

St. White's Farm Cinderford Gloucestershire



Archaeological Evaluation Report



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St. White's Farm Cinderford, Gloucestershire

NGR SO 656 127

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

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SUMMARY

In June 2007, Oxford Archaeology undertook a field evaluation on behalf of Waterman CPM acting on behalf of Bloor Homes. This was on pasture land adjacent to, and southwest of, St White's Farm, Cinderford (NGR SO 656 127). Thirty four evaluation trenches were excavated. Trench 5 produced substantial evidence for iron production and primary smithying dated to the 12th- 13th centuries which is likely to have been associated with the recorded medieval occupation focused upon the chapel of St White. Platform earthworks noted adjacent to the trench are likely to be associated with these remains. A hollow way recorded in Trench 4 also appears to have provided the access to this settlement and strongly suggests that the focus of any earlier buildings was upon the current location of St White's Farm. A localised dump of slag was also encountered within Trenches 25 and 26 although a colluvial soil horizon sealing this suggests an early post-medieval date. No other significant archaeological remains were encountered. Suggestions that extensive scowles existed within the site boundary appear to reflect undulations between the solid geological strata infilled with softer deposits rather than quarries.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 Between the 18th and 28th of June 2007, Oxford Archaeology (OA) undertook a field evaluation of land to the southwest of St White's Farm, Cinderford, Gloucestershire (site centred on NGR SO 656 127) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Waterman CPM (consultants) on behalf of Bloor Homes (Western) in advance of proposals to redevelop the site for housing.

1.1.2 Prior to the start of the fieldwork OA produced a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) detailing how the work would be completed in accordance with a brief set by the Archaeology Service of Gloucestershire County Council.

1.2 Geology and topography

1.2.1 The development area is situated to the south of Cinderford between the town and its neighbour Ruspidge. The development boundary, including the proposed road access, encloses approximately 7.9 ha. The current land use is rough pasture (currently under long grass) enclosed by varied field boundaries.

1.2.2 The main part of the site occupies a ridge of high ground that falls slightly to the south and steeply away to the west. The high ground along the eastern side of the development boundary lies approximately at 213 m OD sloping down to 197 m OD along the western boundary. The northern extent of the proposed access road, at its junction with St. Whites Road, occupies a high point of 237 m OD.

1.2.3 The solid geology consists of a series of Lower Carboniferous deposits collectively known as the Carboniferous Limestone Series (more recently as Dinantian). Haematite deposits are also known to exist roughly along the centre line of the site within the Drybrook Sandstone element of the Series.

1.3 **Archaeological and historical background**

1.3.1 An archaeological desktop study of the development area has previously been undertaken by Bristol and Region Archaeological Services (2004) and was supplemented by a review of the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) by OA as part of the WSI production. A summary of the results from these is presented below.

Cinderford

1.3.2 Cinderford did not come into being until the 19th century. Prior to this the surrounding area was only settled by hamlets and isolated cottages. The creation of the town was a result of the larger scale expansion of industrial works that had long been associated with the Forest of Dean area. Iron ore, coal, shale and ochre had all been extracted from the forest area for many centuries alongside the plentiful timber resource.

1.3.3 The primary industrial focus of Cinderford was mining and ironworks. Cinderford furnace was in production in 1797 and was one of the forest's main iron production centres. By the middle of the 19th century Cinderford had developed into one of the main centres for iron production with a number of foundries and engineering businesses located within the town. The town continued to develop through the later part of the 19th century and into the 20th century. Evidence of probable iron working is present within the site boundaries as a linear depression along the line of the Drybrook Sandstone strata. Infilled scowles relating to ore extraction also exist to the immediate east of the site. The dates of these features are unknown but they are thought to originate mostly from the post-medieval period.

1.3.4 Earlier remains have been suggested within Cinderford with 'Traces of Roman Paving' annotated on the 1:10,560 series OS map of 1891 and repeated on subsequent OS editions. This occupies the line of the existing St White's Road to the west of the development boundary. Possible boundary stones were also recorded by BARAS within the site boundary along its western side.

St White's

1.3.5 St White's is known to have a long history linked closely to the medieval Flaxley Abbey and Flaxley Grange. The grange is thought to have been sited upon the location of the current St White's Farm and included a chapel or hermitage dedicated to the saint. Following the dissolution the focus of settlement moved to the southwest with the former grange becoming part of a leasehold estate. Iron ore mining is recorded in the later part of the 13th century at St White's.

- 1.3.6 The current farmhouse dates from the 19th century and no physical remains of the medieval grange have been recorded.

2 **EVALUATION AIMS**

2.1 **General**

- 2.1.1 To establish the presence/absence, extent, date, nature, function, and phasing of any archaeological remains present within the development boundary.
- 2.1.2 Where encountered suitable archaeological deposits were to be sampled to establish their environmental potential.

2.2 **Specific**

- 2.2.1 As part of the BARAS (2004) study a field walkover survey within the current site boundary identified several features of potential. These invariably were characterised by depressions or stone/rubble concentrations at surface level. Some are clearly identifiable as iron ore extraction workings as also shown in the SMR data along with several probable forest boundary markers. However, several other linear features were identified. These appear to be former field boundaries or possible trackways. These features were targeted by specifically located trenches where possible.

3 **EVALUATION METHODOLOGY**

3.1 **Scope of fieldwork**

- 3.1.1 The evaluation comprised thirty-four trenches (Trenches 1-34), each measuring 30 m x 1.8 m, representing an approximate 2% sample of the development area (Fig. 2). Due to the proximity of recently erected fencing, Trenches 2 and 21 were shortened to 22.2 m and 23.8 m respectively.
- 3.1.2 The overburden was removed under close archaeological supervision by a 13 tonne 360° tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket. Machine excavation ceased at the uppermost archaeological horizon or natural geology depending upon which was encountered first.

3.2 **Fieldwork methods and recording**

- 3.2.1 Exposed archaeological horizons and features were cleaned by hand and sample excavated to determine their extent and nature, and to retrieve finds and environmental samples where relevant.
- 3.2.2 All archaeological features were planned at 1:50 and, where excavated, their sections drawn at scales of 1:20.
- 3.2.3 All features were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film.

3.2.4 Recording followed procedures laid down in the *OAU Fieldwork Manual* (Wilkinson 1992).

3.3 **Finds**

3.3.1 Finds were recovered by hand during the course of the excavation and bagged by context.

3.4 **Palaeo-environmental evidence**

3.4.1 A single deposit was sampled to retrieve Palaeo-environmental evidence.

3.5 **Presentation of results**

3.5.1 This report outlines the significant findings from the evaluation. Section 5 describes the sequence of deposits and archaeological remains from the trenches where archaeological deposits were encountered. Those trenches without archaeological remains have not been described in detail. An inventory of all finds and contexts including measurements not presented within the text is provided in Appendix 1.

4 **RESULTS: GENERAL**

4.1 **Soils and ground conditions**

4.1.1 The site occupies an exposed position on sloping ground and is currently under pasture (long grass). The trenches were opened up by machine under dry conditions making potential archaeological deposits and features easily identifiable.

4.1.2 The geology was variable across the site but generally corresponded with that shown on Drawings 2617/3 and 2617/4 (E J Wilson and Associates, 2003). Across the highest lying levels of the site weathered Carboniferous Limestone outcrops (possible Crease Limestone in Trench 34) were encountered. Weathered outcrops of sandstone were encountered along the central spine of the site with sandy-clay head deposits along the lower levels. However, the outcrops of solid geology were inconsistent and uneven at surface level and deposits of coarse sand and grit and finer deposits of clay infilled the variations and undulations between these. These areas were also targeted for investigation to establish if they represented man-made features such as scowles within Trenches 6, 8, 23 and 24. These trenches are not described in detail below as the deposits are thought to be natural although summary data is presented within Appendix 1 and on figures 3 through to 7.

4.1.3 During the night of 24-25th June, abnormally heavy rain significantly affected the trenches resulting in flooding of those located on poorly drained clay. However, prior to the heavy rain, Trenches 6 to 24 had been fully recorded and it was still possible to investigate the potential archaeological deposits within the remaining unrecorded trenches. However Trench 2 remained almost fully submerged although no archaeological deposits and features were noted during the machine excavation of the overburden.

4.2 Distribution of archaeological deposits

4.2.1 A total of 11 trenches contained possible evidence of archaeological deposits and these are described in turn below. A further 4 trenches (6, 8, 23 and 24) contained possible evidence for iron extraction pits or scowles although further machine excavation revealed each of these to be variations within the natural geology and overlying deposits as described above. The remaining 19 trenches revealed no evidence for archaeological deposits or features. Table 1 below summarises the presence/absence of investigated features within the trenches.

Table 1

Trenches with features and/or deposits	1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 13, 25, 26, 30, 31, 34
Empty trenches	2, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 27, 28, 29, 32, 33

5 RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS

5.1 Description of deposits

Trench 1

5.1.1 A small pit (103) was partially exposed towards the southeastern end of the trench (Fig. 3). Roughly circular in plan, it measured *c* 0.92 m across and 0.45 m deep with uneven sides and base (Fig. 8 section 100). It was filled with a mid brown sandy silt (104) that was of a similar appearance to that of the overlying subsoil. A single sherd of 18th or 19th century earthenware pottery was recovered from the upper level of its fill. Its irregularity, the similarity of the infill to the overlying soil and the date of the pottery suggest that this is a recent treehole.

Trench 3

5.1.2 A shallow linear feature (302) was aligned NW-SE across the centre of the trench (Fig.3). It measured 1.10 m wide and 0.20 m deep with a flat but somewhat irregular base (Fig. 8 section 300). It was filled with a mixed mid yellowish-brown silty sand (303) similar in nature to the surrounding natural. Above was a mid-brown sandy silty sandy (304), similar to the overlying topsoil. No finds were present within the excavated sample of this feature.

Trench 4

5.1.3 The western edge of an extant hollow way (402) was revealed in the northeastern end of the trench (Fig. 3). The hollow way remains visible as a distinct earthwork with its eastern edge defined by the existing hedge boundary beyond the end of the trench. Excavation of the evaluation trench across the full width of the feature was not possible due to the close proximity of overhead cables. The earthwork runs in a NW-SE direction from an existing access gate to the field from St. Whites Road and curves around to meet the northern side of the existing farm complex. This is also

clearly evident on the early editions of OS maps where it is shown as a footpath. The current access to the farm is from the northeast along the high ground, as shown on the 1878 OS first edition map, strongly suggesting that the hollow way pre dates the current farm.

Trench 5

- 5.1.4 Trench 5 was positioned approximately 50m to the west of the existing St. White's Farm complex (Fig. 4). Immediately below the existing topsoil (501) was a thick spread of charcoal-rich blackish silt (500) containing frequent inclusions of slag. This deposit produced a moderate assemblage of late 12th to 13th century pottery and extended for approximately 14 m along the centre of the trench with a maximum thickness of 0.20 m before thinning out. An isolated area of similar silt was positioned to the immediate northeast of the large spread of this deposit. A 2.00 m excavated slot through the centre of the main area (Fig. 8, section 500) revealed that this overlay a thin and patchy compacted yellowish brown clay (504) with blocks of local stone embedded within it. This deposit was largely confined to the southern side of the excavated slot and may represent the patchy remains of a surface laid directly onto the underlying natural. The full extent of this was masked by the overlying layer (501).

Trench 7

- 5.1.5 Located towards the southern part of the trench was a linear (704) feature orientated approximately NE-SW (Fig. 4). It measured 1.40 m in width and 0.30 m in depth with a slightly concave base (Fig. 8 section 700). It was filled with very compact light brown silty sand (703), similar to the overlying subsoil. It contained fragments of clay-pipe, glass and pottery sherds of probable 19th century date.

Trench 13

- 5.1.6 Located at the west end of the trench was an apparent linear feature (1303) orientated approximately NE-SW (Fig. 5). It measured 1.1 m in width and 0.25 m in depth and had two fills (1304 and 1305) both comprising sandy deposits derived from the surrounding colluvial deposits which overlie the solid geology and form the subsoil horizon across the base of the hill slope (Fig. 8 section 1300).

Trench 25

- 5.1.7 This trench was located on a relatively steep slope across the higher levels of the site (Fig. 6). Due to this, relatively thick deposits of colluvium were encountered throughout (Fig. 9 section 2500). At the lower levels of the western end of the trench a thick deposit of slag (2503), up to 0.40 m deep, was present overlying the lowest horizon of colluvium and extending southwards from the trench. Its revealed dimensions were approximately 2.30 m x 1.10 m and it appears to have been confined near to the base of the steep slope the trench was sighted upon at the point where this levels out slightly. The deposit was distinctive in that it did not contain charcoal inclusions suggesting it represents a dump of waste slag material away from

its original source. A small assemblage (6 sherds, 68g) of late 15th to early 17th century pottery was recovered from the overlying colluvial deposit 2501 that partly sealed the slag deposit.

Trench 26

- 5.1.8 A similar deposit of slag (2603) was found at the north end of Trench 26 approximately 20 m south of Trench 24 (Fig. 6). This probably represents the southern extent of this deposit. Here it extended for a maximum distance of 3.3 m from the north end of the trench and was up to 0.10 m thick (Fig. 9 section 2600).

Trench 30

- 5.1.9 A shallow undulation filled with a dark brown/black silt horizon (3003) was present along the southern edge of the trench truncating the colluvial subsoil (3004) above the geology (Fig. 7). This deposit varied in thickness from 0.10 m to 0.45 m and extended for 12.20 m from the south end of the trench. At its southern end it had filled and levelled a slight hollow that had formed in the underlying natural sand (Fig. 9 section 3000), whereas towards the north it became less distinct. A colluvial horizon (3001) of the same appearance as the lower level (3004) overlay the deposit. The shallow undulation and its infill correspond with a possible extant hollow way which was visible during the course of the excavation running in an approximate east to west direction. This infill may therefore represent a developed turf horizon that formed within the base of the hollow way once it had gone out of use.

Trench 31

- 5.1.10 Towards the centre of the trench the topsoil (3104) was noticeably darker than to the north and south and seemingly filled a shallow hollow (3103) (Fig. 7). This may have formed in a similar manner to the 'turf' within the hollow identified in Trench 30 although the lack of any colluvial deposits above this level suggests that this is of a more recent date (Fig. 9 section 3100). The deposit was absent on the east side of the trench.

Trench 34

- 5.1.11 Several soil marks with an irregular appearance were encountered within Trench 34 (Fig. 34). At the southern end a linear ditch-like feature (3406), measuring up to 2.10 m wide and 0.60 m deep, was orientated NW-SE across the trench. Excavation proved this to have very irregular sides and base and to be infilled with a very homogeneous, sterile and compact orange brown clay, clearly implying a naturally derived feature (Fig. 9 section 3400).
- 5.1.12 Immediately to its north was a small pit (3404), 1.00 m across and 0.30 m deep, with a similar irregular profile and filled with identical clean compact clay. However, a 0.15 m thick deposit of charcoal mixed with fragments of slag (3403) sealed this and infilled a shallow hollow created by the natural feature. No dating evidence was

present within the excavated sample and it does not appear to represent significant survival of a potential archaeological deposit.

5.2 Finds and Environmental Remains

5.2.1 Detailed reports for all finds recovered during the evaluation are listed in the appendices. Presented below are summary descriptions of the major assemblages recovered during the evaluation.

Medieval and post-medieval pottery (see Appendix 2)

5.2.2 A total of 33 sherds of pottery (338 g) were recovered from 6 contexts. The largest single assemblage comprises 20 sherds recovered from a charcoal and slag rich layer (500) within Trench 5. These represent at least three vessels including two coarseware cooking pots/jars, and, together with a single glazed sherd probably from a jug, these probably date to the late 12th or the 13th century.

5.2.3 Two contexts (2501 and 3301) produced unglazed orange-red wares possibly of late medieval or early post-medieval date (late 15th to early 17th century). Other contexts produced local glazed post-medieval red earthenwares dating from the 17th to the 18th or early 19th centuries. These were represented by only a few sherds each and derived from deposits lacking any archaeological potential.

Metalworking debris (see Appendix 4)

5.2.4 A total of 19.6 kg of iron slag was recovered from two contexts from Trenches 5 and 25. The waste material is indicative of iron smelting and included some fragments suggestive of secondary working of the ore (metalworking) having occurred at the site. Also a number of fragments with obvious flow features (lobes and tongues) are indicative of tapping. Large amounts of hammerscale and spheroidal hammer slag were also present that may indicate *in situ* working areas from the primary stages of bloom processing.

Carbonised plant remains (see Appendix 5)

5.2.5 The single sample composed largely of slag, charcoal, occasional small fragments of pottery and fragments of sandstone and quartz was recovered from deposit 500 in Trench 5. It appears to be a collection of waste products formed from smelting and possibly metalworking. The flots primarily comprised oak (*Quercus* sp.) charcoal with the residue also containing moderate quantities of oak charcoal. No other charred plant remains (e.g. cereal grain, weed taxa, etc.) were observed.

6 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

6.1 Reliability of field investigation

6.1.1 The evaluation represents an approximate 2 % sample of the proposed development area (as depicted on Figure 2) and therefore the results can only be an indication of the potential for the absence/presence of archaeological remains across the proposal area. However, the evaluation did not reveal any evidence of large-scale post-medieval or modern impacts on the underlying geology. Therefore where an absence of archaeological features has been recorded this can also be defined as a clear absence of historical activity in these locations.

6.2 Overall interpretation

6.2.1 The evaluation revealed two areas that can be attributed, with any degree of certainty, to the use of the site prior to the later post-medieval and modern period. The metalworking debris found within Trench 5, located on roughly level ground immediately to the west of the site of St White's Farm, certainly attests to the use of this area for iron working in the late 12th to 13th century. Clearly both smelting and primary metal working were being undertaken in the immediate vicinity although no such *in situ* deposits to represent these (e.g. hearths or other areas subject to intense heat) were found within the trench. However, the presence of large densities of micro slags, reflecting the working of the primary bloom product after smelting, does suggest that the potential remains for the identification of associated *in situ* working areas such as the placing of anvils within, or adjacent to, the trench. Alongside this, the character of deposit 500 with high concentrations of charcoal mixed with the slag suggests that this has not travelled very far from its point of use. Combined with the possibility that a rammed clay surface is preserved below the charcoal and slag layer, this indicates a significant working area related to the extraction and processing of iron here.

6.2.2 Observation of the topography between the location of Trench 5 and the existing St White's Farm also identified several very clear rectangular platforms terraced and/or slightly built up upon the hill slope. These lay outside of the access road corridor boundary and no formal survey of these was undertaken. Coupled with the documentary evidence and SMR entry for the presence of a chapel dedicated to St White at this location (see BARAS 2004), these are clear evidence for significant occupation and activity on the slope south of the existing St White's Farm through which the access road is aligned. The extant hollow way partly investigated within Trench 4 seems most likely to have been the main access to this settlement and may even have formed a boundary to the north of the main occupation and activities. Its alignment into the northern side of the current farm buildings is also of interest as this could reflect the presence of significant earlier buildings being located within the farm area as suggested in the SMR entry.

- 6.2.3 A second area of metalworking waste was found towards the south of the site within Trenches 25 and 26 although this seems to represent dumping relating to activity elsewhere, probably from further up the slope to the east of the site. These trenches are situated close to the extant disused quarries/scowles located immediately to the east of the site, although these are thought to be of post-medieval date; a probability perhaps confirmed by the recovery of a small pottery assemblage of early post-medieval date from the colluvial soil horizon sealing the dump of slag.
- 6.2.4 No conclusive evidence for iron ore mining was encountered within the excavated trenches despite these being targeted over the sites of possible scowles. However, it is known that such workings are largely present within the Crease and Lower Whitehead limestone beds with most of the mine entrances to be found around the edge of the limestone. Localised pockets of iron ore have also been found in the lower part of the Limestone Shales, the Lower Dolomite and the Drybrook Limestone (Oldham 1999). The two extant scowles to the SE of the site are clearly located within the boundaries of the Grease Limestone outcrops as depicted on Plan 2617/3 (E J Wilson 2003). Indeed the existing St White's farm straddles the western edge of the outcrop. Geotechnical ground investigations revealed 'probable made ground' in two trenches (Trench 1 and 2) along the line of a presumed Haematite vein that revealed 'orange brown to red brown disorientated angular to subangular cobbles and boulders' (Applied Geology 2007). Each measured 4.20 m across and underlay over 1.00 m of colluvial deposits. If these do represent evidence for iron extraction, it seems most likely that these are small or localised activities and appear likely to be early in date. These trenches are located adjacent to OA Trenches 7 and 14 respectively.
- 6.2.5 It is likely that the east-west linear features observed during the walk over (BARAS 2004; Feature H), located towards the south of the site, represent hollow ways or tracks, possibly leading to the extant scowles to the east of the site or to St. White's Farm. Two such hollow ways were revealed in Trenches 30 and 31 although these are undated.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Ctxt No</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Width (m)</i>	<i>Thick. (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>	<i> Finds</i>	<i>No./wt</i>	<i>Date</i>
001								
	100	Layer		0.15	Modern Topsoil			
	101	Layer		0.20	Subsoil			
	102	Layer			Natural limestone/sand/clay			
	103	Cut	0.92	0.45	Tree Throw?			
	104	Fill	0.92	0.45	Fill of 103	Pottery	1/6g	18-19C
002								
					submerged trench no archaeology noted prior to inundation			
003								
	300	Layer		0.48	Modern Topsoil			
	301	Layer			Natural sand			
	302	Cut	1.10	0.20	Shallow linear			
	303	Fill		0.10	Fill of 302			
	304	Fill		0.02	Fill of 302			
004								
	400	Layer		0.45-0.65	Modern Topsoil	Stone	1/515g	
	401	Layer			Natural sand/gravel			
	402	Cut			Hollow way			
005								
	500	Layer		0.10	Charcoal rich spread	Pottery Slag CBM	20/148g 11,832g 5/182g	L12-13C
	501	Layer		0.24-0.40	Modern Topsoil	Pottery	1/14g	med/ p-med
	502	Layer		0.14-0.21	Subsoil			
	503	Layer			Natural clay			
	504	Layer		0.02	Possible floor surface			
006								
	600	Layer		0.19-0.23	Modern Topsoil			
	601	Layer		0.17-0.27	Subsoil			
	602	Layer			Natural sandstone/clay			
	603	Cut	25.00		Potential quarry pit - excavation proved this to be variation of the natural geology			
	604	Fill		1.90	Fill of 603 (Natural clay?)			

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Ctxt No</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Width (m)</i>	<i>Thick. (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>	<i>Finds</i>	<i>No./wt</i>	<i>Date</i>
007								
	700	Layer		0.16-0.17	Modern Topsoil			
	701	Layer		0.12-0.15	Subsoil			
	702	Layer			Natural clay			
	703			0.40	Fill of 703	Pottery Slag Glass	4/92g 4/96g 1/4g	17-19C
	704		1.40		Shallow linear			
008								
	800	Layer		0.27-0.35	Modern Topsoil			
	801	Layer		0.20-0.29	Subsoil			
	802	Layer			Natural sand/clay			
	803	Cut	11.00		Potential quarry pit - excavation proved this to be variation of the natural geology			
	804	Fill			Fill of 804 (natural clay)			
	805	Fill			Fill of 806			
	806	Cut		0.50	Rubble filled pit			
009								
	900	Layer		0.18-0.20	Modern Topsoil			
	901	Layer		0.31-0.43	Subsoil			
	902	Layer			Natural sand/clay			
010								
	1000	Layer		0.15-0.27	Modern Topsoil			
	1001	Layer		0.33-0.43	Subsoil			
	1002	Layer			Natural sand/clay			
011								
	1100	Layer		0.14-0.26	Modern Topsoil			
	1101	Layer		0.32-0.53	Subsoil			
	1102	Layer			Natural			
	1103	Cut	1.10		Modern disturbance			
	1104	Fill		0.20	Fill of 1103			
012								
	1200	Layer		0.20-0.26	Modern Topsoil			
	1201	Layer		0.30-0.46	Subsoil			
	1202	Layer			Natural sand			
013								
	1300	Layer		0.33-0.46	Modern Topsoil			

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Ctxt No</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Width (m)</i>	<i>Thick. (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>	<i>Finds</i>	<i>No./wt</i>	<i>Date</i>
	1301	Layer		0.47	Subsoil			
	1302	Layer			Natural sand			
	1303	Cut	1.10		Shallow linear			
	1304	Fill		0.18	Fill of 1303			
	1305	Fill		0.50	Fill of 1303			
	1306	Cut	0.20		Modern land drain			
	1307	Fill			Fill of 1306	CBM	3/347g	
014								
	1400	Layer		0.20-0.40	Modern Topsoil			
	1401	Layer		0.23-0.34	Subsoil			
	1402	Layer			Natural sand/clay			
015								
	1500	Layer		0.25-0.30	Modern Topsoil			
	1501	Layer		0.25-0.50	Subsoil			
	1502	Layer			Natural sand			
016								
	1600	Layer		0.23-0.30	Modern Topsoil			
	1601	Layer		0.07-0.60	Subsoil			
	1602	Layer			Natural sand			
	1603	Cut	0.44		Modern land drain			
	1604	Fill		0.18	Fill of 1603			
017								
	1700	Layer		0.15-0.23	Modern Topsoil			
	1701	Layer		0.15-0.44	Subsoil			
	1702	Layer			Natural sandstone/clay			
018								
	1800	Layer		0.46-0.55	Modern Topsoil			
	1801	Layer		0.37	Subsoil			
	1802	Layer			Natural sand			
019								
	1900	Layer		0.26-0.40	Modern Topsoil			
	1901	Layer		0.26-0.28	Subsoil			
	1902	Layer			Natural sand/clay			
020								
	2000	Layer		0.50-0.56	Modern Topsoil			

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Ctxt No</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Width (m)</i>	<i>Thick. (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>	<i>Finds</i>	<i>No./wt</i>	<i>Date</i>
	2001	Layer		0.28-0.35	Subsoil			
	2002	Layer			Natural sand/clay			
021								
	2100	Layer		0.18-0.20	Modern Topsoil			
	2101	Layer		0.12-0.43	Subsoil			
	2102	Layer			Natural clay/sand			
022								
	2200	Layer		0.40-0.45	Modern Topsoil			
	2201	Layer			Natural clay			
023								
	2300	Layer		0.17-0.40	Modern Topsoil			
	2301	Layer		0.40	Subsoil			
	2302	Layer			Natural clay/sand			
	2303	Cut			Potential quarry pit - excavation proved this to be variation of the natural geology			
	2304	Fill			Fill of 2304 (natural sandstone)			
024								
	2400	Layer		0.25-0.30	Modern Topsoil			
	2401	Layer		0.20-0.30	Subsoil			
	2402	Layer			Natural clay/sand			
	2403	Cut			Potential quarry pit - excavation proved this to be variation of the natural geology			
	2404	Fill			Fill of 4304 (natural clay/sandstone)			
025								
	2500	Layer		0.25-0.35	Modern Topsoil			
	2501	Layer		0.24-0.57	Subsoil	Pottery	6/68g	L15-E17C?
	2502	Layer			Natural sand			
	2503	Layer		0.40	Slag spread	Slag Stone	35/6835g 1/157g	
	2504	Layer		0.42	Lower subsoil			
026								
	2600	Layer		0.25-0.33	Modern Topsoil			
	2601	Layer		0.43	Subsoil			
	2602	Layer			Natural sand			
	2603	Layer		0.10	Slag spread			
027								
	2701	Layer		0.18-0.26	Modern Topsoil			

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Ctxt No</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Width (m)</i>	<i>Thick. (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>	<i>Finds</i>	<i>No./wt</i>	<i>Date</i>
	2702	Layer		0.10-0.13	Subsoil			
	2703	Layer			Natural sand			
028								
	2800	Layer		0.29-0.35	Modern Topsoil			
	2801	Layer		0.49-0.56	Subsoil			
	2802	Layer			Natural sand			
029								
	2900	Layer		0.10-0.14	Modern Topsoil			
	2901	Layer		0.15-0.21	Subsoil			
	2902	Layer			Natural sand			
030								
	3000	Layer		0.41-0.48	Modern Topsoil			
	3001	Layer		0.19-0.36	Subsoil			
	3002	Layer			Natural sand			
	3003	Layer		0.20	Buried turf/hollow way fill?			
	3004	Layer			Lower subsoil			
031								
	3100	Layer		0.19-0.26	Modern Topsoil			
	3101	Layer		0.19-0.29	Subsoil			
	3102	Layer			Natural clay			
	3103	Cut	4.20		Cut of Hollow way			
	3104	Fill		0.50	Buried turf/hollow way fill?			
032								
	3200	Layer		0.25-0.27	Modern Topsoil			
	3201	Layer		0.26-0.34	Subsoil			
	3202	Layer			Natural sand			
033								
	3300	Layer		0.15-0.18	Modern Topsoil			
	3301	Layer		0.30-0.65	Subsoil	Pottery	1/10g	L15-E17C?
	3302	Layer			Natural sand and clay			
034								
	3400	Layer		0.26-0.30	Modern Topsoil			
	3401	Layer		0.30-0.37	Subsoil			
	3402	Layer			Natural clay and sand			

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Ctxt No</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Width (m)</i>	<i>Thick. (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>	<i>Finds</i>	<i>No./wt</i>	<i>Date</i>
	3403	Layer		0.15	Charcoal spread	Slag	1/246g	
	3404	Cut	1.00		Possible Pit			
	3405	Fill		0.30	Fill of 3404			
	3406	Cut	2.10		Possible ditch			
	3407	Fill		0.60	Fill of 3406			

APPENDIX 2 POTTERY AND CBM ASSESSMENT AND SPOT DATING

by John Cotter

Introduction and methodology

A total of 33 sherds of pottery weighing 338 g. were recovered from 6 contexts. This is of medieval and post-medieval date. All the pottery was examined and spot-dated during the present evaluation stage. For each context the total pottery sherd count and weight were recorded followed by the context spot-date. The spot-date reflects the date-bracket during which the latest pottery types in the context are estimated to have been produced or were in general circulation. Comments on the presence of datable types were also recorded, usually with mention of vessel form (jugs, bowls etc.) and any other attributes worthy of note (eg. decoration etc.).

Date and nature of the assemblage

Overall the pottery assemblage is in a fragmentary condition, although some sherds are quite fresh and a few are fairly large although others are extremely worn making precise identification difficult. Ordinary domestic pottery types are represented. The types present are summarised below. More detailed descriptions can be found in the spot-dates list.

Context 500 produced the highest number of sherds – 20 sherds representing at least three vessels. These include two coarseware cooking pots/jars and a single glazed sherd probably from a jug. These probably date to the late 12th or the 13th century. The coarsewares include a rim and sagging base fragments in a sandy brownish-grey ware which is probably of local or regional origin. It has some similarities with Worcestershire Fabric 58, a sandy limestone-tempered ware of 11th-12th century date which is thought to have a Midlands source, but the fabric here is lacking in limestone. The other coarseware present, occurring as sagging base and body sherds, is orange-brown and heavily grit-tempered. This is quite likely to be medieval Malvernian ware which is tempered with distinctive igneous/metamorphic rock fragments and mica (Vince 1977). The glazed jug sherd present, which is quite small and worn, is likely to be a finer variant of Malvernian ware. A piece of 18th/19th century brick found in context 500 is probably intrusive (see CBM report).

Two contexts (2501 and 3301) produced unglazed orange-red wares possibly of late medieval or early post-medieval date (late 15th to early 17th century?). Other contexts produced local glazed post-medieval red earthenwares dating from the 17th to the 18th or early 19th centuries. These were represented by only a few sherds each.

<i>Ctxt</i>	<i>No. of sherds</i>	<i>Weight (g)</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Comment</i>
104	1	6	18-19C	Bs post-med red earthenware (PMRE) with int clear glaze
500	20	148	L12-13C	[But see CBM with frag 18/19C brick] Pot all med. Mostly 1 cpot with rim and sagging base frags. Soft light brownish-grey sandy ware fabric, prob local, with rare coarse quartz. Some sooting ext. wide diam rim, simple everted with ext triangular bead. 5 other bss from 2 other vess in orange-brown ?Malvernian ware. 1 with abundant coarse quartz and rock grits, incl prob sagging cpot base. 1 glazed ?jug sherd in slightly finer fabric with worn brownish ext glaze
501	1	14	med/post-med?	Ident and date uncertain. Thick worn grit-tempered orange-grey bs with allover int reduced greenish glaze & traces ext glaze. Looks most like North Devon gravel-tempered ware, 16-18C, but might be from a bowl in coarse ?Malvernian ware - 14C+?
703	4	92	17-19C	Poss 18-19C? Prob 2 vess incl lower part jar in PMRE with int brown glaze. 1x worn unglazed flat base sherd in orange-red PMRE terracotta fabric - not impossibly flowerpot?
2501	6	68	L15-E17C?	2 sherds poss early PMRE or refined late Malvernian ware with soft smooth fabric & sparse gritty white inclusions up to 1mm across. Incl slightly sagging base sherd & thick wheelthrown wall sherd. 4 other bss v worn/soft & poss unidentifiable (poss even Roman?), poss might be local late med/early post-med incl 2 orange-brown with grey core and sparse fine organic inclusions (similar Southampton late med organic-temp). Also 2 joining v worn soft pink-buff bss with coarse red iron oxide inclusions
3301	1	10	L15-E17C?	Prob an early hard-fired PMRE bs. Oxidised int, reduced ext. Grey core. Fine with coarse white grits to 1.5mm
TOTAL	33	338		

The ceramic building material (CBM)

The excavation produced 8 pieces of CBM weighing 539 g. from two contexts. These have not been separately spot-dated but are briefly described here.

The five pieces from context 500 included a small edge/corner fragment of red brick which is probably of 18th/19th-century date. The other four pieces in this context appear to be shapeless lumps of fired daub in a soft brown gritty fabric. These may be of medieval date. The three pieces from context 1307 are joining sherds from the same 18th/19th-century U-shaped land drain. This has an orange fabric with prominent streaks of poorly mixed marl or cream-coloured clay.

APPENDIX 3 GLASS

A single sherd of dark green glass from the wall of a vessel was recovered in a very corroded state from context 703. It is most likely to have derived from a bottle and is post-medieval in date.

APPENDIX 4 METALWORKING DEBRIS AND RESIDUES

by Luke Howarth

The fragments were briefly washed on to a 0.5mm mesh and any residue retained to ensure that any hammerscale or other metal working debris was recovered. A number of fragments of slag were collected in the field and these are described in the table below. A large amount of slag was also recovered whilst processing a sample for environmental assessment, the fragments are generally <10mm. These have been incorporated into this analysis and are described in the lower half of the table.

Quantification

<i>Ctxt</i>	<i>ID</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>Comment</i>
2503	Fe tap slag	5kg	Two large fragments of slag. The largest fragment has a sub horizontal surface and a approximately convex lower surface. Both the sub horizontal surface and the convex surface have lobes and tongues of material and form a generally undulating surface. The tongues of slag all appear to flow in the same direction. Perpendicular to these are flat broken surfaces showing a cross section through the material. No inclusions are visible. One of the surfaces has some CBM and charcoal annealed to the surface. Few vesicles visible. Moderately magnetic.
2503	Fe slag	900g	A total of thirteen fragments of a highly metallic slag. Overall lustre is metallic, some surfaces show crystal faces in the slag. The slag is fairly 'massive' i.e. structureless and has few vesicles. Some cooling joints can be seen on broken surfaces perpendicular to the free surfaces. One of the fragments has some CBM and charcoal annealed to it. The free surfaces are flat and show no signs of flow. The overall form of these fragments is undiagnostic.
2503	Fe tap slag, and smithying slag.	1.1kg	There are six fragments, three of which have a metallic lustre and have undulating surfaces with tongues of slag. These fragments are highly homogenous and have no visible inclusions. They are dark grey in colour and have a maroon patina in places. The remaining three fragments are less homogenous and include fragments of CBM, rock and charcoal, there are also impressions of charcoal in places. They also have a more vesicular character and two of the fragments have highly crystalline surfaces. The two largest fragments have a concave top and a convex bottom. None of these three fragments show any indication of flow.
2503	Blackened sandstone. Fe tap slag, and undiagnostic fragments of slag.	775g	Ten fragments, one of which was of sandstone. The largest fragment has a concave surface sub parallel to a convex surface. The convex surfaces has a large amount of CBM annealed to it and a large proportion of the fragment is made up of partly vitrified CBM. There are three distinctive fragments which have a metallic lustre and few inclusions. In form they look like the infill from a channel. They have a semi circular form in cross section and cooling joints perpendicular to these surfaces. These fragments are elongate and slightly tapering. The remaining fragments are of undiagnostic form. In texture they are moderately vesicular and have a metallic lustre.
500	Fragments of Fe tap slag and pot and sandstone.	11.825kg	Residue recovered from the processing of sample 1. This residue contains 90%+ of relatively homogenous slag. The slag has a metallic lustre and is dark grey in colour with a maroon patina in places. The fragments are moderately magnetic. Some fragments have inclusions of sandstone and CBM/burnt clay mostly partly baked. The morphology of the surfaces is generally undulating with tongues and lobes of material often with 'clean' broken faces perpendicular to these. Many of the fragments are vesicular. Some impressions of charcoal can be seen and crystal faces are visible in some fragments. The rest of the deposit ~10% is made up of fragments of pot and sandstone. In the smaller fractions <4mm the slag becomes more glassy in lustre and less diagnostic. There is also increasing amounts of hammerscale and spheroidal hammer slag in the finer fractions.
Total		19.6kg	

The waste material described above is indicative of iron smelting. There are also some fragments that suggest secondary working of the ore (metalworking) is taking place. There are a number of fragments suggestive of tapping, including three fragments that appear to have cooled in a tapping channel, whilst many other fragments had flow features (lobes and tongues) typical of tap slag. Large amounts of hammerscale and spheroidal hammerslag produced by beating hot bloom ores are also present in the smaller fractions. Other fragments had highly crystalline textures and visible mineral faces commonly associated with metalworking slag.

The deposit clearly indicates that smelting and metal working was taking place in this area whilst the nature of the material in this deposit suggests this was a dumping ground for the waste products. The quantities represented suggest that this has not been transported any great distance. Also the presence of micro slags, in association with a possible floor surface identified below layer 500, could indicate that this was an area where processing and working of the primary bloom was undertaken.

APPENDIX 5 CHARRED PLANT REMAINS

by Luke Howarth and Wendy Smith

Introduction

One soil sample was collected for analysis to evaluate environmental potential. The sample (sample <1> from context 500) was recovered from a charcoal and slag-rich spread overlying a possible clay floor and contained 12th to 13th century pottery. It came from Trench 5, located close to St. Whites Farm where iron ore extraction and smelting is recorded in association with the former medieval grange that is thought to have occupied the site. The sample volume was 35 litres, and during processing it was clear that the principal component of this sample was slag.

Methodology

The sample was processed for charred plant remains (CPR) and charcoal by flotation in a modified Siraf-type machine, with the residue collected in a 500µm mesh and the flot collected on a 250µm mesh. The residue was further sub-graded by passing it through a stack of sieves to produce the following fractions: >10mm, 10-4mm, 4-2mm and 2-0.5mm.

The flot and residue were air-dried with the residue subsequently sorted by eye; any ecofactual or artefactual remains were removed, bagged and recorded. After any artefactual or ecofactual material was removed, the sterile residue was discarded. The flot was passed through a 2mm sieve and fragments of wood charcoal or other CPR (e.g. cereal grain, fruit stones, etc.) extracted. Charcoal >2mm in diameter was examined under a low-power binocular microscope at x 10 and x 20 magnification (transverse section only). While this provides a reliable method for the provisional identification for ring porous taxa (eg. *Quercus* sp.), identifications are tentative for the semi- to diffuse-porous taxa (*Maloideae*, *Prunus* etc.).

Results

Flot

The flot produced was relatively large at approximately 1.5 litres of charcoal (4.3% of the total volume of the unprocessed sample). The majority of the charcoal fragments were fairly small-sized, usually <0.5cm³ in size, though a few pieces were larger ~1cm³. The charcoal assemblage was monotypic and consisted entirely of highly ring porous wood and these fragments were all identified as oak (*Quercus* sp.). No other CPR was observed.

Residue

The heavy residue contains fragments of charcoal and micro-charcoal. No other ecofactual remains are present. The charcoal in the residue is of a similar size range to that seen in the flot. The fragments of charcoal are again highly ring porous and form lathe shaped fragments strongly indicative of oak (*Quercus* sp.). The majority of the heavy residue ~90% is composed of slag and associated metalworking waste products. (iron hammerscale and spheroidal hammerslag).

Potential

This sample is composed of slag, charcoal, occasional fragments of pottery and fragments of sandstone and quartz. It appears to be a collection of waste products formed from smelting

and possibly metal working. The flot is primarily composed of oak (*Quercus* sp.) charcoal, and the residue also contains moderate quantities of oak charcoal. No other charred plant remains (e.g. cereal grain, weed taxa, etc.) were observed.

The environmental significance of this sample is limited as oak charcoal is ubiquitous and its association with industrial activities is well documented. The artefactual remains however add to the interpretation of the deposit and the history of metal extraction and refining at the site with the specific capability to demonstrate the individual processes that were being undertaken. Detailed analysis of micro slag distributions, where *in situ* deposits are encountered, also has the potential to clearly identify features otherwise invisible such as the placement of raised hearths, anvils and other working areas.

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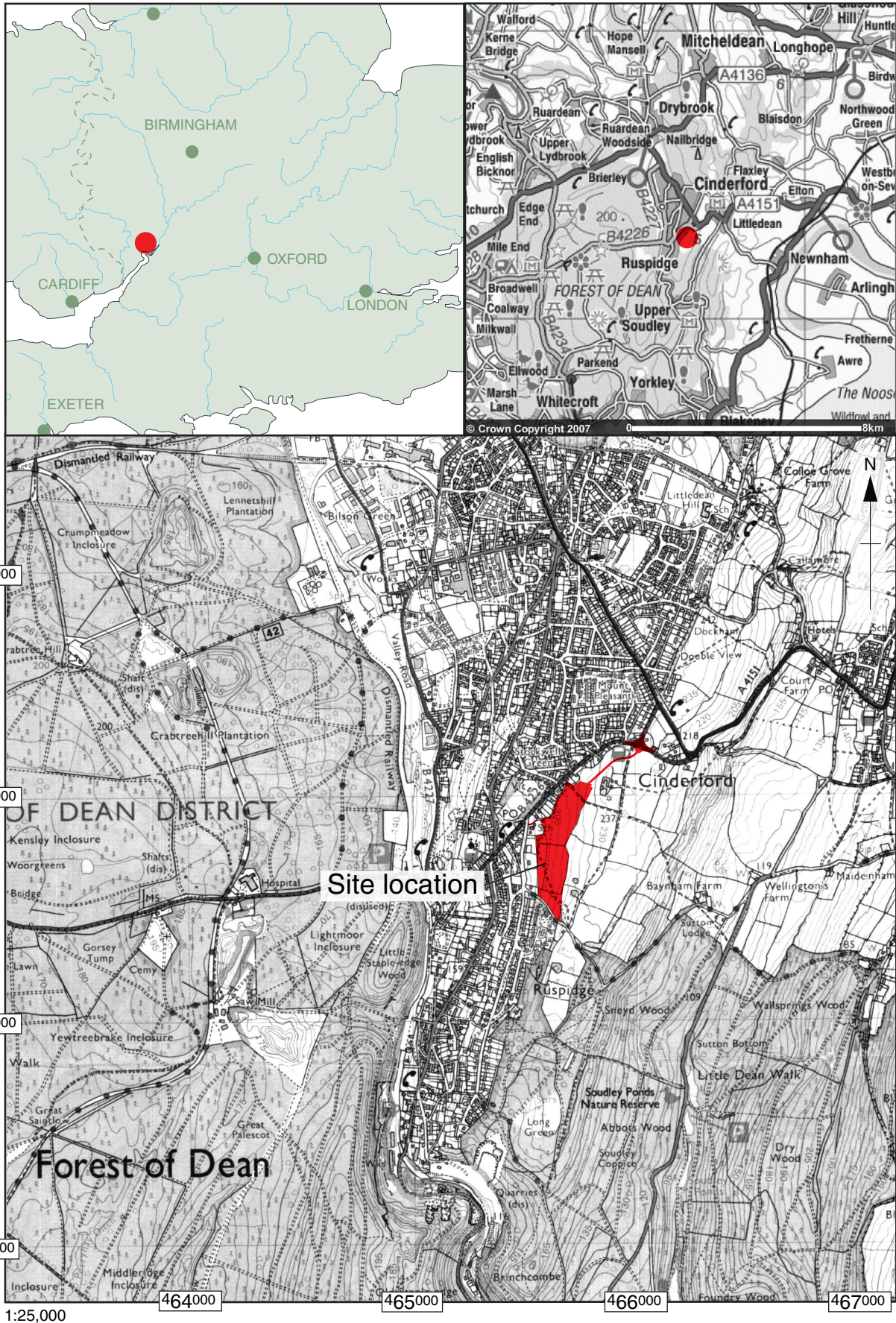
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APPENDIX 7 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS**Site name:** St. White's Farm, Cinderford, Gloucestershire**Site code:** SOYDH:2007.46**Grid reference:** SO 656 127**Type of evaluation:** 34 trench evaluation**Date and duration of project:** 18th- 28th June 2007**Area of site:** 7.9 hectare**Summary of results:**

In June 2007, Oxford Archaeology undertook a field evaluation on behalf of Waterman CPM acting on behalf of Bloor Homes. This was on pasture land adjacent to, and southwest of, St White's Farm, Cinderford (NGR SO 656 127). Thirty four evaluation trenches were excavated. Trench 5 produced substantial evidence for iron production and primary smithying dated to the 12th- 13th centuries which is likely to have been associated with the recorded medieval occupation focused upon the chapel of St White. Platform earthworks noted adjacent to the trench are likely to be associated with these remains. A hollow way recorded in Trench 4 also appears to have provided the access to this settlement and strongly suggests that the focus of any earlier buildings was upon the current location of St White's Farm. A localised dump of slag was also encountered within Trenches 25 and 26 although a colluvial soil horizon sealing this suggests an early post-medieval date. No other significant archaeological remains were encountered. Suggestions that extensive scowles existed within the site boundary appear to reflect undulations between the solid geological strata infilled with softer deposits rather than quarries.

Location of archive:

The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Dean Heritage Museum Trust in due course, under the following accession number: SOYDH:2007.46



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Figure 1: Site location

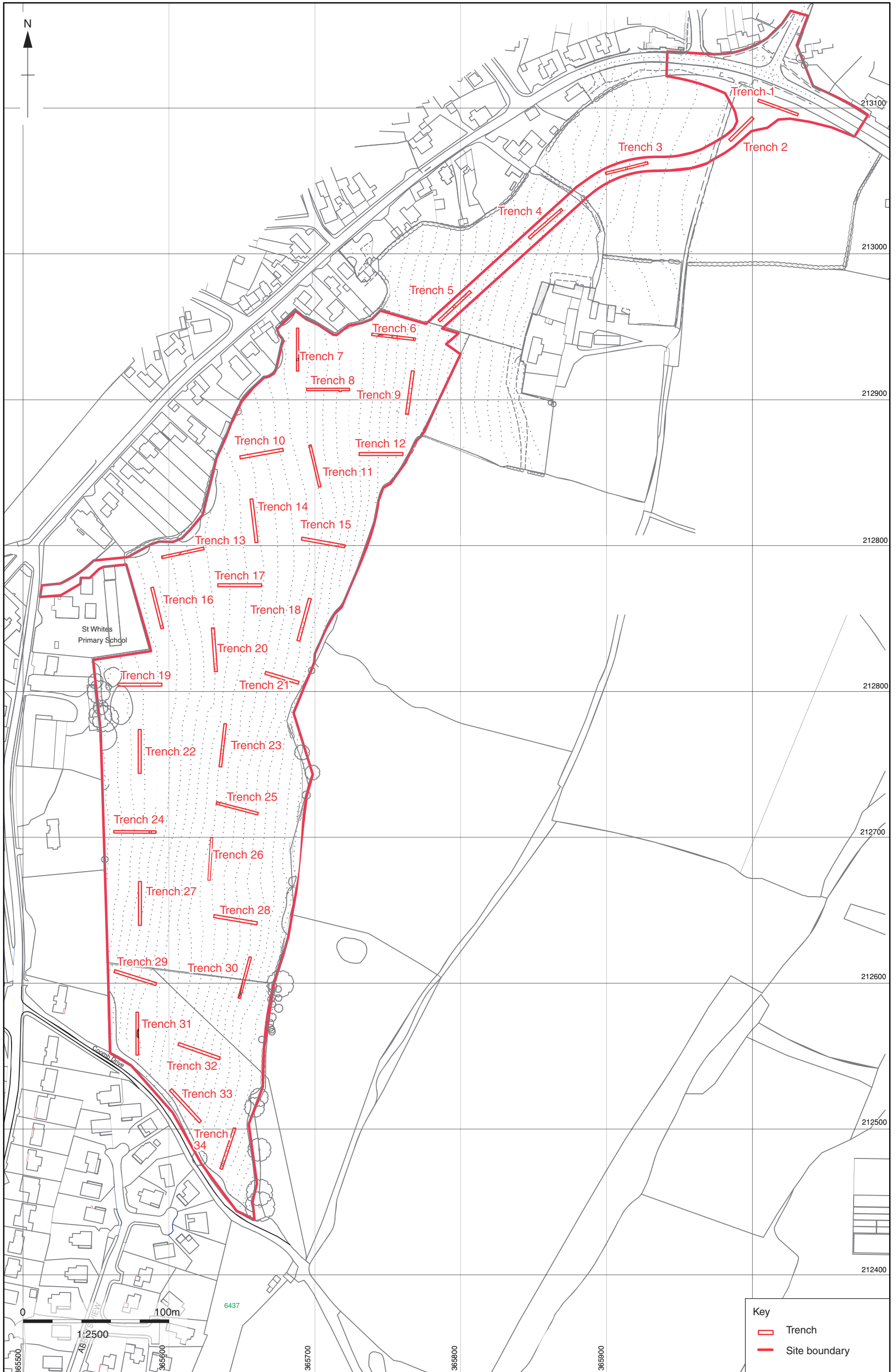


Figure 2: Trench plan

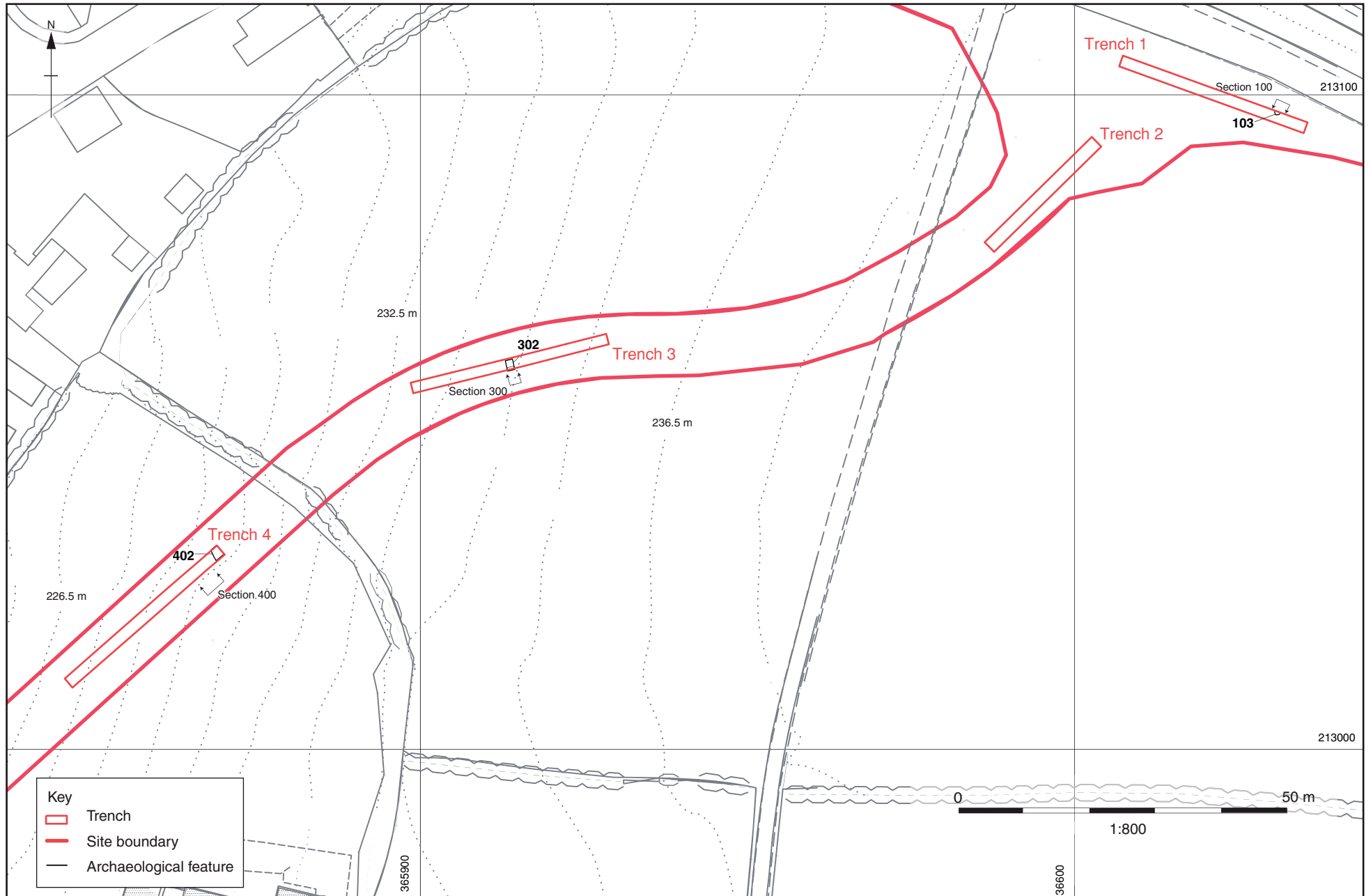


Figure 3: Trenches 1 - 3, plans

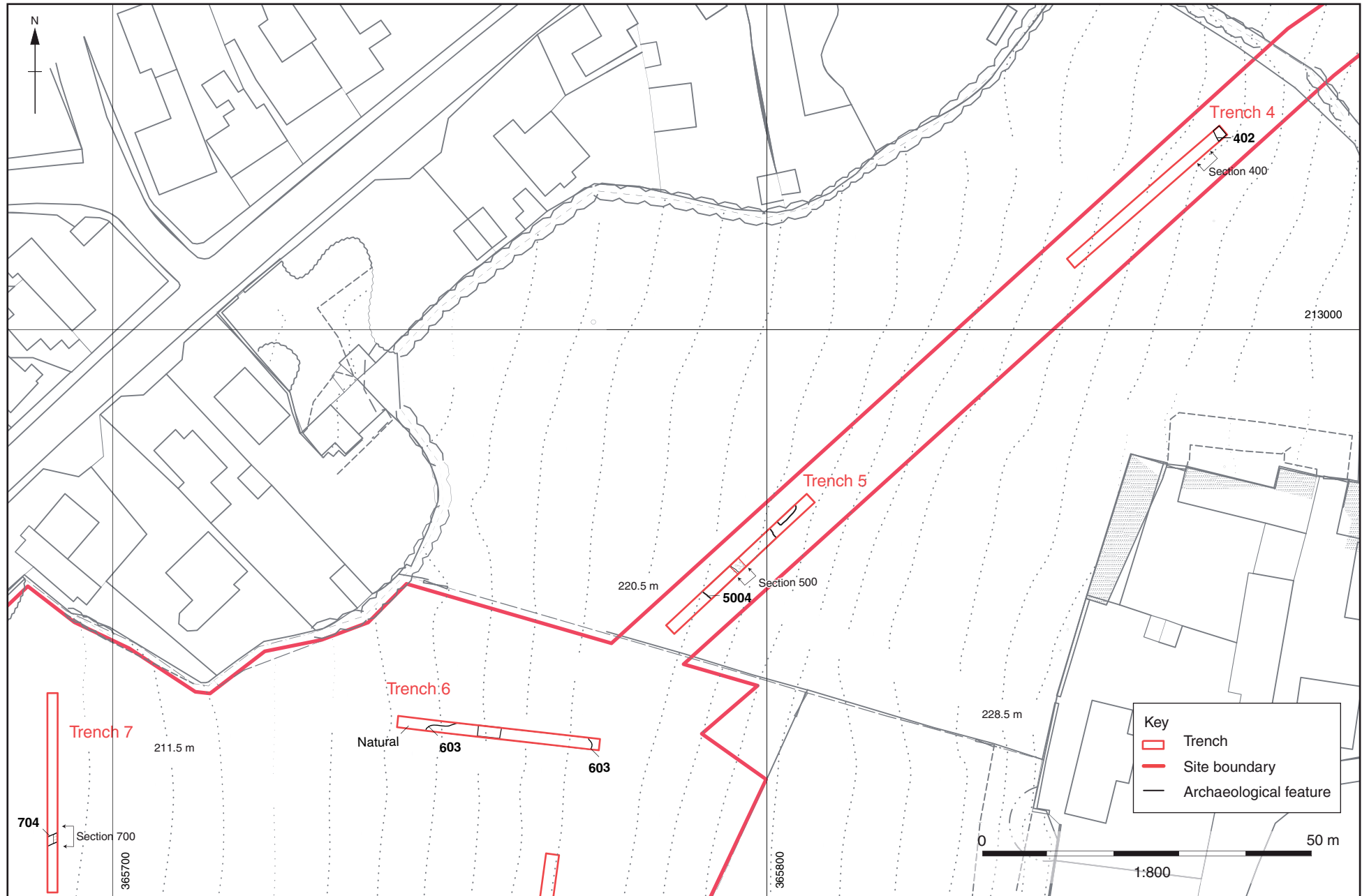


Figure 4: Trenches 4 - 7, plans

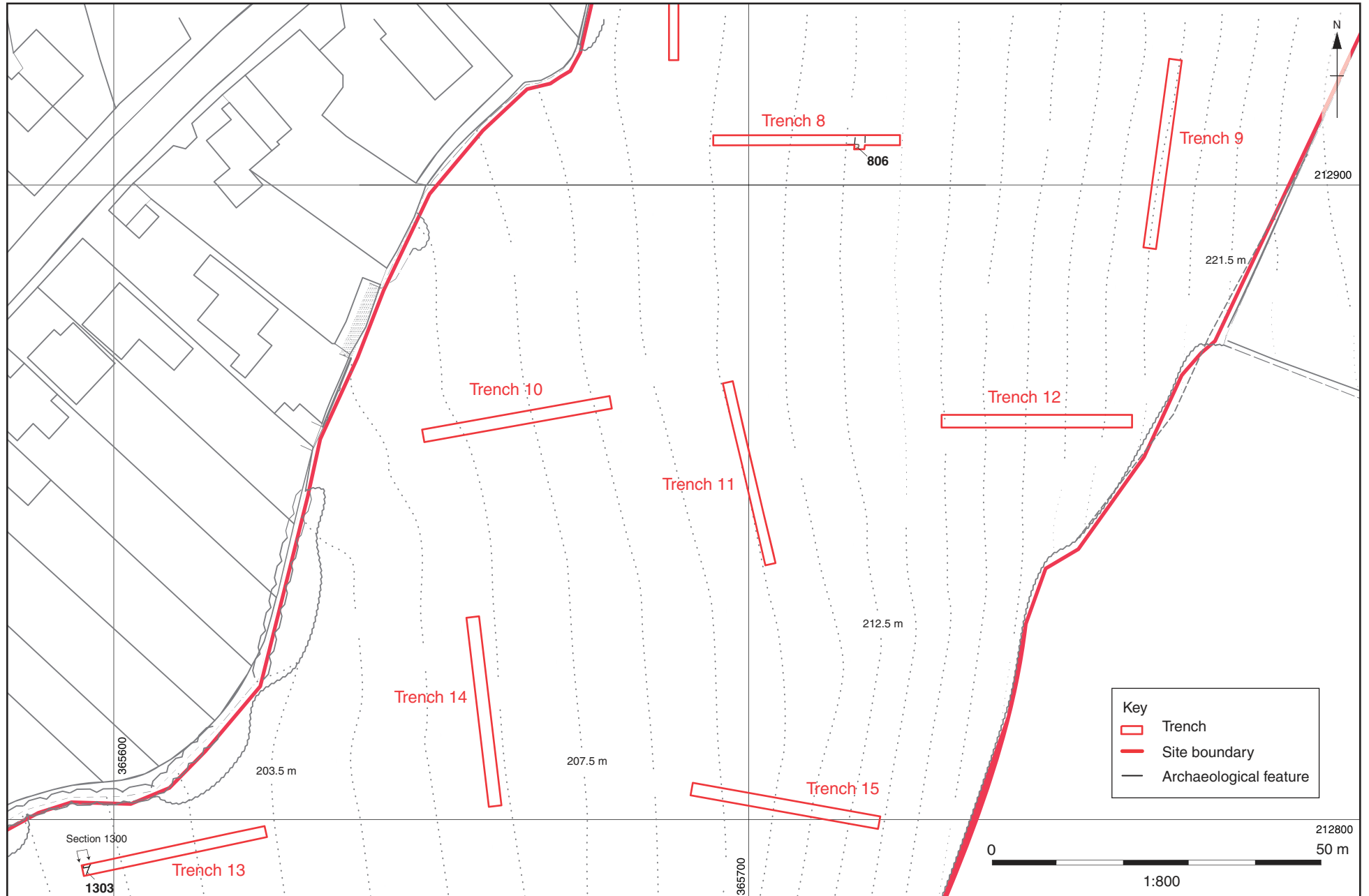


Figure 5: Trenches 8 - 15, plans

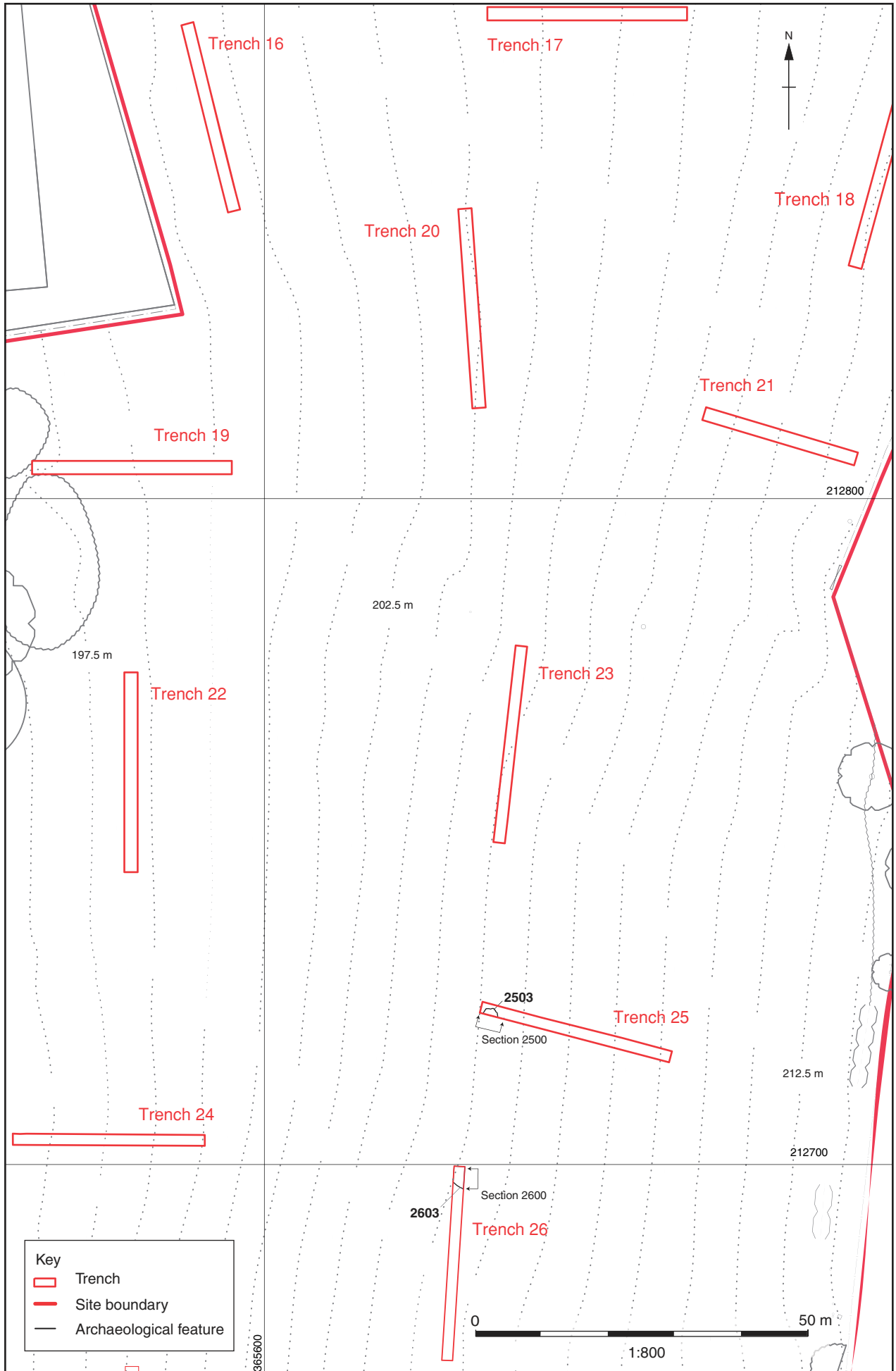


Figure 6: Trenches 16 - 24, plans

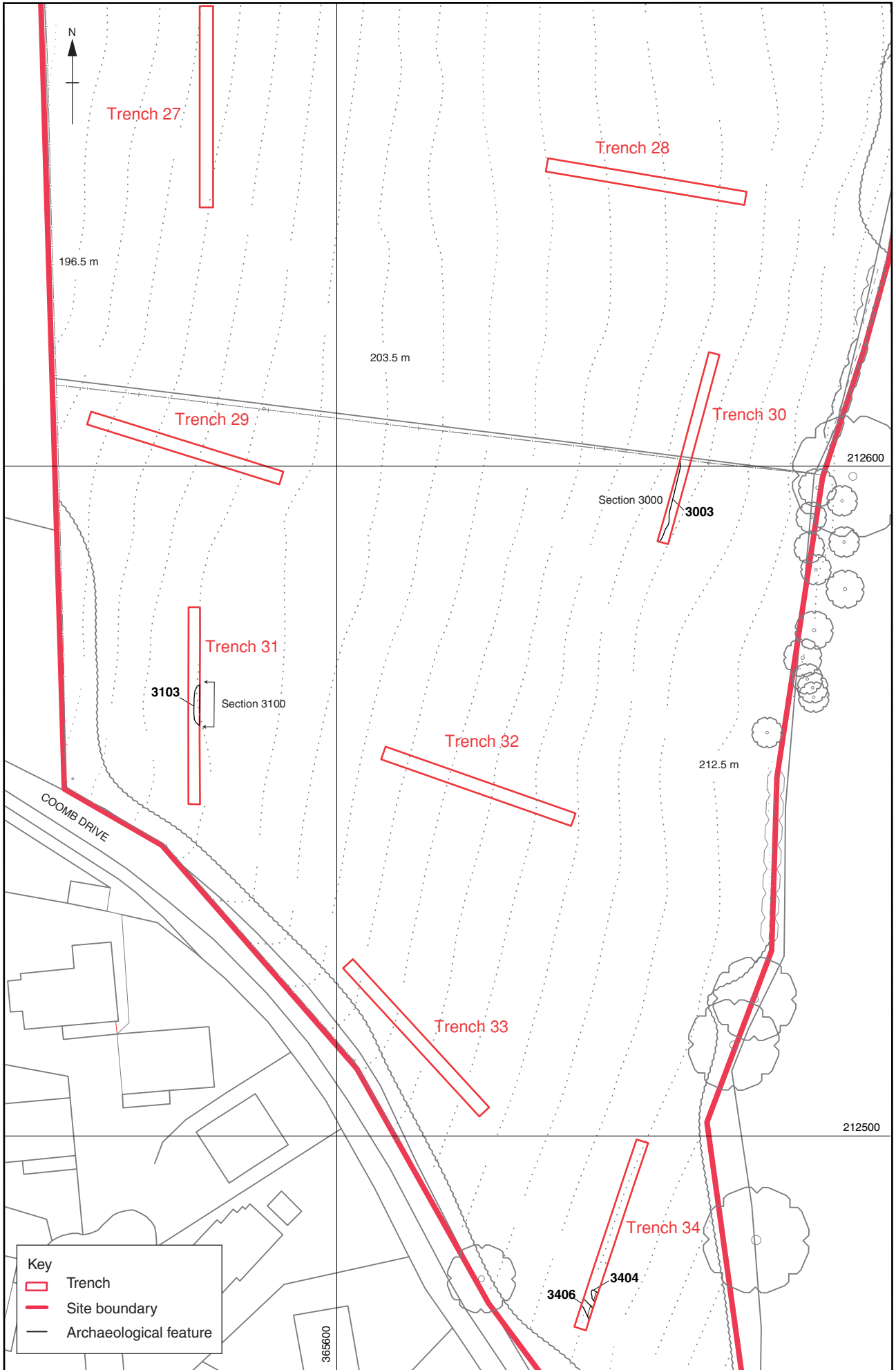


Figure 7: Trenches 27 - 34, plans

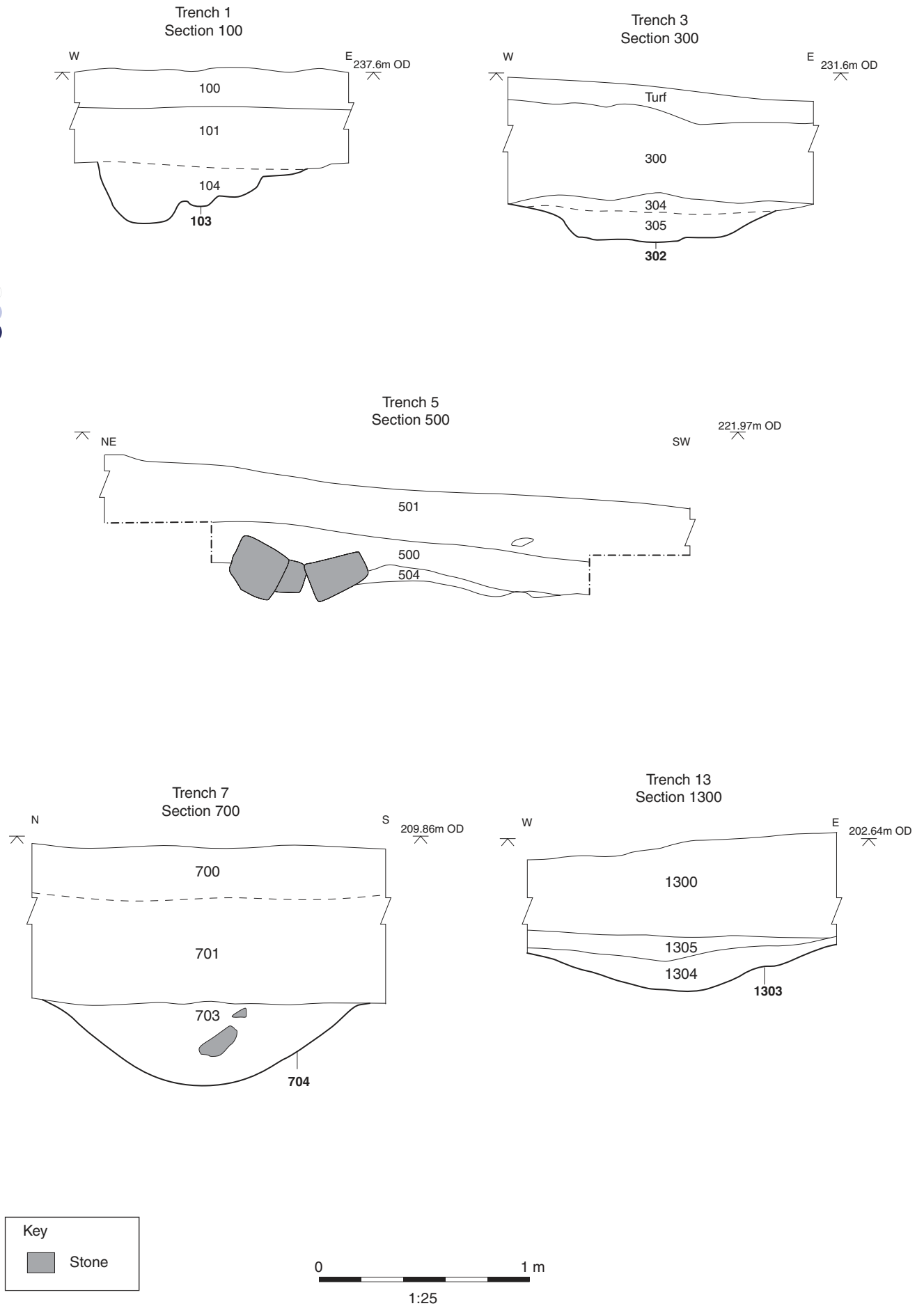


Figure 8: Trenches 1, 3, 5, 7 and 13, sections

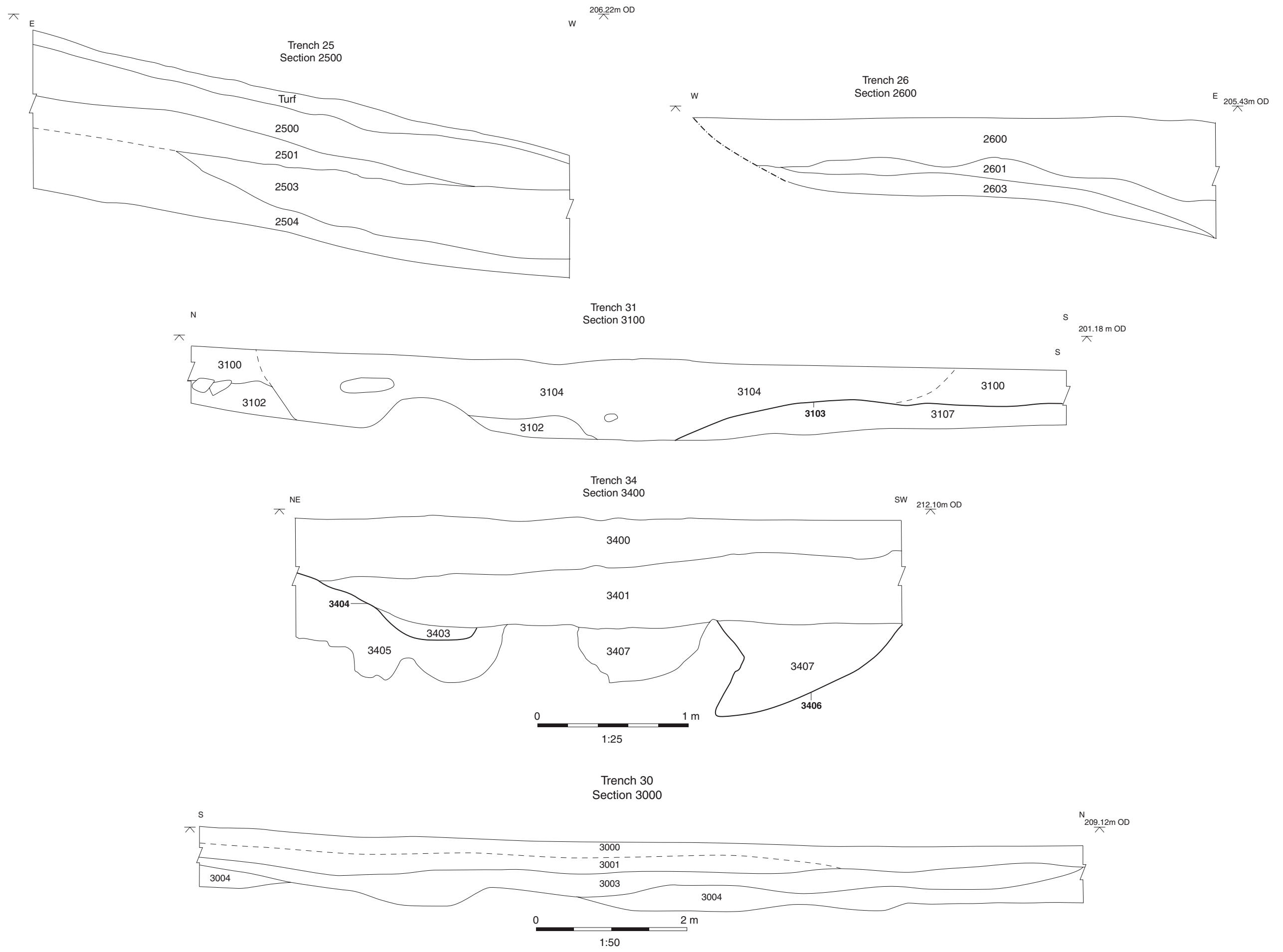


Figure 9: Trenches 25, 26, 30, 31 and 34, sections



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