

Trentham Gardens Trentham Staffordshire: The Italian Gardens



Archaeological Evaluation Report



October 2003

Client: St Modwen Developments

Issue No: 1
OA Job No: 1947
NGR: SJ 866 409

Archaeological Evaluation Report

Client Name: St Modwen Developments

Client Ref No:

Document Title: Trentham Gardens, Trentham, Staffordshire: The Italian Gardens

Document Type: Evaluation

Issue Number: 1

National Grid Reference: SJ 866 409

Planning Reference: 35257

OA Job Number: 1947

Site Code: STTG 03

Invoice Code: STTGEV1

Receiving Museum

Museum Accession No: STKMG 2002.k.19

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Date: 20th October 2003

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Gardens*LM

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SUMMARY

Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out a field evaluation within the Italian Gardens at Trentham Gardens, Trentham, Staffordshire (NGR SJ 866 409) on behalf of St Modwen Developments. The purpose of the evaluation works was to investigate and provide information regarding the construction and current state of preservation of paths and steps that formed part of the original nineteenth century Italian gardens as designed by Charles Barry. These works were required to inform a programme of restoration works being undertaken within the gardens. The evaluation has provided detailed information regarding the survival, extent and construction methods and materials used relating to both the former (nineteenth century) and presently existing paths and steps within the Italian Gardens.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 In August and September 2003 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out a field evaluation within the Italian Gardens, Trentham Gardens, Trentham, Staffordshire (NGR SJ 866 409) on behalf of St Modwen Developments Ltd in respect of a condition of planning permission No. 35257 for the construction of a hotel, restaurants, a garden centre, a new sports/leisure unit, retail outlets, monkey woodland, holiday lodges, fishing lake, vineyard and for the restoration of the Italian Gardens. The archaeological works were undertaken in accordance with a brief set by Mr David Wilkinson, the former archaeological advisor to Stafford Borough Council and to a written scheme of investigation agreed with Mr Chris Wardle, archaeological advisor to Staffordshire County Council. The evaluation was concentrated within the area of the Italian Gardens that total approximately 3.5 hectares in extent.

1.2 Geology and topography

1.2.1 The development area is located immediately to the south-west of Trentham which lies on the periphery of the Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle-under-Lyme conurbation. The site is bounded by the A34 trunk road to its east, the M6 motorway to its west and at its southern limit extends towards Beech Lane and Tittensor village. The evaluation was concentrated within the Italianate Gardens, located adjacent to the lake and immediately south of the former site of Trentham Hall. The lake and formal gardens are situated within the floodplain of the river at a height of approximately 100 m above OD, with the associated wooded parkland rising westward up the valley slope to a height of approximately 150 m above OD.

1.2.2 The underlying geology of the proposal area comprises alluvial drift deposits of sand, silt and gravel overlying mudstone and sandstone of the Keele formation.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The archaeological background to the development of the gardens at Trentham has been the subject of a separate desk based study (Banks 1998), the results of which are presented in outline below.
- 1.3.2 The earliest surviving reference to the gardens at Trentham relate to works undertaken by Sir Richard Leveson between 1630-1638. Leveson instigated improvements to the gardens in line with his rebuilding of the Hall. Extensive walled gardens were laid out and these incorporated the construction of a prospect mount, a pool and two turrets intended as dovecotes. These features are thought to have replaced or subsumed the pool between the Hall and the park depicted in Henry Fletcher's plan of Trentham dated 1599. Views of the garden later published by Robert Plot in 1686 identify a number of these garden improvements, although the prospect mount and dovecotes appear to be no longer present.
- 1.3.3 Major landscape improvements at Trentham were undertaken by the Rev George Plaxton in 1695 who proposed to construct a dam transforming the existing pool south of the Hall into a small lake. This lake was to be crossed by a causeway creating a long walk from the Hall to King's Wood. Surveys of Trentham undertaken in the early eighteenth century by Thomas Burton and Thomas Tibbetts both confirm that Sir John Leveson-Gower had these new design elements put in place. In addition to these improvements to the park, Sir John Leveson-Gower further undertook a rebuilding programme of the Hall between 1707-1710. This work was later followed by further extension and improvement of the parkland by his heir, the second Baron Gower, in the 1720s, designed and implemented by Charles Bridgeman. Survey at Trentham carried out by Thomas Burton (1722-4) indicates that four avenues forming a large patte d'oie had been created during this period within the pleasure grounds to the south of the Hall.
- 1.3.4 Trentham Hall was again remodelled by Francis Smith between 1737-38 and shortly after the completion of these works changes were further made to the park and gardens. Most notably the gravel causeway between the two canals was removed, creating a single lake. The mid-eighteenth century saw major landscaping changes made to the park and gardens at Trentham when Lancelot (Capability) Brown was commissioned in 1759 by Granville, 2nd Earl Gower to recast the estate. In addition to the works undertaken by Brown within the park, the formal gardens beside the house were also redesigned. Brown's design necessitated the removal of the parterres, walls and walks of the early eighteenth century formal garden which were replaced by a more understated garden comprising a lawn, shrubbery, a bowling green and a series of gravel walks.

- 1.3.5 In 1805-9 George Granville, 1st Duke of Sutherland, instigated a further programme of works and repairs to the estate. He commissioned the architect Charles Heathcote Tatham to undertake these works. Tatham introduced a number of new architectural features and structures into the parkland landscape. Most notable, in respect to the formal gardens was the introduction of an ornamental fountain adjacent to the south front of the hall. The completion of Tatham's works within the estate marked the last significant alterations to be made at Trentham prior to the work of Charles Barry who redesigned the hall and gardens from 1834 onwards.
- 1.3.6 Charles Barry was commissioned by the 2nd Duke of Sutherland to implement an extensive building programme between 1834-50 that was to transform Trentham. Trentham Hall was remodelled and extended in the Italianate style by Barry who, to complement the house, designed a formal 'architectural' garden. Barry's original concept design for the formal layout of the gardens is depicted in a plan drawn by Barry in 1834 (Blissett 2002, Fig 15), however, this scheme appears to have evolved through the development process to an altered design layout as depicted in two further Barry plans, one dating to 1849, the other undated (ibid, Figs 21 and 25). It is this design to which the currently preserved gardens most directly relate and which appears to have been executed.

The Italian Gardens

- 1.3.7 The Italianate gardens created by Barry comprised a series of terraced gardens extending south between the house and lake. Immediately adjacent to the hall was the upper garden or 'Terrace Garden' which was composed of several stone raised beds with large marble vases and bronze statues. The terrace garden was separated by a balustrade from the Upper Flower Garden or as otherwise known 'Parterre' or 'Rose Garden' that lay some two feet below it.
- 1.3.8 The Upper Flower Garden was divided into four compartments that converged on a central bed and fountain, the beds being defined and separated by gravel walks with stone borders. The garden was bounded by balustrades. Statues and urns were placed within the gardens and a line of vases ornamented the top of the balustrade. The Italian gardens or 'Lower Flower Garden' was demarcated from the upper flower garden by its southern balustrade which at its centre had a semi-circular flight of steps providing access from one garden to the next, and which had two imposing pavilions and loggias located along its extent.
- 1.3.9 The Lower Flower Garden was the largest of the three terraced gardens extending southward to the edge of the lake and covering an area of approximately 10 ha. The garden was divided into a series of compartments, each containing a fountain, that were again defined and separated by broad gravel walkways. These gardens were flanked by an iron trellis walk to the east and a shrubbery to the west. In 1847 a statue of Perseus and Medusa (today listed Grade II*) was placed adjacent to the lake at the southern extent of the central axial walkway. Although Barry is likely to have predominantly influenced the design of these gardens he was not a horticulturalist

and the influences of George Fleming (head gardener) and of William Nesfield on the final garden design and planting scheme has to be considered.

- 1.3.10 A succession of noted head gardeners followed on from the work of Fleming and Barry at Trentham, with the formal gardens being regarded as the most celebrated and influential gardens of the nineteenth century. By the late nineteenth century, however, the estate had fallen into decline. In 1912 the hall was demolished and the garden partially robbed of its statuary and adornments. Trentham Gardens Limited was established in 1931 to manage the estate. The grounds were opened to the public and a number of leisure facilities such as a golf course, swimming pool, bandstand and caravan park were built within the park.
- 1.3.11 The present formal terrace gardens situated to the south of the house, created by Barry between 1834-49, have however survived relatively intact despite the decline and decay of the house. The general layout of the walkways and beds and the survival of some of the original architectural features such as balustrades, a single loggia and some statuary retain some of the original character of the gardens. The planting regime has unfortunately been lost over time and alterations in construction materials within the garden, such as path surfaces, has also been made.

1.4 Acknowledgements

- 1.4.1 Thanks are extended to the both St Modwen Developments Ltd and to Mr Chris Wardle of Staffordshire County Council who conducted monitoring visits during the period of works.

2 TRENCHED EVALUATION

2.1 Aims

2.1.1 The general aims of the archaeological evaluation were:

- To provide information by prior evaluation that will inform the restoration design and the implementation of the works.
- To identify and examine the potential for any surviving earlier garden features/deposits to be present.
- To create a record and archive of the investigations.

2.1.2 Specific aims of the archaeological evaluation were:

Paths

- to define and determine the precise depths and widths of the original paths by removal of existing overburden.
- to record the character of the path surfaces and identify the materials used in their construction.
- to locate the presence of any potential kerbing and side drains, and investigate the dimensions and character of any gullies.
- to provide accurate recorded data to the restorations contractor in order to guide the execution of the restoration work.

Steps

- To define and determine the true character and depth of the steps which were originally constructed in the Barry garden.
- To provide accurate data to the restorations contractor in order to guide the execution of the restoration work.

2.2 Scope of fieldwork

2.2.1 The scope of these archaeological works was based on recommendations made according to a landscape impact assessment of the park and gardens produced by Elizabeth Banks Associates (EBA 1998), on behalf of St Modwen Properties plc, and analysis of the restoration design proposals outlined in the *Trentham Gardens Restoration Management Plan* (June 2003), produced by Land Use Consultants on behalf of Trentham Leisure Ltd.

2.2.2 The evaluation consisted of the excavation of 11 trenches within the existing gardens (Fig. 2). Trenching was targeted across existing pathways and their associated turfed verges in order to address the aims of the project as defined in section 2.1 above. Nine trenches were located within the Lower Flower Garden with two trenches being located in the Upper Flower Garden (Fig. 2). The dimensions of the trenches varied, measuring between 5 m to 10 m in length and 1.20 m in width, according to the varying dimensions of existing path widths across the gardens. The overburden was removed under close archaeological supervision by a 360° Kubota-type mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket.

2.3 Fieldwork methods and recording

2.3.1 The trenches were cleaned by hand and, where present, revealed features were sampled to determine their extent and nature, to retrieve finds, and where suitable, environmental samples. All archaeological features were planned and, where excavated, their sections drawn at scales of 1:10 and 1:20. All features were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film. Recording followed procedures laid down in the *OAU Fieldwork Manual* (ed. D Wilkinson, 1992).

2.4 Finds

2.4.1 Finds, where present, were recovered by hand during the course of the excavation and bagged by context.

2.5 Palaeo-environmental evidence

2.5.1 No deposits suitable for environmental sampling were identified during the evaluation works.

2.6 Presentation of results

- 2.6.1 Section 3.2 below contains a description of the stratigraphic sequence of archaeological deposits and features recorded with path descriptions being taken together as interpretative groups divided between those recorded in the Upper and Lower Flower Gardens (additional context information can be found in the context inventory (Appendix 1)). This is followed in Section 4 by a discussion which brings together the recorded stratigraphic and artefactual evidence.

3 RESULTS: GENERAL

3.1 Soils and ground conditions

- 3.1.1 The underlying geology is alluvial drift deposits of sand, silt and gravel overlying mudstone and sandstone of the Keele formation. The gardens area comprised gravel pathways that have later been covered by tarmac. Where natural geology was exposed this comprised a thick clay deposit underlying garden soils and former path construction deposits.

3.2 Distribution of archaeological deposits

3.2.1 Paths

Lower Flower Garden

- 3.2.2 A total of eight trenches were excavated across existing paths within the Lower Flower Garden (Trenches 1 to 8; Fig. 2). The trenches were excavated with the aim of establishing the precise dimensions, character, construction and state of preservation of former paths as originally laid out within the nineteenth century gardens.
- 3.2.3 The trenches varied in dimension, measuring between 5 m to 10 m long by 1.2 m wide, according to the variable width of existing path alignments that measure approximately 4 m, 7 m and 12 m wide. Trench 1 was excavated to examine the broad east to west aligned path situated at the southern end of the Lower Flower Garden, immediately adjacent to the lake (Figs 2 and 3). No natural geology was encountered within the trench as this area of the gardens appears to have been subject to considerable later disturbance. This later disturbance appears to be characterised by the deposition of demolition/building rubble consisting of burnt coal, coke, brick and slag deposits (context 11). This would appear to have severely truncated and removed any evidence of the former path surface, although some loose gravel deposits were recorded at the northern end of the trench (context 12), the nature and origin of which remains uncertain. Deposit 11 recorded throughout much of the trench is thought to have been deliberately dumped in order to raise ground level. It

may possibly be suggested that such dumping has occurred in this area close to the lake due to problems with subsidence. Full excavation through deposit 11 was not undertaken.

- 3.2.4 Trenches 2 and 6 were excavated across the width of the more southerly of two internal east to west aligned paths within the Lower Flower Garden (Figs 2, 3 and 5). Natural geology was not revealed within either of the excavated trenches. The primary deposits recorded in both trenches comprised a coarse sandy gravel (contexts 24 and 64) that is thought to represent part of a sequence of deposits used in the construction of the original path. Deposits 24 and 64 were overlain by further gravel deposits 23 and 63. Deposit 23 comprised a coarse sandy gravel that was recorded to survive in depth to 0.20 m and is again thought to represent part of construction deposits associated with the original former path. Deposit 63, however, comprised a heavily compacted sandy gravel surviving in depth to 0.08 m that is interpreted as representing part of the surviving surface of the former path. Both these deposits were overlain by dark brown gravel deposits (contexts 21, 22 and 62) that form part of the construction sequence for the existing tarmac path surfacing laid above (contexts 20 and 60). Garden soil deposits 25 and 61 were shown to have been deposited against the later tarmac path surfacing and where visible (Trench 6) to overlie the earlier former path surface.
- 3.2.5 Trenches 3 and 4 were excavated across the wide north to south aligned path that runs centrally through the Lower Flower Garden (Figs 2 and 4). Natural geology was not revealed within either of the excavated trenches. The primary deposit recorded comprised a buried garden soil (Trench 3; context 34) that was shown in section at the eastern extent of Trench 3 to be overlain/cut by construction deposits (context 35) representing the remains of the former path. Recorded construction deposits for the path varied in nature between excavated trenches. Trench 3 revealed a deposit of loose brown gravel clay (context 35) that was overlain by a 0.10 m deep deposit of compacted sandy gravel (context 33) that is thought to represent part of the former original path surface. Trench 4, however, revealed only the remains of a loose coarse sandy gravel (context 42), thought to represent part of a construction deposit for the path. Both deposits 33 and 42 were overlain by further gravel deposits (contexts 32 and 41) that form part of the construction sequence for the existing tarmac path surfacing laid above (contexts 31 and 40). The tarmac path was shown to be overlain by garden soil deposits along both its eastern and western verges (contexts 30 and 43), within which a north to south aligned iron water pipe was recorded in Trench 4.
- 3.2.6 Trenches 5 and 7 were excavated across the most easterly of two north to south aligned paths within the Lower Flower Garden (Figs 2, 5 and 6). Natural geology, comprising dark brown clay (context 73) was recorded at the base of Trench 7. In Trench 7 the natural clay (73) and buried soil (77) were shown to have been truncated by the construction cut (78) for the path. Cut 78 was primarily filled with a loose sandy gravel (context 72), a similar construction deposit (context 52) being

recorded in Trench 5, that was in turn overlaid by 0.04 m thick deposit of compacted gravel (context 71), believed to represent part of the original path surface. Deposits 52 and 71 were overlain by gravel construction deposits (context 51) for the existing tarmacadam path surfacing laid above (Contexts 50 and 70). The tarmacadam path surface was shown to be overlain by a series of later disturbance deposits recorded along its eastern verge in Trench 7. These comprise a sequence of thin layered deposits consisting of a 0.07 m deep layer of dumped ash (context 76) overlain by a 0.04 m deep layer of dumped coal (context 75), from which pottery and glass was recovered, that in turn was sealed by a 0.16 m depth of topsoil (context 74).

- 3.2.7 Trench 8 was excavated across the full width of the north to south aligned path located at the eastern extent of the Lower Flower Garden and which formed part of the former Trellis Walk (Figs 2 and 6). Natural geology was not revealed within the excavated trench. The primary recorded deposit comprises a 3.60 m wide loose coarse sandy gravel (context 82) thought to represent the remains of construction deposits for the original path. The construction deposit 82 was overlain by a buried soil horizon (context 84) along its eastern verge, possibly representing the original former ground surface adjacent to the path. Buried soil horizon 84 was overlain by garden soil 83 which in turn was overlain by a dark gravel deposit (context 81) believed to represent a construction deposit for the existing tarmacadam path surfacing laid above (context 80). Exposed immediately beneath the tarmacadam surfacing was an east to west aligned service.

Upper Flower Garden

- 3.2.8 Two trenches were excavated across existing paths within the Upper Flower Garden (Trenches 9 and 10; Fig. 2). The trenches were excavated with the aim of establishing the precise dimensions, character, construction and state of preservation of former paths as originally laid out within the nineteenth century gardens.
- 3.2.9 Trench 9 was excavated across the full width of the north to south aligned path of the Upper Flower Garden which measures approximately 4.7 m wide (Figs 2 and 7). Excavation of the trench was undertaken between and either side of the two existing east and west kerbstones (contexts 93 and 96) of the path. The deposit sequence defined within the kerbstones comprised a primary deposit of loose coarse sandy gravel (context 92) believed to form part of the construction deposit of the original path. Deposit 92 was overlain by a 0.07 m thick deposit of darker gravel representing a construction deposit for the existing 0.04 m thick tarmacadam path surfacing laid above (context 90). Excavation to the west and east of the kerbstones revealed that the eastern kerbstone was set within the garden soil (context 95) placed on a blue brick foundation (context 94). A similar construction sequence was observed for the western kerbstone, however, a tile constructed French drain was recorded adjacent to the foundations of the kerb (context 97), sealed by a packing deposit (context 98) comprising sandstone and brick fragments with gravel, overlain by garden soil (context 95).

3.2.10 Trench 10 was excavated across the full width of the central circular path surrounding the former fountain within the Upper Flower Garden, that measures approximately 4.7 m wide (Figs 2 and 7). Excavation of the trench was again conducted between existing kerbstones (contexts 104 and 107) of the path and continued within the garden soils immediately to the south of the south-eastern kerbstone. The deposit sequence defined within the kerbstones comprised a primary drain structure 108, constructed from sand mortared brick, likely to have been contemporary with the construction of the kerb, that was abutted by a deposit of loose coarse sandy gravel (context 103), similar in composition to deposit 92 recorded in Trench 9, that is thought to represent part of a construction deposit of the original path. Deposit 103 was overlain by a 0.07 m thick deposit of dark gravel (context 101) believed to represent a construction deposit for the existing 0.05 m thick tarmac path surfacing laid above (context 100). Excavation to the south of the south eastern kerbstone revealed that the kerb had been set within the garden soil (context 106) on a brick foundation (context 105) similar in construction to the kerb foundations recorded in Trench 9. The drainage run located within the trench is likely to relate to a system of drains along the path indicated by the presence of a series of metal gridded drain covers situated along its western edge.

3.2.11 Steps

3.2.12 A single trench (Trench 11) was excavated adjacent to the central semi-circular steps connecting the Upper and Lower Flower Gardens (Figs 2 and 8). The trench was excavated with the aim of establishing the precise dimensions, character, construction and state of preservation of former steps as originally constructed in the nineteenth century, since the later use of tarmac across the site was thought to have potentially altered or obscured former evidence of the original steps.

3.2.13 Trench 11 was situated immediately adjacent to the western side of the existing lowest step of the flight of semi-circular steps leading from the Lower Flower Garden to the Upper Flower Garden (Fig. 2). The final excavated trench measured approximately 2 m by 2 m (Fig. 8). The primary recorded deposits comprised of a compacted pebble and limestone mortared platform (context 115) that was constructed as a foundation platform for a three course sand mortared brick wall (context 113) that served as a footing for the basal step of the semi-circular flight of steps (context 112). Foundation 115 had no apparent construction cut suggesting that the ground surface around the steps had been open whilst the steps were constructed.

3.2.14 Abutting and overlying foundations 113 and 115 were a sequence of deposits representing the construction of the associated path. The primary path construction deposit comprised a coarse sandy gravel (context 114) that was overlain by a 0.07 m thick fine compacted gravel layer (context 111), believed to represent the surviving remains of the original path surface. This former path surface in turn was overlain by

make up deposits and tarmacadam (context 110), the tarmacadam surface being shown to abut the base of the existing steps. Exposed throughout the trench was a modern service that cut through path deposits 111 and 114.

3.3 Finds

3.3.1 The evaluation recovered a small assemblage of finds, dating in origin from the nineteenth to twentieth century which comprise thirty five sherds of white glazed pottery, representing the remains of three tableware vessels, one of which has transfer decoration, recovered from deposit 75 (Trench 7), five flower pot sherds, one of which has relief decoration, from deposit 106 (Trench 10), a single sherd of glass from deposit 75 (Trench 7) and tiles recovered from the French drainage system in Trench 9 (deposit 97), represented by a complete half round ridge tile and two associated flat tiles. The dating of the limited materials recovered by the evaluation appears to be consistent with the main focus of the garden's formalisation by Barry in the nineteenth century, although some residuality of finds is noted as shown in deposit 75.

4 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Reliability of field investigation

4.1.1 The investigative techniques employed during the fieldwork were designed in order to provide a detailed examination and accurate record of surviving archaeological remains relating to the former nineteenth century gardens design, and provide an informed basis upon which proposed reinstatement works can be conducted.

4.1.2 The trenched evaluation has allowed an accurate record to be made of the current state of preservation of the gardens paths and central steps. The paucity of recovered finds was to be expected given the nature of the deposits that were being investigated, and interpretation regarding the potential date of construction/deposition of features/deposits is principally derived from documentary record and analysis of the recorded depositional sequence.

4.2 Overall interpretation

Summary of results

4.2.1 Paths

Lower Flower Garden

4.2.2 The trenches excavated within the Lower Flower Garden indicate that the former gravel paths survive in differential states of preservation across the garden. On the whole, the former compacted gravel surfacing of the paths appears likely to have been removed, with potential former surfacing deposits being recorded only in Trenches 3, 6 and 7. The degree to which former path surfacing materials have been truncated is uncertain, given the differing levels of later overburden recorded across

the site, although evidence in Trench 1 would indicate that much, if not all, the original path surfacing in this location has been lost. The presence of potential surviving surfacing deposits would however suggest that the original paths formerly existed at depths below present ground level of *c.* 0.10 to 0.15 m at the northern end, and *c.* 0.05 to 0.08 m at the southern end, of the Lower Flower Garden.

- 4.2.3 The recorded path deposits within Trench 7 perhaps provide the best illustration of the manner of the former paths' construction. The exposed northern section of the path is shown to have been constructed within a shallow cut that was initially filled with a 0.24 m thick coarse sandy gravel deposit, over which was laid a 0.04 m thick light red coloured compacted sandy gravel deposit, representing the surviving surface deposit of the former path. The path was also shown to have a distinct camber that would have served to aid the drainage of surface water away from it. The lack of any recorded associated drainage features is discussed in greater detail below. Similar primary coarse sandy gravel path construction deposits were recorded across all the trenches excavated (a possible exception being the sequence recorded in Trench 1), with a marked distinction being noticeable in the heavily compacted and red/brown colouration of the surviving gravel surface deposits of the former paths observed in Trenches 3, 6 and 7. The use of a reddish gravel deposit to define the surface of the former gravel paths may have influenced the later resurfacing of the paths using a red coloured tarmacadam, perhaps chosen in an attempt to preserve the character of the garden design as originally conceived.
- 4.2.4 The width and alignment of the former gravel paths appears to correlate well with those presently existing within the garden, indicating that later resurfacing of the gravel walks has had little impact upon its former original layout. This evidence is supported by a lack of any recorded presence of former kerbing, both kerbstones or footings, associated with the paths in the Lower Flower Garden. Examination of historic illustrations of the Lower Flower Garden drawn by E. Adveno Brooke in 1857 (Plate 1; Blissett 1999a) and photographic evidence taken in 1898 (Plate 2; Blissett 1999a) illustrates an absence of kerb structure associated with the paths, the true absence of which has been demonstrated by the results of the evaluation.
- 4.2.5 The trenches excavated within the Lower Flower Garden have also produced no evidence of any contemporary drainage features associated with the former paths. It is possible that this evidence may reflect a true lack of any formalised drainage in this area, although it is also possible that excavation within many of the trenches may not have been to a sufficient depth for drainage features to be uncovered, an assumption made on recently excavated evidence of path drainage structures within the formal parterre gardens at Witley Court in Worcestershire that revealed the presence of ceramic French drains lying at some depth beneath the edges of the buried gravel pathways (OA 2003). The one possible exception is the deposit sequence recorded in Trench 7 that clearly indicates a lack of any formalised drainage features associated with the path.

Upper Flower Garden

- 4.2.6 The true widths of the former paths within the Upper Flower Garden remain clearly defined by the extant kerbstones that line the existing tarmac paths. The kerbstones were shown to have been founded upon sand mortared brick footings that appear to have been contemporary in construction with associated drainage features recorded along the paths. Unlike the lack of contemporary drainage features observed within the Lower Flower Garden, the Upper Flower Garden appears to have been served by a system of ceramic French drains packed with a loose coarse gravel. Metal gridded drain covers that appear to overlie a system of sumps, as recorded in Trench 10, remain visible within the existing tarmac paths today. These are thought likely to feed any excess surface water into the system of drainage recorded in the trenches.
- 4.2.7 Coarse gravel construction deposits relating to the former paths were recorded between the kerbstones, but no clearly discernible remains of surviving path surfaces were observed. It is therefore not possible to provide any further information from the evaluation regarding the former level of the original paths within the Upper Flower Garden.

Steps

- 4.2.8 The existing semi-circular steps providing access from the Upper to the Lower Flower Garden comprises a flight of six steps surfaced by red tarmac. Original plans of the steps, as produced by Barry in 1839 (Plate 3; Blissett 1999b), indicate that the steps were originally designed to comprise a flight of nine steps, possibly suggesting that later 'reworking' may have altered their intended character.
- 4.2.9 Evaluation undertaken adjacent to the central semi-circular steps leading from the Upper to the Lower Flower Garden has demonstrated that no alteration to their extent or design as executed appears to have occurred through later resurfacing works within the gardens. It would appear that a large area surrounding the steps was initially required to be opened in order that a mortared platform could be laid, over which a brick footing was constructed that acted as the basis for the steps that were laid above. The gravel path was then constructed against the footings and the base of the steps, but the former height of the path surface in relation to the basal step could not be ascertained due to later truncation of the former gravel surface of the path.
- 4.2.10 The results of the evaluation adjacent to the steps would therefore suggest that Barry's original design for a flight of nine steps may never have actually been executed and perhaps as a later design adaptation or for financial reasons their extent was reduced.

Summary

- 4.2.11 The archaeological field evaluation has allowed a detailed assessment to be made of the current state of preservation of the former nineteenth century paths and steps within the Italian Gardens. Detailed information has been recorded regarding the manner and materials used in their construction, the nature of any associated drainage

and their original dimensions and extents in relation to the originally executed design of the nineteenth century gardens.

- 4.2.12 The evaluation has also indicated the extent of truncation by later activity of these contemporary garden features, and the information that has been produced by this work can be used as a basis for informing the restoration programme that is to be conducted within the gardens.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I 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 | | | | | | | | |
| | 10 | Layer | | 0.14 | Tarmacadam | | | |
| | 11 | Layer | | 0.11 | Made Ground/ dump deposit containing brick, coke and slag fragments | | | |
| | 12 | Layer | | - | Gravel | | | |
| | 13 | Layer | | 0.28 | Garden soil | | | |
| 002 | | | | | | | | |
| | 20 | Layer | | 0.04 | Tarmacadam | | | |
| | 21 | Layer | | 0.02 | Made Ground - gravel make-up for tarmac path | | | |
| | 22 | Layer | | 0.09 | Made Ground | | | |
| | 23 | Layer | | 0.20 | Gravel of former path | | | |
| | 24 | Layer | | c.0.10 | Gravel make-up deposit for path deposit 23 | | | |
| | 25 | Layer | | 0.10 | Garden soil | | | |
| 003 | | | | | | | | |
| | 30 | Layer | | 0.14 | Grass | | | |
| | 31 | Layer | | 0.09 | Tarmacadam | | | |
| | 32 | Layer | | 0.22 | Made Ground - gravel make-up for tarmac path | | | |
| | 33 | Layer | | 0.10 | Gravel of former path | | | |
| | 34 | Layer | | 0.15 | Garden soil | | | |
| | 35 | Layer | | c.0.05 | Gravel make-up deposit for path deposit 33 | | | |
| 004 | | | | | | | | |
| | 40 | Layer | | 0.04 | Tarmacadam | | | |
| | 41 | Layer | | 0.04 | Made Ground - gravel make-up for tarmac path | | | |
| | 42 | Layer | | c.0.15 | Gravel of former path | | | |
| | 43 | Layer | | c.0.20 | Garden soil | | | |

| <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> |
|---------------|----------------|-------------|------------------|-------------------|--|--------------|---------------|-------------|
| 05 | | | | | | | | |
| | 50 | Layer | | 0.04 | Tarmacadam | | | |
| | 51 | Layer | | 0.04 | Made Ground - gravel make-up for tarmac path | | | |
| | 52 | Layer | | 0.10 | Gravel of former path | | | |
| | 53 | Layer | | 0.09 | Garden soil | | | |
| 06 | | | | | | | | |
| | 60 | Layer | | 0.04 | Tarmacadam | | | |
| | 61 | Layer | | 0.16 | Garden soil | | | |
| | 62 | Layer | | 0.20 | Make-up layer for tarmac path | | | |
| | 63 | Layer | | 0.08 | Gravel of former path | | | |
| | 64 | Layer | | c.0.05 | Gravel make-up deposit for path deposit 63 | | | |
| 07 | | | | | | | | |
| | 70 | Layer | | 0.10 | Tarmacadam | | | |
| | 71 | Layer | | 0.04 | Gravel surface, former path | | | |
| | 72 | Layer | | 0.24 | Gravel make-up deposit for path deposit 71 | | | |
| | 73 | Layer | | c.0.20 | Clay natural | | | |
| | 74 | Layer | | 0.16 | Turf | | | |
| | 75 | Layer | | 0.04 | Coal dump | Glass, pot | 30/392 | 19/20th |
| | 76 | Layer | | 0.07 | Ash dump | | | |
| | 77 | Layer | | c.0.25 | Buried garden soil | | | |
| | 78 | Cut | c. 3.70 | 0.28 | Construction cut for path 71/72 | | | |
| 08 | | | | | | | | |
| | 80 | Layer | | 0.04 | Tarmacadam | | | |
| | 81 | Layer | | 0.04 | Made Ground - gravel make-up for tarmac path | | | |
| | 82 | Layer | 3.60 | c.0.15 | Gravel of former path | | | |
| | 83 | Layer | | 0.07 | Garden soil | | | |
| | 84 | Layer | | c.0.07 | Lower horizon garden soil recorded below 83 | | | |

| <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> |
|---------------|----------------|-------------|------------------|-------------------|--|--------------|---------------|-------------|
| 09 | | | | | | | | |
| | 90 | Layer | | 0.04 | Tarmacadam | | | |
| | 91 | Layer | | 0.07 | Made Ground - gravel make-up for tarmac path | | | |
| | 92 | Layer | | 0.10 | Gravel of former path | | | |
| | 93 | Structure | 0.16 | Height 0.26 | Eastern kerb of path | | | |
| | 94 | Structure | 0.11 | | Brick foundation for Kerb 93 | | | |
| | 95 | Layer | | 0.34 | Garden soil | | | |
| | 96 | Structure | 0.15 | 0.26 | Western kerb of path | | | |
| | 97 | Structure | 0.10 | 0.10 | Drain | Tile | 3/1758 | 19th |
| | 98 | Layer | 0.33 | 0.15 | Backfill of drain 97 | | | |
| 10 | | | | | | | | |
| | 100 | Layer | | 0.05 | Tarmacadam | | | |
| | 101 | Layer | | 0.07 | Made Ground - gravel make-up for tarmac path | | | |
| | 103 | Layer | | 0.17 | Gravel of former path | | | |
| | 104 | Structure | 0.15 | 0.26 | Southern kerb of path | | | |
| | 105 | Structure | | | Brick foundation for kerb 104 | | | |
| | 106 | Layer | | 0.29 | Garden soil | Pot | 5/35 | 19th |
| | 107 | Structure | 0.15 | 0.26 | Northern kerb | | | |
| | 108 | Structure | 0.32 | 0.12 | Drain | | | |
| 11 | | | | | | | | |
| | 110 | Layer | | 0.03 | Tarmacadam | | | |
| | 111 | Layer | | 0.07 | Gravel of former path | | | |
| | 112 | Structure | | 0.15 | Basal stone step | | | |
| | 113 | Structure | | 0.31 | Brick wall | | | |
| | 114 | Layer | | 0.22 | Gravel make-up | | | |
| | 115 | Structure | | 0.06 | Foundation platform for wall 113 | | | |

APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

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- LUC, 2003 Trentham Gardens Restoration Management Plan; client report for Trentham Leisure Ltd produced by Land Use Consultants.
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APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: Trentham Gardens, Trentham, Staffordshire

Site code: STTG 03

Grid reference: SJ 866 409

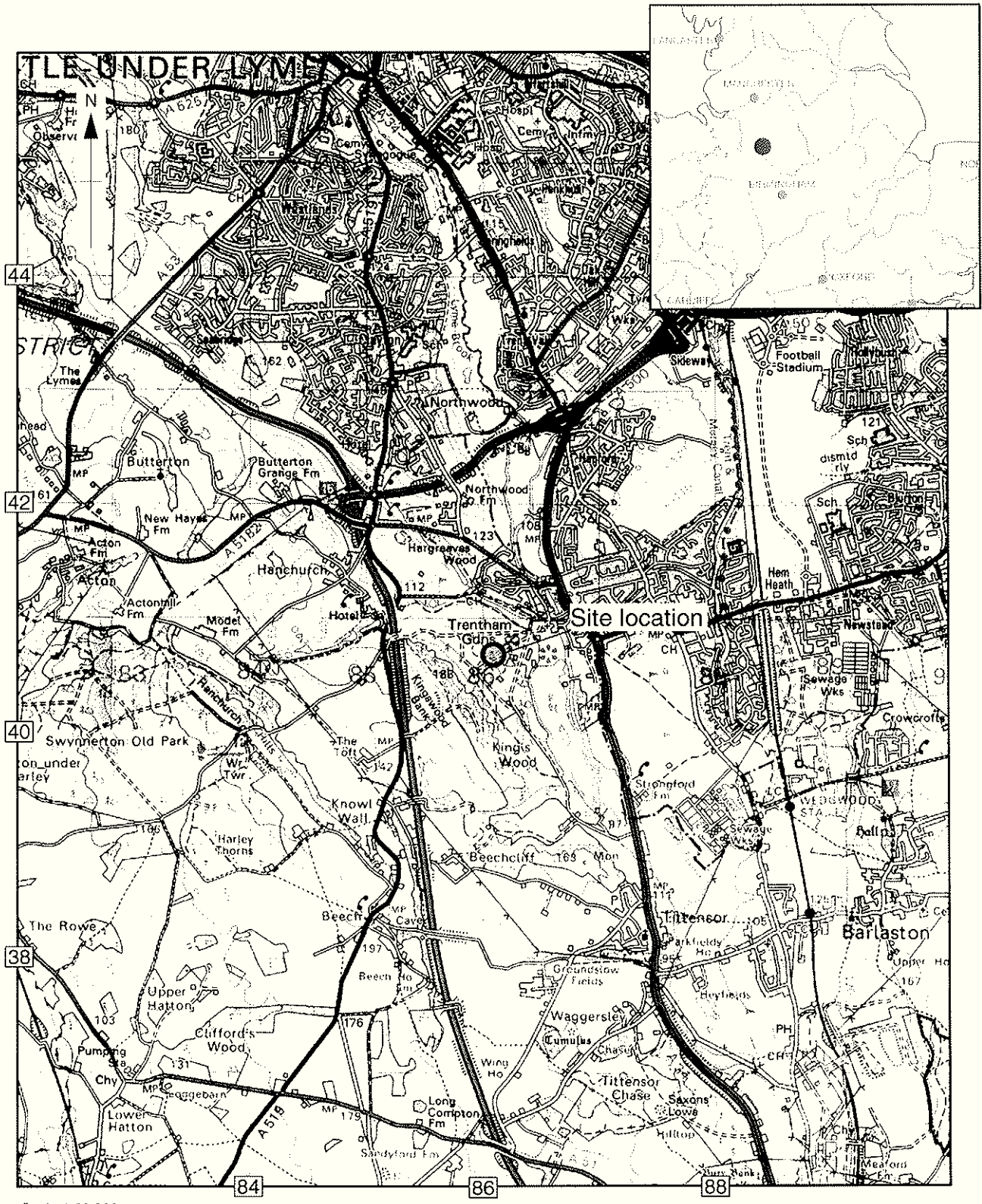
Type of evaluation: Trenching

Date and duration of project: 26th August - period of two weeks

Area of site: 3 ha.

Summary of results: Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out a field evaluation within the Italian Gardens at Trentham Gardens, Trentham, Staffordshire (NGR SJ 866 409) on behalf of St Modwen Developments. The purpose of the evaluation works was to investigate and provide information regarding the construction and potential state of preservation of paths and steps that formed part of the original nineteenth century Italian gardens as designed by Charles Barry. These works were required to inform a programme of restoration works being undertaken within the gardens. The evaluation has provided detailed information regarding the survival, extent and construction methods and materials used relating to both the former (nineteenth century) and presently existing paths and steps within the Italian Gardens.

Location of archive: The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with The Potteries Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent in due course, under the following accession number: STKMG 2002.k.19



Scale 1:50,000

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Figure 1: Site location

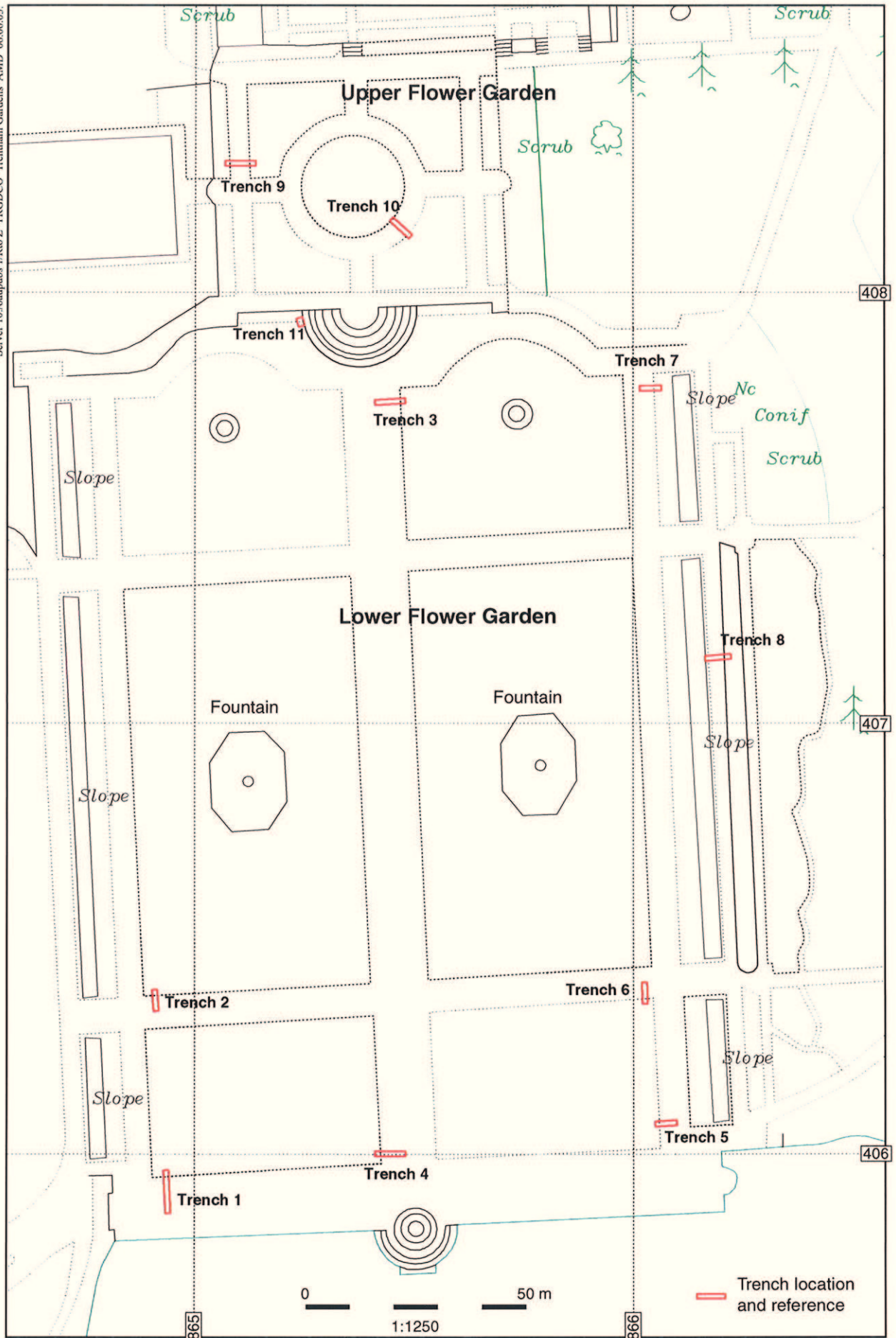


Figure 2: Trench location plan.

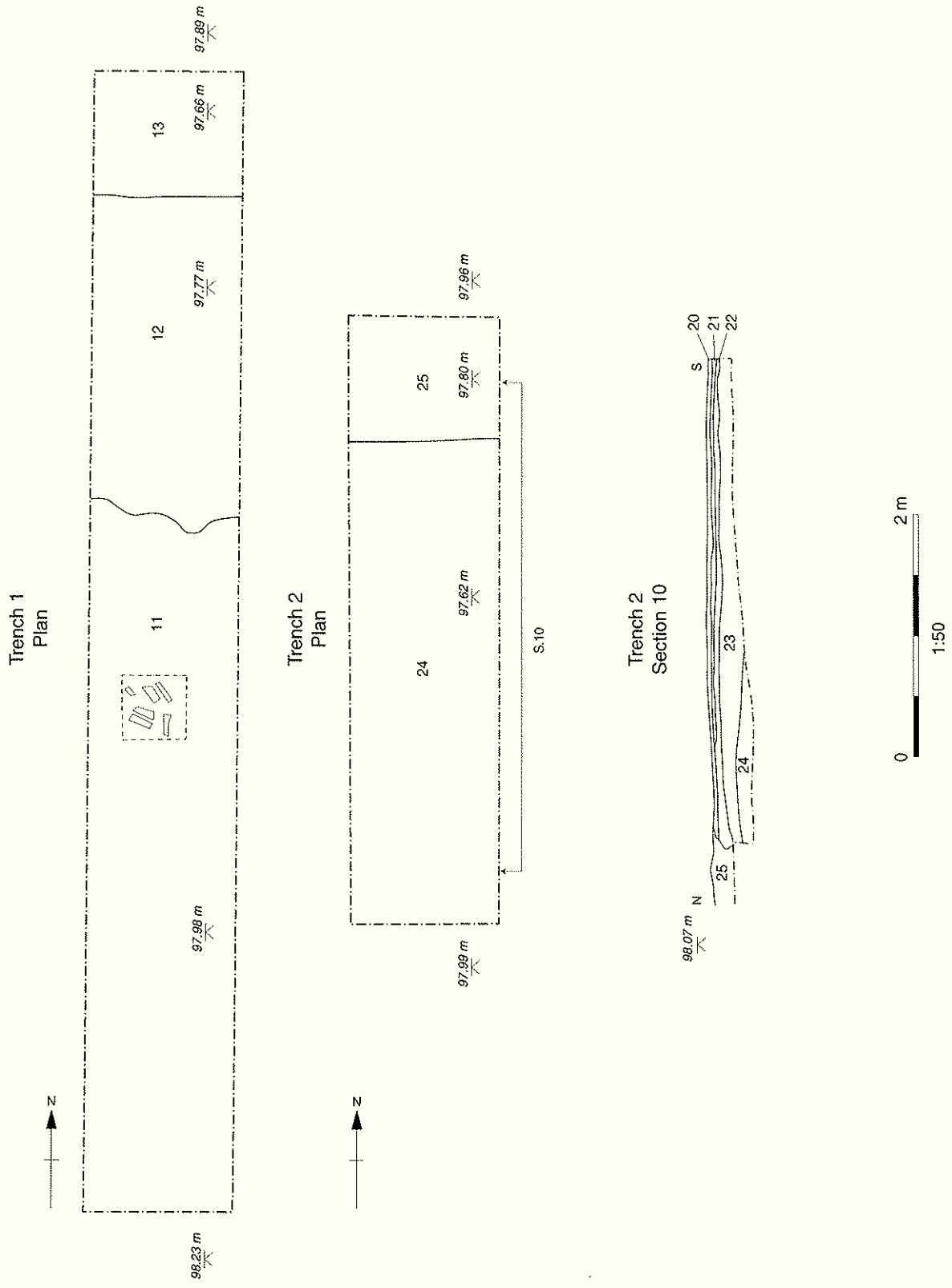


Figure 3: Trenches 1 and 2; plans and sections

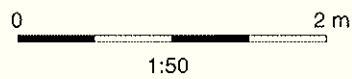
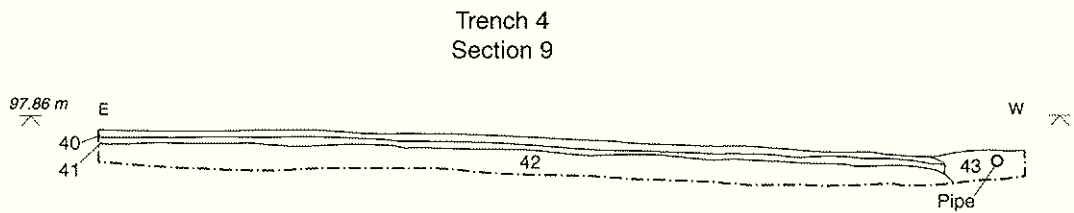
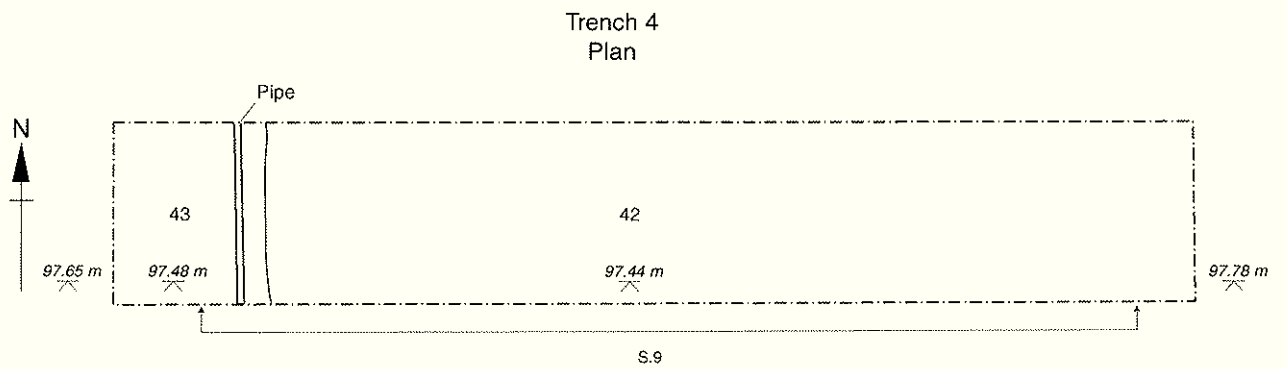
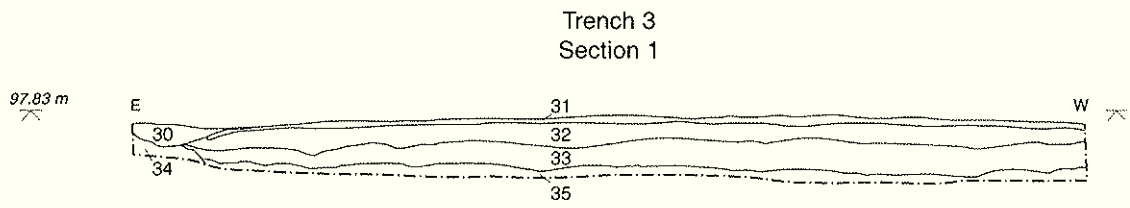
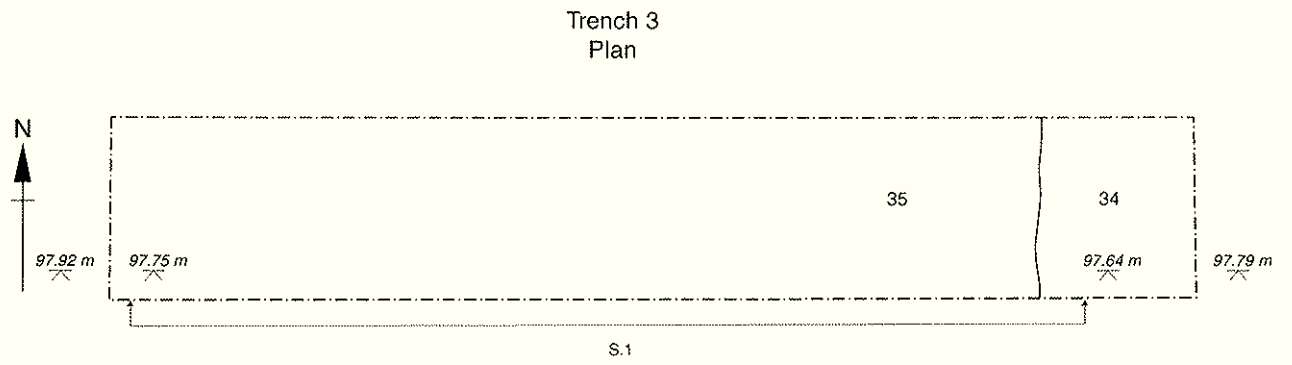


Figure 4: Trenches 3 and 4; plans and sections

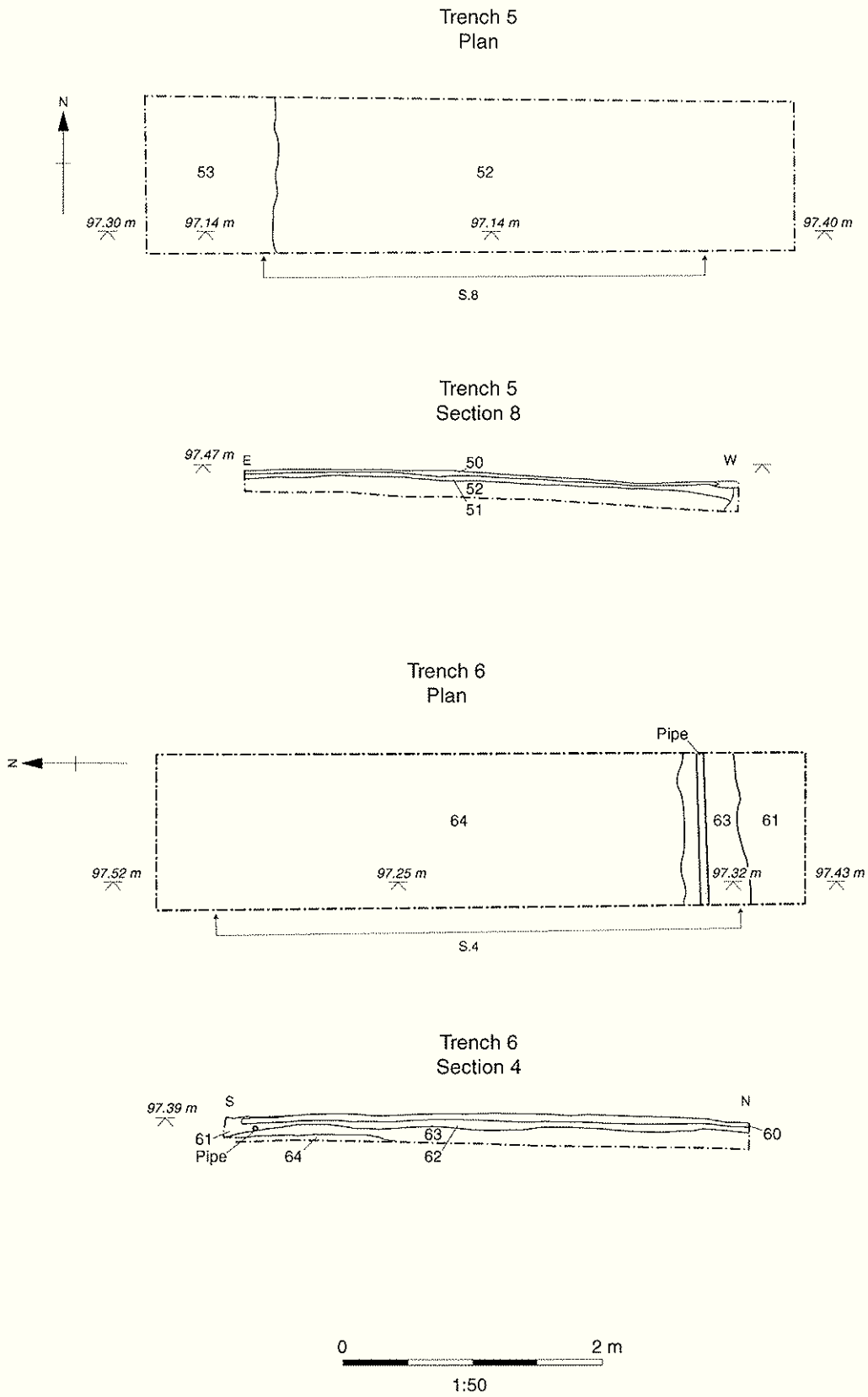


Figure 5: Trenches 5 and 6; plans and sections

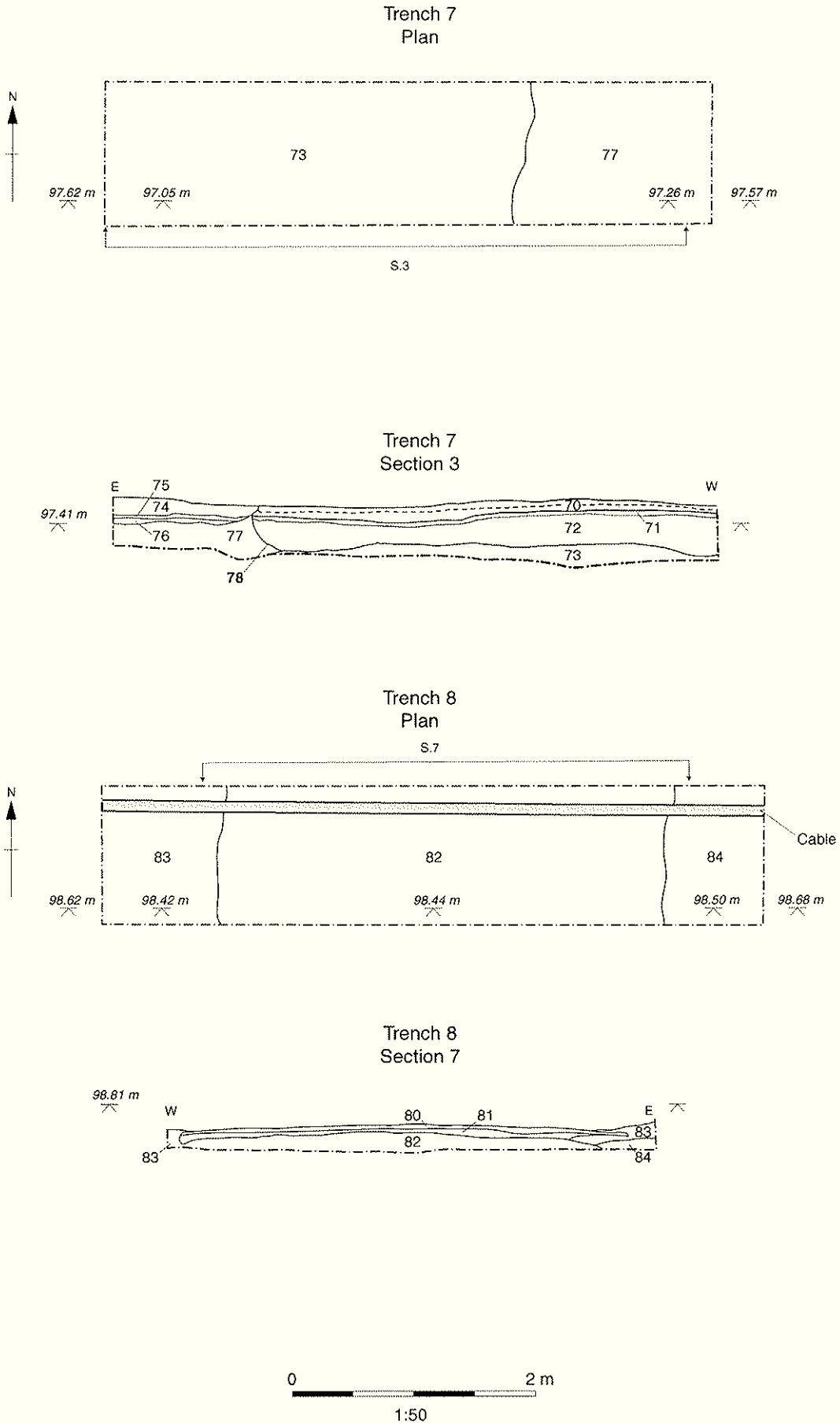


Figure 6: Trenches 7 and 8; plans and sections

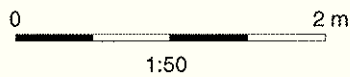
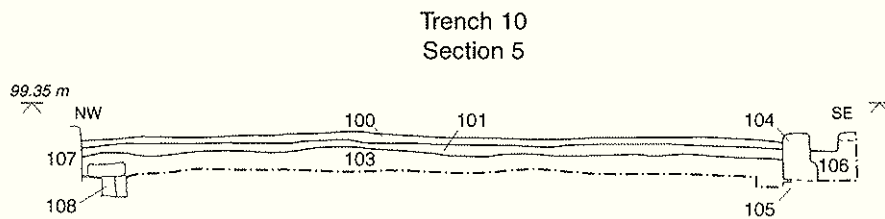
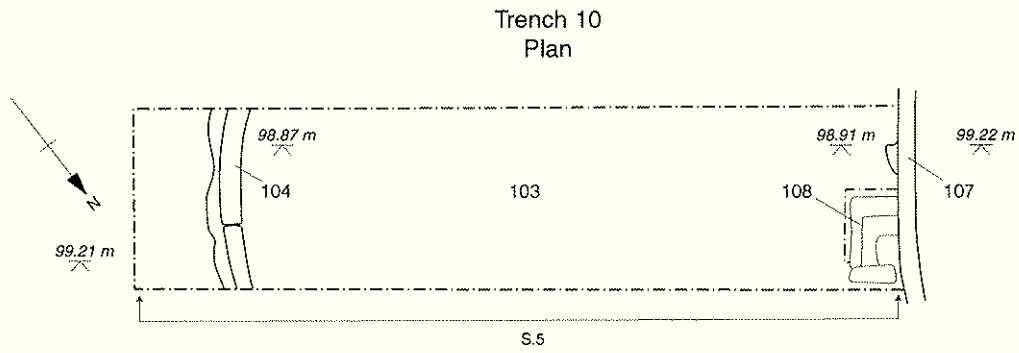
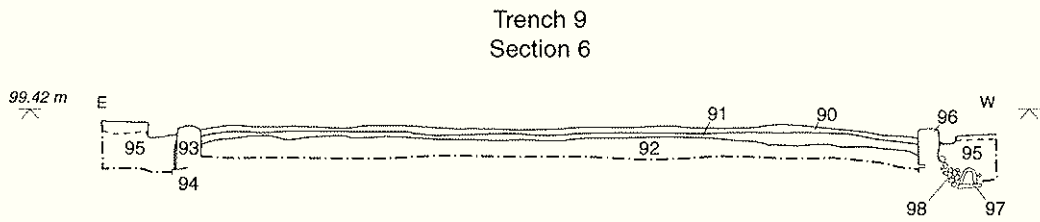
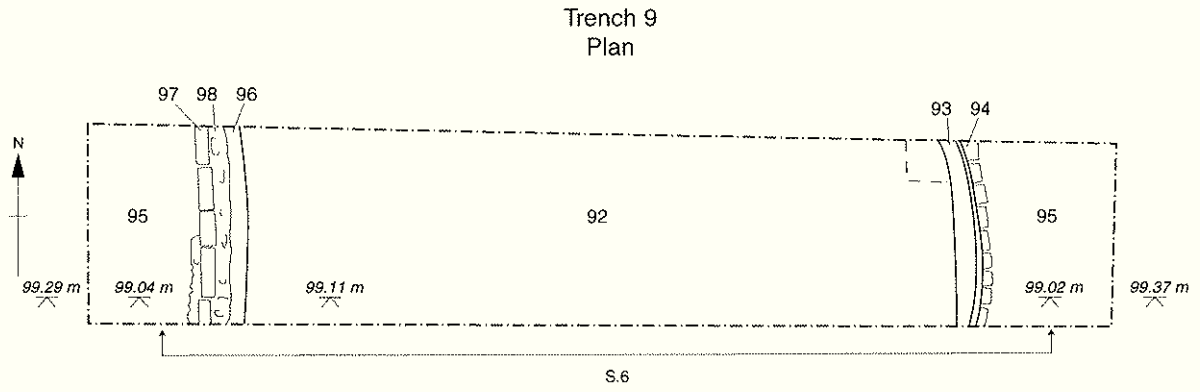


Figure 7: Trenches 9 and 10; plans and sections

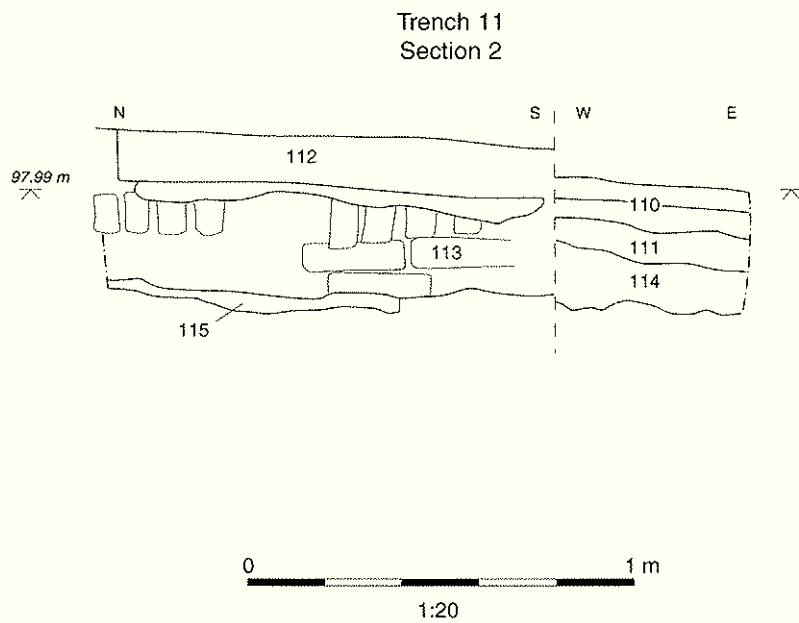
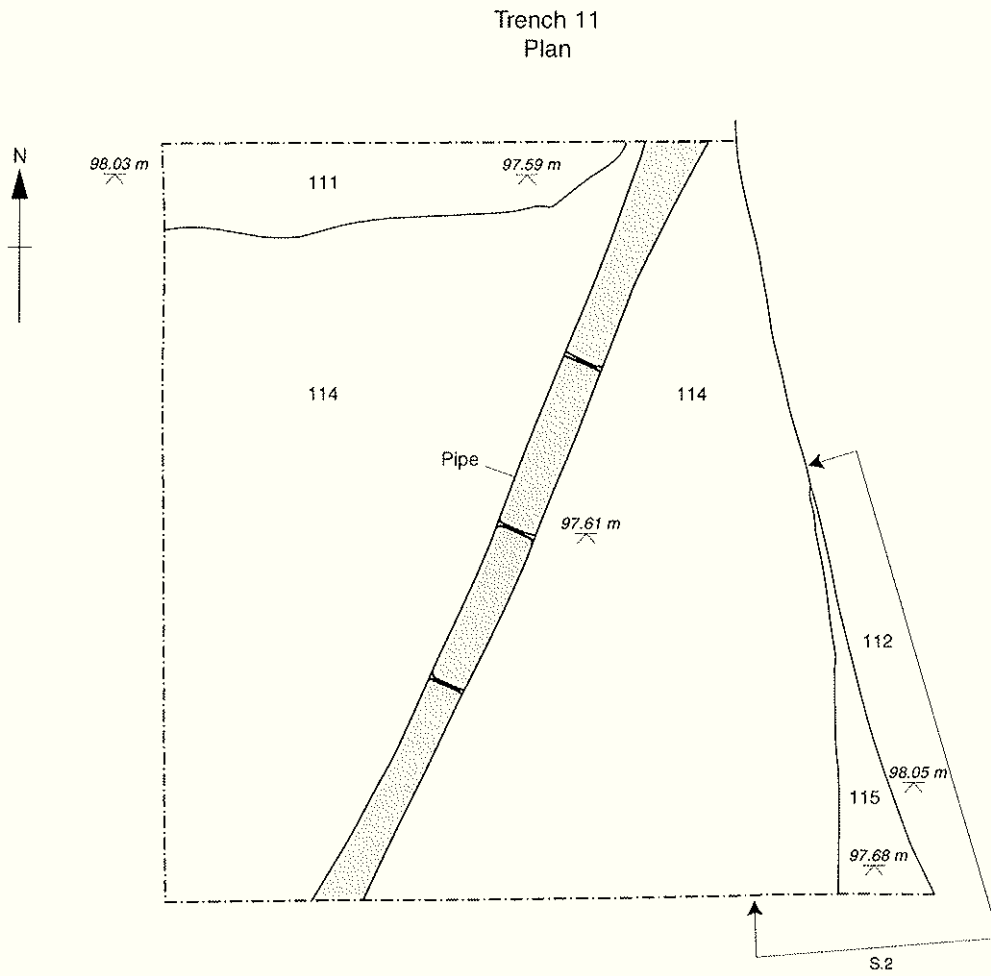


Figure 8: Trench 11; plan and section



Plate 1: 'The Terrace' between upper and lower flower garden



Plate 2: Photograph c.1898; general view of remodeled house and lower garden

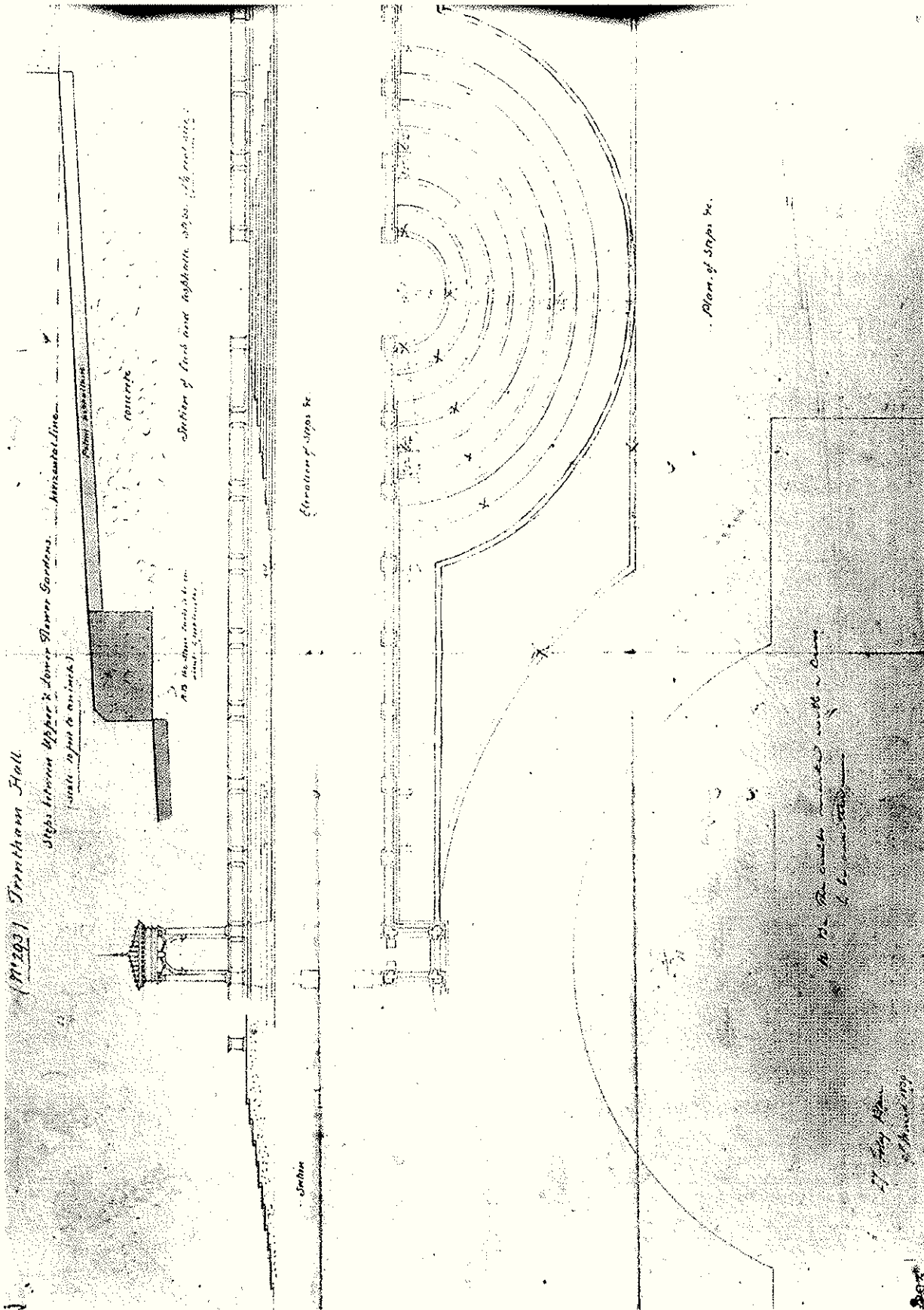
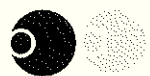


Plate 3: Design for pavilion and steps between upper and lower flower garden. Design by Barry, 1839



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