

Archaeological Watching Brief on land at Howt Green Farm, Sheppey Way, Bobbing, Kent

Site Code HGF /WB/18



Date of report 21/05/2018

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Archaeological Watching Brief on land at Howt Green Farm, Sheppey Way, Bobbing, Kent

Site Code HGF/WB/18
NGR 589611 166037

Date of report: 21/05/2018



Plate 1. Aerial view of site (red line area) showing the site being developed and area watched

(Google Earth 2018: Eye altitude 389m).

1.0 Abstract

1.1. From the 8th to 11th March 2018 Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA of Swale and Thames Archaeological Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) carried out an Archaeological Watching Brief on ground works involved in the build of a Cold Store at Howt Green Farm, Bobbing in Kent. (Fig. 1 & Plates 1-7).

1.2. The works were carried out on behalf of the land owner.

1.3. An Archaeological Watch was kept during the excavation of foundation post pads (Plates 2-7).

The archaeological work was undertaken in one phase.

Phase 1: The digging out of the foundation post pads of the new building to about 1.40-1.50m below present ground level of about 25.40m AOD (8th-11th March & Plates 2-6).

1.4. The Archaeological Watching Brief was to watch for any signs of archaeological activity. In particular, any evidence of archaeological activity associated with the known archaeological sites in the area including the nearby findings of Prehistoric activity (SWAT 2017 & Appendix 2).

1.5. The Planning Application Number for the development is Swale Borough Council SW/16/507789.

1.6. Although the archaeological potential has been highlighted by KCC Heritage Conservation the Archaeological Watching Brief revealed no buried archaeological features and no archaeological finds were retrieved.

2.0 Introduction

2.1 The site is located on was located northwest of Sheppey Way in the hamlet of Howt Green within a large orchard and parking area that was partially grubbed out to make way for the development and on an area of rough, disturbed ground southwest of the orchard within the farm yard. Bounded by existing orchards to the north and east, Sheppey Way to the southeast and farm buildings to the west, the site was rectangular shaped and measured approximately 0.3819 ha and sloped gently to the southeast at approximately 24.30m to 25.67m aOD (above Ordnance Datum).

2.2 Planning Background

Planning application SW/16/ 507789/FULL was submitted to Swale Borough Council the Local Planning Authority (LPA). Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation (KCCHC), on behalf of the LPA requested that an Archaeological Watching Brief be undertaken in order to record any archaeological remains uncovered during the development work. The following condition (3) was attached to the planning consent:

Prior to the commencement of the development the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of archaeological work in accordance with a written specification and timetable which has been submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority

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

3.0 Schedule of Visits

An archaeologist suitably experienced attended the site (Paul Wilkinson SWAT Archaeology) and monitored the excavation works from 8th – 11th March 2018.

4.0 Aims and Objectives

4.1. The reason for the monitoring and recording, were to:

“The objectives of the archaeological watching brief are to contribute to heritage knowledge of the area through the recording of any archaeological remains exposed as a result of excavations in connection with the groundworks. Particular attention will be made to the character, height below ground level, condition, date and significance of the deposits (SWAT Archaeology 11/05/2018).

4.2. A full programme of proposed works by the contractor were made available to SWAT Archaeology before the on-site monitoring took place.

4.3. Confidence Rating

No factors hindered the recognition of archaeological and deposits during the monitoring and recording exercise.

5.0 Archaeological and Geological Background

5.1. According to the British Geological Survey, the site lies on Head deposits, and the archaeological watching brief revealed pale brown sandy silty clay in the form of Brickearth as exposed superficial geology below the surface (Figure 1 and Plates 2-7).

5.2. SWAT Archaeology has been involved in significant archaeological work at Coleshall Farm in Iwade, just over a kilometre north of the proposed development site. These ongoing works have revealed an extensive range of human activity from Neolithic pits (c.3350-2800BC) to Medieval field systems (c.1125-1350AD) (Wilkinson 2012). Prior to the work carried out by SWAT, Pre-Construct Archaeology (PCA) found evidence of Mesolithic to Iron Age remains in the neighbouring vicinity (Bishop & Bagwell 2005) and later Medieval activity in 2000 (PCA Unpublished document 2000). Just over a kilometre south of Howt Green Farm, Canterbury Archaeological Trust in 2008 uncovered a large high status Migration Period Anglo Saxon cemetery and earlier prehistoric ring ditches at The Meads between Bobbing and Sittingbourne (Weekes 2012).

5.3 In April and May 2014 SWAT Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation at Howt Farm followed on by a strip, map and sample excavation that revealed the presence of prehistoric field systems comprising ditches, elongated pits, drainage gullies and other agricultural activity concentrated within an area located to the west of a large linear feature group, a possible hollow way or trackway. This large linear feature was provisionally interpreted as potential track way or hollow way leading to the Iwade settlement, located approximately 1k to the north and investigated by SWAT Archaeology and Pre Construct Archaeology.

5.4 The evidence for pottery making, provisionally dated to the Beaker Period, was discovered to the east of the centrally located large linear. The industrial features comprised a 'one shot' pottery kiln exposed during the evaluation. A refuse pit and adjacent post-holes located in the vicinity of the kiln were found during the excavation. The results from the excavation suggest that prehistoric activity from the Early Bronze Age into the Late Iron Age may have centred around the trackway as an important access route through this area south of the Swale and its marshlands (SWAT 2015).

5.5 There are additional listings in the Historical Environment Record (HER) of recorded findings close to Howt Green Farm. Between 2000 and 2002 Thames Valley Archaeological Services carried out excavations at the site of a new crematorium and cemetery off of Stickfast Lane, approximately half a kilometre southwest of the development site. Work in 2000 revealed late Bronze Age to early Iron Age pits, ditches and gullies (HER Number TQ 86 NE 135), and further work in 2002 exposed post Medieval activity (HER Number TQ 86 NE 137).

6.0 Methodology

6.1. The Watching Brief was conducted in accordance with the Archaeological Specification compiled by SWAT Archaeology and it also complied with the Chartered Institute of Field Archaeologists' Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (ClfA: Dec 2017).

6.2. The works comprised the observation of all ground works, including the inspection of subsoil and natural deposits for archaeological features and finds.

6.3. The Watching Brief was carried out according to the needs of the building contractors from 8th-11th March 2018.

6.4. Excavation of the area was carried out by contractors using a 360 degree machine equipped with a toothed bucket necessary to remove the soil down to formation level (Plates 2-7).

6.5. All excavation was carried out under the constant supervision of an experienced archaeologist (Dr Paul Wilkinson MCifA).

6.6. Where possible the areas of excavation were subsequently hand-cleaned with the intention of revealing any observed features in plan and section.

6.7. If found archaeological features under threat were to be excavated to enable sufficient information about form, development date and stratigraphic relationships to be recorded without prejudice to more extensive investigations, should these prove to be necessary.

6.8. The archaeological watching brief was carried out in accordance with current ClfA Standards and Guidance, (ClfA: 2017), and methodology discussed on a number of occasions with the Senior Archaeological Officer KCC.

7.0 Results

7.1 General

No archaeological features or finds were revealed or recovered. The subsoil encountered across the site was deposits of pale brown sandy silty clay in the form of Brickearth overlaid by tarmac crush. No archaeological features were revealed in the natural geology and no archaeological finds retrieved from the site which was swept with a Fisher CZ 3D metal detector.

7.2 The proposed build is to be located within the curtilage of Howt Green Farm. The area was surveyed in and shown on Plate 1 & Figure 1.

7.3 The site produced no archaeological features or deposits or finds and no environmental potential was recognised on site.

8.0 Finds

No finds were retrieved.

9.0 Discussion

The development site is in an area of archaeological potential. However, no archaeology was revealed on the development site.

10.0 Conclusion

The Archaeological Monitoring has fulfilled the primary aims and objectives of the SWAT Archaeological Specification. As far as it is known no buried archaeological features have been affected as a result of the development.

11.0 Acknowledgments

SWAT Archaeology would like to thank the landowners for commissioning the project. Fieldwork was undertaken and report written by Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA.

References

HER data (KCC and Historic England 2018)

CIfA (2017) Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs

Appendix 1
Kent County Council HER Summary Form

Site Name: Development of land at Howt Green Farm, Sheppey Way, Bobbing, Kent

SWAT Site Code: HGF/WB/18

Site Address: As above

Summary:

Swale and Thames Survey Company (SWAT) carried out Archaeological Monitoring on the development site above. The site has planning permission for a new Cold Store whereby Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation (KCCHC) requested that an Archaeological Watching Brief be undertaken to determine the possible impact of the development on any archaeological remains.

The Archaeological Monitoring consisted of site visits which encountered no buried archaeological features or artefacts.

District/Unitary: Swale Borough Council

Period(s):

NGR (centre of site to eight figures) 589611 166037

Type of Archaeological work: Archaeological Watching Brief

Date of recording: March 2018

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

Geology: Bedrock geology is Brickearth Formation

Title and author of accompanying report: Wilkinson P. (2018) Archaeological Watching Brief on land at Howt Green Farm, Sheppey Way, Bobbing, Kent

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

See above

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

Contact at Unit: Paul Wilkinson

Date: 21/05/18



Plate 2. General view of site (looking NE)



Plate 3. View of post pad trenching (looking NE)



Plate 4. View of post pad trenching (looking SE)



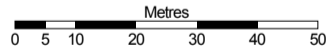
Plate 5. View of the post pad trenches (looking NW)



Plate 6. View of the post pad trenches (looking NW)



Plate 7. View of the post pad trenches (looking NW)



Scale: 1:1250



Howt Green Farm

**Sheppey Way
Bobbing
ME9 8QP**

Supplied by: National Map Centre
License number: 100031961
Produced: 22/11/2018
Serial number: 2053820

Plot centre co-ordinates: 589590,166071
Download file: howt.zip
Project name: swat

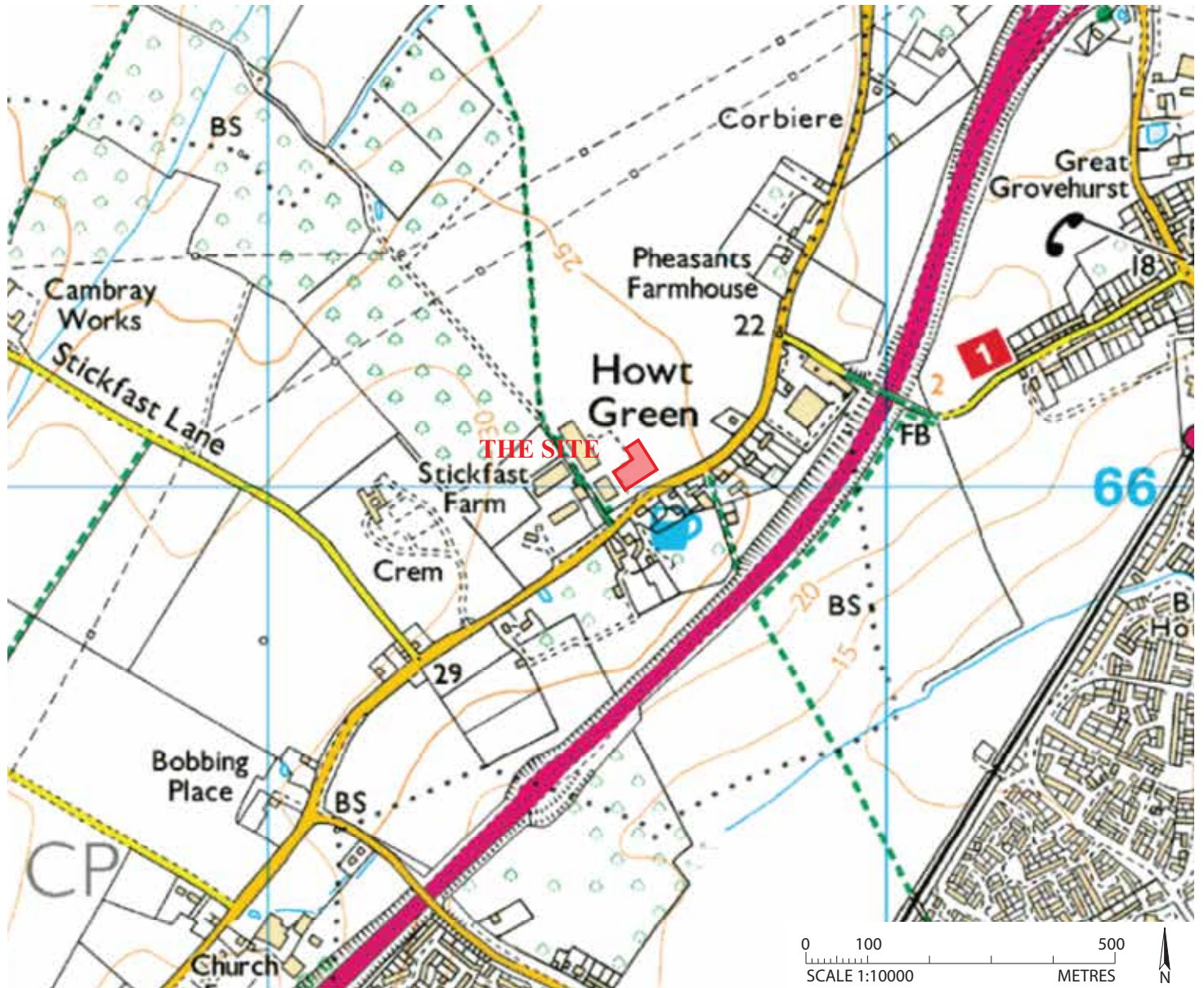


Figure 1: Site location map, scale 1:10000.

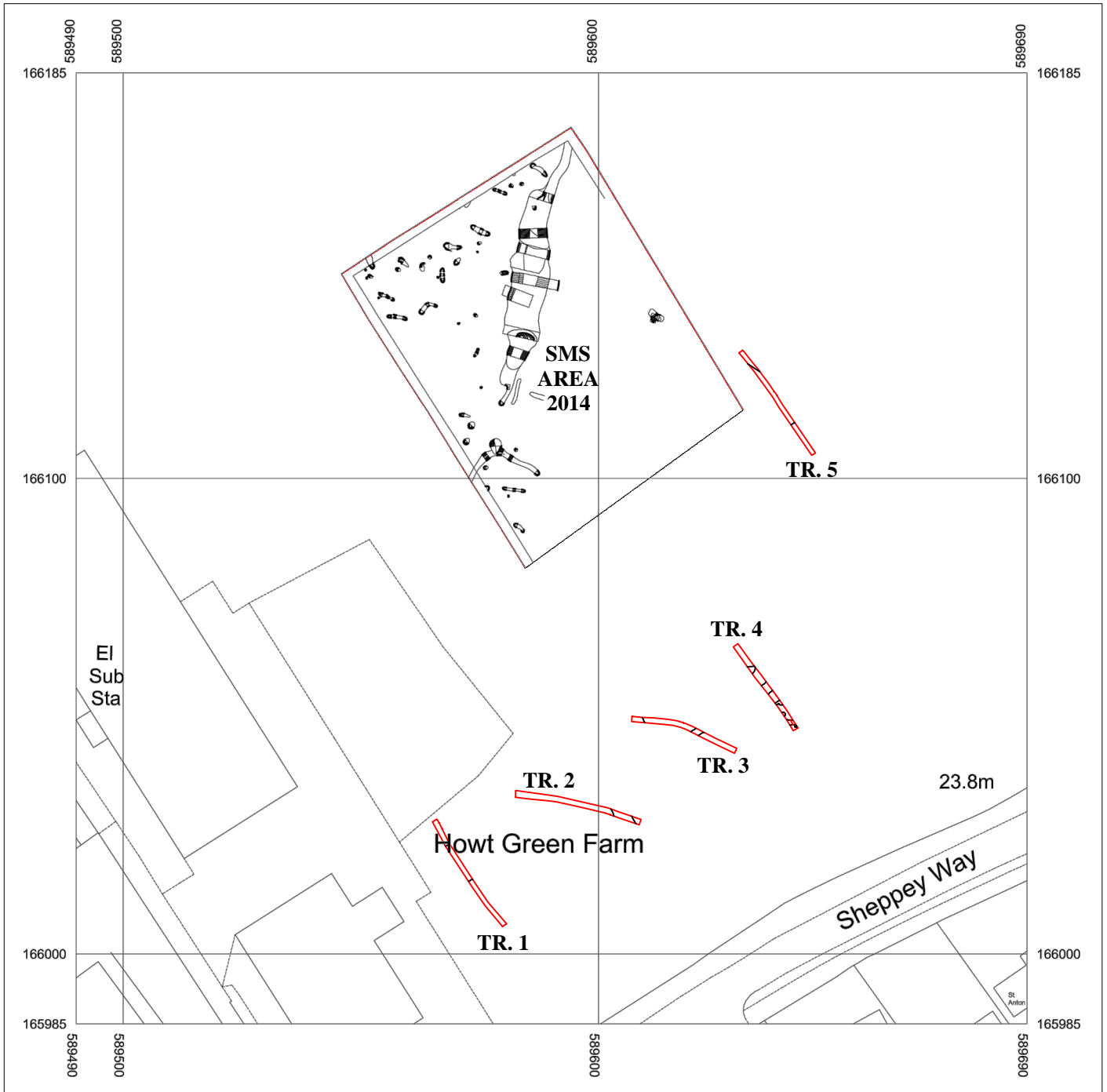


Figure 2: Trench location, scale 1:1250

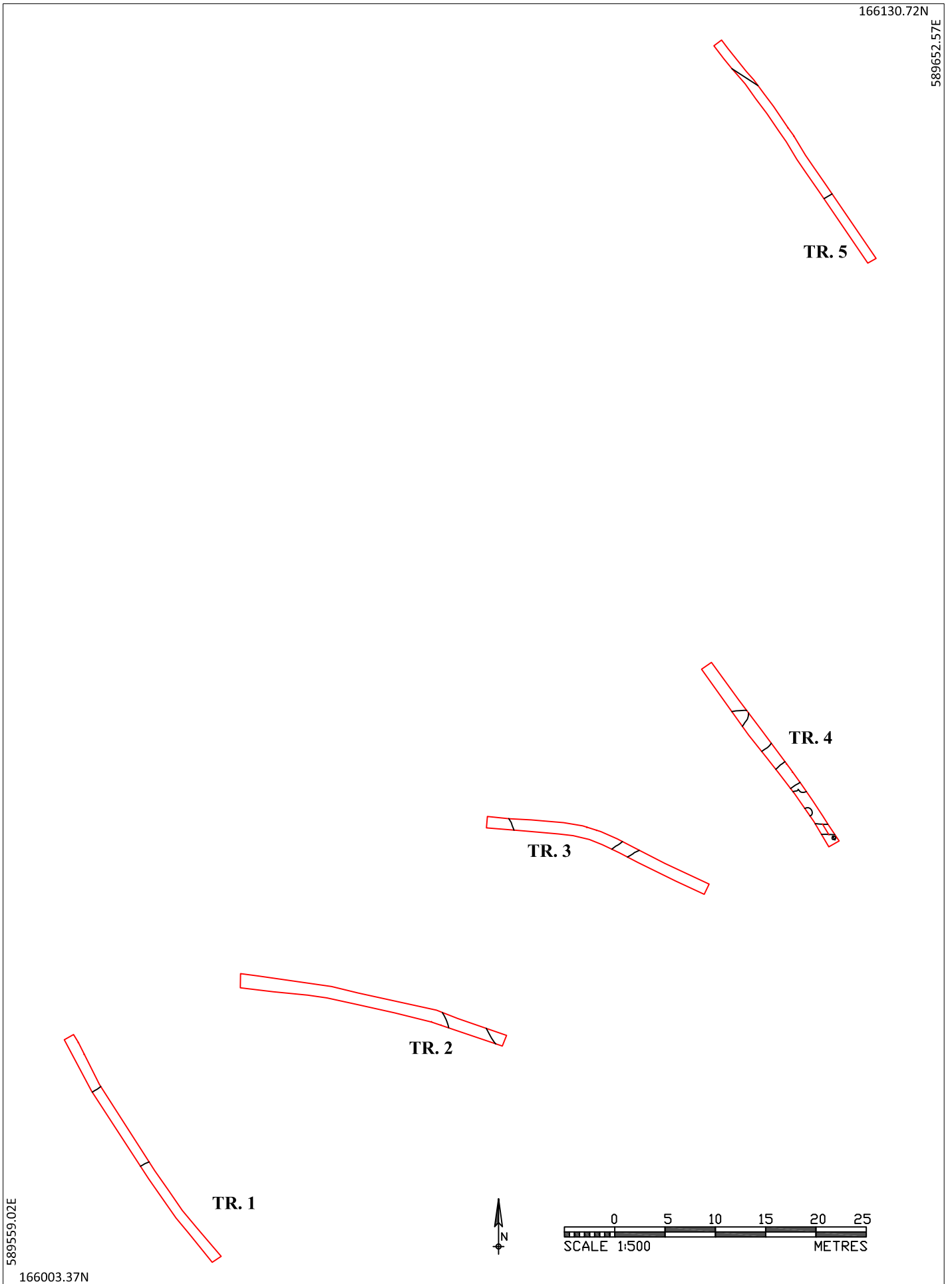


Figure 3: Trench location, scale 1:500

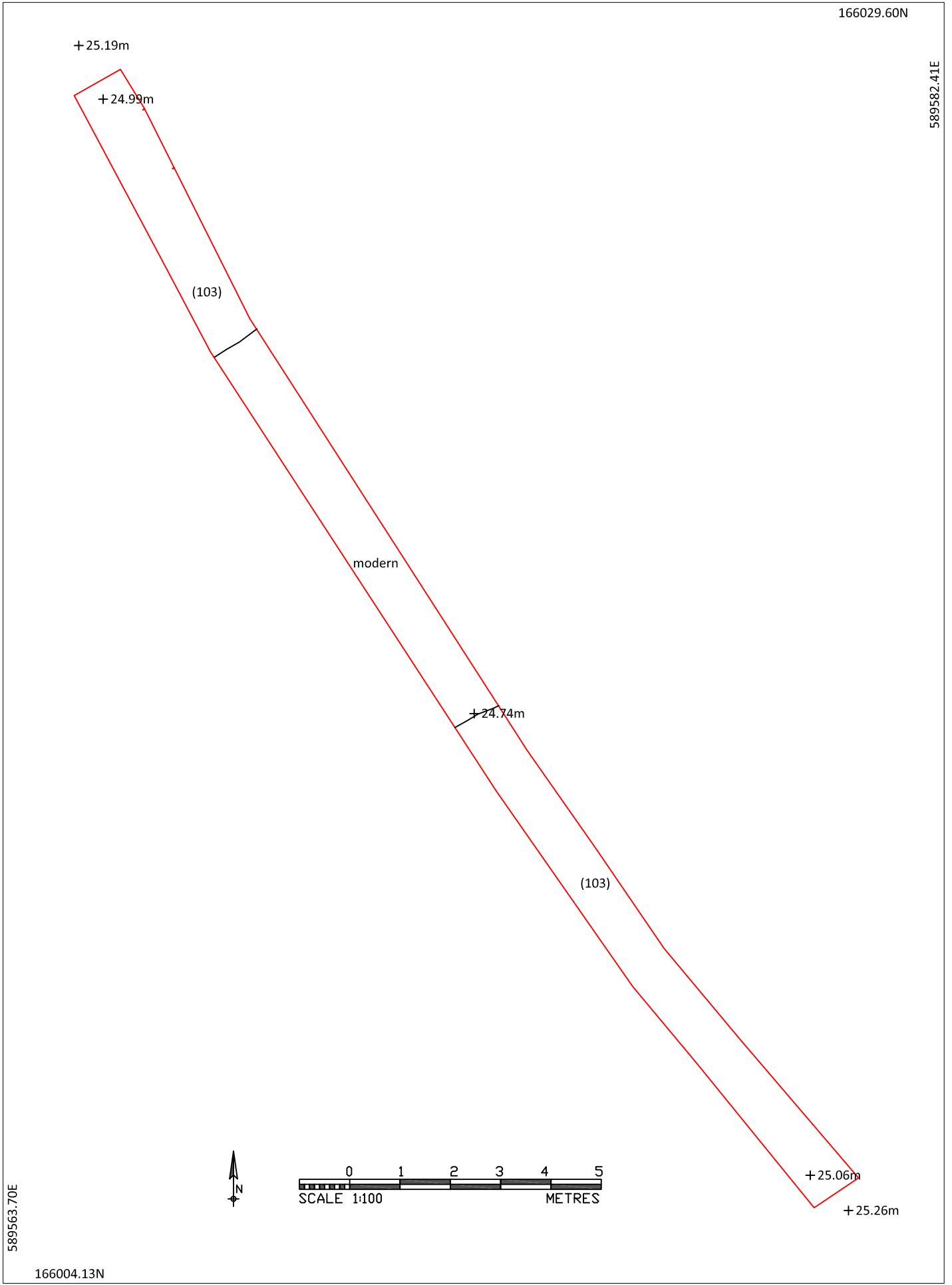


Figure 4: Trench 1

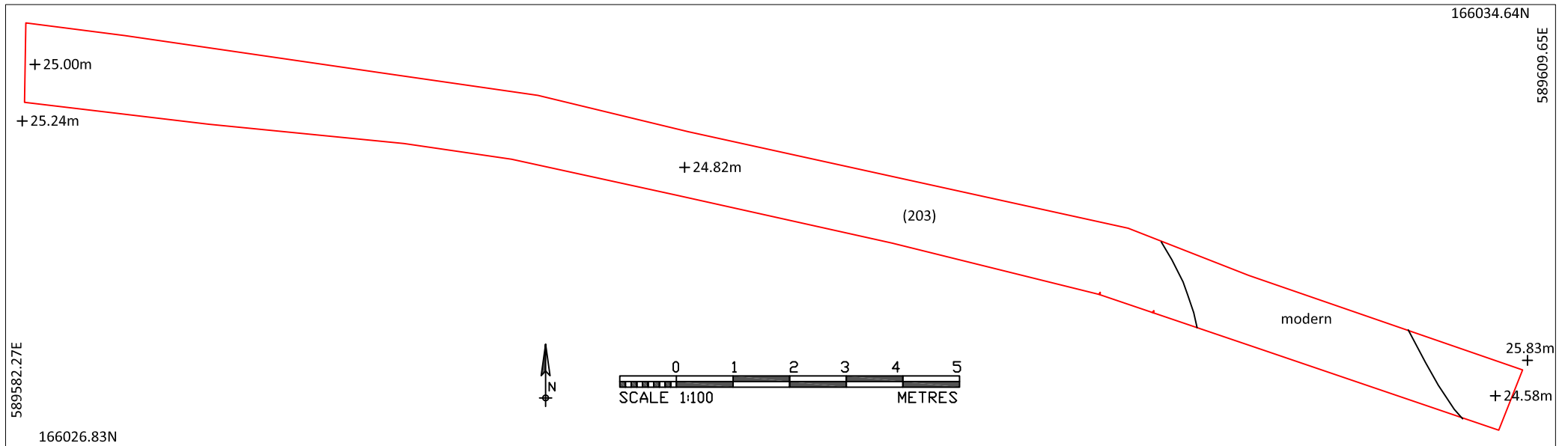


Figure 5: Trench 2

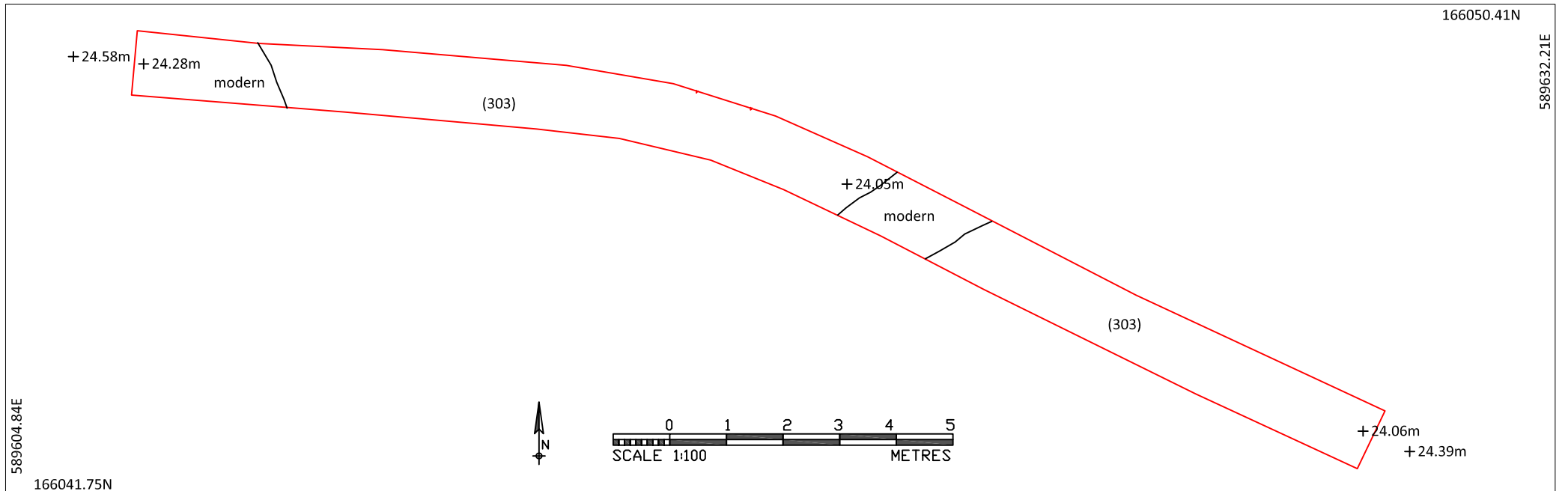


Figure 6: Trench 3

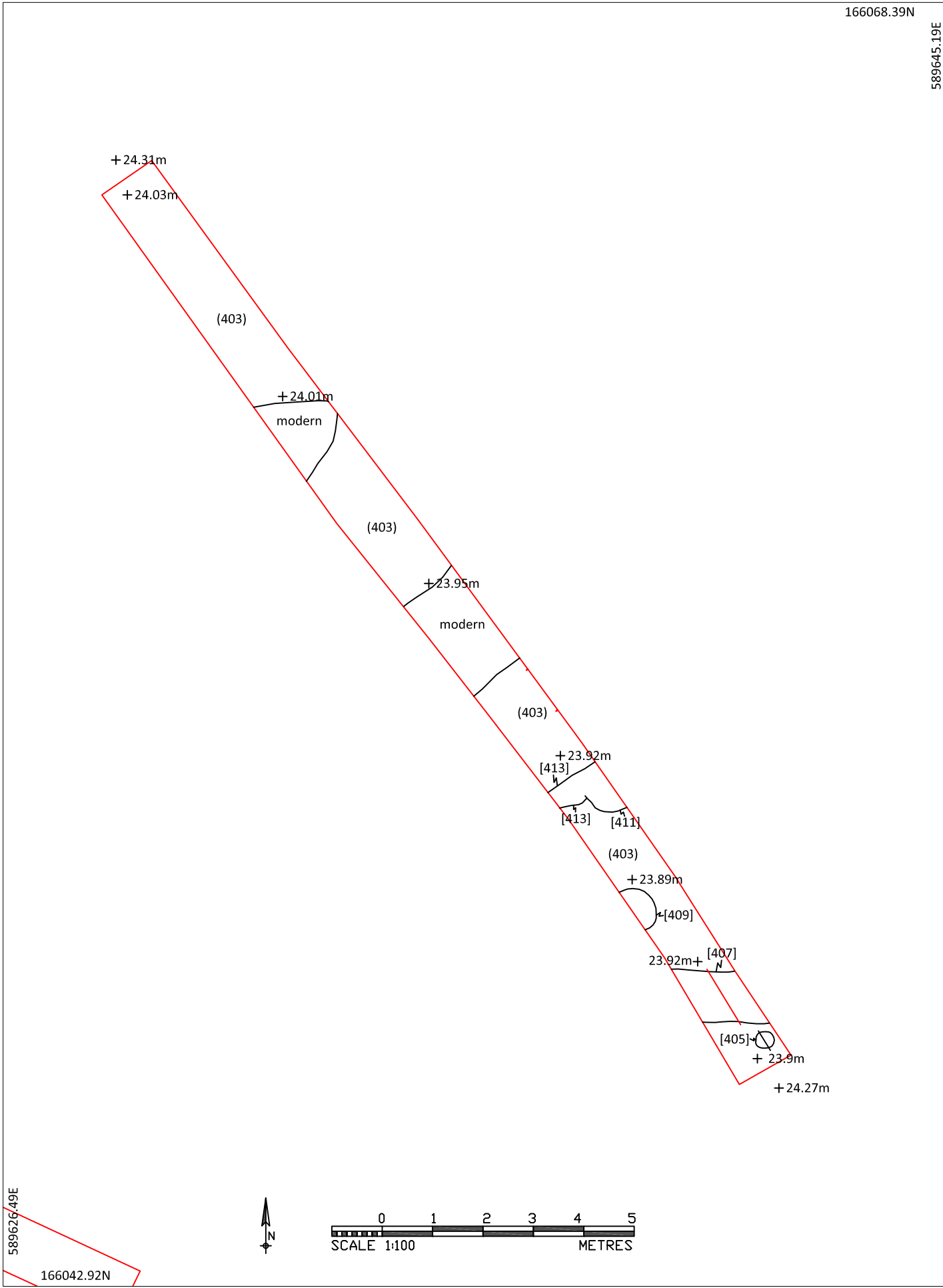


Figure 7: Trench 4

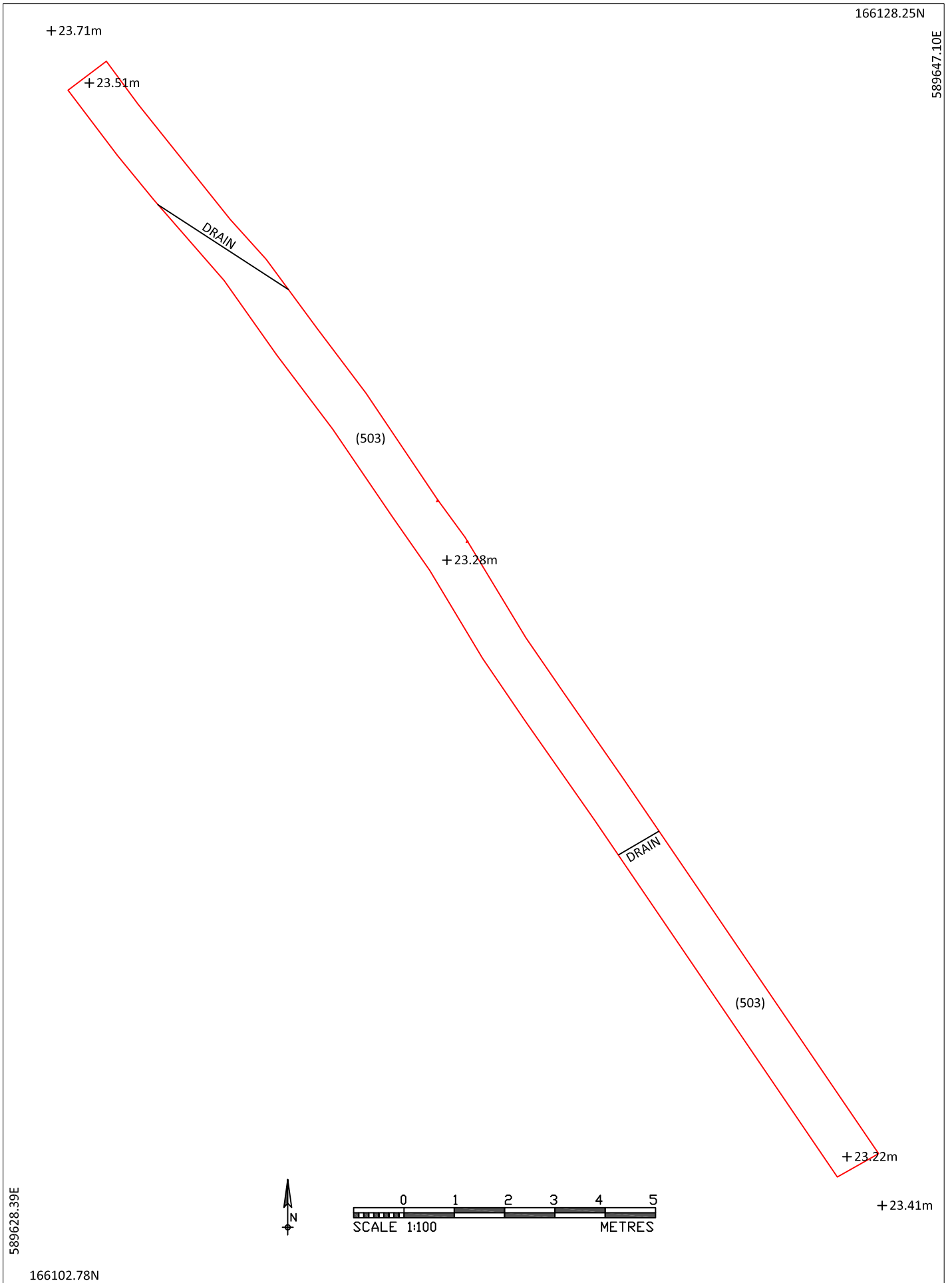


Figure 8: Trench 5

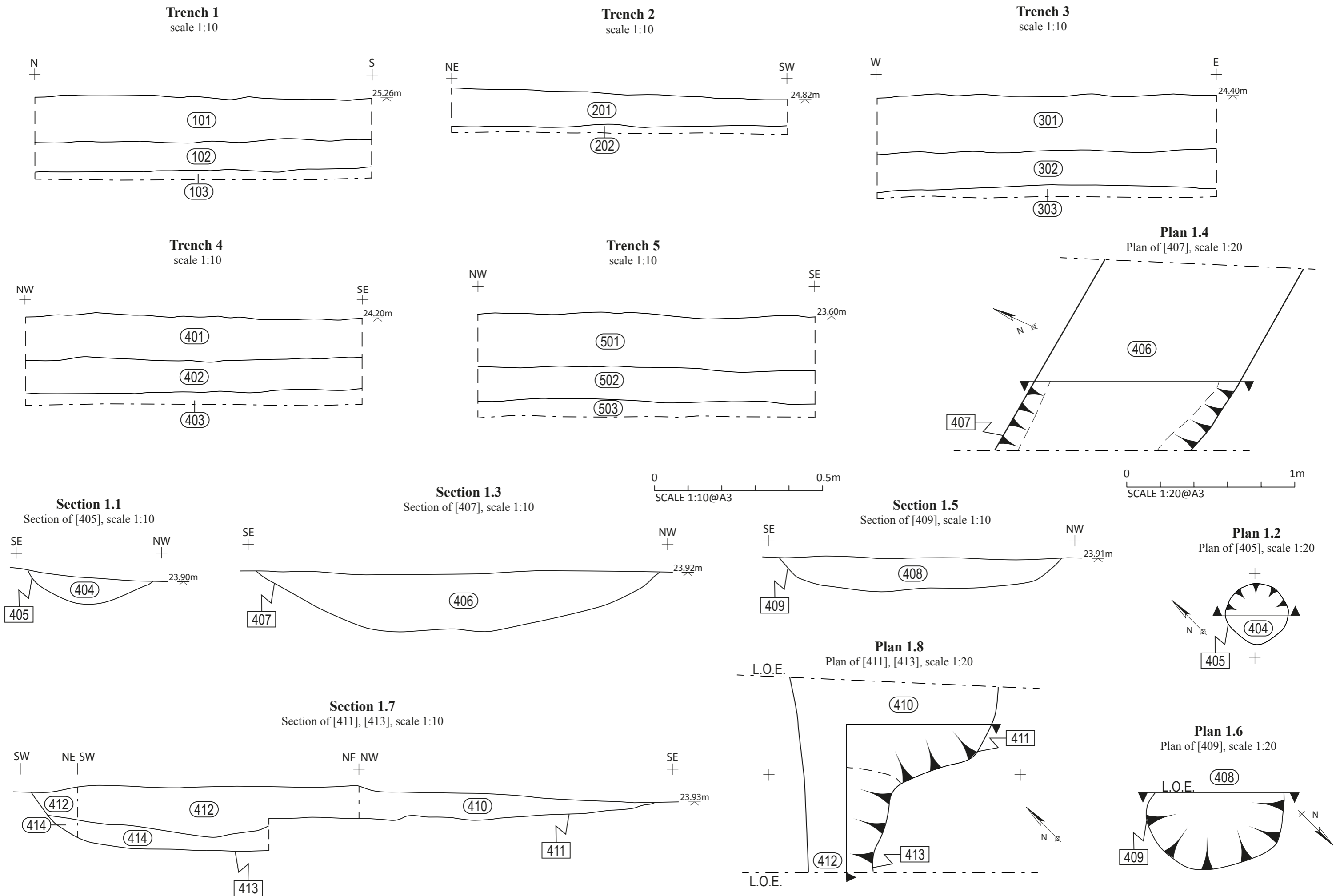


Figure 9: Representative sections of trenches, feature's sections and plans