

Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological evaluation
on land at Millhouse Green, Sheffield
Yorkshire
September 2006



N A Flavell

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Report 06/140

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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project title	Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Millhouse Green, Sheffield, Yorkshire	
Short description (250 words maximum)	An archaeological evaluation was undertaken in September 2006 on land at Millhouse Green, Sheffield. It comprised twelve excavation trenches across open parts of the site. The majority of trenches contained no archaeology. A few contained drains and one contained a short alignment of post holes. There seems to have been no utilisation of the site before the 18 th century.	
Project type	Trial trench evaluation	
Previous work (reference to organisation or SMR numbers etc)	Desk based assessment (Northern Archaeological Associates)	
Future work (yes, no, unknown)	Yes – stage 2 evaluation and buildings recording	
Monument type and period		
Significant finds (artefact type and period)	None	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Yorkshire	
Site address	Eckland Bridge Works Millhouse Green Sheffield Yourkshire	
Easting	S2220	
Northing	E0310	
Height OD	225.867m OD	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originator		
Project Design originator	Scott Wilson Ltd	
Director/Supervisor	Nathan Flavell	
Project Manager	Iain Soden for Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Sponsor or funding body		
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	18/09/06	
End date	22/09/06	
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical	Pottery, tile, bone, small finds	1 box pottery, bone,
Paper	Contexts, registers Plans, sections	1 file 2 plan and section sheets
Digital	Report, illustrations	
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Title	Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Millhouse Green, Sheffield, Yorkshire	
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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION OF LAND AT
MILLHOUSE GREEN, SHEFFIELD,
YORKSHIRE
SEPTEMBER 2006**

ABSTRACT

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken in September 2006 on land at Millhouse Green, Sheffield. It comprised twelve excavation trenches across open parts of the site.

The majority of trenches contained no archaeology. A few contained drains and one contained a short alignment of post holes. There seems to have been no utilisation of the site before the 18th century.

1 INTRODUCTION

Archaeological trial excavation was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology for Scott Wilson Ltd in September 2006 on land currently occupied by Eckland Bridge Works and an area set aside to the west of the works at Millhouse Green, Sheffield, (Fig 1; NGR: SE 2220 0310).

The evaluation was designed to meet the requirements of the project design issued by Scott Wilson Ltd (Scott Wilson 2006).

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Topography and geology

The site incorporates land occupied by Eckland Bridge Works. Trial excavation was located to avoid landscape features such as a 3m-high earth-bund to the west of the works and a mill leat running east to west though the south of the site. Otherwise the site is bounded on the north by the A628, to the west by Binks Lane and to the south and east by the River Don. The site slopes down from the A628 to the south before breaking steeply down to the River Don.

The geology comprises a fine loam and silty soils of the Dale association, overlying the Lower Westphalian Coal Measures (<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/index.htm>).

2.2 Archaeological background

The earliest activity in the area comprises surface finds of Mesolithic flints from the area around Hartcliffe Tower, located 1km to the south. An Iron Age Hillfort, Castle Dike lies 2.5km to the south and west. There is no evidence for Roman activity in the area. The Domesday Book recorded Thurstone 1km to the east, and two medieval wayside crosses are located in the area surrounding Mill House Green. Located 1km west of the site at Bulhouse Hall was a medieval manor. A number of mills were established along the River Don at Mill House Green in the post medieval period. The earliest known building on the site was a paper mill established in the 18th Century.

3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Objectives

The current objectives of the evaluation were (Scott Wilson 2006):

- *...to identify the presence/absence, nature, depth, extent and date of any archaeological deposits or features encountered;*
- *...to produce further information on the extent of modern disturbance;*
- *...if significant archaeological remains are identified, to inform the preparation of a strategy to mitigate the impact of the development*

3.2 Methodology

The evaluation comprised twelve trenches, three of 20m length and nine, each of 30m. Trench 2 was moved slightly to the north to avoid a gas pipe. Trench 12 was moved west to avoid overhead cables during machining. The locations of all trenches were surveyed in relation to both the National Grid and Ordnance Datum using a Leica System 1200 GPS (Fig 2).

The removal of the topsoil and other overburden was carried out by a tracked 360-degree mechanical excavator, fitted with a 2m-wide toothless ditching bucket, operating under archaeological supervision. In all trenches mechanical excavation proceeded as far as the natural substrate or the first significant archaeological horizons.

All potential archaeological features were investigated by cleaning or hand excavation.

Features within each trench were numbered using the trench number as a prefix (e.g. post hole [1005] being context 05 in Trench 10 etc.). A list of contexts is given in Appendix 1.

Standard Northamptonshire Archaeology recording procedures were employed (NA 2004). All works were conducted in accordance with the *IFA Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (1994, revised 2001) and the *Code of Conduct* of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1985, revised 2000)

4 RESULTS

4.1 General stratigraphic sequence

A total of fourteen archaeological features were encountered in Trenches 5-8, and 10-12. Most features revealed were postholes and stake holes. A single pit or tree bowl was found in Trench 5 and stone-lined drains were found in Trenches 6-8 and 11-12. Most of the features were undated but a small amount of pottery was recovered from a single posthole in Trench 10. Trenches 1, 2, 4 and 9 contained no archaeology and are therefore illustrated only in Fig 2 to show their location.

Generally the natural geology consists of light grey sandy clay with orange streaks, with variations of naturally-occurring limestone fragments. Subsoil comprises orange-brown clay sand, in the west of the site, changing to light grey clay sand with orange flecking. The topsoil consists of dark grey-brown sandy loam.

4.2 Archaeological features (Fig 3 for Trenches 5, 6, 8 and 10)

Trench 1

Natural geology (103) was encountered at a depth of 0.32m below the modern ground surface. The subsoil (102) was 0.12m thick, the topsoil (101) generally 0.20m thick. There was no archaeology present.

Trench 2

The natural geology (203) was uncovered at a level between 0.40m and 0.49m below the modern ground surface. The subsoil (202) ranged from between 0.10m and 0.15m in thickness. The topsoil (201) was between 0.30m and 0.34m thick. There was no archaeology present.

Trench 3

The natural geology (303) was 0.66m below the modern ground surface in the south of the trench, rising to 0.35m in the north. The subsoil (302) was consistently 0.15m thick. A modern ceramic field drain, cut into the subsoil, was aligned approximately north-west to south-east across the trench. The topsoil (301) ranged from 0.5m from the south end of the trench, to 0.2m in the north end.

Trench 4

Natural geology (403) was at a depth of between 0.54m and 0.50m, the thickness of the subsoil (402) between 0.21m and 0.30m, deeper at the west end of the trench. The topsoil (401) followed the trend, 0.33m to the west, 0.20m to the east. There was no archaeology present.

Trench 5

Natural geology (503) was encountered at a depth of between 0.45m and 0.50m. A tree bowl [505] or hollow 0.2m deep lay in the natural, located 9.5m from the north end of the trench (Figs 3 and 4). It was roughly circular in shape with moderately sloping sides and a concave base and had a diameter of 1.5m. It was filled by (504), a firm, grey sandy-clay with orange streaking, with some stone inclusions. It is unclear, due to its location, if the subsoil sealed it. The subsoil (502) itself was between 0.12m and 0.20m thick, the topsoil (501) was between 0.30m and 0.33 thick.

Trench 6

Natural geology (602) was at a depth of 0.30m. Cut into the natural was a stone lined drain [604] (Figs 3 and 4), aligned north to south, near the north-east end of the trench. It had steep sides and a flat base, 0.35m wide and 0.25m deep. The base and sides were lined with flat stones, and it was filled by flat stones (603) laid at a vertical angle to allow the free flow of water. The stones are overlain by (605) a backfill of re-deposited natural, 0.20m thick. The topsoil (601) overlay this to a depth of 0.30m. There was no subsoil evident within the trench. A modern, but disused electricity cable was also encountered, aligned north-west to south-east.

Trench 7

The natural (703) was between 0.40m and 0.55m in depth. Cut into this was another stone-lined drain [706] aligned north to south, 2.2m from the west end of the trench. It had vertical sides and a flat base lined with large stone blocks (704) typically measuring 0.25m x 0.25m x 0.10m. It was also capped by stone blocks creating a channel for the flow of water. It was 0.80m wide and 0.30m deep. The drain had naturally filled up with (705), a black organic sand. The subsoil (702) seemed to overlie the drain, measuring between 0.15m and 0.26m thick. The topsoil (701) was between 0.25 and 0.29m in thickness.

Trench 8

The natural geology (802) in this trench was between 0.25m and 0.30m deep. A cut for a stone-lined drain [805] (Figs 3 and 4), similar in style to (704) was aligned north to west, 0.80m from the north-east end of the trench. It also had steep sides with a flat base, stones (803) lining the sides and base, also capping it, 0.40m wide and 0.35m deep. It was filled by (804), a similar fill to that of (705). There also appeared to be no subsoil within the trench. The topsoil (801) was between 0.25m and 0.30m thick.

Trench 9

Natural geology (903) was encountered at a depth of between 0.35m and 0.40m. The subsoil (902) was at a fairly constant depth of 0.15m and the topsoil (901) was between 0.20m and 0.25m. There was no archaeology.

Trench 10

The natural geology (1003) was between 0.40m and 0.28m in depth. Cut into the natural were four postholes [1005], [1011], [1013], [1021] and four stake holes [1007], [1009], [1015], [1017] (Figs 3 and 4). The postholes were generally shallow sided with flattish bases. All were filled by dark grey clay and were between 0.30m and 0.45m in diameter and 0.05m and 0.10m deep. Post hole 1005 contained pottery dating from c1690-1740 (fill 1004). The four stake holes were generally steep sided with concave bases, filled with loose black loam. They were generally 0.08m in diameter and between 0.05m and 0.10m in depth. The stake holes are later in date than the post holes, as [1009] truncated [1011] and [1015] truncated [1013]. It is unclear if they cut the subsoil. The subsoil (1002) was between 0.15m and 0.20m thick, and the topsoil (1001) was between 0.13m and 0.20m thick.

Trench 11

The natural geology (1103) was between 0.30m and 0.50m deep. Cut into this was another stone-lined drain (1104), similar to that in Trenches 6 and 8. It was 4.2m from the south end of the trench, aligned approximately north to south and was 0.80m wide. This particular drain was still in use. The subsoil (1102) was between 0.10m and 0.20m thick, the topsoil (1101), between 0.20m and 0.30m thick.

Trench 12

The natural geology (1205) was between 0.40m and 0.70m deep. Cut into this were two stone-lined drains. (1208), [1209] was similar in style to that in Trench 6, and (1206), [1207] was similar to those in Trenches 7 and 8. The former was 9.5m from the north end of the trench aligned east to west, 0.45m wide. The latter was in the very south end of the trench, aligned north-west to south-east, 0.70m wide. The subsoil (1204) appeared to overlie the drains, and was 0.20m thick. At the south end of the trench overlying the subsoil were two make-up layers. The lower one (1203), was light grey brown sandy-clay, 0.10m thick. Overlying this was (1202), a mixed layer of black coal/slag and clay with some burnt material. Topsoil (1201) overlay this, with a thickness of 0.20m

5 THE FINDS

Few finds were present on the site. What little there was indicates a site with little occupation at any period, and indicates none before the 18th century.

5.1 The pottery

Eleven sherds of pottery were recovered in six types, from five trenches.

The pottery recovered by context was as follows:

- 501 1 body sherd of blackware, 18th-19th century (topsoil, unstratified)
- 701 1 profile of white earthenware saucer, 19th-20th century (topsoil, unstratified)
- 705 1 base sherd of Pearlware, 18th century (drain fill)
- 804 1 body sherd of white earthenware, 19th century (drain fill)
- 1004 5 abraded sherds from ?1 vessel of manganese mottled earthenware, c1690-1740 (fill of post hole 1005)
- 1202 1 base and 1 rim sherd from single vessel in underglaze blue transfer printed earthenware, 19th century (layer beneath topsoil)
- 1203 1 body sherd of brown glazed earthenware, 19th century (layer beneath topsoil)

None of the above is significant, other than to provide very broad dating, which suggests there was little or no occupation of the site before the 18th century, and then only very sparse. Of the eleven sherds, two were unstratified and a further two were probably washed through the drains from further up-slope, beyond the site.

5.2 Other finds

Context 804 (drain fill) also produced a typical 19th-century fluted clay tobacco pipe bowl. This could have washed through the drain at any point since the 19th century until the drain blocked.

5.3 Environmental sample

A single 30 litre sample was taken from context 504, an undated context. This was processed using a siraf tank fitted with a 500micron mesh and flot sieve. The resulting flot and residue was dried and examined with a microscope (10X). Unfortunately only small (less than 2mm in any dimension) unidentifiable charcoal fragments were observed. These results give little indication of activity at the site other than to say possible fuel burning was taking place in the vicinity.

6 DISCUSSION

All archaeological features encountered on the site all appear to be of a late post medieval date. The four postholes in Trench 10 were aligned in an east-west direction and could have been a former fence. Pottery suggests it stood at any time since c1690, probably much later.

There was no dating evidence recovered from the stake holes. However, two of these truncate two of the postholes, so therefore must be later, also the fill of the stake holes suggests it is akin to the topsoil. These also suggest some sort of alignment, although the full extent of both of these is unknown.

Of the six stone-lined drains revealed, two had pottery within the silting, suggesting that they blocked up at some point in or since the 19th century.

The site therefore is almost devoid of archaeological features, suggesting there has been little or no human occupation at least until the later post medieval period, probably when the paper mill was established on the site in the 18th century.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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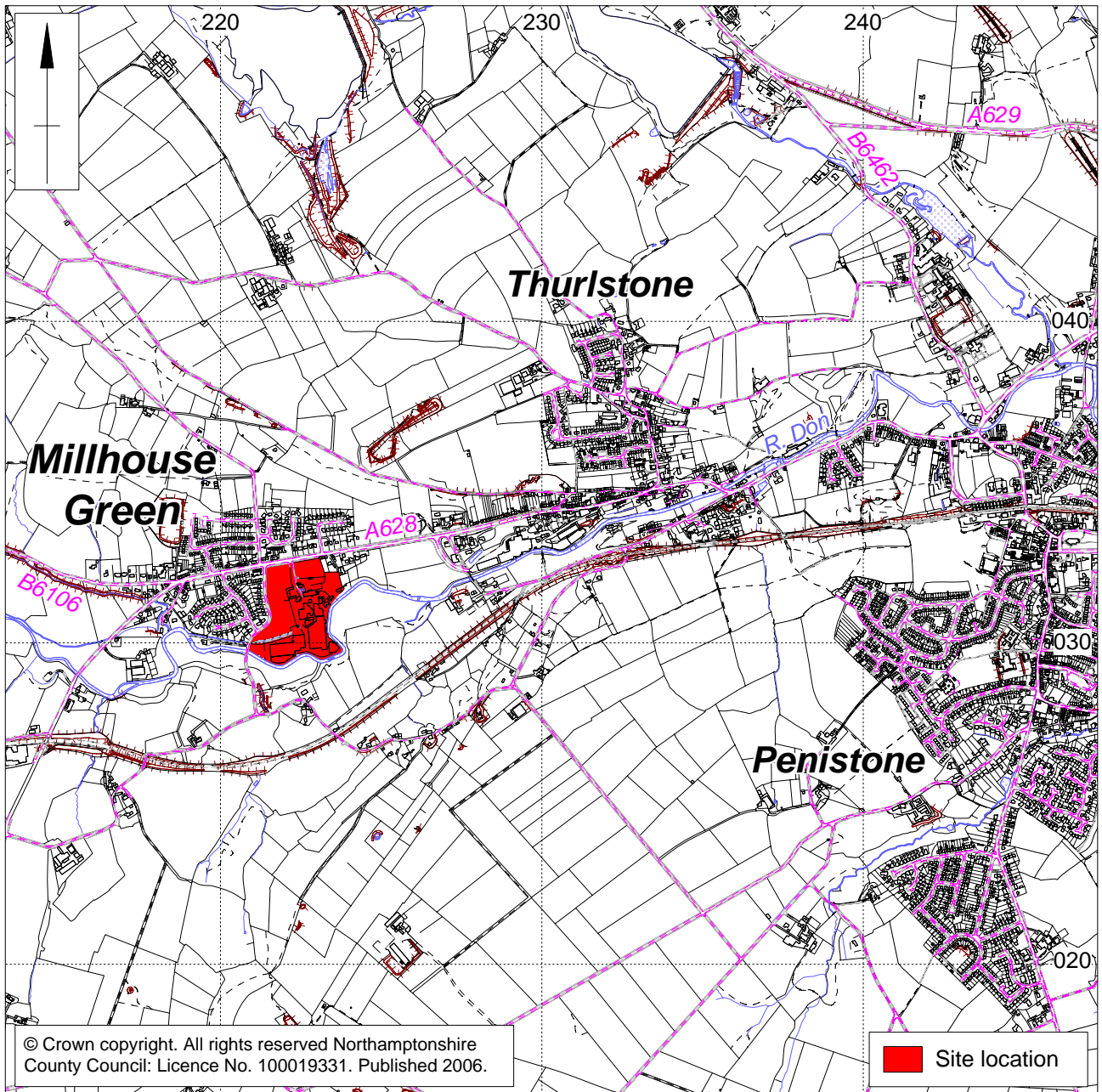
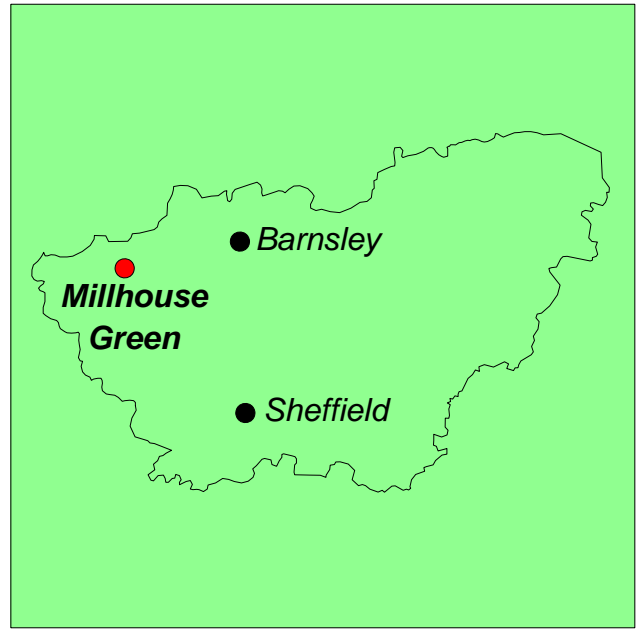
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APPENDIX : CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

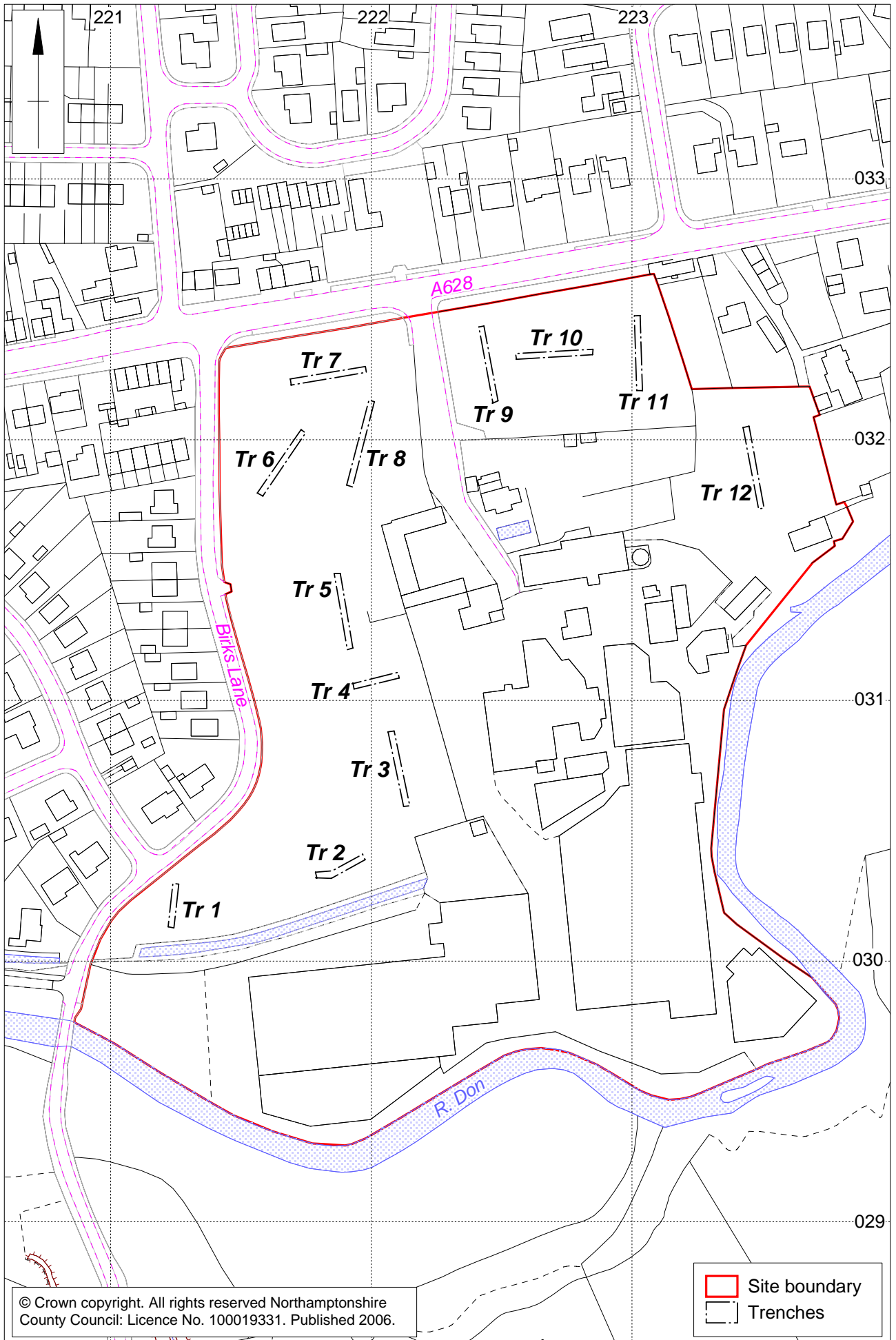
Context Number	Type	Description	Length	width	Depth
101	Topsoil	Dark grey-black sandy loam			0.20
102	Subsoil	Orangey-brown clay sand			0.12-0.14
103	Natural	Light brown and blue-grey sandy-clay			
201	Topsoil	Dark grey-black sandy loam			0.30-0.34
202	Subsoil	Light grey sandy clay orange streaking with some stone inclusions			0.10-0.15
203	Natural	Light brown and blue-grey sandy-clay			
301	Topsoil	Dark grey-black sandy loam			0.20-0.50
302	Subsoil	Light grey sandy clay orange streaking with some stone inclusions			0.15-0.16
303	Natural	Light brown and blue-grey sandy-clay			
401	Topsoil	Dark grey-black sandy loam			0.20-0.33
402	Subsoil	Light grey sandy clay orange streaking with some stone inclusions			0.21-0.30
403	Natural	Light brown and blue-grey sandy-clay			
501	Topsoil	Dark grey-black sandy loam			0.30-0.33
502	Subsoil	Light grey sandy clay orange streaking with some stone inclusions			0.12-0.20
503	Natural	Light brown and blue-grey sandy-clay			
504	Fill of 505	Grey sandy clay with orange streaking and stone inclusions			
505	Cut	Tree bowl		1.50	0.20
601	Topsoil	Dark grey-black sandy loam			0.30
602	Natural	Light brown and blue-grey sandy-clay			
603	Fill of 604	Stone drain			
604	Cut	Drain aligned N-S, steep sides with flat base	2.90	0.35	0.25
605	Fill of 604	Redeposited natural			0.20
701	Topsoil	Dark grey-black sandy loam			0.25-0.29
702	Subsoil	Light grey sandy clay orange streaking with some stone inclusions			0.15-0.26
703	Natural	Light brown and blue-grey sandy-clay			
704	Fill of 706	Stone drain			
705	Fill of 706	Black organic sand			
706	Cut	Drain aligned N-S, steep sides and flat base	2.00	0.80	0.30
801	Topsoil	Dark grey-black sandy loam			0.25-0.30
802	Natural	Light brown and blue-grey sandy-clay			
803	Fill of 805	Stone drain			
804	Fill of 805	Black organic sand			
805	Cut	Drain aligned N-S, steep sides and flat base	6.10	0.40	0.35
901	Topsoil	Dark grey-black sandy loam			0.20-0.25
902	Subsoil	Light grey sand with orange streaking			0.15
903	Natural	Light brown and blue-grey sandy-clay			

Context Number	Type	Description	Length	width	Depth
1001	Topsoil	Dark grey-black sandy loam			0.13-0.20
1002	Subsoil	Light grey sand with orange streaking			0.15-0.20
1003	Natural	Light brown and blue-grey sandy-clay			
1004	Fill of 1005	Dark grey clay			
1005	Cut	Posthole		0.45	0.10
1006	Fill of 1007	Loose black loam			
1007	Cut	Stake hole		0.08	0.06
1008	Fill of 1009	Loose black loam			
1009	Cut	Stake hole		0.08	0.05
1010	Fill of 1011	Dark grey clay			
1011	Cut	Posthole		0.40	0.05
1012	Fill of 1013	Dark grey clay			
1013	Cut	Posthole		0.40	0.05
1014	Fill of 1015	Loose black loam			
1015	Cut	Stake hole		0.07	0.07
1016	Fill of 1017	Loose black loam			
1017	Cut	Stake hole		0.08	0.10
1018	Fill of 1019	Mid grey sandy-clay			
1019	Cut	Vegetation		0.30	0.10
1020	Fill of 1021	Dark grey clay			
1021	Cut	Posthole		0.30	0.10
1101	Topsoil	Dark grey-black sandy loam			0.20-0.30
1102	Subsoil	Light grey sand with orange streaking			0.10-0.20
1103	Natural	Light brown and blue-grey sandy-clay			
1104	Fill of 1105	Stone drain			
1105	Cut	Drain aligned N-S		0.80	
1201	Topsoil	Dark grey-black sandy loam			0.20
1202	Levelling layer	Loose black coal/slag with clay clumps and burnt material			0.40
1203	Levelling layer	Light grey-brown sandy-clay			0.10
1204	Subsoil	Light grey sand with orange streaking			0.10-0.20
1205	Natural	Light brown and blue-grey sandy-clay			
1206	Fill of 1207	Stone drain			
1207	Cut	Drain, aligned NW-SE	2.00	0.70	
1208	Fill of 1209	Stone drain			
1209	Cut	Drain aligned E-W	3.00	0.45	



Scale 1:20,000

Site location Fig 1



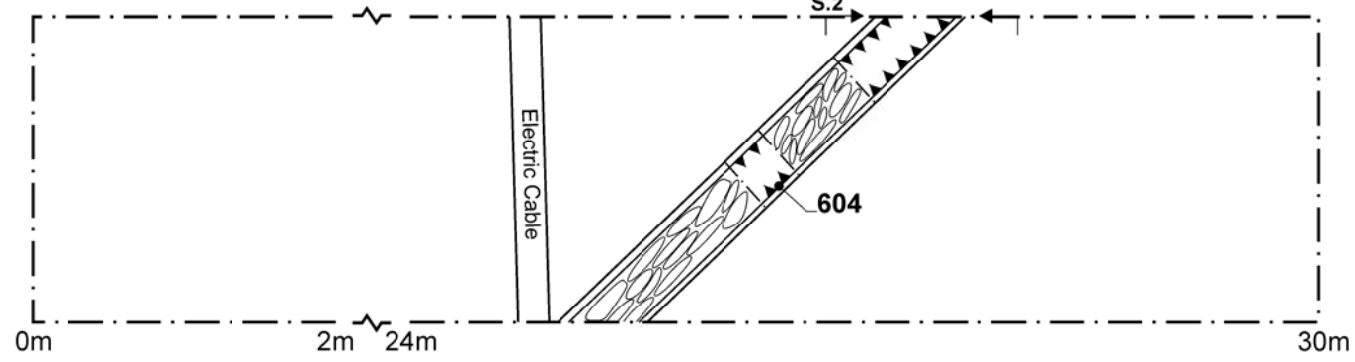
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General plan of trenches Fig 2

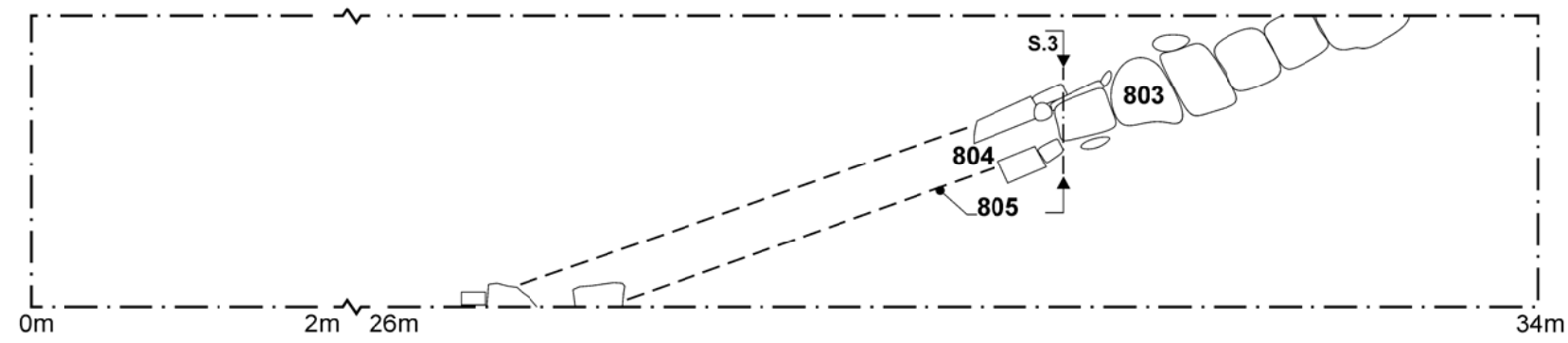
Trench 5



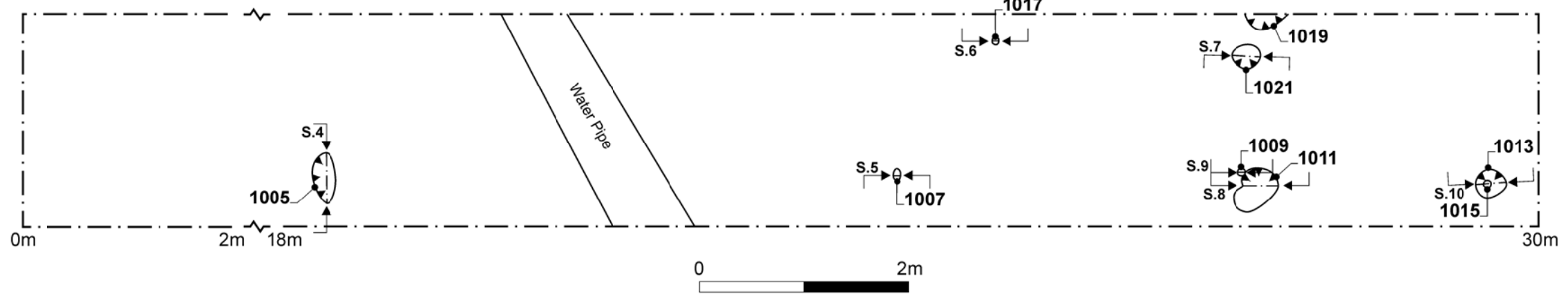
Trench 6



Trench 8

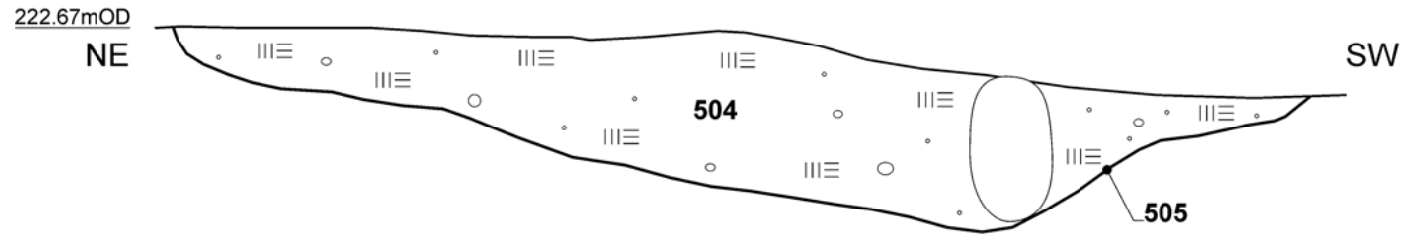


Trench 10

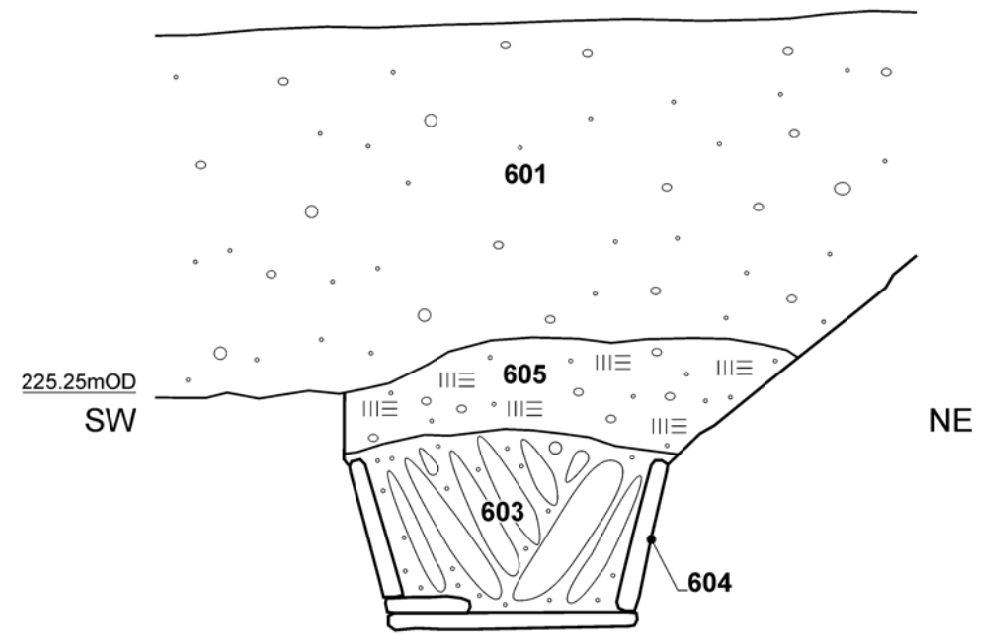


Plans of Trenches 5, 6, 8, & 10 Fig 3

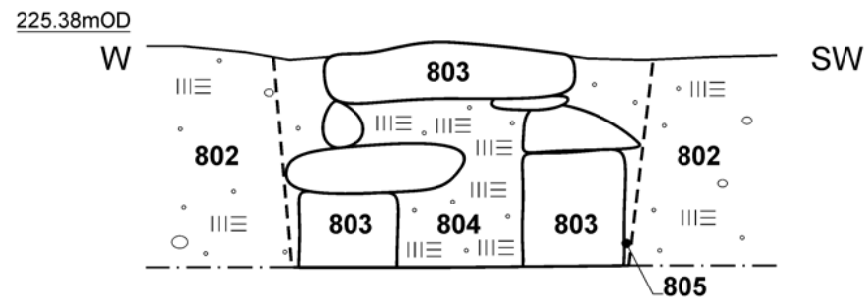
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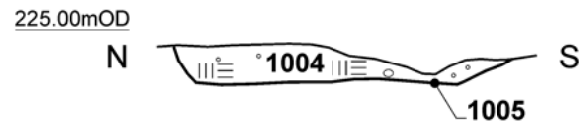
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Section 3 - Trench 8



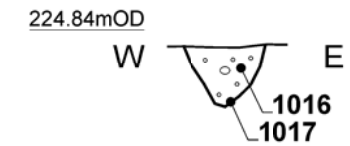
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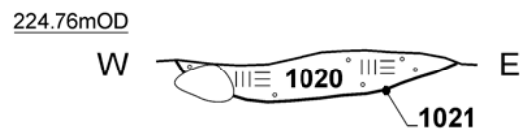
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Section 6 - Trench 10



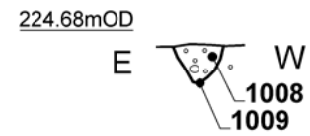
Section 7 - Trench 10



Section 8 - Trench 10



Section 9 - Trench 10



Section 10 - Trench 10

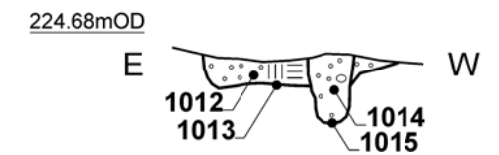




Plate 1: Drain [805], looking north.



Plate 2: Trench 10, looking west.