

Roman and Medieval Remains at Estover Road March Cambridgeshire



Archaeological Evaluation Report



October 2014

Client: Savills for St Johns College

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Roman and Medieval Remains at Estover Road, March, Cambridgeshire

Archaeological Evaluation

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents

Summary.....	6
1 Introduction.....	8
1.1 Location and scope of work.....	8
1.2 Geology and topography.....	8
1.3 Archaeological and historical background.....	8
1.4 Acknowledgements.....	9
2 Aims and Methodology.....	10
2.1 Aims.....	10
2.2 Methodology.....	10
3 Results.....	11
3.1 Introduction.....	11
3.2 Results.....	11
3.3 Field Survey.....	15
3.4 Finds Summary.....	15
3.5 Environmental Summary.....	15
4 Discussion and Conclusions.....	16
4.1 Introduction.....	16
4.2 Prehistoric.....	16
4.3 Roman.....	16
4.4 Late medieval.....	17
4.5 Post medieval.....	17
4.6 Significance.....	17
4.7 Recommendations.....	18
Appendix A. Trench Descriptions and Context Inventory.....	19
Appendix B. Finds Reports.....	26
B.1 Metalwork.....	26
B.2 Flint.....	26
B.3 Pottery.....	27
B.4 Ceramic Building Material.....	29
Appendix C. Environmental Reports.....	30
C.1 Animal Bone.....	30
C.2 Shell.....	31

C.3 Environmental Samples.....	32
Appendix D. Bibliography.....	34
Appendix E. OASIS Report Form.....	36

List of Figures

- Fig. 1 Site location map
Fig. 2 Trench location plan
Fig. 3 Trenches overlain on the aerial photographic survey
Fig. 4 Trenches overlain on geophysics plot
Fig 5 Close up plan of Trenches 4 and 5
Fig. 6 Selected sections

List of Plates

- Plate 1 Pit **53**, looking west
Plate 2 Pit **90**, looking south

List of Tables

- Table 1 Field survey results
Table 2 Pottery
Table 3 Species distribution for the assemblage
Table 4 Marine shell recovered from MAREST14
Table 5 Environmental samples from MAREST14

Summary

An archaeological evaluation was carried out on Land North of Estover Road, March, Cambridgeshire (TL 4251 9813). The fieldwork took place between the 20th and 28th October 2014. A total of fifteen trenches were excavated within the proposed development area, targeting archaeological features suggested from an aerial photograph survey and a geophysical survey.

Several ditches and possible settlement features tentatively dated to the Roman period were present in the west and the south of the site. The settlement features included a ring-ditch towards the centre of the site that is suggested to be a roundhouse.

In the western part of the site, a concentration of east to west aligned enclosure ditches and related settlement features dating to the medieval period may be indicative of possible tofts. A curvilinear ditch in the western part of the site enclosed an area of buried soil that was possibly the result of an occupation horizon.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 An archaeological evaluation was conducted on land north of Estover Road, March, Cambridgeshire (TL 4251 9813) between the 20th and 28th October 2014 (Fig. 1).
- 1.1.2 This archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Kasia Gdaniec of Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC; pre-planning application), supplemented by a Specification prepared by OA East (Macaulay, 2014).
- 1.1.3 The work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed redevelopment area, in accordance with the guidelines set out in *National Planning Policy Framework* (Department for Communities and Local Government March 2012). The results will enable decisions to be made by CCC, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority, with regard to the treatment of any archaeological remains found.
- 1.1.4 The site archive is currently held by OA East and will be deposited with the appropriate county stores in due course.

1.2 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The site is located at c.3m AOD, to the north-east of March town centre, between the 'isle' and the fen. The superficial geology consists of March gravel deposits on a bedrock of Ampthill Clay (British Geological Survey, 1980).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 A full Historic Environment Record (HER) search was completed prior to the commencement of fieldwork. A summary of the results is given below, detailed background is provided in a desk-based assessment carried out for this site (Mellor, 2014).

Neolithic and Bronze Age

- 1.3.2 Neolithic settlement within the vicinity is attested to by the recovery unstratified finds. These include three handaxes, located along the edge of the higher ground and fen to the east of the site (06032a) and to the north-west (MCB 19586, MCB2573).
- 1.3.3 Evidence for Bronze Age settlement has been recovered in the form of unstratified worked flints and two concentrations of settlement features, located on the fen edge (05924, CB15266).

Iron Age

- 1.3.4 By The Iron Age the River Nene had changed course and the fen deposits surrounded the Isle of March to the east and west (Hall, 1987). On the 'Isle' itself, Middle Iron Age settlement features including enclosures and pits have been recorded by excavations to the north-west (07936a). The earliest evidence for dense occupation dates to the Late Iron Age and this formed the basis of the Roman settlement at Flagrass (08448a).

Roman

- 1.3.5 The site lies immediately to the south of the Fen causeway; the Roman road which ran from Peterborough into Norfolk. To the north-east of the site a dense concentration of linear settlement emanated from this routeway. This was known as Flagrass and comprised rectilinear enclosures, domestic occupation and industrial occupation, dominated by salt making and small scale pottery production (06032). Cropmarks

(08991) of similarly dense rectilinear enclosures suggest that this settlement extended to the south-east of the site.

- 1.3.6 To the north-west further cropmarks of Roman enclosure systems are recorded (09380) from previous archaeological works (07936).

Anglo-Saxon and medieval

- 1.3.7 During this time the settlement of March grew up around Knight's End, to the south of the modern village centre. The village core subsequently shifted to its present day position north of the River Nene, centred around the river crossing (CCC, in prep).
- 1.3.8 There is no evidence for Anglo-Saxon settlement in the vicinity. This is likely to be attributable to climatic changes to colder and wetter conditions, that resulted in rising sea levels that would have made the marginal land upon which the site lies unfavourable for settlement.
- 1.3.9 In the vicinity of the site the evidence for medieval activity comprises ridge and furrow cropmarks to the south-east (8981a) and a possible house platform, seen as a rectilinear enclosure, to the west (09381).

1.4 Acknowledgements

- 1.4.1 The author would like to thank Andrew Hodgson of Savills, on the behalf of St John's College, who commissioned and funded the work. The fieldwork was carried out by Nick Cox, Paddy Lambert, Stephen Morgan and Petra Weschenfelder. David Brown carried out the on-site survey. The project was managed by Stephen Macaulay and monitored by Kasia Gdaniec of Cambridgeshire County Council.

2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 The objective of this evaluation was to determine as far as reasonably possible the presence/absence, location, nature, extent, date, quality, condition and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits within the development area.
- 2.1.2 The trenching was designed to test the results of the aerial photographic survey (Palmer 2014) and the geophysical survey (Masters 2014). Aerial photographs suggested that the site lay within an area of Roman settlement, whilst the geophysical survey did not show any archaeological remains with clarity.

2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 The Brief required that an adequate sample of the potential development area be investigated by trial trenching. Two trenches were targeted on geophysical anomalies, with further trenches located along areas where cable routes, substations and access tracks were to be constructed.
- 2.2.2 Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a wheeled JCB-type excavator using a toothless ditching bucket.
- 2.2.3 The site survey was carried out by David Brown using a Leica GPS fitted with *Smartnet* technology.
- 2.2.4 Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal detector. All metal-detected and hand-collected finds were retained for inspection, other than those which were obviously modern.
- 2.2.5 All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using OA East's *pro-forma* sheets. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales and colour and monochrome photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits.
- 2.2.6 Four environmental samples were taken in order to assess the environmental potential of contexts deemed to be of archaeological significance.
- 2.2.7 Site conditions were variable, with some heavy rain showers experienced. Deep excavation of any archaeological remains was limited due a high water table, however this did not hamper the evaluation.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The trenches are presented below in numerical order (see Fig. 2 for trench locations). They were 50m in length and 2m wide, unless otherwise stated. The natural geology was an orange silty sand. Topsoil comprising a dark greyish brown silty sand, 0.4m thick, was encountered throughout the field. All the fills of archaeological features were silty sand in composition unless otherwise stated. Full details of trench and context are given in Appendix A.
- 3.1.2 The archaeological remains identified during the evaluation corresponded relatively well with the aerial photographic survey, although several small pits and ditches were recorded that were not identified by this survey. In addition, several anomalies encountered in the aerial photographic survey did not correspond with any archaeological remains uncovered by the evaluation.
- 3.1.3 The geophysical survey did not reflect the archaeological remains present on site. The survey identified few archaeological remains, and many of the anomalies that were interpreted as possible archaeology did not correspond with features uncovered by the evaluation.

3.2 Results

Trench 1

- 3.2.1 At the western end of the trench lay a ditch (**16**), aligned north to south. The ditch had steep sides and a flat base, its exposed width was 1.5m, with a depth of 0.36m. It was initially filled by a mid greyish brown clay silt (17), 0.2m thick that was overlain by a secondary deposit, comprising a mid brown clayey silt (18), 0.2m thick.
- 3.2.2 A north-east to south-west aligned ditch (**19**) was encountered six metres to the south-east. The ditch had steep sides and a concave base and was 1.05m wide by 0.35m deep. It was filled by a light grey silt sand (20), containing a possible struck flint.
- 3.2.3 Adjacent to this ditch was a small pit (**21**), which was circular in plan, with steep sides and a concave base. It measured 0.75m in diameter and 0.42m deep and the fill consisted of a light grey silt sand (22).
- 3.2.4 In the middle of the trench lay a north to south aligned ditch (**97**) that was 0.5m wide and 0.2m deep. This ditch had steep sides, a flat base and was filled by a dark brown silt sand (98).

Trench 2

- 3.2.5 Towards the western end of the trench lay a small, circular posthole (**33**) with gentle sides and a flat base. It measured 0.6m in diameter and 0.05m deep and was filled by mid grey silt sand (34). This was truncated by a north to south aligned ditch (**112**), measuring 1.6m wide. This ditch was a continuation of ditch **16**, in Trench 1 and as a result was not excavated in this trench.

Trench 3

- 3.2.6 A small sub-circular posthole (**107**) lay at the northern end of the trench. It had steep sides and a concave base, measuring 0.34m in diameter and 0.12m deep. The fill of this posthole comprised a mid grey silt sand (106).

- 3.2.7 In the middle of the trench an east to west aligned ditch (**105**) was encountered that had stepped sides and a concave base, measuring 1.9m wide and 0.7m deep. Its fill sequence comprised an initial fill of dark reddish grey silty sand (104), 0.38m thick, that contained the remains of a cat, which was overlain by a mid greyish brown (103), 0.32m thick.
- 3.2.8 At the southern end of the trench lay a second, parallel ditch (**102**) with gentle sides and a flat base was observed. The ditch measured 1.45m wide and 0.13m deep and had a dark greyish brown silty sand fill (101).

Trench 4

- 3.2.9 At the western end of the trench a curvilinear ditch (**75**) was present, which was aligned east to west before turning towards the south. The ditch had steep sides and a gently concave base, measuring 1.4m wide and 0.35m deep. It was filled by a dark greyish brown silt sand (76) from which cattle, horse and sheep/goat bone fragments and two sherds of undiagnostic pottery were recovered. Within the area enclosed by the ditch a buried soil layer was present. This mid brownish grey deposit (100) was 0.1m thick.
- 3.2.10 To the east lay a north to south aligned ditch (**95**), which had gradually sloped sides and a concave base. The ditch measured 1.5m wide and 0.28m deep and had a mid brownish grey fill (96).
- 3.2.11 Seven metres to the east a small, circular posthole (**87**) was encountered. This posthole was circular in shape, with steep sides and a flat base. It measured 0.6m in diameter and 0.1m deep and contained a light brown fill (88).
- 3.2.12 Adjacent to this posthole was a north to south aligned ditch (**77**), which had steep sides and a flat base, measuring 1.6m wide and 0.45m deep. It had an initial dark blackish brown fill (79), 0.45m thick, containing late medieval pottery and tile, frequent mussel shells and charcoal fragments. This fill was overlain by a mid brownish grey tertiary deposit (78), 0.2m thick, containing mussel shell fragments, cattle and horse bone fragments and 15th-16th century pottery.
- 3.2.13 To the east was a north-west to south-east aligned ditch (**80**), which had steep sides and a flat base. The ditch terminus, which lay to the south-west, was squared and measured 0.4m wide and 0.1m deep. It contained a mid greyish brown fill (81).
- 3.2.14 At the eastern end of the trench was a ditch (**82**) aligned north to south. This feature was 3.5m wide, a slot excavated in the eastern side revealed it to be 0.9m deep, with a steeply sloped eastern side and a concave base. It was filled by a mid brownish grey silt sand (83) containing bone from sheep/goat species and 13th-15th century pottery. This was overlain by a dark greyish brown tertiary deposit (108), 0.3m thick that contained sheep/goat bone fragments. The ditch was truncated by at least two small pits (**84**, **109**), which were circular in plan and left unexcavated as the ground conditions were deemed too unsafe for further excavation.

Trench 5

- 3.2.15 Trench five was L shaped with a right angle turn to the east. The north-east to south-west portion was 59m long and the north-west to south-east arm was 20m long.
- 3.2.16 At the western end of the trench was a north-east to south-west aligned ditch (**63**) that had steep sides and a concave base, measuring 0.5m wide and 0.2m deep. It was filled by a mid grey deposit (62). Further to the east was a north to south aligned ditch (**120**) that measured c.1.5m in width. This ditch was a continuation of ditch **95** in Trench 4 and as a result was left unexcavated.

- 3.2.17 Another north to south aligned ditch (**59**) was present four metres to the east. The ditch had steep sides and a flat base, measuring 1.6m wide and 0.5m deep. It contained a primary mid grey fill (58), 0.5m thick, containing two sherds of 12-14th century pottery, cattle, sheep/ goat bone fragments and mussel shell fragments. This was overlain by a mid brownish grey upper fill (57), 0.25m thick.
- 3.2.18 Ditch **59/63/120** was truncated by an east-north-east to west-south-west aligned ditch (**61**). This feature had straight sides and a flat base, measuring 1.5m wide and 0.3m deep. Its fill comprised a mid brownish grey silty sandy silt (60) that contained sherds from a 15-16th century bowl.
- 3.2.19 Parallel with and two metres to the north of ditch **61** was a second ditch (**56**). This feature was 1.5m wide and 0.45m deep, with steep sides, a flat base and contained two fills (54, 55). The lowest fill (55) contained cattle bones, 15-17th century pottery, and a 14-16th century Copper Alloy vessel fragment. The upper fill (54) contained 12-14th century pottery and late medieval CBM. Another east-north-east to west-south-west ditch (**121**) was located five metres to the north, this was unexcavated, but measured 2.5m wide and had a mid greyish brown fill (122).
- 3.2.20 Immediately to the north, a feature (**53**) was encountered (plate 1) that was not fully exposed within the trench but appeared to be linear, which was suggestive of a ditch terminus. However, the exposed sides were vertical, which might indicate a pit or well. This feature measured 1.5m in width and was excavated to a depth of 0.6m, before further excavation was stopped due to waterlogging. The exposed lower fill was dark brownish grey (51) and 0.25m thick. Its secondary, upper fill comprised a mid brownish grey silty sand (52), containing undiagnostic pottery, sheep/goat bones, oyster, mussel and cockle shell.

Trench 6

- 3.2.21 No archaeological features were recorded in this trench.

Trench 7

- 3.2.22 In the middle of the trench lay a sub-square posthole (**39**), which had straight sides and a flat base. It measured 0.4m wide and 0.12m deep, and was filled by a mid brown clayey sand (40). Twenty metres to the east a small pit (**37**) was encountered against the trench edge. Its exposed width was 1.2m wide and 0.2m deep. The pit had concave sides and a concave base and contained a mid grey fill (38).
- 3.2.23 Four sherds of Roman pottery were recovered from this trench as surface finds (64), with no obvious relationship to archaeological features.

Trench 8

- 3.2.24 A north-east to south-west aligned ditch (**92**) was located towards the middle of the trench. This ditch had concave sides and a concave base. Measuring 0.7m wide and 0.2m deep and contained a mid grey fill (91).

Trench 9

- 3.2.25 A small oval posthole (**94**) was investigated at the northern end of the trench. This was 0.7m long, 0.45m wide and 0.2 deep, with steep sides and a concave base. It contained a mid grey fill (93). In the middle of the trench lay a sub-rectangular pit (**90**), 2m long, 1.8m wide and 0.4m deep (plate 2). This pit had near vertical sides and a flat base, and contained a dark greyish brown fill (89).

- 3.2.26 Twenty metres to the south was an east-north-east to west-south-west ditch terminus (**72**). The ditch terminated to the west and had steep sides and a flat base, measuring 1m wide and 0.38m deep. This was truncated by a parallel ditch (**74**), possibly acting as a replacement. Ditch **74** measured 1.9m wide and 0.44m deep and had stepped sides and a concave base. Both were filled by a similar dark greyish brown fill (71, 73).

Trench 10

- 3.2.27 A pit and posthole were located in the northern part of the trench. The pit (**69**) was oval in shape, with gentle sides and a flat base. It measured 2.6m long, 1.6m wide and 0.1m deep and had a mid grey fill (70). The posthole (**67**) was located six metres further south, it was sub-square with steep sides and a flat base. It also contained a mid grey fill (68).
- 3.2.28 Located in the middle the trench was a ring-ditch (**65**), the exposed eastern portion suggested that it had an internal diameter greater than 8.5m. The southern arm of the ring-ditch was excavated revealing a wide U shaped profile, measuring 0.4m in width and 0.1m deep. It was filled by a mid brownish grey sandy silt (66).

Trench 11

- 3.2.29 In the eastern half of the trench lay a ditch (**50**), aligned north to south, with steep sides and a flat base. It measured 1.9m in width by 0.3m depth and was filled by a dark brownish grey deposit (49).

Trench 12

- 3.2.30 Towards the western end of the trench was a circular pit (**31**) with gradually sloped sides and a concave base. It measured 0.8m in diameter and 0.18m deep and was filled by a mid grey clayey silt (32).
- 3.2.31 In the centre of the trench lay a possible pond (**29**). This feature was ten metres wide and a slot was excavated first by hand, then extended by machine to a depth of 1.4m. Further excavation was stopped due to health and safety concerns. A series of three fills were seen in section, the lower fill (116) was a dark blueish grey clayey silt that contained a sherd of Late Roman pottery. The middle layer (115) consisted of redeposited yellow and grey gravel, 0.2m thick. The upper fill (30) comprised mid brown clayey silt, 0.6m thick and contained residual Early Iron Age pottery.
- 3.2.32 Cutting this pond was a north-west to south-east aligned ditch (**118**). This was left unexcavated as it was shown by the aerial photographs to be the same ditch as that seen in Trench 13.
- 3.2.33 Immediately to the east was a small sub-circular posthole (**27**) with near vertical sides and a concave base. It measured 0.6m in diameter by 0.44m deep and contained a mid grey clayey silt fill (28). A further sub-circular pit (**25**) was located adjacent to the posthole. The pit had gradual sides and a flat base, measuring at least 0.6m wide and 0.12m deep. This pit was filled by mid grey clayey silt with frequent charcoal and burnt clay (26).
- 3.2.34 At the eastern end of the trench lay a possible ditch (**23**) aligned north-west to south-east. This ditch was only partially exposed but measured at least 1.75m in width by 0.15m deep, its south-western side was gradually sloped, with a flattish base. This ditch was filled by a mid brown clayey silt (24).

Trench 13

3.2.35 A north-north-west to south-south-east ditch (**35**) was encountered in the centre of the trench. The ditch had gradually sloped sides and a concave base, measuring 2.4m wide and 0.32m deep. It was filled by a mid brown clayey silt (36).

Trench 14

3.2.36 Towards the centre of the ditch lay a ditch (**114**) that was 2.3m wide. The aerial photographs suggested that this was a continuation of ditch **35** in Trench 13.

Trench 15

3.2.37 At the eastern end of the trench a north-west to south-east ditch (**42**) was recorded. This ditch was 0.5m wide and 0.1m deep, with a U shape profile. Twenty metres to the east lay a parallel ditch (**46**), measuring 0.7m in width by 0.2m deep with steep sides and a flattish base. Both ditches were filled with a similar mid grey clayey silt (41, 45).

3.2.38 Immediately adjacent to ditch **46** was a small sub-rectangular posthole (**44**), 0.38m in diameter and 0.18m deep. The posthole had steep sides and a concave base and contained a mid grey clayey silt fill (43). Ten metres to the east was a small oval pit (48), with steep sides and an irregular base. It measured 0.7m wide and 0.24m deep with a mid grey silty clay fill (47).

3.3 Field Survey

3.3.1 Ninety litres of topsoil from each trench were examined by hand to determine the quantity, date and significance of artefactual evidence within the ploughsoil. The results are listed in Table 1.

Trench	Find type	Weight (kg)	Date
1	Pottery	0.001	19th Century
	Ceramic building Material	0.008	Post-Medieval
2	Ceramic building Material	0.004	Post-Medieval
4	Animal Bone	0.008	sheep/goat
5	Pottery	0.035	12-14th Century
6	Flint	0.001	unidentifiable
7	Flint	0.004	unidentifiable
8	Flint	0.007	unidentifiable

Table 1: Field survey results

3.4 Finds Summary

3.4.1 A moderate assemblage of 79 sherds, weighing 0.880kg, was retrieved. This assemblage mainly dates to the late-medieval period with six sherds of Roman pottery and a single, residual Early Iron Age sherd.

3.4.2 The evaluation produced nine small finds, the majority were iron nails or fragments, however a single copper alloy vessel fragment was recovered. Four fragments of CBM were recovered along with six struck flints.

3.5 Environmental Summary

3.5.1 Animal bone, weighing 1.6kg was recovered. The identifiable fragments were from cow, sheep/goat, horse and cat. A total of 0.144kg of shell of marine molluscs were collected from five contexts. The assemblage consists of mussel, cockle and oyster.

3.5.2 Four bulk samples were taken from feature fills. The remains of wheat, barley grain and weed seeds associated with cereal crops were recovered from two samples.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The evaluation recorded Roman and late medieval activity that is discussed below by period and character, in order to help establish the findings in the context of their wider landscape setting.
- 4.1.2 The site lies on the Fen edge, on the eastern side of the 'Isle' of March, which is a particularly rich archaeological landscape. Based upon its topographic setting, the archaeological potential of the site is mixed as a result of the changing environmental conditions over time. In drier periods the land would have been conducive to settlement and agriculture, whilst during wet climatic periods the low lying land would have been marshland and unfavourable to settlement.
- 4.1.3 The aerial photographic survey identified a complex of ditches, mainly concentrated to the west of the site, and two further ditches to the east. For the most part, the results of the evaluation corresponded with these cropmarks. A small number of large ditches and all the smaller pits and ditches did not appear as cropmarks in the survey, though this is not unexpected for the smaller features.
- 4.1.4 The geophysical survey did identify an area of archaeological interest to the south-west which correlated with some archaeological remains, however overall, the geophysical survey did not produce any results that were helpful in identifying areas of archaeological significance.

4.2 Prehistoric

- 4.2.1 A small assemblage of worked flint and one sherd of Early Iron Age pottery were retrieved. There was a slight concentration of finds to the north of the site but these were recovered residually. Their presence does however suggest some form of possibly intermittent occupation of the site during the earlier prehistoric period.

4.3 Roman

- 4.3.1 The retrieval of residual Roman pottery from the site, along with the lack of evidence for earlier pottery, suggests that on balance the following features, although undated, are likely to date to the Roman period. An earlier date cannot, however, be ruled out.

Settlement Features

- 4.3.2 In the centre of the site a ring-ditch (**65**) was evident, its full diameter is extrapolated to be c.12m and one fragment of daub was recovered from its fill. The ditch had been heavily truncated by modern ploughing but is thought to represent a possible roundhouse.
- 4.3.3 Several small pits (**25**, **31** & **69**) and postholes (**27**, **37**, **39**, **48**, **67** & **94**) were encountered across the site, although not in any apparent specific concentrations. They all were similar in character and had the same mid grey fills, however it is not possible to make further interpretations about their function at present.

Field Systems

- 4.3.4 A field system comprising four north-west to south-east aligned ditches (**42**, **46**, **63** & **92**) was evident in the southern part of the site. These ditches are currently undated, however this is not entirely unexpected as these would have formed an agricultural field system on the outskirts of settlement. This field system is putatively attributed to the

Roman period as its fills are leached and their orientation bear no relation to the east to west and north to south axis of later medieval remains.

Fen Edge features

- 4.3.5 To the north of the site a possible pond was encountered in Trench 12. Its full extent was not seen, however it is known to date back at least to the Late Roman period.

4.4 Late medieval

Settlement Features

- 4.4.1 In the western part of the site, in Trench 4, was a small ditch (**75**) which turned a right-angle from east to west to north to south. The ditch appeared quite unusual in form, although given the limited scope of the trench it was impossible to ascertain its overall layout. The layer of subsoil-like material (100) which was present to the south-west and enclosed by the ditch is potentially significant as this deposit was not seen elsewhere during the evaluation and may represent an occupation layer.

Enclosures

- 4.4.2 A series of enclosure ditches on north to south (**59, 77 & 95**) and east to west alignments (**61 & 56**) were observed. The line of these, when traced using the aerial photographic survey, suggest they form a series of rectilinear enclosures concentrated to the west and south of the site.

Pits

- 4.4.3 Within the complex of rectilinear enclosures, in the area encompassed by the eastern end of Trenches 4 and 5, several large pits were encountered. The two in Trench 4 (**84 & 109**) were masked by a later ditch (**82**). Pit (**53**), in Trench 5, may have represented a watering hole or well.

4.5 Post medieval

- 4.5.1 The north-west to south-east aligned ditch encountered to the east of the site (**27, 35 & 114**) is suggested to be post medieval in date. Although undated at present it was aligned parallel to the modern day field boundary and the fill was distinctly different in character, being brown in colour and more peaty in composition.

4.6 Significance

- 4.6.1 The evaluation revealed significant remains in the eastern and southern half of the site that dated to the Roman and late medieval periods.
- 4.6.2 The Roman remains were attested to by a ring-ditch in Trench 10, a possible agricultural field system and pits. There is at present little evidence for Roman activity in the vicinity, with the site lying to the south-west of the Flagrass settlement. The nature of activity here is slightly different to that at Flagrass, with little evidence for the regular rectilinear enclosures and industrial salt and pottery production evident there.
- 4.6.3 At present it is unclear whether the large settlement complexes in the locale were part of an imperial estate or grew up organically from the native population. The fact that the remains recorded by this evaluation do not show any of the characteristics of the Flagrass settlement might suggest that this site lay on the periphery of that particular landownership. Another possibility is that these remains reflect a short period of settlement expansion when economic conditions were favourable, but that this was abandoned before an ordered settlement could be established.

- 4.6.4 The medieval remains are highly significant as the site would have lain on the very edge of the Isle in the medieval period and no evidence for settlement during that time has previously been recorded this far north-east of the settlement core. Cropmarks in this area are usually Iron Age or Roman in date and those that have not been investigated are also usually assigned to these periods, rather than the later medieval period.
- 4.6.5 The enclosures presumably reflect individual tofts, the evidence for several enclosures and pottery spanning the 12th to 16th century suggest activity over an extended period, with one or more phases of remodelling. Further work would be needed to establish the exact nature of this continuity and also to answer the question of whether these remains represent an individual nucleated settlement or the north-eastern limit of March village. If the latter were true then it would significantly increase the known extent of March village in the medieval period away from its core around the river crossing (CCC, in prep).
- 4.6.6 The possible continuity of settlement throughout the medieval period is unusual as climatic conditions deteriorated during this time and many settlements contracted or became redundant. If the settlement was to have continued throughout it would suggest that it had an economic mainstay to support it and make it viable. Little evidence for any industrial activity was retrieved during the evaluation, however given the location on the fen edge, it is possible that salt making could have been practised.

4.7 Recommendations

- 4.7.1 Recommendations for any future work based upon this report will be made by the County Archaeology Office.

APPENDIX A. TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1						
General description				Orientation		NW-SE
Trench contained three ditches and one pit. Consists of topsoil overlying a natural of silty sand.				Avg. depth (m)		0.42
				Width (m)		2
				Length (m)		49
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1	Layer	-	0.4	Topsoil	flint, pottery	-
16	Cut	1.48	0.35	Ditch	-	-
17	Fill	1.3	0.2	Ditch	-	-
18	Fill	1.1	0.36	Ditch	-	-
19	Cut	1.05	0.35	Ditch	-	-
20	Fill	1.05	0.35	Ditch	flint	-
21	Cut	0.75	0.42	Pit	-	-
22	Fill	0.75	0.42	Pit	-	-
97	Cut	0.52	0.2	Ditch	-	-
98	Fill	0.52	0.2	Ditch	-	-
Trench 2						
General description				Orientation		E-W
Trench contained one ditch and one posthole. Consists of topsoil overlying a natural of silty sand.				Avg. depth (m)		0.4
				Width (m)		2
				Length (m)		49
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
2	Layer	-	0.42	Topsoil	pottery	-
33	Cut	0.35	0.2	Pit	-	-
34	Fill	0.35	0.2	Pit	-	-
111	Cut	1.5	-	Ditch	-	-
112	Fill	1.5	-	Ditch	-	-
Trench 3						
General description				Orientation		N-S
Trench contained two ditches and one posthole. Consists of topsoil overlying a natural of silty sand.				Avg. depth (m)		0.33
				Width (m)		2
				Length (m)		49
Contexts						

context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
3	Layer	-	0.	Topsoil	-	-
101	Fill	1.45	0.13	Ditch	-	-
102	Cut	1.45	0.13	Ditch	-	-
103	Fill	1.62	0.32	Ditch	-	-
104	Fill	1.9	0.38	Ditch	animal bone	-
105	Cut	1.9	0.7	Ditch	-	-
106	Fill	0.34	0.12	Posthole	-	-
107	Cut	0.34	0.12	Posthole	-	-
Trench 4						
General description					Orientation	E-W
Trench contained one curvilinear ditch, four ditches, two pits and a posthole. Consists of topsoil overlying a natural of silty sand.					Avg. depth (m)	0.43
					Width (m)	2
					Length (m)	50
					Contexts	
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
4	Layer	-	0.	Topsoil	animal bone	-
75	Cut	1.4	0.36	Ditch	-	-
76	Fill	1.4	0.36	Ditch	pottery, animal bone	-
77	Cut	1.6	0.45	Ditch	-	medieval
78	Fill	0.7	0.21	Ditch	animal bone, shell	-
79	Fill	1.6	0.45	Ditch	pottery, CBM	medieval
80	Cut	0.4	0.1	Ditch terminus	-	-
81	Fill	0.4	0.1	Ditch terminus	-	-
82	Cut	1	0.9	Ditch	-	medieval
83	Fill	1	0.9	Ditch	pottery, animal bone	medieval
84	Cut	0.12	0.23	Pit	-	medieval
85	Fill	0.12	0.23	Pit	pottery	medieval
87	Cut	0.6	0.08	Posthole	-	-
88	Fill	0.6	0.08	Posthole	-	-
95	Cut	1	0.28	Ditch	-	-
96	Fill	1	0.28	Ditch	-	-
99	Layer	-	0.48	Topsoil	-	-
100	Layer	-	0.12	Buried soil	-	-
108	Fill	0.8	0.30	Ditch	animal bone	-

109	Cut	0.3	-	Pit	-	-
110	Fill	0.3	-	Pit	-	-

Trench 5

General description Trench contained six ditches. Consists of topsoil overlying a natural of silty sand.	Orientation	E-W / N-S
	Avg. depth (m)	0.45
	Width (m)	2
	Length (m)	58

Contexts

context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
5	Layer	-	0.45	Topsoil	pottery	-
51	Fill	1.34	0.26	Pit	-	-
52	Fill	1.34	>0.35	Pit	flint, pottery, shell	-
53	Cut	1.34	>0.54	Pit	-	-
54	Fill	1.5	0.25	Ditch	pottery, CBM	medieval
55	Fill	1.5	0.4	Ditch	animal bone, pottery	late medieval
56	Cut	13.5	0.45	Ditch	-	late medieval
57	Fill	1.6	0.25	Ditch	-	-
58	Fill	1.6	0.5	Ditch	animal bone, shell	-
59	Cut	1.6	0.5	Ditch	-	-
60	Fill	1.58	0.3	Ditch	pottery, animal bone	late medieval
61	Cut	1.58	0.3	Ditch	-	late medieval
62	Fill	0.5	0.2	Ditch	-	-
63	Cut	0.5	0.2	Ditch	-	-
119	Fill	1.5	-	Ditch	-	-
120	Cut	1.5	-	Ditch	-	-

Trench 6

General description Trench contained no archaeological features. Consists of topsoil overlying a natural of silty sand.	Orientation	N-S
	Avg. depth (m)	0.38
	Width (m)	2
	Length (m)	50

Contexts

context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
6	Layer	-	0.4	Topsoil	flint	-

Trench 7

General description	Orientation	E-W
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Trench contained two pits. Consists of topsoil overlying a natural of silty sand.					Avg. depth (m)	0.35
					Width (m)	2
					Length (m)	50
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
7	Layer	-	0.43	Topsoil	flint	-
37	Cut	1.2	0.2	Pit	-	-
38	Fill	1.2	0.2	Pit	-	-
39	Cut	0.4	0.18	Pit	-	-
40	Fill	0.4	0.18	Pit	-	-
64	layer	-	-	surface finds	pottery	Roman
Trench 8						
General description					Orientation	E-W
Trench contained one ditch. Consists of topsoil overlying a natural of silty sand.					Avg. depth (m)	0.4
					Width (m)	2
					Length (m)	48.5
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
8	Layer	-	0.44	Topsoil	flint	-
91	Fill	0.7	0.22	Ditch	-	-
92	Cut	0.7	0.22	Ditch	-	-
Trench 9						
General description					Orientation	N-S
Trench contained two ditches, one pit and one posthole. Consists of topsoil overlying a natural of silty sand.					Avg. depth (m)	0.38
					Width (m)	2
					Length (m)	68
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
9	Layer	-	0.38	Topsoil	-	-
71	Fill	0.9	0.38	Ditch	-	-
72	Cut	0.9	0.38	Ditch	-	-
73	Fill	0.9	0.45	Ditch	-	-
74	Cut	0.9	0.45	Ditch	-	-
89	Fill	1.8	0.4	Pit	-	-
90	Cut	1.8	0.4	Pit	-	-
93	Fill	0.5	0.2	Posthole	-	-
94	Cut	0.5	0.2	Posthole	-	-

Trench 10						
General description				Orientation	E-W	
Trench contained one ring-ditch and two pits. Consists of topsoil overlying a natural of silty sand.				Avg. depth (m)	0.4	
				Width (m)	2	
				Length (m)	50	
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
10	Layer	-	0.45	Topsoil	-	-
65	Cut	0.3	0.08	Ring-ditch	-	-
66	Fill	0.3	0.08	Ring-ditch	-	-
67	Cut	0.82	0.19	Pit	-	-
68	Fill	0.82	0.19	Pit	-	-
69	Cut	1.7	0.1	Pit	-	-
70	Fill	1.7	0.1	Pit	-	-
Trench 11						
General description				Orientation	E-W	
Trench contained one ditch. Consists of topsoil overlying a natural of silty sand.				Avg. depth (m)	0.35	
				Width (m)	2	
				Length (m)	48	
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
11	Layer	-	0.35	Topsoil	-	-
49	Fill	2	0.3	Ditch	-	-
50	Cut	2	0.3	Ditch	-	-
Trench 12						
General description				Orientation	E-W	
Trench contained one pond, two ditches and three pits. Consists of topsoil overlying a natural of silty sand.				Avg. depth (m)	0.4	
				Width (m)	2	
				Length (m)	50	
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
12	Layer	-	0.4	Topsoil	-	-
23	Cut	>1.5	0.12	Ditch	-	-
24	Fill	>1.5	0.12	Ditch	-	-
25	Cut	1	0.1	Pit	-	-
26	Fill	1	0.1	Pit	-	-
27	Cut	0.7	0.55	Pit	-	-

28	Fill	0.7	0.55	Pit	-	-
29	Cut	10	>1.4	Pond	-	-
30	Fill	10	0.6	Pond	-	-
31	Cut	0.7	0.16	Pit	-	-
32	Fill	0.7	0.16	Pit	-	-
115	Fill	10	0.2	Pond	-	-
116	Fill	10	0.2	Pond	pottery	Late Roman
117	Fill	1.5	-	Ditch	-	-
118	Cut	1.5	-	Ditch	-	-

Trench 13

General description

Trench contained one ditch. Consists of topsoil overlying a natural of silty sand.

Orientation

NE-SW

Avg. depth (m)

0.4

Width (m)

2

Length (m)

50

Contexts

context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
13	Layer	-	0.44	Topsoil	-	-
35	Cut	2.4	0.32	Ditch	-	-
36	Ditch	2.4	0.32	Ditch	-	-

Trench 14

General description

Trench contained one ditch. Consists of topsoil overlain by a natural of silty sand.

Orientation

NE-SW

Avg. depth (m)

0.4

Width (m)

2

Length (m)

50

Contexts

context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
14	Layer	-	0.42	Topsoil	-	-
113	Fill	2.4	-		-	-
114	Cut	2.4	-		-	-

Trench 15

General description

Trench contained two ditches, one posthole and one pit. Consists of topsoil overlain by a natural of silty sand.

Orientation

NE-SW

Avg. depth (m)

0.34

Width (m)

2

Length (m)

49

Contexts

context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
15	Layer	-	0.34	Topsoil	-	-

41	Fill	0.45	0.1	Ditch	-	-
42	Cut	0.45	0.1	Ditch	-	-
43	Fill	0.35	0.17	Posthole	-	-
44	Cut	0.35	0.17	Posthole	-	-
45	Fill	0.7	0.2	Ditch	-	-
46	Cut	0.7	0.2	Ditch	-	-
47	Fill	0.8	0.25	Pit	-	-
48	Cut	0.8	0.25	Pit	-	-

APPENDIX B. FINDS REPORTS

B.1 Metalwork

By Chris Faine

- B.1.1 SF 1 (55): Copper alloy vessel fragment, consisting of lower portion of body with upper foot attached. Width: 62.1mm Height: 56.6mm. A small portion of double concentric ring decoration can be seen at the top. The profile suggests a reasonably deep straight-sided bowl or a deep straight-sided everted rim, as seen on cauldrons. Date: 1400-1600 A.D. Copper alloy vessels used as cooking pots or for commercial purposes are relatively rare given their cost compared to wooden vessels. A large number were recovered from Pottergate, Norwich (Margeson, 1993) with the large amount of fragments, legs and handles recovered suggesting a metalworkers supply for re-use.
- B.1.2 SF 2 (51): Square section iron nail fragment with rounded head. Width: 13.4mm. Date: Medieval to Post-Medieval.
- B.1.3 SF 3 (78): Rectangular section iron nail head. Shank missing. Width: 11mm. Date: Uncertain
- B.1.4 SF 4 (57): Square section iron nail fragment. Shank bent midpoint with no head. Date: Medieval to Post-Medieval.
- B.1.5 SF 5 (60): Unidentifiable iron fragment. Date: Uncertain.
- B.1.6 SF 6 (18): Unidentifiable iron fragment. Length: 113mm Width: 32.5mm. Possible handle or tool fragment. Date: Uncertain.
- B.1.7 SF 7 (78): Heavily corroded square-section iron nail shank. Length: 38.7mm. Head missing. Date: Uncertain.
- B.1.8 SF 8 (79): Heavily corroded square-section iron nail shank. Length: 44.3mm. Head missing. Date: Uncertain.
- B.1.9 SF 9 (154): Copper alloy composite folding strap clasp. Length: 47.9mm. Sheet frame with separate spindle for rotating closure. No decoration on plate or folding end. Date: 1300-1500 A.D. Similar examples can be found in Egan (1997) p. 119.

B.2 Flint

- B.2.1 An assemblage of five struck flints were collected during the evaluation. These were all undatable and represented flint debitage.

B.3 Pottery

By Carole Fletcher with prehistoric pottery identifications by Sarah Percival and Roman pottery identification by Alice Lyons.

Introduction

- B.3.1 Archaeological works produced a pottery assemblage of 79 sherds, weighing 0.880kg. The assemblage spans the Early Iron Age to the mid 19th century. The condition of the overall assemblage is moderately abraded and the mean sherd weight is moderate to low at approximately 0.011kg.

Methodology

- B.3.2 The Medieval Pottery Research Group (MPRG) *A guide to the classification of medieval ceramic forms* (MPRG, 1998) and *Minimum Standards for the Processing, Recording, Analysis and Publication of Post-Roman Ceramics* (MPRG, 2001) act as a standard.
- B.3.3 Recording was carried out using OA East's in-house system based on that previously used at the Museum of London. Fabric classification has been carried out for all previously described medieval and post-medieval types. All sherds have been counted, classified and weighed on a context-by-context basis. The assemblage is recorded in the summary catalogue. The pottery and archive are curated by Oxford Archaeology East until formal deposition.

Assemblage

- B.3.4 The pottery recovered was multi-period and includes a single relatively unabraded rim sherd from a flint tempered Early Iron Age jar and a small number of Roman sherds including a sherd from a local copy of a Black Burnished ware II dish. The majority of the sherds are medieval including Medieval Ely ware, Toynton Medieval ware and Bourne B, and late medieval wares including Late Medieval Ely ware, Late Medieval Colne ware and late medieval-early post medieval Bourne D-type ware. A small number of sherds could not be identified to a specific fabric due to their abraded nature and these are therefore not closely datable.
- B.3.5 Topsoil in Trench 1 produced the only sherd of 18th-19th century pottery from the site. Trench 4 produced 13 sherds in total weighing 0.234kg from three features. Ditch **75** produced two sherds from an unprovenanced jar or jug base and from ditch **77** were recovered late medieval sherds of Ely and Colne wares, suggesting an overall date for the fill of the feature as mid 15th-mid 16th century. Pit **84** produced medieval fabrics including Bourne, Unglazed Reduced Sandy wares, of Blackborough End-type and sherds from a Toynton ware jug (mid 13th-mid 15th century). Also present is Late Medieval Ely ware suggesting a date of mid 14th-mid 15th century for the pit fill.
- B.3.6 The final ditch in this trench, ditch **82**, produced sherds from a Toynton ware jug (mid 13th-mid 15th century), including the jug rim sherd which has a cross-join with the rim sherd recovered from pit **84**. Also present are sherds of Unglazed Reduced Sandy wares, of Blackborough End-type, the sherd from a Bourne-type Medieval ware bowl and a late Medieval Ely ware jug sherd. Overall the context dates to mid-14th to mid 15th century.
- B.3.7 Trench 5 produced the bulk of the assemblage from the archaeological works, 59 sherds, weighing 0.577kg. The majority of the pottery was recovered from a single feature, ditch **61**, that produced 46 sherds of Late Medieval Colne ware, of which 45 sherds (0.437kg) were from a single large flared or concave sided bowl. These large

bowls, often found in late medieval and early post-medieval contexts, are often associated with dairying.

- B.3.8 Ditch **56** contained two fills which produced pottery, the upper fill produced a single sherd from a Medieval Ely ware jug, while the lower fill produced a body sherd from an unglazed reduced Sandy ware of Blackborough End-type and a sherd from the base and wall of a large Bourne D type vessel most likely a bunghole pitcher or large jug, dating the fill to the early 15th-mid 17th century. Ditch **59** produced two undiagnostic Medieval Ely ware body sherds.
- B.3.9 A single pit in this trench, **53**, produced pottery, a somewhat abraded, shell tempered sherd from which the majority of the shell has been leached and is not closely datable.
- B.3.10 In Trench 7 a single context 64, produced four sherds from the rim of a relatively unabraded jar identified as a Roman Sandy grey ware (with oxidised surfaces) and dating to the Late 1st -3rd century.
- B.3.11 Trench 12 contained a feature identified by the excavator as a pond, feature **29**, with three fills visible in section. Of these the lower fill (116) contained a single sherd of pottery described as the body sherd from a dish imitating a Black Burnished ware II type dish, with internal cross-hatched burnishing. The sherd dates to the 3rd-4th century A.D.
- B.3.12 The assemblage is domestic in nature, indicating multi-period occupation with medieval and late medieval pottery being the main period of deposition across the site. The medieval-late medieval pottery may relate to occupation to the west of the site. The presence of an unabraded sherd of Early Iron Age pottery suggests Iron Age features that may be relatively undisturbed by later activity and the Roman pottery, including the imitation Black Burnished ware II dish, suggests the presence of Romano-British features, some of which may have been disturbed by medieval activity.

Summary catalogue

Ctxt	Cut	Trench	Fabric	Basic Form	Sherd Count	Weight (kg)	Context Date
1		1	Pearlware transfer printed	Body sherd	1	<0.001	1770-1840
5		5	Medieval Ely ware	Jug body sherd	1	0.030	1150-1350
			Fine quartz and mica tempered fabric (abraded)	Body sherd	1	0.005	Not closely datable (?Roman)
30	29	12	Flint tempered	Jar with beaded rim	1	0.014	Early Iron Age
52	53	5	Shell tempered (leached)	Body sherd	1	0.005	Not closely datable
54	56	5	Medieval Ely ware	Jug body sherd	1	0.005	1150-1350
55	56	5	Bourne 'D' ware	Base angle sherd	1	0.007	1430-1650
			Unglazed Reduced Sandy wares, of Blackborough End type	Body sherd	1	0.005	
58	59	5	Medieval Ely ware	Body sherd	2	0.014	1150-1350
60	61	5	Late Medieval Colne ware	Bowl rim, body and sherd	45	0.437	1450-1550
			Late Medieval Colne ware	Base sherd	1	0.009	
64		7	Roman Sandy Greyware with Oxidised surfaces	Jar rim sherd	4	0.036	Late 1st -3rd century

Ctxt	Cut	Trench	Fabric	Basic Form	Sherd Count	Weight (kg)	Context Date
76	75	4	Unprovenanced	Jar/Jug base sherd	2	0.016	Not closely datable
79	77	4	Late Medieval Ely ware	Bowl base sherd	1	0.007	1450-1550
			Late Medieval Colne ware	Bowl body sherd	1	0.018	
			Roman Greyware	Jar body sherd	1	0.005	
			Unprovenanced coarseware	Jar body sherd	1	0.002	
			Unprovenanced coarse sandy ware	Jar base sherd	1	0.009	
83	82	5	Toynnton Medieval ware	Jug rim sherd (xfit with context 85)	1	0.023	1250-1450
			Toynnton Medieval ware	Body sherd	2	0.017	
			Unglazed Reduced Sandy wares, of Blackborough End type	Body sherd	2	0.020	
85	84	4	Bourne-type Medieval ware	Bowl body sherd	1	0.007	1350-1450
			Late Medieval Ely ware	Jug body sherd	1	0.014	
			Toynnton Medieval ware	Jug rod handle attached to body	1	0.103	
			Toynnton Medieval ware	Jug rim sherd (xfit with context 83)	1	0.026	
			Unglazed Reduced Sandy wares, of Blackborough End type	Jar body sherd	2	0.027	
116	29	12	Imitation Black Burnished ware II	Dish body sherd	1	0.019	3rd-4th century
Total					79	0.880	

Table 2: Pottery

B.4 Ceramic Building Material

B.4.1 An assemblage of four fragments of ceramic building material was recovered from the site. A Late Medieval brick was recovered from ditch 56. One fragment of Medieval roof tile was retrieved from ditch 77. A further two roof tile fragments were recovered from topsoil during the field survey.

APPENDIX C. ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS

C.1 Animal Bone

By Chris Faine

- C.1.1 The evaluation recovered 1.6 kilograms of animal bone. The assemblage consisted of twenty six fragments of which 17 were identifiable to species. Identifiable material was recovered from 10 contexts. Table 1 shows the species distribution for the assemblage.
- C.1.2 Sheep/Goat is the dominant taxon, with the assemblage consisting largely of lower limb elements from contexts **4, 52, 58, 76, 83 & 108**. A collection of tibia, metacarpals and radii from **108** were all from juvenile animals.
- C.1.3 Cattle remains were recovered from contexts **55, 58, 76 & 78**. Context **55** contained an intact young adult mandible (3+ years of age) and partial humerus, with a partial scapula being recovered from context **58**. Contexts **76** and **78** contained a partial adult tibia and pelvis respectively. Two horse fragments were recovered; a juvenile radius and partial tibia from contexts **76 & 78** respectively.
- C.1.4 Commensal mammal remains are limited to an adult cat humerus from context **104**. This is a small assemblage that most likely represents general settlement waste rather than any specialist husbandry practice.

	NISP	NISP%	MNI	MNI%
Cattle (<i>Bos</i>)	5	29	3	25
Sheep/Goat (<i>Ovis/Capra</i>)	9	53	6	50
Horse (<i>Equus</i>)	2	12	2	16.6
Cat (<i>Felis sylvestris</i>)	1	6	1	8.4
Total	17	100	12	100

Table 3: Species distribution for the assemblage

C.2 Shell

By Rachel Fosberry

Introduction

- C.2.1 A total of 0.144 Kg of marine shell was recovered from five contexts during excavations at Estover Road, March, Cambridgeshire. The shells were quantified and examined in order to assess the diversity and quantity of these ecofacts and their potential to provide useful data as part of the archaeological investigations.
- C.2.2 This assemblage is the result of both hand collection and shell recovered from environmental samples.

Results

- C.2.3 Mussel (*Mytilus edulis*) shells predominate occurring in all five contexts and as a significant quantity is fill 78 of ditch 77. A single shell of cockle (*Cerastoderma edule*) and a fragment of oyster (*Ostrea edulis*) are also present in this context.

Context No.	Cut No.	Mussel weight(g)	Cockle weight(g)	Oyster weight(g)
52	53	3	2	3
55	56	33		
58	59	3		
78	77	93		
79	77	7		

Table 4. Marine shell recovered from MAREST14

Discussion

- C.2.4 The presence of marine shell indicates that these species are a food resource that was exploited. Mussel shells predominate in this small assemblage which is interesting as oysters are often the preferred shell fish in the Roman period. The majority of the shells are moderately preserved and they do not appear to have been deliberately broken or crushed. Marine mussels would have been collected from the low and mid intertidal zone from the coast and transported inland. Only in context 78 are there a sufficient number of shells to represent a single meal. The other representations are likely to have derived from midden material that has been subsequently deposited in pits and ditches.

C.3 Environmental Samples

By Rachel Fosberry

Introduction

- C.3.1 Four bulk samples were taken from features within the excavated areas at Estover Road, March, Cambridgeshire 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.3.2 Features sampled include ditches and a pit thought to date from the Late Iron Age to the Roman period.

Methodology

- C.3.3 For this initial assessment, one bucket (up to 10 litres) of each bulk 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) of the samples was collected in a 0.3mm nylon mesh and the residue was washed through 10mm, 5mm, 2mm and a 0.5mm sieve. Both flot and residues 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 flots were subsequently sorted using a binocular microscope at magnifications up to x 60 and a complete list of the recorded remains are presented in Table 5. Identification of plant remains is with reference to the *Digital Seed Atlas of the Netherlands* 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).

Quantification

- C.3.4 For the purpose of this initial assessment, items such as seeds, cereal grains and legumes have been scanned and recorded qualitatively according to the following categories

= 1-10, ## = 11-50, ### = 51+ specimens ##### = 100+ specimens

Items that cannot be easily quantified such as charcoal, magnetic residues and fragmented bone have been scored for abundance

+ = rare, ++ = moderate, +++ = abundant

Results

- C.3.5 The only productive samples from this evaluation were those taken from the ditch fills. Fill 36 of pit **25** contained only sparse charcoal and fill 66 of ring ditch or drip-gully **64** did not contain any preserved remains. Sample 2, fill 52 of ditch **53** contains a single charred oat (*Avena* sp.) grain, a fragment of mussel (*Mytilus edulis*) shell and a fragment of mammal bone. Sample 3, fill 79 of ditch **77** contains a moderate assemblage of charred plant remains in which oat grains predominate. Barley (*Hordeum vulgare*) and wheat (*Triticum* sp.) grains are also present in small numbers and are less well preserved than the oats. Charred weed seeds in this assemblage include seeds of weeds that are likely to have been growing amongst the cereals in

cultivated fields such as corncockle (*Agrostemma githago*), dock (*Rumex* sp.), clover (*Trifolium* sp.) and buttercup (*Ranunculus* sp.). Additionally seeds of wetland plants are represented namely hemp agrimony (*Eupatorium cannabinum*) and sedge (*Carex* sp.). These are both plants that grow in wet or mainly damp soils that may have been present on the margins of crop fields or may indicate the collection and use of wetland plants for fuel or other uses. A pottery fragment and mussel shell are also present in this sample.

Sample No.	Context No.	Cut No.	Feature Type	Sample Size (L)	Comments	Volume processed (L)	Flot Volume (ml)	Cereals	Weed Seeds	Charcoal <2mm	Charcoal > 2mm	Large animal bones	Marine molluscs	Pottery	Metal	Comments	
1	3625		pit	18	fill of small shallow pit with dark fill	10	1	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0		Sparse charcoal only
2	5253		ditch	20	Late IA/Roman ditch terminus fill	8	15	#	0	+	+	#	#	0	0		Single charred oat grain
3	7977		ditch	20	secondary fill of ditch. Charcoal rich with mussel shell	10	30	##	#	+	+	0	m#	#	fe nail		moderate assemblage of charred cereals (oats, barley and wheat), crop weed seeds and wetland plant seeds
4	6664		ditch	20	fill of ring ditch/drip gully. Fairly sterile	10	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		No finds or plant remains

Table 5: Environmental samples from MAREST14

Discussion

C.3.6 The samples taken during the evaluation of Estover Road, March indicate that there is good potential for the survival of charred plant remains from this site. Ditches were often convenient features in which to dispose of food waste as is indicated by the presence of mussel shell and animal bone. The charred plant remains recovered from ditch 77 contain cereal grains that have been either accidentally burnt during food preparation along with weed seeds that may have been sieved or picked out of a batch of grain or they may represent fodder waste that has been swept up and burnt and then disposed of.

C.3.7 If further excavations are planned for this site, it is recommended that a targeted sampling strategy is undertaken.

APPENDIX D. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Maps consulted

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APPENDIX E. OASIS REPORT FORM

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

Project Details

OASIS Number	oxfordar3-194335			
Project Name	Evaluation on land north of Estover Road, MArch			
Project Dates (fieldwork)	Start	10-10-2014	Finish	28-10-2014
Previous Work (by OA East)	No		Future Work	Yes

Project Reference Codes

Site Code	MAREST14	Planning App. No.	PRE APP
HER No.	4277	Related HER/OASIS No.	

Type of Project/Techniques Used

Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG15
Development Type	Rural Residential

Please select all techniques used:

<input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photography - interpretation	<input type="checkbox"/> Grab-Sampling	<input type="checkbox"/> Remote Operated Vehicle Survey
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photography - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Gravity-Core	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sample Trenches
<input type="checkbox"/> Annotated Sketch	<input type="checkbox"/> Laser Scanning	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey/Recording Of Fabric/Structure
<input type="checkbox"/> Augering	<input type="checkbox"/> Measured Survey	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Targeted Trenches
<input type="checkbox"/> Dendrochronological Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Metal Detectors	<input type="checkbox"/> Test Pits
<input type="checkbox"/> Documentary Search	<input type="checkbox"/> Phosphate Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Topographic Survey
<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Sampling	<input type="checkbox"/> Photogrammetric Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Vibro-core
<input type="checkbox"/> Fieldwalking	<input type="checkbox"/> Photographic Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual Inspection (Initial Site Visit)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Geophysical Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Rectified Photography	

Monument Types/Significant Finds & Their Periods

List feature types using the [NMR Monument Type Thesaurus](#) and significant finds using the [MDA Object type Thesaurus](#) together with their respective periods. If no features/finds were found, please state "none".

Monument	Period	Object	Period
DITCH	Roman 43 to 410	POTTERY	Late Prehistoric -4k to 43
DITCH	Late Prehistoric -4k to 43	POTTERY	Roman 43 to 410
POND	Late Prehistoric -4k to 43	METAL	Roman 43 to 410

Project Location

County	cambridgeshire	Site Address (including postcode if possible)
District	Fenland	Estover Road March Cambridgeshire PE15 8SF
Parish	MArch	
HER	Cambridgeshire	
Study Area	4.4 hectare	National Grid Reference TL 4297 9846

Project Originators

Organisation	OA EAST
Project Brief Originator	Kasia Gdaniec (CCC)
Project Design Originator	Stephen Macaulay (OA East)
Project Manager	Stephen Macaulay (OA East)
Supervisor	Helen Stocks-Morgan (OA East)

Project Archives

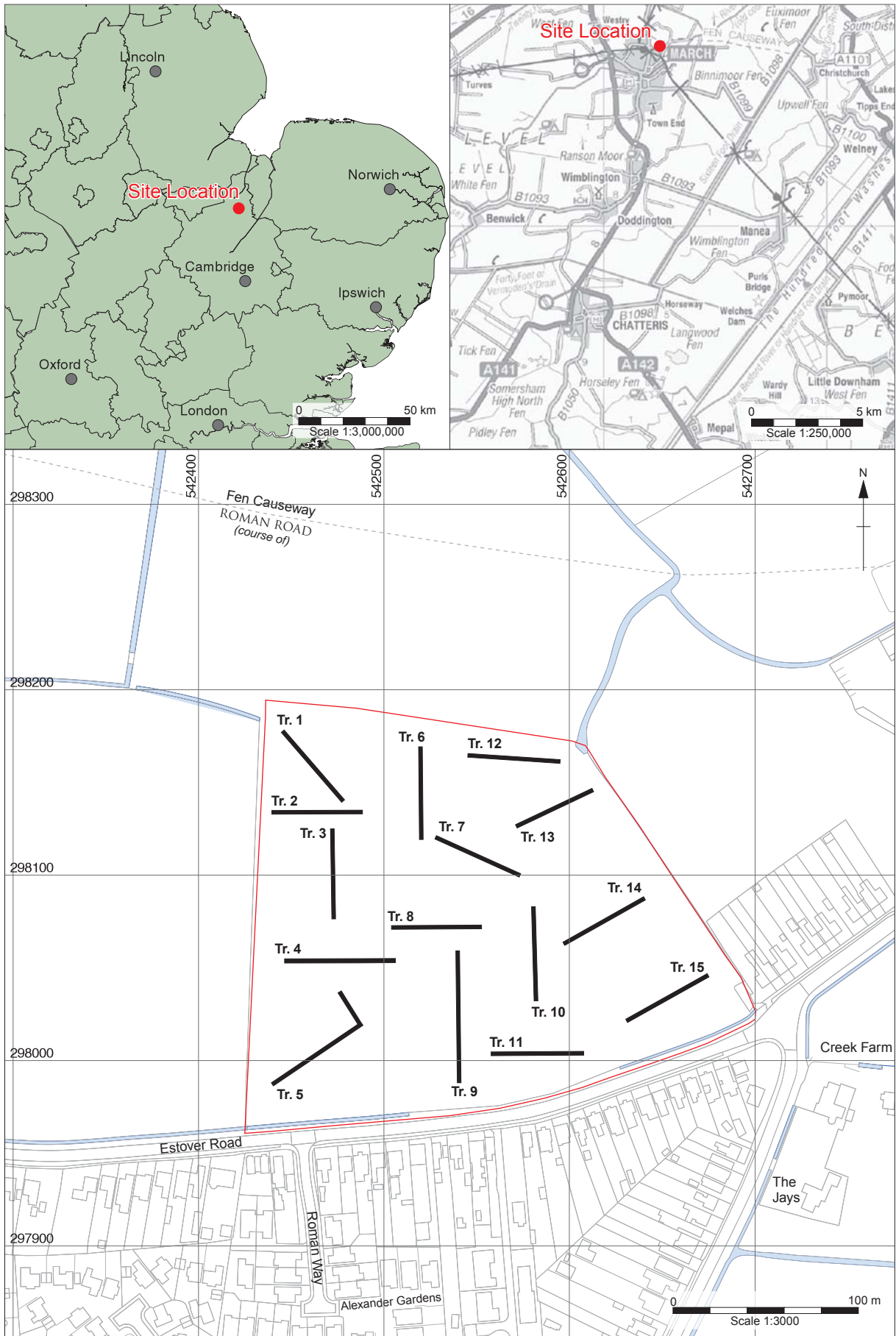
Physical Archive	Digital Archive	Paper Archive
Cambridgeshire County Council	OA EAST	Cambridgeshire County Council
MAREST 14	MAREST 14	MAREST 14

Archive Contents/Media

	Physical Contents	Digital Contents	Paper Contents
Animal Bones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Glass	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Human Bones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Digital Media	Paper Media
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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Geophysics	<input type="checkbox"/> Correspondence
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Images	<input type="checkbox"/> Diary
<input type="checkbox"/> Illustrations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Drawing
<input type="checkbox"/> Moving Image	<input type="checkbox"/> Manuscript
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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Matrices
<input type="checkbox"/> Text	<input type="checkbox"/> Microfilm
<input type="checkbox"/> Virtual Reality	<input type="checkbox"/> Misc.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Research/Notes
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Photos
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plans
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Report
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sections
	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey

Notes:



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

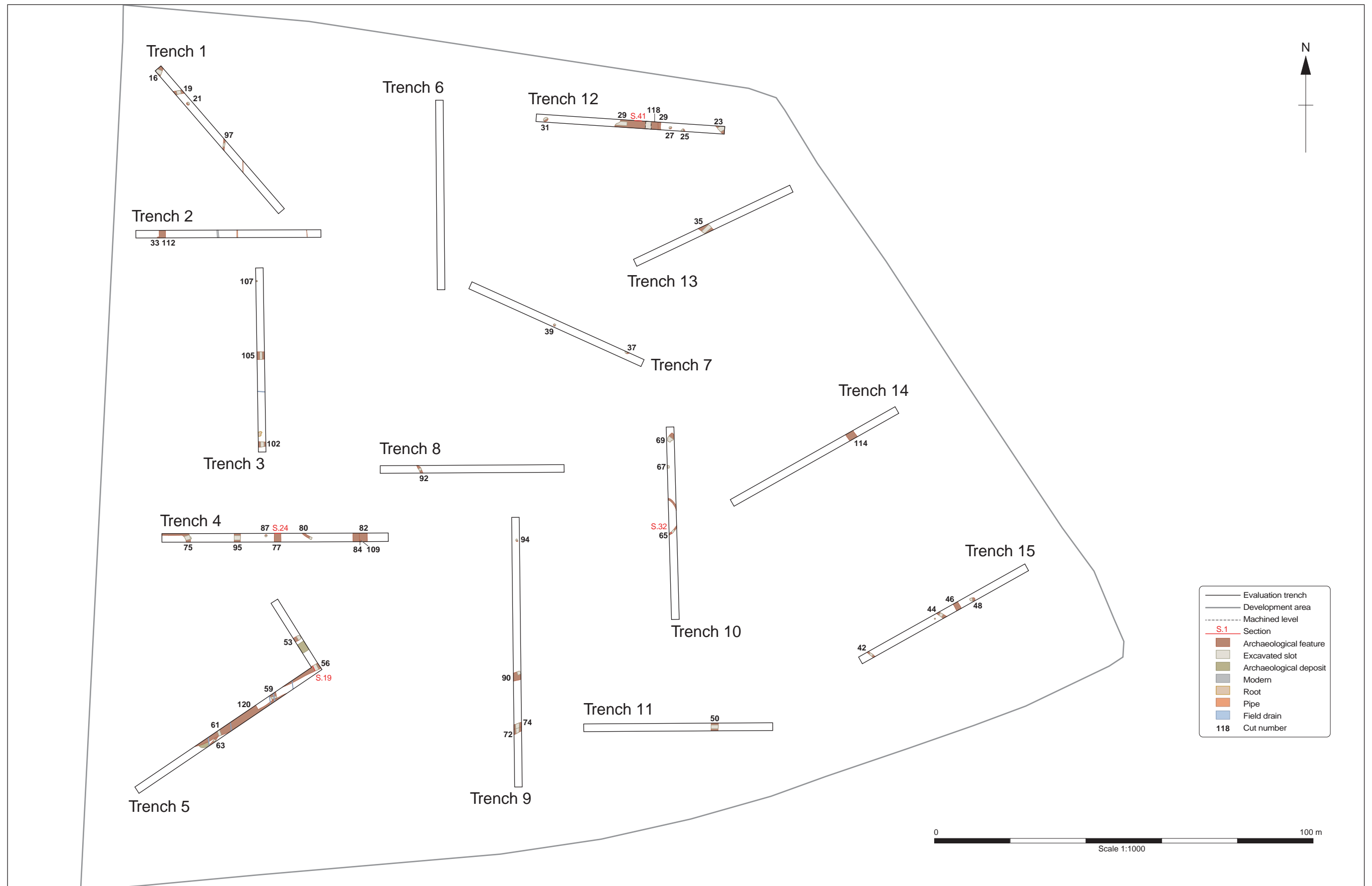


Figure 2: Trench location plan



Figure 3: Trenches overlain on aerial photo survey

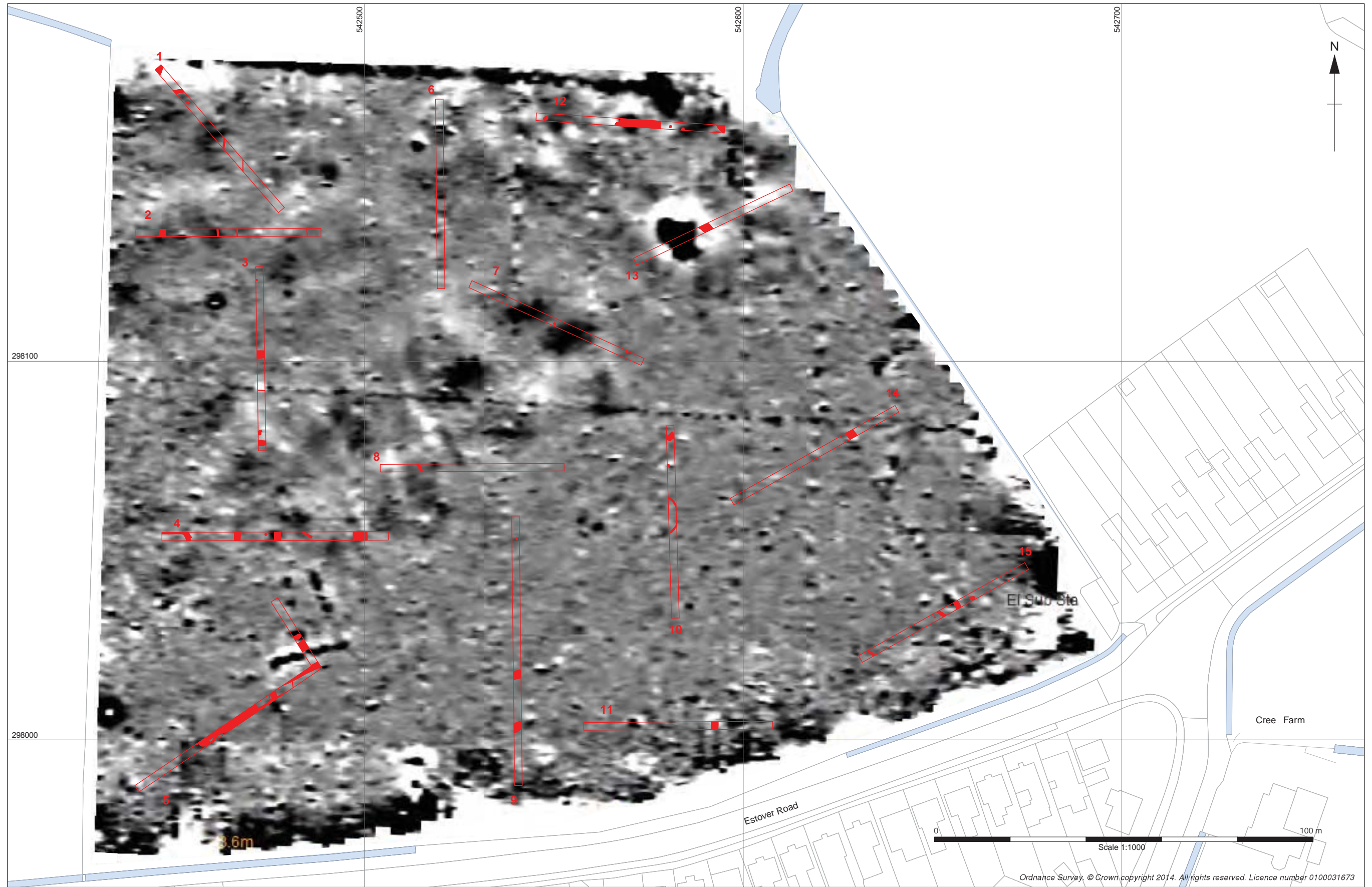


Figure 4: Trenches overlain on geophysics plot

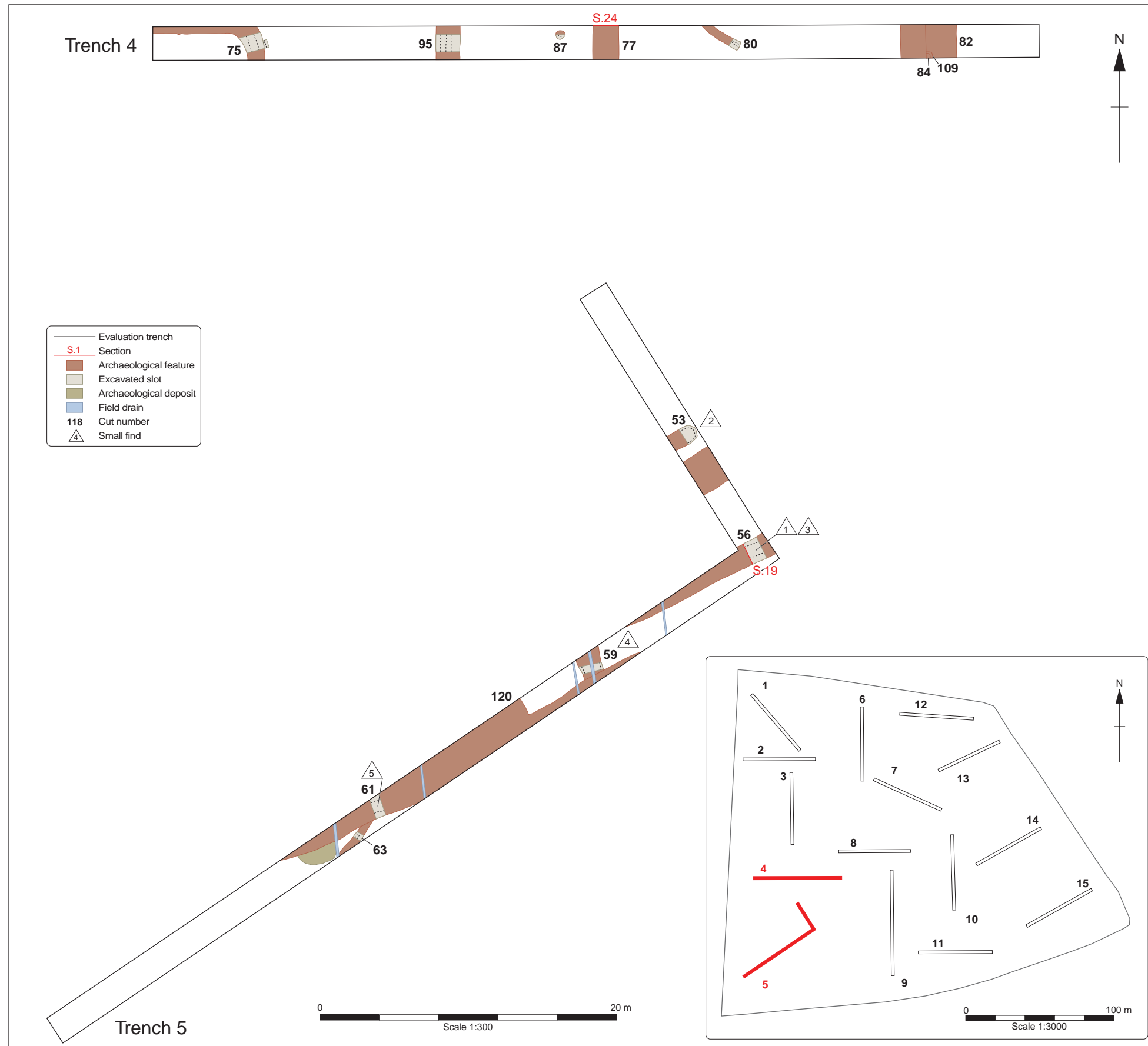


Figure 5: Close up plan of trenches 4 and 5

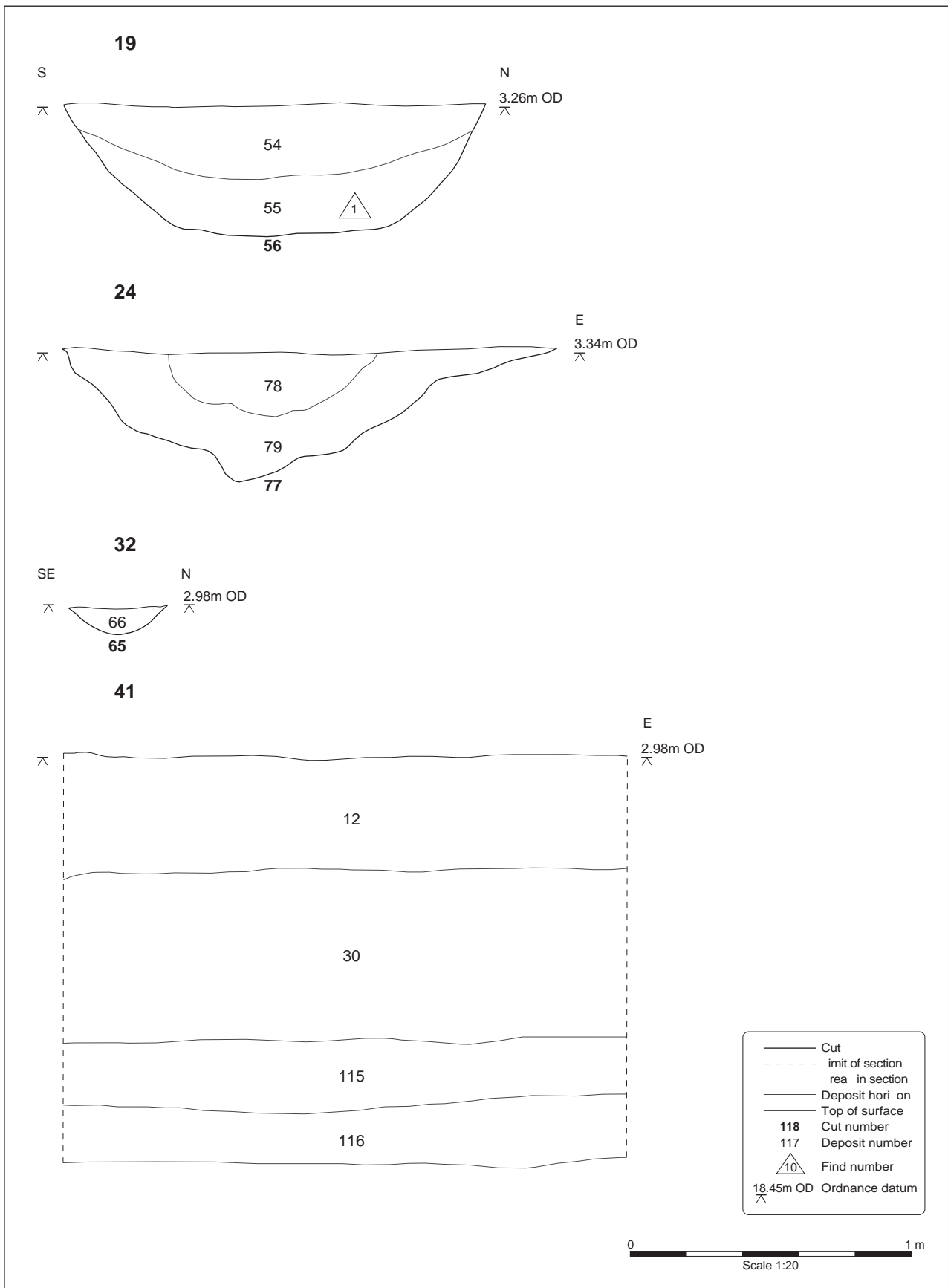


Figure 6: Selected sections



Plate 1: Pit 53



Plate 2: Pit 90



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