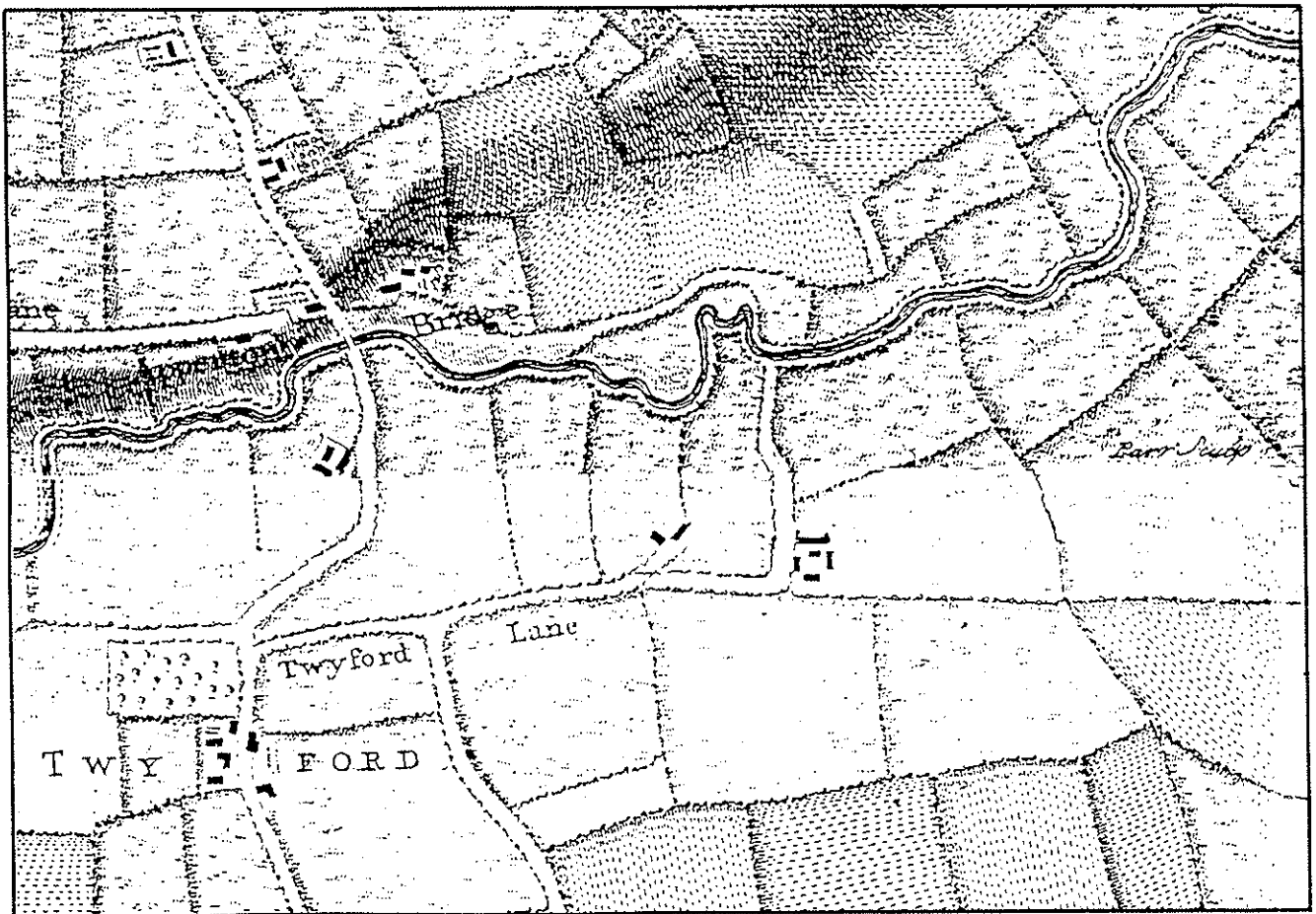


TWYAB (BT)  
449/75

# Twyford Abbey, Twyford Abbey Road Twyford London Borough of Ealing

NGR TQ 1905 8326

Archaeological Evaluation



OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

October 1995

**TWYFORD ABBEY, TWYFORD ABBEY ROAD,**

**TWYFORD**

**London Borough of Ealing**

**(TWA 95)**

**TQ 51891832**

**MARK ROBERTS OAU**

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Table of contexts (NB include spot dates) and Illustrations

## **ABSTRACT**

Five machine dug and four hand dug test pits were excavated at Twyford Abbey to provide information on the likely impact of development on below ground archaeological deposits. No significant archaeological deposits were encountered but some sherds of Saxon or prehistoric pottery were recovered from a gardensoil.

## **INTRODUCTION**

This report has been commissioned by Iain Pattie Associates on behalf of Lafayette Limited in support of an application for planning permission for converting the existing building to a hotel/conference centre with an attached leisure centre. The evaluation was initially to be carried out following a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by the Oxford Archaeological Unit and approved by English Heritage on behalf of Planning and Economic Development of the London Borough of Ealing. The brief was modified after an on site meeting with English Heritage as several of the hand dug test pits were in an area containing a layer of recent medical debris over 0.3 m deep and several other test pits were in an area of the wood infested with wasps which stung several members of staff.

## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

The reasons for commissioning the work were to locate traces of the 11th century manor and perhaps burials associated with the 12th century chapel to the W of the site. As the site lies on the boundary of the Taplow Gravels and London Clay and there is a slight ridge overlooking the former course of the River Brent there may be prehistoric activity underneath the medieval settlement. Rocque's 1746 map of London and 10 miles around (see cover) shows the manor which was to be Twyford Abbey set in fields to the N of Twyford Lane.

As there were no archaeological deposits located on the site the Greater London Sites and Monuments Record has not been consulted.

The site lies at a height of 25-27 m OD and the N edge of the site (now the A406 North Circular Road) was at one time formed by the River Brent.

## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY**

The total surface area of the site which was investigated was 263 square metres, this is approximately 0.4% of the total of the site. However, the trenches were positioned in areas which were targeted for car parking and buildings in the proposed development.

It was intended to excavate five trenches each 3 m wide and 20 m long. Three trenches were dug to this size but two were curtailed; Trench 2 was only 1.5 m wide and Trench 5 was 3 m wide but only 10.1 m long.

These were to be machined in spits down to the top of the geological subsoil and monitored and hand cleaned for artefacts unless archaeological features were found at a higher level than the geology.

By agreement with both the London Borough of Ealing's arboriculturalist and English Heritage eight hand dug test pits 2x2 m were to be excavated instead

of two machine-dug trenches within an area covered by a Woodland Preservation Order. Only two of these were fully excavated as the N part of the wood was covered by medical waste and the S part of the wood was infested by wasps.

No environmental samples were taken. No features were encountered from which meaningful environmental material could be taken.

## **DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS**

(also see figure 1, Table of contexts, pottery and ceramic building material reports in appendices)

### *Trench 2 (figure 2)*

In the area of proposed car parking to the NW of the site deep modern dumping and disturbance may either be associated with the construction of the A406 North Circular Road or 19th-century landscaping. Although the presence of a large wheel rut from a large earth-moving machine may indicate the former.

### *Trenches 8 and 9 (figure 6)*

The N part of the wood where either vehicle or foot access between the car parking and the Hotel entrance is proposed there are modern deposits over 1.2 m deep. It is unlikely that either any archaeological deposits survive in this area or if they do that they would be disturbed by construction.

### *Trenches 4 and 6 (figure 3 and 4)*

The walled garden, where a leisure facility and parking is proposed, had very deep garden soils and modern drains. All of the features encountered in the trenches were modern and presumably formed by garden activity. It is likely that the intensive horticulture in this area has removed any archaeological deposits if they were ever present.

### *Trench 7 (figure 5)*

To the N of the proposed new E wing deep garden deposits were encountered although some topsoil had been imported perhaps when the existing wing was built in the 1960's. All of the features encountered in the trenches were modern and presumably formed by garden activity.

### *Finds*

Eight very small sherds of pottery were recovered from the garden soil in Trench 7. Of these eight sherds two were large enough to be identified; one was organic tempered Saxon pottery and the other was tempered with coarse sand and might be either Late Iron Age or late Saxon.

### *Trench 5 (figure 4)*

In the NE of the site where alternative car parking to that in the wood may be proposed there were deep modern deposits relating to the River Brent. Modern concrete overlay a tarmac surface which had been laid on a make-up layer on the river silts. The river silts had layers of gravel interleaved in them and there were

no clear edges or layering. It is possible that the river was diverted or canalised when the 19th-century gardens were laid out. It is interesting to note that the current surface of the A406 North Circular Road is below the silt deposit and this implies that the river course has been cut away by the road construction.

## **DEPOSIT SURVEY**

The site is roughly rectangular and slopes from the S to the N dropping around 2 m. In the areas of maximum impact where the trenches were excavated it is likely that the 19th century landscaping/garden activity has truncated the subsoil and any archaeological deposits. The overall extent of this truncation is unknown, although the truncation seems to extend across all of the site.

The evaluation showed 'made ground' at the W of the site and this may be dumping from the terracing outside the entrance to the Abbey (in an area which was not evaluated). An access road is proposed in this area and its proximity to the old core of the Abbey which may be identified with the 1806 building and the S range may suggest that archaeological deposits have been removed by the terracing.

The interior of the walled garden and the area to the E of the Abbey also appeared to have been truncated by landscaping or gardening.

It is proposed to plant many new trees around the Abbey and the effect of these in areas way from those shown not to have archaeological deposits is unknown.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

No archaeological deposits were located in the evaluation trenches.

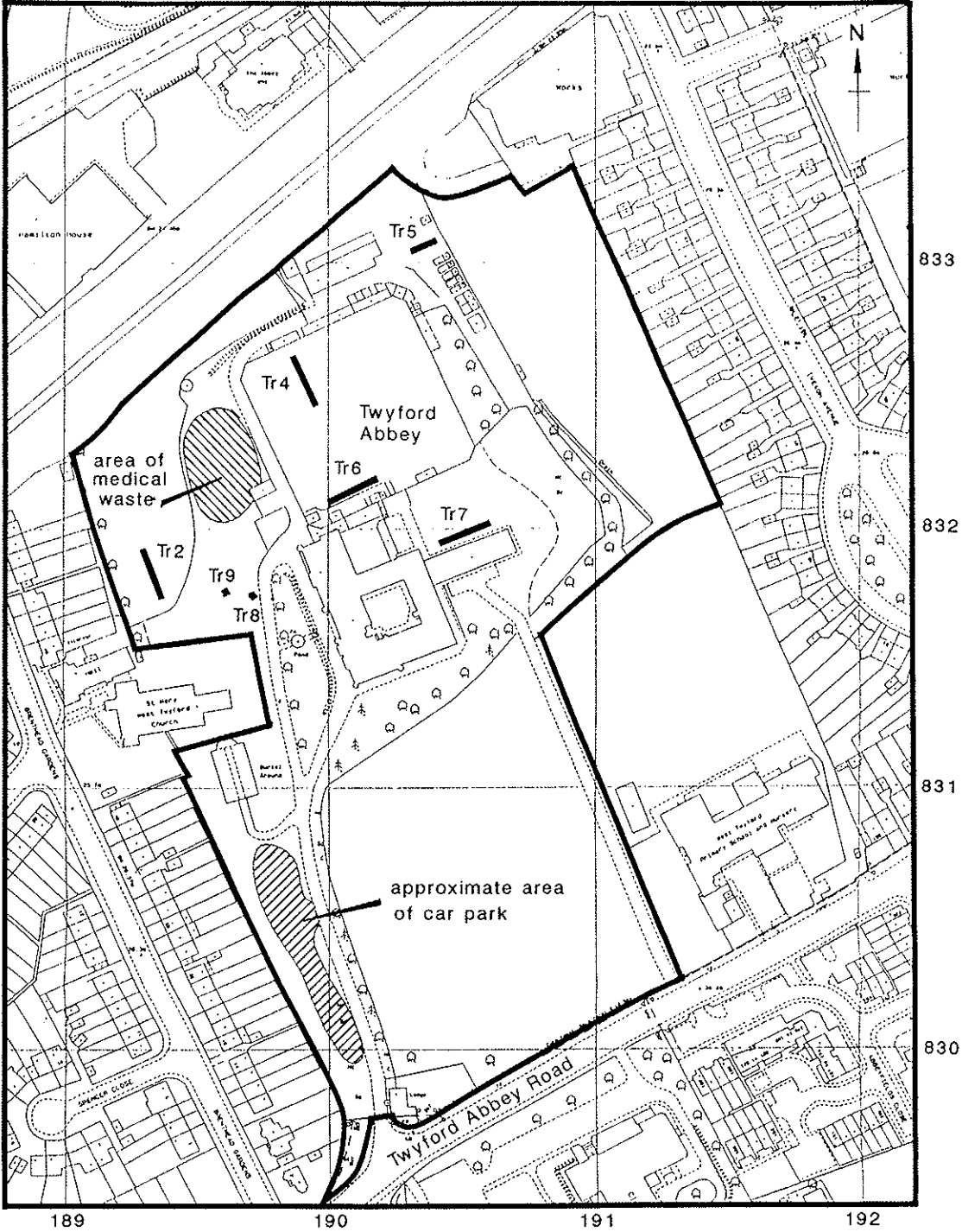
## APPENDICES

### Table of Contexts

CTX	description	length	width	depth	date
201	topsoil			0.15	mod
202	dump			0.23	mod
203	?old ploughsoil			0.24	mod
204	disturbed natural			-	
301	topsoil/leaf mould			0.3	medical waste?
401	garden soil			0.4	
402	pipe trench fill				
403	pipe trench (filled by 402)	3+	0.8	-	
404	pipe trench fill				
405	pipe trench fill				
406	pipe trench (filled by 404 and 405)	20.5	2+	-	
407	fill of garden feature				
408	garden feature	20	0.5		
409	fill of garden feature (filled by 408)				
410	garden feature similar to 408 (filled by 409)				
411	Taplow Gravels				
412	gravel path	2.5	-	0.09	
501	concrete			0.24	
502	make-up			0.19	
503	bitumenous tarmac			0.28	
504	ash			0.16	
505	rubble			0.21	
506	river silt			0.56	2 frags of brick.
507	London Clay			-	
600	topsoil			0.2	
601	garden soil			0.2	
602	garden soil			0.15	
603	drain			-	
604	Twyford Gravels				
605	Drain (filled by 606)		1.2	-	
606	Fill of drain				
607	garden feature (filled by 608)	0.95	0.5	0.05	

CTX	description	length	width	depth	date
608	fill of garden feature				
609	garden features				
610	garden feature				
611	fill of drain				
701	topsoil			0.18	
702	garden soil			0.26	
703	garden soil			0.26	
704	gravel path			0.24+	
705	disturbed subsoil			0.24+	bricks
706	London Clay			-	
707	gully fill				3 frags of brick.
708	gully (filled by 707)	10+	0.36	0.07	
709	drain fill				5 frags of brick
710	french drain	20+	0.5	0.2	
800	leaf mould			0.35	
801	dump			0.34	red border ware, tile and 4 frags of brick.
802	dump/made ground?			0.32	Porringer and 6 frags of brick.
803	dump			0.4+	20th-century bottle and 6 frags of brick.
901	leafmould			0.05	
902	dump			0.8	
903	disturbed natural			0.35+	



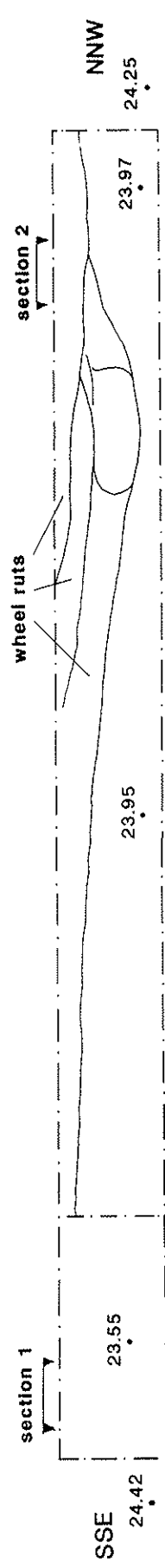


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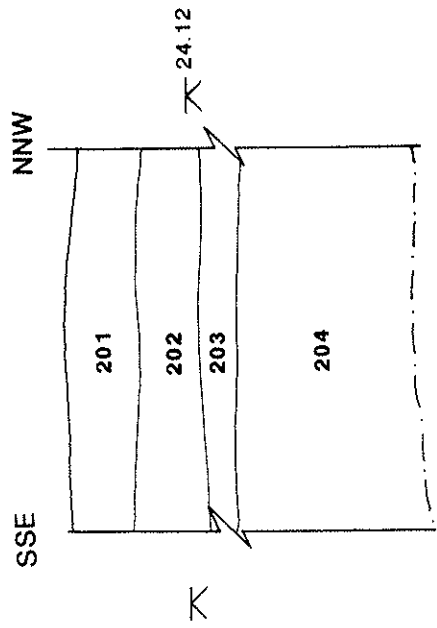
trench location

figure 1

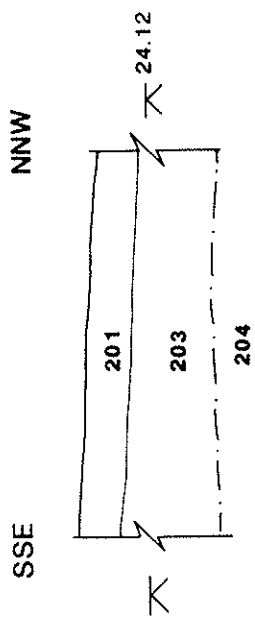
Trench 2



section 1



section 2



scale 1:100 for trench plan



scale 1:20 for trench sections

figure 2

Trench 4

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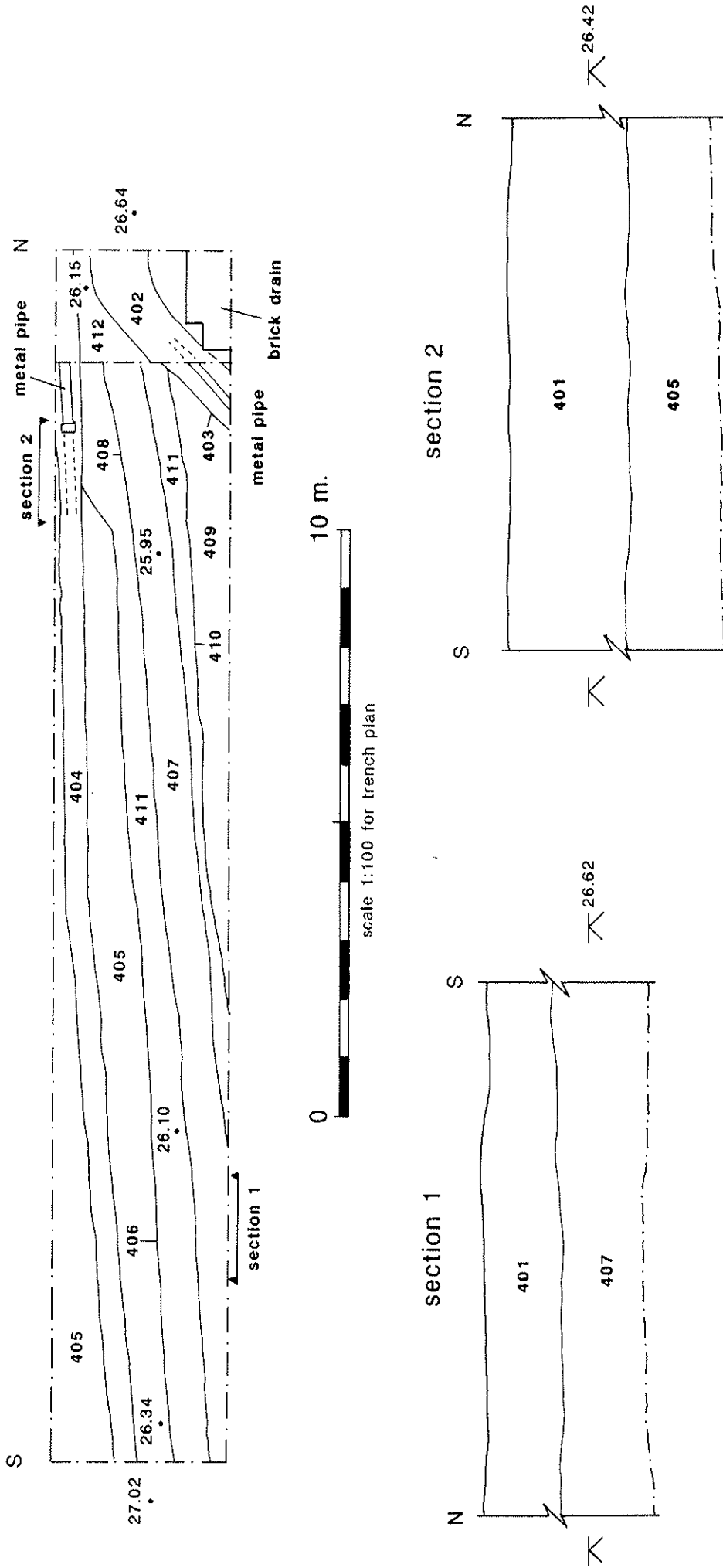
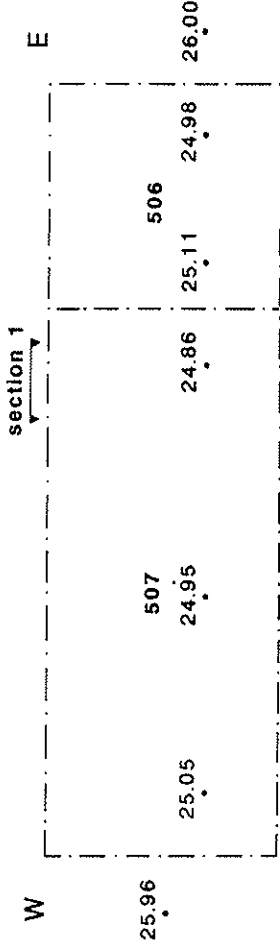
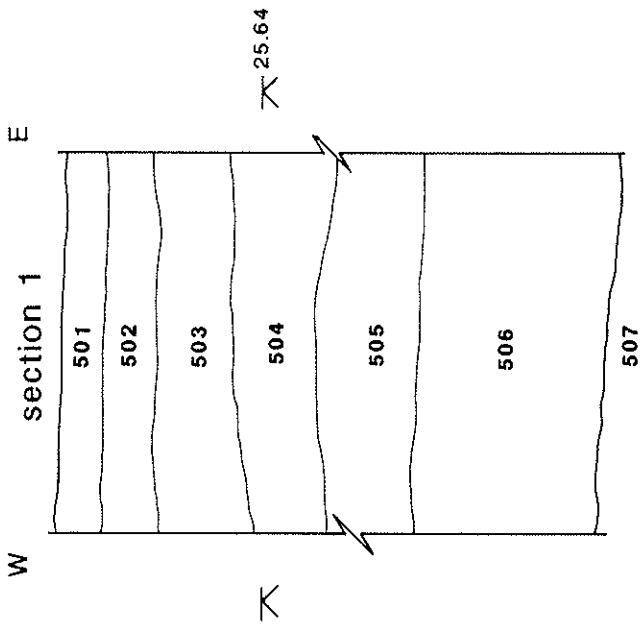


figure 3

Trench 5

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Trench 6

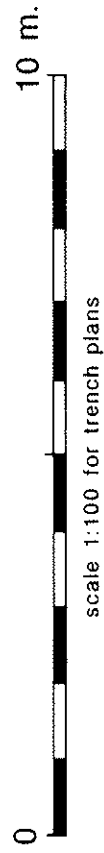
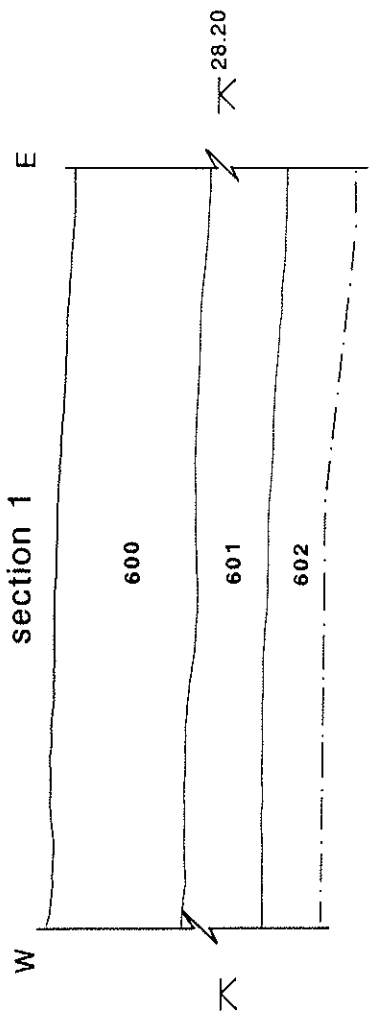
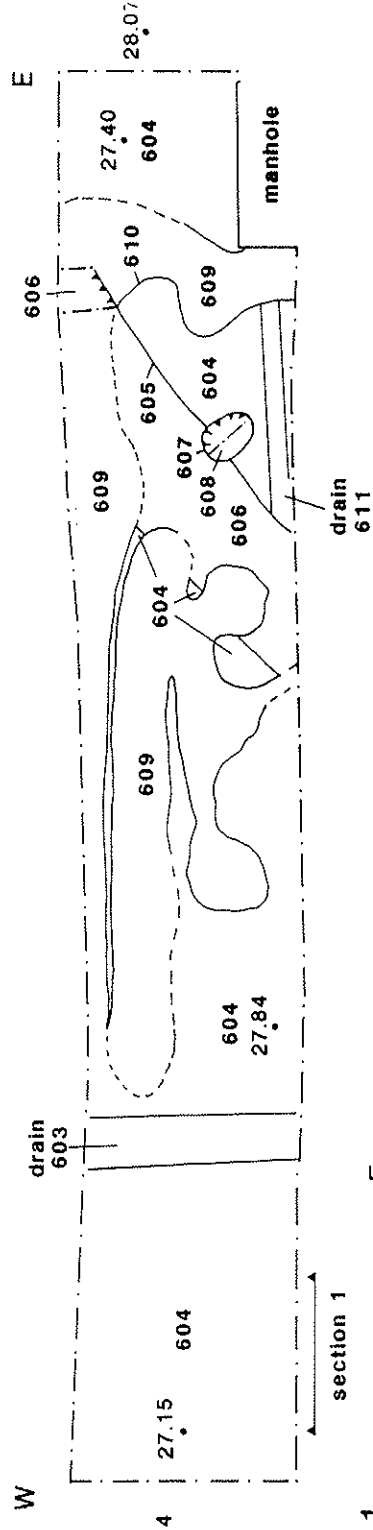
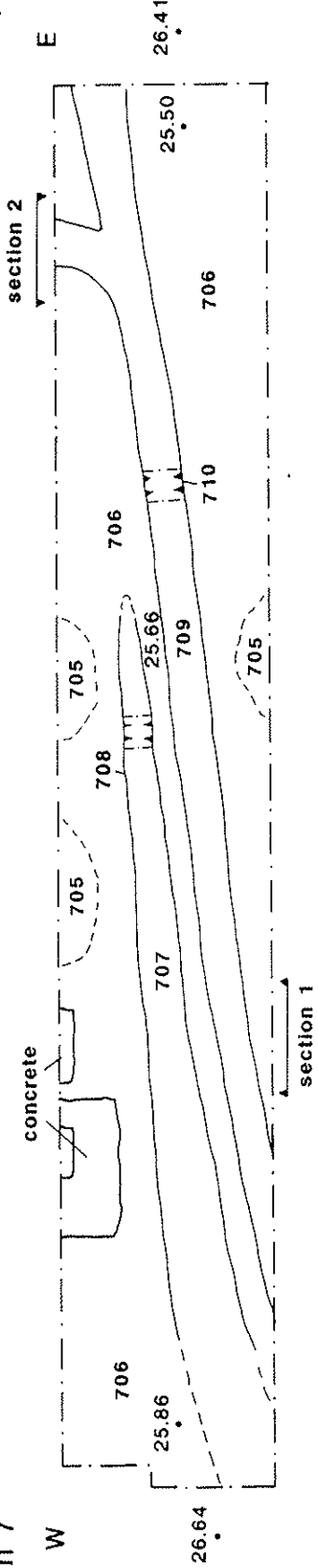


figure 4

Trench 7

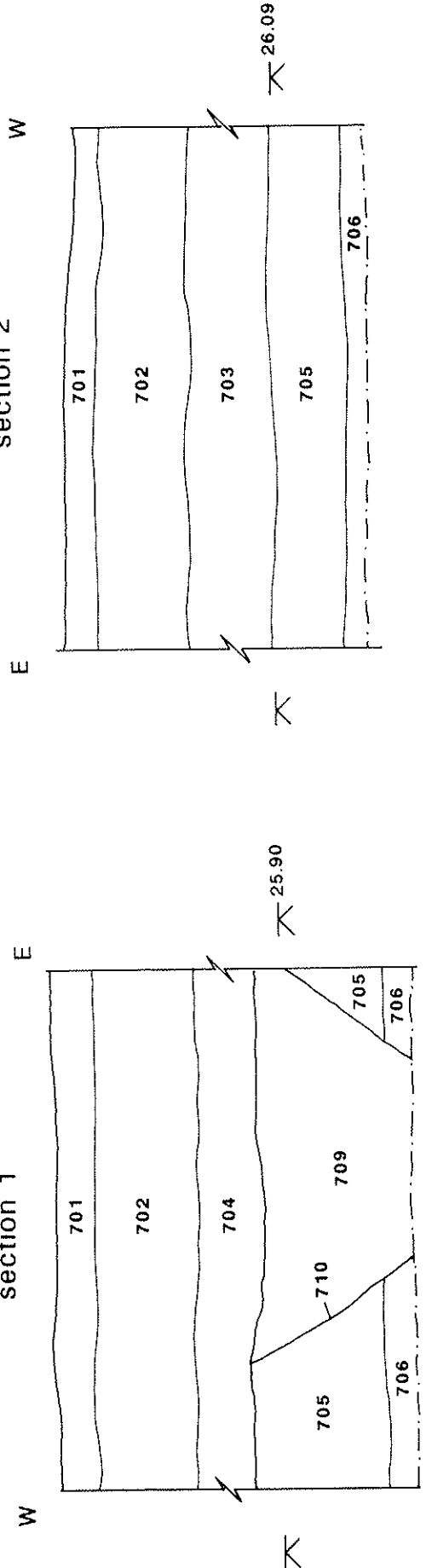
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scale 1:100 for trench plan

section 1

section 2

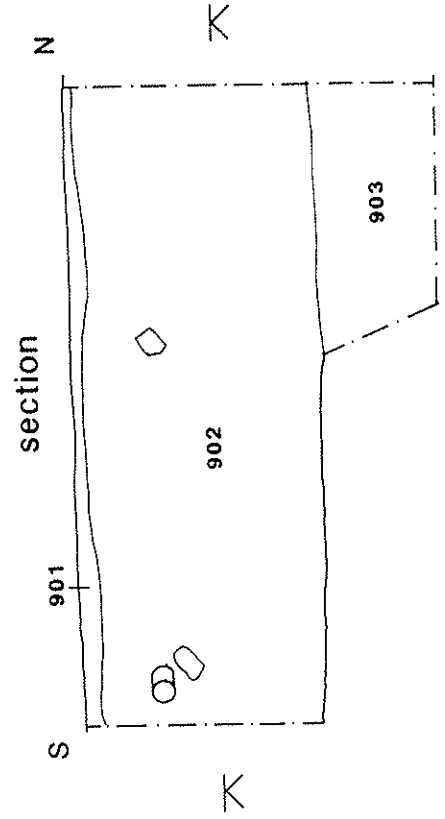
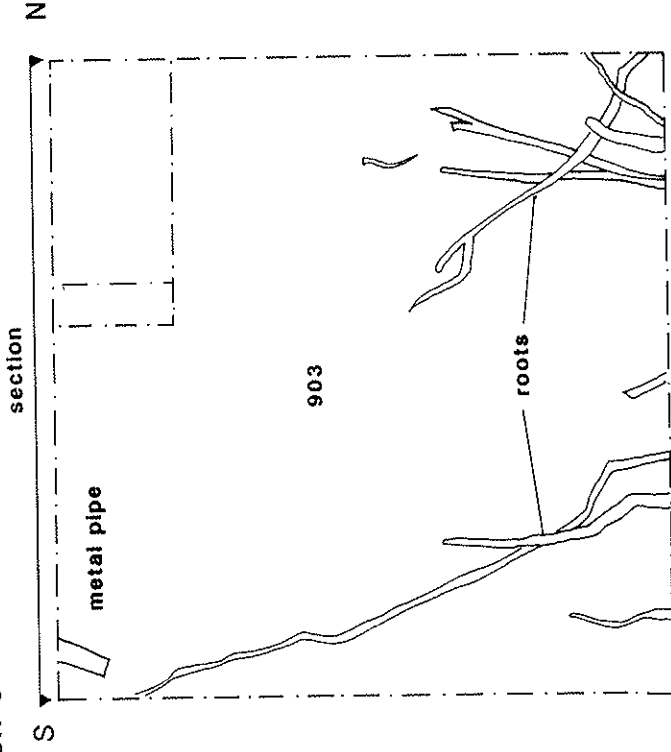


scale 1:20 for trench sections

figure 5

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Trench 9



Trench 8

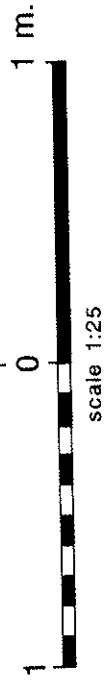
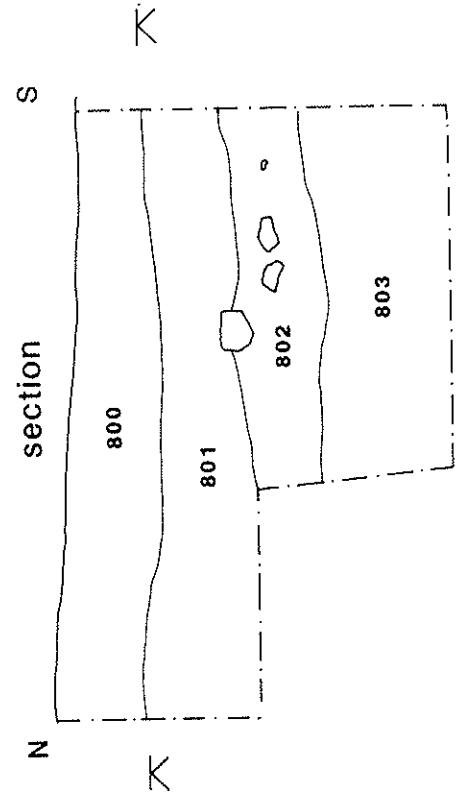
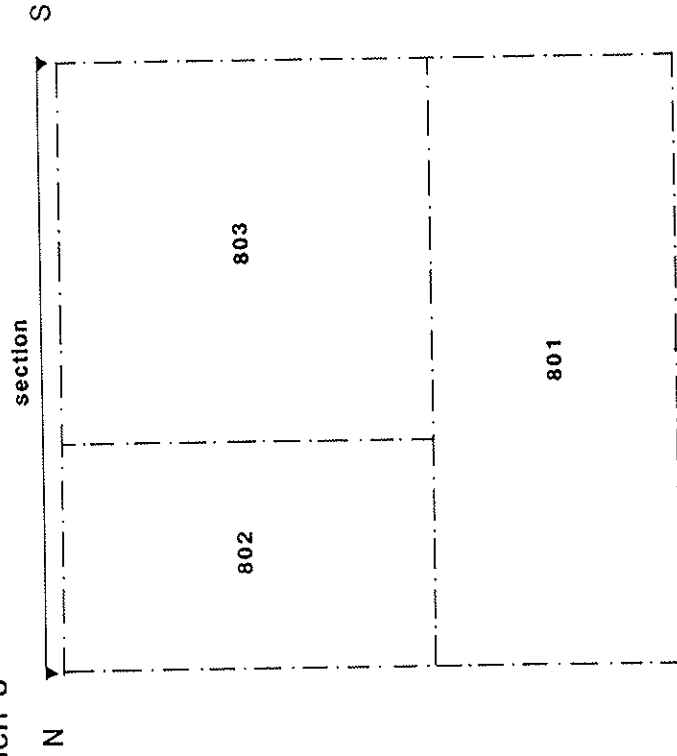


figure 6



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