Report on an Archaeological Evaluation at Ryhall Substation, Temporary Pylon Area, Rutland.

Prepared by M. Dodd

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Ryhall Site, Trench 2 in foreground looking north east to Trench 1

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SUMMARY

- Trent & Peak Archaeology were commissioned by Jacobs UK Ltd, to carry out a trial trenching, comprising 10 trenches (2m x 25m), in advance of a proposed National Grid Substation, Temporary Pylon Area at Ryhall, Rutland, centred on NGR TF0471511233.

- The work was carried out between the 13th October and 17st October 2014 in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation for Trial Trenching by Trent and Peak Archaeology (TPA) (Davies 2014) and the approved TPA Risk Assessment and Methods Statement (Davies 2014). Monitoring was provided by the Principal Planning Archaeologist at Leicestershire County Council.

- In advance of the evaluation at the proposed Temporary Pylon Area, a geophysical survey of the site was undertaken by Archeophysica. The results of this survey depicted east-west aligned 'furrow'-like positive magnetic anomalies in the west of the site, 1 or 2 further NE-SW aligned linear expressed as positive anomalies also provided targets, but overall concluded that nothing of archaeological interest was seen

- During the course of the evaluation, the presence of numerous furrows was confirmed, along both E-W and N-S alignments.

- The only significant archaeological feature was an undated, NW-SE aligned ditch, observed terminating within Trench 2 at the northern limit of the site. Other features included post-medieval field boundaries and drains.

- There were also a number of discrete, undated and irregular features, which appeared on the whole to be the results of bioturbation.

- It was also noted that there was almost complete lack of material culture within any of the features, or even the overlying agricultural deposits further indicating that the area has seen little in the way of sustained settlement activity.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Trent & Peak Archaeology was commissioned by Jacobs UK to carry out a trial trench evaluation, comprising 10 trenches (2m x 25m) in advance of a proposed Temporary Pylon Area. This will form the next phase of works during the construction of a National Grid Substation at Ryhall, Rutland.

1.2 The development, hereafter 'the Site', is located c.0.75km northeast of the historic core of Ryhall village in the eastern part of Rutland County and is centred on National Grid Reference (TF0471511233). The archaeological works are secured as a condition of planning consent (2013/02/FUL) stating that:

> *8. No development shall take place within the application site until the applicant or developer has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.*

2. PROJECT BACKGROUND

2.1 In order to address Condition 8 of the planning application, a Desk-Based Assessment (DBA) for the development was prepared by Hyder on behalf of National Grid in 2013 (Hyder, 2013). The DBA recommended that a geophysical survey of the development site should be undertaken to establish the presence or absence of buried remains within the scheme footprint to determine the need for any further archaeological work.

2.2 The geophysical survey was carried out in September 2014 by Archaeophysica Ltd and identified a number of linear anomalies. Towards the west of the site, multiple E-W aligned 'furrow'-like positive magnetic anomalies were observed. In addition, one or two further NE-SW aligned linears expressed as positive anomalies also provided targets, along with a group of dipolar macular anomalies in the north east of the site, which may represent pits containing burnt material (although similar can be obtained from modern ferrous material present within topsoil deposits) (Davies, 2014).

2.3 Subsequently the Principal Planning Archaeologist at Leicestershire County Council specified that archaeological trial trenching of 5% of the development site was required. This equated to approximately 10, 25m x 2m trial trenches.

2.5 This report details the results of the required trial trenching.

3. SITE TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

3.1 The site consists of a rectangular area approximately 1 hectare in size. This was located at the eastern edge of a large area of open arable farmland situated to the east of Ryhall, between the village and a disused railway. The topography of the site slopes gently from approximately 36.5m AOD in the north, to 35.5m AOD in the south.

3.2 The underlying bedrock comprises Blisworth Limestone Formation (Hyder, 2013). The soils in this area are classified in the Elmton 1 association, characterised as well drained, brashy fine loams and calcareous clays (Hyder, 2013).

4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 *Prehistoric (10,000BC to 43AD)*
There are a number of cropmarks, in some places supported by excavated evidence, which suggest a Prehistoric presence in the vicinity of the site. On this basis the study area was assessed in the DBA as having a moderate potential for unknown archaeological remains dating to the prehistoric period (Hyder, 2013). The cropmarks include:

● To the south-east of the site, analysis of aerial photographs in the 1980s observed a cropmark of a curvilinear ditch which was interpreted as an Iron Age Enclosure (Hyder 2013, Site 1).

● Further evidence of potential Iron Age activity can be seen to the east of the southern tip of the site (Hyder 2013, Site 3) where aerial photographs reveal cropmarks of a large, double-ditched, sub-rectangular enclosure. Here, excavations prior to the construction of a gas pipeline in the 1980s recorded boundary ditches and a possible round-house. Pottery recovered from these features was dated to the Iron Age.

● A square cropmark with a ditch running north from the enclosure was observed on aerial photographs to the east of the site (Hyder 2013, Site 5). To the west of the site aerial photographs show a complex series of pits and ditches which have been interpreted as an indication of later prehistoric settlement activity (Hyder 2013, Site 2).

All of this cropmark evidence taken together could suggest that the area around the site was a focus for activity in the Iron Age with potential settlements existing within at least one of the enclosures. To the north of the substation site, a pottery vessel of presumed prehistoric date was discovered during the construction of the Stanford and Essendine railway in the mid-19th century (Hyder, Site 6).

During March 2014, Trent and Peak Archaeology carried out a trial trench evaluation of the main Ryhall Substation site, immediately to the East of the proposed development area, within the adjacent field.

This work successfully identified a number of archaeological features. On the basis of both morphology and artefactual data, features indicative of later Bronze Age or earlier Iron Age settlement activity – perhaps now relatively ephemeral – were identified. These may comprise the remains of an unenclosed settlement. At this stage it is uncertain if two distinct activity foci are represented or if one contiguous area of less densely occupied habitation is in fact indicated.

Where artefacts were identified within features, it was demonstrated that rich primary deposits of settlement related waste were present in discrete parts of the site. Artefact assemblages contained worked flint in addition to pottery and charred remains suggesting that plant macrofossils may be present. The trial trenching established that there is significant potential to recover evidence for Late Bronze Age – Earlier Iron Age settlement, including aspects of the contemporary economy, and the ceramic traditions.

4.2 *Roman (AD43-AD410)*

There is little evidence for activity dating to the Roman period within the study area. However, a number of cropmarks identified in the Hyder DBA could date to either the Prehistoric or Roman periods. On this basis, the study area was assessed as having a moderate potential for unknown archaeological remains dating to the Roman period (Hyder, 2013). Features include:

● A set of potential Roman or prehistoric field boundaries outside the western boundary of the site (Hyder 2013, Site 7) was identified from aerial photographs. Analysis of the aerial photographs identified a number of fields each defined by a single ditch with a maximum length of 210m.

● To the west of the site, analysis of aerial photographs revealed a potential trackway and two enclosures (Hyder 2013, Site 10). The trackway is approximately 350m long and is defined by two ditches.

● To the west of the study area cropmarks showing a trackway approximately 200m long which are identified as potentially Roman (Hyder, 2013). The trackway is defined for part of its length by two ditches and for another part of its length by a line of pits (Hyder 2013, Site 11).

4.3 *Early Medieval (AD450-1066 AD)*

The villages of Ryhall, Belmesthorpe and Essendine all appear in the Domesday book as established settlements suggesting that they were in existence in the early medieval period. Ryhall, but the study area was assessed in the DBA as having a low potential for unknown archaeological remains dating to the early medieval period (Hyder, 2013). During the construction of the Stanford and Essendine Railway line in the 19th century (which passes just by the site) an Anglo Saxon pot was recovered. Although the exact findspot is unclear it is located by the HER in the study area (Hyder 2013, Site 12).

4.4 *Medieval (1066- 1540 AD*

By the medieval period Ryhall, Belmesthorpe and Essendine were established settlements. h To the west of the study area, aerial photograph evidence shows ridge and furrow, consistent with open field arable cultivation in the medieval period. The study area was assessed in the DBA as having a low potential for unknown archaeological remains dating to the medieval period (Hyder, 2013).

4.5 *Post-Medieval (1540-1914 AD)*

In the post-medieval period Ryhall, Belmesthorpe and Essendine continued to expand with a number of new buildings being built. However later in the post-medieval period the fortunes of Essendine declined rapidly when its castle was destroyed by Cromwell in the Civil War. In the late post-medieval period the railways came to Rutland. In 1846 the Great Northern Railway construction began on a route from London via Peterborough, Lincoln and Gainsborough; eventually the line was extended to provide a direct link between London and York. This railway line passes to the north of the study area and remains in use today and is now the East Coast Mainline. In 1856 the Stamford and Essendine Railway was opened to link Stamford with the Great Northern Railway. This railway line runs partially within the eastern boundary of the site (Hyder 2013 DBA Site 16). At the height of the railway both Ryhall and Essendine had stations; Ryhall Station was on the Stamford and Essendine line and Essendine Station was on the Great Northern Railway. The study area was assessed in the DBA as having a low potential for unknown archaeological remains dating to the post-medieval period (Hyder, 2013).

4.6 *Modern (1914- present)*

In 1959 the Stamford and Essendine Railway closed down and at the same time both Ryhall and Essendine stations were closed. The DBA assessed the study area as having a negligible potential for unknown archaeological remains dating from the Modern period (Hyder, 2013).

4.7 *Undated*

A number of undated features were visible on aerial photographs and have been interpreted as potential boundary ditches (Sites 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21). These features could suggest an early field pattern which has been superseded by the present day pattern. Adjacent to the Iron Age double ditched enclosure (Hyder 2013, Site 3) to the south-east of the study area, a T-shaped collection of linear features can be seen on aerial photographs (Hyder 2013, Site 22). The function of these features is unknown and it is not clear whether they are contemporary with the enclosure. To the south-west of the study area is the potential site of a windmill (Hyder 2013, Site 23).

5. METHODOLOGY

5.1 All work was carried out in accordance with the requirements and standards set out in *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment Project Planning Note 3: Archaeological Excavation* (MoRPHE PPN3) (English Heritage 2008), and the requirements and standards set by the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) in their *Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 1994; revised 2008) *Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological material* (IfA 2001; Revised 2008); *Code of Conduct* (IfA 1985; revised to 2008) and *Standard and Guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives (*IfA, 2009).

General and Specific Aims

5.2 The general aim of the trial trenching was to gather sufficient information to establish the presence/absence, extent, condition, depth, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains in order to establish the impact of the development on the archaeological resource.

More specific aims and objectives were as follows:

To identify, investigate and record any such archaeological remains to the extent possible by the methods put forward in this Specification;
To clarify the date, character and extent of those sites and geophysical anomalies identified within the footprint of the proposed development;
To determine (so far as possible) the stratigraphic sequence and dating of the deposits or features identified;
To establish any ecofactual and environmental potential of archaeological deposits and features; and
To provide recommendations for mitigation measures.

Trench Excavation

5.3 A total of 10 trial trenches with a total area of 500m^2 were excavated. The locations of these trial trenches were determined using the results of the geophysical survey, in order to target obvious anomalies and to provide a representative random sample of the site.

Surveying and setting out

5.4 All trenches were set out, surveyed as excavated and tied in to the Ordnance Survey (OS) National Grid and Ordnance datum, using a GPS, Leica CS15/GS15 RTK Differential GNSS. TPA holds full co-ordinate data which can be supplied as DXF/DWG files if necessary

Mechanical excavation

5.5 Topsoil and subsoil was removed using a 360^o mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. All such mechanical excavation was undertaken under the direct and continuous supervision of Trent & Peak Archaeology staff. Mechanical excavation ceased at the first archaeologically significant horizon or when the absence of any such horizon was adequately demonstrated. Topsoil and subsoil was segregated in separate spoil heaps. Spoil from the excavation of archaeological features was stored on the subsoil heap. After the completion of archaeological excavation the material was replaced in reverse order of removal and the soil was graded to a smooth, even profile, free from local mounds and depressions.

Hand Excavation

5.6 All fieldwork was carried out in accordance with the code of conduct of The Institute for Archaeologists. The depth and complexity of archaeological features and deposits across the whole site was evaluated by hand excavation. Hand excavation was undertaken in compliance with the WSI to a level sufficient to characterise all key features and provide opportunities for the recovery of dateable finds and palaeoenvironmental material.

Recording

5.7 All excavated contexts were fully recorded on TPA written context records giving details of location, composition, shape, dimensions, relationships, finds, samples, cross-references to other elements of the record and other relevant contexts, etc.

5.8 All features were recorded on at least one plan (normally at 1:20 scale) and at least one section drawing (normally at 1:10 scale). A complete post-excavation plan and long section of each trench was prepared. All drawings included co-ordinate data and spot-heights related to the Ordnance Survey Datum and accurate to two decimal places. The level of recording increased relative to the presence of features of archaeological significance.

5.9 All excavated features and deposits were recorded photographically using black and white negative film, in a 35mm or medium format. Additional illustrative photographs were taken using digital photography (four Megapixels). All black and white record photographs were taken using silver based film only, being suitable for long-term storage (Brown 2007, 13).

5.10 All finds were recorded by context; and individually significant finds were also individually labelled with a TPA three-letter code (e.g. AAA) and recorded three-dimensionally. All artefacts recovered were retained and removed from site for conservation (if necessary) and specialist examination/analysis (see Section 6). All recording, cleaning, storage and conservation of finds has been carried-out in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologist's *Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (2001, revised 2008).

Palaeoenvironmental Sampling

5.11 All environmental archaeology was undertaken in accordance with the principles set out in *Environmental Archaeology: a guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation* (English Heritage 2011) and with reference to the Association for Environmental Archaeology's Working Paper No. 2, *Environmental Archaeology and Archaeological Evaluation* (1995).

5.12 Soil samples comprising at least 40 litres per context or 100% of smaller contexts were taken for the recovery of charred plant remains, small bones and finds shall be taken from appropriate contexts. These comprised basal/primary fills of at least 50% of all cut archaeological features and at least 25% of all other anthropogenic soil deposits, including all deposits containing any visible charcoal or other carbonised material and all deposits considered to be of particular interest on the basis of artefactual content or other characteristics.

5.13 During the evaluation none of the deposits observed were deemed suitable for Palaeoenvironmental sampling.

Site Archive

5.15 Archive consolidation was undertaken immediately following the conclusion of fieldwork. The site record was checked, cross-referenced and indexed.

5.16 All retained finds have been marked and packaged as necessary but due to their friable nature have not been washed. Recommendations for their treatment are made in Section 6 and should follow further mitigation.

5.17 All retained finds have been assessed and recorded by suitably qualified and experienced staff (prehistoric pottery by Dr. David Knight (TPA) and worked flint by Peter Webb (TPA). Initial artefact dating has been integrated into the site narrative.

5.18 Following further mitigation, the archive shall be assembled in accordance with the guidelines set out in Appendix 1, P1 of MoRPHE PPN3 (English Heritage 2008) and the Rutland County Museum's *Transfer of Archaeological Archives to Rutland County Museums and Record Service (Rutland Museum, 2013)*. In addition to the site records, artefacts, ecofacts and other sample residues, the archive shall contain:

site matrices where appropriate;
a summary report synthesising the context records;
a summary of the artefact record; and
a summary of any other records or materials recovered.
The integrity of the primary field records shall be preserved and the Contractor shall create security copies in digital, fiche or microfilm format of all primary field records.

5.19 Initial contact has been made with Lorraine Cornwell, Collections Manager at Rutland County Museum and the following accession number issued for this site: OAKRM:2014.5. An archive index is provided below:

Field Records	***Description***	***Number***
Context Sheet	Record of each intervention	105
Registers	Registers	14
A3 Drafting Film	Scale plans and Sections	10
Digital Photographs	All views	x BW and Colour

Documents	*Description*	*Number*
Written scheme of investigation	Statement of the aims, objectives and methodology for the project.	1
Health & Safety	Safe working statement & risk assessment	1
Report to client	Report of findings of the watching brief.	1

6. RESULTS

6.1 An outline narrative of the results of the archaeological evaluation trenches is now presented below. The overall location of the trenches are shown on Figure 2 with more detailed plans of the areas of interest shown on Figures 3, 4, 5 and 6, a full context list is provided as Appendix 1.

Trench 1 (2m x 25m; Figure 3)

6.2 Trench 1 was orientated E-W, and positioned within the north eastern corner of the site. Machining removed the topsoil, which measured a maximum depth of 0.29m, exposing a shallow subsoil layer of soft, orange brown, silty clay, up to 0.15m deep. The underlying natural substrate was mixture of compact, mottled light grey and orange, sandy clay, combined with patches of degraded limestone bedrock.

6.3 Cut into the natural substrate were a number of linear features, including two N-S aligned furrows. The most easterly of the two, [105] was slightly truncated during machining, but was visible in section to a width of 1.62m, with a maximum depth of 0.09m. The second furrow, [109] was situated towards the western end of the trench and measured 1.24m wide, with a depth of 0.07m. Both furrows had typically shallow concave profiles and were filled with a soft, pale orange brown, silty clay.

6.4 The southern end of furrow [109] had been truncated by an E-W aligned linear ditch [111], which was itself only partially, as it extended beyond the southern half of the trench. The unexcavated upper fill was soft, dark greyish brown, silty clay. An identical feature was identified and excavated to the west, within Trench 3, where it was proven to be a modern drain.

6.5 Approximately 8m from the eastern end of Trench 1, a fourth feature was recorded, but was again only partially visible, as it continued beyond the southern limits of the excavated area. Observed cutting through the subsoil, feature [102] was sub-circular in plan, with irregular sides and a concave base, the maximum diameter measured 1.16m and the depth was 0.24m. It contained a sterile homogenous fill of light brown clay, with very occasional, small fragments of stone. Overall it is suspected that this represents the remains of a tree-bole, rather than an archaeological feature.

6.6 A modern N-S aligned ceramic field drain was also observed.

Trench 2 (2m x 25m; Figure 3)

6.7 Trench 2 was located at the northern end of the site, positioned on a NE-SW alignment. A consistent layer of topsoil was removed along the length of the trench, measuring approximately 0.22m deep. The underlying subsoil varied in thickness, totalling just 0.04m at the north eastern end, but increasing to a maximum of 0.28m thick at the opposing south western end. Underlying the subsoil was a concentration of features cutting into the degraded Limestone natural.

6.8 Situated at the very north eastern end of the trench, was an E-W aligned linear feature [206]. Upon excavation, it revealed moderately steep sides, with a flat base, measuring 0.64m in width and 0.2m in depth. It contained a single fill of soft red brown, silty clay, with occasional angular stone fragments, but unfortunately no charcoal, or material culture. The form of the feature is indicative of a small boundary, possibly a drainage ditch. But the sterile fill and lack of artefacts, combined with the fact that only a small portion was visible, make this interpretation uncertain.

6.9 Approximately 2m to the SW of ditch [206], was a second linear feature [204]. It was recorded along a NW-SE orientation and was excavated to a depth of 0.58m, with a maximum width of 2.2m. The upper edges were moderately sloped, becoming steeper towards the base, where a rounded terminal end was revealed. Although, the upper portion of the ditch extended

beyond the limits of trench, it is assumed that this feature was a ditch terminus. The primary fill of the ditch was a 0.32m thick deposit of soft, light orange brown, silty clay, with moderately frequent angular stones, probably resulting from erosion of the edges. The upper fill was a similar composition, but contained notably less stone inclusions. Neither fill contained any finds or evidence of associated human activity.

6.10 The south western edge of ditch [204], truncated an earlier sub-circular pit or tree-throw, [208]. It measured 1.5m in length, and 0.86m in width, with a moderately well-defined, but irregular concave profile, with one gently sloped edge and an opposing steeper sloping side. It contained a single sterile fill of mid red brown, silty clay.

6.11 As shown in Figure 3, an earlier feature [210], had been truncated by [208]. Potentially representing the remains of a small gully, [210] was rectangular in plan, but only observable along a length of 0.4m, with a width of 0.35m and a total depth of 0.08m. Excavation showed that it contained a single fill of soft, mid grey brown, silty clay. With such a small portion visible it is difficult to be certain about the function of this feature. Although potentially a small gully, the sterile fill and lack of artefactual evidence indicate that natural origins might be more likely.

6.12 The final feature within the trench was a modern E-W aligned linear [212], also observed with trenches 1 and 3.

Trench 3 (2m x 25m; Figure 2)

6.13 Trench 3 was located along the western edge, at the north of the site, perpendicular to a series of E-W, linear anomalies identified from the geophysics. Machining of the trench revealed that it was located within a previously unobservable depression in the geology. This had led to the development of a 0.4m thick layer of topsoil, overlying up to 0.35m of soft orange brown, silty clay subsoil which had formed above the degraded limestone natural.

6.14 Situated 4.5m from the northern end of the trench, was an E-W aligned, modern drainage ditch, [302]. It measured 1.35m wide, with steep, irregular sides. The bottom of the feature was not revealed, as excavation was halted at 0.72m after revealing a large ceramic drain. Surrounding the drain pipe was a layer of loose pebbles - which had been immediately overlain by a backfill of dark, greyish brown, silty clay. Perfectly aligned with one of the geophysical anomalies, it was possible to determine that the broadly identical features, [212] and [111] within trenches 1 and 2 were the same drainage ditch.

6.15 At the southern end of the trench, a large irregular feature was recorded [305], measuring 2.4m in length and 1.25m wide. The edges were diffuse, but excavation revealed an irregular profile containing a single fill of soft orange, light brown, silty clay. It contained no finds or charcoal and most probably represents the remains of a tree-throw.

Trench 4 (2m x 25m; Figure 4)

6.16 Trench 4 was orientated E-W, and positioned at the eastern edge of the site. Machine excavation removed the topsoil, and then the underlying subsoil, which measured approximately 0.3m and 0.1m thick respectively. Following their removal, a mixed geology was revealed comprising patches of silty clay and gravel, combined with degraded limestone bedrock.

6.17 Cutting into the natural were three N-S aligned linears, situated towards the eastern end of the trench. From east to west, these were recorded as [403], [405] and [407]. They varied in width between 1.1m and 1.56m and all measured a maximum depth of 0.1m. Based upon their broad and shallow, concave profiles these features have been interpreted as probable furrows.

6.18 Located near the centre of the trench was a small sub-circular feature, [409] which measured 0.36m by 0.29m in plan, with a depth of 0.23m. The sides were steep, and slightly concave,

leading to a concave base. It contained a loose, dark brown, silty clay. This feature has tentatively been interpreted as a post hole.

Trench 5 (2m x 25m; Figure 2)

6.19 Trench 5 was orientated N-S at the western edge of the site, across the main E-W anomalies identified by the geophysics. Machine excavation removed the topsoil and subsoil to a maximum depth of 0.95m. Along the length of the trench, the topsoil was relatively uniform at approximately 0.3m thick, whereas the subsoil varied in depth, measuring just 0.15m at the southern end, and deepening gradually to 0.5m at the northern end of the trench.

6.20 Although the geophysics had identified a number of E-W anomalies at this location, no archaeological features were observed.

Trench 6 (2m x 25m; Figure 2)

6.21 Trench 6 was situated near the centre of the site, on an E-W orientation. Machining removed the topsoil and subsoil, exposing the natural geology of light grey brown, silty clay approximately 0.45m below ground level. The topsoil was observed along the length of the trench with a regular thickness of 0.25m, but the underlying subsoil varied in depth, present only in patches at the eastern end. It became thicker and more consistent towards the west, with a maximum depth of 0.2m.

6.22 Two N-S aligned linears, [605] and [607] were observed cutting into the natural. Linear [607] had been slightly truncated by machining, but was still visible in section with a width of 1.1m and a depth of 0.15m, whilst the second linear measured 1.2m wide and 0.15m deep. Both features contained a mid brown, silty clay deposit. Their slightly irregular, broad concave profiles are characteristic of furrows and it seems likely that these represent truncated furrow bases.

6.23 A third feature [603], was partially exposed along the southern edge of the trench, near to the centre. It was irregular in form, with diffuse edges, and had naturally silted up with a mid to dark grey brown, clay silt. Following excavation this was interpreted as the probable remains of a tree-bole.

6.24 No finds were recovered from any of the excavated features and no further archaeological remains were present.

Trench 7 (2m x 25m; Figure 5)

6.25 Trench 7 was located towards the south east corner of the site, on a SW-NE alignment. Both the topsoil and subsoil were removed by machine, and were recorded with depths up to 0.32m and 0.22m respectively. The underlying natural geology was revealed as light grey brown, silty clay and limestone gravel, into which multiple linear features were cut.

6.26 Potentially the earliest features within the trench, were [702] and [706], situated towards the south west end of the excavated area. Cut [702] measured 0.12m wide, with a depth of 0.17m, forming an elongated oval shape in plan, over a length of at least 0.8m. The northern end had been truncated by furrow, [704], whilst the southern end extended beyond the limits of the trench. Excavation demonstrated that it had steep sides, with an irregular base and had been filled with a firm, dark reddish brown, clay, containing no charcoal or artefactual material.

6.27 The second feature, [706] was situated a further 5m to the north east, with its longest axis also orientated N-S. Slightly more linear in plan, [706] measured 0.14m wide and 0.16m deep, with a minimum length of 1.3m, as it was truncated to the north by furrow [708]. Its fill was identical to that of [702], and also failed to produce any material culture.

6.28 In total, four probable furrows were identified within the trench, [704], [708], [714] and [716], each on the same E-W alignment (Fig 5), mirroring the geophysics anomalies identified to the north. They varied in width between 1.65m and 2.05m, with depths of up to 0.1m. Within each of them, was soft, orange brown, silty clay.

6.29 Furrow [714] had been truncated along its northern edge by a later ditch, [710]. Almost parallel to the furrow, on an E-W alignment, the ditch measured 0.64m wide and 0.22m deep, along a length of at least 2.05m. The sides of the ditch were moderately steep, leading down to a broad flat base, into which, a soft dark brown silty clay had slowly accumulated. During excavation, fragments of animal bone were recovered from this fill, along with a sherd of post-medieval pottery.

6.30 Immediately to the north east of [710], was another ditch, [712]. Orientated slightly differently, on an WNW-ESE alignment, shared the same profile as [710], but was slightly larger, with a depth of 0.69m and a depth of 0.25m. Again, the fill was a soft dark brown, silty clay. Given their similarities, it is possible that these were broadly contemporary features, perhaps maintain the same boundary.

6.31 One final feature [718], was observed within the south western end of the trench, and extended beyond limits of the excavated area. Investigation of this feature revealed a sub-circular feature with steep sides and a concave base. The visible diameter measured 0.7m, and the depth was 0.24m. No finds were recovered from the fill, which was a dark, reddish brown clay, similar to that recorded within features [702] and [706].

Trench 8 (2m x 25m; Figure 2)

6.32 Trench 8 was located on an E-W alignment, to the east of Trench 7, with the intention of examining a NW-SE aligned anomaly identified from the geophysics. The trench was excavated using a machine, revealing up to 0.4m deep topsoil and a shallow underlying subsoil, up to 0.15m thick.

6.33 Once the natural geology was exposed, the only NW-SE aligned feature identified, that may have resulted in the geophysical anomaly was a modern field drain, [810]. The western edge of this drain was observed cutting through an earlier irregular, though broadly sub-circular feature, [812] interpreted as the remains of a tree bole. It measured 1.25m by 1m in plan, with a shallow irregular profile, 0.14m deep. The fill was a homogenous, mid brown, sandy clay, silt.

6.34 The four other features observed within the trench, [814], [808], [806] and [804] were all interpreted as furrows. Broadly positioned on N-S alignments they ranged in width between 0.9m and 1.7m, with maximum depth of 0.08m. Present within each of them was a soft mid brown, sandy clay, silt. No artefacts were recovered from any of the features within Trench 8.

Trench 9 (2m x 25m; Figure 6)

6.35 Situated in the south east corner of the site, Trench 9 was orientated on an E-W alignment. The trench was excavated by machine, revealing the natural geology at a depth of 0.45m below ground level. The subsoil was recorded between 0.2 and 0.25m thick, and was in turn overlain by approximately 0.25m of topsoil. The exposed geology at this location differed significantly from the rest of the site, comprising a light greyish yellow, silty clay, containing gritty fragments of degraded bedrock. Certainly more alluvial in nature, it is worth noting that once the trench was open, groundwater was present within the lowest parts, making excavation and visibility more difficult. This perhaps results from Trench 9 being located in the lowest portion of the site at 35.3m AOD.

6.36 A possible gully, [907] was identified cutting into the natural, 1.5m from the western end of the trench. It was aligned NE-SW, but was slightly irregular in plan, and difficult to observe at its north eastern extremity. The feature measured at least 2m in length, and 0.62m wide with a shallow concave profile, 0.12m deep. Contained within it was a firm, mid grey brown, silty clay, with very occasional charcoal fragments. This most likely accumulated naturally over a

period of time, indicating that the feature had been left open following its initial excavation. No artefacts were recovered from the fill.

6.37 Near the centre of the trench was a sub-circular cut, [905] which measured 0.7m by 0.65m, with a depth of 0.15m. Investigation of the feature revealed steep sides and a broad flattish base, into which a firm, mid grey brown, silty clay had formed. This contained occasional manganese flecks and limestone grit towards the edges. Although no charcoal or other evidence of human activity was observed within this feature, the regular nature of the cut suggests that it may be the base of a pit or post hole, rather than a natural feature.

6.38 A second linear, [903] was recorded to the east of pit [905]. Situated on a N-S alignment, the cut was quite irregular in plan, and measured a maximum width of 0.7m. Excavation of the feature revealed equally irregular edges and broad flattish base. It contained a single homogenous fill, of mid grey brown, silty clay with occasional manganese flecking, but no charcoal or material culture. It is possible that the irregular form is in fact due to the presence of more than feature, possibly a pit as well, but this was not discernible, and could equally have resulted from bioturbation.

Trench 10 (2m x 25m; Figure 5)

6.39 Trench ten was located towards the south west of the site, along an E-W alignment. Machining removed the topsoil and underlying subsoil, which measured 0.3m and 0.24m thick respectively. Once the natural geology had been exposed, a number of features were observed along the base of the trench.

6.40 At the western end was a shallow linear, [1003] orientated NW-SE. Measuring at least 2.5m in length, it extended beyond the limits of the excavated trench to the south east, whilst the north western end appeared to either terminate, or have been truncated away. The maximum width of the linear was 0.75m, whilst the depth measured 0.11m. Excavation revealed a profile with moderately steep sides and a flat base, into which a soft mid brown, clay silt had accumulated. This may represent the truncated remains of a boundary ditch, but could more simply be an undulation in the natural that had silted up.

6.41 Also recorded within the trench, were the truncated remains of three sub-circular features, [1005], [1007] and [1011]. The most convincing of these three, [1005] was situated towards the centre of the trench. It measured 0.8m by 0.7m in plan, and was excavated to a depth of 0.2m. It had been filled by a soft, mid brown, clay silt. No charcoal or material culture was recovered from the fill. The northern edge of [1005], appeared to have been partially truncated by a small, shallow cut, [1007]. However, as the latter measured just 0.08m deep, it is difficult to certain about the relationship between the two. Cut [1007] measured 0.62m by 0.52m in plan, with a broad concave profile, with a fill of mid brown clay silt. Again, no anthroprogenic material was recovered from its fill.

6.42 Feature [1011] was located towards the eastern end of the trench and measured 1.9m by 0.78m in plan, although its south western edge had been truncated by a modern drain. Notably more irregular than the other two discrete features, its profile was uneven, the maximum depth was recorded as 0.18m. The fill was a mid brown, clay, sandy silt. This has been interpreted as the remains of a tree bole.

6.43 Two furrows, [1009] and [1013] were also recorded within Trench 10. Both were aligned N-S, and each measured 1.2m wide. The deepest of the two, was [1009], with a depth of 0.21m, whereas [1013] was just 0.14m deep. Both furrows contained a mid brown, clay, sandy silt.

7. ARTEFACTS AND ENVIRONMENTAL REMAINS

7.1 Pottery

7.1.1 The pottery assemblage recovered from the site was limited to a single small sherd recovered from the fill of ditch [710]. It consisted of a heavily abraded body sherd of lead glazed, red earthenware (<1g), dating to the 18th/ 19th century.

7.2 Faunal Remains

7.2.1 In total 9 fragments of animal bone were recovered from the site, all from the fill of ditch [710]. The entire assemblage weighed 156g and includes a fragment of probable sheep-goat femur.

8. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

8.1 It has been demonstrated that there was regionally significant evidence for late prehistoric activity within close vicinity of proposed development area. With several clusters of late Bronze Age or early Iron Age, features recorded less than 100m to the east of the site. However, resulting from the ten trenches excavated during these works, there is little indication that this activity continued westwards into the development area of the temporary pylon.

8.2 Although multiple features were recorded during the course of this evaluation, many of them do not appear to be of archaeological significance. The most common feature types encountered were truncated furrows. These were generally observed along N-S orientations, although at the west of the site, those within Trench 7 were aligned E-W, matching the trends observed during the geophysics.

8.3 The most significant archaeological feature was the ditch terminus [204] recorded within Trench 2. Presumably forming part of a boundary, it may indicate the presence of an entrance between two plots of land, near the north of the site. However, it was not identified by the geophysics, and its NW-SE alignment did not appear within any of the other excavated trenches. The area delineated by this ditch is therefore unknown. Furthermore, the ditch fills were completely sterile and devoid of any material culture, meaning that it is not possible to ascertain its period of use. Although the sterile nature of these fills does indicate that it was probably located at some distance from concentrated settlement activity.

8.4 Consideration is also required of the possibly gully, [206] situated to the north east of ditch [204]. Although only a small portion was visible, it was more regular and less ephemeral than many of the other features observed. It contained a sterile homogeneous fill with little indication as to its date or precise function, but was notably different from the fill of ditch [204], comprising a reddish brown clay rich fill. The origins of this material are uncertain and may indicate that the feature was left often for a considerable period, or may simply suggest natural origins as other patches of reddish clay were observed elsewhere as part of the natural geology.

8.5 Other than the drains observed within Trenches 1, 2, 3, 8 and 9 the only other definite ditches were the two shallow E-W aligned linears, [710] and [712] within 7. Almost identical in their appearance and situated in similar orientations, it seems plausible that they were contemporary boundaries, or at least reinstatements of the same division. However it is worth noting that ditch [710] was recorded cutting through an earlier furrow, [714], and also contained a small sherd of post-medieval pottery. These are therefore likely to represent a relatively late phase of activity on the site

8.6 Within trench 9, further linears were recorded, but were both ephemeral and irregular in their nature. It is therefore uncertain as to whether their origins are archaeological or natural. Especially when it is considered that they are located within the lower-lying alluvial affected area of the site.

8.7 Numerous discrete features recorded within the other trenches were typically irregular in their form, and contained sterile fills, devoid of artefactual material. Although there is potential that they may represent the truncated remains of dispersed activity, this is difficult to conclude, and they appear more likely to be the result of bioturbation.

8.8 Finally, it is worth noting that although there is a potential for discrete areas of archaeological activity to have been missed entirely, the geophysical survey undertaken prior to this work, failed to identify anything of obvious archaeological significance. Moreover, the almost complete lack of material culture within any of the features, or even the overlying agricultural deposits further indicates that the area has seen little in the way of sustained settlement activity.

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Appendix 1 Context Register

Trench 1				
Context Number	**Context Type**	**Description**	**Length x Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**
100	Layer	Topsoil - Dark greyish brown silty clay	-	0.29
101	Layer	Subsoil - Mid orange brown, silty clay	-	0.15
102	Cut	Pit/Tree throw – Sub-circular, gently sloping sides, concave base.	1.94	0.41
103	Fill	Fill of [102] – Light brown clay, 5% gravel	-	0.24
104	Fill	Fill of [102] – Compact, brownish red clay	-	0.41
105	Cut	Furrow	1.62	0.09
106	Fill	Fill of [105] – Light orange brown, silty clay	1.62	0.09
107	Cut	Land Drain	0.3	0.47
108	Fill	Fill of [107]	0.3	0.47
109	Cut	Furrow	1.24	0.07
110	Fill	Fill of [109] - Light orange brown, silty clay	1.24	0.07
111	Cut	ESE-WNW Ditch - Unexcavated	9.75 x 1.6	-
112	Fill	Fill of [111] – Dark greyish brown, silty clay, wood and charcoal fragments	-	-
113	Layer	Natural – Mottled light grey and orange sandy clay, with degraded bedrock in patches	-	-

Trench 2				
Context Number	**Context Type**	**Description**	**Length x Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**
200	Layer	Topsoil - Dark greyish brown, silty clay		0.24
201	Layer	Subsoil - Mid orange brown, silty clay		0.28
202	Fill	Fill of [204] – Light orange brown, silty clay, occasional angular stones		0.22
203	Fill	Fill of [204] – Light orange brown, silty clay, moderately frequent angular stones		0.32
204	Cut	NW-SE Ditch – Gradual sloping sides, steep near base, flat base. Terminal end.	2.2	0.58
205	Fill	Fill of [206] – Mid red brown, silty clay, occasional stones		0.2
206	Cut	Ditch – Slightly irregular, steep sides, flat base	0.64	0.2
207	Fill	Fill of [208] – Mid red brown, silty clay		0.17
208	Cut	Pit/tree throw – Oval in plan, steep sides, uneven base	1.5 x 0.86	0.17
209	Fill	Fill of [210] – Mid red brown, silty clay		0.08
210	Cut	Gully – Rectangular, E-W aligned, steep sides, full profile not seen	0.4 x 0.35	0.08
211	Fill	Fill of [212] - Dark greyish brown, slightly silty clay	-	-
212	Cut	Ditch - Unexcavated	0.6	-
213	Layer	Natural – Mottled light grey and orange sandy clay, with degraded bedrock in patches	-	-

Trench 3				
Context Number	**Context Type**	**Description**	**Length x Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**
300	Layer	Topsoil - Dark greyish brown, silty clay	-	0.38
301	Layer	Subsoil – Orange brown, silty clay	-	0.34
302	Cut	WNW-ESE – Ditch/drain	1.35	0.72
303	Fill	Fill of [302] – Dark greyish brown, silty clay		0.65
304	Fill	Fill of [302] – Loose gravel with ceramic drain		0.24
305	Cut	Tree throw	2.4 x 1.25	0.2
306	Fill	Fill of [305] – light orange brown, silty clay		0.2
307	Layer	Natural – Mottled light grey and orange sandy clay, with degraded bedrock in patches	-	-

Trench 4				
Context Number	**Context Type**	**Description**	**Length x Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**
400	Layer	Topsoil - Dark greyish brown silty clay	-	0.3
401	Layer	Subsoil - Mid orange brown, silty clay	-	0.12
402	Layer	Natural – Mottled light grey and orange sandy clay, with degraded bedrock in patches	-	-
403	Cut	Furrow	1.56	0.1
404	Fill	Fill of [403] – Mid to dark orange brown, silty clay	1.56	0.1
405	Cut	Furrow	1.4	0.09
406	Fill	Fill of [405] - Mid to dark orange brown, silty clay	1.4	0.09
407	Cut	Furrow	1.1	0.15
408	Fill	Fill of [407] - Mid to dark orange brown, silty clay	1.1	0.15
409	Cut	Possible post hole	0.36 x 0.29	0.23
410	Fill	Fill of [409] – Dark reddish brown, silty clay	0.36 x 0.29	0.23

Trench 5				
Context Number	**Context Type**	**Description**	**Length x Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**
500	Layer	Topsoil - Dark greyish brown silty clay	-	0.3
501	Layer	Subsoil - Mid orange brown, silty clay	-	<0.5
503	Layer	Natural – Mottled light grey and orange sandy clay, with degraded bedrock in patches	-	-

Trench 6				
Context Number	**Context Type**	**Description**	**Length x Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**
600	Layer	Topsoil - Dark greyish brown silty clay	-	0.25
601	Layer	Subsoil - Mid orange brown, silty clay	-	0.15
602	Layer	Natural – Mottled light grey and orange sandy clay, with degraded bedrock in patches	-	unknown
603	Cut	Pit/Tree thow	0.9 x 0.55	0.32
604	Fill	Fill of [603]	0.9 x 0.55	0.32
605	Cut	Furrow	1.2	0.12

606	Fill	Fill of [605]	1.2	0.12
607	Cut	Furrow	1.1	0.15
608	Fill	Fill of [607]	1.1	0.15

Trench 7

Context Number	Context Type	Description	Length x Width (m)	Depth (m)
700	Layer	Topsoil - Dark greyish brown silty clay	-	0.32
701	Layer	Subsoil	-	0.22
702	Cut	Tree throw – Irregular oval, steep sides, irregular base	0.8 x 0.12	0.17
703	Fill	Fill of [702] – Firm, dark reddish brown clay	0.8 x 0.12	0.17
704	Cut	Furrow	1.78 x 0.62	0.1
705	Fill	Fill of [704] – Light orange brown, silty clay	1.78 x 0.62	0.1
706	Cut	Tree throw	1.3 x 0.14	0.16
707	Fill	Fill of [706] – Soft, dark reddish brown, clay	1.3 x 0.14	0.16
708	Cut	Furrow	2.05 x 0.24	0.08
709	Fill	Fill of [708] – Light orange brown, silty clay	2.05 x 0.24	0.08
710	Cut	E-W Gully – Steep sides and flat base	1.6 x 0.69	0.25
711	Fill	Fill of [710] – Soft, dark reddish brown, silty clay	1.6 x 0.69	0.25
712	Cut	SE-NW Gully	1.65 x 0.46	0.25
713	Fill	Fill of [712] – Soft dark brown, silty clay	1.65 x 0.46	0.25
714	Cut	Furrow	1.65 x 0.46	0.1
715	Fill	Fill of [714] – Light orange brown, silty clay	1.65 x 0.46	0.1
716	Cut	Furrow	2.18 x 1.5	0.06
717	Fill	Fill of [717] – Light orange brown, silty clay	2.18 x 1.5	0.06
718	Cut	Tree throw – Sub-circular, steep sides, concave base	0.7	0.24
719	Fill	Fill of [718] – Dark reddish brown, clay	0.7	0.24
720	Layer	Natural – Mottled light grey and orange sandy clay, with degraded bedrock in patches	-	-

Trench 8

Context Number	Context Type	Description	Length x Width (m)	Depth (m)
800	Layer	Natural - Mottled light grey and orange sandy clay, with degraded bedrock in patches	-	-
801	Layer	Topsoil - Dark greyish brown silty clay	-	0.35
802	Layer	Subsoil	-	0.15
803	Fill	Fill of [804] – Mid brown, sandy clay, silt	1.7	0.08
804	Cut	Furrow	1.7	0.08
805	Fill	Fill of [806] - Mid brown, sandy clay, silt	0.9	0.04
806	Cut	Furrow	0.9	0.04
807	Fill	Fill of [808] - Mid brown, sandy clay, silt	1.6	0.08
808	Cut	Furrow	1.6	0.08
809	Fill	Fill of [810] – Soft dark grey brown, clay silt	0.52	0.42
810	Cut	Drain	0.52	0.42

811	Fill	Fill of [812] – Soft mid brown, sandy clay silt	1.25 x 1.0	0.14
812	Cut	Tree throw	1.25 x 1.0	0.14
813	Fill	Fill [814] - Mid brown, sandy clay, silt	1.0	0.05
814	Cut	Furrow	1.0	0.05

Trench 9

Context Number	Context Type	Description	Length x Width (m)	Depth (m)
900	Layer	Topsoil - Dark greyish brown silty clay	-	0.25
901	Layer	Subsoil - Mid orange brown, silty clay	-	0.25
902	Layer	Natural – Light greyish yellow, silty clay, with gritty degraded bedrock throughout	-	-
903	Cut	Possible N-S ditch – Irregular edges and irregular broad flattish base	0.7	0.2
904	Fill	Fill of [903] – Mid grey brown, silty clay, manganese flecks	0.7	0.2
905	Cut	Possible pit – Moderately steep sides, flattish base	0.7 x 0.65	0.15
906	Fill	Fill of [906] – Mid grey brown, silty clay, manganese flecks, grit towards base	0.7 x 0.65	0.15
907	Cut	Possible NE-SW gully – Slightly curvilinear, gently sloped sides, shallow concave base	0.62	0.12
908	Fill	Fill of [907] – Firm, mid grey brown, silty clay, occasional charcoal flecks	0.62	0.12

Trench 10

Context Number	Context Type	Description	Length x Width (m)	Depth (m)
1000	Layer	Topsoil - Dark greyish brown silty clay	-	0.3
1001	Layer	Subsoil - Mid orange brown, silty clay	-	0.24
1002	Fill	Fill of gully [1003]	0.6	0.11
1003	Cut	Gully	0.6	0.11
1004	Fill	Fill of [1005]	0.8 x 0.7	0.2
1005	Cut	Possible pit	0.8 x 0.7	0.2
1006	Fill	Fill of [1007]	0.62 x 0.51	0.08
1007	Cut	Possible pit	0.62 x 0.51	0.08
1008	Fill	Fill of [1009]	1.2	0.21
1009	Cut	Furrow	1.2	0.21
1010	Fill	Fill of [1011]	1.9 x 0.78	0.18
1011	Cut	Tree throw	1.9 x 0.78	0.18
1012	Fill	Fill of [1013]	1.2	0.14
1013	Cut	Furrow	1.2	0.14
1014	Fill	Fill of [1015]	0.5	-
1015	Cut	Drain	0.5	-
1016	Layer	Natural – Mottled light grey and orange sandy clay, with degraded bedrock in patches	-	-

Appendix 2 Plates

PLATE 1. Possible ditch/gully [206] at NE of Trench 1

PLATE 2. Terminal end of Ditch [204], within Trench 2

PLATE 3. Probable tree throw [208], cutting feature [210] to the south east

PLATE 4. Large E-W drain [302]

PLATE 5. N-S furrow [407] within Trench 4

PLATE 6. Possible truncated post hole [409]

PLATE 7. Trench 5, showing cleaned east facing section

PLATE 8. Trench 6, showing probable tree throw [603]

PLATE 9. Longitudinal section of possible gully [702], with furrow [704] visible to the north

PLATE 10. Trench 7, E-W ditch [710]

PLATE 11. Trench 7, E-W ditch [712]

PLATE 12. Trench 9, Possible N-S gully [903]

PLATE 13. Trench 9, tree throw or pit [905]

PLATE 14. Trench 9, shallow NE-SW linear [907]

PLATE 15. Trench 10, shallow NW-SE linear [1003]

PLATE 16. Trench 10, Truncated pit or tree throw [1005], cut by [1007] to northeast

PLATE 17. Trench 10, shallow N-S furrow [1013]

Appendix 3 Figures

Figure 1: Location map

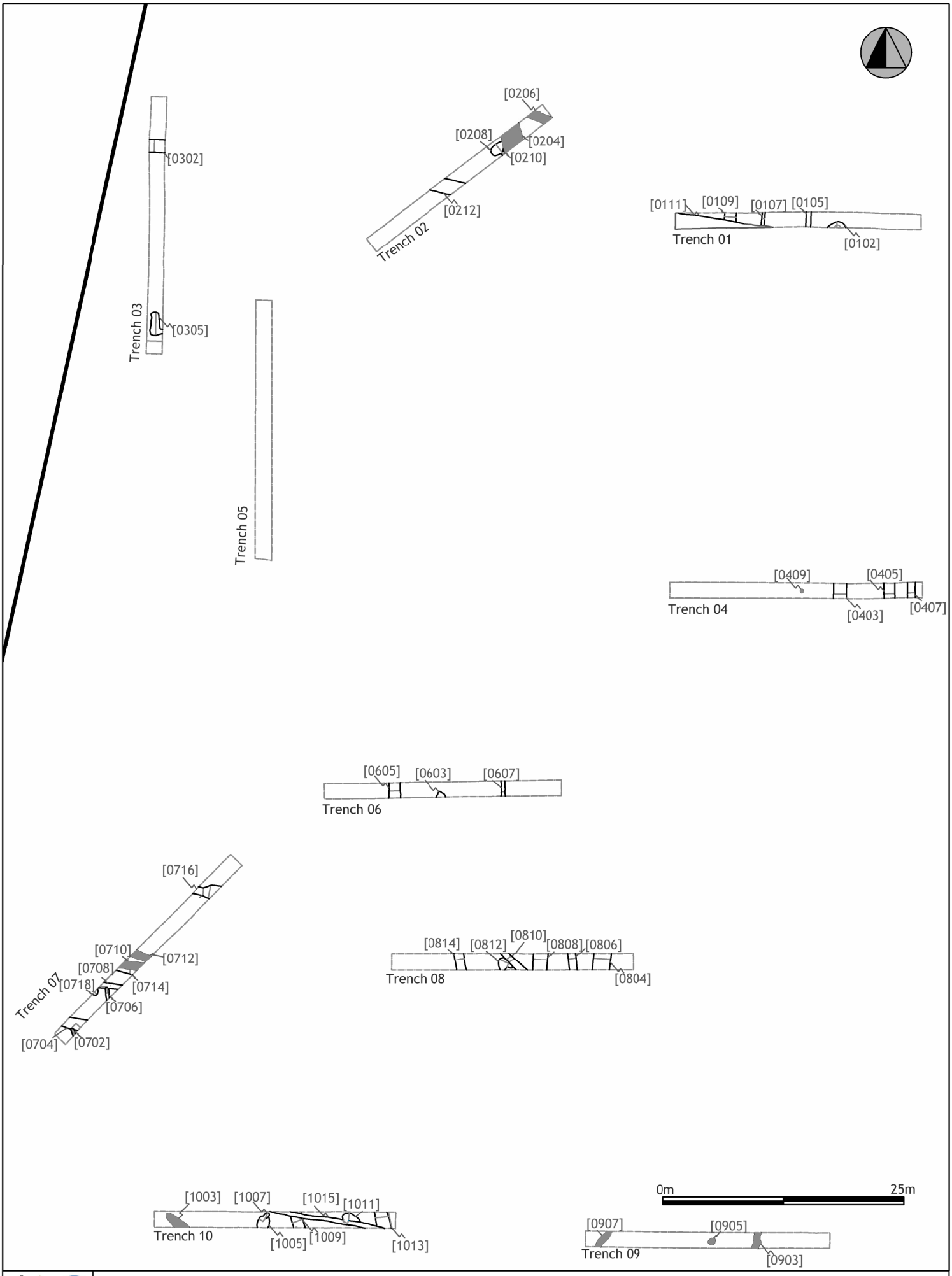


Figure 2: Site Plan 1:500

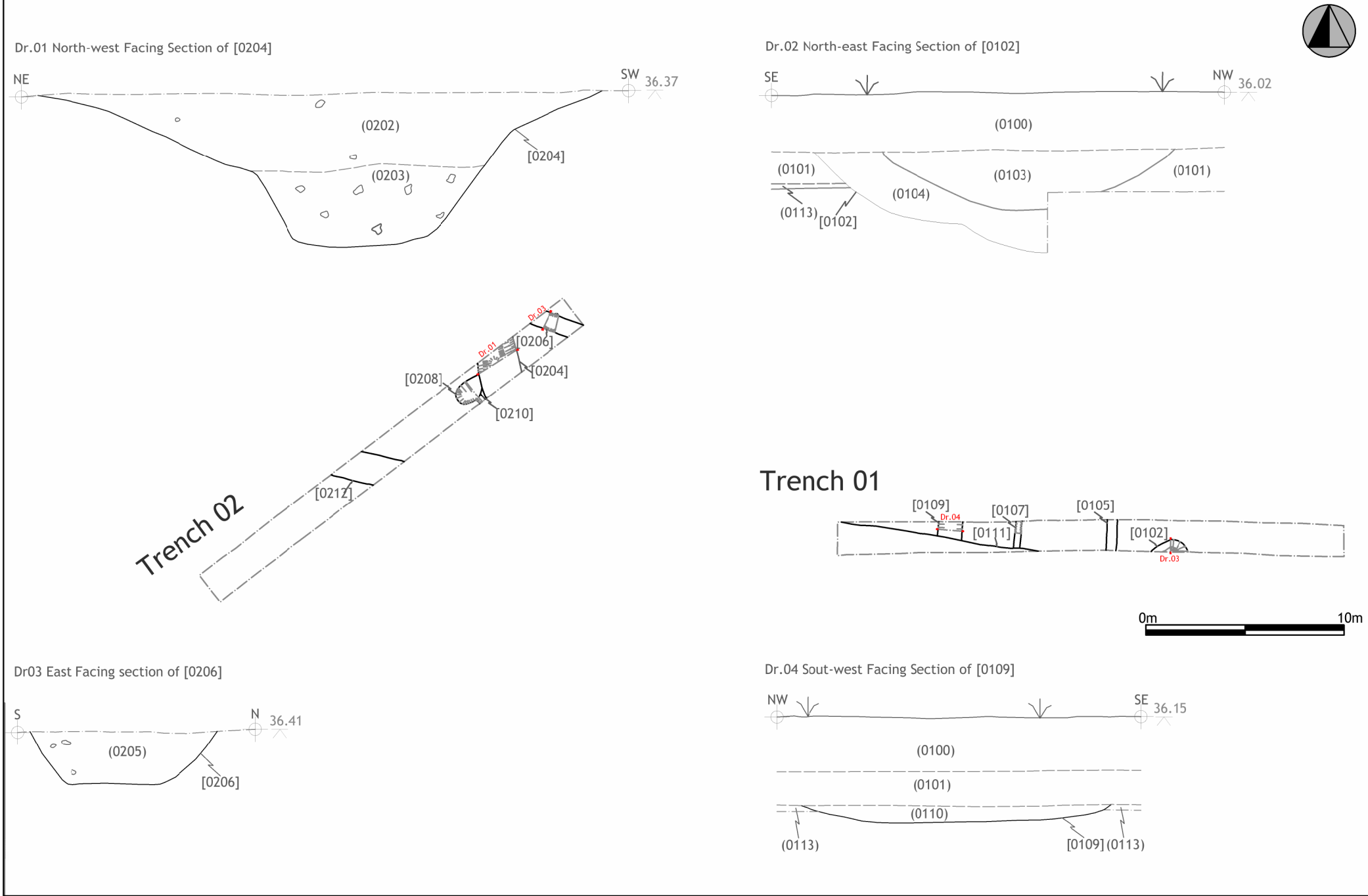
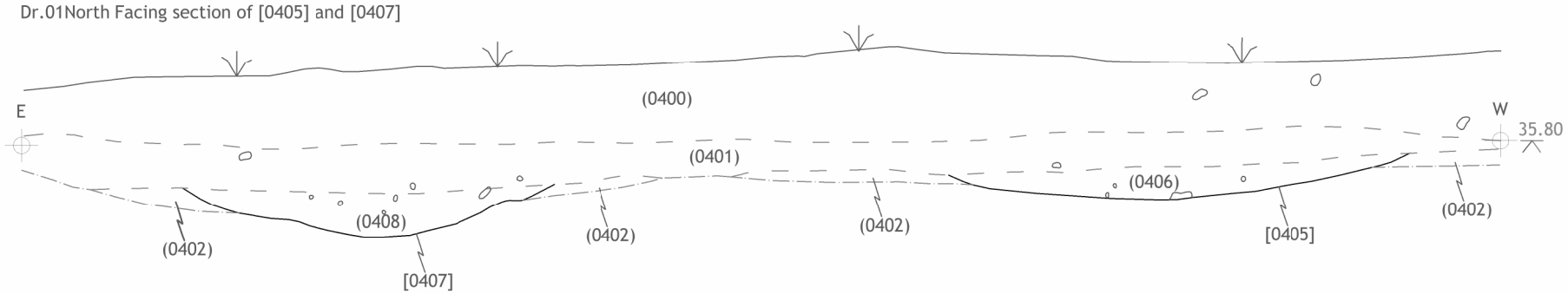
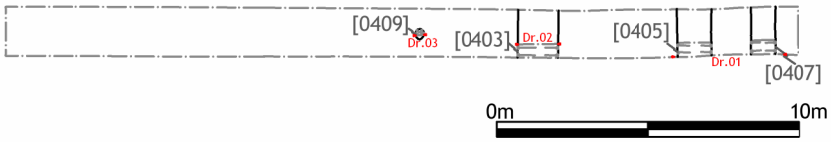
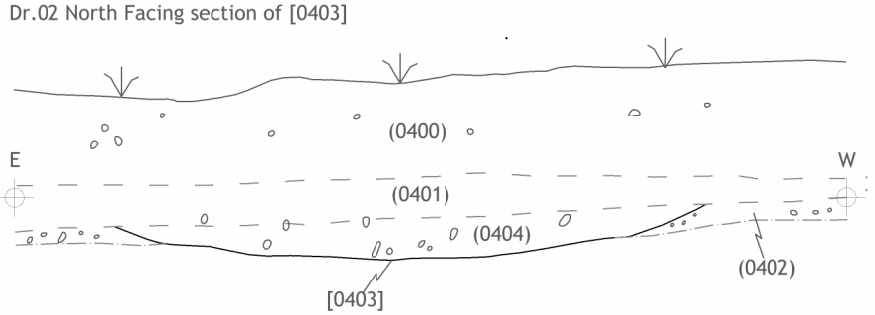


Figure 3: Trenches 1 and 2 at 1:250 (all sections are at 1:20)



Trench 04





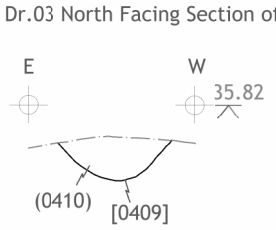


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Figure 4: Trench 4 at 1:250 (all sections are at 1:20)

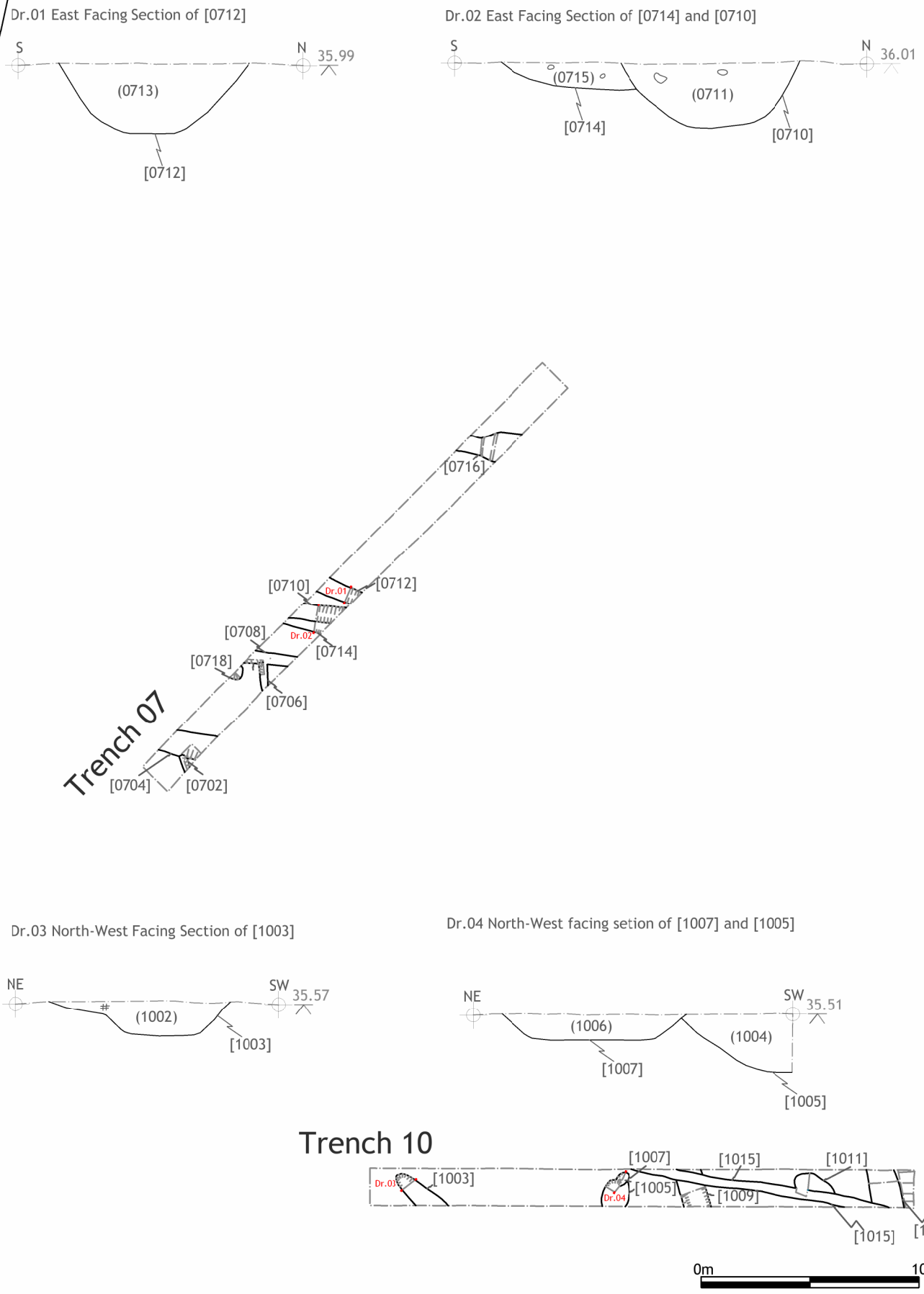
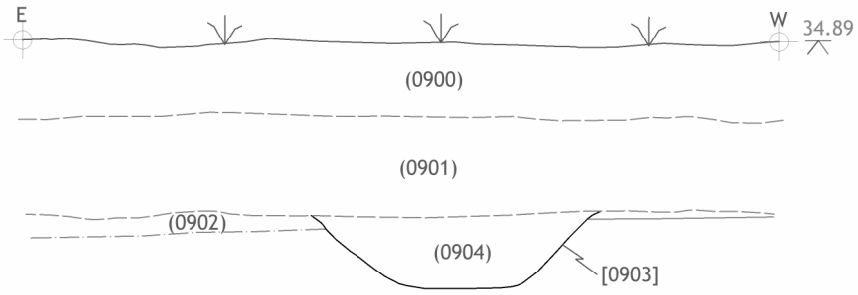
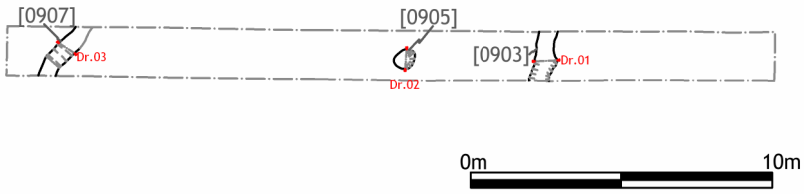


Figure 5: Trenches 7 and 10 at 1:250 (all sections are at 1:20)

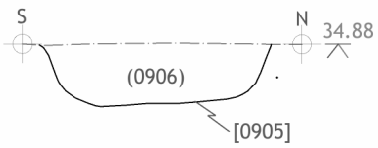
Dr.01 North Facing Section of [0903]



Trench 09



Dr.02 East Facing Section of [0905]



Dr.03 North-east Facing Section of [0907]

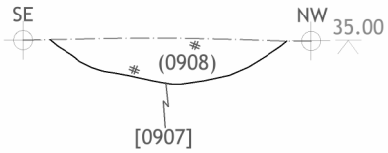


Figure 6: Trench 9 at 1:250 (all sections are at 1:20)