

Land East of Randalls Farm, Barway Soham



Archaeological Evaluation Report



November 2015

Client: Mr P. Randall

OA East Report No: 1854

OASIS No: oxfordar3-226905

NGR: TL 5473 7580

Land East of Randalls Farm, Barway, Soham

Archaeological Evaluation

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Report Date: November 2015

Report Number: 1854
Site Name: Land East of Randalls Farm, Barway, Soham
HER Event No: ECB 4568
Date of Works: October 2015
Client Name: Mr P. Randall
Client Ref: -
Planning Ref: 15/00032/OUT
Grid Ref: TL 5473 7580
Site Code: SOHBAR15
Finance Code: SOHBAR15
Receiving Body: CCC Stores, Deepstore
Accession No: -
Prepared by: Kathryn Nicholls
Position: Supervisor
Date: November 2015

Checked by: Tom Phillips
Position: Senior Project Manager
Date: November 2015
Signed:



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Summary

On the 13th and 14th of October 2015 Oxford Archaeology East undertook an evaluation at land to the east of Randall's Farm, Barway, Soham (TL 5473 7580). A single trench measuring 40m was excavated across the proposed development area. Two linear ditches with an east-north-east to west-south-west alignment were uncovered although their fills yielded no finds. The ditches do not correlate with any boundaries depicted on historic mapping from the late 19th or 20th centuries and are therefore probably not modern. A correlation with the present day field boundaries means a post-medieval date is possible but without dating evidence this cannot be confirmed. No other features were encountered.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 An archaeological evaluation was conducted on a plot of land to the east of Randall's Farm, Barway, Soham (Fig. 1). A single trench measuring 40m long and 1.8m wide was machine excavated within a plot totalling c. 1800m².
- 1.1.2 This archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Gemma Stewart of Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC; Planning Application 15/00032/OUT), supplemented by a Specification prepared by OA East.
- 1.1.3 The work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed redevelopment area, in accordance with the guidelines set out in *National Planning Policy Framework* (Department for Communities and Local Government March 2012). The results will enable decisions to be made by CCC, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority, with regard to the treatment of any archaeological remains found.
- 1.1.4 The site archive is currently held by OA East and will be deposited with the appropriate county stores in due course.

1.2 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The site is located to the north of Barway Road and to the east of Randall's Farm. The site is 250m north of the Soham Lode and approximately 950m east of the River Great Ouse. The site sits at approximately 4.9m OD.
- 1.2.2 The underlying geology comprises Ampthill Clay formation with no superficial deposits recorded (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

Prehistoric

- 1.3.1 A number of prehistoric findspots have been recorded in the area. Two Bronze Age thumbnail scrapers have been recovered from near to the western boundary of the site (CHER 07016), palaeolithic flints were recovered 600m to the north of the site (CHER 01785) and a Neolithic end scraper was found 1km to the south (CHER 02092). Another Neolithic end scraper was recorded 500m to the south east (CHER 02100) and Neolithic flints were recovered 600m to the south west (CHER 07696).
- 1.3.2 A Neolithic greenstone axe hammer was recovered 600m to the south west at New Fordey Farm (CHER 07010), whilst a polished greenstone axe was also found 800m to the south west of the development area (CHER 08380).
- 1.3.3 Approximately 1km to the west evidence for a Bronze Age timber Causeway has been located along the eastern bank of the River Ouse (CHER 06987). A significant number of Bronze Age metalwork have been recovered from New Fordey Farm to the south west, which may be linked to the causeway. These include an axe, two spearheads, a palstave and a dagger (CHER 06998, 06999, 08308, 07002 and 08306). A Bronze Age knife was also recovered 450m to the south east (CHER 07693).

Romano British

- 1.3.4 At Old Fordey Farm 650m to the south lies a Roman settlement (CHER 07045, DCB 345), which comprises cropmarks of field systems and finds of Roman pottery across the field as well as a coin hoard. A group of Romano-British pottery findspots have been recorded approximately 800m north east of the development area (CHER 07049, 08304 and 08391) along with a group of Roman coins (MCB 16803).

Medieval

- 1.3.5 Saint Nicholas Church is located 180m to the west and dates to the 14th century (DCB 912). A late medieval bronze ring was found 700m to the south west (CHER 07045b).

Post-medieval

- 1.3.6 A post-medieval wind pump/windmill, labelled as 'Thetford Score Mill or Harrimeer Mill' was located directly to the west of the site (CHER 06976).

1.4 Acknowledgements

- 1.4.1 The author would like to thank the client, Mr Randall, for commissioning the work and Adam Tuck of PlanSurv for organising the fieldwork on behalf of the client. Andy Thomas of Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team monitored the fieldwork. Thanks also to Tom Phillips and Matt Brudenell for managing the project.

2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 The objective of this evaluation was to determine as far as reasonably possible the presence/absence, location, nature, extent, date, quality, condition and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits within the development area.

2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 The Brief required that a single evaluation trench be excavated across the proposed development area to obtain a 4% sample of the site; this resulted in a trench measuring 40m in length.
- 2.2.2 Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a wheeled JCB-type excavator using a 1.8m wide toothless ditching bucket.
- 2.2.3 The site survey was carried out by Dave Brown using a Leica GS08 GPS system.
- 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 A single environmental sample was taken from the fill of ditch **5** in order to assess the quality of preservation of plant remains.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Trench 1

- 3.1.1 A single trench was excavated, measuring 40m in length with a north-west to south-east alignment (Fig. 2). Two ditches were uncovered, both of which had an east-north-east to west-south-west alignment. Ditch **4** was located in the centre of the trench and was the larger of the two ditches. It measured 1.1m wide and 0.3m deep, with steep sides and a concave base. Its fill (5) comprised a light brownish grey silty clay and contained no finds (Plate 1).
- 3.1.2 Ditch **6** was located to the south-east of ditch 4 and measured 0.65m wide and 0.18m deep, with steep sides and a concave base. Its fill (7) was similar to that in ditch **4** and contained no finds. A buried soil (8) was visible in section at the south east end of the trench. It measured 0.1m thick and comprised a mid grey brown silty clay (Plate 2). This was overlain by a mid brown grey silty clay subsoil which varied in depth between 0.1m and 0.35m thick. It was sealed by a dark greyish brown clayey silt topsoil.

3.2 Environmental Summary

- 3.2.1 An environmental sample was taken from the fill of ditch **4** (5), this sample contained no evidence for plant remains or artefacts.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Discussion and Conclusion

- 4.1.1 The two ditches uncovered during the evaluation (**4** and **6**) were undated and had an east-north-east to west-south-west alignment, making them perpendicular to the field boundary to the west and roughly parallel with the road. Historic Ordnance Survey maps of the site from the First Edition of 1887 through to the present day show no evidence of field boundaries in the location of the ditches (<http://www.oldmapsonline.org/>). This evidence, coupled with a lack of any modern dating material, suggests the ditches may at least pre-date the mid 19th century. The correlation with the modern field layout means a post-medieval date is possible but without dating evidence this cannot be confirmed.

APPENDIX A. TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1						
General description					Orientation	NW-SE
Trench contained two ditches overlain by a topsoil and subsoil. A clay natural was observed					Avg. depth (m)	0.55
					Width (m)	1.8
					Length (m)	38
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1	Layer	-	0.27	Topsoil	-	-
2	Layer	-	0.1-0.35	Subsoil	-	-
3	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
4	Cut	1.1	0.3	Cut of Ditch	-	-
5	Fill	1.1	0.3	Fill of Ditch 4	-	-
6	Cut	0.65	0.18	Cut of Ditch	-	-
7	Fill	0.65	0.18	Fill of Ditch 6	-	-
8	Layer	-	0.1	Buried soil	-	-

APPENDIX B. ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS

B.1 Environmental samples

By Rachel Fosberry

Introduction

- B.1.1 A single bulk sample was taken from the single fill (5) of undated ditch **4** during the evaluation in order to assess the quality of preservation of plant remains and their potential to provide useful data as part of further archaeological investigations.

Methodology

- B.1.1 Ten litres of the 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) was collected in a 0.25mm nylon mesh and the residue was washed through 10mm, 5mm, 2mm and a 0.5mm sieve. Both flot and residue were allowed to air dry. A magnet was dragged through each residue fraction prior to sorting for artefacts. The dried flot was subsequently sorted using a binocular microscope at magnifications up to x 60.

Results

- B.1.2 The sample was devoid of both plant remains and artefacts.

APPENDIX C. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Phillips, T. 2015, Written Scheme of Investigation: Archaeological Evaluation Land to the east of Randall's Farm, Barway Road, Barway

Online Resources

Geology of Britain: <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> (Accessed 14/10/15)

Heritage Gateway: <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/> (Accessed 14/10/15)

Old Maps: <http://www.oldmapsonline.org/> (Accessed 20/10/15)

APPENDIX D. OASIS REPORT FORM

Project Details

OASIS Number	oxfordar3-226905		
Project Name	Land East of Randall's Farm, Barway, Soham		
Project Dates (fieldwork) Start	13-10-2015	Finish	14-10-2015
Previous Work (by OA East)	No	Future Work	No

Project Reference Codes

Site Code	SOHBAR15	Planning App. No.	15/00032/OUT
HER No.	ECB 4568	Related HER/OASIS No.	

Type of Project/Techniques Used

Prompt	Select Prompt (this should be in your brief/spec)...
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 type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photography - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Gravity-Core	<input type="checkbox"/> Sample Trenches
<input type="checkbox"/> Annotated Sketch	<input type="checkbox"/> Laser Scanning	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey/Recording Of Fabric/Structure
<input type="checkbox"/> Augering	<input type="checkbox"/> Measured Survey	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Targeted Trenches
<input type="checkbox"/> Dendrochronological Survey	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Environmental Sampling	<input type="checkbox"/> Photogrammetric Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Vibro-core
<input type="checkbox"/> Fieldwalking	<input type="checkbox"/> Photographic Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual Inspection (Initial Site Visit)
<input type="checkbox"/> Geophysical Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Rectified Photography	

Monument Types/Significant Finds & Their Periods

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

Monument	Period	Object	Period
Ditch	Uncertain	N/A	Select period...
	Select period...		Select period...
	Select period...		Select period...

Project Location

County	Cambridgeshire	Site Address (including postcode if possible)	
District	East Cambridge	East of Randall's Farm Barway Road Barway	
Parish	Soham		
HER	Cambridge		
Study Area	1800 sq. m	National Grid Reference	TL 5473 7580

Project Originators

Organisation	OA EAST
Project Brief Originator	Gemma Stewart
Project Design Originator	Tom Phillips
Project Manager	Tom Phillips
Supervisor	Kathryn Nicholls

Project Archives

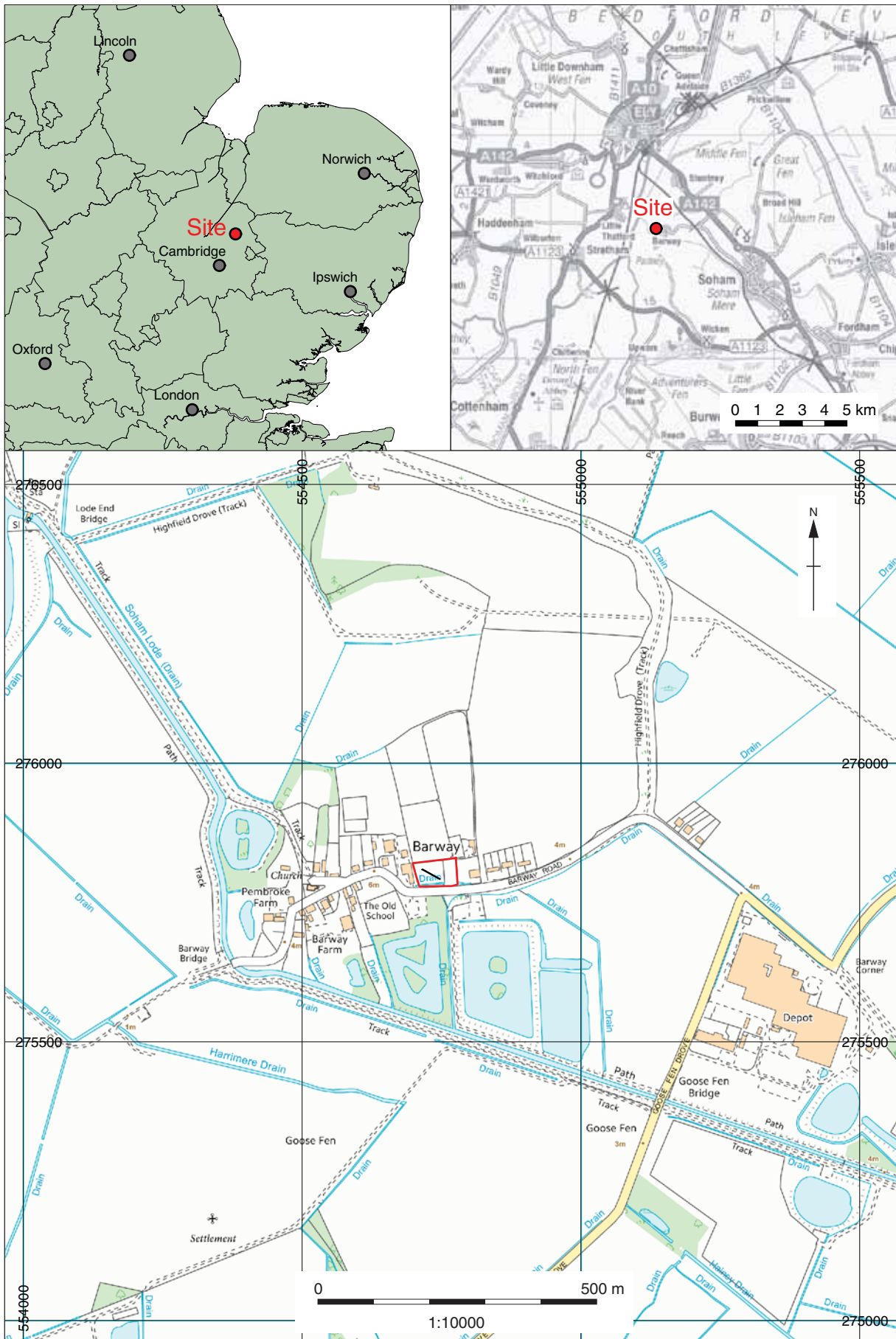
Physical Archive	Digital Archive	Paper Archive
CCC	OA East	CCC
SOHBAR15	SOHBAR15	SOHBAR15

Archive Contents/Media

	Physical Contents	Digital Contents	Paper Contents
Animal Bones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Glass	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Human Bones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leather	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Metal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stratigraphic		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Survey		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Textiles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worked Bone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worked Stone/Lithic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Digital Media	Paper Media
<input type="checkbox"/> Database	<input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photos
<input type="checkbox"/> GIS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Context Sheet
<input type="checkbox"/> Geophysics	<input type="checkbox"/> Correspondence
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Images	<input type="checkbox"/> Diary
<input type="checkbox"/> Illustrations	<input type="checkbox"/> Drawing
<input type="checkbox"/> Moving Image	<input type="checkbox"/> Manuscript
<input type="checkbox"/> Spreadsheets	<input type="checkbox"/> Map
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Matrices
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Text	<input type="checkbox"/> Microfilm
<input type="checkbox"/> Virtual Reality	<input type="checkbox"/> Misc.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Research/Notes
	<input 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 archaeological trenches (black) in development area (red)

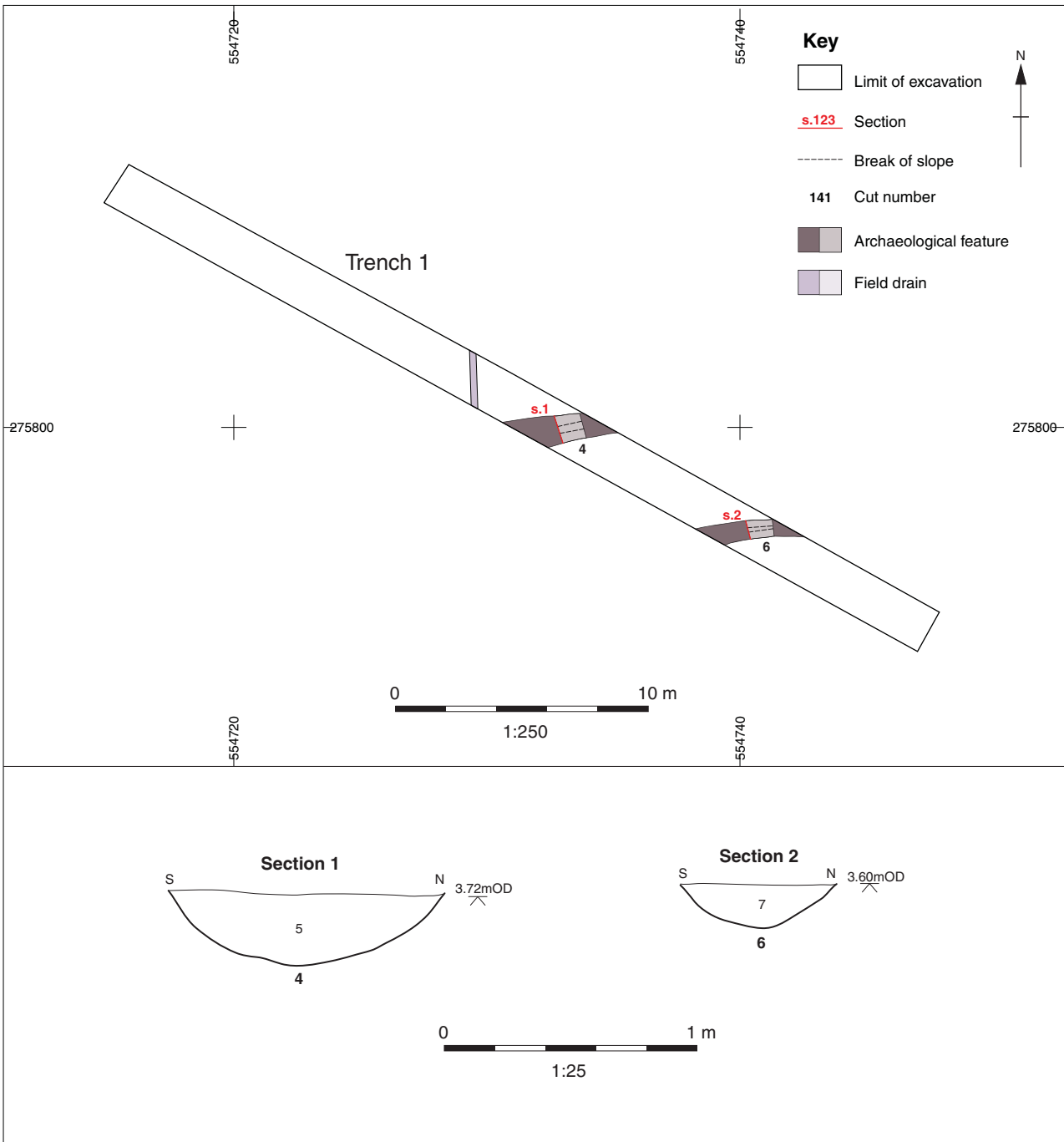


Figure 2: Plan of evaluation trench and associated sections



Plate 1: Ditch 4, looking east



Plate 2: Trench section showing buried soil (8), subsoil (2) and topsoil (1)



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