

Northney Farm, Hayling Island

Archaeological Evaluation Report
For Dandara Southern Ltd

Cornelius Barton MCIfA FSA

Northney Farm, Hayling Island

Client:	Dandara Southern Ltd
Local Authority:	Havant Borough Council
NGR:	472557, 103451
Planning App:	APP/25/00071
Author(s):	Cornelius Barton
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Info@beltaneheritage.com

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Abstract

This document describes the results of an archaeological evaluation carried out at Northney Farm, Hayling Island, Hampshire. The works were carried out by Beltane Heritage on behalf of Dandara Southern Ltd, in advance of proposed redevelopment of the field. The redevelopment consists of shallow scrapes to act as a winter wading-bird habitat.

A total of five evaluation trenches were excavated across the site to investigate the potential for buried archaeological deposits or features. None of the trenches contained archaeological features. One trench contained a scatter of Iron Age and Romano-British pottery fragments.

It is recommended that no further works are required in the evaluated area before excavation of the scrapes.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The works described in this report were undertaken in order to investigate the archaeological potential for a site at Northney Farm, Hayling Island (FIGURE 1). The local authority is Havant Borough Council (HBC).
- 1.2. The archaeological evaluation was carried out by Beltane Heritage on behalf of Dandara Southern Ltd in September 2025. This report has been prepared by Cornelius Barton, with contribution from Rachel Hall (pottery).
- 1.3. The works involved the excavation of five trenches measuring 20m by 2m at predefined locations in line with an approved written scheme of investigation, submitted by Beltane Heritage and approved by HBC (FIGURE 2).
- 1.4. The work was carried out in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) *Standard for archaeological evaluation* (CIFA, 2023).

2. Site Background

2.1.PLANNING

2.1.1. The site is proposed for redevelopment, involving low-level landscaping works to create a habitat suitable for wading birds. Planning application APP/25/00071 is pending approval, and the works described in this document are intended to inform the planning decision.

2.1.2. The local authority is Havant Borough Council (HBC) who take archaeological advice from Hampshire County Council (HCC).

2.1.3. The site code BH25013 has been assigned by Beltane Heritage.

2.2.GEOLOGY

2.2.1. The British Geological Survey (BGS) GeoIndex shows river terrace deposits of sand, silt and clay overlying Portsdown Chalk Formation (BGS, 2025).

2.2.2. The results of the evaluation confirm clay and silt deposits are present to a depth exceeding 0.5m below ground level.

2.3.TOPOGRAPHY

2.3.1. The Site is an irregularly-shaped parcel of land, currently under pasture (FIGURE 2). It is bounded by hedgerows to the north, west and south, and by properties fronting onto St Peter's Road to the east. The field is broadly flat, lying at approximately 2.7m above Ordnance Datum (OD).

2.3.2. The site is currently under pasture.

2.4.ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

2.4.1. The Langstone Harbour area has been inhabited since the Early Prehistoric period. A number of Palaeolithic hand-axes are recorded in the Historic Environment Record (HER) as having been found on Hayling, including one at Fleet approximately 1.5m from the site. Mesolithic and Neolithic activity has been recorded at Havant and South Binness island (WESSEX ARCHAEOLOGY, 1993).

- 2.4.2. A site at Tournerbury is recorded as being possibly a Bronze Age barrow, but more likely a burnt mound of similar date. Bronze Age hoards have been found all over Hayling, including one hoard from Fleet consisting of 20 palstaves, and a possible bronze-working site located close to the Site at Duckard Point (ALLEN & GARDINER, 2000).
- 2.4.3. The most important heritage asset near the proposed development is the Iron Age and Roman temple located in the field to the immediate south of the Site. The temple was excavated in the 1970s and further investigated in the 1980s and 2000s. The temple was first constructed in the Late Iron Age - “The first use of the site appears to have been in the early/mid 1st century BC, and it continued up to and beyond the Roman conquest, being replaced by the large stone-built temple in the 60s/70s AD”(KING & SOFFE, 2013). The full extent of the temple complex has not been fully established, although previous work within the Site (see below) has not found any associated features.

3. Previous Work

3.1. EVALUATION

- 3.1.1. An archaeological evaluation was carried out on the site in 2006, in advance of the replacement of the rising water main which runs through the Site (GODDEN, 2006). A watching brief was subsequently undertaken during the works.
- 3.1.2. A pit containing burnt material was recorded at [406], which was interpreted as possible pyre material. The feature was dated to the Middle Iron Age.
- 3.1.3. Romano-British remains were found in the north-east corner of the site at [5] and [15], consisting of a cremation burial and a possible linear feature.
- 3.1.4. None of these features were considered to be specifically related to the temple site, although Romano-British cremations are often found near known sacred sites.

4. Aims

4.1. The general aim of the evaluation was to determine the character, date, location and preservation of any archaeological remains on the site, and to gather enough information to understand the site and its significance as fully as possible in order to place the site within the wider landscape.

4.2. The specific aims of the evaluation were:

- To investigate the presence or absence of late Iron Age or Roman activity on the Site, which relates to the temple.
- To investigate the presence or absence of prehistoric or Roman activity on the site.

4.3. The overall purpose of the evaluation was to collect enough information on the buried archaeological remains to allow a suitable mitigation strategy to be devised if necessary.

5. Methodology

- 5.1. For a full description of the archaeological methodology please refer to the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (BARTON, 2025).
- 5.2. A total of six trenches was planned to be excavated across the site. One trench was positioned in the centre of each proposed scrape. All trench locations were agreed with HBC in advance via the approved WSI. Each trench measured 20m long by 2m wide. The trenches were dug to a maximum depth of 0.5m, the formation depth of the scrapes.
- 5.3. In the event, only five trenches could be excavated due to the presence of an as-yet unharvested maize crop in the part of the field containing Trench 6.
- 5.4. Trenches were excavated using a 14-ton 360° excavator with a 2m wide toothless ditching bucket.
- 5.5. Examination and cleaning of all archaeological deposits was by hand using appropriate hand tools. All archaeological deposits were examined and recorded both in plan and section. The sections were hand drawn and the features were surveyed in using a Global Positioning System (GPS).

6. Results

SITE STRATIGRAPHY

- 6.1. The stratigraphic sequence consisted of a dark grey-brown silty clay plough soil {701} overlying a mixed yellow-brown clay subsoil {702}. This in turn overlay a mixed clay deposit {703}, which was the top of the drift geology. {703} was only visible in trenches 2 and 4 (PLATE 1).
- 6.2. Trench 5, located in the southern central area of the site, contained a scatter of pottery fragments of Late Iron Age and Romano British fabrics. The fragments were found in the subsoil {702}. The material was not within an archaeological feature or layer, and appeared residual in the subsoil.
- 6.3. Plough scars were observed in Trenches 2 and 4.
- 6.4. There were no archaeological deposits observed in any of the other trenches.

FINDS

- 6.5. The scatter of pottery in Trench 5 consisted of two fragments of a cordoned jar and one fragment of a bead rim jar, with two fragments of black burnished ware. This material is of Late Iron Age/ Romano British manufacture, consistent with the dates of use for the temple site to the south.

DISCUSSION

- 6.6. The results of the evaluation were largely negative. This would appear to be consistent with the findings of the 2006 evaluation. It would appear that the site was part of an active landscape containing the temple complex, but did not contain any structures or features directly relating to the temple.
- 6.7. It should be noted that this evaluation was targeted specifically on the scrapes for the proposed bird habitat. The trenches covered approximately 0.07% of the site area in total, and this should be considered if future redevelopment is proposed.
- 6.8. It should also be noted that the trenches were dug to a maximum depth of 0.5m, which is the maximum formation depth of the scrapes. Natural geology was exposed in trenches 2 and 4, and it can be stated with confidence that no

archaeology was present in these locations. In trenches 1,3 and 5 natural was not reached, and there is still a possibility of archaeological remains existing below this depth. Care will therefore need to be taken when excavating the scrapes that the stated formation depth of 0.5m is not exceeded.

7. Conclusions

7.1. There is no evidence of occupation or activity relating to the temple on the site area. The finds in Trench 5 confirm that the site was part of an active landscape, but there was no material of archaeological significance found.

7.2. It is recommended that no further works are required preceding the excavation of the scrape locations as shown on FIGURE 2. As stated in 6.8, care should be taken during excavation of the scrapes to ensure that no excavations exceed 0.5m below ground level.

8. Archive

8.1. The finds archive consists of:

- ◆ 1 x bag of pottery.

8.2. The site records are currently in digital form.

8.3. The digital archive will be held by Beltane Heritage pending deposition with the HER.

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FIGURES

APPENDIX I

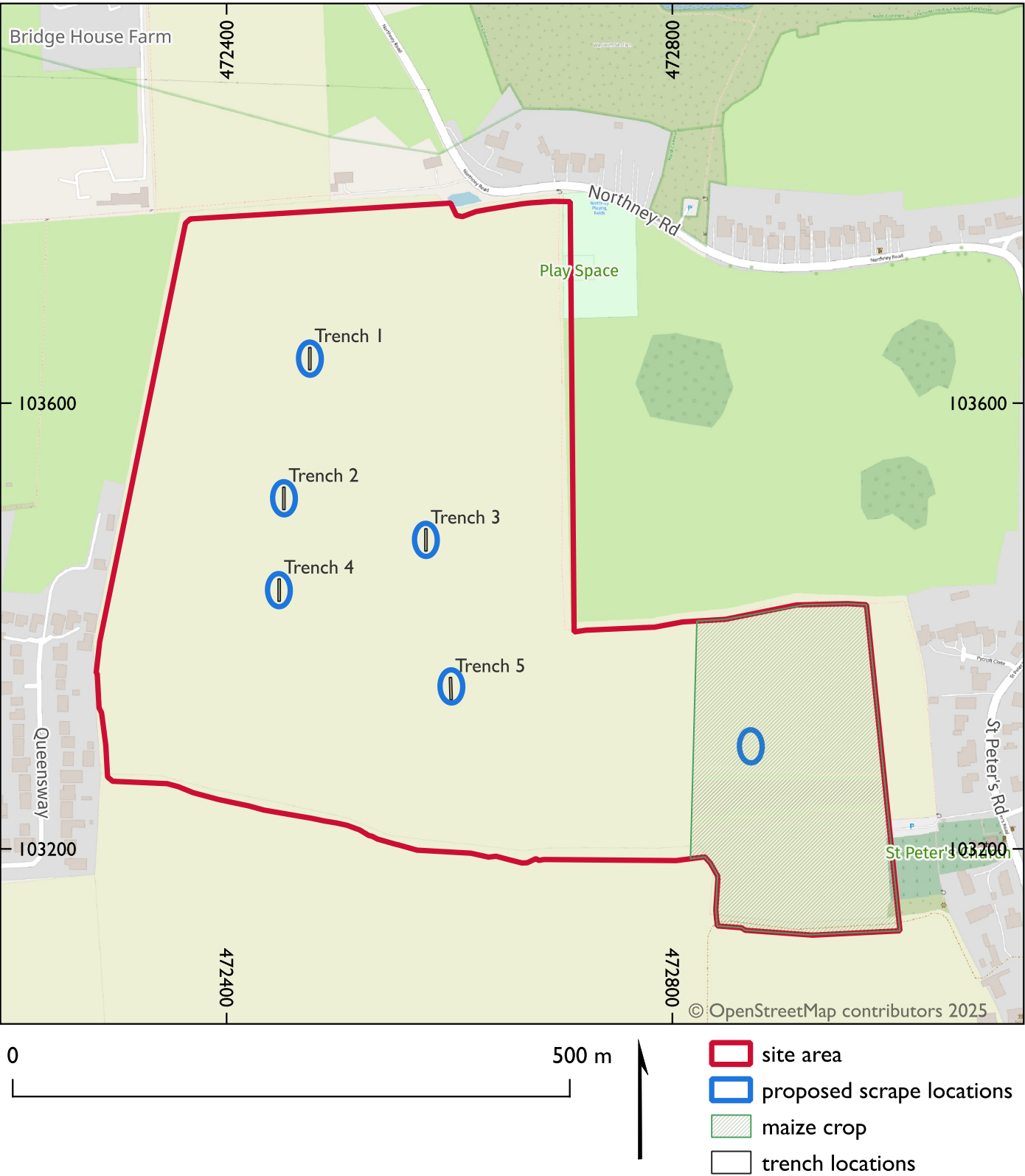
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Figure 1 Site Location - General



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NORTHNEY FARM, HAMPSHIRE
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Figure 2 Site Location - Detail

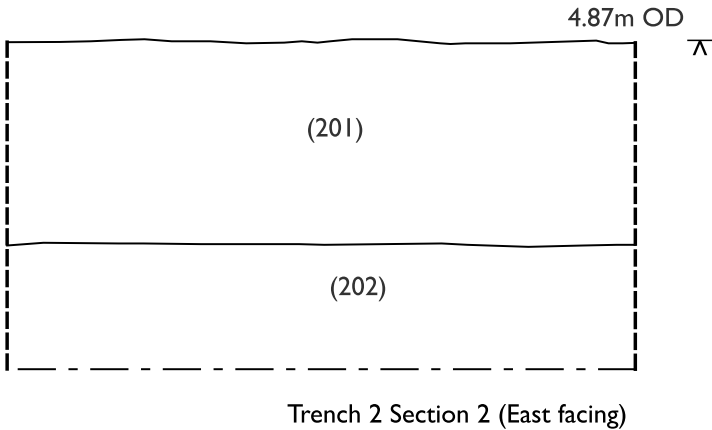
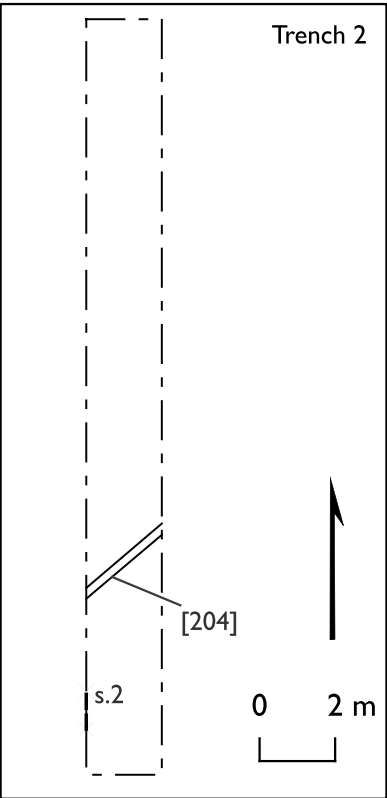
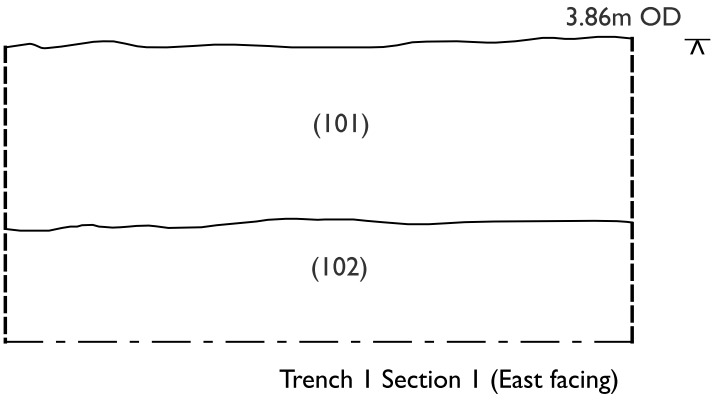
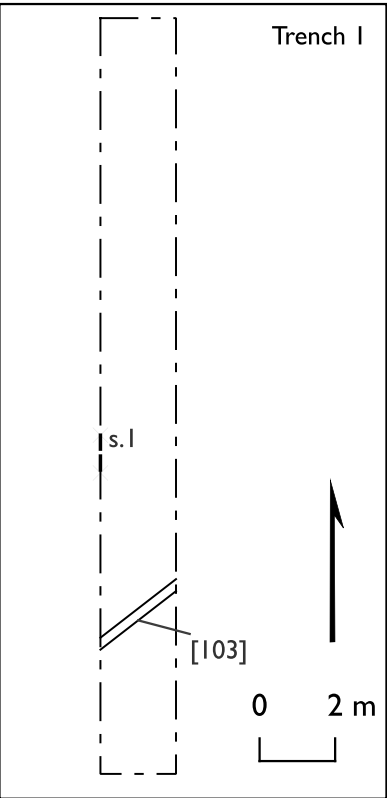


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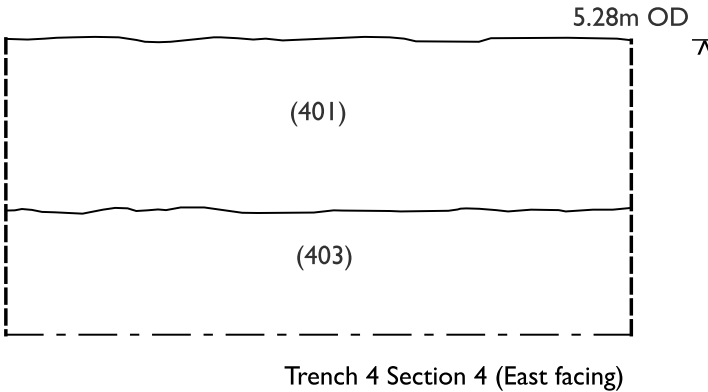
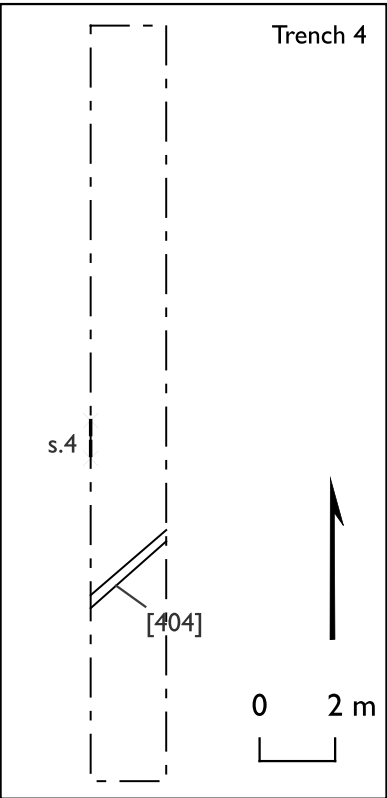
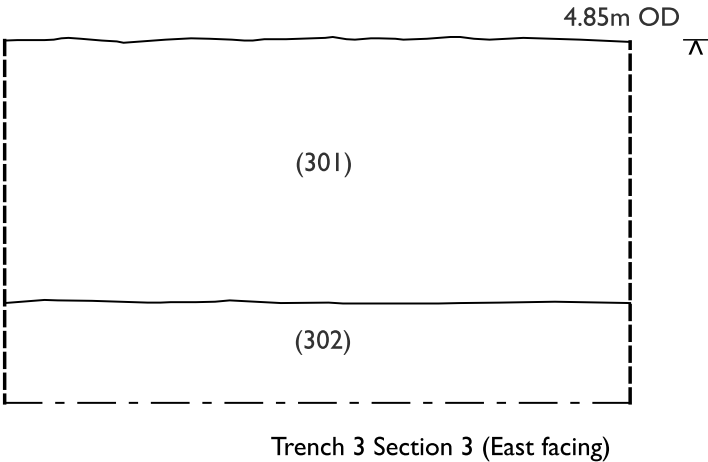
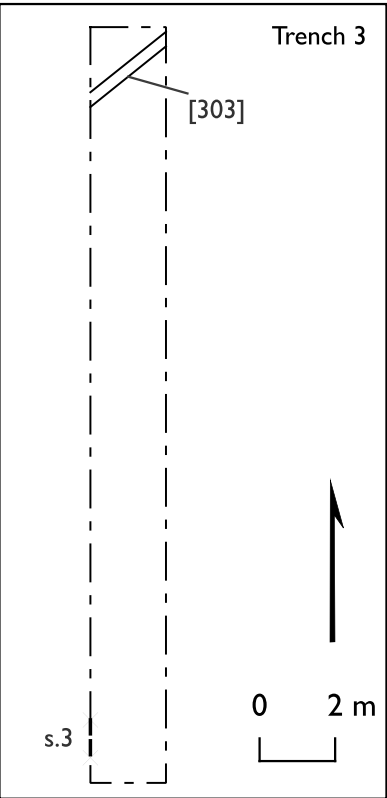
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Figure 3 Trenches 1 & 2



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Figure 4 Trenches 3 & 4



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Figure 5 Trench 5

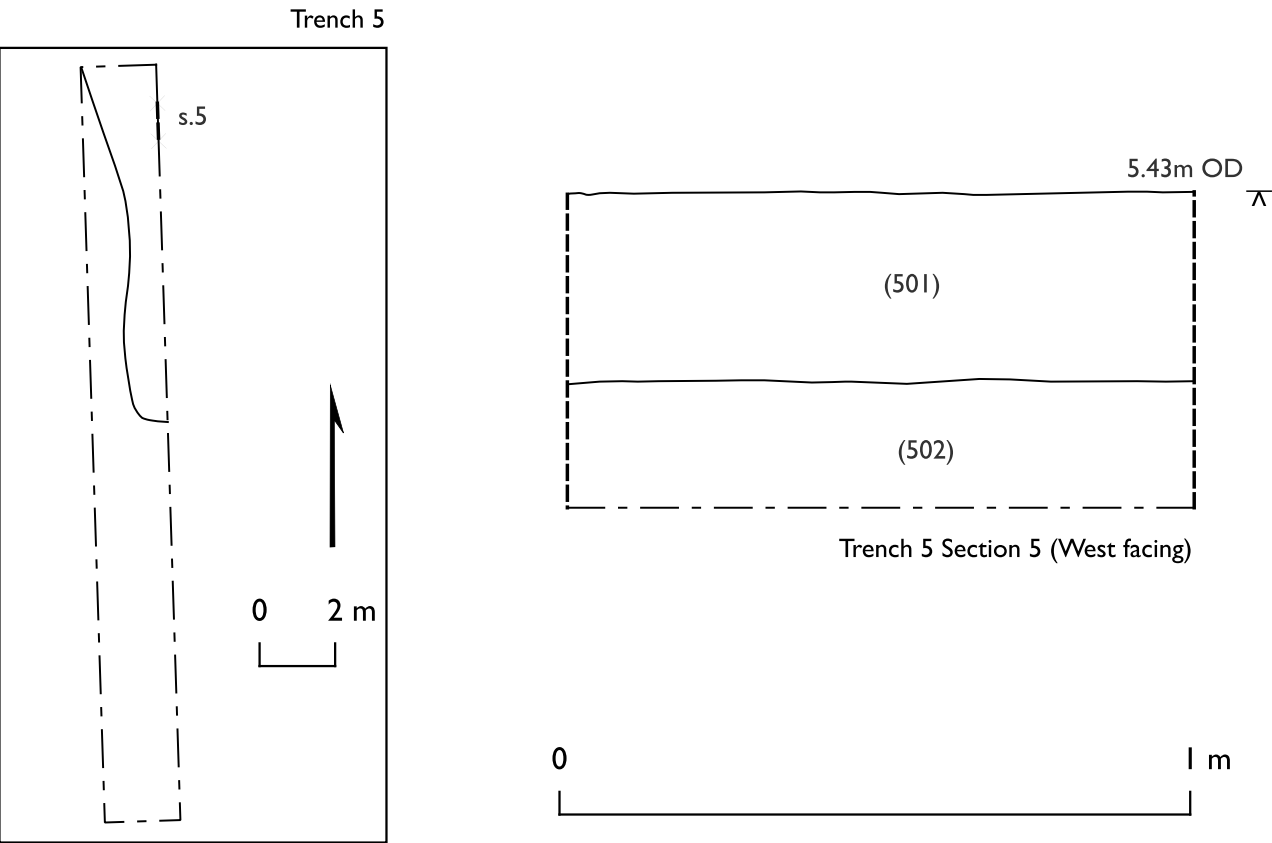




Plate 1: Trench 2 from south, 2 x 1m scale



Plate 2: East-facing section Trench 3, 1 x 1m scale