

**6 THE STREET,
LIDDINGTON,
WILTSHIRE.**

NGR: 420628.181394

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Report No. 1110

February 2016



ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANCY, MANAGEMENT & FIELD SERVICES

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LIDDINGTON,
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TRENCH 1 LOOKING NORTHEAST, SHOWING DITCH [102]

February 2016
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Quality Assurance

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CONTENTS

Summary

Glossary of Archaeological Terms and Abbreviations

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

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Stratigraphic Data

Appendix 2: The Pottery

FIGURE LIST

- Figure 1: Site Location
- Figure 2: Site Plan
- Figure 3: Trench 1 Plan and Section
- Figure 4: Trench 2 Plan and Sections
- Figure 5: Site in Relation to Landscape Contours

SUMMARY

In February 2016 Foundations Archaeology undertook a programme of archaeological evaluation on land at 6 The Street, Liddington, Wiltshire (NGR: 420628.181394). The project was commissioned by Steve Graham.

The evaluation comprised the excavation and recording of two trenches within the site.

The archaeological works identified the presence of four ditches, which comprised a relatively substantial probable late Prehistoric ditch, parts of a possible Roman co-axial ditch system and a probable Medieval or later residential/property boundary ditch.

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 in February 2016 on land at 6 The Street, Liddington, Wiltshire (NGR: 420628.181394). The project was commissioned by Steve Graham.
- 1.2 The project was conducted in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), prepared by Foundations Archaeology (2016), CIFA *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation* (2014) and *Standards for Field Evaluation and Assessment in Wiltshire* (CAS 1995).
- 1.3 The code of conduct of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists was adhered to throughout.

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 2.1 It is proposed to demolish the existing property at 6 The Street, Liddington and subsequently construct two new detached dwellings, with associated garages, driveways and services (**Application Number S/15/1958**).
- 2.2 The site is located to the south of The Street and comprises a former residential dwelling and associated garden. It is situated at approximately 144m AOD, upon a natural terrace, which is located on the northern edge of an east – west aligned natural spur (Figure 5). The site overlooks an extensive expanse of lower ground to north. The underlying natural geology is recorded as *Upper Greensand Formation* - sandstone, glauconitic. Sedimentary bedrock, with no superficial deposits recorded (BGS – online viewer).
- 2.3 The settlement of Liddington dates back to Prehistoric times. The ancient Ridgeway traverses the parish, on the higher ground just south of the village and the Iron Age hillfort known as Liddington Castle overlooks the present-day village. Liddington itself is first recorded in the late Saxon period, around AD 940 and the Domesday Book records a settlement of the name of ‘Ledentone’ in 1086.
- 2.4 By the 14th century Liddington was a prosperous parish. However by the mid-19th century it was in decline. Church Road and The Green form the historic core of the village, now separated by Purley Road. Early maps show that The Street was originally the main road through the village with Church Road leading off it. All Saints Church dates to the 13th century, it was extensively altered in the 14th century and restored in the 19th century.
- 2.5 Archaeological finds and features have been found in the vicinity of the site, which lies within the Conservation Area of Liddington. An archaeological evaluation has previously been undertaken nearby at 20 The Green (Wessex Archaeology, 2006). The evaluation identified two shallow ditches. Medieval pottery was recovered from one of these features and it is possible that the

6 The Street, Liddington, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation

other ditch was also of this date. This work was proceeded by a watching brief (Foundations Archaeology, 2009) which revealed the presence of moderately preserved Medieval occupation deposits of 12th to 14th century date.

- 2.6 The study area therefore contained the potential for archaeological finds, predominantly dating to the Medieval period. This did not prejudice the evaluation against the recovery of data relating to other periods.
- 2.7 In light of the identified archaeological potential, the County Archaeological Officer requested a programme of field evaluation prior to determination of the development application.

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. This would allow informed 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 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) 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 Two trenches were excavated within the site, as shown in Figure 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 through the use of a mechanical excavator, equipped with a toothless grading bucket. Spoil tips were visually scanned for finds.

6 The Street, Liddington, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation

4.2 All excavation and recording work was undertaken in accordance with the WSI and the Foundations Archaeology Technical Manual 3: Excavation Manual. Any amendments to the approved excavation scheme were agreed on site with the County Archaeological Officer.

4.3 Ditch [102] was only partially excavated, due to space constraints.

5 RESULTS

5.1 A full description of all contexts identified during the course of the project is presented in Appendix 1, along with a pottery report in Appendix 2. A summary and discussion of the results is given below:

5.2 The general stratigraphic sequence was relatively uniform across the site. The natural chalk marl deposits were present between 0.45m and 0.70m below the Modern ground. These were directly overlaid by a dark brown clay silt garden soil, which contained Modern detritus throughout. There was no evidence for significant truncation of natural levels, although garden activity is likely to have caused localised disturbance. A total of four ditches were present, cut into the top of the natural deposits.

5.3 **Trench 1** contained a substantial northeast – southwest aligned ditch [102], which was up to 3.1m wide and greater than 0.82m deep. The feature was only partially investigated, however, the occurrence of two sherds of Iron Age pottery, along with a struck flint, in ditch fill (104) indicated that it most likely dated to the later Prehistoric period.

5.4 **Trench 2** contained two shallow ditches ([202] and [204]), which formed a near right-angle and probably represented the remains of a former co-axial ditch system. Pottery from ditch fill (203) suggested an early Roman date for these features. A further ditch, [206], remained undated, however, it was stratigraphically later than ditches [202] and [204] and its alignment, perpendicular to The Street, suggested that it represented a former residential/property boundary ditch, which most likely dated to the Medieval period or later.

5.5 The recovered artefact assemblage included a small amount of Iron Age and Roman pottery, a struck flint and a few fragments of animal bone.

6 CONCLUSION

6.1 The evaluation has identified the presence of four ditches, which represent at least two, but possibly three different phases of site activity.

6.2 Ditch [102] probably represents the remains of a fairly substantial late Prehistoric boundary, although, in light of its location on the edge of a

6 The Street, Liddington, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation

landscape spur, overlooking low ground to the north, it was not possible to entirely rule out the possibility that it represented part of a Prehistoric barrow.

- 6.3 Ditches [202] and [204] were located on a slightly different alignment to ditch [102]. They were associated with Roman pottery and possibly represented part of a Roman co-axial ditch system.
- 6.4 Ditch [206] was later than the probable Roman ditches and most likely represents a Medieval or later residential/property boundary.
- 6.5 The evaluation has identified the presence of moderately well preserved archaeological features, which mainly comprise probable landscape/property boundaries. Any further archaeological work within the site should specifically seek to ascertain the date and function of ditch [102] and, if possible, to attempt to understand the inter-relationships and phasing between the identified ditches, as well as investigate and record any other exposed archaeological features.
- 6.6 The archive is currently held at the offices of Foundations Archaeology, but will be deposited in due course with the appropriate museum. 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 Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger of Wiltshire Council and Steve Graham for their help during the course of the project.

6 The Street, Liddington, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation

APPENDIX 1: Stratigraphic Data

CXT	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	DESCRIPTION	LATER THAN	EARLIER THAN
				Trench 1: 13.2m by 1.8m. Natural = light beige chalk marl.		
				Top of natural at average height of 144.15m OD		
101	na	na	0.48	Garden soil; dark brown clay silt, which contained occasional Modern detritus.	natural	na
[102]	4.5	3.1	>0.82	Northeast - southwest aligned ditch with a regular sloping southeastern edge.	natural	103
				Not fully excavated. Contained fills 103 and 104.		
103	?	1.3	0.33	Fill of ditch [102]; light grey chalky clay silt, which contained occasional charcoal	[102]	104
				flecks.		
104	4.5	1.3	0.55	Fill of ditch [102]; mid tan grey clay silt, which contained occasional charcoal	103	101, Modern
				flecks, a piece of struck flint and two fragments of bone , as well as two		feature
				sherds of Iron Age pottery .		
				Trench 2: 14.50m by 1.8m. Natural = light beige chalk marl.		
				Top of natural at average height of 142.63m OD		
201	na	na	0.63	Garden soil; dark brown clay silt, which contained occasional Modern detritus.	natural	na
[202]	2.5	0.65	0.21	Northwest - southeast aligned ditch with a rounded profile. Contained fill 203.	natural	203
				Probably related to ditch [204].		
203	2.5	0.65	0.21	Fill of ditch [202]; mid grey soft clay silt, which contained occasional charcoal flecks,	[202]	[206]
				along with a fragment of bone and two sherds of early Roman pottery .		

6 The Street, Liddington, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation

CXT	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	DESCRIPTION	LATER THAN	EARLIER THAN
[204]	1.5	0.42	0.07	Northeast - southwest aligned ditch base with a shallow, rounded profile.	natural	205
				Contained fill 205.		
205	1.5	0.42	0.07	Fill of ditch [204]; mid grey soft clay silt, which contained occasional charcoal	[204]	[206]
				flecks. Similar to fill 203.		
[206]	11.5	0.85	0.1	North-northwest - south-southeast aligned ditch base with a shallow, irregular	203, 205	207
				profile. Contained fill 207.		
207	11.5	0.85	0.1	Fill of ditch [206]; dark brown black clay silt. Similar to garden soil 201.	[206]	?201, Modern
				Contained two fragments of bone .		soakaway

APPENDIX 2: The Pottery

By Jane Timby

The archaeological work resulted in the recovery of a small assemblage of four sherds of pottery weighing 46 g dating to the later Prehistoric and early Roman periods. The sherds are all bodysherds and thus dating can only be quite broad based on the character of the fabrics and the technology. The pottery is in moderately fresh condition, although the sherds are fairly small.

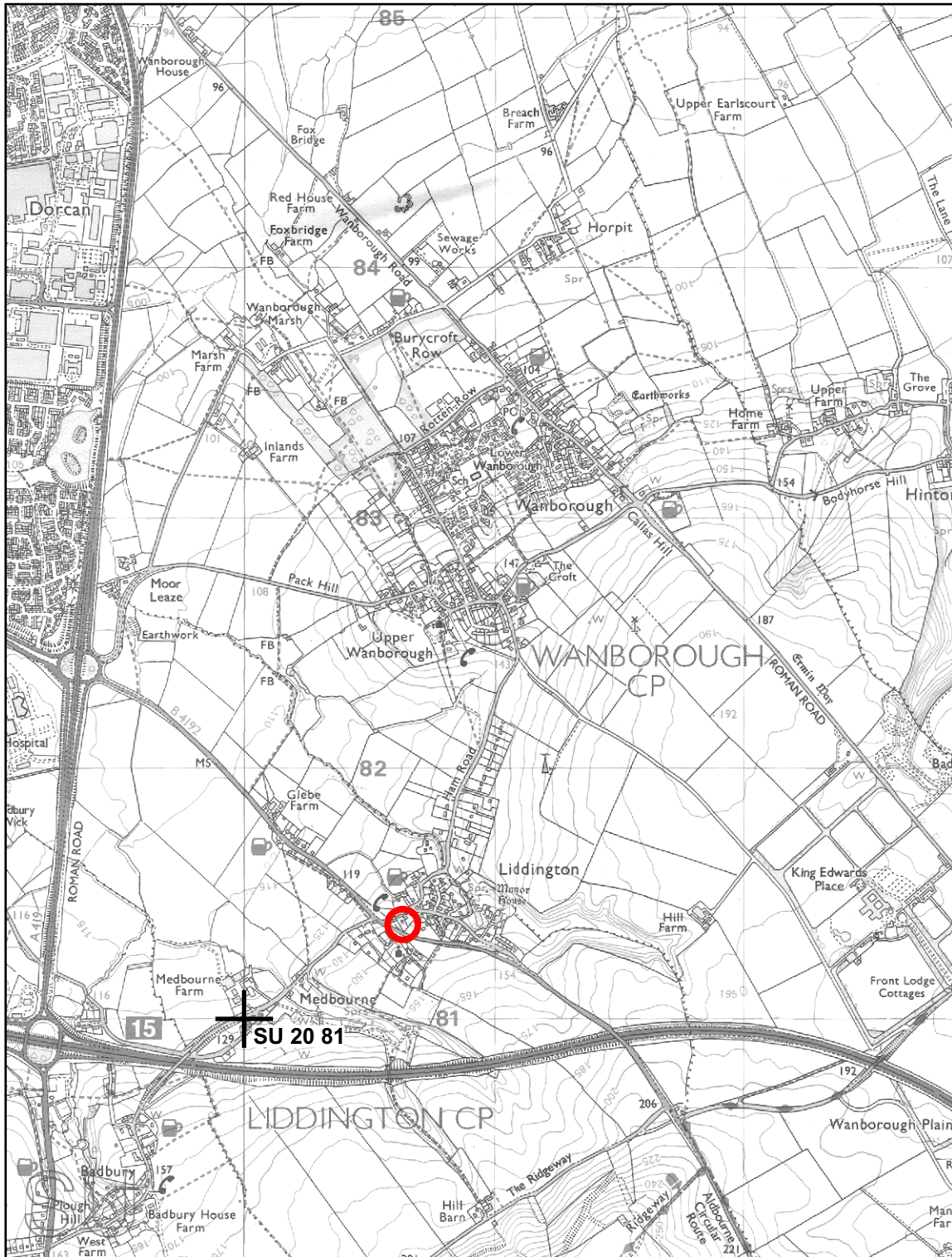
The assemblage was recovered from two linear features. Context (104) produced two handmade bodysherds; one contains a dense fossil shell temper; the other sparse shell in a micaceous sandy fabric. The use of fossil shell has quite a long tradition but the fabrics would be typical of the Iron Age in this area.

Context (203) produced two sherds; one a bodysherd from a beaker with rouletted decoration; probably a butt beaker. The other is a grey coarseware. Both sherds would be typical of the early Roman period.

This is a very small assemblage which does not warrant any further work at this stage.

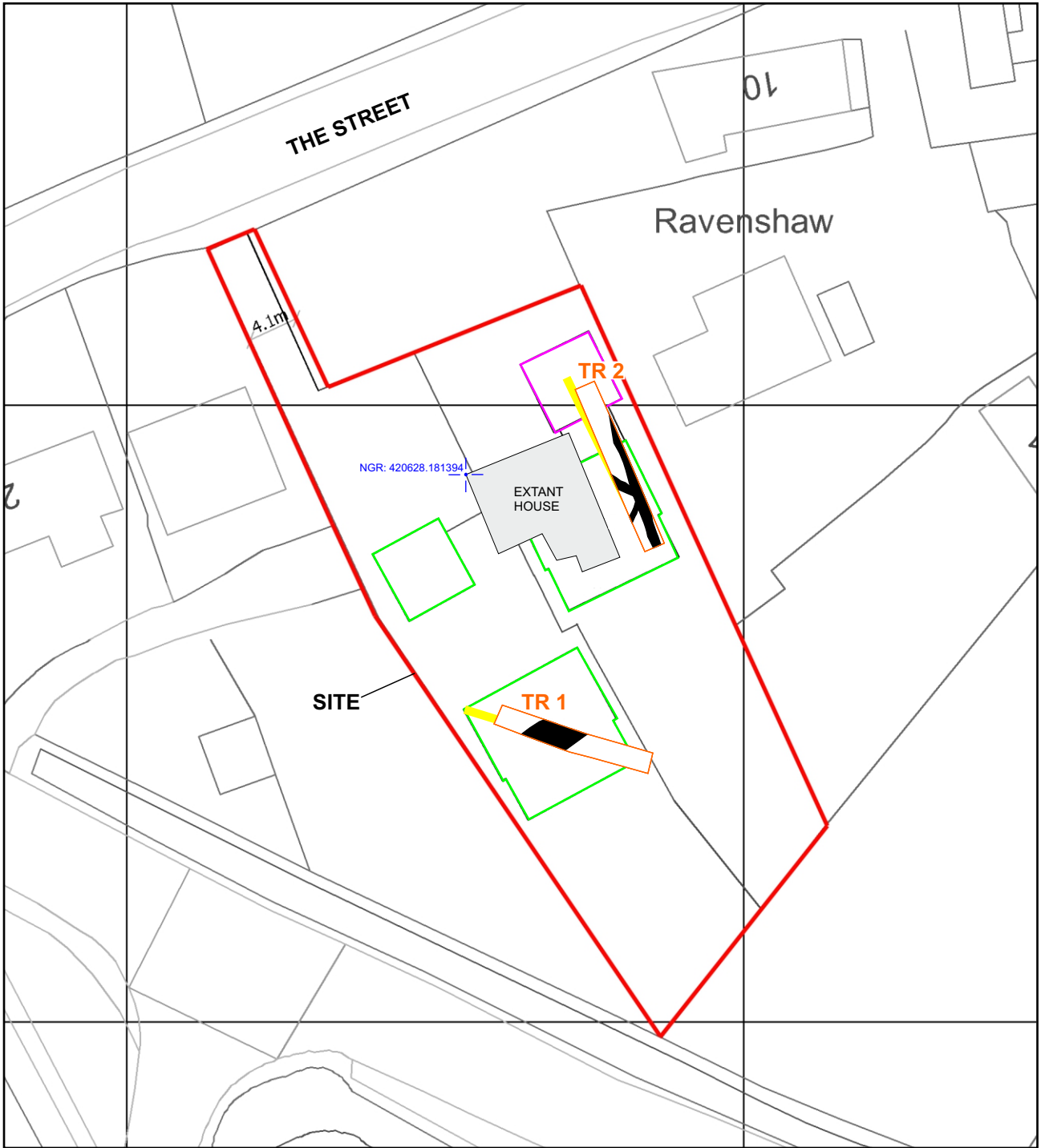
Catalogue

1. Bodysherd with a common frequency of crushed fossil shell temper. Wt. 7 g. Date: Iron Age.
2. Bodysherd in a fine sandy, micaceous paste with sparse fossil shell fragments 2-3 mm in size. Wt. 7 g. Date: Iron Age.
3. Bodysherd from a Wheelmade vessel, probably a butt beaker with rouletted decoration. Fine cream ware with an oxidised interior surface. Wt. 3 g. Date: early Roman.
4. Bodysherd in a grey hard-fired ware with sparse grog tempering. A Wiltshire coarseware. Wt. 29 g. Date: early Roman.



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Site Code: TSL16
Accession Code:

FIGURE 1: Site Location



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Site Code: TSL16
Accession Code:

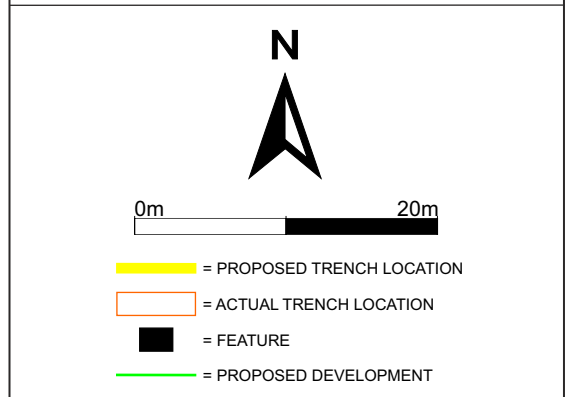
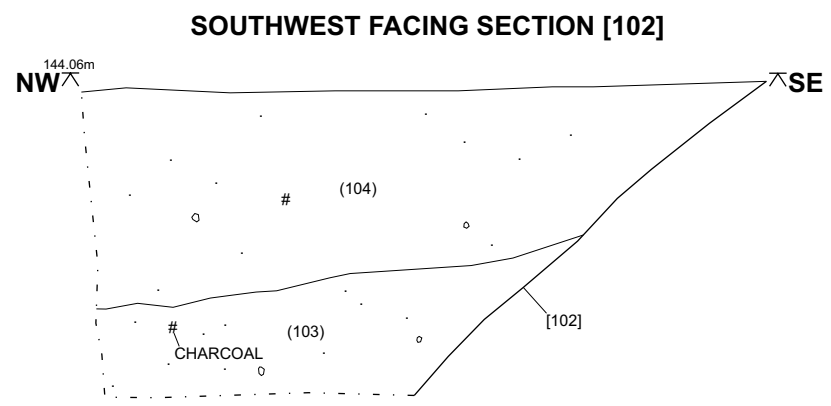
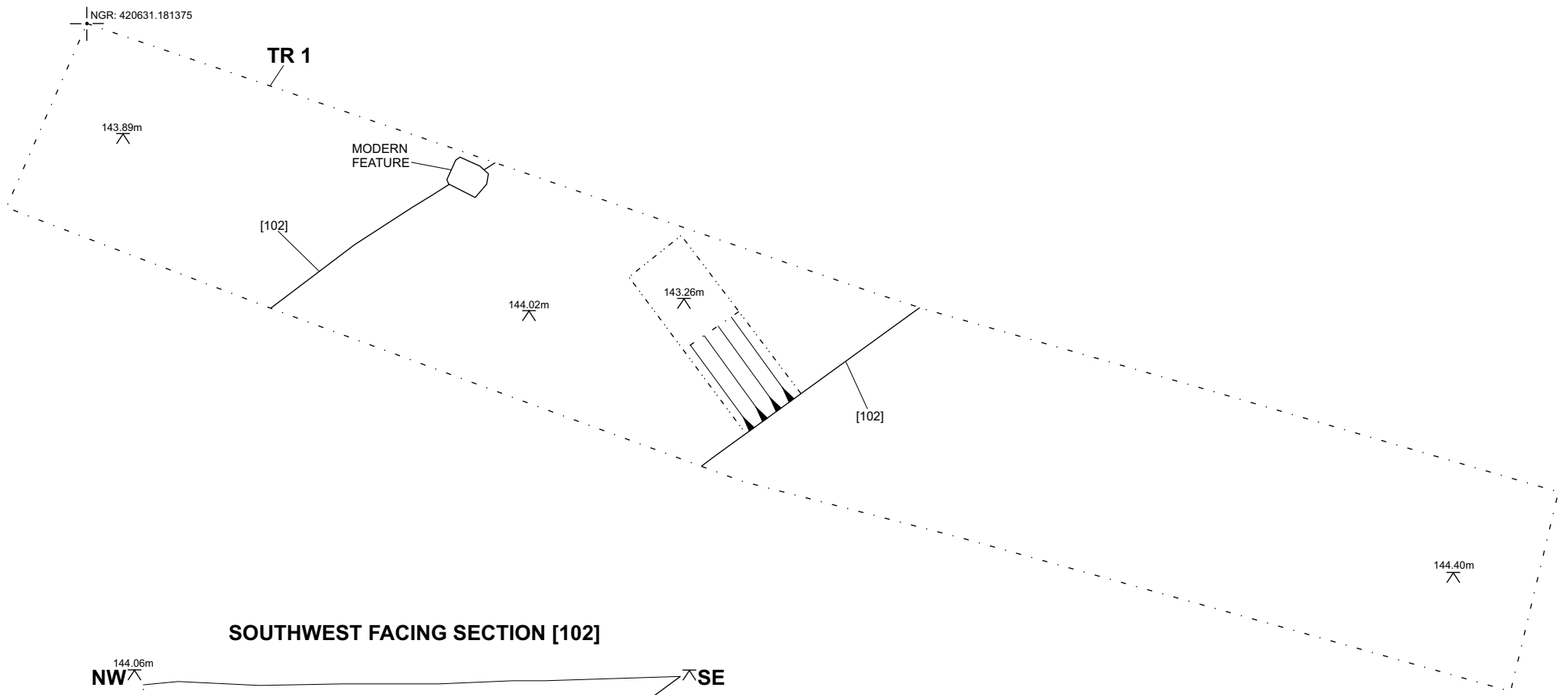


FIGURE 2: Site Plan



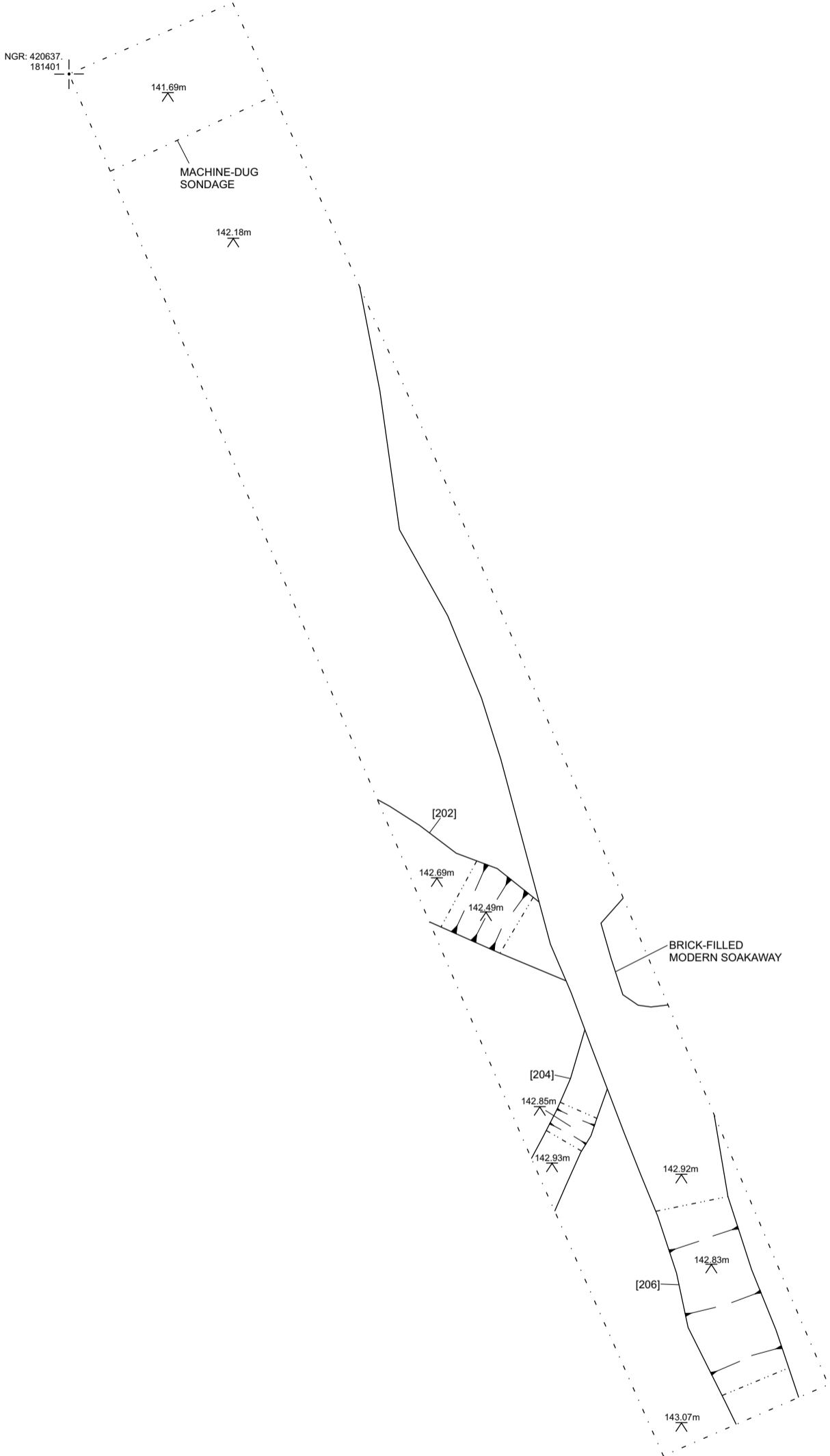
Site Code: TSL16
 Accession Code:

N

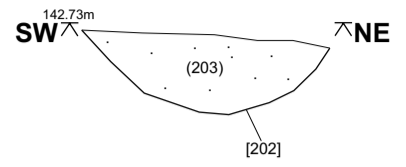
0m 2m
 PLAN

0m 1m
 SECTION

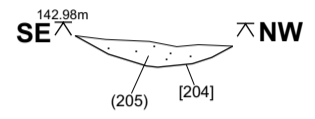
FIGURE 3: Trench 1 Plan and Section



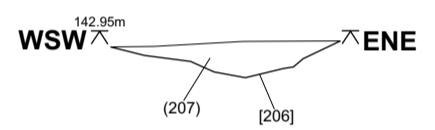
SOUTHEAST FACING SECTION [202]




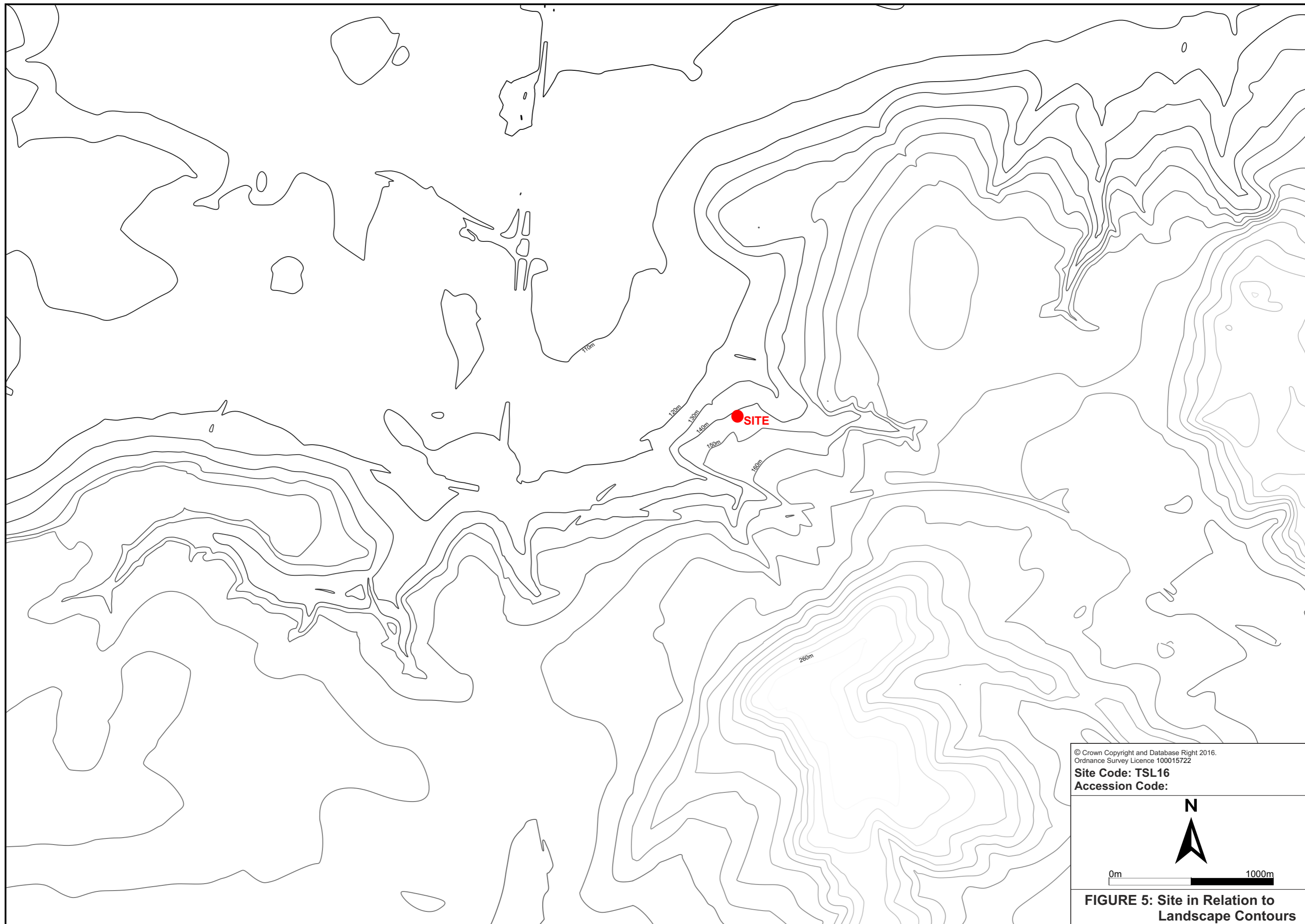
NORTHEAST FACING SECTION [204]



SOUTH-SOUTHEAST FACING SECTION [206]



<p>Site Code: TSL16</p> <p>Accession Code:</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">N</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">0m 2m</p> <p style="text-align: center;">PLAN</p> <p style="text-align: center;">0m 1m</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SECTIONS</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">FIGURE 4: Trench 2 Plan and Sections</p>



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Site Code: TSL16

Accession Code:



0m 1000m

**FIGURE 5: Site in Relation to
Landscape Contours**