

Land adjacent Seven Acre Close, Bishop's Tachbrook, Warwickshire

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION



EXPERTISE WHERE YOU NEED IT

Archaeology Warwickshire Report No 1953

May 2019



*Working for
Warwickshire*

Project: Seven Acre Close Bishop's Tachbrook
Commissioned by: CgMs Consulting
Site Code: BSA19
Planning Reference: W/16/0279
Planning Authority: Warwick District Council
National Grid Reference: SP 3077 6142
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Date: May 2019
Report reference: Thompson, P, 2019 *Land adjacent Seven Acre Close, Bishop's Tachbrook, Warwickshire: Archaeological Evaluation*, Archaeology Warwickshire Report 1953

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SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation, comprising thirteen 30m x 1.8m trial trenches, was carried out on behalf of CgMs Consulting. Geological natural sandy clay or sand and gravels were exposed in all trenches but no significant archaeological deposits or finds were recorded.

Evidence of medieval or post-medieval ridge and furrow cultivation was revealed as furrows were identified in most trenches extending roughly north/south across the site.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Planning permission has been granted for residential development on land adjacent to Seven Acre Close, Bishop's Tachbrook (Planning Ref: W/16/0279). It was a requirement of planning permission (Condition 8) that a programme of archaeological works be carried prior to the development, in line with a Written Scheme of Investigation produced by CgMs Consulting (Clarke 2019) on behalf of the developer.
- 1.2 Archaeology Warwickshire were commissioned to undertake an archaeological evaluation in accordance with the approved WSI, which took place between 29th April and 2nd May 2019. This report presents the results of that work. The archive will be stored at Warwickshire Museum under the site code BSA19.
- 1.3 This work was carried out in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standard and guidance for field evaluation (2014).

2 SITE LOCATION

- 2.1 The site is located on the north-west side of the village of Bishop's Tachbrook and is situated on the north side of Mallory Road. The site is bounded to the south by Mallory road, to the east by Seven Acre Close and related residential development. The remaining boundaries are adjacent agricultural fields and the site comprises c.2.35 hectares of land centred at National Grid Reference SP 3077 6142 (Fig 1).

- 2.2 The British Geological Survey (BGS) 1:50,000 records the solid geology within the site comprises Mercia Mudstone Group Formation, overlain by superficial deposits of Thrussington Member (British Geological Survey 2018). The site is on part of a north facing slope with levels between 84m aOD at the highest point falling to 77m aOD.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 An archaeological background for the site has previously been produced as part of an existing desk based assessment report (Prospect Archaeology 2015) and the written scheme of investigation (Clarke 2019). A summary of this information is provided below.

Prehistoric

- 3.2 There is very little direct evidence of earlier prehistoric activity in the vicinity of the site. A Palaeolithic hand axe was discovered to the north-west of the village (MWA 2177) and a dispersed scatter of flint including a Mesolithic core and a later retouched blade was identified to the south-east of Bishops Tachbrook (NMR 335632). A flint of unspecified prehistoric date was also found in Tachbrook Mallory to the north-east of Bishops Tachbrook (MWA 6154).

Roman

- 3.3 Spot finds associated with Roman activity in the environs of the site have been recorded, but these have not been related to specific settlement site. These include pot sherds found in Bishops Tachbrook (MWA 1252), and to the north-east of the village (MWA 4581). Pot sherds (MWA 6155) and coins (MWA 5941) have been found at Tachbrook Mallory, to the north-east of Bishops Tachbrook.

Medieval

- 3.4 Two mills were recorded in Bishops Tachbrook in 1086 and the parish church of St Chad (MWA 711; Grade I Listed Building 1364940) is of mid-twelfth century origin. A document from 1557 mentions two water mills, and a windmill probably located to the north of the church on Windmill Hill.
- 3.5 The medieval village core of Bishops Tachbrook (MWA 9502), designated as part of the Conservation Area, is situated on the east side of the present day village. A possible boundary hedge is located to the east side of the village, running down from the brook. However, the settlement stops short of it, which could indicate possible shrinkage (HER MWA 9502).

- 3.6 Medieval/post-medieval ridge and furrow (NMR 1532188) has been identified in the fields to the south-east of the village and to the south of the application site, and medieval pottery found at an earthwork to the north-east of the village (MWA 4581).

Post-medieval

- 3.7 The Banbury Road on the western side of the village, connecting Warwick and Banbury was a turnpike road (MWA 4774) established between 1725 and 1750. Bishops Tachbrook is reached from the road via Mallory Road
- 3.8 The 1710 survey of the manor belonging to the Earl of Warwick shows the site entirely within a single field labelled Glebe Lands. Mallory Road, although unnamed, is shown and runs onto Bishop Tachbrook village.
- 3.9 The 1840 Tithe map shows the land has been subdivided into smaller fields and the site now lies within parts of three fields. On the 1887 Ordnance Survey map the three fields depicted on the tithe map have been amalgamated into a single plot and the sites southern boundary is defined by Mallory Road, and its northern and eastern boundaries by the field boundaries.
- 3.10 To the west of the site was a brickworks (MWA7086), which comprised a small rectangular plot containing a linear building, and a kiln is marked a short distance to the west. There is also a building marked a little way to the south of the brickworks. By 1906 the building to the south, noted on the 1887 map is now named Brickyard Cottages. During the 20th century Bishop's Tachbrook extended westwards with development ultimately encroaching on the eastern boundary of the site, although the layout of the site remain unaltered up to the present (Clarke 2019).

4 AIMS AND METHODS

- 4.1 The main aim of the evaluation was to determine whether any archaeological evidence survived on the site.
- 4.2 The evaluation was undertaken to determine as far as reasonably possible the location, form, extent, character, date and significance 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.
- 4.3 The area was evaluated by means of 390m of trial trenching, comprising thirteen 30m long evaluation trenches. The objectives of the work were:
- To establish the presence or otherwise of prehistoric activity at the site
 - To establish the presence or otherwise of Roman activity on the site.
 - To establish the presence or otherwise of Anglo-Saxon or Late Medieval activity at the site.
 - To establish the environmental context of prehistoric, Roman, Anglo-Saxon, Medieval, Post Medieval and Modern activity.
 - Evaluate the likely impact of past land use and development.
- 4.4 The project was designed to inform, where applicable, the development and implementation of local, regional and national research agendas with specific reference to the West Midlands Research Framework and the research priorities for Warwickshire set out by the 'Archaeological Resource Assessment of the Aggregates Producing Areas of Warwickshire and Solihull' project.
- 4.5 Topsoil, former ploughsoils and demonstrably modern overburden were removed by an appropriate machine using a toothless bucket under direct archaeological supervision. Ground reduction was carried out in shallow spits until the uppermost archaeological horizon, or the geological natural was reached (whichever the higher).

5 RESULTS

Geological Natural

- 5.1 The geological natural across much of the site was reddish-brown clay (301, 601, 801), although variations in natural were recorded and yellowish brown sand and gravel (401, 501) was also present. Natural deposits were generally exposed at a depth of 0.3-0.35m below the current ground surface.

Deposit Sequence

- 5.2 The geological natural was directly overlain by a simple sequence of plough soils or topsoil. Agricultural activity across the site is likely to have had some impact on the depths of the deposit sequence.

Possible Feature

- 5.3 Archaeological features were absent across virtually all trenches with the exception of a possible feature (1202) in Trench 12. This was investigated and half sectioned and whilst it had a roughly circular appearance and was approximately 1m in diameter, it contained no finds and the edges were irregular. It is most likely that this is a natural feature such as a tree hole.

Furrows

- 5.4 A single furrow was subject to sample excavation in trench 6. The excavated furrow (602) was approximately 2.6m wide and a minimum of 0.2m deep. A very small assemblage of pottery was recorded in the fill of the furrow (603) ranging from Roman to post-medieval. The furrow was cut by a field drain (604) which contained 4 sherds of pottery dating from 14th to 20th century (not retained).
- 5.5 Other furrows were identified in trenches T3 -T8, T10, T13 on a roughly north-south alignment.

6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 No significant archaeological deposits or finds were recorded on the site.

- 6.2 Whilst no visible earthworks were present on site a series of north/south furrows were revealed in most trenches. The evidence for ridge and furrow ploughing is indicative of the site having been within the medieval or later open fields.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeology Warwickshire would like to thank Nick Cooke of CgMs for commissioning the work and John Robinson at Warwickshire County Council for representing the planning authority.

REFERENCES

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1: Trench 3, looking south-west



2: Trench 7, looking west showing furrows



3: Trench 9, looking north



4: Trench 6, excavated section of furrow 602



5: Trench 12, excavation of possible tree hole 1202

APPENDICES

A List of contexts

Trench	Context	Description	Depth (m)	Comment
1	100	Grey brown sandy silt	0.30	Topsoil
1	101	Reddish brown sand sandy clay		Geological natural
2	200	Grey brown sandy silt	0.3	Topsoil
2	201	Reddish brown sandy clay		Geological natural
3	300	Grey brown sandy silt	0.3	Topsoil
3	301	Reddish brown clay		Geological natural
4	400	Grey brown sandy silt	0.25-0.3	Topsoil
4	401	Yellowish brown sand and gravel.		Geological natural
5	500	Grey brown sandy silt	0.35	Topsoil
5	501	Reddish brown sand and gravel		Geological natural
6	600	Greyish brown sandy silt	0.35	Topsoil
6	601	Reddish brown clay		Geological natural
6	602	Furrow		Post medieval or medieval plough furrow
6	603	Brown silty clay sand		Furrow
6	604	Field drain		Cut of drain
6	605	Dark grey brown silty clay sand		Fill of drain cut
7	700	Greyish brown sandy silt	0.15 to 0.3	Topsoil
7	701	Reddish brown clay		Geological natural

Trench	Context	Description	Depth (m)	Comment
8	800	Greyish brown sandy silt	0.30	Topsoil
8	801	Reddish brown clay		Geological natural
9	900	Greyish brown sandy silt	0.30	Topsoil
9	901	Reddish brown clay		Geological natural
10	1000	Grey brown sandy silt	0.30	Topsoil
10	1001	Reddish brown clay		Geological natural
11	1100	Grey brown sandy silty clay	0.30	Topsoil
11	1101	Reddish brown clay		Geological natural
12	1200	Grey brown sandy silt	0.30	Topsoil
12	1201	Reddish brown clay		Geological natural
12	1202	Cut for tree bole	0.28	Tree bole hole
12	1203	Fill of 1202		In fill of natural hole
13	1200	Grey brown sandy silt	0.20 -0.30	Topsoil
13	1201	Reddish brown clay and yellowish brown sand/gravel		Geological natural

B List of finds

Context	Type	Quantity	Comment
603	Pottery	3	Roman (1), medieval/post medieval (2)
605	Pottery	4	14th to 20th century (4)

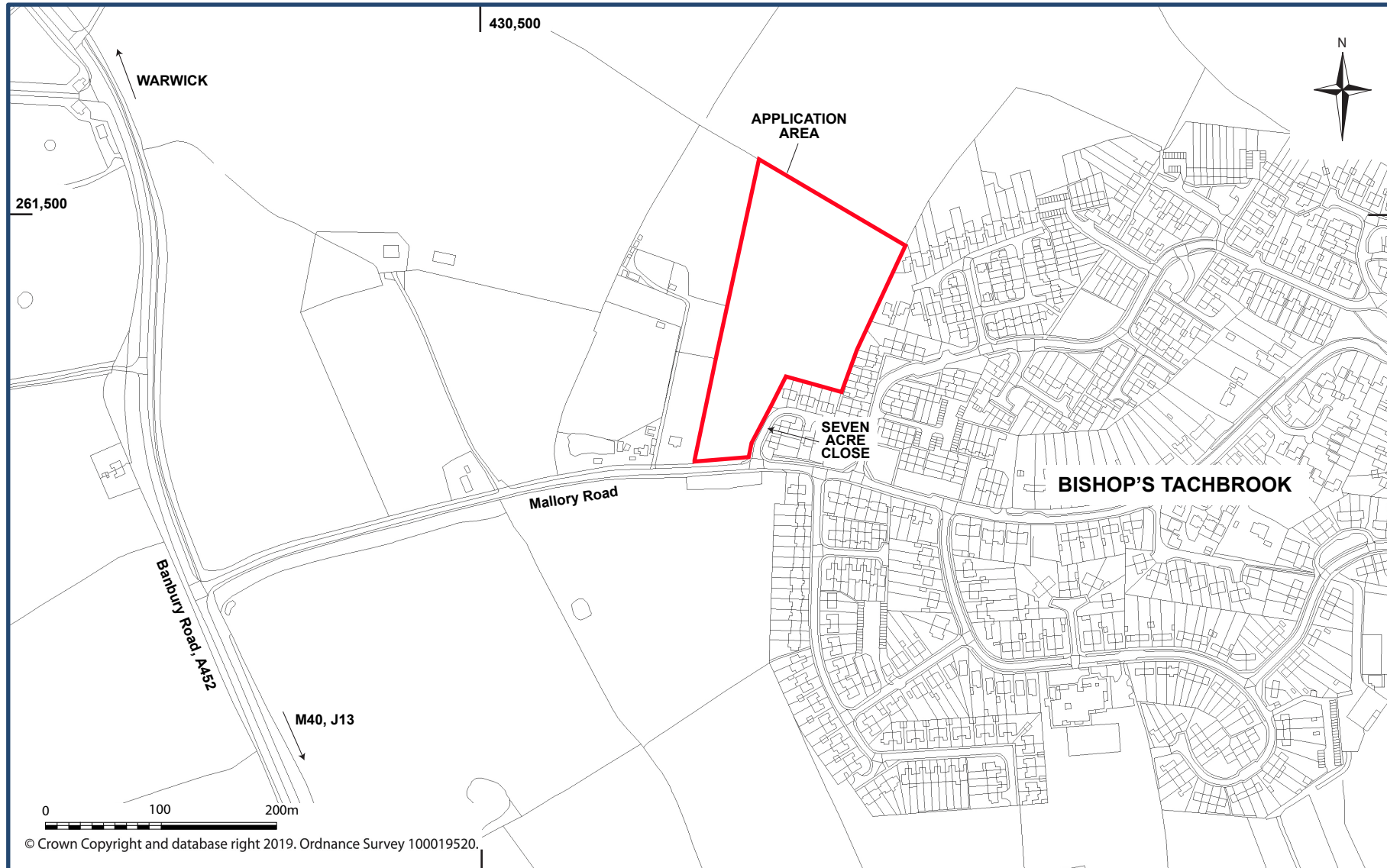


Fig 1: Location of application area

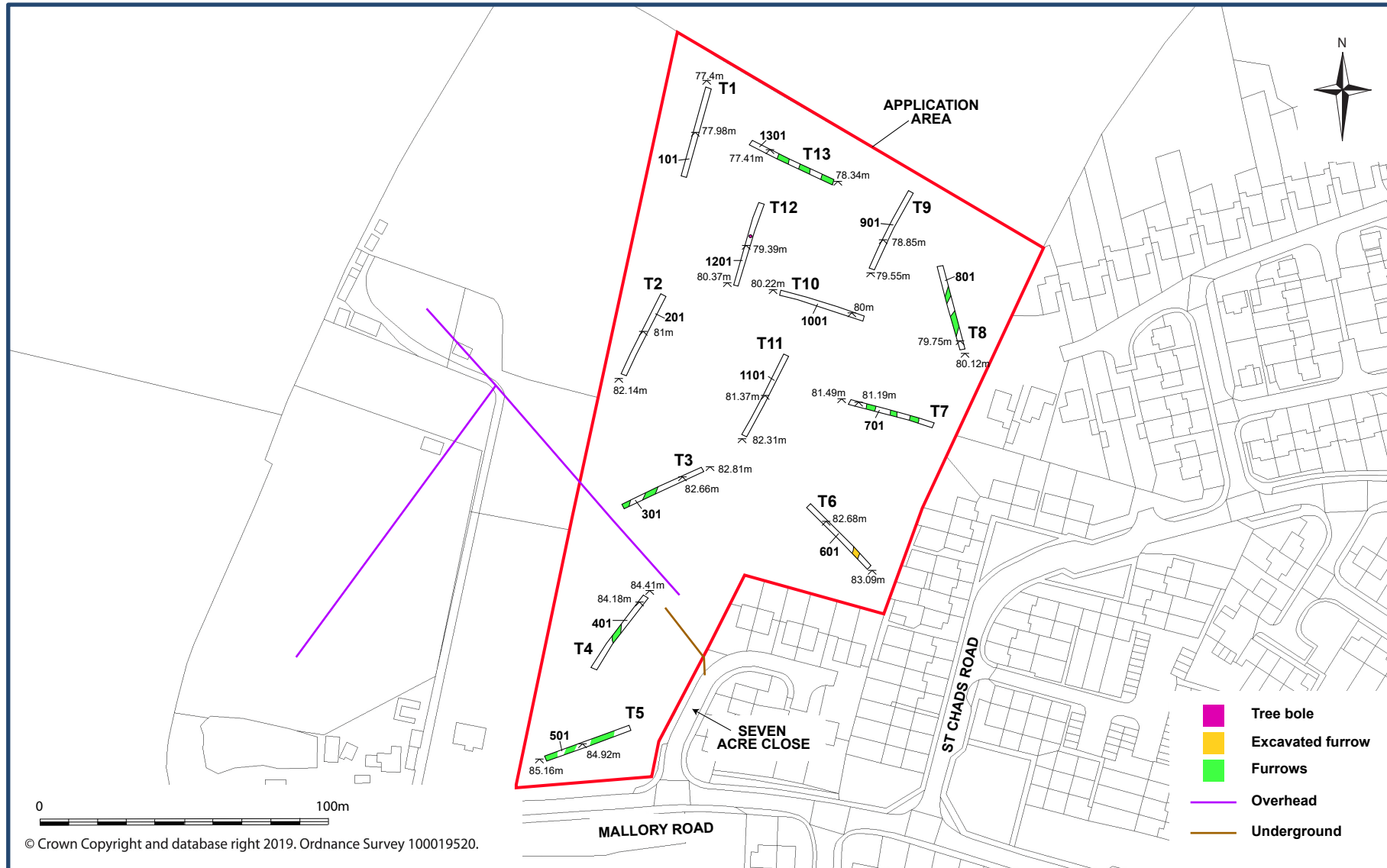


Fig 2: Location of excavated trenches

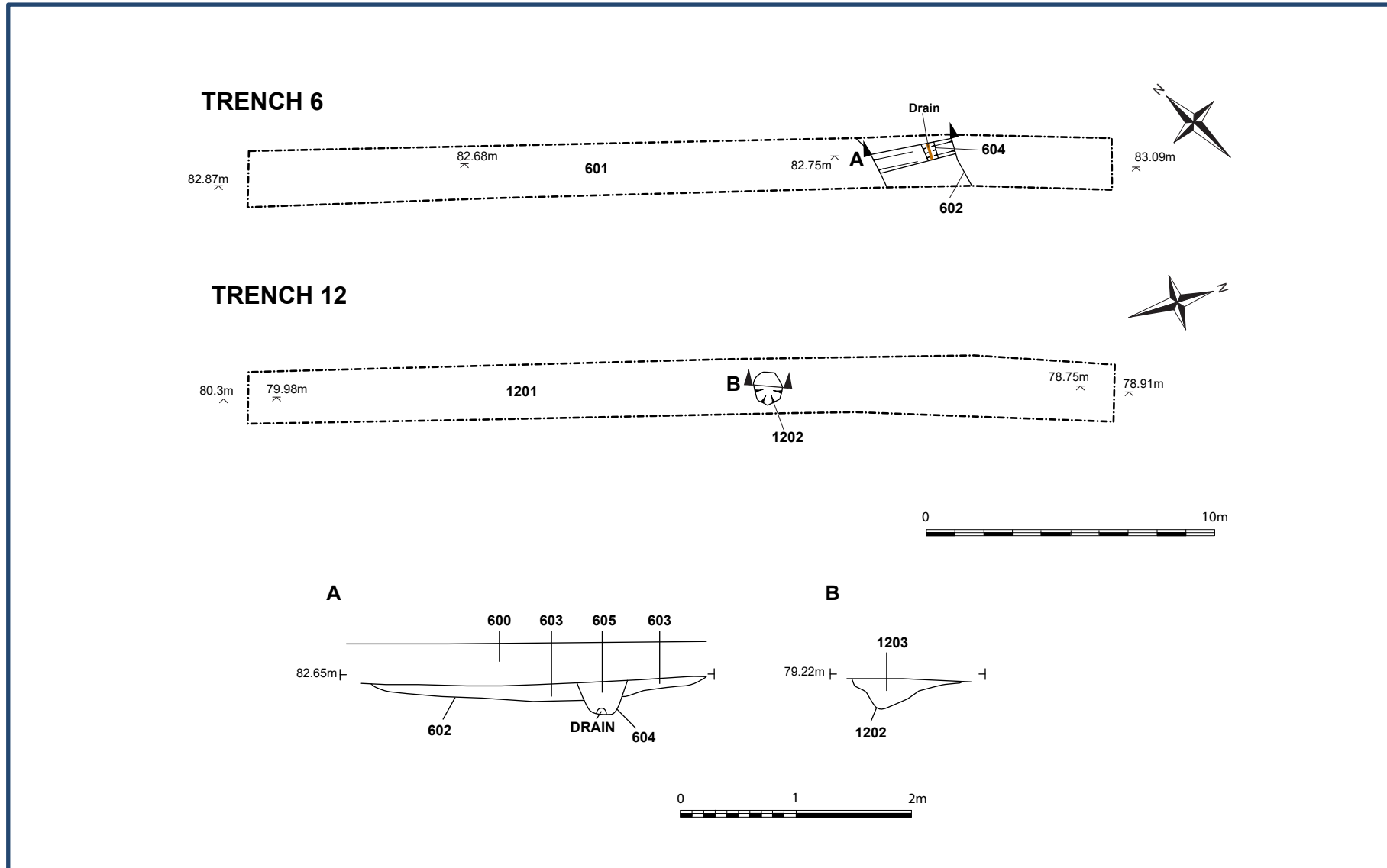


Fig 3: Detail of trenches 6, 12 and associated sections A and B