Public Archaeology Laboratory

Technical Memorandum
Metacomet Country Club
East Providence, Rhode Island

Archaeological Monitoring of Geotechnical Borings

March 25, 2024
PAL No. 4641

Submitted to:

Metacomet Property LLC.
950 Warren Avenue
East Providence, Rhode Island 02914

In response to a request from Metacomet Property LLC (MM LLC.), The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc. (PAL) conducted archaeological monitoring of 12 geotechnical borings and five test pits throughout the Metacomet Country Club Project Area (Figure 1). The monitoring was conducted under contract to MP LLC.

Archaeological monitoring of geotechnical boring locations was conducted within the Metacomet Country Club Project Area in East Providence, Rhode Island. The Metacomet Country Club is situated on a ±105-acre parcel of land on the east bank of the Providence River, immediately northeast of Watchemoket Cove. The Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission (RIHPHC) has commented that the golf course property may contain evidence of a nearby archaeological site, the Jones Pond Site (RI 0230) that was investigated by an amateur archaeologist in the 1930s and included a burial (Brown 1939). The RIHPHC has described the Jones Pond Site as being part of a large village and that burials can be found anywhere within such a village, and recommended a comprehensive survey of the development area. The geotechnical borings provided additional information on the integrity of the soils and the potential for archaeological sites to be present.

Project Description

The proposed Project is a redevelopment of the former Metacomet Country Club 18-hole golf course into a 9-hole course and mixed commercial and residential development. This development is planned to include 16 proposed buildings. The redevelopment will include soil grading, with cuts up to 20 ± feet and fills up to 17 ± feet required to develop the site.

PAL Scope

The goal of the archaeological monitoring was to identify any evidence of archaeological deposits within the locations of geotechnical borings and to make recommendations regarding the need for any additional archaeological investigation. The borings were conducted by Soil X Corp. for MM LLC.

All tasks associated with this survey were undertaken in accordance with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation* (48 FR 44716–44742; National Park Service 1983) and with the MHC's *Public Planning and Environmental Review: Archaeology and Historic Preservation* (1979). This report follows the guidelines established by the National Park Service in *Recovery of Scientific, Prehistoric, Historic, and Archaeological Data* (36 CFR Part 66, Appendix A).

Project Personnel

PAL staff involved in the archaeological monitoring were Deborah Cox (project manager), Peter Mair (principal Investigator) Samuel Marcucci, Nathan Orsi, and J. Colin Stevenson, (Archaeologists). Staff meet the *Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards* (36 CFR Appendix A to Part 61).

Disposition of Project Materials

All Project information (i.e., field recording forms, maps, photographs) are currently on file at PAL, 26 Main Street, Pawtucket, Rhode Island. PAL serves as a temporary curation facility until such time as the State of Rhode Island designates a permanent repository.

Review of Research Contexts and Sensitivity Assessment

MP LLC contracted with PAL to conduct a cultural resources due diligence to assist with Project planning by providing information on historic properties (archaeological sites, historic structures and districts, cemeteries, etc.) in or near the property and to assess the likelihood for unrecorded archaeological sites to be present within the future development area. PAL conducted a review of the RIHPHC's site files to identify previously recorded historic properties within the Project study area. Reports documenting Cultural Resource Management (CRM) investigations conducted in the vicinity of the proposed Project were reviewed. Project plans, including boring logs were examined. Finally, Donald Ross' notes and sketch figures for the redesign of Metacomet Country Club, held at the Given Library and Tufts Archive, Pinehurst, South Carolina were reviewed. *For the results of these reviews and the summarized sensitivity assessment, see the Cultural Resources Due Diligence memorandum (November 2023).*

Field Investigations

Fieldwork for the archaeological monitoring of geotechnical borings was done in December 2023, over the course of five days. PAL monitored 12 geotechnical borings and five test pits conducted throughout the Metacomet Country Club Project Area (Figure 2). Bore/test pit locations have been categorized by being in three distinct portions of the Project Area: Western, Central, and Eastern portions. Information on the geotechnical borings conducted at these locations is summarized in Table 1. Representative soil profiles can be seen in Figure 3.

Table 1. Geotechnical borings/test pits at Metacomet Country Club Project Area.

Boring/Test Pit Number	Soil Integrity	Soil Profile	Portion of Property
K1	Disturbed	Landscaped A/C	Northwest
K2	Disturbed	Landscaped A/C	Northwest
K3	Disturbed	Asphalt/Landscaped A/C	Southwest
K4	Modern Fill Disturbed	Ao/Fill	Southwest
K5	Intact Strata from Surface	A/B1/B2/C	Southwest
K6	Disturbed	Landscaped A/Wetland A	Southwest
K7	Disturbed	Asphalt/Landscaped A/C	West
K8	Disturbed	Asphalt/Landscaped A/C	West
K19	Landscaped A/Wet	Landscaped A/Wetland A	Center
K27	Intact under Landscaped A	Landscaped A/B1	Center
K28	Intact under Landscaped A	Landscaped A/B1	Center
K29	Disturbed	Landscaped A/C	Center
K30	Disturbed	C	Center
K31	Intact under Landscaped A	Landscaped A/B1	Center
K23	Intact under Landscaped A	Landscaped A/B1	Southeast
K25	Intact under Landscaped A	Landscaped A/B1	Southeast
K26	Intact under Landscaped A	Landscaped A/B1	Southeast

Western Portion of Project Area

Soil borings conducted along the western edge of the project area include K1 through K8 (with K6 being the only test pit). The soils documented in K1, K2, and K3 which were placed within the northwest corner of the Project Area, showed C horizon soils under a landscaped topsoil. A similar profile was documented at K6, K7, and K8. The soil profile K4 showed modern fill to a depth of more than 2 meters (m). No further testing or monitoring is recommended in the area surrounding these borings.

Intact soils were documented in K5 located along the absolute western edge of the Project Area in the southwest corner. The core showed an intact soil sequence starting at the surface, including an A topsoil of dark brown (10YR 3/3) silty fine sand down to 15 cm below surface (cmbs) atop a B1 of dark yellow brown (10YR 4/6) silty fine sand down to around 32 cmbs. The B2 was a yellow brown (10YR 5.6) silty fine sand which transitioned to a pale brown (2.5Y 7/3) fine sand C soil around 54 cmbs. K6 is located along the absolute southern edge of the Project Area in the southwest corner, and

displayed intact wetland soil of light grey (2.5Y 6/1) silty sand beneath 50 cm of disturbed/landscaped topsoil. Shovel testing is recommended for the areas immediately surrounding K5.

Central Portion of Project Area

A transect of six borings (K27 through K31) and one isolated test pit (K19) was monitored by PAL in the central portion of the Project Area. The soil profile documented at K27 included intact B1 subsoil of dark yellow brown (10YR 4/6) fine sandy silt beneath 90 cm of landscaped topsoil. Any further soil grading or any activity that would involve subsurface disturbance at this location is recommended to be monitored. The soil profiles documented at K28 and K31 were similar to the one observed at K27 but with intact subsoil closer to the surface, at around 45 cmbs. Intact wetland soil of light grey (10YR 7/1) silty fine sand was documented beneath 30 cm of landscaped topsoil at K19. Shovel testing is recommended for the areas immediately surrounding these locations before any further disturbance.

Sterile C Horizon beneath 240 cm of disturbed/landscaped topsoil made up the profile of K29. The soil profile at K30 was entirely sterile parent material. No further testing or monitoring is recommended in the area surrounding these borings.

Eastern Portion of Project Area

Test pits conducted along the eastern edge of the project include K23, K25, and K26. These three test pits are located in the southeastern corner of the Project Area. The soil profiles between these three pits were comparable, with an intact B1 subsoil of yellow brown (10YE 3/6) silty medium to coarse sand beneath 30 to 50 cm of landscaped topsoil. Two soil anomolies were encountered within K25. Feature 1, at 30 cmbs, was identified as a very dark grey brown (10YR 3/2) circular stain, approximately 30 cm in diameter with charcoal flecking and small amounts of shell (Photo 1). Feature 2 was encountered at 50 cmbs and was comparable to Feature 1 but slightly larger in diameter, around 50 cm, and also had charcoal flecking and small amounts of shell (Photo 2). These features appear to be small refuse pits after photographing they were reburied to avoid further impact. Shovel testing is recommended for the areas surrounding K23, K25, and K26.

Summary and Management Recommendations

Monitoring of geotechnical borings found that some areas within the property that are planned for grading have intact subsoils which may contain cultural deposits. One geotechnical bore in the southeast of the property encountered an intact feature with shell. It is recommended that areas with intact soil within three feet of the surface are shovel-tested and areas with intact soil deeper than three feet of the surface are monitored during the grading process. Some borings throughout the property showed disturbed topsoil over sterile parent material. No further testing is recommended for these specific parts of the project area.

Monitoring of geotechnical borings and test pits confirmed that parts of the western, central, and eastern portions of the property each have intact soil that could contain pre-contact cultural components. In the western portion of the property, the area surrounding K5 is regarded as the most likely to have intact soil with cultural material, and shovel testing is recommended before any further subsurface disturbance. The soils documented at K1 through K4 and K6 through K8, were disturbed and have no likelihood of containing cultural material.

Except for the soils at K29 and K30, all the borings monitored in the center of the Project Area (K19, K27, K28, and K31) had intact soil beneath landscaped topsoil. Shovel testing is recommended for these areas if they are to be disturbed by soil grading activities. Test pits K23, K25, and K26 in the southeastern corner of the Project Area also had intact subsoil beneath landscaped topsoil. Two soil anomalies that contained charcoal and shell were encountered in one test pit (K25). Shovel testing is recommended for these areas before any further disturbance.

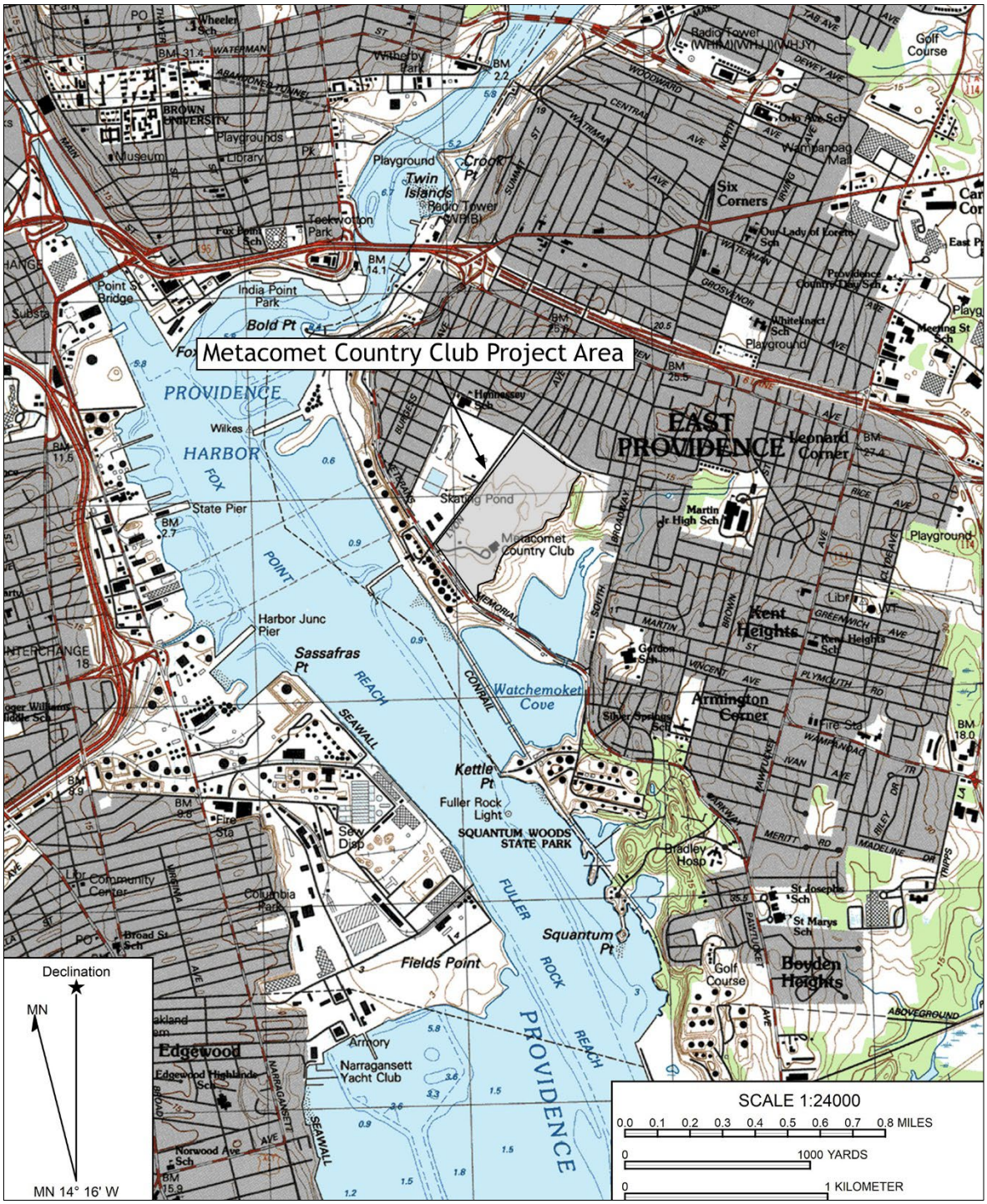

Figure 1. Location of Metacomet Country Club Project Area in East Providence, Rhode Island.

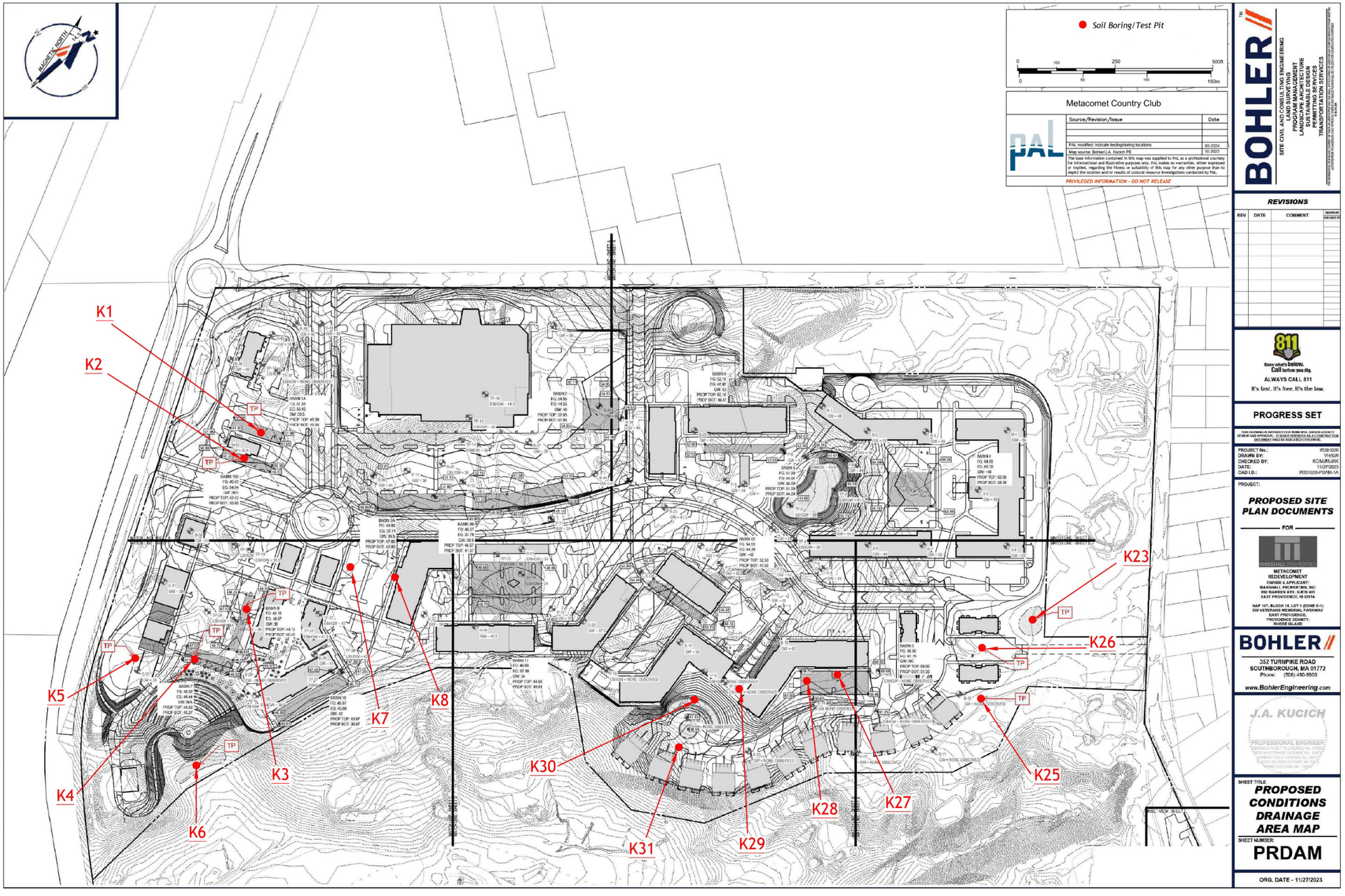

Figure 2. Location of Geotechnical Borings/Test Pits at the Metacomet Country Club Project Area.

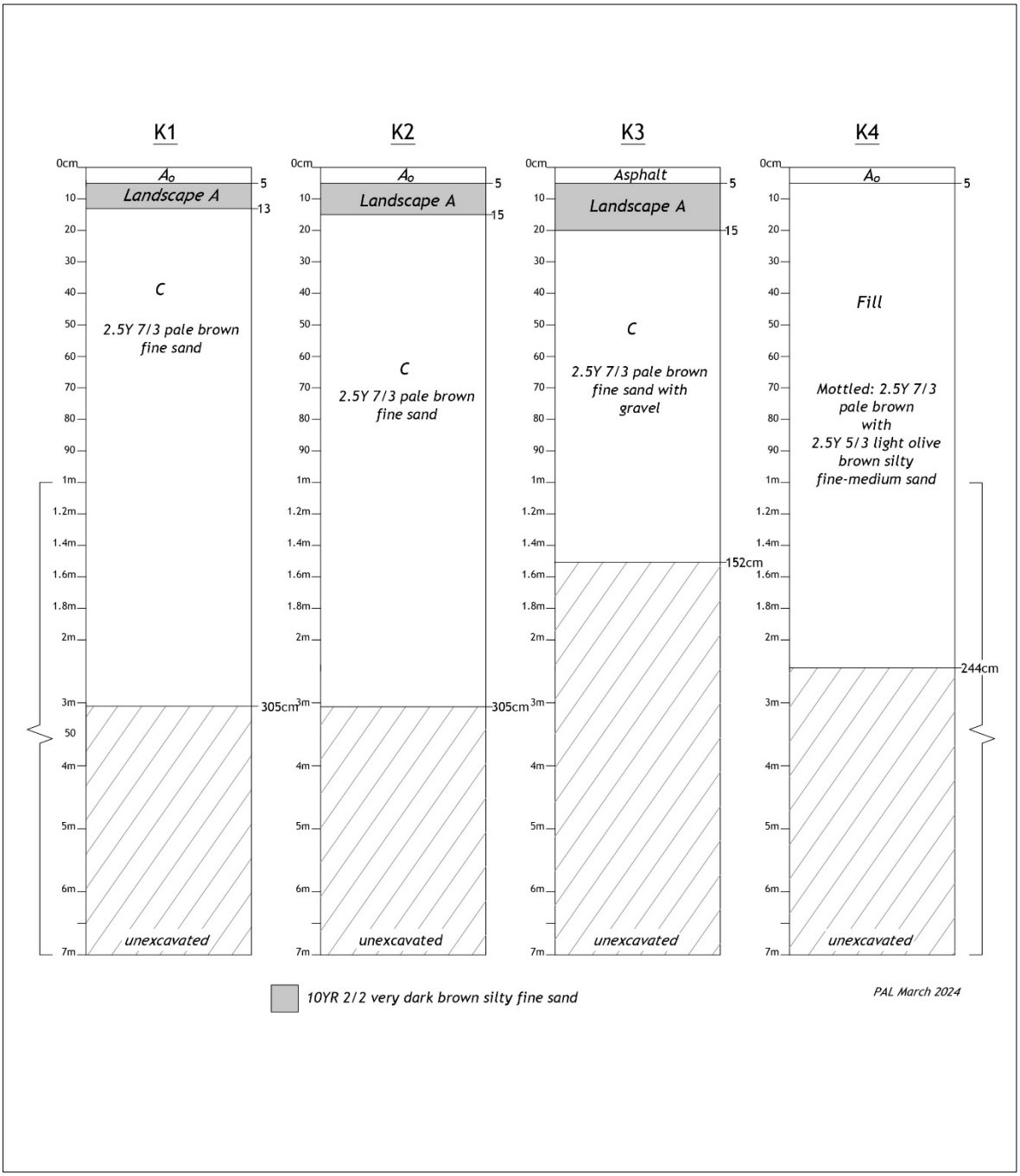

Figure 3a. Representative soil profiles from geotechnical borings/test pits within the western section of Metacomet Country Club Project Area

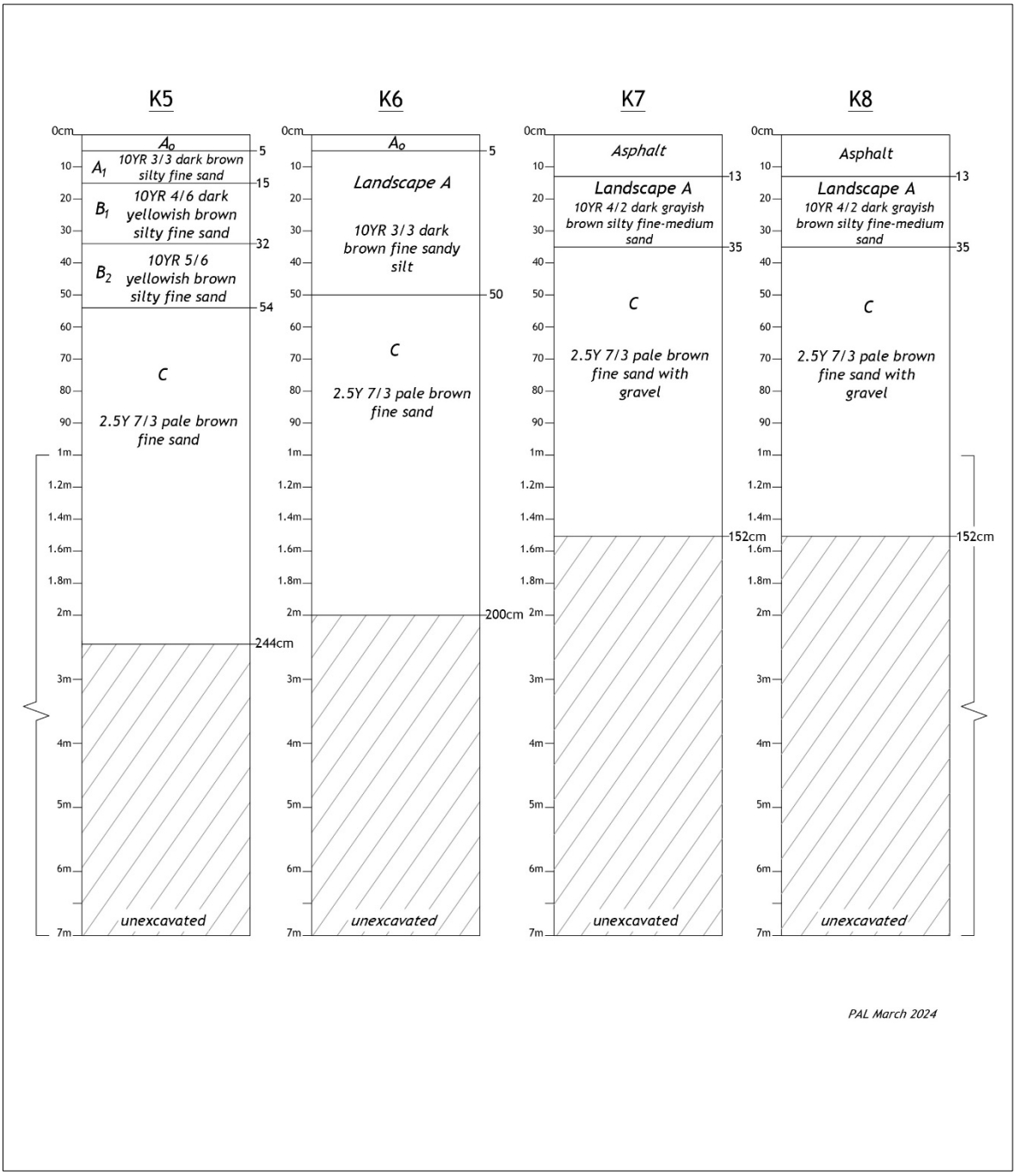

Figure 3b. Representative soil profiles from geotechnical borings/test pits within the western section of Metacomet Country Club Project Area

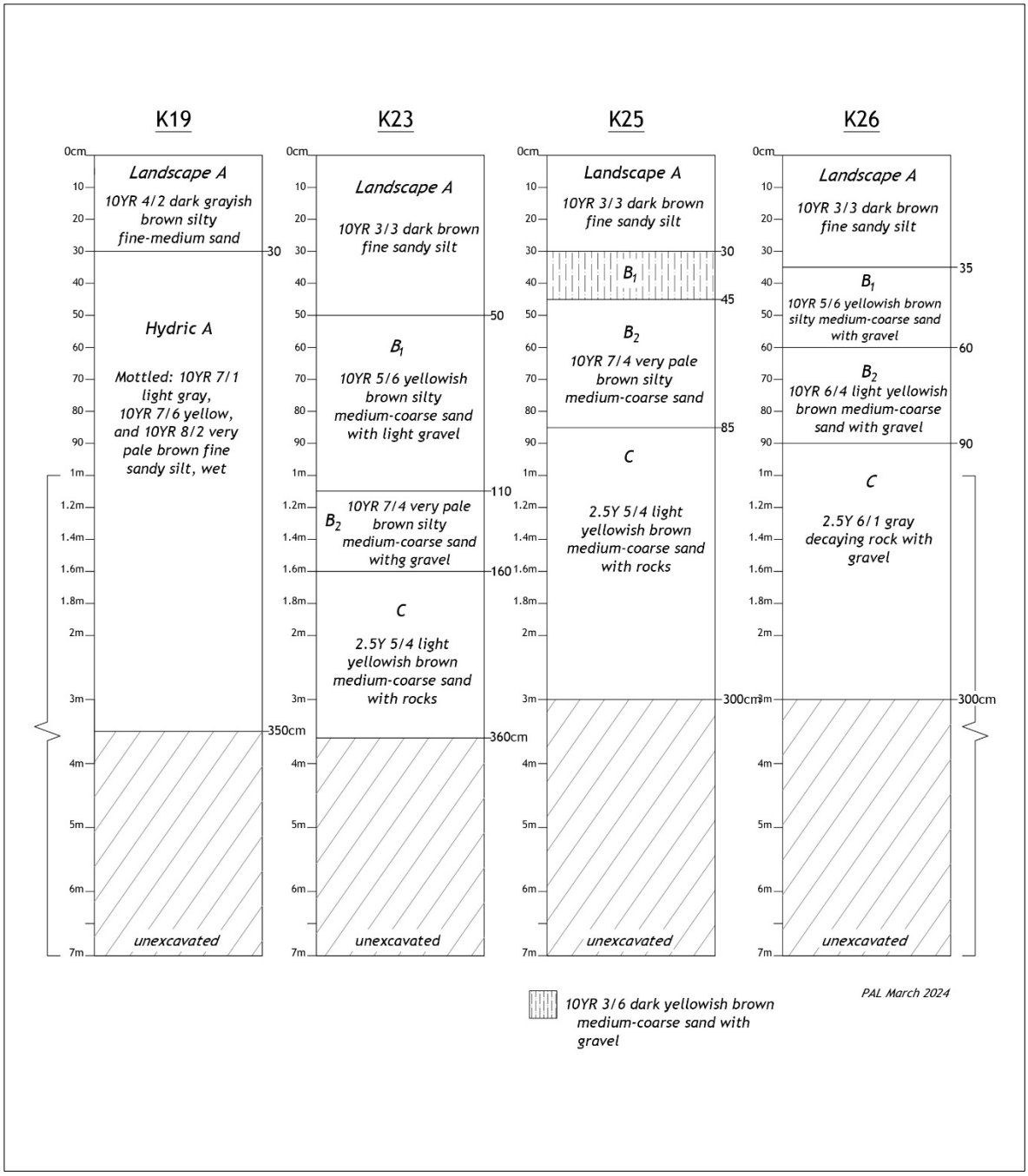

Figure 3c. Representative soil profiles from geotechnical borings/test pits within the eastern section of Metacomet Country Club Project Area

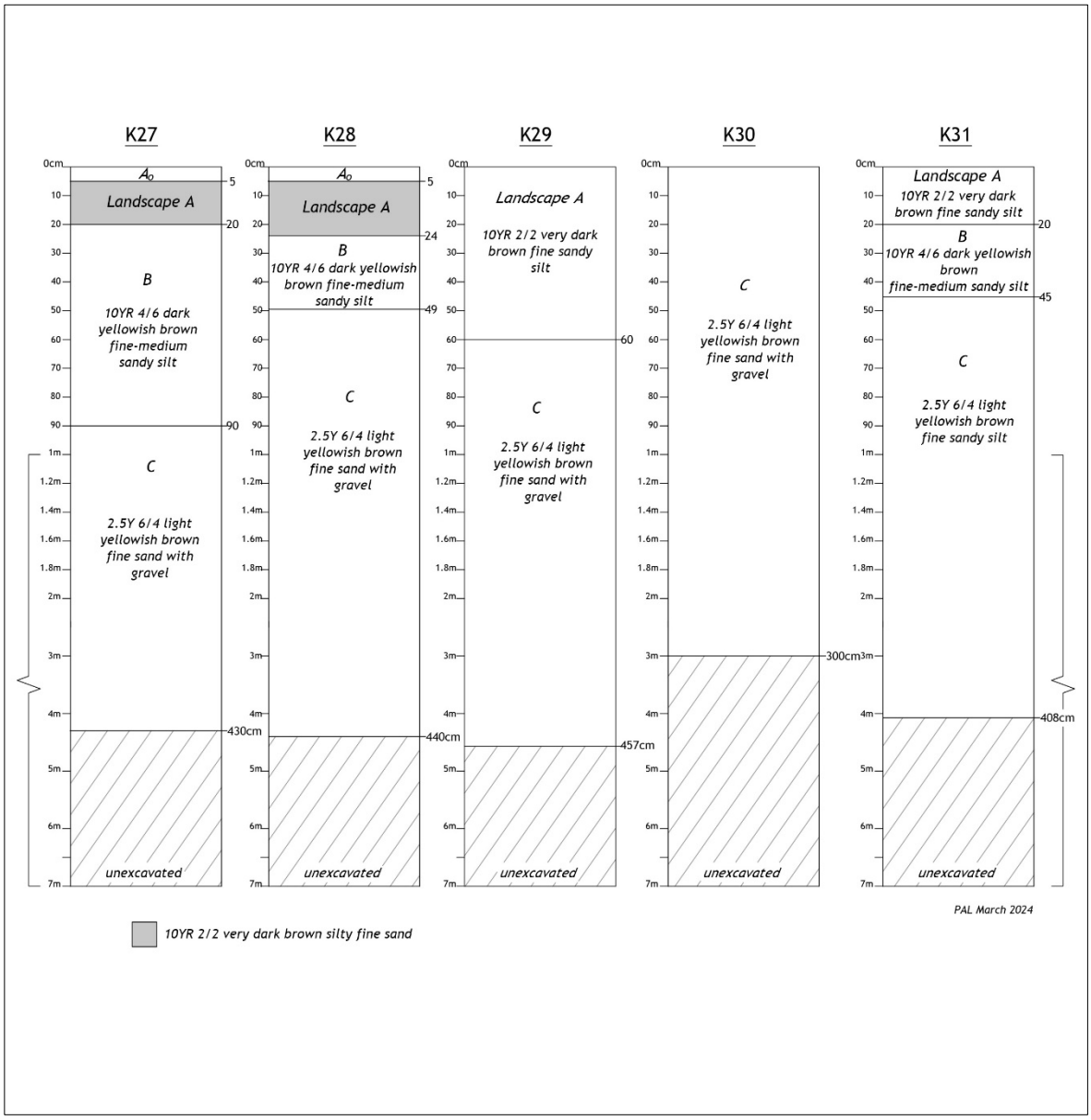

Figure 3d. Representative soil profiles from geotechnical borings/test pits within the central section of the Metacomet Country Club Project Area

Photo 1. Feature 1 from Test pit K25.

Photo 2. Feature 2 from test pit K25.