

New Surgery
Horse and Groom Site
Elm Road
Penn
Buckinghamshire



Archaeological Evaluation Report



Oxford Archaeology

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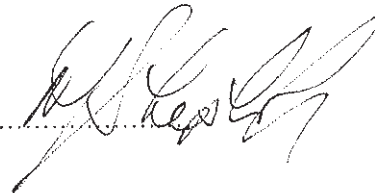
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The New Surgery, Horse and Groom Site, Elm Road, Penn, Buckinghamshire

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

CONTENTS

Summary.....	1
1 Introduction	1
1.1 Location and scope of work	1
1.2 Geology and topography	1
2 Archaeological and historical background.....	1
3 Evaluation Aims.....	3
4 Evaluation Methodology	3
4.1 Scope of fieldwork	3
4.2 Fieldwork methods and recording.....	3
4.3 Finds	4
4.4 Palaeo-environmental evidence.....	4
4.5 Presentation of results	4
5 Results: General.....	4
5.1 Soils and ground conditions	4
5.2 Distribution of archaeological deposits.....	4
6 Results: Descriptions.....	4
6.1 Description of deposits	4
6.2 Finds	5
7 Discussion And Interpretation.....	5
7.1 Reliability of field investigation.....	5
7.2 Overall interpretation	6
Appendix 1 Archaeological Context Inventory	7
Appendix 2 Bibliography and references.....	7
Appendix 3 Summary of Site Details.....	8

LIST OF FIGURES

- Fig. 1 Site location
Fig. 2 Trench location
Fig. 3 Sections

SUMMARY

On the 26th and 27th of January 2004 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out a field evaluation at the New Surgery, Horse and Groom Site, Elm Road, Penn, Buckinghamshire on behalf of Brocklehurst Architects Ltd. The evaluation revealed evidence for ridge and furrow agriculture together with 19th century domestic occupation but no evidence for earlier activity or for tile making on the site.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 On the 26th and 27th of January 2004 OA carried out a field evaluation at the New Surgery, Horse and Groom Site, Elm Road, Penn, Buckinghamshire (NGR SU 9060 9402) on behalf of Brocklehurst Architects Ltd. in respect of a planning application for redevelopment of the former Horse and Groom public house as a doctor's surgery. A brief (BCAS 2003) was set by and a WSI (OA 2004) was agreed with the Buckinghamshire County Council Archaeological Officer, David Radford.
- 1.1.2 The development site contains the still standing Horse and Groom public house, with a car park at the front of the building and gardens to the rear. It is located on the west side of Elm Road within the Village of Penn (Fig.1). The site is bounded to the east by the B474, Elm Road, to the north and south by private residences and to the west by Rays Lane.

1.2 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The village of Penn lies on the dip-slope of the Chiltern hills. The site lies on level ground at approximately 160 m OD and occupies an area of roughly 0.2 hectares. The underlying geology is chalk overlain by clay mixed with pebbles and sand.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1.1 A summary of the archaeological background to the evaluation has been provided below from the WSI (OA 2004). The site itself has produced no significant archaeological evidence, although a site on the opposite side of Elm Road, Yonder Lodge Cottage, has produced post-medieval tile wasters in its garden (CAS 2165).

Summary from the WSI

- 2.1.2 There is little evidence of activity in the vicinity of Penn prior to the medieval period. The prehistoric period is represented by a limited number of individual find spots within the Parish boundary of Penn. These include a Neolithic scraper (CAS 5411) and a copper alloy leaf-shaped spear head (CAS 5877) found at Tylers Green, immediately north-west of Penn.
- 2.1.3 Prehistoric activity is mostly concentrated in the area of the Chiltern Hills to the north-west of the site. This upland zone is of significance within the context of the Bronze Age and the Iron Age periods containing important sites such as the Bronze Age site of Ivinghoe Beacon. During the Iron Age more intensified occupation and

development within this localised upland zone was apparent, particularly along the Chiltern Escarpment, where notably, a concentration of hillfort monuments were constructed. This area lies *c* 16 km to the north-west of the site.

- 2.1.4 The Roman period is equally underrepresented within the vicinity of Penn. Activity dating to this phase is again concentrated along the Chilterns with a number of villas being situated within the river valleys (Branigan 1987).
- 2.1.5 Penn forms an elongated 'ribbon-like' tail to High Wycombe and merges at its north end imperceptibly with Tyler's Green. Penn's origins lie in the medieval period and it is first recorded in the 13th century.
- 2.1.6 By the 14th century Penn had become famous for its production of floor tiles (Pevsner, Sherwood and Williamson 1994, 594). The industry supplied high status sites such as Windsor Castle and the Palace of Westminster (Hohler 1941).
- 2.1.7 Artefactual evidence recovered in the vicinity of this development site suggests that the main focus of the industry was situated near the junction of Beacon Hill, Stumpwell Lane and Church Road to the west of the Horse and Groom site. Finds from here include roof tiles and decorated floor tiles (CAS 4244-6 incl; 4761; 5156). A probable tile kiln is known near to this development site (CAS 4244) and post-medieval pottery "wasters" have been found in the garden of Yonder Lodge Cottage (CAS 2165).
- 2.1.8 More recently medieval and post-medieval tile kilns and decorated medieval tiles were found at Rose Cottage, located approximately 1000 m to the south of the Horse and Groom site on the opposite side of Elm Road (Fell 2001). A total of five kilns were also identified and excavated by ASC Ltd in August 2003 at land opposite the Penn and Tylers Green Sports Ground, three of which were tile constructions with the remaining two being brick built. These kilns were found to be consecutive in their usage and show a continuity of tile manufacture on this site (report awaited).
- 2.1.9 The medieval tile industry at Penn is of significant regional and national importance and has been the subject of several research studies (e.g. Hohler 1941, Cauvain 1995). It has been recognised as one of the most extensive and well organised commercial tile manufacturing centres of medieval Britain. By the late 14th century, Penn tilers held what was tantamount to a monopoly over tile production in the south-east, particularly around London. It is known from various records from the Royal Palaces, ecclesiastical establishments and houses of the rich that vast quantities of tiles from Penn were manufactured for specific projects and clients. Penn tilers received Royal Patronage from Edward III (1327-1377) and later from his son, Richard II (1377-1399). Penn tiles were used extensively in several royal palaces, and in particular in Windsor Castle.
- 2.1.10 A summary of finds relating to the tile industry in Penn has previously been compiled (Green, 2003). The compiler also noted tile fragments in the garden of Beam End Cottage (OA 2003). To the west of Elm Road evidence of "squatter" encroachment onto the medieval common has been identified in the 1770 Jeffreys and Bryant Map of Buckinghamshire. This common is also known to have been utilised for clay extraction and possibly production too.

- 2.1.11 A post-medieval kiln and associated tile constructed out-building were located during the archaeological evaluation at Rose Cottage (CAS 6869). The tiles used in the construction of the building were medieval in date.
- 2.1.12 Although some tile production continued into the post-medieval period it appears that manufacture was in decline and certainly by the 18th century, Penn and Tylers Green were reverting to residential areas. Jeffreys and Bryant map of the settlement does not identify any specific places of production within the village and it appears that 18th and 19th century Penn was characterised by residential street plans.
- 2.1.13 In 1796, a school for displaced French aristocrats was established in Tylers Green (Robinson 1929, 64) where a building known as French Meadow is situated. This was originally a 17th century timber framed dwelling which was later clad in brick during the 18th century. This was fairly typical of the buildings built during this period along Elm Road, many of which were used as summer residences by rich Londoners (Robinson 1929, 65).

3 EVALUATION AIMS

- 3.1.1 To establish the presence or absence, extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains within the proposed development area, and in particular evidence of the presence of further medieval settlement directly associated with the area of tile manufacture.
- 3.1.2 To establish the ecofactual and environmental potential of archaeological deposits and features.
- 3.1.3 To make available the results of the investigation

4 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

4.1 Scope of fieldwork

- 4.1.1 The evaluation consisted of three trenches all measuring 1.8 m wide (Fig.2). Trench 1 was "L" shaped measuring 8.0 m north-south and 12.0 m east-west, Trench 2 was also "L" shaped measuring 7.0 m north-south and 5.0 m east-west, whilst Trench 3 was a linear trench of 7.0 m length aligned east-west. This equates to a 10% sample of the site. The car park surfaces and any overburden was removed under close archaeological supervision using a JCB fitted with a toothless grading bucket for trenches 2 and 3, while Trench 1 was excavated using a 360° tracked excavator also fitted with a toothless grading bucket.

4.2 Fieldwork methods and recording

- 4.2.1 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 the trenches and any archaeological features were planned at a scale of 1:50

while sample sections and sections of excavated features were drawn at a scale of 1:20. The trenches, sections and 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).

4.3 Finds

- 4.3.1 Finds were recovered by hand during the course of the excavation and bagged by context.

4.4 Palaeo-environmental evidence

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

4.5 Presentation of results

- 4.5.1 The results of the evaluation are presented below, with the stratigraphic accounts of each trench described individually, followed by an overall discussion and interpretation.

5 RESULTS: GENERAL

5.1 Soils and ground conditions

- 5.1.1 The site was located on level ground, comprising modern tarmac and brick surfaces overlying buried soils within trenches 2 and 3, and garden soils overlying the natural in Trench 1. The boundaries of the layers and the edges of the cut features were well defined. Soils conditions were moist with no waterlogging.

5.2 Distribution of archaeological deposits

- 5.2.1 Distribution of the archaeological deposits and features was equally sparse between the three trenches with no concentrations encountered.

6 RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS

6.1 Description of deposits

Trench 1 (Fig.3, Section 1)

- 6.1.1 A bright orange brown silty clay natural (103) containing many small flint inclusions was reached at a depth of 0.65 m below ground level. This was overlain by a 0.5 m thick layer of a friable brown loamy clay (102) representing a worked garden soil. The trench was sealed by a layer of turf 0.1 m - 0.15 m thick (101). No significant archaeological features or deposits were encountered.

Trench 2 (Fig.3, Section 2)

- 6.1.2 The base of this trench was a tenacious orange brown silty clay natural (206) containing many small to medium sized yellow flint inclusions at a level of 0.6 m below the car park surface. This was cut by a 4.5 m wide by 0.2 m deep linear feature

(205) aligned north-south running roughly parallel to Elm Road, the base of a probable medieval plough furrow. Filling this was a tenacious mid brown silty clay (204) containing charcoal flecking and many plain tile fragments. Overlying this was a 0.2 m deep layer of a greyish brown tenacious loamy clay (203), a layer of buried topsoil. Along the eastern edge of the north-south arm of the trench this was overlaid by a lens of off-white clayey silt (202). This was 0.12 m thick and contained much pulverised chalk and may represent material cast up during the excavation of the foundations for the Horse and Groom foundations and cellar. Sealing both 203 and 202 was a 0.25 m deep layer of a dark grey silty clay (201) which contained many brick fragments and is probably the original yard surface fronting the building. A 0.1 m deep layer of modern tarmac completed the section.

Trench 3 (Fig.3, Section 3)

- 6.1.3 The orange brown silty clay natural (304) was reached at a depth of 1.0 m below the existing car park surface. This was sealed by a 0.6 m deep layer of friable dark greyish brown silty clay (303), a layer of buried topsoil, which had been heavily disturbed by modern service trenches containing saltglazed sewer pipes, a 20th century soakaway and the brick built socket for a large wooden post. Sealing this layer was a 0.15 m deep deposit of off-white pulverised chalk (302), possibly cast out material from the excavation of the foundations for the Horse and Groom or possible levelling material prior to the pouring of the 0.15 m thick layer of concrete (301). As in Trench 2 the modern tarmac car park surface was laid over this area.
- 6.1.4 Located in the eastern half of the trench was a 2.5 m square vertical sided cut (307) containing a circular brick lined well of 1.6 m diameter (306) located on fig 2. Constructed of red bricks measuring 222 mm x 110 mm x 72 mm bonded with a lime mortar, it was built using stretcher laid bricks in a single row capped with a hemispherical brick well cap. The brick sizes and the presence of the well cap suggests a 19th century date. The space between the brick lining of the well and the well shaft was backfilled by a dark greyish brown silty clay (305), most likely redeposited soils. The well itself had silted up to within 0.4 m of the top with a dark grey silt (308) leaving a void underneath the well cap when first exposed. The well cap and the backfilling of the wellshaft were overlaid by the buried topsoil (303).

6.2 Finds

- 6.2.1 A quantity of plain red tile fragments were recovered from the plough furrow soil (204). These probably represent the migration of tile wasters downhill from tile kilns known to exist to the south of the site rather than production in the immediate locality. The remainder of the finds were recovered from the buried topsoils (102), (203) and (303) and include transfer printed ware, creamware and stoneware indicative of 19th and 20th century domestic occupation.

7 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

7.1 Reliability of field investigation

- 7.1.1 The percentage sample of the site, the location of the trenches and the consistent results from between the trenches gives a high confidence that the interpretation of the results will apply equally throughout the development site.

7.2 Overall interpretation

- 7.2.1 The evaluation showed that only a limited amount of activity had taken place within the area of the site. The lack of early dating evidence is consistent with the known historical background of the area. The possible medieval ridge and furrow activity within trench 2 is the first datable occurrence within the site whilst the recovery of 19th century domestic refuse suggests residential occupation by that time. The absence of large quantities of tile waste or related features would mitigate against any tile kilns either within the site or close by.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Ctxt No</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Thick. (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>	<i>Finds</i>	<i>Date</i>
1						
	101	Layer	0.0 m - 0.1 m	Modern turf	-	-
	102	Layer	0.1 m - 0.7 m	Buried topsoil	Pottery, Brick	C19th - C20th
	1003	Layer	>0.7 m	Natural clay	-	-
2						
	201	Layer	0.0 m - 0.3 m	Make up for car park	Brick, Glass	C20th
	202	Lens	0.3 m - 0.45 m	Lens of redeposited chalk	-	-
	203	Layer	0.3 m - 0.5 m	Buried topsoil	Pottery, Glass, Clay pipe	C19th - C20th
	204	Layer	0.5 m - 0.75 m	Plough soil, Furrow fill	Roof tile	Medieval ?
	205	Cut	0.6 m - 0.75 m	Plough furrow	-	-
	206	Layer	>0.75 m	Natural clay	-	-
3						
	301	Layer	0.0 m - 0.25 m	Concrete	-	C20th
	302	Layer	0.25 m - 0.4 m	Levelling layer	-	-
	303	Layer	0.4 m - 1.0 m	Buried topsoil	Pottery, Glass, Brick	C19th - C20th
	304	Layer	>1.0 m	Natural clay	-	-
	305	Fill	>1.0 m	Redeposited soil	Brick	C19th
	306	Well	0.4 m - > 1.0 m	Brick lined well and wellcap	Brick	C19th
	307	Cut	0.4 m - > 1.0 m	Well shaft	-	C19th
	308	Fill	0.7 m - > 1.0 m	Silting within well	-	-

APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

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APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: The New Surgery, Horse and Groom Site, Elm Road, Penn, Buckinghamshire

Site code: HIWYNS 04

Grid reference: SU 9060 9402

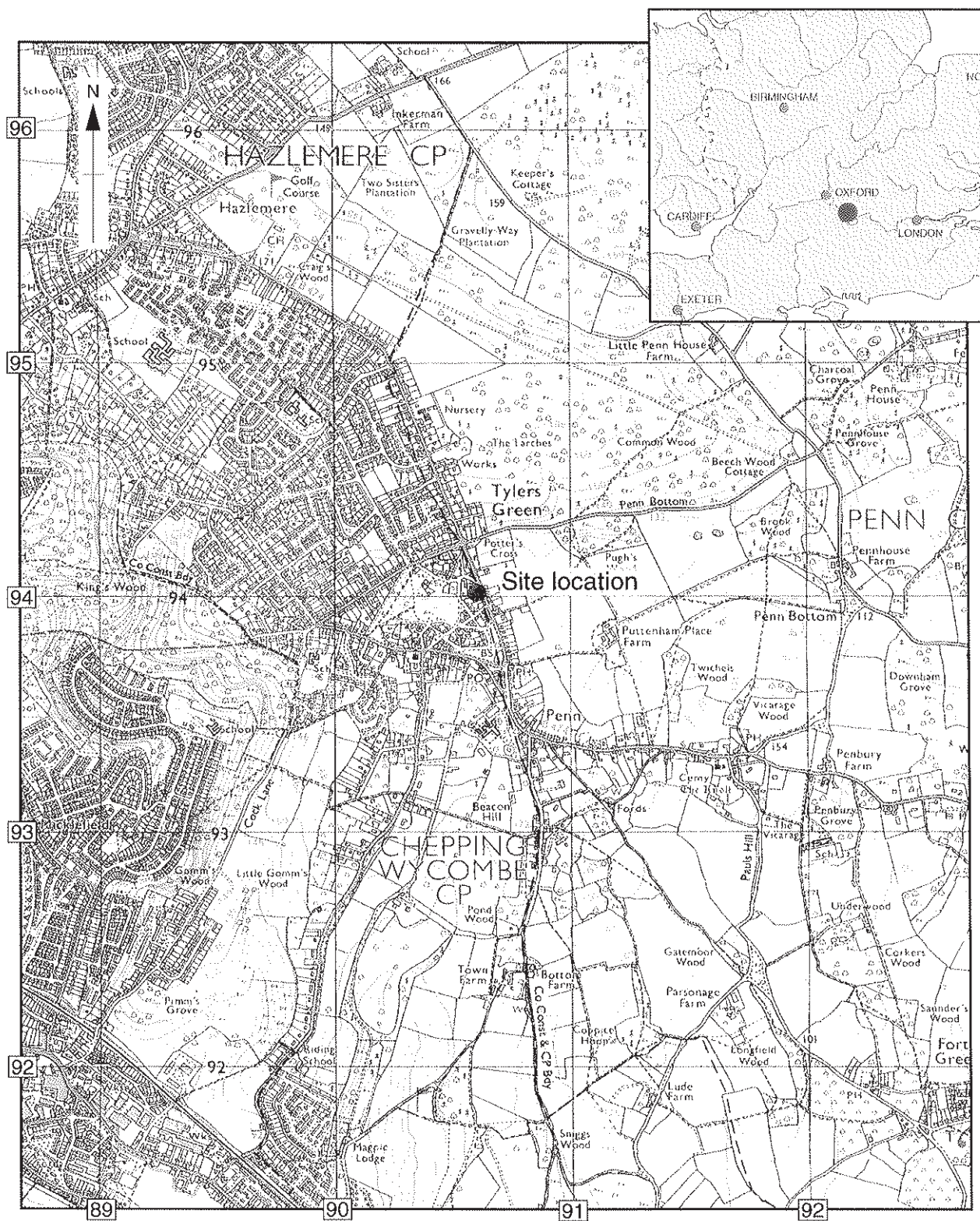
Type of evaluation: Three machine excavated trenches

Date and duration of project: 26th and 27th of January 2004, 2 days

Area of site: 0.2 hectares

Summary of results: The evaluation produced evidence for ridge and furrow agriculture and 19th century domestic occupation

Location of archive: The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Buckinghamshire County Museums Service in due course



Scale 1:25,000

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Figure 1: Site location

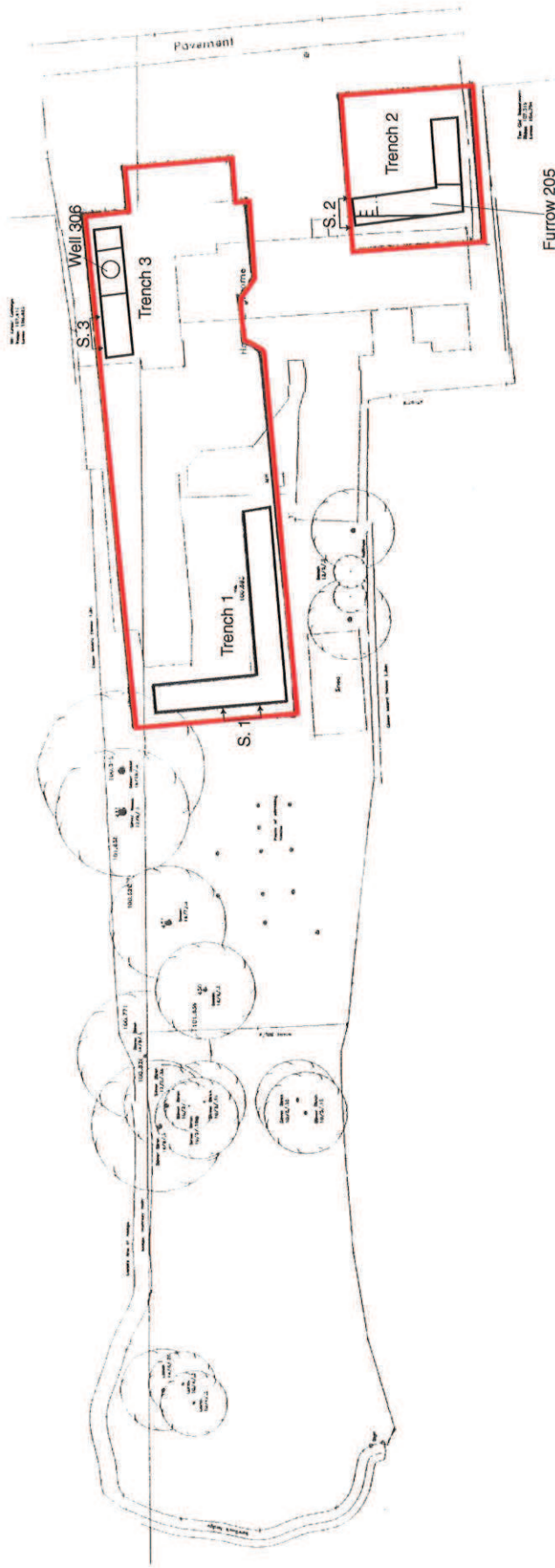


Figure 2: Trench location plan

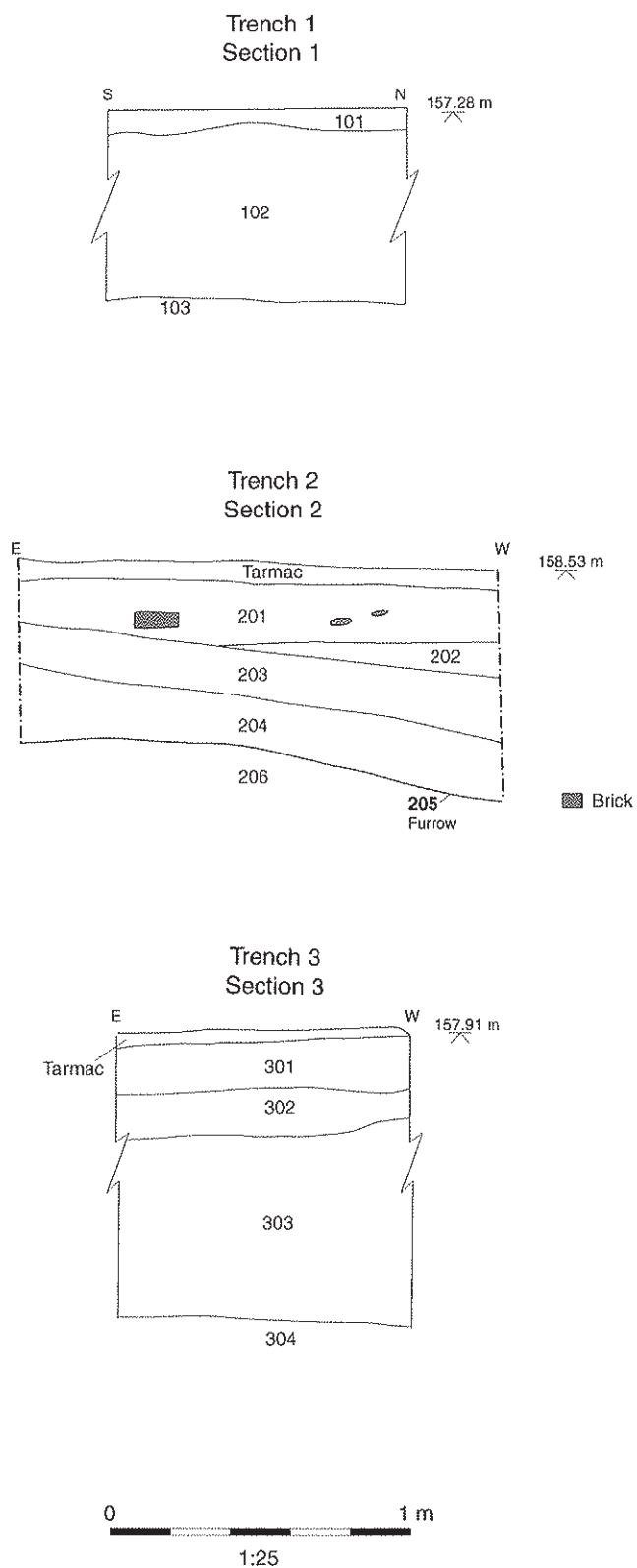


Figure 3: Sections



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