

# Land off Cedar Road Eglwys Brewis Glamorgan



## Archaeological Evaluation Report



January 2008

**Client: Paddle Ltd**

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## SUMMARY

*In December 2007 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out a field evaluation at Land off Cedar Road, Eglwys Brewis, Glamorgan (NGR ST 0059 6940) on behalf of Paddle Ltd. The work was in advance of a new housing development. The evaluation revealed undated boundary ditches that may have formed part of a Roman, medieval, or later field system. The ditches were overlain by a buried cultivation soil, and modern landscaping was revealed in the northern part of the site.*

### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 In December 2007 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out a field evaluation at Land off Cedar Road, Eglwys Brewis, Glamorgan (Fig. 1). The work was carried out on behalf of Paddle Ltd, in respect of a planning application for nine new homes (Planning Application No. 2007/00881/FUL) on land formerly used as allotments. A Brief was set by Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT 2007) outlining the archaeological requirements of the work. OA produced a Project Design detailing how those requirements would be met. The development site is situated behind and adjacent to properties fronting onto Chestnut Avenue and Elm Grove, and off the terminus of Cedar Road (NGR ST 0059 6940). The site is *c* 1.5 ha hectares in area.

#### 1.2 Geology and topography

1.2.1 The proposed site lies at *c* 41 m OD, and the solid geology of the site is Jurassic Lower Lias.

#### 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 The archaeological background to the evaluation was presented in the Brief (GGAT 2007), the results of which are summarised below. No archaeological investigations have been carried out within the proposed development site, although there are several significant sites/locations nearby.

##### *Prehistoric*

1.3.2 Two Bronze Age beads were discovered 0.5 km to the east of the site, and a ploughed out long barrow was revealed 1.7 km to the south of the site.

##### *Romano-British*

1.3.3 Several Roman coin hoards and a rectilinear enclosure have been discovered at RAF St Athan, to the south of the site.

##### *Medieval and post-medieval*

1.3.4 The Church of St Brewis at Eglwys Brewis dates from at least the 13th century, being first mentioned in 1254. The dedication is probably a projection of the name of the

settlement, which is probably derived from the de Braose family, who held land in Glamorgan between the 13th and 14th centuries. A medieval coin hoard was found on land immediately adjacent to the church. Medieval structures and possible graves, and post-medieval walls and drains have also been noted at RAF St Athan.

## 2 EVALUATION AIMS

- 2.1.1 General aims were to establish the presence/absence of any archaeological remains within the proposal area, and to determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains that may affect further need for mitigation during the construction process.
- 2.1.2 To establish the ecofactual and environmental potential of any archaeological deposits and features, and to make available the results of the investigation.

### *Specifically*

- 2.1.3 To identify any remains associated with medieval Elgwys Brewis.

## 3 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Scope of fieldwork

- 3.1.1 The evaluation consisted of four trenches each measuring 18 m x 1.5 m wide (Fig 2). The trenches were located within the footprint of the proposed new units. The overburden was removed under close archaeological supervision, by a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket.
- 3.1.2 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. All features were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film. Recording followed procedures laid down in the *OAU Fieldwork Manual* (ed. D Wilkinson, 1992).

## 4 RESULTS: GENERAL

### 4.1 Soils and ground conditions

- 4.1.1 The natural geology comprises silty clay overlying lower lias deposits, and the fills of the archaeological features were generally derived from a combination of these deposits, and the overlying cultivation soils.

### 4.2 Distribution of archaeological deposits

- 4.2.1 Limited archaeological evidence was revealed during the work, undated ditches were revealed along the western and eastern limits of the southern part of the site but no other significant features were revealed. Landscaping and dumps of modern waste were revealed in the northern part of the site.

## 5 RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS

### 5.1 Description of trenches

#### *Trench 1 (Fig. 3)*

- 5.1.1 Trench 1 was aligned north-west to south-east and situated in the south-west corner of the site. Natural geology, an orange brown silty clay with bands of limestone (102), was revealed 0.5 m below ground level (41.7 m OD). At the north-west end of the trench the natural clay had been cut by two ditches (103 and 105). Ditch 103 was aligned north-east to south-west, and had steep sides and a concave base. The ditch measured 0.54 m wide x 0.57 m deep, and was filled by a dark orange brown silty clay (104). No finds were recovered to date the ditch. Ditch 105 was similarly aligned, with shallower sides and a concave base. It measured 0.52 m wide x 0.21 m deep, and was filled by a dark orange brown silty clay (106). No finds were recovered to date the ditch.
- 5.1.2 The two ditches were overlain by a 0.3 m thick dark reddish brown silty clay buried soil horizon (101), which was overlain by the modern allotment topsoil (100), measuring 0.3 m thick.
- 5.1.3 The topsoil was cut by a west-east aligned sewer trench (107) that was filled by a dark orange brown silty clay (108). The southern part of the trench had been truncated by modern landscaping (109) that was 0.6 m deep, and filled by a light grey brown silty clay (110).

#### *Trench 2 (Fig. 4)*

- 5.1.4 Trench 2 was aligned north-east to south-west and natural geology (200) was revealed 0.45 m below ground level (41.65 m OD). The natural geology was cut by a north-south aligned ditch (203), which had a shallow concave profile and measured 0.5 m wide x 0.16 m deep. It was filled by a dark reddish brown silty clay loam (204), no finds were recovered to date the ditch.
- 5.1.5 An irregular root hole (205) was revealed in the west of the ditch. The root hole had an uneven concave base and measured 0.9 m x 0.6 m x 0.1 m deep. It was filled by a reddish brown silty clay (206). The features were overlain by a 0.2 m thick, dark reddish brown, silty clay buried soil horizon (202). A 0.3 m thick modern allotment topsoil (201) overlay the soil horizon.
- 5.1.6 The topsoil was cut by a modern trench (207), with vertical sides and a flat base. The trench measured 0.3 m wide x 0.6 m deep and was filled by a very dark grey brown silty clay (208). A modern nail was recovered from the fill. The edge of a pit (209) was partly exposed in the south-western edge of the trench. It had very steep sloping sides, rounding to a concave base. The pit measured 1.2 m wide x 0.8 m deep and was filled by a loose dark grey brown silty clay (210), which contained glass, tin and slate. In the north-east end of the trench a sewer trench (211) was revealed, which was filled by a dark orange brown silty clay (212).

***Trench 3 (Figs 2 and 5)***

- 5.1.7 Trench 3 was aligned north-west to south-east and natural geology (302) was revealed 0.25 m below ground level (40.6 m OD). The natural geology was overlain by a brown silty clay buried soil horizon (301), below the modern allotment soil (300). The deposits had been cut by two areas of landscaping (303) filled with modern waste (304) such as carpet.

***Trench 4 (Figs 2 and 5)***

- 5.1.8 Trench 4 was aligned north-east to south-west and natural geology (400) was revealed 0.7 m below ground level (39.9 m OD). The natural geology was overlain by a brown silty clay buried soil horizon (402), below the modern allotment soil (401). The deposits had been cut by an area of landscaping (403) filled with a humic loam (404) containing concrete blocks, plastic and glass. The deposits were overlain by a redeposited topsoil (405).

**5.2 Finds**

- 5.2.1 One modern nail was recovered from the fill of a modern pit (208), no other 20th century finds were retained.

**5.3 Palaeo-environmental remains**

- 5.3.1 No deposits suitable for environmental sampling were identified during the evaluation.

**6 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION****6.1 Reliability of investigation**

- 6.1.1 The northern part of the site had been disturbed by modern landscaping/rubbish disposal and archaeological evidence may have been lost. The cultivation of the site may have led to the loss of shallow features, such as postholes, but the lack of residual pottery in the overlying deposits indicates that any significant settlement lay away from the development site.

**6.2 Overall interpretation**

- 6.2.1 The evaluation revealed only limited evidence of archaeological features. Undated boundary ditches were revealed in the southern part of site, and may have represented Roman, medieval or post-medieval field boundaries. The ditches were overlain by the allotment soils and are unlikely to relate to allotment activity.
- 6.2.2 The lack of any dating or structural evidence indicates that the site probably formed agricultural land. The lack of residual Roman or medieval finds within the buried cultivation soil, suggest that the area was not manured and may have been used for pasture.

## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench	Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Comments	Date
1	100	Layer		0.3	Topsoil	
	101	Layer		0.3	Buried cultivation soil	
	102	Layer			Natural	
	103	Cut	0.57	0.54	Ditch	
	104	Fill		0.54	Fill of ditch	
	105	Cut	0.52	0.21	Ditch	
	106	Fill		0.21	Fill of ditch	
	107	Cut	0.7	0.61	Ditch	
	108	Fill		0.61	Fill of ditch	
	109	Cut	1.5	0.58	Service	Modern
	110	Fill		0.58	Fill of service	
2	200	Layer			Natural	
	201	Layer		0.3	Topsoil	
	202	Layer		0.3	Buried cultivation soil	
	203	Cut	0.5	0.16	Ditch	
	204	Fill		0.16	Fill of ditch	
	205	Cut	0.9	0.1	Root hole	
	206	Fill		0.1	Fill of root hole	
	207	Cut	0.3	0.6	Service	Modern
	208	Fill		0.6	Fill of service	
	209	Cut	1.2	0.8	Pit	
	210	Fill		0.8	Fill of pit	
	211	Cut	1.3	0.4	Service	Modern
212	Fill		0.4	Fill of service		
3	300	Layer		0.36	Topsoil	
	301	Layer		0.11	Buried cultivation soil	
	302	Layer			Natural	
	303	Cut	4.15	0.53	Landscaping	Modern
	304	Fill		0.53	Fill of landscaping	
4	400	Layer			Natural	
	401	Layer		0.3	Topsoil	
	402	Layer		0.25	Buried cultivation soil	
	403	Cut	3.5	0.4	Landscaping	Modern
	404	Fill		0.4	Fill of landscaping	
	405	Layer		0.2	Topsoil	



**APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES**

GGAT, 2007 Residential Development at Land off Cedar Drive Eglwys Brewis, Brief for Archaeological Evaluation

OA, 2007 Land off Cedar Road, Eglwys Brewis, Glamorgan Project Design

OAU, 1992 Fieldwork Manual (ed. D Wilkinson)

**APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS**

**Site name:** Land of Cedar Road, Eglwys Brewis, Glamorgan

**Site code:** EGCED 07

**Grid reference:** NGR ST 0059 6940

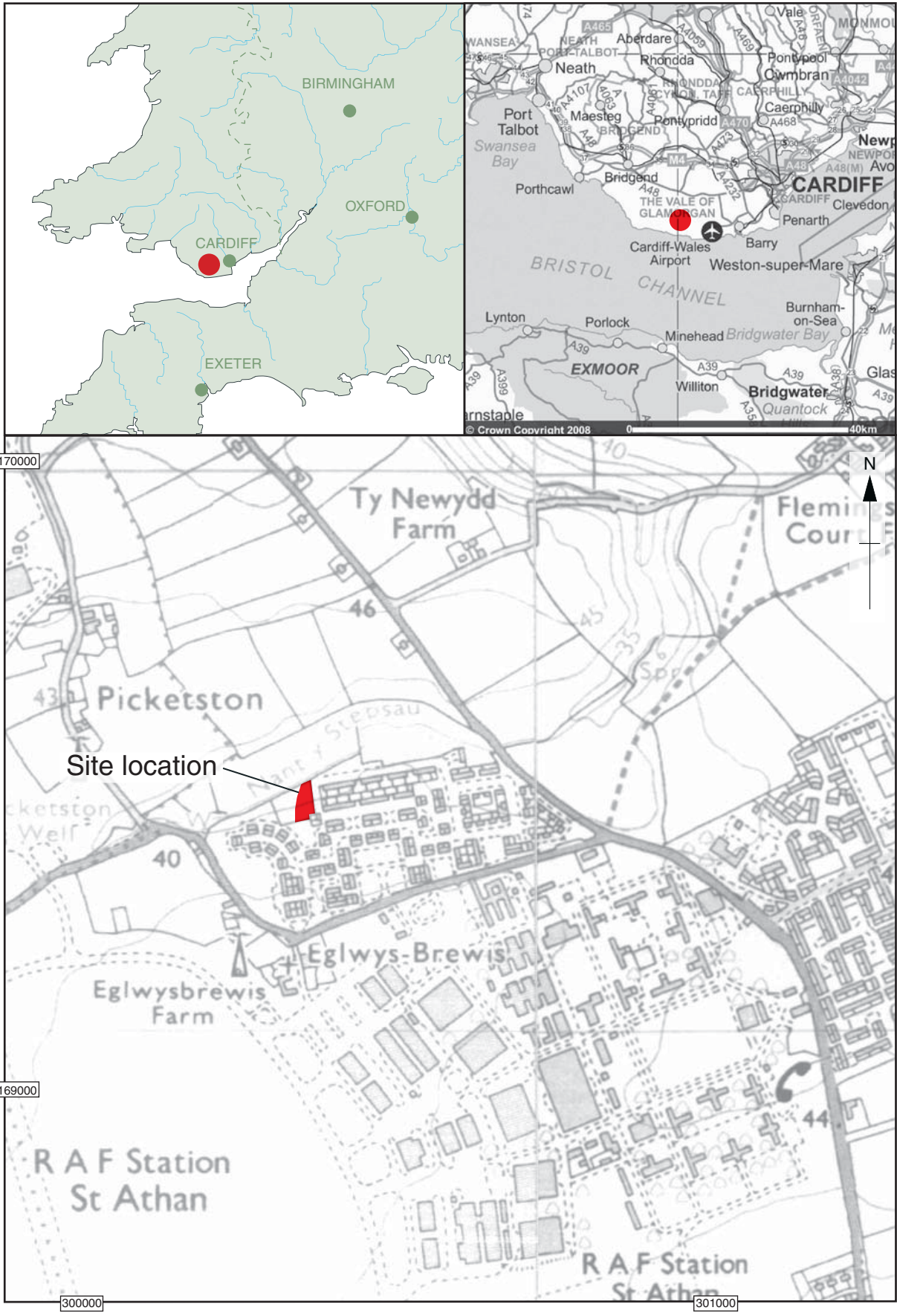
**Type of evaluation:** Four trench evaluation on site of development.

**Date and duration of project:** Four days from the 17.12.2007 to the 20.12.2007.

**Area of site:** 1.5 ha

**Summary of results:** Undated boundary ditches were revealed, which were sealed by as buried cultivation soil.

**Location of archive:** The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with the National Museum and Gallery, Cardiff in due course, under the following accession number: tba



Scale 1:10,000

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Figure 1: Site location

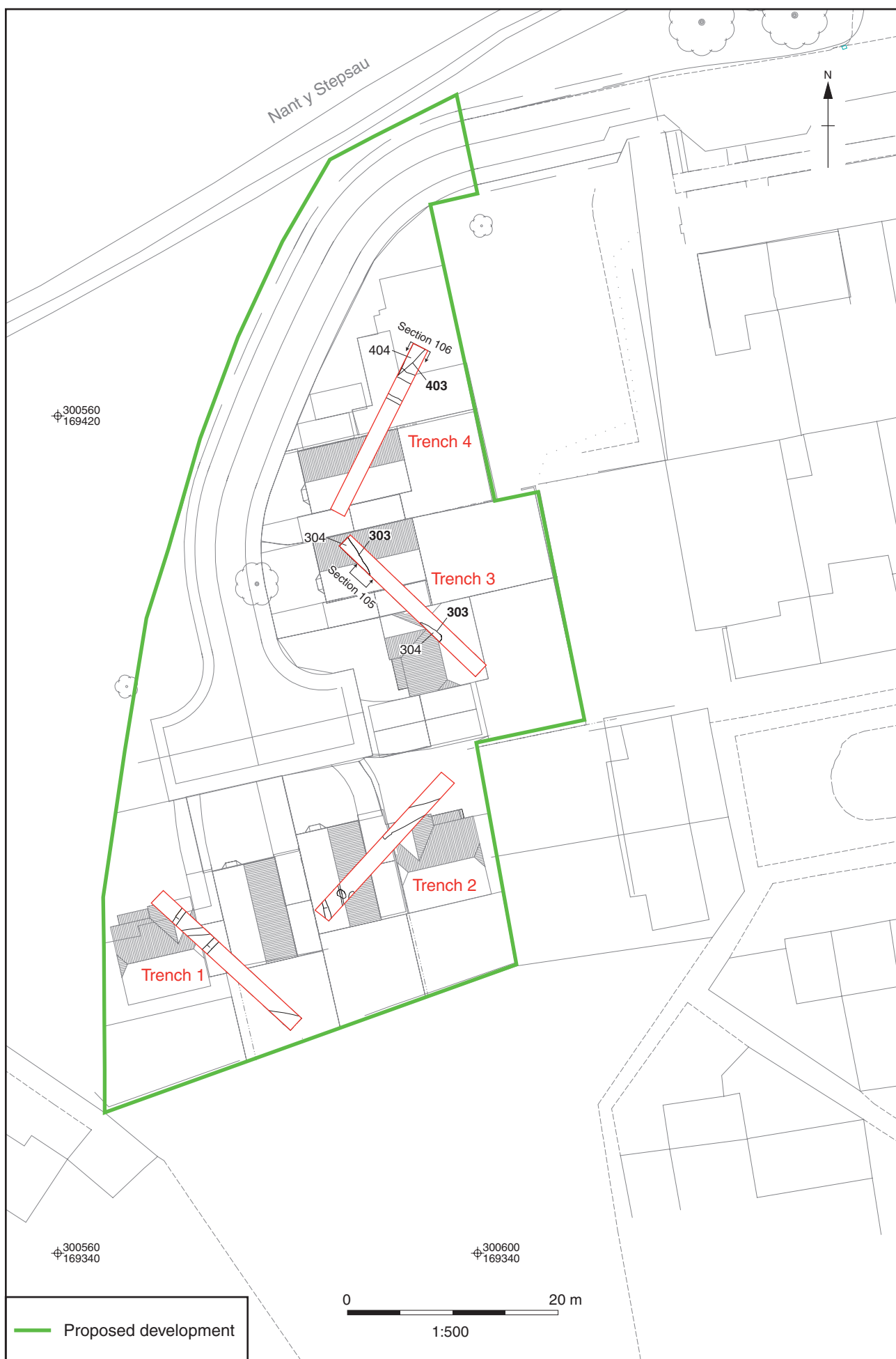


Figure 2: Trench locations in relation to the proposed development

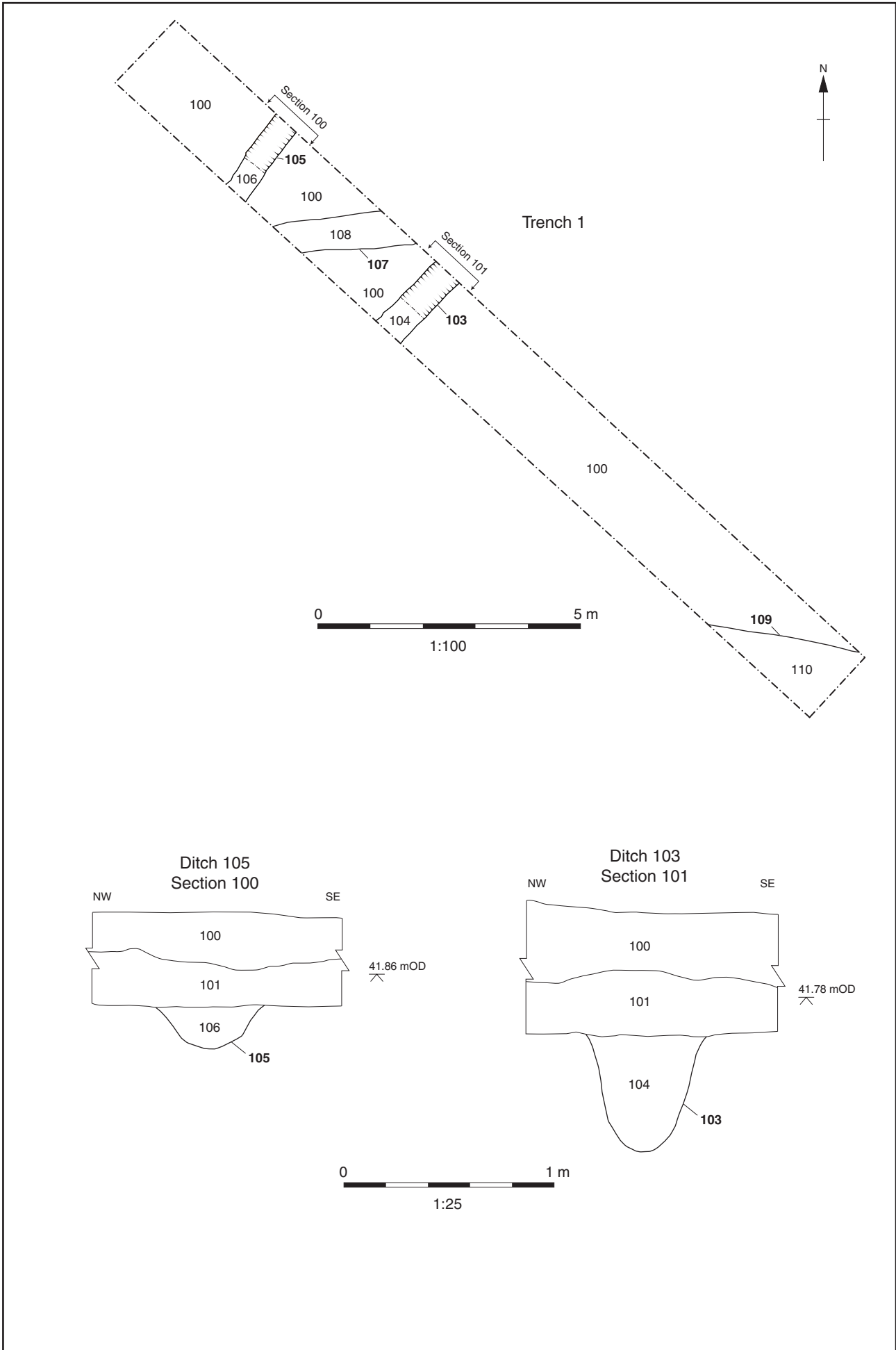


Figure 3: Trench 1 plan and sections

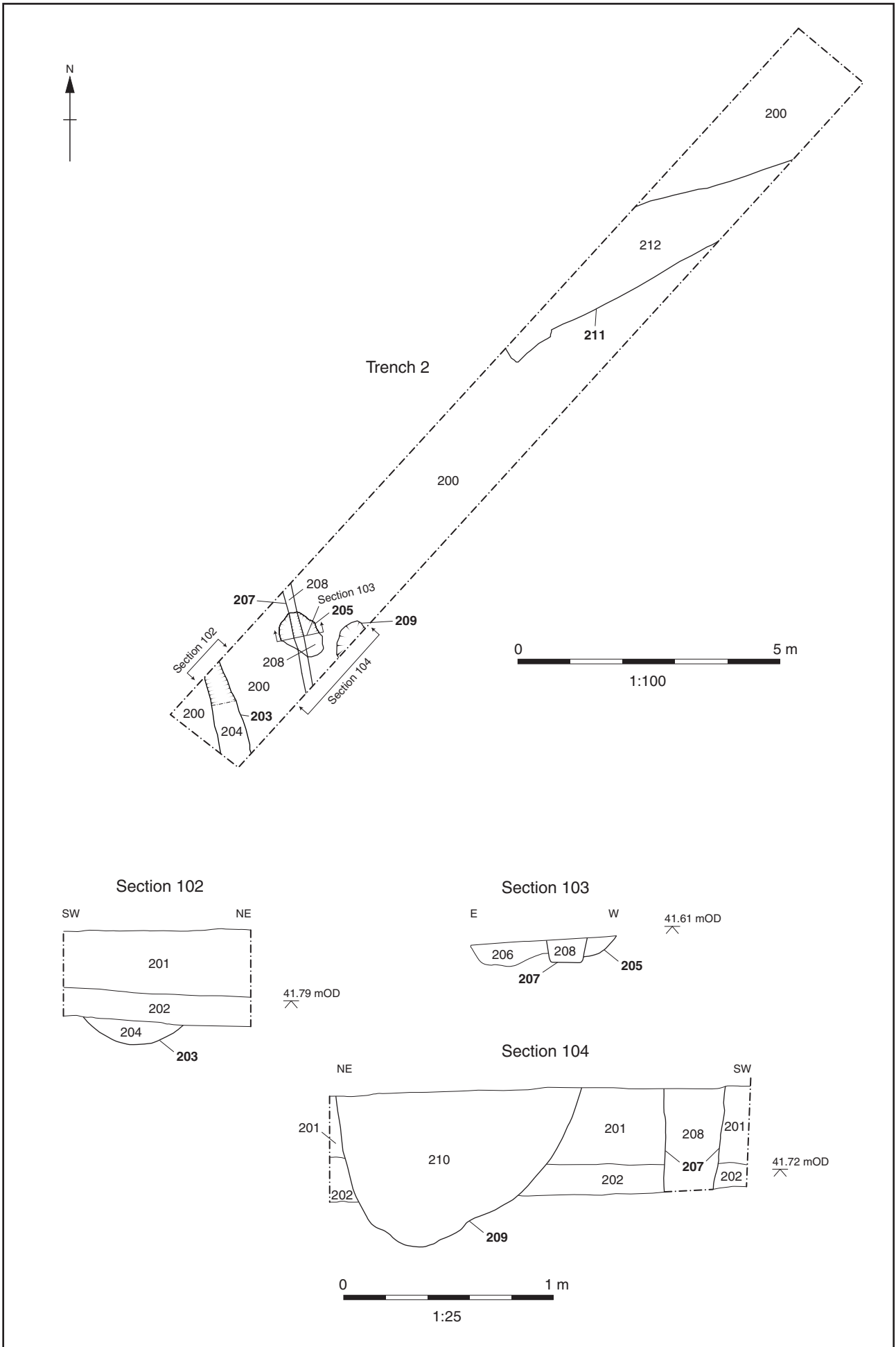


Figure 4: Trench 2 plan and sections

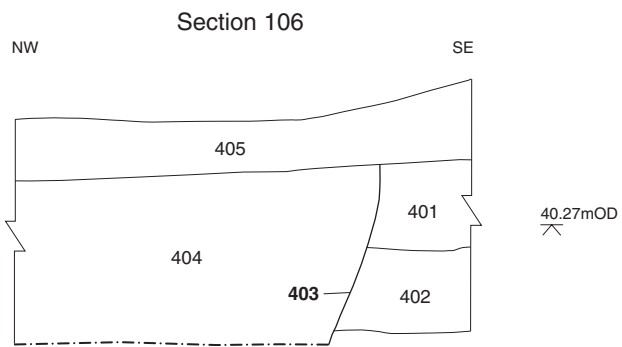
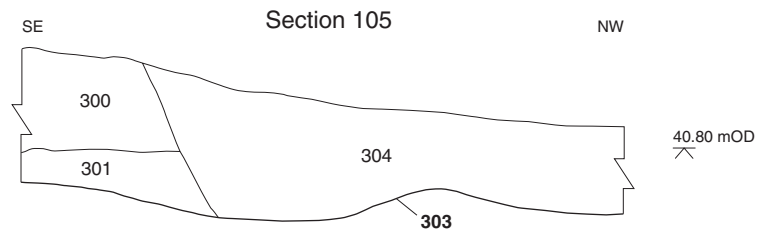


Figure 5: Trenches 3 and 4, sections