

**Gazeley Properties Ltd**

**Delta Works, Millmarsh Lane, Enfield, London**

***ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT***

**NGR TQ 3660 9720**

**MLM 00**

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**April 2001**



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|---------------------------|
| Prepared by:<br><br>Date: |
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## ***ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION***

### **CONTENTS**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Summary .....                                     | 2 |
| 1 Introduction .....                              | 2 |
| 1.1 Location and planning background .....        | 2 |
| 1.2 Geology and topography .....                  | 2 |
| 1.3 Archaeological background .....               | 2 |
| 1.4 Acknowledgements .....                        | 3 |
| 2 Evaluation Aims and Methodology .....           | 3 |
| 2.1 Aims .....                                    | 3 |
| 2.2 Scope of fieldwork .....                      | 4 |
| 2.3 Fieldwork methods and recording .....         | 4 |
| 2.4 Finds .....                                   | 4 |
| 2.5 Palaeo-environmental evidence .....           | 4 |
| 3 Results: Descriptions .....                     | 4 |
| 3.1 Description of deposits .....                 | 4 |
| 4 Finds .....                                     | 6 |
| 4.1 The flint, by Hugo Lamdin-Whymark .....       | 6 |
| 4.2 The pottery, by Paul Booth .....              | 6 |
| 5 Discussion And Interpretation .....             | 6 |
| 5.1 Reliability of field investigation .....      | 6 |
| 5.2 Overall Interpretation .....                  | 6 |
| Appendix 1 Archaeological context inventory ..... | 7 |
| Appendix 2 Bibliography and references .....      | 7 |

### **LIST OF FIGURES**

- Fig. 1 Site location map  
Fig. 2 Trench location plan  
Fig. 3 Trench 10, 11 - plans and sections

## SUMMARY

*In March 2001 the Oxford Archaeological Unit (OAU) carried out a field evaluation at the site of the former Delta Works, Millmarsh Lane, in the Borough of Enfield, Greater London on behalf of Gazeley Properties Ltd (Site Code - MLM00). The evaluation consisted of two 50 m long trenches in the south-western corner of the site which revealed four small features, three of which may be Roman or pre-Roman. However, the dating evidence for these features was poor. Modern disturbance was found over much of the evaluated area.*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Location and planning background

- 1.1.1 The background to the first phase of the evaluation was as follows. In April, May and August 2000 OAU carried out a field evaluation at the site of the former Delta Works, Millmarsh Lane, in the Borough of Enfield, Greater London on behalf of Gazeley Properties Ltd in respect of a planning application for B1, B2 and B8 development. The archaeological brief was set by Robert Whytehead of English Heritage, GLAAS (Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service), acting as Archaeological Advisor to the London Borough of Enfield. From this, Dr Royston Clark of CPM, acting on behalf of Gazeley Properties Ltd established the Archaeological Specification (CPM 1999) from which OAU prepared a Method Statement (OAU 2000). The content of both these documents was agreed with GLAAS. The development site is situated at TQ 3660 9720 and covers an area of 41,256 sq m (Figs 1 and 2).
- 1.1.2 The second phase of evaluation, the subject of this report, was carried out in March 2001 at the request of GLAAS. The proposed method of work was prepared by OAU on behalf of Gazeley Properties (letter David Wilkinson to Robert Whytehead, 12/3/2001) and approved by GLAAS (return letter 16/3/2001). Fieldwork began on 29/3/01 and was completed on 2/4/01.

### 1.2 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The site overlies (gleyic) argillic brown earths on aeolian silty drift over River Lea terrace gravel (Hamble 2 soil association; Jarvis (Jarvis *et al.*, 1984)) at c.15m above OD. The site is located on former industrial ground and situated to the east of Enfield Town in Brimsdown. The eastern boundary of the development area is formed by the river wall of the historic River Lea Navigation.

### 1.3 Archaeological background

- 1.3.1 Whilst no archaeological finds or deposits have been recorded from the development site prior to April 2000 it lies in an area of archaeological potential. Prehistoric and Roman artefacts were recovered during construction of the reservoir to the east of the

site. A sequence of waterlain silty clays, containing layers radiocarbon dated to the Mesolithic and Neolithic (one of which is thought to indicate large scale burning) was identified during an evaluation of land to the south of the present development carried out by the Museum of London Archaeological Service (MoLAS) in 1993. No archaeological features were encountered. Alluvial material encountered during a separate MoLAS evaluation further to the south at Ponders End Flour mill, identified Post-medieval flood deposits. Other stray finds dating from the prehistoric period through to the post-medieval period have been recorded from the Enfield area.

- 1.3.2 The first phase of OAU evaluation produced the following results (trench locations are shown on Figure 1). Further detail is available in the evaluation report (OAU October 2000) All of the trenches revealed the surface of the natural gravel subsoil which sloped gently down from the north-east and south-west to a slight hollow which ran through the centre of the site. In Trench 4, adjacent to the current River Lea Navigation, a palaeochannel was revealed on a north-south alignment. This channel had silted up with substantial alluvial deposits. This sequence was sampled and could represent actions from the Early Mesolithic to the Roman/Saxon periods. The environmental assessment of the samples indicate an early prehistoric date for the sequence, similar to other environmental sequences from the area, however in the absence of any absolute dating these results are inconclusive.
- 1.3.3 It is possible that this alluvial sequence was the same as those recorded in the trenches on the eastern half of the site. Trench 8 in the south-west corner of the site, revealed three probable ditches, a post-hole and a single pit. Only the pit yielded any finds and was dated to the Middle Bronze Age, however this could not be related to the alluvial sequence. In Trench 7 on the central southern boundary of the site alluvial deposits sealed a buried soil, a tree-hole and a feature that contained 'bloom' derived from the production of iron. In Trench 5 a substantial undated, north-south orientated ditch, parallel to the River Lea Navigation, and filled by alluvial silts, was observed. It was re-cut once and probably backfilled in the post-medieval period. A number of ceramic land-drains sealed below an old ploughsoil attested to the 20<sup>th</sup> century agricultural phase of the site.
- 1.3.4 Concrete structures relating to the sites modern and most recent industrial use truncated the earlier sequences in many places. The demolition and remediation work had also created a certain amount of truncation of the upper part of the sequences observed and in many places had completely removed all material overlying the natural geology.

## 1.4 Acknowledgements

## 2 EVALUATION AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 The first phase of evaluation showed some archaeology in Trench 8, in the south-west corner of the site. The second phase of evaluation was therefore designed to investigate the extent of this archaeology, and, in particular, the extent of damage caused by any previous works.

## 2.2 Scope of fieldwork

- 2.2.1 The evaluation consisted of two trenches forming a 'T' shape. These measured 50 m (east to west) x 45 m (north to south). Both trenches were 5 m wide (Figs 2,3).

## 2.3 Fieldwork methods and recording

- 2.3.1 The overburden was removed under close archaeological supervision by a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket.
- 2.3.2 The trenches were cleaned by hand as appropriate 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).

## 2.4 Finds

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

## 2.5 Palaeo-environmental evidence

- 2.5.1 Underlying deposits were heavily truncated by modern disturbances and overlain by substantial made ground deposits. The cut features and subsoil were either poorly dated or very shallow, and were therefore considered to be unsuitable for environmental sampling.

# 3 RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS

## 3.1 Description of deposits

### *Trench 10 (Figure 3)*

- 3.1.1 Trench 10 was aligned east-west within the south-western corner of the site; it was located just to the north of a previous evaluation trench (Trench 8).
- 3.1.2 The trench measured 50 m long by 5 m wide.
- 3.1.3 Within both trenches 10 and 11, the underlying natural was heavily disturbed and truncated by modern intrusions - these areas were recorded as context 1001. Where the undisturbed natural was found it occurred in small strips or areas, at a depth of approximately 0.9 m beneath the present ground level (14.97 m OD).



- 3.1.4 The earliest natural deposit encountered was an undisturbed orange gravel, 1005, which was seen only intermittently within Trench 10.
- 3.1.5 The gravel was overlain by up to 0.3 m of clean orange brown clay 1004. This is again a natural deposit.
- 3.1.6 A shallow rounded feature, 1009, cut the underlying clay (1004) and was sealed below a shallow spread of grey-brown sandy silt, 1007 (Fig 3, Section 1001). This feature extended 0.5 m south from the northern trench edge, was rounded in shape, and measured 0.9 m wide x 0.21 m deep. Its fill was a dark grey sandy silt which contained no finds. The edges of this feature were rather poorly defined against the surrounding natural clay.
- 3.1.7 The overlying sandy silt, 1007, was up to 0.18 m thick. It was investigated but contained no finds.
- 3.1.8 A very faint linear feature, 1011 cutting layer 1007, was also investigated. This feature was aligned NW-SE across the trench and measured 0.1 m wide x 0.1 m deep. The cut was very poorly defined but the fill, a grey sandy silt, contained a single small sherd of Roman pottery.
- 3.1.9 These features and spreads were overlain by up to 0.2 m of dark brown sandy silt, 1006, which contained occasional modern white glazed pottery and modern debris. Above this were substantial deposits of recent made-ground, 1000, which was made up of broken concrete and other mixed modern debris. These deposits were up to 1 m thick.

### ***Trench 11***

- 3.1.10 Trench 11 was placed at a right-angle to the centre of Trench 10 and ran north-south for 45 m.
- 3.1.11 Trench 11 was broadly similar to Trench 10 and also revealed extensive areas of modern disturbance.
- 3.1.12 The underlying gravel, 1005, was revealed at the southern end of the trench, and was overlain by orange brown clays, 1105, 1107. The level of these clays gradually rose towards the north to a minimum depth of 0.66 m beneath the present ground level (15.23 m OD), at the far north of the trench.
- 3.1.13 These clays were investigated within a 4 m long hand-excavated slot near to the center of the trench. The slot revealed an irregular banding of grey brown loamy clay, 1108, between orange brown clays (1107,1109). Layer 1008 was up to 0.2 m thick. None of the clays investigated within Trench 11 produced finds, and all were considered to be natural deposits.
- 3.1.14 Towards the north of the trench two shallow and irregular features (1101,1103) were sectioned.

- 3.1.15 Feature 1101 measured 2.5 m long x 1.2 m wide by 0.1 m deep. Its fill, a grey brown loamy clay, contained four pieces of burnt flint and a single flint flake.
- 3.1.16 Feature 1103 measured 0.36 m in diameter by only 0.04 m deep. Its fill was a dark grey sandy silt similar to the modern deposits above.
- 3.1.17 Throughout most of Trench 11, the underlying clays and features were sealed by a layer of dark grey brown clayey silt, 1104/1106. This layer was up to 0.2 m thick and contained occasional obviously modern finds.
- 3.1.18 Layers 1104/1106 and underlying deposits were covered by modern made-ground (1000) which were up to 1 m thick.

## **4 FINDS**

### **4.1 The flint, by Hugo Lamdin-Whymark**

- 4.1.1 A single flint flake and four pieces (72g) of burnt unworked flint were recovered from the excavation of fill 1100. The struck flint is a side trimming flake, probably struck using a hard hammer. No platform edge abrasion was present. The flake exhibits moderate post-depositional edge damage and is probably residual. The flint is not diagnostic and only a broad later prehistoric date can be proposed. The burnt unworked flint is white to grey in colour, crazed and calcified.

### **4.2 The pottery, by Paul Booth**

- 4.2.1 A single small (4g), moderately abraded sherd of Roman pottery (not closely datable) came from context 1010. The sherd is a slightly sandy reduced coarse ware, with partly oxidised surfaces.

## **5 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION**

### **5.1 Reliability of field investigation**

- 5.1.1 A lack of archaeological finds means that the dating of features and layers is unreliable. The evaluation produced consistent evidence, considered to be reliable, of heavy disturbance caused by modern activity.

### **5.2 Overall Interpretation**

- 5.2.1 The first phase of evaluation (Trench 8) produced archaeological features, one of which contained early Neolithic to Bronze Age pottery. There was thus the potential for a more extensive archaeological site to have survived in the south-west part of the Enfield Delta Works site. Trenches 10 and 11 have now shown that the area has been extensively damaged, firstly by the construction of the industrial buildings formerly occupying the site, and then by the demolition of those buildings, during which deep floor slabs, foundations and machine bases were removed.

## APPENDIX 1    ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

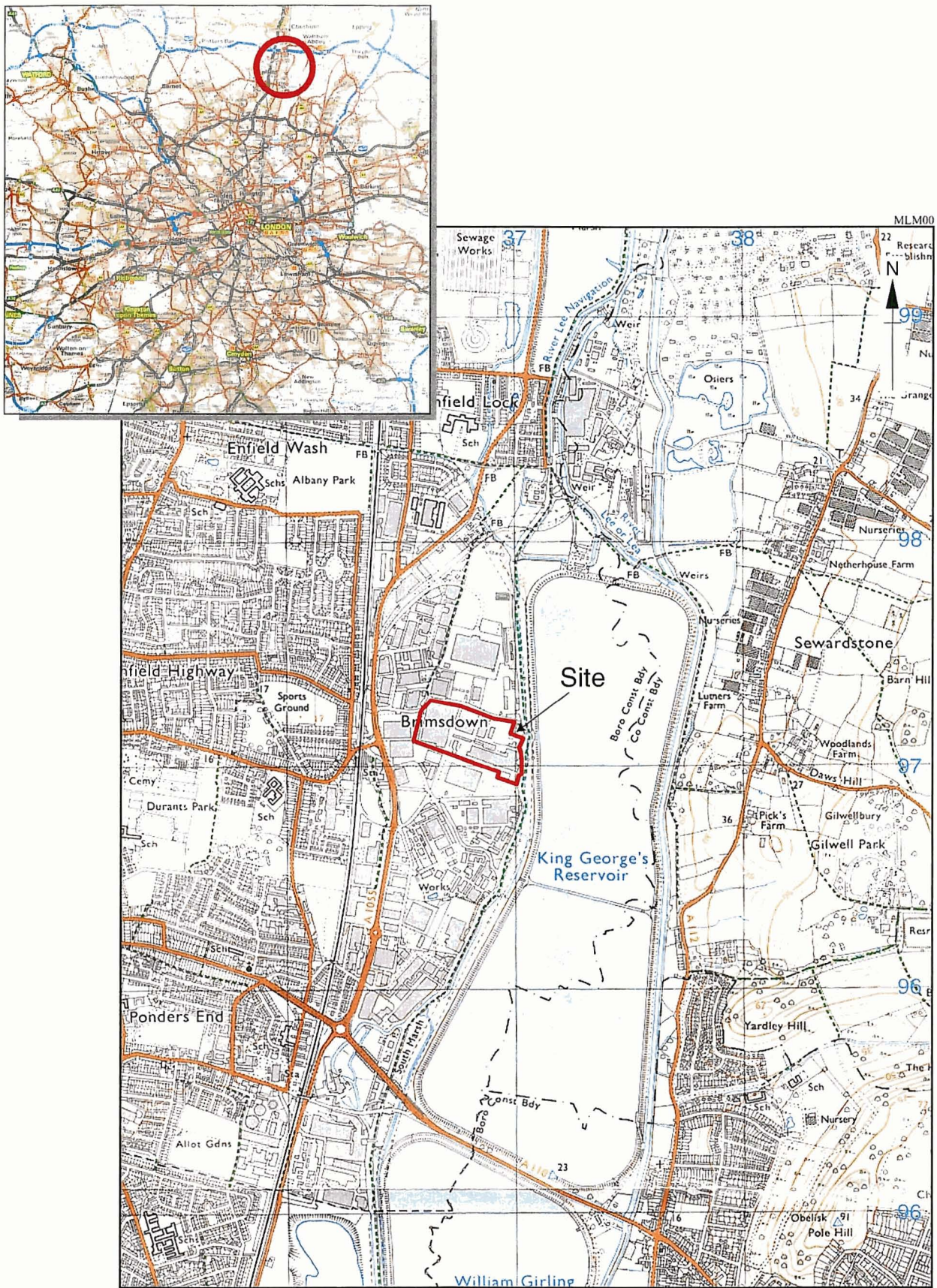
| <b>Trench 1</b> |       |                           |           |           |             |         |
|-----------------|-------|---------------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|---------|
| Context         | Type  | Description               | Depth (m) | Width (m) | Finds       | Date    |
| 1000            | Layer | Made ground               | 1         |           |             | Modern  |
| 1001            | Fill  | Made ground               | 1.05      |           |             | Modern  |
| 1002            | Cut   | Modern disturbance        | Unknown   |           |             | Modern  |
| 1003            | Layer | Interface layer           | 0.3       | 1.5       |             |         |
| 1004            | Layer | Subsoil?                  | 0.3       |           |             |         |
| 1005            | Layer | Natural gravel            | Unknown   |           |             |         |
| 1006            | Layer | Buried topsoil?           | 0.2       |           |             |         |
| 1007            | Layer | Disturbed subsoil         | 0.18      |           |             |         |
| 1008            | Fill  | Fill of pit 1009          | 0.21      |           |             |         |
| 1009            | Cut   | Shallow pit               | 0.21      | 0.9       |             |         |
| 1010            | Fill  | Fill of 1011              | 0.1       | 0.1       |             |         |
| 1011            | Cut   | Shallow spread            | 0.1       | 0.1       | Pottery     | Roman   |
| <b>Trench 2</b> |       |                           |           |           |             |         |
| Context         | Type  | Description               | Depth (m) | Width (m) | Finds       | Date    |
| 1100            | Fill  | Fill of 1101              | 0.1       |           | Burnt flint | Unknown |
| 1101            | Cut   | Shallow feature           | 0.1       | 1.2       |             |         |
| 1102            | Fill  | Fill of 1103              | 0.04      |           |             |         |
| 1103            | Cut   | Shallow feature           | 0.04      | 0.36      |             |         |
| 1104            | Layer | Subsoil?                  | 0.2       |           |             |         |
| 1105            | Layer | Subsoil                   | Unknown   |           |             |         |
| 1106            | Layer | Former cultivation level? | 0.2       |           |             |         |
| 1107            | Layer | Former cultivation level? | 0.2       |           |             |         |
| 1108            | Layer | Subsoil                   | 0.2       |           |             |         |

## APPENDIX 2    BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

CPM November 1999    *Delta Works, Millmarsh Lane, Enfield, Greater London; specification for archaeological field evaluation.*

OAU October 2000    *Former Delta Works, Millmarsh Lane, Enfield, Greater London; Archaeological Evaluation Report.*





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Figure 1: Location of site.





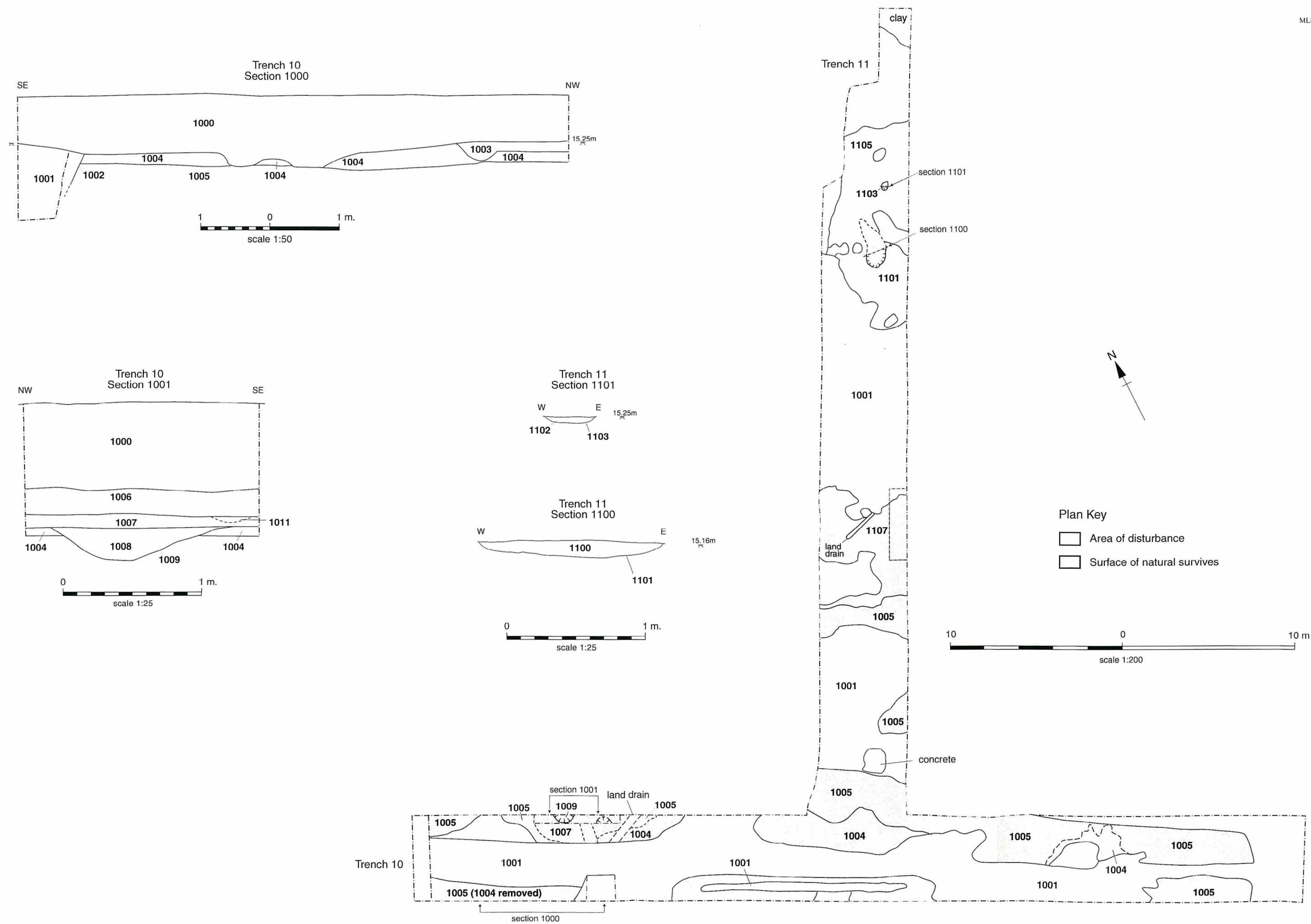


Figure 3: Trenches 10 and 11, plan and sections.



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