An Archaeological Evaluation at Plot 6030/6040

Western Approaches Distribution Park

Avonmouth

South Gloucestershire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

oxfordarchaeology

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Archaeological Evaluation Report

Plot 6030 and 6040, Western Approaches Distribution Park, Avonmouth, South Gloucestershire

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

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SUMMARY

Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by CgMs (formerly JSAC), on behalf of Gazeley UK Limited, to carry out a field evaluation at Plot 6030 and 6040, Western Approaches Distribution Park, South Gloucestershire (NGR 355076E 183388N). The work was carried out at the request of Gazeley UK Limited, prior to a planning application for a warehouse development, associated offices and car parking facilities. The work was carried out in March 2007.

The development area was previously evaluated by Wessex Archaeology in 1998, by trial trenching and an auger survey designed to assess the archaeological potential of the underlying alluvial sequence. The evaluation trenches were targeted on the recently demolished post-medieval farm houses (Creed's farm and Dyer's farmhouse), and the underlying Wentlooge sequence. They were far less numerous than the trenches excavated more recently on the adjacent plots (4000 and 5000) to the south and east, where extensive Romano-British settlement activity has been identified. Prior to the present phase of trenching it was not clear whether the absence of significant features in Plot 6030/6040 reflected genuinely low archaeological potential or the limited scope of the 1998 evaluation.

The present evaluation aimed to address this issue, in particular to determine whether the Romano-British activity identified in Plots 5000 and 4000 continued into Plot 6030/ 6040. Seven trenches were located in areas not covered by the previous work, targeting locations where linear features were expected to continue into the area from the adjacent Plot 5000.

The evaluation identified Roman activity on the southern edge of the site, concentrated in Trench 3 immediately to the north-west of the previously excavated Romano-British site in Plot 5000. It also revealed ditches and gullies forming part of a possible sub-divided enclosure. Similarities with the features at Plot 5000 suggest that the enclosure is likely to date from the later Romano-British period (2nd to 4th century AD). Further undated ditches were recorded in Trenches 1 and 4.

Several late post-medieval/modern features were also revealed in Trenches 2 and 7, located close to the former post-medieval/modern farm buildings. The evaluation results help to confirm the postulated construction date in the late 17th and 18th century for Dyer's Farmhouse, and the 19th century for Creed's Farm. No earlier medieval evidence for these settlements was detected.

Undated ditches were present throughout the site, many respecting the alignment of extant drainage ditches. Most are likely to be field boundaries and drains of post-medieval and modern date. They are not considered archaeologically significant.

Two contingency trenches were excavated in plot 6040 in August 2007 with the aim to trace the alignment of the ditches observed in the first

phase of evaluation and establish the extent of the enclosure ditches identified in the second phase of evaluation. The trenches revealed a continuation of these features but did not identify significant new features. The evaluation has confirmed that the Romano-British activity identified within Plot 5000 appears to decrease at the edge of plot 6040.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 In March 2007 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out a field evaluation at Plot 6030 and 6040, Avonmouth Western Approaches Distribution Park, on behalf of Gazeley UK Limited, through the agency of CgMs Archaeological Consultants (formerly John Samuels Archaeological Consultants, JSAC). The evaluation is in respect of a planning application for warehouse development, associated offices and car parking facilities. The work was carried out in accordance with a specification prepared by the client's consultant, S.Mortimer (CgMs/ JSAC, 1296/06/02), as approved by the South Gloucestershire Archaeology and Conservation Officer (D.Haigh), and the English Heritage Regional Science Advisor (V.Straker). The development site is situated at 6 m OD. The development area is c 2.7 ha in total extent.

1.1.2 The development area was previously evaluated by Wessex Archaeology in 1998, by trial trenching and an auger survey designed to assess the archaeological potential of the underlying alluvial sequence. The evaluation trenches were targeted on the recently demolished post-medieval farmhouses (Creed's farm and Dyer's farmhouse) formerly located on the site, and the underlying Wentlooge sequence. These were far less extensive than the trenches excavated more recently on the adjacent plots (4000 and 5000) to the south and east, where extensive Romano-British settlement activity has been identified. Prior to the present phase of trenching it was not clear whether the absence of significant features in Plot 6030/6040 reflected genuinely low archaeological potential or the limited scope of the 1998 evaluation.

1.1.3 The present evaluation aimed to address this issue, in particular to determine whether the Romano-British activity identified in Plots 5000 and 4000 continued into Plot 6000. Seven trenches were located in areas not covered by the previous work, targeting locations where linear features were expected to continue into the area from the adjacent Plot 5000.

1.1.4 Two contingency trenches were excavated in plot 6040 in August 2007 with the aim to trace the alignment of the ditches observed in the first phase of evaluation and establish the extent of the enclosure ditches identified in the second phase of evaluation.

1.2 Site location and topography

1.2.1 The site lies on Henbury Level (part of the Avon Levels) at OS Grid Reference ST 5510 8340, an area of estuarine alluvium, 0.75 km from the Severn Channel, at an average of 6m above OD (Fig. 1). The site is generally flat with just 0.35 m between the highest and lowest points.

1.2.2 The solid geology consists of Triassic Marl - Mercia Mudstone (Geological Survey of Great Britain, Sheet 250, 1981) overlain by marine alluvium and gravel and a band of post glacial alluvial deposits known as the Wentlooge Formation.

1.2.3 Much of the south-east of the site is dominated by marshland under grass and reeds. The southern part is extensively overgrown with brambles. The east is scrub land, littered with abandoned vehicles. The north has undergone extensive modern disturbance with dumped piles of rubble, embankments and made ground associated with the current road and flood management. These areas are defined by substantial, modern and well established ditches and hedge-lines.

1.3 Acknowledgements

1.3.1 Thanks to Simon Mortimer of CgMs/ JSAC for commissioning and managing the fieldwork, and to David Haigh, South Gloucestershire Archaeology and Conservation Officer, who monitored the evaluation.

1.3.2 The project was carried out by Carl Champness of Oxford Archaeology (OA), with the assistance of Julian Newman and Patrick Dresser. Stuart Foreman (OA) was the project manager. The contingency trenching was supervised by Kate Wheaton (OA).

1.4 Archaeological background

1.4.1 The following is reproduced from the specification, which is in turn is based on a desk-based appraisal of plots 6030 and 6040 (CgMs/ JSAC 1296/05/02). The appraisal contains a summary of the conclusions of the desk-based assessment, with additional information taken from reports on fieldwork in the immediate environments of the development area. Further information on medieval/ post-medieval land-use is taken from information provided by the South Gloucestershire HER and the Capita Symonds (2005 a and b) geotechnical reports.

Previous palaeoenvironmental work on the Wentlooge Sequence

1.4.2 The Upper Wentlooge sequence has previously been assessed in plots 6010, 6020, (Wessex Archaeology, 2002), 4000 (Wessex Archaeology, 2006a), 5000 (OA, 2006) and 8000 (Wessex Archaeology, 2006a). The sedimentary sequence consists of greyish brown to olive grey clays, several peat bands and greenish grey clays (Moore et al 2002). The Roman surface has been identified in each of the studies sealed beneath a thin post-Roman alluvial subsoil. The underlying upper peat horizon has been radiocarbon dated to the later Neolithic to Middle Bronze Age and the palaeoenvironmental data suggests a potential sea level index point of Bronze Age date (3151 +/-45BP at 3.69m aOD). No features or finds of Bronze Age archaeological origin have been found within the distribution park.

1.4.3 The Wentlooge sequence has also been assessed during archaeological works at the following local sites: Avlon Works (Wessex Archaeology 2001), Katherine Farm (Allen *et al*, 2002), Cabot Park (1998) and the Avon Levels in general (Allen and Scaife 2001; Gardiner *et al*, 2002).

Prehistoric

1.4.4 No features or finds of prehistoric origin have been found within the distribution park. Peat deposits in the area have been dated to the later Neolithic to Middle Bronze Age.

Iron Age

1.4.5 The earliest known human settlement of the Levels dates to the Iron Age and is best represented by the excavations at Hallen, some 2.5 km to the south (Gardiner *et al* 2002). "The settlement consisted of roundhouses within palisaded enclosures and seems to have been based on a pastoral economy in a relatively dry environment (Wessex Archaeology 2001). Evidence for Iron Age activity has also been recovered at Green Lane, Redwick, *c* 1.8 km to the north of Plot 8000, and at Brynleaze Farm, a similar distance to the east (Barnes *et al*, 1993; Russet, 1990/1).

1.4.6 These sites tended to be found at the edge of the Levels on the higher ground, with the low lying areas possibly used for seasonal grazing. It is likely that the levels would have been tidally influenced and prone to flooding at this time.

Roman

1.4.7 Recent work (summer 2005 and winter 2006) at plots 4000 and 5000, immediately to the east of the present site, has exposed Roman enclosures, at least three roundhouses and possible evidence for metal-working at c 5.45 m aOD, immediately below the topsoil. The post-excavation assessment illustrates that activity on the site spans the 2nd to 4th century AD. No evidence was found for Iron Age activity on this site (Wessex Archaeology 2006a).

1.4.8 Prior to the excavations in Plots 4000 and 5000, the only other recorded evidence for Roman activity within the distribution park was the discovery of a 'V'-shaped Roman ditch from SSC:EA trial pit GO12 (NGR ST 55289 84225) (Lawler *et al* 1992). Roman activity had been thought to be concentrated on the higher ground to the east of the levels, although sites were known at Rookery Farm (*c* 2 km to the north of plot 8000) and Elmington Manor Farm (*c* 1 km to the south-east of plot 5000) (GGAT 1993; Rippon 1993). Later activity is recorded at Ellinghurst Farm (*c* 0.8 km north-east of plot 8000) and Crook's Marsh Farm (*c* 1.5 km south-west of plot 5000) (4th century AD) (Everton and Everton 1981; Juggins 1982).

1.4.9 What is not clear at present is whether the archaeology exposed at plot 4000 and 5000 is an island of Roman activity or if this is in fact part of a wider settled landscape. It is also surprising, given the amount of alluviation prior to the Roman period, that the archaeology on these plots should be exposed so close to the present ground surface; suggesting that there has been little or no alluviation since.

1.4.10 It is possible that the focus of archaeological fieldwork, prior to the work on Plot 4000, was on the Wentlooge sequence, concentrated in particular on finding archaeological deposits at depths in excess of 1.5 m below the current ground surface. Trenches recently excavated within Plot 8000 did not identify any anthropogenic evidence predating the medieval period. Although the exact mechanism for

determining the suitability of individual plots within the distribution park for settlement is not yet understood, it appears likely that it is related to hydrology. It appears clear at present that evidence for Romano-British activity is not preserved uniformly across the distribution park.

1.4.11 It is possible that in the middle of the Roman period that this land was drained and managed such that it was not as prone to alluviation as before. It is clear that on plots 4000, 5000 and 8000, where the maximum topsoil depth recorded is c 0.3 m (with the exception of slight undulations and mounds) that the Roman and medieval ground surfaces were virtually the same.

Medieval

1.4.12 Place name and documentary evidence suggest that the Levels were exploited as meadowland in the late Saxon period, with settlement again centred on the higher ground to the east. Rippon (1993) has described the landscape at this time as 'irregular', characterised by dispersed settlements connected by droveways. Natural watercourses were frequently incorporated into these landscapes, giving many fields sinuous boundaries.

1.4.13 Rippon identifies a change from small irregular fields of the earlier medieval period to regularly arranged blocks of strip fields, with straighter droveways and small scale settlements, which he terms the 'intermediate' landscape. There is little evidence for significant medieval settlement of this date.

1.4.14 The South Gloucestershire HER contains an entry for Edsleigh Farm c 150 m north of plot 5000. It notes that earthworks were thought to be the remains of a medieval farm, but excavation showed them to be of little substance. Record 5334, referring to the same farm complex, states: *"Medieval farmstead? (site of). Stands in classic position on the edge of Dyer's Common, surrounded by ridge and furrow. Not part of manor of Compton Greenfield C19th. Present farmhouse much modernised 1980's. Formerly c 18th/19th - showed signs of alternate development."*

1.4.15 The late thirteenth century is characterised by extensive drainage and management of the Levels. They appear to have been largely unsettled during the early medieval period, but utilised for seasonal grazing (Lawler 1994; BaRAS 1998).

Post-medieval

1.4.16 Extensive areas of ridge and furrow were mapped by Wessex Archaeology in their desk-based assessment of ICI Severnside (Wessex Archaeology 1995). The fact that the pattern consists of straight rows, with the furlongs corresponding to the regular and rectangular arrangement of fields, has been taken to suggest that it is late in date. Earlier ridge and furrow, typical of open-field arable farming, commonly results in the reversed 'S' - shape.

1.4.17 Both Creed's Farm and Dyer's Farmhouse (HER entry 6514) were located within the development area. Both structures were recorded prior to demolition (Hill Beild Associates 1996, 1997) and both were investigated by trial trenches (Wessex

Archaeology, 1998). A construction date of the late 17th century was postulated for Dyer's farmhouse, whilst Creed's farm was found to be of 19th century date.

2 EVALUATION AIMS

2.1.1 The aims of the evaluation, as stated in the CgMs/ JSAC specification, were in accordance with IFA Standards and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation (2001):

2.1.2 In summary, they were to:

- To determine the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits artefacts and ecofacts.
- If present, to define their character, extent, quantity and preservation.
- To assess their worth in a local, regional or national context.
- To establish their potential to contribute to the understanding of human habitation in the area and the development of the landscape.

Specific research aim:

- To determine to what extend the activity identified within plots 5000 and 4000 continued into this area. Whether this activity formed part of a larger planned landscape or represented an island of activity.

3 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

3.1 Scope of fieldwork

Evaluation trenching

3.1.1 The evaluation consisted of 7 trenches measuring between 50 m long x 2 m wide, laid out to achieve a representative sample of the site area. The area has been previously evaluated with trenching and auger holes to investigate the underlying alluvial sequence (Wessex Archaeology, 1998). Each phase was intended to be *c* 2.5% of the site area. The actual measurement is *c* 4% of the combined area of the two plots. A number of trenches along the north-eastern edge of site required re-positioning to avoid large spoil heaps that lay across the site. Trenches located on made ground or through banks were shortened or re-positioned. One trench was extended in order out to investigate concentrations of significant Roman features.

3.1.2 Two further contingency trenches were excavated in plot 6040 in order to determine the fully extent of archaeology within the area adjacent to plot 5000. The length of these trenches was determined by the extent and nature of the archaeology uncovered.

3.1.3 The overburden was removed under close archaeological supervision. When no archaeological features were encountered the subsoil and first alluvial deposit was removed to ensure that no features were below these layers. The excavation was carried out with a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket. Some trenches were back-filled after recording to prevent flooding and collapse.

3.2 Fieldwork methods and recording

3.2.1 The trenches were cleaned by hand where practicable. This was not always possible, particularly in the western parts of the site, where the trenches flooded relatively rapidly. Nevertheless, archaeological features were clearly visible and accessible for excavation and recording purposes, for a short time after the trenches were opened. The revealed features were sampled to determine their extent and nature, and to retrieve finds and 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

3.3.1 Finds were recovered by hand during the course of the excavation and bagged by context. Finds of special interest were given a unique small find number.

3.4 Presentation of results

3.4.1 The factual results of the trench evaluation are presented as a trench by trench description.

4 RESULTS: EVALUATION TRENCHES

4.1 Distribution of archaeological features and deposits

4.1.1 The evaluation identified limited Roman activity in the north-eastern area of Plot 6040. The features identified were visible at depths of less than 0.30m, and are consistent in depth and type with those revealed during the excavations at Plot 5000. There appears to be a concentration of Roman features to the west of the previous excavation, within Trench 3. The features are predominantly ditches and gullies, of which only one of the ditches producing any dating evidence.

4.1.2 The trenches in Plot 6030 indicate that much of this area had been previously topsoil stripped and significant modern disturbance has occurred. Similar levels of modern truncation were recorded directly to the north on Plots 6010 and 6020 (Wessex Archaeology, 2002). Only one linear ditch and a section of wall foundation in Trench 7, dating to the 19th century, were identified within the area.

4.1.3 Most of the trenches contained features of some description. However, the vast majority comprised linear field boundary ditches and drains, that were either undated or demonstrably of post-medieval date, and are not considered significant.

4.2 Trench descriptions

4.2.1 **Trench 1 (Fig. 3):** An alluvial deposit (102) of reddish clay was encountered at a depth of 0.44 m (5.03 m OD). This trench contained one linear ditch (103), aligned north-west to south-east. The ditch had a U-shaped profile, being 0.42 m in depth, and a width of 0.70 m. It was filled with a tenacious blue-grey clay (104) and reddish grey clay (105). The features were sealed by 0.20 m of subsoil (101) which was overlain by 0.24 m of topsoil (100).

4.2.2 **Trench 2 (Fig. 4):** An alluvial deposit (203) was encountered at a depth of 0.60m, (5.28 m OD). The trench contained a large modern boundary ditch (204), an animal burial within a small oval pit (206) and a large rectangular feature with an associated ditch (208). Most of these features produced 18th century pottery and a mixed assemblage of pig, sheep and cattle animal bone.

4.2.3 A north-east/south-west aligned ditch (208) was found, associated with a larger rectangular feature (210). This larger feature had a distinct profile, with a concave base and gradually sloping sides. Its' full extend could not be determined within the limits of the evaluation but it was approximately 0.86m in depth and at least 1.56m in width. It was filled with a thin red clay lining at its base (213), thicker mid green grey silty clay (212) and dark bluish grey clay (211). It is located close to the remains of Dyer's farmhouse and probably represents part of the farm complex.

4.2.4 These features were sealed by 0.30m of subsoil (202), and 0.10 m of made ground (201). No topsoil was present. It may have been removed during recent construction earthworks.

4.2.5 **Trench 3 (Fig. 5):** An alluvial deposit (309) was encountered at a depth of 0.30 m (5.70 m OD). This trench contained two gullies (308 and 306) and a larger ditch (303) with an earlier truncated gully (310), all of which intersected at the northern end of the trench. The largest ditch (303), was aligned northwest/southeast. It cut gully (310) which ran parallel before terminating near to gully (308). This was quite a substantial ditch with a shallow rounded 'U'-shaped profile. It was 1.5 m wide and 0.20 m deep filled with a stiff, light grey clay (304). Gully (310) was of a similar depth of 0.16 m and 0.76 m in width, and its western edge was cut by ditch (303).

4.2.6 Two gullies (308 & 311), aligned northwest to southeast, run parallel to each other. One gully was clearly cut by both the larger ditch (303) and the gully (310), while the relationship with gully (308) was more uncertain and open to interpretation. These gullies appear to represent the edge of a small enclosure that may have been re-cut and enlarged by ditch (303).

4.2.7 All the features were sealed by 0.20 m of subsoil (302), which was overlain by 0.10 m of made ground/topsoil (301).

4.2.8 **Trench 4 (Fig. 6):** An alluvial deposit (409) was encountered at a depth of 0.54 m (5.65 m OD). The lowest deposit identified (403) consisted of firm, mid clay alluvium. The subsoil (402) was 0.20 m thick, consisting of a firm, mid brown clay, with overlying made-ground (401) 0.34 m in thickness.

4.2.9 The trench contained one ditch (405) running northwest by southeast, located on an area of intact alluvium surrounded by modern truncation features (403 & 407) at either end of the trench. The ditch had a distinct 'V' shaped profile and was 0.67 m in width and 0.37 m in depth. It had a single dark grey silty clay fill (406) which produced no finds.

4.2.10 **Trench 5:** An alluvial deposit (504) was encountered at a depth of 0.44 m (5.38 m OD). This was one of the least disturbed trenches on plot 6030, with only limited disturbance of the 0.30m of modern topsoil (501) present. A thin deposit of alluvial subsoil (505, 0.16m thick) was present overlying the oxidised alluvium (504). The trench contained only one large and deep feature (502) which was filled with a rooty and organic fill (503) and represented a modern back-filled drainage ditch aligned northeast to southwest.

4.2.11 **Trench 6:** An alluvial deposit (604) was encountered at a depth of 0.86 m (5.39 m OD). This trench contained a buried modern topsoil (602) sealed beneath 0.50 m of made ground (601). In a number of places the buried topsoil exhibited signs of disturbance and compaction, indicating previous modern construction earthmoving activity in the area. No archaeological features or deposits were identified within the trench.

4.2.12 **Trench 7 (Fig. 7):** An alluvial deposit (702) was encountered at a depth of 1.15 m (4.58 m OD), overlain by a varying thickness of made ground consisting of building rubble, possibly from the demolished Creed's farm. This trench contained the remains of a small section of siltstone wall foundations (703) a modern straight-sided cut

(most likely one the edge of one of the previous evaluations) and an east-west ditch (705). Modern (19th century) pottery was recovered from the surface of the ditch along with occasional charcoal fragments. Flooding of the trench prevented further investigation or excavation of the feature. The date of the building foundation was undetermined but is likely to be of a similar date to the ditch.

4.2.13 **Trench 8 (Fig. 8):** An alluvial deposit (810) was encountered at a depth of 0.28m (5.37 m OD), overlain by subsoil (802) which was sealed beneath the modern topsoil (801). The trench contained a long north-south aligned enclosure ditch (809) 0.24m deep this ditch was previously encountered in trench 1. A large sub rectangular pit (807) 0.38m deep. A small east-west aligned gully (812) which remained un-execavated. One fragment of late Roman pottery was recovered from the upper fill of the pit. The date of the enclosure ditch was undetermined but is likely to be of similar date to the pit.

4.2.14 **Trench 9 (Fig. 9):** An alluvial deposit (910) was encountered at a depth of 0.43m (5.39m OD), overlain by subsoil (902) which was sealed beneath the topsoil (901). The trench contained two east-west aligned ditches (903) and (906), that was previously encountered in trench 3. The larger of the two ditches (903) appeared to have an associated bank that had collapsed in forming deposit (905). The smaller ditch (906) appeared to be a gully respecting the alignment of (903). The two ditches are probably contemporary with each other although no dating evidence was retrieved from the fills.

4.3 Finds

Pottery

4.3.1 The pottery assemblage recovered from the evaluation consisted of 14 sherds weighing a total of 581g. Only one sherd of Roman pottery, weighing 6 g, was recovered form the evaluation, together with 12 sherds of post-medieval/modern date, weighing 575g. The material from each context was quantified by sherd count and weight in terms of broad fabric groupings, using the codes set out in the OA pottery recording system, and vessel types were also noted in terms of major classes (Appendix 3).

4.3.2 The Roman pottery was recovered from Trench 3, from a shallow northwest-southeast aligned boundary ditch [304]. This is a body sherd of fine light brown oxidised ware which cannot be identified to ware level, but is probably a fairly local or regional product. A late 2nd and 3rd century date is possible, and would be consistent with the date of features in the adjacent Plot 5000.

4.3.3 One sherd of Roman pottery was recovered from Trench 8, from a large sub-recatngular pit [807], this is a body sherd of fine light brown oxidised ware which can be given a rough 2nd- 4th century date, although it is very abraided and could be re-deposited.

4.3.4 The later assemblages consist mainly of common domestic 18th-century earthenwares (10 sherds) and a smaller quantity of 19th-century Staffordshire transfer-printed wares and local earthenware (3 sherds). The post-medieval sherds are fairly large and fresh and confined to Trenches 2 and 5.

Bone

4.3.5 A total of 10 animal bones were recovered from the evaluation, entirely from Trench 2 (see Appendix 4). Most bones were in a good condition. Burned bones were absent, and only two bone displayed gnaw marks. The predominance of cattle, sheep/goat in the assemblage is consistent with bone recovered from features associated with Dyer's farm (Wessex Archaeology 1998).

4.3.6 The bones of cattle, sheep/goat and pig that could be aged by epiphyseal fusion derived from adult and sub-adult animals. Butchering marks were found on one cattle pelvis, which had been portioned by chops at the auricular surface and at the acetabulum.

5 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

5.1 Reliability of field investigation

5.1.1 The results of the surface evaluation trenching provide reliable information on the date, density, preservation and general character of archaeological remains of Roman and later date, particularly when added to results from the previous evaluation (WA 1998b). Due to flooded trenches, excavation and recording of features was somewhat difficult, but sufficient information was gathered to positively identify limited Romano-British activity, lying close to or at the north-eastern edge of Plot 6040. This activity appears superficially similar in character to the activity on Plot 5000. However, the ditches identified are on a different alignment, which may indicate a slightly different phase of activity or the presence of a major boundary between Plots 5000 and 6000.

5.1.2 The contingency trenching outlined within the project specification (CgMs/ JSAC, 1335/06/02) was used in order to determine the relationship between the archaeology uncovered within plot 6040 to that of the main excavation on plot 5000. This phase of work attempt to address outstanding questions about how features in the two areas are linked. Unfortunately, due to the presence of an exclusion area beneath the existing overhead electricity cables and around the adjacent pylon footing, it has not been possible to excavate trenches directly linking plots 5000 and 6040. As there are no plans to divert the overhead cables, it is expected that the strip beneath the overhead cables will be preserved *in situ* in the construction design.

5.2 General distribution of deposits

5.2.1 Previous geoarchaeological investigation of these and the surrounding plots (Wessex Archaeology 1998, 2002; OA 2006) has established the sub-surface stratigraphy of

the area in general terms. This work has indicated that the Romano-British activity appears to coincide with a rise in the underlying Mercia Mudstone. The reduction in Romano-British activity within Plot 6000 may coincide with lower levels in the underlying Mercia Mudstone, and possibly the Roman land surface. Slight variations in the drainage and elevations of this surface would be sufficient to significantly affect drainage, and thus determine which areas were suitable for settlement.

5.3 Plot 6030

5.3.1 The trenches in Plot 6030 (5, 6 and 7), confirmed that this area has been previously stripped of topsoil and significantly truncated by modern disturbance. Even the trenches which exhibited the least signs of disturbance did not produce any significant archaeology.

5.3.2 The few archaeological features that were encountered in Trench 7 consisted of the modern remains of building foundations and a ditch, possibly part of the Creed's Farm complex. The evaluation has helped to confirm a 19th century construction date of the building, with no evidence of any earlier activity.

5.3.3 This area has therefore been significantly reduced by modern truncation, and is considered to have low archaeological potential.

5.4 Plot 6040

5.4.1 The features and finds recovered towards the east of Plot 6040 in Trench 3, are comparable with the Plot 5000 features, although only one sherd of Roman pottery was recovered, suggesting that Plot 6030 is on the very edge of a low status Romano-British agricultural settlement. Ditches in Trenches 1, 4 and 8 produced no artefacts, but may be a part of the same network of enclosures, and are also likely to be Romano-British in date. The large pit in trench 8 produced one sherd of Roman pottery (2nd to 4th century AD) and is likely to be associated with the enclosure ditches found in trenches 1 and 8 possibly forming part of a staggered entrance. Based on the dating from the Plot 4000 and 5000 excavations, a later Romano-British date (2nd to 4th century AD) seems the most likely.

5.4.2 The distribution and character of Roman features in Trenches 3 and 9 suggests the presence of a small enclosure, broadly comparable with the range of features recorded in Plot 5000. There was no evidence for buildings or other structures, but the activity may represent a continuation of small animal enclosures or paddocks. The absence of features continuing from the Plot 5000 excavation may indicate that a significant boundary exists between the two plots, underneath the overhead electricity lines. The exact relationship between the two areas of activity could not be fully established within the scope of the evaluation. In addition, the full extent of this activity has not been defined.

5.4.3 Many ditches recorded in evaluation trenches remain undated. Some of them were aligned northeast to southwest, following the same alignment as the present drainage

ditches. They probably represent in-filled post-medieval field boundaries and drainage ditches.

5.5 Conclusion

5.5.1 The evaluation identified low archaeological potential within Plot 6030 which had been significantly disturbed by modern truncation. Within Plot 6040 the trenches confirmed that the archaeology present in the south towards the excavation plot 5000, does appear to represent a gradual decrease in activity towards the north.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

Ctxt No	Type	Width (m)	Depth. (m)	Comment	Finds	No./ wt	Date
Trench 1							
100	Layer		0-0.24	Topsoil			
101	Layer		0.24-0.44	Subsoil			
102	Layer		0.44-0.60	Alluvium			
103	Cut	0.72	0.42	NW-SE Ditch			
104	Fill		0.38	Secondary fill of [103]			
105	Fill		0.04	Primary fill of [103]			
Trench 2							
201	Layer		0-0.10	Topsoil			
202	Layer		0.10-0.40	Subsoil			
203	Layer		0.40-0.60	Alluvium			
204	Cut	4.20	2.00	Modern field boundary			
205	Fill		2.00	fill of boundary ditch			
206	Pit	0.30	0.20	oval pit			
207	Fill		0.20	Fill of pit [206]			
208	Cut			Ditch			
209	Fill			Fill of ditch [208]			
210	Cut	1.56	0.86	Ditch			
211	Fill		0.26	Fill of ditch [210]	Pot	54g	18C
212	Fill		0.50	Fill of ditch [210]	Pot	324g	18C
213	Fill		0.10	Fill of ditch [210]			
Trench 3							
301	Layer		0.05	Topsoil/ Madeground			
302	Layer		0.40	Subsoil			
303	Fill		0.16	Fill of [304]	Pot	6g	RB
304	Cut	1.44	0.16	Ditch cut	Pot	6g	RB
305	Fill		0.02	Fill of 305			
306	Cut	0.75	0.48	Gully			
307	Fill		0.30	Fill of 307			
308	Cut	0.5	0.30	Gully			
309	Layer		0.40-0.50	Alluvium			
310	Cut	0.76	0.16	Gully			
311	Fill		0.16	Fill of 310			
Trench 4							
401	Layer		0-0.30	Made ground			
402	Layer			Modern disturbance [403]			
403	Cut			Cut of modern disturbance			
404	Layer		0.30-0.46	Alluvial subsoil			
405	Cut	0.67	0.37	Ditch			
406	Fill		0.37	Fill of Ditch [405]			
407	Cut			Modern disturbance cut			
408	Fill			Fill of modern disturbance			

Ctxt No	Type	Width (m)	Depth. (m)	Comment	Finds	No./ wt	Date
409	Layer		0.46-0.68	Alluvium			
Trench 5							
501	Layer		0-0.30	Topsoil			
502	Layer		0.30-0.46	Subsoil			
503	Layer		0.46-0.70	Alluvium			
504	Fill			Fill of [505]			
505	Cut			E-W Modern Ditch			
Trench 6							
601	Layer		0-0.54	Madeground			
602	Layer		0.54-0.84	Buried topsoil			
603	Layer		0.84-0.94	Alluviual subsoil			
604	Layer		0.94-1.00	Alluvium			
Trench 7							
701	Layer		0-1.16	Made ground			
702	Layer		1.16-1.30	Alluvium			
703	Fill	>0.70	0.24	Silstone wall			
704	Cut			Modern feature cut			
705	Fill			Fill of cut 704			
706	Fill			Fill of ditch 707	Pot	11g	19C
707	Cut			Ditch cut			Post-medieval
Trench 8							
801	Layer		0.01	Topsoil			
802	Layer		0.28	Subsoil			
803	Cut	0.64	0.24	Ditch terminus cut			
804	Fill		0.24	Fill of [803]			
805	Cut	1.2	0.41	Ditch cut			
806	Fill		0.41	Fill of [805]			
807	Cut	2.6	0.38	Pit cut			
808	Fill		0.19	Fill of [807]	Pot		2nd-4th C
809	Grp	1.2	0.41	Group for ditches [803], [805]			
810	Layer		0.16	Alluvium			
811	Fill		0.19	Fill of pit [807]			
812	Cut	0.1		Gully cut			
813	Fill		0.16	Fill of [812]			
Trench 9							
901	Layer		0.25	Topsoil			
902	Layer		0.43	Subsoil			
903	Cut	1.06	0.4	Ditch cut			
904	Fill	1.06	0.26	Fill of [903]			
905	Fill	1.06	0.14	Fill of [903]			
906	Cut	0.38	0.09	Ditch cut			
907	Fill	0.38	0.09	Fill of [906]			
910	Layer			Alluvium			

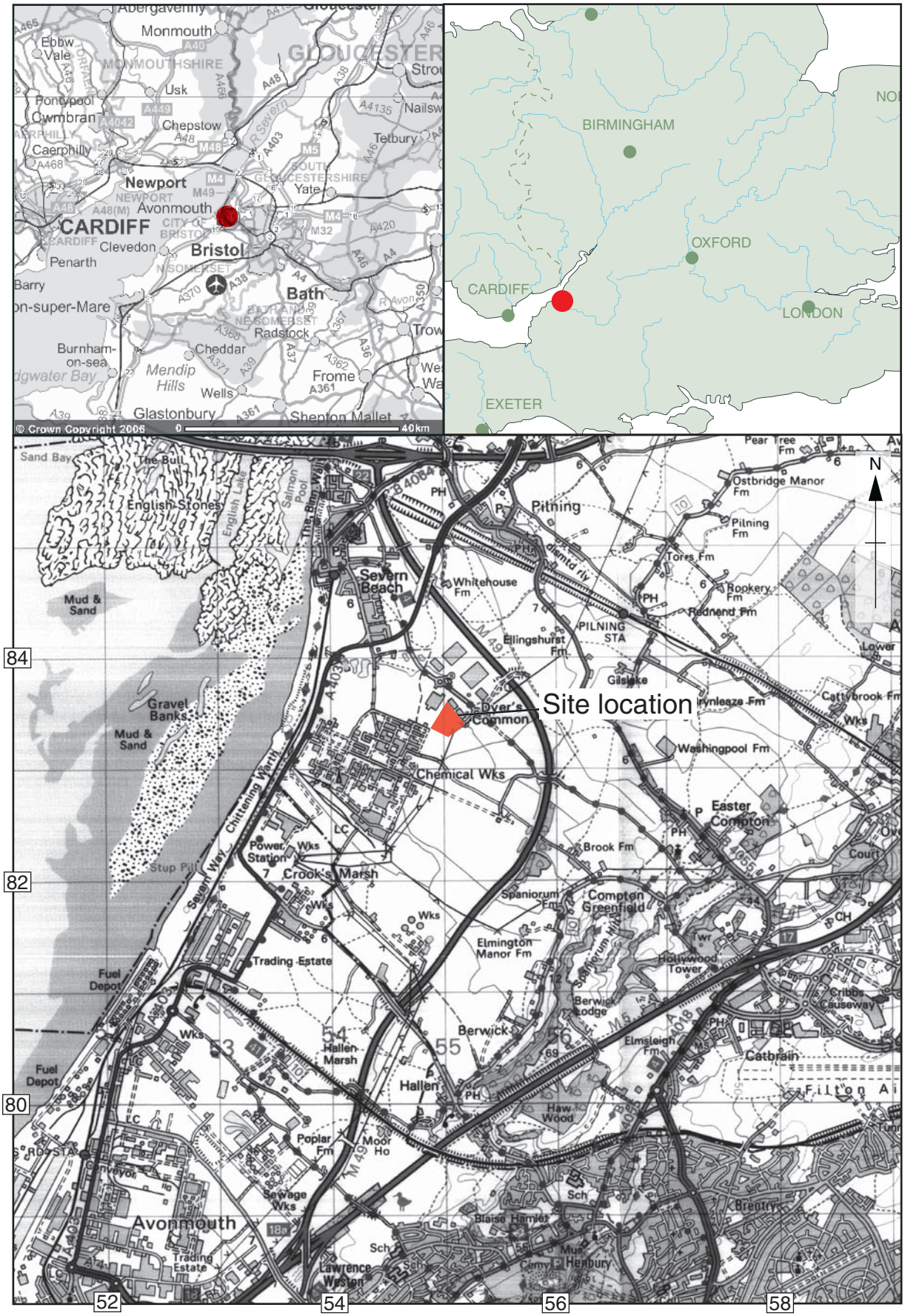


Figure 1: Site location

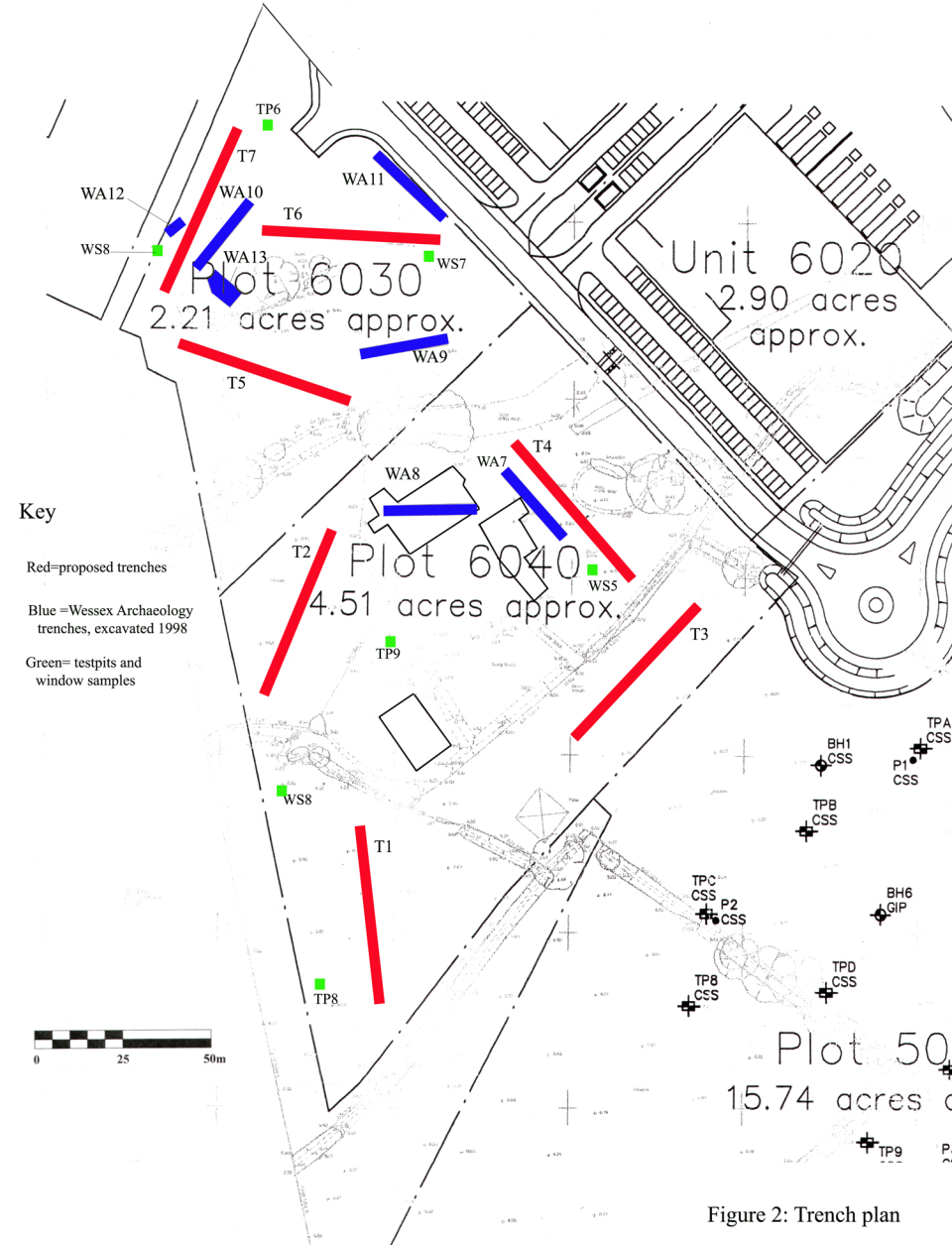


Figure 2: Trench plan

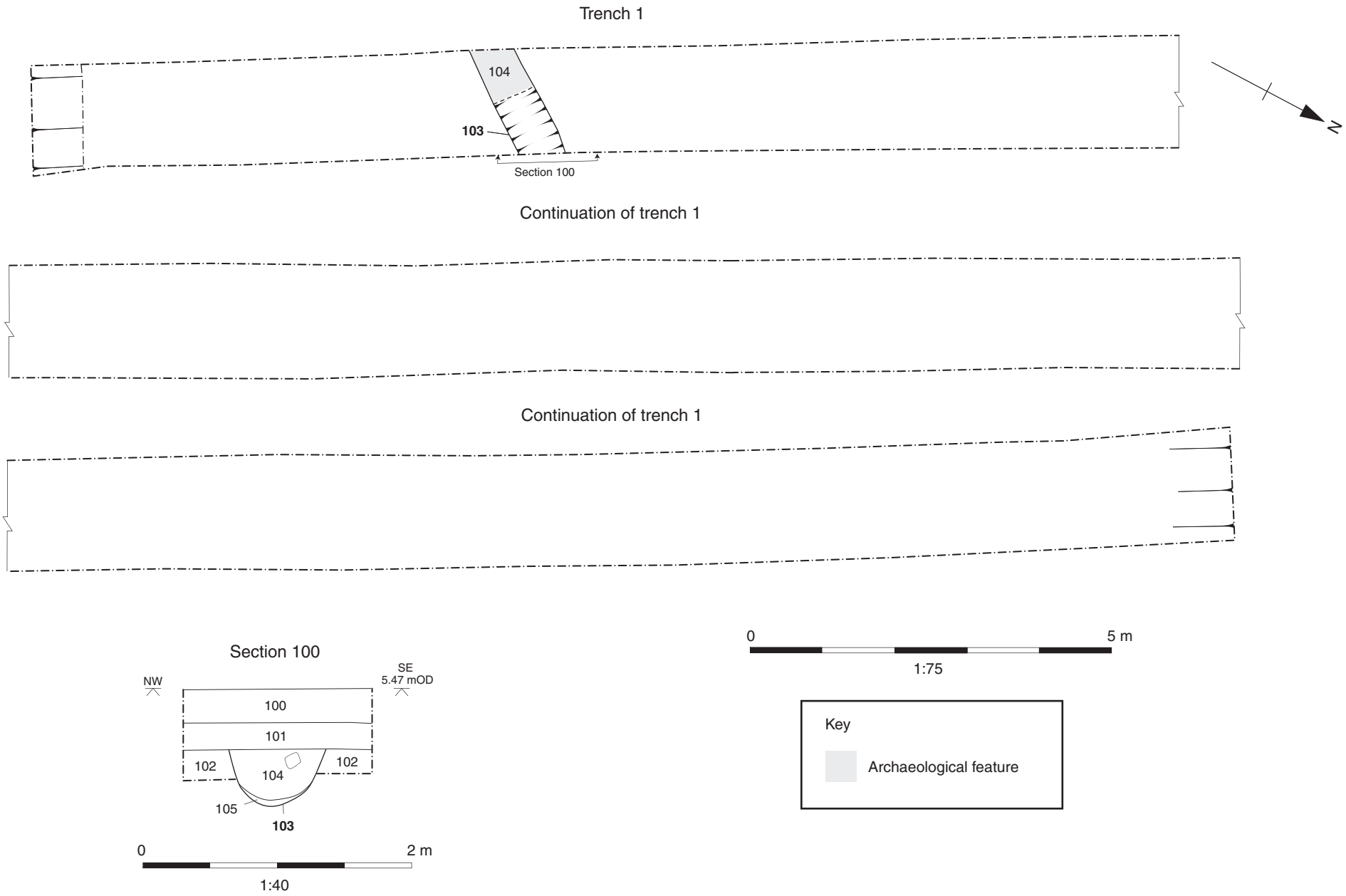


Figure 3: Plan of trench 1 and section 100

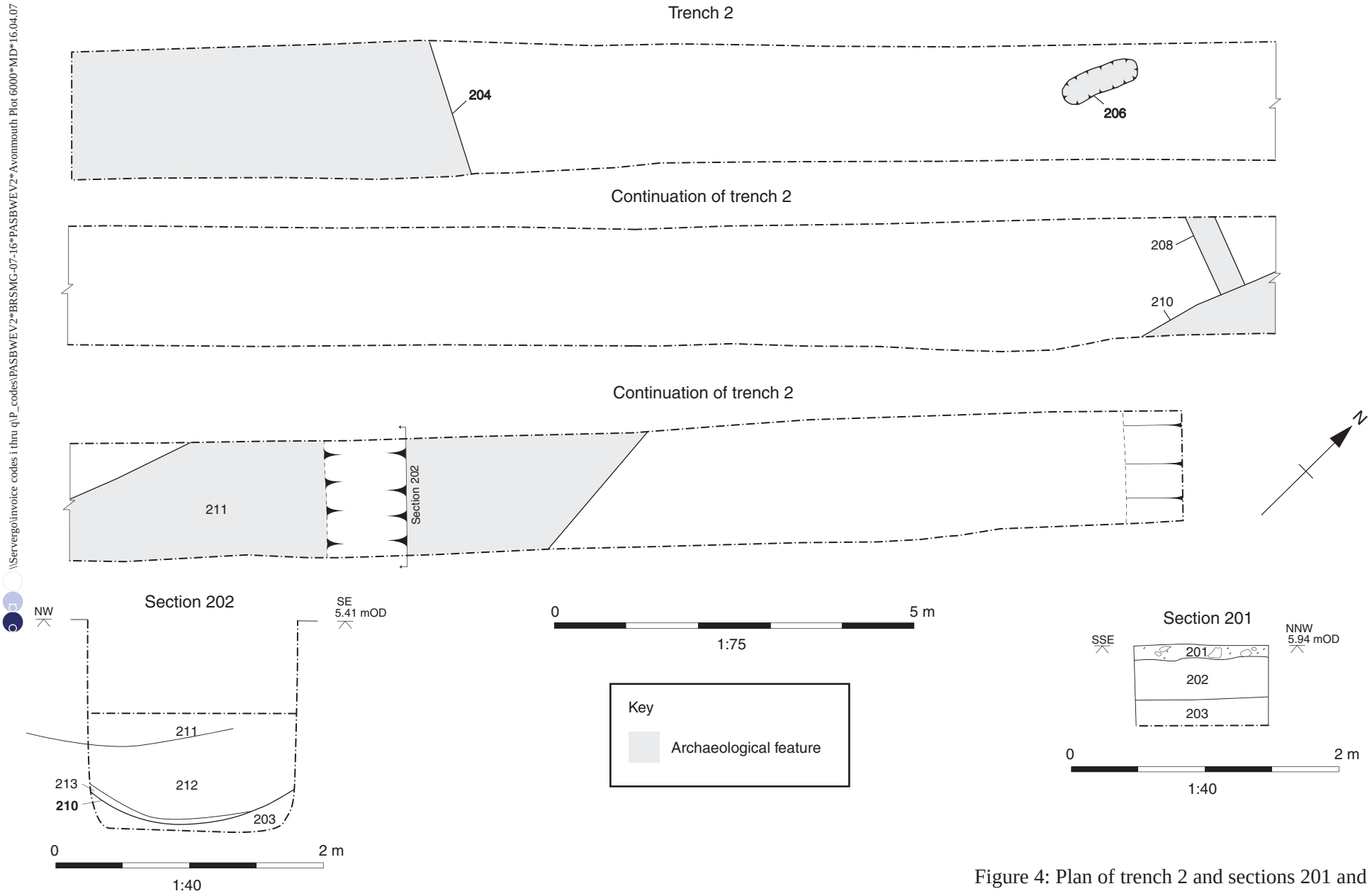


Figure 4: Plan of trench 2 and sections 201 and 202

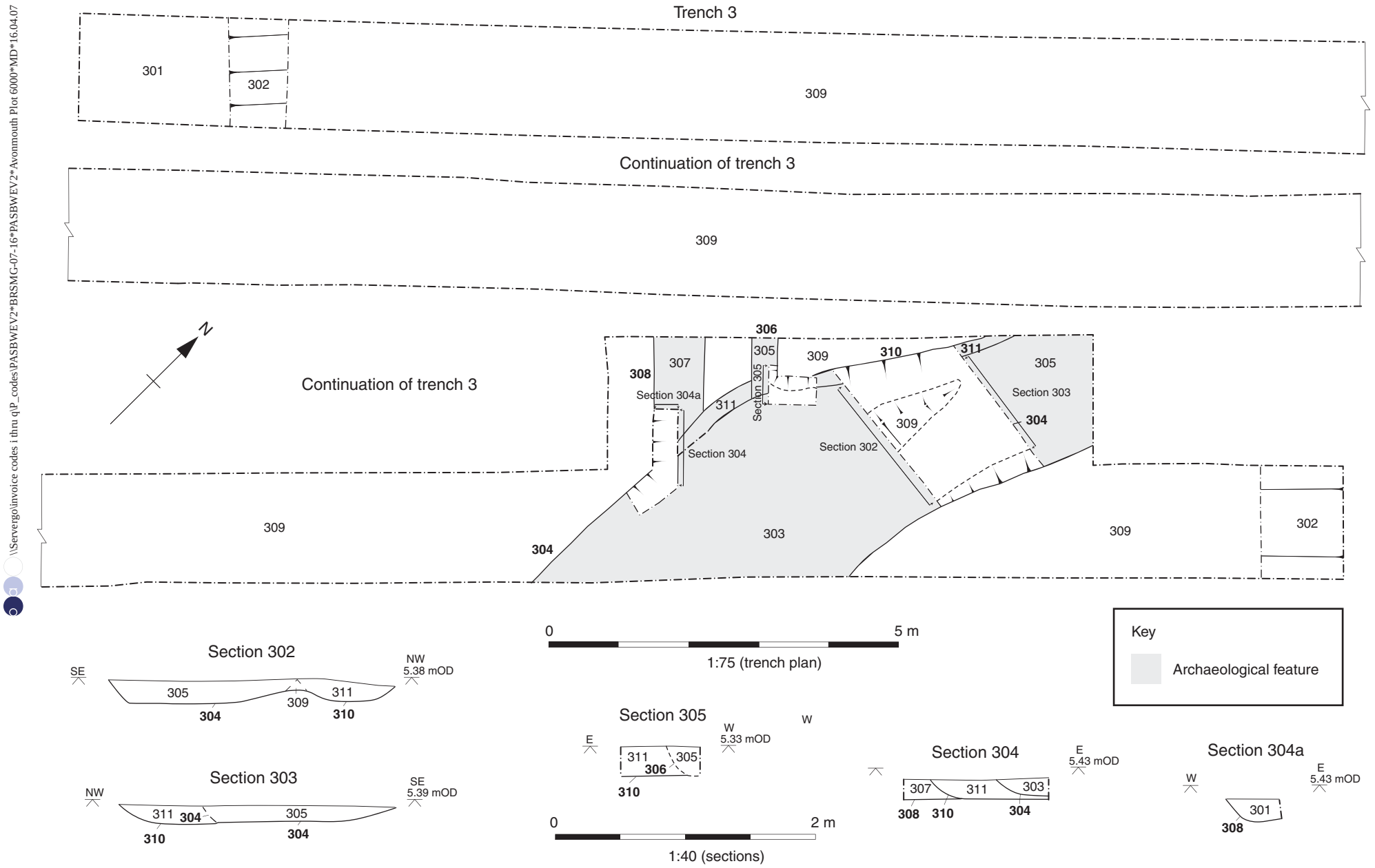


Figure 5: Plan of trench 3 and sections 302-305

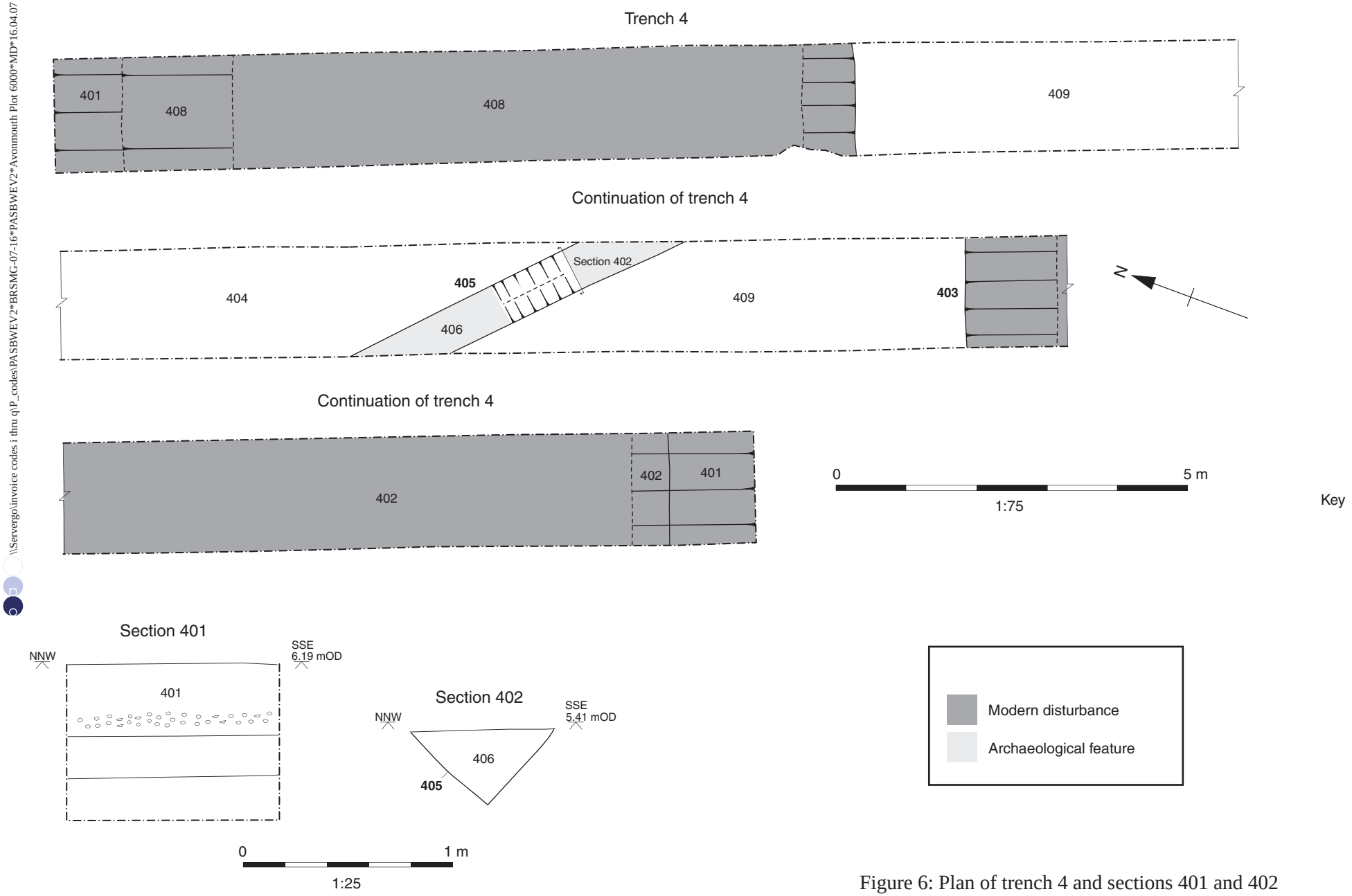
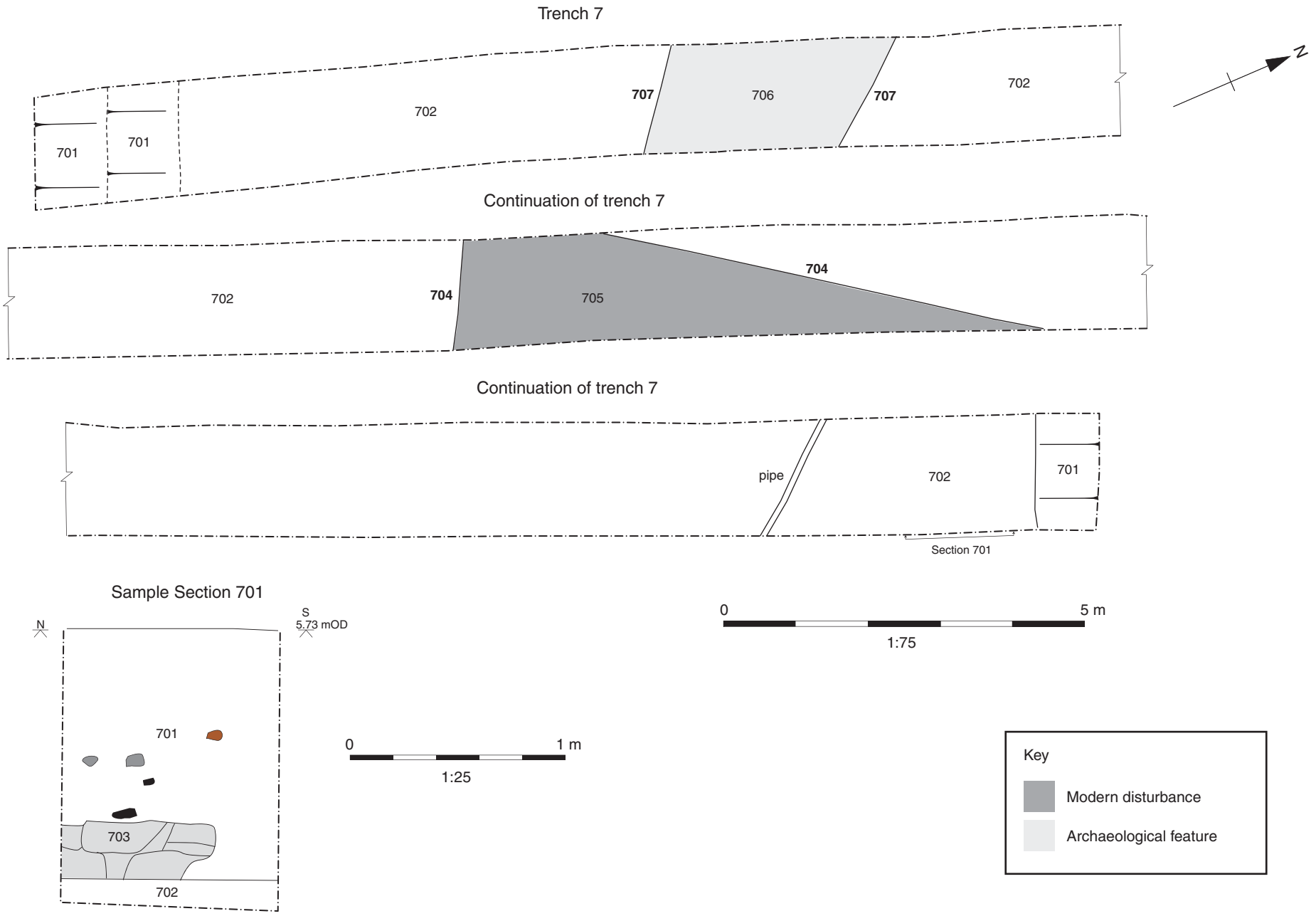
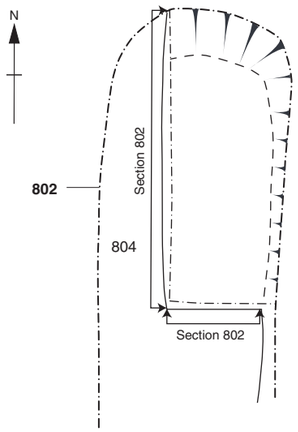


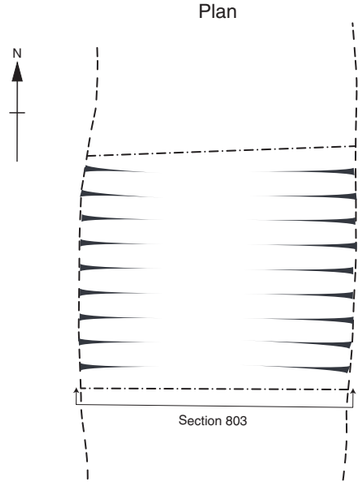
Figure 6: Plan of trench 4 and sections 401 and 402



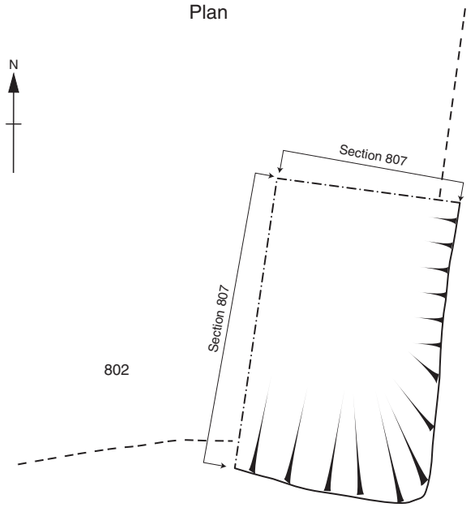
Trench 8
Plan



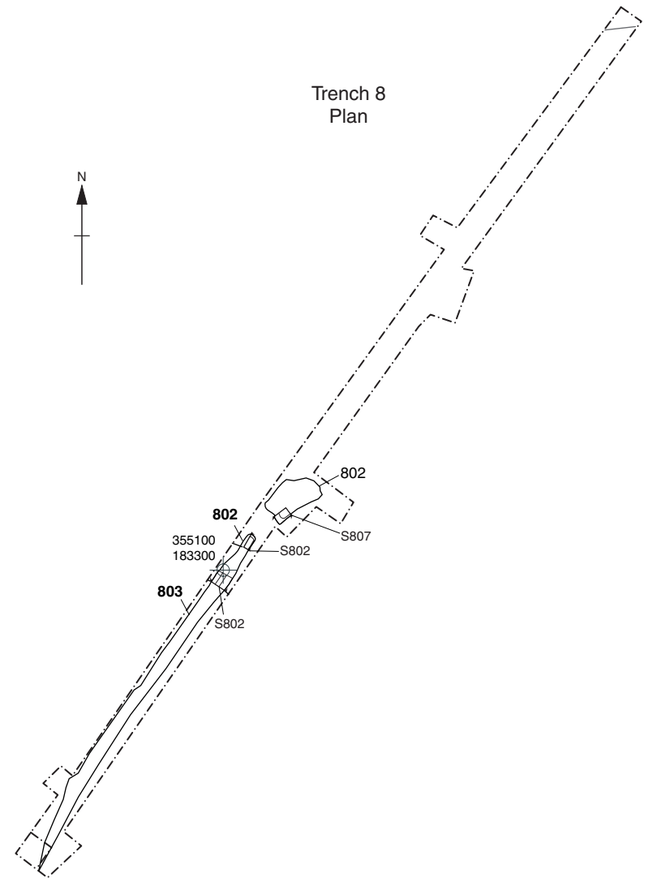
Trench 8
Plan



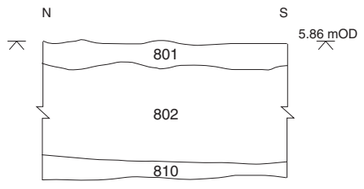
Trench 8
Plan



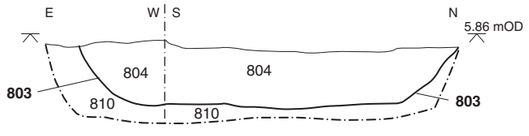
Trench 8
Plan



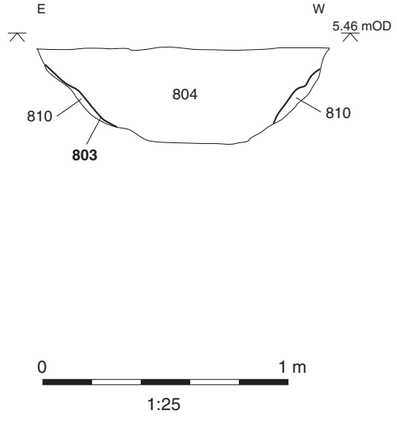
Trench 8
Section 801



Trench 8
Section 802



Trench 8
Section 803



Trench 8
Section 807

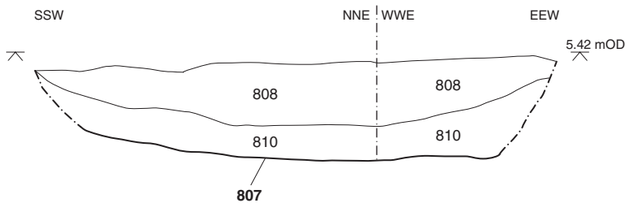
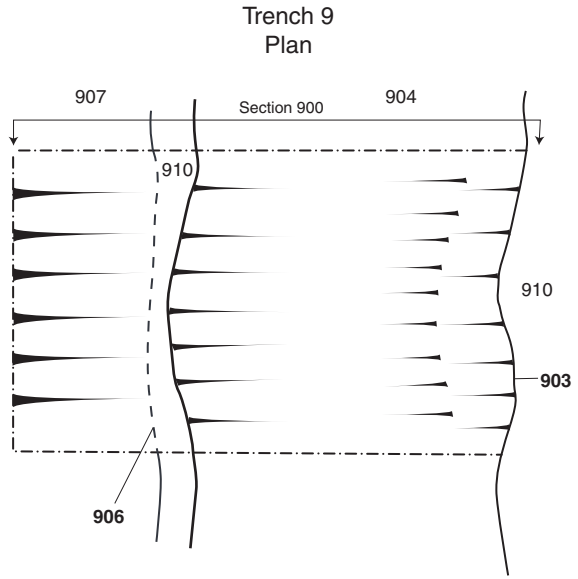
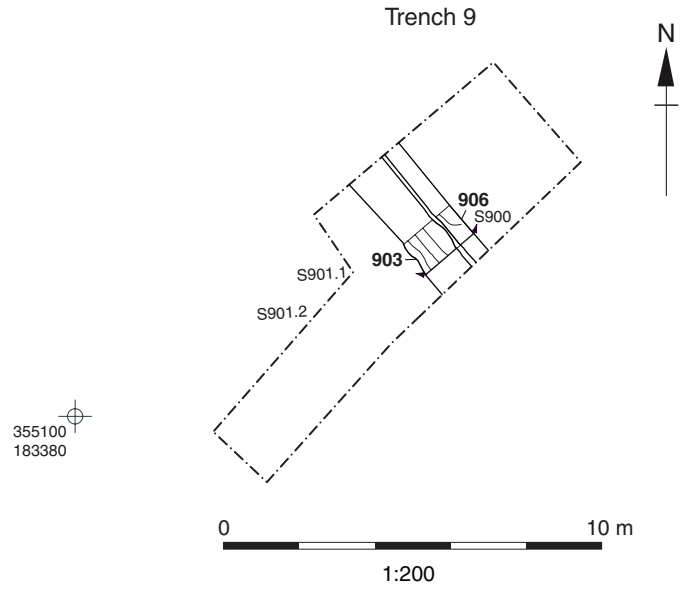
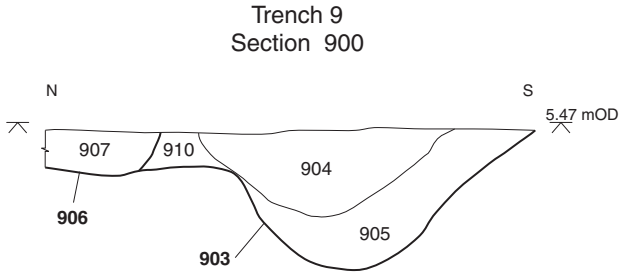


Figure 8: Detail plans and sections of trench 8







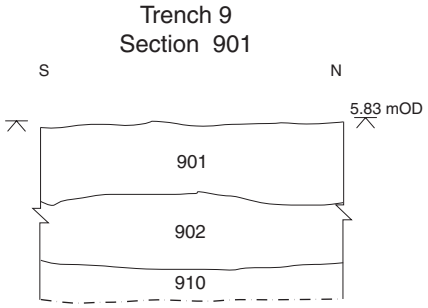


Figure 9: Detail plans and sections of trench 9