

Archaeological Evaluation of Land at the Proposed New Car Dealership, Ashford Road, near Canterbury, Kent



NGR: 611448 155736

Site Code: VOLVO/EV/19

(Planning Application: CA/18/01293)

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AP 1. Aerial photograph of site (9/4/2017) Google Earth

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NGR: 611448 155736

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1. Summary

Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT) carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at 68 Old Dover Road, Canterbury in Kent. A Planning Application (CA/18/01293) to develop this site for the site to form a new Volvo dealership was submitted to Canterbury City 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 (SWAT Specification A and CCC Manual Part B) and in discussion with the Archaeological Heritage Officer, Canterbury City Council. The results of the excavation of 23 evaluation trenches revealed that just one archaeological feature was present within the trenches (Trench 18 Figure 3). The natural geology of Clay, Silt was reached at an average depth of between 0.28m and 0.35m below the top layer of topsoil. 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 the landowners 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 (SWAT 2019) and in discussion with Rosanne Cummings, Archaeological Heritage Officer, Canterbury City Council. The evaluation was carried out on the 6th May 2019.

3. Site Description and Topography

The proposed development area (PDA) sits at an average height of circa 13.50m. The site is located to the west of Canterbury and situated in the Stour Valley on the northern side of the A28 Ashford Road and near to Chartham on the outskirts of Canterbury (AP 1 & Plate 1).

4. Planning Background

Planning permission has been obtained with the following Condition (5):

No development other than demolition shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of:

i) archaeological field evaluation works in accordance with a specification and written timetable which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority; and

ii) following on from the evaluation, any safeguarding measures 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 in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure that features of archaeological interest are properly examined and recorded in accordance with policies HE11 and HE12 of the Canterbury District Local Plan 2017 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

The results from this evaluation will be used to inform CCC Archaeology and Heritage and Canterbury City Council of any further archaeological mitigation measures that may be necessary in connection with the development proposals.

5. Archaeological and Historical Background

Details of previous discoveries and investigations within the immediate and wider area may be found in the Kent County Council Historic Environment Record and have been summarised in the Archaeological Desk Based Assessment produced by SWAT Archaeology (2018).

6. Aims and Objectives

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

6.1 The primary objective of the archaeological evaluation is to establish or otherwise the presence of any potential archaeological features which may be impacted by the proposed development.

6.2 Also to find out the depths of features below the surface, how much overburden and the extent of the depth of deposits themselves. In addition the dates and quality of any archaeological remains which will be achieved through a limited sample excavation of features. Human remains will not be excavated (see also CCC Evaluation Specification Part B: 4. Objectives).

7. Methodology

The Archaeological Specification called for an evaluation by trial trenching comprising a first phase of 23 trenches 20m long and 1.8m wide within the footprint of the proposed development. An 18.5 ton 360° tracked mechanical excavator with a flat-bladed ditching bucket was used to remove the topsoil and subsoil to expose the natural geology. All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with the specification. A single context recording system was used to record the deposits, and context recording numbers were assigned to all deposits for recording purposes. All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with CCC, SWAT and CifA standards and guidance.

8. Monitoring

Curatorial monitoring was available during the course of the evaluation.

9. Results

The 23 evaluation trenches exposed a deposit sequence consisting variably of stiff, light yellow-brown sandy clay with frequent flint inclusions, light grey-brown silty clay, spreads of poorly-sorted gravel and, in the northern part of the site, light grey silt, these being in part consistent with the much-reworked alluvial depositional regime that is characteristic of the flood plain of the Great Stour, as described, for example, by Gibbard and Lewin (2009), in their detailed discussion of this subject. However, a notable difference from that description was the absence of any peat or other organic on the present development site, as the Gibbard and Lewis paper states that:

'The increase in floodplain surface and channel stability was greatly enhanced from the early Holocene by establishment of woodland both in the catchment in general, but particularly on floodplain surfaces. Riparian [river bank] vegetation reinforced bank resistance. For example, in the River Stour valley peat that began at 9.8 ky and continued until recently, indicates a succession from *Betula* [birch] to *Salix* [willow] to *Alnus* [alder]-dominated forest ...Indeed, *Alnus* remains the dominant tree on lowland British floodplains to this day ... such dense woodland would certainly retard channel migration, leading instead to the stabilisation of multiple small channels that shifted by avulsion [sudden washing away of land]. In addition, these small channels were highly susceptible to damming by vegetational debris and by beaver activity, creating ponds.' (Gibbard and Lewis 2002, 6)

A previous, extensive investigation of the floodplain deposits undertaken between Chilham and Godersham (Allen 2009), some six kilometres to the southwest, identified many peaty deposits as described above and it can therefore be inferred that a slightly different depositional regime prevailed in this part of the lower flood plain.

The only archaeological feature exposed during the evaluation was an approximately north-south aligned ditch [1803], in which an exploratory slot was cut in Trench 18. The ditch was 1.53m wide, 0.28m deep and had a flattened concave profile. It contained two fills, a 0.16m thick mid-dark brown clay silt (1804) underlying a 0.12m thick upper fill of mid-light brown clay silt (1805), neither of which produced any datable material or any artefactual evidence.

The upper ditch fill in Trench 18 was sealed by a 0.3m-thick layer of the topsoil (1801), probably a plough/agricultural soil and which extended across the whole site (Plates 19,20).

For the trench narrative see **Appendix 1**.

10. Discussion

With a number of archaeological sites known in the vicinity of the PDA it was expected that the evaluation may produce evidence of archaeological activity. But there was just one. All trenches showed a typical sequence of topsoil and subsoil with Trench 18 exposing an undated ditch feature.

11. Finds

No finds were retrieved.

12. Conclusion

The evaluation trenches at the proposed development site revealed one archaeological feature. 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)**. 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 for commissioning the project. Thanks are also extended to Rosanne Cummings Archaeological Heritage Officer, Canterbury City Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by Bartek Cichy and Tim Allen MCIfA and the report written by Paul Wilkinson MCIfA.

Dr Paul Wilkinson 08/06/2019

14. References

- Allen, T., 2009, *An archaeological evaluation and watching brief along the route of the Chilham to Godmersham Main Lay*
- Gibbard, P. L. and Lewin, J. 2002 'Devensian (Weichselian) Late-Glacial-Holocene (Flandrian) fluvial sequence as an analogue' in *Climate and related controls on interglacial fluvial sedimentation in lowland Britain*, Quaternary Palaeoenvironments Group (University of Cambridge)
- Chartered Institute for Field Archaeologists (CIfA), Rev (2017). *Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation*
- SWAT Archaeology (2019) *Site Specific Requirements: Proposed New Car Dealership at Ashford Road, near Canterbury, Kent*
- SWAT Archaeology (2018) *Archaeological Desk Based Assessment for the Proposed New Car Dealership at Ashford Road, near Canterbury, Kent*

HER Summary Form

Site Name: Land at Ashford Road, near Canterbury, Kent

SWAT Site Code: VOLVO/EV/19

Site Address: As above

Summary:

Swale and Thames Survey Company (SWAT) carried out Archaeological Evaluation on the development site above. The site has planning permission for a new car showroom whereby Canterbury City Council Heritage and Conservation requested that Archaeological Evaluation be undertaken to determine the possible impact of the development on any archaeological remains.

The Archaeological Monitoring consisted of an Archaeological Evaluation which revealed an undated ditch.

District/Unitary: Canterbury City Council

Period(s):

NGR (centre of site to eight figures) 611448 155736

Type of Archaeological work: Archaeological Evaluation

Date of recording: May 2019

Unit undertaking recording: Swale and Thames Survey Company (SWAT. Archaeology)

Geology: Underlying geology is superficial deposits of Clay and Silt

Title and author of accompanying report: Wilkinson P. (2019) Archaeological Evaluation of Land at the Proposed New Car Dealership at Ashford Road, near Canterbury, Kent

Summary of fieldwork results (begin with earliest period first, add NGRs where appropriate)

One undated ditch found

Location of archive/finds: SWAT. Archaeology. Graveney Rd, Faversham, Kent. ME13 8UP

Contact at Unit: Paul Wilkinson

Appendix 1

Trench 1	Dimensions: 21.5m x 1.8m Depth: 0.32m Trench alignment: NW-SE SE ground level: 13.78m OD, NW ground level: 13.13m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
101	Topsoil Ploughed soil	Mid compaction, dark brown, silty clay with occ. stone	0.00-0.3
102	Natural	Firm compaction, medium orange brown, silty clay with occ. sub angular flint	0.3+
103	Natural	Flint gravel	1.1+
104	Modern cut	Edge of modern cut exposed at NW end of the trench. Feature had moderate sloping and flat base. Machine excavated	0.3-1.1
105	Backfill of [104]	Firm, dark brown clay with occ. modern rubbish	0.3-1.1
106	Modern pit	Rectangular in plan, un-excavated	0.3+
107	Backfill of [104]	Firm, dark brown clay with occ. modern rubbish	0.3+

Trench 2	Dimensions: 20.8m x 1.8m Depth: 0.32m Trench alignment: NE-SW NE ground level: 13.38m OD, SW ground level: 13.58m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
201	Topsoil Ploughed soil	Mid compaction, dark brown, silty clay with occ. stone	0.00-0.3
202	Natural	Firm compaction, medium orange brown, silty clay with occ. sub angular flint and freq. roots	0.3+

Trench 3	Dimensions: 20.3m x 1.8m Depth: 0.32m Trench alignment: NE-SW NE ground level: 13.82m OD, SW ground level: 13.76m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)

301	Topsoil Ploughed soil	Mid compaction, dark brown, silty clay with occ. stone	0.00-0.3
302	Natural	Firm compaction, medium orange brown, silty clay with occ. sub angular flint	0.3+

Trench 4	Dimensions: 20.3m x 1.8m Depth: 0.32m Trench alignment: NW-SE SE ground level: 13.59m OD, NW ground level: 13.57m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
401	Topsoil Ploughed soil	Mid compaction, dark brown, silty clay with occ. stone	0.00-0.3
402	Natural	Firm compaction, medium orange brown, silty clay with occ. sub angular flint	0.3+

Trench 5	Dimensions: 20.55m x 1.8m Depth: 0.3m Trench alignment: NW-SE SE ground level: 13.7m OD, NW ground level: 13.68m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
501	Topsoil Ploughed soil	Mid compaction, dark brown, silty clay with occ. stone	0.00-0.3
502	Natural	Firm compaction, medium orange brown, silty clay with moderate sub angular flint	0.3+

Trench 6	Dimensions: 21.02m x 1.8m Depth: 0.32m Trench alignment: NE-SW NE ground level: 13.51m OD, SW ground level: 13.59m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
601	Topsoil Ploughed soil	Mid compaction, dark brown, silty clay with occ. stone	0.00-0.3
602	Natural	Firm compaction, medium orange brown, silty clay with freq. sub angular flint	0.3+

Trench 7	Dimensions: 13.7m x 1.8m Depth: 0.32m Trench alignment: NE-SW NE ground level: 13.72m OD, SW ground level: 13.7m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
701	Topsoil Ploughed soil	Mid compaction, dark brown, silty clay with occ. stone	0.00-0.3
702	Natural	Firm compaction, medium orange brown, silty clay with occ. sub angular flint and freq. roots	0.3+

Trench 8	Dimensions: 20.05m x 1.8m Depth: 0.3m Trench alignment: NW-SE SE ground level: 13.68m OD, NW ground level: 13.66m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
801	Topsoil Ploughed soil	Mid compaction, dark brown, silty clay with occ. stone	0.00-0.3
802	Natural	Firm compaction, medium orange brown, silty clay with freq. gravel	0.3+

Trench 9	Dimensions: 21.02m x 1.8m Depth: 0.30m Trench alignment: NE-SW NE ground level: 13.58m OD, SW ground level: 13.56m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
901	Topsoil Ploughed soil	Mid compaction, dark brown, silty clay with occ. stone	0.00-0.28
902	Natural	Firm compaction, medium orange brown, silty clay with moderate gravel	0.3+

Trench 10	Dimensions: 21.2m x 1.8m Depth: 0.3m Trench alignment: NW-SE SE ground level: 13.62m OD, NW ground level: 13.36m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
1001	Topsoil	Mid compaction, dark brown, silty clay with occ.	0.00-0.3

	Ploughed soil	stone	
1002	Natural	Firm compaction, medium orange brown, silty clay with freq. gravel	0.3+

Trench 11	Dimensions: 19.3m x 1.8m Depth: 0.35m Trench alignment: NE-SW NE ground level: 13.25m OD, SW ground level: 13.51m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
1101	Topsoil Ploughed soil	Mid compaction, dark brown, silty clay with occ. stone	0.00-0.3
1102	Natural	Firm compaction, medium orange brown, silty clay with occ. gravel	0.3+

Trench 12	Dimensions: 24.7m x 1.8m Depth: 0.35m Trench alignment: NW-SE SE ground level: 13.37m OD, NW ground level: 13.18m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
1201	Topsoil Ploughed soil	Mid compaction, dark brown, silty clay with occ. stone	0.00-0.3
1202	Natural	Firm compaction, medium orange brown, silty clay with occ. gravel	0.3+
1203	Cut of modern ditch	Linear NE-SW aligned, 2.14m wide, unexcavated. Also exposed in Trench 14	0.3+
1204	Fill of [1203]	Firm compaction, dark brown, silty clay with occ. modern rubbish	0.3+

Trench 13	Dimensions: 20.52m x 1.8m Depth: 0.35m Trench alignment: NW-SE SE ground level: 13.48m OD, NW ground level: 13.47m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)

1301	Topsoil Ploughed soil	Mid compaction, dark brown, silty clay with occ. stone	0.00-0.3
1302	Natural	Firm compaction, medium orange brown, silty clay with occ. gravel	0.3+

Trench 14	Dimensions: 19.3m x 1.8m Depth: 0.35m Trench alignment: NE-SW NE ground level: 13.47m OD, SW ground level: 13.45m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
1401	Topsoil Ploughed soil	Mid compaction, dark brown, silty clay with occ. stone	0.00-0.3
1402	Natural	Firm compaction, medium orange brown, silty clay with occ. gravel	0.3+
1403	Cut of modern ditch	Linear NE-SW aligned, 2.14m wide, unexcavated. Also exposed in Trench 12	0.3+
1404	Fill of [1403]	Firm compaction, dark brown, silty clay with occ. modern rubbish	0.3+

Trench 15	Dimensions: 14.04m x 1.8m Depth: 0.35m Trench alignment: NW-SE SE ground level: 13.48m OD, NW ground level: 13.09m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
1501	Topsoil Ploughed soil	Mid compaction, dark brown, silty clay with occ. stone	0.00-0.3
1502	Natural	Firm compaction, medium orange brown, silty clay with occ. gravel	0.3+

Trench 16	Dimensions: 19.3m x 1.8m Depth: 0.35m Trench alignment: NE-SW NE ground level: 13.41m OD, SW ground level: 13.51m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
1601	Topsoil	Mid compaction, dark brown, silty clay with occ.	0.00-0.3

	Ploughed soil	stone	
1602	Natural	Firm compaction, medium orange brown, silty clay with occ. gravel	0.3+

Trench 17	Dimensions: 21m x 1.8m Depth: 0.35m Trench alignment: NW-SE SE ground level: 13.35m OD, NW ground level: 13.48m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
1701	Topsoil Ploughed soil	Mid compaction, dark brown, silty clay with occ. stone	0.00-0.3
1702	Natural	Firm compaction, medium orange brown, silty clay with occ. gravel	0.3+

Trench 18	Dimensions: 20.56m x 1.8m Depth: 0.35m Trench alignment: NE-SW NE ground level: 13.18m OD, SW ground level: 13.58m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
1801	Topsoil Ploughed soil	Mid compaction, dark brown, silty clay with occ. stone	0.00-0.3
1802	Natural	Firm compaction, medium orange brown, silty clay with occ. gravel	0.3+
1803	Cut of ditch	The ditch was 1.53m wide, 0.28m deep and had a flattened concave profile	0.3-0.58
1804	Primary fill of [1803]	dark brown clay silt	0.42-0.58
1805	Secondary fill of [1803]	light brown clay silt	0.3-0.42

Trench 19	Dimensions: 17.32m x 1.8m Depth: 0.35m Trench alignment: NW-SE SE ground level: 13.18m OD, NW ground level: 13.06m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)

1901	Topsoil Ploughed soil	Mid compaction, dark brown, silty clay with occ. stone	0.00-0.3
1902	Natural	Firm compaction, medium orange brown, silty clay with occ. gravel	0.3+
1903	Cut of modern pit	NE-SW aligned pit, 2.5m wide, shallow sides and flat base	0.3-0.44
1904	Fill of [1903]	Mid compaction, dark brown, silty clay with occ. modern rubbish	0.3-0.44

Trench 20	Dimensions: 12m x 1.8m Depth: 0.32m Trench alignment: NW-SE SE ground level: 13.33m OD, NW ground level: 13.58m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
2001	Topsoil Ploughed soil	Mid compaction, dark brown, silty clay with occ. stone	0.00-0.3
2002	Natural	Firm compaction, medium orange brown, silty clay with occ. sub angular flint	0.3+

Trench 21	Dimensions: 18.26m x 1.8m Depth: 0.35m Trench alignment: NW-SE SE ground level: 13.42m OD, NW ground level: 13.4m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
2101	Topsoil Ploughed soil	Mid compaction, dark brown, silty clay with occ. stone	0.00-0.3
2102	Natural	Firm compaction, medium orange brown, silty clay with occ. sub angular flint	0.3+
2103	Land drain	NE-SW aligned, 0.2m wide	0.3+

Trench 22	Dimensions: 12m x 1.8m Depth: 0.32m Trench alignment: W-E W ground level: 13.30m OD, E ground level: 13.58m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
2201	Topsoil Ploughed soil	Mid compaction, dark brown, silty clay with occ. stone	0.00-0.26
2202	Natural	Firm compaction, medium orange brown, silty clay with occ. sub angular flint	0.3+

Trench 23	Dimensions: 16.24m x 1.8m Depth: 0.35m Trench alignment: NE-SW NE ground level: 13.33m OD, SW ground level: 13.42m OD		
Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
2301	Topsoil Ploughed soil	Mid compaction, dark brown, silty clay with occ. stone	0.00-0.3
2302	Natural	Firm compaction, medium orange brown, silty clay with occ. gravel	0.3+
2303	Cut of Modern pit	The Pit was 2.91m wide, rectangular in plan, NW-SE aligned	0.3+
2304	Fill of Modern pit [2303]	dark brown clay silt with occ. modern rubbish	0.3+

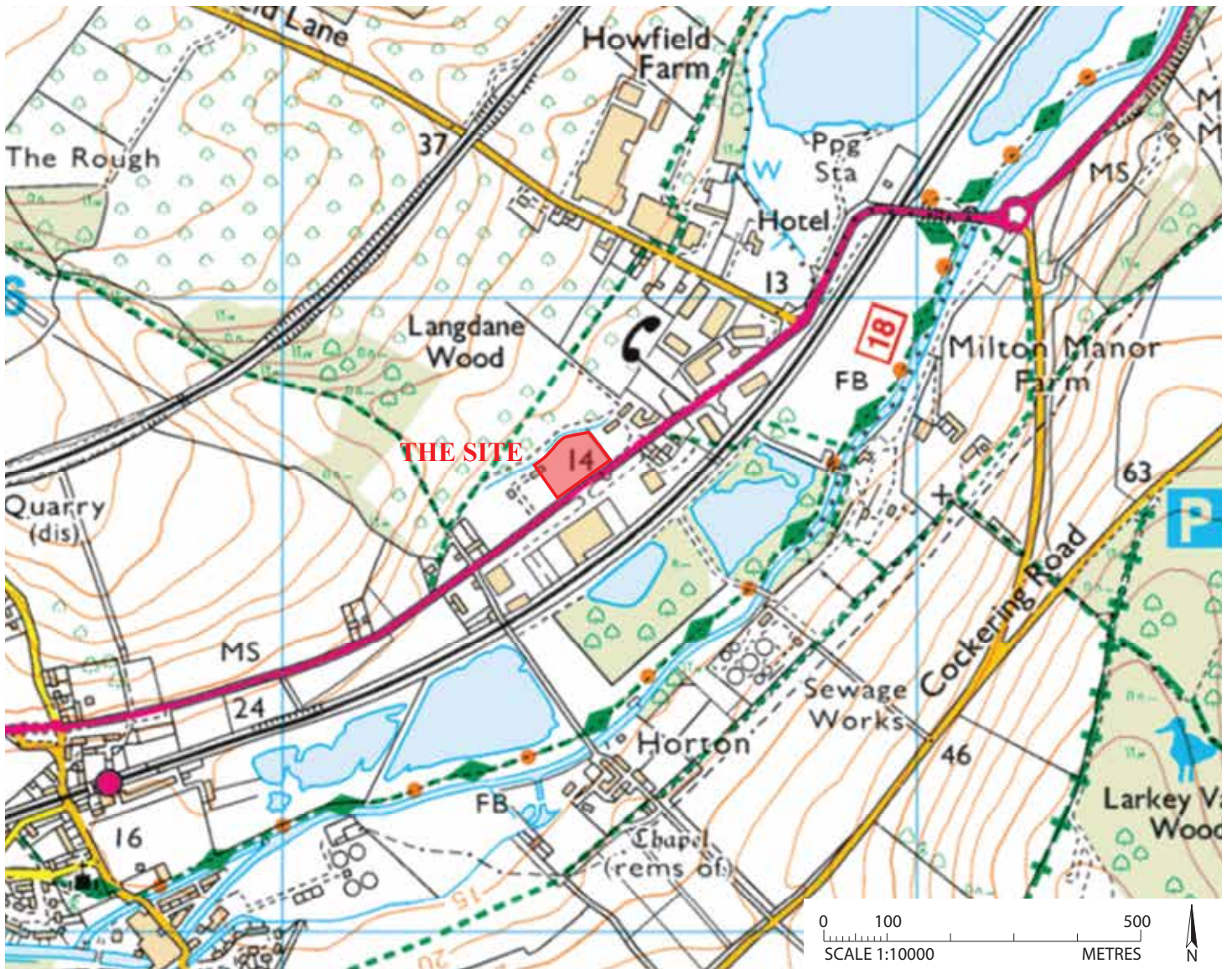


Figure 1: Site location map, scale 1:10000.

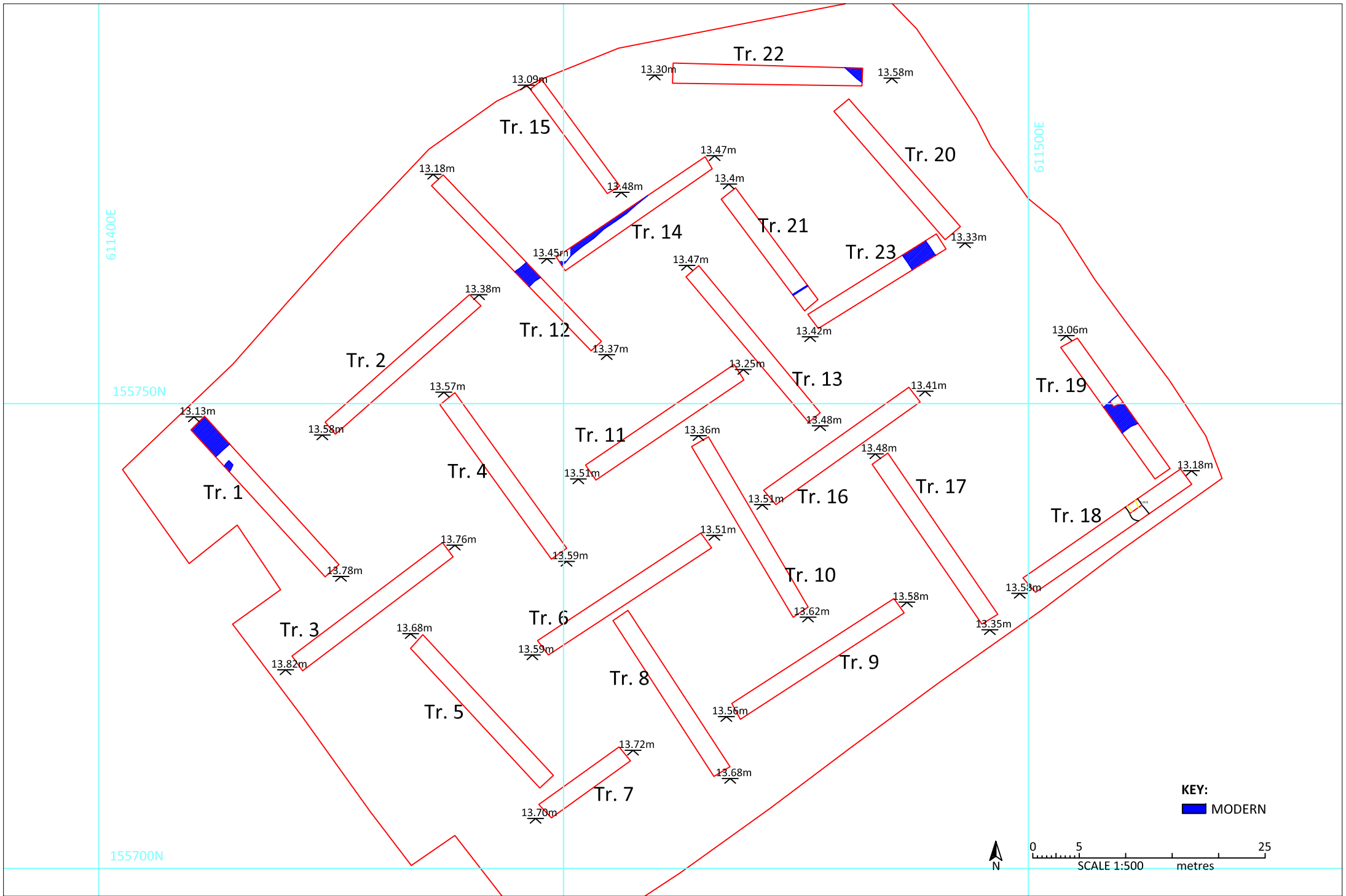
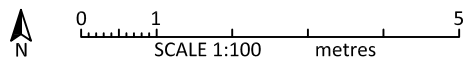


Figure 2: Trench location, scale 1:500



Tr. 18

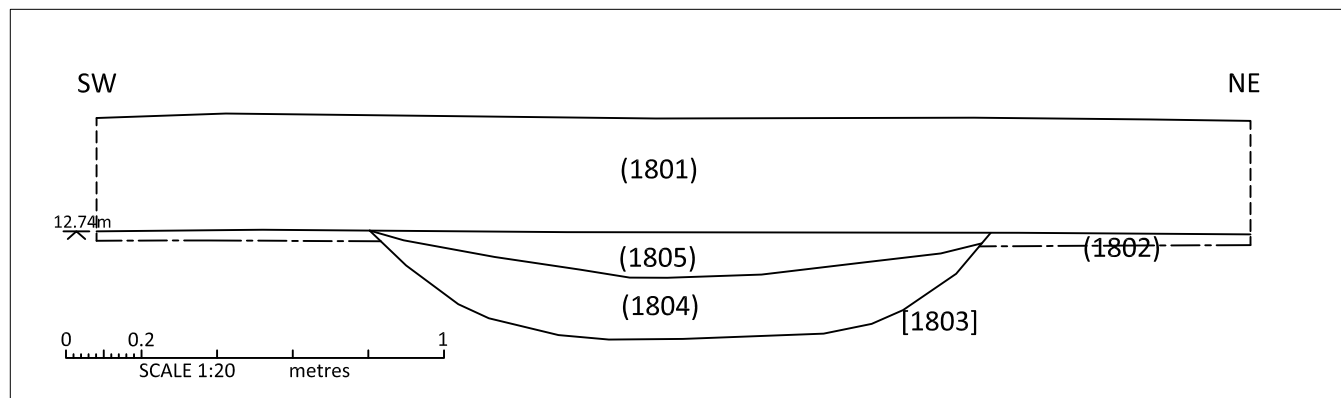
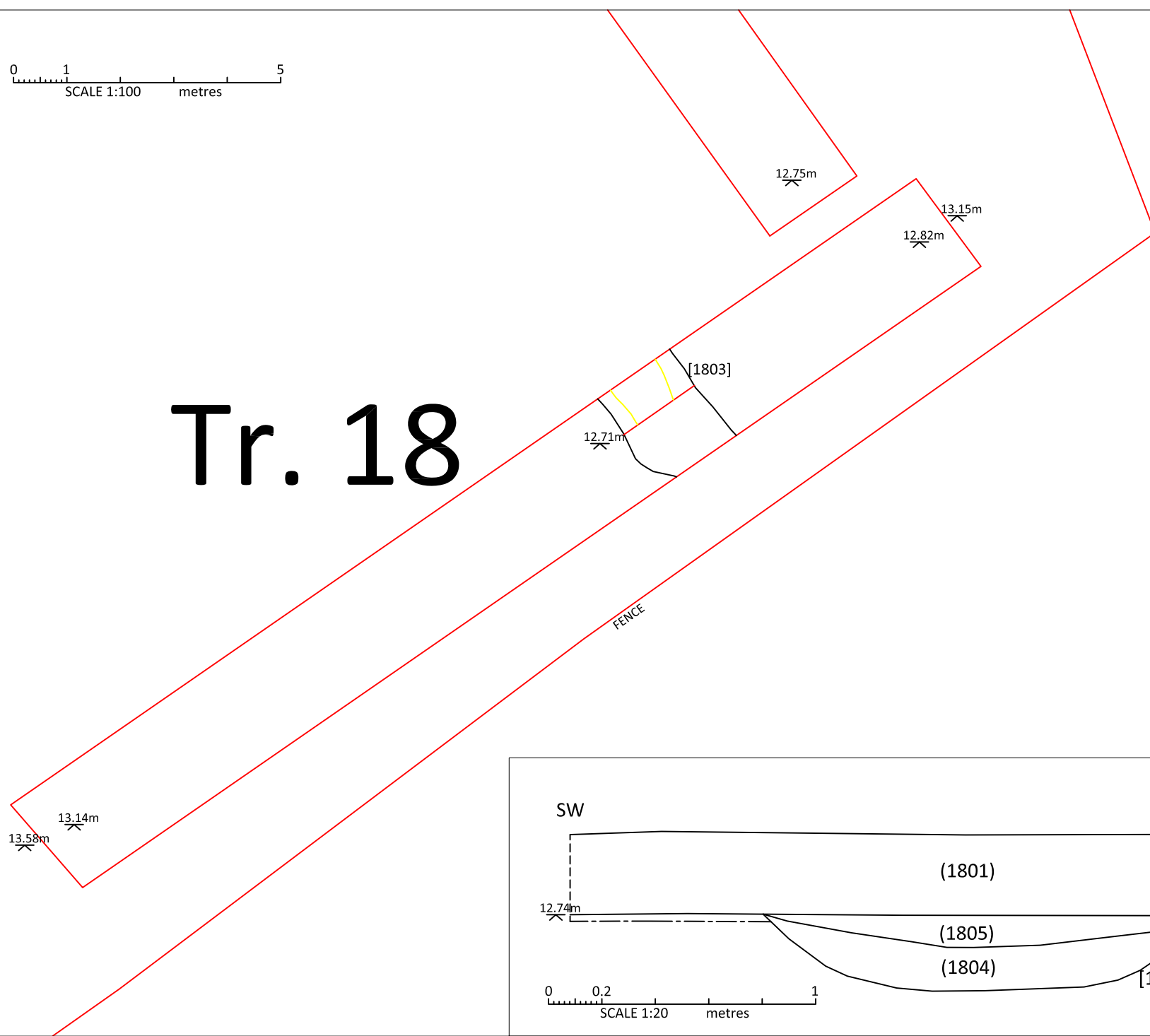


Figure 3: Trench 18

Plates



Plate 1: Looking east-south-east at the site



Plate 2: Trench 1 looking northeast, one-metre scale



Plate 3: Trench 2 looking northeast, one-metre scale



Plate 4: Trench 3 looking northeast, one-metre scale



Plate 5: Trench 4 looking northwest, one-metre scale



Plate 6: Trench 5 looking southeast, one-metre scale



Plate 7: Trench 6 looking northeast, one-metre scale



Plate 8: Trench 7 looking northeast, one-metre scale



Plate 9: Trench 8 looking southeast, one-metre scale



Plate 10: Trench 9 looking northeast, one-metre scale



Plate 11: Trench 10 looking northwest, one-metre scale



Plate 12: Trench 11 looking northeast, one-metre scale



Plate 13: Trench 12 looking northwest, one-metre scale



Plate 14: Trench 13 looking northwest, one-metre scale



Plate 15: Trench 14 looking east, one-metre scale



Plate 16: Trench 15 looking north, one-metre scale



Plate 17: Trench 16 looking east, one-metre



Plate 18: Trench 17 looking northwest, one-metre scale



Plate 19: Trench 18 looking east, one-metre scale



Plate 20: Slot through shallow ditch [1803] in Trench 18, one-metre scale