

The Old Forge, Island Road, Sturry, Kent CT2 0EZ

Archaeological evaluation report

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ABSTRACT

On 28 January 2016, Canterbury Archaeological Trust undertook an archaeological evaluation of land at The Old Forge, Island Road, Sturry. Two trenches were machine cut. Trench 1 was 8m long, 0.82m wide and cut to a depth of 0.96m. Trench 2 was initially 5.25m long, 0.82m wide and cut to a depth of 0.78m. After cutting, recording and backfilling, Trench 2 was extended by a further distance of 2.08m to meet the southern edge of Trench 1.

No features of archaeological significance were identified. Natural ground was observed in Trench 2. In Trench 1, however, a large backfilled feature, probably a quarry pit, covered the entire area of the trench. Part of the southern edge of this feature was observed at the northern, extended end of Trench 2.

In the main body of Trench 2, natural ground was cut by an early modern post-hole. Overlying were horizontal deposits probably associated with landscaping the upper levels of the quarry and the surrounding ground. The landscaping may have been related to the construction and/or occupation of the nineteenth-century property standing on the southern side of the PDA.

Topsoil and turf capped both trenches.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 On 28 January 2016, Canterbury Archaeological Trust undertook an archaeological evaluation of land at The Old Forge, Island Road, Sturry, Kent, CT2 0EZ. The evaluation was commissioned and funded by Mr Stewart Gough following a planning application (CA/15/02357) to demolish existing derelict outbuildings and a garage and to form a new replacement workshop and garage to the rear garden area.
- 1.2 The planning application was granted consent with a condition (3) attached, stating that:

Prior to the commencement of development, the following components of a scheme for the archaeological evaluation of the site, to be undertaken for the purpose of determining the presence or absence of any buried archaeological features and deposits and to assess the importance of the same, shall each be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority:

- a) A written scheme of investigation, to be submitted a minimum of fourteen days in advance of the commencement of fieldwork.*
- b) A report summarising the results of the investigations, to be produced on the completion of fieldwork, in accordance with the requirements set out in the written scheme of investigation.*
- c) Any further mitigation measures considered necessary as a result of the archaeological investigations, to ensure preservation in situ of important archaeological remains and/or further archaeological investigation and recording in accordance with a specification and timetable which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.*
- d) If necessary, a programme of post-excavation assessment, analysis, publication and conservation.*

Fieldwork, including further mitigation works and post-excavation work shall be completed in accordance with the approved details and programme timings unless otherwise agreed in writing with the local authority, and the local authority shall be notified in writing a minimum of fourteen days in advance of the commencement of any fieldwork.

REASON: Pursuant to Articles 35 (1) and (2) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure)(England) Order 2015, the local planning authority is satisfied that the requirements of this condition (including the timing of compliance) are so fundamental to the development permitted that, if not imposed, it would have been necessary to refuse permission for the development. This is because, at the time of granting permission, full archaeological details were not yet available but this information is necessary to ensure the development complies with Canterbury District Local Plan 2006 Policy BE15 and Draft Canterbury District Local Plan 2014 Policy HE11 and otherwise to protect the environment of the site and its locality.

2. LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

- 2.1 The proposed development area (PDA) is located at The Old Forge, Island Road, Sturry, Kent (NGR 619488 161554 centred), situated between Sturry and Hersden. The site lies on the north side of, and fronting onto, the A28 Island Road. The PDA is

bounded to the north and west by an area of scrubland and Spires Academy (formerly Montgomery School) and to the north-east by the neighbouring residential property, Fourwents Cottage.

- 2.2 Situated within the curtilage of The Old Forge, the PDA comprises existing outbuildings and a relatively flat grassed plot of ground covering a total area of c 236m² and lying at a height of c 37.4m OD (Fig. 1, Plates 1 and 2). The proposed development is to lie towards the western side of the plot.
- 2.3 The PDA is situated on the shoulder of the north side of the Stour Valley. The underlying geology is mapped as London Clay formation overlain by Head deposits of gravel, sand, silt and clay (British Geological Survey 1:50,000 digital map, accessed 5 January 2016).

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 A programme of archaeological evaluation was carried out to determine whether any significant archaeological remains survive within the PDA and, if so, to assess the potential impact of the proposed development on buried archaeological features and deposits. The main objectives were to: establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains across the PDA; ascertain the extent, depth below existing, depth of deposit, character, date and quality of any such remains without materially damaging intact deposits; and gauge the state of preservation and importance of the archaeological resource if present.
- 3.2 If archaeological remains could potentially be affected by subsequent development, the work would also identify what mitigation measures would be appropriate.

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 All archaeological work was undertaken according to a Written Scheme of Investigation, prepared by Canterbury Archaeological Trust in January 2016 and submitted to the client. It was carried out in accordance with the accepted professional standards set out in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and guidance for archaeological evaluation*. Canterbury Archaeological Trust is a registered organisation with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists and conforms to their by-laws, standards and policy statements.
- 4.2 The evaluation comprised the machine cutting of two trenches on the western side of the PDA (Fig. 1). Trench 1, aligned north-east to south-west, was 8m long, 0.82m wide and cut to a depth of 0.96m. It was originally intended that Trench 1 would lie further to the west and extend into the far north-west corner of the PDA, but the position of a tank/soakaway in this corner meant that Trench 1 had to be relocated slightly to the east. Trench 2, aligned north-west to south-east, was initially 5.25m long, 0.82m wide and cut to a depth of 0.78m. After cutting, recording and backfilling, Trench 2 was extended by a further distance of 2.08m to meet the southern edge of Trench 1, in order to determine the edge of a large feature observed in Trench 1. The total initial evaluation area was 10.86m², representing a 4.6% sample of the entire PDA, extending to 5.3% following the lengthening of Trench 2.

- 4.3 The trenches were cut using a mechanical excavator fitted with a 0.8m wide flat-bladed ditching bucket, working under constant archaeological supervision. Trench 2 was cut to reveal the natural ground. Trench 1 was cut to a depth of 0.96m but no natural ground was observed.
- 4.4 Following machine clearance of topsoil and overburden, features and deposits were mapped but no sample excavation was undertaken.
- 4.5 Archaeological recording of the cut trenches was undertaken using Canterbury Archaeological Trust *pro forma* context and trench recording sheets. Measured plan and section drawings were compiled and a photographic record was maintained using digital format. The complete archive relating to the excavation is currently held by Canterbury Archaeological Trust.

5. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 5.1 The archaeological potential is based on the proximity of archaeological remains presently recorded in the HER.
- 5.2 During the post-medieval period, several sand and gravel quarries were excavated in the area around Sturry, Fordwich and Hersden. Throughout the course of these works numerous flint artefacts dating to the Lower Palaeolithic period came to light. These included discoveries made close to the PDA, at Stonerocks gravel pit (HER No. TR 16 SE 244) and in the area around the former Butts public house at Westbere (HER Nos. TR 16 SE 249 and TR 16 SE 250).
- 5.3 The PDA lies immediately north of the A28 Island Road which follows the line of the road which connected Roman Canterbury (*Durovernum Cantiacorum*) with the Isle of Thanet. Roadside locations situated outside the Roman town are known to be favoured places for burial during the Roman period, and such discoveries have been made both to the north and south of the present road in this locality. One nearby example is the probable Roman cremation cemetery discovered at Summer Hill, Westbere (HER No. TR 16 SE 62).
- 5.4 The site of an Anglo-Saxon cremation and inhumation cemetery lies to the east of the PDA, near Bushy Close Wood (HER No. TR 16 SE 12).
- 5.5 The Old Forge is a late nineteenth-century building, situated within a local Conservation Area. Surviving elements of post-medieval farmsteads are recorded at Little Bredlands Farm (HER No. MKE86408) and Bredlands Farm (HER No. MKE86407), both situated to the north of the PDA. At Bredlands Farm, the farmhouse is a Grade II listed eighteenth-century building (HER No. TR 16 SE 138), and the barn is a locally listed building (HER No. TR 16 140). Another farmstead, once situated to the west of the PDA, is now completely destroyed (HER No. MKE86409).
- 5.6 The cropmark of a First World War trench line is recorded to the north-west of the PDA (HER No. TR 16 SE 238).

6. EVALUATION RESULTS

Trench 1

(Figs 2 and 3, Plates 3 and 4)

- 6.1 Trench 1 was machine excavated to a depth of 0.96m (36.43m OD) to the south-west and 0.75m (36.64m OD) to the north-east. It contained a sequence of deposits ((100)–(103)) which are thought to have infilled the upper levels of a broad feature, the extent of which was not identified in Trench 1.
- 6.2 Water was seen within the base of the trench towards the south-west. This was initially taken to represent a perched water table, but it is possible that the water may instead have come from a tank/soakaway located in the north-west corner of the PDA.
- 6.3 At the base of the trench, a deposit of mid grey-brown clay (100) containing moderate medium rounded flint was observed¹. Where seen in section, deposit (100) was at least 0.23m thick.
- 6.4 Overlying deposit (100) towards the north-eastern end of the trench was a deposit of mid grey-brown clay (101), similar to deposit (100) but containing frequent rounded flint and occasional red brick fragments. Deposit (101) was seen to a depth of 0.30m but continued beyond the base of the trench. The material is thought to have lain within a depression in the surface of deposit (100) rather than within a cut.
- 6.5 In the north-eastern half of the trench, overlying deposit (101) and extending part way across underlying deposit (100) was a deposit of crushed chalk mixed with patches of mid grey clay (102). It lay up to 0.11m thick and is thought to represent a dump of material.
- 6.6 Overlying (102) and extending over the entire area of the trench was a deposit of yellow-grey-brown silty clay (103) containing moderate medium rounded flint, occasional large rounded flint and occasional fragments of red brick and white china plate. Deposit (103) was up to 0.68m thick.
- 6.7 Capping the trench was a 0.30m thick horizon of dark grey topsoil and turf (104), the surface of which lay at a height of 37.39m OD.

Trench 2

(Figs 2 and 3, Plates 5 and 6)

- 6.8 Trench 2 was machine excavated to a depth of up to 0.78m (36.62m OD) to the north-west and 0.70m (36.70m OD) to the south-east, revealing natural yellow-brown London Clay (200) extending across the base of the trench.
- 6.9 Cutting the natural clay at the north-western end of the trench, where it had been extended to the north to meet Trench 1, was the outer edge of the broad feature whose fills were observed in Trench 1. The cut [208] was seen crossing the width of the Trench 2 extension. The cut was not investigated in depth but from the surface it was seen to contain a fill of yellow-grey-brown silty clay (209) containing frequent

¹ Heights OD of deposits and features can be identified from the relevant section and plan drawings.

rounded flint. Overlying, seen in section, was a deposit of yellow-grey-brown silty clay (210), up to 0.40m thick, containing moderate rounded flint, and occasional fragments of brick, representing a continuation of deposit (103) seen in Trench 1.

- 6.10 Cutting the natural clay at the base of Trench 2 further to the south-east was a post-hole. The post-hole cut [202] was circular in plan, 0.26m in diameter and at least 0.20m deep, though the feature was not fully excavated. It contained a fill of mid grey gritty clay (201) containing degraded chalk lumps, occasional medium rounded flint and occasional large pieces of red brick.
- 6.11 Overlying post-hole [202] towards the south-eastern end of the trench was a deposit of mid brown-grey silty clay (203), up to 0.17m thick, containing occasional medium rounded flint.
- 6.12 Lying above (203) was a deposit of crushed chalk (204), up to 0.10m thick, which was confined to the south-eastern end of the trench. Overlying (204) was a deposit of mid grey silty clay (205), up to 0.30m thick, containing occasional medium rounded flint and occasional fragments of red brick, clear window glass and nineteenth-/twentieth-century glass bottle fragments. Deposit (205) covered most of the main body of Trench 2 which was investigated in full; the relationship between deposit (205) and feature [208] in the extension to the north was not observed.
- 6.13 Deposit (205) was overlain by a layer of mid orange-brown gritty silty clay (206), up to 0.23m thick, containing moderate rounded flint.
- 6.14 Capping Trench 2 was a 0.34m thick horizon of topsoil and turf (207), the surface of which lay at a height of 37.40m OD.

7. FINDS

- 7.1 No finds were retained from the evaluation work.

8. SUMMARY OF RESULTS

- 8.1 The lower deposits in Trench 1 ((100)–(103)) are thought to have represented the upper backfill layers of a large feature, part of the southern edge of which was visible in the extended northern end of Trench 2 (cut [208], fills (209), (210)). The large feature was probably a quarry pit. Several sand and gravel quarries are known to have been excavated in the area during the post-medieval period, such as those marked on nineteenth- and early twentieth-century maps close to Westbere (HER Nos TR 16 SE 62, TR 16 SE 84, TR 16 SE 85) c 300m to the south of the PDA. A number shown on the 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1898 lie beside Island Road, one gravel pit just c 460m distant from the PDA to the south-west and another c 450m away to the north-east. No quarries are shown within the area of the PDA but a small quarry, cut and backfilled within a relatively short space of time, may simply not have been depicted. Alternatively, the feature could predate known mapping of the area. The layers in Trench 1 may have represented final capping and landscaping of the quarry.
- 8.2 In Trench 2, post-hole [202], cutting natural ground, contained fragments of red brick. Overlying were layers ((203)–(206)) which may have been laid to landscape the upper levels of the quarry feature seen predominantly in Trench 1, as well as level the

surrounding ground. The landscaping may have been related to the construction and/or occupation of the late nineteenth-century property, The Old Forge, which stands on the southern side of the PDA.

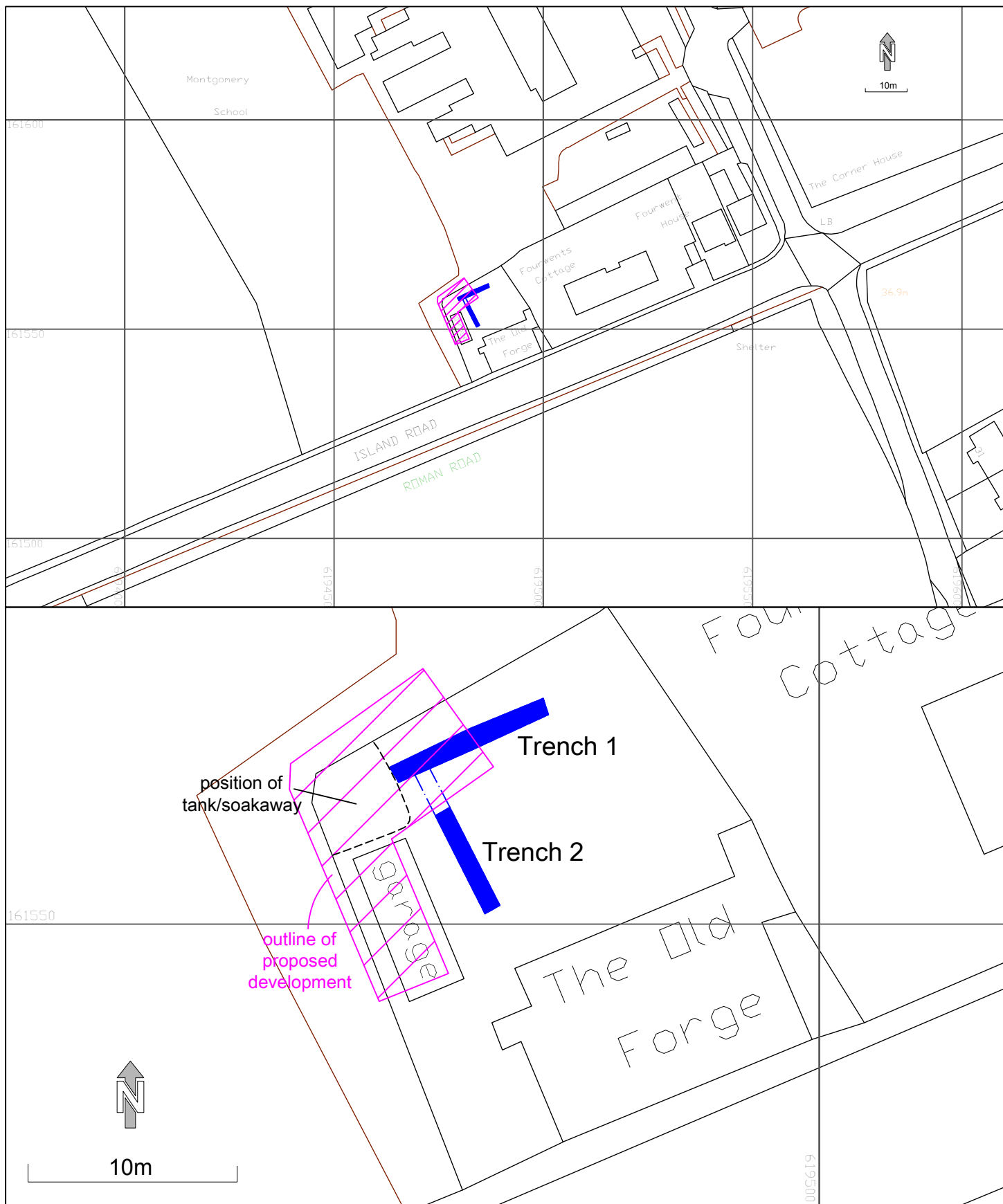
- 8.3 In each of the trenches, the sequence of deposits was overlain by topsoil and turf ((104) in Trench 1, (207) in Trench 2).

9. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 No remains of archaeological significance were identified during the evaluation work.
- 9.2 The construction work as proposed at The Old Forge is therefore considered unlikely to impact upon archaeological remains.

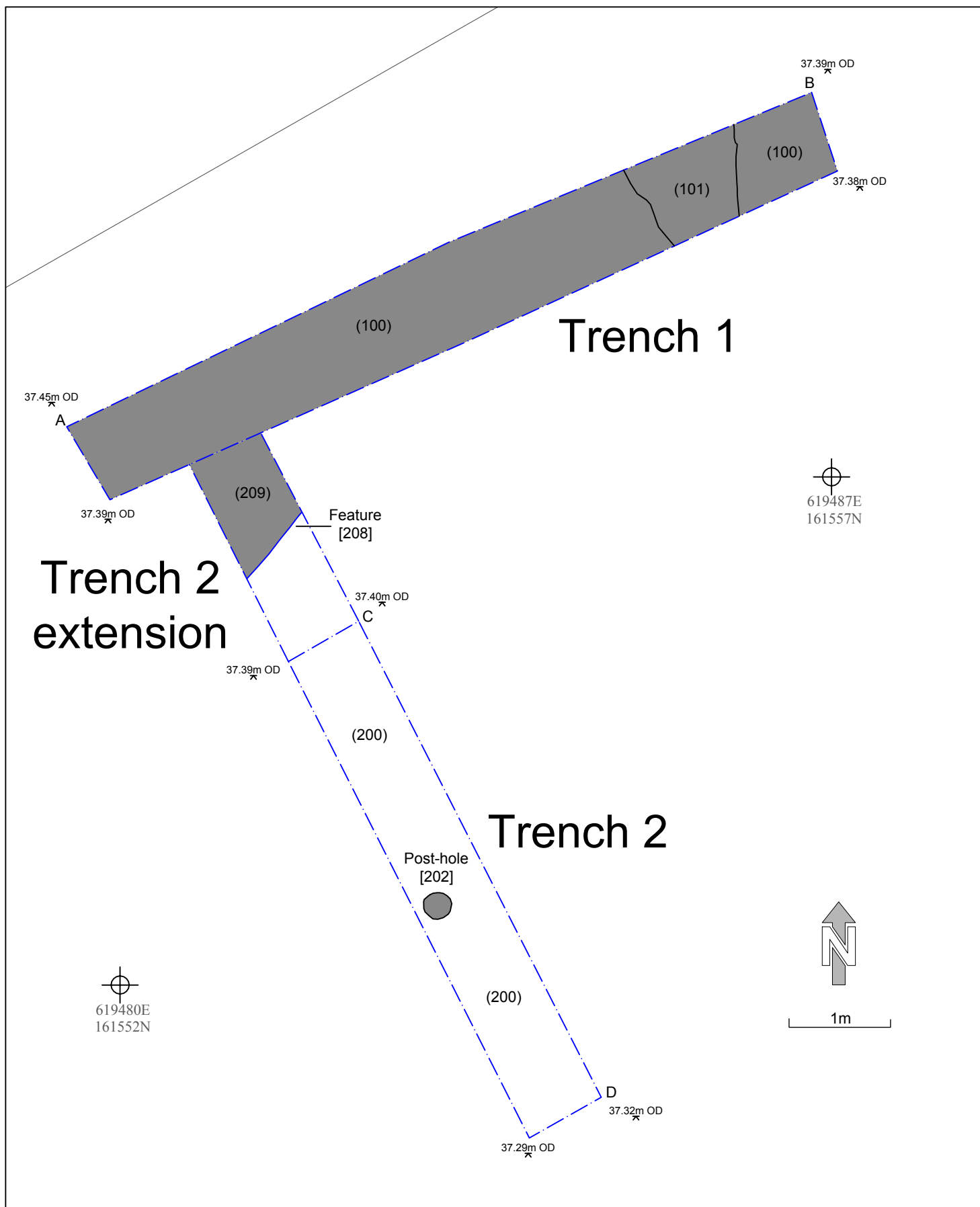
10. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

- 10.1 Thanks are extended to Mr Stewart Gough for funding the work. The fieldwork was undertaken by Tania Wilson.



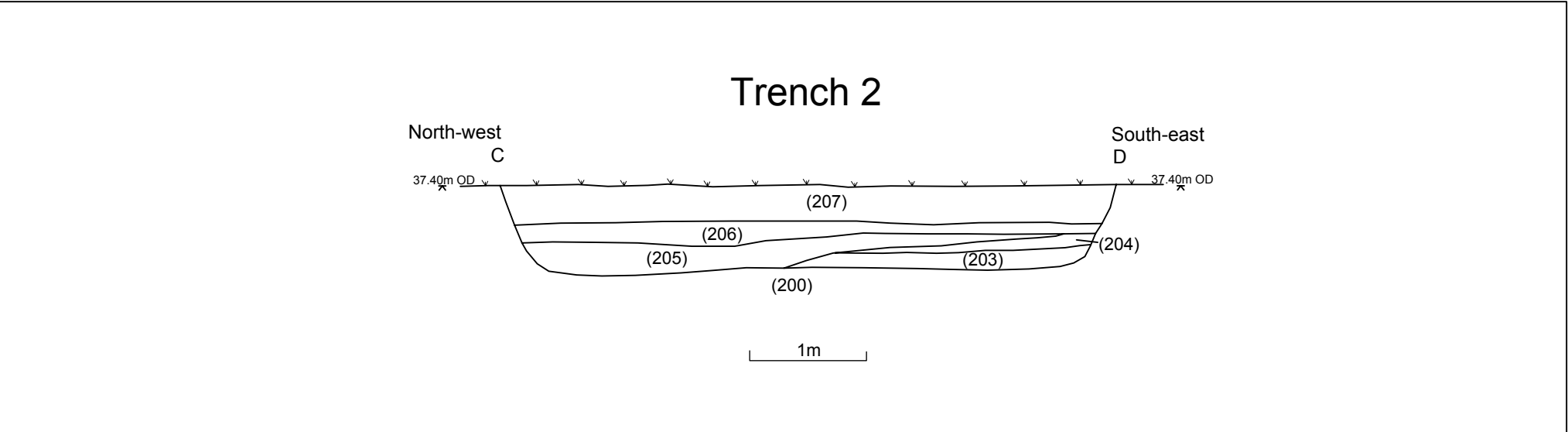
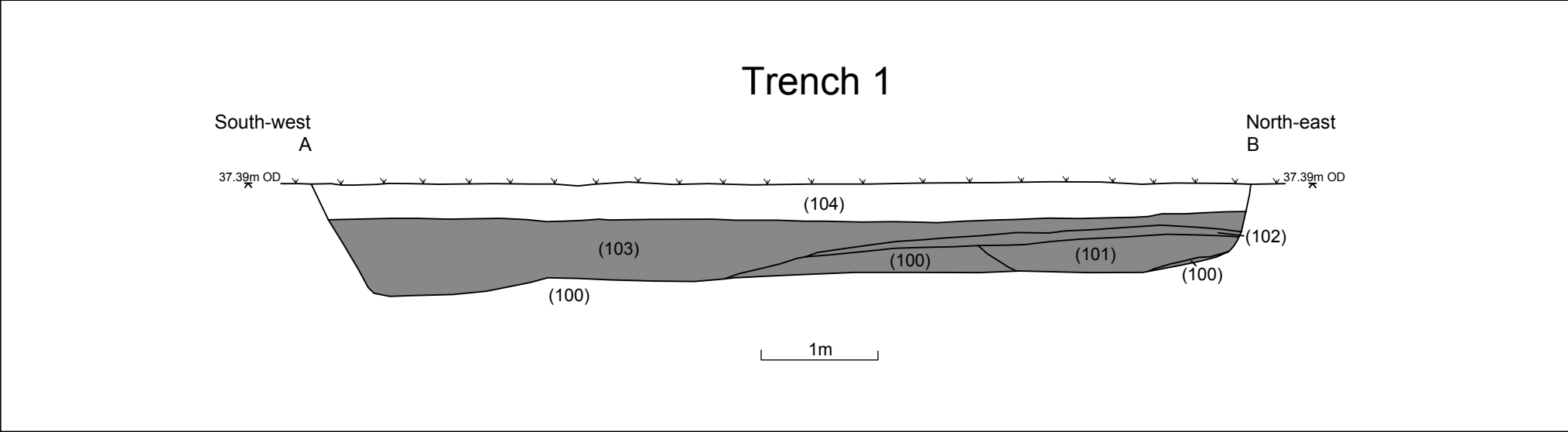
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	PROJECT CODE OFS-EV-16	DATE 01/02/16	LAST REVISION ----
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Figure 1: Site and trench location



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Figure 2: Site plan, Trenches 1 and 2



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Figure 3: Site sections, Trenches 1 and 2.



Plate 1. The development area looking north-west.



Plate 2. The development area looking south-east



Plate 3. Trench 1 looking south-west. Scale 1m.



Plate 4. The middle section of Trench 1 looking north-west. Scale 1m.



Plate 5. Trench 2 looking north-west. Scale 1m.



Plate 6. The extended northern end of Trench 2, where it met Trench 1 to the north (right), showing cut [208]. Looking south-west. Scale 1m.