

Archaeological Evaluation at the site of the former Prince of Wales PH, East Milton Road, Denton, Gravesend, Kent.



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SWAT. Archaeology
Swale and Thames Archaeological Survey Company
School Farm Oast, Graveney Road
Faversham, Kent. ME13 8UP
Tel: 01795 532548 or 07885 700 112
www.swataeology.co.uk

Archaeological Evaluation at the site of the former Prince of Wales PH, East Milton Road, Denton, Gravesend, Kent.

NGR: 565934/173820

Site code: EMR-EV-14

Planning Application Number: 20131085

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Archaeological Evaluation at the site of the former Prince of Wales PH, East Milton Road, Denton, Gravesend, Kent.

1. Summary

Swale and Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at the site of the former Prince of Wales PH East Milton Road Denton, Gravesend, Kent. The site has planning consent for redevelopment and there is potential for remains associated with medieval or post medieval settlement. This evaluation will clarify the presence/absence of archaeological remains and will guide the need for detailed archaeological mitigation measures.

2. Introduction

On the 24th November 2014 SWAT Archaeology began a programme of archaeological evaluation on the land located within the district of Denton in Gravesham, immediately to the west of Gravesend; it is centred at NGR: 565934/173820. The site is bounded to the south by East Milton Road, to the west by the St Peter and St Paul's church and churchyard and to the east by Elliot Street. The site is currently derelict/brownfield land, covered in trees and vegetation but it formerly contained the Prince of Wales PH fronting East Milton Road and a bowling green towards the northern end.

The archaeological evaluation is to quantify and establish the possible significance of any archaeological remains prior to construction work commencing and determine whether further work is required.

3. Site Description and Topography

The site is located within the district of Denton in Gravesham, immediately to the west of Gravesend; it is centred at NGR:565934/173820. The site is

bounded to the south by East Milton Road, to the west by the St Peter and St Paul's church and churchyard and to the east by Elliot Street. The site is currently derelict/brownfield land, covered in trees and vegetation but it formerly contained the Prince of Wales PH fronting East Milton Road and a bowling green towards the northern end. According to current data from the BGS, the site lies on Chalk, with Head deposits to the west and Alluvium and Taplow Gravels to the north. The River Thames lies c.520m to the north.

4. Planning Background

There are proposals for residential redevelopment of this site for erection of 3 storey building to provide six flats and a two storey terrace of 4-3 bedroom houses with associate parking. Further details are set out in planning application 20131085. On the basis of present archaeological information, the Archaeological Officer for Gravesham Borough Council recommended that the site should be subject to a programme of archaeological work in order to clarify the historical and archaeological elements within the site. The results can then guide appropriate mitigation measures for the future development.

Gravesham Borough Council has granted planning permission for the development . On the advice of the County Archaeologist a condition securing a programme of archaeological works has been attached to the consent.

'No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written specification and timetable which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.'

[Reason: To ensure that features of archaeological interest are properly examined and recorded]

The work was carried out in accordance with the requirements set out within the Archaeological Specification from Kent County Council.

5. Archaeological and historical background

The potential of this area has been gauged in relation to the proximity of known archaeological remains. The site of the proposed development lies within the possible area of a former medieval village of Milton / Denton. The Church of St Peter and St Pauls lies just to the west and it is a Grade II* Listed Building. This church is of 14th century date but it is considered to lie on or close to the site of an 11th century church for Milton. Remains associated with medieval activity may survive on the site.

The former Prince of Wales PH is identifiable on the 1st Ed OS map and its remains would be of local heritage interest. There may be post medieval remains surviving, associated with the use of the inn.

6. Aims and objectives

The programme of archaeological work should be carried out in a phased approach and will commence with evaluation through trial trenching. This initial phase should determine whether any significant archaeological remains would be affected by the development and if so what mitigation measures are appropriate. Such measures may include further detailed archaeological excavation, historic buildings recording and/or an archaeological watching brief during construction work. This specification sets out the requirements for trial trenching on the site and any further archaeological work, such as detailed excavation work or a watching brief, would need to be subject to further specifications.

7. Methodology

The trenches were excavated using 8 ton machine equipped with toothless/ flat bucket. The trenches were excavated to the appropriate depth where natural geology surface can be clearly observed. The evaluation comprised 6 archaeological trenches which were excavated in order to avoid on site constraints such as live services and any vegetation to be retained within the development. The trench layout was agreed with the County Archaeologist prior to commencement of works on site. Further requirements are set out in KCC Spec Manual Part B.

8. Monitoring

Curatorial monitoring was available during the course of the evaluation.

9. Results of the evaluation

On 24th November evaluation trenches 1, 2 and 3 were excavated and on the following day excavations continues for Trenches 4, 5 and additional Trench 6 requested by the County Archaeological Officer. Archaeological investigation and recording were completed on 26th November.

Trench 1

Plan Fig. 3 and 7, sections Fig. 7 s.1.1 and s.1.2

Plates 3, 4 and 5

This east-west aligned trench was placed in the northern part of the site and measured 12.5metres long by 1.8m wide. Machine excavation was carried out to the average depth of 1.2metres and exposed natural geology (CRNs 102 and 103). (CRN102) was firm, brown-white-grey eroded chalk with grey clay-silt and (CRN103) was firm, brown-orange clay-silt with flints of a certain periglacial origins.

Two intercutting modern features were exposed in this trench. Rubbish pit (CRN112) was over 1.6m wide and 1.1m deep and back-filled with firm, brown-grey clay-silt with moderate chalk flecks and occasional horizontal tip-lines of white-grey chalk with moderate modern inclusions of brick fragments, glass and early modern pottery sherds. Feature was truncated by another modern rubbish pit (CRN110) which was 2.72metres-wide and over 1.2m deep (**Fig.7 s.1.2**) and back-filled with non-homogeneous mixture of chalk, mortar, burnt wood, shingle and crushed building material.

The deposits sequence overlaying natural geology was recorded in representative section (**Fig.7 s.1.1**) and consisted of (CRN106); firm, grey, clay-silt with infrequent modern inclusions. That was capped by (CRN107) dark-grey, clay-silt with occasional inclusions dated to Victorian-period pot sherds, glass and crushed building material. This context was interpreted as buried Victorian top-soil and was overlaid by 0.38m-thick band of brown and white

heterogeneous mixture of compressed modern rubble with flints and chalk. That in turn was capped on top by 0.2m-thick band of dark metallic grey shingle bedding (CRN109) and overlaid by thin layer of dark grey recent top-soil (CRN101).

Slightly exposed (CRN104) at the base of representative section was white-grey soft natural chalk.

No significant archaeological features were exposed in this Trench.

Trench 2

Plan Fig. 3 and 8, sections Fig. 8 s.1.4

Plates 6 and 7

This north-south aligned trench was placed in the north-western part of the site alongside proposed foundation trench for new building and measured 16.9metres long by 1.9metres wide. Machine excavation was carried out to the depth of 1.07metres in its northern part and to the depth of 0.23m in its southern part and exposed natural soft-chalk geology (CRN204). The exposed natural surface was moderately intersected by a series of brown-orange clay-silt scars with flints of periglacial origins.

One east-west aligned linear feature was exposed in this trench. Prehistoric linear ditch (CRN206) had steep sloping sides sharply breaks into mainly flat base. It measured 1.80metres in length by 0.52metres in width and 0.39m in depth. Feature was filled in by (CRN207) which was firm, mid brown, clay-silt with occasional chalk flecks. This deposit derived as a result from general overtime silting and produced a prehistoric pottery sherd, dated provisionally on-site to the general Iron Age and several worked flint flakes.

Ditch 206 had a re-cut along its length in Trench 2. Feature (CRN210) was wider and had moderately sloping sides, gradually breaking into concave base and measured 0.81m wide and 0.28metres in depth. The fill of the ditch (CRN211) was firm, brown-grey clay-silt with occasional chalk pebbles and produced an animal bone fragment.

The ditch was capped by extensive 0.54m-thick band (CRN208) of firm, grey, clay-silt with infrequent inclusions like pot sherds, glass and crushed building material dated to Victorian-period. That was capped on top by (CRN209) 0.08m-thick band of dark metallic grey shingle bedding which in turn was capped by the most recent top-soil with moderate 'peat' organic content (CRN201).

Two inter-cutting archaeological features were exposed and recorded in this Trench. The continuity of one ditch was also recorded in Trench 6 (discussed below).

Trench 3

Plan Fig. 4 and 9, sections Fig. 9 s.1.7

Plates 8 and 9

This east-south-east west-north-west aligned trench was placed in the central part of the site and measured 13.8 metres long by 1.8metres wide. Machine excavation was carried out to the average depth of 0.7metres and exposed natural soft-chalk geology (CRN302). The exposed natural surface was occasionally intersected by brown-orange clay-silt scars with flints of periglacial origins (CRN303) and by outcrops of white chalk bed-rock (CRN305).

One north-west-north south-east-south aligned linear feature (CRN306) was exposed in this trench. A shallow gully had gently sloping sides, concave base and measured 1.43metre wide and 0.29m in depth. The infill (CRN307) was firm, mid brow clay-silt with occasional chalk flecks. No datable cultural material was retrieved from this deposit.

The modern deposit sequence exposed in Trench 3 comprised two distinguishable modern landfills (CRN309) and (CRN308). First mentioned (CRN309) was grey heterogeneous mixture of clay silt and hardcore with moderate glass, mortar and tiles. That in turn was overlaid by 0.18-0.22m-thick band of mid grey brown clay silt with moderate inclusions of glass, crushed

bricks and chalk flecks. Deposit was capped on top by the most recent top-soil (CRN301) comprising moderately compacted dark-grey clay silt with modern rubble and moderate 'peat' organic content.

One possible undated archaeological feature was exposed in this trench, however its continuity was not observed in Trench 2.

Trench 4

Plan Fig. 5 and 10, sections Fig. 10 s.2.1 and 2.2

Plates 10, 11, 12 and 13

This roughly north-west aligned trench was placed in the south-eastern part of the site and measured 23.2 metres long by 1.8metres wide. Machine excavations were carried out to the average depth of 1.1metres and exposed natural soft-chalk geology (CRN402). In its southern part excavations revealed former building construction cut (CRN406) and excavations here reached the maximum depth of 2.0metres.

The deposit sequence exposed in Trench 4 comprised white solid chalk (CRN405), overlaid by natural soft-chalk (CRN402). That was capped by substantial 0.6m-thick band of mid-grey heterogeneous mixture (CRN408) of clay-silt with frequent/moderate addition of crushed hardcore, glass, shingle and mortar. This deposit had general properties matching buried older top-soil, however the addition of contaminants which have been hardly pressed into it despite such interpretation. That in turn was overlaid by (CRN409); a modern landfill comprising grey clay-silt with moderate inclusions of modern glass and crushed demolition debris and it was capped on top by (CRN410) which consisted mostly of re-deposited white-grey chalk rubble.

The construction cut (CRN406) exposed in northern part of Trench had vertical sides and measured 8m wide by 12metres long and was also exposed in adjacent Trench 5. The back-fill of this (CRN407) comprised modern brick rubble with dark-brown loam. This part of the trench was excavated to the depth of 2.0m in order to looking for remaining foundations and back-filled straight after due to the health and safety reasons.

Modern east-west aligned service pipe was exposed roughly in central part of the trench. Three intercutting features were exposed in its southern part. The earliest one (CRN416) was east-west aligned rectangular cut and measured 1.2m wide and was machine excavated to the depth of 2m followed by instant back-fill due to the conspicuous health and safety reasons. Feature was back-filled by (CRN417) comprising mid brown clay-silt with occasional angular flints and lenses of greenish mineralised cess. Feature was truncated by a modern rubbish pit (CRN414) which had steep sloping sides, flat base and measured 2.80m wide and 1.42m in depth. The only-fill of the feature (CRN415) was firm, grey-brown clay silt with occasional angular flints and chalk flecks. That in turn was truncated by tree bole (CRN411); a concave depression measured 2.40m wide, 1.02m deep and was back-filled by two deposits. Basal one (CRN412) was very dark humic soil with modern inclusions capped by (CRN413) a very dark mixture of top-soil and crushed demolition debris.

Trench 5

Plan Fig. 5 and 11, sections Fig. 11 s.2.3

Plates 14, 15 and 16

This north-east-north south-west-south aligned trench was placed in the south-western part of the site and measured 14.5 metres long by 1.8metres wide. Trench was excavated to the average depth of 0.8m and revealed very recent rubbish hole in its northern part truncating a soft-chalk natural geology (CRN502). Modern drainage pipe was exposed in its central part.

A corner of former building (CRN506) was exposed and excavated to the depth of 2.2m. The investigated part certainly comprised basement and this trench identifies its limit to the west. Only small fragment of still in-situ wall was found here. Context (CRN508) comprised red bricks with soft-sandy mortar. That in turn was capped by substantial demolition rubble (CRN507) comprising abundant amounts of crushed bricks with other demolition debris.

Trench 6

Plan Fig. 3 and 11, sections Fig. 11 s.2.4

Plates 17 and 18

This short additional trench was dug in order to establish continuity of the ditch exposed in Trench 2. Trench 6 was 5.5metres long, placed parallel to the trench 2 and excavated to the maximum depth of 1.01m where natural soft-chalk geology (CRN602) was revealed, capped on top by (CRN608); a 0.2m-0.3m-thick band of dark-grey soil mixed with infrequent inclusions like pot sherds, glass and crushed building material dated to Victorian-period. That in turn was capped by thick recent top-soil (CRN601) with moderate modern inclusions like concrete fragments and brickwork.

The expected archaeological feature was exposed in central part of Trench 6, however appeared a bit wider than feature investigated in Trench 2. (CRN606) had very gently sloping almost convex sides and concave base. It measured 2.40m wide by 0.48m in depth and was filled by (CRN607) comprising brown-grey clay-silt with occasional chalk flecks and small angular flints. This deposit produced useful cultural material in form of seven prehistoric potsherds and they were subjected to specialist analysis undertaken by Nigel McPerson-Grant.

(CRN607) Finds:

7 sherds (weight 23grams), 2 periods represented. The flint-tempered coarseware bodysherds are a bit uninformative but dated likely between Late Bronze Age and Earliest Iron Age – span c 1100-600 BC. There is a slight preference for EIA – c.900-600 BC broadly. Sherds are fresh and from a contemporary discard deposit.

A single small heavily worn Early Roman coarseware bodysherd is intrusive – condition suggest derived from Roman period agricultural manuring. North Kent Thameside fine sandy ware, c. 125-150/175 AD.

10. Finds

The pottery from this evaluation have been processed and the pottery spot-dated. A small, principally prehistoric assemblage consisting of 27gms was recovered during this evaluation.

Context 607 -= 7 sherds pottery (weight : 23gms), 2 periods represented. The flint-tempered coarseware bodysherds are a bit uninformative but likley between Late Bronze Age and Earliest Iron Age - span c.1100-600 BC. For starters - there is a slight preference for EIA - so c.900-600 BC broadly. Sherds are fresh and from a contemporary discard deposit.

A single small heavily worn Early Roman coarse ware body sherd is intrusive - condition suggests derived from Roman period agricultural manuring - possibly. North Kent Thames side fine sandy ware, c.125-150/175 AD.

11. Discussion

The evaluation trenches at the proposed development site revealed one linear which has been dated to about c.1100-600BC by pottery sherds found in the fill of the ditch. The ditch although heavily truncated is a fine piece of work and the suspicion must be that it is more than a field boundary and could be a land ownership boundary given that evidence for prehistoric activity has been found c.500-700m to the east at Westcourt Marshes.

The evaluation trenches in the southern area of the site on the building footprint of the former Prince of Wales PH revealed that the building on demolition had been totally destroyed with foundations pulled out and the demolished fabric used to fill the cellars. There was no evidence of medieval or post-medieval remains associated with the adjacent church and medieval settlement of Denton.

12. Conclusions

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 and/or demolition sealing the subsoil which overlay the natural geology of Chalk. All features were planned in relation to the trenches, and the excavated pits and linears were drawn in section at a scale of 1:10. 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

12

SWAT Archaeology would like to thank the client, Denmark & White for commissioning the project. Thanks are also extended to Wendy Rogers, Senior Heritage Officer, Kent County Council. Illustrations were produced by Bartek Cichy. The fieldwork was supervised and report data written by Peter Cichy, and the project was managed by Dr Paul Wilkinson.

Paul Wilkinson PhD., MCifA., FRSA.

14. References

Institute for Field Archaeologists (IfA), Rev (2008). *Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation*

Heritage Conservation Group KCC (2014) *Specification for Archaeological Trial Trenching at the site of the former Prince of Wales PH, East Milton Road, Denton (Manual of Specification Part A & B)*

Appendices

Appendix I : KCC Summary Form

| | |
|--|-----------------------|
| Site Name: | |
| Site Address: As above | |
| Summary: An evaluation of the above site suggested that prehistoric remains were present in the northern part of the site | |
| District/Unitary: Gravesham | Parish: |
| Period(s): Prehistoric archaeology | |
| NGR (centre of site : 8 figures): 565934 173820 (NB if large or linear site give multiple NGRs) | |
| Type of archaeological work (delete) Evaluation | |
| Date of Recording: 24-26 th November 2014 Evaluation | |
| Unit undertaking recording: SWAT Archaeology | |
| Geology: The site lies on chalk | |
| Title and author of accompanying report: An archaeological evaluation at the former Prince of Wales PH, East Milton Road, Denton, Gravesend, Kent. Cichy. P., Wilkinson. P. | |
| Summary of fieldwork results (begin with earliest period first, add NGRs where appropriate) The evaluation exposed part of a prehistoric ditch | |
| Location of archive/finds: SWAT Archaeology | |
| Contact at Unit: Paul Wilkinson | Date: 04/12/14 |

Plates

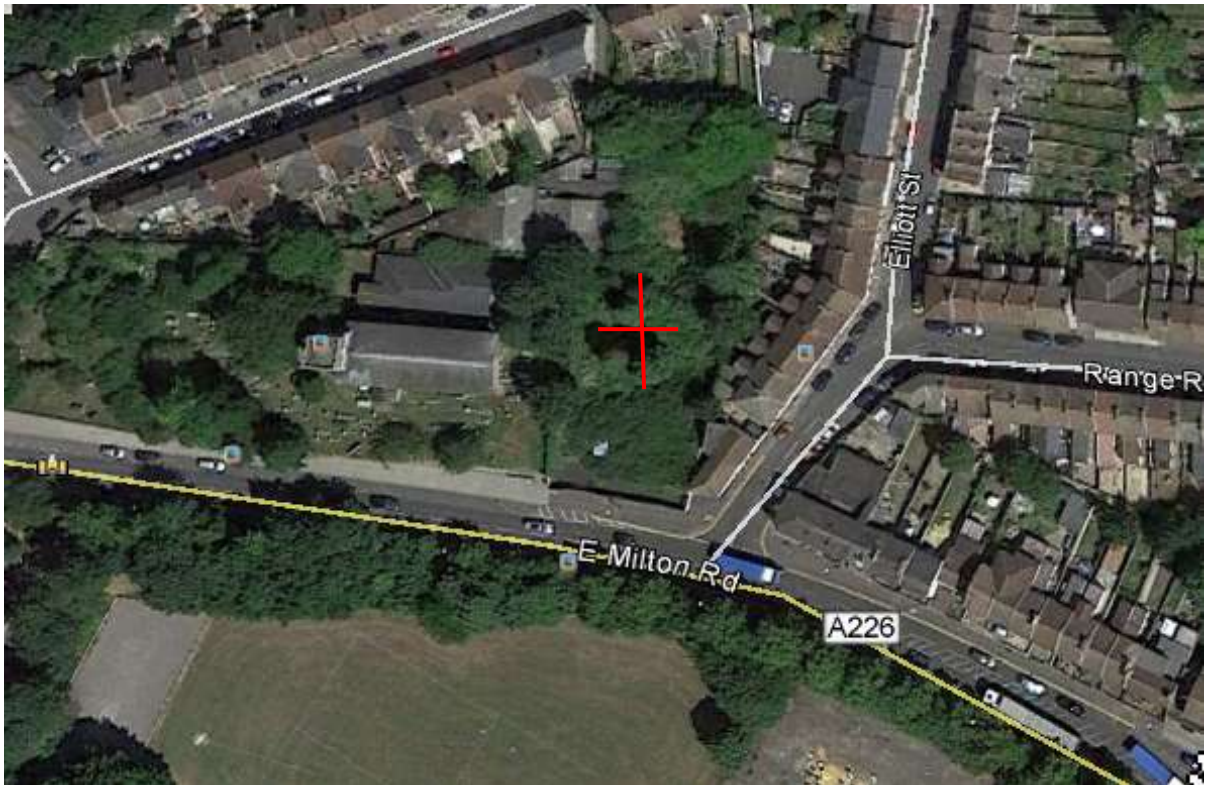


Plate 1 – Aerial view of the site.



Plate 2. The site looking north prior to demolition of the public house.



Plate 3. Trench 1, looking north (one metre scale).



Plate 4. Modern feature exposed in Trench 1



Plate 5. Representative section in Trench 1



Plate 6. Trench 2 looking south (one metre scale).



Plate 7. Ditch 206 exposed in Trench 2. Looking west, (one metre scale)



Plate 8. Trench 3, gully 306 visible in foreground. Looking east, (one metre scale).



Plate 9. Section 1.7 in Trench 3, looking south (one metre scale).



Plate 10. Looking east on Trench 4 (one metre scale).



Plate 11. Cess pit exposed in Trench 4. Looking east, (one metre scale).



Plate 12. Machine excavated cess pit surroundings. Looking north, (one metre scale).



Plate 13. Former building basement construction cut in Trench 4. Looking south-east, (one metre scale).



Plate 14. Trench 5 looking south, one metre scale.



Plate 15. Former building construction cut corner with fragment of wall still in-situ being exposed in Trench 5 at respective depth of 2.20m. Looking south, one metre scale.



Plate 16. Former building basement exposed in Trench 5. Looking south-east, (one metre scale).



Plate 17. Trench 6, looking south-east, (one metre scale).



Plate 18. Ditch 606 exposed in trench 6. Looking east, (one metre scale).



30 15 0 30 m

Scale 1:1250



Former Prince of Wales PH

Supplied by: National Map Centre Kent
 Licence number: 100031961
 Produced: 03/12/14
 Serial number: 1443036

Denton, Gravesend

Plot centre co-ordinates: 565934, 173846
 Download file: Print52611_1443036
 Project name: SWAT Denton

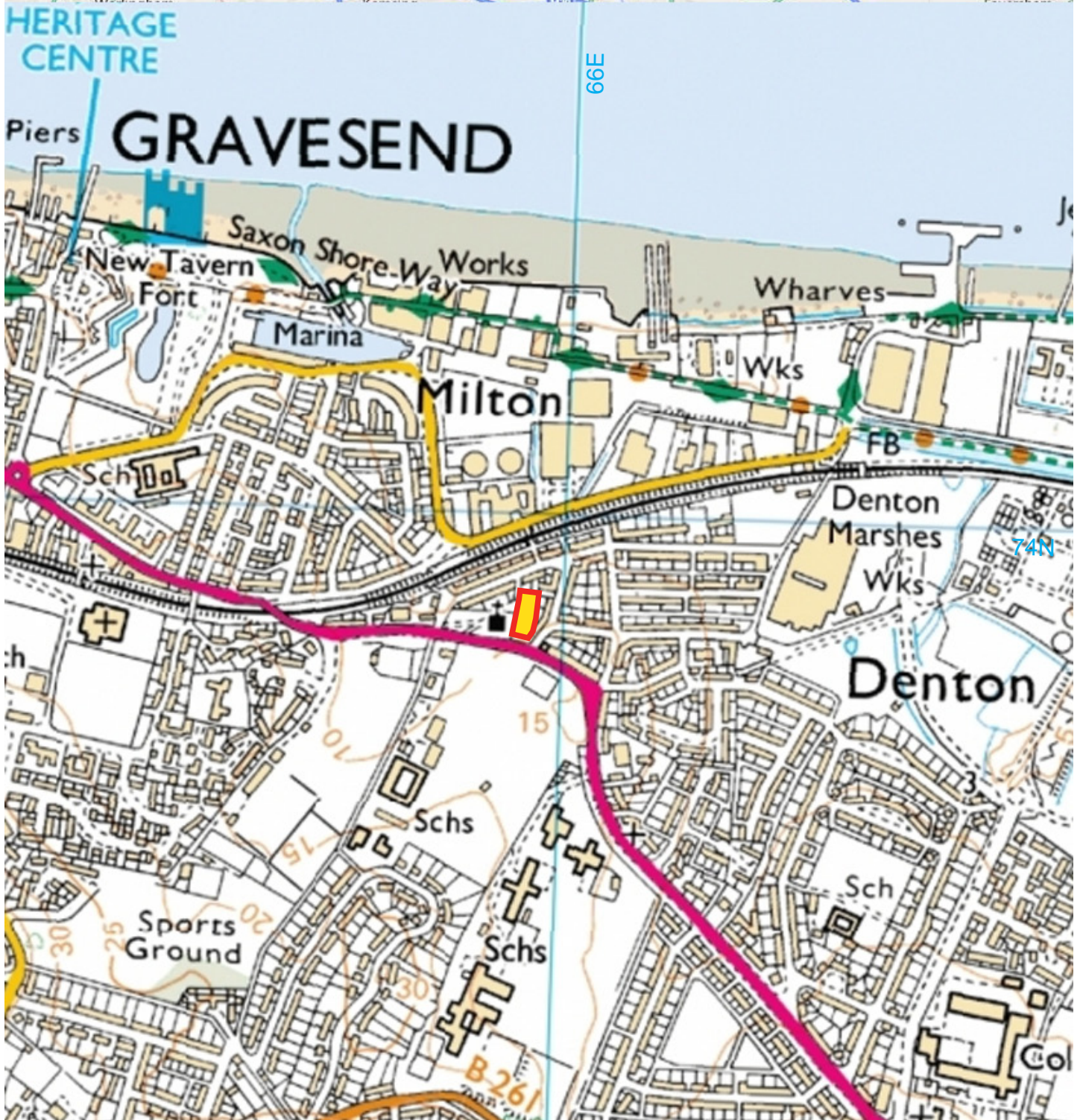


Figure 1: Site location map



Figure 2: Site plan

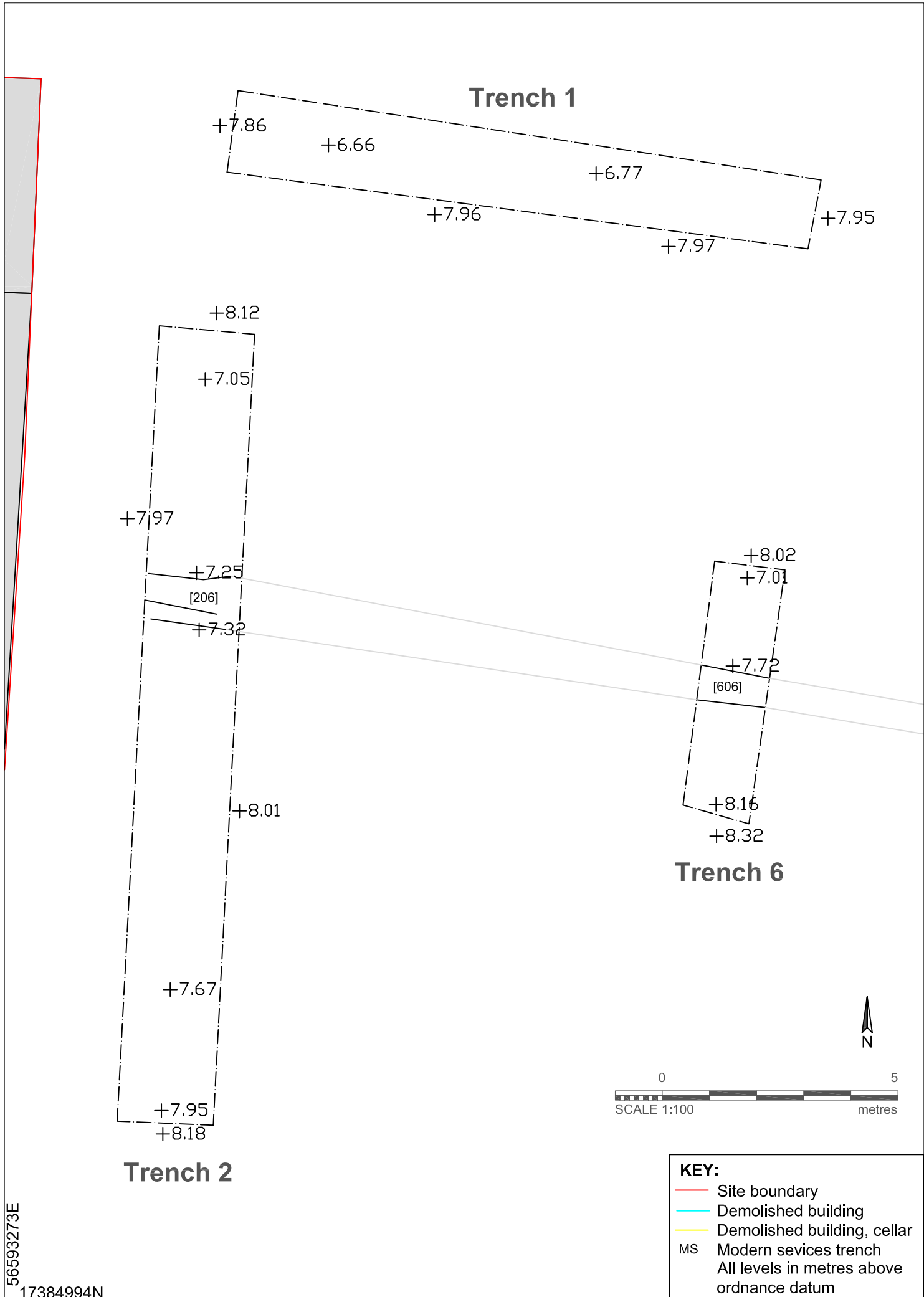


Figure 3: Trench 1, 2 and 6 plan

KEY:

- Site boundary
- Demolished building
- Demolished building, cellar
- MS Modern services trench

All levels in metres above ordnance datum

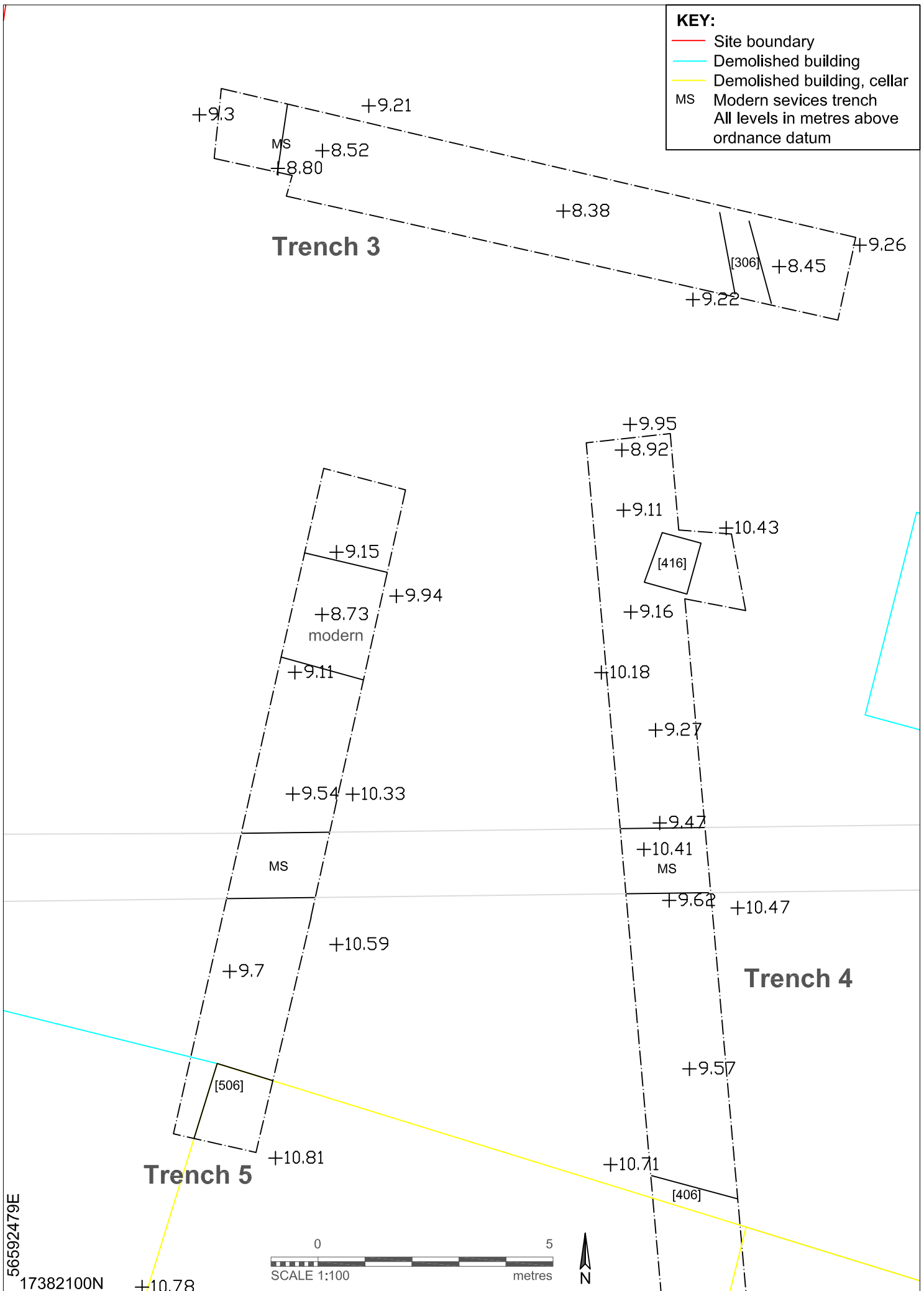


Figure 4: Trench 3, 4 and 5 plan

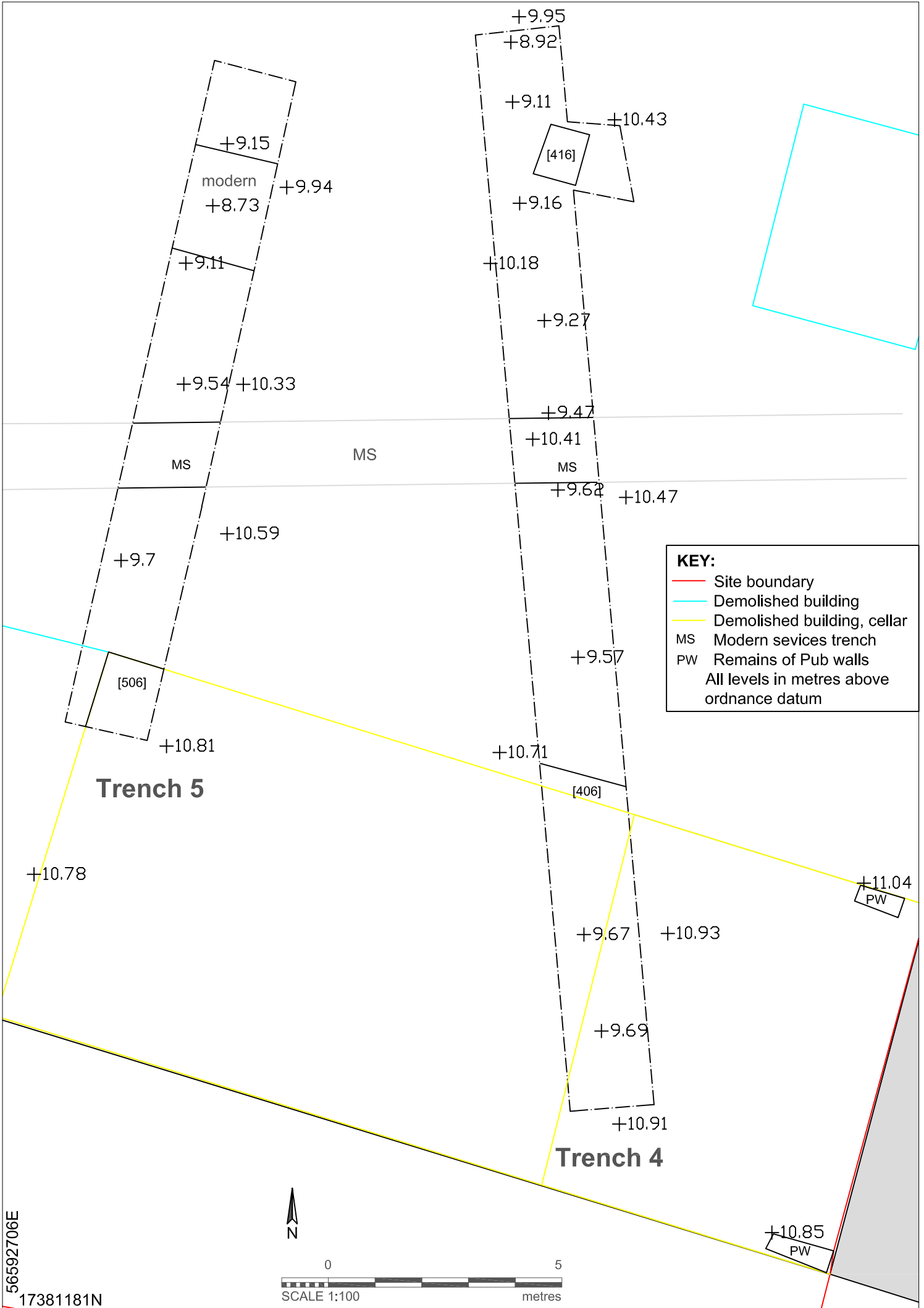
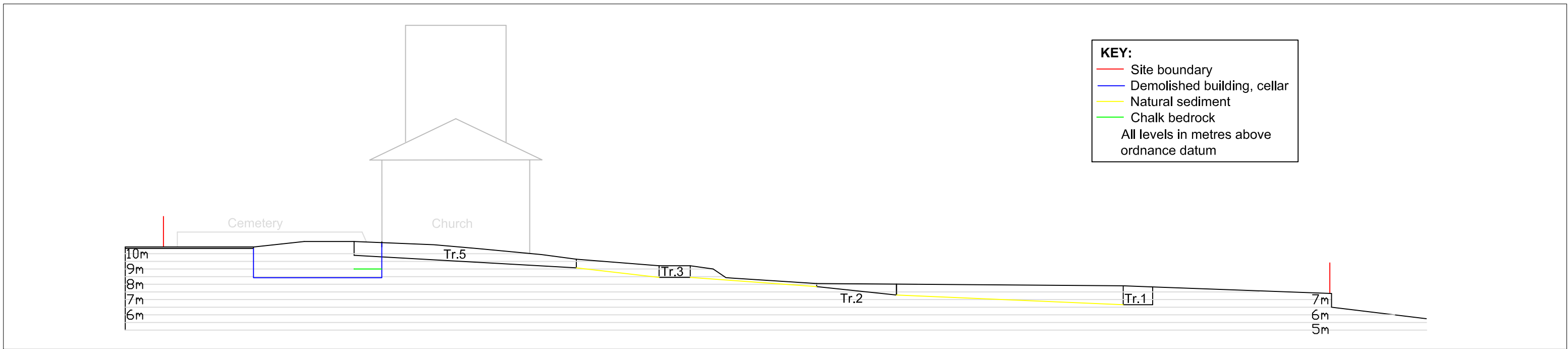
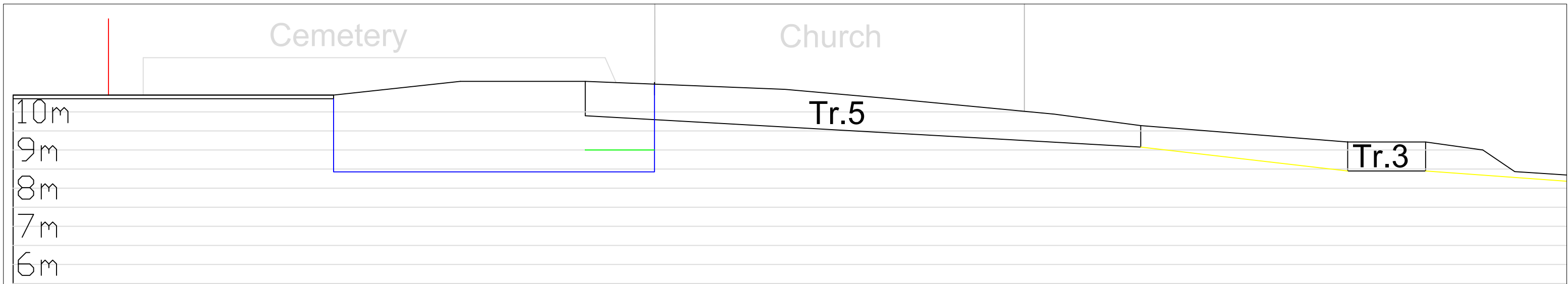


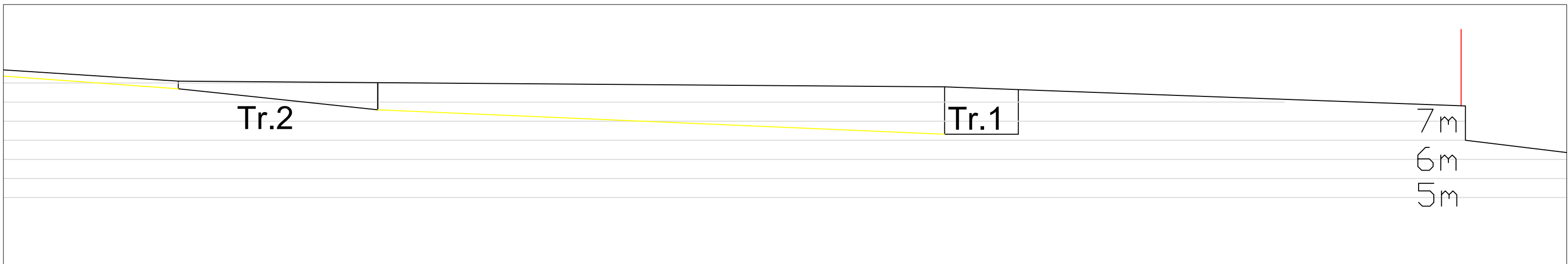
Figure 5: Trench 4 and 5 plan



Site profile A-A, scale 1:500



Site profile A-A, south part, scale 1:100



Site profile A-A, north part, scale 1:100

Figure 6: Site profile A-A

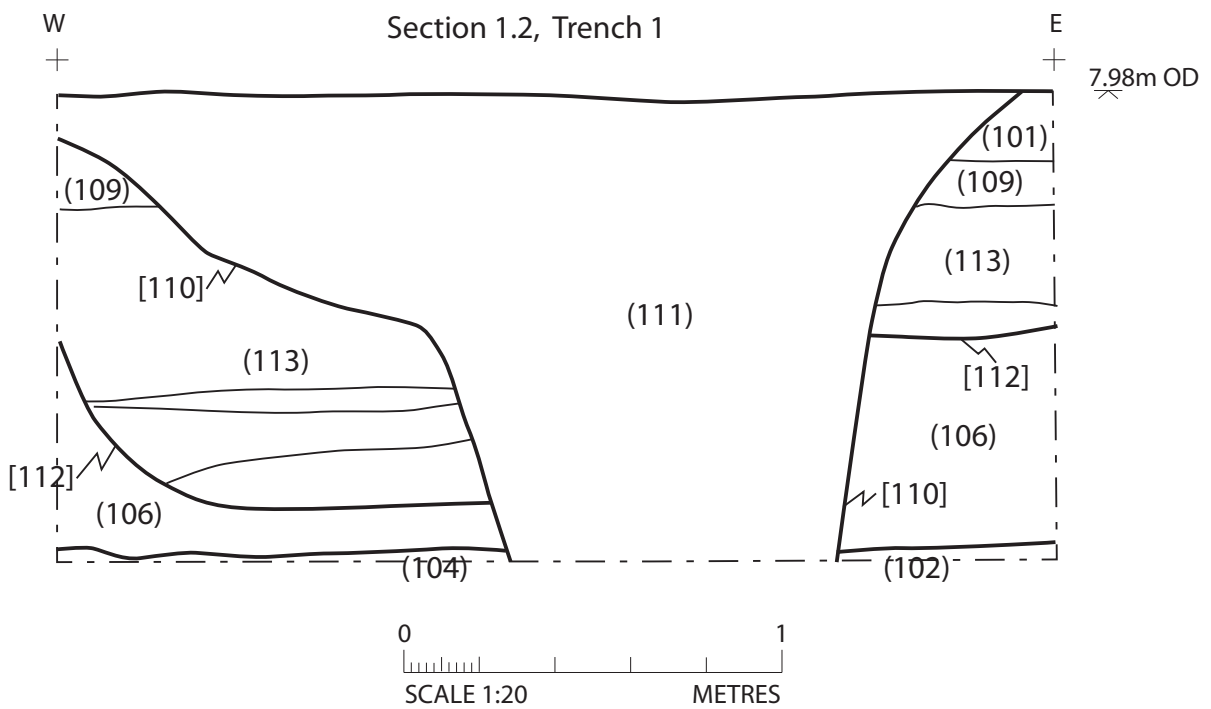
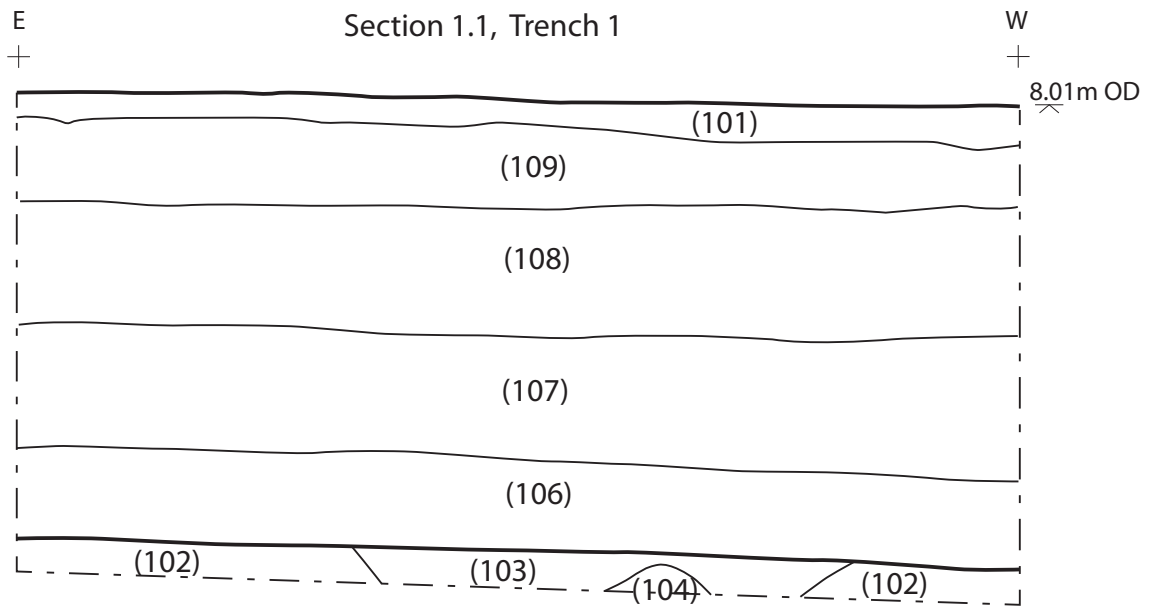
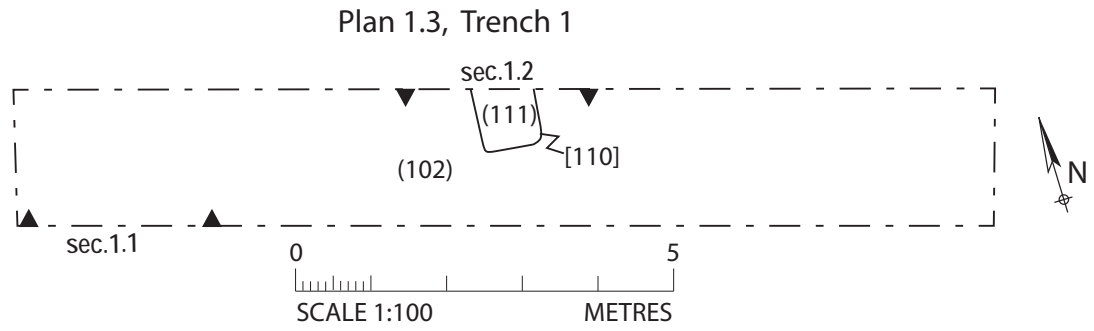
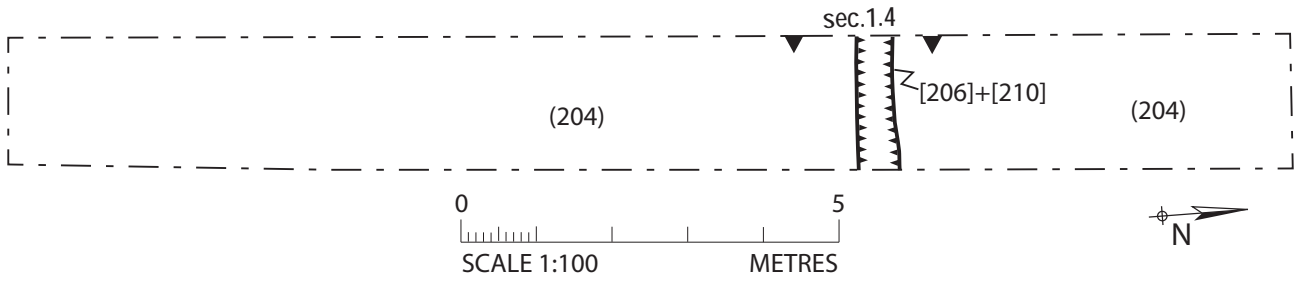
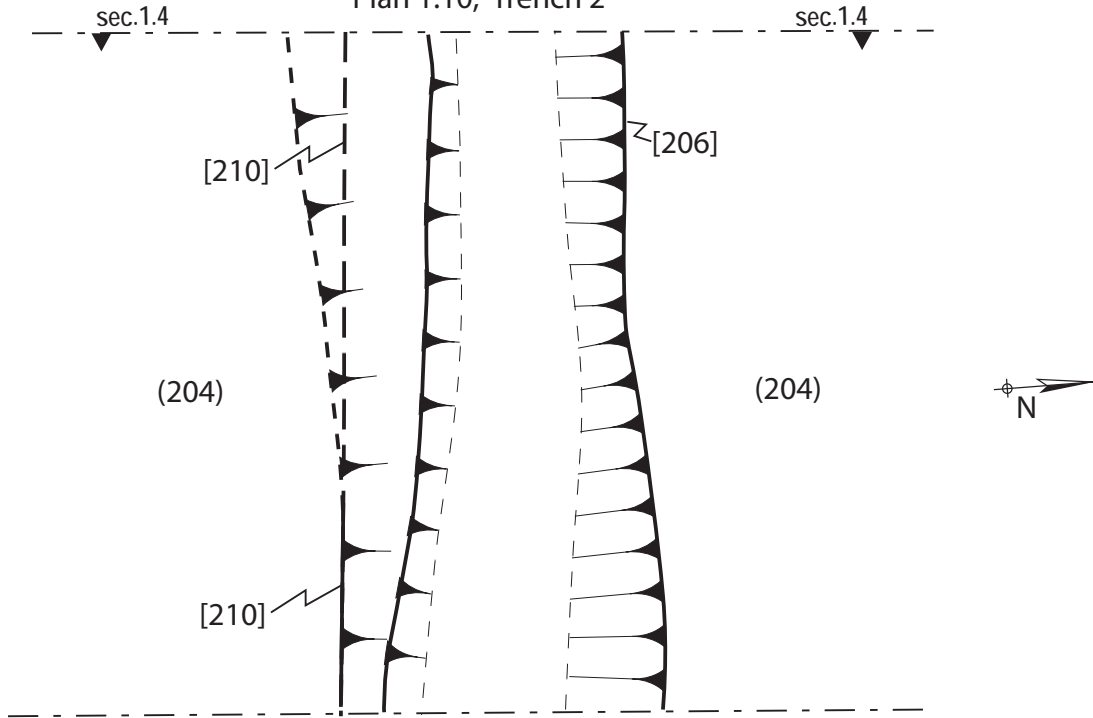


Figure 7: Trench 1 plan and sections.

Plan 1.5, Trench 2



Plan 1.10, Trench 2



Section 1.4, Trench 2

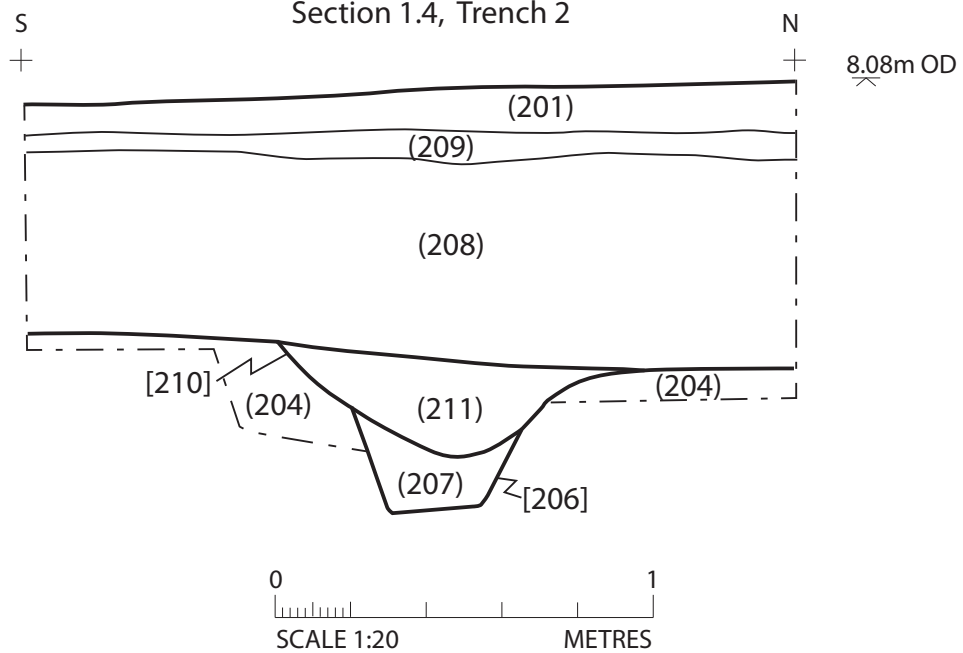
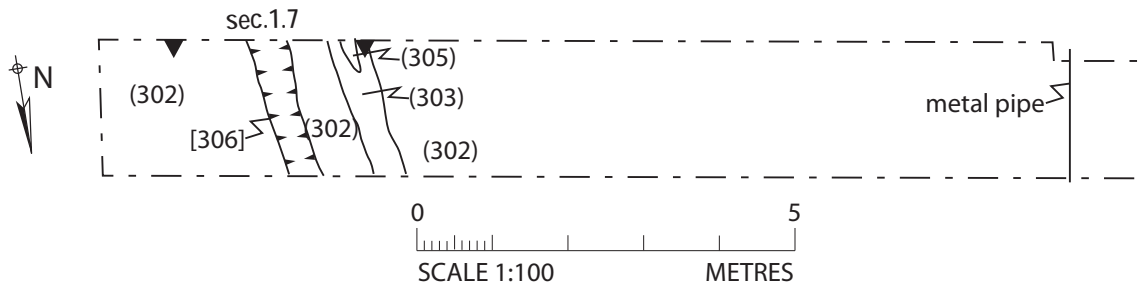
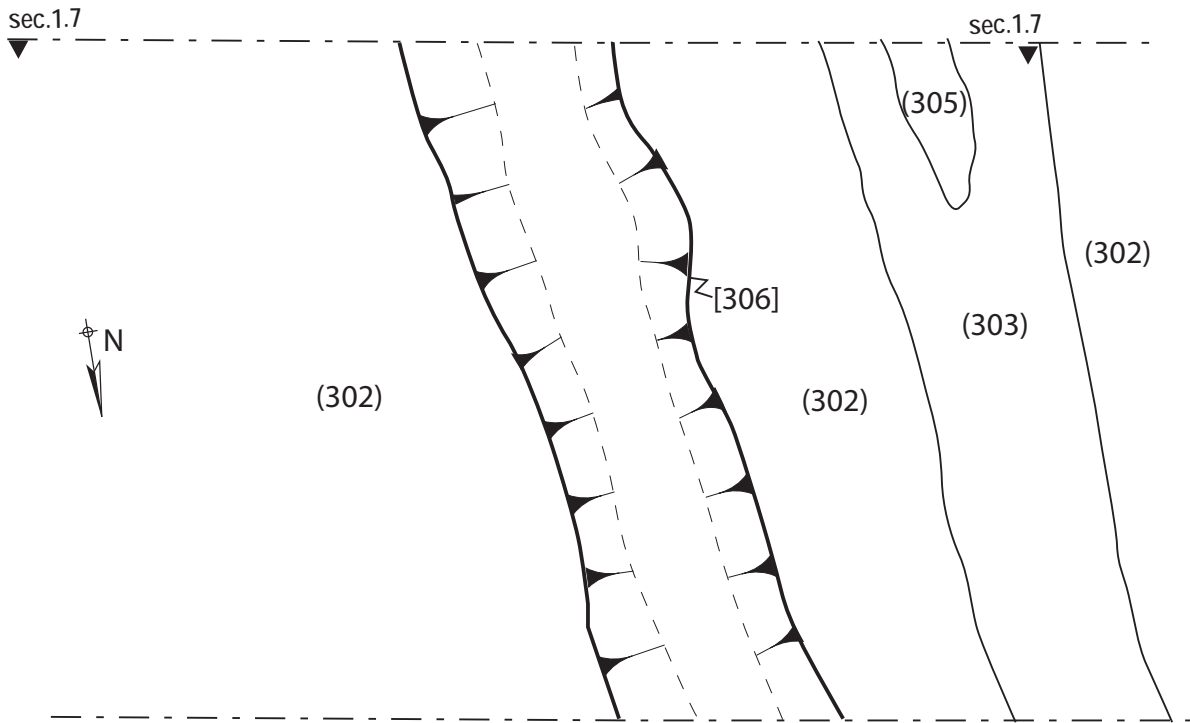


Figure 8: Trench 2 plan and section.

Plan 1.9, Trench 3



Plan 1.8, Trench 3



Section 1.7, Trench 3

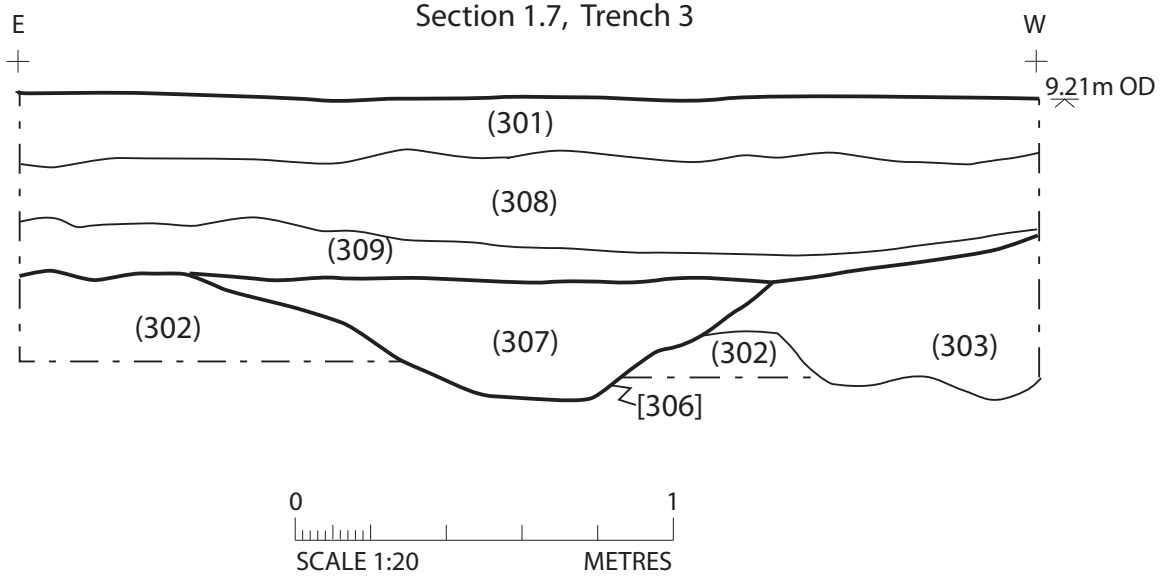
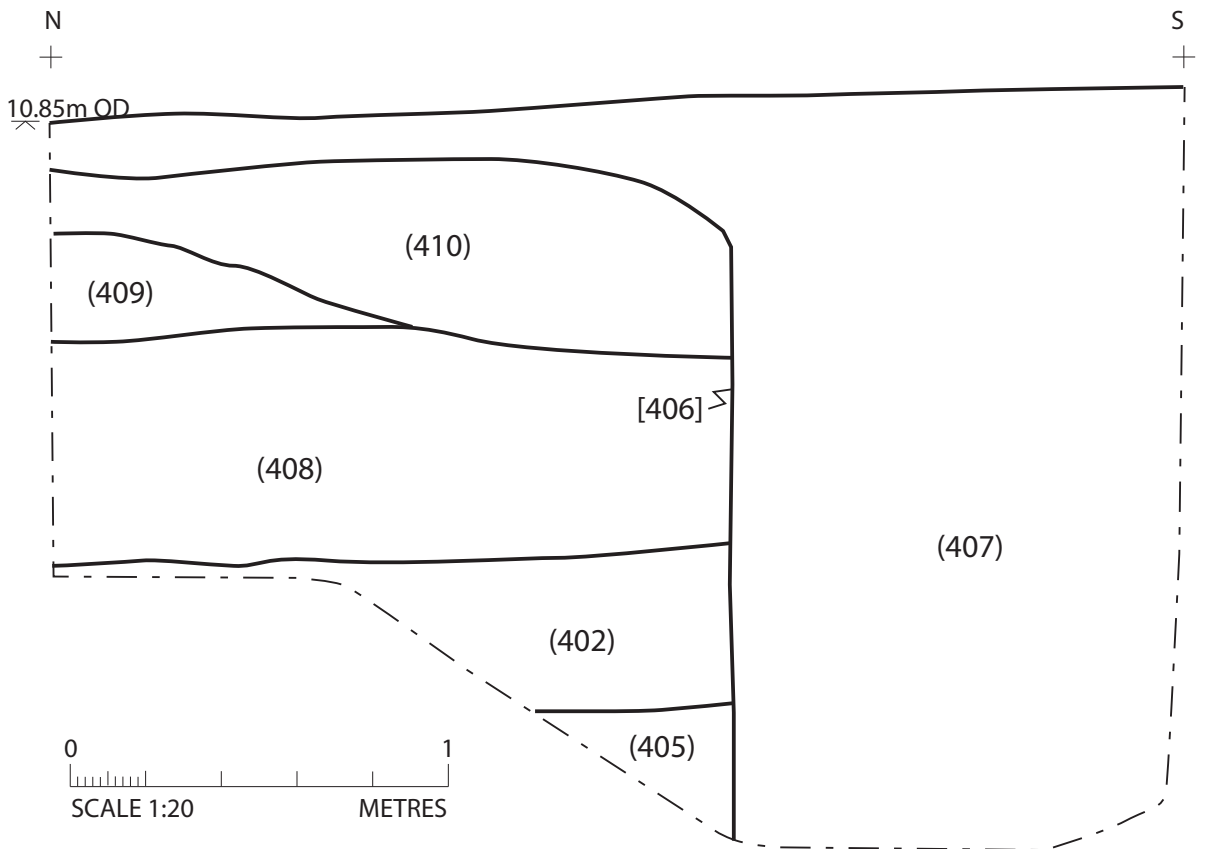


Figure 9: Trench 3 plan and section.

Plan 2.5,
Trench 4,
scale 1:100



Section 2.1, Trench 4



Section 2.2, Trench 4

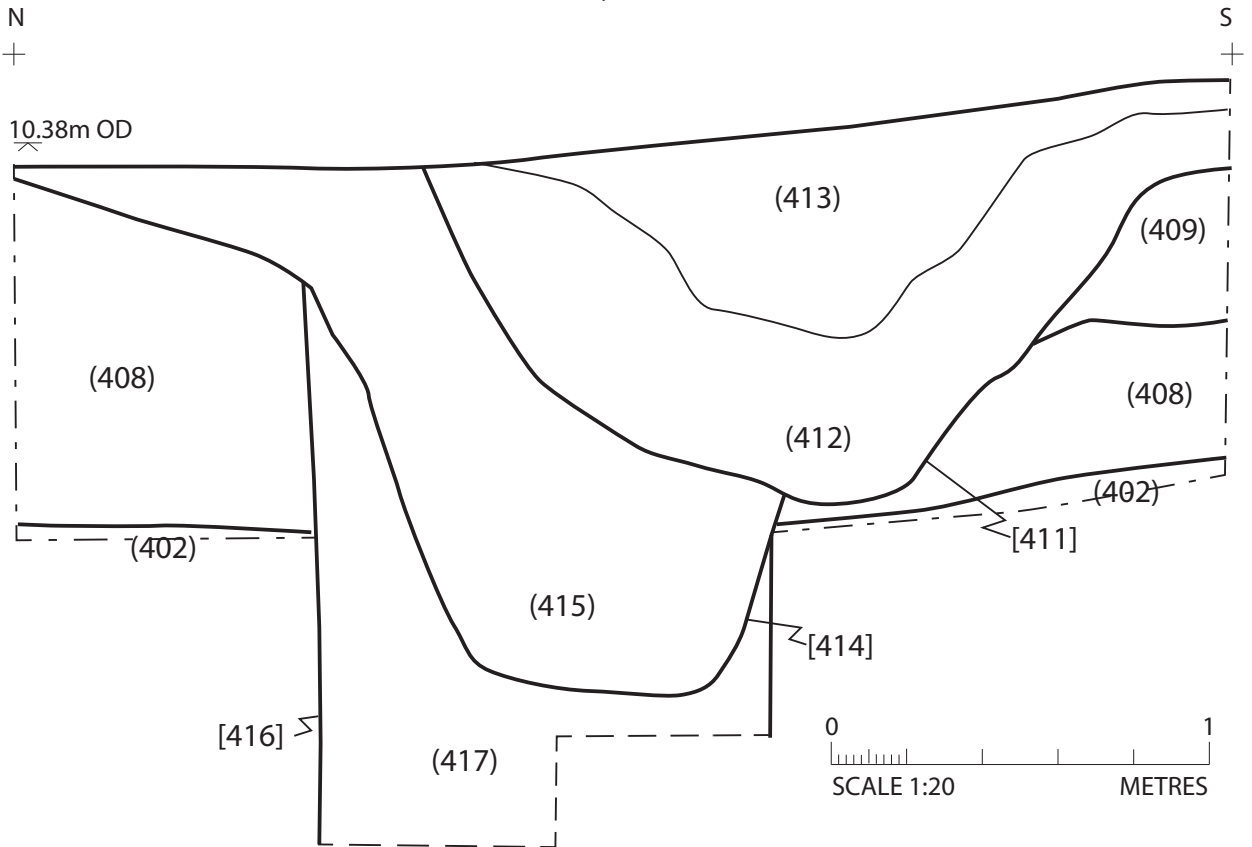


Figure 10: Trench 4 plan and sections.

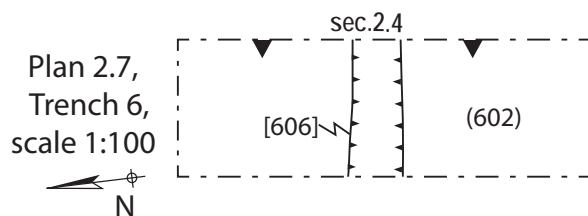
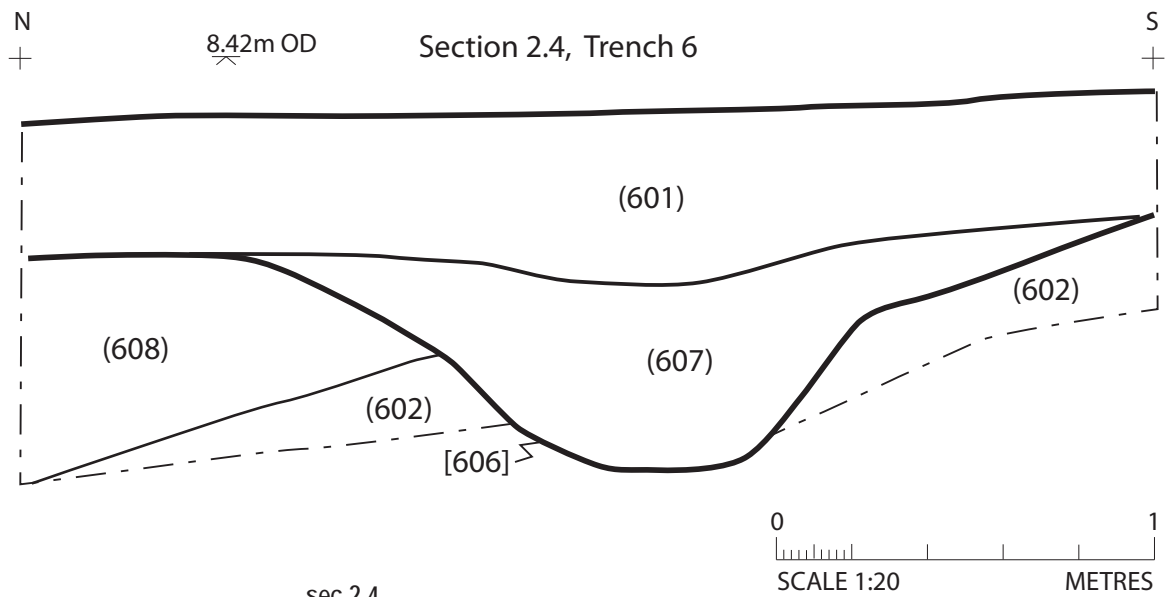
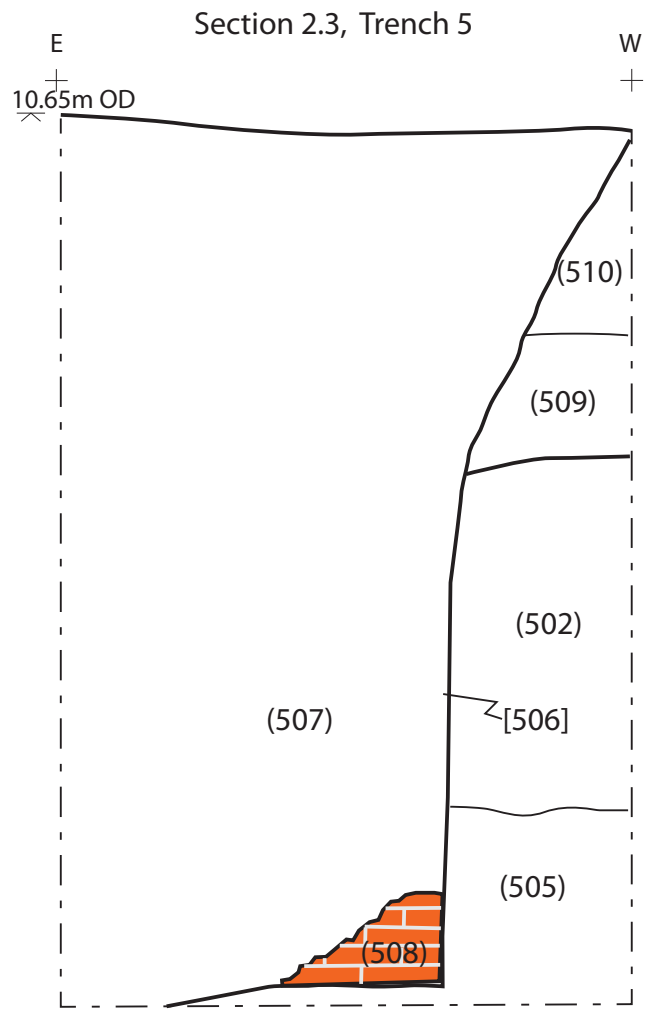
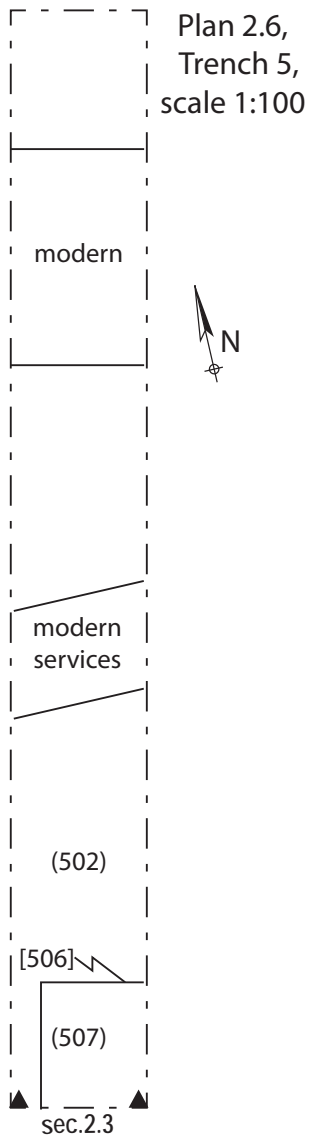


Figure 11: Plans and sections of Trench 5 and 6.