

**LAND AT BROADWATER,
MANOR ROAD,
WANTAGE,
OXFORDSHIRE.**

NGR: SU 3970 8739

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Quality Assurance

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SUMMARY

Between the 11th and 15th July 2011 Foundations Archaeology undertook a programme of archaeological evaluation on land at Broadwater, Manor Road, Wantage, Oxfordshire (NGR: SU 3970 8739). The project was commissioned by Turley Associates, on behalf of John O'flynn Developments.

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

The archaeological works revealed the presence of numerous features, which occurred beneath and above an agricultural soil horizon. These included ditches, possible gullies, pits, a possible posthole, two large cuts and other possible features.

The recovered artefact assemblage included Medieval and Post-medieval pottery, CBM, bone, shell, metal artefacts, glass and clay pipe, which suggested that settlement activity at the site potentially spanned the Medieval to Post-medieval periods.

A small assemblage of struck flints probably represented re-deposited material and indicated Prehistoric activity in the general vicinity of 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 the Norman Conquest (AD 1066) and *circa* 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 *circa* 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 between AD 43 and AD 410.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by Foundations Archaeology between 11th and 15th July 2011 on land at Broadwater, Manor Road, Wantage, Oxfordshire (NGR: SU 3970 8739). The project was commissioned by Turley Associates, on behalf of John O'lynn Developments.
- 1.2 The archaeological works were undertaken in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (2011), based upon a brief issued by Oxfordshire County Council (2011), and the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2008).

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Oxfordshire Planning Archaeologist advised that a pre-determination programme of archaeological evaluation was to be undertaken in advance of the proposed development on land at Broadwater, Manor Road, Wantage.
- 2.2 The site is situated immediately to the west of Manor Road, to the south of Willow Lane and covers an area of approximately 0.8 ha. At the time of the fieldwork the site was given over to grass, with a clump of trees in the northwestern corner.
- 2.3 The site has been the subject of a desk-based archaeological assessment (Foundations Archaeology 2011), which has highlighted its archaeological potential.
- 2.4 Significant Prehistoric features are known from the former St Mary's School site, although the Prehistoric potential for Broadwater may be considered low-moderate, depending on whether the nearby watercourse was present on its Modern alignment at this early date.
- 2.5 The site lies outside of the Roman, Saxon and Medieval cores of the town, in an area that would probably have been utilised for agricultural purposes. Its location close to a watercourse may suggest that it could have been employed as meadow. Significant early Medieval and Medieval activity, however, is also known from the former St Mary's School site which demonstrate that activity during these periods was taking place some distance from the Market Square, the assumed centre. The implication is that settlement was either more substantial than previously suspected or that it was more dispersed and may have had more than one focus.
- 2.6 With the exception of a late 19th century building in the northwest corner, the site appears to have not been developed prior to 1937 and, other than the limited impact that may have occurred from agricultural activities – which may be limited if the site consisted of pasture/meadow – is unlikely to have seen any significant disturbance. Preservation of any archaeological deposits within the larger part of the site may, therefore be considered good.

Preservation within the area currently occupied by Broadwater and its curtilage may be considered likely to have suffered a higher degree of impact.

- 2.7 The site therefore predominantly contained the potential for Prehistoric activity and activity associated with Early Medieval and Medieval settlement features associated with the historic centre of Wantage. This did not prejudice the works against the recovery of data 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 decisions to be taken regarding the archaeological provision for the areas affected by the proposed 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 characterise the nature of the archaeological sequence and recover as much information as possible about the spatial patterning of features present on the site;
 - iii) To recover a well dated stratigraphic sequence and recover coherent artefact, ecofact and environmental samples.

4 METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The Written Scheme of Investigation required the excavation of 7 trenches, measuring 30m by 1.5m. Due to the presence of a clump of trees at the northwestern part of the site, it was only possible to excavate 6 trenches. Some trenches had to be slightly re-located in order to avoid isolated trees. All amendments to the trenching methodology were agreed, on-site, with the Oxfordshire Planning Archaeologist. The final trench locations are shown in Figure 2.
- 4.2 Topsoil and non-significant overburden was removed to the top of the archaeological deposits or natural, whichever was encountered first. This was achieved by the use of a 360° mechanical excavator, equipped with a toothless grading bucket, whilst under constant archaeological direction. Thereafter all additional investigation was conducted manually by archaeologists.

- 4.3 All excavation and recording work was undertaken in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation and the Foundations Archaeology Technical Manual 3: Excavation Manual. Any variations to the WSI excavation sampling methodology were agreed, on-site, with the Oxfordshire Planning Archaeologist.

5 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- 5.1 A full stratigraphic description of all the contexts identified in the course of the project is presented in Appendix 1, along with a report on the recovered pottery in Appendix 2 and a list of miscellaneous finds in Appendix 3. A summary discussion is given below.
- 5.2 The natural deposits were present across the site at an average depth of 1.20m (93.30m OD) below the Modern ground.
- 5.3 The natural in Trench 1 was sealed by a khaki brown clay subsoil (103), which was distinct from the layers contained within the other trenches. The subsoil contained occasional charcoal flecks, along with sixteen fragments of degraded bone and four Prehistoric struck flints. Subsoil (103) was overlaid by a grey brown clay (102), which was, in turn sealed by the topsoil (101). The absence of any features within Trench 1, or neighbouring Trench 2, indicated that the Prehistoric artefactual material within subsoil (103) was unlikely to represent *in-situ* activity and that this layer possibly represented an imported, probably alluvial, deposit.
- 5.4 The stratigraphic sequence in Trenches 2, 3, 5 and 6 comprised natural deposits overlaid by grey-brown clay soil layers (202), (303), (503), (504) and (603). Two of these, clay soil layers (504) and (603), were cut by land drains and thus, presumably, represented an agricultural horizon. The agricultural clay soil layers were subsequently overlaid by Modern make-up deposits (302), (502) and (602) and topsoils (201), (301), (501) and (601).
- 5.5 Archaeological deposits, which included ditches, possible gullies, pits, a possible posthole and two large cuts, along with other possible features, were present beneath the agricultural clay soil layers within Trenches 3, 5 and 6. Features [507] and [606] had demonstrably cut earlier deposits and thus indicated the potential for multiple phases of activity to be present.
- 5.6 It was not possible to determine the relationship between feature [308] and agricultural clay soil layer (303). Features [522], [523] and [524] were cut through clay soil layer (504) and were associated with relatively recent CBM fragments, as such, these features represented later Post-medieval/Modern activity.
- 5.7 The natural deposits in Trench 4 were present at a depth of 1.22m (93.00m OD) below Modern ground at the east and 1.75m (92.55) below Modern ground at the west and were directly overlaid by Modern make-up layer (402), which, in turn, was sealed by topsoil (401). The lack of *in-situ* agricultural

clays indicated that the deposits within the trench had previously been stripped and the variable depth of the natural suggested a degree of truncation may have also occurred.

- 5.8 The recovered artefactual assemblage included pottery, CBM, bone, shell, metal artefacts, glass and clay pipe, all of which are entirely indicative of settlement. The pottery spot dates suggested that settlement activity at the site potentially spanned the Medieval to Post-medieval periods.
- 5.9 The struck flints in Trench 1 probably represented re-deposited material and the struck flints recovered from Trenches 3 and 5 were present as residual artefacts in later fills, or, were unstratified. The occurrence of the flints was, therefore, most likely to indicate Prehistoric activity in the general locale.

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The evaluation has revealed the presence of numerous archaeological features, which were stratified beneath an agricultural soil horizon. These included ditches, possible gullies, pits, a possible posthole, two large cuts and other possible features. Later features, which cut the agricultural soils, were also present. The recovered artefact assemblage included Medieval and Post-medieval pottery, CBM, bone, shell, metal artefacts, glass and clay pipe, which suggested that settlement activity at the site spanned the Medieval to Post-medieval periods.
- 6.2 A small assemblage of struck flints probably represented re-deposited material and indicated Prehistoric activity in the general vicinity of the site.
- 6.3 The archive is currently held at the offices of Foundations Archaeology, but will be deposited within 12 months with the Oxfordshire County Museum Service. A short note will be submitted for publication in the relevant local archaeological journal and an OASIS form will also be submitted to ADS.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Foundations Archaeology would like to thank Hugh Coddington of Oxfordshire County Council and Peter Lawson of Turley Associates for their assistance during the course of this project.

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APPENDIX 1: Stratigraphic Data

CXT	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	DESCRIPTION	CUTS/LATER THAN	CUT BY/EARLIER THAN
				Trench 1; 30m by 1.5m. Natural = light beige chalk clay.		
101	na	na	0.34	Dark brown, compact clay silt topsoil. Contained frequent Modern artefacts.	102	na
102	na	na	0.17	Grey brown, compact clay sand. Contained occasional CBM fragments.	103	101
103	na	na	0.54	Khaki brown, compact clay silt. Contained occasional charcoal flecks.	nat.	102
				No archaeological features present within the trench.		
				Trench 2; 30m by 1.5m. Natural = light beige chalk clay.		
201	na	na	0.39	Light grey brown clay silt. Contained occasional Modern artefacts.	202	na
202	na	na	0.5	Dark grey clay sand. Contained occasional CBM fragments.	nat.	201
				No archaeological features present within the trench.		
				Trench 3; 29m by 1.5m. Natural = light beige chalk clay.		
301	na	na	0.26	Dark brown clay silt topsoil. Contained frequent Modern artefacts.	302	na
302	na	na	0.75	Mixed deposits of soil, clinker, brick and stone. Modern make-up.	303	301
303	na	na	0.34	Grey brown, compact clay silt. Contained occasional charcoal flecks.	nat.	302
[304]	1.5	5	0.47	Large cut feature with a wide, shallow profile. Extended across the width of the trench.	nat.	305
				Contained fill 305.		
305	1.5	5	0.47	Fill of feature [304]; light grey brown, compact clay silt. Contained occasional charcoal flecks and occasional small stones.	[304]	303
[306]	2	1.5	0.16	East-northeast - west-southwest aligned ditch with a shallow, truncated profile. Contained fill 307.	nat.	307
307	2	1.5	0.16	Fill of ditch [306]; grey, compact clay silt. Contained occasional charcoal flecks and occasional stones.	[306]	303
[308]	4?	2?	0.6+	Possible north - south aligned ditch with a steep, sloping profile. Not fully excavated.	nat.	315
				Contained fills 315, 309 and 310.		
				Unsure of stratigraphic relationship with layer 303 due to trench section weathering.		

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CXT	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	DESCRIPTION	CUTS/LATER THAN	CUT BY/EARLIER THAN
309	?	0.54	0.32	Fill of ditch [308]; grey clay with flints. Contained rare charcoal flecks.	315	310
310	4	0.7	0.28	Fill of ditch [308]; dark grey clay silt. Contained occasional charcoal flecks.	309	?
311	4.2	0.5	?	Light grey, compact clay silt. Possible northwest - southeast aligned ditch/gully. Not excavated.	nat.	?
312	2.5	1.5	?	Light grey, compact clay silt. Possible feature. Not excavated.	nat.	?
313	2	0.5	?	Light grey, compact clay silt. Possible west-northwest - east-southeast aligned ditch/gully. Not excavated.	nat.	?
314	1.9	0.45	?	Beige clay sand. Contained rare charcoal flecks and 1 X small, undiagnostic CBM fragment.	nat.	?
				Possible north - south aligned ditch/gully. Not excavated.		
315	?	0.24	0.17	Fill of ditch [308]; mottled beige grey, soft clay silt. Contained rare charcoal flecks.	[308]	309
				Trench 4; 30m by 1.5m. Natural = light beige chalk clay.		
401	na	na	0.15	Dark brown clay silt topsoil. Contained frequent Modern artefacts.	402	na
402	na	na	1.6	Mixed deposits of soil, clinker, brick and stone. Modern make-up.	nat.	401
				No archaeological features present within the trench.		
				Trench 5; 29m by 1.5m. Natural = light beige chalk clay.		
501	na	na	0.26	Dark brown clay silt topsoil. Contained frequent Modern artefacts.	502	na
502	na	na	0.3	Mixed deposits of soil, clinker, brick and stone. Modern make-up.	503	501
503	na	na	0.48	Dark brown, compact clay silt. Contained occasional charcoal flecks.	504	502
504	na	na	0.2	Light grey, compact clay silt. Contained rare charcoal flecks. Cut by agricultural land drain (not recorded).	nat.	503
[505]	1.7	0.6	0.43	Cut feature, probably a pit, with a near vertical profile. Contained fill 506. Not fully excavated.	nat.	506
506	1.7	0.6	0.43	Fill of pit [505]; dark grey brown, compact clay. Contained occasional small stones and occasional charcoal flecks.	[505]	504

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CXT	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	DESCRIPTION	CUTS/LATER THAN	CUT BY/EARLIER THAN
[507]	2.1	0.8	0.38	Re-cut of feature [521]; cut feature with near vertical sides and a flat base. Contained fill 509.	508	509
508	?	0.6	0.32	Fill of feature [521]; dark brown, plastic clay. Contained occasional small stones.	[521]	[507]
509	2.1	0.8	0.38	Fill of feature [507]; dark grey brown, compact clay. Contained occasional charcoal flecks and occasional small stones.	[507]	504
[510]	1.6	1.5+	0.42	Cut feature with a steep, sloping profile and a flat base. Contained fill 511.	nat.	511
511	1.6	1.5+	0.42	Fill of feature [510]; light grey, compact clay silt. Contained occasional charcoal flecks and occasional small stones.	[510]	504
512	1.8	0.7	?	Light grey, compact clay silt. Contained rare charcoal flecks. Possible feature. Not excavated.	nat.	504
513	1.7	0.7	?	Dark brown clay silt. Possible feature. Not excavated.	nat.	504
514	2	1.25	0.5+	Fill of soakaway [522]; a loose mixture of beige limestone fragments and occasional Post-medieval/Modern brick and tile fragments.	[522]	502
515	1.8	0.6	?	Light grey, compact clay silt. Possible feature. Not excavated.	nat.	504
516	0.9	0.55	?	Dark brown clay silt. Contained rare charcoal flecks. Possible feature. Not excavated.	nat.	504
517	0.4	0.4	?	Dark brown clay silt. Contained rare charcoal flecks. Possible posthole. Not excavated.	nat.	504
518	1.4	0.85	0.35+	Fill of feature [523]; grey clay with frequent limestone fragments. Contained Post-medieval/Modern brick fragments.	[523]	502
519	2.6	1.4	?	Beige grey clay. Contained rare charcoal flecks. Possible feature. Not excavated.	nat.	[523]
520	1.6	0.85	0.4+	Fill of feature [524]; grey clay with frequent limestone fragments. Contained Post-medieval/Modern tile fragments. Similar to fill 518.	[524]	502
[521]	0.6	0.5	0.32	Cut feature with an irregular profile. Contained fill 508.	nat.	508
[522]	2	1.25	0.5+	West-northwest - east-southeast aligned linear soakaway trench with an irregular profile. Contained fill 514. Not fully excavated.	504	514

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CXT	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	DESCRIPTION	CUTS/LATER THAN	CUT BY/EARLIER THAN
[523]	1.4	0.85	0.35+	Sub-oval pit with sloping sides. Contained fill 518. Not fully excavated.	504	518
[524]	1.6	0.85	0.4+	Probable pit. Contained fill 520. Not fully excavated.	504	520
				Trench 6; 30m by 1.5m. Natural = light beige chalk clay.		
601	na	na	0.15	Dark brown clay sand topsoil. Contained frequent Modern artefacts.	602	na
602	na	na	0.45	Grey brown clay sand. Contained frequent stone, brick and clinker lenses. Modern make-up.	603	601
603	na	na	0.26	Grey clay silt. Contained occasional CBM fragments. Cut by agricultural land drains.	nat.	602
[604]	0.7	0.94	0.32	Cut feature, possibly a ditch, with steep sides and a flat base. Contained fill 605.	nat.	605
605	0.7	0.94	0.32	Fill of feature [604]; light brown grey clay. Contained occasional charcoal flecks.	[604]	[606]
[606]	10	1.5	0.83	Large cut feature with a steep northwest edge and a gently sloping base. Extended across the width of	605	607
				the trench. Contained fills 607 and 608. Not fully excavated.		
607	10?	1.5?	0.52	Fill of feature [606]; black grey, soft clay. Contained occasional charcoal flecks and	[606]	608
				occasional small stones.		
608	9?	1.5?	0.3	Fill of feature [606]; brown black grey, soft clay. Contained occasional stones and occasional	607	603
				charcoal flecks.		

APPENDIX 2: The Pottery

By Dr. Jane Timby

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The evaluation at Broadwater resulted in the recovery of a small assemblage of 66 sherds of pottery weighing 1.1 kg largely dating to the Medieval and Post-medieval periods. In addition three fragments of ceramic building material are present with the pottery.
- 1.2 Pottery was recovered from 11 separate contexts from four trenches (2, 3, 5 and 6). The condition of the material was quite variable with several very large fresh sherds, some from the same vessels and some more fragmented finds. This is reflected in a good overall average sherd size of 16.3 g.
- 1.3 For the purposes of the assessment the pottery assemblage was briefly scanned to assess its likely chronology and quantified by sherd count and weight for each recorded context. The resulting data is summarised in Pottery Table 1.
- 1.4 No research has been carried out at this stage to seek local or regional parallels for the material.

2 Medieval

- 2.1 Approximately 25 sherds of Medieval date were recovered associated with six contexts.
- 2.2 Most of the sherds are body or base sherds and include plain jars/ cooking pots and jugs with at least one tripod pitcher represented by a basesherd with one surviving pod in Minety ware. Other wares include unglazed sandy ware, flint and sand-tempered wares were typical of the Kennet Valley and glazed Brill-Boarstall type jug sherds.
- 2.3 The greatest density of wares of this date, a total 13 sherds, came from the fill (607) of feature [606]. The group was accompanied by one Surrey-Hampshire Border ware of later Medieval or early Post-medieval date and a small Post-medieval sherd with a brown glaze which may be intrusive.
- 2.4 Other contexts with only Medieval material include feature [304] and layer (504) but the numbers of sherds involved is low so the possibility of re-deposition cannot be discounted.

3 Late Medieval – early Post-medieval

- 3.1 Some 11 sherds are dated to the later Medieval – early Post-medieval period. Most of these are the green glazed, white firing Surrey Border wares which were made between the 14th and 17th centuries and glazed Brill-Boarstall-type wares which could also be Medieval or later. Also in this group is a

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broken base of a German grey stoneware jug (?Aachen/Raeren) decorated with brown stripes from ditch [308] (309). Such wares were imported in quantity from the 15th -16th century. Of similar date (16th century) is a sherd of Cistercian ware from (508) [521].

3.2 These wares were distributed across seven contexts with the highest incidence in ditch [308] which seems to date to around the 16th-17th century.

4 Post-medieval

4.1 A total 30 sherds of likely Post-medieval date are present from five contexts with most of the sherds, some 25 pieces coming from ditch [308].

4.2 Wares include glazed and unglazed red earthenware, English stoneware, Surrey-Hampshire Border ware, iron-glazed kitchen ware and slip-decorated ware. The complete absence of any industrial wares suggests that nothing later than the 18th century is present.

5 Potential and further work

5.1 Despite the proximity of significant Prehistoric features no pottery of this date was present in the recovered assemblage.

5.2 The assemblage spans the Medieval to Post-medieval periods (13th-18th centuries) with perhaps the greatest amount of activity dating to around the 15-17th centuries.

5.3 No further work is recommended unless the chronology needs further refining in date in which case an appropriate Medieval/Post-medieval specialist needs to be consulted.

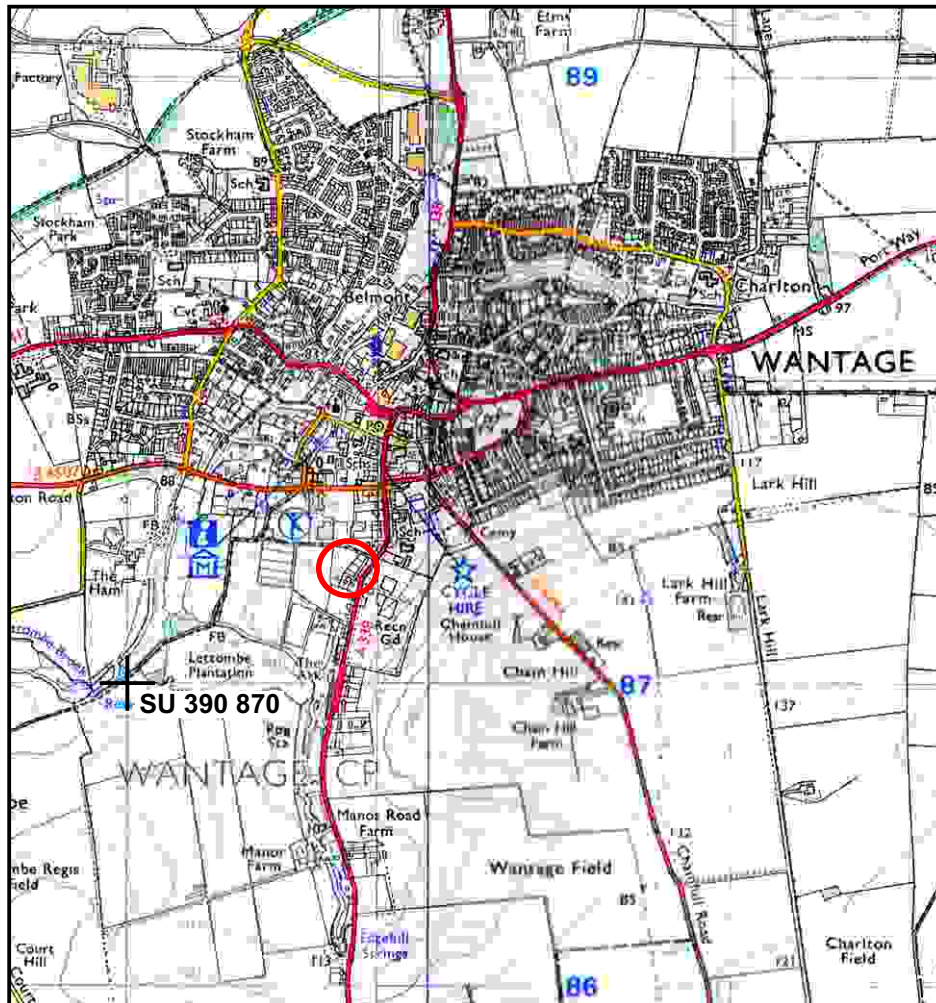
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Pottery Table 1: The pottery from Broadwater, Wantage evaluation (BWO11eval)

Context	Type	Med	Lmed- ePmed	Pmed	Tot No	Tot Wt	Date	cbm
202	layer	0	0	1	1	32	C18+	
303	layer	0	0	1	1	47	C18th+	
305	fill of feature [304]	1	0	0	1	139	C12-13	
309	fill of ditch [308]	0	7	25	32	706	C16-18	
310	fill of ditch [308]	2	1	2	5	53	C19+	
503	layer	0	0	0	0	0	med	1
504	layer	1	0	0	1	13	C13- 15th	
508	fill feature [521]	0	1	0	1	2	C15-16	
509	fill feature [507]	7	1	0	8	25.5	C14- 16th	2
607	fill feature [606]	13	1	1	15	52	C13-15+	
pot 'A'		1	0	0	1	7	C13- 15th	
TOTAL		25	11	30	66	1076.5		

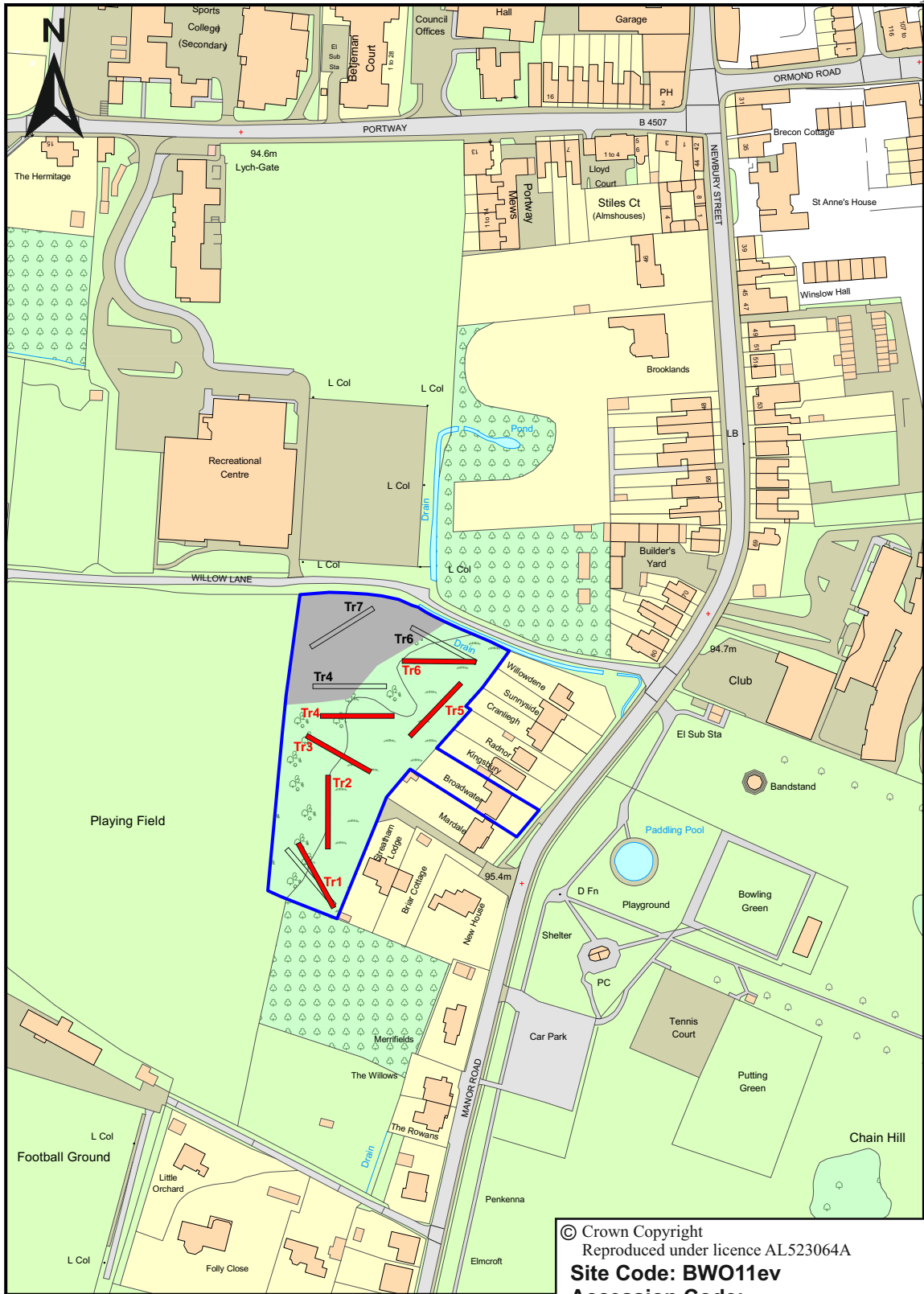
APPENDIX 3: Miscellaneous Finds

Context	Bone	CBM	Shell	Struck Flint	Other
103	16			4	
307	2		2		
309	9	2	5		
309	17			3	
309	8	4	2		Stone?
309	6	3	3		2 clay pipe
309	6	5	1		
309	9	3	5		
309	19	4	2		
309	4	2	1		
310	14	1	1		
503					1 metal
506	9			3	3 metal
508	6	6			
509	10	5	2		5 metal, 1 glass, 3 clay pipe
511	8			1	
607	31	1	6	3	3 metal
607	23	2			
Tr5 u/s				4	
Totals	197	38	30	18	



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FIGURE 1: Site Location



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 **STUDY AREA**

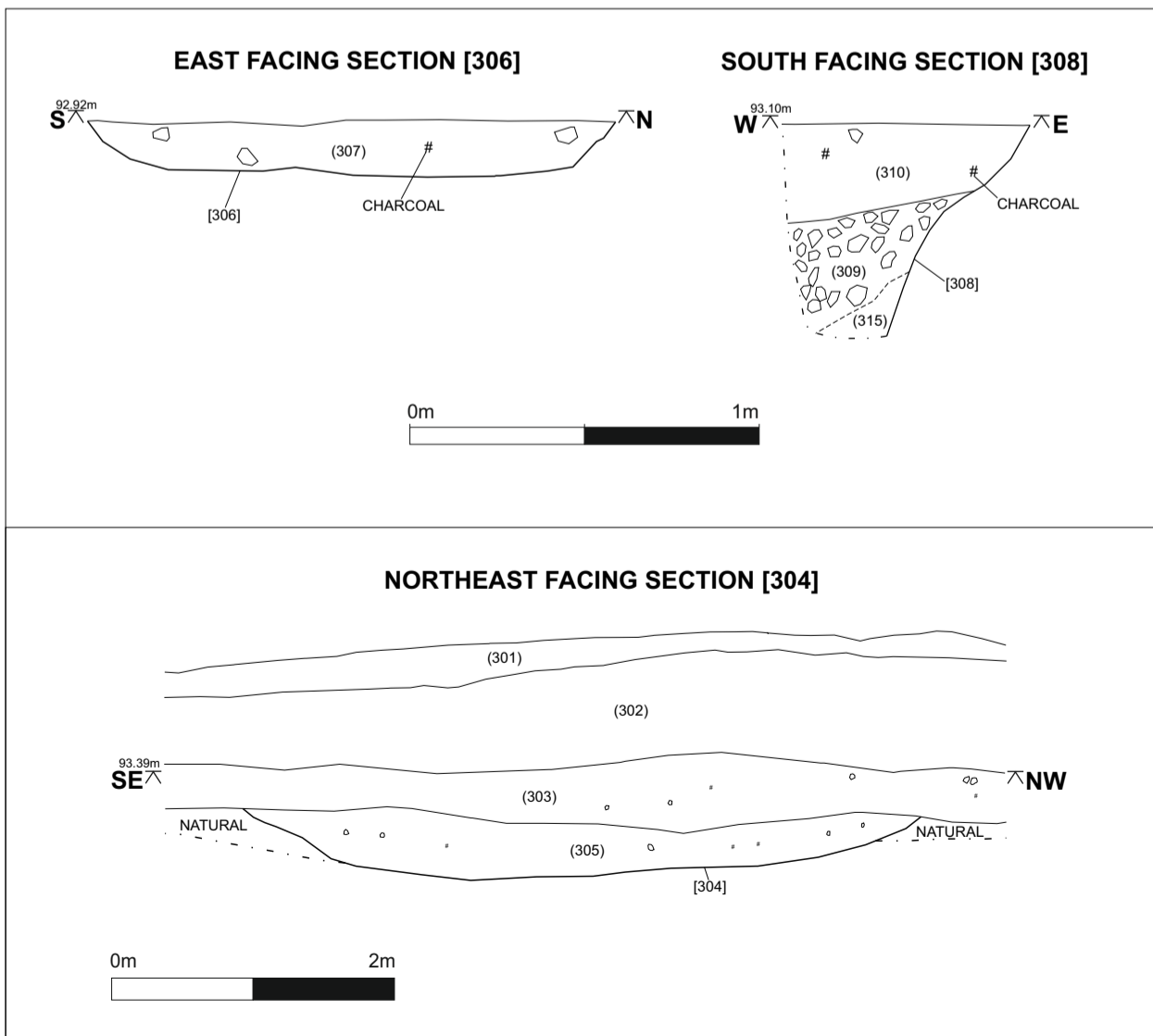
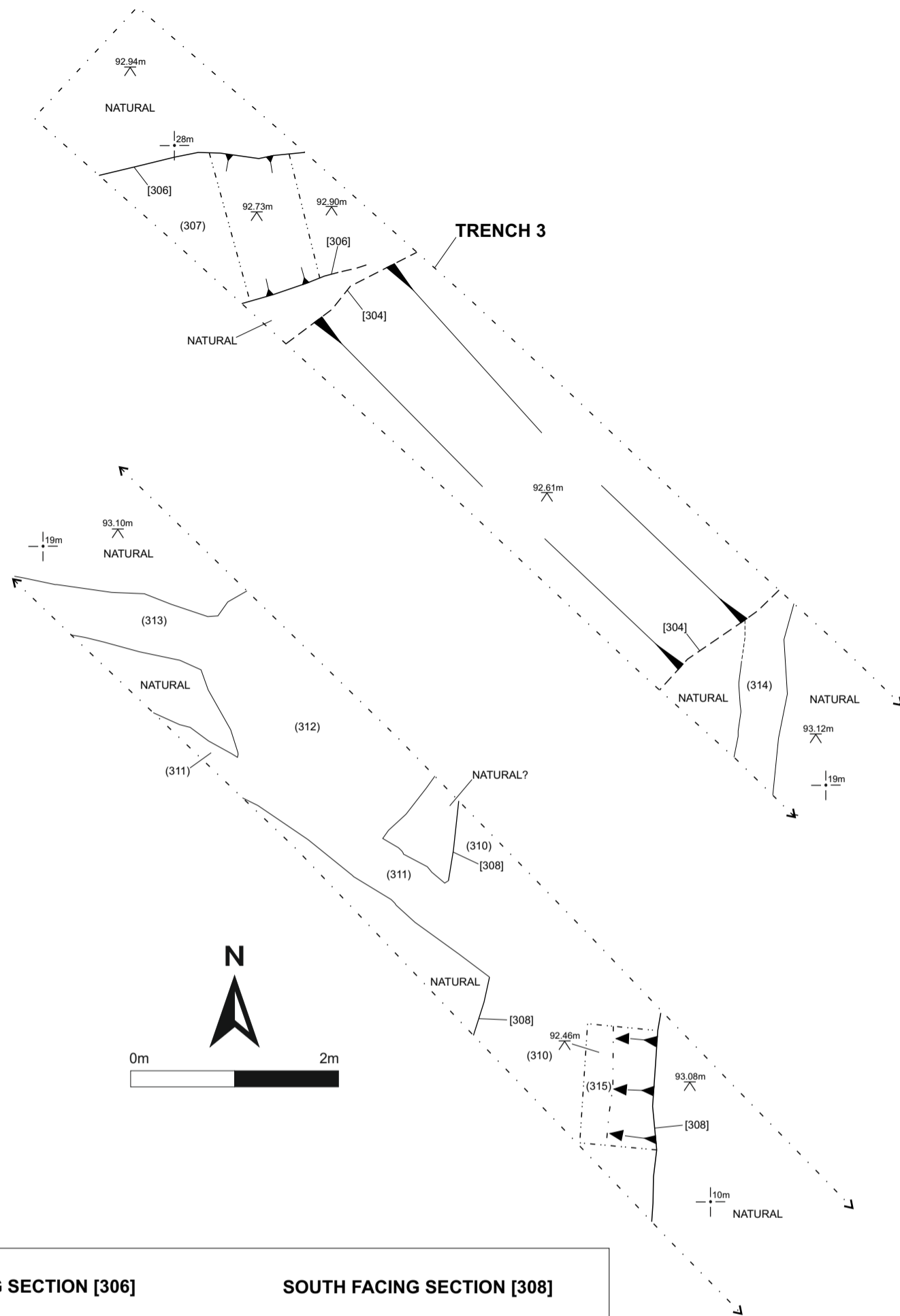
 **APPROXIMATE EXTENT OF TREE COVER**

 **PROPOSED TRENCH LOCATIONS**

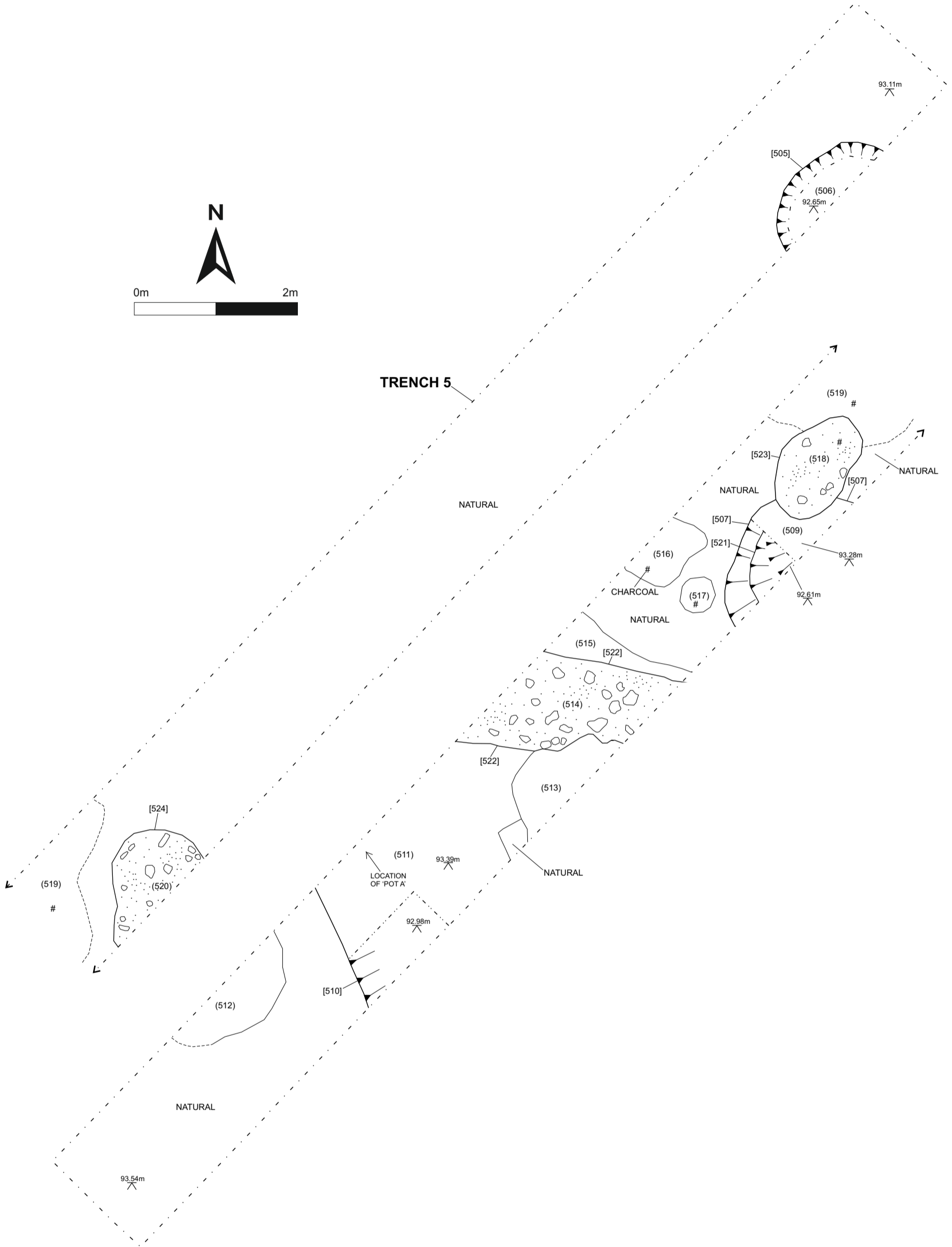
 **ACTUAL TRENCH LOCATIONS**



FIGURE 2: Trench Locations

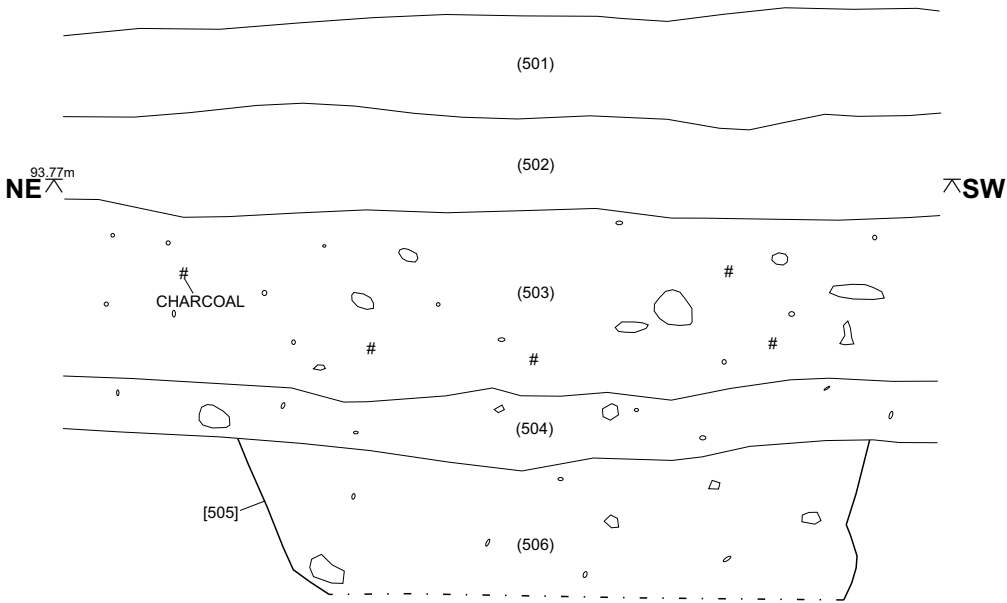


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FIGURE 3: Trench 3 Plan and Sections

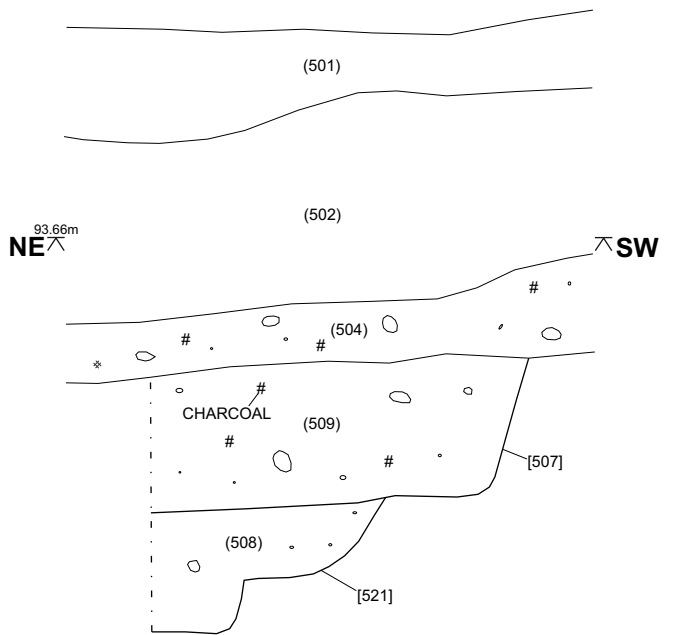


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FIGURE 4: Trench 5 Plan

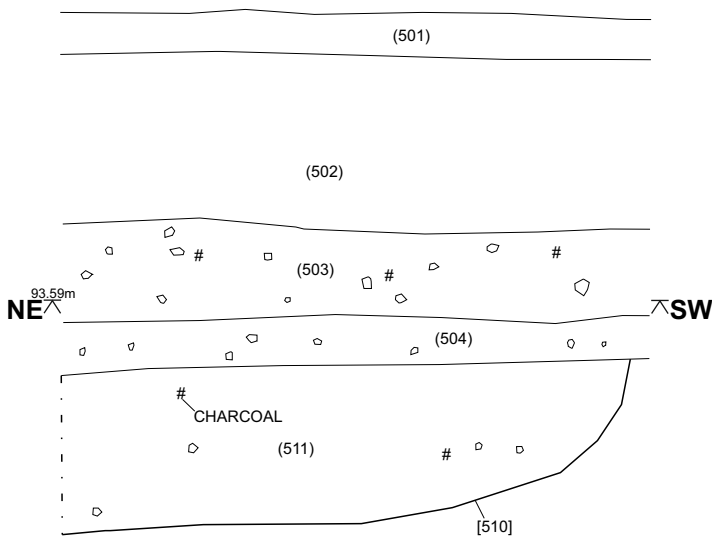
NORTHWEST FACING SECTION [505]



NORTHWEST FACING SECTION [507] and [521]



NORTHWEST FACING SECTION [510]



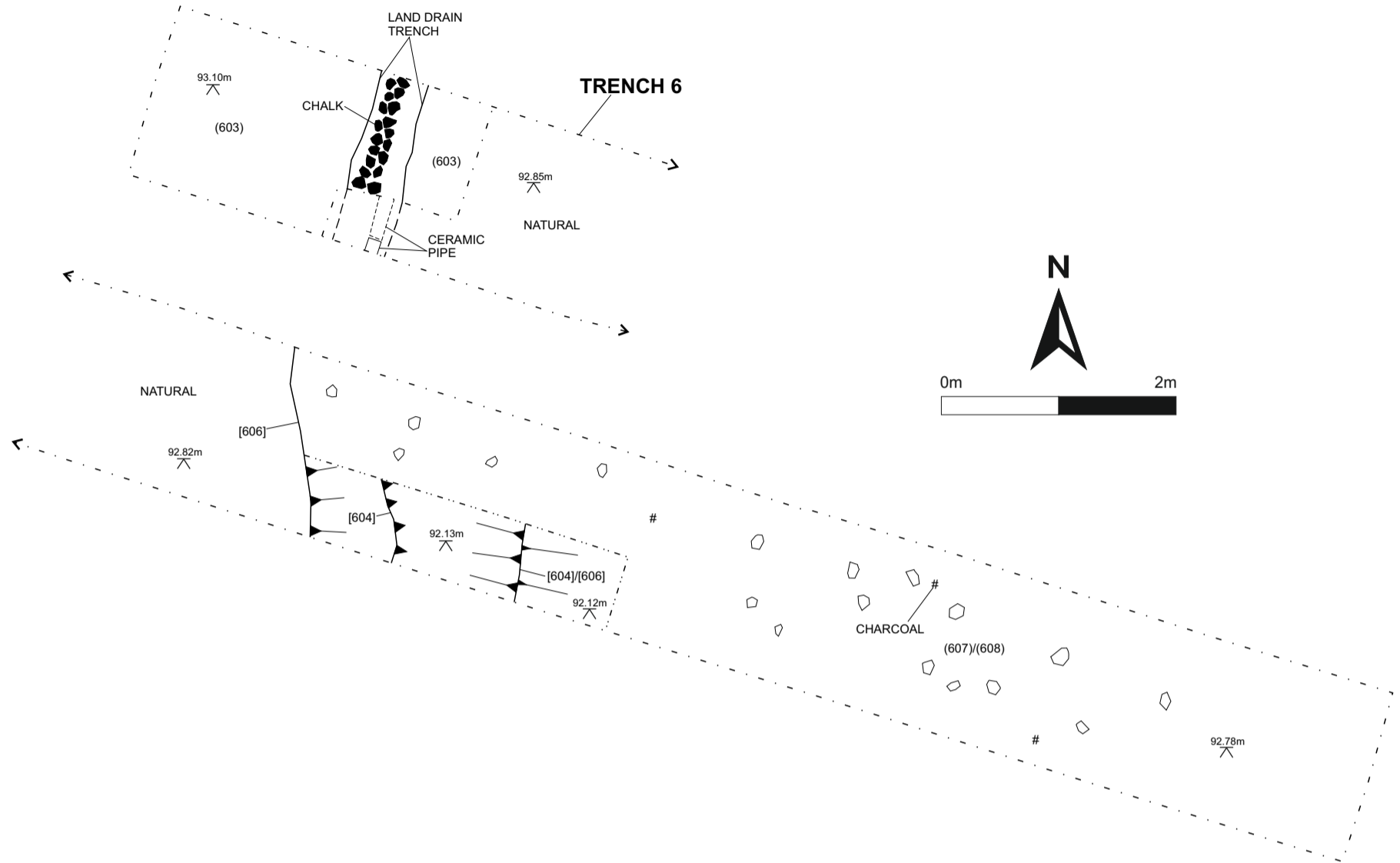
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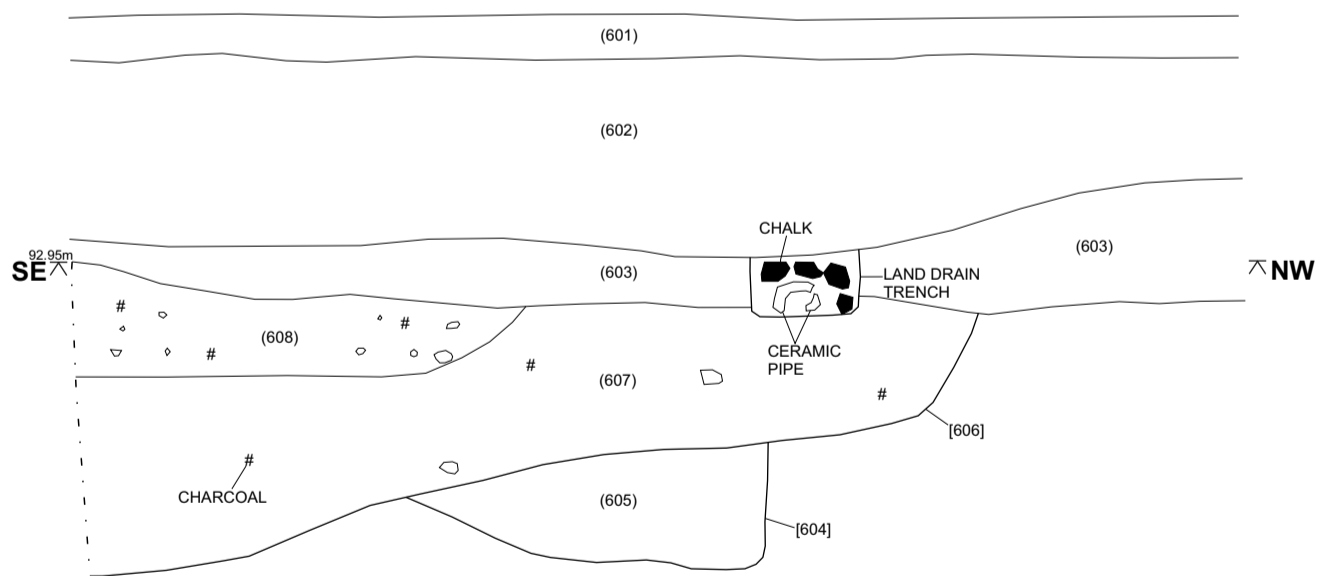
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FIGURE 5: Trench 5 Sections



NORTHEAST FACING SECTION [604] and [606]



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FIGURE 6: Trench 6 Plan and Section