Marlow Flood Alleviation Scheme Pound Lane Marlow Buckinghamshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Marlow Flood Alleviation Scheme

Pound Lane, Buckinghamshire

NGR: SU 842 855

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

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SUMMARY

In April 2005, Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out a field evaluation at Pound Lane in Marlow, (NGR: SU 842 855), on behalf of the Environment Agency. Aerial photography and intermittent investigations carried out by the local archaeological society in the adjacent southern field had identified three ring ditches, two irregular enclosures and a concentration of finds along the field boundary shared with the present site. This evaluation was designed to investigate the potential continuation of this archaeological activity and identify the presence of any previously unknown archaeological remains that may be impacted by the proposed construction of a 280 m length of wall or embankment and a flood compensation storage zone covering an area of 3,100 sq. m. A total of twenty-eight trenches were opened on the basis of geophysical survey results and the local topography.

Overall the archaeology was fragmented and isolated in nature, but principally of early prehistoric/Neolithic date. Trenches 1, 2, 3, and 4, denote an area at the western limit of the site that potentially indicates the continuation of associated activity defined by previous work to the south. Greater coherence and potential organisation of archaeological features and deposits was present to the north, specifically in Trenches 4, 12, 13, and 17, (including 13b and 13c). The eastern edge of the investigation area in which Trenches 21 (including 21b and 21c), 22, 25, 26, 27 were placed reveals further evidence for isolated activity but with few material remains to support interpretation.

1 INTRODUCTION: LOCATION AND SCOPE OF WORK

1.1.1 Between the 4th and 11th April 2005, Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out a field evaluation at Marlow in Buckinghamshire (Fig. 1) on behalf of the Environment Agency. A Written Scheme of Investigation was agreed with the Environment Agency (EA) and with David Radford of Buckinghamshire County Council, in respect of a permitted development being undertaken by the EA.

1.1.2 The development by EA concerns a proposal for the construction of a 280 m length of wall or embankment and a flood compensation storage zone covering an area of 3,100 sq. m. A significant aspect of the works would involve the removal of the topsoil and approximately 0.3 m of subsoil.

1.1.3 The site is located on the south-west margins of Marlow, Buckinghamshire (at NGR: SU 842 855), *c* 700 m west of the river Thames.

2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

2.1.1 The site lies on an island of floodplain terrace gravel surrounded by alluvium (BGS sheet 255, 1979) and heights within the field range from 28.48 m OD to 29.09 m OD. The site occupies the higher ground within the field, with a decrease in height away from the central area.

2.1.2 A small stream runs along the edge of the field to the north-west, situated within a wooded area beyond which the ground rises to form the western hill line overlooking the site. Earthworks and a number of large trees to the north, north-west and north-east delineate old field boundaries that have been absorbed during re-division of the landscape. Smaller earthworks are randomly situated throughout the investigation area with no regularity or structure.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 Previous Work

3.1.1 The archaeological background to the evaluation has been the subject of earlier research as part of the original Written Scheme of Investigation (OA, 2005). The results are summarised below.

3.1.2 The site lies in an area of known archaeological potential. Aerial photographs of the site and its surroundings show a number of cropmarks consistent with later prehistoric funerary and agricultural activity (SMR Nos. BC 3512 -17).

3.1.3 A series of up to four circular ring ditches, interpreted as barrows, have been identified near Lower Grounds Farm to the immediate south-west of the site. One of these appears to be a double-ditched feature. These cropmarks have been interpreted as a barrow cemetery dating from the late Neolithic period through to the late Iron Age. Associated linear features suggest a field system and possible palaeo-channels.

3.1.4 The Marlow Archaeological Society has investigated the cropmark complex over a number of years. This involved field-walking, geophysical survey and limited trial trenching (N.B. MAS have been contacted by the Environment Agency and OA with regard to providing further information on their investigations of the site and to ensure they have access to OA works and results). Details of these phases of work are held in the county Sites and Monuments Record (SMR).

3.1.5 Field-walking undertaken in 1999 and 2000 produced a concentration of finds along the north edge of the southern field (adjacent to the current study area). These consisted of flint implements (142 tools, 17 cores and 106 flakes, noted as largely Mesolithic), a small amount of pottery (including 1 prehistoric sherd and 3 Roman sherds), and post-medieval finds of metal, brick and tile.

3.1.6 Geophysical surveys were undertaken in a number of areas between 1999 and 2004, although only preliminary records are present for those undertaken after 2002. These surveys have identified a number of areas of potential archaeological interest. A focused study on the three most well-defined barrows, seen previously as crop marks, has confirmed their presence. A larger magnetometer survey in the northernmost corner of the field has provided speculative evidence for a large number of ring ditches, although only the interpretative drawings are held by the SMR.

3.1.7 Successive geophysical surveys have expanded these archaeologically significant areas incorporating evidence for smaller circular monuments between the barrows. A possible link between settlement activity and the northernmost barrow, in the form of a causeway, is currently being investigated (research on this is in the initial stages). Within this interpretative drawing areas of activity are denoted by the find spots of either burnt flint or worked flint obtained during field walking. The heightened density of finds towards the northern edge of the field may be indicative of

archaeological activity or alternatively a result of re-distribution by ploughing. Unfortunately there is no original survey data to corroborate the validity of these interpretations.

3.1.8 Three evaluation trenches were opened on the site in 2001 and one of these was re-opened in 2002. Only the report on the 2002 work was available for inspection at the SMR, but the report does not make clear where the trenches were excavated. The re-excavated trench (Trench 3) revealed the position of a ditch that measured 2 m in width and 0.94 m in depth, directly beneath the ploughsoil. Finds were recovered from the topsoil, which included flint, but no prehistoric pottery. A find of a middle Bronze Age spearhead (SMR No. MBC 3488) has been noted in the vicinity of the site as being dredged from the nearby Thames gravels.

3.1.9 The combined evidence suggests not only a small group of funerary or ceremonial monuments but also possible field and settlement enclosures. This pattern of association has been noted elsewhere in the Thames valley (e.g. at South Lea Farm, Datchet). Few finds dating from the Roman to post-medieval periods have been noted in the vicinity of the site. This is almost certainly because the site lies within the Thames floodplain, and would have been for exclusively agricultural use during these periods.

3.2 Geophysical Survey

3.2.1 A geophysical survey has been carried out by West Yorkshire Archaeology Service (WYAS) and a provisional interpretative plot supplied (Fig. 2) that formed the basis for the location of the evaluation trenches. The objective of the geophysical survey was to determine the nature of any archaeological magnetic anomalies on the site and in particular to investigate whether burial monuments or associated features identified to the south continued into the current survey area.

3.2.2 Detailed survey employs the use of a sample trigger to automatically take readings at predetermined points, typically at 0.25 m intervals, on zigzag traverses spaced 1 m apart. These readings are stored in the memory of the instrument and are later transferred to a computer for interpretation. A Bartington Grad601 dual sensor magnetic gradiometer was used during this survey. The survey methodology complied with guidelines outlined by English Heritage (David 1995) and by the IFA (Gaffney, Gater and Ovenden 2002).

3.2.3 The results of the survey were inconclusive as no strong signals indicating archaeological remains were recorded. A clear SW-NE trend can be seen, although this may represent recent ploughing. Less distinct and slightly curving boundary-like features, with occasional right angled returns may indicate earlier field or enclosure boundaries, possibly in line with some crop-marks to the south. A reasonably distinct anomaly running across the north western edge of the survey might represent a palaeochannel seen in aerial photographs.

3.2.4 Further analysis of the WYAS results and how they relate to earlier MAS results will have to await submission of the final report from WYAS to the Environment Agency.

4 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

4.1.1 OA would like to thank Marlow Archaeological Society and Minas Tirith LTD for providing additional information during the course of the evaluation, where documents in the county records were incomplete.

5 EVALUATION AIMS

5.1.1 To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the proposal area and to determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains present.

5.1.2 To establish the palaeo-environmental potential of the site. Particular attention shall be given to the possibility of waterlogged deposits.

5.1.3 To make available the results of the investigation and to help define any relevant research priorities if additional archaeological investigation proves necessary.

6 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

6.1 Scope of fieldwork

6.1.1 A *c* 5% sample of the proposal area was sampled. This was equivalent to 27 trenches measuring 30 m long by 2 m wide. Each trench was excavated under close archaeological supervision by a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket. The trenches were located as shown on Fig. 2.

6.1.2 The trenches were placed to investigate areas of geophysical anomalies noted in the WYAS survey and also in 'blank' areas as a control. All trenches were positioned

with the agreement of the County Archaeological Officer. Trenches that were originally placed within the adjacent field or those that would disrupt the field boundary, defining the southern extent of the investigation area, were either removed from the scope of work or shortened, decreasing the evaluation's impact to the environment. In addition Trench 7b was removed from the program of works and Trenches 13 and 21 were extended - annotated 13B, 13C and 21B and 21C respectively. Therefore the total number of trenches was in effect increased to 32. This decision was taken by the site supervisor in agreement with OA management, site engineers Halcrow, the Environment Agency and the County Archaeological Officer in order to focus the investigation on trenches containing features of significant archaeological potential.

6.2 Fieldwork methods and recording

6.2.1 The overburden was removed under close archaeological supervision by a 360^0 mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket. Excavation proceeded to the top of the natural geology or to the top of the first significant archaeological horizon, whichever was encountered first. Where alluvium or other masking deposits were present the material was removed to ensure it did not seal archaeological remains.

6.2.2 Within trenches where the natural gravel horizon was not reached, the masking material was removed to assess the geology and possible presence of archaeological remains beneath. Trenches 12 and 15 were excavated in two parts but initial machine excavation was limited to the top of the potential archaeological horizon. Specific information about trench depths (in m OD) is detailed in Appendix 2.

6.2.3 In the case of Trench 12, the initial machined horizon revealed archaeological features and deposits. These were characterised, planned and recorded in accordance with the correct methods and procedures before the machine removal of the alluvium. Trench 15 contained no such archaeologically relevant features or deposits cutting the alluvium, thus this resulted in only a single stage of recording.

6.2.4 Trench 13 was extended in two parts to the west and east to track a ditch in plan. Trench 13B extended for 3.85 m towards the west. Trench 13C extended 9.6 metres towards the east.

6.2.5 Trench 21 was extended in two parts to characterise the form of a linear feature that had been partly revealed. Trench 21B extended for a length of 4.15 m in a northerly

direction from the western limit of trench 21. Trench 21C extended for 5 m in a southerly direction from the main body of trench 21.

6.2.6 Both Trenches 2 and 25 were extended 1 m to the north in order to incorporate the full extent of the features present.

6.2.7 The trenches were cleaned by hand and the revealed features were sampled to determine their extent and nature, and to retrieve finds and environmental samples. All archaeological features and deposits were issued with a unique context number and bulk finds were collected by context.

6.2.8 The stratigraphy of the trenches was recorded even when no archaeological deposits were identified. Spoil heaps were monitored for artefacts during the period spent on site to allow spatial distribution.

6.2.9 Trenches were planned at a scale of 1:50 with exception of the extended Trenches 13 and 21 which were also planned at 1:100 to incorporate extended trenches 13B, 13C, 21B and 21C. Section drawings of features and sample sections were drawn at a scale of 1:20. No additional sample sections were drawn for the trench extensions. All trenches, sample sections and features were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film. A more general photographic record of the evaluation was also kept. Recording followed procedures detailed in the *OAU Fieldwork Manual* (ed. D Wilkinson, 1992).

6.2.10 Archive note: Trench 12 was recorded with an incorrect numbering system. The number 001 was used instead of 01 after the Trench prefix.

7 FINDS

7.1.1 Finds were recovered by hand during the course of the excavation and labelled by context in accordance with the *OA Fieldwork Manual* and OA Standard Fieldwork methodology (OA 1992).

8 PALAEO-ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

8.1.1 Deposits of environmental significance were bulk sampled in accordance with the project aims, OA's Environmental Manual and English Heritage *Guidelines Environmental Archaeology* (2002).

8.1.2 Deposits of a charcoal-rich nature were targeted and representative samples of fills of cut features and other deposits were taken. Particular emphasis was placed on samples taken from pit 313 in Trench 3. This was specifically to check for the presence of charred remains and microscopic associated material. No deposits or horizons that were waterlogged or rich in organic remains were identified.

9 PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

9.1.1 A general description of the soils, ground conditions, the stratigraphic sequences and distribution of archaeological deposits is given below. The empty trenches are listed with a brief description, though trenches containing features are described in detail. Levels are provided by trench (Appendix 2) and noted in the text, but are not shown on individual section drawings.

9.1.2 Trench descriptions are followed by a description of the finds and a summary discussion of the results. A table of individual contexts is given in Appendix 1

9.1.3 A table of trench orientations, basal heights at the limits of the trenches and depth to the archaeological horizon from the current ground surface is given in Appendix 2.

10 RESULTS: SOILS AND GROUND CONDITIONS

10.1.1 The field in which the evaluation took place is located on the Thames floodplain and is currently under pasture. Ground surface heights range between 28.48 m and 29.09 m OD. No documentation exists to suggest that intrusive methods of farming have taken place within the boundaries of this field, although the results of this evaluation suggest otherwise.

10.1.2 The limited area of geology exposed within trench bases suggests a series of gravel islands dispersed within a marshy/ shrubby environment interlaced with meandering streams and isolated pools. Access and route ways would have been limited but the landscape seems likely to have been open. The site is surrounded by steep low hills that provide a vantage point for uninterrupted views across the site and for extensive distances across the landscape in several directions.

10.1.3 The underlying geology is coarse gravel with a sandy silt matrix. The original extent of the alluvial deposits present is unknown due to redistribution and disruption from intrusive ploughing methods. This redistributed material has been defined as a subsoil in the context of this investigation.

11 RESULTS: DESCRIPTION OF DEPOSITS

11.1.1 Archaeological features were absent from Trenches 6, 7, 8, 11, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 23. In the majority of the trenches, the stratigraphic sequence consisted of geological gravels overlain by a mid-red/brown sandy clay subsoil, 0.19 m in depth. This was covered by a diffuse and insubstantial dark reddish brown sandy clay topsoil layer with a maximum thickness of 0.23 m. In a small number of trenches the alluvial deposits were thicker and unaffected by ploughing. These deposits occupied the lower ground between the gravel islands or were within probable palaeo-channels, or pockets defined by a yellow sand of varying thickness.

11.1.2 Trenches 18, 22, 26 contained possible archaeological features that were recorded in plan only. Undulations in the natural gravels, and the results of bioturbation and animal activity was evidenced in all of the trenches. Animal activity was predominantly concentrated in the trenches near the boundary at the southern edge of the field and was easily identified during machine excavation. Distinguishing between the naturally formed features and deposits on site and those formed as a direct result of human activity occasionally proved problematic. This refers specifically to the comparison between suspected pits, tree throw holes and natural hollows between features in Trenches 3, 9 and 21 (including 21b and 21c).

12 RESULTS: TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS

12.1 Trenches 1-10

Trench 1

12.1.1 Trench 1 (Fig. 3) measured 30 m in length and 1.85 m in width and was orientated N-S. The geological gravel (103) was encountered between 27.8 m and 28.3 m OD.

12.1.2 Trench 1 contained a single sub-circular pit (104). It was filled with a dark red/brown clayey sand (105), which was most likely derived from the erosion of surrounding ground surface material into the feature.

12.1.3 A small quantity of burnt flint and sparse charcoal flecks was present within the fill though no dating evidence was retrieved. This feature was sealed by a layer of mid reddish brown sandy clay subsoil (102), which was overlain by 0.23 m of topsoil (101).

Trench 2

12.1.4 Trench 2 (Fig. 4) measured 31 m in length and 1.8 m in width and was orientated N-S. The geological gravel (203) was encountered between 28.3 m and 28.6 m OD. Only the northern end of this trench contained archaeological features. A large tree throw hole (212) produced a number of flint artefacts, and four small irregular pits or natural hollows were identified. Two of these (204 and 208) produced flint blades or waste flakes.

12.1.5 Feature 204 was sub-circular in shape with a concave profile and measured 0.55 m in diameter and 0.08 m in depth. Feature 206 was sub-circular in shape with a concave to flat base and concave sides and measured 0.52 m in diameter and 0.1 m in depth. Feature 208 was sub-circular in shape with a concave profile and measured 0.46 m in diameter and 0.15 m in depth. Feature 210 was sub-circular in shape with a concave profile and measured 0.74 m in diameter and 0.18 m in depth. The fills of each of these smaller features were mid-orange/brown sand silts (with a small clay component). Tree throw hole 212 was irregular in shape and profile. It was filled by a dark grey and mid reddish brown clayey silt (213) and contained fragments of burnt and un-burnt angular flint along with traces of charcoal flecks.

12.1.6 These features were overlain by a layer of mid orange brown sandy clay subsoil (202) that was sealed by a layer of topsoil (201).

Trench 3a

12.1.7 Trench 3a (Fig. 5) was 30 m in length and 1.8 m in width and orientated approximately E-W. The gravel natural was encountered between 28 m and 28.5 m OD.

12.1.8 Trench 3a contained a single pit (305) that was circular in shape with straight sides and a concave base. It measured 1.6 m in diameter and 0.54 m in depth and was situated *c* 2 metres from the east limit of the trench.

12.1.9 The pit was filled by a single deposit (304) of dark grey sandy silt and contained fragments of burnt flint. The feature was overlain by a layer of mid orange brown sandy clay subsoil (302) that was sealed by a layer of topsoil (301).

Trench 3b

12.1.10 Trench 3b was an extension of Trench 3(a) and was 28.6 m in length and 1.8 m in width and orientated N-S. The geological gravel natural was encountered between 28.3 m and 28.5 m OD.

12.1.11 Pit 316 was situated on the intersection of a and b, and although the interface between the cut and the natural was clear, the feature contained no finds and its function could not be determined. Pit 313 was situated towards the southern limit of Trench 3b and contained a large number of artefacts providing a datable assemblage. Much of the material within the pit was made up of two deliberate dumped deposits (309 and 311). These were interspersed with gravelly deposits from the feature sides. Pottery fragments were located on depositional interfaces. High quality flint work and debitage was spread throughout the deposit suggesting that it entered the pit as part of the source material.

12.1.12 A tree hole was also recorded (307). It was irregular in shape and had uneven edges and was filled with dark grey/brown sandy silt (306); a number of flints were recovered from the surface of this deposit.

12.1.13 These features were overlain by mid-orange brown sandy clay subsoil layer 302 that was sealed by topsoil layer 301.

Trench 4

12.1.14 Trench 4 (Fig. 6) was 30 m in length and 1.8 m in width and orientated approximately E-W. The gravel natural (403) was encountered between 27.8 m and 27.9 m OD.

12.1.15 A small pit (404) in the south part of the trench extended from the south baulk. It measured 0.2 m in depth and 0.6 m in width. The dark reddish brown sandy clay fill contained a large quantity of charcoal and occasional fragments of burnt flint. No datable finds were retrieved. The deposit most likely derived from human activity and was dumped into the pit.

12.1.16 Towards the eastern limit if the trench, five ditches and gullies were identified, all crossing the trench on a broadly N-S alignment. Ditch 406 had an asymmetrical profile and a concave base, with the west side steeper than the east. The ditch measured 1.28 m in width and 0.43 m in depth. No finds were recovered.

12.1.17 Gully 408 had smooth concave gradually sloping sides and a concave base. It measured 0.33 m in width and 0.1 m in depth. Gully 410 was shallow and irregular in profile and measured 0.6 m in width and 0.09 m in depth. Ditch 412 had gradually sloping sides and a flat base and measured 0.87 m in width and 0.12 m in depth.

12.1.18 All of these features were filled by a homogenous dark red/brown sandy clay with very few inclusions, indicating slow deposition. The features were sealed by mid-orange brown sandy clay subsoil layer 402, which was sealed by topsoil layer 401.

Trenches 5,6,7 and 8

12.1.19 These trenches contained no archaeologically significant features or deposits. Anomalies were caused by undulations in the gravels such that natural hollows held preserved alluvial material at the archaeological horizon. In addition bioturbation, roots and vegetation hollows disturbed the natural gravels.

Trench 9

12.1.20 Trench 9 (Fig. 7) was 30 m in length and 1.8 m in width and orientated approximately E-W. The geological natural gravel (902) was encountered between 27.7 m and 28.8 m OD.

12.1.21 Two large sub-circular pits, (904 and 906) were identified, both containing possible traces of archaeological material. Pit 904 extended 0.32 metres into the trench from the northern baulk and measured 0.41 m in depth and 1.55 m in width. The single fill (903) was a medium to dark greyish brown sandy silt with occasional very small flecks of charcoal. Pit 906 also extended from the north baulk, some 1.15 m into the trench. It was 0.58 m in depth and 1.55 m in width and similar in profile to pit 904. These features were sealed by a mid orangey brown sandy clay subsoil (901), which was overlain by the friable reddish brown sandy clay topsoil (900).

Trench 10

12.1.22 Trench 10 (Fig. 8) was 30 m in length and 1.8 m in width and orientated approximately N-S. The geological gravel natural was encountered between 28.2 m and 28.5 m OD. A narrow insubstantial NE-SW aligned ditch (1004) was 0.28 m deep. The two fills (1005 and 1006) were mid-grey/brown sandy silts and were recorded in section; no finds were recovered. Feature 1007 was a small oval shaped pit with steep sides and a concave base, measuring 0.7 m in diameter and filled by a

dark soil (1008). These features were sealed by a friable sandy clay subsoil layer (1002) which was overlain by the topsoil (1001).

12.2 Trenches 11-20

Trench 11

12.2.1 Trench 11 was 30 m in length and 1.8 m wide and orientated approximately E-W. The natural (1103) was encountered between 28.10 m and 29.01 m OD.

12.2.2 No archaeological remains were identified within the trench. The geology varied from coarse gravel at the west of the trench to alluvial material in the east. The alluvial deposits are preserved to a significant depth here, demonstrating the presence of a probable underlying palaeo-channel. The natural was overlain by a mid-orange/brown sandy silt subsoil (1102), which was overlain by the topsoil (1101).

Trench 12

12.2.3 Trench 12 (Fig. 9) was 30 m in length and 1.8 m in width and orientated approximately E-W. The features in this trench were cut into a layer of alluvium (12003), overlying the geological gravel, which was encountered between 28.2 m and 28.3 m OD. Pit 1206 was situated *c* 13 m from the west end of the trench. It was sub-circular in shape and concave in profile with gradually sloping sides. It measured 1.27 m in diameter and 0.4 m in depth but was not fully exposed within the trench limits.

12.2.4 The earliest fill (12007) against the east edge of the pit represented slumping from that side of the feature. The later fill (12008) was a mixed dark reddish brown clayey silt containing fragments of burnt flint; no dateable material was recovered. The alluvium (12003) was 0.2 m thick and after the excavation of the feature this was removed by machine.

12.2.5 The natural gravels were encountered at 28 m OD. The alluvium (12003) was overlain a mid orangey brown sandy silt subsoil (12002), which was overlain by the topsoil (12001).

Trench 13(a)

12.2.6 Trench 13 (Fig. 10) was 30 m in length and 1.8 m in width and orientated approximately N-S. The geological gravel natural (1303) was encountered between

27.8 m and 28.2 m OD. Additional trench extensions were opened either side of this trench.

12.2.7 A NE-SW orientated ditch (1304) extended from the west to east baulk. It measured 0.81 m in width and 0.42 m in depth at this point with a `V'-shaped profile. The primary fill (1307) was made up of fine grits and small gravels and represents the stabilisation of the feature sides. This was overlain by fill 1306, a gravel rich deposit that originated from this side of the ditch. The upper fill (1305) was a mid orangey grey sandy silt.

12.2.8 Feature 1308 represents the void left by the removal of vegetation or the filling of a hollow within the natural gravel geology. The feature was filled with a grey brown sandy silt (1309) with no visible inclusions. A similar soilmark to this just south of ditch 1304 was thought to be not a real feature.

12.2.9 The natural gravels were overlain a mid orangey brown sandy silt subsoil (1302), which was overlain by the topsoil (1301).

Trench 13b

12.2.10 Trench 13b was 3.85 m in length and 1.87 m in width and orientated approximately E-W. The geological gravel natural (1303) was encountered at 28.1 m OD.

12.2.11 The trench contained the south-east terminus of the NE-SW orientated linear feature (1304). The original intervention was extended to incorporate the terminal end of the ditch length. As a result, a significant portion of the ditch was excavated and a substantial flint assemblage retrieved. The natural gravels were overlain by a mid orangey brown sandy silt subsoil (1302) which was overlain by the topsoil (1301).

Trench 13c

12.2.12 Trench 13c was 9.6 m in length and 1.87 m in width and orientated approximately E-W. The geological gravel natural was encountered at 28 m OD.

12.2.13 Cut (1310) represents the NE terminal end to the NE-SW linear feature (1304) that was identified in trenches 13(a) and 13b. A single mid-orange brown sandy silt fill was present within the cut at this point (1311) and a number of flint artefacts were recovered.

12.2.14 The natural gravels were overlain by a mid orangey brown sandy silt subsoil (1302) which was overlain by the topsoil (1301).

Trench 14

12.2.15 Trench 14 (Fig. 12) was 30 m in length and 1.8 m in width and orientated approximately E-W. The natural was encountered between 28.1 m and 28.4 m OD.

12.2.16 This trench contained the terminus of a possible NE-SW aligned ditch (1404). It extended some 1.8 m into the trench from the south baulk and was 0.3 m in depth. It was filled by a single deposit (1405). The continuation of the feature was not identified in any of the other trenches in the area. Probable non-archaeological features were identified in the geophysical survey and confirmed in this trench. They were recorded in plan only.

12.2.17 The natural gravels were overlain a mid orangey brown sandy silt subsoil (1402) which was overlain by the topsoil (1401).

Trench 15

12.2.18 Trench 15 (Fig. 13) was 30 m in length and 1.8 m in width and orientated approximately N-S. The geological gravel (1503) was encountered between 27.7 m and 28.3 m OD.

12.2.19 No archaeology was present within the trench, though alluvial material was preserved *in situ*. Underneath and overlying the natural gravels some 1.2 m below the current ground surface was a patchy yellow-white sand (1504). This was overlain by a coarse red sand (1505). Above this was the alluvial material (1506). Elsewhere this alluvium had been disturbed and redistributed to form the subsoil. It survived in Trench 15 to a greater depth, perhaps due to the presence of a palaeochannel.

12.2.20 The alluvium was overlain by a mid orangey brown sandy silt subsoil (1502) which was overlain by the topsoil (1501)

Trench 16

12.2.21 No archaeologically significant features or deposits are present. The geological gravel natural was encountered between 28.2 m and 28.5 m OD.

Trench 17

12.2.22 Trench 17 (Fig. 14) was 30 m in length and 1.8 m in width and orientated approximately E-W. The gravel natural was encountered between 27.9 m and 28.1 m OD, overlain by a layer of alluvium (1703) into which the features were cut.

12.2.23 The archaeology within this trench consisted of a small sub-circular pit (1704) that measured 0.5 m in diameter and 0.24 m in depth. It was concave in profile and filled by a mid-grey moderate sandy silt (1705) mostly seen in section. A similar-sized feature with comparable fill was noted to the east (1712). Linear feature 1706 was a possible E-W orientated ditch that was just revealed at the edge of the trench. It was filled by deposit 1707 that was mainly observed in section. It was a mid to dark grey moderate sandy clay with no inclusions. A ?gully terminus (1710) was identified against the north baulk; the fill (1711) was undated.

12.2.24 The features were overlain by a friable mid orangey brown sandy silt subsoil (1702) which was overlain by the topsoil (1701).

Trench 18

12.2.25 Trench 18 (Fig. 15) was 30 m in length and 1.8 m in width and orientated approximately N-S. The geological gravel natural was encountered between 28.1 m and 28.2 m OD. No archaeologically significant features or deposits were present. Towards the northern limit of Trench 18 was a possible tree throw hole (1805) containing fill 1806, a mixed orangey brown and grey sandy silt. No artefacts were retrieved.

12.2.26 The natural gravel was overlain by a friable orangey brown sandy silt subsoil (1802) and that overlain by the topsoil (1801).

Trenches 19 and 20

12.2.27 No archaeologically significant features or deposits were present. The natural gravels were overlain by a mid orangey brown sandy silt subsoil (1902/2002) which was overlain by the topsoil (1901/2001).

12.3 Trenches 21-27

Trench 21(a)

12.3.1 Trench 21 (Fig. 16) was 30 m on length and 1.8 m in width and aligned approximately E-W. Curvilinear ditch 2103 was aligned NW-SE and was re-cut by ditch 2105 which removed most of the original feature fill. It was filled by (2104), a mid-brown clay silt. This deposit was probably naturally derived and may have originated from a positive feature or silting from exposed alluvial deposits. Re-cut 2105 had a `V'-shaped profile and measured 1.1 m in width and 0.5 m in depth. It contained a much darker material (2106) that had been disturbed by rooting. The

trench was extended to ascertain the form of this feature in plan. No further part of this feature was revealed.

12.3.2 The feature was sealed by a mid orangey brown sandy silt subsoil (2101) which was overlain by the topsoil (2100).

Trench 21b

12.3.3 This trench (Fig. 17) was an extension of Trench 21 to establish the form in plan of ditch 2103 and re-cut 2105. These features were not present, but several tree throws and vegetation hollows were uncovered. Irregular tree throw hole 2108 was filled by mid orangey brown fill 2107 and was recorded in full, the other two vegetation hollows were limited to a record in plan only.

Trench 21c

12.3.4 The south terminus of the feature represented by 2103 and 2105 extended some 0.2 metres into the area denoted by this trench. No further archaeological remains were identified.

Trench 22

12.3.5 Trench 22 (Fig. 18) was 30 m in length and 1.8 m in width and orientated approximately N-S. The natural was encountered between 28.1 m and 28.3 m OD.

12.3.6 Feature 2203 was a fairly substantial post-hole with part of the post-pipe still visible. The post-pipe hole had been filled by two mid brown sandy silt fills (2204 and 2205), which formed after the removal/decay of the post. The erosion of surrounding ground surface material formed final fill 2206. No artefactual remains were retrieved from any of the fills.

12.3.7 Two cuts (2207 and 2209) were shallow possible sub-circular pits. Both were approximately 0.8 m in diameter and were 0.09 to 0.14 m in depth. They were regular in shape, with concave profiles. No artefacts were recovered so their date and function remains unknown.

12.3.8 Ditch 2211 had shallow sides and a flat base and measured 0.7 m in width and 0.14 m in depth. The single fill (2212) derived from erosion of surrounding ground surface material.

12.3.9 The cut extended from the eastern limit of the trench for 1.3 m towards the west and slightly curved towards the north. The feature may be represent a small drip gully associated with a structure.

Trench 23 and 24

12.3.10 These trenches contained no archaeologically significant features or deposits. Trench 24 (Fig. 19) contained a sub-circular natural feature (2403) which was filled by deposit 2404.

Trench 25

12.3.11 Trench 25 (Fig. 20) was 30 m n length and 1.8 m in width and orientated approximately N-S. The geological gravel natural was encountered at 27.9 m OD.

12.3.12 Tree throw hole 2504 was filled by deposit 2505 and measured 0.25 m in depth. No artefacts were recovered. Gully 2506 was orientated E-W and measured 0.78 m in width and 0.15 m in depth. It was filled by 2507, a mid to dark brownish grey clayey silt, deriving predominantly from erosion of the surrounding ground. The ditch was not identified in nearby trenches and no artefacts were recovered from the feature.

12.3.13 An insubstantial post-hole (2508) was situated by the side of ditch 2506. It measured 0.45 m in diameter and 0.16 m in depth. It was filled by deposit 2509, a mid to dark brownish grey clay silt. On the opposing side was a similar feature 2510, 0.5 m in diameter and 0.08 m in depth. It was filled by 2511, also a mid to dark brownish grey clay silt.

12.3.14 These features were sealed by a mid orangey brown friable sandy silt subsoil (2502). This was overlain by the topsoil (2501).

Trench 26

12.3.15 No archaeologically significant features or deposits were present. Cut 2603, filled by 2604,and cut 2605 was filled by 2606 represent tree throws or natural features. Plans of these features were drawn.

Trench 27

12.3.16 Trench 27 (Fig. 21) was 30 m in length and 1.8 m in depth and was orientated approximately N-S. The geological gravel natural was encountered between 27.8 m and 27.9 m OD.

12.3.17 Curvilinear ditch 2704 was centrally located within the trench and was aligned E-W. It measured 1 m in width and 0.25 m in depth. It was filled by two deposits, the earliest of which (2705) was a mid grey sandy silt that derived from the northern side of the ditch. The upper fill of the ditch (2706) was a mid orangey brown clay silt and had a diffuse interface with the subsoil. The continuation of the ditch was not identified in the surrounding trenches. A small sub-circular pit (2707) was filled by deposit 2708. This fill was a mid greyish brown sandy silt with occasional gravel inclusions that contained one small flint flake.

12.3.18 These features were sealed by a friable orangey brown sandy silt subsoil (2702) which was overlain by the topsoil (2701).

13 FINDS

13.1.1 Full finds reports are contained in the Appendices.

Prehistoric Pottery

13.1.2 A total of 117 sherds of prehistoric pottery were recovered from pit 313 in Trench 3b, from the subsoil (302) in Trench 3b and from a ditch (feature 415) in Trench 4. Most of this pottery consisted of sherds of early Neolithic Plain Bowl and the material was in good condition.

13.1.3 The sherds from pit 313 represent a minimum of two bowls and the majority of the remaining sherds probably originated from one open carinated plain bowl.

Worked flint

13.1.4 The majority of the struck flint (139 pieces) came from pit 313 in Trench 3, a feature also rich in early Neolithic Plain Bowl pottery sherds. This association, combined with its technological appearance, clearly dates the assemblage to the early Neolithic. The worked flint from this pit was mainly un-retouched debitage but also included one core and ten retouched pieces, mainly serrated flakes.

13.1.5 A notable absence of scrapers confirms an early Neolithic date for this group. A large assemblage was also identified during the sieving of the fill of tree throw hole 212 in Trench 2, but is yet to be fully recorded after its discovery during the environmental processing stage. Burnt, unworked flint was also recovered from pit 313 (11 pieces).

Worked stone

13.1.6 Two pieces of burnt quartzite pebble were retrieved from contexts 309 and 311, the fills of pit 313 in Trench 3. These are adjoining and form part of a rubbing stone with two worn faces.

Charred plant remains

13.1.7 Significant charred plant remains were identified from tree throw hole 212 in Trench 2; pit 313 in Trench 3 and pit 405 in Trench 4. All of these features were located in the north-west part of the site. Tree throw hole 212 contained a large amount of hazelnut shells and may have been utilised for cooking activities. Pit 313 also contained hazelnut shells, found in conjunction with grains of charred spelt/emmer wheat. Oak and apple wood charcoal was also identified. Pit 405 was rich in oak charcoal.

14 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

14.1 Reliability of field investigation

14.1.1 Archaeological features were easily identified on the gravel. However, in many trenches, there was natural disturbance in the gravel leaving hollows filled with undisturbed alluvial material. Tree throw holes, bioturbation and animal burrows were also present. These features were sampled but the majority proved archaeologically insignificant.

14.1.2 There was no intrusion by modern services or land drains. Ploughing seems to have redistributed alluvial material that may once have existed across the entire investigation area. This redistribution forms the current subsoil, which exists from between 0.36-0.52 m below the current ground surface.

14.1.3 Due to this, in the majority of trenches, the subsoil is in direct contact with the natural gravels and preservation of positive features is unlikely. Impact by ploughing on the negative archaeological remains appears minimal though the exact damage cannot accurately be quantified. Alluvial deposits were present in some areas at depths that were unaffected by ploughing

14.1.4 The percentage sample, distribution and positioning of the evaluation trenches placed have given a reasonable understanding of the overall potential archaeology on site.

14.1.5 The fragmentary nature of the features present means confirming focal areas of archaeological activity proved problematic. The geophysical survey undertaken prior

to the evaluation proved ineffective and trench placements were unable to support the results.

14.2 Overall interpretation

14.2.1 The focus of archaeological activity is exhibited in an arc extending from the west part of the site in the area of Trenches 1, 2, 3, 3b, and 4 (Fig. 22,, features highlighted by trench). It then passes through the north part of the investigation area with archaeological remains present in Trenches 12, 13 and 17, turning back towards the south and east with preserved features in trenches 21, 21b, 21c, 22, 25, 26, and 27.

14.2.2 The archaeological remains are fragmentary in nature and the vast majority of the features were isolated pits and ditch segments. Where a linear feature was present and was not fully characterised in plan by trench extensions, its continuation was not found in surrounding trenches or identified by the geophysical data.

14.2.3 The results suggest that a continuation of the activity previously identified in the adjacent southern field continues across the western limit of the site. This is supported by the presence of residual material remains in hollows and tree throws coupled with a number of isolated pits. One in particular (313) has produced a significant artefact assemblage and is securely dated to the early Neolithic. This pit also yielded a flint assemblage, charred hazelnut shells and charred grains of spelt/emmer wheat suggesting at least a small early Neolithic settlement with arable cultivation nearby.

14.2.4 Nearby woodland was almost certainly exploited as a food source, indicated by the hazelnut shells. It is likely that these remains were deposited in the pit as fire debris. Tree throw hole 212 was probably utilised as a pit for the disposal of fire debris and domestic rubbish or even for cooking activity. A large number of charred hazelnut shells were recovered from the fill (213), along with a blade based flint assemblage of probable Mesolithic or early Neolithic date, although more work needs to be undertaken on this assemblage to clarify this. Pit 404 contained large amounts of oak charcoal.

14.2.5 The peak period of round barrow construction began in the late Neolithic to early Bronze Age (beaker) period. This suggests that the although the development area was occupied for a time before these monuments were built, it does not necessarily imply continuous settlement here in the earlier prehistoric period.

14.2.6 In the north of the site evidence for early occupation from the two pits and a tree throw hole was reiterated by the presence of a number of linear ditches in trench 4. This suggests the re-establishment of boundaries, which implies a degree of longevity of occupation. The situation was similar in the north-east of the site. Pits and linear alignments representing probable boundaries divide the landscape but lack of finds means that a date for these remains is unknown.

14.2.7 Trench 17 revealed that either the archaeology within this investigation area was originally cut through alluvial deposits or that a number of phases of occupation took place. This can only be established through further work. A decrease in the level of impact caused by ploughing, coupled with differing geological factors in the immediate area, means that the archaeology was preserved to a much greater extent in this trench and potentially in the surrounding areas and towards the north.

14.2.8 Datable material was limited to features in Trenches 2, 3bB and 4, much of which has potential for radiocarbon dating. Neither of the potential areas of low intensity archaeological remains to the north or east provided anthropogenic remains.

15 IMPACT OF THE DEVELOPMENT

15.1.1 This evaluation has produced results suggesting that the main bulk of archaeological activity is likely to be located towards the edges of the investigation area. Isolated features are not able to be quantified, though works within the western limit of site should be avoided due to the increased potential discovered as a result of this evaluation.

15.1.2 Figure 22 also demonstrates the areas of the site in which no archaeologically significant features or deposits were located. OA suggests that the proposed works would be best situated in this zone, where adverse impact on the interpretative value to future work would be minimal. However, consideration should be given to the indirect methods by which continual movement of soil and machinery may effect the sealed features and deposits outside this area.

15.1.3 The presence of isolated features within the proposed zone remains a possibility, specifically in the south and west, where analysis has revealed a possible settlement site of early Neolithic date. If present these may prove important for the generation of additional information in order to place the nearby monumental structures within a wider archaeological context. Consideration should be given to further mitigation in

the form of archaeological presence when the proposed works are carried out. This would also prove useful in ensuring the archaeological remains are not indirectly impacted.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT TABLE

Trench	Context	Type	Width	Thickness	Comment	Finds	No/Weight	Date
1	101	Layer		0.23	Topsoil			
	102	Layer		0.19	Subsoil			
	103	Layer			Natural			
	104	Cut	0.84	0.22	Pit			
	105	Fill	0.84	0.22	fo. 104	B.Flint		
2	201	Layer			Topsoil			
	202	Layer			Subsoil			
	203	Layer			Natural			
	204	Cut	0.55	0.08	Pit			
	205	Fill	0.55	0.08	fo. 204	Flint		
	206	Cut	0.47	0.1	Pit			
	207	Fill	0.47	0.1	fo. 206			
	208	Cut	0.4	0.15	Pit			
	209	Fill	0.4	0.15	fo. 208	Flint		
	210	Cut	0.64	0.18	Pit			
	211	Fill	0.64	0.18	fo. 210			
	212	Cut	1.94	0.4	Tree Throw			
	213	Fill	1.94	0.4	fo. 212	Flint		
3	301	Layer			Topsoil			
	302	Layer			Subsoil			
	303	Layer			Natural			
	304	Fill	1.6	0.54	fo. 305			
	305	Cut	1.6	0.54	Pit			
3B	301	Layer			Topsoil			
	302	Layer			Subsoil			
	303	Layer			Natural			
	306	Fill	0.84	0.32	fo. 307	Flint		
	307	Cut	0.8E/W - 1.3N/S	0.32	Tree Throw			
	308	Fill	0.88E/W - 1.10N/S	0.22	fo. 313	Flint		
	309	Fill	0.65E/W - 0.47N/S	0.18	fo. 313	Pottery Flint Stone		
	310	Fill	0.65E/W -	0.28	fo. 313			

			0.30N/S					
	311	Fill	0.49E/W - 0.47N/S	0.28	fo. 313	Pottery Flint Stone		
	312	Fill	0.67N/S - 0.59E/W	0.14	fo. 313			
	313	Cut	1.10N/S - 0.87E/W	0.63	Pit			
	314	Fill	0.38E/W - 0.45N/S	0.32	fo. 313			
	315	Fill	0.95E/W - 0.76N/S	0.3	fo. 316			
	316	Cut	0.95E/W - 0.76N/S	0.3	Pit			
4	401	Layer			Topsoil			
	402	Layer			Subsoil			
	403	Layer			Natural			
	404	Cut	0.6	0.2	Pit			
	405	Fill	0.6	0.2	fo. 404	B.Flint		
	406	Cut	1.28	0.43	Ditch			
	407	Fill	1.28	0.43	fo. 406	B.Flint		
	408	Cut	0.33	0.1	Gully			
	409	Fill	0.33	0.1	fo. 408	B.Flint		
	410	Cut	0.6	0.09	Ditch			
	411	Fill	0.6	0.09	fo. 410	B.Flint		
	412	Cut	0.87	0.12	Ditch			
	413	Fill	0.87	0.12	fo. 412	B.Flint		
	414	Cut	0.63	0.19	Ditch			
	415	Fill	0.63	0.19	fo. 414	B.Flint		
5	501	Layer		0.1	Topsoil			
	502	Layer		0.38	Subsoil			
	503	Layer			Natural			
6	601	Layer		0.11	Topsoil			
	602	Layer		0.32	Subsoil			
	603	Layer			Natural			
7	701	Layer		0.08	Topsoil			
	702	Layer		0.36	Subsoil			
	703	Layer			Natural			
8	801	Layer		0.2	Topsoil			
	802	Layer		0.26	Subsoil			
	803	Layer		0.05 ov.ex	Natural			
9	900	Layer			Topsoil			

	901	Layer			Subsoil			
	902	Layer			Natural			
	903	Fill	1.55	0.32	fo. 904			
	904	Cut	1.55	0.32	Pit			
	905	Fill	1.55E/W - 1.15N/S	0.58	fo. 906			
	906	Cut	1.55E/W - 1.15N/S	0.58	Pit			
10	1001	Layer						
	1002	Layer						
	1003	Layer						
	1004	Cut	0.3	0.28	Gully			
	1005	Fill	0.3	0.28	fo. 1004			
	1006	Fill			fo. 1004			
	1007	Cut	0.7		Pit			
	1008	Fill	0.7		fo. 1007			
11	1101	Layer		0.06	Topsoil			
	1102	Layer		0.28	Subsoil			
	1103	Layer		0.12 ov.ex	Natural			
12	12001	Layer			Topsoil			
	12002	Layer			Subsoil			
	12003	Layer			Natural			
	12004	Cut	0.4	0.14	Bioturbation			
	12005	Fill	0.4	0.14	fo. 12004	B.Flint		
	12006	Cut	1.27	0.4	Pit			
	12007	Fill	0.32	0.37	fo. 12006			
	12008	Fill	0.96	0.4	fo. 12006			
	12009	Cut	0.4	0.18	Bioturbation			
	12010	Fill	0.4	0.18	fo. 12009			
13	1301	Layer			Topsoil			
	1302	Layer			Subsoil			
	1303	Layer			Natural			
	1304	Cut	0.81	0.42	Ditch			
	1305	Fill	0.63	0.18	fo. 1304	Flint		
	1306	Fill	0.57	0.12	fo. 1304			
	1307	Fill	0.23	0.03	fo. 1304			
	1308	Cut	1.1	0.11	Tree Throw			
	1309	Fill	1.1	0.11	fo. 1308			
13B	1301	Layer			Topsoil			
	1302	Layer			Subsoil			
	1303	Layer			Natural			

13C	1301	Layer			Topsoil			
	1302	Layer			Subsoil			
	1303	Layer			Natural			
	1310	Cut			Ditch			
	1311	Fill			fo. 1310	Flint		
14	1401	Layer			Topsoil			
	1402	Layer			Subsoil			
	1403	Layer			Natural			
	1404	Cut			Ditch			
	1405	Fill			fo. 1404			
15	1501	Layer			Topsoil			
	1502	Layer			Subsoil			
	1503	Layer			Natural			
	1504	Layer			Yellow Sand			
	1505	Layer			Red/ Brown Sand			
	1506	Layer			Alluvium			
16	1601	Layer		0.06	Topsoil			
	1602	Layer		0.37	Subsoil			
	1603	Layer			Natural			
17	1701	Layer			Topsoil			
	1702	Layer			Subsoil			
	1703	Layer			Natural			
	1704	Cut			Pit			
	1705	Fill			fo. 1704			
	1706	Fill			fo. 1704			
	1707	Fill			fo. 1704			
	1708	Cut			Ditch			
	1709	Fill			fo. 1708			
	1710	Cut			Gully			
	1711	Fill			fo. 1710			
	1712	Cut			Pit			
	1713	Fill			fo. 1712			
18	1801	Layer			Topsoil			
	1802	Layer			Subsoil			
	1803	Layer			Natural			
	1804	Cut			Tree Throw			
	1805	Fill			fo. 1804			
19	1901	Layer		0.14	Topsoil			
	1902	Layer		0.34	Subsoil			
	1903	Layer			Natural			

20	2001	Layer		0.05	Topsoil			
	2002	Layer		0.26	Subsoil			
	2203	Layer		0.15 ov.ex	Natural			
21	2100	Layer			Topsoil			
	2101	Layer			Subsoil			
	2102	Layer			Natural			
	2103	Cut	0.32	0.56	Ditch			
	2104	Fill	0.32	0.56	fo. 2103			
	2105	Cut	1.02	0.56	Ditch			
	2106	Fill	1.02	0.56	fo. 2105			
	2107	Fill	1.36	0.48	fo. 2105			
	2108	Cut	1.36	0.48	fo. 2107			
22	2200	Layer			Topsoil			
	2201	Layer			Subsoil			
	2202	Layer			Natural			
	2203	Cut	0.84	0.39	Post Hole			
	2204	Fill	0.45	>0.20	fo. 2203			
	2205	Fill	0.65	0.25	fo. 2203			
	2206	Fill	0.92	0.28	fo. 2203			
	2207	Cut	0.66	0.09	Pit			
	2208	Fill	0.66	0.09	fo. 2207			
	2209	Cut	0.83	0.14	Pit			
	2210	Fill	0.83	0.14	fo. 2209			
	2211	Cut	0.7	0.14	Ditch			
	2212	Fill	0.7	0.14	fo. 2211			
23	2301	Layer		0.14	Topsoil			
	2302	Layer		0.34	Subsoil			
	2303	Layer			Natural			
24	2400	Layer			Topsoil			
	2401	Layer			Subsoil			
	2402	Layer			Natural			
	2403	Cut	0.66	0.13	Pit			
	2404	Fill	0.66	0.13	fo. 2403			
25	2501	Layer		0.16	Topsoil			
	2502	Layer		0.29	Subsoil			
	2503	Layer			Natural			
	2504	Cut	2.01	0.25	Tree Throw			
	2505	Fill	2.01	0.25	fo. 2504			
	2506	Cut	0.78	0.15	Gully			
	2507	Fill	0.78	0.15	fo. 2506			
	2508	Cut	0.45	0.16	Pit			

	2509	Fill	0.45	0.16	fo. 2508			
	2510	Cut	0.5	0.08	Pit			
	2511	Fill	0.5	0.08	fo. 2510			
26	2600	Layer		0.14	Topsoil			
	2601	Layer		0.3	Subsoil			
	2602	Layer			Natural			
	2603	Cut	0.75	0.22	Bioturbation			
	2604	Fill	0.75	0.22	fo. 2603			
	2605	Cut	0.36	0.1	Bioturbation			
	2606	Fill	0.36	0.1	fo. 2605			
27	2701	Layer			Topsoil			
	2702	Layer			Subsoil			
	2703	Layer			Natural			
	2704	Cut	1	0.25	Ditch			
	2705	Fill			fo. 2704			
	2706	Fill		0.25	fo. 2704			
	2707	Cut	0.6	0.12	Pit			
	2708	Fill	0.6	0.12	fo. 2707	Flint		

APPENDIX 2 TRENCH ORIENTATIONS

Table A2: Includes information on the average depth to the archaeological horizon from current ground surface and heights taken on the base of the trench at either end, (dependent on orientation).

Trench	Orientation	Length (m)	North (OD)	South (OD)	East (OD)	West (OD)	Depth (m)
1	N/S	30					0.43
2	N/S	31					0.38
3	E/W	30					0.30
3b	N/S	28.15					
4	E/W	30					0.50
5	N/S	30					0.50
6	E/W	30					0.43
7	N/S	30	28.7	28.63			0.42
8	N/S	30					0.40
9	E/W	30					0.48
10	N/S	30	28.5	28.22			0.36
11	E/W	30					0.38
12	E/W	30			28.13	28.48	0.72
13	N/S	30	27.88	28.24			0.34
13B	E/W	3.85					
13C	E/W	9.6					
14	E/W	30					0.44
15	N/S	30	27.74	28.32			0.50 - 1.20
16	E/W	30			28.22	28.61	0.42
17	E/W	30					0.60
18	N/S	30	28.14	28.24			0.36
19	E/W	30			28.2	28.5	0.48
20	N/S	30	28.36	28.25			0.30
21	E/W	30			28.21	27.67	0.46
21B	N/S	9.3					
21C	N/S	5					
22	N/S	30					0.46
23	E/W	30			28.26	28.2	0.47
24	N/S	30					0.52
25	N/S	31					0.40
26	E/W	30					0.38
27	N/S	30	28.06	28.01			0.45

APPENDIX 3 SECTION HEIGHTS ABOVE OD

Table A3: Trench Section Heights

TRENCH	SECTION NUMBER	HEIGHT (ABV. OD)
1	100	28.41
	101	27.98
2	200	28.64
	201	28.33
	202	28.01
	203	27.98
	204	27.98
	205	28.01
3	300	28.48
	301	28.42
	303	28.28
	304	28.49
4	400	28.92
	401	28.04
	402	28.06
	403	28.61
	404	28.8
	405	28.52
	406	28.35
5	500	28.1
6	600	27.98
7	700	27.95
8	800	28.43
9	900	28.58
	901	28.57
10	1000	28.76
	1001	28.49
11	1100	28.49
13	1300	28.78
	1301	28.52
	1302	28
14	1400	27.97
	1401	27.95
15	1500	27.99
	1501	27.98
	1502	28.14
16	1600	28.37
17	1700	28.21
	1701	28.78

	1702	28.43
	1703	28.33
	1704	27.99
18	1800	28.25
19	1900	28.01
20	2000	28.58
21	2100	28.37
	2101	28.33
	2102	28.04
22	2200	28.06
	2201	28.04
	2202	28.4
	2203	28.21
23	2300	28.33
24	2400	28.37
	2401	28.85
25	2500	28.37
	2501	28.35
	2502	28.28
	2503	28.71
26	2600	28.29
27	2700	28.33
	2701	28.51
12	12000	28.21
	12001	28.16
	12002	28.32
	12003	28.56

APPENDIX 4 POTTERY ASSESSMENT AND SPOT DATING

by Emily Edwards, OA

Introduction

A total of 5 contexts (from a pit, a ditch and the subsoil) contained 117 (678 g) sherds of pottery (Table A4 below). The great majority of this pottery was early Neolithic Plain Bowl in good condition, with some refitting sherds. The pottery was counted and weighed by context whilst fabric and form were briefly noted. Fabrics were given alphanumerical codes relating to the size of the principal inclusion. Generally speaking, in excess of 20 sherds (or several diagnostic sherds) are required from a single prehistoric feature to allow some precision of dating which takes residuality into account. This must be taken into account with the spot dating especially where there are less than five sherds.

Discussion

A minimum of two bowls were recovered from Pit 313 and the majority of sherds from all three contexts were possibly from one externally thickened, open uncarinated plain bowl. These bowls were tempered with sparse, ill-sorted crushed flint, which was of a similar fabric to the sherd from the subsoil (context 302). The abraded indeterminate sherd from the ditch (context 415) was tempered with sand and rare flint; the firing suggesting a prehistoric date.

Table A4: Table giving quantification by context.
EN: Early Neolithic, Preh: Prehistoric. F: Flint.

Feature	Context	Sherd Count	Weight (g)	Fabric	Date
Ditch 414	415	1	4	AF1	PREH
Pit 313	308	46	154	F3	EN
Pit 313	309	47	416	F3	EN
Pit 313	311	20	100	F3	EN
Subsoil	302	3	8	F3	EN
Total		***117***	***678***		

Conclusion

Further work should include a refitting exercise. It is relatively rare for an early Neolithic pit to contain many fragments of a single vessel. There is a good deal of Neolithic activity within the middle Thames region and parallels for this assemblage should be easily found.

Examples can be found at the Staines Causewayed Enclosure, the Maidenhead to Slough Flood Alleviation Scheme and Eton Rowing Lake (Alistair Barclay, OA, Pers. *Comm.*).

APPENDIX 5 WORKED FLINT

by Kate Cramp and Rebecca Devaney, OA

Introduction

An assemblage of 184 struck flints and 94 pieces (690g) of burnt unworked flint was recovered during the evaluation (Table A5 below). The majority of the struck assemblage (139 pieces) came from pit 313 and is almost certainly in contemporary association with the early Neolithic Plain Bowl pottery from the same deposit. With the exception of the unrecorded sieved material from tree-throw hole 212, the remaining flintwork was thinly scattered across the site (Table A6 below). The condition of the material varies by context but is generally fresh and uncorticated.

Table A5: Quantification of struck flint from MARFA 05, Buckinghamshire.

Category	Total
Flake	98
Bladelike flake	19
Blade	18
Bladelet	1
Irregular waste	11
Core face/edge rejuvenation flake	2
Chip	8
Multi-platform flake core	3
Retouched flake	9
Serrated flake	11
Notch	2
Piercer	1
Microlith	1
Total	***184***

Table A6: Quantification of struck flint by context from MARFA 05.

Context	Total
0	1
205	2
209	1
213	1
302	2
304	1
306	6
308	69
309	40
311	30
315	2
405	1

407	3
413	1
415	1
903	1
905	3
1305	7
2106	1
2708	1
12005	10
Total	***184***

Technology and dating

Most of the assemblage was recovered from a single feature, pit 313. A second large assemblage was identified in the sieved residues from tree-throw hole 212 but, due to its late discovery, this material is yet to be fully recorded and assessed. What follows is a preliminary description of the significant flint assemblages by feature.

Pit 313

Deposits 308, 309 and 311 within pit 313 together produced an assemblage of 139 struck flints and 11 pieces (66 g) of burnt unworked flint (Table A7). The flint-work is in a fresh, uncorticated condition and can be dated by its ceramic association and technological appearance to the early Neolithic.

Table A7: Struck flint by context and by type from pit 313.

Category	**308**	**309**	**311**	**Total**
Flake	41	24	14	79
Bladelike flake	5	5	2	12
Blade	6	6	3	15
Bladelet	1			1
Irregular waste	7		2	9
Chip	1		1	2
Multi-platform flake core	1			1
Retouched flake	2	3	2	7
Serrated flake	4	1	5	10
Notch		1	1	2
Piercer	1			1
Total	***69***	***40***	***30***	***139***

The assemblage is largely composed of un-retouched debitage, including 79 flakes and 9 pieces of irregular waste. Blades, bladelets and bladelike flakes are well represented by a combined total of 28 pieces. Many of these pieces display careful preparation and removal involving the use of platform edge abrasion and soft-hammer percussion.

The presence of a neatly worked flake core (36 g) provides limited evidence for the deposition of knapping waste. Many of the flakes and blades possess a similar cortex and probably originate from the same core. While very little microdebitage was recorded in the excavated assemblage, numerous chips were identified in the sieved residues; these will be quantified and examined in more detail at a later stage of analysis.

The retouched component is dominated by serrated flakes (ten pieces). The majority of these have been made on bladelike blanks and exhibit fine serrations to one or both lateral edges. Silica gloss was noted on the ventral surface of the edge in approximately 50 % of cases; this edge gloss probably results from use contact with silica-rich plant material such as cereals or reeds. This abundance of serrated flakes is combined with a total absence of scrapers, a characteristic seen in other early Neolithic pit assemblages, e.g. those from Newbury, Berkshire (Cramp and Lamdin-Whymark, in prep.). Other retouched pieces include simple edge retouched flakes (ten pieces) and notched flakes (two pieces); a piercer was recovered from context 308. The frequency of use-wear on unretouched edges suggests that many flakes were used in an unmodified state.

Tree-throw hole 212

While only eight pieces of burnt unworked flint were excavated by hand from this feature (context 213), a brief scan of the sieved residues was quick to establish that the feature contained a sizeable flint assemblage. Preliminary observations suggest a carefully knapped, blade-based assemblage consistent with a Mesolithic or early Neolithic flint knapping tradition.

Of particular note is the presence of a single microlith, comparable to Jacobi's type 5 (Jacobi 1978, 16, Fig. 6). This narrow-blade type is usually associated with the microlith industries of the later Mesolithic; the assemblage requires full recording and more detailed assessment before this date can be confirmed or rejected.

The remaining assemblage

The remaining 44 pieces of struck flint from the site were spread across seventeen deposits. This material is similar in character to the flintwork from pit 313 and may, for the most part, represent broadly contemporary activity.

Recommendations

Further work should begin with the complete recording of the assemblage, including any material from sieving and particularly that recovered from tree-throw hole 212. Following

this, it may be necessary to perform a technological comparison of the assemblages from pit 313 and tree-throw hole 212 in order to refine the date of the latter. The assessment identified numerous flakes of a related flint type in the material from pit 313; further refitting analysis may contribute to a discussion of the technological character of the assemblage and its depositional history. The striking number of serrated flakes in the assemblage has already been briefly referred to and would benefit from further investigation, with additional library-based research recommended in order to identify local parallels and place the Neolithic flintwork in its wider context.

APPENDIX 6 ENVIRONMENTAL DATA

by Dawn Irving and Dana Challinor, OA

Ten samples, ranging in size from 10 to 40 litres, were taken during the evaluation from several trenches, for the recovery of charred plant remains from pits, three throws and a ditch. These features date from the early Neolithic to the Bronze Age. The samples were processed for charred plant remains by flotation using a modified Siraf-type machine, with flots collected onto a 250µm mesh. After air-drying these flots were scanned for material under a binocular microscope at x10 and x20 magnification. The course residues were sorted for artefacts. Charcoal >2mm was quantified as identifiable. The results are tabulated at the end of this document after Appendix 8.

The flots ranged in size from 30 to 100ml with the exception of context (405), which contained large amounts of charcoal (approx. 1000ml). Modern contamination, in the form of roots, weed seeds and pupa cases, were present in all flots. Table A8 shows the results of the assessment, Four samples contained good assemblages of charcoal; taxa provisionally identified included *Quercus* sp. (oak), Maloideae (hawthorn, apple, pear etc) *Hedera helix* (ivy) and *Ulmus*/*Ulex* (elm)(gorse). Non-wood remains were dominated by *Corylus avellana* (hazel) nut shell fragments, which was present in most of the flots. Other charred plant remains were not so well preserved or abundant. The pits were dominated by hazelnut shell, with three samples from the same pit [313] producing some *Triticum spelta/dicoccum* (spelt/emmer wheat) cereal grains. No chaff or other environmental indicators were noted in any of the samples. The majority of samples contained flint debris but no other artefacts were retrieved.

The samples that produced the most charred material tended to come from the deposits of pits (313) and (404) . It is likely that most of the assemblages represent fire debris that was

deliberately dumped into pits. The wood charcoal was well preserved and it is likely that further analysis would increase the species list

The Neolithic samples appear to have produced charred assemblages typical of the period - lots of hazelnut shell and rare cereal remains. The quantity of nutshell recovered from the tree throw context (213) suggests that this feature was utilised either for cooking or for the deposition of materials.

The evaluation has shown that there are preserved charred plant remains from the Neolithic period at this site. Consequently, any future excavations undertaken at the site should include an appropriate strategy for sampling in accordance with current best practice, and should focus on deposits from features more likely to include charred assemblages. Pit deposits have the highest potential, (of the features examined) to provide economic information.

APPENDIX 7 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

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APPENDIX 8 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: Marlow Flood Alleviation Scheme

Site code: MARFA 05

Grid reference: SU 842 855

Type of evaluation: Machine-excavated, 28 Trench Evaluation

Date and duration of project: Undertaken between 4th April 2005 and the 11th April 2005.

Area of site: 3,100 sq. m

Summary of results: Archaeology present, isolated and fragmentary, and of early prehistoric/Neolithic date. No continuation of monuments know in adjacent fields, but associated features present. Definite impact of archaeology by proposed works. Suggestion that area of proposed works be focused and limited in depth, presence of archaeologist should be considered.

Location of archive: The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Aylesbury and Buckingham County Museum in due course, under the following accession number: AYBCM 2005.36

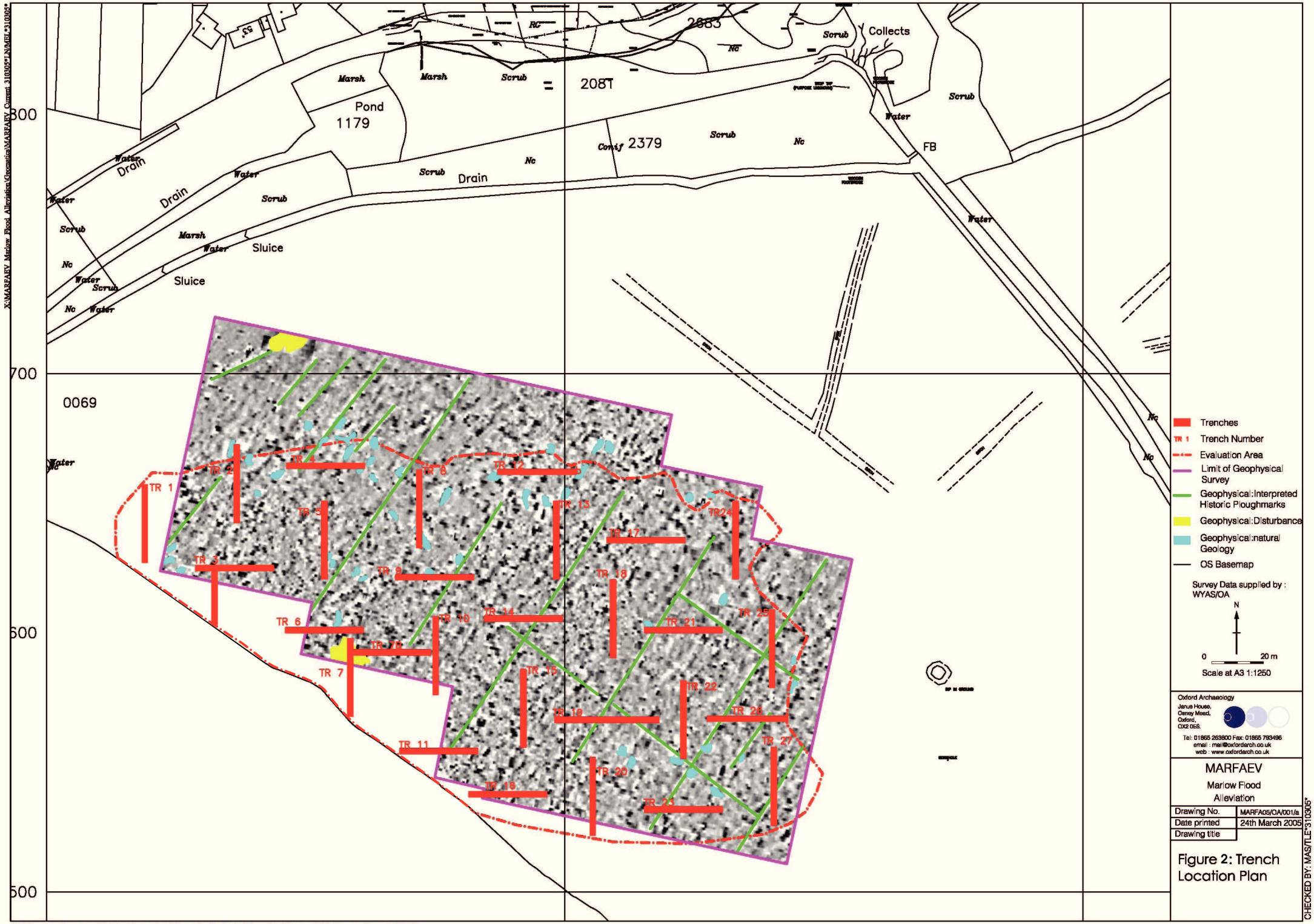
Table A8: The results of the assessment of samples of charred plant remains.

Sample no.	Context no.	Trench	Type Of Feature	Vol. (ml)	Charcoal identification		Grain		Other
					Quantity	Identification	Quantity	Identification	Quanti
001	**308**	3E	Pit [313]	30	+++	*Quercus* sp. Maloideae *Ulmus/Ulex Hedera helix* sp.	+	*Triticum* sp.	++
002	**309**	3E	Pit [313]	100	++	*Quercus* sp.	+	*Triticum* sp. *Triticum* cf. *dicoccum*	+++
003	**311**	3E	Pit [313]	40	++	*Quercus* sp. Maloideae	+	*Triticum* sp.	++
004	**2106**	21	Ditch	40					
005	**2505**	25	Tree Throw	30					
006	**905**	9	Pit	30	+	*Quercus* sp.			
007	**905**	9	Pit	30					
008	**213**	2	Tree Throw	60					++++
009	**405**	4	Pit [404]	1000	++++	*Quercus* sp.			
010	**12007**	12	Pit	30					

+ = present (up to 5 items), ++ = frequent (5-25), +++ = common (25-100), ++++ = abundant (>100)

Scale 1:25,000

Figure 1: Site location



Oxford Archaeology
Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES.
Tel: 01865 263800 Fax: 01865 793496
email : mail@oxfordarch.co.uk
web : www.oxfordarch.co.uk

MARFAEV
Marlow Flood Alleviation

Drawing No.	MARFA05/OA/001/a
Date printed	24th March 2005
Drawing title	

Figure 2: Trench Location Plan

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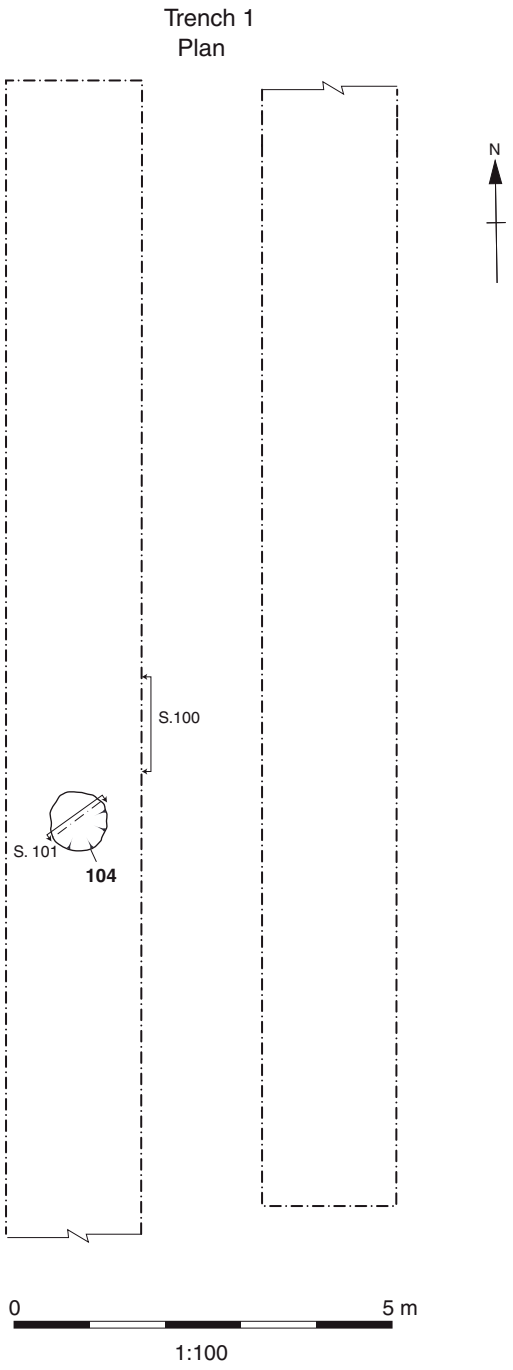
CHECKED BY: MAS/TLE*310305*



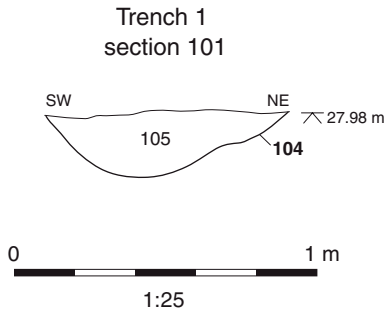
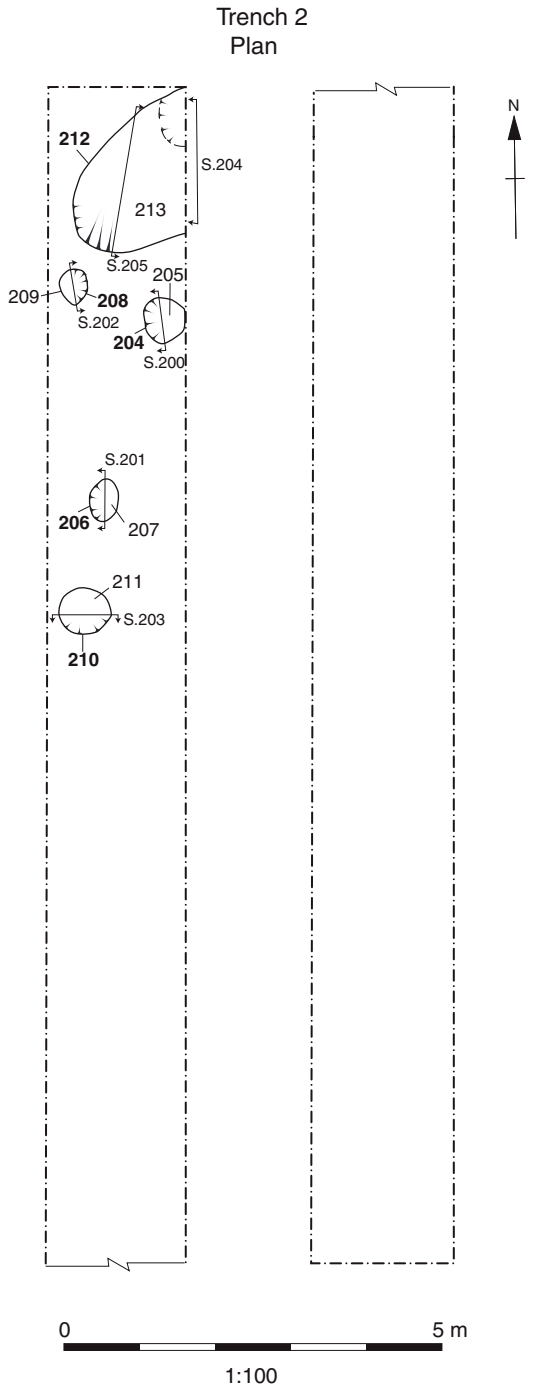


Figure 3: Trench 1, plan and section



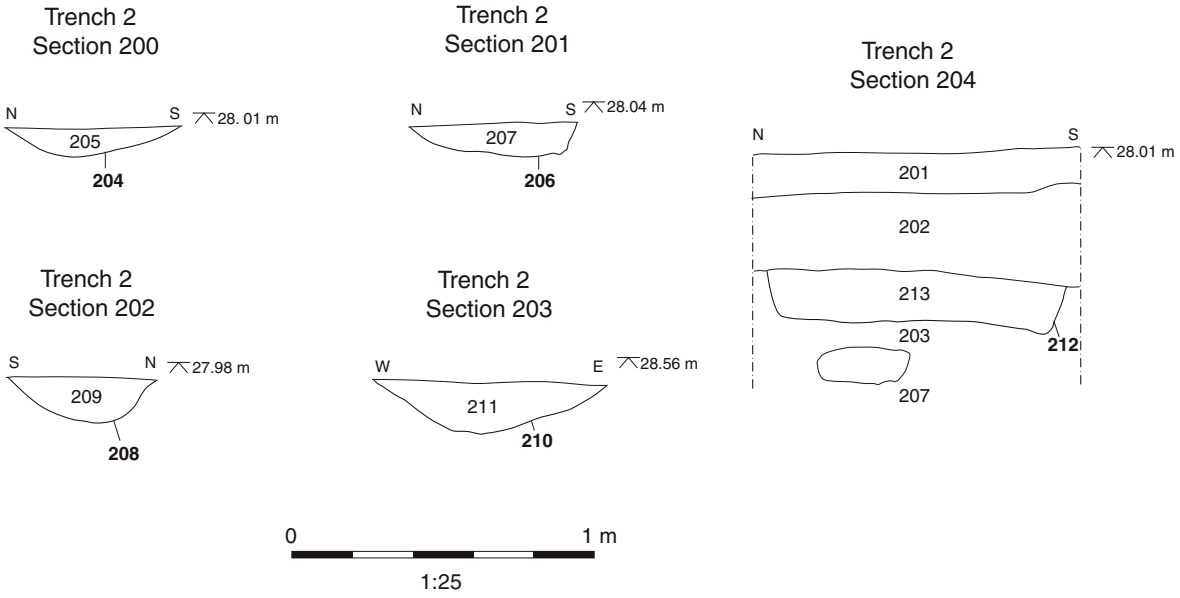


Figure 4: Trench 2, plan and sections

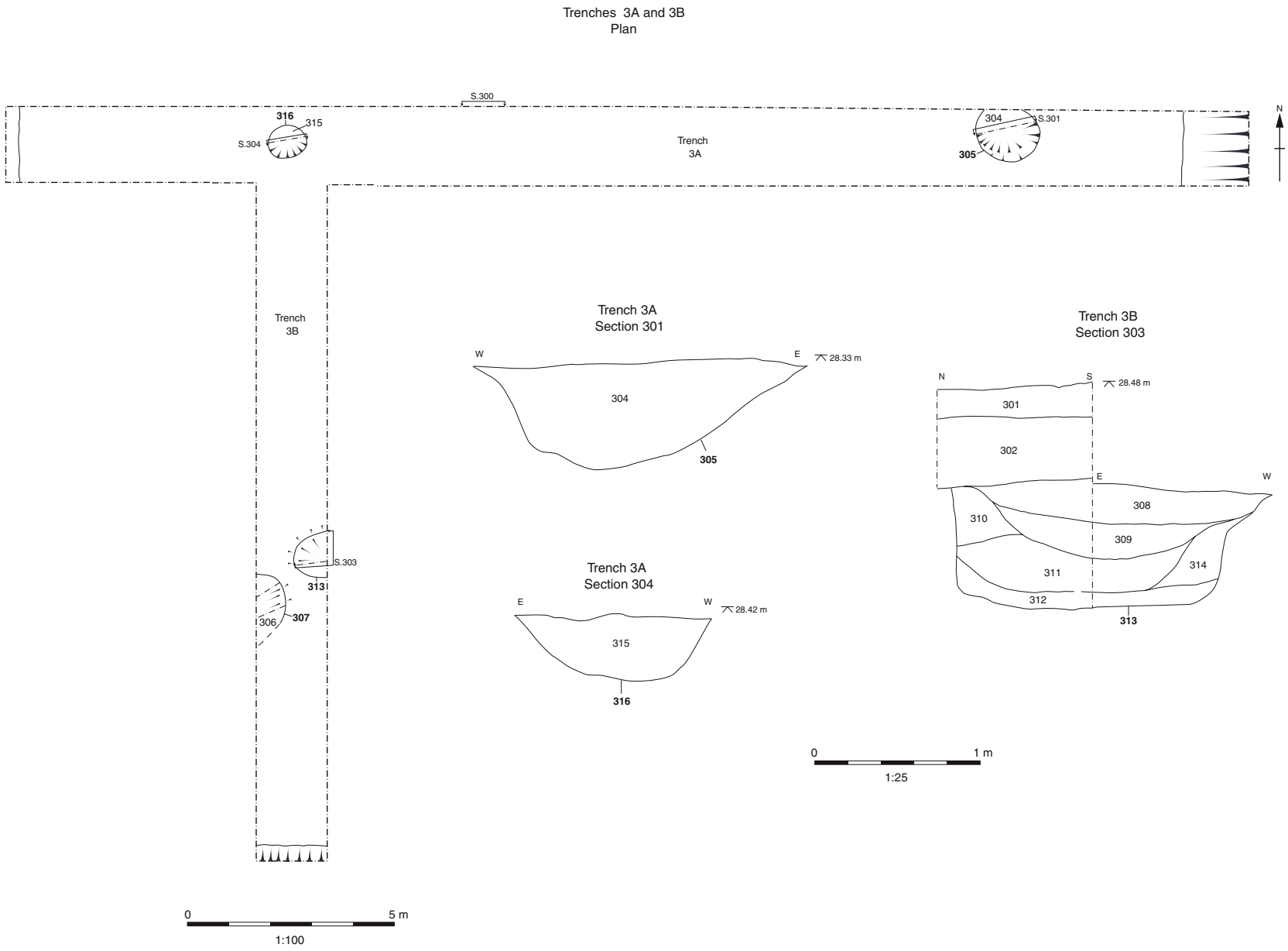


Figure 5: Trenches 3A and 3B, plan and sections

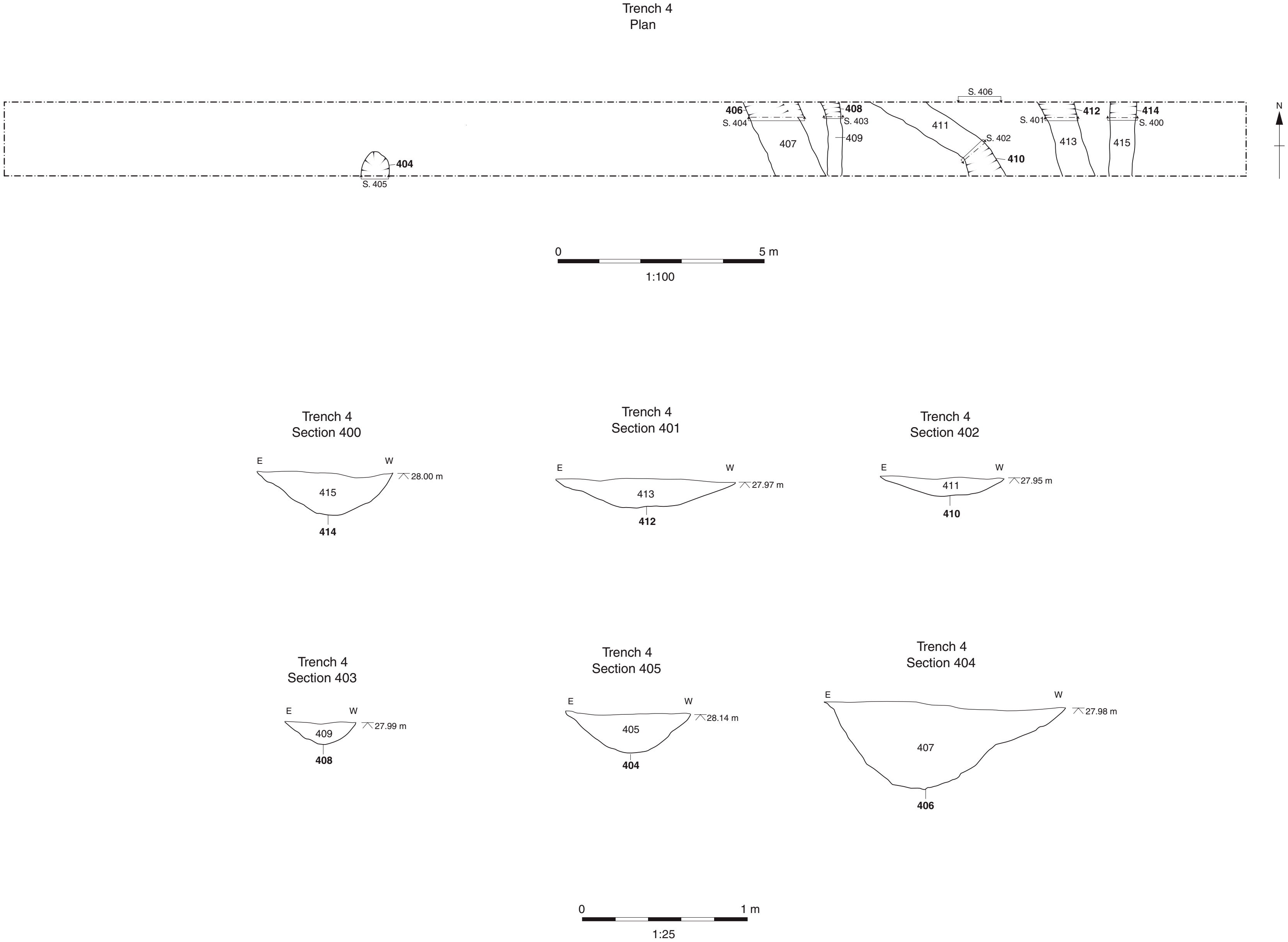
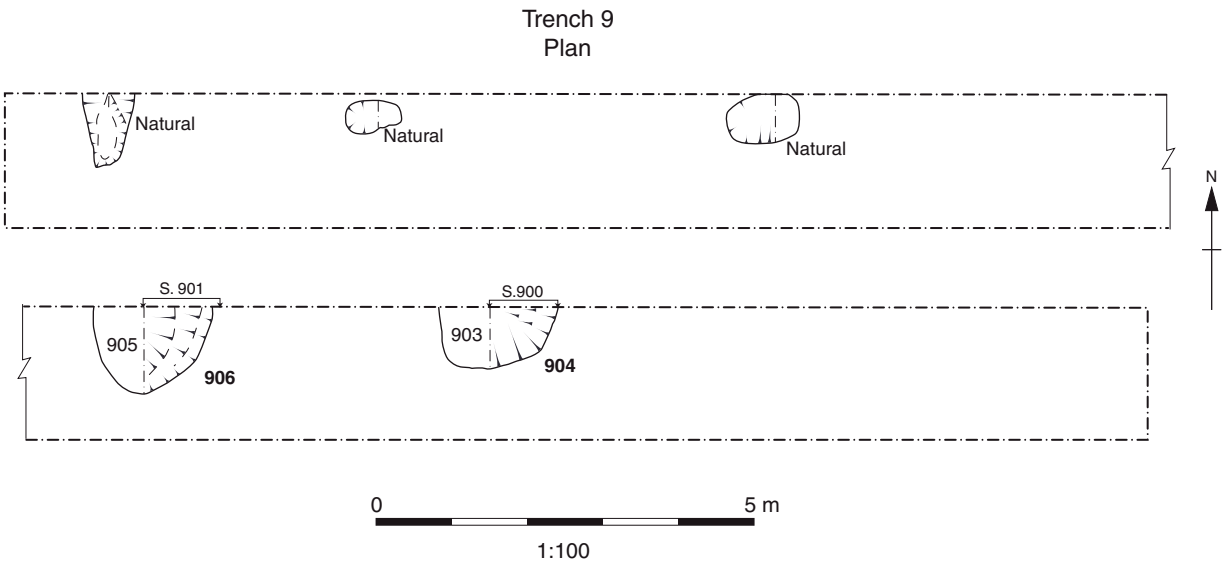
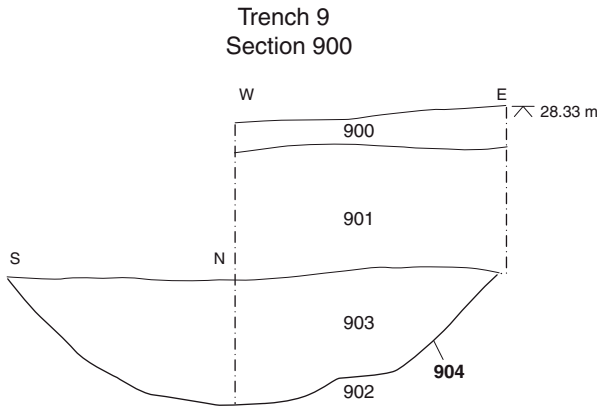


Figure 6: Trench 4, plan and sections





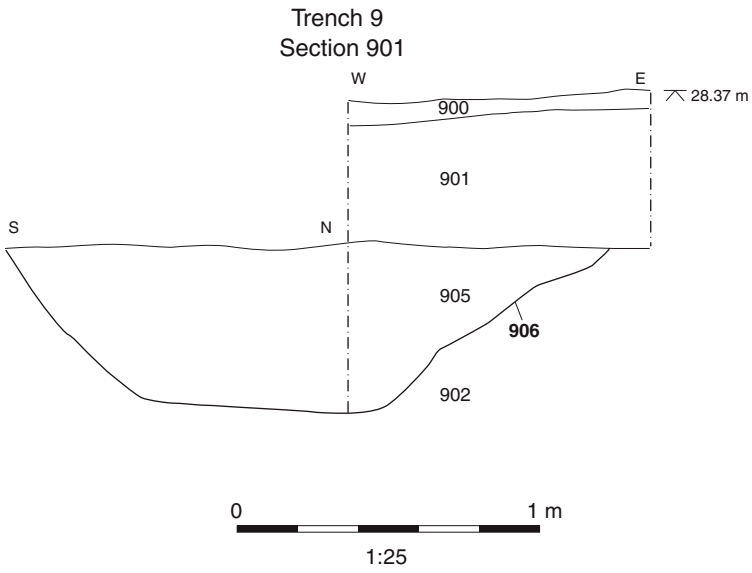
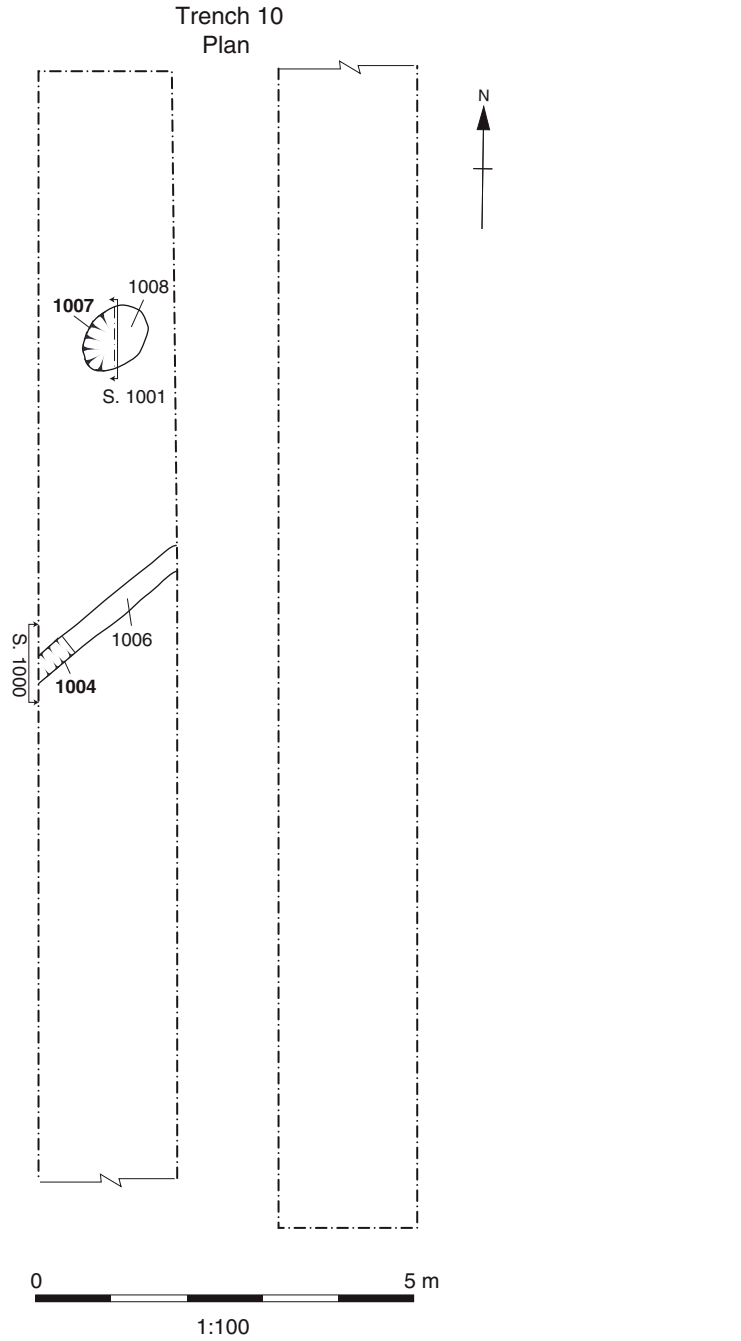


Figure 7: Trench 9, plan and sections



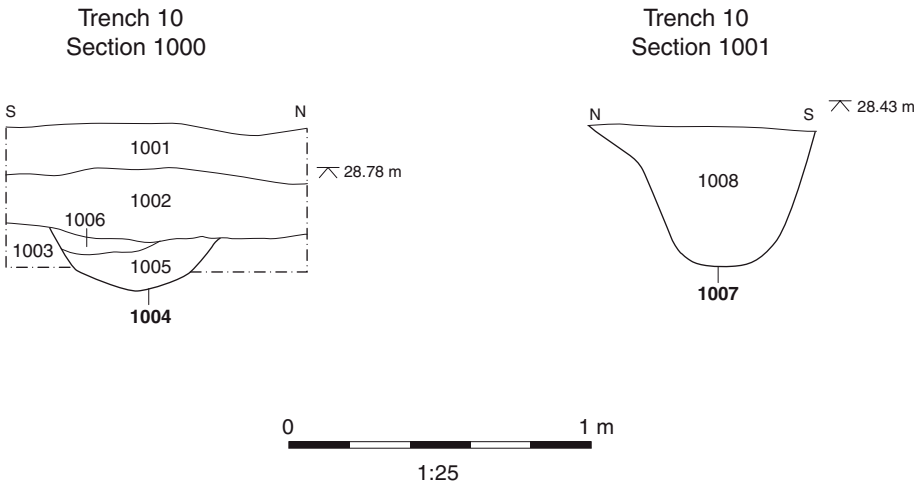
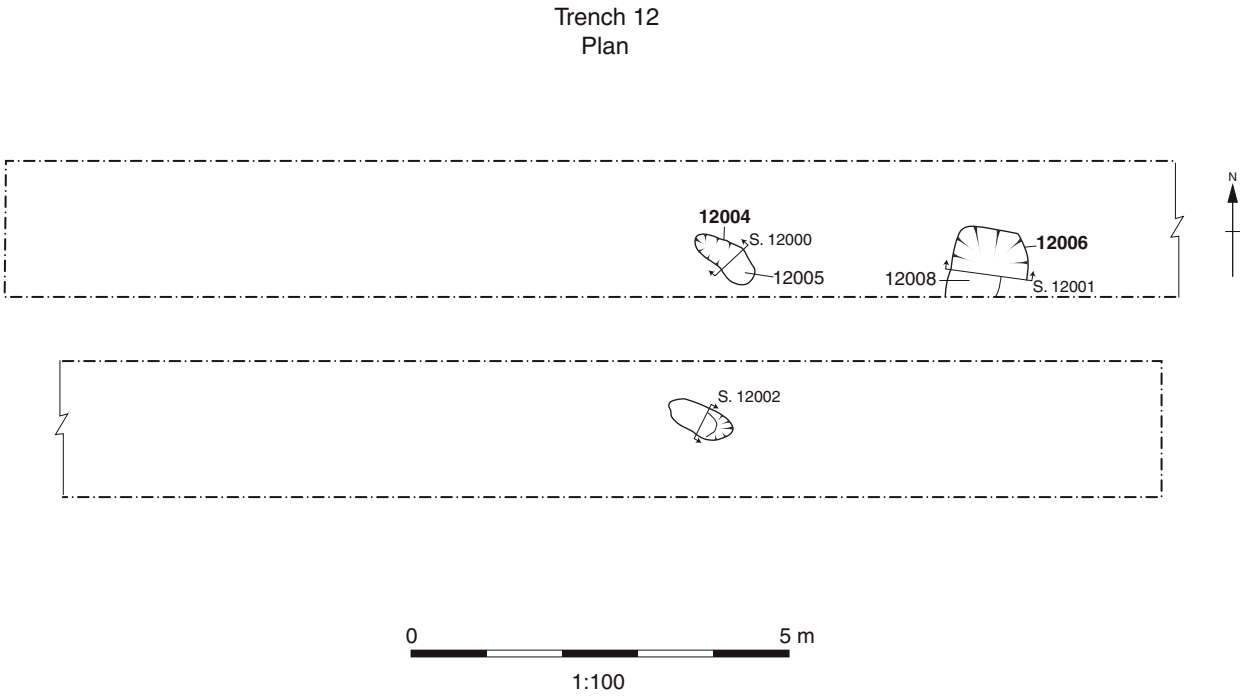


Figure 8: Trench 10, plan and sections



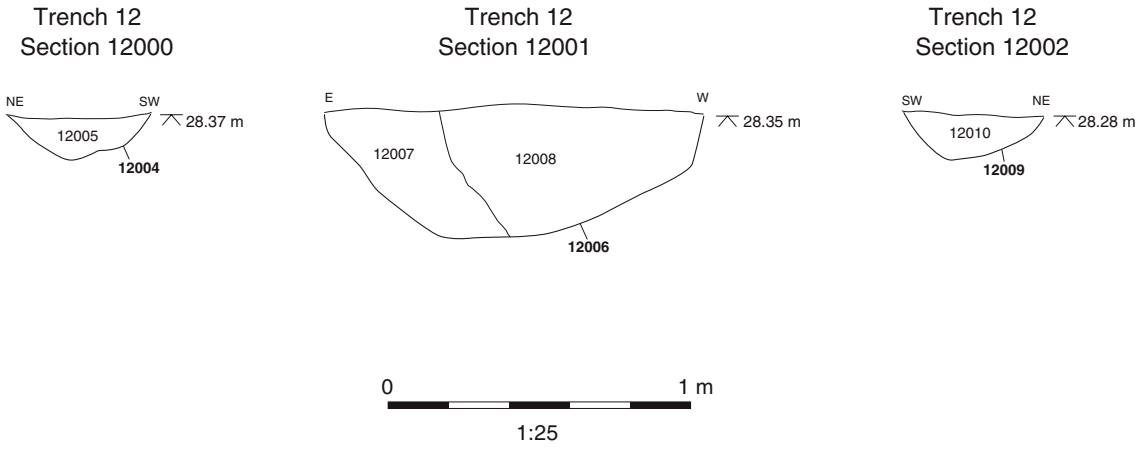


Figure 9: Trench 12, plan and sections

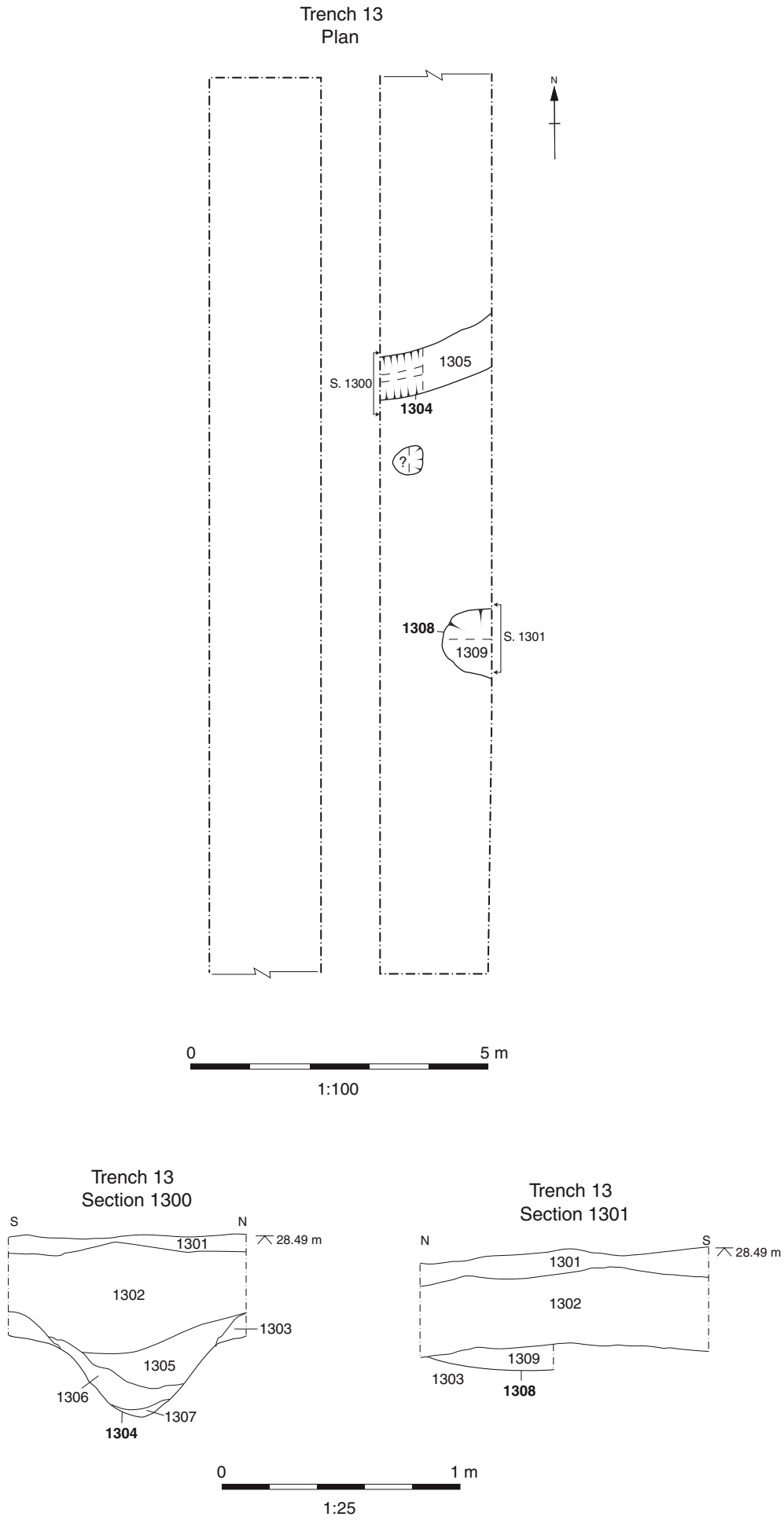


Figure 10: Trench 13, plan and sections

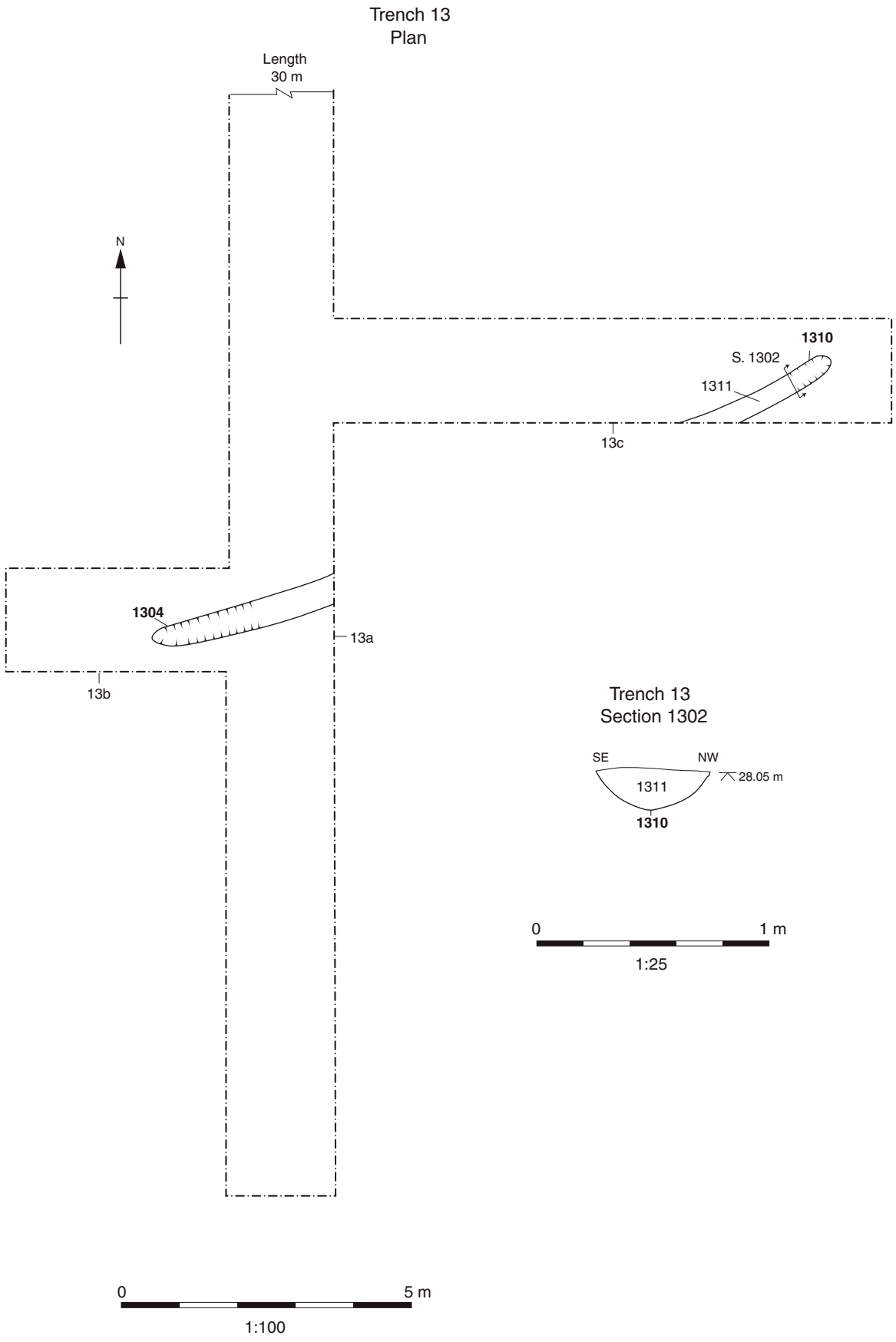
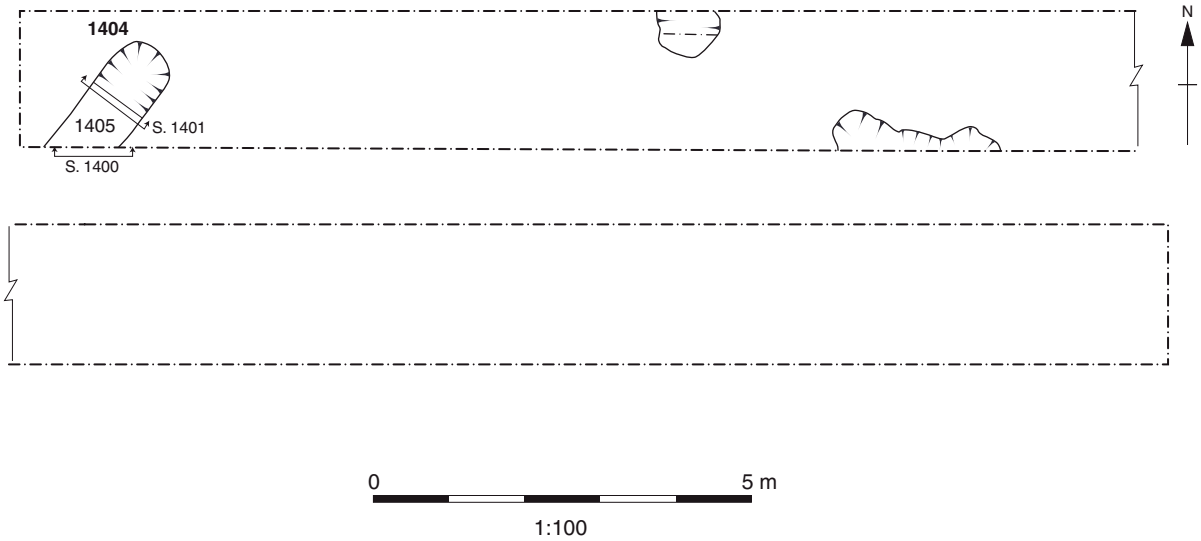


Figure 11: Trench 13 extended, plan and section

Trench 14
Plan



Trench 14
Section 1401

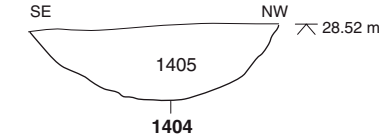
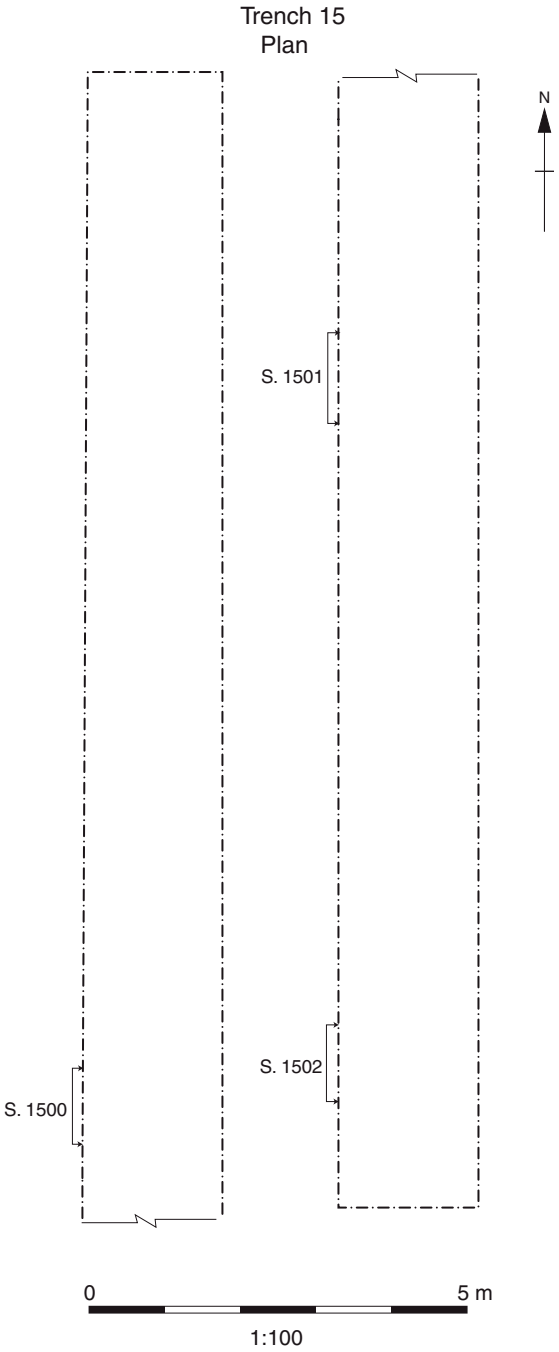


Figure 12: Trench 14, plan and section



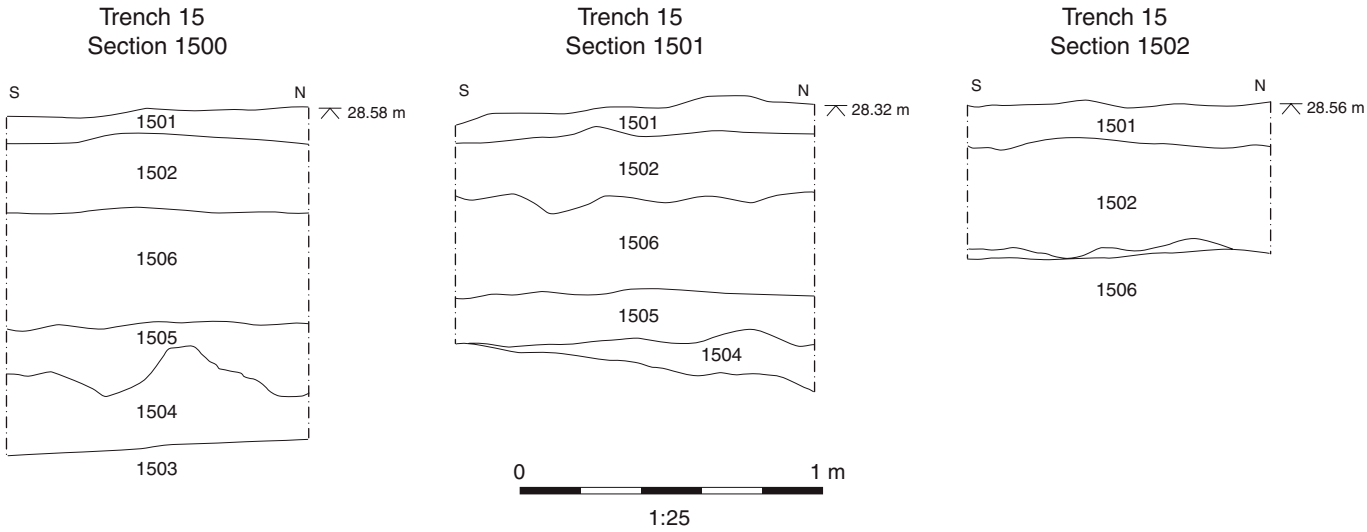
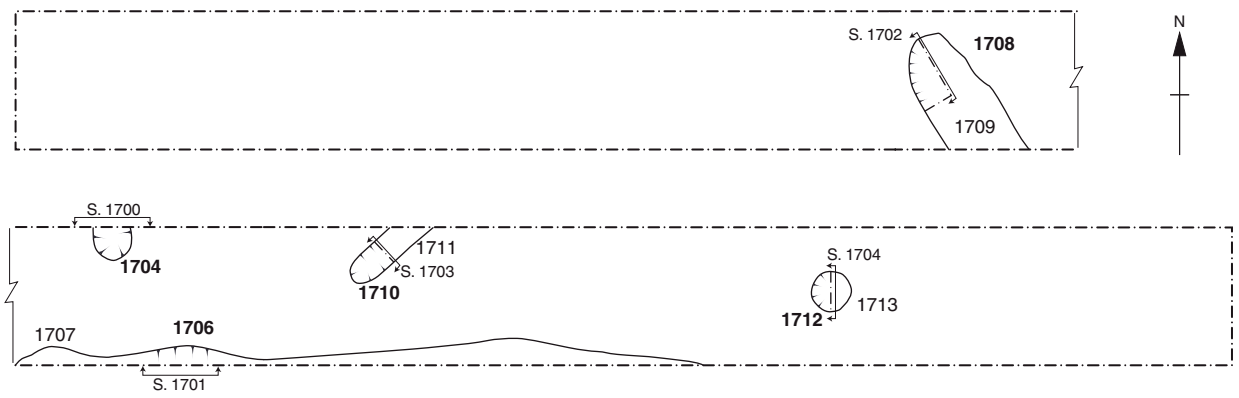


Figure 13: Trench 15, plan and sections

Trench 17
Plan



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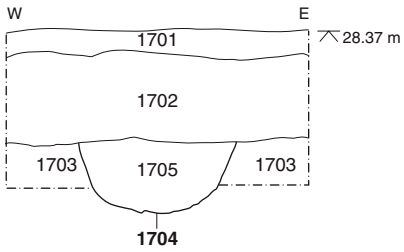
Trench 17
Section 1700



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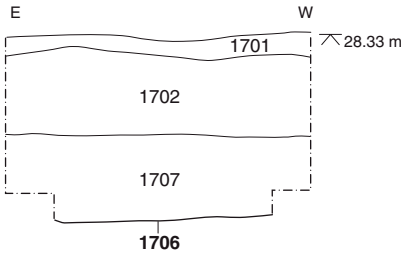
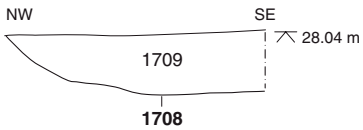


Trench 17
Section 1702



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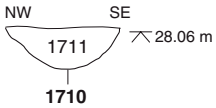
Section 1703



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Section 1704

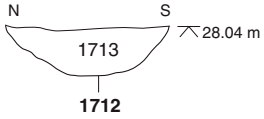

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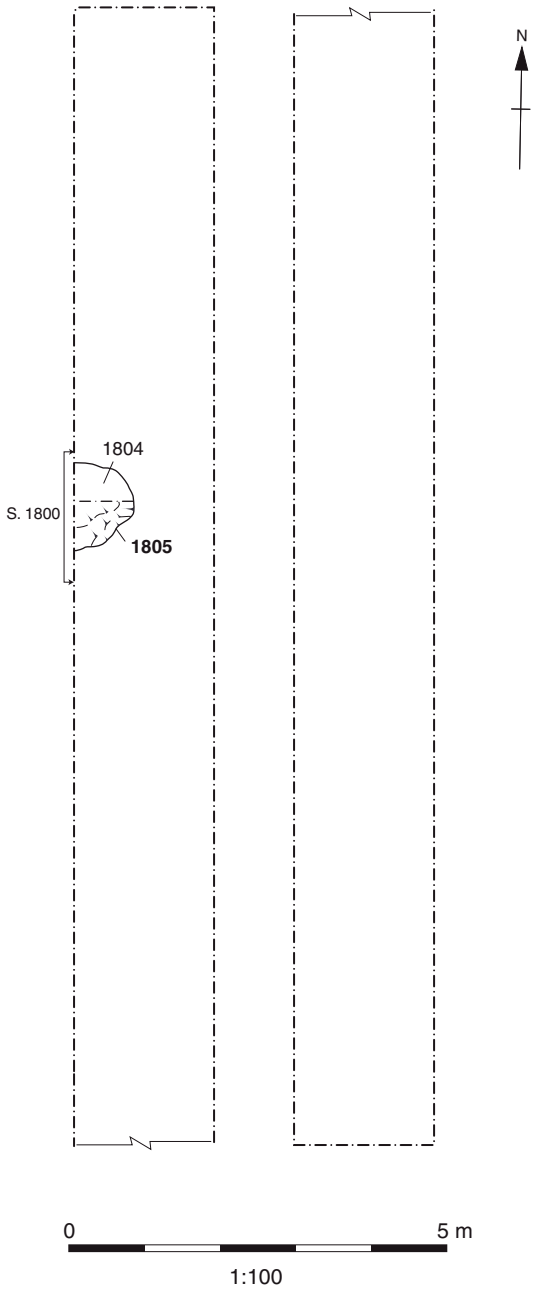
Figure 14: Trench 17, plan and sections

Trench 18
Plan



Trench 18
Section 1800

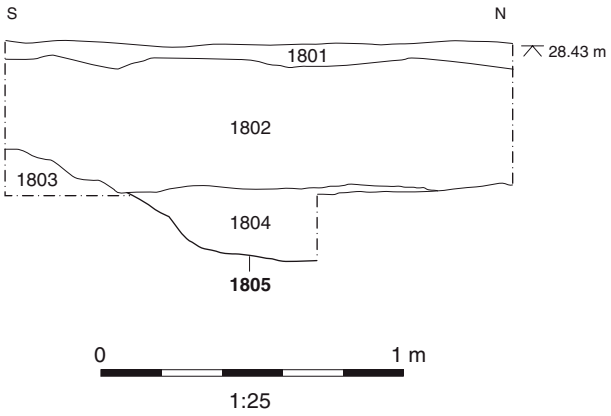
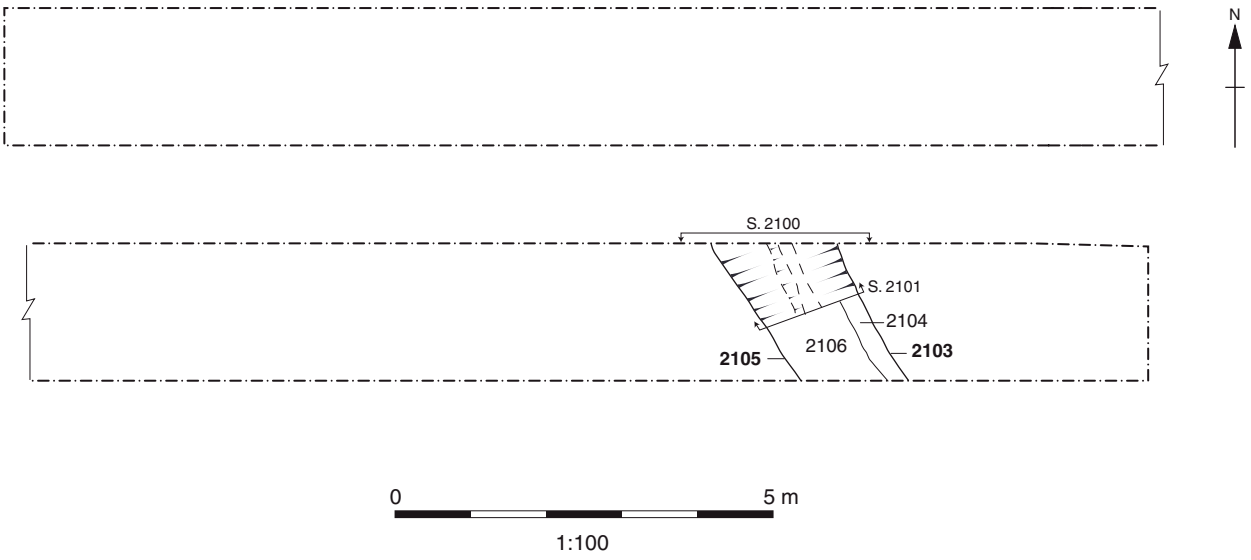


Figure 15: Trench 18, plan and section

Trench 21 A
Plan



Trench 21 A
Section 2100

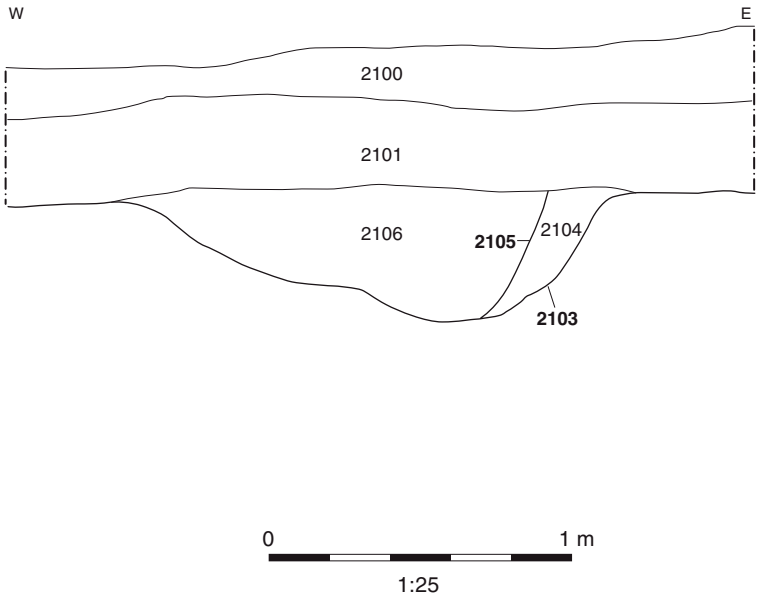


Figure 16: Trench 21 A, plan and section

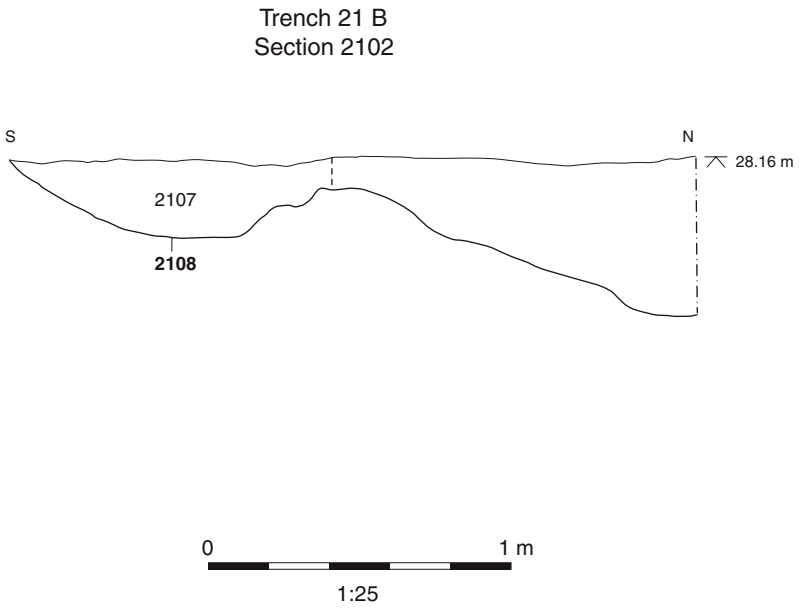


Figure 17 Trench 21 B, section

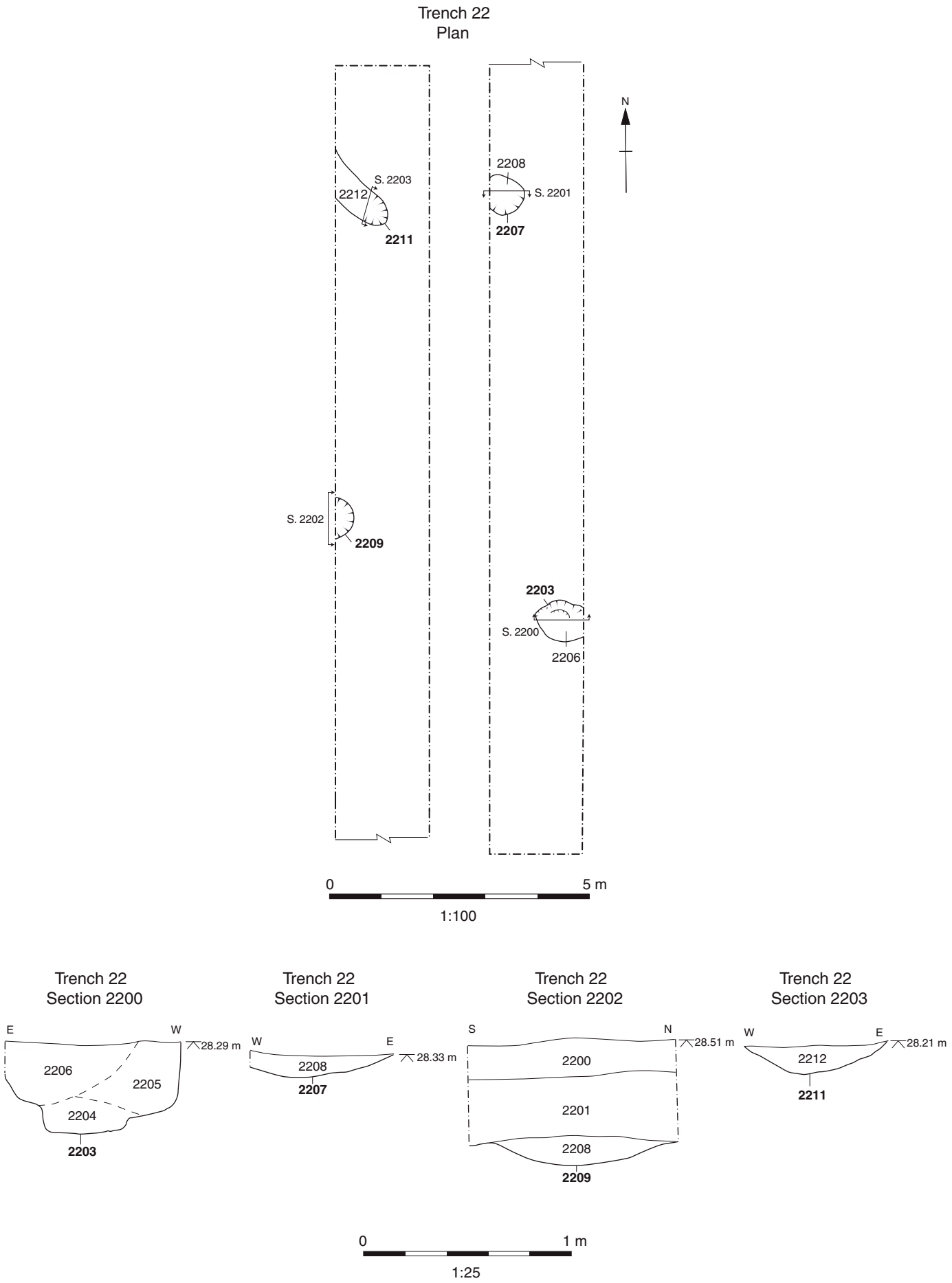


Figure 18: Trench 22 plan and sections

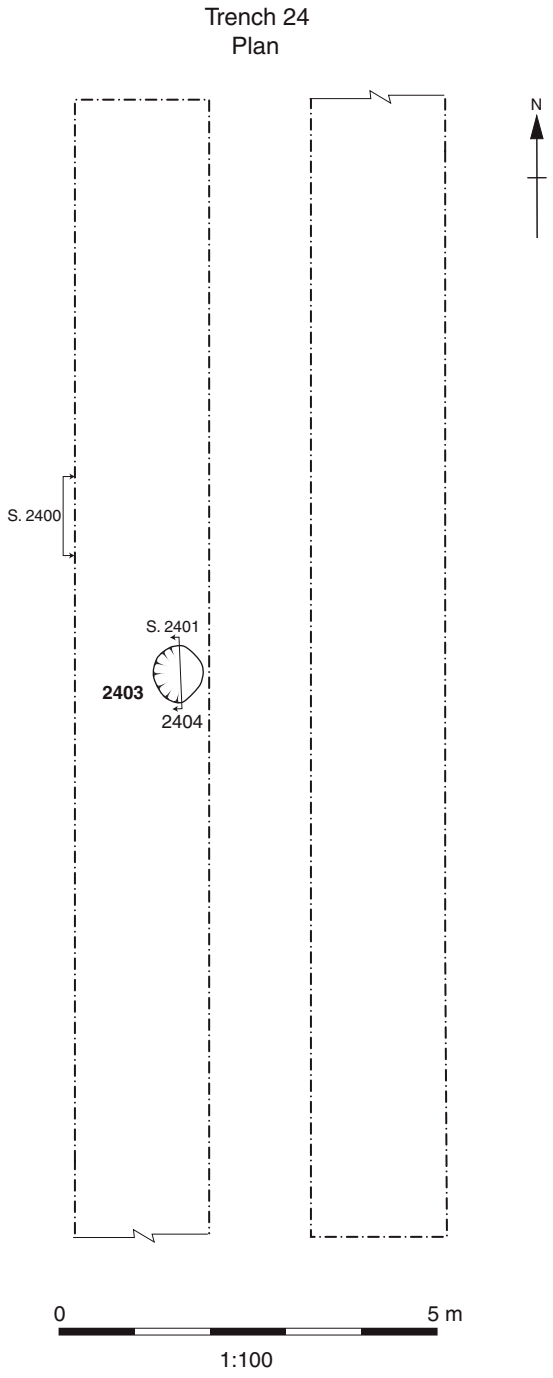
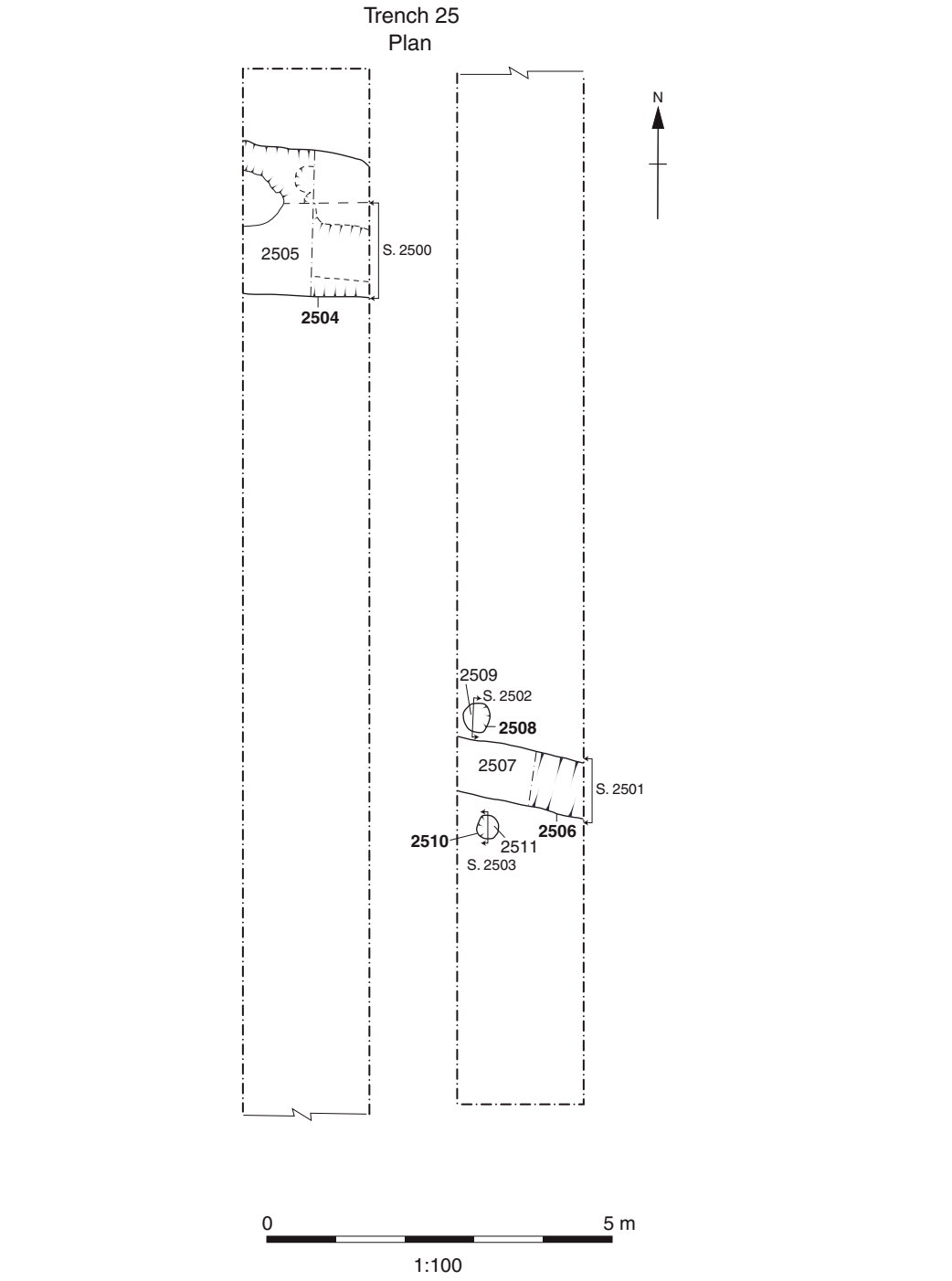


Figure 19: Trench 24, plan and section



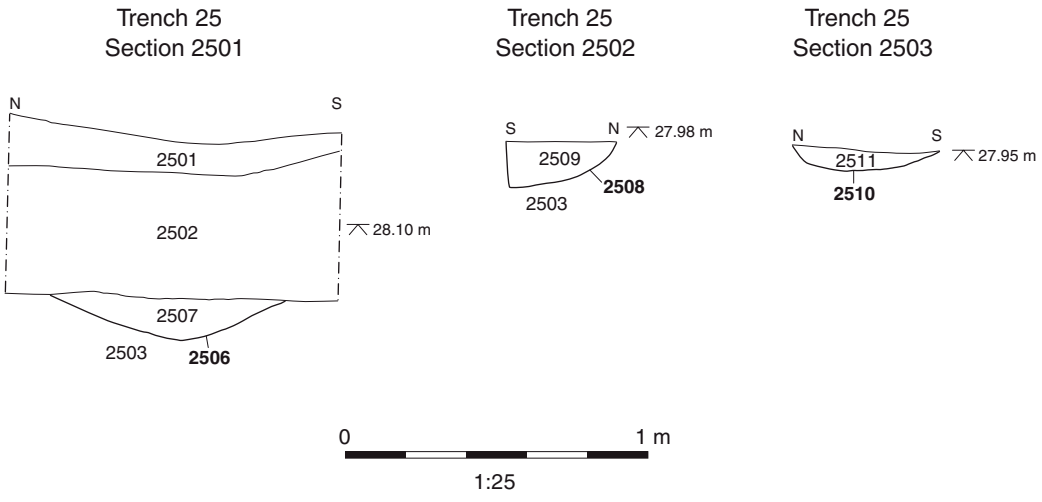
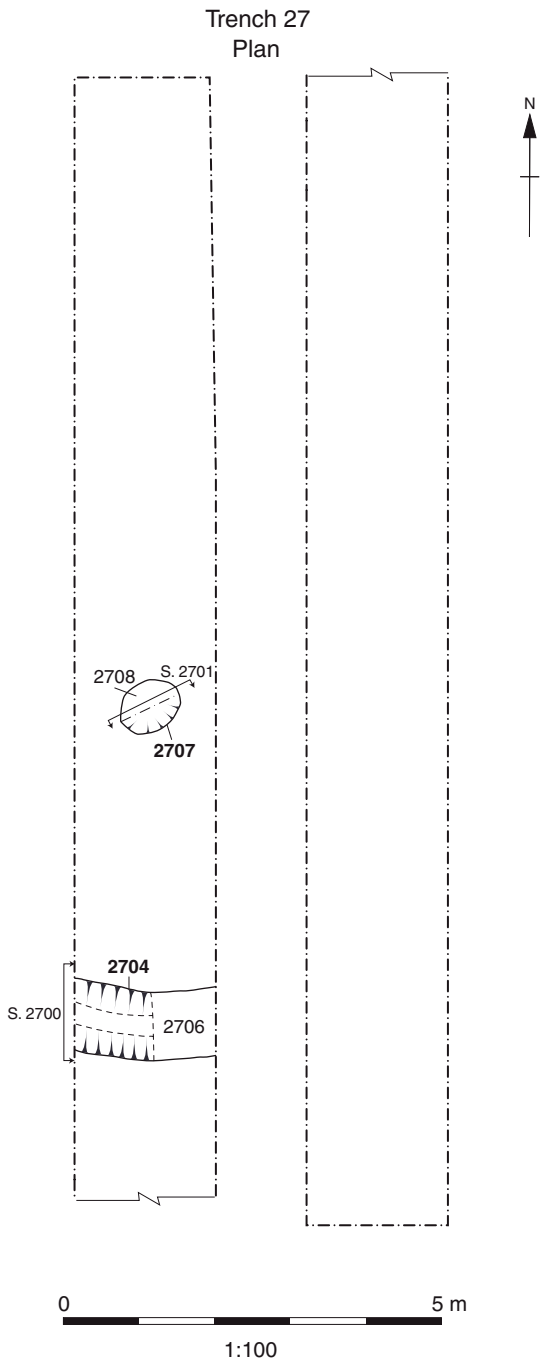
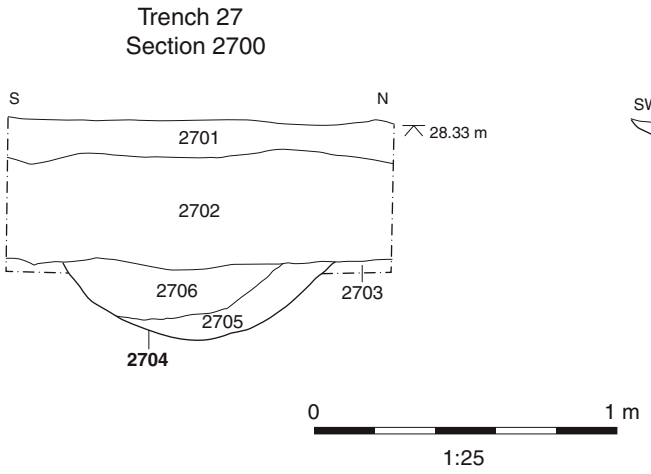


Figure 20: Trench 25, plan and sections





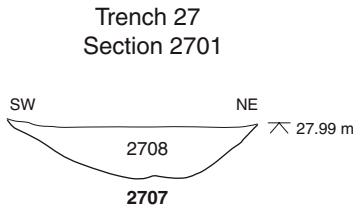


Figure 21 Trench 27, plan and sections

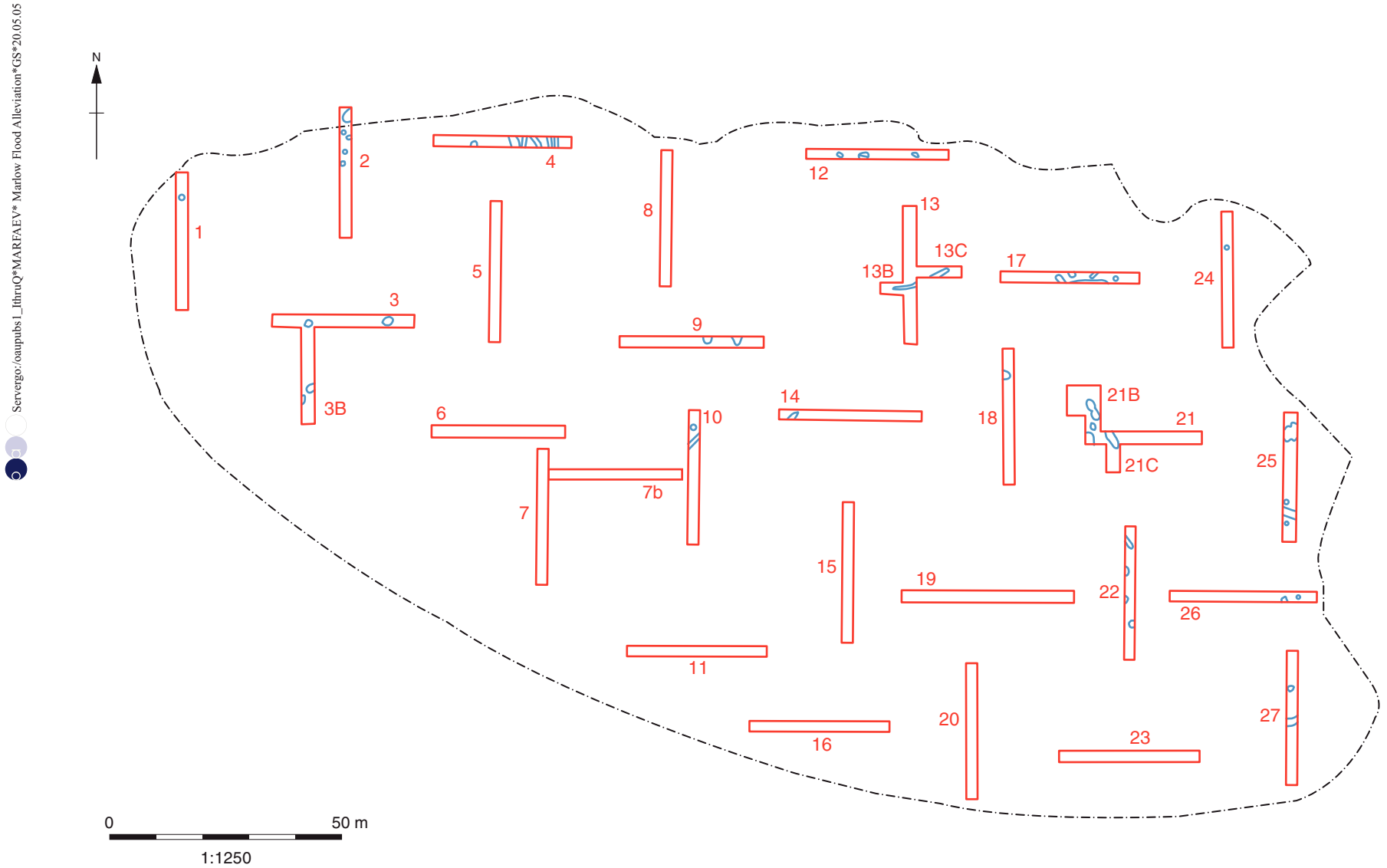


Figure 22: Distribution of archaeological features