FOUNDATIONS
ARCHAEOLOGY

LAND AT GREAT HORWOOD, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

NGR: SP 777 310 (CENTRED)

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Report No. 966
May 2014

ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANCY, MANAGEMENT & FIELD SERVICES

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Quality Assurance
This Document has been compiled and authorised in accordance with AMS's Quality Procedures (BS EN ISO 9001: 2008)
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Date: 12th May 2014
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QA Checked: D. King

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FIGURE LIST

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SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken between the 28th and 30th April 2014 by Foundations Archaeology on land at Great Horwood, Buckinghamshire (NGR: SP 777 310 - centred). The works were commissioned by ACD Archaeology Limited on behalf of Taylor Wimpey South Midlands Limited.

The evaluation revealed two possible pits, a possible post-hole and furrows. Pit [203] contained a single fragment of pottery of probable Iron Age date. The pit [205] and possible post-hole [208] could not be dated, but it would appear that the post-hole was stratigraphically later than the pit.

Evidence of Medieval agriculture in the form of furrows was present in every trench. The linear feature [408], which post-dated the furrows, was most likely evidence of later drainage.

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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.

Headland

A linear bank, formed of accumulated plough soil, which occurred at the end of, and perpendicular to, plough strips or rows. They are commonly associated with ridge and furrow ploughing.

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.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 An archaeological evaluation was undertaken between the 28th and 30th April 2014 by Foundations Archaeology on land at Great Horwood, Buckinghamshire (NGR: SP 777 310 - centred). The works were commissioned by ACD Archaeology Limited on behalf of Taylor Wimpey South Midlands Limited.

1.2 The project was conducted in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), prepared by Foundations Archaeology (2014); IfA *Standards and Guidance on Archaeological Evaluation* (2008); and MoRPHE, issued by English Heritage (2006).

1.3 This report constitutes the results of the archaeological works.

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

2.1 The site is located to the south of Little Horwood Road, to the west of residential housing and to the north and east of agricultural land. At the time of the works the land was under pasture. The underlying geology consists of *Weymouth Member - Mudstone*. Sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 156 to 161 million years ago in the Jurassic Period. Local environment previously dominated by shallow seas (BGS Online Viewer).

2.2 Planning permission has been sought to support a forthcoming planning application for residential and related development. In accordance with the principles of National Planning Policy Framework (2012), a programme of archaeological evaluation was required in advance of the determination of the planning application.

2.3 The site has been subject to a desk-based archaeological assessment (ACD Archaeology 2014) which has not identified any particular potential within the site, although there has been activity in the wider area since prehistoric times. The assessment also noted that the field which forms the site has had much the same dimensions since enclosed in the mid-19th century. Residual ridge and furrow in the north western corner of the now pasture field confirms its location within Great Horwood's 'East Field' before its enclosure. The ridge and furrow has negligible interest, although the eastern and western hedgerows marking the site boundary have local significance.

2.4 A geophysical survey of the site was subsequently undertaken by ASWYAS (2014). The survey has highlighted the presence of Medieval agricultural remains in the form of ridge-and-furrow across the site.

2.5 The site therefore contained the potential for the presence of archaeological features, predominately relating to the Medieval period. This did not prejudice the evaluation against deposits dating to other periods.

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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, 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;

v) To define any research priorities that may be relevant should further field investigation be required.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 A total of four 50m by 1.8m trenches were excavated within the site, as shown in Figure 2.

4.2 Non-significant overburden was removed under constant archaeological supervision to the top of the archaeological deposits, or the underlying natural substrates, whichever was encountered first. This was achieved through the use of a JCB type excavator, equipped with a toothless grading bucket. Spoil tips were scanned for finds.

4.3 Where possible, all excavation and recording work was undertaken in accordance with the WSI and the Foundations Archaeology Technical Manual 3: Excavation Manual.

4.4 Visibility conditions were very good and, as such, it was possible to confidently identify features.

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4.5 All amendments to the trenching and excavation methodology were agreed with the County Archaeological Service.

5 RESULTS

5.1 **Trench 1** was orientated approximately north northeast-south southwest and excavated down onto the natural deposits of orange brown clay with gravels at an average depth of 0.51m (128.49m OD) from the Modern ground surface. The natural deposits were sealed by a light orange brown plastic silt clay subsoil (102), up to 0.26m thick. This was sealed by a light brown friable sand silt topsoil and turf (101) up to 0.35m thick.

5.1.1 A total of five linear features were identified within this trench. All the linears were orientated approximately east-west and contained a light orange brown plastic silt clay fill, with occasional charcoal flecks, which was visually similar to subsoil (102). The features were all sealed by topsoil (101) and have been identified as furrows. No artefactual evidence was present within any of the furrows which were sampled.

5.2 **Trench 2** was orientated approximately northwest-southeast and excavated down onto the natural deposits of orange brown clay with gravels at an average depth of 0.38m (124.80m OD) from the Modern ground surface. The natural deposits were sealed by a light orange brown plastic silt clay subsoil (202), up to 0.14m thick. This was sealed by a light brown friable sand silt topsoil and turf (201) up to 0.30m thick.

5.2.1 A probable pit [203] was sealed beneath the subsoil and was only partly contained within the trench. It had a width of over 1m, length of over 0.58m and depth of 0.19m. The cut had steep, sloping sides, a flat base and contained (204), a grey brown silt clay, with frequent charcoal flecks. The feature contained a single sherd of burnished pottery of probable Iron Age date (J. Timby pers. com.) and a few small fragments of animal bone.

5.2.2 South of [203] and also sealed by subsoil (202) was probable pit [205]. The feature was also only partly contained within the trench and had a width of 2.22m, a length of over 1.2m and depth of 0.43m. The cut had sloping uneven sides and contained two distinct fills, the basal fill (206) was a grey brown plastic silt clay, up to 0.2m thick, which contained frequent charcoal flecks but no artefactual evidence. The second fill (207) was a black brown silt clay, up to 0.26m thick, which contained frequent charcoal flecks, fragments of animal bone and a heavily corroded flat iron object (approximately 120mm by 18mm). A possible posthole [208] was located on the northern edge of this feature.

5.2.3 Possible posthole [208] was also sealed by the subsoil and only partly contained within the trench, it was 0.5m wide, over 0.35m in length and 0.61m deep. The feature had a steep sided U-shaped cut and contained fill (209), a grey brown silt clay with frequent charcoal inclusions but no artefactual evidence. The northern edge of [205] and southern edge of [208] had been

truncated by a Modern land drain, but it appeared that posthole [208] was stratigraphically later than pit [205].

5.2.4 Six furrow bases were also contained within Trench 2.

5.3 **Trench 3** was orientated approximately east-west and excavated down onto the natural deposits of orange brown clay with gravels at an average depth of 0.38m (124.19m OD) from the Modern ground surface. The natural deposits were sealed by a light orange brown plastic silt clay subsoil (302), up to 0.15m thick. This was sealed by a light brown friable sand silt topsoil and turf (301) up to 0.30m thick.

5.3.1 A single northwest-southeast furrow was present within this trench, which contained early Post-medieval pottery.

5.4 **Trench 4** was orientated approximately northeast-southwest and excavated down onto the natural deposits of orange brown clay with gravels at an average depth of 0.37m (126.22m OD) from the Modern ground surface. The natural deposits were sealed by a light orange brown plastic silt clay subsoil (402), up to 0.16m thick. This was sealed by a light brown friable sand silt topsoil and turf (401) up to 0.24m thick.

5.4.1 Three possible furrows, orientated approximately east-west, were contained within this trench. The possible furrow in the centre of the trench, [405], was slightly different as it contained a basal fill (406), up to 0.13m thick, comprising a grey brown clay silt with frequent chalk and charcoal flecks, as well as a secondary fill (407). This was visually similar to the subsoil and the other furrow fills and contained a fragment of CBM. Possible furrow [405] was also cut by linear [408], a narrow feature 0.3m wide and 0.5m deep which followed the same orientation as furrow [405]. The linear contained fill (409), a mottled orange grey plastic clay, with frequent chalk flecks and small stones, but no artefactual evidence.

6 DISCUSSION

6.1 The evaluation revealed two possible pits, a possible post-hole and furrows. Pit [203] contained a single fragment of pottery of probable Iron Age date. The pit [205] and possible post-hole [208] could not be dated, but it would appear that the post-hole was stratigraphically later than the pit. As the heavily corroded iron object was present in the upper fill of pit [205], it is possible that this artefact is intrusive.

6.2 Evidence of Medieval agriculture in the form of furrows was present in every trench. The linear feature [408], which post-dated the furrows, was most likely evidence of later drainage.

6.3 Two copies of the report (one of which will be digital) will be deposited with the county HER, while an additional copy will be deposited with the site archive and English Heritage (Archives). A further bound copy will be

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supplied to the District Council. The report will become a public document after a period not exceeding six months.

6.4 The archive is currently held at the offices of Foundations Archaeology, but will be deposited with the County Museum in due course. A short note will be submitted for publication in the relevant local archaeological journals (South Midlands Archaeology and Records of Buckinghamshire) and an OASIS form will also be submitted to ADS.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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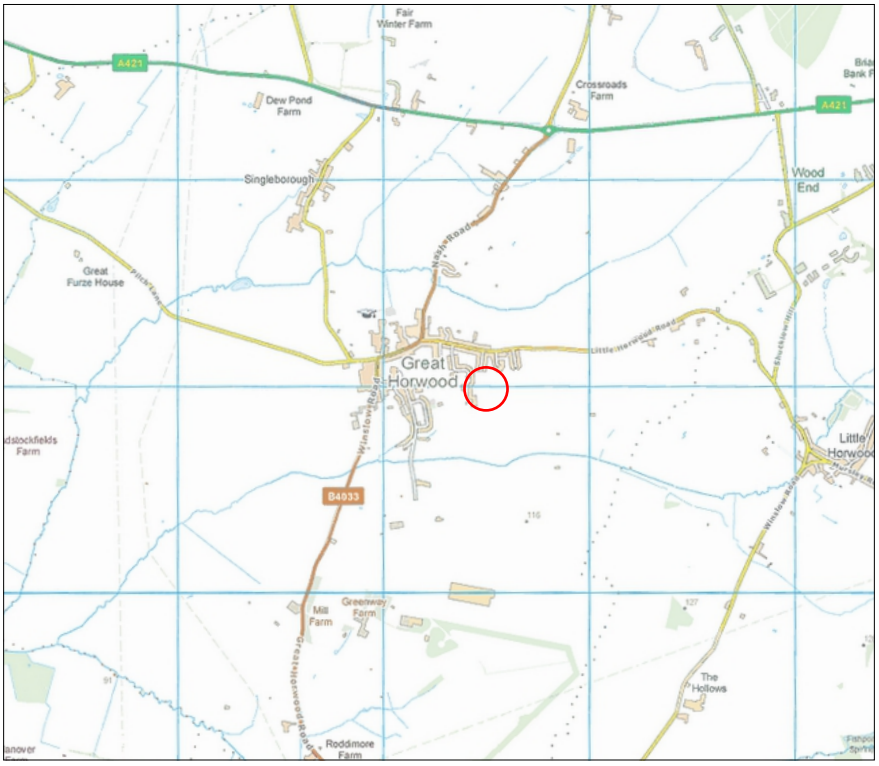
8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Foundations Archaeology would like to thank Eliza Alqassar of Buckinghamshire County Council and Ben Stephenson on behalf of ACD Archaeology for their help during the course of the project.



Site Code: GHB14
Accession Code:

N

0m 1km

1:25,000@A4

FIGURE 1: Site Location

TYPE OF ANOMALY		INTERPRETATION
•	DIPOLAR ISOLATED	FERROUS MATERIAL
	MAGNETIC DISTURBANCE	FERROUS MATERIAL
- - -	LINEAR TREND	RIDGE AND FURROW
——	LINEAR TREND	AGRICULTURAL

Archaeological Services W Y A S
PO Box 30, Nepshaw Lane South, Morley, LS27 0UG
Tel: 0113 383 7500 Fax:0113 383 7501

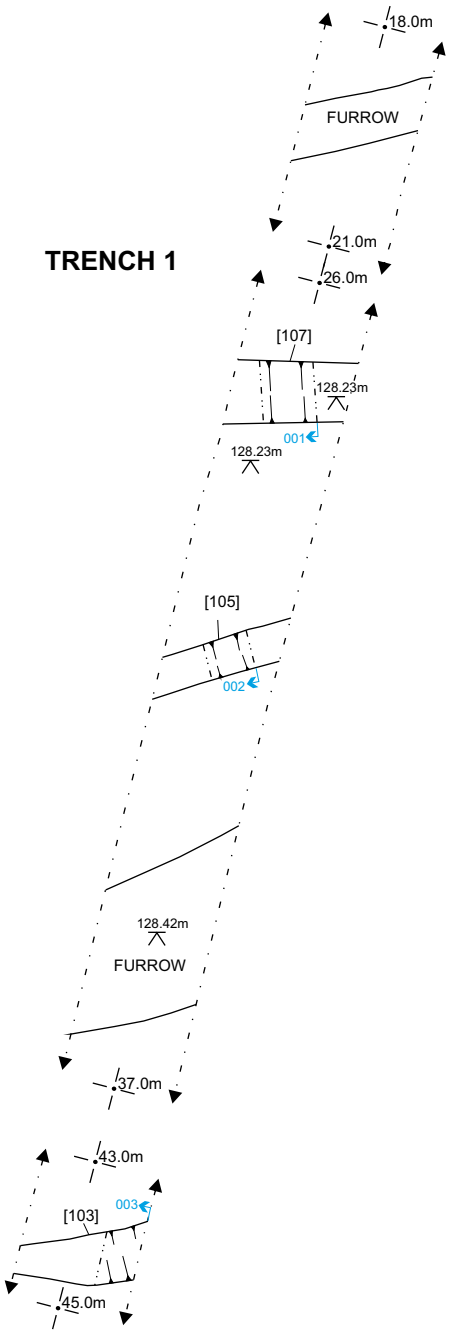
Site Code: GHB14
Accession Code:

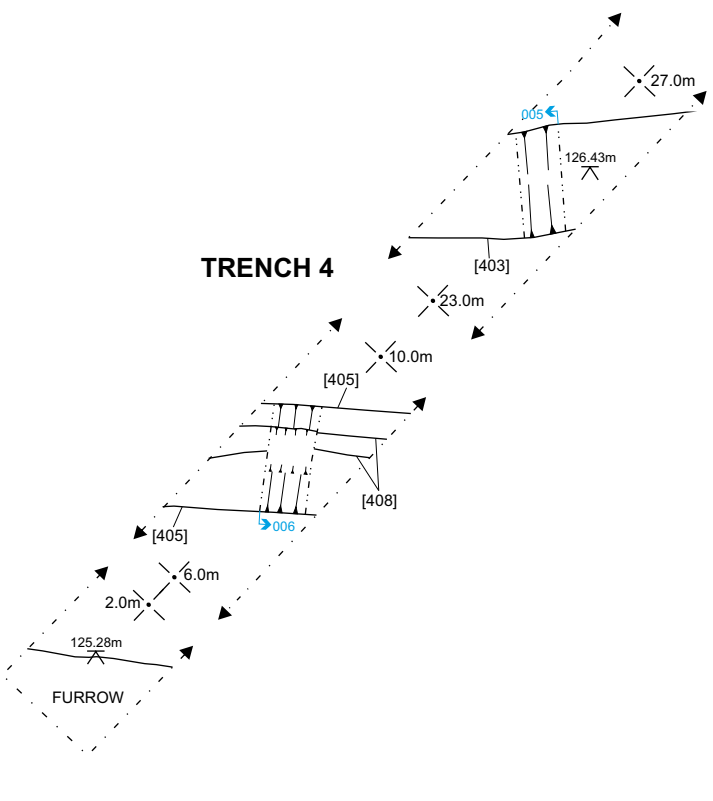
N

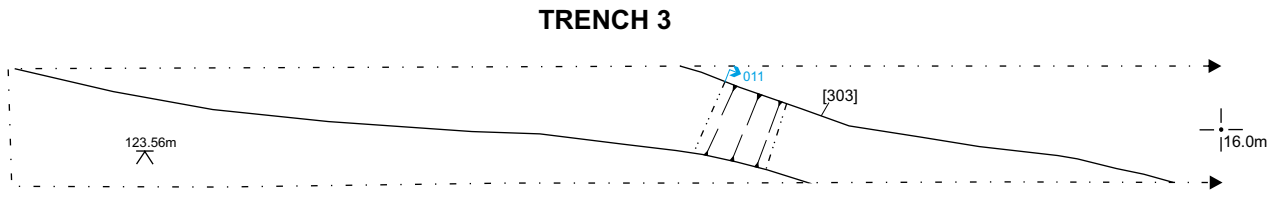
0m 50m

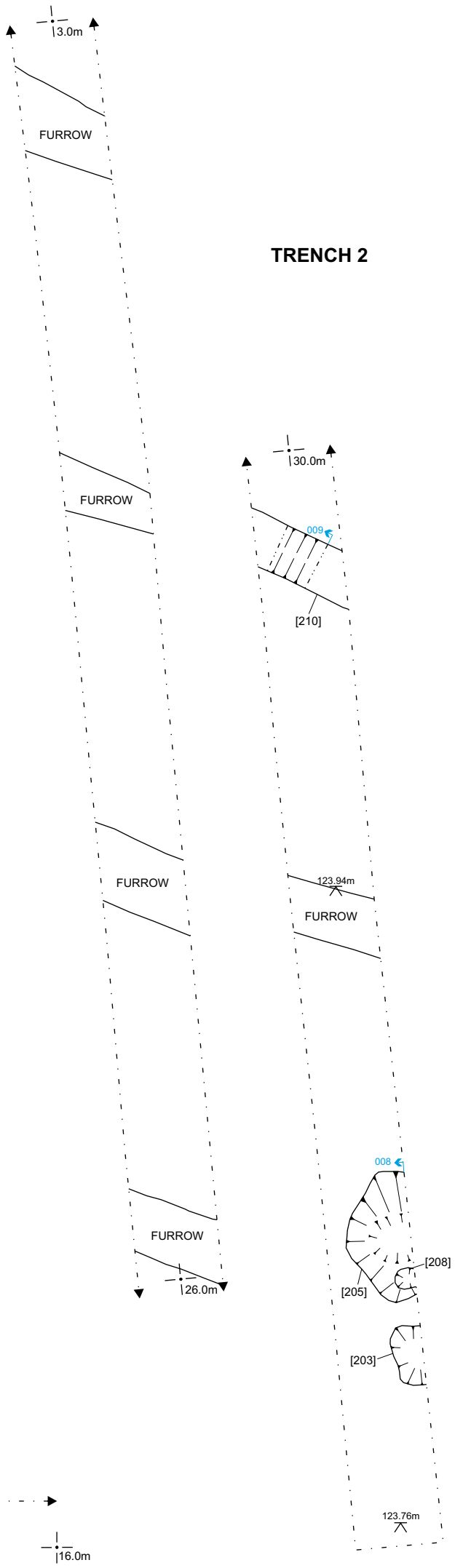
1:1,250@A4

FIGURE 2: Trench Location Plan









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Accession Code:

N

0m 4m

1:100@A3

FIGURE 3: Trench Plans

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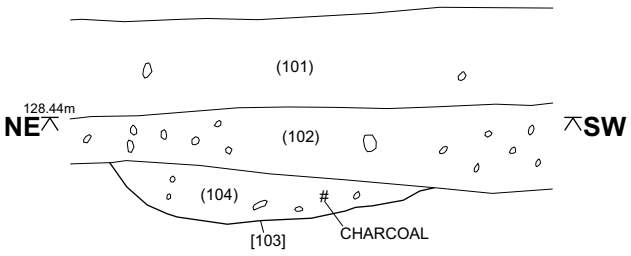

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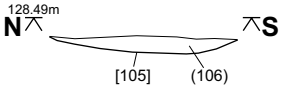

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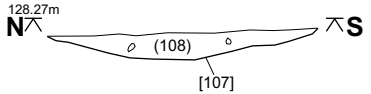

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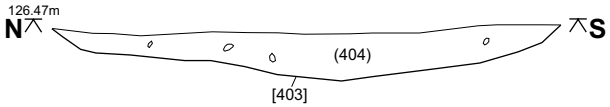
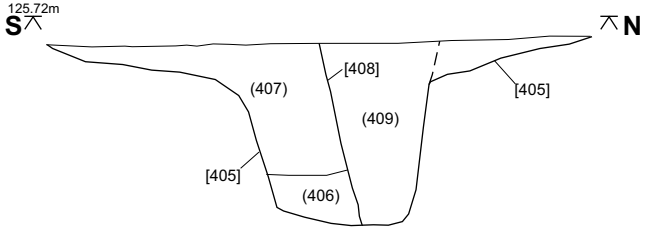
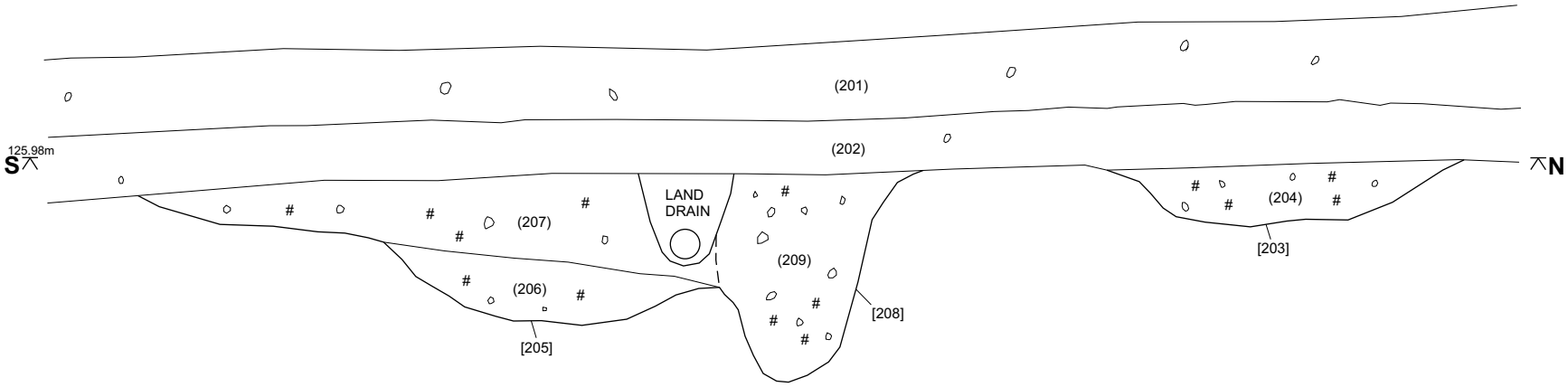


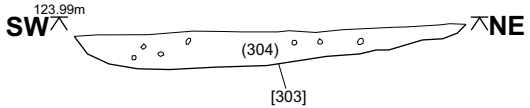
006: EAST FACING SECTION [405] and [408]



008: EAST FACING SECTION [203], [205] and [208]



011: SOUTHEAST FACING SECTION [303]



Site Code: GHB14
Accession Code:

0m 1m
1:20@A4

FIGURE 4: Sections