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Hallhill Farm, Dunbar, East Lothian

Archaeological Evaluation

Report No. 3229

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Hallhill Farm, Dunbar, East Lothian

Archaeological Evaluation

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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 October 2014 at Hallhill Farm, Dunbar, East Lothian (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Taylor Wimpey Limited.

A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), dated 30 April 2014, for the evaluation was produced by CFA and agreed in advance by the East Lothian Council Archaeology Service (ELCAS). The WSI detailed the mitigation measures required to meet the terms of a programme of works presented in an internal memorandum from ELCAS, dated 10 March 2010, with modifications agreed at a site meeting on 25 April 2014.

1.2 Background

A planning application (Ref. No. 09/00623/FUL) has been approved for the erection of 130 houses and associated works on land at Hallhill Farm, Dunbar. The planning approval was subject to an archaeological condition.

The development site is located on the southern fringes of Dunbar and just to the north of the A1 (NGR: NT 67123 77874). The site occupied a small knoll and was arable farm land prior to the development.

Previous work on the site consisted of evaluations of the development site, undertaken by CFA in 2003 and 2005 (Glendinning 2003; Curtis & Johnson 2005), which identified the remains of a long cist cemetery apparently enclosed by an annular enclosure defined by a double ditch, that had been observed on aerial photographs prior to the evaluations.

Ground breaking works were subsequently carried out within the area of the long cist cemetery and ditches without an archaeologist being present. This work principally involved the construction of a pumping station within a large deep trench; the excavation of a deep drainage channel cut, running south-east to north-west; and works associated with the construction of new roads and houses in close proximity to and over the known double ditched enclosure and southern part of the cemetery. ELCAS required a programme of trial trenching to be conducted to determine the extent of the damage to the archaeologically sensitive area. This report presents the results of that trial trenching exercise.

1.3 Archaeological Background

Long cist cemeteries are found throughout Scotland but the densest concentrations occur within the Lothians, Fife and the north Borders (Cressey 2003; Henshall, 1956). Long cist cemeteries such as this one were generally in use between the 4th and 8th centuries AD (Cressey 2003). Similar long cist burials have been found elsewhere in East Lothian, including at Belhaven Bay, Knowes, Kirkhill Braes (Henshall 1956); Dunbar (Perry, 1993); Innerwick (Rees 1997); and Easter Broomhouse (Cressey 2003).

1.4 Objectives

The objectives of the programme of works reported herein were:

- To carry out a programme of archaeological evaluation within the north-west corner of the development area, in order to ascertain the limits of disturbance to the cist cemetery from ground works associated with the pumping station, drainage cut, and roads.
- To establish the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological features or deposits within the development area.

2. WORKING METHODS

2.1 General

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

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 positions of all archaeological features were surveyed using industry standard electronic surveying equipment

2.2 Evaluation

Thirteen targeted trial trenches (Trenches 1-13) (Fig. 1) were excavated within the area of the long cist cemetery and ditched enclosure identified in the 2003/2005 evaluations (Fig. 2). Any cists that were identified were cleaned and recorded. Undisturbed skeletons were left in situ and their locations noted. Disturbed skeletons were excavated.

All trenches were excavated using a 360° tracked excavator equipped with a smoothbladed ditching bucket to reveal either the subsoil surface or the surface of the first archaeological horizon. All stripping operations were carried out under constant archaeological supervision.

Due to on-site constraints related to ensuring that access could be maintained, and in the interests of safety, each trench was benched when access at depth was required and backfilled immediately thereafter. In addition, the location of a large soil storage area could not be trenched at this time, which limited the area that could be evaluated.

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

3.1 General

Appendix 1 contains a tabulated summary of trench dimensions and gives a brief summary of the features encountered. Numbers in bold refer to contexts, a full list of which is contained in Appendix 2. The location of the trenches is presented on Figures 1 and 2.

The deposits throughout the development area varied considerably. When encountered, the topsoil (115) consisted of between 0.1m and 0.6m of dark brown sandy silt. However, the majority of the site appears to have been stripped of topsoil prior to the evaluation. The natural substrate consisted of sandy silts, silty sand and sandy clays varying in colour from mid-brown/orange to dark orange/red (100).

3.2 Trial Trenching Results

Trench 1 (15m by 1.8m; Fig. 2): Only re-deposited subsoil was present within Trench 1 and trenching was stopped at 2.1m. Modern inclusions of straw were encountered throughout the deposits identifying them as re-deposited.

Trench 2 (25m by 2m; Fig. 2, 3a): Trench 2 was excavated to a depth of 3.2m at which point it was clear none of the original ground remained. Re-deposited midbrown/orange clay sand subsoil (104) was present down to a depth of 0.6m which overlay 1.1m of very firm mid-brown/pinkish sandy silt (105). This, in turn, overlay re-deposited topsoil (106) which contained numerous modern inclusions, such as polystyrene, clay pipes and a rubber glove (Fig. 4).

Trench 3 (17m by 1.8m; Fig. 2, 3a, 5): A cut (103) into the natural was identified at the western end of Trench 3. This cut represented the western extent of the topsoil/subsoil removal. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.95m but the base of the cut was not identified. At this depth the trench was considered unsafe and excavation ceased.

Trench 4 (6m by 3m; Fig. 2, 3c, 6): This trench and was located within the area where long cists had been identified in the previous evaluation (Glendinning 2003). Seven long cists (1-7) were discovered within this trench (Fig. 6), below 0.6m of topsoil (115). They were orientated roughly north-east to south-west. All of them were in good condition and had the capstones in place. Where the capstones were missing the side slabs were clearly visible.

Trench 5 (8.5m by 2m; Figs 2, 3c, 7): One grave cut (107) was revealed, cut into natural (100), which contained an articulated skeleton. The grave was under 0.5m of topsoil (115). The majority of the upper half of the skeleton had been damaged but the bottom half remained largely intact. It was orientated east-north-east to west-south-west.

Trench 6 (8.7m by 1.9m; Figs 2, 3c, 8): One long cist was located at the northern end of the trench (8). All of the capstones were present but had collapsed and the side slabs were visible. Part of a linear feature or pit **(112)** was also identified within this

trench. This extended beyond the eastern edge of the trench so the full dimensions of the feature were not determined. The cut for a trench which was excavated for the pumping station (111) was also identified in Trench 6. To the south of this cut, the subsoil has been removed down to a depth of 6-7m.

Trench 7 (18m by 2m; Figs 2, 3b): A dense concentration of human bones measuring 5.5m in length by the full width of the trench, was identified at the western end of the trench. No grave cuts were apparent and, since it has been agreed that human remains would be left in situ, no attempt was made to clean or identify individual skeletons within this concentration. Within the remainder of the trench, seven long cists (9-15) were identified. Some of these retained their capstones and were orientated roughly north-east to south-west. Cists 10 and 15 appear to be cists which were identified during the 2003 evaluation.

Trench 8 (8m by 1.9m; Figs 2, 3b, 9): This trench was excavated in order to identify a known drainage trench cut. The drainage trench (114) was identified approximately 1.5m from the western end of the trench and was orientated north-west to south-east. Three long cists (18-20) were also identified. These were below approximately 0.1-0.2m of subsoil (110) and it appeared that in this location the topsoil had been previously removed. Cist 19 appears to be a cist which was identified during the 2003 evaluation. The costs were primarily defined by their side slabs, and were orientated east-west.

Trench 9 (6m by 1.8m; Fig. 2): No features were identified in this trench. However, it was noted that the original ground surface and undisturbed topsoil survived within this trench below made ground.

Trench 10 (9m by 1.9m; Fig. 2, 3c): One long cist (21) was identified at the southern end of this trench below 0.5m of topsoil. The cist was orientated north-east by southwest and consisted of one capstone and side slabs. It was noted that the original ground surface and undisturbed topsoil survived within this trench below made ground.

Trench 11 (17m by 1.8m; Fig. 2): This trench was excavated in order to identify any remains of the ditched enclosure. Re-deposited orange-brown sandy silt was recorded to a depth of between 0.7m and 1.3m, overlying natural substrate (**100**).

Trench 12 (11m by 1.8m; Fig.2): This trench was excavated in order to identify any remains of the ditched enclosure. Made ground to a depth of 0.4-0.6m was removed and found to overly 0.4m of topsoil. Below this was natural substrate (**100**).

Trench 13 (11m by 1.8m; Fig. 2): This trench was excavated in order to identify any remains of the ditched enclosure. Re-deposited red-brown silty sand was recorded to a depth of 0.7m, overlying natural substrate (100). Mixed modern debris was present throughout this deposit, such as bricks, plastic piping and wire.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Thirteen trial trenches were excavated within the previously identified long cist cemetery in order to determine how much damage had been done to the cemetery and possible enclosing ditch during ground breaking activities associated with the excavation of a drainage trench and foundations for a pumping station.

The work identified that the drainage trench was orientated roughly north-west to south-east and has resulted in the removal of any archaeological remains within this area. The results from the excavation of Trenches 1-3 demonstrate that the natural in the south-western part of the evaluation area has been dug away to a depth of at least 3.2m.

The cut for the foundation trench of the pumping station was identified in Trench 6 and, although the western edge of the foundation trench could not be located due to on site constraints, it can be assumed that the dimensions of the foundation trench were similar all around the pumping station footprint and that the foundation trench will have removed any archaeological remains from within this area.

Long cists and cut graves were recorded in Trenches 4-8 and 10 within the central part of the evaluation area and preservation has been shown to be good, with capstones often remaining in situ. In combination with the evaluation results from 2003 and 2005, the likely extent of the known cemetery can be plotted and is shown on Fig. 2. It appears that approximately 60% of the likely extent of the cemetery still survives in situ, despite the unauthorised excavation. The most densely occupied part of the cemetery, which is in and around Trench 4, has survived.

The project archive, comprising all CFA record sheets, maps and reports, will be deposited with the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Scotland (RCAHMS) and copies of reports will be lodged with the East Lothian Council Sites and Monuments Record.

On completion of the programme of archaeological 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. **REFERENCES**

Cressey, M et al 2003 'Three long cist burials at Easter Broomhouse, near Dunbar, East Lothian', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries Scotland*, 133, 277-282.

Curtis, A. and Johnson, M. 2005 *Hallhill Farm, Dunbar, East Lothian. Archaeological Evaluation,* CFA Data Structure Report No. 1031.

Henshall, A. S. 1965 'The long cist cemetery at Lasswade, Midlothian', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries Scotland*, 89 (1955-6), 252-283.

Glendinning, B. 2003 Hallhill Farm, Dunbar, East Lothian. Archaeological Evaluation, CFA Data Structure Report No. 821.

Maloney, C. 2001 'New evidence for the origins and evolution of Dunbar: excavations at the Captain's Cabin, Castle Park, Dunbar, East Lothian', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries Scotland*, 131, 283-317.

Rees, A. R. and Finlayson, W. L. 1997 'A long cist burial at Innerwick, near Dunbar, East Lothian', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries Scotland*, 127, 601-607.

Trench Number	Trench Size	Depth of Trench	Description
T001	15mx1.8m	2.1m at west end, 1.3m at east end	Entire trench exposed layers of re-deposited and made ground with modern debris throughout.
T002	25mx2m	3.2m max, 1.5m min.	Entire trench exposed layers of re-deposited and made ground with modern debris throughout
Т003	17mx1.8m	1.95m max	Excavated through 1.95m of made ground, before encountering a large cut through the natural at the extreme west end of trench.
T004	6mx3m	1.4m max	7 long cist graves
T005	8.5mx2m	1.9m max	One grave (107) cut into natural containing an articulated skeleton.
T006	8.5mx1.9m	1.9m max	1 long cist grave and a pit/linear feature (113)
T007	18mx2m	0.5m max	7 long cist graves and a deposit containing human skeletal remains.
T008	8mx1.9m	0.4m max	Trench excavated to find the cut of the drainage trench for the pump station, discovered at the extreme W end of the trench. Also within this trench were three long cist graves.
T009	6mx1.8m	1.2m max	Layer of made ground overlying undisturbed topsoil, over subsoil down to brown/red firm sandy natural
T010	9mx1.9m	2.5m at north end, 2.0m at south end.	Layer of made ground overlying undisturbed topsoil, over subsoil over brown/red sandy clay natural. One long cist grave discovered at southern edge of trench.
T011	17mx1.8m	1.3m max	Entire trench exposed layers of re-deposited and made ground
T012	11mx1.8m	0.6m max	Layer of made ground over topsoil over naural
T013	11mx1.8m	0.7m max	Entire trench exposed layers of re-deposited and made ground with modern debris throughout

APPENDIX 1: Summary of Trenches

APPENDIX 2: Context Register

Context	Fill	Trench	Description
	of		
100		Across	Natural – varying between brown/red sandy gravel and brown/red silty
		site	sand
101		1 – 2	65cm made ground – brown/red sandy silt
102		1 – 2	80cm firm made ground – dark brown/red sandy silt
103		3	Cut through natural for large ground reductions/borrow pit
104		3	Re-deposited mixed orange clay/sand
105		3	Re-deposited mixed brown/red sandy silt
106		3	Dark brown clay/silt – most likely re-deposited topsoil
107		5	Cut of grave for skeleton 1
108	107	5	Fill of grave
109		6	In-situ topsoil
110		6	Subsoil
111		6	Cut for pump station ground reductions
112		6	Cut of linear feature
113	112	6	Fill of linear feature
114		8	Cut of pipe trench
115		8	Topsoil
116		8	Subsoil

APPENDIX 3: Photographic Register

Photo No.	Contexts/description	Taken From
1	Shot of south-facing section of Trench 5	S
2	General shot of Trench 5	Е
3	General shot of Trench 5	W
4	General shot of Trench 6	Е
5	General shot of Trench 7	E
6	Possible linear feature- proved to be nothing after investigated	W
7	Trench for footpath to west of memorial garden	Ν
8	West-facing section of footpath showing all re-deposited soil where trench was excavated	W
9	Area where drainage pipe running from the pump station was located	SE
10	As above	SE
11	Topsoil spoil heap which is to be removed	Е
12	General shot of Trench 1 – all made ground	Е
13	General shot of Trench 2 – all made ground	W
14-15	NNE-facing section of the WNW end of Trench 2 showing upper and lower made ground	NNE
16	Shot of modern drainage pipe fragment at 2m depth in Trench 2	NE
17	Detail of pipe fragment in Trench 2	E
18	Trench 2, general shot showing depth and still on re-deposited subsoil	E
19	Trench 2, extension, north-facing section	N
20	Trench 3, general shot	E
20	Oblique of north-facing section of Trench 3	NE
22	Cist 1, post-cleaning	W
23	Cist 1, plan view	S
24	Cist 2, post-cleaning	W
25	Cist 2, plan view	N
26	Cist 3, post-cleaning	W
20	Cist 3, plan view	S
28	As above	S
29-30	Cist 4, plan view	N N
31	Cist 5, plan view	N
32	Cist 6, plan view	SE
33	Cist 0, plan view	S
33		N N
35	Grave 1 / (107) plan view	E
36	Grave 1 / (107) longitudinal view	E
	Grave 1 / (107) bottom half	E
37	Grave 1 / (107) torso	
38	Plan view of Grave 1 with markers	N
39	Grave 1 showing location of markers for plan, eastern half	S
40	Grave 1 showing location of markers for plan, western half	S W
41	Grave 1 post-excavation	
42-43	Cist 8, plan view	SE
44	Cist 8, plan view	NW
45	Linear feature (112), plan view	NW
46	Linear feature (112), post-excavation	NW
47	Trench 6 general shot showing features	NW
48	NW-facing section of feature (112)	NW
49	Plan view of feature (112), post-excavation	NW
50	NE-facing section of trench 6 showing cut for pump station ground reductions	NE
51	Cist 9, plan view	Ν
52	Cist 10, plan view	S
53-54	Cist 11, plan view	S
55-56	Cist 12, plan view	N

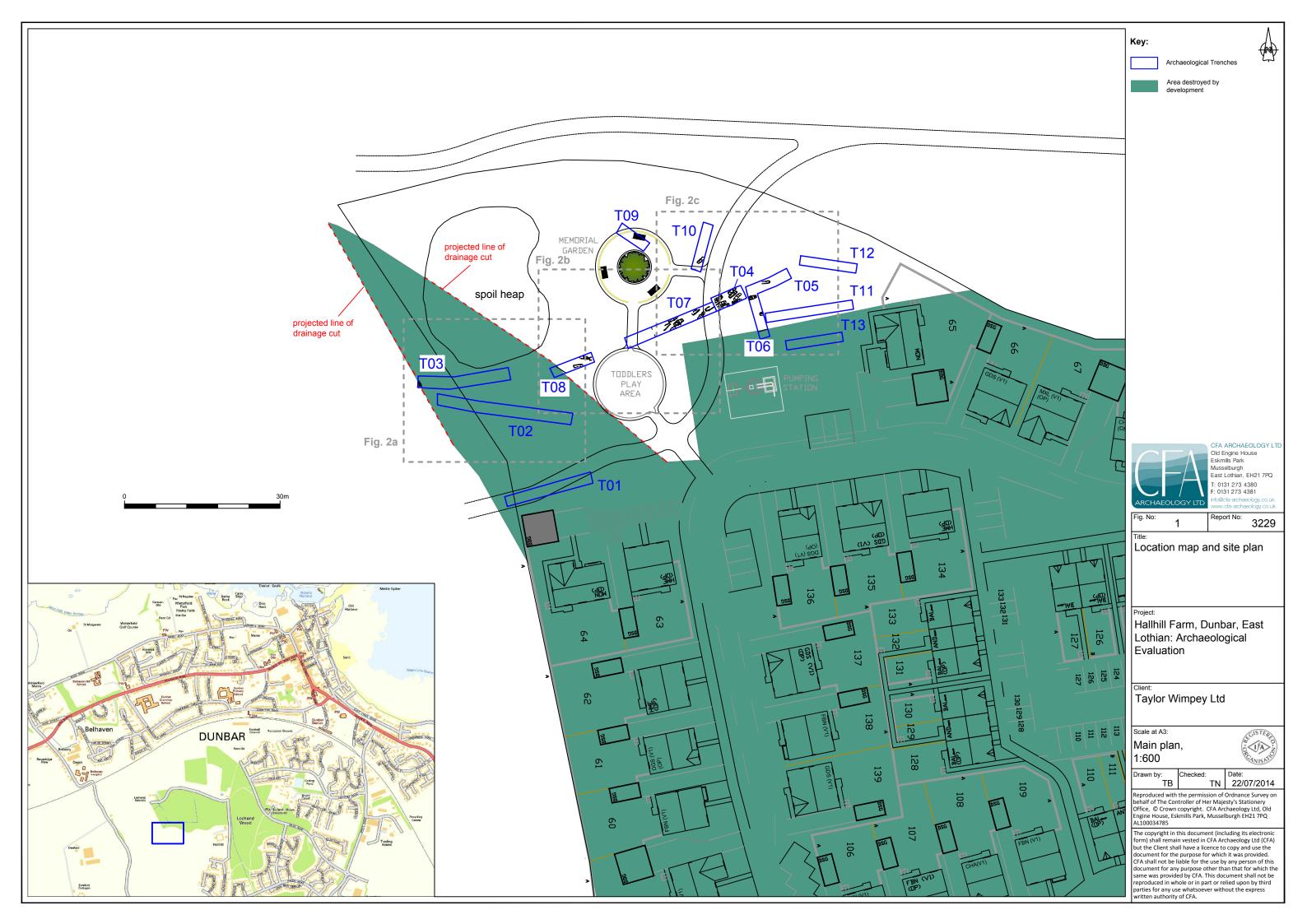
57	Cist 14, plan view	Е
58	Cist 13, plan view	W
59	Cist 12, plan view	NNW
60	Cist 15, plan view	SE
61	Oblique shot of NW-facing section showing pipe trench cut	Ν
62	NW-facing section showing pipe trench cut	NW
63-64	Trench 9 general shot	SSE
65	Cist 18, plan view	S
66	Cist 19, plan view	W
67	Cist 20, plan view	W
68	Cist 21, plan view	SE

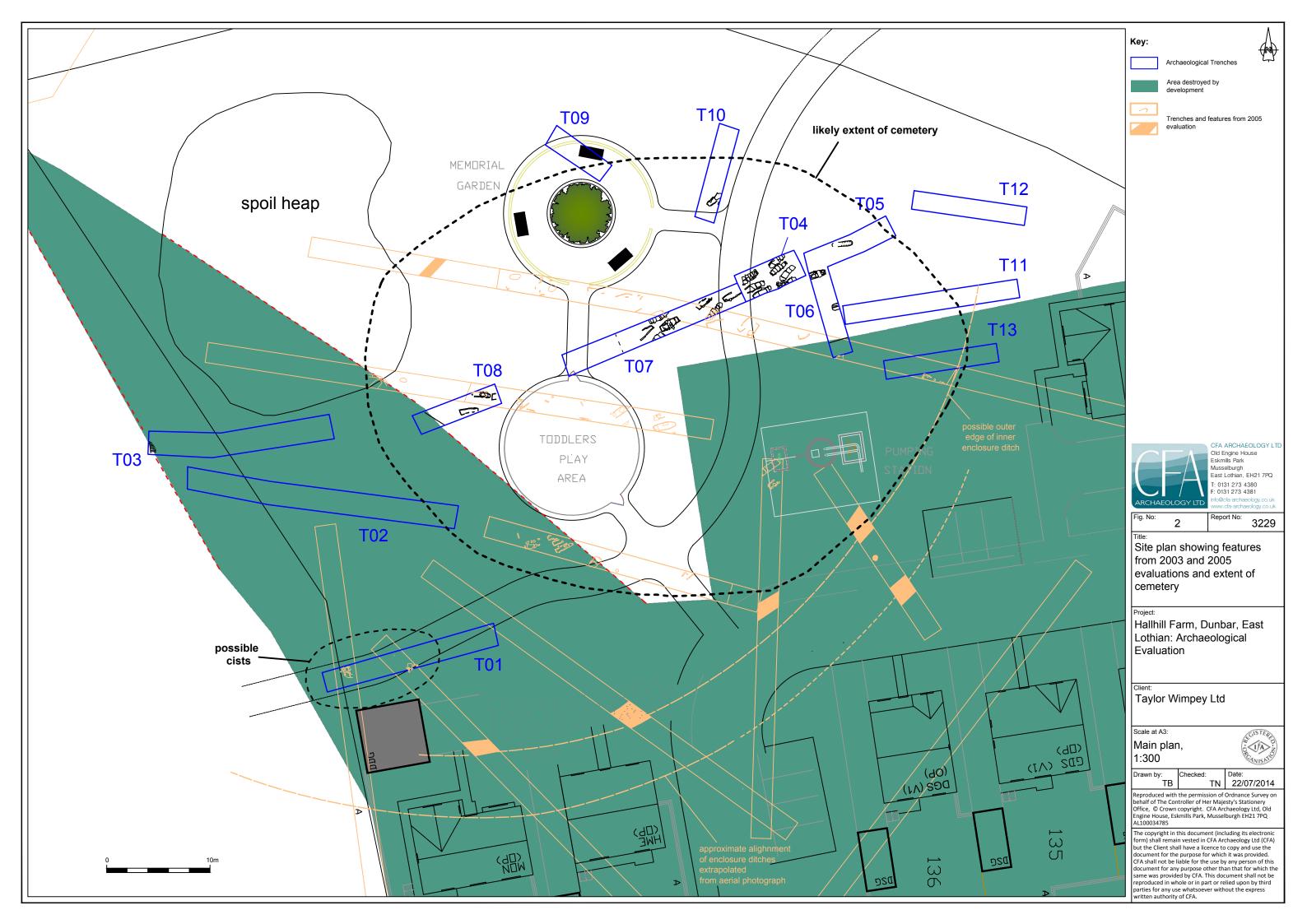
APPENDIX 4: Field Drawing Register

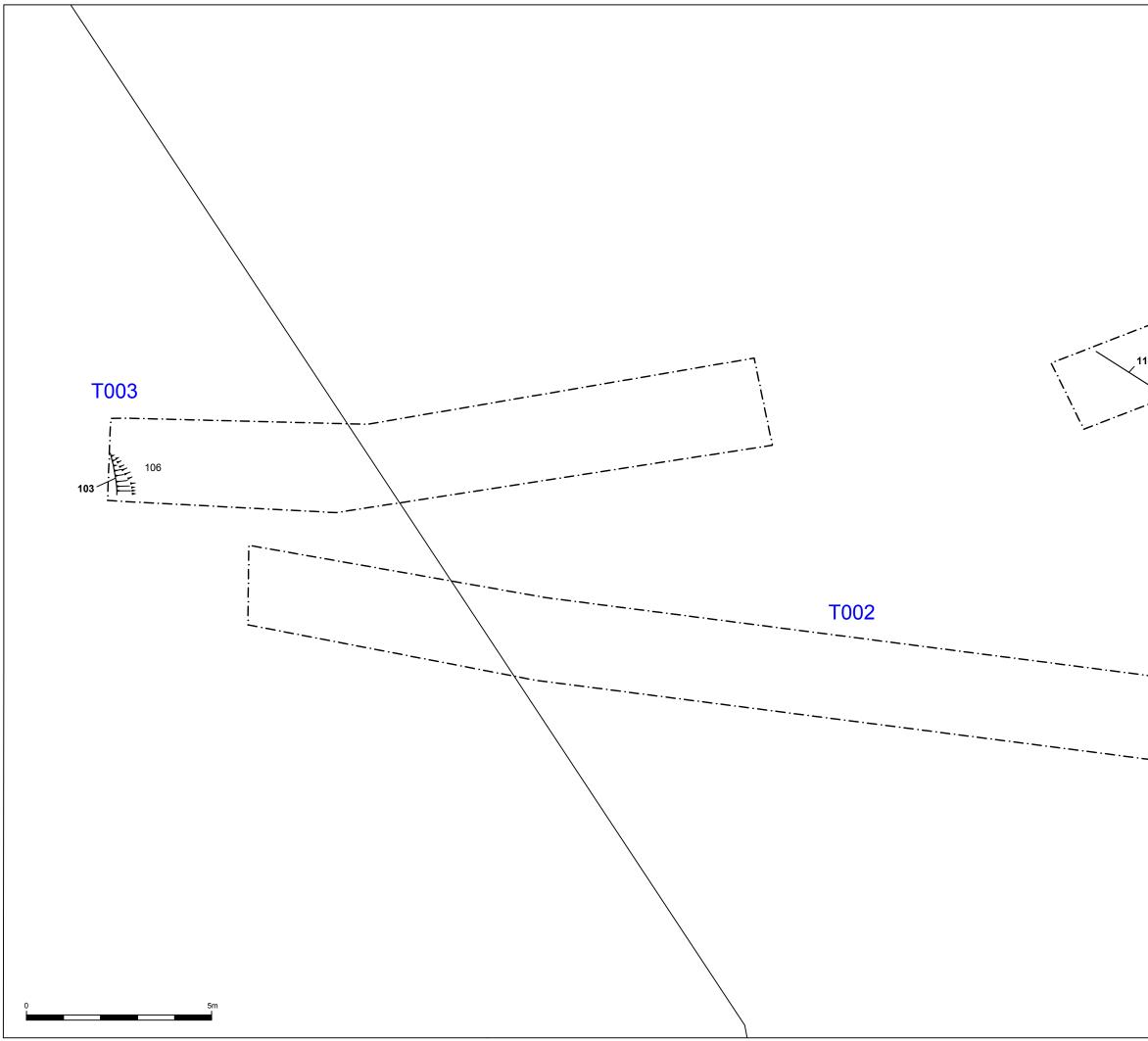
Drawing Number	Sheet Number	Description	Scale
1	1	North-facing section of trench 3 showing cut into natural at western end	1:20
2	1	Plan of trench 3 showing line of cut away ground	1:20
3	2	Plan of Cist graves in trench 4	1:20
4	1	Plan of grave (107) in trench 5	1:20
5	1	Profile of grave (107) along length	1:20
6	1	Profile of grave (107) along width	1:20
7	3	Trench 6 plan	1:20
8	3	ENE-facing section of trench 6 showing cut (111) for pump station	1:20
9	3	NNW-facing section of feature (112)	1:20
10a	4	Trench 7 plan – NE side	1:20
10b	4	Trench 7 plan – central section	1:20
10c	5	Trench 7 plan – SW side	1:20
11	5	Trench 8 plan	1:20
12	6	Trench 10 plan	1:20
13	6	NW-facing section of Trench 8 with drainage cut	1:20

APPENDIX 5: Sample Register

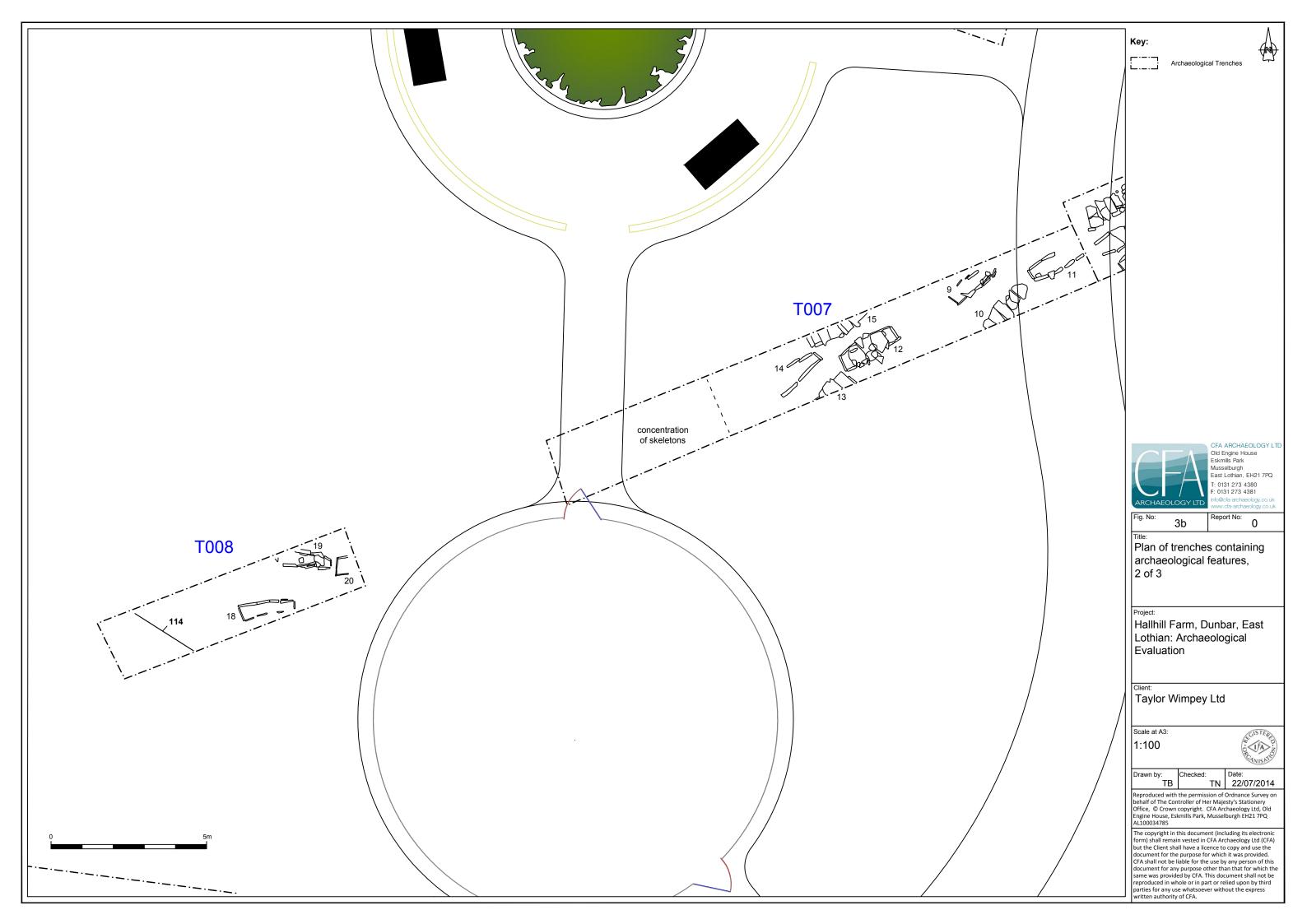
Sample No Context		Description	Sample Volume	Sample Type	
1	108	Fill of grave (107)	501	Bulk	
2	108	Basal part of grave (107) fill	201	Bulk	

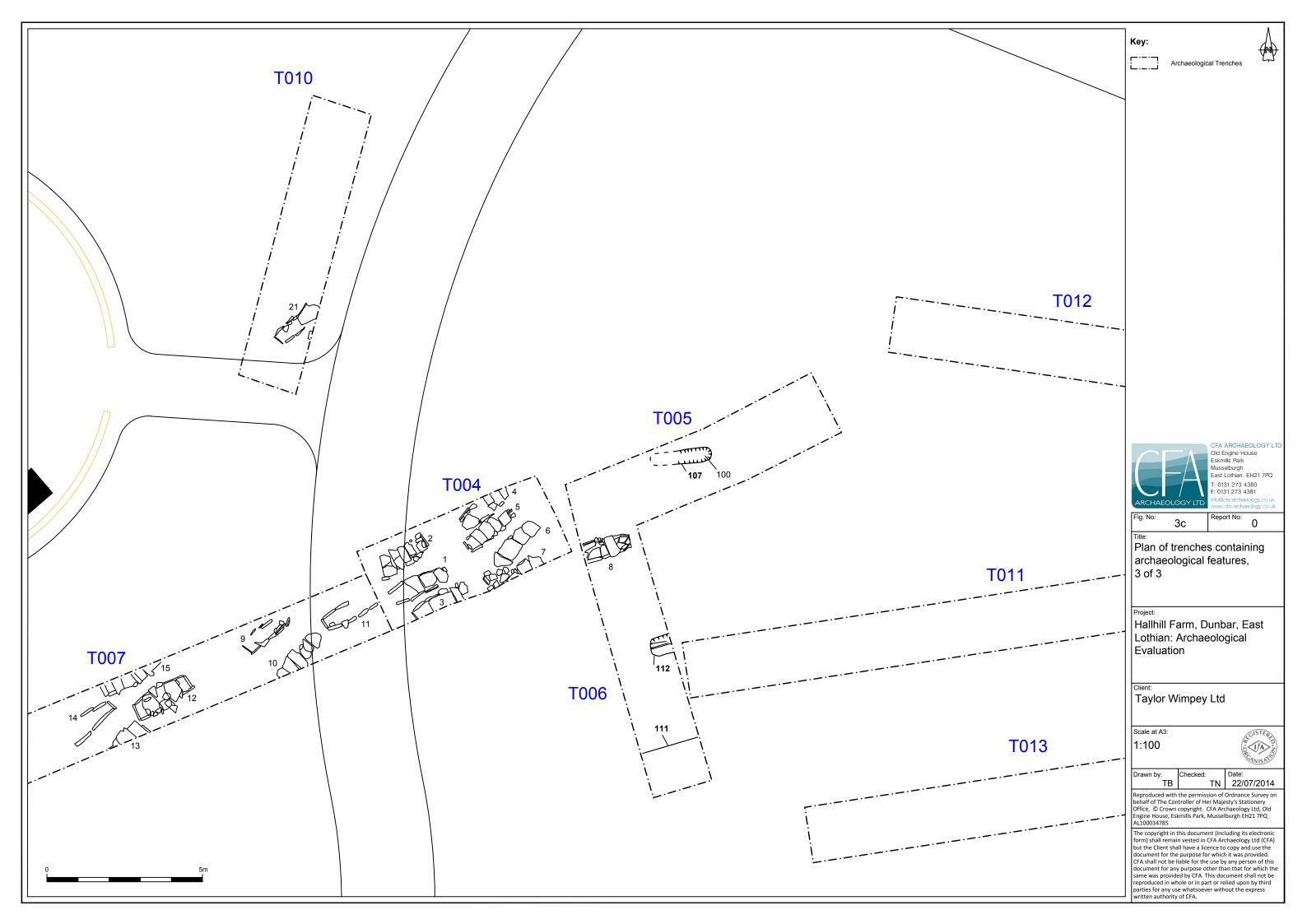






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	archaeological features, 1 of 3 Project: Hallhill Farm, Dunbar, East Lothian: Archaeological Evaluation Client: Taylor Wimpey Ltd
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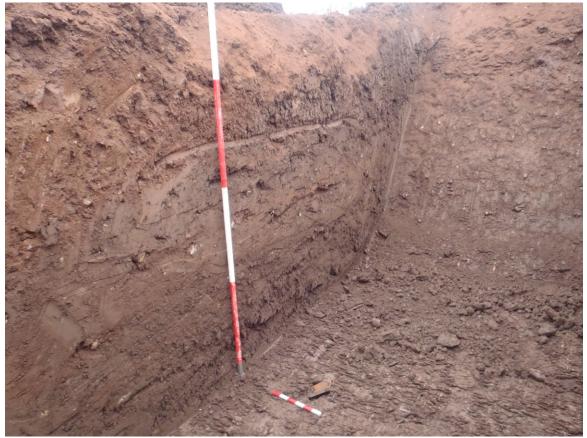


Fig 4 - Oblique north-facing section of Trench 2 showing redeposited topsoil/subsoil



Fig 5 - North-facing section in Trench 3 showing cut **103**



	CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD Old Engine House	Title: Site Photos	Fig. 4-5	Report: 322	9 Drawn: TB	CKD:	ΤN	Date: 28/10/14
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Fig 6 - Cist 1 and 3



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Hallhill Farm, Dunbar, East Lothian: Archaeological Evaluation

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Report: 3229 Drawn: TB CKD: TN Date: 28/10/14 CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD Title: Fig. 8-9 Old Engine House Ekmills Park Musselburgh Site Photos Client: Taylor Wimpey Ltd East Lothian, EH21 7PQ 0131 273 4380 0131 273 4381 Project: LCISTER. <fA> Hallhill Farm, Dunbar, East Lothian: Archaeological Evaluation eology.co.uk eology.co.uk HAEOLOGY LTD ecta-archae v.cfa-archa ANISK

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