

**Archaeological Strip, Map and Sample
Excavation
Of
Crown Quay Lane, Sittingbourne, Kent**



NGR 90862 64058

Site Code: CQL-EX-17

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Crown Quay Lane
Sittingbourne
Kent
CQL-EX-14

NGR 90862 64058

Archaeological Assessment Report

For
Redrow Homes.

July 2017

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Sittingbourne
Kent

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Archaeological Assessment Report

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1. Introduction

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Between 5th and 7th of June and 3rd and 4th of July 2017 SWAT Archaeology carried out an archaeological strip, map and sample (SMS) excavation on the site of the former Brickworks at Crown Quay Lane, Sittingbourne, Kent (NGR TR 90862 64058) in advance of the construction of a new housing estate and accompanying road scheme. The work was commissioned by Redrow Homes (address.....) A revised planning application for the proposed development (16/507877/FULL) was submitted to SwaleDistrict Council and subsequently granted consent on ???? with an attached condition (?) stating that

No development shall take place until the applicant or the developer, or their successor(s) in title has secured; firstly, the implementation of an 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; secondly, implementation of any mitigation measures, including further archaeological work that may be required as a result of the evaluation, to safeguard the preservation of archaeological remains; and; thirdly a programme of post-excavation analysis and recording of any matters of archaeological interest. All archaeological works shall be carried out in accordance with written programmes and schemes of work that have been first submitted to, and approved in writing, by the local planning authority.

1.2 An earlier archaeological evaluation by SWAT Archaeology was undertaken in May 2017.

1.3 All maps within this report have been produced from the Ordnance Survey with the permission of Her Majesty's Stationary Office, Crown Copyright. Licence number AL100031917.

2. Site Description (Figure 2)

2.1 The site of the former brickworks lies immediately west of Crown Quay Lane and is a large brownfield site on the northern edge of Sittingbourne town centre. The site was vacant and has been reduced to slab level. Its northern boundary is an important frontage to Milton Creek whilst its southern boundary adjoins Eurolink Way. The Sittingbourne Retail Park and Eurolink Industrial Estate border the site to the west and east. The OS location is NGR 90862 64058 and is approximately 10.68 hectares in extent (Figure 1).

2.2 The Strip, Map and Sample (SMS) comprised of 2 areas. Area 1 (including the site Access Road) and Area 2 were excavated as part of the initial phase of groundworks. Area 1 covered an approximate area of 4250m² and Area 2 covered c. 1700m².

The site had been subject to extensive brickearth extraction and geotechnical investigations undertaken on the site in June 2015 showed that Made Ground was encountered in almost all of the exploratory holes. The ground levels varied due to the landscaping of the site, between 12m aOD and 4m aOD.

According to the British Geological Survey the site lies on Bedrock Geology of Seaford Chalk Formation.

3. Aims and Objectives

3.1 Aims - The aims of the excavation, as set out in the Archaeological Method Statement (2017) include:

- Assessing the likely impact of the proposed development on the archaeological remains using the results of earlier fieldwork.
- Assessing the impact of past development on the site's archaeological potential.
- Excavating archaeological remains that are threatened by development.

3.2 Objectives - The principle objectives of the archaeological excavation were to:

- Establish the presence or absence of any archaeological resource which may be affected by the proposed development.
- Ascertain the extent, depth below ground surface (within safe parameters), and if possible, the character, date and quality of any buried archaeological remains and their possible relationship to archaeological features revealed by the earlier fieldwork.
- Determine the state of preservation and the importance of the archaeological resource within the wider confines of Canterbury's archaeology.
- Ensure preservation by record of the archaeological resource.

4. Methodology

4.1 Summary

A Written Scheme of Investigation for the site at Crown Quay Lane was submitted by SWAT Archaeology and passed by the Heritage Officer, Kent County Council. Within the Scheme a methodology was agreed upon which stated that the archaeological excavation would be undertaken in two phases, and the SMS would involve the investigation of two areas where there was potential for surviving industrial archaeological remains. Phase 1 consisted of the mechanical removal of the overlying demolition deposits followed by the cleaning and planning of all exposed archaeological features, deposits and structures at the uppermost horizon. Phase 2 comprised the implementation of the excavation strategy, including exploratory trenching, after consultation with the Heritage Officer and in agreement with Redrow Homes.

The SMS on the site comprised of two isolated areas. Area 1 was situated on a raised plateau, situated toward the southwest corner of the site at 7.19m aOD. Area 2 was situated within a reduced part of the site to the east at

4.13m aOD. Area 1 incorporated evaluation trenches 2 and 21. Area 2 incorporated trenches 15 and 17.

4.2 Phase One

As per the Written Scheme of Investigation, Phase One commenced with the machine removal of the demolition deposits of Area 1, followed by Area 2. The Access Road within Area 1 was removed last (to facilitate the groundworks).

4.3 Phase Two

The principle aim of the Phase Two excavation strategy was the preservation by record of all buried archaeological remains located within the two areas, especially in the case of brick kilns.

5. Historical Background

5.1 The rich and complex archaeology and history surrounding Sittingbourne is vast, therefore only the most recent archaeological work in Sittingbourne and entries in the Historical Environment Record (HER) are included here.

5.2 The most recent archaeological work in the area undertaken by SWAT Archaeology involved an evaluation on the site (CQL-EV-17) in May 2017 ([author 2017](#)). A common stratigraphic sequence was recognised across the site that comprised of the recent demolition of the brickworks, the survival (in two small areas) of early brickworks and the exposure, within the central area, of the natural brickearth and bedrock chalk due to large scale truncation and landscaping of the sites' topography. The evaluation also revealed that extensive truncation or land in-filling had taken place across the site, especially to the north, nearest Milton Creek, where extensive deposits of material suggest that the foreshore was reclaimed during the Victorian period, probably to facilitate the expansion of the brickworks.

5.3 Historic Environment Record (HER) Entries

The Kent County Council Historic Environment Record (KCCHER) has provided details of any previous investigations and discoveries. The potential of this area has been gauged in relation to the proximity of known archaeological remains. A high status Bronze Age burial or metal workers hoard was recovered within the site in 1824. Roman burials are recorded close to the site at TQ 913 640 (HER EWX 6567). An important 7th century Anglo Saxon cemetery with two clusters of burials were also recorded just to the west of the site in 1824-1826 (TQ 96 SW 27).

Further information on the above is provided in the Archaeological Desk-based Assessment and Archaeological Impact Assessment (CgMS 2016).

6. Site Narrative

6.1 The following narrative was based on the preliminary excavation archive of the SMS of two distinct areas within the development site at Crown Quay Lane. Area 1 was located toward the southwest corner of the site and it measured approximately 4250m². Area 2 was located towards the northeast corner of the site and measured approximately 1700m². The spot dating of the material recovered from this site has been fully completed and plans of the site have been included (Figs 2, 3, 4 and 5) showing feature location and their relationship with features and buildings..

Based on the completed excavation archive and material spot dating, the majority of the features can be grouped into two broad phases; Victorian/Edwardian and Modern.

6.2 Victorian/Edwardian (Figures 2, 3, 4 and 5)

The Victorian/Edwardian phase at Crown Quay Lane was represented by a series of yellow stock brick walls in Area 1 and a surviving group of brick clamps in Area 2.

The walls within Area 1 represented a group of permanent industrial buildings and internal divisions that were later demolished during the modern phase (Plates 1 – 3).

Wall [1011] was aligned NW-SE and was observed for a length of +35m. It was bonded with grey mortar containing charcoal and a single brick's width of 22cm. The southeast section was obscured by a large deposit of redeposited industrial waste material (1010).

Wall [1012] was also aligned NW-SE and was parallel to wall [1011]. It was also bonded with grey mortar containing charcoal and a single brick's width of 22cm. It also had a length of +35m.

Wall [1013] (Plate 4) was situated ?m southwest of wall [1012] and was exposed during the expansion of Trench 21. It had been grubbed out and sealed underneath redeposited industrial materials (1008). Aligned NE-SW the wall was set at 090° to wall [1012]. It was observed for a length of +12m and had a width of 1m.

Wall [1014] was located within the extreme southeast corner of the area. It had also been grubbed out and sealed underneath redeposited industrial materials (1009). Also aligned NE-SW, it was observed for a length of +3.50m and had a width of 0.75m.

The surviving brick clamps within Area 2 were arranged in NE-SW rows and set in to concave depressions within a large, continuous floor surface (2027). Each clamp was represented by at least two (sometimes three) successive phases of construction and demolition, represented by deliberately placed thin layers of material, creating individual platforms, that with each successive firing sometimes merged to form a single horizon. Their 'footprints' were roughly ovoid in plan and were mostly aligned NW-SE. The 'bedding layer' of each, during each phase of clamp construction, comprised of very compacted coarse greensand on which was placed a smaller deposit of very compacted flint gravel, which became discoloured red during firing. Encompassing several of the clamp 'footprints' was a deposit of black burnt material, which may represent the rakings of the spent fuel, after completion of the firing process.

Clamp One (BC.1) (Figs. 2, 4 and 5) was situated within the NW corner of the area and was aligned NW-SE. It had been severely truncated by the construction and subsequent demolition of the 20th century buildings. The 'footprint' measured 12m x +6m and occurred at 4.33m aOD. An exploratory machine cut trench revealed that the base of the depression within which the clamp was formed had a depth of 0.93m and occurred at 3.46m aOD. Exposed on the surface was a spread of very compact burnt, red flint (2000) which lay on top of a layer of very compact coarse greensand (2001).

Clamp Two (BC.2) (Figs. 2 and 4. Plates 5 and 6) was situated less than 2m south of clamp one. It was also aligned NW-SE. The 'footprint' measured 12m x 7m and occurred at 4.36m aOD. Exposed on the surface was a spread of very compact burnt, red flint (2003) which sat on a layer of very compact coarse greensand (2004). This in turn lay on a spread of burnt black material (2005) that extended eastwards.

Clamp Three (BC.3) (Figs. 2 and 4. Plate 6) was exposed during the evaluation (Trench 17) and was also aligned NW-SE. The SMS revealed that there were three phases of clamp construction, visible on the surface. Each phase migrated, subtly in a NE direction. The latest clamp was less than a metre south of clamp two and measured 5m x +3m and comprised of a layer of very compact coarse greensand (2006) at 4.54m aOD. This context lay on top of a second phase of clamp, that measured 10m x 3m and comprised of a large spread of very compact, burnt, red flint (2007), which in turn sealed a large spread of very compact coarse greensand (2008). The earliest phase, represented by a spread of very compact burnt, red flint (2009) measured 10m x +2m and occurred at 4.24m aOD. Butting up against, and along the southern edge of (2009) was a deposit of burnt black material (2010).

Clamp Four (BC.4) (Figs. 2, 4 and 5. Plates 7 and 8) was situated 7m east of clamp three. The exposed spread of very compact burnt, red flint (2011) of the clamp was aligned NE-SW, measured 6m x 3m and occurred at 4.22m aOD. The 'bedding layer' of very compact coarse greensand (2013) merged with that of clamp five. An exploratory machine cut trench revealed that the base of the depression within which the clamp was formed had a depth of 0.53m and occurred at 3.69m aOD.

Clamp Five (BC.5) (Figs. 2, 4 and 5. Plate 8) was situated 5m NE of clamp four, was aligned NW-SE and measured 6m x 5m . The northern section of the clamp had been truncated by the construction and subsequent demolition of the 20th century buildings. The exposed surface of the clamp comprised of a layer of very compact burnt, red flint (2012) that occurred at 4.31m aOD. This sat on a large spread of very compact coarse greensand (2013) that merged with clamp four. An exploratory machine cut trench revealed that the base of the depression within which the clamp was formed had a depth of 0.68m and occurred at 3.63m aOD.

Clamp Six (BC.6) (Figs. 2 and 4. Plates 8 and 9) was the best preserved example of the group, although the north section of the footprint was truncated by a wall from one of the 20th century factory buildings. The SMS revealed that there were three phases of clamp construction, visible on the surface at 4.22m aOD. Each phase migrated, subtly in a northerly direction. The latest clamp measured +10m x 7m and comprised of a layer of very compact burnt, red flint (2014) that lay on top of a very compact layer of coarse greensand (2015). This context lay on top of a second phase of clamp, that measured +2m x 4m and comprised of a large spread of very compacted, burnt, red flint (2016), which in turn sealed a large spread of very compacted coarse greensand (2017). The earliest phase, represented by another spread of very compact coarse greensand (2018) measured +1m x 5m and occurred at 4.08m aOD. Butting up against, and along the eastern edge of (2014) and (2015) was a deposit of burnt black material (2019) that also sealed the secondary and primary clamp phases.

The SMS of the area also revealed that the burnt black material (2019) was part of linear system of segments of burnt black deposits (2020) – (2026) that formed the outer, eastern, southern and western edges of the brick clamp area (Figs. 4 and 5).

6.3 Modern (Figures 2 and 3)

The modern phase at Crown Quay Lane was evident throughout the development site. Within the two SMS areas, the modern phase was predominantly represented by building debris filling the course of several walls that had been removed during the demolition of the industrial complex in 2010.

Walls [1001], [1002], [1003] and [1004] within Area 1, formed the footprint of at least one large-scale building aligned NE-SW. Part of this building had been divided into four NW-SE aligned rooms, formed by three concrete beams [1005], [1006] and [1007]. The floors within the building had been removed in 2010, and this exposed a series of redeposited industrial materials (1008), (1009) and (1010), laid down to consolidate the ground level prior to the construction of the modern building.

The modern phase within Area 2 was also observed as a series of walls, removed and backfilled with demolition debris in 2010. The footings of another building along the northeast LOE truncated Brick Clamp 6, confirming that the brick clamps pre-dated the construction of the modern buildings within the industrial complex.

7. Conclusion

The excavation at Crown Quay Lane, Sittingbourne comprised of two small areas within an extensive site of the former brickworks.

The landscape within the former brickworks was dominated by the remnants of a series of modern industrial buildings, demolished in 2010. The buildings had been constructed on platforms set at different levels. The construction of the modern buildings was responsible for the demolition of the Victorian/Edwardian buildings in Area 1 and the truncation of the remains of the brick clamps in Area 2.

In sum, the archaeological investigation at Crown Quay Lane, prior to the redevelopment of the site revealed a site that contained evidence of the brickmaking industry, spanning the Victorian and Modern periods.

8. Summary of Site Archive

The site archive comprised the following elements:

- Context register including: Context Register Sheets [\(1\)](#), Photo Register Sheets (10), Drawing Register Sheets (1) and Context Sheets [\(1\)](#)
- Drawings: 4 A3 permatrace drawing sheets comprising feature plans and associated sections (4 in total).
- Photographs: 149 Digital images
- Correspondence

9. Recommendations for Further Archaeological Assessment

Statement of Potential

The archaeological excavations at Crown Quay Lane, Sittingbourne, Kent have demonstrated the presence of Victorian through to Modern activities, related to the brick making industry on the Site. In light of the severe truncation of the site through a mixed process of landscaping and subsequent phases of demolition, re-building and further demolition of the industrial buildings on site, it is recommended that no further archaeological investigation is required.

10.Acknowledgements

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11. References

Kent County Council 'Exploring Kent's Past'

www.kent.gov.uk/ExploringKentsPast

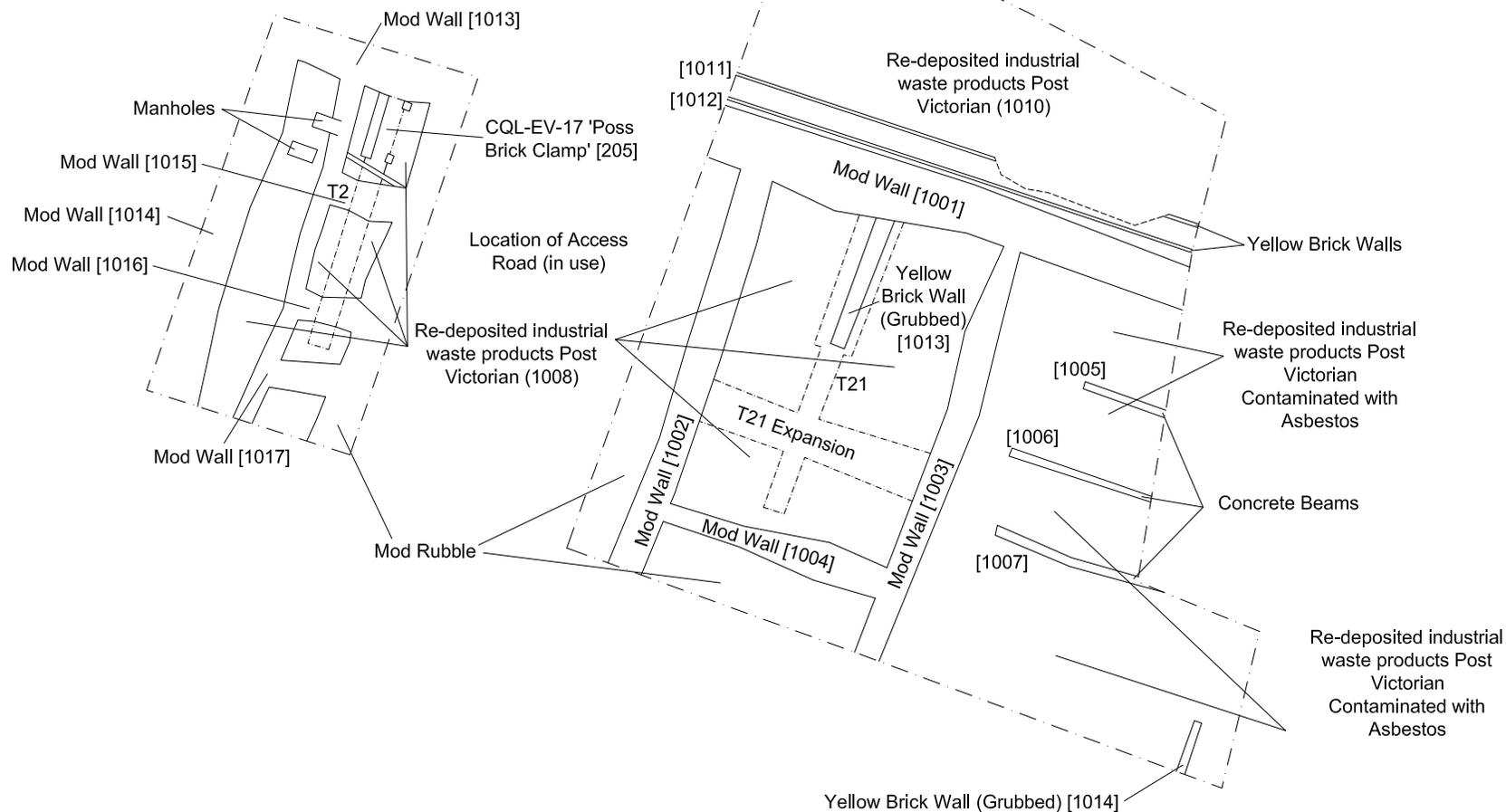
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CgMS 2016 Archaeological Desk-based Assessment and Archaeological Impact Assessment Report



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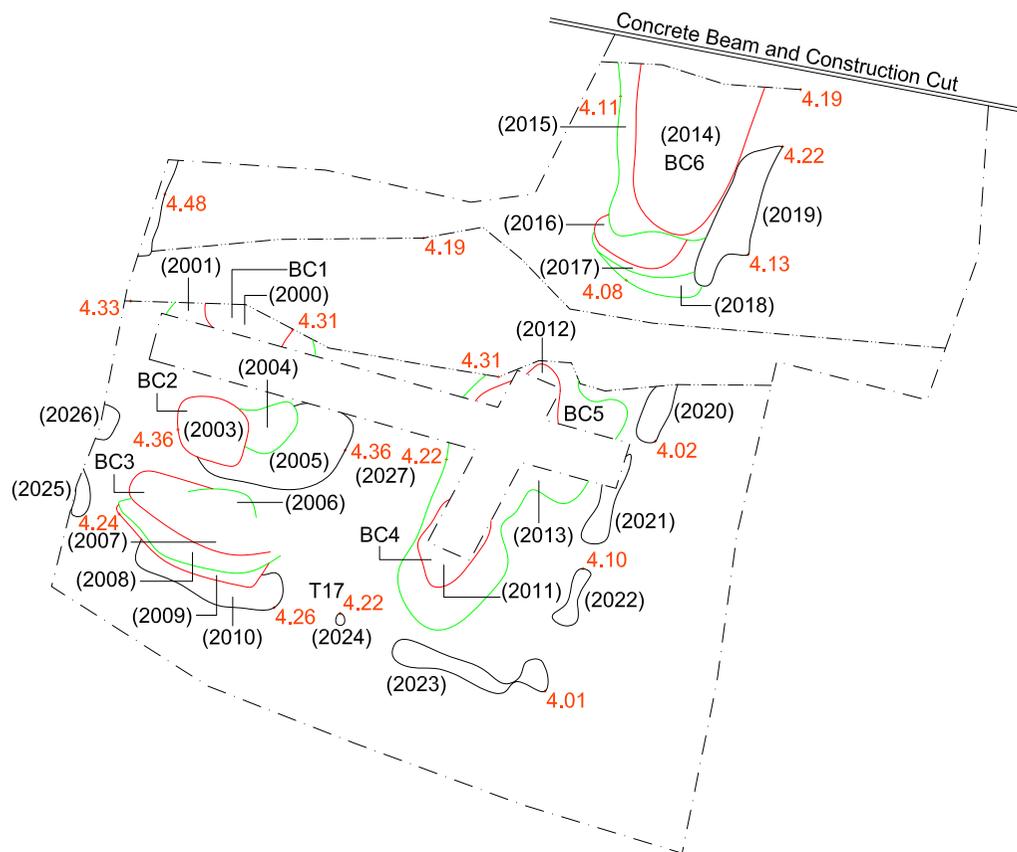
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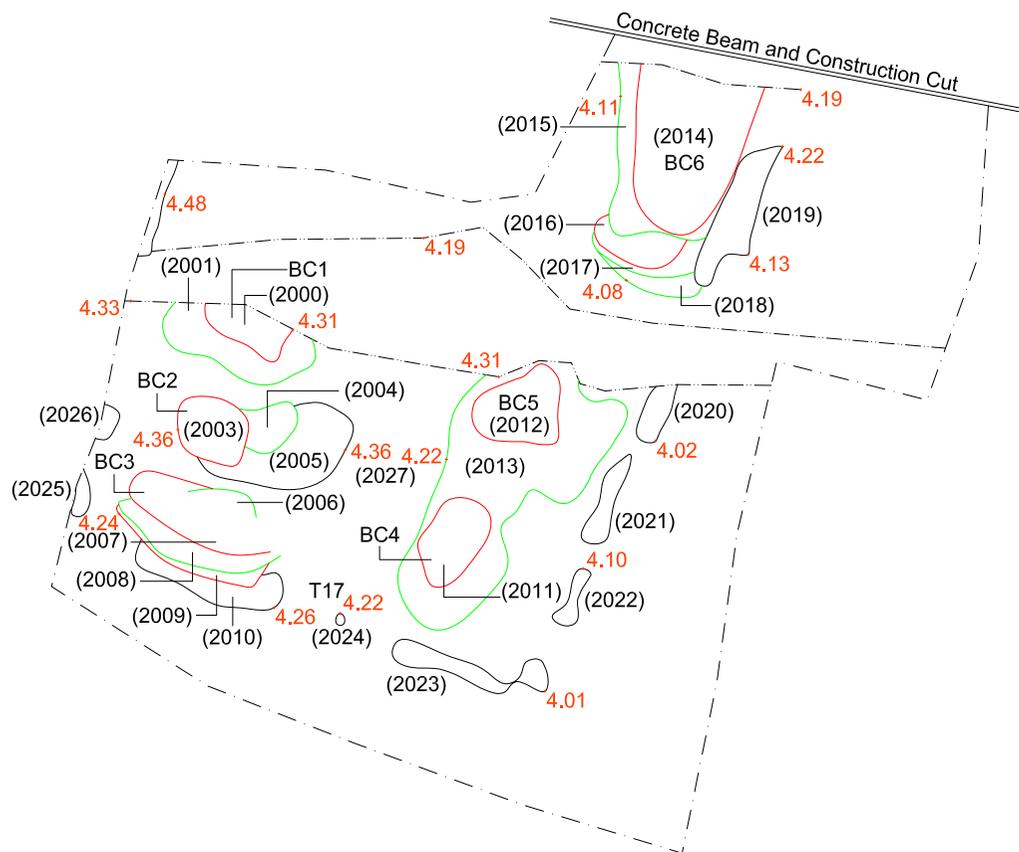
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