

Archaeological Evaluation Report

CHARTER HOUSE BEDFORD

For Dalton Homes North East Ltd

John Duffy MA AIfA

L~P:ARCHÆOLOGY

Archaeological Evaluation Report

CHARTER HOUSE BEDFORD

Client: Dalton Homes North East Ltd

Local Authority: Bedford Borough Council

NGR: 505421, 250299

Planning App: 12/01585/MAF

Author: Duffy J

Doc Ref: LPI450L-AER-v1.1

Site Code: CHB13

Date: September 13

L-P:ARCHAEOLOGY

A trading name of the L – P : Heritage LLP.

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Abstract

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at Charter House, Bedford. The evaluation was implemented because of the potential for archaeological remains on the site. The work was carried out by L - P : Archaeology. This report has been prepared by John Duffy of L - P : Archaeology on behalf of Dalton Homes North East Ltd.

The site lies to the north of the known Medieval town limit and on the edge of the Bedford Town Centre Conservation Area, which extends up the western side of Kimbolton Road. The site is to the south of the late 18th century workhouse, now Bedford Hospital though the site itself appeared to remain undeveloped until the construction of a pavillion and sports field in the early 20th century.

The objectives of the evaluation were to assess the site for potential archaeological remains with specific aims to identify whether the Medieval town extended this far north and to further characterise the Post Medieval development in this area.

Limited archaeological remains were identified on the site and all were located in the southernmost trench, Trench 1. The northern area of the site was undisturbed with an imported topsoil brought in to create the current lawn. The western and south western areas of the site were heavily truncated and any archaeological deposits were removed.

The evaluation identified limited archaeological remains and no dating evidence as well as being heavily truncated in the southern area. After discussion with Bedford Borough Council's Archaeological Officer there is no requirement for further archaeological work.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This evaluation report has been prepared by John Duffy of L - P : Archaeology on behalf of Dalton Homes North East Ltd.
- 1.2. The fieldwork was carried out by John Duffy of L – P : Archaeology between 10th September 2013 and 13th September 2013.
- 1.3. The site is located in at Bedford Charter House, 1A Kimbolton Road, Bedford (FIGURE 1). The NGR is 505421, 250299.
- 1.4. The site code allocated by L – P : Archaeology is CHB13.
- 1.5. The work was carried out in accordance with the written scheme of investigation prepared by John Duffy of L – P : Archaeology (DUFFY 2013).

2. Site Background

2.1. PLANNING

- 2.1.1. The archaeological evaluation was undertaken as a condition of the planning determination. The application reference is 12/01585/MAF.
- 2.1.2. The site contained no scheduled monuments or listed buildings.
- 2.1.3. The local planning authority, Bedford Borough Council, are advised by their own archaeological officers, in this instance Geoff Saunders.
- 2.1.4. When considering an application Bedford Borough Council is bound by local policies BE24 and BE25 regarding archaeology and planning. As such, an archaeological condition was attached to the development.
- 2.1.5. Dalton Homes North East Ltd and Bedford Borough Council have agreed the methodology for these works in the written scheme of investigation (DUFFY 2013). This was based on a Brief provided by Bedford Borough Council's Archaeological Officer.

2.2. GEOLOGY

- 2.2.1. The British Geological Survey GeoIndex shows the site to be located on a bedrock of Kellaways Formation with possible superficial deposits of River Terrace Gravels. This data is at relatively low resolution and offers only a rough indication of the site geology (BGS 2013).
- 2.2.2. The trial trenching identified a natural yellow sandy clay below the disturbed topsoil and subsoil.

2.3. TOPOGRAPHY

- 2.3.1. The site is situated immediately to the north east of Bedford Town centre with Kimbolton Road forming the western site boundary.
- 2.3.2. The site is divided into broadly three areas. The northern area of the site is covered by grass forming the lawn for the existing care home. An Army Cadet Force Hut and associated hardstanding is located in the south west corner of the site along with the site access. This area was unavailable for evaluation at

this stage. The south east area of the site was covered in substantial undergrowth with a concrete platform in the western part of this area. The existing care home is located on the eastern portion of the site and forms Phase 2 of the development.

- 2.3.3. The northern area of the site is relatively flat at approximately 33m OD with the southern area sloping down to approximately 32.5m OD. The area of disturbance associated with the concrete surface is approximately 32m OD.

2.4.SITE CONDITIONS

- 2.4.1. The site had no development associated with it until the early 20th century, as indicated by the Ordnance Survey Maps. The current northern half of the site is a lawn associated with the care home to the east. The southern half of the site has been truncated by the construction of the southern access road, the cadet hut and a large concrete surface.

2.5.ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

- 2.5.1. A search of the Bedford Historic Environment Record (BHER) was undertaken and the information is provided courtesy of Bedford Borough Council. The search identified several listed buildings in vicinity of the site and it lies just beyond the limit of the Bedford Town Centre Conservation Area.
- 2.5.2. A 4th century Roman coin has been recorded 175m to the north of the site (MBB21496) and was reported to the Portable Antiquities Scheme.
- 2.5.3. The site lies approximately 100m to the north of the limit of the Medieval town as defined in the BHER (MBD10530).
- 2.5.4. Two windmills are indicated either side of Kimbolton Road in the 18th century (MBD3194), approximately 100m north of the site. However, neither of the windmills are shown in 19th century maps. The site of a late 18th and early 19th century brick and tile kiln is recorded approximately 175m to the north of the site (MBD7362).
- 2.5.5. To the north east is Bedford North Wing Hospital, a Grade II listed building, originally built in 1794-96 as a workhouse (MBD1284) along with it's

associated 19th century chapel (MBD4520). Immediately to the south is Kimbolton Lodge, a Grade II listed building, dating to the earlier 19th century (MBD1304).

- 2.5.6. Several further listed buildings are present within the immediate vicinity of the site on the opposite side of Kimbolton Road and all lie within the conservation area.
- 2.5.7. Ordnance Survey maps show the site as open ground to the north of Kimbolton Lodge with little development until the 1926 map when a pavillion was visible in the south west corner of the site with part of the area marked as a croquet ground. Subsequent maps show the continued use of the site for sport, including the creation of tennis courts. By 1972 the current care home building is built but the area of the site is still a sports ground with a pavillion. By the 1980s the site was now clear of structures and development until the construction of the existing cadet hut.
- 2.5.8. The search of the BHER identified limited findspots nearby with only a single find within 250m of the site. The majority of entries close to the site are for listed buildings and buildings of local interest within the conservation area. It is likely that the absence of information is due to limited archaeological work in the vicinity of the site rather than an absence of preserved remains.

3. Aims

3.1. The general aims of the archaeological evaluation were to assess the character, date, type, state of preservation, and extent of any archaeological remains on site.

3.2. The specific aims of the archaeological evaluation were:

- ◆ To contribute to the study of Prehistoric activity along the Ouse Valley.
- ◆ To examine the periphery of the Late Saxon and Medieval town in order to identify any activity within this area.
- ◆ To examine the Post Medieval development of the town and its expansion along Kimbolton Road.

3.3. The objective of this report is to provide enough information for a suitable mitigation strategy to be devised.

4. Methodology

- 4.1. For a full description of the archaeological methodology please refer to section 4 of the written scheme of investigation (DUFFY 2013).
- 4.2. A total of five 20m long trenches were excavated across the site. Two trenches were opened on the northern lawn and three trenches were opened in the southern area (FIGURE 2).
- 4.3. Due to the presence of tree preservation orders and to allow access to the site to be maintained the trench positions were slightly adjusted from the proposed locations.

5. Results

5.1. Results are given below trench by trench. Not all context numbers referred to in the text are illustrated, but all are in the archive. Deposit numbers are given in (parentheses) and cut numbers are given in [square brackets]. Heights are given in m OD and depths are given as below ground level (BGL).

5.2. TRENCH 1

5.2.1. Trench 1 was excavated near the southern edge of the site and was aligned approximately north east to south west (FIGURE 2). Three possible archaeological features were identified in the trench with a Post Medieval field drain also recorded (FIGURE 3).

5.2.2. Approximately 4.75m from the north east limit of the trench a possible posthole [103] was identified and excavated (FIGURE 4). It was oval in plan, measuring, 0.5m by 0.4m and had a depth of 0.25m. The profile was steep sided on the north east edge and on the lower half of the south west edge becoming shallower on the upper half (FIGURE 4). It was filled by a mid grey clayey sand (104) with a patch of light grey clayey sand (105) near the base. No finds were recovered from the feature.

5.2.3. A second possible posthole was identified near the middle of the trench [110] and was roughly circular in plan with a diameter of 0.2m (FIGURE 4). It was steep sided with a concave base and was 0.11m deep. It was filled by a mid to light grey sand (111). No finds were recovered from the feature.

5.2.4. A possible gully [112] was identified to the south of posthole [110] running approximately east to west (FIGURE 4). It was visible from the southern trench limit for a length of approximately 3m before being truncated to the west. The sides were gently sloping with a slightly concave base and it survived to a depth of 0.04m. It was filled by a mid to light brown clayey sand (113) and no finds were recovered from the fill.

5.2.5. Approximately 8m from the north east limit of the trench a deep gully [107] was identified running approximately north west to south east across the trench (FIGURE 3). The gully was identified immediately below the topsoil

(101) and cut through the subsoil (102). It was steep sided with a concave base and was 0.9m deep. The upper fill was a mixed dark brown and yellow clayey sand (108) and the lower fill was a dark brown clayey sand with frequent stones and rubble (109). The feature is interpreted as a Post Medieval or early Modern field drain based on its depth, form and stratigraphic relationship to the subsoil.

5.2.6. The dispersed features identified in Trench 1 were all undated and heavily truncated by later activity. Any surviving archaeological deposits appear to be concentrated at the southern end of the site as no other archaeological deposits were identified on the site.

5.3. TRENCH 2

5.3.1. Trench 2 was excavated in a north to south direction along the eastern boundary of the southern area of the site (FIGURES 2 AND 3). The trench was heavily disturbed and the trench lay across a concrete walled structure. The footings of the structure were identified along the northern limit of the trench with the footings extending along the eastern edge of the trench (FIGURE 3). The southern return of the structure was visible 3.75m north of the southern limit of the trench. The area within the wall footings was disturbed with some subsoil remaining below, (204) and (206).



Plate 1 - Trench 2 slope at south end. 2m scale.

5.3.2. At the southern end of the trench the natural ground was seen to drop down to 1.25m BGL (FIGURE 3 AND PLATE 1). There was no evidence of a cut and the drop in level appeared to be a natural hollow or slope. It was filled by a mid brown clayey sand (207) which was similar to the subsoils in the trench, (204) and (206).

5.3.3. Although the trench was heavily disturbed by the concrete structure the natural deposits do not appear heavily truncated. There is no evidence for archaeological deposits in this area.

5.4. TRENCH 3

5.4.1. Trench 3 was excavated at the northern end of the southern area (FIGURES 2 AND 3). The trench was aligned east to west and extended into the area of the concrete in order to ascertain levels of likely disturbance.

5.4.2. The trench was heavily disturbed by roots and a brick rubble layer (302) was identified at the eastern end of the trench. The natural was identified approximately 0.7m BGL for most of the trench and was undisturbed except for root action. However at 4.25m from the western end the concrete surface was identified cutting at least 0.3m into the natural deposits (PLATE 2).



Plate 2 - Trench 3 showing concrete surface. 1m scale.

5.4.3. No archaeological deposits were identified in the trench and it is likely that any

archaeological deposits that were present within the area of the concrete have been removed by the construction of the structure.

5.5.TRENCH 4

- 5.5.1. Trench 4 was excavated in an east to west direction across the lawn in the northern area of the site (FIGURES 2 AND 5). It was excavated to a depth 1m BGL onto an undisturbed natural. The topsoil within this trench, as well as Trench 5, appears to have been imported for the creation of the current lawn as it is different from the topsoil in the southern area of the site. A possible former topsoil layer (402) appears along most of the length of the trench.
- 5.5.2. A 0.35m thick rubble and dark brown clayey sand deposit (411) was identified at the western end of the trench extending for approximately 4m to the east. This deposit was sealed by the topsoil (401) and overlay a disturbed subsoil (412). This rubble layer may form a levelling layer ahead of the laying of the lawn or may represent the demolition of a small wall. The quantity of material does not suggest the demolition of a substantial structure, such as a house along the street frontage.
- 5.5.3. Two linear features were identified running approximately north to south across the trench, [405] and [407] (PLATE 3). However, both had irregular edges and were shallow, approximately 0.04m deep. The fills were a mid to light grey clayey sand, (406) and (408) respectively, and were identical to the subsoil identified across the trench (403). Neither feature appeared archaeological in nature and as the fills were similar to the subsoil may represent natural undulations.
- 5.5.4. A field drain [409] was also recorded near the eastern end of the trench and appears similar to the one identified in Trench 1, [107] (PLATE 3). The alignment of the two field drains match.



Plate 3 - Trench 4 – [407] and [409]. 1m scale.

5.6. TRENCH 5

- 5.6.1. Trench 5 was similar to Trench 4 with the imported topsoil, (501), overlaying the subsoil layers. At the northern end of the trench was a concrete slab footpath on a rubble foundation.
- 5.6.2. At the southern end of the trench two shallow features, similar to the features in Trench 4, were identified [505] and [507] (PLATE 4). The maximum depth of both features was 0.1m and both were filled by clayey sand similar to the subsoil (503). Neither feature appeared archaeological and may represent undulations in the natural similar to Trench 4.
- 5.6.3. At the southern end of the trench there are several disturbed layers of clayey sand (511), gravel (512) and brick rubble (510). These indicate levelling of the ground before the importation of the topsoil for the creation of the lawn, similar to the western end of Trench 4.



Plate 4 - Trench 5 – [[505] and [507]. 2m scale.

6. Finds and Environmental Samples

6.1. There were no finds recovered from any of the archaeological features. The topsoil produced only modern finds including plastic drinks bottles and food packaging.

6.2. No deposits were considered worthwhile for sampling.

7. Summary and Conclusions

- 7.1. A site at Bedford Charter House is proposed for redevelopment. The proposed redevelopment involves the construction of a new care home and associated landscaping, access routes and services.
- 7.2. Examination of the available data indicates that the site does not contain any scheduled monuments or listed buildings.
- 7.3. The site appears to remain undeveloped until the 20th century and lies outside of the known limit of the Medieval town. Listed buildings are present to the north east and south and date from the late 18th and 19th centuries as well as along the opposite side of Kimbolton Road. Within the immediate vicinity of the site only a single Roman coin has been recorded that predates the 18th century.
- 7.4. Previous development on the site in the area of the concrete surface and probably the Army Cadet Hut and access road has heavily truncated the underlying deposits. If archaeological deposits were present on site they would not survive in these areas.
- 7.5. Limited archaeological deposits were identified on the site and all were on the southern edge in Trench 1. These were a heavily truncated gully and two possible postholes all of which were undated.
- 7.6. The absence of archaeological deposits is likely a result of little activity rather than loss through later disturbance. There was no evidence recovered to indicate the Medieval town extended this far north or that the site was developed in the Post Medieval period.
- 7.7. It is recommended due to the general absence of archaeological deposits that no further archaeological work is required on the site. This has been agreed with the Bedford Borough Council's Archaeological Officer.

8. Archive

8.1. The paper archive consists of:

- ◆ 1 x Drawing Register
- ◆ 6 x Drawing Film
- ◆ 1 x Photographic Register
- ◆ 22 x Black and white photographs and negatives
- ◆ 22 x Colour slides
- ◆ 53 x Digital images
- ◆ 1 x Context Register
- ◆ 20 x Context sheets
- ◆ 5 x Trench sheets

8.2. The finds archive consists of:

- ◆ No finds archive

8.3. The archive is to be deposited at the Bedford Museum under Accession Number BEDFM2013.37.

SOURCES CONSULTED

BIBLIOGRAPHIC

DUFFY J 2013. *Specification for Archaeological Evaluation at Charter House Bedford*. L – P :
Archaeology. LP1450L-WSI-v1.2

SAUNDERS G 2012. *Brief for Archaeological Field Evaluation at Bedford Citizens Housing Association, Charter House, 1A Kimbolton Road, Bedford, Bedfordshire*. Historic Environment Planning Services, Bedford Borough Council.

ELECTRONIC

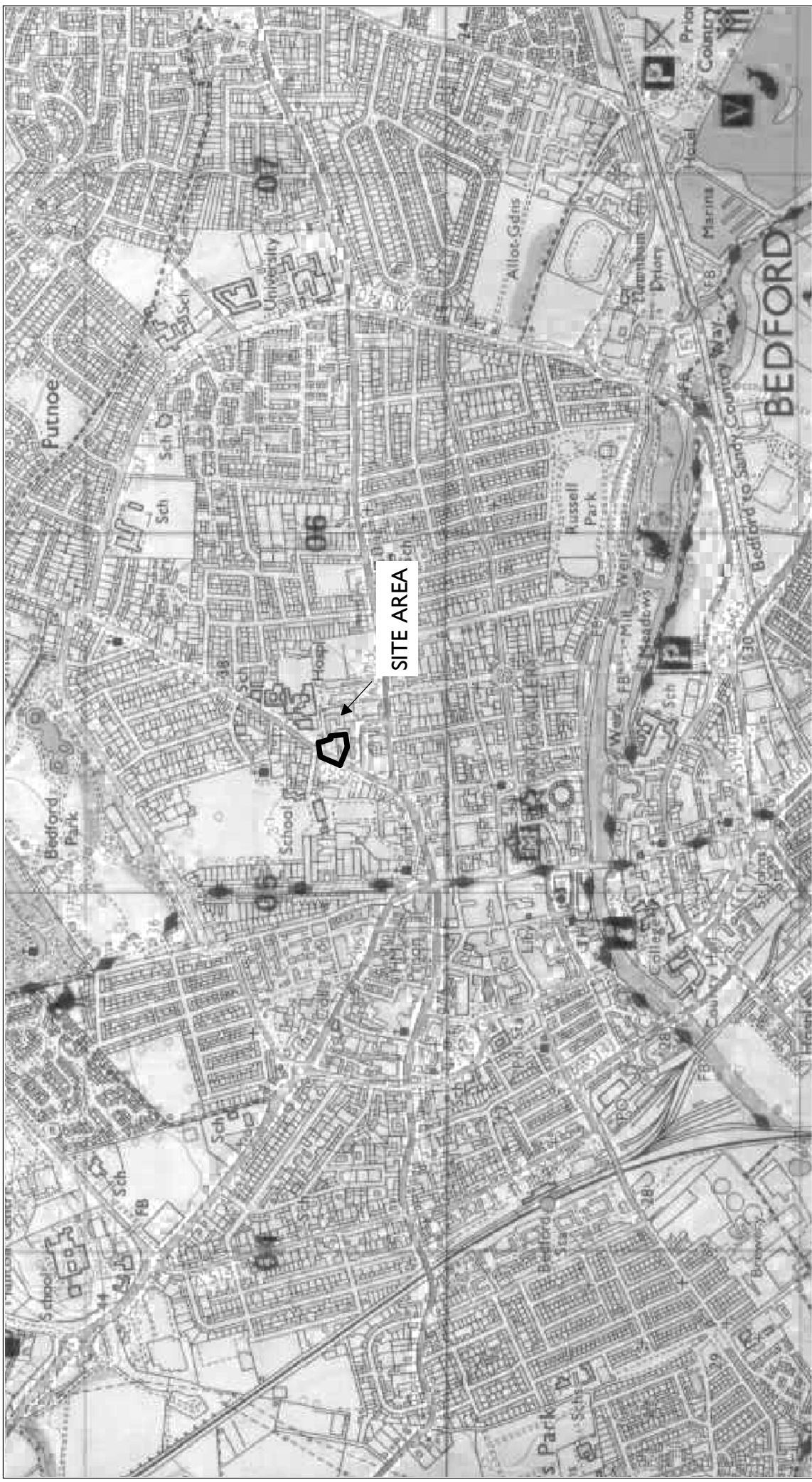
BGS 2013. www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex

STATUTORY AND GUIDANCE

INSTITUTE FOR ARCHAEOLOGISTS 2008. *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation*.
Institute of Field Archaeologists.

FIGURES

FIGURE 1 // Site Location



A4 scale 1:15,000

1 km

PROJECT // 1450L - Bedford Charter House

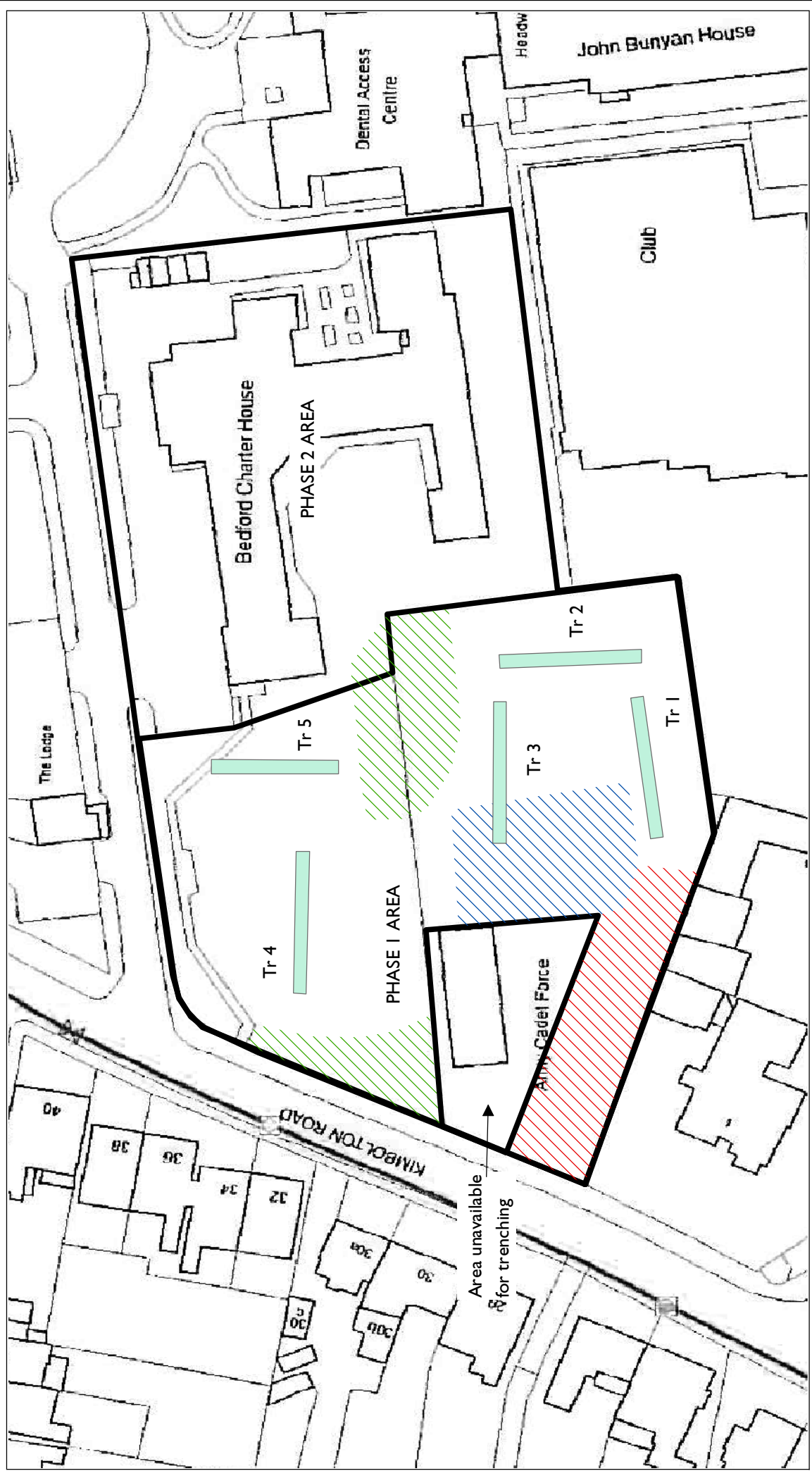
DESCRIPTION // Site Location

Reproduced by permission of the controller of HMSO, Licence 100053067

DOC REF: LP1450L-AER-v1

L-P: ARCHAEOLOGY

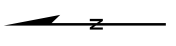
FIGURE 2 // Trench Plan



A4 scale 1:750

Legend:

- Access road (Red diagonal hatching)
- Preserved trees (Green diagonal hatching)
- Concrete surface (Blue diagonal hatching)



50m

PROJECT // 1450L - Bedford Charter House

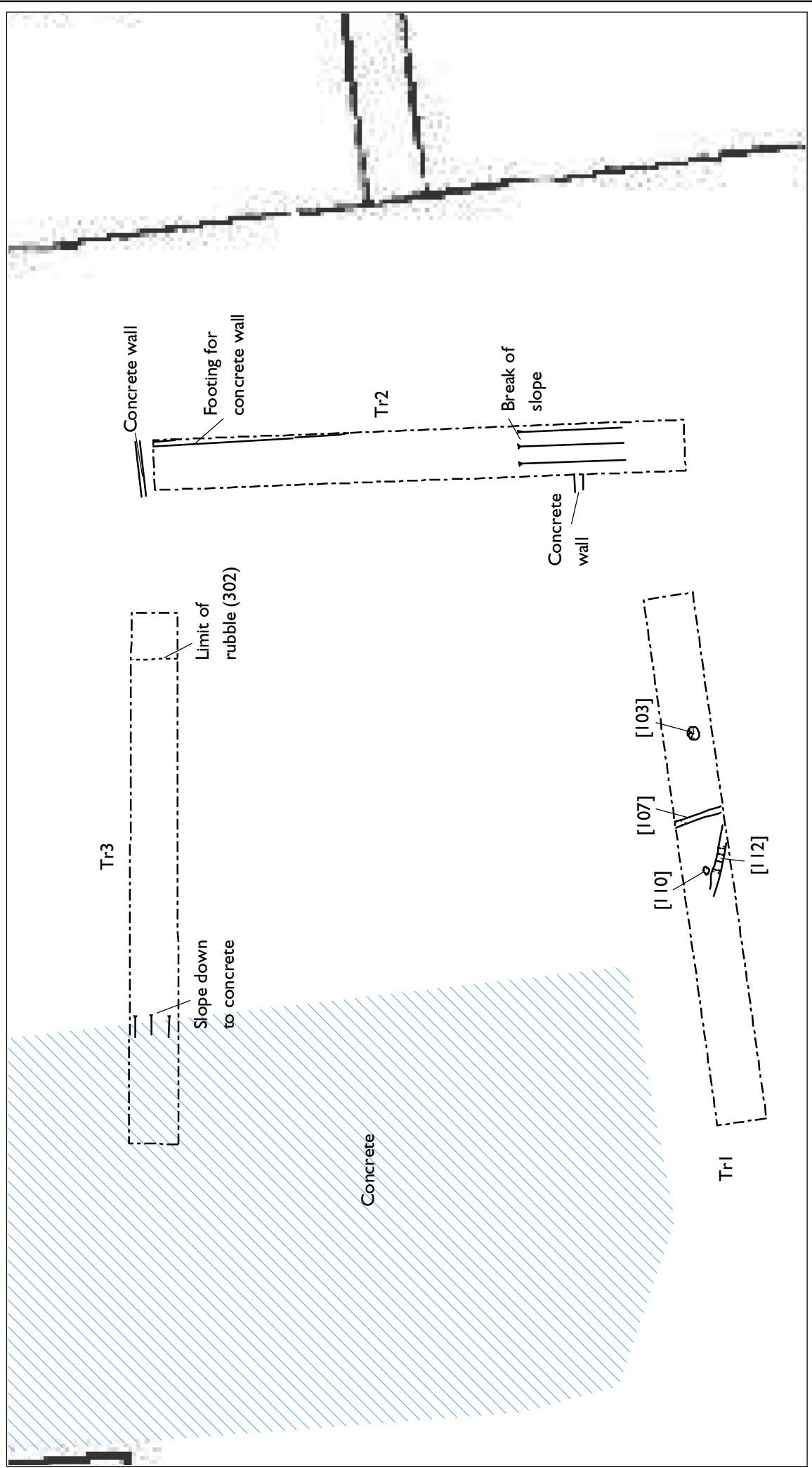
DESCRIPTION // Trench plan and restrictions

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DOC REF: LP1450L-AER-v1

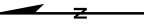
L-P: ARCHAEOLOGY

FIGURE 3 // Plan of South Area



A4 scale 1:200

0 10m



PROJECT // 1450L - Bedford Charter House

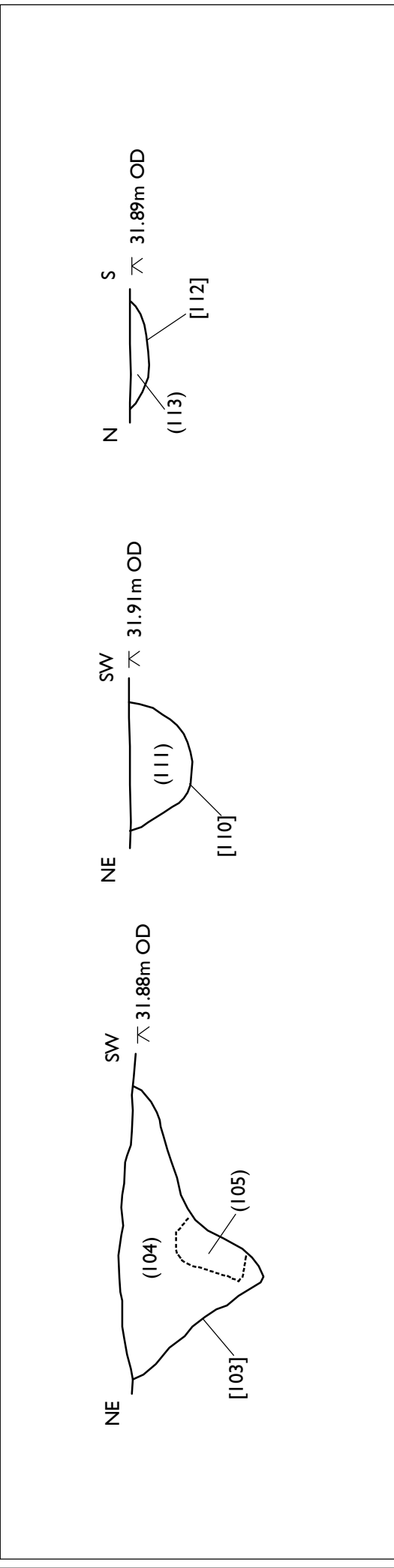
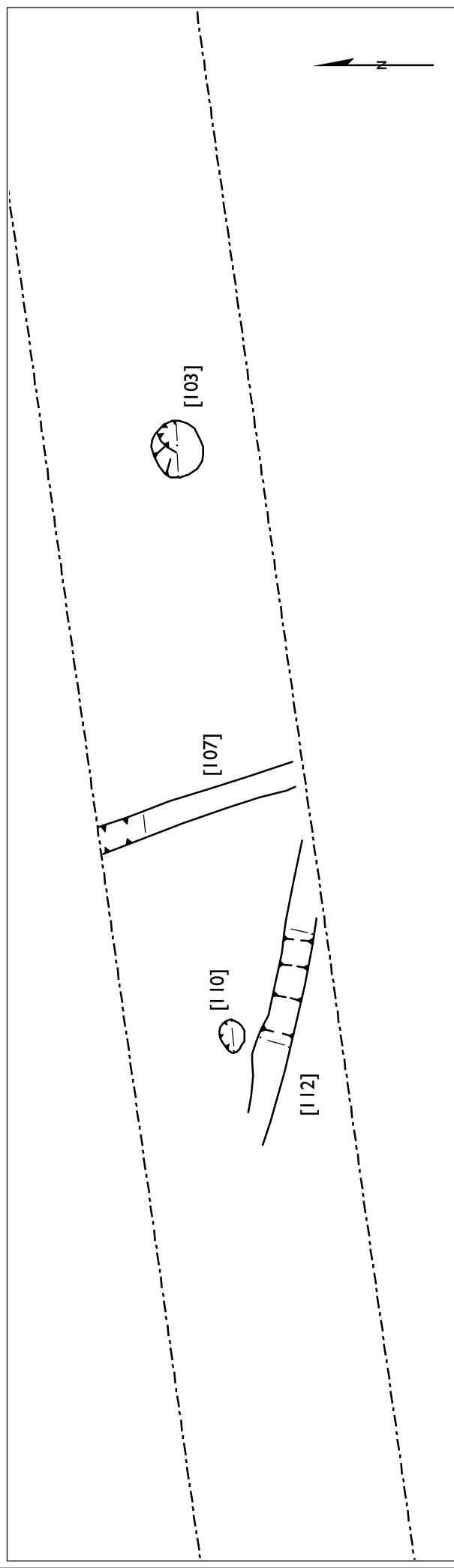
DESCRIPTION // Plan of Southern Area (Trenches 1, 2 and 3)

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DOC REF: LP1450L-AER-v1

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FIGURE 4 // Plan and Sections of Trench I



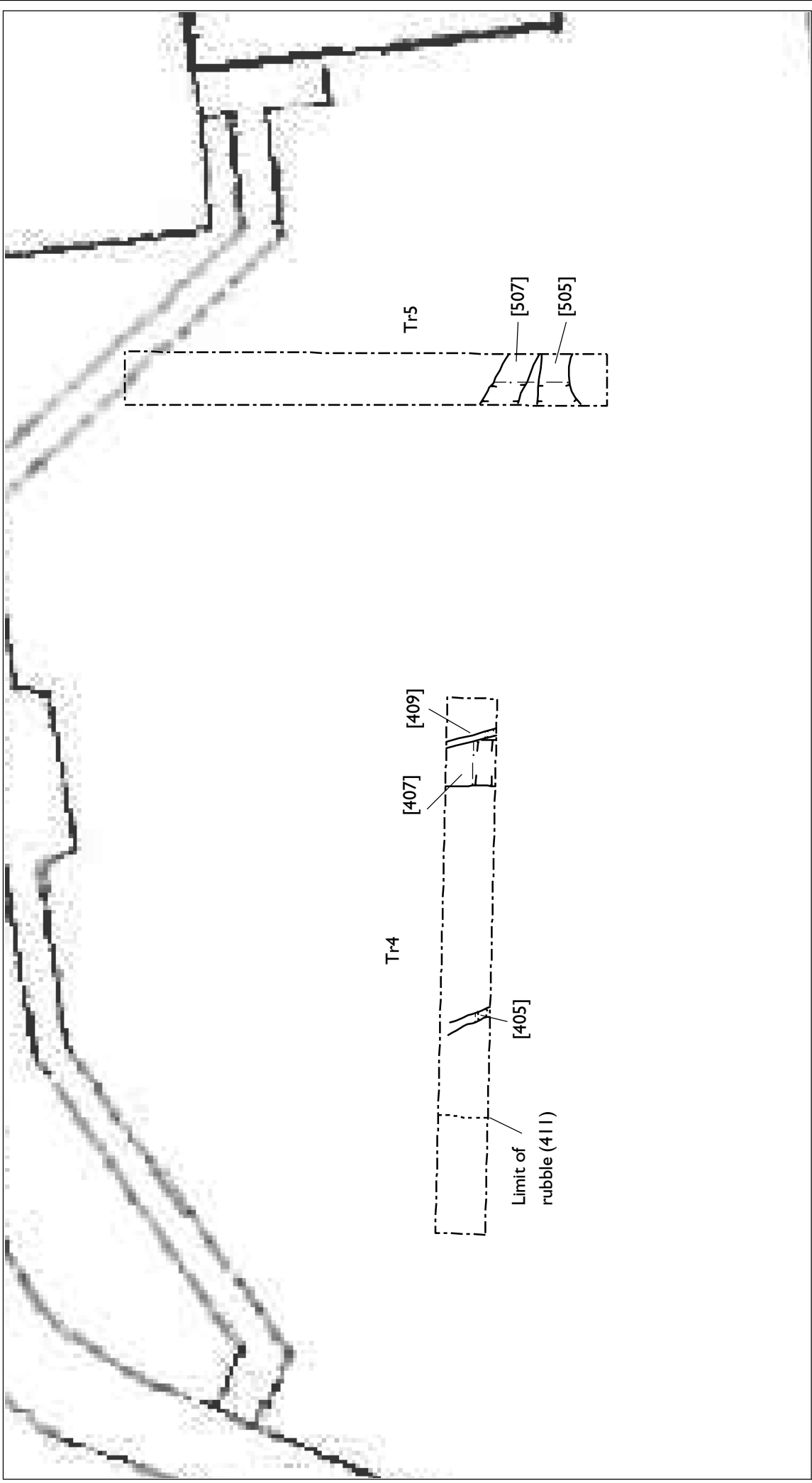
A4 scale 1:50 (top)
A4 scale 1:10 (bottom)

PROJECT // 1450L - Bedford Charter House
DESCRIPTION // Trench I features plan (top) and sections (bottom)

DOC REF: LP1450L-AER-v1

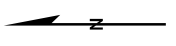
L-P:ARCHAEOLOGY

FIGURE 5 // Plan of North Area



A4 scale 1:200

0 10m



PROJECT // 1450L - Bedford Charter House

DESCRIPTION // Insert figure description here

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OASIS FORM

APPENDIX I

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM:

England

OASIS ID: lparchae1-159904

Project details

Project name Charter House Bedford
A small evaluation, consisting of five trenches, was undertaken on the proposed site of the new care home at Bedford Charter House, Kimbolton Road, Bedford. The site is just beyond the limit of the known Medieval town but the site provided no Medieval evidence supporting the theory that the site lay beyond the Medieval town. The site was heavily truncated in parts and produced limited archaeological evidence all of which was undated.

Project dates Start: 10-09-2013 End: 13-09-2013

Previous/future work No / No

Any associated project reference codes BEDFM2013.37 - Museum accession ID

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status None

Monument type POSTHOLE Uncertain

Monument type GULLY Uncertain

Significant Finds NONE None

Methods & techniques "Sample Trenches"

Development type Public building (e.g. school, church, hospital, medical centre, law courts etc.)

Prompt National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

Position in the planning process After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country England

Site location BEDFORDSHIRE BEDFORD BEDFORD Charter House Bedford

Postcode MK40 2PU

Study area 0.45 Hectares

Site coordinates TL 05421 50299 52 0 52 08 25 N 000 27 33 W Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 31.00m Max: 32.00m

Project creators

Name of Organisation L - P : Archaeology
Project brief originator City/Nat. Park/District/Borough archaeologist
Project design originator L - P : Archaeology
Project director/manager John Duffy
Project supervisor John Duffy
Type of sponsor/funding body Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body Dalton Homes North East Ltd

Project archives
Physical Archive Exists? No
Physical Archive recipient Bedford Museum
Digital Archive recipient Bedford Museum
Digital Archive ID BEDFM2013.37
Digital Contents "Survey"
Digital Media available "GIS","Images raster / digital photography","Images vector","Survey","Text"
Paper Archive recipient Bedford Museum
Paper Archive ID BEDFM2013.37
Paper Contents "Survey"
"Context
Paper Media available sheet","Drawing","Map","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section","Survey ","Unpublished Text"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
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Author(s)/Editor(s) Duffy, J.
Other bibliographic details Report No: LP1450L-AER-v1
Date 2013
Issuer or publisher L - P : Archaeology
Place of issue or publication Bury St Edmunds
Description A4 spiral bound
Entered by John Duffy (john.duffy@lparchaeology.com)
Entered on 25 September 2013

OASIS:

Please e-mail English Heritage for OASIS help and advice

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