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Interpretation, Design & Display

Daubeney Gate, Shenley Church End, Milton Keynes - Archaeological Evaluation

Report No. MK043/16

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1. SUMMARY

CFA Archaeology Ltd carried out an archaeological evaluation on a proposed development at Daubeney Gate, Shenley Church End, Milton Keynes at SP 8252 3680. The work was undertaken on behalf of Mace Group on the 3rd of March 2016. Five 30m trenches were excavated. In the western part of the site the trenches exposed three post holes, a single furrow of likely Medieval or post-medieval date, and a linear feature filled with cobbles. The latter feature is associated with a track shown on the 1840 Tithe map. The eastern part of the site had been truncated by recent activity associated with the construction of nearby housing estates.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 General

2.1.1 This document presents the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by CFA Archaeology Ltd (CFA) on 3rd of March on a proposed development site at Daubeney Gate, Shenley Church End, Milton Keynes. The work was commissioned by Mace Group.

2.1.2 The work was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) dated 15th February 2016, covering this programme of works produced by CFA.

2.2 Background

2.2.1 The proposed development site (Fig. 1) measures approximately 1.1 hectares in extent and is located at the base of a broad shallow valley associated with a former tributary of the Loughton Brook, at approximately 90m AOD. The local topography descends from Shenley Park located to the east towards the valley floor which extends north-east to south-west through the Site. A large hedge running north-east to south-west divides the Site. The overlying soils are recorded by the as ‘slowly permeable seasonally wet slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils’ (Soilscapes Webviewer, accessed June 2014).

2.2.2 A Desk-based assessment by Cotswold Archaeology (Report 14175) concludes:

The Scheduled remains of a medieval manorial moated complex are located immediately to the west of the proposed development site. The earthworks denoting this manorial moated enclosure are relatively well defined and, on current evidence, do not appear to extend into the proposed development site. Analysis of historical aerial photography and LiDAR data suggest that the proposed development site formed part of the agricultural hinterland (comprising ridge and furrow cultivation) beyond the boundaries of the moated enclosure. There are no extant earthworks recorded within the proposed development site and any below ground remains relating to former ridge and furrow cultivation within the proposed development site are considered to be of only limited heritage value.

2.3 Objectives

- 2.3.1 The objectives of the project were to determine the ‘location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed development’.

The Research Objectives were to:

- Investigate the evidence for and origins of the different phases of land use and enclosure within the area, including any evidence for pre-Roman, Roman, Saxon, medieval and post-medieval activity;
- Place the results of the investigation within the wider landscape context and contribute to an understanding of the pattern of land use;
- Use a spectrum of environmental techniques appropriate for this aspect of investigation, an attempt will be made to model the landscape and its transformation brought about by the settlement’s inhabitants and due to natural events.

3. WORKING METHODS

3.1 General

- 3.1.1 CFA Archaeology Ltd follows the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists’ Code of Conduct, Standards and Guidance.

3.2 Trenching

- 3.2.1 A 5% sample of the Site was evaluated corresponding to five trenches each measuring 30m x 1.8m. The proposed locations of trenches were targeted on buildings and services associated with the proposed development, however during fieldwork, trench positions had to be adjusted slightly: Trench 1 was moved to the north to avoid trees and Trench 4 was moved south and rotated 90 degrees to avoid a sewer. All machining was undertaken using a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision.

3.3 Excavation and Recording Strategy

- 3.3.1 All archaeological remains were recorded by means of photographs, drawings and written records conforming to Cifa standards (2014) and CFA’s quality manuals. All features were planned and drawn in section at an appropriate scale (1:10, 1:20 or 1:50). All plans and sections were related in height to ordnance datum. The photographic record consisted of digital photographs. Archaeological features were systematically scanned by metal detector prior to excavation and spoil routinely scanned for finds.

3.4 Finds

- 3.4.1 All finds of pre-modern date were retained for analysis. All finds were treated in accordance with relevant guidance (UKIC 2001 and Cifa 2014).

4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

4.1 General

4.1.1 Trench locations are shown on Fig. 1 and a summary of all trenches is contained in Appendix 1. Illustrations and photos referred to in the text can be found at the back of this report.

4.2 Trenches 1, 2 and 3

4.2.1 Trenches 1, 2 and 3 were located on the west side of the Site within a poorly drained landscape covered with scrub and modern spoil heaps. In trenches 1 and 3 only a very thin topsoil (0101/0301) overlying natural light grey-to-light blue clay (0102/0302) was identified (Figs. 12 and 16). The thin nature of the topsoil and the lack of cultivation soil are consistent with the area having been lowered during the construction of the road embankment to the north-west for the Portway.

4.2.2 A very small shallow feature was identified in Trench 1 (0103) filled with grey silt (0104) which is thought to be a vegetation/root mark (Figs 2 and 3). Three shallow features were revealed in Trench 3: A wide shallow linear cut (0303) measuring 1.4-1.8m wide and 0.06m deep filled with grey-yellow brown clay with charcoal lumps and brick fragments (0304) (Figs. 6, 7, 17). This feature is likely to be a cultivation furrow associated with Medieval or post-medieval agriculture. Nearby were two shallow post holes (Figs. 1, 8-11, 18 and 19). Post hole 0305 measured 0.4m in diameter and 0.15m deep filled with dark grey silt. Post hole 0307 measured 0.28m long, 0.25m wide and 0.09m deep filled with a grey-yellow silty clay. No pottery was revealed from the two post holes but they probably date post-medieval period.

4.2.3 A cultivation soil (0202) was exposed in Trench 2 (Fig. 13) showing that the area around the central hedge running through the Site has escaped truncation by modern activity. The cultivation soil, a grey-brown silty clay, overlay natural clay in most of the trench and sealed a compact cobble layer (0205) at the south end. The cobble layer was composed of sub-rounded and angular stones, not laid, mixed with 10% orange silt, filling a shallow linear gully running north-east to south-west (0204) (see Figs. 4, 5, 14 and 15). Post-medieval pottery was found pressed into the surface of the cobbles. Two excavated sondages revealed the cobbles to be 0.2m thick but no further pottery was discovered. A ceramic field drain exposed in the south-east corner of the trench cut into the cobbles. The cobble layer is likely to be hardstanding for a track or road and is located approximately where the 'Carriage Road to Calverton' is shown on the 1840 Shenley Church End Tithe Map (Cotswold DBA, Fig 4).

4.3 Trenches 4 and 5

4.3.1. Trenches 4 and 5 were located west of the central hedge in parkland between housing estates covered with short grass (Figs.20 and 21). In both trenches the topsoil overlay a 0.2-0.3m layer of very compact made ground (0402/0502)

containing modern brick and plastic associated with construction of the nearby housing estates. No features, except ceramic field drains, were found below this deposit and it is likely that this area was stripped of original topsoil and cultivation soil during construction of the housing developments.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The evaluation has found that most of the original deposits across the Site have been removed by 20th century developments around Shenley Church End. Limited evidence of medieval or post-medieval Ridge and Furrow agriculture and some post holes, possibly dating to the same period, were found next to the Portway though these have been heavily truncated, presumably by bulldozing for the road embankment. Original deposits appear to survive best around the central hedge running through the Site where in Trench 2 revealed a deposit aligning with the Carriage Road to Calverton. This road is likely to be post-medieval in origin. CFA recommends no further archaeological work.

6. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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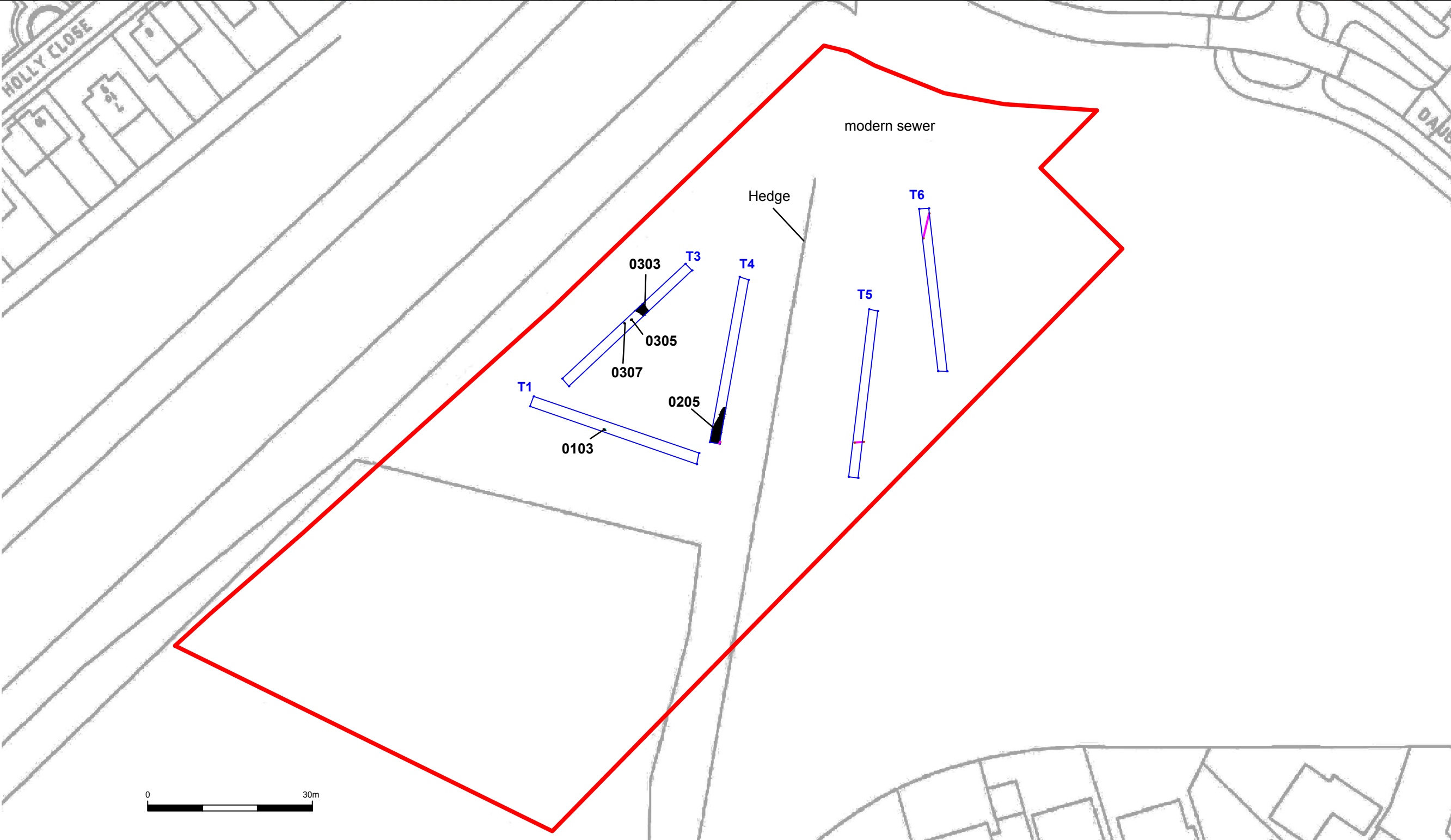
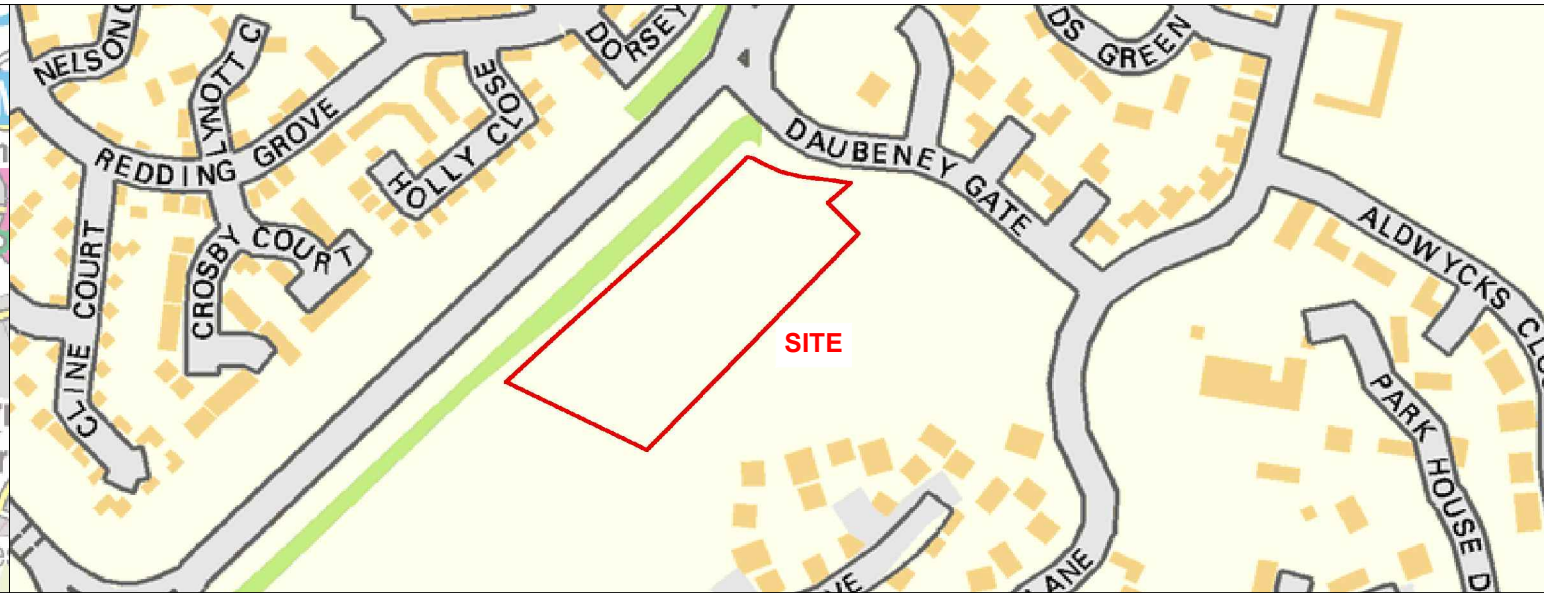
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APPENDIX 1: Trench Summary

Trench 01		Trench Size 30m x 1.8 m	
Trench Depth 0.2-0.6m	Topsoil Depth 0.07-0.17m	Subsoil Depth None	
Archaeology: <i>Small feature, possibly a posthole or pit, cut into natural clay (0102). One piece of land drain found in topsoil.</i>			
Trench 02		Trench Size 30m x 1.8 m	
Trench Depth 0.4-0.66m	Topsoil Depth 0.13-0.15m	Subsoil Depth 0.25-0.6m	
Archaeology: <i>A layer of cobblestones (0205) filling linear shallow cut (0204) into natural clay (0203). The cobble layer is composed of sub-rounded stones and angular flints (max diameter 12cm). Stones mixed with 10% orange clay and silt. Possible surface of road or track. Ceramic field drain cut into this deposit along E side of the trench.</i>			
Trench 03		Trench Size 30m x 1.8 m	
Trench Depth 0.2-0.5. m	Topsoil Depth 0.05-0.1m	Subsoil Depth None	
Archaeology: <i>Wide and shallow linear feature (0303) cut into natural filled with yellow-brown clay and charcoal (0304). Feature is agricultural furrow from Medieval / post-medieval activity. To SW of furrow are two shallow post holes (0305) filled with (0306) and (0307) filled with (0308). None of the features are stratigraphically related.</i>			
Trench 04		Trench Size 30m x 1.8 m	
Trench Depth 0.4-0.5m	Topsoil Depth 0.15-0.5m	Subsoil Depth 0.3-0.4m	
Archaeology: Made ground / levelling layer (0402) below topsoil. Contains modern brick and plastic. Associated with construction compounds for nearby housing estates? Single ceramic field drain present.			
Trench 05		Trench Size 30m x 1.8 m	
Trench Depth	Topsoil Depth	Subsoil Depth	
Archaeology: Made ground / levelling layer (0402) below topsoil. Contains modern brick. Associated with construction compounds for nearby housing estates? Single ceramic field drain present.			



Key:

- Site Boundary
- Archaeological Trenches
- Archaeological Features
- Field Drains



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Title:
Site and trench location plan

Project:
**Daubney Gate, Milton Keynes –
Archaeological Evaluation**

Client:
Mace Group

Scale at A3:
1:750

Drawn by: TB	Checked: SW	Date: 13/01/2016
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Report No: MK043/16	Fig. No: 1
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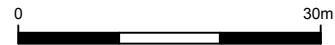


Fig. 2 - Plan of feature 0103

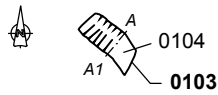


Fig. 4 - Plan of feature 0204

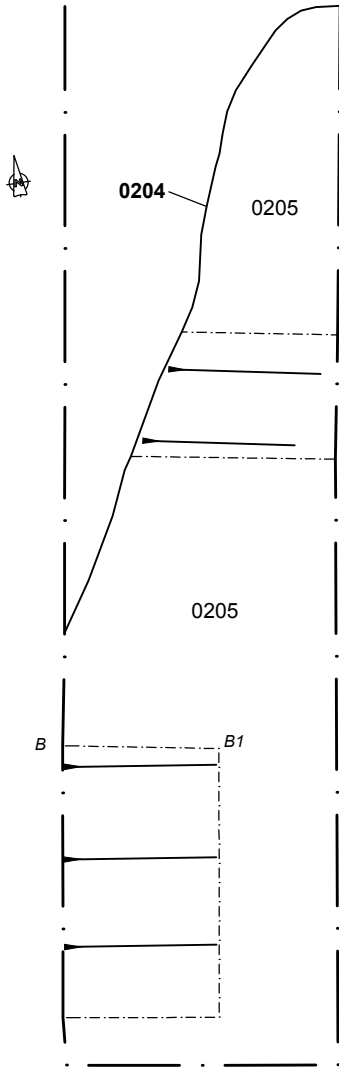


Fig. 5 - S-facing section, feature 0204

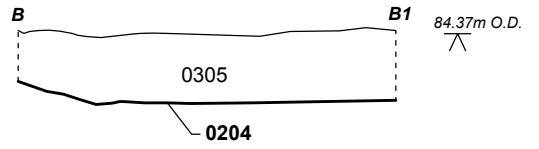


Fig. 3 - NW-facing section of feature 0103

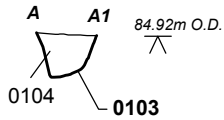


Fig. 8 - Plan of feature 0305

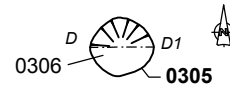


Fig. 9 - N-facing section feature 0305

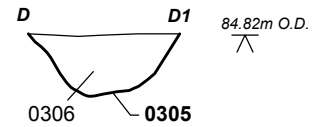


Fig. 6 - Plan of feature 0303

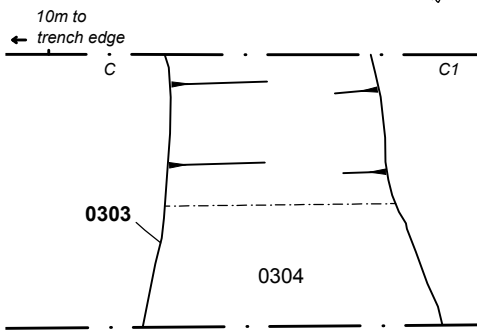


Fig. 10 - Plan of feature 0307



Fig. 7 - NW-facing section of feature 0303

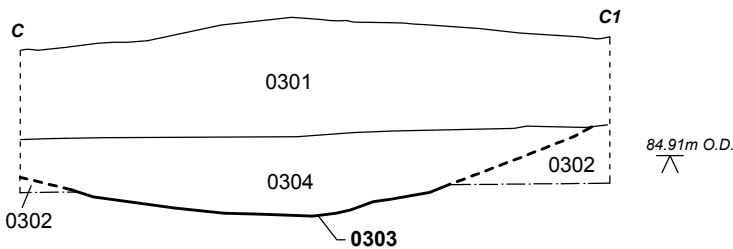
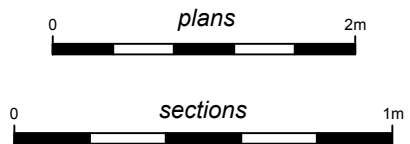
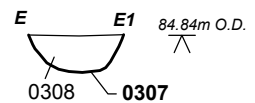


Fig. 11 - NW-facing section of feature 0307



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Plans and sections

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Scale at A4:
Plans, 1:50; Sections, 1:20

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SW

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15/03/2016

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2-11



Fig. 12 - Trench 1 after excavation,
from the NW



Fig. 13 - Trench 2 after excavation,
from the S

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Fig. 14 - Cobble layer 0205 in Trench 2, from the S



Fig. 15 - Cobble layer 0205 in Trench 2, from the N

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Fig. 16 - Trench 3 after excavation,
from the SW



Fig. 17 - Furrow 0303 in Trench 3, from the NW

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Fig. 18 - Feature 0305 in Trench 3, from the NE



Fig. 19 - Feature 0307 in Trench 3, from the NW

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Fig. 20 - Trench 4 after excavation,
from the NW



Fig. 21 - Trench 5 after excavation, from the S

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