

Environment Agency

Land Adjacent to Edgwarebury Brook, Edgware Way,
Edgware

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

NGR TQ 187 932

Prepared by: Bryan Matthews

Date: 26th July 2000

Checked by: G. S. Ruff

Date: 4 August 2000.

Approved by: ANU BOOTH

Date: 16th AUGUST 2000

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SUMMARY

The Oxford Archaeological Unit (OAU) carried out a field evaluation at Land Adjacent to Edgwarebury Brook, Edgware Way, Edgware on behalf of The Environment Agency. The evaluation revealed shallow deposits of made ground and dumped 20th century domestic materials over natural clays. No archaeological remains were present.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 In July OAU carried out a field evaluation at *Land Adjacent to Edgwarebury Brook, Edgware Way, Edgware* at Bury Farm, Edgwarebury on behalf of The Environment Agency. The development site is situated west of Edgwarebury Brook and east of the A41 Watford by-pass, approximately 100 m north-east of the roundabout junction with the A410 at NGR TQ 187932 (Fig. 1). The evaluation was targeted within the footprint of a proposed earth embankment forming part of a flood storage area (Fig. 2).

1.2 Geology and topography

1.2.1 The site lies on uneven ground immediately adjacent to the Edgwarebury Brook. The underlying geology of the site is London clay.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 The archaeological background to the evaluation has been the subject of a separate desk study carried out by MoLAS (Land adjacent to Bury farm, Edgwarebury), which records the finding of a Roman tile to the north of the area and the existence of an earth dam some 300 m to the north. The evaluation trenches were situated to the south east of two fields known as Great Millponds and Little Millponds, which strongly suggests the presence of a former mill situated adjacent to the Edgwarebury Brook.

2 EVALUATION AIMS

2.1.1 The evaluation aims were to assess whether the proposed earthworks overlay the former mill, mill workings or other archaeological deposits

3 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

3.1.1 The evaluation consisted of three trenches each measuring 10 m long by 1.6 m wide (Fig. 2). The overburden was removed under close archaeological supervision by a JCB mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket.

3.2 Fieldwork methods and recording

3.2.1 The trenches were cleaned and then photographed using colour slide and black and white print film. The trenches were planned at a scale of 1: 50 and sections drawn at a scale of 1: 20. Recording followed procedures laid down in the *OAU Fieldwork Manual* (ed D Wilkinson, 1992) and GLAAS Archaeological Guidance Papers 2,3,4,5, October 1998.

3.3 Finds

3.3.1 No archaeological finds were recovered during the evaluation. Modern finds encountered were noted and then discarded.

3.3.2 Spoil tips were also monitored to recover finds.

3.4 Palaeo-environmental Evidence

3.4.1 No palaeo-environmental deposits suitable for sampling were revealed during the evaluation.

3.5 Presentation of Results

3.5.1 A general description of soil and ground conditions and the distribution of deposits is followed by a description of each trench. This is followed by a brief discussion of the finds and a discussion of the results. A table detailing individual contexts is given in Appendix 1.

4 RESULTS: GENERAL

4.1 Soils and Ground Conditions

4.1.1 The site is located on London clays. During the evaluation the ground conditions were dry.

4.2 Distribution of Archaeological Deposits

4.2.1 The evaluation uncovered no archaeological deposits.

5 RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS

5.1 Description of deposits

Trench 1

5.1.1 Trench 1 was aligned north - south immediately adjacent to the Edgwarebury Brook (Fig. 2).

- 5.1.2 Within Trench 1 the underlying natural clay was revealed at a depth of between 0.2 - 0.4 m beneath the present ground level (54.51 - 54.66 m AOD). Trench 1 was deepened at its northern end to fully test this deposit, revealing a similar clean yellow-brown clay to a depth of 0.98 m beneath the present ground level (53.93 m AOD) (Fig. 3).
- 5.1.3 The underlying clay was sealed by up to 0.2 m of orange-brown silty clay subsoil, 101, which was found to contain fragments of modern brick and glass.
- 5.1.4 The trench was sealed by a 0.3 m thick layer of brown silty clay topsoil, which also contained occasional modern brick fragments.

Trench 2

- 5.1.5 This trench was aligned east-west just to the south of Little Millponds field (Fig. 2).
- 5.1.6 A underlying yellow-brown natural clay was revealed at a depth of 0.38 m beneath the present ground level (54.68 m AOD) (Fig. 3).
- 5.1.7 The underlying clay was sealed by a layer of orange brown subsoil, 201. This layer was only 0.05 m thick and appears to have been truncated by layer 200 above.
- 5.1.8 The subsoil, 201, was overlain by a spread of modern material, which included brick, concrete, glass and porcelain within the present topsoil, 200. This layer was somewhat variable along the trench and was thickest to the west where it reached a depth of 0.44 m. This spread is very likely to be the result of modern landscaping and dumping which was locally apparent around the area of this trench.

Trench 3

- 5.1.9 Trench 3 was located at the southern end of a long narrow strip of land bordering the Edgwarebury Brook and to the east of the millpond fields. This trench was aligned north-south across a slightly raised area of ground immediately adjacent to the brook (Fig. 2).
- 5.1.10 A clean brownish orange clay was revealed at a depth of between 0.46 - 0.6 m beneath the present ground level (54.90 - 55.02 m AOD) (Fig. 3).
- 5.1.11 The underlying clay was sealed by a deposit of banded orange brown silty clay and re-deposited orange brown clay, containing abundant quantities of modern glass, porcelain and other obviously modern finds. This deposit was up to 0.49 m thick.
- 5.1.12 The trench was sealed by up to 0.2 m of brown silty clay topsoil.

5.2 Finds

- 5.2.1 All of the finds recovered were readily dateable as post-medieval and were predominantly of 20th century origin. The majority of finds consisted of broken porcelain and glass bottles of domestic origin.

6 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

6.1 Reliability of field investigation

- 6.1.1 The results of the evaluation were unambiguous, revealing the site to have been extensively disturbed by modern activity with no evidence of archaeological deposits or artifacts.

6.2 Overall Interpretation

Summary of results

- 6.2.1 No archaeological remains were revealed. The site appears to have been extensively truncated and only a thin layer of the original subsoil, 201, was revealed within Trench 2. Elsewhere, the underlying natural clay is sealed by modern deposits, which probably represent the re-deposition of domestic material, possibly associated with the clearance of London Underground arches and land to the south-west of the site.

APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1					
Context	Type	Description	Depth (m)	Finds	Date
100	Layer	Topsoil	0.3		Modern
101	Layer	Subsoil	0.12	Pot,CBM,Glass	Modern
102	Layer	Natural clay	0.9+		
Trench 2					
Context	Type	Description	Depth (m)	Finds	Date
200	Layer	Topsoil	0.2		Modern
201	Layer	Subsoil	0.15	Pot,CBM,Glass	Modern
202	Layer	Natural clay	Not excavated		
Trench 3					
Context	Type	Description	Depth (m)	Finds	Date
300	Layer	Topsoil	0.2		Modern
301	Layer	Made ground	0.2	Pot,CBM,Glass	Modern
302	Layer	Redeposited clay	0.32	Pot,CBM,Glass	Modern
303	Layer	Made ground	0.26	Pot,CBM,Glass	Modern
304	Layer	Natural clay	Not excavated		

APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

Museum of London, November 1999: *General standards for the preparation of archaeological archives deposited with the Museum of London.*

Museum of London Archaeological Service: *Land adjacent to Bury Farm, Edgwarebury.*

Wilkinson, D. (ed) 1992: *Oxford Archaeological Unit Field Manual*, (First edition, August 1992).

EH 1998 Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service Papers 2,3,4,5

APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: Land Adjacent to Edgwarebury Brook, Edgware Way, Edgware

Site code:EDY 00

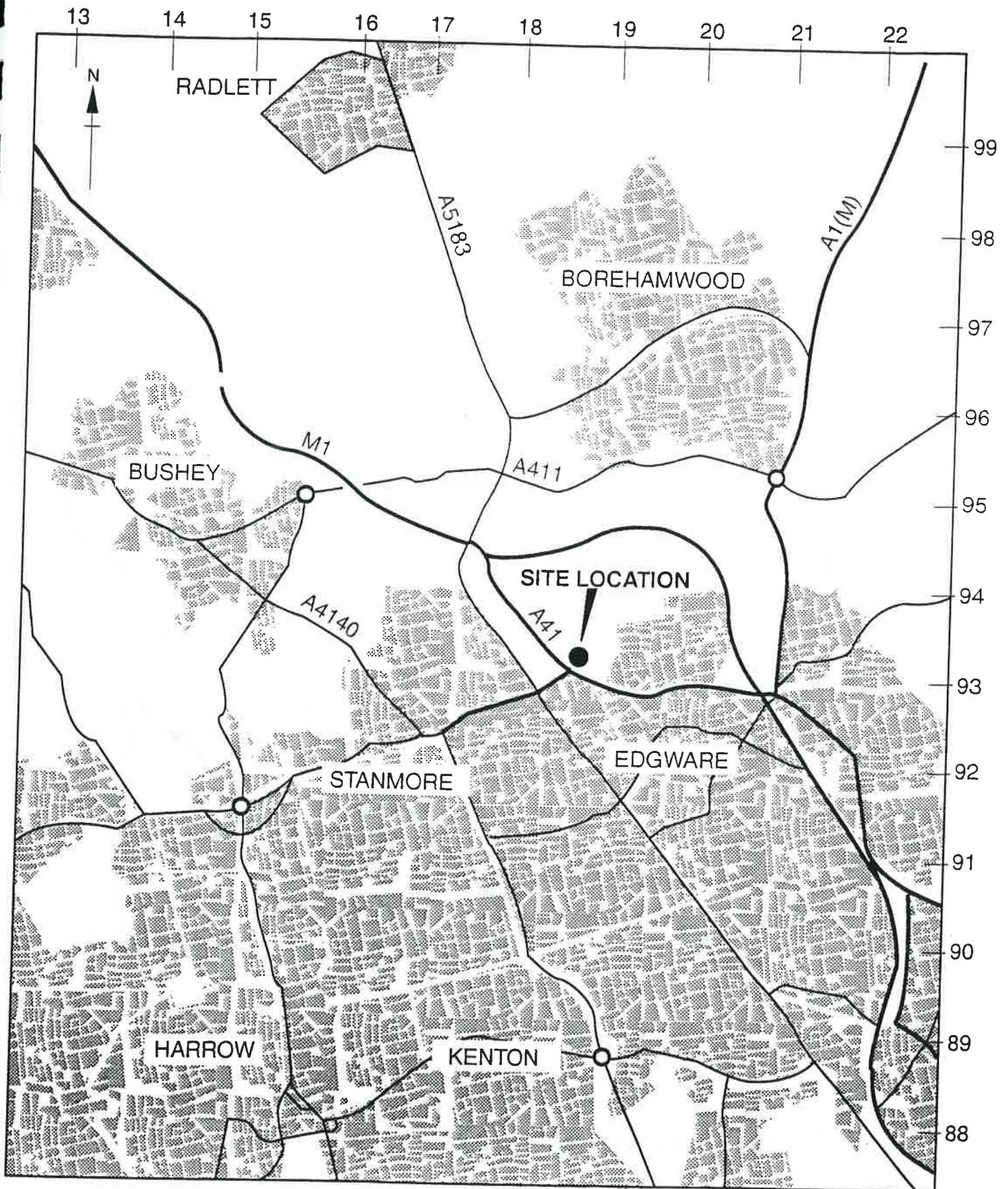
reference: TQ 187 932

Type of evaluation: Three 10m trenches.

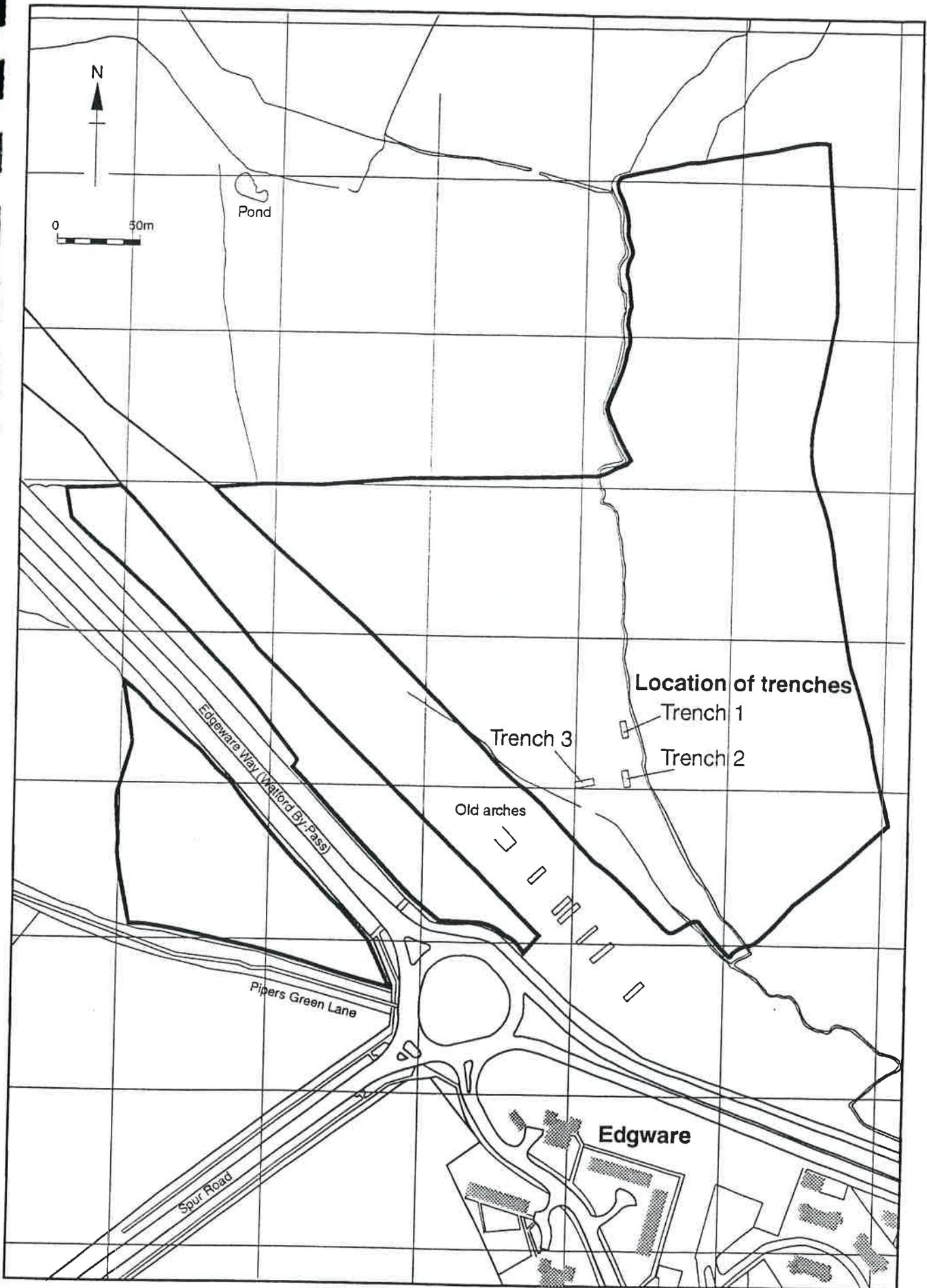
Date and duration of project: Tuesday 26th July 2000

Summary of results: No archaeological remains, extensive modern disturbance.

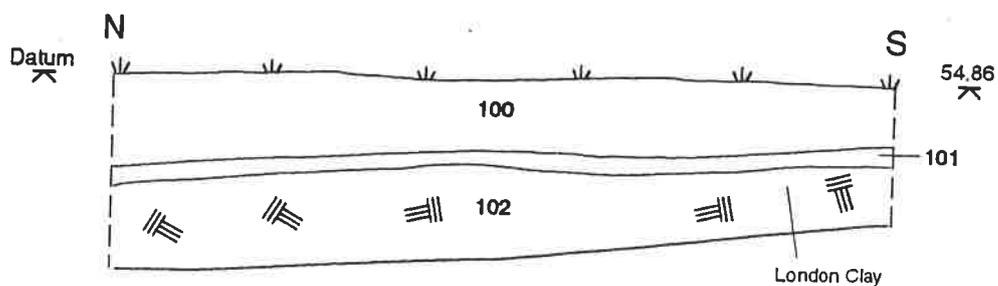
Location of archive: The archive is currently held at OAU, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES.



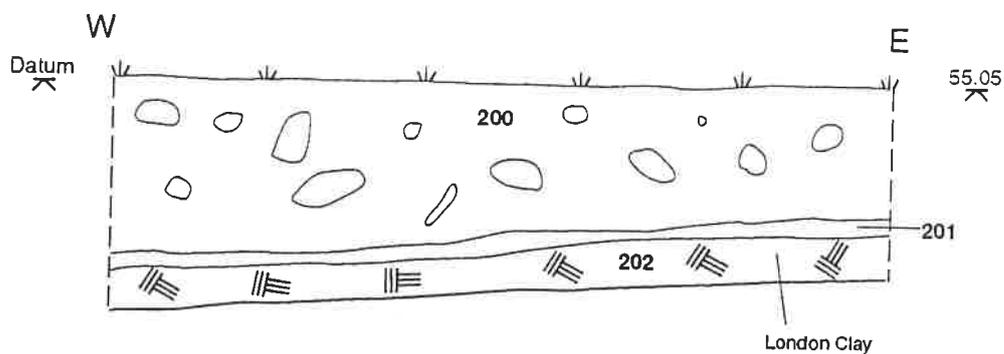
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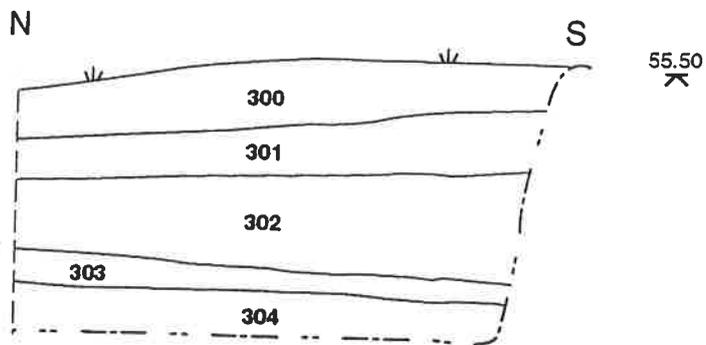
Section 2



Section 3



Section 4





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