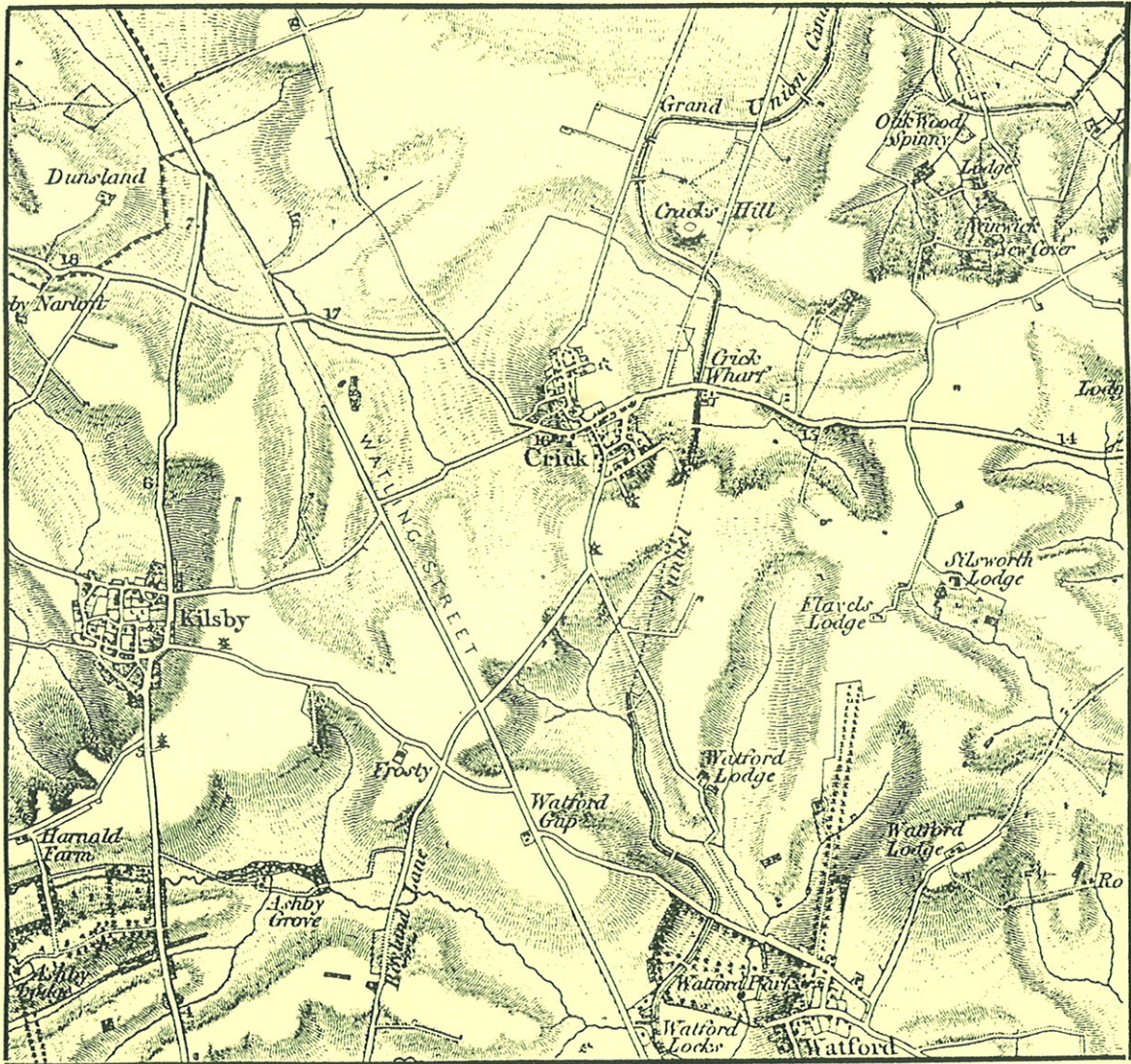


Forte Posthouse, Crick, Northamptonshire

NGR SP 5811 7306

Archaeological Evaluation Report



Oxford Archaeological Unit

October 1997

Forte Hotels

Forte Posthouse, Crick, Northamptonshire
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

NGR SP 58117306

Planning ref. DA97/0535

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OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

October 1997

Forte Posthouse, Crick, Northamptonshire

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

LIST OF CONTENTS

	SUMMARY	1
1	INTRODUCTION	2
1.1	Location and scope of work	2
1.2	Geology and topography	2
1.3	Archaeological and historical background	2
2	EVALUATION AIMS	2
3	EVALUATION METHODOLOGY	3
3.1	Sample size	3
3.2	Fieldwork, methods and recording	3
4	RESULTS: GENERAL	3
4.1	Soil and ground conditions	3
4.2	Distribution of archaeological deposits	3
5	RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS	3
5.1	Trench descriptions	3
	5.1.1 Trench 1	3
	5.1.2 Trench 2	4
	5.1.3 Trench 3	4
5.2	Finds	4
6	DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION	4
6.1	Overall interpretation	4

Bibliography and references

List of Appendices

Appendix 1 Archaeological Context Inventory

List of Figures

Fig. 1 Site location map: 1:25000

Fig. 2 Location of Trenches

Fig. 3 Trench Plan and Sections

SUMMARY

The Oxford Archaeological Unit carried out a field evaluation at the Forte Posthouse Hotel at Crick, Northants, on behalf of Forte Hotels. The evaluation comprised three evaluation trenches positioned just north of the existing bedroom block. They revealed evidence of former ridge and furrow cultivation but no archaeological features were located.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

In October 1997 the Oxford Archaeological Unit carried out a field evaluation at Forte Posthouse, Crick, Northants, on behalf of Forte Hotels in respect of a planning application to Daventry District Council for a 96 bedroom extension, Planning Application No. DA97/0535. The development site lay immediately north of the present bedroom block (NGR SP58117306). The hotel is situated just east of the M1 at junction 18 and the development area is 0.32 hectares in area in total. (Fig. 1)

1.2 Geology and topography

The site lies on glacial sand and Upper Lias Clay at 118 m above OD. The site is presently pasture, grazed by cattle.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

The development site lies in an area rich in archaeological remains and information from the County Sites and Monument record is plotted on figure 1. Recent work in the area has revealed Iron Age sites, a Roman field system and Saxon occupation. Crick lies just off the major Roman Road Watling Street. A huge complex of Iron Age occupation is being excavated to the west of the M1. This includes *c.* 10 to 12 hectares of activity which resembles villages and cattle enclosures more commonly recognised on the gravels of the Thames Valley.

A possible round barrow lies to the west of Crick. A scatter of Roman pottery lies *c.* 200 m to the north-west of the village and an undated scatter of pottery lies *c.* 1 km to the south-west of the village.

Crick is mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086 when it must have been a substantial settlement; 31 households and a priest are recorded. Standing earthworks in the village may represent the former extent of the medieval occupation; two halls, a cottage and a sheepcote were wasted by the lord of the manor in 1380.

2 EVALUATION AIMS

To determine whether there are any Iron Age or Roman archaeological remains on the site and, if so, to ascertain their character, date, extent, state of preservation and depth of burial.

To determine the palaeo-environmental potential of the site.

To make the results accessible.

3 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

3.1 Sample size

The evaluation was based upon a *c.* 3.5% sample of the development area, and consisted of three trenches measuring in total 75 m long and 1.55 m wide (Fig. 2). The overburden was removed by a JCB mechanical excavator under close archaeological supervision.

3.2 Fieldwork methods and recording

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

4 RESULTS: GENERAL

4.1 Soils and ground conditions

The general soil type was a clay silt. Ground conditions were dry and the weather fine.

4.2 Distribution of archaeological deposits

No significant archaeological features were located in the evaluation trenches. The only features present relate to previous ridge and furrow cultivation.

5 RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS

5.1 Trench descriptions

All three trenches contained an early ploughsoil, which was overlain by the present topsoil. The depth of the trenches varied between 0.26m and 0.36m. The natural geology was a thin (*c.* 0.10 m) layer of coarse flinty gravel with pebbles, which overlaid the Lias clay.

5.1.1 Trench 1 (Fig. 3)

Two features (104 & 106) were revealed in Trench 1, both furrows originally associated with ridge and furrow cultivation.

One furrow (104) was located at the west end of Trench 1. This was 0.08 m in depth and produced one possibly Iron Age or early Roman sherd of pottery. The furrow was overlain by a ploughsoil (102).

The second furrow (106) was orientated north-south and measured 1.40 m in width and 0.15 m in depth. The furrow *appeared* to cut the ploughsoil (102).

5.1.2 Trench 2 (Fig. 3)

Trench 2 revealed a furrow (205) which was orientated approximately north-south. This furrow was very shallow (0.05 m) and indistinct in plan. The fill (204) produced a single struck flint flake. A single piece of undated red fired tile was recovered from ploughsoil 202.

5.1.3 Trench 3 (Fig. 3)

A furrow (304) in Trench 3 was orientated north-south and measured 1.20 m wide and 0.10 m in depth.

5.2 Finds

Only three finds were recovered from the site. The single Iron Age or early Roman pottery sherd, from the furrow in Trench 1, is probably residual rather than an indicator of the date of the ridge and furrow cultivation.

Trench 1: The finds consisted of one piece of possibly Iron Age or Early Roman pottery from a furrow (103) in Trench 1.

Trench 2: A piece of red roof tile from the earlier ploughsoil (202). A flint flake from furrow (204), although not diagnostic, may be late Neolithic to Bronze Age in date.

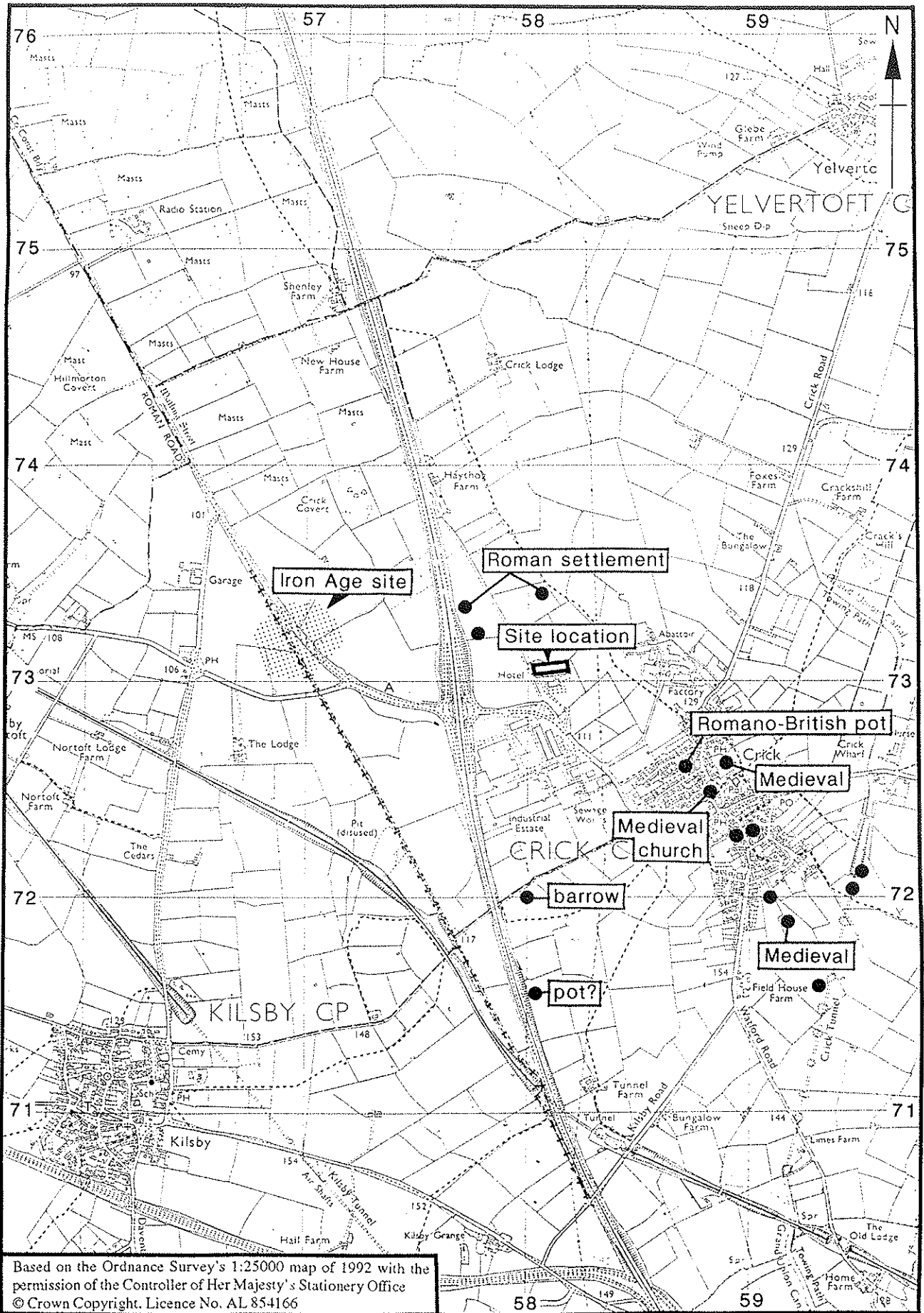
6 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

6.1 Overall interpretation

No significant archaeological features were revealed in the three evaluation trenches. The only features which were located related to the former medieval ridge and furrow cultivation, although later ploughing has removed almost all traces of this.

Bibliography and references

- Wilkinson, D (ed.) 1992 *Oxford Archaeological Unit Field Manual*, (First edition, August 1992)



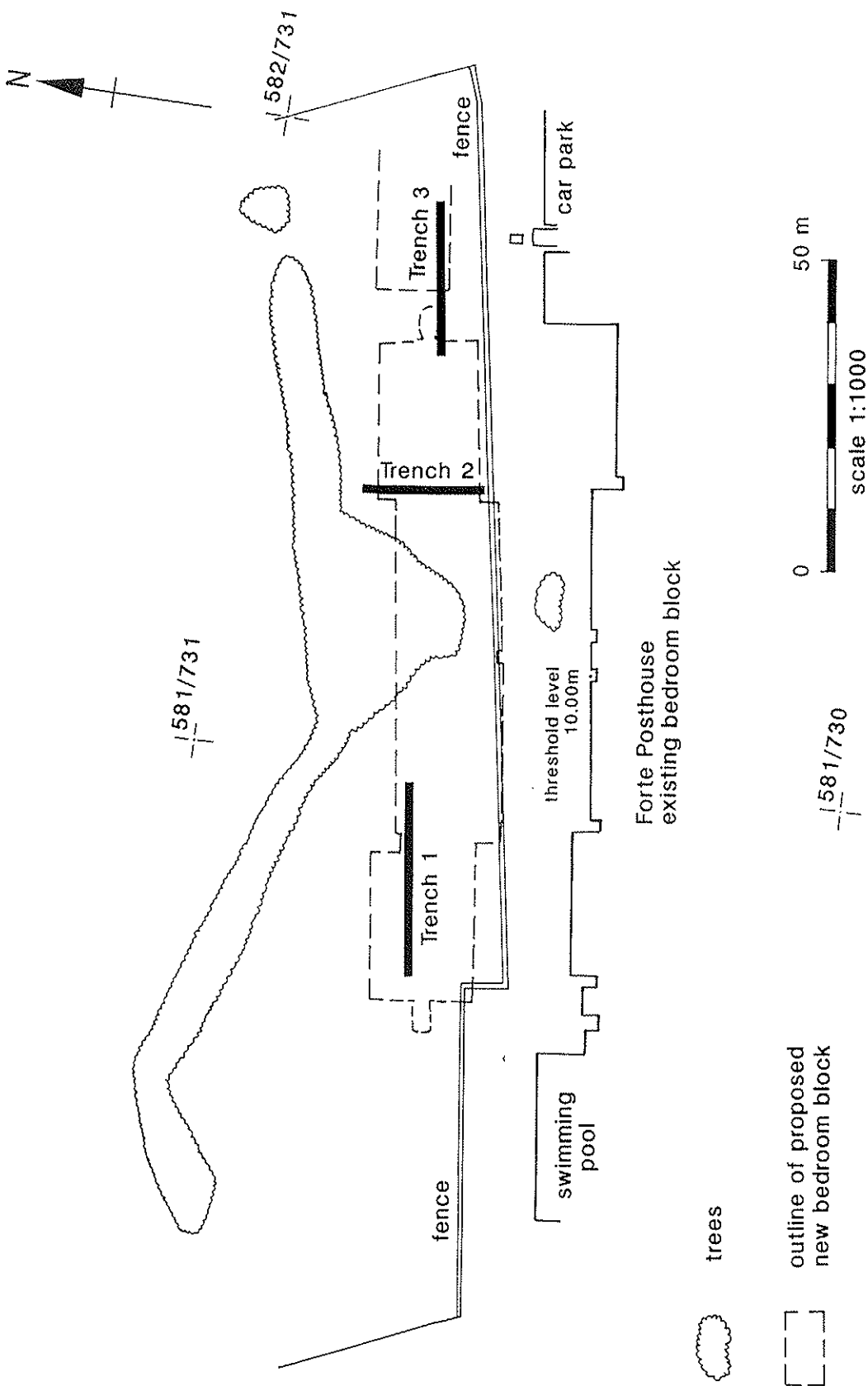
Based on the Ordnance Survey's 1:25000 map of 1992 with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office
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● Sites and Monuments Record information

Scale 1:25 000

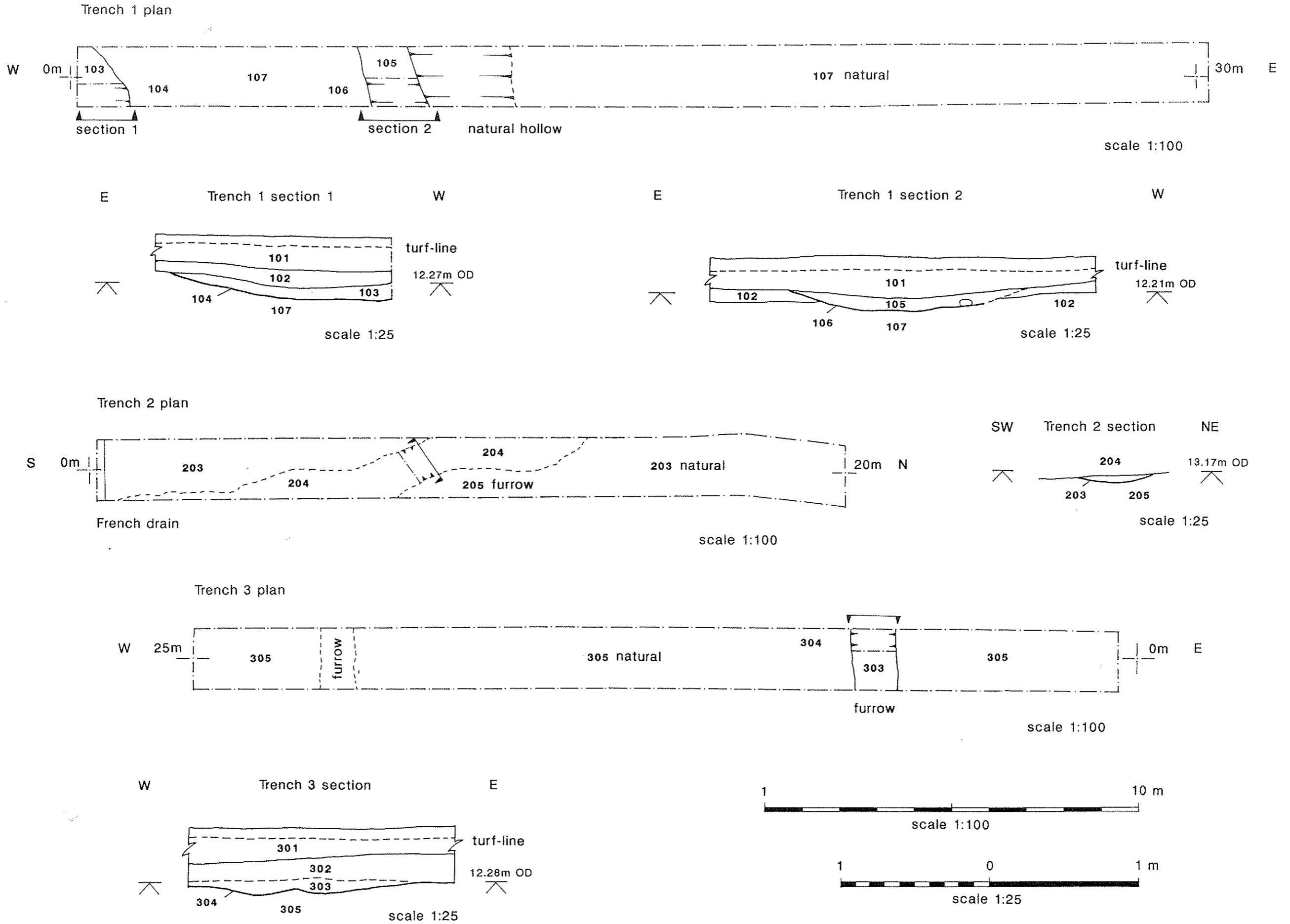
Site location map

Figure 1



Trench locations

Figure 2



Trenches 1, 2 and 3 plans and sections

Figure 3



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