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Marcham, Oxfordshire

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Marcham Park, Marcham

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Contents

LIST OF FIGURES	4
LIST OF PLATES	4
SUMMARY	5
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	6
1 INTRODUCTION	7
1.1 SCOPE OF WORK	7
1.2 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY	7
1.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	7
2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY	11
2.2 METHODOLOGY	11
3 RESULTS	12
3.1 INTRODUCTION AND PRESENTATION OF RESULTS	12
3.2 GENERAL SOILS AND GROUND CONDITIONS	12
3.3 GENERAL DISTRIBUTION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL DEPOSITS	12
3.4 TRENCH 1	12
3.5 TRENCH 2	13
3.6 TRENCH 4	13
3.7 TRENCHES 3 AND 5	13
3.8 FINDS SUMMARY	13
4 DISCUSSION	13
4.1 RELIABILITY OF FIELD INVESTIGATION	13
4.2 EVALUATION OBJECTIVES AND RESULTS	14
4.3 INTERPRETATION	14
4.4 SIGNIFICANCE	15
APPENDIX A TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY	16
APPENDIX B FINDS REPORTS	19
B.1 POTTERY	19
B.2 CBM	19
B.3 METAL	19

APPENDIX C	ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS.....	20
C.1	ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLES.....	20
C.2	ANIMAL BONE.....	21
APPENDIX D	BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	23
APPENDIX E	SITE SUMMARY DETAILS.....	24

List of Figures

- | | |
|----------|--|
| Figure 1 | Site location |
| Figure 2 | Trench layout |
| Figure 3 | Detailed plan of excavated trenches and geophysical survey results |
| Figure 4 | Sections 201, 300, 400 and 500 |

List of Plates

- | | |
|---------|---|
| Plate 1 | Feature 104, view to north-east |
| Plate 2 | Ditch 205, view to east |
| Plate 3 | Trench 4, looking north |
| Plate 4 | Pit 405, looking west |
| Plate 5 | Deposit sequence revealed in Trench 5, view to north-west |

SUMMARY

Oxford Archaeology were commissioned by Askew Nelson Ltd on behalf of Arabella Duffield to undertake a trial-trench evaluation at the site of a proposed development at Marcham Park, Oxfordshire. The work comprised the excavation of five evaluation trenches between the 11th and 14th July 2023.

Although some features were identified, the investigations did not reveal any significant archaeological remains in the area of the proposed development. Based on the deep sequences of overburden recorded in the trenches, it appears that the ground level was elevated during the mid-20th century when the lake was established.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Oxford Archaeology would like to thank Askew Nelson for commissioning this project on behalf of Arabella Duffield. Thanks are also extended to Steven Weaver and Richard Oram who provided advice and monitored the work on behalf of Oxfordshire County Council.

The project was managed for Oxford Archaeology by Mark Dodd. The fieldwork was directed by Tamsin Jones, who was supported by Lily Andrews and Ann Schmidt. Survey and digitising were carried out by Lily Andrews and Caroline Souday. Thanks are also extended to the teams of OA staff that cleaned and packaged the finds under the supervision of Leigh Allen, processed the environmental remains under the supervision of Rebecca Nicholson, and prepared the archive under the supervision of Nicola Scott.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of work

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by Askew Nelson on behalf of Arabella Duffield to undertake a trial-trench evaluation at the site of a proposed development at Marcham Park.
- 1.1.2 The work was undertaken in advance of the submission of two separate planning applications within the site. Although the local planning authority has not set a brief for the work, discussions between OA and Steven Weaver, Planning Archaeologist for Oxfordshire County Council (OCC), established the scope of work required. A written scheme of investigation (WSI) was produced by OA (2023a) detailing the local authority's requirements for work necessary to inform the planning process.
- 1.1.3 The WSI outlined a total of 11 trenches to be located at predetermined locations to investigate various geophysical anomalies and areas of the proposed development with potential to damage archaeological remains. Due to limited access at the time of the fieldwork, only Trenches 1–5, which form part of the lake extension application could be excavated. This document presents the results of this investigation.

1.2 Location, topography and geology

- 1.2.1 The site is situated on the western periphery of Marcham, a village located c 3km west of Abingdon. The site is in the county of Oxfordshire but was part of Berkshire until the county boundary change in the 1970s.
- 1.2.2 The site lies 1.5km to the north of the River Ock, and to the west and north of the site is the Frilford and Marcham Brook, which has been redirected to source the lake and other water systems within the site. The western side of the site lies around 58m above Ordnance Datum (aOD), rising gently in the east to c 60m aOD.
- 1.2.3 The bedrock geology of the site is mapped as sandstone of the Kingston Formation (BGS Online). This is overlain in the north-west part of the site by alluvium comprising clay, silt and gravel. A borehole survey in 1912, less than 100m south of the site, recorded 'sand' and 'rock' to a depth of 9.55m below the ground surface.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The archaeological and historical background of the site has been described in detail in two separate desk-based assessments produced by OA (2023b; 2023c). The information presented in these documents has been summarised below for reference.

Previous Archaeological Investigations

- 1.3.2 There are no previous archaeological investigations recorded within the site, but a number of sites have been investigated within the immediate vicinity. An excavation was undertaken c 700m south-west of the site. Archaeological evidence comprised a spread of material, c 8m in diameter, which contained

animal bone, pottery, and flint (Hart *et al.* 2012). All archaeological evidence recovered from this project was dated to the late Bronze Age/early Iron Age.

- 1.3.3 Numerous archaeological evaluations have been carried out in the area. These have identified areas of Iron Age activity, including roundhouses and storage pits relating to settlement evidence. A fieldwalking survey carried out nearby recorded prehistoric worked flint, and Iron Age, Roman, medieval and post-medieval pottery. Saxo-Norman, medieval, and post-medieval evidence has been recorded at Priory Lane.
- 1.3.4 The scheduled monument c 1km to the north-east of the site was subject to a geophysical and fieldwalking survey which confirmed the presence of Iron Age and Romano-British activity. Geophysical survey at Manor Farm, near Frilford, c 1km south-west of the site, recorded a Roman amphitheatre, a terminus wall of a temple complex, several Roman buildings and ditches dated to the late Iron Age/Romano-British period. Survey in this area has also recorded several possible ring ditches.
- 1.3.5 In June 2023, Sumo Geophysics Ltd undertook a magnetometry survey of the proposed development area. The survey did not reveal any results of archaeological interest. Several weak linear trends of uncertain origin and three trackways were identified (SUMO 2023).

Prehistoric Period (500,000 BP–AD 43)

- 1.3.6 The earliest evidence for prehistoric activity is worked flint flakes found about 1km south of the site dated to the Lower Palaeolithic. An early Mesolithic flint scatter consisting of five retouched flakes, one scraper and one knife has also been found c 600m west of the site. A Neolithic flint knife was recovered c 250m east of site. These finds suggest that there has been human occupation of the surrounding area from the earliest human occupations of Britain.
- 1.3.7 Bronze Age evidence within the study area includes a middle Bronze Age spearhead recovered c 400m south of site; a barbed-and-tanged arrowhead found 800m south-east of site; ditches, gullies, pits and postholes indicating a concentration of settlement activity dated to the Bronze Age or early Iron Age which is located c 500m south-west of site; a Bronze Age barrow located 300m east of the site; and anomalies identified during a geophysical survey consisting of annular and curvilinear ditches which could be evidence of Bronze Age settlement or a former burial complex which has been truncated by ploughing, located c 500m south-east of site.
- 1.3.8 Iron Age activity within the study area is also well represented. There are several areas of concentrated Iron Age features including ditches, postholes and gullies representative of settlement activity. Most Iron Age settlement evidence within the study area is concentrated to the south-east between 350–550m from the site. A pottery scatter was also recovered 900m to the south-west of site and three Iron Age coins were recovered c 100m to the north of site. These features suggest there was a significant degree of settlement within the study area during the Iron Age period.
- 1.3.9 Just outside the study area, c 1.1km to the south-west, is a site located on the former garden of the Noah's Ark Inn, which is an Iron Age settlement and ritual complex overlaid by a Romano-British temple (Kamash *et al.* 2010).

Romano-British Period (AD 43–410)

- 1.3.10 The site at Noah's Ark Inn, near the study area, provides significant evidence for Roman activity in the area. The site includes a Roman temple complex with a circular feature interpreted as either a theatre or amphitheatre associated with the Roman religious complex (Kamash *et al.* 2010, 106–7). Near Frilford, just west of the Frilford crossroad, c 900m west of site, is evidence for Roman settlement including postholes, field boundaries and pottery.
- 1.3.11 A Roman occupation layer and possible Roman road were identified at the north-western site boundary. This layer contained an abundance of Roman pottery and animal refuse and was 'over 100ft long' (30.4m) (Bradford and Morris 1941, 87). Due to the proximity of this scatter to the site, it is probable that related Roman evidence is preserved within the site boundary.
- 1.3.12 Other evidence dated to the Roman period within the study area includes pottery found 720m east of the site and several coins recovered within the study area. A Roman road has also been identified about 1km north-east of the site.

Medieval Period (AD 410–1550)

- 1.3.13 Marcham Village was originally a Saxon settlement. In the early medieval period, Marcham belonged to the Abbey of Abingdon, having been gifted to the Abbey by King Edgar in AD 965 (Stradling and Tomlinson 2022). The Abbey elevated Marcham church to the rank of a minster and several of the main abbey servants held lands in the village including the master cobbler (*ibid.*). The first building phase of All Saint's Church was constructed in the 13th century. Approximately 500m south-east of the site, several features dated to the 13th century were identified, including evidence of medieval tenements, boundary and enclosure ditches, and slag indicative of smithing activity.
- 1.3.14 There are two possibly medieval fishponds within the garden, shown on Rocque's map from 1761. One is located to the west of the house, and the other to the north-east of the house, c 50m north-east of the site. The regular, rectangular shape of the features suggests that they were ponds used to provide fresh fish to the manor—a common status symbol during the late Medieval period (Currie 1990, 23–5). Medieval fishponds were often located in proximity to manor houses and estates, and this is strong evidence that there was a manor house on the site before the current building was constructed in the early 18th century (*ibid.*).
- 1.3.15 Less than 100m south of the house is All Saint's Church and churchyard, originally built in the 13th century, with 15th-century additions. All but the tower of the church was later rebuilt in the early 19th century (Page and Ditchfield 1924).

Post-Medieval Period (1550–1900)

- 1.3.16 The lands of Marcham manor passed through several hands from 1538 throughout the late 16th century and the early 17th century. By the 1640s, the manor was owned by the Pigot family and was later sold to the Meggot family in the early 18th century. The manor was inherited by Sir Hervey Elwes in 1751.

The family name later changed to Duffield, through marriage, in the early 19th century and the house was owned by the Elwes/Duffield family until the early 20th century. It is thought the extant building on the site was originally built in the early 18th century and was rebuilt due to dereliction in the 1830s (Stradling and Tomlinson 2022).

- 1.3.17 The site has been part of a formally landscaped garden associated with Marcham House since at least the early 18th century. It is shown on Rocque's map, dated 1761, with linear planted trees forming a boundary to the park on the east, north, and west as well as two rectangularly shaped ponds located to the west and north-east of the house. The fishponds and their canals are sourced from water redirected from the Frilford and Marcham brook and it is assumed there is an underground culvert across the site, although its location is unknown. Rocque's map also shows two buildings to the north-east and another to the north-west of the manor house. The enclosure map for Marcham, dated 1818, shows several buildings to the north of the manor house, and that buildings to the south-east of the site were not within the garden boundary at this time.
- 1.3.18 By 1883, the fishpond/canal to the west of the house had been extended and widened along the western boundary of the site. More decorative canals had also been added to the parkland to the north-west of the manor house, also fed by the Frilford/Marcham brook. A water fountain and a walled kitchen garden had been added to the east of the house. The addition of new water features within the garden suggests that further underground water systems might have been constructed to provide water to new features as well as irrigation for planted area (Currie 1990).

Modern

- 1.3.19 Ordnance Survey maps from 1900 and 1914 show the layout of the house and park relatively unchanged since the late 19th century, although the latter also shows a small extension to the manor house at its south-eastern corner.
- 1.3.20 In 1938, Charles Duffield sold Marcham Park to Geoffrey Hugh Berners (Stradling and Tomlinson 2022, 17). During the Second World War, the stables at Marcham Park were requisitioned by the Air Ministry for the storage of Air Raid Precautions (Berkshire Record Office C/CD/A3/8). Alterations to the site and the surrounding area to accommodate military infrastructure include the construction of two pillboxes, one 280m north of the site, another about 10m west of the lake, and a gun emplacement on the northern border of the park, 400m north of site.
- 1.3.21 After the war, the land was returned to Mr Berners and then sold to the Women's Institute in 1948 and renamed Denman College (Stradling and Tomlinson 2022, 18). An Ordnance Survey map of the site from 1959 shows that, between 1914 and 1959, an oval-shaped extension was added to the east side of the lake, establishing its current shape. Ordnance Survey maps from the late 20th century indicate that no further changes or adjustments have been made to the form of the lake, and there is no indication of further irrigation or water-system works throughout the garden.

Undated

- 1.3.22 Undated assets within the study area include some damaged human remains and a field system. The human remains belong to several bodies and were found less than 80m west of the house and were revealed when a tree blew down in 1986. Due to the proximity with the boundary wall to the church, these bones could have originally been associated with the churchyard. Aims and Methodology

2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

- 2.1.1 The general aims and objectives of the evaluation were:
- i. To determine the presence or absence of any archaeological remains which may survive.
 - ii. To determine or confirm the approximate extent of any surviving remains.
 - iii. To determine the date range of any surviving remains by artefactual or other means.
 - iv. To determine the condition and state of preservation of any remains.
 - v. To determine the degree of complexity of any surviving horizontal or vertical stratigraphy.
 - vi. To assess the associations and implications of any remains encountered with reference to the historic landscape.
 - vii. To determine the potential of the site to provide palaeoenvironmental and/or economic evidence, and the forms in which such evidence may survive.
 - viii. To determine the implications of any remains with reference to economy, status utility and social activity; and
 - ix. To determine or confirm the likely range, quality and quantity of the artefactual evidence present.
 - x. To assess the results and reliability of the geophysical survey.
- 2.1.2 The programme of archaeological investigation was also conducted within the general research parameters and objectives defined by the Solent-Thames Research Framework for the Historic Environment Resource Assessments and Research Agendas (Hey and Hind 2014).
- ### **2.2 Methodology**
- 2.2.1 Limited access to the site meant that it was only possible to excavate Trenches 1–5 of the intended 11 trenches originally proposed in the WSI. These were positioned, as indicated on Figure 2, to provide an even coverage of the development impacts from the proposed lake extension. Wherever possible, these targeted the anomalies from the geophysical survey, whilst also taking into consideration the various constraints on site, including buried services.
- 2.2.2 The trenches were excavated using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket under the direct supervision of an archaeologist. Due to the depth of the natural geology and concerns over health and safety, some of
-

the trenches were excavated in stages to ensure that deep excavations were not left open and unattended for prolonged periods. This meant that Trenches 2, 3 and 5 were initially excavated to either the top of the archaeological horizon, or a maximum depth of 1m below ground level. Following consultation with Richard Oram (OCC), these were then partially backfilled and restriped in sections to ensure the natural geology or archaeological horizon has been exposed along their entire length.

- 2.2.3 At the eastern end of Trench 5, a machine-cut trench was revealed containing mixed modern debris. Communication with representatives of the landowner confirmed that this was a 2m-deep test-pit dug to investigate the geology of the site. Due to the presence of possible asbestos containing materials within this backfill, this material was left *in situ*.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction and presentation of results

- 3.1.1 The results of the evaluation are presented below and include a stratigraphic description of the trenches that contained archaeological remains. The full details of all trenches with dimensions and depths of all deposits can be found in Appendix A. Finds data and spot dates are tabulated in Appendix B.

3.2 General soils and ground conditions

- 3.2.1 The soil sequence in the trenches was fairly consistent across the portion of the site investigated. A mixed natural geology of limestone and alluvium was overlain by a shallow subsoil and a buried layer of topsoil. This was in turn sealed beneath a layer of made ground likely derived from the establishment or maintenance of the adjacent lake. This was typically overlain directly by a modern layer of topsoil. The depth of these made-ground deposits varied across the evaluated area, with those to the east revealing deeper sequences than those to the west.
- 3.2.2 Ground conditions throughout the evaluation were generally good, and the site remained largely dry throughout. Although there was some ingress of groundwater towards the end of the project, this did not hinder the identification or excavation of the archaeological features, which were easy to identify against the underlying natural geology.

3.3 General distribution of archaeological deposits

- 3.3.1 Archaeological features were only revealed in Trenches 2 and 4, comprising a small pit and an undated ditch. The remaining trenches were devoid of archaeological features.

3.4 Trench 1

- 3.4.1 At the south-west end of Trench 1, an irregular feature (104) with near vertical sides and an undulating base was revealed (Plate 1). It contained a mixed fill of dark greyish-brown, humic, silty clay material (105). No finds were recovered from the feature and it appears to be a tree hole which was deliberately removed and then backfilled.

3.5 Trench 2

- 3.5.1 Trench 2 revealed an E-W aligned ditch (205; Plate 2). It had moderately steep sides and a broad undulating base (Fig. 4, section 201). Filling the ditch was a dark brownish-grey, silty clay (206). This appeared to be waterlogged at the time of excavation and an environmental sample was recovered. This produced a combination of anaerobically preserved organics and a mix of both freshwater and terrestrial molluscs. A single animal bone fragment was also recovered from sample.
- 3.5.2 The ditch was sealed beneath a layer of buried soil (203) which had been overlain by a deposit of made ground (202) and then the current subsoil and topsoil.

3.6 Trench 4

- 3.6.1 Pit 405 was recorded at the north-west end of the trench (Plate 4). It was sub-circular in plan with gently sloping sides and a concave base (Fig. 4, section 400). Filling the pit was a yellow-grey, silty clay deposit (406). A post-medieval iron nail was recovered from this deposit. The pit was sealed beneath a buried soil horizon (403) and later made-ground deposits (402 and 401; Plate 3).

3.7 Trenches 3 and 5

- 3.7.1 Both trenches were devoid of archaeological features, with the natural geology buried beneath deep sequences of overburden (Fig. 4, sections 300 and 500). In both trenches, these layers comprised buried soil horizons, sealed beneath redeposited natural and deposits of made ground. In Trench 5, there was a distinctive layer of stone fragments and CBM (501), sitting directly beneath the topsoil and turf (500; Plate 5). Fragments of drainpipe and a sherd of a white earthenware cup were recovered from deposit 501 and are probably mid-20th century in date.

3.8 Finds summary

- 3.8.1 A small assemblage comprising an iron nail, part of an earthenware cup and some CBM fragments were recovered during the investigation. A single fragment of animal bone was also recovered from a soil sample, along with terrestrial and freshwater mollusc shells.

4 DISCUSSION

4.1 Reliability of field investigation

- 4.1.1 The results of this investigation can be considered as a reliable indicator of the remains present on the site. Due to the favourable weather conditions and the nature of the remains, archaeological features, where present, were relatively easy to distinguish from the natural geology.
- 4.1.2 The usual caveats should of course be applied, noting that discrete features such as pits, burials and smaller perhaps unenclosed areas of activity are difficult to locate through trial trenching. The general lack of artefacts from the investigation supports the overall observation that there was little previous activity on the site prior to the construction of Marcham House.

4.2 Evaluation objectives and results

- 4.2.1 The evaluation revealed features in Trenches 1, 2 and 4. A corroded iron nail was recovered from the pit in Trench 4, while the remaining features were undated. Animal bone was recovered from ditch 205. The sequence of overburden on the site was deeper than anticipated, with layers of made ground burying an earlier soil horizon across much of the area adjacent to the lake. No complex vertical stratigraphy and no buildings or features relating to industrial activity were encountered.
- 4.2.2 The environmental evidence recovered from ditch 205 does demonstrate that the level of groundwater is conducive to the survival of waterlogged remains. It should be noted that the date of the ditch is unknown and therefore the date from which this remains are preserved remains uncertain.
- 4.2.3 A single geophysical anomaly was targeted by Trench 5 but no corresponding archaeology was revealed. Due to the nature and depth of the made-ground deposits revealed in this part of the site and the overlying deposit of mixed stone rubble it is unclear where this anomaly originates from, but it is unlikely to be archaeological in origin. The geophysical features in the east of the site were not investigated during this phase of investigation, so these limited results prevent further conclusions on the overall reliability of the geophysics across the site.

4.3 Interpretation

- 4.3.1 Although undated, the ditch recorded in Trench 2 extends parallel to the field boundary to the north and it may reasonably be asserted that they were broadly contemporary, if only for a brief period. However, it does not correlate with any boundary features recorded on historic mapping, whilst the extant ditch to the north can be traced back to at least the middle to late 19th century. It is therefore likely to have originated prior to this point and then gone out of use. Based on the nature of the deposit filling the ditch and the ground conditions, it would evidently have performed a water-management function possibly relating to the fishponds that were present in 1761 when they were recorded Rocque's map of Berkshire. The ditch could have originated in the medieval period.
- 4.3.2 The irregular and deliberately backfilled feature in Trench 1 almost certainly derives from the removal of a tree or large shrub and then backfilling of the resulting hole. Although the pit in Trench 4 was not evidently backfilled in the same way as pit 104, it is likely to be post-medieval in date and the result of similar activity.
- 4.3.3 The deep sequences of overburden recorded in Trenches 2–5 are all likely to have formed from upcast created during the excavation of the adjacent lake. The layer of stone and CBM recorded in Trench 5 dates from the middle of the 20th century. This corresponds well with cartographic evidence that demonstrates that the lake, in its current form, was established between 1914 and 1959.

4.4 Significance

- 4.4.1 The archaeological evidence from the surrounding area includes numerous sites dating to the prehistoric, Roman and medieval periods. However, no comparable archaeological remains were encountered during this evaluation and the paucity of artefactual evidence suggests there has been little activity within the area of investigation prior to the establishment of the Marcham Park estate.

APPENDIX A TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1							
General description					Orientation		NE-SW
Trench revealed a pit at southern end. Trench consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying a clay geology.					Length (m)		25
					Width (m)		1.8
					Avg. depth (m)		0.75
Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
100	Layer			0.2	Topsoil. Mid grey-brown friable silty loam		
101	Layer			0.25	Subsoil. Mid reddish blue grey-brown clayey silt		
102	Layer			0.2	Other Layer. Mid yellowish bluish grey silty clay, probably buried soil.		
103	Layer				Natural. Light bluish grey mixed with yellow clay		
104	Cut			0.2	Tree Throw		
105	Fill	104		0.2	Secondary Fill. Soft, dark greyish-brown humic silty clay.		
Trench 2							
General description					Orientation		NW-SE
Trench revealed one ditch running NW- SE. Topsoil overlying made ground overlying subsoil overlying layer overlying natural.					Length (m)		25
					Width (m)		1.8
					Avg. depth (m)		1
Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
200	Layer			0.24	Topsoil. Grey-brown, sandy silt.		
201	Layer			0.17	Other Layer. Grey-brown sandy, silt		
202	Layer			0.19	Other Layer. Mixed deposit of light brown and grey-brown, sandy silt with CBM and limestone fragments throughout.		
203	Layer			0.36	Buried soil. Dark grey-brown sandy silt.		
204	Layer				Natural. Light yellow grey clay and limestone		
205	Cut		0.78	0.26	Ditch		
206	Fill		0.78	0.26	Secondary Fill. Dark brown grey, silty clay		
Trench 3							
General description					Orientation		ESE-WNW
Trench devoid of archaeology. Trench consists of topsoil overlying made ground deposits, a buried soil and the natural geology.					Length (m)		15
					Width (m)		1.6

						Avg. depth (m)	1.2
Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
300	Layer			0.23	Topsoil. Soft, dark, grey-brown silty loam.		
301	Layer			0.33	Other Layer. Made ground. Soft, mid orange-brown clayed silt with occasional sub-angular pebbles and occasional cbm present.		
302	Layer			0.18	Subsoil. Soft mid yellow grey clayed silt with occasional pebbles.		
303	Layer			0.14	Other Layer. Light grey-orange silty clay		
304	Layer			0.05	Other Layer. Soft mid orange-grey silty clay.		
305	Layer				Natural. Firm, mid grey-yellow with white bands. Clay brash.		
Trench 4							
General description						Orientation	NNW-SSE
Trench revealed one pit at Northern end. Trench consists of topsoil and made ground overlying two alluvial deposits, overlying a clay geology.						Length (m)	35
						Width (m)	1.8
						Avg. depth (m)	1
Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
400	Layer			0.14	Topsoil. Mid brown silty loam		
401	Layer			0.22	Other Layer. Mid brownish grey friable clayey silt, with limestone fragments throughout. Redeposited natural, made ground.		
402	Layer			0.18	Other Layer. Light brown silty clay. Probably redeposited natural.		
403	Layer			0.18	Buried soil. Mid to light brown silty clay		
404	Layer				Natural. Light brownish yellow clay with silty clay lenses.		
405	Cut		1.52	0.68	Pit		
406	Fill	405	1.52	0.68	Secondary Fill. Mid yellow grey, silty clay.	Fe	P-Med?
Trench 5							
General description						Orientation	ENE-WSW
Trench consists of topsoil, several made ground layers and buried soil overlying a mixed silt and chalk natural. Half of trench to the East is within backfill of geotechnical test pit, in which some ACMs were present.						Length (m)	15
						Width (m)	1.8
						Avg. depth (m)	1.16
Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date

500	Layer			0.1	Topsoil. Mid brown friable silty loam		
501	Layer			0.18	Other Layer. Light yellowish-white mixed with mid brown, friable clayey silt, with stone and brick inclusions. Made ground.	CBM, Pot	C20th
502	Layer			0.42	Other Layer. Made ground. Mid grey-brown clayey silt with brick and stone inclusions		
503	Layer			0.16	Buried soil. Dark grey-brown clayey silt		
504	Layer			0.14	Other Layer. Made ground. Mixed light yellowish-white and mid brown clayey silt with stone inclusions.		
505	Layer			0.15	Alluvial/Natural Layer. Mid bluish-grey silty clay.		
506	Layer				Natural. Light white clayey silt with chalk inclusions		

APPENDIX B FINDS REPORTS

B.1 Pottery

By John Cotter

- B.1.1 Context (501): one sherd (7g) from a mug or teacup handle in a very modern-looking, refined white earthenware (Fabric code REFW) with a clear white glaze (mid-20th C?).
- B.1.2 The items of pottery have no potential for further research and can be discarded.

B.2 CBM

By John Cotter

- B.2.1 Context (501): two pieces (230g). Includes one broken rim/socket from a drainpipe in an unglazed, cream-coloured, near-stoneware with a grey core, made from a non-local coal measures-type fabric (mid-20th C?). One thick, flat fragment of modern stoneware with a pale grey fabric and a clear Bristol-type glaze (ENGS BRST) from a flat-sided object/vessel rather than a circular vessel or pot. No original edges are present but a straight band of rusty staining along one straight (broken) edge suggests it may be an item of sanitary ware, perhaps a toilet cistern or something similar. Dates probably to the 20th century.
- B.2.2 The items of CBM have no potential for further research and can be discarded.

B.3 Metal

By Mark Dodd

Introduction

- B.3.1 One heavily corroded fragment of an iron nail was recovered from context 406. This item has no further potential and can be discarded.

APPENDIX C ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS

C.1 Environmental Samples

By Richard Palmer

Introduction

- C.1.1 A single sample was taken during archaeological evaluation works, primarily for the retrieval and assessment of ecofacts and the recovery of artefacts. The sample was from a waterlogged fill of a ditch and, whilst anaerobic preservation was expected, processing of the sample was undertaken to allow recovery of charred material as well.

Method

- C.1.2 The sample was processed using a modified Siraf-type water flotation machine. The flot was collected in a 250µm mesh and the residue in a 500µm mesh. Both were dried in a heated room. The residue fractions (ie the material which did not float) were sorted with the aid of a magnet, while the flot material was sorted using a low-power (x10) binocular microscope to extract cereal grains and chaff, small seeds and other quantifiable plant remains.
- C.1.3 Due to the density of organic material likely to be accumulated in the flot, it was decided at the start to only process 50% of the sample (corresponding to 16l of material) and the rest would be retained, pending the results of the flot assessment.
- C.1.4 Nomenclature for identified species follows Stace (2010) with identifications made with reference to Cappers *et al.* (2006) and modern reference material.

Results

- C.1.5 Flot assessment and sample summary data is presented in Table C.1.1. Soil colour description was determined using a Munsell Soil Colour chart with soil texture described using published guidelines (Historic England 2015).
- C.1.6 The single sample is from fill 206 of ditch 205. It is rich in anaerobically preserved organics with a significant quantity of fine fibrous/rooty material and woody fragments. Fruit seeds/stones from cherry/blackthorn (*Prunus* sp.) and bramble (*Rubus* sp.) are present with bramble being abundant. Seeds from elder (*Sambucus* sp.), thistle (*Carduus/Cirsium* type) and sedges (Cyperaceae) were also identified. Buttercup seeds (*Ranunculus repens/acris/bulbosus*) are highly abundant with possible woundworts (cf *Stachys* sp.) and white bryony (*Bryonia alba*) also common in the flot.
- C.1.7 A mix of both freshwater and terrestrial molluscs were also recovered with both types being abundant to the flot. Identified freshwater species include Planorbidae, *Bithynia tentaculata* with rare loose operculae and small bivalves. Terrestrial species included probable *Trochulus hispidus*, *Vallonia* sp. and *Carychium tridentatum*.
- C.1.8 Very rare insect fragments were noted as present but the flot lacked any obvious charred material. Bone was recovered from the residue.
-

Discussion

- C.1.9 Preservation of the waterlogged organic material is generally good, although a few seeds, especially bramble, were fragmented as were some of the molluscs. Based on this sample, where waterlogging is present there is likely to be good potential for the recovery of a range of anaerobically preserved material.
- C.1.10 The mix of both terrestrial and freshwater molluscs suggests changing levels of water in the ditch, or perhaps some erosion of the bank into a water-filled feature.
- C.1.11 Several of the identified plants (bramble, woundwort, white bryony among others) can be found in hedgerows or on scrub/waste ground.
- C.1.12 The sample is currently undated, so it is uncertain whether this material relates to the formally landscaped garden of the manor, earlier manor grounds or the undetermined usage of the land predating the manor. The Prunus stone is a large type but also slightly distorted. It is likely to be a domesticated variety based on its size (c 9mm on the longest axis).
- C.1.13 The waterlogged seeds and fruit stone could be used for radiocarbon dating if required.

Recommendations for retention/disposal

- C.1.14 The flot warrants retention until all works on site are complete. Any further analysis should follow national guidelines (Historic England 2011). If further work is undertaken, the 16l of unprocessed sediment should be retained to allow analysis of a subsample of the material to be processed specifically for the recovery of anaerobically preserved material and/or molluscs. If no further work is likely to occur then the retained sediment could be discarded.
- C.1.15 Due to the difficulty of long-term storage of waterlogged material, the dry flot should be retained for deposition in preference to any wet material derived from later processing. Retention in the archive will, however, only be warranted if the sample is more-securely dated and the feature better understood.

Sample no.	Context no.	Feature	Trench	Date	Sample vol. (L)	Flot vol. (ml)	Charred Material	Woody Material	Fruit/Nut	Seed	Molluscs	Insect Remains	Soil Description
1	206	205	2	-	16	400		++++	++++	++++	++++	+	10YR 3/3 sandy silt loam/silty clay loam

Key: +=present (up to 5 items), +=frequent (5-25), +=+=common (25-100), +=+=+=abundant (100+)

Table C.1.1: Assessment of bulk sample

C.2 Animal Bone

By Adrienne Powell

- C.2.1 A single bone fragment weighing 23g was recovered by hand excavation from context 206. The specimen is a left proximal ulna from an equid (*Equus* sp.), comprising the interosseous space area of the shaft and part of the caudal border of the olecranon. It is in moderate condition.
- C.2.2 Sample 1 from context 206 yielded 60 mammal and amphibian bone fragments. The 14 mammal bones comprise a diastema fragment from a small vole (Cricetidae) left mandible, seven fragments of large mammal vertebra, five indeterminate, possibly vertebral, large mammal fragments, and one indeterminate medium mammal fragment.
- C.2.3 The 42 amphibian fragments are, aside from a single angular, post-cranial element, mostly not identifiable beyond frog/toad (Anura). However, a left ilium is common frog (*Rana temporaria*), three humeri (two male and one female) are brown frog (*Rana* sp.), two of the tibiofibular fragments are frog (Ranidae), and a right scapula is common toad (*Bufo bufo*).
- C.2.4 The specimens has no research potential and may be discarded.

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APPENDIX E**Site name:**

Marcham Park, Marcham

Site code:

MARP23

Grid Reference

MARPEV

Type:

Evaluation

Date and duration:

July 2023

Area of Site

1.2ha

Location of archive:

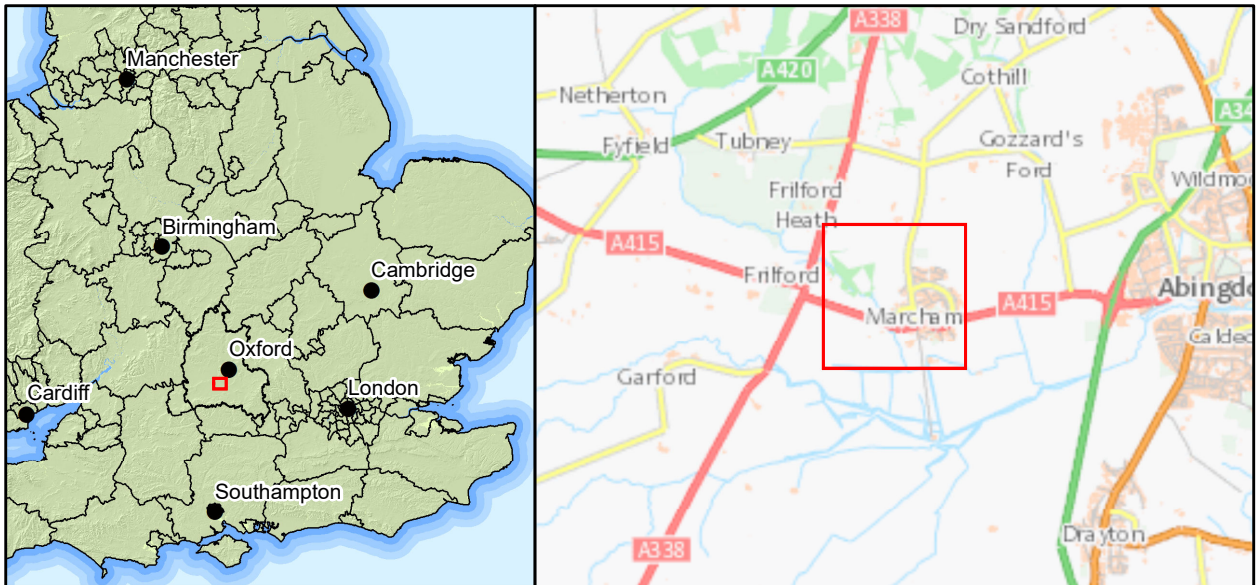
The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, OX2 OES, and will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museum Service in due course, under the following accession number: OXCMS : 2023.81

Summary of Results:

Oxford Archaeology were commissioned by Askew Nelson Ltd on behalf of Arabella Duffield to undertake a trial-trench evaluation at the site of a proposed development at Marcham Park, Oxfordshire. The work comprised the excavation of five evaluation trenches between the 11th and 14th July 2023.

Although some features were identified, the investigations did not reveal any significant archaeological remains in the area of the proposed development.

Based on the deep sequences of overburden recorded in the trenches, it appears that the ground level was elevated during the mid-20th century when the lake was established.



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Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2018
 Contains OS data © Crown Copyright and database right 2020
 Source: Esri, Maxar, Earthstar Geographics, and the GIS User Community

Figure 1: Site location



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Source: Esri, Maxar, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community

0 50m
1:1,250 @ A4

Figure 2: Trench layout

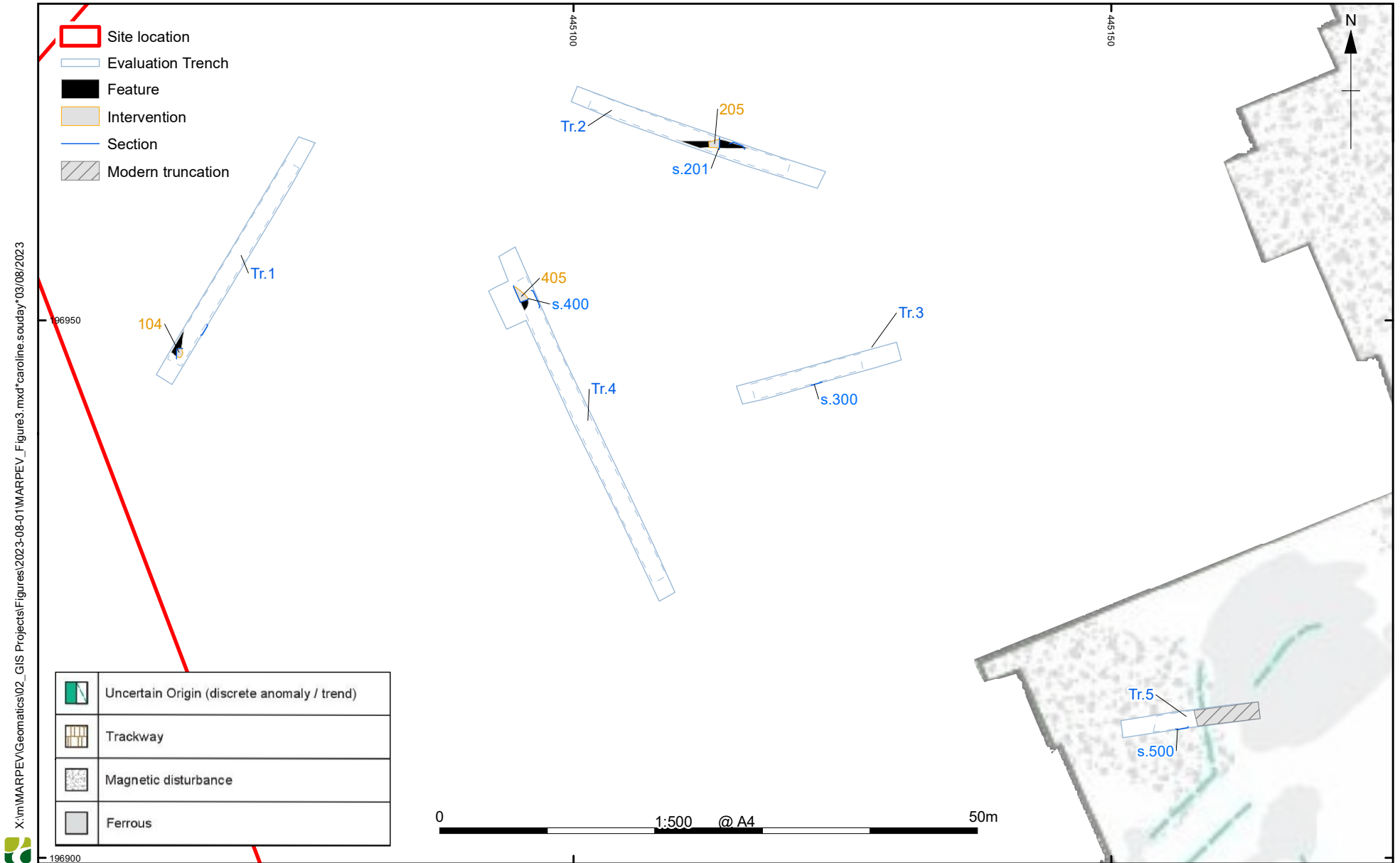


Figure 3: Detailed plan of excavated trenches and geophysical survey results

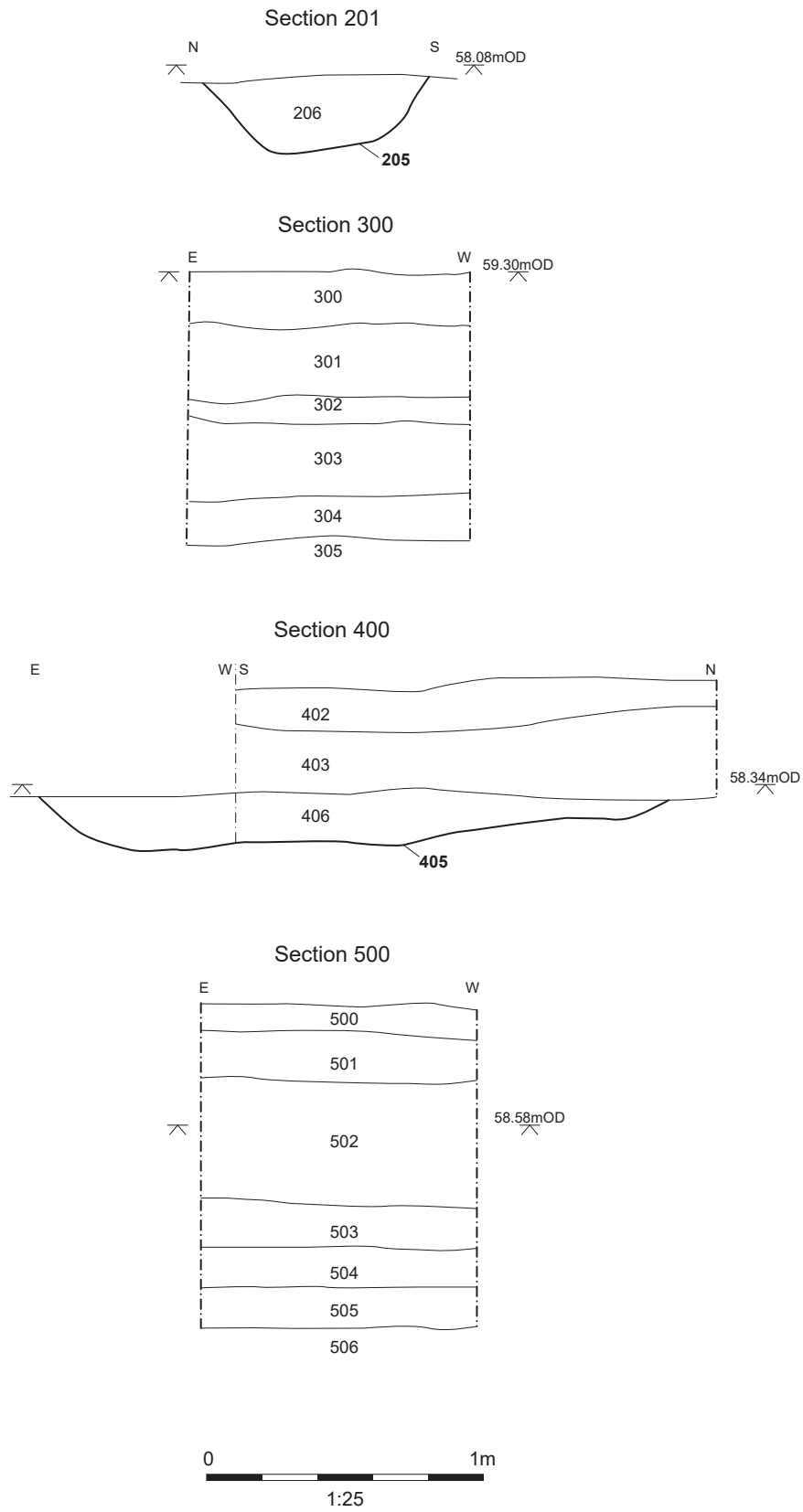


Figure 4: Sections 201, 300, 400 and 500



Plate 1: Feature 104, view to north-east



Plate 2: Ditch 205, view to east



Plate 3: Trench 4, looking north



Plate 4: Pit 405, looking west



Plate 5: Deposit sequence revealed in Trench 5, view to north-west

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