

**An Archaeological Evaluation at 811 The Ridge,  
Baldslow, Hastings East Sussex**

**Planning Application Ref: HS/FA/10/00691**

**NGR 579877 113122**

**Project No. 4713  
Site Code: HTR11**

**ASE Report No: 2011049  
OASIS id: archaeol6-**

**Greg Priestley-Bell**

**March 2011**

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**Abstract**

*Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Mr Rick Hoad to undertake an archaeological evaluation at 811 The Ridge, Baldslow, Hastings, East Sussex (NGR 579877 113122). Two 5m long evaluation trenches were excavated. Trench T1 was taken down to the top of the natural at c. 97.5m AOD: a ceramic land drain was recorded at the base of the trench, while modern disturbance was recorded at the northern end. Trench 2 was taken down to the top of the natural at between 97.4 – 97.7m AOD: the edge of a modern terracing cut was recorded running SW-NE the length of the base of the trench. No archaeological features or finds were present.*

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE) (a division of The Centre for Applied Archaeology at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London) was commissioned by Mr Rick Hoad (hereafter referred to as 'the client') to undertake an archaeological evaluation at No. 811 The Ridge, Baldslow, Hastings, East Sussex in advance of development (hereafter referred to as 'the site') (Fig.1).

### **1.2 Geology and Topography**

1.2.1 The underlying geology of the site comprises part of the Wadhurst Clay Formation consisting of sandstone dating to the Cretaceous period. The site lies near the top of the north facing slope in Baldslow village, just to the west of the junction of the A2100 and A211.

### **1.3 Planning Background**

1.3.1 The proposed works comprise the demolishing of the existing garage and construction of a new bungalow under Planning Permission ref: HS/FA/10/00691.

1.3.2 Following consultation with Greg Chuter, Assistant County Archaeologist, East Sussex County Council a condition (condition 12) was placed on the planning permission requiring a programme of archaeological works take place on the site ahead of the development. This condition was placed on the works because the site lies within an Archaeological Notification Area, which defines the medieval and post-medieval hamlet of Baldslow. These works are in accordance with PPS5 Planning for the Historic Environment and Policy C6 of the Hastings Local Plan.

1.3.3 ASE produced a *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI), required by planning condition 12 (Sygrave 2011). The document was compiled with reference to the East Sussex Standards (ESCC 2008) and was submitted to Greg Chuter, Assistant County Archaeologist ESCC for his approval in advance of development. All work was carried out in accordance with these documents (unless otherwise specified below), and the relevant *Standards and Guidance* of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA).

### **1.4 Aims and Objectives**

1.4.1 The general aim of the archaeological work is to establish the extent of archaeological deposits on the site, their nature and the degree to which the proposed development may impinge upon them.

1.4.2 Specific aims are to identify and record evidence of the medieval and post-medieval hamlet of Baldslow, note any evidence pertaining to the antiquity of the routeways adjacent to the site and the development of Iron working in the vicinity of the site.

### **1.5 Scope of Report**

1.5.1 The fieldwork was undertaken by Greg Priestley-Bell (Senior Archaeologist) on the 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2011. This report details the results of this work.

## 2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

### 2.1 Archaeological Periods Represented

#### *Prehistoric*

Palaeolithic 450,000 - 10,000 BC

Mesolithic 10,000 - 5,000 BC

Neolithic 5,000 - 2,300 BC

Bronze Age 2,300 - 600 BC

Iron Age 600 - AD 42

#### *Historic*

Roman AD 42 - 410

Anglo Saxon/Early Medieval AD 410 - 1065

Medieval AD 1066 – 1485

Post-Medieval AD 1486 – present

### 2.2 Summary of HER

2.2.1 The following is a summary of the records held at the Historic Environment Record (HER) for the area within a 500m radius of the proposed development.

HER Number	NGR	Details
MES1009	TQ 8008 1285	Find spot - Neolithic axe
MES893	TQ 79 13	Find spot - Neolithic axe
MES3434	TQ 7909 1419	Ridgeway – probably prehistoric or Roman trackway
MES3416	TQ 7888 1418	Find spot – Roman pottery
MES3414	TQ 789 140	Earthwork - medieval
MES3427	TQ 789 140	Extraction pit - medieval
MES928	TQ 79679 13326	Farmstead building – late medieval
MES15539	TQ 7991 1312	Settlement – medieval to post-medieval
MES2603	TQ 7971 1424	Road - medieval to post-medieval
MES833	TQ 8041 1288	Statue – post-medieval
MES922	TQ 8030 1297	Listed building – post-medieval farmhouse
MES939	TQ 80 13	Windmill – post-medieval
MES8678	TQ 78881 13582	House site – 18 <sup>th</sup> century
MES999	TQ 80023 13108	Mill site – 19 <sup>th</sup> century
MES15524	TQ 7908 1339	Earthwork - undated
MES15525	TQ 7904 1350	Earthwork – undated
EES14387	TQ 80250 12800	Interpretation - CgMs Consulting
EES14503	TQ 7858 1456	Survey – ASE
EES14467	TQ 78880 13555	Watching brief – CG Archaeology

Table 1: HER search results (0.5km radius)

2.2.2 The area surrounding the site is known for its iron working tradition which is known to have been active since at least the Roman period. Over 60 such Iron working sites are known across the Weald, with a bloomery site located c. 1 mile to the north west of the site in Beaufort Park.

- 2.2.3 The Ridge would have served as the main routeway from Winchelsea, Hastings and through Battle into the rest of Sussex.
- 2.2.4 The sites lies in an Archaeological Notification Area associated with the medieval and post-medieval hamlet of Baldslow on the junction of two routeways of unknown antiquity

### **3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY**

- 3.1** Two evaluation trenches each measuring 5m long and 1.8m wide, were excavated under archaeological supervision using a 360 degree slew mechanical digger equipped with a toothless bucket.
- 3.2** Machine excavation continued to the top of significant archaeological deposits or the surface of geological drift deposits, whichever was uppermost. Machine excavation proceeded in spits of no more than 200mm depth. Spoil heaps and trench bases were scanned with a metal detector as will the spoil derived from excavated features.
- 3.3** All encountered archaeological deposits, features and finds were recorded according to accepted professional standards in accordance with the approved ASE Written Scheme of Investigation using pro-forma context record sheets.
- 3.4** A full photographic record of the trenches and associated deposits and features was kept (including monochrome prints, colour slides and digital), and will form part of the site archive.
- 3.5** Trenches were backfilled and compacted upon completion but no formal re-instatement (e.g. turf etc.) was undertaken.

Number of Contexts	13
No. of files/paper record	1
Plan and sections sheets	1
Bulk Samples	none
Photographs Digital	12
B+W	6
CS	6
Bulk finds	none
Registered finds	none
Environmental flots/residue	none

Table 2: Quantification of site archive

## 4.0 RESULTS

### 4.1 Trench 1 (Figs 2 and 3)

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Depth	Height m.AOD
1/01	Deposit	Modern made ground	Tr.	Tr.	0.50m max.	98.51 (E) 98.42 (W)
1/02	Deposit	Buried topsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.20m max.	98.01
1/03	Deposit	Subsoil/weathered natural	Tr.	Tr.	0.30m	97.71
1/04	Cut	Land drain	2.7m	0.35m		
1/05	Fill	Pottery drain and backfill			0.30m	97.41
1/06	Deposit	Natural	Tr.	Tr.	n/a	97.52
1/07	Cut	Modern disturbance	2m	Unknown		
1/08	Fill	Modern made ground			0.90m max.	97.52

Table 3: Trench 1 contexts

4.1.1 Made ground, [1/01], consisting of dark reddish brown clayey silt with occasional CBM, concrete, plastic and iron, overlay a buried topsoil, [1/02], consisting of dark reddish brown clayey silt with occasional rooting. Layer [1/02] overlay subsoil/weathered natural [1/03], consisting of mid yellowish brown silty clay. Deposit [1/03] overlay natural, [1/06], consisting of mid brownish yellow silty clay.

4.1.2 A linear cut, [1/04], running N-S across the trench, contained a single fill, [1/05], consisting of mid yellowish grey silty clay and a ceramic pipe drain. At the northern end of the trench, a large amorphous cut, [1/07], contained a mixed fill, [1/08], consisting of dark grayish brown silty clay with occasional CBM, concrete, glass, plastic and iron.

### 4.2 Trench 2 (Figs 2 and 4)

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Depth	Height m.AOD
2/01	Deposit	Modern made ground	Tr.	Tr.		98.92 (N) 98.62 (S)
2/02	Not used	-	-	-	-	-
2/03	Cut	Modern terracing	Tr.	Tr.		
2/04	Fill/ deposit	Modern made ground	Tr.	Tr.	1.1m	98.77 (N) 98.02 (S)
2/05	Deposit	Subsoil	Tr.	Unknown	0.3m	
2/06	Deposit	Natural	Tr.	Unknown	n/a	97.72 (N) 97.42 (S)

Table 4: Trench 2 contexts

- 4.2.1 Made ground, [2/01], consisting of dark greyish brown silty clay with 20% stone gravel, overlay subsoil, [2/05], consisting of mid yellowish brown silty clay (not seen in recorded east-facing section). Deposit [2/05] overlay natural, [2/06], consisting of mid brownish yellow silty clay.
- 4.2.2 A linear cut [2/03], measuring 350mm wide and 300mm deep, ran the full length of the base of the trench, and contained a mixed fill [2/04] of dark yellowish brown silty clay with occasional modern brick, plaster board, slate and iron

## **5.0 FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLES**

### **5.1 Summary**

- 5.1.1 No ancient finds were noted or recovered. A significant quantity of modern building materials and refuse was noted but not recovered.
- 5.1.2 No deposits suitable for environmental sampling were encountered.

## **6.0 DISCUSSION**

- 6.1.1 Although the northern part of the site had suffered some localised disturbance, buried topsoil and subsoil/weathered natural was identified. These seemingly intact deposits therefore offered the potential for the identification/recovery of archaeological remains. However, no such archaeological remains were present
- 6.1.2 The southern part of the site appeared to be heavily truncated by modern landscaping which would have almost certainly removed all but the deepest archaeological remains in that area.
- 6.1.3 In conclusion, no archaeological features or deposits were present and no ancient artefacts recovered. This absence of archaeological features together with the absence of any residual finds suggests that the proposed development will have minimal impact on the archaeological record.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

ESCC, 2008. *Standards for archaeological fieldwork, recording and post-excavation work in East Sussex*

Sygrave, J, 2011 811 The Ridge, St. Leonards-on-sea, Hastings, East Sussex: Archaeological evaluation: Written scheme of investigation. Unpub. ASE rep.

**HER Summary Form**

Site Code	HTR11					
Identification Name and Address	No. 811 The Ridge, Baldslow, Hastings, East Sussex					
County, District &/or Borough	East Sussex					
OS Grid Refs.	NGR 579877 113122					
Geology	Wadhurst Clay					
Arch. South-East Project Number	4713					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval. X	Excav.	Watching Brief	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field	Shallow Urban X	Deep Urban	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	3 <sup>rd</sup> Feb 2011	Excav.	WB.	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Mr Rick Hoad					
Project Manager	Jon Sygrave					
Project Supervisor	Greg Priestley-Bell					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM	Other Modern X		
<p>100 Word Summary.</p> <p><i>Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Mr Rick Hoad to undertake an archaeological evaluation at 811 The Ridge, Baldslow, Hastings, East Sussex (NGR 579877 113122). Two 5m long evaluation trenches were excavated. Trench T1 was taken down to the top of the natural at c. 97.5m AOD: a ceramic land drain was recorded at the base of the trench, while modern disturbance was recorded at the northern end. Trench 2 was taken down to the top of the natural at between 97.4 – 97.7m AOD: the edge of a modern terracing cut was recorded running SW-NE the length of the base of the trench. No archaeological features or finds were present.</i></p>						

**OASIS ID: archaeol6-95355**

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**Project details**

Project name	The Ridge, Hastings
Short description of the project	Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Mr Rick Hoad to undertake an archaeological evaluation at 811 The Ridge, Baldslow, Hastings, East Sussex (NGR 579877 113122). Two 5m long evaluation trenches were excavated. Trench T1 was taken down to the top of the natural at c. 97.5m AOD: a ceramic land drain was recorded at the base of the trench, while modern disturbance was recorded at the northern end. Trench 2 was taken down to the top of the natural at between 97.4 - 97.7m AOD: the edge of a modern terracing cut was recorded running SW-NE the length of the base of the trench. No archaeological features or finds were present.
Project dates	Start: 03-02-2011 End: 03-02-2011
Previous/future work	Not known / Not known
Type of project	Field evaluation
Current Land use	Residential 1 - General Residential

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**Project location**

Country	England
Site location	EAST SUSSEX HASTINGS HASTINGS 811 The Ridge, Hastings
Postcode	TN34
Study area	0.10 Hectares
Height OD / Depth	Min: 97.40m Max: 97.70m

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**Project creators**

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South East
Project brief originator	East Sussex County Council
Project design originator	Archaeology South-East
Project director/manager	Jon Sygrave
Project supervisor	Greg Priestley-Bell
Type of sponsor/funding body	private client

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**Project archives**

Physical Archive recipient     Hastings Museum

Digital Archive recipient     Hastings Museum

Paper Archive recipient     Hastings Museum

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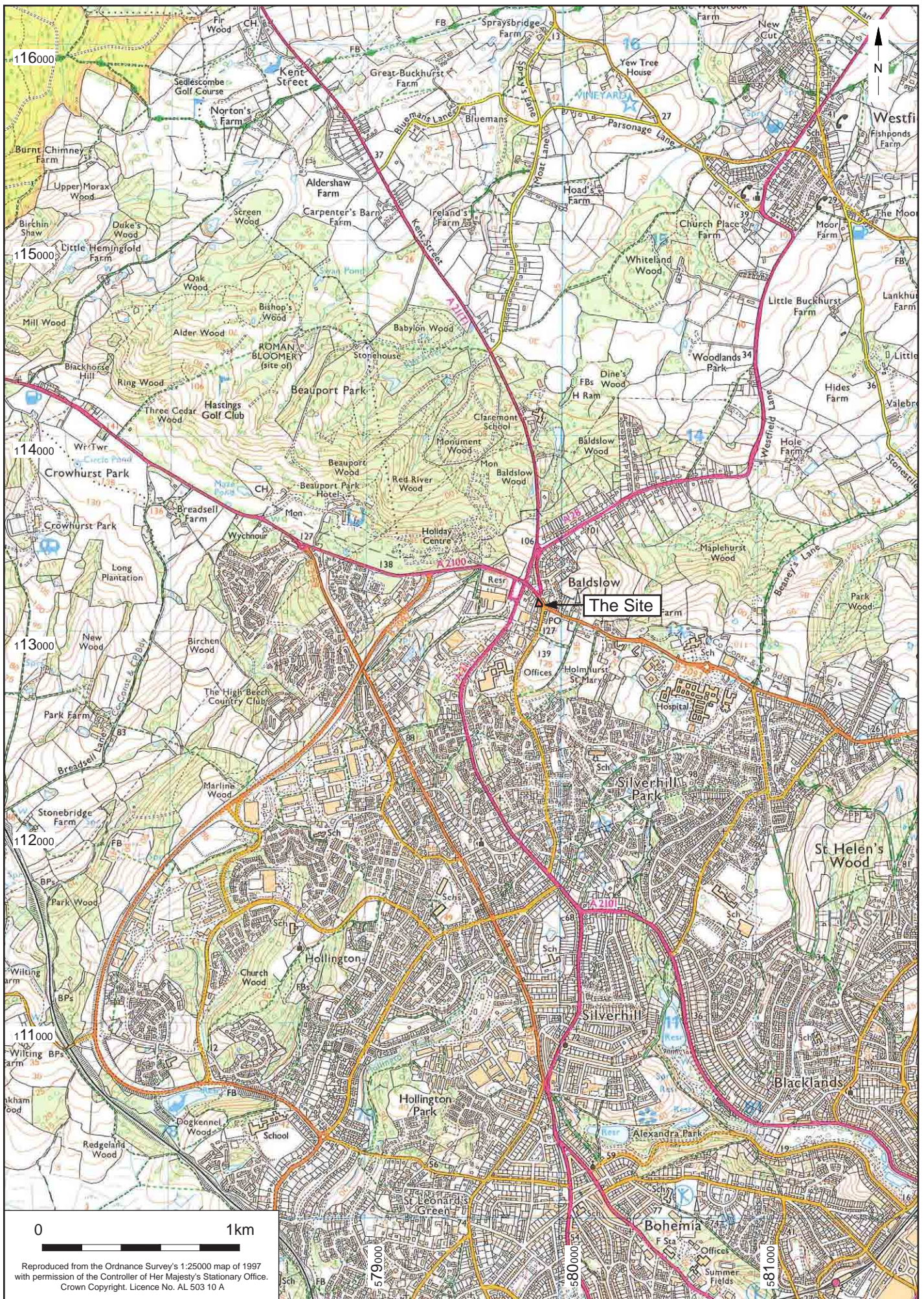
**Project bibliography 1**

Publication type     Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

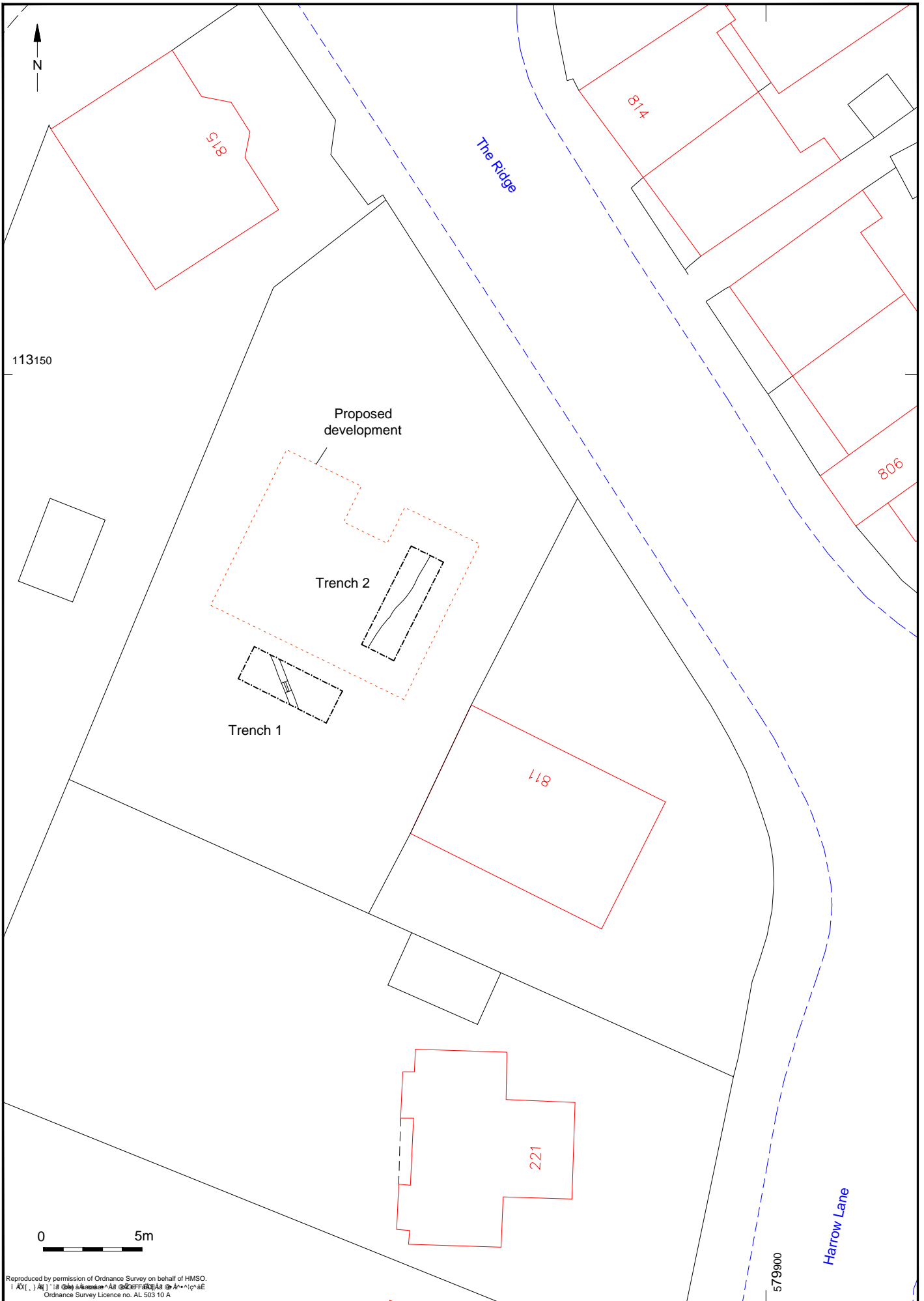
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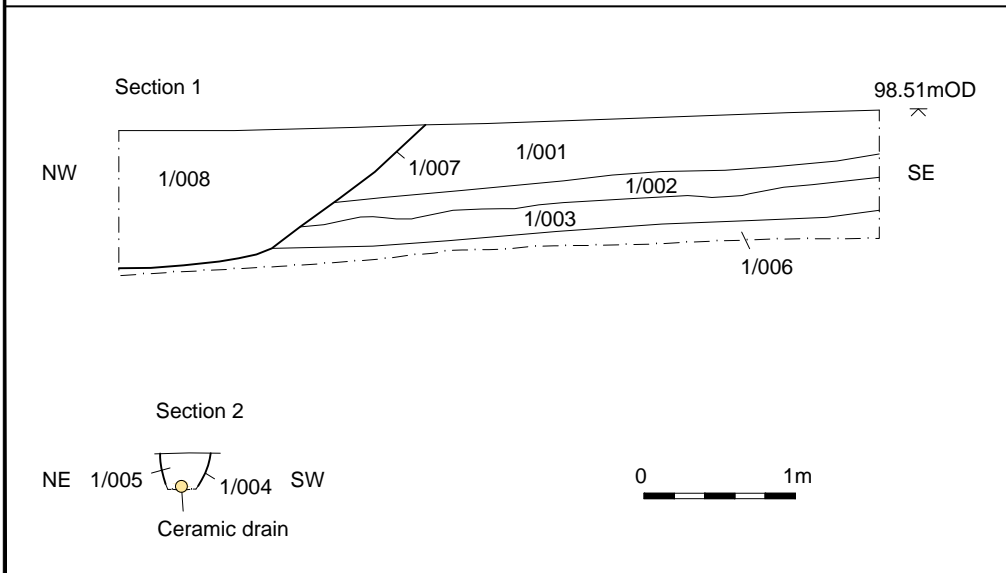
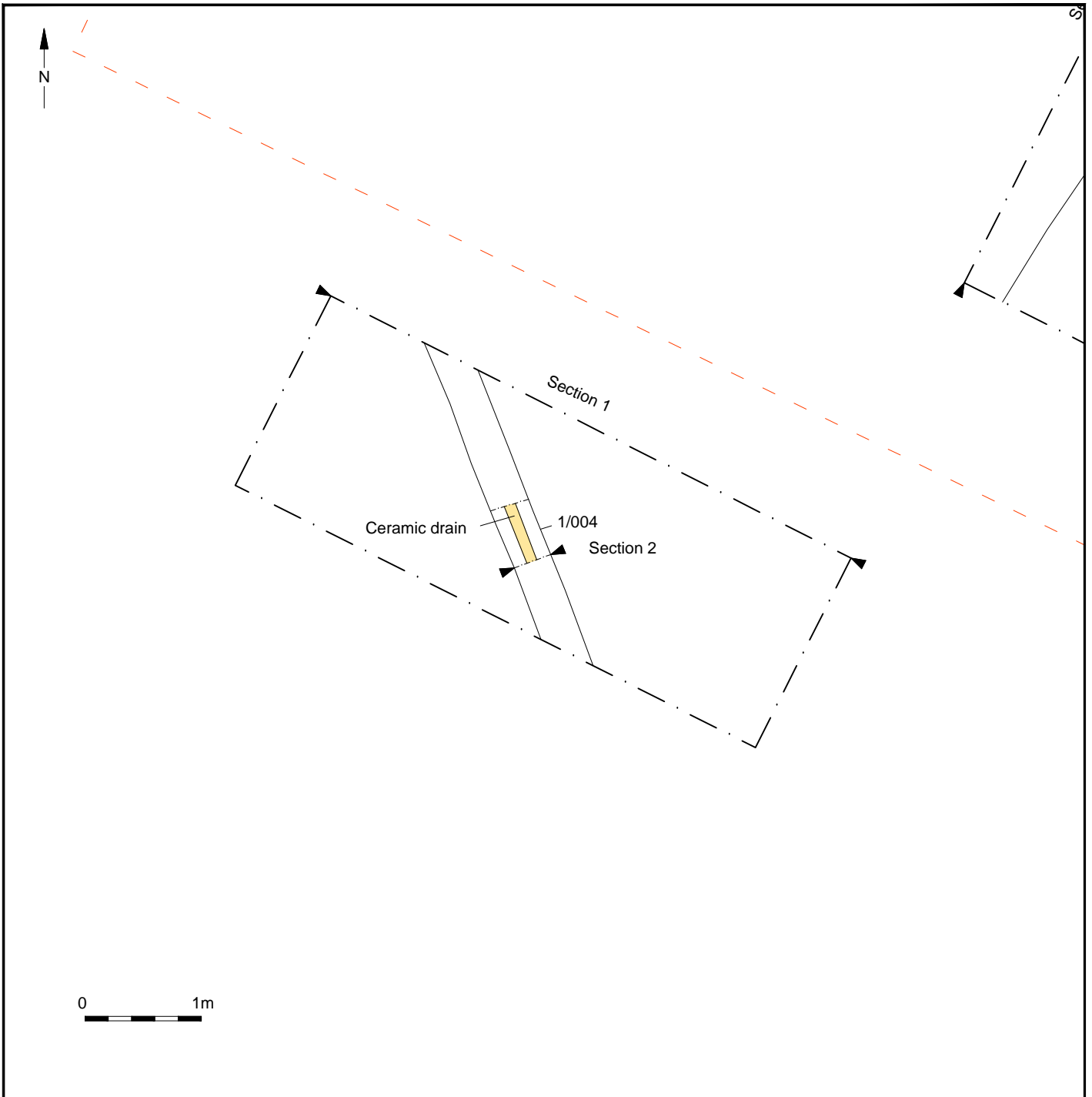
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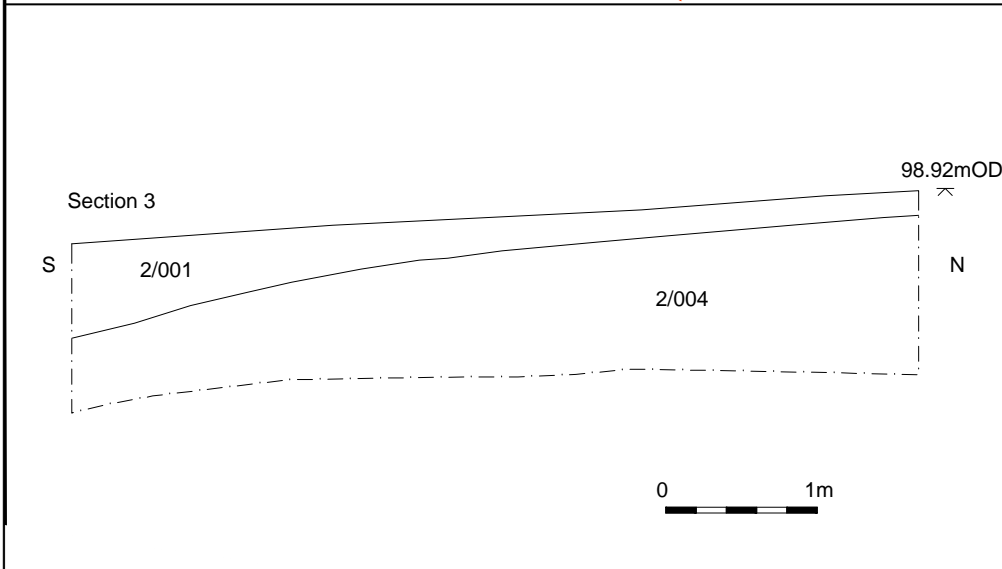
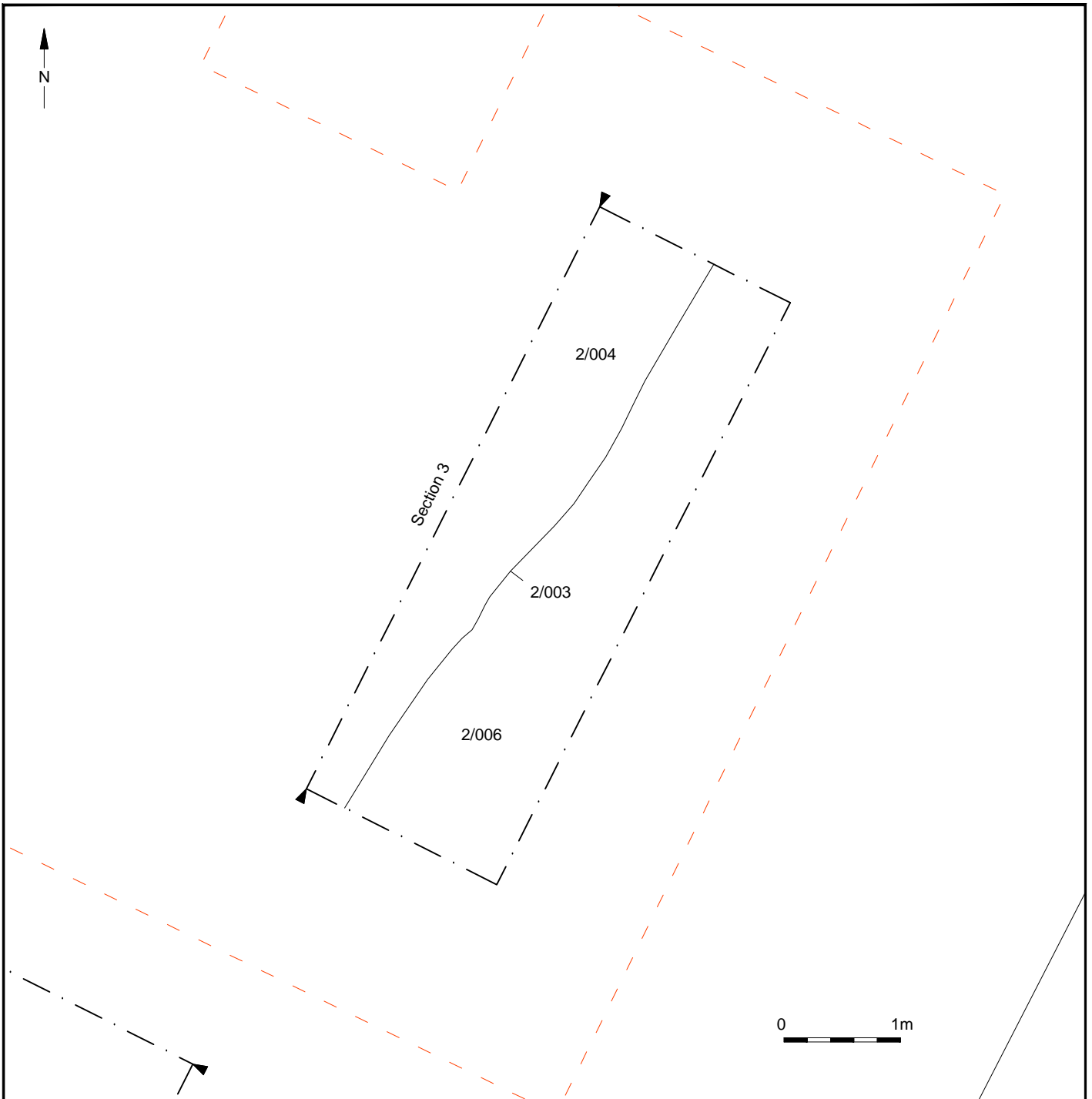
© Archaeology South-East		811 The Ridge, Hastings		Fig. 1
Project Ref: 4713	Feb 2011	Site location		
Report Ref:	Drawn by: DJH			



		811 The Ridge, Hastings	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 4713	Feb 2011	Trench location	
Report Ref:	Drawn by: JLR		



Archaeology South-East		811 The Ridge, Hastings	Fig. 3
Project Ref: 4713	Feb 2011	Trench 1: Plan, sections and photograph	
Report Ref:	Drawn by: JLR		



Archaeology South-East		811 The Ridge, Hastings		Fig. 4
Project Ref: 4713	Feb 2011	Trench 2: Plan, sections and photograph		
Report Ref:	Drawn by: JLR			

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