TIGERGEO

Proposed Development off Llay New Road, Rhosrobin, Wrexham

Field Evaluation
(Strip, map and sample excavation – Archaeology)

Version 1.0

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OASIS: tigergeo1-526089

Produced for: SG Estates

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REGISTERED ORGANISATION CIfA

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Environmental Geophysics – Survey, Research and Consultancy

TIGERGEO

Proposed Development off Llay New Road, Rhosrobin, Wrexham

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TigerGeo Limited

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Non-Technical Summary

A strip, map and sample excavation exercise was commissioned by SG Estates at a parcel of land off Llay New Road, Rhosrobin, Wrexham as part of a condition of planning permission for residential development.

The strip, map and sample excavations were concentrated on two areas, where earlier phases of investigation had identified features of potential archaeological interest. Two areas were stripped and mapped and the features and deposits exposed sample excavated and recorded. Area 1 revealed deposits typical of wet ground, probably part of a natural drainage feature such as a drainage channel or pond. Area 3 revealed irregular-shaped features interpreted as tree bowls, root disturbance and three land drains.

No features or deposits of archaeological interest were identified.

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Crynodeb Annhechnegol

Comisiynwyd ymarfer cloddio dadorchuddio, mapio a samplo gan SG Estates ar ddarn o dir ger Ffordd Newydd Llai, Rhosrobin, Wrecsam fel rhan o amod caniatâd cynllunio ar gyfer datblygiad preswyl.

Roedd y cloddiadau dadorchuddio, mapio a samplo yn canolbwyntio ar ddwy ardal, lle'r oedd nodweddion o ddiddordeb archaeolegol posibl wedi'u nodi yn ystod camau cynharach o'r ymchwiliad. Cafodd dwy ardal eu dadorchuddio a'u mapio a chafodd y nodweddion a'r dyddodion eu hamlygu, y sampl ei gloddio a'i gofnodi. Datgelodd Ardal 1 ddyddodion sy'n nodweddiadol o dir gwlyb, yn debygol o fod yn rhan o nodwedd draeniad naturiol megis sianel neu bwll draenio. Datgelodd Ardal 3 nodweddion o siâp afreolaidd a ddehonglwyd fel tyllau a adawyd gan gyffion coed, gwreiddiau wedi'i haflonyddu a thri draen tir.

Ni nodwyd unrhyw nodweddion neu ddyddodion o ddiddordeb archaeolegol.

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Drawing	**Title**
DWG 01	Site Location
DWG 02a	Area Location Plan
DWG 02b	Area 1
DWG 02c	Area 3

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1 Introduction

TigerGeo was commissioned by SG Estates to undertake a strip, map and sample excavation (SMS) of two discrete areas within a parcel of land off Llay New Road (the site). The features were identified during a trial trench evaluation of the site (TigerGeo, 2022) but due to inclement weather, they could not be investigated.

The scope of the SMS was set out in a Written Scheme of Investigation (TigerGeo, 2024) that was approved by Neil Bayliss, Development Control Archaeologist at Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT), who advises the local planning authority.

2 Context

2.1 Location and description

The proposed survey area is located off Llay New Road, in a parcel of land divided by agricultural boundaries. The eastern boundary is formed by a railway embankment, and beyond this is Wat's Dyke.

Details of the site, including a central Ordnance Survey (OS) grid reference, geology and topography and current land use etc., are set out in the table below and shown on **DWG 01**.

Country	Wales
County	Wrecsam (Wrexham)
Nearest Settlement	Rhosrobin
Central Co-ordinates	333074,352957
Soilscapes Classification	Freely draining slightly acid loamy soils (6)
Superficial 1:50000 BGS	Till, Devensian - Diamicton (TILLD)
Bedrock 1:50000 BGS	Halesowen Formation - Mudstone, Siltstone And Sandstone (HA)
Topography	Flat
Current Land Use	Agricultural – Pastoral
Land Cover	Rough grass

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2.2 Archaeological background

2.2.1 Initial site consultation

Consultation with Mark Walters, the Development Control Archaeologist who advices the local planning authority, stated that:

"Information held on the Historic Environment Record (HER) does not currently indicate any recorded sites within the development boundary. There was a former railway line at the southern end of the site on the early OS mapping which merged with the existing line but this has been demolished. The buildings to the east at Pandy Farm and The Mews are recorded as post medieval farm buildings on the HER, but they lie outside the development boundary. The hedgerow field boundaries are visible on the first edition OS and are likely to be the oldest surviving surface features within the development area and consideration should be given to the retention of these in any final layout design.

In fields to the south of the modern railway cutting the alignment of the scheduled monument known as Wats Dyke (SM DE 151) crosses the fields as a prominent earthwork. Given the intervening railway and tree foliage on the boundaries it seems unlikely that there would be a setting impact for the scheduled monument, but Cadw must be consulted for their opinion ...

Geophysical survey of the ground to the south around the scheduled monument in advance of a housing development there did reveal sub-surface archaeology of interest including a number of possible prehistoric ring ditch burial sites in the eastern half. These were subsequently preserved by design with this area being removed from the application boundary.

The potential for further prehistoric monuments of similar date and form within your proposed development area is currently unknown and we would advise that a geophysical survey using magnetometry techniques is completed at the pre-determination stage to assess this potential."

2.2.2 Geophysical Survey

The geophysical survey (TigerGeo, 2021) revealed anomalies of potential archaeological interest. The summary of the report states that:

"*A short length of ditch fill, that might be modern, was seen in the larger western field and in one of the eastern ones there is a small circular area of anomalous magnetic gradient that might be the site of a structure or a fill*'.

Following the results of the geophysical survey, further consultation stated that:

"The geophysics results indicate two features of archaeological potential (ditch fill 3 and circular area 4, page 18) which require further investigation by trenching to determine their origin, function and dating so that we can advise on any subsequent mitigation required."

The scope of the work is set out in the following paragraph and states:

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"The evaluation will include two trenches of varying length to fully cross geophysics features 3 and 4 and extend up to 3 metres beyond to test for the presence of sub-surface remains. All work will be completed in accordance with the relevant CIFA standards and guidance on evaluation and project archiving and reporting."

2.2.3 Trial trenches

The trial trenching was undertaken in December 2021. The summary of the subsequent report (TigerGeo, 2022) states that:

"A total of four trenches were positioned to test potential anomalies of archaeological interest identified in a previous geophysical survey. Two of the targets were identified and features of potential archaeological interest were revealed in Trenches 1 and 3. Unfortunately the extent of groundwater ingress into the trenches limited any meaningful investigation through excavation, and the character and nature of these features could not be established."

Following the results of the trial trenching, further consultation (dated 16th May 2022) on amended plans application P/2021/1057 stated that:

"An initial area of 10x10 metres around features in trenches 1 and 3 should therefore be investigated by a strip/map/excavate methodology. If these features continue beyond the 10x10 initial area the trench should be expanded accordingly until the entire feature and any associated deposits are fully investigated and recorded. This mitigation is recommended in accordance with Planning Policy Wales (Feb 2021) and TAN24 (May 2017)."

2.3 Planning Permission

The above consultation recommended a planning condition to P/2021/1057 to facilitate a scheme of archaeological work.

The condition states that:

"No development shall take place within the application area 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 scheme of investigation, which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The archaeological programme of work will be undertaken and completed in accordance with the relevant Standards and Guidance laid down by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. A copy of the resulting report should be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and the Development Control Archaeologist, (Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust, The Offices, Coed y Dinas, Welshpool, SY21 8RP Email: mark.walters@cpat.org.uk Tel: 01938 553670). After approval by the Local Planning Authority, a copy of the report and resulting archive should also be sent to the Historic Environment Record Officer, Clwyd- Powys Archaeological Trust for inclusion in the regional Historic Environment Record and to the National Monuments

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Record, RCAHMW."

Reason: To secure preservation by record of all archaeological remains which will be impacted by the development.

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3 Project aims and objectives

3.1 Aims

The proposed development has the potential to damage or remove archaeological remains within the site. In the event that archaeological remains are present, the evaluation will provide sufficient information to inform a suitable mitigation strategy, if required.

3.2 Objectives

The objectives are to establish the character, date, state of preservation and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed development area. The results will contribute to the understanding of archaeological remains in the area with regard to local and regional frameworks.

4 Methodology

4.1 Introduction

The fieldwork methodology followed that set out in the project's Written Scheme of Investigation (TigerGeo, 2024).

The two areas were excavated using a mechanical excavator equipped with a flat toothless bucket under the control and supervision of the project supervisor. The topsoil and subsoil were removed, in the absence of any archaeological deposits, to the level at which natural deposits were exposed. The location of the areas and features within it were recorded using Network RTK GNSS.

4.2 Recording

The deposits were recorded using standard *pro forma* trench and context recording sheets that were checked and cross-referenced with analysis effected through a combination of contexts and information from other sources.

4.3 Artefacts

Recovery of artefacts was undertaken in accordance with the project's Written Scheme of Investigation (TigerGeo, 2024a). In the event two pieces of post-medieval pottery were retained for reference only and will be disposed of following approval of this report.

4.4 Environmental samples

The sampling policy was undertaken in accordance with the project's Written Scheme of Investigation (TigerGeo, 2024a). In the event no deposits were identified which were considered to be suitable for environmental analysis.

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5 Results

5.1 Strip, map and sample

A brief description of features and deposits is provided below. The numbers and brackets refer to contexts as [cuts] and (deposits/fills). A more comprehensive record is provided in the catalogue (see Section 5.2). Selected photographs are included at the end of the report in **Appendix 1** and the location of the two areas and features within them is shown on **DWG 03a-b**.

5.1.1 Area 1 (10m x 10m)

Area 1 was positioned in the east of the site to test an anomaly [4] identified in the geophysical survey (TigerGeo, 2021) and the trial trenching [103] (TigerGeo, 2022) and is shown on **DWG 02** and **DWG 03a**.

The topsoil and subsoil were machine excavated and revealed a feature consistent with that recorded in the trial trench [103] and is likely to be a natural/drainage pond (see Figure 1). A geo-technical test pit was identified on its edge (see Figure 2) and a box section (see Figure 3) excavated through the pond deposits (302 and 303) revealed underlying blue clay (104). Beyond the north-west corner of the excavation, a reed bed indicates the continuation of the pond.

No pond is located in this area on historic Ordnance Survey maps, but pottery retrieved from context (303) is slipware, probably of 18th century date, and it may have been open at this time.

No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed.

5.1.2 Area 3 (10m x 10m)

Area 3 was positioned in the east of the site to test an anomaly ([4]) identified in the geophysical survey (TigerGeo, 2021) and the trial trenching [303] (TigerGeo, 2022), and is shown on **DWG 02** and **DWG 03b**.

The topsoil and the subsoil were machine excavated and revealed the linear feature identified in the trial trench. This was scraped clean by machine and gave way to a series of irregular shaped features [303, 305, 307 and 309] cutting the base of the trench (see Figures 4 and 5). All of the features were subject to investigation (see Figures 6 – 8 and 10 - 11), and were inconsistent in form and all interpreted as natural features (tree bowls or root disturbance). Three linear field drains were also recorded, two aligned north-east – south-west and one north-west – south-east (see Figure 9).

No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed.

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5.2 Catalogue

5.2.1 SMS area catalogue

Area	**Size**	**Meters AOD (top of trench)**		**Meters Above Ordnance Datum (base of trench)**	
1	10m x 10m	NE – 85.47 SE – 86.67	NW 85.89 SW – 85.89	NE – 84.96 SE – 85.52	NW 85.06 (in box section) SW -
3	10m x 10m	NE – 86.47 SE – 86.08	NW – 86.66 SW – 86.19	NE – 86.10 SE – 86.08	NW – 85.35 SW – 86.19

5.2.2 Context catalogue

Context	Type	Description	Depth
Area 1			
101	Topsoil	Turf horizon – appearance of uncultivated grassland	0.2m
	Subsoil	Dark-brown silty clay with occasional small rounded pebbles	
102	Layer	Dark-brown silty clay small-medium rounded stones/gravel. A band of forming the edge to a possible channel/pond. A natural feature.	0.2m
103	Layer	Dark-brown silty clay with charcoal flecking, root disturbance and small rounded pebbles forming possible channel/pond, A natural feature. A single piece of post-medieval slip-ware pottery was recorded within this deposit.	0.25m
104	Layer	Blue-yellow clay with orange flecking and small rounded pebbles. Possible channel/pond and probably part of reed bed evident in the field.	Not excavated
Area 3			
301	Topsoil	Turf horizon – appearance of uncultivated grassland with thumps.	0.35m
	Subsoil	Dark-brown silty clay with occasional small rounded pebbles increasing in size at depth	
302	Layer	Yellow with orange flecking silty clay with lenses of white/silver sand and occasional small rounded pebbles. A natural deposit with features cut into it. The features are on the alignment of the linear feature observed but not investigated in the trial trench.	Not excavated
303	Cut	Irregular in plan with mixed angles and depths to the sides and base. Probably the result of tree/plant bowl and/or roots. Slot excavated through feature.	0.15m
304	Fill	Same as 301	0.15m
305	Cut	Irregular in plan with mixed angles and depths to the sides and base. Probably the result of tree/plant bowl and/or roots. Slot excavated through feature.	0.1m
306	Fill	Same as 301	0.1m
307	Cut	Irregular in plan with mixed angles and depths to the sides and base. Probably the result of tree/plant bowl and/or roots. Slot excavated through feature.	0.12m
308	Fill	Same as 301	0.12m
309	Land drains	Land drains x 3. Two aligned NE – SW and one NW - SE	Not excavated

6 Conclusions

A strip, map and sample excavation exercise was commissioned by SG Estates at a parcel of land off Llay New Road, Rhosrobin, Wrexham as part of a condition of planning permission for residential development.

The strip, map and sample excavations were concentrated on two areas, where earlier phases of investigation had identified features of potential archaeological interest. Two areas were stripped and mapped and the features and deposits exposed sample excavated and recorded. Area 1 revealed deposits typical of wet ground, probably part of a natural drainage feature such as a drainage channel or pond. Area 3 revealed irregularity-shaped features interpreted as tree bowls, root disturbance and three land drains.

No features or deposits of archaeological interest were identified. The strip, map and sample excavation has resolved any doubt as to the origin of the previously identified features. These are of natural origin or at most related to an earlier episode of drainage works and are not considered to be of archaeological interest.

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7 Archiving and dissemination

The site archive will conform to the requirements of the projects's Data Management Plan set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation (TigerGeo, 2024) and to relevant guidance documents. These include MoRPHE (Historic England, 2015), the Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014, Updated 2020), the Standard and Guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014, Updated 2020) and the National Standard and Guidance to Best Practice for Collecting and Depositing Archaeological Archives in Wales 2017 (NPAAW, 2017) and the RCAHMW Guideline for Digital Archives (2015).

The report will be distributed to the local authority for planing purposes and the Welsh Historic Environment Records via HEDDOS platform while the full digital archive will be deposited with National Monuments Record, Aberystwyth. A copy of the project report will also be uploaded to the OASIS Grey Literature library, and a summary of the OASIS record is included as **Appendix 2**.

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8 Bibliography

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Google Maps (https://www.google.com/maps/)

National Library of Scotland (NLS) historic mapping (https://maps.nls.uk/geo/explore/side-by-side/)

National Soil Resources Institute (NSRI) Soilscapes mapping (https://mapapps2.bgs.ac.uk/ukso/home.html)

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TigerGeo, 2024, "Proposed Development off Llay New Road, Rhosrobin, Wrexham: Written Scheme of Investigation: Strip, map and sample excavation) Report Ref. TG_DLW2441_WSI_V1.0

9 Selected reference

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10 Supporting information

10.1 Standards and quality (archaeology)

TigerGeo is developing an Integrated Management System (IMS) towards ISO certification for ISO9001, ISO14001 and OHSAS18001/ISO45001. For work within the archaeological sector TigerGeo has been awarded CIfA (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists) Registered Organisation status.

A high standard of client-centred professionalism is maintained in accordance with the requirements of relevant professional bodies including the Geological Society of London (GeolSoc) and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA). Senior members of TigerGeo are professional members of the GeolSoc (FGS) and CIfA (MCIfA).

There is a strong culture of internal peer-review within TigerGeo, for example, all reports pass through a process of authorship, technical review and finally proof-reading before release to the client. All work is undertaken in accordance with the high professional standards and technical competence expected by the Geological Society of London and the European Association of Geoscientists and Engineers.

All work for archaeological projects is also conducted in accordance with the following standards and guidance:

- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists – Code of Conduct (December, 2014, Updated 2021);
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2023, "Standard for archaeological excavation" Reading
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2023, "Universal guidance for archaeological excavation" Reading; and
- Historic England – Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environmental (MoRPHE) (2015) and Project Planning Note 3 (to be used with MoRPHE) (2015).

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10.2 Key personnel

Martin Roseveare, MSc BSc(Hons) MEAGE FGS MCIfA	**Senior Geophysicist, Director**
Martin specialised (MSc) in geophysical prospection for shallow applications and since 1997 has worked in commercial geophysics. Elected a GeolSoc Fellow in 2009 he is now working towards achieving CSci. A member of the European Association of Geoscientists & Engineers, he has served on the EuroGPR and CIfA GeoSIG committees and on the scientific committees of the 10th and 11th Archaeological Prospection conferences. He has reviewed papers for the EAGE Near Surface conference, was a technical reviewer of the Irish NRA geophysical guidance and is a founding member of the ISSGAP soils group. Professional interests include the application of geophysics to agriculture and the environment, e.g. groundwater and geohazards. He is also a software writer and equipment integrator with significant experience of embedded systems.	
Anne Roseveare, BEng(Hons) DIS MISoilSci	**Operations Manager, Environmental Geophysicist - Data Analyst**
On looking beyond engineering, Anne turned her attention to environmental monitoring and geophysics. She is a Member of the British Society of Soil Science / Institute of Professional Soil Scientists (BSSS/IPSS) and has specific areas of interest in soil physics & hydrology, agricultural applications and industrial sites. Working in shallow geophysics since 1998, Anne is a founding member of the ISSGAP soils group, also was the founding Editor of the International Society for Archaeological Prospection (ISAP). Specifications, logistics, health and safety, data handling & analysis are integral parts of her work, though she is happily distracted by the possibilities of discovering lost cities, hillwalking, dance and good food.	
Daniel Lewis, MA BA(Hons) MCIfA	**Consultant Archaeologist, Project Manager**
Daniel studied archaeology at the University of Nottingham and worked in field archaeology for many years, managing urban and rural fieldwork projects in and around Herefordshire. When the desk became more appealing he jumped into the world of consulting, working on small and large multi-discipline projects throughout England and Wales. At the same time, he returned to University, gaining an MA in Historic Environment Conservation. With experience in the heritage sector since 1998, Daniel has a diverse portfolio of skills. Here he ensures that geophysical work within the heritage sector is well grounded in archaeology. His spare time includes much running up mountains.	

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11 Appendices

11.1 Appendix 1 - Photographs

11.2 Appendix 2 – OASIS Summary Sheet

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Appendix 1

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Figure 1: general overview of Area 1 with context 104 in the foreground



Figure 2: geo-technical test pit (Area 1)



Figure 3: box section showing clay below contexts 102 and 103 in the north section (Area 1)



Figure 4: general overview of Area 3

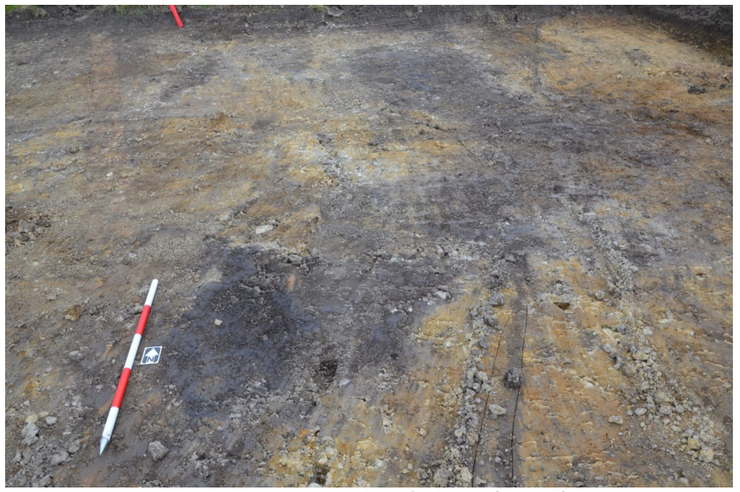


Figure 5: pre-excavation features (Area 3)



Figure 6: feature 303 (Area 3)

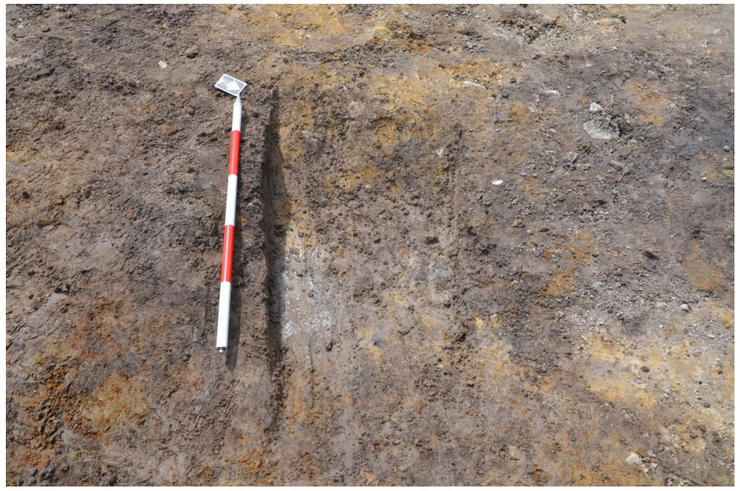


Figure 7: feature 305 (Area 3)



Figure 8: feature 307 (Area 3)



Figure 9: box section into land drain (Area 3)

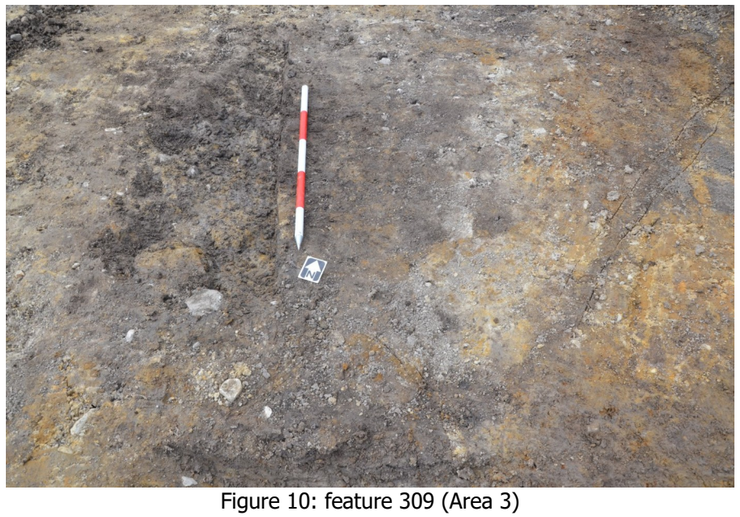


Figure 10: feature 309 (Area 3)

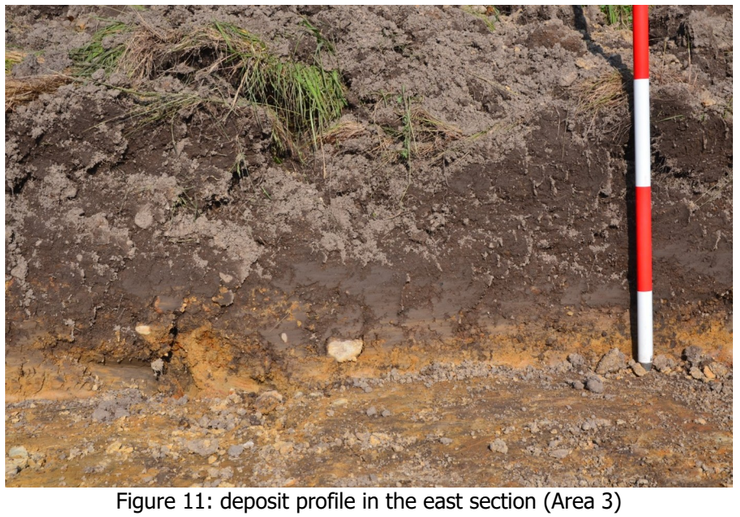
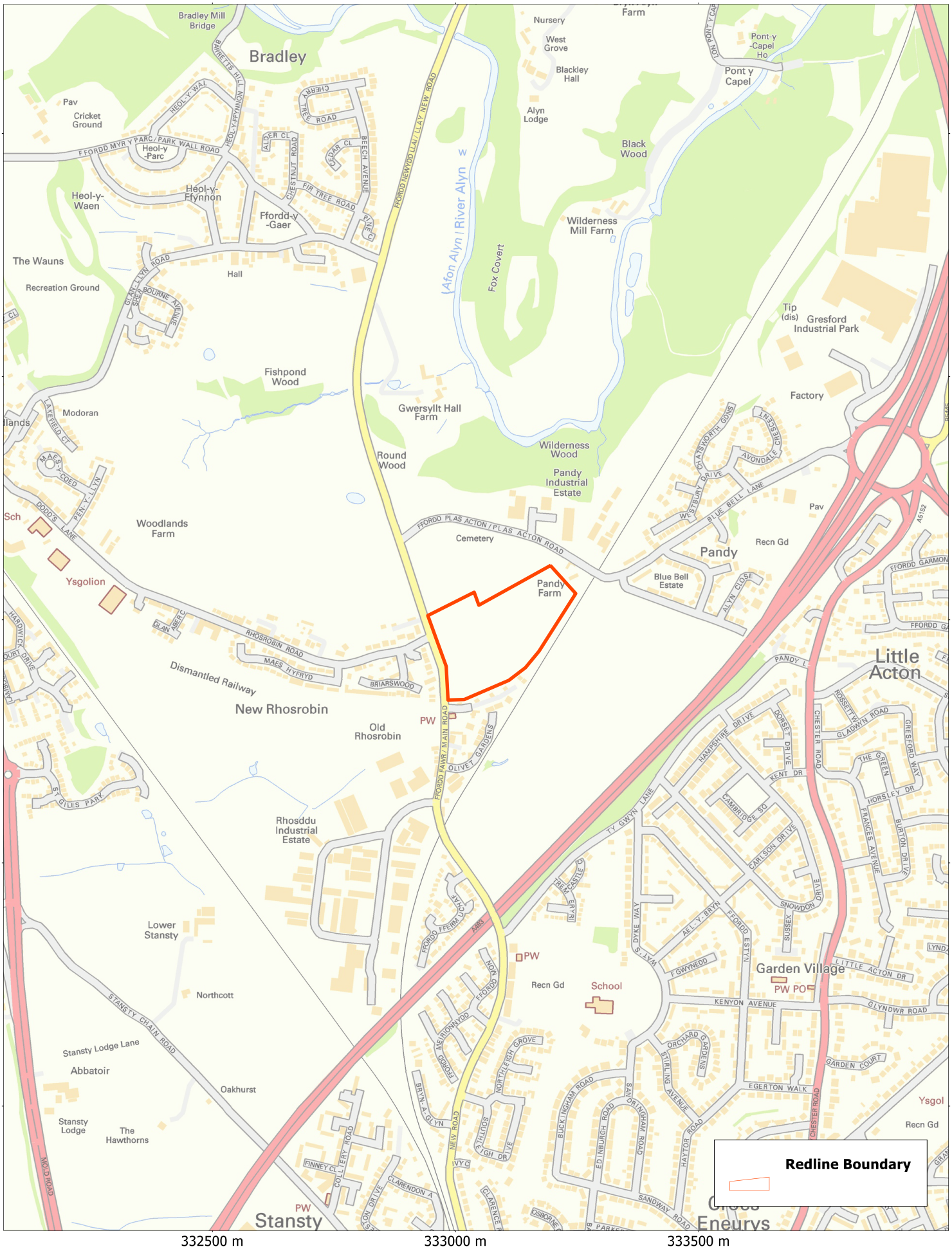


Figure 11: deposit profile in the east section (Area 3)

OASIS Summary for tigergeo1-526089

OASIS ID (UID)	tigergeo1-526089
Project Name	Strip Map And Sample at Proposed Development off Llay New Road, Rhosrobin, Wrexham
Sitename	Proposed Development off Llay New Road, Rhosrobin, Wrexham
Sitecode	DLW241
Project Identifier(s)	Proposed Development off Llay New Road, Rhosrobin, Wrexham
Activity type	Strip Map And Sample
Planning Id	P/2021/1057
Reason For Investigation	Planning: Post determination
Organisation Responsible for work	Tigergeo Limited
Project Dates	06-Jun-2024 - 07-Jun-2024
Location	Proposed Development off Llay New Road, Rhosrobin, Wrexham NGR : SJ 33074 52957 LL : 53.06963850158568, -3.000296776903171 12 Fig : 333074,352957
Administrative Areas	Country : Wales County/Local Authority : Wrexham Local Authority District : Wrexham Parish : Gwersyllt
Project Methodology	The two areas were excavated using a mechanical excavator equipped with a flat toothless bucket under the control and supervision of the project supervisor. The topsoil and subsoil were removed, in the absence of any archaeological deposits, to the level at which natural deposits were exposed. The location of the areas and features within it were recorded using Network RTK GNSS.
Project Results	
Keywords	
Funder	Private or public corporation SG Estates
HER	
Person Responsible for work	Daniel Lewis
HER Identifiers	
Archives	

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DLW241 Development off Llay New Road, Rhosrobin, Wrexham

DWG 01 Location Plan

Orthographic Scale: 1:10000 @ A4 Spatial Units: Meter. Do not scale off this drawing

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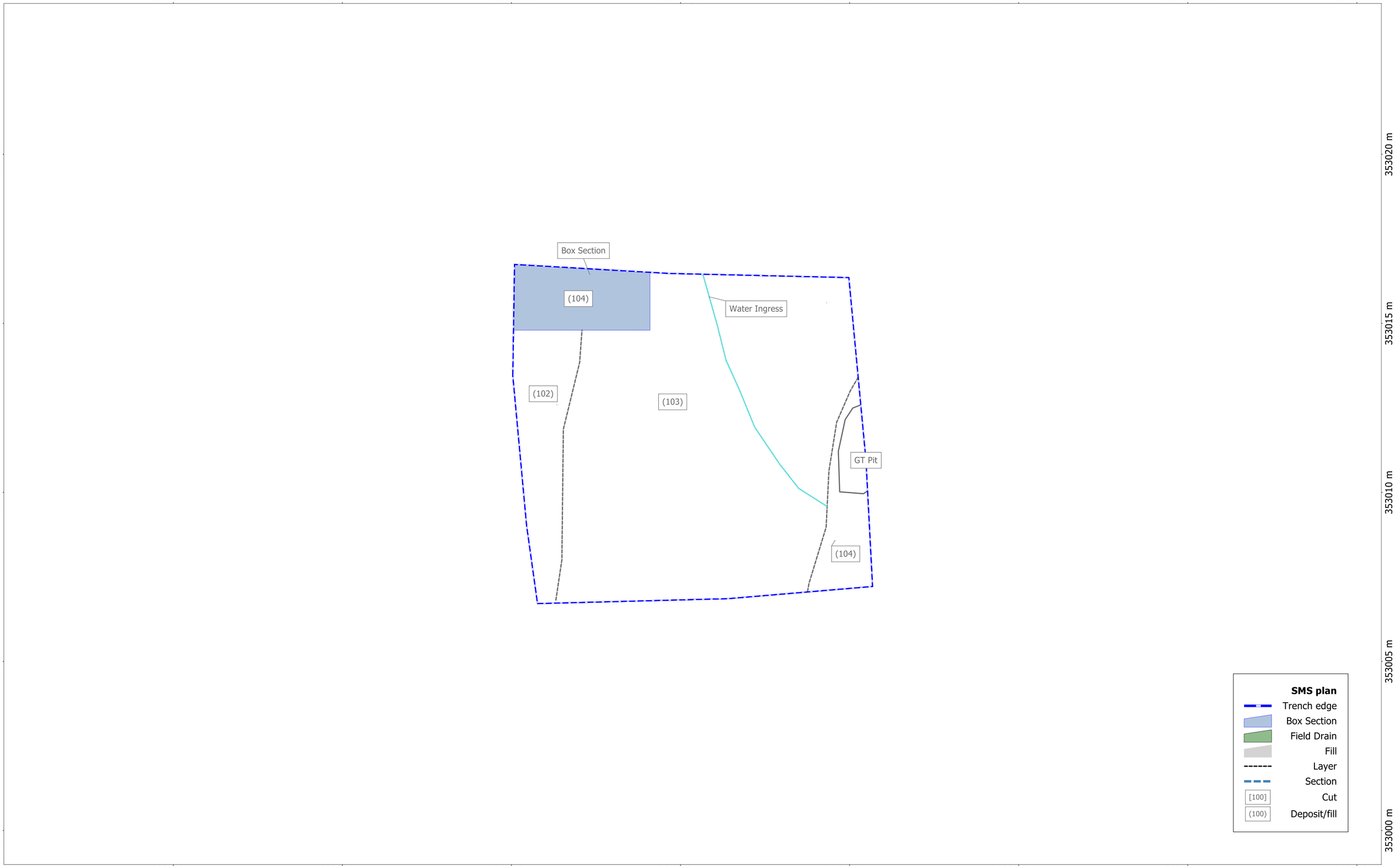


DLW241 Development off Llay New Road, Rhosrobin, Wrexham
DWG 02 Area Location Plan

Orthographic Scale: 1:1200 @ A3 Spatial Units: Meter. Do not scale off this drawing

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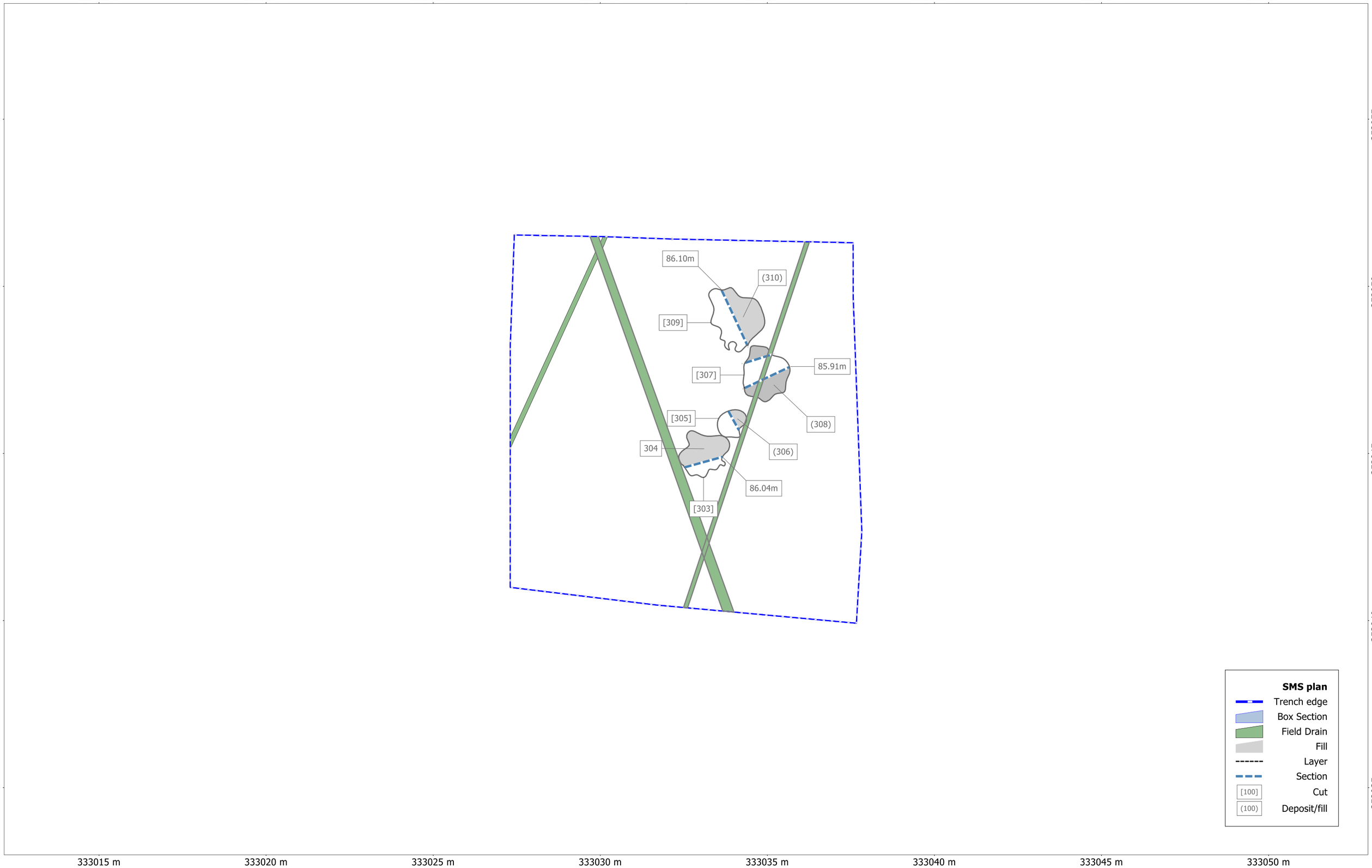
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DLW241 Development off Llay New Road, Rhosrobin, Wrexham
DWG 03a SMS Area 1

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DLW241 Development off Llay New Road, Rhosrobin, Wrexham
DWG 02b SMS Area 3

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