

Contents

	Page
List of illustrations	3
List of plates	3
List of appendices	3
Abstract.....	4
1 INTRODUCTION	5
1.1 Background	5
1.4 Archaeological background	5
2 OBJECTIVES	5
3 METHODOLOGY	6
4 RESULTS	6
5 DISCUSSION	9
6 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	9
7 BIBLIOGRAPHY	9
APPENDIX 1: Trench Descriptions	12
APPENDIX 2: Context Descriptions.....	13
APPENDIX 3: Photographic Record	14
APPENDIX 4: Small Finds Register	15
APPENDIX 5: Sample Register.....	15
APPENDIX 6: ‘Discovery and Excavation in Scotland’ Report.....	16

List of illustrations

- Figure 1 Site Location
Figure 2 Trench Location Plan
Figure 3 Plan and Sections of Features within Trenches 3, 4 and 4a

List of plates

- Plate 1 Pit/post-hole alignment within Trench 3 from north
Plate 2 Post-holes within Trenches 4 & 4a from south-east
Plate 3 Trench 5 south-east facing section showing dumped top-soil

List of appendices

- Appendix 1 Trench Descriptions
Appendix 2 Context Descriptions
Appendix 3 Photographic Record
Appendix 4 Small Finds Register
Appendix 5 Samples Register
Appendix 6 *'Discovery and Excavation in Scotland'* Report

Abstract

AOC Archaeology undertook an archaeological evaluation in respect to a proposed development within the grounds of Stirling Council at Viewforth, St. Ninians Road, Stirling (NGR; NS 7953 9282).

The area (3600 m²) was subject to an 8% sample evaluation to comprise 72 linear metres. However the presence of live services and heavy tree canopy reduced the current works to 62 linear metres.

The evaluation revealed thirteen pits/post-holes of probable prehistoric date. These features formed a right angled linear alignment and are the possible remains of a substantial post-built structure or enclosure.

Three sherds of late medieval reduced ware pottery were recovered from the interface of the top-soil and natural. These included two body sherds and a skillet handle.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 AOC Archaeology Group was commissioned by Stirling Council to undertake an archaeological evaluation in respect to a proposed development within the grounds of Stirling Council at Viewforth, St. Ninians Road, Stirling (NGR; NS 7953 9282). The evaluation was undertaken in order to satisfy the requirements of the local planning authority, Stirling Council who are advised on archaeological matters by Mr Murray Cook, Archaeological Officer for Stirling Council
- 1.1.2 The archaeological works were conducted in accordance with the principles set out in *Scottish Planning Policy (2010) & Planning and Archaeology 2/2011 (2011)*.
- 1.1.3 The evaluation revealed significant archaeological material in the form of thirteen pits and post-holes of probable prehistoric date. Three sherds of late medieval ceramics were also recovered.

1.2 Location

- 1.2.1 The proposed development area is centred at approximately on Grid Ref NS 7953 9282 (Figure 1) and covers a total area of c.60 m by 60 m (3600 m²). The development area lies within the grounds of the Stirling Council offices. The site lies to the immediate east of St. Ninians Road and directly west of the North wing of the existing Stirling Council offices. Presently the area is a landscaped piece of ground comprising a mixture of grass and trees.
- 1.2.2 The site area is heavily landscaped and ranges between 175.0 m OD to 170.0 m OD in height.

1.4 Archaeological background

- 1.4.1 The Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland lists the Stirling Council building, NMRS No. NS79SE 704 and to the north of the evaluation area there is a 19th century villa, 'Viewforth House', which is C-Listed, NMRS No. NS79SE 403.
- 1.4.2 Whilst the RCAHMS does not list any known archaeological sites within the development area Mr. Murray Cook, states that the development area may contain the remains of a cist cemetery previously recorded during antiquarian works.

2 OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The objectives of the archaeological evaluation were:
- i) to determine and assess the character, extent, condition, quality, date and significance of any buried archaeological remains within the proposed development area through evaluation trenching;

- ii) to determine the presence or absence of the proposed cist cemetery
- iii) to advise and implement an appropriate form of archaeological mitigation, such as excavation, post-excavation analyses and publication, should significant archaeological remains be encountered that cannot be preserved *in situ*.

3 METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 The evaluation initially required the machine excavation of an 8% sample (72 linear metres) within the proposed development area (3600 m²). However, the presence of live services and heavy tree canopy reduced the trenching to 62 linear metres.
- 3.2 The evaluation trenches were positioned in order to avoid existing services and existing tree canopy and to expand the range of features discovered during the evaluation (Figure 2).
- 3.2 The evaluation was undertaken by a tracked 360 mini excavator equipped with a 1.5 m wide bladed ditching bucket. Excavation was undertaken in units/spits until the first significant archaeological horizon or natural subsoil was reached. In particular the evaluation sought to confirm the presence of a cist cemetery previously recorded during antiquarian works (Murray cook pers comm.). All machine excavation was supervised by an experienced field archaeologist and according to AOC Archaeology Group's standard operating procedures, and as per the methodology within the *Method Statement* (AOC 2013). The trenches were backfilled once recording had been undertaken.

4 RESULTS

- 4.1 The archaeological evaluation was undertaken on the 10th– 14th June 2013. Weather conditions were good and archaeological visibility was excellent.
- 4.2 **Deposits**
 - 4.2.1 An imported loam top-soil [001] 0.30 m thick was recorded across the site. This in-turn overlay an older top-soil 0.50 m in depth. This deposit contained numerous sherds of white ceramic and was probably created during landscaping works associated with the 19th century construction of Viewforth House. An interface 0.10 m in depth was observed with the underlying orange natural sands and gravels. Three sherds of late medieval pottery (SF. 1-3) were recovered from this deposit within the otherwise sterile Trench 1.
- 4.3 **Trench 3**
 - 4.3.1 Five circular cut features [305, 307, 309, 311 & 315] were revealed within Trench 3 (Figure 3). These features were exposed at a depth of 0.90 m and were arranged in a north-east to south-west linear pattern. Feature [315] was situated within the east facing section. The features ranged from 0.30 m to 0.38 m in diameter and were spaced at 0.20 m intervals. The feature [303] was slightly off set to the north-west.

- 4.3.2 Three of the features [305, 309 & 313] were investigated. All of the features had similar profiles with sharply defined steeply sloping sides and rounded bases. The features ranged from 0.12 m to 0.27 m in depth and were filled by sterile dark grey-brown sandy silt.
- 4.3.3 The features would appear to be post-holes and are of probable prehistoric date. The post-holes would appear to be part of a larger post-built structure including the features within Trenches 4 and 4a.



Plate 1 Pit/post-hole alignment within Trench 3 from north

4.4 Trench 4

- 4.4.1 A further five circular cut features [403, 405, 407 & 409] were revealed within Trench 4 (Figure 3). This trench was positioned in order to catch the return or continuation of the features within Trench 3. Three of the features [403, 405 & 411] were arranged in a south-east to north-west linear pattern and mark the return of those features recorded within Trench 3. The features were spaced 0.50 m apart with [411] visible within the east facing section. Two further features [407 & 409] were recorded 1.5 m to the north.
- 4.4.2 The features ranged from 0.30 m to 0.54 m in diameter. A single feature [407] was investigated; this was only 0.05 m in depth and appeared heavily truncated.



Plate 2: Post-holes within Trenches 4 & 4a from south-east

4.5 Trench 4a

4.5.1 An ancillary trench was excavated from the east facing section of Trench 4 in order to ascertain whether the features continued. The trench revealed the continuation of the north-east-south-west linear feature alignment within this trench (Figure 3). Two further circular cut features [413 & 415] were revealed on this alignment.

4.6 Trenches 2 & 5

4.6.1 These two trenches were excavated near the northern perimeter of the site. Trench 2 was excavated north-west from the edge of a landscaped bank. This revealed top-soil to a depth of 0.70 m with an underlying deposit of bank material and re-deposited sands and gravels. Excavation reached 1.40 m in depth. To the north-west of the trench several circular Victorian pits were observed. Trench 5 was also excavated within the banked material associated with the 19th century landscaping of the site. A large 1.5 m pit was observed underlying the banked material at a depth of 1.40 m. This feature produced white ceramics, glass and clay pipe all Victorian in date.



Plate 3: Trench 5 south-east facing section showing dumped top-soil

5 DISCUSSION

- 5.1 The archaeological evaluation was hugely successful, identifying new evidence for the occupation of the site. Significant archaeological remains were identified during the evaluation in the form of thirteen post-hole/pit features forming a right-angled linear alignment. These features are of probable prehistoric date and may form part of a post-built structure. Similar structures have been identified across Scotland, and analogy suggests that it could relate to the Neolithic. Evidence of Neolithic buildings is still relatively rare, and any new evidence is hugely significant. Alternatively, the features may relate to the prehistoric cist cemetery previously identified on the site. However, it is rare for such cemeteries to be enclosed (Hunter 2000).

6 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The archaeological features are under no immediate threat of disturbance, and therefore no further on site works are required. This recommendation will require confirmation by Mr Murray Cook on behalf of Stirling Council.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

AOC 2013 *Viewforth, Stirling Council, Stirling: Written Scheme of Investigation* Unpublished client report

Hunter, F., 2000 'Excavation of an Early Bronze Age cemetery and other sites at West Water Reservoir, West Linton, Scottish Borders' in *Proc Soc Antiq Scot* 130 (2000), 115-182.

Scottish Government 2010 *Scottish Planning Policy*, February 2010.

Scottish Government 2011 *Planning And Archaeology 2/2011*.

Viewforth, Stirling Council, Stirling: Archaeological Evaluation Data Structure Report

Section 2: Appendices

APPENDIX 1: Trench Descriptions

Trench 1

<i>Dimensions</i>	12 m by 1.5 m
<i>Orientation</i>	N-S
<i>Top-soil Depth</i>	0.70 m
<i>Depth of Made Ground</i>	None
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.90 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Other Features</i>	None
<i>Subsoil</i>	Orange sandy silt
<i>Finds</i>	Late medieval reduced ware (SF 1, 2 &3)

Trench 2

<i>Dimensions</i>	10 m by 1.5 m
<i>Orientation</i>	SE-NW
<i>Top-soil Depth</i>	0.70 m
<i>Depth of Made Ground</i>	0.70 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	1.40 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Other Features</i>	Victorian pits
<i>Subsoil</i>	Orange sands and gravels
<i>Finds</i>	White ceramics observed in top-soil

Trench 3

<i>Dimensions</i>	15.0 m by 1.5 m
<i>Orientation</i>	N-S
<i>Top-soil Depth</i>	0.70 m
<i>Depth of Made Ground</i>	None
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.90 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	Pit/post-holes [305, 307, 309, 311 & 315]
<i>Other Features</i>	None
<i>Subsoil</i>	Orange sands and gravels
<i>Finds</i>	White ceramics observed within top-soil

Trench 4

<i>Dimensions</i>	12.0 m by 1.5 m
<i>Orientation</i>	SSE-NNW
<i>Top-soil Depth</i>	0.70 m
<i>Depth of Made Ground</i>	None
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.90 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	Pit/post-holes [403, 405, 407, 409 & 411]
<i>Other Features</i>	Borrow pit at 8.0 m
<i>Subsoil</i>	Orange sands and gravels
<i>Finds</i>	White ceramics observed within top-soil

Trench 4a

<i>Dimensions</i>	5.0 m by 1.5 m
<i>Orientation</i>	E-W
<i>Top-soil Depth</i>	0.70 m
<i>Depth of Made Ground</i>	None
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.80 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	Pit/post-holes [403, 405, 407, 409 & 411]
<i>Other Features</i>	None

<i>Subsoil</i>	Orange sands and gravels
<i>Finds</i>	White ceramics observed within top-soil

Trench 5

<i>Dimensions</i>	12.0 m by 1.5 m
<i>Orientation</i>	E-W
<i>Top-soil Depth</i>	0.40 m
<i>Depth of Made Ground</i>	None
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	1.0 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Other Features</i>	Pit cut [503] at 3.5-5.2 m
<i>Subsoil</i>	Orange sands and gravels
<i>Finds</i>	White ceramics observed within top-soil and in pit

APPENDIX 2: Context Descriptions

Context	Description
001	Modern top-soil 0.20 m – 0.30 m in depth
002	Original top-soil 0.50 m in depth
003	Natural. Orange silty sand and gravels
303	Void
304	Void
305	Circular cut with sharp, steeply sloping sides and rounded base. Dimensions; 0.40 m in diameter by 0.27 m in depth. Post-hole within linear alignment. Filled by (306).
306	Dark brown sandy silt with occasional gravel inclusions. Fill of [305]
307	Circular cut. Dimensions; 0.35 m. Post-hole within linear alignment. Filled by (308). Not excavated.
308	Dark brown sandy silt with occasional gravel inclusions. Fill of [307]
309	Circular cut with sharp, steeply sloping sides and rounded base. Dimensions; 0.30 m in diameter by 0.12 m in depth. Post-hole within linear alignment. Filled by (310).
310	Dark brown sandy silt with occasional gravel inclusions. Fill of [309]
311	Circular cut. Dimensions; 0.38 m in diameter. Post-hole within linear alignment. Filled by (312). Not excavated.
312	Dark brown sandy silt with occasional gravel inclusions. Fill of [311]
313	Circular cut with sharp, steeply sloping sides and rounded base. Dimensions; 0.32 m in diameter by 0.17 m in depth. Post-hole within linear alignment. Filled by (314).
314	Dark brown sandy silt with occasional gravel inclusions. Fill of [313]
315	Circular cut. Dimensions; 0.39 m in diameter. Post-hole within linear alignment. Filled by (316). Not excavated
403	Circular cut. Dimensions; 0.40 m in diameter. Post-hole within linear alignment. Filled by (404). Not excavated
404	Dark brown sandy silt with occasional gravel inclusions. Fill of [403]
405	Circular cut. Dimensions; 0.46 m in diameter. Post-hole within linear alignment. Filled by (406). Not excavated

406	Dark brown sandy silt with occasional gravel inclusions. Fill of [405]
407	Circular cut. Dimensions; 0.30 m in diameter by 0.05 m in depth. Pit within linear alignment. Filled by (408).
408	Dark brown sandy silt with occasional gravel inclusions and a small concentration of charcoal. Fill of pit [407]
409	Circular cut. Dimensions; 0.54 m in diameter. Post-hole within linear alignment. Filled by (410). Not excavated
410	Dark brown sandy silt with occasional gravel inclusions. Fill of [409]
411	Circular cut. Dimensions; 0.38 m in diameter. Post-hole within linear alignment. Filled by (412). Not excavated
412	Dark brown sandy silt with occasional gravel inclusions. Fill of [411]
413	Circular cut. Dimensions; 0.35 m in diameter. Post-hole within linear alignment. Filled by (414). Not excavated
414	Dark brown sandy silt with occasional gravel inclusions. Fill of [413]
415	Circular cut. Dimensions; 0.39 m in diameter. Post-hole within linear alignment. Filled by (416). Not excavated
416	Dark brown sandy silt with occasional gravel inclusions. Fill of [415]

APPENDIX 3: Photographic Record

Digital Photographs

Frame	Description	From
1	Registration	-
2	Trench 1 post-excavation	N
3	Trench 1 west facing section	W
4	Trench 2 pre-excavation	N
5	Trench 2 north-west facing section showing banked material	NW
6	Trench 2 post-excavation	SW
7	Trench 3 pre-excavation working shot	N
8-9	Trench 3 working shot showing post-holes	S
10	Trench 3 working shot showing post-holes	SE
11-12	Trench 3 post-holes [305, 307, 309, 311,313 & 315]	N
13	Trench 3 post-holes [305, 307, 309, 311,313 & 315]	S
12	Trench 3 post-hole [305] north-east facing section	NE
13	Trench 3 post-hole [309] south facing section	S
14	Trench 3 post-hole [313] east facing section	E
15	Trench 4 post-holes [403,407,409,411]	N
16	Trench 4 post-holes [403,407,409,411]	S
17	Trench 4 post-hole [407] north-west facing section	NW
18	Trench 4/4a showing pit/post-hole alignment	NW
19	Trench 4/4a showing pit/post-hole alignment	SE
20	Trench 4/4a showing pit/post-hole alignment	NW

21	Trench 5 south-east facing section showing banked material	SE
22	Trench 5 working shot	E
23	Backfilled trenches	S

APPENDIX 4: Small Finds Register

No.	Context	Description
1	002	Late Medieval reduced ware body sherd Trench 1
2	002	Late Medieval reduced ware body sherd Trench 1
3	002	Late Medieval reduced ware skillet handle Trench 1

APPENDIX 5: Sample Register

Context	Description
408	Dark brown sandy silt with occasional small stone inclusions and frequent charcoal

APPENDIX 6: 'Discovery and Excavation in Scotland' Report

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Stirling Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME	Viewforth, Stirling Council, Stirling
PROJECT CODE:	AOC 22410
PARISH:	Stirling
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Rob Engl
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	AOC Archaeology Group
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeological Evaluation
NMRS NO(S)	None
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Linear post-hole structure
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	Late medieval ceramics
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NS 7953 9282
START DATE (this season)	10 th June 2013
END DATE (this season)	14 th June 2013
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	<p>AOC Archaeology undertook an archaeological evaluation in respect to a proposed development within the grounds of Stirling Council at Viewforth, St. Ninians Road, Stirling (NGR; NS 7953 9282).</p> <p>The area (3600 m²) was subject to an 8.0% sample evaluation to comprise 72 linear metres. However the presence of live services and heavy tree canopy reduced the current works to 62 linear metres.</p> <p>The evaluation revealed thirteen pits/post-holes of probable prehistoric date. These features formed a right angled linear alignment and are the possible remains of a substantial post-built structure or enclosure.</p> <p>Three sherds of late medieval reduced ware pottery were recovered from the interface of the top-soil and natural. These included two body sherds and a skillet handle.</p>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	Yes
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	---
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Stirling Council
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	Edgefield Road Industrial Estate, Loanhead, Midlothian, EH20 9SY
EMAIL ADDRESS:	Rob.Engl@aocarchaeology.com
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Archive to be deposited in NMRS

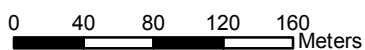
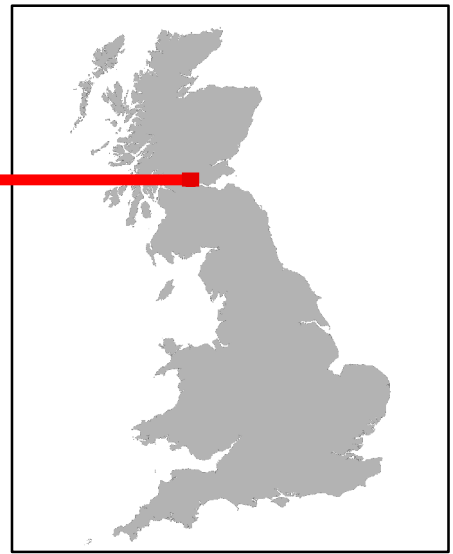
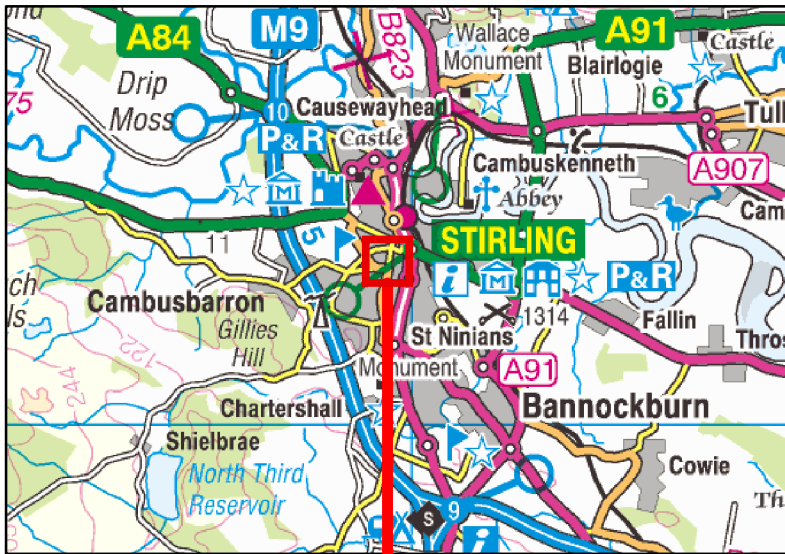













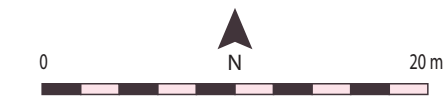
Figure 1: Site Location Plan

St. Ninians Road

Stirling Council Offices

Figure 2: Evaluation Trench Locations

-  Trees
-  BT Services
-  Power Cables
-  Gas Main
-  Water Main
-  Cable and Wireless
-  Trenches
-  Cable and Wireless
-  Area of truncation
-  Area of archaeology
-  Area of archaeological potential



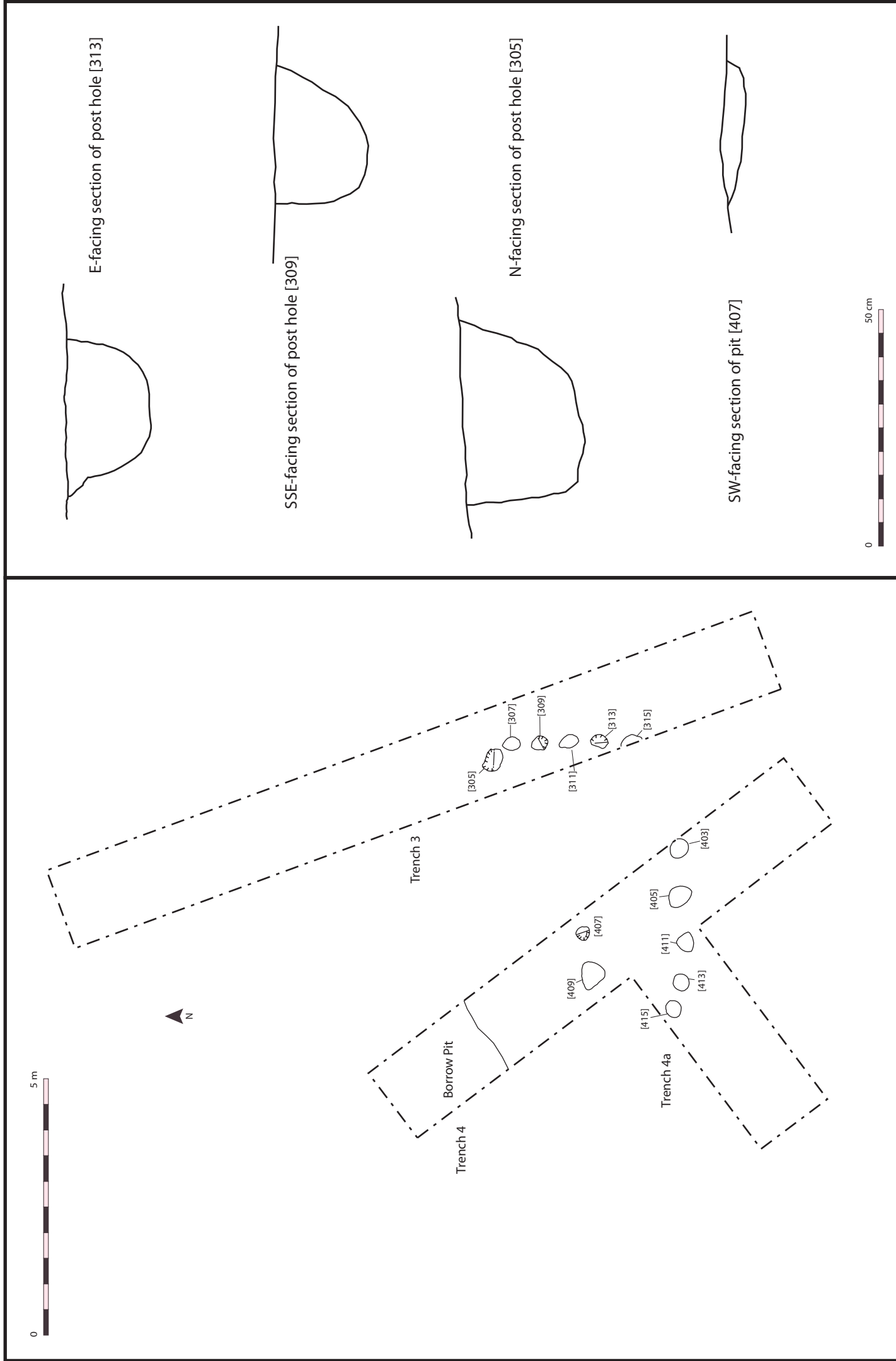
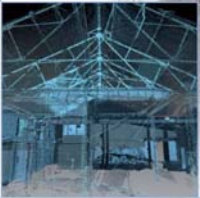


Figure 3 - Plan and sections of features in Trenches 3-4a



AOC Archaeology Group, Edgefield Industrial Estate, Edgefield Road, Loanhead EH20 9SY
tel: 0131 440 3593 | fax: 0131 440 3422 | e-mail: admin@aocarchaeology.com

www.aocarchaeology.com