

Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation at Skylarks Dementia Care, Adbolton Lane, West Bridgford, Nottinghamshire.



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SUMMARY

- Trent & Peak Archaeology was commissioned by Grace Machin Planning & Property to carry out a trial trench evaluation in order to develop a suitable mitigation strategy. The excavation comprised seven trenches (1.80m x 10m) in advance of the proposed expansion at the site of Skylarks Dementia Care, Adbolton Lane, West Bridgford, Nottinghamshire, centred on NGR SK 60147 38363.
- The evaluation aimed to rapidly clarify and characterise the levels of truncation/preservation of archaeological remains within the proposed development area. The work was carried out between the 14th and 22nd of May 2018 in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation (Collins 2018).
- Across the northern part of the site within trenches 1 and 2 the evaluation demonstrated a degree of modern truncation caused by previous development which may have removed the potential for archaeological remains to a depth of c. 0.7m to 0.8m. This suggests all shallow features if present will have been truncated although the lower parts of deeper cut ditches or pits have the potential to survive.
- In contrast to the south, a concentration of archaeological features were identified within the remaining five trenches 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7, which comprised a series of ditches, pits and postholes, although sample excavation produced no datable artefacts.
- Together these appear to indicate the presence of at least a moderate density of archaeological features that due to their morphology and orientation appear to be a continuation of the significant Mid-Late Iron Age settlement site previously excavated along the east side of the proposed development in 2006/7. Archaeologically excavated examples of such sites remain rare within the county and along the Trent Valley and are therefore of potential regional significance.
- Environmental samples from these features have been processed and are currently undergoing analysis. These have already identified the presence of charcoal that maybe used to confirm the date of the excavated features through radiocarbon dating.
- The potentially significant archaeological features were present within trenches 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 at depths between c.0.4m to 0.8m cut into naturally deposited sand and gravel, although it was unclear whether some of the features may have also been cut through the subsoil layer above this. These features will be impacted on by the proposed main development area.
- The results of this report will allow for the client to work with Rushcliffe Borough Council to define areas that may require further appropriate archaeological mitigation.

Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation on Land at Skylarks Dementia Care, Adbolton Lane, West Bridgford, Nottinghamshire.

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Trent & Peak Archaeology was commissioned by Grace Machin Planning and Property on behalf of Skylarks Dementia Care to carry out a program of trial trenching in advance of the proposed expansion of the Skylarks Dementia Care site, centred on SK 60147 38363. The excavation comprised 7 trenches (Trenches 1 and 2 in the car park, Trenches 3, 4 and 7 within the most eastern side of the development site towards the fence boundary and Trench 5 within the courtyard and Trench 6 to the South of Trench 5 within the open grassed area).
- 1.2 The development Site is located to the north-east of West Bridgford, within Rushcliffe Borough of Nottinghamshire situated immediately south of the City of Nottingham. The site itself consists of a care home building, gardens and associated parking. To the north of the site is the River Trent and to the south the village of Gamston.
- 1.3 The total area of the proposed development site is approximately 1188m². The archaeological works were secured as part of pre-application advice (planning reference 18/010703/FUL).

2 SITE BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Prior to the submission of planning application (18/010703/FUL), Grace Machin Planning and Property on behalf of Skylarks Dementia Care were advised to conduct an investigative scheme of archaeological works in the form of trial trenches. This was to determine whether the area of the proposed development had any Mid to Late Iron Age and Medieval activity present.
- 2.2 This report is a final analysis report which focuses on the complete investigations with Trenches 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7. The 2018 evaluation trenching was focused around the proposed development for extensions and alterations to the existing care home in order to provide an additional 32 bedrooms and associated communal space, and the installation of five separate residential garden pods, each comprising two bedrooms towards the Eastern area of the site.
- 2.3 In 2006 Trent & Peak Archaeology (TPA) undertook a total of 8 Trenches within the Skylarks boundary followed by one targeted open area excavation. This revealed a broad expanse of remains, including prehistoric ditches, Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age flint, Mid-Late Iron Age ditched enclosures and pit alignments with pottery, Romano British pottery and a sherd of Anglo-Saxon decorated cremation urn. This demonstrated the presence of significant archaeological remains extending across the proposed development area.
- 2.4 In light of the results of the 2006/7 excavations, which exposed archaeological of regional significance, an area for trial trenching was agreed for the proposed development. The methodology for the Trial Trenching was secured by the approval of a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI).

3 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 3.1 The underlying geology of the proposed development site consists of bedrock of the Radcliffe Member – Mudstone and Siltstone formation, a sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 242 to 247 million years ago in the Triassic Period. This is indicative of a local environment previously dominated by hot deserts (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).
- 3.2 Superficial deposits of Holme Pierrepont Sand and Gravel Member, formed up to 3 million years ago in the Quaternary Period, have been recorded (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).
- 3.3 The overlying soils are characterised as freely draining, slightly acid and loamy (www.landis.org.uk/soilscapes).

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 4.1 A Desk Based Assessment of the site was conducted by University of Leicester Archaeological Services in February 2018. A short summary of their findings is listed below.

Prehistoric

- 4.2 Evidence of early prehistoric activity within a 1km radius of the site is limited to a few findspots. Of particular note are scatters of Neolithic flints (MNT12078) with a concentration located 165m southeast of the site and prehistoric flint (MNT11926) recovered from an evaluation trench excavated 365m north-west of the site.
- 4.3 There are no designated heritage assets of Prehistoric date within a 1km radius of the site.

Iron Age/ Roman

- 4.4 Archaeological field investigations at Adbolton Lane were carried out by Trent & Peak Archaeology in 2006. In total 8 Trial Trenches including 2 trenches on land within the Skylarks boundary were excavated followed by a targeted open area excavation. Significant remains dating to the Iron Age period were encountered during the ground investigations, including a pit and gully (MNT11939) and a possible enclosure ditch (MNT11938).
- 4.5 Evidence of Romano-British activity is limited to a single findspot of pottery (MNT11941) found immediately beyond the north-east boundary of the site.
- 4.6 There are no designated heritage assets of Iron Age/Roman date within a 1km radius of the site.

Medieval and Post-Medieval

- 4.7 The deserted Medieval/Post Medieval village of Adbolton (MNT13017) is located 360m north-west of the site. Several earthworks and evidence of ridge and furrow (MNT 10086) have been recorded and tentatively assigned Medieval and Post-Medieval dates within the 1km radius of the site.

- 4.8 There are several listed buildings within the search area. Of particular note is Simkins Farm, located 88m to the west of the site. This building is a good example of an early 19th century farmhouse, possibly designed by the classically inspired William Wilkins.

Archaeological Potential

- 4.9 There is evidence for Iron Age archaeology within the development area and evidence of Neolithic to Medieval archaeology in the immediate vicinity. As such, the potential for archaeological deposits from a range of periods to be encountered during the evaluation is deemed high.
- 4.10 However, it is highly likely that the current land use and its associated construction may have disturbed and truncated archaeological deposits present. Therefore, any surviving archaeology is likely to be limited to isolated pockets in areas of the site that have been subjected to the least amount of intrusive groundworks (e.g. gardens).
- 4.11 Any evidence of Iron Age settlement encountered during the archaeological investigations, due to the rarity of such sites, will remain of great significance. Only a handful of Mid to Late Iron Age enclosures have been recorded along the Trent Valley.

5 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 5.1 The trial trench evaluation aimed to rapidly clarify and characterise the levels of truncation/preservation of archaeological remains within the proposed development area in compliance with the approved WSI (Collin 2018). An appropriate level of sample excavation of archaeological features/deposits was undertaken, sufficient to demonstrate character, extent, and where possible, recover dating evidence. The location of the trenches was determined by the results of previous excavations undertaken by TPA between 2006-7 which identified significant archaeological remains within the planned development area (Elliott 2017), and placed so as to provide a sample of all main areas of the site in order to rapidly inform on the distribution of surviving archaeological remains and their potential to inform decisions as to whether and what further mitigation would be required.
- 5.2 The objectives of the archaeological evaluation were:
1. To characterise the archaeological potential of the proposed development. This will provide the basis for an assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the cultural heritage resource.
 2. To establish the depth at which the sensitive archaeological horizon lies.
 3. To investigate the potential for continuations of archaeological and possible archaeological features identified by earlier investigations (Elliot 2017).
 4. To recover and retain artefacts and samples of geoarchaeological/palaeoenvironmental interest if present, as these may contribute to an understanding of the nature of the landscape and the uses to which it was put.

5. To maintain an appropriate level of *preservation by record* in line with ClfA standards (2014).
6. Any buried archaeological remains identified during the evaluation, provides an opportunity to address the research priorities of the region as highlighted in the East Midlands Updated Research Agenda and Strategy (Knight, Vyner and Allen 2012). These were detailed as follows;

- **Late Bronze Age and Iron Age (c.1150 cal BC- AD 43)**

- **6.2.1. Middle Iron Age Settlements (c.450-100 BC)**

1. Why were settlements increasingly enclosed during this period and to what extent may the progress of enclosure have varied regionally?

- **6.2.2. Field Systems and Major Line Boundaries**

2. Can we shed further light upon the development of field and boundary systems?
3. What were the economic, social or political roles of the pit alignments and linear ditch systems that characterised many areas of the East Midlands?

6 METHODOLOGY

- 6.1 All work was undertaken by suitably qualified and experienced archaeologists in accordance with accepted archaeological practice and the *Standard & Guidance* produced by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (ClfA 2014).
- 6.2 Seven trial trenches (1.8m x 10m) with a total area of 1182m² were excavated under archaeological conditions. The locations of these trenches are shown in Figure 2. The rationale for the placement of the trenches has primarily been informed by the previous excavation conducted by TPA in 2006. The trenches have been designed to target features identified in the previous phase of work that appear to be continuing into the present development area. This includes, but is not limited to, the Iron Age enclosure ditch and its associated features.
- 6.3 All trenches were excavated using a 360° tracked excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision.
- 6.4 Trenches were excavated to a level at which archaeological deposits were present, or in their absence, to the natural geological substrate. Subsoil was excavated in spits no greater than 100mm. The trenches and any archaeological features were located by GPS, Leica CS15/GS15 RTK Differential GNSS.
- 6.5 Excavation followed one of two potential sequences depending on the deposits present below the topsoil:
 1. If archaeology was present upon removal of initial topsoil/subsoil/rubble then the trench was hand cleaned and features/horizons characterised.

2. If deep colluviums or made ground was present selected areas were machined to see if horizons of interest could be sampled with the safe working constraints.
- 6.6 Trenches were hand cleaned and a minimum of one long section of each trench was photographed and drawn at 1:50/1:20.
 - 6.7 All exposed surfaces were inspected by a suitably qualified archaeologist and any archaeological deposits were hand cleaned and recorded where appropriate. Features were characterised through excavation where necessary to obtain datable material and understand the levels of preservation. All contexts were given an individual context number. Plans and sections of all features were drawn on drafting film in pencil at a scale of 1:20, and showed at least context numbers, all colour and textural changes and principal slopes represented as hachures. Digital colour photographs of each context were taken using a DSLR at 7 megapixel minimum resolution. Written records were maintained as laid down in the TPA recording manual.
 - 6.8 Where appropriate features were identified, soil samples were retrieved in order to undertake palaeo-environmental sampling. The sampling of features followed procedures set out within the English Heritage Centre of Archaeology Guidelines, Environmental Archaeology 2011. Samples were processed within the TPA Environmental Lab, under the supervision of TPA Environmental Officer Alison Wilson.
 - 6.9 All works were carried out in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Trent & Peak Archaeology (Collins 2018) and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *Standards and Guidance for an Archaeological Field Evaluation* (CIfA 2014).

7 RESULTS

- 7.1 A total of 7 trenches were excavated on land adjacent to Skylarks Dementia Care. Of these, 5 were found to contain significant archaeological features or deposits. The trenches comprised a total 7.5% of the proposed development area. An outline narrative of the results of the archaeological evaluation trenches is now presented below. The overall location of the trenches are shown in Figures 02-04 with representative sections of all trenches and more detailed plans of trenches containing archaeological features depicted in Figure 04 onwards. A full context list is provided in Appendix 1.
- 7.2 **Trench 1 (Figures 05-06)**
 - 7.2.1 Trench 1 was located within the car park, orientated east-north-east by west-south-west, measuring 1.5m x10m. Machine excavation and hand cleaning was undertaken to a maximum depth of 1.15m. This revealed a simple stratigraphic sequence of natural sand and gravel (0105), overlain by a buried brown sandy silt subsoil (0104), firm silty clay ground levelling (0103), stony hardcore (0102=0101) and tarmac (0100). No archaeological finds features or deposits were present.

7.3 Trench 2 (Figures 07-08)

- 7.3.1 Trench 2 was located within the car park, parallel to Trench 1, orientated at north-east by south-west, measuring 1.8m x 10m. Machine excavation and hand cleaning was undertaken to a maximum depth of 0.9m where natural sand and gravel (0205) was exposed. This revealed the same stratigraphic sequence as trench 01 adjacent. No archaeological finds, features or deposits were observed.

7.4 Trench 3 (Figures 09-10)

- 7.4.1 Trench 3 was located south of the car park and east of the current Skylarks building adjacent to a low brick wall surrounded by dense vegetation. Trench 02 was orientated north by south, measuring 1.85m x 7.40m. Machine excavation and hand cleaning was undertaken to a maximum depth of 1.05m where natural sand and gravel (0314) was exposed. A sporadic lens of churned lower subsoil (0305) was observed towards the base of the upper subsoil layer (0304). This was sealed by a thin modern layer of red sandstone (0303) which petered out to the south, above which was a layer of buried topsoil (0302) that had subsequently been sealed by a modern layer yellow gravel hardcore (0301) and concrete paving (0300). Four archaeological features were exposed within the base of the machine excavated trench; a series of pits [0306]; [0308]; [0310] and [0312].

Pit: [0306]

- 7.4.2 Located towards the northern end of the trench was a sub-circular pit [0306] measuring 0.51m x 0.35m x 0.08m which contained a single fill (0307), of firm dark brown silty-sand. Excavation revealed an uneven, concave profile. No dateable material was recovered from the feature.

Features: [0308] and [0310]

- 7.4.3 A large, irregularly shaped pit, [0308], was identified approximately central within the trench, measuring c.0.7m x 1.4m x 0.08m. Excavation quickly determined that pit [0308] likely comprised two poorly defined, shallow pit features with a diffuse dark red/brown fill that could not be differentiated. No dateable material was recovered.

Posthole: [0312]

- 7.4.5 Cutting the south-east corner of feature [0308/10], a small circular apparent posthole [0312] was identified. Excavation revealed a wide U-shaped profile with steep to vertical sides and a flat base measuring 0.32m x 0.26m x 0.24m which was infilled by a homogenous deposit of friable dark-greyish brown silty-sand (0313). No finds or dateable material was recovered.

7.5 Trench 4 (Figures 11-12)

- 7.5.1 Trench 4 was located towards the south of Trench 3 and towards the east of the residential building near the fence boundary within a densely vegetated area, orientated north-east by south-west, measuring 1.0m x 9.50m. Trench 04 was excavated to a depth of c.1.05m, to the level at which natural sand and gravel (0406) was observed. This revealed a simple stratigraphic sequence similar to Trench 03, which comprised substratum (0406), which was sealed by two discreet layers of reddish brown silt sand upper and lower subsoil (0405) and (0404) to a combined depth of c.0.84m. These deposits were sealed by the same yellow stony hardcore and concrete paving as Trench 03. One linear feature was exposed within the base of the machine excavated trench as: [0401].

Ditch: [0401]

- 7.5.2 One linear ditch, oriented east by west, was located towards the most southern end of trench 4. Excavation was limited by the presence of dense vegetation and sub-surface tree roots, with limited investigation revealing the ditch to be shallow, with sloping sides and a rounded base measuring c.2.75m x 0.34m which extended beyond the east and west limits of the trench. Ditch [0401] contained a single homogenous deposit of firm dark brown silty sand (0402) and may represent a continuation of a large east by west aligned ditch identified during earlier ground investigations to the east (Elliot 2017; figure 3). A bulk sample was taken of 40L from the fill (0401) to ascertain the potential for surviving remains of palaeoenvironmental significance.

7.6 Trench 5 (Figures 13-14)

- 7.6.1 Trench 5 was located with the open courtyard to the east of the existing care home residential building, towards the west of Trench 4. Trench 05 was orientated north-west by south-east, with dimensions of 1.8m x 10m. Machine excavation and hand cleaning was undertaken to a maximum depth of 0.80m, where natural sand and gravel was revealed (0504). Machine excavation of the trench revealed a simple stratigraphic sequence of lower and upper subsoil (0502/0503) the same as Trench 04, which was sealed by yellow stony hardcore and concrete paving identified across the site. Three linear features were exposed in the base of the machine excavated trench; [0505]; [0507] and [0509], which cut the natural (0504).

Ditches: [0505] [0507] and [0509]

- 7.6.2 A linear ditch, aligned east by west was identified within the southernmost end of the trench. This was originally viewed in plan as a single feature, however further investigation revealed a small phased complex of ditched features comprising [0507] and [0509] also. When viewed in section, it is likely that [0505] and [0509], with a comparable depth of 0.25m and fill comprising mid-orangish brown silty sand, represent the same feature. This was then cut by similarly aligned ditch [0507], measuring c.0.9m x 0.5m, displaying steep sides and a rounded base which was backfilled by a deposit of dark brownish grey silty sand and gravel. Both ditches align well with large east by west aligned ditched features investigated as part of previous ground investigations (figure 3). No finds or dateable material was recovered.

7.7 Trench 6 (Figures 15-17)

- 7.7.1 Trench 6 was located south of Trench 5, within an open grassed area to the east of the residential building. The trench was orientated north-west by south-east, measuring 1.8m x 10m. Machine excavation and hand cleaning was undertaken to a maximum depth of 0.85m to the depth at which natural sand and gravel (0613) was exposed. Machine excavation of the trench revealed a simple stratigraphic sequence consistent with trenches excavated across the site. Two discreet layers of lower and upper subsoil (0601/ 0602) measuring c.0.5m in depth were sealed by modern grassed topsoil (0600). A series of features, comprising pits: [0605]; [0609], postholes: [0611]; [0614], ditch: [0607] and ditch terminus: [0603] were exposed in the base of the machine excavated trench.

Terminus?: [0603]

- 7.7.2 Thought to be a ditch terminus, feature [0603] followed an east by west alignment, measuring 1.25m in width and 0.2m deep and extended east beyond the trench limits, inhibiting interpretation either as a ditch terminus or an elongated pit. Excavation revealed a shallow rounded profile filled by (0604), a firm dark-brown silty-sand. It is found in close proximity to a large pit: [0605], though no relationship

was apparent. No dateable evidence was recovered, but a bulk environmental sample was retained and recorded to ascertain the potential for palaeoenvironmental significance.

Pit: [0605]

- 7.7.3 A large pit [0605] measuring c.1.02m in length, 0.45m width and 0.16m depth was observed within the central portion of the trench. Excavation revealed a similar shallow sloping profile and concave base which was infilled by a homogenous deposit of firm dark greyish-brown silty-sand (0606). It was found in close proximity to two features, possible terminus [0603] to the north, and curvilinear ditch [0607] to the south. No dateable material was recovered, but a bulk environmental sample was taken so as to assess the palaeoenvironmental potential of the site.

Curvilinear Ditch: [0607] and possible posthole [0611]

- 7.7.4 A curvilinear ditched linear, found within the central region of Trench 6 adjacent to pit [0605], along an approximate east by west orientation was identified and investigated. This revealed a shallow, 0.76m x 0.20m feature displaying a wide U-shaped profile. The feature contained a single fill of (0608), comprising a firm dark brownish-red silty-sand. A possible poorly defined posthole [0611] was identified within the cut for ditch [0607], only visible within the south-east facing trench section. No dateable evidence was uncovered but a bulk environmental sample was taken.

Pits/Postholes: [0609] and [0614]

- 7.7.5 Within the southern portion of the trench, an irregularly shaped sub-circular feature was identified within the base of the machine excavated trench. Investigation quickly revealed this to be two shallow pits [0609] and [0614], of which [0609] represented the earliest feature. Pit [0609] revealed a shallow 0.08m deep, flat bottomed profile filled by a loose deposit of clean reddish-brown sand (0610), which had been truncated to the south by [0614]. [0614] may represent a re-cut of the earlier pit/posthole [0609], which survived to a greater depth of 0.2m. [0614] had been infilled by a much darker deposit of greyish-brown silty sand. No dateable material was recovered.

7.8 Trench 7 (Figures 18-19)

- 7.8.1 Trench 7 was located south-east of Trench 6 in a densely vegetated area, near the southern boundary of the care home; orientated north-east by south-west, the trench measured c.1.4m x 10m. Machine excavation and hand cleaning was undertaken at a maximum depth of 0.75m to the depth at which natural sand and gravel (0703) was exposed. Removal of two discreet layers of lower and upper subsoil (0701/0702) and a layer of grassed topsoil exposed three potential features in the base of the trench.

Ditch: [0704]

- 7.8.2 A linear ditch aligned east by west was identified within the northernmost portion of the trench. Measuring approximately 1.85m in width and 0.30m in depth, excavation revealed a shallow dished profile which was infilled by (0705) consisting of a firm dark greyish-brown silty-sand. No dateable material was uncovered but a bulk sample was retained to assess the potential for preserved palaeoenvironmental remains.

Pit: [0706]

- 7.8.3 Pit [0706] was located adjacent to [0704] to the north, excavation revealed a shallow rounded profile measuring c.0.80m in width, 0.50m in length and 0.25m in depth. The feature had been infilled by a similar deposit of dark brown silty sand, but produced no datable material. The proximity and relatively similarity in depth and fill

may suggest that the features are contemporary, although date and function remains unclear.

Ditch: [0708]

- 7.8.4 A linear ditch located towards the southernmost end of the trench was identified in section as having cut into the lower subsoil (0702). Full measurements were not ascertained, but the feature was observed as having a well defined splayed V-shaped profile with a width and depth of c.0.65m x 0.45m. The fill comprised a homogenous deposit of dark brown sandy silt which produced no datable material.

8 THE ENVIRONMENTAL REMAINS *by Tina Roushannafas*

8.1 Methodology

- 8.1.1 Six contexts from undated features were sampled for environmental evidence: (0400)/[0401], (0604)/[0603], (0606)/[0605], (0608)/[0607], (0705)/[0704] and (0709)/[0708].
- 8.1.2 Forty litres of soil from each context were machine-floated through a 0.5mm mesh and the flot collected in a 0.25mm mesh, with residues also retained for hand-sorting. The flots were separated into fractions using graded sieves of 2mm, 1mm and 0.25mm to aid the sorting process. The flot of context (0709) was 50% sorted (equivalent to 20 litres) due to its exceptionally large volume. The residues were similarly divided into fractions of >1cm, >2mm and >0.25mm and were fully sorted.
- 8.1.3 Identifications were made with the assistance of personal reference material, Jacomet (2006) and Cappers, Bekker & Jans (2012). Nomenclature is based on Jacomet (2006) for cereals and Stace (2010) for other plant types. Where identifications are uncertain the abbreviation 'cf.' (*confer* or 'compares favourably with') is used. Grass seeds (*Poaceae*) were divided into two classes based on diameter (>1.5mm or <1.5mm). Full results are presented in Table 1, below.

8.2 Results

- 8.2.1 Processing of the samples produced large volume flots which were predominantly composed of partially degraded woody material and roots which were up to 3.5mm in diameter.
- 8.2.2 Charcoal was present in varying quantities with all samples with the exception of context (0705) (which contained no charred material or other identifiable palaeoenvironmental evidence). The majority of fragments were fairly small (i.e. <4mm), however large fragments of up to 170mm long were identified within context (0608).
- 8.2.3 Fifteen cereal grains were recovered from four contexts: (0400), (0604), (0606) and (0709). These were generally very poorly preserved, with both extensive charring and mechanical damage. Where categorisation was possible, the presence of barley (*Hordeum*) and oat (*Avena*) could be ascertained, with less certain identifications of rye (*Secale cereale*) and wheat (*Triticum*). While identification as cereals was supported by overall morphology and ratio of depth to length and width, the small size of some grains could indicate the presence of wild or partially domesticated species. Indeed in the absence of diagnostic floret bases, it is difficult to make distinction between wild and domesticated oat (*Avena*) (Jacomet 2006, 50). Alternatively these smaller cereal grains may represent 'tail-grain'- the smallest, least developed grains of the plant, which may have been separated off as waste during processing.
- 8.2.4 Several other seeds of the *Poaceae* (grass) family were identified which almost certainly derive from wild species, but were, again, too poorly preserved for further identification. In addition non-specific small-seeded legumes were present, as well as a single wild type identifiable to species: *Rumex acetosella* (sheep sorrel). This species is found on heathy

open ground, short grassland and cultivated land, mostly on sandy acid soils (Stace 2010, 446).

- 8.2.5 Modern seeds, in particular *Chenopodium*, were present across the samples, as were disarticulated insect remains and insect larvae. Mollusc shell fragments were obtained from two samples: (0400) and (0709), but were insufficiently incomplete to be diagnostic.

8.3 Discussion

- 8.3.1 The charred plant remains recovered from the samples are potentially significant in light of the paucity of datable artefact evidence recovered from the site. However, dense vegetation and sub-surface tree roots were recorded at the time of excavation and the composition of the flots is highly suggestive of bioturbation and disturbance of material, as well as contamination by modern organics. The potential for charred plant remains to act as dating evidence is therefore compromised, as small remains could easily have been displaced and may not be contemporary with their surrounding matrix. The condition of the plant remains was also quite poor, limiting their interpretational potential. Nevertheless, charred material was recovered from all but a single context, and it is suggested that, should further excavation take place, contexts in which the least root disturbance can be observed should be targeted for further analysis.

		(0400) Ditch [0401]	(0604) Ditch terminus/pit [0603]	(0606) Pit [0605]	(0608) Curvilinear [0607]	(0705) Ditch [0704]	(0709) Ditch [0708]
		40 litres	40 litres	40 litres	40 litres	40 litres	20 litres
Cereal	<i>Avena</i>	1					
	<i>Hordeum</i>	1					1
	cf. <i>Hordeum</i>	2		1			2
	cf. <i>Secale cereale</i>			1			
	cf. <i>Triticum</i>	1					
	Grain (indet.)	1	1	1			2
Weed/Wild	<i>Carex</i>	1					
	<i>Poaceae</i> (>1.5mm)	2	3	1			1
	<i>Poaceae</i> (<1.5mm)				2		
	<i>Rumex acetosella</i>	1					
	Small-seeded legume		1	1			
Other (internal cast)	1						
Charcoal	Fragments >2mm	xxx	xxx	xx	xxx	-	xx

Table 1: Results (indet= indeterminate) x= 1–10, xx=11–50, xxx= 50–100

9 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 9.1 The excavation at Skylarks Dementia Care has successfully identified at least a moderate density of archaeological features. These are most apparent to the south where preservation is greater through the lack of development related truncation. Potentially significant archaeological features were present within five of the seven trenches excavated (Trenches 03-07).
- 9.2 Unfortunately a lack of dateable artefacts leaves confirmation of the date of these features not definitive at this stage. However, given their proximity, morphology and orientation it is likely that they relate to a dense spread of ditches relating to a period of extended Mid-Late Iron Age settlement activity (often aceramic) identified east of the development area during excavations between 2006/7 (Elliott 2017). Forthcoming assessment of the environmental samples retrieved from the site may provide material for absolute (c14) dating to aid in the interpretation of the site and the local environs.
- 9.3 The trial trench evaluation demonstrated that truncation caused by previous development, particularly within Trenches 1 and 2, may have removed potential archaeological remains to a depth of c.0.7-0.8m. In other trenches (3, 4, 5, 6, and 7) truncation is less evident, with several ditched features displaying good spatial correlation to remains identified during the 2006/7 excavations, possibly representing continuations of these features. Additional pit and posthole features were identified during the course of the trial trench evaluation; with similarities in fill, morphology and depth suggesting that they form part of a contemporarily dated group of features.
- 9.7 The location of the pits, in particular those excavated in Trench 6 ([0605] and [0609]), are of interest. Their proximity to the relatively dense ditch systems raises questions as to their role within a potential prehistoric settlement, and their function on a broader spectrum. Whilst difficult to ascertain with any certainty at this stage, it is speculated that the number and proximity of posthole arrangements (in particular [0611] and [0614]), may suggest contemporaneous features, and may even delineate post-built structures. It is hoped that the environmental samples recovered from the site will go some way towards characterising the site and its potential to elucidate on the form and function of Mid-Late Iron Age settlement activity.
- 9.8 Given the concentration of features within the southern area of the PDA, there remains a high potential for archaeological finds, features or deposits which likely relate to an extensive pattern of Mid-Iron Age settlement activity, excavated examples of which remain rare within the county and along the Trent Valley (Knight and Howard 2004).
- 9.10 The lack of preserved archaeological remains within the northernmost aspect of the PDA are likely the result of recent development and ground levelling, with the potential for surviving archaeological deposits now thought to be low-minimal or heavily truncated in this area.
- 9.11 This report will allow for the client to work with Rushcliffe Borough Council to define a specified area for further mitigation where necessary.

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11 Context Register

Trench 1:

Context	Category	Description
0100	Deposit	Tarmac (Ground Surface)
0101	Deposit	Gravel Underlay
0102	Deposit	Gravel Underlay
0103	Deposit	Made Ground
0104	Deposit	Subsoil
0105	Layer	Natural Substrate

Trench 2:

Context	Category	Description
0200	Deposit	Tarmac (Ground Surface)
0201	Deposit	Gravel Underlay
0202	Deposit	Gravel Underlay
0203	Deposit	Made Ground
0204	Layer	Mottled stoney natural and Subsoil
0205	Layer	Natural Substrate (Sand)

Trench 3:

Context	Category	Description
0300	Layer	Concrete paving
0301	Layer	Made Ground
0302	Topsoil	Mid-brownish sandy silt
0303	Layer	Red Sandstone
0304	Subsoil	Mid brown-orange silt
0305	Lower Subsoil	Mid brown-orange gravelly-silt
0306	Cut	Cut of Pit
0307	Fill	Fill of [0306]
0308	Cut	Cut of Pit
0309	Fill	Fill of [0308]
0310	Cut	Cut of Pit
0311	Fill	Fill of [0310]
0312	Cut	Cut of Post-hole

0313	Fill	Fill of [0312]
0314	Layer	Natural Substrate

Trench 4:

Context	Category	Description
0400	Fill	Fill of [0401]
0401	Cut	Cut of Linear
0402	Layer	Concrete paving
0403	Layer	Gravelly-sand underlay
0404	Layer	Upper Subsoil
0405	Layer	Lower Subsoil
0406	Layer	Natural Substrate

Trench 5:

Context	Category	Description
0500	Deposit	Concrete slab surface
0501	Deposit	Gravel underlay
0502	Layer	Upper Subsoil
0503	Layer	Lower Subsoil
0504	Layer	Natural Substrate
0505	Cut	Cut of EW aligned gully (cut by [0507])
0506	Fill	Fill of [0505]
0507	Cut	Cut of EW aligned gully (cuts [0505] and [0509])
0508	Fill	Fill of [0507]
0509	Cut	Cut of EW aligned gully (Cut by [0507])
0510	Fill	Fill of [0509]

Trench 6:

Context	Category	Description
0600	Layer	Topsoil
0601	Layer	Upper Subsoil
0602	Layer	Lower Subsoil
0603	Cut	Cut of Terminus
0604	Fill	Fill of [0603]
0605	Cut	Cut of Pit

0606	Fill	Fill of [0605]
0607	Cut	Cut of Linear
0608	Fill	Fill of [0607]
0609	Cut	Cut of Pit
0610	Fill	Fill of [0609]
0611	Cut	Cut of Post-hole, within [0607]
0612	Fill	Fill of [0611]
0613	Layer	Natural Substrate
0614	Cut	Cut of Post-hole
0615	Fill	Fill of [0614]

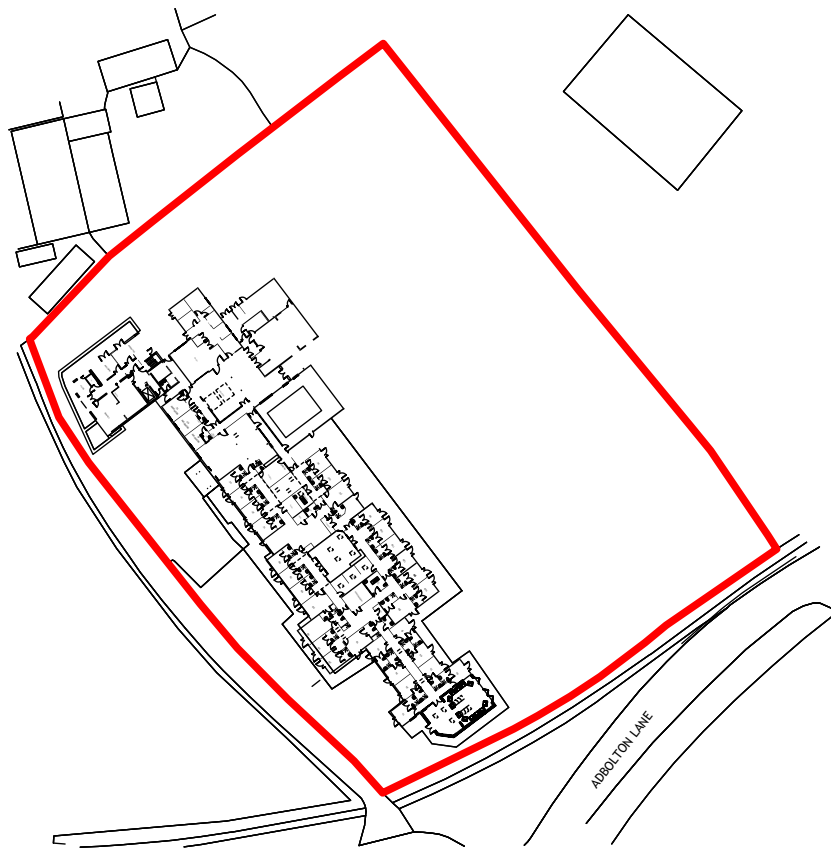
Trench 7:

Context	Category	Description
0700	Layer	Topsoil
0701	Layer	Mid orange-brown silty-gravel Subsoil
0702	Layer	Mid orange-brown silt, Subsoil
0703	Layer	Natural Substrate
0704	Cut	Cut of Linear
0705	Fill	Fill of [0704]
0706	Cut	Cut of Pit
0707	Fill	Fill of [0706]
0708	Cut	Cut of Linear
0709	Fill	Fill of [0708]

12 Figures

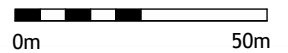


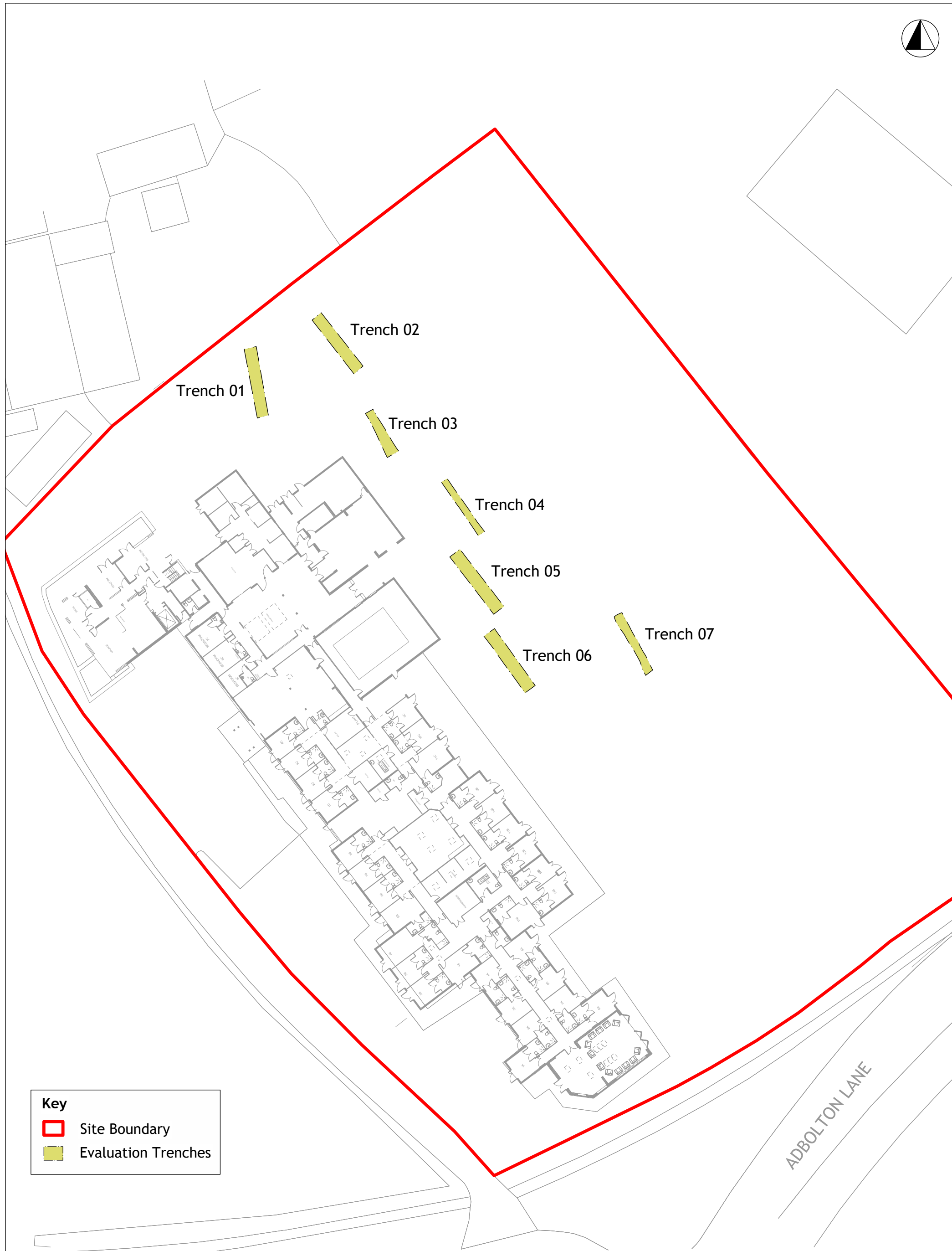
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Key
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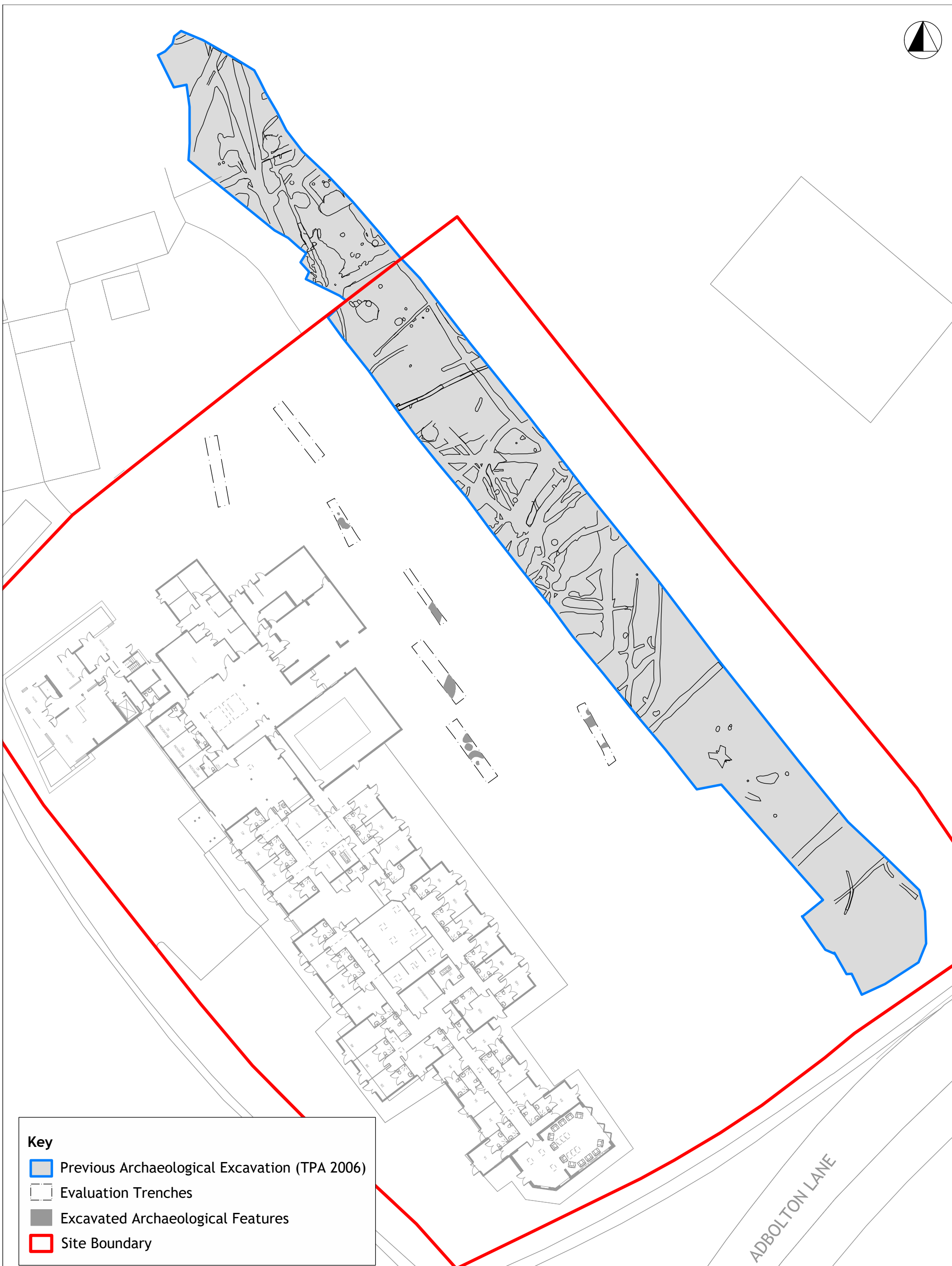
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Key

-  Site Boundary
-  Evaluation Trenches



Key

- Previous Archaeological Excavation (TPA 2006)
- Evaluation Trenches
- Excavated Archaeological Features
- Site Boundary



ASK
 Figure 03
 Scale at A3 - 1:500

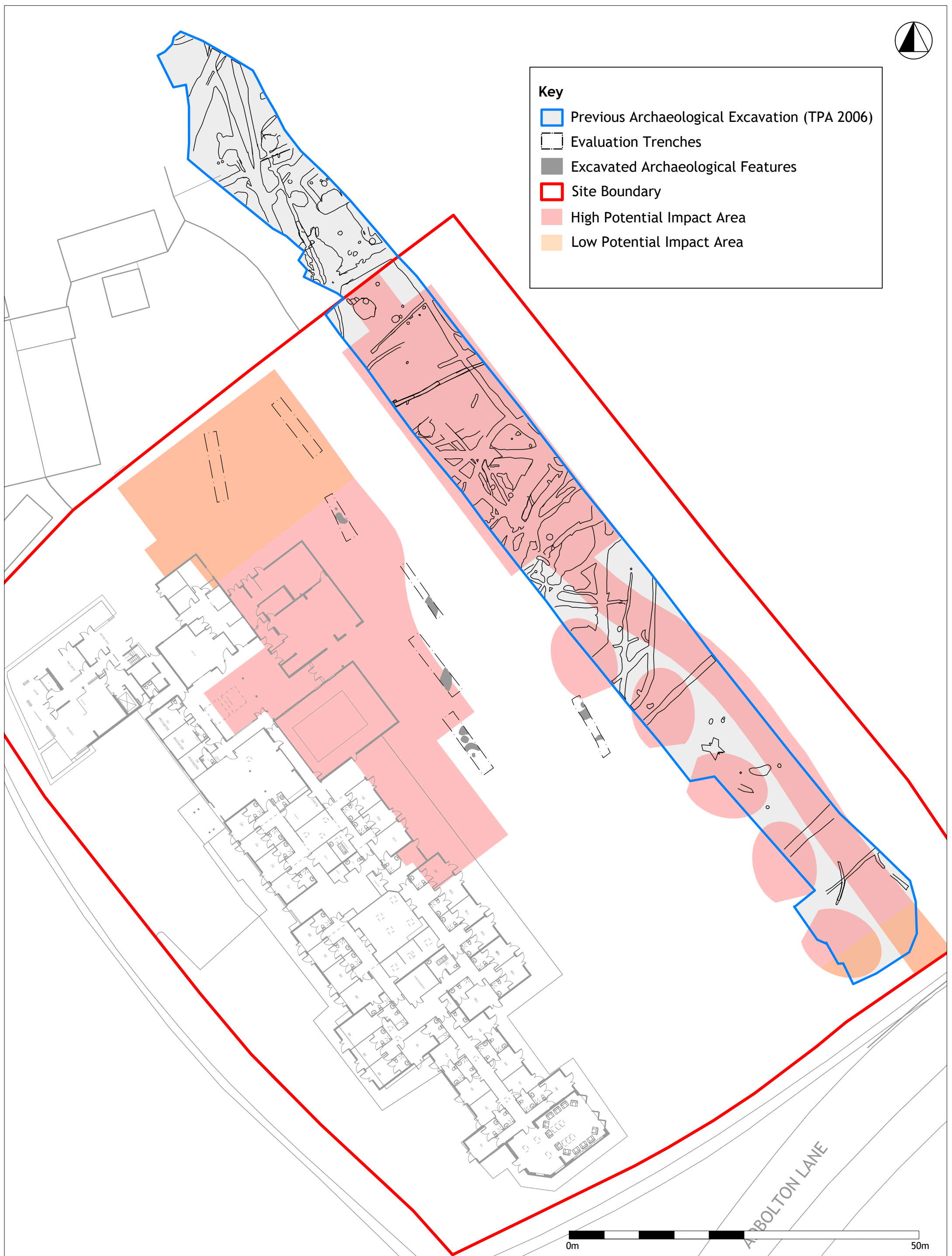
Skylarks Dementia Care, Adbolton Lane
 Site Plan Showing Previous Archaeological Work
 Illustration by: M.I

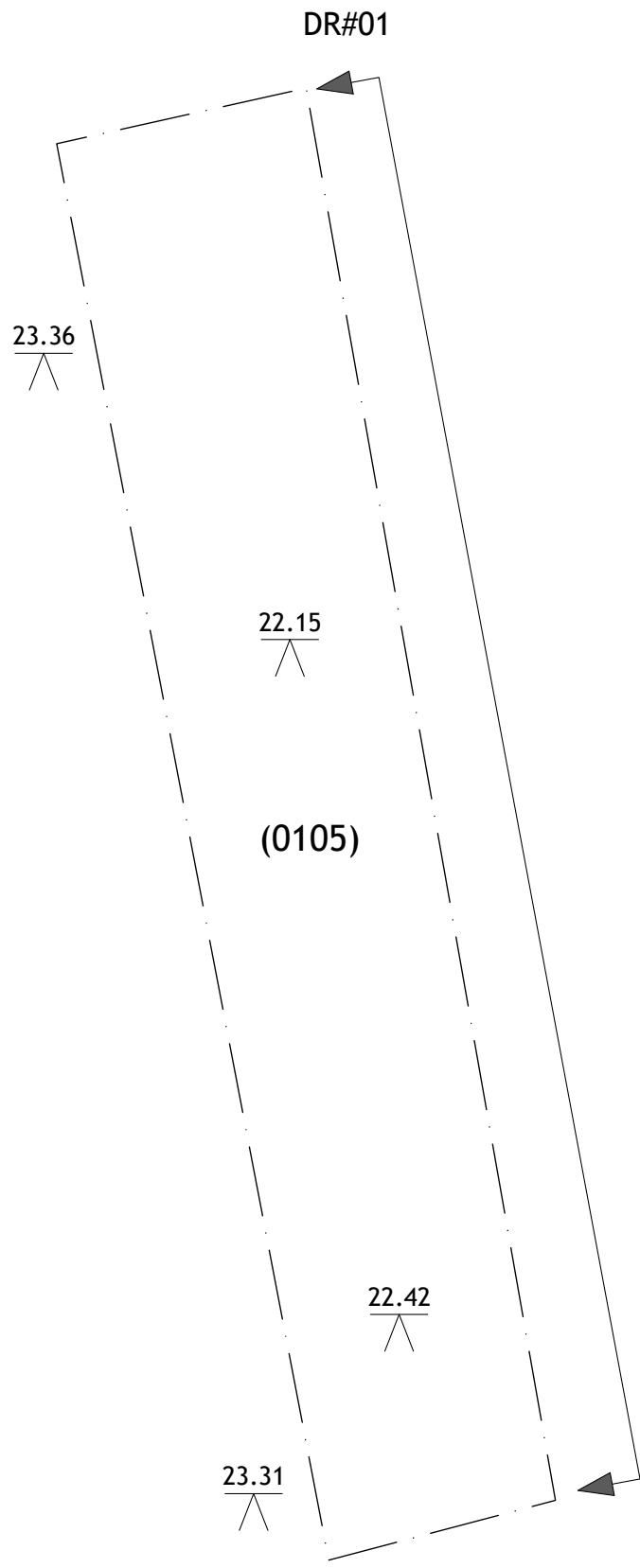


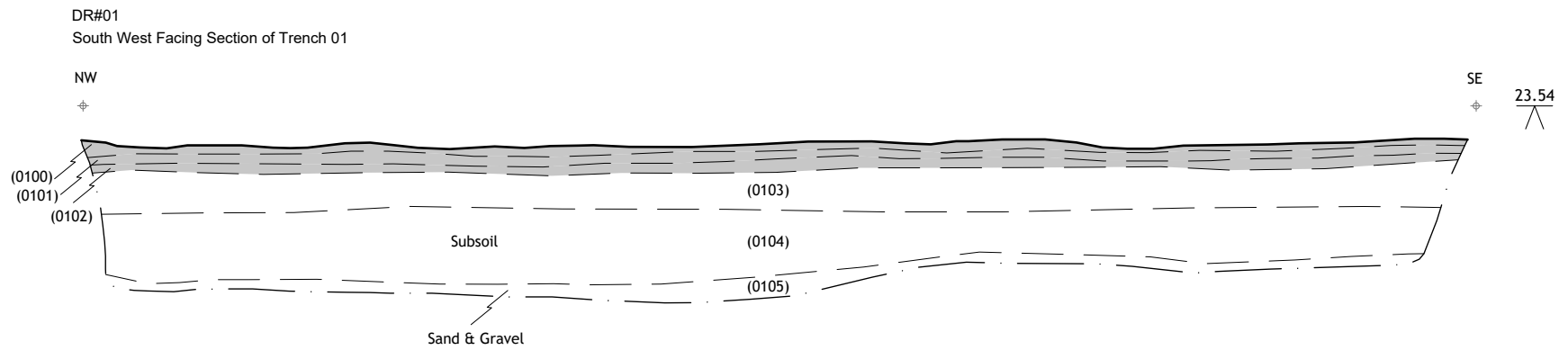


Key

- Previous Archaeological Excavation (TPA 2006)
- Evaluation Trenches
- Excavated Archaeological Features
- Site Boundary
- High Potential Impact Area
- Low Potential Impact Area

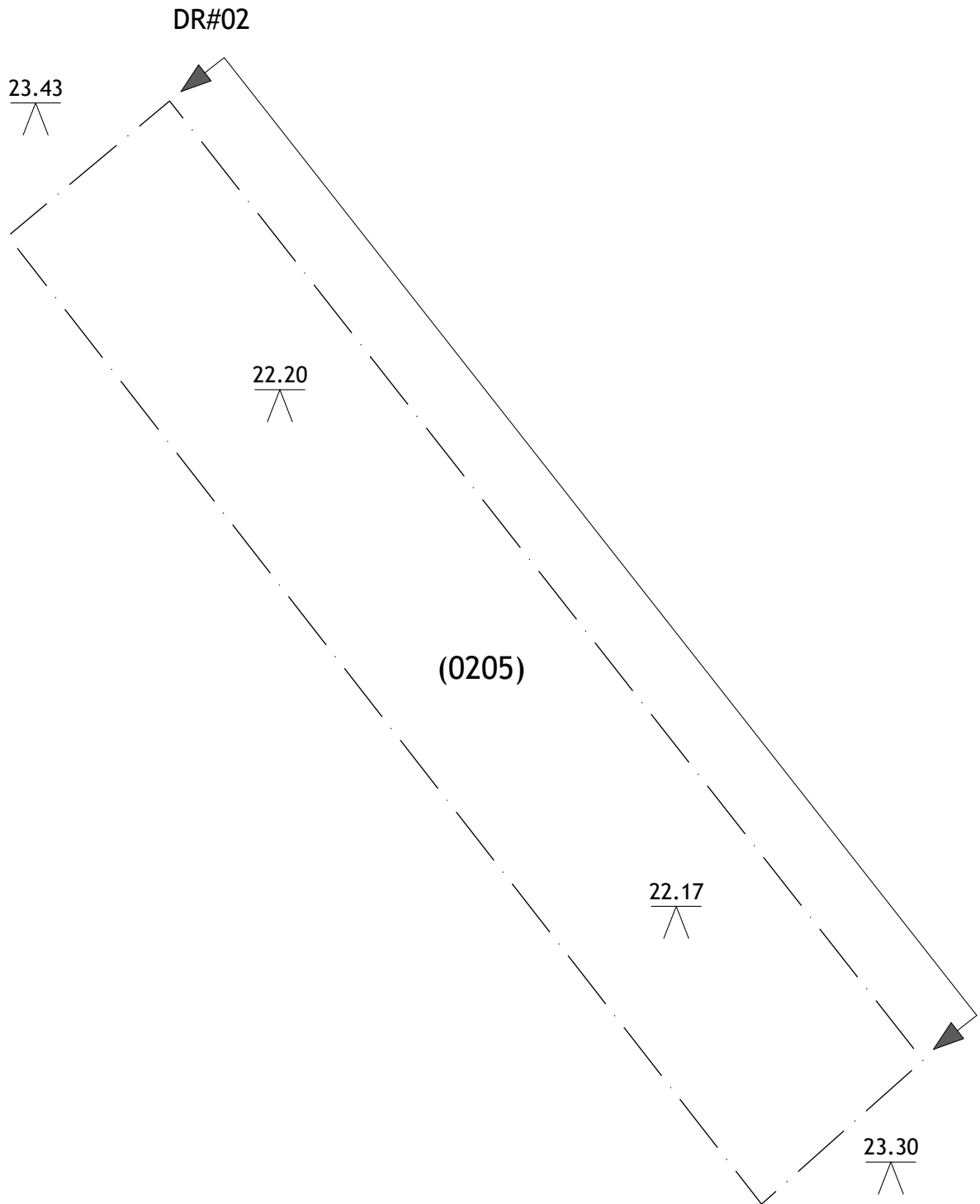


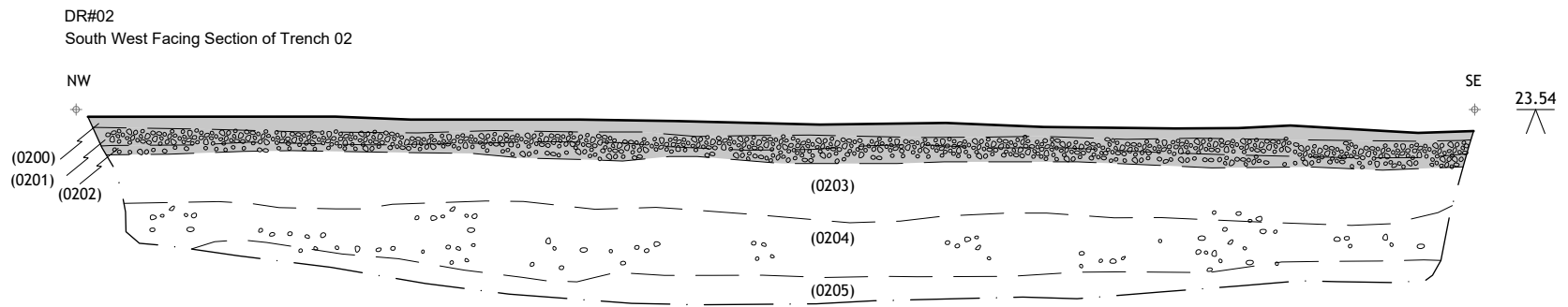




Key

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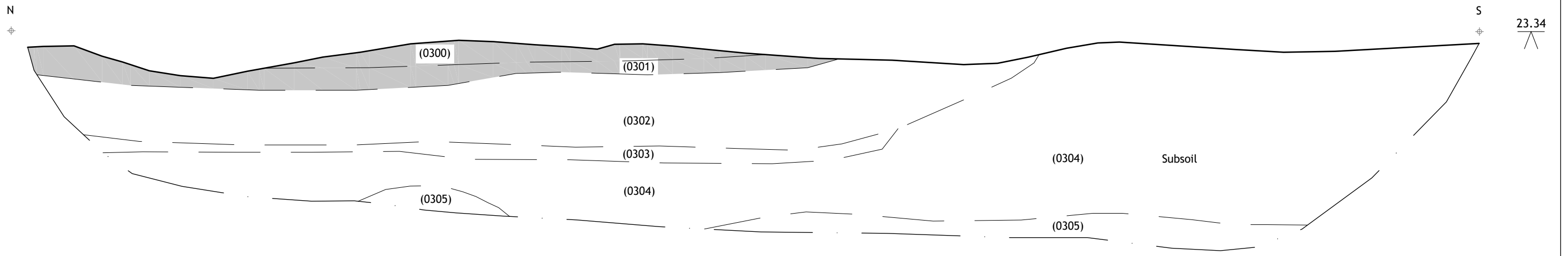




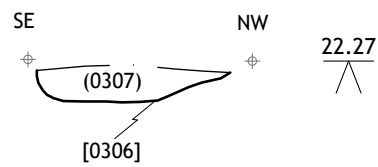
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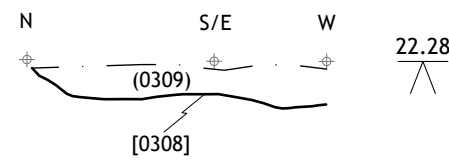
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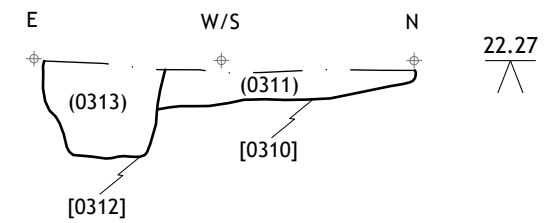
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North East Facing Section Of [0306]



DR#05
Running Section Of [0308]

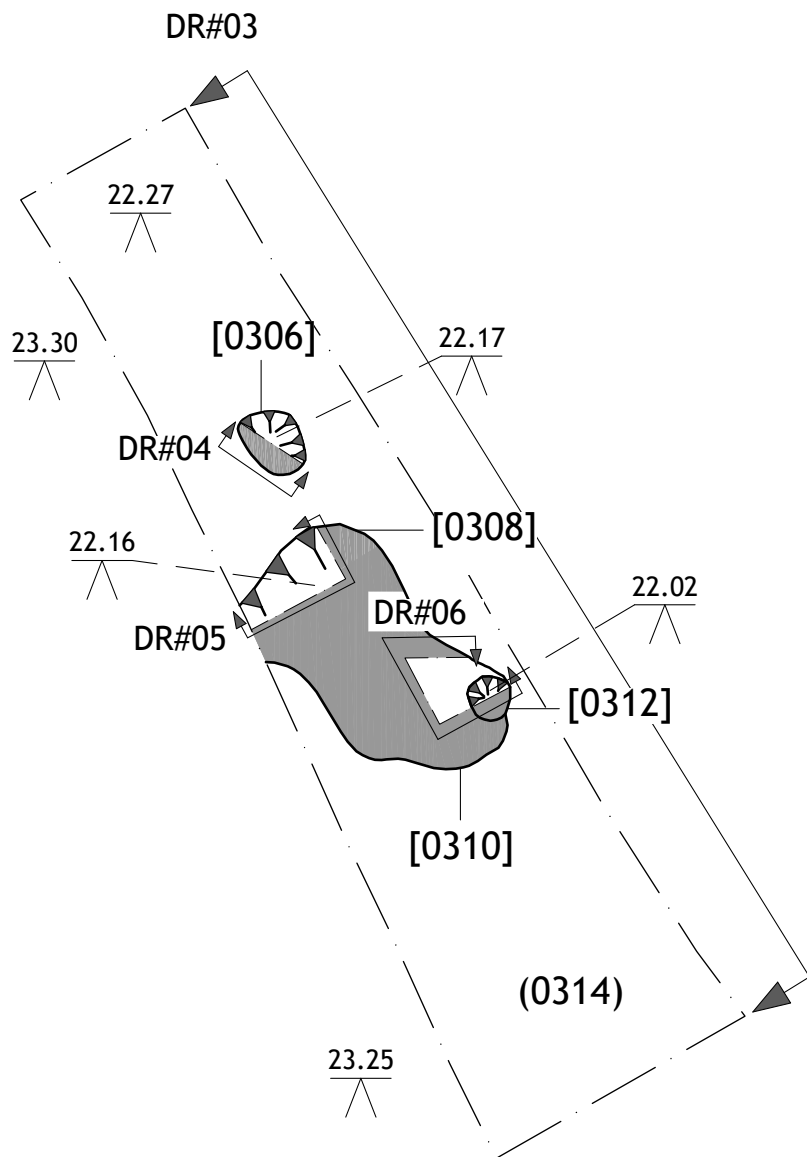


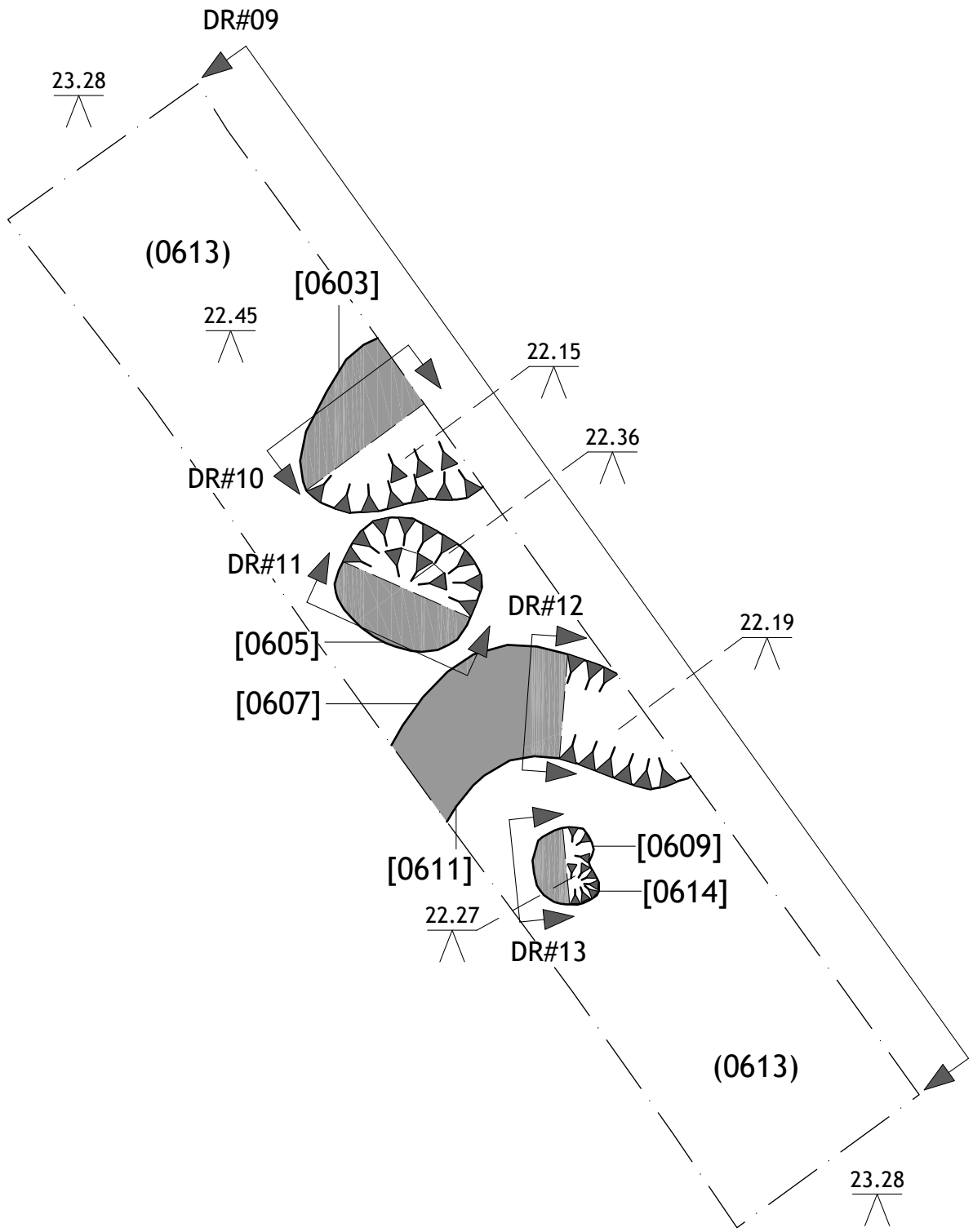
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Running Section Of [0310] and [0312]

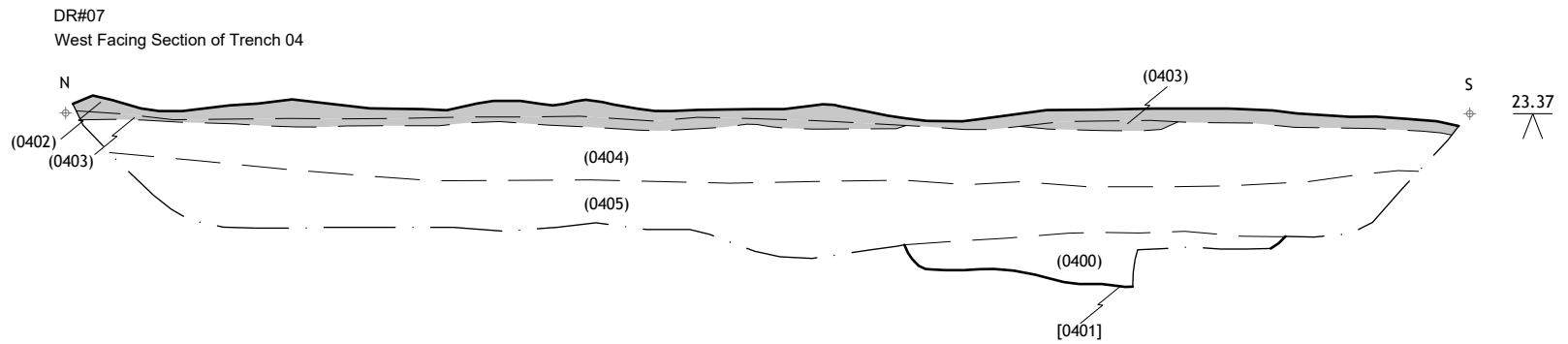


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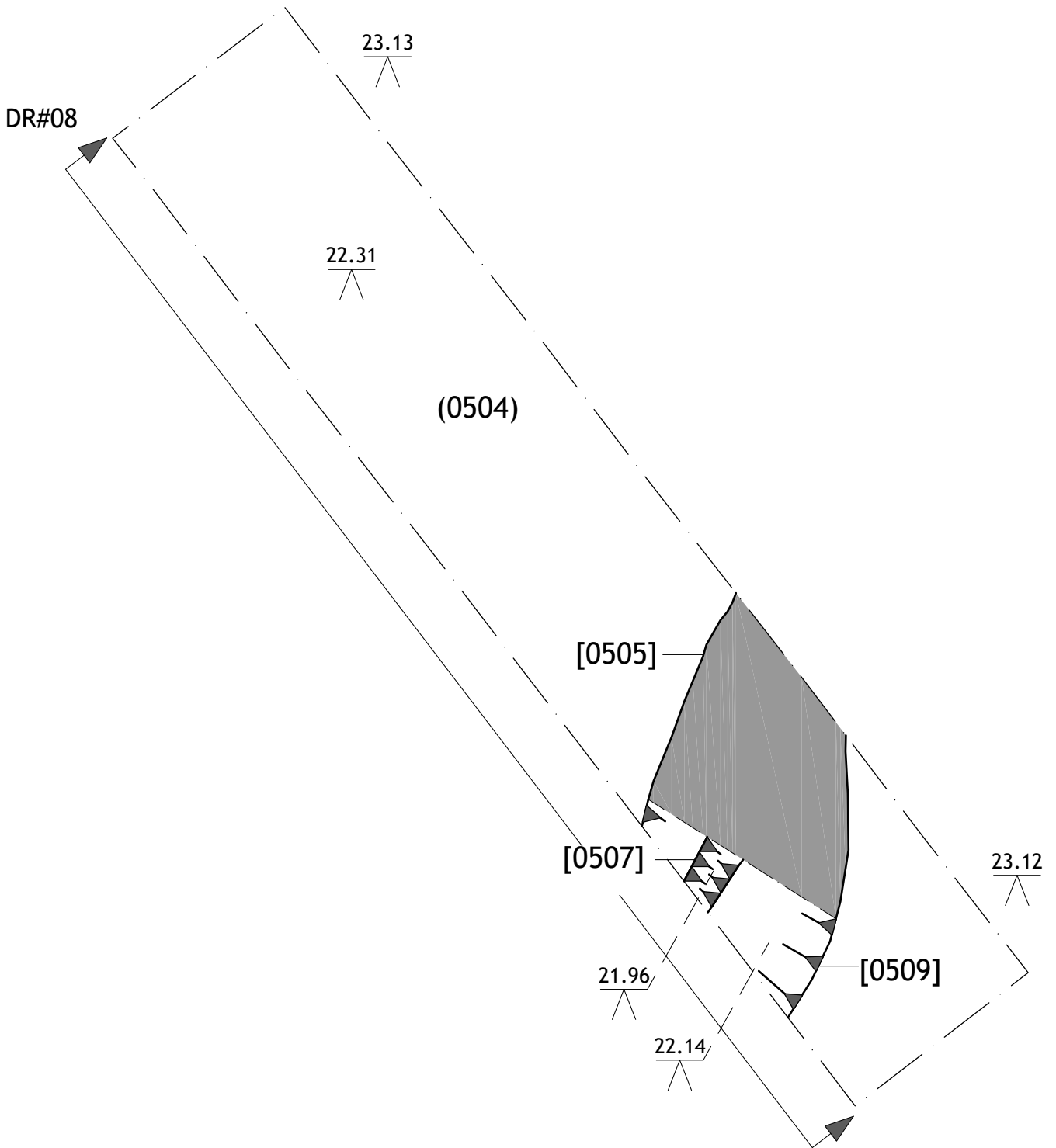
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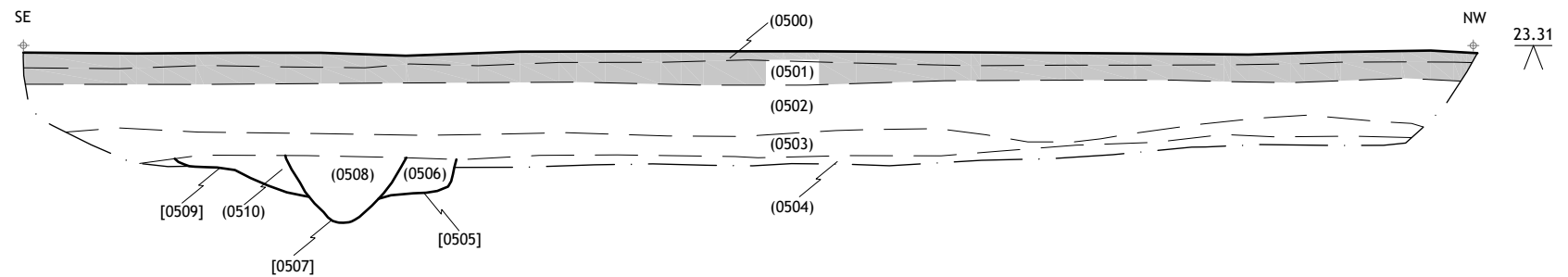


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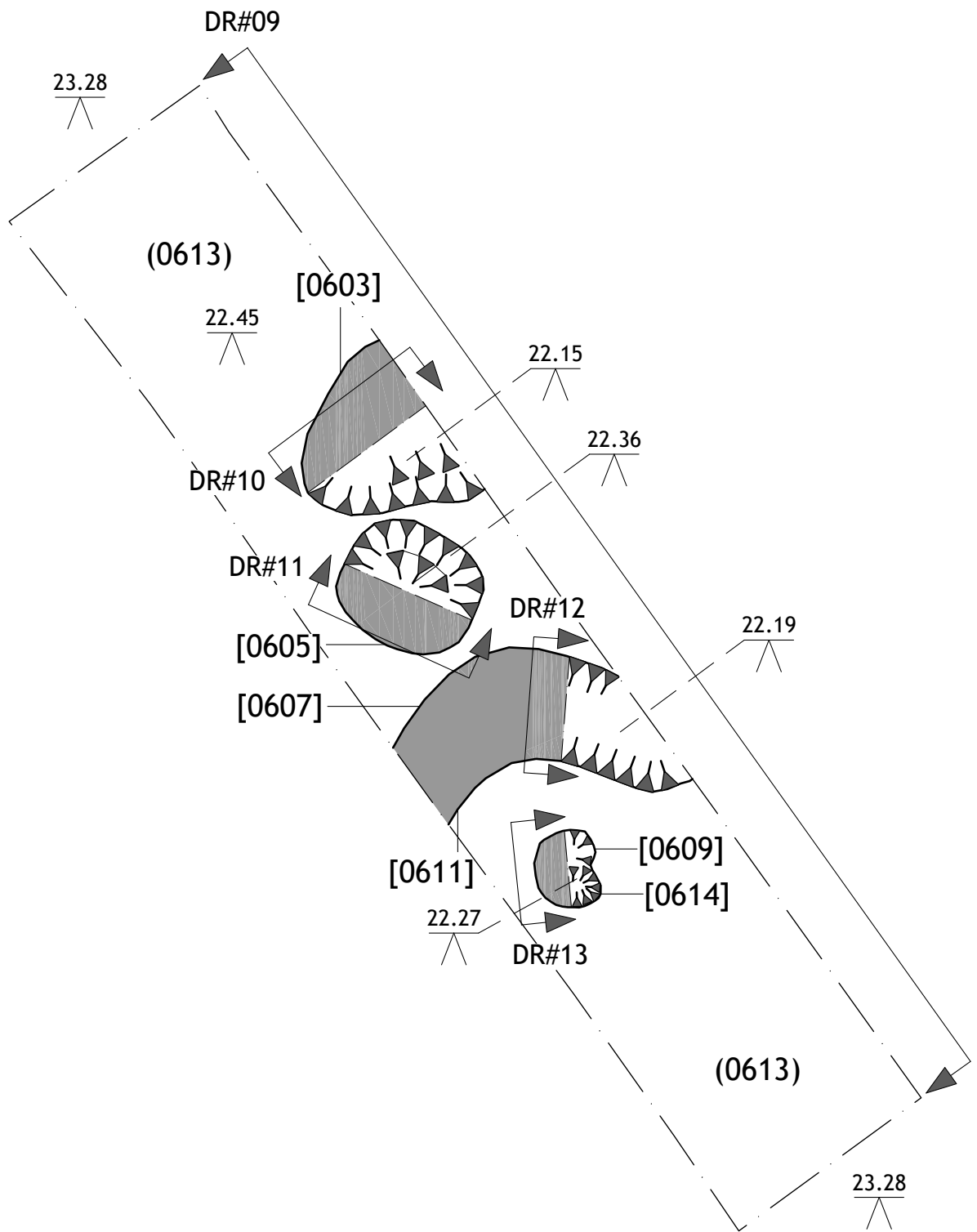


0m 5m

DR#08
North East Facing Section of Trench 05

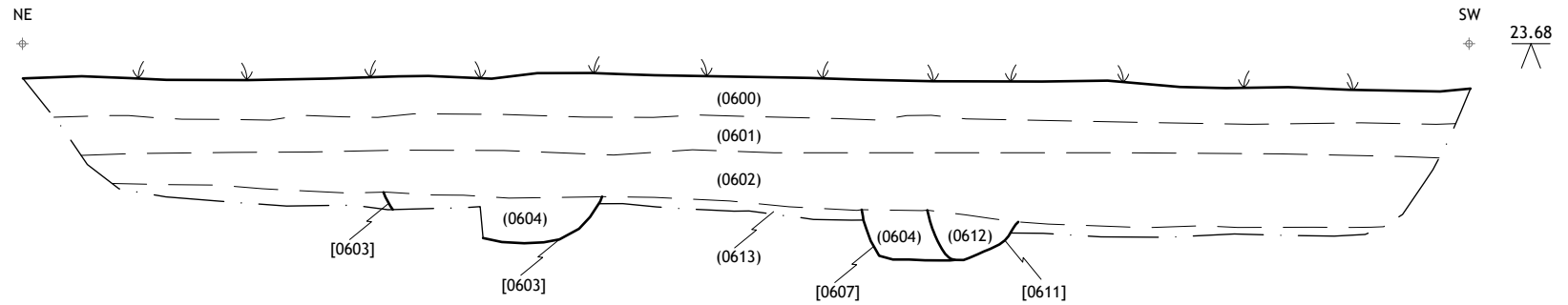


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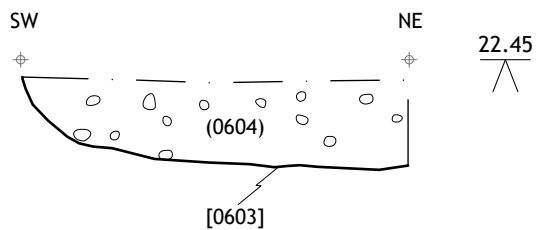


0m 5m

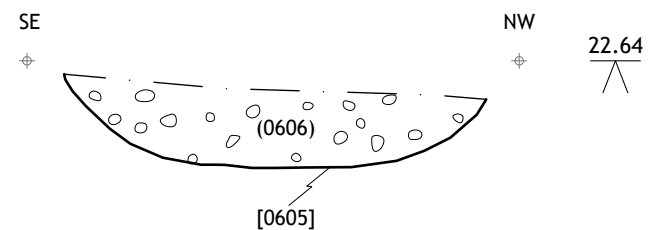
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South East Facing Section of Trench 06



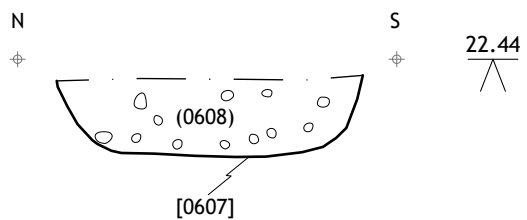
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South East Facing Section Of [0603]



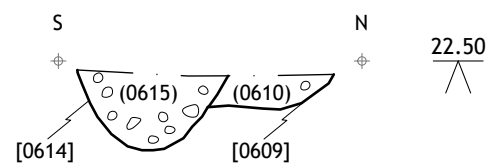
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North East Facing Section Of [0605]

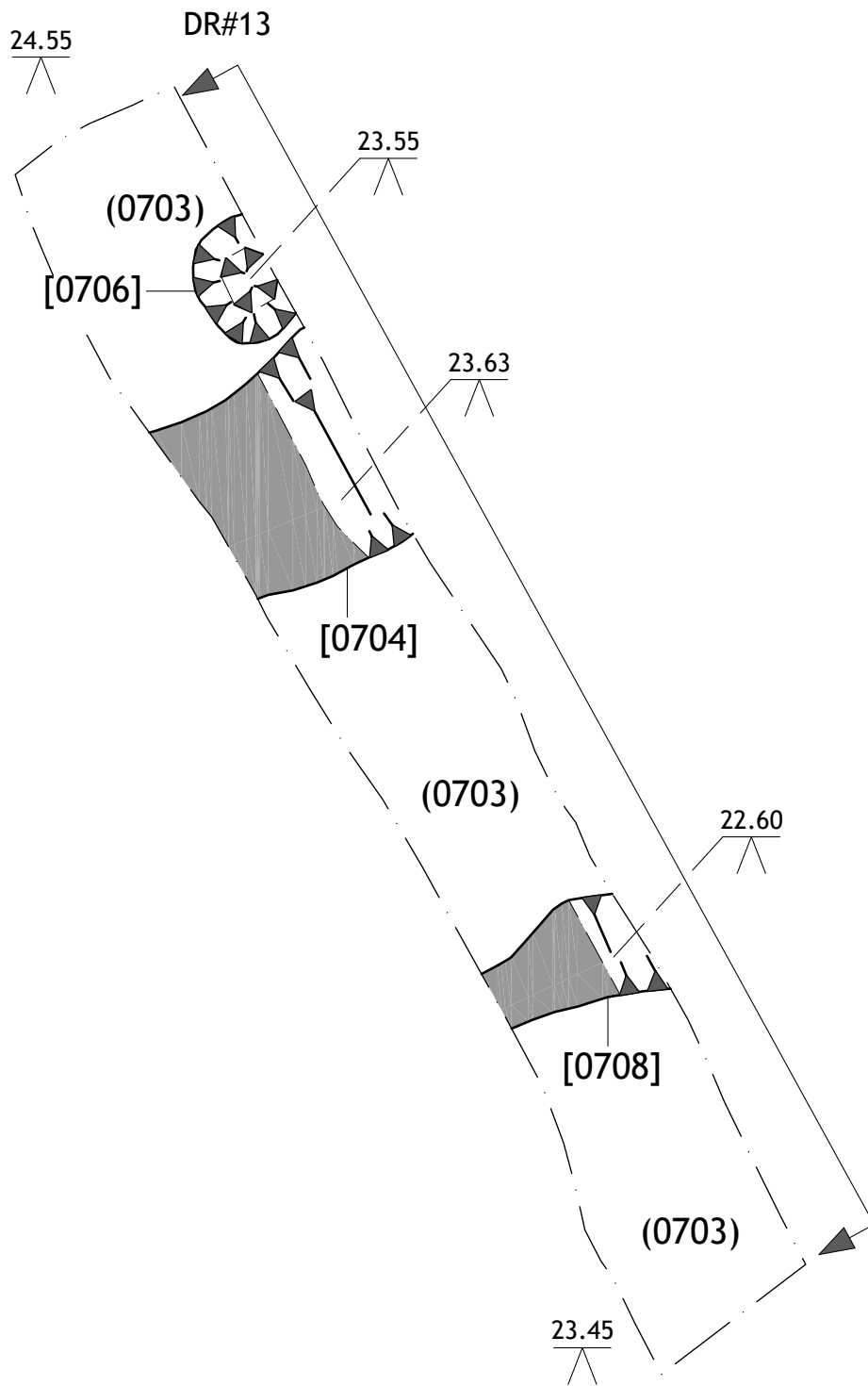


DR#12
East Facing Section Of [0607]

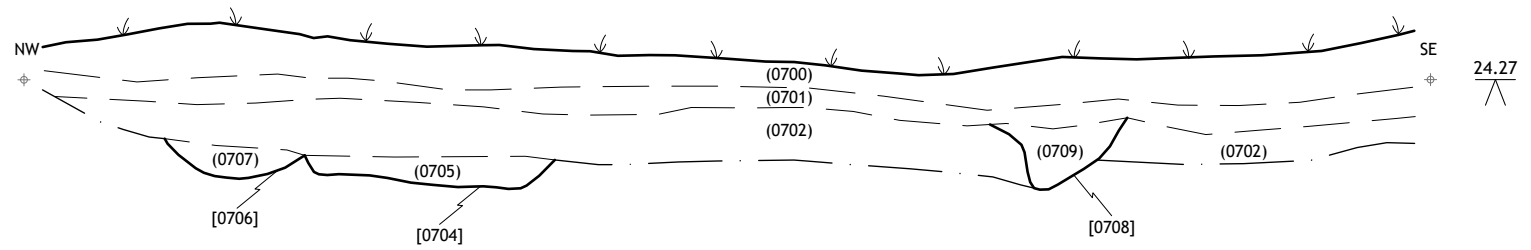


DR#13
East Facing Section Of [0609] and [0614]





DR#14
South West Facing Section of Trench 07



13 Plates



Plate 1: General view of trench 01; looking north-west



Plate 2: General view of trench 02; looking north-east



Plate 3: General view of trench 03; looking south-west



Plate 4: East facing section of [0306]



Plate 5: North-east facing section of [0308]



Plate 6: South facing section of [0310] and [0312]



Plate 7: Overview of trench 04; looking south-west



Plate 8: General view of trench 05; looking west



Plate 9: Representative section of trench 05



Plate 10: East facing section of [0505]



Plate 11: East facing section of [0507]



Plate 12: East facing section of [0509]



Plate 13: Overview of trench 06; looking north.



Plate 14: West facing section of [0603]



Plate 15: East facing section of [0605]



Plate 16: West facing section of [0607]



Plate 17: South-east facing section of [0609]



Plate 18: Overview of trench 07; looking south-west



Plate 19: North-west facing section of [0706]



Plate 20: North-west facing section of [0704]; showing also [0706]



Plate 21: Ditch [0708]; oblique

Appendix 1: Index of Archive and Arrangements for Deposition

<i>Field Records</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Number</i>
Trench record sheets	Register of context numbers and descriptions	7
Context sheets	Record of features and deposits	69
Photo record sheet	Record of photographs taken	1
Digital photographs	All views	222
Site drawings	Plan of site	20
<hr/>		
<i>Documents</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Number</i>
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
<hr/>		
Find	Description	Number
Artefact	Nil	Nil
Ecofact	Environmental samples, bulk	6

The site archive is currently held at the offices of Trent & Peak Archaeology, Unit 1, Holly Lane, Chilwell, Nottingham, NG9 4AB.

Appendix 2: OASIS Data Collection Form

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

[List of Projects](#) | [Manage Projects](#) | [Search Projects](#) | [New project](#) | [Change your details](#) | [HER coverage](#) | [Change country](#) | [Log out](#)

Printable version

OASIS ID: trentpea1-319428

Project details

Project name	SKYLARKS DEMENTIA CARE, ADBOLTON, WEST BRIDGEFORD
Short description of the project	Trent and Peak Archaeology was commissioned by Grace Machin Planning and Property to carry out a trial trench evaluation in order to develop a suitable mitigation strategy. The excavation comprised seven trenches (1.80m x 10m) in advance of the proposed expansion at the site of Skylarks Dementia Care, Adbolton Lane, West Bridgford, Nottinghamshire, centred on NGR SK 60147 38363. The evaluation aimed to rapidly clarify and characterise the levels of truncation/preservation of archaeological remains within the proposed development area. Across the northern part of the site within trenches 1 and 2 the evaluation demonstrated a degree of modern truncation caused by previous development which may have removed the potential for archaeological remains to a depth of c. 0.7m to 0.8m. In contrast to the south a concentration of archaeological features were identified within the remaining five trenches 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7, which comprised a series of ditches, pits and postholes, although sample excavation produced no datable artefacts. Together these appear to indicate the presence of at least a moderate density of archaeological features that due to their morphology and orientation appear to be a continuation of the significant Mid-Late Iron Age settlement site previously excavated along the east side of the proposed development in 2006/7. The potentially significant archaeological features were present within trenches 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 at depths between c.0.4m to 0.8m cut into naturally deposited sand and gravel, although it was unclear whether some of the features may have also been cut through the subsoil layer above this. These features will be impacted on by the proposed main development area.
Project dates	Start: 14-05-2018 End: 22-05-2018
Previous/future work	Yes / Yes
Any associated project reference codes	ASK - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area
Current Land use	Residential 2 - Institutional and communal accommodation
Monument type	SETTLEMENT Middle Iron Age
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	"Targeted Trenches"
Development type	Building refurbishment/repairs/restoration
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	NOTTINGHAMSHIRE RUSHCLIFFE WEST BRIDGFORD Skylarks Dementia Care, Adbolton Lane, West Bridgeford
Postcode	NG2 5AS
Study area	1185 Square metres
Site coordinates	SK 460160 338332 52.899647664476 -1.31583835594 52 53 58 N 001 18 57 W Point
Lat/Long Datum	Unknown
Height OD / Depth	Min: 0m Max: 0m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Trent and Peak Archaeology
Project brief originator	Trent and Peak Archaeology
Project design originator	Trent and Peak Archaeology
Project director/manager	Tom Hooley
Project supervisor	Camilla Collins
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Trent and Peak Archaeology
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Spreadsheets", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Trent and Peak Archaeology
Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Correspondence", "Map", "Matrices", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report", "Section", "Survey", "Unpublished Text"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation at Skylarks Dementia Care, Adbolton Lane, West Bridgeford, Nottinghamshire
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Owen, V., Bishop, C.
Other bibliographic details	Report number: 095/2018
Date	2018
Issuer or publisher	Trent and Peak Archaeology

Place of issue or publication	Trent and Peak Archaeology
Description	Grey literature, PDF.
Entered by	Owen, V. (vowen@yorkat.co.uk)
Entered on	11 June 2018

OASIS:

Please e-mail [Historic England](#) for OASIS help and advice

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