A1 Peterborough to Blyth Grade Separated Junctions: A1/A151 and A1/B6403 Colsterworth Interchange

Archaeological Evaluation Report

Oxford Archaeology

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A1 PETERBOROUGH TO BLYTH GRADE SEPARATED JUNCTIONS SCHEME A1/A151/B676 and A1/B6403 COLSTERWORTH INTERCHANGE

NGR: SK 937 237(centered)

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

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SUMMARY

In May 2004 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out a field evaluation at Colsterworth Interchange on behalf of Interserve Atkins Joint Venture. Eight trenches were excavated across the site and no archaeology was revealed. The sequence of soils exhibited during the fieldwork and the retrieval of two stray finds suggests that the proposal area has been in use as agricultural land from at least the late medieval period.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 In May 2004 OA carried out a field evaluation at Colsterworth, Lincolnshire (NGR:SK 937 237) on behalf of Interserve Atkins in respect of a planning application for a programme of improvements to the A1 between Peterborough and Blyth (Fig. 1). The Study Area (Fig. 2) comprises 8.5 ha of land to the south of the existing roundabout, 5.85 ha to the west of the A1, and 2.5 ha to the east of the A1 and south of the existing service area. All works were carried out in accordance with an approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (OA 2004).

1.2 Geology and topography

1.2.1 The solid geology of the area around Colsterworth comprises Jurassic Middle Lias strata. The land lies at approximately 115 m OD (ASUD, 2004).

1.2.2 Current land use is agricultural.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

The following is a summary of the survey carried out as part of the Stage 2 Archaeological Report (RPS, 2002.)

1.3.1 Detailed desktop assessment and walkover survey has been undertaken in the area of the proposed junction. The area is one of mixed arable and pastoral agriculture with medium and large sized fields bounded by thorn hedges which probably date from late 18th century Parliamentary Enclosure.

1.3.2 South of the junction with the A151 and B676, the A1 follows the line of Ermine Street. However, north of the roundabout, the A1 swings to the north-west and Ermine Street pursues a more direct northerly course through agricultural land.

1.3.3 Immediately to the north-east of the existing roundabout at the junction between the A1/A151 and B676 there are two fields (Fields 1 and 3, Pell Frischmann, 2002) in which ridge and furrow is clearly visible on the surface. This is almost certainly part of a wider system and is well preserved, around 6.5 m between ridge tops and a maximum height of around 300 mm.

1.3.4 Further north on the east side of the A1, arable agriculture has removed any obvious trace of ridge and furrow. However, the 1971 aerial photographs show vestiges of the ridge and furrow system which have since been eroded. The results of the limited

geophysical survey also suggested the continuation of the ridge and furrow system to the north.

1.3.5 There is one listed structure in the immediate area of the proposed works. This is a cast iron milestone at SK 493877 323818 (SMR list no. 1004.003).

1.3.6 To the immediate north-east of the existing roundabout is the site of a former WWII POW camp. No buildings remain at this site and it lies close to a poultry farm.

1.3.7 A total area of 4.6 ha has been the subject of a geophysical survey (ASUD, 2003). This comprised four areas to the east of the A1.

1.3.8 Area 1 surveyed 1.44 ha of the field immediately to the south of the dismantled railway (SK 4932 3249: Field 6, Pell Frischmann, 2002). Few anomalies were detected with the exception of a possible ditch in the central part of the area.

1.3.9 Area 2 surveyed 1.44 ha of the field south of Area 1 (SK 4935 3245: Field 5, Pell Frischmann, 2002). In addition to *"small items of near-surface ferrous debris"*, the survey identified four possible soil filled ditches and a few amorphous readings which could reflect irregular pits.

1.3.10 Area 3 surveyed 0.8 ha of the field south of Area 2 (SK 4936 3243: Field 4, Pell Frischmann, 2002). In addition to *"small items of near-surface ferrous litter"*, the survey identified sub-surface remains of ridge and furrow.

1.3.11 Area 4 surveyed 0.92 ha along the projected northern continuation of Ermine Street, north-east of the junction between the A1 and the A151, and west of the poultry farm which stands near the location of the WWII POW camp (Fields 1 and 3, Pell Frischmann, 2002). Whilst the survey did not detect any evidence of Ermine Street, anomalies were identified which may reflect existing reinforced concrete platforms and ferrous and fired building debris (associated with the POW camp?), which either obscure any underlying features or have truncated them.

1.3.12 In April 2004, further geophysical survey was conducted on the land take for the current scheme by Archaeological Services University of Durham (ASUD, 2004). Detailed fluxgate survey revealed a weak positive anomaly *c.* 10 m wide and oriented north-south, this was interpreted as a possible palaeochannel or hollow-way. Further weak anomalies were recorded and these may represent small field boundary ditches.

2 AIMS OF THE EVALUATION

2.1.1 The aims of the evaluation were to determine the location, extent, date, character, and state of preservation of any archaeological remains surviving within the Study Area. The trenches were located in order to test 'blank' areas of the site as well as the weak geophysical anomalies. Attention has been given to remains of all periods, including evidence for past environments. Provision for environmental sampling was included.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1.1 The archaeological investigation was undertaken in two stages and comprised of a programme of geophysical survey and trenched evaluation as detailed below.

3.1.2 ***Phase I geophysical survey***

3.1.3 The entirety of the area affected by the proposed modifications (8.5 ha) was the subject of a magnetic susceptibility survey to enable the targeting of gradiometer survey. Detailed fluxgate gradiometer survey was undertaken across 30% (2.6 ha) of the site and was restricted to the areas of impact (Fig 3a/b). The results of the geophysics were used to identify areas of archaeological potential and inform the subsequent programme of trial trenching (Fig. 4a/b).

Phase II trial trenching

3.1.4 A total of 8 trenches were excavated within the route of the proposed roadworks. The trenches were positioned to define and characterise likely areas of archaeological sensitivity indicated by the geophysical survey, and to confirm the absence of features where no positive results were obtained (Fig 2).

3.1.5 The trenches were excavated under archaeological supervision by 360° tracked mechanical excavators equipped with a toothless ditching/grading buckets. Trenches were excavated to the top of the first archaeological horizon, or if these were absent, to the underlying natural geology.

3.1.6 The trenches were cleaned by hand and no deposits or features of archaeological significance were present. Trench plans were drawn at a scale of 1:50. Section drawings of features and sample sections of trenches were drawn at a scale of 1:20 or 1: 10, as appropriate. All trenches were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film. Recording followed procedures laid down in the *OAU Fieldwork Manual* (ed. D Wilkinson, 1992).

4 PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

4.1.1 A general description of the soils, ground conditions and the general stratigraphic sequence is given below. The empty trenches are listed but not otherwise described. This is followed by a description of the finds and a summary and discussion of the results. Individual contexts are detailed within the Table of Contexts (*Appendix 1*).

5 RESULTS: GENERAL

5.1 Soils and ground conditions

5.1.1 The underlying solid geology of the site comprises Jurassic Middle and Lower Lias strata. The three fields investigated were of short cropped agricultural land. The soils were superficially wet after a period of heavy rainfall.

5.2 The stratigraphic sequence

5.2.1 The stratigraphic sequence was fairly consistent across the site. The undisturbed natural was a light brownish yellow clay with frequently occurring limestones of varying sizes. This deposit was encountered between 0.5m and 0.85 m below present ground level.

5.2.2 All of the trenches, with the exception of Trench 1, exhibited a subsoil. This soil consisted of a mid brownish orange clay with frequently occurring sub angular limestone pieces. This soil was undoubtedly derived from previous ploughing and was up to 0.5 m thick. The absence of this deposit from Trench 1 is due to the siting of the trench on top of a slight slope.

5.2.3 The topsoil was recorded as a mid brownish grey silty clay loam. This deposit contained frequent small pebbles and limestone pieces. Two finds were recovered from this deposit in Trenches 2 and 3; a single fragment of red tile from Trench 2 dating from the medieval period or later - probably deposited as manure, and a single base sherd of Black Slipware pottery from Trench 3 dated to the late medieval or early post-medieval period and of similar origin. The topsoil was *c* 0.35 m thick.

5.3 Distribution of archaeological deposits

5.3.1 With the exception of Trench 2, all of the trenches were archaeologically sterile.

6 RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS

6.1 Description of deposits

Trench 2

6.1.1 This trench was located as shown in figure 2. The trench was orientated north to south and measured 30 m in length with a basal width of 1.8 m. The natural geology (202) was observed at a depth of 0.6 m below current ground surface. The natural was a light brownish yellow clay with frequently occurring limestones of varying sizes.

6.1.2 A very shallow sub circular feature was observed cutting into deposit 202. This feature was 0.19 m in diameter and no greater than 0.1 m thick. It was filled with a single deposit of dark brownish grey clay with rarely occurring charcoal flecks and burnt clay. This feature could have been the remnant of a heavily truncated post hole, or possibly the remains of a tree throw pit. No finds were recovered from this feature (Fig. 5).

6.1.3 The underlying geology (202) was overlain by a subsoil deposit 201. This deposit was up to 0.2 m thick and comprised a mid brownish orange clay with frequent small limestone pieces. No finds were retrieved from this deposit.

6.1.4 The subsoil was overlain by a mid brownish grey silty clay loam 200. This deposit contained frequent small pebbles and limestone pieces. A single piece of red tile was

recovered from this context and has been dated to the medieval or post medieval period.

6.2 Finds

6.2.1 Two finds were recovered from topsoil contexts (201) and (301). Both finds dated from the late medieval or early post medieval and consisted of a pot base of Black Slipware and a fragment of red tile.

6.3 Palaeo-environmental remains

6.3.1 No deposits of palaeo-environmental potential were observed during the evaluation.

7 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

7.1 Reliability of field investigation

7.1.1 The evaluation revealed a uniform stratigraphic sequence of soils across the Study Area. The sequence of soils was very simple and was typical of the sequence exhibited on arable land. The geophysical results of the area also indicated that the land was archaeologically quiet apart from field boundary ditches.

7.2 Overall interpretation

Summary of results

7.2.1 Eight trial trenches were excavated across land at Colsterworth Interchange in order to assess the presence or absence of archaeological deposits likely to be affected by the roadworks. No definite features of archaeological significance were revealed, however, 2 topsoil finds dating from the late medieval would indicate that the area had been farmed since at least this period.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench No	Cxt No.	Type	Width	Thickness	Comment	Finds	No.	Date
1								
	100	Dep	1.5	0.37	Topsoil			
	101	Dep	1.5		Natural			
2								
	200	Dep	1.5	0.35	Topsoil	Tile	1	P. Med
	201	Dep	1.5	0.2	Subsoil			
	202	Dep	1.5		Natural			
3								
	300	Dep	1.5	0.32	Topsoil	Black Slip	1	L. Med
	301	Dep	1.5	0.5	Subsoil			
	302	Dep	1.5		Natural			
4								
	400	Dep	1.5	0.3	Topsoil			
	401	Dep	1.5	0.5	Subsoil			
	402	Dep	1.5		Natural			
5								
	500	Dep	1.5	0.3	Topsoil			
	501	Dep	1.5	0.5	Subsoil			
	502	Dep	1.5		Natural			
6								
	600	Dep	1.5	0.35	Topsoil			
	601	Dep	1.5	0.3	Subsoil			
	602	Dep	1.5		Natural			
7								
	700	Dep	1.5	0.3	Topsoil			
	701	Dep	1.5	0.5	Subsoil			
	702	Dep	1.5		Natural			
8								
	800	Dep	1.5	0.3	Topsoil			
	801	Dep	1.5	0.35	Subsoil			
	802	Dep	1.5		Natural			

APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

ASUD, 2004 *A1 Peterborough to Blyth. Grade Separated Junctions at Apleyhead, Gonerby Moor and Colsterworth. Geophysical Surveys*

OA, 1992 *Fieldwork Manual* (1st edition D.Wilkinson)

OA, 2004 *A1 Peterborough to Blyth Grade Separated Junctions Scheme A1/A151/B676 and A1/B6403 Colsterworth Interchange: Written Scheme of Investigation for a Field Evaluation*

Pell Frischmann, 2002 *Stage 2 Cultural Heritage Report*

RPS, 2002 *A1 GSJ Colsterworth,* Stage 2 Archaeological Report

APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: Colsterworth
Site code: PBCO 04
Grid reference: SK 49 32
Type of evaluation: Trial Trenching
Date and duration of project: 5th May 2004. 2 days
Area of site: 8.5 ha
Summary of results: No significant archaeological finds/deposits. Area used as agricultural land.
Location of archive: The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Lincoln Museum in due course, under the following accession number: 2004.103

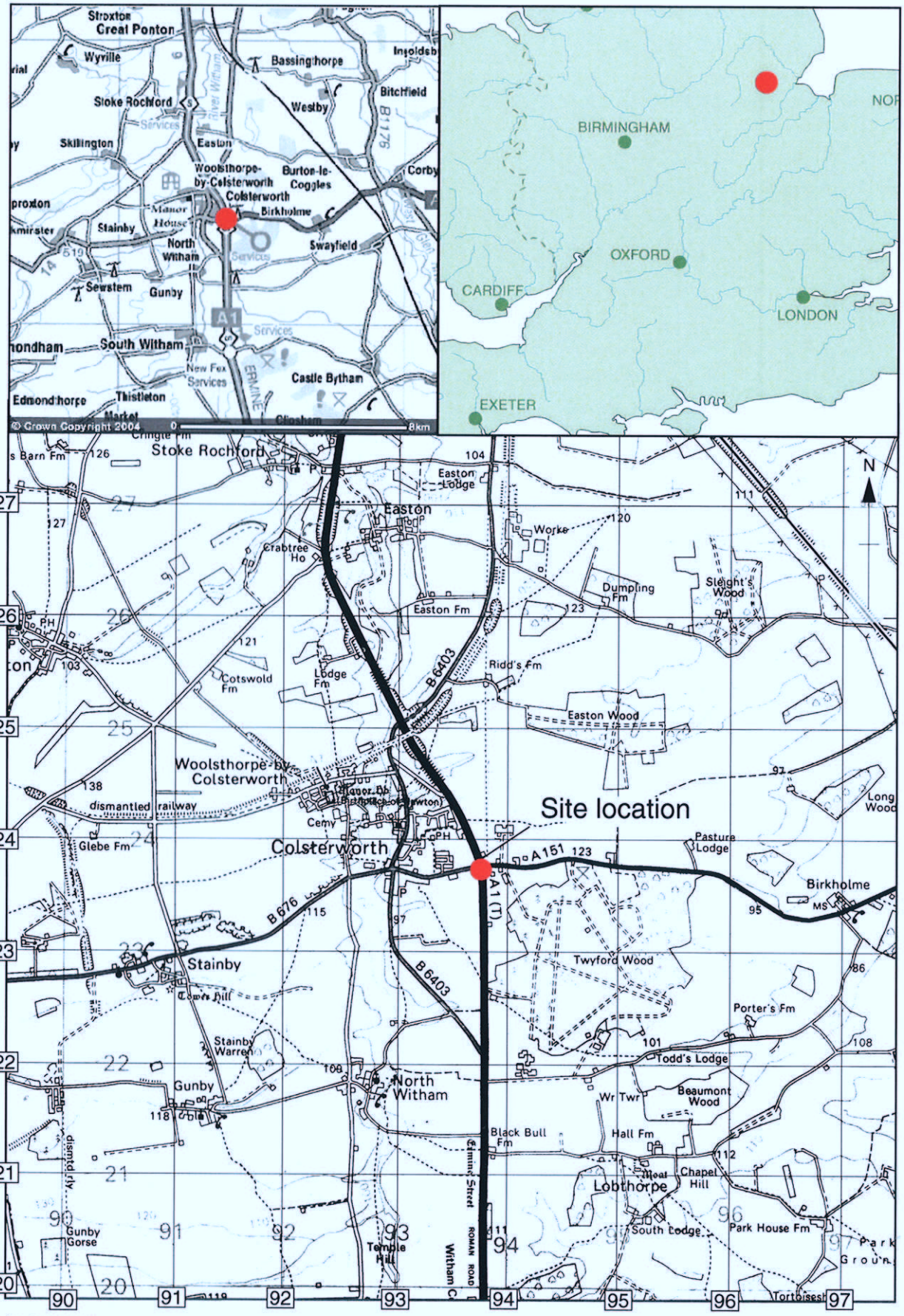

Figure 1: Site location

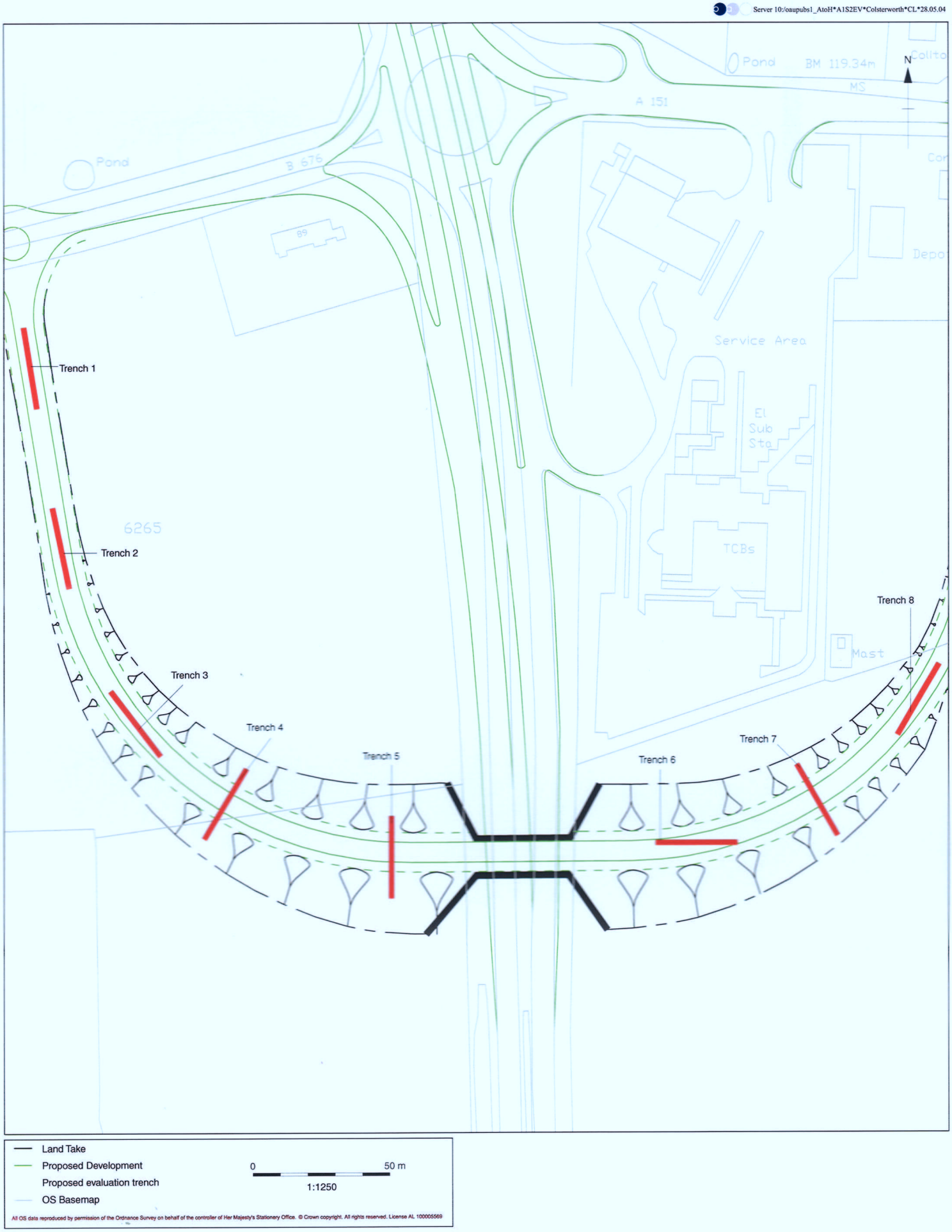

Figure 2: Trench Location Plan (Colsterworth South)

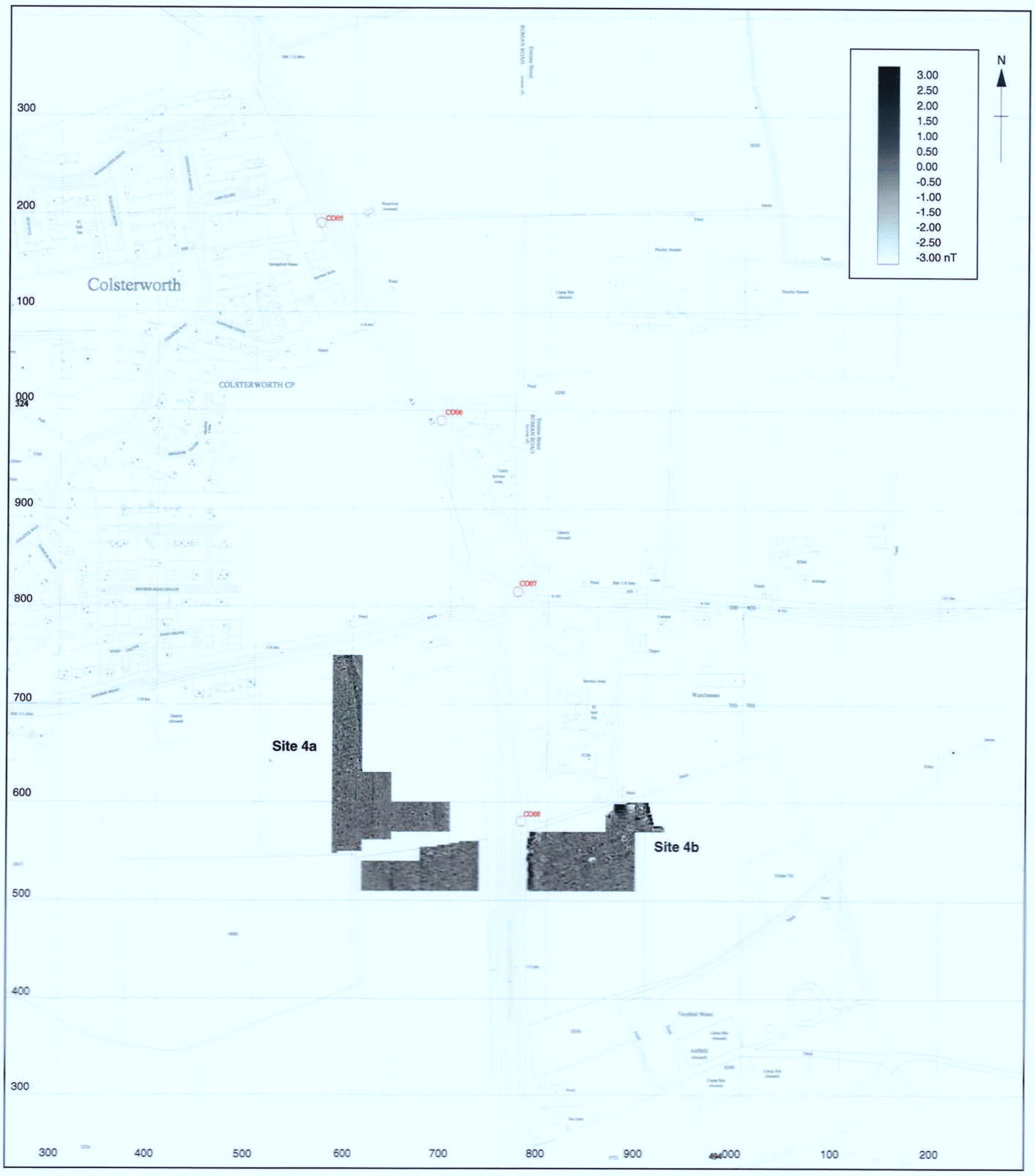

Figure 3a: Geophysical Fluxgate Survey (based on geophysical survey drawings produced by: Archaeological Services University of Durham)

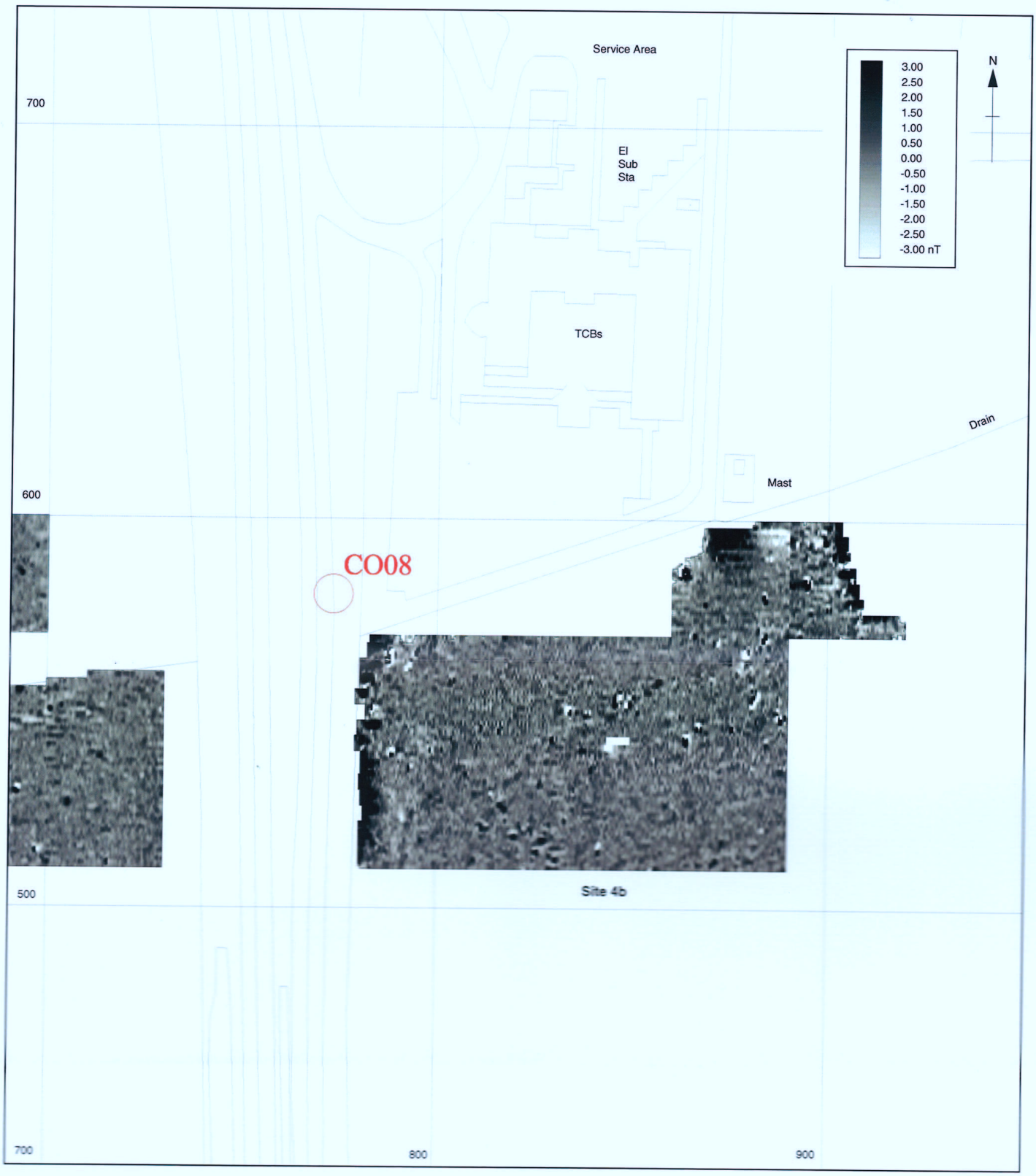

Figure 3b: Geophysical Fluxgate Survey (based on geophysical survey drawings produced by: Archaeological Services University of Durham)

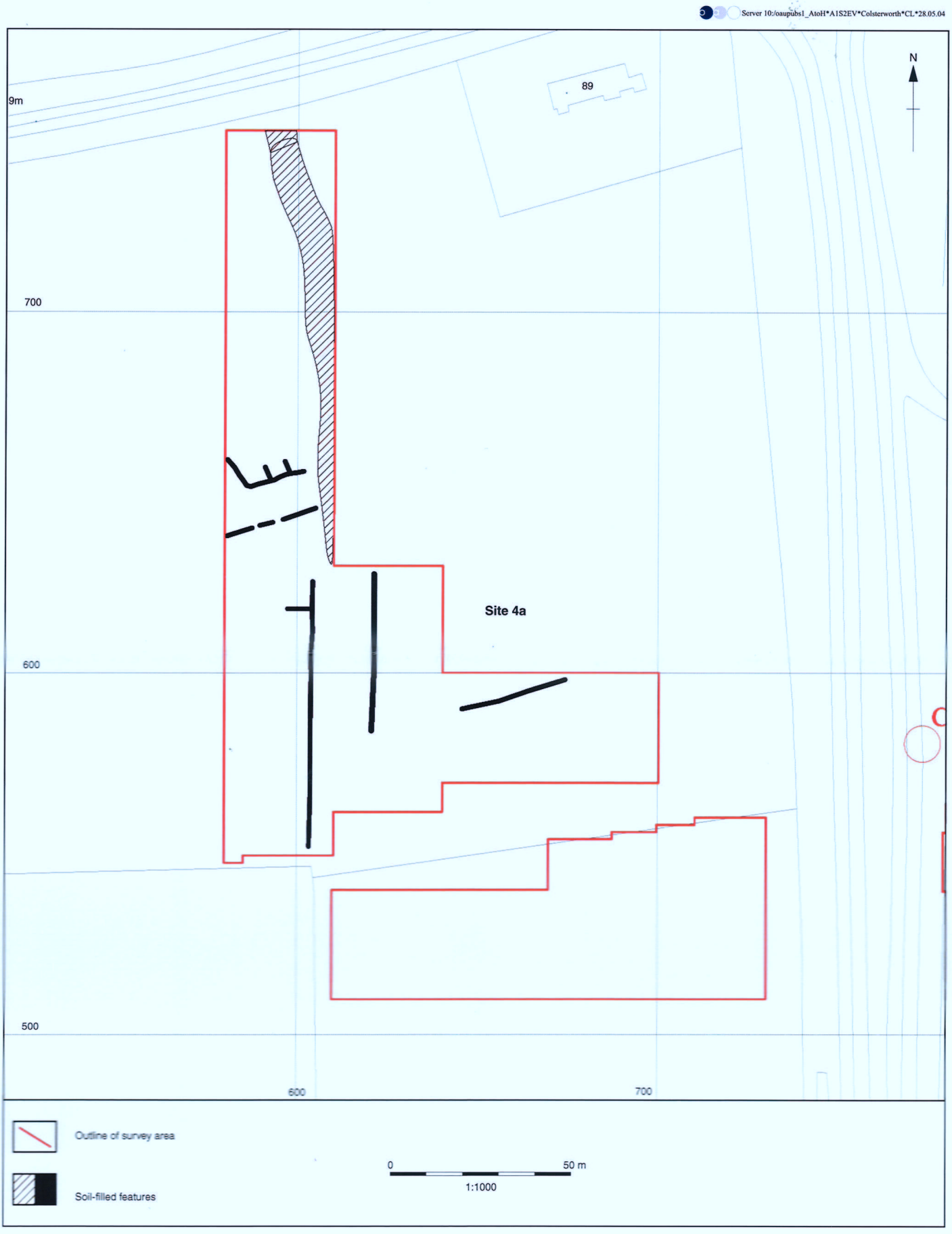

Figure 4a: Geophysical interpretation at Colsterworth (based on geophysical survey drawings produced by: Archaeological Services University of Durham)

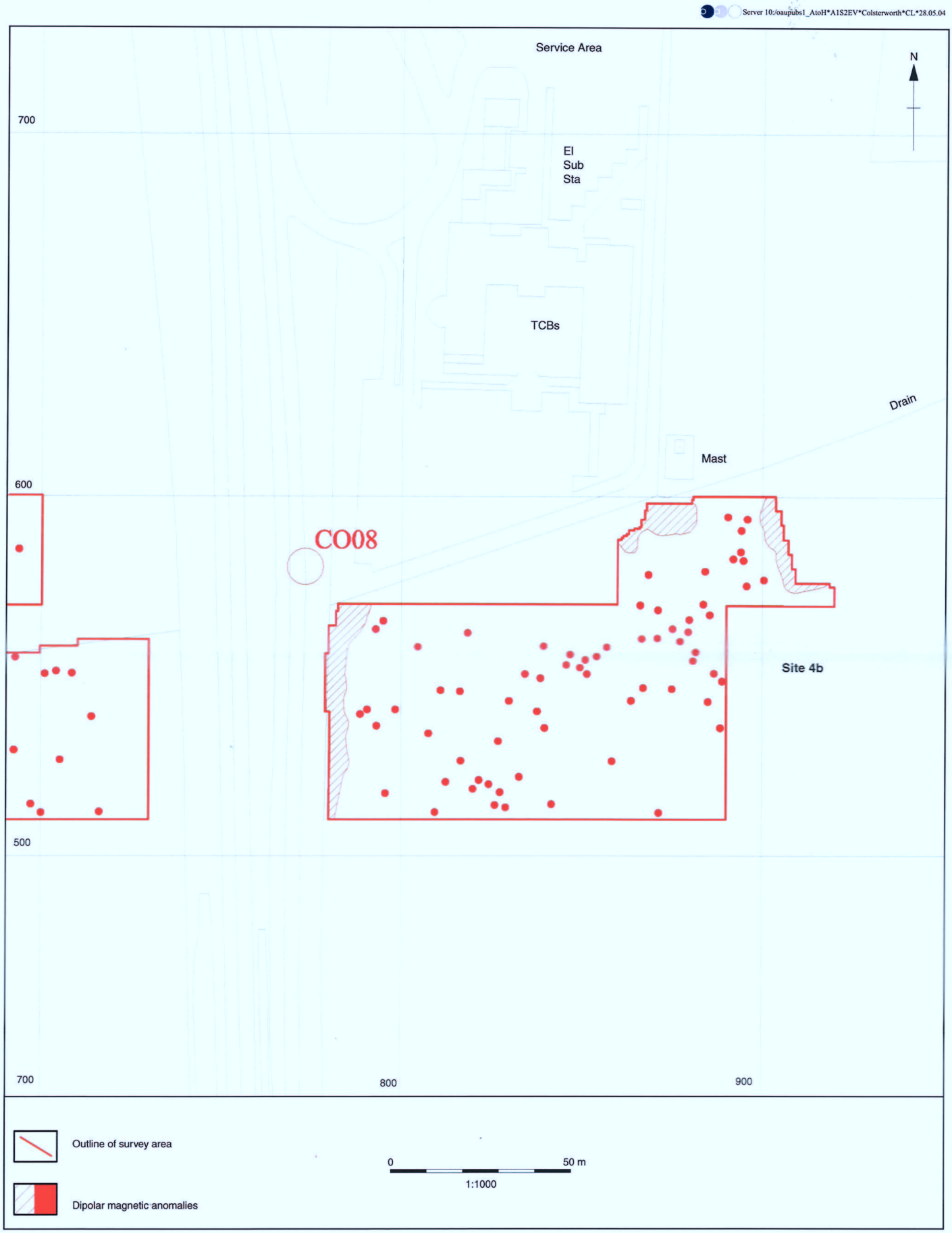

Figure 4b: Geophysical interpretation at Colsterworth (based on geophysical survey drawings produced by: Archaeological Services, University of Durham)

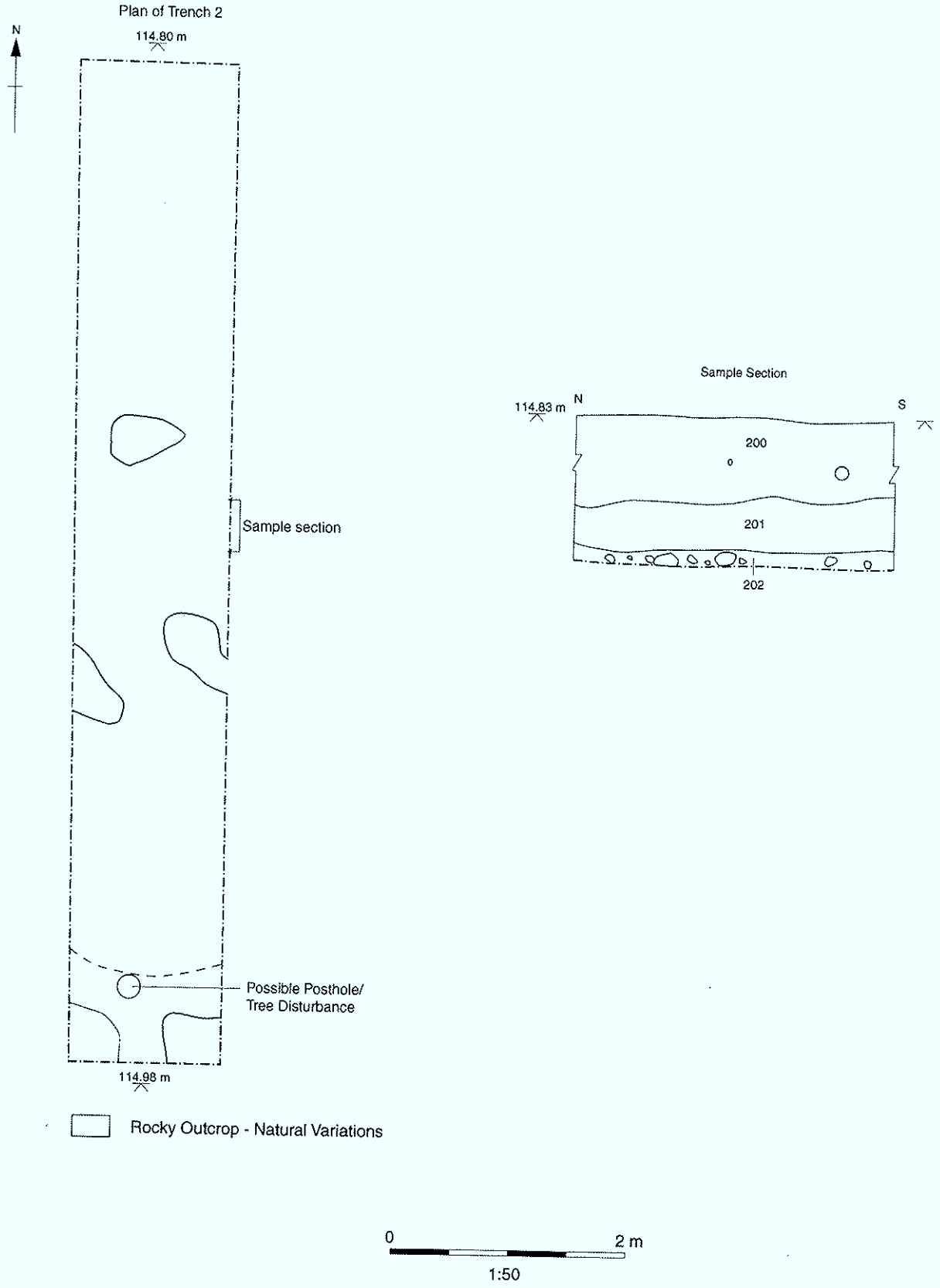

Figure 5: Plan of Trench 2 and sample section

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