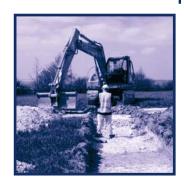
# Clenchwarton Road West Lynn Nr. King's Lynn Norfolk



**Archaeological Evaluation Report** 



January 2006



**Client: CgMs Consulting** 

Issue N<sup>O</sup>: 1 OA Job N<sup>O</sup>: 3022 NGR:TF 6070 1944 **Client Name:** CgMs Consulting

**Client Ref No:** 

**Document Title:** Evaluation Report

**Document Type:** Evaluation

**Issue Number:** 1

National Grid Reference: TF 6070 1944

Planning Reference: n/a

OA Job Number: 3022

Site Code: 42738 KLY Invoice Code: WLCLENEV

Receiving Museum: Norfolk Museum Service

Museum Accession No: 42738 KLY

Prepared by: Guy Cockin Position: Supervisor

Date: 25th January 2006

Checked by: Austin Ainsworth

Position: Asst. to the Head of Fieldwork

Date: 25th January 2005

Approved by: Nick Shepherd Signed.....

Position: Head of Fieldwork Date: 26th January 2005

Document File Location X:\WLCLENEV\_West\_Lynn\_Clenchwarden\_Road\_EV\

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Graphics File Location servergo/RtoZ/42738KLY/WLCLENEV/Clenchwarton

Rd, West Lynn\*12.01.06

Illustrated by Georgina Slater

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## Land off Clenchwarton Road West Lynn, King's Lynn Norfolk

NGR: TF 6070 1944

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

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#### **SUMMARY**

In January 2006, Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out a field evaluation at land off Clenchwarton Road, West Lynn, King's Lynn, Norfolk (NGR TF 6070 1944), for CgMs Consulting. A total of eleven trenches out of a proposed thirteen were excavated. The evaluation revealed two possible post-medieval/medieval features and two undated clay lined pits, which all appear to represent specialist activities associated with metalworking. A section through the remains of medieval clay sea bank was also revealed.

#### 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Scope of work

- 1.1.1 In January 2006, Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out a field evaluation of land off Clenchwarton Road, West Lynn, King's Lynn, Norfolk (centred on TF 6070 1944).
- 1.1.2 In preparation for a proposed new housing development, Norfolk Landscape Archaeology (NLA) requested that an archaeological evaluation be carried out to determine the archaeological potential of the site, in accordance with the relevant planning policies. A Written Scheme of Investigations has been produced (OA, 2005) and agreed by A.R.J. Hutcheson BSc MIFA, the Head of Archaeological Planning, Norfolk Landscape Archaeology. The work was undertaken in accordance with procedures and research issues outlined within that document.

#### 1.2 Location, geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The site is centred at TF 6070 1944, west of Clenchwarton Road, in the town of West Lynn in Norfolk (Fig. 1). It is to the south-west of West Lynn, lying within a semi-rural location. The site is sub-rectangular in shape and covers an area of approximately 1 ha. It is bounded to the west and south by open fields, a garage (Charlie's Service Station) lies to the north. Warehouses are located to the east.
- 1.2.2 The site is currently covered with long grass and scrub with an overgrown stockpile in the north-west of the site. Various types of fly-tipped waste occur sporadically across the site and include corrugated metal panels, wooden pallets and broken asbestos sheeting (Abatech, 2004, 2).
- 1.2.3 The site is overlain by superficial geological deposits of Terrington Beds of Pleistocene and Recent age. The Terrington Beds are described as "younger marine alluvium; salt marsh, tidal creek and river deposits. The underlying solid geology is characterised by Kimmeridge Clay of Jurassic age (BGS Sheet 145).

#### 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 The following archaeological background is a brief summary of information contained within the Norfolk Landscape Archaeology Brief and Archaeological Excavation on Land at Clenchwarton Road, West Lynn, Norfolk, produced by Archaeological Project Solutions (APS, 2004).

- 1.3.2 A Roman coin is recorded as being found c 150 m to the northwest of the site (HER 17624). No further Roman remains are recorded in the vicinity.
- 1.3.3 The village of West Lynn is known to date from the late Saxon period (*c* AD850-1066) and lies outside of the medieval marshland 'Sea-bank', which enclosed Clenchwarton to the west. The site under discussion includes within its boundaries part of the 'Sea Bank' (Norfolk Historic Environment Resource, NHER 2187), thought to date from the late Saxon or medieval periods.
- 1.3.4 Domesday references to salterns in Lynn suggest that salt-making started prior to the Norman Conquest. At least fourteen salt-making mounds are extant to the north and west of West Lynn. It is possible that these are remnants of a more extensive group that were levelled during the expansion of the village.
- 1.3.5 A group of mounds to the north of the village, now partially levelled for cultivation, have produced pottery of 11th to 13th century date. Further mounds to the north of Clenchwarton Road *c* 250 m from the development area have produced surface finds of medieval pottery (NHER 22543). A group of possibly medieval salterns (NHER 22309) are recorded *c* 350 m from the development area and have produced buckles of 16th century date as well as a possibly medieval lead weight
- 1.3.6 Previous evaluation and subsequent excavation on land adjacent and to the north of this area, (NHER 39662), has uncovered evidence of salt production, along with further medieval activity. It also suggests that that the 'Sea Bank' could be a levee or 'over-bank' next to a former river channel, and associated with the reclamation of marshland for agricultural or pastoral use.

#### 2 EVALUATION AIMS

- 2.1.1 The aims of the evaluation are to:
  - clarify the presence/absence and extent of archaeological deposits within the site;
  - identify, within the constraints of the evaluation, the date, character, condition, significance, quality and depth of any surviving remains within the site;
  - assess the degree of existing impacts to sub-surface horizons and to document the extent of archaeological survival of buried deposits.

#### 3 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

## 3.1 **Scope of fieldwork**

- 3.1.1 The site was subject to the proposed excavation of thirteen trenches, each measuring 10 m x 4 m, the locations of which are shown on Fig. 1. These were placed in order to provide samples of the range of possible archaeological deposits expected to be present on the site and of variations in the existing topography and ground conditions.
- 3.1.2 Two trenches, numbers 8 and 11, were abandoned due to the presence of asbestos in the south-west corner of the site.

## 3.2 Fieldwork methods and recording

- 3.2.1 The trenches were excavated under archaeological supervision using a suitable mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket. Machine excavation proceeded to the top of the first archaeological horizon, or the upper levels of natural estuarine silts, whichever was encountered first. That level was hand cleaned. Spoil was scanned for artefacts.
- 3.2.2 All features and deposits were issued with unique context numbers, and context recording was in accordance with the established OA Field Manual, (OA 1992) and IFA Guidance (IFA 1999). Colour transparency and black-and-white negative photographs were taken of all features. The stratigraphy of the trenches was recorded even where no archaeological deposits were identified.
- 3.2.3 A project supervisor, one archaeologist and a geo-archaeologist, under the supervision of a project manager undertook the fieldwork. Monitoring of the evaluation was undertaken by the A.R.J. Hutcheson BSc MIFA, the Head of Archaeological Planning, Norfolk Landscape Archaeology.

#### **3.3 Finds**

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

#### 4 RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS

#### 4.1 Soils and ground conditions

- 4.1.1 All the evaluation trenches came down onto natural estuarine deposits represented by mid to light yellow sandy silts with fine laminations. To the south of the site this tended to be overlain by re-deposited natural silts and present topsoil while in the north there was possible evidence of the sea bank deposit and a buried soil or surface.
- 4.1.2 Ground water was encountered during the excavations but not to extent where it hampered the excavations.

## 4.2 **Description of deposits**

## Trenches 1 and 2 (Fig. 6)

4.2.1 Trenches 1 and 2 at the north end of the site contained the same sequence of deposits. Both were excavated to a depth of 0.85 m onto natural, a laminated sandy silt (1005 and 2005). Overlying this material was a 0.13 m thick deposit of possibly disturbed natural of sandy silty clay (1004 and 2004). These in turn were sealed by a 0.2 m thick deposit of compact light blue grey silty clay with reddish mottling and frequent macroscopic charcoal inclusions. This material (1003 and 2003) was interpreted as redeposited Kimmeridge clay and may have served as the material used to form the sea bank noted in previous works. Deposit 2003 petered out towards the south end of

Trench 2, indicating the southern extent of the sea bank in this location. Layers 1003 and 2003 were overlain by a 0.22 m thick layer of re-deposited sandy silt natural, (1002 and 2002), which were overlain by 0.3 m of topsoil.

## Trench 3 (Fig. 3)

4.2.2 Trench 3 was excavated to a depth of 1.26 m onto (3006) a light greyish brown sandy silt, natural estuarine deposit. Cut into this material was a north-south aligned linear feature (3005). This feature was 0.37 m deep and 2 m wide with a flat base and gently sloping sides. Its fill (3004) was a mid reddish brown sandy silt, which contained frequent cockleshells and industrial waste. This feature was overlain by two layers of made ground, firstly layer 3003, a 0.56 m thick layer of mixed light yellow sandy clay and greyish sandy silt and clay, and secondly 3002, a mid yellowish brown sandy silt and clay with patches of blueish grey silty clay. Both these deposits contained frequent charcoal flecks. Layer 3002 was sealed by 0.32 m of topsoil (3001).

## Trench 4 (Fig. 6)

4.2.3 Natural estuarine deposit 4008 was reached at a depth of 0.74 m in Trench 4. This was sealed by another thin layer of probable natural estuarine material (4004), a light brownish yellow sandy silt. Above this was a 0.1 m thick layer of mid greyish brown silty clay with red mottling. This was interpreted as a former land surface or buried soil, which appeared to be stratigraphically associated with the sea bank. A ditch cut (4005) was identified running from east to west. Cutting this was a field drain, filled by a ceramic pipe (4007) and a dark brown soil backfill (4006). Overlying 4003 and sealing field drain backfill (4006) was a 0.24 m thick layer of re-deposited natural, a yellow brown sandy silt clay with red mottling (4002), overlain by 0.32 m of topsoil (4001).

#### Trench 5 (Fig. 6)

4.2.4 Natural (5004) was reached at a depth of 1.17 m. This consisted of a light greyish yellow laminated sandy silt. Overlying this was (5003) a 0.37 m thick layer of very similar material that contained modern brick rubble. This was overlain by 0.36 m of re-deposited natural (5002), a sandy silt made ground, sealed by 0.44 m of topsoil containing modern rubbish (5001).

## Trench 6 (Fig. 4)

4.2.5 At a depth of 0.6 m, natural brownish yellow laminated sand silt (6004) was revealed. Cutting this deposit was a curvilinear feature (6003) running north-south before turning to the west at the south end of the trench. This feature was at least 1.5 m wide and 0.52 m deep. It had gently sloping sides and a flat base and its fill (6002) was a friable mid red brown sandy silt with frequent charcoal flecks. Fill (6002) also produced a fragment of post-medieval brick and an iron nail. Overlying (6004) and sealing (6002) was a 0.6 m thick deposit of mid yellowish brown sandy silt, made ground deposit.

## Trench 7 (Fig. 5)

4.2.6 In the base of Trench 7, two clay-lined pits were revealed cutting natural sandy silt (7003). One of these rectangular pits (7006) was excavated. This feature proved to have a stepped north-eastern side, then near vertical sides. The pit was at least 0.5 m deep and 1.2 m wide. Unfortunately the base of the pit was not reached due to the confined space within which to work. The pit appeared to consist of two elements: a shallow flat-bottomed trough to the north-east, which became to the south-west a near vertical sided pit. The entire feature was lined with a 0.05 m thick layer of mid grey blue clay. The earliest fill of the pit was a mid grey sandy silt (7005) and was 0.2 m thick, slumping down from the north-east to south-west. A secondary fill (7004) consisted of light brownish grey sandy silt and was 0.3 m thick. Both these fills were sterile and produced no finds. Both clay-lined pits were sealed by a thin layer of light yellowish brown sandy silt, re-deposited natural (7002), which was overlain by 0.3 m of topsoil (7001).

#### Trenches 9 and 12 (Fig. 6)

4.2.7 Both Trenches 9 and 12 displayed a very similar sequence of deposits. A light yellow finely laminated silty sand (9004 and 12004) was reached at a depth of approximately 1 m. Above these layers was a deposit of made ground (9003) and (12003) consisting of a mid brown sandy silt containing frequent fragments of modern rubble. Both these were sealed by a layer of redeposited natural sandy silt (9002 and 12002), which was 0.25 m thick. Sealing both these layers was a sandy silt loam topsoil 0.3 m thick.

## Trench 10 (Fig. 6)

4.2.8 Trench 10 was excavated to a depth of 0.2 m on to layer 10004, a light brown laminated natural. Running north-south along the eastern edge of the trench was a shallow linear feature (10003), possibly the basal remains of a ditch or more likely modern truncation associated with the warehouses to the east, as it was only 0.05 m deep and 1 m wide. This feature was filled by a firm mid greyish blue clay and brown silty clay (10002) that contained occasional charcoal flecks but produced no finds. Fill (10002) and natural (10004) were overlain by 0.2 m of topsoil (10001).

## Trench 12 (Fig. 6)

4.2.9 Natural estuarine silt (12004) was sealed by possibly re-deposited natural (12002) prior to being capped by 0.28 m of imported material (12003) used to raise the ground level. Topsoil (12001) capped the trench that contained no archaeological features.

## Trench 13 (Fig. 6)

4.2.10 Natural laminated sandy silt (13002) was seen at a depth of 0.4 m. The western half of Trench 13 had been subject to modern truncation (13004), creating a disturbed natural layer containing modern material (13003). Overlying this was 0.4 m of modern re-deposited sandy silt (13001).

#### **4.3 Finds**

- 4.3.1 The site produced very little in the way of archaeological finds (Appendix 4). Curvilinear feature (6003) produced a fragment of post-medieval brick and an iron nail from its surface. The brick was coated with modern looking mortar, suggesting that it had been reused in more recent times.
- 4.3.2 Both curvilinear features (3005) and (6003) were filled with charcoal, shell, animal bone and industrial waste materials. Environmental samples were taken where appropriate.

#### 4.4 Environmental evidence

- 4.4.1 Two bulk samples and two monolith samples were taken during the course of the evaluation to aid interpretation of site formation processes and types of archaeological activity here (Appendix 3). Samples were taken in accordance with procedures outlined within the OA Environmental Sampling Manual (OA 2002), which follows English Heritage guidelines (EH, 2002).
- 4.4.2 Bulk samples were taken from the two curvilinear features (3005 and 6003), identified in Trenches 3 and 6. The samples produced evidence of industrial waste products in the form of burnt clay, metal slag, charcoal, flue ash and an iron nail. This material indicates that industrial processes associated with metalworking (possibly lead) or the production of lime were occurring on site. Feature 3005 also produced frequent fragile cockle shells (*Cerastoderma edule*), which may indicate processing of marine resources here or be discarded food materials from the workers.
- 4.4.3 The monolith samples (in accordance with the WSI) were taken through the potential sea bank deposit in Trench 1 and from the possible buried surface in Trench 4. These samples have been retained, should clarification of these deposits be required.

#### 5 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

- 5.1.1 The evaluation identified limited archaeological potential within the north half of the site, whereas the southern end showed signs of significant modern truncation to a depth of c 1 m. Potential medieval and post-medieval features were identified, enclosed within what appears to be the remains of the former sea wall defence.
- 5.1.2 The sea wall deposit represents a localised deposit that appears confined to the area where it is shown to the cross the site on a map dating from the 1500s. No visible trace of the sea wall was present on the surface and the blue/grey silty clay identified in Trenches 1 and 2 appears to be all that remains of the former bank.
- 5.1.3 The bank appears to have been constructed using the underlying Kimmeridge clay, which would have made up the core of the bank. Possibly during the construction of the nearby factories, the sea wall was levelled and the material was either spread out over the area or mostly removed from the site.

- 5.1.4 The features identified during the evaluation all appear to have a specialist function. The clay-lined features identified in Trench 7 presumably held water, possibly associated with metalworking or (possibly), were used to keep resources like cockles, eels, and other marine resources fresh.
- 5.1.5 The curvilinear features in Trenches 3 and 6, both filled with industrial waste, must have been associated with metalworking. No occupation evidence (such as pottery) was recovered from the trenches to suggest habitation nearby.

## **APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench	Ctxt No	Type	Width (m)	Thick. (m)	Comment	Finds	No./ wt	Date
001								
	1001	Layer		0.3	Topsoil	-		
	1002	Layer		0.22	Redeposited natural	Bone		
	1003	Layer		0.2	Possible sea bank	-		
	1004	Layer		0.12	Estuarine silt	-		
	1005	Layer		>0.2	Estuarine silt			
002								
	2001	Layer		0.3	Topsoil	-		
	2002	Layer		0.2	Redeposited natural			
	2003	Layer		0.22	Possible sea bank			
	2004	Layer		0.13	Estuarine silt			
	2005	Layer		-	Estuarine silt	-		
003								
	3001	Layer		0.32	Topsoil	-		
	3002	Layer		0.24	Made ground	-		
	3003	Layer		0.56	Made ground	-		
	3004	Fill		0.37	Fill of 3005	Bone, clinker		
	3005	Cut	2.0	0.37	Curvilinear ditch	-		
	3006	Layer		>0.14	Estuarine silt	-		
004								
	4001	Layer		0.32	Topsoil	-		
	4002	Layer		0.24	Redeposited natural	-		
	4003	Layer		0.11	Buried soil			
	4004	Fill		0.07	Estuarine silt	-		
	4005	Cut	-	0.5	Field drain			
	4006	Fill	-	-	Fill of 4005			
	4007	Drain	-	-	Fill of 4005			
	4008	Layer		-	Estuarine silt	-		
005								
	5001	Layer		0.44	Topsoil	-		
	5002	Layer		0.36	Redeposited natural	-		
	5003	Layer		0.37	Disturbed natural silt	-		

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Trench	Ctxt No	Type	Width (m)	Thick. (m)	Comment	Finds	No./ wt	Date
	5004	Layer		-	Estuarine silt	-		
006								
	6001	Layer		0.6	Topsoil	-		
	6002	Fill		0.52	Fill of 6003	CBM, Fe.		Post- medieval
	6003	Cut	>1.5	0.52	Curvilinear feature	-		
	6004	Layer		>0.2	Estuarine silt	-		
007								
	7001	Layer		0.3	Topsoil	-		
	7002	Layer		0.1	Subsoil	-		
	7003	Layer		0.2	Estuarine silt	-		
	7004	Fill		0.3	Fill of 7006	-		
	7005	Fill		0.2	Fill of 7006	-		
	7006	Cut	1.2	>0.5	Pit	-		
	7007	Fill		0.05	Pit lining	-		
009	•	•		•			•	•
	9001	Layer		0.3	Topsoil	-		
	9002	Layer		0.26	Redeposited natural	-		
	9003	Layer		0.49	Made ground	-		
	9004	Layer		-	Estuarine Silt	-		
010	•						•	•
	10001	Layer		0.2	Topsoil	-		
	10002	Layer		0.05	Fill of 1003	-		
	10003	Layer	1	0.05	Shallow linear feature	-		
	10004	Layer	1.3	0.48	Estuarine silt	-		
012	•	<u> </u>	•	•	1	<b>-</b>	1	
	12001	Layer		0.28	Topsoil	-		
	12002	Layer		0.32	Redeposited natural	-		
	12003	Layer		0.28	Made ground	-		
	12004	Layer		-	Estuarine silt	-		
013	<u>. I</u>	1	1		ı		1	
	13001	Layer		0.4	Fill of 704	-		
	13002	Fill		0.1	Fill of 1303	-		
	13003	Cut	.>5	0.1	Modern truncation	-		
	13004	Layer		_	Estuarine silt	_		

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#### APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

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OA 1992 Fieldwork Manual (ed. D Wilkinson, first edition, August 1992)

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NLA 2005 Brief for Archaeological Evaluation by Trial Trenching at: Land Off Clenchwarton Road, West Lynn, King's Lynn.

## APPENDIX 3 ASSESSMENT OF THE CHARRED PLANT REMAINS

by Dawn Irving and Rebecca Nicholson (OA)

#### Methodology

Two bulk samples were taken during the evaluation for the recovery of charred plant remains. The samples were taken through the fill of a curvilinear feature, which contained frequent cockle (*Cerastoderma edule*) shells and charcoal. The bulk samples were carefully excavated because the cockleshells were too friable to be handled.

The samples were processed by flotation using a modified Siraf-type machine, with the flot collected on a 250  $\mu$ m mesh. The cockleshells were too friable for this process and disintegrated even when a low-pressure water spray was used. After air-drying the flot was scanned for material under a binocular microscope at x10 and x20 magnification with the residues sorted by hand.

#### **Results and residues**

Flots: The flots were average in size (100 to 200mls). Wood charcoal was present in both samples with a range of taxa provisionally identified, including Maloideae (hawthorn type) and *Alnus/Corylus* (alder/hazel). There was no other charred plant remains present in the flot but a large amount of flue ash and burnt clay was present. Snails were common in the flots including open country species and catholic species. A single small bird/mammal bone and a fish vertebra were identified in the flots.

Large amounts of flue ash/burnt clay, charcoal and coal were present in the residues. A small amount of metalworking slag was also present, including metal spheres (indicating high temperatures), one of which had oxidised white - probably an indication of lead. No mammal

bone was seen in the residues and the cockleshells had almost all disintegrated and were therefore rarely present in the residues.

#### **Discussion**

It is likely that the assemblage represents the re-deposited remains of a specific industrial process such as lime production. The good condition of the wood charcoal suggest that there is potential for the preservation of non-wood charred plant remains and this should be reflected in any further excavation in the area, if appropriate deposits are revealed.

The large amount of industrial debris in the samples would be consistent with a furnace/furnace lining (Cynthia Poole, pers. comm). Further identification of the charcoal could inform on the utilisation of local woodlands for industrial purposes, and it is recommended that a charcoal specialist is involved if further work is envisaged on this material or at this site.

## APPENDIX 4 ASSESSMENT OF FINDS

## Ceramic building material

by Leigh Allen (OA)

A fragment from a post-medieval brick was recovered from feature (6003). A very small section of the original brick surface survives. Mortar of modern appearance was found attached to a broken surface and implies it has been reused. An undiagnostic iron nail was also recovered from the same context.

#### **Animal bone**

by Fay Worley (OA)

Two sheep/goat teeth and three fragments of cortical bone from a single right sheep/goat mandible were recovered from context (3004). The bone was in poor condition. The teeth comprised the second and third molars. Tooth wear indicates that the animal was over eight years old when it died.

#### APPENDIX 5 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

**Site name:** Land off Clenchwarton Road, West Lynn, King's Lynn, Norfolk

Site code: 42738 KLY

Grid reference: NGR TF 6070 1944

**Type of evaluation:** 11 trenches measuring 10 m by 4 m **Date and duration of project:** 3-9 January, five days

Area of site: 1 ha

Summary of results: Two possible post-medieval/medieval features. Two undated clay lined

pits and a segment of a medieval sea bank foundation.

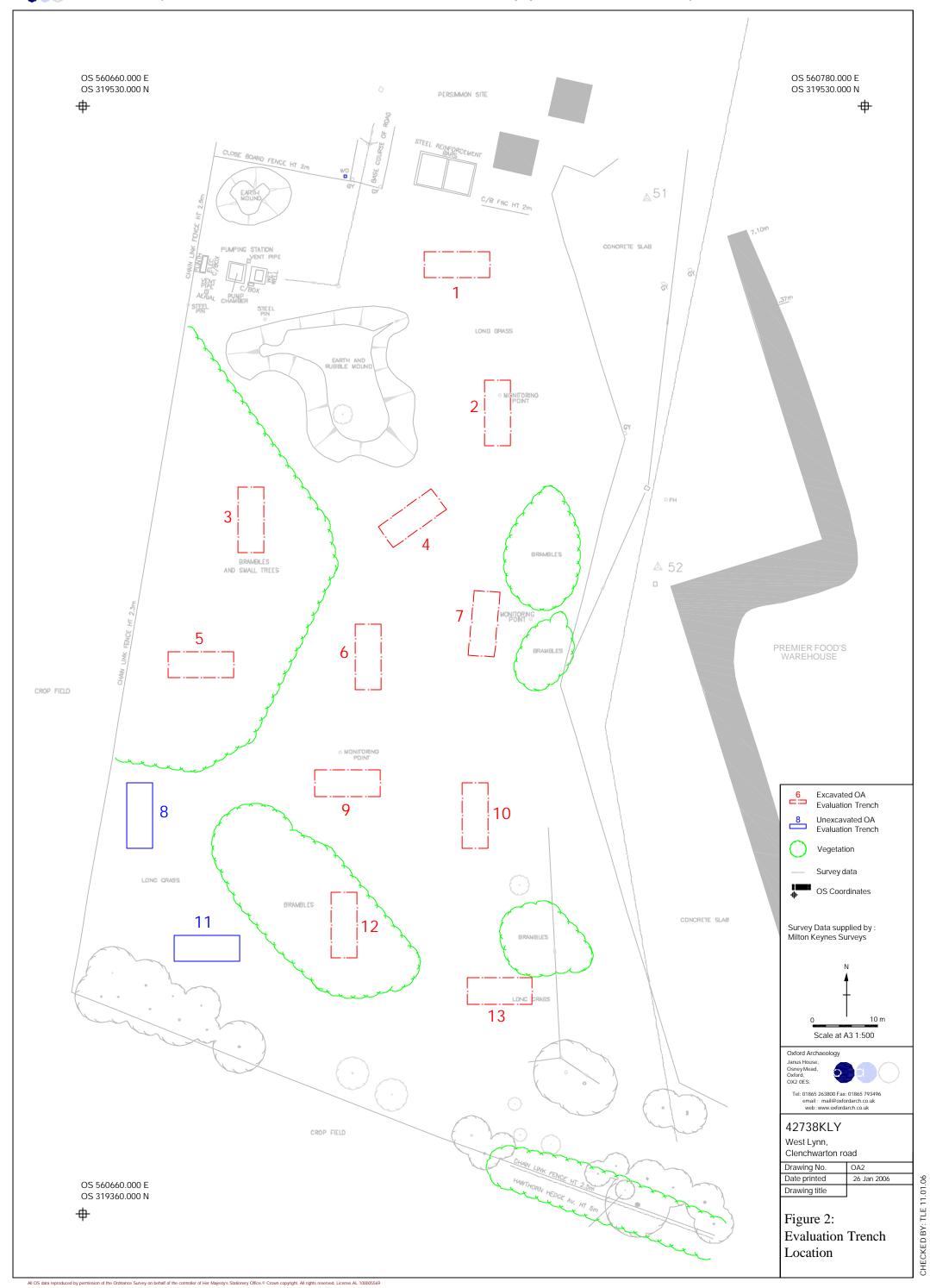
**Location of archive:** The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford,

OX2 0ES, to be deposited with Norfolk Museum Service, Acc. Code 42738KLY.

Scale 1:25,000

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Figure 1: Site location



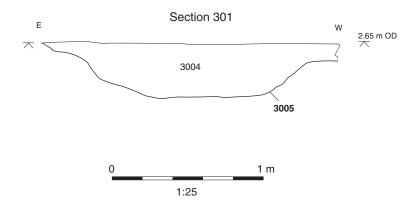


Figure 3: Trench 3, plan and section

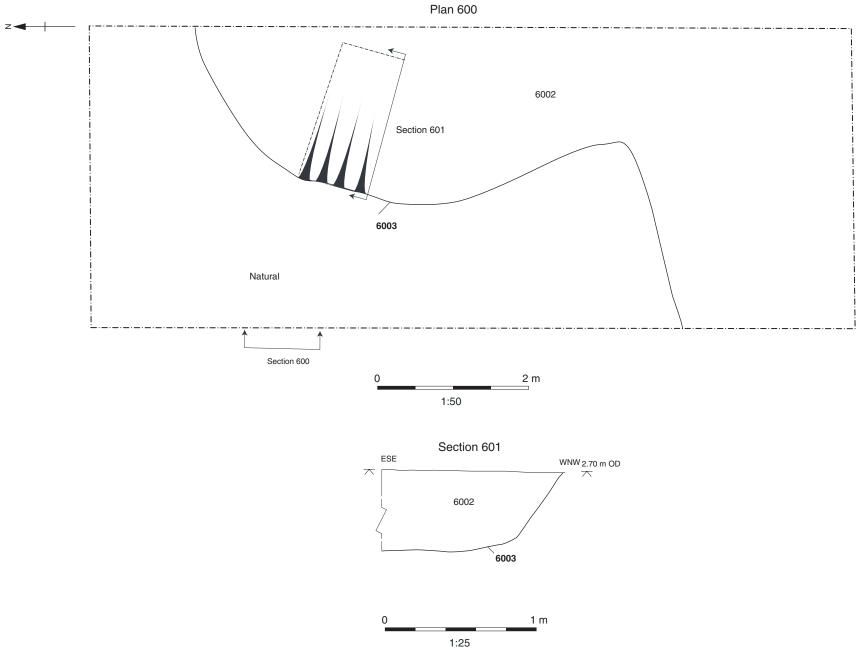
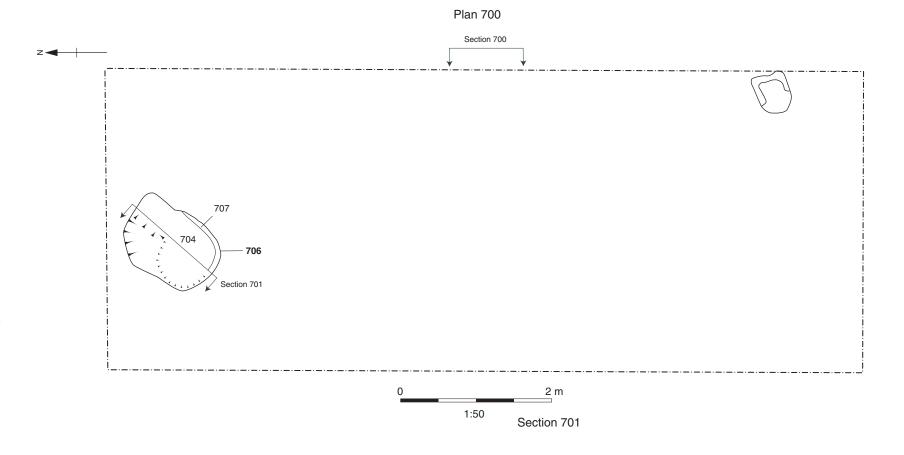


Figure 4: Trench 6, plan and section





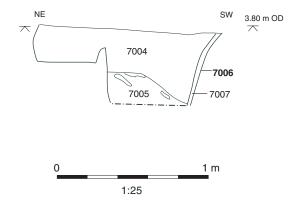
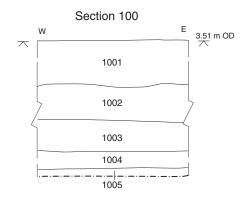
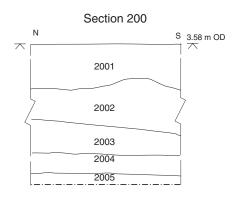
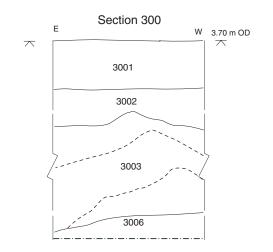
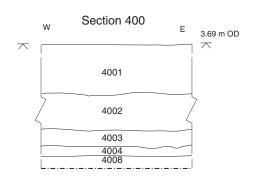


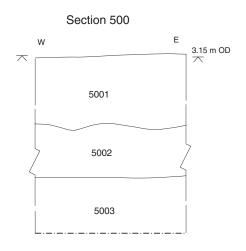
Figure 5: Trench 7, plan and section

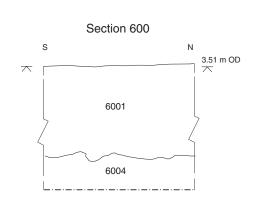


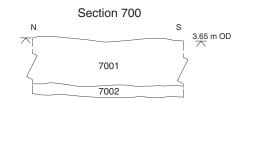


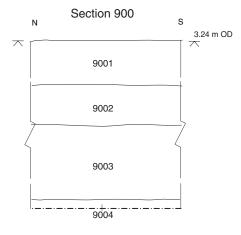


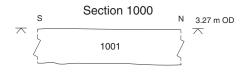


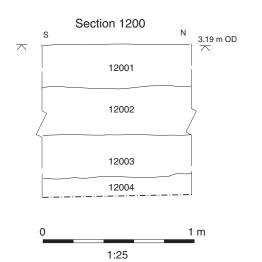












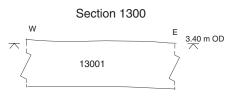


Figure 6: Sections