

Land off Groby Road, Anstey, Leicestershire



Archaeological Evaluation Report



December 2012

**Client: CgMs Consulting on behalf of
Davidsons Developments Ltd**

OA East Report No: 1428

OASIS No: oxfordar3-138567

NGR: 454479 308233

Land off Groby Road, Anstey, Leicestershire

An Archaeological Evaluation

By Louise Bush BA MA PlfA


Editor: Richard Mortimer MfA

Illustrators: Louise Bush BA MA PlfA and Stuart Ladd MA PlfA

Report Date: December 2012

Report Number: 1428
Site Name: Land off Groby Road, Anstey, Leicestershire
Date of Works: 29 November 2012
Client Name: CgMs Consulting on behalf of Davidsons Developments Ltd
Client Ref: N/A
Planning Ref: P/11/0149/2
Grid Ref: 454479, 308233
Site Code: XLEGRA12
Finance Code: XLEGRA12
Receiving Body: Leicestershire Museums Service
Accession No: X.A122.2012

Prepared by: Louise Bush
Position: Project Officer
Date: December 2012

Checked by: Richard Mortimer
Position: Senior Project Manager
Date: December 2012
Signed: 

Disclaimer

This document has been prepared for the titled project or named part thereof and should not be relied upon or used for any other project without an independent check being carried out as to its suitability and prior written authority of Oxford Archaeology being obtained. Oxford Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for the consequences of this document being used for a purpose other than the purposes for which it was commissioned. Any person/party using or relying on the document for such other purposes agrees and will by such use or reliance be taken to confirm their agreement to indemnify Oxford Archaeology for all loss or damage resulting therefrom. Oxford Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for this document to any party other than the person/party by whom it was commissioned.

Oxford Archaeology East,
15 Trafalgar Way,
Bar Hill,
Cambridge,
CB23 8SQ

t: 01223 850500
f: 01223 850599
e: oaeast@thehumanjourney.net
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net/oaeast>

© Oxford Archaeology East 2011
Oxford Archaeology Limited is a Registered Charity No: 285627

Table of Contents

Summary.....	5
1 Introduction.....	7
1.1 Location and scope of work.....	7
1.2 Geology and topography.....	7
1.3 Archaeological and historical background.....	7
1.4 Acknowledgements.....	8
2 Aims and Methodology.....	9
2.1 Aims.....	9
2.2 Methodology.....	9
3 Results.....	10
3.1 Introduction	10
3.2 Trial trenches.....	10
4 Discussion and Conclusions.....	10
Appendix A. Trench Descriptions and Context Inventory.....	11
Appendix B. Bibliography	13
Appendix C. OASIS Report Form	14

List of Figures

- Fig. 1 Site location map
Fig. 2 Trenches showing furrows

List of Plates

- Plate 1 Trench 3, looking north-west
Plate 2 Trench 5, looking east-northeast

Summary

On the 29th November 2012 Oxford Archaeology East carried out archaeological trial trenching on land off Groby Road, Anstey, Leicestershire (SP 544 082). These archaeological works were the first of three phases of trial trenching works ahead of the construction of a residential development of up to 165 dwellings with associated open space, drainage, new allotment space and new cemetery space.

In this phase of the works (Phase 1) five trial trenches were excavated in an area approximately 1.6 hectares in size. No preserved archaeological features or deposits were encountered, however, slight remains of post-medieval ridge and furrow agriculture was seen across all the trenches.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 Archaeological trial trenching was conducted at land off Groby Road, Anstey, Leicestershire (NGR 454479, 308233) (Fig.1).
- 1.1.2 This archaeological trial trenching was undertaken in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) issued by Myk Flitcroft of CgMs Consulting (Planning Application P/11/0149/2).
- 1.1.3 The work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed redevelopment area, in accordance with the guidelines set out in *National Planning Policy Framework* (Department for Communities and Local Government March 2012). The results will enable decisions to be made by the Local Planning Authority, with regard to the treatment of any archaeological remains found.
- 1.1.4 The site archive is currently held by OA East and will be deposited with the appropriate county stores in due course.

1.2 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The site is located to the immediate south-west of the village of Anstey. The total development area is approximately 10.4 hectares in size. It comprises arable fields situated on both sides of Groby Road.
- 1.2.2 The site lies on a south-east facing slope, forming the northern side of the Rothley Brook valley. Ground level adjacent to the Groby Road is around 76.5m OD and rises steadily northward to around 82.5m OD.
- 1.2.3 The geology of the site is made up of Edwalton Member Mudstone overlain by superficial deposits of Oadby Member Diamicton clay (BGS 2012).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The following background information is taken from the Desk Based Assessment (DBA) (Flitcroft 2010):

Early Prehistoric

- 1.3.2 Small quantities of Mesolithic and Neolithic struck flint have been recovered from fieldwalking south-west of the development area (MLE7054), and further struck flints of the same date were uncovered during trial trenching at Cropston Road (MLE10236) and Bradgate Road (MLE15734), Anstey.

Iron Age and Roman

- 1.3.3 The line of the major Roman road, the *Via Devana* running from Leicester to Chester passes through the Anstey area (MLE404 and MLE10657), implying the potential for Roman finds within the general area.
- 1.3.4 This is reinforced by the evidence for an Iron Age and Roman settlement which was uncovered during archaeological trial trenching in the early 1990s located to the south of the development area (MLE411 and MLE413). Further to this, evidence for pottery manufacturing was identified at Sheet Hedge Wood (MLE2770) to the west of site.

Saxon and Medieval

- 1.3.5 There is no evidence for Saxon occupation in the immediate environs of site. However, there is evidence of Medieval activity. The majority of this however, is related to extant buildings within the core of Anstey village itself.
- 1.3.6 A geophysical survey was undertaken across the development area itself which revealed evidence of medieval/post-medieval open field cultivation (Walford & Simmonds 2011).

1.4 Acknowledgements

- 1.4.1 The author would like to extend thanks to Myk Flitcroft of CgMs Consulting and Davidsons Developments Ltd for commissioning the archaeological works. Site work was undertaken by the author, with the assistance of Andrew Greef and Patrick Moan. The project was managed by Richard Mortimer. Machine excavation was carried out by Newline Midlands Ltd.

2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 The objective of this archaeological trial trenching was to determine as far as reasonably possible the presence/absence, location, nature, extent, date, quality, condition and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits within the development area.

2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 The WSI required that five 50m trenches be excavated in the field to the north of the Groby Road (Phase 1).
- 2.2.2 Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with an 8 tonne tracked mechanical excavator using a 1.5m wide toothless ditching bucket.
- 2.2.3 The site survey was carried out by Patrick Moan using a Leica SmartRover VRS07.
- 2.2.4 Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal detector.
- 2.2.5 All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using OA East's *pro-forma* sheets. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales and colour and monochrome photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits.
- 2.2.6 Site conditions were extremely wet under foot. The lengths of the trenches had to be varied on site to avoid standing water and recent drainage channels dug across the site (Fig.1). A large water pipe running across the site from north-west to south-east also limited where the trenches could be excavated.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 During the trial trenching works, no archaeological features other than the shallow remains of medieval/post-medieval agricultural furrows were uncovered in the trenches (Fig.2). Across the site, natural geology (consisting of a yellow-orange clay with chalk inclusions) was encountered approximately 0.25m below modern ground level. Topsoil was a dark grey-brown silty clay and contained no archaeological finds or modern debris. There was no subsoil. No finds were recovered during the archaeological works.
- 3.1.2 Full details of trench depths/dimensions are listed in Appendix A.

3.2 Trial trenches

Trench 1

- 3.2.1 Trench 1 was orientated north-northwest to south-southeast. Within the trench, two furrows were seen running down slope in a south-easterly direction. The furrows were approximately 2m wide and filled with a mid brown silty clay.

Trench 2

- 3.2.2 Trench 2 was orientated north-east to south-west. Seven furrows were seen running perpendicular to the trench in a south-easterly direction. The furrows were approximately 2m wide and spaced about 4m apart.

Trench 3

- 3.2.3 Trench 3 was aligned north-west to south-east. Six furrows, approximately 2m wide and 4m apart were seen across the trench running in a south-easterly direction.

Trench 4

- 3.2.4 Trench 4 was aligned in a north-east to south-west direction. It contained six furrow, all of which were around 2m wide and spaced 4m apart from one another. The furrows ran in a south-easterly direction.

Trench 5

- 3.2.5 Trench 5 was orientated east-northeast to west-southwest. It was seen to contain six furrows running on a south-easterly alignment. These furrows were approximately 2m wide and spaced about 4m apart.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1.1 No archaeological features or deposits other than the shallow remains of medieval/post-medieval furrows were uncovered during the trial trenching works. The furrows were evenly spaced, narrow, and ran down-slope in a south-easterly direction. These furrows correspond with the ridge and furrow identified during the geophysical survey. A number were excavated by hand and by machine, they were consistently a maximum of 0.1m to 0.15m deep. None contained any artefactual material.
- 4.1.2 The lack of finds, even of a medieval or post-medieval date implies that the land, while clearly ploughed for a short while, may have been under pasture for prolonged periods.

APPENDIX A. TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1						
General description				Orientation		NNW-SSE
Trench only seen to contain furrows. Consists of topsoil overlying a natural of chalky clay.				Avg. depth (m)		0.25
				Width (m)		1.5
				Length (m)		25
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trench 2						
General description				Orientation		NE-SW
Trench only seen to contain furrows. Consists of topsoil overlying a natural of chalky clay.				Avg. depth (m)		0.25
				Width (m)		1.5
				Length (m)		45.8
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trench 3						
General description				Orientation		NW-SE
Trench only seen to contain furrows. Consists of topsoil overlying a natural of chalky clay.				Avg. depth (m)		0.25
				Width (m)		1.5
				Length (m)		47.5
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trench 4						
General description				Orientation		NE-SW
Trench only seen to contain furrows. Consists of topsoil overlying a natural of chalky clay.				Avg. depth (m)		0.27
				Width (m)		1.5
				Length (m)		39
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trench 5						
General description				Orientation		ENE-WSW

Trench only seen to contain furrows. Consists of topsoil overlying a natural of gravelly clay.				Avg. depth (m)	0.27	
				Width (m)	1.5	
				Length (m)	40.1	
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
-	-	-	-	-	-	-

APPENDIX B. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- BGS <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>. Accessed: 30 November 2012
- Flitcroft, M. 2010 *Archaeological Desk Based Assessment: Land at Groby Road, Anstey*. Unpublished
- Flitcroft, M. 2012 *Written Scheme of Investigation for a Programme of Archaeological Works: Land north and south of Groby Road, Anstey*. Unpublished
- Walford, J. & Simmonds, C. 2011 *Archaeological Geophysical Survey of land at Groby Road, Anstey, Leicestershire*. Northamptonshire Archaeology Reports 11/04. Unpublished

APPENDIX C. OASIS REPORT FORM

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

Project Details

OASIS Number	oxfordar3-138567			
Project Name	Evaluation on land off Groby Road, Anstey, Leicestershire			
Project Dates (fieldwork)	Start	29-11-2012	Finish	29-11-2012
Previous Work (by OA East)	No		Future Work	Yes

Project Reference Codes

Site Code	XLEGRA12	Planning App. No.	P/11/0149/2
HER No.	X.A122.2012	Related HER/OASIS No.	

Type of Project/Techniques Used

Prompt	Planning condition
Development Type	Rural Residential

Please select all techniques used:

<input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photography - interpretation	<input type="checkbox"/> Grab-Sampling	<input type="checkbox"/> Remote Operated Vehicle Survey
<input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photography - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Gravity-Core	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sample Trenches
<input type="checkbox"/> Annotated Sketch	<input type="checkbox"/> Laser Scanning	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey/Recording Of Fabric/Structure
<input type="checkbox"/> Augering	<input type="checkbox"/> Measured Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Targeted Trenches
<input type="checkbox"/> Dendrochronological Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Metal Detectors	<input type="checkbox"/> Test Pits
<input type="checkbox"/> Documentary Search	<input type="checkbox"/> Phosphate Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Topographic Survey
<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Sampling	<input type="checkbox"/> Photogrammetric Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Vibro-core
<input type="checkbox"/> Fieldwalking	<input type="checkbox"/> Photographic Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual Inspection (Initial Site Visit)
<input type="checkbox"/> Geophysical Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Rectified Photography	

Monument Types/Significant Finds & Their Periods

List feature types using the [NMR Monument Type Thesaurus](#) and significant finds using the [MDA Object type Thesaurus](#) together with their respective periods. If no features/finds were found, please state "none".

Monument	Period	Object	Period
N/A	None	N/A	None
	Select period...		Select period...
	Select period...		Select period...

Project Location

County	Leicestershire	Site Address (including postcode if possible)	
District	Charnwood	Groby Road Anstey Leicestershire, LE7 7FL	
Parish	Anstey		
HER	Leicestershire Museums Service		
Study Area	1.6 ha	National Grid Reference	454479, 308233

Project Originators

Organisation	OA EAST
Project Brief Originator	N/A
Project Design Originator	N/A
Project Manager	Richard Mortimer
Supervisor	Louise Bush

Project Archives

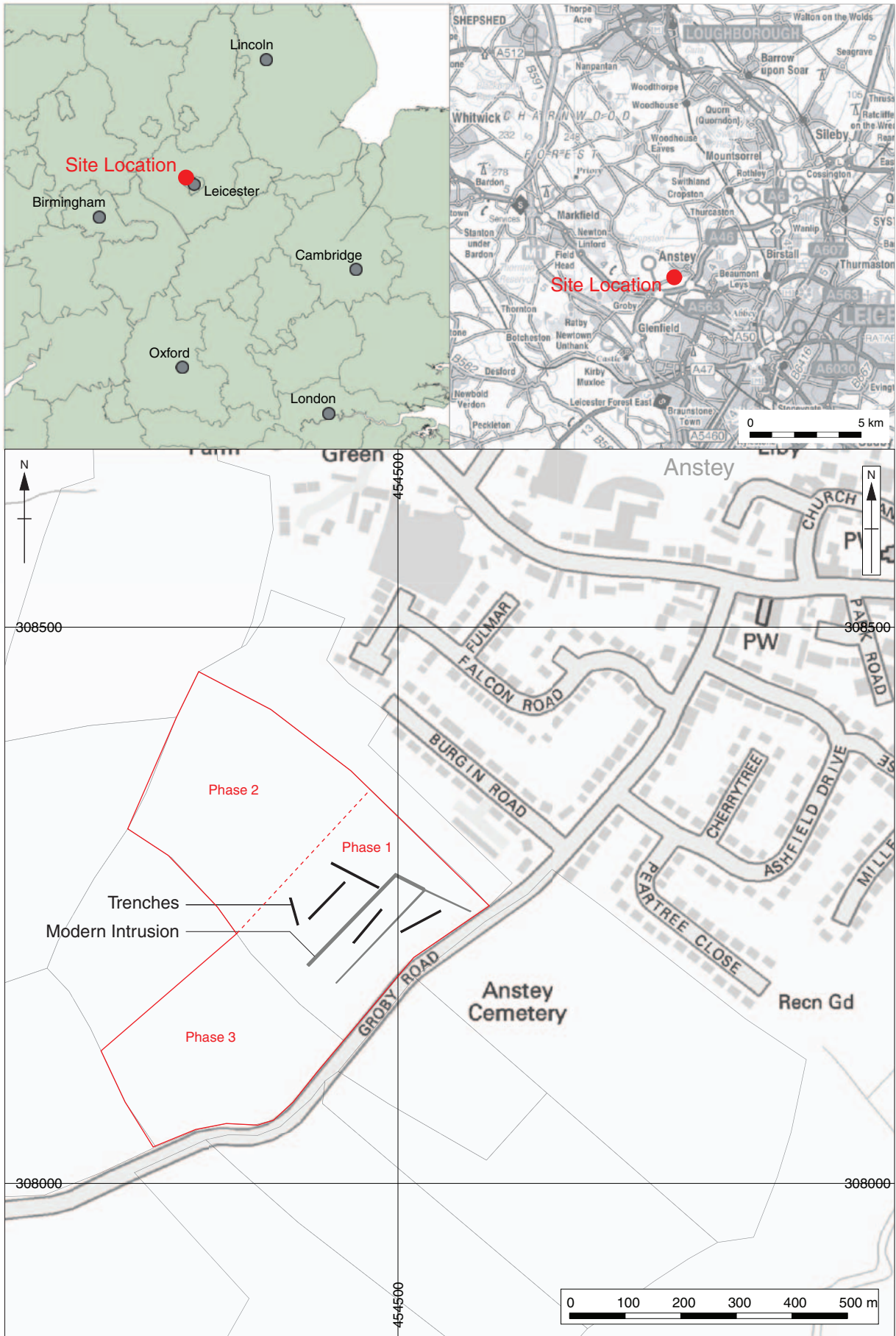
Physical Archive	Digital Archive	Paper Archive
Leicestershire Museums Service	Bar Hill	Leicestershire Museums Service
XLEGRA12	XLEGRA12	XLEGRA12

Archive Contents/Media

	Physical Contents	Digital Contents	Paper Contents
Animal Bones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Glass	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Human Bones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leather	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Metal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stratigraphic		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Survey		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Textiles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worked Bone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worked Stone/Lithic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Digital Media	Paper Media
<input type="checkbox"/> Database	<input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photos
<input type="checkbox"/> GIS	<input type="checkbox"/> Context Sheet
<input type="checkbox"/> Geophysics	<input type="checkbox"/> Correspondence
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Images	<input type="checkbox"/> Diary
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Illustrations	<input type="checkbox"/> Drawing
<input type="checkbox"/> Moving Image	<input type="checkbox"/> Manuscript
<input type="checkbox"/> Spreadsheets	<input type="checkbox"/> Map
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Matrices
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Text	<input type="checkbox"/> Microfilm
<input type="checkbox"/> Virtual Reality	<input type="checkbox"/> Misc.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Research/Notes
	<input type="checkbox"/> Photos
	<input type="checkbox"/> Plans
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Report
	<input type="checkbox"/> Sections
	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey

Notes:



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2011. All rights reserved. License No. AI 100005569

Figure 1: Site location showing archaeological trenches and modern intrusion in development area (red)

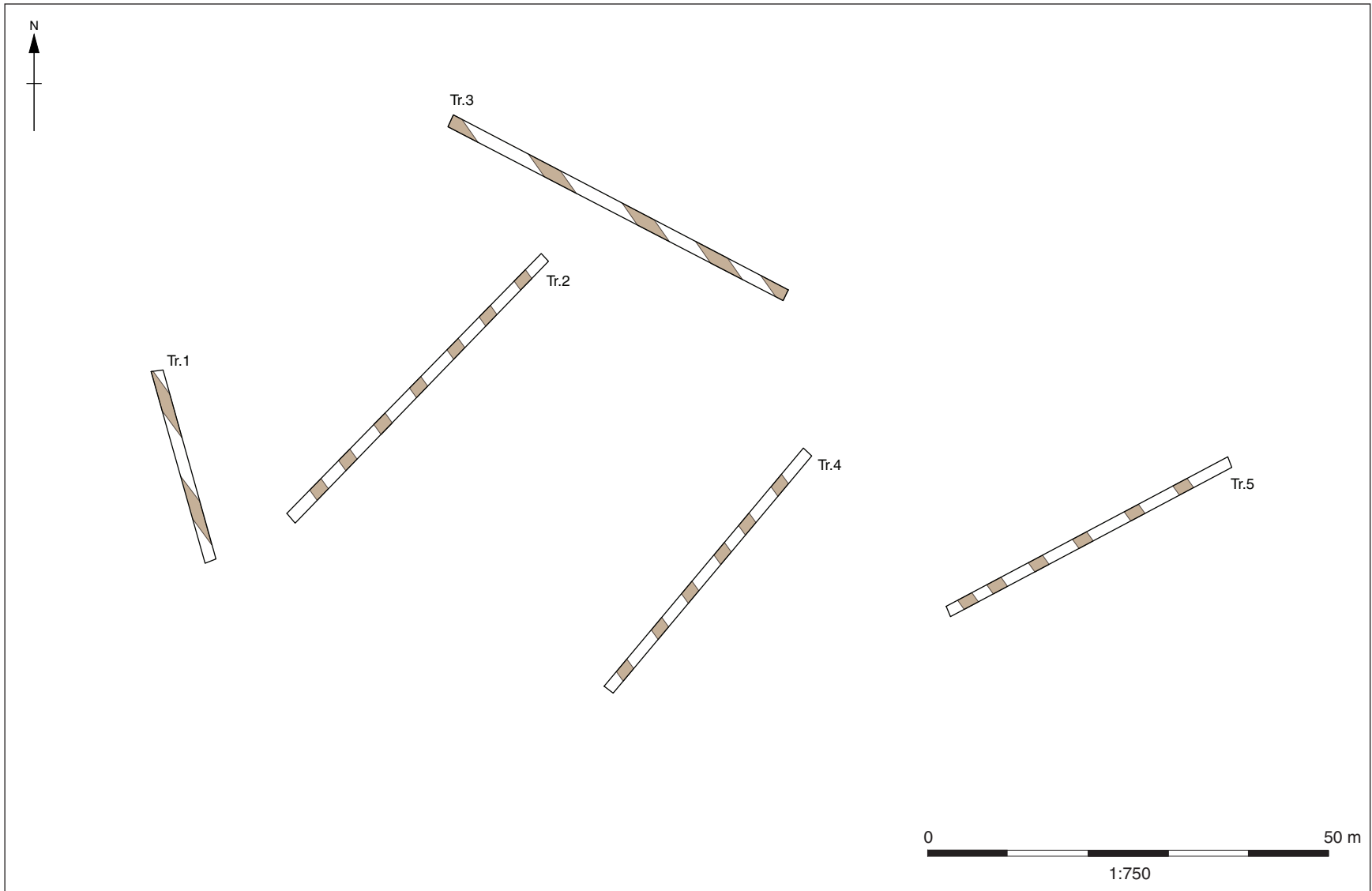


Figure 2: Trenches showing furrows



Plate 1: Trench 3, looking north-west



Plate 2: Trench 5, looking east-northeast



**Head Office/Registered Office/
OA South**

Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford OX2 0ES

t: +44 (0) 1865 263 800
f: +44 (0) 1865 793 496
e: info@oxfordarch.co.uk
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net>

OA North

Mill 3
Moor Lane
Lancaster LA1 1GF

t: +44 (0) 1524 541 000
f: +44 (0) 1524 848 606
e: [oanorth@thehumanjourney.net](mailto: oanorth@thehumanjourney.net)
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net>

OA East

15 Trafalgar Way
Bar Hill
Cambridgeshire
CB23 8SQ

t: +44 (0) 1223 850500
f: +44 (0) 1223 850599
e: [oaeast@thehumanjourney.net](mailto: oaeast@thehumanjourney.net)
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net>



Director: David Jennings, BA MIFA FSA

*Oxford Archaeology Ltd is a
Private Limited Company, N^o: 1618597
and a Registered Charity, N^o: 285627*