

Land at Houghton Barton Newton Abbot Devon

Archaeological Evaluation



for
The Environmental Dimension
Partnership Ltd

CA Project: EX0057
CA Report: EX0057_1
OASIS ID: cotswold2-363403

October 2019



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A	23 October 2019	Jonathan Orellana	Derek Evans	Internal review	–	Duncan Coe

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CONTENTS

SUMMARY	2
1. INTRODUCTION.....	3
2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND.....	3
3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES.....	4
4. METHODOLOGY	4
5. RESULTS	5
6. DISCUSSION.....	5
7. CA PROJECT TEAM.....	6
8. REFERENCES.....	6
APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS	7
APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM.....	8

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

- Fig. 1 Site location plan (1:25,000)
- Fig. 2 Trench location plan, showing archaeological features and geophysical survey results (1:3000)
- Fig. 3 Trench 1: plan, section and photograph (1:20)
- Fig. 4 Trench 3: plan, section and photograph (1:20)



SUMMARY

Project Name:	Land at Houghton Barton
Location:	Newton Abbot, Devon
NGR:	282376 072522
Type:	Evaluation
Date:	16–17 September 2019
Location of Archive:	To be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS)
OASIS ID:	cotswold2-363403
Site Code:	HOU 19

In September 2019, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation on land at Houghton Barton, Newton Abbot, Devon. A total of three trenches were excavated.

The evaluation recorded a substantial ditch corresponding to a sub-circular enclosure noted by a previous geophysical survey. No artefactual material was recovered and no internal features were present.



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In September 2019, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation on land at Houghton Barton, Newton Abbot, Devon (centred at NGR: 282376 072522; Fig. 1). This evaluation was undertaken for the Environmental Dimension Partnership Ltd.
- 1.2 The evaluation was undertaken to inform a planning application for residential and mixed-use development of the site, which is to be made to Teignbridge District Council. The scope of the evaluation was defined in discussions with Stephen Reed, Senior Historic Environment Officer, Devon County Council Historic Environment Team (DCCHE); the archaeological advisors to Teignbridge District Council).
- 1.3 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a detailed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by CA (2019) and approved by Stephen Reed. The evaluation was also in line with *Specification for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (Devon County Council 2017), *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (CIfA 2014), *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) PPN 3: Archaeological Excavation* (Historic England 2015) and *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (Historic England 2015).

The site

- 1.4 The evaluation site lies north-west of Newton Abbot and approximately 0.4km north of Ashburton Road. It is situated within the south-eastern corner of an arable/pasture field. Farm buildings lie to the north; further arable/pasture fields lie on all other sides.
- 1.5 The site's underlying bedrock geology is mapped as Gurrington Slate Formation slate, lava and tuff, which formed during the Devonian and Carboniferous Periods. No superficial deposits are present (BGS 2019).

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Prehistoric (pre-AD 43)

- 2.1 A geophysical survey of the evaluation site (Headland Archaeology 2017) identified a sub-circular enclosure measuring c. 69m in diameter. This enclosure is located in an elevated position on the north-east facing side of a low ridge. It was interpreted in the geophysical survey report as being of likely prehistoric origin. Several discrete anomalies recorded within the enclosure were thought to potentially represent pits, although these anomalies were less certainly of archaeological origin.

Roman (AD 43–AD 410)

- 2.2 A previous archaeological evaluation recorded a Roman period rectilinear enclosure c. 0.25km east of the present site (CA 2018; see Fig. 2).

Post-medieval (1540–1800) and modern (1880–present)

- 2.3 Historic cartographic sources indicate that the site was in agricultural use during these periods. Nineteenth century maps show a now-removed north-west/south-east aligned boundary running to the immediate west of the evaluation site; this boundary was recorded as a linear anomaly by the geophysical survey (Headland Archaeology 2019). A further linear anomaly running on a parallel alignment was identified cutting through the possible prehistoric sub-circular enclosure (see above); this presumably represents another former field boundary.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 As defined in the WSI (CA 2019), the general objective of the evaluation was to provide further information on the likely archaeological resource within the site, including its presence/absence, character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality. This information will enable Teignbridge District Council to identify and assess the particular significance of any archaeological heritage assets within the site, consider the impact of the proposed development upon that significance and, if appropriate, develop strategies to avoid or minimise conflict between heritage asset conservation and the development proposal, in line with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (MHCLG 2019).
- 3.2 The specific objective of the evaluation was to investigate the sub-circular enclosure recorded by the geophysical survey (Headland Archaeology 2019), and to determine (if possible) its form, date and function.

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The fieldwork comprised the excavation of three trenches (T1–T3, Fig. 2). The trenches were each 50m in length and 1.8m in width. The trenches were located to investigate the sub-circular geophysical anomaly (see *Archaeological background*).
- 4.2 Trenches were set out on OS National Grid (NGR) co-ordinates using Leica GPS and surveyed in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 4: Survey Manual*. All trenches were excavated by a mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket. All machine excavation was undertaken under constant archaeological supervision to the top of the natural substrate, which is the level at which archaeological features were first encountered. Archaeological deposits were excavated by hand in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 1: Fieldwork Recording Manual*.
- 4.3 Deposits were assessed for their palaeoenvironmental potential in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 2: The Taking and Processing of Environmental and Other Samples from Archaeological Sites*. No deposits were identified that required sampling.

- 4.4 As no artefacts were recovered, no material (finds) archive will be prepared or deposited. A digital archive, comprising all born-digital data and digital copies of the primary site record, will be prepared and deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS). The digital archive will be compiled in accordance with the *ADS Guidelines for Depositors*.
- 4.5 A summary of information from this project, as set out in Appendix B, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain (OASIS ID: cotswold2-363403).

5. RESULTS

- 5.1 This section provides an overview of the evaluation results. Detailed summaries of the recorded contexts can be found in Appendix A.
- 5.2 The natural substrate comprised grey shillet with outcrops of siltstone and patches of greyish brown clay. It was exposed across the three trenches at depths of 0.3m–0.4m below the present ground level. The natural was directly overlain by the modern ploughsoil.
- 5.3 Archaeological features were identified in all three trenches. All features were cut into the natural substrate and were sealed by the ploughsoil.

Trench 1

- 5.4 North-east/south-west aligned ditch 102 was 2.8m wide and 1.3m deep (Fig. 3, Sec. AA). It contained three undated fills (103–105).

Trench 2

- 5.5 North-west/south-east aligned ditch 202 was 1.1m wide. It was not hand excavated in T2 as its continuations were excavated in T1 (ditch 102) and T3 (ditch 302).

Trench 3

- 5.6 North-east/south-west orientated ditch 302 was 2.32m wide and 1.05m deep (Fig. 4, Sec. BB). It contained five undated fills (303–307).

6. DISCUSSION

- 6.1 The evaluation recorded three ditches. These corresponded to a large sub-circular enclosure that had been identified previously by a geophysical survey (Headland Archaeology 2019), although the match was not exact; the below-ground ditches were generally some 10m south-east of the anomaly, which might suggest that the geophysical survey plot is slightly out. The geophysical survey indicates that the enclosure is c. 69m in length and c. 66m in width.

- 6.2 The evaluation demonstrated that the enclosure ditch was very substantial (1.1m–2.8m wide and 1.05m–1.3m deep). There was no evidence for a former bank and no internal features were present. No artefactual material was recovered.
- 6.3 The lack of internal features and associated artefacts may indicate that the enclosure was not domestic in origin. It may have had an agricultural/animal husbandry function, such as a stock enclosure, but its date and purpose cannot be determined at present.
- 6.4 A substantial sub-square Roman period enclosure was recorded during a previous evaluation c. 250m to the east of the present site (CA 2018; see Fig. 2). This Roman period enclosure ditch had a similar profile to that recorded by the current evaluation, but was a different shape in plan and enclosed a smaller area (c. 30m by c. 30m, as opposed to the present enclosure's c. 69m by c. 66m).

7. CA PROJECT TEAM

- 7.1 Fieldwork was undertaken by Jonathan Orellana, assisted by Parris Stubbings and Jake Godfrey. This report was written by Jonathan Orellana. The report illustrations were prepared by Amy Wright. The project archive has been compiled by and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Derek Evans.

8. REFERENCES

British Geological Survey 2019 *Geology of Britain Viewer* <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html> Accessed 12 August 2019

Cotswold Archaeology 2018 *Land at Houghton Barton, Newton Abbot, Devon: Archaeological Evaluation* CA typescript report no. **18143**

Cotswold Archaeology 2019 *Land at Houghton Barton, Newton Abbot, Devon: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation*

Headland Archaeology 2019 *Houghton Barton, Newton Abbot, Devon: Geophysical Survey*

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government 2019 *National Planning Policy Framework*

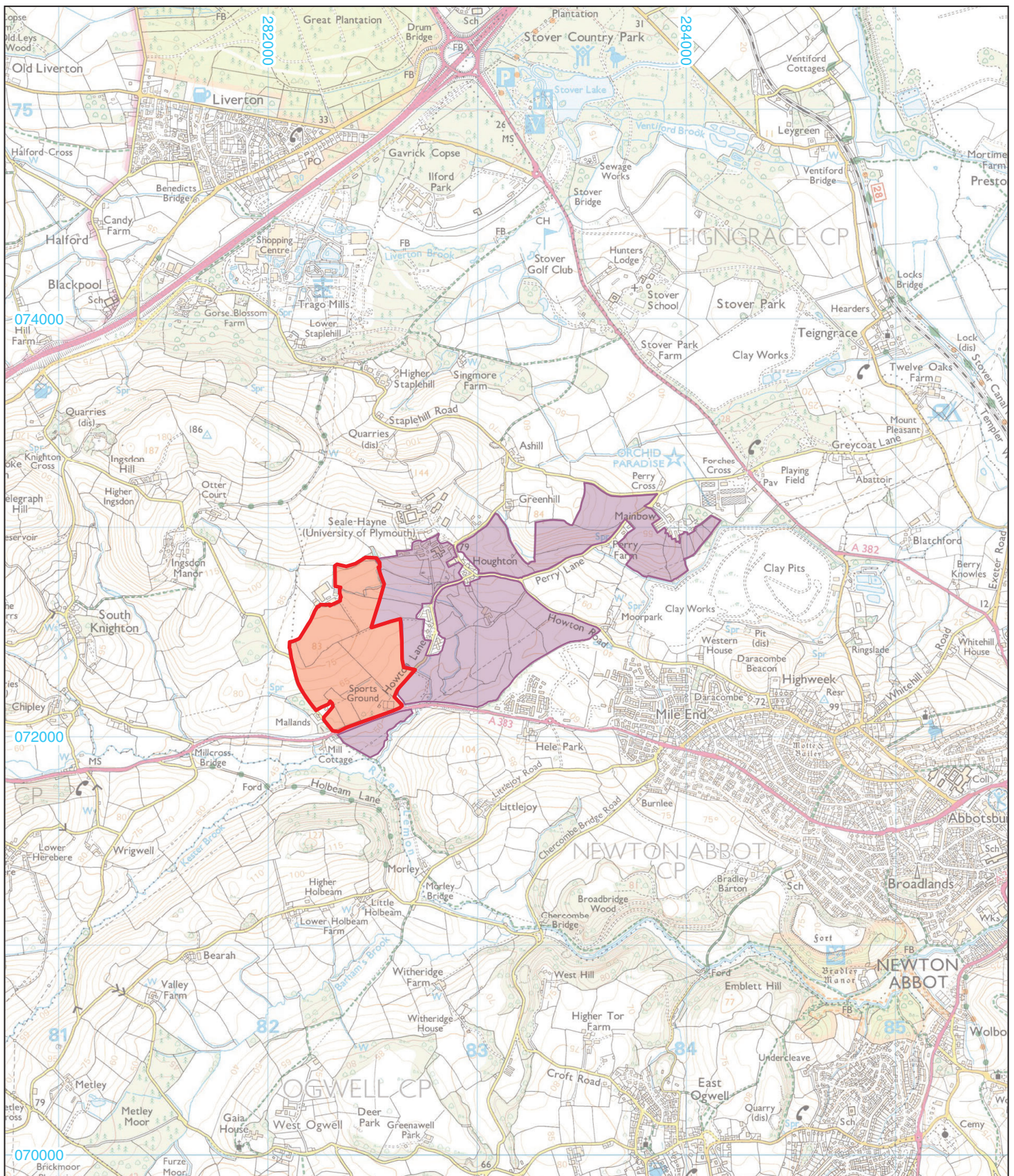


APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench No.	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	Width (m)	Depth/thickness (m)
1	100	Layer		topsoil	mid greyish brown sandy silt		0.4
1	101	Layer		natural substrate	Mid brownish grey shillet with bands of yellowish brown clay		
1	102	Cut		ditch	NE/SW orientated, steep sides and flat base	2.8	1.3
1	103	Fill	102	1st fill of ditch	mid brownish grey silty clay	1	0.35
1	104	Fill	102	2nd fill of ditch	mid greyish brown silty clay	1.4	0.48
1	105	Fill	102	3rd fill of ditch	mid greyish brown sandy silt	2.8	0.83
2	200	Layer		topsoil	light greyish brown sandy silt		0.35
2	201	Layer		natural substrate	mid grey shillet with frequent outcrops of siltstone and patches of greenish brown clay		
2	202	Cut		ditch	curvilinear in plan, NW/SE orientated, not hand excavated	1.1	
2	203	Fill	202	upper fill of ditch	mid greyish brown sandy silt	1.1	
3	300	Layer		topsoil	loose dark brownish grey sandy silt		0.4
3	301	Layer		natural substrate	mid grey shillet with patches of grey clay		
3	302	Cut		ditch	NE/SW orientated, steep V-shaped profile and concave base	2.32	1.05
3	303	Fill	302	1st fill of ditch	light grey clayey silt	0.46	0.21
3	304	Fill	302	2nd fill of ditch	light greyish yellow clayey silt	0.72	0.17
3	305	Fill	302	3rd fill of ditch	mid grey clayey silt	1.5	0.26
3	306	Fill	302	4th fill of ditch	mid greyish brown clayey silt	1.95	0.34
3	307	Fill	302	5th fill of ditch	mid orangey brown sandy silt	2.32	0.11

APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	Land at Houghton Barton, Newton Abbot, Devon	
Short description	<p>In September 2019, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation on land at Houghton Barton, Newton Abbot, Devon. A total of three trenches were excavated.</p> <p>The evaluation recorded a substantial ditch corresponding to a sub-circular enclosure noted by a previous geophysical survey. No artefactual material was recovered and no internal features were present.</p>	
Project dates	16–17 September 2019	
Project type	Evaluation	
Previous work	Geophysical Survey (Headland Archaeology 2019)	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site Location	Land at Houghton Barton, Newton Abbot, Devon	
Study area (m ² /ha)		
Site co-ordinates	282376 072522	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	N/A	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Derek Evans	
Project Supervisor	Jonathan Orellana	
MONUMENT TYPE		
	Undated enclosure	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS		
	None	
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
	Intended final location of archive	Content
Physical	N/A	N/A
Paper	N/A	N/A
Digital	Archaeology Data Service (ADS)	Digital survey, digital photos, scans of primary site archive
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Cotswold Archaeology 2019 <i>Land at Houghton Barton, Newton Abbot, Devon: Archaeological Evaluation</i> CA typescript report EX0057_1		



- Site boundary
- Previous site boundary



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Ordnance Survey 0100031673

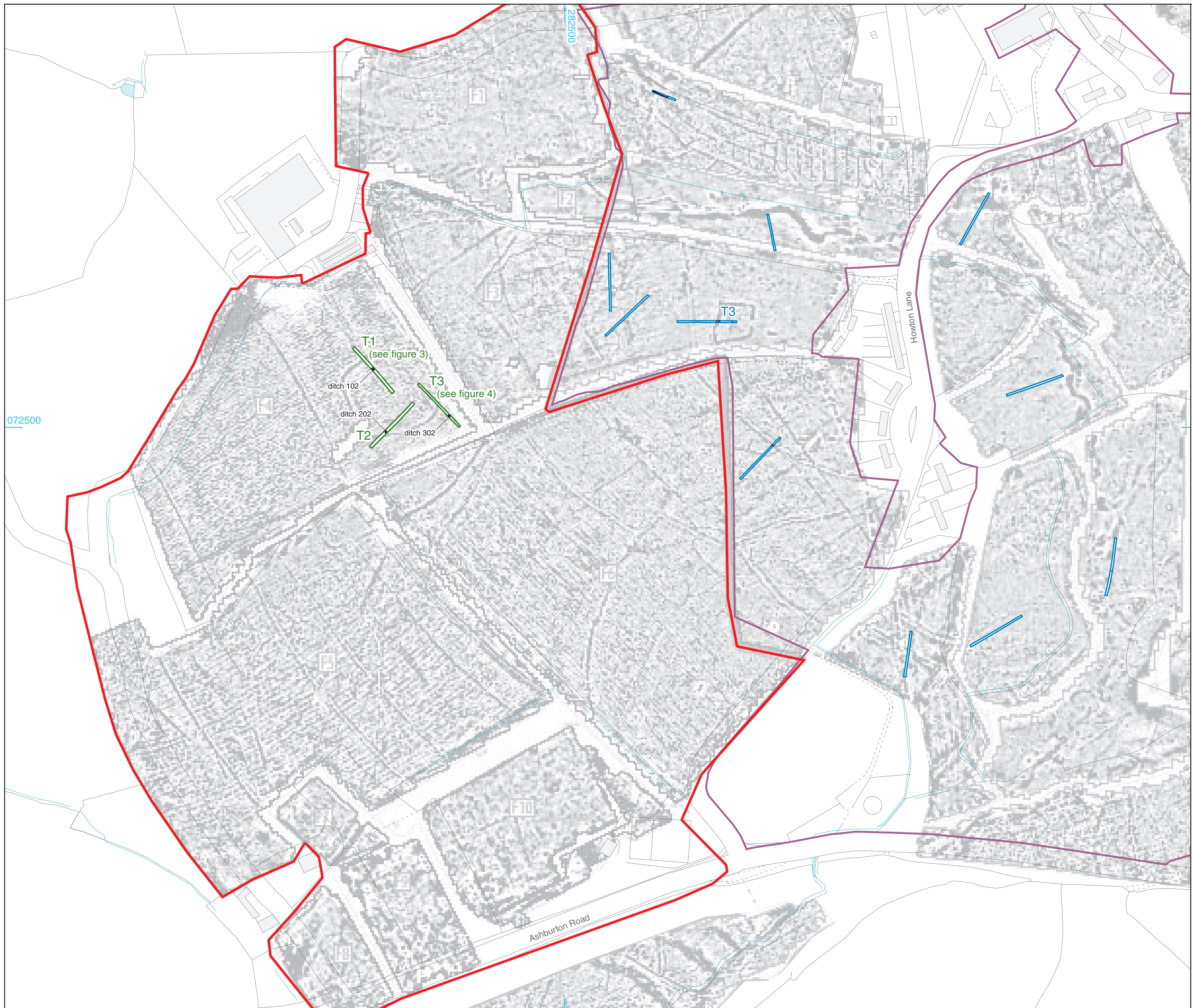


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PROJECT TITLE
Land at Houghton Barton, Newton Abbot, Devon

FIGURE TITLE
Site location plan

DRAWN BY AW	PROJECT NO. EX0057	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY DJB	DATE 07.10.19	1
APPROVED BY DE	SCALE@A4 1:25,000	



- ▭ Site boundary
- ▭ Previous site boundary
- ▭ Evaluation trench
- ▭ Previous evaluation trench
- ▭ Archaeological feature



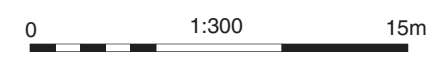
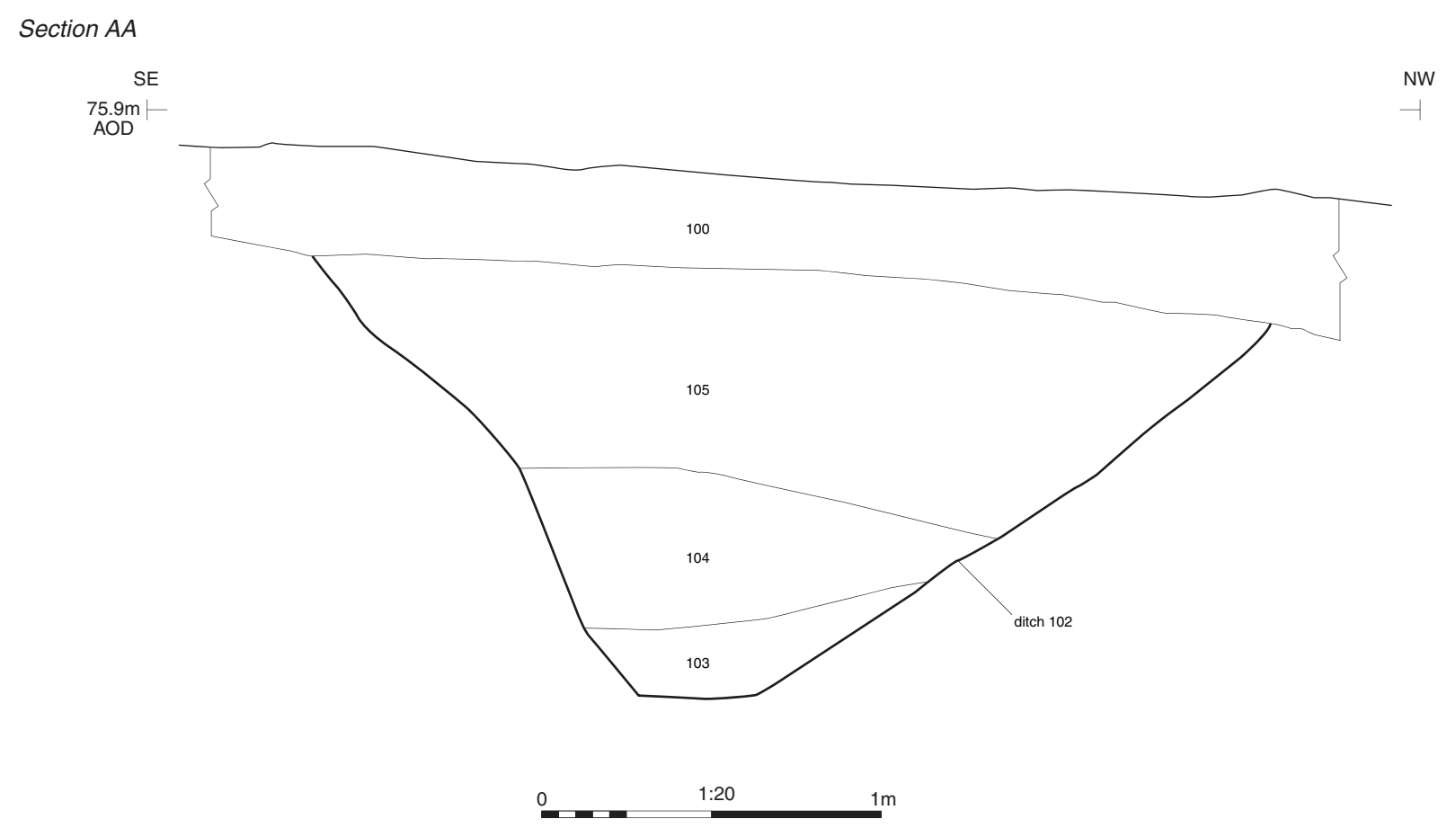
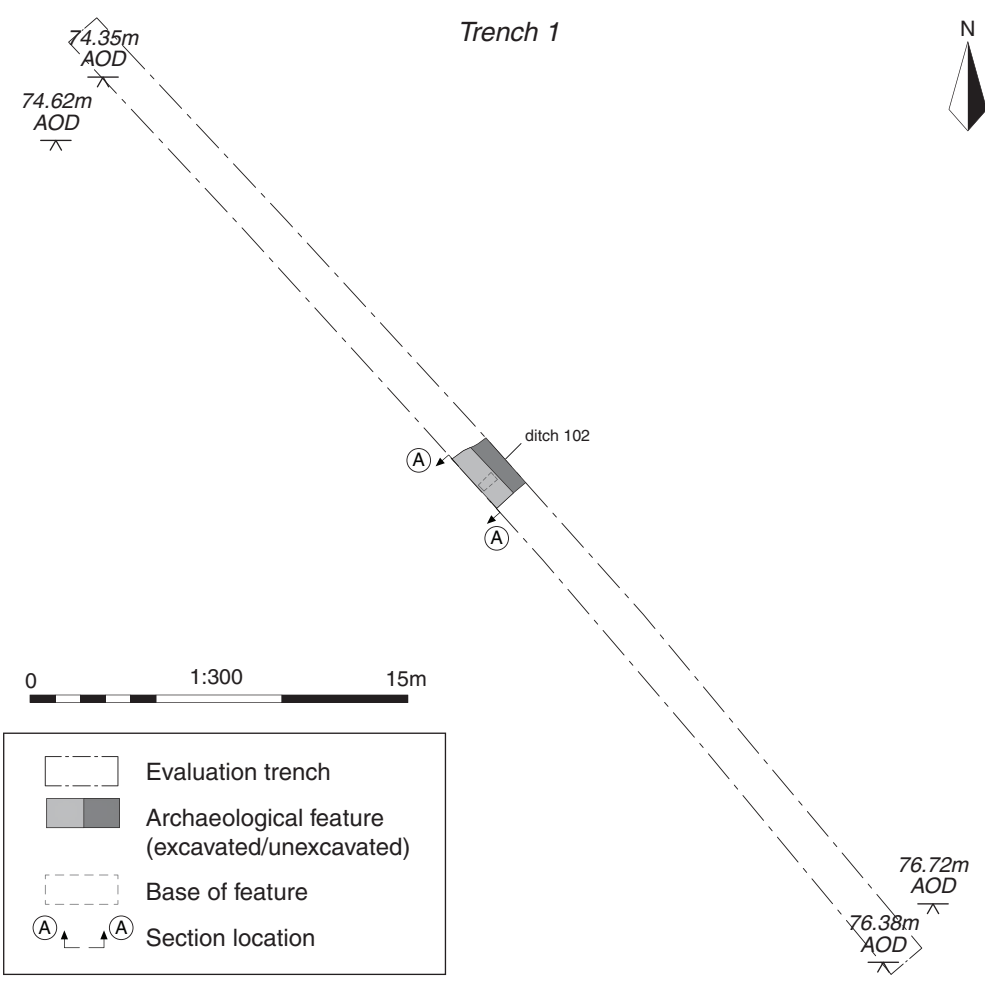
Geophysical survey results by Headland Archaeology 2019
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PROJECT TITLE
 Land at Houghton Barton, Newton Abbot, Devon

FIGURE TITLE
 Trench location plan, showing archaeological features and geophysical survey results

<small>DRAWN BY</small> AW	<small>PROJECT NO.</small> EX0057	<small>FIGURE NO.</small>
<small>CHECKED BY</small> DJB	<small>DATE</small> 08.10.19	2
<small>APPROVED BY</small> DE	<small>SCALE@A3</small> 1:3000	



- Evaluation trench
- Archaeological feature (excavated/unexcavated)
- Base of feature
- Section location



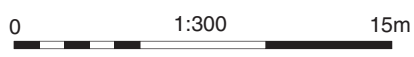
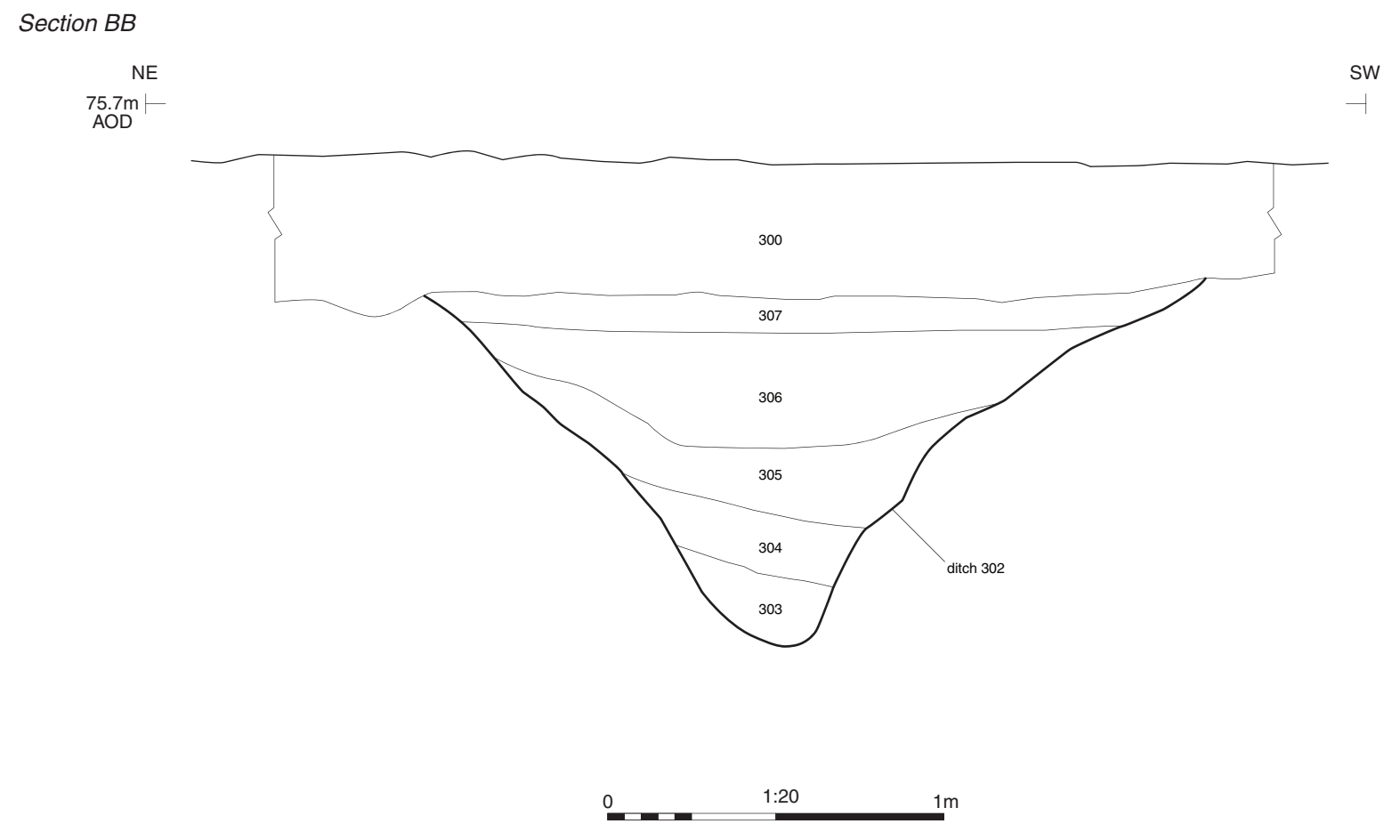
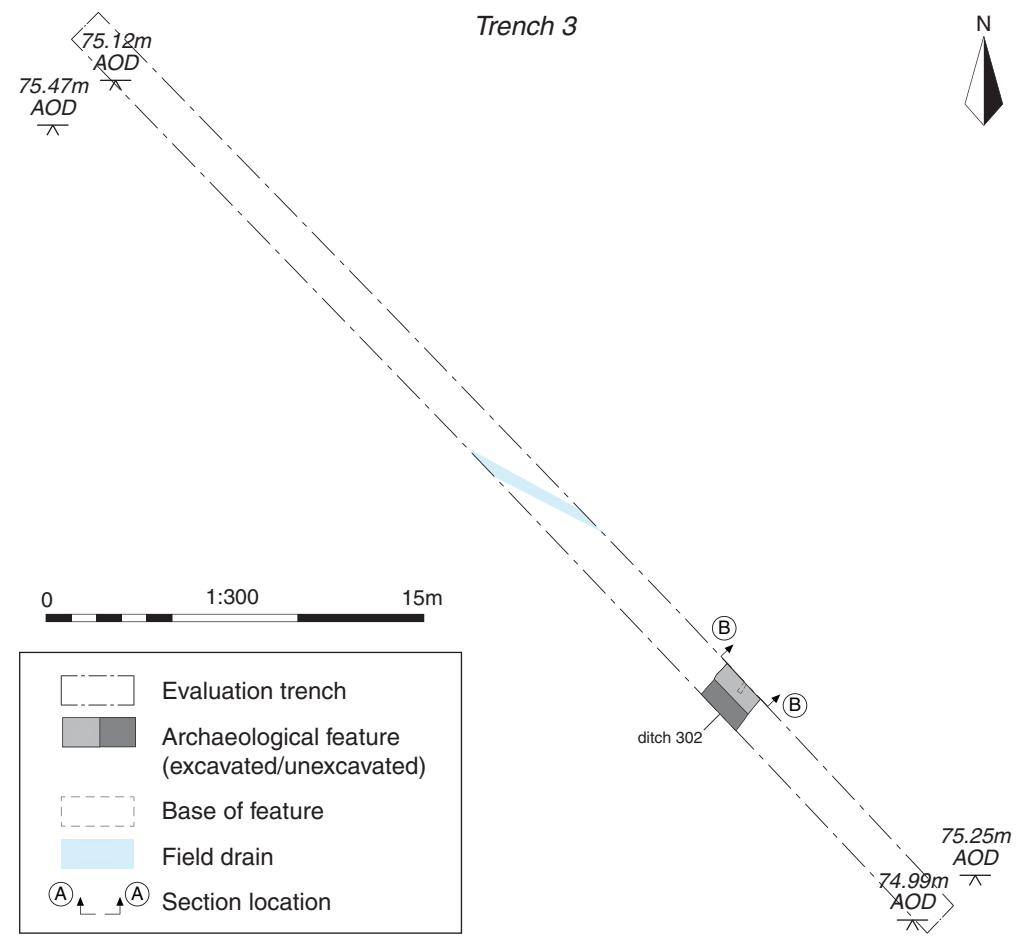
Ditch 102, looking south-west (1m scale)

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PROJECT TITLE
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FIGURE TITLE
Trench 1: plan, section and photograph



- Evaluation trench
- Archaeological feature (excavated/unexcavated)
- Base of feature
- Field drain
- Section location



Ditch 302, looking north-east (1m scale)


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PROJECT TITLE
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FIGURE TITLE
 Trench 3: plan, section and photograph

DRAWN BY	AW	PROJECT NO.	EX0057	FIGURE NO.
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