

# The White Hart Petersfield Hampshire



## Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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## The White Hart, Petersfield, Hampshire

*Archaeological Watching Brief Report*

*Written by Ken Welsh*

*and illustrated by Markus Dylewski*

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## Summary

*Oxford Archaeology was commissioned by Woodley Lucas Ltd to undertake a watching brief during the construction of new housing on the site of the former White Hart public house in Petersfield, Hampshire. The work was undertaken in October-December 2013.*

*The watching brief revealed a length of chalk wall footing in the western part of the site. No other remains were associated with it and it was unclear whether it formed part of a building or a boundary wall. The wall footing was undated but it is thought likely to date to the medieval or post-medieval periods.*

*A brick wall-footing was recorded towards the eastern edge of the site. It is likely to be a boundary wall of 19th century date, pre-dating the construction of the White Hart in the early 20th century.*

*No other archaeological remains were recorded during the watching brief.*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Scope of work

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by Woodley Lucas Ltd to undertake a watching brief during the construction of new housing on the site of the former White Hart public house in Petersfield, Hampshire (centred on SU 7480 2330).
- 1.1.2 The work was undertaken as a condition of Planning Permission (planning ref: SDNP/24600/003). Although the Local Planning Authority did not set a brief for the work, discussions with Hannah Fluck, Senior Archaeologist Landscape, Planning and Heritage Environment Department, Hampshire County Council, established the scope of work required. Oxford Archaeology produced a Written Scheme of Investigation showing how it would meet those requirements (Oxford Archaeology 2013).
- 1.1.3 All work was undertaken in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists' *'Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief'* (revised 2008) and local and national planning policies.

### 1.2 Location, geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The site lies on land occupied by the White Hart Public House, Petersfield (Fig. 1). The site is bounded to the north and west by Bowden Lane, to the east by College Street and to the south by commercial units and Crawters Lane, and situated just within Petersfield Conservation Area. The site is at 65m above Ordnance Datum and is relatively flat.
- 1.2.2 The underlying bedrock geology is recorded as Marehill Clay Member – Mudstone. Superficial alluvial deposits of clay, silt, sand and gravel have also been recorded (British Geological Survey, Sheet 300).

### 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The origin of the present town is believed to date to the 12th century when a 'new town' was created by William, Earl of Gloucestershire. The town became a sizeable community and was the only town in Hampshire, besides the main markets of Winchester, Southampton, Portsmouth and Andover, to have guild merchants. The

principal industry in the town was wool and cloth, although there is also suggestion that in the sixteenth century the town relied on the leather industry for prosperity (Hopkins 2004). In 1597 the Borough was purchased by Thomas Hanbury and the town gradually fell into decline throughout the seventeenth century, primarily due to the decline in the cloth and tanning industries (Hopkins 2004).

- 1.3.2 The site lies to the eastern side of the Petersfield Conservation Area, to the north of the historic town Square and High Street. An HER search of a 1km radius of the site yielded 81 archaeological sites, five historic parks and gardens and 172 historic buildings including two Grade I listed and eight Grade II\*. The majority of the historic buildings are post-medieval. However, 10 are listed as medieval, or having medieval origins, including the 12th century Church of St Peter situated 215m south-west of the site.
- 1.3.3 Prehistoric sites include a collection of 21 bowl barrows of Late Neolithic to Bronze Age date located approximately 870m south-east of the site. The first edition OS map dating to 1810 indicates that the barrow cemetery was once more extensive, stretching further to the east and north. This has now been covered by modern housing. The surviving barrows are classified as a Scheduled Monument.
- 1.3.4 Prehistoric findspots include a Lower Palaeolithic handaxe, recovered from the surface of a field in 1889 approximately 400m south-east of the site, and a scatter of around 3000 early Mesolithic blades, flakes and microliths that were recovered during re-laying of turf in 1907 approximately 600m east of the site. A further collection of early Mesolithic waste flakes were recovered from a building trench in 1962.
- 1.3.5 Evidence of Roman activity in the area is limited. A findspot of residual sherds of early to mid fourth century Roman pottery was recovered from a medieval well 285m south-west of the site during excavations in 1976. The sherds were interpreted as evidence for Romano-British settlement in the vicinity (Hopkins 2004).
- 1.3.6 There are no records of sites or finds of Anglo-Saxon date in the area.
- 1.3.7 Evidence for medieval and post-medieval activity is more extensive and includes the aforementioned well 285m south-west of the site. A pit was also recorded at the same location and medieval pottery was also recovered during construction work 265m south-west of the site.
- 1.3.8 Remains associated with a medieval blacksmith's workshop were uncovered during excavations in 1996. The discovery was made 200m south-west of the site and comprised a series of layers to the rear of the building containing large quantities of charcoal and ash.
- 1.3.9 A wall and three steps were found during tree planting in a private garden 366m south-west of the site. Pottery was recovered from occupation levels and dated between the 13th and 19th century.
- 1.3.10 Heavily disturbed limestone wall foundations were recorded 75m north of the site. The nature of the disturbance made interpretation very difficult, although both medieval and post-medieval pottery was found at the site.
- 1.3.11 A small, circular, brick-lined post-medieval well was recorded during construction work at the junction of Station Road and King George Avenue approximately 100m north of the site. A similar well was also recorded 270m south of the site.



- 1.3.12 An undated, intact wall foundation constructed from limestone blocks was observed 145m south-west of the site and an undated iron-stone lined well was recorded 150m north of the site. The well was 20 inches in diameter and 17 feet deep.
- 1.3.13 Immediately SE of the site was the site of a post-medieval almshouse. This is marked on the first edition OS map, but is marked as 'remains of' on the second to fourth edition. The almshouse was partially built over by Lukers Red Lion Brewery at the end of the 19th century, which survived until World War II, when it was badly damaged in a bombing raid.
- 1.3.14 The construction date of the existing public house is uncertain, although it was probably built in the early 20th century.

## 2 PROJECT AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 The aims of the watching brief, as set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation, were:
- To identify and record the presence/absence, extent, condition, quality and date of all archaeological remains in the areas affected by the works.
  - To signal, before the destruction of the material in question, the discovery of a significant archaeological find, for which the resources allocated are not sufficient to support a treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard.
  - To make available the results of the investigation.

### 2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 The watching brief was maintained during the period of ground works, which included the excavation of foundation and service trenches and landscaping.
- 2.2.2 As a first stage of the watching brief, a series of trenches were excavated under archaeological control, on the line of proposed foundations trenches and in the area of a proposed new car park (Fig. 2).

## 3 RESULTS

### 3.1 Description of deposits

- 3.1.1 The watching brief was undertaken in three distinct phases:
- Excavation of five trenches, four on the line of proposed foundation trenches and one in the area of a proposed new car park.
  - Excavation of an area of 17m x 13m for the installation of a piling mat.
  - Intermittent visits during ground reduction.
- 3.1.2 The observations made during the various phases of the groundworks are described below, followed by an overall discussion and conclusion. The controlled excavation of the trenches provided a preview of the deposit sequence present and observations of subsequent ground reduction revealed similar sequences.

#### ***Trenches 1-5***

- 3.1.3 Trench 1 was excavated to a depth of 0.7m (Fig. 3, section 100). The natural clay (102) was exposed at a depth of 0.5m and was overlain by a silty clay subsoil (101), 0.2m



thick. The subsoil was overlain by the modern topsoil (100), a dark brown silty clay, 0.3m thick. No archaeological deposits were present.

- 3.1.4 Trench 2 was excavated to a depth of 0.6m and revealed a similar deposit sequence to that seen in Trench 1 (Fig. 3, section 101). The natural clay (102) was exposed at a depth of 0.45m and was overlain by a silty clay subsoil (101), 0.15m thick. The subsoil was overlain by the modern topsoil (100), a dark brown silty clay, 0.3m thick. No archaeological deposits were present.
- 3.1.5 Trench 3 was excavated to a depth of 1.2m (Fig. 3, section 102). The natural clay (102) was exposed at a depth of 0.8m and was overlain by a layer of made ground (103) containing building rubble, 0.55m thick. The made ground was overlain by the modern topsoil (100), a dark brown silty clay, 0.25m thick. No archaeological deposits were present.
- 3.1.6 Trench 4 was excavated to a depth of 1.3m and revealed a similar deposit sequence to that seen in Trench 3 (Fig. 3, section 103). The natural clay (102) was exposed at a depth of 1.05m and was overlain by a layer of made ground (103) containing building rubble, 0.80m thick. The made ground was overlain by the modern topsoil (100), a dark brown silty clay, 0.25m thick. No archaeological deposits were present.
- 3.1.7 Trench 5 was excavated to a depth of 0.7m (Fig. 3, section 104). The natural geology was not observed within this trench. A compact silty clay subsoil (106) was revealed at a depth of 0.7m. It was cut by a wall foundation (104), aligned NE-SW and composed of irregular chalk fragments. The footing (Plate 1) was 0.4m wide and 0.2m deep. No finds were recovered.
- 3.1.8 It was overlain by a layer of made ground (105), 0.3m thick, containing brick fragments. The made ground was overlain by the modern topsoil (100), 0.4m thick.

#### ***Piling mat excavation***

- 3.1.9 Following demolition of a number of existing buildings on the site, an area of approximately 17m x 13m was excavated to a depth of 0.4m prior to the installation of a piling mat (Fig. 2). A layer of modern demolition rubble (109) was revealed across the area and this overlay a made ground layer (108), containing willow pattern pottery, perhaps associated with the construction of the public house in the early 20th century.
- 3.1.10 Beneath layer 108, a length of wall footing (107), constructed from red frogged bricks, was revealed (Plate 2). It is likely to be a footing of an earlier boundary wall of the site, perhaps pre-dating the construction of the public house.

#### ***Ground reduction***

- 3.1.11 More general ground reduction across the site was limited to a depth of c 0.4m (Plate 3). In the area of the proposed new car park, excavation was to a depth of 0.3m only. As a result, excavation was not sufficiently deep to expose levels at which archaeological deposits might survive.

### **3.2 Finds**

- 3.2.1 A number of brick fragments and sherds of 19th- and 20th-century pottery were identified during the works but, as these were clearly of modern date, they were not retained.



### 3.3 Environmental remains

- 3.3.1 No deposits suitable for palaeo-environmental sampling were observed during the course of the watching brief.

## 4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1.1 The watching brief showed that undisturbed natural clay was present at a depth of between 0.45m and 1.05m below present ground level. In the northern part of the site, this was overlain by a subsoil, up to 0.2m thick, which may be a former cultivation soil. In the central and southern part of the site, the natural clay was overlain by a layer of made ground layer which is likely to be associated with the construction of the White Hart, probably in the early 20th century.
- 4.1.2 The wall footing (104) in Trench 5 was constructed from chalk fragments. Only a short length was exposed and no floor or other surfaces were associated with it. It was therefore not possible to determine whether it formed part of a building or was simply a boundary wall. No dating evidence was recovered but it is likely to date to the medieval or post-medieval period. Construction of a new car park in this area involved ground reduction to a depth of 0.3m below the modern ground surface. The wall and any associated archaeological deposits have, therefore, been preserved *in situ* beneath the new car park.
- 4.1.3 The wall footing (107) along the eastern edge of the site was constructed from frogged bricks and is likely to be of 19th century date. It may, therefore, be a boundary wall, pre-dating the construction of the White Hart.
- 4.1.4 No other archaeological remains were recorded during the watching brief as ground reduction was insufficiently deep to have an impact on levels at which archaeological deposits might survive.



## APPENDIX A. ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

Context	Type	Depth	Width	Length	Comments	Finds	Date
100	Layer	0.4			Topsoil		modern
101	Layer	0.2			Subsoil		
102	Layer				Natural clay		
103	Layer	0.8			Made ground		modern
104	Wall	0.2	0.4		Chalk wall footing		med/post-med
105	Layer	0.3			Made ground		
106	Layer				Subsoil		
107	Wall		0.33		Brick wall footing		19th century
108	Layer	0.3			Demolition layer		modern
109	Layer				Made ground		modern



## APPENDIX B. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

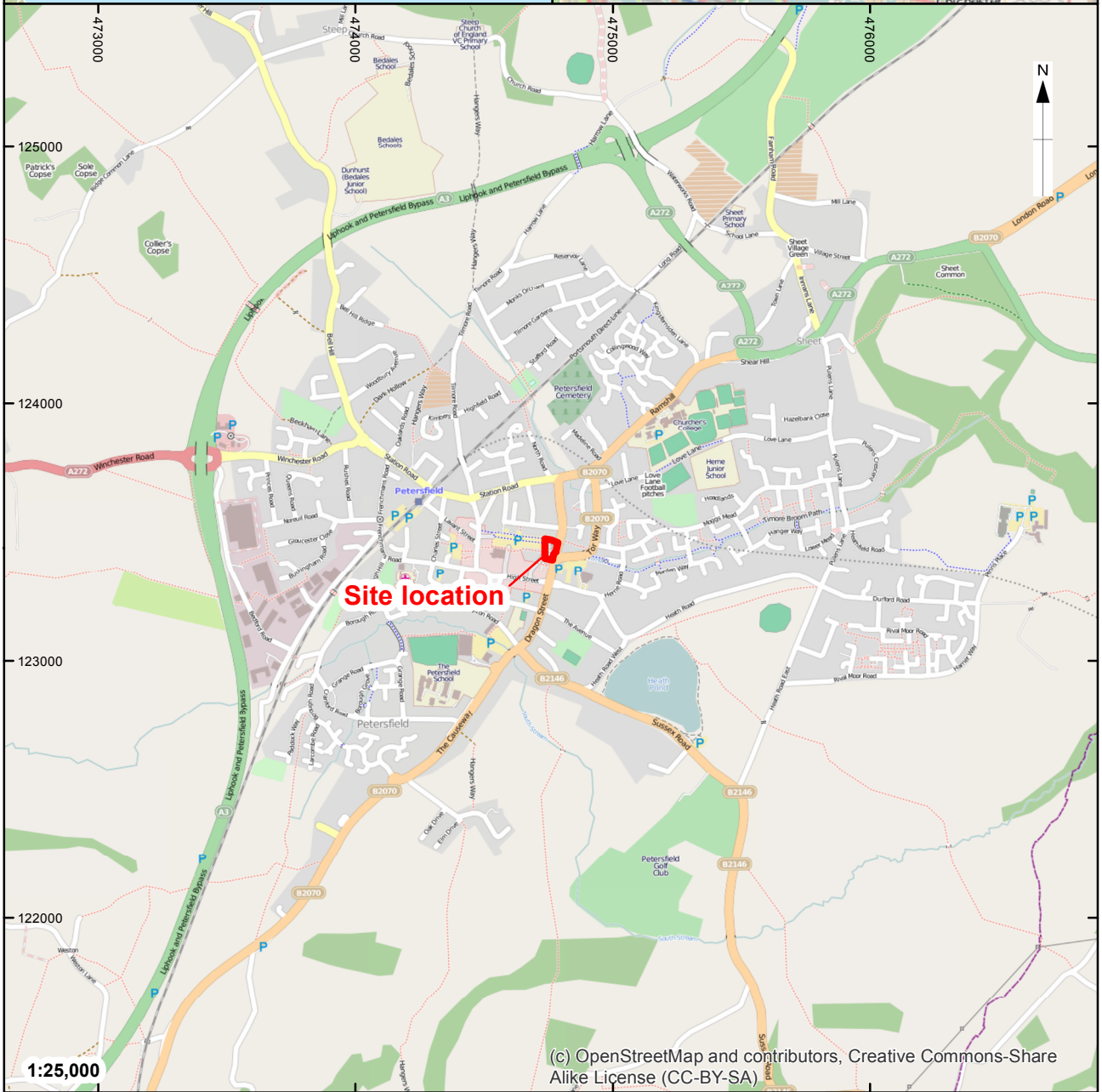
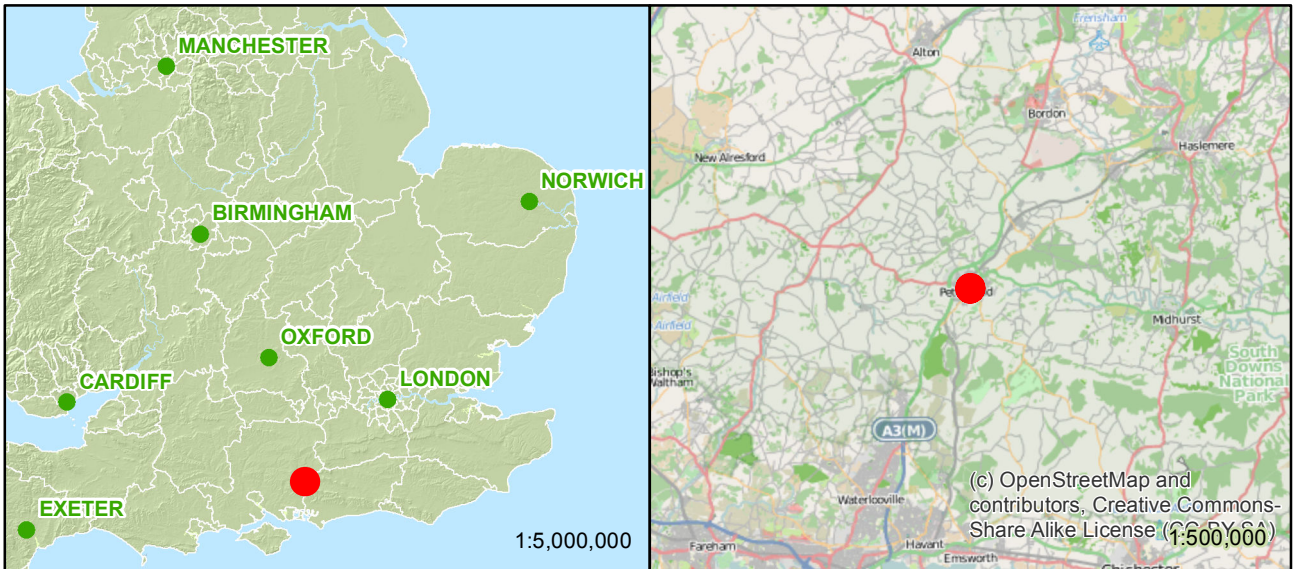
Oxford Archaeology, 2013 White Hart Public House, Petersfield, Hampshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief



## APPENDIX C. SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name:	The White Hart, Petersfield, Hampshire
Site code:	A2013.25
Grid reference:	Centred at NGR SU 7480 2330
Type of investigation:	Watching brief
Date and duration of project:	October-December 2013
Area of site:	1,600m <sup>2</sup>
Summary of results:	<p>The watching brief revealed a length of chalk wall footing in the western part of the site. No other remains were associated with it and it was unclear whether it formed part of a building or a boundary wall. The wall footing was undated but it is thought likely to date to the medieval or post-medieval periods.</p> <p>A brick wall-footing was recorded towards the eastern edge of the site. It is likely to be a boundary wall of 19th century date, pre-dating the construction of the White Hart in the early 20th century.</p> <p>No other archaeological remains were recorded during the watching brief.</p>
Location of archive:	The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with the Hampshire County Museum Service in due course, under the following accession number: A2013.25.



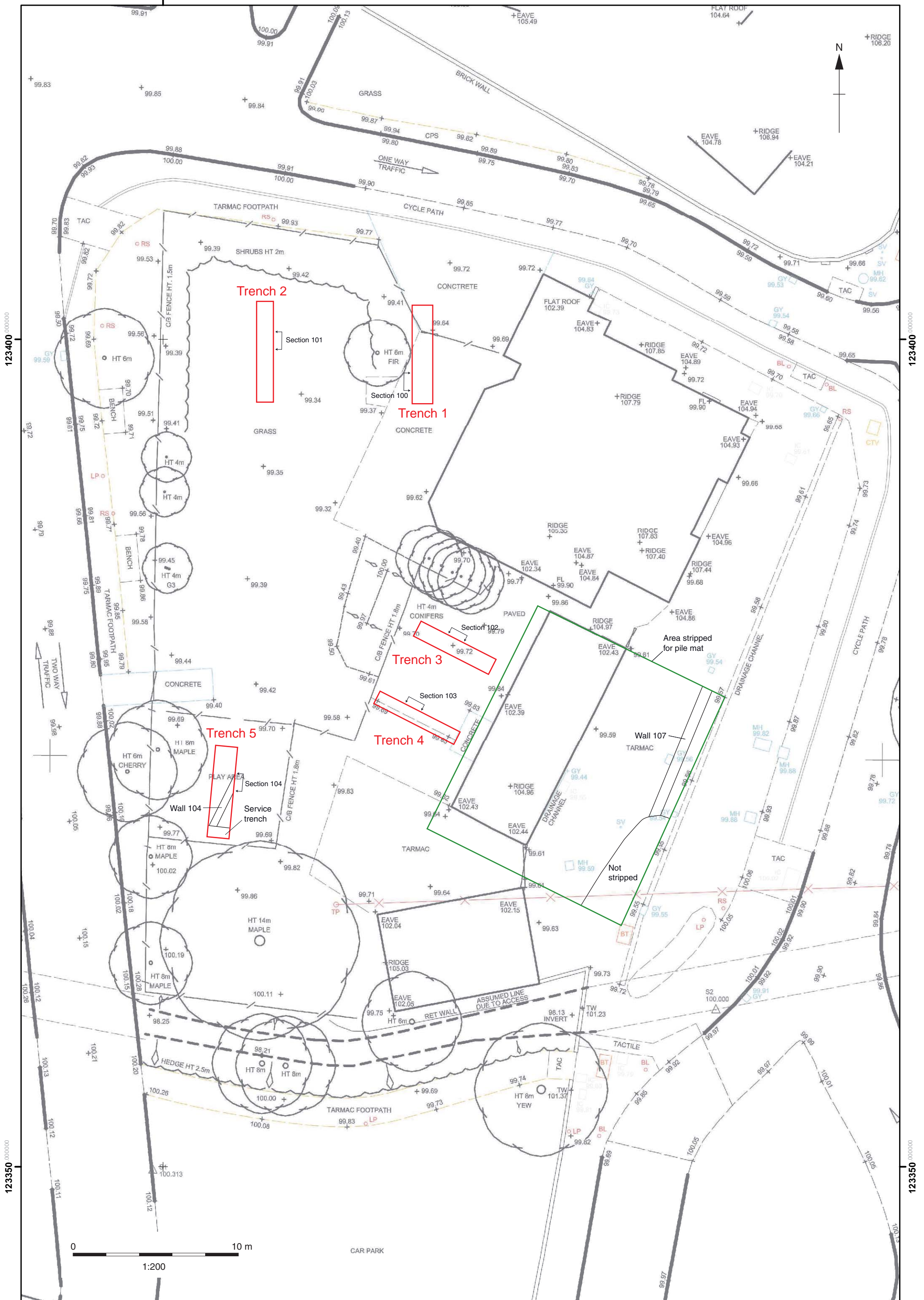


Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2011

Figure 1: Site location

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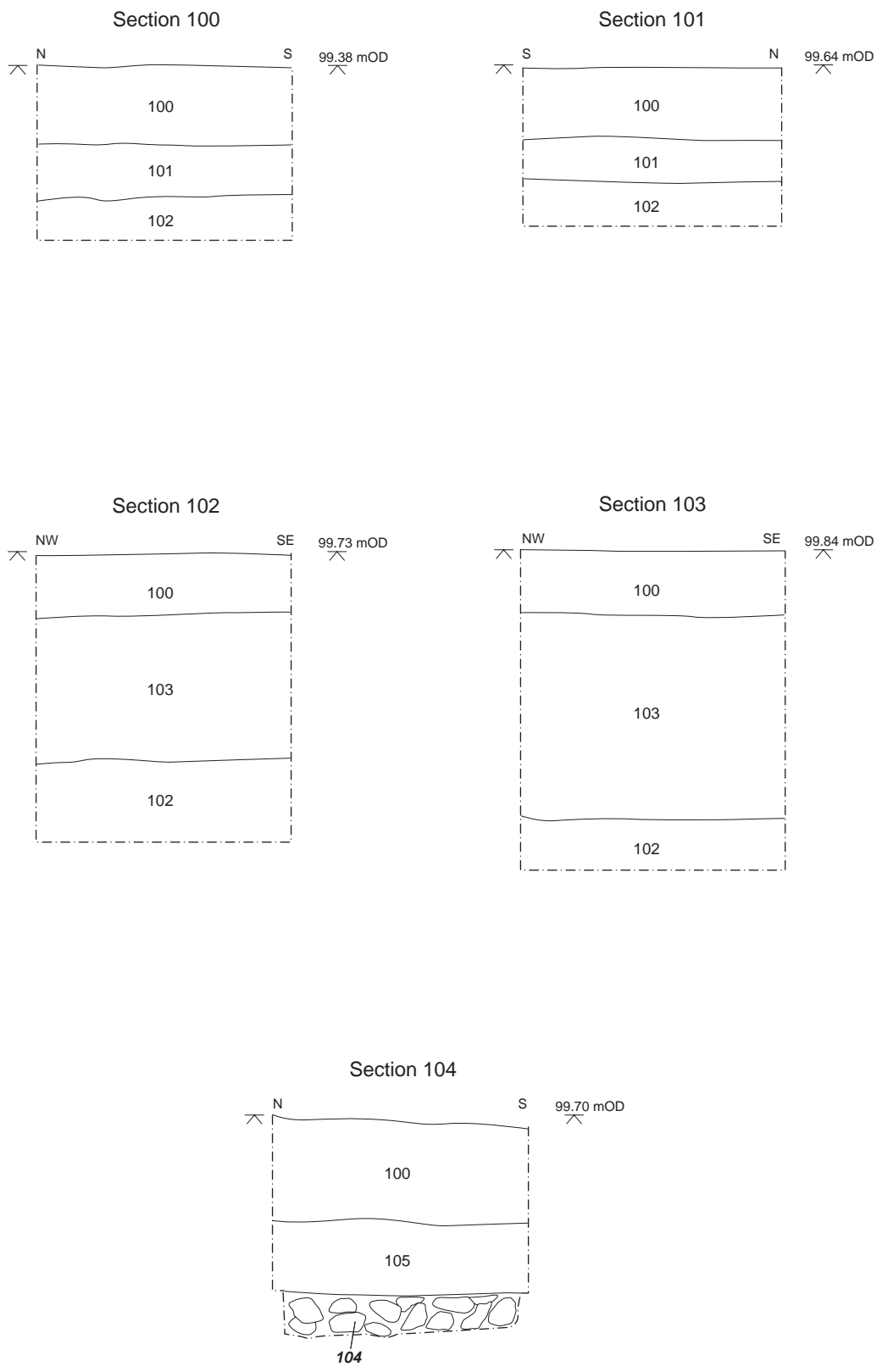


Figure 3: Sections 100-104



Plate 1: Trench 5: Wall footing 104



Plate 2: Eastern edge of site: Wall footing 107



Plate 3: General view of ground reduction





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