

Archaeological Evaluation at Valiant Square, Bury, Cambridgeshire



Archaeological Evaluation Report



October 2011

Client: Storey Homes

OA East Report No: 1308

OASIS No: oxfordar3- 111791

NGR: TL 2783 8335

Archaeological Evaluation at Valiant Square, Bury, Cambridgeshire

Archaeological Evaluation

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Report Date: October 2011

Report Number: 1308
Site Name: Valiant Square, Bury
HER Event No: ECB 3664
Date of Works: October 2011
Client Name: Storey Homes
Client Ref: n/a
Planning Ref: 1001815FUL
Grid Ref: TL 2783 8335
Site Code: BUY VAS 11
Finance Code: BUY VAS 11
Receiving Body: CCC Stores
Accession No: BUY VAS 11
Prepared by: Nick Gilmour
Position: Project Officer
Date: October 2011
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Table of Contents

Summary.....	5
1 Introduction.....	7
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
2 Aims and Methodology.....	9
2.1 Aims.....	9
2.2 Methodology.....	9
3 Results.....	10
3.1 Introduction	10
3.2 Trench 1.....	10
3.3 Trench 2.....	10
3.4 Trenches 3, 4 and 5 (fig 2).....	10
3.5 Finds and Environmental Summary.....	10
4 Discussion and Conclusions.....	11
4.1 The un-dated ditches	11
4.2 The furrow.....	11
4.3 Significance.....	11
4.4 Recommendations.....	11
Appendix A. Trench Descriptions and Context Inventory.....	12
Appendix B. Bibliography	14
Appendix C. OASIS Report Form	15

List of Figures

- Fig. 1 Site location map
Fig. 2 Trench Plan
Fig. 3 Sections
Fig. 4 1st Edition OS map, showing site location

List of Plates

- Plate 1: Trench 2 from the south
Plate 2: Ditch 8 from the south

Summary

On the 10th and 11th October 2011, Oxford Archaeology East carried out an archaeological evaluation on land at Valiant Square, Bury, Cambridgeshire. This was in advance of the construction of housing.

The evaluation revealed a single furrow and two undated ditches. The furrow is a remnant of an agricultural system, widely used across England in the medieval and post-medieval periods. The two ditches were on the same alignment as each other and were 4m apart, suggesting they may have formed a trackway. They contained no finds, although one appeared to cut the furrow, this relationship was uncertain. They do not appear on the 1st edition OS map. The lack of accurate dating evidence for these ditches makes interpretation difficult.

There were no finds recovered during the evaluation.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 An archaeological evaluation was conducted at Valiant square, Bury, Cambridgeshire (TL 2783 8335).
- 1.1.2 This archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Kasia Gdaniec of Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC; Planning Application 1001815FUL), 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 *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment* (Department for Communities and Local Government 2010). 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 The site is currently an open area laid to grass and bordered by trees. It is currently an open space within an area of domestic housing. The geology is Boulder Clay and the site is at a height of 18.5m above Ordnance Datum.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The subject site is located in the parish of Bury cum Hepmangrove in the district of Huntingdonshire. Bury and Hepmangrove were originally separate settlements, Hepmangrove was a populous suburb of Ramsey before the dissolution (Page, Proby and Inskipp Ladds 1974, 164).
- 1.3.2 The Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER) records scattered Neolithic activity on a site at Owl's End, c.600m to the north-east of Valiant Square. This site was subject to earthwork survey, evaluation and excavation (ECB369), which also revealed a major phase of Later Iron Age / Early Romano-British settlement.
- 1.3.3 Other prehistoric and Roman finds include a scatter of Neolithic flint flakes found on high ground adjoining the fens somewhere in the parish of Bury (CHER02871). A Roman upper quern stone, of puddingstone, is in the Norris Museum in St Ives, although the exact findspot within Bury is unknown (CHER 02872).
- 1.3.4 The CCC Brief notes that Roman and medieval finds have been found at Upwood Airfield (HER 10392/3) which is located approximately 1km to the west of the subject site. Also noted are the remains of two deserted medieval settlements, one at Owl End (MCB11984) approximately 600m to the north-east of the site and the other Hepmangrove (MCB3599) to the south of the subject site. The manor at Hepmangrove is first mentioned in the statutes of Abbot Aldwin (1091-1102) showing that the profits from the manor were assigned to the cellarer of Ramsey Abbey (Page, Proby and Inskipp Ladds 1974, 165). Records show that the Manor remained with Ramsey Abbey until the dissolution (*ibid.*).
- 1.3.5 The HER notes that the exact location of Hepmangrove is not known although it is marked on a map of 1750 in the area to the south of the subject site it is not clear to

what this refers (CHER 02885). Holy Cross Church, Bury (CHER 02835) is located c.1km to the north-east of Valiant Square. This church includes elements dating to the 12th century, alongside a series of later alterations. Several medieval silver pennies and a gold ring set with a sapphire have also been recovered from unreported locations around Bury (CHER 02886, 08669A)

- 1.3.6 Later sites include a post-medieval mill mound, recorded c.900m to the east of the site (CHER 02807), which overlays ridge and furrow cultivation. In addition, a 16th century manor house is located c.400m to the north of this mill mound (CHER 02831)

1.4 Acknowledgements

- 1.4.1 The author would like to thank Storey Homes, who commissioned and funded the work. Particular thanks go to Charlie Thomson for his assistance. The project was managed by Aileen Connor. Nick Gilmour carried out the fieldwork and Rachel Clarke conducted the site survey. The excavation was monitored for Cambridgeshire County Council by Kasia Gdaniec. The mechanical excavator was provided by Rose Plant Hire.

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 required that five trenches, totalling 100m in length, be excavated. These trenches were located so as to avoid overhead and underground telephone cables, a gas main and several trees.
- 2.2.2 Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a wheeled JCB-type excavator using a 1.5m wide, toothless ditching bucket.
- 2.2.3 The site survey was carried out using a Leica 1200 GPS fitted with Smartnet.
- 2.2.4 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.
- 2.2.5 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 No environmental samples were taken due to the lack of suitable features on the site.
- 2.2.7 Site conditions were good, with predominantly dry, cloudy weather.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The results are presented by trench below. Descriptions of each trench, with measurements are given in Appendix A.

3.2 Trench 1 (Fig. 2)

3.2.1 Two ditches were excavated in Trench 1, on a north-west to south-east alignment, they were approximately 4m apart. Ditch **6** (Fig. 3 S. 3) was 1.16m wide and 0.38m deep, with steeply sloping sides and a concave base. It was filled by 5; a mid brownish-grey, silty-clay, with occasional gravel inclusions.

3.2.2 Ditch **8** (Fig. 3 S. 4) had a similar profile, with steeply sloping sides and a concave base. It was 1.08m wide and 0.28m deep. Ditch **8** was filled by 7, which was also very similar the fill of Ditch **6**, being a a mid brownish-grey, silty-clay, with occasional gravel inclusions.

3.2.3 No finds were recovered from either of these ditches, but their similarity makes it extremely likely that they were related to one another.

3.2.4 In addition, a furrow was recorded, with an east to west orientation. This furrow was not excavated in Trench 1. This furrow appeared to cut across Ditch **6**, although this relationship was uncertain.

3.3 Trench 2 (Fig. 2)

3.3.1 A single furrow (**4**) was excavated in trench 2. It continued in Trench 1, to the west. Furrow **4** (Fig. 3 S. 2) was 1.30m wide and 0.12m deep, with gently sloping sides and a flat base. It was filled by 3, a mid greyish-brown, silty-clay, with occasional gravel inclusions. No finds were recovered from this feature. Furrow **4** was truncated by a fielded drain, running on the same alignment.

3.4 Trenches 3, 4 and 5 (fig 2)

3.4.1 No archaeological finds or features were identified in any of these trenches.

3.5 Finds and Environmental Summary

3.5.1 No archaeological finds were recovered from this evaluation. In addition, no environmental samples were taken as no deposits were suitable.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1 The un-dated ditches

4.1.1 The two ditches (**6** and **8**) were parallel to each other, approximately 4m apart, in Trench 1. There were no finds recovered from either of the ditches, making dating difficult. However, Ditch **6**, may have been cut a furrow. If this relationship is correct, then these ditches are of post-medieval or modern date. However, they do not appear on the 1st edition OS map (fig. 4) and are on a different alignment to both the furrow, and current field boundaries. It is, therefore, possible that these ditches pre-date the current field system.

4.1.2 Although the date of these ditches is uncertain, it seems likely that they formed a trackway. This may have some relation to the Iron Age, Roman and medieval site excavated at Owls End (CHER 10115), which this track would head towards. It is also of note that these ditches are on the same alignment as Upwood Road road, just to the west of the site.

4.2 The furrow

4.2.1 A single furrow was identified on the site, running on an almost east to west alignment, perpendicular to the current line of Ramsey Road; just to the west of the site. This is also the same alignment as the field system shown on the 1st Edition (1887) OS map (fig. 4). These furrows are the remains of a ridge and furrow cultivations system, a largely medieval and post-medieval practice. In part these furrows are produced by primitive ploughing, although sometimes they were deliberately created to improve drainage or for other agricultural benefit.

4.3 Significance

4.3.1 This evaluation has shown that little archaeologically visible activity appears to have taken place on this site.

4.4 Recommendations

4.4.1 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	
					Avg. depth (m)	0.5
					Width (m)	1.5
					Length (m)	18.9
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1	Layer	-	0.22	Topsoil	-	-
2	Layer	-	0.28	Subsoil	-	-
5	Fill	-	-	Fill of ditch 6	-	-
6	Cut			Ditch	-	-
7	Fill			Fill of ditch 8	-	-
8	Cut			Ditch	-	-

Trench 2						
General description					Orientation	
					Avg. depth (m)	0.48
					Width (m)	1.5
					Length (m)	23.5
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1	Layer	-	0.22	Topsoil	-	-
2	Layer	-	0.26	Subsoil	-	-
3	Fill			Fill of furrow 4	-	-
4	Cut			Furrow	-	medieval/Post-medieval

Trench 3						
General description				Orientation		
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying a natural of boulder clay.				Avg. depth (m)		0.48
				Width (m)		1.5
				Length (m)		19.6
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1	Layer	-	0.28	Topsoil	-	-
2	Layer	-	0.2	Subsoil	-	-

Trench 4						
General description				Orientation		
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying a natural of boulder clay.				Avg. depth (m)		0.46
				Width (m)		1.5
				Length (m)		19.7
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1	Layer	-	0.24	Topsoil	-	-
2	Layer	-	0.22	Subsoil	-	-

Trench 5						
General description				Orientation		
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying a natural of boulder clay.				Avg. depth (m)		0.44
				Width (m)		1.5
				Length (m)		15.3
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1	Layer	-	0.14	Topsoil	-	-
2	Layer	-	0.30	Subsoil	-	-

APPENDIX B. BIBLIOGRAPHY

W. Page, G. Proby and S. Inskipp Ladds, 1974; *The Victoria History of the County of Huntingdon: Volume II*

APPENDIX C. OASIS REPORT FORM

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

Project Details

OASIS Number	oxfordar3- 111791		
Project Name	Archaeological Evaluation at Valiant square, Bury, Cambridgeshire		
Project Dates (fieldwork) Start	10-10-2011	Finish	11-10-2011
Previous Work (by OA East)	No	Future Work	No

Project Reference Codes

Site Code	BUYVAS11	Planning App. No.	1001815FUL
HER No.	ECB3664	Related HER/OASIS No.	n/a

Type of Project/Techniques Used

Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS 5
Development Type	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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Photographic Survey	<input checked="" 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
furrow	Post Medieval 1540 to 1901		Select period...
ditch	Uncertain		Select period...
	Select period...		Select period...

Project Location

County	<input type="text" value="cambridgeshire"/>	Site Address (including postcode if possible)
District	<input type="text" value="huntingdonshire"/>	<input type="text" value="Valiant square,
Bury,
Ramsey, Cambridgeshire, PE26 2PQ"/>
Parish	<input type="text" value="Bury"/>	
HER	<input type="text" value="Cambridgeshire"/>	
Study Area	<input type="text" value="c.3000sqm"/>	National Grid Reference <input type="text" value="TL 2783 8335"/>

Project Originators

Organisation	<input type="text" value="OA EAST"/>
Project Brief Originator	<input type="text" value="kasia gdaniec"/>
Project Design Originator	<input type="text" value="Aileen Connor"/>
Project Manager	<input type="text" value="Aileen Connor"/>
Supervisor	<input type="text" value="Nick Gilmour"/>

Project Archives

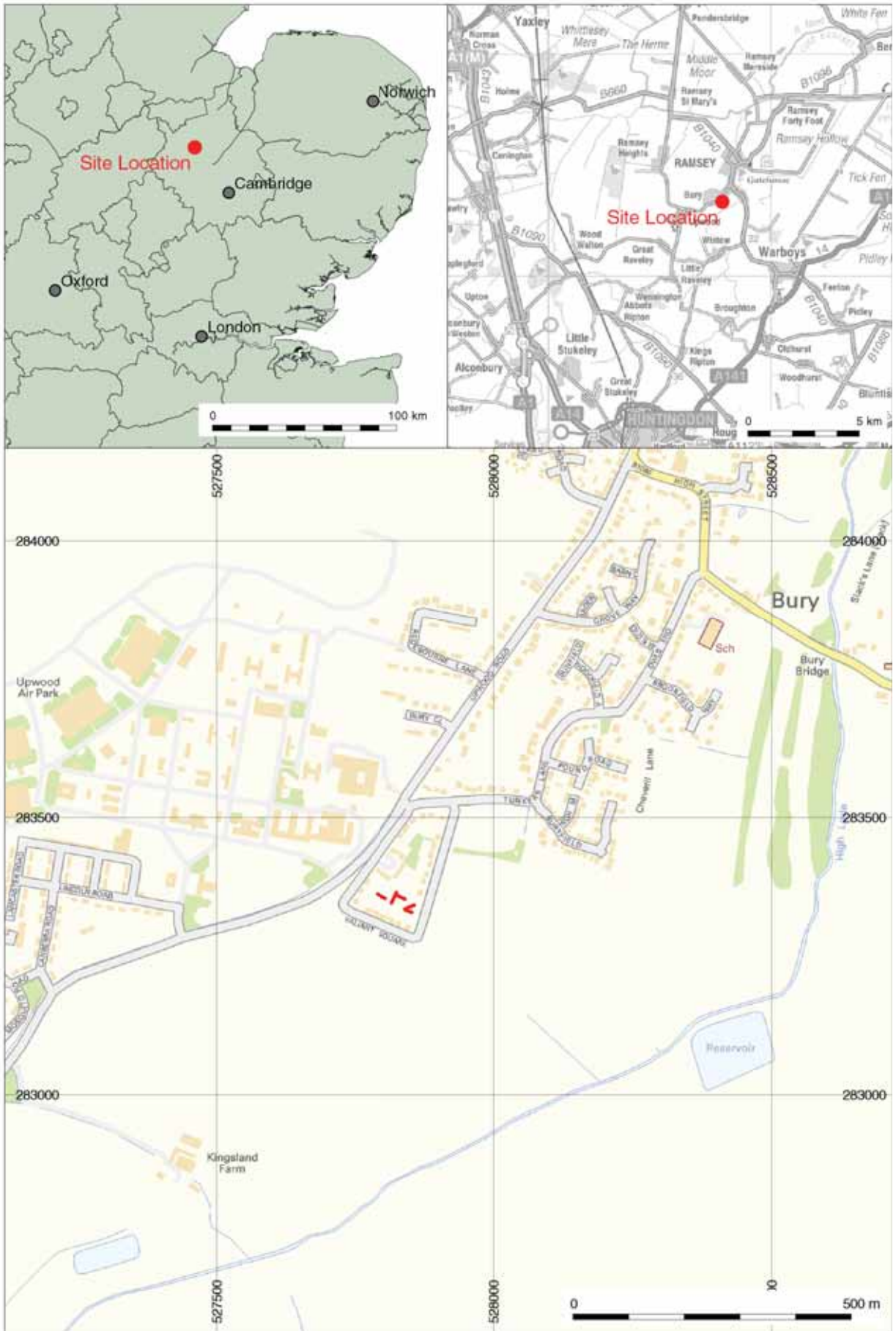
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<input type="text" value="BUYVAS11"/>	<input type="text" value="BUYVAS11"/>	<input type="text" value="BUYVAS11"/>

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Ceramics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Leather	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Digital Media	Paper Media
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<input type="checkbox"/> GIS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Context Sheet
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	<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:



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Figure 1: Site location

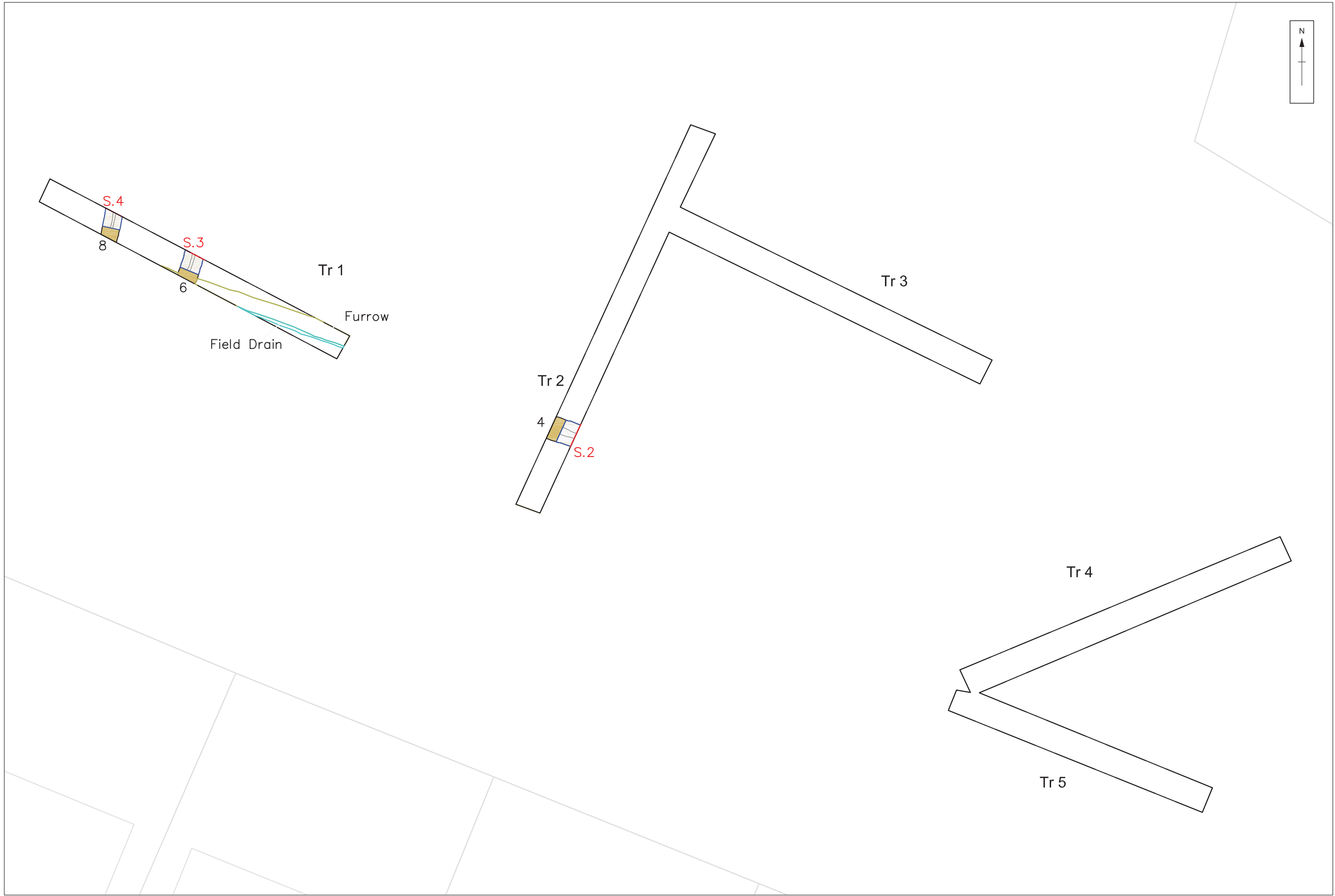


Figure 2 Trench Plan

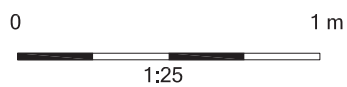
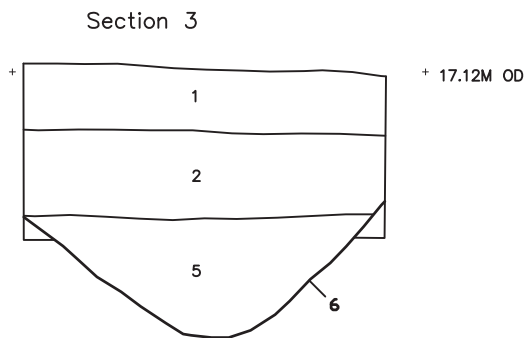
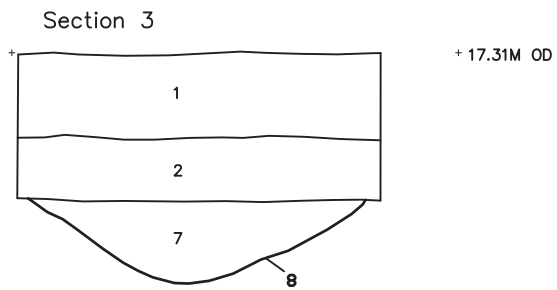
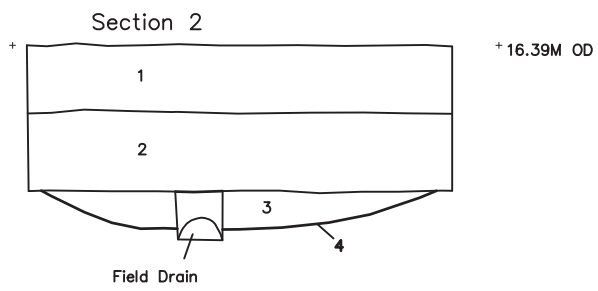
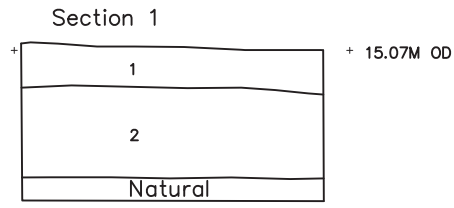


Figure 3 Sections



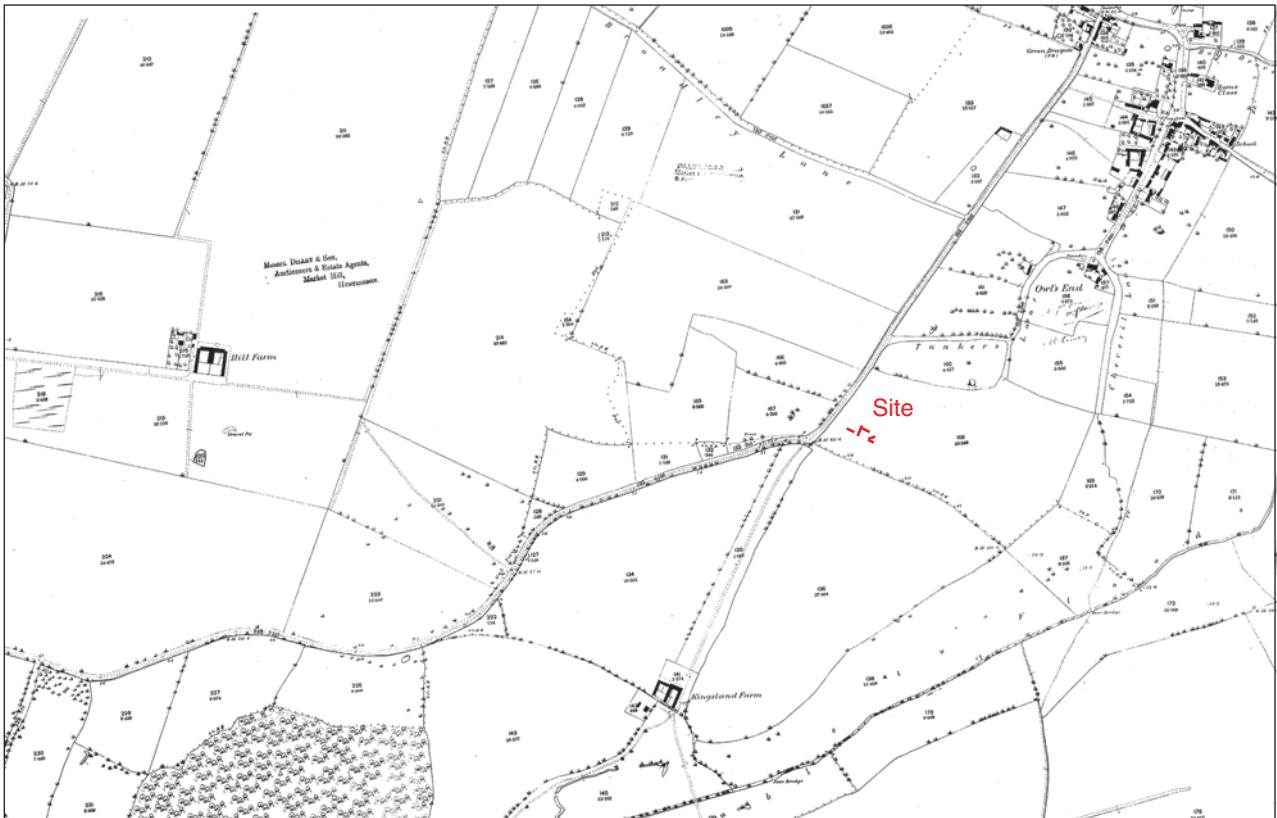


Fig 4: 1887 OS map of Bury, showing site location.



Plate 1: Trench 2 from the south



Plate 2: Ditch 8 from the south



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