

# Archaeological Evaluation of Land at the former HBC Engineering Site on Power Station Road, Minster, Sheppey, Kent



NGR: 593312 173487

Site Code: PSR/EV/16

(Planning Application: SW/15/50508025)

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# **Archaeological Evaluation of Land at the former HBC Engineering Site on Power Station Road, Minster, Sheppey, Kent**

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## **1. Summary**

*Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT) carried out an archaeological evaluation of land off Power Station Road, Sheppey in Kent. A Planning Application (SW/15/50508025) to develop this site for 142 dwellings and associated landscaping and other works to Swale Borough Council, whereby the Council requested that an Archaeological Evaluation be undertaken in order to determine the possible impact of the development on any archaeological remains. The work was carried out in accordance with the requirements set out within an Archaeological Specification (KCC Specification A, E and Manual Part B) and in discussion with the Principal Archaeological Heritage Officer, Kent County Council. The results of the excavation of 14 evaluation trenches revealed that archaeological features were present within the trenches dating from the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD. The natural geology of London Clay Formation was reached at an average depth of between 0.35m and 0.40m below the modern ground surface. The Archaeological Evaluation has been successful in fulfilling the primary aims and objectives of the Archaeological Specification.*

## **2. Introduction**

Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT) was commissioned by Persimmon Homes Ltd to carry out an archaeological evaluation at the above site. The work was carried out in accordance with the requirements set out within an Archaeological Specification (KCC 2016) and in discussion with Simon Mason, Principal Archaeological Heritage Officer, Kent County Council. The evaluation was carried out from the 10<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> August 2016.

## **3. Site Description and Topography**

The proposed development site is located to the north of Power Station Road on land formally occupied by the HBC Engineering Works and previously in part by the Sheerness Power Station. The former industrial buildings have been demolished leaving behind areas of concrete hard standing and tarmac drives and parking. The site is generally flat at about 4.30m to 5.00m OD.

The underlying geology is mapped as Bedrock Geology of London Clay Formation- Clay and Silt. The Superficial Geology is recorded to the north of the site as Alluvium, Clay, Silty, Peaty, Sandy deposits (BGS 2016). Recent geotechnical investigation results have been consulted. The geology revealed on site in the evaluation trenches was London Clay.

#### **4. Planning Background**

Swale Borough Council gave planning permission (SW/15/50508025) for development of land off Power Station Road on the former HBC Engineering Site, Minster, Sheppey in Kent.

The proposed development comprises the construction of 142 new houses throughout the site in two phases. In addition new estate roads, services and drainage including a substantial storage tank on the northern edge of the site are to be constructed.

On the advice of Simon Mason Principal Archaeological Officer (KCC) a programme of archaeological works in the form of an initial targeted archaeological evaluation plus a Watching Brief in areas of the development not subject to targeted trial trenching.

In addition where evaluation trenching has identified the need for further more detailed archaeological investigation to address the mitigation of the development impacts on archaeology a programme of Strip, Map and Sample or detailed excavation will be agreed and undertaken as appropriate ( KCC Site Specific Specifications A, B, C, D, E).

The results from this initial evaluation will be used to inform KCC Heritage and Swale Borough Council of any further archaeological mitigation measures that may be necessary in connection with the development proposals.

#### **5. Archaeological and Historical Background**

The application site lies within an area with known archaeology. To the south of the site on the residential development constructed by Wimpey Homes in the late 1990s a multi-period site was investigated by the Canterbury Archaeological Trust, the Kent Archaeological Rescue Unit and Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust found remains of Mesolithic, Neolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age, Anglo-Saxon and Medieval date (TQ 97 SW 140). In addition a Neolithic oven and pottery found closer to the site at Power Station Road (TQ 97 SW 146). Anglo-Saxon and Viking activity (TQ 97 SW 145) and a Medieval enclosure (TQ 97 SW 146). The early OS maps show an open marginal site on the very edge of the Minster marshes, a landscape unchanged to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The KCC specification shows that site development in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century was:

5.4 The early 20th century saw development of the western third of the site. A power station and tram depot (TQ 97 SW 1107) complex was built by the Sheerness and District Electric Power and Traction Co in 1902-3. The power station (at TQ 9315 7345) was situated immediately to the SE of the depot and is located within the western part of the site. It supplied domestic and industrial users and tramway power and there were timber cooling towers. The trams stopped running in 1917 and the depot became a bus depot. The power station continued generating as the Sheerness and District Electricity Supply Co until it was absorbed

into the BET Electricity Supply Co in 1937. It is thought to have closed upon nationalisation in 1947.

5.5 The eastern areas of the site remained undeveloped until the 1970s when the engineering works appears to have been constructed in the north and which gradually expanded over much of the northern and central part of the site.

## **6. Aims and Objectives**

According the KCC Archaeological Specification, the specific aims and objectives for the archaeological work were to ensure that:

6.1 The evaluation phase of the programme is to determine the potential for archaeological remains to be present within the area of proposed development groundwork and how they would be affected by such works. From that the aim is to develop and agree an appropriate programme of archaeological mitigation works. Specific research questions that should be examined are:

6.2 Whether the multi-period remains seen on the site to the south extend into the present site and if so what is the nature of such remains and their character? What does the archaeology of the site tell us about the ancient landscape and the use and exploitation of the marginal lands on the edge of the Minster Marshes? Are there any remains of industrial interest associated with the power station or tram depot present on the site?

6.3 The watching brief and any agreed detailed investigation will aim to create an appropriately detailed record of the archaeology of the site that will contribute to a better understanding of the archaeology and history of the Isle of Sheppey (KCC 2016: 6).

## **7. Methodology**

The KCC Archaeological Specification called for an evaluation by trial trenching comprising:

‘1 Trench located in Phase 1 Area B (see Part E Figure 5) targeted at an area not previously occupied by works buildings (SWAT Trench 4).

3 Trenches located in phase 1 Area A (see Part E Figure 5) targeted at areas that have been previously undeveloped (SWAT Trenches 1, 2, 3)

14 trenches located in phase 1 Area A (see Part E Figure 5) targeted at former car park (5 trenches), hard standing (2 trenches) and grassed areas (7 trenches) - SWAT Trenches 5, 6, 7, 8. 9. 10. 11, 12, 13, 14- and additional 3 trenches currently under contaminated spoil heaps’.

A 14.5 ton 360° tracked mechanical excavator with a flat-bladed ditching bucket was used to remove the topsoil and subsoil to expose the natural geology and/or the archaeological horizon.

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with the KCC specifications. A single context recording system was used to record the deposits, and context recording numbers were assigned to all deposits for recording purposes. These are used in the report and shown in **bold**. All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with KCC, SWAT and ClfA standards and guidance.

## 8. Monitoring

Curatorial monitoring was available from Simon Mason KCC during the course of the evaluation.

## 9. Results

The evaluation has identified a number of archaeological features within the 14 trenches (Figure 2).

### Trench 1

Trenches 1 to 4 were located in 'Area B', a previously developed part of the proposed development site that had had a building situated on it; this was demolished prior to the commencement of archaeological works.

The plan is recorded in Figure 3. The trench (Plate 1) was situated to the S edge of the site and ran parallel to Power Station Road, approximately E to W. This and the three other trenches in the area were sealed by a blackened surface layer (**100**) containing several modern inclusions such as brick and glass, which were remnants of the demolition of the building. The depth of this layer varied from 0.19m to 0.37m. The secondary layer (**101**) was clay approximately 0.10m-0.15m thick and ranging from a blackish grey to a greyish brown in colour; again this was severely contaminated by the previous development of the site. The undisturbed natural level was orangey brown London clay (**104**) at a depth of approximately 0.52m below the present ground surface at 5.09mOD at the E end of the trench.

One potential feature [**103**] (Plate 28) was identified in this trench, with a width of approximately 0.60m. The fill (**102**) was a very compact greyish beige clay; it was excavated and sampled but only some brittle fragments of seashell with a width and length ranging from approximately 0.5mm-0.01m were recovered. Following the flotation and examination of the sample, it was discovered that the 100ml flot was dominated primarily by uncharred (modern) root/rhizome fragments and moderate quantities of charcoal (<4mm – too small to identify with confidence). Minimal quantities of magnetic

material was observed in the residue. None of these fragments appeared to be hammerscale. One small piece of animal bone, 50ml of unburnt flint and 50ml of burnt flint were also recovered<sup>1</sup>.

## Trench 2

The plan is recorded in Figures 1 and 2. The trench (Plate 2) was located almost parallel and to the N of trench 1, running E to W close to the E edge of the area. It was sealed by **(200)**; this was the same context as **(100)** and had an approximate depth of 0.18-0.32m. The secondary layer **(201)** was the same clay as **(101)**, again varying in depth between 0.10m and 0.15m. The undisturbed natural geology was London clay **(203)** and was the same context as **(104)**.

A possible feature weathered out between day 1 and day 2 of the evaluation. It was suggestive of a prehistoric ditch, so a sondage was monitored through it to investigate; no finds were recovered. It was concluded that it was probably more of a greyish brown lens **(202)** that did not continue into trench 3.

Unfortunately this trench could not be extended beyond approximately 16.00m due to encountering former services, and the secondary clay layer was very wet, risking waterlogging the remainder of the trench.

## Trench 3

The plan is seen in Figures 1 and 2. The trench (Plate 3) was located N of trench 2 at the E edge of Area B, running NE to SW. The surface layer **(300)** had a depth of between 0.20-0.35m and was the same context as **(100)** and **(200)**, the secondary blackish grey clay layer **(301)** was again the same context as **(101)** and **(201)**, again varying in depth between 0.10m and 0.15m. The undisturbed natural London clay **(302)** was the same as **(104)** and **(203)**. No features were identified. Positioning had to be altered from the trench plan due to the premature reduction of levels by the groundworkers, who had piled their spoil on the original site of the trench.

## Trench 4

Located at the W edge of Area B shown in Figures 1 and 2, trench 4 ran NE to SW and was the worst contaminated of the trenches. It was sealed by the blackened surface layer **(400)**, the same context as **(100)**, **(200)** and **(300)**, again varying in depth between 0.19-0.31m. Below was the blackish grey clay **(401)**, the same context as **(101)**, **(201)** and **(301)** and with a depth between 0.15m and 0.25m. Once again the undisturbed natural London clay **(402)** was identified, but was a darker orangey brown

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<sup>1</sup> *Pers.comm.*, L. Gray, 1/9/16; 'Archaeobotanical Assessment for one sample from an evaluation of Power Station Road' report in prep



and contained some discolouration. This trench appears to have been placed in an area where development was more intensive and therefore penetrated further into the natural level than where the other trenches here were situated.

No features were identified in this trench.

## **Trench 5**

The plan is recorded in Figure 4 and the section in Figure 10 (Section 6). The trench (Plate 4) was situated parallel to the E edge of Area A. It and four other trenches were located in a former car park that was still covered with tarmac. This and the concrete beneath formed context **(501)** and had a varying depth across the area at approximately 0.30m-0.40m. Beneath this was a layer of modern beige coloured sandy gravel **(502)** that was between 0.20m-0.25m thick. This sealed a discontinuous layer of blackish grey clay **(507)** approximately 0.10m-0.15m in depth that seemed to have been contaminated by the modern level and was probably the same context as **(101)**, **(201)**, **(301)** and **(401)**. The undisturbed natural London clay **(508)** was identified at approximately 0.75-1.19m below the present ground surface at 4.91mOD.

One long linear feature **[506]** was identified (Plate 15), approximately 16.50m in length, that crossed the trench at a diagonal and disappeared into the W section; it seemed to reappear at the most E corner of trench 6. The cut had a width of approximately 1.60m and a slightly concave base (Section 11). Finds recovered from its moderately compact, mottled grey, slightly silty clay fill **(505)** were pottery dated to the Late Iron Age (c. 25BC or earlier), oyster shell, CBM and bone; this feature had a maximum depth of 0.28. It was truncated by a later ditch **[504]** (Plate 14), running from the E to the W of the trench. It had a width of 1.00m and a concave base (Sections 13 and 14), and the fill **(503)** was a firm mottled mid to dark grey clay fill with a maximum depth of 0.25m, from which oyster shell and pottery dated possibly to the Early Roman period (c.100-150AD) was recovered.

This trench and the others in the car park area were machined significantly wider than the ditching bucket; this was due to the way in which the tarmac and concrete broke up during the machining process, and was considered safer for excavation purposes.

## **Trench 6**

The plan is recorded in Figure 5 and the section in Figure 10 (Section 8). This trench (Plate 5) was located to the S of the area and ran parallel to the road E to W. It was structured in the same way as trench 5 – **(501)** a tarmac and concrete level atop **(502)** a modern gravel, beneath which was found a discontinuous blackish grey clay **(507)** and then the natural London clay **(508)** at a maximum of approximately 0.75m below the present ground surface at 5.46mOD.

The trench was mostly barren except for the E end, where a feature cut diagonally through. It was excavated and numbered **[607]** (Plate 18); it had a slightly sloped and undulated profile (Section 21) and a maximum depth of 0.50m. It was possibly the continuation of linear **[506]**. It contained two fills; a moderate to firm compaction dark grey silty clay (**605**) which contained oyster shell, bone and pot dated to the Late Iron Age (c.0-50AD), and a moderately compact greenish grey silty clay (**606**) which also contained pottery that in turn was dated to the Early Roman Period (c.125-150BC). It is expected that (**605**) is the same as (**505**).

Two smaller possible pits **[602]** (Plate 16) and **[604]** (Plate 17) were also identified. Each contained only one fill, possibly contemporary as they were the same firm, mottled greyish brown slightly silty clay, and both had a depth of 0.09m; no finds were recovered. Each had a very slightly concave profile (Sections 17 and 19). It is possible they were natural deposits. A sondage through the W end of the trench revealed nothing else of archaeological interest.

### **Trench 7**

The plan is recorded in Figure 4 and the section in Figure 10 (Section 10). Trench 7 (Plate 6) was situated less than 3.00m from trench 5 and ran NE to SW centrally across the tarmac. It was structured in the same way as trenches 5 and 6 with a tarmac and concrete top layer (**501**), modern gravel (**502**), blackish grey discontinuous clay (**507**) and then the natural orangey brown London clay (**508**), identified at a maximum of approximately 1.20m below the present surface level at 5.12mOD.

The trench was extended past the standard 20m length in order to see if feature **[504]** in trench 5 continued across the area; it did not. Only two potential features were identified – one to the most SW end, and one to the most NE. The 'feature' to the SW was in fact a clay band in the natural geology – this type of 'feature' was seen across the site in other trenches – and no finds were recovered from it.

The second identified feature was an irregularly shaped cut **[702]** (Plate 19) with an undulating base and a maximum depth of 0.21m (Section 15). Its fill (**701**) was a moderately compact mottled light grey clay which produced pottery dated to the Early Roman Period (c.100-150BC).

### **Trench 8**

The plan is recorded in Figure 2 and the section in Figure 11 (Section 23). Aligned to a diagonal NW to SE position from Power Station Road on the W side of the car park area, trench 8 (Plate 7) was completely barren. No surface finds were recovered and the trench consisted of the same four layers that constituted the remaining four trenches located in the tarmacked part of the site (**501**, **502**, **507**). The natural geology (**508**) was recorded at a depth of approximately 1.20m below present ground level at 5.48mOD. No further excavation was required.

## Trench 9

The plan is recorded in Figure 6 and the section in Figure 11 (Section 24). Close in proximity to trenches 5 and 7, trench 9 (Plate 8) had an ENE to WSW alignment to the N edge of the tarmacked part of Area A. The ENE end of the trench was cut through a part of the grassy area to the N of the former car park as well as the tarmac; through the subsoil of this part of the trench ran a clay water pipe which was no longer in use and was in fact blocked up with soil. It was removed during the machining process.

The rest of the trench through the tarmac area constituted the same four levels at the same approximate depths as the other trenches nearby (**501**, **502**, **507**) and the natural geology (**508**) was identified at a maximum of 1.50m below present ground surface at 5.19mOD. Two potential archaeological features were discovered; one towards the WSW end and the second in the centre of the trench.

The latter was a natural clay band akin to that found in trench 7 (and perhaps the same type of deposit that was excavated as contexts (**601**) and (**603**) in trench 6). The second feature [**903**] (Plate 20) had a very concave profile with a maximum depth of approximately 0.28m (Sections 26 and 27). It had two fills; from the upper fill – a moderately compact mottled dark grey silty clay (**901**) – were recovered a piece of ironwork, some bone, and pot which was dated to the Early Roman Period but deemed to be residual. The lower fill (**902**) – a soft yellowy brown clay containing some manganese flecking – yielded daub fragments along with oyster shell.

This linear truncated an earlier feature that could have either been a very shallow pit, a linear terminus (which it has been recorded as) or simply an area of trample. It was recorded as cut [**905**] and had a very shallow concave base (Section 26). It had two fills (**904**) and (**906**), which resembled fills (**901**) and (**902**) respectively in texture and colour. This feature did not, however, contain any finds.

## Trench 10

The plan is recorded in Figure 7 and the section in Figure 11 (Section 46). Trench 10 (Plate 9) was aligned NNW to SSE and located to the W of Area A. It was the first trench to be entirely cut through topsoil and subsoil instead of tarmac. The topsoil (**1000**) was loose and mid to dark brown with a depth of approximately 0.25m, whilst the subsoil (**1001**) was loose and light to mid brown. It was approximately 0.35m deep along the trench. Both the topsoil and subsoil contained modern inclusions such as glass bottles and brick, and were consistent throughout the remaining trenches 11-14. The natural geology was a light orangey brown clayey silt that was identified at 0.60m below the surface level at 4.98mOD.

The trench was shallower than those in the car park, and the natural level was significantly siltier than that in trenches 1-9. This was consistent in trenches 11-14 as well. Several large pit-like features

were identified during the machining process, as well as a very blackened area that took up the whole SSE third of the trench. Initially it was intended to use a machine to place a sondage in this fill, but after two shallow scrapes with the bucket several pieces of oyster shell and some pot was revealed. It was decided that the sondage would be dug by hand instead.

The large pit-like features were investigated first.

**[1004]** (Plate 23) had a concave profile with a total depth of 0.34m (Section 31) and width of 1.00m. Daub was recovered from the upper, moderately compact dark grey fill **(1002)** and pottery from the lower, moderately compact mottled yellowish brown fill **(1003)**. The pottery was dated to the Late Iron Age (c.200BC-50AD).

**[1006]** (Plate 24) also had a roughly flat base with a depth of 0.16m (Section 33) and width of 0.70m. It contained only one moderately compact mottled yellowish brown and grey fill **(1005)** that did not yield any finds. It is likely to have been another natural deposit, similar to the clay bands found in trenches 7 and 9.

**[1008]** (Plate 25) was similar to **[1006]** in that it too had a concave profile and contained only one moderately compact yellowish grey fill **(1007)** from which nothing was recovered. It had a depth of 0.30m (Section 40) and width of 0.98m.

Excavation was commenced on a fourth potential feature, but its similarity in texture, colour and lack of finds to **[1006]** and **[1008]** indicated it too was a natural deposit.

**[1011]** (Plate 26) was an the irregularly shaped feature with an undulating base and maximum depth of 0.27m (Section 45). It consisted of two fills – the upper **(1009)**, a moderately compact mottled orangey grey silty clay, contained moderate manganese, while the lower **(1010)** was a moderately compact orangey brown clay that also contained moderate manganese inclusions. No finds were recovered from either.

The sondage through the large blackened area at the SSE end of the trench was numbered **[1014]** (Plate 22). The section is recorded in Figure 11 (Section 46). It was not fully excavated because the depth of the cut reached the safe working limit. Two fills have been identified thus far: the upper fill **(1012)** was a mid to dark brown silty clay with a very greyish hue, approximately 0.55m in depth; the lower **(1013)** was a darker blackish brown silty clay. Finds recovered from these fills included bone, oyster shell and daub. Pottery also found has been dated to the Late Iron Age (c.25BC-50AD). As the bottom fill was not fully excavated, it is unclear how thick this layer is, but it was taken to approximately 0.50m-0.60m.

## **Trench 11**

The plan is recorded in Figure 8. This trench (Plate 10) was situated in the centre of Area A and ran E to W. The topsoil **(1100)** was the same context as **(1000)** and the subsoil **(1101)** was the same as

**(1001)**, although it had an increased depth of 0.46m. The natural geology was the same as that in trench 10, and located at a depth of 0.71m below the present ground level at 4.24mOD.

The trench was mostly barren except for two possible features; one of these was a linear shape that grew from 3.50m to 4.00m in width from the N side of the trench to the S, whilst the second was a possible small pit that had been truncated by a modern inclusion marked at the E end of the trench by a line of gravel. During the machining, some surface finds were recovered, including a small piece of ironwork and a large fragment of charcoal.

The linear shape appeared to be a natural deposit, as its texture, colour and the lack of any finds was reminiscent of features **[1006]**, **[1008]**, and the clay bands found in trenches 7 and 9. The small pit **[1103]** (Plate 27), however, was fully excavated up to the point of truncation; it had a flat base and a depth of 0.27m (Section 42). Its fill **(1102)** was greyish silty clay with some charcoal and occasional manganese flecking, which became progressively more waterlogged the closer it was dug to the modern gravel. No finds were recovered.

### **Trench 12**

The plan is recorded in Figure 2. Trench 12 (Plate 11) was located to the E of the site, aligned NNW to SSE. The topsoil **(1200)** was the same as **(1000)** and **(1100)** although slightly deeper at 0.40m, and the subsoil **(1201)** was the same context as **(1001)** and **(1101)** at a thickness of approximately 0.43m. Again the natural geology was orangey brown clayey silt, identified at a depth of 0.83m below the present ground level.

Upon machining the trench revealed several potential features, most of which were interconnected. Due to the similarity of the texture and colour to other previously identified natural features, as well as the lack of surface finds and the lack of shape or definition, it was concluded that these slightly darkened patches were more likely to be natural discolourations than anything of archaeological interest.

### **Trench 13**

The plan is recorded in Figure 2. Trench 13 (Plate 12) was located N of trench 11 and aligned NE to SW. Once again the topsoil **(1300)**, subsoil **(1301)** and the natural silty clay were the same as the rest of trenches 10, 11, 12 and 14, with the depths being the same as those in trench 12.

Similarly to trench 12, several interconnecting darker areas were revealed, but no surface finds or definitive shaping was evident. A sondage through a possible lens to the N-W of the trench revealed nothing, and investigation of the potential 'features' revealed that these too – as in trench 12 – seem to be natural discolouration with no manmade purpose.

## Trench 14

The plan is recorded in Figure 9. Situated to the W of the site and aligned NNW to SSE, trench 14 (Plate 13) was formed by the same topsoil (**1400**) and subsoil (**1401**) as trenches 10-13, with a similar depth of these to trenches 12 and 13. The natural geology was brown clayey silt identified at 0.83m below the present ground level at 3.62mOD.

Only one potential feature [**1404**] (Plate 21) was identified, located against the W section of the trench. It had a flat base and depth of 0.18m (Section 38). Its shape and size suggested a possible post hole. It consisted of two fills; the upper fill (**1402**) was very pale brown silty clay, and the lower (**1403**) was also a silty clay coloured a pale brown mottled with some orangey brown patches. Neither fill yielded any finds.

## Remaining trenches

There are four trenches in Area A that have not yet been opened or investigated; this is because their locations are situated beneath two large piles of demolished materials that contain significant quantities of asbestos. Once these piles have been removed it will be possible to complete the evaluation.

## 10. Discussion

The Archaeological Evaluation has been successful in identifying a Prehistoric Landscape. Features have been identified in the evaluation trenches and the pottery retrieved goes a little way to understanding the significance of the site. This evaluation produced a fairly small multi-period pottery assemblage, comprising 63 sherds weighing 745gms and spanning the late phases of the Later Prehistoric to the earlier part of the Historic Periods.

Although there is no doubt regarding the ceramic traditions represented, as recovered, the range of material recovered – mostly bodysherds - does not allow for precision in determining the site's full chronological range.

As a tradition, the indigenous pre-'Belgic' Mid-Late Iron Age (MLIA) is definitely present, so that on-site activity *may* start around c.200 BC or within the earlier second century BC. However, as was noted with the recent nearby 2008 Neats Court SWAT excavation – and from elsewhere in the County – this native tradition, manufacturing flint-tempered pottery, continues as a social substrate right through to the Conquest-period AD. Here, though, with the presence of a base sherd from a finely potted Medway zone fineware jar with traces of an incised probable cross on its underside from *Context 1012/1013*, it is *probably* safe to assume settlement activity between **c.150-75 BC**.

Material representing the succeeding Late Iron Age (LIA) 'Belgic'-style grog-tempered tradition was recorded from most contexts. The sherds are mostly soft and from rather low-fired vessels and, technically, could have been produced anywhere between c.75/50 BC right through to the Conquest-period AD. Even if there is some doubt regarding a potential settlement start-date within either the later phases of the MLIA or the earlier part of the LIA, the presence of a fragment from a neatly-made bell-shaped lid, again from *Context 1012/103* – which is unlikely to date much earlier than c.25 BC - and a bodysherd from an imported Gallo-Belgic white ware probable butt-beaker from *Context 3*, with an import range between c.15 BC-25 or slightly later, certainly confirms a site presence from the later first century BC onwards.

Later, Roman activity is confined to a handful of sherds that may or may not be intrusive in the contexts they were recorded from – *Contexts 3, 7, 503, 606, 701, 901* and *1012/1013*. The single samian sherd from *Context 7* is relatively fresh and does suggest nearby, if not on-site, continuity into the earlier Roman period, at least as late as c.150/175 AD. No evidence for any later activity was recovered. Overall, the low quantity of Roman sherds, compared with the higher number of MLIA and LIA elements, does indicate a shift, if not in settlement, at least in activity areas at some point during the later first century AD.

## **11. Finds**

The only finds retrieved were 63 pottery sherds.z

## **12. Conclusion**

The evaluation trenches at the proposed development site revealed archaeological features and artefacts spanning the Prehistoric and Early Roman phases of activity. The ditches found suggest field systems and the pottery retrieved suggest a nearby Prehistoric/Early Roman settlement. Archaeological features were investigated in Trenches 1, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 14 and pottery retrieved from trenches 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10.

The archaeological evaluation has been successful in fulfilling the primary aims and objectives of the Specification. A common stratigraphic sequence was recognised across the site comprised of topsoil **(101)** sealing the subsoil **(102)** which overlay the natural geology **(103)**. Therefore, this evaluation has been successful in fulfilling the aims and objectives as set out in the planning condition and the Archaeological Specification.

## **13. Acknowledgements**

SWAT Archaeology would like to thank the client, Persimmon Homes Ltd for commissioning the project. Thanks are also extended to Simon Mason Principal Heritage Officer, Kent County Council.

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Paul Wilkinson

13/10/2016

#### **14. References**

Institute for Field Archaeologists (IfA), Rev (2014). *Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation*

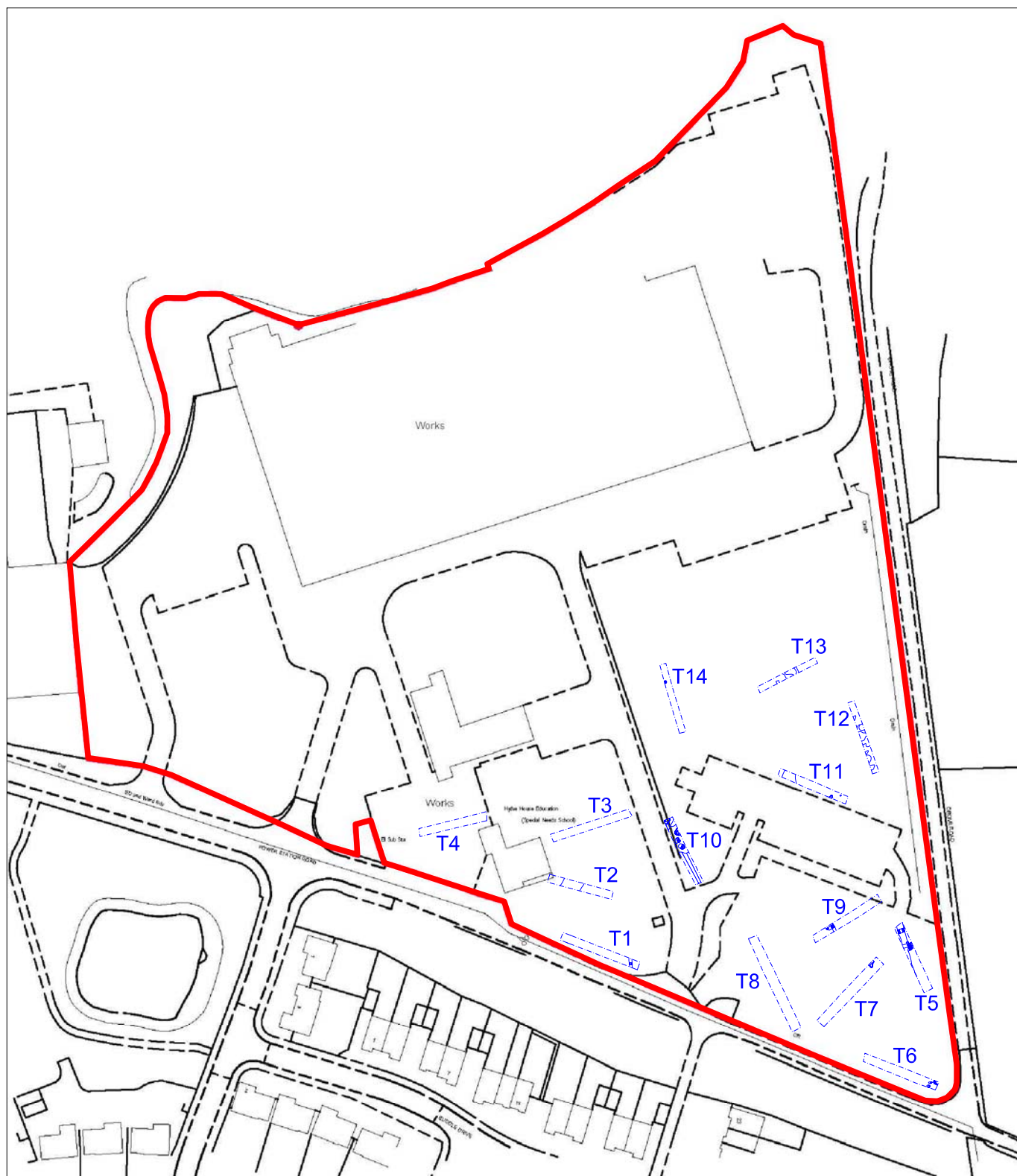
KCC Heritage Part A (2016) *Specification for a programme of archaeological works at the former HBC Engineering Site on Power Station Road, Minster, Sheppey, Kent ME12 3AB*

KCC Specification Manual Part B, E

KCC and Historic England HER data 2016



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593405.0mE  
173320.0mN

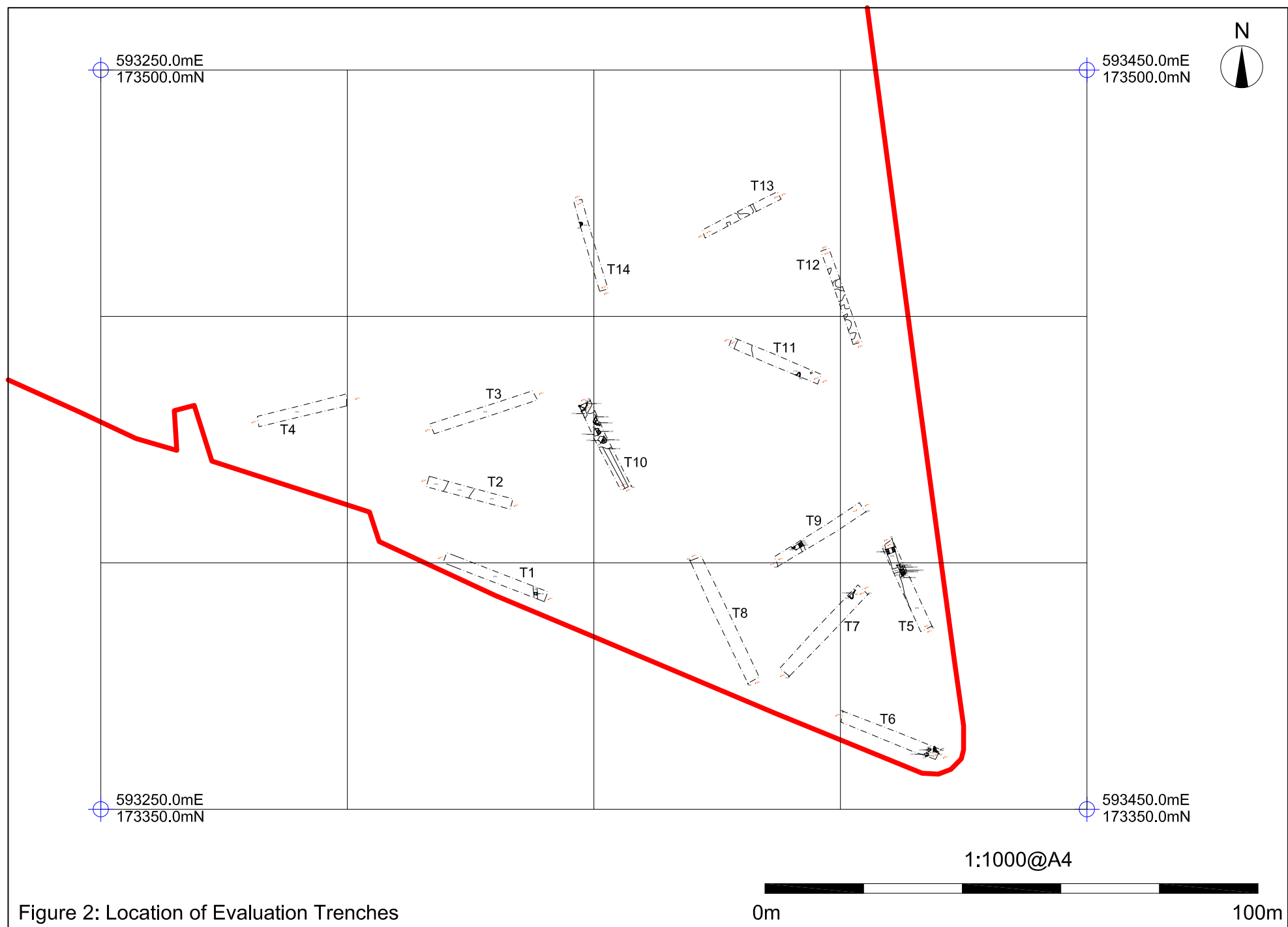
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Figure 1: Location of site

0m

150m



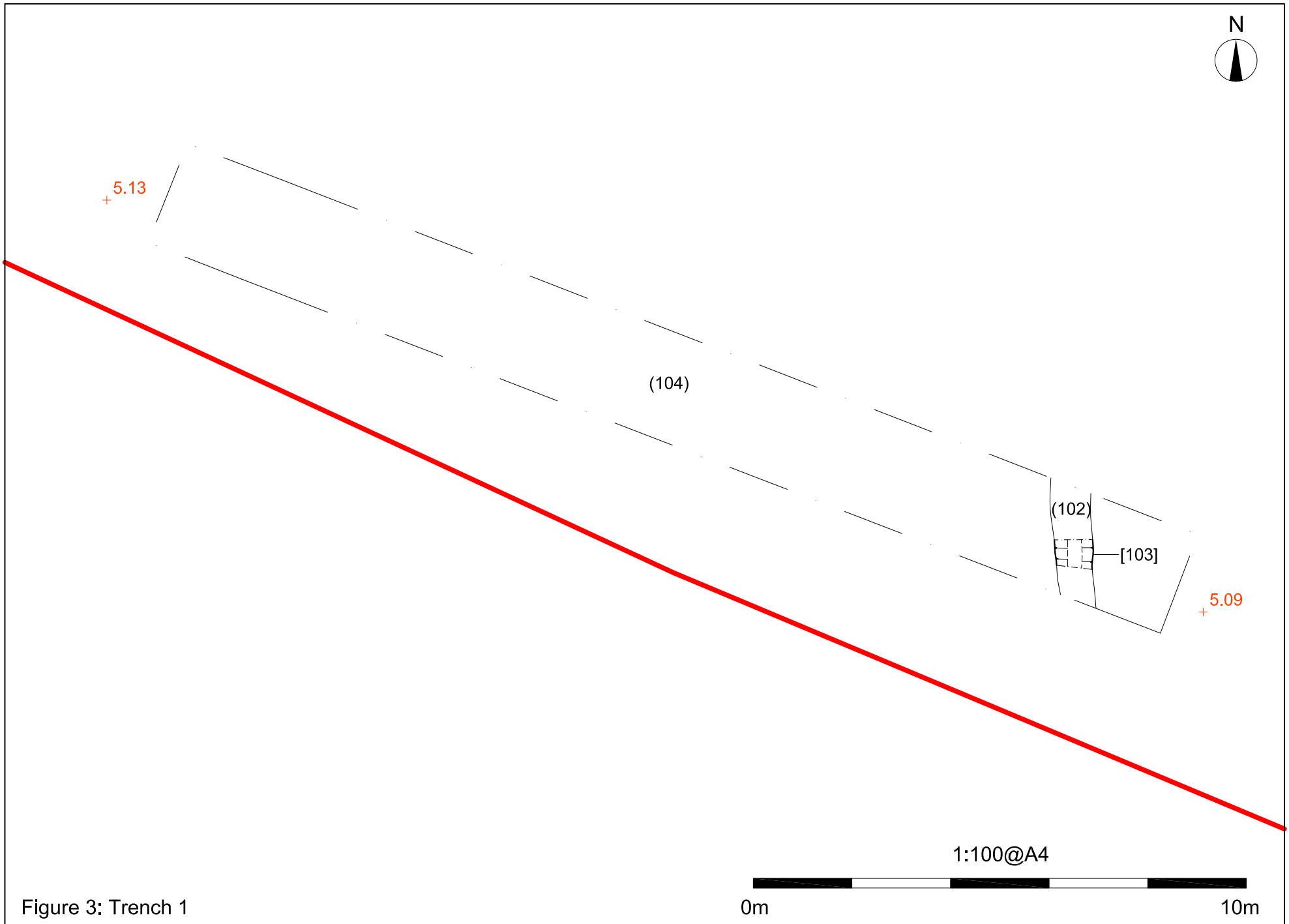


Figure 3: Trench 1

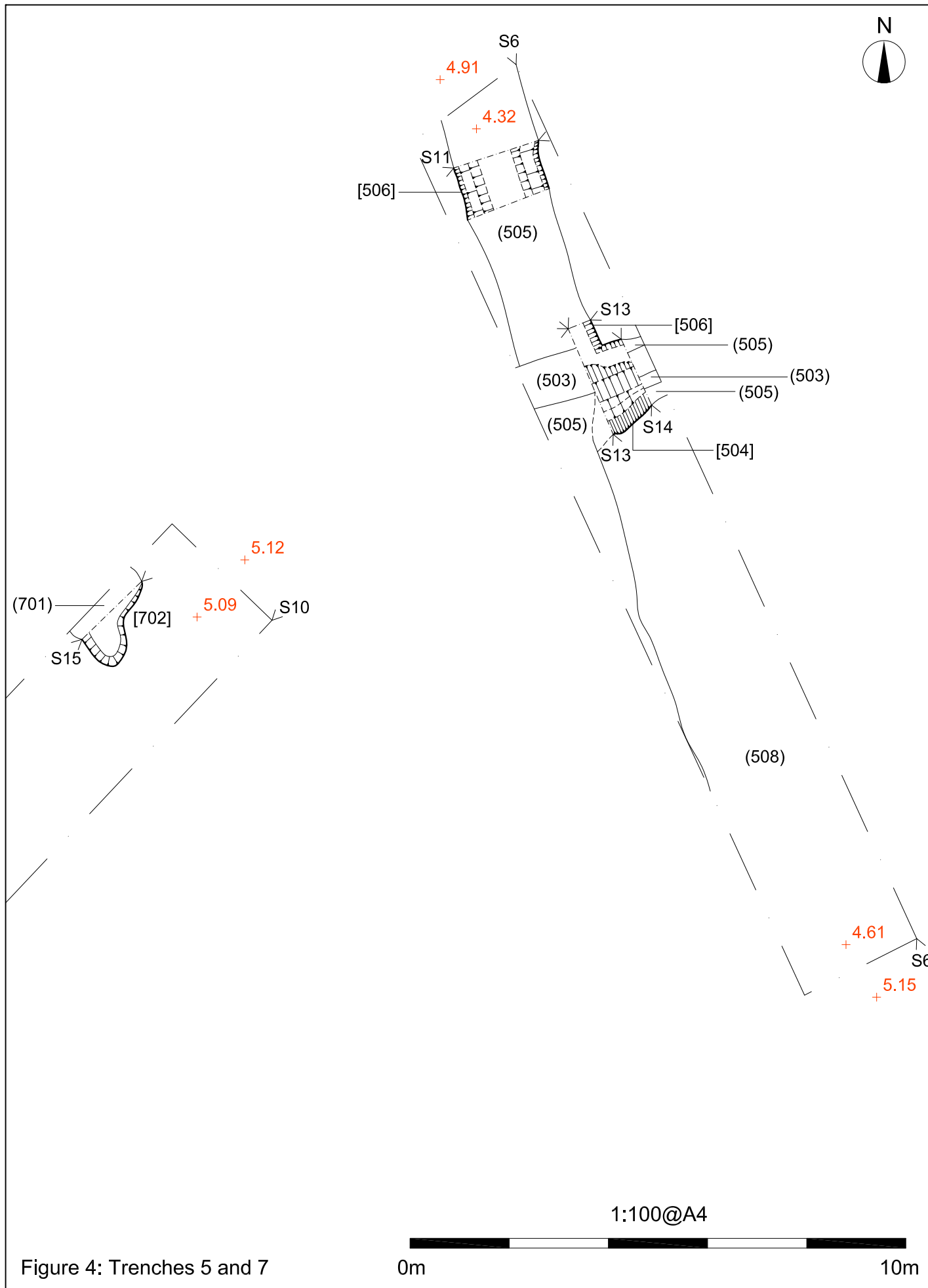


Figure 4: Trenches 5 and 7

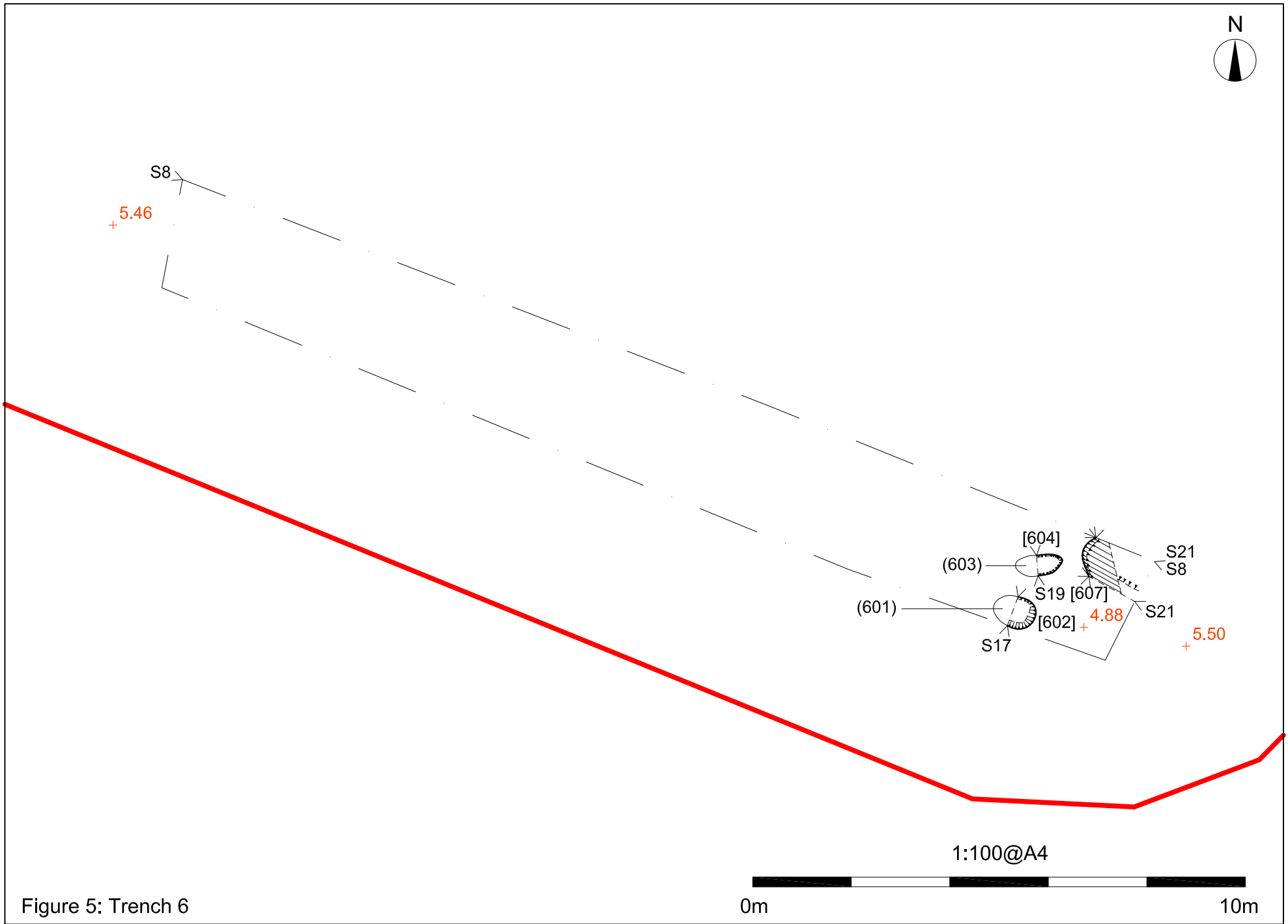


Figure 5: Trench 6

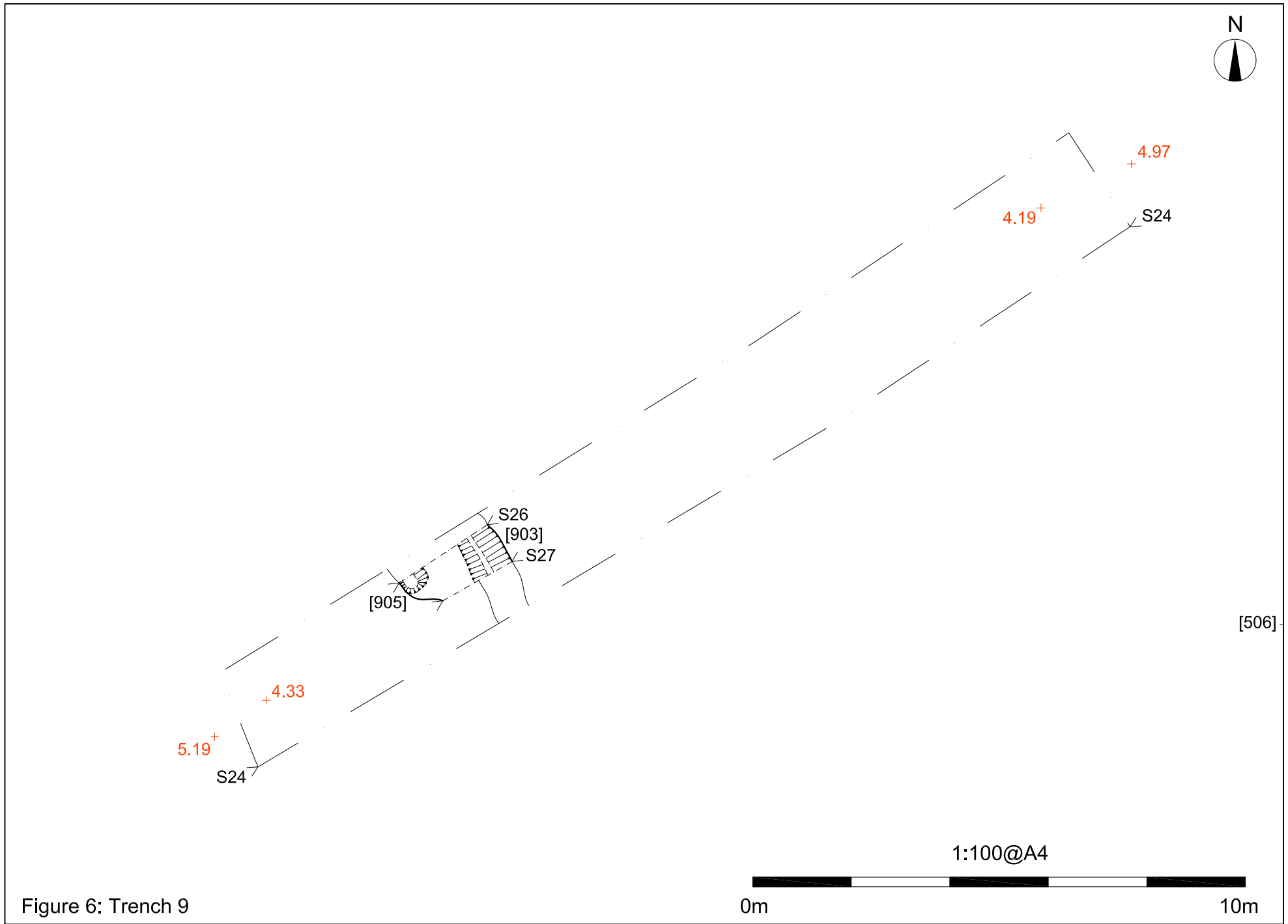
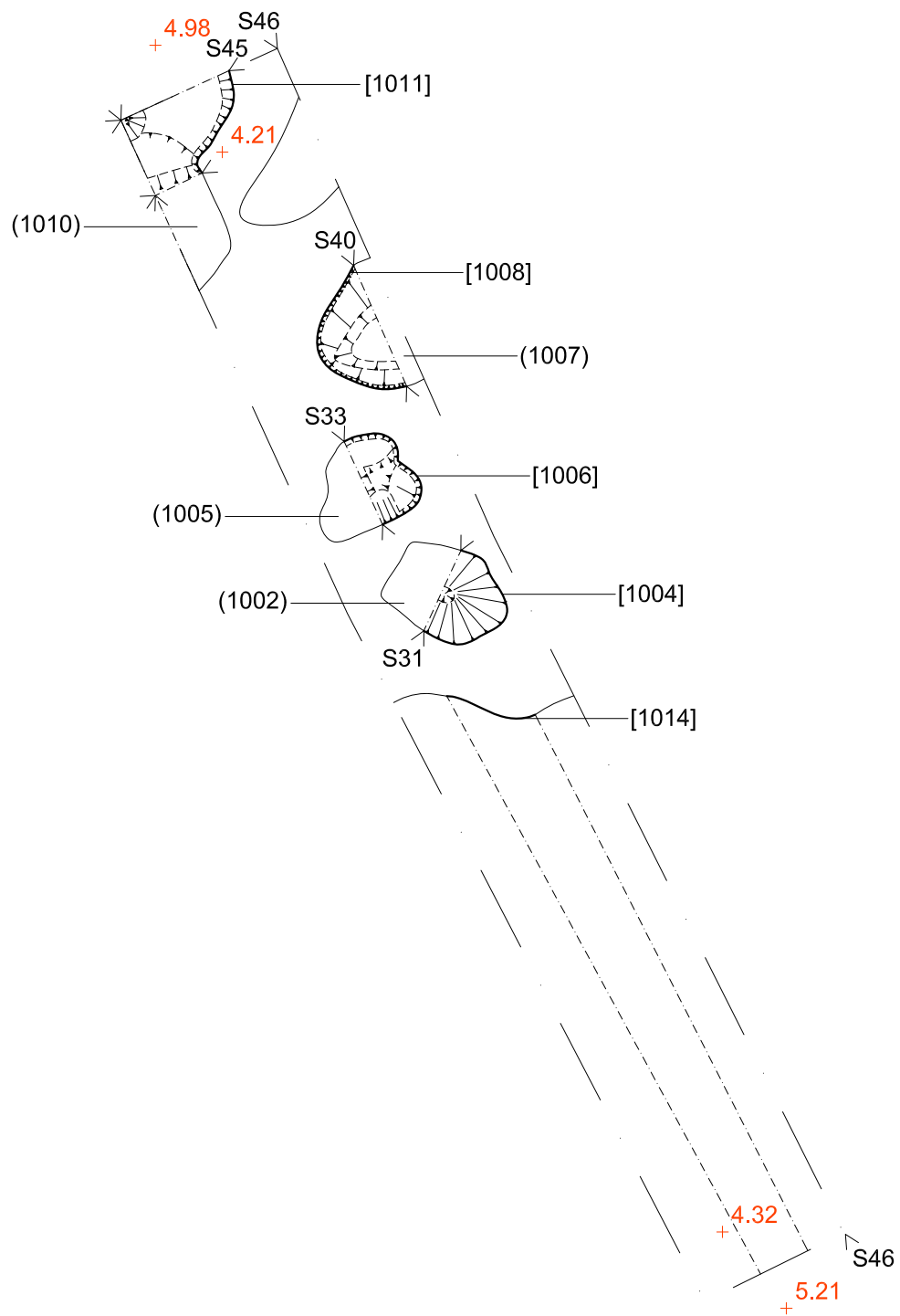
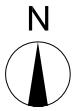


Figure 6: Trench 9

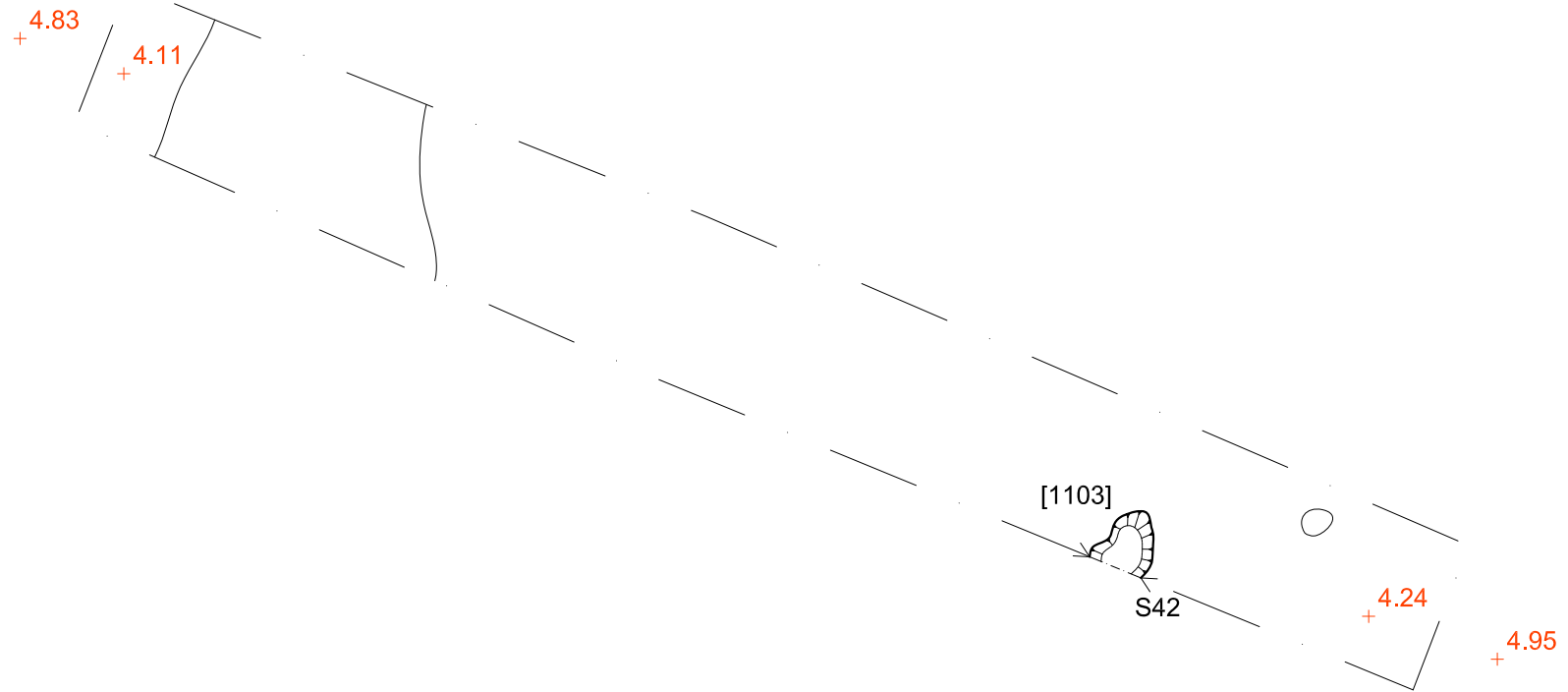
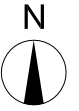


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0m

10m

Figure 7: Trench 10



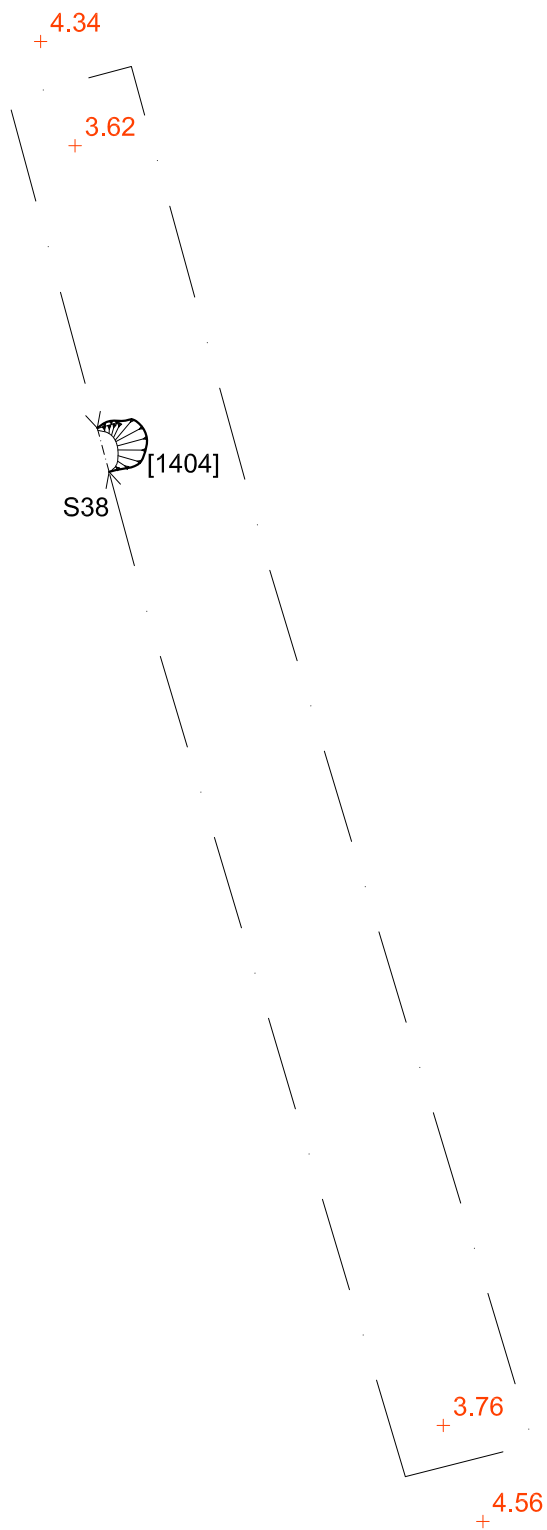
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0m

10m

Figure 8: Trench 11



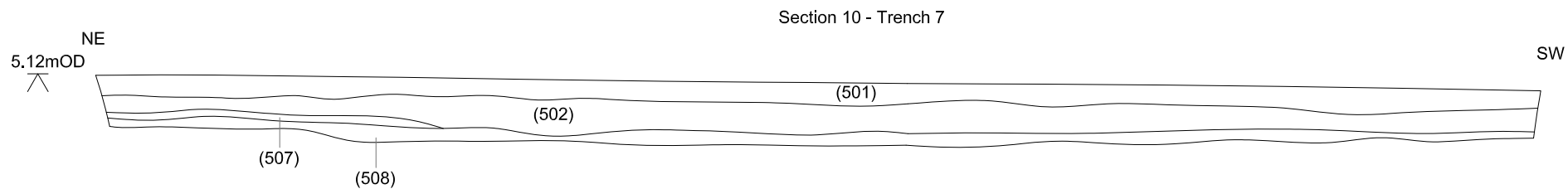
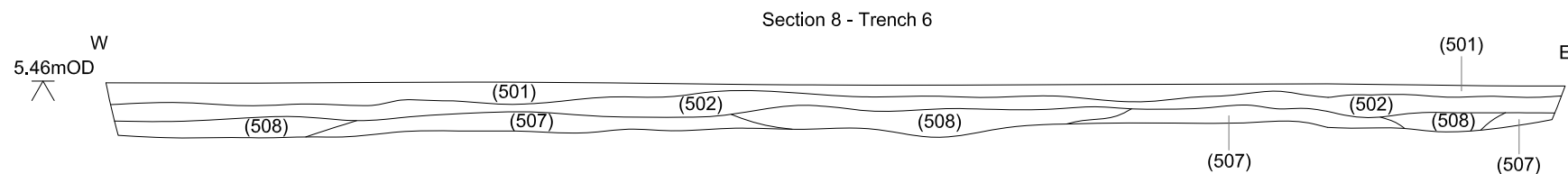
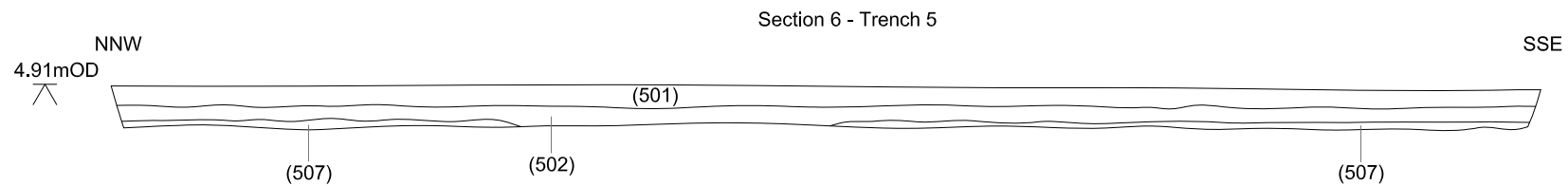


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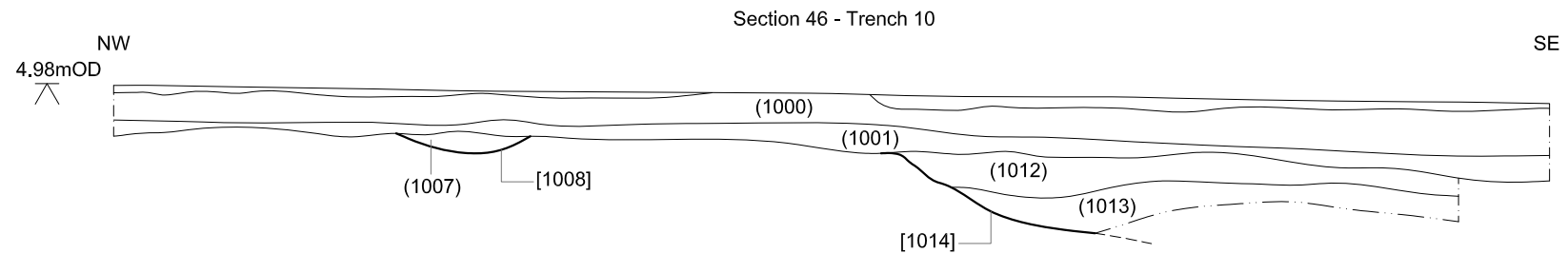
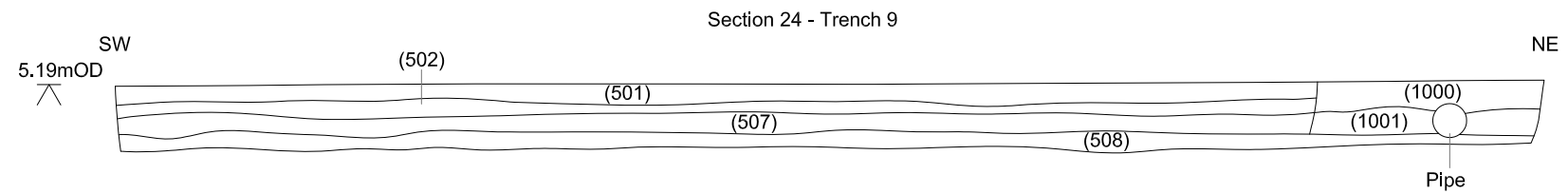
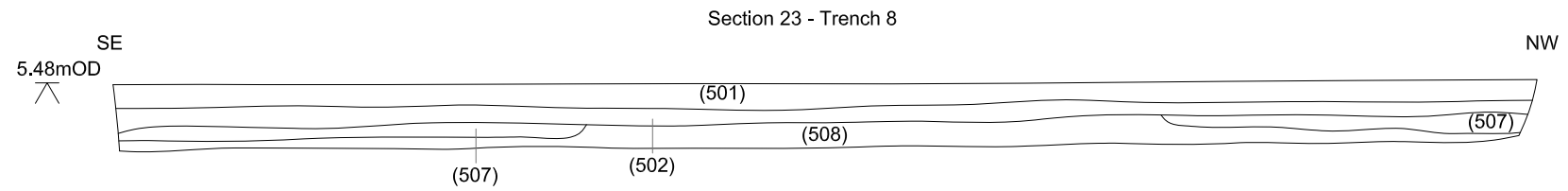
Figure 9: Trench 14



1:100@A4



Figure 10: Trench Sections



1:100@A4



Figure 11: Trench Sections

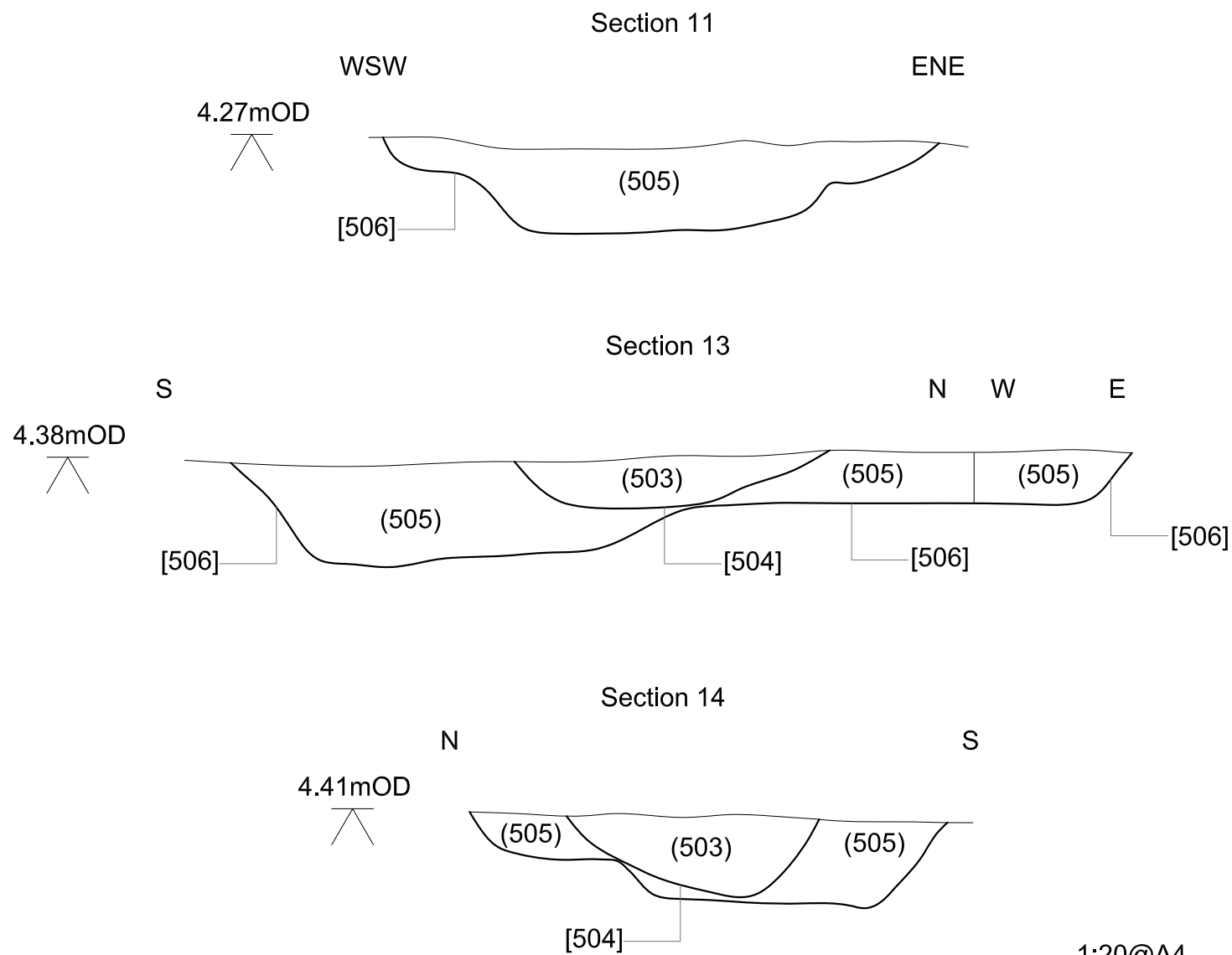


Figure 12: Sections

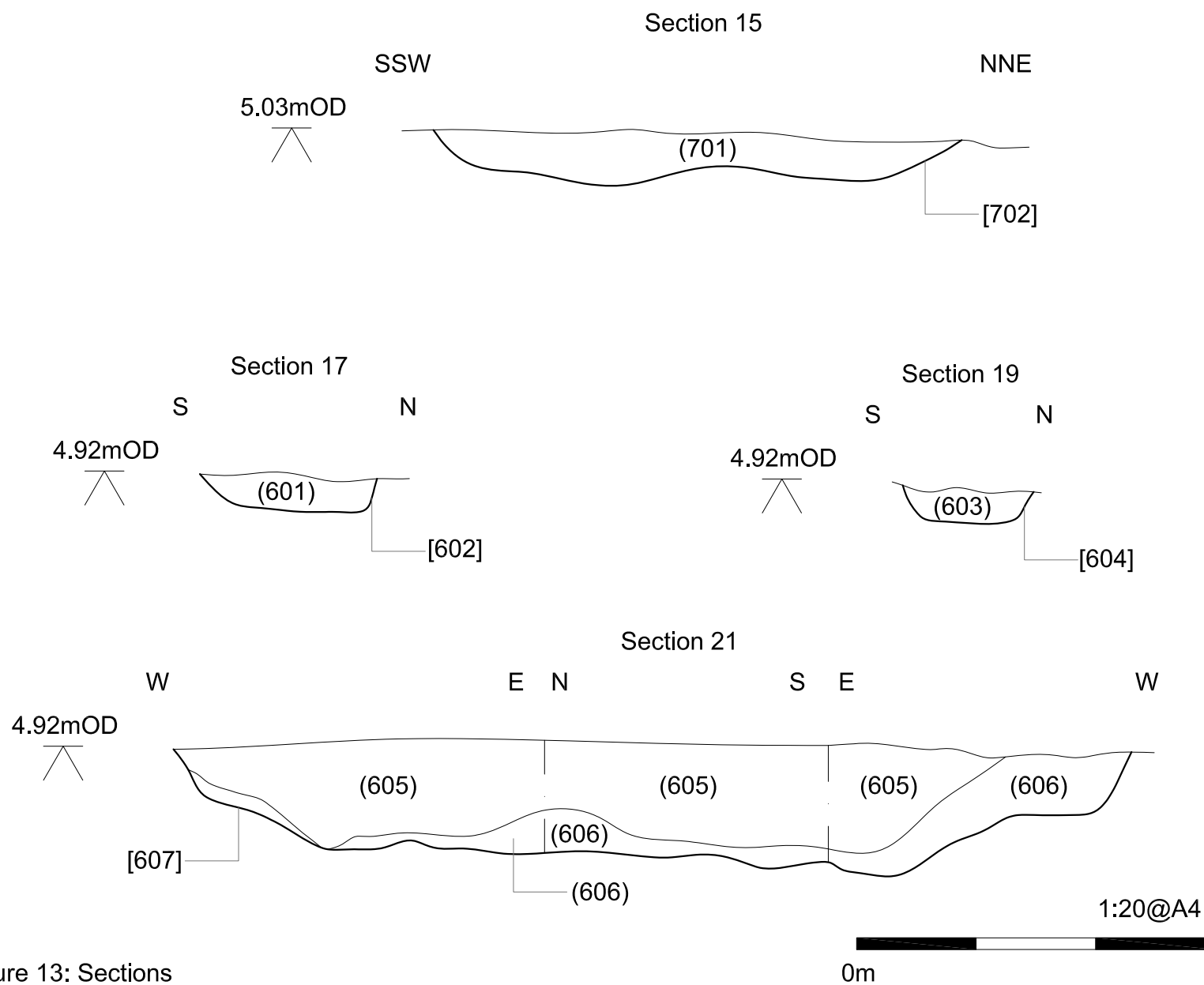


Figure 13: Sections

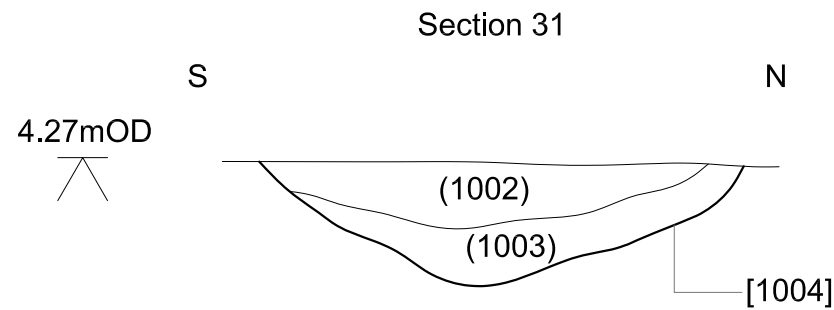
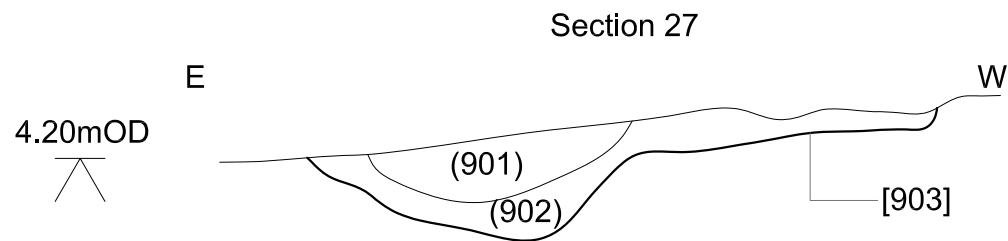
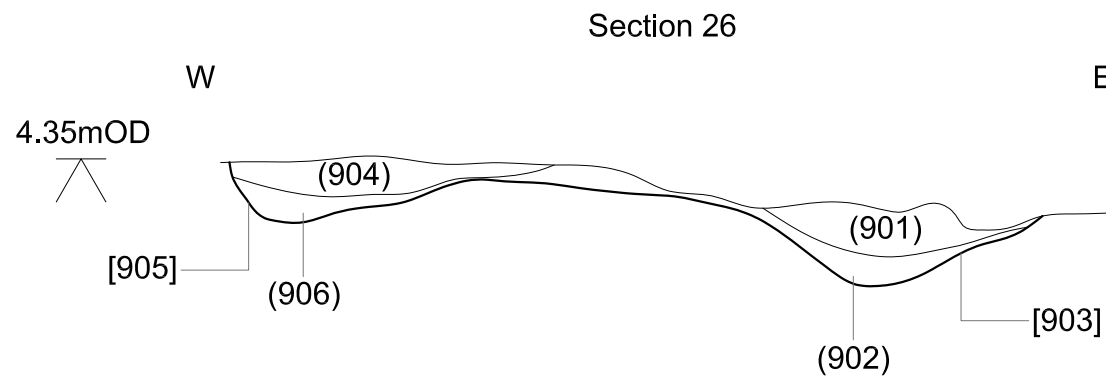
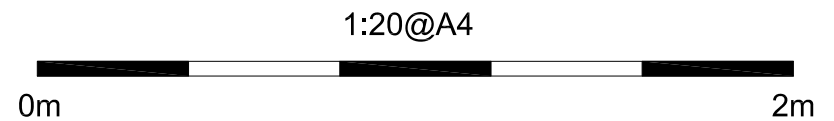


Figure 14: Sections



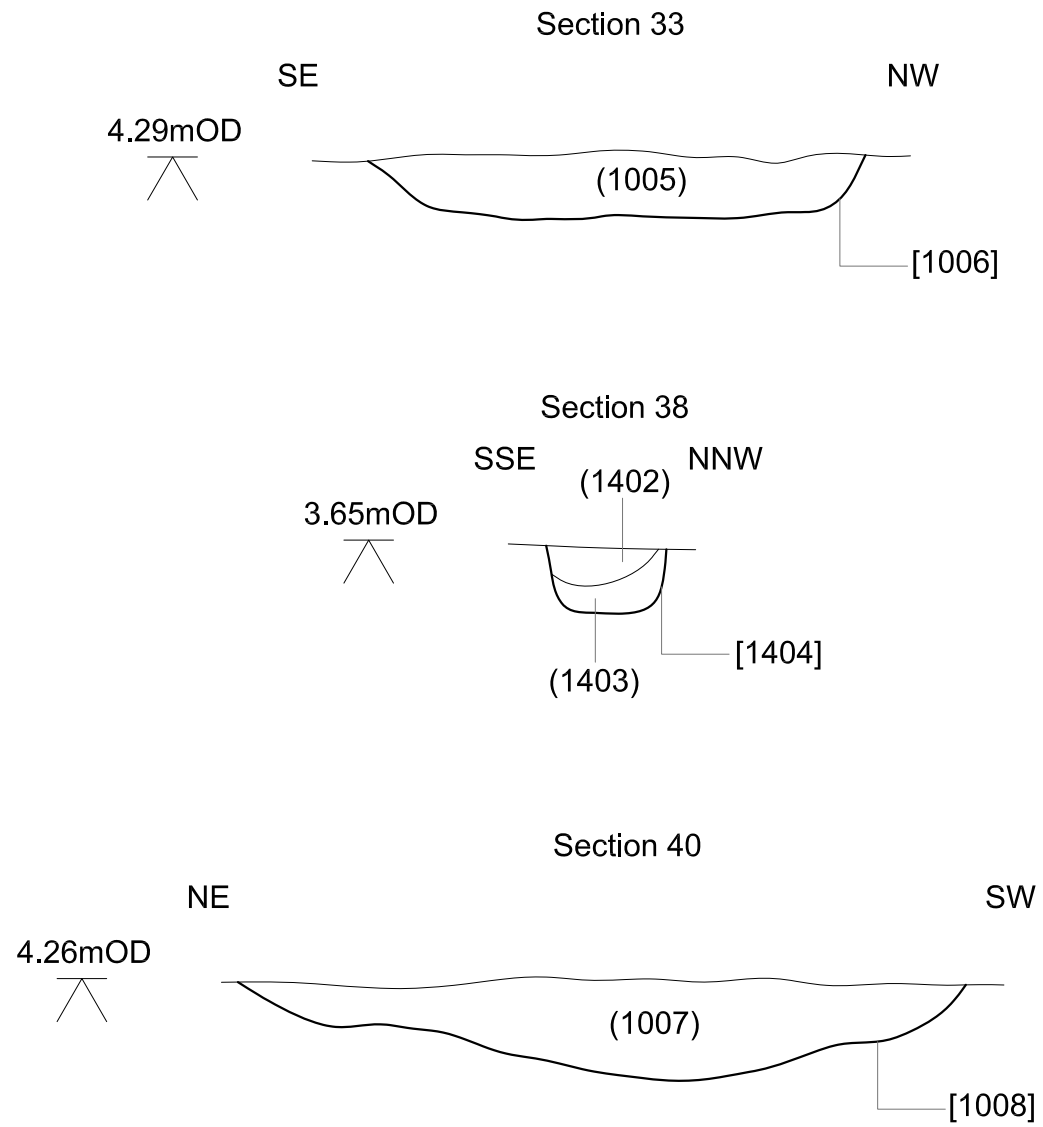
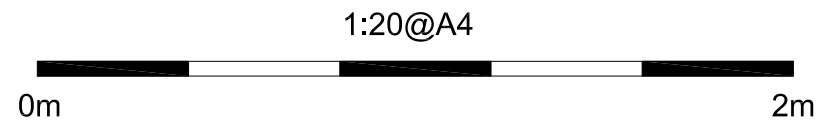


Figure 15: Sections



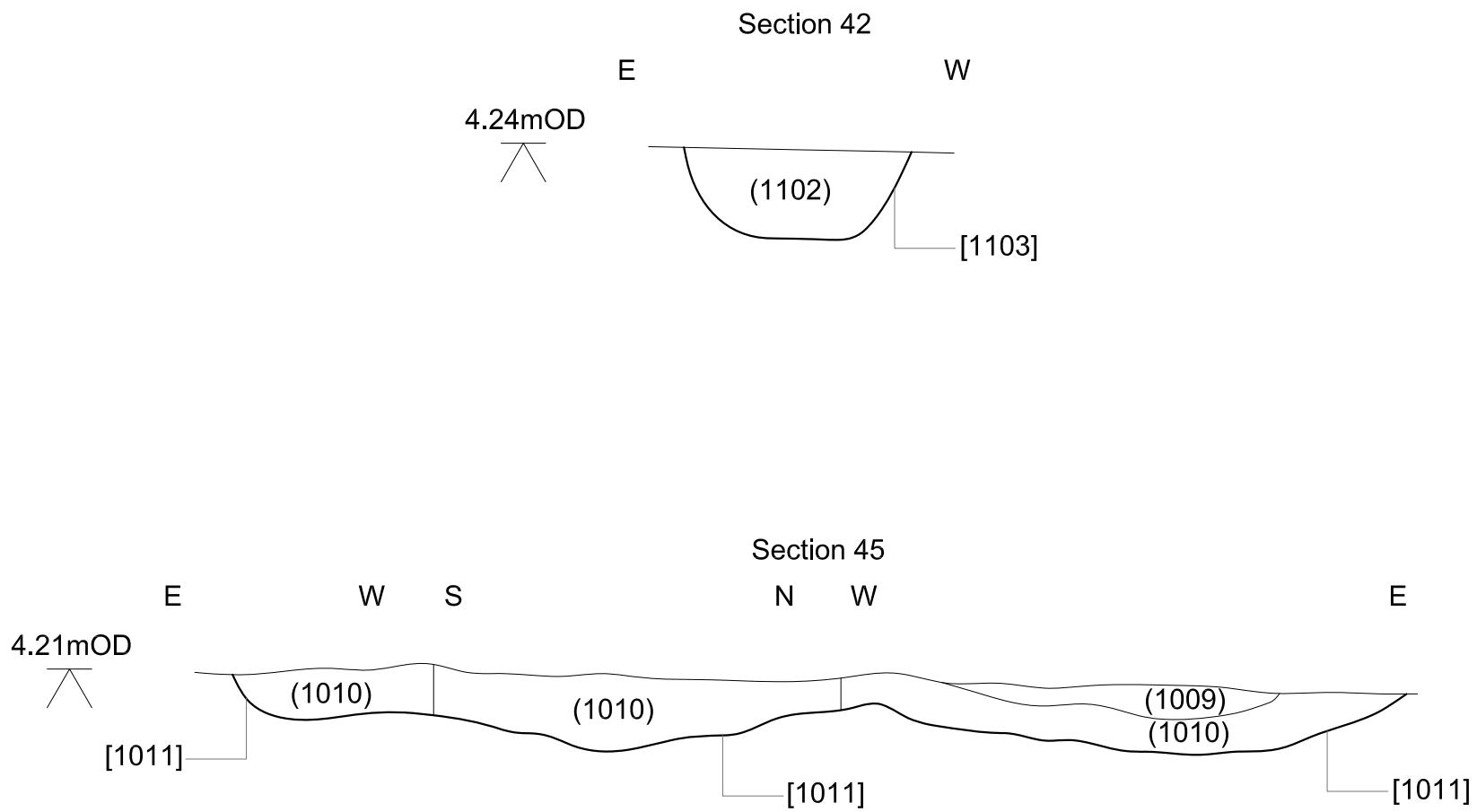


Figure 16: Sections

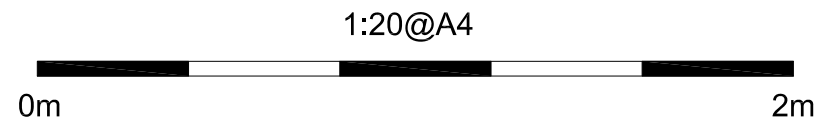






Plate 1 – Trench 1: possible linear feature is barely visible





Plate 2 – Trench 2: lots of visible root action; possible Paleo lens is visible towards the centre





Plate 3 – Trench 3: no archaeological features, and the possible lens in Trench 2 does not continue onwards into this one





Plate 4 – Trench 5: Wide linear feature truncated by later, narrower linear





Plate 5 – Trench 6: probable continuation of long, wide linear found in Trench 5





Plate 6 – Trench 7: a natural clay band, similar to that found in Trench 9





Plate 7 – Trench 8: completely barren of any archaeological features or surface finds





Plate 8 – Trench 9: two possible features identified, that which is furthest to the northeast was a clay band akin to the one found in Trench 7





Plate 9 – Trench 10: several possible features visible, all containing fills of a similar colour and texture





Plate 10 – Trench 11: possible pit [1103], truncated by modern feature





Plate 11 – Trench 12: natural discolouration also common in Trenches 10, 11 and 13





Plate 12 – Trench 13: natural discoloration also common in Trenches 10-12





Plate 13 – Trench 14: no natural discolouration, single possible post hole [1404] visible





Plate 14 – slot through [504] and [506] indicating truncation



Plate 15 – Slot [506] through long linear in Trench 5





Plate 16 – possible small pit [602], probably more likely to be a natural clay deposit similar to the band seen in Plate 6



Plate 17 – possible small pit [604], probably more likely to be a natural clay deposit similar to those in Plates 6 and 15





Plate 18 – slot through [607], which is thought to be the same context as [506]



Plate 19 – irregular shaped feature [702], originally suspected to be a natural clay deposit but later yielded pottery





Plate 20 – linear feature [903] cut by possible pit / terminus [905], the only feature in Trench 9



Plate 21 – possible post hole [1404], the only potential feature in Trench 14; two fills, neither of which contained any finds





Plate 22 – section of sondage [1014] through large dark area at the southern end of Trench 10; this was not bottomed due to reaching the limit of safe working, but several finds were recovered from both fills



Plate 23 – half section of [1004]; probably a natural deposit such as those in Plates 16 and 17





Plate 24 – half section of [1006] (dried out quickly by high temperatures and direct sunlight); the same as [1004]



Plate 25 – half section of [1008]; another feature akin to [1004] and [1006]





Plate 26 – slot through [1011]; there was potential charcoal flecking in the top fill (1009), but no finds were recovered



Plate 27 – section of possible small pit [1103]; no finds discovered, truncation made it impossible to 100% excavate this feature





Plate 28 – slot through [103]; possible linear identified in Trench 1, sample but could possibly be a hill-wash channel due to lack of finds and no other features in the vicinity

## **APPENDIX !**

### **THE DATING AND ASSESSMENT OF THE CERAMIC ASSEMBLAGE FROM :**

#### **POWER STATION ROAD, QUEENBOROUGH, SHEPPEY EVALUATION 2016 (PSRQ-EV-16)**

## **ASSESSMENT**

### ***Introduction***

This Evaluation produced a fairly small multi-period pottery assemblage, comprising 63 sherds weighing 745gms and spanning the late phases of the Later Prehistoric to the earlier part of the Historic Periods. Although there is no doubt regarding the ceramic traditions represented, as recovered, the range of material recovered – mostly bodysherds - does not allow for precision in determining the site's full chronological range.

As a tradition, the indigenous pre-'Belgic' Mid-Late Iron Age (MLIA) is definitely present, so that on-site activity *may* start around c.200 BC or within the earlier second century BC. However, as was noted with the recent nearby 2008 Neats Court SWAT excavation – and from elsewhere in the County – this native tradition, manufacturing flint-tempered pottery, continues as a social substrate right through to the Conquest-period AD. Here, though, with the presence of a base sherd from a finely potted Medway zone fineware jar with traces of an incised probable cross on its underside from *Context 1012/1013*, it is *probably* safe to assume settlement activity between **c.150-75 BC**.

Material representing the succeeding Late Iron Age (LIA) 'Belgic'-style grog-tempered tradition was recorded from most contexts. The sherds are mostly soft and from rather low-fired vessels and, technically, could have been produced anywhere between c.75/50 BC right through to the Conquest-period AD. Even if there is some doubt regarding a potential settlement start-date within either the later phases of the MLIA or the earlier part of the LIA, the presence of a fragment from a neatly-made bell-shaped lid, again from *Context 1012/103* – which is unlikely to date much earlier than c.25 BC - and a bodysherd from an imported Gallo-Belgic white ware probable butt-beaker from *Context 3*, with an import

range between c.15 BC-25 or slightly later, certainly confirms a site presence from the later first century BC onwards.

Later, Roman activity is confined to a handful of sherds that may or may not be intrusive in the contexts they were recorded from – *Contexts 3, 7, 503, 606, 701, 901 and 1012/1013*. The single samian sherd from *Context 7* is relatively fresh and does suggest nearby, if not on-site, continuity into the earlier Roman period, at least as late as c.150/175 AD. No evidence for any later activity was recovered. Overall, the low quantity of Roman sherds, compared with the higher number of MLIA and LIA elements, does indicate a shift, if not in settlement, at least in activity areas at some point during the later first century AD..

### ***Recommendations***

Dependant upon intentions – further archaeological work at this location should help define the commencement date of the Later Prehistoric phase of activity and confirm whether the settlement continued beyond the later second century AD and into the third..

### ***Bibliography***

#### **Rigby 1995 :**

Rigby, V. with Green, M.J., 'Early Gaulish and Rhenish imports' in Blockley, K, *et.al.*, *Excavations in the Marlowe Car Park and Surrounding Areas*, The Archaeology of Canterbury **V** (Part II) 1995, 639-668

#### **Thompson 1982 :**

Thompson, I., *Grog-tempered 'Belgic' pottery of South-eastern England*, British Archaeological Reports **108** i-iii, Oxford 1982.

## **APPENDIX : CONTEXT-BASED POTTERY QUANTIFICATION AND DATING CATALOGUE**

***Primary quantification : 63 sherds (weight : 745gms)***

***Period codes employed :***

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MIA-LIA	= Mid>Mid-Late Iron Age
LIA	= Late Iron Age
ER	= Early Roman
MR	= Mid Roman

***Context dating :***

**Context: Trench 5 - 3 top** - 9 sherds (weight : 57gms)

3 MLIA>LIA flint-tempered ware (c.200/25 BC-50 AD emphasis; **same vessel**)

2 MLIA>LIA flint-tempered fine sandy ware (c.200/25 BC-50 AD emphasis)

1 LIA 'Belgic'-style grog-tempered ware (c.50/25 BC-50 AD emphasis probably)

1 LIA>LIA-ER Gallo-Belgic white ware (?butt-beaker, Rigby 1995 Fabric 1, Marne/Vesle area' c.15 BC-25/50 AD emphasis probably)

1 ER ? North Kent Thameside fine sandy ware (c.75/100-1125 AD emphasis)

1 ER Romanising native grog-tempered ware (c.100/125-150 AD emphasis)

*Comment* : Mostly small elements, several moderate-sized, all bodysherds – earliest pre-c.50 AD material fairly fresh, as is latest-dated ER element..

**Likely date : If not intrusive – possibly between c.125-175 AD**

**Context: Trench 5 - 5** - 3 sherds (weight : 71gms)

2 MLIA>LIA flint-tempered ware (c.200/25 BC-50 AD emphasis)

1 LIA>LIA-ER 'Belgic'-style flint-tempered fine sandy ware (c.25 BC-50/75 AD probable emphasis)

*Comment* : Moderate-sized elements, 2 bodysherds, one jar base – all coarseware. All slightly worn – the latest dated slightly more so. Latter has fine comb-finishing. Should be from an undisturbed broadly contemporary deposit.

**Likely date : Possibly between c.25-75 AD**

**Context: Trench 5 - 7** - 1 sherd (weight : 11gms)

1 MR Eastern Gaulish samian ware (Dr.31, ?Trier, c.125-200 AD range probably)

*Comment* : Moderate-sized rim sherd, surface very slightly chipped, otherwise near-fresh and should be from an undisturbed contemporary deposit.

**Likely date : c.150-200 AD or slightly earlier**

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**Context: 503** - 3 sherds (weight : 37gms)

1 MLIA>LIA flint-tempered ware (c.200/50- 0 BC emphasis probably; **with seed or fruit stone impression**)

1 LIA 'Belgic'-style grog-tempered ware (c.50/25 BC-50 AD emphasis)

1 ER Romanising native grog-tempered ware (c.100/125-150 AD emphasis probably)

*Comment* : Earliest entry is small and heavily abraded – and residual in-context. Later elements are moderate-sized bodysherds, both chipped and rather worn.

**Likely date : Uncertain – possibly between c.100-150 AD or very slightly later**

**Context: 505** - 7 sherds (weight : 49gms)

3 MLIA>LIA flint-tempered ware (c.200/100-25 BC emphasis probably)

2 MLIA>LIA flint-tempered fine sandy ware (c.200/100-25 BC emphasis; **same vessel**)

1 MLIA>LIA greensand ware (c.200/100-25 BC emphasis)

3 'Belgic'-style grog and flint-tempered ware (c.75/50 BC-25 AD emphasis probably)

*Comment* : All small elements – the MLIA>LIA bodysherds all rather worn and probably residual in-context. The LIA sherds are collectively very slightly larger and fresher than the earlier material.

**Likely date : Uncertain – possibly between c.25 BC-25 AD or slightly earlier**

**Context: 605** - 9 sherds (weight : 110gms)

5 MLIA>LIA flint-tempered ware (c.200/25 BC-25 AD emphasis probably; **same vessel**)

1 MLIA>LIA shell-tempered fine sandy ware 200/25 BC-25 AD emphasis probably)

2 LIA 'Belgic'-style flint and grog-tempered ware (incl. 1 x Thompson 1982 Type C3 bead-rim jar, c.25 BC-25/50 AD emphasis)

1 LIA 'Belgic'-style grog-tempered ware (c.25 BC-25/50 AD emphasis)

*Comment* : The indigenous-style flint-tempered material (and shelly ware sherd) are all small, but not heavily worn and should be broadly contemporary (or only very slightly earlier) with the larger moderate-sized LIA elements – latter are chipped and only slightly worn and may well come from an undisturbed contemporary deposit.

**Likely date : Between 0-50 AD or slightly later**

**Context: 606** - 3 sherds (weight : 25gms)

1 LIA-ER fine sandy ware (c.25-50/75 AD emphasis)

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1 ER Romanising native grog-tempered ware (c.50-75/100 AD emphasis)

1 ER Romanising native grog-tempered ware (c.100/125-150 AD emphasis)

*Comment* : All fairly small-small bodysherds – first entry rather worn, second with heavy unifacial damage, C2 AD element again with unifacial wear but less so.

**Likely date : c.125-150 AD - possibly slightly earlier**

**Context: 701** - 3 sherds (weight : 55gms)

1 LIA 'Belgic'-style flint-tempered ware (c.50/25 BC-25 AD emphasis probably)

1 LIA-ER fine sandy ware (c.25-50/75 AD emphasis)

1 ER sandy ware with marl/fossil shell inclusions (c.75-125/150 AD emphasis)

*Comment* : First two entries moderate-sized – first fairly worn and should be residual in-context. Second entry also worn but less so. Last, ER, sherd is fairly small but fairly heavily worn overall.

**Likely date : Uncertain – if not intrusive, possibly c.100-150 AD or slightly later**

**Context: 901** - 1 sherd (weight : 3gms)

1 ER North Kent Thameside fine sandy ware (c.75/100-150 AD emphasis)

*Comment* : Bodysherd, fairly heavy bifacial wear

**Likely date : Residual**

**Context: 1002** - 1 sherd (weight : 3gms)

1 LP flint-tempered ware (slight MLIA>LIA preference, c.1550/200 BC-50 AD emphasis)

*Comment* : Small coarseware bodysherd, slightly worn –*may* derive from an undisturbed contemporary deposit.

**Likely date : If not residual – between c.200 BC-50 AD**

**Context: 1012/1013** - 21 sherds (weight : 270gms)

5 MLIA>LIA flint-tempered ware (c.200/100-25 BC probable emphasis; **2 same vessel, 3 re-fired**)

1 MLIA>LIA flint-tempered sandy ware (c.200/100-25 BC emphasis probably, **re-fired**)

2 MLIA>LIA flint-tempered fine sandy/silty ware (c.200/100-25 BC emphasis probably)

1 MLIA>LIA greensand ware (c.200/100-25 BC emphasis probably; **incised mark on base**)

1 ? MLIA>LIA fine silt/sandy ware (c.200/100-25 BC emphasis probably)

1 LIA flint and grog-tempered sandy ware (c.75/50-0 BC emphasis)

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- 2 LIA 'Belgic'-style grog-tempered greensand ware (c.75/50-0 BC emphasis; **same vessel**)
- 3 LIA 'Belgic'-style grog-tempered ware (c.50/25 BC-25 AD emphasis; incl. 1 x Thompson 1982 Type L1 lid)
- 2 LIA 'Belgic'-style grog-tempered ware (c.25 BC-25/50 AD emphasis probably; **same vessel**)
- 1 LIA 'Belgic'-style grog-tempered fine sandy ware (c.25 BC-25/50 AD; Thompson 1982 Type C1-2)
- 1 LIA-ER chaff-tempered ware (c.25-50/75 AD emphasis)
- 1 ER red fine sandy ware with coarse quartz and sparse flint inclusions (c.100/125-150 AD **probable** emphasis; **ODD**)

*Comment* : Bulk of earliest MLIA.LIA type material small-moderate sized, mostly fairly heavily worn – particularly the re-fired elements. LIA'Belgic' material dated to the later C1 BC or no later than c.25 AD is all fairly heavily worn – including the lid fragment. Conquest-period grog-tempered sherds are moderate-sized and fairly fresh – and date-allocated on this basis. The CTW fragment and the ER sherd are heavily worn and could be intrusive.

**Likely date** : Uncertain – *possibly* c.0-50 AD or slightly later - ? with intrusive elements

**Context: 1013** - 2 sherds (weight : 54gms)

- 1 LIA 'Belgic'-style grog and flint-tempered ware (c.50/25 BC-50 AD probable emphasis)
- 1 LIA 'Belgic'-style grog-tempered ware (c.50/25 BC-50 AD probable emphasis)

*Comment* : Moderate-sized bodysherds, the mixed-temper element slightly more worn than the purely grogged – latter near-fresh. Former form a comb-finished jar.

**Likely date** : Between c.25 BC-50 AD

**Analyst** : N.Macpherson-Grant 9.2016

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## **Appendix 2**

### **ASSESSMENT OF ONE WHOLE EARTH SAMPLE FROM POWER STATION ROAD, MINSTER-IN-SHEPPEY, KENT ( PSRQ-16-EV).**

**by Lisa Gray MSc MA ACIfA**

**September 2016**

#### **1. Introduction**

This report will describe the contents of one whole earth soil sample taken during the evaluation at Power Station Road, Minster-in-Sheppey, Kent and will assesses the significance and potential of any plant macro-remains present. Comments will also be made on faunal and inorganic material in the sample.

This 14L sample was taken from a linear feature (*pers.comm.* Faye Wills 2016).

#### **2. Methodology**

Sampling was carried out by the Swale and Thames Archaeological Unit team excavating the site.

This 14L sample was completely processed by the author using a recycling flotation tank with a 1mm mesh for the residue and 250 micron mesh sieve for the flot.

The residue and flot was air dried and examined by the author. The flot was scanned using a low-powered binocular stereo-microscope with magnifications of between 10 and 40 times. The quality of preservation, diversity of plant macro-remains, mollusca and bone were recorded as were any artefactual remains. A magnet was passed over the flots and residues to retrieve any magnetic material.

#### **3. Results**

##### **3.1. Inorganic Remains**

5ml of magnetic material was found in the residue but none of it was clearly hammerscale. None was found in the flot. Geological contents consisted of 100ml of round unburnt pebbles, 50ml of angular unburnt flint and 50ml of burnt flint.

##### **3.2. Zooarchaeological Remains**

One fragment of very abraded unburnt large mammal bone was present.

### **3.3. Botanical Remains**

No plant macro-remains were found in the residue. The 100ml flot was dominated by modern root/rhizome fragments and moderate quantities of charred wood flecks (<4mm Ø and too small to identify). No other botanical remains were present. No faunal or inorganic remains were present.

### **4. Potential and Significance**

The high proportion of uncharred root/rhizome fragments is indicative of bioturbation and aeration of the sampled context. This can produce preservation conditions favouring differential preservation favouring charred plant remains. The state of preservation of the bone fragments was also very poor.

The observation was made on site was that this deposit was probably an accumulation of hill-wash. No surface finds were present (*pers.comm.* Faye Wills 2016). The sample contents support this observation with one very abraded bone and scant plant macro-remains.

### **5. Recommendations**

Due to the lack of plant remains in this sample no further work is recommended. The flot and residue will be kept in the author's archive until directed otherwise by Dr Paul Wilkinson of SWAT.

### **6. Acknowledgements**

Thanks are due to Faye Wills (SWAT Archaeology) for site and sampling details.