



Archaeological Services
University of Durham

Land south of Freemans Way, Leeming Bar, North Yorkshire

archaeological evaluation

on behalf of

LNT Construction Ltd

Report 1554

October 2006

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2150 Century Way, Thorpe Park, Leeds, LS15 8ZB

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1. Summary

The project

- 1.1 This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation conducted in advance of a proposed development at Freemans Way, Leeming Bar. The works comprised the excavation of four trenches.
- 1.2 The works were commissioned by LNT Construction Ltd, and in accordance with a WSI (written scheme of investigation) provided by Archaeological Services (DS06.247).

Results

- 1.3 Archaeological deposits relating to the Roman period survive in the east of the site; the full extent of these has not been identified.
- 1.4 Medieval ridge and furrow is present in the west of the site.

Recommendations

- 1.5 It is recommended that, prior to any ground reduction, a full scheme of archaeological excavation work is conducted in the northeast of the site, in order to ascertain the full extent and nature of any surviving archaeological deposits.

2. Project background

Location (Figure 1)

- 2.1 The study area is located at the southern edge of Leeming Bar, north of Bedale Beck and east of the A1 road (centred at NGR: SE 2884 8977). The site occupies an area of approximately 1.2 hectares and is bounded to the north by properties on Freemans Way, to the east by Leeming Lane, to the south by a field and Leeming Garth Manor nursing home and to the west by agricultural land.

Development proposal

- 2.2 The proposed development comprises the construction of a two-storey building to be used as a residential care home for older people.

Objective

- 2.3 The objective of the evaluation was to assess the nature, extent and potential significance of any surviving archaeological features within the proposed development area, so that an informed decision may be made regarding the nature and scope of any further scheme of archaeological works that may be required in advance of development.

Methods statement

- 2.4 The works have been undertaken in accordance with a WSI (written scheme of investigation) provided by Archaeological Services (DS06.247).

Dates

- 2.5 Fieldwork was undertaken between 9th and 11th October 2006. This report was prepared between 16th and 30th October 2006.

Personnel

- 2.6 Fieldwork was conducted by Brian Atkinson and Richard Villis, and supervised by Jason Mole. This report was prepared by Jason Mole, with illustrations by David Graham. Specialist analysis was conducted by John Dore (ceramics), Louisa Gidney (animal bone), and Dr Charlotte O'Brien (macrofossil analysis). The Project Manager was Daniel Still.

Archive/OASIS

- 2.7 The site code is **LBF06**, for **Leeming Bar, Freemans Way 2006**. The archive is currently held by Archaeological Services and will be transferred to the Richmondshire Museum in due course. Archaeological Services is registered with the **Online Access to the Index of archaeological investigationS** project (OASIS). The OASIS ID number for this project is **archaeol3-19881**.

3. Landuse, topography and geology

- 3.1 At the time of survey the proposed development area was in use as a grass paddock for horses and was bounded by a combination of wooden post-and-rail fencing and hedges, with mature trees around the perimeter. Large areas of

bramble and nettles covered the northern and southern boundaries. Gated access to the site was from the eastern end of Freemans Way.

- 3.2 The survey area was predominantly level at a mean elevation of *c.*36m OD.
- 3.3 The soils of the area are of the Wick 1 Association (541r), occurring on glaciofluvial or river terrace drift (Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983). The solid geology of the area is undifferentiated Permian and Triassic sandstone (British Geological Survey 2001).

4. Historical and archaeological background

- 4.1 The proposed development site lies within an area of potential archaeological significance. The course of Dere Street Roman Road runs through fields to the northeast and southeast of the area. The road crosses Bedale Beck at Leeming Bar and curves, possibly to keep on firm ground (Margary 1973). The road partially survives as a shallow earthwork to the rear of Garth Cottage and No.12 Leeming Lane. It then crosses Leeming Lane and heads northwest to the rear of properties on the north side of Leeming Lane. The point where Dere Street crosses Bedale Beck has been suggested as a location for a Roman fort, like those known to exist at Healam Bridge and Roecliffe to the south. However, due to the close proximity of Leeming Bar to the fort at Catterick, approximately seven miles to the north, Roman activity is more likely to represent a roadside settlement, or waterside activity.
- 4.2 Geophysical surveys undertaken around Leeming Bar for the A1 Dishforth to Barton Improvement detected widespread evidence for ridge and furrow cultivation, and former rectilinear field systems of unknown date to the west of the current study area (Archaeological Services 2005 & 2006a).
- 4.3 A geophysical survey undertaken within the study area identified a linear series of weak positive magnetic anomalies, indicating possible ditch features (Archaeological Services 2006b).

5. The evaluation trenches

Introduction (Figure 2)

- 5.1 Four evaluation trenches were excavated to sample anomalies identified during a geophysical survey of the site (Archaeological Services 2006b). The trenches were located in areas where ground disturbance would be concentrated in the proposed development.

Trench 1 (Figure 3)

- 5.2 This trench was 10.5m by 1.8m in size, and was located over a curved linear dipolar anomaly. Natural glacial till, a yellow-orange sand containing small degraded sandstone fragments, was reached at a depth of 0.62m. Evidence of ridge and furrow, aligned northeast-southwest across the field, was present with the remains of three ridges [9, 25 and 26] identified in the trench. The ridges consisted of a yellow-brown sand with a few degraded fragments of

sandstone. These ridges were formed from up-cast natural glacial till. Only one of the ridges had a complete profile [9]; this measured 4m wide by 0.26m deep and contained three fragments of Roman pottery.

- 5.3 The entire trench was overlain by a red-brown sandy silt subsoil [8] 0.14m deep, and a dark brown topsoil [7] 0.36m deep.

Trench 2 (Figure 4)

- 5.4 This trench was 20m by 1.8m in size, and was located over ridge and furrow and on the edge of a large circular dipolar anomaly. Natural glacial till, an yellow-orange sand, was reached at a depth of 0.75m. Evidence of ridge and furrow, aligned northeast-southwest across the field, was present with the remains of two ridges [15 and 28] identified in the trench. The ridges consisted of a yellow-brown sand and were formed from up-cast natural glacial till. Only one of the ridges had a complete profile [15]; this measured 3.54m wide by 0.26m deep.

- 5.5 The entire trench was overlain by a red-brown sandy silt subsoil [14], 0.42m deep, and a dark brown topsoil [13] that was 0.27m deep. No artefacts were recovered from this trench. The source of the dipolar anomaly was not identified but probably originated from an area of demolition adjacent to this area.

Trench 3 (Figure 3)

- 5.6 This trench was 15m by 1.8m in size. Natural glacial till, an yellow-orange sand, was reached at a depth of 0.58m. Evidence of ridge and furrow, aligned northeast-southwest across the field, was present with the remains of two ridges [12 and 27] identified in the trench. The ridges consisted of a yellow-brown sand and were formed from up-cast natural glacial till. Both ridges were complete profiles; ridge [12] measured 1.02m wide by 0.14m deep and ridge [27] measured 2.24m wide by 0.11m deep.

- 5.7 The entire trench was overlain by a red-brown sandy silt subsoil [11] 0.37m deep and a dark brown topsoil [10] 0.28m deep. No artefacts were recovered from this trench.

Trench 4 (Figure 5)

- 5.8 This trench was 15m by 1.8m in size, and was located over a linear positive magnetic anomaly. Natural glacial till, a yellow-orange sand, was reached at a depth of 0.76m. At the northwestern end of the trench two shallow gullies, [F4: 0.43m wide by 0.08m deep] and [F6: 0.36m wide by 0.16m deep] both aligned east-west, were identified across the width of the trench; these were both filled with grey sandy silts [3] and [5] respectively. Both gullies contained fragments of Roman pottery.

- 5.9 In the centre of the trench were three intercutting ditches, the earliest of which [F21: 0.26m wide by 0.28m deep] was masked on the surface by the two later cuts. Feature [F21] was therefore only seen in the excavated section; its alignment and length was unknown. This feature was filled by light grey clay

silt deposit [22]. Cutting this was a northwest-southeast aligned gully [F17/F23: 0.73m wide by 0.25m deep], the primary fill of which was a 0.01m deep lens of yellow-orange sand [20] covering 0.26m of the base of the gully. This was overlain by a grey sandy silt [16/24], 0.73m wide by 0.24m deep, containing four fragments of Roman pottery including Black Burnished ware and grey ware. This was cut by an northeast-southwest aligned ditch [F19: 1.96m wide by 0.68m deep]. This had a single fill of grey sandy silt [18] with occasional small sandstone inclusions; it contained 24 fragments of Roman pottery, including locally produced Crambeck reduced ware as well as imported samian ware.

6. The finds

Pottery assessment

- 6.1 The pottery assemblage from Leeming Bar, consisted of 44 sherds of pottery weighing 0.496 kg. Of these, two sherds (13.1g) were samian while the remainder (42 sherds, 483.1g) were coarseware (Table 2.1)

Samian ware

- 6.2 One example of form 29 in South Gaulish fabric was noted in Context [2]. The decoration and fabric would suggest a Flavian date (AD 69-96). One example of form 18/31R in Central Gaulish fabric was noted in Context [18]. This dates from approximately AD 100-160.

Coarseware

- 6.3 One wall sherd from a cooking pot in Black Burnished ware (BB) BB1 was noted in Context [24]. Although the fragment was small, the obtuse angle of the cross-hatched decoration would suggest a date not earlier than the very end of the 2nd century AD. Three wall sherds from a bowl or dish in BB2 were noted in Context [2]. Five rim and wall sherds from a flanged bowl in Crambeck grey ware were noted in context [18]. These date from the late third century or later. One rim sherd from a jar in grey ware of late 1st-century date was noted in context [5]. Nine rim and wall sherds from an orange ware beaker, possibly originating from Wilderspool, were noted in context [18]. One rim sherd from a hammer-headed mortarium in Mancetter-Hartshill white-ware was noted in context [18].

- 6.4 The datable material yields the following *termini post quos* for the following contexts.

Context	Date
2	Mid 2 nd century AD
5	Late 1 st century AD
18	Late 3 rd century AD
24	Late 2 nd century AD

- 6.5 It is recommended that the following vessels are drawn and these drawings lodged with the permanent record in the relevant archive repository:

Context	Vessel
2	Samian form 29, SG
5	Grey ware jar rim , L1C
18	Crambeck grey ware flanged bowl
18	Mancetter-Hartshill hammer-headed mortarium
18	Beaker in orange ware

Animal bone assessment

- 6.6 A very small collection of animal bone fragments was recovered from three Roman ditch fill contexts. Preservation of the bones is poor. Evidence for the presence of cattle, sheep and horse was recovered.
- 6.7 Context [16] produced part of a cattle humerus with the distal epiphysis fused. Context [18] produced fragments of a horse metapodial with fused distal epiphysis. Also represented were elements of sheep/goat: three teeth (molars 1-3), probably representing a decayed maxilla, and shaft fragments of humerus and tibia. One cattle tooth, mandibular molar 3, was also recovered. Context [24] contained part of a sheep/goat astragalus.
- 6.8 The presence of horse from context [24] is of interest for continuing the trend for horses to be represented in even the smallest and most poorly-preserved collections of animal bone from rural Iron Age and Romano-British sites in the region. No further work is recommended on the assemblage.

Clay pipe assessment

- 6.9 One piece of clay pipe stem came from context [9]. It is 41mm long and 7.5mm in diameter. One end shows part of the curve of the pipe bowl. The stem bore is 2mm in diameter. No further work is recommended.

Building materials assessment

- 6.10 Context [18] produced a small piece of orange/grey semi-fired daub, 37x36x23 mm maximum. It is irregular in shape, with part of one possible original face. No impressions of the wattle substrate survive. There are no visible fillers in the clay, though small voids in the material suggest that these may have been organic. No further work is recommended.

7. The environmental evidence

Methods

- 7.1 Plant macrofossil assessment was undertaken on five bulk environmental samples. Samples 1 and 2 (contexts [3] and [5]) were gully fills, and samples 3, 4 and 5 (contexts [18], [16] and [22] respectively) were ditch fills. All contained Roman pottery. Five litres of each sample was manually floated and sieved through a 500 µm mesh. The residues were retained, described and scanned using a magnet for ferrous fragments. The flots were dried slowly and scanned at x 40 magnification for waterlogged and charred botanical remains. Identification of these was undertaken by comparison with modern reference material held in the Environmental Laboratory at Archaeological

Services Durham University. Plant taxonomic nomenclature follows Stace (1997).

Results

- 7.2 All of the samples produced small flots in which few plant remains were preserved. Charred plant macrofossils included a wheat grain in each of contexts [3], [16] and [18], and a grass seed in context [3]. Modern roots, unburnt bone, charcoal and coal were present in small amounts. A few uncharred seeds of birch and grass were present in context [3], and a knotgrass seed was in context [18]. The contents of the residues and flots are listed in Appendix 2, Table 2.2.

Discussion

- 7.3 The few charred plant remains provide little chronological or economic information about the site other than indicating that wheat formed part of the diet. The presence of cereal grains, charcoal, coal and bone in the samples may indicate the incorporation of domestic waste in the gully and ditch fills. Uncharred remains of knotgrass, birch and grass suggest that these taxa were growing locally, although these seeds may be modern introductions; modern roots were recorded in most of the samples.

Recommendations

- 7.4 No further plant macrofossil work is recommended for any of the contexts due to the low number of plant remains present. Material suitable for radiocarbon dating is present in contexts [3], [16] and [18].

8. The potential archaeological resource.

- 8.1 Archaeological deposits relating to the Roman period survive in the northeast of the site; the full extent of these has not been identified. This evidence is likely to relate to activities associated with the Roman road which lies to the east of the study area.
- 8.2 Medieval ridge and furrow is present in the west of the site.

9. Recommendations

- 9.1 It is recommended that, prior to any ground reduction, a further scheme of archaeological excavation work is conducted in the northeast of the site, in order to ascertain the full extent and nature of any surviving archaeological deposits.

10. Sources

Archaeological Services 2005 *A1(T) Dishforth to Barton Improvement, North Yorkshire: geophysical surveys Vols I-III*, unpublished report **1121** for AMEC, Archaeological Services Durham University

Archaeological Services 2006a *A1(T) Dishforth to Barton Improvement, North Yorkshire: Phase 2 geophysical surveys*, unpublished report **1368** for AMEC, Archaeological Services Durham University

Archaeological Services 2006b *Land south of Freeman Way, Leeming Bar, North Yorkshire: geophysical survey*, unpublished report **1534** for LNT Construction Ltd, Archaeological Services Durham University

British Geological Survey 2001 *Solid Geology Map UK South Sheet 4th Edition*

Margary, I D, 1973 *Roman Roads in Britain*

Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983 *Soils of Northern England, Sheet 1*

Stace, C, 1997 *New Flora of the British Isles*. 2nd Edition, Cambridge



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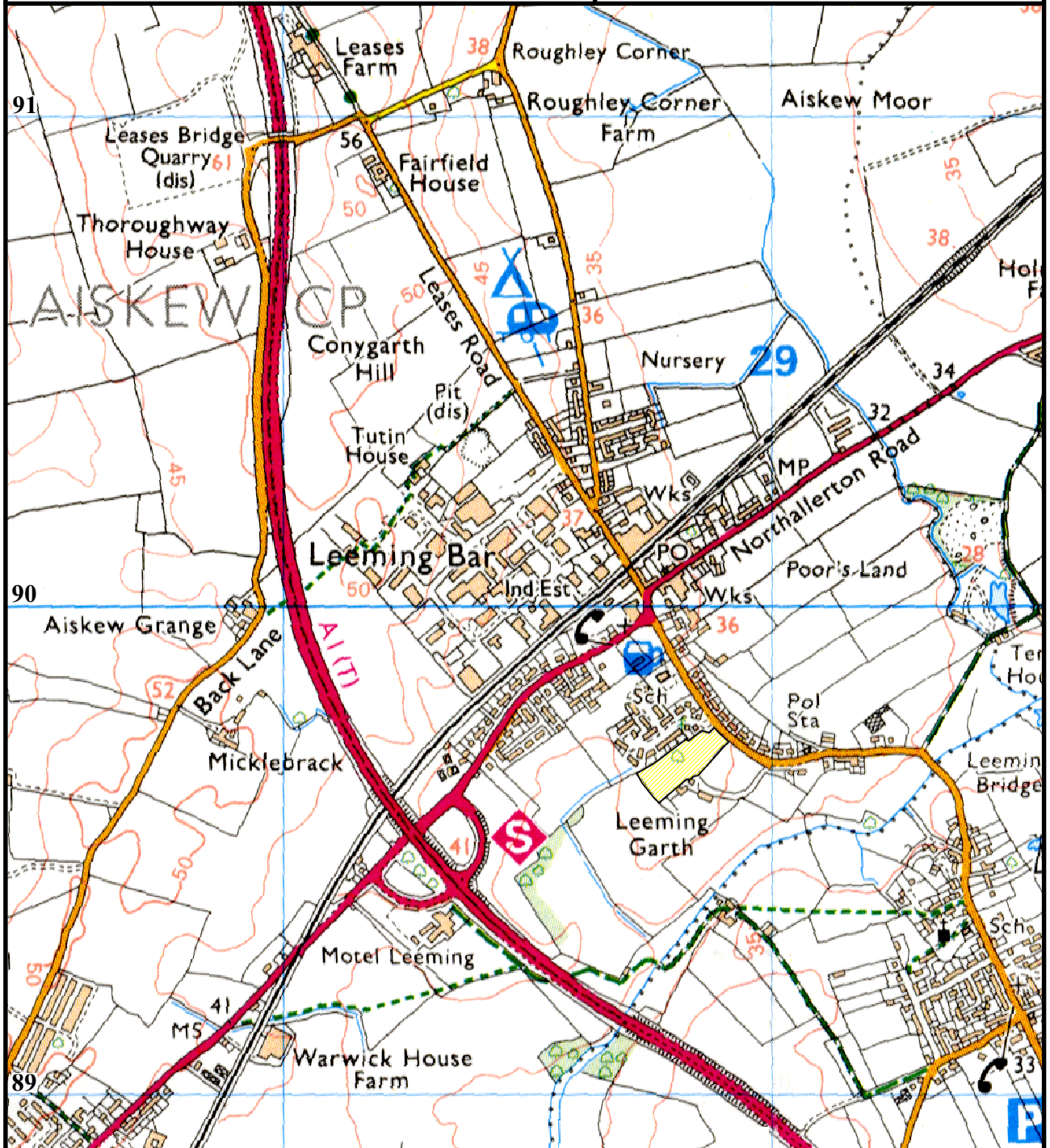
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Figure 1

Location of the site

on behalf of
LNT Construction Ltd

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proposed development area

0 500m

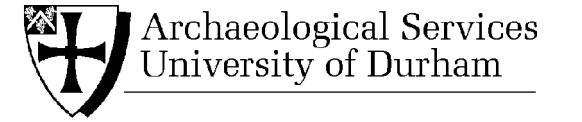


scale 1:12 500 - for A4 plot



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Figure 2
Location of the trenches

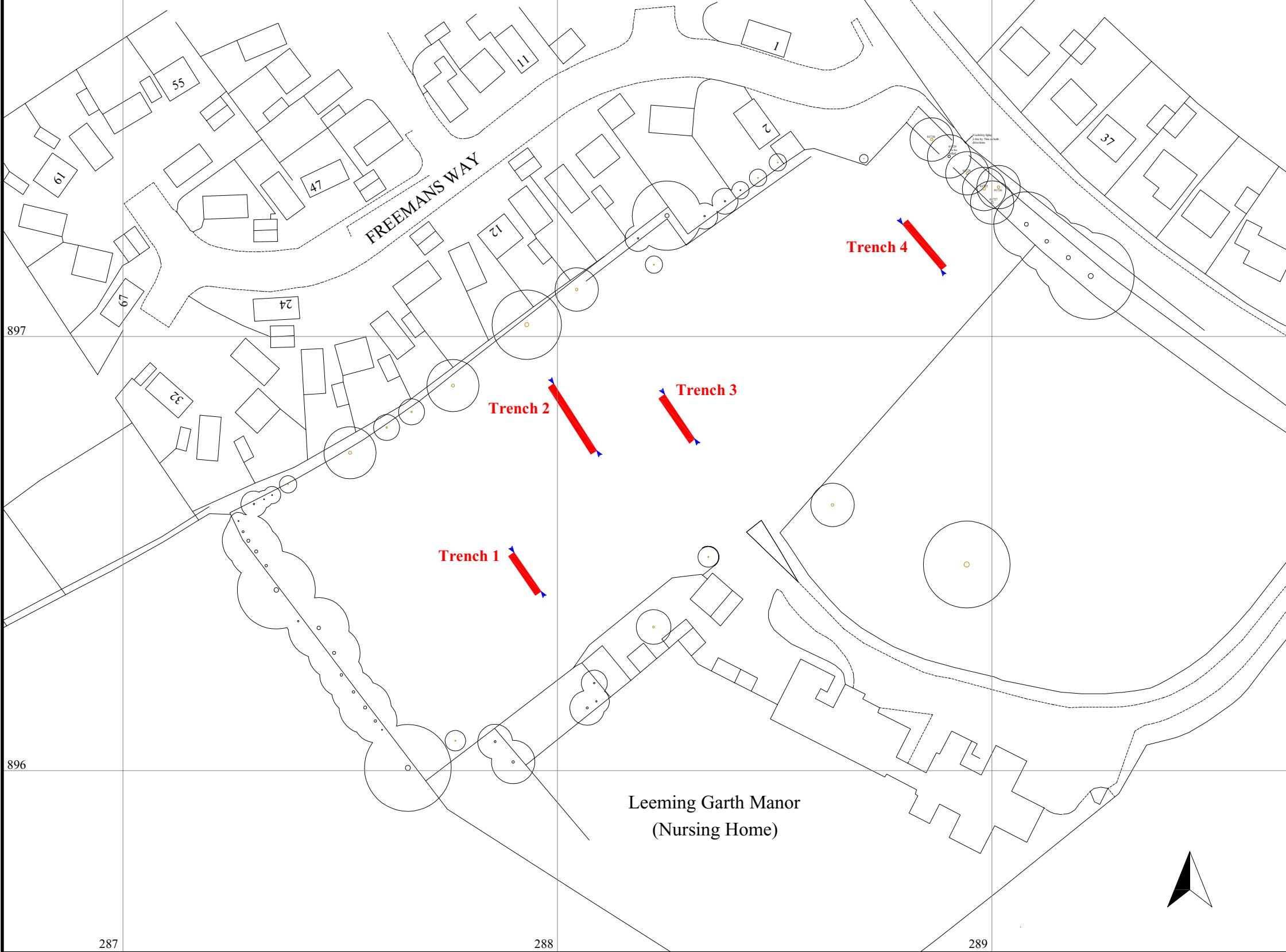
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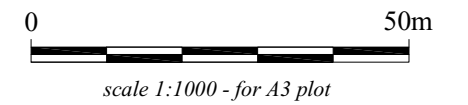
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
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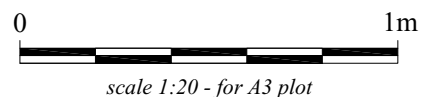
-  trench
-  section





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limit of excavation

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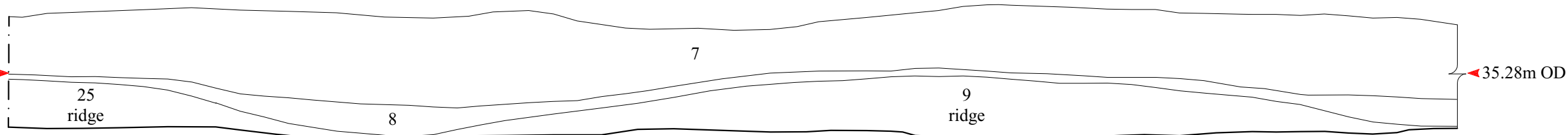
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Figure 3
Trenches 1 & 3, sections

Trench 1

NW

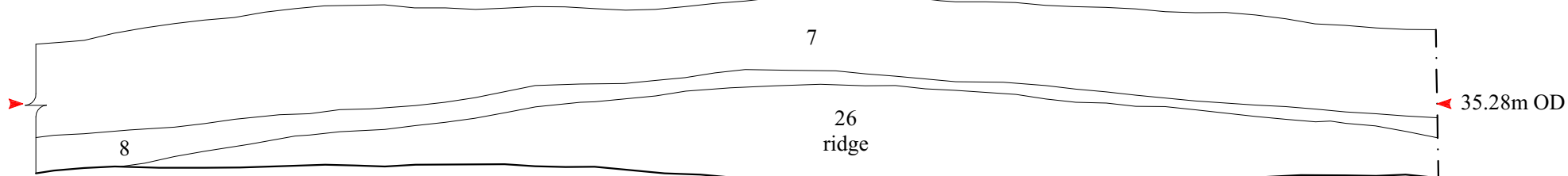
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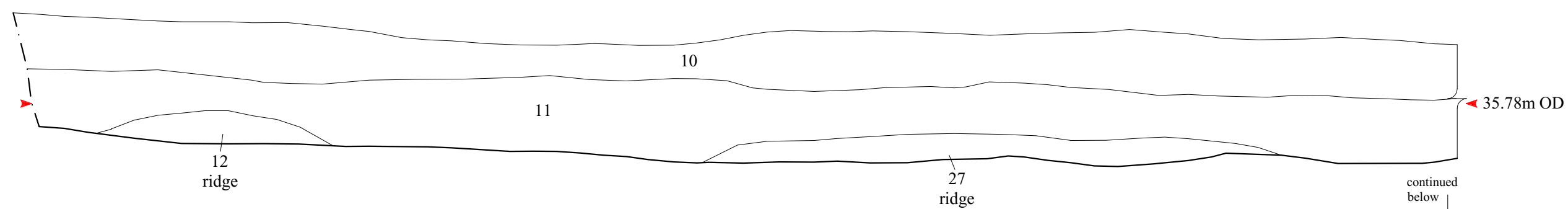
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Trench 3

NW

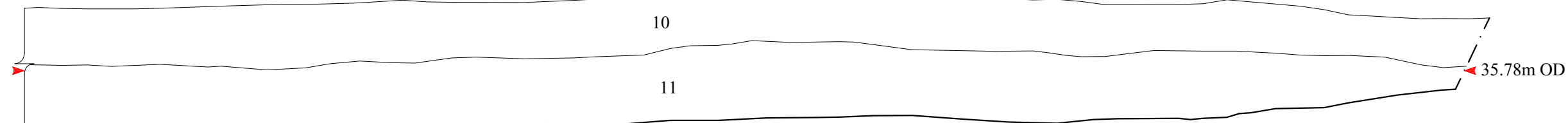
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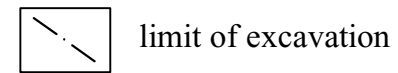
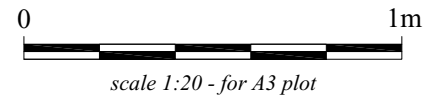


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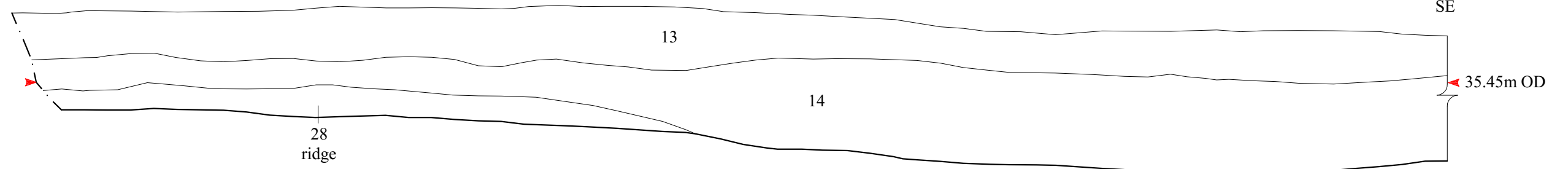
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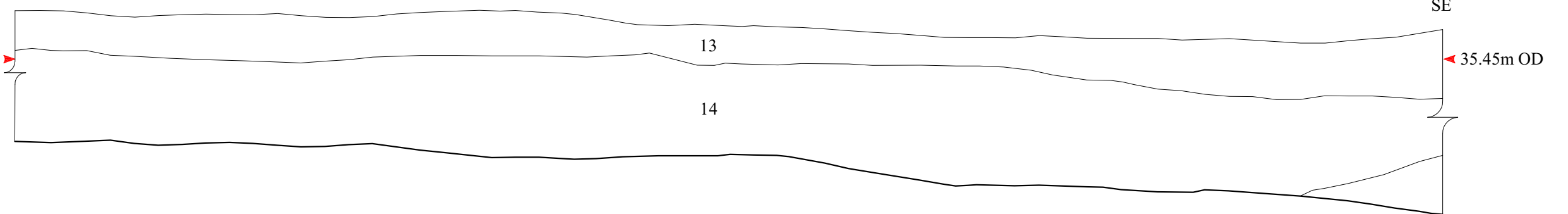
Trench 2

NW



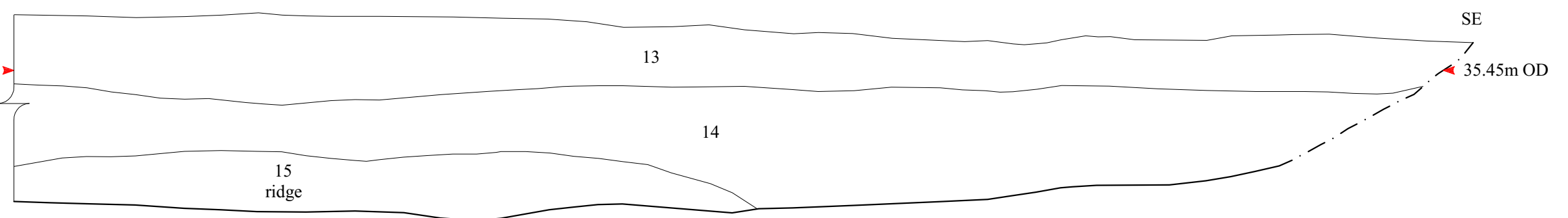
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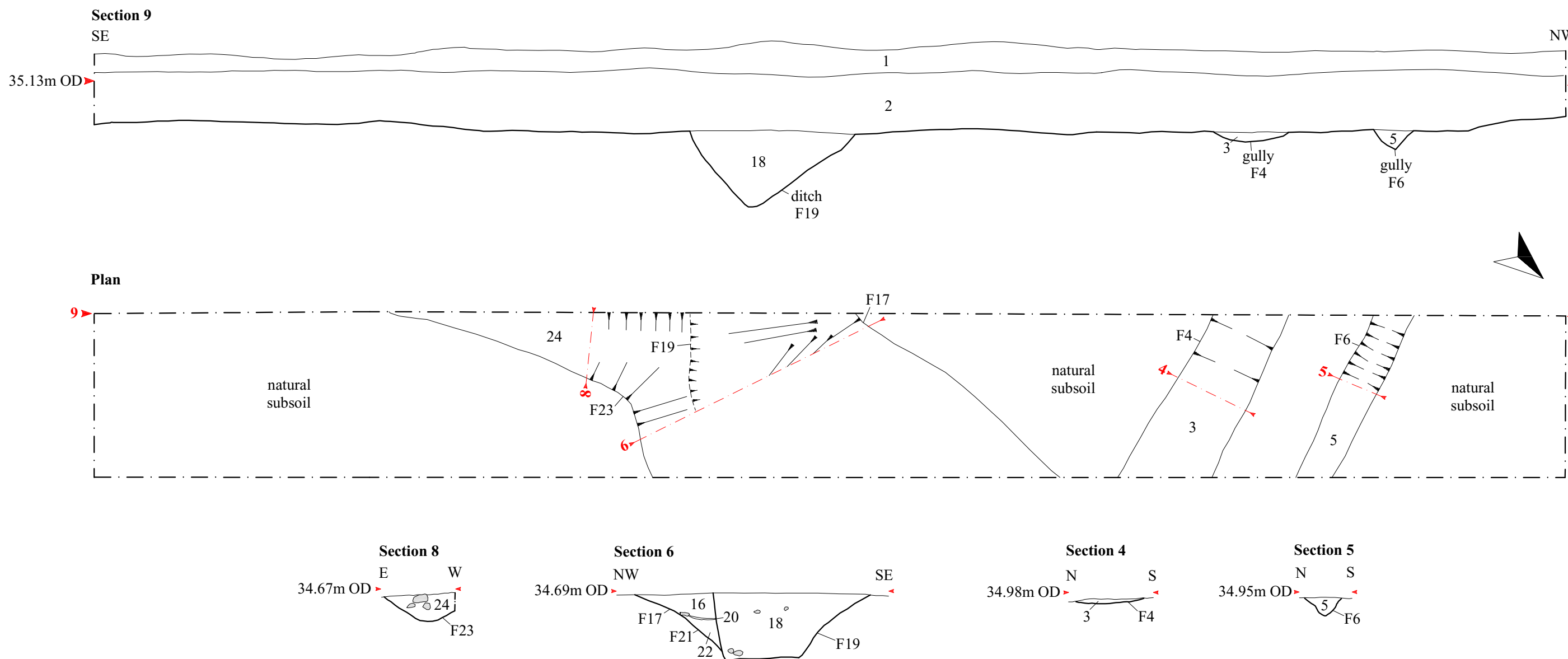
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NW





Appendix 1: Context data

Summary list of contexts. The • symbols in the columns at the right indicate the presence of finds of the following types: P pottery, B bone, O other materials.

No	Description	P	B	O
1	Topsoil Tr 4			
2	Subsoil Tr 4	•		
3	Fill of Shallow gully	•		
4	Cut of shallow gully			
5	Fill of Shallow gully	•		
6	Cut of shallow gully			
7	Topsoil Tr 1			
8	Subsoil Tr 1			
9	Ridge of re-deposited natural	•		•
10	Topsoil Tr 3			
11	Subsoil Tr 3			
12	Ridge of re-deposited natural			
13	Topsoil Tr 2			
14	Subsoil Tr 2			
15	Ridge of re-deposited natural			
16	Fill of ditch [F17]	•	•	
17	Cut of ditch			
18	Fill of ditch [F19]	•	•	•
19	Cut of ditch			
20	Silted up layer of transported natural			
21	Primary ditch cut			
22	Fill of primary ditch cut			
23	Ditch cut (same as [F17])			
24	Fill of ditch (same as [16])	•	•	
25	Ridge of re-deposited natural			
26	Ridge of re-deposited natural			
27	Ridge of re-deposited natural			
28	Ridge of re-deposited natural			

Appendix 2: Data tables

Table 2.1: Pottery

Context	Type	Number	Weight	Part	Form	Date range	Notes
2	BB2	3	13.00	wall	Bowl	c.AD 140 +	
2	Orange ware	1	26.40	rim	Jar	?1C	
2	Orange ware	3	19.30	wall	indeterminate		
2	Samian SG	1	3.00	wall	Dr 29	Flavian	Bit of decoration: winding scroll with tendrils & heart shaped
3	Grey ware	2	18.50	wall	jar		Tr 4
5	Grey ware	1	38.80	rim	Jar	L1C	Tr 4
5	Grey ware	1	11.00	rim	Jar	L1C?	Tr4
5	Grey ware	1	7.00	wall	Jar		
9	Orange ware	3	19.10	wall	indeterminate		Tr 1
16	Grey ware	1	6.40	wall	jar		Tr 4
16	Orange ware	1	7.00	wall	indeterminate		
18	Crambeck Reduced Ware (CRA RE)	5	118.00	rim and wall	Bowl	L3+	No wavy line visible
18	Grey ware	2	9.30	wall	Jar	18	
18	Grey ware	1	65.60	wall	Jar	18	
18	Mancetter Hartshill White ware (MAH WH)	1	33.70	rim and wall	Mortarium - hammer headed	3rdC	Tr 4
18	Orange ware	5	12.90	wall	Indeterminate		
18	Orange ware possibly Wilderspool Oxidised (WIL OX)	9	65.70	rim and wall	beaker	Mid 2C	
18	Samian CG	1	10.10	wall	Bowl Form 18/31R	c. 100-160 AD	
24	BB1	1	2.60	wall	Jar	L2C+	Small fragment but it appears to shows obtuse angle cross-hatch, but NO scored line
24	Grey ware	1	8.80	wall	Jar		

Table 2.2: Macrofossil results

Sample	1	2	3	4	5
Context	3	5	18	16	22
Volume processed (ml)	5000	5000	5000	5000	2500
Flot volume (ml)	50	50	25	20	2
Volume assessed (ml)	50	50	25	20	2
Residue contents (relative abundance)					
Metal dust	1	1	1	1	1
Unburnt bone	-	-	2	-	-
Flot matrix (relative abundance)					
Charcoal	1	1	-	-	1
Coal	1	-	-	1	-
Modern roots	1	1	2	1	-
Mollusc	-	1	-	-	-
Unburnt bone	-	1	1	1	1
Charred remains (total counts)					
(c) <i>Triticum</i> sp (Wheat species)	1	-	1	1	-
(x) Poaceae (Grass)	1	-	-	-	-
Waterlogged remains (relative abundance)					
(r) <i>Polygonum aviculare</i> (Knotgrass)	-	-	1	-	-
(t) <i>Betula</i> sp (Birch)	2	-	-	-	-
(x) Poaceae (Grass)	1	-	-	-	-

[a-arable weed, t-woodland/shrub]

Relative abundance is based on a scale from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest).