



Archaeological Evaluation Report

Land at The Coppice

Burbage

Hinckley



Report Number 243

Final Issue

Heritage Consultancy and Planning Services Ltd T/A Groundworks Archaeology.
8 Mercia Business Village, Torwood Close, Coventry, CV4 8HX

Company Registration: 11534563 VAT number: 304037842

Client Name: Springbourne Homes

Document Title: Archaeological Evaluation Report, Land at The Coppice, Burbage

Issue No.	Report Type:	Checked by:	Approved by:	Date Approved:
1	Draft for LA Review	Michael Blake	Aimie Roberts	29/04/2024
2	Final Issue	Michael Blake	Aimie Roberts	29/04/2024
3	Update with Enviro Results	Michael Blake	Aimie Roberts	10/06/2024

National Grid Reference: SP 44069 93728

Planning Reference: APP/K2420/W/22/3297466

Site Code: TCB24

Museum Accession X.A13.2024

Author: James Roberts

Groundworks Archaeology

Web: groundworksarchaeology.co.uk
Email: contact@groundworksarchaeology.co.uk
Phone 01676 540327

Disclaimer: This document has been prepared for the titled project or part thereof. It should not be relied upon for any other project or purpose without an independent check as to its suitability. Prior written authority from Groundworks Archaeology must also be obtained. No responsibility or liability is accepted by Groundworks Archaeology for consequences arising from this document being used for a purpose other than that for which it has been commissioned. Groundworks Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for this document to any party other than the person/party by whom it was commissioned. Any person/party who uses or relies on the document without the express consent of Groundworks Archaeology will, by such use, be taken as confirming their agreement to indemnify Groundworks Archaeology against any and all losses or damage arising as a result.

© Groundworks Archaeology

Heritage Consultancy and Planning Services Ltd T/A Groundworks Archaeology.
8 Mercia Business Village, Torwood Close, Coventry, CV4 8HX

Company Registration: 11534563 VAT number: 304037842

List of Contents:

	Summary	1
1.	Introduction	2
2.	Site Location and Description	2
3.	Planning Background	2
4.	Archaeological and Historical Background	4
5.	Aims and Objectives	6
6.	Methodology	6
7.	Results	7
8.	The Finds	9
9.	Discussion and Conclusions	13
10	Archive	14
11.	Acknowledgements	14
12.	Bibliography	14

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Trench Summary

Appendix 2: Plates

List of Figures:

Figure 1: Site Location

Figure 2: Trench Location Plan

Figure 3: Trench Plans (DWG's 6 and 8)

Figure 4: Drawings 1 and 2

Figure 5: Drawings 3,4 and 5

Heritage Consultancy and Planning Services Ltd T/A Groundworks Archaeology.
8 Mercia Business Village, Torwood Close, Coventry, CV4 8HX

Company Registration: 11534563 VAT number: 304037842

- Figure 6:** Drawings 7,9 and 10
- Figure 7:** Detailed Plan showing features identified in Trenches 1 and 6
- Figure 8:** Burbage Tithe Map, 1838
- Figure 9:** Ordnance Survey 25" map, edition of 1901, sheet XLII.8

Summary

Groundworks Archaeology was commissioned by Springbourne Homes to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at The Coppice, Burbage, Leicestershire. The work was carried out at the proposed development site between the 18th and 21st March 2024. The evaluation comprised of one 50m x 1.80m and six 30m x 1.80m trial trenches as specified in the written scheme of investigation.

The trenches were laid out to target a series of anomalies identified on a prior geophysical survey. None of the linears were identifiable within the trenches despite targeted investigation and hard cleaning. However, a number of the pits identified on the geophysical plot were indeed present, with a concentration of Romano-British features comprising a pit and spread in the southern corner of the site. These features were of 2nd century origin. Given that no other Romano-British features were identified in the other trenches it is likely that any associated activity extends to the south, south-east or south-west and that the spread and pit are periphery to Romano-British activity previously identified 60m south of the site (MLE2829).

The trenches targeting the north-eastern half of the site all demonstrated thick deposits of modern dumped material which corresponded with the geophysical data. It is likely that this material was deposited in an attempt to level the site sometime in the 20th century.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Groundworks Archaeology was commissioned by Springbourne Homes to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at The Coppice, Burbage, Leicestershire. The work was carried out at the proposed development site between the 18th and 21st March 2024.
- 1.2 The work was carried out according to the requirements of an archaeological condition, which was attached to the granting of planning consent on appeal (APP/K2420/W/22/3297466). This is in accordance with the principles established in *NPPF: Planning for the Historic Environment: Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide* (Department of Culture, Media and Sport, revised 2021), and *Standard for archaeological field evaluation* (CIfA, 2023).

2. Site Location and Description

- 2.1 The site lies on the northern edge of Burbage. Entry to the site is off The Coppice. A public footpath leading off from Woodgate Road forms the south-eastern boundary which is lined with trees and an overgrown hedgerow. The site itself is laid to pasture but has been abandoned for some years. The north-western boundary is formed by the rear garden plots of dwellings fronting onto The Coppice while the south-western boundary is formed by an access road and dwellings facing the site. The north-eastern boundary is open to further fields with a small area of overgrown woodland to the east containing a pond. The site is centred on NGR SP 44069 93728 at an approximate height of 113m AOD (Figure 1).

Geology

- 2.2 The British Geological Survey website identifies the bedrock geology as the Mercia Mudstone Group, a mudstone sedimentary bedrock formed between 252.2 and 201.3 million years ago during the Triassic period.
- 2.3 Superficial deposits are recorded as the Wolston Sand and Gravel, a sedimentary superficial deposit formed between 2.588 million years ago and the present during the Quaternary period. The northern corner of the site is recorded as the Bosworth Clay Member. A sedimentary superficial deposit formed between 480 and 423 thousand years ago during the Quaternary period.

3. Planning Background

- 3.1 A planning application (21/00556/FUL) was submitted to Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council for “No. 8 dwellings with associated access and

landscaping” on land at The Coppice, Burbage; consent was refused on the 27th October 2021. A subsequent appeal (APP/K2420/W/22/3297466) was lodged with the planning inspectorate which was granted on the 27th September 2022.

- 2.2 Consultee advice provided by Sophie Clarke (dated 14th June 2021) recommended a staged programme of archaeological mitigation, an initial trial trench investigation should be undertaken prior to the commencement of any permitted groundworks in order to devise an appropriate mitigation strategy.

2.3 The recommended condition wording was:

No demolition/development shall take place/commence until a staged programme of archaeological work, commencing with an initial phase of trial trenching has been undertaken. Each stage will be completed in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI), which has been [submitted to and] approved by the local planning authority in writing. For land that is included within the WSI, no demolition/development shall take place other than in accordance with the agreed WSI, which shall include the statement of significance and research objectives, and

- The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording and the nomination of a competent person(s) or organisation to undertake the agreed works.
- The programme for post-investigation assessment and subsequent analysis, publication & dissemination and deposition of resulting material. This part of the condition shall not be discharged until these elements have been fulfilled in accordance with the programme set out in the WSI.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory archaeological investigation, recording, dissemination and archiving

2.4 The wording of condition 8 of the appeal decision was as follows:

“No development shall commence until an archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include an assessment of significance and research objectives. If indicated to be required, it shall include the programme and methodology of any necessary site investigation and recording, and the development shall be carried out in accordance with this approved methodology”.

4. Archaeological and Historical Background

- 4.1 A Desk-based Assessment (Martin and Smith 2013) was prepared for a previous application, the results of which are summarised below and updated with more recent discoveries.

Prehistoric

- 4.2 The scatter of Prehistoric material across the assessment area indicates that there was Prehistoric activity in the area during this period, although its nature and extent is not fully known.

Roman

- 4.3 In 1933 three Roman jars were discovered in Burbage Sandpit at the corner of Sapcote and Burbage Road, c. 160m to the south of the site (LHER: MLE2829; NGR: 441 934). The jars included a pot of grey ware and a small decorated pot of Castor Ware, and it has been speculated that they may have been cremation urns. In 1950 two possible hearths were noted in this location and a quern was found on the site. A mosaic (MLE7936) was reported as being found at Horsepool with a further site (MLE2846) located at White House Farm consisting of coins, brooches and pottery.

Early-medieval and Medieval

- 4.4 According to the LHER the establishment of Burbage as a settlement occurred in the late Anglo-Saxon period (LHER: MLE2848; NGR: 49SW). This has been deduced from historic mapping and place name evidence. According to Frank Shaw, there are two sources for the place name Burbach. The first was suggested by J. Nichols in 1787 and derives from *Burr*, a form of thistle and *Bach*, a small rivulet and the second suggestion derives from the Saxon for *Bur*, a hill and *Bach*, a spring. The latter is seen as the more credible explanation as the settlement has various springs and is situated on a hill (Shaw, 1996).
- 4.5 There have been a number of Early-medieval finds recorded from the area including Saxon pottery and a square-headed brooch (MLE20670).
- 4.6 Domesday records 'Burbece' which was originally part of the Sparkenhoe Hundred of Leicestershire, in Guthlaxton Wapentake and now lies in the Borough of Hinckley and Bosworth. The land was held by Coventry Abbey and was valued at four pounds, housing 20 villagers, with two smallholders and two slaves. Prior to Domesday, the 1043 Foundation Charter of the Monastery of the Blessed Mary of Coventry records that 'Burbagh' was amongst townships given by Leofric, Earl of Mercia, to Coventry Abbey. Leofric, the Abbot of Coventry Abbey was supposedly mortally wounded in the battle against the Norman invasion at Hastings. In 1100 King William took lands away from Coventry Abbey and the manor of Burbach was given

- to Robert de Flamville and later passed to John de Hastings. The manor remained with the de Hastings family until 1401. In 1401, the Manor became the property of the Greys of Ruthin and remained under their ownership until 1797 (Nichols 1811).
- 4.7 To the south of the site a linear hollow way has been recorded in the playing fields of Hastings High School and it is suggested that it was probably the old course of the road from Burbage to Hinckley (LHER: MLE2831; NGR: SP 440 931). This may suggest that the current Burbage road, adjacent to the site is not on its original alignment. At the junction of London Road and Castle Street, to the north-west of the site, there is St Mary's Well, which is recorded in the LHER as of Early-medieval origin (LHER: MLE2897; NGR: SP 432 939). According to Nichols, six gold coins of Edward III were found near the well in 1755, (LHER: MLE6792; NGR: SP 433 940).
- 4.8 Within the centre of Burbage, to the south of the site, a Medieval fishpond has been located within the Manor House Grounds although it is believed to be associated with Burbage Hall, (LHER: MLE2843; NGR: SP 444 927). The Hall, which externally is an early 18th century red brick house with 17th century panelling, incorporates an earlier timber framed building which is believed to be the Earl of Gainsborough's hunting lodge, (LHER: MLE13024; NGR: SP 444 926).

Post-medieval

- 4.9 In 1564 the diocesan returns indicate the population was still small, consisting of 57 families; the settlement remained small, and the census of 1801 recorded only 1098 inhabitants. It was not until the 20th century that the population exceeded 2000. Between 1862 and 1864 the London & North Western Railways (LNWR) opened the South Leicestershire Line. The alignment of this effectively prevented Burbage from being swallowed by the expansion of Hinckley and thus the village remained a separate entity and also perhaps contributed to some extent to its relatively slow growth. Nevertheless Burbage did effectively become a suburb of Hinckley in the 1950s with the building of Sketchley Hill housing estate, which alone added over 3000 people to the population.
- 4.10 The earliest historic mapping consulted was the Burbage Tithe map of 1838 (figure 8). This shows the site as part of an arable field named Long Close. No change was shown on the Ordnance Survey 25" map of 1901 (figure 9).

Previous Investigations

- 4.11 A geophysical survey (MLE28483) was undertaken on the site in 2013 (Parker 2013). It recorded a number of possible linear features running approximately south-west to north-east, one of which represents a probable field boundary and three further weak linear responses. Several discrete features that may represent pits were also identified (the geophysical survey

interpretation from the Stratoscan report is shown on figure 2 in yellow). The consultee comments note that these anomalies may represent a continuation of the Roman features identified under HER reference MLE2829 and described in paragraph 4.3.

5 Aims and objectives of the project

5.1 The aim of the project was to determine the presence or otherwise of archaeological features within the application site, knowledge of which could be used to inform further mitigation.

5.2 The objectives of the project were:

To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the area of the development site.

To determine the type, extent, condition, nature, character, quality, function, and date, of any archaeological remains encountered.

To gain information about heritage assets identified within the area of the proposed development site.

To mitigate potential threats.

To interpret the archaeology of the site within its local, regional and national context.

To provide sufficient data to formulate a suitable archaeological mitigation plan.

6. Methodology

6.1 The archaeological evaluation was carried out between the 18th and 21st March 2024. This involved the mechanical excavation under archaeological supervision of one 50m x 1.80m and six 30m x 1.80m trial trenches. All trenches were laid out vis DGPS survey as specified in the WSI. Trench 5 was re-orientated to avoid the hedged boundary and trench 7 was re-orientated and shortened to 19.5m to avoid the site access.

6.2 Where necessary, surfaces were hand cleaned for examination and recording and deposits observed were recorded on standard pro-forma recording sheets.

- 6.3 Full context descriptions are provided in the trench summary which is presented in Appendix 1.
- 6.4 A digital colour photographic record was also maintained, some of which is reproduced in this report as plates 1–21 Appendix 2.
- 6.5 All work was carried out according to the agreed Written Scheme of Investigation and in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) standards and guidance for archaeological evaluations.

7. Results

Trench 1

- 7.1 Trench 1 was excavated to a length of 49.30m and a width of 1.80m (plates 1 and 2, dwg 8 figure 3). The uppermost deposit was the topsoil (101) which was up to 0.26m thick. This overlay a subsoil (105) up to 0.12m thick which sealed the natural (102).
- 7.2 A sub oval pit [103] measuring 1m wide and exceeding 1.75m in length (extent unseen) cut from the topsoil. It contained a single fill (104) which contained modern window glass, coal, nails and pottery. This feature was also present on the geophysical survey (plates 3 and 4, dwg 7 figure 6).
- 7.3 A spread (106) was present towards the south-east end of the trench, it lay on top of (102) and was sealed by the subsoil (105). The spread was irregular in plan and up to 3.20m across (length unseen). It measured 0.09m in depth and contained pottery, CBM and a heat cracked stone. This feature was also present on the geophysical survey (plate 5, dwg 9 figure 6).
- 7.4 The geophysical survey identified three potential linear features crossing the trench on a north-east to south-west orientation, these potential features were not discernible in plan. Their exact location was surveyed in via DGPS, the sections cleaned and slots excavated across their location to no avail (plate 6). Interestingly, a land drain crossed the trench orientated north-west to south-east that was not identified on the geophysical survey.

Trench 2

- 7.5 Trench 2 was excavated to a length of 29.70m and a width of 1.80m (plates 7 – 9, dwg 1 figure 4). The uppermost deposit was a topsoil (201). At the south-west end of the trench the topsoil overlay a subsoil (203) which in turn sealed the natural geology (204). At the north-eastern end of the trench the topsoil overlay a modern dumped deposit (202) comprising of rubble with glass and plastic up to 0.55m thick which in turn overlay the subsoil (203). The natural topography sloped down to the north-east and it appears that

rubble and other rubbish was used to level up the area. No archaeological features were present within the trench.

Trench 3

- 7.6 Trench 3 was excavated to a length of 29.50m and a width of 1.80m (plates 10-12, dwg 2 figure 4). The uppermost deposit was topsoil (301). This overlay a modern dumped deposit (302) comprising of rubble with plastic, glass and metal up to 1.06m thick. This in turn sealed (303) a buried subsoil up to 0.20m thick which in turn overlay the natural. The natural geology comprised largely of sand (303), however, the north-eastern end of the trench revealed a geological horizon where it transitioned to a stiff clay (305). This accords with the BGS mapping which shows the Bosworth clay member present in the northern corner of the site. No archaeological features were present within the trench.

Trench 4

- 7.11 Trench 4 was excavated to a length of 29.20m and to a width of 1.80m (plates 13-15, dwg 3 figure 5). The uppermost deposit was the topsoil (401), which overlay a deposit of made ground (402) made up of 20th century rubbish and rubble up to 0.51m thick (as seen in trenches 2 and 3). The made ground overlay a buried subsoil (403) which directly sealed the natural (404). No archaeological features were present within the trench.

Trench 5

- 7.11 Trench 5 was excavated to a length of 30.50m and a width of 1.80m (plates 16-18, dwg 4 figure 5). Due to the thickly hedged boundary of the site the trench was re-oriented to the south-west to avoid damage to root systems along the boundary. The uppermost deposit comprised of topsoil (501) which overlay a deposit of made ground (as seen in trenches 2,3 and 4) up to 0.20m thick. This in turn overlay the natural geology (303).

Trench 6

- 7.11 Trench 6 was excavated to a length of 30.04m and a width of 1.80m (plates 19-21, dwg 6, figure 3). The uppermost deposit was the topsoil (601). This overlay a subsoil (606) which in turn sealed the natural (602). A single sub oval pit [603] truncated the natural (plate 21, dwg 5 figure 5) . It had a gradual break of slope to top with shallow concave side breaking into convex with an imperceptible break to a flat base. The primary fill (604) was a reddish orange clay up to 0.05m thick which had possibly been subjected to in-situ burning. This was overlain by a secondary fill (605) which was up to 0.13m thick, containing roman pottery and CBM. The pit was sealed by the subsoil (606).

Trench 7

- 7.11 Trench 7 was re-orientated to the north-east and shortened to avoid the site access. The trench was excavated to a length of 19.50m and a width of

1.80m (plates 22-24). The uppermost deposit was the topsoil (701) which directly sealed the natural (702). No subsoil was evident within the trench and no archaeological features were identified.

8. The Finds

8.1 Pottery Jerry Evans

8.1.1 Some 36 sherds of Roman pottery weighing 285g were presented for examination. The average sherd weight is 7.9g, a low figure, below the usual range for Lowland Zone basic level rural sites. Five rimsherds are represented with a total RE value of 69%. The pottery has been catalogued following the Warwickshire Museum recording system and following the Warwickshire County fabric type series.

Chronology

8.1.2 There are just two samian sherds from the site, a Central Gaulish Dr 18/31 or 31 base and a Central Gaulish D37 decorated bodysherd, AD120-200. Class E fabrics are absent and there is no evidence for pottery deposition here before AD70. All of the datable material from the site is of later first to second century date, and all might be second century.

8.1.3 Stratified pottery only comes from two contexts, 107 and 605. The latter is Flavian or later and might be later first to second century. The former contains the sherd of decorated Central Gaulish samian ware, AD120-200, and a sandy greyware jar with a beaded rim (R01 J1.1), probably of Bubbenhall type, perhaps cAD70-200.

8.1.4 The unstratified material includes a Central Gaulish Dr 18/31 or 31, AD120-200, and a Mancetter mortarium flange, from a class A or B beaded and flanged mortarium, with a stamp of die 1 of BONOX(u)S dated by Hartley AD125-155.

8.1.5 Minimally the whole assemblage from the site might date to the second century.

Other

8.1.6 There is far too little material from the site to say anything meaningful about the type of site the assemblage represented.

The Roman tile

Catalogue

8.1.7 Context 107 Trench 1

A flat tile fragment, sanded on one side, 25mm thick. Wt 344g. Possibly a

tegula fragment, probably Mancetter fabric.

Context 605 Trench 6

Two fragments of imbrex, 14mm thick, possibly Mancetter fabric. Wt 106g.

A flat tile fragment with edge, 26mm thick, possible Mancetter, Wt 95g, possibly tegula.

A flat tile fragment, base sanded, 18mm thick, probably Mancetter fabric, Wt 143g.

A flat tile fragment with edge, 31mm thick, possibly floor tile? Fabric hard, purplish fabric with common coarse sand c0.4-0.5mm. Wt 207g.

A tegula flange fragment, tile and flange height 41mm, flange width 23mm, tegula thickness 19mm, Wt 262g. Brodribb (1987) fig 6, second drawing on right. Probably Mancetter fabric.

A tegula flange fragment, underside sanded. Flange and tegula height 42mm, flange width 30mm, Tegula thickness 23mm, Wt 316g. Brodribb (1987) fig 6, second drawing on right. Probably Mancetter fabric.

Context U/S Trench 1

A flat tile fragment, sanded on one side, 21mm thick, Wt 158g. Possibly a tegula fragment, probably Mancetter fabric.

Discussion

- 8.1.8 There are 9 tile fragments weighing 1.631kg. Most are in a fabric which would not be inconsistent with a Mancetter origin. There is far too little material to draw any firm conclusions from this small collection, although tile does appear relatively common compared with the pottery. There is no hypocaust tile, and all the material might originate from roofing, whether on this site or elsewhere is unclear.

8.2 Slag David Dungworth

- 8.2.1 A single fragment of iron working slag was recovered from context (107) weighing 49g. The smoother surface is likely the upper surface which incorporates fragments of partially melted ceramic (probably hearth lining) and is likely a smithing hearth cake indicative of a blacksmith operating in the vicinity.

8.3 Flint Dr Lynne Bevan

- 8.3.1 One unstratified worked flint was recovered from the site, a small side and

end scraper made on a flake of light-mid brown translucent flint which was in a good, fresh condition, with no evidence for abrasion or re-cortication. Small areas of remnant cortex on the scraper were thin and compacted and characteristic of flint from a secondary source, probably local gravels.

- 8.3.2 The scraper had a pronounced bulb of percussion, and retouch and traces of use-wear around 90% of its outer edges, the only unworked sections being the small slivers of cortex on both distal and proximal ends of the dorsal face. Although not closely chronologically-diagnostic, such tools are generally dated to the later Neolithic to Early Bronze Age period (Butler 2005, Fig. 70:8, 166). Though scrapers are the most common tool type found on sites of those periods (*ibid*, 166), the presence of a single scraper in an unstratified context is of no great significance in itself and probably represents a chance loss or single-episode of activity in the landscape rather than settlement of any duration.

8.4 Environmental Analysis Bekky Hillman

- 8.4.1 Two environmental samples of 20 litres taken during the archaeological evaluation at land at The Coppice, Burbage (TCB24) were assessed for carbonised plant remains. Samples were taken from two pit features that have been dated to the Roman period, possibly later second century (Evans 2024).
- 8.4.2 Samples were processed in entirety by Archaeology Warwickshire using the standard procedures for floatation with residues retained on a 500µm mesh and flots retained on a 300µm sieve. The flots were dried before examination, then sieved and fractionated into 4mm, 2mm and 300µm fractions from which any charcoal or charred remains were sorted, separated, and bagged.
- 8.4.3 All samples were rapidly assessed using an Aspen stereo binocular microscope (X10-500).
- 8.4.4 The assessment considers archaeobotanical potential, preservation of the remains and quantities recovered, this will aid sampling strategies for mitigation. Nomenclature for cereals follows Zohary et al. 2012 and other plants Stace 2019. The term seed may include achene, fruit, nutlet in this assessment.

Results

Context 107 Pit fill (Sample 1)

- 8.4.5 This sample contained a single grain of hulled wheat (*Triticum spelta/dicoccum*). Wild seeds of stinking mayweed (*Anthemis cotula*), knotweeds (*Polygonaceae* sp.), and grasses (Poaceae) with some grass chaff also noted. Charcoal of 4mm was rare but fragments of 2mm were

abundant. A small amount of burnt bone was also found in the residue of this sample.

Context 604/605 Pit fill (Sample 2)

- 8.4.6 This sample contained a partial indeterminate cereal grain. Charcoal of 4mm was rare but fragments of 2mm were abundant. Insect exoskeletal material and sclerotia, compact masses of hardened fungal mycelium, were also recovered.

Discussion

- 8.4.7 Both samples contained carbonised material showing that charred plant remains, and charcoal survive within the features. The flots recovered were small and whilst there was not a diverse range of species, preservation was fair. The small amount of charcoal and charred plant remains indicate low levels of settlement related burning activity taking place in the area.
- 8.4.8 Sample 1 from pit fill 107 contained a single grain and wild seeds from disturbed ground, amongst the seeds there were also charred remains of wild seed stems as well as abundant fragments of charcoal, and fragments of burnt bone. Sample 2 from pit fill 605 was almost devoid of plant remains though small fragments of charcoal were abundant.
- 8.4.9 The number of samples is too small to say anything meaningful about the site, however with only three archaeological interventions producing evidence of Roman activity in the area (Roberts 2024) results from further works could be locally and possibly regionally significant. The current results indicate that there is potential during mitigation to recover a charred plant assemblage that could be useful for research.

Research aims

- 8.4.10 Results at mitigation could contribute to research, particularly those of the East Midlands Framework including **strategic objective 5E** to '*promote the integration of specialist studies of material relating to subsistence, diet and health*'. There is scope for enhancing the paleoenvironmental record – notably by encouraging regular sieving for fish bones and by ensuring that bulk samples are large enough to yield sufficient floral and faunal data to permit meaningful analysis (Dobney 2001). Addressing such questions as: *5.5.3 What is the evidence for the diet of people of high and low status in urban and rural settlements, especially those close to military sites?*
- Strategic Objective 5H** '*Investigate the landscape context of rural settlements*' appropriate environmental sampling strategies need to be encouraged to accumulate botanical and faunal data that will provide a secure foundation for studies of changing landscape context and site location strategies. Thus, addressing questions such as: 5.4.3: How did rural settlements relate to each other and to towns and military sites, and

how may this have varied regionally and over time? 5.4.5: What patterns can be discerned in the location of settlements in the landscape? There is also the potential for carbon dating of material addressing **Strategic Objective 5C** '*Promote the systematic application of scientific dating techniques to sites of the Roman period*'.

Recommendations

- 8.4.11 Should further work be undertaken it is recommended that, where possible, sample sizes of 40 litres should be taken of secure contexts, particularly contexts that are a single episode of activity (e.g. a tipping event or in situ burning).
- 8.4.12 In Leicestershire and Rutland, the consistency of coverage over the last decade or more means that a solid base of archaeobotanical understanding has been built up with a high proportion of sites in Leicestershire having been well sampled (Carruthers and Hunter 2019). Therefore, a targeted research strategy may be suitable for the Roman period to help more accurately date activity and understand the processes of agricultural and environmental change (EMHERF; Roman Period), however expanding our knowledge of the transitional period and the introduction of new crops, herbs and fruits will need consideration.

9. Discussion and Conclusions

- 9.1 The evaluation trenches targeted a number of geophysical anomalies including linear features and potential pits. None of the potential linears were identifiable despite surveying in their location and subjecting the area to intensive hand cleaning. Interestingly, a land drain was identified in trench 1 which was not visible on the geophysical data.
- 9.2 The earliest find from the investigation was an unstratified flint dating from the late Neolithic Early Bronze Age transition, although this likely represents a stray loss indicating general activity in the wider landscape at this period rather than any concentrated activity.
- 9.3 A number of Roman features were identified in the southern area of the site. A spread (106) containing pottery, CBM and a single fragment of slag was identified at the south-eastern end of trench 1. This corresponded to a geophysical anomaly which had been interpolated as a potential curvilinear feature. Trench 6 contained a single sub oval pit [603] which contained Roman pottery contemporary with that identified in trench 1. Both features contained CMB, primarily roof tile indicative of a building in the vicinity. All of the Roman material recovered was datable to a 2nd century deposition date.

- 9.4 Given that no other Romano-British features were identified in the other trenches it is likely that these features are periphery activity associated with Romano-British activity identified 60m south of the site (MLE2829) as described in paragraph 4.3. It is possible that further features are present between trenches 1 and 6 and the southern site boundary (see figure 7 for feature locations).
- 9.5 A single pit of modern origin [103] was identified in trench 1. The trenches targeted on the north-eastern portion of the site all identified thick layers of modern dumped material. This corresponded to the geophysical data and also matched anecdotal accounts of the site being used as a farmer's dump during the 20th century. The natural topography of the site would have sloped down to the north-east and it is likely that this dumping was an attempt at levelling the site.

10. Archive

- 10.1 The Project will be archived with the Leicestershire Museum Service under the accession code X.A13.2024. The digital records will be lodged with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) and final report uploaded to OASIS.

11. Acknowledgements

- 11.1 Groundworks Archaeology would like to thank Springbourne Homes for commissioning this investigation. We would also like to thank Mr William Kelly of the Leicestershire Historic and Natural Environment Team for his assistance during the course of the project.

12. Bibliography

ADS 2013 Caring for Digital Data in Archaeology: a guide to good practice. Archaeology Data Service & Digital Antiquity Guides to Good Practice

British Geological Survey online viewer
<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>

Brown, D H 2011 Archaeological Archives: a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation (revised edition). Archaeological Archives Forum

Butler, C. 2005 Prehistoric Flintwork. Tempus Publishing Ltd, Gloucestershire.

ClfA 2020a Standard and Guidance for the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Materials. Reading, ClfA

ClfA 2020c Code of Conduct. Reading, ClfA

ClfA 2021 Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives. Reading, ClfA

ClfA 2021 Code of Conduct, professional ethics in archaeology. Reading, ClfA

ClfA 2022 Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives. Reading ClfA

ClfA 2023 Universal Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation. Reading ClfA

English Heritage 2011 Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory, Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation (second edition). Portsmouth, English

Heritage Historic England 2015 Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE project managers' guide. Swindon, Historic England

Historic England 2015 Geoarchaeology: Using Earth Sciences to Understand the Archaeological Record. Swindon, Historic England

Martin and Smith 2013 Land at Woodgate Road, Burbage, Leicestershire, Heritage Statement. Nexus Heritage

MHCLG, 2021. National Planning Policy Framework

Roberts 2024 Written Scheme of Investigation, Archaeological Evaluation, Land at The Coppice, Burbage, Hinckley. Groundworks Archaeology

SMA 1993 Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections. Society of Museum Archaeologists

SMA 1995 Towards an Accessible Archaeological Archive. Society of Museum Archaeologists

Watkinson, D and Neal, V 1998 First Aid for Finds: practical guide for archaeologists. United Kingdom Institute for Conservation of Historic & Artistic Works

Appendix 1: Trench Summary

Trench 1			
Dimensions 49.30 x 1.80m		Ground level	
Orientation: NNW-SSE		Max Depth	
Context	Type	Description	Depth
(101)	Layer	Soft, mid brown silty sand topsoil	0.26m
(102)	Natural	Soft light brownish-orange sand with occasional patches of brown staining	>0.21m
[103]	Cut	Cut of pit, sub oval in plan (extends beyond LOE), 1m wide and in excess of 1.75m long. Steep break of slope to top, steep edge with gradual break to a convex slope and imperceptible break to a tapered base	>0.40m
(104)	Fill	F/O [103], soft mid brown silty sand containing modern glass, metal, coal	>0.40m
(105)	Layer	Soft dark greyish-brown silty sand subsoil	0.12m
(106)	Deposit	Soft dark orange-brown sand spread 3.20m across, (length unseen), irregular in plan containing Roman pottery, CBM and slag	0.09m

Trench 2			
Dimensions 29.70 x 1.80m		Ground level	
Orientation: NE-SW		Max Depth	
Context	Type	Description	Depth
(201)	Layer	Soft, mid brown silty sand topsoil	0.28m
(202)	Deposit	Firm dark brown to reddish brown sandy silt and gravel made ground with concrete, brick, glass and plastic rubbish	0.55m
(203)	Layer	Firm dark greyish brown sandy silt, possible buried top/subsoil	0.17m
(204)	Natural	Firm mid orange sand with frequent lenses of mid brownish grey sandy clay	>0.05m

Appendix 1: Trench Summary

Trench 3			
Dimensions 29.50 x 1.80m		Ground level	
Orientation: NE-SW		Max Depth	
Context	Type	Description	Depth
(301)	Layer	Soft to friable, mid brown silty sand topsoil	0.27m
(302)	Deposit	Firm dark brown to reddish brown sandy silt and gravel made ground with concrete, brick, glass and plastic rubbish	1.06m
(303)	Layer	Firm dark greyish brown sandy silt, possible buried top/subsoil	0.20m
(304)	Natural	Firm mid orange sand with frequent lenses of mid brownish grey sandy clay	>0.10m
(305)	Natural	Stiff mid reddish brown clay with occasional fragments of sub-angular stone	>0.59m

Trench 4			
Dimensions 29.20m x 1.80m		Ground level	
Orientation: NW-SE		Max Depth	
Context	Type	Description	Depth
(401)	Layer	Soft, mid brown silty sand topsoil	0.28m
(402)	Deposit	Firm dark brown to reddish brown sandy silt and gravel made ground with concrete, brick, glass and plastic rubbish	0.51m
(403)	Layer	Firm dark greyish brown sandy silt, possible buried top/subsoil	0.09m
(404)	Natural	Firm mid orange sand with 35% patches of brownish grey staining	

Trench 5			
Dimensions 30.50 x 1.80m		Ground level	
Orientation: NNE-SSW		Max Depth	
Context	Type	Description	Depth
(501)	Layer	Soft, mid brown silty sand topsoil	0.27m
(502)	Deposit	Firm dark brown to reddish brown sandy silt and gravel made ground with concrete, brick, glass and plastic rubbish	0.16m
(503)	Natural	Firm mid orange sand with frequent lenses of mid brownish grey sandy clay	

Appendix 1: Trench Summary

Trench 6			
Dimensions 30.40 x 1.80m		Ground level	
Orientation: NNE-SSW		Max Depth	
Context	Type	Description	Depth
(601)	Layer	Soft, mid brown silty sand topsoil	0.35m
(602)	Natural	Firm dark orange sand	>0.06m
[603]	Cut	Cut of sub oval pit measuring 2.83m wide and >1.80m long (extends beyond LOE). Gradual break of slope to top with shallow concave side breaking into convex with an imperceptible break to a flat base	0.21m
(604)	Fill	Primary F/O [603], firm mid orange/red clay	0.05m
(605)	Fill	Secondary F/O [603], soft mid orange-brown sand	0.13m
(606)	Layer	Soft dark brown silty sand subsoil	0.11m

Trench 7			
Dimensions		Ground level	
Orientation: WNW-ESE		Max Depth	
Context	Type	Description	Depth
(701)	Layer	Soft, mid brown silty sand topsoil	0.27m
(702)	Natural	Soft light brownish-orange sand with moderate patches of mid orange-brown sand	>0.08m

Appendix 1: Trench Summary

Appendix 2: Plates



Plate 1: Trench 1 Looking SSE



Plate 2: Trench 1 Looking NNW

Appendix 2: Plates



Plate 3: NE Facing section of pit [103], DWG 7



Plate 4: SE Facing section [103]

Appendix 2: Plates



Plate 5: SE Facing section of spread (106), DWG 9



Plate 6: Slot through geophysical linear location

Appendix 2: Plates



Plate 7: Trench 2 Looking NE



Plate 8: Trench 2 Looking SW

Appendix 2: Plates



Plate 9: SE Facing sample section, Trench 2



Plate 10: Trench 3 Looking SW

Appendix 2: Plates



Plate 11: Trench 3 Looking NE



Plate 12: SW Facing sample section, Trench 3

Appendix 2: Plates



Plate 13: Trench 4 Looking SE



Plate 14: Trench 4 Looking NW

Appendix 2: Plates



Plate 15: NE Facing sample section, Trench 4



Plate 16: Trench 5 Looking NNE

Appendix 2: Plates



Plate 17: Trench 5 Looking SSW



Plate 18: NNE Facing sample section, Trench 5

Appendix 2: Plates



Plate 19: Trench 6 Looking SW



Plate 20: Trench 6 Looking NE

Appendix 2: Plates

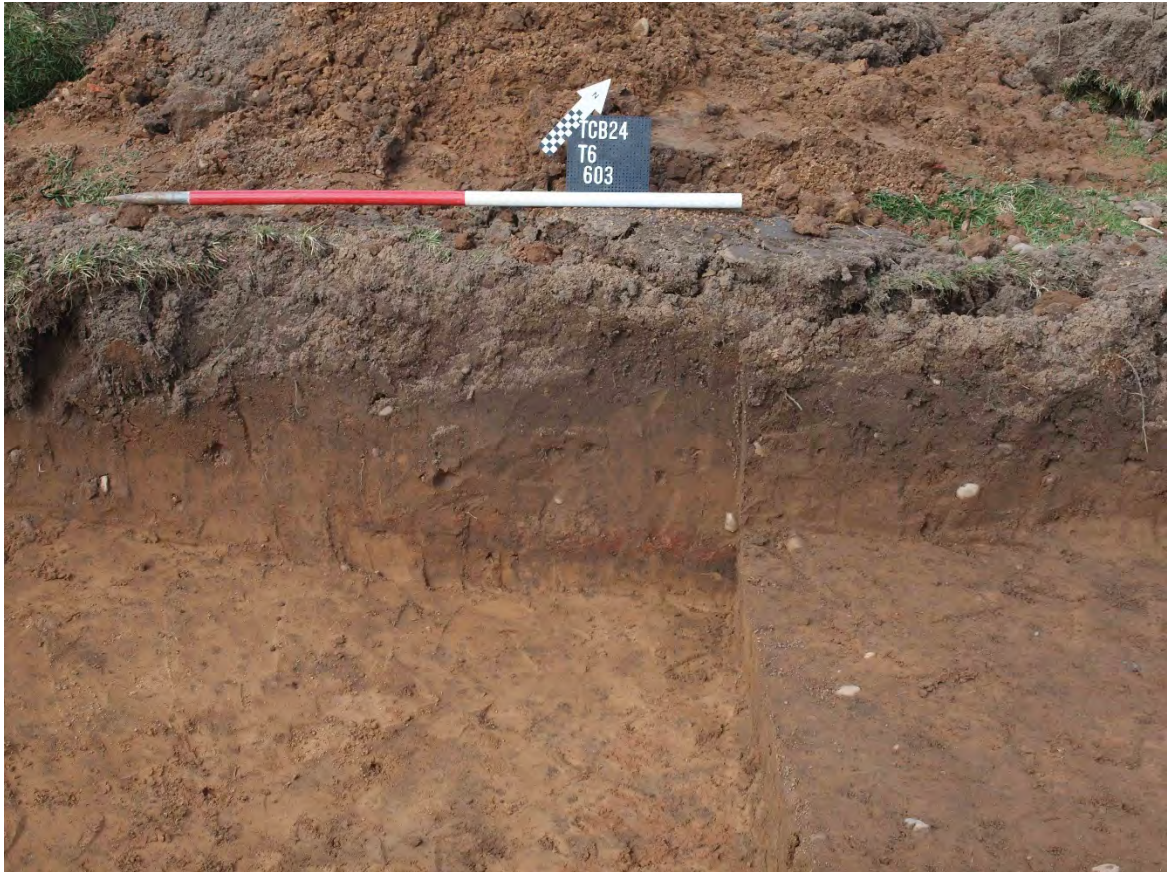


Plate 21: SE Facing Section [603]



Plate 22: Trench 7 Looking WNW]

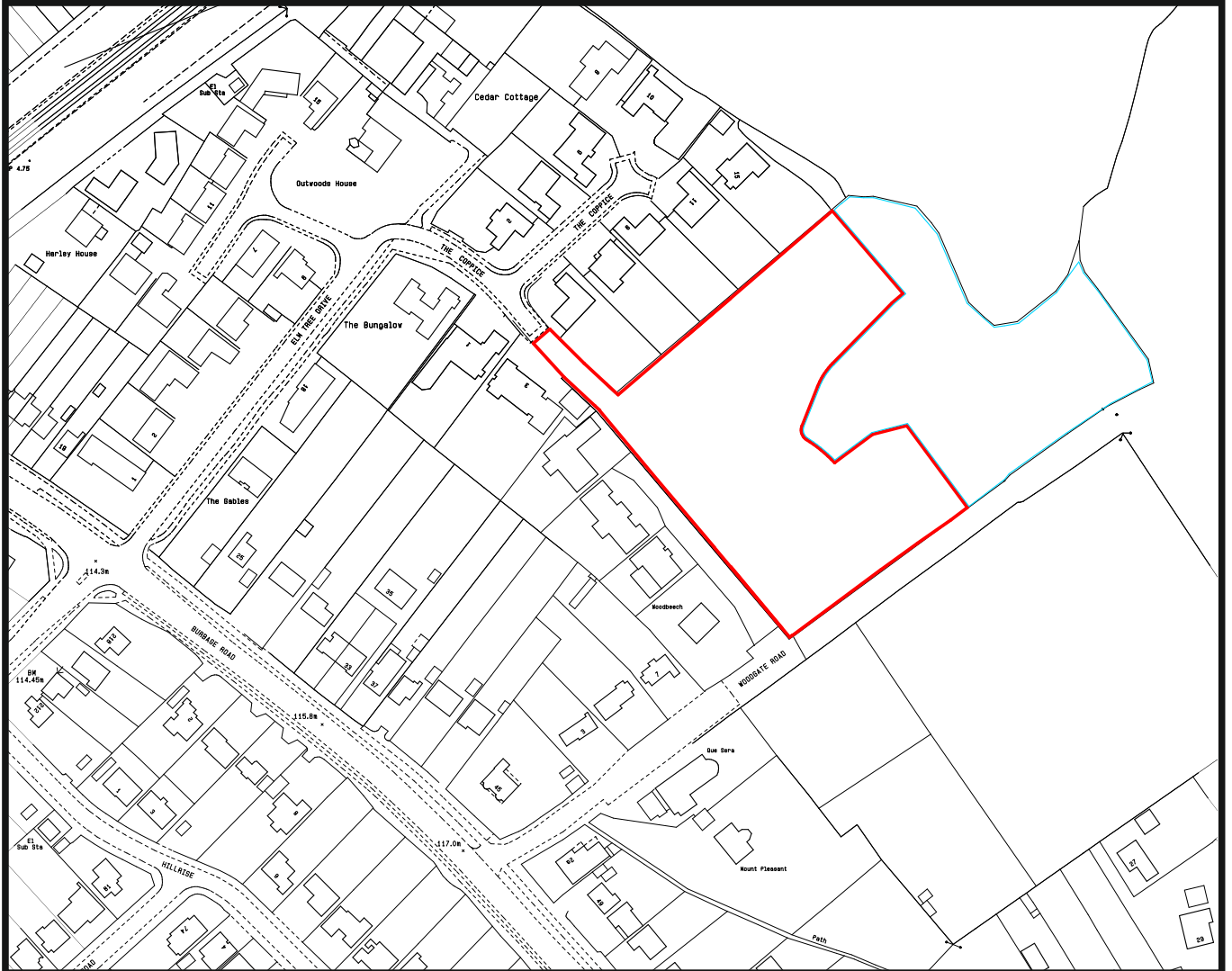
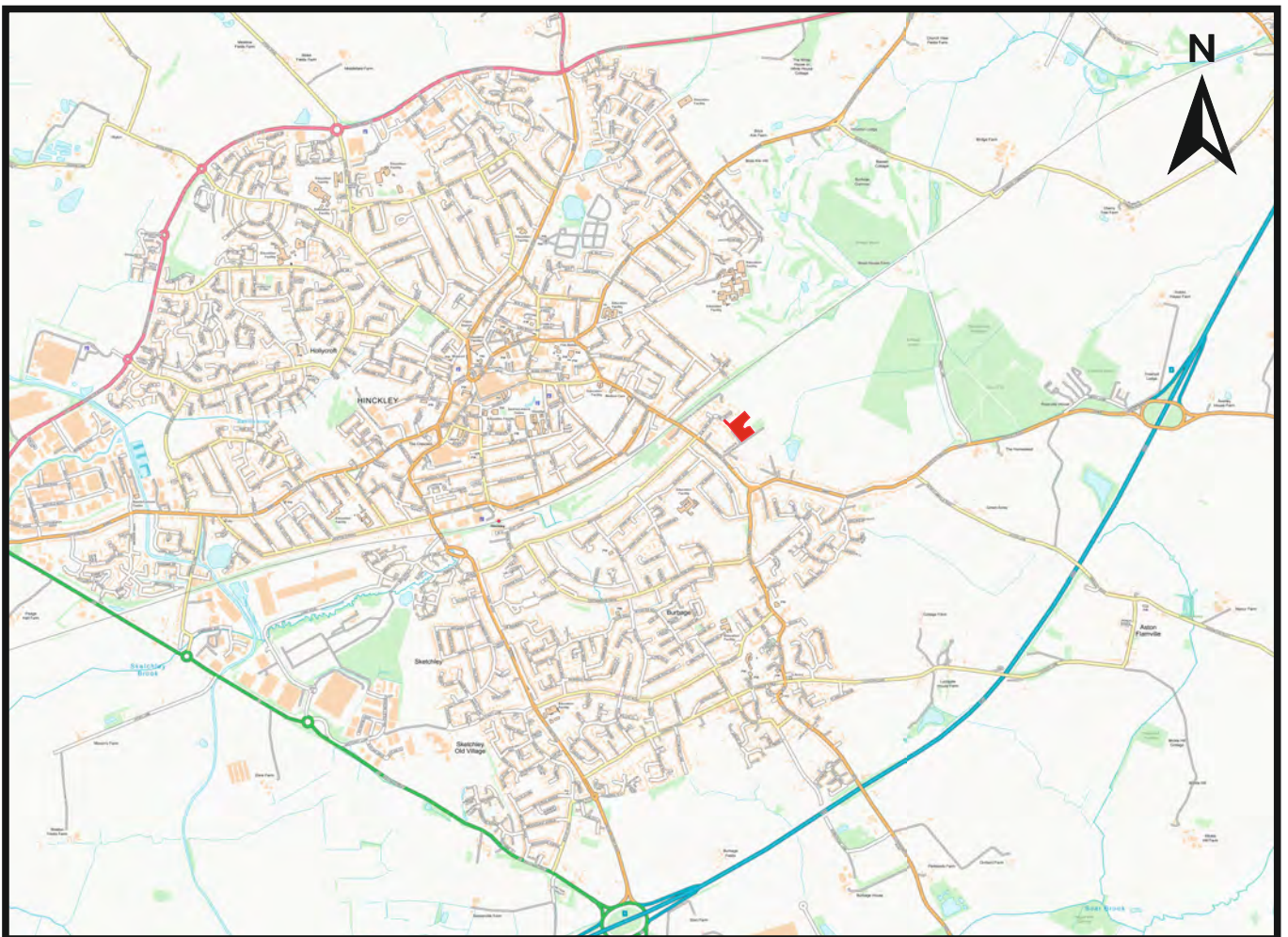
Appendix 2: Plates



Plate 23: Trench 7 Looking ESE



Plate 24: NNW Facing sample section, Trench 7



0m 100m
1:2500

Figure 1: Site Location

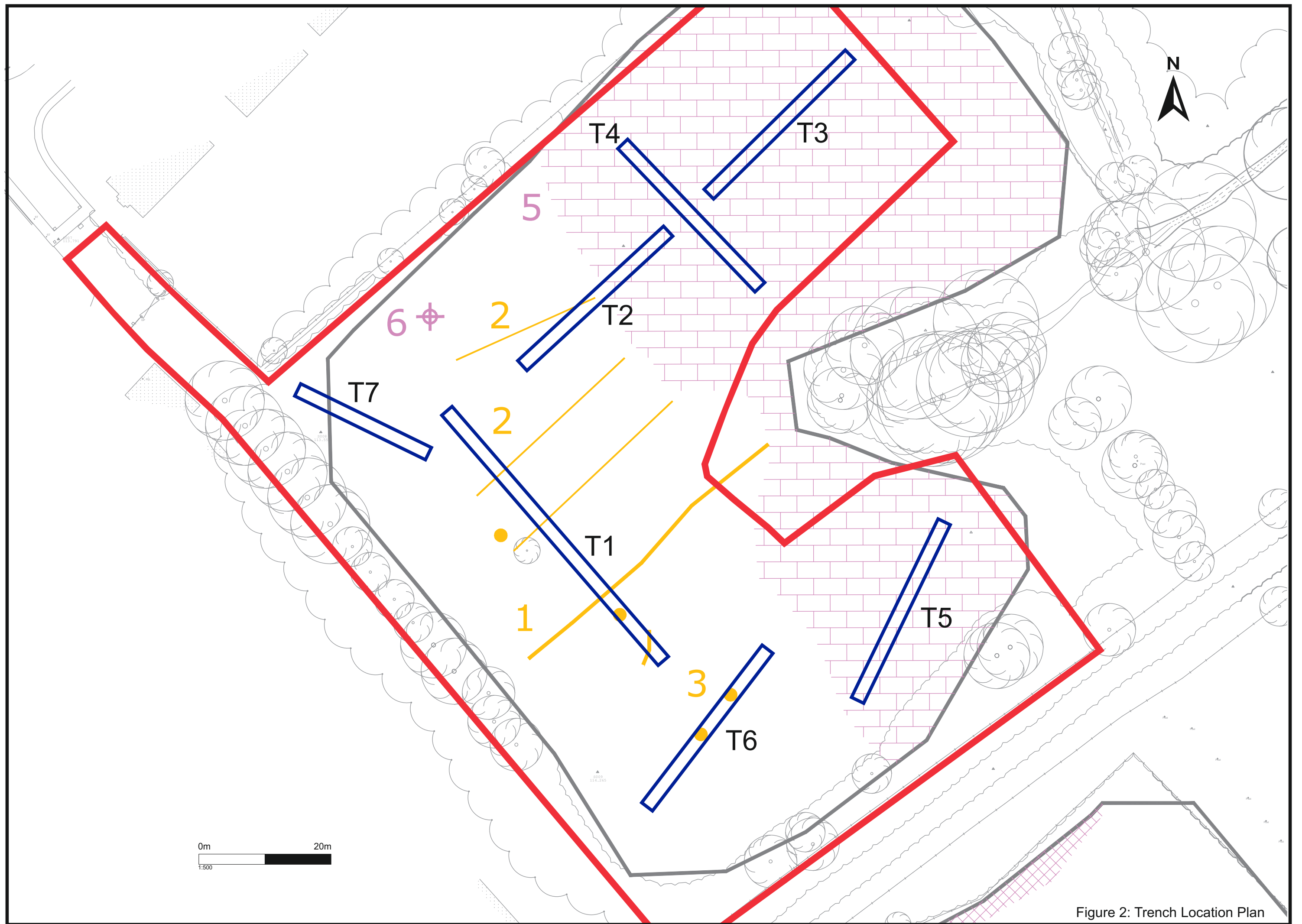
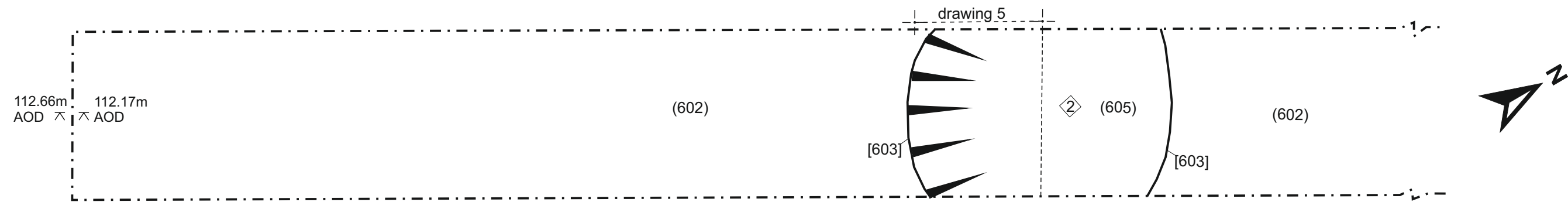


Figure 2: Trench Location Plan

Drawing 6: Plan trench 7 scale1:50



Drawing 8: Plan trench 1 scale 1:10

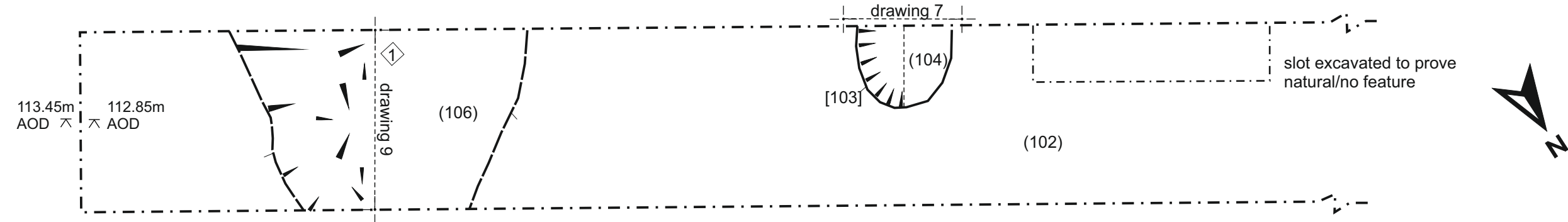
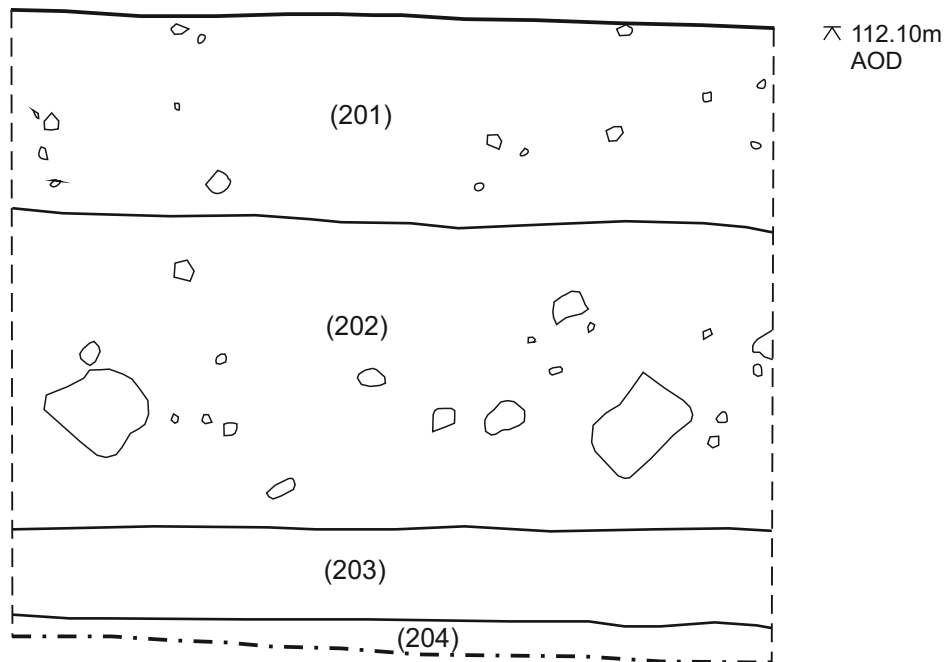


Figure 3: Trench Plans, (DWG 6 and 8)

Drawing 1 south-east facing section trench 2
scale 1:10



Drawing 2 South-east facing section trench 3
scale 1:10

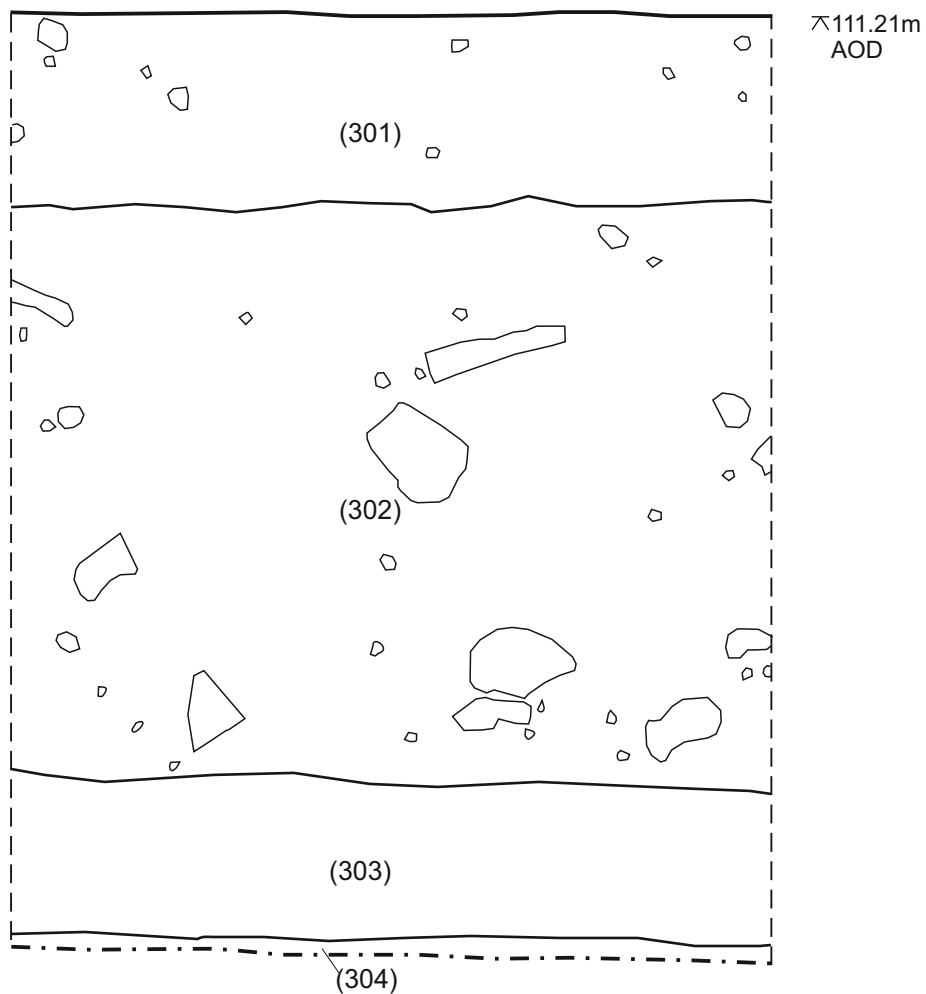
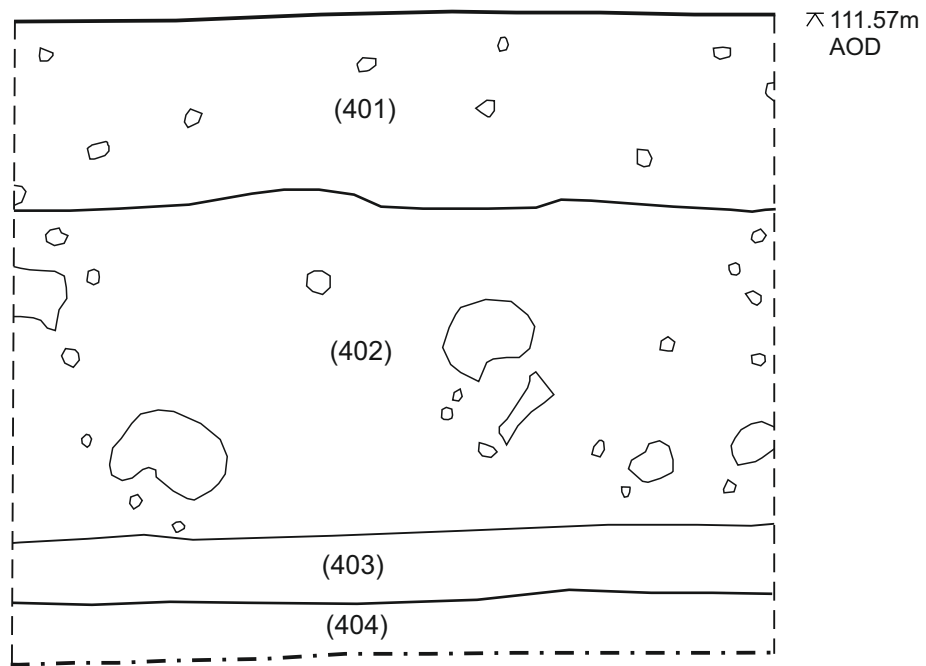
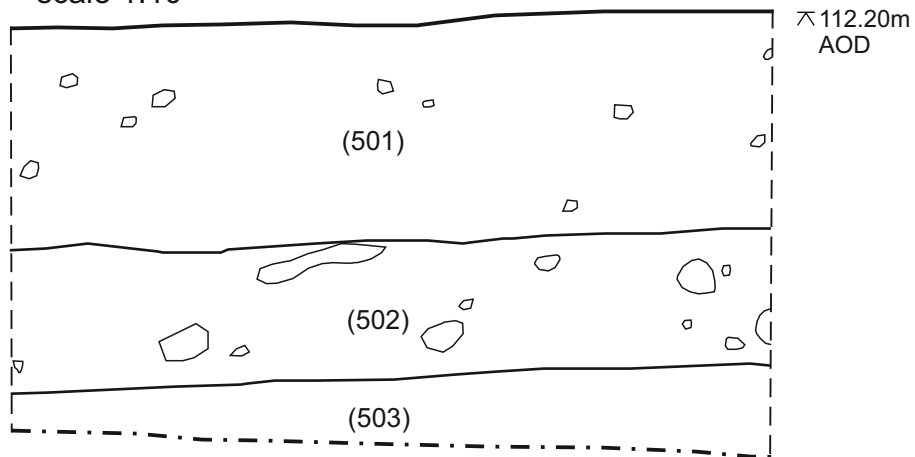


Figure 4: Sections (DWG 1 and 2)

Drawing 3 north-east facing section trench 4
scale 1:10



Drawing 4 west-north-west facing section trench 5
scale 1:10



Drawing 5 east-south-east facing section pit [603] & trench 6 scale 1:10

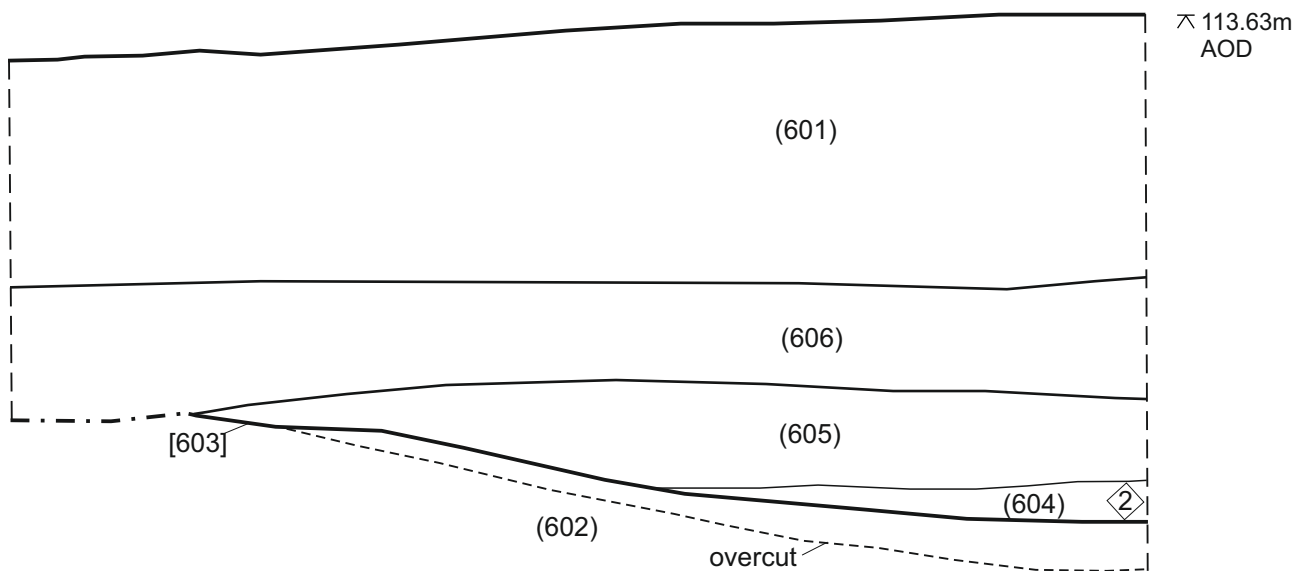
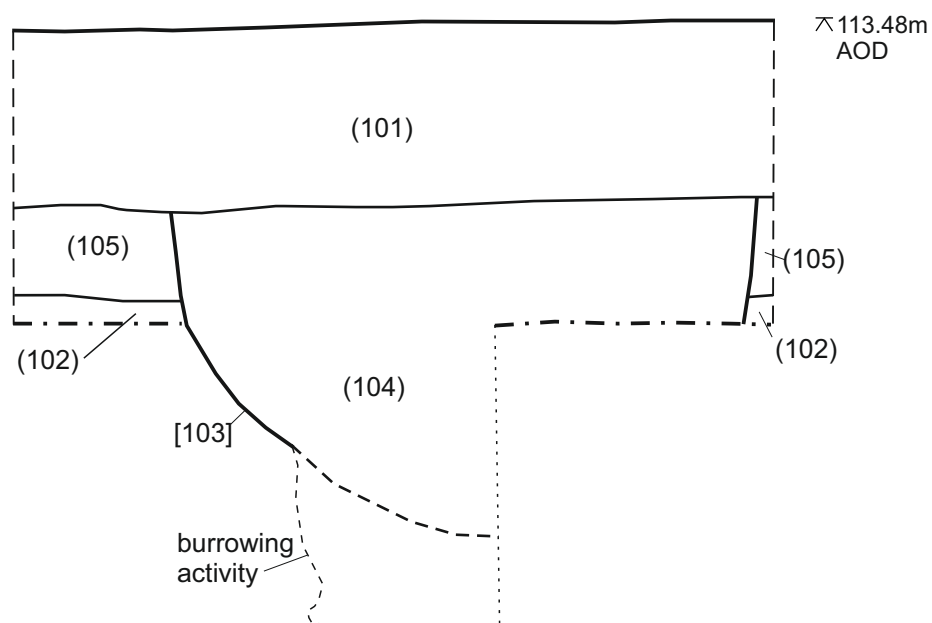
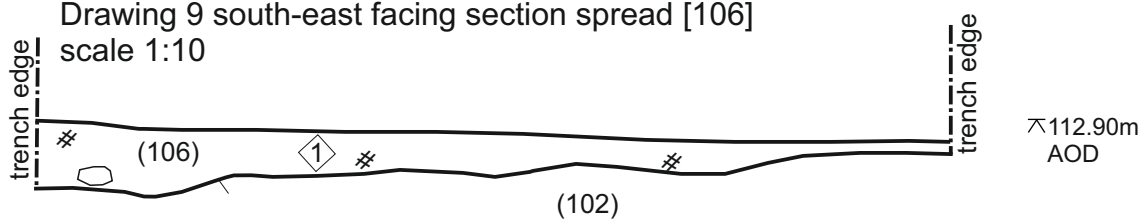


Figure 5: Sections (DWG 3,4 and 5)

Drawing 7 north-east facing section trench 1 & pit [103]
scale 1:10



Drawing 9 south-east facing section spread [106]
scale 1:10



Drawing 10 north-north-east facing section trench 7
scale 1:10



Figure 6: Sections (DWG 7, 9 and 10)

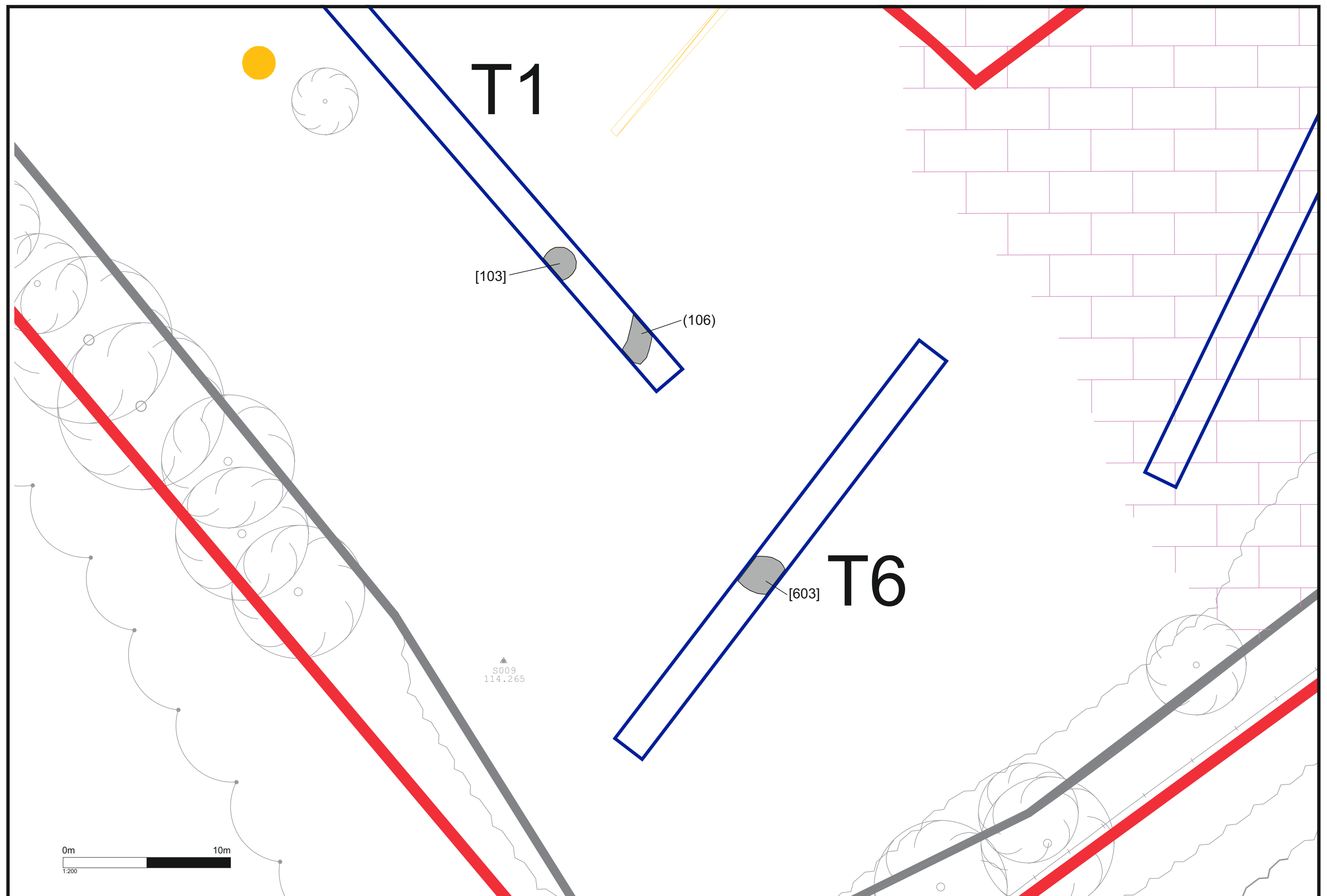


Figure 7: Plan of Features in Trenches 1 and 6

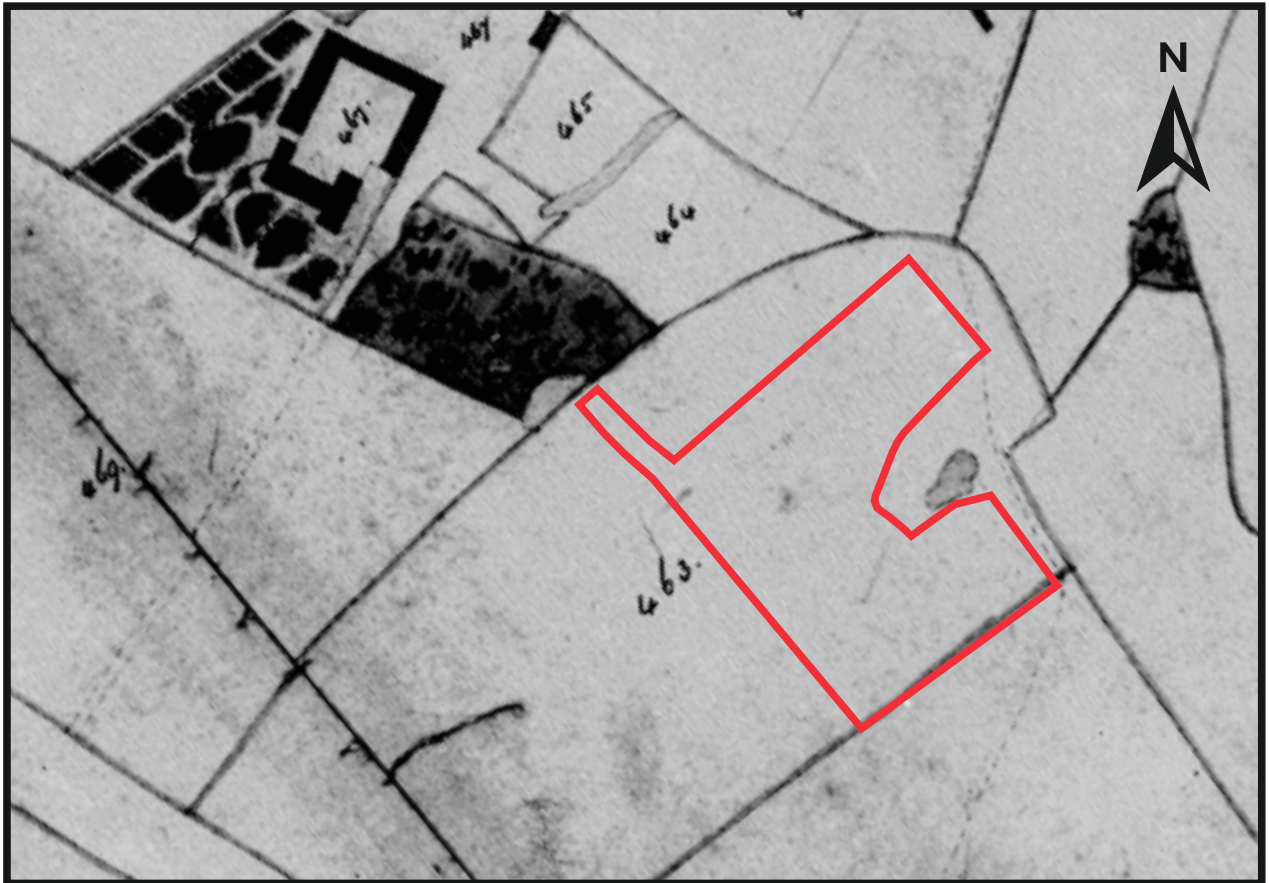


Figure 8: Burbage Tithe Map, 1838

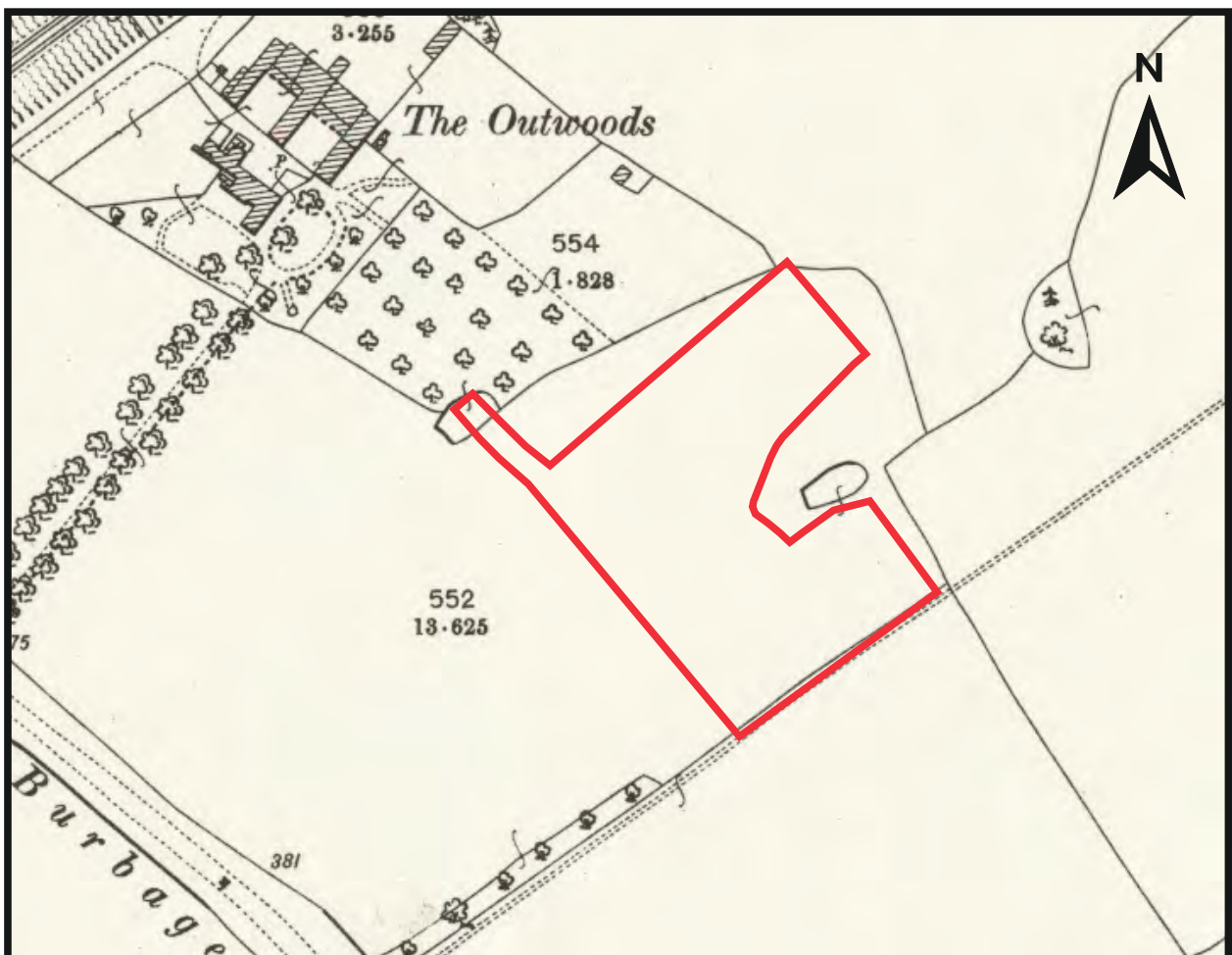


Figure 9: Ordnance Survey 25" map, edition of 1901, sheet XLII.8