

# Land to the Rear of Orchard Close, Cottenham, Cambridgeshire



## Archaeological Evaluation Report



February 2009

Client: Cocksedge Building Contractors Ltd

OA East Report No: 1077

OASIS No: oxfordar3-51975

NGR: TL 4435 6721

## Land to the Rear of Orchard Close, Cottenham, Cambridgeshire

*By Thomas Lyons BA*

*Editor: Richard Mortimer MIFA*

*Illustrator: Lucy Offord BA*

*Report Date: February 2009*



**Report Number:** 1077  
**Site Name:** Orchard Close, Cottenham  
**HER Event No:** ECB 3087  
**Date of Works:** December 2008  
**Client Name:** Cocksedge Building Contractors Ltd  
**Client Ref:** OCT 183/08  
**Planning Ref:** S/0686/08/F  
**Grid Ref:** TL 4435 6721  
**Site Code:** COT ORC 08  
**Finance Code:** COT ORC 08  
**Receiving Body:** CCC Stores, Landbeach

**Accession No:**

**Prepared by:** Thomas Lyons  
**Position:** Supervisor  
**Date:** February 2009

**Checked by:** Richard Mortimer  
**Position:** Project Manager  
**Date:** February 2009  
**Signed:**



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**Oxford Archaeology East,**  
15 Trafalgar Way,  
Bar Hill,  
Cambridge,  
CB23 8SQ

t: 01223 850500  
f: 01223 850599  
e: oaeast@thehumanjourney.net  
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net/oaeast>

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## Table of Contents

<b>Summary.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1 Introduction.....</b>	<b>7</b>
1.1 Location and scope of work.....	7
1.2 Geology and topography.....	7
1.3 Archaeological and historical background.....	7
1.4 Acknowledgements.....	8
<b>2 Aims and Methodology.....</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1 Aims.....	9
2.2 Methodology.....	9
<b>3 Results.....</b>	<b>10</b>
3.1 Introduction .....	10
3.2 Trench, topsoil & subsoil depths (Table 1).....	10
3.4 Finds Summary.....	10
<b>4 Discussion and Conclusions.....</b>	<b>11</b>
4.3 Significance.....	11
4.4 Recommendations.....	11
<b>Appendix A. Trench Descriptions and Context Inventory.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Appendix B. Bibliography .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Appendix C. OASIS Report Form .....</b>	<b>14</b>

## List of Figures

	Convention Key
Fig. 1	Site location map
Fig. 2	Section Drawings

## List of Plates

Plate 1	Trench Section
Plate 2	Possible Furrows

## **Summary**

*Between the 2nd and 4th of December 2008, Oxford Archaeology East undertook an archaeological evaluation at land to the rear of Orchard Close, Cottenham. No archaeological features or artefacts were found. Prior to the site's recent use as arable land it had contained an orchard. This resulted in many tree throws being present beneath the subsoil which cut slightly into to the natural geology.*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 An archaeological evaluation was conducted at Orchard Close, Cottenham, Cambridgeshire.
- 1.1.2 This archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Andy Thomas of Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC; Planning Application S/0686/08/F), supplemented by a Specification prepared by OA East (formerly Cambridgeshire County Council's CAM ARC).
- 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 *Planning and Policy Guidance 16 - Archaeology and Planning* (Department of the Environment 1990). The results will enable decisions to be made by CCC, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority, with regard to the treatment of any archaeological remains found.
- 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 Cottenham is located at the north east end of a pronounced ridge (BGS Sheet 188). The proposed development area is on Lower Greensand overlying Kimmeridge Clay and is located at 10.7m AOD towards the bottom of the ridge on a southeast facing slope that falls away to the Cottenham Pastures. To the north west of the ridge the land falls away into the valley of the Beck Brook .

### 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The proposed development area lies in an area of archaeological potential between two main, known areas of interest. Some 250m to the south west are extensive cropmark remains of probable Iron Age and/or Roman date, the full extent of which is not known (HER No. 09547). To the north and east is the Saxon and Medieval village core of Cottenham (HER 15525, 15526), again the full extent of which is unknown.
- 1.3.2 The Lordship Lane excavations in 1996/7 uncovered significant evidence for the development of Early and Middle Saxon Cottenham. Several timber buildings and a sunken feature building were found within an extensive ditch system. By the 11th Century this area had gone out of direct occupation. The medieval core of Cottenham appears to have grown around this Saxon settlement, in the Lamb's Lane/Lordship Lane/High St area some 800m to the northeast of the proposed development area (Mortimer 2000).
- 1.3.3 The Roman earthwork and cropmark site of Bullocks Haste on the Car Dyke lies some 2km to the north east and the road from Cambridge through Histon and Cottenham is thought to be of at least Roman origin. The road runs approximately 500m south of the proposed development area.



## **1.4 Acknowledgements**

- 1.4.1 The project was commissioned and funded by John Brand of Cocksedge Building Contractors Ltd. Fieldwork was carried out by Tom Lyons and Johnny Lay. Richard Mortimer managed the project and Kasia Gdaniec from Cambridgeshire County Council monitored the evaluation.

## 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 Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a wheeled JCB-type excavator using a toothless ditching bucket.
- 2.2.2 The site survey was carried out by Taleyna Fletcher using a Leica GPS which was orientated to the OS Grid.
- 2.2.3 Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal detector. All metal-detected and hand-collected finds were retained for inspection, other than those which were obviously modern.
- 2.2.4 Topsoil and subsoils were sorted for artefacts. 45 litres of topsoil and between 60 and 70 litres of subsoil were sorted at the ends of each trench.
- 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 good.

### 3 RESULTS

#### 3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Six trenches were excavated on alternating orientations along the length of the proposed development area. All were 20m in length and excavated to a depth of between 0.8m and 1m. Topsoil was approximately 0.3m thick and subsoil was between 0.45m and 0.5m thick. The subsoil was occasionally composed of two separate but merging soil layers, the lower of which contained more sand. Some of the trenches were over-cut into the natural geology. None of the trenches contained any archaeological features or finds of pre-modern date.

<b>Trench</b>	<b>Topsoil (m)</b>	<b>Subsoil (m)</b>	<b>Total depth (m)</b>
1	0.35	0.45	0.9
2	0.3	0.5	0.8
3	0.25	0.5	0.8
4	0.3	0.4	0.8
5	0.3	0.4	0.9
6	0.3	0.5	0.9

Table 1: Topsoil and Subsoil depths

#### 3.2 Finds Summary

3.2.1 No pre-modern artefacts were recovered from any of the trenches or spoil.

## 4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Until recently the proposed development area was used as arable land. Before then it was part of a series of orchards, some of which is still present in the enclosure immediately to the north. This has resulted in considerable tree root/bole disturbance both within and beneath the subsoil over the whole of the site. These have also disturbed the sandy subsoil, with little visible distinction between it and the natural geology. Edges of possible furrows were visible at the base of the subsoil suggesting that some evidence of earlier, medieval ridge and furrow agriculture survives (Plate x).

### 4.1 Significance

4.1.1 No archaeological features were present on site with the possible exception of faint furrow remains, and no pre-modern artefacts or ecofacts were recovered. The development site appears to lie within an area not directly occupied by either of the known settlements to the southwest (IA/Roman) or the northeast (Saxon/Medieval).

### 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

Trenches 1- 6						
<b>General description</b>				<b>Orientation</b>	NW-SE & NE SW	
Trenches devoid of archaeological features. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying a natural of silty sand.				<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	0.8	
				<b>Width (m)</b>	1.6	
				<b>Length (m)</b>	20	
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1	Layer	-	0.25	Topsoil	-	-
2	Layer	-	0.55	Subsoil	-	-
3		-	-	Natural Geology	-	-

## APPENDIX B. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Mortimer, M and Hall, D. 2000. Village Development and Ceramic Sequence: The Middle to Late Saxon village at Lordship Lane, Cottenham, Cambridgeshire. PCAS 89: 5-34

Cambridgeshire HER ([heritagegateway.org.uk](http://heritagegateway.org.uk))

## APPENDIX A. OASIS REPORT FORM

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

### Project Details

OASIS Number	<input type="text" value="oxfordar3-51975"/>			
Project Name	<input type="text" value="Land to the north west of Orchard Close, Cottenham, Cambridgeshire"/>			
Project Dates (fieldwork)	Start	<input type="text" value="01-12-2008"/>	Finish	<input type="text" value="03-12-2008"/>
Previous Work (by OA East)	<input type="text" value="No"/>	Future Work	<input type="text" value="Unknown"/>	

### Project Reference Codes

Site Code	<input type="text" value="COT ORC 08"/>	Planning App. No.	<input type="text" value="S/0686/08/F"/>
HER No.	<input type="text" value="ECB 3087"/>	Related HER/OASIS No.	<input type="text"/>

### Type of Project/Techniques Used

Prompt	<input type="text" value="Planning condition"/>
Development Type	<input type="text" value="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
<input type="text" value="none"/>	<input type="text" value="Select period..."/>	<input type="text" value="none"/>	<input type="text" value="Select period..."/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="Select period..."/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="Select period..."/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="Select period..."/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="Select period..."/>

### Project Location

County	<input type="text" value="Cambridgeshire"/>	Site Address (including postcode if possible)
District	<input type="text" value="SCDC"/>	<input type="text" value="Orchard Close&lt;br/&gt;Cottenham&lt;br/&gt;Cambridgeshire CB24 8TN"/>
Parish	<input type="text" value="Cottenham"/>	
HER	<input type="text" value="Cambridgeshire"/>	
Study Area	<input type="text" value="0.48ha"/>	National Grid Reference
		<input type="text" value="TL 4435 6721"/>

### Project Originators

Organisation	OA EAST
Project Brief Originator	Andy Thomas
Project Design Originator	Richard Mortimer
Project Manager	Richard Mortimer
Supervisor	Thomas Lyons

### Project Archives

Physical Archive	Digital Archive	Paper Archive
Cambs County Store	OA East	Cambs County Store ...
COT ORC 08	COT ORC 08	COT ORC 08

### 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>




Digital Media	Paper Media
<input type="checkbox"/> Database	<input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photos
<input type="checkbox"/> GIS	<input type="checkbox"/> Context Sheet
<input type="checkbox"/> Geophysics	<input type="checkbox"/> Correspondence
<input type="checkbox"/> Images	<input type="checkbox"/> Diary
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Illustrations	<input type="checkbox"/> Drawing
<input type="checkbox"/> Moving Image	<input type="checkbox"/> Manuscript
<input type="checkbox"/> Spreadsheets	<input type="checkbox"/> Map
<input 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:**



## Drawing Conventions

### Plans

Limit of Excavation	—————
Deposit - Conjectured	-----
Natural Features	—————
Sondages/Machine Strip	- - - - -
Intrusion/Truncation	- · - · - · -
Illustrated Section	————— <span style="color: red;">S.14</span>
Archaeological Deposit	
Excavated Slot	
Modern Deposit	
Cut Number	<span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">118</span>

### 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	<span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">118</span>
Deposit Number	117
Ordnance Datum	18.45m OD ^
Inclusions	



Figure 1: Location of development area (red)

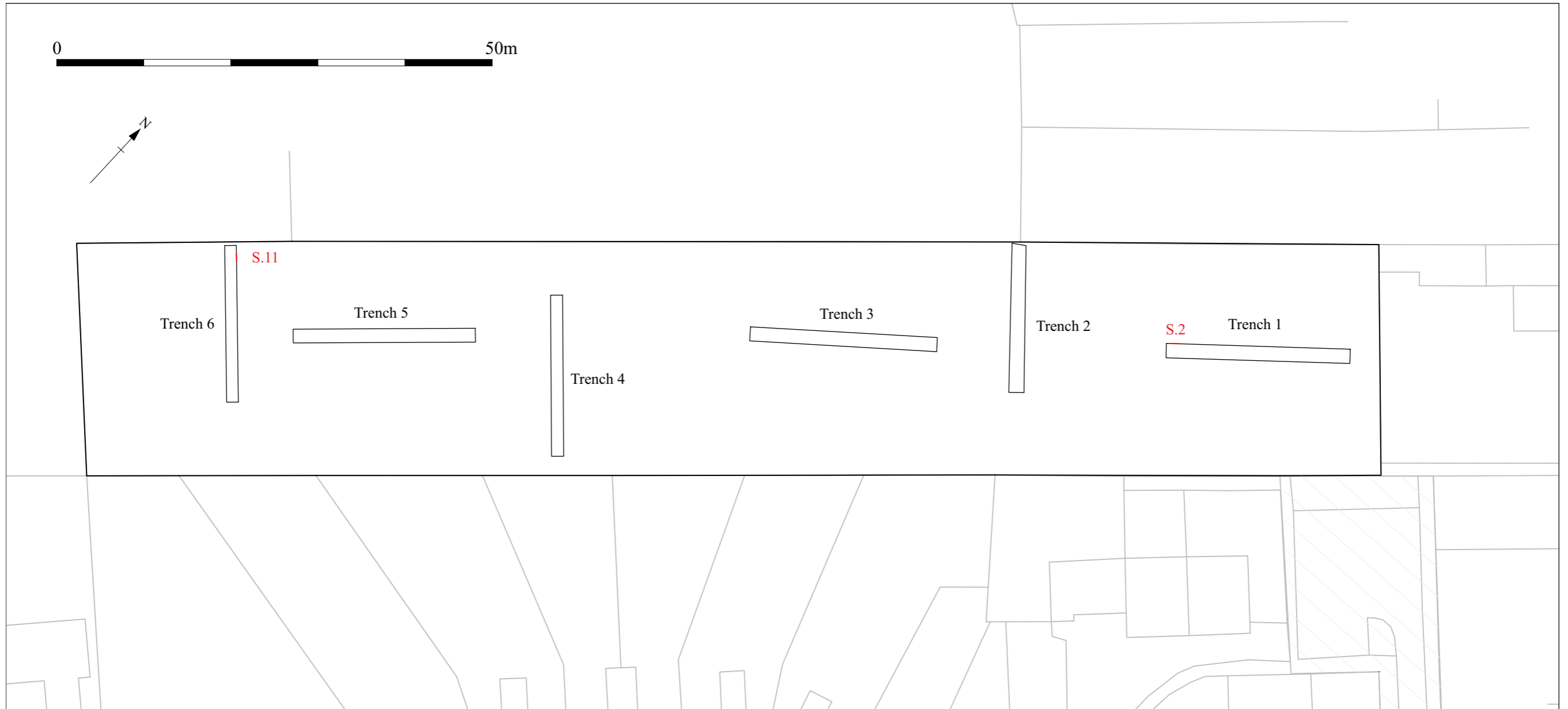


Figure 2: Trench plan at 1:2000

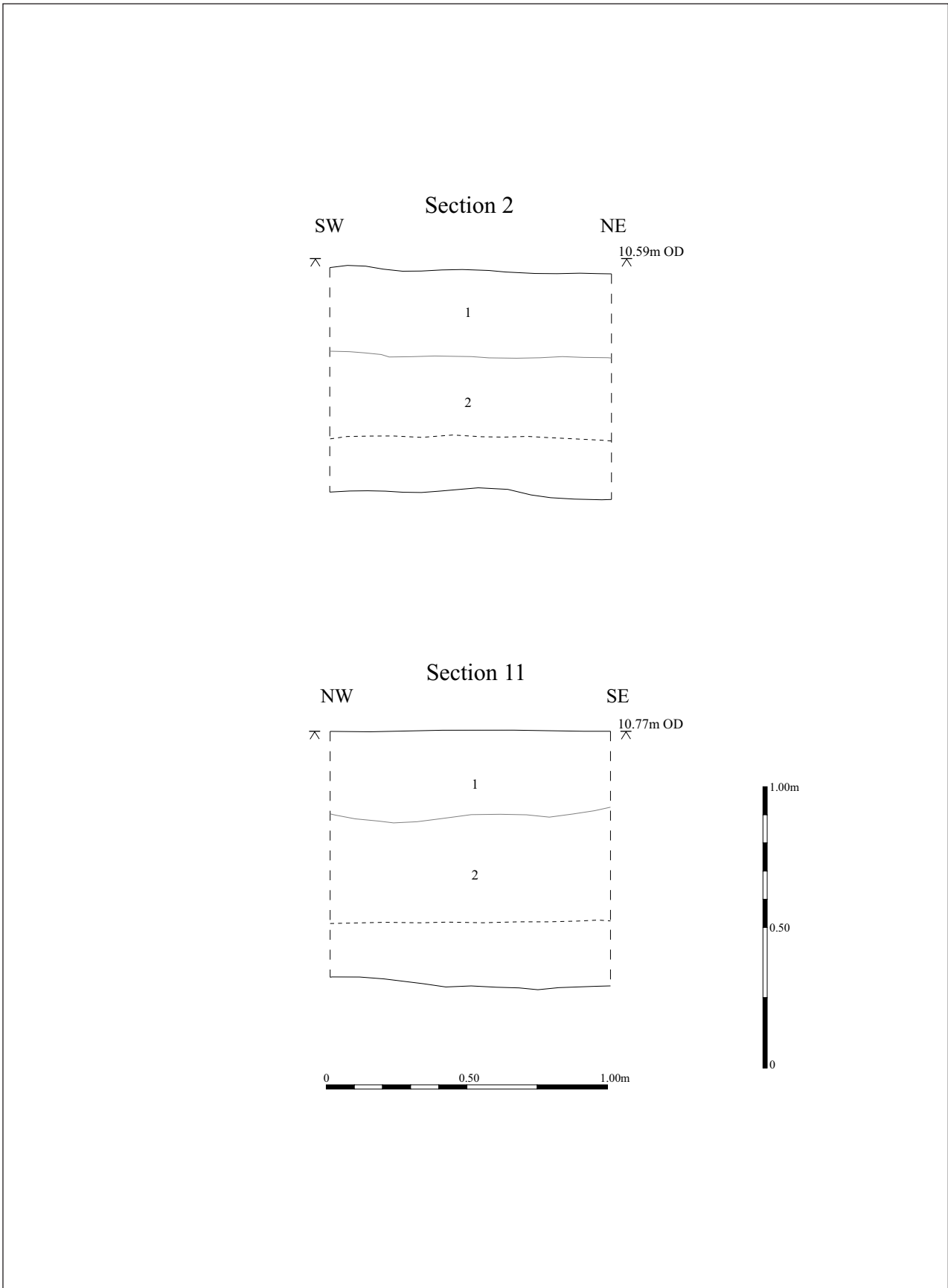


Figure 3: Section drawings at 1:20



*Plate 1: Trench Section*



*Plate 2: Possible Furrows*



### **Head Office/Registered Office**

Janus House  
Osney Mead  
Oxford OX2 0ES

t: +44 (0) 1865 263 800  
f: +44 (0) 1865 793 496  
e: [info@thehumanjourney.net](mailto:info@thehumanjourney.net)  
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net>

### **OA North**

Mill 3  
Moor Lane  
Lancaster LA1 1GF

t: +44 (0) 1524 541 000  
f: +44 (0) 1524 848 606  
e: [oanorth@thehumanjourney.net](mailto: oanorth@thehumanjourney.net)  
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net>

### **OA East**

15 Trafalgar Way  
Bar Hill  
Cambridgeshire  
CB23 8SQ

t: +44 (0) 1223 850 500  
f: +44 (0) 1223 850 599  
e: [oaeast@thehumanjourney.net](mailto: oaeast@thehumanjourney.net)  
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net/oaeast>

### **OA Méditerranée**

115 Rue Merlot  
ZAC La Louvade  
34 130 Mauguio  
France

t: +33 (0) 4.67.57.86.92  
f: +33 (0) 4.67.42.65.93  
e: [oamed@oamed.fr](mailto: oamed@oamed.fr)  
w: <http://oamed.fr/>



**Director:** David Jennings, BA MIFA FSA

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