AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT AT 14-18 ALBANY ROAD (Site Code ARB 90)

ARCHIVE REPORT

by
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ABSTRACT

Four assessment trenches were laid out across the proposed development site. The earliest levels encountered in the assessment suggest that the area was initially a marsh. A gully was encountered in trenches 2, 3 and 4, orientated NE-SW, which possibly represents an early attempt to control the water level. No finds were retrieved from this feature, however it underlay a layer of peat, possibly laid down in the Tilbury IV regression phase which dates from the middle to late Bronze Age.

After the deposition of the peat layer the area appears to have continued to be affected by flooding, with a series of waterlaid clays and silts been deposited. In trench 3 a second, undated, gully was found cutting the peat. This had been covered by a layer of waterlaid clay and a layer of sand, on which a rough trackway constructed from Roman pottery and building debris had been laid. Elsewhere no significant datable activity was located prior to the Victorian development of the site, which had destroyed the stratigraphy upto a depth of 2.25 m. During the Victorian period the site had been covered in housing.

INTRODUCTION

The Oxford Archaeological Unit undertook an archaeological assessment on behalf of Thames Property Developments Limited. The work was carried out between January and February 1990, and its aim was to assess the archaeological potential of an area due for redevelopment.

Prior to excavation the area was tested by borehole drilling. Three samples were studied by Wembley Laboratories Limited on behalf of the developers. Each borehole was 15O mm in diameter and 2O m in depth. The tests showed that the underlying geology consisted of Flood Plain Gravel over Woolwich and Reading Clay Beds, in turn resting on Thanet Sands. These deposits occurred at 4 m below topsoil with made-ground and humic sands above.

Although this sequence of deposits was encountered during the archaeological assessment, the results from the borehole investigation were markedly different in detail to the archaeological remains.

Before the excavation the site, which covers an area of approximately 0.2 ha at the N end of Albany Road (Fig. 1), was vacant and for the most part under turf. The proposed development is for a five storey block of flats with a frontage facing Albany Road and car parking to the rear. The development is to comprise of two lines of deep piling foundation with a suspended concrete raft base.

The purpose of the assessment was to ascertain the damage that would be caused to any archaeological features by the construction of the new development. As the structure was to be built on deep piles, four trenches were located in the areas of concentrated pile clusters (Fig. 2). The area to the N of the redevelopment, fronting Shorncliff Road, is designated for forecourt car parking which does not pose a threat to archaeological remains and was therefore not excavated.

The modern material from each trench was removed by a 360° excavator, and the spoil from each trench stockpiled a minimum 2 m from the edge of the trench. When the excavation and recording of the assessment was completed the trenches were immediately backfilled. Where the depth of stratigraphy necessitated safety precautions, each trench was stepped 0.5 m for every metre in depth excavated.

Trench 1 measured 5 m x 5 m; Trench 2, 6.5 m x 6.5 m; Trench 3, 10 m x 5 m, later extended on the second day of excavation by a further 5 m x 4 m from the north western edge; and Trench 4, 10 m x 5 m. When the machining of the modern material was completed, two people excavated and recorded each trench. The three trenches containing minimal stratigraphy were excavated first, and in a short period of time. This meant that the whole team could excavate the trench with the most complex strata. The result was that the excavation of trenches one, two and four was virtually completed within two days, leaving three days to complete trench three.

When recording, each assessment excavation was prefixed T for trench, followed by its respective number (thus: T1, T2, T3 and 4). Every layer, feature and feature fill within all four trenches was given its own individual context number and recorded on a standard format context sheet used on all sites by the OAU. The blocks of context numbers in each trench started with (1) with the prefix of a trench number. Thus T1 [1] and T2 [1] translates as Trench 1 layer 1, Trench 2 layer 1 et cetera.

Drawings showing the stratigraphy in section for trenches two and four were done at a scale of 1:20. Trench three was drawn at a scale of 1:50 because of it length. Trench one was not drawn because it contained no layers of any archaeological significance. This practice would differ had this been a full excavation, in which case all sections would have been drawn. However, for the purposes of an assessment it was deemed unnecessary. The layers and features in trench 3 were planned in detail at a scale of 1:50. The other trenches were only planned at a scale of 1:200 (Fig. 4), due to the lack of complex archaeological features, on a plan of the development area, to provide an overview of their interrelationships.

A photographic record of the site and features was compiled. This took the form of two colour slides and two black and white prints for every feature and layer, together with a photographic scale and identification board. Various photographs of the work in progress were also included. The site datum of 2.81 m was taken from a convenient fixed station plotted by the consulting engineers with an EDM. The station was sighted from a fixed OS Bench Mark of 2.54 m on St George's Methodist Church in Cobourg Road.

Environmental samples were taken from every layer of silting, waterborn deposits and features containing organic matter within trench 3. No samples were taken from trenches 1 or 2. A single sample was taken from the fill [5] within a gully [3] in trench 4. This was done to confirm the similarity in the nature and function of this feature in relation to another gully found in trench 3 (context T3 [15]) .

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Although no previous archaeological work has been undertaken on the site, it is known to lie within an area of high archaeological potential.

Pre-Roman activity in this area of London is dictated very much by the nature of the natural topography. The areas of Southwark, Lambeth and Bermondsey overlie an original mixture of prehistoric marshland, Thames river tributaries and isolated gravel banks. The gravel 'islands' seem to have been the foci for prehistoric settlement. The Museum of London excavated a site c.600 m to the NW of Albany Road in 1987 at the Old Bricklayer's Arms railway yard. On this excavation evidence of a large prehistoric marsh covering the north edge of Bermondsey was evident, and well preserved timbers were discovered, of early to middle Bronze Age date, which seemed to have been laid down to form a timber raft.

Evidence for Roman activity in the vicinity is sparse. Watling Street, a major Roman arterial road leading to the SE coast, is traditionally believed to lie under the present Old Kent Road. This lies to the east of the development area. Speculation exists that there is an access road leading off from Watling Street to a Roman bridge over the Thames somewhere between Southwark and Lambeth. The Greater London Sites and Monuments Record (map number O9O996) annotates the alignment of this assumed road as crossing the redevelopment site. Several Roman burials have been recorded close to the site, probably lining Watling Street (GLSMR NO 538 and 226). Evidence of further Roman activity is represented by the find of a representation of the god Janus carved in stone. The exact location of where this was found is unkown, however it is believed to have come from the Albany Road area

A medieval stone bridge forming a crossing over the stream in the immediate vicinity of the present site, at a place called St Thomas Watering, is recorded on the Greater London Sites and Monuments Record (reference number 1O7O). It has been postulated that the place name is the result of a small medieval or post medieval settlement, located at the crossing point. However, it is most likely to have been a simple staging inn, providing refreshment and rest to pilgrims travelling to the shrine of Thomas Becket in Canterbury. At the NE corner of the present development area is a Victorian Public House called the Thomas a Becket and this building probably indicates the likely site of the crossing point.

The area is recorded by Rocque on a map dated to 1746 (Fig. 3), and taking into account the variability of scale on old maps, the approximate location of the present site, in relation to the map, would suggest that a stream course, called the Earls Sluice, runs either underneath modern Albany Road or within the SE edge of the site. Unfortunately surviving records give no indication of structures or features that may have existed during the post medieval era. During the Victorian period the site, along with most of the Bermondsey area, was densely packed with Victorian housing.

ORGANISATION OF THE REPORT

Each trench is described separately, with a complete phased and descriptive matrix at the beginning. This is followed by a detailed description of each context, after which there is a brief interpretation of the stratigraphy. The sections and plans are placed at the end of the text. The general conclusions are presented after the description of the individual trenches and after this the specialist reports are appended.

The final section of the archive consists of an index of contexts listing the relevent context number to plan, section, finds and photograph catalogue numbers. Included within this archive heading is the environmental sample index and the ceramic index.

THE EXCAVATION

TRENCH 1 (T1) (Fig. 4)

PHASED MATRIX

Chronology	Layers	Description
1800s - Modern	1	Rubble
Prehistoric	2	Clay
	Unexcavated 2.2.90	

CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

[1] Uncompacted rubble. Post Medieval building debris, backfilled services, redundant manholes, remains of modern brick cellar.

Level:Top 2.55 m OD
Bottom 0.35 m OD

[2] Thick, compacted layer of dark yellow clay, striated with irregular bands of mottled light grey clay, with occasional pellets of iron panning.

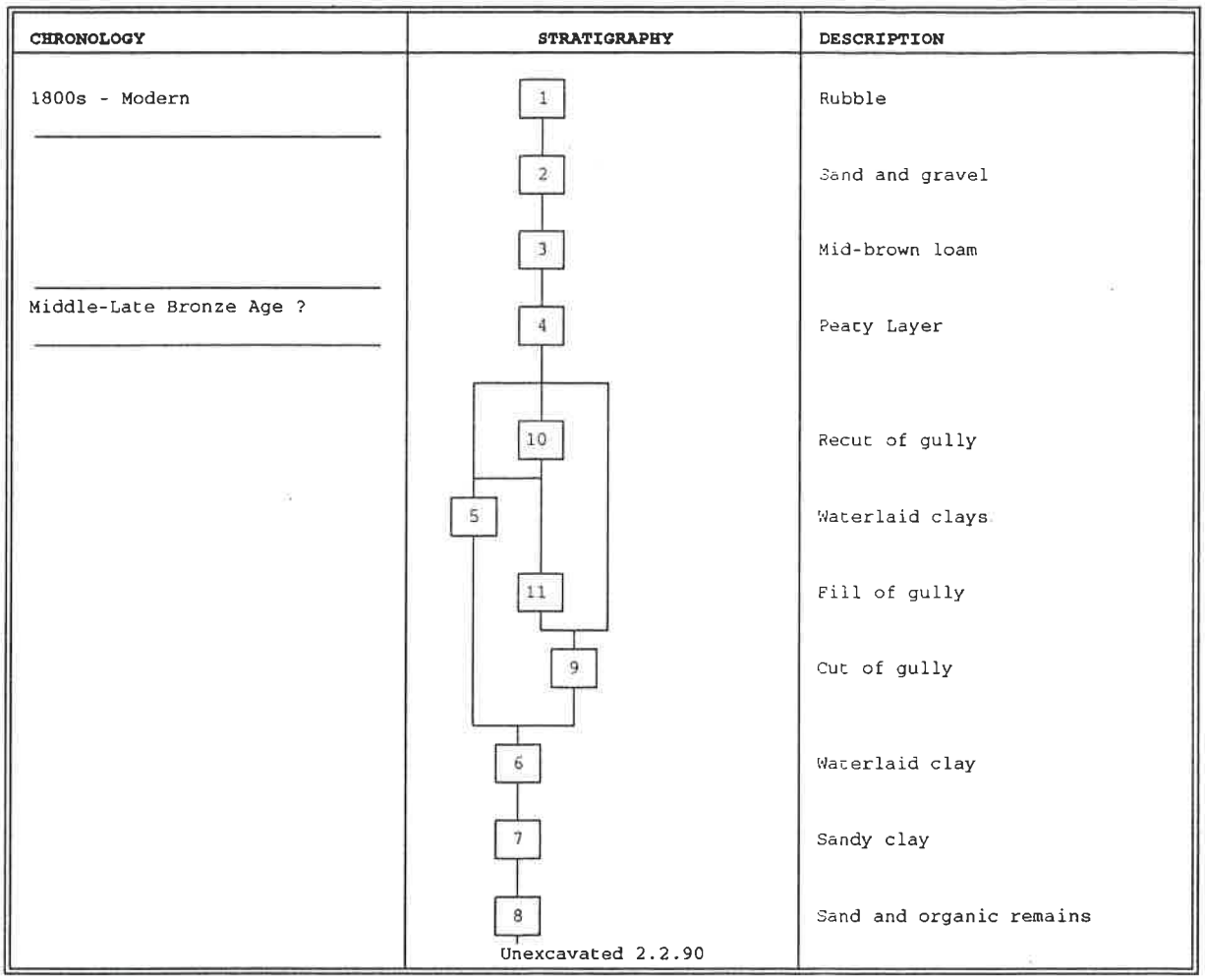
Level:Top 0.35 m OD
Bottom 0.05 m OD

INTERPRETATION

Massive disturbance from Victorian development, effectively destroying over 2 m of stratigraphy. The clay was level and no features or finds were recovered. It is probably waterlaid and of prehistoric date.

TRENCH 2 (T2) (Figs. 4 and 5)

PHASED MATRIX



CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

[1] Mixed material consisting of remnants of brick built basements, rubble, lumps of mortar and dark brown loam.

Level:Top 2.57 m OD
Bottom 1.37 m OD

[2] Bands of dull yellow/dark orange fine gravel and sand.

Level:Top 1.37 m OD
Bottom 1.27 m OD

[3] Dark brown clayey loam with occasional small pebbles.
Level:Top 1.27 m OD
Bottom 1.14 m OD

[4] Mid-brown peaty loam containing occasional charcoal fragments and occasional orange flecks of iron panning.
Level:Top 1.14 m OD
Bottom 1.03 m OD

[5] Yellow grey/orange thin laminated clays, with occasional patches of fine grey sand.
Level:Top 1.03 m OD
Bottom 0.88 m OD

[6] Thick layer of dark brown sticky clay, with occasional water-worn pebbles, unstruck flint fragments and charcoal flecks.
Level:Top 0.88 m OD
Bottom 0.65 m OD

[7] Layer of light grey sandy clay, striated with pale yellow streaks. Occasional water-worn pebbles.
Level:Top 0.65 m OD
Bottom 0.45 m OD

[8] Layer of light brown/pale yellow fine sand, frequent inclusions of organic remains of marsh reed.
Level:Top 0.45 m OD
Bottom LIMIT OF EXCAVATION

[9] Gully with sharp, steeply angled side and irregular base. The feature extended under the main southern section of the trench. It was 1 m wide and 0.45 m deep. The feature had a single fill [11] and cut layer [6]. It was subsequently recut in the form of context [10].
Level:Top 0.84 m OD
Bottom 0.39 m OD

[10] Recut of gully [9], extending under the southern section. Shallow sloping sides with a flat bottom. The excavated section of the recut was 1 m wide and 0.2 m deep. The feature was cut from layer [5] and truncated the upper level of feature [9]. It had a single fill of mixed yellow and orange clay.
Level:Top 1.03 m OD
Bottom 0.83 m OD

[11] Fill of feature [9]. Very dark brown organic loam.

INTERPRETATION

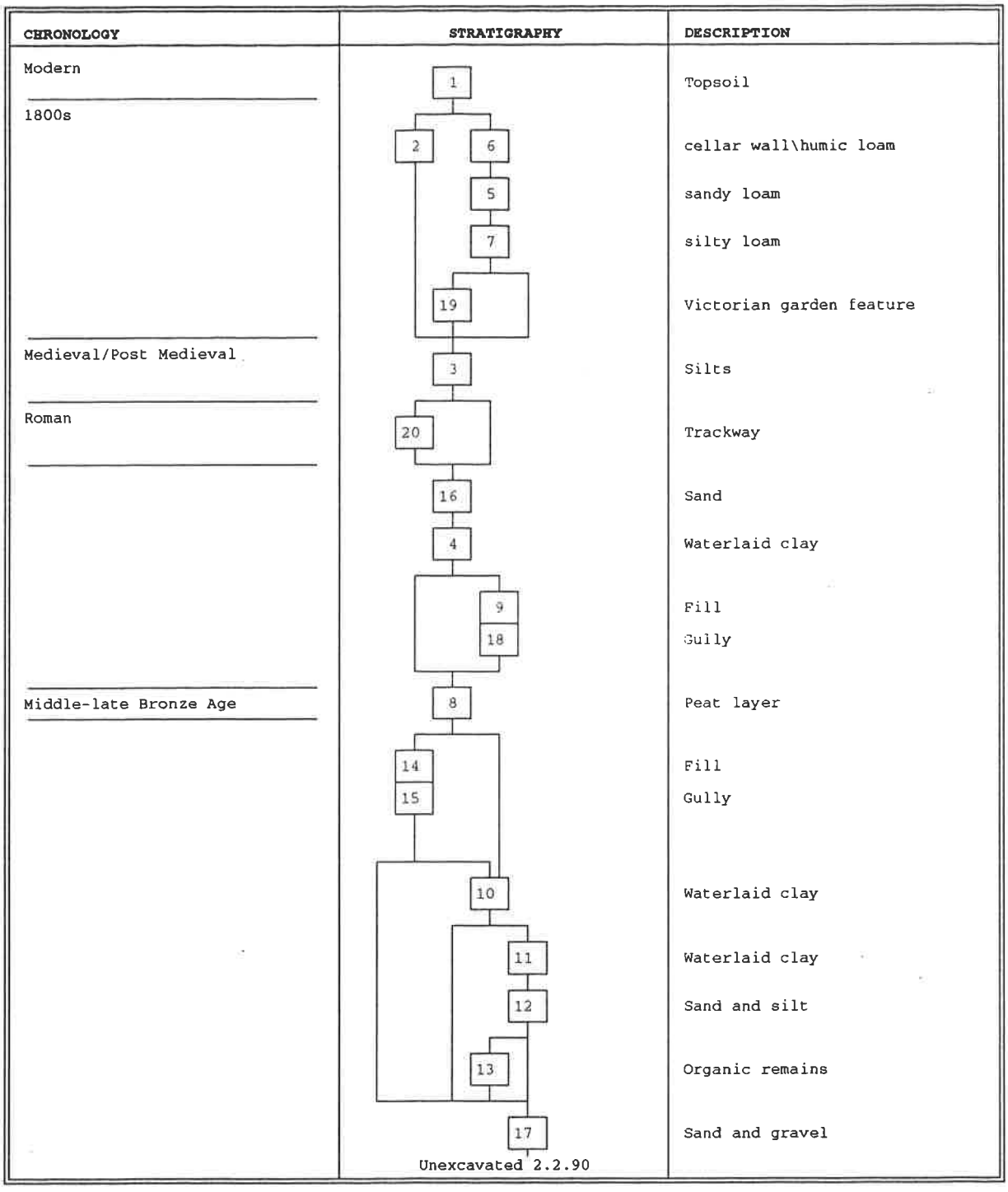
Layer [8] in trench 2 is identical to layer T3 [17] and probably indicates the upper levels of sand at the base of a prehistoric marsh. No dating evidence was found for either the initial gully [9] or the recut [10]. This feature, which cut a sequence of waterlaid deposits

represented by layers [6] and [7], was possibly dug in an attempt to provide drainage for the area. The fill to feature [9] is identical to fills T3 [14] and T4 [5]. It is likely that T2 [9] is the western segment of a continuous gully aligned NE-SW. The thin laminated clays represented by [5] are almost certainly waterborn, possibly indicating a sequence of flooding. It is from this level that the gully [9] had been recut.

A layer of peaty loam [4], similar to layer T3[8] and T4[5], overlay the gully [9] and its recut [10]. Layer [2] was a silt possibly deposited during the existence of the Earls Sluice, suggesting that the course of the stream lies in close proximity to the area. Many of the upper levels to trench 2 had been badly affected by the Victorian development. Layer [1] seems to be the Post war backfill to those developments.

TRENCH 3 (T3) (Figs. 6 and 7)

PHASED MATRIX



CONTEXT DESCRIPTION

[1] Modern topsoil and turf.

Level:Top 2.63 m OD

Bottom 2.53 m OD

[2] Remnant of brick-built cellar wall aligned E-W across the trench, filled with assorted brick, tile and mortar rubble.

Level:Top 2.53 m OD
Bottom 1.53 m OD

[3] Thick layer of fine dark grey silt, with occasional tile fragments and oyster shells. Occasional sherds of medieval and Roman pottery.

Level:Top 1.53 m OD
Bottom 1.03 m OD

[4] Blue, very sticky clay, with frequent small charcoal fragments.

Level:Top 0.83 m OD
Bottom 0.53 m OD

[5] Layer of light brown sandy loam, with occasional small pebbles.

Level:Top 1.83 m OD
Bottom 1.73 m OD

[6] Layer of dark brown humic loam with occasional small pebbles, chippings of red tile and mortar lumps.

Level:Top 2.34 m OD
Bottom 1.83 m OD

[7] Dark grey to brown silty loam with moderate small pebbles, occasional flecks of charcoal and crushed red tile.

Level:Top 1.73 m OD
Bottom 1.35 m OD

[8] Thick, flat and uniform deposit of fine peat, with occasional small fine grains of sand.

Level:Top 0.93 m OD
Bottom 0.63 m OD

[9] Single fill of feature [18]. Very dark brown silt containing a lot of organic material.

Level:Top 0.98 m OD
Bottom 0.33 m OD

[10] Very sticky light blue clay, with occasional flecks of charcoal. The layer slopes from N to S.

Level:Top 0.63 m OD
Bottom 0.33 m OD

[11] Hard bright yellow clay, occasionally striated with thin bands of grey silt. The layer slopes down towards the NW from the SE.

Level:Top (NW) 0.33 m OD
(SW) 0.53 m OD
Bottom (NW) 0.23 m OD

(SW) 0.43 m OD

[12] Fine pale yellow sand with striations of grey silt. Uneven surface, presumably affected by layer [11] above

Level:Top (NW) 0.23 m OD
(SW) 0.43 m OD
Bottom (NW) 0.11 m OD
(SW) 0.32 m OD

[13] Surviving organic remains of rooted marsh plants.

Level:Top 0.22 m OD
Bottom Unexcavated.

[14] Single fill within feature [15]. Dark brown, very organic silt, containing large amount of well preserved, densely packed unworked twigs and small branches.

Level:Top 0.43 m OD
Bottom 0.07 m OD

[15] Gully, 1.60 m wide and 0.36 m deep. It had a sharp break of slope on the N side but an irregular edge to the S. Filled with context [14]. Cuts context[10].

Level:Top 0.43 m OD
Bottom 0.07 m OD

[16] Thin even band of pale yellow sand.

Level:Top 1.03 m OD
Bottom 0.93 m OD

[17] Level, even band of fine dark green sand, striated with many bands of fine gravel. It contains the rooted remains of context [13].

Level:Top 0.22 m OD
Bottom Unexcavated.

[18] Gully. Most of the feature extended under S section and only its N edge was uncovered. The gully was 0.65 m deep . Its side had a shallow break of slope and flat bottom. The bottom of the gully sloped slightly from W-E. It had a single fill [9].

Level:Top 0.98 m OD
Bottom 0.33 m OD

[19] Small shallow feature only detected in section with gently sloping sides and flat base. Filled with dark green sand.

Level:Top 1.43 m OD
Bottom 1.20 m OD

[20] A 2 m wide band of crushed Roman pottery. The deposit is aligned NE-SW in the northern half of the trench and continued under the western and eastern trench sections. The context had uneven edges and it overlies layer [16], forming a noticeable ridge. Fragments of mortar and occasional powdered red tile are mixed with the pottery.

Level:Top 1.03 m OD

Bottom 0.93 m OD

INTERPRETATION

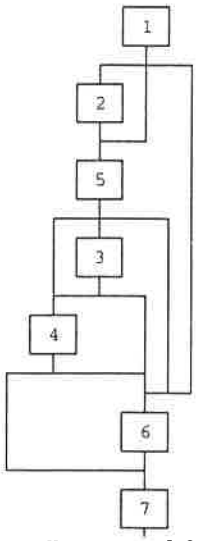
Layers [10], [11], [12] and [17] form the primary layers of the marsh, and they are cut by gully [15], which seems to have been filled with organic remains and wind-blown woodland material. The area seems to have continued to be waterlogged, as is attested by the build up of the peaty deposit [8], which overlay gully [15]. This layer, similar to the organic/peaty layers found in trenches 2 and 4 (T2[4] and T4[5]), was cut by a second gully [18] located in the southern half of the trench. No dating evidence was recovered from either gully, however it is possible that both were dug in an attempt to drain the area. Gully [18] was in turn overlain by a layer of waterlain clay [4] and a band of yellow sand [16], which is likely to be the sediment of localised shallow water. The spread of Roman pottery was placed on top of layer [16], and it is most likely that it represents a rudimentary path across the shallows of the marshy area. The pottery is all of a similar fabric, mainly pasty fine ware, but the bulk of the material is from many different forms. The pottery is very abraded but appears to date from the 2nd to 3rd century.

Layer [3], which contained both Roman and medieval pottery, appears to be the latest in the sequence of silts in the area and possibly represents flooding from the Earls Sluice. Alternatively the deposit could be the result of a deliberate programme of dumping to prepare the ground for the Victorian development.

Victorian damage to the strata had been surprisingly light. Layers [6], [5] and [7] are most likely to be the remains of the garden levels of the Victorian properties. Feature [19] is also most likely to be a Victorian garden feature. It was missed during the machine work, but noticed and recorded in section.

TRENCH 4 (T4) (Figs. 4 and 8)

PHASED MATRIX

INTERPRETATION	STRATIGRAPHY	DESCRIPTION
1800s - Victorian		Basements
		Silts
Middle-Late Bronze Age ?		Organic layer\clay
		Gully
		Sandy clay
		waterlaid clay
		sand

CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

[1] Modern debris comprising of brick rubble, crushed mortar, grey ash, lumps of charcoal, concrete, and modern pottery.

Level:Top 2.59 m OD
Bottom 0.59 m OD

[2] Approximately five lenses of silts, deposited in alternate thin bands of light and dark grey.

Level:Top 0.59 m OD
Bottom 0.42 m OD

[3] Narrow gully with steeply sloping sides and flat bottom, slightly rising towards the SW. Filled with context [5]. The feature was 0.86 m wide and 0.4 m deep. Cuts layer [4].

Level:Top 0.46 m OD
Bottom 0.06 m OD

[4] Thin layer of dark grey sandy clay. Cut by gully [3].

Level:Top 0.39 m OD
Bottom 0.31 m OD

[5] The fill to feature [3]. The fill also forms a deposit that spreads across the area northwards. Dark brown silty clay with occasional small pebbles, fragments of well preserved twigs and other organic matter, probably remnants of marsh plant.

Level:Top (NW) 0.41 m OD

(SE) 0.57 m OD
Bottom (NW) 0.36 m OD
(SE) 0.41 m OD

[6] Layer of light grey clay with occasional yellow clay flecks. The layer slopes sharply from S to N.

Level:Top (NW) 0.36 m OD
(SE) 0.41 m OD
Bottom (NW) 0.29 m OD
(SE) 0.29 m OD

[7] Fine dark green sand changing to dull orange in the SE of the trench, with striations of clay and silts.

Level:Top 0.19 m OD
Bottom UnExcavated.

INTERPRETATION

Victorian development virtually destroyed all levels in this area and no dating evidence was recovered from any of the silts. Layers [4], [6] and [7] form the primary levels of the marsh. Feature [3] has the same dimensions, profile, and fill as the gullies noted in T2 and T3 (T2 [3] and T3 15]) and it seems likely that it is part of the same context. It was filled with similar organic material to that found in the gully in trench 3 (T3[14]), however, it was not possible to make a distinction between the fill of the gully and the organic layer which overlay the fill.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

The earliest levels of the site's development, recorded in trenches 2, 3 and 4, were represented by a similar stratigraphic sequence. It consisted of layers of waterlaid clays and silts cut by a gully and subsequently overlaid by an organic/peaty layer. In trench 3 this layer was succeeded by layers of clay and sand, which underlay a deposit of Roman pottery; while in trench 2 the organic layer was overlaid by a humic loam and in trench 4 by bands of silt.

In trench 1, activity in the Victorian period had destroyed most of the stratigraphy, however, the layer of clay underneath the Victorian disturbance, probably represents the initial series of waterlaid clays and silts found in trenches 2-4.

A sequence of waterlaid clays overlaid by peat, followed by more waterlaid clays has been recognised in many excavations in Southwark and Bermondsey (Tyers 1988; Merriman forthcoming), including those at the Bricklayers Arms located c. 600 m to the NW of Albany Road. The peat layer has been identified as corresponding to the Tilbury IV regression phase, initially defined by Devoy (1979), which has been radiocarbon dated to the middle-late Bronze Age c. 1500-1000 BC (Tyers 1988, Table 1).

The overall correlation between the stratigraphic sequence at Albany Road and the general sequence for Southwark is apparent. However the top and bottom of the peat layer at Albany Road occurs at a height not previously recorded for the Tilbury IV regression peats. Within

Southwark and Lambeth the peat has varied in OD height between +0.65 m to -0.64 m for the top and +0.51 m to -1.82 m for the bottom. At Albany Road the top of the peaty layer ranged between +0.41 m to +1.14 m, and the bottom between +0.36 m to +1.03 m. This variation beyond the previously established parameters of the upper and lower levels of the peat, suggests that the peaty layer at Albany Road can only be interpreted tentatively as belonging to the period of the Tilbury IV regression phase. However, as Tyers has noted (1988, 11) the upper limits of these layers may have been effected by erosion, truncation or compaction, and their lower limits seem to follow underlying features. Therefore as the site is the furthest from the river, at which these layers may so far have been encountered. it may be unsurprising that they occur at a higher elevation.

If the organic/peaty layer is considered to belong to the Tilbury IV regression phase this provides us with a *terminus ante quem* of the middle to late Bronze Age for the cutting and filling of the gully found in trenches 2, 3 and 4. The environmental report indicates that the gully held stagnant or slow moving water, and the predominance of the remains of *alnus glutinosa* in the sample suggests that pure alder woodland grew over much of the area. However the presence of several other species of plants suggests that this woodland may have been transitional to alder carr.

It is possible that this gully may have been associated with activities occurring at the Bricklayers Arms site, where a series of timbers were found underneath the peat layer. which seem to have been placed intentionally in an attempt to consolidate marshy ground. Two radiocarbon dates from these timbers provided dates of 3260+/-60 BP (GU-2900) and 3300+/-60 BP (GU2901) (Merriman forthcoming).

An environmental sample taken from the peat layer itself, suggests that the area underwent a significant transition between the filling of the gully and the deposition of the peat. The alder woodland had disappeared and the floral remains indicate that the site was composed of an area of shallow water with banks of exposed mud.

In trench 3 the peat was cut by a gully (T3[9]), the environmental evidence from which suggested that it supported tall reedswamp vegetation. This feature can only be dated, on the basis of its stratigraphic location, as being after the deposition of the peat dated to the middle to late Bronze Age, and before the construction of the trackway dated to the 2nd to 3rd century AD, which is stratigraphically later. The gully was overlaid by a layer of sticky waterlaid clay, which was in turn covered by a thin band of sand.

No activity which could be assigned to the Roman period was found in trenches 1, 2 and 4. Only trench 3 provided any evidence of activity with a mixed spread of pottery and building rubble deposited in a band approximately 2 m wide, orientated NE-SW, in the northern half of the trench ([T3[20]). Most of the pottery was of a similar fabric, and it belonged to a broad range of vessel types, dating from the 2nd to 3rd century. The material had been dumped on top of context T3[16], a thin layer of fine sand, possibly in an attempt to provide a crude path across the waterlogged area. The abrasion of the sherds, if it is thought to have occured *in situ*, would tend to support the notion that the deposit had been used as a trackway.

Above the dump of Roman material, a layer of grey silt T3[3] was recorded which contained

both Roman and medieval pottery. This may represent flooding, perhaps from the Earls Sluice attested in documentary sources. Alternately it may be a deliberate dump of material in preparation for the Victorian development on the site. A series of loams (T3[5], 3[6] and T3[7]), which overlay this layer, most probably represent the garden levels associated with the Victorian housing on the site.

In trench 2 a dark brown clay loam T2[3] was recorded above the peaty layer, which could be derived from waterlaid clay that had been turned over and used in some form of agriculture or horticulture. No dating evidence was recovered from this layer, which was overlaid by bands of gravel T2[2]. Above the gravel there was a mixed deposit of rubble T2[1], which probably represented backfilling of World War II damage to the Victorian housing.

In trench 4 a series of silts T4[2], which could not be dated, overlay the peaty layer. This layer was overlaid by Victorian basements and their associated destruction rubble.

The evidence for later use of the site is therefore sparse. On Rocque's map of 1746 (Fig. 3) the site is shown to be in an area of orchards, and in close proximity to a stream called the Earls Sluice. It is possible that the waterlaid deposits above the peat layer may be the result of localised flooding of this channel.

The uppermost levels of all of the trenches demonstrated that the site had been occupied by Victorian housing. In trenches 1 and 2 a mixed and disturbed deposit was found, which probably represented post World War II site clearance. In trench 3 a property boundary wall was located, and in the N of the trench the remnants of a basement with backfilled debris, while probable garden levels were recorded in the S part of the trench. This building pattern seems similar in basic design to surviving buildings along Cobourg Road (the next road parallel to Albany Road).

Trench 4 had the remains of a deep basement/cellar fronting Albany Road. The infill within the surviving walls had a mixture of Victorian, 1940s material and very modern debris. This indicates that a recent isolated structure formerly occupied the site prior to the excavation.

APPENDED REPORTS

ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

by John Letts

INTRODUCTION

The excavation at Albany Road revealed a series of alluvial sediments above probable Pleistocene gravels and sealed beneath Roman dumping, within which were stratified two undated ditches (see section). The course of a former channel was evident as a hollow in the top of the gravel. This had been entirely covered by a layer of non-calcareous inorganic grey silty clay. Cutting the clay was a shallow ditch filled with brown organic silt and containing waterlogged twigs (Trench 3, Context 14, Sample 13). A Layer of peaty clay-silt filled the top of the ditch and extended over the inorganic clay (Trench 3, Context 8, Sample 2). This deposit had in turn been cut by a ditch in which accumulated brown highly organic loam (Trench 3, context 9, Sample 7). Finally, a layer of inorganic non-calcareous grey clay was deposited.

METHODS AND RESULTS

Samples of 250 g from each of the two ditches and the intervening layer were washed over onto a 0.2 mm sieve and analysed for plant and invertebrate remains. Macroscopic plant remains are listed in Table 1, nomenclature following Moore et al (1987). Dr M. Robinson kindly commented on the insect remains, which are given in Table 2. Mollusc shells were absent.

INTERPRETATION

The insect remains, mostly water beetles, suggest that Context 14, the early ditch, held stagnant or slowly moving water. There were not many seeds of aquatic plants but *Lemna* sp. (duckweed) was present. The most abundant remains were from *Alnus glutinosa* (alder), which was represented by fruits, female catkins and bud scales. With the exception of a single seed of *Rubus fruticosus* (agg.) (blackberry), evidence of other woody species was absent. Almost pure alder woodland probably grew over much of the area. The presence of *Hydrocotyle vulgaris* (marsh pennywort) a plant which favours a peaty soil, might suggest that this woodland was transitional to alder carr. The majority of the herbaceous species, such as *Moehringia trinerva* (sandwort) and *Urtica dioica* (stinging nettle), readily grow in damp woodland, but a few light demanding species such as *Carduus* sp. (thistle) and the *Lemna* sp. were also present. Presumably there was some clearance associated with the digging of the ditch.

The next sample in the sequence, from Context 8 suggested very different conditions. The alder woodland had entirely disappeared and the area of Trench 3 was in shallow water. Aquatic insects, such as Trichoptera (caddis) larvae and seeds of submerged aquatic plants such as *Ranunculus* S. *Batrachium* sp. (water crowfoot), *Ceratophyllum* cf. *submersum* (hornwort) and *Myriophyllum* sp. (water milfoil) were present. It is uncertain whether this

body of water just followed the line of the silted ditch or whether it was a more extensive lake, but it is clear that both a rise in water table and clearance had occurred. Tussocks of *Juncus effusus* gp. rushes probably grew at the edge of the water but these also seem to have been areas of exposed mud which supported plants such as *Chenopodium rubrum* (red goosefoot) and *Rumex maritimus* (golden dock).

The final sample suggested that Context 9, the later ditch, supported tall reedswamp vegetation of *Oenanthe aquatica* gp. (water dropwort), *Rumex hydrolapathum* (water dock) and *Schoenoplectus lacustris* (bulrush). This ditch presumably effected some drainage but there is little evidence for the terrestrial vegetation with the exception of numerous seeds of *Juncus effusus* gp. tussock rushes.

Throughout the waterlogged sequence there was no evidence from the biological remains for human activity other than clearance and the creation of the habitats of the ditches. On stratigraphic and vegetational grounds the sequence could fall anywhere between the Neolithic and Roman periods.

CONTEXT INDEX

T = TRENCH
COL = COLOUR SLIDE
BW = BLACK AND WHITE
F1 = FILM NUMBER
NK = NOT KEPT
POT = POTTERY
ROM = ROMAN
MIX = MIXED

CONTEXT:	PLAN:	SECTION:	PHOTO:	FINDS:
T1 (1)	------	--------	------	MODERN NK
(2)	1	--------	F1 1&2 COL F2 1&2 BW	NONE
T2 (1)	-------	3 & 4	--------	MODERN NK
(2)	-------	3 & 4	--------	NONE
(3)	-------	3 & 4	--------	NONE
(4)	-------	3 & 4	--------	NONE
(5)	-------	3 & 4	F1 3&4 COL F2 10,11 BW	POT ROM
(6)	-------	3 & 4	--------	NONE
(7)	-------	3 & 4	--------	NONE
(8)	1	3 & 4	--------	NONE
(9)	1	3 & 4	F1 3&4 COL F2 10,11 BW	POT MIX
(10)	1	3 & 4	F1 3&4 COL F2 10,11 BW	NONE
(11)	-------	3 & 4	----------	NONE
T3 (1)	-------	2	----------	MODERN NK
(2)	-------	2	----------	MODERN NK
(3)	-------	2	----------	POT MIX NK
(4)	-------	2	----------	NONE
(5)	-------	2	----------	NONE
(6)	-------	2	----------	NONE
(7)	-------	2	----------	NONE
(8)	-------	2	----------	NONE
(9)	1	2	F1 12,13 COL F2 16,17 BW	NONE
(10)	-------	2	----------	NONE
(11)	-------	2	----------	NONE
(12)	-------	2	----------	NONE
(13)	1	2	F1 18,19 COL F2 18 BW	NONE
(14)	1	2	F1 16,17 COL F2 19,20 BW	NONE
(15)	1	2	F1 14,15 COL F2 21,22 BW	NONE
(16)	-------	2	----------	NONE
(17)	1	2	F1 8,9,10 COL F2 12,13 BW	NONE
(18)	1	2	F1 12,13 COL F2 16,17 BW	NONE

CONTEXT:	PLAN:	SECTION:	PHOTO:	FINDS:
(19)	-------	2	----------	NONE
(20)	1	2	----------	POT ROM
T4 (1)	-------	1	----------	MODERN NK
(2)	-------	1	----------	NONE
(3)	1	1	F1 24,25 COL F2 6&7 BW	NONE
(4)	1	1	F2 3,4,5 BW	NONE
(5)	-------	1	F1 26,27 COL F2 19,20 BW	NONE
(6)	-------	1	----------	NONE
(7)	-------	1	----------	NONE

ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLE INDEX

CONTEXT	SAMPLE	
T1 (1)	NONE	
(2)	NONE	
T2 (1)	NONE	
(2)	NONE	
(3)	NONE	
(4)	NONE	
(5)	NONE	
(6)	NONE	
(7)	NONE	
(8)	NONE	
(9)	NONE	
(10)	NONE	
(11)	NONE	
T3 (1)	NONE	
(2)	NONE	
(3)	NONE	
(4)	<1>	CLAY
(5)	NONE	
(6)	NONE	
(7)	NONE	
(8)	<2>	PEATY SILT
(9)	<7>	ORGANIC SILT FILL OF (18)
(10)	<11>	CLAY
(11)	<12>	CLAY
(13)	NONE	
(14)	<4>	TWIGS FROM FILL OF (15)
	<5>	SILT FILL OF (15)
	<6>	ORGANIC REMAINS FROM FILL TO (15)
	<13>	WOOD FOR C14 ANALYSIS
(15)	NONE	
(16)	<8>	SAND
(17)	<10>	SAND - MARSH BED
T4 (1)	NONE	
(2)	NONE	
(3)	NONE	
(4)	NONE	
(5)	<3>	ORGANIC SILT FILL TO (3)
(6)	NONE	
(7)	NONE	

CERAMIC INDEX

CONTEXT	QUANTITY	DESCRIPTION	DATE
TI (1)			
(2)			
T2 (1)			
(2)			
(3)			
(4)			
(5)			
(6)			
(7)			
(8)			
(9)	1	BODY FRAGMENT	15-16th
	1	AMPH BODY	LATE 3rd
(10)			
(11)			
T3 (1)			
(2)			
(3)			
(4)			
(5)			
(6)			
(7)			
(8)			
(9)			
(10)			
(11)			
(12)			
(13)			
(14)			
(15)			
(16)			
(19)			
(20)	287	244 BODY	2nd - 3rd
		29 RIMS	
		12 BASES	
		2 HANDLES	
T4 (1)			
(2)			
(3)			
(4)			
(5)			
(6)			
(7)			

REFERENCES

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Devoy R J N 1979: Flandrian sea level changes and vegetational history of the lower Thames estuary. in *Phil. Trans. Royal Soc. Lond. B* 285, 355-407

Merriman N forthcoming: Predicting the unexpected: prehistoric sites recently discovered under alluvium in central London. in *Archaeology Under Alluvium Conference Proceedings* (BMP)

Tyers I 1988: The prehistoric peat layers (Tilbury IV). in Hinton P (ed) *Excavations in Southwark 1973-76 and Lambeth 1973-79* (London and Middlesex Archaeological Society and Surrey Archaeological Society Joint Publication No. 3, 5-12

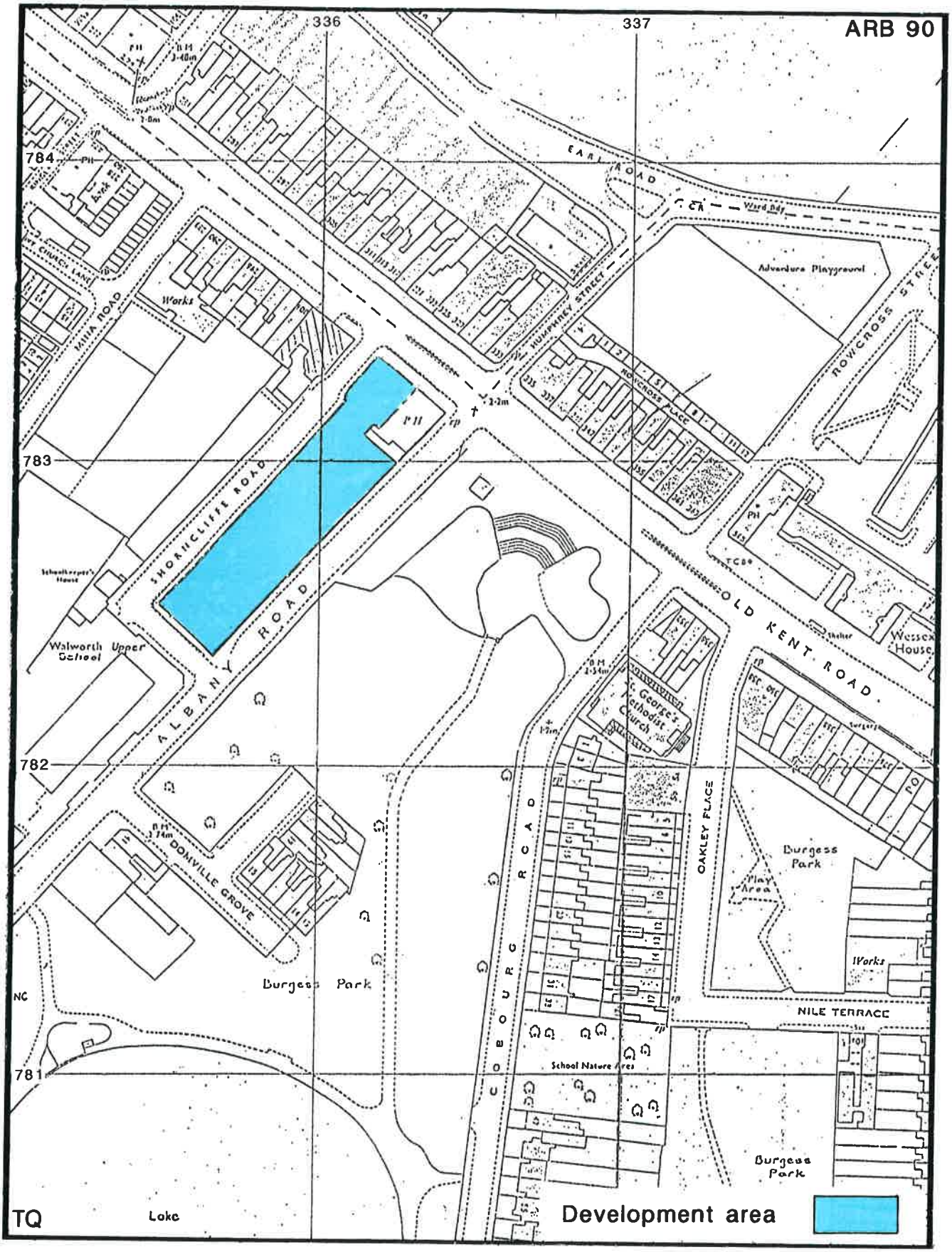


Fig. 1 Site location plan.

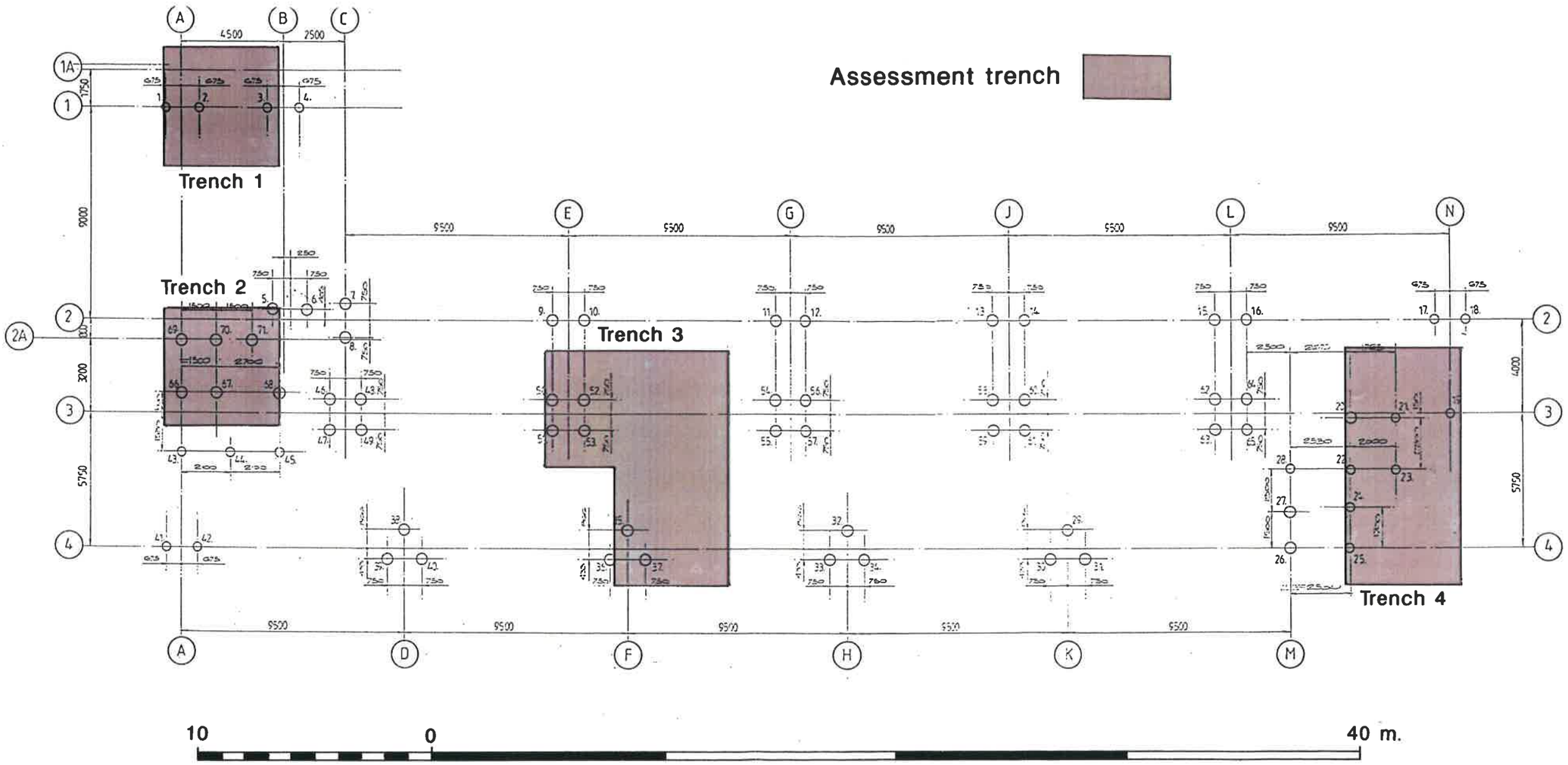
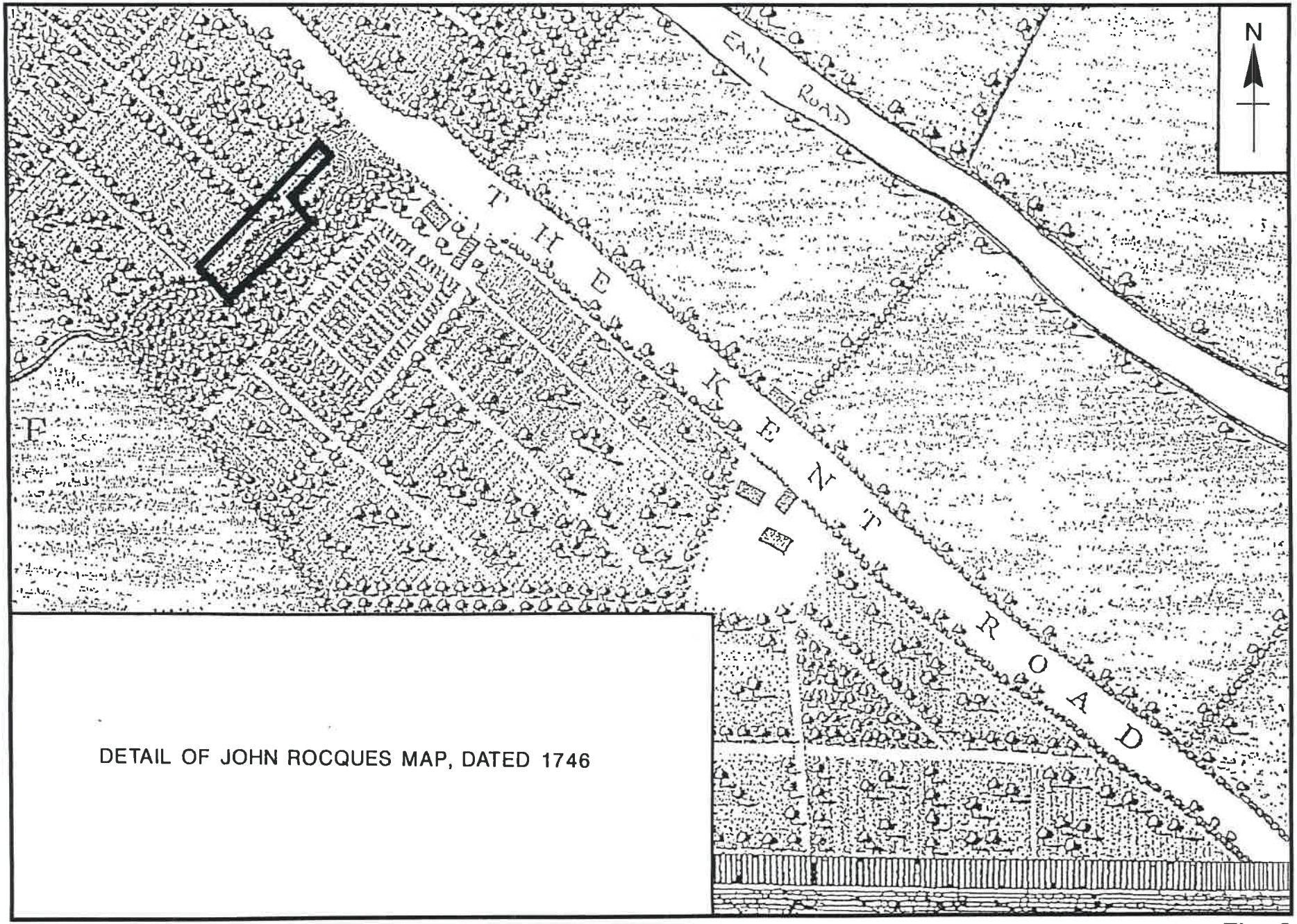

Assessment trench
Trench 1
Trench 2
Trench 3
Trench 4
A
B
C
D
E
F
G
H
J
K
L
M
N
1A
1
2
2A
3
4
4500
2500
9500
9000
3000
5750
4000
10
0
40 m.

Fig. 2



DETAIL OF JOHN ROCQUES MAP, DATED 1746

Fig. 3

Trench 2

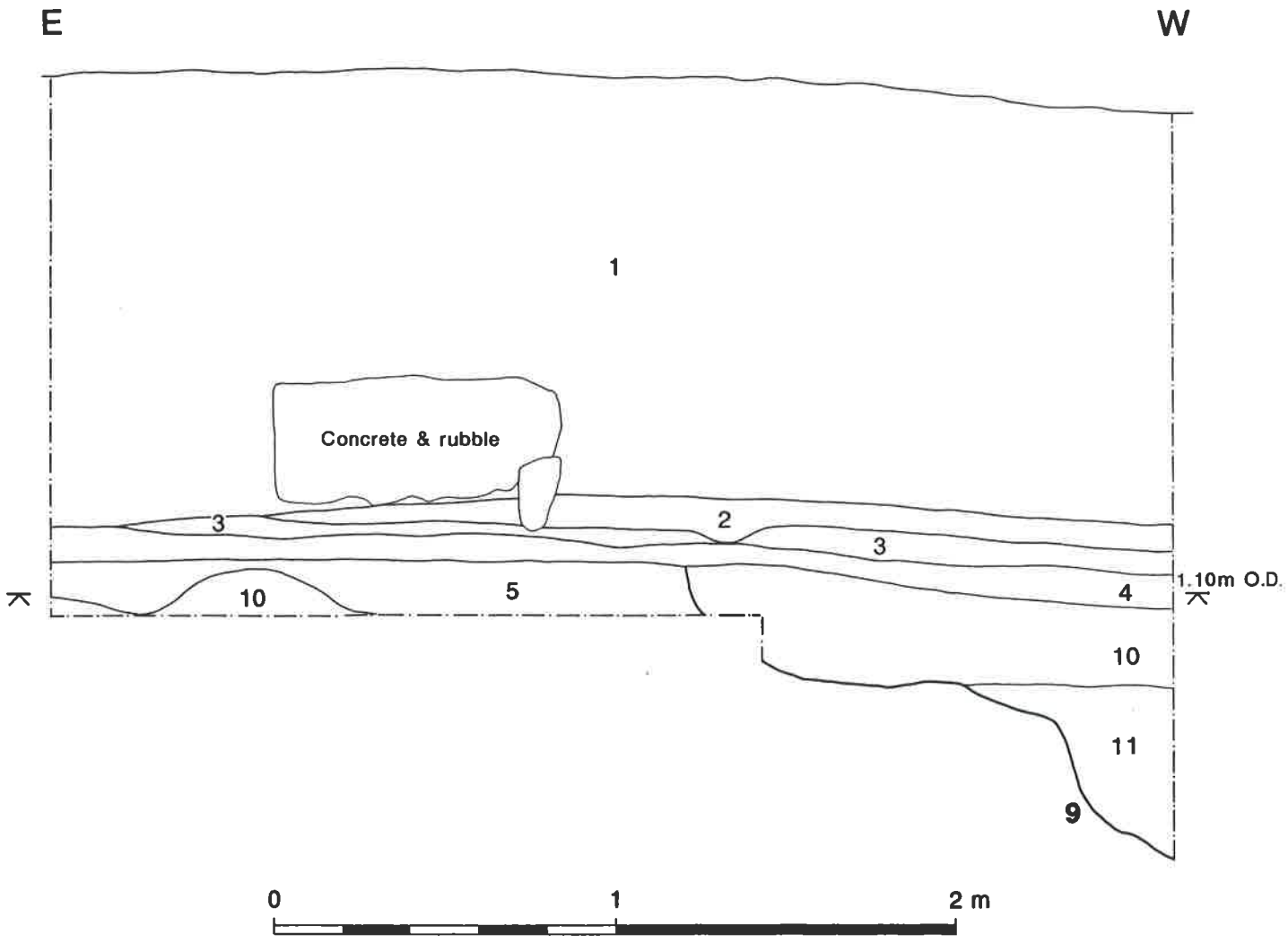


Fig. 5

Fig.4 Prehistoric Features

ARB 90

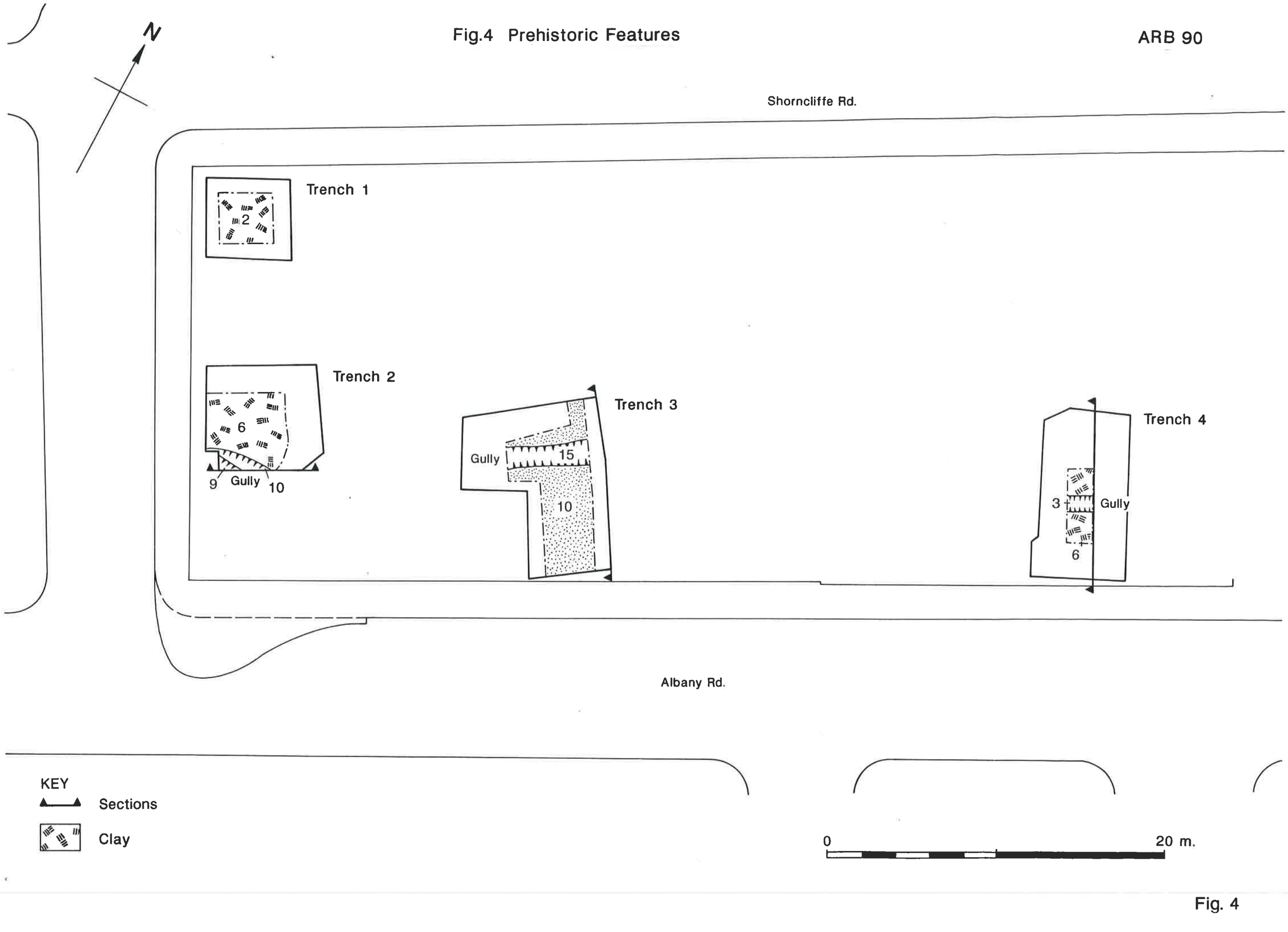


Fig. 4

ARB 90 Undated gully & Roman trackway

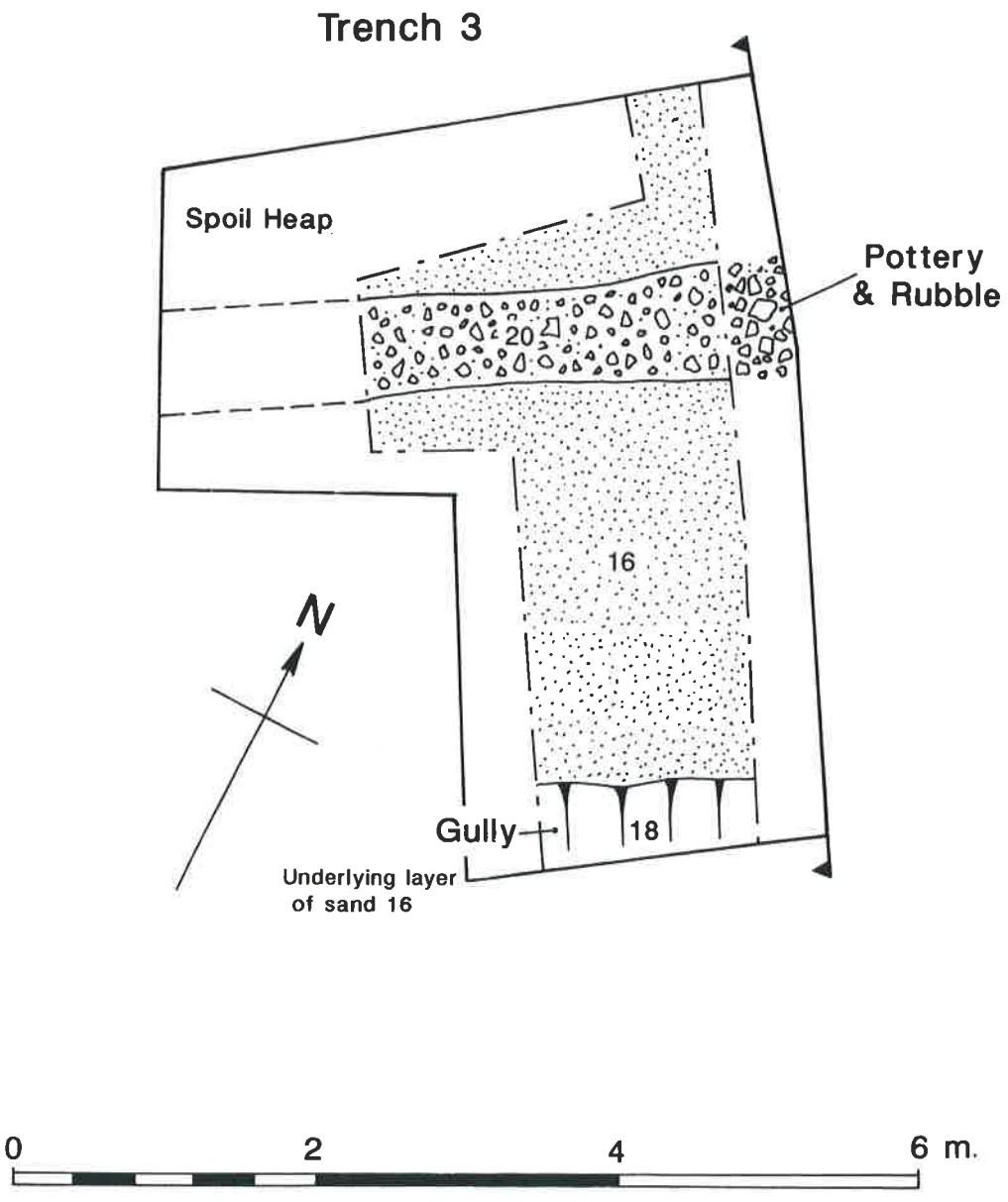
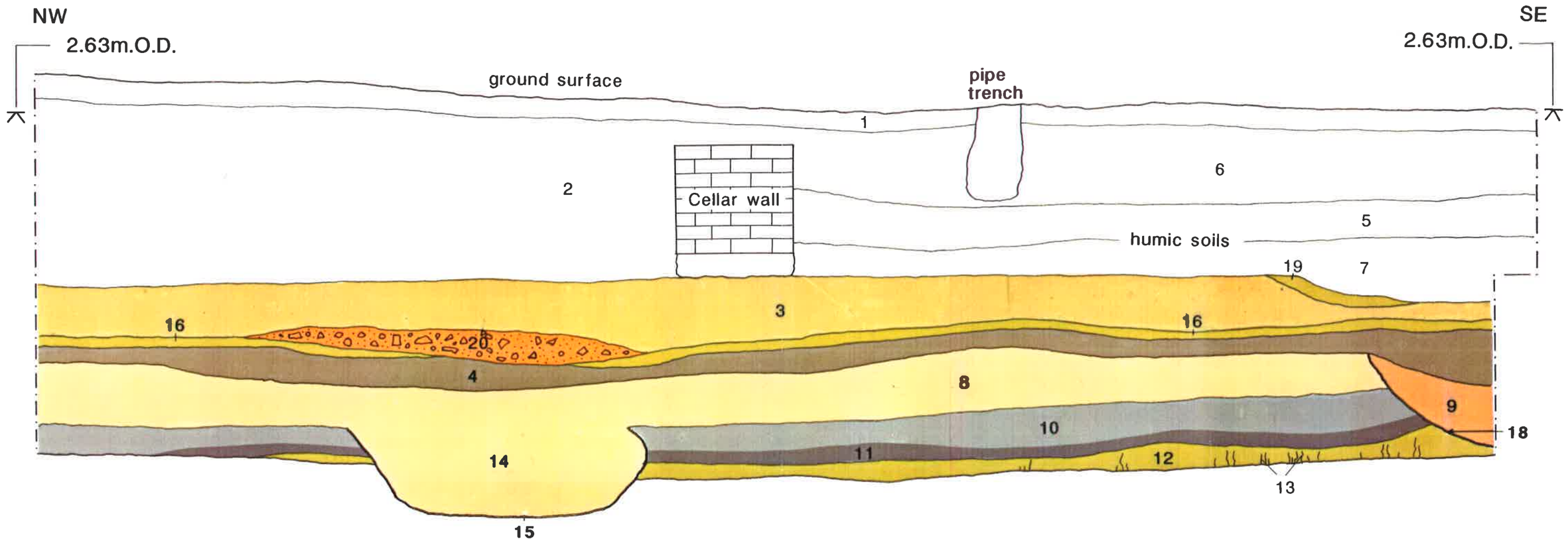


Fig. 6

ARB 90 Section 2, Trench 3



Silty loam

Roman rubble

Sand

Peat

Silt

Alluvial Deposits

1 0 7 m.

for the purpose of this document this drawing has been reduced to an odd scale to fit the page

Fig. 7

Trench 4

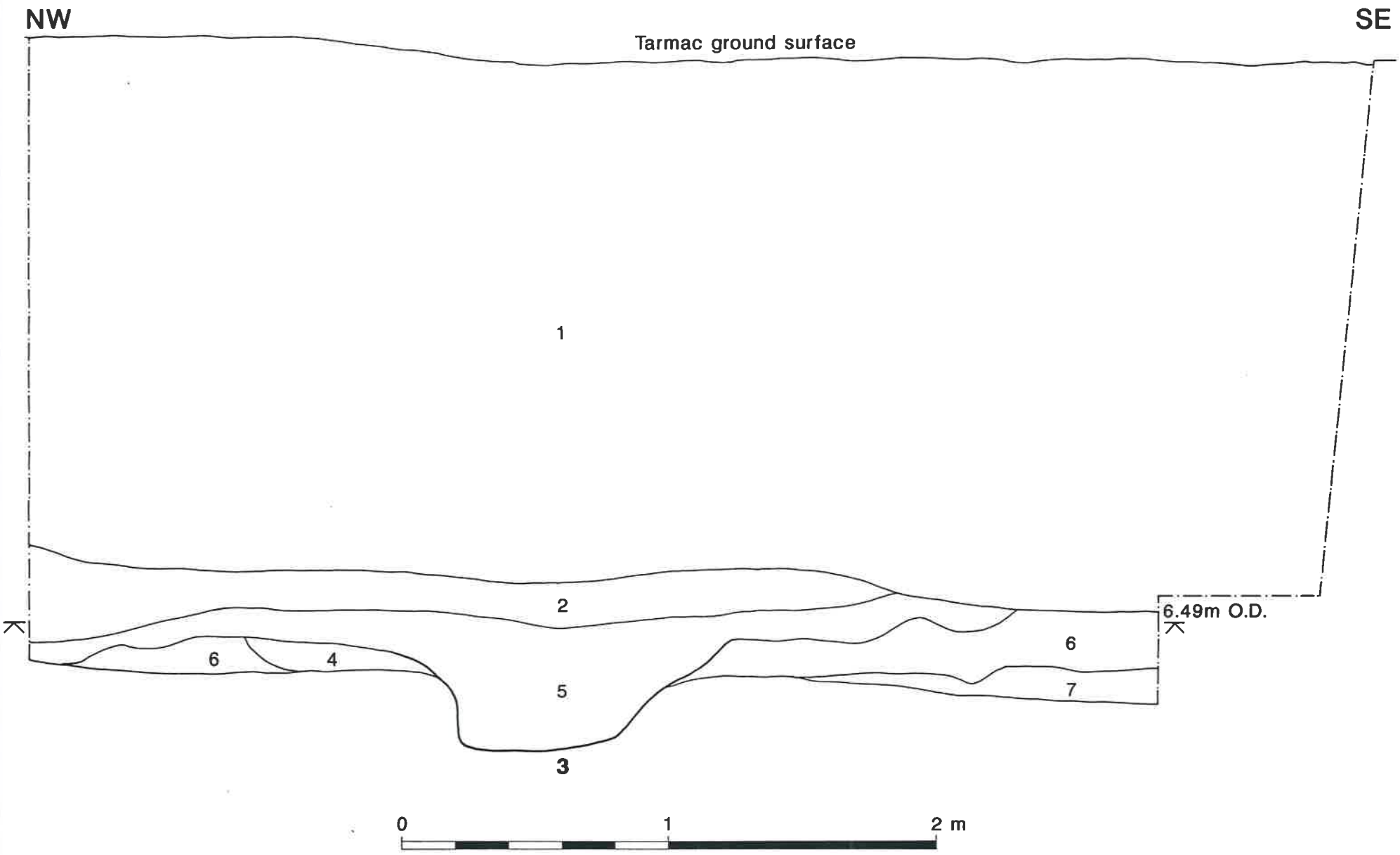


Fig. 8

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