

Lypstone Farm
Worle
Weston-super-Mare
Somerset



Archaeological Evaluation Report



Oxford Archaeology

September 2004



Client: CgMs Consulting

Issue N^o: 1

OA Job N^o: 2432

Planning Ref N^o:

NGR: ST 3615 6161

Client Name: CgMs Consulting

Client Ref No:

Document Title: Lypstone Farm, Worle, Weston-super-Mare, Somerset

Document Type: Evaluation

Issue Number: 1

National Grid Reference: ST 3615 6161
Planning Reference:

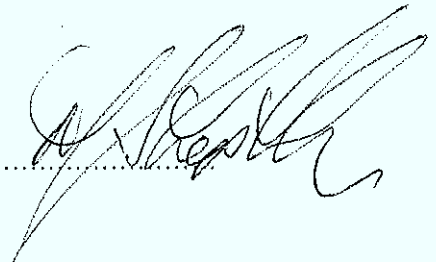
OA Job Number: 2432
Site Code: WOLF 04
Invoice Code: WOLF EV
Receiving Museum: North Somerset Museum Service
Museum Accession No: TBC

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Document File Location H:\PROJECTS\Somerset SO\North Somerset NS\5455
Lypstone Farm, Weston-super-Mare\evREP.doc
Graphics File Location Server 10:/oaupubs 1_RtoZ*WOLF
04*WOLFEV*Lypstone Farm*MD*14.09.04
Illustrated by Robin Latour

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SUMMARY

On the 1st and 2nd of September 2004 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out a field evaluation at Lypstone Farm, Worle, Weston-super-Mare, Somerset on behalf of CgMs Consulting. The evaluation revealed evidence for three postholes and a ditch, all of which may be Roman in date. The evaluation also recovered evidence for a 19th century house platform. With the exception of the house platform none of the other archaeological features were securely dated.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 On the 1st and 2nd of September 2004 OA carried out a field evaluation at Lypstone Farm, Worle, Weston-super-Mare, Somerset (NGR ST 3615 6161) on behalf of CgMs Consulting in respect of a planning application for development of the former Lypstone Farm as a housing complex. A brief (NSAS 2004) was set by and a WSI (OA 2004) was agreed with Vince Russet from the North Somerset Archaeology Service.

1.1.2 The development site contains the remains of Lypstone Farm (mainly demolished). It is located on the southern side of Moor Lane in the parish of Weston-super-Mare and consists of an area of c.2000m (Fig.1).

1.2 Geology and topography

1.2.1 The site lies entirely on the alluvium of the North Somerset Moors.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. A summary of the archaeological background to the evaluation has been provided below from the WSI (OA 2004). The site itself has produced no significant archaeological evidence, although it lies at the centre of a complex sequence of Roman and late prehistoric landscape features.

Summary from the WSI

2.1.1 The site lies in the centre of a complex sequence of Roman and late prehistoric landscape features. To the north-east, the cutting of the new rhyne at The Hedges revealed over 40 Roman and late prehistoric features and ditches in its side (SMR42611) as well as a number of features associated with late prehistoric and Roman salt making (SMR42612). These salt making complexes are of national importance and may possibly extend into the proposed development area.

2.1.2 Roman landscapes have also been identified during evaluations and watching briefs immediately to the south (SMR40092, SMR44926) and to the east (SMR42876) of the site, which is possibly a major Roman villa. The proposed development site thus has a strong potential for archaeological deposits surviving from this period.

3 EVALUATION AIMS

- 3.1.1 To establish the presence or absence, extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains within the proposed development area, and in particular evidence of the presence of Roman and late prehistoric activity.
- 3.1.2 To establish the ecofactual and environmental potential of archaeological deposits and features.
- 3.1.3 To make available the results of the investigation

4 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

4.1 Scope of fieldwork

- 4.1.1 The evaluation consisted of two trenches measuring 2.00 m wide (Fig.2). Trench 1 was "T" shaped measuring 8.00 m north-south and 17.00 m southeast-northwest, Trench 2 was linear measuring 25.00 m east-west. This equates to a 5% sample of the site. The trenches were excavated under close archaeological supervision using a JCB fitted with a toothless grading bucket.

4.2 Fieldwork methods and recording

- 4.2.1 The trenches were cleaned by hand and the revealed features were sampled to determine their extent and nature, and to retrieve finds and environmental samples. All the trenches and any archaeological features were planned at a scale of 1:50 while sample sections and sections of excavated features were drawn at a scale of 1:20. The trenches, sections and 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).

4.3 Finds

- 4.3.1 No finds were recovered during the course of the excavation.

4.4 Palaeo-environmental evidence

- 4.4.1 No deposits suitable for palaeo-environmental sampling were identified during the evaluation.

4.5 Presentation of results

- 4.5.1 The results of the evaluation are presented below, with the stratigraphic accounts of each trench described individually, followed by an overall discussion and interpretation.

5 RESULTS: GENERAL

5.1 Soils and ground conditions

5.1.1 The site was located on level ground, comprising demolition rubble from the demolished Lypstone Farm overlying concrete yard surfaces and topsoil in Trench 2 and topsoil only in Trench 1. Topsoil in both trenches overlay North Somerset Moors alluvial deposits.

5.2 Distribution of archaeological deposits

5.2.1 Distribution of the archaeological deposits and features was equally sparse between the two trenches with no concentrations encountered.

6 RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS

6.1 Description of deposits

Trench 1 (Fig. 3, Sections 4-5)

6.1.1 A yellowish brown/grey silty clay alluvium (1001) with no observed inclusions was reached at a depth of 0.20m below ground level. The layer extended throughout the trench and was found to be of uniform colour and consistency. Deposit (1001) was cut in the west of the trench by ditch (1010). The ditch was linear and aligned northeast-southwest, had a concave base, steeply angled sides and a sharply defined top profile. The observed length of the ditch was 6.50m, the width was 1.00m and the depth was 0.54m. Ditch (1010) was filled by (1009), a mid grey silty alluvial clay containing no inclusions or finds. The homogeneity of the deposit argues for natural silting of the ditch rather than deliberate deposition by backfilling or secondary use as a place to deposit household refuse. The ditch lies stratigraphically under deposit (1000), a 0.20m thick layer of very dark grey/black humic clay soil. The soil displays a fining up sequence from its parent material (alluvium (1001)) and is believed to be an in-situ accretionary soil and not the result of deliberate deposition of humic material for ground levelling purposes.

Trench 2 (Fig. 4, Sections 1-3)

6.1.2 A yellowish brown/grey silty clay alluvium (1001) with no observed inclusions was reached at a depth of 0.20m below ground level. The layer extended throughout the trench and was found to be of uniform colour and consistency. Overlying (1001) was a 0.30m thick layer of greenish blue/grey firm/plastic silty clay (1002). The deposit was only encountered in the western end of the trench and had an observed length of 5.50m. No features were seen to cut this deposit. The east end of the trench contained two postholes, (1004) and (1006). Post hole (1004) which lay against the northern edge of the trench was circular with a sharp top profile, vertical sides a sharp break to the base and a flat base; the posthole had a diameter of 0.30m and a depth of 0.30m. Although not proved it is believed that the feature was truncated by a levelling action which created a level platform for the construction of the farmhouse. The posthole was filled by a soft loose light orange/brown slightly silty sand (1003). Post hole (1006) which lay against the southern edge of the trench was circular with a sharp

top profile and concave sides which graded into a slightly concave base; the posthole had a diameter of 0.25m and a depth of 0.08m. It is believed that the posthole was truncated by the same levelling action which truncated posthole (1004). The posthole was filled by a soft plastic dark brown almost organic silty clay (1005). The deposit may represent the remains of a post which decayed in-situ. Posthole (1008) was located in the centre of the trench, was circular with a sharp top profile, vertical sides, a sharp break of slope to the base which was slightly concave; the posthole had a diameter of 0.25m and a depth of 0.10m. The posthole was filled by (1007), a deposit identical to posthole fill (1005). The levelling action responsible for the truncation of postholes (1004) and (1006) is also believed to be responsible for the truncation of posthole (1008). All three postholes were sealed by topsoil (1011), the deposit has the same characteristics as soil layer (1000) but without the indication by the fining up sequence of it being in-situ. It is believed that when the farm house platform was constructed the existing topsoil was removed then after building construction was completed the soil was replaced as a landscaping feature.

6.2 Finds

6.2.1 No finds were recovered during the course of the evaluation.

7 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

7.1 Reliability of field investigation

7.1.1 The percentage sample of the site, the location of the trenches and the consistent results from between the trenches gives a high confidence that the interpretation of the results will apply equally throughout the development site.

7.2 Overall interpretation

7.2.1 The evaluation showed that only a limited amount of activity had taken place within the area of the site. The lack of dating evidence from the features encountered means that no testable chronological sequence can be established for the site other than the known 19th century date for the farm complex. The south of the site appears undisturbed with the possibility that the encountered soil horizon may represent the medieval or earlier land surface. The north of the site has been extensively modified, the creation of a house platform, terracing and service trenches are evident in the alluvium; together they have severely truncated any earlier archaeological features in the area.

7.2.2 The lack of finds, even residual, in an area of known Roman activity is notable, it may be that the site lies outside the perimeter of the known sites to the south and east, that any Roman archaeology has been removed by later activity or that there are aspects within the Roman landscape that constrained development in the area of the site. The north of the site has obviously been subject to major modification during the 19th century therefore a complete sequence for the development of the landscape cannot be established. The evolutionary sequence of the landscape in the south of the site appears to be complete. In order to gain an enhanced understanding of the site and to ascertain whether aspects of the Roman landscape have been a limiting factor

to development in the area of the site it is proposed that any future geotechnical investigations by way of test pits or augering be monitored geoarchaeologically by a suitably qualified organisation.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Ctxt No</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Thick. (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>	<i>Finds</i>	<i>Date</i>
1						
	1001	Layer	-	Alluvium	-	-
	1002	Layer	0.30m	Alluvium	-	Post-Roman?
	1003	Fill	0.30m	Fill of 1004	-	-
	1004	Cut	0.30m	Posthole	-	-
	1005	Fill	0.08m	Fill of 1006	-	-
	1006	Cut	0.08m	Posthole	-	-
	1007	Fill	0.10m	Fill of 1008	-	-
	1008	Cut	0.10m	Posthole	-	-
	1011	Layer	0.20m	Re-deposited topsoil	-	19th century
2						
	1000	Layer	0.20m	In-situ topsoil	-	-
	1001	Layer	-	Alluvium	-	-
	1009	Fill	0.54m	Fill of 1010	-	-
	1010	Cut	0.54m	Ditch	-	-

APPENDIX 2 REFERENCES

IFA, 1999 *Standard and Guidance for archaeological watching briefs*

NSAS, 2004 *Land at Former Lypstone Farm, Weston-super-Mare. Project Brief for Archaeological Mitigation*

OA, 2004 *Lypstone Farm, Worle, Weston-super-Mare, Somerset. Method Statement for an Archaeological Evaluation*

OA, 2000 *Oxford Archaeology Environmental Sampling Guidelines*

OAU, 1992 *Fieldwork Manual* (ed. D Wilkinson)

APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: Lypstone Farm, Worle, Weston-super-Mare, Somerset

Site code: WOLF 04

Grid reference: ST 3615 6161

Type of evaluation: Two machine excavated trenches

Date and duration of project: 1st and 2nd September 2004, 2 days

Area of site: 2000m²

Summary of results: The evaluation produced evidence for three postholes and a ditch, all of which may be Roman in date. Evidence for a 19th century house platform was also recovered.

Location of archive: The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with North Somerset Museum Service in due course.



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Figure 1: Site location

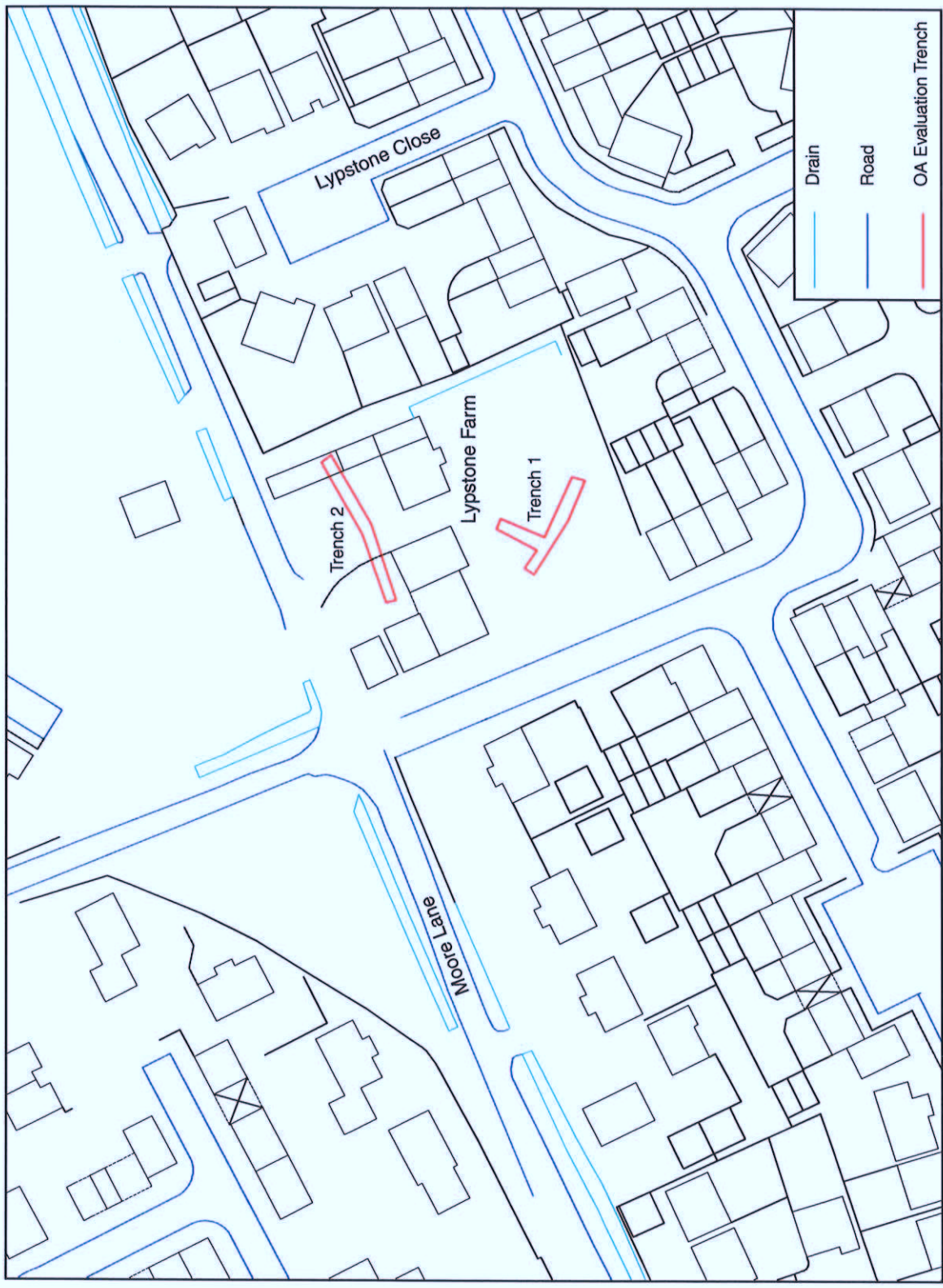
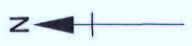


Figure 2: Trench location plan

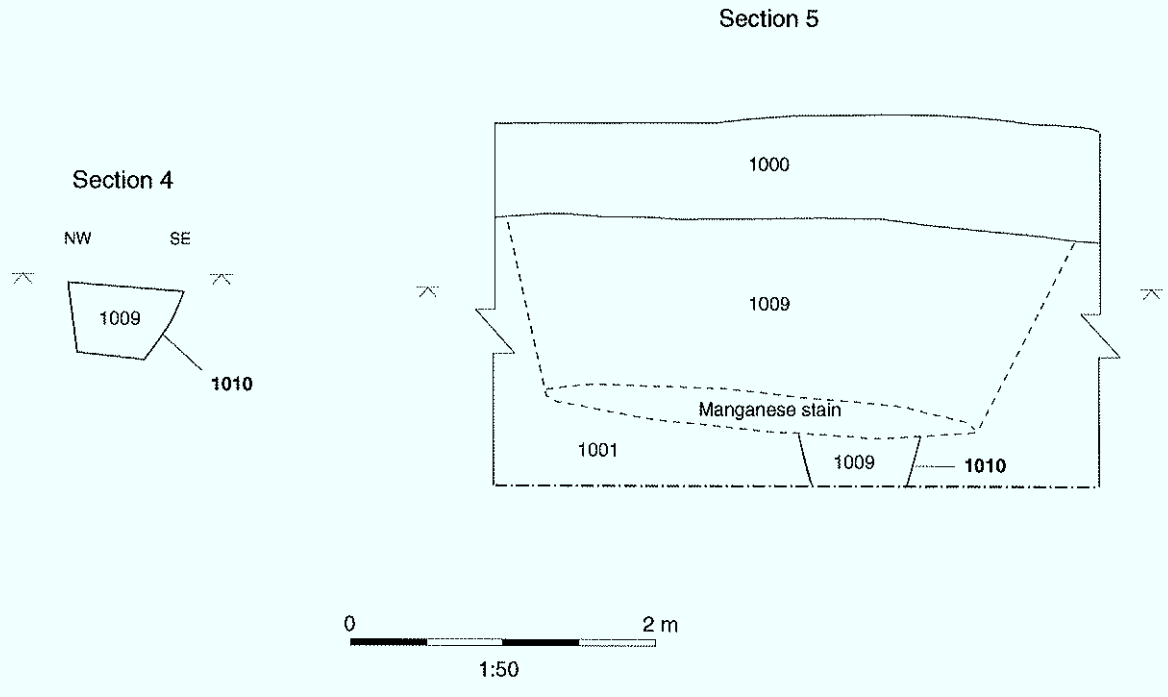
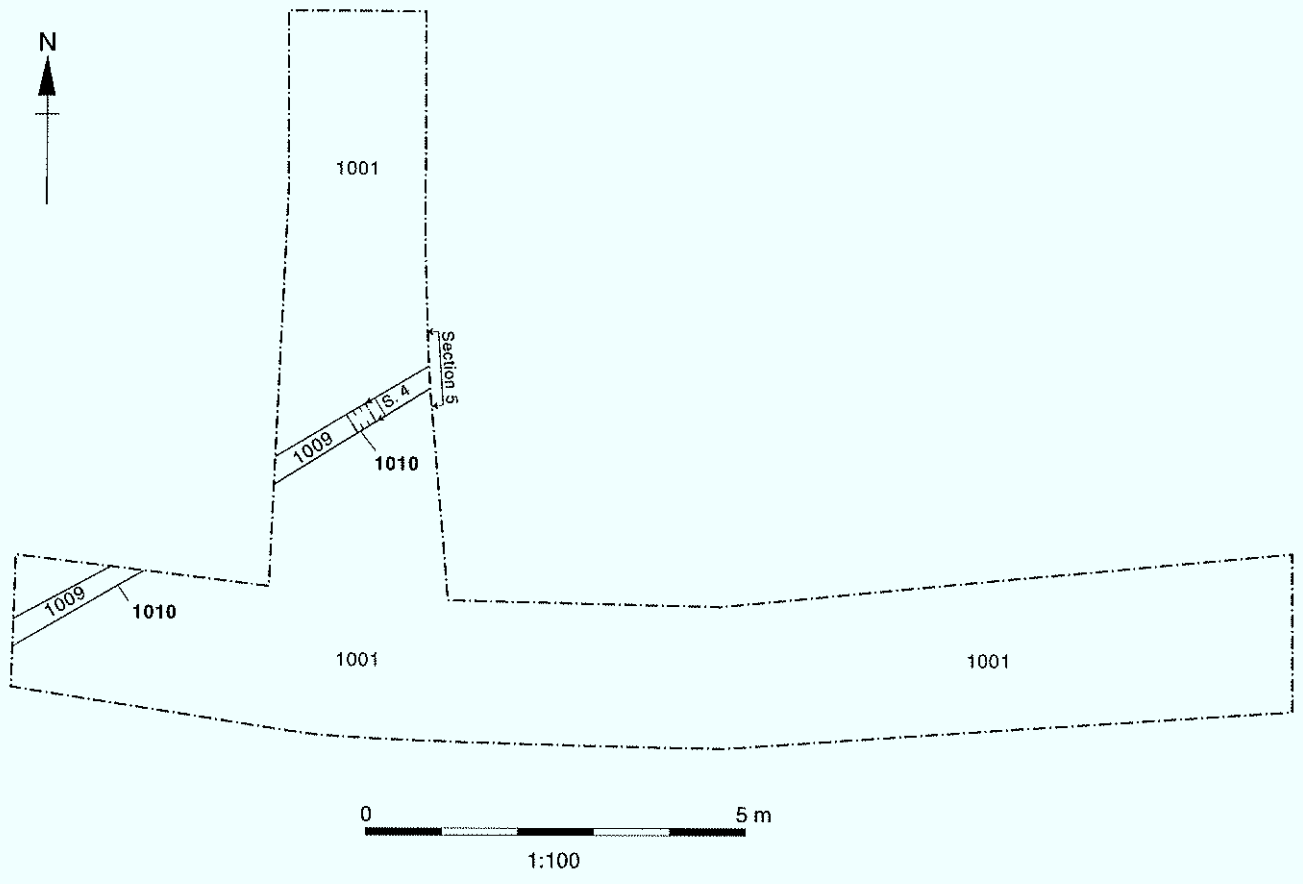


Figure 3: Trench 1, plan and sections

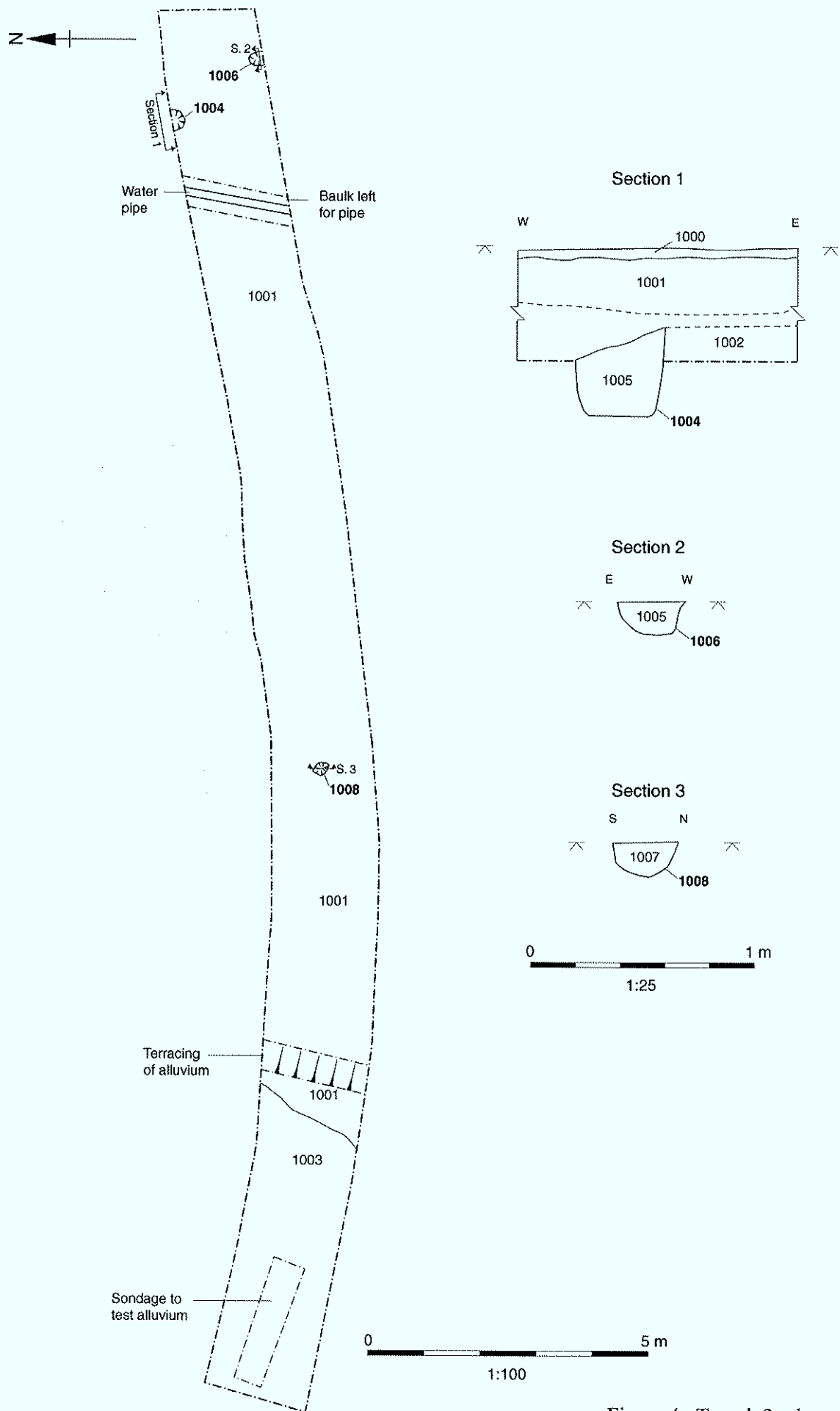


Figure 4: Trench 2, plan and sections



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