An Archaeological Evaluation at Alconbury Airfield Enterprise Zone, Alconbury, Cambridgeshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

July 2012

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Archaeological Evaluation Report

Report Title

An Archaeological Evaluation at Alconbury Airfield Enterprise Zone, Alconbury, Cambridgeshire

By Rob Atkins BSocSc DipArch MIfA

With contributions by Chris Faine MA MSc AIfA, Rachel Fosberry AIfA and Alice Lyons BA MA MIfA

Editor: James Drummond-Murray BA MIfA

Illustrator: Lucy Offord BA

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Prepared by: Rob Atkins
Position: Project Officer
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Checked by: James Drummond-Murray
Position: Senior Project Manager
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Signed: .....

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

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

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Summary

Over 3rd to the 6th July 2012, OA East conducted an archaeological evaluation comprising twelve trenches (collectively 358.25m long) at Alconbury Enterprise Zone, Alconbury Airfield in advance of a new road access. This work was located to the west of a previous evaluation in 2001 which found Mid/Late Iron Age to Early Roman remains. In the present evaluation, five trenches contained no archaeological features and seven trenches, over a 350m distance, found features dating to between c. 2nd century BC and c. late 2nd century AD. The density of features in the seven trenches ranged from a single feature to densely intercutting remains across an entire trench.

Iron Age features were encountered in five Trenches (6, 7, 8, 11 and 12) over a 300m by 150m area with domestic type assemblages recovered from two different areas (Trenches 6/7 and Trenches 11/12), c.300m apart. The Late Iron Age remains found in the 2001 evaluation was located c.300m and c.400m distance respectively from these two 'domestic' areas suggesting that these three areas represent different farmsteads or different family groupings within an agglomerate type settlement.

Early to Middle Roman remains were found in two locations (Trenches 5 and 9), more than 200m apart. Trench 5 was located c.100m to the west of one of the Latest Iron Age domestic focii (Trench 6) and contained a very dense area of features (either pits and/or ditches) dating up to at least the end of the 2nd century AD. The second area of Roman remains (Trench 9) was located between the other two Latest Iron Age domestic areas found in the evaluation.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 An archaeological evaluation was conducted at Alconbury Enterprise Zone, Alconbury Airfield, Cambridgeshire (Fig.1; TL 1960 7770). This work was undertaken in accordance with a Specification and a Method Statement prepared by OA East (Drummond-Murray 2012a and b) and was carried out in line with a condition attached to planning consent (Planning Application1102094FUL).

1.1.2 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 Cambridgeshire County Council, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority, with regard to the treatment of any archaeological remains found.

1.1.3 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 proposed development of the Alconbury Airfield complex comprises a 47.26 hectare area. There are no natural watercourses on the site with the land generally draining towards Alconbury Brook, *c.*1km to the south-west. The ground level at the extreme western end of the site at Trenches 1 and 2 lies at 46.4 to 47.3m OD whereas Trench 3 in the middle was at 49.1m and Trench 12 at the extreme eastern side at 49.2m OD with no area within this centre of the site below 48.9m or above 49.5m. The two trenches on the western side was at the periphery of the former airfield whereas the central 10 trenches, where the area is remarkably flat, were all located near the centre of the airfield and it is possible to achieve this, there was a levelling of the ground area in this location.

1.2.2 The British Geological Survey (BGS 1972) records the Drift geology in the site as Boulder Clay and this overlies Solid geology of Oxford Clay.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background (Fig.2)

1.3.1 The current archaeological work took place within the western part of Alconbury airfield. This evaluation forms part of a series of archaeological works within the site with a desk-based assessment undertaken prior to commencement of intrusive archaeological work (Marsden *et al* 1998), an aerial photographic assessment (Palmer 1998) and a geophysical survey which was partly within the present evaluation area (Fig. 3; GSB 2000). There were two archaeological trial trench evaluations within Alconbury Airfield in 2000 and 2001 (Macaulay 2000 (CHER MCB 15840) and Macaulay and Casa Hatton 2001 (Fig. 3; CHER CB 14697). Further Geophysical Surveys took place by Durham University in 2006 and 2011 (these were located directly to the north-east and further to the east of the present evaluation). An archaeological trial trench evaluation took place in 2012 (Fletcher 2012; CHER ECB 3741). As part of the present investigation an archaeological desk-based assessment was carried out as part of the enabling works for Alconbury Enterprise Zone (Dicks and Chadwick 2011).

1.3.2 The following (below) has been taken from the 2011 desk-based assessment (Dicks and Chadwick 2011) and other evaluation reports in the vicinity (*e.g.* Philips 2009) and amended where appropriate. Figure 2 shows the location of the main Historic Environment Record numbers as referenced below:

Earlier Prehistoric

1.3.3 No Palaeolithic sites or artefacts were recorded on the Cambridgeshire HER within 1km zone around the site (Dicks and Chadwick 2011, 12). A perforated macehead was the only Mesolithic artefact and this was found 1km to the south-east (CHER 00805). Neolithic to Bronze Age artefacts comprise a flint scraper c.300m to the north-west of the study site (CHER 00834) and flint implements 100m to the south (CHER 00827). Further away a Bronze Age settlement has been found less than 3km to the south-east at Northbridge where a large evaluation uncovered a concentration of pits, gullies and post holes in the centre of the site, some containing quantities of Late Bronze Age finds, indicating occupation in the vicinity (Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record MCB16363; Cullen 2004).

Iron Age/Roman

1.3.4 During the Iron Age and Roman periods several archaeological remains have been adjacent to the evaluation site and slightly further away. During the Roman period the study site lay adjacent to Ermine Street, a Roman road linking the Roman towns of Durovigutum (Godmanchester: 7km south of the study site) and Durobrivae (Water Newton: 16km to the north).

1.3.5 Within 1km of the subject site there were several Iron Age and Roman records suggesting an intensely occupied area in this period. A geophysical survey has taken place partly within the evaluation area (GSB 2000) and this uncovered a few possible pit like features as well as some ditches. A subsequent evaluation within this geophysical area in 2001, directly to the east of the present evaluation, found six linear ditches, four post holes and a gully/slot which were dated to two phases (late Middle Iron Age and a small late pre-Belgic Iron Age enclosure (found in the geophysics survey); Macaulay and Casa Hatton 2001).

1.3.6 A Roman building was identified *c*.1km north of the evaluation (CHER 00836). Two Roman barrows are located close to Ermine Street in Great Stukeley, approximately 1km to the south and south-west of the site (Scheduled Monuments 33351 and 33352). The CHER also records the discovery of a Roman pit c.0.5km to the north-west (CHER 00831). An aerial photographic assessment identified a rectilinear enclosure c.250m to the north (Palmer 1998) and it is possible the pit related to this settlement. A Roman coffin and quern stone c.200m to the south of the study site (CHER 00826). In addition, Roman finds at six sites within the 1km search area comprising Roman coin (CHER 00828), Roman finds (CHER 00808), Roman pottery and brooch (CHERs 00809 and 00830) and Roman pottery (CHER 00817) and a Roman coin (CHER 01572).

1.3.7 In the area beyond the 1km search area, an archaeological evaluation 2000 there were two separate settlements found (Macaulay 2000). About 2km to east an Early to Middle Iron Age settlement is suggested by five ditches found in a single trench, and *c*.3km to the east, an Early/Middle Iron Age to Roman settlement was found with pottery recovered from 13 ditches and a pit within five adjacent trenches.

1.3.8 At the site of Ermine Business Park c.3km to the south-east of the site (ECB 3078), an evaluation of two fields comprising 70 trenches was undertaken in 2008 (Philips 2009).

Field A was interpreted as a Middle Iron Age industrial area consisting of one or more large pits which included metal working waste. Also in Field A were several ditches representing field boundaries or land divisions, part of a co-axial field system. One of these may have extended, although not continuously, for 200m as it was encountered in three trenches. Field B consisted of an area of Middle Iron Age settlement. Features included several boundary ditches, some of a considerable size, two possible water holes, a pit and a curvilinear gully which could have been part of a roundhouse. The settlement was restricted to a relatively small area, approximately 1ha.

1.3.9 At Bob's Wood, Hinchingbrook, 4km to the south-east, a farmstead originating in the Middle Iron Age grew in to a settlement of several hectares by the Roman period (CHER 13033; Hinman 2005). Among the findings were houses and associated structures, enclosures and water management features, a smithy, cremations, inhumations and significant assemblages of metalwork, pottery and animal bone (Hinman 2005). To the immediate west of Bobs Wood, at Parkway School, an excavation in 2004 (Fletcher 2004) revealed the presence of a ditch and the remaining half of a pit previously identified in the evaluation both dating to the Later Iron Age. The north-eastern excavation area revealed possible Bronze Age pits, a Later Iron Age roundhouse and a drainage ditch with evidence of maintenance, also dating to the Later Iron Age.

1.3.10 At Northbridge, 4km to the south-west of the site, a square enclosure was identified through aerial photographs and geophysical survey. Evaluation proved this to be a double ditched enclosure containing quantities of Roman artefacts (CHER 16364). An agricultural function was the most likely interpretation. In addition Roman field systems were identified to the east of the enclosure and a water hole to the south. Directly to the west of the Northbridge evaluation cropmarks and geophysics have revealed further enclosures and field systems on a similar alignment to the square enclosure, suggesting a Roman date (CHER MCB16939). The Northbridge evaluation extended to the Roman Road, Ermine Street, directly to the south of the subject site. No evidence of the road was encountered, nor was any trace found of field systems extending from the route of it (Cullen 2004).

1.3.11 The Fenland survey records a hill top Iron Age into Roman settlement at Abbots Ripton, c.3km to the north (not illustrated; Hall and Coles 1994, no.RN4 and 5, ABR S1 and S5). In addition Iron Age pottery was discovered 2km to the north (not illustrated).

Anglo-Saxon to modern

1.3.12 There are no Early to Middle Saxon CHER records within the 1km study zone of the site. The Late Saxon and later settlement of Little Stukeley is located 1km to the east. The site is within the medieval parish of Alconbury. The air photograph assessment and geophysical surveys identifies ridge and furrow around Alconbury Airfield and it is therefore assumed that the site is under arable cultivation.

1.3.13 In 1791, land within the parish of Alconbury was enclosed to create a pattern of roughly rectangular hedged fields. The 1887 Ordnance Survey shows little change to the field pattern. The 1902 map shows 'Common Farm' lieing within the study site. The site became an air force base in WWII and the station was closed in 1994 although the USAF have retained an enclave base to the east of the study area.

1.4 Acknowledgements

1.4.1 The author would like to thank Paul Chadwick of CgMs who commissioned the archaeological evaluation and who, with Andrew Brading of Savills, helped the project

to run smoothly. The project was managed by James Drummond-Murray who also wrote the Specification and Method Statement. Steve Critchley kindly metal detected the site. The site was monitored by Andy Thomas of Cambridgeshire County Council. Rob Atkins directed the evaluation with Peter Boardman, John Diffey, Julian Newman and Tam Webster assisting. Gareth Rees surveyed in the trenches. Thanks are also extended to each of the contributing specialists and Lucy Offord the illustrator.

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. The results of the 2001 evaluation adjacent to the present site was to be incorporated into the findings of the present work.

2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 The Specification and Method Statement set out the way the evaluation was to be conducted (Drummond-Murray 2012a and b). The Method Statement proposed that 12 evaluation trenches totalling 450m were to be excavated and this report incorporated an agreed trench plan for the site (Drummond-Murray 2012b).

2.2.2 On the morning of the evaluation, due to the risk from weapons ordnance being encountered etc. within the former WWII and Cold War airfield, BABTEC inducted the staff on recognition of such objects. Andrew Brading supplied a plan of the known services for the part of the airfield. A CAT was also used to identify services. As a result of this, some of the trenches were moved (if possible or reduced in size). The far north-eastern part of the site was under up to a foot of water and as a consequence this trench was moved.

2.2.3 Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a tracked 360° type excavator using a 2.1m wide toothless ditching bucket.

2.2.4 The site survey was carried out by Gareth Rees using Leica GPS 1200.

2.2.5 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.

2.2.6 All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using OA East's *pro-forma* sheets. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales and monochrome and digital photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits.

2.2.7 Seven bulk environmental samples were taken across the site with 20l typically taken. A sub-sample of 10l were processed for this report with the exception of a possible cremation which was totally analysed (and proved to be burnt animal bone).

2.2.8 The site took place under overcast and showery conditions except the last day on site which was very wet.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 This section is described in two sections: the 5 Trenches (1-4 and 10) where there were no archaeological remains are described together whereas the seven Trenches with remains (5-9 and 11-12) are described by trench. A table of all contexts appears as Appendix 1.

3.2 Trenches (1-4 and 10) where there were no archaeological remains (Fig. 1)

3.2.1 In Trenches 1-4 it is noticeable that the ground level had not been truncated in any of these trenches with the subsoil surviving.

3.2.2 Trenches 1 and 2 were adjacent and located at the far western part of the site where a new entranceway and road into the former airbase is proposed. There were several services recorded in this location and the trenches were divided and moved where possible (Trenches 1a and b and Trenches 2a and b). Collectively Trenches 1 and 2 were 40.75m long. Trench 1 was 17.25m long and between 0.40m OD and 0.60m deep. Subsoil (2) comprised a light grey brown silty clay between 0.2m and 0.4m deep under a 0.2m thick topsoil (1) comprising a dark grey brown clay silt. Two possible very empheral east to west furrows (less than 5mm deep) were found but they may be just natural silting of shallow hollows. Trenches 2a and b were collectively 23.5m long with the natural sealed beneath a topsoil and subsoil between 0.55m and 0.6m deep. No artefacts were recovered even from the topsoil and subsoil implying that both trenches were well away from settlement remains.

3.2.3 Trenches 3 and 4 were adjacent and were both located directly to the east of the airfield's main entranceway. Again there were several services recorded in both locations including electricity services through both trenches leading to a sub-station to the south-east of Trench 4. The Trenches were therefore divided (Trenches 3a and b and Trenches 4a and b) and were collectively 51.5m long with no features or artefacts found in either. The subsoil in both trenches were 0.35m and 0.4m thick and the topsoil 0.2m and 0.25m thick respectively.

3.2.4 Trench 10 was 20m long and located at the extreme south-eastern extent of the evaluation. It was aligned north-west to south-east and was between 0.25m and 0.3m deep. About half of the trench had been truncated by modern features. No old ground levels survived with the topsoil overlaying either the truncation or natural sub-soil.

3.3 Trench 5 (Fig. 4)

3.3.1 Trench 5 was aligned north-east to south west and was 26.5m long. Natural was only exposed in less than 10% of the trench along the north-western side of the trench with the remainder comprising a possible ditch, a post hole and either intercutting pits and/or ditches. Overall, there were dense and perhaps complicated archaeological remains within the trench which is likely to represent several phases/sub-phases. Three excavation slots were excavated within the trench, although none absolutely resolved what the features were, they did establish the depth of certain features and their date.

3.3.2 In the south-western part of the trench a slot found two possibly intercutting pits (Fig. 4, S.1; **6** and **8**). The earliest feature (**8**), was 0.82m long, more than 0.6m wide and 0.27m deep. Only bone was found within its fairly sterile backfill. It was cut by pit or ditch (**6**). It may have been fairly large, *c*.1.7m in diameter, and due to safety reasons

was not hand excavated to natural. The bottom of the feature was augered and was *c.*1m deep. Its sides was moderate to steep and the feature was backfilled with at least three deposits (3-5). The hand augering found the lowest deposit was not organic despite the fact the lowest 0.7m of the feature was below the site water level (which was presumably perched). Small quantities of Early to Middle Roman pottery (0.018kg), four tegula and five imbrex roof tile (1.049kg) and small quantities of fired clay (0.039kg) were found in the backfills.

3.3.3 In the middle of the tench an undated layer (16), 0.1m deep was cut by the intercutting pits and/or ditches on its south-eastern side. The third slot was at the north-eastern part of the trench (Fig. 4, S.2). A large pit, watering hole or ditch (**15**) was encountered and this was more than 2m long and augered to a depth of 1.45m (1.85m below ground level). The basal deposits found in the auger survey were not organic. Only the south eastern side of the feature was found with the top 0.4m having a moderately sloping edge which then became near vertical. The feature could be a watering hole or pit though there is a chance it is a very large ditch. It was backfilled with at least six deposits (9-14) all tipping down from the south-east, which suggest it was backfilled quickly. The fills varied from a mid yellow brown clay silt to a dark grey brown clay silt. A small to moderate collection of 18 pottery sherds (0.21kg) from five deposits, largely dating to the Early to Middle Roman period but including two residual scraps of pottery possibly dating to the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age as well as some Iron Age sherds. Single pieces of imbrex were recovered from two deposits (0.284kg), a slag fragment (83g) and three small fired clay fragments (0.028kg). Two of the fills (12 and 14) were environmentally sampled and were devoid of charred plant remains.

3.3.4 Sealing the features was a subsoil layer between 0.25m and 0.4m thick and a 0.2m thick topsoil. A moderate quantity of artefacts including pottery was recovered unstratified from the trench (28 sherds (0.419kg)) and included samian as well as Nene Valley ware dating to at least the late 2nd century.

3.4 Trench 6 (Fig. 5)

3.4.1 Trench 6 was less than 100m to the north-east of Trench 5, it was 50.25m long and aligned north-east to south-west. It is possible there is a fragment of subsoil, *c.*0.1m deep in parts of the trench overlying the natural and cut by features (Fig. 5, S.8) or this may have been slightly disturbed natural. Up to seven trenches were found within the trench.

3.4.2 Partly within the northern baulk was a shallow pit (**18**), 0.7m in diameter and 0.15m deep (Fig. 5, S.9). It had moderately sloping sides and a flattish base and was filled with a very dark grey brown clay silt and filled with frequent small pieces and flecks of charcoal. A single hand-made late Iron Age pottery sherd was recovered from its backfill (further tiny fragments were found in the soil sample (3)). Small quantities of animal bone, including some burnt fragments, were also found. The soil sample was devoid of charred plant remains.

3.4.3 Directly to the north-east of pit **18** was a large north to south ditch (**37**), 2.5m wide and 0.82m deep with moderately sloping sides and a flattish base (Fig. 5, S.8; Plate). The basal deposit (36), 0.26m deep, comprised mixed but sterile material. This was sealed by a mid grey brown silt with a little clay (35) which contained five sherds of Late Iron Age pottery, two fired clay fragments as well as significant quantities of iron slag. 0.456kg of smithing hearth bottom was found but this is likely to be an under-representation as the deposit was extending into the baulk of the trench. A soil sample taken (6) of this deposit and proved to be devoid of charred plant remains. The upper

deposit (34) was 0.22m thick and comprised a very dark grey brown clay silt with numerous small charcoal flecks and may derive from nearby domestic occupation. A moderate quantity of artefacts (13 pottery sherds (0.189kg), a later prehistoric struck flint chunk and two fired clay fragments (0.018kg) was recovered from the deposit.

3.4.4 Two very shallow (0.05m deep) undated ditches or infilling of natural hollows were found in the trench but were unnumbered as they may have been natural. They are aligned roughly perpendicular and may be related. Pit (**21**) was mostly within the trench, it was 1.3m diameter and 0.44m deep with steep sides and a flattish base. The basal fill was a probable natural silting deposit containing a little bone. It was sealed by a mid bluey grey with frequent charcoal flecking. A single mid 1st century AD sherd and a little animal bone were found. A soil sample taken (4) and was devoid of charred plant remains.

3.4.5 At the extreme north-eastern part of the trench were two undated intercutting ditches (**24** and **26**). The two ditches were fairly small and shallow at 0.9m and 0.7m wide, 0.32m and 0.08m deep respectively. Most features were sealed by a topsoil layer up to 0.3m deep. Unlike Trenches 1-5 there was no real subsoil layer, suggesting that it is likely the features within the trench had been slightly truncated.

3.5 Trench 7 (Fig. 6)

3.5.1 Trench 7 was less than 50m to the south of Trench 6 and aligned north-east to south-west. It was 25.7m long with a moderately dense quantity of eight features recorded across the trench, although there were several areas of 20th century truncation comprising about a third of the trench in total.

3.5.2 There were two intercutting ditches (**28** and **30**) at the extreme south-western part of the trench. The earliest ditch **28** ran north-west to south-east, was 0.45m wide and 0.22m deep with moderately sloping sides and a slightly roundish base. Two latest Iron Age pottery sherds were recovered from its backfill. It was cut by ditch **30** which was aligned north-east to south-west, was 0.85m wide and 0.14m deep and contained two scraps of residual pottery probably dating to the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age.

3.5.3 Five metres to the north-east of ditch **30** was an undated pit (**39**) which was sub-rounded in plan, 0.82m by 0.7m in area and 0.15m deep. To the north-east was pit **41** which lay partly within the trench and was 1.45m long and 0.16m deep. This pit contained one Latest Iron Age sherd which had be pierced post firing and may have been ritually killed (See Atkins with Lyons, Section B.1). Directly to the north of pit **41** were three intercutting features comprising two ditches (**45** and **47**) and a pit (**43**) (Fig. 6, S.12). The earliest feature was an undated ditch (**45**), aligned north-west to south-east which has tentatively been dated as Mid to Late Iron Age due to the strategraphic phasing. It was 0.45m wide and 0.14m deep with a slightly rounded base and filled with a sterile mid brown silty clay. Ditch **45** was cut by a substantial ditch (**47**), on its south-western side running in the same direction. This ditch was 1.55m wide and augered to 0.9m deep. It was hand excavated to 0.58m deep and in this upper area was backfilled with a single mid grey silty clay deposit (46). Within this fill there was a mixture of hand made flint and shell tempered pottery dating to the Mid/Late Iron Age (nine sherds weighing 0.038kg), as well as some bone. A probablly modern pit **43**, cut ditch **47** (and also the subsoil), was 1.2m long and1.09m deep with sides which ranged from very steep (*c*.75º) to near vertical.

3.5.4 In the extreme north-eastern part of the trench was a ditch (**33**), aligned north to south which terminated just in front of the southern baulk of the trench. It was 0.65m wide and 0.55m deep with very steep near vertical sides and a flat base (Fig. 6, S. 7). The

ditch had partly naturally silted up with a thin sterile redeposited natural primary fill (32). This was overlaid by a mid to dark grey brown clay silty deposit with frequent charcoal flecks (33). Two Mid to Late Iron Age pottery sherds were recovered (0.063kg) as well as moderate quantities of 24 fired clay fragments including 2 probable mould fragments (0.125kg) and some animal bone. A soil sample (5) from this deposit was devoid of charred plant remains.

3.6 Trench 8 (Fig. 7)

3.6.1 Trench 8 was 52.4m long, it was located 50m to the south-east of Trench 7 and aligned north-west to south-east. The northern half of the trench was within an area evaluated by a geophysics survey in 2000 (Fig. 3). This geophysical survey had this area as a ferrous anomaly and this part of the trench had no archaeological remains. The geophysical survey found sparse archaeological features directly to the south-west of the southern half of the trench and in this area there were four or five ditches (**50**, **52**, **56**, **58** and **60**) and two tree boles (**54** and **62**) and a possible modern service trench (**54**). These ditches were aligned as running into the area of the geophysical survey but they were not recorded in this survey.

3.6.2 At the far south-eastern part of the trench there were two parallel adjacent undated ditches (**50** and **52**) aligned north-east to south-west. Ditch **50** was 3.16m wide and 0.54m deep whilst **52** was 3.84m wide and 0.44m deep (Fig. 7, S. 13 and 14). A single scrap of fired clay/daub was recovered from ditch **52** and some animal bone. Ten metres to the north-west there were a further two adjacent ditches (**56** and **58**) on the same north-east to south-west alignment. Ditch **58** was 1.12m wide and 0.51m and contained three tiny fragments of pottery sherds (2g) probably dating to the latest Iron Age and a fragment a fired clay (6g). Ditch **56** was 0.41m wide and 0.16m deep and filled with a sterile deposit. The two ditches were cut by a probably post Roman tree bole (**54**), sub-circular with a diameter of 0.73m and 0.16m deep.

3.6.3 A possible undated tree bole (**62**) was directly to the north of these three features. It was sub-rounded with a 0.6m diameter and was 0.09m deep. It was cut by a possible east to west ditch (**60**) which seems to terminate within the trench.

3.7 Trench 9 (Fig. 8)

3.7.1 Trench 9 was 25.4m long and was located 50m to the east of Trench 8 and aligned east to west. There were three intercutting features (**67**, **69** and **75**) at the extreme western extent but no other archaeological remains (Fig. 8, Plate). About half the trench had been affected by modern disturbances. There was no subsoil in the trench and the features were sealed by a 0.25m thick topsoil deposit.

3.7.2 The earliest feature was a pit (**67**) *c*.2m diameter and 0.55m deep (Fig. 8, S.18). It contained three small sherds of Early to Middle Roman pottery. It was possibly cut by ditch **69** on its western side and this ditch was aligned roughly north to south, more than 1.2m wide and 0.85m deep. It was filled with a single deposit, a mid grey brown clay silt, within which was an imbrex roof tile fragment and some bone. This ditch in turn was cut by another possible ditch (**75**) on its western side in which three sterile backfill deposits contained no artefacts.

3.8 Trench 11 (Fig. 9)

3.8.1 Trench 11 was in the far eastern part of the evaluation and had been divided into two due to a barbed wire fence running across the middle. The trench was collectively 36.5m long and aligned roughly north to south with a single east to west ditch (**65**) at

the northern end with the remainder of the trench comprising natural cut by modern disturbances including a concrete wall. The topsoil was 0.25m thick and directly sealed the archaeological remains and natural with no subsoil encountered.

3.8.2 Ditch **65** was at least 2.9m wide and 0.4m deep and filled with two deposits. The lower one, 64 was a light yellowy brown silty clay which contained only bone. The upper deposit, 0.28m thick, was a dark browny grey silty clay with numerous charcoal flecks which contained a large quantity of fairly small abraded pottery (68 sherds (0.936kg)) dating to the Latest Iron Age and included fine wares (See Section, B.1) and also some bone.

3.9 Trench 12 (Fig. 10)

3.9.1 Trench 12 was 29.25m long and was located 20m to the north-east of Trench 11 and aligned north-east to south-west. There were three ditches (**73**, **76** and **79**) within the north-eastern part of the trench with the remainder of the trench comprising of natural clay although there were two small areas of modern disturbances. The topsoil directly sealed the natural and features with no subsoil.

3.9.2 The earliest ditch (**76**) was 2.7m wide and 0.54m deep and aligned north-west to south-east (Fig. 10, S. 17). The ditch has a steep south-western edge and a gentle one on its north-eastern side. The lower deposit (77) was a light grey silty clay which produced three sherds of Latest Iron Age pottery (0.062kg). This ditch was cut by ditch **73** which ran on the same alignment and this was 1.2m wide and 0.35m deep with moderate sides and a concave base. It was filled by a single deposit comprising a mid grey red brown clay silt containing some charcoal flecks. A moderate collection of Latest Iron Age pottery (29 sherds weighing 0.216kg) was recovered. A soil sample (7) produced no charred plant remains.

3.9.3 A 19th or early 20th century ditch (**79**) was partly excavated. It was backfilled with a mid to dark grey brown clay silt. Metal detecting uncovered a shot gun cartridge top from the top deposit. During excavation a clay pipe stem was found 0.28m into the ditch. Excavation was stopped as it proved to be a modern ditch.

3.10 Finds Summary

3.10.1 The evaluation was relatively small and for its size it found a moderate collection of artefacts comprising:

Pottery

3.10.2 A total of 192 pottery sherds (2.285kg) was found almost all dating to the *c*.2nd century BC to the late 2nd century AD with perhaps a few scraps of residual Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age pottery. The pottery suggests at the peak of the community c.mid 1st century AD the community was fairly affluent with reasonable quantity of finewares.

Roof tile

3.10.3 A small collection of roof tile (15 fragments (1.472kg) including at least five tegula and eight imbrex was all recovered from one trench (except one fragment).

Fired clay/daub

3.10.4 A small collection of 43 fragments of fired clay/daub (0.252kg) included two probable mould fragments, a few fragments with lining but mostly undiagnostic.

Other artefacts

3.10.5 A single struck flint chunk, some iron slag (0.543kg) from three contexts dating the the Latest Iron Age and Early/Mid Roman period including smithing hearth bottom and a clay pipe stem.

3.11 Environmental Summary

3.11.1 A small collection of 2.53kg of animal bone was found with 63 fragments identified to species of which 92% came from Latest Iron Age contexts. Cattle and sheep/goat were the only species present.

3.11.2 Seven bulk environmental samples were taken and these found no charred plant remains - only charcoal.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Activity and occupation by period

4.1.1 Five phases of activity have been identified by the evaluation as follows:

Phase 1 Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age

Phase 2 Mid/Late Iron Age

Phase 3 Latest IA to mid 1st Century AD

Phase 4 Early/Mid Roman

Phase 5 Post Roman

Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age

4.1.2 A handful of residual scraps of probable Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age pottery from Trenches 5 and 7 suggests there may have been intermittent use on the site in this period. This suggested minor activity in this period and compares with Late Bronze Age settlement found 3km to the south-east where numerous features were uncovered (Fig. 2; CHER MCB16363;Cullen 2004) and two Early Iron Age settlements 2km and 3km to the east (Fig. 2; CHER MCB 15840; Macaulay 2000).

Mid/Late Iron Age

4.1.3 It is possible that a settlement was permanently occupied from *c*.2nd century BC. The number of features dating to this phase comprised three ditches from Trench 7 and these were of different sizes ranging from 0.45m wide and 0.14m deep, 0.65m wide and 0.55m deep, and 1.55m+ wide and 0.9m deep respectively. This may suggest different types of use of the site such as the large ditch may suggest a possible enclosure which may be related to agricultural pastoral farming although only two cattle bone were recovered from this phase. A few pottery sherds, some fired clay/daub including possible moulds and lining implies domestic as well as industrial activity.

4.1.4 In the 2001 evaluation c.300m to the south-east there were two broad and deep ditches which were dated to Phase 1 (late Middle Iron Age) within Trench 2C(i) (Macaulay and Casa-Hatton 2001, 15). These ditches were 2m+ wide and 0.8m deep and 3.6m wide and 0.9m deep respectively and they seem to have been part of a sub-rounded enclosure, *c*.23m by *c*.15m in area, identified in the geophysics survey (Fig. 3). Tentatively assigned to this period were two shallow (0.22m deep), aligned east to west ditches, located within the area enclosure and were thought to be possibly part of a so-axial field system (the strategraphic relationship between these ditches and the enclosure was unknown). The 2001 evaluation recovered a few pre-Belgic Iron Age pottery sherds from this Phase.

4.1.5 There were no Mid/Late Iron Age features within the evaluation trenches between Trench 7 and Trench 2C(i) (Trenches 8, 1B (i) and (ii) and 2c (ii)) the geophysics survey did not identify large scale features in this area (Fig. 3). The distances between these two areas is fairly large (*c*.300m) and it is therefore uncertain whether these were part of a large sparsely occupied linked settlement or two separate farmsteads presumably each run by single extended family.

4.1.6 In the neighbouring area there was an increase in the numbers of settlements in this Middle and Late Iron Age period (see Section 1.3.4 to 1.3.5 and 1.3.8 to 1.3.11). This seems to suggest from *c*.2nd century BC there was an increase in farming utilising even these difficult clay sub-soil areas. This increase in quantity of sites suggests that there was a steady rise in population.

Latest Iron Age to mid 1st century AD

4.1.7 Latest Iron Age features were encountered in five Trenches (6, 7, 8, 11 and 12) over a 300m by 150m area with domestic type assemblages recovered from two different areas (Trenches 6/7 and Trenches 11/12), c.300m apart. At least 12 features dated to this phase with a moderate quantity of pottery recovered, including finewares, suggesting both settlement areas were flourishing. There were also 57 cattle and sheep/goat bone found (92% of the bone recovered from the site). Several features had dark charcoal enriched backfill deposits.

4.1.8 Fairly sterile field systems were also encountered in Trench 8 and this seems to be confirmed by the geophysical survey which shows were only a few pit like possible features in this location (Fig. 3)

4.1.9 There was Late Iron Age remains found in the 2001 evaluation trenches 2C (i) and (ii) which was located 300m and 400m distance respectively from these two 'domestic' areas (Trenches 6/7 and Trenches 11/12). Thirty six Latest Iron Age pottery sherds were found in features from this period.

4.1.10 It is likely that these three locations represent different farmsteads or possibly different family groupings within an agglomerate type settlement.

Early to Mid Roman

4.1.11 Early to Middle Roman remains were found in two locations (Trenches 5 and 9), more than 200m apart in the evaluation. Trench 5 was located c.100m to the west of one of the Latest Iron Age domestic *focii* (Trench 6) and contained a very dense area of features (either pits and/or ditches) dating up to at least the end of the 2nd century. This area was only very partially sampled as the mass of features would only be understood if a larger area was opened up. Features in this period varied from shallow to 1.45m deep.

4.1.12 The three slots found pottery including samian and Nene Valley wares as well as 14 roof tile fragments including tegula and imbrex. The evidence may suggest that a Romanised building had been close by. The second area of Roman remains (Trench 9) was located between the other two Latest Iron Age domestic areas and only a few features and three pottery sherds (including an imbrex tile) was found here. No definite 3rd or 4th century Roman remains were found in either trench but it is possibly these lie outside the area evaluated. Some Early Roman pottery (11 sherds) was found in the 2001 evaluation and these imply the Iron Age farmstead in this location continued into at least the Early Roman period.

Post-Roman

4.1.13 No definite medieval or post-medieval remains or artefacts were found. In the modern period a single 19th or early 20th century ditch pre-dated the airfield.

4.2 Survival of remains

4.2.1 In the present evaluation, five trenches had no archaeological remains and seven trenches found features ranged from single examples to densely intercutting. In these seven trenches there was some modern truncation in most, with no old ground levels identified in up to five trenches and in some places there were large scale modern disturbances affecting up to half the trench. No definite post holes were encountered but it is uncertain whether this was due to truncation or that there were never any in these trench locations. Post holes were encountered in the 2001 evaluation to the east of the site.

4.2.2 Nearly half the features survived to more than 0.5m deep with several large or very large (up to 1.45m deep). The water level, presumably perched, was 0.5m below the top of some of the features, but no organic waterlogged remains were encountered. Animal bone survived In good condition but no charred plant remains within the seven samples taken.

4.3 Significance

4.3.1 It is likely that the present evaluation and the 2001 area to the east have uncovered at least three different farmsteads c.300m to 400m apart, with two dating from the Middle to Late Iron Age and the third seemingly beginning in the Latest Iron Age. The settlement areas of all three seem to move slightly over time but it is uncertain when they were abandoned as later occupation may have been beyond the trenches. The 300m to 400m distance between the Iron Age and Roman farmsteads is similar to the distance between suggested farmsteads at Stow Longa and Tilbrook, Huntingdonshire (Atkins 2010, 85) or around Ely, Cambridgeshire (Atkins and Mudd 2003). Alternatively it is possible that all three settlements were part of a large agglomerate site with different family groupings.

4.3.2 The airfield has caused considerable damage to the archaeological remains which does affect the importance of the site. That being said, It is likely that the majority of the archaeological remains still survive, albeit slightly truncated.

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

Context	Cut	Trench	Category	Feature Type	Length	Breadth	Depth	Phase
1			layer	topsoil				5
2			layer	subsoil				5
3	6	5	fill	?pit or ditch				4
4	6	5	fill	?pit or ditch				4
5	6	5	fill	?pit or ditch	0			4
6	6	5	cut	?pit or ditch	1.7		1	4
7	8	5	fill	?pit or ditch	0			4
8	8	5	cut	?pit or ditch	0.82	0.6+	0.27	4
9	15	5	fill	?pit or ditch	0			4
10	15	5	fill	?pit or ditch	0			4
11	15	5	fill	?pit or ditch	0			4
12	15	5	fill	?pit or ditch	0			4
13	15	5	fill	?pit or ditch	0			4
14	15	5	fill	?pit or ditch	0			4
15	15	5	cut	?pit or ditch	2m+		1.45	4
16		5	layer		0	1.05	0.1	0
17	18	6	fill	pit	0			3
18	18	6	cut	pit	0.7		0.15	3
19	21	6	fill	pit	0			3
20	21	6	fill	pit	0			3
21	21	6	cut	pit	1.3	1.25	0.44	3
22	24	6	fill	ditch	0			0
23	24	6	fill	ditch	0			0
24	24	6	cut	ditch	0	0.9	0.32	0
25	26	6	fill	ditch	0			0
26	26	6	cut	ditch	0	0.7	0.08	0
27	28	7	fill	ditch	0			3
28	28	7	cut	ditch	0	0.45	0.22	3
29	30	7	fill	ditch	0			3
30	30	7	cut	ditch	0	0.85	0.14	3
31	33	7	fill	ditch	0			2
32	33	7	fill	ditch	0			2
33	33	7	cut	ditch	0	0.65	0.55	2
34	37	6	fill	ditch	0			3
35	37	6	fill	ditch	0			3
36	37	6	fill	ditch	0			3
37	37	6	cut	ditch	0	2.5	0.82	3
38	39	7	fill	pit	0			0
39	39	7	cut	pit	0.82	0.7	0.15	0

Context	Cut	Trench	Category	Feature Type	Length	Breadth	Depth	Phase
40	41	7	fill	pit	0			3
41	41	7	cut	pit	1.45		0.16	3
42	43	7	fill	pit	0			?5
43	43	7	cut	pit	1.2		1.09	?5
44	45	7	fill	ditch	0			2
45	45	7	cut	ditch	0	0.45	0.14	2
46	47	7	fill	ditch	0			2
47	47	7	cut	ditch	0	1.55	0.9	2
48	50	8	fill	ditch	0			0
49	50	8	fill	ditch	0			0
50	50	8	cut	ditch	0	3.16	0.54	0
51	52	8	fill	ditch	0			0
52	52	8	cut	ditch	0	3.84	0.44	0
53	54	8	fill	tree bole	0			5
54	54	8	cut	tree bole	0.73		0.16	5
55	56	8	fill	ditch	0	0.41	0.16	3
56	56	8	cut	ditch	0			3
57	58	8	fill	ditch	0			3
58	58	8	cut	ditch	0	1.12	0.51	3
59	60	8	fill	?ditch	0			0
60	60	8	cut	?ditch	0	0.6		0
61	62	8	fill	tree bole	0			0
62	62	8	cut	tree bole	0.6		0.09	0
63	65	11	fill	ditch	0			3
64	65	11	fill	ditch	0			3
65	65	11	cut	ditch	0	2.9	0.4	3
66	67	9	fill	pit	0			4
67	67	9	cut	pit	2	1.3	0.55	4
68	69	9	fill	ditch	0			4
69	69	9	cut	ditch	0	1.2+	0.85	4
70	75	9	fill	?ditch	0			4
71	75	9	fill	?ditch	0			4
72	75	9	fill	?ditch	0			4
73	73	12	cut	ditch	0	1.2	0.35	3
74	73	12	fill	ditch	0			3
75	75	9	cut	?ditch	0	1	0.71	4
76	76	12	cut	ditch	0	2.7	0.54	3
77	76	12	fill	ditch	0			3
78	79	12	fill	ditch	0			5
79	79	12	cut	ditch	0	1.3	0.26+	5

Table 1: *Context list*

APPENDIX B. FINDS REPORTS

B.1 Pottery

By Rob Atkins, with specialist comment by Alice Lyons

Methodology

B.1.1 The whole ceramic assemblage (pottery, ceramic building material and fired clay) was laid out, scanned rapidly and spot dated by Alice Lyons. Notes were taken by Rob Atkins who wrote up the reports.

Introduction

B.1.2 A total of 192 sherds, weighing 2.285kg of Iron Age, Early Roman and Romano-British pottery largely dating from the 3rd or 2nd century BC to *c*. the late 2nd century AD was recovered from 22 contexts derived from 15 features in seven trenches (Table 2). Finds were also recorded from unstratified material from Trench 5

B.1.3 The pottery had survived in an abraded condition with an average sherd weight of *c*. 12g. Some of the original use residues, such as soot, have survived *in situ*.

B.1.4 The assemblage reviewed by context and presented in tabular form:

Cntx (and cut)	Tr	Sherd Count	Wt (g)	Feature Date	Comments
4 (**6**)	5	3	13	Early to Mid Romano-British	1 shell tempered (5g); 1 sandy grey ware jar/bowl (5g); 1 sandy coarse ware (3g). None very diagnostic. Early Roman+
5 (**6**)	5	1	2	Early to Mid Romano-British	1 grog tempered coarse ware (2g). Lid? 1st BC-early/mid C2
6 (**6**)	5	1	3	Early to Mid Romano-British	1 sandy oxidised ware (Verulamium type; Tyers 1996, 199-201). Sooted. Mid C1-M/LC2 AD
9 (**15**)	5	2	7	Early to Mid Romano-British	1 flint tempered (2g) ?LBA/EIA; 1 shell tempered (7g) Iron Age.
10 (**15**)	5	3	33	Early to Mid Romano-British	2 sandy grey ware jar/bowl (19g). Proto. Mid 1st-mid 2nd AD; 1 shell tempered jar/bowl (14g)
11 (**15**)	5	1	59	Early to Mid Romano-British	1 Shell tempered storage jar. Hand made. Vertical combing 2nd BC-E/Mid C1 AD
12 (**15**)	5	7	89	Early to Mid Romano-British	2 sandy grey ware (27g). M/l1st-2nd century; 1 Verulamium type White Ware (6g). Mid 1st-L2nd century AD; 1 shell tempered storage jar base (34g). 1st-3rd century AD; 2 sandy oxidised ware bowl including triangular rim (18g). Mid 2nd AD.; 1 sandy

					oxidised ware (4g).
14 (**15**)	5	5	22	Early to Mid Romano-British	Fine ware beaker with diamond panels of red painted dots imitating poppy headed beaker. ?Cherry Hinton. Mid/late 1st AD
17 (**18**)	6	1	10	Latest Iron Age to Mid C1 AD	Reduced ware handmade jar/bowl with grog and shell temper (10g).1st BC-e/mid C1 AD
19 (**21**)	6	1	11	Latest IA-MC1Latest Iron Age to Mid C1 AD	Grey ware grog tempered. Proto Roman: mid 1st AD
27 (**28**)	7	2	51	Latest Iron Age to Mid C1 AD	2 shell and grog tempered storage jar. very abraded. Hand made LIA-E/mid C1 AD.
29 (**30**)	7	2	5	?Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age	1 flint tempered sherd (2g) ?LBA/EIA; 1 shell tempered (3g) IA
31 (**33**)	7	2	63	Mid to Late Iron Age	1 shell tempered gritted bowl (36g) Incised decoration on body and rim; 1 shell tempered jar/bowl (27g) Both hand made. 2nd century BC-? early-mid C1 AD
34 (**37**)	6	13	189	Latest Iron Age to Mid C1 AD	2 pink grog jar/bowl. (34g) E/mid C1AD; 7 Sandy reduced ware with fragments of shell and grog. Includes cordon jar. (62g) 1st BC-1st AD; 4 shell tempered including 1 storage jar with vertical combing. LIA-e/mid C1 AD (93g)
35 (**37**)	6	5	33	Latest Iron Age to Mid C1 AD	Shell tempered. Hand made. 1 decorated with incised scored marking. Late IA type. 1st BC-early/mid C1 AD
40 (**41**)	7	1	12	Latest Iron Age to Mid C1 AD	1 reduced ware grog tempered. Wide mouth cordoned jar with raised bead. Deliberately pierced post firing. ?Ritual killing. E/mid 1st century AD
46 (**47**)	7	9	38	Mid to Late Iron Age	4 flint tempered (14g); 5 shell tempered (24g) *c*.3rd-1st century BC
57 (**58**)	8	3	2	Latest Iron Age to Mid C1 AD	Reduced ware. Tiny fragments. ?LPRIA 1st BC-early/mid 1st century AD
63 (**65**)	11	68	936	Latest IA-MC1Latest Iron Age to Mid C1 AD	9 shell tempered with grog inclusions (?one vessel) (216g). Most are sooted. Partly hand made and finsihed on a, slow wheel. E/mid C1 AD; 36 sandy reduced ware jar/storage jar (386g), some decorated with vertical combing. Fairly abraded. C1 AD; 2 grey ware with oxidised surface with traces of red slip (32g). One vessel. ?butt beaker or barrel beaker. Local copy of Gaulish vessel. Rouletted decoration. Fine ware E/mid C1 AD; 3 shell tempered storage jar (95g). Vertical combing; 18 grog tempered storage jar fragments (207g). Rolled rim. Largely hand made. ?Produced in Milton Keynes area.
66 (**67**)	9	2	10	Early to Mid Romano-	1 sandy reduced ware(5g). Flint tempered. Proto. Rim. Mid 1st-e/m2nd century AD; 1 sandy oxidised

				British	(5g). Flagon. Mid C1-C3
74 (**73**)	12	29	216	Latest Iron Age to Mid C1 AD	4 shell tempered jar (22g). Wheel made; 7 Pink grog and shell temper. Small jar (73g); 11 reduced ware with oxidised surface (52g). Grog tempered included carinated jar/bowl; 6 sandy reduced ware (67g). Grog tempered. Some sherds burnish, some sooted; 1 sandy red ware beaker (2g). Assemblage mid 1st AD.
77 (**76**)	12	3	62	Latest Iron Age to Mid C1 AD	1 reduced with oxidised surface (32g). Grog tempered jar/bowl; 1 pink grog ware jar (16g); 1 sandy oxidised colour coated sherd (14g) ?source. Overall LPRIA. Mid 1st century AD
9999	5	28	419	Mixed date	4 samian (10g); 1 Fine ware beaker with diamond panels of red painted dots imitating poppy headed beaker (4g). ?Cherry Hinton. Mid/late 1st AD; 7 grey ware (60g). Jars and dishes. Triangular and rolled and underscored rims; 6 shell tempered storage jar (249g). Body and base; 2 sandy red ware (3g); 4 sandy oxidised Verulamium type (48g). Includes 1 jar with bi-fid lid. Some sooted. Mid 2nd to 3rd century; 2 Nene Valley grey ware (11g). Late 2nd - 4th century AD; 1 grog tempered (10g) Hand made; 1 sandy reduced ware (24g). Storage jar.
Total		**192**	**2285**		

Table 2 : *Prehistoric and Roman pottery*

Results

B.1.5 There were a few small sherds of pottery probably dating to the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age from one ditch (**30**) in Trench 7, residual sherds of pottery possibly dating to this period were recovered also in Trench 5. Some Mid/Late Iron Age pottery were recovered in ditches (**33**) and (**47**) from Trench 7 which includes sherds with incised (scored) decoration.

B.1.6 Pottery dating from the Latest Iron Age to mid C1 AD formed the largest component and included both handmade and wheel thrown examples. This pottery was commonly found in Trenches 6, 7, 8, 11 and 12 with both fine ware (including a Butt Beaker; Tyers 1996, 163) and coarse ware represented. Relatively unusual sherds include a cordon jar from **41** which had been deliberately pierced and may represent ritual killing of the vessel (a practise usually associated with the burial ritual).

B.1.7 Some Early Roman to Mid Roman pottery was found, with the majority recovered from Trench 5 but also two sherds from Pit **67** (Trench 9). The pottery within Trench 5 dates to at least the late 2nd century AD with Nene Valley (Tyers 1996, 173-5) grey ware possibly the latest with no definite 3rd or 4th century sherds. There were a mixture of fine wares (a small numbers of samian (Tyers 1996, 105-1140 fragments were found) as well as utilitarian coarse wares. No specialist wares such as mortaria (Tyers 1996, 116-134) and amphora (Tyers 1996, 85-104) did not form part of this assemblage.

Conclusions

B.1.8 The pottery assemblage represents a settlement continuously occupied from the Late Iron Age to Mid Romano-British period. Although small the pottery assemblage suggests

a community that flourished particularly around the mid 1st century AD but did not survive into the later Romano-British era.

B.1.9 When at its peak the community appears to have been fairly affluent with well made pots, including finewares, that reflect the strong Gaulish influence seen in new ceramics at that time (Tyers 1996, 59). Most of the pottery, however, is locally made and would have been purchased at local markets. This relative affluence may have been connected to the evidence for metal working found on the site (see below) also its location on the great Roman road of Ermine Street (which is now the M1).

B.1.10 Alconbury is in an area rich in Iron Age and Early Roman finds (Hancocks 1998; 2003) and the addition of this small but significant ceramic assemblage adds to our corpus of data for the area.

B.2 Roman roof tile

By Rob Atkins

Introduction

B.2.1 A small collection of Roman roof tile comprising 15 fragments (1.472kg) was recovered from the evaluation (Table 3). The methodology for analysis can be seen in B.1.1 (above).

Context (and cut)	Trench	Sherd Count	Weight (g)	Comments
4 (**6**)	5	9	1049	4 Tegula (923g); 5 Imbrex (126g)
10 (**15**)	5	1	180	Imbrex
11 (**15**)	5	1	104	Tegula. *c*.Late C1 +AD
68 (**68**)	9	1	53	Imbrex Late C1+ AD
9999	5	3	86	Includes imbrex
Total		**15**	**1472**	

Table 3: *Roman roof tile*

Results

B.2.2 The tile was relatively unabraded and comprised at least five tegula and eight imbrex. The material, all bar one imbrex fragment, derived from Trench 5 and this may suggest that there was a Romanised building in the vicinity of this trench.

B.3 Fired Clay/daub

By Rob Atkins

Introduction

B.3.1 There were 43 fragments of fired clay and/or daub (0.252kg). These were found in 11 contexts with six trenches (Table 4). The methodology for analysis can be seen in B.1.1 (above).

Ctxt (and cut)	Tr	Fragment number	Weight (g)	Feature Date	Comments
6 (**6**)	5	2	39	Early to Mid Romano-British	Two undiagnostic fragments in a chalky sandy fabric
10 (**15**)	5	1	17	Early to Mid Romano-British	Undiagnostic
11 (**15**)	5	2	11	Early to Mid Romano-British	Undiagnostic
31 (**33**)	7	24	125	Mid/Late Iron Age	2 probable mould fragments (30g); 22 abraded fragments (85g). Several have lining.
34 (**37**)	6	2	18	Latest Iron Age to Mid C1 AD	Undiagnostic
35 (**37**)	6	2	8	Latest Iron Age to Mid C1 AD	Undiagnostic
40 (**41**)	7	1	5	Latest Iron Age to Mid C1 AD	Undiagnostic
51 (**52**)	8	1	1	?	?daub
57 (**58**)	8	1	6	Latest Iron Age to Mid C1 AD	Undiagnostic
63 (**65**)	11	1	6	Latest Iron Age to Mid C1 AD	Undiagnostic
74 (**73**)	12	6	16	Latest Iron Age to Mid C1 AD	Undiagnostic
Total		**43**	**252**		

Table 4: *Fired clay and/or daub*

Results

B.3.2 The vast majority of the material was very fragmentary. There were two possible mould fragments in the Mid to Late Iron Age ditch (**33**) and half the fired clay/daub derived from this excavation slot. Moulds were often broken during the removal of the completed object and this may have happened here with other fragments from this context comprising smaller pieces of this former mould. No slag was attached to the mould and so the identification is not certain.

A few fragments represented possible lining of ovens or hearth. In the main the vast majority of the assemblage was undiagnostic with no withy impression occurring on any fragment.

B.4 Clay Pipe, flint and slag

By Rob Atkins

Results

B.4.1 A single clay pipe stem was found in ditch **79** (Phase 5).

B.4.2 A large struck flint chunk (later prehistoric) was recovered from context 35 (ditch **37**; Phase 3).

B.4.3 Iron slag weighing 0.543kg was found in three contexts: 83g in context 12 (pit **15**; Phase 4), 4g in context 27 (ditch **28**; Phase 3) and 456g in context 35 (ditch **37**; Phase 3).

APPENDIX C. ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS

C.1 Animal Bone

By Chris Faine

Recovery

C.1.1 The bones forming this assessment were collected by hand. No material from environmental samples was available for analysis at the time of writing.

Residuality and contamination

C.1.2 No information regarding residuality or contamination is available to the author at this time.

Context

C.1.3 Faunal material was recovered from a variety of features including pits and linear features dating from the Middle Iron Age to Roman periods, with the majority being obtained from Latest Iron Age features.

Preservation

C.1.4 The preservation of the assemblage is generally good, although fragmented due to butchery.

Storage and quantity

C.1.5 The hand collected animal bone is stored in 1 long bone box measuring 38x25.5x13cm. The bones are washed and bagged by context. The total weight of the hand-collected bone is 2.53Kg.

Methods

C.1.6 Faunal material was scanned with all “countable” bones being recorded on a specially written MS Access database. The overall species distribution in terms of fragments (NISP) is shown in Table 5, with numbers of ageable mandibles recorded in Table 6 The counting system is based on a modified version of the system suggested by Davis (1992) and used by Albarella and Davis (1994). Completeness was assessed in terms of diagnostic zones (Dobney and Reilly, 1988). Ageing was assessed via epiphyseal fusion. Bird, fish and small mammal remains were noted but not identified to species at this stage.

The assemblage

C.1.7 The assemblage is small, consisting of 63 fragments identifiable to species (Table 1). Cattle and sheep/goat are the only species present, with cattle the most prevalent taxon in all phases. The vast majority (92%) the assemblage was recovered from Latest Iron Age contexts, most the largest amount (NISP: 13) coming from ditch fill **74**. As one would expect the number of ageable epiphyses corresponds largely to number of countable elements, with the majority belong to cattle elements from Latest Iron Age contexts (Table 2). No ageable mandibles, sexable or measurable bones were recovered.

C.1.8 **Conclusions/recommendations:** This is a small assemblage with little potential to to aid in interpreting the site as it stands. However, a larger sample size from further

excavation would certainly require further analysis and be of greater help in understanding the site in its wider context.

	Mid-Late Iron Age	Latest Iron Age	Early-Mid Roman
Cattle (*Bos*)	2	37	4
Sheep/Goat (*Ovis/Capra*)	0	20	0
Total:	**2**	**57**	**4**

Table 1: *Number of countable animal bones*

	Mid-Late Iron Age	Latest Iron Age	Early-Mid Roman
Cattle (*Bos*)	0	16	3
Sheep/Goat (*Ovis/Capra*)	0	9	0
Total:	**0**	**25**	**3**

Table 2: *Number of ageable epiphyses*

C.2 Environmental samples

By Rachel Fosberry

C.2.1 Seven bulk samples were taken during the evaluation. Features sampled dated from the Mid/Late Iron Age to the Early/Mid Roman period and include pits and ditches. One bucket (ten litres) of each of the samples except sample 3 (fifteen litres) were processed by tank flotation for the recovery of charred plant remains, dating evidence and any other artefactual evidence that might be present. The flot was collected in a 0.3mm nylon mesh and the residue was washed through a 0.5mm sieve. Both flot and residue were allowed to air dry. The flot was examined under a binocular microscope .

C.2.2 No preserved plant remains other than charcoal were found in any of the samples. The soils were heavy clay which may have had an effect on preservation but there wasn't even any fragments of cereals so it is more likely that there just isn't any evidence of the disposal of domestic/hearth waste in the features sampled.

APPENDIX D. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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APPENDIX E. OASIS REPORT FORM

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

Project Details

OASIS Number	oxfordar3-130527		
Project Name	An Archaeological Evaluation at Alconbury Airfield Enterprise Zone Enabling Works, Alconbury, Cambridgeshire		
Project Dates (fieldwork) Start	03-07-2012	Finish	06-07-2012
Previous Work (by OA East)	Yes	Future Work	Yes

Project Reference Codes

Site Code	STUALZ12	Planning App. No.	1102094FUL
HER No.	CHER 3806	Related HER/OASIS No.	CHER CB 14697

Type of Project/Techniques Used

Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS 5
Development Type	Rural Commercial

Please select all techniques used:

☐ Aerial Photography - interpretation	☐ Grab-Sampling	☐ Remote Operated Vehicle Survey
☐ Aerial Photography - new	☐ Gravity-Core	☒ Sample Trenches
☐ Annotated Sketch	☐ Laser Scanning	☐ Survey/Recording Of Fabric/Structure
☒ Augering	☐ Measured Survey	☐ Targeted Trenches
☐ Dendrochronological Survey	☒ Metal Detectors	☐ Test Pits
☐ Documentary Search	☐ Phosphate Survey	☐ Topographic Survey
☒ Environmental Sampling	☐ Photogrammetric Survey	☐ Vibro-core
☐ Fieldwalking	☐ Photographic Survey	☐ Visual Inspection (Initial Site Visit)
☐ Geophysical Survey	☐ 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
settlement	Iron Age -800 to 43	Domestic; industrial	Iron Age -800 to 43
settlement	Roman 43 to 410	Domestic; industrial	Roman 43 to 410
ditch	Post Medieval 1540 to 1901	clay pipe	Post Medieval 1540 to 1901

Project Location

County	Cambridgeshire	Site Address (including postcode if possible)	
District	Huntingdonshire	Alconbury Enterprise Zone Alconbury Airfield Nr Huntingdon Cambridgeshire	
Parish	Alconbury		
HER	Cambridgeshire		
Study Area	47.26ha	National Grid Reference	TL 1960 7770

Project Originators

Organisation	OA EAST
Project Brief Originator	-
Project Design Originator	James Drummond-Murray, OA East
Project Manager	James Drummond-Murray, OA East
Supervisor	Rob Atkins, OA East

Project Archives

Physical Archive	Digital Archive	Paper Archive
OA East	OA East	OA East
STUALZ12	STUALZ12	STUALZ12

Archive Contents/Media

	Physical Contents	Digital Contents	Paper Contents
Animal Bones	☒	☒	☒
Ceramics	☒	☒	☒
Environmental	☒	☒	☒
Glass	☐	☐	☐
Human Bones	☐	☐	☐
Industrial	☒	☒	☒
Leather	☐	☐	☐
Metal	☒	☒	☒
Stratigraphic		☐	☐
Survey		☐	☐
Textiles	☐	☐	☐
Wood	☐	☐	☐
Worked Bone	☐	☐	☐
Worked Stone/Lithic	☒	☐	☒
None	☐	☐	☐
Other	☐	☐	☐

Digital Media	Paper Media
☒ Database	☐ Aerial Photos
☐ GIS	☒ Context Sheet
☐ Geophysics	☒ Correspondence
☒ Images	☐ Diary
☒ Illustrations	☒ Drawing
☐ Moving Image	☐ Manuscript
☐ Spreadsheets	☒ Map
☒ Survey	☐ Matrices
☒ Text	☐ Microfilm
☐ Virtual Reality	☐ Misc.
	☐ Research/Notes
	☒ Photos
	☒ Plans
	☒ Report
	☒ Sections
	☒ Survey

Notes:

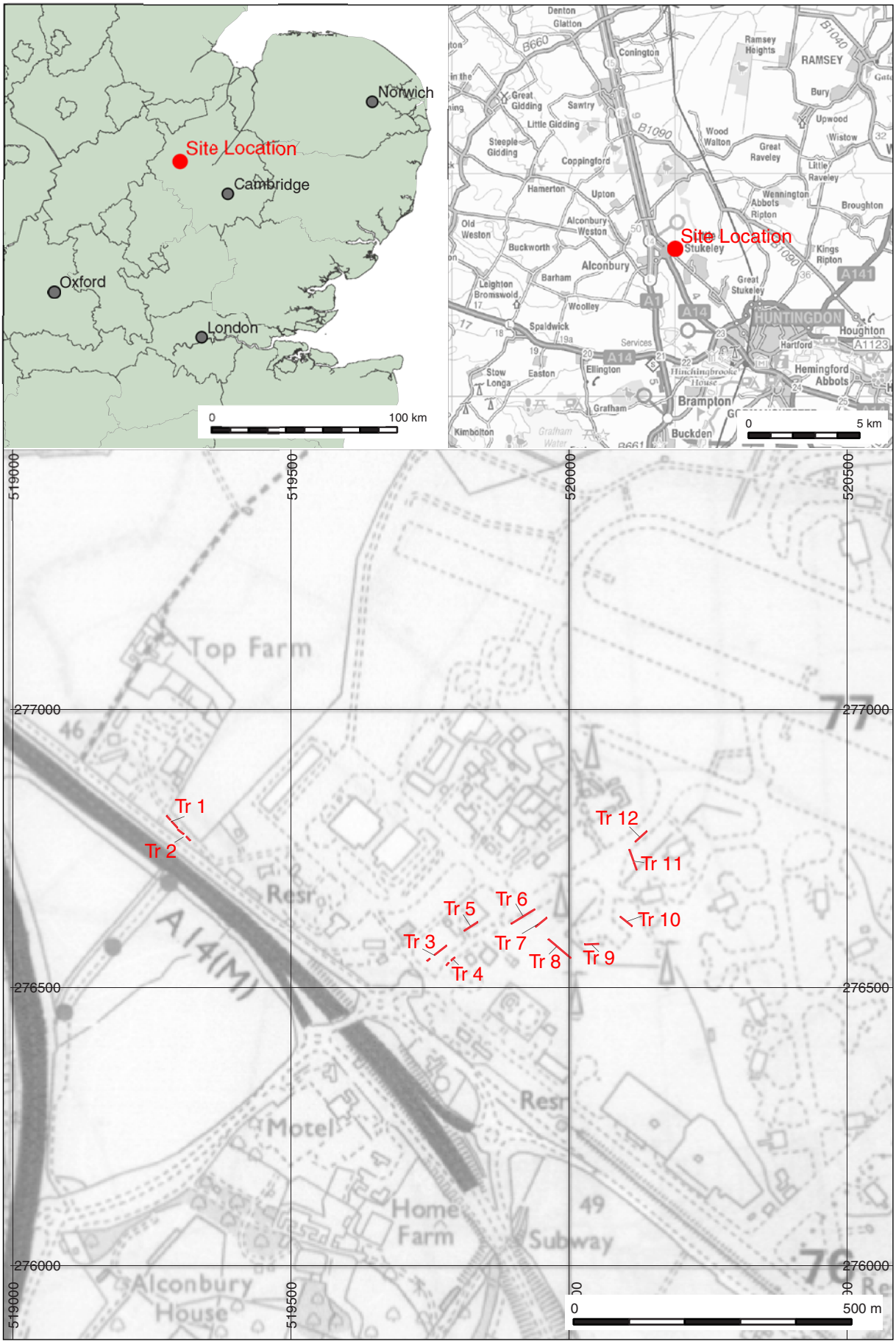


Figure 1: Site location

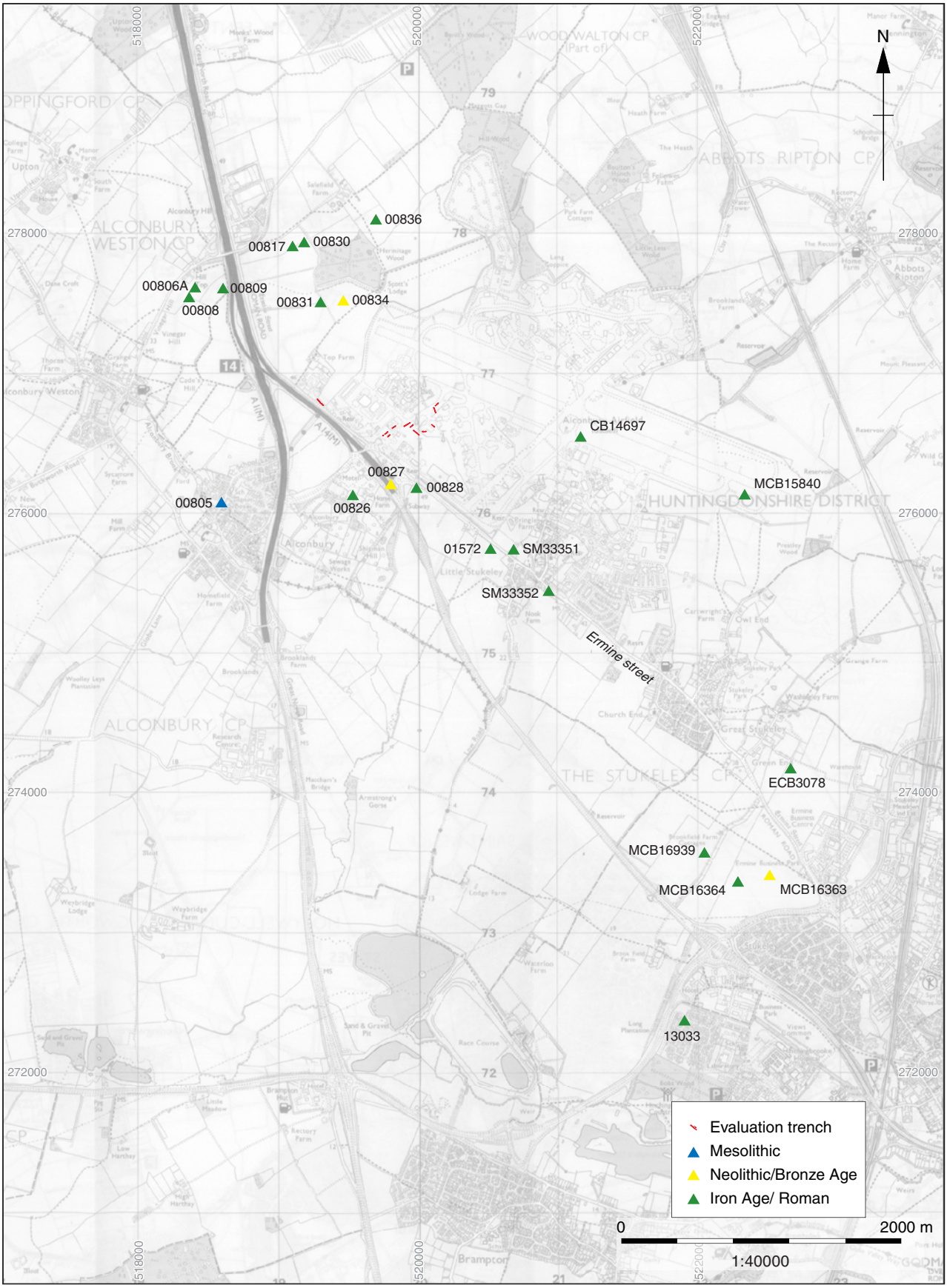


Figure 2. Historic Environment Record entries and trench locations

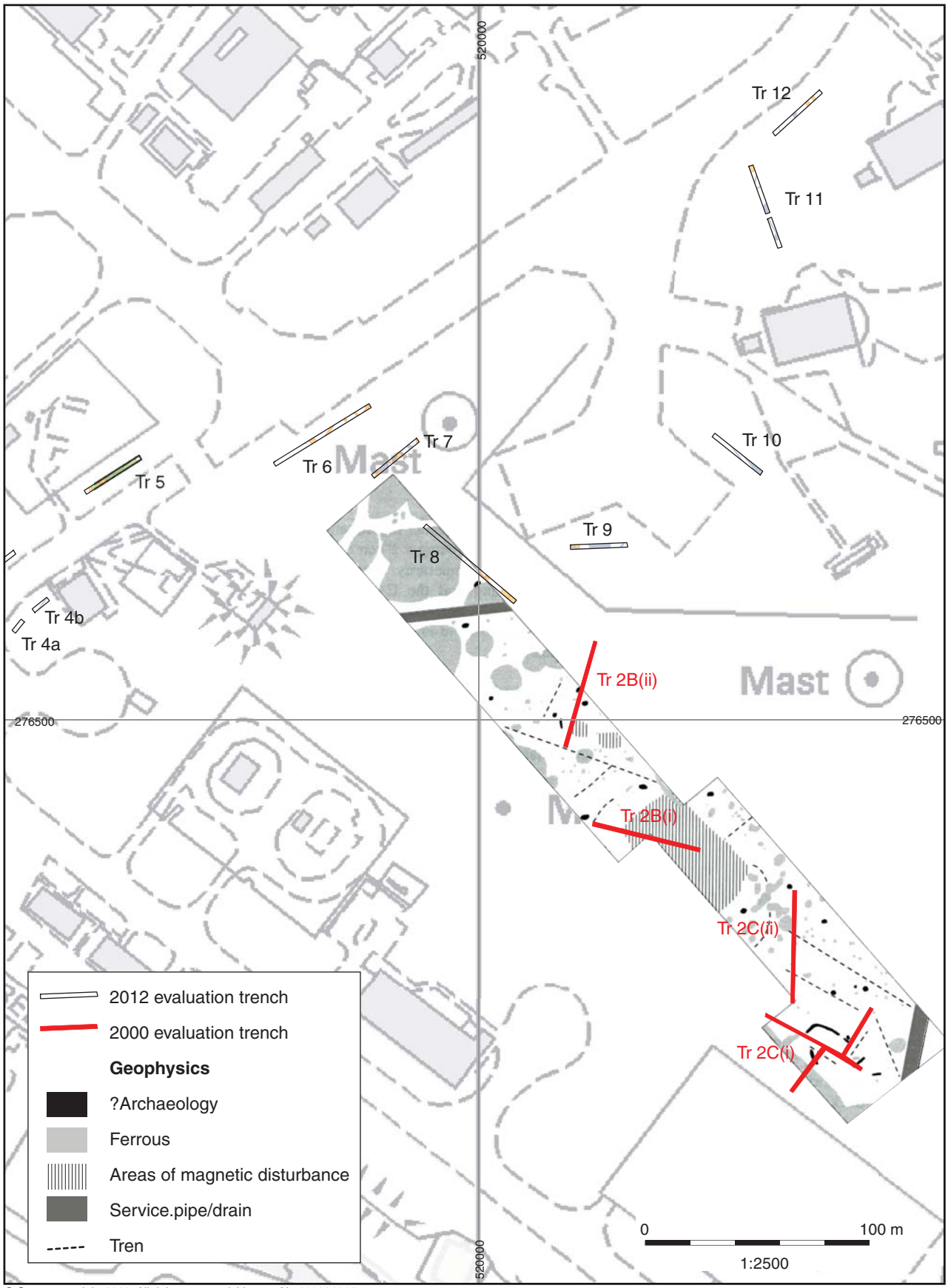


Figure 3. Location of 'settlement' (Trenches 5-12 including 2001 evaluation trenches 2B (i and ii) and 2000 geophysical survey

Trench 5 looking North

Figure 4. Trench 5 plan and sections

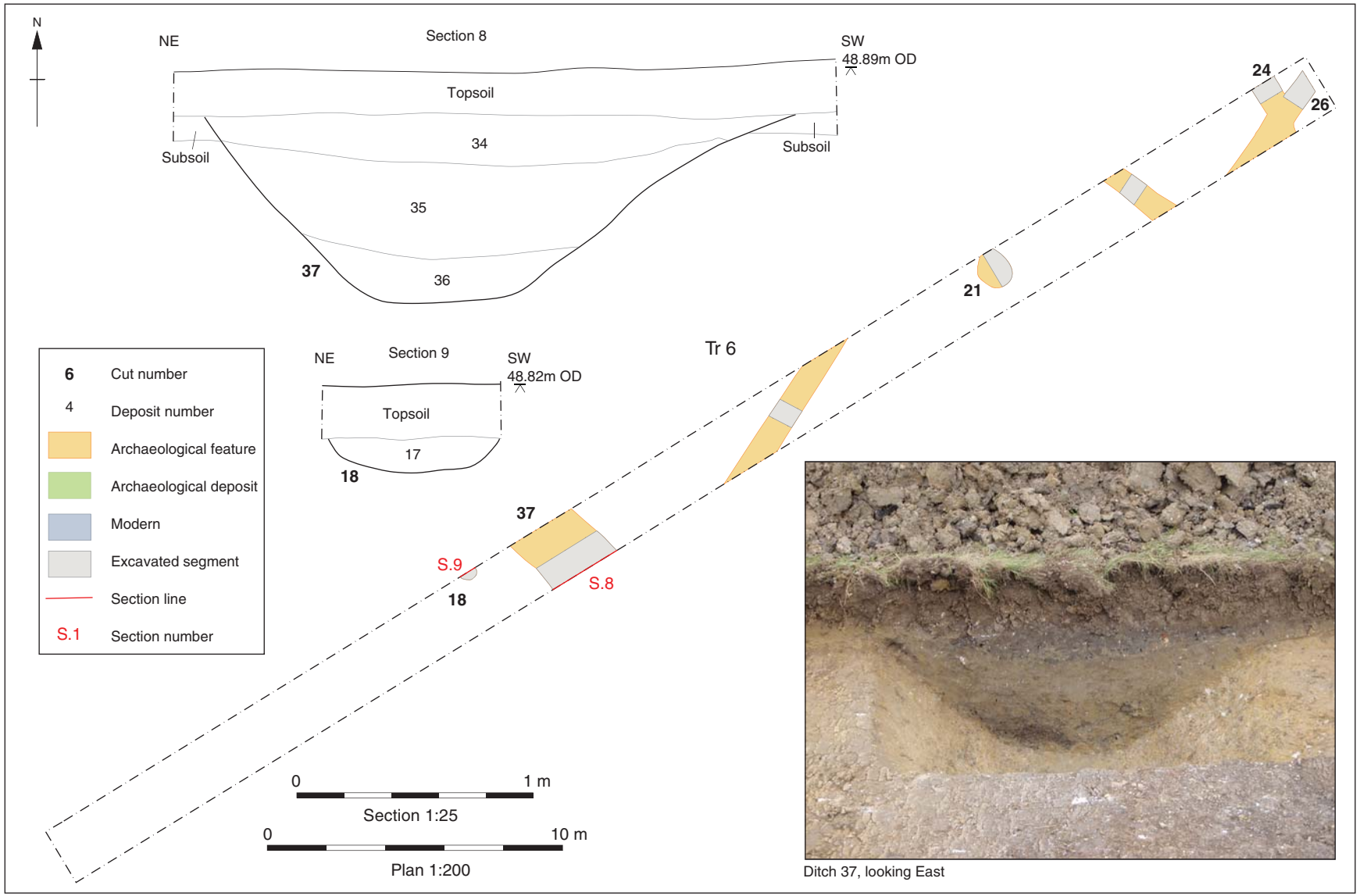


Figure 5: Trench 6 plan

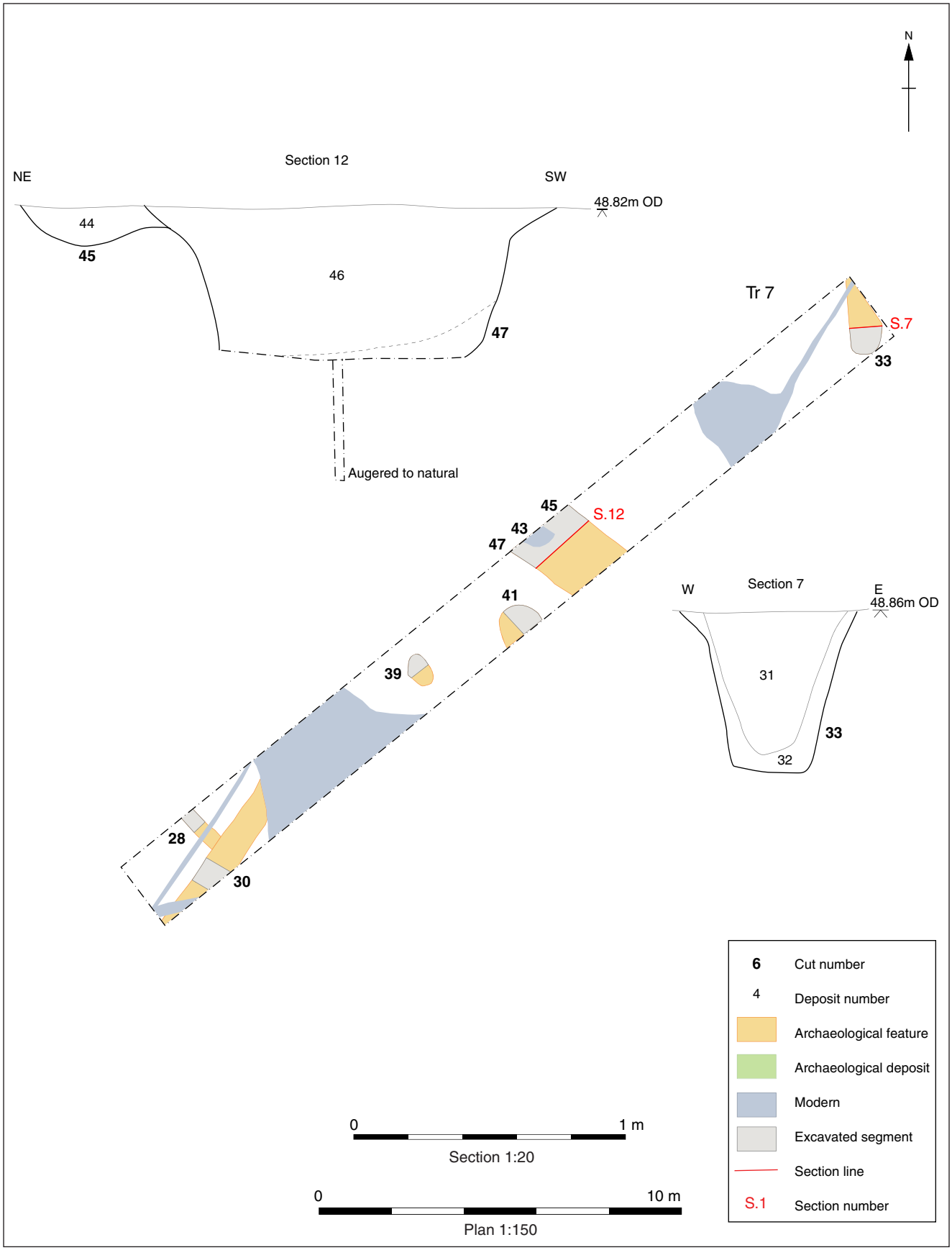


Figure 6. Trench 7 plan and sections

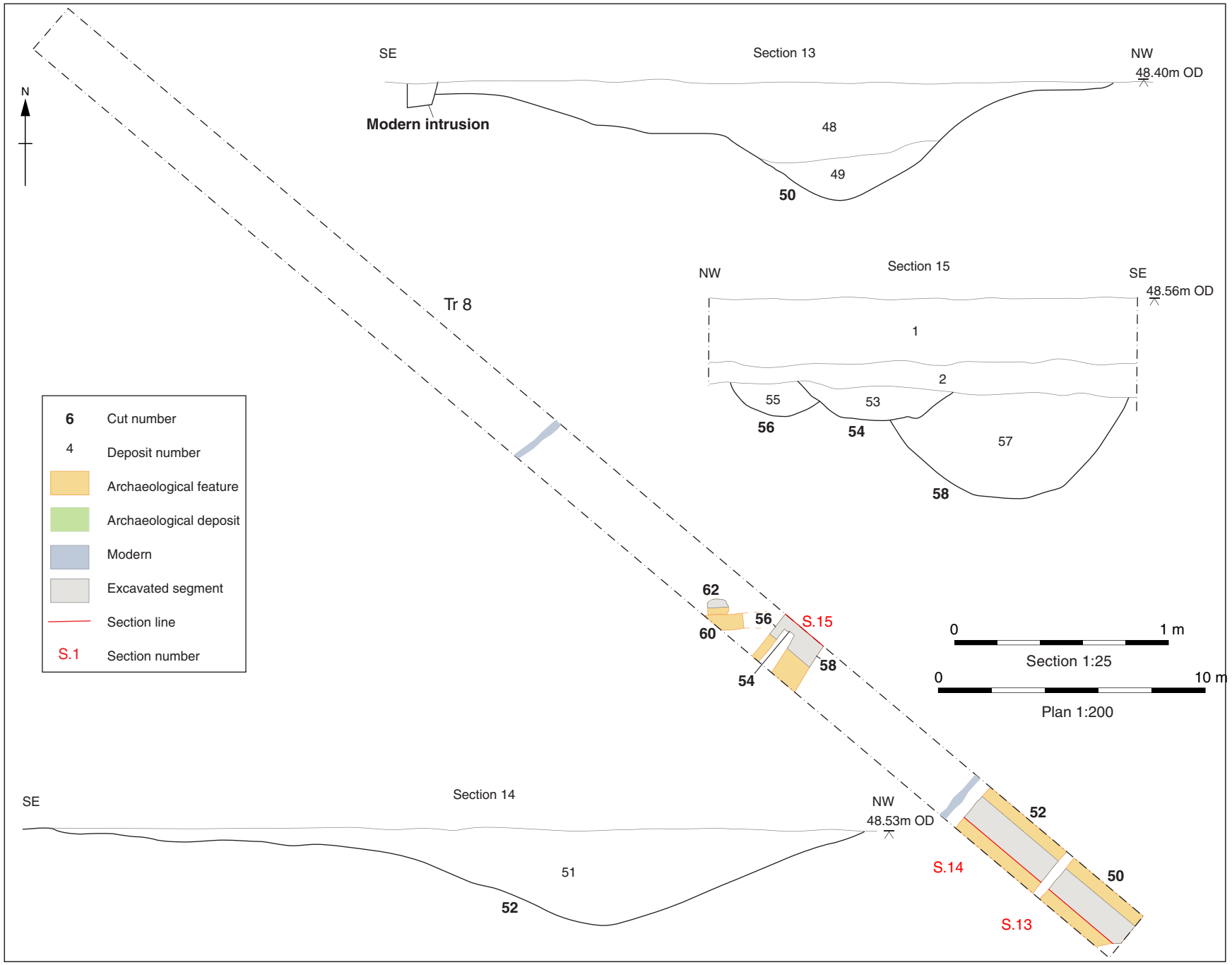
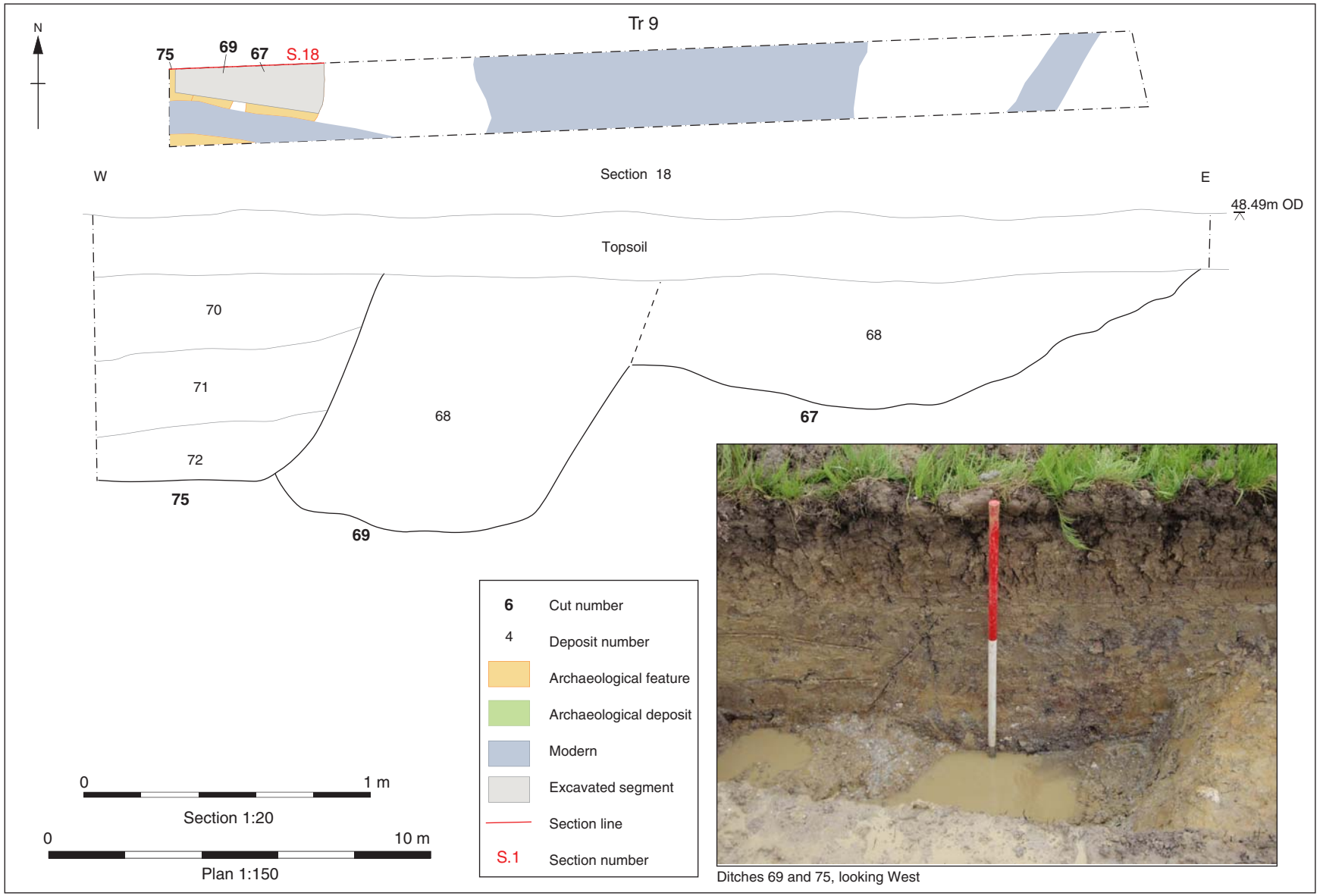


Figure 7: Trench 8 plan and sections



Ditches 69 and 75, looking West

Figure 8. Trench 9 plan and sections

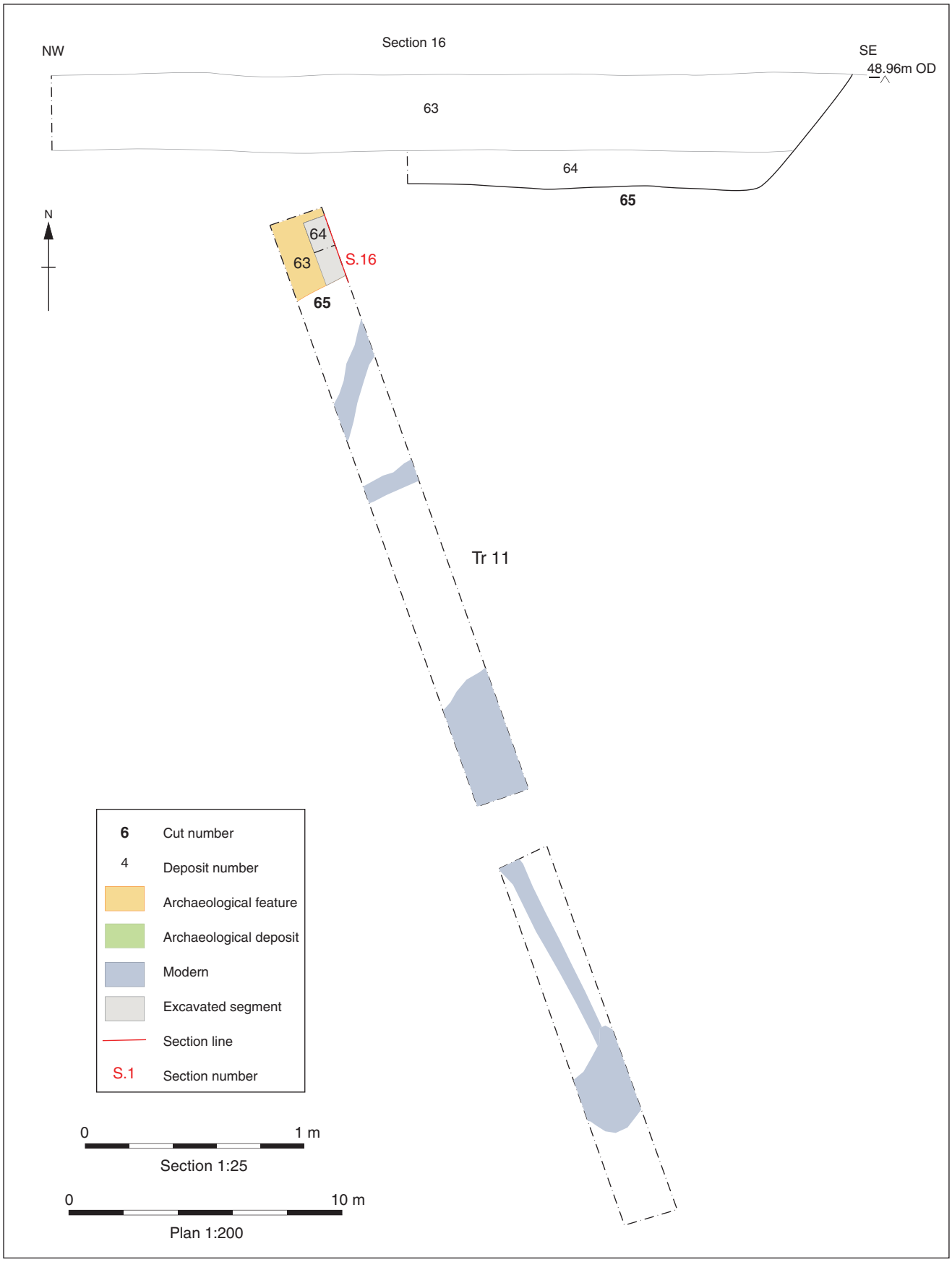


Figure 9. Trench 11 plan

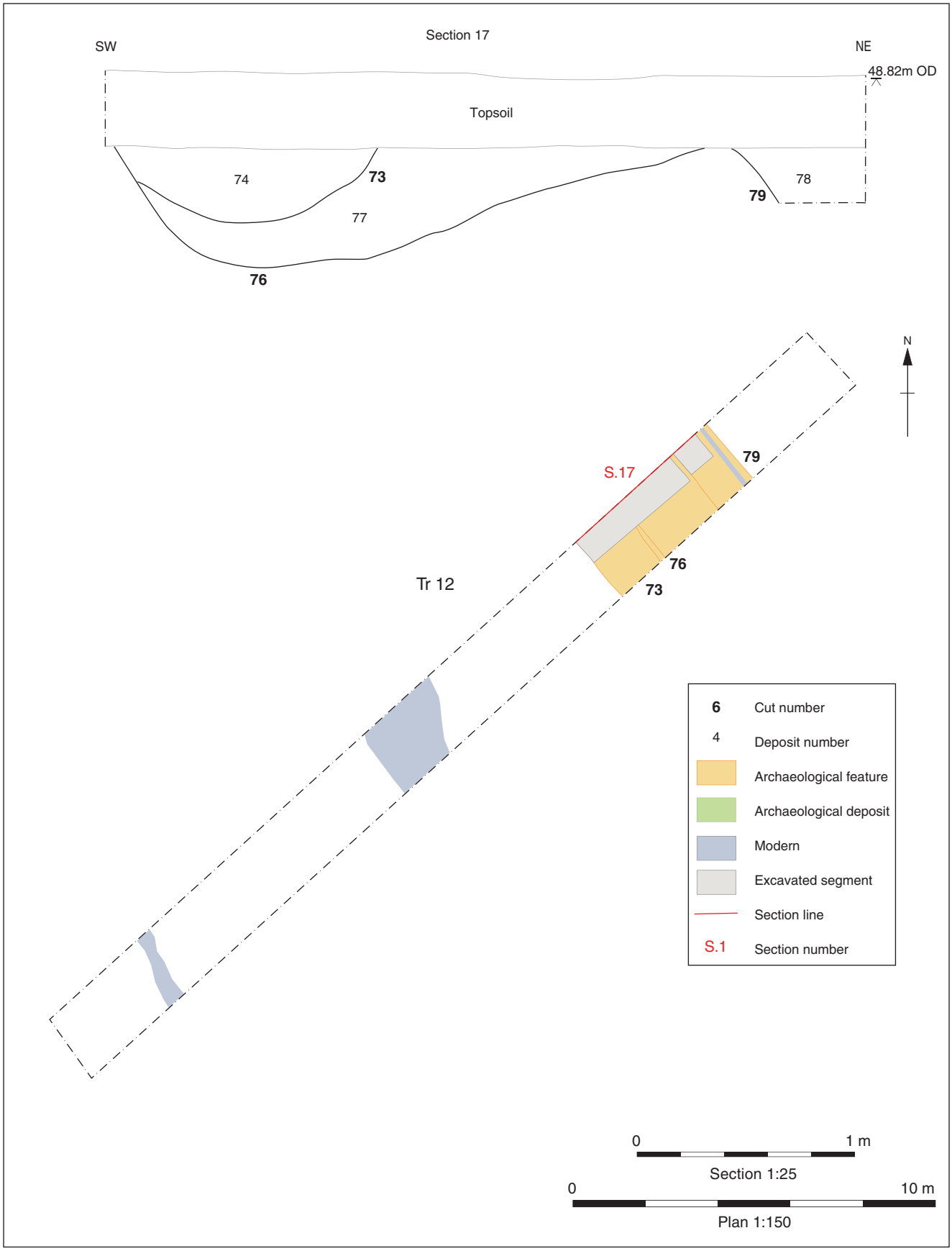


Figure 10. Trench 12 plan

Head Office/Registered Office/ OA South

Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford OX2 0ES

t: +44 (0) 1865 263 800
f: +44 (0) 1865 793 496
e: info@oxfordarch.co.uk
w:http://thehumanjourney.net

OA North

Mill 3
Moor Lane
Lancaster LA1 1GF

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

OA East

15 Trafalgar Way
Bar Hill
Cambridgeshire
CB23 8SQ

t: +44 (0) 1223 850500
f: +44 (0) 1223 850599
e: oaeast@thehumanjourney.net
w:http://thehumanjourney.net