

Evaluation at Langley court Ramsey Road, St Ives Cambridgeshire



Archaeological Evaluation Report



April 2015

Client: Ashbury Construction

OA East Report No: 1764

OASIS No: oxfordar3-208009

NGR: TL 3123 7179

Evaluation at Langley court, Ramsey Road, St Ives, Cambridgeshire

Archaeological Evaluation


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Report Date: April 2015

Report Number: 1764
Site Name: Langley Court, Ramsey Road, St Ives, Cambridgeshire
HER Event No: ECB4326
Date of Works: March/April 2015
Client Name: Ashbury Construction
Client Ref:
Planning Ref: 1301979FUL
Grid Ref: TL 3123 7179
Site Code: STILAN14
Finance Code: STILAN14
Receiving Body: CCC Stores
Accession No: STILAN14
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Summary

From the 31st March to 1st April Oxford Archaeology East excavated seven trenches at Langley Court in St Ives. The majority of the trenches were heavily disturbed by modern truncation and archaeologically monitored demolition activity that had occurred recently on the site.

Trench 7 revealed an undated pond and an undated north-west to south-east aligned ditch was found within Trench 3. Residual prehistoric finds consisting of two struck flints, a piece of burnt stone and a fragment of Iron Age pottery were recovered from the ditch.

Prior to this evaluation removal of below ground structures was subject to archaeological monitoring, no archaeological deposits were observed.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 Archaeological monitoring of removal of below ground structures followed by evaluation trenching was conducted at Langley Court, Langley Close, St. Ives, Cambridgeshire (TL 3123 7179)
- 1.1.2 This archaeological investigation was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Kasia Gdaniec of Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC; Planning Application 1301979FUL), supplemented by a Specification prepared by OA East (Connor 2015).
- 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 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 located to the north of the fire station in St. Ives, just off Ramsey road and behind Slepe Hall. It lies at around 7m OD on an underlying geology of Oxford clay formation with overlying superficial deposits of first – second sand and gravel river terrace deposits (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> accessed 1/1/2015).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 This area of St Ives has received little in the way of archaeological investigation. The Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER) records several entries in the vicinity of Langley Court. These include finds of Iron Age pottery 60m to the north of the development area (MCB4417) and extensive medieval and Saxon remains in the environs of Green End (MCB15819 and 15802), also to the north. The majority of archaeological remains are found in the medieval core of the town and around the market place to the south of the development along the edge of the River Great Ouse.

1.4 Acknowledgements

- 1.4.1 The author would like to thank the site team of Anthony Haskins and Mary Andrews, Dean Haskins and Tommy Mckenna of Aspen build for their assistance during the works, Ashbury construction for commissioning the works, Dave Brown for the site survey, Charlotte Davies for the graphics work, Sarah Percival and Anthony Haskins for the finds work.
- 1.4.2 Further thanks should go to Kasia Gdaniec of Cambridgeshire County Council who monitored the project, Aileen Connor for managing the archaeological work and Latternbury Services Ltd. For providing the mechanical plant.

2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

2.1.1 The objective of the investigation 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 archaeological monitoring was carried out during the demolition of the existing building and that a further phase of evaluation entailing the excavation of 90m of linear trenches. These were split into 5m by 15m trenches and 2m by 7.5m trenches as specified in the WSI (Connor 2015). Due to difficulties on site from cabling detected by CAT scanner this was altered to 2m by 7.5m, 3m by 15m, 1m by 9m and 1m by 17.5m trenches.

2.2.2 Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a 360° mechanical excavator using a 2m toothless ditching bucket.

2.2.3 The site survey was carried out by Dave Brown using a Leccia DGPS.

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 heavy modern disturbance within the trenches.

2.2.7 The site was excavated in good dry but windy conditions.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Archaeological monitoring showed that much of the area to be redeveloped had previously been severely truncated and no archaeological finds, features or deposits were observed to be present during this phase of work. The evaluation trenching was therefore designed to target areas of less disturbed ground and to test the conclusions of the monitoring that the majority of the area had been disturbed by previous building works.

3.1.2 All the trenches were excavated through a layer of heavily disturbed and mixed subsoil, topsoil and demolition rubble – this mixed deposit was most prominent in Trenches 2 and 5. Little of archaeological interest was found in Trenches 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6 and therefore, these will not be discussed below, but details of all the trenches are given in Appendix A. Due to their small number, the artefacts they have been recorded in the finds summaries but are not reported on separately within the appendices.

3.2 Trench 3 (Fig. 2 and 3; Plate 1)

3.2.1 This was the most archaeologically interesting trench and the least disturbed by the previous building works and subsequent demolition. The trench was excavated through a mixed modern topsoil overlying a mixed deposit containing post-medieval brick, ceramic and glass bottle fragments (not recovered). This deposit sealed a mid reddish-brown sandy clay with occasional to frequent sub-rounded and sub-angular flints (6) and the natural river terrace sands and gravels.

3.2.2 The natural sands and gravels were cut by a single ditch (7). Ditch 7 was over 2m wide and up to 0.75m deep with a wide V-shaped profile and aligned north-west to south-east but not quite along the same line as the trench. Two fills were identified within the ditch, the lower fill (5) was a 0.6m thick mid to light brownish-grey gleyed clay with sorted sub-angular flints that produced two struck flints and a sherd of Early Iron Age date pottery. The upper fill (6; see above) was a secondary deposit up to 0.4m thick.

3.3 Trench 7 (Fig. 2 and 3; Plate 2)

3.3.1 Trench 7 was also heavily disturbed by modern activity. Over lying the natural sands and gravels was a dark greyish-black slightly peaty clay (9) within a slight hollow in the natural gravel. This was sealed by a gleyed blue-grey to brown-grey clay (8). Two modern rectangular cuts were identified truncating these deposits. No dating evidence was recovered.

3.4 Finds

Flints

Anthony Haskins

3.4.1 A secondary flake of good quality semi-translucent yellowish brown flint and a tertiary flake of heavily patinated light blue-white to dark blackish-blue opaque flint were recovered from ditch fill (5). Both flakes are quite short and squat, struck by hard hammer and show little sign of structured working. However, due to the small sample it is not possible to closely date these flints, although the initial indications suggest a later prehistoric date. As both of the flakes are heavily abraded they are almost certainly residual.

3.4.2 Pottery

Sarah Percival

- 3.4.3 A single rim sherd of Early Iron Age pottery was recovered from ditch fill (5). The sherd is heavily abraded and likely to be residual in nature.

3.5 Discussion and Conclusions

- 3.5.1 In Trench 3 the evaluation works uncovered a single ditch, aligned north-west to south-east. It contained a single sherd of heavily abraded Early Iron Age pottery, the ditch could therefore be Iron Age in date.
- 3.5.2 A hollow in Trench 7 is most likely a pond. It is unclear what date the feature is.
- 3.5.3 The presence of two struck flints and a single small abraded sherd of later prehistoric pottery (all residual) indicate some possible low level activity in the broad vicinity in the prehistoric period.

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						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of mixed demolition rubble overlying river terrace sands and gravels					Avg. depth (m)	0.9
					Width (m)	2
					Length (m)	9
Contexts						
ctxt no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	finds	date
1	Layer	-	0.9	Mixed demolition rubble, topsoil and subsoil	-	-
Trench 2						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of mixed demolition rubble overlying river terrace sands and gravels					Avg. depth (m)	0.8
					Width (m)	2
					Length (m)	15
Contexts						
ctxt no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1	Layer	-	0.9	Mixed demolition rubble, topsoil and subsoil	-	-
Trench 3						
General description					Orientation	NW-SE
Trench contained topsoil, modern demolition material, and a subsoil layer sealing a single NW-SE orientated ditch cutting through the natural river terrace gravels.					Avg. depth (m)	0.8
					Width (m)	2
					Length (m)	17.5
Contexts						
ctxt no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
10	Layer	-	0.2	Topsoil	-	-
1	Layer	-	0.3	Modern Demoliton	-	-
2	Layer	-	0.3	Subsoil	-	-
5	Fill	2+	0.6	Fill of 7	Flint and Pot	Iron Age or later
6	Fill	2+	0.4	Fill of 7	-	-
7	Cut	2+	0.95	Cut of ditch	-	-
Trench 4						
General description					Orientation	NW-SE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of mixed demolition rubble and subsoil overlying river terrace sands and gravels					Avg. depth (m)	0.7
					Width (m)	2
					Length (m)	7.5

Contexts						
ctxt no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1	Layer	-	0.4	Modern demolition rubble	-	-
2	Layer	-	0.3	Subsoil	-	-
Trench 5						
General description					Orientation	NW-SE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of mixed demolition rubble overlying river terrace sands and gravels					Avg. depth (m)	0.8
					Width (m)	2
					Length (m)	7.5
Contexts						
ctxt no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1	Layer	-	0.9	Mixed demolition rubble, topsoil and subsoil	-	-
Trench 6						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench consists of modern demolition material and features cutting through river terrace sands and gravels and a tree throw					Avg. depth (m)	0.7
					Width (m)	2
					Length (m)	15
Contexts						
ctxt no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1	Layer	-	0.4	Mixed demolition rubble, topsoil and subsoil	-	-
2	Layer	-	0.3	Subsoil	-	-
3	Cut	-	0.5	Cut of tree throw	-	-
4	Fill	-	0.5	Fill of 3	-	-
Trench 7						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench consists of modern demolition material and features cutting through river terrace sands and gravels and an undated pond					Avg. depth (m)	0.7
					Width (m)	2
					Length (m)	15
Contexts						
ctxt no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1	Layer	-	0.4	Mixed demolition rubble, topsoil and subsoil	-	-
2	Layer	-	0.3	Subsoil	-	-
9	Layer	-	0.36	Gleyed clay within hollow	-	-
10	Layer	-	0.16	Organic rich clay in hollow	-	-

APPENDIX B. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Connor A, 2015 *Written Scheme of investigation: Archaeological Evaluation; Langley Court, St Ives* Oxford Archaeology East

APPENDIX C. OASIS REPORT FORM

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

Project Details

OASIS Number	<input type="text"/>		
Project Name	<input type="text"/>		
Project Dates (fieldwork) Start	<input type="text"/>	Finish	<input type="text"/>
Previous Work (by OA East)	<input type="text"/>	Future Work	<input type="text"/>

Project Reference Codes

Site Code	<input type="text"/>	Planning App. No.	<input type="text"/>
HER No.	<input type="text"/>	Related HER/OASIS No.	<input type="text"/>

Type of Project/Techniques Used

Prompt	<input type="text"/>
Development Type	<input type="text"/>

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 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
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Project Location

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District	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Parish	<input type="text"/>	
HER	<input type="text"/>	
Study Area	<input type="text"/>	National Grid Reference <input type="text"/>

Project Originators

Organisation	<input type="text"/>
Project Brief Originator	<input type="text"/>
Project Design Originator	<input type="text"/>
Project Manager	<input type="text"/>
Supervisor	<input type="text"/>

Project Archives

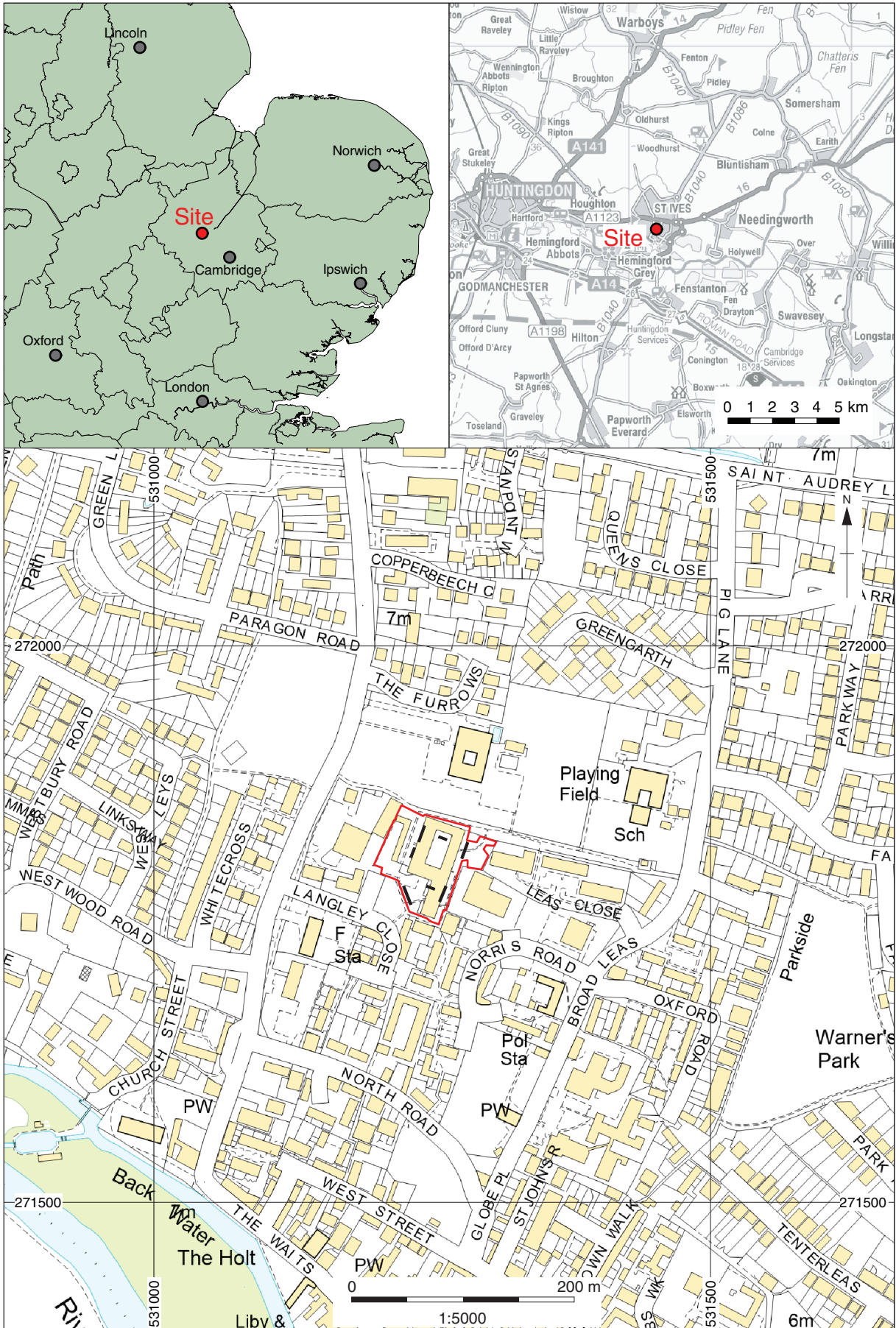
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Archive Contents/Media

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<input type="checkbox"/> Geophysics	<input type="checkbox"/> Correspondence
<input type="checkbox"/> Images	<input type="checkbox"/> Diary
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<input type="checkbox"/> Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Matrices
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	<input type="checkbox"/> Research/Notes
	<input type="checkbox"/> Photos
	<input type="checkbox"/> Plans
	<input type="checkbox"/> Report
	<input type="checkbox"/> Sections
	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey

Notes:



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

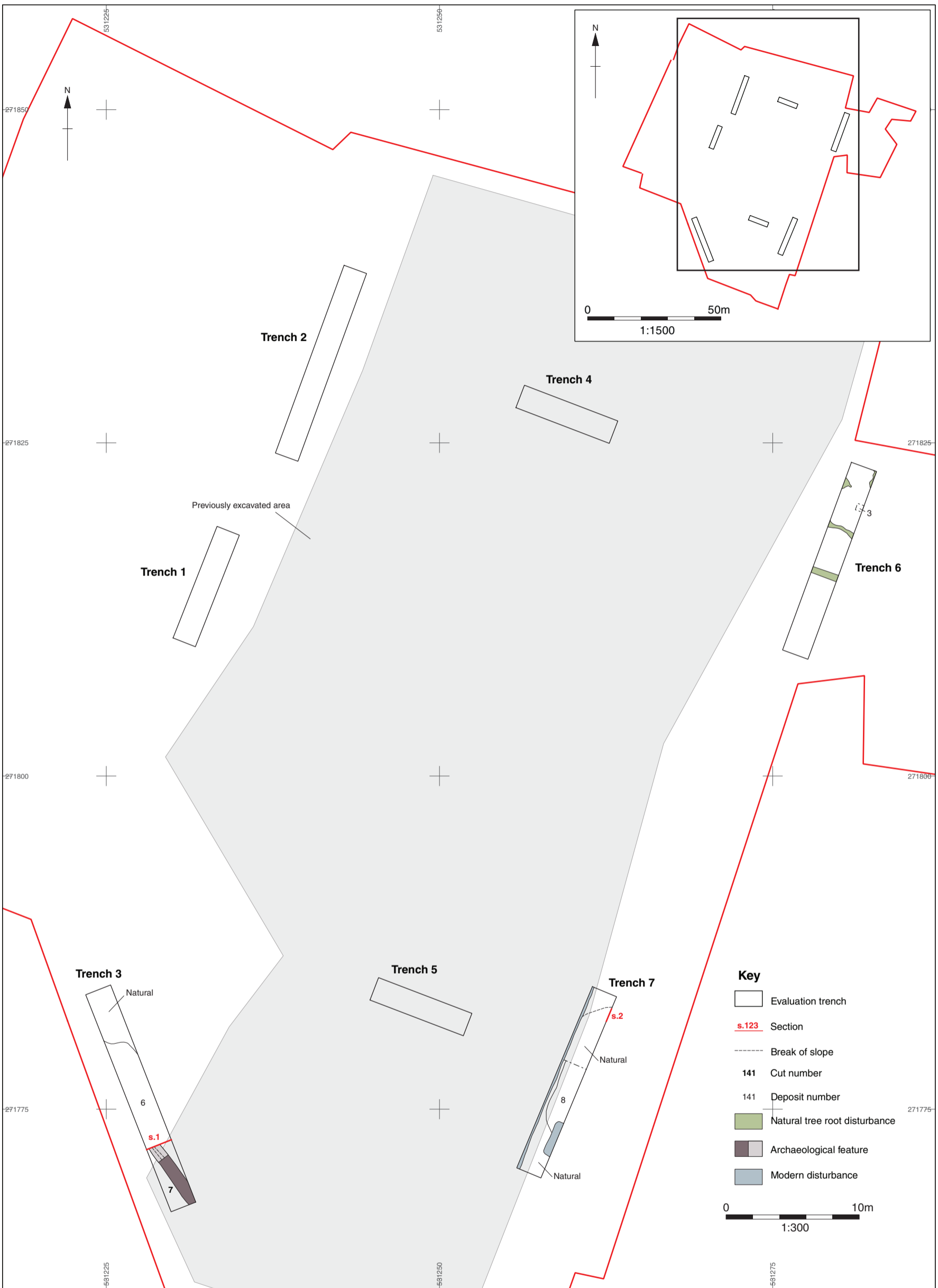


Figure 2: Trench location plan

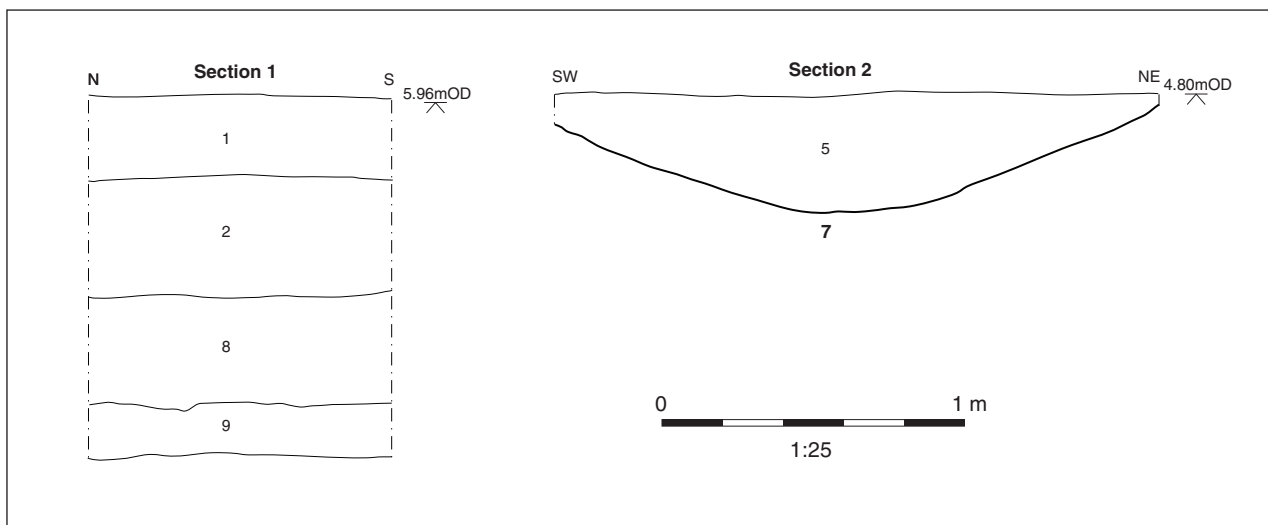


Figure 3: Selected sections



Plate 2: Trench 7 looking north



Plate 1: Trench 3 looking south-east



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