

ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
SERVICES  
DURHAM UNIVERSITY

on behalf of  
Banks Property

Land off Browney Lane  
Meadowfield  
Durham

archaeological evaluation

report 3242  
September 2013

## Contents

1.	Summary	1
2.	Project background	2
3.	Landuse, topography and geology	2
4.	Historical and archaeological background	3
5.	The evaluation trenches	3
6.	The artefacts	5
7.	The archaeological resource	6
8.	Impact assessment	6
9.	Recommendations	6
10.	Sources	6
	Appendix 1: Data table	7
	Appendix 2: Stratigraphic matrices	8

## Figures

Figure 1:	Site location
Figure 2:	Trench locations
Figure 3:	Trench 6 plan and F604 section
Figure 4:	Trench 4, with two large linear drain cuts visible, looking north-west
Figure 5:	Trench 4, large drain, looking west
Figure 6:	Trench 6, F604, looking north

## **1. Summary**

### **The project**

- 1.1 This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation conducted in advance of a proposed development at land off Browney Lane, Meadowfield, Durham. The works comprised the excavation of ten evaluation trenches.
- 1.2 The works were commissioned by Banks Property and conducted by Archaeological Services Durham University.

### **Results**

- 1.3 A single modern posthole was recorded in Trench 6.
- 1.4 No archaeological deposits were recorded in trenches 1-5 and 7-10.
- 1.5 Furrows, the remains of medieval or post-medieval ploughing, were recorded in all the trenches.
- 1.6 Modern field drains were also recorded in all the trenches.

### **Recommendations**

- 1.7 No further scheme of archaeological works is recommended in relation to this development.

## 2. Project background

### Location (Figure 1)

- 2.1 The site is located south of Browney Lane, Meadowfield, Durham (NGR centre: NZ 24851 38755). It covers an area of approximately 11 ha. To the west and north is residential housing, to the north-east is Meadowfield industrial estate, and to the south are arable fields.

### Development

- 2.2 The development is residential housing.

### Objective

- 2.3 The objective of the scheme of works was to assess the nature, extent and potential significance of any archaeological resource within the development area, so that an informed decision may be made regarding the nature and scope of any further scheme of archaeological works that may be required in relation to the development.

### Specification

- 2.4 The works have been undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation provided by Archaeological Services Durham University (reference PC13.308) and approved by the planning authority.

### Dates

- 2.5 Fieldwork was undertaken between 11th and 13th September 2013. This report was prepared for September 2013.

### Personnel

- 2.6 Fieldwork was conducted by Dr David Webster and Nathan Thomas (supervisor). This report was prepared by Nathan Thomas, with illustrations by Linda Bosveld. Specialist reporting was conducted by Jennifer Jones (artefacts). The Project Manager was Daniel Still.

### Archive/OASIS

- 2.7 The site code is **DMB13**, for **D**urham **M**eadowfield **B**rowney 2013. The archive is currently held by Archaeological Services Durham University and will be transferred to the Bowes Museum in due course. Archaeological Services Durham University is registered with the **Online AccesS** to the Index of archaeological investigationS project (**OASIS**). The OASIS ID number for this project is **archaeol3-159238**.

## 3. Landuse, topography and geology

- 3.1 At the time of the works, the proposed development area comprised a single arable field that had recently been harvested.
- 3.2 The area slopes gradually from north-west down to south-east, with elevations between 95m and 75m OD.
- 3.3 The underlying solid geology of the area comprises Pennine Middle Coal Measures which are overlain by drift geology of Devensian till.

## **4. Historical and archaeological background**

### **Previous archaeological works**

- 4.1 A desk-based assessment and geophysical survey have both been undertaken as part of the scheme of archaeological works (Archaeological Services 2012a, 2012b). A summary of the results from these investigations is provided below.
- 4.2 There is no direct evidence for prehistoric or Roman activity within the development area, but the presence of activity in the surrounding vicinity, including a Bronze Age burial identified to the north-west of Brandon and enclosures identified from cropmarks, indicate that an as yet unidentified resource has the potential to exist within the site.
- 4.3 The area lies beyond the edge of the medieval village of Brandon, and over 1km west of the medieval settlement at Langley Moor. It is probable that the area was utilised in the medieval and post-medieval periods as agricultural land. Evidence relating to this, in the form of ridge and furrow cultivation, has been identified from aerial photography in the north part of the field.
- 4.4 The geophysical survey detected ridge and furrow cultivation across the survey area. Other anomalies were interpreted as two former field boundaries, a possible burnt area and rubble from the demolition of early 20th-century buildings. Recent services were also detected running across the development area.

## **5. The evaluation trenches**

### **Introduction (Figure 2)**

- 5.1 Ten trenches were located across the development area and targeted on anomalies detected by the geophysical survey.

#### **Trench 1**

- 5.2 This trench was 40m long, oriented north-west to south-east, and located over a series of weak linear geomagnetic anomalies. The natural geology, a mottled yellow clay [101], was identified at a depth of 0.3m (90.36m OD). Cutting this was a series of seven furrows [F102]. The furrows were oriented north-east to south-west and were filled with a light yellow clayey silt [103]. The furrows corresponded with the identified linear magnetic anomalies. A single modern field drain was also recorded cutting the furrows. Immediately above the natural and covering the features was a ploughsoil [100: 0.3m deep], a mid greyish-brown clayey silt.

#### **Trench 2**

- 5.3 This trench was 40m long, oriented north-west to south-east, and located over a series of weak linear geomagnetic anomalies. The natural geology, a mottled yellow clay [201], was identified at a depth of 0.35m (86.55m OD). Cutting this was a series of four furrows [F202]. The furrows were oriented north-east to south-west and were filled with a light yellow clayey silt [203]. The furrows corresponded with the identified linear magnetic anomalies. Three modern ceramic field drains were also recorded cutting the furrows. Immediately above the natural and covering the features was a ploughsoil [200: 0.3m deep], a mid greyish-brown clayey silt.

### **Trench 3**

- 5.4 This trench was 40m long, oriented north-west to south-east, and located over a series of weak linear geomagnetic anomalies. The natural geology, a mottled yellow clay with patches of sand and pink clay [301], was identified at a depth of 0.2m – 0.4m (85.1m OD). Cutting this was a series of three furrows [F302]. The furrows were oriented north-east to south-west and were filled with a light yellow clayey silt [303]. The furrows corresponded with the identified linear magnetic anomalies. Three modern field drains were also recorded cutting the furrows. Immediately above the natural and covering the features was a ploughsoil [300: 0.25m – 0.4m deep], a mid greyish-brown clayey silt.

### **Trench 4**

- 5.5 This trench was 40m long, oriented north-west to south-east, and located over a series of weak linear geomagnetic anomalies. The natural geology, a mottled yellow clay [401], was identified at a depth of 0.3m – 0.55m (84.6m OD). Cutting this were two furrows [F402]. The furrows were oriented north-east to south-west and were filled with a light yellow clayey silt [403]. The furrows corresponded with the identified linear magnetic anomalies. Five modern field drains were also recorded cutting the furrows. Two of the drains were large square-cut linear ditches, oriented north-south, containing ceramic drain pipes (Figures 4 and 5). Immediately above the natural and covering the features was a ploughsoil [400: 0.3m – 0.45m deep], a mid greyish-brown clayey silt.

### **Trench 5**

- 5.6 This trench was 40m long, oriented north-west to south-east, and located over a series of weak linear geomagnetic anomalies. The natural geology, a mottled yellow clay [501], was identified at a depth of 0.2m – 0.3m (86.2m OD). Cutting this was a series of five furrows [F502]. The furrows were oriented north-east to south-west and were filled with a light yellow clayey silt [503]. The furrows corresponded with the identified linear magnetic anomalies. A single modern field drain was also recorded cutting the furrows. Immediately above the natural and covering the features was a ploughsoil [500: 0.2m – 0.3m deep], a mid greyish-brown clayey silt.

### **Trench 6 (Figure 3)**

- 5.7 This trench was 40m long, oriented north-west to south-east, and located over a large positive geomagnetic anomaly. The natural geology, a mottled yellow clay [601], was identified at a depth of 0.35m (81.5m OD). Cutting this was a series of three furrows [F602]. The furrows were oriented north-east to south-west and were filled with a light yellow clayey silt [603]. Cutting one of the furrows in the centre of the trench was a probable posthole [F604: 1m wide and 0.46m deep]. Posthole [F604] contained two fills (Figure 6). The primary fill [606: 0.05m deep], was a mid yellowish brown silty clay. Above [606] was a dark greyish black silty clay [605: 0.41m deep] that contained a large fragment of modern glazed drain pipe and a piece of coked fuel. F604 is modern and may have been the cause of the anomaly. Two modern field drains were also recorded cutting the furrows. Immediately above the natural and covering the features was a ploughsoil [600: 0.35m deep], a mid greyish-brown clayey silt.

### **Trench 7**

- 5.8 This trench was 40m long, oriented north-west to south-east, and located over a series of weak linear geomagnetic anomalies. The natural geology, a mottled yellow

and grey-brown clay [701], was identified at a depth of 0.2m – 0.35m (80.5m OD). Cutting [701] were two furrows [F702]. The furrows were oriented north-east to south-west and were filled with a light yellow clayey silt [703]. The furrows corresponded with the identified linear magnetic anomalies. Two modern field drains were also recorded cutting the furrows. Immediately above the natural and covering the features was a ploughsoil [700: 0.2m – 0.35m deep], a mid greyish-brown clayey silt.

#### **Trench 8**

- 5.9 This trench was 40m long, oriented north-west to south-east, and located over a series of weak linear geomagnetic anomalies. The natural geology, a mottled yellow clay with patches of yellow sand [801], was identified at a depth of 0.2m – 0.25m (83.5m OD). Cutting this were two furrows [F802]. The furrows were oriented north-east to south-west and were filled with a light yellow clayey silt [803]. The furrows corresponded with the identified linear magnetic anomalies. Four modern field drains were also recorded cutting the furrows. Immediately above the natural and covering the features was a ploughsoil [800: 0.2m – 0.25m deep], a mid greyish-brown clayey silt.

#### **Trench 9**

- 5.10 This trench was 40m long, oriented north-west to south-east, and located over a series of weak linear geomagnetic anomalies. The natural geology, a mottled yellow clay [901], was identified at a depth of 0.2m – 0.3m (78.6m OD). Cutting this was a series of four furrows [F902]. The furrows were oriented north-east to south-west and were filled with a light yellow clayey silt [903]. The furrows corresponded with the identified linear magnetic anomalies. Two modern field drains were also recorded cutting the furrows. Immediately above the natural and covering the features was a ploughsoil [900: 0.2m – 0.3m deep], a mid greyish-brown clayey silt.

#### **Trench 10**

- 5.11 This trench was 30m by 1.7m, oriented north-east to south-west, and located over a series of weak linear geomagnetic anomalies. The natural geology, a mottled yellow clay [1001], was identified at a depth of 0.2m – 0.3m (76.7m OD). A single modern field drain was recorded cutting the natural at the north-east end of the trench. Immediately above the natural and covering the drain was a ploughsoil [1000: 0.2m – 0.3m deep], a mid greyish-brown clayey silt.

## **6. The artefacts**

### **Building materials assessment**

#### **Results**

- 6.1 A fragment of brown glazed earthenware drain culvert cover (928g wt) was recovered from context [605]. The piece is slightly curved, 182 x 178 x 27mm thick, and glazed both sides. It has a short length of a straight glazed edge, probably for butting against an adjoining fragment. It is of 19th or 20th century date.

#### **Recommendation**

- 6.2 No further work is recommended.

## **Industrial residues assessment**

### **Results**

- 6.3 A piece of coked fuel (<3g wt) came from context [605]. This is likely to be post-medieval.

### **Recommendation**

- 6.4 No further work is recommended.

## **7. The archaeological resource**

- 7.1 A single modern posthole was recorded in Trench 6.
- 7.2 No archaeological deposits were recorded in trenches 1-5 and 7-10.
- 7.3 Furrows, the remains of medieval or post-medieval ploughing, were recorded in all the trenches.
- 7.4 Modern field drains were also recorded in all the trenches.

## **8. Impact assessment**

- 8.1 Groundworks associated with the development are unlikely to remove or truncate any significant archaeological deposits.

## **9. Recommendations**

- 9.1 As no significant archaeological resource was identified, no further scheme of archaeological works is recommended in relation to this development.

## **10. Sources**

Archaeological Services 2012a *Land off Browney Lane, Browney, County Durham; archaeological desk-based assessment*. Unpublished report **2868**, Archaeological Services Durham University

Archaeological Services 2012b *Land off Browney Lane, Browney, County Durham; geophysical survey*. Unpublished report **2886**, Archaeological Services Durham University



## Appendix 1: Data table

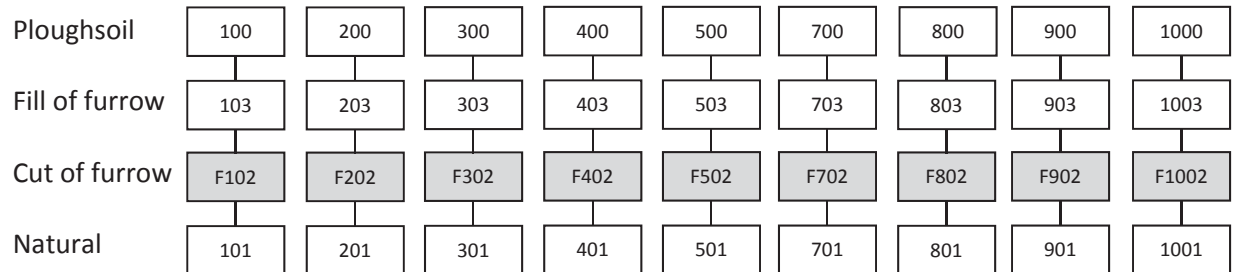
**Table 1.1: Context data**

The • symbols in the columns at the right indicate the presence of artefacts of the following types: P pottery, B bone, M metals, F flint, I industrial residues, G glass, C ceramic building material, O other materials.

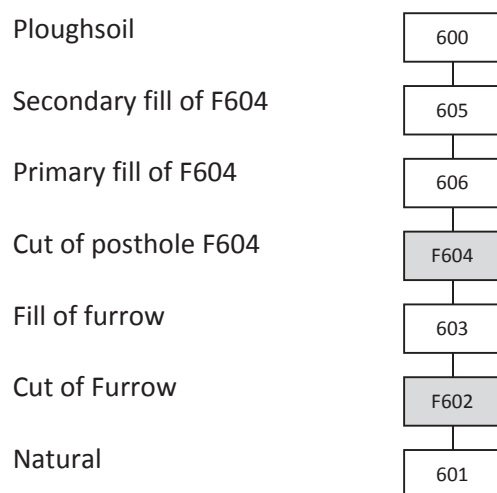
No	Area	Description	P	B	M	F	I	G	C	O
100	1	Plough soil								
101	1	Natural								
F102	1	Cut of furrow								
103	1	Fill of furrow								
200	2	Plough soil								
201	2	Natural								
F202	2	Cut of furrow								
203	2	Fill of furrow								
300	3	Plough soil								
301	3	Natural								
F302	3	Cut of furrow								
303	3	Fill of furrow								
400	4	Plough soil								
401	4	Natural								
F402	4	Cut of furrow								
403	4	Fill of furrow								
500	5	Plough soil								
501	5	Natural								
F502	5	Cut of furrow								
503	5	Fill of furrow								
600	6	Plough soil								
601	6	Natural								
F602	6	Cut of furrow								
603	6	Fill of furrow								
F604	6	Cut of posthole								
605	6	Secondary fill of posthole					•		•	
606	6	Primary fill of posthole								
700	7	Plough soil								
701	7	Natural								
F702	7	Cut of furrow								
703	7	Fill of furrow								
800	8	Plough soil								
801	8	Natural								
FF802	8	Cut of furrow								
803	8	Fill of furrow								
900	9	Plough soil								
901	9	Natural								
F902	9	Cut of furrow								
903	9	Fill of furrow								
1000	10	Plough soil								
1001	10	Natural								

## Appendix 2: Stratigraphic matrices

### Trenches 1-5 and 7-10

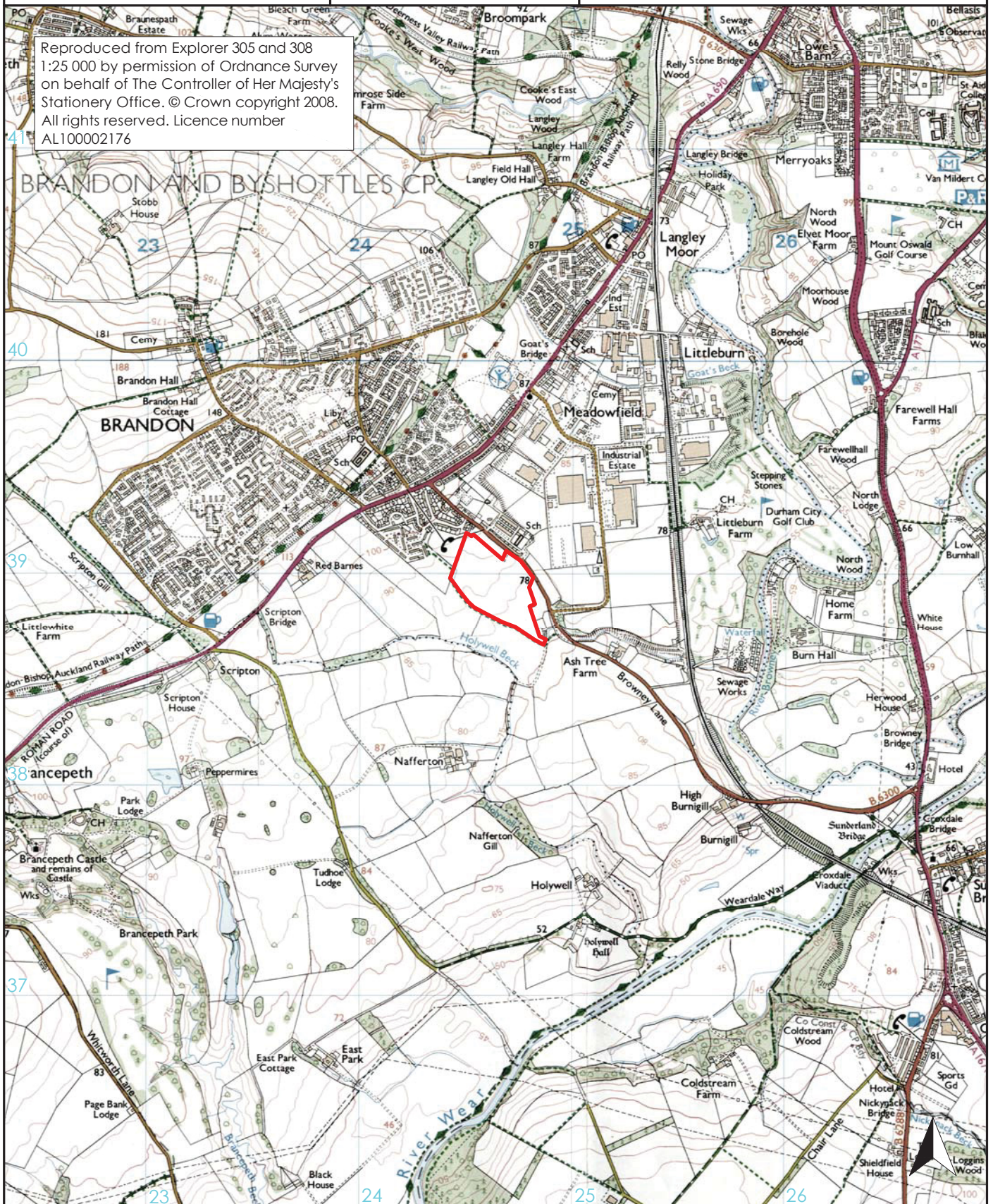


### Trench 6





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AL100002176



 proposed development area

0 1km  
scale 1:25 000 for A4 plot

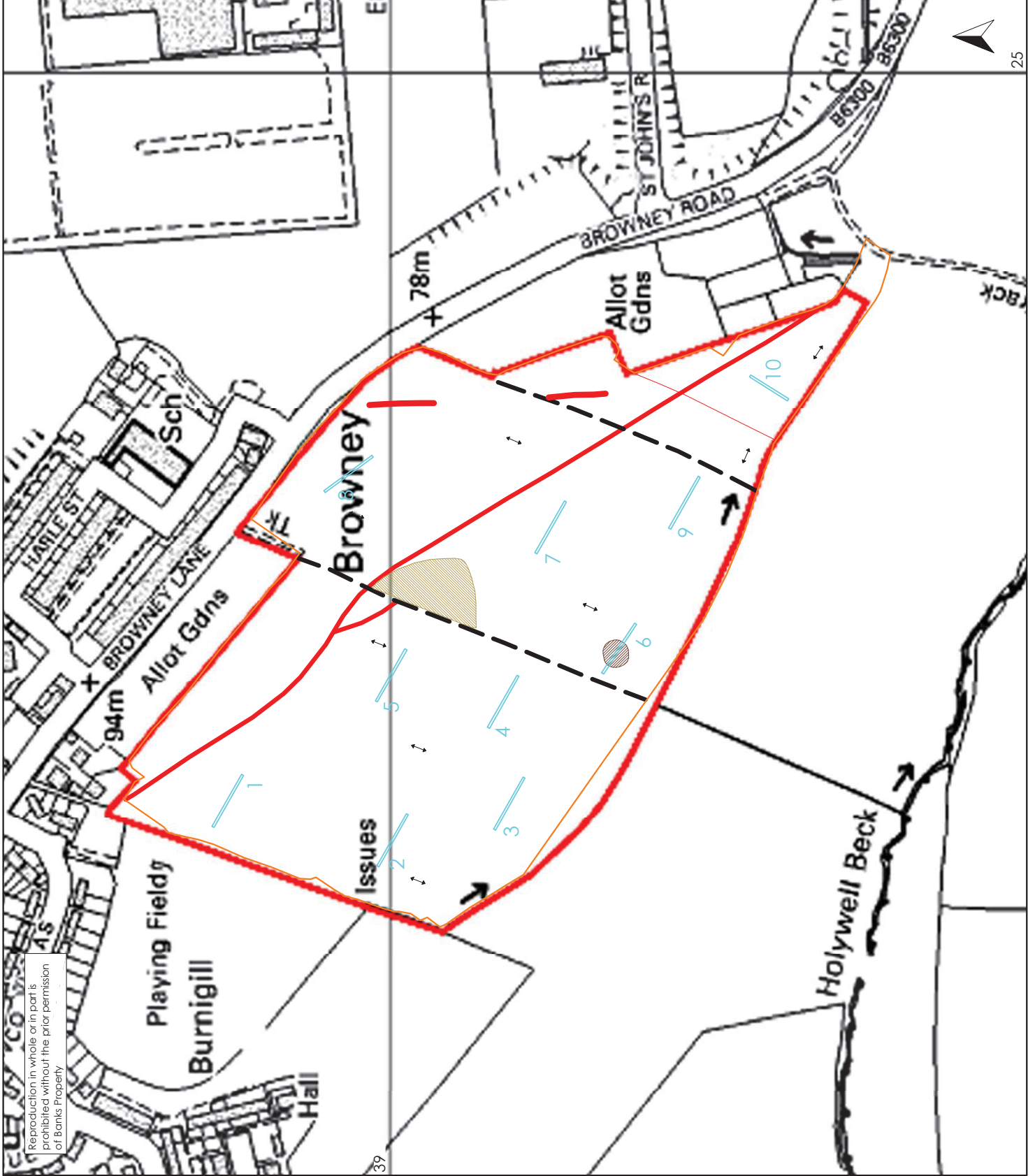
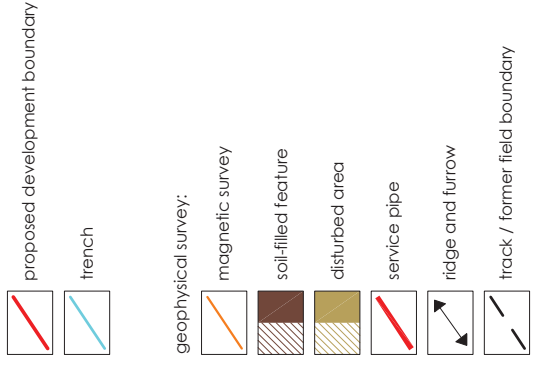


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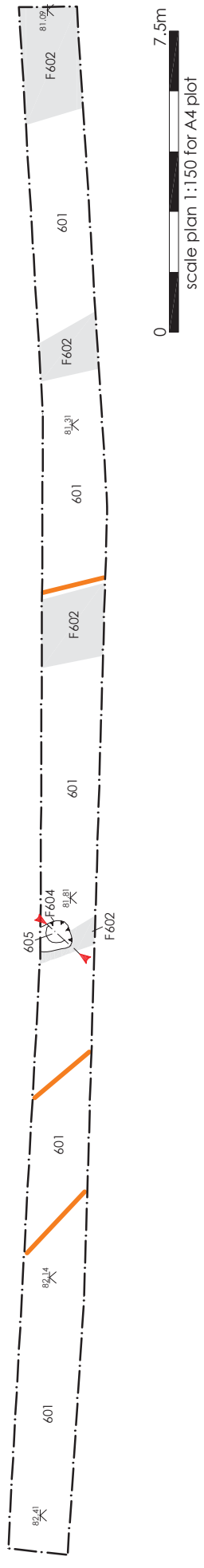
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Figure 2: Trench locations

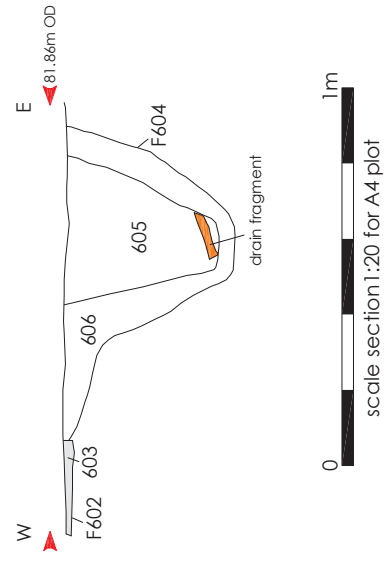




Plan



Section



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report 3242

Figure 3: Trench 6 plan and F604 section

	extent of excavation		ceramic drain
	section		furrow
	height m OD		





Figure 4: Trench 4, with two large linear drain cuts visible, looking north-west



Figure 5: Trench 4, large square cut drain, looking west





Figure 6: Trench 6, F604, looking north