

**6-8 HIGH STREET,
WROUGHTON,
WILTSHIRE.**

NGR: SU 1441 8042

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

Report No. 871

March 2013



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WROUGHTON,
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CONTENTS

List of Illustrations

Summary

Glossary

- 1 INTRODUCTION
- 2 PROJECT BACKGROUND
- 3 AIMS
- 4 METHODOLOGY
- 5 RESULTS
- 6 DISCUSSION
- 7 BIBLIOGRAPHY
- 8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Appendix 1: Stratigraphic Table

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

- Figure 1: Site Location
- Figure 2: Study Area Location and Site Plan
- Figure 3: Area 1 Plan
- Figure 4: Area 1 Sections

SUMMARY

Site Name: 6-8 High Street, Wroughton, Wiltshire

Grid Reference: SU 1441 8042

Site Activity: Archaeological Watching Brief

Date of Project: June to December 2012

Project Manager: Roy King

Site Supervisor: Diana King

Site Code: HSW12

Summary of Results: The archaeological works comprised the monitoring of the groundworks associated with the construction of residential units to the rear of 6-8 High Street, Wroughton (Figures 1 and 2). The work was commissioned by Mel Ziziros of Tangled Up In Blue Ltd in response to a condition of planning permission issued by Wiltshire Council, which required a 'watching brief' during the construction of residential units (planning reference: S/09/0405). The programme of archaeological works was required in accordance with the general principals of *National Planning Policy Framework 2012* (NPPF).

The site works comprised the excavation of footings for the new build, Area 1, and a service trench, Area 2. The monitoring revealed archaeological features at the southern end of the site, in Area 1. No archaeological deposits were encountered at the northern end of the site (Area 2) although this latter area had minimal opportunity to observe deposits due to the keyhole nature of the excavation.

Archaeological deposits encountered included three north-south aligned intercutting ditches, observed at the south end of the new build. The ditches dated to 12th century, the 17th-18th century and the 19-20th century. A further ditch, which contained a fragment of fairly undiagnostic tile, was identified on the northern edge of the new build and may have been the continuation of one of the southern ditches.

The ditch features probably represented a long-lived property boundary re-excavated along the same alignment between the 12th and 19th-20th centuries. Ditch [106] contained a base depositional fill, indicating it may have been an open feature for a period of time.

Natural deposits were encountered across the site, which were overlain by subsoil and topsoil layers at the southern end of the site, and by topsoil and modern make-up at the northern end of the site. The absence of subsoil in Area 2 may indicate modern truncation of this part 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.

Modern

The period following the Second World War to the present day.

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.

OS

Ordnance Survey

Post-medieval

The period from AD 1600 to the Second World War.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Between June and December 2012 Foundations Archaeology undertook a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording (watching brief) to the rear of 6-8 High Street, Wroughton, Wiltshire at NGR: SU 1441 8042 (Figure 1). The work was commissioned by Mel Ziziros of Tangled Up In Blue Ltd in response to a condition of planning permission issued by Wiltshire Council, which required a ‘watching brief’ during the construction of residential units (planning reference: S/09/0405).
- 1.2 The project involved the observation of the groundworks associated with the construction of the residential units to the rear of 6-8 High Street, Wroughton. The programme of archaeological works was required in accordance with the general principals of *National Planning Policy Framework 2012* (NPPF).
- 1.3 The works were undertaken in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by Foundations Archaeology (2012) which complied with the standard Brief issued by Wiltshire Council, the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* issued by the Institute for Archaeologists (2008) and the *Standards for Field Evaluation and Assessment in Wiltshire* (CAS 1995).
- 1.4 This report constitutes the results of the archaeological monitoring.

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In accordance with the general principles of *National Planning Policy Framework 2012* (NPPF), Wiltshire Council have placed a condition on planning permission requiring a programme of archaeological works to be carried out in relation to planning reference S/09/0405 for residential development at 6-8 High Street, Wroughton.
- 2.2 The site is located within the historic core of Wroughton and may contain evidence for Saxon, Medieval and Post-medieval settlement activity. The proposed residential units are situated in an area previously used as garden with trees to the rear of The Honeypot café. The site is demarcated to the north by the High Street and to the east, south and west by domestic build, which is predominantly modern in date.
- 2.3 The study area therefore contains the potential for archaeological finds, predominantly dating to the Early Medieval to Post-medieval periods. This will not prejudice the watching brief against the recovery of data relating to other periods.

3 AIMS

- 3.1 The aims of the archaeological monitoring 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.
- 3.2 These aims were to be achieved by the pursuit of the objectives as stated in the Written Scheme of Investigation (2012).
- 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 groundworks were undertaken by a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless grading bucket. The strip foundation trenches (Area 1) and part of the service trench (Area 2) were excavated under constant archaeological supervision of a suitably experienced archaeologist. However, the area of proposed build had been reduced by 0.1m-0.7m below the original ground level on arrival of Foundations Archaeology and the access road had been stoned. The depth of stratigraphy across the proposed development area was, however, sufficient that archaeological deposits were not impacted upon during these initial groundworks. In addition, the southern trench of the residential development was excavated using a toothed bucket. This was agreed by telephone with Clare King of Wiltshire Council. A 10m section of the service trench was observed; the remainder was excavated without archaeological supervision due to a miscommunication with the groundworks contractor. The very narrow width of this trench, would however, have limited the potential to identify archaeological deposits.
- 4.2 Spoil tips were scanned for unstratified finds across the entire study area.
- 4.3 Any significant archaeological deposits and/or features within the study area were manually cleaned, investigated and recorded in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation.

5 RESULTS

5.1 The contexts and features encountered in all areas are detailed in Appendix 1. A summary of the results is presented below.

Phase 1: Strip Foundations for Residential Development (Figures 3 and 4)

5.2 The first phase of the groundworks comprised the excavation of a series of footing trenches (Figure 3) covering an area of 11.5m by 10m. Each trench has been given a number for ease of discussion, as depicted on Figure 3. The external trenches measured 0.6m wide and 1m deep; the internal trenches measured 0.3m wide and 1m deep.

5.3 Natural deposits comprising brown yellow to orange clay with some chalk content were present at the southern end of the development area at a depth of approximately 0.8m from the original ground level. The northern half of the area revealed green grey Kimmeridge clay at a similar depth (0.7m from the original ground level). It is possible the difference in colour of the natural clays was due to historical waterlogging of areas of the site. The natural orange clay deposits were overlain by subsoil (103), 0.27m thick, a probable buried topsoil (102), 0.2m thick, and a modern topsoil (101), up to 0.5m thick. In the northern half of the area the green grey natural clay was overlain by (111), a 0.7m thick layer of possible topsoil which directly overlay the natural. The possible waterlogging of the northern half of the area may have rendered the layers noted further south visually identical at this point; there was no evidence of cut and fill and therefore levelling or raising the ground in the northern half of the area remains unlikely as an explanation for this disparity in stratigraphy.

5.4 A total of four cut features were present in the monitored areas. These comprised three intercutting north-south aligned ditches and a further north-south aligned ditch situated to the north, which may have been the continuation of one of the southern ditches.

5.5 The earlier features, [106] and [108] were overlain by subsoil (103). Feature [104] cut the subsoil (103), the possible buried topsoil (102) and had an uncertain relationship with topsoil (101). Feature [112] was overlain by (111).

5.6 Feature [108] was the earliest cut feature present on site. It comprised a probable north-south aligned ditch seen in plan and both sections of Trench 1. It was unclear whether this feature continued further north; the feature may have been present in Trench 2 of the footings, although the narrow width of this trench rendered it difficult to be certain. There was no evidence of continuation further north, in Trench 6, although visibility at this end of the site may have been compromised by historic flooding (see paragraph 5.2).

- 5.7 Feature [108] was fairly substantial at 0.60m deep, had steeply sloping sides and a 'V' shaped profile and contained a single fill (109). Finds from this feature included two sherds of Minety ware of mid-12th to mid-14th century date, a sherd of Newbury A ware of 10th-12th century date and two small, undiagnostic animal bone fragments. The larger sherd of Minety ware comprised a bodysherd with a broken-off handle with green glaze and comb decoration and may have been part of a tripod pitcher. The smaller Minety ware sherd was externally burnt, suggesting it derived from a cooking pot. The feature was cut by [106], therefore only a section of its western edge and part of its base remained.
- 5.8 Feature [106] was a possible north-south aligned ditch seen in plan and both sections of Trench 1. It was unclear whether it continued further north, as with feature [108]. It comprised a wide, deep ditch with fairly steep sides and a wide base. It contained two fills. It was primarily filled with (110), a shallow deposit probably representing depositional build-up in the base of the ditch. The bulk fill (107) contained a sherd of Newbury A of 10th-12th century date, a sherd of Laverstock ware of 13th-14th century date, a sherd of green glazed earthenware of 17th-18th century date, two tiny fragments of CBM, a Fe nail and three small, undiagnostic fragments of animal bone.
- 5.9 Feature [104] was a possible north-south aligned ditch seen in plan and both sections of Trench 1. It was unclear whether it continued further north, as with features [106] and [108]. It was a deep, 0.9m, 'U' shaped feature filled with (105), a loose dark deposit. Finds from the feature included a fragment of handmade brick, a sherd of red-glazed earthenware of 19th century date and a sherd of China ware of 19th-20th century date.
- 5.10 Feature [112] was seen in plan and section in Trench 6 and comprised a north-south aligned ditch with steeply sloping sides. It contained a single fill (113) from which a fragment of glazed tile was recovered. The tile was fairly undiagnostic and dated to between the 14th and 19th centuries. The position of the feature at a depth of 0.7m below the existing ground level could indicate that it fell within the earlier section of the dating range; features [108] and [106], the former of Medieval date, were encountered at a similar depth (0.60m) below the existing ground level. It is possible feature [112] was a continuation of either [108] or [106].

Area 2, Service Trench (Figure 2)

- 5.11 The stratigraphy within the service trench comprised black grey Kimmeridge clay encountered at a depth of 0.57m from the existing ground level. The natural was overlain by a possible buried topsoil layer (203), which was in turn overlain by a sand bedding layer (202) for the Tarmac surface of the existing car park, and the Tarmac itself, (201). The height of natural deposits and the lack of subsoil in this area indicate a degree of truncation.

- 5.12 No archaeological finds, features or deposits were encountered within this area.

6 DISCUSSION

- 6.1 The monitoring revealed archaeological features at the southern end of the site (Area 1), within the area of new build. No archaeological deposits were encountered at the northern end of the site (Area 2), within the service trench, although this latter area had limited opportunity to observe deposits due to the keyhole nature of the excavation. Natural deposits were encountered across the site, which were overlain by subsoil and topsoil layers at the southern end of the site, and by topsoil and modern make-up at the northern end of the site. The absence of subsoil in Area 2 may indicate modern truncation of this part of the site.
- 6.2 Archaeological deposits encountered included three north-south aligned intercutting ditches, observed within the southern trench of the footings for the new build. The earlier ditches, [106] and [108], may have continued further north, beyond the footings of the new build and a section of ditch [112] was present on the southern edge of the footings, at a similar depth below the existing ground level. The earliest ditch [108] dated to the 12th century and was cut by [106] of probable 17th-18th century date. Ditch [112] contained a fragment of tile, which could have dated from the 14th to the 19th centuries. The latest ditch, [104], which cut ditch [106] contained pottery dating it to the 19th-20th century.
- 6.3 The ditch features probably represented a long-lived property boundary re-excavated along the same alignment between the 12th and 19th-20th centuries. Ditch [106] contained a base depositional fill, indicating it may have been an open feature for a period of time.
- 6.4 The archive is currently held at the offices of Foundations Archaeology, but will be deposited within 12 months with Swindon Museum, under an Accession Code to be confirmed. A note will be published in the local journal. An OASIS form will also be submitted to ADS.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Foundations Archaeology 2012, *Land at 6-8 High Street, Wroughton, Wiltshire: Archaeological Watching Brief: Written Scheme of Investigation*.

IFA 2008, *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*. Institute for Archaeologists.

8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

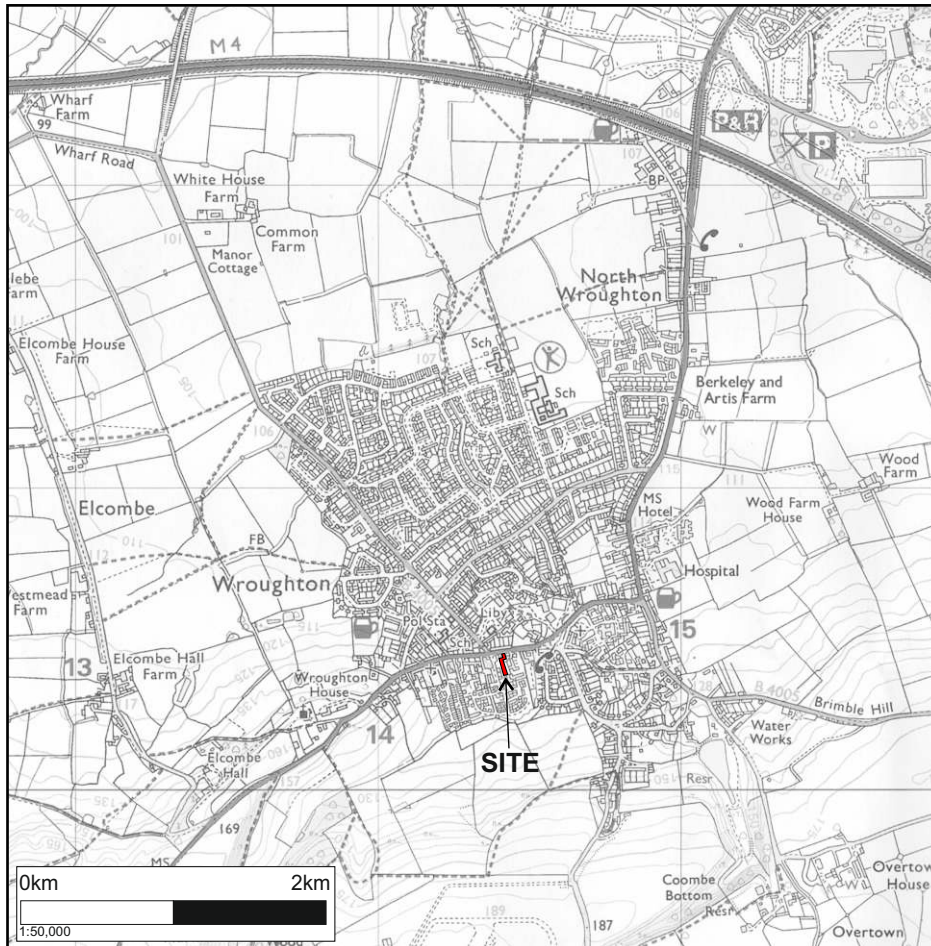
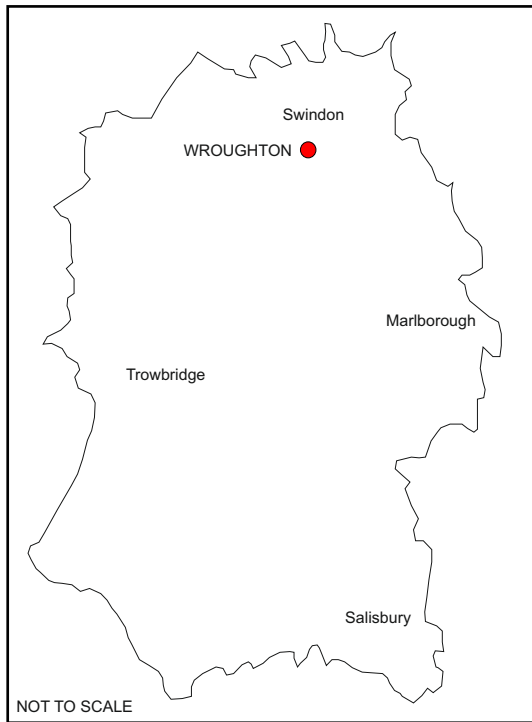
Foundations Archaeology would like to thank the client Me Ziziros, Clare King and Melanie Pommeroy-Kellinger of Wiltshire County Council and the on-site groundworkers for their help and co-operation during the course of the project.

Appendix 1: Stratigraphic Table

Context	Depth (m)	Width (m)	Length (m)	Overlies/Cuts	Overlain by/ Cut by	Description
101	0.2 (west)- 0.5 (south)			102	n/a	Modern topsoil, possibly imported. Brown black soft friable to plastic clay silt containing modern detritus such as concrete fragments and plastic. Heavily root disturbed.
102	0.1-0.2			103	101	Buried topsoil? Layer of black grey firm silt clay with sherds of 20 th century China wares.
103	0.27			Natural	102	Subsoil. Mid yellow grey plastic clay with rare chalk and charcoal flecks.
[104]	0.9	1.0		?101, 102, 103, [106]	n/a	Late Post-medieval/Modern cut feature, possible ditch. Steeply sloping sides with a wide, rounded base, N-S aligned.
105	0.9	1.0		n/a	n/a	Fill of [104]. Black grey loose, plastic silt clay. Top very root disturbed. Finds included a brick fragment, a sherd of 19 th century red glazed earthenware and a sherd of China ware of 19 th -20 th century date.
[106]	1.1+	1.7		103, [108], Natural	102, [104]	Late Post-medieval cut feature. Possible N-S aligned ditch with steeply sloping sides and a wide, flattened base.
107	1.1+	1.7		110	102, [104]	Fill of [106]. Mid yellow brown grey plastic, firm silt clay. Finds included a 17 th -19 th century green glazed earthenware pottery sherd, a sherd of Laverstock ware of 13 th -14 th century date, a sherd of Newbury A ware of 10 th -12 th century date, 2 small CBM fragments, a Fe nail and three small animal bone fragments.
[108]	0.6	1.0+		Natural	102, [104]	Medieval cut feature. Steeply sloping sides and a narrow, pointed base. Possible N-S aligned ditch.
109	0.6	1.0+		n/a	102, [104]	Fill of [108]. Mid yellow grey with green mottling soft, plastic, compact silt clay. Finds included two sherds of Minety ware of mid 12 th -mid 14 th century date, a sherd of Newbury A ware of 10 th -12 th century date and two small animal bone fragments.

6-8 High Street, Wroughton: Archaeological Watching Brief

Context	Depth (m)	Width (m)	Length (m)	Overlies/Cuts	Overlain by/ Cut by	Description
110	0.12	1.1		n/a	107	Base fill of [106]. Mid orange brown soft, plastic, sticky silt clay.
111	0.70			Natural	n/a	Topsoil layer. Dark brown clay silt.
[112]	0.5+	1.1		Natural	111	N-S aligned ditch. Steeply sloping sides, base not excavated.
113	0.5+	1.1		n/a	111	Fill of [112]. Dark brown black clay silt. A fragment of green and red glazed tile of 14 th -19 th century date.
201	0.1			202	n/a	Tarmac, surface to car park.
202	0.12			203	201	Layer of modern builders' sand, yellow.
203	0.35			Natural	202	Possible buried topsoil. Layer of Black grey clay silt with finds of CBM fragments and China wares.



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Site Code: HSW12

Accession Code:



FIGURE 1: Site Location



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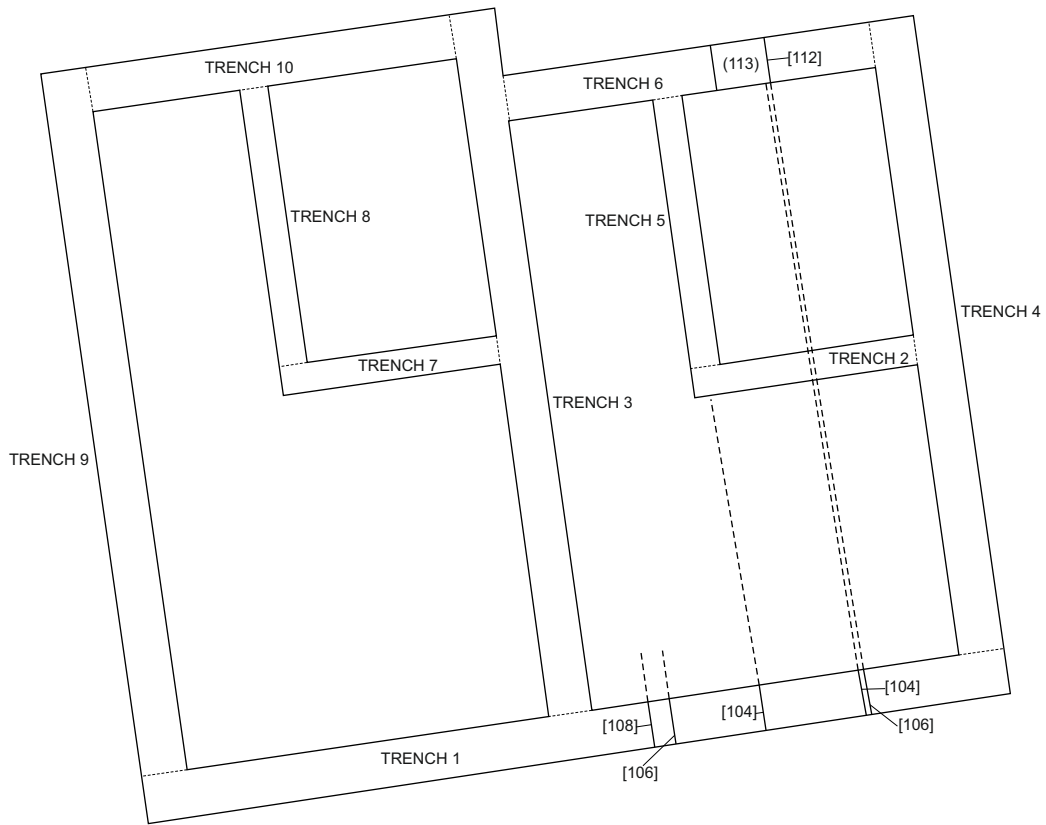
Site Code: HSW12


Accession Code:

- NEW BUILD, AREA 1
- SERVICE TRENCH, AREA 2
- REDUCED AREA
- STONED AREA
- SITE OUTLINE

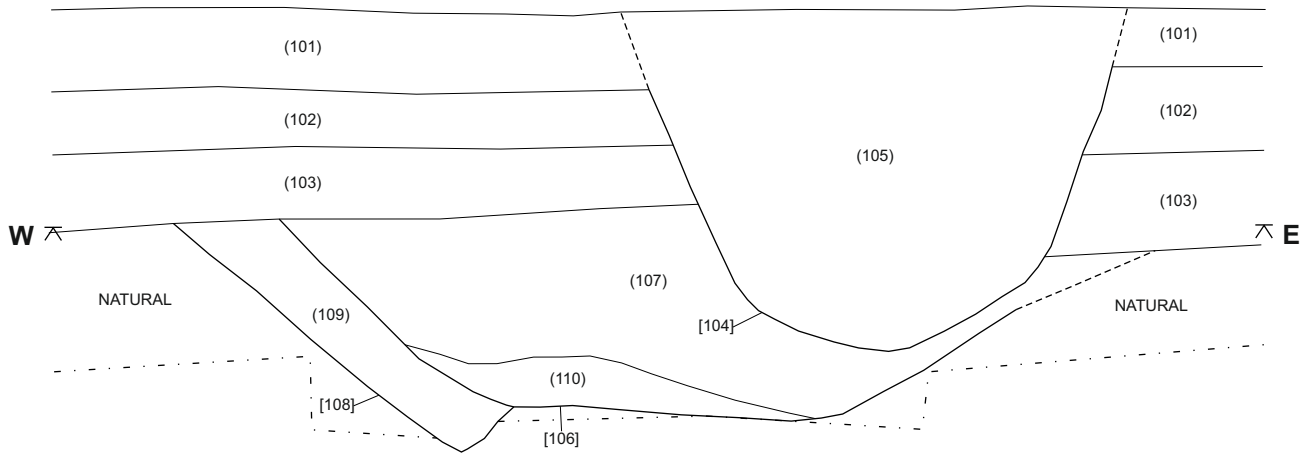


FIGURE 2: Study Area Location and Site Plan

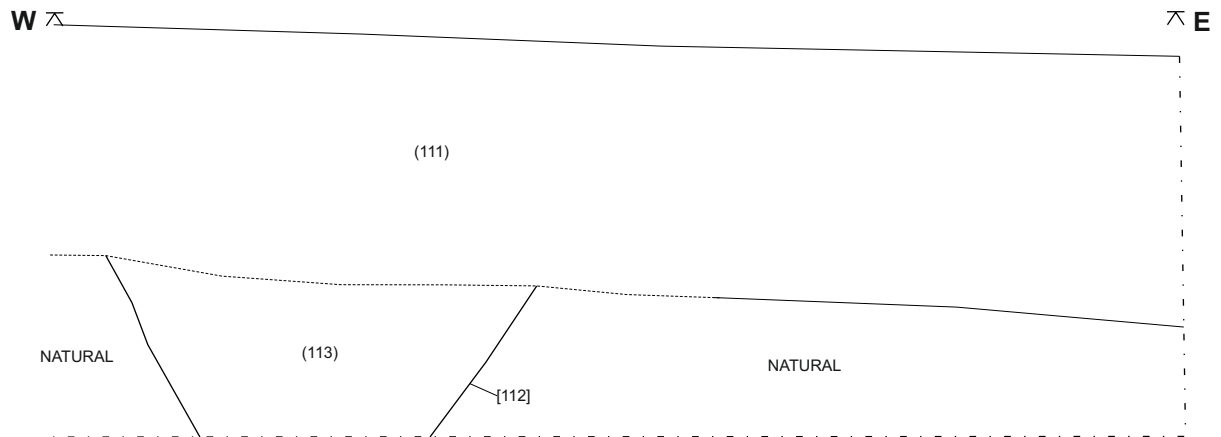


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<p style="text-align: center;">FIGURE 3: Area 1 Plan</p>

001: SOUTH FACING SECTION [104], [106] AND [108]



002: SOUTH FACING SECTION [112]



Site Code: HSW12

Accession Code:



FIGURE 4: Area 1 Sections