

# Smartlife Centre Land off Kings Hedges Road Cambridge Cambridgeshire



## Excavation Report



December 2010

**Client: Fusion Project Management  
on behalf of Cambridgeshire  
County Council**

OA East Report No: 1228  
OASIS No: oxfordar3-88180  
NGR: TL 4551 6179



**Smartlife Centre, Land of Kings Hedges Road, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire**

*Archaeological Excavation*

*By Thomas Lyons BA*

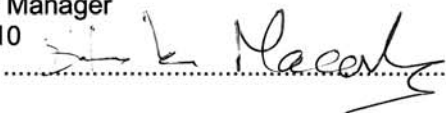
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*Illustrator: Séverine Bézie MA*

*Report Date: December 2010*

**Report Number:** 1228  
**Site Name:** The Smartlife Centre, Land off Kings Hedges Road, Cambridge  
**HER Event No:** 3447  
**Date of Works:** November 2010  
**Client Name:** Fusion Project Management on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council  
**Client Ref:** 12342  
**Planning Ref:** C/05007/10  
**Grid Ref:** TL 4551 6179  
**Site Code:** CAM KHR 10  
**Finance Code:** CAM KHR 10  
**Receiving Body:** CCC Stores, Landbeach  
**Accession No:**

**Prepared by:** Thomas Lyons  
**Position:** Project Supervisor  
**Date:** November 2010

**Checked by:** Stephen Macaulay  
**Position:** Senior Project Manager  
**Date:** November 2010  
**Signed:** 

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## **Summary**

*Oxford Archaeology East conducted an excavation on the site of the proposed new Smartlife Centre on land adjacent to Kings Hedges Road on the northern perimeter of Cambridge. The site lies immediately to the east of the putative course of Akeman Street Roman road which runs from the historic city centre and forms part of the modern A10 to the north on its way to Ely and Denver in Norfolk, and therefore had a high archaeological potential.*

*No archaeological remains of any antiquity were encountered during the investigation. Ditches and postholes identified on the site were post-medieval in date.*





## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Location and scope of work

An archaeological excavation was conducted at land between Kings Hedges road and the Guided Busway, immediately to the east of the Orchard Park estate. The investigation was carried out in advance of the construction of a new Smartlife Centre.

This archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Andy Thomas of Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC; Planning Application C/05007/10), supplemented by a Specification prepared by OA East.

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 *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment* (Department for Communities and Local Government 2010). The results will enable decisions to be made by CCC, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority, with regard to the treatment of any archaeological remains found.

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

The development site overlies the 3<sup>rd</sup> Terrace River Gravels, with some overlying alluvial deposits: the solid geology is Gault Clay (BGS 1981).

### 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

The site lies within a known area of Iron Age and Roman activity: An Iron Age fort (known as Arbury Camp) lies approximately 500m to the west of the proposed development area.. A Roman villa lies beneath the site of Kings Hedges School (HER 05421) approximately 500m to the south while the northwestern boundary of the site marks the putative course of Akeman Street Roman road.

Akeman Street Roman Road runs from the southwest of England, through the historic core of Cambridge City, through the centre of Roman Cambridge (*Duroliponte*) at Castle Hill and heads northeast (known locally as *Mere Way*), towards Ely, on its way to Denver on the Norfolk border. Sections of the modern A10 follow its route. It is known to date to the early-mid 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, constructed during the Hadrianic-Antonine period (Macaulay 1997).

Immediately to the east of the proposed development area, adjacent to the site, an archaeological investigation was undertaken in advance of the building of an electricity substation but this investigation found no archaeological remains (HER ECB 2512).

The wider area to the north of the A14 and either side of the A10 is known to be rich in Iron Age and Roman archaeological remains.

### 1.4 Acknowledgements

The project was funded by Cambridgeshire County Council and commissioned by Fusion Project Management on their behalf and was directed by Chris Thatcher, assisted by Tom Lyons, of OA East. The project was managed by Stephen Macaulay and monitored by Andy Thomas of Cambridgeshire County Council.

## 2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Aims

The objective of this excavation 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

The Brief required that a 'Strip and Map' investigation be undertaken and in the event of significant archaeological remains being discovered a suitable programme of excavation designed.

Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a tracked 360-type excavator using a toothless ditching bucket.

Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal detector. All metal-detected and hand-collected finds were retained for inspection, other than those which were obviously modern.

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.

## 3 RESULTS

### 3.1 Introduction

An area of approximately 720sqm (covering the footprint of the proposed SMARTlife Centre) was stripped clear of topsoil and subsoil to reveal any underlying archaeological features. Subsoil was between 0.2m and 0.3m deep and topsoil was up to 0.28m thick. Natural geology was reached at approximately 0.5m beneath current ground level over most of the site. No modern truncation of these levels was observed.

A total of seven archaeological features were revealed, located on the western side of the proposed development area. These included four post holes on a SW – NE alignment (nos. **[103-109]**) as well as two ditch lines (nos. **[111 & 113]**) orientated on a complementary WSW alignment.

### 3.2 Ditches

Feature **[111]** was 2m wide and 0.22m deep. The fill (110) was a homogeneous brown silty clay with few inclusions or artefacts. The ditch terminated close to the centre of the trench where it narrowed and was difficult to see in plan.

Feature **[113]** was 2.7m wide and 0.3m deep. The fill (112) was a homogeneous brown silty clay with few inclusions or artefacts. The ditch was visible in plan over the entire width of the trench and appeared to terminate adjacent to the west facing baulk 2.5m from the north east corner of the trench.

Both ditches had indistinct edges uneven bases and produced modern pottery sherds. No evidence of a bank was observed for either ditch.

### 3.3 Post Holes

The four post holes discovered close to the south west corner of the trench **[103, 105, 107 & 109]** were sub circular in shape; post holes **105 & 107** were excavated to a depth of 0.08m and 0.11m respectively while **103 & 109** were 0.26m and 0.19m deep respectively.

Fill 108 contained a modern nail, otherwise no finds were recovered from the post holes.

### 3.4 Finds Summary

Finds recovered from the features consisted post medieval and modern artefacts including C19th glazed wares, post medieval tiles and nails. These were few in number.

#### 4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The few archaeological features discovered within the proposed development area date to the post medieval period. Their alignment on a south-west to north-east orientation indicate they were laid out respecting the route of Akeman Street which would presumably have been still in use, as it is today, as a trackway/footpath, known as *Mere Way*. The two ditches run perpendicular to *Akeman Street* and may form a possible track which runs off the former Roman road.

In the light of, and absence, of evidence from the immediate surrounding area i.e. Orchard Park to the west and beneath the electricity substation immediately to the east, it can be stated with some confidence that this stretch of Akeman St was not associated with Roman road side settlement or activity (e.g. burial).

## APPENDIX A. TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1						
<b>General description</b>				<b>Orientation</b>	n/a	
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of soil and subsoil overlying a natural of silty sand.				<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	0.5	
				<b>Width (m)</b>	26	
				<b>Length (m)</b>	28	
Contexts						
100	Layer			Topsoil	S.9	
101	Layer			Subsoil	9	
102	Fill			Fill of [103]	8	
103	Cut			Cut of post hole	8	Post Medieval
104	Fill			Fill of [105]	7	
105	Cut			Cut of post hole	7	Post Medieval
106	Fill			Fill of [107]	6	
107	Cut			Cut of post hole	6	Post Medieval
108	Fill			Fill of [109]	5	
109	Cut			Cut of post hole	5	Post Medieval
110	Fill			Fill of [111]	1	
111	Cut			Cut of ditch	1	Post Medieval
112	Fill			Fill of [113]	2	
113	Cut			Cut of ditch	2	Post Medieval
114	Fill			Fill of [115]		
115	Cut			Cut of ditch		Post Medieval
116	Fill			Fill of [117]		
117	Cut			Cut of pit		Post Medieval

## APPENDIX B. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Cambridgeshire County Historic Environment Record (CHER)

Macaulay, S.P., 1997. Akeman Street Roman Road and Romano-British Settlement at Landbeach, Car Dyke Farm. CCC AFU report No. 141.

## APPENDIX C. OASIS REPORT FORM

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

### Project Details

OASIS Number	oxfordar3-88180			
Project Name	Land between Kings Hedges Road and the Guided Busway, Cambridge.			
Project Dates (fieldwork)	Start	09-11-2010	Finish	12-11-2010
Previous Work (by OA East)	No		Future Work	No

### Project Reference Codes

Site Code	CAM KHR 10	Planning App. No.	C/05007/10
HER No.	3447	Related HER/OASIS No.	

### Type of Project/Techniques Used

Prompt

### Please select all techniques used:

<input type="checkbox"/> Field Observation (periodic visits)	<input type="checkbox"/> Part Excavation	<input type="checkbox"/> Salvage Record
<input type="checkbox"/> Full Excavation (100%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Part Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Systematic Field Walking
<input type="checkbox"/> Full Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Recorded Observation	<input type="checkbox"/> Systematic Metal Detector Survey
<input type="checkbox"/> Geophysical Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Remote Operated Vehicle Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Test Pit Survey
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open-Area Excavation	<input type="checkbox"/> Salvage Excavation	<input type="checkbox"/> Watching Brief

### 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
ditches	Post Medieval 1540 to 1901		Select period...
post holes	Post Medieval 1540 to 1901		Select period...
	Select period...		Select period...

### Project Location

County	Cambridgeshire	Site Address (including postcode if possible)	
District	South Cambs		
Parish	Cambridge City		
HER	Cambridgeshire		
Study Area	720sq m	National Grid Reference	

## Project Originators

Organisation	OA EAST
Project Brief Originator	Andy Thomas
Project Design Originator	Stephen Macaulay
Project Manager	Stephen Macaulay
Supervisor	Chris Thatcher / Tom Lyons

## Project Archives

Physical Archive	Digital Archive	Paper Archive
none	OA East	OA East
n/a	CAM KHR 10	CAM KHR 10




## 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 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plans
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Report
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sections
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Survey

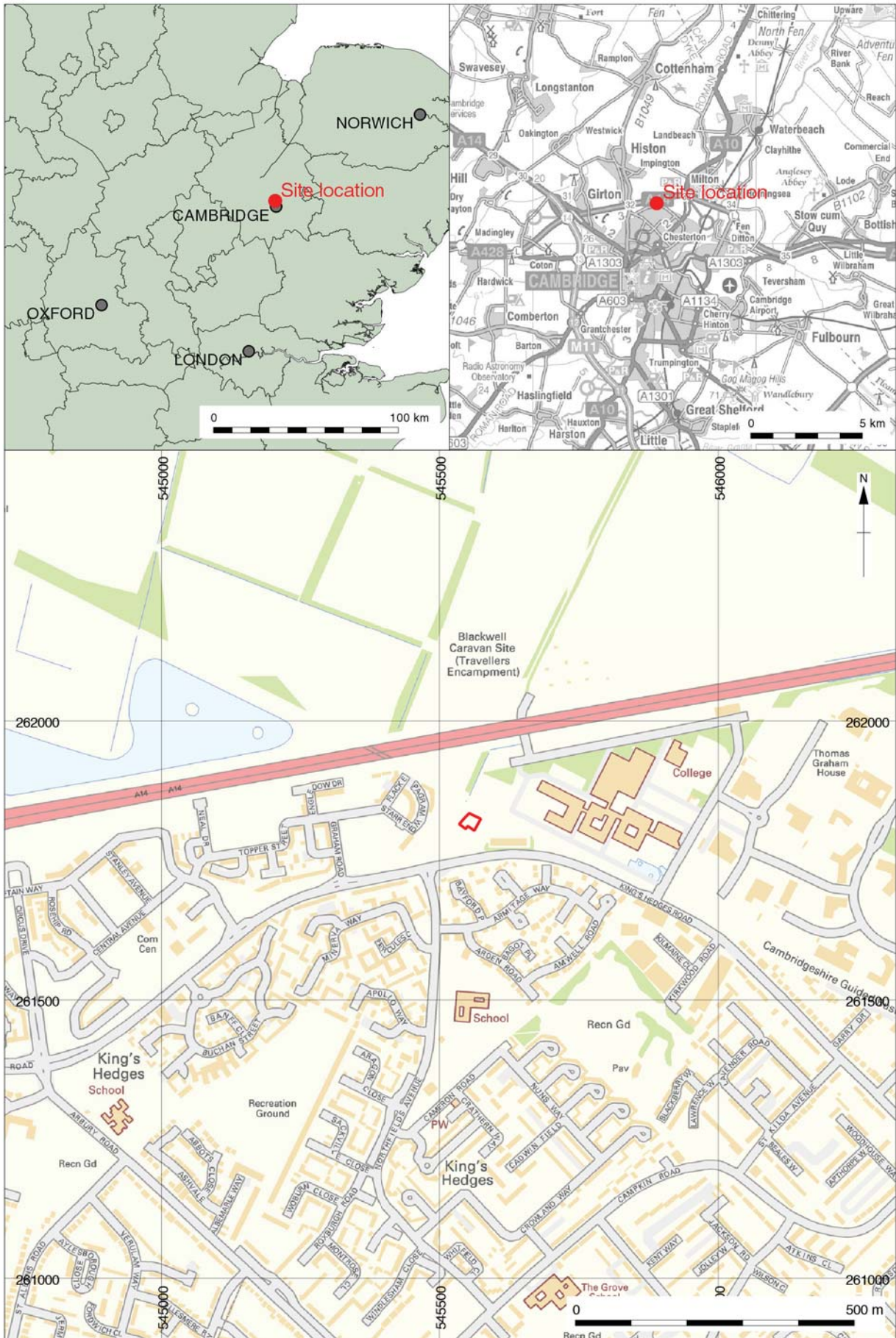
### Notes:



Plans	
Limit of Excavation	—————
Deposit - Conjectured	- - - - -
Natural Features	—————
Sondages/Machine Strip	- . - . - .
Intrusion/Truncation	- . . . .
Illustrated Section	<u style="color: red;">S.14</u>
Archaeological Feature	
Excavated Slot	
Cut Number	<b>118</b>
Deposit Number	117
Sections	
Limit of Excavation	- . . . .
Cut	—————
Cut Conjectured	- - - - -
Deposit Horizon	—————
Deposit Horizon Conjectured	- - - - -
Intrusion/Truncation	- . . . .
Top Surface/Top of Natural	—————
Break in Section/ Limit of Section Drawing	- - - - -
Cut Number	<b>117</b>
Deposit Number	117
Ordnance Datum	18.45m OD ^
Stone	

Convention Key





Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2010

Figure 1: Site location (Trench outlined red)



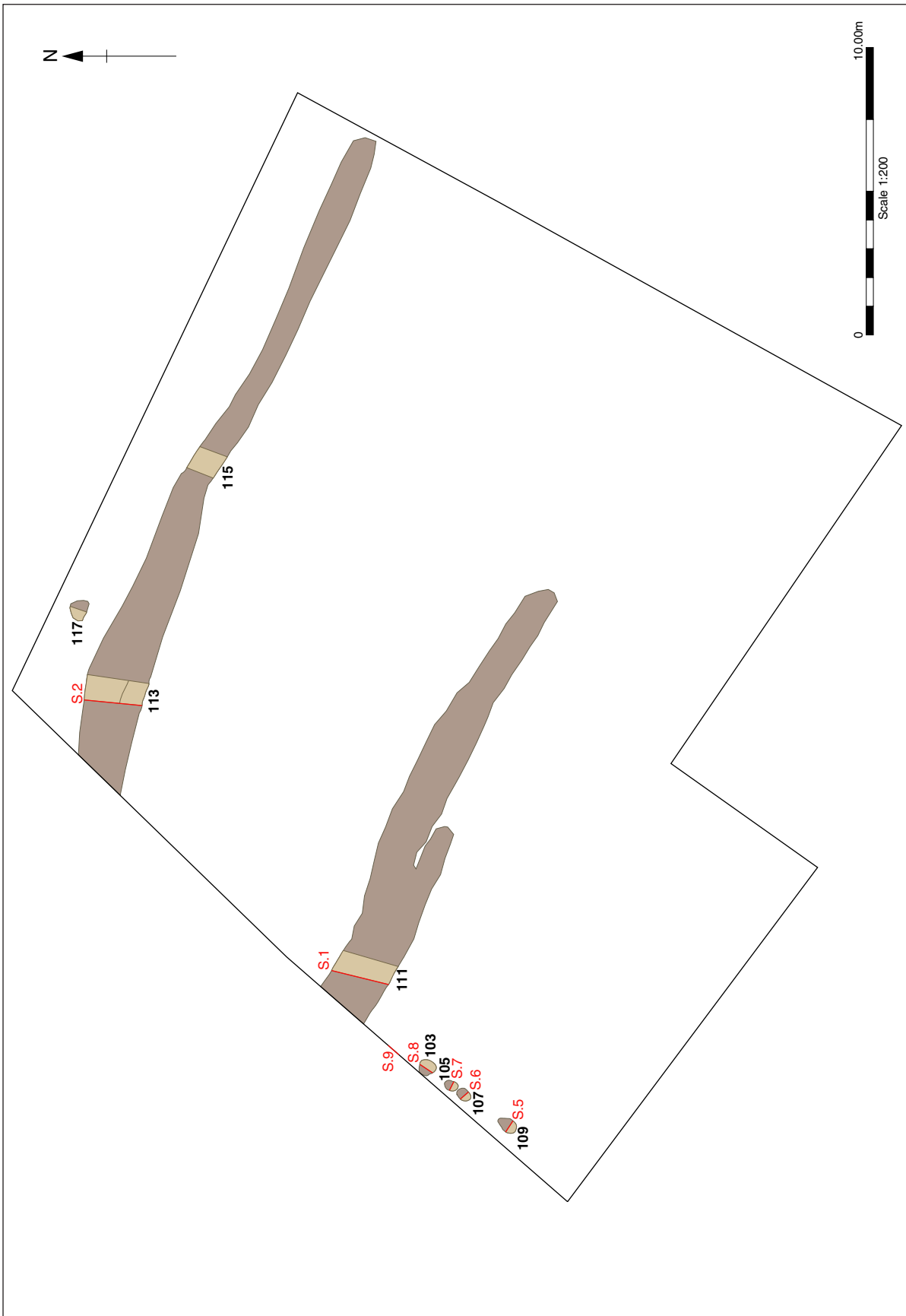


Figure 2: Excavation plan



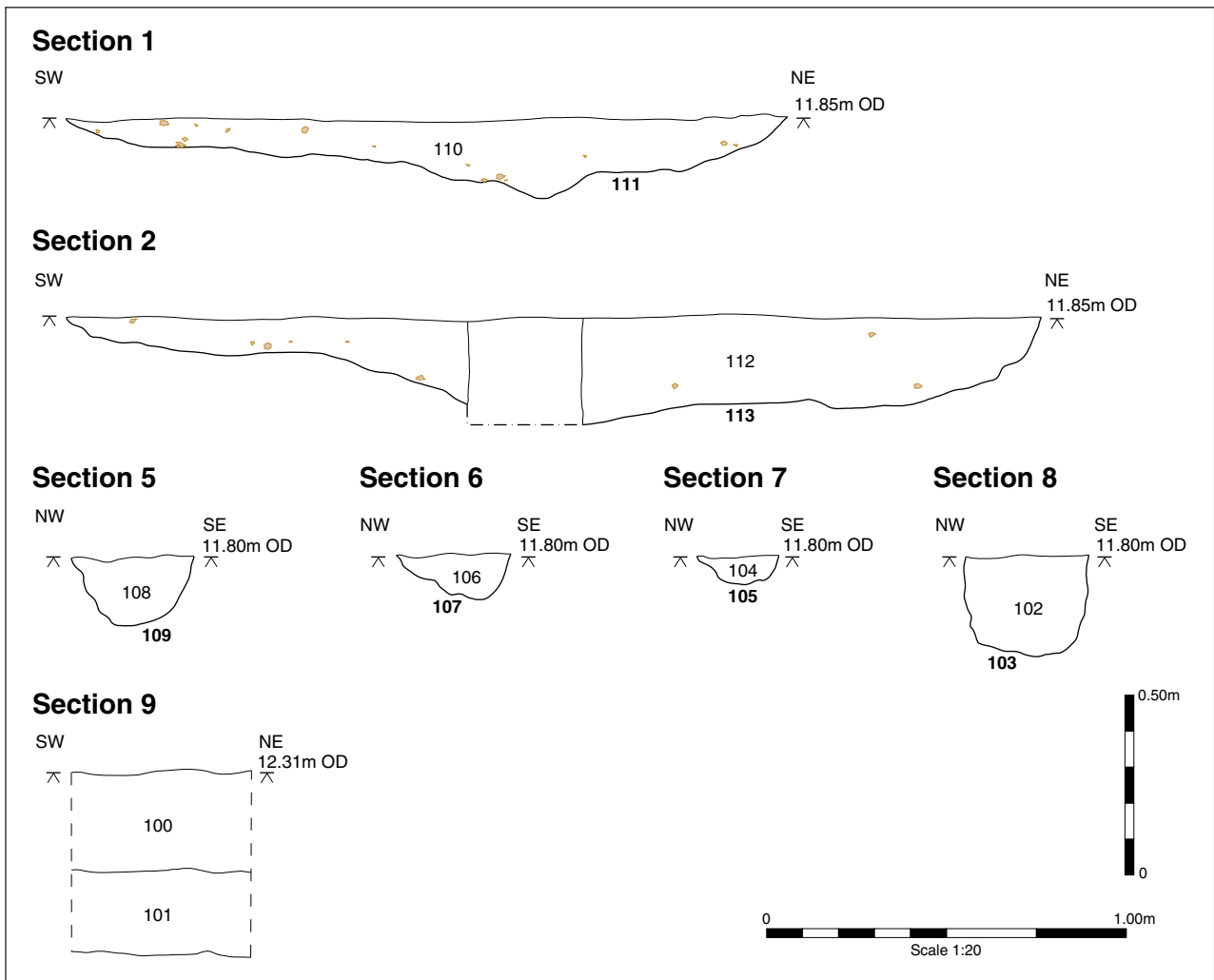


Figure 3: Section drawings







Plate 1: Trench shot (from north-east)



Plate 2: Post holes (from south-west)







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