

ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION REPORT:

BRISTOL HOUSE, OMBERSLEY, WORCESTERSHIRE

Planning Reference: 18/00259/FUL
NGR: SO 8441 6397
AAL Site Code: DROM 18
OASIS Reference Number: allenarc1-332111
HER Event Number: WSM70565



Report prepared for The Historic Environment Consultancy
on behalf of Newfield Homes

By
Allen Archaeology Ltd
Report Number AAL2018155

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Allenarchaeology



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Cover image: Land at Bristol House, Ombersley, looking northeast

Executive Summary

- Allen Archaeology Limited was commissioned by The Historic Environment Consultancy on behalf of Newfield Homes to undertake an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at Bristol House, Ombersley, Worcestershire, as a condition of planning consent for a residential development of two bungalows.
- The site lies in an area of limited archaeological interest, although the parish is documented in the early 8th century.
- Three trenches were excavated across the development area. Two were located within the footprints of the two proposed houses and another along the southern site boundary.
- No archaeological features or deposits were encountered in the three trenches excavated and there is no potential for the development to affect buried archaeological remains.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Allen Archaeology Limited was commissioned by The Historic Environment Consultancy, on behalf of Newfield Homes to undertake a programme of evaluation trenching as a condition of planning consent for a residential development on land at Bristol House, Ombersley, Worcestershire.
- 1.2 The fieldwork, recording and reporting was carried out in a manner consistent with current national guidelines, as set out in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists '*Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluations* (CIfA 2014), '*Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*' (Historic England 2015), and a specification prepared by The Historic Environment Consultancy (2018). All relevant Historic England guidelines on archaeological best practice were also followed.
- 1.3 The documentary archive generated by this excavation will be assembled in accordance with national guidelines in '*Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation*' (AAF 2011). The archive will be deposited with the relevant local authority museum service. A copy of the report will also be submitted to OASIS (Online AccesS to the Index of archaeological investigationS).

2.0 Site Location and Description

- 2.1 The site is located on a narrow strip of land behind Bristol House in the village of Ombersley. Bristol House is to the west of the main road through the village and south of Chapel Lane. Ombersley is within the Wychavon District Council area of Worcestershire, approximately 8.5km north of central Worcester. The land is currently under grass and in some areas paving slabs and tarmac, and is centred on NGR SO 8441 6397.
- 2.2 The underlying bedrock geology is Helsby Sandstone Formation Sandstone, with no superficial deposits recorded (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

3.0 Planning Background

- 3.1 Planning permission has been granted for a residential development comprising two bungalows (Planning reference 18/00259/FUL). Prior to the development the local planning authority requested the undertaking of a programme of evaluation trenching to assess the archaeological potential of the site.
- 3.2 A written scheme of investigation was prepared by The Historic Environment Consultancy for a programme of intrusive evaluation trenching (2018). The results of this work are intended to inform the decision on the need, design and extent of any subsequent archaeological mitigation works that may be required in advance of development.
- 3.3 The approach adopted is consistent with the recommendations of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), with the particular chapter of relevance being 'Chapter 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government 2018).

4.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 4.1 The first reference to Ombersley occurs with the granting of a charter to the Abbot Egwin of Evesham Abbey in 706 AD. It is also mentioned in the Domesday Book in 1086. Despite this, there is very little archaeological evidence for this activity and the online Historic Environment Record contains no entries within the vicinity of the development.
- 4.2 Bristol House is a Grade II Listed timber framed property of 17th century date, with 19th and 20th century alterations and additions (HER Reference WSM 20265).

5.0 Aims and Objectives

- 5.1 To determine whether or not archaeological remains exist within the development area
- 5.2 To assess the condition, survival and significance of any archaeological deposits or features found.
- 5.3 If archaeological features or deposits are encountered further more comprehensive investigations may take place if these are to be damaged by the development.

6.0 Methodology

- 6.1 The evaluation took place on 26th September 2018 to fulfil a planning condition following permission being granted for a residential development. The evaluation was conducted and the report was written by Ben Moore. The illustrations were prepared by Robert Evershed.
- 6.2 The three trenches were excavated across the footprints of the two bungalows and also against the southern boundary of the proposed development (Figure 2).
- 6.3 The evaluation trenches were accurately located using a Leica GS08 RTK NetRover GPS unit receiving RTK corrections.
- 6.4 In each trench, a wheeled excavator fitted with a smooth ditching bucket was used to remove topsoil and any underlying non-archaeological deposits in spits no greater than 0.10m thick. The process was repeated until the first archaeologically significant or natural horizon was exposed and all further excavation was carried out by hand. Machine excavation was monitored at all times by an experienced field archaeologist.
- 6.5 A full written record of the archaeological deposits was made on standard AAL context recording sheets. Deposits were drawn in section at an appropriate scale (1:20), with OD heights being displayed on each class of drawing. Colour photography formed an integral part of the recording strategy with all photographs incorporating scales, an identification board and directional arrow, as appropriate.

7.0 Results

Trench 1

- 7.1 Trench 1 was located towards the northwest end of the development area within the footprint of the westernmost of the two bungalows (Figure 2, Plate 1). It was aligned east-west and was 18m long and 1.8m wide.
- 7.2 The trench was excavated to the top of natural geology, comprising reddish brown sand 102, a maximum of 1m below current ground level. This was overlain by between 0.1m and 0.7m of light brown silty sand levelling material 101 and 0.34m of soft light grey sandy silt topsoil 100 (Figure 3). The depth of the deposit below the topsoil increased markedly towards the western end of the trench perhaps suggesting levelling. No archaeological features or deposits were observed.



Plate 1: Trench 1, facing West, 2 x 1m scales

Trench 2

- 7.3 Trench 2 ran along the southern boundary of the site and was 18m in length and 1.8m wide (Plate 2). The trench was excavated onto orange and red sand natural geology 202 at a maximum of 0.6m below the current ground surface. This was overlain by a 0.3m deep layer of friable mid to light brown material 201 and 0.3m of light greyish brown topsoil (Figure 3).
- 7.4 No archaeological features or deposits were encountered but at the eastern end of the trench were two modern pits containing concrete and the remains of what appeared to be a demolished greenhouse.



Plate 2: Trench 2 facing West, 2 x 1m scales

Trench 3

7.5 Trench 3 was located within the footprint of the easternmost bungalow towards the northeast of the development area (Figure 2). It was aligned east-west and was 16m long and 0.8m wide. It was excavated onto natural red and orange sand geology 302, 0.62m below current ground level. This was overlain by 0.2m of mid brown material 301 and light greyish brown topsoil 300. Over the eastern half of the trench, concrete paving slabs 303 had been lain above the topsoil (Figure 3).



Plate 3: Trench 3 facing west, 2 x 1m scales

- 7.6 No archaeologically significant deposits or features were found although two metal water pipes were encountered, one at the western end of the trench and another towards the centre.

8.0 Discussion and Conclusions

- 8.1 The stratigraphic sequence across the three trenches excavated did not show any significant variations apart from the variable depth of the subsoil in Trench 1, consisting of the natural geology overlain by levelling material and topsoil. It seems likely that the land had been used for cultivation and animal grazing for a considerable period of time, with no evidence of pre-modern anthropogenic activity.
- 8.2 Due to the nature of the deposits encountered there is no potential for the development to impact upon archaeological remains.

9.0 Effectiveness of Methodology

- 9.1 The programme of trial trenching was appropriate for the nature and extent of the archaeological features encountered. It has indicated that the development will not impact upon any archaeological remains.

10.0 Acknowledgements

- 10.1 Allen Archaeology would like to thank The Historic Environment Consultancy and Newfield Homes for commissioning the project.

11.0 References

AAF, 2011, *Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation*, Archaeological Archives Forum

CIfA, 2014, *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluations*, Institute for Archaeologists, Reading

The Historic Environment Consultancy 2018, *Written Scheme of Investigation, Archaeological Evaluation, Land at Bristol House*. Unpublished report

Historic England 2016, *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: MoRPHE*, London: Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2018, *National Planning Policy Framework*. London: HMSO

Appendix 1: Context Summary List

Trench 1

Context	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Thickness/depth (m)	Interpretation
100	Layer	Friable light greyish brown sandy silt	18m	1.8m	0.34m	Topsoil
101	Layer	Compacted light brown silty sand	18m	1.8m	0.10m – 0.70m	Levelling layer
102	Layer	Reddish brown sand with clay patches	18m	1.8m	N/A	Natural geology

Trench 2

Context	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Thickness/depth (m)	Interpretation
200	Layer	Friable light greyish brown sandy silt	18m	1.8m	0.3m	Topsoil
201	Layer	Compacted light brown silty sand	18m	1.8m	0.3m	Levelling material
202	Layer	Reddish brown sand	18m	1.8m	N/A	Natural geology

Trench 3

Context	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Thickness/depth (m)	Interpretation
300	Layer	Friable light greyish brown sandy silt	18m	1.8m	0.3m	Topsoil
301	Layer	Compacted light brown silty sand	18m	1.8m	0.2m	Levelling material
302	Layer	Reddish brown sand with clay patches	18m	1.8m	N/A	Natural geology
303	Layer	Concrete paving slabs	8m	1.8m	0.04m	Yard surface

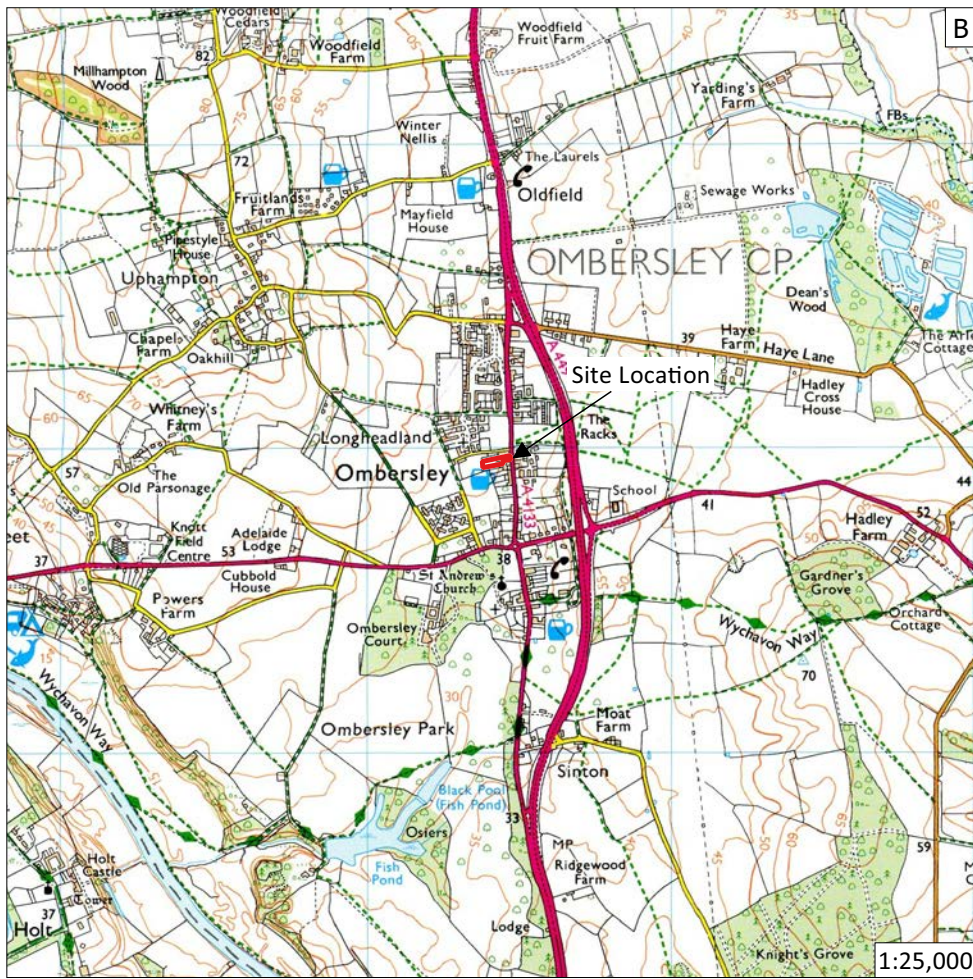
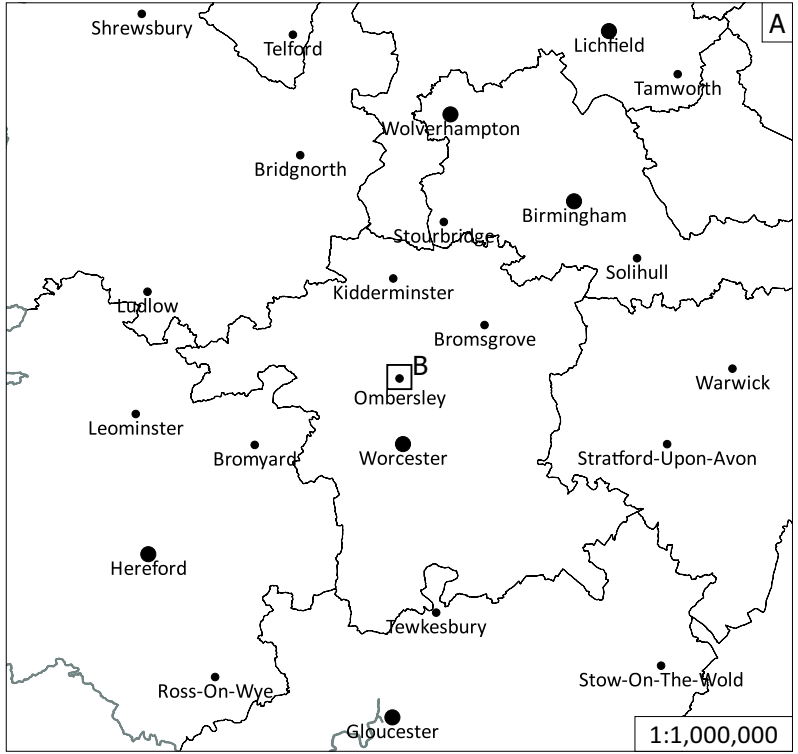
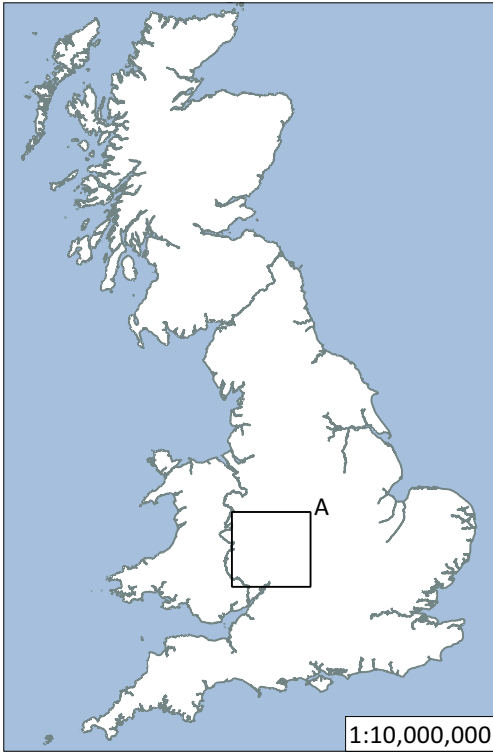


Figure 1: Site location outlined in red

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Site Code	DROM 18
Scale	1:10,000,000 1:1,000,000 1:25,000 @ A4
Drawn by	R Evershed
Date	29/10/2018

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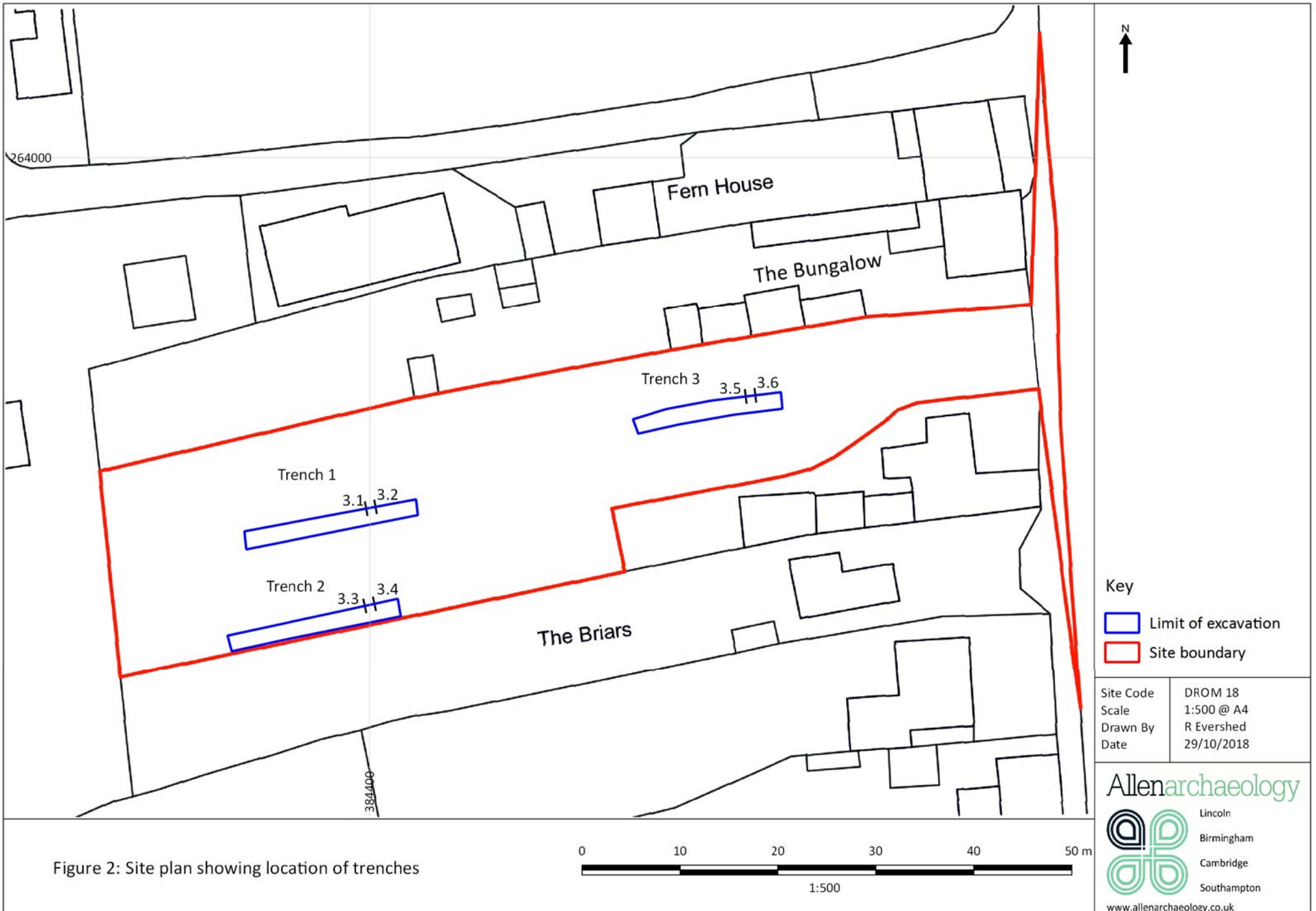
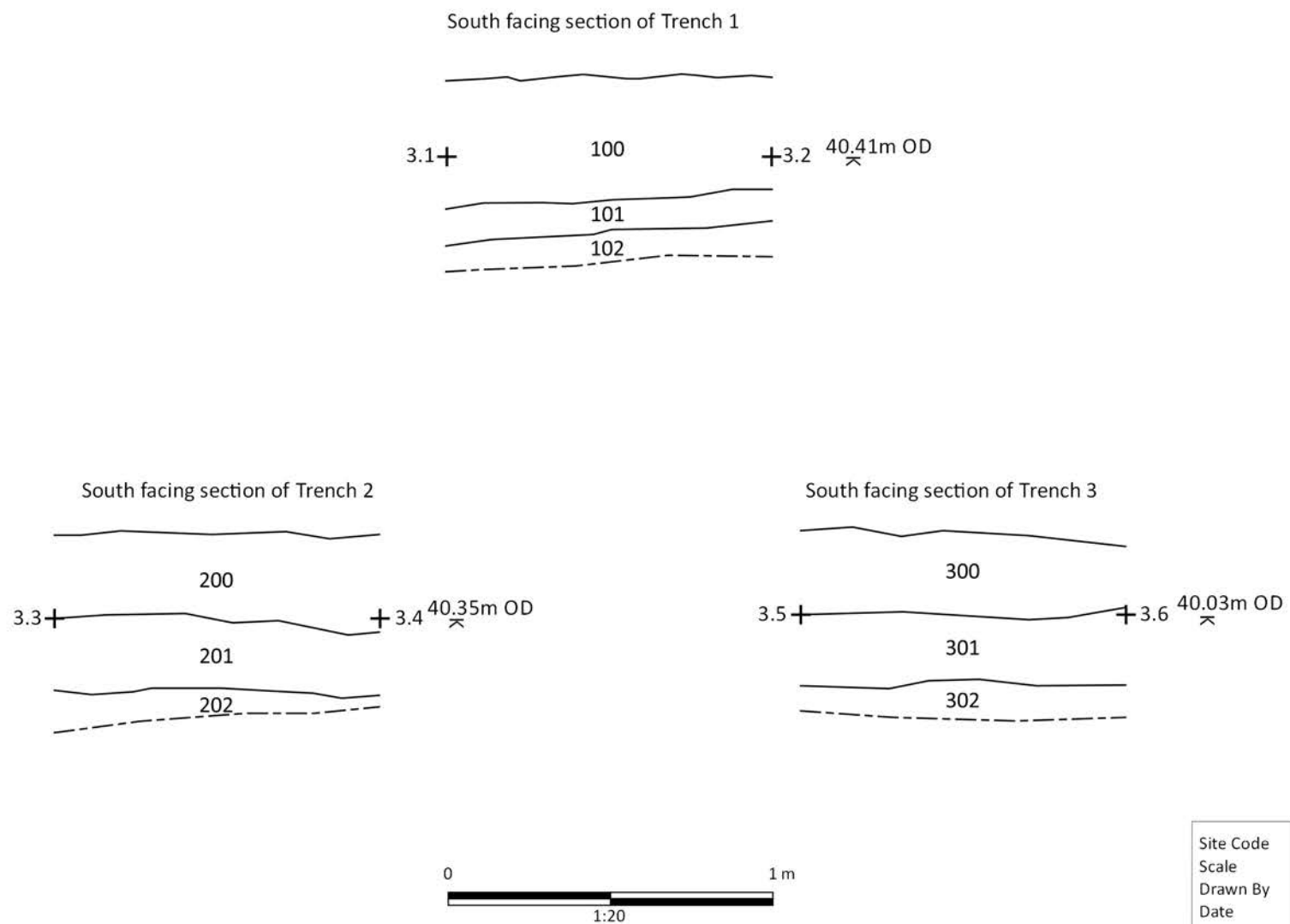


Figure 2: Site plan showing location of trenches



Site Code	DROM 18
Scale	1:20 @ A4
Drawn By	R Evershed
Date	29/10/2018

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Figure 3: Representative sections of trenches



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