

Topplers Hill to Stratton Water Pipeline, Biggleswade Bedfordshire



Archaeological Evaluation Report



February 2016

Client: Anglian Water Services

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NGR: TL 20534 43634 to TL 21146 40987

Toplers Hill to Stratton Water Pipeline, Biggleswade, Bedfordshire

Archaeological Evaluation

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Summary

Between the 3rd and 11th of February 2016 Oxford Archaeology East undertook a trial trench evaluation along the route of a proposed water pipeline between Toplers Hill and Stratton, Biggleswade, Bedfordshire (TL 20534 43634 to TL 21146 40987).

In all, seven of the 16 excavated trenches were seen to contain archaeology. The remains date from the Middle and Late Iron Age. Post-medieval and modern agricultural remains in the form of ridge and furrow were also identified across a further four trenches.

The Middle Iron Age was represented by a single pottery sherd recovered from the subsoil of Trench 3. Late Iron Age activity was identified in Trench 1 at Toplers Hill, where a single north-west to south-east aligned ditch was revealed (containing a small amount of pottery). A single ditch in Trench 7 also contained one small sherd of Late Iron Age pottery.

The trenches to the south and east of Stratton Business Park (Trenches 11, 13 and 14) contained the most concentrated Late Iron Age remains. Here ditches, gullies, pits, a cobbled surface and an extensive area of either quarrying or intercutting pits were uncovered. Trenches 7 to 10 contained the remnants of ridge and furrow, all of which were orientated east to west.

Overall the fieldwork has identified a concentration of Late Iron Age remains across Trenches 11 and 13 to 15 in the vicinity of Stratton Farm which have the potential to tie in with the previous fieldwork findings in the immediate environs.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 An archaeological evaluation was conducted along the proposed route of a new water pipeline between Topleys Hill water tower (Edworth Road) and Stratton (Dunton Lane), to the south of Biggleswade, Bedfordshire (Fig. 1).
- 1.1.2 This archaeological trial trenching was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by the Central Bedfordshire Archaeology Team (CBAT, Oake 2016) supplemented by a Specification prepared by OA East (Mortimer 2016).
- 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 CBAT, 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 vast majority of the pipe route is located on a bedrock geology of Gault Formation Mudstone with superficial deposits of Oadby Member Diamicton. However at the southernmost end of the route it changes to a bedrock geology of West Melbury Marly Chalk Formation. This is also the highest point of the pipeline, situated at 75.5m OD. As the pipe easement moves northward, the topography gradually drops, plateauing at around 43m OD where the route turns east to cross the A1.
- 1.2.2 From here the topography begins to rise again, up to 46.3m OD where it meets Stratton Farm. The northernmost portion of the pipe route, between Stratton Farm and Dunton Lane sees a slight drop in the topography down to 40m OD. Across this area too is a further change in geology, with Woburn Sands Formation Sandstone being overlain by Glaciofluvial Deposits of sand and gravel (British Geological Survey <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The following information is taken from the Specification (Mortimer 2016):
- 1.3.2 Topleys Hill reservoir sits within a field system recorded from aerial photographs that may cover up to 10 hectares (HER 3545). The field system comprises a major ditched boundary on a north-west to south-east alignment with a series of smaller-ditched enclosures lying perpendicular to it, particularly on the south-western side. A coaxial field system on this alignment is most likely to have originated in the Middle Bronze Age and should contain small settlement foci from the middle and late Bronze Age and early Iron Age periods. Part of the enclosure system was recorded in a small excavation to the south-east of the tower (Wilson 2010) and the excavation of the water pipeline to the immediate north-west of the tower found a pit containing a 'Bronze Age' domestic assemblage (Wilson & Zeepvat 2010).
- 1.3.3 An excavation some 300m to the east of the water tower recorded a re-cut ditch, on the same alignment as the field system alongside evidence for early or middle Iron Age settlement (Luke 2004).

- 1.3.4 Large parts of this area of the pipeline route run alongside and/or close to the Baldock to Sandy Roman Road, potentially lying beneath or close to the current A1.
- 1.3.5 On all sides of Stratton Farm are a series of mostly linear cropmarks representing Iron Age, Roman, or potentially Middle Bronze Age, features (HERs 13956, 15327, 16157, 16158, 16823, 16824 and 18284) and to the south Roman pottery has been found among further cropmarks (HER 3547).
- 1.3.6 The northern end of the pipeline has been excavated prior to relatively recent development work and lies within an extensive area of Saxon and Medieval settlement at Stratton (HER 518) and an evaluation on the line of the route south of Dunton Land found remains of a late Medieval building (BCAS 1994). To the north of Dunton Lane is the scheduled monument of Stratton Park moat (HER 520).
- 1.3.7 To the south the route passes through an area that has been extensively evaluated prior to upcoming development (Albion Archaeology 2015). The evaluation found no archaeological features, with the exception of a single undated ditch, along the proposed pipeline route.
- 1.3.8 At the northern end of the route a Bronze Age ring ditch lies 40m to the east of the route and there are extensive remains of Bronze Age, Iron Age and Roman and Medieval archaeology off to the south and east of the route. Further evidence of Medieval occupation has been found to the east of the pipeline route (HER 17738 and Albion Archaeology 2002) and post-medieval has been found to the west within Stratton Business Park (HER 16162 and BCAS 1995).

1.4 Acknowledgements

- 1.4.1 The author would like to extend thanks to Anglian Water Services for commissioning and funding the archaeological works. Thanks must also go to the various farmers, landowners and land agents for their cooperation during the fieldwork.
- 1.4.2 The trial trenching was undertaken by the author with the assistance of Emily Abrehart, Zoë Clarke and Chris Swain. Machine excavation was carried out by Lattenbury Services. The project was managed by Richard Mortimer and the evaluation monitored by Martin Oake of CBAT.

2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

Aims

- 2.1.1 The objective of this trial trench 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.

Methodology

- 2.1.2 The Brief advised that the route of the water pipe would be crossing through an archaeologically sensitive area and therefore mitigation through trial trench evaluation should be undertaken to assess the level and type of archaeological remains.
- 2.1.3 It was laid out in the Specification that each of the evaluation trenches would commence with a 2m long x 2m wide test pit wherein the depth and type of any subsoil would be recorded. Should the subsoil layer beneath the topsoil be of a consistency and depth (minimum 300mm) to suggest the possibility of preservation *in situ* then the trench would be halted.
- 2.1.4 Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a 13 tonne tracked 360° excavator using a 1.8m wide toothless ditching bucket.
- 2.1.5 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.
- 2.1.6 All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using OA East's *pro-forma* sheets. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales. Digital photographs were taken of all features and deposits.
- 2.1.7 A single environmental sample was taken in order to investigate the survival of micro- and macro-botanical remains.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The evaluation trench results will be discussed geographically from south (Toplers Hill) to north (Stratton).
- 3.1.2 Topsoil (01) across the length of the pipe route consisted of a dark grey silty clay and was a fairly consistent thickness of around 0.3m. The subsoil (02) consisted of a mid orange brown silty clay which was only present in any real form at the northern end of Trench 1, where it measured 0.55m in thickness.
- 3.1.3 A comprehensive list of trench descriptions and depths can be found in Appendix A. Unless otherwise stated, features were devoid of finds.

3.2 Toplers Hill to the A1 Apple Green Service Station – CH50-2300

Trench 1 (Fig. 2)

- 3.2.1 Initial excavation at the northernmost end of Trench 1 revealed a substantial subsoil, 0.55m thick. Therefore machine excavation along the ensuing 40m of the trench was limited to removal of the topsoil (as laid out in the Specification). At this point the subsoil measured just 0.15m in thickness, below which a mid grey brown silty clay layer (03) was revealed. Layer 03 was 0.2m thick and contained two sherds (3g) of Late Iron Age pottery. The remainder of the trench was excavated down to the natural geology because of the reduced subsoil thickness.
- 3.2.2 A single north-west to south-east aligned ditch was identified toward the southern end of the trench (Plate 1). Ditch **05** measured 1.6m wide and was 0.3m deep with gently sloping sides and a concave base. It was filled with a mid brown grey clay silt (04) which contained a single sherd (2g) of Late Iron Age pottery and a lump of vitrified material (56g).

Trench 2

- 3.2.3 Trench 2 was devoid of archaeology.

Trench 3

- 3.2.4 Trench 3 was devoid of archaeology. Although a sherd of Early Iron Age pottery (17g) was recovered from the subsoil during machining.

Trench 4

- 3.2.5 Trench 4 was devoid of archaeology.

Trench 5

- 3.2.6 Trench 5 was devoid of archaeology.

Trench 6

- 3.2.7 Trench 6 was devoid of archaeology.

Trench 7 (Fig. 2)

- 3.2.8 A single ditch along and a series of post-medieval furrows were identified within Trench 7. At the southern end of the trench, ditch **08** was aligned west-northwest to east-

southeast. It measured 0.6m wide and was 0.3m deep with steeply sloping sides and a flat base. It was filled with a mid grey brown clay silt (09) which contained a single sherd (5g) of Late Iron Age pottery. A total of five furrows were seen across the remainder of the trench, they were all orientated east-west. One furrow was excavated, it measured 1.6m wide and was 0.17m deep with a mid red brown silty clay fill.

Trench 8 (Fig. 2)

- 3.2.9 A single ditch along with at least two furrows were identifiable across Trench 8. Ditch **11** was aligned east-northeast to west-southwest. It measured 0.95m wide and was 0.3m deep with gently sloping sides and a concave base. It was filled with a mid yellow brown silty clay (10). All the furrows was aligned east to west.

Trench 9 (Fig. 2)

- 3.2.10 A total of four furrows, aligned east to west were seen within Trench 9, one of which was excavated. The furrow was 2.3m wide and 0.07m deep. It was filled with a mid red brown silty clay.

Trench 10 (Fig. 2)

- 3.2.11 Trench 10 also contained east-west aligned furrows. A large modern feature was also located with the northern end of the trench. This feature extended across the trench for 5.6m. Excavation produced an irregular profile with a sharp vertical edge on its northern side and a gently undulating slope on the southern side. The feature was excavated to a depth of 0.3m. The fill consisted of an orange brown silty clay which contained fragments of brick.

3.3 A1 New Spring Farm to Stratton Farm – CH2350-3300

Trench 11 (Fig. 3)

- 3.3.1 Two ditches on two differing alignments were seen within Trench 11. Ditch **17** was orientated north-west to south east. It 0.95m wide and 0.4m deep with steeply sloping sides and a concave base. It was filled with a mid yellow brown silty clay (16) which contained a single sherd (3g) of Late Iron Age pottery. Approximately 2m to the west of this was north-south aligned ditch **19**. Ditch **19** measured 0.75m wide and 0.3m deep with steeply sloping sides and a concave base. It was filled with a mid yellow grey silty clay (18).

Trench 12

- 3.3.2 Trench 12 was devoid of archaeology.

Trench 13 (Fig. 3)

- 3.3.3 Archaeological features were seen across the full length of Trench 13. At its western end was east-west aligned ditch **20**. It measured 0.8m wide and was 0.3m deep with steeply sloping sides and a flat base. It was filled with a mid brown grey clay silt (21) which contained 10 sherds (293g) of Late Iron Age pottery, 173g of animal bone (from a variety of species) and oyster shell (41g). Approximately 4.5m to the east was a parallel ditch of similar morphology. This ditch was not excavated.
- 3.3.4 Located across the central portion of the trench was cobbled surface **24** (Plate 2). The surface extended across the trench for 3m and was made up of medium and large sub-rounded stones with chalky gravel packed between and around the cobble stones. An

assemblage of Late Iron Age pottery (40 sherds, weighing 529g) was recovered from the surface along with 184g of animal bone and three fragments of baked clay (34g). Immediately to the east of surface 24 was pit **22**. The pit was only partially visible within the trench, but measured 0.6m wide and 0.17m deep with gently sloping sides and a concave base. It was filled with a dark brown grey clay silt (23) which contained 11 sherds (62g) of Late Iron Age pottery.

Trench 14 (Fig. 4, Plate 3)

- 3.3.5 Archaeological features were seen across the full length of Trench 14. At its easternmost end was a pit or ditch, this feature was only partially visible and was not excavated. Approximately 5m to the east was gully **15**. This feature also was not excavated, but two sherds (11g) of Late Iron Age pottery were collected from the surface of its fill (14). A further 2m to the east was pit **13** (also unexcavated). Three sherds of Late Iron Age pottery (42g) were also collected from the surface of the fill (12).
- 3.3.6 The central and western portion of the trench contained a feature (**31**) which extended for 14m. A hand-dug slot was excavated on the edge of the feature and a machine slot was also excavated across the centre. Feature **31** had near vertical sides and was 1m deep. The earlier of the two fills (32) consisted of a 0.7m thick mid brown grey silty clay which contained 18g of animal bone from a variety of species. Above this was a 0.3m thick dark yellow grey silty clay (30) which contained seven sherds (81g) of Late Iron Age pottery and 56g of animal bone. An environmental sample taken from fill 32 produced low levels of charred plant remains (see Appendix C.2).
- 3.3.7 Truncating through the top of feature **31** was east-west aligned ditch **34**. The full width of the ditch could not be seen but it was at least 1.5m wide. A hand-dug slot was excavated in the ditch and it also extended into the machine slot through feature **31**. Ditch **34** was at least 0.6m deep and had steeply sloping sides, the base was beyond the limits of the trench. It was filled with a mid brown grey silty clay (33) which contained degraded wood, modern glazed china, brick fragments and a large piece of iron which appeared to be part of a plough (these finds were not kept).

Trench 15 (Fig. 4, Plate 4)

- 3.3.8 Toward the southern end of Trench 15 was feature **29** which extended across the trench for 11.5m. The feature measured 0.68m deep with a gently sloping side and concave base. The earlier of the two fills (28) consisted of a 0.18m thick mid red brown sandy clay which contained a fragment of CBM (72g). Above this, fill 27 consisted of a 0.5m thick mid grey brown silty clay which contained 71g of animal bone.
- 3.3.9 Approximately 6m to the north of this was feature **26** which extended across the trench for 3.2m. It was 0.2m deep with very gently sloping sides which then stepped down vertically at the centre. It was filled by a mid yellow brown silty clay (25).

Trench 16

- 3.3.10 Trench 16 had to be reduced in length due to the presence of underground services. It was devoid of archaeology.

3.4 Finds and Environmental Summary

- 3.4.1 The main assemblage recovered from the site was pottery (79 sherds, totalling 1009g). It consisted of Late Iron Age sherds (along with a single unstratified sherd of Early Iron Age) in a variety of fabrics. The assemblage belongs to the 'Belgic' ceramic tradition, thus dating from c.100/50 BC to AD 50. The majority of the pottery was collected from the features in Trench 13.
- 3.4.2 A lesser amount of animal bone was also collected from the site. The assemblage consists mostly of large mammals (cattle, horse, sheep, pig), but a small number of small mammal or bird bones were recovered from the environmental sample. A small number of the bones displayed butchery and/or gnaw marks.
- 3.4.3 A single piece of CBM, three fragments of baked clay, an oyster shell and a lump of vitrified material were also recovered.
- 3.4.4 One environmental sample was taken from the lower fill (32) of feature **31** in Trench 14. A small number of charred cereal grains were recovered.
- 3.4.5 Specialist reports can be found in Appendices B and C.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

- 4.1.1 The archaeological works along the route of the proposed Topleys Hill to Stratton water pipeline have identified archaeological remains across seven of the 16 trenches. Post-medieval ridge and furrow was also identified across a further four of the trenches.

Trench 1 (Topleys Hill)

- 4.1.2 The single ditch seen in Trench 1 would appear to relate to the findings of previous fieldwork undertaken adjacent to the water tower (Luke 2004). Here a north-west to south-east aligned boundary made up of four re-cut parallel ditches (referred to as G16/18/20/22) was uncovered (Luke 2004: 37). A linear cropmark (referred to as G26) identified by aerial photography to the north-west, is stated as being the probable continuation of this boundary (Luke 2004: 38, fig. 8). The ditch (**05**) uncovered in Trench 1 of the current evaluation would appear to correspond with these features and thus is likely to be the remnant of this ditched boundary. The finds assemblage from the earlier excavation ranged in date from the Late Bronze Age to the Late Iron Age (Luke 2004: 39).

Trenches 7 and 8 (New Spring Pumping Station A1)

- 4.1.3 Two ditches aligned broadly east-west were identified in Trenches 7 and 8. Whilst only a very small amount of Late Iron Age pottery was recovered, it highlights that peripheral and probable agricultural activity was taking place in the wider landscape at this time. Undated cropmarks (HER 3546) of sub-rectangular enclosures are recorded to the south of this location, thus these ditches could be associated.

Trenches 11 and 13 to 15 (Stratton)

- 4.1.4 The most concentrated remains were seen across Trenches 11, 13, 14 and 15 to the east and south of the Stratton Business Park. Archaeological work undertaken in 2003 ahead of the construction of the Bibby Distribution warehouse (adjacent to Trenches 15 and 16) uncovered a series of ditches on a number of alignments, along with a trackway, across the north-eastern extent of the development area. The pottery assemblage dated this activity to the Early-Middle Iron Age and Late Pre-Roman Iron Age (Albion Archaeology 2003: 6).
- 4.1.5 Further fieldwork in this area has been carried out ahead of the proposed Stratton Park Access Road (Albion Archaeology 2004). This access road planned to run along the eastern and southern perimeter of the Bibby Distribution warehouse. Therefore Trenches 15 and 16 of the current evaluation are actually located within this earlier proposed and previously evaluated land. The Albion Trenches 1 to 3 are located on either side and in between the current fieldwork Trenches 15 and 16.
- 4.1.6 Archaeological remains (predominantly in the form of ditches) were uncovered across all trenches within the Access Road evaluation, along with large assemblages of Late Iron Age 'Belgic' pottery, baked clay and animal bone (Albion Archaeology 2004: 19). The current finds assemblages correlate with these earlier finds.
- 4.1.7 Taking the results of these three evaluations as a whole, it is clear that there is coherent Late Iron Age activity in the immediate environs. Previously identified cropmarks in this area (HER 16823 and 16824) are also likely to relate to the current fieldwork findings and highlight the potential extent of this activity.

Conclusion

- 4.1.8 Overall the evaluation works have identified archaeological remains dating from the Late Iron Age period, along with post-medieval and modern agricultural activity. The most significant remains have been uncovered in the vicinity of Stratton Farm and have the potential to tie in with the previous findings to the immediate north.

APPENDIX A. TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1						
General description				Orientation		NNW-SSE
Trench contained a single ditch. A thick layer of subsoil was uncovered at the northern end of the trench but this thinned out as the trench continued southward.				Depth (m)		0.4-0.85
				Width (m)		1.8
				Length (m)		100
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1	layer	-	0.15-0.3	topsoil	-	-
2	layer	-	0.15-0.55	subsoil	-	-
3	layer	-	0.2	layer	pottery	LIA
4	fill	-	-	ditch	pottery & animal bone	LIA
5	cut	-	-	ditch	-	-

Trench 2						
General description				Orientation		NNW-SSE
Trench was devoid of archaeological remains.				Depth (m)		0.35
				Width (m)		1.8
				Length (m)		50
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1	layer	-	0.15-0.25	topsoil	-	-
2	layer	-	0.1-0.2	subsoil	-	-

Trench 3						
General description				Orientation		NNW-SSE
Trench was devoid of archaeological remains.				Depth (m)		0.3-0.4
				Width (m)		1.8
				Length (m)		50
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1	layer	-	0.2	topsoil	-	-
2	layer	-	0.1-0.2	subsoil	pottery	LIA

Trench 4						
General description				Orientation	N-S	
Trench was devoid of archaeological remains.				Depth (m)	0.3-0.45	
				Width (m)	1.8	
				Length (m)	50	
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1	layer	-	0.2-0.3	topsoil	-	-
2	layer	-	0.1-0.2	subsoil	-	-

Trench 5						
General description				Orientation	NNW-SSE	
Trench was devoid of archaeological remains.				Depth (m)	0.35-0.4	
				Width (m)	1.8	
				Length (m)	50	
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1	layer	-	0.2-0.3	topsoil	-	-
2	layer	-	0.1-0.15	subsoil	-	-

Trench 6						
General description				Orientation	N-S	
Trench was devoid of archaeological remains.				Depth (m)	0.3-0.5	
				Width (m)	1.8	
				Length (m)	50	
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1	layer	-	0.2-0.3	topsoil	-	-
2	layer	-	0.1-0.2	subsoil	-	-

Trench 7						
General description				Orientation	N-S	
Trench contained a ditch along with a series of post-medieval furrows.				Depth (m)	0.3-0.35	
				Width (m)	1.8	
				Length (m)	50	
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1	layer	-	0.25	topsoil	-	-
2	layer	-	0.05-0.1	subsoil	-	-
6	cut	-	-	furrow	-	-
7	fill	-	-	furrow	-	-
8	cut	-	-	ditch	-	-
9	fill	-	-	ditch	pottery	LIA

Trench 8						
General description				Orientation	N-S	
Trench contained a ditch along with a series of post-medieval furrows. No subsoil present.				Depth (m)	0.35	
				Width (m)	1.8	
				Length (m)	50	
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1	layer	-	0.35	topsoil	-	-
10	fill	-	-	ditch	-	-
11	cut	-	-	ditch	-	-

Trench 9						
General description				Orientation	NNW-SSE	
Trench contained a series of post-medieval furrows. No subsoil present.				Depth (m)	0.3-0.35	
				Width (m)	1.8	
				Length (m)	50	
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1	layer	-	0.3-0.35	topsoil	-	-

Trench 10						
General description				Orientation		NNW-SSE
Trench contained furrows and a post-medieval pit. No subsoil present.				Depth (m)		0.35
				Width (m)		1.8
				Length (m)		50
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1	layer	-	0.35	topsoil	-	-

Trench 11						
General description				Orientation		ENE-WSW
Trench contained two ditches. Subsoil only present at eastern end of trench.				Depth (m)		0.3-0.35
				Width (m)		1.8
				Length (m)		30
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1	layer	-	0.3	topsoil	-	-
2	layer	-	0.05	subsoil	-	-
16	fill	-	-	ditch	pottery	LIA
17	cut	-	-	ditch	-	-
18	fill	-	-	ditch	-	-
19	cut	-	-	ditch	-	-

Trench 12						
General description				Orientation		ENE-WSW
Trench was devoid of archaeology				Depth (m)		0.25-0.3
				Width (m)		1.8
				Length (m)		30
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1	layer	-	0.2	topsoil	-	-
2	layer	-	0.05-0.1	subsoil	-	-

Trench 13						
General description				Orientation		ENE-WSW
Archaeological features seen across full length of trench.				Depth (m)		0.3-0.4
				Width (m)		1.8
				Length (m)		30
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1	layer	-	0.2-0.3	topsoil	-	-
2	layer	-	0.05-0.1	subsoil	-	-
20	cut	-	-	ditch	-	-
21	fill	-	-	ditch	pottery & animal bone	LIA
22	cut	-	-	pit	-	-
23	fill	-	-	pit	pottery	LIA
24	layer	-	-	cobbled surface	pottery	LIA

Trench 14						
General description				Orientation		ENE-WSW
Archaeological features seen across full length of trench. No subsoil present.				Depth (m)		0.25
				Width (m)		1.8
				Length (m)		30
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1	layer	-	0.25	topsoil	-	-
30	fill	-	-	intercutting pits/quarry	pottery	LIA
31	cut	-	-	intercutting pits/quarry	-	-
32	fill	-	-	intercutting pits/quarry	-	-
33	fill	-	-	ditch	ceramic	post-medieval
34	cut	-	-	ditch	-	-

Trench 15						
General description				Orientation		NNW-SSE
Trench contained two features. No subsoil present across trench, however two topsoils were evident – the upper soil has resulted from redistribution from the development of the neighbouring plot.				Depth (m)		0.35-0.4
				Width (m)		1.8
				Length (m)		30
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1	layer	-	0.15	topsoil	-	-
35	layer	-	0.2-0.25	lower topsoil	-	-
25	fill	-	-	?furrow	-	-
26	cut	-	-	?furrow	-	-
27	fill	-	-	intercutting pits	animal bone	undatable
28	fill	-	-	intercutting pits	CBM	
29	cut	-	-	intercutting pits	-	-

Trench 16						
General description				Orientation		NNW-SSE
Trench devoid of archaeological features. No subsoil present across trench, however two topsoils were evident – the upper soil has resulted from redistribution from the development of the neighbouring plot.				Depth (m)		0.7-0.75
				Width (m)		1.8
				Length (m)		10
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1	layer	-	0.3	topsoil	-	-
35	layer	-	0.4-0.45	lower topsoil	-	-

APPENDIX B. FINDS REPORTS

B.1 Pottery

By Matt Brudenell

Introduction

- B.1.1 A total of 79 sherds of prehistoric pottery (1009g) were recovered from the evaluation, with a mean sherd weight (MSW) of 12.8g. The pottery was recovered from 11 contexts relating to eight cut features (four ditches, three pits and a gully), a surface layer, a spread and the subsoil (Table 1). These contexts were found across Trenches 1, 3, 7, 11, 13 and 14. With the exception of a single Early Iron Age rim sherd from the subsoil of Trench 3 (context 2, 17g, fabric F16), all the pottery was assigned to the Late Iron Age (c. 100/50 BC – AD 50). The pottery was in a stable condition, though sherd sizes are generally small and partially abraded. This report provides a quantified description of the assemblage.

Methodology

- B.1.1 All the pottery was fully recorded following the recommendations laid out by the Prehistoric Ceramic Research Group (2009). All sherds were counted, weighed (to the nearest whole gram) and assigned to fabric (sherds broken in excavation were refitted and counted as single entities). Sherd type was recorded, along with evidence for surface treatment, decoration, and the presence of soot and/or residue. Rim forms have been described using a codified system recorded in the catalogue, and are assigned vessel numbers.
- B.1.2 Late Iron Age wheel-made 'Belgic'-related vessels were classified using Isobel Thompson's (1982) catalogue, and her alphanumeric codes, prefixed with TH-. All pottery has been subject to sherd size analysis. Sherds less than 4cm in diameter have been classified as 'small' (50 sherds); sherds measuring 4-8cm are classified as 'medium' (25 sherds), and sherds over 8cm in diameter 'large' (4 sherds).

Results

Early Iron Age

- B.1.3 A single rim sherd of Early Iron Age pottery was recovered from the subsoil in Trench 3. The rim sherd is T-shaped, with an expanded exterior lip and flanged interior lip in shell tempered fabric F16. The rim form is typical of ceramics dating from c. 600-350 BC in Eastern England (Brudenell 2012).

Late Iron Age

- B.1.4 Pottery assigned to the Late Iron Age comprises 78 sherds (992g). The material was recovered from 10 contexts relating to eight cut features (four ditches (**5, 8, 17, 20**), three pits (**13, 22, 31**) and a gully (**15**)), a surface layer and a spread.
- B.1.5 The assemblage contains sherds with grog (F06C), sand and grog (F09), shell (F07), and sand (F34) as the principal inclusion (Table 2). Those with grog dominate (42%), followed by sand and grog (33%), shell (17%), then sand (6%). The grog-tempered wares (F06C and F09) comprise handmade and wheel-made sherds, some with combed surfaces (11 sherds, 233). The grog also included a cordoned neck sherd (9g),

a grooved neck sherd (8g), and the rims of three vessels. The largest belonged to a large storage jar (Form, TH-C6-1) with a c. 36cm rim diameter.

B.1.6 The shelly wares (F07) in the assemblage are primarily handmade, although a few are wheel-thrown. The only notable sherd is the rim of a lid-seated jar from Ditch **20**, Trench 13.

B.1.7 The sandy wares comprise fragments of handmade and wheel-made vessels; one a rilled sherd (8g) from Ditch **20**, Trench 13.

Context	Cut	Feature	Trench	No./Wt. (g) sherds	Fabrics (no.wt. (g) sherds)	Date
2	-	subsoil	3	1/17	F16 (1/17)	EIA
3	-	spread	1	2/3	F07 (2/3)	LIA
4	5	ditch	1	1/2	F34 (1/2)	LIA
9	8	ditch	7	1/5	F06C (1/5)	LIA
12	13	pit	14	3/42	F09 (3/42)	LIA
14	15	gully	14	2/11	F34 (2/11)	LIA
16	17	ditch	11	1/3	F34 (1/3)	LIA
21	20	pit	13	10/253	F06C (2/8), F07 (2/24), F09 (3/185), F34 (3/37)	LIA
23	22	pit	13	11/62	F60C (2/23), F07 (5/33), F34 (3/6)	LIA
24	-	surface	13	40/529	F06C (27/387), F07 (7/99), F09 (6/43)	LIA
30	31	pit	14	7/81	F07 (2/10), F09 (3/67), F34 (2/4)	LIA
Total				79/1009		

Table 1: Pottery quantification by context

Fabric type	Fabric group	No./wt. (g) sherds	% fabric by wt.	No./wt. (g) burnished	No./wt. (g) wheel-made	MNV
F06C	Coarse grog	33/423	41.9	-	16/229	1
F07	Shell	18/169	16.7	-	3/22	1
F09	Sand and grog	15/337	33.4	1.32	10/134	2
F16	Coarse shell	1/17	1.7	-	-	1
F34	Sand	12/63	6.2	-	8/33	-
Total		79/1009	99.9		37/418	5

Table 2: Pottery quantification by fabric. (MNV = minimum number of vessels calculated as the total number of different rims and bases identified (5 different vessel rims). Fabric codes follow the Bedfordshire Ceramic Type Series (see descriptions by Wells 2008, 294-296))

Conclusion

B.1.8 Overall, the Late Iron Age assemblage is typical of the 'Belgic'-related ceramic tradition of the region, dating c. 100/50 BC – AD 50, and can be paralleled with material from the Stratton Business Park Access Road Site (Albion Archaeology 2004).

APPENDIX C. ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS

C.1 Animal bone

By Angelos Hadjikoumis

Introduction and methodology

- C.1.1 Twenty-eight specimens of animal bone were recovered during the trial trench evaluation. Nineteen specimens derived from the hand collected sample and nine specimens from the residue (combined >2 mm fractions) of a sample processed by water flotation. All specimens of recovered animal bone were studied to assess the preservation condition and overall potential of zooarchaeological remains to generate new archaeological knowledge through further investigations.
- C.1.2 Identification and full recording was attempted on every specimen. Besides anatomical and taxonomic identification, data on the fusion state of postcranial elements, eruption and wear of dental remains, fragmentation, level of erosion, taphonomy, butchery and biometrical measurements were also recorded. Identification was carried out with the use relevant osteological atlases (e.g. Barone 1976; Pales and Garcia 1981; Schmid 1972). Epiphyseal fusion was recorded following Silver (1969). The distinction between sheep and goat was attempted on all caprine remains based on the criteria published by Boessneck *et al.* (1964). Fragmentation, taphonomy and butchery were recorded as described in Halstead (2011) and biometric measurements were taken following von den Driesch (1976). The extent of erosion/abrasion on bone surfaces was graded from 0 (unaffected) to 5 (heavy erosion across whole surface) according to Brickley & McKinley (2004, 14-15).

Quantification

- C.1.3 The basic unit for the quantification of this sample is the Number of Identified Specimens (NISP). All twenty-eight specimens were identifiable to some anatomical and taxonomic level, although most (eighteen out of twenty-eight) were identified to the species or genus level.

Results

- C.1.4 Identifiable specimens were recovered in all four contexts from which animal remains were hand collected, as well as the sample processed by water flotation (Table 3). At least four mammal species are represented in the samples. Cattle, pig, sheep and an equid (donkey/horse/mule) were positively identified. It cannot be excluded that more mammal species are represented amongst more generic taxonomic categories such as sheep/goat (e.g. goat), 'large mammal' and 'medium mammal'. Moreover, the presence of two fragments that belong to either small mammal or bird species suggest that additional species would be present at the site. Moreover, the presence of carnivore gnawing marks on two specimens constitutes indirect evidence for the presence of carnivores in the area, presumably domestic dogs (although other species such as the red fox or even pig cannot be entirely excluded). From the positively identified species, cattle are the most numerous, followed by sheep/goat (predominantly or exclusively sheep), while equids (one specimen is more likely to belong to horse) are represented by two specimens and pig by a single specimen.
- C.1.5 The material can be divided into two groups in terms of preservation. Contexts 30 and 32 (flotation) exhibit near-perfect bone preservation, while material from contexts 21, 24

and 27 is heavily eroded and also exhibits a reddish staining, possibly from naturally occurring iron oxides or oxidised iron objects in the vicinity. The sharp differences between these two groups may reflect chronological, contextual or soil chemistry differences between the different contexts.

C.1.6 Butchery marks were recorded on four specimens and two specimens yielded biometric measurements. Moreover, five specimens are attributable to an age cohort.

Context	Feature	Trench	Element	Taxon	Age Information	Biometric information	Butchery information	Erosion
21	Ditch	13	Metacarpus	Cattle				4
			Maxillary tooth	Sheep/goat	√			3
			Metacarpus	Sheep/goat				4
			Tibia	Equid				4
			Pelvis	Pig			√	4
			Long bone	Large mammal				4
			Long bone	Large mammal				4
24	Surface	13	Mandible condyle	Cattle				3
			Mandibular tooth	Cattle	√			4
			Mandible	Cattle				4
			Metatarsus	Cattle			√	4
			Radius	Cattle			√	4
			Ulna	Cattle				4
27	Pit	15	Astragalus	Equid				5
			Tibia	Cattle/equid				4
			Long bone	Large mammal				5
			Long bone	Large mammal				5
30	Pit	14	Metatarsus	Cattle			√	1
			Scapula	Sheep	√	√	√	1
32 (flot)	Pit	14	Metacarpus	Sheep	√			0
			Sacrum	Sheep/goat				0
			Maxillary tooth	Sheep/goat	√			0
			Tibia	Large mammal				1
			Flat/cubic bone	Medium mammal				2
			Rib	Medium mammal				1
			Ulna	Medium mammal				1
			Indeterminate	Small mammal/bird				1
			Indeterminate	Small mammal/bird				1

Table 3: Overview of data collected from faunal assemblage ('flot'= sample processed by water flotation)

Sampling Bias

C.1.7 Inevitably, hand collection of faunal remains usually causes an under-representation of smaller animal species, small anatomical elements or larger animals, as well as younger animals. The sample processed by water flotation, however, indicates that small mammal and/or bird species could be present at the site.

Conclusion

C.1.8 The study of the faunal sample shows that the potential for the recovery of well-preserved animal remains at the site is high in some contexts (e.g. 30 and 32). In other

contexts, the conditions in the soil, whether natural or anthropogenic, have deteriorated the condition of the bone thus reducing its potential to yield detailed information on some aspects such as butchery marks, taphonomic agents and biometric information.

- C.1.9 Nevertheless, this condition allows analysis of species frequencies and many other aspects, if the preservation bias is taken into account during the interpretation stage. Overall, if a substantial faunal sample is recovered and chronological information becomes available in the course of any ensuing excavation, then it would have the potential to shed light on the type of activities carried out by humans in the area.

C.2 Environmental samples

By Rachel Fosberry

Introduction and methodology

- C.2.1 A single bulk sample was taken from a possible pit or quarry feature (31) within the evaluated area to the south of Stratton Business Park, Biggleswade, in order to assess the quality of preservation of plant remains and their potential to provide useful data as part of further archaeological investigations.
- C.2.2 The total volume (7 litres) of the sample was processed by water flotation (using a modified Siraff three-tank system) for the recovery of charred plant remains, dating evidence and any other artefactual evidence that might be present. The floating component (flot) was collected in a 0.3mm nylon mesh and the residue was washed through 10mm, 5mm, 2mm and a 0.5mm sieves. Both flot and residue were allowed to air dry. A magnet was dragged through each residue fraction prior to sorting for artefacts. Any artefacts present were noted and reintegrated with the hand-excavated finds. The dried flot was subsequently sorted using a binocular microscope at magnifications up to x60 and a list of the recorded remains are presented in Table 4.
- C.2.3 Identification of plant remains is with reference to the *Digital Seed Atlas of the Netherlands* (Cappers *et al.* 2006) and the authors' own reference collection. Nomenclature is according to Zohary and Hopf (2000) for cereals and Stace (1997) for other plants. Carbonized seeds and grains, by the process of burning and burial, become blackened and often distort and fragment leading to difficulty in identification. Plant remains have been identified to species where possible. The identification of cereals has been based on the characteristic morphology of the grains and chaff as described by Jacomet (2006).

Results

- C.2.4 Preservation of plant remains is by carbonisation with no evidence of any preservation by waterlogging. Three charred cereal grains are present; they are poorly preserved but can be tentatively identified as barley (*Hordeum vulgare*) and wheat (*Triticum* sp.) by their morphology. A small grass (*Poaceae*) seed was also noted. Charcoal fragments are rare.

Sample No.	Context No.	Cut No.	Feature Type	Flot contents	Residue contents
1	32	31	Pit/quarry	Occasional charred grain and grass seed	Occasional fragments of pottery and animal bone and (modern) plastic.

Table 4: Environmental results

Discussion

- C.2.5 Charred cereal grains are commonly recovered from archaeological sites as evidence of their cultivation and consumption as a staple food. The single sample taken from this site indicates that there is the potential for the preservation of plant remains in a carbonised form.

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APPENDIX E. OASIS REPORT FORM

Project Details

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Project Reference Codes

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HER No.	<input type="text"/>	Related HER/OASIS No.	<input type="text"/>

Type of Project/Techniques Used

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Development Type	<input type="text"/>

Please select all techniques used:

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<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".

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Supervisor	<input type="text"/>

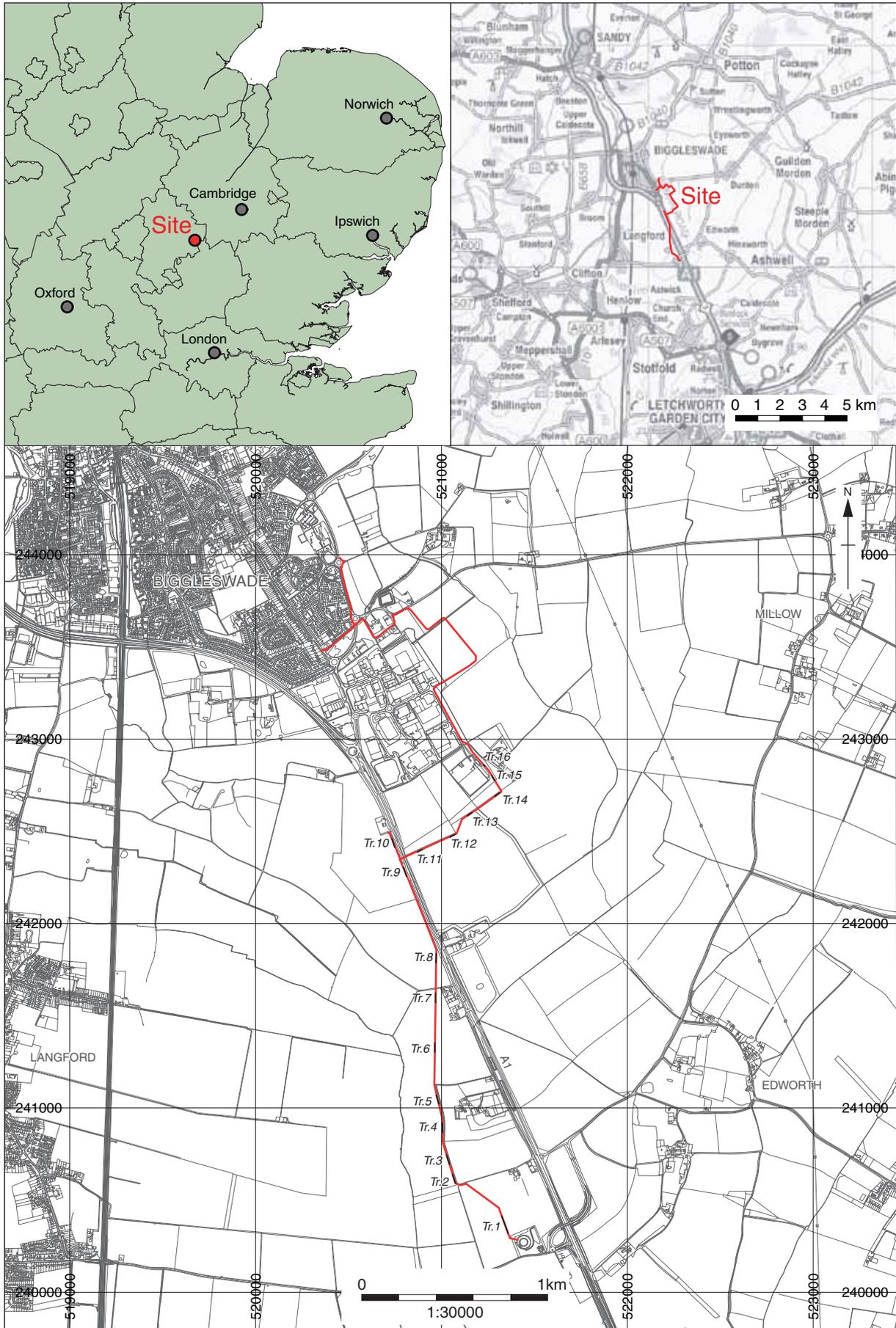
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Figure 1: Site location showing archaeological trenches (black) in development area (red)

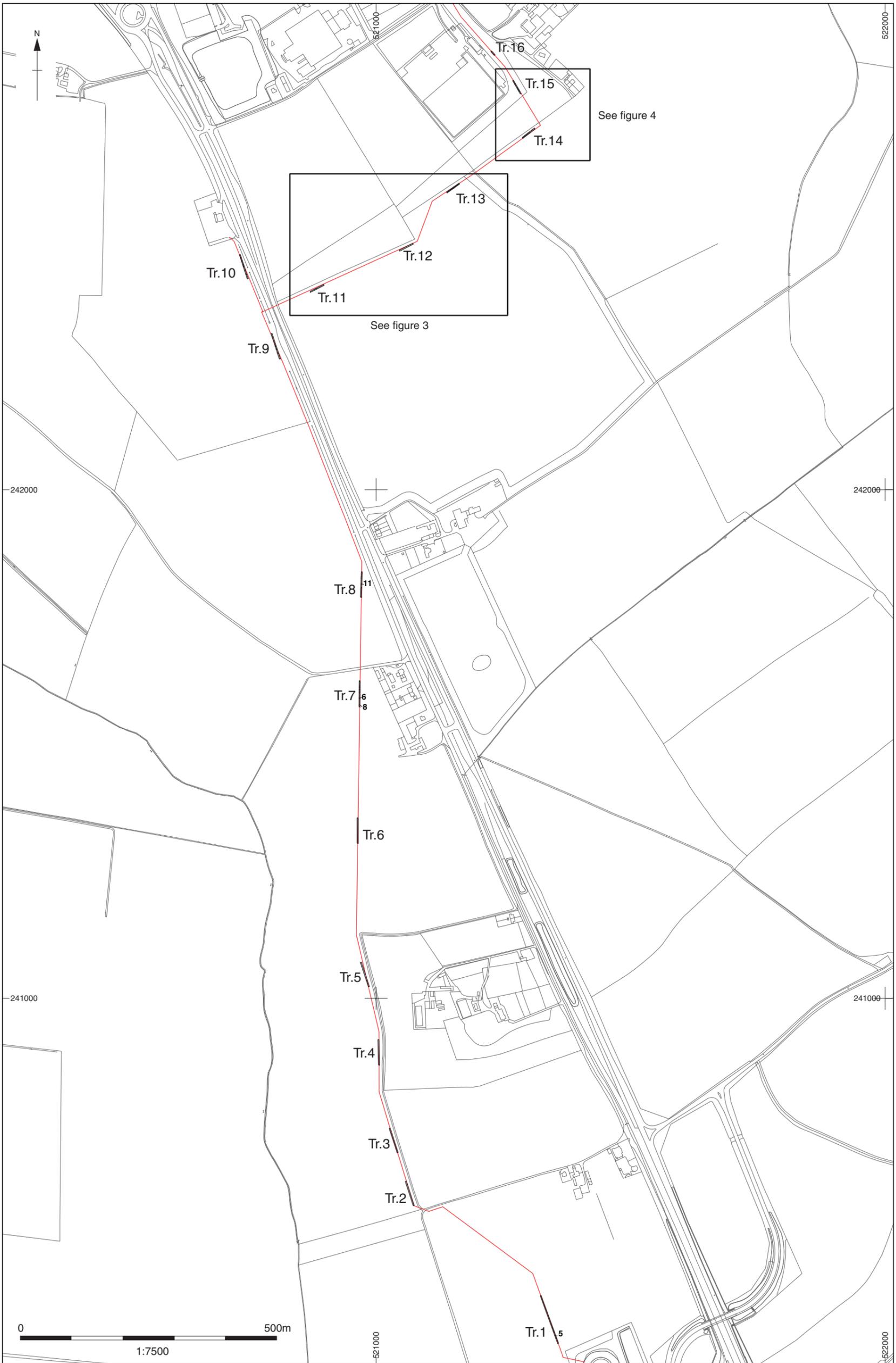


Figure 2: Trench location plan

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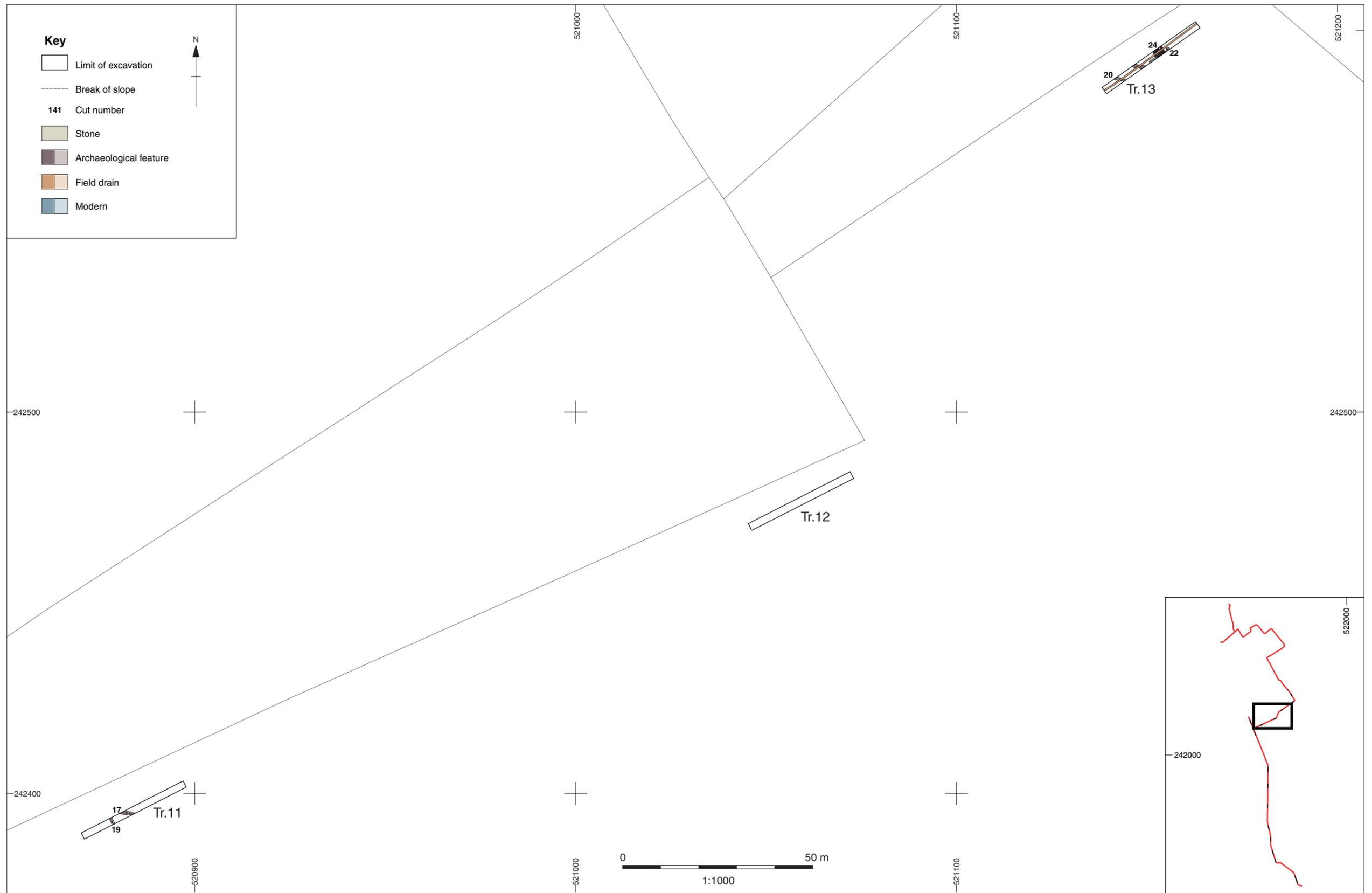


Figure 3: Plan of evaluation trenches 11-13

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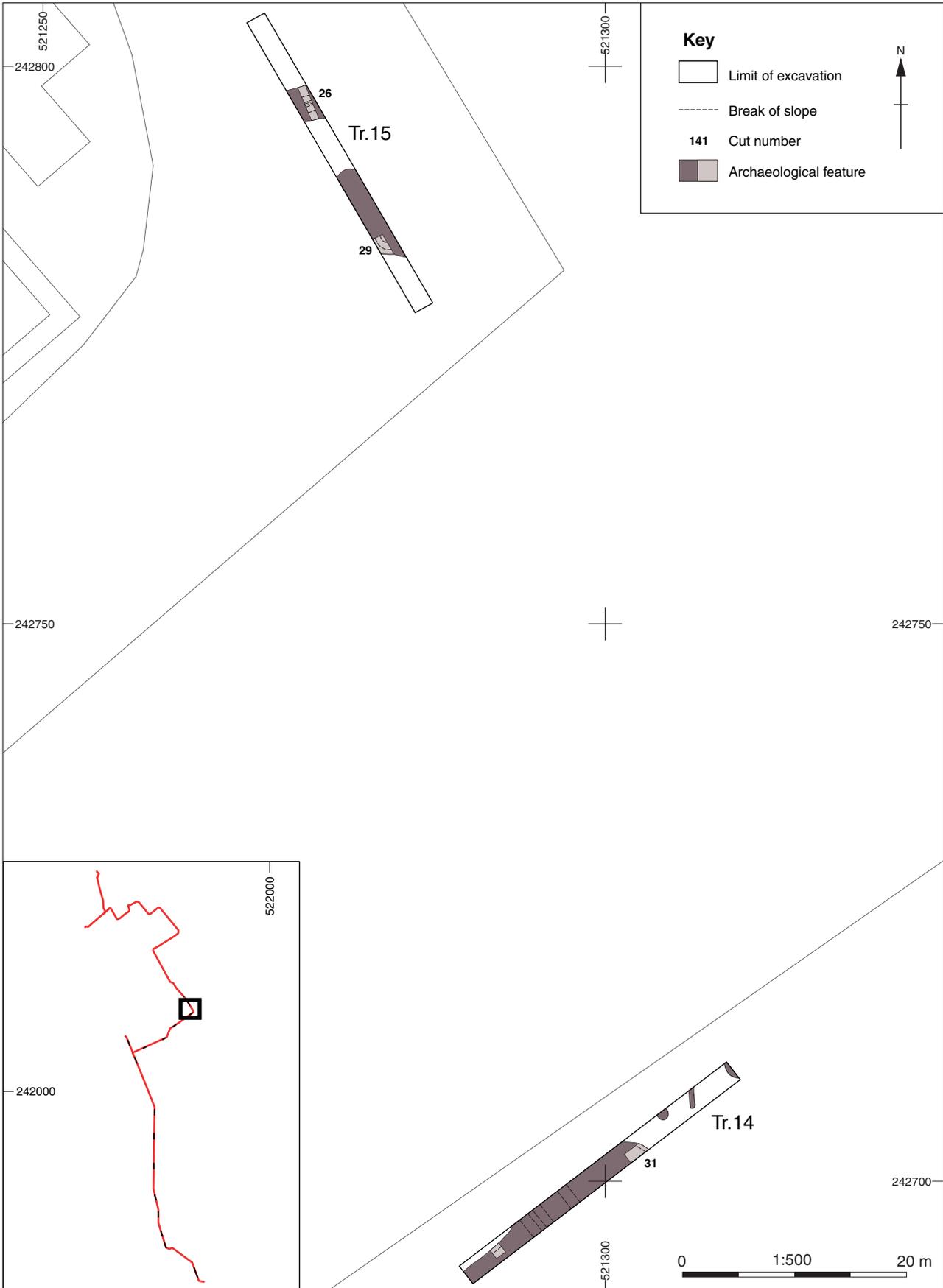


Figure 4: Plan of evaluation trenches 14-15

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Plate 1: Ditch **05**, Trench 1, looking north-west



Plate 2: Cobbled surface **24**, Trench 13, looking south



Plate 3: Trench 14, looking west



Plate 4: Trench 15, looking north



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