

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT:
LAND ADJACENT TO GREENFIELDS RECREATION GROUND, FALSTAFF STREET, SHREWSBURY,
SHROPSHIRE**

Planning Reference: 17/05234/FUL
NGR: SJ 49551 13942
AAL Site Code: SHFS 22
OASIS Reference Number: allenarc1-510274



Report prepared for Crow Archaeology Ltd

By
Allen Archaeology Ltd
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Allenarchaeology



Contents

Executive Summary	1
1.0 Introduction.....	2
2.0 Site Location and Description.....	2
3.0 Planning Background.....	2
4.0 Archaeological and Historical Background.....	3
5.0 Aims and Objectives	4
6.0 Methodology.....	4
7.0 Results	5
Trench 1 (Figure 3 & Figure 4).....	5
Trench 2 (Figure 3 & Figure 4).....	5
Trench 3 (Figure 3 & Figure 4).....	6
8.0 Discussion & Conclusion.....	7
9.0 Effectiveness of Methodology.....	7
10.0 Acknowledgements	7
11.0 References.....	8

List of Plates

Plate 1: Geotechnical pit [105], looking southeast, scales 2x 0.50m	5
Plate 2: Natural feature [215], looking east, scales 2 x 0.50m	6
Plate 3: Plan shot of natural feature [213], looking east, scales 2 x 0.50m	6
Plate 4: Geotechnical pit [305], looking east, scales 2 x 0.50m	7

List of Appendices

Appendix 1: Context Summary List	9
Appendix 2: Figures	12

List of Figures

Figure 1: Site location outlined in red	12
Figure 2: Trench location plan.....	13
Figure 3: Trenches 1-3	14
Figure 4: Sections from Trenches 1-3.....	15

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Cover image: General shot of site, looking north

Executive Summary

- Crow Archaeology Ltd commissioned Allen Archaeology Ltd to undertake an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching on land adjacent to Greenfields Recreation Ground, Falstaff Street, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, as a condition of planning consent for the erection of 15 dwellings with a new access road and associated parking.
- The site lies in an area of archaeological interest, with finds dated from the early Neolithic to Saxon periods found in the vicinity of the site. Medieval activity is not well represented as the site lies within the suburbs of the medieval town in an area likely used for agriculture. In the post-medieval period Shrewsbury expanded and a number of structures were built near to the site, such as a probable 16th century house known as Myttons Mansion.
- The evaluation comprised the excavation of four trial trenches measuring 18-30.5m long by 1.80m wide. The evaluation identified no archaeological features or deposits of significance. Three of the four trenches revealed evidence of former geotechnical pits, animal/root disturbance and a modern ceramic drainage pipe. The evidence suggests a negligible archaeological potential for the proposed development area.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Crow Archaeology Ltd commissioned Allen Archaeology Ltd (AAL) to undertake an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching on land adjacent to Greenfields Recreation Ground, Falstaff Street, Shrewsbury, Shropshire as part of planning consent for the erection of 15 dwellings with a new access road and associated parking.
- 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* (2020a), the Historic England document *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (2014) and a site specification prepared by this company (2022).
- 1.3 The documentary archive will be assembled in accordance with the national guidelines in *Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation* (Brown 2011), *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives* (CifA 2020b) and local guidelines set out in the Shropshire Museums Collections and Curatorial Services document *Standards for the preparation and deposition of archaeology archives* (2015). The archive will be submitted to the Shrewsbury Museum and Art gallery, Shrewsbury, within six months of the completion of the report.

2.0 Site Location and Description

- 2.1 Shrewsbury is a market town and the county town of Shropshire, located c.44km northwest of Wolverhampton. The proposed development site is located approximately 1.6 km to the northeast of Shrewsbury town centre and 130m to the west of the River Severn. The site is located on a roughly rectangular plot of land covering c.4,500 square metres immediately to the west of Greenfields Recreation Ground to the north of Falstaff Street, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, and is centred on NGR SJ 49551 13942 (Figure 1).
- 2.2 The bedrock geology comprises the Kinnerton Sandstone Formation formed approximately 247 to 252 million years ago in the Triassic Period. With overlying superficial deposits of Diamicton, Devensian Till formed up to 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period. (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

3.0 Planning Background

- 3.1 Outline planning permission has granted '*Erection of 15 dwellings (including 2 affordable) to include new access road and associated parking (amended description)*' on land off Greenfields Recreation Ground, Falstaff Street, Shrewsbury, Shropshire (17/05234/FUL), with conditions, including:

3. No development approved by this permission shall commence until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a phased programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI). This written scheme shall be approved in writing by the Planning Authority prior to the commencement of works.

Reason: The site is known to hold archaeological interest.

- 3.2 The approach adopted is consistent with the recommendations of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), with the particular sections of relevance being Paragraphs 187 and 189 of '*Section 16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment*' (The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government 2021).

4.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 4.1 An archaeological desk-based assessment has previously been prepared for the site (Centre for Archaeology 2017), a summary of which is provided below:
- 4.2 Several prehistoric finds have been recovered within the area. A probable Neolithic conical butted stone axe was recovered 50m south of site. A flint scatter, thought to date to the Neolithic period, was located 130m north of the site and a Late Bronze Age four-ribbed socketed bronze axe was found in river gravels, 140m northwest of site.
- 4.3 An enclosure of Roman date was identified through magnetometry survey and excavation at Greenfields in 1995, 220m to the north-northwest of the site. Elsewhere across Shrewsbury there have been chance finds of Roman coins and pottery but otherwise there is very little evidence for Roman settlement or activity in Shrewsbury. It is not until the 5th century that it is thought that there was settlement of the area.
- 4.4 The settlement of Shrewsbury was probably founded as a town in the 8th century with the name Shrewsbury coming from the Saxon name 'Scrobbesbyrig'. The earliest documentary reference is from the year 901 by which time it had become an important border post between the Anglo-Saxons and the Britons in Wales. A hoard of 200 Saxon coins was discovered in 1936 at Castle Foregate, 800m to the south of site.
- 4.5 The study area sits just outside of the historic core of medieval Shrewsbury, however the medieval period is not well represented in the HER, and it is likely to have been agricultural land on the periphery of the town.
- 4.6 Shrewsbury expanded during the post-medieval period with a proliferation of buildings dating to this period in the vicinity of the site. The site of a probable 16th century house known as Myttons Mansion is located 660m to the southwest of the site. Adjacent to this was a row of four 16th century timber framed and brick clad houses, which perhaps originated as the barn of Myttons Mansion.
- 4.7 A possible further early 17th century mansion house, known as Benbow House was also once present at Coton Hill, 830m to the southwest of site. Also located in Coton Hill is the site of a probable brickworks, including its clay-pit, 550m to the southeast of site. Shrewsbury Canal, which was completed by 1797 and in operation until 1922, was located approximately 430m to the east of the site. The canal was 17 miles in length and was built to provide an easier route for the shipment of coal and iron from Donnington Wood to Shrewsbury and to join the existing canal from Coalport. Ditherington Flax Mill took advantage of this newly constructed transport network by locating just east of the canal. A canal terminus and wharf was constructed in the 19th century at the southern end on the canal. The canal was backfilled in 1944.

5.0 Aims and Objectives

- 5.1 The purpose of the trial trenching was to gather sufficient information for the Historic Environment Officer to be able to make a decision regarding the management of subsurface heritage assets at the site.
- 5.2 Evidence was gathered to establish the presence/absence, nature, date, depth, quality of survival and importance of any archaeological deposits to enable an assessment of the potential and significance of the archaeological remains, and to allow for the determination of any appropriate strategies to mitigate the effect of the proposed development upon the archaeological resource.

6.0 Methodology

- 6.1 The trial trenching comprised the excavation of four trenches initially measuring 1.80m wide by 30m long. However, each of the trenches varied in length, between 18-30.5m, and some of the trenches initial planned locations were altered (Figure 2) due to restrictions caused by trees, shrubbery and a large drainage pipe present on site. The fieldwork was carried out between 20th and 23rd September 2022, by a team of experienced field archaeologists, supervised by Geoff Morley.
- 6.2 The evaluation trenches were located using a survey grade Leica GS08 RTK NetRover GPS receiving RTK corrections and positioned as specified or as near as site conditions allowed. Each trench location was scanned using a Cable Avoidance Tool (CAT scanner) prior to and during the excavation to ensure that no live services were present.
- 6.3 In each trench, topsoil, subsoil and underlying non-archaeological deposits were removed by mechanical excavator with a toothless ditching bucket in spits no greater than 100mm in thickness, supervised by an experienced field archaeologist at all times. The process was repeated until the first archaeologically significant or natural horizon was exposed.
- 6.4 A full written record of the archaeological deposits was made on standard AAL context recording sheets. Each deposit, layer or cut was allocated a unique three-digit identifier (context number) and given a written description. Three-digit numbers within square brackets represent cut features e.g. cut of geotechnical pit [105]. A summary of these is included in

- 6.5 Appendix **1**.
- 6.6 Archaeological deposits were drawn to scale, in plan and section (at scale 1:20 or 1:50), with Ordnance Datum heights being displayed on each class of drawing. Hand drawn plans were also supplemented with survey data gathered using a survey grade GPS.
- 6.7 Full colour photography formed an integral part of the recording strategy, incorporating scales, a directional arrow and an identification board where appropriate. General site shots were also taken to complement the record.

7.0 Results

- 7.1 The stratigraphic sequence was consistent across the site, comprising a mid-brown clayey silt topsoil (100, 200, 300 and 400) measuring between 0.12-0.30m in thickness. This sealed a 0.07-0.33m thick mid reddish brown sandy clayey silt subsoil (101, 201, 301 and 401). The subsoil overlay a mid-yellowish brown silt natural geology that contained frequent patches of rounded stones (102, 202, 302 and 402) (Figure 4).
- 7.2 Trench 4 was entirely devoid of archaeological features.

Trench 1 (Figure 3 & Figure 4)

- 7.3 Trench 1 was situated in the northern part of the site, orientated northeast to southwest, measuring 1.80m wide by 26.5m long. The trench revealed two geotechnical pits, at the northeast end of the trench, and in the centre of the trench, and a ceramic land drain running east – west across the southwest end of the trench.



Plate 1: Geotechnical pit [105], looking southeast, scales 2x 0.50m

Trench 2 (Figure 3 & Figure 4)

- 7.4 Trench 2 was situated toward the centre of site, orientated northwest to southeast, measuring 1.80m wide by 27.5m long. The trench contained four natural features and two geotechnical pits. The geotechnical pits [205] and [211], were both north-south aligned measuring 1.40m long and 0.50-0.60m wide, and located toward the northern end of the trench, approximately 9m apart.
- 7.5 Natural feature [207] was situated at the northern end of the trench, broadly east-west aligned, and [215] situated at the southern, broadly north to south aligned. Both were filled with a single gradually accumulated silt or clayey silt fill, 206 and 214 measuring between 0.05-0.12m thick. They may be either tree rooting or animal burrows.



Plate 2: Natural feature [215], looking east, scales 2 x 0.50m

- 7.6 Situated towards the centre of the trench either side of geotechnical pit [211] were two small sub-oval probable natural features, [209] and [213]. Both had irregular concave sides and an uneven base, containing single gradually accumulated fills with occasional rooting and stone inclusions.



Plate 3: Plan shot of natural feature [213], looking east, scales 2 x 0.50m

Trench 3 (Figure 3 & Figure 4)

- 7.7 Trench 3 was situated towards the centre of site, north to south aligned measuring 1.80m wide and 30.5m long. It contained two rectangular geotechnical pits, [305] and [307] towards the centre and southern parts of the trench respectively.



Plate 4: Geotechnical pit [305], looking east, scales 2 x 0.50m

8.0 Discussion & Conclusions

8.1 The evaluation identified no archaeological features or deposits of significance. Three of the four trenches revealed features however, these were identified as only geotechnical pits, natural features likely to be caused by animal /root disturbance and a modern ceramic drainage pipe. As such the site is considered to have a negligible archaeological potential.

9.0 Effectiveness of Methodology

9.1 The evaluation by trial trenching methodology was appropriate to the nature and extent of the proposed development. It has allowed for an assessment of the archaeological potential of the proposed development area.

10.0 Acknowledgements

10.1 AAL would like to thank Crow Archaeology Ltd for this commission.

11.0 References

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Appendix 1: Context Summary List

Trench 1

Context	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Thickness/depth (m)	Interpretation
100	Layer	Loose, mid brown clayey silt with occasional rooting, small to medium stones, CBM and coal inclusions			0.25-0.30	Topsoil
101	Layer	Loose, mid reddish brown sandy clayey silt with occasional small to medium stones, coal and CBM fragments			0.15-0.33	Subsoil
102	Layer	Firm, light -mid yellow brown silt with frequent small to medium rounded stones patches			0.50+	Natural geology
103	VOID	VOID				VOID
104	Fill	Loose, mid grey brown clayey silt mottled with mid yellow silt with occasional small sub-angular stones, modern plastic and Victorian CBM			1	Backfill of [105]
105	Cut	Northeast to southwest orientated rectangular shaped pit with a vertical south side and stepped north side leading to a flat base	1.86+	0.95+	1	Cut of geotechnical pit
106	Fill	Loose, mid brown grey silt with moderate straw and small stones				Backfill of [106]
107	Cut	East southeast to west northwest orientated rectangular shaped pit, unexcavated	1.50+	0.6		Cut of geotechnical pit

Trench 2

Context	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Thickness/depth (m)	Interpretation
200	Layer	Loose, mid brown clayey silt with occasional rooting, small to medium stones, CBM and coal inclusions			0.12-0.20	Topsoil
201	Layer	Loose, mid reddish brown sandy clayey silt with occasional small to medium stones, coal and CBM fragments			0.07-0.15	Subsoil
202	Layer	Firm, light -mid yellow brown silt with frequent small to medium rounded stones patches			0.30+	Natural geology
203	VOID	VOID				VOID

Context	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Thickness/depth (m)	Interpretation
204	Fill	Loose, mid brown grey silt			0.04+	Backfill of [205]
205	Cut	North to south orientated rectangular shaped pit, with straight steep sides leading to an unexcavated base	1.40+	0.60+	0.04+	Cut of geotechnical pit
206	Fill	Loose, mid brown grey silt with frequent rooting and animal disturbance			0.05	Natural silting of [207]
207	Cut	East northeast to west southwest orientated irregular linear feature, unexcavated	1.80+	0.5	0.05	Cut of natural feature
208	Fill	Loose, mid brown grey silt with occasional rooting and small-medium rounded stones			0.04	Natural silting of [209]
209	Cut	Sub-oval shaped feature with irregular concave sides leading to an uneven base	0.52	0.3	0.04	Cut of natural feature
210	Fill	Loose, mid brown grey silt with moderate straw and small stones				Backfill of [211]
211	Cut	North to south orientated rectangular shaped pit, unexcavated	1.4	0.5		Cut of geotechnical pit
212	Fill	Loose, mid brown grey silt with frequent small to medium rounded stones and occasional rooting			0.05	Natural silting of [213]
213	Cut	Sub-oval shaped feature with irregular concave sides leading to an uneven base	0.67	0.4	0.05	Cut of natural feature
214	Fill	Loose, mid reddish brown sandy clayey silt with occasional small stones			0.12	Natural silting of [215]
215	Cut	North to south orientated irregular linear feature with shallow concave sides leading to a concave base	3.8	0.3	0.12	Cut of natural feature

Trench 3

Context	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Thickness/depth (m)	Interpretation
300	Layer	Loose, mid brown clayey silt with occasional rooting, small to medium stones, CBM and coal inclusions			0.12-0.30	Topsoil
301	Layer	Loose, mid reddish brown sandy clayey silt with occasional small to medium stones, coal and CBM fragments			0.07-0.12	Subsoil

Context	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Thickness/depth (m)	Interpretation
302	Layer	Firm, light -mid yellow brown silt with frequent small to medium rounded stones patches			0.23+	Natural geology
303	VOID	VOID				VOID
304	Fill	Firm, mid brown grey silty clay with occasional small-medium stones, rooting, Victorian clay pipe and CBM			0.14+	Backfill [305]
305	Cut	East to west orientated rectangular feature with vertical sides leading to an unexcavated base	1.40+	0.84	0.14+	Cut of geotechnical pit
306	Fill	Loose, mid brown grey silt with moderate straw and small-medium rounded stones				Backfill [307]
307	Cut	East to west orientated rectangular shaped pit, vertical sides leading to an unexcavated base	0.67+	0.53		Cut of geotechnical pit

Trench 4

Context	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Thickness/depth (m)	Interpretation
400	Layer	Loose, mid brown clayey silt with occasional rooting, small to medium stones, CBM and coal inclusions			0.12-0.30	Topsoil
401	Layer	Loose, mid reddish brown sandy clayey silt with occasional small to medium stones, coal and CBM fragments			0.10-0.30	Subsoil
402	Layer	Firm, light -mid yellow brown silt with frequent small to medium rounded stones patches			0.30+	Natural geology
403	VOID	VOID				VOID

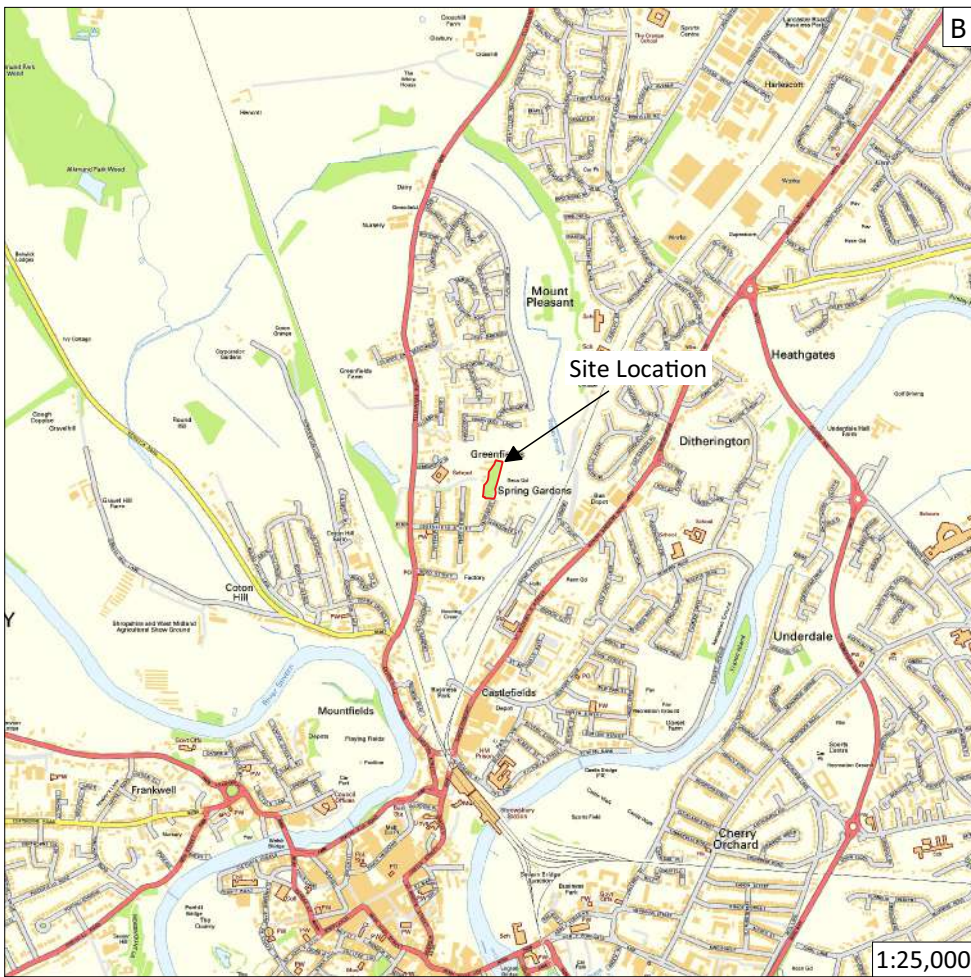
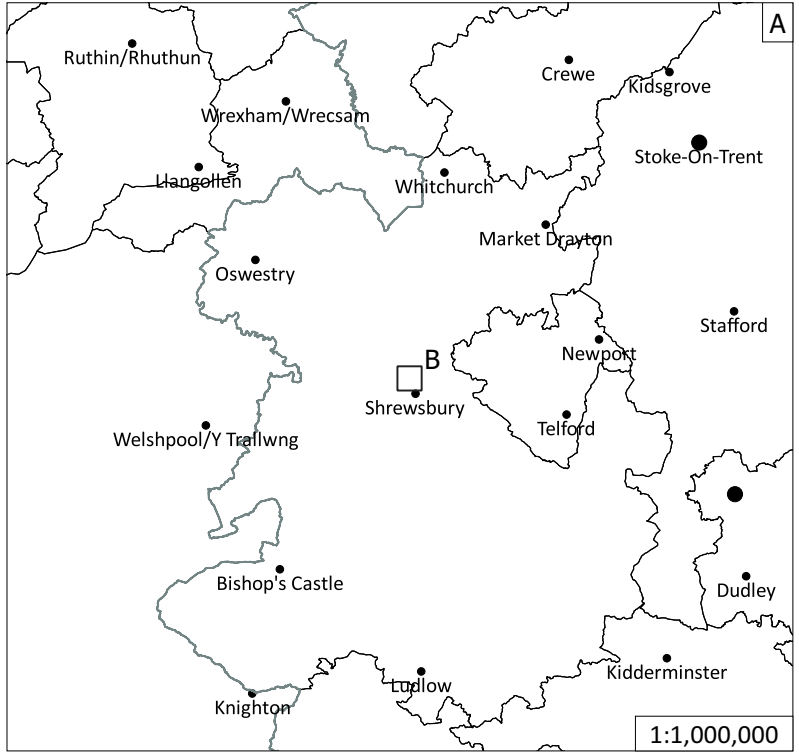


Figure 1: Site location outlined in red

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Site Code	SHFS 22
Scale	1:10,000,000 1:1,000,000 1:25,000 @ A4
Drawn by	E Danielsson
Date	25/10/2022

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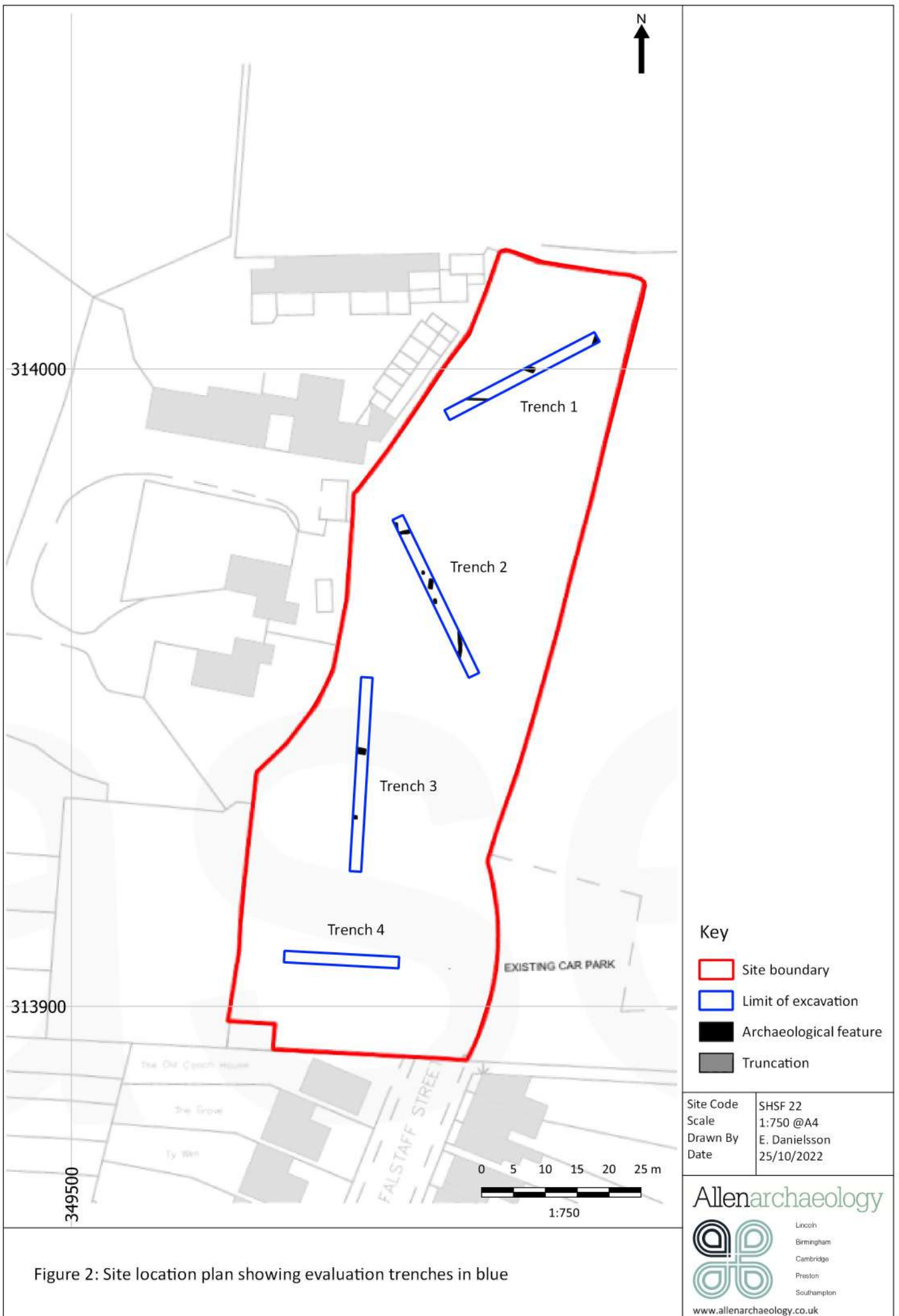


Figure 2: Site location plan showing evaluation trenches in blue

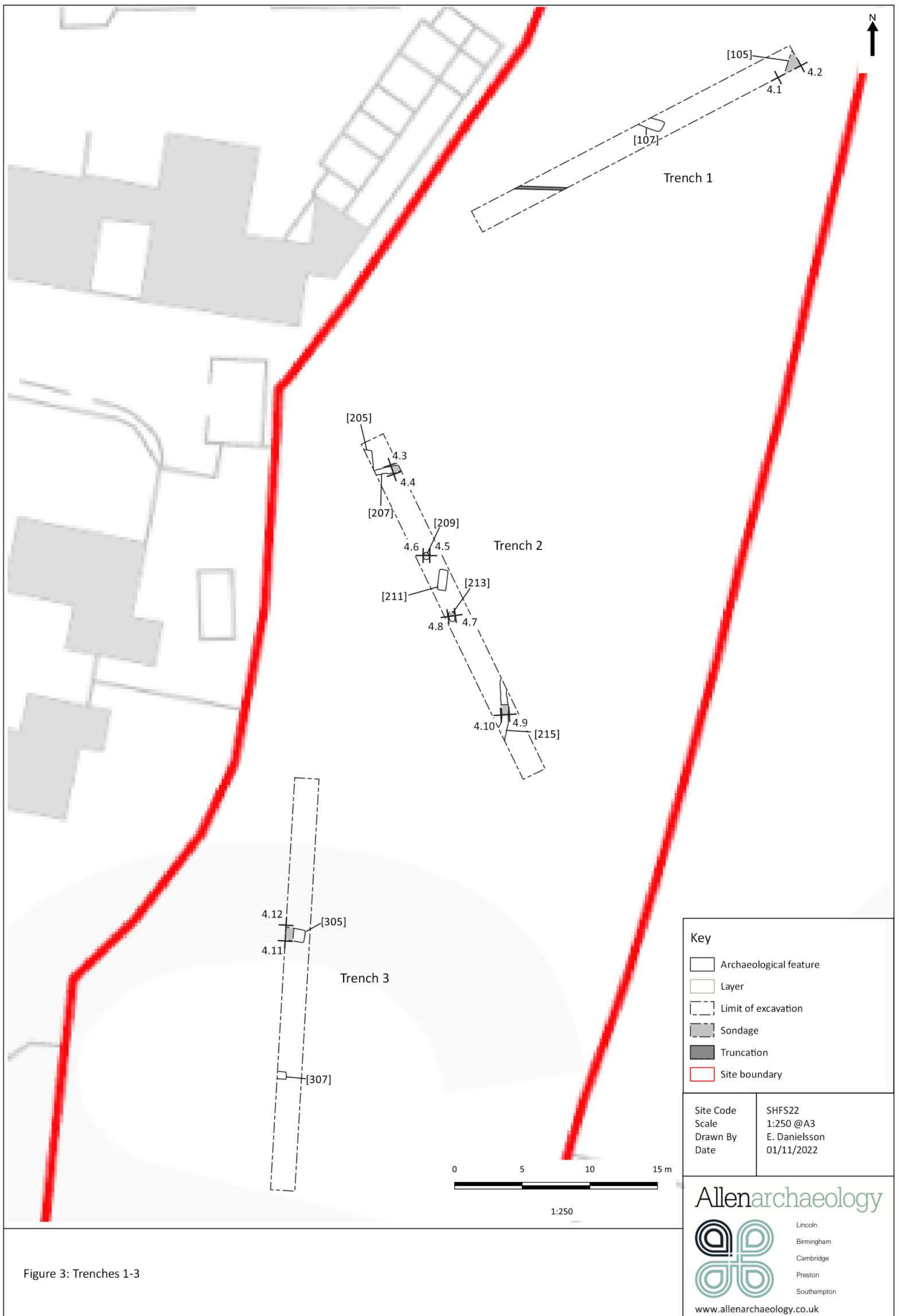
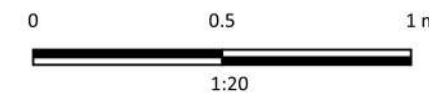
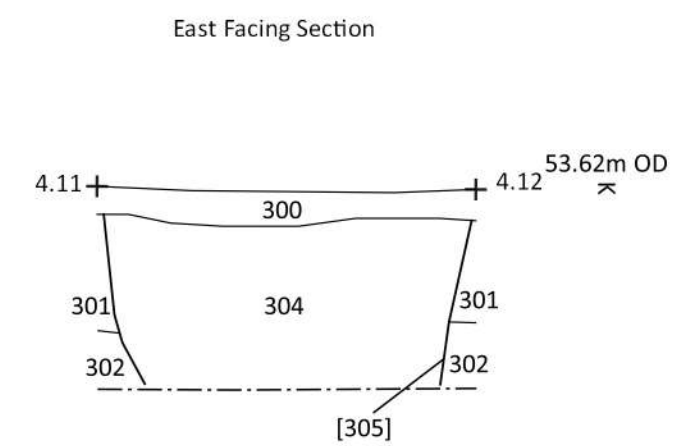
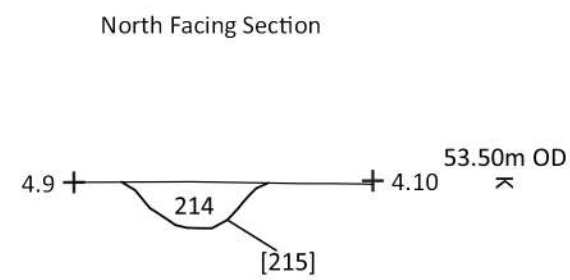
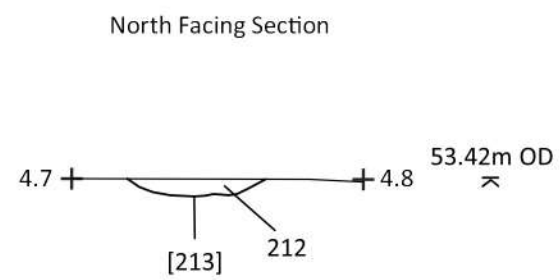
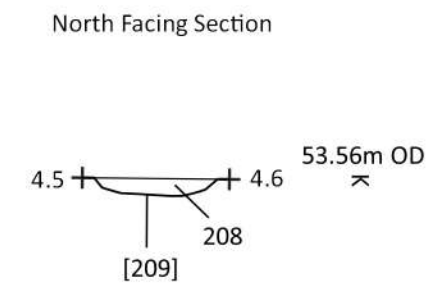
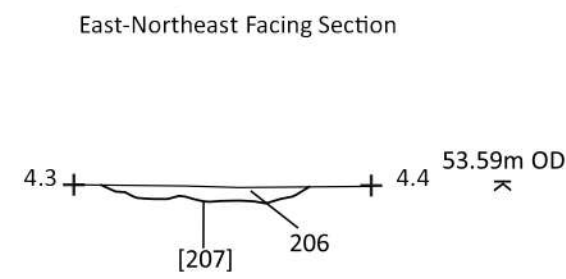
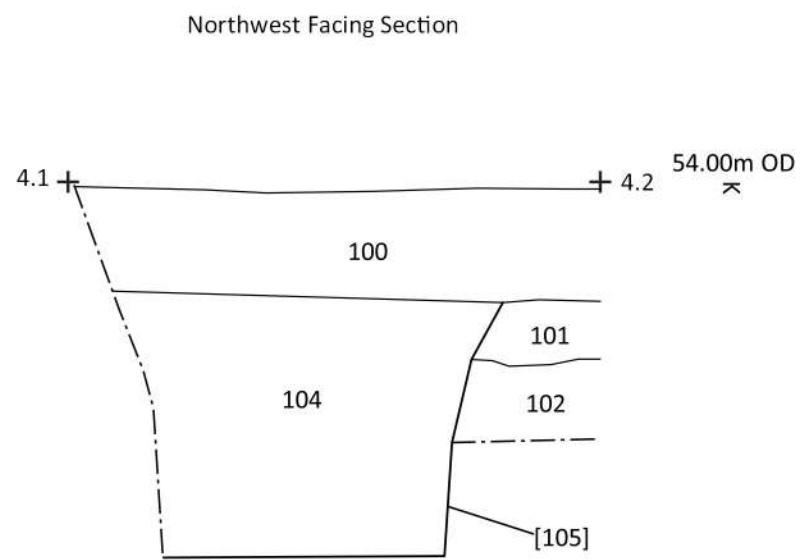


Figure 3: Trenches 1-3



Site Code	SHFS 22
Scale	1:20, @A3
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Figure 4: Sections from Trenches 1-3



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