

ALP414 (BT)
339/95

414A & 416 Ealing Road / Alperton Lane
Alperton, London

TQ 1814 8321

Archaeological Evaluation

OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

May 1995

414A & 416 EALING ROAD/ALPERTON LANE

ALPERTON

<u>CONTENTS</u>	Page
INTRODUCTION	1
LOCATION	1
GEOLOGY	1
ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	1
STRATEGY	1
SUMMARY	2
RESULTS	2
Trench 1	2
Trench 2	3
Pottery	4
CONCLUSIONS AND CONSIDERATION OF THE METHODOLOGY	5
APPENDIX 1: Table of contexts and finds	

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INTRODUCTION

The Oxford Archaeological Unit (OAU) undertook an evaluation in an area currently occupied by a public house (The Hungry Horse bar and restaurant) and its car park. It is proposed to comprehensively redevelop the site with a retail warehouse and car parking. As part of the consideration of the planning application, English Heritage had advised the London Borough of Brent that an archaeological evaluation be undertaken. The work was carried out between the 27th of April and the 1st of May 1995.

LOCATION (see fig. 1)

The site is bound by the Ealing Road to the east and Alperton Lane to the south (TQ 1820 8320). The site lies at 24.25 m above Ordnance Datum (OD) and the ground slopes gently down to the south.

GEOLOGY

The site lies within the valley of the River Brent, which is situated just south of Alperton Lane. The BGS survey shows a band of floodplain gravels bordering the river. The site lies at a higher level than the river's alluvial floodplain and much of north Middlesex lies upon London Clay.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The site is situated at the junction of two medieval roads in the documented medieval hamlet or village of Alperton (Victoria County History - Middlesex: Vol IV, p192). Two medieval tenements are documented on the east side of Ealing Road, but the location of a third tenement is not given. Other medieval tenements and outbuildings may have stood in the area. A building, which is thought to be a barn, stood on the site in 1759.

STRATEGY

Two trenches were machine excavated with a JCB equipped with a five foot toothless ditching bucket. Trench 1 measured 15 m long and 2.00 m wide and Trench 2 measured 22.50 m long x 2.00 m wide. The positioning of the trenches was designed to establish the presence and extent or absence of archaeological remains within the development area. In particular to assess the site for prehistoric occupation or any evidence for the Saxon origins of the medieval village of Alperton, based on placename evidence.

The trenches were first excavated down to the first archaeologically significant horizon. Features revealed in the trench were then hand excavated to establish their condition, character, quality and to recover material to date the archaeological remains present.

SUMMARY

The two trenches identified well preserved post-medieval deposits within the beer garden and modern disturbance within the area of the car park. Finds from the earliest layer in Trench 2 indicate a date range of mid 17th to mid 18th century. Two ditches were identified in Trench 2, one probably late 18th century and the other undated. No finds or features were located which would indicated medieval occupation associated with the medieval hamlet/village of Alperton.

RESULTS

For dimensions of deposits, features and trenches see Appendix 1.

Trench 1 (see fig. 2 and fig. 3)

Trench 1 was orientated approximately NNW-SSE, situated along the west edge of the car park. The natural geological deposit, a pebbly clay brickearth, was exposed at a depth of 0.70 m (23.65 m OD) below the present ground surface. Three features were located in the trench, 107, 108, and 110. The earliest stratified feature 110, which cut the natural brickearth, was slightly irregular in shape and depth, although probably linear orientated approximately E-W. The fill 109 was greenish clay which probably indicated contamination/discolouration. A single large red roof tile fragment was recovered from the fill, 109. The fill 109 was truncated by a redeposited clay 103.

A depression 108 was cut into the natural brickearth and produced modern 20th century floor tile.

The redeposited greenish silty clay, 103, extended along the whole trench and measured up to 0.33 m thick. At the northern end of the trench, layer 103 was cut by a square shaped pit 107.

Layer 103 was overlain by two layers of stone and rubble hardcore, 102 and 101, the hardcore layers had a combined thickness along most of the trench of 0.54 m. At the south end of the trench the hardcore layers sloped away to the south and thickened up to 0.74 m. They formed the make-up layers for the present tarmac surface.

Interpretation Trench 1

The level of the natural brickearth (compared to Trench 2), along with the rubble hardcore and redeposited clay (103) in Trench 1, indicate the car park area had been reduced and disturbed during its construction. The indication from the section is that this truncation becomes more severe at the south end of the trench. The probable ditch in Trench 1 (110)

was disturbed although it probably occupies a position along the break of slope before the ground slopes down to the River Brent. The green discoloration of deposits in this trench is probably due to contamination, consequently it was not possible to gauge a clear representation of the deposits particularly the fill of ditch 110. The pit, 107, cut the redeposited clay 103 indicating it is modern in date.

Trench 2 (see fig. 2 and fig. 4)

Trench 2 was orientated approximately NNW-SSE, situated within the beer garden and continuing south into the car park. The natural geological deposit, a pebbly clay brickearth, was exposed at a depth of 0.70 m (23.90 m above OD) below the present ground surface.

The area within the beer garden revealed a 15 m length of well preserved stratified layers. No archaeological features were seen in the trench within the beer garden. The earliest layer 210 was a light brown silty clay and measured 0.20 m thick. It contained hand-made red brick, red tile, and clay pipe fragments which included two complete pipe bowls. The pottery falls within a date range of mid 17th to mid 18th century and the clay pipe bowls fall within the same date range.

Layer 210 was overlaid by a well worked mid-brown clay loam 209, which measured 0.58 m thick and was overlaid by the present turf and topsoil. White glazed pottery was recovered from 209.

In contrast the 5.50 m length of trench within the car park revealed a continuation of the rubble hardcore layers seen in Trench 1. Two ditches were identified at the south end of the trench, 203 and 207. Both features cut a clayey pebble river gravel and appeared to be ditches orientated approximately ENE-WSW.

Ditch 203 was filled with a dark grey clay, 202 and produced numerous red brick fragments and post-medieval pottery. The fill was truncated by the rubble hardcore 201.

Ditch 207 ran approximately parallel to ditch 203. It was filled with a stiff light grey clay, 206 and it produced one piece of burnt flint. On the north side ditch 206 was truncated by layer 208. This layer was a light grey slightly greenish clay and could be a continuation of layer 210 seen in the beer garden.

Interpretation Trench 2

The results from Trench 2 show well preserved post-medieval deposits within the beer garden. The two ditches in Trench 2 although truncated by hardcore show less disturbance than that recorded in Trench 1. Ditch 203 is dated to the 18th century, post-medieval period, ditch 207 is undated. It is possible feature 110 is a continuation of one of the ditches in Trench 2 although due to the disturbed nature of ditch 110 this is far from clear. If, as seems likely, layer 208 is the same as 210 it would mean stratigraphically ditch 207 is the earliest feature in Trench 2. The 'clean' fill of ditch 207 differed greatly from that of ditch 203 probably indicating it is probably an earlier feature.

POTTERY by L. Bown

Three contexts produced a small assemblage of post-medieval pottery, totalling nine sherds. These range from a late 15th to mid 16th century Raeren Stoneware (RAER) import to locally produced 17th to 18th century red earthenwares (PMR) and late 18th to 19th century Creamware (CREA) and transfer printed Pearlware (PEAR). A storage jar or crude cauldron rim in Post-Medieval Red Earthenware is indicative of a mid 17th to 18th century date for layer 210. Layer 202 has a mixed assemblage in which the Rhenish Stoneware jug (RAER) is likely to be residual in a context dated by Post-Medieval Red Earthenware and Creamware as late 18th to 19th century. A Creamware bowl and transfer printed Pearlware plate suggest a 19th century date for the layer 209.

CONCLUSIONS AND CONSIDERATION OF THE METHODOLOGY

No evidence for medieval occupation was recovered from the two evaluation trenches. The area of the car park had been reduced in level and disturbed by hardcore layers.

The finds from ditch 203 are post-medieval in date. The finds recovered from layer 210 are broadly contemporary with a barn thought to stand on the site in 1759. No residual medieval finds were recovered from the post-medieval layer 210. Ditch 207 is undated but is possibly earlier than the post-medieval period. Both the ditches in Trench 2 occupy an area at the top of a break in slope before the ground drops away to the south towards the River Brent. The ditches probably represent boundary/land division ditches and the quantity of finds from post-medieval ditch 203 probably indicate nearby activity/occupation.

The two trenches provided a good cross section of the site and identified the degree of preservation on the site, particularly the undisturbed deposits within the beer garden.

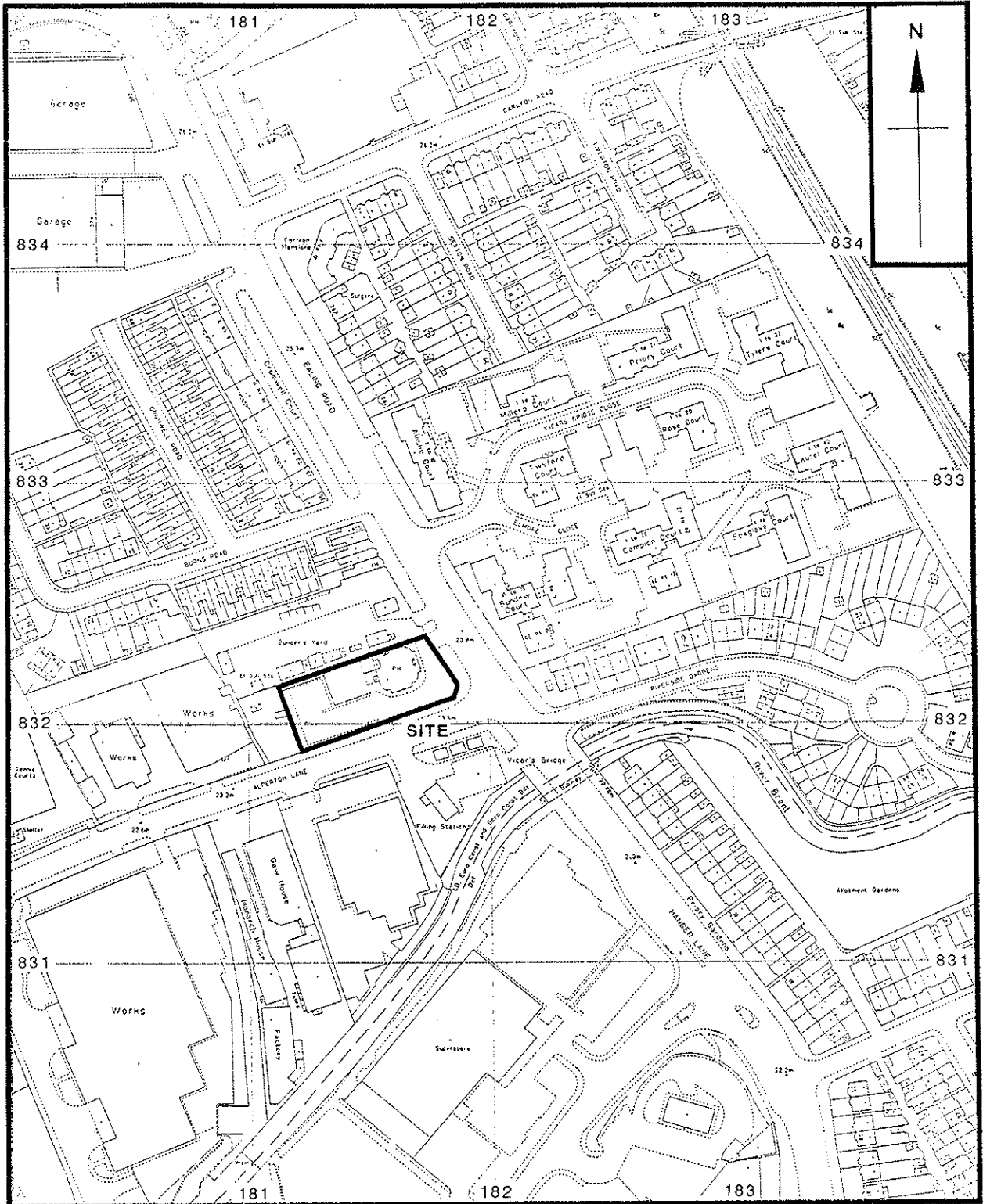
OAU
A Parkinson
May 1995

APPENDIX 1: Table of Contexts and Finds

414A & 416 EALING ROAD/ALPERTON LANE						
ALPERTON (APL 95)						
Context	Type	Depth (m)	Length (m)	Width (m)	Comments	Finds
TRENCH 1		0.60	15.00	2.00		
100	Layer	0.07			Tarmac	
101	Layer	0.19			Hardcore	
102	Layer	0.15			Rubble	
103	Layer	0.20-0.33			Disturbed clay	
104	Layer				Natural clay brickearth	
105	Fill	0.06			Fill of 108	3 modern tile fragments
106	Fill	0.29			Fill of 107	
107	Cut	0.30	0.50	0.50	Square shaped pit	
108	Cut	0.60	1.00	0.60		
109	Fill	0.45			Fill of 110	1 curved red tile
110	Cut	0.35		1.00	Ditch	
TRENCH 2		0.42-0.68	22.50	2.00		
200	Layer	0.07			Tarmac	
201	Layer	0.34			Hardcore	
202	Fill	0.38			Fill of 203	4 brick fragments 8 red tile fragments (one of which is a peg tile) 2 pot sherds PMR fabric 5 pot sherds RAER fabric 1 pot sherd CREA fabric 1 Oyster shell
203	Cut	0.38		1.30	Ditch	
204	Layer				Natural Clay Brickearth	
205	Layer				Natural pebble & Clay Brickearth	
206	Fill	0.33			Fill of 207	1 burnt flint
207	Cut	0.33		1.40	Ditch	
208	Layer	0.10			Disturbed clay	
209	Layer	0.45			Turf and Topsoil	1 pot sherd PEAR fabric (transfer printed) 1 pot sherd CREA fabric
210	Layer	0.20			Cultivation soil	8 red brick fragments 2 clay pipe stems 2 clay pipe bowls 2 red tile fragments 2 pot sherds PMR fabric 1 piece of bone 1 iron object 1 burnt flint

Key to fabrics

- RAER = Raeren Stoneware range from late 15th to 16th century
- PMR = Red earthenwares produced 17th to 18th century
- CREA = Creamware, late 18th to 19th century
- PEAR = 19th century transfer printed pearlware



scale 1:2500

Based on the Ordnance Survey's 1:1250 map of 1994 with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown copyright. Licence No. A1 854166

figure 1

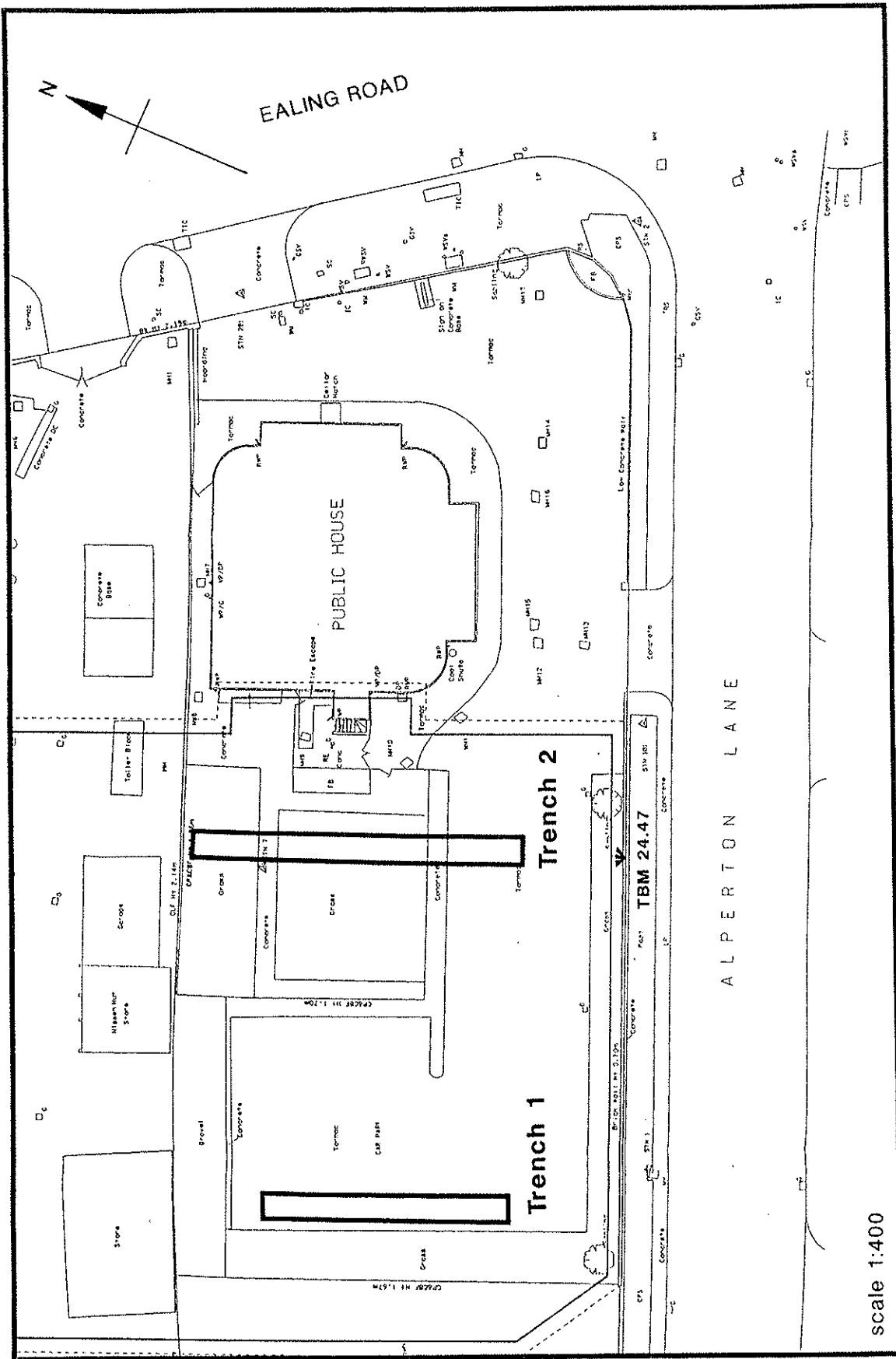
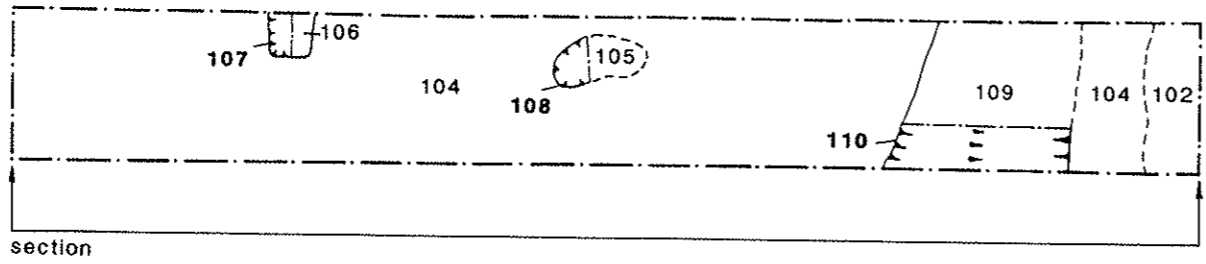


figure 2

Trench 1

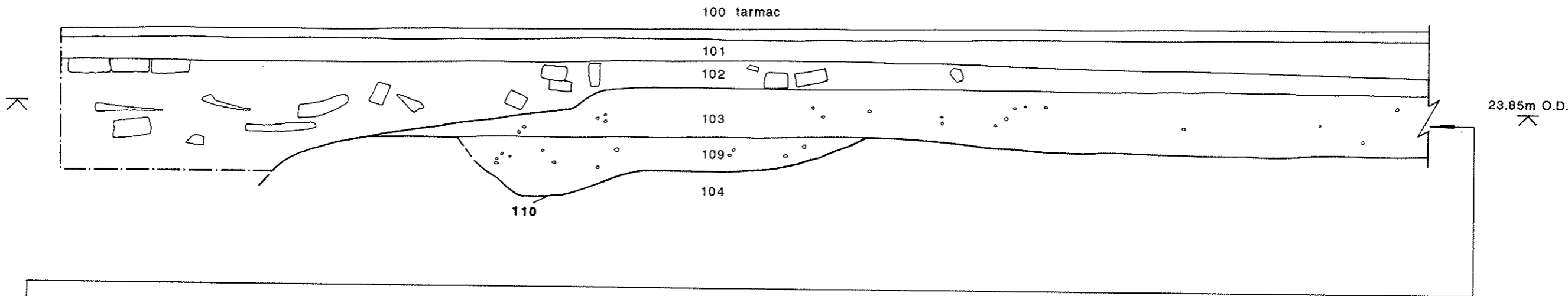


section

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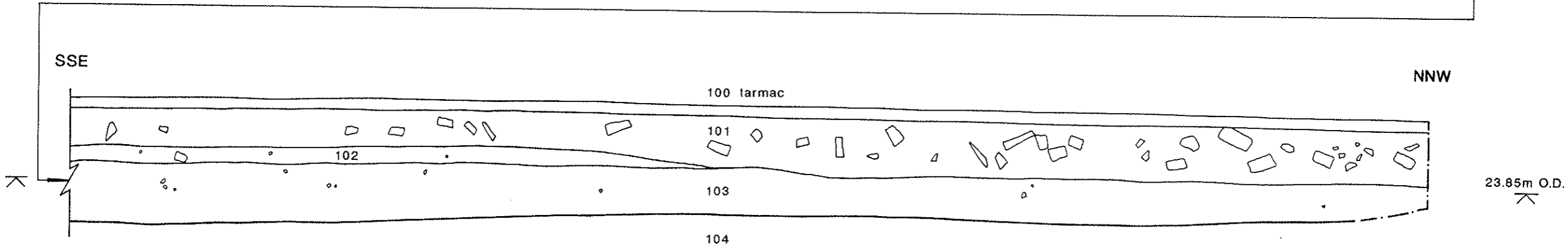
SSE

NNW



SSE

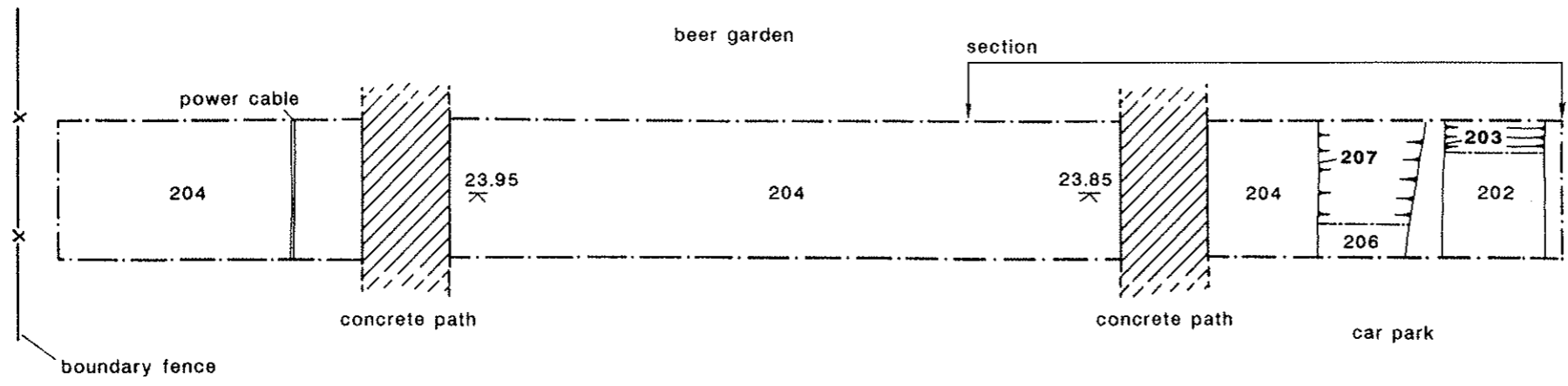
NNW



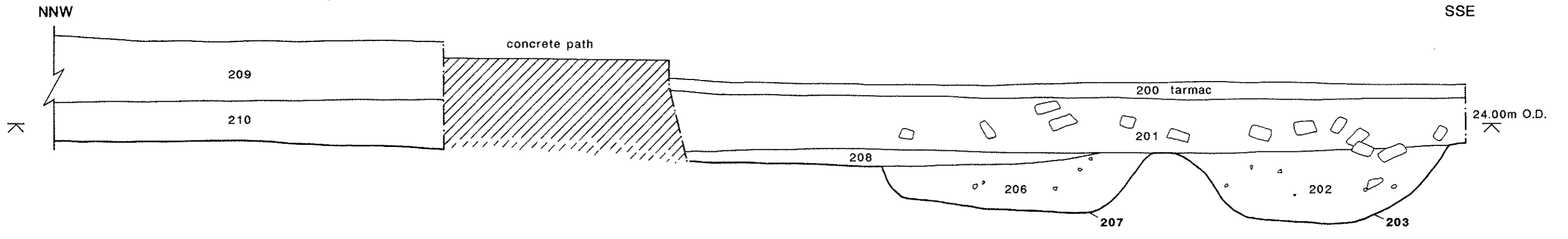
scale 1:25

figure 3

Trench 2

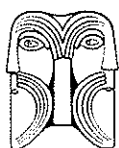


scale 1:100



scale 1:25

figure 4



OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

46 Hythe Bridge Street, Oxford, OX1 2EP

Head Office Tel: 01865 243888 Fax: 01865 793496

Post-Excavation Tel: 01865 204642 Fax: 01865 204637



Director: David Miles B.A., F.S.A., M.I.F.A.

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