

ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SERVICES
DURHAM UNIVERSITY

on behalf of
Keepmoat Homes

Former Stables
Red Hall
Darlington

archaeological excavations

report 4984
February 2019

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1. Summary

The project

- 1.1 This report presents the results of archaeological excavations conducted in advance of a proposed development on land at a former riding school, Red Hall, Darlington. The works comprised the excavation and recording of three areas, supplementing previous excavation works that had been conducted at the site.
- 1.2 The works were commissioned by Keepmoat Homes and conducted by Archaeological Services Durham University.

Results

- 1.3 No archaeological deposits were recorded in the trenches.

Recommendations

- 1.4 No further scheme of archaeological works is recommended.

2. Project background

Location (Figure 1)

- 2.1 The site is located on land at Red Hall, Darlington (NGR centre: NZ 30885 15570). It covers an area of approximately 37 sq m. The site was surrounded by a housing estate under construction.

Development proposal

- 2.2 The development is residential.

Objective

- 2.3 The objective of the scheme of works was to identify, excavate and record any archaeological features that were present.

Research Objectives

- 2.4 The regional research framework (Petts & Gerrard 2006) contains an agenda for archaeological research in the region, which is incorporated into regional planning policy implementation with respect to archaeology. In this instance, the scheme of works was designed to address agenda item Riv: Roman native and civilian life.

Methods statement

- 2.5 The works have been undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Durham County Council Archaeology Section and follow standard Archaeological Services practice. Four areas were originally proposed for excavation; however, one of these (Trench 4) was inaccessible due to constraints relating to ongoing building work on the site.

Dates

- 2.6 Fieldwork was undertaken on 23rd and 24th January 2019. This report was prepared for February 2019.

Personnel

- 2.7 Fieldwork was conducted by Rebekah Watson. This report was prepared by Rebekah Watson, with illustrations by Dr Helen Drinkall. The Project Manager was Daniel Still.

Archive/OASIS

- 2.8 The site code is DRS19, for Darlington Riding School 2019. The archive is currently held by Archaeological Services Durham University and will be transferred to the County Durham Archaeological Archives 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 archaeol3-340810.

3. Landuse, topography and geology

- 3.1 At the time of this assessment, the site comprised a small patch of land on a building site. Houses were under construction immediately to the north-east of the excavation area.

- 3.2 The survey area was predominantly level with a mean elevation of approximately 49m OD.

- 3.3 The underlying solid geology of the area comprises Permian and Triassic calcareous mudstone of the Roxby Formation, which are overlain by Devensian diamicton till (www.bgs.ac.uk). Artificial deposits of made ground are recorded to the west of the site.

4. Archaeological background

- 4.1 A geophysical survey was conducted on the site (Archaeological Services 2016a, b). This identified probable soil-filled features, possibly reflecting ditches and gullies, across the north-western part of the site. Two distinct orientations of former ridge and furrow cultivation were also detected. Probable building debris associated with the now demolished Red Hall and the former riding school buildings were identified in the north-east of the area, along with modern and existing features, including a service, goal posts and a basketball court.
- 4.2 A subsequent archaeological evaluation (Archaeological Services 2017) comprising the excavation of eighteen trial trenches was then conducted. The remains of a large ditch identified on the geophysical survey were excavated in Trench 1; pottery and glass recovered from the ditch indicated that it was Roman in date. An undated shallow gully was recorded in Trench 2. Five walls were uncovered in Trench 15. These walls were the remains of Red Hall, shown on historic Ordnance Survey maps of the site, and subsequently demolished.
- 4.3 Subsequently an archaeological excavation took place, comprising two large trenches (Archaeological Services 2018). In Trench 1, flint artefacts indicated short-term occupation during the late Mesolithic to early Neolithic periods. The next phase was represented by an Iron Age gully that was in turn truncated by a large ditch, radiocarbon dated to the 2nd to 4th centuries AD, and probably defending a settlement to the north. Several gullies and pits were identified to the south of the ditch, which may have been associated with a Romano-British settlement; one of these was dated to 3rd-4th Centuries AD. The finds assemblage and palaeoenvironmental data indicated the site may have been occupied from the later prehistoric period. The foundations of an extensive 19th-century manor house, Red Hall, were recorded in Trench 2. This included several floor surfaces as well as internal and external features.

5. The excavation

Introduction

- 5.1 Three trenches were excavated on the site (Figure 2), to the south-east of Trench 1 of the main excavation. This area was targeted to identify the potential for further archaeological features relating to the Romano-British settlement. The trenches were excavated using a machine equipped with a toothless ditching bucket, under constant archaeological supervision. The size of the trenches was constrained by the presence of newly-installed drains and services in all directions. Trench plans and sections can be seen on Figure 3. Context data is summarised in Table 1.1.

Trench 1 (Photo 1)

- 5.2 This trench was 4.5m by 2.9m and was the most northerly trench, aligned north-west/south-east. Natural subsoil, a yellow and grey clay [2], was identified between 0.75m and 0.85m below the ground surface (a mean elevation of 48.89m OD).

Overlying this was a very recent made ground deposit [1: 0.75m to 0.85m deep] comprising mixed clay, sand and gravel and containing frequent stones, bricks and general building debris. No archaeological features were identified and no artefacts recovered.

Trench 2 (Photo 2)

- 5.3 Trench 2 measured 3.9m by 3.0m and was the central trench, aligned north-east/south-west. Natural subsoil, a yellow and grey clay [2], was identified between 0.8m and 0.9m below the ground surface (a mean elevation of 48.61m OD). Overlying this was a very recent made ground deposit [1: 0.8m to 0.9m deep] comprising mixed clay, sand and gravel and containing frequent stones, bricks and general building debris. No archaeological features were identified and no artefacts recovered.

Trench 3 (Photo 3)

- 5.4 This trench was 4.5m by 2.8m and was the southernmost trench, aligned north-east/south-west. Natural subsoil, a yellow and grey clay [2], was identified at 0.9m below the ground surface (a mean elevation of 48.61m OD). Overlying this was a very recent made ground deposit [1: 0.9m deep] comprising mixed clay, sand and gravel and containing frequent stones, bricks and general building debris. No archaeological features were identified and no artefacts recovered.

6. The artefacts

- 6.1 No artefacts were recovered.

7. The palaeoenvironmental evidence

- 7.1 No material suitable for palaeoenvironmental assessment was identified.

8. The archaeological resource

- 8.1 No archaeological deposits were recorded in the trenches. Prior to construction starting on the site, the ground had been stripped to the level of the natural subsoil and a made ground deposit laid down to level the ground surface. This made ground was identified in all of the trenches. However, the elevation of the natural subsoil indicates that no truncation had occurred, as it is very similar to the elevation of the natural subsoil recorded during the previous archaeological excavation.
- 8.2 The regional research framework (Petts & Gerrard 2006) contains an agenda for archaeological research in the region, which is incorporated into regional planning policy implementation with respect to archaeology. In this instance, no archaeological resource was identified.

9. Recommendations

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

10. Sources

Archaeological Services 2016a *Land at Red Hall Estate, Darlington: geophysical survey*. Unpublished report 4312, Archaeological Services Durham University

Archaeological Services 2016b *Land at the former riding school, Red Hall Estate, Darlington: geophysical survey*. Unpublished report 4330, Archaeological Services Durham University

Archaeological Services 2017 *Land at the former riding school, Red Hall, Darlington: archaeological evaluation*. Unpublished report 4540, Archaeological Services Durham University

Archaeological Services 2018 *Land at former riding school, Red Hall, Darlington: archaeological post-excavation assessment*. Unpublished report 4641, Archaeological Services Durham University

Archaeological Services 2018 *Land at former riding school, Red Hall, Darlington: post-excavation full analysis*. Unpublished report 4852, Archaeological Services Durham University

Petts, D, & Gerrard, C, 2006 *Shared Visions: The North-East Regional Research Framework for the Historic Environment*. Durham

Websites

www.bgs.ac.uk

Appendix 1: Data table

Table 1.1: Context data

No	Area	Description
1	All	Modern made ground
2	All	Natural subsoil

Appendix 2: Stratigraphic matrix

Trenches 1-3





Photograph 1: Trench 1, looking north-west



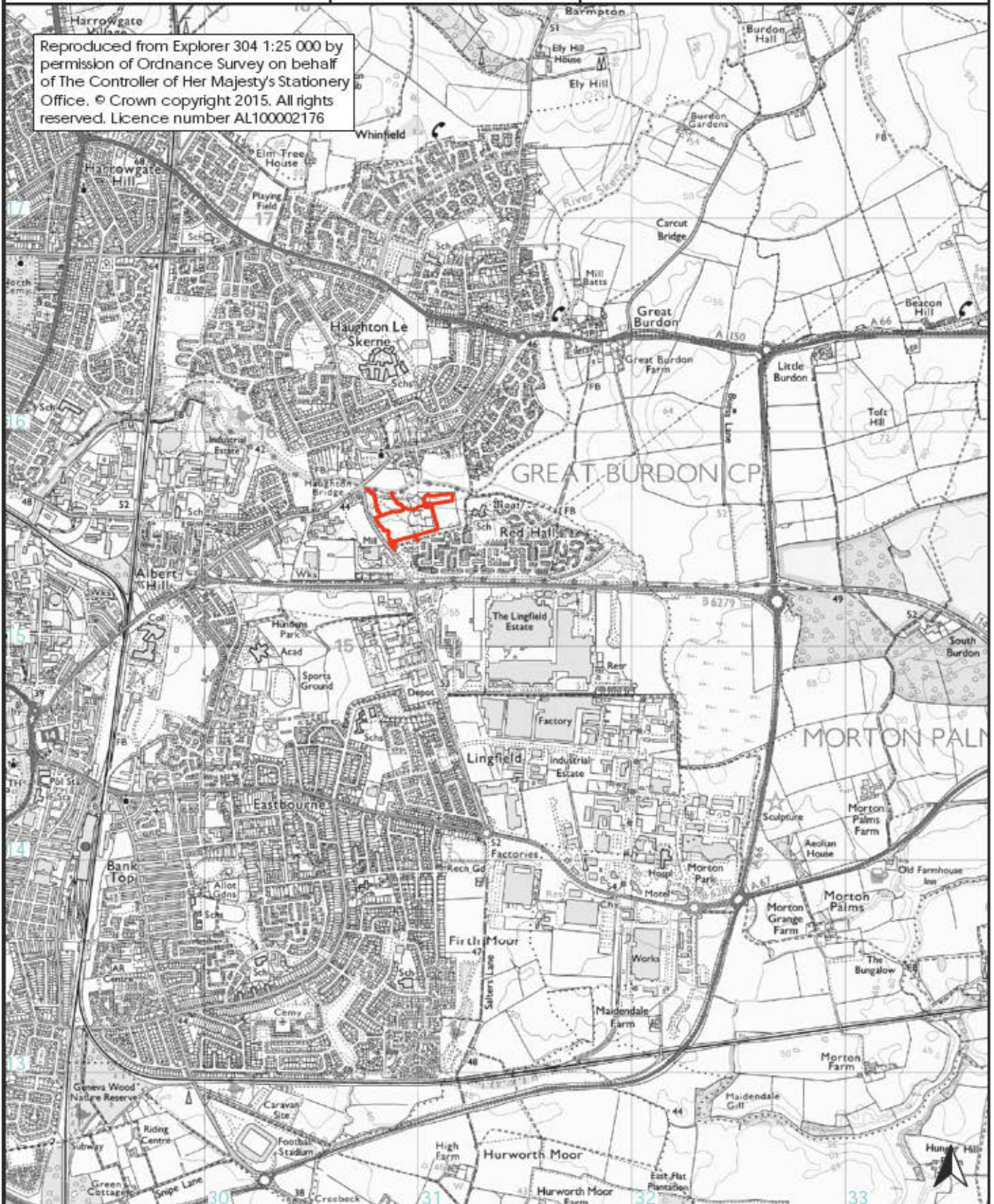
Photograph 2: Trench 2, looking south-west



Photograph 3: Trench 3, looking south-west

Figure 1: Site location

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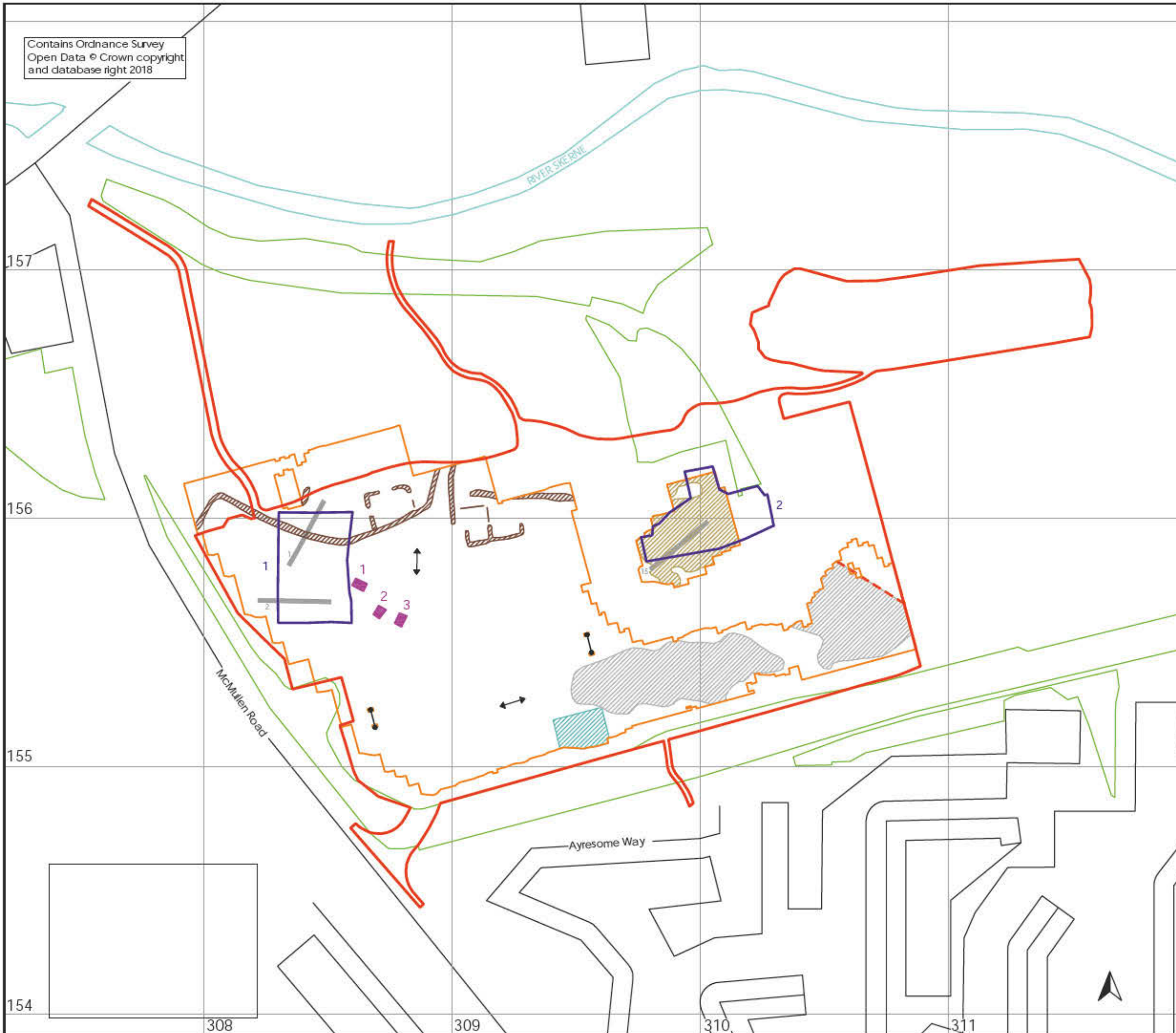
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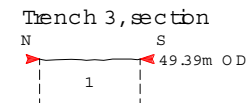
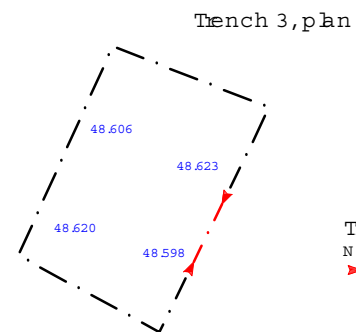
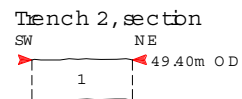
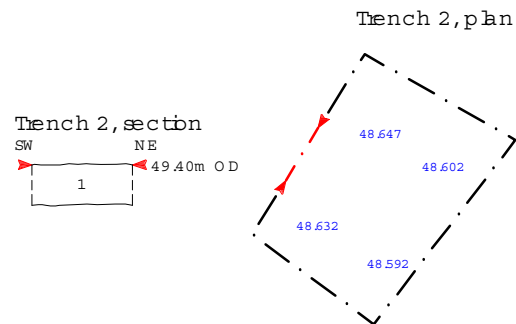
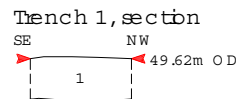
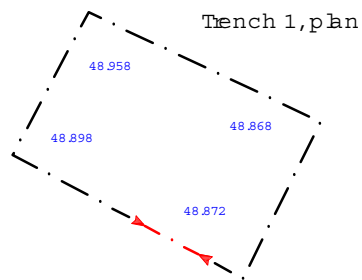
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Figure 2: Trench locations

0 75m
scale 1:1500 for A3 plot

- site boundary
- 2019 trench
- previous area of strip, map and record
- previous evaluation trench
- magnetic survey
- soil-filled feature
- ferrous/ fired materials
- disturbed area
- basketball court
- service
- ridge and furrow
- goal post





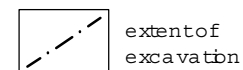
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Figure 3: Trench plans and sections



99.000 height m OD

