

**3A PARK STREET,
CIRENCESTER,
GLOUCESTERSHIRE.**

NGR: SP 020 021

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



May 2019
Report No. 1297



ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANCY, MANAGEMENT & FIELD SERVICES

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Quality Assurance

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SUMMARY

Between 21st to 29th June 2018 Foundations Archaeology undertook an archaeological watching brief on land at 3A Park Street, Cirencester, Gloucestershire (NGR: SP 020 021). The project was commissioned by Mr Rory Young.

The watching brief comprised the monitoring of groundworks associated with the construction a boundary wall at 3A Park Street, Cirencester.

No natural deposits were encountered during this watching brief. Archaeological evidence in the form of limestone walls, rubble deposits and soil deposits were all securely dated to the Post-medieval period or later, with the exception of layer (102). A small quantity of residual Medieval pottery was recovered from contexts (101), (302), (503) and (505).

Walls (202)/(506) and (404) formed a similar northwest-southeast/northeast-southwest co-axial alignment and therefore may possibly be contemporary. However, as this arrangement mirrored the current northwest-southeast property boundary, which most likely has origins to the Medieval period. Therefore it could also be likely that the walls represent earlier, but different phases of activity on the site in the Post-medieval period.

Context (102) remains undated and it was not clear if the stones were part of an in-situ structure or a rubble/demolition layer.

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 watching brief, undertaken by Foundations Archaeology between 21st to 29th June 2018, on land at 3A Park Street, Cirencester, Gloucestershire (NGR: SP 020 021). The project was commissioned by Mr Rory Young.
- 1.2 The watching brief 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 Watching Brief* (2014).
- 1.3 The code of conduct of the CIfA was adhered to throughout.

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Planning permission (Ref: **18/00434/FUL**) was granted for the erection of a boundary wall at 3A Park Street, Cirencester. The site is within an area of residential development.
- 2.2 The centre of the development area is located approximately 200m to the west of the main *Corinium* Roman Town Scheduled Monument (SM Ref. 1003426), however, scheduled elements of the Roman town have also been uncovered approximately 70m to the north in Thomas Street and around 130m to the northeast of Dollar Street, with further scheduled areas just over 250m to the south between Castle Street and Ascroft Road. Therefore the site itself is located within the northern part of the Roman town, close to Ermin Street, which formed the main Roman NW-SE street through the town between the Gloucester and Silchester gates. This was diverted into the present street pattern during the Medieval period.
- 2.3 The underlying geology is recorded as *Cornbrash Formation - Limestone*, with superficial geological deposits recorded as *River Terrace Deposits, 1 - Gravel* (BGS Online viewer).
- 2.4 The site therefore contained the potential for the presence of archaeological remains, predominately dating from the Roman period, along with later activity. This did not prejudice the works against evidence relating to other periods.

3 AIMS

- 3.1 The aim of the archaeological watching brief was 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 This was 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 groundworks, which had the potential to impact upon buried archaeological remains, were conducted whilst under constant archaeological observation. Groundworks excavation was undertaken by hand. The monitored groundworks comprised the excavation for the boundary wall, as shown in Figure 2.
- 4.2 All excavation and recording work was undertaken in accordance with the WSI and the Foundations Archaeology Technical Manual 3: Excavation Manual.

5 RESULTS

- 5.1 A full description of all contexts identified during the course of the watching brief is presented in Appendix 1, along with a finds list in Appendix 2. A summary of the results is given below.
- 5.2 **Test Pit 1** was excavated down to a depth of 0.65m below the Modern ground level. The lowest stratigraphic deposit encountered was the top of (102), a layer of irregularly shaped limestone blocks contained within a soft limestone and peagrit mortar. It was not clear if this context represented a rubble/demolition layer or if it was structural, the feature appeared to terminate along the southwestern edge identified in plan. No dating evidence was present during the cleaning of this feature and limestone layer (102) was left in-situ. Context (102) was sealed by topsoil (101), which contained Modern material along with earlier residual artefacts. This layer continued beyond the limit of excavation in the southwestern side of the test pit.
- 5.3 **Test Pit 2** was excavated down to a depth of 0.6m below the Modern ground level. The lowest stratigraphic deposits encountered were (202) and (203).

Context (202) was a limestone wall which consisted of both irregular and faced stone blocks with a soft beige pea grit mortar. Within the test pit the wall was exposed for three courses, with part of a fourth visible, and was demonstrated to continue beyond the limit of excavation. The wall was only partly revealed within the test pit and therefore its orientation was unclear, but it was possibly orientated northwest-southeast and was possibly equivalent to (506). Contained within the matrix of the wall was a single sherd of willow pattern chinaware. Probably abutting wall (202) was soil rubble layer (203), this deposit contained late Post-medieval material and also continued beyond the limit of excavation. This and the wall were in turn sealed by topsoil (201).

- 5.4 **Test Pit 3** was extended and recorded as Test Pit 5.
- 5.5 **Test Pit 4** was excavated down to a depth of 1.05m below the Modern ground level. The lowest stratigraphic deposits encountered were (403) and (404). Context (404) was a limestone wall constructed of irregular limestone blocks, which were roughly faced and had a rubble core. The wall was orientated northeast-southwest and continued below the limit of excavation. The wall was associated with mortar/soil infill (406) and appeared to continue under extant wall (405). During the cleaning of wall late Post-medieval pottery and CBM was identified. Probably abutting wall (404) was context (403), a mid to dark brown grey sandy clay deposit, which contained late Post-medieval artefacts. Context (403) and wall (404) were then sealed by topsoil (402).
- 5.6 **Test Pit 5** was excavated down to a depth of 0.85m below the Modern ground level. The lowest stratigraphic deposit encountered was (503), a mid to dark brown grey sandy clay deposit, which contained late Post-medieval/modern artefacts. This deposit was most likely equivalent to (403). Deposit (503) was cut by wall cut [504], which contained limestone wall (506). Wall (506) was orientated northwest-southeast and constructed of large irregular limestone blocks, roughly shaped on the outer edges and with a rubble core. There was no obvious mortar around the stones and the wall infill was similar in appearance to (505). Wall (506)/[504] and deposit (503) were in turn sealed by (502), a light beige/yellow compact mortar/limestone rubble layer equivalent to (401).

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 No natural deposits were encountered during this watching brief. Archaeological evidence in the form of limestone walls, rubble deposits and soil deposits were all securely dated to the Post-medieval period or later, with the exception of stone rubble/layer structural deposit (102). A small quantity of residual Medieval pottery was recovered from contexts (101), (302), (503) and (505).
- 6.2 Walls (202)/(506) and (404) formed a similar northwest-southeast/northeast-southwest co-axial alignment and therefore may possibly be contemporary. However, as this arrangement mirrored the current northwest-southeast

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property boundary, which most likely has origins to the Medieval period. Therefore it could also be likely that the walls represent earlier, but different phases of activity on the site in the Post-medieval period.

- 6.3 Context (102) remains undated and it was not clear if the stones were part of an in-situ structure or a rubble/demolition layer.
- 6.4 The archive is currently held at the offices of Foundations Archaeology, but will be deposited in due course with *Corinium 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

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 2014. *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief*. Reading.

Foundations Archaeology. 2018. *3A Park Street, Cirencester, Gloucestershire: Written Scheme of Investigation for a Programme of Archaeological Watching Brief*. Unpublished.

8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Foundations Archaeology would like to thank Charles Parry of Gloucestershire Archaeological Service, as well as Rory Young, for their help during the course of the project.

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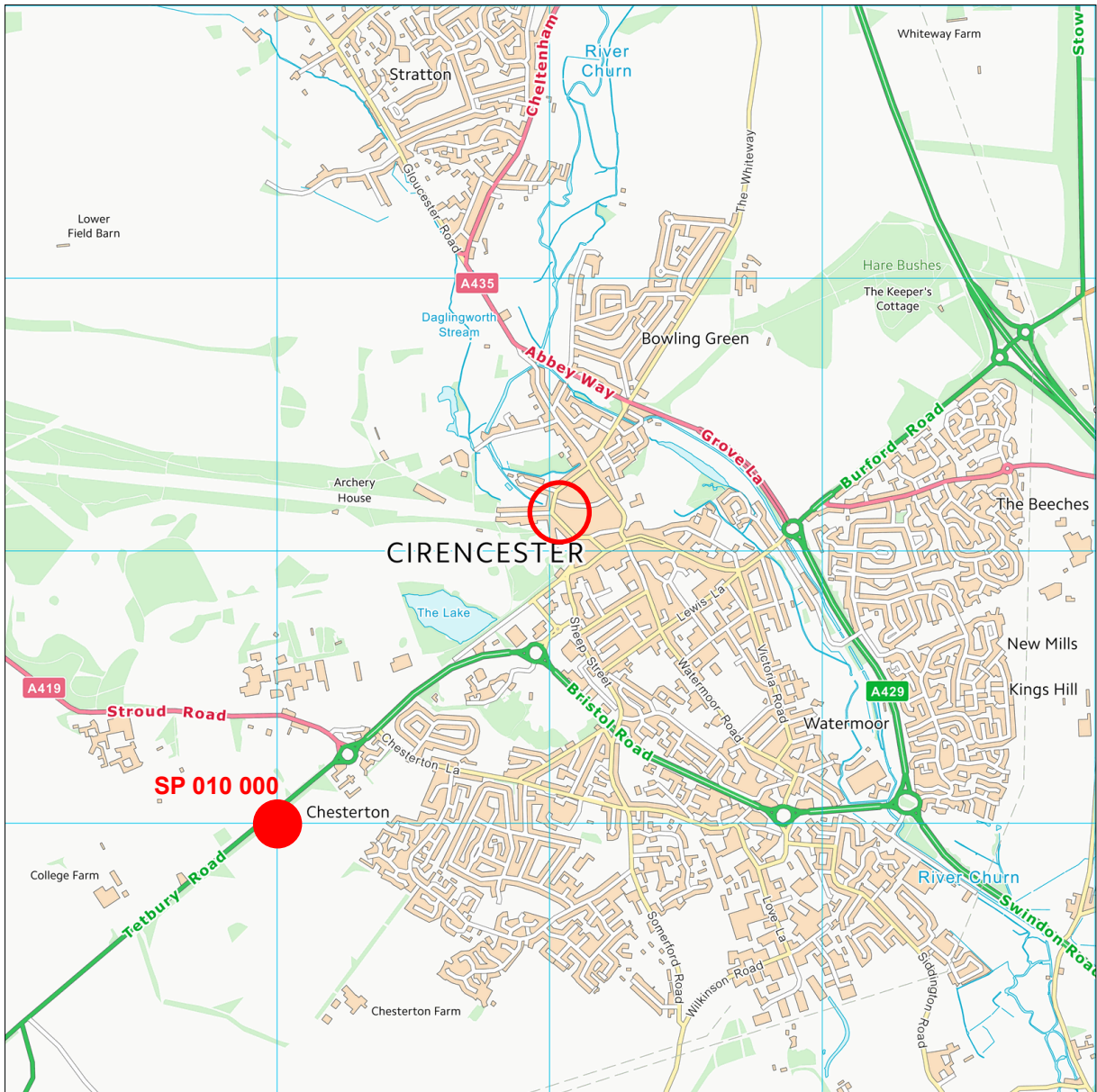
CXT	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	DESCRIPTION	CUTS/LATER THAN	CUT BY/EARLIER THAN
				Test Pit 1: Area excavated to a depth of 0.65m (110.74m AOD) from the Modern ground level. No natural deposits present within the excavated depth.		
101	1.2+	0.45+	0.65+	Topsoil: Dark brown soft clay silt, which contained Modern artefacts including chinaware as well as some residual earlier material.	102	n/a
102	0.65+	0.45+	?	Irregular stone rubble deposit, which contained irregular shaped limestone blocks with a soft limestone pea grit mortar. Only present at northeast end of test pit.	?	101
				Test Pit 2: Area excavated to a depth of 0.65m (110.60m AOD) from the Modern ground level. No natural deposits present within the excavated depth.		
201	n/a	n/a	0.65+	Topsoil: Dark brown soft clay silt, which contained Modern artefacts including chinaware as well as some residual earlier material.	202, 203	n/a
202	0.85+	0.35	0.32+	Limestone Wall: constructed with both irregular and faced stone. Soft beige pea grit mortar, with three courses exposed and part of fourth visible. Only partly revealed within test pit therefore orientation unclear, but possibly orientated northwest-southeast. Possibly equivalent to (506). Probable Post-medieval boundary wall. A single sherd of willow pattern china contained within stone matrix.	?	201, 203?
203	1.12+	0.8+	0.32+	Soil rubble layer: Mid brown clay silt, with frequent patches of limestone and pea grit throughout. Abuts wall (202) at north northwest and south southwest. Contained Post-medieval pottery (not retained).	202?	201
				Test Pit 3: This was extended to become Test Pit 5		
				Test Pit 4: Area excavated to a depth of 1m (110.38m AOD) from the Modern ground level. No natural deposits present within the excavated depth.		
401	3.4+	2.4+	0.24	Layer: Light beige/yellow compact mortar/limestone rubble. Possible floor surface? Contained frequent late Post-medieval artefacts throughout (not retained). Sealed wall (404) abutted wall (405). Equivalent to (502).	403, 404	402, 405?
402	3.4+	2.4+	0.6	Topsoil: Dark brown soft clay silt, which contained Modern artefacts including chinaware. Abuts wall (405).	401	n/a
403	2.4+	1.35+	0.22+	Deposit: Mid to dark brown grey firm sandy clay with occasional small limestone inclusions. Occasional charcoal flecks and contained late Post-medieval artefacts including chinaware (not retained). Appeared to abut wall (404). Possibly equivalent to (503).	404?	401
404	2.4+	0.9	?	Limestone wall: Irregular limestone blocks, roughly faced with a rubble core, orientated northeast-southwest. Only surface exposed and continued below excavation level. Associated with mortar/soil infill (406). Appeared to continue under wall (405). During cleaning of wall late Post-medieval pottery and CBM identified (not retained).	?	405, 401
405	?	?	?	Extant wall: Test pit 4 abuts this extant limestone wall. Consisted of large shaped limestone blocks with a pale grey hard mortar, with small stone fragments, orientated northwest-southeast. The base consisted of thin rougher slabs. Appeared to seal wall (404).	404	?
406	2.4+	0.9	?	Soil/mortar matrix wall (405): Soft limestone and pea grit mortar and mid grey clay silt soil, surrounding and infilling wall (404).	?	405, 401
				Test Pit 5: Area excavated to a depth of 0.85m (110.52m AOD) from the Modern ground level. No natural deposits present within the excavated depth.		
501/301	1.8+	0.95+	Upto 0.52	Topsoil: Dark brown soft clay silt, which contained Modern artefacts including chinaware.	502	507

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CXT	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	DESCRIPTION	CUTS/LATER THAN	CUT BY/EARLIER THAN
502/302	1.8+	0.95+	Upto 0.18	Layer: Light beige/yellow compact mortar/limestone rubble. Possible floor surface? Contained frequent late Post-medieval artefacts throughout (not retained). Equivalent to (401).	506,505, [504], 503	501
503	0.95+	0.75+	0.2+	Deposit: Mid to dark brown grey firm sandy clay with occasional small stone inclusions. No obvious charcoal but contained late Post-medieval artefacts including chinaware (not retained). Possibly equivalent to (403).	?	[504], 502
[504]	0.95+	1.08+	0.2+	Probable construction cut of wall (506). Orientated northwest-southeast, only southwest edge is visible which is steeply sloping. Contained (505) and (506).	503	502
505	0.95+	0.36+	0.2+	Fill of wall cut [504]. Light brown friable sand, with no obvious inclusions or charcoal, but did yield a fragment of clay pipe. Possibly abutting wall (506).	506? 503	502
506	0.95+	0.7	0.32+	Wall: Orientated northwest-southeast. Constructed of large irregular limestone blocks, roughly shaped on outer edges, with a rubble core, No obvious mortar, infill is similar in appearance to (505).	?	505? 502
507	1.5+	1.1+	0.1	Modern concrete blocks sealing topsoil (501) and forming edging and footpath.	501	?

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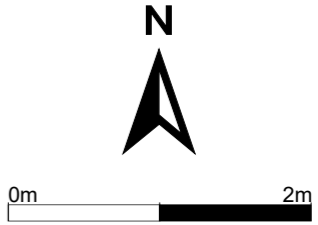
Context No.	Pottery	CBM	Bone	Other
101	13x modern pottery various (total 96g)	2 x modern brick (total 126g)	7 (total 118g)	7x modern glass (total 150g)
	3x glazed redware late post medieval (total 42g)			2x clay pipe stems (total 9g)
	1x locally made late Medieval pottery with green glaze 27g			3x slate (total 29g)
				1x copper alloy button 3g
				1x oyster shell 2g
				1x plastic >1g
				1x modern metal knife with wooden handle 12g
201	1x glazed stoneware late post-medieval 241g	2 (total 110g) late post med/m	3 (total 51g)	2x brown glass (total 8g) modern
	6x modern pottery various (total 27g)			1x mussel shell 3g
202	1x willow pattern chinaware 2g			
202/203	3x late post med/modern glazedware (total 42g)	2x modern brick (total 86g)		
301	3x modern chinaware (total 15g)	1 x 24g	7 (total 56g)	1x clay pipe stem 3g
	3x glazed redware late post medieval (total 49g)			3x glass, (incl. 2 modern) total 65g
				1x plastic 1g
302	8x various modern glazed pottery (total 57g)	1x 31g	8 (total 57g)	6x glass, various modern and late post med (total 297g)
	8x various late post medieval glazed pottery (total 232g)			1x clay pipe stem 3g
	1x locally made Medieval pottery 12th to 13th century 15g			3x iron nails, one possibly handmade (total 22g)
401	1x white glazed modern chinaware 15g		2 (total 20g)	1x plaster with white paint 34g
	1x green glazed earthenware 17th century? 10g			1x glass >1g
				2x clay pipe stem (total 3g)
				1x plastic nit comb 5g
402	1x redware with green glaze 16th to 17th century 63g		2 (total 73g)	1x green glass mid to late post-medieval 46g
	1x modern flowerpot 16g			1x clay pipe stem 2g
	1x white glazed modern chinaware 4g			
	1x willow pattern chinaware 3g			
403	6x modern pottery various (total 81g)		1x 16g	3x glass (2 clear, 1 brown) total 28g
	1x glazed stoneware ink bottle 150g 19th century			1x large handmade iron nail 45g
	2x glazed redware 18-19th century 13g			
	1x green glazed earthenware 17th century? 144g			
404		1x 9g	3 (total 67g)	2x handmade iron nails (total 13g)
				1x modern glass 2g
501	3x modern chinaware (total 54g)		2 (total 17g)	1x slate 10g
503	3x locally made Medieval pottery 12th to 13th century? (total 32g)	1x 23g (modern)	2 (total 19g)	
	1x green glazed late Medieval pottery 11g			
	1x redware with brown glaze 16th-17th century 23g			
	1x willow pattern chinaware 2g			
505	1x residual locally made Medieval pottery 12th to 15th century? 8g		4 (total 23g)	1x clay pipe stem 1g
	1x white glazed modern chinaware 4g			



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Accession Code:

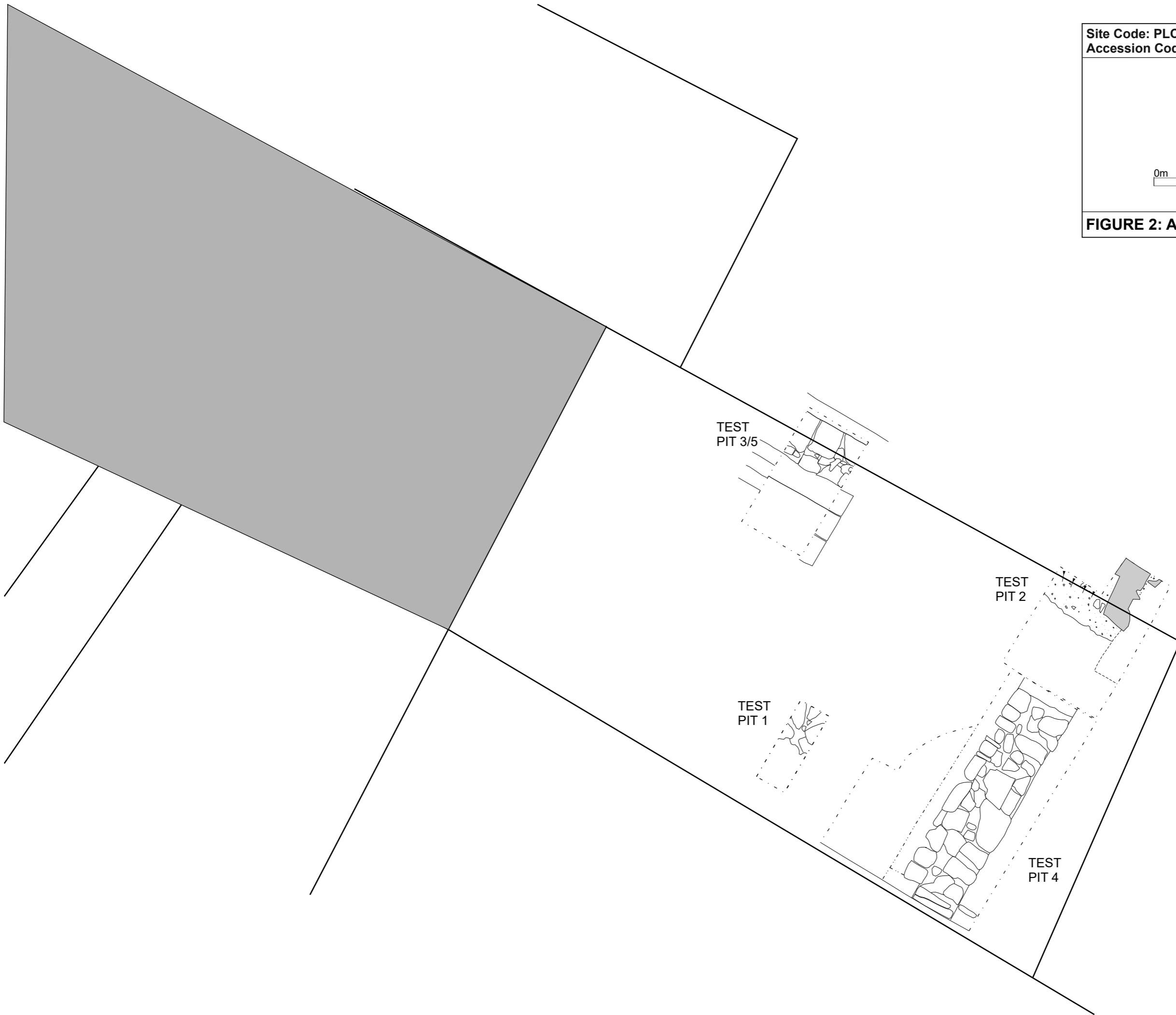
FIGURE 1: Site Location

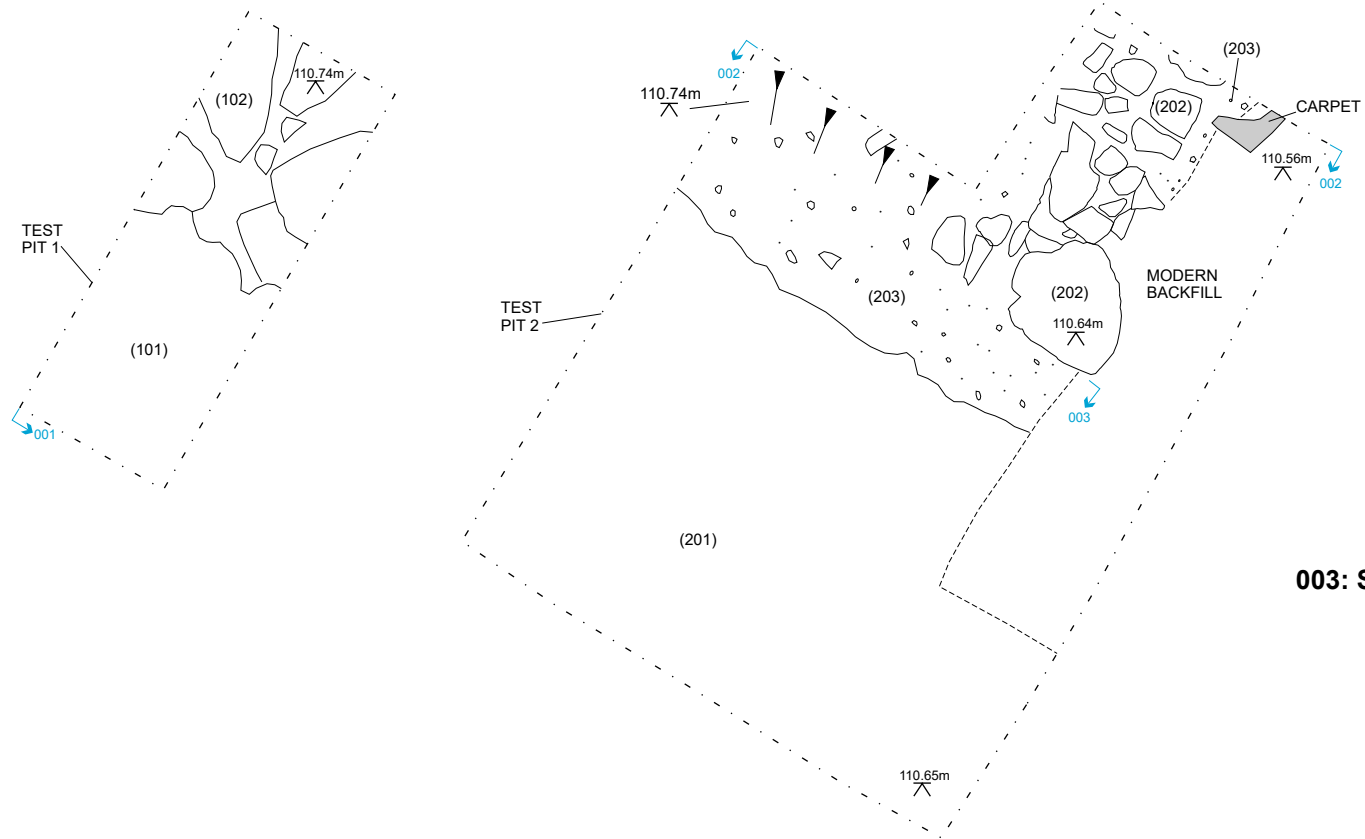
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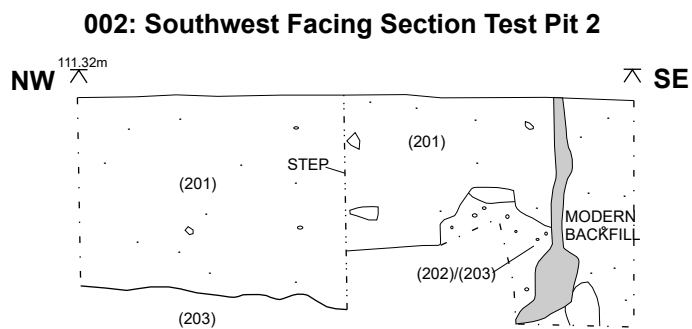
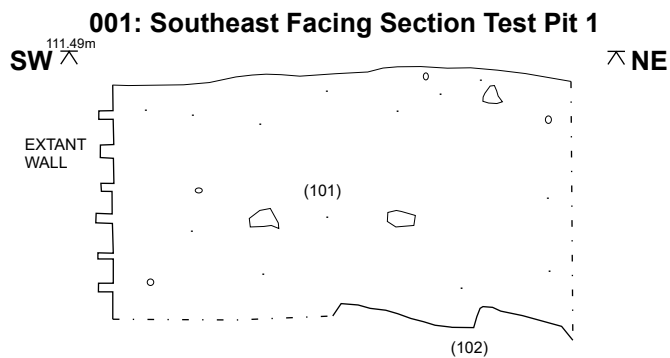
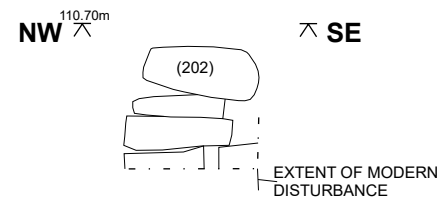
0m 2m

FIGURE 2: All Test Pit Plans, No Labels





003: Southwest Wall Terminus Elevation

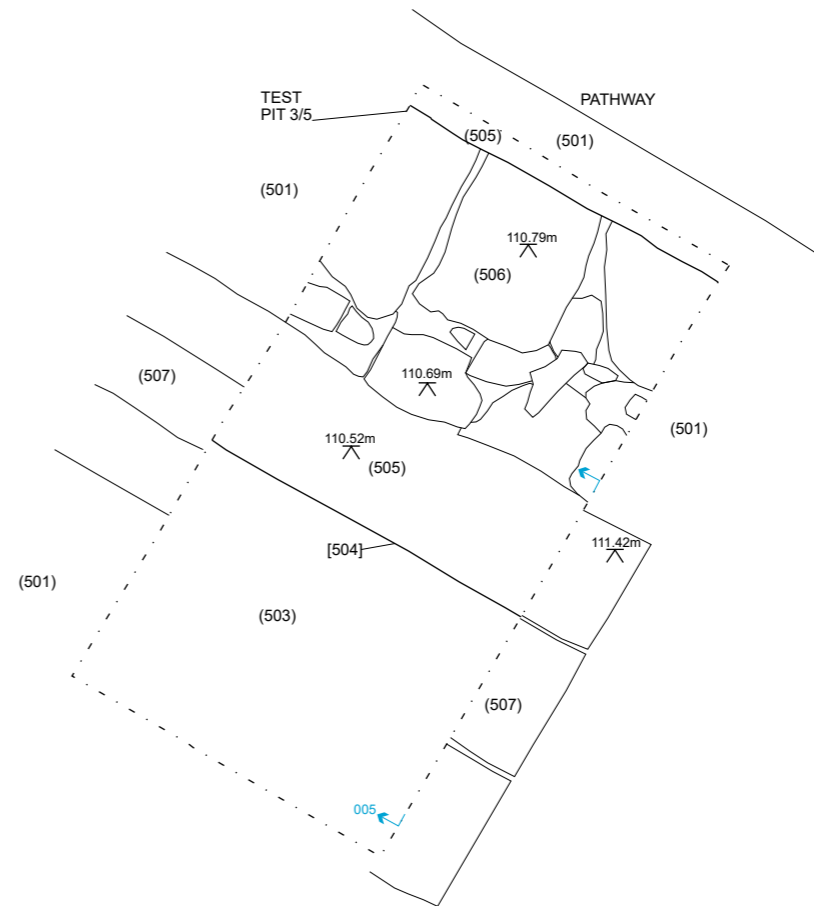
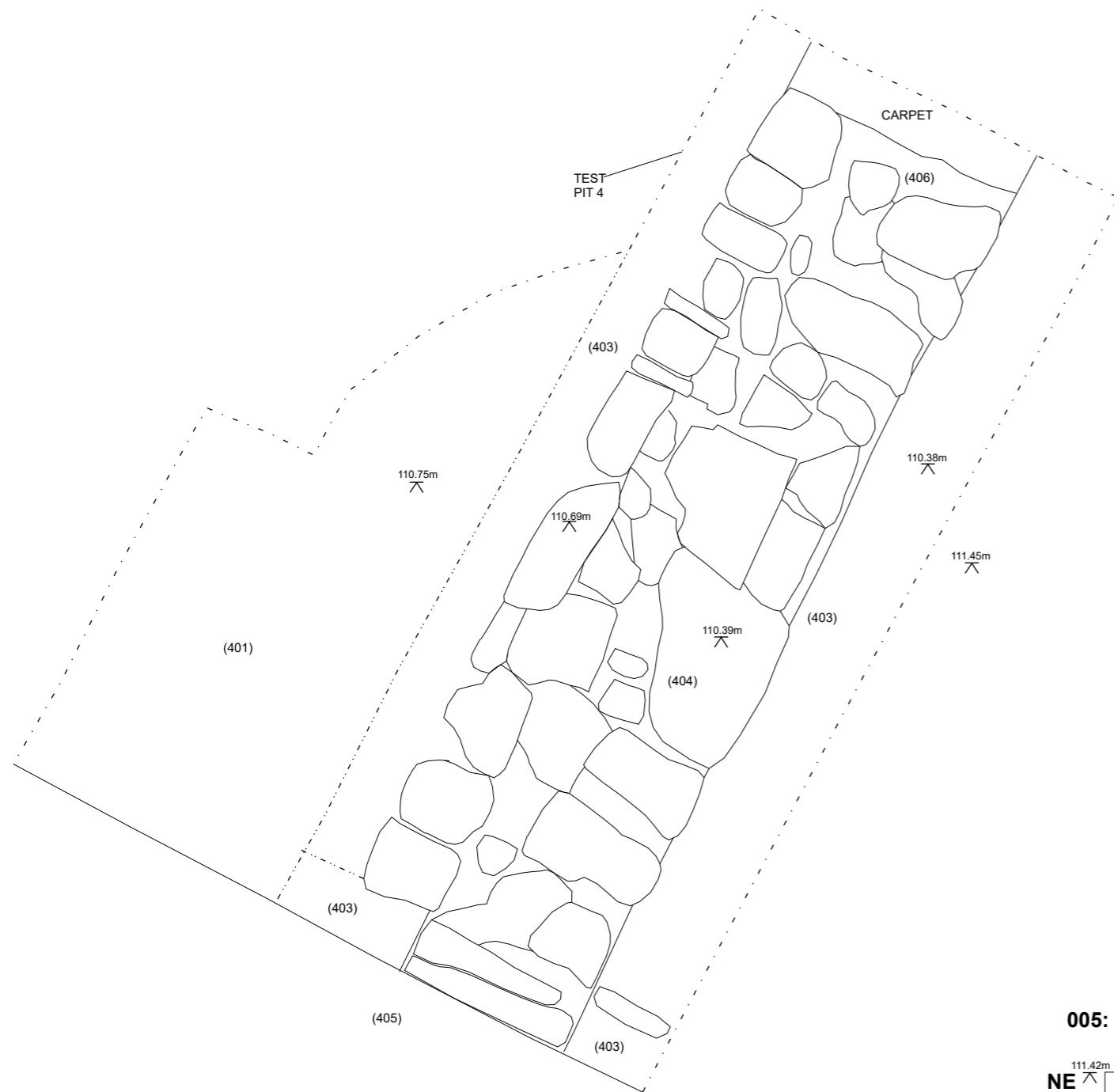


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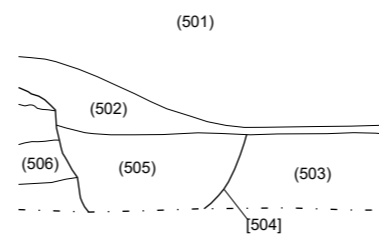
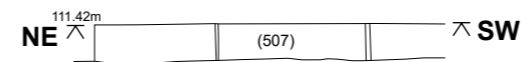
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0m 1m

FIGURE 3: Test Pits 1 & 2, Plans, Sections & Elevations



005: Northwest Facing Section [504]



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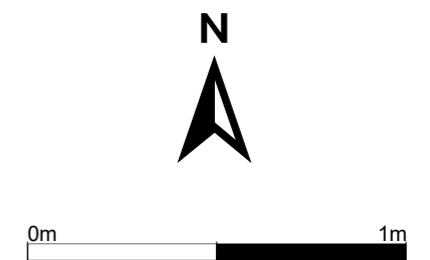


FIGURE 4: Test Pits 3/5 & 4, Plans and Section



Overhead Shot of Test Pit 1



Test Pit 2 Looking Northeast



Test Pit 4 Looking South



Test Pit 5 Looking Northeast

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FIGURE 5: Photographs