

HERITAGE NETWORK



Land adjacent to
THE OLD RECTORY
Station Road, Hillington, Norfolk
(HN447)

Archaeological Evaluation Report



THE HERITAGE NETWORK LTD

Registered with the Institute of Field Archaeologists as an Archaeological Organisation

Archaeological Director: David Hillelson, BA MIFA

Land adjacent to
THE OLD RECTORY
Station Road, Hillington, Norfolk

HN447

Archaeological Evaluation Report

Prepared on behalf of Mr and Mrs J Woolner

by

Chris Turner, BSc

Report No. 215

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12 ROYSTON ROAD, BALDOCK, HERTS. SG7 6NT
TELEPHONE: (01462) 893288 FAX: (01462) 893562

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Acknowledgements

The fieldwork for this project was carried out Chris Turner, and Mark Winter. Illustrations were prepared by Karin Semmelmann and Chris Turner, and the report was edited by David Hillelson.

The Heritage Network would like to express its thanks to the site owner, Mr J. Woolner; Mike Hastings, Architect; and Andy Hutcheson, Development Control Archaeologist, Norfolk Landscape Archaeology, for their co-operation and assistance in the execution of this project.

Summary

Site name and address:	Land adjacent to The Old Rectory, Station Road, Hillington, Norfolk		
County:	Norfolk	District:	West Norfolk
Village/town:	Hillington	Parish:	Hillington
Planning reference:	020623 O	NGR:	TF 57225 32539
Client name and address:	Mr & Mrs J. Woolner, 5 Arlington Park Rd, Middleton, Kings Lynn.		
Nature of work:	New Dwelling	Present land use:	Scrubland/ garden
Size of affected area:	c.596m ²	Size of area investigated:	c.32m ²
Site Code:	HN447	Other reference:	N/a
Organisation:	Heritage Network	Site Director:	David Hillelson
Type of work:	Evaluation	Archive location:	Norfolk Museums
Start of work	3 rd Dec 2003	Finish of work	4 th Dec 2003
Related SMR Nos.:	NHER 37305	Periods represented:	Late Post Med/ Mod
Previous summaries/reports:	N/a		

Synopsis: In response to an archaeological condition on the planning permission for a new dwelling on land adjacent to the Old Rectory, Station Road, Hillington, Norfolk, the Heritage Network was commissioned by the owners to undertake an archaeological evaluation of the site.

Two trenches measuring c. 4 x 4m each were excavated. The natural lower greensand was encountered at a depth of 1.20-1.30m, suggesting that the plot had been built up.

Despite the proximity of the site to known medieval and late Saxon archaeology, only two features were encountered in this evaluation: a faint hedge line running E-W across trench 1, and a shallow ditch running NW-SE across trench 2. Neither feature was dated.

The stratigraphy in trench 2 demonstrated the presence of an underground spring or perched water table in the vicinity. Water rose up through the base of the ditch when it was excavated and there was a thin layer of grey sandy silt sealing the natural sand. This layer was not observed in trench 1.

1. Introduction

1.1 This report has been prepared on behalf of the *Mr and Mrs J Woolner* as part of an archaeological evaluation of a proposed development on land adjacent to the Old Rectory, Station Road, Hillington, Norfolk. Any planning permission granted for the development by the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk (KLBC) under application no. 020623O, has been subject to a standard archaeological condition, in accordance with the provisions of the DETR's *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16* (PPG16). The scope of the works follows the *Brief for Archaeological Evaluation by Trial Trenching* issued by Norfolk Landscape Archaeology (NLA), acting as advisers to KLBC (ref. AH 27/06/03), and a full specification was contained in the Heritage Network's approved Project Design dated November 2003.

1.2 The site is located on the eastern side of Station Road, in the south-east corner of the garden of the Old Rectory (Fig.1), approximately 175m north north-west of the parish church of St Mary (centred on NGR (TL 57225 32539)). The development proposes the construction of a single dwelling with associated driveway and services.

1.3 The site lies within an area of known archaeological potential: cropmarks and earthworks defining a trackway, several enclosures and a moated site have been recorded 200m to the east. In addition, late Saxon and medieval pottery has been recorded within 100m to the south-west, and recent investigation on an adjacent development site to the west of the present site recorded a medieval midden suggesting occupation in the immediate vicinity.

1.4 At the time of the evaluation, the plot had degenerated to scrub land interspersed with a number of trees. It had been cleared of undergrowth and dumped waste prior to the start of the project. This clearance did not disturb the modern topsoil.

1.5 The aim of the evaluation has been to consider the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the development, and to provide an archaeological and historical context for such remains if any were discovered. Evidence which had the potential to increase our understanding of settlement during the Saxon period was considered to be of particular interest.

1.6 The present report has been prepared to provide the planning authority with sufficient data to allow it to consider the archaeological implications of the proposed development, and to determine what further mitigation measures, if any, may be required.

2. Fieldwork

TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

2.1 The site lies at c.25m AOD, on land which falls gradually to the north-east, towards the Babingley River c.100m away.

2.2 The underlying geology is yellow brown Lower Greensand.

METHODOLOGY

3.2 All work was carried out in accordance with the approved *Project Design*, current health and safety legislation, and IFA standards.

3.3 Trenches were set out using 50m tapes triangulated from known points.

3.4 Two trenches were opened using a wheeled JCB fitted with a 1.5m wide toothless bucket, under close archaeological supervision. Spoil from the machining was inspected for archaeological artefacts. Trenches were machined to the first significant archaeological horizon.

3.5 The trenches were cleaned by hand, and all potential archaeological features and deposits were sampled to ascertain their nature, depth, date, and quality of preservation.

3.6 All identified contexts were photographed and recorded using the appropriate proforma. Scaled plans and sections were drawn on drafting film at a scale of 1:20.

3.7 All levels have been recorded from the benchmark on the north-west corner of St Mary's church.

3.8 Trenches were located relative to the plot boundaries using an EDM.

RESULTS

Trench 1

3.9 Trench 1 was located outside the footprint of the new proposed dwelling (Fig.2). The trench measured 4.72 x 4.32m and was 1.32m in depth. (Fig.3).

3.10 The stratigraphy in this trench consisted of three layers of overburden above natural sand. The dark topsoil (100) overlaid a subsoil (101) containing fragments of ceramic building material. Below this was a sandy silt layer (102) with occasional fragments of natural ironstone at the interface with the natural sand (104).

3.11 One linear feature [103] was observed cutting into the natural sand, orientated E-W across the trench. This feature was 0.93m wide and approximately 0.10m deep with a mottled grey sandy silt fill. The edges of this feature were feathered and indistinct in places, characteristic of root disturbance.

Recorded contexts

Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)
100	Layer	Dark greyish brown (10 YR 2/1) sandy clay silt. Moderate sub angular small stone and root inclusions	0.28m thick
101	Layer	Dark reddish brown (10 YR 3/3) sandy silt. Sub angular stone, charcoal flecks, occasional cbm inclusions	0.34m thick
102	Layer	Dark greyish black (10 YR 3/2) sandy silt. Occasional ironstone inclusions	0.40m thick
103	Hedge Line	Grey (2.5 YR 6/1) sandy linear deposit with feathered edges. Orientated approx. E-W.	Length: 4.1m+ Width: 0.92m Depth: 0.10m
104	Layer	Yellow brown (2.5 Y 6/4) natural sand. Occasional small sub angular stones	-

Trench 2

3.12 Trench 2 was located in the north east corner of the proposed footprint of the new dwelling. The trench measured 5.7m x 4.6m and was 1.26m in depth.

3.13 The stratigraphy in the trench was similar to trench 1. The topsoil (200) overlaid a reddish brown sandy subsoil (201). Beneath this was a thin layer of grey sandy silt (202), which overlaid the natural sand (205).

3.14 A linear feature [204] was observed sealed by layer (202) and cut into the natural sand. This feature measured 0.96m in width and 0.12m in depth. It was orientated broadly NW-SE, across the length of the trench. Root disturbance was observed on the margins of this feature. The single grey sandy silt fill (203) contained no artefacts.

Recorded contexts

Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)
200	Layer	Dark greyish brown (10 YR 2/1) sandy clay silt. Sub angular stone, charcoal flecks, occasional cbm inclusions	0.58m thick
201	Layer	Dark reddish brown (10 YR 3/3) sandy silt. Occasional sub angular stone and charcoal flecks inclusions.	0.60m thick
202	Layer	Dark grey (10 YR 4/2) sandy silt. Moderate stone inclusions.	0.08m thick
203	Fill	Dark greyish black (10 YR 3/1) sandy silt. Frequent sub angular stone inclusions.	Length: 4.1m+ Width: 0.96m Depth: 0.12m
204	Cut	Linear orientated broadly NW-SE with irregular sides (c.30°), Flat base. Root activity was evident across this feature.	Length: 4.1m+ Width: 0.96m Depth: 0.12m
205	Layer	Greyish yellow brown (2.5 Y 6/2) natural sand. Frequent sub angular stone inclusions.	-

FINDS CONCORDANCE

3.15 Although fragments of modern ceramic building material were observed in the overburden during machining, no material was considered to be of significance or was retained for further analysis.

3.16 No artefacts or ecofacts were recovered from the identified features.

4. Discussion

4.2 Despite the proximity of the site to known archaeological deposits, only two features were identified in this evaluation: a hedge line (103) in trench 1, and ditch (204) in trench 2.

4.3 The first edition of the Ordnance Survey County Series (1888) shows a rectilinear enclosure in the grounds to the south east of the Rectory. The identified features may equate to this enclosure. Although no direct dating evidence was recovered from these features, it is likely that they were extant at the end of the 19th century.

4.4 The fieldwork demonstrated that the natural sand lies approximately 1.20-1.30m below the surface. This depth of overburden is consistent with the ground having been built up, possibly in association with the landscaping of the former rectory grounds.

4.5 The grey layer (202) in trench 2 was not present in trench 1. Moisture was encountered at the base of the trench in contrast with the dry sand found in trench 1 (104). It is likely that layer (202) is a product of a periodic rise of the groundwater. This suggests that there may be a natural spring line or perched water table in the vicinity of this trench.

Conclusions

4.6 The archaeological evaluation has demonstrated the present of boundary features of Victorian or earlier date associated with the grounds of the former Rectory.

4.7 No features of a Medieval or earlier date were encountered and no artefacts or ecofacts indicative of occupation prior to the Victorian period were encountered.

4.8 On this basis, it is considered unlikely that any significant archaeological features or deposits will be disturbed by the proposed development.

CONFIDENCE RATING

4.9 In the course of the fieldwork weather and ground conditions were generally acceptable for the identification of potential features and deposits, and for their investigation.

4.10 There are no circumstances which would lead to a confidence rating for the present evaluation which is less than High.

5. Bibliography

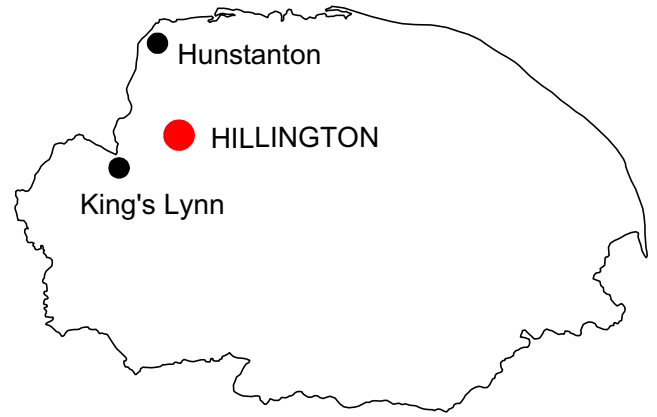
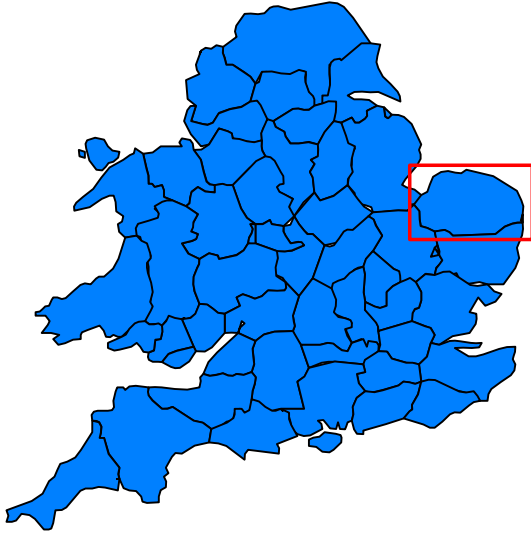
Hillelson, D. 2003. *Land adjacent to the Old Rectory, Hillington, Norfolk. Project Design: Archaeological Evaluation*. Heritage Network, November 2003.

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Ordnance Survey, 1888, County Series, 1st edition, 1: 10,560 (Courtesy Landmark Information Group Ltd.)

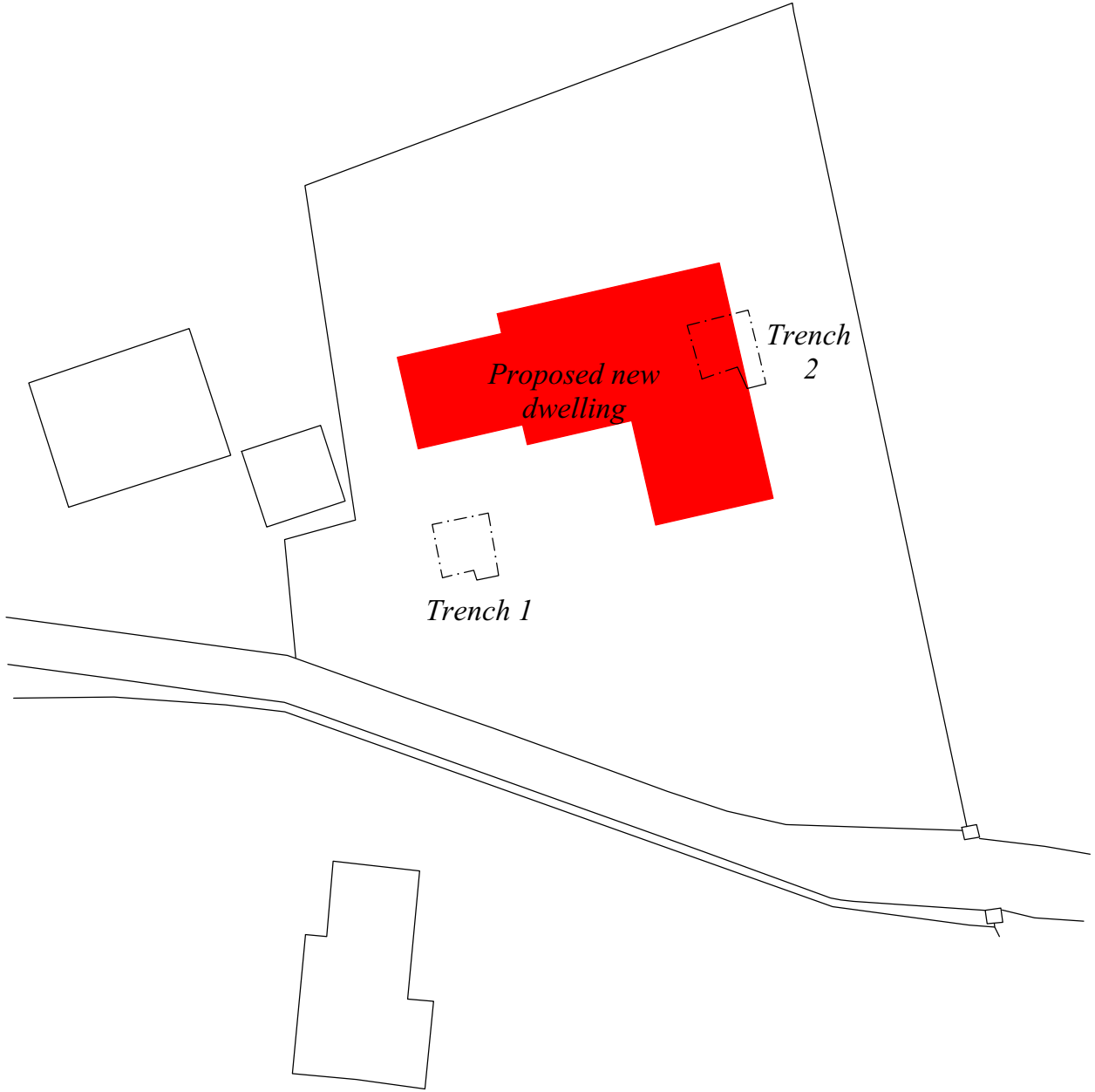
6. Illustrations

Figure 1	Site location
Figure 2	Site layout
Figure 3	Trench 1: plan and section
Figure 4	Trench 2: plan and section



Site Location

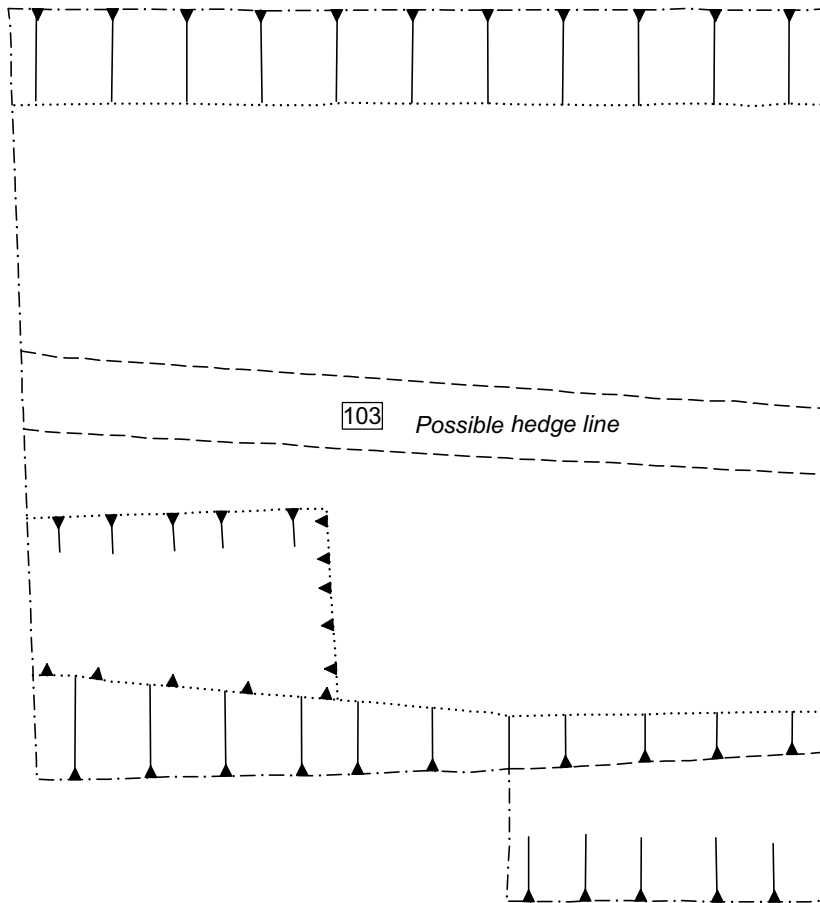
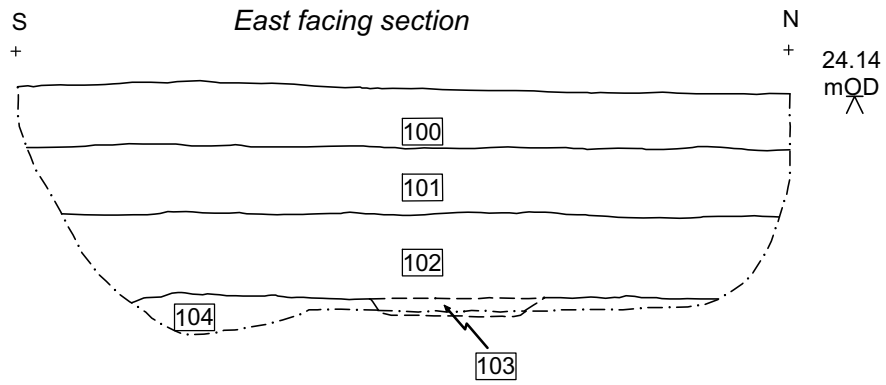
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Trench layout

Scale 1:500

Figure 2

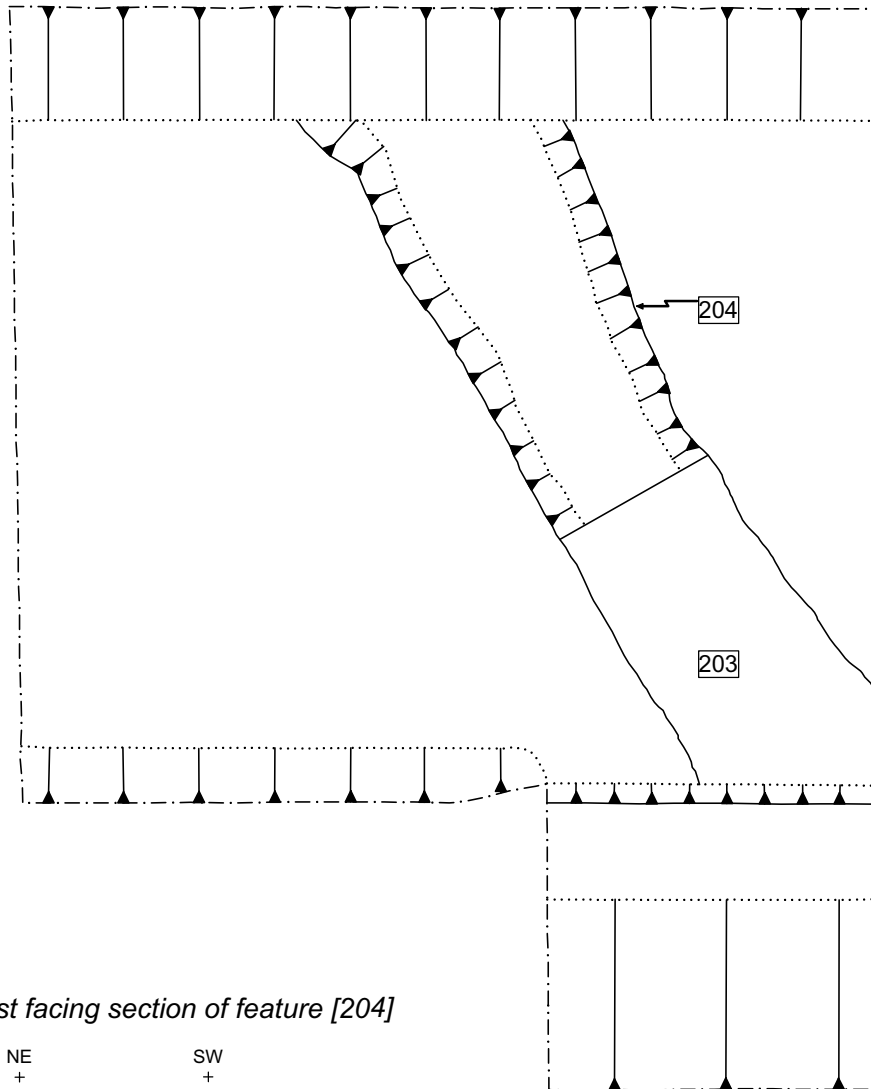
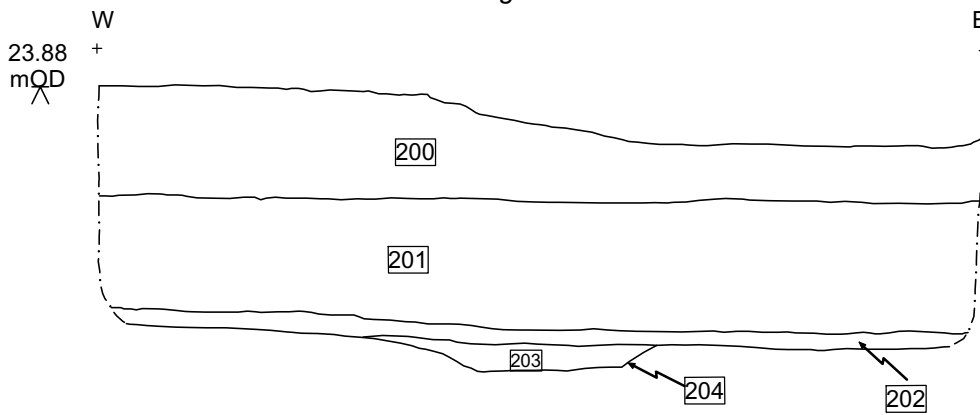


Trench 1: plan & section

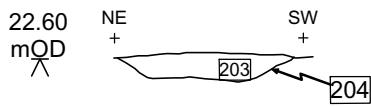
Scale 1:40

Figure 3

South facing section



North-west facing section of feature [204]



Trench 2: plan & section

Scale 1:40

Figure 4