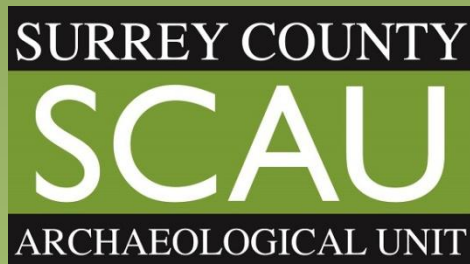


**CLEMSFOLD HOUSE, GUILDFORD ROAD  
HORSHAM, WEST SUSSEX**

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL  
TRENCH EVALUATION**



# AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AT CLEMSFOLD HOUSE, GUILDFORD ROAD, HORSHAM, WEST SUSSEX

## Summary

*On the 13<sup>th</sup> November 2017, a three trench archaeological field evaluation was carried out by staff of the Surrey County Archaeological Unit on the site of a proposed accommodation block sited to the rear of an existing care facility in Horsham, West Sussex. Each of the trenches revealed a similar stratigraphic sequence of drift geology, subsoil and overlying topsoil, with identified features appearing at the interface of the drift geology and the overlying subsoil. The drift geology was revealed throughout the entirety of two trenches and partly within the third, where the location of a buried service precluded deeper excavation in part of the trench.*

*Aside from three, shallow, irregular features, which were devoid of dating evidence and are probably no more than root disturbance, no features, or finds, representing anything other than modern occupation were observed. In view of this, it seems unlikely that archaeological deposits of value lie within the development area and it is recommended that no further archaeological fieldwork is required in respect of the development.*

Surrey County Archaeological Unit  
Surrey History Centre, 130 Goldsworth Road,  
Woking, Surrey, GU21 6ND

Tel: 01483 518779

email: [archaeology.scau@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:archaeology.scau@surreycc.gov.uk)

Project Manager	Nowal Shaikhley
Author	John Payne
Date of fieldwork	13 November 2017
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NGR (centre of area)	512957 133240
Client	Sussex Health Care
Post code	RH12 3PW
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Appendix 1: Photo compendium

## 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 On the 13<sup>th</sup> November 2017, an archaeological field evaluation was carried out by staff of the Surrey County Archaeological Unit on the site of a proposed accommodation block sited to the rear of an existing care facility in Horsham, West Sussex (Application DC/14/2252). The field evaluation was undertaken in order to satisfy the archaeological conditions attached to the planning permission.

1.2 Condition 8 of the permission document stated: *An archaeological investigation of the site shall be carried out at the expense of the developer in accordance with a specification and timetable to be submitted to and agreed by the Local Planning Authority in writing following approved removal of trees upon the site and before the commencement of any building works.*

*Reason: The site may be of archaeological significance and it is important that it is recorded by excavation before it is destroyed by development in accordance with policy DC 1 O of the Horsham District Local Development Framework: General Development Control Policies (2007).*

1.3 The above condition was imposed following advice given by the Senior Archaeologist, Strategic Planning - Environment & Heritage West Sussex County Council. His comments stated:

*The application area is located 50 metres to the north-east of part of a Romano-British settlement of the 1st -early 2nd centuries AD, exposed in 2000, in the field to the rear of the care home, during the stripping of topsoil from the 15-metre wide working width of the construction corridor for a major gas pipeline, running from Betchworth in Surrey to Rowhook in West Sussex.*

*Within the exposed part of this settlement, shallowly buried archaeological features, thought to be traces of "round houses" of the period, were recorded, together with drainage ditches and some Roman cremation burials.*

*The settlement site almost certainly extends beyond the immediate vicinity of the gas pipeline; given the close proximity of the application area, it may extend also into the footprint of the proposed care facility and its footprint.*

*New ground excavations for construction of the care home facility, its access road and car parking may reduce or remove any buried remains of the Romano-British settlement. In the event that these proposals are approved, it will be important to ensure that surviving buried archaeological features are adequately investigated, recorded and reported.*

*Accordingly archaeological mitigation measures are considered to be appropriate, in advance of development.*

*Because the proposed care facility building footprint is currently occupied by a copse of fruit trees, on-site archaeological investigation and recording would necessarily have to follow the intended felling of the fruit trees, which, for the protection of archaeology below ground, should be cut at ground level, not pulled out.*

1.4 Following this advice, Sussex Health Care commissioned the Surrey County Archaeological Unit to prepare the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) as required by the condition (Saywood 2017). This recommended an archaeological trial trench

evaluation of the development area and this was subsequently approved by the Senior Archaeologist, Strategic Planning - Environment & Heritage, West Sussex County Council, who advises the Local Planning Authority.

1.5 Sussex Health Care commissioned the Surrey County Archaeological Unit to undertake the trial trench evaluation in accordance with the WSI.

1.6 The aim of the evaluation was to sample the proposal area in order to assess the potential for archaeological remains within the development area.

1.7 The recommendation in the WSI was for an archaeological evaluation comprising three trial trenches, each of 20.00m in length. However, on-site restrictions necessitated some flexibility in this plan, with the final trench lengths varying from between 18 to 22 metres. The combined target length of 60m was achieved (figs 2 and 3).

## **2 Methodology**

2.1 The evaluation was undertaken using a tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.5m wide toothless bucket, whilst revealed anomalies of possible archaeological interest were excavated using a variety of appropriate hand tools.

2.2 The evaluated area comprised undisturbed rough lawn with small fruit trees, located to the south of the existing care facility. To the south of evaluated area and beyond the property boundary, a rural landscape was seen to extend.

On site alterations to the original trench plan (fig 2) included the rotation and repositioning of all three trenches (fig 3). This was necessitated by the position of both overhead and buried services, plus the position of existing trees, some of which were safeguarded by a Tree Protection Order (TPO).

2.3 The machine excavation was carefully monitored throughout, with trenches being periodically CAT scanned during the soil reduction process. CAT scan readings were investigated using insulated hand tools and where services were identified, the surrounding soil was left undisturbed and mechanical excavation continued at a safe distance beyond the identified service.

2.4 The recognition of features or artefacts of archaeological interest, occurred at the interface between the subsoil, and the natural, underlying drift geology, although the subsoil, was examined for evidence of cutting features.

Upon visual identification, cleaning, hand excavation and recording of identified features was carried out as necessary.

### 3 RESULTS

3.1 Each of the trenches revealed a similar stratigraphic sequence of drift geology, subsoil and overlying topsoil, with identified features appearing at the interface of the drift geology and the overlying subsoil. The drift geology was revealed throughout the entirety of two trenches (1 and 2) and partly within trench 3, where the location of a buried service precluded deeper excavation in part of the trench.

#### Trench 1 (fig 4)

Context number	Length	Width	Thickness /depth	Description	Highest top level	Lowest base level
100	20.75m	1.50m	0.17m	Existing vegetated topsoil – Mid-dark greyish brown slightly sandy clay.	33.01m	32.81m
101	20.75m	1.50m	0.17m	Subsoil – mid-light brown slightly sandy clay.	32.84m	32.55m
102	20.75m	1.50m	0.08m+	Natural geology – light brownish-yellow sandy clay with frequent small chemical concretions (manganese or iron)	32.60m	n/a
103	0.95m	0.85m	0.10m	Incomplete, curving cut, shallow sloping sides and flattish base, filled by 104 (non-anthropogenic feature);	32.60m	32.50m
104	0.95m	0.85m	0.10m	Fill of 103	32.60m	32.50m
105	2.20m	1.50m	0.10m+	Mixed, dark sandy silt, with pea shingle lenses and modern plastics	32.80m	32.55m

3.2 Trench 1 was orientated north to south and measured 20.75m in length. The surface of drift geology was revealed at approximately 0.40m below the existing ground surface.

Context 102 was the earliest deposit encountered and comprised a sandy clay, with frequent, small nodular concretions, which are likely to have formed through post depositional chemical precipitation. This deposit represents the in-situ drift geology.

Cut 103 was located at the southern end of the trench and comprised a curving feature, partly revealed within the west facing trench section. A single intervention was placed into this feature, which revealed a shallow sloping, straight sided profile and a flat base. The revealed extent of this cut measured 0.85m wide by 0.95m long, whilst the depth was only 0.10m. The single fill comprised an homogeneous silty sand, which was devoid of dating evidence (fill 104). This feature is thought to be non-anthropogenic in nature, possibly associated with root disturbance.

Context 101 overlay the previously described featured and comprised an homogeneous sub-soil horizon formed through the natural processes of erosion and deposition.

Context 100 overlay the previous deposit and represents the existing vegetated topsoil.

Context 105 was revealed at the north end of the trench and comprised a mixed, dark sandy silt, with pea shingle lenses. The presence of very modern debris (plastics) within this deposit clearly indicates that this represents a very recent landscaping episode and is probably associated with the construction of the most modern part of the existing care facility. Although the topsoil deposit 100 was seen to overlie this context, it is almost certain that context 105 is the latest episode of deposition and the topsoil which overlay it has been redeposited during a subsequent landscaping episode.

### Trench 2 (fig 5)

Context number	Length	Width	Thickness /depth	Description	Highest top level	Lowest base level
200	22.00m	1.50m	0.14m	Existing vegetated topsoil – Mid-dark greyish brown slightly sandy clay.	32.58m	32.14m
201	22.00m	1.50m	0.26m	Subsoil – mid-light brown slightly sandy clay.	32.46m	31.88m
202	22.00m	1.50m	0.04m+	Natural geology – light brownish-yellow sandy clay with frequent small chemical concretions (manganese or iron)	32.23m	n/a
203	0.78m	0.48m	0.07m	Incomplete, curving cut, shallow sloping sides and flattish base, filled by 204 (non-anthropogenic feature);	32.08m	32.01m
204	0.78m	0.48m	0.07m	Fill of 203	32.08m	32.01m
205	0.70m	0.50m	0.05m	Roughly oval shaped cut with shallow sloping sides and flattish base, filled by 206 (non-anthropogenic feature);	31.95m	31.83m
206	0.70m	0.50m	0.05m	Fill of 205	31.95m	31.83m

3.3 Trench 2 was orientated northwest to southeast and measured 22.00m in length. The surface of drift geology was revealed at approximately 0.40m below existing ground surface.

Context 202 was the earliest deposit encountered and comprised a sandy clay, with frequent, small nodular concretions, which are likely to have formed through post depositional chemical precipitation. This deposit represents the in-situ drift geology.

Cut 203 was located roughly midway along the trench's length and comprised a curved feature, partly revealed within the northeast facing trench section. A single intervention was placed into this feature, which revealed a shallow sloping, straight sided profile and a flat base. The revealed extent of this cut measured 0.48m wide by 0.78m long, whilst the depth was only 0.04m. The single fill comprised an homogeneous silty sand, which was devoid of dating evidence (fill 204).

Cut 205 was located close to the trench's southeast end and comprised an irregular, oval shaped cut with a shallow sloping, straight sided profile and a flat base. The extent of this cut measured 0.50m wide by 0.70m long, whilst the depth was only 0.05m.

The single fill comprised an homogeneous silty sand, which was devoid of dating evidence (fill 206). As with the feature seen in Trench 1, these two features are thought to be non-anthropogenic in nature and again, are possibly associated with root disturbance.

Context 201 overlay the two previously described features and comprised an homogeneous sub-soil horizon formed through the natural processes of erosion and deposition.

Context 100 overlay the previously described sub-soil deposit and represents the existing vegetated topsoil.

### Trench 3 (fig 6)

Context number	Length	Width	Thickness /depth	Description	Highest top level	Lowest base level
300	18.30m	1.50m	0.32m	Existing vegetated topsoil – Mid-dark greyish brown slightly sandy clay.	32.40m	31.67m
301	18.30m	1.50m	0.16m	Subsoil – mid-light brown slightly sandy clay.	32.06m	31.57m
302	18.30m	1.50m	0.04m+	Natural geology – light brownish-yellow sandy clay with frequent small chemical concretions (manganese or iron)	31.90m	n/a

3.4 Trench 3 was orientated northwest to southeast and measured 18.30m in length. The surface of drift geology was revealed at approximately 0.50m below existing ground surface.

Context 302 was the earliest deposit encountered and was revealed both at the northwest and southeast trench ends, whilst centrally the deposit was obscured by a 2.50m length of the overlying subsoil, which was retained in-situ because of the presence of buried service cables. The deposit itself comprised a sandy clay, with frequent, small nodular concretions, which are likely to have formed through post depositional chemical precipitation. This deposit represents the in-situ drift geology.

Context 301 overlay the previously described deposit and comprised an homogeneous sub-soil horizon formed through the natural processes of erosion and deposition.

Context 100 overlay the previous deposit and represents the existing vegetated topsoil.



## **4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.1 Good archaeological coverage of the available area was achieved, despite some adjustments to the size and location of the trial trenches. The site appeared to have undergone little disturbance, as suggested both by the presence of an in-situ subsoil and the visual similarity between the ground level of the site and the adjacent farmland, lying to the south.

Aside from the three, shallow, irregular features, which were devoid of dating evidence and are probably no more than root disturbance, no features, or finds, representing anything other than modern occupation were observed.

4.2 In view of the above information, it seems unlikely that archaeological deposits of value lie within the development area and it is recommended that no further archaeological fieldwork is required in respect of the development.

4.3 The statements and recommendations in 4.1-4.2 are the considered views of the Surrey County Archaeological Unit, based on the evidence presented in the earlier part of this report. It must be emphasised, however, that whether further archaeological work is required, what form it should take, and when it might be scheduled are decisions to be made by the local Planning Authority (generally acting under the advice of the Senior Archaeologist, Strategic Planning - Environment & Heritage West Sussex County Council) and any further action in response to this report should await their opinion.

## **5 REFERENCES**

Saywood M. 2017, Clemsfold House, Horsham, West Sussex, Written Scheme of Investigation for an archaeological trial trench evaluation, SCAU unpublished client report.

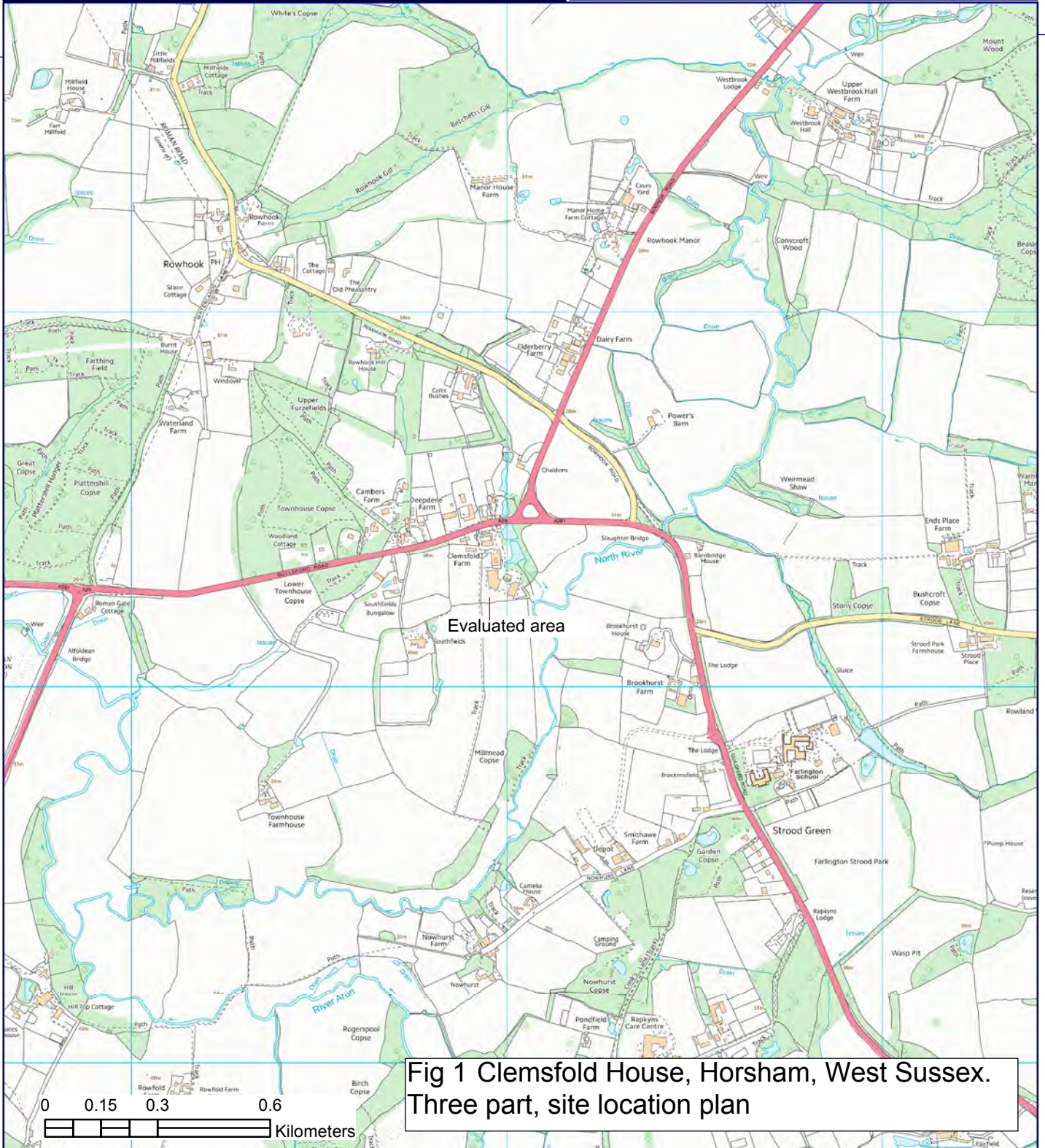
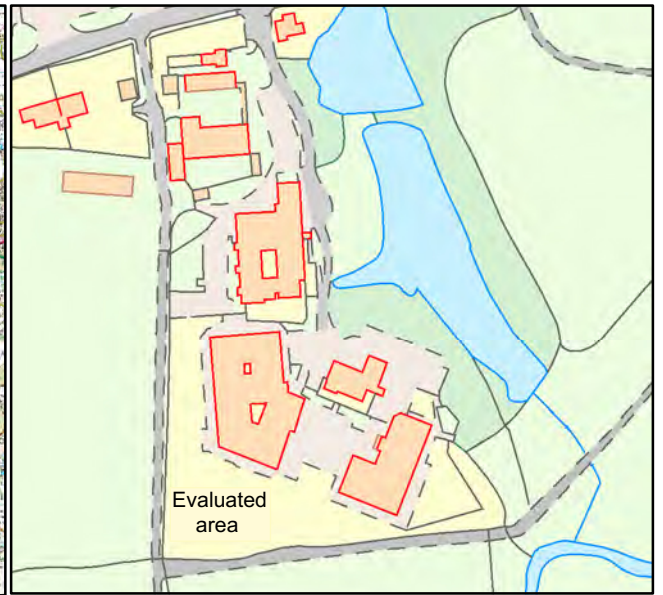
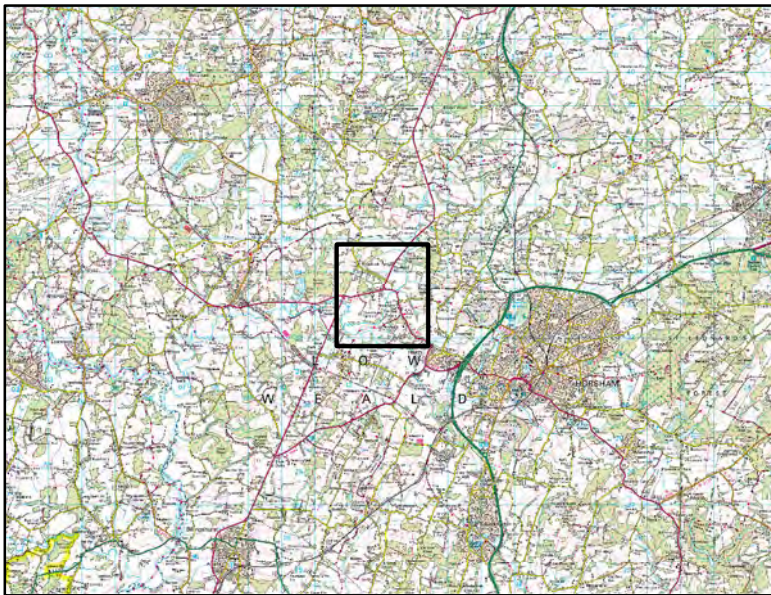


Fig 1 Clemsfold House, Horsham, West Sussex. Three part, site location plan

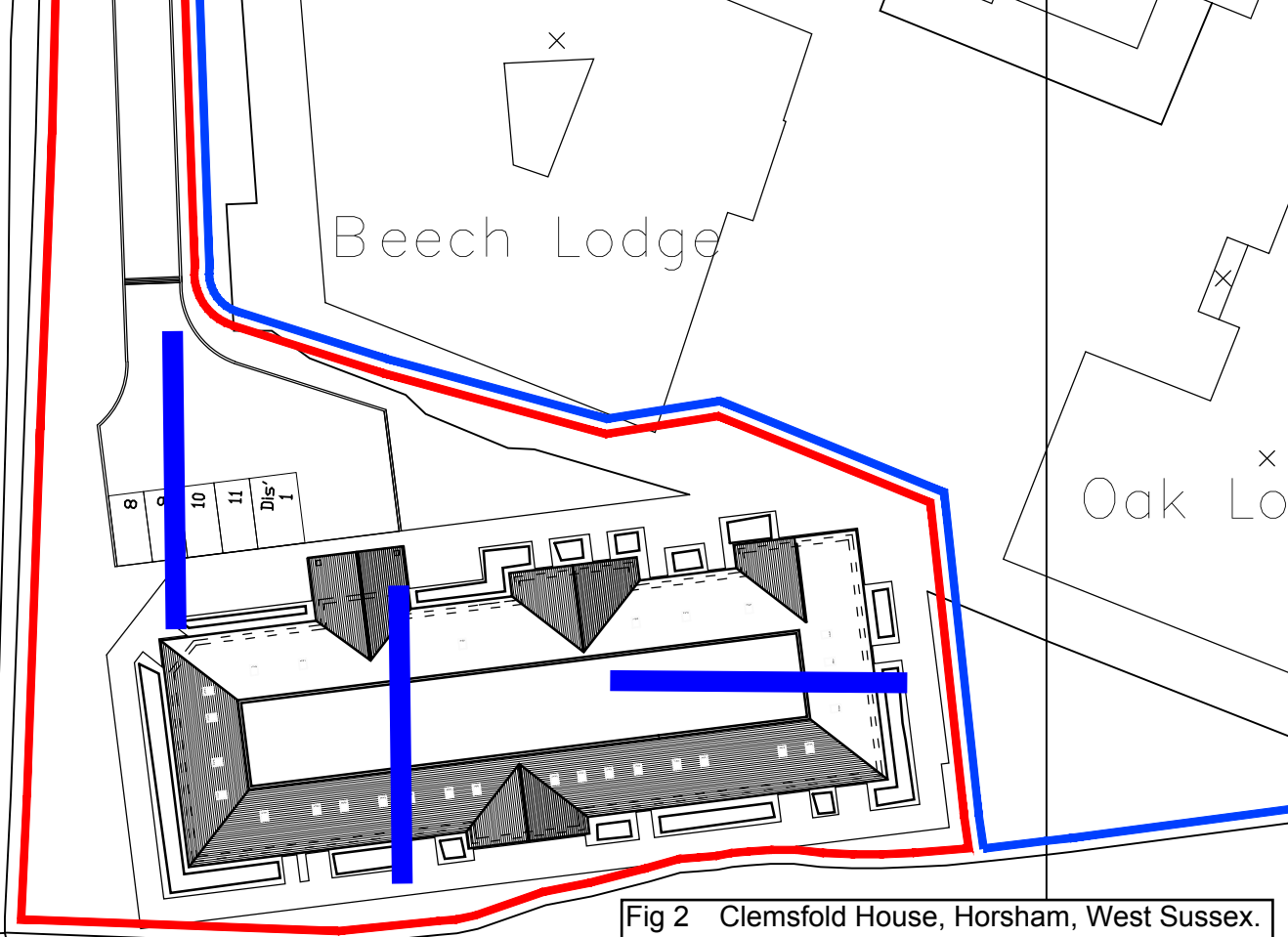


Fig 2 Clemsfold House, Horsham, West Sussex.  
Proposed trench locations

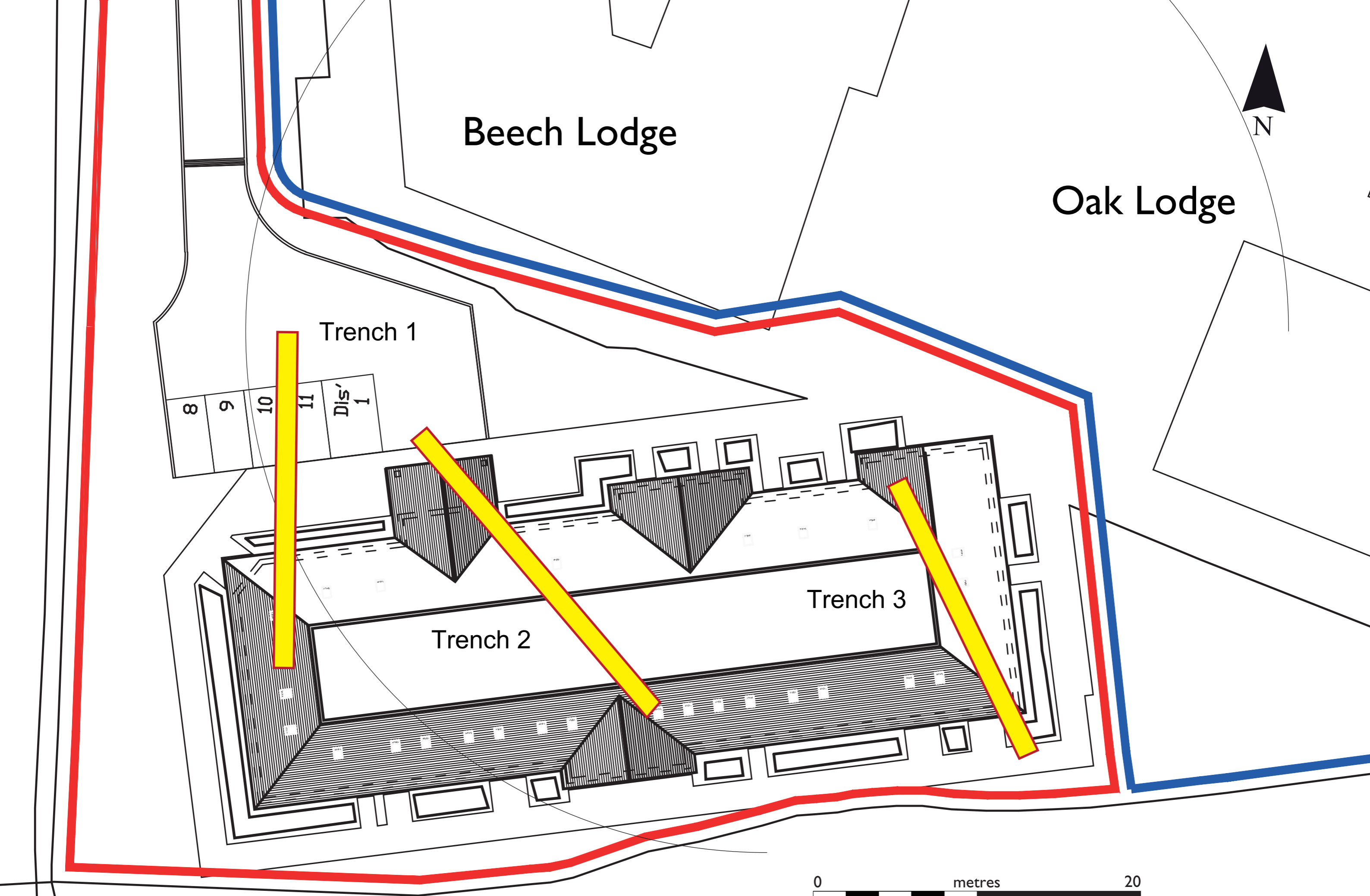


Fig 3; Clemsfold House, Horsham, West Sussex. Actual trench locations

Fig 4 Clemsfold House, Horsham, West Sussex.  
Trench 1

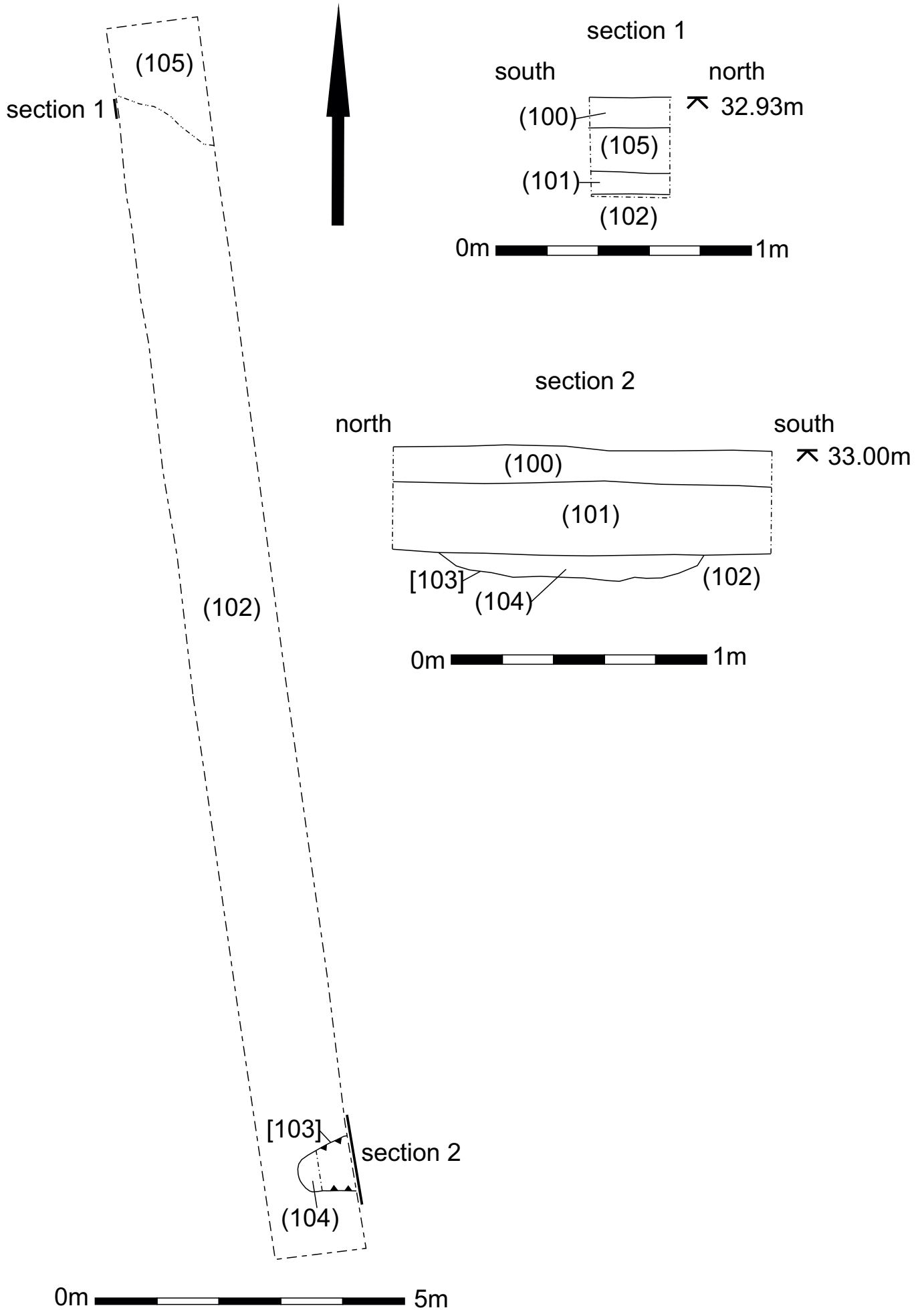


Fig 5 Clemsfold House, Horsham, West Sussex.  
Trench 2

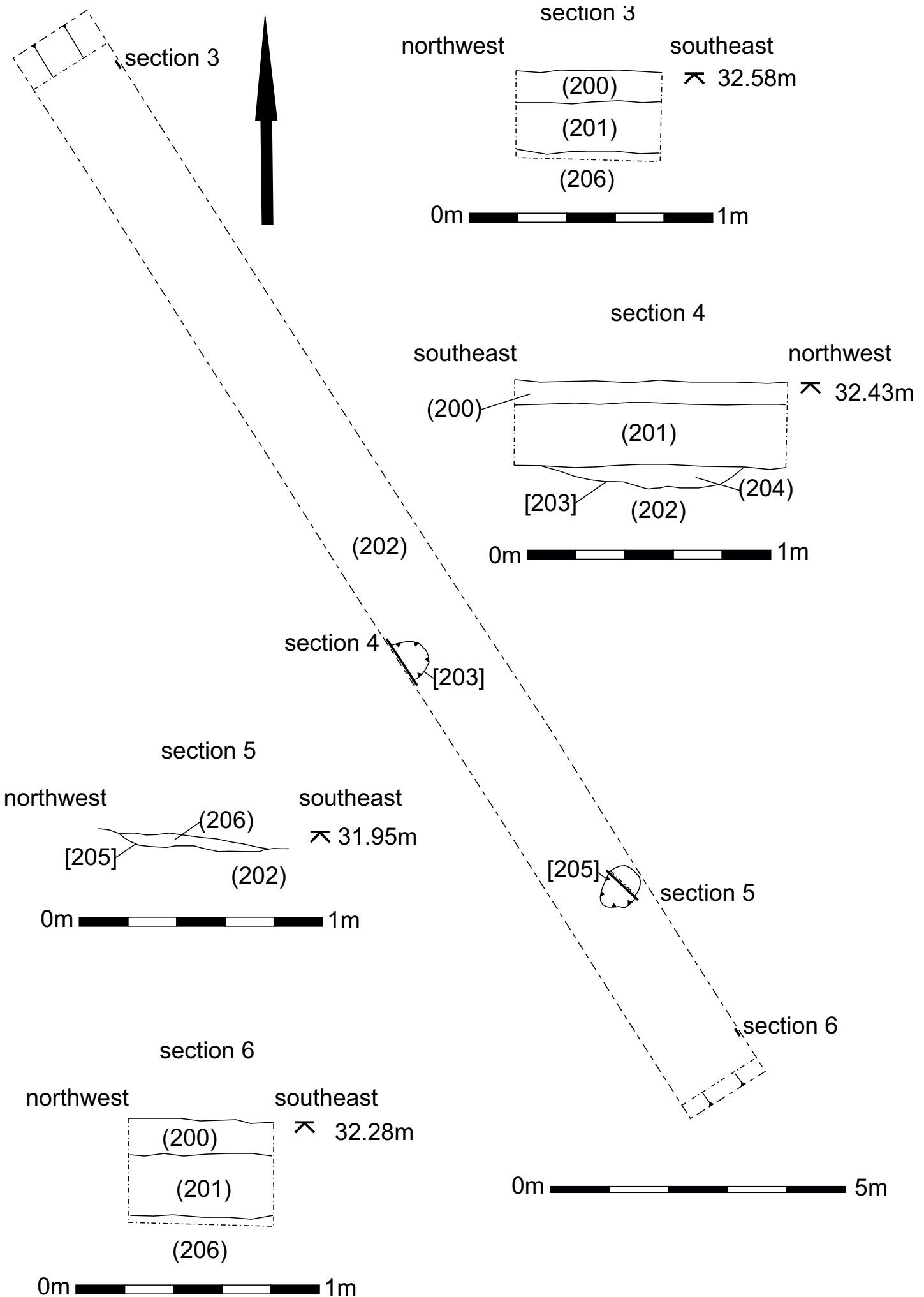
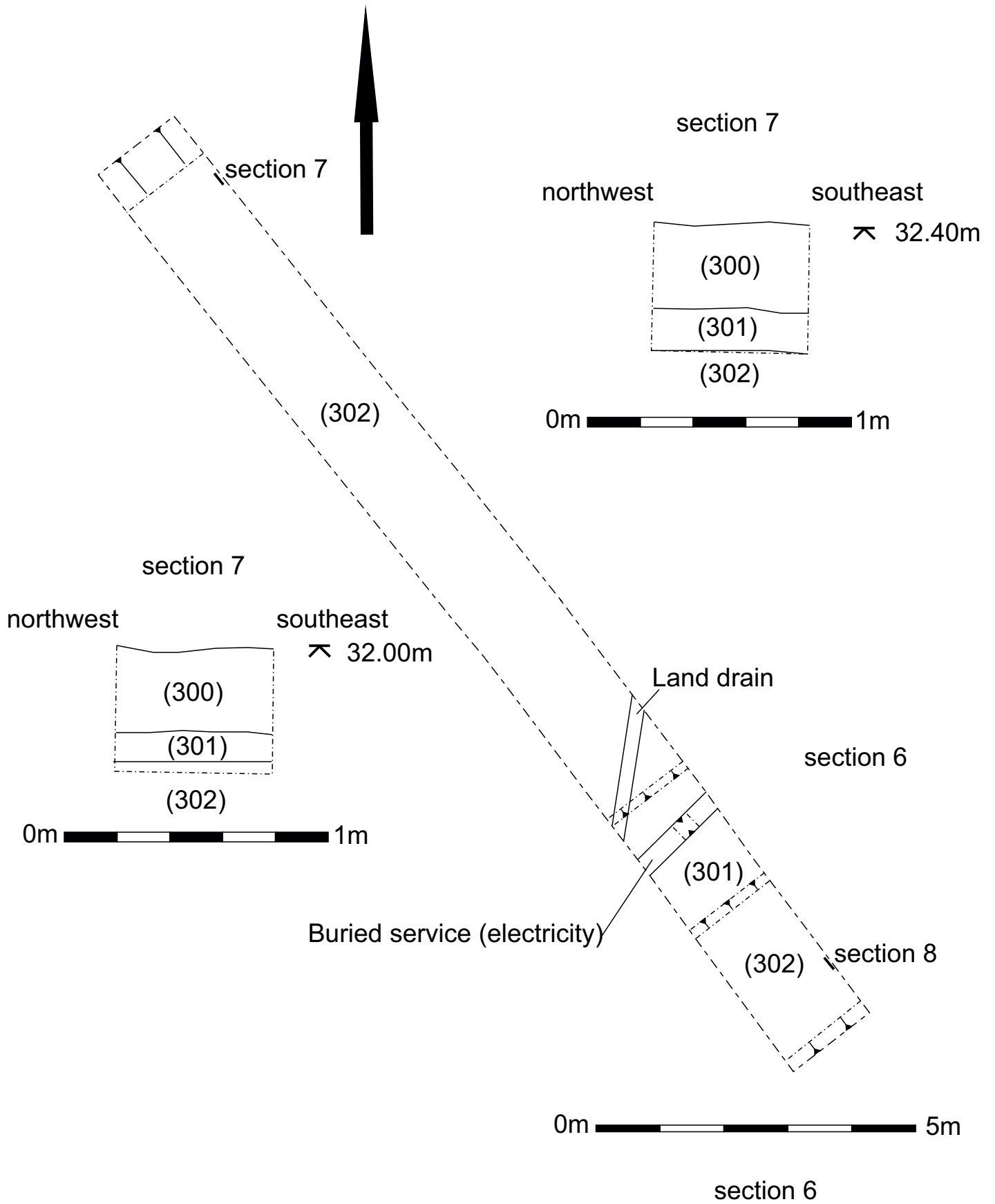


Fig 6 Clemsfold House, Horsham, West Sussex.  
Trench 3



# Appendix 1: Photo compendium



Trench 1 looking North



Trench 1 cut 103, Looking East



Trench 2 Looking Northwest



## Appendix 1: Photo compendium



Trench 2, cut 203, Looking Southwest



Trench 2, cut 205, Looking North



Trench 3, Looking Northwest

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Email: [archaeology.scau@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:archaeology.scau@surreycc.gov.uk)

Surrey County Archaeological Unit  
Surrey History Centre  
130 Goldsworth Road  
Surrey GU21 6ND



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