



**A406 NORTH CIRCULAR ROAD,  
EAST OF FALLODEN WAY-MAIN WORKS  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION  
(NCR 93)**

**AREA 1 TQ 258899  
AREA 2 TQ 266 908**

**MARK ROBERTS OAU**

## **ABSTRACT**

Six trenches (one of which was split into two parts) were dug in two areas of the road widening scheme. No archaeological significant deposits were located that were dated to before the 19th century. The construction of the North Circular Road seems to have involved large area topsoil stripping followed by landscaping including the dumping of thick deposits of modern rubbish.

## **INTRODUCTION**

This report has been commissioned by Gifford Graham and Partners, Consulting Engineers, on behalf of the Department of Transport in advance of a road widening scheme. The evaluation was initially to be carried out following an English Heritage brief, who were acting on behalf of Barnet Borough Council, and was based on a borehole and test pit survey of the site. The brief was modified after an on site meeting and one trench was omitted.

It should be noted that archaeological constraints were not part of the planning process at the time that permission was granted to the scheme. The archaeological trenches were excavated during the advance works for the project and a watching brief is to be carried out over the topsoil movement on the rest of the route between areas 1 and 2.

## Archaeological background

The principal reasons for commissioning the work were:

### Area 1

- i) To locate the medieval course of East End Road.
- ii) To detect any prehistoric crest top occupation/activity.

### Area 2

- iii) To detect any medieval activity on the roadside edge of historic Glebeland.
- iv) To detect any traces of prehistoric streamside activity.

### All areas

- v) To determine as far as possible, the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains.

Area 1 lies on the crest of high ground at a height of 90 m OD and has magnificent views over the valley. Area 2 is just to the N of a Strawberry Brook at the E tail of the crest at a height of 68-69 m OD (see cover for 1st edition Ordnance Survey map).

The London Clay on which the sites lie has been regarded as archaeologically sparsely populated; there are few sites recorded on the Greater London Sites and Monuments Record on the Clay near the road line. However, recent work in other parts of the country suggest that occupation on clay soils was more widespread than previously supposed.

Struck flints and a Roman potsherd have been found by the Mutton Brook at the foot of the slope to the W of area 1. To the E of East End Road lies East End Manor. This is a moated site which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (see Fig. 1 and cover). At this point East End Road made a significant right-angle on to the lane which became the North Circular Road which may have been to avoid a property.

Finchley High Road, which runs through area 2, is a medieval road. The earliest map of the area, by John Rocque in 1754, shows a building called 'Baker's Well' which may have been a tavern SE of the crossroads of Finchley High Road and the A406. On the 1st edition O.S. map a building(s) called Brown's Well can be seen at this spot.

As no significant archaeology was found no further background work was undertaken other than repeating the information provided in the English heritage brief.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY (Figs. 2 and 3)

The use of trenching was necessary as no archaeological finds had been located before (see above) and so a desktop and/or surface surveys were inappropriate.

The total surface area of the site which was investigated was 233.4 square metres and which was concentrated at the points of most impact on the road junctions. The sample was selective due to the late nature of the archaeological response. The size and location of the trenches was affected by the presence of services and other constraints. All of the trenches were placed in areas of open ground as access permitted. These factors limited the sample for evaluation.

The clay subsoil was hand cleaned where it was found and features encountered were hand dug to determine their nature and date. Due to the presence of services much of trench 3b was hand-excavated. The old ploughsoils in trenches 3b and 5 were hand excavated as were the interfaces between the clay and the overlying ploughsoils.

The trenches (as long as practicable in the space) were positioned to prospect for archaeological material.

### Trench sizes

trench 1 was 3x3.5m and 1.2 m deep, trench 2 was 13x3 m and 1.2 m deep, trench 3a was 15x0.6 m and 0.5 m deep, trench 3b was 1.8x3 m and 0.8 m deep, trench 4 was 25x 4.2 m and 1.9 m deep, trench 5 was 8x1.8 m and 1.5 m deep, trench 7 was 22x3 m and 1.2 m deep.

From information received by the OAU it was expected that the trenches would be around 0.5 m deep. Only one trench was this depth due to modern dumping. Trench 4 was very deep and was widened and stepped in, for safety reasons, in order to reveal the clay subsoil.

The trenches in area 1 were positioned in order to locate the course of East End Road and the area of open land to the W of the roundabout. It is possible that the A406 is on the line of a Roman Road or trackway and the trench on the roundabout would have detected this.

The trenches in area 2 were positioned to exploit the open ground on the edge of the Glebeland. (Fig. 2 does not show the new road but does show 2 shafts which are part of the advance works.)

No environmental samples were taken. There were no features which were deemed suitable for environmental potential.

Contexts were numbered according to trench i.e. contexts 100- were from trench 1 and contexts 200- were from trench 2 etc. Contextes 300- were from trench 3a and contexts 350- were from trench 3b.

## DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

(see Table of contexts, pottery and flint reports in appendices)

No significant archaeological features were found in the trenches. A modern gully was found in trench 7. There were old ploughsoils which overlay the natural where these layers had not been truncated. There was a collection of struck flint from trench 3b but this was residual in a 19th century layer of dump.

In trench 7 the old topsoils had been removed but negative features survived cut into the London Clay (Fig. 8 and 9). These features were hand cleaned and excavated but were found to be tree root or animal disturbance. One gully (707/708) was found to be modern.

Old ploughsoils were located in trenches 2 and 3b in area 1 and in trench 5 in area 2. In trench 2 the old ploughsoil (209) was restricted to the NW end of the trench because it had been truncated by the construction of the North Circular Road (Fig. 5). In trench 3b a similar soil was also found (355, Fig. 6b). These soils contained modern finds and were overlain by modern dumping. In trench 5 the old ploughsoil (504) was sealed beneath modern dumping at a depth of around 1 m (Fig. 7).

The London Clay was found to be truncated by modern disturbance in trenches 1, 3 and 4 in area 1. In trench 1 and 4 it is likely that this was to level the W approach to the roundabout. The contours on Fig. 2 (which are based on an engineer's survey) to the W of the roundabout may indicate this dump. Trench 3a showed the line of East End Road which was modern. Trench 3b showed modern dump over old ploughsoil. In area 2 the dumping in trench 5 and trench 7 indicated that it was likely that the level of the top of the clay had been removed in the area of trench 6; a borehole in the area of trench 6 showed modern dumping to a depth of 2 m, twice the depth of trenches 5 and 7. The shafts being dug out for the advance works showed the same truncation of the clay. The contours on Fig. 3 may show the uneven dumping/landscaping.

In trench 2 the old course of the North Circular Road was revealed. The road bed had been removed and only the coarse make-up levels were left. The dumping in both areas 1 and 2 seemed to be consistent with the construction of the road. The area around the junctions had been levelled and then landscaped. This is also the proposed course of action for the present works.

## **DEPOSIT SURVEY**

Figures 2 and 3 show the topography of the two areas as surveyed by the engineers. The evaluation showed the landscaping of the area which resulted in these contours. The extent of the truncation was not fully understood from the trenches but the contours on the drawings suggest the possible extent. In area 1, to the W of the roundabout the level of the road and the land to the N and S of the road shows uneven contours which suggest dumping (as shown by the deep dumps in trenches 1 and 4). In area 2 the land between the Finchley High Road and the North Circular also shows uneven contours; the trenches and observations of the shafts showed deep layers of modern dumping.

The cutting for the road in area 1 and the flyover will only affect areas already disturbed by roadbuilding or small areas of old (but recent) ploughsoils. In area 2 the flyover of Finchley High Road and the slip roads for the junction will also only affect areas already disturbed by roadbuilding or small areas of old (but recent) ploughsoils.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

No significant archaeological remains were uncovered. Given the limited nature of the work (due to timescale and avoiding services) the character of deposits around the junctions was determined.

A watching brief is still necessary over the rest of the route as in sections of the advance works showed large areas of untruncated subsoil.

## APPENDICES

### Table of Contexts

CTX description length width depth Date

100	topsoil	3.5	3	0.22	
101	dump			0.25	
102	dump			0.15	
103	deposit			0.55	
200	topsoil			0.1-0.15	
201	dump			0.4-0.7	
202	road surface			0.15	
203	make-up	-	3+	0.15-0.18	
204	drain		0.12	0.12	
205	cut for road	3+	9		
206	possible ploughsoil			0.15	
207	land drain			0.09	
208	cut for 207	8	0.08	0.2	
209	possible ploughsoil			0.2	
210	natural			-	
211	natural			-	
212	interface between 209 and 210			0.15	
300	car park surface	60	15	0.03	
301	reinforcing for car park			0.14	
302	make-up			0.08	
303	make-up			0.25	
304	natural			-	
305	fill of modern cut 306		0.25	0.05	
306	posthole		0.25	0.05	
307	wooden stake		0.06	0.08	
308	fill of modern cut 309		0.28	0.08	
309	posthole		0.28	0.08	
350	topsoil			0.11	
351	dump			0.18	1800-1900
352	sand	2	1.8	0.10	
353	dump	-	0.7	0.08	
354	dump			0.08	1650-1900
355	possible ploughsoil			0.22	1600-1900
356	weathered natural			-	
400	topsoil			0.15-0.20	
401	dump			0.2-0.22	



402	dump			0.2	
403	dump			0.3-0.35	
404	dump			0.6-0.7	
405	dump			0.2-0.35	1650-1900 battery core and plastic
406	natural	-	-	-	
500	topsoil			0.35-0.4	
501	dump			0.2-0.25	
502	dump			0.2	
503	possible old ploughsoil			0.16-0.2	1800-1900 claypipe and glass
504	natural (sand)				machine sondage to a depth of 1.5 m from present surface
700	topsoil			0.12-0.2	
701	dump			0.9-1	
702	dump			0.12-0.18	
703	natural (clay)			-	
704	feature fill (of 705)	6.5	0.45	0.08	
705	Bioturbation	6.5	0.45	0.08	
706	deposit	3.7	0.55	0.01-0.03	brick/tile
707	feature fill (of 708)			0.01-0.06	1650-1800 slate
708	cut for gully	3	0.3	0.01-0.06	

### Flint Assessment

By Dr F Healy

Nine pieces of plough- or otherwise damaged struck flint were recovered from context 354. These were not diagnostic enough to provide a date range for this small assemblage. There were two cores fragments, one blade and 3 flakes with 3 fragments of irregular waste.

### Pottery

By Catherine Underwood-Keevill

37 sherds of post medieval pottery averaging 10 g in weight were recovered with other modern items (a battery core, plastic etc.) from seven contexts.

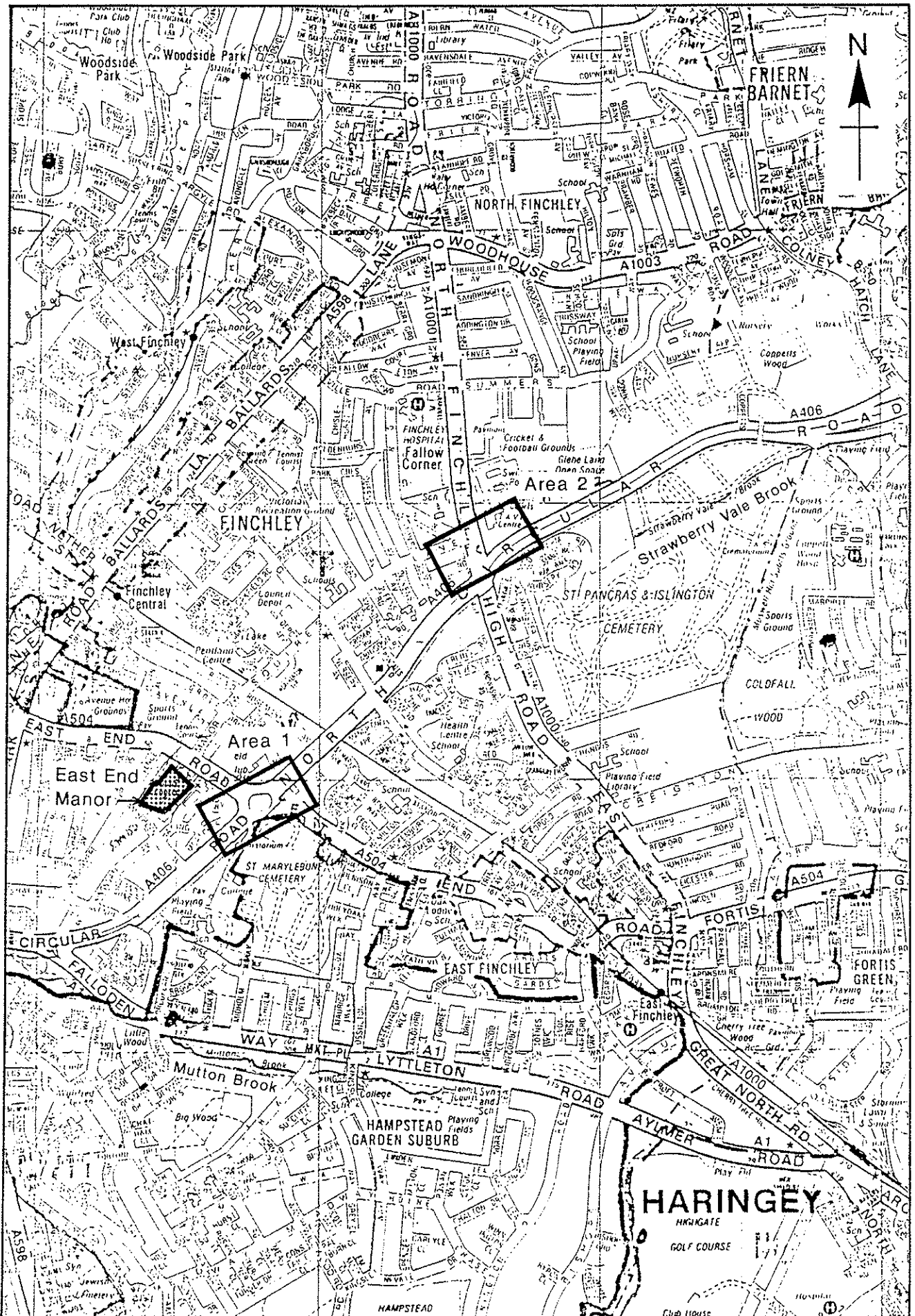


Figure 1.

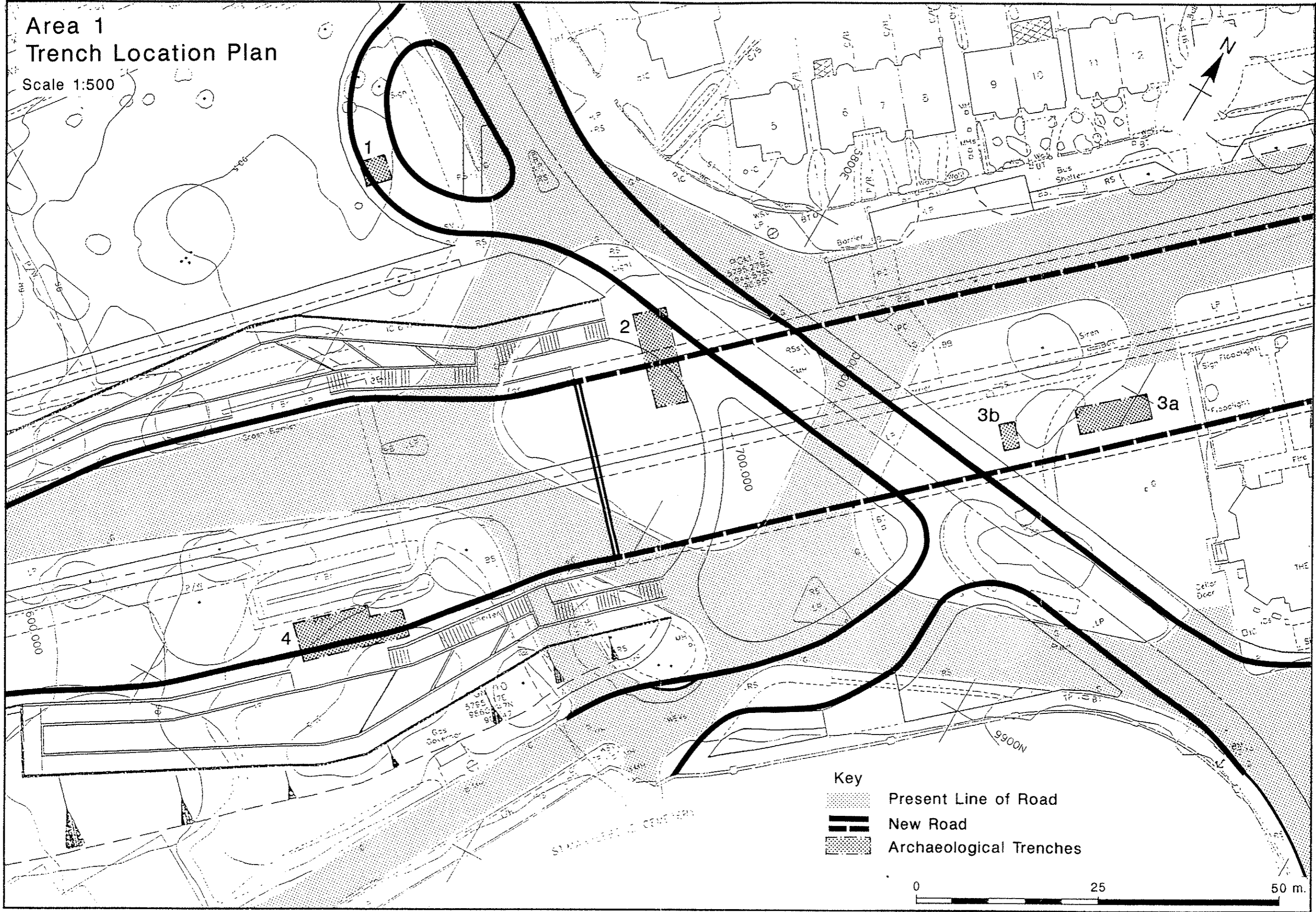
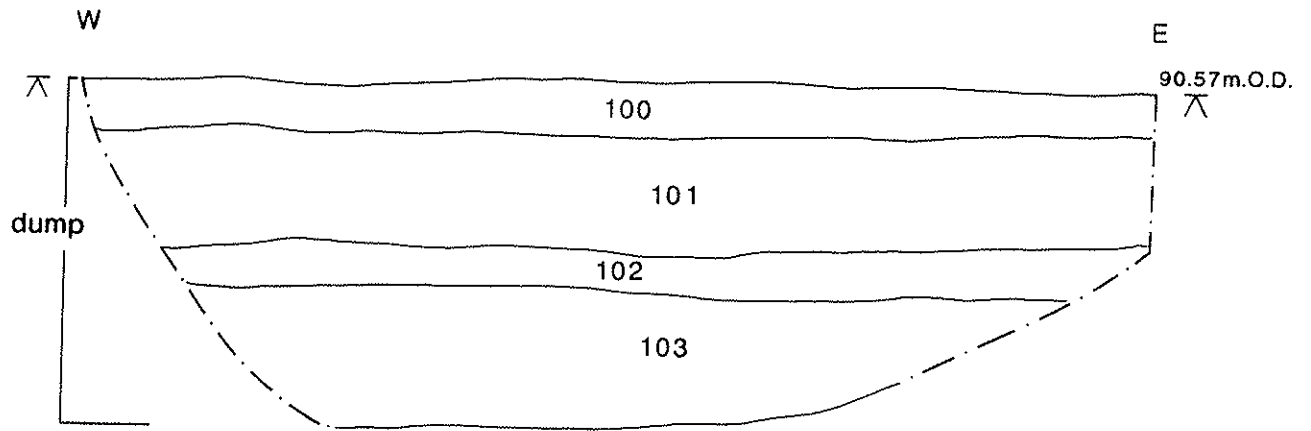


Figure 2.



### Trench 1



### Trench 4

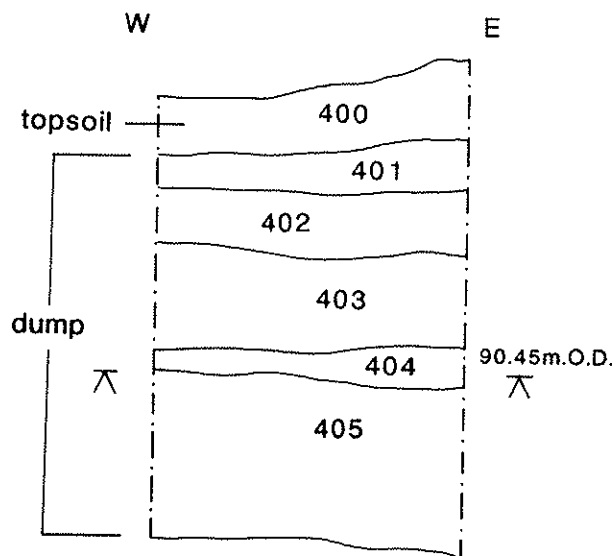


Figure 4.

# Trench 2

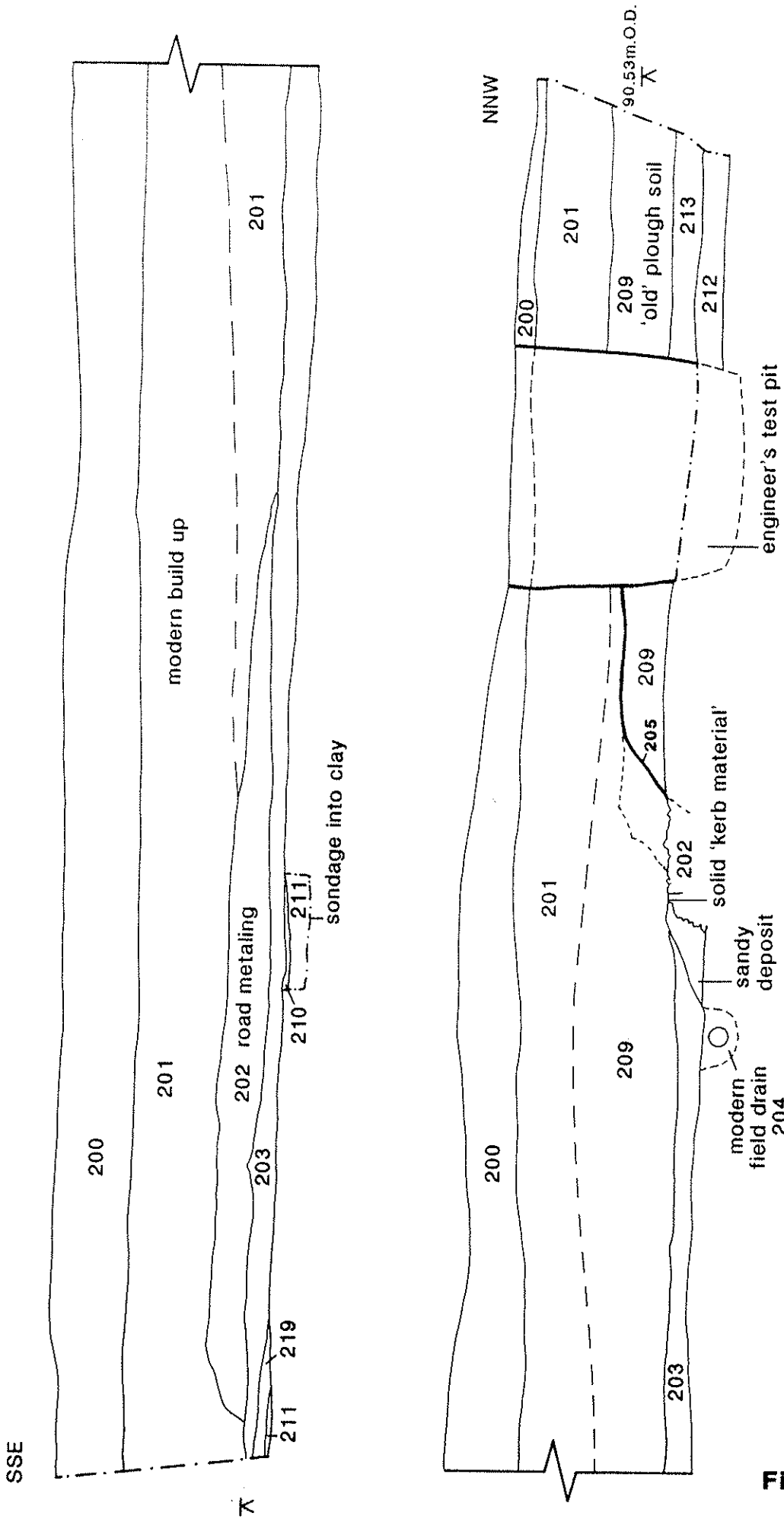


Figure 5.

### Trench 3a

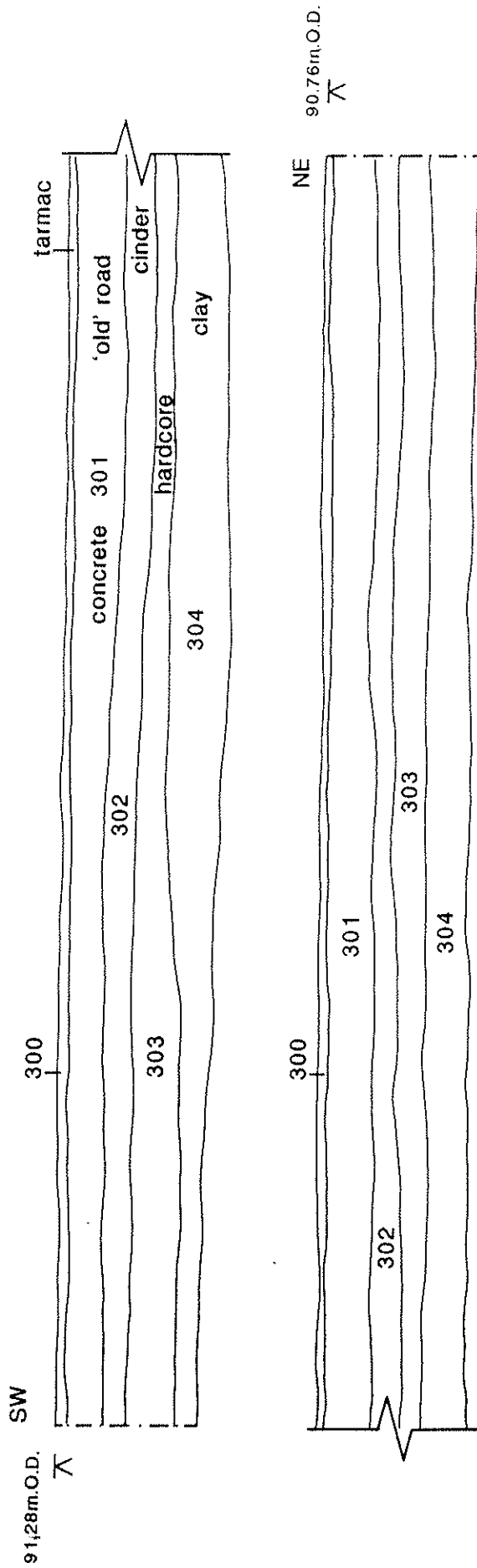


Figure 6a.

### Trench 3b

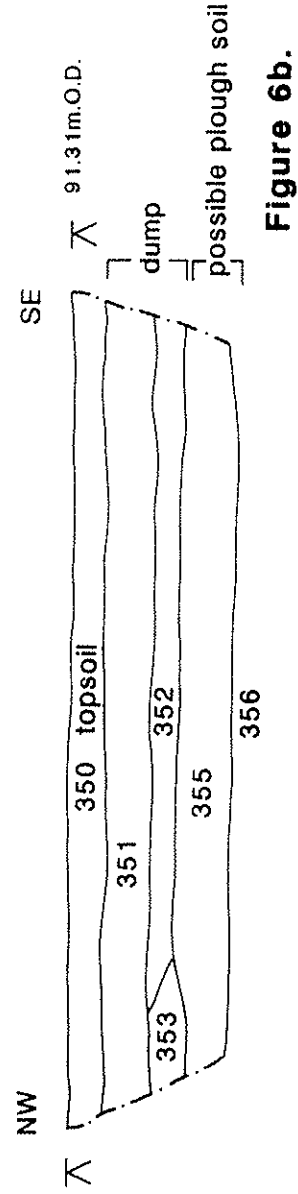
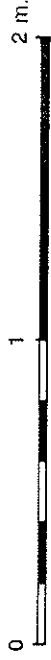


Figure 6b.



# Trench 5

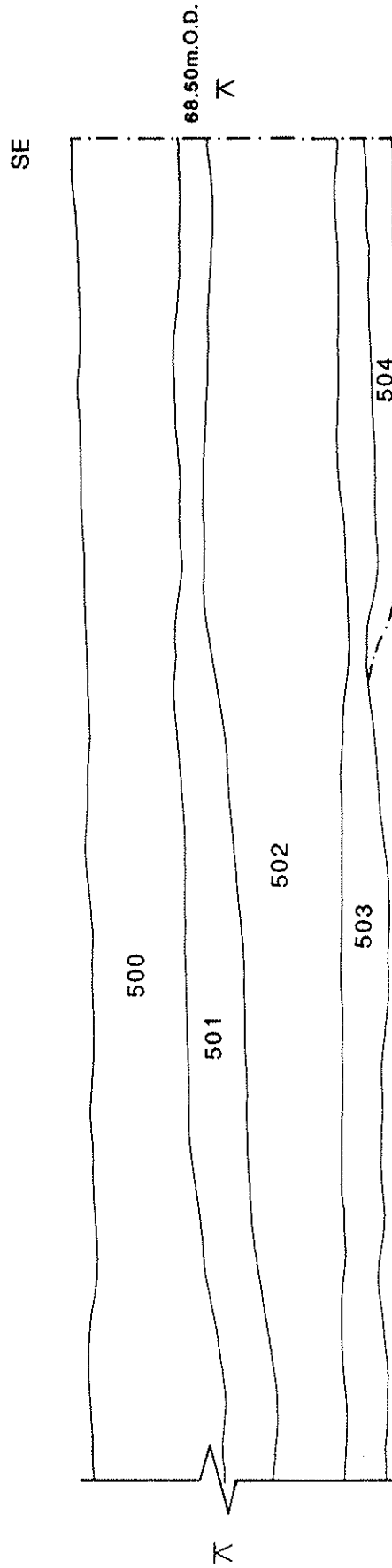
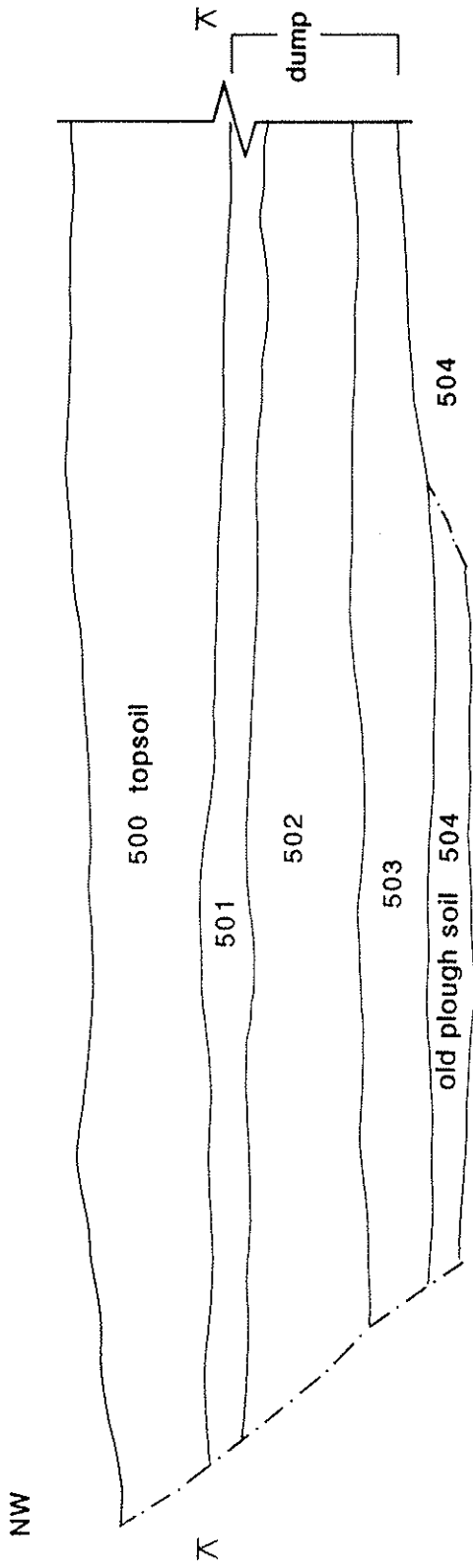


Figure 7.



# Trench 7 Section South End

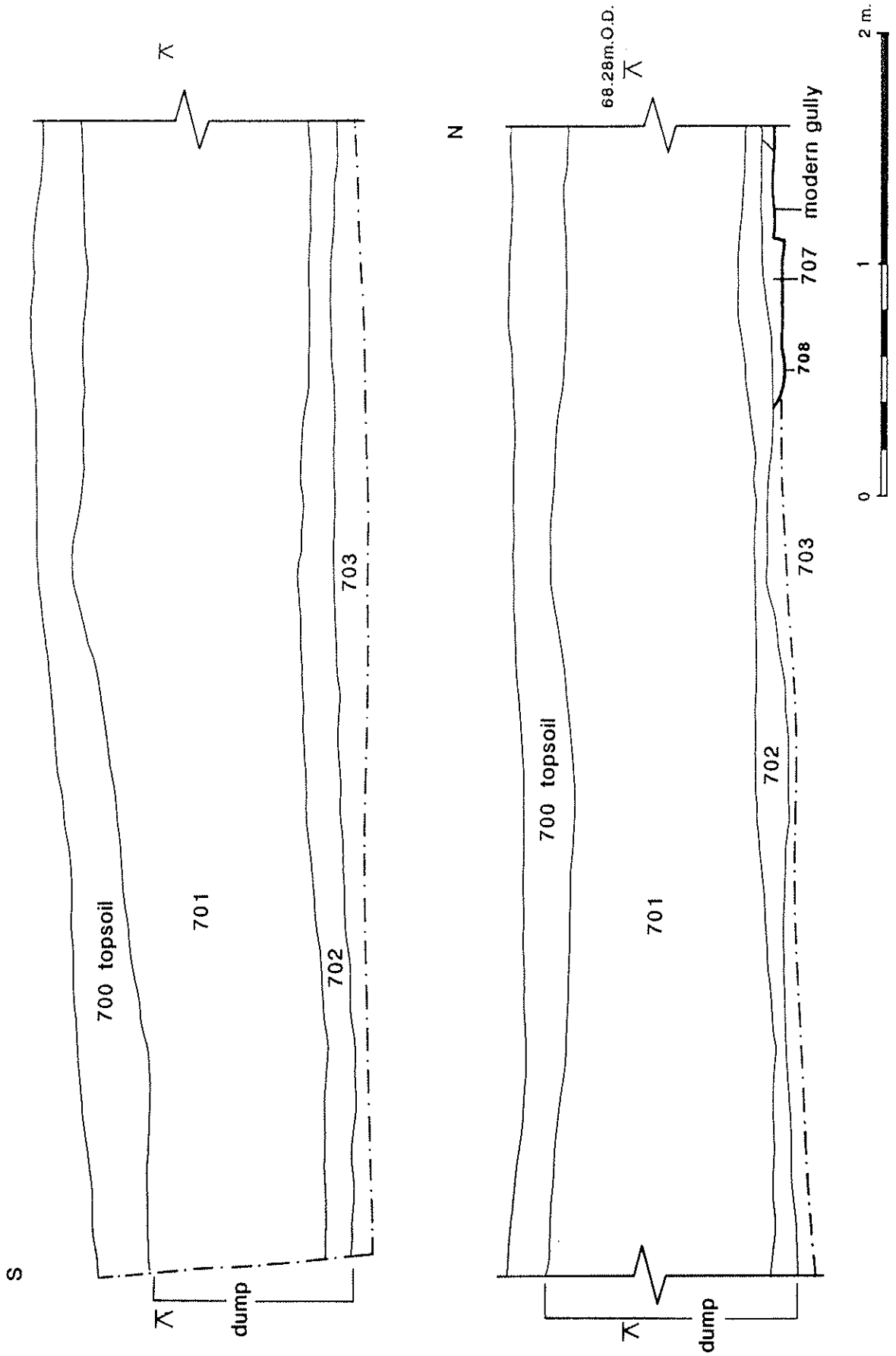


Figure 8.

Trench 7  
Plan

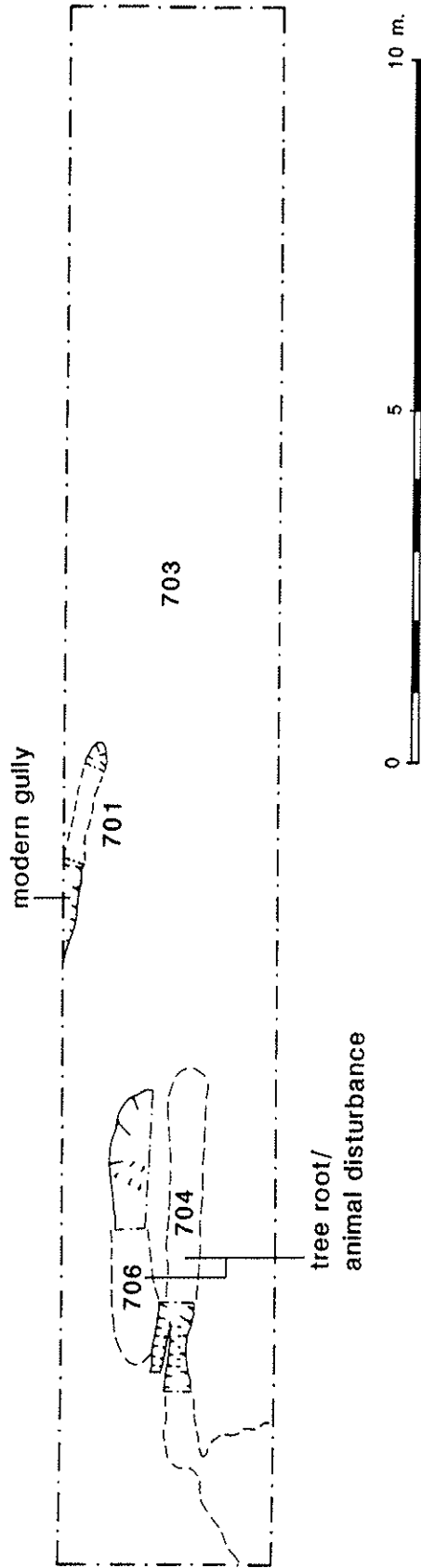


Figure 9.

Oxford Archaeological Unit

46 Hythe Bridge Street

Oxford OX1 2EP



Tel: 0865 243888 Fax: 0865 793496

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