

Land Off Elizabeth Way,  
Harlow,  
Essex



**Archaeological  
Evaluation Report**



October 2013

**Client: CgMs Consulting**

OA East Report No: 1526  
NGR: TL 429 101

**Land Off Elizabeth Way, Harlow, Essex**

*Archaeological Evaluation*

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*Report Date: October 2013*

**Report Number:** 1526  
**Site Name:** Elizabeth Way, Harlow  
**Date of Works:** September 2013  
**Client Name:** CgMs Consulting  
**Client Ref:** CB/15773  
**Grid Ref:** TL 429 101  
**Site Code:** HAPL13  
**Finance Code:** XEXELZ13

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Date: 16th October 2013  
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## **Summary**

*On the 23rd September 2013 Oxford Archaeology East conducted an archaeological evaluation at the site of the former Pitney Bowes office and works off Elizabeth Way, Harlow, Essex (TL 429 101). The proposed development includes the demolition of the existing buildings and the redevelopment of the site as a Distribution Warehouse and includes areas of terracing and landforming across the site.*

*Three trenches were excavated which revealed extensive modern disturbance and truncation in the form of made ground overlying the natural deposits. No archaeological features or deposits were recorded.*



# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 An archaeological evaluation was conducted on the 23rd September 2013 at the site of the former Pitney Bowes office and works off Elizabeth Way, Harlow, Essex (TL 429 101). The proposed development includes the demolition of the existing buildings and the redevelopment of the site as a Distribution Warehouse. This includes areas of terracing and landforming across the site.
- 1.1.2 This archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation issued by Caroline Butler of CgMs Consulting, 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 EHE, 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 British Geological Survey shows the geology underlying the study site comprises London Clay overlain by Lowestoft Formation (diamicton).
- 1.2.2 Geotechnical work confirmed the sequence of London Clay overlain by layers of glacial sand and gravel and glacial till. London Clay was only encountered in one of the boreholes at a depth of 48.55m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD). Glacial tills and gravels were recorded between 65.51m AOD to at least 45m AOD (extent of the borehole). Made Ground was present across much of the site, though not all areas. Where present it was at least 0.25m thick up to 2.70m thick.

## 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 A Desk-based Assessment Report was prepared by CgMs Consulting (August 2013), a summary of the results taken from that report are presented below.

### ***Prehistoric***

- 1.3.2 The only record of prehistoric evidence within the study area is for a hammerstone, seven arrowheads and an adze, dating between the Palaeolithic and Late Bronze Age, found c.1km north-east of the site (HER ref: 3578 at TL 4109 0885). This poorly provenanced and vague entry does little to assist an assessment of the study site.
- 1.3.3 From around 4000 BC, the mobile hunter-gathering economy of the Mesolithic gradually gave way to a more settled agriculture-based subsistence. The pace of woodland clearance to create arable and pasture-based agricultural land varied regionally and locally, depending on a wide variety of climatic, topographic, social and other factors. The trend was one of a slow, but gradually increasing pace of forest clearance. It is traditionally thought that areas on London Clay tended to be cleared and settled later and at a lower density than better drained, more fertile soils.
- 1.3.4 To the east of the study area, three scheduled bowl barrows suggest some activity in the Bronze Age.



### ***Roman***

- 1.3.5 The study site lies well away from any major Roman Road. There was a Roman town at Harlow c.5km to the east and it is presumed that at least parts of the study site had been cleared of its natural woodland cover. There are no records on the HER relating to finds or features from the Roman period in the study area.

### ***Anglo-Saxon, Early Medieval and Late Medieval***

- 1.3.6 There are no finds of Anglo-Saxon or early medieval date recorded within the study area.
- 1.3.7 The landscape of this area in the medieval period would have been largely wooded, with areas cleared for arable cultivation and meadow farmed from scattered manorial estates and smaller farms. Approximately 900m to the north of the study site was Roydon Lea Farm (HER ref: 45221) and Jerrounds Manor lay c.900m to the south (HER ref: 3717 at TL 4327 0885).
- 1.3.8 The origins of Barrows Farm which lay on the northern edge of the study site are documented in the Elizabethan Chancery papers.
- 1.3.9 Great Parndon Abbey was founded in 1172 c.500m to the north-east of the study site (HER Ref: 3586 at TL 433 104). By 1180 it had moved to Beeleigh.

### ***Post-Medieval and Modern***

- 1.3.10 During the post-medieval period, cartographic and documentary sources give supplementary information.
- 1.3.11 Chapman and Andre's map of 1777 shows that by the mid 18th century Barrows Farm was in existence on the site and later map evidence suggests that it lay within an enclosed agricultural landscape.
- 1.3.12 The Ordnance Survey Drawing of 1799 labels Barrows Farm again and evidences associated field systems.
- 1.3.13 By 1845, the Great Parndon tithe map shows that there had been some rearrangement of the field boundaries. The accompanying award lists the fields as being in use for arable cultivation and meadow, with one in use as an orchard.
- 1.3.14 The Ordnance Survey edition of 1873 shows the detail of the site more clearly. The buildings of Barrows Farm are depicted as lying partially within the study site. There are also two ponds within the study site, and a small orchard. The majority of the site is occupied by fields.
- 1.3.15 By 1896 some of the buildings within the study site had been demolished or rebuilt, but the rest of the site remained unchanged. An additional building had been built within the farm complex within the study site by 1920.
- 1.3.16 Substantial changes had taken place by 1965-66. All of the farm buildings had been demolished and Elizabeth Way had been constructed along the northern and western boundaries of the site. A large works building and warehouse building had been constructed on the study site. The Ordnance Survey map makes it clear that substantial terracing and land forming had taken place in the construction of these buildings and Elizabeth Way. By 1984 both the Works and the Warehouse had been extended and additional buildings had been constructed. There has been no further substantial change to the site since.

## **1.4 Acknowledgements**

- 1.4.1 The author would like to thank CgMs Consulting who commissioned and funded the work. Specifically Caroline Butler who produced the WSI and visited the site. The project was managed by Aileen Connor. Chris Thatcher directed the fieldwork, with the assistance of Stuart Ladd, who also conducted the site survey. The excavation was monitored by Richard Havis and the Brief and advice provided by Maria Medleycott, both of Essex County Council Historic Environment Management (ECC EHM).

## 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 Three trenches were excavated using a mechanical excavator: two of 20 x 1.8m and one of 10 x 1.8m.

2.2.2 Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a wheeled JCB-type excavator using a toothless ditching bucket. A toothed bucket was fitted for the excavation of one trench where extremely heavily compacted modern hardcore and concrete was encountered.

2.2.3 The site survey was carried out using a Leica 1200 GPS with 'Smartnet'.

2.2.4 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.

2.2.5 Conditions on site were dry and overcast.

## 3 RESULTS

### 3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 No archaeological features or deposits were recorded within any of the trial trenches. Full details by trench are tabulated in Appendix A

### 3.2 Trench 1

3.2.1 Trench 1 was situated in the south-eastern corner of the development area. It was noted prior to excavation that the area was uneven underfoot and appeared to have been disturbed in the recent past. Underlying the topsoil within this trench was a particularly compacted deposit of made ground comprising hardcore, gravel and large blocks of concrete. It was not possible to break through this layer, which extended for over half of the length of the trench, even with a toothed bucket. A modern drain, that also continued into Trench 3, was recorded cutting this layer.

3.2.2 Towards the southern end of the trench the ground became softer, whereupon it was possible to excavate the layer to a depth of 0.80m using a toothless ditching bucket. Large quantities of brick, kerbstone and modern construction detritus were recorded throughout.

3.2.3 No archaeological features or finds were recorded.

### 3.3 Trench 2

3.3.1 Trench 2 was located in the northernmost corner of the site. The topsoil sealing the trench overlay a 0.42m thick, modern layer of rubble and hardcore. This in turn sealed the dark orange brown clay natural.

3.3.2 No archaeological features or finds were recorded.

### 3.4 Trench 3

3.4.1 Trench 3 lay closest to Elizabeth Way. A very similar sequence to that in Trench 1 was recorded here. The natural deposits at the southern end of the trench lay 0.60m below the current ground level and comprised a dark orange brown clay with frequent gravel inclusions.

3.4.2 The northern part of the trench was located over a highly compacted deposit of made ground comprising hardcore, gravel and large blocks of concrete, similar to that recorded in Trench 1. Once again it was not possible to excavate through this layer.

### 3.5 Discussion

3.5.1 The trial trenching revealed that the site had undergone significant modern disturbance and truncation, probably as a result of the construction of the extant buildings and associated landscaping.

### 3.6 Recommendations

3.6.1 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						
<b>General description</b>				<b>Orientation</b>	NE-SW	
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of soil overlying modern made ground.				<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	0.4	
				<b>Width (m)</b>	1.8	
				<b>Length (m)</b>	20	
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
100	Layer	-	0.15	Topsoil	-	-
101	Layer	-	0.25	Modern made ground	-	-
Trench 2						
<b>General description</b>				<b>Orientation</b>	E-W	
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of soil overlying modern made ground.				<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	0.5	
				<b>Width (m)</b>	1.8	
				<b>Length (m)</b>	10	
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
100	Layer	-	0.2	Topsoil	-	-
101	Layer	-	0.3	Modern made ground	-	-
Trench 3						
<b>General description</b>				<b>Orientation</b>	N-S	
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of soil overlying modern made ground.				<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	0.3	
				<b>Width (m)</b>	1.8	
				<b>Length (m)</b>	20	
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
100	Layer	-	0.2	Topsoil	-	-
101	Layer	-	0.3	Modern made ground	-	-

## APPENDIX B. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Butler, C 2013 Written Scheme of Investigation, Elizabeth Way, Harlow, Essex
- CgMs 2013 *Elizabeth Way, Harlow, Essex Desk-based Assessment*  
Consulting unpublished document
- Connor, A 2013 Specification for an Archaeological Evaluation, Elizabeth Way,  
Harlow

## APPENDIX C. OASIS REPORT FORM

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

### Project Details

OASIS Number	oxfordar3-161507		
Project Name	Archaeological Evaluation at Elizabeth Way, Harlow		
Project Dates (fieldwork) Start	24-09-2013	Finish	23-09-2013
Previous Work (by OA East)	No	Future Work	No

### Project Reference Codes

Site Code	XEXELZ13	Planning App. No.	
HER No.		Related HER/OASIS No.	

### Type of Project/Techniques Used

Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS 5
Development Type	Urban Commercial

### 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 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 checked="" 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
None	Select period...	None	Select period...
	Select period...		Select period...
	Select period...		Select period...

### Project Location

County	Essex	Site Address (including postcode if possible)
District	Harlow	Elizabeth Way Harlow Essex CM19 5BD
Parish	Harlow	
HER	Essex	
Study Area	8 hectares	National Grid Reference TL 429 101

### Project Originators

Organisation	OA EAST
Project Brief Originator	CgMs Consulting
Project Design Originator	OA East
Project Manager	Aileen Connor
Supervisor	Chris Thatcher

### Project Archives

Physical Archive	Digital Archive	Paper Archive
OA East	OA East	OA East

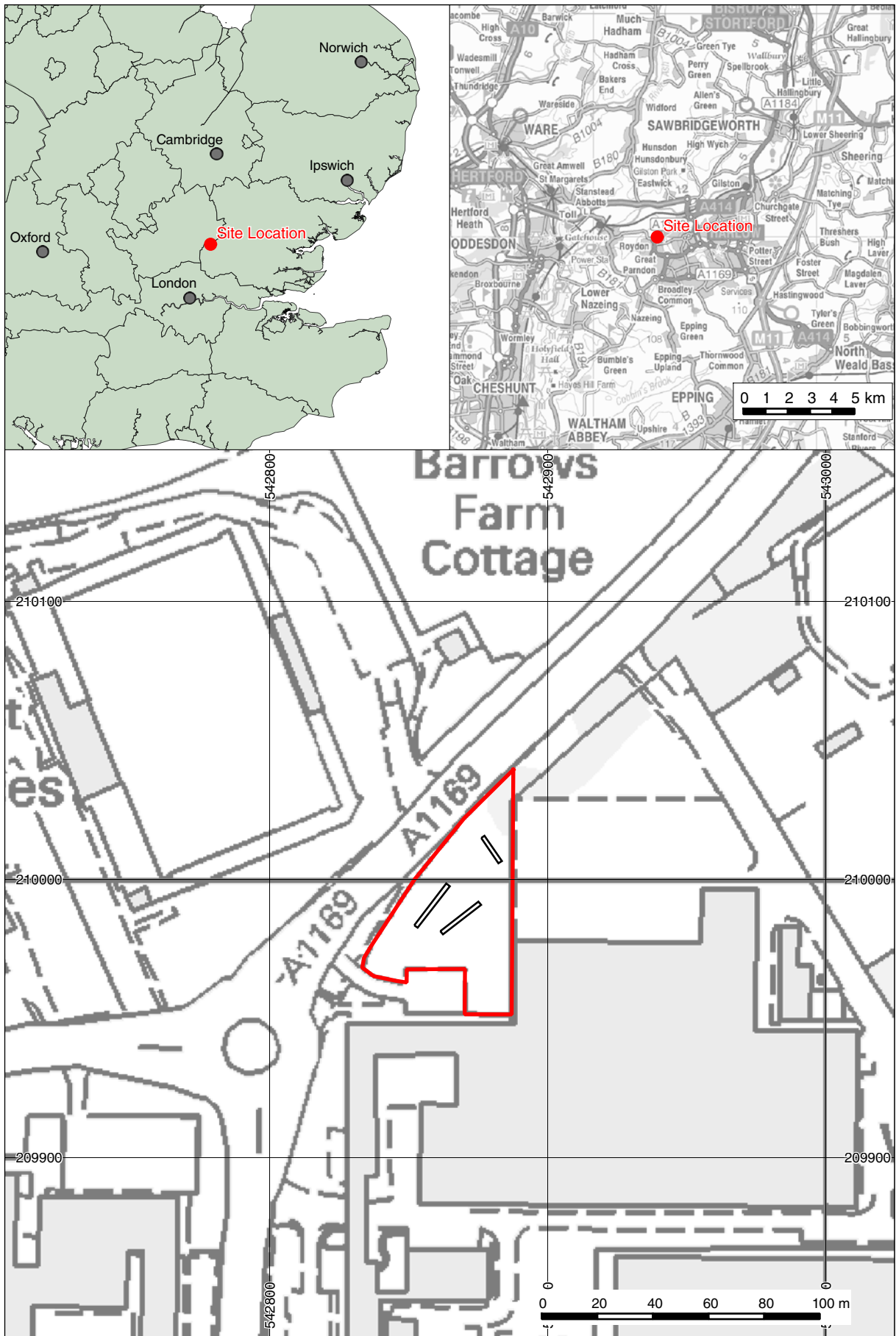
### Archive Contents/Media

	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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 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 type="checkbox"/> Survey

**Notes:**





Ordnance Survey. © Crown Copyright [year]. All rights reserved. Reference number 10001998

Figure 1: Site location showing archaeological trenches (black) in development area (red)

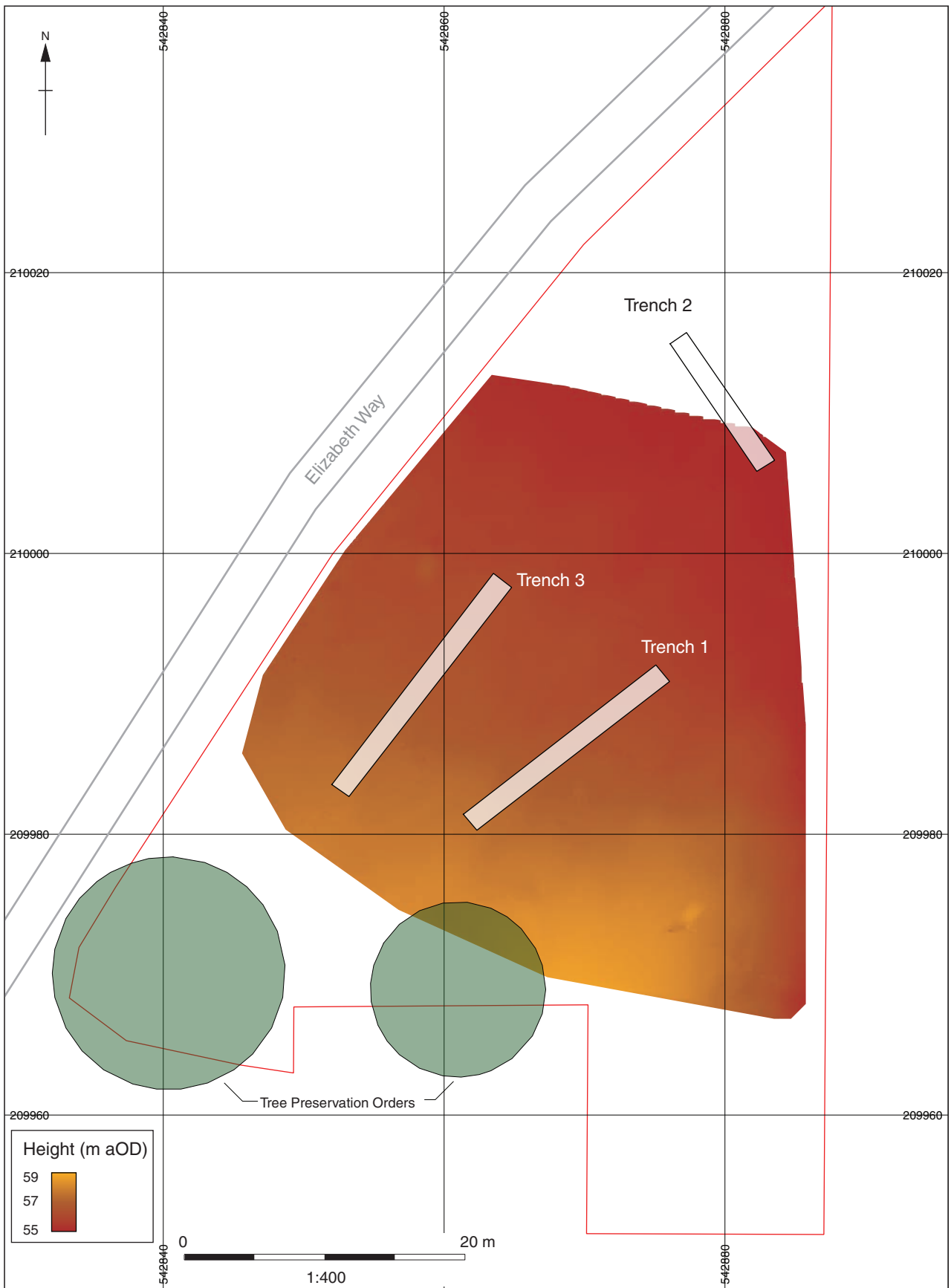


Figure 2: Trench locations and topographical survey

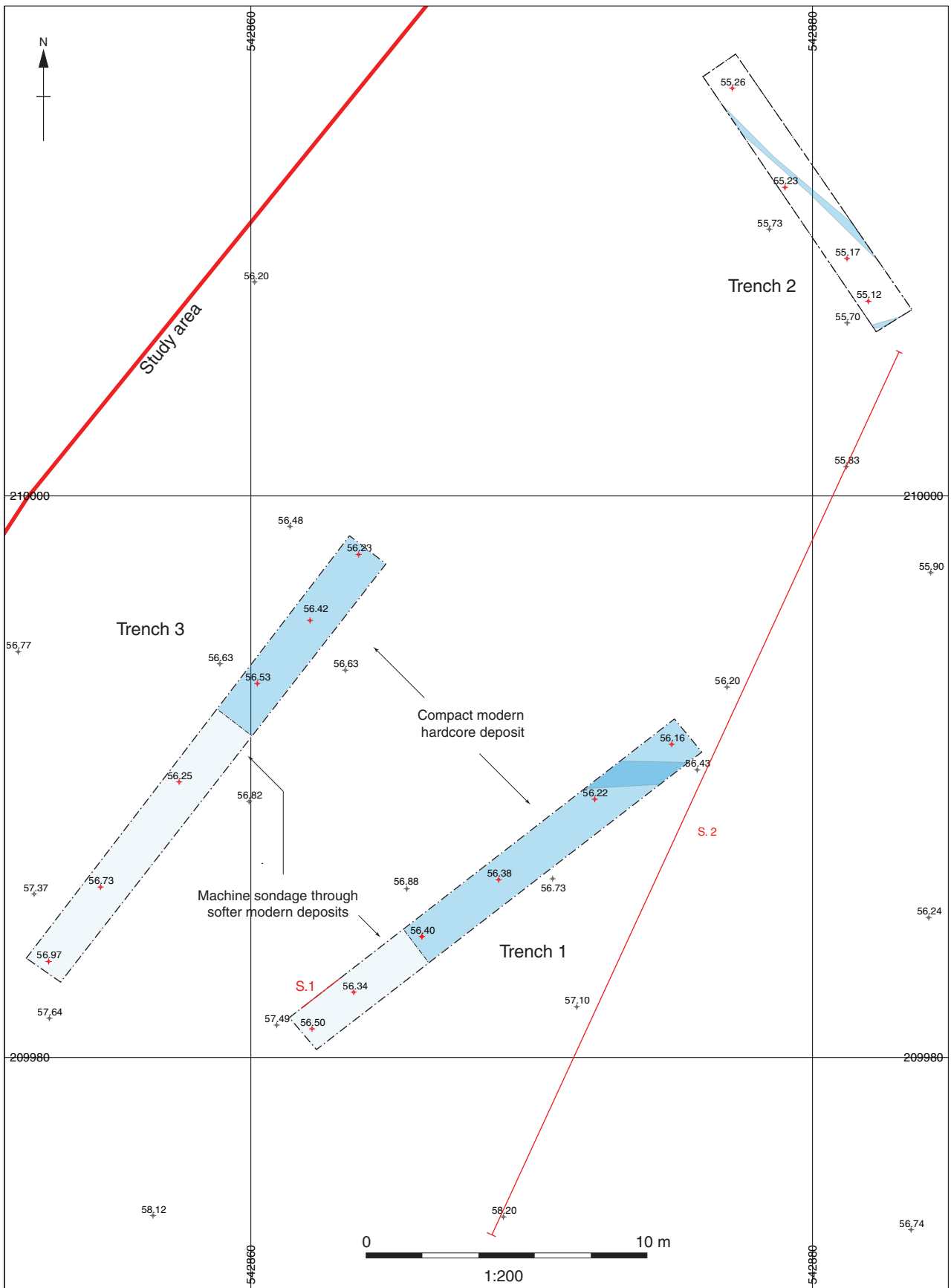


Figure 3: Trench plans

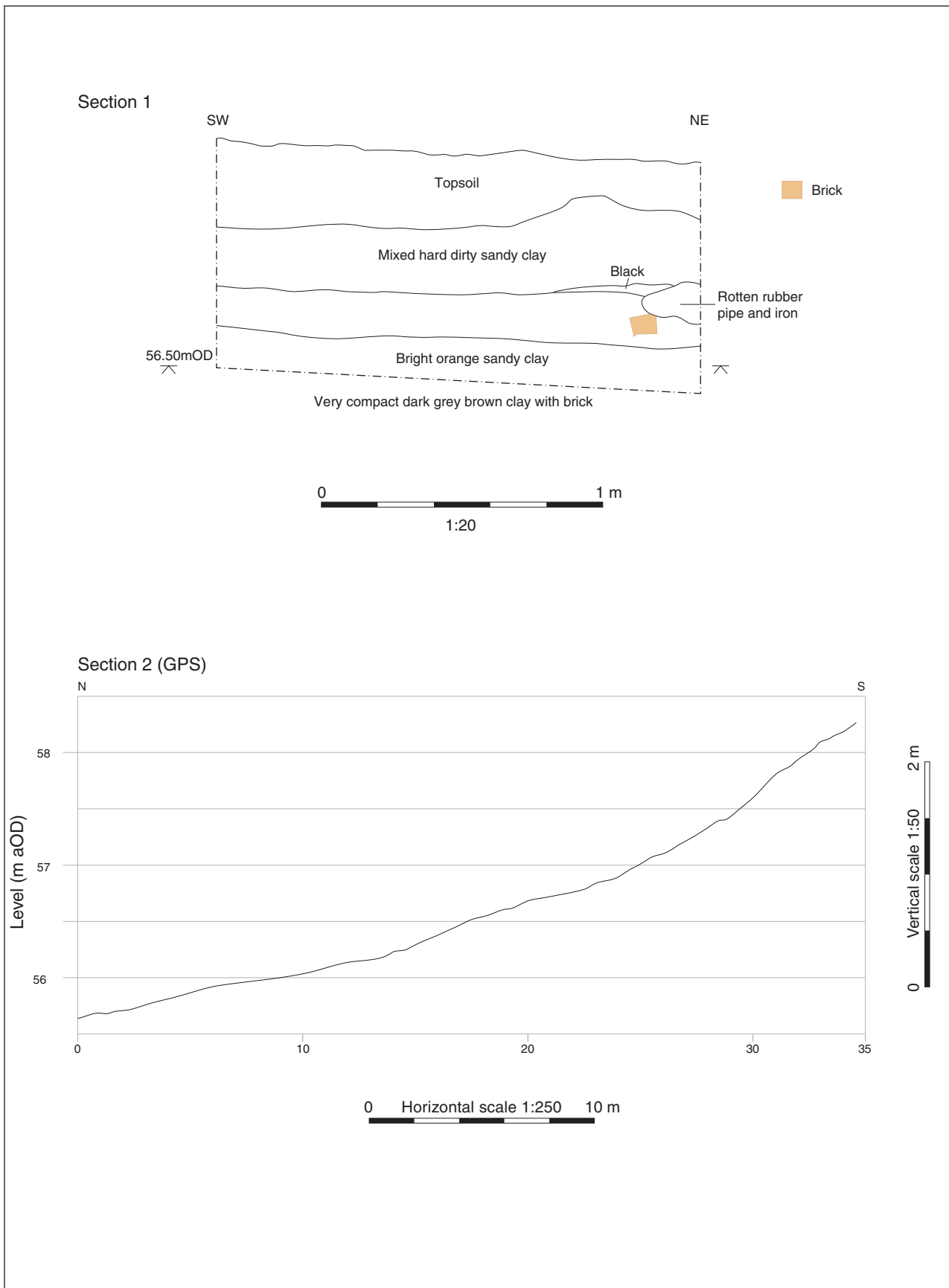


Figure 4: Sections



Plate 1: Trench 1



Plate 2: Trench 2



Plate 3: Trench 3



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