

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND RECORDING REPORT:**

**WHITEOAKS, HILL TOP, REDDITCH, WORCESTERSHIRE**

Planning Reference: 19/00237/FUL  
NGR: SP 01820 66257  
AAL Site Code: REHT 20  
Museum Accession code: WSM73536  
OASIS Reference Number: allenarc1-409258



Report prepared for Wendy Whitby

By  
Allen Archaeology Ltd  
Report Number AAL 2020133

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*Cover image: General view of site, looking northwest*

## **Executive Summary**

- Wendy Whitby commissioned Allen Archaeology Limited to undertake a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording during groundworks associated with the demolition of an existing garage and erection of a detached house and creation of a new access and driveway for Whiteoaks, Hill Top, Redditch, Worcestershire, as a condition of planning consent.
- The proposed development area is located c.2.70km southwest of the historic core of Redditch, in an area identified as having the potential for medieval settlement.
- The monitored groundworks comprised areas associated with a basement room for the new dwelling, a service trench and a soakaway pit.
- The archaeological monitoring recorded only a single undated pit, sealed by a layer of made ground.

## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Wendy Whitby commissioned Allen Archaeology Limited (AAL) to undertake a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording as a condition of planning consent for the demolition of an existing garage and erection of a detached house and creation of a new access and driveway for Whiteoaks, Hill Top, Redditch, Worcestershire.
- 1.2 The fieldwork, recording and reporting confirms to current national guidelines, as set out in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists '*Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief*' (ClfA 2020), the Historic England document '*Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*' (Historic England 2015), local guidelines in '*Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological Projects in Worcestershire*' (WCC 2019a) and a specification produced by this company (AAL 2020).
- 1.3 The archive will be prepared following the '*Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives*' (ClfA 2014) and in accordance with the local guidelines in '*Museums Worcestershire. Depositing Archaeological Archives*' (WCC 2019b). The archive will be deposited with Museums Worcestershire within 12 months of the completion of the report, under the accession code WSM73536.

## 2.0 Site Location and Description

- 2.1 Hill Top is situated in Redditch, in Worcestershire, England within the district of Webheath, and located to the south of the village of Callow Hill. Whiteoaks is located on the north side of Hill Top, centred on NGR SP 01820 66257.
- 2.2 The local bedrock geology comprises the Mercia Mudstone Group - mudstone, sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 201 to 252 million years ago in the Triassic Period, with Till, Mid Pleistocene – diamicton overlying superficial geology. (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>)

## 3.0 Planning Background

- 3.1 Planning permission (ref 19/00237/FUL) has been granted for 'demolition of existing garage and erection of a detached house and creation of a new access and driveway for Whiteoaks.'

- 3.2 Condition 9 of the consent stated:

*9) No development shall take place until a programme of archaeological work including a Written Scheme of Investigation for 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:*

*a) The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording.*

*b) The programme for post investigation assessment.*

*c) Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording.*

*d) Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation*

*e) Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation*

*f) Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation. Reason: In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.*

- 3.3 The approach adopted is consistent with the guidelines that are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2019), and with Policy 36 of the *Borough of Redditch Local Plan No. 4* (adopted January 2017) which states:

*Policy 36*

*36.2 Designated heritage assets including listed buildings, structures and their settings; conservation areas; and scheduled monuments, will be given the highest level of protection and should be conserved and enhanced. Non-designated heritage assets, nationally important archaeological remains and locally listed heritage assets, and their settings will also need to be conserved and enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance and contribution to the historic environment.*

*36.3 Heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and those at risk should be protected. The sensitive adaptive reuse of buildings at risk will be encouraged where they may secure the future of a heritage asset. Proposals that will lead to substantial harm to or loss of significant heritage assets will not be permitted. Where there is to be a loss of a heritage asset that has been agreed, developers are required to record, archive and make information about the asset publicly accessible.*

*36.4 Heritage-led regeneration will be encouraged, particularly when related to the Town Centre Strategic Site, but also at any other site of historic value. Proposals which aim to realise the leisure and tourism potential of the historic environment will also be encouraged where these will result in enhancements to heritage assets and/ or enhancement of the wider historic environment.*

*36.5 Applications for development affecting any heritage asset or its setting must be accompanied by a heritage statement. The level of detail should be proportionate to the significance of the heritage asset and the likely level of impact. Where a development site includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, developers must submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation. Where appropriate, development proposals will be expected to have regard to the Historic Environment Assessment for Redditch Borough.*

## **4.0 Archaeological and Historical Background**

4.1 Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service have noted that 'The proposed development area (PDA) is located on the north side of what is now called Hill Top, in an area where the settlement pattern is of medieval origin. The earliest map showing the lane (WSM21768) is an 1813 Ordnance Surveyors' drawing and it is also marked on the Tardebigge tithe map of 1839, where it is listed as owned by George Bolton Ladbury. To the north of the application site earthwork remains of medieval and later date including a holloway, ridge and furrow and a former quarry have previously been identified (WSM21764), while the presence of a number of fields with 'black' in their names just to the south and west of the PDA also suggests previous occupation here. 'Black' field names are often associated with areas of intense occupation, usually Roman, as ploughing over these settlements frequently brings up dark soil. Consequently it is judged that the PDA has the potential to contain as yet unknown heritage assets' (WAAS, 2017)

## **5.0 Aims and Objectives**

5.1 The purpose of the archaeological monitoring and recording was to allow the preservation by record of the archaeological resource within the proposed development area by gathering evidence to establish the presence/absence, nature, date, depth, quality of survival and importance of any archaeological deposits across the areas affected by development.

## **6.0 Methodology**

6.1 The scheme of archaeological works involved monitoring of all ground disturbances with the ability to stop and fully record archaeological features. The fieldwork was undertaken by an experienced field archaeologist between the 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

6.2 All groundworks were carried out by a back-acting mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket. Excavation of identified archaeological features was carried out by hand, using appropriate tools.

6.3 A full written record was made on standard context record sheets and plans and sections were recorded at an appropriate scale (1:20 or 1:50). Each deposit, layer or cut was allocated a unique identifier (context number) and accorded a written description. A summary of all contexts has been included in Appendix 1.

6.4 Digital photography formed an integral part of the recording strategy and photographs incorporated scales, an identification board and directional arrow.

## 7.0 Results

- 7.1 The areas subject to ground reduction comprised an area of c. 40m<sup>2</sup> for the basement of the proposed new dwelling, a service trench c. 8.5m in length and 0.75m wide, and a 2.68m x 2.34m area for a soakaway pit (Figure 2).
- 7.2 In the basement and pipe trench areas the natural geology 104, comprising light orange brown sand, was recorded at a maximum level of 142.30m AOD. Bands of reddish brown sand 105 and clay 106 within the sand deposit were interpreted as variations in the natural (Error! Reference source not found.).



*Plate 1: Northeast-facing representative section of basement area. 1m scale*

- 7.3 In the basement and pipe trench areas the natural geology was overlain by a 0.20m thick deposit 101 of subsoil and a 0.45m thick layer 100 of topsoil. No archaeologically significant deposits or features were identified within the areas of the basement or pipe trench.
- 7.4 In the area excavated for the soakaway pit, a possible cut feature [108] was recorded in the southeast facing section (Plate 2). The feature was over 2.61m in width and was not recorded in the northeast facing section of the soakaway, suggesting that it was a discrete feature such as a pit, rather than a linear feature. It was not possible to determine its extent in plan due to rising groundwater. The single fill 103 of the feature comprised a sterile mottled orange/light grey sandy clay.



*Plate 2: Southeast-facing section soakaway pit. 1m scale*

- 7.5 The fill 103 of the possible cut feature recorded in the area of the soakaway was sealed by a 0.25m thick made ground deposit, 102, which was overlain by subsoil 101 and topsoil 100, as recorded elsewhere on the site.

## **8.0 Discussion and Conclusions**

- 8.1 The archaeological monitoring identified no archaeologically significant deposits or features. The single possible cut feature, recorded in the area of the soakaway pit, was undated, and as such the interpretive potential is limited.

## **9.0 Effectiveness of Methodology**

- 9.1 The archaeological monitoring and recording methodology employed was appropriate to the scale and nature of the proposed development and has identified deposits of negligible archaeological interest.

## **10.0 Acknowledgements**

- 10.1 Allen Archaeology Limited would like to thank Wendy Whitby for this commission.



## 11.0 References

AAL, 2020, *Specification for an Archaeological Watching Brief: Whiteoaks, Hill Top, Redditch, Worcestershire B97 5PQ*, Allen Archaeology Limited unpublished document

CIfA, 2014, *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, Reading

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Historic England, 2015, *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*. Historic England

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2019, *National Planning Policy Framework*. London: Department for Communities and Local Government

WAAS, 2017, Unpublished document, Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service

WCC, 2019a, *Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological Projects in Worcestershire*, Worcestershire County Council

WCC, 2019b, *Museums Worcestershire. Depositing Archaeological Archives*, Worcestershire County Council

## Appendix 1: Context Summary List

Context	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Thickness/depth (m)	Interpretation
100	Layer	Friable light brown silty sand with occasional rounded pebble inclusions	-	-	0.45	Topsoil
101	Layer	Compact dark brown slightly clayey silty sand with occasional rounded pebbles and very occasional flecks of charcoal	-	-	0.20	Subsoil
102	Layer	Compact light greyish brown slightly clayey silty sand with very occasional flecks of charcoal	-	-	0.25	Made ground
103	Fill	Firm mottled orange/light grey sandy clay	-	>2.58	>0.44	Backfill of [108], poss redeposited natural
104	Layer	Friable light brownish grey coarse sand	-	-	>0.54	Natural geology
105	Layer	Friable mid reddish brown coarse sand with occasional gravel inclusions	-	0.50	-	Natural geology
106	Layer	Firm mottled orange/light grey clay	-	1.15	-	Natural geology
107	Layer	Friable mottled dark brown/orange/light grey silty sand with occasional rounded pebble inclusions	-	-	-	Made ground
108	Cut	Shape in plan unclear. Gradual break of slope from top, gradual sides, base not excavated		>2.58	>0.53	Pit cut, recorded in section



**Figure 1:** Site location in red

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Site Code	REHT 20
Scale	1:10,000,000 1:1,000,000 1:25,000 @ A4
Drawn by	A Telford
Date	25/11/20

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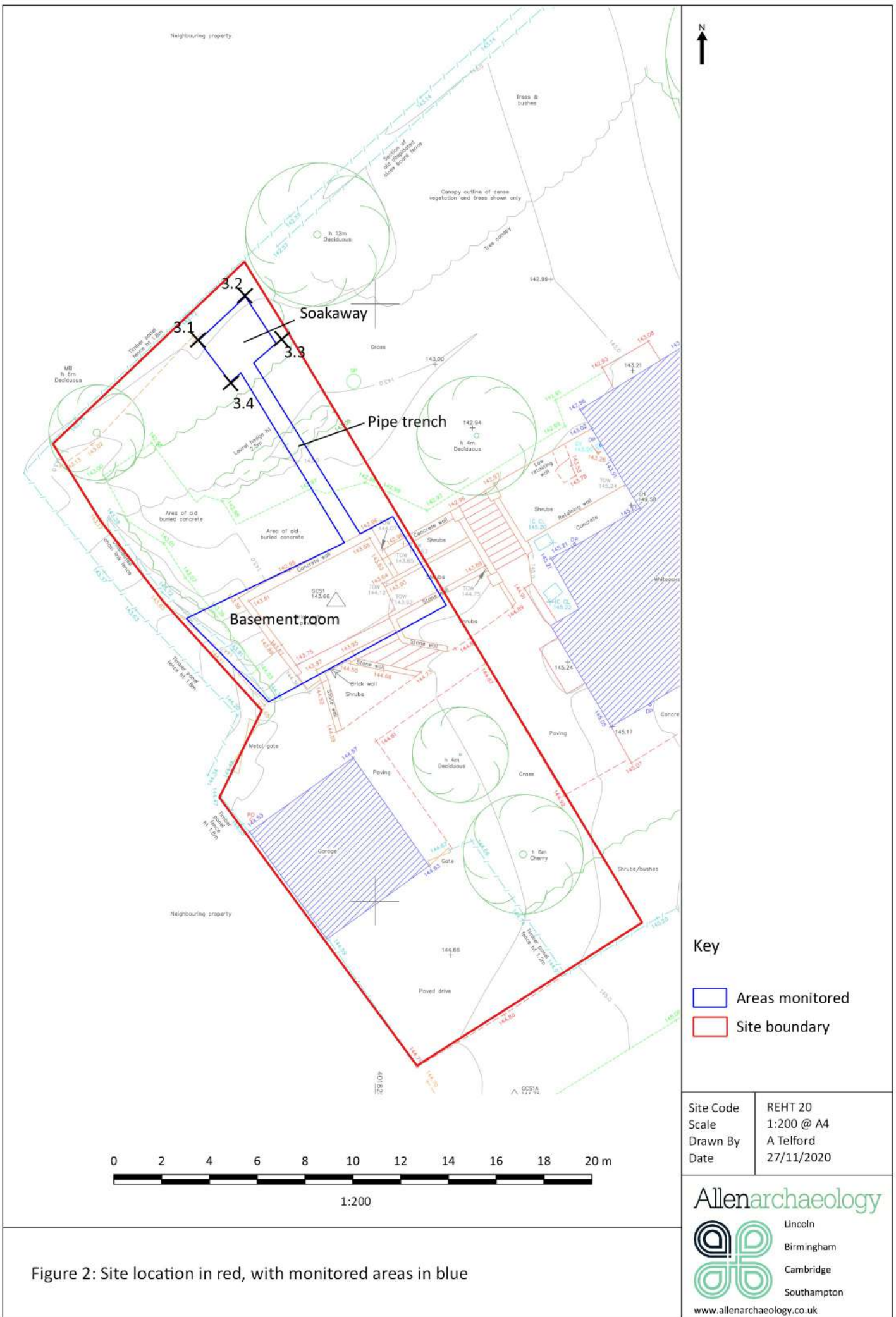
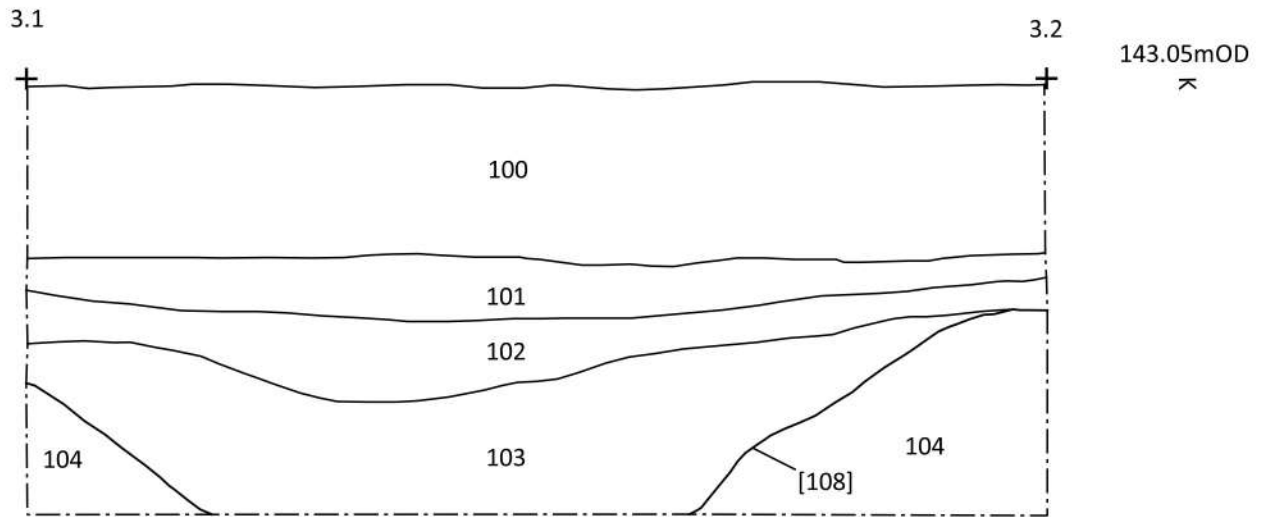
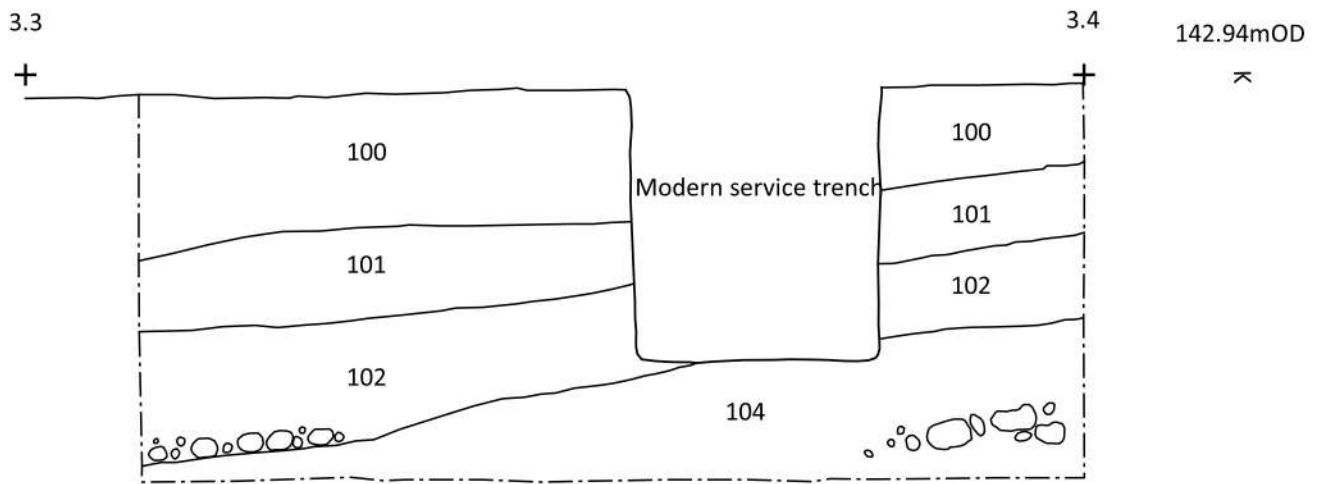


Figure 2: Site location in red, with monitored areas in blue



Southeast-facing section



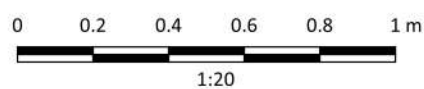
Northwest-facing section

Site Code	REHT 20
Scale	1:20 @ A4
Drawn By	A Telford
Date	27/11/2020

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Figure 3: Sections of soakaway pit





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