KINGSTON UPON THAMES (SR)

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Serco Ltd

Kingston College Car Park, Kingston upon Thames

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

NGR TQ 1800 6891

OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

November 1997

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Date:	12th November '97
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Date:	14th November 97
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Date:	17th November 97

OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

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SUMMARY

The Oxford Archaeological Unit carried out a field evaluation at the car park at the rear of Kingston College in Kingston upon Thames for Serco Ltd on behalf of Kingston College. The evaluation revealed modern services, the remains of a modern structure and modern backfill layers. No other archaeological deposits were encountered. The area of excavation was limited due to the number of services detected before excavation began.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

In October 1997 the Oxford Archaeological Unit (OAU) carried out a field evaluation at Kingston College car park, Kingston-upon-Thames on behalf of Serco Ltd in respect of a planning application for an extension to the existing premises. A Written Scheme of Investigation, including trench plan was produced by the OAU and agreed with Ken Whittaker of English Heritage. The development site lay to the west and south of a bend in the River Hogsmill and east of the River Thames and is 300 square m in area.

1.2 Geology and topography

The site lies on a sand spur at 7.5 m above OD. The site is situated at the rear of the Kingston College and to the north of The Bittoms multi-storey car park in a built-up area between a bend in the River Hogsmill and the River Thames. The site is presently a car park for members of the college.

1.3 Historical and archaeological background

Kingston's early origins can be traced back to a pre-urban settlement of the 9th-10th century when it consisted of a 'vill', the administrative centre of a Royal Estate. It was also the site of an 8th-century Minster church, scene of the coronation of a number of 9th-century West Saxon Kings. It is apparent from the Domesday Survey that Kingston was a rural settlement.

Legal status as a town was first gained in the Charter of Freemen of Kingston in 1200. Medieval Kingston represents a modest market town within the regional historic urban hierarchy but the building of a bridge across the Thames in the 12th century provided an important strategic component of the regional transport and commercial infrastructure and generated general wealth in Kingston.

The extant medieval plan reveals a market-based town layout. The market place is located immediately south of the parish church (formerly part of the Minster church) and fronted by substantial masonry and timber buildings with alleys giving access to the Thames waterfront. The area between market and waterfront represents the main area of commerce and industry. The site of the 12th-century bridge across the Thames is located to the north, beyond the main focus of the town, i.e. the church/market-place, whilst to the south, the extant 12th-century Clattern Bridge crosses the Hogsmill.

2 EVALUATION AIMS

The evaluation was carried out to determine, as far as was reasonably possible, the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed redevelopment. An adequate representative sample of all the areas where archaeological remains are potentially threatened was studied, where access is possible.

The evaluation intended to clarify the nature and extent of existing disturbances and intrusions and hence assess the degree of survival of buried deposits and surviving structures of archaeological significance.

To collect and assess the artefact groups that occur within reworked deposits overlying natural deposits and any archaeological strata. Samples were be of sufficient size to allow dating and degree of residuality to be accurately determined.

The potential for defining the environmental context to the activities of medieval and post-medieval urban populations was assessed and the influence of these activities on the local environment considered.

To make available the results of the investigation.

3 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

3.1 Sample size and scope of field work

The evaluation was to comprise two trenches in the sample area, one running north to south across the west part of the site (Trench 1) and the other aligned east to west along the north part of the site (Trench 2). The evaluation was based upon a 20 % sample of the development area, however several services were detected by CATSCAN limiting the area open to investigation (approximately half of the area of the site was inaccessable). After consultation with Ken Whittaker of English Heritage it was agreed that Trench 2 would not be excavated.

The evaluation consisted of a single trench measuring 12 m long by 2 m wide (Fig 3). Trench 1 was necessarily shortened due to the presence of services at its north end. The overburden was removed by a JCB mechanical excavator under close archaeological supervision.

3.2 Fieldwork methods and recording

The trench was 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).

3.3 ' Finds

Any finds from features or archaeological deposits were retained for dating purposes.

3.4 Environmental data

No environmental samples were taken.

4 RESULTS: GENERAL

4.1 Soils and ground conditions

The general soil type was silty clay which overlay the natural sand.

4.2 Distribution of Archaeological Deposits

The deposits were continuous through out the trench and consisted of modern contexts overlying a silty clay layer which sealed the natural sand.

4.3 Presentation of Results

The following describes the deposits encountered during the evaluation. Each deposit and feature has been given a unique context number. The contexts will be described in chronological order starting with the oldest first and ending with the most recent.

5 RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS

5.1 Description of deposits

5.1.1 *Trench 1* (Fig. 3)

Natural sand (108) was reached in sondages at both ends of the trench at a height of 5.85 m OD. A 1 m-thick layer of orange brown silty clay containing manganese (107) overlay the sand. A layer of mid brown clay silt (106) which contained modern fragments of brick and tile overlay 107. A service trench (109) containing a ceramic pipe and filled by a mixed clay silt (110) cut through 106. The service trench was aligned roughly east-west and was located 6.5 m north of the south end of the trench. A construction trench containing the remains of a wall (104) consisting of a 0.4 m-thick concrete footing upon which sat a single course of mottled orange yellow and purple bricks, cut through layers 106 and 107. A layer of blue-grey clay silt (105) overlay 106, sealed the fill of the service trench and butted up against the remains of the north side of wall 104. This deposit was not visible south of wall 104. Make-up and tarmac layers (103-101) for the surface of the College car park sealed the trench.

5.2 Finds

Two fragments of modern roof tile were collected from the site. No other artefacts were recovered.

6 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

6.1 Reliability of field investigation

The sample size was sufficient to determine the extent and type of deposits on the site. The trench were large enough to determine the nature and character of the deposits. Natural was reached at both ends of the trench.

6.2 Overall interpretation

6.2.1 Summary of Results

No archaeological features or deposits were encountered and no artefacts were recovered during this evaluation. The presence of modern services indicated that the site had been disturbed and any archaeology that may have been present was removed during the course of the earlier groundworks.

Bibliography and references

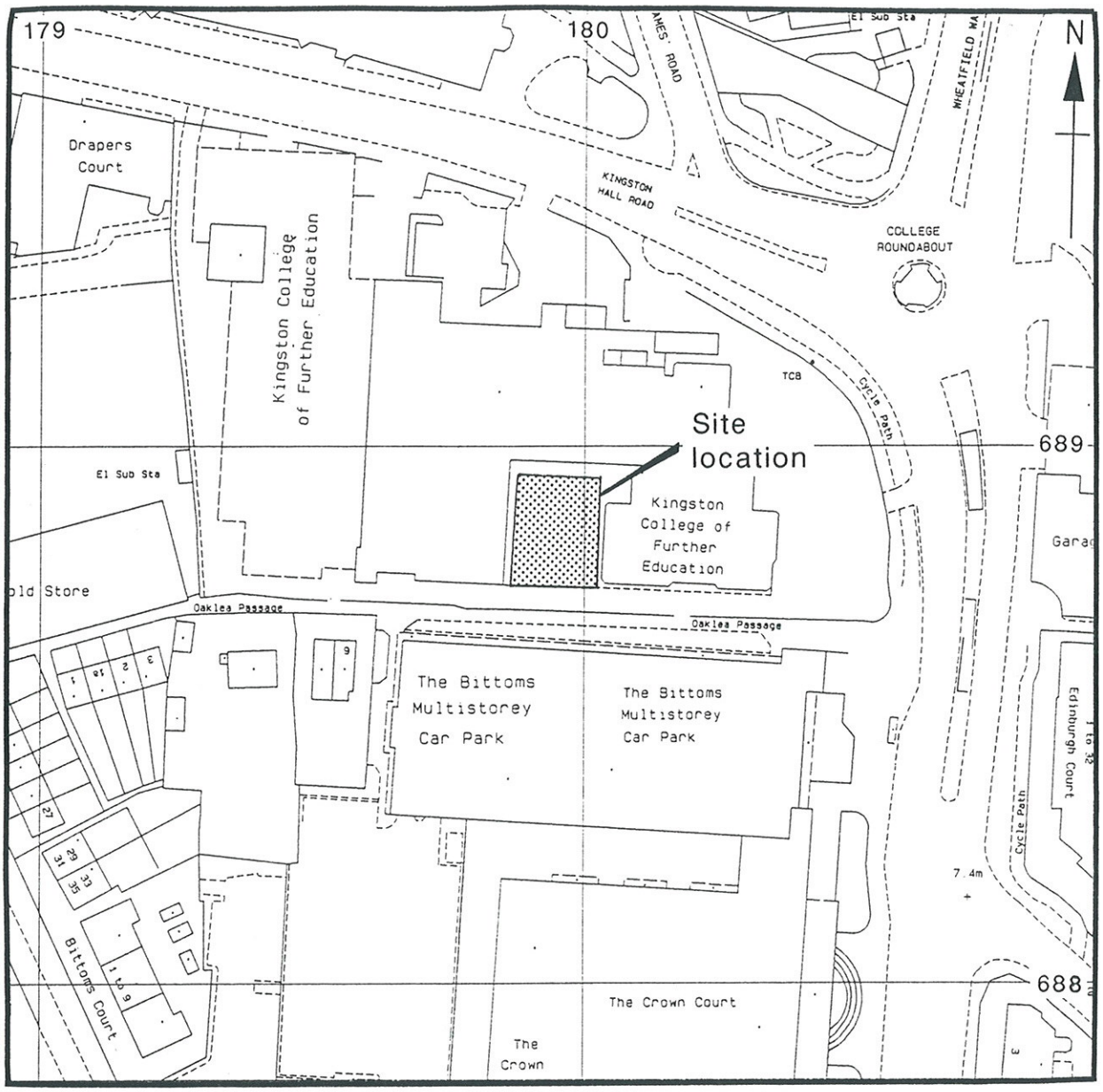
Wakeford, J, 1990 *Kingston's Past Rediscovered*, Phillimore

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

Appendix 1 Archaeological Context Inventory

Trench	Ctxt	Type	width (m)	thick. (m)	Comment	Finds	No.	Date
1								
	101	layer		0.1	tarmac			
	102	layer		0.05	car park make-up			
	103	layer		0.1	car park make-up			
	104	wall		0.56	wall and foundation			
	105	layer		0.2	Dark blue-grey clay silt			
	106	layer		0.25	mid brown silt clay	tile	2	mod
	107	layer		1.05	orange-brown silt clay with manganese			
	108	natural			sand			
	109	service			ceramic service pipe and backfill			
	110	fill			service trench			

Illustrations



scale 1:1250

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Figure 1

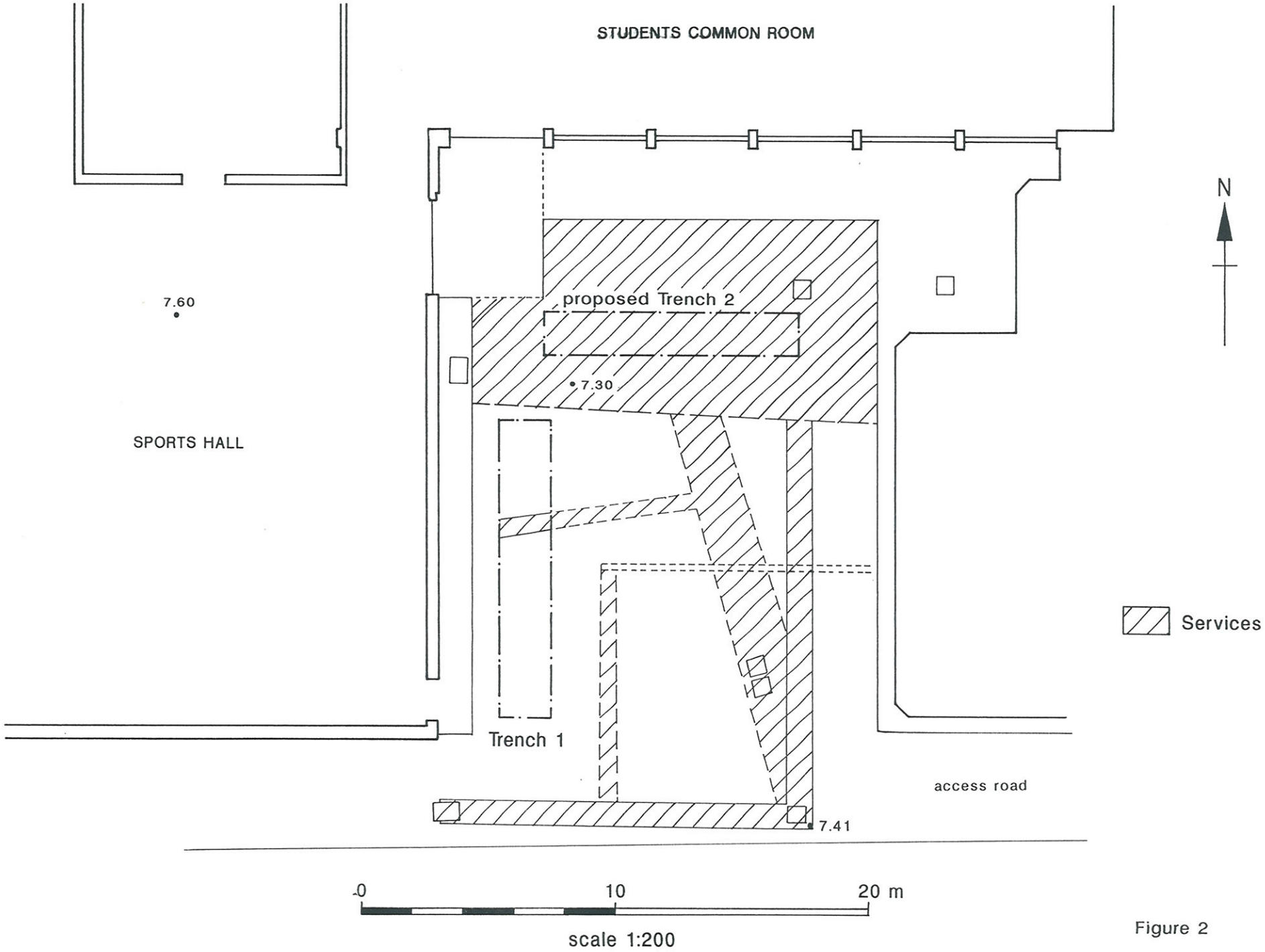
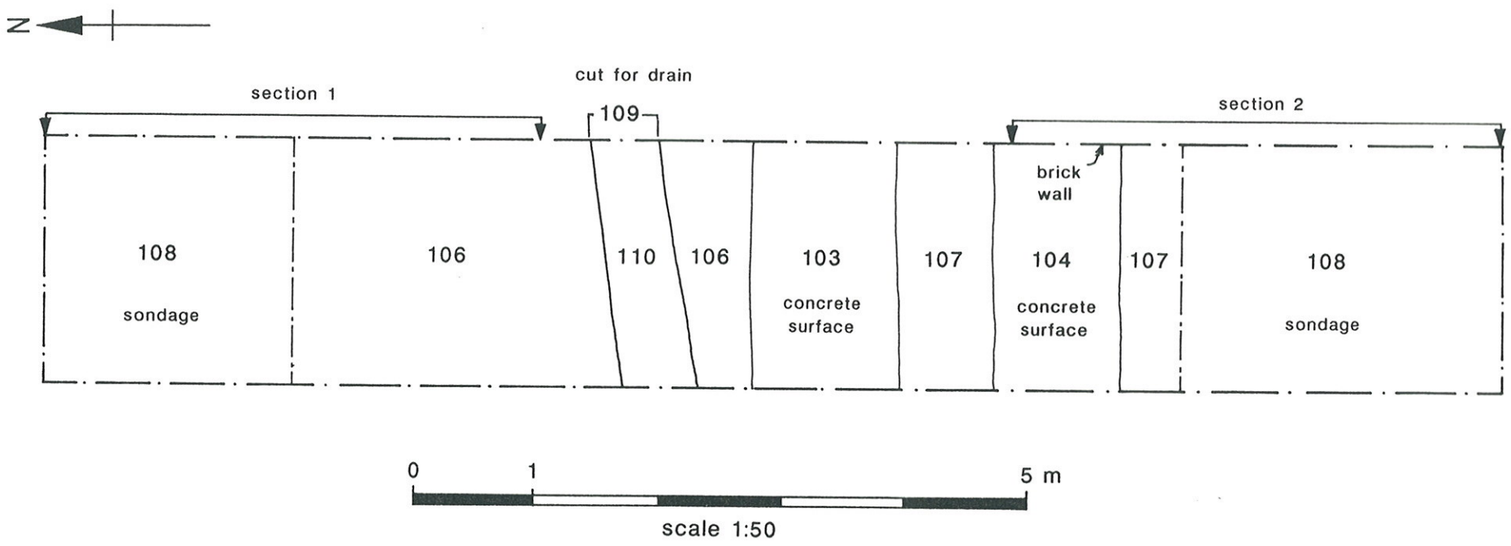

STUDENTS COMMON ROOM
7.60
SPORTS HALL
proposed Trench 2
7.30
Trench 1
access road
7.41
N
Services
0
10
20 m
scale 1:200

Figure 2


N
cut for drain
109
section 1
section 2
brick wall
108
sondage
106
110
106
103
concrete surface
107
104
concrete surface
107
108
sondage
0
1
5 m
scale 1:50

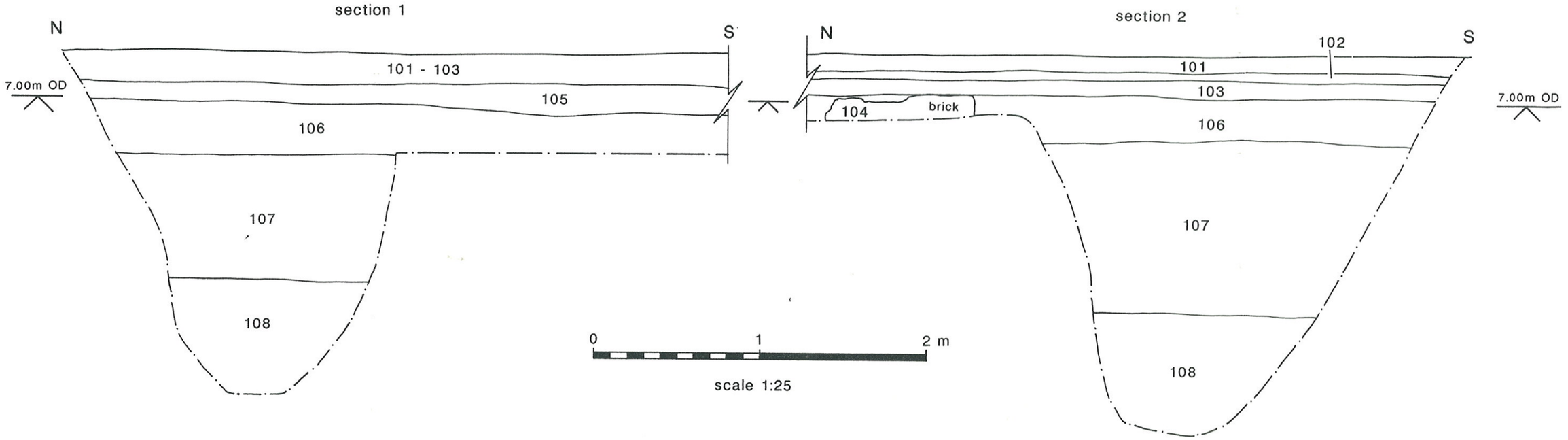

section 1
N
S
7.00m OD
101 - 103
105
106
107
108
0
1
2 m
scale 1:25
section 2
N
S
102
101
103
104
brick
106
107
108
7.00m OD

Figure 3

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