

Pits and Field Systems on land off Carey Close Ely



Archaeological Evaluation Report



May 2010

Client: CgMs

OA East Report No: 1183

OASIS No: Oxfordar3-76945

NGR: TL 5507 8133

Burnt flint pits and probable Iron Age/Roman field systems on land off Carey Close, Ely

Archaeological Evaluation

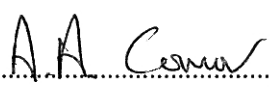
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Summary

Archaeological evaluation on land off Carey Close, Ely (TL 5507 8133) found sparse shallow ditches probably part of a field system belonging to a Middle Iron Age to Late Roman settlement 100m to the north of the subject site. Only a single Roman pottery sherd was recovered from one of the ditches.

Of particular significance are two pits, c.10m to the east of a stream which flowed along the western boundary of the site. These pits contained large quantities of shattered burnt flint and sandstone pieces (16.7kg), fired clay (2.3kg), some of which showed evidence for structure, and 3 debitage flint flakes within their backfill. Their date is unknown but they are likely to be pre-Roman and possibly relate to cooking, a sauna or the production of temper for pottery production.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 An archaeological evaluation was conducted by Oxford Archaeology East (OA East) on 0.9 ha of land off Carey Close, Ely (Fig. 1) during May 2010.
- 1.1.2 This archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Specification prepared by OA East (Atkins 2010). The evaluation was commissioned at pre-planning stage. An application has now been submitted (East Cambridgeshire District Council 10/00116/OUM). The proposed development is for 25 houses. The evaluation was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed development 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).
- 1.1.3 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 British Geological Survey (1980) shows the site as lying within an area of drift geology consisting of Middle Pleistocene glacial tills. The underlying solid geology here is Lower Greensand and Kimmeridge Clay (British Geological Survey 1980). Trenching revealed predominantly weathered glacial tills (comprising stiff mixed grey clay with chalk inclusions) and relict periglacial ground ice features filled with fine yellow/orange sands (observed in Trench 6). In Trench 5 (and close to a stream or drain) a patch of small pebbles and stones was observed overlying the glacial tills. This natural feature is likely to have been formed by clast sorting within the active ground ice layer on a gentle south-westerly facing slope. Manganese staining was also observed in this area and is likely to have formed as a response to the waterlogged conditions existing in this area.
- 1.2.2 The site is located on the east side of a meandering stream (marked drain on Figure 1) in a gently sloping valley. The stream has been channelled and straightened to follow field boundaries. The 1886-8 Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map shows that the stream is likely to have risen in the vicinity of New Barns House to the north-west of the site. It appears to have followed a naturally winding course until reaching the subject site where it has been straightened, and as it leaves the site at the southern end it turns eastwards and then fairly sharply north, after which it enters Waterden Fen and finally empties into the river Great Ouse.
- 1.2.3 The stream acts as a boundary along the western edge of the site, at its highest point as it enters at the north-west corner it is approximately 14.65m, dropping to 12.80m as it leaves in the south-west. From the stream (both in the west and south-east) the land rises gently north and east towards Carey Close (which forms the northern boundary) where it reaches approximately 15.2m and continues to climb northwards until it reaches an area of level ground (at approximately 21.7m) occupied by a Middle Iron Age to Late Roman settlement (Atkins and Mudd 2003, 5).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 The site is located in the High Barns area of Ely, outside the medieval and post-medieval core. It is very likely that High Barns was enclosed during the reign of Henry VIII and was probably cultivated fields during the medieval period (Palmer 1937). The CHER (Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record) lists several sites and find-spots in the vicinity of the site:

CHER 06136: A Beaker burial and barrow uncovered directly to the north-west of the development area in 1958 at TL 550 816 (Hall 1996 Ely Site12).

CHER 11967: Archaeological work about 200m to the south-east, initially consisted of five evaluation trenches followed by a 15m by 15m open area excavation (TL 552 811). A scatter of flint which dated to the later Neolithic and Bronze Age and a possible prehistoric pit were found. Late Iron Age/Early Roman drainage ditches were also uncovered and these were superseded by a 1st or 2nd century driveway (Whittaker 1997; Dickens 1997).

CHER 11906: An archaeological evaluation took place in 1996, 200m to the south-west (TL 549 810;). This consisted of seven evaluation trenches with 10 ditches found on four different alignments. All were undated except a single ditch possibly dated by one Roman pottery sherd. There were also some Roman and Saxon pottery sherds recovered from the topsoil (Kemp1996).

CHER 10259: An archaeological evaluation 50m to the north-west of the subject site (TL 550 814) found up to seven undated ditches/linear features in 300m of trenching, four Iron Age and one Roman pottery sherds were recovered from the topsoil (Haley 1992). None of the ditches are likely to continue into the subject site.

CHER 14805: In 1999 and 2000, an archaeological evaluation and subsequent excavation took place on land adjacent to the north and east of the subject site (TL 551 814). The main archaeological remains were found on higher ground at least 40m to the north and north-east of the subject site. A background scatter of 97 Neolithic and Bronze Age flints was recovered. Later occupation comprised a Middle Iron Age (c.5th to 3rd century BC) to Late Roman (4th century AD) farmstead. Results of a geophysical survey suggested the settlement was located at least 50m to the north of the subject site. The excavation supported this interpretation although did reveal a few shallow north to south aligned Roman ditches, possibly part of a field system (Meadows 1999; Atkins and Mudd 2003). The ditches extended beyond the excavation area southwards towards the subject site.

1.4 Acknowledgements

1.4.1 The author would like to thank CgMs who commissioned the evaluation especially Michael Dawson. The project was managed by Aileen Connor who also edited this report. Dan McConnell of Cambridgeshire County Council visited the site and monitored the evaluation on behalf of the planning authority.

1.4.2 I am grateful for specialist analysis from Rachel Fosberry and Steve Wadeson. Richard Mortimer kindly commented on the worked flint. Taleyna Fletcher carried out the survey and the author directed the field work assisted by Chris Faine. Séverine Bézie produced the illustrations. Steve Critchley offered advice on the local geological history of the site. Lukas Barnes provided additional assistance as a volunteer.

2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 The objective of this evaluation 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 Specification required that the trial trenches will be excavated by machine to the depth of geological horizons, or to the upper interface of archaeological features or deposits, whichever is encountered first (Atkins 2010). A JCB type of machine excavator under archaeological supervision was fitted with a 1.6m wide flat bladed ditching bucket which was used to excavate six trenches. The location of the trenches was agreed with by both Dan McConnell of Cambridgeshire County Council and Michael Dawson of CgMs (Fig. 1). These comprised one 40m trench running east to west to assess whether a series of north-south ditches found during excavation to the north continue into the subject site, and five 20m trenches laid out on a standard grid array and tied into the Ordnance Survey using a Leica 1200 GPS coupled with Leica smartnet. (Fig. 1).
- 2.2.2 All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using OA East *pro-formas*. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales (plans at 1:50 and sections at either 1:10 or 1:20). Monochrome and digital photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits, supported by digital photographs. Four environmental samples were collected comprising two 10 litre samples from ditches and two 30 litre samples from pits.
- 2.2.3 Conditions in the field were good and other than a high water table at the southern end of the site there were no factors that might adversely affect observation and recording.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The following results are presented by trench in numerical order. A listing of the context details by trench/context appear in Appendix A. Topsoil (8; 0.30-0.35m thick) and subsoil (2; 0.05-0.40m thick) were found in every trench except Trench 1 and part of Trench 6 where topsoil had been removed and replaced with hardcore and tarmac. All trenches were 1.80m wide and either 20m or 40m in length.

3.2 Trench 1

3.2.1 Trench 1 was 20m long and ran roughly north-east to south-west in the north-eastern corner of the site. The natural was a yellowish grey boulder clay till, no archaeological features were present. The subsoil (2) was 0.3m thick and sealed by modern hardcore (1; 0.18m thick).

3.3 Trench 2

3.3.1 Trench 2 was 20m long and ran north-west to south-east in the central eastern part of the site. In the middle of the trench there were two undated features (Fig. 2) comprising a possible pit or ditch terminus (5) which was overlaid by a later shallow ditch which ran roughly north to south (3). Pit/ditch terminus (5) was 1.8m wide, by more than 0.60m long and 0.42m deep (Fig. 3, S1). It had moderate sides and a base which sloped slightly down towards the north. Its basal fill (7) was a dark blueish grey silty clay overlaid by a light brownish grey silty clay (6). It was cut by a ditch (3) which was 2.8m wide and 0.3m deep with moderate to steeply sloping sides and a slightly concave base. Ditch 3 was backfilled with a single deposit of a mid brownish grey clay silt (4). These features were sealed by subsoil (2). A fragment of medieval roof tile was found in the subsoil immediately above ditch 3.

3.4 Trench 3

3.4.1 Trench 3 was 20.3m long and located directly to the south of Trench 2 on a roughly north-east to south-west orientation. No archaeological features were present. The subsoil layer (2; 0.20m thick) was overlaid by topsoil (0.33-0.35m thick).

3.5 Trench 4

3.5.1 Trench 4 was located in the lowest area of the site just to the east of the stream. It was aligned south-east to north-west and was 20m long. The water table was very high (c. 12.00, OD) in this trench and all of the features filled with water as soon as they were excavated. Four probable ditches (12, 13, 15 and 10) were present, all of them parallel and aligned north-east to south-west. (heading towards the stream). Ditch 10 was 1m wide and 0.21m deep with moderately steep sides and a flattish base (Fig. 2). It was filled with a mid brownish grey clayey silt (9) from which a single Roman pottery sherd was recovered. The ditch was sampled (<1>), but no environmental remains were present. Ditches 15 and 13 were shallow and undated. The earliest (15) was more than 0.5m wide and 0.1m deep and filled with a dark greyish brown clay silt (16). Ditch 13 was 1.1m wide and 0.18m deep with moderately steep sides and a flat base. It was filled with a mid reddish brown clay silt (14). Ditch 12 was more substantial at 1.6m wide and 0.44m deep with a flattish base and moderately steep south side although the

south-eastern edge was somewhat irregular (Fig. 3, S2). It was backfilled with a dark grey brown clay sandy silt (11) that contained no finds.

- 3.5.2 Subsoil (2; 0.40m thick) sealed the ditches, it may be slightly thicker here due to periodic flooding.

3.6 Trench 5

- 3.6.1 Trench 5 was 20.3m long, aligned north-east to south-west, near to the stream (Fig. 2). The natural clay here was overlain by an area of small flint pebbles and stones in the southern 8m of the trench nearest the stream. This is likely to be a natural periglacial feature, rather than archaeological. Manganese staining was also observed in this area and is likely to have formed as a response to waterlogged conditions. The only archaeological features in this trench were two small pits (**20** and **22**; Fig. 2, Plate 1), both contained significant quantities of burnt flints and other materials but showed no signs of *in-situ* burning. No datable finds were recovered from these pits but the character of their fills (burnt flint and clay) suggests a prehistoric date.

- 3.6.2 Pit **22** was 0.65m long, more than 0.55m wide and 0.15m deep (Fig. 3, S.6). The pit had moderately steep sides and a slightly rounded base. It was backfilled with burnt flint nodules, burnt sandstone (8.649kg) and burnt clay (0.322kg) (Table 1), within a matrix of very dark brown/black slightly clayey sandy silt with frequent charcoal flecks. A small number of unburnt flint pieces including three flakes of debitage were also found, none were diagnostic. A soil sample (<3>) from the deposit contained no environmental materials of any significance.

- 3.6.3 Pit **20** was 1.1m long, more than 0.85m wide and between 0.22m and 0.26m deep (Fig. 3, S.6). It had moderately steep sides and a flattish base although it was noticeably slightly deeper near the western side of the pit. It was backfilled with burnt flint (8.01kg) and burnt clay (1.973kg) within a matrix of charcoal flecked very dark brown to black slightly clayey sandy silt (19). Although no datable finds were recovered from the pit, it did contain three fragments of burnt clay that were clearly structural; two had imprints from withies and a third piece of smoothed ?lining was impressed with a possible thumb print. A soil sample (<2>) from the pit contained no environmental materials of any significance.

- 3.6.4 The subsoil in this trench was very thin (0.05-0.07m) and was overlain by topsoil (0.3-0.35m thick).

3.7 Trench 6

- 3.7.1 Trench 6 was 40m long and was aligned south-east to north-west for 40m. Several features were present, although all of them were undated. They comprised two ditches (**23** and **29**), and five possible pits (**25**, **27**, **31**, **34** and **36**). Two natural features (**37** and **40/42**) (Fig. 2) were also found. Although undated there is evidence for two phases of activity; an earlier pitting phase with later ditches.

- 3.7.2 Pits **27** and **31** were similar in form, they were both sub-circular or oval in shape with the former at least 0.8m long by more than 0.4m and the latter 0.6m by 0.40m. They were both shallow (respectively 0.3m and 0.1m deep) and filled with a sterile dark blueish grey silty clay. They were both cut by a north-east to south-west aligned ditch (**29**). Pit **25** was more than 2m long, 0.80m wide and 0.17m deep. It was filled with a sterile mid greyish brown sandy clay and was cut by ditch **23**. Pit **34** was sub-circular, 0.65m by 0.55m and 0.24m deep with steep sides and a flattish base which was slightly deeper on the northern side. It was backfilled with a mid grey brown clay sandy silt with

occasional stones. These mostly comprised natural flint pieces up to 0.15m in length and 0.03m thick. Less than four metres to the west of pit **34** was another pit (**36**) which was partly within the northern baulk of the trench. It was 1.15m long, more than 0.7m wide and 0.14m deep with gentle sides and a flattish base. Pit **36** was filled with a light to medium brown sandy silt and some clay. None of the pits contained datable finds.

- 3.7.3 The two ditches were on different alignments and are therefore likely to represent different phases. Ditch **29** was 1.2m wide and 0.2m deep and filled with a dark blueish brown silty clay, it was aligned north-east to south-west. Ditch **23** was aligned east to west, it was 1m wide and 0.16m deep and filled with a mid blueish brown silty clay. Neither contained any datable finds and the soil sample (<4>) from ditch **29** was completely sterile.
- 3.7.4 Two natural features (**37** and **40/42**; Fig. 2) were recorded in this trench. Feature **37** had irregular edges and was filled with a clean sterile light blue silty clay, possibly as a result of ice cracking. A similar feature was located adjacent to the east. Feature **40/42** was roughly crescent shaped, 3.8m by more than 1.6m across with severely undercutting sides. It was backfilled with a mid greyish brown clayey sand and a light to mid brown sandy silt with a little clay. The classic crescent shape suggests that this was a tree throw (the result of a tree falling over and its roots dragging up the underlying soil).
- 3.7.5 Subsoil (2) sealed the features and was in turn overlaid by topsoil (8) in the eastern half of the trench and hardcore/tarmac (1) over the western half.

3.8 Finds Summary

- 3.8.1 There were very few artefacts recovered from the site with the exception of 16.659kg of burnt flint/stones and 2.295kg of burnt clay - these were all recovered from just two pits (**20** and **22**). The burnt clay included three fragments that must have come from a structure, either an oven/hearth or possibly a building. Three very small undatable flint debitage flakes were found in pit **22** and another stuck flint flake was found in topsoil over Trench 4. One sherd of Roman pottery was found in ditch **10** and a medieval tile fragment came from the subsoil overlying ditch **3**.

3.9 Environmental Summary

- 3.9.1 No charred or waterlogged plant material was recovered from the four soil samples and only small quantities of charcoal were present in the samples from pits **20** and **22**.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Overview

- 4.1.1 The evaluation found shallow ditches and pits in four of the six trenches. Datable finds were few, with only a single Roman pottery sherd and one fragment of medieval tile, although a large assemblage of burnt flint and clay from two small pits in one trench suggest significant, albeit localised, prehistoric activity. It is likely that most of the ditches relate to field systems possibly extending from the nearby Middle Iron Age to Late Roman settlement situated on higher ground less than 100m to the north (Atkins and Mudd 2003). There are no other known Iron Age or Roman settlement sites in the vicinity, indeed extensive recent archaeological work close to the south-east, south-west and north-west (see Section 1.3 above) have found very similar features to the present site (sparse ditches). These all presumably relating to agriculture as virtually no artefacts were recovered from them.
- 4.1.2 The results from Trenches 5 and 6 are of most significance, Trench 5 in particular contained evidence for localised prehistoric activity. Two pits filled with burnt stones and burnt clay; although not in-situ, this material is unlikely to have been carried very far. Its character suggests residue from processes that used heat and water (to shatter the flint) such as might be produced by a sauna, cooking or perhaps preparation of temper for pottery production. The burnt clay may have derived from an oven or hearth or may represent the debris from a building that had burnt down. It is interesting to note that the burnt clay assemblages in the two pits were quite different, suggesting that they perhaps derived from different sources and implying more than one activity. The pits were located c.10m to the west of the stream and situated next to the only place on site where there were large quantities of natural flint cobbles on the surface of the natural. It would seem likely that this was the source of the flint, although no obvious source for the sandstone in the assemblage has been identified. The pits may relate to the nearby Middle Iron Age to Late Roman settlement to the north, although it is also possible that they are evidence for completely unrelated earlier activity. The close proximity of the stream, which has been straightened and managed for drainage in more recent times, is an important aspect to consider. Whatever the process that produced these deposits of shattered flint, it is likely to have required plenty of water. There are no other obvious water sources in the vicinity and it is interesting to note that the Iron Age/Roman settlement located to the north was lacking in any sort of watering holes or wells (Atkins and Mudd 2003) suggesting this stream was likely to have been its main source of water. Trench 6 contained five pits, although none of them were dated their significance may be greater than would otherwise be supposed by their proximity to the pits in Trench 5. It is also clear from the features in Trench 6 that activity in this area relates to more than one phase; three of the pits were clearly earlier than the possible Iron Age/Roman field ditches, and the ditches themselves are likely to belong to more than one phase.
- 4.1.3 The evidence from East Anglian sites suggests a continued pattern of shifting or semi-permanent settlement, becoming more permanent and enclosed only in the later Bronze Age (Brown and Murphy 2000). Evidence for this semi-settled pattern includes burnt flint “mounds” found close to water sources, of which there are plenty of examples throughout East Anglia, often these are Bronze Age in date and interpreted as cooking pits or saunas. There are no known similar deposits in the vicinity of the subject site. Neolithic features have been found 3km to the west at West Fen Road where Neolithic domestic pits were found (Masser 2001; Mortimer *et al* 2005). Bronze Age funerary

remains and field systems have been found in the area, as well as occasional isolated features perhaps indicative of small settlements. Beaker burials have been found directly to the north at TL 550 816 (Hall 1996 Ely Site12) and c.1km to the south at TL 548 806 (CHER 07245). There was a possible Late Bronze Age field system in Ely 2km to the west (CHER MCB17963; TL 5375 8086 (Bush 2008 and Hunter 1992)). Two possible Late Bronze Age ditches, and a Late Bronze Age pond-like hollow was found at Trinity fields 3km to the south-west (TL 52759 80267) indicating animal husbandry (CHER 15553; Masser 2001; Evans *et al* 2007, fig. 16). A Late Bronze Age pit found 2km to the west on land off the A10 Ely Bypass contained substantial remains of two post-Deverel Rimbury 'plain ware' vessels and an animal bone fragment (CHER CB15536; TL 53884 81283 (Robinson and Bray 1998)).

- 4.1.4 Subsoil sealed all of the features, it varied in thickness and its character and a fragment of medieval roof tile suggests it may be the remnant of ploughed out ridge and furrow, possibly medieval in date. Other than a limited area of hard-standing there has been no modern disturbances on the site affecting the earlier remains.
- 4.1.5 The combination of water source, coupled with ready supply of flint is likely to have made the site particularly attractive for specific activities. These may be settlement related but appear to be very localised.

4.2 Significance

- 4.2.1 The evaluation has provided evidence for localised and specialised activity of probable prehistoric but (as yet) undetermined date possibly relating to cooking, a sauna, tempering pottery or other process. Evidence for prehistoric activity, particularly specialised processes such as are in evidence here is lacking in the area and this gives the site a particular significance. The lack of datable finds from the site is unfortunate but it may be possible to obtain dates by using radiocarbon or thermoluminescence dating techniques. There is likely to be a sufficient quantity of charcoal in the hand collected assemblage to provide a radiocarbon date, or alternatively it may be possible to obtain dates from the burnt flint by thermoluminescence.
- 4.2.2 Of interest, although lower significance are the shallow ditches that cross much of the site. These are likely to belong to the field system associated with the Iron Age/Roman settlement to the north, although they are difficult to date due to a lack of datable finds. The lack of artefacts and ecofacts (animal bones and plant remains) suggests that little information would be gained by excavating more of these features although it may be possible to understand their relationship to the Iron Age/Roman settlement to the north if they could be seen in plan.

4.3 Recommendations

- 4.3.1 Recommendations for any future work based upon this report will be made by the County Archaeology Office of Cambridgeshire County Council.

APPENDIX A. TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1						
General description					Orientation	E-W
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of soil and subsoil overlying a natural of boulder till.					Avg. depth (m)	0.48
					Width (m)	1.6
					Length (m)	20
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1	Layer	-	0.30	Hardcore	-	-
2	Layer	-	0.18	Subsoil	-	-
Trench 2						
General description					Orientation	N-S
A single possible pit or ditch butt end (5) was cut by a later shallow ditch (3)					Avg. depth (m)	0.65
					Width (m)	1.6
					Length (m)	20
Contexts						
context no	type	length/width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
2	Layer		0.3	Subsoil	Roof tile	Medieval
8	Layer		0.35	Topsoil	-	-
3	Cut	2.8m wide	0.3	Ditch	-	-
4	Fill	-	-	Ditch 3	-	-
5	Cut	1.8m x0.6m+	0.42	Pit or ditch	-	-
6	Fill	-0	-	Pit or ditch 5	-	-
Trench 3						
General description					Orientation	E-W
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of soil and subsoil overlying a natural of boulder till					Avg. depth (m)	0.54
					Width (m)	1.6
					Length (m)	20.3
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
2	Layer	-	0.2	Subsoil	-	-
8	Layer	-	0.33m-0.35m	Topsoil	-	-
Trench 4						
General description					Orientation	N-S
Four ditches in southern half of trench was seen cutting boulder clay till.					Avg. depth (m)	0.74

Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
2	Layer	-	0.4	Subsoil	-	-
8	Layer	-	0.34	Topsoil	-	-
9	Fill	-	-	Ditch 10	1 pottery sherd	Roman
10	Cut	1m	0.21	Ditch	-	Roman
11	Fill	-	-	Ditch 12	-	-
12	Cut	1.6	0.44	Ditch	-	-
13	Cut	1.1	1.8	Ditch	-	-
14	Fill	-	-	Ditch 13	-	-
15	Cut	0.54m+	0.1	Ditch	-	-
16	Fill	-	-	Ditch 15	-	-

Trench 5

General description	Orientation	E-W
Two adjacent pits (20 and 22) within the trench contained large quantities of burnt flint and fired clay	Avg. depth (m)	0.4
	Width (m)	1.6
	Length (m)	20.3

Contexts

context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
2	Layer	-	0.05-0.07m	Subsoil	-	-
8	Layer	-	0.3-0.35m	Topsoil	-	-
19	Fill	-	-	Pit 20	Fired clay (8.01kg); burnt flint (1.973Kg)	
20	Cut	0.85	0.26	Pit	-	-
21	Fill	-	-	Pit 22	Fired clay (1.322kg); burnt flint (8.649Kg); worked flint (3 flakes)	-
22	Cut	0.65	0.15	Pit	-	-

Trench 6

General description	Orientation	N-S
There were six shallow pits and ditches within the southern and central areas of the trench (ditches 23 and 29 ; and four possible pits 25 , 27 , 31 and 34). Two natural features in the northern side (37 and 40/42).	Avg. depth (m)	0.7
	Width (m)	1.6
	Length (m)	40

Contexts

context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1	Layer		0.25	Hardcore	-	-
2	Layer		0.34-0.4	Subsoil	-	-
8	Layer		0.35	Topsoil	-	-

23	Cut	1m	0.16m	Ditch	-	-
24	Fill	-	-	Ditch 23	-	-
25	Cut	0.8m	0.17m	Pit	-	-
26	Fill	-	-	Pit 25	-	-
27	Cut	0.8m	0.3m	Pit	-	-
28	Fill	-	-	Pit 27	-	-
29	Cut	1.2	0.2m	Ditch	-	-
30	Fill	-	-	Ditch 29	-	-
31	Cut	0.6m	0.1m	Pit	-	-
32	Fill	-	-	Pit 31	-	-
33	Fill	-	-	Pit 34	-	-
34	Cut	0.65m	0.24m	Pit	-	-
35	Fill	-	-	Pit 36	-	-
36	Cut	1.15m	0.14m	Pit	-	-
37	Cut			Natural feature	-	-
38	Fill			Natural feature 37	-	-
39	Fill			Tree bowl? 40	-	-
40	Cut	0.9m	0.39m	Tree bowl?	-	-
41	Fill			Tree bowl?42	-	-
42	Cut	1m	0.23m	Tree bowl	-	-

APPENDIX B. FINDS REPORTS

B.1 Lithics

- B.1.1 A very small quantity of worked flint was recovered. These comprised three very small undatable debitage flakes recovered from soil sample 3 (pit **22**). A struck flint flake was also found unstratified during machining Trench 4 in the extreme south-western part of the site.
- B.1.2 A total of 16.659kg of burnt flint and stone was recovered by hand collection and two 30 litre samples from two pits (**20** and **22**; Table 1). Most of the burnt stone were flint but there was also a considerable quantity of burnt sandstone recovered. There may have been two or three pieces of burnt flint which had been struck but these were not datable.
- B.1.3 A radiocarbon (C14), or thermoluminescence (TL) date would be useful in dating this assemblage. Once a period has been assigned the collection could be compared with other examples.

Cont	Cut	Burnt flint	Burnt stone	Burnt stone/flint	Total burnt	Burnt stone/flint
------	-----	-------------	-------------	-------------------	-------------	-------------------

		>5mm (hand)	>5mm (hand)	>5mm (sample)	flint/stone > 5mm	<5mm (sample)
19	20	0.83kg	0.83kg	4.5kg	6.16kg	1.85kg
21	22	0.667kg	0.042kg	6kg	6.71kg	1.94kg
Total		1.497kg	0.76kg	10.5kg	12.87kg	3.79kg

Table 1 *Burnt lithics from pits 20 and 22*

B.2 Pottery and roof tile

By Steven Wadeson

- B.2.1 A single sherd of Romano-British pottery (14g) was found in ditch **10**. This was a body sherd of a probable locally produced (unsourced) Sandy Grey Ware ?jar dated any time between MC1 and 4th centuries.
- B.2.2 A single Ely ware roof tile fragment (39g) was found in subsoil (2).

B.3 Fired clay/daub

By Rob Atkins

- B.3.1 A moderate quantity of fired clay/daub was recovered from the evaluation (2.295kg). Over 70 fragments of fired clay (1.593kg) were hand collected from pit **20** whilst just 0.062kg was found in pit **22**. In addition soil samples recovered 0.38kg of fired clay from pit **20** and 0.26kg from pit **22**. Three fragments from pit **20** show evidence of structure. A ?thumb print is present on one smoothed piece of probable hearth or oven lining. The impressions of withies are present on two fragments; one up to 58mm in length and 22mm wide and another 64mm long and 17mm wide. The fabric is almost all oxidised orange sandy clay but there are also several reduced fragments. It is likely the assemblage derives from an oven or hearth although the possibility of a building that has burnt down should not be completely discounted.

APPENDIX C. ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS

C.1 Environmental samples

By Rachel Fosberry

Introduction and methods

- C.1.1 Four bulk samples were taken from a ?Roman ditch, two undated pits containing large quantities of burnt materials and from another undated ditch .
- C.1.2 The total volume (up to thirty litres) of each sample was processed by tank flotation for the recovery of charred plant remains, dating evidence and any other artefactual

evidence that might be present. The flot was collected in a 0.3mm nylon mesh and the residue was washed through a 0.5mm sieve. Both flot and residue were allowed to air dry. The dried residues of Samples 2 and 3 were passed through a 5mm sieve and each resulting fraction was weighed. The dried residues of Samples 1 and 4 were scanned by eye. Any artefacts present were noted and reintegrated with the hand-excavated finds. The flot was examined under a binocular microscope at x16 magnification and the presence of any plant remains or other artefacts are noted on Table 2.

C.1.3 For the purpose of this assessment, items such as seeds, cereal grains and small animal bones have been scanned and recorded qualitatively according to the following categories

= 1-10, ## = 11-50, ### = 51+ specimens

C.1.4 Items that cannot be easily quantified such as charcoal, magnetic residues and fragmented bone have been scored for abundance

+ = rare, ++ = moderate, +++ = abundant

Results

C.1.5 The results are recorded on Table 2. Preservation is by carbonisation. Sparse charcoal was recovered from the flots of Samples 2 (pit fill 19) and 3 (pit fill 22). No plant remains or artefacts are present in Samples 1 (ditch fill 9) or 4 (ditch fill 30).

C.1.6 Samples 2 and 3 comprise burnt flint and stones, many of which have shattered into sharp fragments. Burnt clay fragments are also present.

Sample No.	Context No.	Cut No.	Feature Type	Sample Size (L)	Charcoal <2mm	Charcoal > 2mm	Flot comments	Residue comments
1	9	10	ditch	10	0	0	No CPR	no finds
2	19	20	pit	30	+	+	sparse charcoal only	Burnt clay = 0.38Kg, Burnt flint /stones < 5mm = 1.85Kg, >5mm = 4.5Kg
3	21	22	pit	30	+	++	sparse charcoal only	Burnt clay = 0.26Kg, Burnt flint/stones < 5mm = 1.94Kg, >5mm = 6Kg
4	30	29	ditch	10	0	0	No CPR	no finds

Table 2 Results from Samples

Discussion

C.1.7 Preservation is poor and the samples from the ditches do not aid further interpretation of these features. The pits containing burnt flint and clay produced very little charcoal from samples. These features are considered to represent a secondary dump of material rather than *in-situ* burning and so the lack of charcoal in the samples is perhaps unsurprising, although more was collected by hand and a visual description of the contexts in the field suggested charcoal flecking throughout.

C.1.8 The results from these samples suggests that the potential for preservation of charred plant and other ecofacts is very limited.

APPENDIX D. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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APPENDIX E. OASIS REPORT FORM

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

Project Details

OASIS Number	Oxfordar3-76945		
Project Name	Burnt flint pits and probable Roman agricultural features on at land off Carey Close, Ely		
Project Dates (fieldwork) Start	28-04-2010	Finish	30-04-2010
Previous Work (by OA East)	No	Future Work	Unknown

Project Reference Codes

Site Code	ELYCCL10	Planning App. No.	10/00116/OUM
HER No.	ECB 3370	Related HER/OASIS No.	N/A

Type of Project/Techniques Used

Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16
Development Type	Housing Estate

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
Ditches and pits	Roman 43 to 410	pottery	Roman 43 to 410
Burnt flint and pits	Uncertain	Burnt flint	Uncertain
	Select period...	Fired clay	Uncertain

Project Location

County	Cambridgeshire	Site Address (including postcode if possible)	
District	East Cambridgeshire	Land directly to the west of Carey Close, Off High Barns Road, Ely	
Parish	Ely		
HER	Cambridgeshire		
Study Area	0.9ha	National Grid Reference	TL 5507 8133

Project Originators

Organisation	OA EAST
Project Brief Originator	N/A
Project Design Originator	Rob Atkins, Project Officer OA East
Project Manager	Aileen Connor
Supervisor	Rob Atkins

Project Archives

Physical Archive	Digital Archive	Paper Archive
CCC Stores, Landbeach	OA East	CCC Stores, Landbeach
ELYCCL10	ELYCCL10	ELYCCL10

Archive Contents/Media











	Physical Contents	Digital Contents	Paper Contents
Animal Bones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Digital Media	Paper Media
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Database	<input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photos
<input type="checkbox"/> GIS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Context Sheet
<input type="checkbox"/> Geophysics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Correspondence
<input type="checkbox"/> Images	<input type="checkbox"/> Diary
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<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Photos
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plans
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Report
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sections
	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey














Notes:

Drawing Conventions

Plans

Evaluation Trench	
Limit of Excavation	
Deposit - Conjectured	
Natural Feature	
Sondages/Machine Strip	
Intrusion/Truncation	
Illustrated Section	
Archaeological Feature	
Tree Bowl	
Excavated Slot	
Cut Number	118

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	118
Deposit Number	117
Ordnance Datum	18.45m OD 
Flint Burnt	
Clay Burnt	
Charcoal	
Stone	

Convention Key

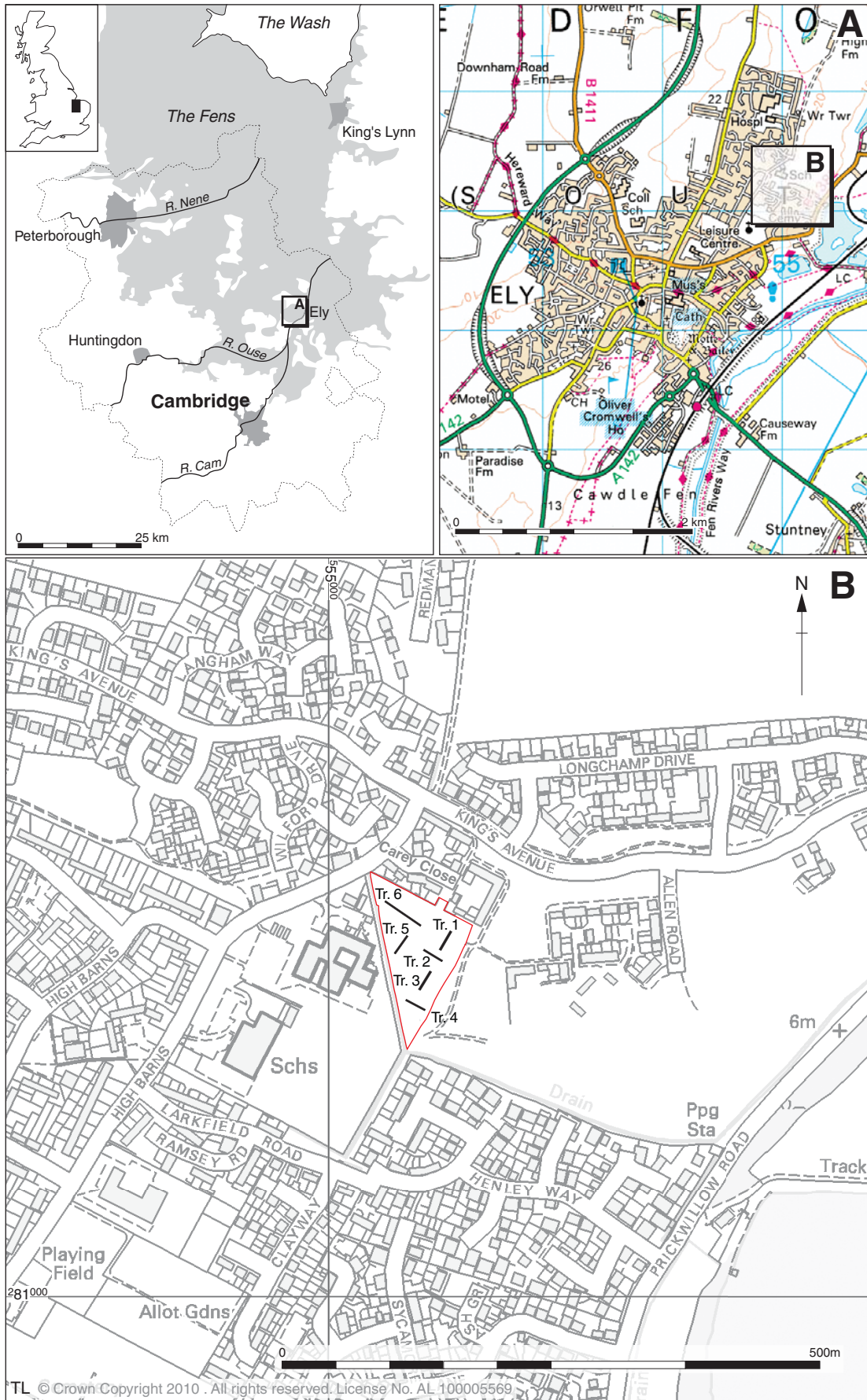


Figure 1: Location of trenches (black) with the development area outlined (red)

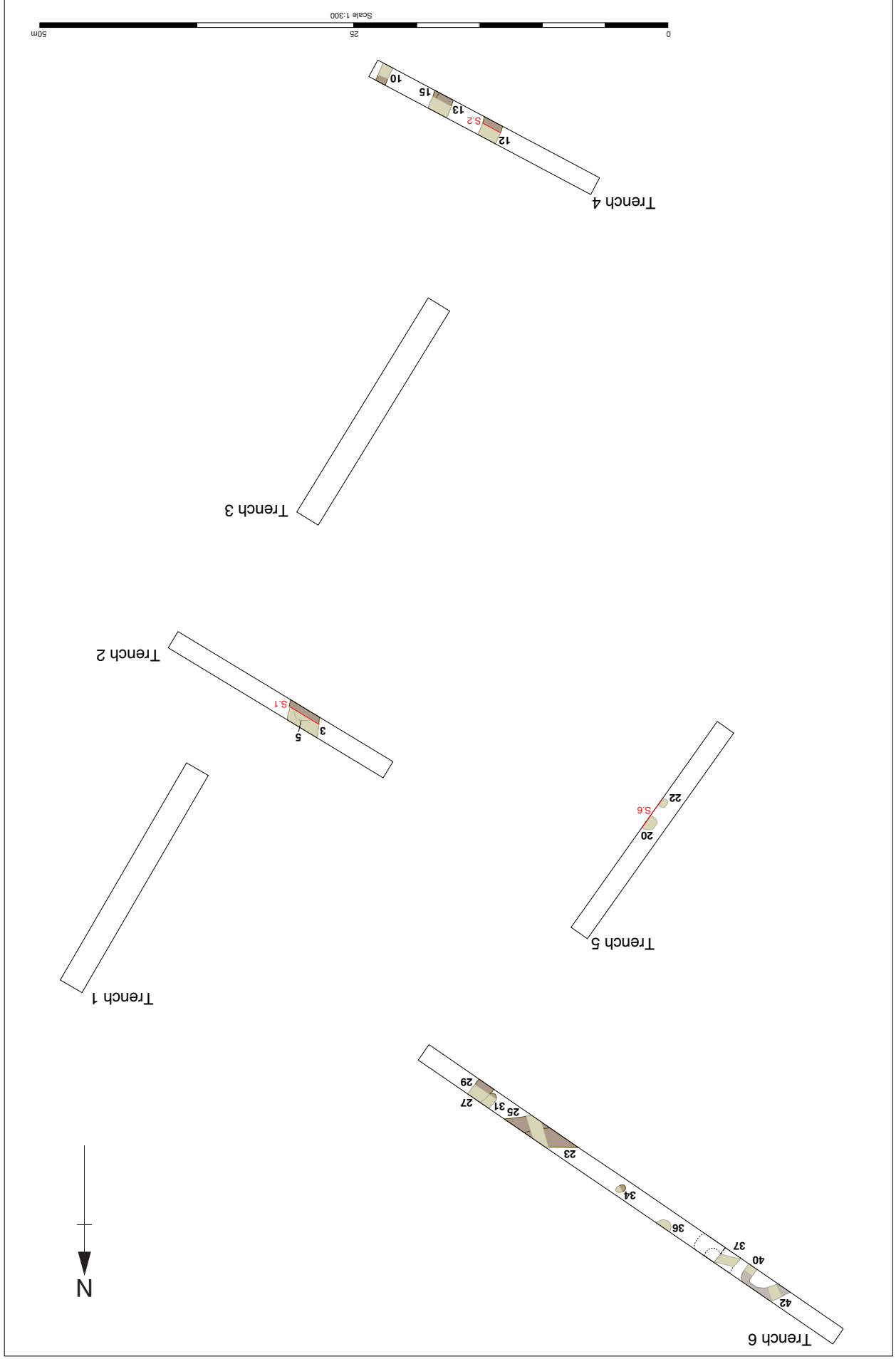


Figure 2: Trench plans

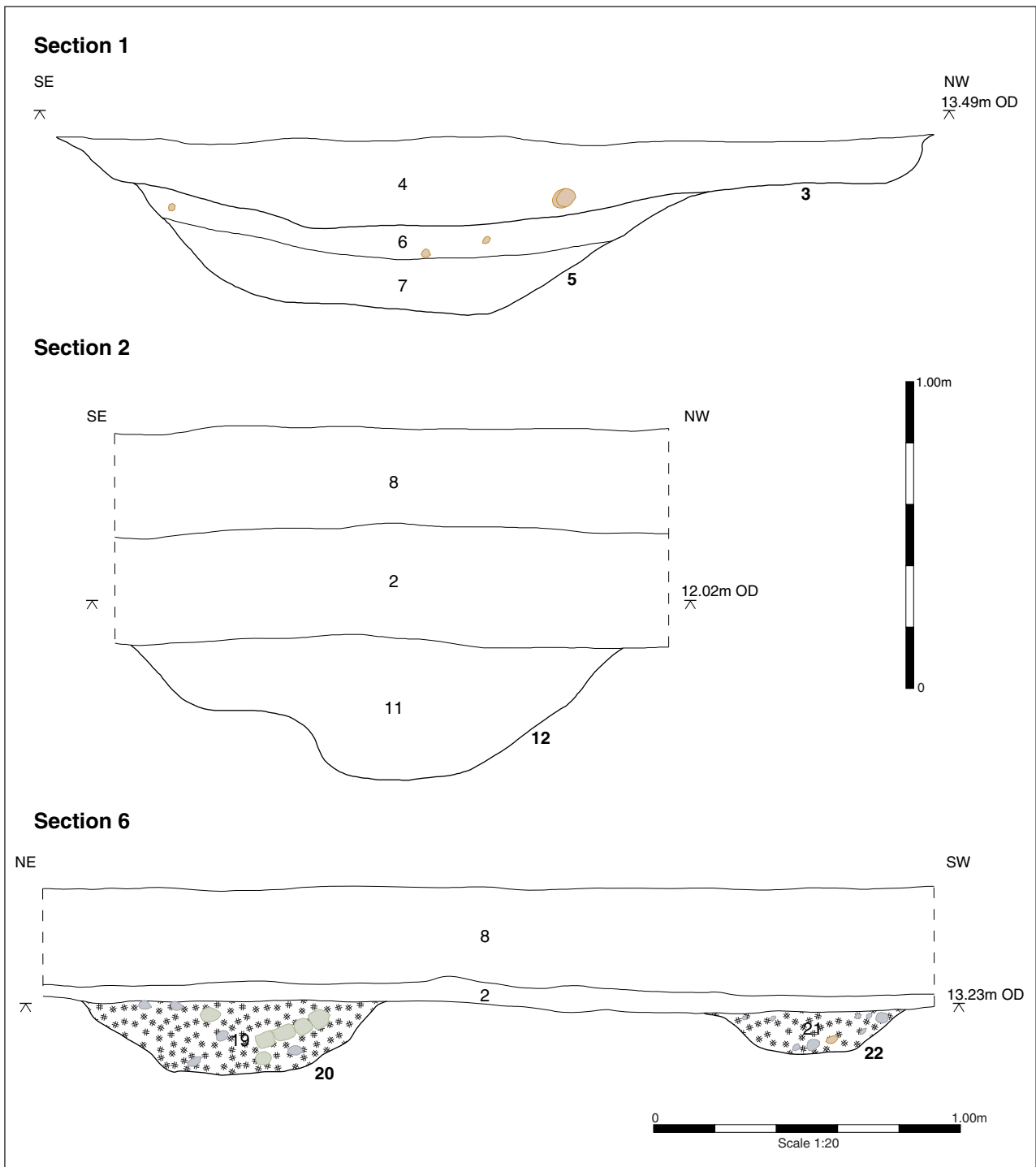


Figure 3: Section drawings



Plate 1: Trench 5, pits 20 and 22 looking south



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