

**An Archaeological Evaluation the proposed Children's Centre,  
Leysdown Road, Warden Bay  
Isle of Sheppey, Kent**

**NGR 602510 170651  
(TR 025 706)**

**Project No. 4026  
Site Code: SWB09**

**ASE Report No. 2009177  
OASIS ID: archaeol6-67663**



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**by Alice Thorne**

**November 2009**

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## **Abstract**

*Archaeology South East was commissioned by Kent County Council Property Group to undertake an archaeological evaluation of land at Leysdown Road, Wardens Bay, Isle of Sheppey, Kent.*

*Five trenches totalling 100m in length were excavated at the site. A late Iron Age or early Roman funerary pit was identified within one trench. This contained three fragmented semi-complete ceramic vessels dating from AD10–70 in association with a quantity of cremated human bone, several sherds from other pottery vessels, up to 6 badly corroded copper alloy brooches and a cosmetic or medicinal set comprising a copper alloy mortar and pestle. The pit is thought to have contained the remains of two interments.*

*Details of the proposed development and its below-ground impacts were not available at the time of writing but it is considered that further archaeological remains are likely to exist on the site and it is proposed that there should be further archaeological mitigation in areas of proposed impact, perhaps particularly within the southern part of the site.*

*Natural London Clay was recorded at between 11.11m OD and 12.42m OD.*

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Site Background**

- 1.1.1 Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Kent County Council (KCC) Property Group to undertake an evaluation on land at a proposed Children's Centre site on land at Leysdown Road, Warden Bay, Isle of Sheppey, Kent. The site is centred on NGR TR 025 706 and its location is shown in Figure 1.

### **1.2 Geology and Topography**

- 1.2.1 The British Geographical Survey Map (Sheet 273) for the area shows the underlying geology to comprise London Clay. The site consists of vacant land, adjacent to a former caravan park. The site is broadly pentagonal in shape and covers an area of approximately 0.4ha. It is bounded to the south by Leysdown Road, to the east by Warden Bay Road, to the north by a caravan park and to the west by open ground.

### **1.3 Planning Background**

- 1.3.1 Proposals for the redevelopment of the site comprise the construction of a new Children's Centre. Due to the archaeological potential of the site, the KCC Heritage Conservation Group (KCCHCG) advised that an archaeological field evaluation would be appropriate as a first stage of archaeological survey. The results of this work will assist KCCHCG with its planning advice to the Planning Applications Group at KCC.
- 1.3.2 A *Specification* outlining the scope of this work was subsequently prepared by the KCC Heritage conservation Group (KCC 2009). All work was carried out in accordance with this document and with the relevant Institute for Archaeologists Standard and Guidance papers (IfA 2008).

### **1.4 Scope of Report**

- 1.4.1 This report details the results of archaeological evaluation works on the site. The work was undertaken between the 28<sup>th</sup> of October and the 2<sup>nd</sup> of November by Alice Thorne (Senior Archaeologist), Rob Cole (Surveyor), Tony Baxter and Nina Oloffsen (Assistant Archaeologists). The fieldwork was managed by Jon Sygrave (Project Manager) and the post-excavation analysis was managed by Jim Stevenson and Dan Swift (Project Manager).

## 2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1** A search of The Historic Environment Register (HER) within a 1km radius of the site was obtained by Archaeology South-East (Table 1) for an archaeological evaluation undertaken at the neighbouring site in June 2009 (Hart, 2009). The location of the HER entries are shown on Figure 1.
- 2.2** The 12<sup>th</sup> century church of St. Clement was located some 300m to the south-west of the site, though this has now been demolished (KCC 2009). The nearby Paradise Farm (Grade II listed) dates from c. 1700 and Kent Historic Environment Records suggest the land around the church and farm may include a Deserted Medieval Village (ibid).
- 2.3** As mentioned above, a recent evaluation was undertaken by Archaeology South-East on the neighbouring site to the west. This found multi-period remains dating from the Bronze Age through to the medieval and post-medieval periods (Hart, 2009), and this site is currently subject to further archaeological investigation as a result of these findings.
- 2.4** Other historic landscape features in the environs of the site include an undated mound to the north of the site and a group of unlocated 16<sup>th</sup> century beacons.

No	HER No.	NGR (TR)	Description
1	TR 07 SW 3 - MKE4207	TR 0230 7039	St Clement's church, C12th; rebuilt 1874
2	TR 07 SW 6 - MKE4210	TR 03 70	Beacon 16th century (site of)
3	TR 07 SW 8 - MKE4212	TR 03 70	Roman coin hoard from the shore at Leysdown
4	TR 07 SW 9 - MKE4213	TR 024 704	Leysdown - alleged Deserted Medieval Village
5	TR 07 SW 18 - MKE8371	TR 0324 7068	Leysdown station
6	TR 07 SW 1016	TR 01688 70629	Shallow oval depression surrounded by embankments
7	TR 07 SW 1014	TR 02819 71191	Oval enclosure and associated salt workings
8	TR 07 SW 1013	TR 02770 71324	Sea Defences Earlier than 1870
9	TR 07 SW 1009	TR 03258 70881	Anti Tank Obstacles
10	TQ 87 SE 1076	TR 02043 71161	Unidentified mound, near Grain, Isle of Grain
11	TR 07 SW 1029	TR 0294 7107	Earthwork, near Little Grove Farm
12	TR 07 SW 1030	TR 0285 7107	Earthwork, near Little Grove Farm
13	TR 07 SW 1031	TR 0282 7106	Earthwork, near Little Grove Farm
14	TR 07 SW 1087	TR 0228 7035	Paradise Farmhouse Grade II listed

Table 1:HER data

### **3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Methodology**

- 3.1.1 The methodology comprised the mechanical excavation, under constant archaeological supervision, of 5 evaluation trenches, totalling some 100m of trenching, as set out in Figure 2.
- 3.1.2 All trenches were scanned using a Cable Avoidance Tool (CAT) prior to excavation. Excavation was undertaken in spits of no more than 0.10m to the top of the underlying natural substrate, or to the top of archaeological deposits, whichever was higher.
- 3.1.3 All deposits were recorded using ASE standard context sheets, with colours recorded by visual inspection. Sections were drawn at appropriate scales on plastic drafting film.
- 3.1.4 A full photographic record was made.
- 3.1.5 Spoil heaps and trench bases were scanned using a metal detector and by eye, for unstratified artefacts.
- 3.1.6 Trenches were backfilled and compacted by machine but no further reinstatement was required. Topsoil and subsoil were stockpiled separately and backfilled in sequence.

#### **3.2 Quantification of Archive**

Number of Contexts	43
No. of files/paper record	1 file
Plan and sections sheets	3
Bulk Samples	3
Photographs	1 colour slide film, 1 black and white and digital shots
Bulk finds	1 box
Registered finds	10
Environmental flots/residue	1 small box

Table 2: Site Archive Quantification



## 4.0 RESULTS (Figures 2-7)

### 4.1 Natural Geology and Overburden

- 4.1.1 The natural geology (London Clay) comprised a stiff, mid yellowish brown slightly silty clay, with occasional small rounded pebbles, pockets of gravel and flecks of degraded chalk.
- 4.1.2 The overburden observed in all trenches consisted a layer dark greyish – brown silty clay topsoil that measured between 0.27m and 0.32m in depth across the site. An interface layer between this topsoil horizon and the underlying natural London Clay comprised a diffuse mid greyish-brown silty clay, containing occasional fragments of charcoal, clinker and fragments of degraded chalk. This layer was diffuse and measured between 0.12 and 0.24m in depth across the site.

### 4.2 Trench 1 (Figure 3)

- 4.2.1 Length: 20.00m                      Width: 1.80m                      Depth: 0.60m  
Orientation: Northeast-southwest

Number	Type	Description	Max. length	Max. width	Max. depth	Max. height (m OD)
1/001	Deposit	Topsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.29m	12.12
1/002	Deposit	Interface	Tr.	Tr.	0.24m	11.88
1/003	Deposit	Natural	Tr.	Tr.	-	11.57
1/004	Fill	Possible Pit Fill	1.90m	0.68m	0.22m	11.27
1/005	Cut	Possible Pit Cut	1.90m	0.68m	0.22m	11.27
1/006	Fill	Possible linear Fill	1.33m	0.88m	0.14m	11.43
1/007	Cut	Possible Linear terminus	1.33m	0.88m	0.14m	11.43

Table 3: List of Recorded Contexts – Trench 1

- 4.2.2 The natural London Clay [1/003] was encountered between 11.16m and 11.57m OD.

A sub-circular feature, partially exposed extending from the baulk, was investigated in the central southern part of the trench [1/005]. It had a shallow irregular profile, and was filled by a mid greyish brown silty clay [1/004]. No finds were recovered, and this feature is thought to represent a possible pit, or more probable patch of rooting disturbance.

A second ephemeral feature was partially exposed extending from the baulk in the central northern part of the trench [1/007]. This comprised a possible linear terminus, or pit with a shallow concave profile, and a rounded end. It was filled by mid greyish-brown silty clay, which was very similar in colour and texture to the surrounding clay natural [1/006]. Two tiny fragments of CBM were recovered from this feature.

## 4.2 Trench 2 (Figure 4)

4.2.1 Length: 20.00m                      Width: 1.80m                      Depth: 0.51m  
Orientation: Northwest-southeast

Number	Type	Description	Max. length	Max. width	Max. depth	Max. height (m OD)
2/001	Deposit	Topsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.27m	12.01
2/002	Deposit	Interface	Tr.	Tr.	0.15m	11.86
2/003	Deposit	Natural	Tr.	Tr.	-	11.58
2/004	Fill	Possible Pit Fill	-	1.60m	0.39m	11.41
2/005	Cut	Possible Pit Cut	-	1.60m	0.39m	11.41
2/006	Fill	Possible Pit Fill	-	1.80m	0.34m	11.38
2/007	Cut	Possible Pit Cut	-	1.80m	0.34m	11.38
2/008	Fill	Linear Fill	2.10m	0.45m	0.12m	11.40
2/009	Cut	Linear Cut	2.10m	0.45m	0.12m	11.40
2/010	Fill	Linear Fill	1.90m	0.48m	0.17m	11.42
2/011	Cut	Linear Cut	1.90m	0.48m	0.17m	11.42
2/012	Fill	Pit Fill	-	0.70m	0.13m	11.46
2/013	Cut	Pit Cut	-	0.70m	0.13m	11.46

Table 4: List of Recorded Contexts – Trench 2

4.2.2 The natural London Clay [2/003] was encountered between 11.58m and 11.71m OD. A modern service pipe was encountered at the south-eastern end of the trench, and this area was therefore left high.

In the north-western end of the trench, two ephemeral sub-circular features were observed partially exposed extending out from the eastern baulk. [2/005] had a concave profile, and was noted to have cut through the interface layer [2/002]. It was filled by a stiff mid greyish brown silty clay [2/004], which contained one undiagnostic fragment of struck flint. To the south, feature [2/007] had a flattened concave profile and was filled by a similar stiff mid greyish brown silty clay from which no finds were recovered [2/006]. These features were interpreted as probable areas of rooting disturbance.

Within the southern part of the trench two irregular and ephemeral narrow linear features were observed. [2/009] comprised an irregular elongated linear feature, which was filled by a stiff mid greyish brown silty clay [2/008], containing occasional small rounded flint pebbles and a fragment of probable 19<sup>th</sup> century ceramic field drain. To the south [2/011] comprised an ephemeral linear with a rounded terminus containing two small cross-fitting bodysherds which are likely to be prehistoric and another undiagnostic fragment of CBM or burnt clay [2/010]. These features could in association form an interrupted section of a post-medieval gully or drain running parallel to Warden Bay Road containing residual fragments of prehistoric pottery. However, it is thought that despite similarities in the orientation of the features in plan, these two features may relate to different phases of activity on the site.

To the south [2/013] comprised a shallow sub circular feature, partially exposed extending beyond the subsoil. This was filled by a stiff mid greyish brown silty clay [2/012] containing occasional rounded flint pebbles. No finds were observed. This feature may represent the remains of a shallow pit.

## 4.2 Trench 3 (Figure 5)

4.2.1 Length: 20.00m Width: 1.80m Depth: 0.47m  
Orientation: Northeast-southwest

Number	Type	Description	Max. length	Max. width	Max. depth	Max. height (m OD)
3/001	Deposit	Topsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.32m	11.56
3/002	Deposit	Interface	Tr.	Tr.	0.12m	11.42
3/003	Deposit	Natural	Tr.	Tr.	-	11.11
3/004	Deposit	Rooting	-	0.72m	0.04m	10.97

Table 5: List of Recorded Contexts – Trench 3

4.2.2 The natural London Clay [3/003] was encountered between 11.11m and 10.73m OD. A sondage was excavated to a depth of 10.37m OD at the north-eastern end of the check to confirm the level of the excavation and investigate the nature of the underlying clay geology. The only possible feature within this trench was found upon excavation to be an area of rooting disturbance [3/004].

## 4.2 Trench 4 (Figure 6)

4.2.1 Length: 20.00m Width: 1.80m Depth: 0.60m  
Orientation: Northeast-southwest

Number	Type	Description	Max. length	Max. width	Max. depth	Max. height (m OD)
4/001	Deposit	Topsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.44m	12.39
4/002	Deposit	Interface	Tr.	Tr.	0.23m	12.16
4/003	Deposit	Natural	Tr.	Tr.	-	11.79
4/004	Fill	Pit Fill	1.53m	1.30m	0.24m	11.75
4/005	Cut	Pit Cut	2.05m	2.00m	0.34m	11.75
4/006	Fill	Pit Fill	0.70m	0.49m	0.13m	11.75
4/007	Cut	Pit Cut	0.70m	0.49m	0.13m	11.75
4/008	Fill	Fill of Posthole	-	0.30m	0.09m	11.76
4/009	Cut	Cut of Posthole	-	0.30m	0.09m	11.76
4/010	Fill	Pit Fill	2.05m	2.00m	0.34m	11.75
4/011	Fill	Pit Fill	-	0.70m	0.19m	11.76
4/012	Cut	Pit Cut	-	0.70m	0.19m	11.76

Table 6: List of Recorded Contexts – Trench 4

4.2.2 The natural London Clay (4/003) was encountered between 11.79m and 11.52m OD.

Four features were observed within this trench. Within the south-western part of a trench a large and irregularly sided sub-circular feature [4/005] was observed, partially exposed extending out from the southern baulk. As the full extent of the feature was not obtained, the exposed section may possibly represent the terminus of a linear. However, the edges of the feature were curving up towards the baulk, and it thought that the feature most likely represents the remains of a discreet pit. It had an irregular concave profile, with a rounded base and very ephemeral edges.

The primary fill of the pit comprised stiff light yellowish brown silty clay [4/010], containing occasional fragments of charcoal, and frequent small fragments of burnt bone. The burnt bone was dispersed throughout the fill, but concentrated particularly

within the vicinity of the location of two fragmented vessels (RF 3 and 4) and two copper objects (RF 5 and 6B).

The upper fill of the pit [4/004] also comprised stiff light brownish yellow silty clay, which contained occasional charcoal and frequent burnt bone fragments. The bone was concentrated below the location of a fragmented vessel (RF 1) and within the vicinity of a copper object (RF 2)

This feature is thought to represent the remains of a funerary pit of Late Iron Age to Early Roman origins. The edges of the feature were ephemeral and indistinct, possibly resulting from a brief span that the feature was open before placement of the vessels and backfilling of the cut. The vessels were in a fragmentary and incomplete state, and may have been deliberately broken before deposition (see section 5.2.7). Interestingly, the presence of RF 1 and 2, and evidence for more burnt bone within the upper fill of the pit suggests a possible secondary use of this feature for funerary purposes.

A small circular pit was found to cut [4/005], [4/012] had a concave profile and was filled by a stiff mid brownish orange silty clay [4/011] containing frequent manganese fragments and small flint pebbles. No finds were recovered. This feature may represent a small shallow intercutting pit, or could have comprised a shallow posthole, possibly forming a grave marker for the underlying burial pit.

In the south-western part of the trench, a circular pit with a concave profile [4/007] was filled by a stiff mid to dark greyish brown silty clay [4/006]. Immediately to the south-east of this a circular posthole with steep concave sides and a rounded base [4/009] was filled by a mid to dark greyish brown silty clay [4/008]. No finds were recovered from either of these features.

Registered Find No	Context Number	Description	Max. height (m OD)
1	4/004	Fragmented Vessel	11.75
2	4/004	Copper Object (brooch?)	11.58
3	4/010	Fragmented Vessel	11.46
4	4/010	Fragmented Vessel	11.47
5	4/010	Copper Object (mortar?)	11.43
6	4/010	Copper object	11.43
6B	4/010	Copper Object (pestle?)	11.43

Table 7: List of Registered Find Numbers – Trench 4

## 4.2 Trench 5 (Figure 7)

4.2.1 Length: 20.00m                      Width: 1.80m                      Depth: 0.47m  
Orientation: Northeast-southwest

4.2.2 The natural London Clay [3/003] was encountered between 12.42 and 12.33 mOD.

Two possible features were identified within this trench. [5/004] comprised a wide sub-circular feature partially exposed extending from the western baulk. It had a concave profile, with a flattened concave base. It was filled by a mid greyish brown slightly silty clay [5/005] which was very similar in colour and texture to the surrounding natural geology. This feature is thought to represent an area of rooting disturbance.

To the south [5/006] comprised a smaller circular feature, also partially exposed extending out from the western baulk. This had concave sides and a flattish base filled by mid greyish brown slightly silty clay with frequent rounded to sub angular flint gravels and pebbles [5/007]. This feature was also thought to represent an area of rooting disturbance.

Number	Type	Description	Max. length	Max. width	Max. depth	Max. height (m OD)
5/001	Deposit	Topsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.32m	12.78
5/002	Deposit	Interface	Tr.	Tr.	0.12m	12.66
5/003	Deposit	Natural	Tr.	Tr.	-	12.42
5/004	Cut	Possible Pit Cut	-	1.50	0.12m	12.38
5/005	Fill	Possible Pit Fill	-	1.50	0.12m	12.38
5/006	Cut	Possible Pit Cut	-	0.72m	0.10m	12.37
5/007	Fill	Possible Pit Fill	-	0.72m	0.10m	12.37

Table 8: List of Recorded Contexts – Trench 5

## **5.0 THE FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE**

### **5.1 Introduction**

- 5.1.1 A small assemblage of finds was recovered during the archaeological work, tabulated in Appendix 1.

### **5.2 The Prehistoric or Early Roman Pottery by Anna Doherty**

- 5.2.1 A total of 424 sherds, weighing 2632 grams and amounting to 2.16 EVEs were recovered, mostly from three complete/partially complete vessels associated with cremation burials in pit [4/005]. The pottery was examined using a x20 binocular microscope and quantified by sherd count, weight and EVE. In the absence of an accepted regional type-series for Kent, fabrics and forms were recorded using the codes from the Southwark typology (Marsh & Tyers 1979). Wherever possible, forms have also been concorded to Thompson (1982) and the Camulodunum series (Hawkes & Hull 1947), which feature more detailed sub-division of Late Iron Age/early Roman forms.
- 5.2.2 Only two small cross-fitting bodysherds, from [2/010], are likely to pre-date the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. The moderate/common ill-sorted flint of 0.5-3mm is more typical of later Bronze Age fabrics but the sherds are not diagnostic enough to rule out either an earlier or a later prehistoric date. The rest of the pottery was of a single fabric type, featuring common grog of around 1-1.5mm. Most are dark-surfaced, although the cores tend to be grey and relatively high-fired. This might suggest some degree of change towards 'Romanised' firing techniques, although there is no clear-cut evidence of a post-conquest date.
- 5.2.3 Two fragmented vessels, assigned registered find numbers 3 and 4 on site, were originally recorded from the primary fill [4/010] of the cremation pit [4/005]. However, when examining the pottery it became clear that neither was wholly complete and that some sherds of other vessels were mixed in with this material. RF 3 is a butt-beaker-like vessel with a tall base, a plain bulbous body, a cordoned shoulder and a tall upright neck. It is similar to some vessels classified as G1-5 barrel-shaped butt beaker imitations by Thompson (1982) but is probably on a continuum with finer jar forms, rather than being a faithful imitation. The majority of sherds appear to be from the base and lower wall, with only a quarter of the rim intact.
- 5.2.4 RF 4 is a plain necked jar form with a single cordon similar to Thompson's B1-1 or Cam 221. This is much more fragmented; only half of the rim survives and it is difficult to tell whether all bodysherds bagged together are necessarily of the same vessel because three small shoulder sherds of a vessel with corrugation on the shoulder (Thompson B2-1/Cam 229) and a further 12 sherds from a strongly rounded/carinated shoulder (Thompson B3-8) were also mixed in with this material. Assuming that all other plain bodysherds are from RF 4, the weight amounts to around 450 grams, probably less than half that of a complete vessel.
- 5.2.5 The upper fill of the cremation pit, [4/004], contains the most complete vessel, RF 1, a plain necked jar similar to RF 4. Most of this vessel appears to be present but it is notable that no base sherds were recovered. As in the primary fill, other sherds were also mixed in with material bagged as RF 1, including 9 sherds of a pronounced pedestal base in a slightly coarser grog fabric and 3 sherds of another fine necked form with single cordon at the neck. This latter vessel is the only one which appears to be deliberately oxidised, a trait which is more often associated with butt-beaker

imitations.

- 5.2.6 The range of forms described above suggests a date no earlier than c. AD10 for the deposition of the cremation group. As discussed above, the firing of the fabrics is consistent with 'Romanising' wares but no clearly post-conquest sherds were encountered and several of the forms, including the base of a pedestal jar and the plain barrel-shaped butt-beaker imitations, are types which probably did not remain in use much beyond the pre-Flavian period. Overall, a date range of around AD10-70 for the pit group as a whole is suggested.
- 5.2.7 The photographs of the vessels show that all three were to some extent intact when deposited. However, both RF 1 and RF 4 were lying on their sides and both were missing either the whole base or a substantial part of it. The sherds of all three vessels were found *in situ* in a fragmented condition and were fairly widely dispersed. Whilst this could be partly explained by truncation or disturbance, the vessels from [4/010] were sealed by the overlying fill [4/004]. It therefore seems possible that they were not repositories for the bone itself but were deliberately broken or 'killed' as part of a process of structured deposition.
- 5.2.8 The pottery from pit [4/005] is in itself worthy of publication. Further discussion, particularly on the depositional context of the assemblage, is recommended. Owing to the fragmentary nature of the pottery, extra time may also be required to reconstruct five vessels for illustration. At present it is envisaged that around 1.5 days would be required in total. However, in the event of further archaeological excavation on the site, this work should be integrated with analysis of any other pottery recovered.

### **5.3 The Post-Roman Pottery by Elke Raemen**

- 5.3.1 A total of five post-medieval pottery fragments were recovered from top- and subsoil. The earliest of these consists of a slightly sandy earthenware fragment, possibly of 16<sup>th</sup>- to 17<sup>th</sup>-century date. Included are also 19<sup>th</sup>- to 20<sup>th</sup>-century red earthenware flowerpot fragments ([1/001], [5/002]) and a blue transfer printed china sherd of 19<sup>th</sup>-century date. A 20<sup>th</sup>-century hard-fired fine earthenware piece was also recovered ([2/001]).

### **5.4 The Registered Finds by Elke Raemen**

- 5.4.1 A number of finds were assigned unique Registered Finds numbers (RF <00>). These have been summarized in Table 9. Numbers were all assigned on site, apart from RF <100>-<102>.
- 5.4.2 The remains of at least four brooches (based on the spring fragments only) were recovered. All were from the Late Iron Age or early Roman cremation pit [4/005]. The brooches are badly corroded and fragmented, and their poor condition may have been caused by inclusion in the cremation, the heat of which would have weakened the brooches. RF <2> (upper fill [4/004]) consists of two one-piece sprung brooches with flat bow, probably Nauheim derivatives (early to mid 1<sup>st</sup> century). Primary fill [4/010] contained minimum two further examples. Based on the springs only, there are minimum two more brooches, with RF <101> and <102> possibly containing part of the same spring. These are again one-piece brooches with flat bow and of early to mid 1<sup>st</sup>-century date.
- 5.4.3 Small brooch fragments are also present in the environmental samples from pit [4/005]. These may have formed part of the same brooches as the hand-collected



examples.

SITE CODE	CONTEXT	RF No	OBJECT	MATERIAL	Wt (g)	PERIOD	COMMENTS
SWB09	4/004	1	POT	CERA	1270	LIA/ER	
SWB09	4/004	2	BROO	COPP	28	LIA/ER	frags; min 2
SWB09	4/010	3	POT	CERA	804	LIA/ER	
SWB09	4/010	4	POT	CERA	440	LIA/ER	
SWB09	4/010	5	COSS	COPP	16	LIA/ER	mortar, cosmetic set together with RF <6B>
SWB09	4/010	6A	BROO	COPP	<2	LIA/ER	frags; min 1
SWB09	4/010	6B	COSS	COPP	12	LIA/ER	pestle, cosmetic set together with RF <5>
SWB09	2/001	100	SHOE	IRON	28	PMED	heel plate
SWB09	4/010	101	BROO	COPP	6	LIA/ER	frags; possibly part of RF <102>
SWB09	4/010	102	BROO	COPP	20	LIA/ER	frags; possibly part of RF <101>

Table 9: Summary of the Registered Finds

- 5.4.4 Of interest are a cosmetic set consisting of a pestle (RF <6B>) and mortar (RF <5>). They were found in pit [4/005], in primary fill [4/010], next to each other and associated with the cremation. Pottery from pit [4/005] all dates to circa AD 10 to 70. They are in fair condition, which may be because of their more robust nature, as opposed to the relatively thin brooches. Both are end-looped and fairly plain. Both mortar terminal and pestle tip are missing. The pestle consists further of a plain circular suspension loop and a curved sub-circular-sectioned stem, measuring together 56+mm. The mortar retains a suspension loop with bill-like extension. The latter is often interpreted as a bird-head (Jackson 1985), although RF <5> would form a considerably stylised example. The bow contains a U-sectioned groove.
- 5.4.5 The objects would have been suspended together on a leather lace or thong, possibly from the waist. This would make them easily detachable, which would have been necessary as the objects would have been in use together. They would have been used for grinding mineral-based cosmetics or possibly medicaments. This type of cosmetic sets appears exclusively in Britain and mainly in the South. Although not many securely dated examples have been found, they seem to appear from the late pre-Roman Iron Age up to the early second century AD (Jackson 1985). Sets are rare and survive mainly in graves (i.e. St Albans, Chichester and Canterbury). Other examples of mortars or pestles in north Kent were found in i.e. Faversham, Springhead and Keston (Jackson 1985).
- 5.4.6 The brooch group should be looked at in greater detail, in order to establish the exact number of brooches as well as their types. Of importance is the cosmetic set, which requires a publication note with illustration and regardless of any further work on site. Conservation requirements include the stabilization of the cosmetic set, which is affected by active bronze disease. Although both components appear plain, cleaning and/or X-radiography of in particular the mortar is required to ensure no decoration is present. If any further excavation work takes place, this group needs to be studied in conjunction with any other finds.



## 5.5 Other Finds by Elke Raemen

5.5.1 Fired clay fragments were recovered from the topsoil in trenches 1 and 2 and from [2/010]. All of them are sparse fine sand-tempered and featureless. Two coal fragments were recovered from [1/001]. The same context also contained a plain clay tobacco pipe (CTP) stem fragment of 19<sup>th</sup>-century date. A green glass wine bottle kick fragment dating to the late 19<sup>th</sup>- to mid 20<sup>th</sup>-century was recovered from [2/002]. In addition, a modern (20<sup>th</sup> century) iron spark plug tool was recovered from [1/001].

## 5.6 The Cremated Human Bone by Lucy Sibun

5.6.1 Cremated human bone was recovered from two fills [4/004] and [4/010] of single pit [4/005]. The cremation deposits appear to be un-urned, although associated broken pottery vessels were recovered from the pit. A few fragments of bone were recovered by hand collection during the on-site excavation, but the majority of the assemblage was recovered from environmental samples <1> ([4/004]), <2> and <3> ([4/010]) in sieve fractions of 2-4mm, 4-8mm and >8mm.

5.6.2 A preliminary assessment has been made of the cremated bone assemblage according to standard guidelines (McKinley 2004). This includes fragment size, the presence or absence of identifiable fragments, the degree of oxidation, the presence of ageing, sexing or pathological data. The total of weight of each cremation deposit was also established.

5.6.3 All recognisable finds were removed during the processing stage but the material was scanned for the presence of possible staining on bone or for animal bone.

	WEIGHT (grams)					AGE	SEX	IDENTIFIABLE				
Sample	Fragment size (mm)					Total (g)			S	A	U	L
	0-4	4-8	8-20	20-30	>30							
<1> [4/004]	100	162	70	8	12	352	A?	?	Y	?	Y	Y
<2> [4/010]	2	2				4	?	?	?	?	?	?
<3> [4/010]	204	142	40	10		396	A	?	Y	?	Y	Y

Table 10: Quantification of cremated bone

### 5.6.4 [4/004], Sample <1>

This context produced a total of 352 grams of cremated bone. Although some fragments were blue/grey in colour, the majority were off-white, suggesting an efficient cremation process. Fragments ranged in size from 1mm to 30mm and cranial, upper and lower limb fragments were identifiable. Unfortunately, no fragments that would aid in the determination of age or sex were present but fragment size suggests an adult individual. The 4-8mm and 8-20mm fractions contained one or two fragments which appear to be from a metatarsal, displaying copper alloy staining

### 5.6.5 [4/010], Samples <2> and <3>

Two samples were taken from this context <2> and <3>. In addition, 12 grams of cremated bone were recovered from hand collection. These fragments range in size from 10-20mm, are off-white in colour and comprise lower limb and cranial fragments.

- 5.6.6 Sample <2> produced only 4 grams of bone, the majority of which were less than 5mm in size. This small, off-white assemblage does not contain fragments which are identifiable to skeletal element.
- 5.6.7 Sample <3> produced 396 grams of cremated bone ranging in size from 0.5mm to 20mm. However, this weight is slightly exaggerated by the large quantity of very small flint pebbles still included within the smallest fraction. The majority of the assemblage was off-white in colour but blue/grey and charred fragments are also present, suggesting less efficient cremation processes, or uneven heat distribution throughout the pyre. Identifiable fragments included those from the cranium, upper and lower limbs, but no fragments that would aid determination of age or sex were present.
- 5.6.8 Although only a preliminary assessment has been made, it has been possible to establish the condition of the assemblages. Unfortunately, it is unclear whether the cremation deposits relate to one, two or three separate cremation burials. No repeated fragments were noted, so from the bone evidence alone the minimum number of individuals represented is one. Only sample <1> from [4/004] contained fragments indicative of age, which in this case suggests an adult individual.

## **5.7 The Flint by Lucy Allott**

- 5.7.1 A single flint flake weighing 12g was collected from context [2/004]. The flake is semi cortical and shows some signs of possible damage as well as possible retouch/secondary flaking. It is not considered diagnostic.

## **5.8 The Ceramic Building Material by Sarah Porteus**

- 5.8.1 Ceramic building material (CBM) was recovered from eight contexts. The majority of this is post-medieval. A total of three peg tile fabric types were identified. Fine orange fabric T1, with fine micaceous inclusions was recovered from contexts [1/001], [2/001], [2/002], [3/002] and [5/002] and is of probable 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century date. Peg tile fabric T2, an orange fabric with sparse fine quartz inclusions of probable 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century date was recovered from context [1/001] only. Peg tile in a fabric similar to Canterbury Archaeological Trust fabric CAT32, a fabric with abundant fine calcareous inclusions was recovered from contexts [1/001] and [3/002], this tile is also of probable 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century date. Fragments of unglazed ceramic field drain were recovered from contexts [2/002] and [2/008] both are in an orange fabric similar to T1 and are of probable 19<sup>th</sup> century date. A single abraded brick fragment from context [1/001] could not be accurately dated but is most likely broadly post-medieval in date. Flakes of tile of less than 2g weight recovered from contexts [2/010] and [1/006] in a fine under-fired orange fabric with fine micaceous inclusions and sparse red iron rich silt could not be accurately dated, the fragment from [2/010] may be fired clay.

## **5.9 The Animal Bone by Gemma Ayton**

- 5.9.1 One fragment of animal bone was recovered from context [1/001]. The fragment belongs to a sheep/goat (*Ovis/Capra*) and is the distal end of a right tibia. There is a small amount of abnormal bone growth around the articulation. No evidence of butchery or gnawing was recorded.
- 5.9.2 The assemblage holds no potential for further statistical analysis.

## **5.10 The Environmental Samples by Lucy Allott**

- 5.10.1 Three bulk soil samples were taken during to maximise recovery of cremated bone noted during excavation and to establish evidence for other environmental remains within contexts [4/004] and [4/010]. The samples were processed in their entirety in a flotation tank, the residues and flots were retained on 500µm and 250µm meshes respectively and were air dried prior to sorting. The residues were passed through 8mm, 4mm and 2mm geological sieves and each fraction sorted for environmental and artefact remains (Table 11). The flots were scanned under a stereozoom microscope at magnifications of x7-45 and an overview of their contents recorded (Table 12).
- 5.10.2 With the exception of cremated bone (see section 5.6) bulk samples contained very few environmental remains. No charcoal or charred macrobotanical remains were evident in these samples and only small fragments of indeterminate marine mollusc shell were recovered in sample <2>, [4/010]. The flots consisted of uncharred vegetation that provide some evidence for post depositional disturbances.
- 5.10.3 Artefact remains including small fragments of copper alloy, pot and fire cracked flint were also present in these samples. These are consistent with artefacts documented in the finds report. A small fragment of modern glass was also recovered from [4/010].

Sample Number	Context	Context / d eposit type	Sample Volume litres	Sub-Sample Volume litres	Charcoal	Crem bone >8mm	Weight (g)	Crem bone 4-8mm	Weight (g)	Crem Bone 2-4mm	Weight (g)	Marine Molluscs	Weight (g)	Other (eg ind, pot, cbm)
1	4/004	Fill of Pit	40	40	-	***	90	***	162	****	100			Cu **/6g, Alloy Fe * /<2g, Pot **/244g, FCF */20g
2	4/010	Fill of Pit	40	40	-			**	2	**	2	*	<2	FCF */12g, Glass */2g
3	4/010	Fill of Pit	20	20	-	**	50	***	142	****	204			Poy ***/112g, Fe */<2g, Cu Alloy **/4g

Table 11: Residue Quantification (\* = 1-10, \*\* = 11-50, \*\*\* = 51-250, \*\*\*\* = >250) and weights in grams

Sample Number	Context	Weight g	Flot volume ml	Uncharred %	Sediment %	Charcoal	Charred macrobotanical remains
1	4/004	8	80	100		-	-
2	4/010	10	80	95	5	-	-
3	4/010	<2	20	100		-	-

Table 12: Flot Quantification (\* = 1-10, \*\* = 11-50, \*\*\* = 51-250, \*\*\*\* = >250)

## **6.0 DISCUSSION**

### **6.1 Introduction**

- 6.1.1 This evaluation has demonstrated the presence of archaeological remains on the site. In contrast to the evaluation undertaken in June 2009 on the adjacent field which produced a range of features and significant evidence multi-period settlement and agricultural remains dating from the Bronze Age, Iron Age, Saxon, medieval and post-medieval periods (Hart 2009) the majority of features identified were often ephemeral and irregular, containing little or no dating evidence. However, the evaluation has provided conclusive evidence of important burial activity within the site boundary, with a funerary pit in Trench 4 dating to the period from the Late Iron Age or Early Roman Period.

### **6.2 Interpretation**

#### **6.2.1 Late Iron Age/Early Roman**

Trench 4 produced the most significant archaeological remains on the site. This comprised a sub-circular funerary pit dating to the period AD10-70.

The primary fill of the funerary pit [4/010] contained the remains of two fragmented vessels which are believed to have been deliberately broken prior to deposition within the grave. Sherds from two other vessels were also recovered from this fill. The cremated bone was dispersed around the area of these vessels, indicating that the bone may not have been inurned, but was perhaps deposited loose or within an organic container which has since decayed. The burial was accompanied by the remains of up to 4 badly corroded and decayed copper alloy brooches and a cosmetic or medicinal set comprising a mortar and pestle which may have formed part of the dress fittings, perhaps suspended from the waist.

The upper fill of the pit contained what is thought to represent a separate, secondary burial within the grave pit. Context 4/004 contained a fragmentary, but semi-complete pottery vessel. During the post-excavation process it was discovered that this vessel was missing a base and, as with the two vessels from fill 4/010, appeared to have been deliberately deposited in a broken state. Several sherds from two other vessels were also found in association with this pot. The cremated bone within this fill was dispersed below the position of the vessel and around the badly corroded and decayed remains of a further 2 copper alloy brooches. This again suggests that the cremated bone had been placed within the grave loose or within an organic container. No separate cut for this assemblage was observed, and it is thought that these objects may have been deposited within the grave fairly soon, possibly immediately after the primary burial had been placed and covered over.

A preliminary assessment of the burnt bone has been undertaken, but unfortunately it has not been possible to confirm if the assemblage relates to one or two separate cremation burials. The sample from the upper fill [4/004] did however contain fragments indicative of an adult individual.

A small intercutting pit which contained no dating evidence may represent the remains of a grave marker, possibly a shallow posthole.

## 6.2.2 Undated

The majority of features on site were ephemeral, irregular and contained little or no dating evidence. On the basis of these characteristics it was thought during excavation that the features within Trenches 3, 5 and features [1/005], [2/005] and [2/007] represented areas of rooting disturbance.

A small undated pit [2/013] was identified at the southern end of Trench 2, close to the location of a small gully terminus, which was found to contain two small adjoining sherds of prehistoric pottery [2/011]. As this feature shared some similar characteristics and orientation to an irregular feature containing sherds of ceramic field drain immediately to the north [2/009], it is not known at present if the prehistoric fragments represent residual sherds within an interrupted section of a later post-medieval drainage gully.

Two further features, a small undated pit and undated posthole were noted in the south-western end of Trench 4.

## 6.3 Overview

- 6.3.1 Despite the site's proximity to an earlier evaluation undertaken on the school site immediately to the west (Hart 2009) which provided evidence of settlement and agricultural activity ranging from the Bronze Age through to the post-medieval period, this phase of work produced a very different set of results. The multi-period settlement evidence is not represented, but instead the evaluation has highlighted the potential for the site for containing funerary activity dating to the late Iron Age to Early Roman period.

## 7.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The evaluation has provided evidence of significant funerary remains dating to the Late Iron Age or early Roman period. The most significant remains encountered on site were located in Trench 4, where a pit containing funerary remains and two other undated shallow pits and a posthole were identified at a depth of approximately 0.50m below the current ground surface at approximately 11.75m OD.
- 7.2 Details of the proposed development and its below-ground impacts were not available at the time of writing but it is considered that further archaeological remains are likely to exist on the site and it is proposed that there should be further archaeological mitigation in areas of proposed impact, perhaps particularly within the southern part of the site.

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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**APPENDIX 1: FINDS QUANTIFICATION**

Context	Pot	Wt (g)	CBM	Wt (g)	Cremated bone	Wt (g)	Bone	Wt (g)	Flint	Wt (g)	Stone	Wt (g)	Fe	Wt (g)	F.Clay	Wt (g)	CTP	Wt (g)	Glass	Wt (g)
1/001	3	12	17	324			1	26			2	2	1	164	1	<2	1	<2		
1/006			2	<2																
2/001	1	4	6	124											1	76				
2/002			3	88															1	14
2/004										1	12									
2/008			1	6																
2/010	2	8	1	<2											2	<2				
3/002			4	94																
4/004																				
RF <1>	239	1270			1	<2														
4/010	25	112			12	10														
4/010																				
RF <3>	91	804			1	<2														
4/010																				
RF <4>	77	440																		
5/002	1	30	1	22																
<b>Total</b>	<b>439</b>	<b>2680</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>658</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>14</b>

## APPENDIX 2: ENVIRONMENTAL QUANTIFICATION

Sample Number	Context	Context / deposit type	Sample Volume litres	sub-Sample Volume litres	Charcoal >4mm	Weight (g)	Charcoal <4mm	Weight (g)	Crem bone >8mm	Weight (g)	Crem bone 4-8mm	Weight (g)	Crem Bone 2-4mm	Weight (g)	Marine Molluscs	Weight (g)	Estimate quant. & weigh (eg. Pot 12/5g)
1	4/004	Fill of Pit	40	40					***	90	***	162	****	100			Cu Alloy **/6g, Fe * /<2g, Pot **/244g, FCF */20g
2	4/010	Fill of Pit	40	40							**	2	**	2	*	<2	FCF */12g, Glsss */2g
3	4/010	Fill of Pit	20	20					**	50	***	142	****	204			Poy ***/112g, Fe */<2g, Cu Alloy **/4g



### APPENDIX 3: SMR SUMMARY FORM

Site Code	SWB09					
Identification Name and Address	Proposed Children's Centre site, Leysdown Road, Warden Bay, Isle of Sheppey, Kent					
County, District &/or Borough	Swale Borough Council					
OS Grid Refs.	NGR 602510 170651					
Geology	London Clay					
Arch. South-East Project Number	4026					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval. ✓	Excav.	Watching Brief	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field ✓	Shallow Urban	Deep Urban	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval. 28-30/10/09	Excav.	WB.	Other		
Sponsor/Client	KCC Property Group					
Project Manager	Jon Sygrave					
Project Supervisor	Alice Thorne					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA ✓	RB ✓
	AS	MED	PM			

Archaeology South East was commissioned by Kent County Council Property Group to undertake an archaeological evaluation of land at Leysdown Road, Warden Bay, Isle of Sheppey, Kent.

Five trenches totalling 100m in length were excavated at the site. A late Iron Age or early Roman funerary pit was identified within one trench. This contained three fragmented semi-complete ceramic vessels dating from AD10–70 in association with a quantity of cremated human bone, several sherds from other pottery vessels, up to 6 badly corroded copper alloy brooches and a cosmetic or medicinal set comprising a copper alloy mortar and pestle. The pit is thought to have contained the remains of two interments.

Details of the proposed development and its below-ground impacts were not available at the time of writing but it is considered that further archaeological remains are likely to exist on the site and it is proposed that there should be further archaeological mitigation in areas of proposed impact, perhaps particularly within the southern part of the site.

Natural London Clay was recorded at between 11.11m OD and 12.42m OD.

## APPENDIX 4: OASIS SUMMARY FORM

**OASIS ID: archaeol6-67663**

### **Project details**

Project name	An Archaeological Evaluation at a proposed Children's Centre Site, Leysdown Road, Warden Bay
Short description of the project	<p>Archaeology South East was commissioned by Kent County Council Property Group to undertake an archaeological evaluation of land at Leysdown Road, Wardens Bay, Isle of Sheppey, Kent.</p> <p>Five trenches totalling 100m in length were excavated at the site. A late Iron Age or early Roman funerary pit was identified within one trench. This contained three fragmented semi-complete ceramic vessels dating from AD10–70 in association with a quantity of cremated human bone, several sherds from other pottery vessels, up to 6 badly corroded copper alloy brooches and a cosmetic or medicinal set comprising a copper alloy mortar and pestle. The pit is thought to have contained the remains of two interments.</p> <p>Details of the proposed development and its below-ground impacts were not available at the time of writing but it is considered that further archaeological remains are likely to exist on the site and it is proposed that there should be further archaeological mitigation in areas of proposed impact, perhaps particularly within the southern part of the site.</p> <p>Natural London Clay was recorded at between 11.11m OD and 12.42m OD.</p>
Project dates	Start: 28-10-2009 End: 02-11-2009
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	SWB09 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	4026 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 14 - Recreational usage
Monument type	CREMATION BURIAL Late Iron Age
Significant Finds	POTTERY Late Iron Age
Significant Finds	METALWORK Late Iron Age

Methods & techniques	'Sample Trenches'
Development type	Public building (e.g. school, church, hospital, medical centre, law courts etc.)
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

#### **Project location**

Country	England
Site location	KENT SWALE LEYSDOWN Warden Bay
Postcode	ME12 4
Study area	0.30 Hectares
Site coordinates	TR 602510 170651 50.8935483132 1.701325754410 50 53 36 N 001 42 04 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 11.11m Max: 12.42m

#### **Project creators**

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South East
Project brief originator	Kent County Council
Project design originator	Kent County Council
Project director/manager	Jon Sygrave
Project supervisor	Alice Thorne
Type of sponsor/funding body	County Council
Name of sponsor/funding body	Kent County Council Property Group

#### **Project archives**

Physical Archive recipient	Local Museum
Physical Contents	'Ceramics','Human Bones','Metal'
Digital Archive	Local Museum

recipient	
Digital Contents	'other'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography'
Paper Archive recipient	Local Museum
Paper Contents	'Ceramics','Human Bones','Metal','Stratigraphic','other'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Diary','Drawing','Map','Notebook - Excavation','Research','General Notes','Photograph','Plan','Report','Section'

---

**Project bibliography 1**

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	An Archaeological Evaluation at a proposed Children's Centre Site, Leysdown Road, Warden Bay
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Thorne, A
Other bibliographic details	2009177
Date	2009
Issuer or publisher	Archaeology South - East
Place of issue or publication	Archaeology South- East
Description	Grey Literature Report
Entered by	alice thorne (tcrnath@ucl.ac.uk)
Entered on	19 November 2009





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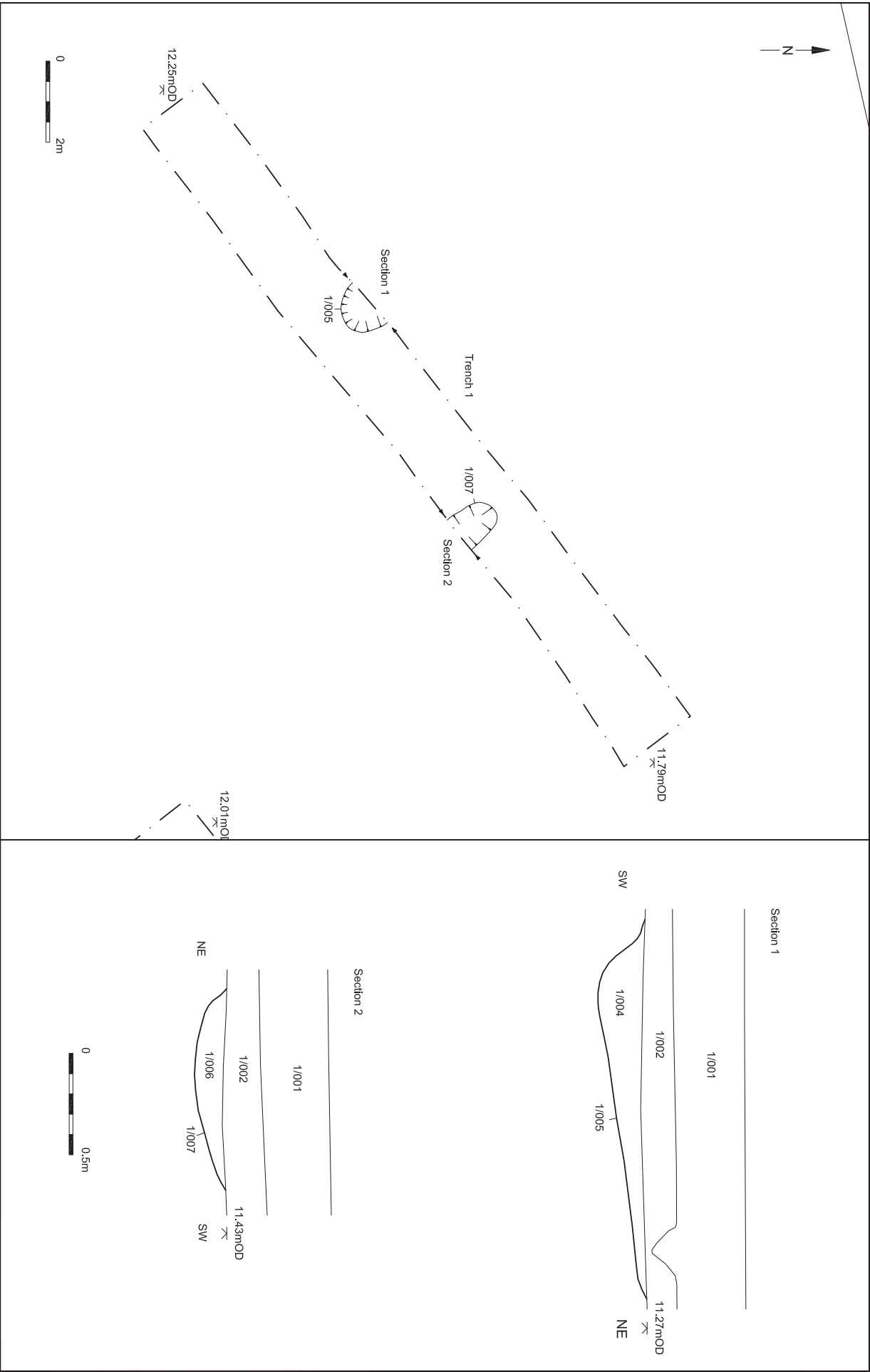
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Warden Bay, Isle of Sheppey

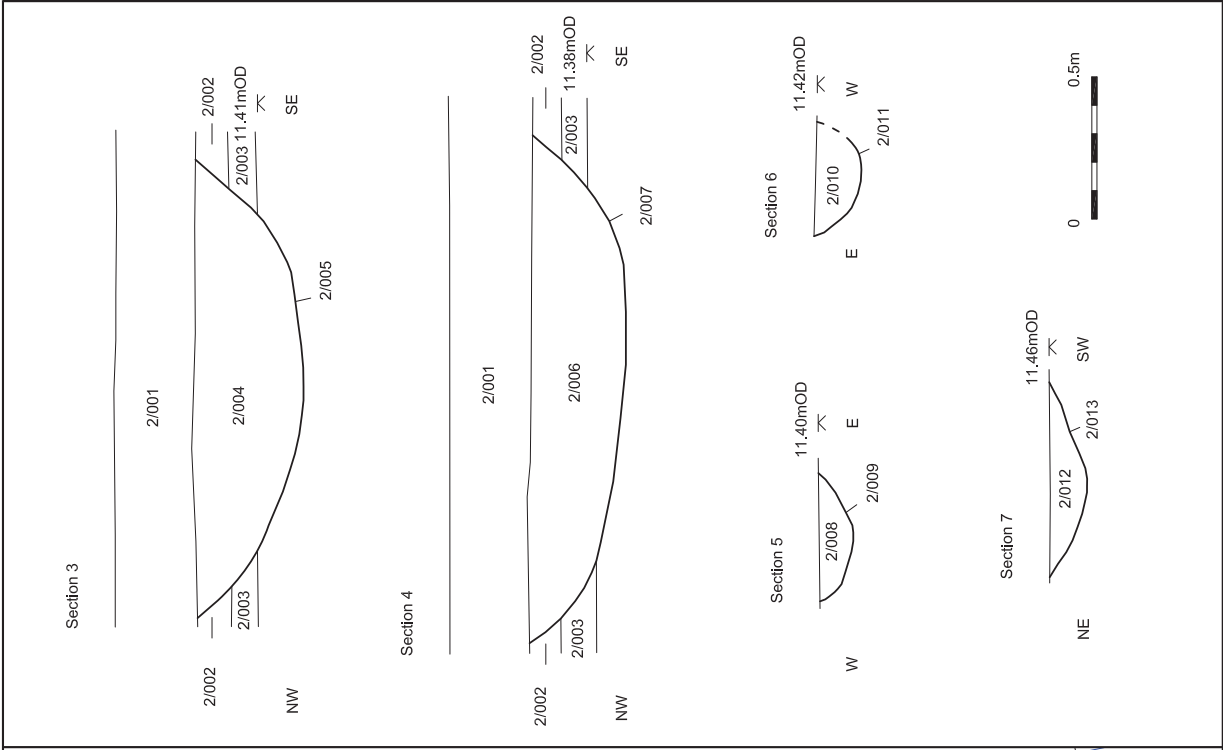
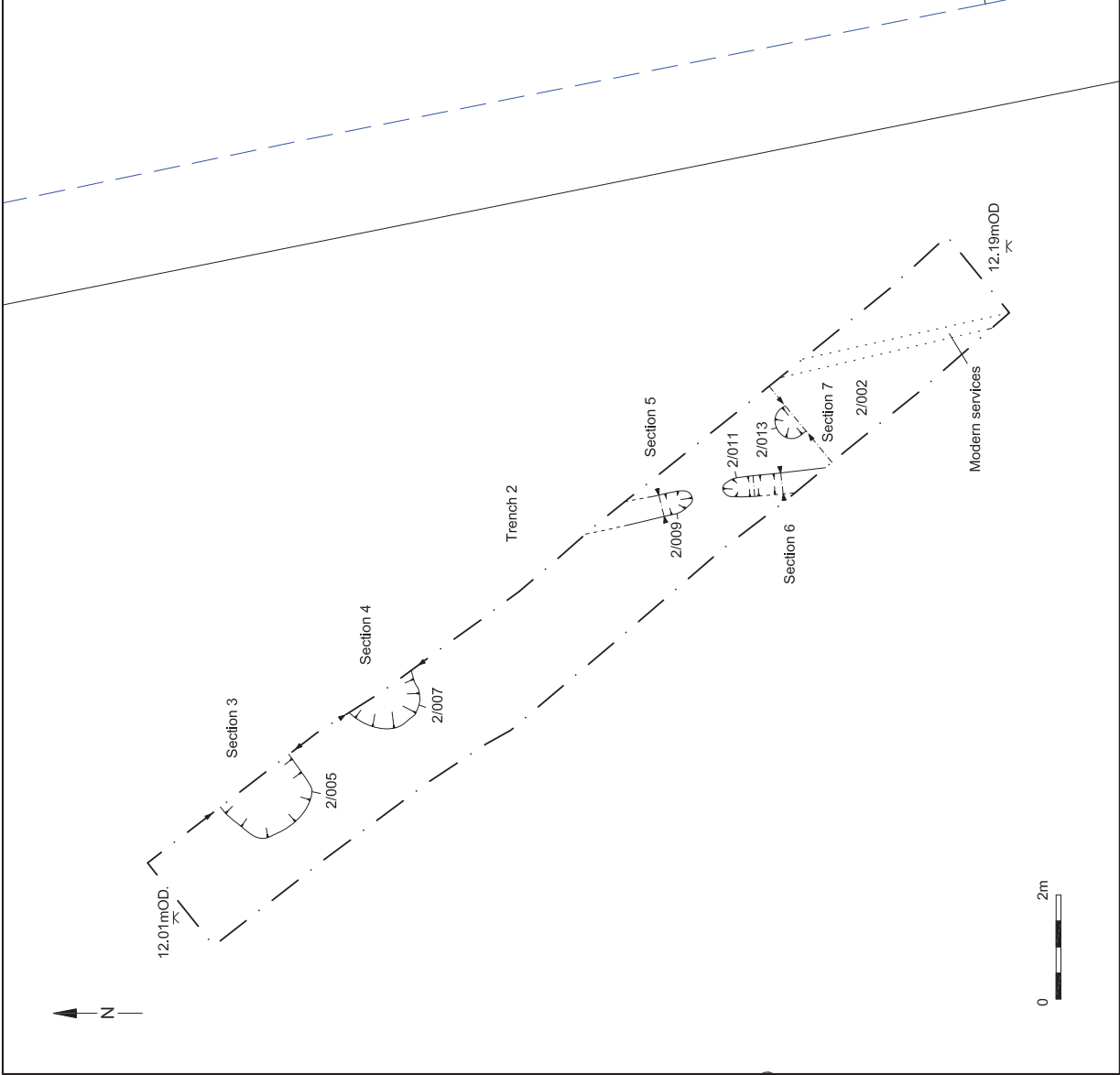
Site location

Fig. 1



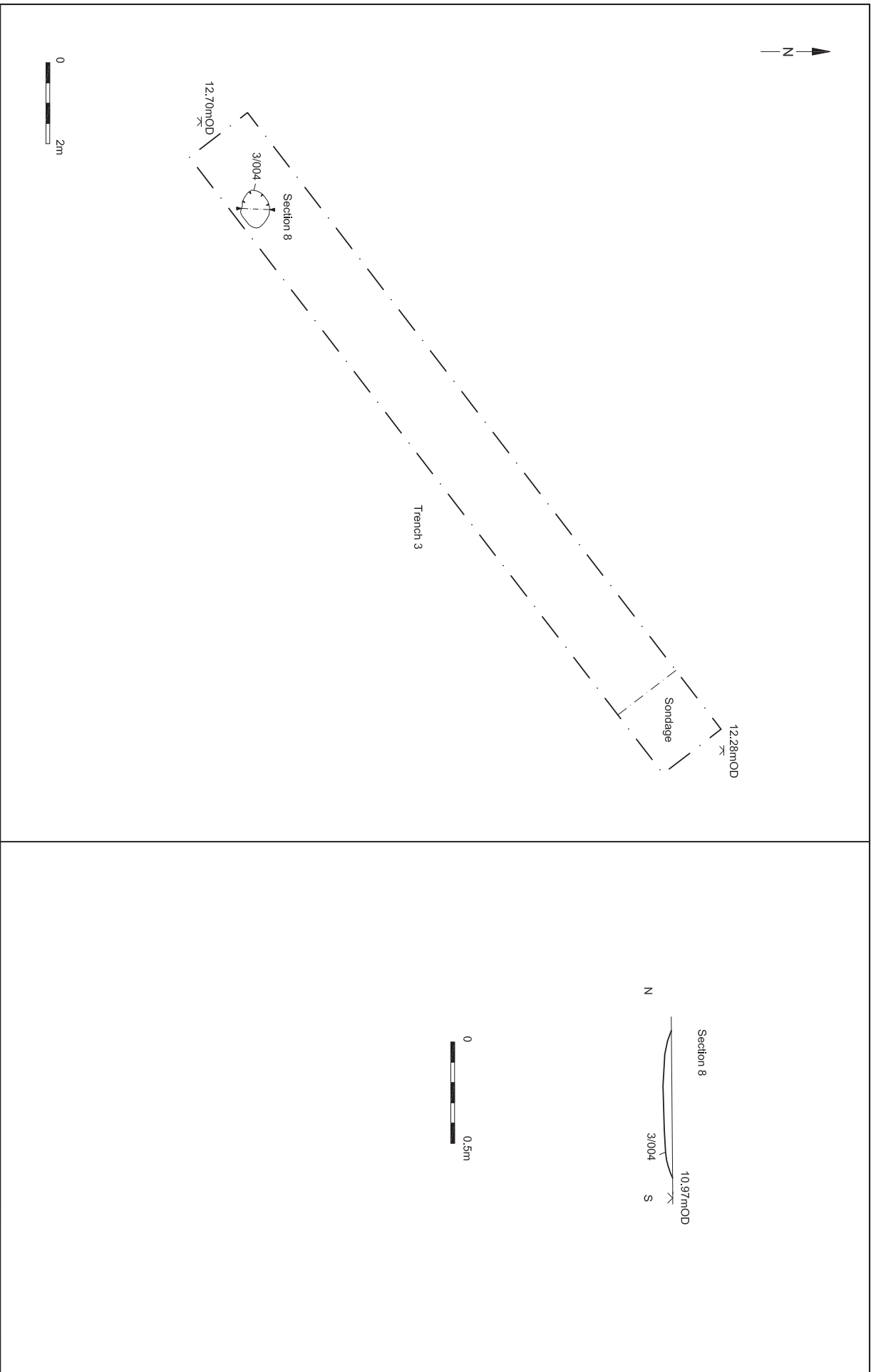


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Report Ref: 2009177	Drawn by: JLR	Trench 1: Plan and sections	

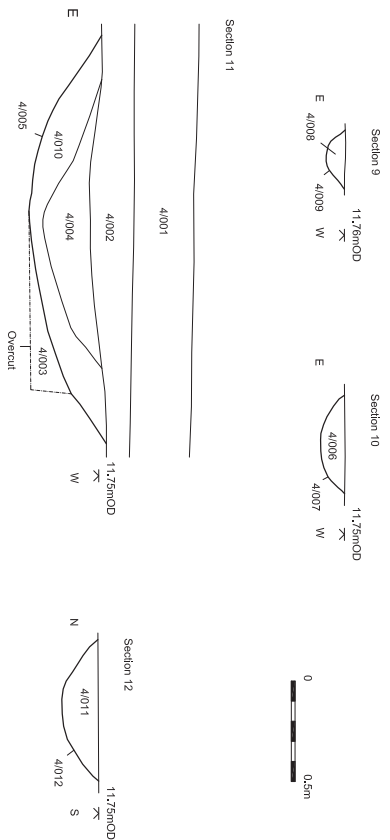
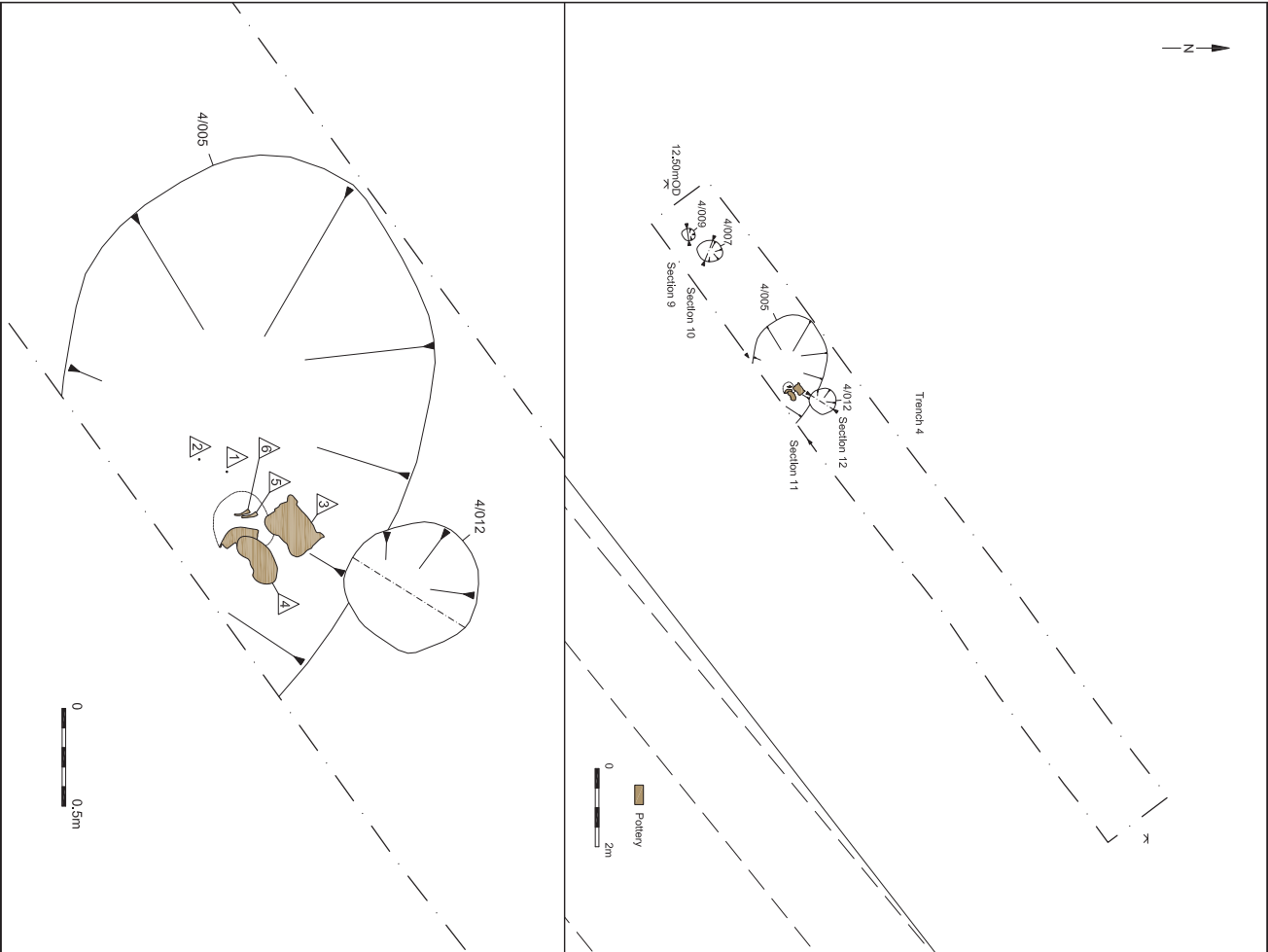


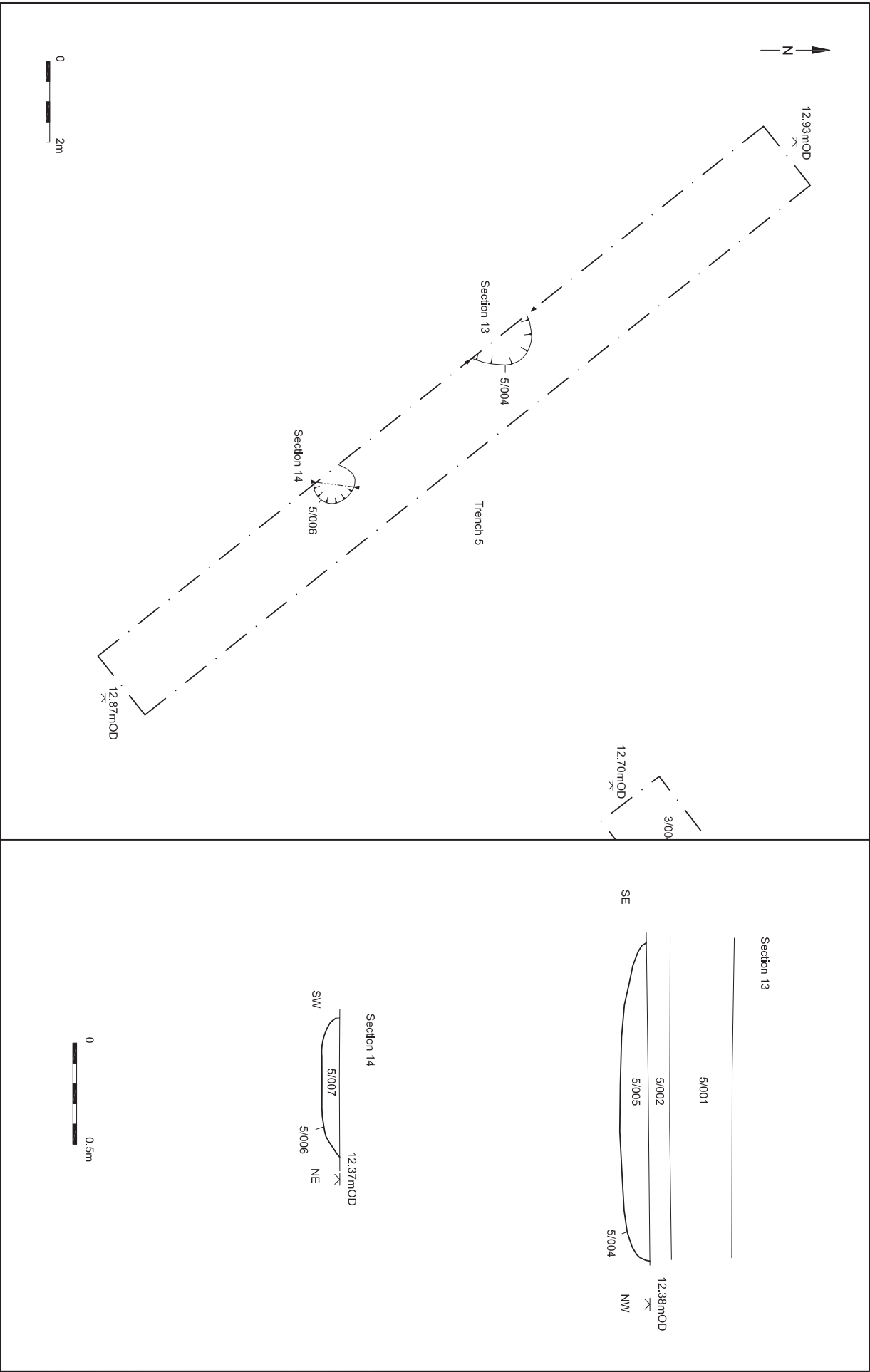
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Report Ref: 2009177	Drawn by: JLR		

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