

Batterton Tyack Architects/ Swan Hill Homes Ltd

**Oxford Court, Weston-on-the-Green
Oxfordshire**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

NGR: SP 5328 1880

Planning ref: 01/00767/F

Oxford Archaeological Unit
July 2001

Batterton Tyack Architects/ Swan Hill Homes Ltd

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NGR: SP 5328 1880

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Prepared by: D. Thomason Date: 28th June 2001
Checked by: J Hiller Date: 6th July 2001
Approved by: <i>R. Williams</i> ASSISTANT DIRECTOR Date: <i>8/7/2001</i>

Oxford Court, Weston-on-the-Green Oxfordshire

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

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SUMMARY

The Oxford Archaeological Unit (OAU) carried out a field evaluation at Oxford Court in Weston-on-the-Green, Oxfordshire (NGR: SP 5328 1880) in June 2001, on behalf of Batterton Tyack Architects/ Swan Hill Homes Ltd. The evaluation revealed no archaeological deposits other than modern made ground and make-up layers were revealed. A modern dry stone wall was observed that overlay modern deposits..

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 In June 2001 OAU carried out a field evaluation at Oxford Court, Weston-on-the-Green, Oxon. (NGR SP 5328 1880) on behalf of Batterton Tyack Architects/ Swan Hill Homes Ltd in respect of a planning application for the construction of 3 new dwellings and garages (Planning Application No. 01/00767/F.) A brief was set by and a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was agreed with Steven Weaver, Assistant Curator Oxfordshire County Council for the project.
- 1.1.2 The development site is situated to the centre of Weston-on-the-Green (SP 5328 – 1880). It is bounded to the north by the Ben Jonson Public House; to the east by the B430; to the south by properties fronting Church Road and to the west by properties fronting Westlands Avenue (Figs 1 and 2).
- 1.1.3 The proposed development comprises an 'L' shaped block of c 0.25 ha, adjacent to Oxford House and Oxford Court. A wooden barn and breeze-block outhouse will be demolished in the redevelopment.

1.2 Location and Geology

- 1.2.1 The site lies at c 72 m OD and the local geology is Lower Oxford Clay with limestone cornbrash outcrops (BGS Sheets, 219/237).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The proposed development site is located in an area of general archaeological potential and within the historic core of Weston-on-the-Green. The village dates at least to the early medieval period, as it is mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086, though the name *West tun* suggests it is likely to date to the Saxon period.
- 1.3.2 No evidence of prehistoric activity has been found in the village. Roman activity in the general area is focused c 5 km to the east, at Alchester, though finds have been found just outside the village (OAU 2001).
- 1.3.3 Recent archaeological investigations undertaken along the north side of Church Road produced evidence of activity dating from the 5th/6th century through to the late medieval period (Taylor, Ford et al, 1999, 245-254).

- 1.3.4 No finds or archaeological deposits have been recorded on the proposal site itself, though this is as much an indication of the lack of archaeological investigation to date rather than an indication of an archaeologically sterile site

2 EVALUATION AIMS

- 2.1.1 To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the proposal area.
- 2.1.2 To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains present.
- 2.1.3 To establish the ecofactual and environmental potential of archaeological deposits and features.
- 2.1.4 To make available the results of the investigation.

3 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

3.1 Scope of fieldwork, methods and recording

- 3.1.1 The evaluation took the form of two trenches covering approximately 3% of the footprint of the proposed development area (Fig. 2).
- 3.1.2 The two trenches measured 15m in length by 1.5m in width. Trench 1 was aligned north-south and Trench 2 was aligned east-west. The overburden was removed under close archaeological supervision by a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket.
- 3.1.3 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 archaeological features were planned at a scale of 1:50 or 1:100 and where excavated their sections drawn at scales of 1:20.
- 3.1.4 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).

3.2 Finds

- 3.2.1 Finds were recovered by hand during the course of the excavation and generally bagged by context. Finds of special interest were given a unique small find number.
- 3.2.2 No deposits of palaeo-environmental interest were encountered.

4 RESULTS: GENERAL

4.1 Soils and ground conditions

- 4.1.1 The site is located on overgrown land, which is in part situated over raised levels to the northern end. Some dumping deposits were encountered to the south of the site.

- 4.1.2 Descriptions of the deposits located during the evaluation will be described by trench and will be followed by an interpretative section relating to these deposits.

5 RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS

5.1 Description of deposits (Fig.3)

- 5.1.1 Trench 1 was located to the north of the site. The natural (105) was reached at a depth of 71.3 m OD and consisted of a compact red-brown clay silt with *c* 30% cornbrash and gravel outcrops. This was overlain by deposit (104) a mid-brown clay silt (probably the natural sub-soil), which was *c* 0.5 m thick.
- 5.1.2 A layer of rubble material (103) overlay the subsoil. The layer was 0.22 m thick and comprised rubble and stone with some charcoal.
- 5.1.3 Part of a limestone wall (101) was set into layer 103. The wall was bonded with cement of recent origin. The wall was 0.72 m wide and was aligned east-west with a thickness of 0.3 m. The wall was abutted on both sides by deposit 102. This was a loose black brown sandy loam with charcoal inclusions and was 0.15 m thick.
- 5.1.4 A cut feature (106) was observed at the level of layer 102. The feature was filled by a disused ceramic drain 0.15 m in diameter, which extended north-west -south-east across the north end of the trench. This drain cut was 1 m wide and 0.6 m deep and was filled by a grey brown clay (107). These deposits were capped by a compact yellow gravel and cement layer (100). This was 0.1 m thick and extended across the length of the trench.
- 5.1.5 The natural clay silt and cornbrash in Trench 2 (203) was overlain by 202, a sandy silt sub-soil that was 0.2 m thick. This was overlain by 201, a sandy clay, which was 0.3 m thick.
- 5.1.6 Two irregular features (204 and 206) cut layer 201. The more westerly of the two features (204) was sub-rectangular and was *c* 2.5 m wide with an unknown depth. This was filled by 205, a friable dark brown silt loam with inclusions of building debris, iron and stone. A second feature (206) was located *c* 4.5 m to the east of this. The feature was sub-circular and was *c* 1 m wide and was filled by 207, a dark brown silty loam containing bricks, glass, a metal cable and burnt material.
- 5.1.7 The fills of these features were overlain by topsoil (200), which was a dark brown silty loam with a thickness of 0.3 m.
- ### 5.2 Finds and samples
- 5.2.1 No artefacts were recovered from the trenches: modern 20th century materials were not retained.
- 5.2.2 No deposits of palaeo-environmental interest were located.

6 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

6.1 Reliability of field investigation and interpretation

- 6.1.1 The investigation comprised a 3% sample of the evaluation area. No archaeological deposits were located in either excavated trench. Trench 1 included modern make-up deposits overlain by a modern garden wall. Two modern rubbish pits in Trench 2 had not truncated any earlier archaeological deposits.
- 6.1.2 The site revealed no archaeological evidence in stark comparison to the recent work undertaken at Beecroft's Yard (Taylor, Ford *et al*, *ibid*) south-west of Oxford Court. It is probable that in the medieval period this area was open land and used for pasture.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Ctx No</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Width (m)</i>	<i>Thick. (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>	<i> Finds</i>
001	100	Layer		0.10	Hardcore	N/A
	101	Structure	1.00	0.30	Garden wall	N/A
	102	Layer		0.15	Dump/raised level	N/A
	103	Layer		0.22	Dump/raised level	N/A
	104	Layer		0.50	Sub-soil	N/A
	105	Layer			Natural gravel/clayey silt	N/A
	106	Cut	1.00	0.60	Drain	N/A
	107	Fill	1.00	0.60	Fill of 106	N/A
002	200	Layer		0.30	Topsoil	N/A
	201	Layer		0.30		N/A
	202	Layer		0.20	Sub-soil	N/A
	203	Layer			Natural gravel/clayey silt	N/A
	204	Cut	2.50	>0.50	Rubbish pit	N/A
	205	Fill			Fill of 204	N/A
	206	Cut	1.00	>0.50	Rubbish pit	N/A
	207	Fill			Fill of 206	N/A

APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

British Geological Survey, 219/237.

OAU, 2001 *Oxford Court, Weston-on-the-Green, Written Scheme of Investigation*.

Taylor, K and Ford, S *et al*, 1999 Medieval Features at Beecroft Yard, Church Road, Weston-on-the Green, *Oxoniensia*, **LXIV**, 245-254

APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: Oxford Court, Weston-on-the-Green, Oxfordshire

Site code: WGOXH 01

Grid reference : SP 5328 1880

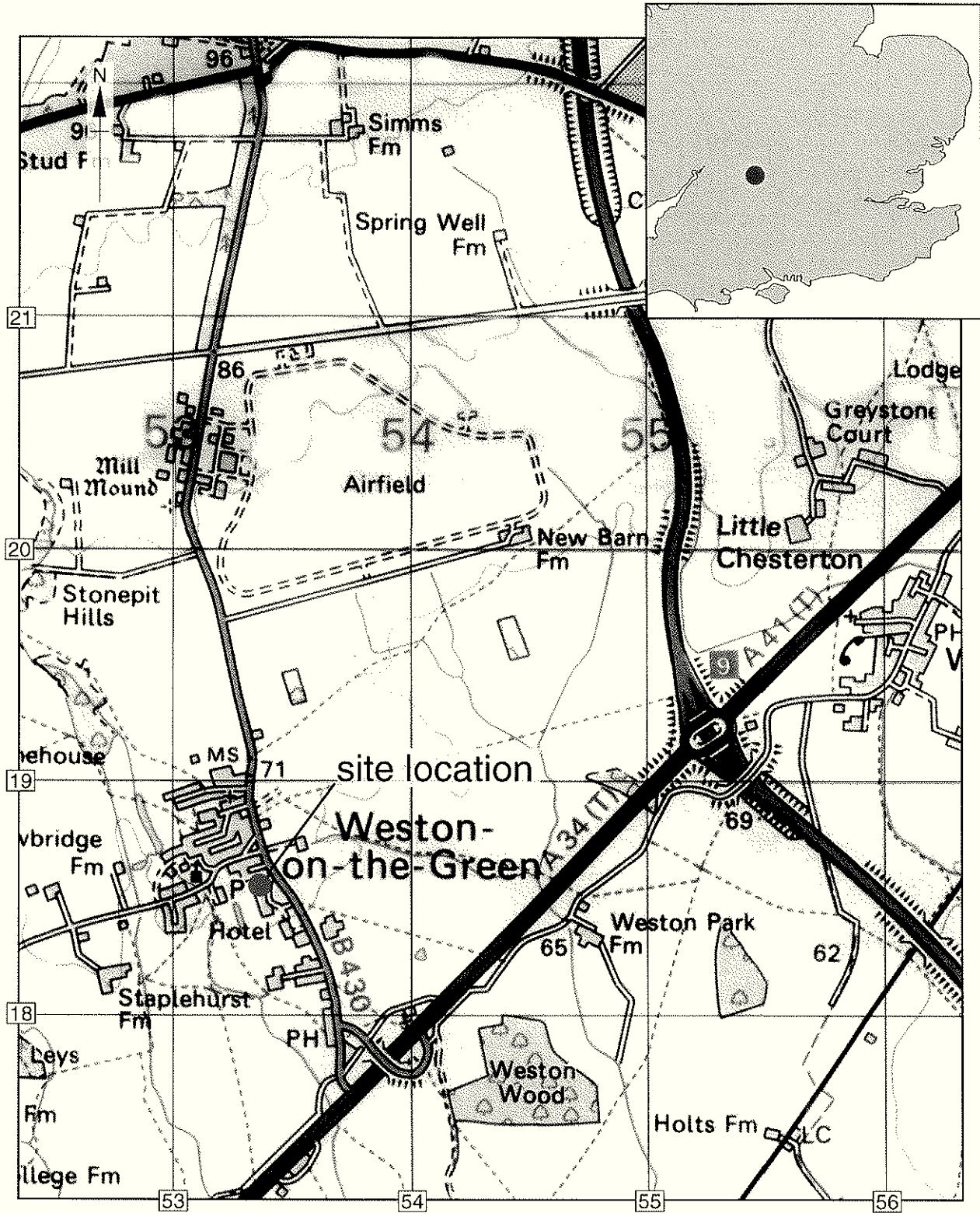
Type of evaluation: Two 15m trenches, machine excavated and hand cleaned

Date and duration of project: June 2001, 1 day

Area of site: 0.22ha

Summary of results: Trenches revealed modern disturbance and recent garden landscaping

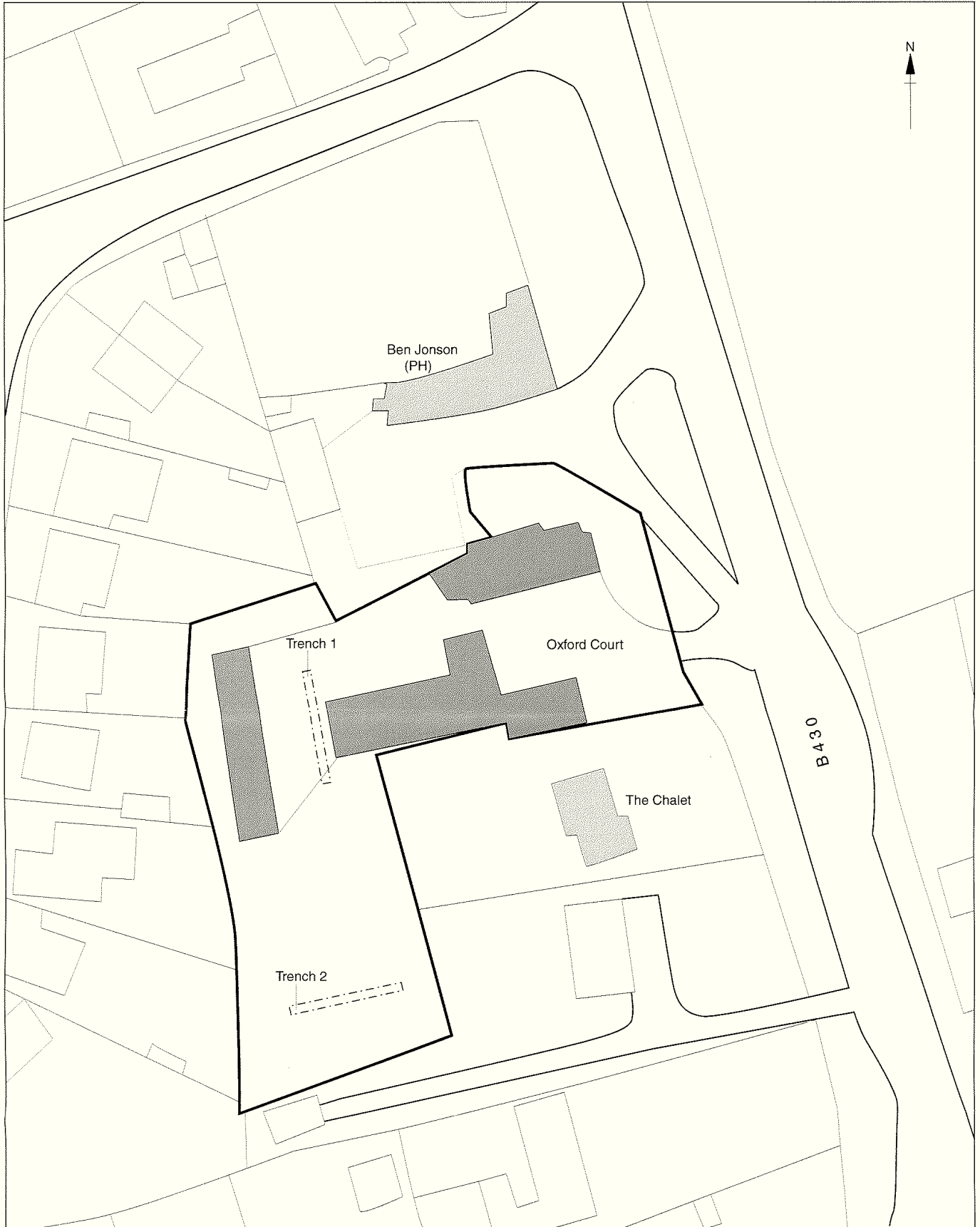
Location of archive: The archive is currently held at OAU, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museums Service in due course.



Scale 1:25,000

Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey's 1:25,000 map of 1990 with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Licence No. 854166

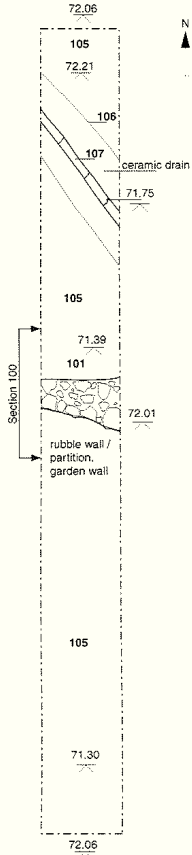
Figure 1: Site location.



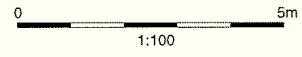
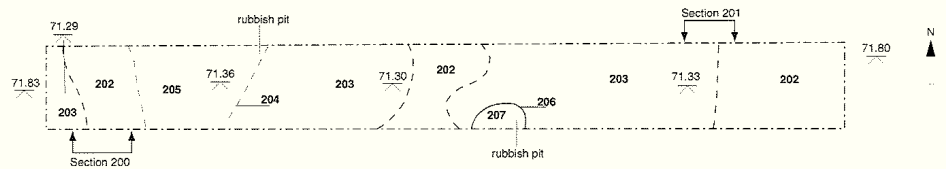
Scale 1: 500

Figure 2 :Location of trenches.

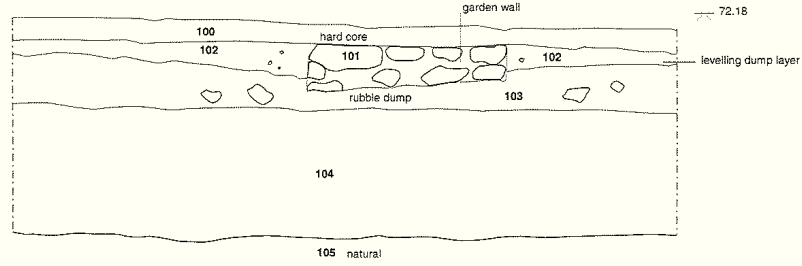
Trench 1 Plan 100



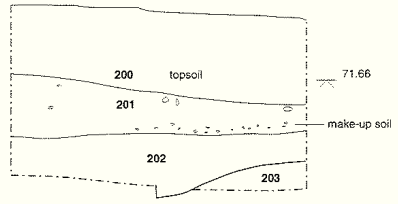
Trench 2 Plan 200



Section 100



Section 200



Section 201

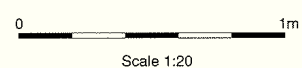
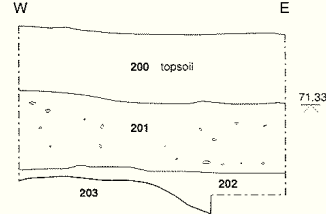


Figure 3 : Site plan and Sections.



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