

Sand Hill, Boxford



Archaeological Evaluation Report



October 2013

Client: Icen Homes

OA East Report No: 1542

OASIS No: oxfordar3-160003

NGR: TL 967 404

Sand Hill, Boxford

Archaeological Evaluation

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Report Date: October 2013

Report Number: 1542
Site Name: Sand Hill, Boxford
HER Event No: BXF 029
Date of Works: October 2013
Client Name: Icen Homes
Client Ref:
Planning Ref: TBA
Grid Ref: TL 967 404
Site Code: BXF 029
Finance Code: XSFBOX13
Receiving Body: Suffolk CC Stores

Accession No:

Prepared by: Patrick Moan
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Date: 24/10/11
Signed:



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Summary

Between 7/10/13 – 9/10/13 Oxford Archaeology East carried out an evaluation on land at Sand Hill, Boxford. Nine 30 metre trenches were excavated. Two possible medieval ditches, and a post medieval colluvial layer were recorded. Nothing else of archaeological significance was encountered.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 An archaeological evaluation was conducted on land at Sand Hill, Boxford.
- 1.1.2 This archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Rachael Monk of Suffolk County Council (SCC; Planning Application pending), supplemented by a Specification prepared by OA East.
- 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 SCC Conservation Team, on behalf of 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 underlying geology across the site is from the London Clay Formation (Clay, Silt and Sand) with Lowestoft Formation Diamicton at the centre of the site, Lowestoft Formation Sand and Gravel to the west and south and Head deposits (Clay, Silt, Sand and Gravel to the north and east (BGS 2010).
- 1.2.2 The development area lies c. 400m due east of the centre of Boxford at an average of 40m AOD on a gentle downward slope from southeast to northwest. The site is bordered to the north by a small stream, with the old main road to the south.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The development area lies in an area of archaeological potential, as it is topographically favourable for early occupation. The site is also located close to findspots of Roman and Saxon date. HER no. BXF002 records a fragment of Roman lava quern found in 1954 during widening of the road directly to the west of the development area. BXF009 was also found nearby; an abraded fragment of an early Anglo Saxon brooch (Monk, R. 2013).

1.4 Acknowledgements

- 1.4.1 The author would like to thank Sweet Group and Icení Homes, who commissioned and funded the work and Rachael Monk of Suffolk County Council Conservation Team, who wrote the brief for the work and monitored the excavation on site.
- 1.4.2 The trenches was surveyed by Dave Brown. Excavation and recording of the evaluation trenches was undertaken by the author and Zoe Ui Choileain. Machine excavation was undertaken by LOC Plant Hire. The site was managed by Richard Mortimer.

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 Brief asked that the trial trenches were to cover a 5% sample of the total development area. This required 270m of 2m wide trenching (fig.1) to be machine excavated to the depth of geological horizons or the upper interface of archaeological features or deposits, whichever was encountered first.
- 2.2.2 Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a tracked excavator using a toothless ditching bucket.
- 2.2.3 The site survey was carried out by Dave Brown using a Leica 1200 GPS.
- 2.2.4 Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal detector. No metal finds were recovered, other than those which were obviously modern and thus not kept.
- 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 favourable, with dry ground conditions and good weather for the duration of the work.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The results will be presented chronologically by trench. Unless otherwise stated, no finds were recovered from a trench, datable or otherwise. For full trench descriptions see Appendix A.

3.2 Trench 1

3.2.1 Trench 1 lay on a mid yellowish-brown boulder clay geology. Above this was 0.22m to 0.3m of dark grey loamy clay topsoil. No archaeological features were present.

3.3 Trench 2

3.3.1 The natural geology consisted of a mid yellowish-brown chalky clay. Above this was a dark brown loamy topsoil with a depth of 0.25m to 0.3m. No archaeological features were present.

3.4 Trench 3

3.4.1 The natural geology was a mid yellowish-brown chalky clay. Above this was 0.32m of dark brown loamy topsoil. No archaeological features were recorded.

3.5 Trench 4

3.5.1 A layer of mid brownish-yellow colluvium was encountered at a depth of 0.3m. This was machine excavated to a depth of 0.5m before excavation ceased. Small numbers of post-Medieval tile and brick fragments were recovered from the layer. Above this was 0.3m to 0.4m of dark brown loamy topsoil.

3.6 Trench 5

3.6.1 The natural geology was a mid brownish yellow compacted sand. Two ditches were recorded in the trench (ditches **3** and **5**) along with some plough scarring. Both ditches and plough scars were aligned east to west. Ditch **3** was 0.7m wide and 0.18m deep with gently sloping sides and a flat base. The single fill (4) was a light brownish-yellow silty loam with moderate flint inclusions. Ditch **5** (see Plate 4 and Fig. 3) was 0.7m wide and 0.11m deep with gentle sloping sides and a flat base. The fill (6) was a light yellowish-brown silty loam with moderate flint inclusions. One small, heavily abraded sherd of grey sand-tempered medieval pottery was recovered from the fill. The plough scars were all 0.5m wide, and extremely diffuse with a light brownish-yellow sand fill. Above this was 0.3m to 0.38m of dark brown topsoil.

3.7 Trench 6

3.7.1 Natural geology was a mid reddish-brown boulder clay. Above this was 0.25m to 0.3m of dark brown topsoil. No archaeological features were encountered.

3.8 Trench 7

3.8.1 A mid reddish brown sandy clay geology was recorded. Above this was 0.23m to 0.3m of dark brown topsoil. No archaeological features were encountered.

3.9 Trench 8

3.9.1 The natural geology was a light brownish-red sand. A large natural feature (1) was recorded running under the eastern edge of the trench (Plate 3, fig. 4). This was sub circular in shape and measured a minimum 4m in length, and minimum 0.7m width. Where excavated it was 0.6m deep. The single fill (2) was a very sterile dark yellowish brown silty sand with rare flint inclusions. The feature may represent a large tree throw, or the top of a geological feature. This was overlain by 0.32m to 0.4m of dark brown topsoil.

3.10 Trench 9

3.10.1 A mid yellowish-brown boulder clay geology was recorded. In the northeastern end of the trench a layer of colluvium was present. A test pit was excavated through the layer to a depth of 0.45m. The layer was a sterile mid brownish-yellow silty sand. Cutting through this was a small palaeochannel. The channel was 3.1m wide and 0.23m deep.

3.11 Finds Summary

3.11.1 Very few finds were recovered from the evaluation. A total of 160g of abraded post medieval brick and tile was collected from the colluvial layer in trench 4. One small sherd (1g) of heavily abraded sand-tempered medieval pottery, dating to the 13th to 14th centuries, was recovered from the fill (6) of ditch 5. Metal detection of the excavated soil recovered no finds of archaeological significance.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1.1 The evaluation at Sand Hill, Boxford has uncovered little of archaeological significance.
- 4.1.2 The natural feature recorded in Trench 8 is most likely a large tree throw hole, with a sterile fill and no finds, residual or otherwise.
- 4.1.3 The ditches and plough scars in Trench 5 could possibly be medieval in date, perhaps 13th to 14th century, however, the lack of finds makes it difficult to assign a definite date and the features could equally be post-Medieval. The ditches could indicate phases of field boundary at the base of the slope, or could represent a medieval strip boundary related to agricultural activity within medieval Boxford. The fact the ditches are not seen in other trenches is unsurprising as they could have been truncated by modern ploughing. The plough scars are assumed to be contemporary with the ditches as they lie on the same alignment.
- 4.1.4 The post medieval tile and building material found in the colluvium in trench 4 probably arrived with manuring waste, ploughed into the topsoil to help break up the heavy clay soils. Below this post medieval colluvial layer may be further, earlier layers such as that seen in the northeastern end of trench 9. This was a completely sterile layer with no archaeological finds, indicating that prior to the medieval/post medieval period the land had not seen significant habitation or human activity.

4.2 Recommendations

- 4.2.1 Recommendations for any future work based upon this report will be made by the County Archaeology Office.

APPENDIX A. TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1						
General description				Orientation		NW-SE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of a mid yellowish brown boulder clay overlain by dark brown topsoil.				Avg. depth (m)		0.24m
				Width (m)		2
				Length (m)		30
Trench 2						
General description				Orientation		NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of a mid yellowish brown chalky clay overlain by a dark brown topsoil.				Avg. depth (m)		0.3
				Width (m)		2
				Length (m)		30
Trench 3						
General description				Orientation		NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of a mid yellowish brown chalky clay overlain by a dark brown topsoil.				Avg. depth (m)		0.32m
				Width (m)		2
				Length (m)		30
Trench 4						
General description				Orientation		ENE-WSW
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of a mid yellowish brown colluvium overlain by a dark brown topsoil				Avg. depth (m)		0.7
				Width (m)		2
				Length (m)		30
Trench 5						
General description				Orientation		WNW-ESE
Trench contained two ditches and 4 plough scars. Consists of mid brownish yellow sand overlain by dark brown topsoil.				Avg. depth (m)		0.35m
				Width (m)		2
				Length (m)		30
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
3	Cut	0.7	0.18	Ditch	-	-
4	Fill	0.7	0.18	Ditch	-	-
5	Cut	0.7	0.11	Ditch	-	-
6	Fill	0.7	0.11	Ditch	pottery	Medieval
Trench 6						
General description				Orientation		NW-SE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of a mid reddish brown boulder clay overlain by dark brown topsoil.				Avg. depth (m)		0.27m
				Width (m)		2
				Length (m)		30

Trench 7						
General description				Orientation		NW-SE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of a mid reddish brown sandy clay overlain by dark brown topsoil				Avg. depth (m)		0.28m
				Width (m)		2
				Length (m)		30
Trench 8						
General description				Orientation		NNE-SSW
Trench contained one natural feature. Consists of a light brownish red sand overlain by a dark brown topsoil.				Avg. depth (m)		0.39m
				Width (m)		2
				Length (m)		30
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1	Cut	4	0.6	Tree bole	-	-
2	Fill	4	0.6	Tree bole	-	-
Trench 9						
General description				Orientation		NNW-SSE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of a mid yellowish brown boulder clay overlain by a dark brown topsoil				Avg. depth (m)		0.35m
				Width (m)		2
				Length (m)		30

APPENDIX B. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Monk, R. 2013 Brief for a Trenched Archaeological Evaluation at Land at Sand Hill, Babergh.
- Mortimer, R. 2013 Specification for Archaeological Evaluation, Sand Hill, Boxford.

APPENDIX C. OASIS REPORT FORM

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

Project Details

OASIS Number	oxfordar3-160003		
Project Name	Evaluation at Sand hill, Boxford		
Project Dates (fieldwork) Start	07-10-2013	Finish	09-10-2013
Previous Work (by OA East)	No	Future Work	No

Project Reference Codes

Site Code	BXF 029	Planning App. No.	
HER No.	BXF 029	Related HER/OASIS No.	

Type of Project/Techniques Used

Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16
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 checked="" 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
ditch	Medieval 1066 to 1540	pottery	Medieval 1066 to 1540
	Select period...		Select period...
	Select period...		Select period...

Project Location

County	Suffolk	Site Address (including postcode if possible)	
District	Babergh	Land at Sand Hill, Boxford Suffolk	
Parish	Boxford		
HER	Suffolk		
Study Area	1000 sq m	National Grid Reference	TL 967 404

Project Originators

Organisation	OA EAST
Project Brief Originator	Rachael Monk
Project Design Originator	
Project Manager	Richard Mortimer
Supervisor	Pat Moan

Project Archives

Physical Archive	Digital Archive	Paper Archive
Suffolk County Store	OA East	Suffolk County Store
BXF 029	XSFBOX13	BXF 029

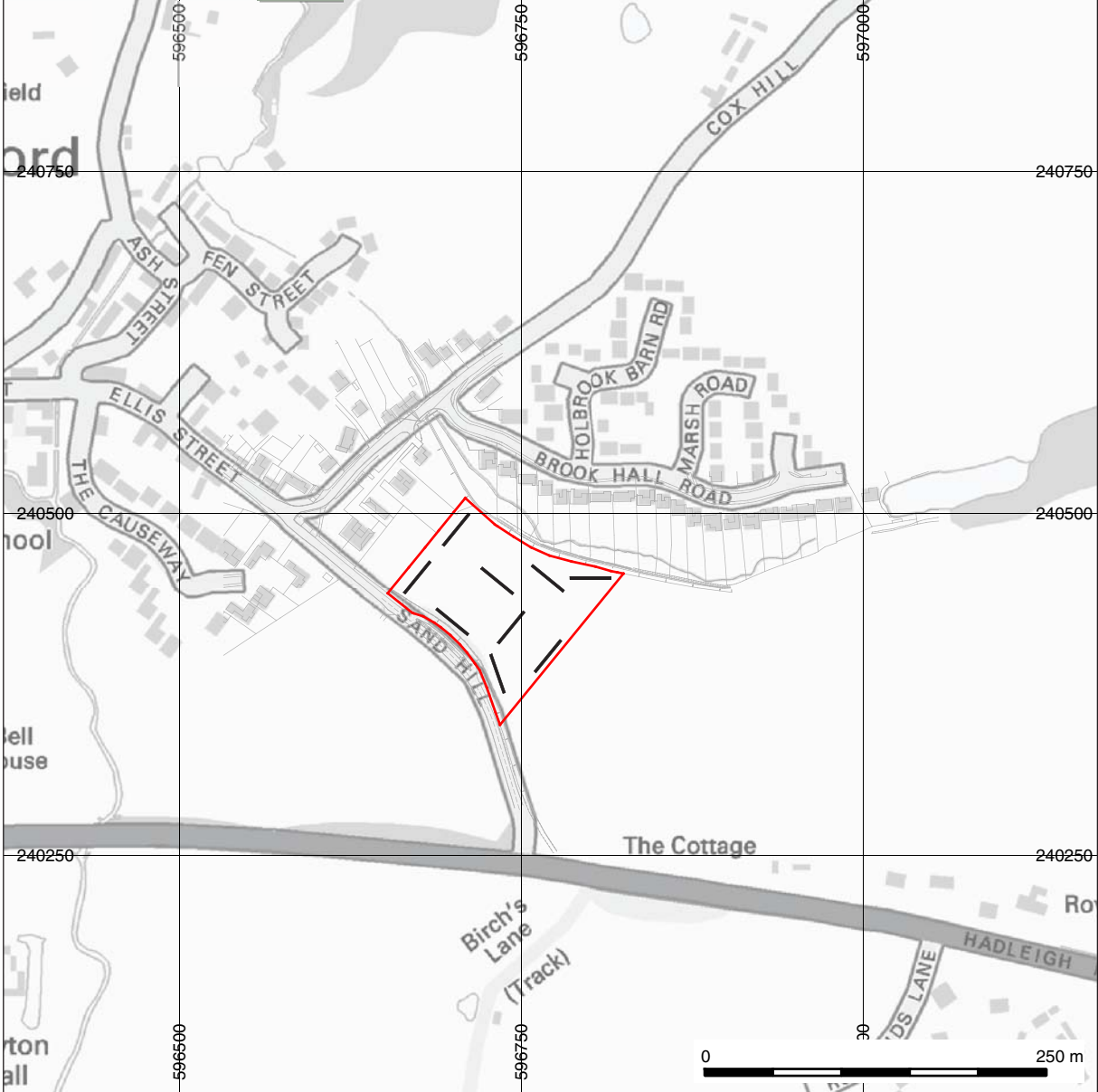
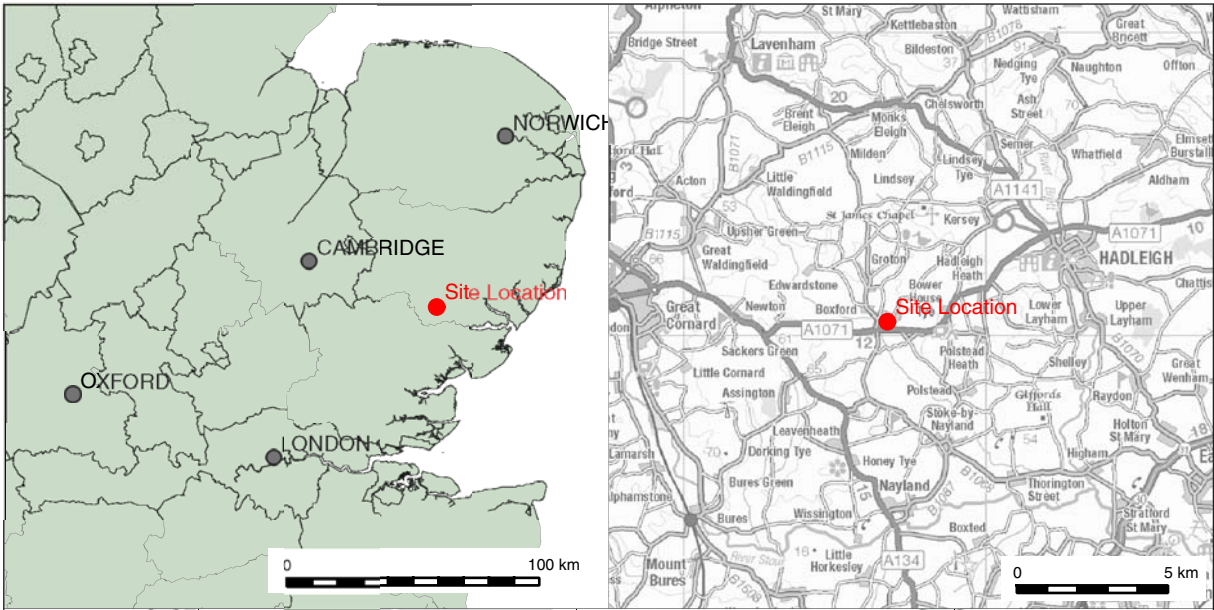
Archive Contents/Media

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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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Drawing
<input type="checkbox"/> Moving Image	<input type="checkbox"/> Manuscript
<input type="checkbox"/> Spreadsheets	<input type="checkbox"/> Map
<input 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:

Notes:



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Figure 1: Development area (red) with evaluation trenches (black)

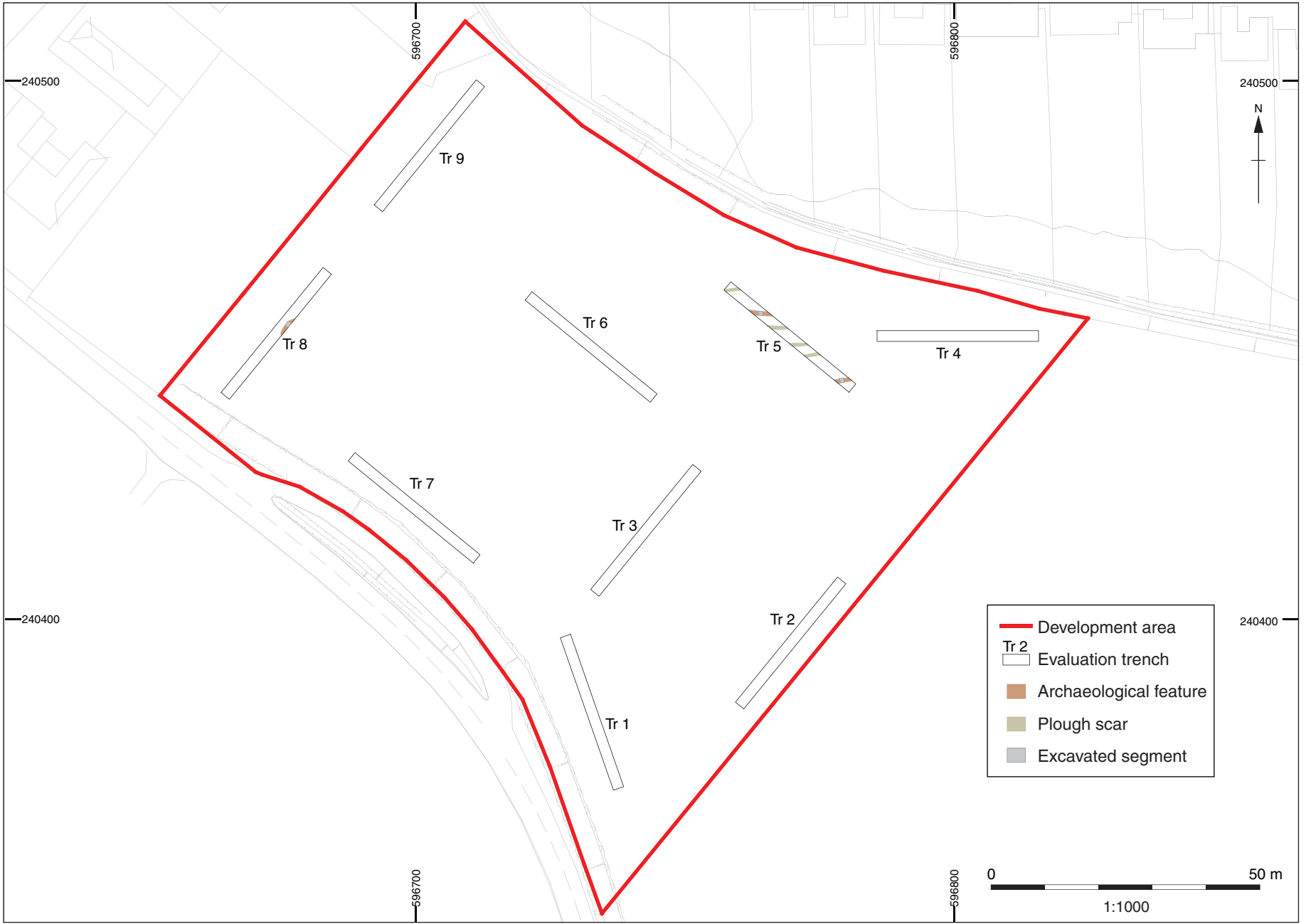


Figure 2: Trench plan

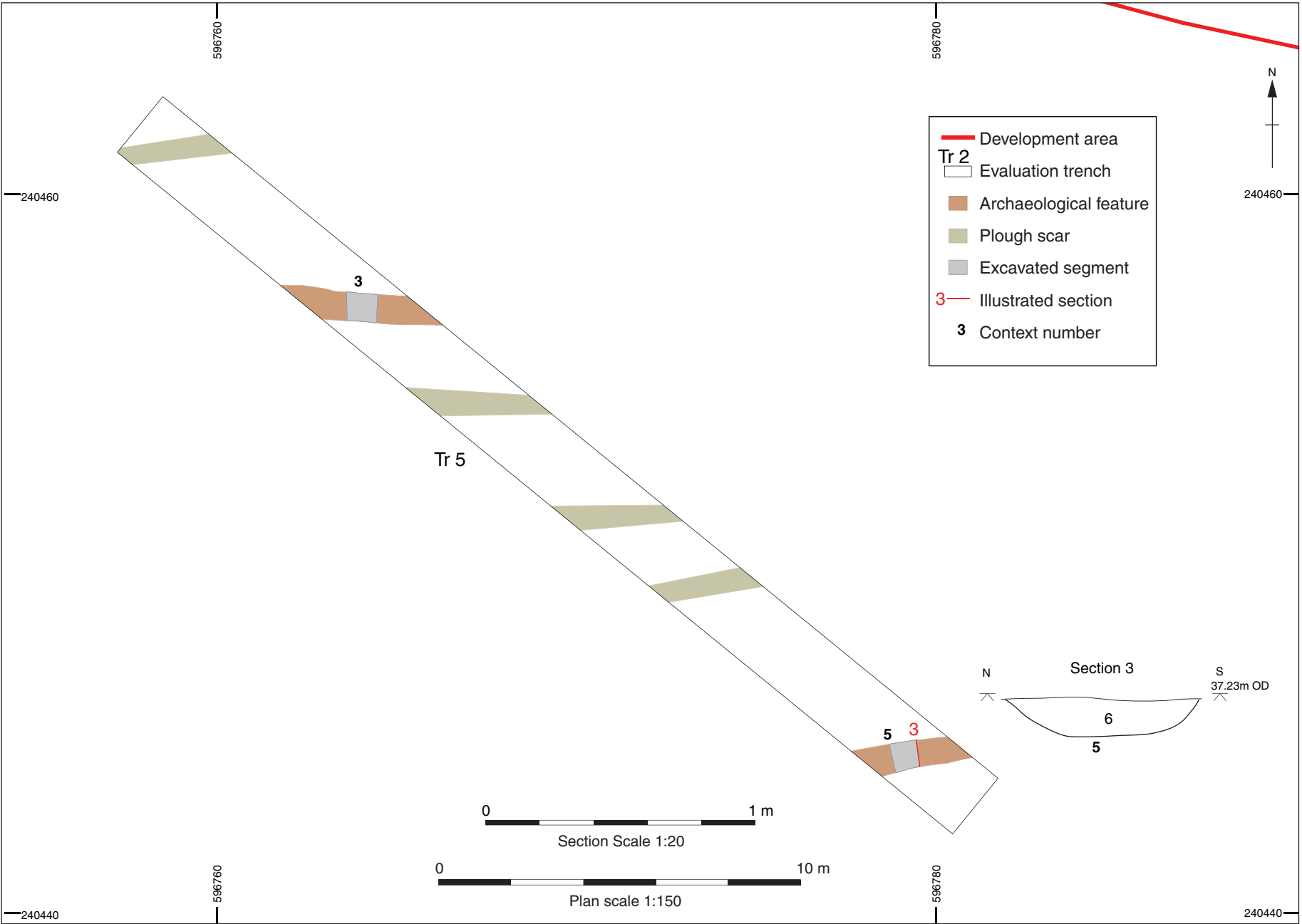


Figure 3: Trench 5 plan and section

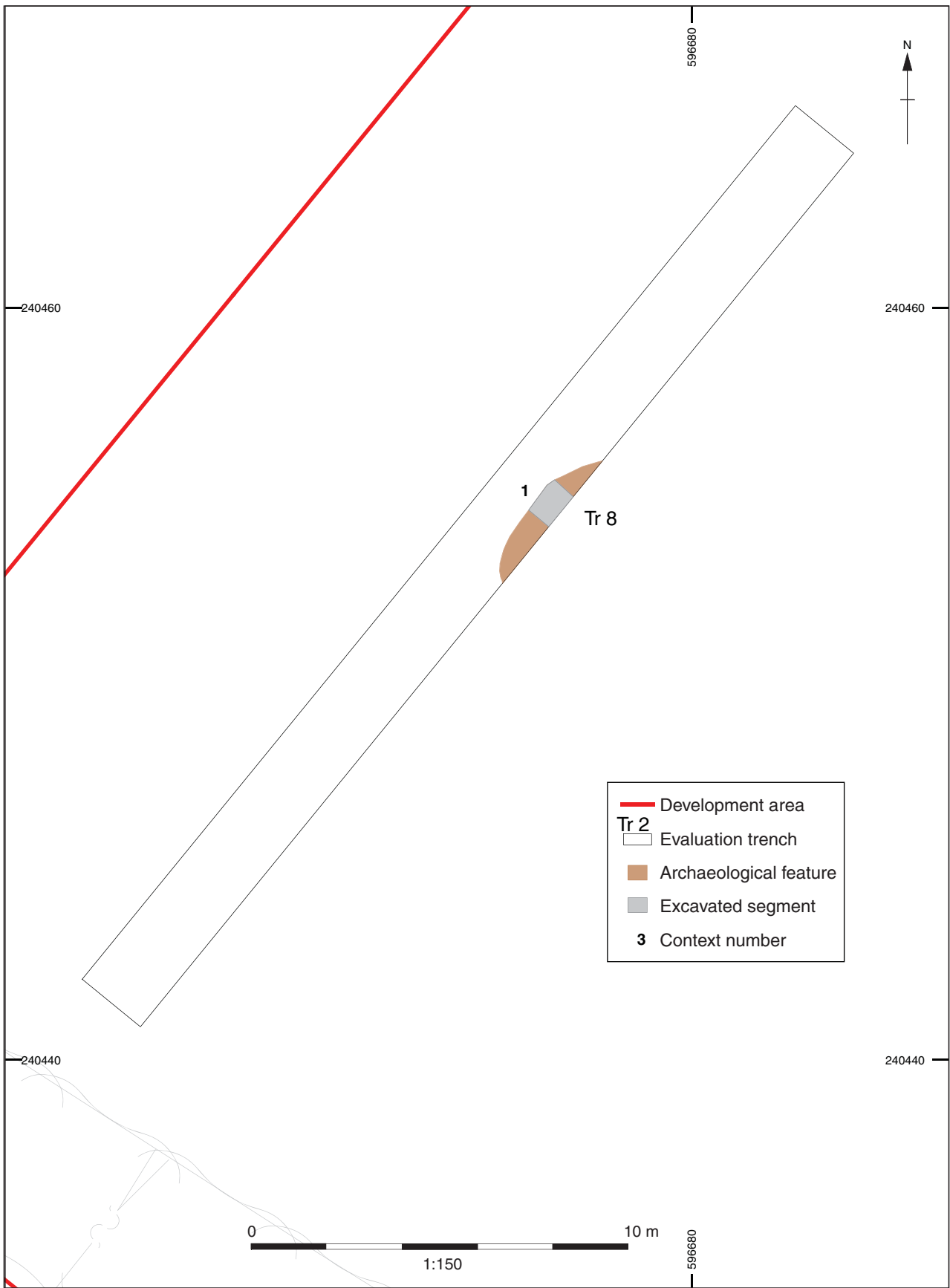


Figure 4: Trench 8



Plate 1: Trench 5, looking south east



Plate 2: Trench 8, looking southwest



Plate 3: Natural feature 1 (trench 8), looking south west



Plate 4: Ditch 5 (trench 5), looking east



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