

HERITAGE NETWORK



REDBOURN VICARAGE
Church End, Redbourn, Herts.

HN462

Archaeological Evaluation Report



THE HERITAGE NETWORK LTD

Registered with the Institute of Field Archaeologists as an Archaeological Organisation

Archaeological Director: David Hillelson, BA MIFA

REDBOURN VICARAGE Church End, Redbourn, Herts.

HN462

Archaeological Evaluation Report

Prepared on behalf of the St Albans Diocesan Board of Finance

by

Geoff Saunders, BA

Report No.239

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The cover photo shows a fragment of window mullion formed from Totternhoe church, recovered from the site

Acknowledgements

The fieldwork for this project was carried out Chris Turner, Geoff Saunders, Karin Semmelmann, and David Kaye, and the finds assessment was undertaken by Helen Ashworth. Illustrations were prepared by Karin Semmelmann, and the report was edited by David Hillelson.

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Summary

Site name and address:	The Vicarage, Church End, Redbourn, Hertfordshire		
County:	Hertfordshire	District:	St Albans
Village/town:	Redbourn	Parish:	Redbourn
Planning reference:	N/a	NGR:	TL 10028 11630
Client name and address:	StAlbans Diocesan Bd of Finance, c/o Rumbold Sedgewick, StAlbans, AL1 3HG		
Nature of work:	New dwelling	Present land use:	Garden
Size of affected area:	c.180m ²	Size of area investigated:	c.38m ²
Site Code:	HN462	Other reference:	N/a
Organisation:	Heritage Network	Site Director:	David Hillelson
Type of work:	Evaluation	Archive location:	St Albans Museums
Start of work	20 th May 2004	Finish of work	24 th May 2004
Related SMR Nos.:	N/a	Periods represented:	Post-med/Victorian / Modern
Previous summaries/reports:	N/a		

Synopsis:

In order to determine the archaeological risk posed by a proposal to construct a new dwelling in the grounds of Redbourn Vicarage, Church End, Redbourn, the Heritage Network was commissioned by the St Albans Diocesan Board of Finance to undertake a programme of archaeological evaluation.

Two trenches measuring c.2 x 10m each were excavated within the footprint of the proposed building. Trench 1 contained two postholes both of which contained artefacts of late post-medieval date. Trench 2 contained a small structure of Victorian date which probably represents the remains of a small outhouse. The trench also contained two postholes and a sub-rectangular pit, which appear to be structural in origin and may represent outhouses associated with the Victorian vicarage.

1. Introduction

1.1 This report has been prepared on behalf of the *St Albans Diocesan Board of Finance*, as part of the archaeological evaluation of a development site on land adjacent to the Vicarage, Church End, Redbourn, Herts. The determination of the planning application for the development by the St Albans District Council (SADC), has been referred back to the applicants for further information on the archaeological potential of the site. This is in accordance with the provisions set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note No.16 (PPG16) on Archaeology and Planning. The scope of the required investigation has been set out in a *Design Brief for Archaeological Evaluation* dated 23 March 2004 prepared by the County Archaeological Office (CAO) of Hertfordshire County Council, acting as adviser to the planning authority. A full specification was contained in the Heritage Network's approved Project Design dated May 2004.

1.2 The site lies within the present garden of the vicarage, to the south-east of the existing building, and approximately 70m north-east of the parish church of St Mary, centred on NGR TL 10028 11630 (see Figure 1).

1.3 The site lies within *Area of Archaeological Significance no.8 (AAS8)* as designated in the District Local Plan. This defines the area as a focus of medieval settlement. The present vicarage is believed to lie on or close to the site of the medieval parsonage and, on this basis, there was considered to be a high probability that remains of a medieval or earlier date may be affected by the development.

1.4 The aim of the evaluation has been to consider the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any remains that are liable to be threatened by the development, and to provide a local and regional, archaeological and historical context for any such remains, in accordance with the current published regional research agenda (Glazebrook 1997, Brown and Glazebrook 2000), if they were discovered.

1.5 The present report has been prepared in order 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.96.5m AOD, on level ground within the boundaries of the garden of the former Victorian vicarage.

2.2 The underlying geology consists of dark yellowish brown (10YR 4/4) clay-with-flints.

METHODOLOGY

2.3 The alignment of Trench 1 was rotated to run northwest – southeast so as to all allow an existing service pipe to cross it at right angles. All other work was carried out in accordance with the approved *Project Design*, current health and safety legislation, and IFA standards.

2.4 The trenches were triangulated from known points using fibreglass tape measures.

2.5 Two trenches were opened using a tracked 360° mini-digger fitted with a 0.8m wide toothless bucket, under close archaeological supervision (see Figure 2). Spoil from the machining was inspected for archaeological artefacts. Trenches were machined to the first significant archaeological horizon.

2.6 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.

2.7 All identified contexts were photographed and recorded using the appropriate pro-forma. Scaled plans and sections were drawn on drafting film at scales of 1:10 and 1:50.

RESULTS

Stratigraphy

2.8 The stratigraphy was the same across the site, it consisted of a layer of very dark brown (10YR 2/2) friable silty clay topsoil. Beneath this was a very dark greyish brown (10YR 3/2) friable silty clay subsoil overlying the natural geology of dark yellowish brown (10YR 4/4) friable clay-with-flints.

Trench 1 (see Figures 2 & 3)

2.9 Trench 1 was located inside the footprint of the proposed new building and was aligned northwest to southeast. The trench measured 2 x 9.05m and was 0.95m in depth.

2.10 The stratigraphy in the trench had been heavily disturbed by modern services and a soakaway associated with the present Vicarage.

2.11 The trench contained a total of six features, four of which were modern, the other two being postholes [101], and [103], which were both located in the southeast half of the trench.

- Posthole [101] was observed cutting into the natural clay, it was sub-square in shape. This feature was 0.50m long by 0.40m wide and approximately 0.30m deep, with near vertical straight sides and a flat base. The solitary friable, olive brown, silty clay fill yielded fragments of modern 20th century tile. The shape and nature of the posthole also indicate it is modern in date.
- Posthole [103] was observed cutting into the natural clay, it was sub-ovoid in shape. This feature was 0.54m long by 0.48m wide and approximately 0.22m deep, with very steep slightly concave sides and a flat base. The solitary friable, olive brown, silty clay fill yielded a residual sherd of medieval grey ware of probable 12th to 14th century date along with modern 20th century flowerpot and tile.

Recorded contexts

Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)
101	Cut	Sub-square cut feature with vertical straight sides and a flat base. Posthole.	Length: 0.50m Width: 0.40m Depth: 0.30m
102	Fill	Friable, olive brown (2.5YR 4/3), silty clay with frequent small to medium flints and occasional flecks of chalk and charcoal . Fill of [101].	Length: 0.50m Width: 0.40m Depth: 0.30m
103	Cut	Sub-ovoid cut feature with very steep slightly concave sides and a flat base. Posthole.	Length: 0.54m Width: 0.48m Depth: 0.22m
104	Fill	Friable, olive brown (2.5Y 4/4), silty clay with frequent small flints and occasional chalk flecks, charcoal flecks, and small roots. Fill of [103].	Length: 0.54m Width: 0.48m Depth: 0.22m

Trench 2 (see Figures 2 & 3)

2.12 Trench 2 was located to the south of Trench 1 in the footprint of the new Vicarage. The trench measured 2m x 9.90m and was 0.95m in depth.

2.13 The stratigraphy in the trench had been disturbed by a large modern service pipe associated with the present Vicarage.

2.14 The trench contained a total of five features, one of which was modern. Of the remainder, there were two probable postholes [205] and [207], a sub-rectangular pit [201], and structure [203].

- A sub-rectangular feature [201] was observed cutting into the natural clay, orientated east – west in the western half of the trench. This feature was 1.50m long by 0.45m wide and approximately 0.34m deep, with steep slightly undercutting sides and an uneven flattish base. The solitary friable, olive brown, silty clay fill yielded frequent fragments of 18th to 19th peg tile. The feature most likely represents the remains of a foundation slot for a structure.
- Structure [203] was observed in the eastern end of the trench. It measured 2.40m long by 0.95m wide and approximately 0.30m deep and was constructed of slightly frogged

red bricks, which measured 0.22m long by 0.10m wide by 0.06m deep, bonded with lime mortar. The floor of the structure was of similar red bricks. The infill consisted of a friable, very dark brown, silty clay very similar to the topsoil. A large redeposited fragment of clunch masonry of probable 14th century date was recovered from the infill, along with several fragments of late Victorian and modern tile and flowerpot. Towards the floor of the structure a large amount of charcoal and coal was observed indicating the structure may have been used as a coal bunker.

- A sub-circular cut feature [205] was observed cut through the natural in the very south-east corner of the trench. The full dimensions of the feature were not clear as it ran beneath the southern and eastern limit of the trench. The feature had steep sides with a flattish base with a deeper cutting close to the centre which may represent a slot for a post. The solitary soft, olive brown, silty clay fill yielded only a single fragment of slag. This feature most likely represents a posthole.
- A sub-ovoid cut feature [207] was observed cut through the natural in the very south-west corner of the trench. The full dimensions of the feature were not clear as it ran beneath the southern and western limit of the trench. The feature had steep slightly concave sides with one step halfway towards the flat base. The solitary soft, brown, slightly silty clay fill yielded a single fragment of residual 17th to 18th century brick and several fragments of 18th to 19th century tile and brick.

Recorded contexts

Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)
201	Cut	Sub-rectangular cut feature with steep undercutting sides and a uneven flattish base, aligned E –W. Probable foundation slot.	Length: 1.50m Width: 0.45m Depth: 0.34m
202	Fill	Friable, olive brown (2.5Y 4/3), silty clay with frequent small to medium flints and occasional chalk flecks, charcoal flecks, and small roots. Fill of [201].	Length: 1.50m Width: 0.45m Depth: 0.34m
203	Cut	Small structure of slightly frogged red bricks bonded with lime mortar. Possible outhouse or coal bunker.	Length: 2.40m Width: 0.95m Depth: 0.30m
204	Fill	Friable, very dark brown (10YR 2/2), silty clay with very frequent coal and charcoal fragments, moderate small flints, and occasional chalk flecks and small roots. Infill of [203].	Length: 2.40m Width: 0.95m Depth: 0.30m
205	Cut	Sub-circular cut feature with steep slightly concave sides and a flat base with a possible post setting. Probable posthole.	Length: 0.45m+ Width: 0.39m+ Depth: 0.32m
206	Fill	Soft, olive brown (2.5Y 4/4), silty clay with moderate small flints and very occasional charcoal flecks. Fill of [205].	Length: 0.45m+ Width: 0.39m+ Depth: 0.32m
207	Cut	Sub-ovoid cut feature with steep slightly concave sides with one step and a flattish base aligned northeast to southwest. Probable posthole.	Length: 0.44m+ Width: 0.45m Depth: 0.29m
208	Fill	Soft, brown (10YR 4/3), slightly silty clay with moderate small flints, and occasional chalk flecks, charcoal flecks, and small roots, . Fill of [207].	Length: 0.44m+ Width: 0.45m Depth: 0.29m

FINDS CONCORDANCE

Ctxt	Pottery		CBM		An.bone		Slag		Mortar/ plaster		Clay pipe		Shell		Flint/Stone		Comments
	Wt.	No.	Wt.	No.	Wt.	No.	Wt.	No.	Wt.	No.	Wt.	No.	Wt.	No.	Wt.	No.	
102			60	6	2	1	5	2							3	1*	*discarded – not worked
104	25	2	160	10	3	1							3	1			
202			1155	11	490	11									20	1*	*discarded – not worked
204	665	3	265	2					25	1	5	1			*	1	*worked clunch
206							85	1									
208			440	11	2	1					2	1			35	1*	*discarded – not worked
Tr 1 U/S	3	1	230	3					15	1	20	5	10	1	25	1*	*discarded – not worked
Total	693	6	2310	43	497	14	90	3	40	2	27	7	13	2	83	5	

ARTEFACTS**Pottery**

2.15 A total of 6 pottery sherds, weighing 693g, were recovered from 1 unstratified and 2 stratified contexts during the present investigation. The pottery ranged in date from the late medieval to the modern period.

2.16 A single sherd of medieval grey ware, with an applied strip, of probable 12th to 14th century date was recovered from context (104). This sherd was residual within a posthole which also contained modern flowerpot and tile fragments.

2.17 A single small sherd of glazed pottery dating to the 18th to 19th centuries was recovered unstratified from Trench 1.

2.18 A ceramic bottle recovered from context (204) represents 96% of the assemblage by weight. The bottle is stamped R. Whites of London and probably dates to the late 19th or early 20th century.

Recommendations

2.19 Given the small size of the pottery assemblage and its largely modern nature, no further work is proposed on this assemblage.

Ceramic Building Material

2.20 A total of 43 ceramic building material fragments, weighing 2310g, were collected from 1 unstratified and 5 stratified contexts during the present investigations. The bulk of the assemblage consisted of fragments of post-medieval to modern peg tile, ranging in date from the 17th to the 20th centuries AD.

Recommendations

2.21 Post-medieval peg-tile is a common find on urban sites of medieval and post-medieval date. On this basis, no further work is proposed on this material.

Mortar/ plaster

2.22 A single fragment of plain white wall plaster, and a fragment of lime mortar, were recovered unstratified from Trench 1 and from context (204).

Recommendations

2.23 Given the small size of the assemblage, no further work is proposed on this material.

Slag

2.24 A total of 3 fragments of slag, weighing 90g, were recovered from contexts (102) and (206).

Recommendations

2.25 Given the small size of the assemblage, no further work is proposed on this material.

Clay pipe

2.26 A total of 7 fragments of clay pipe, weighing 27g, were recovered from 1 unstratified and 2 stratified contexts. The assemblage consists of undiagnostic stem fragments, the bulk of which were recovered unstratified from Trench 1.

Recommendations

2.27 Given the small size and undiagnostic nature of this assemblage, no further work is proposed.

Flint/ stone

2.28 A total of 4 pieces of flint, weighing 83g, were recovered were recovered from 1 unstratified and 3 stratified contexts. The assemblage consisted of naturally chipped fragments of flint with no indication of having been worked.

2.29 A single large fragment of worked clunch was recovered from context (204). The fragment measures 490mm long by 210mm wide by 100mm deep, and is of Totternhoe clunch, and is probably of 14th century date. It has three holes passing through its rear which are possibly for transoms, one of which still contains a fragment of clunch plug, glazing grooves are apparent on both sides. The fragment most likely represents a piece of window tracery, probably a central mullion, and may have originally been either part of the church structure or of an earlier vicarage.

Recommendations

2.30 Given the small size and nature of the flint assemblage, no further work is proposed and the flints will be discarded.

2.31 Although the stone masonry was found redeposited in a modern context, given its intrinsic interest, a drawn record of this artefact will be included in the site archive.

ECOFACTS

Animal bone

2.32 A total of 14 animal bone fragments, weighing 497g, were collected from 4 stratified contexts. Fragments of domestically butchered long bones from a variety of species, recovered from context (202), make up 99% of the assemblage by weight. The remainder of the assemblage consisted of small, mostly undiagnostic, fragments.

Recommendations

2.33 Given the small size and fragmentary nature of this material, no further work is proposed on this assemblage.

Shell

2.34 A total of 2 shells, weighing 13g, were collected from 1 unstratified and 1 stratified context. The material consisted only of oyster shell.

2.35 Oysters were a common foodstuff in the medieval and post-medieval periods.

Recommendations

2.36 Given the small size of the assemblage, no further work is proposed on this material.

3. Discussion

3.1 The present evaluation revealed four postholes, [101], [103], [205], and [207], a sub-rectangular pit [201], and a small brick built structure [203].

3.2 In both trenches the stratigraphy had been disturbed by services associated with the current vicarage, which was constructed in 1969.

3.3 Structural remains identified in the trial trenches are likely to represent outhouses which may be associated with the late Victorian vicarage which was constructed in 1894.

3.4 A single sherd of medieval pottery which was residual in modern posthole [103], and a fragment of probable medieval masonry which was redeposited within the infill of structure [203], were the only evidence of activity on the site predating the Victorian period.

3.5 The fieldwork demonstrates that the natural clay-with-flints lies approximately 0.9-0.95m below the present ground surface. This depth of overburden is consistent with the ground having been built up, possibly in association with the construction of the present vicarage.

Conclusions

3.6 The archaeological evaluation has demonstrated that the stratigraphy on the site, particularly in Trench 1, has been heavily disturbed by modern services.

3.7 A probable Victorian outhouse was recorded, but no direct evidence for the medieval parsonage which is believed to lie on or close to the site of the present vicarage. It is possible, however, that the fragment of stone window mullion recovered from the infill of the Victorian outhouse, may derive from the parsonage or another nearby contemporary building.

3.8 On the basis of these findings, it is considered that there is a low risk that significant archaeological features, deposits or stratified artefacts dating to the medieval period will be disturbed by the proposed development, although there is a possibility that further unstratified medieval building elements may be encountered. It is likely that further Victorian or modern features, deposits and artefacts are likely to be encountered, but their archaeological significance is considered to be low.

CONFIDENCE RATING

3.9 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.

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

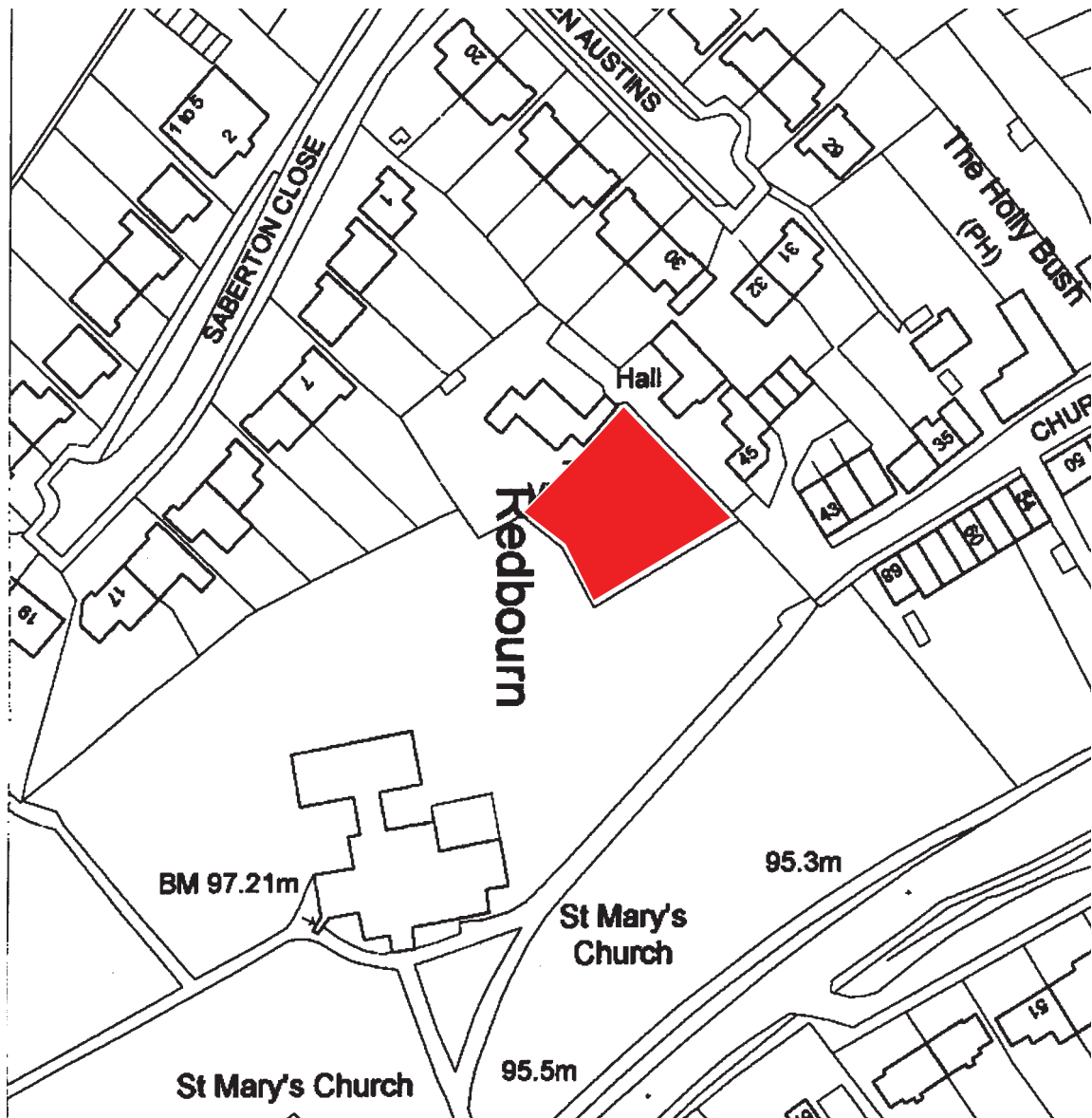
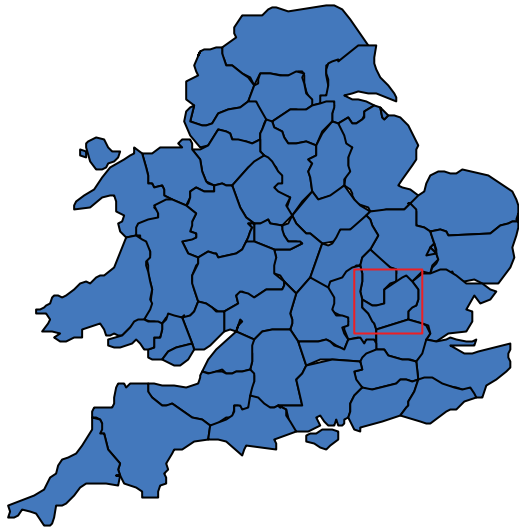
4. Bibliography

Hillelson, D. 2004. *Redbourn Vicarage, Church End, Redbourn, Herts. Project Design: Archaeological Evaluation*. Heritage Network, May 2004.

Smith, J. 2004, *Design Brief for Archaeological Evaluation*. Hertfordshire County Council.

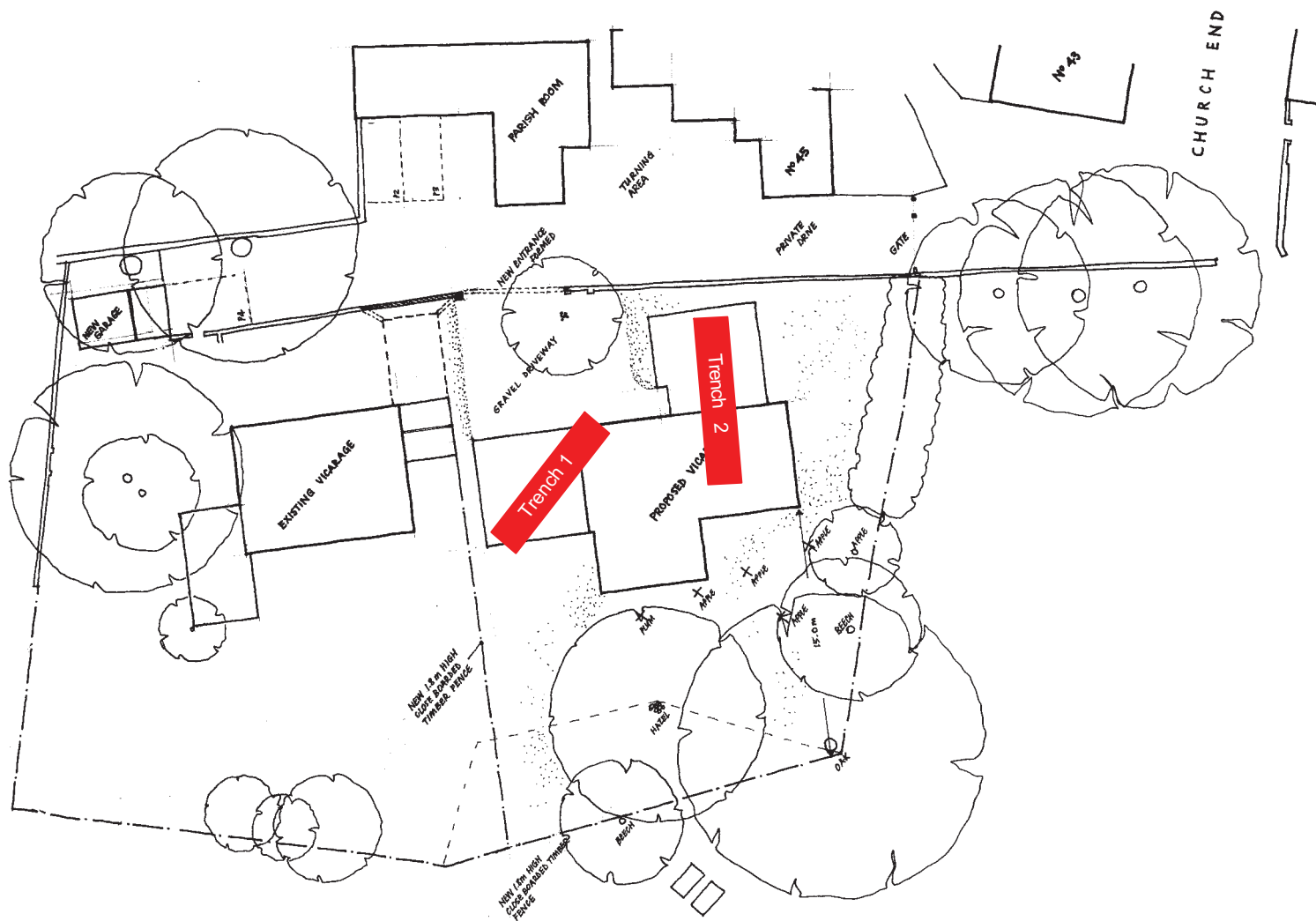
5. Illustrations

Figure 1	Site location
Figure 2	Site layout
Figure 3	Trench 1: plan and section
Figure 4	Trench 2: plan and section
Figure 5	Feature sections and elevations



Site Location

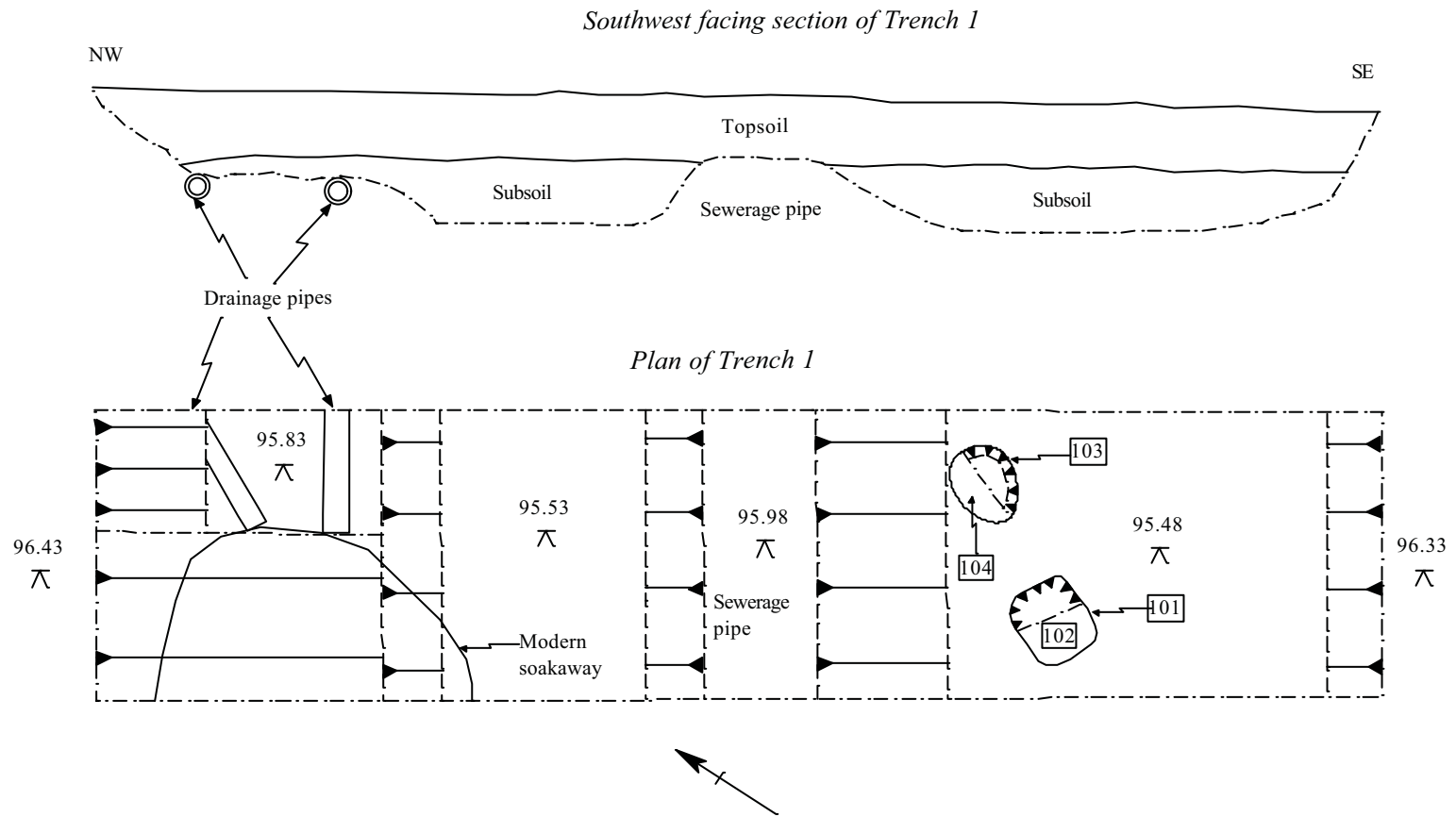
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Trench Location

Scale 1:400

Figure 2

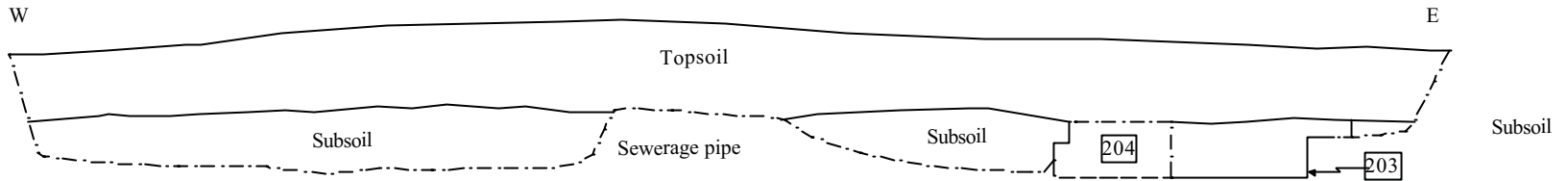


Trench 1 plan and section

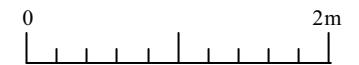
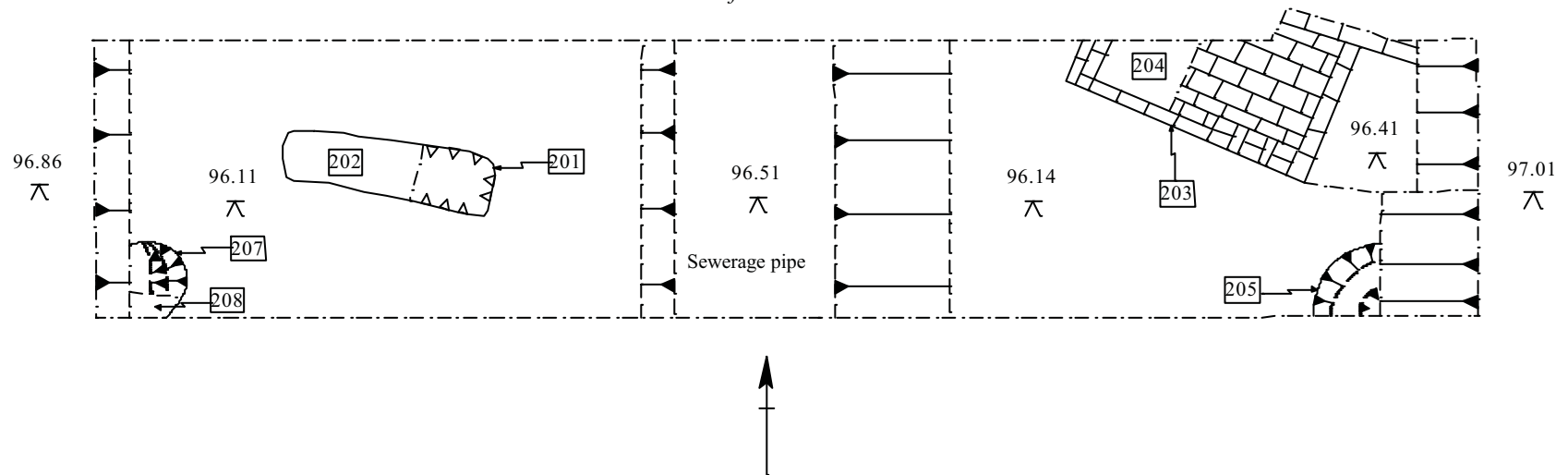
Scale 1:50

Figure 3

South facing section of Trench 2



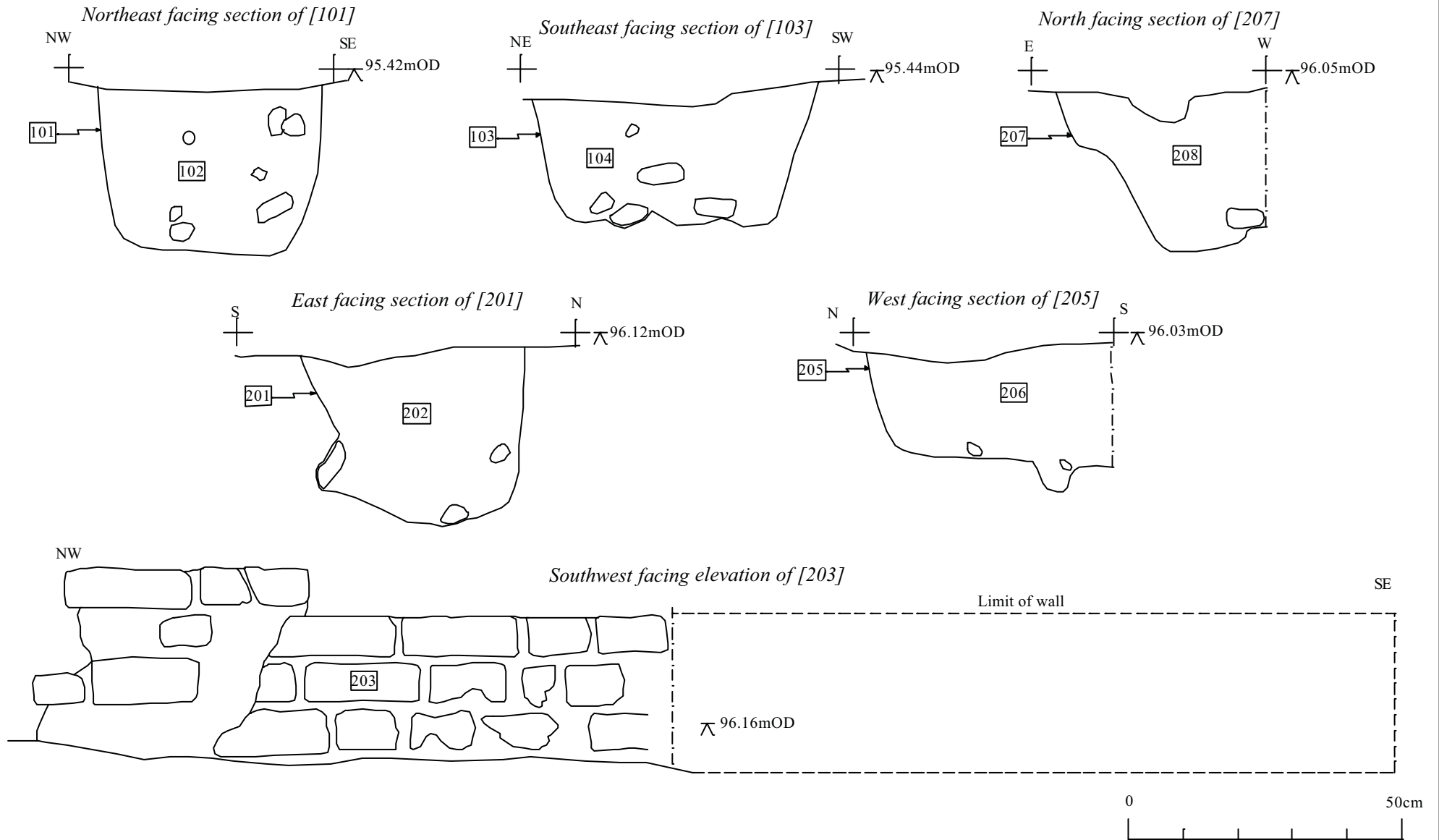
Plan of Trench 2



Trench 2 plan and section

Scale 1:50

Figure 4



Feature sections and elevations

Scale 1:10

Figure 5