ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES
DURHAM UNIVERSITY

on behalf of
Duchy Homes Ltd

# Land at Mount Vernon
# Worsbrough
# Barnsley
# South Yorkshire

## archaeological evaluation

report 5629
October 2021

Durham University

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# 1. Summary

## The project

1.1 This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation in advance of a development at Mount Vernon, Worsbrough, Barnsley, South Yorkshire. The works comprised the excavation of four evaluation trenches.

1.2 The works were commissioned by Duchy Homes Ltd and conducted by Archaeological Services Durham University.

## Results

1.3 No archaeological deposits were recorded. A potential soil-filled feature identified by the geophysical survey was natural in origin.

## Recommendations

1.4 No further scheme of archaeological works is recommended in relation to this development.

# 2. Project background

## Location (Figure 1)

2.1 The development area was located to the south of Mount Vernon Crescent in Worsbrough, 1.6km south of Barnsley town centre, South Yorkshire (NGR centre: SE 3520 0484). To the east and south was farmland and to the west was Mount Vernon Road, with housing beyond.

## Development

2.2 The development is residential.

## Objective

2.3 The objective of the scheme of works was to assess the nature, extent and potential significance of any archaeological resource within the development area, so that an informed decision may be made regarding the nature and scope of any further scheme of archaeological works that may be required in relation to the development.

## Research Objectives

2.4 The regional research framework *Yorkshire Archaeological Research Framework: research agenda* (Roskams & Whyman 2007) contains an agenda for archaeological research in the region, which is incorporated into regional planning policy implementation. In this instance, the scheme of works was designed to address the following period priorities for research: Iron Age, early and high medieval.

## Specification

2.5 The works have been undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation provided by Archaeological Services Durham University (reference 21095).

## Dates

2.6 Fieldwork was undertaken w/c 27th September 2021. This report was prepared for October 2021.

## Personnel

2.7 Fieldwork was supervised by Jamie Armstrong. This report was prepared by Jamie Armstrong, with illustrations by Janine Watson. The Project Manager was Natalie Swann.

## Archive/OASIS

2.8 The site code is MVB2121, for Mount Vernon, Barnsley 2021. The archive is currently held by Archaeological Services Durham University and will be transferred to Sheffield Galleries and Museums Trust in due course. Archaeological Services Durham University is registered with the Online AccesS to the Index of archaeological investigationS project (OASIS). The OASIS ID number for this project is archaeol3-432553.

# 3. Landuse, topography and geology

3.1 At the time of survey the development area comprised one field recently used as pasture for cattle. The field was bounded by stone walls to the west and north; a

collapsed stone wall formed the western part of the southern boundary, while the eastern part of the southern boundary and the east boundary were fenced. Additional fences were present above the northern wall at some locations.

3.2 Telegraph poles and street lights were present along the western boundary; several sheds and outbuildings were present in the gardens backing onto the northern boundary. Four small, recently backfilled, excavations noted during survey were almost certainly associated with geotechnical investigations, such as trial pits and/or soakaway pits.

3.3 The site occupied a very gentle east-north-east-facing slope, with elevations between 151m OD at the south-west corner and 137m OD at the north-eastern corner. Many slight undulations were noted in the field; some of these are probably associated with former ridge and furrow cultivation.

3.4 The underlying solid geology of the area comprises sandstone of Mid-Pennsylvanian Woolley Edge Rock; no superficial deposits are recorded.

## 4. Historical and archaeological background

4.1 A detailed archaeological desk-based assessment has been conducted for the development (Archaeological Services 2020); the results of that assessment are summarised here.

4.2 While there is no direct evidence for prehistoric or Roman activity within the site, the presence of settlements and artefacts in the wider landscape indicates that there is some potential for evidence from these periods to be present.

4.3 The development area was probably farmland associated with the Elmhirst estate during the medieval period. LiDAR data record slight earthwork ridge and furrow across the site, perhaps medieval or early post-medieval in date.

4.4 The site was probably enclosed in the post-medieval period when the field walls and stone gateposts were added to the site for use as pasture.

## 5. The evaluation trenches

### Introduction

5.1 Four trenches were excavated across the site (Figure 2). Trenches 3 and 4 were positioned to investigate a potential soil-filled feature.

### Trench 1 (Figure 3)

5.2 This trench was 30m long, and was located at the western end of the site. Natural subsoil, an orange sandy gravel [3], was identified at a depth of 0.4m. The natural subsoil was cut by two plough furrows aligned roughly east/west. The furrows were approximately 1m wide, and were filled with a light grey sandy-silt. Over the natural subsoil was a light pinkish-brown sandy-silt subsoil with frequent stone inclusions [2: 0.2m thick]. Above this was a grey sandy-silt topsoil [1: 0.2m deep]. No archaeological features were identified and no artefacts recovered.

### Trench 2 (Figure 3, Photos 1, 2)

5.3 This trench was 30m long, and was located near the centre of the site. Natural subsoil, a mixture of an orange sandy gravel and brown clayey-sand [3], was identified at a depth of 0.3-0.5m. Over the natural subsoil was a light pinkish-brown sandy-silt subsoil with frequent stone inclusions [2: 0.1-0.2m thick]. Above this was a grey sandy-silt topsoil [1: 0.2m deep]. No archaeological features were identified and no artefacts recovered.

### Trench 3 (Figure 3)

5.4 This trench was 30m long, and was located near the eastern end of the site. It was positioned to investigate a geophysical anomaly identified in the eastern end of the site. Natural subsoil, a brown sand in the western half of the trench and a yellow clayey sand in the eastern half [3], was identified at a depth of 0.4m. At the point where these two materials met there was a thin (0.02m thick) soil spread which corresponded with a geophysical feature. This was interpreted as the remnants of a shallow watercourse which had exploited a weakness in the underlying superficial geology: this feature was also identified in trench 4. Over the natural subsoil was a light pinkish-brown sandy-silt subsoil with frequent stone inclusions [2: 0.1-0.2m thick]. Above this was a grey sandy-silt topsoil [1: 0.2m deep]. No archaeological features were identified and no artefacts recovered.

### Trench 4 (Figure 3, Photos 3, 4)

5.5 This trench was 40m long, and was located near the eastern end of the site. It was positioned to investigate a geophysical anomaly identified in the eastern end of the site. Natural subsoil, a yellow clayey sand changing to outcropping sandstone at the northeast end of the trench [3], was identified at a depth of 0.4m. Towards the south-west end of the trench the natural subsoil changed from being on a slight incline falling to the north-east to a sharper incline rising to the south-west. This formed a slight depression containing a similar soil spread to that identified in trench 3. This corresponded the geophysical anomaly, and was interpreted as a continuation of the naturally-formed watercourse. Over the natural subsoil was a light pinkish-brown sandy-silt subsoil with frequent stone inclusions [2: 0.2m thick]. Above this was a grey sandy-silt topsoil [1: 0.2m deep]. No archaeological features were identified and no artefacts recovered.

## 6. The artefacts

6.1 No artefacts were recovered.

## 7. The palaeoenvironmental evidence

7.1 No material suitable for palaeoenvironmental assessment was identified.

## 8. The archaeological resource

8.1 No archaeological deposits were recorded. The potential soil-filled feature identified by the geophysical survey was natural in origin.

## 9. Impact assessment

9.1 Development of the site is unlikely to impact on any archaeological deposits.

## 10. Recommendations

10.1 No further scheme of archaeological works is recommended in relation to this development.

## 11. Sources

Archaeological Services 2020 *Land at Mount Vernon, Worsbrough, Barnsley, South Yorkshire: archaeological desk-based assessment*. Report 5412, Archaeological Services Durham University

Archaeological Services 2020 *Land at Mount Vernon, Worsbrough, Barnsley, South Yorkshire: geophysical survey*. Report 5434, Archaeological Services Durham University

Roskams, S, & Whyman, M, 2007 *Yorkshire Archaeological Research Framework: research agenda*. RFRA 2936

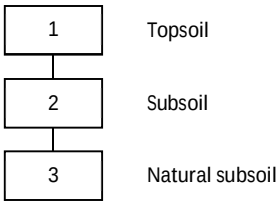
# Appendix 1: Data table

## Table 1.1: Context data

| No | Area | Description |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1-4 | Topsoil |
| 2 | 1-4 | Subsoil |
| 3 | 1-4 | Natural subsoil |

# Appendix 2: Stratigraphic matrix

Trenches 1-4



Photograph 1: Trench 2, looking west

Photograph 2: Trench 2 sample section, looking north

Photograph 3: Trench 4, looking north-east

Photograph 4: Trench 4 sample section, looking south-east

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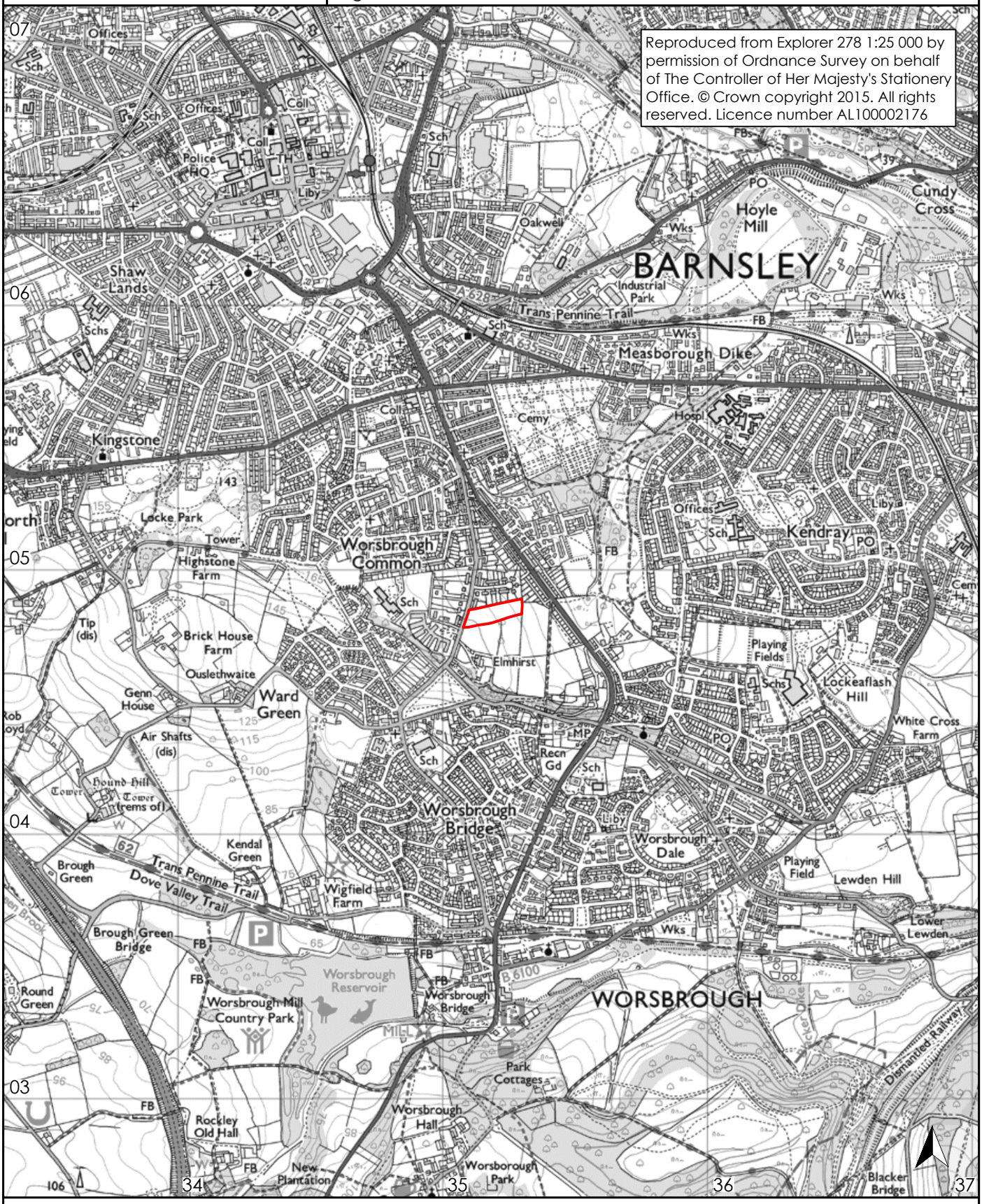
Figure 1: Site location




site boundary

0 1km
scale 1:20 000 for A4 plot

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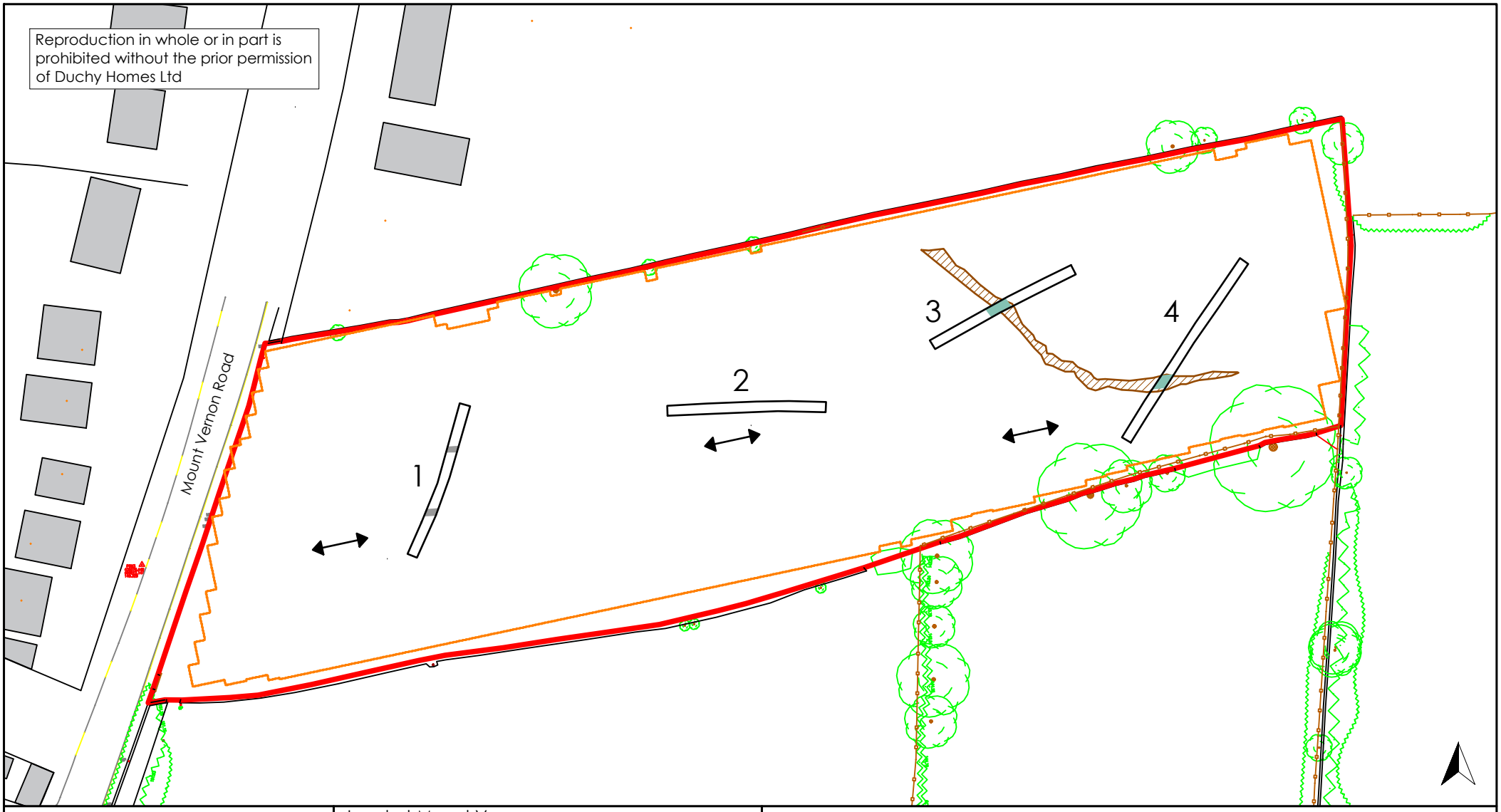


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Figure 2: Trench locations

site boundary
ridge and furrow (from GEO)
magnetometer survey
furrow
possible soil-filled feature (from GEO)
geological feature

0 50m
scale 1:1000 for A4 plot

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edge of excavation
section
139.392 height m OD
furrow
geological feature

0 5m
scale 1:125 for A3 plot

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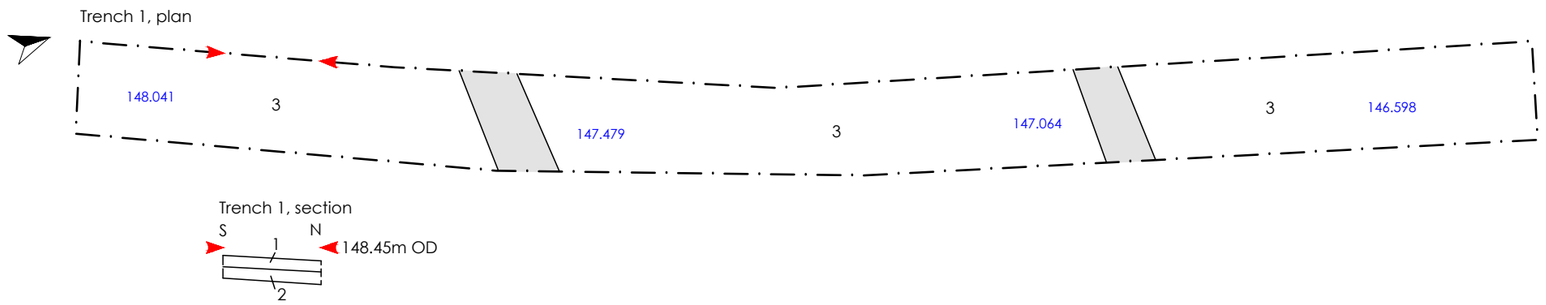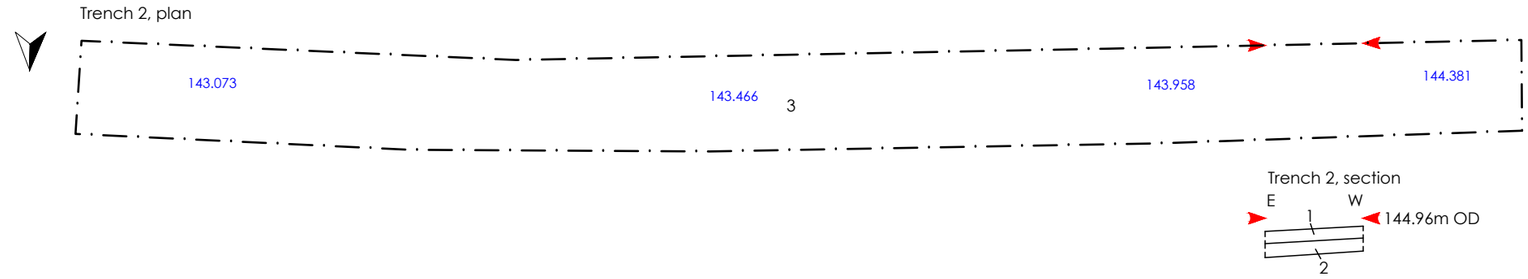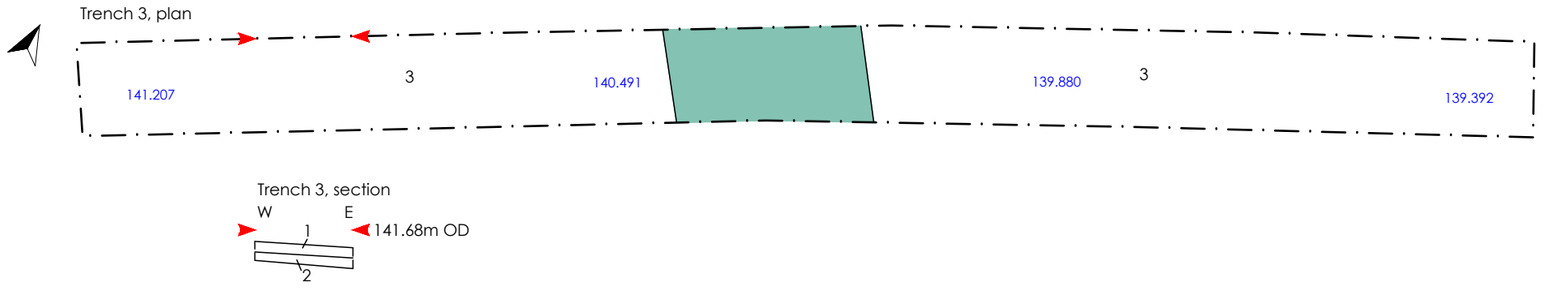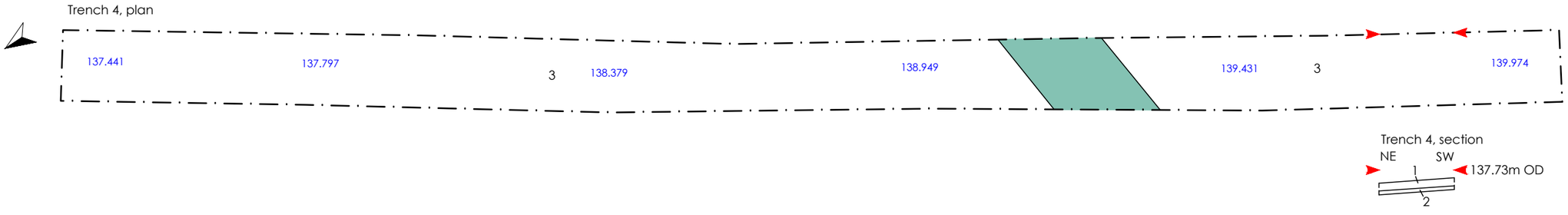
Figure 3: Trench plans and sections