

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT:
FORMER ALLOTMENT GARDENS OFF MASEFIELD AVENUE, HOLMEWOOD, CHESTERFIELD**

NGR: SK 4305 6602
AAL Site Code: HOMA 14
Planning Reference: 11/00804/OL
OASIS Reference Number: allenarc1-188678



Report prepared for Prospect Archaeology Limited
On behalf of Gleeson Regeneration

By
Allen Archaeology Limited
Report Number 2014102

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Allenarchaeology



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Cover photograph: General view of overgrown site looking northwest

Executive Summary

- Allen Archaeology Limited was commissioned by Prospect Archaeology Limited on behalf of Gleeson Regeneration to undertake an archaeological evaluation to support a planning application for a proposed residential development of the former allotment gardens off Masefield Avenue, Holmewood, Chesterfield.
- The site probably lies within the area of the medieval manor of Williamthorpe and as such had the potential to contain buried heritage assets relating to this period.
- In recent years the land has been utilised for allotments which have subsequently been abandoned and grown wild.
- Eighteen 50m long trenches were excavated within the proposed development area, with no archaeological remains other than modern services and field drains uncovered.
- On the basis of the evaluation trenching it is considered that the site has a negligible archaeological potential and will not be impacted upon by the proposed development.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Allen Archaeology Limited (AAL) was commissioned by Prospect Archaeology on behalf of Gleeson Regeneration to undertake an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching in order to support a planning application for a residential development on land off Masefield Avenue.
- 1.2 The fieldwork, recording and reporting conforms 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) and the English Heritage document 'Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment' (English Heritage 2006). A method statement for the scheme was also followed (Prospect Archaeology 2014).
- 1.3 As the project produce archaeological features or any finds worthy of retention, there was no requirement to submit the project archive to the local museum service. Instead, a copy of the report will be submitted to the Derbyshire HER and an OASIS record will be completed.

2.0 Site Location and Description

- 2.1 Holmewood lies 8km southeast of Chesterfield in the District of Heath and Holmewood in Northeast Derbyshire. The site itself is located in the middle of a residential area north of the A6175 Heath Road, bounded to the north by the Holmewood Business Park.
- 2.2 The underlying bedrock geology for the proposed development area is Pennine Middle Coal Measures Formation mudstone, sandstone and ironstone, with no overlying superficial geology recorded (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

3.0 Planning Background

- 3.1 An outline planning application was granted for 'residential development on former allotments' (Ref 11/00804/OL). As part of the planning consent, condition 36 reads:

'No development hereby approved shall commence until an archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing. The scheme shall include an assessment of significance and research questions; and

- *The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording.*
- *The programme for post investigation assessment.*
- *Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording.*
- *Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation.*
- *Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation.*
- *Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation.*

Thereafter no development hereby approved shall take place other than in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation. The development shall not be

occupied until the archaeological site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation and the provision to be made for analysis, publication and dissemination for results and archive deposition has been secured’.

- 3.2 The approach adopted is consistent with the recommendations of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), with the particular chapter of relevance being ‘Chapter 12: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment’ (Department for Communities and Local Government 2012).

4.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 4.1 A preceding desk-based assessment for the site (May 2011) recorded a limited archaeological potential for activity predating the Norman Conquest. The assessment suggested that during the medieval period the site probably lay within the former Domesday Manor of Williamthorpe, although the precise extent of this manor is not clear.
- 4.2 The current site lies just south of the 18th century Williamthorpe Hall, which may have been built over the medieval manor. The hall itself survives only as a listed building now used as a farm shop (Grade II listed building ref 79373).
- 4.3 19th century mapping shows the development area as open fields, which changed to allotments in the early 20th century for the use of the expanding mining community.
- 4.4 Holmewood itself is a relatively modern settlement founded by the Williamthorpe Colliery Company in the early 20th century to provide workers housing for the miners brought in to work on the rich coal seams running through the region. The aerial ropeway of Williamthorpe Colliery crossed the site from at least 1938 – 1962, with supporting towers located within the site.
- 4.5 The colliery closed in 1970 due to the rising costs of deep seam mining, which led to mass unemployment in the village as most families still worked in the colliery. The nearby enterprise parks bounding the site were planned in the 1980s as part of a regeneration programme, while the allotments appear to have remained relatively unchanged since the early 20th century, despite having been abandoned for a number of years.

5.0 Methodology

- 5.1 A programme of trial trenching of the site was agreed with the Derbyshire Development Control Archaeologist. The works comprised 18 trenches, each measuring 50m long by 1.8m wide. The works were undertaken over a seven day period from the 4th to 12th August 2014, and supervised by Maria Piirainen of AAL.
- 5.2 The trenches were located on site using a Leica GS08 Net rover receiving RTK corrections. In each trench, topsoil, subsoil and underlying non-archaeological deposits were removed by a 360^o excavator with a toothless ditching bucket in spits no greater than 100mm in depth. The process was repeated until the first archaeologically significant or natural horizon was exposed. All further excavation was carried out by hand.
- 5.3 A full written record of the archaeological deposits was made on standard AAL trench recording sheets. Archaeological deposits were drawn in plan and section (at scale 1:50), with

Ordnance Datum heights being displayed on each class of drawing. Colour photography formed an integral part of the recording strategy, and all photographs incorporated scales, an identification board and directional arrow.

6.0 Results

6.1 All of the trenches revealed a similar sequence of natural clay geology overlain by silty clay subsoil varying between 0.1m and 0.33m, which was sealed by topsoil that varied between 0.2m and 0.72m in thickness. Only trenches containing modern features or truncation events are discussed in detail below, with the remaining trenches summarised in Appendix 1. The entire site was heavily overgrown and a considerable amount of vegetation was removed by machine prior to excavating each trench.

Trenches 1-4, 10, 12, 13 and 15 (Figures 2 and 3)

6.2 No archaeological remains were present, with the trenches displaying a sequence of natural clay overlain by subsoil and in turn sealed by topsoil.



Plate 1: Trench 1 looking northwest. Scales are 1 m

Plate 2: Southwest facing section of Trench 4. Scale is 1m



Trenches 5-8 (Figures 2 and 3)

6.3 Ceramic field drains were noted in Trenches 5-8, all aligned approximately north – south.

Trench 9 (Figures 2 and 3)

6.4 The backfilled trench for a modern water service was identified at the southwest end of this trench. This service had been previously identified in a topographic survey and the trenches initially moved to avoid the route. However, the presence of trees in the proposed trench location resulted in the trench again being moved to intersect the service trench.

Plate 3: Trench 9 looking southwest. Scales are 1m. The modern service is located at the far end of the trench



Trench 11 (Figures 2 and 3)

6.5 This trench contained a modern service (see Plate 4) and occasional modern rubbish mixed into the topsoil 1100 and subsoil 1101.



Plate 4: Trench 11 looking east with the service in the foreground. Both scales are 1m.

Trench 14 (Figures 2 and 3)

- 6.6 Trench 14 contained a significantly deeper thickness of topsoil 1401, measuring up to 0.72m, likely to be related to a localised levelling event.



Plate 5: Trench 14 looking northeast. Scales are both 1m

Trench 16 (Figures 2 and 3)

- 6.7 Trench 16 contained the remains of a concrete foundation, probably for a demolished allotment shed. No other features or deposits of archaeological interest were present.

Trench 17 (Figures 2 and 3)

- 6.8 This trench contained a modern service orientated approximately north – south and a modern pit containing discarded allotment waste.

Trench 18 (Figures 2 and 3)

- 6.9 Trench 18 contained three narrow service trenches and a square pit containing a modern pet burial.

7.0 Discussion and Conclusions

7.1 The trial trenching has identified a negligible archaeological potential for the proposed development area. Throughout the site, only modern services, land drains and features were exposed. It seems likely that the site has been open agricultural land until it was developed for use as allotments in the 20th century.

8.0 Effectiveness of Methodology

8.1 The trial trenching methodology was appropriate to the nature and extent of the proposed development. It has shown that there were no archaeological features or deposits present on the site, and that the proposed development will have a negligible impact upon the local archaeological resource.

9.0 Acknowledgements

9.1 Allen Archaeology Limited would like to thank Prospect Archaeology for this commission, on behalf of their client, Gleeson Regeneration.

10.0 References

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Prospect Archaeology, 2014, *Former Allotment Gardens Masefield Avenue Holmewood, Chesterfield Written Scheme of Investigation Evaluation Excavation*, Prospect Archaeology unpublished planning document

Appendix 1: Context Summary List

Trench 1

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
100	Layer	Loose dark grey clay silt, 0.2m thick seals 101	Topsoil
101	Layer	Firm mid grey silt clay, 0.32m thick, sealed by 100, seals 102	Subsoil
102	Layer	Firm orange grey clay, sealed by 101	Natural geology

Trench 2

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
200	Layer	Loose dark grey clay silt, 0.34m thick seals 201	Topsoil
201	Layer	Firm light orange brown silt clay, 0.3m thick, sealed by 200, seals 202	Subsoil
202	Layer	Firm orange grey clay, sealed by 201	Natural geology

Trench 3

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
300	Layer	Loose dark grey brown clay silt, 0.35m thick seals 301	Topsoil
301	Layer	Soft light brown orange silt clay, 0.33m thick, sealed by 300, seals 302	Subsoil
302	Layer	Firm orange grey clay with occasional gravel, sealed by 301	Natural geology

Trench 4

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
400	Layer	Loose dark grey brown clay silt, 0.3m thick seals 401	Topsoil
401	Layer	Soft light brown orange silt clay, 0.19m thick, sealed by 400, seals 402	Subsoil
402	Layer	Firm orange grey clay with occasional gravel, sealed by 401	Natural geology

Trench 5

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
500	Layer	Loose dark grey brown clay silt, 0.36m thick seals 501	Topsoil
501	Layer	Soft light brown orange silt clay, 0.18m thick, sealed by 500, seals 502	Subsoil
502	Layer	Firm orange grey clay with occasional gravel, sealed by 501	Natural geology

Trench 6

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
600	Layer	Loose dark grey brown clay silt, 0.23m thick seals 601	Topsoil
601	Layer	Soft light brown orange silt clay, 0.18m thick, sealed by 600, seals 602	Subsoil
602	Layer	Firm orange grey clay with occasional gravel, sealed by 601	Natural geology

Trench 7

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
700	Layer	Loose dark grey brown clay silt, 0.29m thick seals 701	Topsoil
701	Layer	Soft light brown orange silt clay, 0.14m thick, sealed by 700, seals 302	Subsoil
702	Layer	Firm orange grey clay with occasional gravel, sealed by 701	Natural geology

Trench 8

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
800	Layer	Loose dark grey brown clay silt, 0.33m thick seals 801	Topsoil
801	Layer	Soft light brown orange silt clay, 0.12m thick, sealed by 800, seals 302	Subsoil
802	Layer	Firm orange grey clay with occasional gravel, sealed by 801	Natural geology

Trench 9

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
900	Layer	Loose dark grey brown clay silt, 0.3m thick seals 901	Topsoil
901	Layer	Soft light greyish brown silt clay, 0.29m thick, sealed by 900, seals 302	Subsoil
902	Layer	Firm orange grey clay with occasional gravel, sealed by 901	Natural geology

Trench 10

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
1000	Layer	Loose dark grey brown clay silt, 0.33m thick seals 1001	Topsoil
1001	Layer	Soft light brown orange silt clay, 0.2m thick, sealed by 1000, seals 302	Subsoil
1002	Layer	Firm orange grey clay with occasional gravel, sealed by 1001	Natural geology

Trench 11

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
1100	Layer	Loose dark grey brown clay silt, 0.35m thick seals 1101	Topsoil
1101	Layer	Soft light brown orange silt clay, 0.1m thick, sealed by 1100, seals 302	Subsoil
1102	Layer	Firm orange grey clay, sealed by 1101	Natural geology

Trench 12

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
1200	Layer	Loose dark grey brown clay silt, 0.35m thick seals 1201	Topsoil
1201	Layer	Soft light brown orange silt clay, 0.24m thick, sealed by 1200, seals 1202	Subsoil
1202	Layer	Firm orange grey clay with occasional gravel, sealed by 1201	Natural geology

Trench 13

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
1300	Layer	Loose dark grey brown clay silt, 0.34m thick seals 1301	Topsoil
1301	Layer	Soft light brown orange silt clay, 0.14m thick, sealed by 1300, seals 302	Subsoil
1302	Layer	Firm orange grey clay with occasional gravel, sealed by 1301	Natural geology

Trench 14

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
1400	Layer	Loose dark grey brown clay silt with frequent stones, 0.72m thick seals 1401	Topsoil
1401	Layer	Soft light brown orange silt clay, 0.16m thick, sealed by 1400, seals 1402	Subsoil
1402	Layer	Firm orange grey clay with occasional gravel, sealed by 1401	Natural geology

Trench 15

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
1500	Layer	Loose dark grey brown clay silt with frequent stones, 0.28m thick seals 1501	Topsoil
1501	Layer	Soft light brown orange silt clay, 0.32m thick, sealed by 1500, seals 1502	Subsoil
1502	Layer	Firm orange grey clay with occasional gravel, sealed by 1501	Natural geology

Trench 16

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
1600	Layer	Loose dark grey brown clay silt with frequent stones, 0.31m thick seals 1601	Topsoil
1601	Layer	Soft light brown orange silt clay, 0.14m thick, sealed by 1600, seals 1602	Subsoil
1602	Layer	Firm orange grey clay with occasional gravel, sealed by 1601	Natural geology

Trench 17

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
1700	Layer	Loose dark grey brown clay silt with frequent brick and glass, 0.27m thick seals 1701	Topsoil
1701	Layer	Soft light brown orange silt clay, 0.17m thick, sealed by 1700, seals 1702	Subsoil
1702	Layer	Firm orange grey clay with occasional gravel, sealed by 1701	Natural geology

Trench 18

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
1800	Layer	Loose dark grey brown clay silt with frequent brick and glass, 0.42m thick seals 1801	Topsoil
1801	Layer	Soft light brown orange silt clay, 0.31m thick, sealed by 1800, seals 1802	Subsoil
1802	Layer	Firm orange grey clay with occasional gravel, sealed by 1801	Natural geology



Figure 1: Site location outlined in red
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Site Code	HOMA 14
Scales	1:10,000,000 1:1,000,000 1:25,000 @ A4
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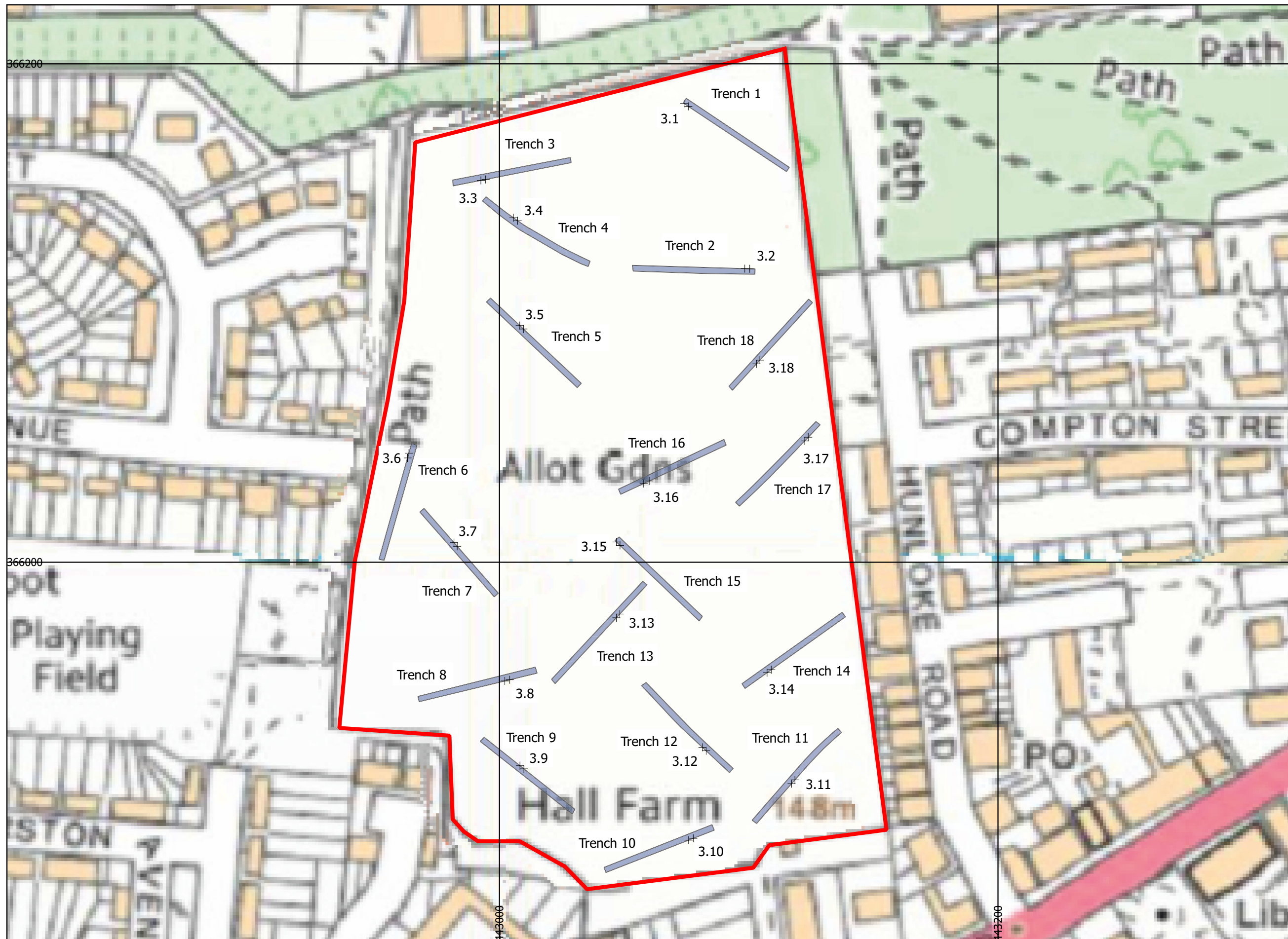
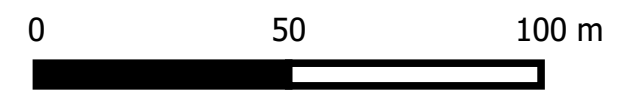


Figure 2: Plan of trenches, showing section locations (eg: 3.1), represented on Figure 3



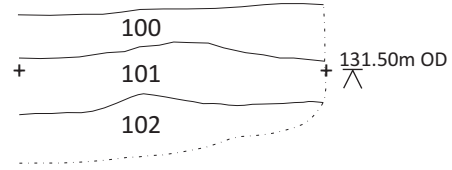
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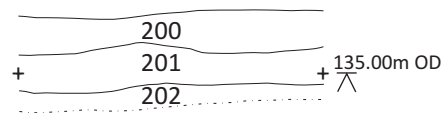
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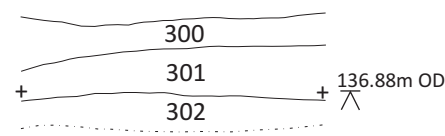
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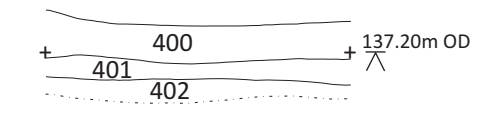
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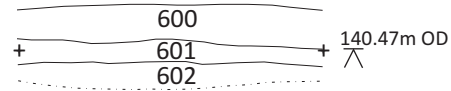
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Southwest Facing Section 3.5



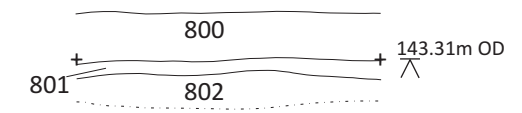
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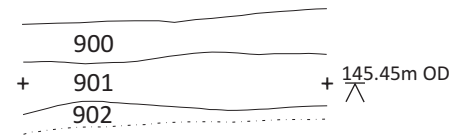
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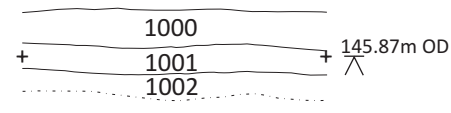
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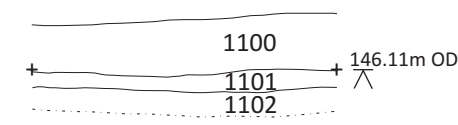
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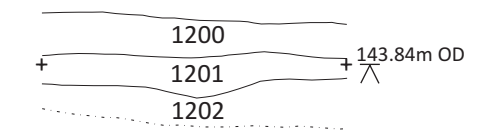
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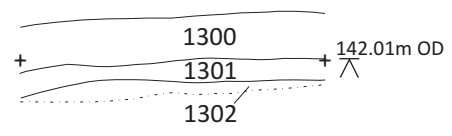
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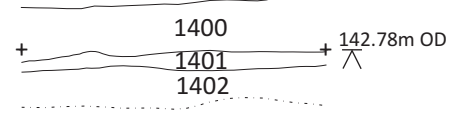
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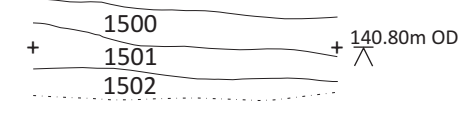
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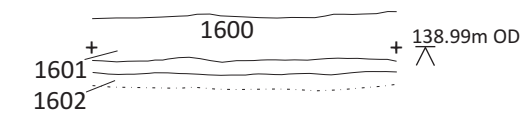
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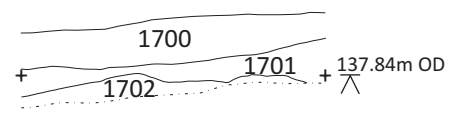
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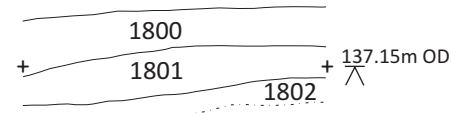
North Facing Section 3.16



Northwest Facing Section 3.17



Northwest Facing Section 3.18



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Figure 3: Representative Sections, located on Figure 2



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