

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT:
TRIAL TRENCHING ON LAND SOUTH OF 50 BENWICK ROAD,
DODDINGTON, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

NGR: TL 3968 9085
Planning Reference: F/YR11/0124/F
AAL Site Code: DOBE 13
CHER Event Number: ECB3952
Oasis Number: allenarc1-160248



Report prepared for Mr David Oswald

By
Allen Archaeology Limited

Report Number AAL2013119

October 2013



Allenarchaeology



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Document Control

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Executive Summary

- An archaeological evaluation by trial trenching was undertaken by Allen Archaeology Limited for Mr David Oswald on land to the south of 50 Benwick Road, Doddington, Cambridgeshire as a condition of planning permission for a residential development.
- The site is situated to the west of the historic core of the village, in a landscape of later prehistoric and Roman activity.
- Two trenches were excavated in the footprint of the proposed development, exposing two small pits of probable modern date as well as two undated probable palaeochannels.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Allen Archaeology Limited was commissioned by Mr David Oswald to undertake an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching on land south of 50 Benwick Road in Doddington, Cambridgeshire, as a condition of planning permission for a residential development.
- 1.2 The site works and reporting conform to current national guidelines as set out in the Institute for Archaeologists '*Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluations*' (IfA 1999, revised 2001 and 2008), the regional guidelines in '*Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*' (Gurney 2003), a brief prepared by the Historic Environment Team of Cambridgeshire County Council (Gdaniec 2012) and a specification prepared by this company (AAL 2013). All relevant English Heritage guidelines on archaeological best practice were also followed (www.helm.org/server/show/nav.7740).
- 1.3 The documentary archive will be submitted to Cambridgeshire Museums Services within six months of the completion of the report, where it will be stored under the Event Number ECB 3952.

2.0 Site Location and Description

- 2.1 Doddington is situated in the administrative district of Fenland District Council, approximately 6km south-southwest of central March. The site is situated to the west of the village centre, on the south side of Benwick Road. It comprises a sub-rectangular block of land centred on NGR TL 3968 9085.
- 2.2 The local geology comprises bedrock deposits of undifferentiated West Walton Formation and Ampthill Clay Formation mudstones, with no superficial deposits recorded (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

3.0 Planning Background

- 3.1 A planning application was submitted in January 2011 for '*Erection of 4 x 2-storey 4-bed dwellings with garages*' (Planning Application Reference F/YR11/0124/F). The application was granted in June 2011 subject to conditions, including the undertaking of a programme of archaeological trial trenching in order to determine the archaeological potential of the proposed development area.

4.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 4.1 A search of the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (hereafter CHER) for a 500m radius from the central NGR identified a number of heritage assets of archaeological interest. Prehistoric and Romano-British activity is well represented in the wider landscape (Gdaniec 2011), although no finds of this date are recorded in the search area. The site is situated on the periphery of the historic core of the settlement, c.500m northwest of the 13th century parish church of St. Mary (CHER Reference MCB17088). Earthworks indicative of medieval ridge and furrow agriculture have been identified immediately to the west of the site, as well as to the north and south (CHER References 09674, 09676, 13006).

- 4.2 A number of archaeological interventions have been undertaken in the vicinity of the site. Evaluation at Ingles Lane, c.550m east-southeast of the site identified a number of pits, ditches and postholes of post-medieval to early modern date (CHER Reference CB15242). Evaluation of a proposed cemetery site in the adjacent field to the west of the site identified an undated gully and a ditch containing a single sherd of medieval pottery (CHER Reference MCB19304).

5.0 Methodology

- 5.1 The fieldwork was carried out on Wednesday 10th April 2013 by a team of experienced field archaeologists, supervised by Maria Piirainen. Two trenches were excavated with a tracked mini excavator fitted with a smooth ditching bucket. Trench 1 measured 20m x 2m and Trench 2 measured 15m x 2m.
- 5.2 A full written record of the archaeological deposits was made on standard AAL context recording sheets. Deposits were drawn to scale in section (at scale 1:20 and 1:50). Photography formed an integral part of the recording strategy, and all photographs incorporated scales, an identification board and directional arrow. A selection of these images has been included in Appendix 1.
- 5.3 Each deposit was allocated a unique identifier (context number), and accorded a written description, a summary of these are included in Appendix 2. Context numbers within square brackets represent cut features, e.g. ditch [102].

6.0 Results (Figures 2 – 4)

6.1 Trench 1 (Figure 3)

- 6.1.1 Trench 1 was located at the south end of the site and aligned approximately east - west. The uppermost deposit was topsoil 100, a 0.20m thick, dark grey brown, sandy silt with frequent angular flint fragments and modern brick and tile. Extending 0.15m from the southern baulk was a small feature [107], measuring c.1m wide and 0.3m deep. As it was not observed in the opposite section it is likely to be a pit or the terminus of a small linear feature, and contained small quantities of modern building material.
- 6.1.2 Feature [107] was cut through a 0.28m thick subsoil 101, of mid grey brown sandy silt with moderate pea grit and small rounded pebbles. It sealed two large linear features; [102] and [109], aligned broadly southeast to northwest. Ditch [102], at the eastern end of the trench measured approximately 6m in width and was 1.4m deep to the limit of excavation. It was not possible to excavate the feature any deeper to rising groundwater causing collapse of the trench edges. It contained three distinct undated naturally accumulated fills; primary fill 103 of plastic mid greyish blue silty clay with occasional organic material, light greyish brown sandy silt 104 and a light grey sandy silt with occasional pea grit and gravel, 105.
- 6.1.3 Ditch [109] was located at the west end of the trench and measured c.3.7m wide, and was in excess of 1.5m deep. Again any further excavation was precluded by rising groundwater and collapse of the trench sides. A similar sequence of undated natural silting was recorded. The sequence comprised; 110, a plastic mid greyish blue silty clay with occasional organic material, 111, firm light greyish brown sandy silt with occasional small flints, and 112, a grey sandy silt with occasional charcoal flecks and small stones.

6.1.4 Both ditches were cut through the natural geology 106 of firm yellow orange sandy silt with occasional flints.

6.2 Trench 2 (Figure 4)

6.2.1 Trench 2 was located in the northern part of the site aligned roughly north – south. The uppermost deposit, topsoil 200 was a dark greyish brown sandy silt with occasional gravel, measuring approximately 0.22m thick. It sealed a small steep sided pit or ditch terminus [203] extending 0.43m from the western baulk. It contained backfill 204 of firm, dark greyish brown sandy clayey silt with gravel and frequent charcoal flecks. Pottery from the feature included two sherds of 19th century whiteware, and a sherd of 16th to 18th century glazed red earthenware.

6.2.2 The pit was cut through layer 201 of moderately firm mid greyish brown clayey silt with occasional charcoal flecks, measuring c.0.22m thick. This sealed the natural geology 202, of moderately firm mid brownish yellow to orange clayey silt.

7.0 Discussion and Conclusions

7.1 The trial trenching exposed two substantial linear features, which could not be safely investigated due to rising water and unstable trenches. However, both features were in excess of 1.4m deep, and contained a similar sequence of natural alluvial deposits, which were devoid of artefacts. There is no evidence for these features on the First Edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1887, which shows an orchard covering much of the site, and as such they are likely to represent man made drainage features of an earlier date, or natural channels that had been infilled before the development of the orchards on the site in the 19th century.

7.2 The only other features recorded were two pits or ditch termini, both of which were directly below the topsoil and are likely to be of an early modern date.

8.0 Effectiveness of Methodology

8.1 The trial trenching was appropriate to the scale and nature of the site and development. It has confirmed the presence of a small number of possible natural and man made features of limited archaeological significance.

9.0 Acknowledgements

9.1 Allen Archaeology would like to thank Mr David Oswald for this commission and cooperation during the site works.

10.0 References

AAL, 2013, *Specification for an archaeological evaluation by trial excavation: Land to the south of 50 Benwick Road, Doddington, Cambridgeshire*. Unpublished project document

Brown, N. and Glazebrook J., 2000, *Research and Archaeology: A framework for the eastern counties, 2. research agenda and strategy*, East Anglian Archaeology, Occasional Paper no.8

English Heritage, 2006, *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*. Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England. London

Gdaniec., K., 2011, *Brief for Archaeological evaluation*. Unpublished document, Historic Environment Team, Cambridgeshire County Council

Glazebrook, J. (ed.), 1997, *Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties: 1 Resource Assessment*. East Anglian Archaeology, Occasional Paper 3

IfA, 1994 (revised 2001 and 2008), *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluations*, Institute for Archaeologists, Reading

Appendix 1: Colour Plates



Plate 1: General site shot from the adjacent field, looking south



Plate 2: General view of Trench 1 showing site conditions, looking east. Scales are 2m and 1m



Plate 3: West facing section of pit [203], looking east. Scales are 1m and 0.50m

Appendix 2: Pottery Report

By Dr Anne Irving

| Cxt | Cname | Full name | Form | NoS | NoV | W (g) | Part | Description | Date |
|-----|-------|------------------------|--------------|-----|-----|-------|------|---|--|
| 204 | GRE | Glazed Red Earthenware | Jar/ bowl | 1 | 1 | 15 | Base | Abraded | Mid 16 th to 18 th |
| 204 | WHITE | Modern Whiteware | Jar | 6 | 1 | 121 | Rim | Blue transfer print | 19 th |
| 204 | WHITE | Modern Whiteware | Jar/ bowl | 1 | 1 | 63 | Base | 'CE&M' - Cork, Edge and Malkin; Registered mark 31st May 1861 | Mid 19 th |

Three vessels were recovered from the site. One vessel, by Cork, Edge and Malkin, has a registered design mark from 1861; as this pottery ceased in 1871 this vessel must date to the mid 19th century.

No further work is required on the assemblage, which is suitable to be discarded.

Appendix 3: Context Summary List

Trench 1

| Context Number | Type | Description | Interpretation |
|----------------|-------|---|---------------------------------------|
| 100 | Layer | Dark greyish brown sandy silt with frequent angular flint fragments and CBM. Seals 101 | Topsoil |
| 101 | Layer | Mid greyish brown sandy silt with moderate pea grit and small rounded pebbles. Sealed by 100, seals 106, cut by [107] | Ground raising/levelling layer |
| 102 | Cut | SSE - NNW aligned linear cut with steep, irregular sides, base not exposed. Contains 103, 104, 105, cuts 106 | Possible boundary ditch/palaeochannel |
| 103 | Fill | Mid greyish blue silty clay with occasional organic inclusions. Sealed by 104 | Primary silting of [102] |
| 104 | Fill | Light greyish brown sandy silt. Sealed by 105, seals 103 | Secondary silting of [102] |
| 105 | Fill | Light grey sandy silt with occasional pea grit and gravel. Sealed by 101, seals 104 | Tertiary backfill of [102] |
| 106 | Layer | Firm yellow/orange sandy silt with occasional flint inclusions | Natural geology |
| 107 | Cut | Steep sided cut with rounded terminus and slightly concave base. Contains 108, cuts 101 | Possible pit/ditch terminus |
| 108 | Fill | Dark greyish brown firm sandy silt with occasional charcoal and modern brick fragments. Sealed by 100 | Backfill of cut [107] |
| 109 | Cut | Southeast to northwest aligned linear cut, steep sides, base not exposed. Contains 110, 111, 112, cuts 106 | Possible boundary ditch/palaeochannel |
| 110 | Fill | Soft mid greyish blue silty clay with occasional organic material within the matrix. Sealed by 111 | Primary fill of [109] |
| 111 | Fill | Light greyish brown sandy silt with occasional small flint fragments. Sealed by 112, seals 110 | Secondary fill of [109] |
| 112 | Fill | Mid grey sandy silt with occasional charcoal flecks and small stones. Sealed by 101, seals 111 | Tertiary fill of [109] |

Trench 2

| Context Number | Type | Description | Interpretation |
|----------------|-------|--|--------------------------------|
| 200 | Layer | Moderately firm dark greyish brown sandy silt with occasional gravel. Seals 201, 204 | Topsoil |
| 201 | Layer | Moderately firm mid greyish brown clay silt with occasional charcoal flecks. Sealed by 200, cut by [203] | Ground raising/levelling layer |
| 202 | Layer | Moderately firm mid brownish yellow to orange clayey silt with occasional flint and stone fragments. Sealed by 201 | Natural geology |
| 203 | Cut | Semi-circular with steep sides and a sharp break of slope to a flat base. Contains 204, cuts 201 | Pit or ditch terminus |
| 204 | Fill | Firm dark greyish brown sandy clayey silt with gravel and frequent charcoal flecks and occasional pot | Backfill of pit cut [203] |

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OASIS ID: allenarc1-160248

Project details

| | |
|--|---|
| Project name | Land south of 50 Benwick Road, Doddington, Cambridgeshire |
| Short description of the project | Two evaluation trenches exposed two early modern pits and two large undated ditches or palaeochannels |
| Project dates | Start: 10-04-2013 End: 10-04-2013 |
| Previous/future work | No / No |
| Any associated project reference codes | F/YR11/0124/F - Planning Application No. |
| Any associated project reference codes | DOBE 13 - Sitecode |
| Type of project | Field evaluation |
| Current Land use | Other 13 - Waste ground |
| Monument type | PITS Post Medieval |
| Monument type | DITCHES Uncertain |
| Significant Finds | POTTERY Post Medieval |
| Methods & techniques | ""Sample Trenches"" |
| Development type | Rural residential |
| Prompt | Planning condition |
| Position in the planning process | After full determination (eg. As a condition) |

Project location

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Country | England |
| Site location | CAMBRIDGESHIRE FENLAND DODDINGTON Land south of 50 benwixk Road, Doddington, Cambridgeshire |
| Study area | 0.30 Hectares |
| Site coordinates | TL 3968 9085 52 0 52 29 50 N 000 03 28 E Point |
| Height OD / Depth | Min: 1.00m Max: 2.00m |

Project creators

Name of Organisation Allen Archaeology Limited
 Project brief originator City/Nat. Park/District/Borough archaeologist
 Project design originator Chris Clay
 Project director/manager Chris Clay
 Project supervisor Maria Piirainen
 Type of sponsor/funding body Developer
 Name of sponsor/funding body Mr David Oswald

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No
 Digital Archive recipient Cambridgeshire County Archaeological Store
 Digital Archive ID ECB3952
 Digital Contents "none"
 Digital Media available "Images raster / digital photography","Text"
 Paper Archive recipient Cambridgeshire County Archaeological Store
 Paper Archive ID ECB3952
 Paper Contents "none"
 Paper Media available "Context sheet","Diary","Miscellaneous Material","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section","Unpublished Text"

Project bibliography

1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
 Title Archaeological Evaluation Report: Trial Trenching on land south of 50 Benwick Road, Doddington, Cambridgeshire
 Author(s)/Editor(s) Piirainen, M and Clay, C
 Other bibliographic details AAL2013119
 Date 2013
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 Place of issue or publication Lincoln
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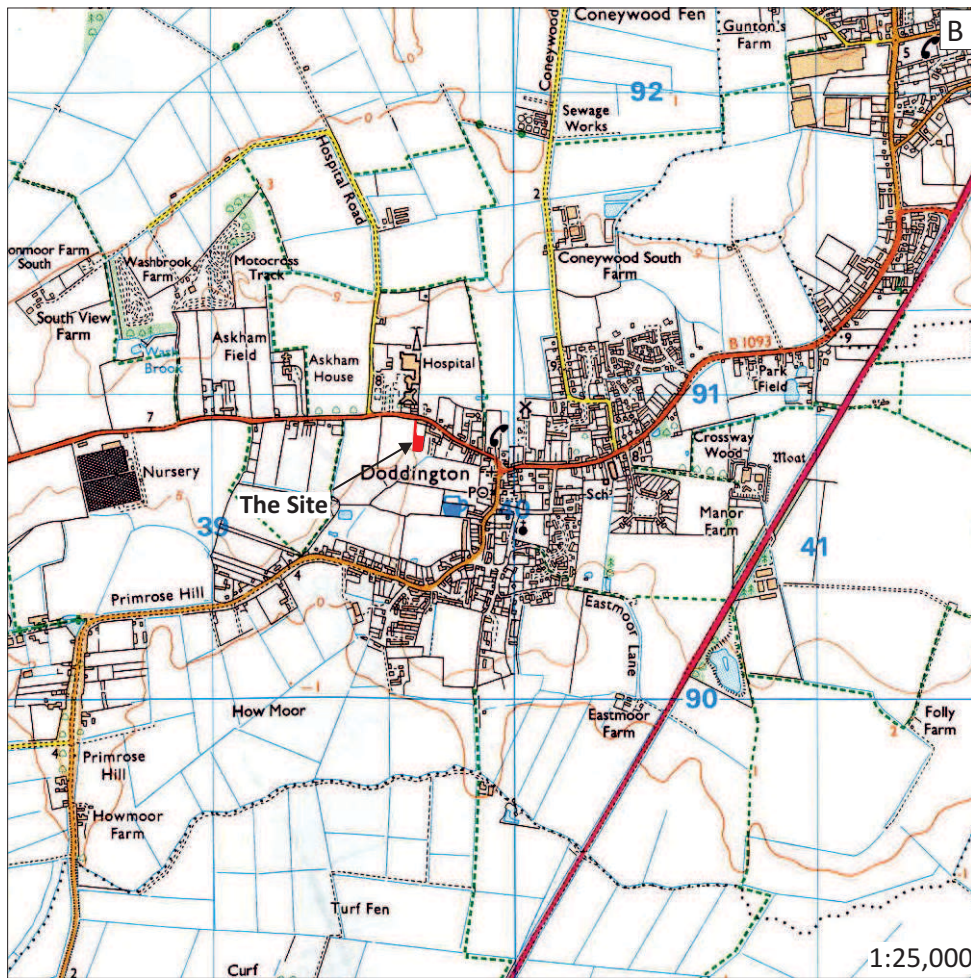
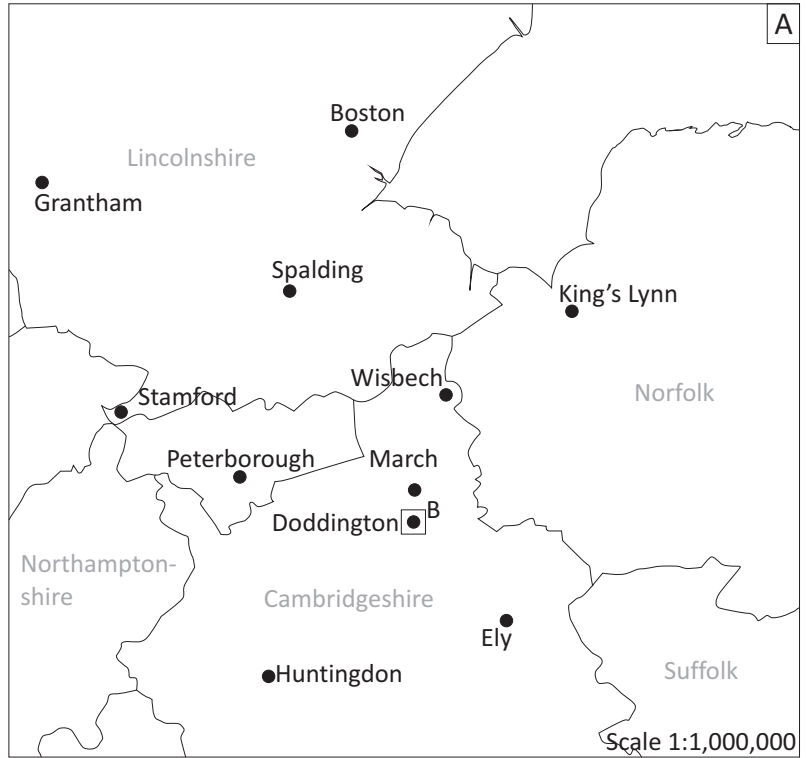
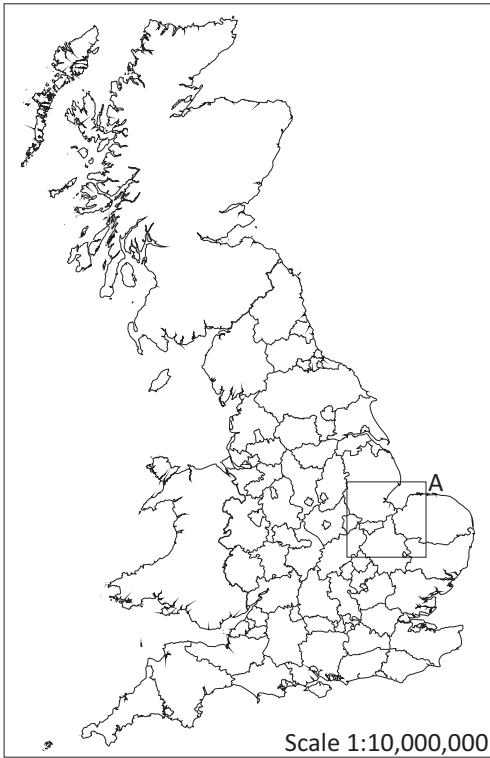


Figure 1: Site location in red

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| | |
|-----------|--|
| Site Code | DOBE 13 |
| Scales | 1:10,000,000 1:1,000,000 1:25,000 @ A4 |
| Drawn by | M Piirainen |
| Date | 02/10/13 |

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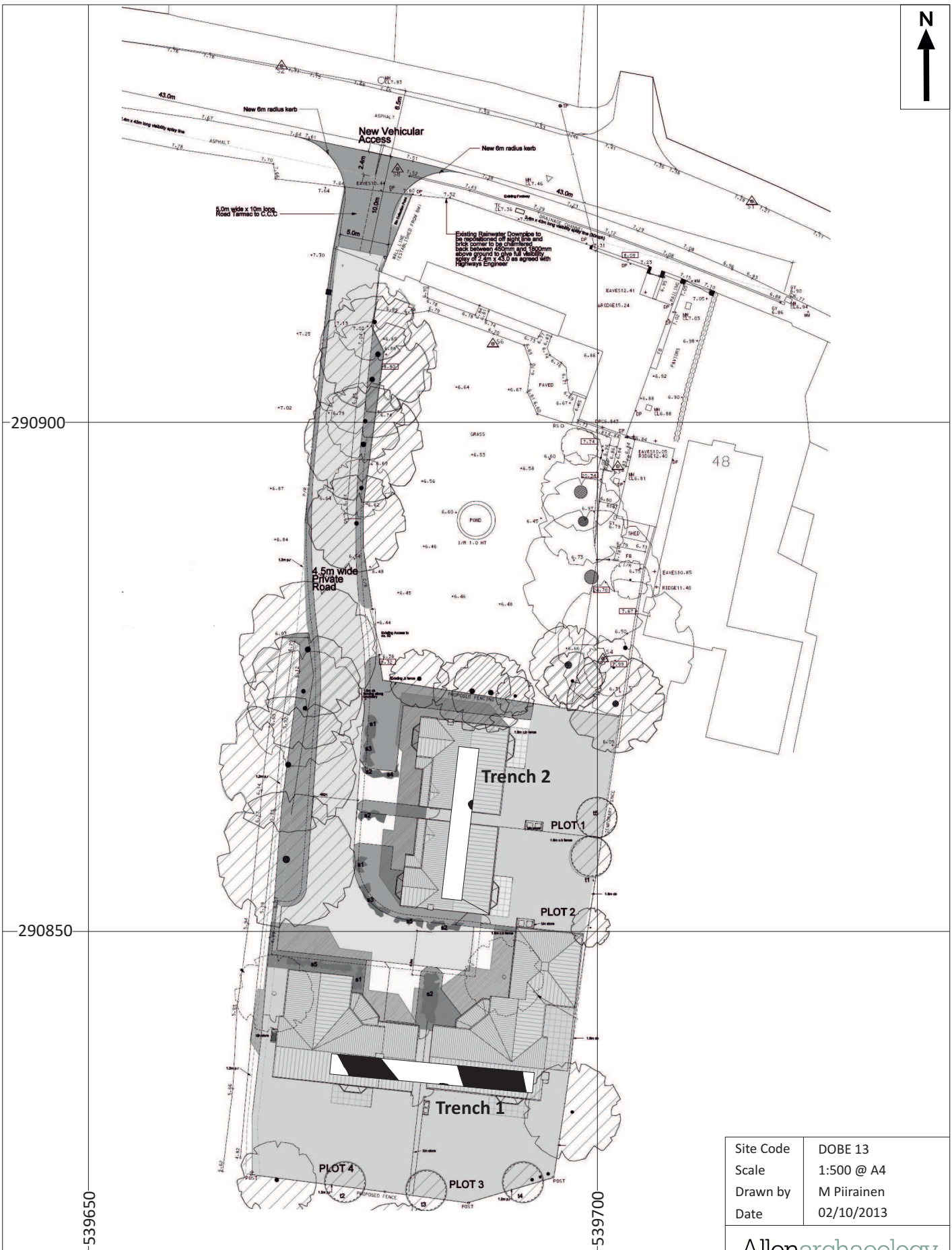
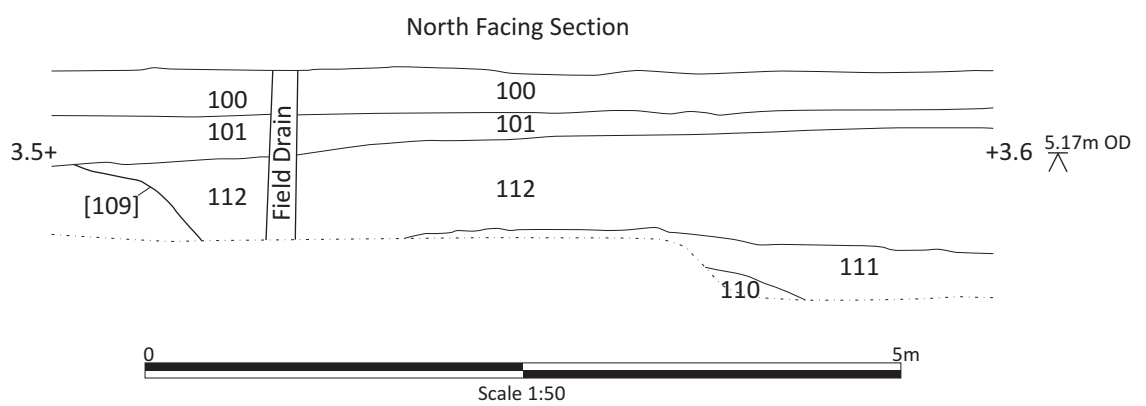
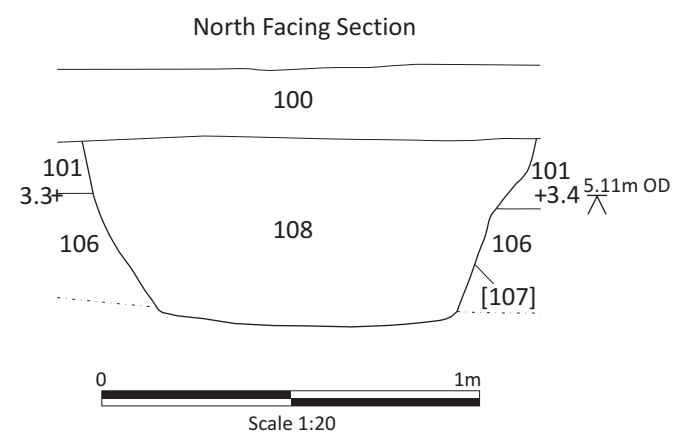
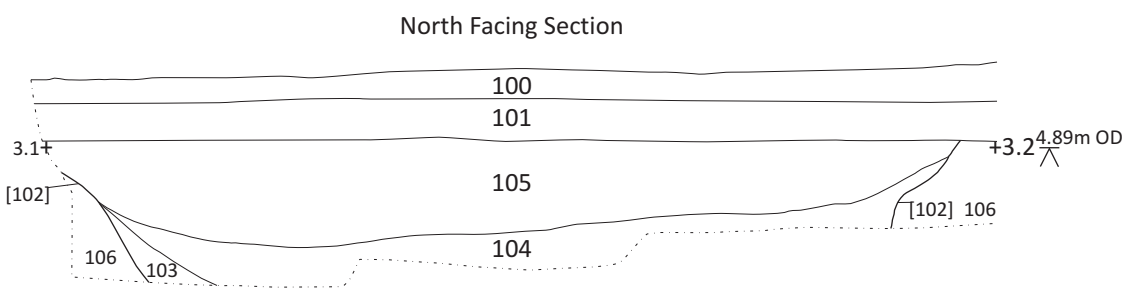
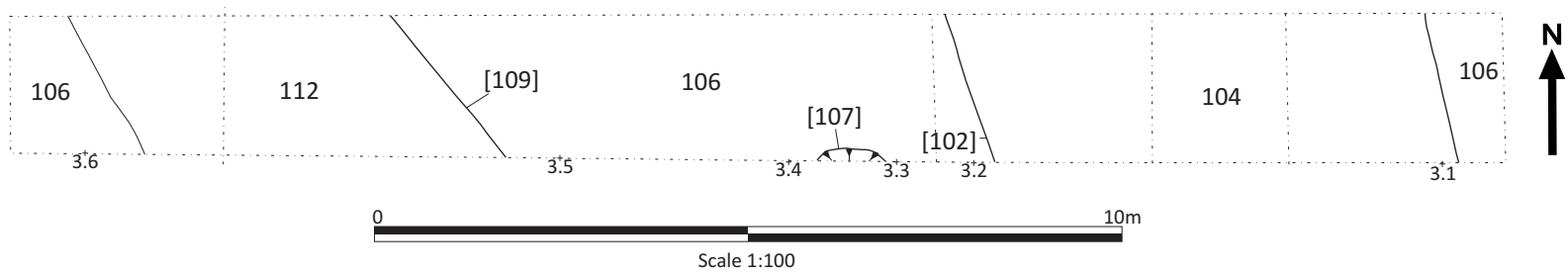


Figure 2: Trench location plan superimposed on proposed development plan, with archaeological features in solid black

| | |
|-----------|-------------|
| Site Code | DOBE 13 |
| Scale | 1:500 @ A4 |
| Drawn by | M Piirainen |
| Date | 02/10/2013 |

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| | |
|-----------|------------------------|
| Site Code | DOBE 13 |
| Scale | 1:100, 1:50, 1:20 @ A4 |
| Drawn by | A Chapman |
| Date | 02/10/13 |

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Figure 3: Plan and sections of Trench 1

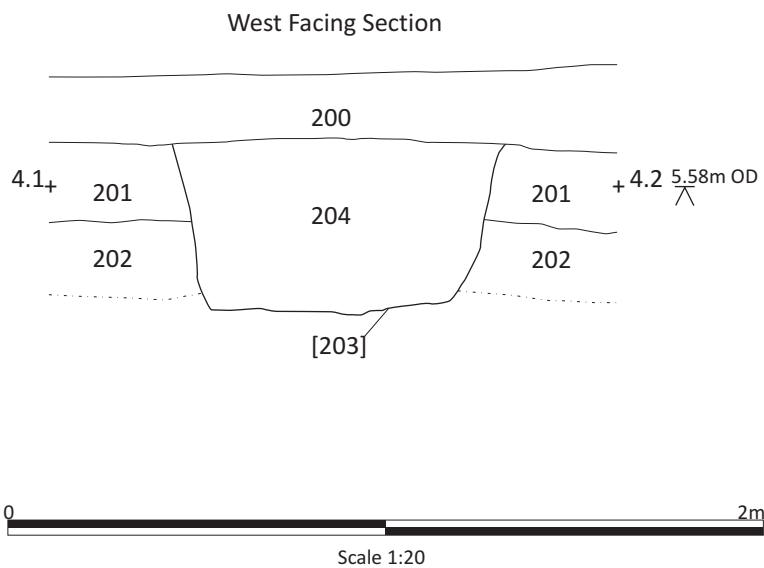
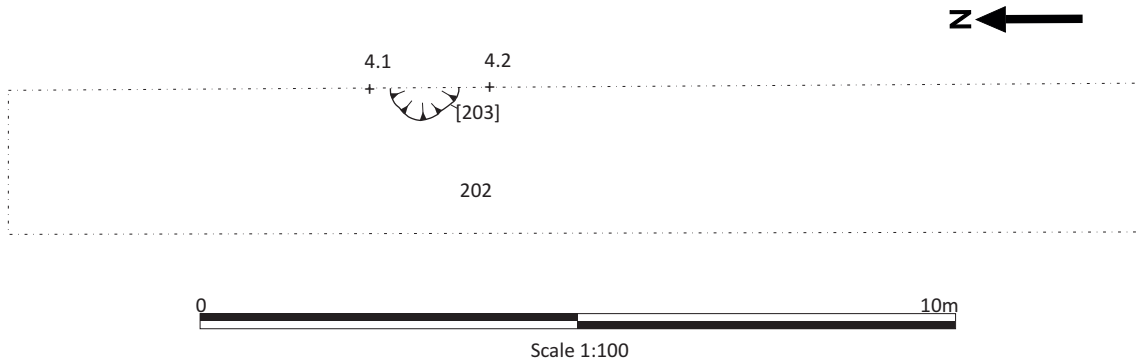


Figure 4: Plan and section of Trench 2

| | |
|-----------|---------------------|
| Site Code | DOBE 13 |
| Scale | 1:100 and 1:20 @ A4 |
| Drawn by | A Chapman |
| Date | 02/10/13 |

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