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GLOSSARY

ARCHAEOLOGY
For the purposes of this project, archaeology is taken to mean the study of past human societies through their material remains, from prehistoric times to the modern era. No rigid upper date limit has been set, but AD 1900 is used as a general cut-off point.

CAT
Cotswold Archaeological Trust

GGAT
Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust

MEDIEVAL
Taken here as the period from the Norman invasion in AD 1066 to approximately AD 1550.

NATURAL
Defined in archaeological terms this refers to the undisturbed natural geology of a site, eg. Lower Lias clay, river terrace gravels etc.

NGR
National Grid Reference given from the Ordnance Survey Grid.

OD
Ordnance Datum; used to express a given height above mean sea level.

POST-MEDIEVAL
The period following the medieval period, from AD 1550 to the Industrial Revolution.

ROMANO-BRITISH
Term used to describe a fusion of indigenous late Iron Age traditions with Roman culture. It is traditionally dated between AD 43 and cAD 400

SAM
Scheduled Ancient Monument

SMR
Sites and Monuments Record
SUMMARY

Cotswold Archaeological Trust (CAT) was commissioned by Mr W.D. Jones to undertake an archaeological evaluation at the former Gwent County Council Works Depot, Crick, Monmouthshire.

The evaluation indicates that medieval and post-medieval deposits, comprising sandstone metalling and two linear ditches, survive within the proposed development area. Medieval activity is restricted to the rear of the application area. Post-medieval yard surfacing survives throughout the modern frontage.
1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 In October 1996 Cotswold Archaeological Trust (CAT) was commissioned by Mr W.D. Jones to undertake an archaeological evaluation at the former Gwent County Council Works Depot, Crick, Monmouthshire. The archaeological evaluation was required in accordance with Planning Guidance Wales: Planning Policy.

1.1.2 The evaluation was undertaken in compliance with the ‘Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations’ issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA). A monitoring visit was made by Mr C. Hill, Curatorial Division of Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust on the 8th November 1996.

1.2 The Study Area

1.2.1 The proposed development comprises a parcel of land fronting the A48 (centred on NGR ST 4894 9010) within the parish of Crick (Fig. 1). It comprises the former County Council Works Depot, and contains a main building along the road frontage, three outbuildings and associated tarmacadam yard surfacing and a small pasture field/paddock to the rear.

1.2.2 The underlying geology of the area is Triassic red marl, more commonly known as 'Keuper Marl'.

1.2.3 Topographically the study area consists of gently undulating ground ranging from approximately 11.9m OD in the south-west to 12.5m OD in the north.
1.3 Archaeological and Historical Background

1.3.1 A rapid desk based assessment of readily accessible archaeological, historical and cartographic records was undertaken prior to the commencement of fieldwork. The main sources of information accessed consisted of relevant data held by GGAT SMR, Swansea and the County Records Office, Cwmbran. The SMR database lists a number of record numbers within the general vicinity of the study area but no entries within the application area itself (Fig. 2).

1.3.2 The earliest recorded archaeological features within the general vicinity of the study area are two round barrows of presumed Bronze Age date. One barrow is located 600m north-east of the application area (SMR 1056), the other, 400m to the west along the A48 (SMR 1067, county SAM 151).

1.3.3 Crick lies 1.8km east of the Roman town of Caerwent (Venta Silurum). The application area itself lies 35m beyond a marked northerly change in the course of the Roman road between Caerwent and Gloucester. A Roman coin (SMR 1058), was discovered as a chance find at an undetermined location within Crick in 1939.

1.3.4 The study area lies within the historic settlement of Crick which dates to at least the late 11th century. Although not mentioned within the Domesday survey for Gloucestershire (land between the Wye and Usk although said to be in Wales and possessing Welsh customs, was in 1086 under Norman administration and was attached for this purpose to Gloucestershire), indirect references for the settlement have been noted within contemporary ancillary documents (Morris 1982).

1.3.5 Rectangular earthworks (SMR 1061 and county SAM 51) survive 120m north of the study area. These were believed by Bradney (1929) to represent the "site of the original castle or small fortress erected by William Denford" in the late 13th century.

1.3.6 The historic core of Crick, including a medieval chapel (SMR 1060) and the wing of a late medieval farmhouse (SMR 1059, county SAM 53) survive 80m north-east of the study area. The earliest architectural evidence within St Nyveyn's chapel dates from
the early 13th century. The Chapel is now incorporated within a modern house. The medieval farmhouse, now called Manor Farm, is principally 15th century in date.

1.3.7 Brook House (SMR 4619), 15m west of the study area, is of mid 17th century origin, and is known to have been a roadside inn. It has been suggested that the skewed angle of the house in relation to the current A48 is due to the realignment of a pre-existing road (GGAT SMR).

1.3.8 Cartographic evidence from a 1777 estate map of land belonging to Morgan Lewis of St Peer, Monmouthshire, indicates a parcel of land called "The Old School House" broadly encompassing the application area. Two buildings are also recorded fronting the Newport to Chepstow turnpike (now the A48).

1.3.9 The First and Second Edition Ordnance Survey maps of 1879 and 1920 respectively, record the presence of the current stone building, but indicated additional rooms existed to the north fronting the contemporary road alignment. A smithy is also recorded, although it is not indicated whether this was within or adjacent to the western limit of the proposed development area.

1.3.10 The study area is likely to be depicted on the 19th century tithe map of the parish of Caerwent. However, the map was not available for consultation as it is not currently held by Cwmbran Record Office.

1.3.11 Many modern changes and improvements have been undertaken to the road system within the village. The A48 has been widened resulting in the loss of the northern extent of the main building within the study area. The road junction between the A48 and the current Shirenewton road has undergone radical change, and no longer follows the course of the Roman road between Caerwent and Gloucester. Furthermore, the construction corridor of the M4 (now the M48) encroaches on land adjoining Manor Farm.

1.4 Archaeological Specification and Methods
1.4.1 An archaeological specification issued by CAT to evaluate the archaeological potential of the study area, was approved by Mr N. Maylan, Curatorial Division, Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust.

1.4.2 The objective of the archaeological evaluation was to determine the extent, date, and preservation of any buried archaeological remains within the study area, so that an informed opinion on their importance in a local, regional and national context could be made.

1.4.3 The evaluation was fulfilled by the excavation of seven trenches. All trenches were excavated by mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket. All machining was carried out under archaeological supervision to the top of the first significant archaeological deposits or the natural substrate, which ever was encountered first.

1.4.4 Where archaeological deposits were encountered they were sampled by hand to meet the aims as stated within the specification, and in accordance with the CAT Field Recording Manual.

1.4.5 All artefacts recovered were catalogued and analysed in accordance with CAT Finds Recording Manual. Particular emphasis was given to potentially datable artefacts such as pottery.

1.4.6 The finds and site archive will, subject to agreement with the legal landowner, be deposited with Chepstow Museum.

2. EVALUATION RESULTS

2.1 General
2.1.1 The evaluation was fulfilled by the excavation of seven trenches. The location of trenches 4 and 6 underwent slight revision to take into account modern services and a reinforced concrete plinth. The modified trench positions were located according to the plan shown as Figure 3.

2.1.2 The natural Triassic red marl was revealed throughout the proposed development area between 11.36m OD and 12.0m OD.

2.1.3 Descriptions of all features recorded within the evaluation trenches are contained within Appendix A. Brief descriptions of all significant features are presented within this section from the earliest deposits encountered to the latest.

2.2 Trench 1 (Fig.4)

2.2.1 Trench 1 was orientated north-east to south-west and measured 15m in length. A north-west to south-east orientated spur, 5m in length, was incorporated into the trench dimension. The trench was located within the small paddock in the rear of the application area.

2.2.2 A ditch [106], orientated approximately north-south, was identified cutting the natural substrate (108), 1m from the western limit of the trench. The ditch measured 0.75m in width and was fully excavated to a depth of 0.13m. It contained a mid red-brown silty clay fill (107) from which 3 sherds of 12th-13th century pottery were retrieved.

2.2.3 A roughly metalled surface of irregular sandstone fragments (103) was encountered 1.6m east of ditch [106], and was revealed across the remainder of the trench. The surface was laid directly on the natural substrate (108), and was excavated to a depth of 0.14m. No finds were retrieved from within the matrix of the surface.

2.2.4 Overlying ditch [106] and surface (103), and across the entire length of the trench, a uniform deposit of red-brown silty clay (102) was encountered. The deposit was fully
excavated to a depth of 0.3m, and 5 sherds of 17th-19th century pottery were retrieved.

2.2.5 Ditch [104] was identified 2.7m from the eastern extent of the trench, cutting deposit (102). It was orientated approximately north-south, measured 0.8m in width and was fully excavated to a depth of 0.24m. No finds were retrieved from silty clay fill (105).

2.2.6 A silty clay topsoil horizon (101) sealed ditch [104] and deposit (102).

2.3 Trench 2 (Fig.5)

2.3.1 Trench 2 was orientated north-west to south-east and totalled 11m in length.

2.3.2 A rough sandstone surface (220) was encountered at the northern extent of the trench. The surface was laid directly on the natural substrate (221). No artefacts were retrieved from the matrix of the surface. Throughout the remainder of the trench isolated fragments of the sandstone surface were evident.

2.3.3 A silty clay topsoil (203) sealed all archaeological deposits, and had been cut by 8 modern features. Pits [204], [206], [208], [210] and [218] were c. 0.25m in diameter and solely contained animal bones. Features [212], [214] and [216] were much larger in scale, but no indication of their full dimensions was obtained due to the confines of the trench. A small quantity of modern brick/tile was retrieved from each of the features.

2.4 Trench 3 (Fig.6)

2.4.1 Trench 3 was orientated north-east to south-west and was 10m in length.
2.4.2 Sandstone metalling (309), consisting of irregular sandstone fragments laid directly onto the natural substrate (316), was revealed throughout the length of the trench. Ceramics dating to the 18th to 19th century were recovered from within the matrix of the surface.

2.4.3 A modern silty clay topsoil horizon (304), containing late 19th to early 20th century material sealed surface (309), and had been cut by 5 small modern pits.

2.5 Trench 4 (Fig.7)

2.5.1 Trench 4 was orientated north-west to south-east and measured 6.5m in length.

2.5.2 Sandstone metalling (406) was revealed throughout the trench. The metalling consisted of irregular sandstone fragments laid directly onto the natural substrate (407). Ceramics dating to the 18th to 19th century were recovered from within the matrix of the surface.

2.5.3 Within the south-west corner of the trench, a light brown silty clay deposit (405) was identified above surface (406). The deposit was 0.03m in depth and contained 18th to 19th century ceramics.

2.5.4 A silty clay topsoil horizon (404) sealed surface (406) and deposit (405).

2.6 Trench 5 (Fig.8)

2.6.1 Trench 5 was orientated north-west to south-east and measured 5m in length.

2.6.2 A rough metalled sandstone surface (504), was encountered at the northern extent of the trench. The surface was laid directly onto the natural substrate (508), and contained 2 sherds of 18th-19th century whiteware.
2.6.3 A levelling deposit (505) of crushed brick/tile was evident 1.5m from the northern limit of the trench. Upon further excavation, the deposit was revealed to overlie surface (504) and extend to the southern limit of the trench. A well made sandstone surface (506), consisting of small, compacted sandstone fragments had been laid over levelling deposit (505).

2.6.4 At the southern limit of the trench, a thin deposit, 0.08m in depth, of burnt, cinder material (507) sealed surface (506).

2.7 Trench 6

2.7.1 Trench 6 was orientated north-east to south-west and measured 5m in length. No archaeological deposits were encountered within the trench. Modern disturbance was encountered to a depth of 1.2m below the current ground surface.

2.8 Trench 7 (Fig.9)

2.8.1 Trench 7 was orientated north-east to south-west and measured 5m in length.

2.8.2 A small remnant of sandstone metalling (703) was revealed at the south-western limit of the trench overlying the natural marl substrate (708) The surface was badly eroded by modern topsoil horizon (702).

2.8.3 A subcircular pit [706], and a shallow linear feature [704] were revealed cutting the modern topsoil horizon.

3. ASSESSMENT OF RESULTS

3.1 Date and Interpretation of Archaeological Deposits
3.1.1 The evaluation indicates that medieval and post-medieval deposits, comprising sandstone surfacing and two linear ditches, survive within the proposed development area.

**Medieval**

3.1.2 Medieval deposits are restricted to trench 1, to the rear of the application area.

3.1.3 The earliest datable feature is ditch [106], which contained 3 sherds of 12th-13th century pottery. The ditch can not be interpreted with any degree of certainty due to the limited nature of the feature and the confines of the trench, although a boundary/drainage ditch would be an appropriate interpretation.

3.1.4 The roughly metalled surface (103), comprising irregular sandstone fragments, is interpreted as an exterior yard surface. The lack of artefactual material retrieved from within the make-up of the surface prohibits its accurate dating. However, the surface may be seen to be redundant, possibly by the 17th century, when it is sealed by deposit (102).

3.1.5 It is worth noting that no medieval deposits or artefacts were identified close to the current street frontage. Post-medieval disturbance may have truncated and damaged such deposits. Alternatively, the possible realignment of the original road, indicated by the unusual setting of Brook House in relation to the modern road (see 1.3.7) may suggest the original course of the road was further to the south, and may possibly be contained within the application area. Such an interpretation would suggest the medieval activity identified during the evaluation fronts this original road alignment.

**Post-medieval**

3.1.6 Post-medieval activity was identified in all trenches except Trench 6.
3.1.7 Within Trench 1, layer (102) sealed all medieval deposits, and may be dated to the 17th-19th century. The function of the layer remains unresolved, but may have developed/resulted when this area of medieval activity became redundant, possibly due to the transfer in the focus of occupation to the current position along the Newport-Chepstow turnpike.

3.1.8 Ditch [104] is interpreted as a boundary ditch, perhaps delineating small paddocks/enclosures associated with the post-medieval occupation fronting the Newport to Chepstow turnpike.

3.1.9 The rough, sandstone surfacing identified within trenches 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7 may be viewed as a contemporary exterior yard surface covering the main frontage of the application area. Glazed, transfer wares dating to the 18th-19th century were retrieved from within the surface and suggest it may be contemporary with the buildings noted on the 1777 estate map (1.3.8 above).

3.1.10 Within Trench 5, the crushed brick/tile levelling deposit (505) and associated sandstone metalling (506) sealed the 18th-19th century yard surface (503). No datable artefacts were retrieved from these deposits, but it may be concluded they are of 19th to early 20th century origin. The thin layer of heavily burnt, cinder material (508) revealed above surface (506), may represent industrial waste from the smithy identified on the 1879 First Edition Ordnance Survey map.

3.2 Survival and Extent of Archaeological Deposits

3.2.1 It is clear from the evaluation that archaeological deposits survive throughout the study area.

3.2.2 Medieval activity is restricted to the small paddock to the rear of the application area, and has been protected from intrusive post-medieval and modern activity by deposit (102). The survival of medieval deposits solely at the rear of the study area is problematic for the interpretation of the potential extent of medieval occupation within
the study area. It remains unresolved whether such findings are an accurate representation of the medieval resource of the application area, or whether subsequent post-medieval and modern activity has removed evidence of medieval occupation fronting the modern road.

3.2.3 Post-medieval activity has survived throughout the application area, and although is likely to have been truncated by the subsequent modern development of the site, the surviving features may be viewed as an accurate reflection of the post-medieval resource of the application area.

3.3 Effectiveness of Evaluation Strategy

3.3.1 The evaluation has identified that archaeological deposits of medieval and post-medieval origin survive throughout the application area. The fact that archaeological remains have been found in all but one evaluation trench indicates that the methodology employed during the evaluation has been successful.

4. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Cotswold Archaeological Trust would like to thank Messrs C. Hill and N Maylan, Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust Curatorial Division, Mr W.D. Jones, Mr G Price and Dr J.R. Timby for their assistance during the course of this project.

The fieldwork was carried out by Cliff Bateman and Mark Brett. The illustrations were drawn by Rick Morton.

5. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND SOURCES

Documentary

Bradney J. 1929 A History of Monmouthshire Vol 4 Pt 1


Morris J.(ed) 1982 Domesday Book, Gloucestershire 15

Cartographic

1777 & 1788 Maps of Estates belonging to Morgan Lewis of St Peer, Monmouthshire

1879 OS 1st Edition Map, 25" to mile

1880 OS 1st Edition Map, 6" to mile

1920 OS 2nd Edition Map, 6" to mile

1981 British Geological Survey, Sheet 250 (Chepstow) 1:50,000
APPENDIX 1

Trench Descriptions

Note: Stratigraphic descriptions are given from the earliest to the latest deposits. Cut features are designated by square brackets thus; [000], all other deposits/layers are in round brackets; (000). All stated depths are given from the present ground level. Heights are based on the bench mark located on Manor Farm. The level was taken to be 16.37m OD.

Trench 1  Modern ground surface 11.91m OD to 12.26m OD

Natural red-brown marls (108) were encountered at a depth of 0.55m below present ground level.

Ditch [106]: Linear cut 0.75m in width and 0.13m in depth, gently sloping profile with rounded base. Contains mid red-brown silty clay fill (107) from which three sherds of 12th-13th century pottery recovered.

Surface (103): Roughly laid sandstone fragments, at least 12m in length, 6.5m in width and 0.14m in depth. No finds.

Layer (102): Mid red-brown silty clay, with occasional sandstone fragments and rounded pebbles. Covers entire trench to depth of 0.25m.

Ditch [104]: Linear cut 0.8m in width and 0.24m in depth, gently sloping profile with rounded base. Contains mid red-brown silty clay fill (105). No finds

Pipe trench [109]: Linear cut containing modern water pipe, 0.4m in width and 0.4m in depth. Contains fill (110).

Pipe trench [111]: Linear cut containing modern water pipe, 0.4m in width and 0.4m in depth. Contains fill (112).

Topsoil (101): Mid grey-brown silty clay, 0.40m in depth.

Trench 2  Modern ground surface 12.37m OD to 12.57m OD


Natural red-brown marls (221) were encountered at a depth of 0.40m below present ground level.

Surface (220): Roughly laid sandstone fragments at least 8m length, 1.5m in width and 0.1m in depth. No finds.

Topsoil (203): Mid grey-brown silty clay, 0.34m in depth.

Modern pit [204]: Subcircular, 0.3m in diameter. Contains fill (205), mid grey-brown silty clay and animal (bird) bones.

Modern pit [206]: Subcircular, 0.25m in diameter. Contains fill (207), mid grey-brown silty clay and animal (bird) bones.

Modern pit [208]: Subcircular, 0.35m in diameter. Contains fill (209), mid grey-brown silty clay and animal (bird) bones.

Modern pit [210]: Subcircular, 0.30m in diameter. Contains fill (211), mid grey-brown silty clay.

Modern pit [212]: Subcircular, at least 3m in diameter. Contains fill (213), mid grey-brown silty clay.

Modern pit [214]: Unknown shape and size. Contains fill (215), mid grey-brown silty clay.

Modern pit [216]: Unknown shape and size. Contains fill (217), mid grey-brown silty clay.

Modern pit [218]: Subcircular, at least 0.3m in diameter. Contains fill (219), mid grey-brown silty clay and animal bone.

Modern levelling horizon (202): loose gravels/ashes/occasional modern building rubble, c. 8m in length and 0.15m in depth.

Modern rubble hardstanding (201): comprising building rubble and gravels, c. 8.4m in length and 0.15m in depth.

**Trench 3** Modern ground surface 12.28m OD to 12.4m OD

Natural red-brown marls (316) were encountered at a depth of 0.36m below present ground level.
Surface (309): Roughly laid sandstone fragments at least 11m length, 1.5m in width and 0.1m in depth. No finds

Topsoil (304): Mid grey-brown silty clay, 0.34m in depth.

Modern pit [307]: Subcircular, 0.4m in diameter. Contains fill (308), mid grey-brown silty clay and animal (bird) bones.

Modern pit [310]: Subcircular, 0.35m in diameter. Contains fill (311), mid grey-brown silty clay and animal (bird) bones.

Modern pit [312]: Subcircular, 0.30m in diameter. Contains fill (313), mid grey-brown silty clay. No finds.

Modern pit [314]: Subrectangular, at least 0.25m in length. Contains fill (315), mid grey-brown silty clay. No finds.

Modern levelling (303): Loose building rubble within gravel/concrete matrix, 0.25m in depth. No finds.

Modern leveling (302): Loose rubble, 0.18m in depth. No finds.

Modern hardstanding (301): comprising building rubble and gravels, 0.05m in depth.

**Trench 4**  Modern ground surface 12.27m OD to 12.46m OD

Natural red-brown marls (407) were encountered at a depth of 0.32m below modern ground level.

Surface (406): Roughly laid sandstone fragments at least 6.5m length, 1.5m in width and 0.1m in depth. Finds: 5 sherds pottery 18th century +

Layer (405): Light brown silty clay, identified within slight hollow in south-west corner to depth of 0.03m. Finds

Topsoil (404): Mid grey-brown silty clay, 0.25m in depth.

Modern concrete plinth (403): Concrete 0.12m in depth.

Modern levelling horizon (402): Loose aggregates for tarmac surface, 0.06m in depth. No finds

Modern tarmacadam yard surface (401): 0.06m in depth.
**Trench 5**  Modern ground surface 12.41m OD to 12.47m OD

Natural red-brown marls (508) were encountered at a depth of 0.43m below present ground level.

Surface (504): Roughly laid sandstone fragments at least 5m length, 1.5m in width and 0.12m in depth. Finds: 2 sherds 18th-19th century pottery

Levelling horizon (505): Crushed brick/tile, 0.05m in depth. No finds.

Surface (506): Well laid sandstone fragments, 0.08m in depth. No finds

Layer (507): Horizon of burnt cinder etc, confined to southern extent of trench, 0.08m in depth. No finds.

Modern levelling horizon (503): Loose aggregates and building rubble, 0.24m in depth. No finds.

Modern levelling horizon (502): Loose aggregates for tarmac surface, 0.06m in depth. No finds.

Modern tarmac yard surface (501): 0.09m in depth.

**Trench 6**  Modern ground surface 12.32m OD

Natural red-brown marls (608) were encountered at a depth of 1.2m below present ground level.

Layer (607): Redeposited natural, containing modern brick/tile and sandstone fragments, depth at least 0.24m. No finds.

Layer (606): Loose building rubble, depth 0.25m. No finds.

Layer (605): Loose building rubble within natural marl matrix, depth 0.3m. No finds.

Layer (604): Redeposited natural, containing modern brick/tile and sandstone fragments, depth 0.20m. No finds.

Layer (603): Crushed slate levelling horizon, depth 0.09m. No finds.

Layer (602): Gravel bedding for tarmacadam surface, depth 0.04m. No finds.
Modern tarmacadam yard surface (601): 0.08m in depth.

**Trench 7**  Modern ground surface 12.28m OD to 12.34m OD

Natural red-brown marls (708) were encountered at a depth of 0.42m below present ground level.

Surface (703): Roughly laid sandstone fragments, restricted to eastern corner of trench, 0.08m in depth. No finds.

Modern pit [706]: Subcircular, 0.35m in diameter. Contains fill (707), mid grey-brown silty clay and animal bones.

Linear [704]: Shallow linear feature, at least 1m in length, 0.25m in width and 0.05m in depth. Contains mid grey-brown silty clay fill (705). No finds.

Topsoil (702): Mid grey-brown silty clay, 0.22m in depth. No finds

Modern tarmacadam yard surface (701): 0.1m in depth.
APPENDIX 2

Pottery Assessment by Dr J.R. Timby

A small assemblage of 16 sherds of pottery were submitted for assessment. The material comprised sherds of medieval and post-medieval date. Four sherds from (102) belonged to the same vessel.

Catalogue:

   x1 rim, x2 bodysherds, x1 base glazed red earthenware. Post-medieval (17th-19th century)

(107)  x1 oxidised handmade bodysherd. Sandy fabric with iron inclusions.
   x1 brown-black handmade sandy ware.
   x1 fine micaceous grey ware with sparse sand.
   Date: Medieval (late 12th-13th century)

(405)  x1 blue and white glazed whiteware
   x1 bodysherd glazed red earthenware
   Date: 18th century +

(406)  x3 blue and white glazed whiteware
   x1 rim glazed red earthenware
   Date: 18th century +

(504)  x1 blue and white ?porcelain
   x1 blue and white glazed whiteware
   Date: 18th-19th century
Fig. 3  Study area and location of trenches
Fig. 4 Trench 1, plan and section
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