

# Advent Way Edmonton London Borough of Enfield



## Archaeological Evaluation Report



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## Advent Way, Edmonton, London Borough of Enfield

### *Archaeological Evaluation Report*

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## **Summary**

*In November 2012 and January 2013, Oxford Archaeology South undertook an evaluation on land off Advent Way, Edmonton within the London Borough of Enfield, on behalf of SEGRO.*

*Thirteen trenches representing a 4% sample of the site by area were excavated revealing a sequence of alluvial deposits overlying gravel. No archaeological remains were present within any of the evaluation trenches. Most trenches also demonstrated moderate levels of truncation to the upper horizons of the alluvial sequence and more limited truncation into the gravel associated with the historic and modern constructions of the former warehouse units and their subsequent demolition and clearance.*

*Undisturbed horizons where archaeological remains would otherwise be expected were present to the degree that their absence indicates a very low potential for archaeological remains to be present within the development boundary.*



## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Commission and planning background

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology South (OAS) was commissioned by SEGRO to undertake an archaeological evaluation of land off Advent Way, Edmonton within the London Borough of Enfield. The evaluation was undertaken pre-determination with a hybrid planning application (detailed and outline) submitted as the fieldwork commenced.
- 1.1.2 A Desk-based Assessment (DBA), including a geoarchaeological assessment of the available borehole data for the site, was previously produced by OA (2012a) to inform the planning application and, subsequently, this phase of evaluation. OA discussed the results of the DBA and the requirements for evaluation with Adam Single of the Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS). Following this, OA proposed and agreed an evaluation specification directly with GLAAS. Prior to the start of the fieldwork a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was produced by OA and agreed with GLAAS outlining how the evaluation would be completed to fulfil the specification (OA 2012b).
- 1.1.3 In two attendances between 12th to 14th November 2012 and on 11th January 2013, OAS excavated thirteen trenches by intrusive evaluation to investigate the buried archaeological potential of the site. This report outlines the results of the evaluation, the extent and significance of the deposits identified and the likely impact of the development upon these.

### 1.2 Location, geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The site is located 1.1km to the south-west of the William Girling Reservoir and 760m north-west of Banbury Reservoir within Eley's Estate, at the junction of the A406, North Circular Road (Angel Road) with Meridian Way (Fig. 1). It is centred on NGR TQ 353 922 and the development boundary encloses c 2.06 hectares, previously occupied by warehousing with an accompanying car park. All structures within the development boundary have been demolished and the resultant rubble has been crushed and stored as a large pile within the site boundary. The site lies within the historic parish of Edmonton and the administrative authority of Enfield Borough Council.
- 1.2.2 The geological map of the area (British Geological Survey Sheet 256) records the Site as being situated on Enfield Silt, a Brickearth of sandy clay and silt dating from the Flandrian stage of the Early to Middle Holocene Period. The site lies at c 10m aOD.
- 1.2.3 The site is located within an area that has been subject to previous geotechnical borehole and geoarchaeological investigations that have identified a deposit sequence comprising London Clay, overlain by the Lea Valley Gravels (also known as Kempton Park Gravels) and then Lea Valley Alluvium. None of these surveys have identified the Brickearth as recorded by the BGS map for this area. A detailed description of the geological sequence is presented within the DBA and should be referred to for full references.



### **1.3 Archaeological and historical background**

- 1.3.1 The archaeological and historical background to the site has been described in detail within the DBA (OA 2012a). The following section summaries the key points identified within the background section although the original DBA should be referred to for a more detailed descriptions and location information.
- 1.3.2 Prehistoric material from all periods has been discovered within the surrounding locality. The earliest material is of Palaeolithic origin with worked flints recovered from several locations to the north and south of the site. Important waterlogged organic deposits from the late glacial and early post glacial environments are also well preserved within the valley gravel sequence. These deposits are known as the Lea Valley Arctic Bed which occur sporadically along this part of the valley. Mesolithic artefacts also regularly occur within investigations of the valley floor.
- 1.3.3 Neolithic and Bronze Age evidence within the valley is similarly represented by the sediment deposition sequence and cultural remains. Flint artefacts have been recovered from within peat accumulations within the valley with worked wood also preserved. The sediments suggest that the floodplain area is likely to have been periodically wet or partly a wetland area during these periods. Deposit modelling of the alluvial sequence also suggests that a palaeochannel or channels exist to the immediate east of the site.
- 1.3.4 Within the Roman period Edmonton was c 10km north of Londinium, and located close to Ermin Street (c 1.2km to the west of the site). A Roman settlement, active up to the 3rd Century AD, was identified at Bush Hill Park in Edmonton during excavations in the 1970s. The River Lea was an important route throughout the Roman period.
- 1.3.5 The name Edmonton appears to originate from the Saxon *Eadhelmes tun* or *Eadhelm's farm*. Activity from this period at the site and its immediate surroundings is sparse although late a Saxon settlement was probably focused upon Lower Hall Lane, Chingford c 800m to the north. The later medieval settlement pattern is reflected in the surviving historic core of Edmonton represented by Fore Street, Silver Street and Angel Road. The last of these roads has now been subsumed into the North Circular Road (A406). A moated manor was also present on land to the west of the site and was extant on the OS map of 1896 before the Kimberley Road terrace was built over this as shown by the 1914 map.
- 1.3.6 The post medieval history of the site and area is one of expansion as London grew. The River Lea was an important part of this providing navigation into and out of the city for produce and goods. Further Acts of Parliament continued to improve the Lea as a communications route resulting in the course of the river being extensively scoured and embanked in places. The river was straightened following the River Lea Act of 1766, which also saw the provision of locks.
- 1.3.7 The area also has a colourful history in the 17th and 18th centuries, mainly due to its two fairs. The Beggar's Bush Fair was granted by James I and was held on the Southgate side of the town until it fell into abeyance in the mid 19th Century. Edmonton Fair was held from 1680 onwards and was well known as a hiring fair for servants. By 1820 it was estimated that around 30,000 people attended the fair, although its original purpose had been somewhat lost and it ceased c 1870.
- 1.3.8 More recently the late 19th and early 20th century expansion and industrialisation of the area accounted for considerable housing and factory construction along the valley.





## 2 EVALUATION AIMS, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 General aims

2.1.1 The evaluation aimed to establish the archaeological potential of the site. To achieve this the general objectives were:

- to establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the proposal area,
- to determine and confirm the character of any remains present, without compromising any deposits that may merit detailed investigation under full area excavation,
- to determine or estimate the date range of any remains from artefacts or otherwise,
- to characterise any underlying archaeological strata down to undisturbed geology without significantly impacting upon significant younger (overlying) deposits where possible,
- to determine the geo-archaeological and palaeo-environmental potential of any archaeological deposits encountered,
- to establish what archaeological remains/deposits maybe affected by any proposed development,
- to make available the results of the investigation to inform the planning application and the potential for any further mitigation strategy,
- to produce a report and full archive,
- to disseminate the results of the investigation at a level appropriate to their importance.

### 2.2 Specific aims and objectives

2.2.1 The evaluation specifically sought to;

- establish the presence/absence and extent of any organic deposits within the alluvial sequence,
- establish the date range of waterlogged organic remains through the use of C14 dating or other suitable scientific methods as appropriate to the types of deposits encountered,
- establish the likely impact of the construction design upon any buried remains above c 8.5m aOD,
- establish the potential for the presence of archaeological remains within an inaccessible area for this phase of evaluation.

### 2.3 Scope of works

2.3.1 The evaluation comprised an approximate 4% sample of the development area. This translated as 13 x 30m trenches each at 2m wide for which the layout was agreed with GLAAS prior to commencing the fieldwork (Fig. 2). Whilst the trenches were arranged to provide a best coverage of the site, it was not possible to access an area of 3,500m<sup>2</sup> within the central part due to the presence of a large pile of rubble derived from the demolition phase. However, through agreement with GLAAS, the arrangement was



deemed suitable to fully evaluate for the presence of potential remains after a review of the initial results during the course of the fieldwork.

- 2.3.2 The impact of the development will mostly be limited to the foundations of the new structures and the accompanying service trenches including attenuation drainage tanks. These will not extend into the gravel below the water table level at c 8.4m a OD. Therefore evaluation was limited to features and deposits that would be encountered at or above the surface of the gravel sequence. No evaluation was undertaken to assess for the presence of potential Arctic Bed deposits stratified within the gravel as these, if present, would be at greater depths than the maximum construction impact.

## **2.4 Methodology**

- 2.4.1 Each trench was mechanically excavated to the first archaeological horizon or the surface of the underlying gravel depending upon which is encountered first. During the first period of site attendance the gravel surface was not adequately revealed in several of the trenches where excavation ceased within the alluvial sequence without encountering archaeological deposits. Due to this and the potential for archaeological remains still to be present sealed below the alluvial deposits, the site was revisited and these trenches were subsequently excavated to the surface of the gravel. During machine excavation particular care was taken to ensure any archaeological deposits within the alluvial sequence could be identified. In the event none were encountered and machine excavation proceeded to the surface of the gravel deposits. Trench views and sample sections were photographed digitally and levels of the exposed gravel surface and the thickness of the alluvial sequence were recorded for each trench prior to backfilling (Figs 3-6). GLASS were informed of the results and did not require a visit to the site.

## **3 RESULTS**

### **3.1 Presentation of results**

- 3.1.1 No archaeological features, deposits or finds were encountered within the evaluation. Therefore the general depositional sequence encountered across the site is described below rather than in a trench by trench format. A comprehensive listing of individual trenches and associated context data can be found in Appendix A. This should be referred to for information such as dimensions which are not otherwise included within the descriptive text unless pertinent to the description.
- 3.1.2 Individual contexts have been uniquely numbered by trench starting at the relevant hundred numeral and then being followed by the individual context (e.g. The first context used for Trench 1 would be 100 followed by 101, Trench 2 starts at 200 etc).

### **3.2 Trenches and deposit sequence**

- 3.2.1 Gravel was encountered within the base of each trench. The surface elevation of this was generally encountered at 8.9-9.3m aOD. Overlying the gravel was a sequence of alluvial silts and clays (see figures 3-7). This sequence was represented by two or three distinct deposits comprising localised layers of grey silt clay at the contact with the underlying gravel overlain by a thick orange brown sandy clay and silt and finally a slightly more reddish brown stiff clay silt. At its greatest this sequence was 1m thick, although this varied greatly due to the amount of truncation across the surface levels that resulted from the historical constructions and modern demolition. A layer of demolition rubble mixed with topsoil completed the sequence.



### **3.3 Artefact and ecofactual summary**

- 3.3.1 No deposits suitable for environmental sampling or artefacts were encountered during the course of the evaluation.

## **4 DISCUSSION**

### **4.1 Reliability of field investigation**

- 4.1.1 The 4% evaluation sample can be viewed as a reliable indicator for the potential of this site. It clearly encountered undisturbed horizons where archaeological remains would reasonably be expected and demonstrated that deep truncation of deposits caused by the historical construction and recent demolition was relatively limited. Visibility and clarity of the sediment sequence and geological deposits was good following the correct identification of these within the second site attendance and the results confidently demonstrate that archaeological remains were not present within the trenches.

### **4.2 Significance and discussion**

- 4.2.1 The lack of archaeological deposits clearly indicate that the site has a very low potential for any remains to exist within the site boundary other than the most isolated and dispersed types that are not easily identified within trench evaluations. The complete absence of deposits, features or finds associated with human activities until the more recent historical period strongly suggests that this site has remained as open land throughout much of its history. The alluvial sediments do not show any sign of having been converted to arable use further indicating this site has remained as floodplain meadow until the development of the area in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.



## APPENDIX A. TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1		
<b>General description</b>	<b>Orientation</b>	NW-SE
No archaeological remains present. Sediment sequence comprises sand and gravel overlain by sterile silt clay alluvium truncated by modern foundations and services. A layer of mixed demolition debris completed the sequence. Trench re-machined correctly to the surface of the gravel during the second attendance.	<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	0.8
	<b>Width (m)</b>	2.10
	<b>Length (m)</b>	33

Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
100	Layer	-	0.1	Demolition layer	-	-
101	Layer	-	0.25	Alluvium reddish brown clay silt	-	-
102	Layer	-	0.4	Alluvium orange brown sandy clay silt	-	-
103	Layer	-	0.4	Evaluation trench backfill	-	-
104	Layer	-	-	Natural sand and gravel	-	-

Trench 2						
<b>General description</b>	<b>Orientation</b>	ESE-WNW				
As Trench 1 but without modern foundation truncation. The surface of the gravel was correctly encountered during the first attendance.	<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	0.7				
	<b>Width (m)</b>	2.10				
	<b>Length (m)</b>	30				
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
200	Layer	-	0.2	Demolition layer	-	-
201	Layer	-	0.5	Alluvium orange brown sandy clay silt	-	-
202	Layer	-	-	Natural sand and gravel	-	-

Trench 3						
<b>General description</b>	<b>Orientation</b>	ESE-WNW				
As Trench 1 but without modern foundation truncation. The surface of the gravel was correctly encountered within half of the trench during the first attendance. The remaining part was re-machined to the correct level during the second attendance.	<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	0.9				
	<b>Width (m)</b>	2.10				
	<b>Length (m)</b>	30				
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
300	Layer	-	0.15	Demolition layer	-	-



301	Layer	-	0.25	Alluvium orange brown sandy clay silt	-	-
302	Layer	-	-	Natural sand and gravel	-	-
303	Layer	-	0.6	Evaluation trench backfill	-	-
304	Layer	-	0.4	Alluvium (same as 301)	-	-
305	Layer	-	0.4	Alluvium reddish brown clay silt	-	-

Trench 4						
<b>General description</b>				<b>Orientation</b>		ESE-WNW
As Trench 1 with significant modern foundation and demolition truncation. The surface of the gravel was correctly encountered during the first attendance.				<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>		0.9
				<b>Width (m)</b>		2.10
				<b>Length (m)</b>		29
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
400	Layer	-	0.4	Demolition layer	-	-
401	Layer	-	0.6	Alluvium orange brown sandy clay silt	-	-
402	Layer	-	-	Natural sand and gravel	-	-

Trench 5						
<b>General description</b>				<b>Orientation</b>		NNE-SSW
No archaeological remains present. Sediment sequence comprises sand and gravel truncated by modern foundations and services and overlain by dark silt and rubble. A layer of mixed demolition debris completed the sequence. All alluvial deposits had been removed by the modern truncation at this location although the surface of the gravel was at the same elevation as elsewhere. The surface of the gravel was correctly encountered during the first attendance.				<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>		1
				<b>Width (m)</b>		2.10
				<b>Length (m)</b>		28
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
500	Layer	-	0.4	Demolition layer	-	-
501	Layer	-	0.6	Former topsoil and rubble	-	-
502	Layer	-	-	Natural sand and gravel	-	-

Trench 6						
<b>General description</b>				<b>Orientation</b>		ESE-WNW
As Trench 1 with significant modern foundation and demolition truncation. The surface of the gravel was correctly encountered within half of the trench during the first attendance. The remaining part was re-				<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>		0.85
				<b>Width (m)</b>		2.10
				<b>Length (m)</b>		24



machined to the correct level during the second attendance.						
<b>Contexts</b>						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
600	Layer	-	0.3	Topsoil and demolition debris	-	-
601	Layer	-	0.3	Alluvium reddish brown clay silt	-	-
602	Layer	-	0.8	Evaluation trench backfill	-	-
603	Layer	-	-	Natural sand and gravel	-	-
604	Layer	-	0.4	Alluvium orange brown sandy clay silt	-	-

<b>Trench 7</b>						
<b>General description</b>		<b>Orientation</b>	NNE-SSW			
As Trench 1 with significant modern foundation and demolition truncation. The surface of the gravel was correctly encountered within half of the trench during the first attendance. The remaining part was re-machined to the correct level during the second attendance.		<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	1			
		<b>Width (m)</b>	2.10			
		<b>Length (m)</b>	23			
<b>Contexts</b>						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
700	Layer	-	0.4	Demolition layer	-	-
701	Layer	-	0.2	Topsoil and rubble debris	-	-
702	Layer	-	0.5	Alluvium orange brown sandy clay silt	-	-
703	Layer	-	0.6	Evaluation trench backfill	-	-
704	Layer	-	-	Natural sand and gravel	-	-

<b>Trench 8</b>						
<b>General description</b>		<b>Orientation</b>	NNE-SSW			
As Trench 1 but without modern foundation truncation. Trench re-machined correctly to the surface of the gravel during the second attendance.		<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	0.8			
		<b>Width (m)</b>	2.10			
		<b>Length (m)</b>	31			
<b>Contexts</b>						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
800	Layer	-	0.28	Demolition layer	-	-
801	Layer	-	0.2	Alluvium reddish brown clay silt	-	-
802	Layer	-	0.5	Alluvium orange brown sandy clay silt	-	-



803	Layer	-	0.5	Evaluation trench backfill		
804	Layer	-	-	Natural sand and gravel		

Trench 9						
<b>General description</b>				<b>Orientation</b>		ESE-WNW
As Trench 1 with localised modern foundation and demolition truncation. The surface of the gravel was correctly encountered during the first attendance.				<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>		0.5
				<b>Width (m)</b>		2.10
				<b>Length (m)</b>		30
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
900	Layer	-	0.1	Demolition layer	-	-
901	Layer	-	0.4	Alluvium orange brown sandy clay silt	-	-
902	Layer	-	-	Natural sand and gravel	-	-

Trench 10						
<b>General description</b>				<b>Orientation</b>		NNE-SSW
As Trench 1 with significant modern foundation and demolition truncation. The surface of the gravel was correctly encountered during the first attendance.				<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>		0.6
				<b>Width (m)</b>		2.10
				<b>Length (m)</b>		30
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1000	Layer	-	0.4	Demolition layer	-	-
1001	Layer	-	0.2	Alluvium orange brown sandy clay silt	-	-
1002	Layer	-	-	Natural sand and gravel	-	-

Trench 11						
<b>General description</b>				<b>Orientation</b>		ESE-WNW
As Trench 1 with localised modern foundation and demolition truncation. Trench re-machined correctly to the surface of the gravel during the second attendance.				<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>		0.8
				<b>Width (m)</b>		2.10
				<b>Length (m)</b>		31
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1100	Layer	-	0.1	Demolition layer	-	-
1101	Layer	-	0.3	Alluvium reddish brown clay silt	-	-
1102	Layer	-	0.4	Alluvium orange brown	-	-



				sandy clay silt		
1103	Layer	-	0.5	Evaluation trench backfill	-	-
1104	Layer	-	-	Natural sand and gravel	-	-

Trench 12						
<b>General description</b>				<b>Orientation</b>		NNE-SSW
As Trench 1 with localised modern foundation and demolition truncation. Trench re-machined correctly to the surface of the gravel during the second attendance.				<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>		0.8
				<b>Width (m)</b>		2.10
				<b>Length (m)</b>		31
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1200	Layer	-	0.3	Demolition layer	-	-
1201	Layer	-	0.25	Alluvium reddish brown clay silt	-	-
1202	Layer	-	0.2	Alluvium orange brown sandy clay silt	-	-
1203	Layer	-	-	Natural sand and gravel	-	-
1204	Layer	-	0.55	Evaluation trench backfill	-	-

Trench 13						
<b>General description</b>				<b>Orientation</b>		ESE-WNW
As Trench 1 with modern foundation and demolition truncation. The surface of the gravel was correctly encountered within the majority of the trench during the first attendance.				<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>		0.6
				<b>Width (m)</b>		2.10
				<b>Length (m)</b>		30
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1300	Layer	-	0.3	Demolition layer	-	-
1301	Layer	-	0.15	Alluvium orange brown sandy clay silt	-	-
1302	Layer	-	-	Natural sand and gravel	-	-





## APPENDIX B. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

- OA, 2012a, Advent Way, Edmonton, London Borough of Enfield. Desktop Assessment. Client report produced by Oxford Archaeology
- OA, 2012b, Advent Way, Edmonton, London Borough of Enfield. A Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation. Produced by Oxford Archaeology



## APPENDIX C. SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

<b>Site name:</b>	Advent Way, Edmonton, London Borough of Enfield
<b>Site code:</b>	ADW 12
<b>Grid reference:</b>	TQ 3530 9220
<b>Type:</b>	Evaluation
<b>Date and duration:</b>	12th-14th November 2012 and 11th January 2013
<b>Area of site:</b>	2.06 hectares

### **Summary of results:**

In November 2012 and January 2013, Oxford Archaeology South undertook an evaluation on land off Advent Way, Edmonton within the London Borough of Enfield, on behalf of SEGRO.

Thirteen trenches representing a 4% sample of the site by area were excavated revealing a sequence of alluvial deposits overlying gravel. No archaeological remains were present within any of the evaluation trenches. Most trenches also demonstrated moderate levels of truncation to the upper horizons of the alluvial sequence and more limited truncation into the gravel associated with the historic and modern constructions of the former warehouse units and their subsequent demolition and clearance.

Undisturbed horizons where archaeological remains would otherwise be expected were present to the degree that their absence indicates a very low potential for archaeological remains to be present within the development boundary.

### **Location of archive:**

The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with the Museum of London in due course, under the accession code ADW12.



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Figure 1: Site location



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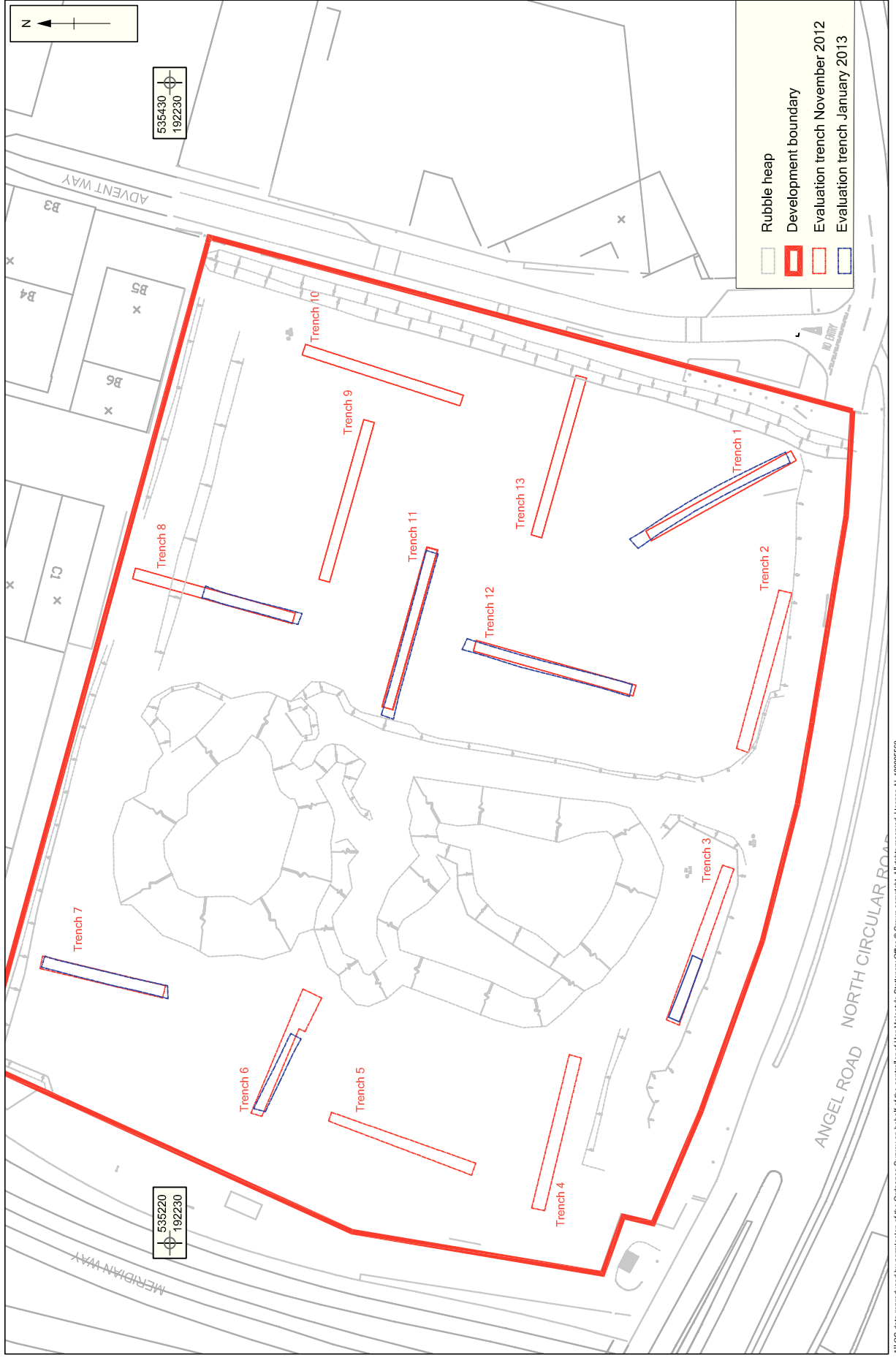


Figure 2: Evaluation trench layout

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Figure 3: Trench 1 general view and section







Figure 4: Trench 4 general view and section





Figure 5: Trench 6 general view and section





Figure 6: Trench 11 general view and section



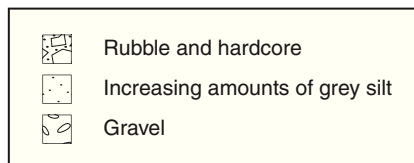
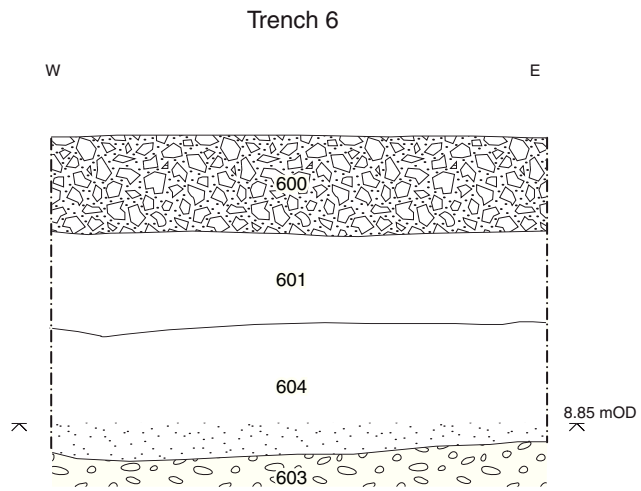
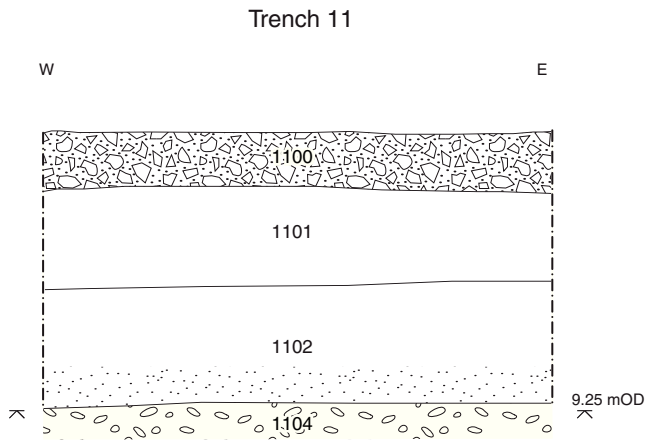


Figure 7: Trenches 6 and 11, sections







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