

Land North of Old Elstead Road Milford Surrey



Archaeological Evaluation Report



Oxford Archaeology

4th February 2003

**Client Name: Bryson-Richardson /
English Villages Housing Association**

Issue N^o: 1

OA Job N^o: 1634

Planning Ref N^o: WA 01/2070

NGR: SU 94140 42720

Client Name: Bryson-Richardson/English Villages Housing Association

Client Ref No: n/a

Document Title: Land North of Old Elstead Road, Milford, Surrey

Document Type: Evaluation

Issue Number: 1

National Grid Reference: SU 94140 42720

Planning Reference: WA01/2070

OA Job Number: 1634

Site Code: WIELS03

Invoice Code: WIELSEV

Receiving Museum: Godalming Museum

Museum Accession No: n/a

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Date: 4th February 2003

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Document File Location X:\Milford, Surrey (WIELS03)\EV rep.doc
Graphics File Location Server 10:/oaupubl_RtoZ/W-invoice
codes*WIELSEV*Elstead Road, Milford*ACT*28.01.03

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Land north of Old Elstead Road, Milford, Surrey

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

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SUMMARY

Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out a field evaluation at land north of Old Elstead Road, Milford, Surrey (NGR SU 94140 42720) on behalf of Bryson-Richardson/English Villages Housing Association. Limited evidence of uncertain archaeological origin was encountered comprising a posthole and two possible gullies from which no dating material was recovered.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 In January 2002 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out a field evaluation at land north of Old Elstead Road, Milford, Surrey (NGR SU 94140 42720) on behalf of Bryson-Richardson/English Villages Housing Association. The work was in respect of a planning application for the erection of 15 new houses and associated service routes (Planning Application No. WA01/2070). A brief outlining the archaeological requirements of the work and a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) detailing how OA would implement the brief was set by, and agreed with, Tony Howe, the Archaeological Officer at Surrey County Council. .

1.2 Geology and topography

1.2.1 The development area is situated north of Old Elstead Road, Milford, Godalming, Surrey. The site occupies an open field *c* 0.6 ha in area. The site is bounded on each side with trees and the northern part of the development site is currently used as a turning space for domestic garages. The land within the development site slopes gently to the south and south-west towards Kennel Moor.

1.2.2 The geology of the site, as identified by the British Geological Survey sheet 286 solid and drift edition (1:50,000), is the Bargate beds and Cretaceous Lower Greensand.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 A desk-based assessment detailing the archaeological and historical background of the development area was undertaken by OA as the first stage of the pre-planning determination relating to the development. The assessment looked at entries held at the Surrey Sites and Monuments Records Office (SSMR), aerial photographs held by the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (RCHME), tithe maps and included visual site inspections. The results of the assessment (OA 2002 a) were summarised in the WSI (OA 2002 b) which is reproduced below.

1.3.2 A number of prehistoric findspots and sites have been identified in the vicinity of the development area on land topographically similar to that of the development area, such as the Mesolithic flint scatter *c.* 300m to the north of the development area and a Neolithic stone axe fragment found *c.* 100m from the scatter. This would seem to

suggest that the development area has the potential to contain hitherto undetected archaeological deposits dating to the prehistoric period.

- 1.3.3 The discovery, in the vicinity of the site, of burials dating to the Roman period and the possibility of a Roman origin for the redundant track running parallel with the parish boundary would suggest a potential for the preservation of Roman remains to be present within the area of the development.
- 1.3.4 The potential of the recovery of evidence from the Saxon and early medieval periods is illustrated by the close proximity of the development area to the Saxon *burh* at Eashing immediately north east of the development site.
- 1.3.5 The development area holds low potential for archaeological deposits dating from the later medieval and post-medieval periods. Evidence taken from historic maps suggest that this area was used predominantly for sheep farming associated with Godalming's wool industry.

2 EVALUATION AIMS

- 2.1.1 To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the development area and to determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality, date, depth below ground surface and depth of any archaeological remains present.
- 2.1.2 To establish the ecofactual and environmental potential of archaeological and geoarchaeological deposits and features.
- 2.1.3 To make available the results of the investigation.

3 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

3.1 Scope of fieldwork

- 3.1.1 Six trenches were excavated, Trenches 1 to 4 measured 30 m by 1.6 m and Trenches 5 and 6 measured 15 m by 1.6 m (Fig 3). The overburden was removed under close archaeological supervision by a JCB mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket.
- 3.1.2 The trenches were targeted on linear and other cropmarks visible on aerial photographs and in areas that contained circular cropmarks indicative of small archaeological features (Fig. 2).

3.2 Fieldwork methods and recording

- 3.2.1 The trenches were cleaned by hand and the revealed features were sampled to determine their extent and nature, and to retrieve finds and environmental samples. All archaeological features were planned and where excavated their sections drawn at scales of 1:20. All features were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film. Recording followed procedures laid down in the *OAU Fieldwork Manual* (Wilkinson, 1992).

3.3 Finds

- 3.3.1 Finds were recovered by hand during the course of the excavation and bagged by individual context.

3.4 Palaeo-environmental evidence

- 3.4.1 No deposits were identified as being suitable for environmental sampling.

3.5 Presentation of results

- 3.5.1 Section 5 includes individual context descriptions, with archaeological deposits and features described from earliest to latest. Context information is summarised in the context inventory (Appendix 1).

4 RESULTS: GENERAL

4.1 Soils and ground conditions

- 4.1.1 The site was located on the side of a small hill. The soils were sand based but were not free draining. During the course of the evaluation any surface rain water pooled in the trench bases, which obscured the features identified during machining.

5 RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS

5.1 Description of deposits

Trench 1 (Fig. 4)

- 5.1.1 Trench 1 measured 30 m by 1.6 m and was aligned N-S with the north end angled to the west. Natural sand (102) was encountered 0.70 m below ground level (bgl), at 50.24 m OD in the north of the trench and at 49.11 m OD in the south. A posthole (104) was observed at the southern end of the trench. It was 0.40 m wide and 0.10 m deep and filled with a dark silty sand (103). No finds were recovered. A layer of red sandy colluvium (101) overlay fill 103 and was in turn overlain by a topsoil (100).

Trench 2 (Fig. 5)

- 5.1.2 Trench 2 measured 30 m by 1.6 m and was aligned NE-SW. In the SW of the trench natural sand (202) was revealed at 48.80 m OD and in the NE of the trench at 50.03 m OD (0.70 m bgl). It was overlain by a layer of colluvium (201) below a topsoil (200).

Trench 3 (Fig. 6)

- 5.1.3 Trench 3 measured 30 m by 1.6 m and was aligned E-W. Natural sand (302) was exposed in the west of the trench at 50.59 m OD and in the east of the trench at 51.66 m OD (0.70 m bgl). In the centre of the trench a N-S aligned linear feature was encountered (307). It was 0.30 m wide and 0.12 m deep and was filled with a brown sand (308) from which no finds were recovered. At the north end of the trench and

in the southern half of the trench irregular root holes were revealed (303 and 305). They were 0.10 m deep and *c* 0.80 m in diameter and filled with yellow brown sand (304 and 306). Overlying the fills was a layer of colluvium (301) below a topsoil (300).

Trench 4 (Fig. 7)

- 5.1.4 Trench 4 was aligned NE-SW and measured 30 m by 1.6 m. Natural sand (402) was exposed at 49.03 m OD in the SW of the trench and at 50.17 m OD in the NE of the trench (0.70 m bgl). It was overlain by a layer of colluvium (401) below a layer of topsoil (400).

Trench 5 (Fig. 8)

- 5.1.5 Trench 5 was aligned NE-SW and measured 15 m by 1.6 m. In the NE of the trench natural sand (502) was revealed at 49.42 m OD and in the SW of the trench at 49.11 m OD (*c* 0.70 m OD). The natural sand lay below by a layer of colluvium (501) which was overlain by a topsoil (500).

Trench 6 (Fig. 9)

- 5.1.6 Trench 6 measured 15 m by 1.6 m and was aligned NW-SE. Natural sand (602) was encountered in the NE of the trench at 50.69 m OD and in the SW of the trench at 51.03 m OD (0.50 m bgl). In the centre of the trench a linear feature was revealed (603) aligned NW-SE. It was 0.20 m wide and 0.20 m deep and filled with a brown sand (604) from which no finds were recovered. The fill (604) lay below a layer of colluvium (601) which was overlain by the topsoil (600).

5.2 Finds

Pottery

- 5.2.1 A single sherd of eighteenth- or nineteenth-century pottery was recovered from the topsoil in Trench 4 (400) and a sherd of nineteenth-century pottery recovered from the topsoil in Trench 2 (200).

Lithics by Kate Cramp

- 5.2.2 A single plunging secondary flint blade was recovered from the topsoil in Trench 6 (600). It was formed from gravel flint and was in very poor condition. The flint was not chronologically distinctive, but could have been Mesolithic given the presence of other Mesolithic scatters in the area.

CBM

- 5.2.3 Two fragments of tile were recovered from the topsoil in Trench 4 (400) and two fragments from the topsoil in Trench 2 (200). The tiles post-dated the seventeenth century and no further work was considered necessary.

6 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

6.1 Reliability of field investigation

- 6.1.1 The percentage sample and layout of the trenches of the investigation gave a satisfactory representative of buried archaeological remains on the site. The conditions under which this investigation was carried out were favourable and allowed clear observation, excavation and recording of archaeological features and deposits within the trenches.

6.2 Overall interpretation

- 6.2.1 Only three features of uncertain archaeological origin were encountered in the investigation. In Trench 1 a posthole was observed and in Trenches 3 and 6 two linear features were revealed. The posthole contained no dating evidence and appears as an isolated feature. It is possible that it may have formed part of an isolated structure or fence line, but no further evidence was revealed in the other trenches. Although the feature was regular it is feasible that it may represent a natural feature such as a root hole.
- 6.2.2 The linear features seen in Trenches 3 and 6 may represent the remains of shallow gullies. The features were fairly irregular and may have been the result of large roots.
- 6.2.3 The features suggested by the aerial photography (Fig. 2) were not encountered. The linear features shown in the AP may represent paths across the field and the circular features may possibly be the result of geological anomalies or surface depressions. The western N-S aligned linear feature, shown in the AP, corresponds to a bank separating the field from the houses.
- 6.2.4 The single probable Mesolithic flint recovered from Trench 6 is residual in origin although its presence on the site is indicative of occupation activity occurring within the wider area, dating from early prehistory.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

	CTXT NO	TYPE	THICK. (M)	COMMENT
1	100	Layer	0.40	Topsoil
	101	Layer	0.45	Colluvium
	102	Layer		Natural sand
	103	Fill	0.10	Posthole fill
	104	Cut	0.10	Posthole
2	200	Layer	0.20	Topsoil
	201	Layer	0.50	Colluvium
	202	Layer		Natural sand
3	300	Layer	0.40	Topsoil
	301	Layer	0.10	Colluvium
	302	Layer		Natural sand
	303	Cut	0.10	Root
	304	Fill	0.10	Root fill
	305	Cut	0.10	Root
	306	Fill	0.10	Root fill
	307	Cut	0.10	Gully/root
	308	Fill	0.10	Gully/root fill
400	400	Layer	0.40	Topsoil
	401	Layer	0.40	Colluvium
	402	Layer		Natural sand
5	500	Layer	0.30	Topsoil
	501	Layer	0.40	Colluvium
	502	Layer		Natural sand
6	600	Layer	0.40	Topsoil
	601	Layer	0.40	Colluvium
	602	Layer		Natural sand
	603	Cut	0.20	Gully/root
	604	Layer	0.20	Gully/root fill
	605	Cut		Sondage

APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

OA 2002 a *Desk based Assessment for Land North of Old Elstead Road, Milford, Godalming, Surrey*

OA 2002 b *Land North of Old Elstead Road, Milford, nr. Godalming, Surrey* Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation

Wilkinson, D. (ed.) 1992 *Oxford Archaeological Unit Field Manual*, (First edition, August 1992).

APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: Land North of Old Elstead Road, Milford, Surrey

Site code: WIELS03

Grid reference: SU 94140 42720

Type of evaluation: Four 30 m trenches and two 15 m trenches

Date and duration of project: 20.01.03-22.01.03

Area of site: 0.6 ha

Summary of results: A single possible posthole and two linear gullies or root disturbances were revealed, all of which were undated and were of uncertain archaeological origin.

Location of archive: The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Godalming Museum in due course.



Scale 1:25,000

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Figure 1: Site location



--- Site Boundary

Figure 2: Details of RCHME Aerial Photograph showing cropmarks (OA 22)

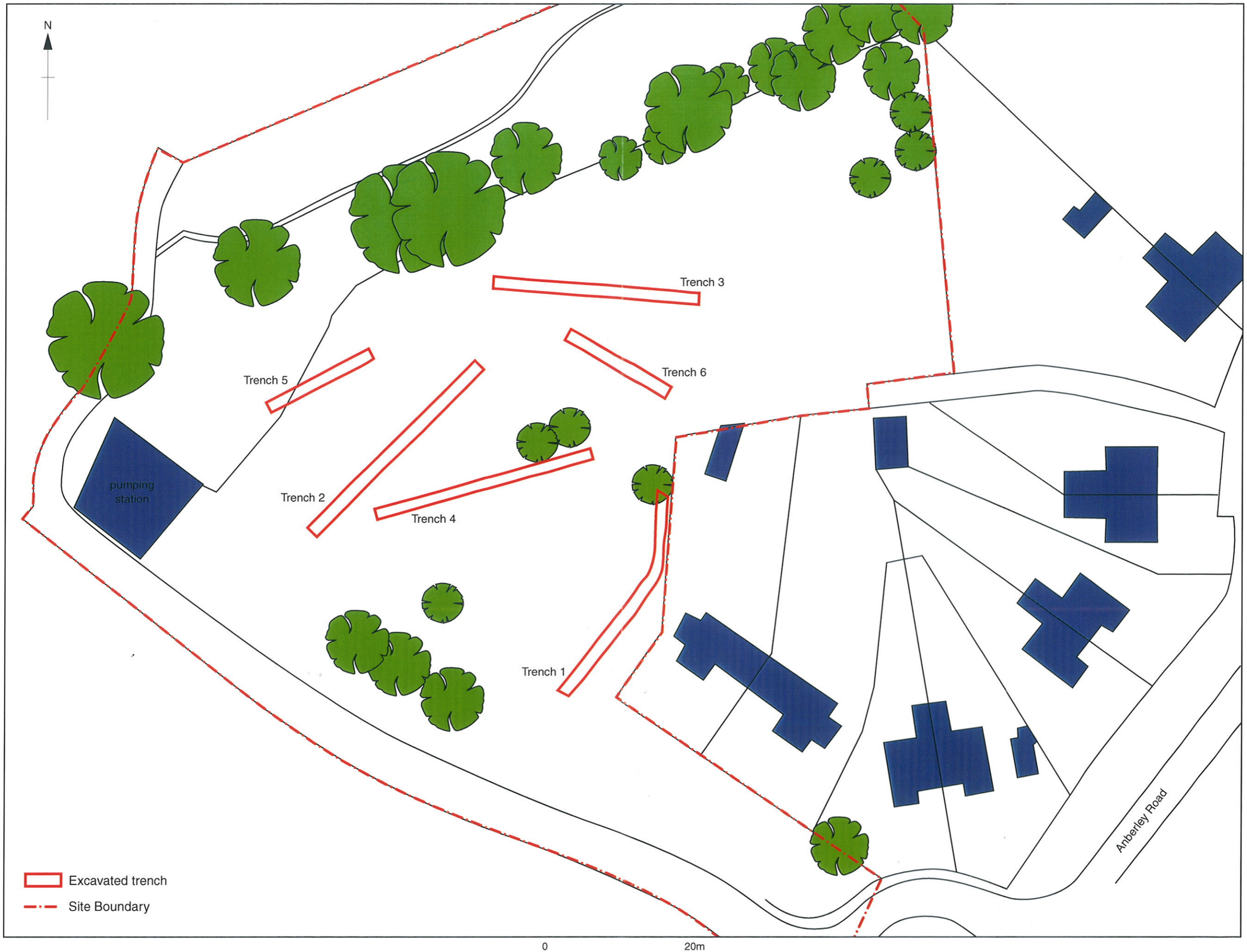
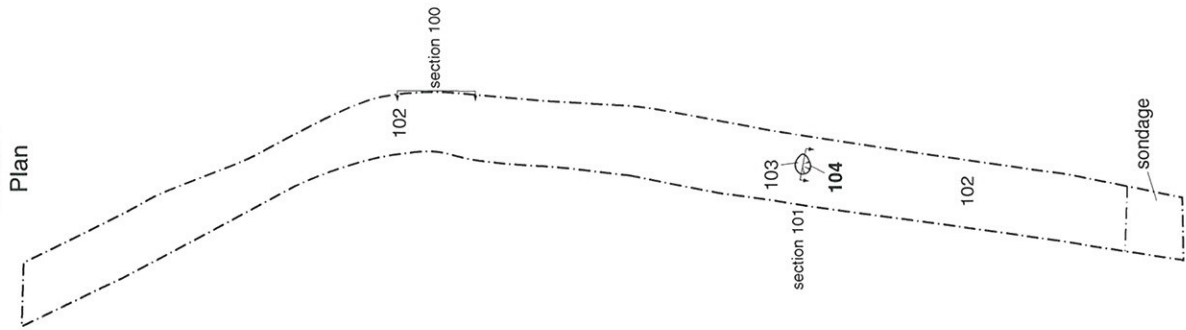


Figure 3: Trench Location Plan

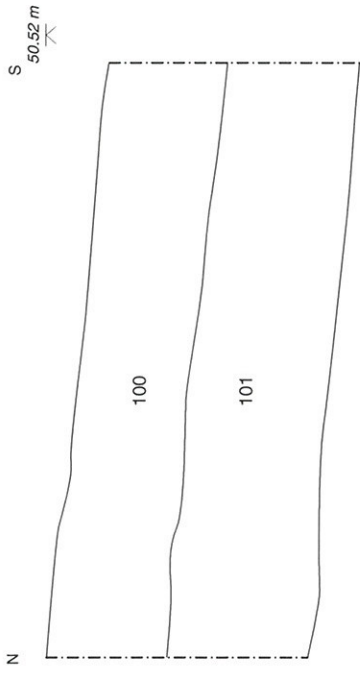


Figure 5: Trench 2 Plan and Sections

Trench 1 Plan



Trench 1 Section 100



Trench 1 Section 101

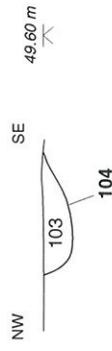
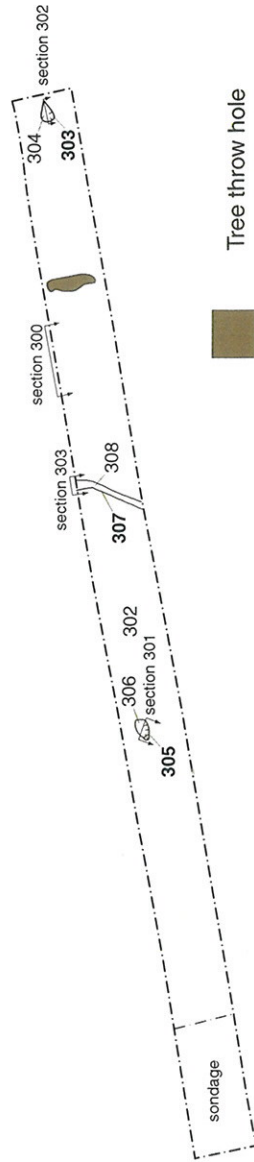
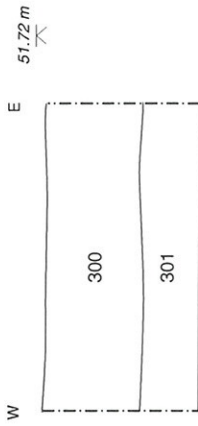


Figure 4: Trench 1 Plan and Sections

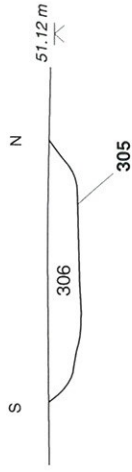
Trench 3 Plan



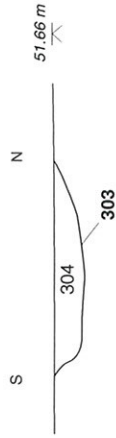
Trench 3 Section 300



Trench 3 Section 301



Trench 3 Section 302



Trench 3 Section 303

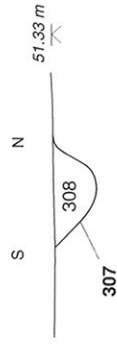
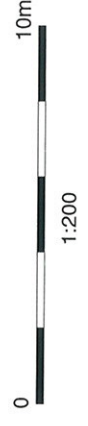
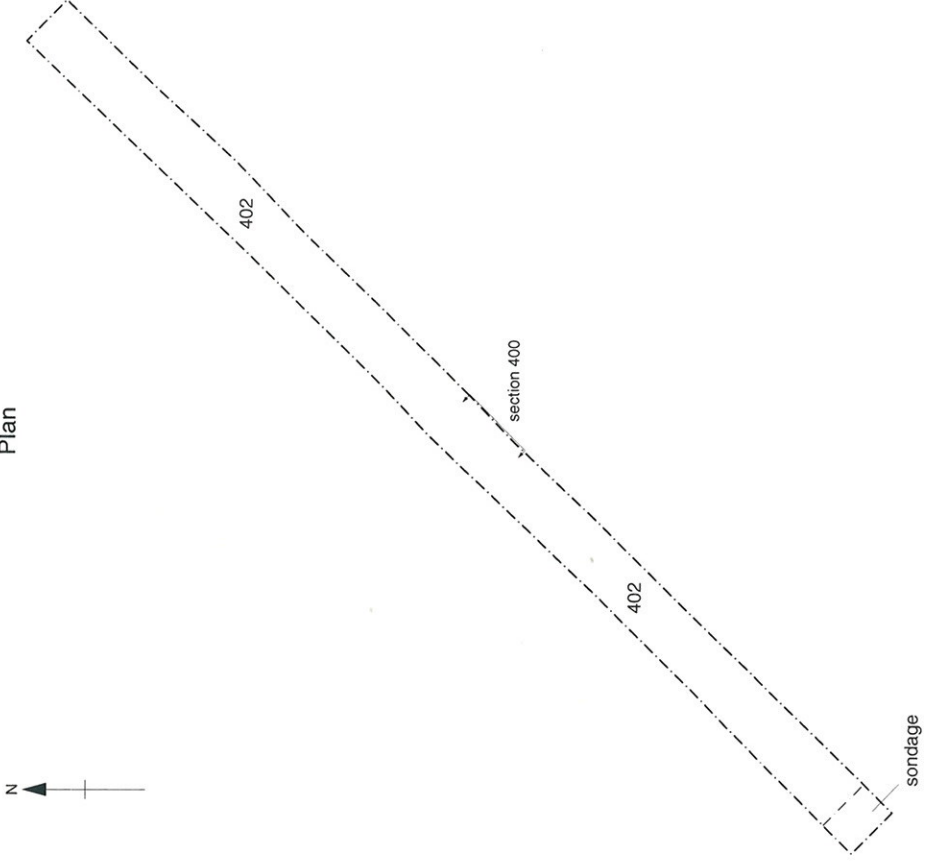


Figure 6: Trench 3 Plan and Sections

Trench 4 Plan



Trench 4 Section 400

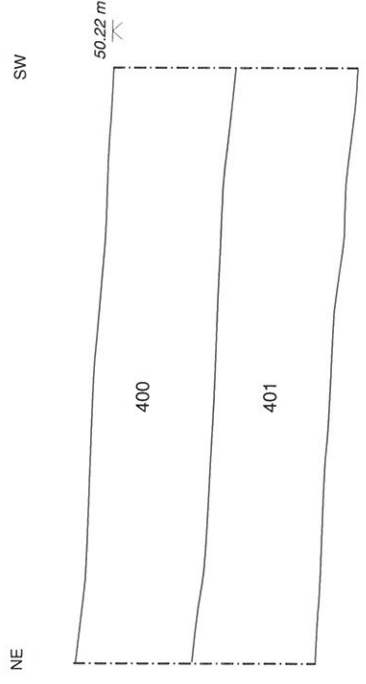
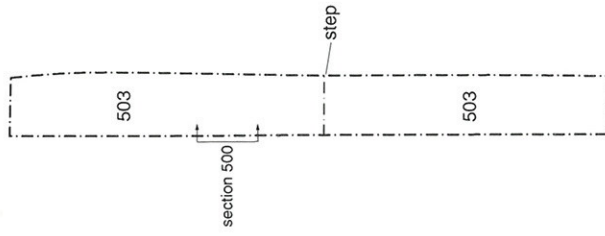


Figure 7: Trench 4 Plan and Section

Trench 5 Plan



Trench 5 Section 500

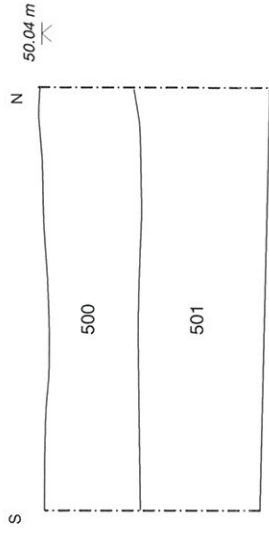
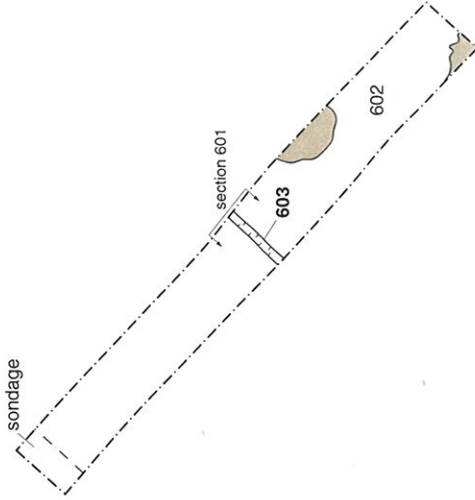



Figure 8: Trench 5 Plan and Section

Trench 6 Plan



 Geological feature



Trench 6 Section 601

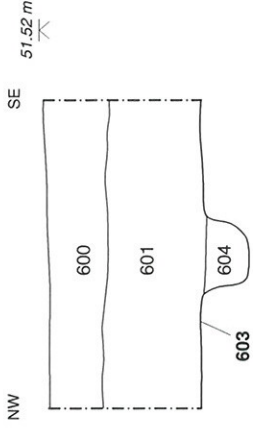


Figure 9: Trench 6 Plan and Section



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