



# Planning Permission Time Extension, Peel Place Quarry, Holmrook, Cumbria

## Archaeological Review Report



September 2014

### **Tendley Quarries Ltd**

Issue No: 2014/1563

OA North Job No: L10795

NGR: NY 6767 1090  
(centred)

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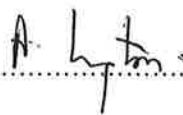
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## SUMMARY

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Tarmac Ltd and Tendley Quarries Ltd were granted planning consent to undertake mineral extraction works at Peel Place Quarry, Holmrook, Cumbria (centred NY 6767 1090) in 2004. This was subsequent to the submission of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) (planning application reference 4/04/9011); at the request of the Cumbria County Council's Historic Environment Service (CCCHES). Following the submission of the EIA and planning application, CCCHES advised that archaeological evaluations should be undertaken prior to the commencement of each phase of extraction and this condition was imposed on the planning consent. This planning permission is due to expire on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2015. However, due to changes in market requirements, output from the quarry was slower than expected and 460,000 tonnes of permitted reserves have not yet been extracted. Tendley Quarries have, therefore, proposed to extend the current planning permission for a further 10 years. The development control department at Cumbria County Council has requested that details of the archaeological investigations and findings at the site to date, and the implications for the forthcoming phases, should be presented in any forthcoming application. Several phases of archaeological investigations have been carried out at the quarry prior to, and following, the approval of the current planning permission by Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) and under the previous organisational title of Lancaster University Archaeological Unit (LUAU). Tendley Quarries Ltd have commissioned OA North to undertake a review of the archaeological work undertaken so far and to provide a statement of implications of the time extension.

The potential for remains of archaeological interest within the planning permission boundary for Peel Place Quarry is indicated by extensive findspots of prehistoric flint in the wider area. The medieval settlement of Halsenna lies to the west of the planning permission boundary and is associated with field systems that extend within this boundary. A fragment of a medieval stone cross and a Roman coin have also been found in the near vicinity of the quarry. The potential for further, previously unidentified, remains in this area led to several phases of archaeological investigations, some of which pre-date the current planning permission boundary.

Four distinct phases of archaeological investigations were undertaken at the Peel Place quarry prior to the proposed extension of the quarry in 2004. The first three phases of archaeological investigations comprised evaluation trenching (annually between 1997 and 1999) that was undertaken by LUAU. In total, 24 trenches were excavated during these three phases and no significant deposits or features of archaeological interest were revealed. The fourth phase comprised a desk-based assessment and a programme of archaeological evaluation; the latter identifying no features of significant archaeological interest.

A proposed extension of the quarry in 2004 facilitated further archaeological assessment, which was undertaken to inform an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). This comprised a desk-based assessment, geophysical survey, and walkover survey (OA North 2004). The findings of these surveys were immediately investigated by a programme of archaeological evaluation in 2004.

Following the approval of the planning application, three phases of archaeological evaluation were undertaken. The first of these was related to the Phase 1 extraction and occurred in 2005 and two programmes of evaluation were undertaken in association with

the Phase 2 extraction, with the first of these occurring in 2008 and the second in 2010.

A time extension to the current planning permission would facilitate ground works that would cause the destruction of sub-surface strata that have not been disturbed previously by extractive works within areas of archaeological potential that have not been evaluated archaeologically. However, any such disturbance would be entirely consistent with those assessed as part of the EIA that accompanied the planning application in 2004. Therefore, the planning conditions relating to archaeology that were imposed in 2004 remain valid. Archaeological investigations, in the form of evaluation trenching, should, therefore, be undertaken in advance of any future phases of extraction in order to identify any heritage assets present and to enable appropriate mitigative approaches to be employed.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Oxford Archaeology North would like to thank Stephenson Halliday for commissioning the project on behalf of Tendley Quarries Ltd.

The archaeological review was undertaken by Alastair Vannan and the drawings were produced by Mark Tidmarsh. The project was managed by Alan Lupton, who also edited the report.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF PROJECT

- 1.1.1 Tarmac Ltd and Tendley Quarries Ltd were granted planning consent to undertake mineral extraction works at Peel Place Quarry, Holmrook, Cumbria (centred NY 6767 1090) in 2004 (Fig 1). This was subsequent to the submission of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) (planning application reference 4/04/9011); at the request of the Cumbria County Council's Historic Environment Service (CCCHES). Following the submission of the EIA and planning application, CCCHES advised that archaeological evaluations should be undertaken prior to the commencement of each phase of extraction and this condition was imposed on the planning consent. This planning permission is due to expire on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2015. However, due to changes in market requirements, output from the quarry was slower than expected and 460,000 tonnes of permitted reserves have not yet been extracted. Tendley Quarries have, therefore, proposed to extend the current planning permission for a further 10 years. The development control department at Cumbria County Council has requested that details of the archaeological investigations and findings at the site to date, and the implications for the forthcoming phases, should be presented in any forthcoming application.
- 1.1.2 Several phases of archaeological investigations (Fig 2) have been carried out at the quarry prior to, and following, the approval of the current planning permission by Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) and under the previous organisational title of Lancaster University Archaeological Unit (LUAU). Tendley Quarries have commissioned OA North to undertake a review of the archaeological work undertaken so far and to provide a statement of implications of the time extension. The results of this review are presented in the following report.

### 1.2 SITE LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

- 1.2.1 The quarry is located approximately 2km north of the village of Holmrook on the west coast of Cumbria, with Seascale to the north and Ravenglass to the south, and is between the main river valleys of the Calder and the Irt (Fig 1). The area around the site is defined as part of the 'West Cumbria Coastal Plain' by the Countryside Commission (1998). This is a region consisting predominantly of lowland river valleys, and the land-use comprises 'gently undulating or flat improved pasture' (*op cit*, 25). The site itself slopes gently to the south-west and north-east, with a peak at its centre, and is currently under pasture. A Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), in the form of the surviving raised mire of Hallsenna Moor, is located to the immediate south of the planning application boundary.
- 1.2.2 The solid geology of the area consists of Permo-Triassic rocks, mainly Steeton Bees Sandstone (*op cit*, 27) and is overlain by glacial deposits, predominantly sand and gravel in the area of the site. The overlying soils in this area are defined by the Ordnance Survey (1983) as part of the Wick 1 series, a typical brown earth.

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## 2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS

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### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1.1 The potential for remains of archaeological interest within the planning permission boundary for Peel Place Quarry is indicated by extensive findspots of prehistoric flint in the wider area. The medieval settlement of Halsenna lies to the west of the planning permission boundary and is associated with field systems that extend within this boundary. A fragment of a medieval stone cross and a Roman coin have also been found in the near vicinity of the quarry. The potential for further, previously unidentified, remains in this area led to several phases of archaeological investigations, some of which pre-date the current planning permission boundary.
- 2.1.2 Nine phases of archaeological investigation have been undertaken between 1997 and 2010 (Investigations A-I; Fig 2). Four distinct phases of archaeological investigations were undertaken at the Peel Place quarry prior to the proposed extension of the quarry in 2004 (Fig 2). The first three phases of archaeological investigations comprised evaluation trenching (between 1997 and 1999) that was undertaken by OA North (LUAU 1997; LUAU 1998; LUAU 1999), in their former guise as Lancaster University Archaeological Unit (LUAU). A total of 24 trenches were excavated during these three phases in the vicinity of land that was allocated for quarrying and no significant deposits or features of archaeological interest were revealed. The fourth phase comprised a desk-based assessment and a programme of archaeological evaluation (OA North 2003); the latter identifying no features of significant archaeological interest.
- 2.1.3 A proposed extension of the quarry in 2004 facilitated further archaeological assessment, which was undertaken to inform an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). This comprised a desk-based assessment, geophysical survey, and walkover survey (OA North 2004). The findings of these surveys were immediately investigated by a programme of archaeological evaluation in 2004.
- 2.1.4 Following the approval of the planning application, three phases of archaeological evaluation were undertaken. The first of these was related to the Phase 1 extraction and occurred in 2005 and two programmes of evaluation were undertaken in association with the Phase 2 extraction, with the first of these occurring in 2008 and the second in 2010.

### 2.2 PREVIOUS INVESTIGATIONS

- 2.2.1 **Investigation A: Phase 1 Evaluation (June 1997):** an area measuring 70m by 50m (3500m<sup>2</sup>) was evaluated by the machine-excavation of six trenches, which examined 7% of the area (LUAU 1997). Three trenches measured 20m by 1.8m and three measured 30m by 1.8m. Sieving of topsoil retrieved post-medieval and modern ceramic sherds, including clay pipe and modern tablewares (Fig 3).
- 2.2.2 **Investigation B: Phase 2 Evaluation (June 1998):** the second stage of work was undertaken to the north-east of that examined during Phase 1 (LUAU 1998). An area measuring 8690m<sup>2</sup> was evaluated by the machine-excavation of eight trenches, which examined 5% of the available area. All of the trenches measured 30m by 1.8m. Sieving of topsoil retrieved post-medieval and modern ceramic sherds (Fig 3).



- 2.2.3 **Investigation C: Phase 3 Evaluation (October 1999):** Phase 3 was completed in October 1999 and comprised a strip of land to the north-east of that investigated during Phase 2 (LUAU 1999). An area measuring 7500m<sup>2</sup> was evaluated by the machine-excavation of ten trenches, which examined 7% of the available area. One trench measured 25m by 1.8m and nine measured 30m by 1.8m. Sieving of topsoil retrieved post-medieval and modern ceramic sherds and an iron nail (Fig 3).
- 2.2.4 Phases 1-3 identified a common stratigraphic profile within each trench that comprised sandy gravels at a depth of 0.4m, which was overlain by a deposit of fine sand of varying depth. The topsoil generally measured between 0.2m and 0.25m thick and was a friable well draining sandy loam of the Ellerbeck Brown Earth series of soils. It also comprised a 15% sub-angular gravel component, which noted in all trenches. In order to enhance artefact retrieval, particularly lithic retrieval, a sieving programme was implemented, comprising the dry sieving of 30 litres of topsoil, through a 5mm mesh, at 5m intervals along the length of each trench. Several flint pebbles and fragments were retrieved during these phases of evaluation, although none of these proved to have been worked. The flint appears to have been distributed fairly evenly across the area.
- 2.2.5 **Investigation D: Phase 4 DBA and Evaluation (June and July 2003):** a desk-based assessment and evaluation were undertaken in 2003 in association with the expansion of Peel Place Quarry within an area immediately to the north of those investigated during Phases 1-3 (OA North 2003; Fig 3). A rapid desk-based assessment was carried out in June 2003, and involved a search of primary and secondary maps, in addition to records held by the Cumbria Record Office in Whitehaven and the Cumbria Sites and Monuments Record (CSMR). The documentary study identified eleven sites of archaeological interest within the study area, none of which would be affected by the development. The site was considered to have archaeological potential due to large quantities of prehistoric flint which have been recovered from an extensive programme of field walking in the area. Four findspots of flint artefacts (SMR 1309; SMR 6459; SMR 6463 and SMR 6465) and a polished stone axe (SMR 1273) showed evidence of prehistoric activity in the area. Evidence of settlement during the Roman and post-medieval periods was also produced.
- 2.2.6 The assessment was followed in July 2003 by a programme of archaeological evaluation trenching. An area measuring approximately 8840m<sup>2</sup> was evaluated by the machine-excavation of 13 trenches, which examined 5% of the available area. The trenches measured 20m by 1.7m. Three modern gullies and two tree throws were revealed, which provides evidence of a post-medieval agricultural landscape that is likely to be of nineteenth-century date. Several pieces of modern pottery and a fragment of clay pipe were also retrieved from the topsoil. No flint was recovered and no features deemed to be of archaeological significance were revealed.
- 2.2.7 **Investigation E: Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) (December 2003; January and March 2004):** an assessment comprising a desk-based assessment, geophysical survey, and walkover survey was undertaken in 2003-4 in order to inform an EIA relating to the proposed extension of quarrying at Peel Place (OA North 2004a).
- 2.2.8 The desk-based assessment identified 19 sites of archaeological interest within the study area (Fig 3), none of which would be affected by the development (Fig 4). The gazetteer produced included four findspots of flint artefacts (Sites **02-05** and

13-14), a polished stone axe (Site 01), and a hand axe roughout (Site 12), which provide evidence for prehistoric activity in the area. Evidence of occupation during the Roman, medieval and post-medieval periods was also produced, which included a Roman coin (Site 06) located to the immediate north of the proposed development, a medieval cross fragment (Site 16), and relict strip fields associated with the settlement of Hallsenna. All of these sites were considered to be significant.

- 2.2.9 The walkover survey was undertaken in March 2004 and identified four previously unidentified sites of archaeological interest (Sites 20-23; Fig 4). These comprised the remains of a relict medieval strip-field system (Site 20), a trackway (Site 21), two gate posts (Site 23) and a disused holloway (Site 22).
- 2.2.10 The geophysical survey was undertaken in December 2003 by Stratascan Ltd. Although the general magnetic response was relatively low, a number of faint linear anomalies were located that may have been anthropogenic, particularly given the prehistoric potential of the area (Fig 5). In addition, a discrete probable thermoremnant response was observed which might be of archaeological significance and could, perhaps, be a hearth. Plough marks were also seen in the plots, which may either relate to the medieval settlement of Hallsenna or could possibly be modern.
- 2.2.11 The assessment showed that the proposed development area would not impact on any known sites of archaeological interest. The likely archaeological potential of the area was suggested by the discovery of significant quantities of prehistoric worked flint in the locale, in addition to other findspots, such as that of a Roman coin. The desk-based assessment and the walkover survey demonstrated evidence of medieval agricultural practice in the proposed development area. The close proximity of the medieval settlement of Hallsenna and the surrounding relict strip cultivation, seen in the extant field boundaries observed from the walkover survey and in documentary evidence, showed a potential for tofts and other archaeological evidence associated with medieval farming in this area.
- 2.2.12 Although the previous phases of evaluation had not identified any significant remains of archaeological interest, it was considered that the potential remained for undiscovered sub-surface remains within the area that would necessitate further evaluation. It was recommended that the anomalies with archaeological potential that were identified by the geophysical survey should be examined by trial trenching.
- 2.2.13 **Investigation F: Archaeological Evaluation (2004):** following the results of the assessment to inform the EIA (OA North 2004a) four evaluation trenches measuring between 15m and 30m in length and 1.8m wide were excavated in areas where geophysical anomalies had been identified (Fig 5).
- 2.2.14 The only feature of archaeological interest that was discovered was a ditch within Trench 3. The ditch contained pottery that was dated to between the late-seventeenth and early-twentieth centuries. This appeared to be a relict field boundary and it correlated with a boundary recorded on the Ordnance Survey first edition map of 1865. This ditch may have been of medieval origin and associated with medieval strip fields. Pottery sherds and a clay pipe stem of post-medieval date were found within the topsoil.

- 2.2.15 No indication of the possible medieval ditch was evident from the geophysical survey results, which demonstrates that other such sub-surface remains might be present that have not been previously identified. No indications of the targeted geophysical anomalies were revealed within the trenches, with the exception of a land drain identified in Trench 4 that might have accounted for one of the anomalies. It is possible that the anomalies identified resulted from variable geological conditions across the site. However, the low magnetic properties of the overlying soils has limited the usefulness of magnetometry, and the results of the evaluation have shown the geophysical survey data to be unreliable as a non-intrusive assessment technique for this site. It was, therefore, recommended that further archaeological investigations should precede further development.
- 2.2.16 **Investigation G: Archaeological Evaluation of Phase 1 Extraction (July 2005):** Tendley Quarries were given planning consent to undertake an additional phase of extraction works on the western extension at Peel Place Quarry, following the submission of an Environmental Impact Assessment (Planning Application Reference 4/04/9011). As a result of the potential for remains of archaeological interest to be present within the area, Cumbria County Council's Historic Environment Service (CCCHES) advised the mineral planning service that a condition should be imposed on the planning consent to undertake an archaeological evaluation prior to the commencement of any groundworks. OA North undertook the required archaeological work in July 2005 (OA North 2005).
- 2.2.17 Ten evaluation trenches were excavated (Fig 6) measuring 25-30m long and 1.75-3.3m wide and were employed to enable 5% of the Phase 1 site to be investigated, which measured one hectare (10,000m<sup>2</sup>). No features of archaeological interest were revealed within the trenches. The finds included 29 artefacts that were retrieved from the topsoil and comprised fragments of pottery, glass, flint, and metal, with at least one pottery sherd being found within each of the trenches. The presence of two potential fragments of waste flint suggested that small-scale knapping had been taking place in the area, but it was not possible to date this activity closely. The fragments of pottery, glass, and metal recovered from the topsoil were all of post-medieval date, and the fragments were small in size. The assemblage appeared to be entirely domestic in character and was likely to have resulted from manuring practices.
- 2.2.18 The results of the evaluation suggested that the potential for remains of archaeological interest within the Phase 1 area was low.
- 2.2.19 **Investigation H: Archaeological Evaluation of Phase 2 Extraction (April 2008):** seventeen evaluation trenches (Fig 6) were mechanically excavated (OA North 2008). The trenches were generally 15-30m long and 2.3m wide and were required to examine a minimum of 5% of the Phase 2 area, which measured 1.44ha (14400 m<sup>2</sup>) having been reduced from an original area measuring 1.7ha due to the establishment of a 15m wide avoidance corridor around a water main that lay across the area.
- 2.2.20 The majority of the trenches were positioned to randomly sample the outlined area of Phase 2 extraction, although Trenches 2, 5, and 6 were positioned to target the possible medieval strip field system. However, no evidence of archaeological interest was identified within these trenches. A small ditch, **106**, was identified within Trench 9 that is likely to relate to a relict strip field boundary that was identified on the Ordnance Survey map of 1865 (OA North 2004a). Trenches 10

and 17 targeted a holloway that was identified during the walkover survey (*ibid*). Trenches 1, 11, 13 and 15 all revealed linear features; a modern ditch, **103**, with a water pipe *in situ*, was observed within Trench 1; a small undulating gully, **108=110**, was revealed in the centre of Trench 11, which was undateable due to the lack of any finds; ditch, **111**, which appeared to be relatively modern, was revealed in Trench 13 and a possible furrow, **129**, was identified in Trench 15.

2.2.21 The results of the evaluation suggested that the potential for remains of archaeological interest within the Phase 2 area was low.

2.2.22 **Investigation I: Archaeological Evaluation of the North-Western Extension of Phase 2 Extraction (July 2010)**: the second part of the Phase 2 extraction required the excavation of 20 archaeological evaluation trenches measuring between 15 and 40m long and 1.8m wide (OA North 2010). The majority of the trenches were positioned randomly within the extension of the Phase 2 area, but Trenches 13, 14, and 15 were positioned to investigate the possible medieval strip field system and the intended positions and length of Trenches 12 and 16 were modified to examine a sharp rise in the centre of the field (Fig 6).

2.2.23 Trenches 1-4, 6-9, and 11 revealed a series of north-west/south-east aligned furrows grouped as **204**. Furrow **209**, within Trench 9, contained post-medieval ceramics. Trench 13 revealed a shallow north-west/south-east-aligned gully, **211**, that also contained post-medieval ceramics. These features may have been associated with the relict strip field boundary that was identified on the Ordnance Survey map of 1865 (OA North 2004a). Trench 9 also revealed a furrow, **207**, that was on a slightly different alignment and featured a different type of fill to those in group **204**, suggesting that it may have represented an earlier phase of ridge and furrow. Trenches 16 and 18 revealed evidence of a possible trackway with discernible wheel ruts, **215/217** and **219/220** respectively, and the undated remains of disturbance related to an associated hedgerow **216** were exposed in Trench 16. Trench 19, contained a north-east/south-west aligned undated ditch, **213**.

2.2.24 The results of the evaluation suggested that the potential for remains of archaeological interest within the area of the Phase 2 north-western extension was low.

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### 3. IMPLICATIONS OF A TIME EXTENSION

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#### 3.1 IMPLICATIONS OF A TIME EXTENSION

- 3.1.1 Several phase of archaeological work have been undertaken in advance of extraction works at Peel Place. These works have been motivated by the potential for the presence of sites of archaeological interest lying within the planning permission boundary. This potential is indicated by extensive findspots of prehistoric flint in the wider area around the quarry, and also by the presence of the medieval settlement of Halsenna, which lies to the west of the planning permission boundary but is associated with field systems that extend within this boundary. A fragment of a medieval stone cross and a Roman coin have also been found in the near vicinity of the quarry.
- 3.1.2 The previous archaeological evaluations have revealed sub-surface remains of ditches and cultivation furrows that are likely to have been associated with the medieval strip fields to the east of Halsenna and evidence for two phases of cultivation, with differing alignments, has also been revealed. The remaining features identified have been of post-medieval or modern date and have not been considered to be archaeologically significant. The only evidence of prehistoric activity that has been identified so far has comprised two waste fragments of worked flint that were discovered in 2005.
- 3.1.3 Although the remains of archaeological interest that have been revealed through evaluation trenching have been limited, the planning application boundary retains the potential for significant features or finds. Archaeological evaluation trenching is a valid test of the potential for the survival of remains within a particular area but the results obtained from one area cannot be extrapolated across adjacent areas that have not been subject to similar levels of detailed examination. Such evaluations will also only provide a indication of the sub-surface character, as only between 5% and 7% of each area was tested by trenching. It is, therefore, possible that further sites of archaeological interest were present in areas examined previously, but may have lain beyond the extent of the evaluation trenches.
- 3.1.4 A time extension to the current planning permission would facilitate ground works that would cause the destruction of sub-surface strata that have not been disturbed previously by extractive works within areas of archaeological potential that have not been evaluated archaeologically. However, any such disturbance would be entirely consistent with those assessed as part of the EIA that accompanied the planning application in 2004. Therefore, the planning conditions relating to archaeology that were imposed in 2004 remain valid. Archaeological investigations, in the form of evaluation trenching, should, therefore, be undertaken in advance of any future phases of extraction in order to identify any heritage assets present and to enable appropriate mitigative approaches to be employed.

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## 5. ILLUSTRATIONS

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### 5.1 FIGURES

Figure 1: Location Plan

Figure 2: Location of Previous Archaeological Investigations (1997-2010)

Figure 3: Location of Evaluation Trenches for Archaeological Investigations A-D (1997-2003)

Figure 4: Desk-based Assessment and Walkover Survey Results for Archaeological Investigation E (2003-2004)

Figure 5: Geophysical Results for Archaeological Investigation E (2003) and Location of Evaluation Trenches for Archaeological Investigation F (2004)

Figure 6: Location of Evaluation Trenches for Archaeological Investigation G-! (Phases 1 and 2: 2005-2010)

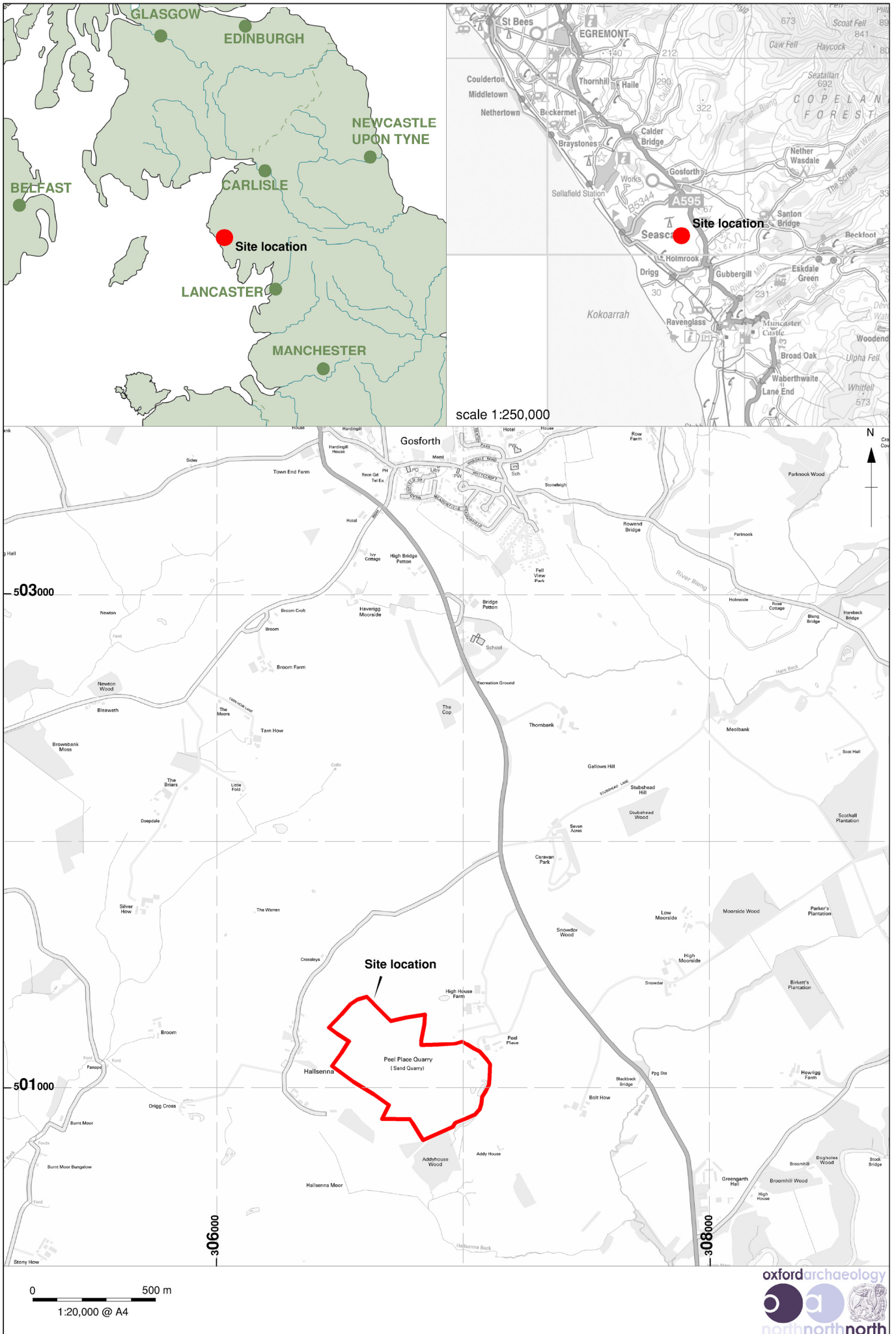


Figure 1: Site location



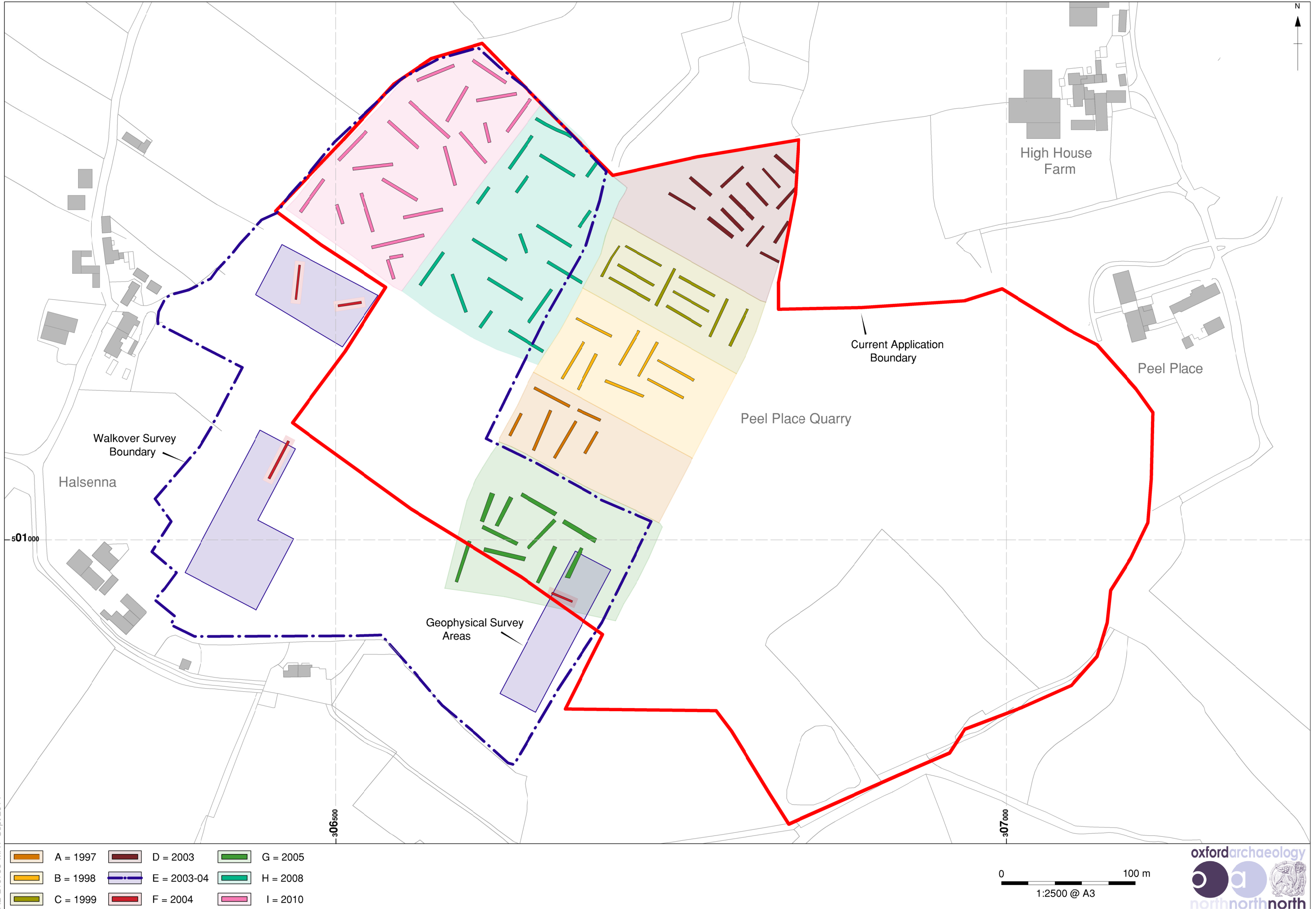


Figure 2: Location of Previous Archaeological Investigations (1997-2010)



Figure 3: Location of Evaluation Trenches for Archaeological Investigations A-D (1997-2003)

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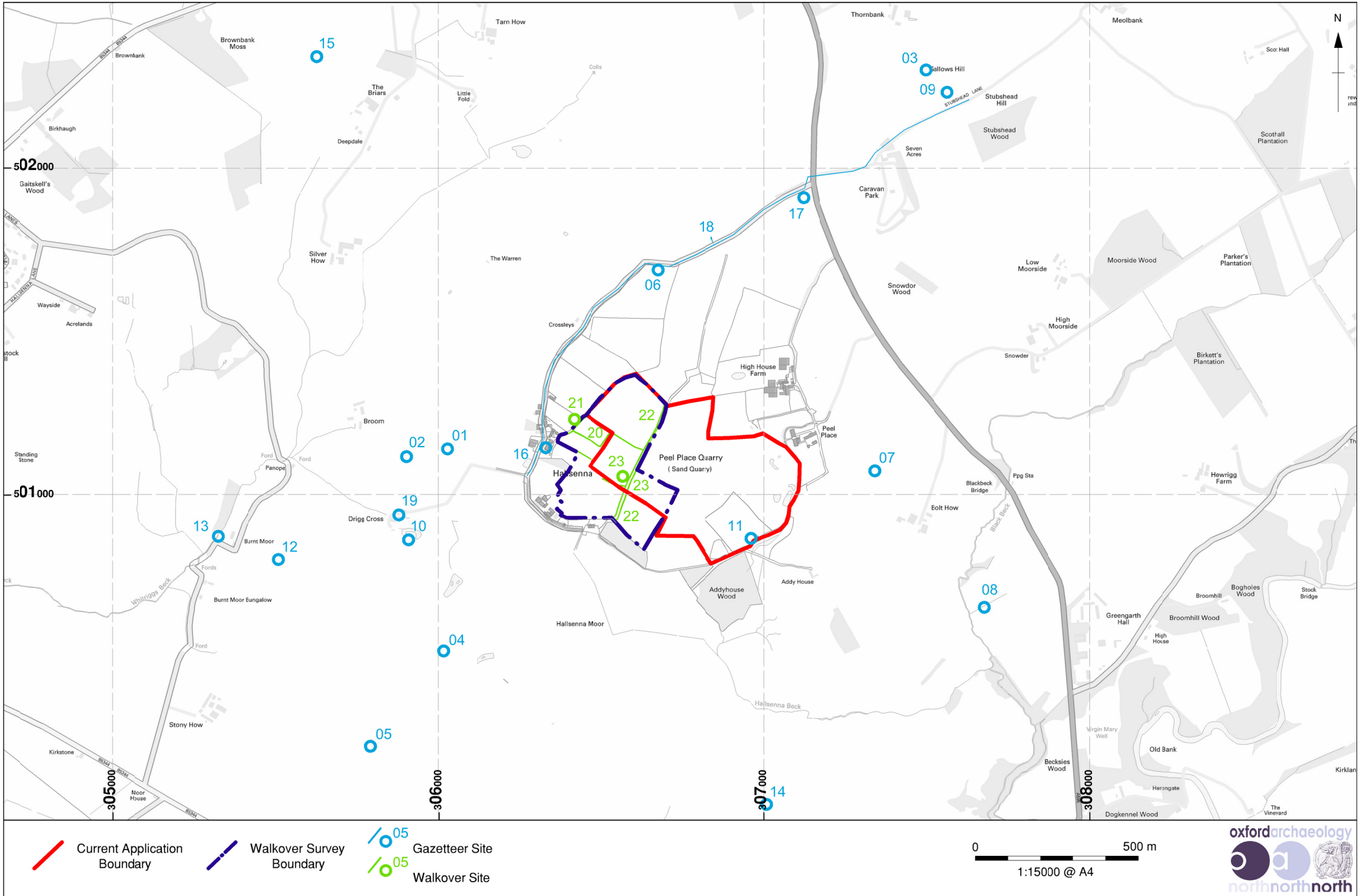


Figure 4: Desk-based Assessment and Walkover Survey Results for Archaeological Investigation E (2003-2004)

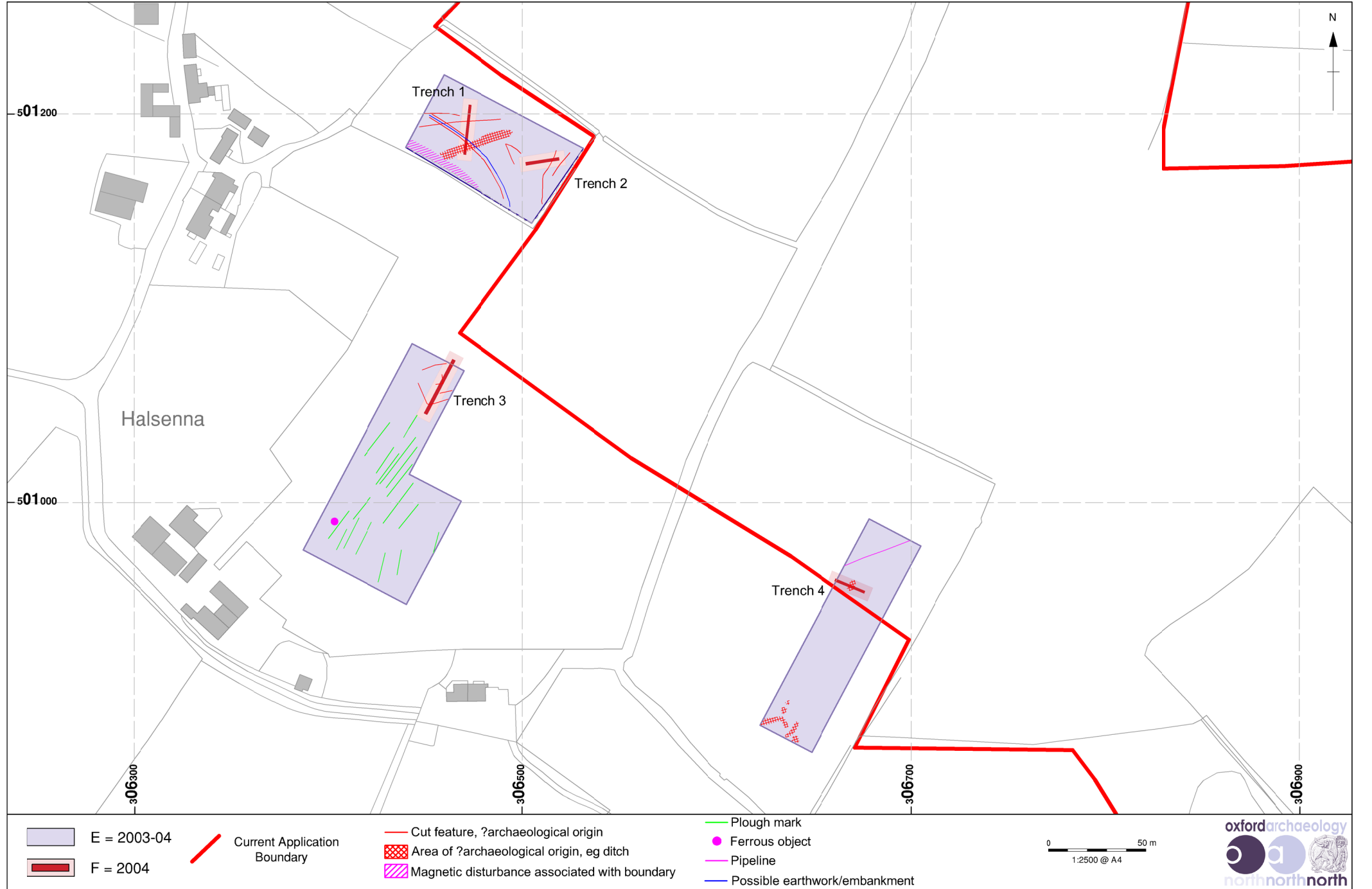


Figure 5: Geophysical Results for Archaeological Investigation E (2003), and location of Evaluation Trenches for Archaeological Investigation F (2004)



Figure 6: Location of Evaluation Trenches for Archaeological Investigations G-I (Phases 1-2: 2005-2010)