

THE WHITE HORSE HOTEL

Hertingfordbury, Hertfordshire

HN1273

Report No. 1014

Site name and address:	The White Horse Hotel, 234 Hertingfordbury Road, Hertingfordbury, SG14 2LB		
County:	Hertfordshire	District:	East Hertfordshire
Village/town:	Hertingfordbury	Parish:	Hertingfordbury
Planning reference:	3/15/2154/FUL	NGR:	TL 3066 1202
Client name and address:	Sandhill Homes Ltd, Unit 5, Charlton Mead Lane, Hoddesdon, EN11 0DJ		
Nature of work:	Residential development	Current land use:	Hotel grounds
Site Status:	Listed Building; Archaeological Area of Significance (AAS176)	Reason for investigation:	Direction of local planning authority (NPPF)
Position in planning process:	After full determination (as a condition)	Project brief originator:	Local Authority
Size of affected area:	c. 5100m ²	Size of area investigated:	96m ²
Site code:	HN1273	HER consultation:	63/16
Organisation:	Heritage Network	Site Director:	David Hillelson
Project type, methods etc.:	Building recording; trial trenching	Archive Recipient:	Hertford Museum
Start of work:	15/08/2016	Finish of work:	16/08/2016
Related HER nos:	HER 16957	Periods represented	Post-medieval
OASIS UID:	heritage1-253747	Significant finds:	Ceramic building material, animal bone, iron objects
Monument types:	Building; pit; culvert		
Physical archive:	Ceramic building material, iron objects, animal bone		
Previous summaries/reports:	Feldkamp, C. 2015 <i>The White Horse Hotel, Hertingfordbury: An Archaeological Desk Based Assessment</i> . Archaeology Collective.		
Physical archive:	None		
Previous summaries/reports:	None		

Introduction:

This report has been prepared at the request of Sandhill Homes Ltd, to cover a programme of archaeological work undertaken as part of the proposed residential development of land at The White Horse Hotel, Hertingfordbury, Hertfordshire (Figure 1).

The planning consent for the development (ref: 3/15/2154/FUL) was granted by East Hertfordshire District Council (EHDC), subject to a standard archaeological condition issued under the provisions set out in the Department of Communities and Local Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). A full specification for the works undertaken is contained in the Heritage Network's approved Project Design, dated June 2016 (Sycamore 2016).

The site comprises The White Horse Hotel, a Grade II listed building of 16th century date on the street frontage, a series of modern accommodation blocks and associated car parking to the west, and a beer garden to the south, with a total area of approximately 0.6 hectares. It is bounded to the east by Hertingfordbury Road; to the west by open fields; to the north by no.232 Hertingfordbury Road; and, to the south by no.238 Hertingfordbury Road (Figure 1).

The site is centred on NGR TL 3066 1202, and lies within both the Hertingfordbury Conservation Area and Area of Archaeological Significance No.176 (AAS176), as identified in the District Local Plan. They encompass the medieval and post-medieval core of the village.

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The proposed development entails the demolition of existing modern extensions to the 16th century building and the construction of 8 new dwellings to the rear of the property.

The present document represents an interim report on the archaeological trial trenching of the site and is intended to provide the planning authority with sufficient information about the below-ground archaeological potential of the site to allow it to decide what further measures may be required, if any, to mitigate those impacts before the development is permitted to proceed.

Narrative:

Three trial trenches were located across the site, by triangulation from known points using fibreglass tape measures.

Trench 1 was located within the existing beer garden to the south of the hotel, in an area proposed for car parking. The trench was orientated northwest-southeast and measured 16m in length, 2.1m in width, and 0.75m depth.

Length (m):	16	Width (m):	2.1	Maximum Depth (m):	0.75	Orientation	NW-SE
Level at NW End of Trench (mOD)		Top	44.99	Level at SE End of Trench (mOD)		Top	44.51
		Base	44.09			Base	42.41
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)				
			Length	Width	Depth		
Topsoil.	Layer	Very dark gray (10YR 3/1) loose silty clay. Heavily rooted.	>16	> 2.1	0.25		
Subsoil	Layer	Dk yellowish brown (10YR 4/4) friable silty clay. Occasional small stones and occasional rooting.	>16	>2.1	0.3		
[101]	Structure	Linear brick structure. Built of yellow bricks laid without mortar (not excavated).	0.9	1.2	Unknown		
(102)	Fill	Brown (10YR 4/3) loose silty clay with frequent stone, frequent metal, occasional tile and rare glass. Fill of [101]. (not excavated)	0.9	1.2	Unknown		
[103]	Cut	Cut of small round pit. Rounded sides, with rounded base.	0.45	0.5	0.15		
(104)	Fill	Strong brown (7.5YR 4/6) loose silty clay with frequent gravel. Fill of [103]	0.45	0.5	0.15		
[105]	Cut	Cut of shallow rounded pit. Gently sloping sides, with flattish base.	1.3	1.6	0.15		
(106)	Fill	Dark brown (7.5YR 3/4) loose silty clay with frequent flint, occasional red brick and occasional tile. Fill of [105]	1.3	1.6	0.15		
[107]	Cut	Cut of irregular pit. Irregular sides, with flattish base.	0.25	0.45	0.1		
(108)	Fill	Very dk brown (7.5YR 2.5/3) friable silty clay with occasional small stones, occ. wood & rare charcoal flecks & red brick fragments. Fill of [107]	0.25	0.45	0.1		
[109]	Cut	Cut of sub-rounded feature/pit. NE-SW. Steep sides, with V-shaped base.	>2.5	>0.6	0.55		
(110)	Fill	Very dark brown (7.5YR 2.5/2) friable silty clay with frequent small-medium flint and occasional charcoal flecks. Upper fill of [109]	2.4	>0.55	0.35		
(111)	Fill	Light yellowish brown (10YR 6/4) firm silty clay with occasional small-medium flint, occasional charcoal flecks and frequent small rooting. Lower fill of [109]	2.5	>0.6	0.2		
Natural	Layer	Yellowish brown (10YR 5/8) compact silty clay. Rare rooting.	>16	>2.1	>0.2		

The stratigraphy in Trench 1 comprised a layer of very dark gray (10YR 3/1) loose silty sandy clay topsoil, 0.25m thick (Plate 53). This overlay a dark yellowish brown (10YR 4/4) friable silty clay subsoil, 0.3m thick. The yellowish brown (10YR 5/8) compact silty clay natural was encountered below the subsoil at a depth of approximately 0.55m below the present surface.

Five discrete features were observed cutting the natural (Figure 10):

- Feature [101], a brick built culvert, was located at the south-eastern end of the trench. It was constructed of at least 4 courses of unmortared yellow bricks and measured 0.9m in length by 1.2m in width (Plate 54). The culvert contained fill (102), a brown (10YR 4/3) loose silty clay with frequent stone, metal and occasional tile.
- A small pit [103] was located at the north-west end of the trench. The feature was circular in plan, with rounded sides and base (Figure 11). It measured 0.45m in length, 0.5m in width and 0.15m in depth (Plate 55). Its fill (104) was a strong brown (7.5YR 4/6) loose silty clay with frequent gravel. No finds were recovered from the fill.
- Immediately to the north-east of pit [103] was another shallow pit, [105]. The feature was sub-oval in plan, with gently curved sides and a flattish base (Figure 11). It measured 1.3m in length, 1.6m in width and 0.15m in depth (Plate 56). Its fill, (106), was a dark brown (7.5YR 3/4) loose silty clay with frequent flint, occasional red brick and occasional tile.
- A small pit, [107], was located in the middle of the trench. The feature has an irregular shape in plan with irregular sides and a flattish base. It measured 0.25m in length, 0.45m in width and 0.1m in depth (Plate 57). Its fill (108) was very dark brown (7.5YR 2.5/3) friable silty clay with occasional small stones, occasional wood and rare charcoal flecks and red brick fragments.
- A large pit or ditch terminal, [109], was revealed in the middle of the trench, extending beyond the north-eastern baulk. The feature was aligned north-east to south-west and appeared to be sub-rounded in plan, with steep sides which appeared to continue downwards beyond the baulk (Figure 11). Its exposed area measured >0.6m in length, 2.5m in width and 0.55m in depth (Plate 58). It contained two fills. The upper fill (110) was very dark brown (7.5YR 2.5/2) friable silty clay with frequent small-medium flint and occasional charcoal flecks, 0.35m in depth. This may represent the fill of a recut within the feature. Finds recovered from this layer included animal bone fragments and brick fragments. The lower fill (111) was a light yellowish brown (10YR 6/4) firm silty clay with occasional small-medium flint, occasional charcoal flecks and frequent small rooting, 0.2m in depth.

No other cut features, deposits or finds were revealed in Trench 1.

Trench 2 was located across the footprint of the northern block of proposed new dwellings, to the west of the hotel (Figure 9). The area was previously used as a car park. The trench was orientated north-east to south-west and measured 16m in length, 2.1m in width and had a maximum depth of 2.1m (Plate 59).

Length (m):	16	Width (m):	2.1	Maximum Depth (m):	2.1	Orientation	NE-SW
Level at NE End of Trench (mOD)		Top	52.87	Level at SW End of Trench (mOD)		Top	55.00
		Base	50.77			Base	52.90
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)				
			Length	Width	Depth		
Overburden	Layer	Black (5YR 2.5/1) soft silty clay. Frequent gravel overlaid by brick rubble and tarmac.	>16	> 2.1	0.6		
Natural	Layer	Yellowish red (5YR 4/6) soft, silty clay. Very frequent gravel.	>16	>2.1	1.4		
Natural	Layer	Strong brown (5YR 5/6) soft sand and gravel.	>16	>2.1	>0.1		

The stratigraphy in Trench 2 comprised a layer of tarmac, with a bedding layer of brick rubble, above made ground of black (5YR 2.5/1) soft silty clay, containing brick rubble, 0.6m thick (Plate 60). This overlay the natural substrate of yellowish red (5YR 4/6) soft silty clay with frequent gravel, 1.4m thick. Below this the natural changed to a strong brown (5YR 5/6) soft sand and gravel natural, >0.1m thick.

No archaeological features, deposits or finds were revealed in Trench 2.

Trench 3 was located to the north of Trench 2, across the footprint of the proposed northern residential block (Figure 9). It was orientated north-west to south-east and measured 16m in length, 2.1m in width, and had a maximum depth of 1.8m (Plate 61).

Length (m):	16	Width (m):	2.1	Maximum Depth (m):	1.8	Orientation	NW-SE
Level at NW End of Trench (mOD)		Top	52.73	Level at SE End of Trench (mOD)		Top	52.62
		Base	50.93			Base	50.82
Context	Type	Description		Dimensions (m)			
				Length	Width	Depth	
Overburden	Layer	Black (5YR 2.5/1) soft silty sandy clay. Frequent gravel overlaid by brick rubble and tarmac.		>16	> 1.8	0.6	
Natural	Layer	Yellowish red (5YR 4/6) soft, sandy clay. Very frequent gravel.		>16	>1.8	1	
Natural	Layer	Strong brown (5YR 5/6) soft sand and gravel.		>16	>1.8	>0.2	

The stratigraphy in Trench 3 was similar to that in Trench 2 and comprised a layer of tarmac, with a bedding layer of brick rubble, above made ground of black (5YR 2.5/1) soft silty clay, 0.6m thick (Plate 62). This overlay the natural substrate of yellowish red (5YR 4/6) soft silty clay, containing frequent gravel, 1m thick. Below this the natural changed to a strong brown (5YR 5/6) soft sand and gravel, >0.2m thick.

No archaeological features, deposits or finds were revealed in Trench 3.

Finds Assessment:

Concordance

Context	Tile		Brick		A Bone		Charcoal		Fe Obj		Other		Notes
	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	
102	3	110							7	55	*1	25	*Glass
106	2	280	1	175									
108			1	260							*2	15	*Wood
110			2	110	11	40	1	2					
Totals	5	390	4	545	11	40	1	2	7	55	3	40	

Ceramic Building Material

A total of 5 pieces of tile and 4 brick fragments were collected from 4 stratified contexts. The material all dated to the late post-medieval or early modern period. No complete examples were present and all pieces showed signs of abrasion, suggesting they were not in their primary place of deposition.

Recommendations

Ceramic building material is a common find on post-medieval sites. Given the fragmentary and abraded nature of the present assemblage no further work is proposed on the material and it is recommended that this group be discarded.

Iron objects

Seven fragments of iron, weighing 55g, were collected from 1 stratified context, the fill of culvert [101]. The assemblage consisted of one broken iron rod, measuring 140mm in length, 8mm at the broken end, tapering to 1mm at the other end. The narrow end is curved, suggesting that it may have been used as a hook.

The remainder of the assemblage consisted of broken fragments of thin iron plate, less than 1mm in depth, which varied in size between 12mm and 45mm in width. No function could be assigned to these pieces.

Recommendations

Given the fragmentary and abraded nature of the present assemblage no further work is proposed on the material and it is recommended that this group be discarded.

Animal Bone

Eleven pieces of animal bone, weighing 40g were recovered from a single context (110). The bones were in poor condition and their edges were heavily abraded, which made accurate identification difficult. The

fragmentary collection represents multiple animals, and includes a possible jaw fragment, a possible bird leg bone and a split pig's tooth. All of the bones appear to have been heat affected. There was no clear evidence of butchery.

Recommendations

Based on the abraded and fragmentary nature of the bone, no further work on this is proposed on this assemblage and it is recommended that this group be discarded.

Discussion:

The archaeological evaluation revealed a large degree of disturbance within Trenches 2 and 3, which overlay the natural substratum. These were located in areas where previous development has taken place and proved to be archaeologically sterile.

Trench 1, which was located in a grassed area to the south of the building, revealed an undisturbed sequence of topsoil, subsoil and natural. The bases of five discrete features, cuts [101], [103], [105], [107] and [109] were exposed in this trench.

Four of the features, cuts [101], [105], [107] and [109], produced a few fragments of late post-medieval ceramic building material and animal bone. The largest feature, cut [109], contained two fills, of which the upper fill appeared to be part of a possible recut.

No other features, deposits or finds of archaeological significance were encountered during the archaeological fieldwork. No evidence for activity pre-dating the post-medieval period was encountered during the trial trenching.

On the basis of the results of the evaluation, the risks that the proposed development might disturb archaeological remains of any significance, may be considered to be *High* for the post-medieval period and *Low* for all other periods, though the significance of the post-medieval remains is likely to be *Minor*.

Illustrations:

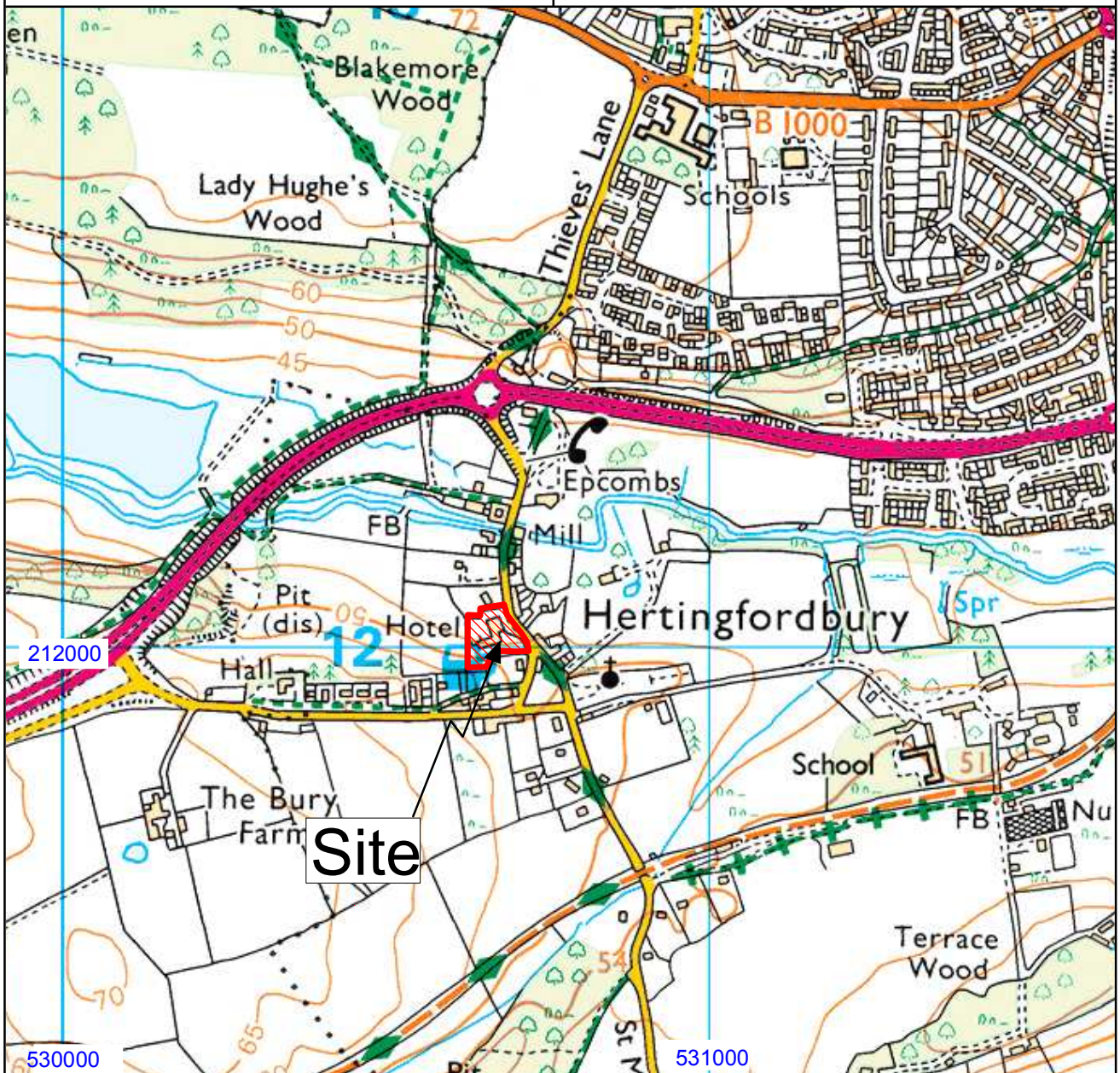
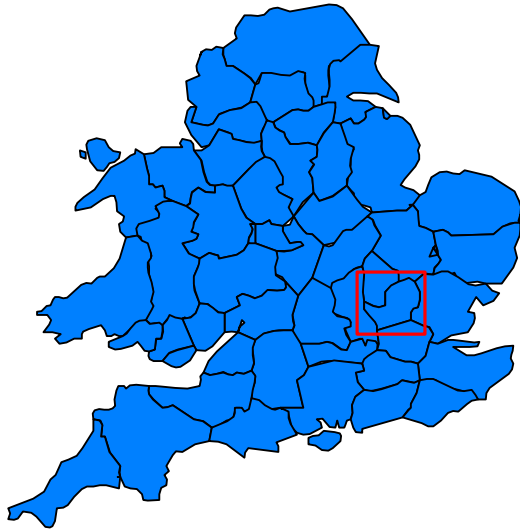
Figure 1 Site location
Figure 2 Trench layout
Figure 3 Trench 1 plan
Figure 4 Trench 1 sections

Plate 1 Trench 1, looking SE
Plate 2 Trench 1, indicative section, looking SW
Plate 3 Brick culvert [101], looking SW
Plate 4 Pit [103], looking SW
Plate 5 Pit [105], looking SE
Plate 6 Pit [107], looking S
Plate 7 Feature [109], looking SW
Plate 8 Trench 2, looking SW
Plate 9 Trench 2, indicative section, looking SE
Plate 10 Trench 3, looking SE
Plate 11 Trench 3, indicative section, looking SW

THE HERITAGE NETWORK LTD

The White Horse Hotel,
Hertingfordbury, Herts.

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Site Location

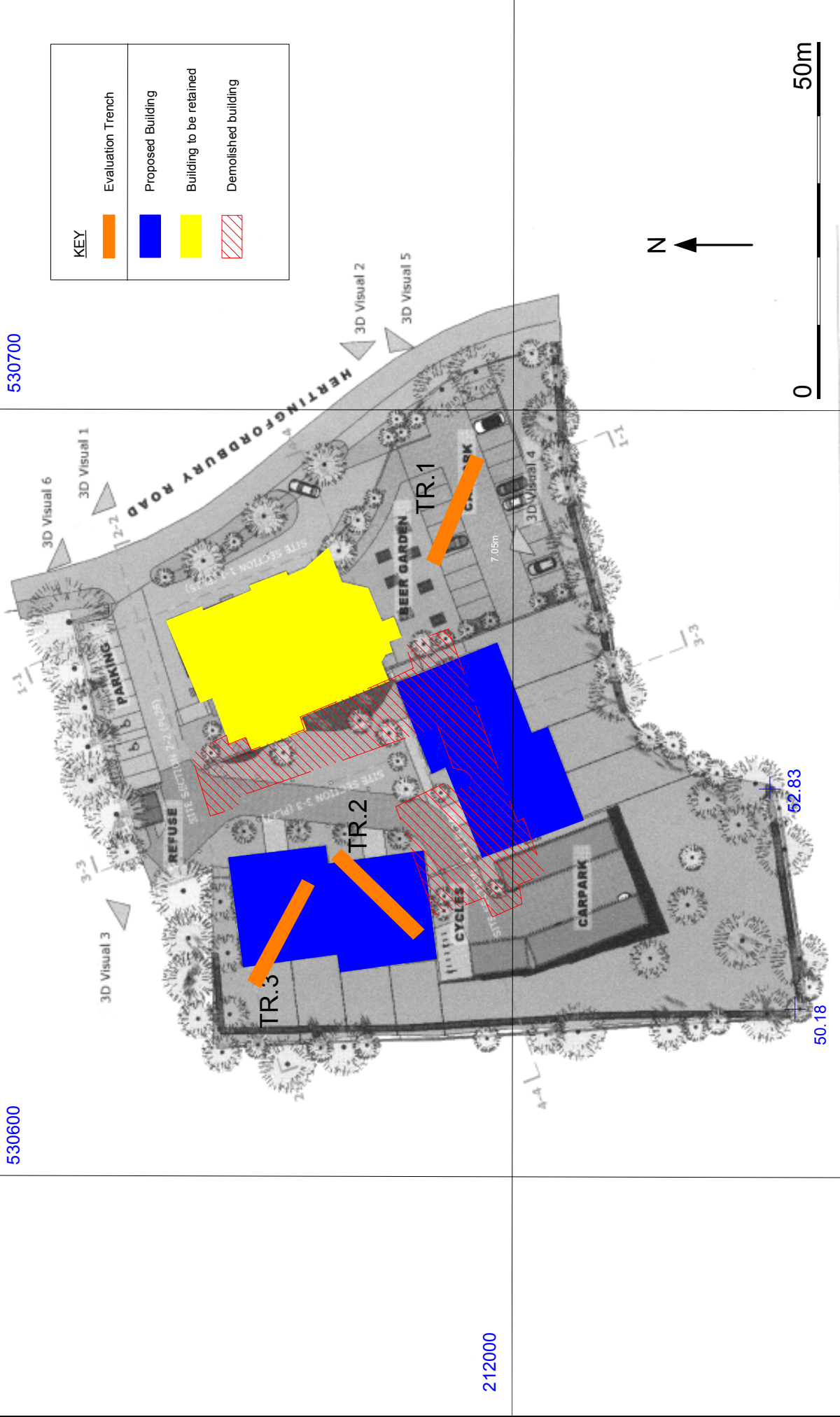
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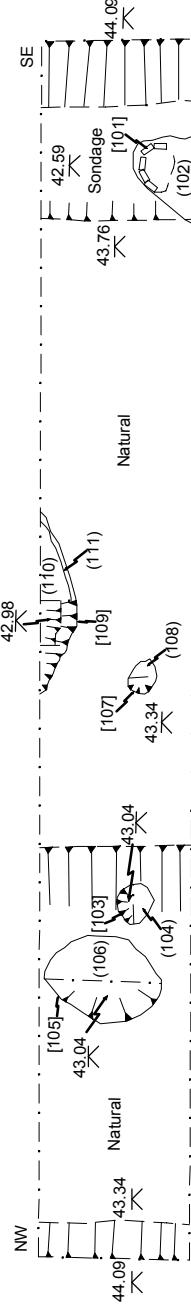
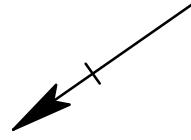
Figure 1

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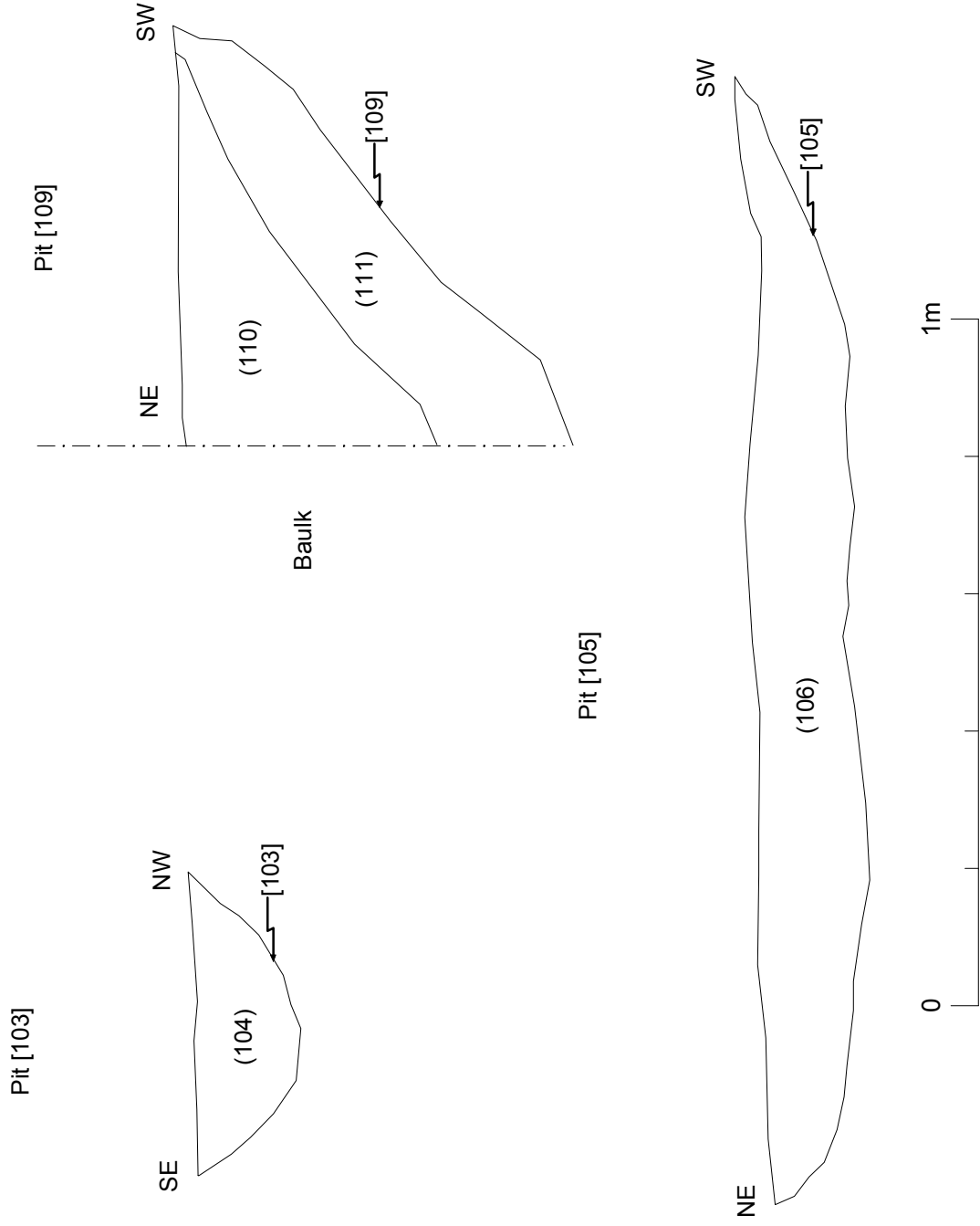
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Trench layout



Trench 1: Plan



Trench 1: Sections



Plate 01 - Trench 1 looking SE



Plate 02 - Trench 1, indicative section, looking SW



Plate 03 - Brick culvert [101], looking SW



Plate 04 - Pit [103], looking SW



Plate 05 - Pit [105], looking SE



Plate 06 - Pit [107], looking S



Plate 07 - Feature [109], looking SE



Plate 08 - Trench 2, looking SW



Plate 09 - Trench 2, indicative section, looking SE



Plate 10 - Trench 3, looking SE



Plate 11 - Trench 3, indicative section, looking SW