

Former Bilton Bypass, Rugby, Warwickshire Phase 3

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION



understanding heritage matters

Archaeology Warwickshire Report No 1560

SEPTEMBER 2015



*Working for
Warwickshire*

Project:	Former Bilton Bypass
Commissioned by:	Mark Hayward @ Court Residential
Project Report No.	1560
Site Code:	RB13
Planning Reference:	R12/1155
Planning Authority:	Rugby, Warwickshire
Planning Archaeologist:	Anna Stocks, Warwickshire
National Grid Reference:	SP 4846 7386
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SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation consisting of seven trial trenches was undertaken on behalf of Court Residential within the supposed extent of the medieval settlement at Bilton. A probable 19th century brick wall and cobbled surface were uncovered broadly corresponding to buildings on the First Edition Ordnance Survey. Several undated features remain difficult to interpret although an undated gully aligns with the modern boundary system.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Planning permission has been granted by the Rugby Borough Council for the erection of eleven dwellings with associated garaging, sewers and other works on land formerly forming the route of the proposed Bilton bypass, Bilton Rugby, Warwickshire (R12/1155). Warwickshire County Council Planning Archaeologist Anna Stocks has advised that an archaeological evaluation should be undertaken before the development commences in order to allow for the mitigation of any archaeological remains that might survive on the area.

1.2 A planning condition attached to the consent requires that the applicant secure the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, submitted by the applicant and approved by the Planning Authority.

1.3 Archaeology Warwickshire have been commissioned to undertake an archaeological evaluation in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation approved by the planning authority. The approved schemes included the provision of multiple trial trenches. This report presents the results of the work on Trenches 1-7 which were excavated in September 2015. The project archive will be stored at the Rugby Museum and Art Gallery (Site Code RB13).

2 SITE LOCATION

2.1 The site is situated on level ground centred on national grid reference SP 4846 7386 in the parish of Rugby. The underlying geology of the site is Dunsmore Gravel (BGS 1984).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 The proposed development lies within an area of archaeological potential, within the probable extent of the medieval settlement at Bilton (Warwickshire Historic Environment Record MWA 9494). There is the potential for the proposed groundworks to disturb

archaeological deposits, including structural remains, boundary features and rubbish pits, associated with the occupation of this area during the medieval and later periods. The archaeological background has been fully detailed in the previous report (Palmer and Wright 2014) and need not be repeated here.

4 AIMS AND METHODS

4.1 The main aim of the evaluation was to determine if there are any significant archaeological remains in the area to be developed; to form an understanding of their value and their potential to shed light on the subsequent development of the area.

4.2 Secondary aims include placing the results in their wider local and regional contexts as appropriate.

4.3 The objectives were to locate, record and analyse archaeological materials and deposits and to disseminate the results in an appropriate format.

4.4 The seven trenches (Trench 1 was divided into 1a and 1b) were opened up by a 5-tonne, 360° excavator with a 1.60m wide, toothless ditching bucket. Topsoil and other plough soils were removed under the supervision of an experienced archaeologist until either the top of archaeological remains or geological natural was reached.

5 RESULTS

5.1 Archaeological deposits were revealed in Trenches 1 and 2 only.

Trench 1a

5.2 This trench was aligned N/S and exposed geological natural 102 along its length. The natural was overlain by a layer of brown sandy loam (106) which appeared to fill a hollow on the western side of the trench. A construction trench 103 contained NNE/SSW aligned brick wall 105 and backfill 104. The bricks were lime mortared and probably late 19th century in date. A return to the west was noted in section. A layer of cobbles 101 survived to the east of the wall.

Trench 1b

5.3 This trench was aligned broadly E/W and geological natural 102 was observed along its entire length. At the west end a pit, or possibly the terminal end of a ditch 107 was at least

0.75m deep and may have been recut at least once. The deeper, earlier cut contained two fills (111 overlaid by 110) whilst the later cut (0.5m deep) contained two further fills (109 overlaid by 108). No finds were recovered from any fill.

Trench 2

5.4 Trench 2 was aligned NW/SE and contained a number of undated archaeological features. Geological natural sand and gravel 202 was exposed along the entire length of the trench. At the SE end, E/W aligned gully 205 had near vertical sides 1.7m wide and a flattish base 0.44m deep. It was backfilled with mixed dark greyish brown loam and redeposited natural. To the NW a probable pit 209 was at least 2.5m wide with sloping sides and a rounded base 0.5m deep. An early fill of very dark grey silty clay loam (215) was overlain by greyish brown silty clay loam (210). No finds were recovered. At the NW end of the trench pit 213 had near vertical sides 0.90m wide and a flat base 0.32m deep and was backfilled with grey sandy loam (214).

5.5 Two small postholes were recorded. Posthole 203 was sub square 0.26m x 0.22m but only 0.07m deep. A small fragment of post-medieval ceramic building material and a crumb of slag were recorded in the very dark grey fill (204). Adjacent posthole 207 was sub-circular 0.33m x 0.26m by 0.13m deep and contained dark greyish brown sand.

6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 The brick wall in Trench 1 clearly relates to the buildings depicted on the First Edition Ordnance Survey. There is no evidence for a particular function. The return shown in the section suggests it was part of a structure possibly associated with a cobbled floor.

6.2 The undated pits do not have the appearance of particularly modern features but conversely they do not exhibit anything which could indicate their function.

6.3 The undated gully is aligned parallel to modern boundaries and need not be a particularly old feature.

6.4 The postholes were post-medieval or later, the square shape of one possibly betraying a modern spade cut.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeology Warwickshire would like to thank Mark Hayward for commissioning the work and for providing the machine on site.

REFERENCES

BGS 2014 British Geological Survey Viewer

<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> accessed December 2014.

Ordnance Survey 1885 First Edition Ordnance Survey map, Warwickshire, Sheet 50.9,



1. Trench 1



2. Wall 105



3. Trench 1b showing 107



4. Pit 209



5. Gully 205

APPENDICES

A List of contexts

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1a	100	Tarmac	Modern
1a	101	Cobbles	Former surface
1a	102	Yellowish brown sand and gravel	Geological Natural
1a	103	Cut next to wall 105	Construction cut
1a	104		Fill of 103
1a	105	Bricks	Wall of building on OS 1 st ed. Also on 1812 map
1a	106	Dark greyish brown silty sand	ploughsoil
1b	107	Pit cut	Possible ditch terminal
1b	108	Dark greyish brown sandy clay loam	Fill of 107
1b	109	Pale grey silty clay	Fill of 107
1b	110	Pale grey silty clay	Fill of 108
1b	111	Greyish brown silty clay	Fill of 108
2	200	Topsoil	Modern
2	201	Brown sandy loam	Layer
2	202	Yellowish brown sandy gravel	Natural
2	203	Sub-square posthole	Vertical sides and flat base
2	204	Very dark greyish brown silty sand	Fill of 203
2	205	Gully	Steep sides and flat base
2	206	Dark greyish brown mixed redeposited natural	Fill of 205
2	207	Sub circular posthole	Sloping sides and base
2	208	Dark greyish brown sand	Fill of 207
2	209	Pit	Sloping sides and rounded base
2	210	Greyish brown silty clay loam	Fill of 209
2	211	Tree hole	Undated
2	212	Loam	Fill of 211
2	213	Pit	Sub oval
2	214	Grey sandy loam	Fill of 213
2	215	Very dark grey silty clay loam	Fill of 209
3	300	Topsoil	Modern

3	301	Dark greyish brown silty sand	Older plough soil
3	302	Natural gravel	
4	400	Topsoil	Modern
4	401	Dark greyish brown silty sand	Older plough soil
4	402	Natural gravel	
5	500	Topsoil	Modern
5	501	Dark greyish brown sandy loam	Older plough soil
5	502	Natural gravel	
6	600	Topsoil	Modern
6	601	Dark greyish brown silty sand	Older plough soil
6	602	Natural gravel	

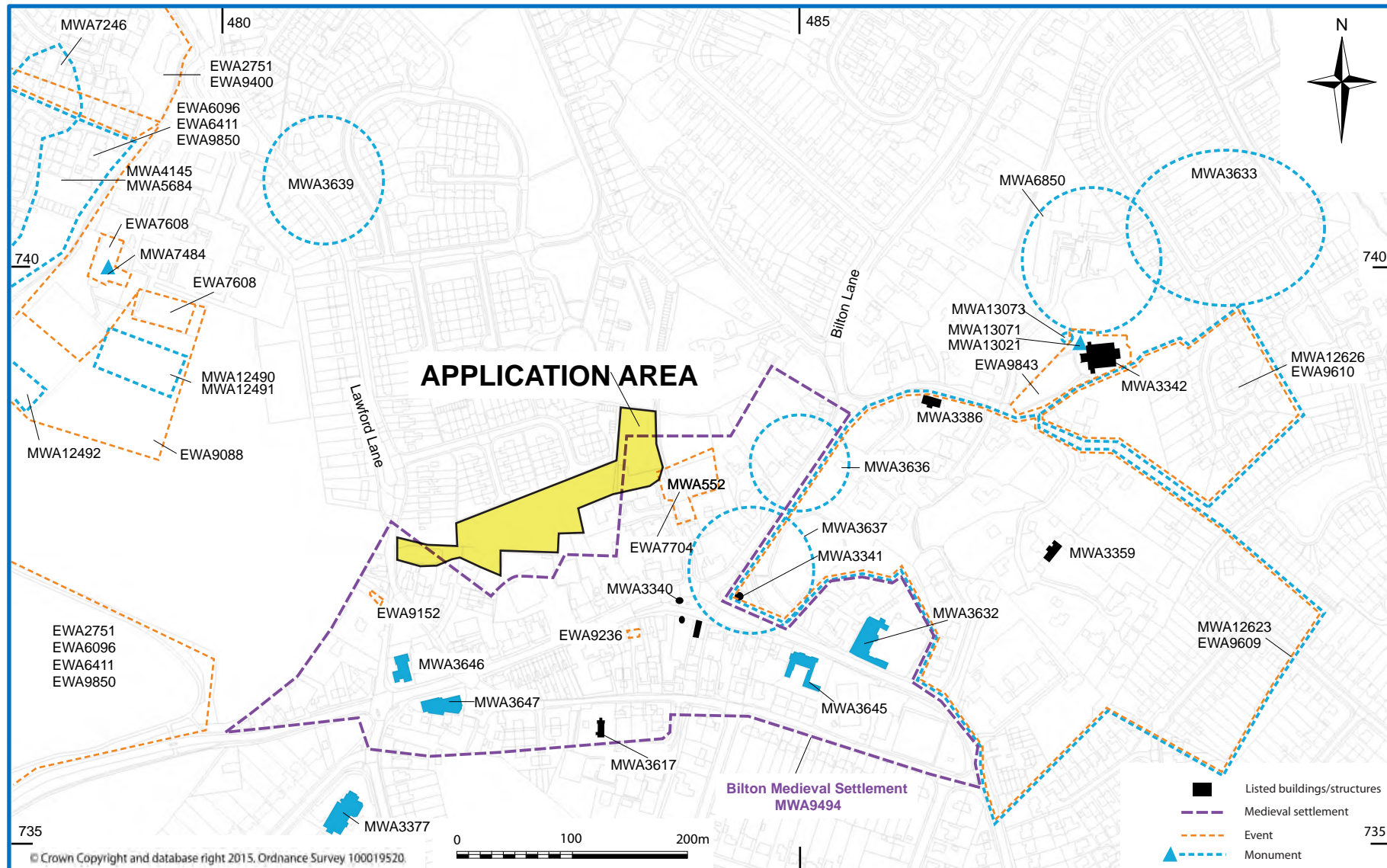


Fig 1: Location of application area and Historic Environment Information

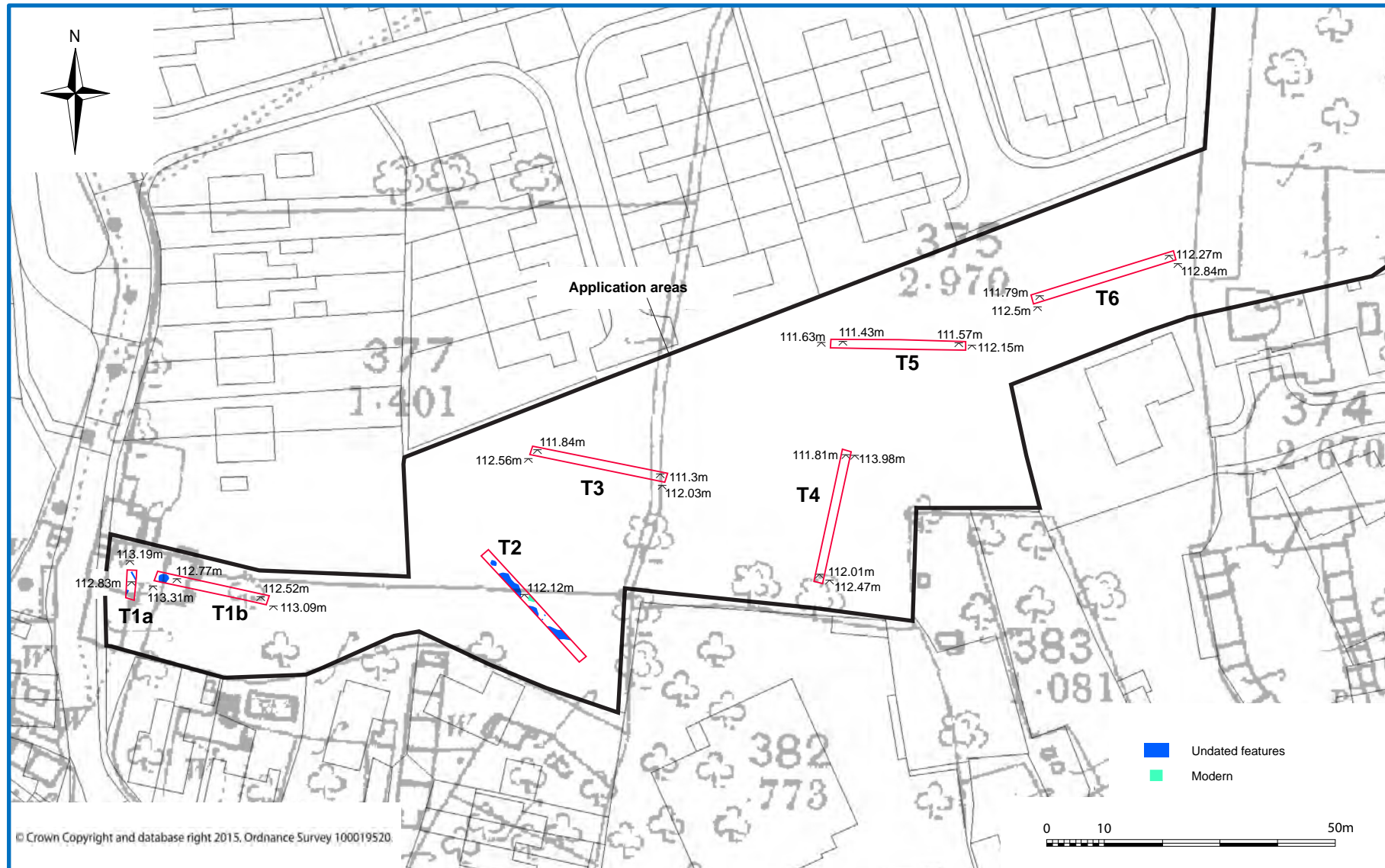


Fig 2: Location of excavated trenches with First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1887-9

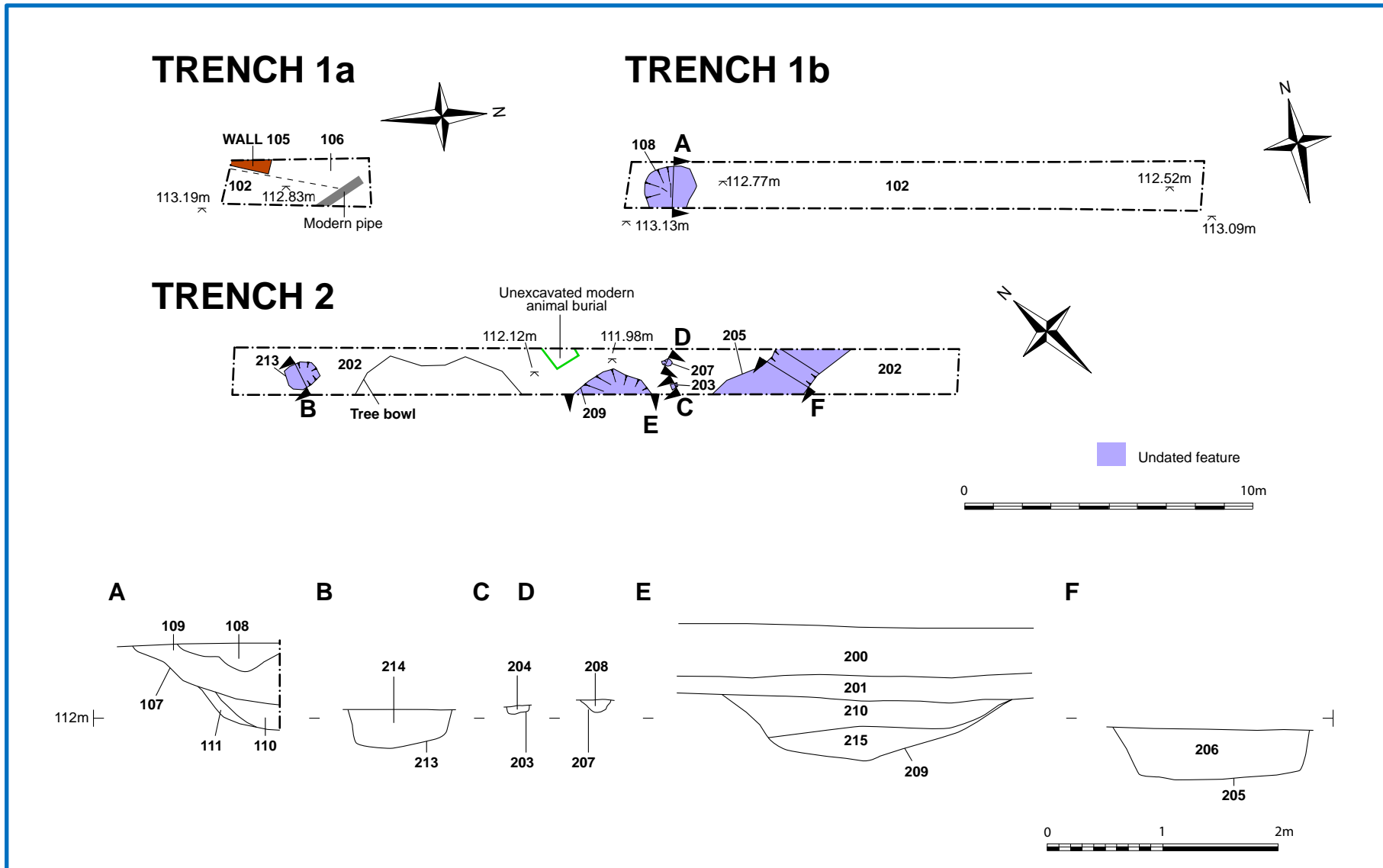


Fig 3: Detail of trenches 1 and 2 and associated sections A to F