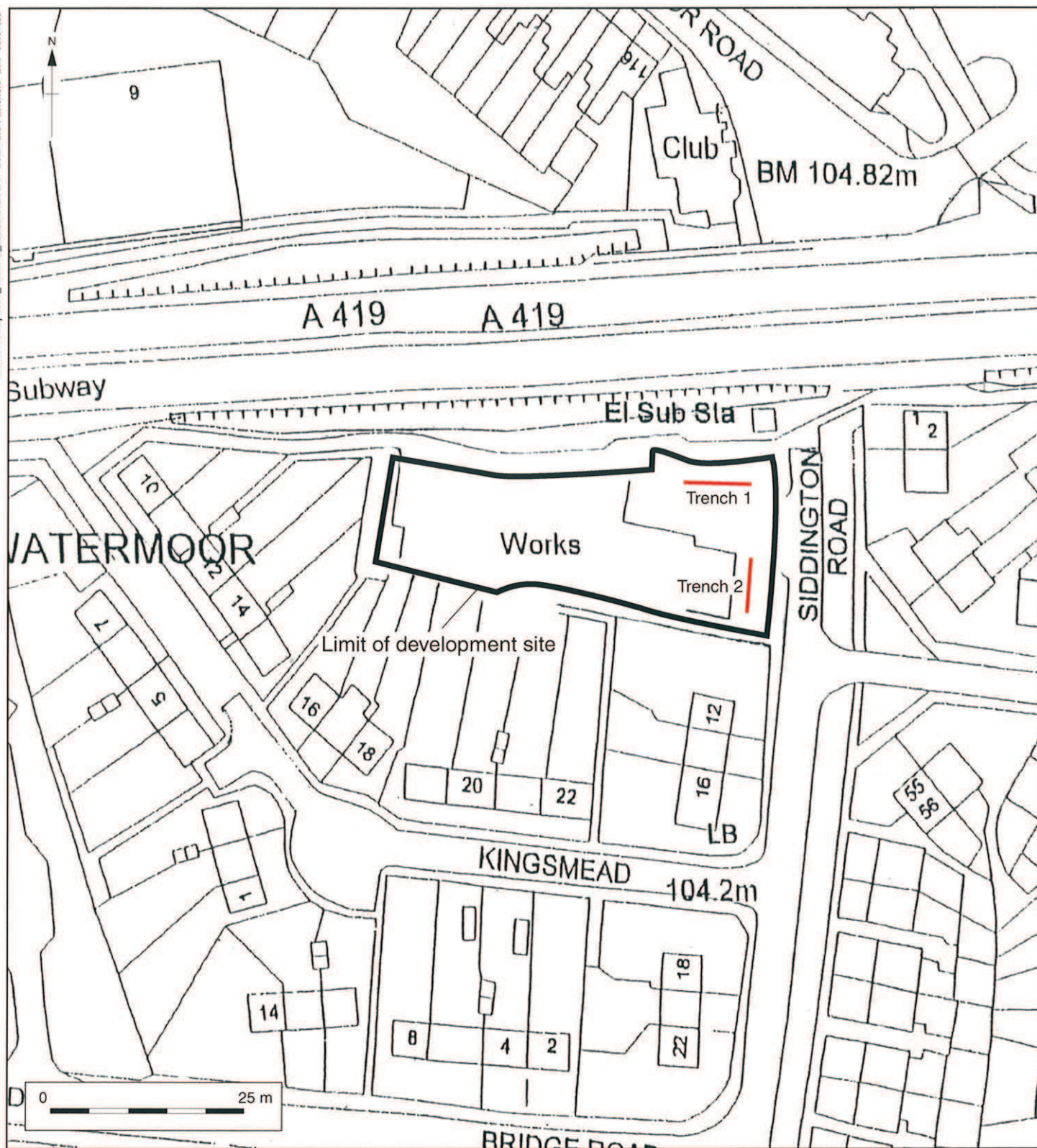


Figure 2: Trench location plan

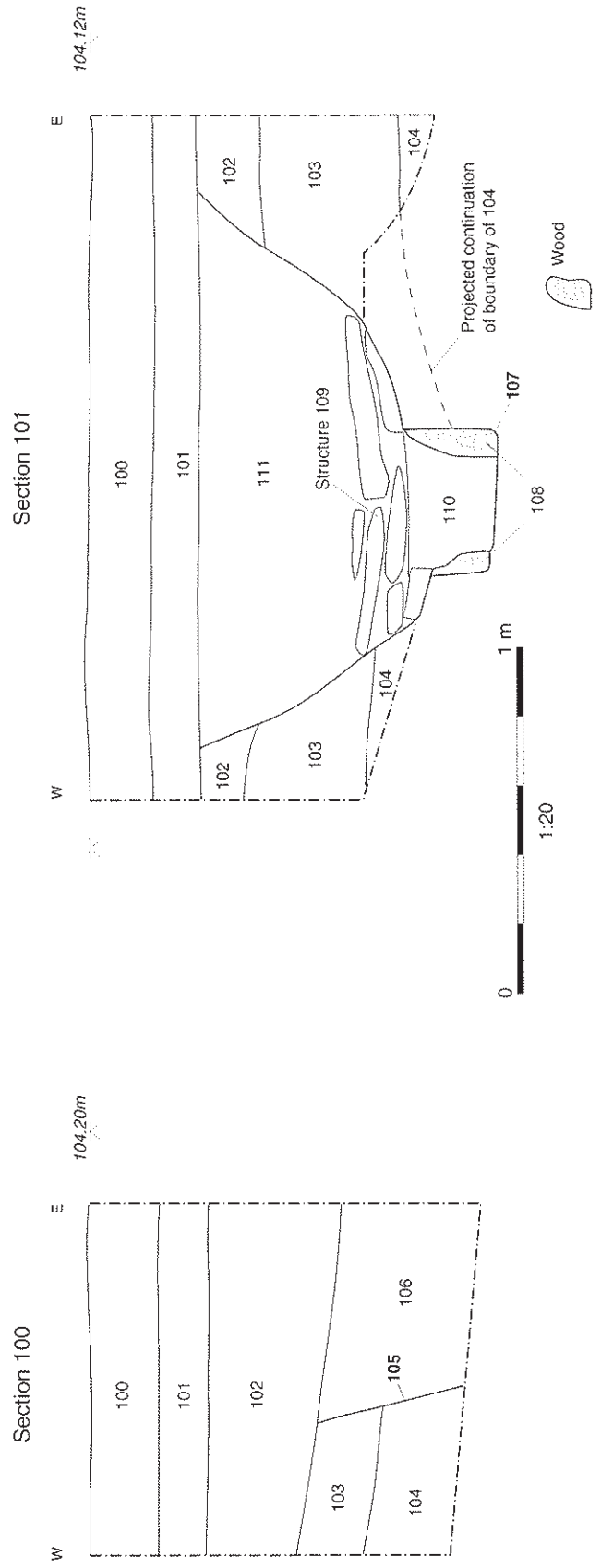
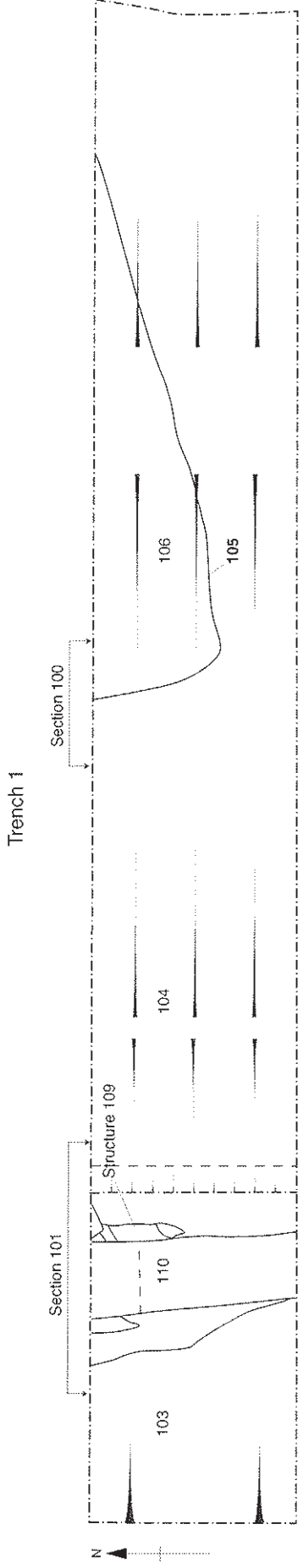


Figure 3: Trench 1 plan and sections

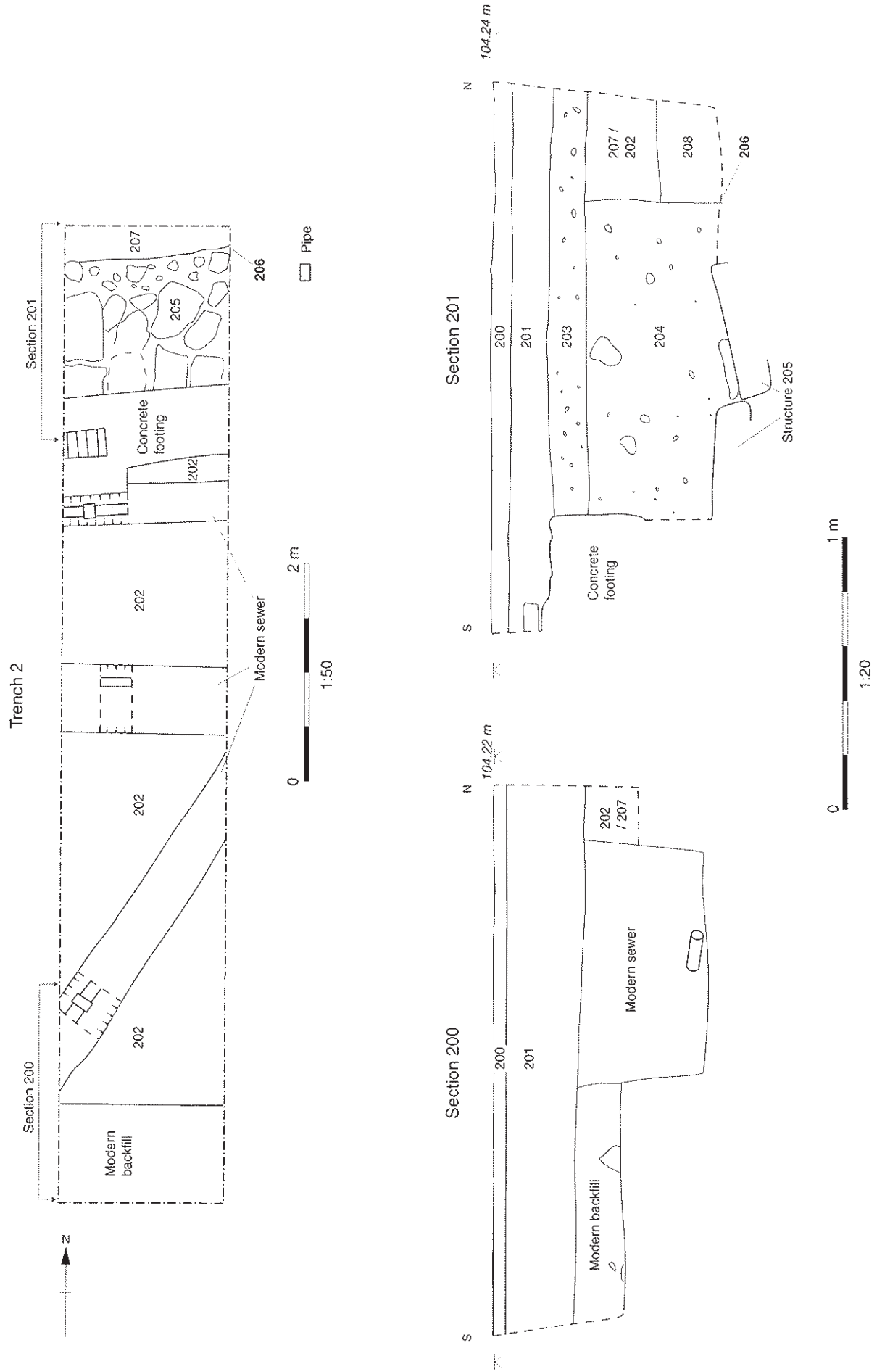


Figure 4: Trench 2 plan and sections



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