

**EAST OF BAYTREE CLOSE,
CORSLEY HEATH,
WILTSHIRE.**

NGR: ST 8224 4535 (centred)

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION



Trench 2 Looking Northwest

June 2021
Report No. 1426



ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANCY, MANAGEMENT & FIELD SERVICES

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Quality Assurance

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SUMMARY

On the 26th May 2021 Foundations Archaeology undertook an archaeological evaluation on land east of Baytree Close, Corsley Heath, Wiltshire (NGR: ST 8224 4535 (centred)). The project was commissioned by Christine Brown of Wiltshire Council.

The project comprised the excavation and recording of four evaluation trenches, within the area of a proposed residential development.

No archaeological features or deposits were present in any of the evaluated trenches, however, a large unabraded bodysherd (102g) from a Medieval courseware vessel, broadly similar to products from the Laverstock kilns, was recovered from the topsoil of Trench 4. The pottery has a probable date range of 12th to 13th century. Also present within the topsoil of Trench 4 were two fragments of late Post-medieval/Modern pottery, along with probable fragments of clinker from the topsoil of Trenches 3 and 4. Two fragments of late Post-medieval ceramic tile were also recovered from the topsoil of Trench 3.

The archaeological evaluation has indicated that there is a low potential for significant archaeological features to be present within the site.

GLOSSARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Archaeology

For the purpose of this project, archaeology is taken to mean the study of past human societies through their material remains from prehistoric times to the modern era. No rigid upper date limit has been set, but AD 1900 is used as a general cut-off point.

CBM

Ceramic Building Material.

Medieval

The period between AD 1066 and AD 1500.

Natural

In archaeological terms, this refers to the undisturbed natural geology of a site.

NGR

National Grid Reference from the Ordnance Survey Grid.

OD

Ordnance datum; used to express a given height above sea-level. (AOD Above Ordnance Datum).

OS

Ordnance Survey.

Post-medieval

The period between AD 1500 and AD 1900.

Prehistoric

The period prior to the Roman invasion of AD 43, traditionally sub divided into; *Palaeolithic* – c. 500,000 BC to c. 12,000 BC; *Mesolithic* – c. 12,000 BC to c. 4,500 BC; *Neolithic* – c. 4,500 BC to c. 2,000 BC; *Bronze Age* – c. 2,000 BC to c. 800 BC; *Iron Age* – c. 800 BC to AD 43.

Roman

The period traditionally dated AD 43 until AD 410.

Saxon

The period between AD 410 and AD 1066.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by Foundations Archaeology on the 26th May 2021 on land east of Baytree Close, Corsley Heath, Wiltshire (NGR: ST 8224 4535 (centred)). The project was commissioned by Christine Brown of Wiltshire Council.
- 1.2 The evaluation was conducted in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), prepared by Foundations Archaeology (2021) and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation* (2014).
- 1.3 The CIfA code of conduct was adhered to throughout.

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 2.1 There is currently a proposal to construct 10 dwellings with associated access, landscaping and parking on land east of Baytree Close, Corsley Heath.
- 2.2 The site comprises an area of grassland approximately 0.4ha. The site is bounded to the south by the A362, to east by residential housing and to the north and west by further grassland. Further west is residential housing for Baytree Close.
- 2.3 According to the British Geology Viewer (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>) the bedrock geology across the site area comprises *Boyne Hollow Chert Member - Sandstone*. No superficial deposits are recorded.
- 2.4 Approximately 700m to the northwest of the study area is the Medieval settlement of Lyes Green (MWI1069), with a further Medieval settlement approximately 1.3km to the northeast of site at Corsley. Approximately 1.3km to the east of the site, is the Scheduled Monument (1017296) on Cley Hill, which contains a hillfort, two bowl barrows, Medieval strip lynchets and a cross dyke. Closer the study area is a number of extant and demolished 18th and 19th century outfarms.
- 2.5 A magnetometer survey was undertaken by Archaeological Surveys Ltd. in December 2020. This survey revealed the presence of a broad linear anomaly within the central part of the site; however, it is not possible to determine if it relates to a natural or anthropogenic feature, this feature is outside of the current site area. A small number of discrete, pit-like and positive linear anomalies of uncertain origin were also located. Weak linear anomalies from former ridge and furrow were also present.
- 2.6 The site therefore contained the potential for archaeological features and deposits, predominately dating to the Medieval or later periods. This did not prejudice the works against evidence relating to other periods.

3 AIMS

- 3.1 The aims of the archaeological evaluation were to gather high quality data from the direct observation of archaeological deposits in order to provide sufficient information to establish the nature, extent, preservation and potential of any surviving archaeological remains; as well as to make recommendations for management of the resource, including further archaeological works if necessary. In turn, this would allow reasonable planning/mitigation decisions to be taken regarding the archaeological provision for the areas affected by the development.
- 3.2 These aims were achieved through pursuit of the following specific objectives:
- i) to define and identify the nature of archaeological deposits on site, and date these where possible;
 - ii) to attempt to characterize the nature of the archaeological sequence and recover as much information as possible about the spatial patterning of features present on the site;
 - iii) where possible to recover a well dated stratigraphic sequence and recover coherent artefact, ecofact and environmental samples;
 - iv) to provide sufficient information on the archaeological potential of the site to enable that archaeological implications of the proposed changes to be assessed;
 - v) to inform formulation of a strategy to avoid or mitigate impacts of the proposed changes on surviving archaeological remains.

4 METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 A total of four evaluation trenches were excavated within the proposed development area, as shown in Figure 2. The trenches were located in order to provide a representative sample of the site, as well as to test various geophysical anomalies. Due to the presence of a recently laid geotechnical pipe and test pit, the southern end of Trench 1 was shortened slightly.
- 4.2 Non-significant overburden was removed, under constant archaeological supervision, to the top of archaeological remains or the underlying natural deposits, whichever was encountered first. This was achieved using a 360° tracked mechanical excavator, equipped with a toothless grading bucket. Features and spoil tips were visually scanned for finds.
- 4.3 Where archaeological features were present, these were subject to appropriate levels of investigation. All excavation and recording work was undertaken in accordance with the WSI and the Foundations Archaeology Technical Manual 3: Excavation Manual.

5 RESULTS

- 5.1 Natural beige yellow sands were present at an average depth of 0.37m (138.18m aOD) below the Modern ground surface. The natural was sealed by a yellow brown sand subsoil/natural interface, on average 0.12m thick, which was in turn overlaid by a dark brown sand topsoil, on average 0.25m thick. Modern detritus was present in the topsoil of all four trenches.
- 5.2 No archaeological features or deposits were present in any of the evaluated trenches, however, a large unabraded bodysherd (102g) from a Medieval courseware vessel, broadly similar to products from the Laverstock kilns, was recovered from the topsoil of Trench 4. The pottery has a probable date range of 12th to 13th century. Also present within the topsoil of Trench 4 were two fragments of late Post-medieval/Modern pottery, along with probable fragments of clinker from the topsoil of Trenches 3 and 4. Two fragments of late Post-medieval ceramic tile were also recovered from the topsoil of Trench 3.
- 5.3 The evaluation did not contain any of the possible pit-like and linear anomalies which were identified by the magnetometer survey, however, a slight natural hollow was investigated in Trench 4 and it's location roughly correlated with a discrete anomaly of uncertain origin. Trench 3 also contained patches of heavy root disturbance which may be the origin of the irregular features in this location identified by the survey.

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 No archaeological features or deposits were present within any of the evaluated trenches. The evaluation has indicated that there is a low potential for significant archaeological features to be present within the site.
- 6.2 The presence of Medieval and late Post-medieval pottery/tile within the topsoil was likely to have derived as stray finds from the nearby settlement of Corsley Heath.
- 6.3 The archive is currently held at the offices of Foundations Archaeology, but will be deposited in due course with Wiltshire Heritage Museum, Devizes under Accession Number DZSWS:31-2021; a digital report/archive will also be submitted to OASIS/ADS. A short note will be submitted for publication in the relevant local archaeological journal.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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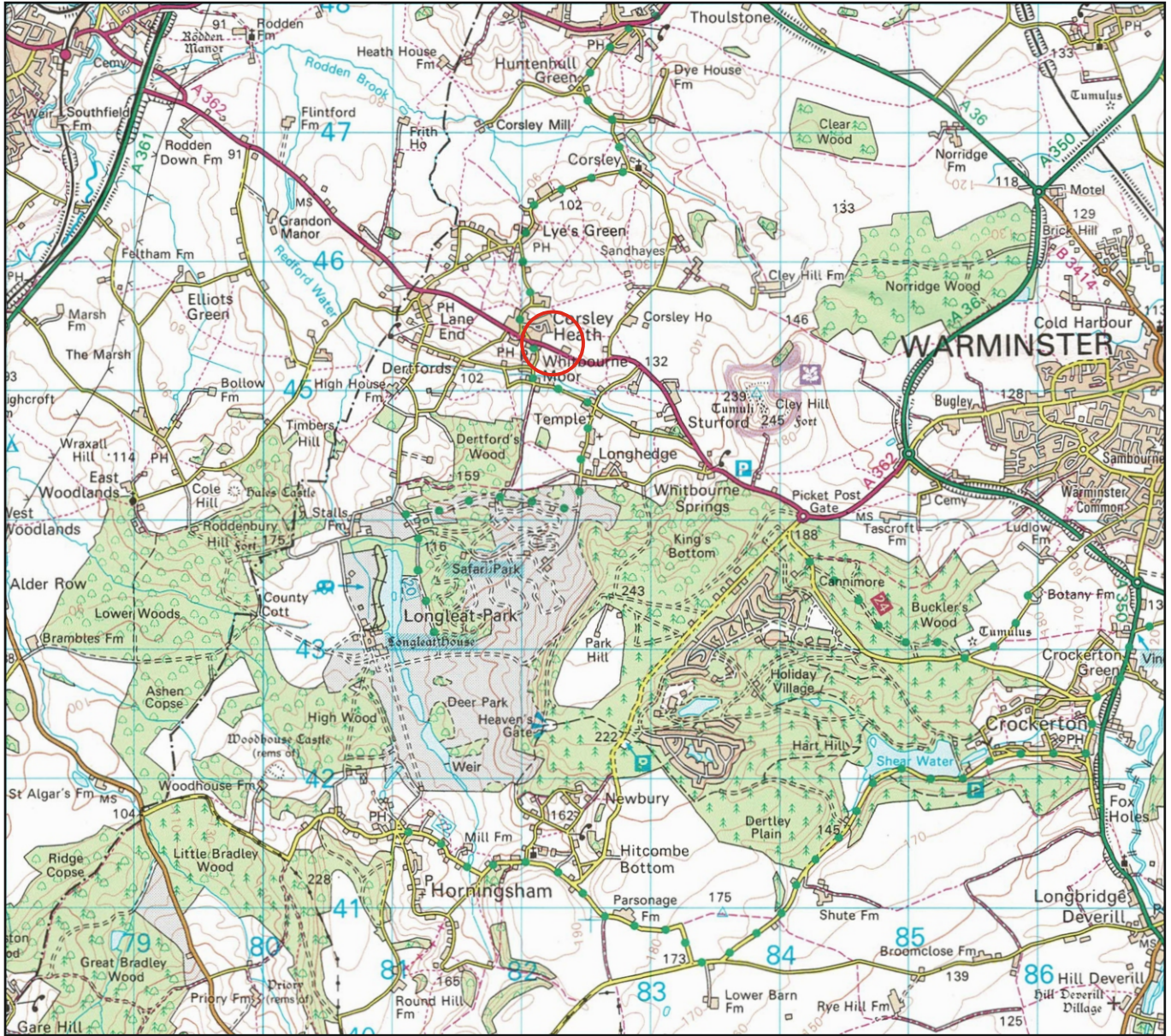
8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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East of Baytree Close, Corsley Heath, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation

APPENDIX 1: Stratigraphic Data

CXT	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	DESCRIPTION	CUTS/LATER THAN	CUT BY/EARLIER THAN
				TRENCH 1: 21.25m long by 1.50m wide. Natural = beige yellow sand. Present at average 138.15m AOD.		
101	21+	1.50+	0.2	Topsoil: dark brown sand, occasional Modern detritus was noted and discarded.	102	n/a
102	21+	1.5+0	0.13	Subsoil/natural interface: variable yellow brown sand.	Natural	101
				No archaeological features or finds were present within the trench. Southern end of the trench was shortened slightly due to the presence of a recently placed pipe to test the drainage of the soils.		
				TRENCH 2: 19.7m long by 1.50m wide. Natural = beige yellow sand. Present at average 138.19m AOD.		
201	20+	1.50+	0.26	Topsoil: dark brown sand, occasional Modern detritus was noted and discarded.	202	n/a
202	20+	1.50+	0.11	Subsoil/natural interface: variable yellow brown sand.	Natural	201
				No archaeological features or finds were present within the trench.		
				TRENCH 3: 20.5m long by 1.50m wide. Natural = beige yellow sand. Present at average 138.21m AOD.		
301	20+	1.50+	0.33	Topsoil: dark brown sand, occasional Modern detritus, along with two fragments of Post-medieval ceramic tile were noted and discarded. Topsoil was slightly thicker at the western end of the trench, towards the southern hedge boundary. A few fragments of probable clinker were also identified and discarded.	302	n/a
302	20+	1.50+	0.12	Subsoil/natural interface: variable yellow brown sand.	Natural	301
				No archaeological features or finds were present within the trench. However, the trench contained patches of heavy root disturbance.		
				TRENCH 4: 20.6m long by 1.50m wide. Natural = beige yellow sand. Present at average 138.16m AOD.		
401	20+	1.50+	0.20	Topsoil: dark brown sand, occasional Modern detritus was noted and discarded. Also present was a large bodysherd Medieval glazed (102g) pottery. A few fragments of probable clinker, along with a small abraded sherd of late Post-medieval glazed redware was also identified and discarded.	402	n/a
402	20+	1.50+	0.13	Subsoil/natural interface: variable yellow brown sand.	Natural	401
				No archaeological features or finds were present within the trench.		



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Site Code: BCC21

Accession Code: DZSWS:31-2021

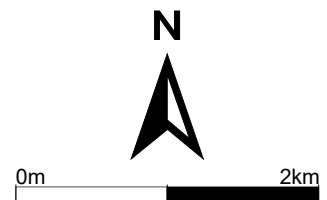
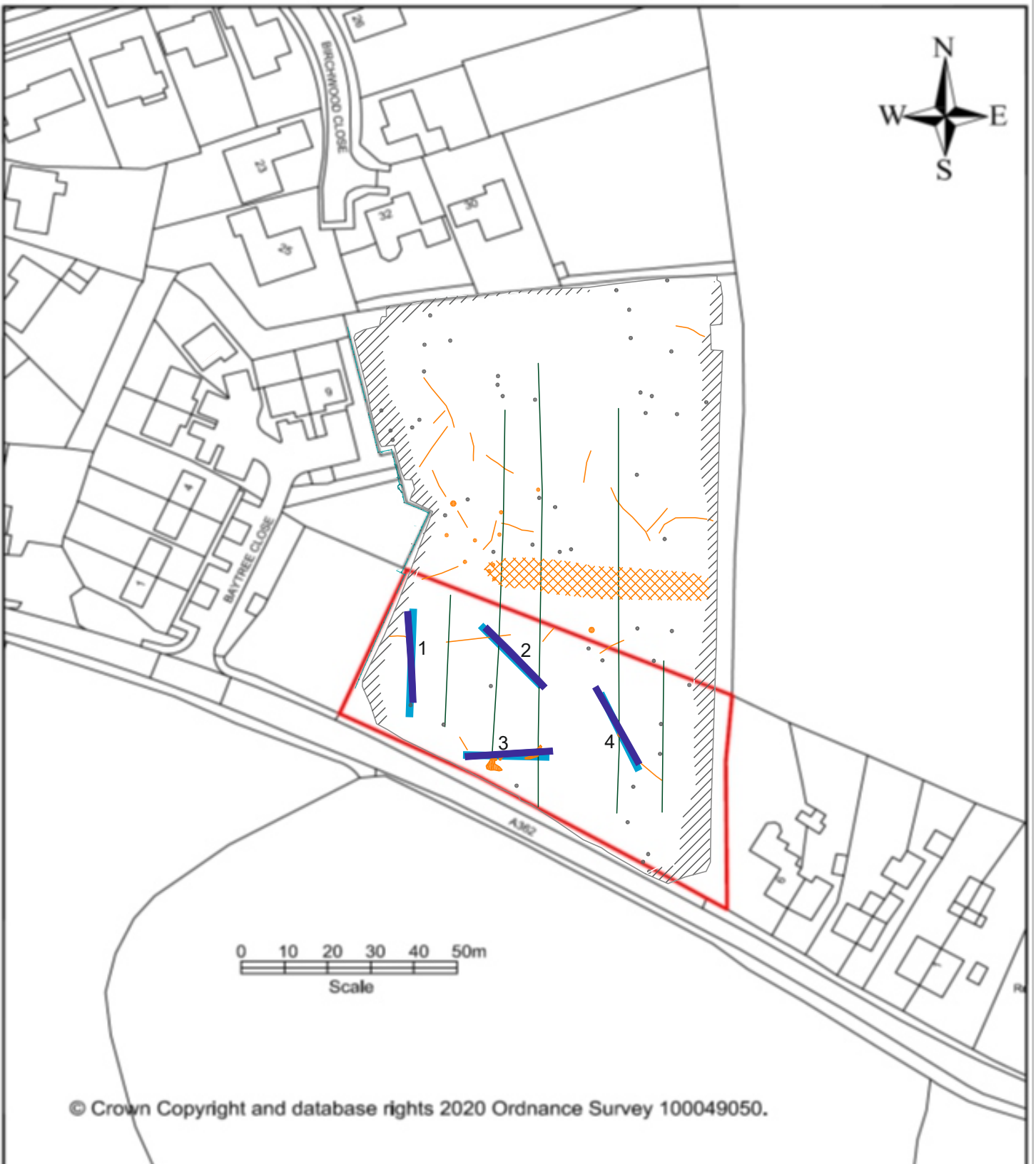


FIGURE 1: Site Location



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Site Code: BCC21
Accession Code: DZSWS:31-2021

- Positive linear anomaly - possible ditch-like feature
- Linear anomaly - ridge and furrow
- Discrete positive response - possible pit-like feature
- ▨ Positive anomaly - magnetically enhanced material
- ▨ Magnetic debris - spread of magnetically thermoremnant/ferrous material
- ▨ Magnetic disturbance from ferrous material
- Strong dipolar anomaly - ferrous object

Proposed Trench Location (light blue line)
Excavated Trench (dark blue line)

0m 50m

FIGURE 2: Trench Locations