

**VYSE QUARRY EXTENSION,
NEAR GEORGEHAM,
DEVON.**

NGR: 249429.141261 (centred)

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

November 2018
Report No. 1270



ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANCY, MANAGEMENT & FIELD SERVICES

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Quality Assurance

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SUMMARY

Between 29th October and 2nd November 2018 Foundations Archaeology undertook an archaeological evaluation on land adjacent to Vyse Quarry, Near Georgeham, Devon (NGR: 249429.141261 - centred). The project was commissioned by Andrew Josephs Associates on behalf of Braunton Aggregates .

The fieldwork comprised the excavation and recording of 10 evaluation trenches within the area of a proposed quarry extension.

The evaluation identified a low potential for archaeological remains to be present within the site. A substantial curvilinear double-ditch earthwork feature, present at the north of the site, was undated, but may have been related to known World War II training activity. However, due to a lack of associated finds or features, the interpretation of the double-ditch is tentative. A further ditch to the southeast was probably a former agricultural boundary, which remained undated.

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.

Post-pipe

Column of material sometimes found within postholes; probable in-fill within void caused by removal/burning/decay of former post. Often surrounded by post-packing material.

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 between 29th October and 2nd November 2018 on land adjacent to Vyse Quarry, Near Georgeham, Devon (NGR: 249429.141261 - centred). The project was commissioned by Andrew Josephs Associates on behalf of Braunton Aggregates.
- 1.2 The evaluation was conducted in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), prepared by Foundations Archaeology (2018) and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CifA) *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation* (2014).
- 1.3 The code of conduct of the CifA was adhered to throughout.

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The site comprises parts of four agricultural fields, which are located approximately 1.6km to the northeast of North Buckland and immediately to the southeast and northeast of Vyse Quarry. The study area is located on the upper, southwest facing slopes of a spur, between approximately 165m AOD at the north and 130m AOD at the south. The underlying geology is recorded as *Pickwell Down Sandstones Formation* - sandstone (BGS Online Viewer).
- 2.2 There is currently a proposal for a 4ha extension to Vyse Quarry. In accordance with the principles of NPPF18, the Devon County Historic Environment Team (HET) requested an archaeological evaluation, as part of a suite of works, in order to inform any associated planning application.
- 2.3 The proposed quarry extension is within an area of archaeological potential. A search of the Historic Environment Record for the area produced 21 entries, which were predominately of Post-medieval date. No entries which predated the Medieval period were present, although the site of Spreacombe Manor (MDV 14512) and the pond (MDV 31685) may have Medieval or earlier origins. Evidence of previous industrial activity in the form of adits, mines (MDV 245, 246, 19500, 54868) and quarrying (MDV 31600 and 31681) is present across the study area. Evidence of World War II activity is fairly extensive across the landscape, in the form of assault practice areas (MDV 73990).
- 2.4 The earliest historic map available for the area is the Tithe Map dated 1839. The quarry and proposed extension are contained within North Down (land parcel 367), which was described as a 'Furze Brake'. This rough grass condition appeared to continue through the first half of the twentieth century, with the area depicted as bracken, heath or rough grassland on the 1888, 1905 and 1963 OS maps. However, the northern extension area only partly extends into the area of rough ground, with the rest of the site shown as clear and was

therefore most likely to have been pasture, or under arable. Vyse Quarry first appears on the 1958 OS map and clearly expanded over the subsequent decades. Up to the 1963 mapping, the broader landscape and land divisions appear relatively unchanged since the late 19th century, apart from the areas of rough grassland, which seem to be more limited, possibly due to land improvements by drainage.

- 2.5 A geophysical survey has been undertaken within the site, as part of the suite of works, by TigerGeo Limited (2018). The results of this survey revealed a series of former field systems, probable ditches and a probable Medieval (or earlier?) series of lynchets.
- 2.6 The site therefore contained the potential for evidence of predominately Medieval and later activity. 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/mitigation decisions to be taken regarding the archaeological provision for the areas affected by the development.
- 3.2 These aims were achieved through pursuit of the following specific objectives:
- i) To determine, as far as reasonably practicable, the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains.
 - ii) To assess vulnerability/sensitivity of any exposed remains.
 - iii) To establish the ecofactual and environmental potential of archaeological deposits and features encountered.
 - iv) To assess the impact of previous land use on the site, including the nature and extent of existing disturbance and intrusion.
 - v) To establish the potential for significant environmental deposits.
 - vi) To provide sufficient information on the archaeological potential of the site to enable that archaeological implications of the proposed development to be assessed.
 - vii) To inform formulation of a strategy to avoid or mitigate impacts of the proposed development on surviving archaeological remains.

4 METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 A total of ten archaeological evaluation trenches were excavated within the site, as shown in Figure 2. The trenches were located primarily to investigate geophysical anomalies, as well as to provide a broadly representative sample of the development site.
- 4.2 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. Features and spoil tips were visually scanned for finds.
- 4.3 Where archaeological features were present, these were subjected to appropriate levels of investigation. All excavation and recording work was undertaken in accordance with the WSI and the Foundations Archaeology Technical Manual 3: Excavation Manual. The initial excavation of features failed to yield artefacts, it was therefore agreed on site that the features present within the evaluation trenches were to be excavated to a 100% sample level.

5 RESULTS

- 5.1 A full description of all contexts identified during the course of the evaluation is presented in Appendix 1. A summary of the results is given below.
- 5.2 The general stratigraphic sequence within the site was relatively uniform across the investigated areas. Natural silt sand was present at an average depth of 0.45m below the Modern ground. This was overlaid by a layer of silt sand subsoil, or degraded natural, average 0.13m thick, which was, in turn, sealed by a silt sand topsoil in Trench 1 and ploughsoil in the remaining trenches, average 0.32m thick. Visibility conditions were generally good and there was no direct evidence for significant truncation or Modern disturbance within the trenches. Where features were present, they were cut through the subsoil/degraded natural layer and into the top of the natural deposits.
- 5.3 The trenches were located across four fields, with Trench 1 in the northernmost field Field 1, Trenches 2 to 4 in Field 2, Trenches 5 and 6 in Field 3 and 7 to 10 in Field 4 to the south.
- 5.4 A total of three ditches were present within Trenches 1 and 5. All of the other trenches were devoid of archaeological features. No archaeological finds were present within any of the trenches or features.
- 5.5 Ditches [103] and [105] were adjacent and parallel to each other and formed an extant northeast-southwest aligned curvilinear double-ditch earthwork. This correlated with a parallel double linear feature (11/12) present in the geophysical survey (Figures 2, 3, 4 and 8). The ditches were cut through subsoil/degraded natural layer (102) and had similar wide, sloping edges and

flat bases. Ditch [105] was the larger feature, at 5.40m in width and 0.77m in depth, whilst ditch [103] was 3.50m wide and 0.42m deep. The ditches contained dark soil in-fills, which were devoid of any datable material. Examination of the evaluation trench sections immediately adjacent to the ditches did not reveal evidence for remnant bank material, or any associated buried soil horizons.

- 5.6 Ditch [503] was situated on a northeast – southwest alignment and correlated with curvilinear feature (4) present in the geophysical survey. It had a wide sloping profile, up to 2.15m in width and 0.33m in depth and was cut through subsoil/degraded natural layer (502). It contained a dark soil in-fill, which was devoid of datable material. There was no evidence for any associated bank or buried soil horizons and the location of the ditch does not appear to match any boundaries present on historical mapping.

6 DISCUSSION

- 6.1 The majority of the evaluation trenches were devoid of archaeological features or finds, which suggested a generally low archaeological potential for the site. On the whole, this correlated with the geophysical survey.

- 6.2 The results of the geophysical and evaluation surveys have indicated that the curvilinear double-ditch feature (evaluation ditches [103] and [105]) extended for a distance of approximately 160m on a northeast – southwest alignment. It was not demonstrably visible elsewhere within the study area and it was therefore uncertain if the feature represented the full extent of a linear ditch system, or the surviving/visible part of a larger feature.

- 6.2.1 Due to a complete lack of associated finds and features, the dating and interpretation of double-ditch [103]/[105] remained somewhat problematic. Its location, on the upper slope of a landscape spur, with extensive views to the south and southwest, may be suggestive of a defensive function (Figure 7). It is therefore possible that double-ditch [103]/[105] was related to the known World War II military training activities in this area (HER Reference No: MDV 73990). However, due to the limited nature of the evidence, any interpretation of the double-ditch is tentative.

- 6.3 The location of ditch [503] suggested that it was unlikely to have been related to double-ditch [103]/[105] and, as such, it most likely represented part of a former agricultural boundary, which remained undated. The location of the ditch also does not appear to match any boundaries present on historical mapping

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The evaluation has identified a low potential for archaeological remains to be present within the site. A substantial curvilinear double-ditch earthwork

feature, present at the north of the site, was undated, but may have been related to known World War II training activity. However, due to a lack of associated finds or features, the interpretation of the double-ditch is tentative. A further ditch to the southeast was probably a former agricultural boundary, which remained undated.

- 7.2 The archive is currently held at the offices of Foundations Archaeology, but will be deposited in due course with the Museum of Barnstable and North Devon. A short note will be submitted for publication in the relevant local archaeological journal and an OASIS form will also be submitted to ADS.

8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Foundations Archaeology. 2018. *Vyse Quarry Extension, Near Georgeham, Devon: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation*. Unpublished.

TigerGeo Ltd. 2018. *Land at Vyse Quarry, Near Georgeham, Devon: Archaeological Geophysical Survey*. Unpublished.

9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Foundations Archaeology would like to thank Stephen Reed of Devon County Council, along with Andy Josephs and Ian Meadows of Andrew Josephs Associates and the staff at Braunton Aggregates for their help during the course of the project.

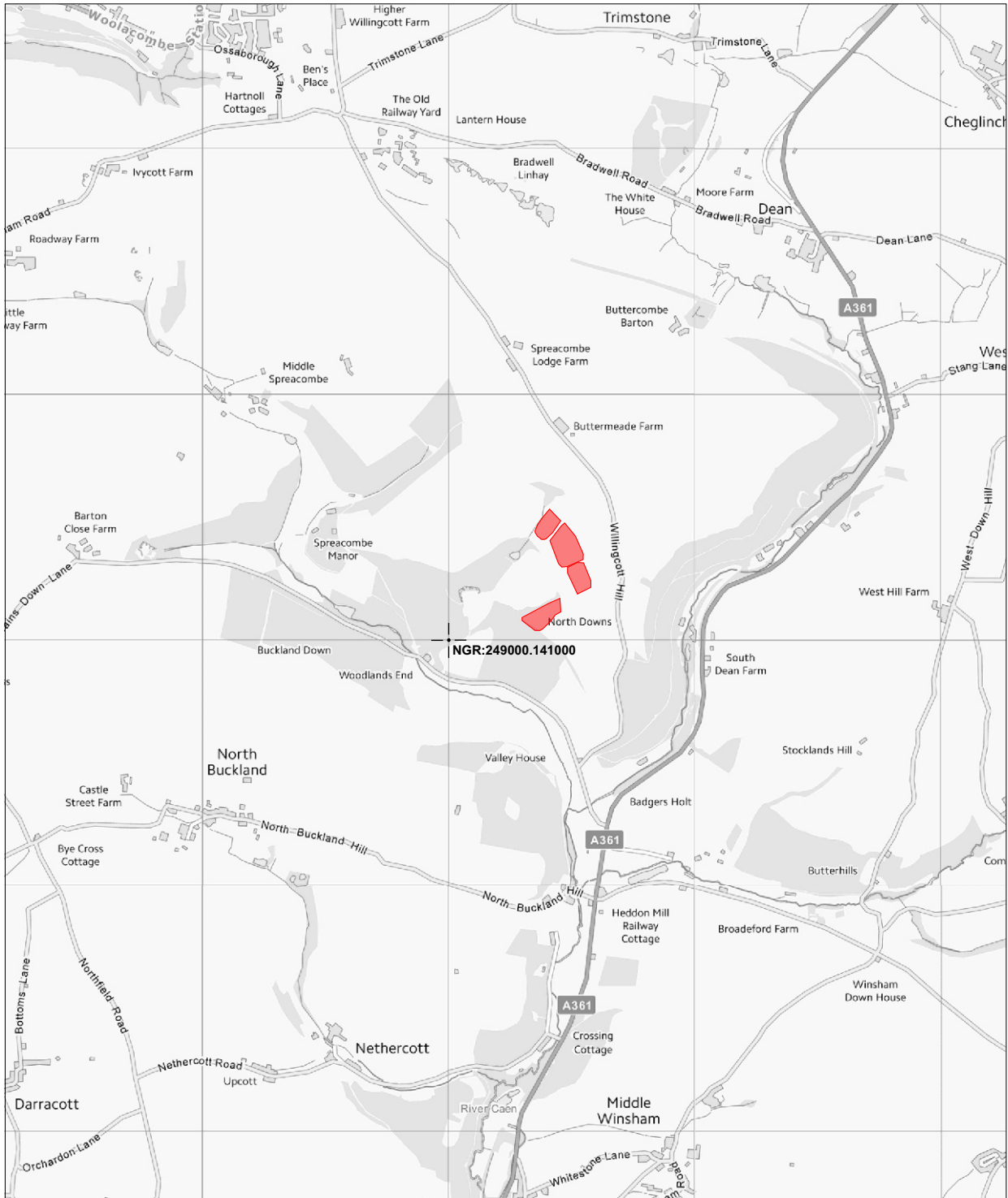
Vyse Quarry Extension, Near Georgeham, Devon: Archaeological Evaluation

APPENDIX 1: Stratigraphic Data

CXT	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	DESCRIPTION	CUTS/LATER THAN	CUT BY/EARLIER THAN
				TRENCH 1: 50m long by 2.35m wide. Natural = variable orange beige pink silt sand with frequent grey pink stones, present at an average depth of 0.57m below Modern ground, average height 161.32m AOD.		
101	50	2.35	0.33	Topsoil; light grey brown silt sand.	102	n/a
102	50	2.35	0.24	Subsoil/degraded natural; brown orange silt sand stone.	natural	101
[103]	2.35	3.50	0.42	Northeast – southwest aligned ditch with a wide, sloping, relatively shallow flat profile. Contained fill 104. Parallel with and probably related to ditch [105].	102	104
104	2.35	3.50	0.42	Fill of ditch [103]; dark brown sand silt, which contained occasional charcoal flecks.	[103]	101
[105]	2.50	5.40	0.77	Northeast – southwest aligned substantial ditch with sloping, slightly undulating sides and a flat base. Contained fills 106 and 107. Parallel with and probably related to ditch [103].	102	106
106	2.50	5.40	0.77	Fill of ditch [105]; dark red brown silt sand, which contained occasional stones, along with occasional charcoal flecks.	[105]	107
107	?	0.92	0.17	Fill of ditch [105]; red black clay sand, which contained frequent charcoal flecks and patches of possibly heated clay.	106	101
				TRENCH 2: 26m long by 2.40m wide. Natural = variable orange beige pink silt sand, present at an average depth of 0.38m below Modern ground, average height 164.54m AOD.		
201	26	2.40	0.28	Ploughsoil; light grey brown silt sand.	202	n/a
202	26	2.40	0.10	Subsoil/degraded natural; brown orange silt sand stone.	natural	201
				No archaeological features or finds were present within the trench.		
				TRENCH 3: 27m long by 2.40m wide. Natural = variable orange beige pink silt sand, with frequent grey pink stones, present at an average depth of 0.55m below Modern ground, average height 163.89m AOD.		
301	27	2.40	0.36	Ploughsoil; light grey brown silt sand.	302	n/a
302	27	2.40	0.19	Subsoil/degraded natural; brown orange silt sand stone.	natural	301
				No archaeological features or finds were present within the trench.		
				TRENCH 4: 26m long by 2.40m wide. Natural = variable orange beige pink silt sand, with frequent grey pink stones, present at an average depth of 0.53m below Modern ground, average height 161.68m AOD.		
401	26	2.40	0.36	Ploughsoil; light to mid grey silt sand.	402	n/a
402	26	2.40	0.17	Subsoil/degraded natural; brown orange silt sand stone.	natural	401
				No archaeological features or finds were present within the trench.		
				TRENCH 5: 25m long by 2.40m wide. Natural = variable orange beige pink silt sand, with frequent grey pink stones, present at an average depth of 0.44m below Modern ground, average height 164.49m AOD.		
501	25	2.40	0.32	Ploughsoil; light grey brown silt sand.	502	n/a
502	25	2.40	0.12	Subsoil/degraded natural; brown orange silt sand stone.	natural	501
[503]	2.36	2.15	0.33	Northeast – southwest aligned ditch with a wide, sloping, relatively shallow and irregular profile. Contained fill 504.	502	504
504	2.36	2.15	0.33	Fill of ditch [503]; dark brown grey silt sand, which contained occasional to frequent stones.	[503]	501


Vyse Quarry Extension, Near Georgeham, Devon: Archaeological Evaluation

CXT	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	DESCRIPTION	CUTS/LATER THAN	CUT BY/EARLIER THAN
				TRENCH 6: 25m long by 2.30m wide. Natural = variable orange beige pink silt sand with frequent patches of grey pink stones, present at an average depth of 0.37m below Modern ground, average height 161.10m AOD.		
601	25	2.30	0.30	Ploughsoil; light grey brown silt sand.	602	n/a
602	25	2.30	0.07	Subsoil/degraded natural; brown orange silt sand stone.	natural	601
				No archaeological features or finds were present within the trench.		
				TRENCH 7: 26m long by 2.40m wide. Natural = variable orange beige pink silt sand with frequent patches of grey pink stones, present at an average depth of 0.40m below Modern ground, average height 140.66m AOD.		
701	26	2.40	0.26	Ploughsoil; light to mid grey silt sand.	702	n/a
702	26	2.40	0.14	Subsoil/degraded natural; brown orange silt sand stone.	natural	701
				No archaeological features or finds were present within the trench.		
				TRENCH 8: 25m long by 2.40m wide. Natural = variable orange beige pink silt sand with frequent patches of grey pink stones, present at an average depth of 0.47m below Modern ground, average height 136.07m AOD.		
801	25	2.40	0.33	Ploughsoil; light to mid grey silt sand.	802	n/a
802	25	2.40	0.14	Subsoil/degraded natural; brown orange silt sand stone.	natural	801
				No archaeological features or finds were present within the trench.		
				TRENCH 9: 25m long by 2.30m wide. Natural = orange pink silt sand with frequent grey pink stones, present at an average depth of 0.31m below Modern ground, average height 133.95m AOD.		
901	25	2.30	0.29	Ploughsoil; light to mid grey silt sand.	902	n/a
902	25	2.30	0.02	Subsoil/degraded natural; brown orange silt sand stone.	natural	901
				No archaeological features or finds were present within the trench.		
				TRENCH 10: 25m long by 2.40m wide. Natural = orange pink silt sand with frequent grey pink stones, present at an average depth of 0.43m below Modern ground, average height 133.39m AOD.		
1001	25	2.40	0.30	Ploughsoil; light to mid grey silt sand.	1002	n/a
1002	25	2.40	0.13	Subsoil/degraded natural; brown orange silt sand stone.	natural	1001
				No archaeological features or finds were present within the trench.		



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Site Code: VQE18
Accession Code:




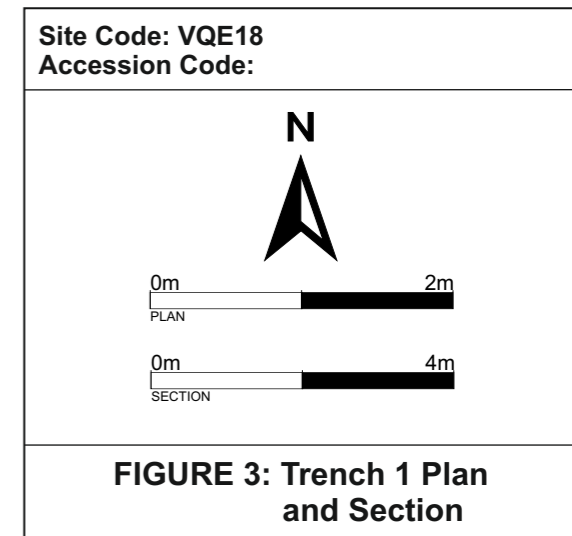
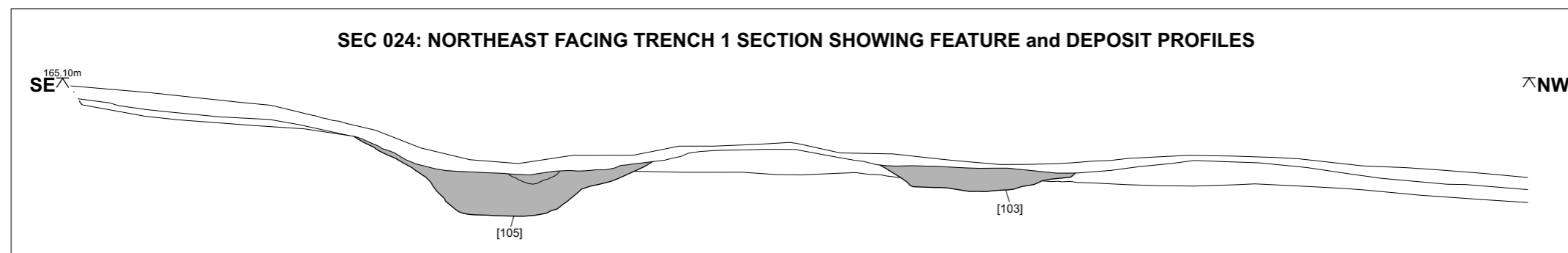
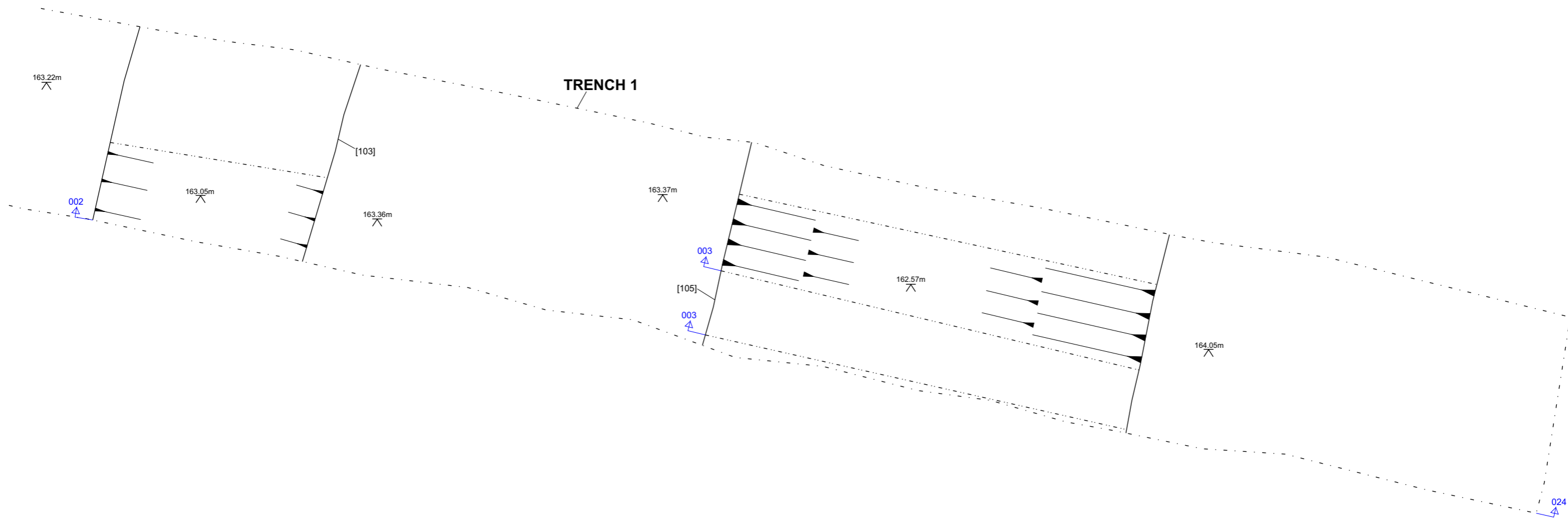
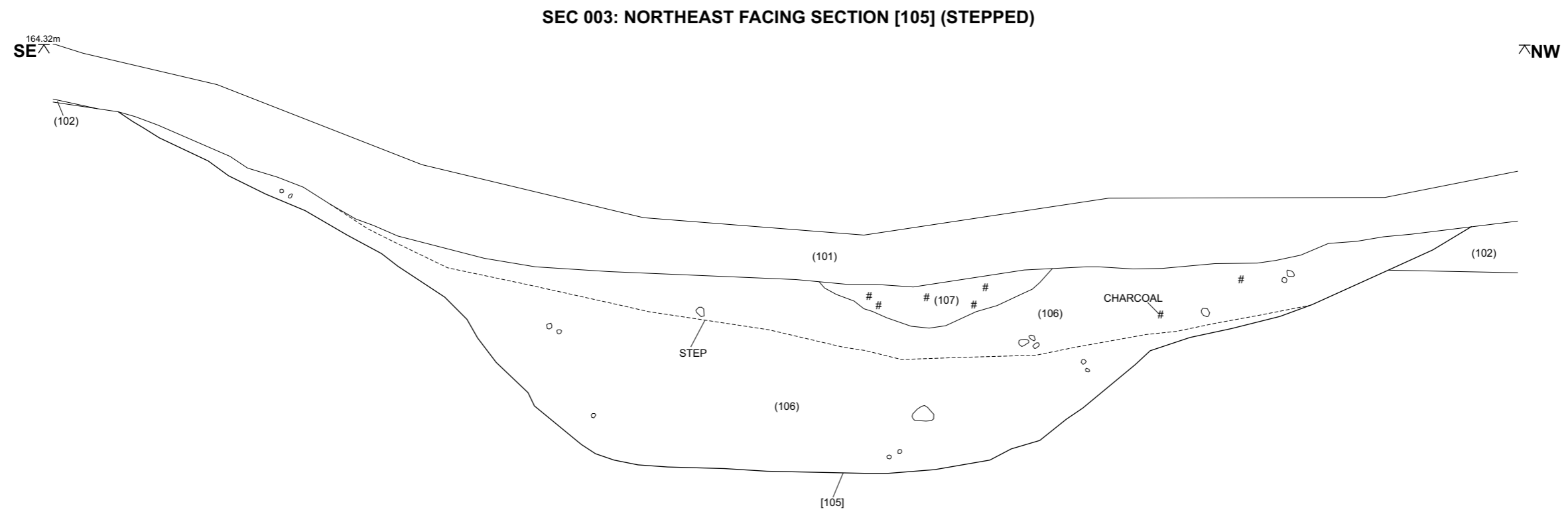
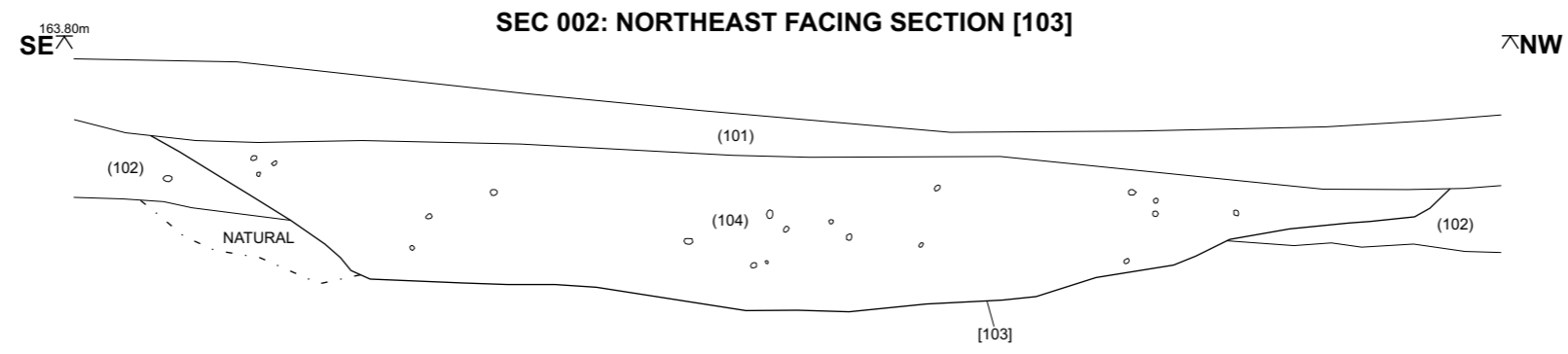


FIGURE 1: Site Location

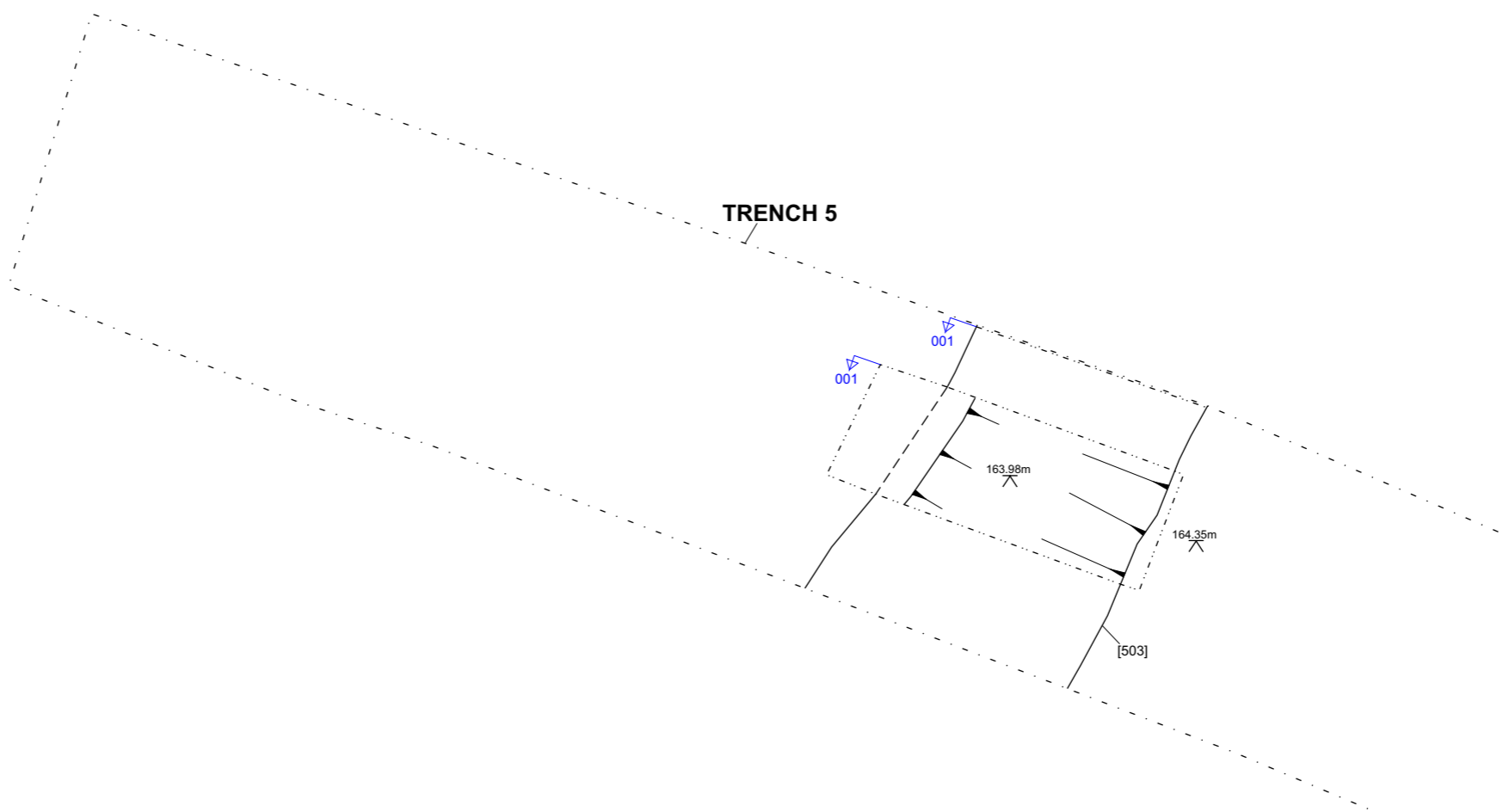


FIGURE 2: Site Plan

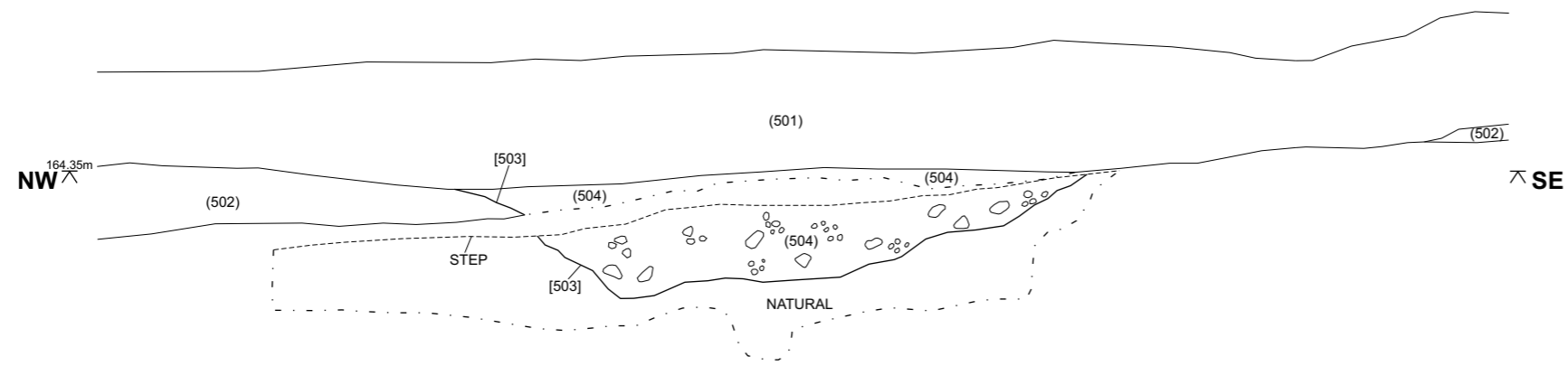




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FIGURE 4: Trench 1 Detailed Sections

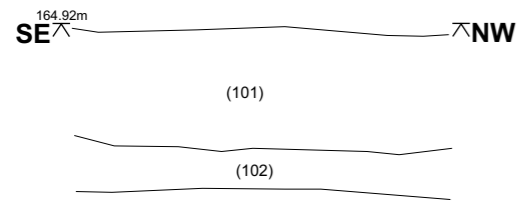


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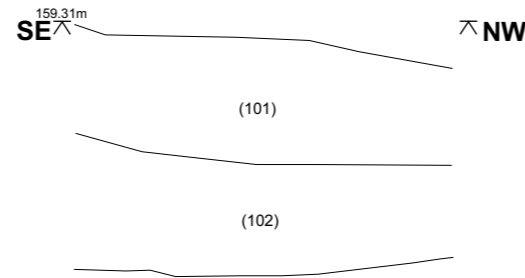


Site Code: VQE18 Accession Code:	
 0m ————— 2m PLAN	
 0m ————— 1m SECTION	
FIGURE 5: Trench 5 Plan and Section	

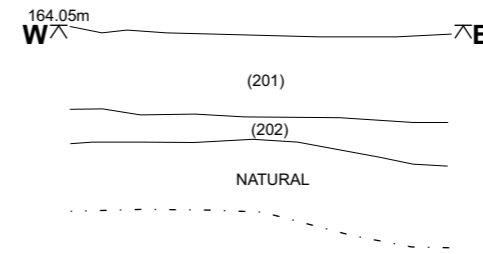
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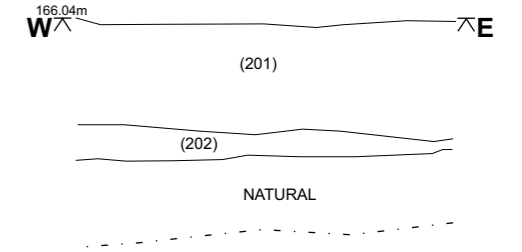
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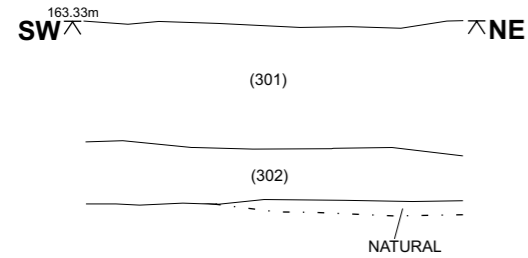
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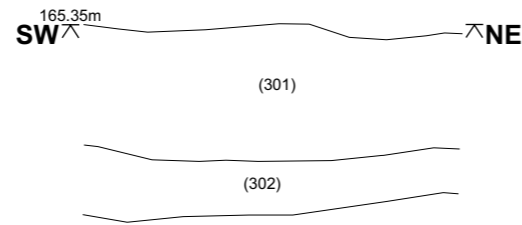
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SEC 008: SOUTHEAST FACING SECTION TRENCH 3 (SOUTHWEST END)



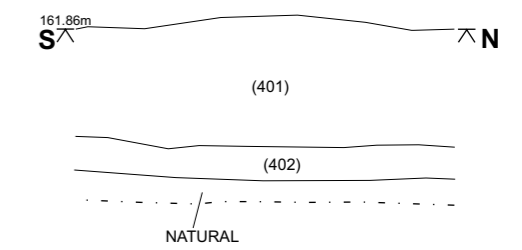
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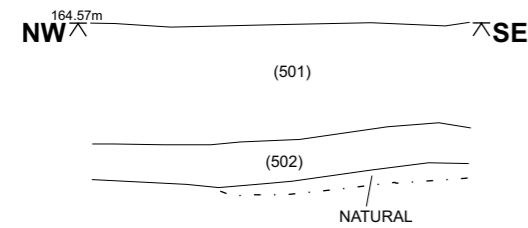
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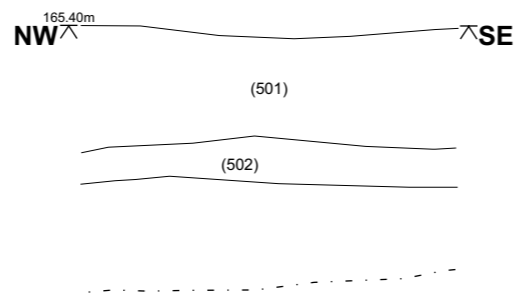
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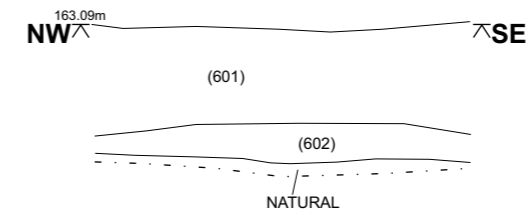
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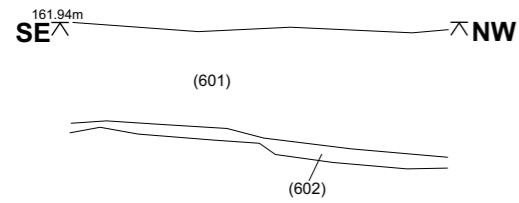
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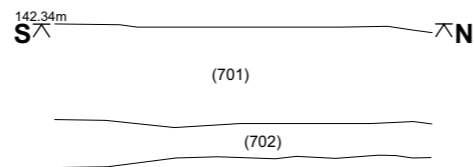
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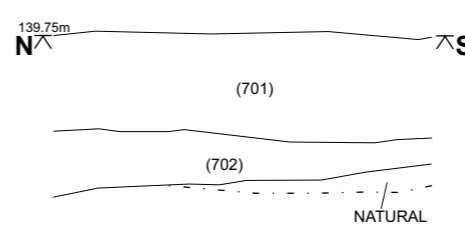
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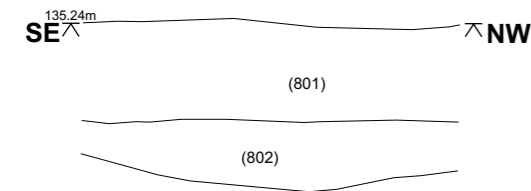
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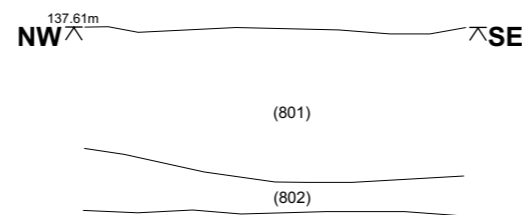
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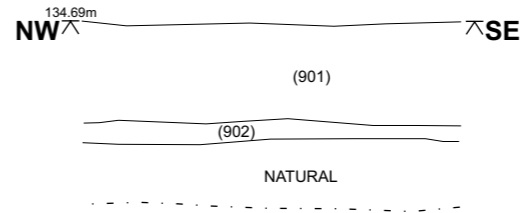
SEC 018: NORTHEAST FACING SECTION TRENCH 8 (SOUTHEAST END)



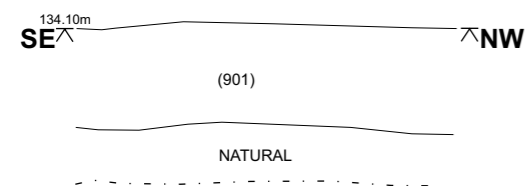
SEC 019: SOUTHWEST FACING SECTION TRENCH 8 (NORTHWEST END)



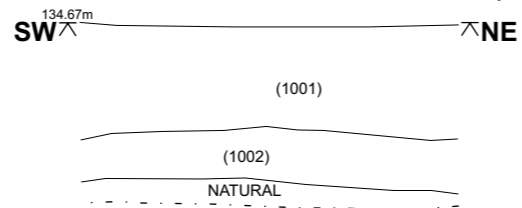
SEC 020: SOUTHWEST FACING SECTION TRENCH 9 (NORTHWEST END)



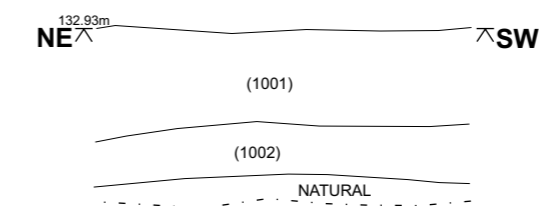
SEC 021: NORTHEAST FACING SECTION TRENCH 9 (SOUTHEAST END)




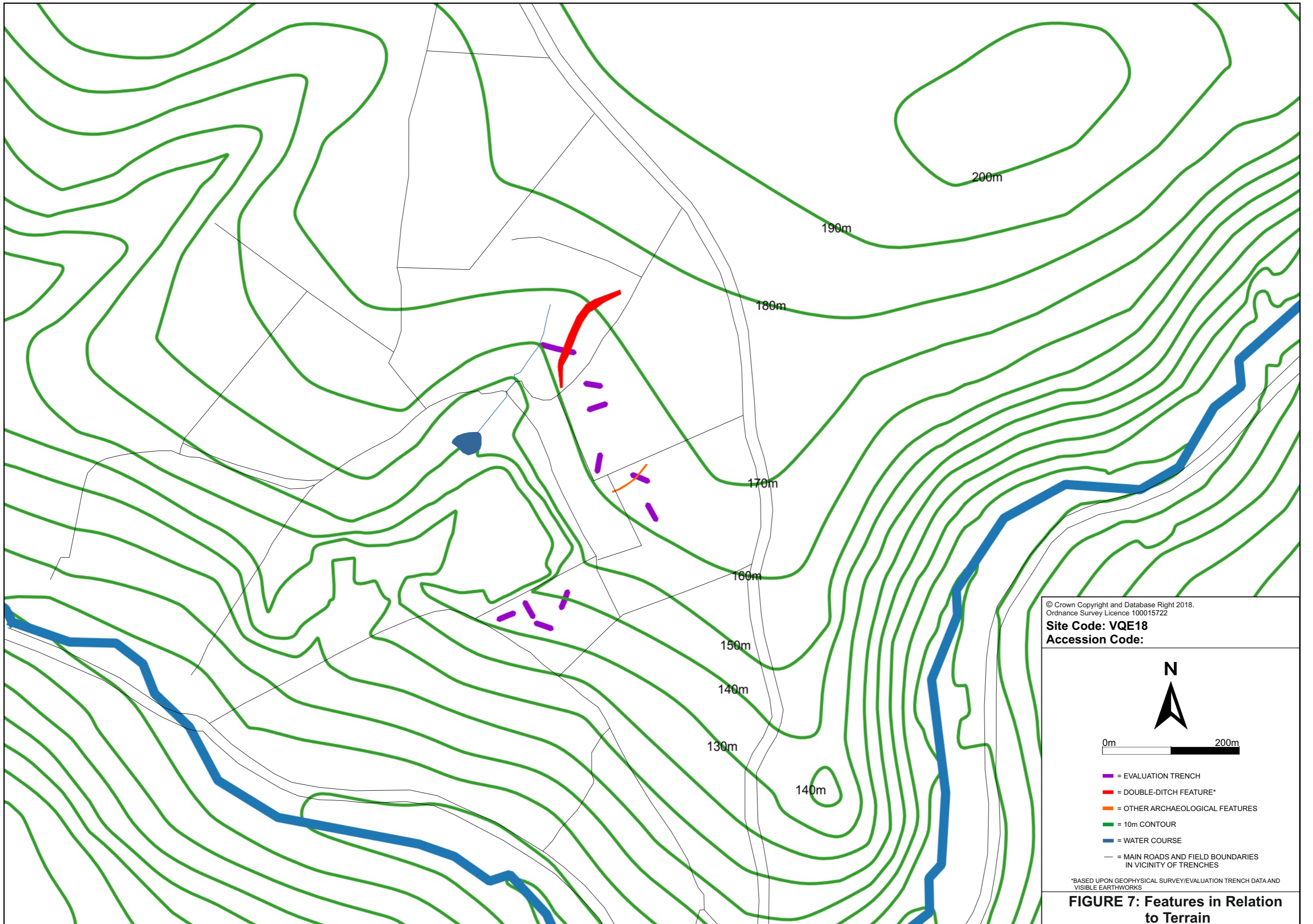
SEC 022: SOUTHEAST FACING SECTION TRENCH 10 (NORTHEAST END)



SEC 023: NORTHWEST FACING SECTION TRENCH 10 (SOUTHWEST END)



Site Code: VQE18
Accession Code:
0m  1m
FIGURE 6: Representative Trench Sections





Double-ditch earthwork feature at location of Trench 1, looking north



Double-ditch earthwork feature at location of Trench 1, looking north-northeast



Double-ditch earthwork feature at location of Trench 1, looking northeast

<p>Site Code: VQE18 Accession Code:</p>
<p>FIGURE 8: Photographs of Double-Ditch Earthwork Feature</p>