

**PARSLOES FARMHOUSE,
OVERTOWN,
WROUGHTON,
WILTSHIRE.**

NGR: 415484.179366

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

Report No. 951
March 2014



ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANCY, MANAGEMENT & FIELD SERVICES



**PARSLOES FARMHOUSE,
OVERTOWN,
WROUGHTON,
WILTSHIRE.**

NGR: 415484.179366

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

March 2014

Report No. 951

Quality Assurance

This Document has been compiled and authorised in accordance with AMS's Quality Procedures (BS EN ISO 9001 : 2008)

Author: N.Moakes

Date: 21/03/2014

Approved: R. King

QA Checked: T.Michaels

This report has been compiled with all reasonable skill care and attention to detail within the terms of the project as specified by the client and within the general terms and conditions of Archaeological Management Services Ltd trading as Foundations Archaeology but no explicit warranty is provided for information and opinions stated. AMS Ltd accepts no responsibility whatsoever to third parties to whom this report or any part thereof is made known. Any such party relies on this report at their own risk. Copyright of this document is retained by AMS Ltd, but unlimited licence to reproduce it in whole or part is granted to the client and/or their agents and/or assignees on payment of invoice

CONTENTS

List of illustrations

Summary

Glossary

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

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Stratigraphic Data

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

- Figure 1: Site Location
- Figure 2: Watching Brief Area
- Figure 3: Site Plan, Showing Proposed and Actual Location of Sewage Treatment System
- Figure 4: Post-Excavation Plan of Trenches, Including All Phases
- Figure 5: Sections

SUMMARY

In March 2014 Foundations Archaeology undertook a programme of archaeological watching brief during sewage works at Parsloes Farmhouse, Overtown, Wroughton, Wiltshire (NGR: 415484.179366). The work was commissioned by Mr and Mrs Gardiner.

The watching brief comprised the monitoring of trench excavation during the installation of a sewage treatment system.

The archaeological monitoring identified an undated linear and three possible cut features, one of post-medieval/modern date.

Possible feature [104], may have extended into Trench 2, if so it was present for a length of over 11m. The full extent of this possible feature was not present within the watched area, this combined with a lack of artefactual evidence made interpretation difficult.

Both the linear and two of the possible cut features that were identified were located in the northern half of Trench 3. Their close proximity allowed for a stratigraphic sequence to be constructed, of which linear [307] is stratigraphically the oldest. This is followed by [311], which is possibly the result of a dumping or demolition event from a previous construction. Both [307] and [311] contained animal bone, which would suggest that the site was in the vicinity of settlement activity. Unfortunately no dateable material was found in these features to link them to either the adjacent Medieval village or any other known archaeological activity in the area. Stratigraphically the latest feature in the sequence is [303], a shallow deposit which is late Post-Medieval or Modern in date.

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.

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.

OS

Ordnance Survey.

Roman

The period traditionally dated between AD 43 and *circa* AD 410.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In March 2014 Foundations Archaeology undertook a programme of archaeological watching brief during sewage works at Parsloes Farmhouse, Overtown, Wroughton, Wiltshire (NGR: 415484.179366). The work was commissioned by Mr and Mrs Gardiner.
- 1.2 The project was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by Foundations Archaeology (2014), which was prepared in accordance with the NPPF12 (*National Planning Policy Framework 2012*), the standard brief issued by Wiltshire Council, the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* issued by the Institute for Archaeologists (2011) and *Standards for Field Evaluation and Assessment in Wiltshire* (CAS 1995).
- 1.3 This document presents the findings of the archaeological watching brief.

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Planning permission (Planning Ref: **S/13/1785**) was granted for the installation of a sewage treatment system at Parsloes Farmhouse, Overtown.
- 2.2 The site is located immediately east of Overtown Farm, it is bounded to the north and east by residential dwellings and agricultural land and to the south by an access track, beyond which is an agricultural field.
- 2.3 The topography is generally flat at approximately 184m OD and the underlying geology comprises *West Melbury Marly Chalk Formation* and *Zig Zag Chalk Formation* (undifferentiated) – Chalk (BGS On Line Viewer).
- 2.4 The Wiltshire HER indicates that Roman pottery sherds were found approximately 200m northwest of the site (HER REF: MWI15111) and possible Roman inhumations have been reported in Overtown, although their precise location is unknown (HER REF: MWI15190).
- 2.5 The study area is located at the southern edge of Overtown Scheduled Monument (SM REF: 1018274), which comprises the remains of a Medieval settlement, although the site itself is situated outside the extent of the scheduled area. The greater part of the monument lies to the south of Overtown House, immediately north of the site and comprises well preserved earthworks including a probable former street and numerous house platforms, which survive up to 1.5m in height.
- 2.6 The study area therefore contains the potential for archaeological remains, predominately dating to the Roman and Medieval periods. This did not prejudice the watching brief against the recovery of data relating to other periods.

3 AIMS

- 3.1 The aims of the archaeological watching brief are 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 will allow reasonable planning decisions to be taken regarding the archaeological provision for the areas affected by the proposed works.
- 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 and preservation of the archaeological sequence and recover as much information as possible about the spatial patterning and extent of features present on the site;
 - iii) to recover a well dated stratigraphic sequence which will attempt to determine the complexity of the horizontal and vertical stratigraphy present, and to recover coherent artefact, ecofact and environmental samples;
 - iv) to determine the potential of the site to provide palaeoenvironmental and/or economic evidence and the forms in which such evidence may be present.

4 METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 All groundwork that had the potential to impact upon buried archaeological deposits was carried out under constant archaeological supervision. The trenches for the drainage field were excavated in a slightly different location from the original plan, the proposed and amended locations are shown in Figure 2 (Figure 2). All mechanical excavation was carried out by a 360° tracked machine, using a toothless bucket.
- 4.2 Investigation of archaeological deposits was conducted manually, by an archaeologist, in accordance with the methodology set out in the WSI. All archaeological deposits and features were subject to appropriate levels of investigation and recording. Spoil tips were scanned for finds. All recovered archaeological artefacts were allocated a context reference number and retained. Modern artefacts were noted and discarded.

5 RESULTS

5.1 A full stratigraphic description of the contexts identified during the course of the project is given in Appendix 1. A summary discussion is given below.

5.2 TRENCH FOR NEW 110MM UPVC DRAINAGE (TRENCH 1)

5.2.1 The service trench was orientated approximately east-west. It extended for a length of approximately 15m and was excavated down to an average depth of 0.75m from the Modern ground level. The natural deposits of marly chalk, were present at a depth of 0.34m at the western end of the trench. This depth dipped at 6.5m from the western end of the trench, where possible feature [104] cut away the natural deposits.

5.2.2 At the eastern end of the trench, the natural chalk appeared to be cut by possible feature [104], which extended across the width of the trench and possibly continued into Trench 2. It contained (103), a mid grey silty clay with frequent charcoal flecks and chalk fragments throughout. Feature [104] and the natural deposits were then sealed by (102), a mid grey silty clay which contained occasional charcoal patches. One piece of Post-medieval pottery was recovered from the surface of (102) in the eastern end of the trench. Subsoil (102) was then sealed by topsoil (101).

5.3 NEW ASP08 SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT (TRENCH 2)

5.3.1 This rectangular cut was 2.65m (east-west) by 2.40m (north-south) and was located at the eastern end of Trench 1 (Figure 4). The natural deposits of marly chalk were encountered at a depth of 1.15m from the Modern ground level. The natural was sealed by (203), a mid grey plastic silty clay, 0.27m thick, which contained occasional charcoal flecks and chalk inclusions. This was sealed by (202), a mid grey plastic silty clay up to 0.58m thick, which contained frequent charcoal and small fragments of brick and chalk. This was then sealed by topsoil (201), which was 0.30m thick and was disturbed by an existing flowerbed.

5.3.2 Deposit (203) was possibly equivalent to (103)/[104]. If this is a continuation of [104], the possible feature would have extended for a length of over 11m.

5.4 AREA FOR NEW DRAINAGE FIELD (TRENCHES 3, 4 AND 5)

5.4.1 The new drainage field comprised three connected trenches of an average 0.90m in width and 1.60m in depth, which together made up a total trench length of 25.60m. For ease of recording, the drainage trench was subdivided into Trenches 3, 4 and 5.

5.4.2 In Trench 3, the natural marly chalk and clay was encountered at an average depth of 0.90m from the Modern ground level. In the northern part of Trench 3, a shallow linear feature [307], which was 0.30m wide and 0.20m deep, was cut into the natural substrates for a length of over 1.80m (Figures 4 and 5). It was orientated northeast-southwest and extended beyond the limits of the trench. This feature was not present in the parallel portion of Trench 4 which would suggest that it terminated between

Trenches 3 and 4. The linear contained (308), dark grey plastic silty clay with limestone fragments, which ranged from 0.10m³ to 0.40m³. Animal bone fragments were recovered from the fill but no dating evidence was present.

- 5.4.3 In the northern half of the trench, a possible cut [311] was present, which was stratigraphically later than [307] and cut the natural deposits. The possible feature contained (306), a fill of densely packed limestone pieces which ranged in size from 0.10m³ to 0.40m³ (Figure 5). Animal bone was recovered from (306), but no dating evidence was found. In the southern half of Trench 3, the natural was sealed by (309), a mid grey plastic silty clay layer which contained occasional charcoal inclusions. Both (306) in the north and (309) in the south were overlaid by a layer of re-deposited chalk (305). This was then sealed by subsoil (302).
- 5.4.4 Shallow feature [303] was cut into (302) and possibly (305) at the northernmost end of the trench and continued beyond the limit of excavation (Figures 4 and 5). Feature [303] was present for over 1.0m and contained (304), dark grey plastic silty clay with abundant charcoal and brick fragments. Metal debris, which included an iron nail and scrap of flat iron, along with late Post-medieval and Modern pottery fragments were recovered from (304). Feature [303] and subsoil (302) were then sealed by topsoil (301).
- 5.4.5 In Trench 4 the natural chalk and clay was encountered at a depth of 0.50m below the Modern ground level in the southern end and 0.90m below the Modern ground level in the northern end. This was sealed by subsoil (402), which was between 0.15 and 0.55m thick, and was in turn sealed by topsoil (401). No archaeological features or finds were present within this trench.
- 5.4.6 In Trench 5, the natural chalk and clay was encountered at a depth of 0.58m below the Modern ground level at the east and west ends to 0.83m below the Modern ground level in the centre of the trench. The natural was sealed by (503), dark grey plastic silty clay, which was overlaid by a re-deposited chalk layer (502), which was equivalent to (305). This layer dissipated towards the western end of the trench. This and the rest of (503) were then sealed by topsoil (501). With the exception of (502), no other archaeological features or finds were present within this trench.

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The archaeological monitoring has revealed a possible cut [104] which contained a charcoal rich fill (103)/(203), in Trench 1. The full extent of the possible feature was not revealed within the watched area, this combined with a lack of artefactual material makes interpretation difficult.
- 6.2 A shallow linear feature [307] of unknown date was stratigraphically the earliest feature observed within Trench 3. The linear was cut by possible feature [311] which contained limestone deposit (306) which was sealed by a re-deposited chalk layer

(305)/(502). The presence of animal bone in both (308) and (306) would suggest that the site was in the vicinity of settlement activity. The close proximity of a known Medieval village could suggest the possibility that these features are of Medieval date. However, this hypothesis cannot be confirmed as no dating evidence was present within either of these features.

- 6.3 Deposits (305) and (306) were both densely packed with chalk and limestone pieces respectively. Neither had the appearance of floor surface or wall foundation and were more likely the result of a dumping or demolition event from a previous construction. However, due to the limited nature of the works and lack of artefactual evidence it is not possible to put a date or function to this activity.
- 6.4 A shallow feature [303] was stratigraphically of a later date than [307] and [311] and contained a number of ferrous objects along with late Post-medieval and Modern pottery.
- 6.5 The archive is currently held at the offices of Foundations Archaeology, but will be deposited within 12 months with the appropriate museum. A short report will be submitted for publication in the relevant local archaeological journal and an OASIS form will also be submitted to ADS.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Department for Communities and Local Government. 2012. *National Planning Policy Framework*. Crown Copyright.

Foundations Archaeology. 2014. *Parsloes Farmhouse, Overtown, Wroughton, Wiltshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief*. Unpublished.

IfA 1999 (rev. 2008). *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*. Institute for Archaeologists.

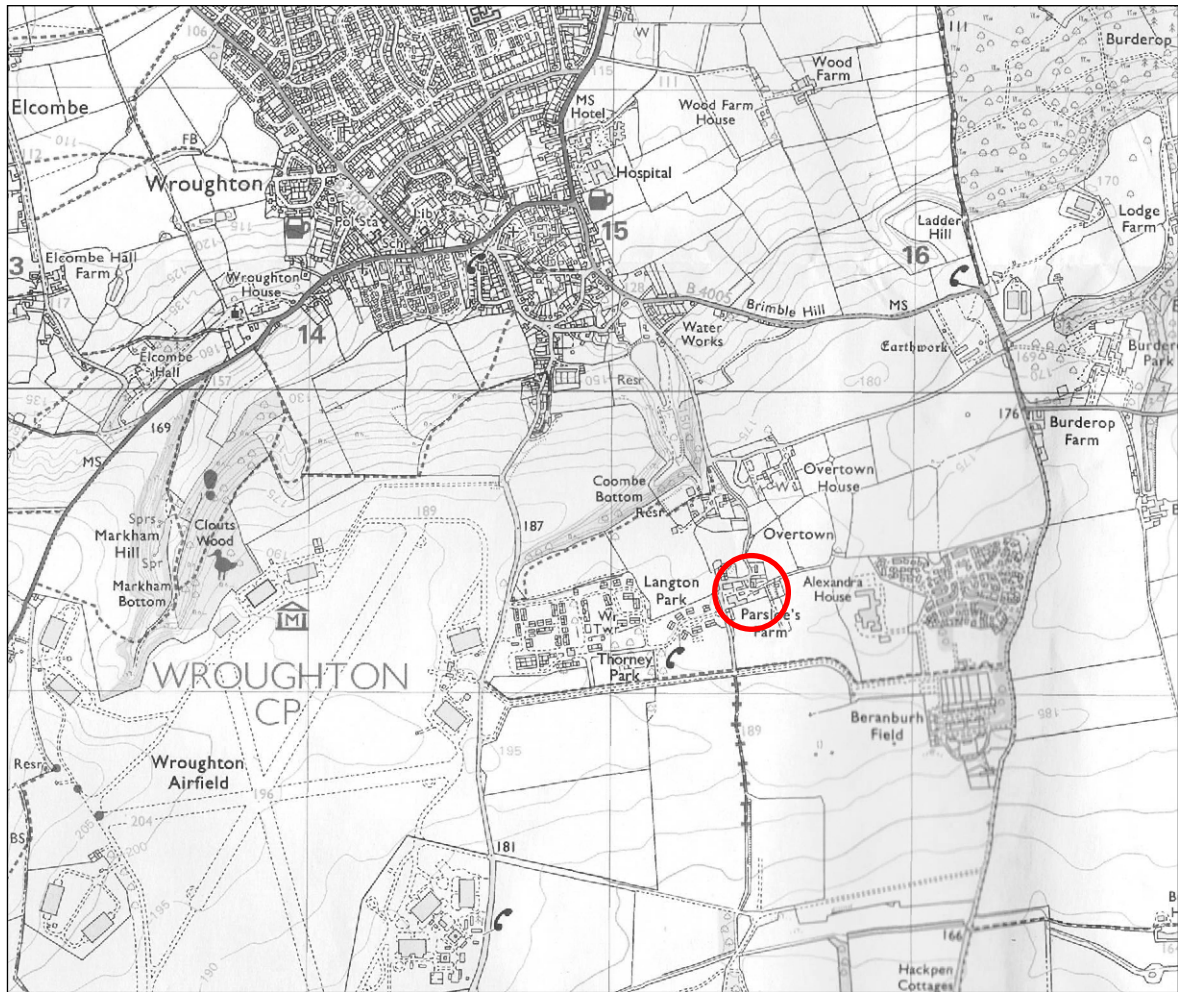
Wiltshire County Council. 1995. *Standards for Archaeological Assessment and Field Evaluation in Wiltshire*.

8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Foundations Archaeology would like to thank Liz and Andy Gardiner of Parsloes Farmhouse and Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger of Wiltshire Council for their help and co-operation.

APPENDIX 1: Stratigraphic data

Context	Description	Depth (m)	Overlies/cuts into	Overlaid by/cut by	Equivalent to
(101)	Topsoil layer, dark brown humic loam	0.20-0.22	(102)	N/A	(201)
(102)	Subsoil layer, mid grey plastic silty clay with occasional charcoal	0.14-0.39	(103)	(101)	N/A
(103)	Fill of [104], mid grey plastic silty clay, frequent charcoal and chalk fragments	0.12	Natural	(102)	(203)
[104]	Uncharacterised cut for [104]	0.12	Natural	(103)	N/A
(201)	Topsoil layer, dark brown loamy humic clay, frequent charcoal	0.30	(202)	N/A	(101)
(202)	Subsoil layer, mid grey plastic silty clay, frequent charcoal, brick and chalk fragments	0.58	(203)	(201)	N/A
(203)	Subsoil layer, mid grey plastic silty clay, occasional charcoal	0.27	Natural/[104]	(202)	(103)
(301)	Topsoil layer, dark brown loamy humic clay, occasional charcoal	0.24	(304)	N/A	(401)
(302)	Subsoil layer, mid grey plastic silty clay, occasional charcoal	0.15-0.25	(305)	[303]	(402)
[303]	Cut for feature [303]	0.20	(302)	(304)	N/A
(304)	Fill for [303], dark grey plastic silty clay, abundant charcoal and brick fragments	0.20	[303]	(301)	N/A
(305)	Re-deposited chalk layer	0.10-0.28	(306)	(302)	(502)
(306)	Deposit of limestones/rubble	0.25	(308)	(305)	N/A
[307]	Cut for linear [307]	0.20	Natural	(308)	N/A
(308)	Fill for [307], dark grey plastic silty clay, with large stones/rubble	0.20	[307]	(306)	N/A
(309)	Subsoil layer, mid grey plastic silty clay, occasional charcoal	0.35	Natural	(305)	(503), (310)
(310)	Subsoil patch similar to (302) underneath (305) in NW corner of Trench 3	0.18	(306)	(305)	(309), (503)
[311]	Cut for deposit of limestones/rubble	0.25	Natural/(308)	(306)	N/A
(401)	Topsoil layer, dark brown loamy humic clay, frequent charcoal	0.35	(402)	N/A	(301)
(402)	Subsoil layer, mid grey plastic silty clay, occasional charcoal	0.15-0.55	Natural	(401)	(302)
(501)	Topsoil layer, dark brown plastic silty clay, occasional charcoal	0.30-0.45	(502)	N/A	N/A
(502)	Re-deposited chalk layer	0.13	(503)	(501)	(305)
(503)	Subsoil layer, dark grey plastic silty clay	0.15-0.25	Natural	(502)	(309)



© Crown Copyright
 Reproduced under licence 100015722
Site Code: PFO14
Accession Code:

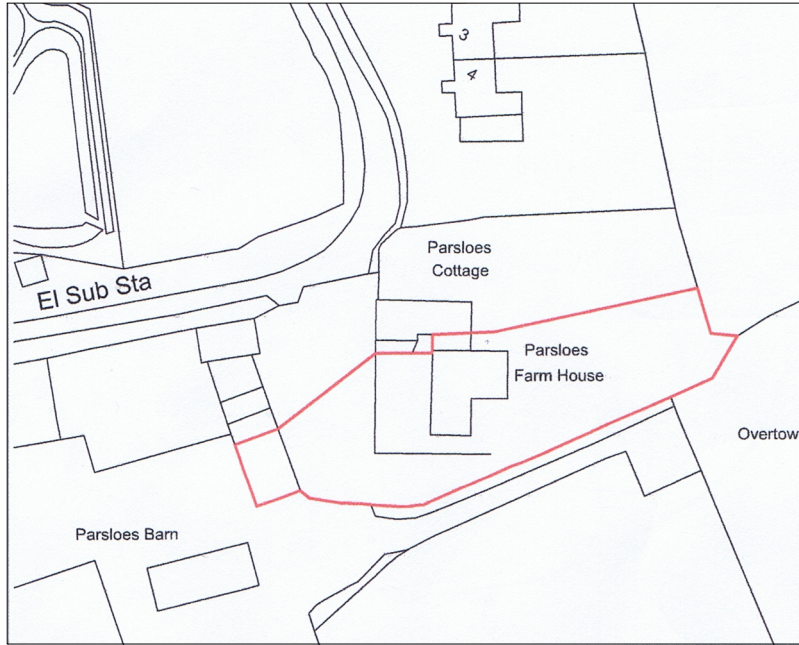
N

0m 1km

1:25,000

○ Site Area

FIGURE 1: Site Location



© Crown Copyright
Reproduced under licence 100015722

Site Code: PFO14

Accession Code:

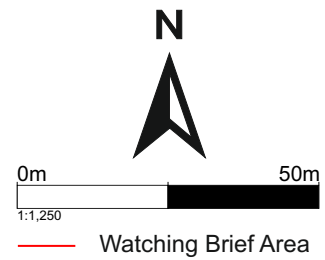
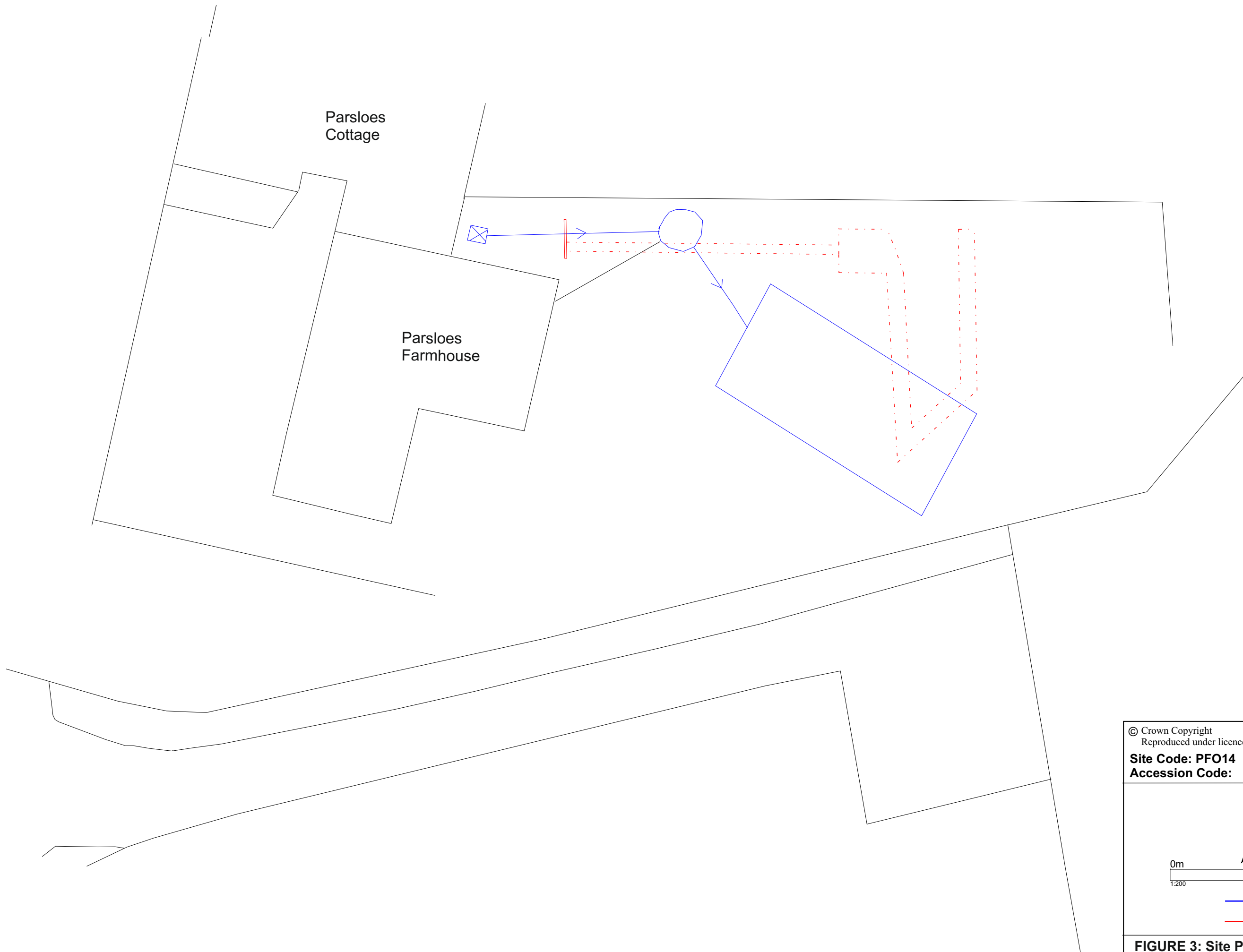






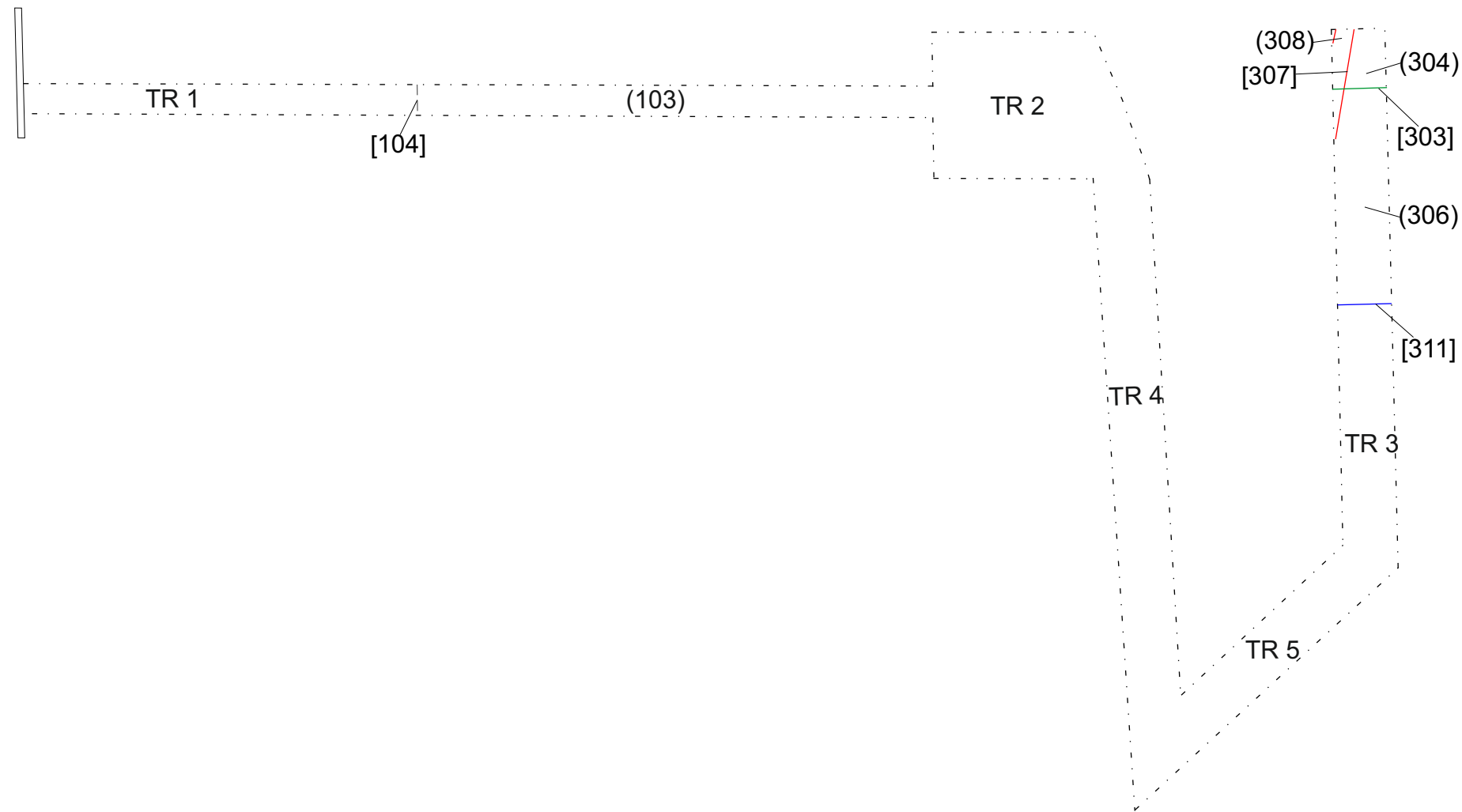
FIGURE 2: Watching Brief Area



© Crown Copyright
Reproduced under licence 100015722
Site Code: PFO14
Accession Code:

FIGURE 3: Site Plan Showing Proposed and Actual Locations for Sewage Treatment Plant

KEY TO STRATIGRAPHIC PHASES	
	TRENCH 1 PHASE 1
	TRENCH 3 PHASE 1
	TRENCH 3 PHASE 2
	TRENCH 3 PHASE 3



© Crown Copyright
 Reproduced under licence 100015722
Site Code: PFO14
Accession Code:

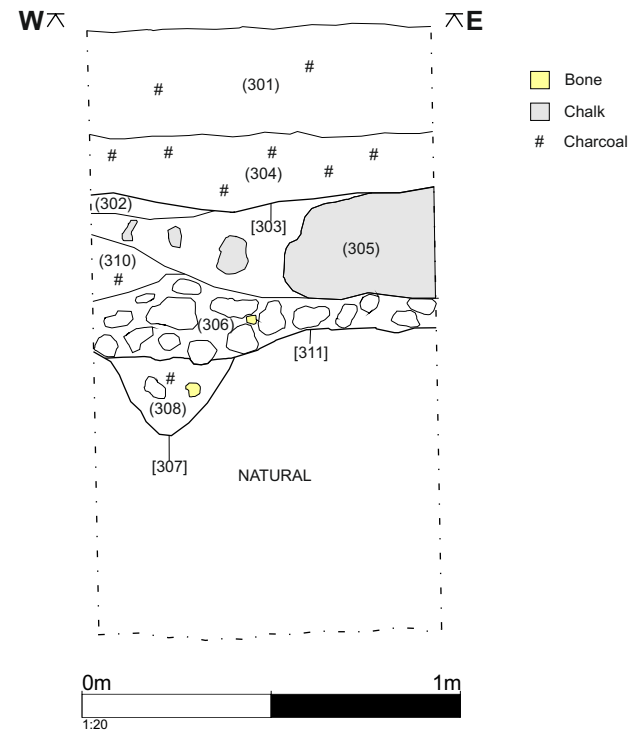
N

0m 4m

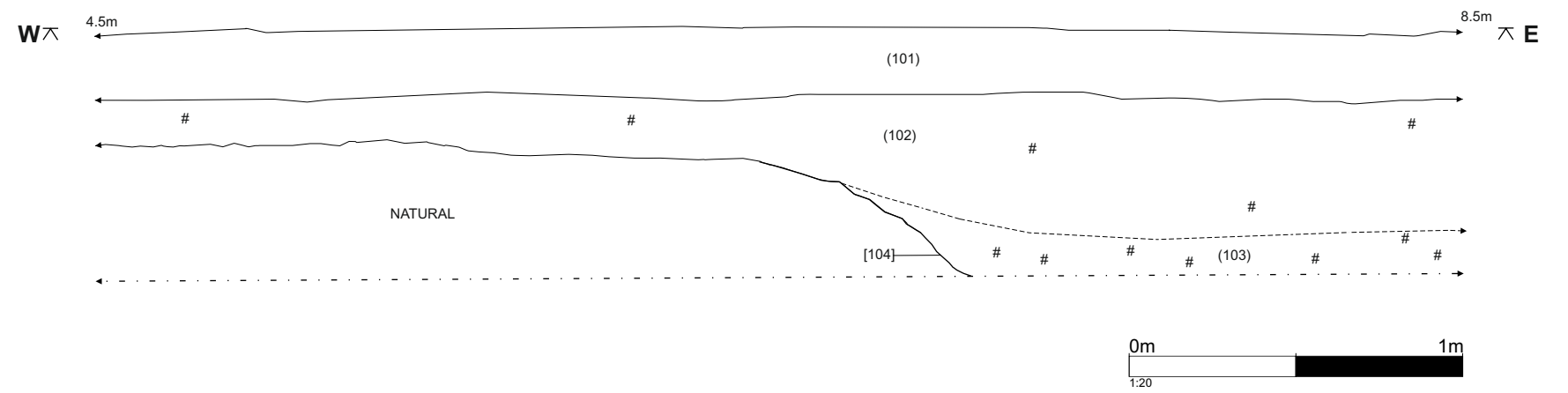
1:100

FIGURE 4: Post-Excavation Plan of Trenches Including All Phases

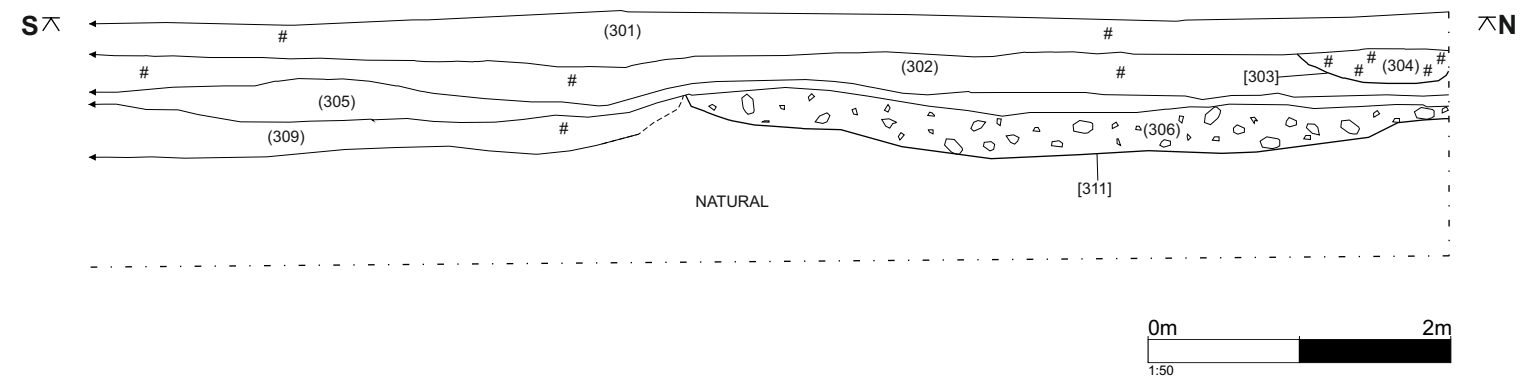
SEC 001: SOUTH FACING SECTION [303], [307] AND [311]



SEC 002: SOUTH FACING SECTION [104]



SEC 003: EAST FACING SECTION [303] AND [311]



Site Code: PFO14
 Accession Code:
FIGURE 5: Sections