

# CFA Archaeology Ltd

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*Geophysical Survey*

**Wellhill Farm and Hall of Auchincross Farm,  
Greenburn Surface Mine (Wellhill Extension)  
New Cumnock,  
East Ayrshire  
Archaeological Evaluation**

**Data Structure Report  
No. 3012**

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# **1 INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 General**

This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by CFA Archaeology Ltd (CFA) in April 2013 at Wellhill Farm and Hall of Auchincross Farm, Greenburn Surface Coal Mine (Wellhill Extension), near New Cumnock, East Ayrshire (NGR: NS 58140 14430 & NS 58218 14075) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by KIER Infrastructure and Overseas Ltd (KIER)

A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) covering this programme of works was produced by CFA on behalf of Kier. The WSI was designed to meet the requirements of the West of Scotland Archaeology Service (WoSAS).

## **1.2 Background**

Kier has submitted a planning application (Ref. No. 11/0004/EIASCP) for the extension of the Greenburn Surface Mine into the area to the east of the existing site. This area lies within the vicinity of Wellhill Farm and Hall of Auchincross Farm and has been named the Wellhill Extension. The planning application was subject to a condition requiring a programme of archaeological mitigation including a desk-based assessment, standing building surveys of Wellhill Farm and Hall of Auchincross Farm, and a programme of archaeological trial trenching.

This report covers the trial trenching undertaken within the footprint of the recently demolished Wellhill Farm and Hall of Auchincross Farm. An architectural watching brief was undertaken during the demolition of Building 4 at Hall of Auchincross Farm (Mitchell 2013) and a previous programme of trial trenching (Kirby 2012) was undertaken within the vicinity of the farms. The desk-based assessment and the standing building surveys of Wellhill Farm and Hall of Auchincross Farm are contained within CFA Data Structure Report No. 2124 (Cressey 2012).

Information obtained from cartographic sources suggests that there has been a farm at Wellhill since at least the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, while at Auchincross a house on Pont's map of 1595 annotated 'Achincrofs' suggests at least late-medieval origins. Other records suggest that Auchincross may have been a former medieval laird's house thought to have been occupied in the early to mid 17th century. This house is annotated 'Old Hall' on the 1857 First Edition Ordnance Survey map (Sheet XLI.8) (Fig.4) and has subsequently been subsumed by the farm complex. More detailed information relating to these farms is contained within the desk-based assessment (Cressey 2012).

## **1.3 Objectives**

The objectives of the programme of works reported herein were to:

- Carry out a trial trenching evaluation within Wellhill Farm and Hall of Auchincross Farm;

- Identify if any earlier settlement remains survive beneath the present buildings, or if there is the potential for earlier settlement remains to survive elsewhere within the immediate locale;
- Establish their vulnerability to the proposed development;
- Produce report(s) outlining the results of the work and any further work that is required to mitigate the effects of the development.

## **2. WORKING METHODS**

### **2.1 General**

CFA Archaeology Ltd follows the Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct, Standards and Guidance.

### **2.2 Evaluation**

The excavation of the trenches was undertaken in accordance with a trenching plans devised in consultation with WoSAS. The trenches were targeted on areas of the farmsteads where early settlement remains were likely to have survived later development, and to provide good overall coverage of the sites. Slight alterations to the agreed plans were made due to the presence of deep slurry pits which had been cut into the natural subsoil thus removing the potential for the survival of archaeological features.

A total of nine trenches (1-4 and 16-20) (Fig. 2) amounting to 630m<sup>2</sup> were excavated at Wellhill Farm (Fig.2) and a total of fourteen trenches (5-15 and 21-23) amounting to 999 m<sup>2</sup> were excavated at Hall of Auchincross Farm (Fig.3). Trenches 13, 15 and 20 represent digressions from the original pre-agreed trenching plan and were repositioned due to the location of slurry pits.

Topsoil and modern overburden were removed by a tracked 360° mechanical excavator equipped with a 1.8m wide smooth-bladed ditching bucket. All groundbreaking work was carried out under constant archaeological supervision. Any further excavation required to fulfil the objectives of the evaluation was carried out by hand.

All excavation and on-site recording was carried out according to standard CFA procedures, principally by drawing, by photography and by completing standard CFA record forms.

The stratification of all excavated areas was recorded whether or not significant archaeological deposits were identified.

Trench positions were surveyed using industry standard electronic surveying equipment and all trenches were backfilled.

### 3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

#### 3.1 General

Numbers in bold refer to contexts, a full list of which is contained in Appendix 2. A summary of the trenches excavated is contained in Appendix 4.

#### 3.2 Wellhill Farm

The deposits within the area of the farmstead (Trenches 1-4 and 19-20) (Fig.2) predominantly consisted of 0.3m to 1m of made-ground (**001**) overlying reddish brown sandy clay and grey clay natural (**002**). The deposits in the trenches that were excavated in the fields immediately outwith the footprints of the recent buildings (Trenches 16-18) consisted of 0.1m to 0.9m of mid grey-brown topsoil (**003**) overlying natural. Considerably deeper deposits of up to 1.7m were encountered at the southern end of Trench 2 where the natural topography dipped down steeply. The deeper deposits were a direct result of material being dumped over the edge of the level platform on which the farmstead was situated. A steep escarpment of c.1m in height along the northern edge of the farmstead would suggest a degree of alteration to the natural topography in order to create this level platform.

The majority of the features uncovered during this evaluation could be directly related to wall lines associated with the recently demolished farmstead. The walls of the recently demolished farmstead were either founded directly on the natural or in shallow foundation trenches of up to 0.2m deep cut into the natural.

A wall (**004**) in Trench 1 and two walls (**011** and **012**) in Trench 19 were not related to the recently demolished structures.

##### *Wall 004*

Wall **004** (Fig.5) was located 0.3m below the ground surface within Trench 1 and was aligned north-west to south-east. This wall measured 0.4m wide by 0.19m high and had been constructed from rough-dressed sandstone blocks measuring up to 0.4m by 0.4m and survived as a single course. It was constructed on a concrete foundation **005** which measured 0.5m wide by 0.08m thick and sat on top of a layer of made ground (**006**) measuring 0.15m deep. The made-ground (**006**) sat directly on top of natural **002**. The wall could not be related to any known or mapped structures but the use of concrete as a foundation suggests that it is of no great antiquity.

##### *Wall 011*

Wall **011** (Fig.6) was identified within Trench 19 and was aligned NNW to SSE parallel with the recently demolished byre. It consisted of a single foundation course of undressed boulders faced on the eastern side by a course of unfrogged brick. This foundation measured 0.9m wide by 0.2m high and sat directly on the natural (**002**). The location of this wall corresponds with the outer edge of a structure depicted on the 1857 First Edition Ordnance Survey map (Fig.4) abutting the recently demolished 19<sup>th</sup> century byre (Building 3 in Cressey 2012).

### *Wall 012*

Wall **012** (Fig.7) was identified in Trench 19 and was aligned north to south. It consisted of a single foundation course of undressed sandstone blocks. It measured 0.9m wide by 0.2m high and sat directly on the natural (**002**). The location of this wall corresponds with the eastern wall of a small square structure which is depicted on the 1857 First Edition Ordnance Survey map (Fig.4).

### **3.3 Hall of Auchincross Farm**

The deposits within the area of the farmstead (Trenches 5-7, 9-15 and 21-23) predominantly consisted of 0.1m to 1.8m of made-ground (**001**) overlying reddish brown sandy clay natural (**002**). The deposits in the trenches immediately outwith the footprint of the existing buildings (Trench 8 and part of Trench 9) consisted of 0.2m to 0.8m of mid grey-brown topsoil (**003**) overlying natural. Considerably deeper deposits of >3m were encountered towards the middle of Trench 21 where a deep gully containing a watercourse had been culverted and filled with made ground. This gully is depicted on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map (Fig.4) as being bridged by the access road. The walls of the recently demolished farmstead were constructed directly on the natural, which appears to have been considerably levelled prior to being capped with a layer of made ground.

The majority of the features uncovered during this evaluation related to the 20<sup>th</sup> usage of the site and included drains, concrete pads, services and an effluence tank. The only feature of interest that was uncovered was an area of rough cobbling (**008**) which is described below.

### *Cobble Surface 008*

The cobble surface **008** (Fig.8 and 9) was located in Trench 9. It sloped downwards towards the culverted watercourse that bisected the north-eastern part of the evaluation area. The surviving remains within the trench measured 5m in length, with further possible cobbling having been removed by more recent services. This surface was constructed from rounded/sub-rounded stones measuring up to 0.3m by 0.2m set within a matrix of dark-brown gravelly silt, which sat on top of a 0.5m deep layer of made-ground (**007**). Made ground **007** sat directly on the natural, with the cobbles being overlain by a further 0.5m of made ground (**001**). This cobbled surface is likely to relate to the early usage of the farmstead and might represent part of the access track depicted on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map (Fig.4).

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at Wellhill Farm and Hall of Auchincross Farm near New Cumnock as part of a programme of works associated with the Wellhill extension to the Greenburn Surface Mine Operation. Previous work undertaken on the site included a standing building survey of the farmsteads and the evaluation of the surrounding area.

In addition to the walls and features related to the recently demolished farmsteads, the evaluation identified the remains of three walls at Wellhill Farm and an area of cobbling at Hall of Auchincross Farm. However, all of these features are considered to relate to the 19<sup>th</sup> century or later development of the farms.

There was no evidence of any earlier settlement or activity either in terms of negative archaeological features or deposits. No finds were recovered and all of the observed material was found to be 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> century in date.

Within the footprint of the farmsteads horizontal truncation appeared to have taken place as disturbed/made ground lay directly over the natural. This appears to have taken place as part of the site preparation prior to construction. As a result it is considered that archaeological remains or deposits relating to any potentially earlier settlement do not survive within the evaluation areas.

No further works are recommended in relation to Wellhill Farm and Hall of Auchincross Farm. However, it is recognised that the final decision on any mitigation required lies with the planning authority as advised by WoSAS.

The project archive, comprising all CFA record sheets, maps and reports, will be deposited with the National Monuments Record of Scotland (NMRS) and copies of reports will be lodged with the WoSAS Sites and Monuments Record.

On completion of the mitigation works a summary statement will be submitted for publication in *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland* and will also be reported on through *OASIS Scotland*.



## 5. REFERENCE

### *Bibliographic*

Cressey, M, 2012 *Greenburn Surface Mine Extension, New Cumnock, East Ayrshire, Wellhill Farm & Hall of Auchincross Farm: Desk-Based Assessment and Standing Building Surveys* CFA Data Structure Report No 2124

Kirby, M, 2012 *Greenburn Surface Mine, Wellhill Extension, New Cumnock, East Ayrshire: Archaeological Evaluation* CFA Data Structure Report No 2143

Mitchell, S, 2013 *Greenburn Surface Mine Extension, New Cumnock, East Ayrshire, Hall of Auchincross Farm: Architectural Watching Brief* CFA Report No 3007

### *Cartographic*

Ordnance Survey First Edition 25" map (1857) *Ayrshire Sheet XLI.8* (New Cumnock)

## APPENDIX 1: Photographic Register

Shot No.	Summary or Description	Taken From	Conditions
1	Trench 1, general shot	North	Overcast
2	Trench 1, wall 004	North	Overcast
3	Trench 1, wall 004	East	Overcast
4	Trench 1, general shot	South	Overcast
5	Trench 2, general shot	South	Overcast
6	Trench 3, general shot	East	Overcast
7	Trench 4, general shot	South	Sun
8 - 9	Trench 4, wall 009 of recently demolished building in section	East	Sun
10	Trench 5, general shot	NE	Overcast
11	Trench 5 general shot	SW	Overcast
12	Trench 5, trench section	NW	Overcast
13	Trench 6, general shot	East	Overcast
14	Trench 7, general shot	South	Sun
15	Trench 8, general shot	East	Overcast
16	Trench 9, general shot	South	Overcast
17	Cobbles 008	North	Overcast
18	Cobbles 008 sitting on top of made ground 007	South	Overcast
19	Trench 10, general shot	SE	Overcast
20	Trench 11, general shot	East	Overcast
21	Trench 13, general shot	NW	Overcast
22	Trench 12, general shot	South	Overcast
23	Trench 14, general shot	NE	Overcast
24	Trench 15, general shot	NW	Overcast
25	Trench 16, general shot	West	Overcast
26	Trench 17, general shot	South	Overcast
27	Trench 18, general shot	West	Overcast
28	Trench 19, general shot	West	Overcast
29	Trench 19, walls 011 and 012	East	Overcast
30	Trench 19, wall 011	East	Overcast
31	Trench 20, general shot	West	Overcast
32	Trench 21, partially excavated showing steep drop into gully containing watercourse	South	Overcast
33	Trench 21, general shot	North	Overcast
34	Trench 22, general shot	West	Rain
35-36	Trench 23, general shot	NE	Rain

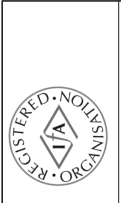
## APPENDIX 2: Context Register

Context No.	Area	Trench	Description
001	Both	1 – 7, 9 – 14, 19-23	Made ground (sandstone, shale etc)
002	Both	All	Natural (orange-brown sandy clay, grey clay, degraded bedrock)
003	Both	1, 8 – 9, 15-18	Topsoil (mid-brown silt)
004	Wellhill	1	Sandstone and lime mortar wall
005	Wellhill	1	Concrete foundation for wall 004
006	Wellhill	1	Made ground underlying wall 004
007	Auchincross	9	Made ground underlying cobbles 008
008	Auchincross	9	Cobbled surface
009	Wellhill	4	Footings of recently demolished building (rough-dressed sandstone and rubble)
010	Wellhill	19	Footings of recently demolished byre (rough-dressed sandstone and rubble)

011	Wellhill	19	Wall foundation (undressed boulders) with brick facing
012	Wellhill	19	Wall foundation (undressed boulders)
013	Auchincross	22, 23	Wall footings of farmhouse (rough-dressed sandstone and rubble)

### APPENDIX 3: Summary of Excavation Results

Trench No.	Area	Size (m)	Depth of Deposits (m)	Features
1	Wellhill	40 x 1.8	0.3 – 0.8	Sandstone wall (004)
2	Wellhill	40 x 1.8	0.3 – 1.7	Five ceramic cylinder drains
3	Wellhill	40 x 1.8	0.3 – 0.7	Brick wall, concrete surface
4	Wellhill	40 x 1.8	0.5 – 0.9	Brick wall (009), footings of recently demolished buildings
5	Auchincross	40 x 1.8	0.6 – 0.7	Concrete pad
6	Auchincross	40 x 1.8	0.2 - 1	N/A
7	Auchincross	40 x 1.8	0.3	N/A
8	Auchincross	40 x 1.8	0.2 – 0.8	One ceramic drain
9	Auchincross	40 x 1.8	0.35 – 0.85	Cobbled surface 008, large culvert, drain
10	Auchincross	40 x 1.8	0.25 – 1.2	Footings of byre (visible in section but not cut through) , large metal effluence tank, metal pipe, brick and concrete wall footings, clay drainage pipe
11	Auchincross	40 x 1.8	0.3 - 1	Concrete surfaces, field drain, concrete slurry channel, plastic pipe
12	Auchincross	40 x 1.8	0.4 – 0.65	Concrete pad
13	Auchincross	50 x 1.8	0.2 – 0.6	Two field drains, concrete building footings
14	Auchincross	40 x 1.8	0.7 – 1.85	Concrete pads, two ceramic service pipes
15	Auchincross	25 x 1.8	0.6 – 1.8	Reinforced concrete surface
16	Wellhill	40 x 1.8	0.1 – 0.9	Stone holes, modern post-holes
17	Wellhill	40 x 1.8	0.25 – 0.4	N/A
18	Wellhill	40 x 1.8	0.25 – 0.4	Plough scores, modern ditches
19	Wellhill	40 x 1.8	0.35 – 0.7	Footings for byre (010), wall footings 011 and 012
20	Wellhill	30 x 1.8	0.7 – 0.9	Brick and concrete wall footings, ceramic drain, large rubble drain
21	Auchincross	40 x 1.8	0.2 - >3	Modern rubbish dump, large culvert located at base of deep gully
22	Auchincross	40 x 1.8	0.1 – 1.8	Footings of farmhouse (013)
23	Auchincross	40 x 1.8	0.1 - 1	Footings of farmhouse (013)



Key:

- Areas of evaluation
- Areas of focused evaluation at Weillhill Farm and Hall of Auchincross Farm
- Evaluation trenches

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Fig. No: 1 Revision: A

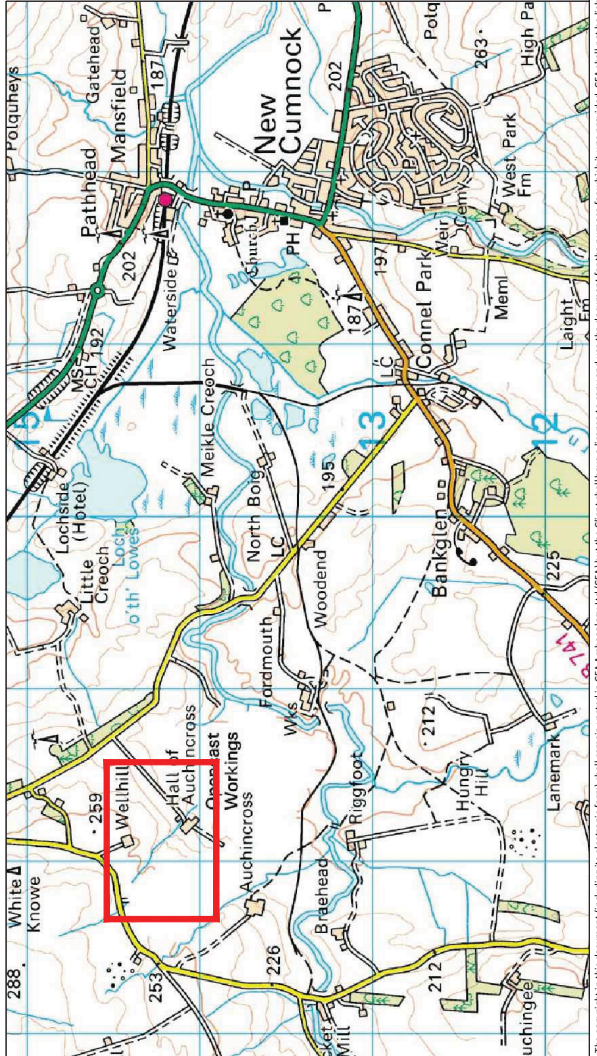
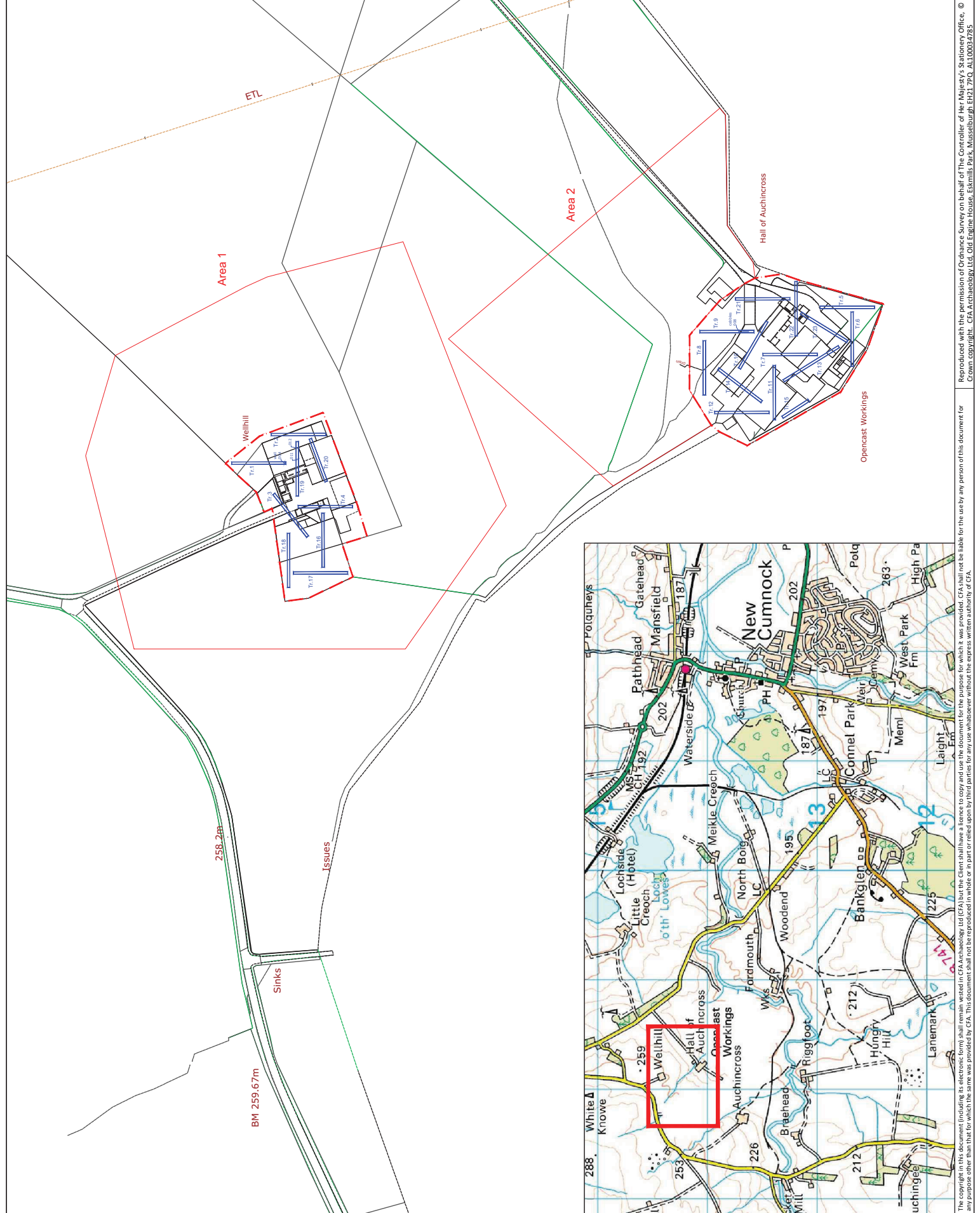
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Project: Weillhill Farm and Hall of Auchincross Farm, Greenburn Surface Mine (Weillhill Extension) New Cumnock, Archaeological Evaluation

Client: Kier Infrastructure and Overseas Ltd

Scale at A3: 1:2500

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Key:

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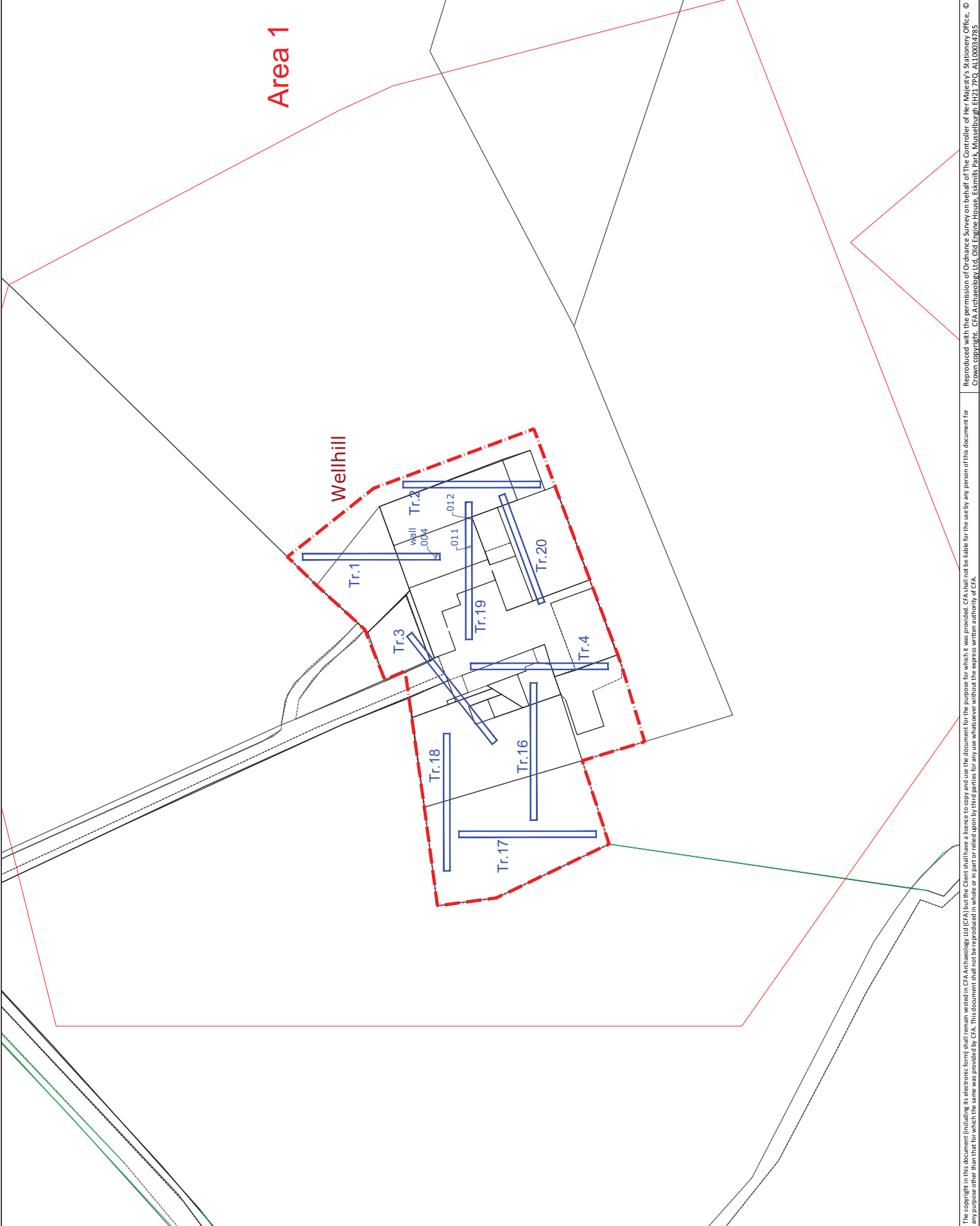
Title:  
 Detailed trench plan of land at  
 Wellhill Farm

Project:  
 Wellhill Farm and Hall of Auchincross  
 Farm, Greenburn Surface Mine  
 (Wellhill Extension) New Cumnock,  
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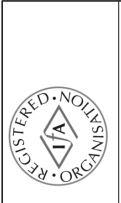
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Key:

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Fig. No: 3 Revision: A

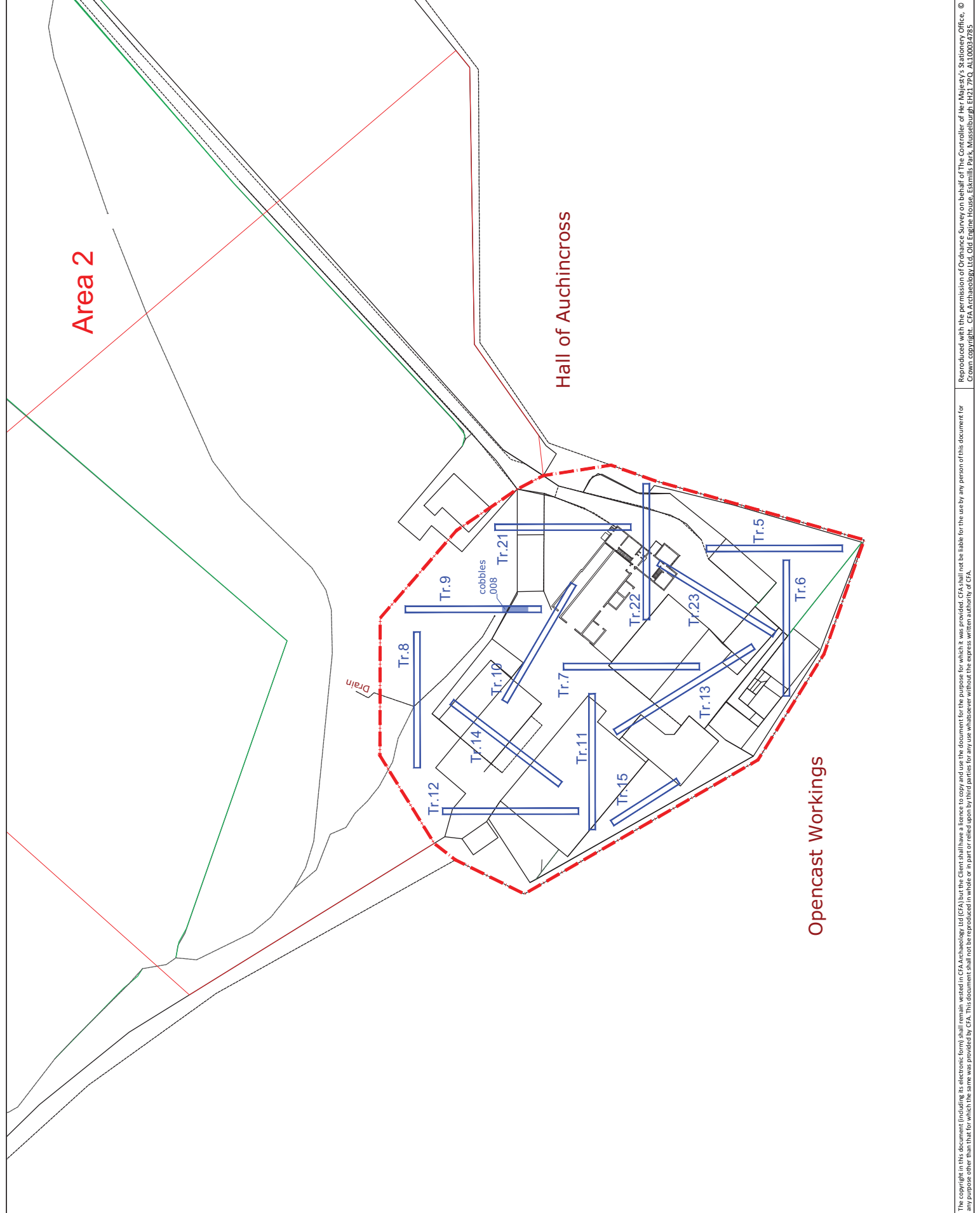
Title:  
 Detailed trench plan of land at  
 Hall of Auchincross Farm

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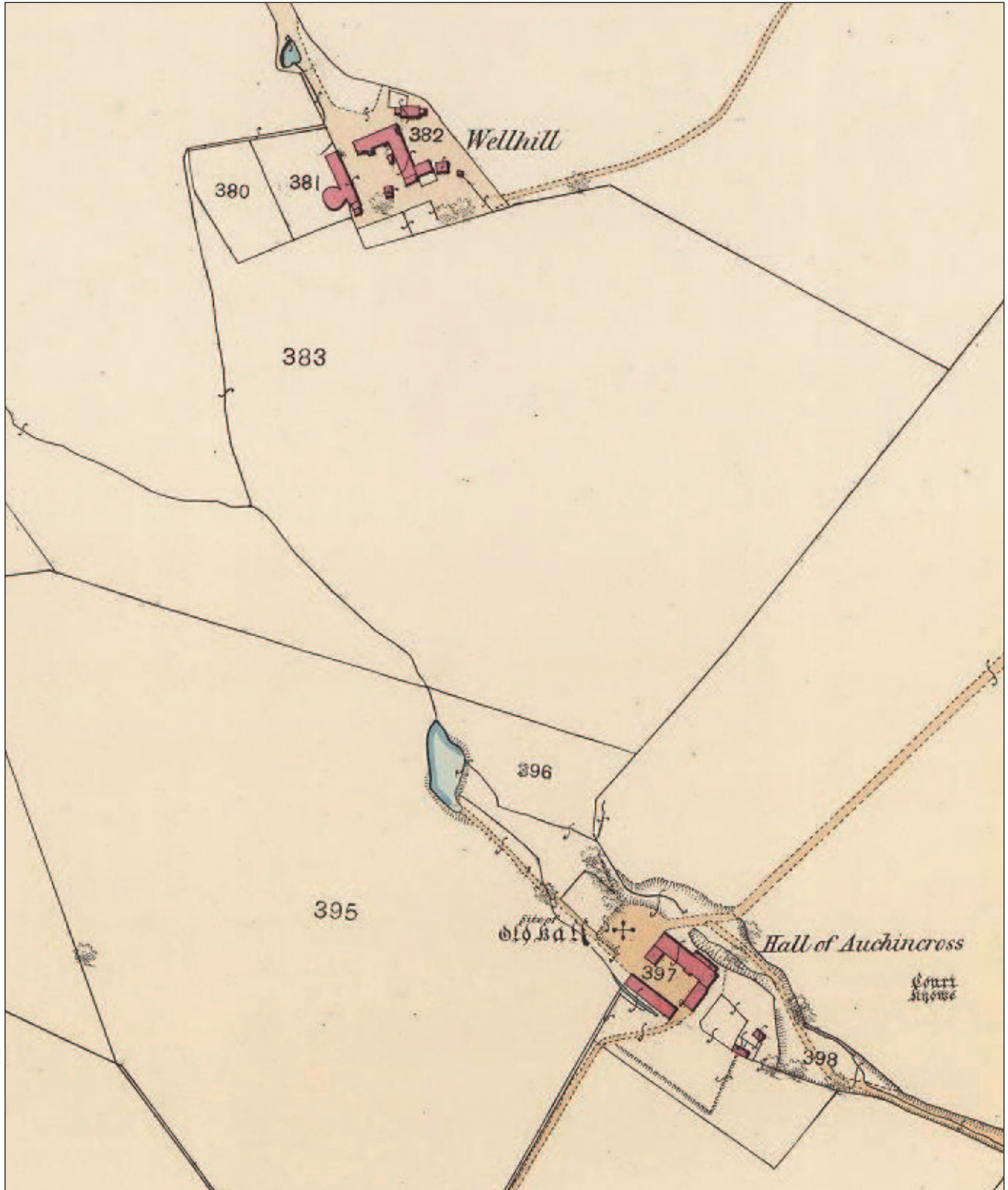


Fig.4 - Detailed extract of First Edition Ordnance Survey map

Fig. No: 4		Revision: A	Project: Wellhill Farm and Hall of Auchincross Farm, Greenburn Surface Mine (Wellhill Extension) Extension			<b>CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD</b> The Old Engine House Eskmills Park, Musselburgh East Lothian, Eh21 7PQ  T: 0131 273 4380 F: 0131 273 4381 e: info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk w: www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk
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Fig.5 - Trench 1, wall 004 from the south



Fig.6 - Trench 19, wall 011 from the east

Fig. No: 5-6		Revision: A	Project: Wellhill Farm and Hall of Auchincross Farm, Greenburn Surface Mine (Wellhill Extension) Extension
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Fig.7 - Trench 19, wall 012 from the east



Fig.8 - Trench 9 from the south showing cobbles 008

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Fig.9 - Trench 9, detail of cobbles 008 sitting on made ground 007

Fig. No: 9		Revision: A	Project: Wellhill Farm and Hall of Auchincross Farm, Greenburn Surface Mine (Wellhill Extension) Extension			<b>CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD</b> The Old Engine House Eskmills Park, Musselburgh East Lothian, Eh21 7PQ T: 0131 273 4380 F: 0131 273 4381 e: info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk w: www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk
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