

Thames Water Utilities Limited

ABINGDON RESERVOIR PROPOSAL

ABINGDON, OXON - 1999

SU 438920 and 445948

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT -C29

Project 93.91

Sites 405 and 181

OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

October 1999

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(93.91 – Sites 405 and 181)

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SUMMARY

The Oxford Archaeological Unit undertook the evaluation of two sites (181 and 405) on the development area of the proposed Abingdon Reservoir on behalf of Thames Water Utilities Limited in August and September 1999. The evaluation revealed features of middle Bronze Age date in Site 405 and an enclosure and related features dating from the middle Iron Age in Site 181. The excavation, combined with finds analysis, enabled provisional conclusions to be drawn on the nature and basic phasing of the features present in Site 181, but interpretation of Site 405 is more difficult. The potential of the preserved environmental remains was established.

Table 1: Summary of the occupation periods/date ranges by site

SITE No.	PERIOD	DATE RANGE
405	MBA	1400-1000 BC
181	MIA	3rd-1st century BC

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

- 1.1.1 The Oxford Archaeological Unit (OAU) was commissioned to participate in a series of archaeological field evaluations, on behalf of Thames Water Utilities Limited (TWUL), in an area south west of Abingdon, proposed by TWUL for the site of a dual purpose reservoir and its ancillary works and structures. The archaeological programme was under the overall management of Wessex Archaeology. The sites which are the subject of the present report (Sites 405 and 181) were examined in August and September 1999 respectively (Fig. 1).
- 1.1.2 The total area under investigation lies within the flat lowland clay vale (Gault and Kimmeridge Clays), between the chalk downlands of the Berkshire Downs to the south and the Corallian Ridge to the north. Variable drift deposits, predominantly sandy clays with variable gravel content, overlie the solid geology.
- 1.1.3 In accordance with Planning Policy Guidance 16 (PPG 16), the area was subject to a desk-top study and a field walking survey undertaken in 1992 by the OAU to assess the impact of the proposed reservoir (South West Oxon Reservoir Development Study OAU Nov. 1992 & March 1993). These studies, when allied with recent aerial and geophysical surveys, allowed a number of specific areas of archaeological potential to be identified. In consultation with the County Archaeological Officer (CAO), a programme of targeted trial trenching was agreed for each area of archaeological potential.

1.2 Aims

- 1.2.1 The overall aim of the trial trenching was to establish the presence/absence, extent, condition, quality and date of any archaeological remains to enable an

assessment of their worth in a local, regional or national context to be made as appropriate.

2. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

2.1 General

- 2.1.1 The OAU investigated two separate areas of interest. In one area (Site 181, centred at c SU 445948) the positioning of the six trenches was determined by the location of cropmark features plotted from aerial photographs, supplemented by the results of a geophysical survey. In the other area (Site 405, centred c SU 438920) the existence of an archaeological site was less clear. One of the seven trenches was located to test a possible geophysical anomaly. The other trenches aimed to provide a general spread across the potential area of Bronze Age activity identified by the fieldwalking survey in 1993.
- 2.1.2 The overall methodology of the trial trenching conformed to the base specification as determined by *Machine Trial Trenching – Base Specification* (TWUL June 1997).
- 2.1.3 The fieldwork took place predominantly in good weather conditions between August 9th-13th (Site 405) and September 6th-13th (Site 181) 1999.

2.2 Survey

- 2.2.1 In all cases a TWUL surveyor located the trenches. All trenches were excavated in their originally identified locations.

2.3 Excavation

- 2.3.1 The trenches were machine excavated using a JCB equipped with a 1.5 m wide toothless bucket to a general depth of the highest archaeological horizon, which invariably equated with the level of the natural subsoil. All revealed features of possible archaeological significance were sample excavated by hand, with a view to recovering dating evidence and organic material, and understanding their stratigraphy. Bulk samples were taken of sufficient deposits to assess environmental potential of the sites after consultation between the OAU Project Manager (Paul Booth), the Managing Archaeological Consultant (MAC; Carrie Hearne) and the County Archaeological Officer's representative (Hugh Coddington).

2.4 Recording

- 2.4.1 All archaeological recording (written, drawn and photographic) was carried out on proforma sheets in accordance with the standard recording procedures of Wessex Archaeology. The evaluation was allocated blocks of unique record numbers, which are fully tabulated in Appendix 1.

2.5 Report Format

- 2.5.1 The report considers each of the two sites in turn, presented in chronological order both of excavation and of principal periods represented, with a description of the general results and a trench by trench contextual description,

followed by a site specific discussion and context and finds inventories. The finds from the sites are then considered together in specialist reports. A bibliography, appendices and illustrations follow; the latter comprising a site location plan, a trench location plan for each site, individual trench plans (where archaeological features were present), and a representative sample of feature sections for each site.

3. RESULTS: Site 405 (Plot 1302) (Fig. 2)

3.1 Summary

The trenches confirmed the presence of an L-shaped ditch identified by geophysical survey. This appeared to be of middle Bronze Age date. Only two other features contained similar dating evidence and the majority of features revealed (mostly linear) were undated. Many of these may have been of medieval or later origin, but some were possibly earlier.

3.2 Geology

- 3.2.1 The local soils of the area of the site was of Grove type, the natural subsoil consisting of grey or grey-brown clays. These were gravelly in the northern part of the site (Trenches 5-7) but elsewhere had a low gravel content.

3.3 General Observations

- 3.3.1 Trench 1 was aligned to intercept linear features identified in geophysical survey and provisionally interpreted as the corner of an enclosure. The remaining trenches were intended to provide a general spread across the potential area of Bronze Age activity identified by the fieldwalking survey in 1993.
- 3.3.2 The site had been ploughed shortly before the evaluation, having previously been in set-aside. There was no clear visual evidence of medieval ridge and furrow as earthworks. There were hints of the presence of east-west aligned furrows, mostly indicated by the existence of field drains.
- 3.3.3 All archaeological features were sealed by a dark grey-brown topsoil, typically 0.2-0.25 m deep. In Trenches 1, 2, 4 5 and 7 archaeological features were also generally sealed by a mid grey-brown former ploughsoil, averaging 0.1 m deep.

3.4 Trench 1 (Fig. 3)

- 3.4.1 60 m, L shaped. NW 443791 191750, corner 443805 191723, NE 443831 191737
- 3.4.2 Two small discrete features and nine linear features were located, six of the latter in the western and three in the eastern arm of the trench. Two further features related to field drains.
- 3.4.3 The southernmost linear feature was a shallow ditch located in both arms of the trench. In the western arm the feature (9112) was c 1.75 m wide and 0.22 m deep, while to the east the feature (9114) was of similar depth but only 1.1 m wide. Here it was cut by a north-south aligned field drain. Feature

9112/9114 may have been of relatively modern date. The context record refers to two fragments of glass being recovered from its fill (9113), though these were not amongst the site finds returned to Oxford, so their date cannot be confirmed.

- 3.4.4 North of feature 9112 were two small converging gullies of irregular plan. The more southerly (9126) was up to c 0.5 m wide, but typically 0.4 m across and only 0.07 m deep. It was cut by the adjacent, slighter feature 9128, only 0.2 m wide and 0.04 m deep, just short of the north-east baulk of the trench, at which point 9126 decreased considerably in width. No dating evidence was recovered from either fill, but the features were thought to be of relatively modern date.
- 3.4.5 Further north were two small pits (9118 and 9120), respectively 0.45 and 0.55 m across and 0.2 and 0.26 m deep. Both were filled with light brown chalky clay and were cut by a shallow ditch (9116) c 0.7 m across and 0.14 m deep aligned roughly east-west and parallel to ditch 9112 to the south.
- 3.4.6 North of 9116 was a further ditch (9103) aligned c ENE-WSW, c 1.1 m across and 0.63 m deep with a steep sided, V-shaped profile. This feature appeared to coincide with a linear anomaly on the geophysical survey. The uppermost fill of the ditch (9106) contained single fragments of animal bone and fired clay; the former had been worked as a gouge.
- 3.4.7 Ditch 9103 was cut by a roughly NNE-WSW aligned ditch (9122) 1.1 m wide and 0.36 m deep with a rounded profile, in turn cut by a NW-SE aligned field drain trench.
- 3.4.8 In the eastern arm of the trench a broad ditch (9107) lay north of feature 9114 and, like 9103, appeared to coincide with the location of a linear anomaly in the geophysical survey. The alignment of 9107 was slightly unclear. While apparently aligned c NNW-SSE it appeared to curve to a slightly more north-south line. The feature was up to 1.9 m wide and at most 0.56 m deep. It had a stepped profile, suggesting that it was of more than one phase. The earliest fill (9108) was of pale greenish clay with flint and chalk inclusions, overlain by 9109, of similar character but slightly darker and with less flint. The most distinct fill (9110) was of dark grey silty clay, still with frequent chalk inclusions. Both this and fill 9109 were sealed by 9111, a thin lens of bluish-grey clay with very little chalk. Finds of animal bone and middle Bronze Age pottery were recovered from 9109, 9110 and 9111 and in addition struck flint came from 9110.
- 3.4.9 North-east of feature 9107 was an east-west aligned linear feature only identified at the very end of the evaluation. This was not excavated, but its alignment and the character of its fill (9130) suggested that this was the same feature as 9116 to the west, although it was considerably narrower.
- 3.4.10 With the exception of ditches 9107 and 9103 mentioned above, both of which apparently corresponded with the linear features identified in the geophysical survey, none of the fills of these features produced any finds.

3.5 Trench 2 (Fig. 4)

3.5.1 30 m N-S. N end 443837 191797. S end 443837 191767

3.5.2 Five east-west aligned linear features were examined. All were fairly shallow and one was associated with a field drain.

3.5.3 The southernmost feature was 9210. This was 0.12 m deep and c 0.9 m wide, though the northern edge was very poorly defined and the feature may have been up to c 1.2 m across.

3.5.4 Some 8 m north of 9210 was a narrow gully (9208) 0.25 m wide and 0.07 m deep with a rounded profile. Its fill (9209) produced a single fragment of middle Bronze Age pottery. Immediately north of 9208 was a wide shallow feature (9206) very similar in character to 9210, c 1.3 m wide and 0.1 m deep. Further north again lay 9212, with exactly similar dimensions to 9206 and cut by a field drain.

3.5.5 Towards the northern end of the trench feature 9203 was more clearly defined, being up to 0.86 m wide and 0.26 m deep with a rounded profile. The principal fill of this feature (9205) produced a single sherd of middle Bronze Age pottery.

3.6 Trench 3 (not illustrated)

3.6.1 30 m E-W. W end 443766 191805. E end 443796 191805

3.6.2 This trench contained no archaeological features, nor was any earlier ploughsoil identified below the modern topsoil. No finds were recovered.

3.7 Trench 4 (Fig. 5)

3.7.1 30 m N-S. N end 443798 191887. S end 443798 191857

3.7.2 Two undated linear features were examined in this trench.

3.7.3 The more southerly feature was a curving ditch (9404), roughly NW-SE aligned, up to 1.12 m wide and some 0.4 m deep. This had a steep southern edge and a flattish base while the northern edge was less regular. The two fills (9403 below 9402) were very similar light brown silty clays. The upper was cut by an east-west aligned field drain.

3.7.4 At the northern end of the trench the west edge of an almost exactly north-south aligned feature was traced for a distance of c 10.3 m. This feature, sectioned at the north end of the trench, was in excess of 0.9 m in width and had a steeply sloping west side and a flattish base. The single fill (9405) was of similar character to the fills of 9404.

3.8 Trench 5 (Fig 6)

3.8.1 30 m N-S. N end 443838 191911. S end 443838 191857

3.8.2 Six east-west aligned linear features were seen, two of which were associated with field drains. A further possible linear feature was probably of natural origin. No finds were recovered from the trench.

3.8.3 The northernmost linear feature (9504) was a possible plough furrow 1.2 m wide and 0.2 m deep, the fill of which had a field drain inserted in it. Some 2.4 m south of 9504 a further possible linear feature was indicated by a faint and poorly-defined fill 9514, 0.5-0.6 m wide, which was not excavated.

3.8.4 In the central part of the trench were three adjacent linear features. The first of these was a ditch or gully (9507) 0.8 m wide and 0.12 m deep. Next was an irregularly profiled feature (9510) 2 m wide and up to 0.3 m deep, probably a plough furrow with a field drain inserted into its fill. A small irregular hollow at the base of this feature was filled with a reddish brown silty clay (9515), slightly darker than the main fill of the feature (9508). To the south was a further ditch or gully (9512) 0.9 m wide and up to 0.2 m deep, its dimensions and fill were very similar to those of feature 9507.

3.8.5 Further south was a very wide, shallow feature (9516) up to 3.3 m across and at most 0.25 m deep. This had a similar reddish brown silty clay fill (9513) to that of the probable plough furrow 9510, which was also like the fills of the adjacent linear features 9507 and 9512.

3.9 Trench 6 (Fig. 7)

3.9.1 30 m E-W. W end 443770 191939. E end 443800 191939

3.9.2 This trench contained a single linear feature. A number of irregular marks in the natural subsoil were thought to represent the fills of natural features. None of the features produced dating material.

3.9.3 The sole linear feature was a probable north-south aligned ditch (9603) situated at the east end of the trench. This was up to 1.3 m wide and 0.35 m deep, containing two fills (9604, 9605) and with a slightly irregular rounded profile, steeper on the east side.

3.9.4 The central part of the trench was occupied by a number of irregular patches of brown clay which contrasted with the more grey subsoil (9602). One of these patches (9607) was partly examined and found to fill an irregularly profiled 'cut' (9606) up to 1.36 m across with a maximum depth of 0.2 m. This was interpreted as a natural feature.

3.10 Trench 7 (Fig. 8)

3.10.1 30 m E-W. W end 443904 192036. E end 443934 192036

3.10.2 Two linear features were examined in this trench. A number of natural features were also present, one of which was partly excavated. No dating material was recovered.

- 3.10.3 Two parallel gullies aligned almost exactly east-west lay extended through much of the length of the trench. The more northerly (9703) was from 0.6-0.85 m wide and 0.26 m deep. Some 1.3 m to the south the second gully (9705) was slighter, only 0.1 m deep and ranging from 0.1-0.35 m in width. The fills were similar grey-brown clays, but that of 9703 (9704) contained considerably more gravel and flint than fill 9706 in 9705.
- 3.10.4 A number of irregular patches of mid brown clay (9707) were observed. One of these, lying between the two gullies, appeared to be more linear in character than usual and was examined on the basis that it might represent a southerly turning of gully 9703 at the point where its east end disappeared beneath the trench edge. There is little doubt, however, that this was part of a natural feature.

3.11 Discussion

- 3.11.1 The principal difficulty in interpreting the features revealed in the evaluation of Site 405 is the lack of dating evidence. Archaeological material derived almost entirely from one ditch feature (9107) in Trench 1, while a piece of worked bone and a fired clay fragment came from feature 9103 and single pottery sherds came from two other features in Trench 2. Other linear features on the site, even if of archaeological significance, cannot be assigned to any specific period with confidence.
- 3.11.2 Ditch 9107 seems almost certainly to have been of middle Bronze Age date. The remaining ceramic material from the site is consistent with this date and in turn with the date of the pottery collected in field walking of the site. A slight note of caution is suggested by the presence of a small sherd, apparently of Iron Age date, in fill 9110 of ditch 9107, but it is most likely that this piece was intrusive as there was no comparable material of any kind elsewhere on the site. The location of ditch 9107 in the eastern arm of Trench 1 is also consistent with its identification as one side of the L-shaped ditch identified in this area by geophysical survey. It is unclear whether or not this feature forms part of an enclosure. The location of the north-west side of the L-shaped feature suggests that this is equivalent to ditch 9103 examined in the western arm of Trench 1. This was the best-defined feature in this part of the trench in terms of its profile, and was also the only one here to contain archaeological material – albeit not datable.
- 3.11.3 It would appear, therefore, that ditches 9103 and 9107 represent the two sides of the L-shaped ditch feature, though there are considerable differences in their profiles and there is no indication in ditch 9103 of the recut evident in 9107. These differences might suggest that interpretation as part of a field system is more likely than that these were adjacent sides of an enclosure. There is increasing evidence for middle Bronze Age field systems in this part of the Upper Thames Valley and recent (unpublished) work at Appleford produced well-preserved cultural material in field system ditches, suggesting the presence of unenclosed settlement in proximity to these systems. Alternatively, however, the relative quantity and fresh condition of the pottery, particularly in ditch fill 9110, might suggest proximity to a settlement focus and indicate that

ditches 9103 and 9107 did indeed form part of an enclosure, though such a feature would be unusual within the region.

- 3.11.4 Of the remaining features in Trench 1 ditch 9122, which appeared to cut 9103, was comparable to the later (recut) phase of 9107 in terms of profile and fills, but was undated. Its alignment precluded it from being part of the L-shaped ditch feature. The other linear features in Trench 1 were shallow. 'Ditches' 9112 and 9114 may have been the same feature, while 9116 and the unexcavated fill 9130 both lay c 5 m north of the line of 9112/9114 and may themselves have been part of a single feature running parallel to 9112/9114. Both these linear features could perhaps represent the bases of medieval plough furrows. Neither of the two field drains (often a clue to the orientation of ridge and furrow) located in this trench was on this roughly east-west alignment, but this need not have been conclusive as some east-west aligned features located in trenches further north were associated with field drains and could quite well represent the bases of medieval furrows.
- 3.11.5 A fairly close east-west alignment for linear features was also observed in Trenches 2, 5 and 7. Trench 3 contained no linear features, while in Trench 4 a curvilinear ditch was seen to be cut by an east-west aligned field drain. The other linear feature in this trench was north-south aligned, and the alignment would suggest that this was the same as the single linear feature observed in Trench 6, though the profiles of the two features (9406 and 9603 respectively) were not very similar.
- 3.11.6 Of these east-west linear features, only 9203 in Trench 2 and 9703 in Trench 7 have a depth:width ratio which suggests that they were dug as ditches or gullies. The remaining east-west features are mostly very shallow, having either a profile or a direct association with a field drain which would support the suggestion that they were plough furrows. This interpretation could be followed for 9210, 9206 and 9212 in Trench 2 and 9504, 9510 and 9516 in Trench 2, though the spacing of all these features is a little irregular.
- 3.11.7 In the case of the linear features not certainly or potentially considered as related to medieval or later agriculture interpretation is particularly difficult. Two east-west aligned features, a narrow slot and a small ditch or gully (9208 and 9203) in Trench 2 both contained single sherds of middle Bronze Age pottery, but in neither case is a Bronze Age date certain. The complete consistency of alignment with certain and probable furrows and field drains, at least in this trench, might suggest that even these features were of comparable date.

Context Inventory: Site 405

TRENCH	CONTEXT	TYPE	WIDTH (M)	DEPTH (M)	FINDS	COMMENT
1	9100	Topsoil	-	0.2	-	
	9101	Ploughsoil	-	0.1-0.2	-	
	9102	Natural subsoil				
	9103	Ditch	1.1	0.63		Roughly NE-SW aligned
	9104	Fill	0.2	0.18		Primary fill of ditch 9103
	9105	Fill	0.55	0.34		Fill of ditch 9103
	9106	Fill	1.1	0.45	Fired clay, Worked animal bone	Fill of ditch 9103
	9107	Ditch	1.9	0.56		Roughly NW-SE aligned
	9108	Fill	0.82	0.36		Fill of ditch 9107
	9109	Fill	1.0	0.48	Pottery, Animal bone	Fill of ditch 9107
	9110	Fill	0.96	0.4	Pottery, Flint, Animal bone	Fill of ditch 9107
	9111	Fill	1.55	0.14	Pottery, Animal bone	Upper fill of ditch 9107
	9112	Ditch	1.75	0.22		E-W aligned ?= 9114
	9113	Fill	1.75	0.22	?Post-medieval glass	Only fill of ditch 9112
	9114	Ditch	1.1	0.2		E-W aligned ?= 9112
	9115	Fill	1.1	0.2		Only fill of ditch 9114
	9116	Ditch	1.05	0.14		E-W aligned
	9117	Fill	1.05	0.14		Only fill of ditch 9116
	9118	Pit	0.45	0.2		Small pit
	9119	Fill	0.45	0.2		Only fill of pit 9118
	9120	Pit	0.55	0.26		Small pit
	9121	Fill	0.55	0.26		Only fill of pit 9020
	9122	Ditch	1.1	0.36		Roughly N-S aligned
	9123	Fill	0.8	0.36		Primary fill of ditch 9122
	9124	Fill	0.54	0.27		Fill of ditch 9122
	9125	Natural subsoil				
	9126	Gully	0.4	0.07		Roughly E-W aligned
	9127	Fill	0.4	0.07		Only fill of gully 9126
	9128	Gully	0.2	0.04		Roughly E-W aligned
	9129	Fill	0.2	0.04		Only fill of gully 9128
	9130	Fill	0.55 m	-		Fill of unexcavated E-W linear feature

TRENCH	CONTEXT	TYPE	WIDTH (M)	DEPTH (M)	FINDS	COMMENT
2	9200	Topsoil		0.2	-	
2	9201	Ploughsoil		0.15	-	
	9202	Natural subsoil				
	9203	Ditch	0.86	0.26		E-W aligned
	9204	Fill	0.3	0.25		Primary fill of ditch 9203
	9205	Fill	0.67	0.26	Pottery	Upper fill of ditch 9203
	9206	?Ditch	1.3	0.1		E-W aligned shallow linear feature
	9207	Fill	1.3	0.1		Only fill of ?ditch 9206
	9208	Gully	0.25	0.07		E-W aligned
	9209	Fill	0.25	0.07	Pottery	Only fill of 9208
	9210	?Ditch	0.9	0.12		E-W aligned shallow linear feature
	9211	Fill	0.9	0.12		Only fill of 9210
	9212	Plough furrow	1.3	0.1 m		Shallow E-W aligned feature containing land drain
	9213	Layer	2.4	-		Irregular spread, possibly recent disturbance
3	9300	Topsoil		0.22		
	9301	Natural subsoil		0.6		
	9302	Natural subsoil				
4	9400	Topsoil		0.2		
	9401	Ploughsoil		0.12		
	9402	Fill	1.12	0.25		Upper fill of ditch 9404
	9403	Fill	0.9	0.2		Lower fill of ditch 9404
	9404	Ditch	1.12	0.4		NW-SE aligned
	9405	Fill	0.76+	0.48		Only fill of ditch 9406
	9406	Ditch	0.76+	0.48		N-S aligned
	9407	Natural subsoil				
	9408	Natural subsoil				
5	9500	Topsoil		0.3		
	9501	Ploughsoil		0.1		
	9502	Natural subsoil				
	9503	Fill	1.2	0.2		Fill of possible furrow 9504
	9504	?Plough	1.2	0.2?		E-W aligned feature containing field

TRENCH	CONTEXT	TYPE	WIDTH (M)	DEPTH (M)	FINDS	COMMENT
		Furrow				drain
5	9505	Natural feature	0.3-0.35	-		
	9506	Fill	0.8	0.12		Fill of ?gully 9507
	9507	?Gully	0.8	0.12		E-W aligned
	9508	Fill	1.8	0.24		Fill of ?furrow 9510
	9509	Fill	0.4	0.3+		Fill of field drain trench in ?furrow 9510
	9510	?Furrow	2.0	0.3		E-W aligned
	9511	Fill	0.9	0.2		Only fill of ?ditch 9512
	9512	?Ditch	0.9	0.2		E-W aligned
	9513	Fill	3.3	0.2		Fill of ?furrow 9516
	9514	Fill	0.5-0.6	-		Fill of unexcavated possible linear feature
	9515	Fill	0.55	0.18		Fill of 5910
	9516	?Furrow	3.3	0.2		Roughly E-W aligned shallow linear
6	9600	Topsoil		0.2		
	9601	NOT USED				
	9602	Natural subsoil				
	9603	Ditch	1.3	0.35		N-S aligned
	9604	Fill	1.08	0.17		Lower fill of ditch 9603
	9605	Fill	1.3	0.2		Upper fill of ditch 9603
	9606	?Natural feature	1.36	0.2		
	9607	Fill	1.36	0.2		Fill of ?natural feature 9606
	9608	Natural subsoil				
	9609	Fill	1.3	-		Fill of unexcavated natural feature
	9610	Fill	2.1 x 0.9	-		Fill of unexcavated natural feature
	9611	Fill	0.85	-		Fill of unexcavated natural feature
	9612	Fill	0.45	-		Fill of unexcavated natural feature
	9613	Fill	0.64 x 0.3			Fill of unexcavated natural feature
7	9700	Topsoil	-	0.12-0.16		
	9701	Ploughsoil	-	0.15-0.19		
	9702	Natural subsoil				
	9703	Ditch/gully	0.6-0.85	0.26		Roughly E-W aligned
	9704	Fill	0.6-0.85	0.26		Only fill of ditch/gully 9703

TRENCH	CONTEXT	TYPE	WIDTH (M)	DEPTH (M)	FINDS	COMMENT
	9705	Gully	0.1-0.35	0.1		E-W aligned
7	9706	Fill	0.1-0.35	0.1 m		Only fill of gully 9705
	9707	Natural subsoil				

Finds Inventory: Site 405

TRENCH	CONTEXT	POTTERY BA except ()		ANIMAL BONE	FLINT	OTHER FINDS
		No. sherds	Wt (g)	No. fragments		
1	9106					Worked animal bone (1 frag) Fired clay (1 frag)
	9109	3	11	18		
	9110	55 (1 ?MIA)	523 (3)	14	2 tools 2 struck lumps	Fired clay (1 frag)
	9111	9	224	3		
	9113					?Post-medieval glass (2 frags)
2	9205	1	1			
	9209	1	8			
TOTAL		70	770	35	4	5

4. RESULTS: Site 181 (Plot 1102) (Fig. 9)

4.1 Summary

The trenches, designed to test features located both from the air and in geophysical survey, confirmed the presence of a rectangular enclosure surrounded by substantial ditches. A linear boundary continuing the line of the north side of the enclosure to east and west was not confidently identified, however. The enclosure was of middle Iron Age date and contained a number of internal features including a possible drainage gully defining the position of a round house. Finds consisted principally of pottery and animal bone.

4.2 Geology

- 4.2.1 The local soils of the area of the site was a Grove type 'island' of compact fine clay gravels, with a patchy upper layer of natural consisting of mid green-brown silty clay. This upper natural deposit was most evident in Trenches 1 and 4.

4.3 General Observations

- 4.3.1 The trenches were positioned to intercept features identified from aerial photographs and a subsequent geophysical survey. Together these suggested the presence of a rectilinear enclosure with some internal features, associated with a roughly east-west aligned linear boundary coincident with the north side of the enclosure.
- 4.3.2 The site is under arable cultivation and had been harvested shortly before the evaluation, having previously been in set-aside. There was no surface evidence of medieval ridge and furrow as earthworks, nor were there any clear indications of medieval ploughing within the trenches.
- 4.3.3 All archaeological features were sealed by a dark grey-brown topsoil, typically 0.2-0.25 m deep but occasionally deeper. In all the trenches a (usually) grey-brown 'subsoil', of sandy or silty clay also occurred. This was perhaps a former ploughsoil, but the relationship of archaeological features to it was variable. While this deposit seemed to overlie features in Trenches 4 and 6, it appeared to be cut by recuts of some of the larger linear features in Trenches 2, 3 and 5. The character of this soil, particularly in Trench 5, appeared to be alluvial, but it is not certain that the deposit was uniform in character across the site and that this interpretation can be universally applied. There were at least minor observable variations in colour and texture from trench to trench. The only point at which a possible 'alluvial' layer was present in addition to an (overlying) subsoil deposit was at the north end of Trench 6.

4.4 Trench 1 (*not illustrated*)

- 4.4.1 15 m N-S. N end 444458 194905, S end 444458 194890
- 4.4.2 This trench was intended to intercept the line of an east-west ditch identified on aerial photographs as linking with the north side of the rectilinear enclosure. No such feature was located. The presence of two field drains in the central part of the trench meant that a length of some 3.3 m could not be cleaned right down to the level of the natural subsoil, however, and it is just possible that the ditch lay at this point. No other archaeological features were noted and there were no finds from this trench
- 4.4.3 In the northern part of the trench two very shallow features (10104 and 10106) were examined. These were respectively 1.3 and 1.2 m wide and 0.1 and 0.15 m deep. Both were roughly linear, but neither was particularly well-defined and the character of their clean red-brown sandy clay fills suggested that they were natural features.

4.5 Trench 2 (Fig. 10)

- 4.5.1 20 m. c WNW-ESE. W end 444502 194883, E end 444522 194878
- 4.5.2 The trench was positioned to intercept the west side of the ditched enclosure as revealed by aerial photographs and geophysics. Three linear features were revealed, all of which appeared to cut the 'subsoil' layer 10201 as well as the underlying natural deposits.
- 4.5.3 Towards the centre of the trench was a large roughly north-south aligned ditch (10205). This was up to 4.6 m wide and 1.65 m deep, with fairly evenly sloping sides and a slightly rounded bottom. The sequence of fills (10206-10212) did not suggest that the ditch had been recut, but the two uppermost fills (10210 below 10211) might have been fills of a hollow formed after settlement of the lower fills. The fills were all of clay or silty clay with varying amounts of calcareous gravel. Most produced middle Iron Age pottery and other finds. The penultimate fill (10210) also contained a small late Iron Age sherd.
- 4.5.4 Some 4 m east of 10205 and approximately parallel to it was a narrower ditch (10215), some 0.8 m wide and 0.48 m deep with a rounded profile. This was cut on its eastern side by a similar but larger feature (10213) up to 1.3 m wide and 0.46 m deep, aligned almost NNW-SSE. Both features had single fills of grey silty clay, but fill 10216 of ditch 10215 had a much higher calcareous gravel content. This fill produced two middle Iron Age pottery sherds, but feature 10213 contained only animal bone.
- 4.5.5 The fills of all three ditches were overlain only by the modern ploughsoil 10200, some 0.25 m thick.

4.6 Trench 3 (Fig. 11)

- 4.6.1 63 m L shaped WNW-ESE and NNE-SSW. W end 444510 194850, corner 444544 194841, S end 444536 194812
- 4.6.2 This trench was located to intercept the line of the south side of the ditched enclosure and a number of features located on the geophysical survey within the south-west corner of the enclosure. Four linear features were located in the south-eastern arm of the trench and five (one probably natural) in the north-western arm.
- 4.6.3 The westernmost feature in the north-west arm of the trench was a substantial, roughly north-south aligned ditch (10304) some 2.8 m wide and 1.25 m deep with an approximately V-shaped profile. Its middle and upper fills produced middle Iron Age pottery.
- 4.6.4 Some 4.4 m further east and roughly parallel to 10304 lay an irregularly-profiled ditch (10308) some 1.3 m wide and 0.4 m deep. The profile of this feature was stepped on the west side and it is possible that two intercutting ditches were present, though if so, there was no distinction between their fills. The single recorded fill (10309) produced a substantial quantity of middle Iron Age pottery.

- 4.6.5 Close to 10308 an irregular NE-SW aligned feature (10314), up to 0.19 m deep, was thought to be of natural origin and produced no finds. Further east lay another roughly north-south aligned feature (10316), up to 1 m wide and 0.26 m deep with gently sloping sides. Its fill (10317) contained no datable material.
- 4.6.6 Some 3 m east of 10316 were two intercutting features which appeared to curve slightly across the width of the trench, though their overall alignment was roughly NNE-SSW. The earlier feature (10326) was poorly-defined (particularly on the east side) with a very shallow profile. It was up to 0.25 m deep and at most c 1.6 m wide with a very gravelly fill (10327) barely distinguishable from the natural subsoil. Fill 10327 was cut by a more clearly-defined and steeper-profiled gully (10318) 0.7 m across and 0.25 m deep. The fill of this feature (10319) contained animal bone and relatively large amounts of middle Iron Age pottery.
- 4.6.7 In the south-east arm of the trench all the linear features were aligned roughly east-west. The most northerly of these was 10312, an irregular feature up to 1.6 m wide at the western edge of the trench but only c 0.85 m wide to the east where it was recorded in section. Here the feature, although shallow (only 0.18 m) had relatively well-defined edges though the profile was only gently dished. Immediately to the south lay a further feature (10310) of almost identical depth and width (c 0.16 m and 0.85 m respectively), but in this case the width was consistent. Both features had a single fill, the only finds from which were two undiagnostic flint fragments from 10313 (feature 10312) and two burnt flint fragments from 10311 (feature 10310).
- 4.6.8 Some 3.5 m south of 10310 lay another east-west ditch (10328), c 1.1 m wide and up to c 0.67 m deep, steeply-sloping on the northern side and a more shallow to the south. This feature had a single main fill (10330) above a slight primary fill of gravelly clay (10329), but it appeared to have been cut through the clay ?alluvial subsoil layer 10302. The uppermost fill of the feature at this point (10331) had a higher gravel content than that of layer 10302, but otherwise the definition of the upper edges of the feature was not very clear.
- 4.6.9 A further 4 m south was a large, roughly V-shaped ditch (10320), 2.7 m across and 1.15 m deep where it cut the natural subsoil (10303) but, like ditch 10328, this feature possibly also cut the ?alluvial subsoil 10302. The three main fills of the ditch (10321, 10322 and 10323) were of grey or grey brown silty clays, only the uppermost of which (10323) had a significant gravel content. None of these fills produced finds except for a piece of burnt stone from 10321. The extent to which the next layer up (10324) was genuinely distinct from 10302 is uncertain, but in character and colour they were quite similar. The more distinct layer (10325) above 10324 could represent the fill of a hollow which formed after subsidence of layer 10324/10302 over the infilled ditch 10320. Layer 10324 contained a tiny fragment of middle Iron Age pottery and a horse tooth pierced for use as a pendant.

4.7 Trench 4 (Fig. 12)

4.7.1 35 m c NNE-SSW. N end 444576 194889, S end 444569 194855

4.7.2 This trench was located to examine the north side of the rectilinear enclosure. Four linear features were identified and sectioned.

4.7.3 The most northerly feature, 10411, was the likely enclosure ditch, running roughly east-west and here some 4.2 m wide and perhaps as much as 1.67 m deep, with a wide V-shaped profile. Five fills (10412-10416) lay within the ditch, with an upper fill (10417), up to 0.56 m deep, filling the hollow in the top of the feature perhaps some time after the other fills had accumulated. Only fill 10416 produced two small sherds of Iron Age pottery and the remaining fills contained no datable material.

4.7.4 South of 10411, and therefore within the enclosure, was a ditch on a NE-SW alignment. This feature (10410) was up to c 0.9 m wide and 0.21 m deep with a gently-rounded profile. It was cut to the south by an east-west aligned ditch (10408), 1 m wide and 0.3 m deep with a rounded profile. Neither feature produced significant finds.

4.7.5 Towards the southern end of the trench lay a roughly NW-SE aligned ditch (10406) up to 1.2 m wide – but narrowing slightly to the north-west – and 0.29 m deep. This had a main fill of greenish brown silty clay (10405), overlain by a lens up to 0.13 m thick of much darker material (10404). Both fills contained animal bone but no other finds.

4.8 Trench 5 (Fig. 13)

4.8.1 39 m c ESE-WNW. W end 444568 194835, E end 444608 194828

4.8.2 This trench was positioned to locate the eastern enclosure ditch and a linear feature identified within the enclosure in the geophysical survey. Four linear features were examined.

4.8.3 Towards the western end of the trench a NW-SE aligned ditch (10503) corresponded in location and alignment with the internal feature identified by the geophysical survey. This was up to 1.4 m wide and 0.53 m deep with a rounded profile. The single fill of the feature (10504) produced relatively substantial quantities of middle Iron Age pottery and animal bone.

4.8.4 The other three linear features in the trench were all quite substantial, north-south aligned and approximately V-shaped in profile. The first (10516) was 2.05 m wide and 0.93 m deep with two principal fills (10518 and 10517). The infilled feature appeared to have been overlain by a subsoil layer (10502) before being redefined or recut as feature 10512, a wider, shallower 'cut' some 2.8 m wide and 0.45 m deep. The only datable material from these features were single Iron Age sherds from the upper fill of the main cut (10517) and the lowest fill of the upper 'cut' (10515). The former fill also contained animal bone.

4.8.5 Ditch 10505 also had a slightly ambiguous relationship with the subsoil layer 10502. It appears, however, to have been sealed by this deposit. The feature was thus c 1.7 m wide and 0.85 m deep, with three fills (10508-10506). A

broad, shallow 'recut' (10509) with two fills (10519 and 10510) either redefined the feature or (less likely) filled a hollow formed by settlement of the fills of 10505 and the overlying layer 10502. The only datable material was a single Iron Age sherd from 10510.

- 4.8.6 Some 2.8 m east of ditch 10505 lay the main enclosure ditch (10520). This was a substantial feature, at least 2.4 m wide and 1.05 m deep and up to 2.85 m wide and 1.25 m deep if it was cut through layer 10502. Again the relationship between the ditch and this layer was ambiguous. The uppermost recorded fill (10524) could have been in a recut or hollow above the main ditch fill sequence, which consisted of fills 10523-10521. The sole datable find recorded from this sequence was a small late Iron Age sherd from 10522.

4.9 Trench 6 (Fig. 14)

- 4.9.1 15 m N-S. N end 444637 194876, S end 444637 194861

- 4.9.2 This trench was positioned to intersect the eastward continuation of the roughly east-west aligned ditch contiguous with the north side of the rectangular enclosure. Two minor linear features were identified and examined.

- 4.9.3 At the north end of the trench a small ditch or gully (10607) was aligned roughly NW-SE. This was only 0.6 m wide but was 0.5 m deep with steeply-sloping sides and a rounded base. The two fills (10606 and 10605) contained no finds and were overlain by a widespread layer of sandy silt (10604), possibly of alluvial character, which was sealed by both subsoil and the modern topsoil (10602 and 10601).

- 4.9.4 At the extreme southern end of the trench was a further feature (10609), approximately east-west aligned, 0.9 m wide and 0.32 m deep, with a rather irregular profile. The single fill of this feature (10608) contained animal bone and middle Iron Age pottery.

4.10 Discussion

- 4.10.1 The presence of the principal linear features identified by the geophysical survey was amply demonstrated. As in Site 405, the plotting of such features by the geophysical survey was very precise, though features additional to those identified by geophysics were also located, some of which were substantial. The rectilinear enclosure was thus identified easily, and shown to be surrounded by a substantial ditch.

- 4.10.2 The eastward and westward continuations of the line of the north side of the enclosure, indicated on aerial photographs as further substantial features, were not seen with any certainty. In Trench 1 this is possibly because the relevant part of the trench was largely obscured by the presence of later field drains, but the same was not true of Trench 6 to the east, where the only roughly east-west aligned feature was ditch 10609 at the southern end of the trench, which was only 0.32 m deep. It may be, therefore, that there is a discrepancy with the

plotting of the aerial photographs and that the line of the major linear feature fell just beyond the extents of Trenches 1 and 6.

- 4.10.3 All the identified features were linear and in all cases lay within the confines of the rectilinear enclosure. No discrete features were recorded at all. The principal linear features formed the four sides of the enclosure, while the majority of the remaining features were aligned approximately on the axis of the enclosure, though a few features were located on quite different alignments. Part of a substantial possible sub-enclosure in the south-west corner of the main enclosure, identified by geophysics, was located in Trench 3. East of this the geophysical survey indicated the presence of a possible sub-circular ditch or gully, and appropriate features were again revealed in Trench 3, the west side being feature 10308 and the east side feature 10326 recut as feature 10318. The irregular profile of 10308 suggested that it too may have been of more than one phase. These features lay some 10 m apart and both were distinguished from other features in the trench by containing relatively large quantities of finds. They seem likely to represent a drainage gully or gullies around a circular building, though no certain structural features were identified. Other features lying between 10308 and 10326/10318 may perhaps have been internal within a building, or have been of a slightly different phase.
- 4.10.4 The finds were relatively limited in quantity, but middle Iron Age pottery occurred fairly consistently. The chronology of the site is not totally straightforward, however, since two late Iron Age sherds were also present and there was also a question of the different relationships observed between some of the features and the widespread subsoil/alluvium layer. If it is accepted that this deposit represents broadly the same horizon across the site, whatever the significance of the minor differences observed from trench to trench, the fact that some features appeared to cut it while others were sealed beneath it indicates more than one phase of activity on the site.
- 4.10.5 It is notable that the features apparently cutting the 'subsoil' layer consistently included the main enclosure ditch, and that it was from this feature that the only two late Iron Age sherds from the site were recovered. The disposition of those internal features which were revealed, and the alignment of most of them, suggest, however, that it is unlikely that an unenclosed settlement was later incorporated within an enclosure. Broadly, therefore, it is suggested that an enclosed settlement of middle Iron Age date perhaps suffered a phase of inundation, after which an attempt was made to redefine the enclosure boundary and a limited number of other features within it, but that this attempt was short-lived and ultimately unsuccessful. The reason for the final abandonment of the settlement was not necessarily environmental, however.
- 4.10.6 The relative scarcity of finds might suggest that the overall life of the settlement was relatively short. This view would also be supported by the lack of any evidence for recutting of the main enclosure ditch before the putative flooding episode, and by the fact that such enclosures are more common later than earlier in the Iron Age. It may be tentatively suggested that the main phase of occupation on the site belongs to the later part of the middle Iron Age (perhaps later 2nd-1st century BC) and that the (possibly short-lived) reoccupation phase occurred at about the time of the transition (in ceramic terms) from the middle to the late Iron Age, perhaps in the early part of the 1st century AD, since

current evidence does not indicate an earlier date for the introduction of 'Belgic type' pottery into the region.

Context Inventory: Site 181

TRENCH	CONTEXT	TYPE	WIDTH (M)	DEPTH (M)	FINDS	COMMENT
1	10101	Layer	-	0.4	-	Ploughsoil
	10102	Layer		0.3		Subsoil
	10103	Layer				Natural
	10104	Cut	1.3	0.1		Probable natural feature
	10105	Fill	1.3	0.1		Fill of feature 10104
	10106	Cut	1.2	0.15		Probable natural feature
	10107	Fill	1.2	0.15		Fill of feature 10106
2	10200	Layer		0.23		Ploughsoil
	10201	Layer		0.25		Subsoil
	10202	Layer		Unknown		Natural
	10203	Layer		Unknown		Natural
	10204	Layer		Unknown		Natural
	10205	Cut	4.6	1.65		N-S ditch
	10206	Fill	0.7	0.08	Pottery	Primary fill of ditch 10205
	10207	Fill	1.3	0.34	Pottery	Secondary fill of ditch 10205
	10208	Fill	3.2	0.36		Fill of ditch 10205
	10209	Fill	4	0.32	Pottery	Fill of ditch 10205
	10210	Fill	4.44	0.5	Pot/ bone	Fill of ditch 10205
	10211	Fill	3.3	0.1		Fill of ditch 10205
	10212	Fill	2.6	0.5	Pot/ bone	Fill of ditch 10205
	10213	Cut	1.27	0.46		NW-SE ditch
	10214	Fill	1.27	0.46		Fill of ditch 10213
	10215	Cut	0.84	0.48		N-S ditch
	10216	Fill	0.84	0.48	Pottery	Fill of ditch 10215
3	10301	Layer		0.25		Ploughsoil
	10302	Layer		0.2		Subsoil
	10303	Layer		Unknown		Natural
	10304	Cut	2.8	1.25		
	10305	Fill	2.8	0.45	Pot, bone, burnt stone	
	10306	Fill	2.6	0.3	Pottery	
	10307	Fill	1.7	0.4		
	10308	Cut	1.3	0.4	Pot/bone	
	10309	Fill	1.3	0.4	Pot/bone	
3	10310	Cut	0.85	0.16		
	10311	Fill	0.85	0.16	Burnt flint (2)	
	10312	Cut	0.85-1.6	0.18		
	10313	Fill		0.18	Flint (2)	
	10314	Cut	1.6	0.19		NE-SW linear
	10315	Fill	1.6	0.19		
	10316	Cut	1	0.26		N-S ditch
	10317	Fill	1	0.26		
	10318	Cut	0.7	0.25		

TRENCH	CONTEXT	TYPE	WIDTH (M)	DEPTH (M)	FINDS	COMMENT
	10319	Fill	0.7	0.25	Pot, bone, worn sandstone pebble	
	10320	Cut	2.7	1.39		E-W ditch
	10321	Fill	0.92	0.3	Burnt stone	
	10322	Fill	1.94	0.29		
	10323	Fill	2.66	0.3		
	10324	Fill	2.8	0.38	Pottery, pierced bone pendant	
	10325	Fill	2.68	0.15		
	10326	Cut	1.6	0.25		N-S linear
	10327	Fill	1.6	0.25		
	10328	Cut	1	0.67		E-W ditch
	10329	Fill	0.48	0.14		
	10330	Fill	0.9	0.4	Bone	
	10331	Fill	1	0.2		
4	10400	Layer		0.35		Ploughsoil
	10401	Layer		0.14		Subsoil
	10402	Layer		Unknown		Natural
	10403	Layer		Unknown		Natural
	10404	Fill	1.2	0.13	Bone	
	10405	Fill	1.2	0.55	Bone	
	10406	Cut	1.2	0.55		SE-NW ditch
	10407	Fill	1	0.3		
	10408	Cut	1	0.3		
	10409	Fill	0.9	0.14	Bone	
	10410	Cut	0.9	0.21		NE-SW linear?
	10411	Cut	4.22	1.67		E-W ditch
	10412	Fill	0.37	0.08		Primary fill
	10413	Fill	1.48	0.47		Secondary fill
	10414	Fill	1.48	0.26	Bone	
	10415	Fill	0.74	0.48		
	10416	Fill	1.73	0.42	Pottery	
	10417	Fill	4.22	0.56	Bone	
	10418					Not used
	10419	Fill	0.3	0.19		Primary fill
5	10500	Layer		0.3		Ploughsoil
	10501	Layer		Unknown		Natural
	10502	Layer		0.2		Subsoil
	10503	Cut	1.4	0.53		E-W ditch
	10504	Fill	1.4	0.5	Pot, bone	
	10505	Cut	1.7	0.85		N-S ditch
	10506	Fill		0.3		
	10507	Fill		0.19		
5	10508	Fill		0.15		
	10509	Cut		0.24		Ditch re-cut
	10510	Fill		0.24	Pot, bone	
	10511	Layer		Unknown		Natural
	10512	Cut	2.8	0.45		Ditch re-cut
	10513	Fill	1.6	0.17		
	10514	Fill	2.45	0.16		
	10515	Fill	2.8	0.2	Pottery	Primary fill

TRENCH	CONTEXT	TYPE	WIDTH (M)	DEPTH (M)	FINDS	COMMENT
	10516	Cut	2.05	0.93		N-S ditch
	10517	Fill	2.05	0.39	Pot, bone	Secondary fill
	10518	Fill	1.4	0.39		Primary fill
	10519	Fill		0.1		
	10520	Cut	2.4	1		N-S ditch
	10521	Fill	2.4	0.18		
	10522	Fill		0.6	Pot, bone	
	10523	Fill		0.2	Bone	
	10524	Fill		0.66		
6	10601	Layer		0.3		Ploughsoil
	10602	Layer		0.25		Subsoil
	10603	Layer		Unknown		Natural
	10604	Layer		0.2		Alluvium?
	10605	Fill	0.4	0.2		Secondary fill
	10606	Fill		0.15		Primary fill
	10607	Cut	0.6	0.5		E-W ditch
	10608	Fill		0.32	Pot, bone	
	10609	Cut	0.9	0.32		E-W ditch

Finds Inventory: Site 181

TRENCH	CONTEXT	POTTERY MIA except ()		ANIMAL BONE	FLINT	OTHER FINDS
		No. sherds	Wt (g)	No. fragments		
2	10206	1	76			
	10207	3	36			
	10209	3	42			
	10210	14 (1 LIA)	79 (2)	6		
	10212	21	194	17		
	10216	2	8			
3	10305	12	475	4		Burnt stone (1)
	10306	11	190			
	10309	11	263	66		
	10311				2 frags burnt	
	10313				Flake, core on flake	
	10319	55	934	11		Worn sandstone pebble
	10321					Burnt stone (1)
	10324	1	1			Pierced horse tooth pendant
	10330			33		
4	10404			3		
	10405			25		
	10409			1		
	10414			3		
	10416	2	5			
	10417			9		
5	10504	22	344	42		
	10510	1	2	2		
	10515	1	37			
	10517	1	5	16		
	10522	(1LIA)	(4)	3		
	10523			3		
6	10608	5	36	8		
	TOTAL	168	2733	252	4	4

5 THE FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

5.1 Bronze Age pottery and fired clay from Site 405 by Alistair Barclay

5.1.1 Bronze Age pottery

5.1.1.1 A total of 70 sherds (770g) of middle Bronze Age Deverel-Rimbury pottery was recovered during the assessment. The small assemblage includes sherds from both Bucket Urns and Globular Urns. The pottery is manufactured from a range of coarse and fine calcined flint-tempered fabrics. A single small sherd (context 9110) tempered with greensand may not be contemporaneous with the rest of the assemblage and could be of Iron Age date. Typically the Bucket Urn sherds were in coarser flint-tempered fabrics and the Globular Urn sherds were in much finer fabrics. Nearly all the pottery was plain with the exception of a single combed sherd. The sherds were in variable condition, but those from context 9111, in particular, were large and unabraded. The material from context 5110, the majority of the assemblage, also contained some large sherds but many smaller fragments were present as well, and the average sherd weight of less than 9.5 g is unremarkable. The pottery is quantified in the table below (see Table 2).

5.1.1.2 Of the five contexts that contained pottery only 9110 produced a significant group of featured material. This context contained sherds from at least four vessels, which included the rims and base sherds from both Bucket and Globular Urns as well as a body sherd with combed decoration and another with an applied boss. Burnt residues on the base from a Globular Urn indicate probable use as a cooking pot. Featured sherds from Bucket Urns were also recovered from contexts 9111 and 9209.

5.1.1.3 This is a small but none the less important group of pottery as Deverel-Rimbury pottery is still relatively rare in the Upper Thames Valley. The recovery of this material from a domestic site increases its importance as relatively little is known of the contemporaneous settlement record.

5.1.2 Fired clay

5.1.2.1 In addition, small pieces of amorphous fired clay were recovered from contexts 9106 and 9110. These could derive from objects such as loomweights.

Table 2: Bronze Age pottery from Site 405 (number of sherds, weight) by context

Context	No, wt (g)
9109	3, 11g
9110	56, 526g*
9111	9, 224g
9205	1, 1g
9209	1, 8g
Total	70, 770g

*Includes one possible Iron Age sherd (3 g)

5.2 Iron Age pottery from Site 181 by Kayt Brown and Paul Booth

5.2.1 Introduction

5.2.1.1 A total of 168 sherds of pottery was recovered from Site 181, weighing 2733 g, and with 12 vessels represented by rim count. The majority of the assemblage can be dated to the middle Iron Age, with only two sherds from the late Iron Age/early Roman period, here dated to the 1st century AD.

5.2.1.2 A rapid scan of the material was undertaken within the OAU framework for recording later prehistoric and Roman pottery from the region. The material from each context was assigned to broad fabric or ware groups, with quantification of each group by sherd count and weight. Rim sherds were also counted to enable an estimate of vessel numbers. The assemblage was in a relatively good condition, with an average sherd weight of 16 g (although for the later material this drops to 3 g). Surface preservation was also good, with the survival of burnishing and sooting on both external and internal surfaces on a number of sherds.

5.2.2 Middle Iron Age

5.2.2.1 The middle Iron Age sherds were predominately sand tempered. A breakdown of the fabric groups, based on principal inclusions, was as follows:

A – sand tempered fabrics: 148 sherds, 2366 g.

AB – sand and glauconite tempered fabrics: 6 sherds, 79 g.

F – flint tempered fabrics: 2 sherds, 18 g.

L – limestone tempered fabrics: 2 sherds, 78 g.

S – shell tempered fabrics: 5 sherds 57 g.

V – organic tempered fabrics: 3 sherds, 129 g.

5.2.2.2 Some 12 vessels were represented by rim count, although of these, less than half were diagnostic to type (though not necessarily date). A single barrel jar and three globular jar/bowls were identified, with a further five rims of unspecified (presumably) jar types. Three rims were too small to be assigned even to a general vessel class. The majority (nine) of the rims were in the sandy (A) fabrics, with single rims in AB, F and S fabrics. The flint-tempered rim sherd was from a globular jar/bowl. One globular jar in a sand tempered fabric with occasional glauconite was burnished on the exterior surface and decorated with two rows of short vertical impressions, with an incised zigzag, the upper triangles of which were infilled with vertical incised lines (10504). External burnishing occurred on a further 13 sherds, all sandy with the exception of three sherds tempered with organic material. Evidence of use in the form of sooting on the exterior and carbonised residues on the interior occurred on 16 sherds.

5.2.2.3 The character of both the fabrics and forms is consistent with a middle Iron Age date for this assemblage, and similar material of this date was also recovered from site 400 in 1998. The predominance of sand as a tempering agent indicates that this material may belong to the later middle Iron Age, when sand tempering replaces the use of other tempering agents in fabrics (Lambrick 1984, 174). In particular, the almost total absence of shell-

tempered sherds is notable. The decorated sherds from (10504) are not directly paralleled in Harding (1972) but are broadly similar to other decorated globular bowls within the region, such as at Cassington and Frilford (Harding 1972, pls. 67 & 68, p. 166).

5.2.3 *Late Iron Age/early Roman Pottery*

- 5.2.3.1 Only two small sherds of this date (6g) were recovered from Site 181. Both sherds were fragments of footring bases, one in a fine sandy fabric (E20) and the other in a grog-tempered fabric (E80). Both these ware groups belong to the 'Belgic type' class of pottery. This material is generally considered to date from the early to mid-late 1st century AD within this region. While it could therefore date to either side of the Roman conquest a complete lack of other Romanised material suggests that these pieces should be seen as being of pre-Conquest date.

5.3 **The flintwork** by Hugo Lamdin-Whymark

- 5.3.1 A total of six pieces of struck flint and two burnt unworked pieces (8 g) were recovered from the evaluation of the two sites. The raw material is locally available gravel flint. Site 405 produced two retouched tools (an end and side scraper and a piercer) and two struck lumps, all from ditch fill 9110 in Trench 1. The end and side scraper was made on a thick hard-hammer flake and exhibited crude retouch. The edge of this tool had become rounded through use, probably scraping animal hides (Tringham *et al.* 1974 187-189). The piercer was retouched on a spur protruding from a crude multi-platform flake core. Technologically these pieces would appear to be of Bronze Age date. The flint from Site 181, two pieces from fill 10313 of ditch 10312 and two burnt unstruck fragments from fill 10311 of the adjacent feature 10310 in Trench 3, can only be broadly dated to the Neolithic or Bronze Age.

Table 3: *The flint assemblage*

CATEGORY TYPE	Context		
	9110	10311	10313
	Site 405	Site 181	Site 181
Flake			1
Tested nodule/bashed lump	2		
Core on a flake			1
End and side scraper	1		
Piercer	1		
Burnt unworked		2	
Total	4	2	2

5.4 Other finds by Paul Booth

- 5.4.1 Finds other than ceramic material and flint were very rare. A bone tool, probably a gouge, was recovered from context 9106 in Site 405 and is discussed in the animal bone report below. Two fragments of (probably) post-medieval glass were noted from context 9113 in Site 405, but were not examined at OAU. Site 181 produced two pieces of burnt limestone, one each from contexts 10305 and 10321, and a rounded sandstone pebble with some wear from context 10319. The latter may have been used for grinding or pounding. A horse tooth, pierced for use, presumably as a pendant, came from ditch fill 10324.

5.5 Animal bone by Bethan Charles

5.5.1 Methodology

- 5.5.1.1 The assemblage was recorded through the use of a simple recording sheet. This enabled a quick calculation of totals to be made along with a rough estimation of the number of individuals in each context and in total. All fragments of bone were counted including elements from the vertebral centrum, ribs and long bone shafts.
- 5.5.1.2 With regard to the Caprine sub-family it was attempted to separate the sheep and goat bones, whose similarity often pose difficulties in identification. However, since there was no positive identification of goat in the collection all caprine bones are listed as sheep.
- 5.5.1.3 The mandibles were aged using a combination of Grants (1982) tooth wear stage and prediction tables as well as Payne (1973) and Halstead's (1985) age ranges, for sheep and cattle respectively, as defined by Hambleton (1999). Ageing through the study of epiphyseal fusion was not attempted at Site 181 due to the small number of bones suitable.

Site 405

5.5.2 Introduction

- 5.5.2.1 A total of 36 fragments of bone were retrieved by hand from the site, nearly all of which were from contexts 9109 and 9111. A number of these bones were re-assembled reducing the final number to 18. The bones were in reasonable condition although over 30% had fresh breaks. One fragment was burnt and one other had signs of carnivore damage.

5.5.3 Species representation

- 5.5.3.1 Cattle and sheep were the most numerous of animals kept at the site, although as cattle have bigger bones, more likely to survive and be retrieved, it is possible that they are over represented here. A horse astragalus was found in context 9110 indicating that horse was present at the site.

Table 4: Site 405 - Number of elements by species

Cattle	Sheep	Horse	Unidentified
4	4	1	9

- 5.5.3.2 Two of the identified fragments of sheep bone from contexts 9109 and 9110 were mandibles with many of the teeth intact. The ages of the sheep were estimated to be 1 to 2 years and 6 to 8 years in age.
- 5.5.3.3 A worked fragment of cattle, horse or red deer radius was recovered from context 9106. The fragment has an oblique diagonal cut across the shaft in a longitudinal direction, which exposes the medullary canal. The object is possibly a section from a gouge. Unfortunately the tip and the butt of the implement are missing. The surface of the fragment indicates that it was originally polished all over with particular areas of high polish along the edges and at the apex of the oblique cut. Gouges are more commonly made from the long bones of sheep. At sites such as Danebury only two gouges out of an assemblage of 38 were manufactured from either cattle or horse bones (Sellwood 1984, 382-387).

Site 181

5.5.4 Introduction

- 5.5.4.1 A total of 252 fragments of bone were retrieved by hand from the site. Some of these bones were re-assembled reducing the final number to 193.

5.5.5 Condition

- 5.5.5.1 The bones were not in particularly good condition. Many had varying degrees of root damage and chemical etching. It is likely that this will have affected the ability to detect butchery marks and signs of pathology on some of the bones. Only two clear butchery marks were recorded on the bones. Knife marks were found on the radius of a cattle mandible (10309) and a sheep radius (10210) had a chop mark across the midshaft. Over 50% of the bones had fresh breaks. One small fragment of bone had been burnt (10504). A few of the fragments had tooth marks on the surface, probably as a result of canine gnawing. This may have affected the distribution of some of the bone across the site.

5.5.6 Species Representation

- 5.5.6.1 Sheep are the dominant species on the site with a smaller number of cattle. It is clear that pigs and horses were also being kept on or around the site. However, the small number of bones retrieved yields little information regarding their impact on the economy of the site.

Table 5: Site 181 - Number of elements by species

Cattle	Sheep	Horse	Pig	Dog	Unidentified
15	24	3	5	1	145

- 5.5.6.2 Three sheep mandibles with teeth present were recorded as being between 2 to 6 months, 6 to 12 months and 1 to 2 years old. It is possible that the younger animals were killed as part of a dairy economy. It is unlikely that the animals were utilised solely for their meat products; they would probably have also been kept for their wool and dung. Two cattle mandibles with teeth were aged as 18 to 30 months old and as adult age. It is likely that the cattle were generally kept to an older age possibly for use in traction as well as for their meat. The cattle may also have been used for their dairy products. However, the small number of bones recovered makes this difficult to identify.
- 5.5.6.3 One fragment of dog maxilla was found in context 10510. It appeared to be from a medium sized animal, but was not complete enough to be measured.
- 5.5.7 *Conclusion*
- 5.5.7.1 The bones appear to represent a typical mid to late Iron Age site. The species fragment frequency is similar to other sites in the area, as at the Ashville Trading Estate, Abingdon (Wilson 1978), with sheep being the dominant species followed by the cattle. In addition to this, the cattle at Ashville were killed off at a slower rate than the sheep, as was found at Site 181. However, the low numbers of bones retrieved from the site makes detailed interpretation of the assemblage difficult.

5.6 Environmental Remains by Dana Challinor

5.6.1 Methodology

- 5.6.1.1 Nine soil samples were taken during the evaluation for the assessment of environmental indicators. Three middle Iron Age ditches were sampled from Site 181 and a middle Bronze Age ditch from Site 405 was also sampled. Sample sizes varied from 10 to 30 litres, with an average of 20 litres.
- 5.6.1.2 All samples were processed by mechanical flotation in a modified Siraf machine for the recovery of charred plant remains and snails, with the sample held on a 500µm and the flot collected on a 250µm mesh. The flots were scanned under a microscope at x10 and x20 magnification.

5.6.2 Results

- 5.6.2.1 The results of the scanning of the flots are summarised in Table 6. All of the flots were dominated by molluscs, with a range of species present. In general there were few charred plant remains and preservation was not good. Several grains were present in context 10518 (Site 181) from which *Triticum* sp. (wheat) and *Avena* sp. (oat) grains were identified. Two other flots (contexts 9111 (Site 405) and 10207 (Site 181)) contained the fragmented remains of cereal grains, but these were not identifiable. A few weed seeds were also noted, mostly small seeded legumes. Two samples contained identifiable fragments of charcoal – *Quercus* sp. (oak) and cf. *Prunus* sp. (blackthorn, bird cherry) were recognised at low magnification.

Table 6: Results of scanning of flots (+ <5, ++ 5-25, +++ 25-100, ++++ >100)

Site	Sample no.	Context	Volume of soil (litres)	Charcoal	Grain	Weeds	Molluscs
405	9850	9111	20		+		+++
405	9851	9109	20				+++
181	9860	10517	20			+	++++
181	9861	10518	20	+	++	+	++
181	9864	10210	24				+++
181	9865	10207	20		+		++++
181	9866	10206	20	+			++
181	9867	10413	10				++++
181	9868	10414	30				++++

5.6.3 Discussion

5.6.3.1 The presence of cultivated cereal grain in the Bronze Age and the Iron Age ditches testifies to agricultural activity in the area in both periods. However, given the paucity of the charred plant remains, there is no potential for the interpretation of the nature of crop processing. Equally the quantity of identifiable charcoal is small and not susceptible to meaningful interpretation. Palaeoenvironmental reconstruction is therefore limited to the molluscan evidence. Since there is a reasonable range of species, the molluscs have the potential to provide good environmental indicators. While charred plant remains are preserved on-site the sampled ditch fills are not producing informative assemblages

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APPENDIX 1: Allocation of field recording numbers

Numbers Allocated	Allocation	Site 405 Used	Site 181 Used
9000 –9799 10000-10799	Context	9100-9130 9200-9213 9300-9302 9400-9408 9500-9516 9600, 9602-9613 9700-9707	10,101-10,107 10,200-10,216 10,301-10,331 10,400-10,417, 10,419 10,500-10,524 10,601-10,609
9800 –9849	Objects	-	-
9850 –9949	Samples	9850-9851	9860 –9868
9950 –9999	Skeletons	-	-
1750 –1779 1780-	Drawings	1750-1775	1781–1807
3500 –3599 3600-	Levels	3500-3574	3600 –3674
520 –529 530-	Films	520-522	530-531

APPENDIX 2: List of Archive Components

Site data:

1. Daybook
2. Catalogue of Contexts
3. Primary Context Records
4. Catalogue of Primary Drawings.
5. Primary Drawings
6. Catalogue of Photographic Record
7. B/W Photographs/Colour Slides

Finds data:

8. Primary Finds data
9. Synthesised Finds Data
10. Specialist Reports
11. Box List

Environmental/Ecofact Data

12. Primary Records
13. Synthesised Records
14. Specialist Reports

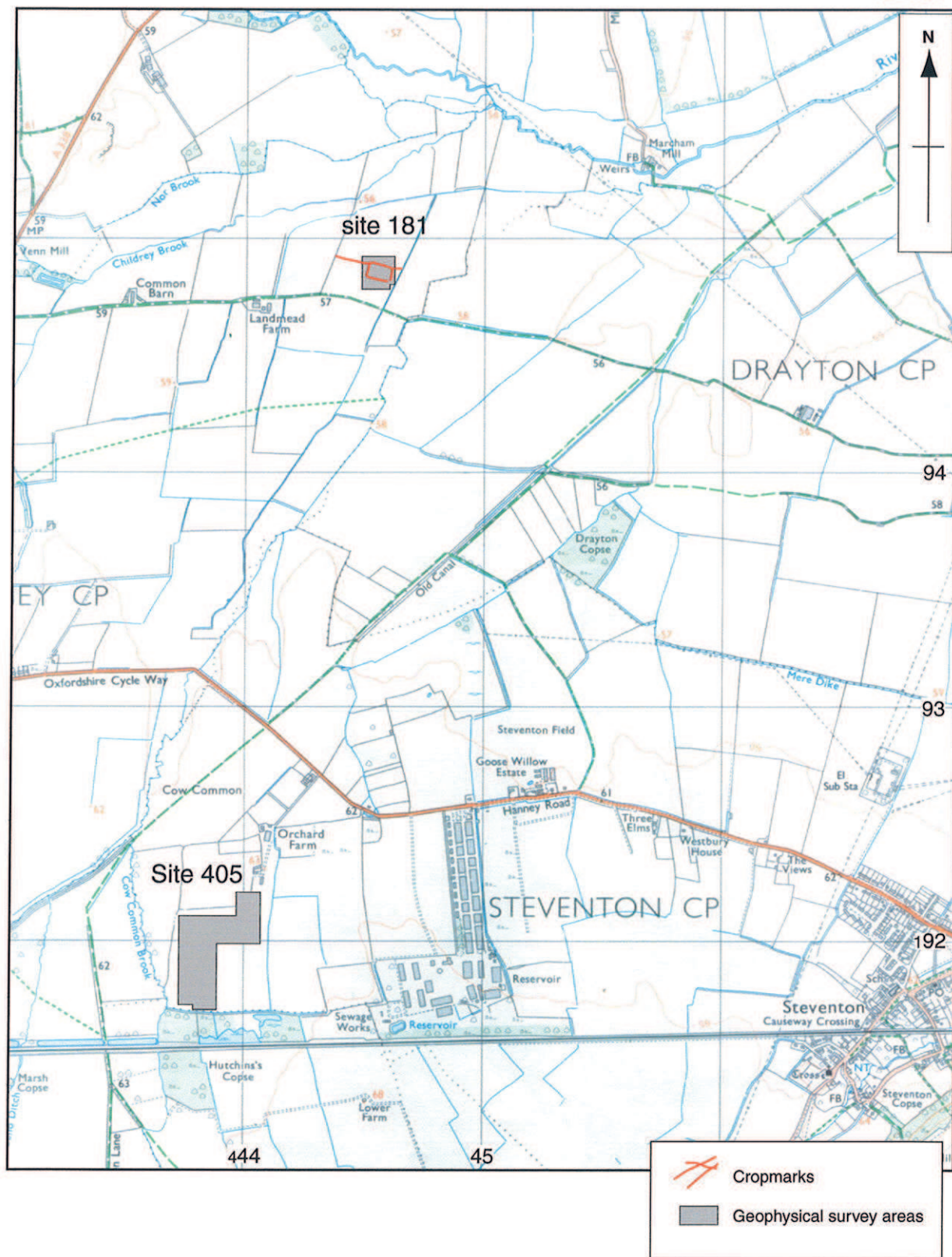
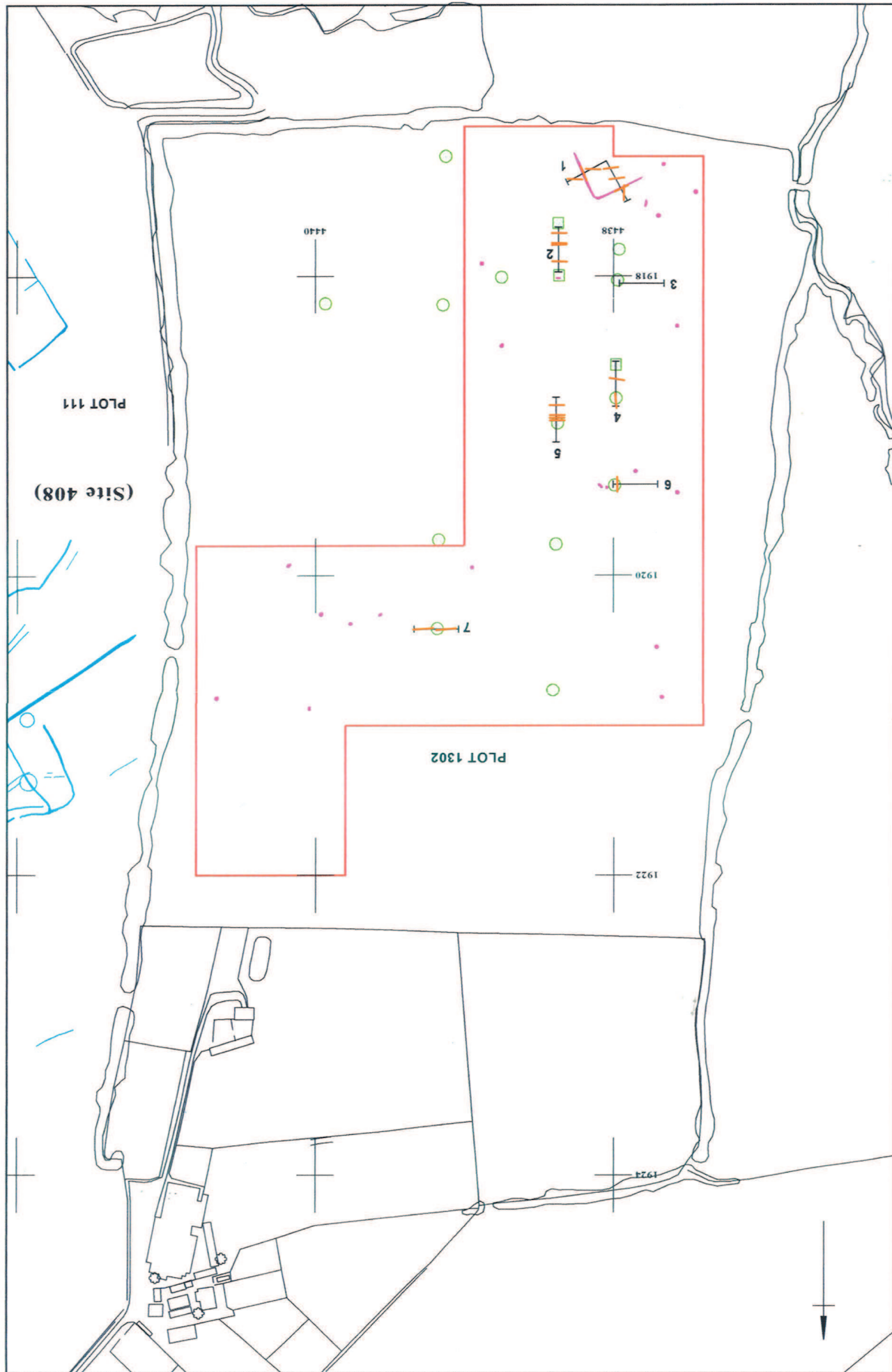


Figure 1: Site location



ABINGDON RESERVOIR PROPOSAL

Site 405

- Geophysical Survey Area
- Geophysical Anomalies
- Linear features
- Cropmarks
- Trial Trenches

- Fieldwalking-
Bronze Age pottery
- 1 sherd
- 2 sherds



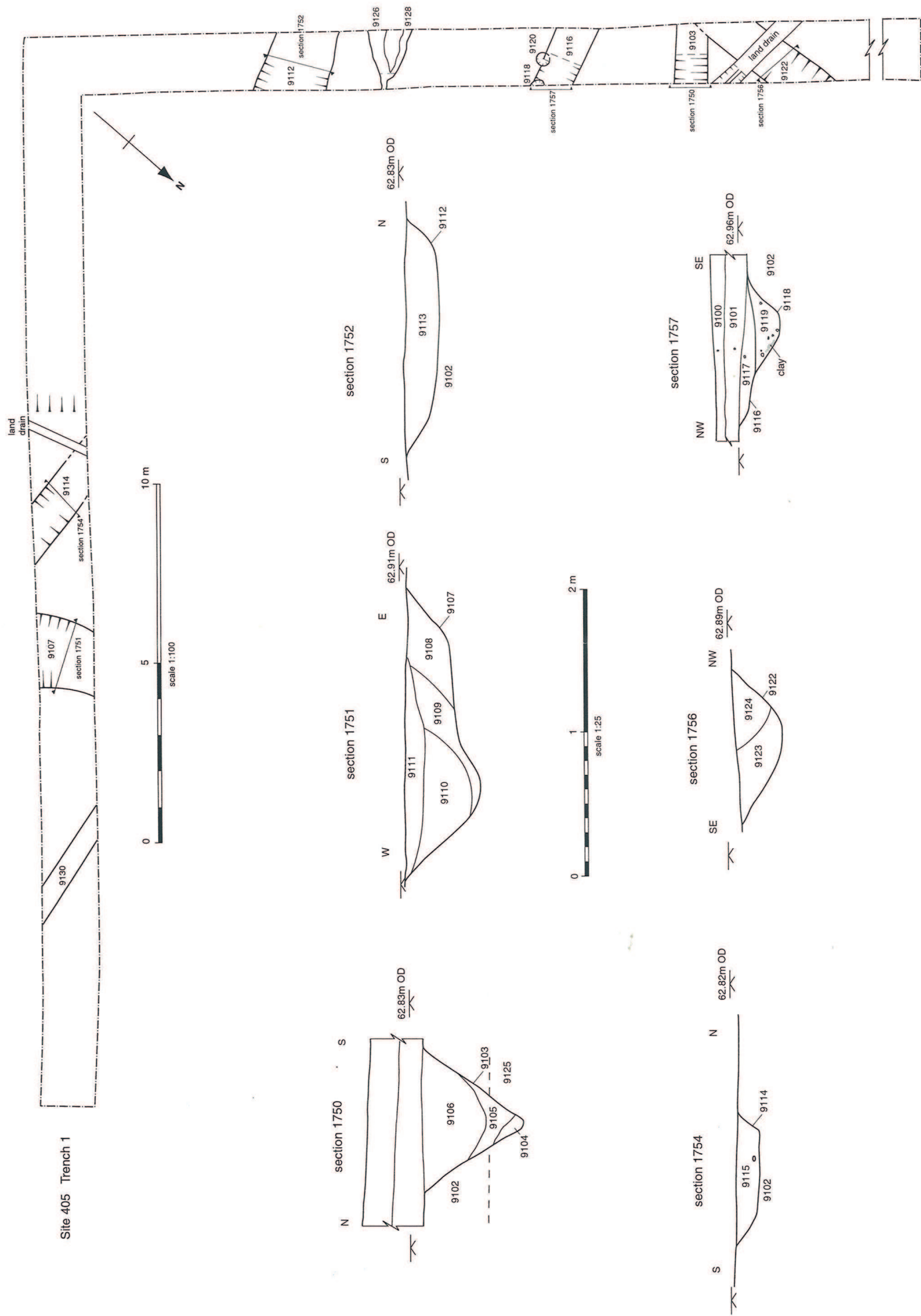
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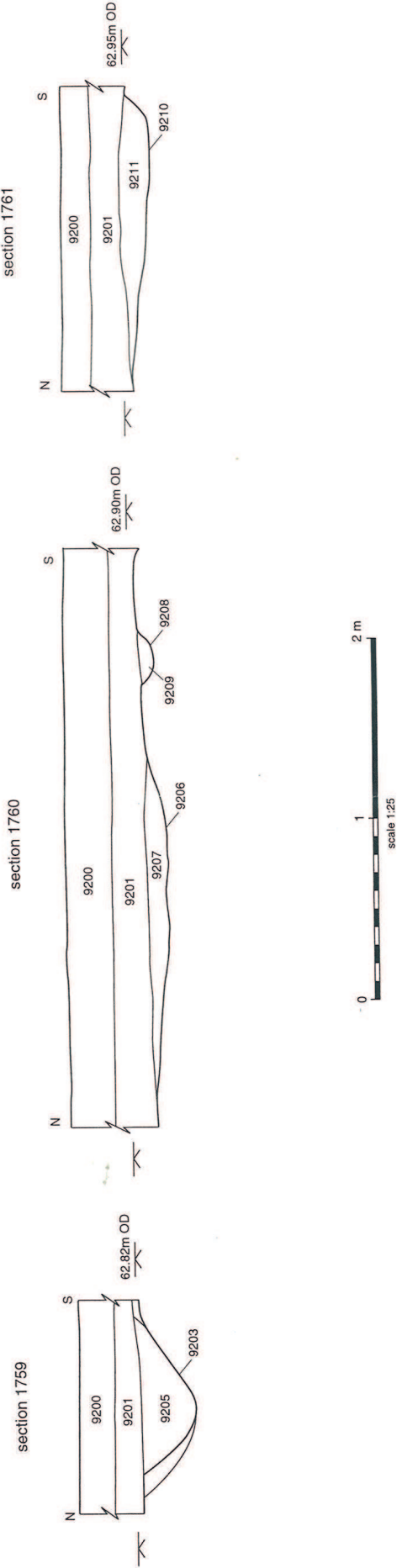
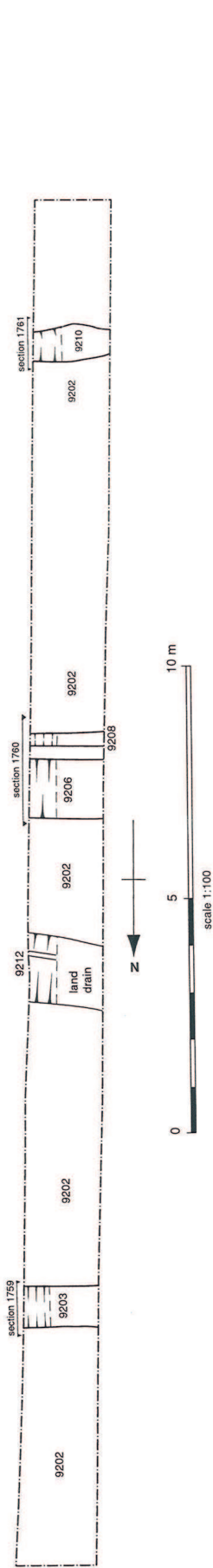
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FIGURE 2



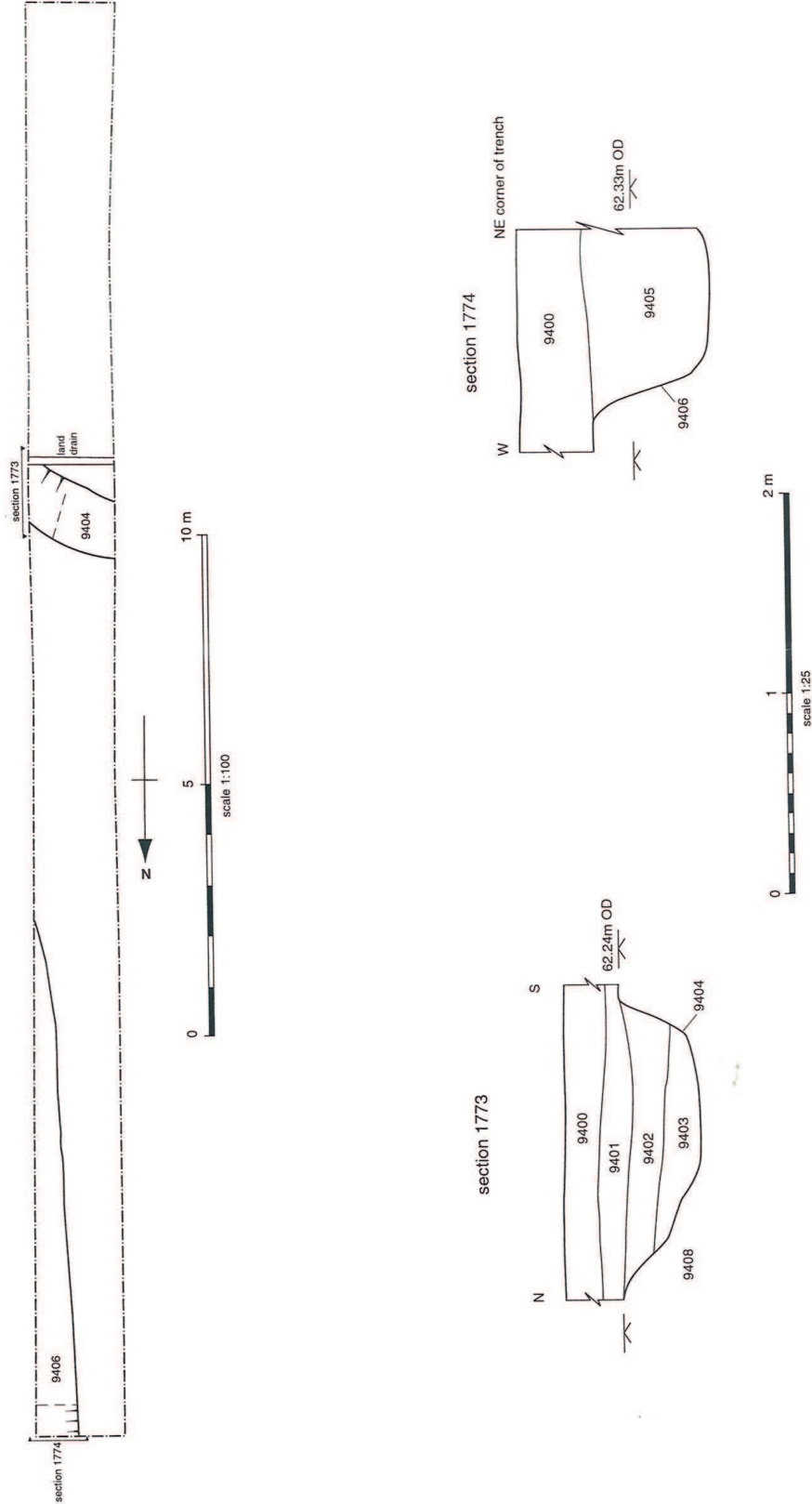
Site 405: Trench 1 plan and sections

Site 405 Trench 2



Site 405: Trench 2 plan and sections

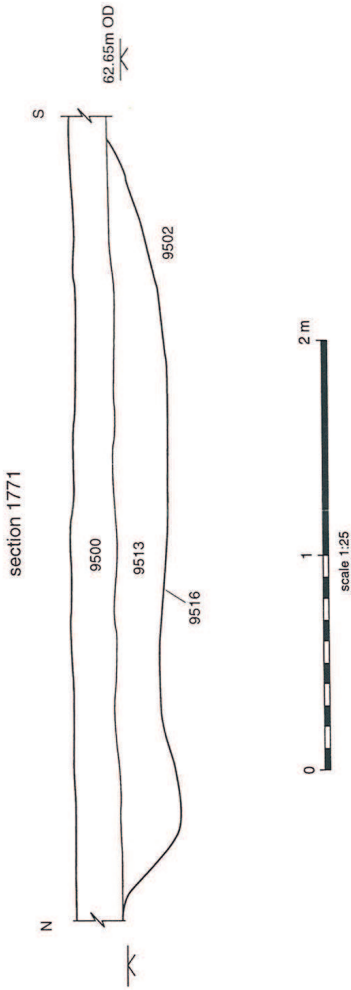
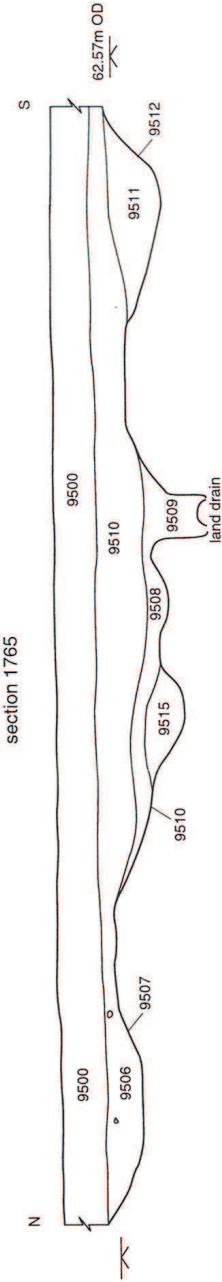
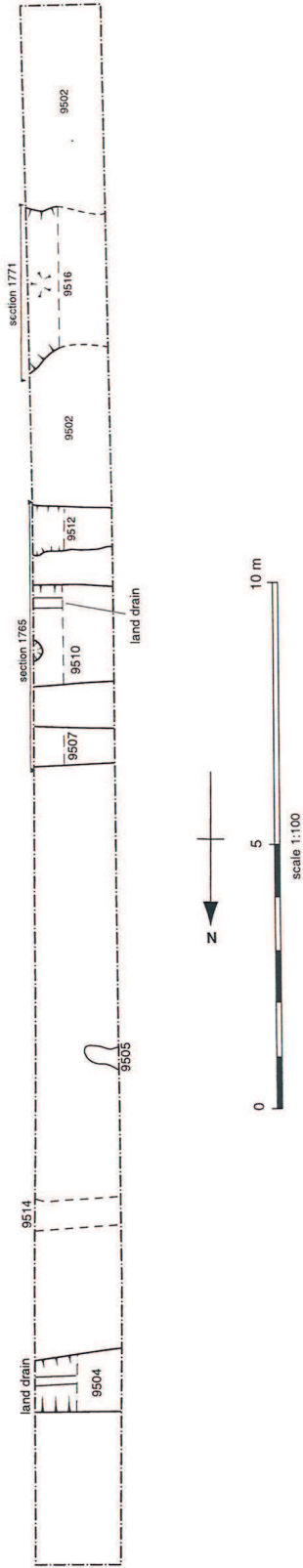
Site 405 Trench 4



Site 405: Trench 4 plan and sections

Figure 5

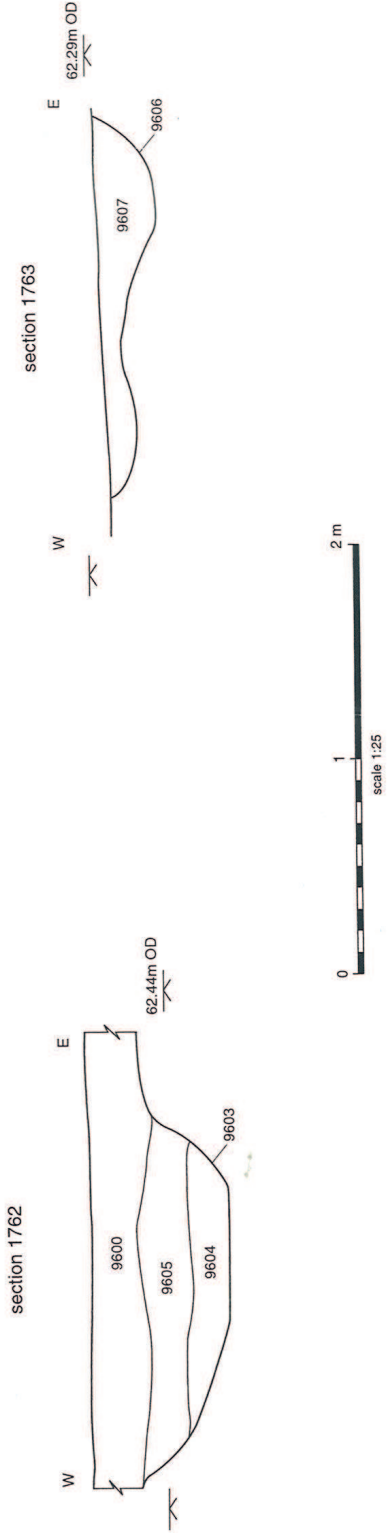
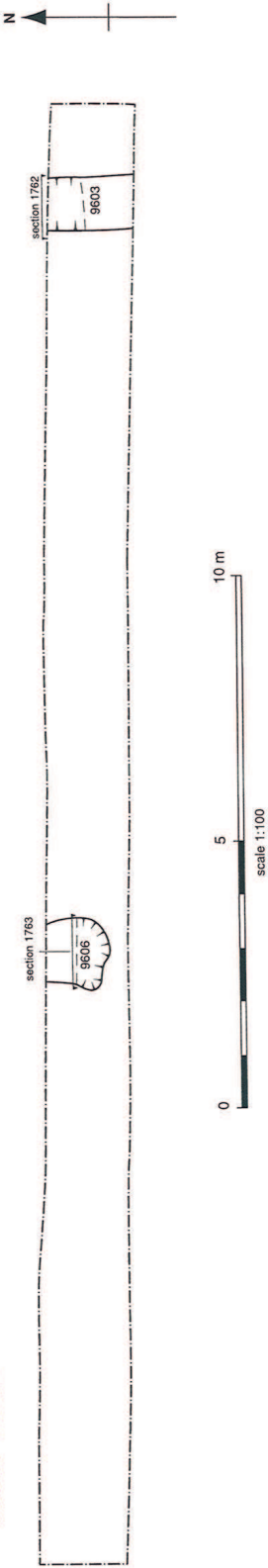
Site 405 Trench 5



Site 405: Trench 5 plan and sections

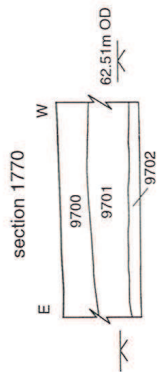
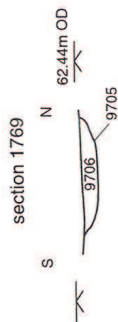
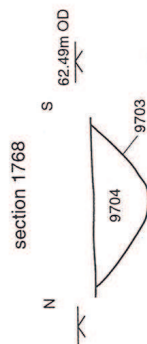
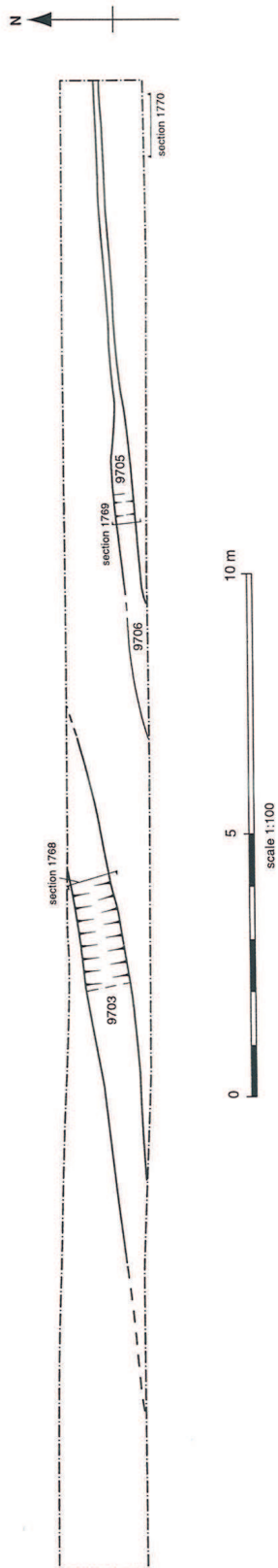
Figure 6

Site 405 Trench 6

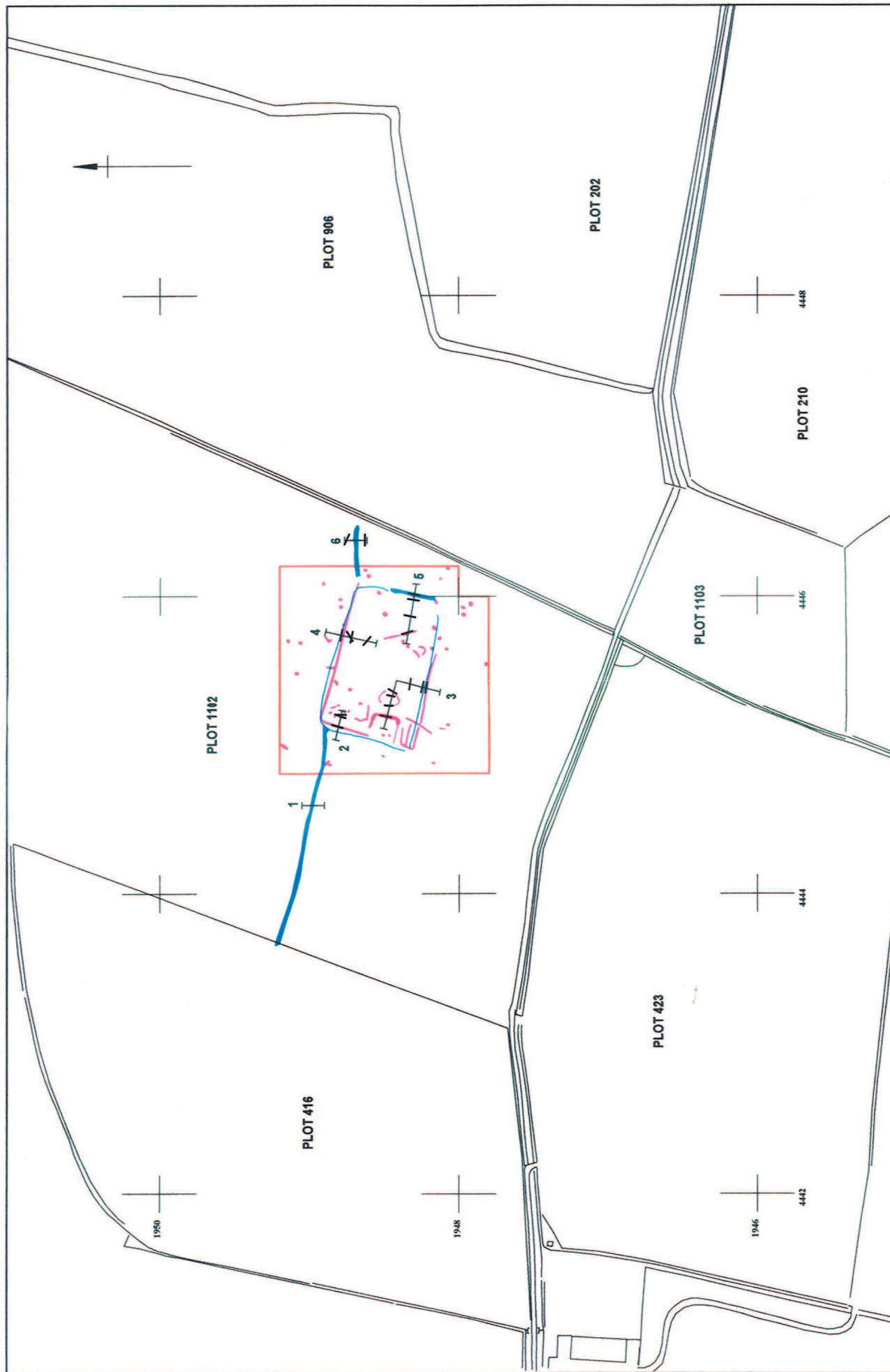


Site 405: Trench 6 plan and sections

Site 405 Trench 7



Site 405: Trench 7 plan and sections



ABINGDON RESERVOIR PROPOSAL

Site 181

- Geophysical Survey Area
- Geophysical Anomalies
- Linear features
- Cropmarks
- Trial trenches



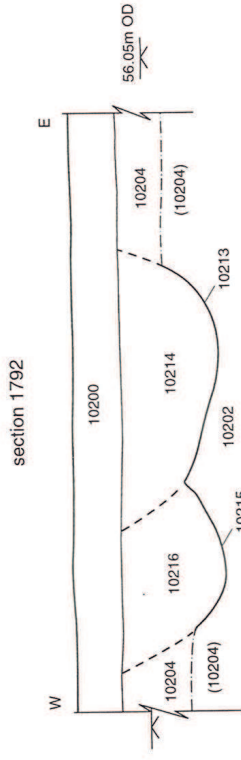
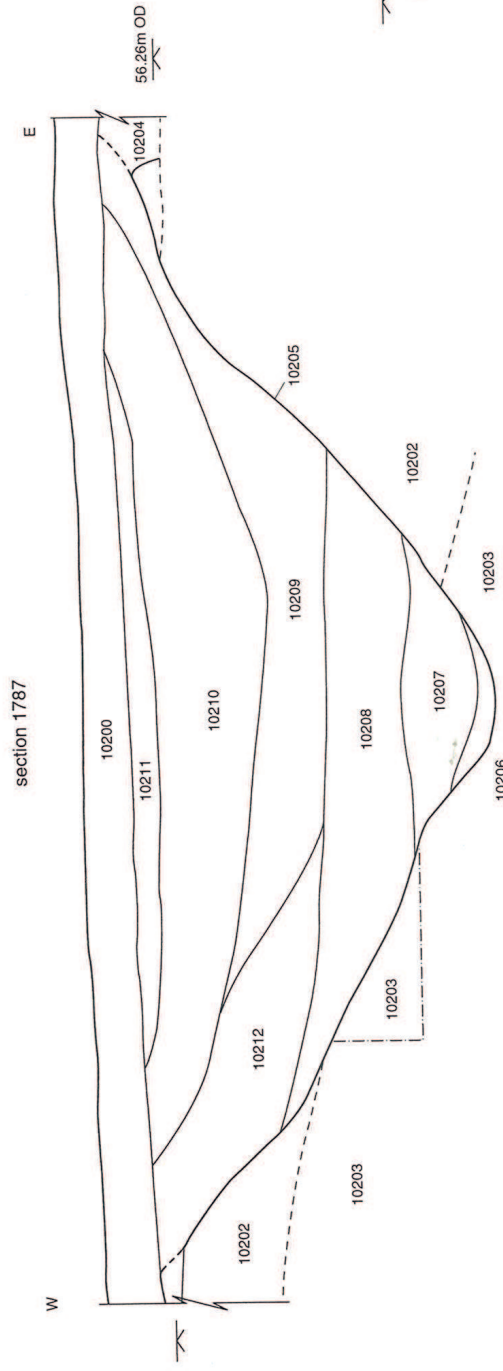
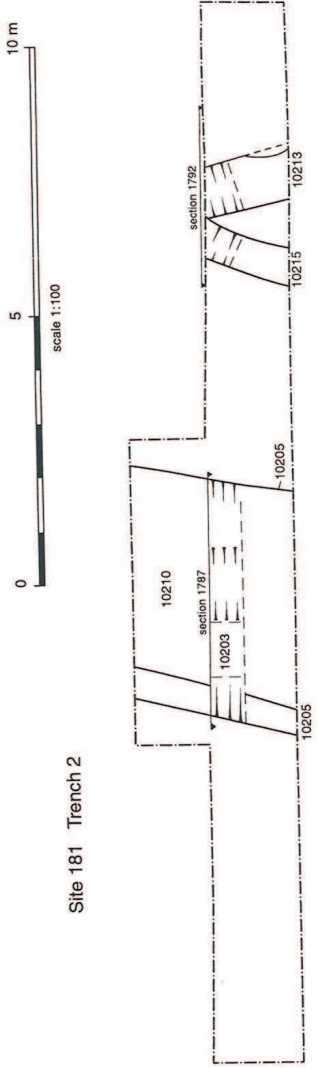
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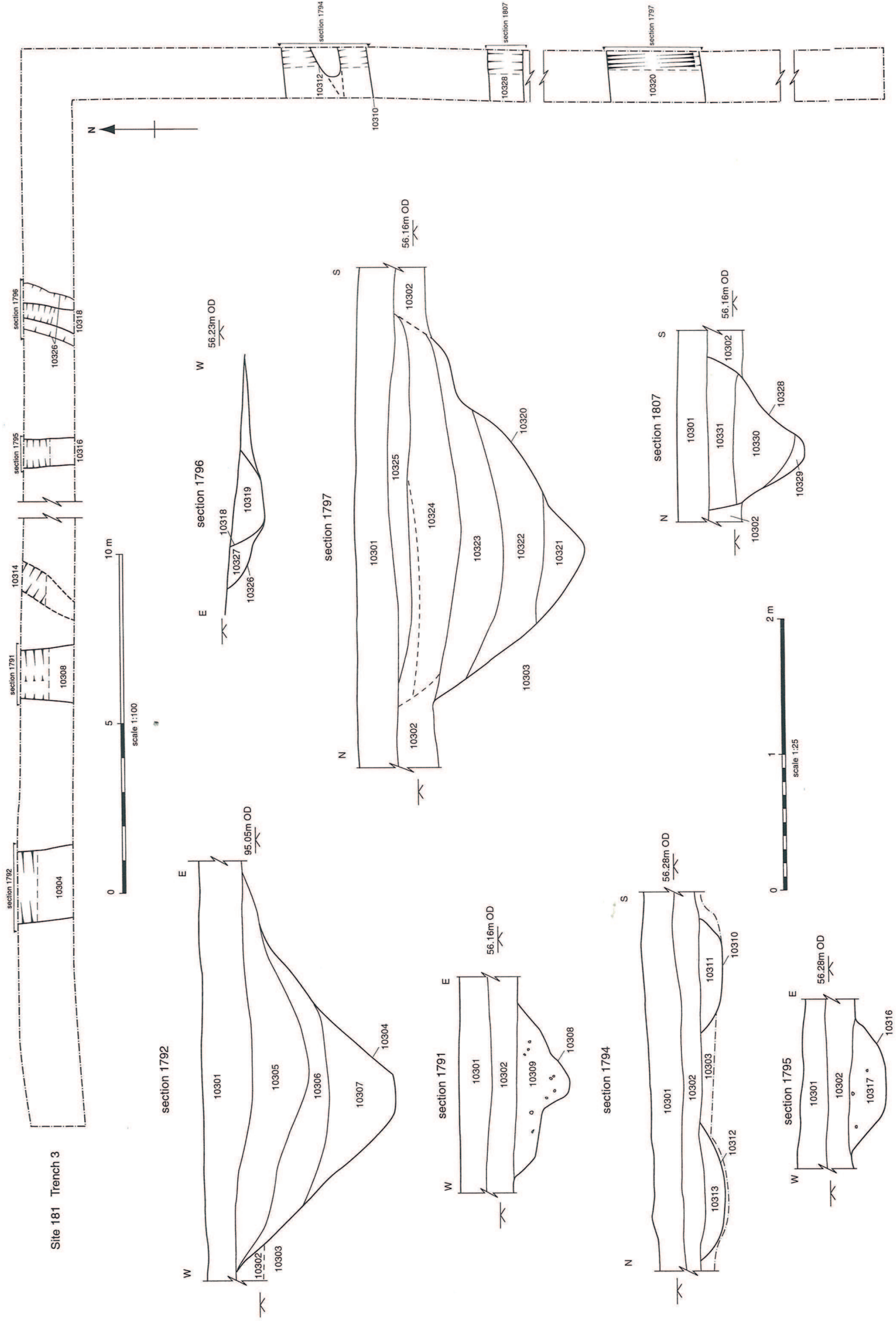
FIGURE 9



Site 181: Trench 2 plan and sections

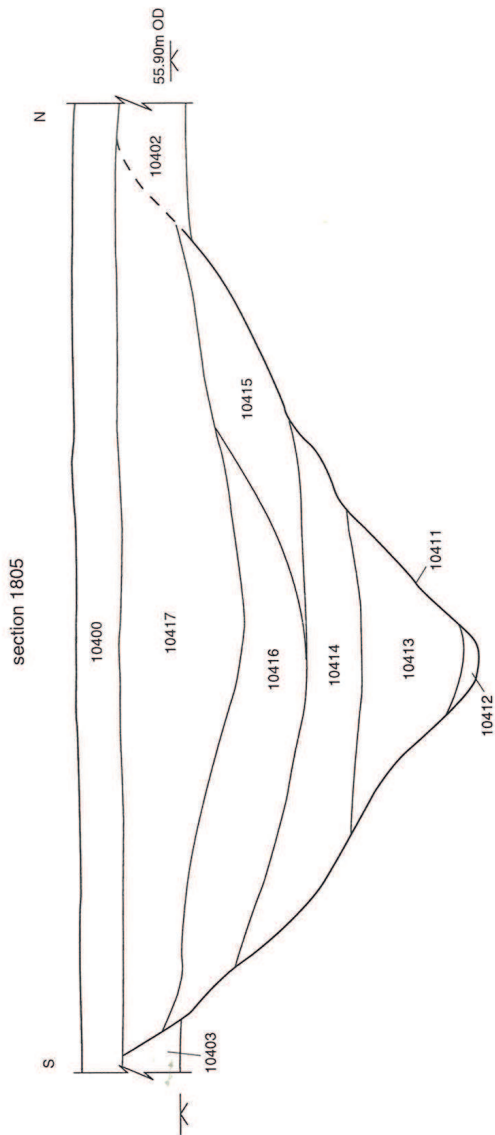
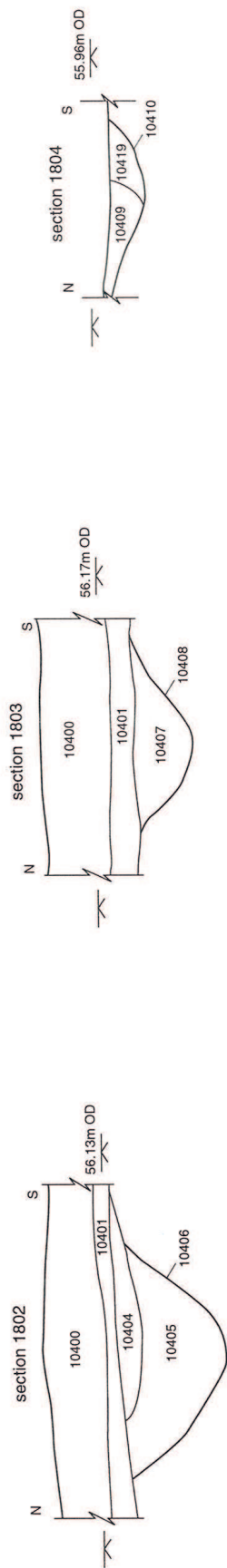
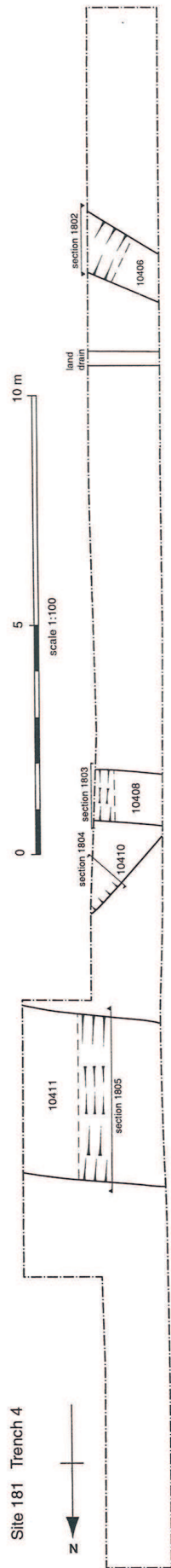
Figure 10

Site 181 Trench 3



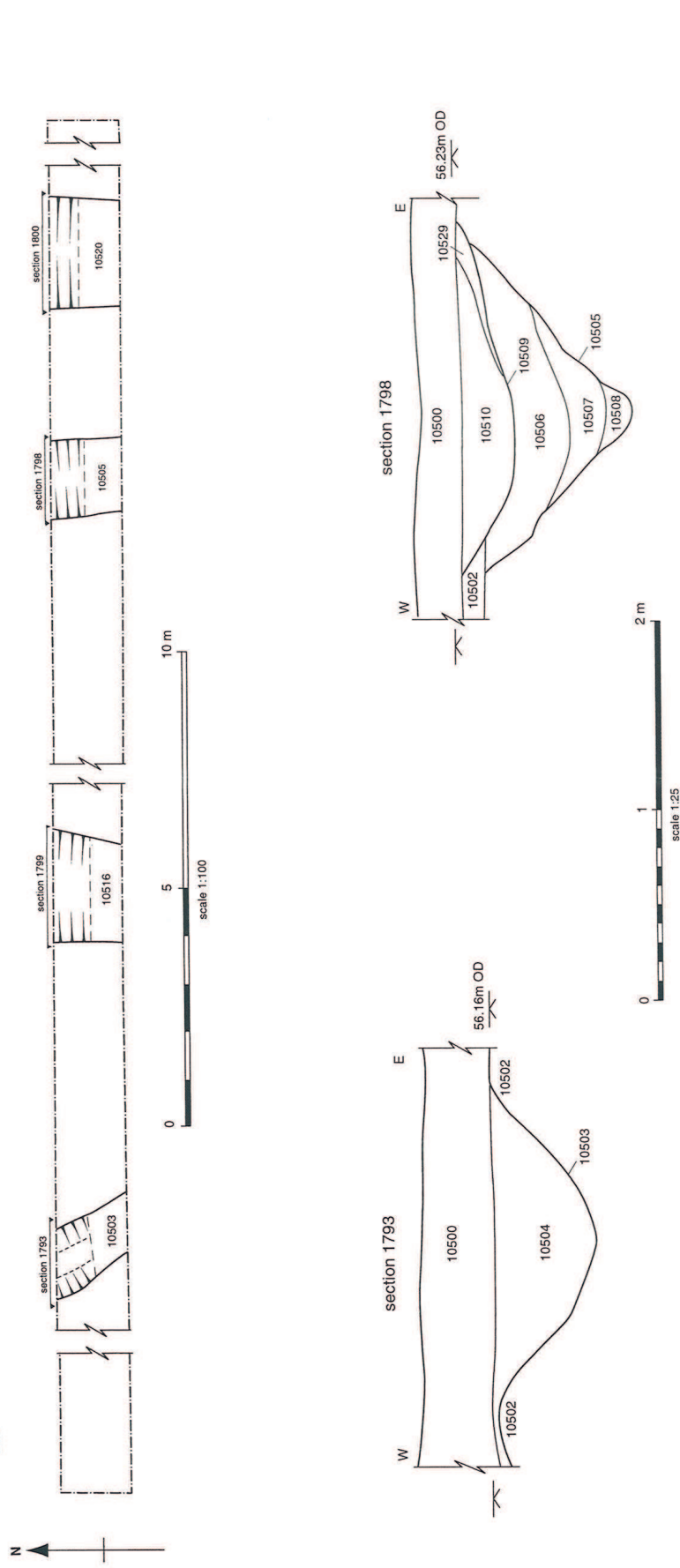
Site 181: Trench 3 plan and sections

Site 181 Trench 4



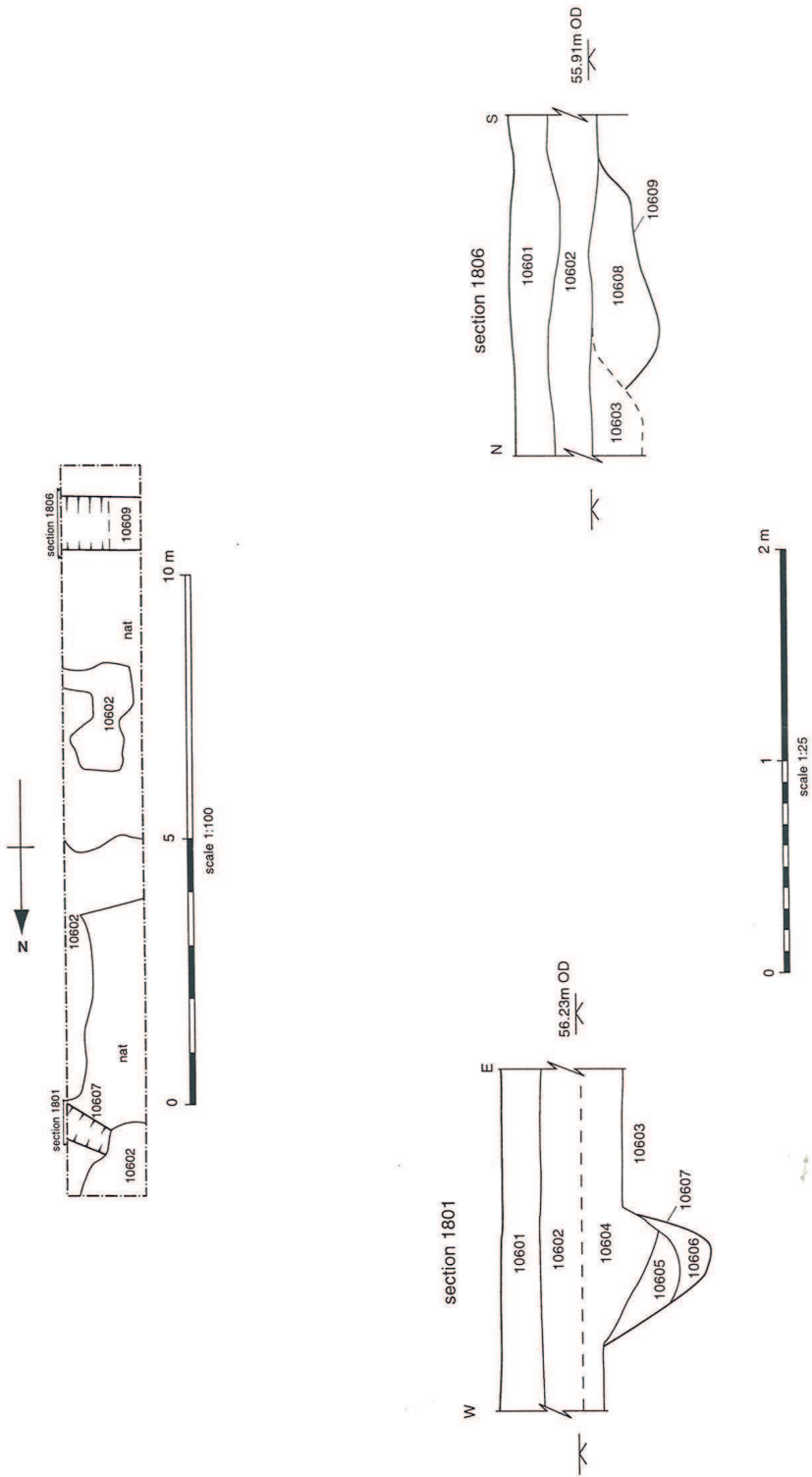
Site 181: Trench 4 plan and sections

Site 181 Trench 5



Site 181: Trench 5 plan and sections

Site 181 Trench 6



Site 181: Trench 6 plan and sections



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