

# Land At Windward, Le Mont Sohier, St. Brelade, Jersey.

## Archaeological Evaluation Report

On Behalf Of:

**Tom Scott**



By

Paul Martin Bsc (Hons), AIFA

&

Sam Driscoll BA (Hons), MA, PIFA



## ABSOLUTE ARCHAEOLOGY

Absolute Archaeology, 51 St Mary's Gardens, Hilperton Marsh, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 7PH

[paul.martin@absolutearchaeology.co.uk](mailto:paul.martin@absolutearchaeology.co.uk)

[sam.driscoll@absolutearchaeology.co.uk](mailto:sam.driscoll@absolutearchaeology.co.uk)

[www.absolutearchaeology.co.uk](http://www.absolutearchaeology.co.uk)

**Report for the Archaeological Evaluation of**  
**Land at Windward, Le Mont Sohier, St Brelade**  
**Planning Ref P/2008/2711**

**Summary**

*Absolute Archaeology was commissioned by ADAM Architecture, on behalf of the client Mr T Scott, to carry out an archaeological evaluation on land belonging to the above. This was carried out in response to the condition of planning, preceding the intended demolition of three existing dwellings known as Windward House, Windward Lodge, and Windward Cottage and the subsequent redevelopment of the site, to comprise the construction of three detached dwellings along with the establishment of new access routes, private driveways/garages, swimming pool and associated services (Planning Reference P/2008/2711). The project was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation, submitted by Absolute Archaeology and approved by the States of Jersey Planning Department.*

*With the exception of Trench 7 and Trench 17, the remaining trenches did not reveal any evidence of archaeological features. However, a total of 43 worked flints and 8 sherds of Neolithic pottery were recovered from the site, the majority from the area to the rear of Plot 3. Trench 17 revealed a large rubble and earth mound to the rear of Windward House, which it is believed may represent a previously unidentified prehistoric cairn on the site. Trench 7 revealed the location of a potential WWII cable, running in the direction of Windward Lodge. Despite the absence of archaeological features, the concentration of worked flint (which is potentially representative of <10% of the total amount of artefacts contained in the spoil) and the occurrence of Neolithic ceramic sherds in the region of Trench 17, it is the conclusion of this report that the development site should be regarded as a site of high archaeological potential. It is therefore recommended that a programme of further monitoring of the groundwork in targeted areas (see Fig 2) should be considered in conjunction with the development of the site.*

## **Acknowledgements**

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Any enquiries should be addressed to:

Absolute Archaeology

51 St Mary's Gardens

Hilperton Marsh

Trowbridge

Wiltshire

BA14 7PH

Telephone: 07825550271

Email: [sam.driscoll@absolutearchaeology.co.uk](mailto:sam.driscoll@absolutearchaeology.co.uk)

Website: [www.absolutearchaeology.co.uk](http://www.absolutearchaeology.co.uk)

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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This report sets out the results of an archaeological trench evaluation of the site know as 'Land at Windward, Le Mont Sohier, St Brelade'. The programme of work was designed to assess the archaeological potential of the development area, ahead of the proposed construction of three detached properties, with associated access route, garage facilities and swimming pool plot (States of Jersey Planning Reference P/2008/2711). The evaluation was carried out by Absolute Archaeology, for two weeks from the 13<sup>th</sup>- 24<sup>th</sup> September 2010.
- 1.2 The work was commissioned by Mr John Bulford (Associate Director ADAM Architecture) on behalf of the client, Mr T Scott.

## **2 TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY**

- 2.1 The site is situated on high ground, c.50m above JD, on land at Windward to the east of (and overlooking) St Brelade Bay, within the parish of St Brelade. A stream, located approximately 500m north of the site, flows SE towards St Aubin's Bay, whilst another stream, approximately 100m SE of the site, flows south.
- 2.2 The site is situated on coarse-grained Granite of Corbière Type with head deposits framing the development area around 25m to the south. Geological sources suggest that the site has not been masked by a layer of present day blown sands, although some of the trenches revealed potential evidence of a build up of material since the felling of tree growth across the site.

### **3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

#### **3.1 Prehistoric**

One of the most significant prehistoric sites in Europe is located c.1km S-SW of the site. The Palaeolithic site of La Cotte de St Brelade, which has evidence for Neanderthal exploitation of mammoth and Rhino, also included material evidence in the form of Middle Palaeolithic tool types. Whilst the presence of Palaeolithic material within the area of development is likely to be low, this high ground was almost certainly part of the hunting process as it is from this position that Neanderthals “herded” the megafauna to their deaths.

More substantial is the megalithic structure of Les Cinq Pierres, which was located in the field known as Pré de L’Oie, immediately to the southeast of Windward House. The Desk-Based Assessment undertaken by Absolute Archaeology in 2008 revealed that currently mapped location of this monument is incorrect and is likely to fall within the boundaries of the development area. Material evidence from Les Cinq Pierres is not clear, but the morphology of the monument is similar to La Hougue de Vinde, which can be broadly paralleled to Early Bronze Age tumuli in Armorica.

Whilst this site was partially destroyed through quarrying and then further damaged by the 20<sup>th</sup> century excavations, there is potential for prehistoric activity within the immediate vicinity.

#### **3.2 Roman**

A Gallo-Roman coin hoard was discovered at La Marquanderie, nearly 1.5km to the west of the site, but there is no evidence to support a Roman presence at Windward.

#### **3.3 Medieval**

There is no evidence for medieval activity within the development area.

### 3.4 Post-Medieval

Although evidence for a post-medieval settlement outside the development area can be located on the Duke of Richmond map of 1795, there is no habitation evidence from within the development area. The clearest evidence of activity at the site prior to the 20<sup>th</sup> century developments was the quarrying activity that partially destroyed Les Cinq Pierres.

## 4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Twenty Five trenches were excavated, measuring 10m x 1.8m with the exception of Trench 17, which was extended to investigate a rubble and earth feature. Trench 17 was excavated to a length of 21m x 1.8m width. Two areas were extended from the north of the trench (orientate N-S) measuring 6.8m x 1.8m (Trench A) and 8m x 1.8m (Trench B). All trenches were located in areas designated for redevelopment, with the highest concentration in areas where foundations are to be dug and in the original location of the proposed swimming pool, associated with Plot 3. Some trench locations may vary slightly from the positions set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation (submitted to the States of Jersey Planning Department 12<sup>th</sup> August and subsequently approved) in order to avoid live cables and other obstacles that were not evident at the time of submission (For trench locations see Fig. 3).

4.2 All spoil heaps were monitored throughout and associated finds retained.

4.3 The recording was carried out using Absolute Archaeology's recording system, which includes written, drawn and photographic records.

4.4 The archive has been prepared using the site code A Arc 36.

## 5 RESULTS

- 5.1 All twenty five trenches were marked out in accordance with the plan submitted in Absolute Archaeology's Written Scheme of Investigation. The original twenty six trenches were reduced by one (Trench 21) due to inaccessibility in one small area of the site. To abide by the overall evaluation percentage of 5% it was decided to extend trenching around the positive feature (1701) in trench 17. A JCB with a 1.8m width grading bucket was used for all of the trenching, which was closely monitored throughout by two archaeologists from Absolute Archaeology. Each of the trenches was reduced stratigraphically until the subsoil/natural was reached. The trenches were excavated in numerical order (as shown on the site plan, Fig 3), with trenching split over a two week period and within the time frame allocated. Each trench was laid out using a GPS and backed up by tape measurement.
- 5.2 Absolute Archaeology devised a mitigation strategy, in consultation with Oxford Archaeology and the States of Jersey Planning Department, in order to facilitate further investigation of the feature in Trench 17. All trenches were recorded using Absolute Archaeology's Trench Recording Forms.
- 5.3 Trenches 1-6 were located in the area of Plot 2. Trenches 7-11 targeted the area to the north of the site in which new access routes will be established, with associated landscaping. Trenches 5 and 12-19 were located in the area of Plot 3, incorporating the planned location and potential relocation of the pool. Trenches 20-26 were located in the area of Plot 1, incorporating the area of the driveway.
- 5.4 Trenches 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23 and 26 were defined by similar stratigraphy, comprising a topsoil/turfline layer <100mm in depth. The turfline sealed a layer of medium yellowish brown, clayey sand measuring <600mm in depth throughout the trenches (See sample section Image 1). This organic sandy layer was seen

to overlay the natural granite gravel at a depth of <700mm throughout, with the exception of Trench 5, due to built up ground in this area.

- 5.5 Trenches 3, 24 and 25 comprised a topsoil/turfline (<100mm depth), sealing a dark, greyish brown clayey sand (<500mm depth). This dark organic layer defines areas of tree growth/vegetation, now removed.
- 5.6 The stratigraphy of trenches 7 and 11 comprised the same topsoil turfline seen throughout. This layer was seen to seal a light brownish yellow blown sand deposit, measuring <200mm, sealing the same medium yellowish brown, clayey sand seen throughout the majority of the trenches. Trench 7 revealed the location of a cable, presumed to date from the WWII period. This raises the potential use of Windward Lodge during the wartime occupation of the island. This was located towards the northern end of trench 7 and running oblique from east to west (Image 2).
- 5.7 Trench 10 revealed an area of disturbed ground to the north of the site. In this area the topsoil/turfline layer is seen to be sealing a deposit of clayey sand mixed with broken tarmac and modern demolition rubble (<500mm depth).
- 5.8 Trench 17 revealed a potential prehistoric cairn in the original area designated for the pool, to the rear of Plot 3. It was apparent before laying out the location of Trench 17 that a natural outcrop of granite (overlooking Ouaisne bay) would impede any reduction of the ground in this area. The trench was therefore extended towards the east. Careful Cleaning of the area revealed angular blocks of granite, apparently placed to form a mound, incorporating the natural rock outcrop. The irregular granite stones ranged in size from 200mm to 5mm in length and width. The form and makeup of the feature suggests a potential cairn in this area of the site. After consultation with Oxford Archaeology, representatives of the States of Jersey Planning Department and Jersey Heritage, it was agreed to extend the trench further to the west. In addition, two trenches were excavated, orientated north-south, adjoining the main trench to the north (Images 3-6).

- 5.9 The western extension of the trench revealed a carpet of placed angular granite blocks, similar to those identified to the east. The granite blocks also carried on into the north westerly side trench. It was evident that the area around the natural outcrop of granite had been built up using the carefully placed angular material (Fig 5).
- 5.10 As no intrusive archaeology has been carried out, the date and nature of the feature is inconclusive at this stage. Preliminary assessment of the granite mound suggests that a post medieval-modern date is unlikely, although the potential for the debris to be associated with quarrying activity should not be ruled out entirely at this stage (Driscoll 2009). However, no modern material (eg CBM, glass, post medieval ceramics, or clay tobacco pipe) was identified within the matrix of the granite blocks throughout the cleaning back of the area. In addition, only rare samples of modern material were identified during the whole evaluation.
- 5.11 Finds from within the matrix of the feature (1701) are represented by a single fragment of burnt worked flint, identified amongst the stones. A small fragment of Gallo-Roman pottery was also recovered from the cleaning over the stones. Seven worked flints were recovered from the spoil of Trench 17 and a Neolithic scraper was identified in the southern end of Trench 16 (1601), less than 3m north of the eastern end of Trench 17. In addition, nine worked flints were recovered from the spoil of Trench 16, along with 4 sherds of Neolithic pottery. One sherd of Roman Black Burnished Ware was also retained from the spoil of Trench 16.
- 5.12 The artefacts from the vicinity of the potential prehistoric feature (1701) represent the greatest concentration of Neolithic worked flint, identified as a result of the evaluation of the site, making up 39% of the flint finds. The area to the south of Plot 3 was also responsible for all 8 sherds of Neolithic and Roman pottery.
- 5.13 The potential prehistoric cairn was recorded and covered with a breathable membrane, allowing ready access should further investigation be required.

5.14 It is worth noting here that an area of loose granite rubble was identified to the South of Trench 26. After cleaning, the area was assessed to be an area of degraded natural, as the granite did not appear to have been placed and had the appearance and feel of a natural feature (Image 7). In support of this, no finds were recovered from the trench or from the spoil. However, worked flint was recovered from Trenches 22, 24 & 25, in the vicinity of Trench 26. Therefore the potential for further prehistoric activity in this area should not be ruled out.

## 6 FINDS

6.1 A total of 43 worked flints and 8 sherds of Neolithic-Early Bronze Age pottery were recovered as a result of the monitoring of the spoil, with only 1 worked flint found within a stratified fill (1601). Two sherds of Roman pottery were also recovered from the spoil heaps to the south of Plot 3.

6.2 The majority of the worked flint was identified in Trenches 12-18, excavated in the vicinity of Plot 3 and making up 65% of the total flint finds for the site. 19% of the worked flint was identified in the region of Plot 1, whilst trenches in the areas of Plot 2 revealed 12% of the flint finds. The remaining 4% were recovered from trenches to the north of the site, in the area of new access routes and associated landscaping (Fig. 2).

6.3 The majority of the trenches were reduced down through sequences of blown sands (loess). The very nature of these fine sands is problematic to any archaeological interpretation. It was clear from the spoil heap finds that activity relating to the Neolithic period was evident in several of the areas investigated, especially in the area of the proposed cairn, though pits and ditches usually associated with finds such as flints and pottery were absent. One explanation could be that the whole area had over a period of time gone through a process of grading away and re-deposition of fine sands through weathering, only leaving the bulkier items such as pottery and flints in situ. Further work would be required in order to confirm this hypothesis.

## 6.4 Pottery (by Paul Driscoll)

6.4.1 The pottery is comprised of late prehistoric granite derived and mainly coarse wares. Only one diagnostic sherd exists within the collection, a base sherd of a jar/pot. Although generally homogenous (e.g. similar clay type and similar inclusions), the small assemblage contains two fabric types.

### 6.4.2 Fabric 1 (all sherds from spoil heaps of trenches 12 and 16 and 1 sherd from spoil heap of trench 15):

Sandy fabric with dark reddish-brown irregularly fired interior and exterior (unburnished) from a local clay source. Core has medium to fine matrix (unlaminated) with large angular and poorly sorted rock inclusions (some of which are quartz), fine mica specs and rare occurrences of organic material (fibre).

### 6.4.3 Fabric 2: (2 sherds from spoil heap 15)

Smooth fine sandy fabric with brownish-red exterior and interior. Fine angular quartz inclusions and specs of mica visible on the surface and moderate-fine inclusions of angular rock (including quartz) and very fine mica specs in the matrix core indicate a well prepared clay prior to firing. Nice smooth exterior and interior (possibly burnished).

### 6.4.4 Form

Only one partial fragment revealed form that is in any way diagnostic, but even this cannot be determined with any accuracy. A base sherd with a slight “kick” at the heel is from a pot of probably about 100mm in diameter at the base (although this is a rough judgement). Regrettably there is no way of determining the exact form from such a fragmentary sherd, but it may well parallel some of the flowerpot vessels found in a variety of contexts in Jersey.

#### 6.4.5 Interpretation and Parallels

The fabric is not uncommon for the island, and similar reddish brown vessels have been found at La Hougue de Geonnais, La Hougue Mauger and other sites, which are Neolithic-Bronze Age in date. The absence of a proper, robust classification for prehistoric pottery in the island, with accompanying thin section analysis and dates derived from correctly excavated contexts is a great hindrance to refining the chronology of the pottery from Windward.

The closest parallel (although this is tentative with such abraded sherds and limited form examples) is the flowerpot vessel type. These are about the same size as the example from Windward and have the slight kick as the base becomes the body. Flowerpot vessels have a long history in Jersey and the neighbouring Armorican zone and cannot be refined to specific date. Although they are likely to have emerged from the Gord style of the Paris basin (Patton 1995: 159-160), as Ian Kinnes points out (1988: 36) they are likely to have a longevity into the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC, a comment born out in a recent assessment of the late prehistoric pottery assemblages (Driscoll 2010). At Tumulus de Ligollenec in Berrien, Brittany, a site which included flowerpot vessels, produced a radiocarbon date of 2197-1513 cal BC (Gif-1866) at 95.4% or 2017-1667 cal BC at 68.2% (after Briard 1984: 205). The most notable examples in Jersey come from La Hougue Mauger in St Mary, where six such vessels were found in an arc surrounding a megalithic structure, although they have also been found at La Hougue de Geonnais. La Hougue Mauger is likely to be a Late Neolithic structure potentially extending into the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC.

#### 6.5 Flint (by Paul Martin)

6.5.1 The cortex found on the majority of the flint has the classic smooth appearance of rolled longshore drift beach material, confirming that the flint was sourced from local sources.

6.5.2 Overall flaking techniques and tool type suggest that a Neolithic date can be given to the whole assemblage.

6.5.3 The bulk of the assemblage is made up of small cores and waste flakes; though a deep angled scraper from Trench 16, a retouched flake from Trench 1 and a burnt polished flint axe fragment from Trench 15 (plus fabricator from Trench 16) could suggest occupational activity in the vicinity. The significance of the flint assemblage becomes more obvious when taking into consideration that the 43 worked flints (nearly all recovered from the surface of the spoil heaps), can be estimated to represent only 1-10% of the actual material in the vicinity of the trenches. When multiplied by 10, it may be fair to suggest that there could well have been up to 400 worked flints hidden within the respective trench spoil heaps. However, this is purely speculative at this time.

## **7 DISCUSSION**

7.1 The absence of Medieval-Post Medieval artefacts from the site and the dominance of Prehistoric worked flint and ceramics gives weight to the suggestion that the granite mound identified to the south of the site may represent a previously unidentified Neolithic feature. The predominance of prehistoric artefacts recovered from within the region of the feature lends further support to this possibility.

7.2 As discussed in the Desk Based Assessment (Driscoll 2009), the development site is located in an area of high prehistoric activity, with the Parish of St Brelade playing host to the highest number of identified sites on the island to date. Furthermore, within the vicinity of the site at least five other Neolithic-Early Bronze Age monuments can be quoted, recorded to have been similar in form and fabric to the feature identified in Trench 17. Les Cinq Pierres, (excavated 1874 and 1875) is situated less than 100m to the east of the site and was recorded as a “low hougue of rubble and earth” with an external circumference of c. 18m. The mound sealed a circular granite wall, enclosing an inhumation (Hawkes, 290). La Hougue de Vinde, Noirmont (excavated 1881 and 1913), situated <500m to the SE, is described as having been a low mound of earth and rubble

sealing a circle of stones, measuring 15-18m in diameter (Johnston 1981, 72). Worked flints were found as a result of the excavation, which dated the site to the late Neolithic. Similarly, La Hougue de Fôret, situated c. 500m to the west of the site (excavated 1897) is described as comprising “the usual rubble and earth”, sealing four upright stones. Again, scattered worked flint was recovered in the area of the monument (Hawkes 1937, 277). Whilst La Tête des Quennevais, located c. 700m to the NW of the site (excavated 1987-88), represents an example of a potential Early Bronze Age cist incorporating an outcrop of the natural bedrock in its construction (Patton 1991). The most significant however, may be the site known as the Beauport Dolmen, situated to the SSE of La Hougue de Foret and around 500m to the east of the site. The now overgrown and largely destroyed monument was first excavated in 1877 and again in 1970. The investigations revealed a feature interpreted as a passage grave, recorded as having been sealed by “a circular cairn of small granite blocks” measuring c. 10m in diameter (Johnston 1981, 70). Furthermore, the form of the monument is recorded as having incorporated the granite bedrock in the main structure of the tomb, with the passage having been carved into the rock to the rear (Fig. 4). In addition, the original excavation mistakenly took the granite outcrop to be the structural uprights and paving of the tomb. It would appear therefore that the bedrock had been used to create the main structure of the tomb to a large extent (Johnston 1981, 70-71).

- 7.3 This brief summary of the nature of late Neolithic monuments within a 1km radius of the site lends support to the hypothesis that the rubble and earth mound identified in Trench 17 may be a previously unidentified prehistoric feature. The feature identified as the result of the trench evaluation appears to correspond in form and fabric to those identified above. However, it should be noted that all of the monuments detailed in this summary have been largely destroyed and no elements of the material sealing the structures remains to date. Despite this, the evidence of placed small granite blocks and earth arranged to create a sub circular mound combined with the level of material finds relating to Neolithic activity on the site would suggest a strong argument in support of the above.

## 8 Conclusion

- 8.1 Although no features relating to occupation were identified as a result of the above investigation, the flint and ceramic finds reveal significant evidence of activity across the site in the Neolithic period. However, the nature of this activity has yet to be ascertained.
- 8.2 The nature and concentration of the finds, within the region of Trench 17 lends further support to the identification of a previously unknown prehistoric monument on the site. Although the intrusive investigation of the rubble and earth feature was deemed beyond the scope of the evaluation at the time, cleaning around the area revealed a feature similar in form, fabric and size to at least five other confirmed prehistoric sites in St Brelade.
- 8.3 It is the conclusion of this report that due to the widespread evidence of worked flint, along with examples of Neolithic pottery (to the rear of Plot 3) and a potential prehistoric monument in Trench 17, that the Windward site should be considered as an area of high archaeological potential. Figure 2 highlights the areas in which finds were concentrated and indicates which regions of the site show the most archaeological potential.
- 8.4 It is understood at the time of writing this report that plans to develop in the area of Trench 17 have been revised, resulting in the relocation of the swimming pool (to the rear of Plot 3) further to the east, avoiding the potential prehistoric monument. However, should plans be altered in the future to incorporate this area once again, it is suggested that there should be a consideration to attempting to establish the true nature of the feature.

8.5 Furthermore, it is suggested that the excavation of the footings and associated groundworks in areas of high potential be accompanied by an archaeological watching brief. This would address the requirement to ensure that the nature and significance of the site is properly assessed in light of the large-scale development of the area.

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Figure 1: Site Location, Centred on UTM 5945 4845  
Not to Scale

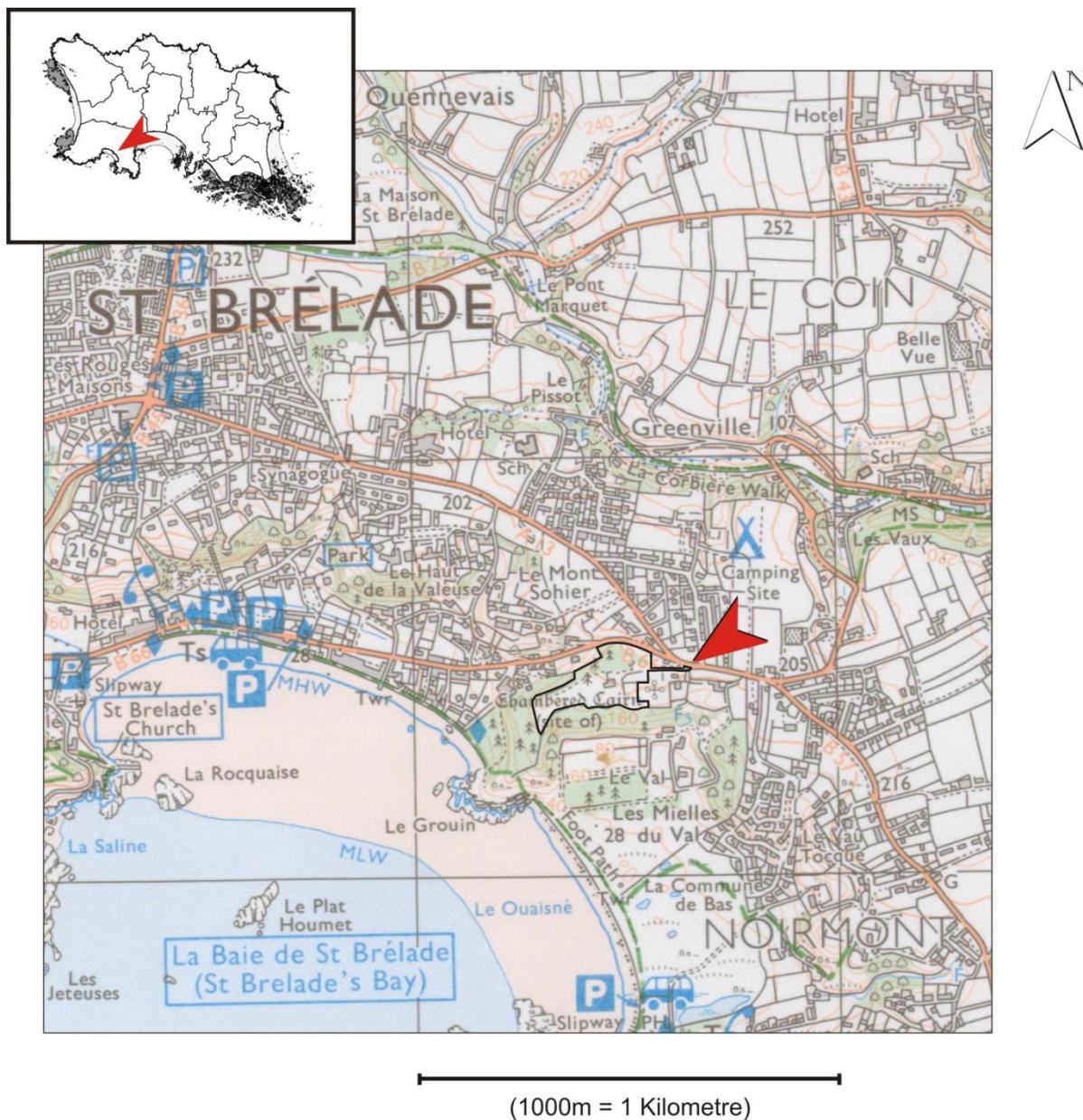


Figure 2 Trench Location Plot : Scale 1:1500@A4 (For Numbered Trenches See Fig 3)

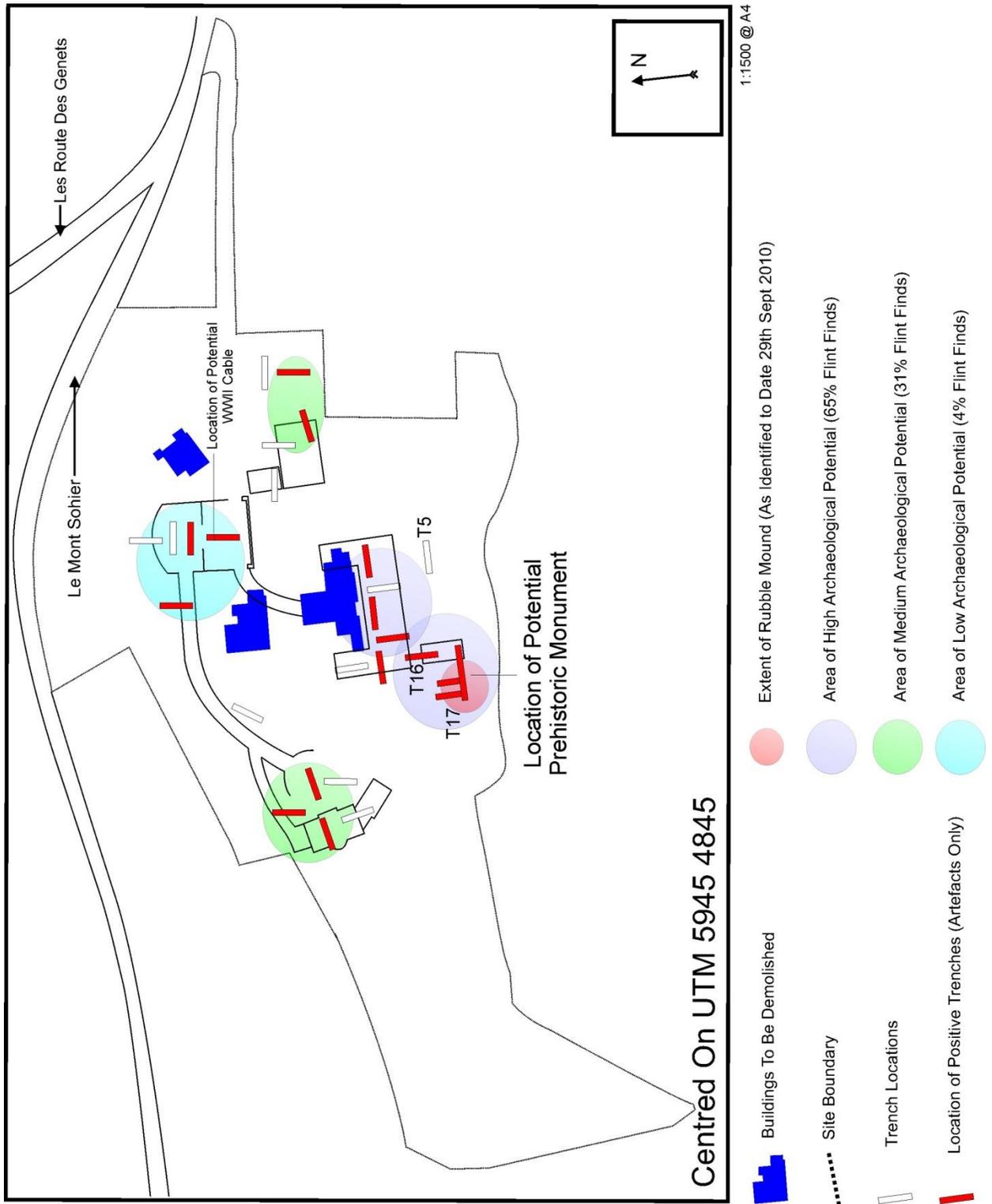


Figure 3 Detail of Trench Location Plan (Not to Scale)

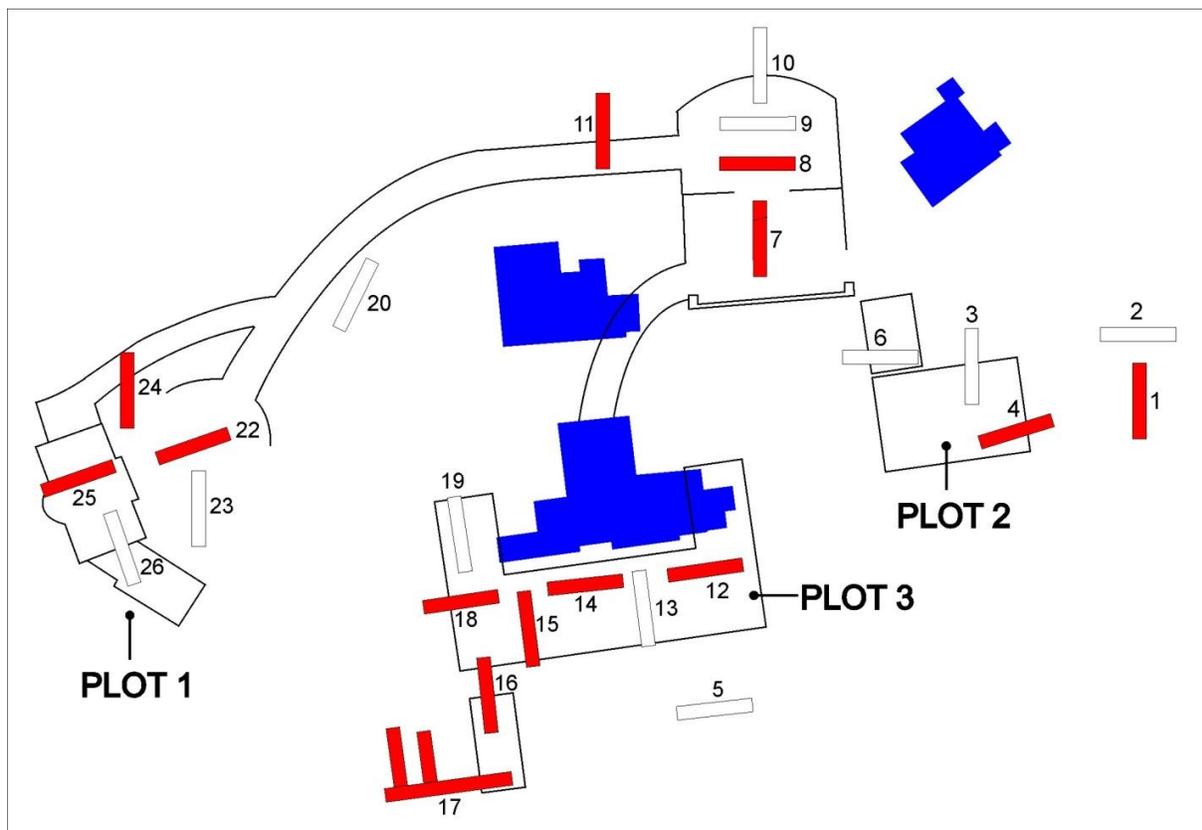


Figure 4 Plan of The Beauport Dolmen (Johnston 1981, 71)

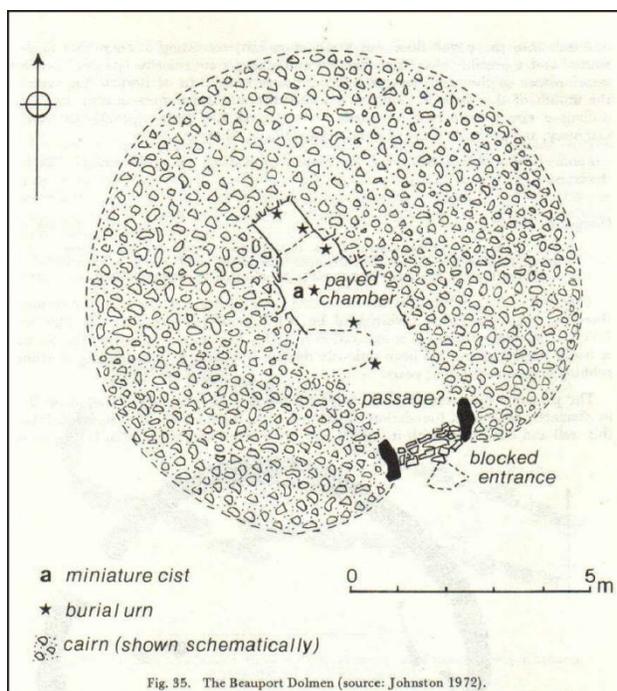
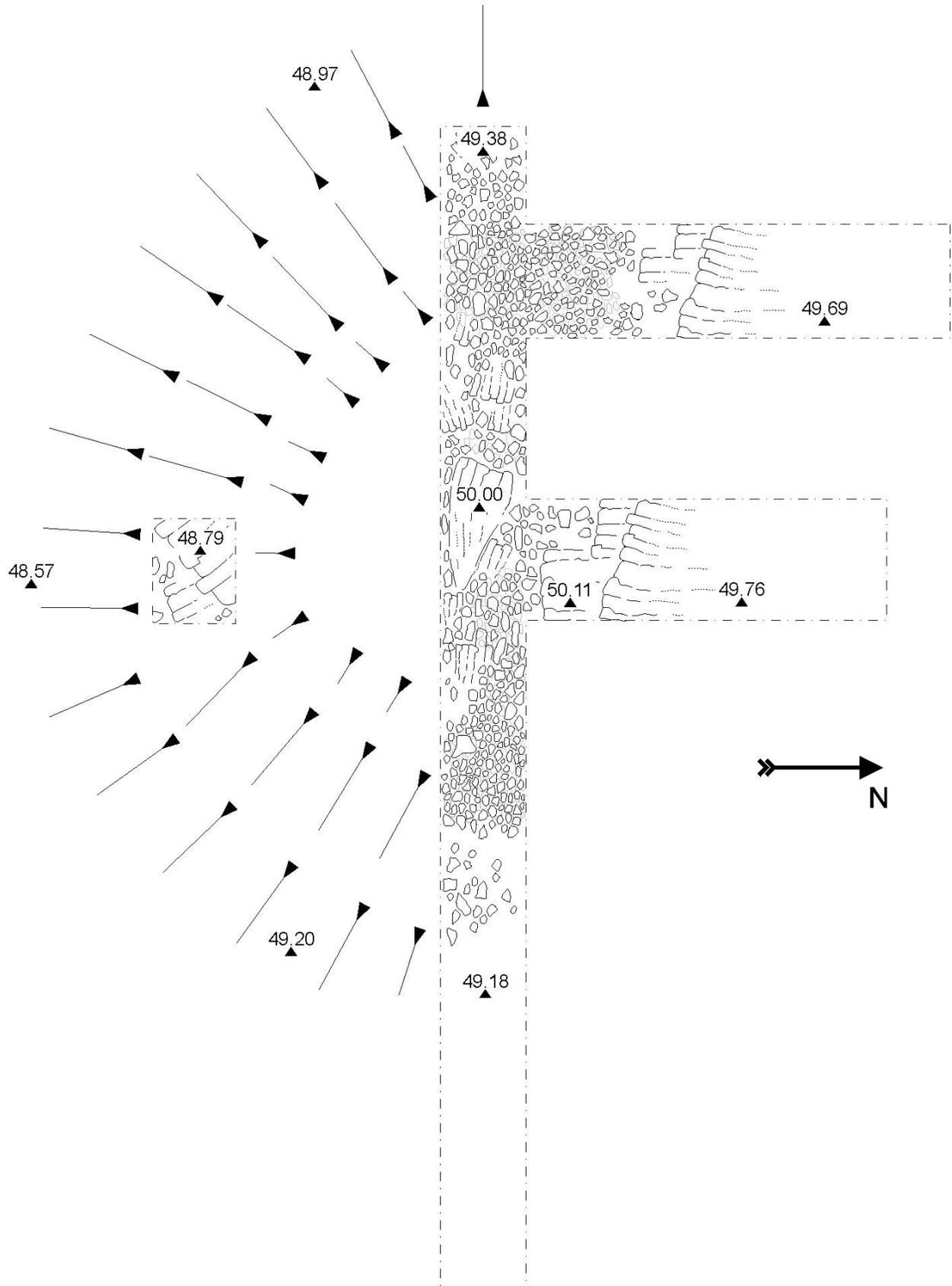


Fig. 35. The Beauport Dolmen (source: Johnston 1972).

Figure 5 Plan of Trench 17: Scale 1:100@A4



## PHOTOGRAPHS



Image 1: Sample Section Trench 13

(Scales 1m &amp; 500mm)



Image 2: Potential WWII Cable Trench 7

(Scale 500mm)



Image 3: Rubble and Earth Mound Trench 17

East Facing View (Scales 2m &amp; 1m)



Image 4: Rubble and Earth Mound Trench 17

West Facing View (Scales 2m &amp; 1m)



**Image 5: Rubble and Earth Mound, Trench 17**

**South Facing View (A) With Natural Outcrop**

**(Scales 2x 1m & 1 x 500mm)**



**Image 6: Rubble and Earth Mound, Trench 17**

**South Facing View (B) Trench 17 (Scales 2 x 1m)**



**Image 7: Loose Granite, Trench 26**

**(Scales 1m & 500mm)**