

Bank and Ditch Removal Turf Hill Inclosure, Hampshire

HLS Wetland Restoration



Measured Survey and Archaeological Watching Brief Report



Prepared by the New Forest National Park Authority

for

Forestry England and the Verderers of the New Forest Higher Level Stewardship Scheme

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In late 2023 the New Forest National Park Authority (NFNPA) Archaeology Team (HLS Archaeologist) conducted a measure survey (27 November) and subsequent archaeological watching brief (18 December) on wetland restoration bank and ditch removal work for Forestry England's HLS Team at Turf Hill, Hampshire (centred on NGR: SU 19649 17313; Fig. 1).
- 1.1 This work was carried out as part of the New Forest Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) Scheme, which aims to restore and enhance the internationally important habitats of the New Forest and is a partnership between the Verderers of the New Forest, New Forest National Park Authority, Forestry England and Natural England.
- 1.2 Two sections of bank and ditch were removed to allow water to run across the area downhill for improved hydrology in the area.
- 1.3 Prior to the watching brief a measured surveyed of the bank and ditch segments, to be removed, was conducted using a Leica TS06+ Total Station.
- 1.4 Bank and ditch removal was undertaken by mechanical excavator under constant archaeological supervision.
- 1.5 The fieldwork followed *Standards and guidance: Archaeological Watching Brief* (CIfA 2014).
- 1.6 The site was located at Turf Hill Inclosure, New Forest, Hampshire approximately 950m south-west of Hale Purlieu and surrounded by open New Forest Crown Land on the northern and southern sides. The area directly west of Turf Hill Inclosure is under pasture.

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The aims of the survey and watching brief were as follows:
 - To survey and record the two sections of bank and ditch prior to removal for the purposes of preservation by record;
 - to assess the impact that this particular type of landscape restoration work might have on any buried archaeological remains in order to inform future work.

3. METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 Prior to the groundworks commencing a measured survey was conducted of both sections of bank and ditch using a Leica TS06+ Total Station. A total of four Temporary Bench Marks (TBM) were established using a Garmin eTrex GPS and OS Locate App on a smart phone (Fig. 1).
 - 3.2 During groundworks, along the western edge of the site, 100 metres of bank and ditch were removed, leaving the corners at the northern and southern end in place. Along the south-eastern edge of the site, 50 metres of bank and ditch (eastern bank) were removed, leaving the remaining bank and ditch in place.
 - 3.3 The bank was reduced and the ditch infilled by a mechanical excavator equipped with a toothed bucket, through the levelling of the bank and backfilling the material into the ditch to create a level surface (Plates. 1 – 5).
 - 3.4 All excavation was undertaken under constant archaeological supervision.
-

4. RESULTS

- 4.1 The removed bank and ditch segments were successfully surveyed and recorded prior to their removal (Figs. 2 - 6).
- 4.2 No unknown archaeological features or artefacts were encountered across the site as all intrusive work was limited to the bank material.
- 4.3 Despite the scanning of disturbed topsoil, no finds of archaeological significance were recovered.

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6. REFERENCES

CIfA 2014 Standards and guidance: Archaeological Watching Brief.

NFNPA 2023 Archaeological Constraints Evaluation: Turf Hill & Millersford Copse in the New Forest Beat.

7. FIGURES

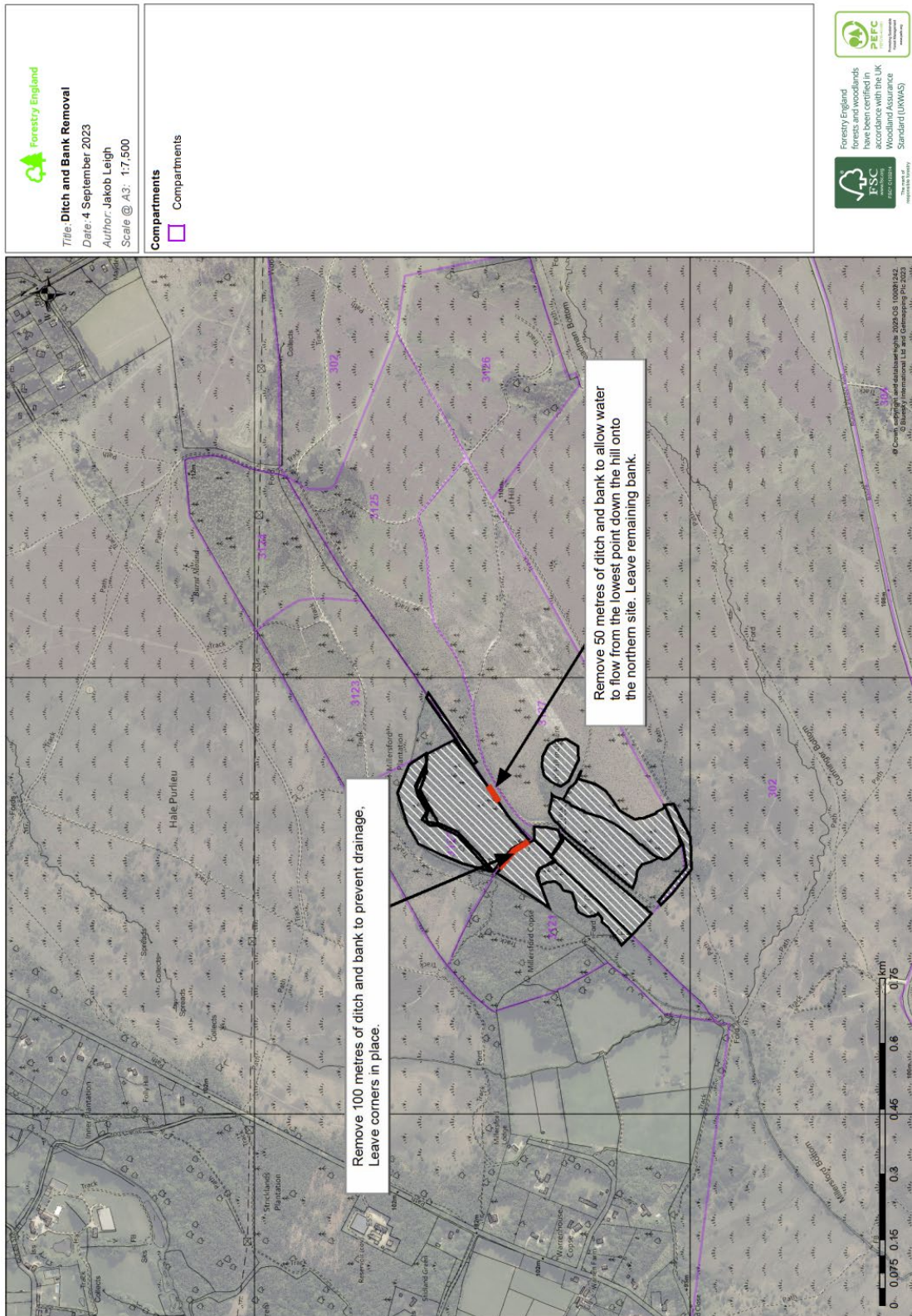


Figure 1: Location map of planned bank and ditch removal works (Forestry England)

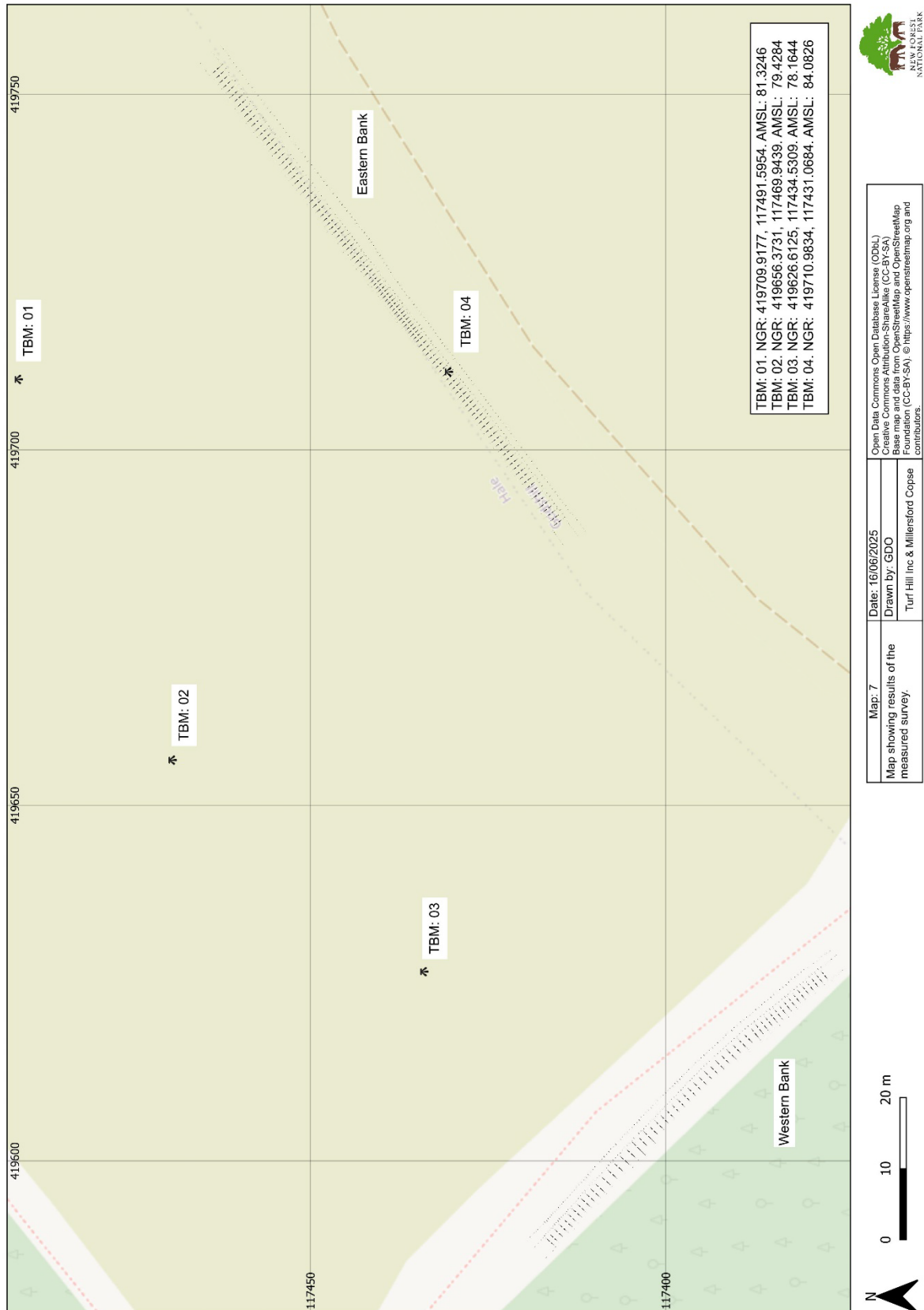


Figure 2: Map showing survey results for both segments of bank and ditch, prior to removal.

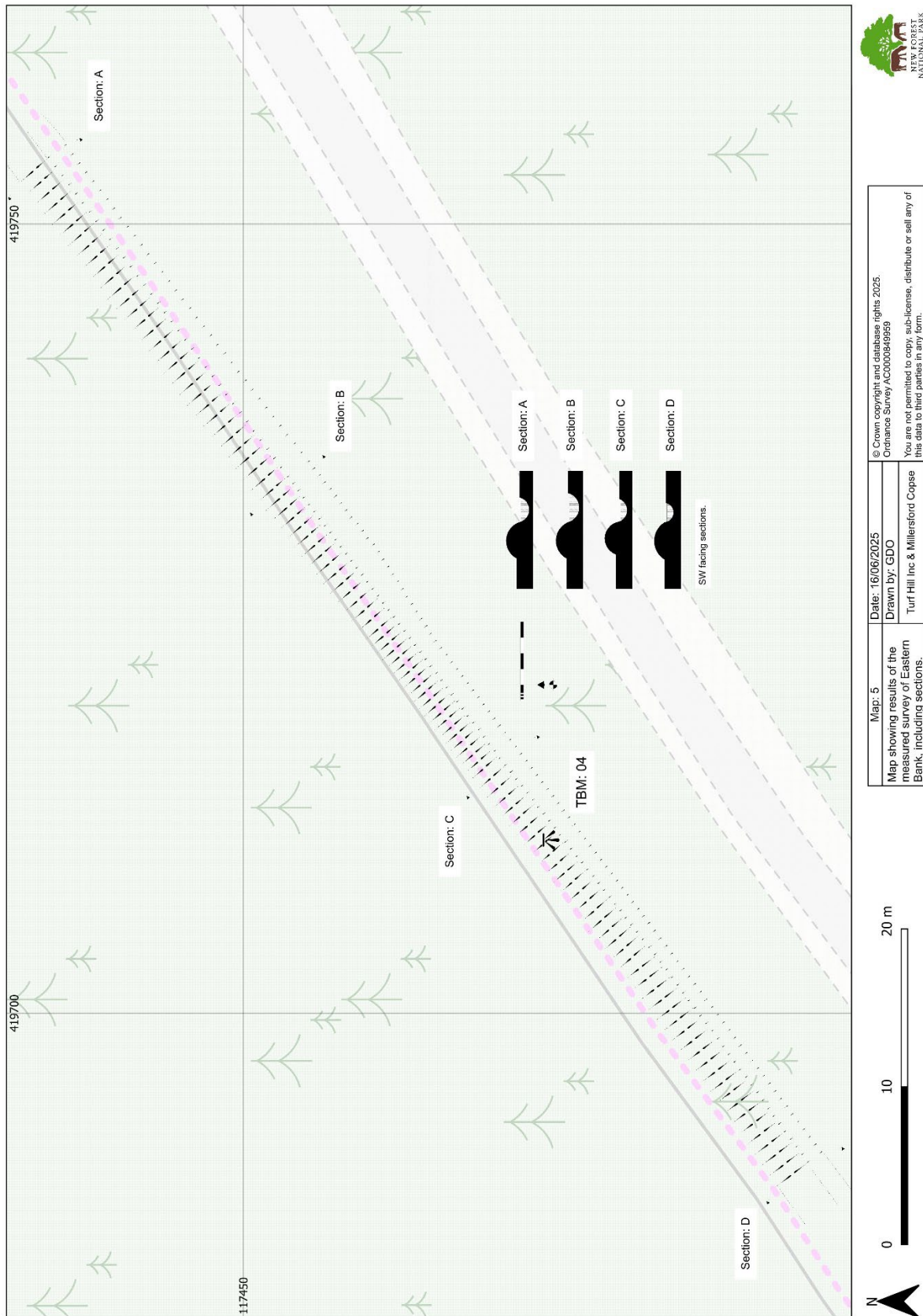


Figure 3: Survey drawing of eastern bank segment, over base mapping.

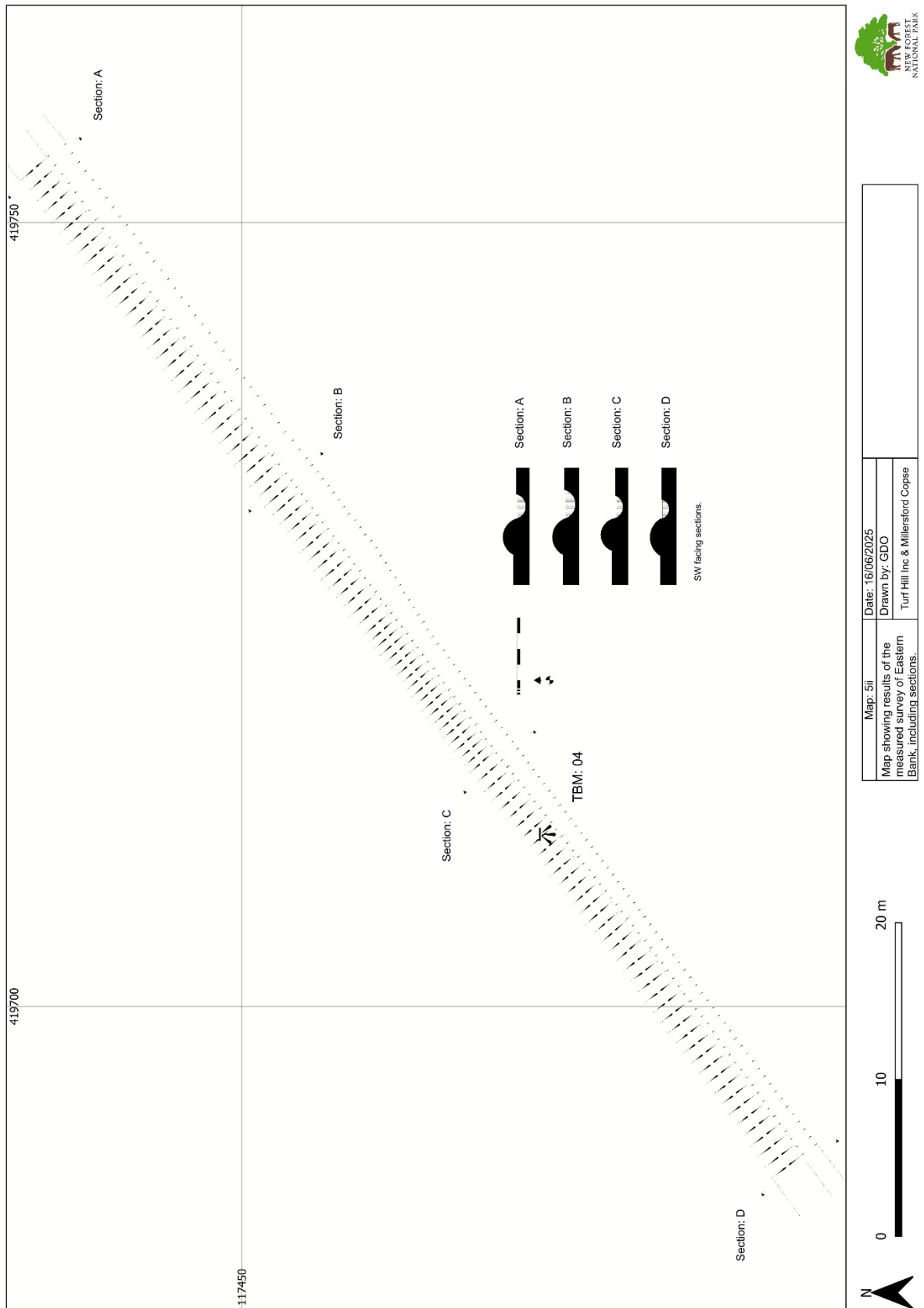


Figure 4: Survey plan and sections of eastern bank segment.

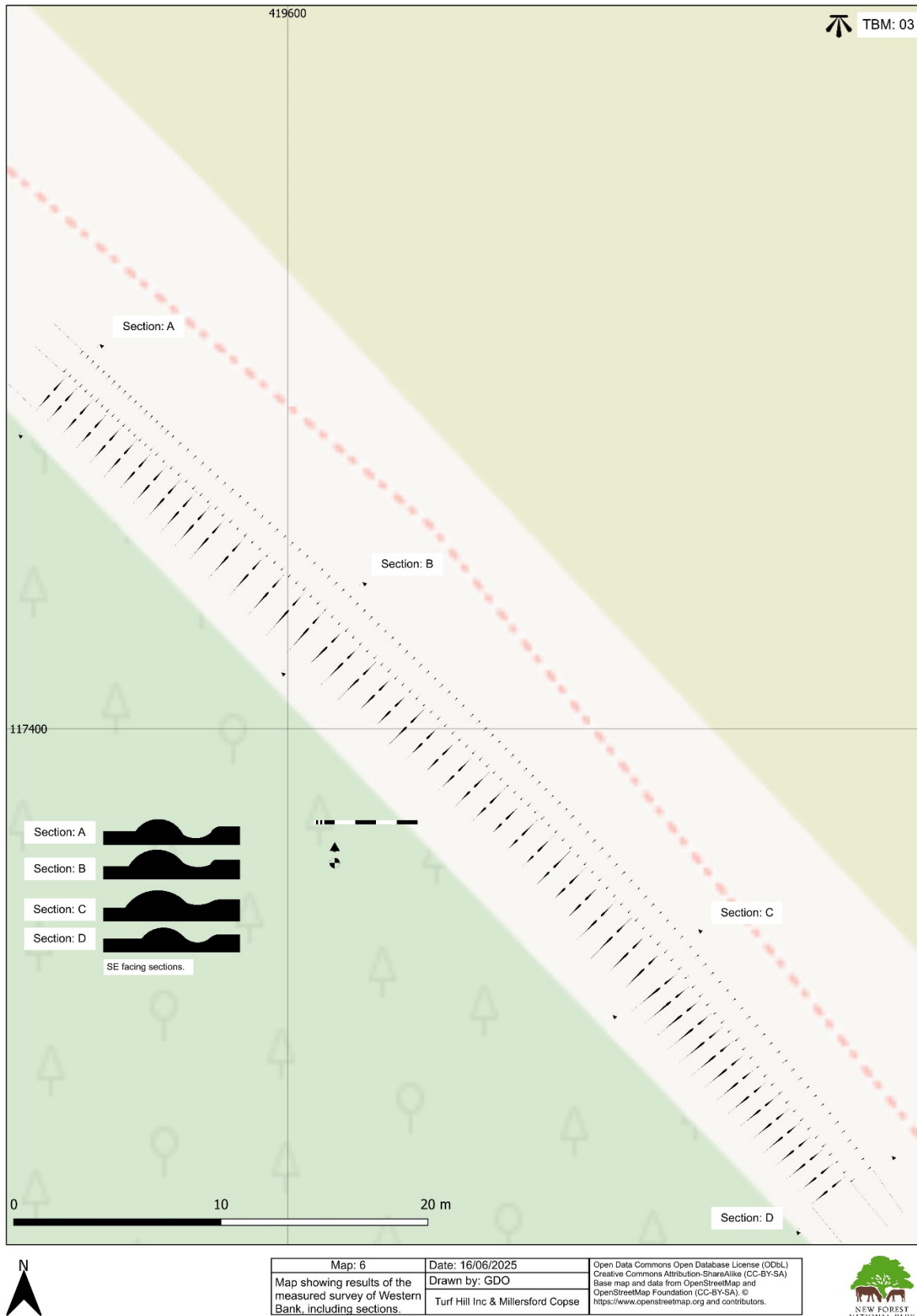


Figure 5: Survey drawing of western bank segment, over base mapping.

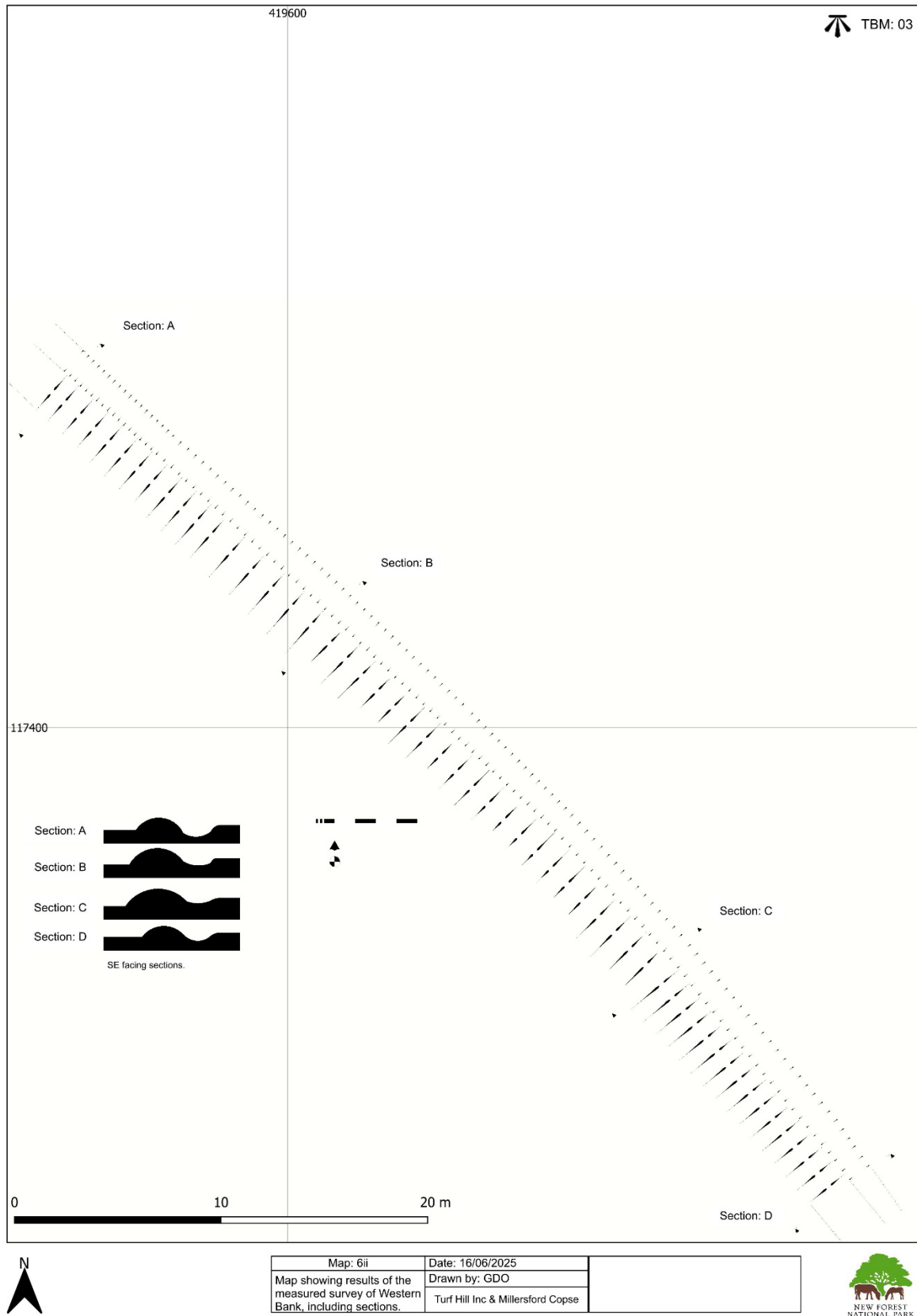


Figure 6: Survey plan and sections of western bank segment.

8. PLATES



Photo 1: Photograph of eastern bank and ditch, prior to removal. Looking east.



Photo 2: Working photograph of eastern bank and ditch removal. Looking east.



Photo 3: Working photograph of eastern bank and ditch removal. Looking west.



Photo 4: Photograph of levelled eastern bank and ditch after groundworks. Looking east.



Photo 5: Photograph of western bank and ditch, prior to removal. Looking south.

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