

HERITAGE NETWORK



**Land South of
4 CARPOND LANE
Wilburton, Cambs.**

HN643

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 South of
4 CARPOND LANE
Wilburton, Cambridgeshire

HN643

Archaeological Evaluation

Prepared on behalf of E. J. Gifford (Construction) Ltd

by

Geoff Saunders, BA AIFA

Report no.392

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The cover photograph shows a view of the site looking north west

Acknowledgements

The fieldwork for this project was carried out by Geoff Saunders and Alison Hudson. The report text and illustrations were prepared by Geoff Saunders, and edited by David Hillelson.

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Summary

Site name and address:	Land S of 4 Carpond Lane, Wilburton, Cambridgeshire		
County:	Cambridgeshire	District:	East Cambridgeshire
Village/town:	Wilburton	Parish:	Wilburton
Planning reference:	ECDC 06/00062/FUL	NGR:	TL 548373 274960
Client name and address:	E.J Gifford (Construction) Ltd, 6 Mitchells Yard, Wilburton, Ely, CB6 3US		
Nature of work:	New Housing	Former land use:	Pasture
Site status:	None	Reason for investigation:	Direction of local planning authority (PPG 16)
Position in planning process:	Post determination	Project brief originator:	Local authority
Size of affected area:	c.3660m ²	Size of area investigated:	c.203m ²
Site Code:	HN643	Other reference:	ECB 2551
Organisation:	Heritage Network	Site Director:	David Hillelson
Project type, methods etc.:	Evaluation	Archive recipient:	Cambs Heritage Services
Start of work	23/01/2007	Finish of work	31/01/2007
Related SMR Nos:	n/a	Periods represented:	LPRIA – Post-medieval
Oasis UID	heritage1-23634	Significant finds:	No significant finds
Monument types:	Ditch, LPRIA-early RB; Ditch, Medieval; Ditch, late post-medieval; Ditch, undated; Pit, LPRIA-early RB; Pit, late post-medieval; Posthole, undated.		
Physical archive:	Pottery, CBM, Daub/Fired clay, Animal bone, Fe object, Slag, Fe.Object, Stone, Flint, Clay pipe.		
Previous summaries/reports:	n/a		

Synopsis: In order to determine the archaeological risk posed by a proposal to construct new housing on land to the rear of 4 Carpond Lane, Wilburton, Cambridgeshire, the Heritage Network was commissioned by the developer to undertake a programme of archaeological evaluation.

Three trial trenches measuring c.1.5 x 25m each were opened across the proposed development area. A series of boundary and enclosure ditches of late pre-Roman Iron Age – early Romano-British date were revealed. A medieval boundary ditch and associated gully were also observed. Several late 18th – 19th century features were observed including a ditch, two pits, and at least two large ponds.

1. Introduction

1.1 This report has been prepared on behalf of *E. J. Gifford (Construction) Ltd* as part of the archaeological evaluation of a proposed development site located on land south of 4 Carpond Lane, Wilburton, Cambridgeshire.

1.2 The investigation is a requirement of the planning consent for the development (ref. ECDC 06/00062/FUL), under the provisions set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note No.16 (PPG16) on Archaeology and Planning (DoE 1990). The work was defined in consultation with the *Cambridgeshire Archaeology, Planning and Countryside Advice* (CAPCA) section of Cambridgeshire County Council, acting as archaeological advisers to the local planning authority, East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC). In the absence of a project brief, the scope of the required work followed the current standard CAPCA model *Brief for Archaeological Evaluation*. The evaluation followed the provisions set out in the Heritage Network's approved Project Design dated December 2006.

1.3 The study area is situated in the historic core of the village of Wilburton, located on the Lower Greensand 'uplands' which form the Haddenham Ridge. The site is centred on NGR TL 548373 274960, and is located within former agricultural land to the east of Carpond Lane, covering approximately 0.4 ha. It is bounded by residential dwellings to the north and south, and the rear of 28 High Street to the east. The development proposes the construction of 8 new dwellings with associated access road, garages and landscaping.

1.4 Wilburton and the surrounding landscape contain evidence of multiperiod activity from the Bronze Age onwards. On the basis of the known archaeology in the vicinity, CAPCA advised that archaeological evaluation of the present site should be undertaken before the development proceeds.

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

1.6 The present report is intended 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, if any, mitigation measures may be required to allow the development to proceed.

2. Fieldwork

SITE TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

2.1 The land falls across the site from c21.0mOD in the south-eastern corner of the site to c19.0m in the north-western corner.

2.2 The site is situated within the core of Wilburton village, on the Haddenham Ridge, a narrow band of Lower Greensand which runs approximately east to west.

2.3 The drift geology belongs to the Bearsted 1 Association (541A), and consists of well drained coarse loamy and sandy soils over sand or sandstone (SSEW, 1983). This was characterised in the trenches as yellowish brown (10YR5/6) sand with occasional angular sandstone fragments.

METHODOLOGY

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

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

2.6 Five trenches were opened using a tracked 360⁰ excavator fitted with a 1.0m wide toothless bucket, under close archaeological supervision (Figure 2).

2.7 Spoil from the machining was inspected for archaeological artefacts. Trenches were machined to the first significant archaeological horizon.

2.8 All potential archaeological features and deposits were sampled to ascertain their nature, depth, date, and quality of preservation.

2.9 All identified contexts were photographed and recorded using the appropriate proforma. Scaled plans and sections were drawn on drafting film at appropriate scales.

RESULTS

Trench 1

Length (m):	24.70	Width (m):	1.50	Maximum Depth (m):	0.85	Orientation	E-W
Level at East End of Trench (mOD)		Top	20.54	Level at West End of Trench (mOD)		Top	20.69
		Base	19.90			Base	19.86
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)				
			Length	Width	Depth		
101	Cut	Sub-ovoid cut feature with concave sides and a rounded base. Small pit.	0.58	0.43	0.20		
102	Fill	Soft, very dark brown (10YR 2/2), silty sand with frequent small charcoal flecks.	0.58	0.43	0.20		
103	Cut	Curvi-linear cut feature the full profile of which was not visible within the evaluation trench. Enclosure ditch, part of group [119].	1.39 +	1.21 +	0.41		

104	Fill	Soft, dark yellowish brown (10YR 4/6), slightly clayey sand. Redeposited natural, primary fill of [103].	1.39 +	0.48 +	0.09
105	Fill	Firm, dark yellowish brown (10YR 4/4), clayey sand with occasional charcoal flecks and small sub-angular flints. Secondary fill of [103].	1.39 +	1.21 +	0.33
106	Cut	Linear cut feature on an E-W alignment with steep slightly concave sides and a rounded 'u' shaped base. Gully, part of group [120].	0.87 +	0.46	0.17
107	Fill	Firm, dark brown (10YR 3/3), clayey sand with occasional charcoal flecks. Fill of [106].	0.87 +	0.46	0.17
108	Cut	Linear cut feature on an E-W alignment with steep slightly concave sides and a rounded 'u' shaped base. Gully, part of group [120].	0.98 +	0.40	0.08
109	Fill	Firm, dark brown (10YR 3/3), clayey sand with occasional charcoal flecks. Fill of [108].	0.98 +	0.40	0.08
110	Cut	Cut feature which extended beyond the southern baulk of the trench, with steep straight sides. The base of the feature was not reached. Ditch butt end or pit.	0.85 +	0.79 +	0.59
111	Fill	Firm, dark brown (10YR 3/3), slightly clayey sand with occasional charcoal flecks and small sub-angular flints. Fill of [110].	0.85 +	0.79 +	0.59
112	Feature	Root or animal activity.	0.31	0.18	0.09
113	Cut	Curvi-linear cut feature with one steep straight side, one shallower slightly concave side and a rounded 'u' shaped base. Enclosure ditch, part of group [119].	0.68 +	2.20	0.40
114	Fill	Firm, dark yellowish brown (10YR 4/4), clayey sand with occasional charcoal flecks and small sub-angular flints. Fill of [113]. Same as (105).	0.68 +	2.20	0.40
115	Cut	Linear cut feature on a N-S alignment with steep slightly concave sides and a flat base. Ditch.	1.52 +	0.98	0.28
116	Fill	Firm, dark brown (10YR 3/3), clayey sand with occasional charcoal flecks. Fill of [115].	1.52 +	0.98	0.28
117	Cut	Linear cut feature on an E-W alignment the full profile of which was not visible within the trench. Ditch.	11.11 +	0.67 +	0.18 +
118	Fill	Firm, dark brown (10YR 3/3), clayey sand with occasional charcoal flecks. Fill of [117].	11.11 +	0.67 +	0.18 +
119	Group	[103], [113]	5.36 +	2.20	-
120	Group	[106], [108]	3.14	0.46	-

2.10 Trench 1 was located towards the western boundary of the site within the area of the proposed access road.

2.11 The stratigraphy in the trench consisted of a layer of friable, very dark greyish brown (10YR 3/2), sandy silt imported topsoil observed in the western half of the trench only. Beneath this was a layer of firm, olive brown (2.5Y 4/4), clayey sand topsoil over a layer of firm, olive brown (2.5Y 4/3), slightly clayey sand subsoil. Beneath this was the underlying natural geology of soft, dark yellowish brown (10YR 4/6), slightly clayey sand.

2.12 The trench contained a small pit [101], a ditch butt end or pit [110], root or animal disturbance [112], three ditches [115], [117], and [119], and a gully [120].

2.13 Small pit [101] was observed in the centre of the trench. The feature was sub-ovoid shaped in plan with concave sides and a rounded base. The single soft, very dark brown, silty sand fill (102) yielded several undiagnostic fragments of burnt clay, of probable late Iron Age/early Romano-British date. The function of the pit is uncertain.

2.14 Cut feature [110] was observed in the western half of the trench extending beyond the southern trench baulk. The feature appeared sub-ovoid in plan with steep straight sides, a high groundwater level prevented the base of the feature being reached. The single soft, dark brown, slightly clayey sand fill (111) yielded two small abraded sherds of pottery of 13th-14th century date. The feature has been interpreted as either a pit or the butt end of a ditch.

2.15 Feature [112] was observed in the centre of the trench. The feature was irregularly shaped in plan with irregular sides and base. The feature has been interpreted as being natural in origin.

2.16 Ditch [115] was observed crossing the eastern half of the trench on a north – south alignment. The feature had steep slightly concave sides and a flat base. The single soft, dark brown, clayey sand fill (116) yielded two small abraded sherds of pottery of late Iron Age/early Romano-British date. The feature has been interpreted as a boundary ditch.

2.17 Ditch [117] was observed running along the northern baulk of the eastern half of the trench on an east – west alignment. The full profile of the feature was not revealed in the evaluation trench, the southern side of the feature was shallow and slightly concave at the top becoming steeper towards the base. The single soft, dark brown, clayey sand fill (118) yielded several sherds of pottery of late Iron Age/early Romano-British date. The feature has been interpreted as a boundary ditch.

2.18 Ditches [115] and [117] formed a junction in the eastern end of the trench, due to the homogeneity of the fills it was not possible to establish a stratigraphic relationship between the ditches. The pottery recovered from the two ditches suggests they are contemporary.

2.19 Ditch [119] was observed in the western end of the trench. The ditch appears to form a small enclosure running into the trench from the southern baulk on a north – south alignment, turning to run east – west before turning again to run beyond the southern baulk on a north – south alignment. Two sections [103], and [113], were excavated through the feature. The full profile of the ditch was only observed in section [113]. The western side was steep and straight, the east side was shallower and slightly concave. The base had a flat ledge on the western side with a rounded ‘u’ shaped gully on the east side. The feature contained two fills, the primary only being identified in section [103]. This soft, dark yellowish brown, slightly clayey sand (104) yielded no archaeological artefacts. The secondary fill (105), a firm, dark yellowish brown, clayey sand, yielded several sherds of pottery of late Iron Age/early Romano-British date. The feature has been interpreted as an enclosure ditch.

2.20 Gully [120] was observed in the western half of the trench running on an east – west alignment. Two sections [106] and [108] were excavated through the feature. The gully had steep slightly concave sides and a rounded ‘u’ shaped base. The single firm, dark brown, clayey sand fill yielded no archaeological artefacts. Feature [110] which contained pottery of 13th-14th century date was cut through the eastern end of the gully.

2.21 No further archaeological features or deposits were observed in this trench.

Trench 2

Length (m):	24.40	Width (m):	1.50	Maximum Depth (m):	1.30	Orientation	E-W	
Level at East End of Trench (mOD)			Top	19.53	Level at West End of Trench (mOD)		Top	19.38
			Base	18.28			Base	18.83
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)					
			Length	Width	Depth			
201	Cut	Sub-ovoid cut feature extending beyond the southern trench baulk, with steep, straight, sides and a flat base. Pit.	0.81 +	1.06 +	0.14			
202	Fill	Firm, brown (10YR 4/3), clayey sand. Fill of [201].	0.81 +	1.06 +	0.14			
203	Cut	Large feature extending beyond the northern, eastern southern trench baulks. Large pond.	4.60 +	1.50 +	0.71			
204	Fill	Firm, bluish grey (Gley 2 6/1), clay. Primary fill observed in base of large pond [203], possible lining.	4.60 +	1.50 +	0.62			
205	Fill	Firm, dark yellowish brown (10YR 4/4), slightly sandy clay. Secondary fill of [203].	0.93 +	1.50 +	0.09			
206	Cut	Large feature extending beyond the northern and southern trench baulks. Large pond.	10.84 +	1.50 +	0.72			
207	Fill	Firm, dark yellowish brown (10YR 4/4), slightly sandy clay. Fill of [206].	10.84 +	1.50 +	0.72			

2.22 Trench 2 was located in the southern half of the site running parallel to the southern site boundary.

2.23 The stratigraphy in the trench consisted of a layer of firm, brown (10YR 4/3), sandy clay topsoil over a firm, dark yellowish brown (10YR 4/4), slightly sandy clay subsoil. Beneath this was the underlying natural geology of firm, yellowish brown (10YR 5/4), slightly sandy clay.

2.24 The trench contained a pit [201], and two depressions [203] and [206], which have been identified as ponds. The groundwater level in this trench was extremely high, making hand investigation of the larger features impractical.

2.25 Pit [201] was observed in the eastern half of the trench extending beneath the southern trench baulk. The feature appeared sub-ovoid in plan with steep, straight sides and a flat base. The single firm, brown, clayey sand fill (202) yielded a single small abraded sherd of late Iron Age/early Romano-British pottery. The function of the pit is uncertain.

2.26 Feature [203] was observed in the eastern end of the trench extending beneath the baulk on the north, south, and east sides. A sondage was machined through the feature in the eastern end of the trench. The primary plastic, bluish grey, clay fill (204) yielded no archaeological artefacts. The secondary firm, dark yellowish brown, slightly sandy clay fill (205) yielded no archaeological artefacts.

2.27 Feature [206] was observed in the western half of the trench extending beyond both the northern and southern limits of the trench. A section was machined through the feature, it had shallow straight sides and a slightly rounded base. The single firm, dark yellowish brown, slightly sandy clay fill (207) yielded pottery sherds of 18th/19th century date.

2.28 Features [203] and [206] have been interpreted as the remnants of ponds. The primary clay fill (204) in [203], may represent a clay lining which suggests that the feature was man made. Although no archaeological artefacts were recovered from [203], pottery recovered from [206] suggests that the feature was filled in during the 18th-19th centuries. Other ponds are known in the vicinity of the site, and one was encountered during the construction of no.6 Carpond Lane on the adjacent plot (Ed Gifford, pers. comm.).

2.29 No further archaeological features or deposits were observed in this trench.

Trench 3

Length (m):	24.50	Width (m):	1.50	Maximum Depth (m):	0.85	Orientation	NE-SW	
Level at North-East End of Trench (mOD)			Top	19.90	Level at South-West End of Trench (mOD)		Top	20.46
			Base	19.16			Base	19.84
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)					
			Length	Width	Depth			
301	Cut	Linear cut feature on a NW-SE alignment with steep concave sides and a rounded 'u' shaped base. Ditch.	1.50 +	0.50	0.30			
302	Fill	Firm, very dark greyish brown (10YR 3/2), slightly clayey sand. Fill of [301].	1.50 +	0.50	0.30			
303	Cut	Large cut feature extending beyond the north-west, north-east, and south-east trench baulks. Large pond.	20.44 +	1.50 +	0.50			
304	Fill	Firm, dark yellowish brown (10YR 4/4), silty sand. Fill of [303].	20.44 +	1.50 +	0.50			

2.30 Trench 3 was located in the centre of the eastern half of the site running virtually parallel to Carpond Lane.

2.31 The stratigraphy in the trench consisted of a layer of firm, dark brown (10YR 3/3), clayey sand topsoil over a layer of firm, yellowish brown (10YR 5/6), slightly clayey sand subsoil. Beneath this was the underlying natural geology of soft, yellowish brown (10YR 5/6) sand.

2.32 The trench contained a ditch [301], and a possible pond [303]. The groundwater level in this trench was extremely high, making hand investigation of the larger feature impractical.

2.33 Ditch [301] was observed in the south-west end of the trench crossing it on a north-west – south-east alignment. The feature, which was cut through the subsoil, had steep concave sides and a rounded 'u' shaped base. The single soft, very dark greyish brown, slightly clayey sand fill (302) yielded no archaeological artefacts. The feature has been interpreted as a boundary ditch.

2.34 Feature [303] covered approximately three quarters of the length of the trench extending beyond the trench on the north-west, north-east, and south-east sides. A section was machined through the feature. The feature, which was cut through the subsoil, had a shallow straight side and a flat base. The single firm, dark yellowish brown, silty sand fill (304) yielded no archaeological artefacts. The feature has been interpreted as the remnants of a pond, and similar to features identified in Trench 2.

2.35 No further archaeological features or deposits were observed within this trench.

Trench 4

Length (m):	24.80	Width (m):	1.50	Maximum Depth (m):	1.00	Orientation	NE-SW
Level at North-East End of Trench (mOD)		Top	20.62	Level at South-West End of Trench (mOD)		Top	20.94
		Base	19.89			Base	20.33
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)				
			Length	Width	Depth		
401	Cut	Linear cut feature on a N-S alignment with shallow concave sides becoming steep and straight towards the flat base. Ditch.	4.50 +	0.70 +	0.42		
402	Fill	Firm, dark greyish brown (10YR 4/2), slightly clayey sand with occasional charcoal flecks and small sub-angular flints. Fill of [401].	4.50 +	0.70 +	0.42		
403	Cut	Curvi-linear cut feature with steep slightly concave sides and a slightly rounded base. Ditch, part of group [407].	2.38 +	1.02	0.41		
404	Fill	Firm, very dark greyish brown (10YR 3/2), clayey sand with occasional charcoal flecks and small sub-angular flints. Fill of [403].	2.38 +	1.02	0.41		
405	Cut	Curvi-linear cut feature with a concave shallow side which becomes steeper and straighter towards the base. Ditch, part of group [407].	0.81 +	1.22 +	0.30 +		
406	Fill	Friable, dark grey (10YR 4/1) with yellowish brown mottling, clayey silt. Alluvial deposit. Same as (404).	0.81 +	1.22 +	0.30 +		
407	Group	[403], [405].	11.68 +	1.02	-		

2.36 Trench 4 was located in the south-east corner of the site running at a right angle to the southern site boundary.

2.37 The stratigraphy in the trench consisted of a layer of firm, dark brown (10YR 3/3), clayey sand over a layer of firm, brown (10YR 4/3), slightly clayey sand subsoil. Beneath this was the underlying natural geology of soft, yellowish brown (10YR 5/6), sand.

2.38 The trench contained two ditches [401], and [407].

2.39 Ditch [401] was observed crossing the centre of the trench on a north – south alignment. The feature had shallow concave sides that became steep and straight towards the base which was flat. The single firm, dark yellowish brown, slightly clayey sand fill (402) yielded pottery sherds dating to the late pre Roman Iron Age. The feature has been interpreted as a boundary ditch.

2.40 Ditch [407] was observed crossing the trench on a north – south alignment before turning to run along the trench on a north-east – south-west alignment before turning again to exit the trench on a east – west alignment. Two sections were excavated through the feature [403], and [405], the full profile of the feature was only observed in [403]. The ditch had steep slightly concave sides and a slightly rounded base. The single firm, very dark greyish brown, clayey sand fill (404) yielded several sherds of pottery dating to the late pre Roman Iron Age. The feature may represent part of a large enclosure ditch.

2.41 Ditches [401] and [407] formed a junction in the centre of the trench with ditch [407] cutting through the fill of ditch [401].

2.42 No further archaeological features or deposits were observed in this trench.

Trench 5

Length (m):	24.70	Width (m):	1.50	Maximum Depth (m):	0.65	Orientation	E-W
Level at East End of Trench (mOD)		Top	20.87	Level at West End of Trench (mOD)		Top	20.48
		Base	20.30			Base	20.09
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)				
			Length	Width	Depth		
501	Cut	Linear cut feature on a NW-SE alignment with steep concave sides and a rounded 'u' shaped base. Ditch.	1.71 +	1.17	0.45		
502	Fill	Soft, dark greyish brown (10YR 4/2), silty sand. Fill of [501].	1.71 +	1.17	0.45		
503	Cut	Sub-rectangular cut feature, which extends beneath the southern trench baulk, with steep straight sides. Pit.	0.93 +	0.66 +	0.33 +		
504	Fill	Soft, dark yellowish brown (10YR 4/4), redeposited sand. Fill of [503].	0.93 +	0.66 +	0.33 +		
505	Cut	Irregular shaped cut feature, which extends beneath the northern trench baulk, with steep straight sides and an irregular base. Posthole.	0.25 +	0.20	0.20		
506	Fill	Soft, dark brown (10YR 3/3), slightly clayey sand. Fill of [505].	0.25 +	0.20	0.20		
507	Cut	Sub-circular cut feature with steep slightly concave sides and a rounded base. Posthole.	0.25	0.20	0.21		
508	Fill	Soft, dark brown (10YR 3/3), slightly clayey sand. Fill of [507].	0.25	0.20	0.21		
509	Cut	Sub-ovoid cut feature, which extends beneath the southern trench baulk, with steep concave sides. Pit.	0.34 +	0.83 +	0.40 +		
510	Fill	Soft, dark greyish brown (10YR 4/2), sand. Fill of [509].	0.34 +	0.83 +	0.40 +		

2.43 Trench 5 was located in the southern half of the site running approximately parallel to the southern site boundary.

2.44 The stratigraphy in the trench consisted of a layer of firm, dark brown (10YR 3/3), clayey sand topsoil beneath which was the underlying natural geology of soft, yellowish brown (10YR 5/6), sand.

2.45 The trench contained ditch [501], two pits [503], and [509], and two postholes [505], and [507].

2.46 Ditch [501] was observed running across the eastern half of the trench on a north-west – south-east alignment. The feature had steep concave sides and a rounded 'u' shaped base. The single soft, dark greyish brown, silty sand fill (502) yielded two fragments of 19th century brick. The feature has been interpreted as a boundary ditch.

2.47 Pit [503] was observed cut through the natural geology in the eastern half of the trench. The feature was sub-rectangular shaped in plan with steep straight sides. The base of the feature was not reached due to the high water table. The single soft, dark yellowish brown, sand fill (504) yielded a large amount of brick of early nineteenth century date only a sample of which was retained. Ditch [501] was cut through the fill of the pit. The function of the pit is unclear.

2.48 Posthole [505] was observed cut through the natural geology in the eastern half of the trench. The feature, which extended beyond the northern trench baulk, was irregular shaped in plan. It had steep straight sides and an irregular base. The single soft, dark brown, slightly clayey sand fill (506) yielded no archaeological artefacts. The feature has been interpreted as a posthole.

2.49 Posthole [507] was observed cut through the natural geology in the eastern half of the trench. The feature was sub-circular shaped in plan with steep slightly concave sides and a rounded base. The single soft, dark brown, slightly clayey sand fill (508) yielded several a single sherd of pottery dating to the late pre-Roman Iron Age. The feature has been interpreted as a posthole.

2.50 Pit [509] was observed cut through the natural geology in the centre of the trench. The feature, which extended beyond the southern trench baulk, appeared to be sub-ovoid shaped in plan. It had steep concave sides. The base of the feature was not reached due to the high water table. The single soft, dark greyish brown, sand fill (510) yielded several fragments of late eighteenth/early nineteenth century brick only a sample of which was retained. The function of the pit is unclear.

2.51 No further archaeological features or deposits were observed in this trench.

3. Finds Assessment

Concordance of finds

Context	Pottery		CBM		Daub/Fired clay		An bone		Fe object		Stone		Flint		Slag		Clay pipe		
	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	
Tr 1 U/S	6	60					1	10											
102					10	65													
105	2	10			1	5	3	10											
111	2	10					4	370			1	25							
114	9	205					16	175			1	590							
116	2	10			2	15					2	10							
118	7	105																	
207	5	335	1	120							4	95							
202	1	3																	
402	23	475			2	45	23	95			6	850			24	455			
404	32	655	1	90	4	5	19	70	1	10	7	1780							
406	28	400			2	15	21	95			6	125	1	15					
502			2	405			2	235										1	2
504			2	5790															
506											2	20							
508	1	5					1	2											
510	1	60	3	1135														2	15
Total	119	2333	9	7540	21	150	90	1062	1	10	29	3495	1	15	24	455	3	17	

Pottery

3.1 A total of 119 sherds of pottery, weighing 2333g, was recovered from 12 stratified and 1 unstratified contexts. The pottery ranged in date from the late Bronze Age to the post-medieval period. The pottery was in variable condition, ranging from small, abraded fragments to sizeable, relatively unworn, sherds.

Chronology

3.2 A single undiagnostic bodysherd of late Bronze Age/early Iron Age flint tempered ware is the earliest pottery recovered from the site. The sherd was redeposited in ditch [117]. Activity of this period is recorded within the vicinity of Wilburton, hoards of late Bronze Age metal work were recovered from Grunty Fen to the north (SMR5785) and at Wilburton Rush Fen to the south-west (SMR5717).

3.3 The bulk of the pottery assemblage from the site is of the late 1st century BC – late 1st century AD. No evidence of later Roman pottery was observed in the trenches.

3.4 Two small sherds of 13th-14th century green glaze pottery recovered from feature [110] represent the only evidence of medieval activity recovered on the site during the evaluation.

3.5 Post-medieval pottery was collected unstratified from Trench 1 and also from pond feature [206].

Discussion

3.6 Grog and sand tempered wares represent the largest fabric groups on the site. These wares are commonly found on Late-pre Roman Iron Age and early Roman sites in this region.

The lack of grey wares in the assemblage is notable. Grey wares tend to replace grog-tempered wares as the dominant fabric group from the later 1st century AD onwards. The lack of such sherds is, therefore, an indication of the early date of the features on the present site. Two base sherds and two bodysherds from a sand-tempered vessel, recovered from ditch section [403], may have been re-used. The two base sherds show signs of having at least two holes drilled through them. Shell-tempered wares, and white wares possibly from Colchester, were also present in the assemblage.

3.7 Although the majority of the assemblage comprised local and regional wares, a single small abraded sherd, possibly of Terra Nigra, was recovered from ditch section [403].

3.8 Jars were the predominant form, in particular at least two large thick walled storage jars were present. Bowls were also represented and part of the handle of a jug was also recovered. The identified forms indicate a domestic assemblage.

3.9 The present assemblage contains large relatively unworn sherds indicating that some of the pottery is likely to have been recovered from its primary place of deposition. This suggests occupation on, or in the immediate vicinity of the site in the late pre-Roman Iron Age and early Romano-British period.

Conclusions

3.10 Pottery recovered from ditch sections [401], [403], and [405] make up 70% of the assemblage by count and 66% by weight. Two of the sections, [403] and [405], are through a single ditch [407].

3.11 On the present evidence a single phase of occupation can be identified on, or in, the immediate vicinity of the site. This started in the late 1st century BC and continued into the late 1st century AD. Later activity on the site is represented by two small sherds of medieval pottery recovered from fill (111) in feature [110], and from post-medieval pottery recovered unstratified from Trench 1 and from pond feature [206].

3.12 The majority of the pottery assemblage was recovered from two ditches, [401] and [407], in Trench 4. This suggests that the focus of settlement during the late pre-Roman Iron Age and early Romano-British period lies to the east of Trench 4 which was located close to the eastern site boundary.

Recommendations

3.13 The present assemblage, although small, does show that there was domestic occupation on, or close to, the site from at least the late 1st century BC. Should further work on the site be undertaken, it is proposed that the combined assemblage should be submitted to a specialist for detailed consideration.

Ceramic Building Material (CBM)

3.14 A total of 9 fragments of CBM, weighing 7540g, was recovered from 5 stratified contexts during the present investigation.

3.15 A single fragment of Romano-British brick was recovered from fill (404) in ditch [403]. The fragment was small, abraded, and undiagnostic. The brick suggests the presence of at least one structure of this date in the vicinity of the site.

3.16 Pond [206] yielded a single small, abraded, and undiagnostic fragment of late post-medieval brick.

3.17 Ditch [501] yielded several fragments of late post-medieval brick, the fragments were incomplete, abraded, and undiagnostic.

3.18 Pit [503] yielded a large amount of late post-medieval brick, a sample of which was collected for further analysis. A complete brick was recovered measuring approximately 250mm by 106mm by 75mm. The bricks were probably produced locally and are handmade. They are badly puddled and generally of poor quality, and have been dated to the early 19th century (Tom Doig, pers.comm.).

3.19 Pit [509] yielded a large amount of late post-medieval brick, a sample of which was collected for further analysis. No complete fragments of brick were recovered. They are of similar fabric to those recovered from pit [503] but are late 18th century in date (ibid).

Recommendations

3.20 Given the small size of the assemblage and that the majority is late post-medieval in date, no further work is proposed on this material.

Daub/Fired clay

3.21 A total of 21 fragments of daub and fired clay, weighing 150g, was recovered from 6 stratified contexts during the present investigation. The majority of the assemblage comprised small and abraded fragments.

3.22 Ten pieces of burnt clay, weighing 65g, were recovered from the fill of small pit [101]. The clay, although burnt and abraded, probably dates to the late pre-Roman Iron Age-early Romano-British period.

3.23 The remainder of the assemblage was recovered from ditch sections [105], [116], [401], [403], and [405], all of which yielded pottery of late pre-Roman Iron Age-early Romano-British date.

3.24 The presence of daub is further evidence of at least one structure on or in close proximity to the site at this time.

Recommendations

3.25 No further work is proposed on this assemblage.

Animal Bone

3.26 A total of 90 fragments of animal bone, weighing 1062g, was recovered from 8 stratified and 1 unstratified contexts during the present investigation. Most of the assemblage is in the form of broken fragments, ranging in size from substantial pieces to small undiagnostic fragments.

3.27 Species represented include larger animals such as cattle and horse, as well as smaller animals such as sheep/goat and pig. A fragment of burnt ulna was recovered from ditch [401]. No evidence of butchery marks was observed in the assemblage.

Recommendations

3.28 Given the small size of the assemblage and its fragmentary nature, no further work is proposed.

Iron Object

3.29 A single iron object, weighing 10g, was recovered from fill (404) in ditch [403] which has been dated to the late Iron Age/early Romano-British period. The heavily corroded object measures 49mm long and has a diameter of 11mm. The object is likely to represent a nail although no head is evident.

Recommendations

3.30 No further work is proposed on this item.

Stone

3.31 A total of twenty nine pieces of stone, weighing 3495g, was recovered from 8 stratified contexts during the present investigation.

3.32 The majority of the assemblage comprises unworked sandstone and some fragments appear to have a high iron content. The natural geology of the area contains sandstone which is in places ferruginous (SSEW 1983), indicating the stone is likely to be naturally occurring locally.

3.33 A single fragment of pudding stone was recovered from ditch [401] which yielded pottery of late pre-Roman Iron age – early Romano-British date. Although the fragment is unworked it may represent part of a broken quern stone.

Recommendations

3.34 No further work is proposed on this assemblage.

Flint

3.35 A single piece of flint, weighing 15g, was recovered from a single stratified context during the present investigation. The unworked fragment was recovered from ditch [405].

Recommendations

3.36 No further work is proposed on this item.

Slag

3.37 A total of twenty four fragments of slag, weighing 455g, was recovered from fill (402) in ditch [401]. Ditch [401] yielded pottery which has been dated to the late pre-Roman Iron Age – early Romano-British period.

3.38 The majority of the slag was recovered from a small area within the feature, suggesting that the ditch had been used for the dumping of metal working waste. The slag appears to have been allowed to run and cool as natural sand has adhered to some of the surfaces.

3.39 The slag is an indication of metal working in the vicinity of the site during this period.

Recommendations

3.40 No further work is proposed on this material.

Clay pipe

3.41 A total of three pieces of clay pipe, weighing 17g, was recovered from 2 stratified contexts during the present investigation. The assemblage consists of small undiagnostic stem fragments.

3.42 One piece was recovered from ditch [501] which has been dated to the late post-medieval period. The remaining two pieces were recovered from pit [509] which has been dated to the late 18th century.

Recommendations

3.43 No further work is proposed on this assemblage.

4. Discussion

4.1 Wilburton has its origins in the medieval period and the present site is located within the historic core of the settlement. The village lies within an important historic landscape with defined archaeological activity ranging from at least the Bronze Age period onwards. Late Bronze Age hoards of metal work (SMR 5785) were discovered in the 19th century on Grunty Fen to the north and at Wilburton Rush Fen (SMR 5717) to the south west of the village. To the south of the village, human and animal remains, and pottery dating to the Iron Age (NMR 372139) were encountered in the 19th century. Chance Roman finds such as a knife handle (NMR 372083) on Grunty Fen to the north and Romano-British pottery (NMR 372135) to the south of the village are also recorded.

4.2 The present archaeological evaluation revealed a series of boundary and enclosure ditches (contexts [115], [117], [119], [401], and [407]) which yielded artefacts dating to the late 1st century BC – late 1st century AD.

4.3 The activity of this period appears to focus on two areas, one defined by a small enclosure ditch [119] beneath the proposed access road for the development. The other defined by ditches [401] and [407] observed in Trench 4 close to the eastern boundary of the present site.

4.4 Ditch [119] appears to form part of a small enclosure the majority of which is located to the south of the western end of Trench 1. The ditch yielded several large relatively unabraded sherds of pottery that appear to have been recovered from their primary place of deposition. This is indicative of domestic activity in the immediate vicinity of the feature. The ditch demonstrated a good depth of preservation, possibly due to the presence of a layer of imported topsoil which covers this part of the site.

4.5 Ditches [401] and [407] on the eastern side of the site yielded the largest amount of artefacts, suggesting that the main focus of occupation at this period lay to the east of the present site. In particular the alignment of ditch [407] suggests that it forms part of a large enclosure, the focus of which appears to lie in the adjacent plot to the east.

4.6 Ditches [115] and [117] formed a right angle junction in Trench 1. The small and abraded nature of the pottery sherds recovered from the features suggest that they may represent part of a field system surrounding the occupation site at this period. A further ditch, [301], yielded no archaeological artefacts but may represent part of the same system.

4.7 Pit [101] produced several fragments of burnt clay which although undiagnostic are likely to be contemporary with this period.

4.8 Pit [201] yielded a single small heavily abraded sherd of pottery contemporary with this period. The size and heavily abraded nature of the sherd suggests it has been redeposited within a later feature.

4.9 Posthole [507] yielded a single small abraded rim sherd of contemporary date. The condition of the sherd suggests that it is unlikely to be in its primary place of deposition and may be redeposited within a later feature.

4.10 Medieval activity on the site was demonstrated by feature [110] which yielded pottery of 13th-14th century date. The feature aligns with existing property boundaries to the north and south. The 1st edition Ordnance Survey shows this boundary continuing through the present site.

The feature may represent an earlier form of this boundary. The feature cut through gully [120] which was aligned at right angles to it and may represent the rear boundary of the plots fronting the High Street at this time.

4.11 A series of large pond-like features [203], [206], and [303], were observed in Trenches 2 and 3. One of these, [206], yielded pottery and CBM of 18th-19th century date. Ponds are known in the vicinity of the site, and one was encountered during the construction of no.6 Carpond Lane on the adjacent plot to the west (Ed Gifford, pers. comm.). A large pond is also shown on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey at the north end of Carpond Lane. The area around it is shown as being marshy.

4.12 Later activity on the site was also demonstrated by ditch [501], and pits [503] and [509]. These features yielded artefacts of late 18th – early 19th century date. These features were observed in Trench 5 which was located close to the existing rear boundary of the plots fronting the High Street. The features may suggest that activity of this period, associated with these plots, extended onto the present site.

Conclusion

4.13 The present evaluation has demonstrated the presence of boundary features dating to the late pre-Roman Iron Age – early Romano-British period on the site. In addition the artefacts recovered suggest settlement activity in the immediate vicinity of the site. The distribution of the artefacts suggests that the main focus of the settlement may lie to the east of the site, possibly on the adjacent plot. No direct evidence for occupation on the site dating to this period was recovered.

4.14 A secondary focus of domestic activity at the same period appears to be located to the south of the western end of Trench 1 which was focused on the proposed access road for the development. A medieval boundary ditch, [110] was also observed in this area. The depth of overburden on this part of the site is likely to protect any archaeology from disturbance by construction of the access road.

4.15 A series of large ponds, one of which yielded artefacts of 18th – 19th century date, occupy the northern half of the site. The ponds, which may be man-made, are likely to have disturbed potential earlier archaeology on this part of the site.

4.16 On the basis of these findings, it is considered that late pre-Roman Iron Age – early Roman-British boundaries, and further similar or related features may be affected by the proposed development. The evidence suggests that the focus of occupation at this period lies outside the site boundaries and that the risk that such features would be disturbed can be considered to be Low – Moderate.

Confidence Rating

4.17 Despite the high water table encountered during the course of the fieldwork, the conditions were generally acceptable for the identification of potential features and deposits, and for their investigation.

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

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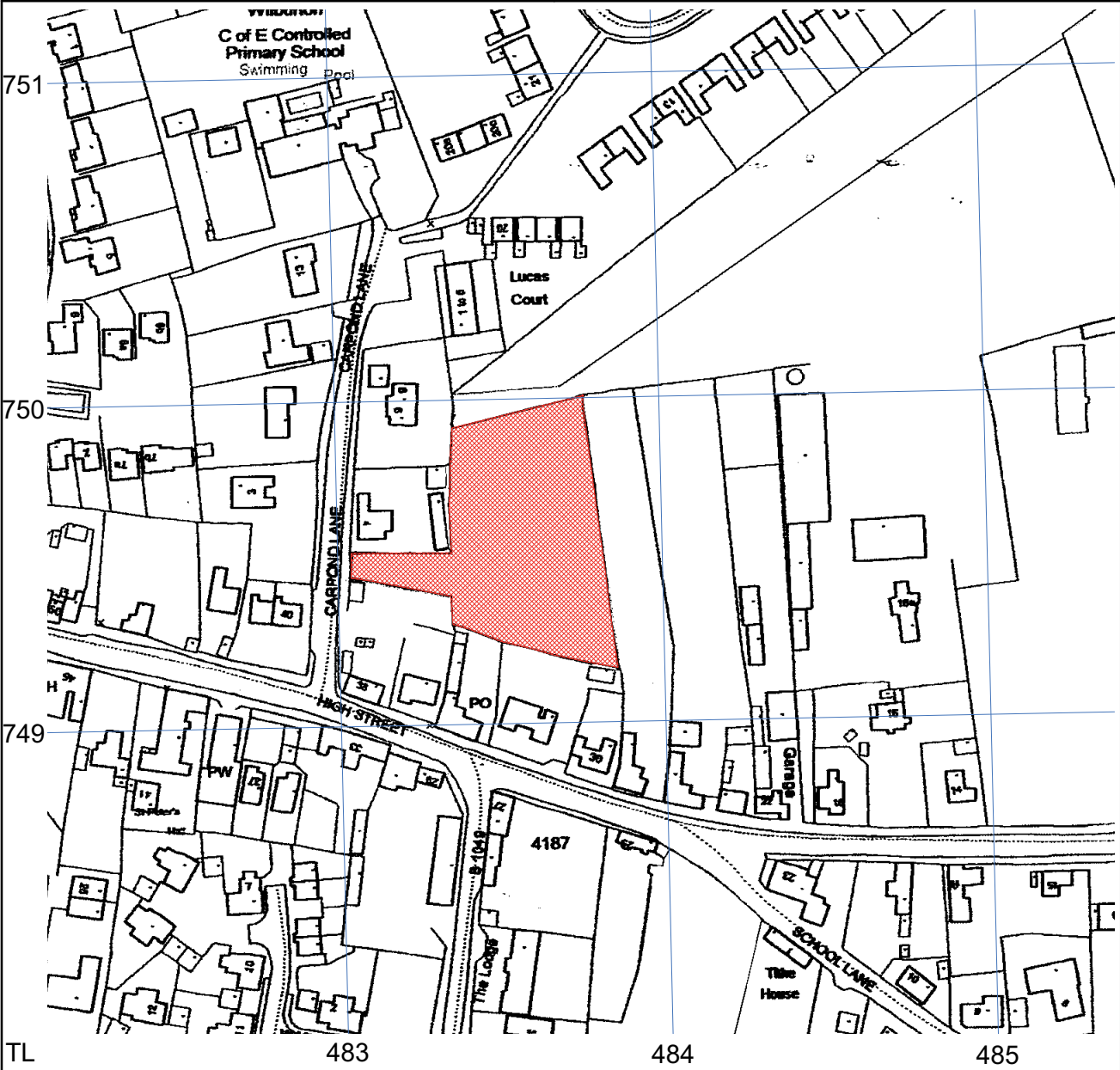
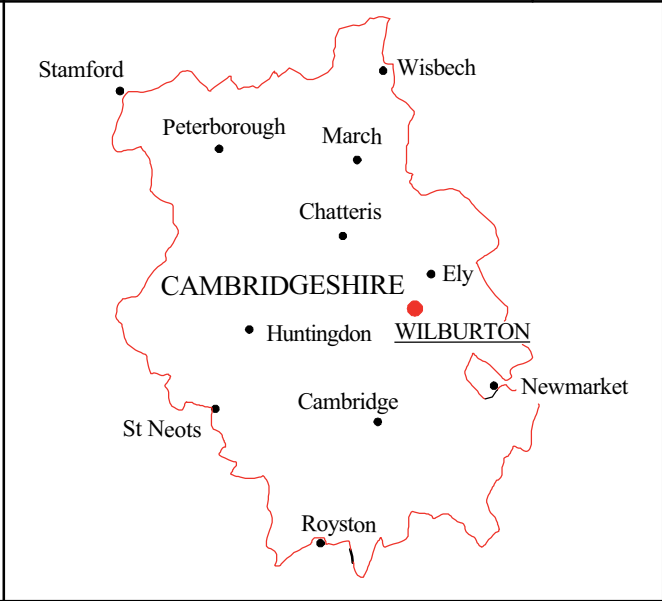
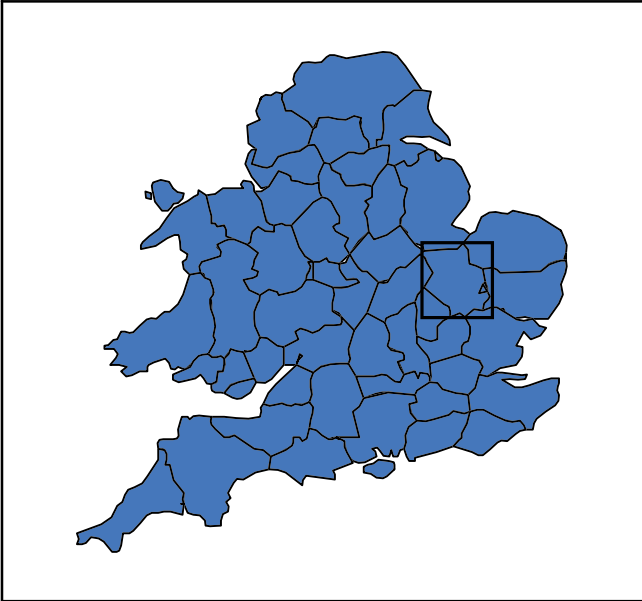
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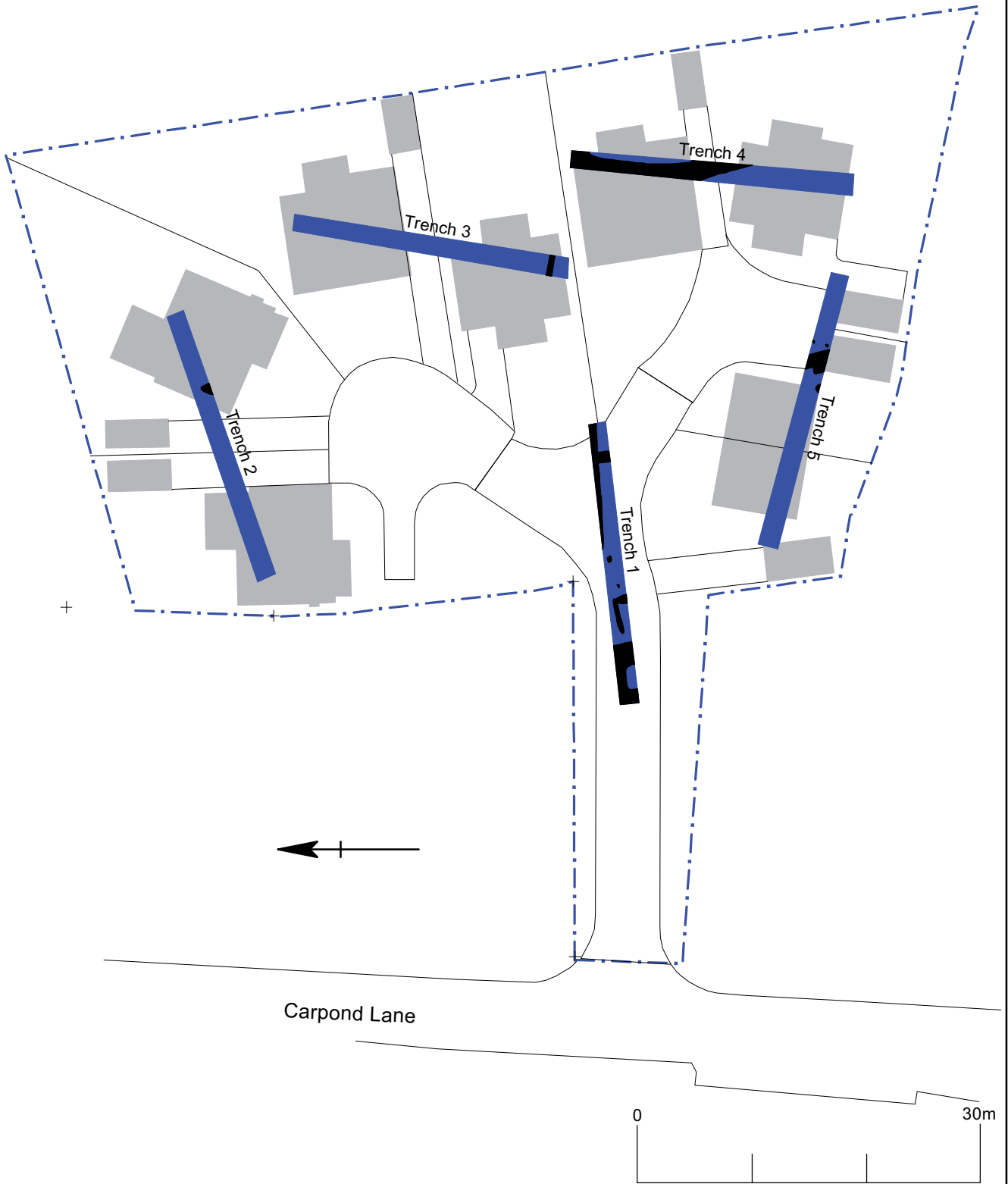
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6. Illustrations

Figure 1.....	Site location
Figure 2.....	Trench layout
Figure 3.....	Trenches 1, 2, and 3 sections and plans
Figure 4.....	Trenches 4 and 5 sections and plans
Figure 5.....	Feature sections



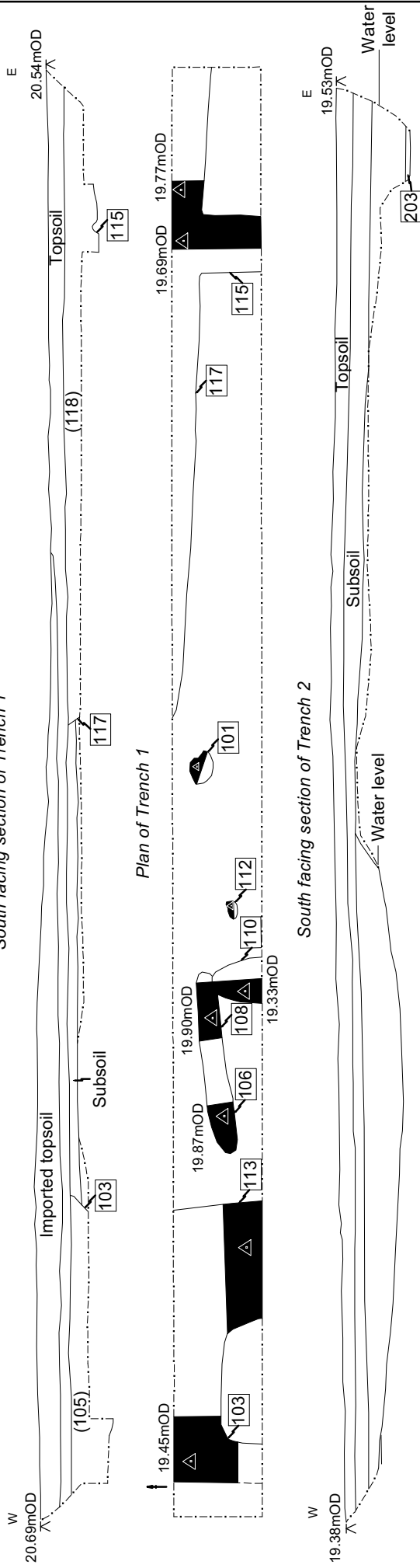


Trench Layout

Scale 1:500

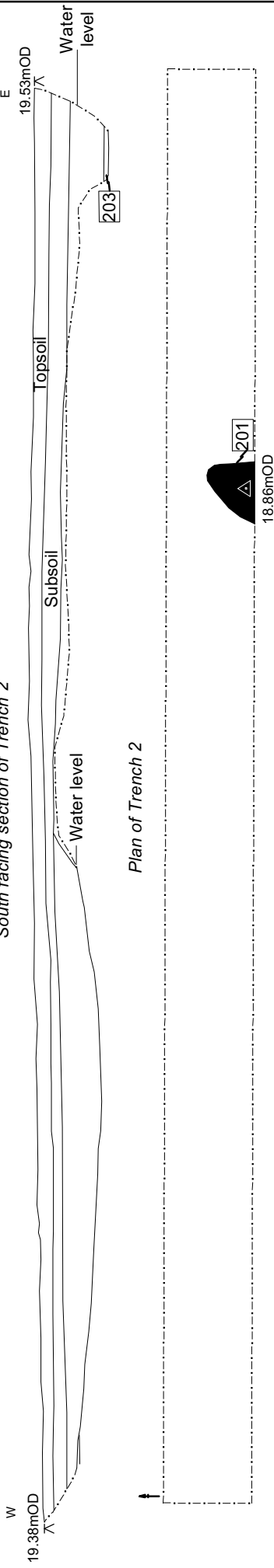
Figure 2

South facing section of Trench 1



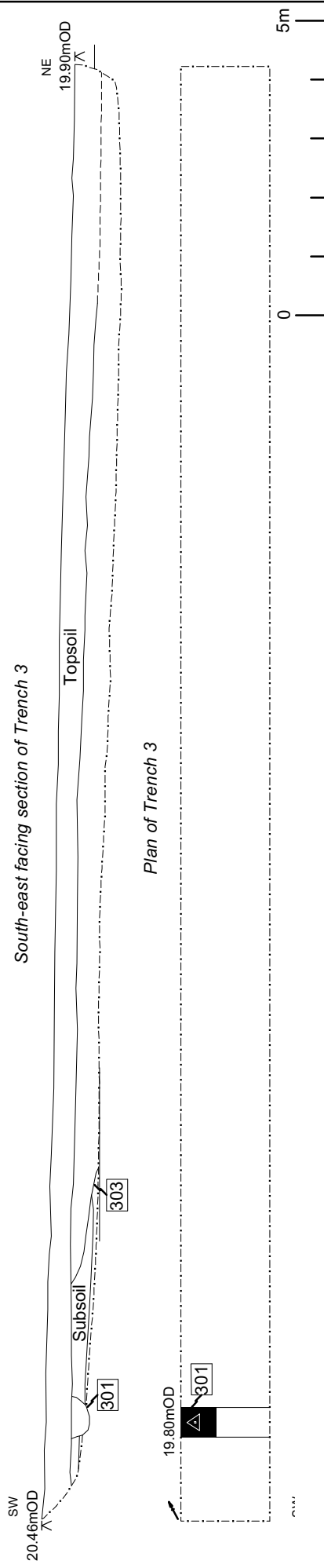
Plan of Trench 1

South facing section of Trench 2



Plan of Trench 2

South-east facing section of Trench 3

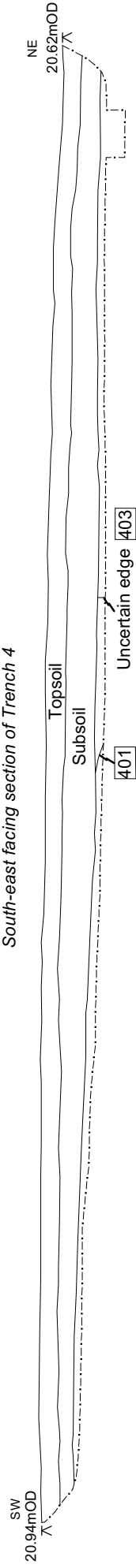


Plan of Trench 3

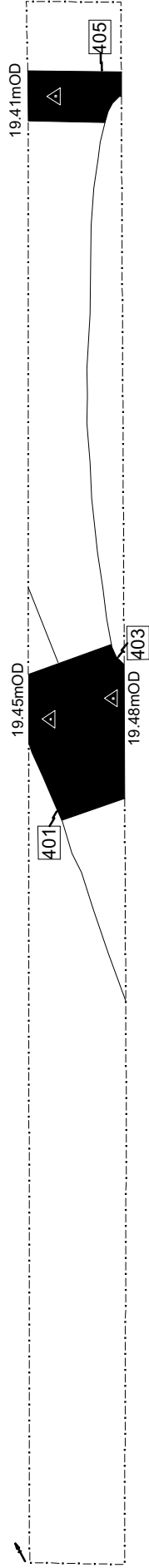


Trenches 1, 2, and 3, plans and sections

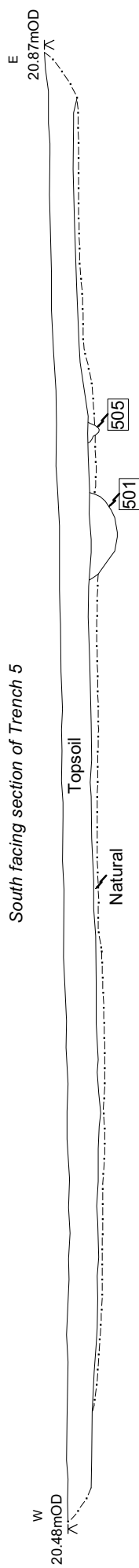
South-east facing section of Trench 4



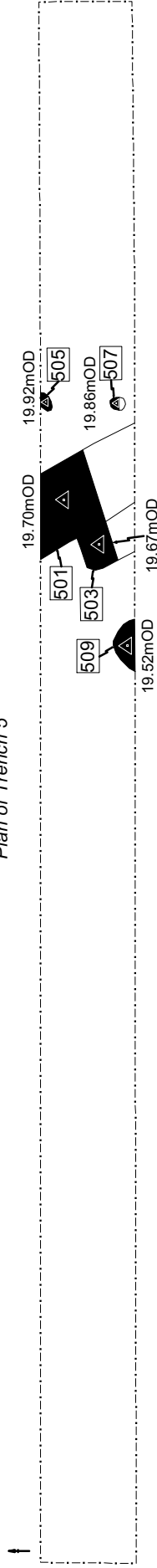
Plan of Trench 4



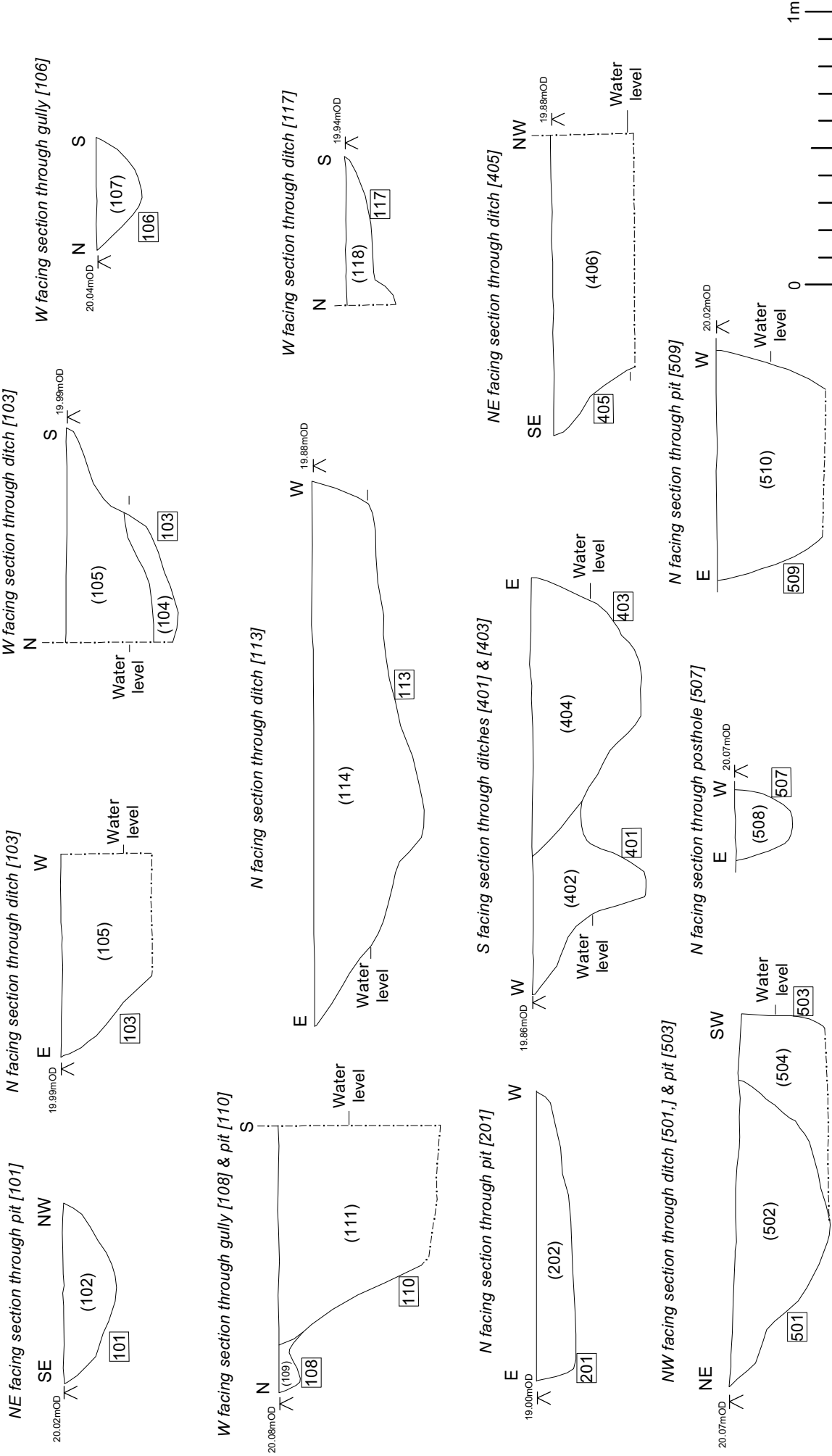
South facing section of Trench 5



Plan of Trench 5



Trenches 4 and 5, plans and sections



Feature sections