



Land off Long Street Road, Hanslope, Milton Keynes

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Summary

Oxford Archaeology undertook a six-trench archaeological evaluation of a 0.58ha development on the north-east side of Long Street Road, Hanslope, Milton Keynes, from 11th to 12th October 2016.

The site lies adjacent to the medieval Long Street Road, between Halfway Houses and Stocking Green, a medieval 'end' of Hanslope. The evaluation was primarily concerned with identifying any evidence relating to the early development of the village, in particular whether this roadside plot was ever occupied by dwellings.

No significant archaeological activity was identified and no artefacts were recovered during the trenching.



1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project details

1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of Mulberry Developments to undertake a six-trench evaluation on the site of a residential development of 12 dwellings, on the north-western edge of Hanslope, Milton Keynes (Fig. 1).

1.1.2 The work was undertaken in response to Condition 18 of the planning permission (Planning Application No.14/02817/OUT; Appeal Ref: APP/Y0435/W/158/3133940):

Condition 18: No development shall take place within the site until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Two copies of the written scheme of investigation must be submitted.

1.1.3 CgMs Consulting prepared a written scheme of investigation for the trenching (CgMs 2016). All work was undertaken in accordance with relevant national and local planning policies (NPPF 2012) and with Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) standards and guidance (CIfA 2014).

1.2 Geology and topography

1.2.1 The site is a single level field, undulating between 114m and 115m AOD. It lies adjacent to Long Street Road, and is bounded along its north-west, south-west and south-east sides by mature hedgerows. The north-eastern limit is open and adjoins arable farmland. The application site is currently used for pasture.

1.2.2 The bedrock geology comprises Mudstone belonging to the Blisworth Clay Formation throughout the site. The solid geology is overlain by Diamicton (Boulder Clay) deposits from the Oadby Member Formation, defined as 'grey, weathering brown, characterised by Cretaceous and Jurassic rock fragments; subordinate lenses of sand and gravel, clay and silt. Clay, brown to grey, and silty clay, with chalk and flint fragments' (BGS nd).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

Introduction

1.3.1 The archaeological background was presented in the written scheme of investigation (CgMs 2016) which is the basis for the following background section.

Prehistoric and Roman evidence

1.3.2 No direct evidence for prehistoric or Roman activity has been identified within or immediately adjacent to the application site. However, aerial photographs taken during June 2011 have revealed a number of cropmarks to the south-east of the village (NMR 1586359). These comprised several enclosures linked by a linear feature. Although undated, their morphology is indicative of a possible prehistoric settlement.

1.3.3 Finds of Roman pottery, tesserae, roof tile and flue tile suggest the presence of a Roman building c 1km to the north-east of the site (NMR 1170672). There is also a second record of Roman-period material c 1.2km to the east.

1.3.4 Prehistoric and Roman-period artefacts have also been recovered from the area of Castle Thorpe.



Medieval evidence

- 1.3.5 Early documentary evidence refers to a pre-conquest settlement in the area, which mentions Aldene, King Edward's housecarl who held and could sell Hanslope. By 1086, the village was referred to as Hammescle in the Domesday book, and was held by Winemar of Flanders. At this time, a total of 55 households were recorded, and the village was assessed at 10 geld units and therefore relatively large.
- 1.3.6 Until the 13th century the population of the parish was probably dispersed between several small hamlets. In the mid-13th century the lord of the manor, William Maudit, relocated the parish church from Castlethorpe to Hanslope. This may have acted as a catalyst for further development of the settlement, eventually including establishment of a market in 1293, although the settlement never fully developed into an urban centre. The settlement plan was originally focused around a large rectangular green or common (Green 2011). Excavations in the area of Stocking Green have recorded evidence for 12th- and 13th- century walls, floors, and boundaries (NMR 1171072).
- 1.3.7 The Milton Keynes Council (MKC) Senior Archaeological Officer commented on the planning application that:

“the site lies adjacent to the medieval Long Street Road and close to Stocking Green, a medieval 'end' of the village. As such it may contain buried archaeology relating to the early development of the village.”

Post-medieval evidence

- 1.3.8 An examination of the historic maps, demonstrates that from 1881 (1st ed. Ordnance Survey), the application site was open farmland, located between Stocking Green and Halfway Houses. Although there has been some residential development to the south-east, along the frontage of Long Street Road, the site itself has remain undeveloped.

1.4 Acknowledgements

- 1.4.1 Oxford Archaeology was appointed to undertake the evaluation by CgMs Consulting on behalf of Mulberry Developments. Nick Crank, Senior Archaeological Officer of MKC, monitored the work. The fieldwork was conducted by Mark Dodd, assisted by Diana Chard and Javier Martinez. The report was written by Mark Dodd. The project was managed for Oxford Archaeology by Stuart Foreman.



2 EVALUATION AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

General

2.1.1 The aim of the evaluation trenching was to determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any archaeological remains within identified areas of archaeological potential.

Specific

2.1.2 The specific aims were to:

- assess the artefactual and environmental potential of the archaeological deposits encountered;
- inform formulation of further measures to mitigate impacts of the proposed development on surviving archaeological remains;
- consider the site within its local, regional, and national context as appropriate;
- deposit the site archive with an appropriate museum, if appropriate;
- provide information for the local HER to ensure the long-term survival of the excavated data.

2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 The trenching programme comprised six trenches, each 25m x 2m in plan, as shown on Figure 2, representing c 5.5% of the site area. Prior to excavation, each trench was located and marked by an OA surveyor using GPS equipment. The locations of the trenches were altered from those indicated in the WSI, with the approval MKC, following identification of a public footpath which traverses the site from north to south. The trenches were numbered in a continuous sequence from 1 to 6.

2.2.2 Plough-disturbed soil horizons were removed by mechanical excavator fitted with a wide toothless bucket to expose archaeologically significant horizons or the surface of the superficial geology, whichever was encountered first. Once archaeological deposits, or those with the potential to contain artefacts were exposed, further excavation proceeded by hand. All features and deposits were issued with unique context numbers derived from the trench number (e.g. Trench 5, context 501, 502 etc). The excavation and recording of archaeological features was undertaken as outlined within the WSI following established OA practices in line with ClfA and MKC standards.

2.2.3 Once the trenches had been excavated and recorded, approval was sought from MKC prior to the backfilling of the trenches.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction and presentation of results

3.1.1 The results of the evaluation and a stratigraphic description of the archaeological remains are presented below. The full details of all trenches with the dimensions and depths of all deposits form the content of Appendix A.

3.2 General soils and ground conditions

3.2.1 The investigations were undertaken in dry ground and weather conditions conducive to archaeological visibility. Although the underlying natural geology comprised clay soils with flint and chalk inclusions, no waterlogging or flooding was encountered.

3.2.2 The soil sequence was consistent throughout the site, comprising topsoil up to 0.2m thick, overlain by a ploughsoil approximately 0.3m thick. There were no colluvial or alluvial accumulations and there was no evidence for ridge-and-furrow, the characteristic traces of medieval and post-medieval open field cultivation.

3.3 General distribution of archaeological deposits

3.3.1 Six trenches were excavated, distributed evenly throughout the application site. One pit was recorded in Trench 1, but otherwise no other archaeological features or artefacts were identified.

3.3.2 Trenches 2-6 contained no features and are described only in Appendix A.

Trench 1 (Fig. 3, Plates 1 and 2)

3.3.3 A sub-circular pit (103) was found c 3.5m from the north-western end of Trench 1. It was only partially exposed at the edge of the excavated area, but was at least 0.4m in diameter. Excavation showed that it had steep sides and a flat base, 0.18m deep. Within the feature was a single deposit of dark grey clay. The nature of the deposit indicated possible organic origins, but no artefacts were recovered from the feature.

4 DISCUSSION

4.1 Evaluation objectives and results

4.1.1 The paucity of archaeological features and artefacts suggests that the application site has very low potential for significant archaeological discoveries of any period. The only possible feature (pit 103 in Trench 1) contained no artefacts and is of unknown date and function.

4.1.2 It appears that this roadside plot, located on the north side of Long Street Road, between Halfway Houses and Stocking Green, was not occupied by dwellings in the medieval or post-medieval periods. The absence of ridge-and-furrow suggests that the land may have been under permanent pasture during these periods.



APPENDIX A. TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1						
General description					Orientation	NW-SE
This trench contained a possible feature at the north-west end of the trench. The soil sequence consisted of ploughsoil (100), overlying subsoil (101), which overlay pit 103, which cut the natural geology (102).					Avg. depth (m)	0.3
					Width (m)	2
					Length (m)	25
Contexts						
Context no	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Comment	Finds	Date
100	Layer	-	0.2	Topsoil: dark greyish brown silty clay	-	-
101	Layer	-	0.1	Subsoil: mid orangey grey clay	-	-
102	Layer	-	-	Natural: light yellow brown clay with flint, and chalk flecks	-	-
103	Cut	0.4	0.18	Possible pit	-	-
104	Fill	0.4	0.18	Fill of 103: dark grey clay	-	-

Trench 2						
General description					Orientation	N-S
This trench contained no archaeology. The soil sequence consisted of ploughsoil (200), overlying subsoil 201, overlying natural geology (202).					Avg. depth (m)	0.4
					Width (m)	2
					Length (m)	25
Contexts						
Context no	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Comment	Finds	Date
200	Layer	-	0.30	Topsoil: dark greyish brown silty clay	-	-
201	Layer	-	0.1	Subsoil: mid orangey grey clay	-	-
202	Layer	-	-	Natural geology: light yellow brown clay with flint, and chalk flecks	-	-

Trench 3						
General description					Orientation	NW-SE
This trench contained no archaeology. The soil sequence consisted of ploughsoil (300), overlying subsoil (301), overlying natural geology (302).					Avg. depth (m)	0.5
					Width (m)	2
					Length (m)	25
Contexts						



Trench 3						
Context no	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Comment	Finds	Date
300	Layer	-	0.3	Topsoil: dark greyish brown silty clay	-	-
301	Layer	-	0.2	Subsoil: mid orangey grey clay	-	-
302	Layer	-	-	Natural geology: light yellow brown clay with flint, and chalk flecks	-	-

Trench 4						
General description				Orientation	NE-SW	
This trench contained no archaeology. The soil sequence consisted of ploughsoil (400), overlying subsoil (401), overlying natural geology (402).				Avg. depth (m)	0.42	
				Width (m)	2	
				Length (m)	25	
Contexts						
Context no	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Comment	Finds	Date
400	Layer	-	0.32	Topsoil: dark greyish brown silty clay	-	-
401	Layer	-	0.1	Subsoil: mid orangey grey clay	-	-
402	Layer	-	-	Natural geology: light yellow brown clay with flint, and chalk flecks	-	-

Trench 5						
General description				Orientation	NW-SE	
This trench contained no archaeology. The soil sequence consisted of ploughsoil (500), overlying subsoil (501), onto natural geology (502).				Avg. depth (m)	0.41	
				Width (m)	2	
				Length (m)	25	
Contexts						
Context no	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Comment	Finds	Date
500	Layer	-	0.23	Topsoil: dark greyish brown silty clay	-	-
501	Layer	-	0.18	Subsoil: mid orangey grey clay	-	-
502	Layer	-	-	Natural geology: light yellow brown clay with flint, and chalk flecks	-	-



Trench 6						
General description				Orientation	NE-SW	
This trench contained no archaeology. The soil sequence consisted of ploughsoil (600) overlying subsoil (601), which overlay natural geology (602).				Avg. depth (m)	0.43	
				Width (m)	2	
				Length (m)	25	
Contexts						
Context no	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Comment	Finds	Date
600	Layer	-	0.28	Topsoil: dark greyish brown silty clay	-	-
601	Layer	-	0.15	Subsoil: mid orangey grey clay	-	-
602	Layer	-	-	Natural geology: light yellow brown clay with flint, and chalk flecks	-	-



APPENDIX B. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

BGS, nd Geology of Britain viewer. British Geological Survey
<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>

CIfA 2014 Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation. Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

NPPF, 2012 The National Planning Policy Framework, Department for Communities and Local Government

CgMs 2016 Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation (Trial Trenching), Land Off Long Street Road, Hanslope Milton Keynes. CgMs Consulting. Issued June 2016, revised July 2016.

Green, D, 2011 Hanslope, Buckinghamshire historic towns assessment report. Buckinghamshire County Council



APPENDIX C. SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: Land off Long Street Road, Hanslope, Milton Keynes

Site code: HALS16

Grid reference: SU 5990 8800

Type: Evaluation

Date and duration: 11th to 12th October 2016

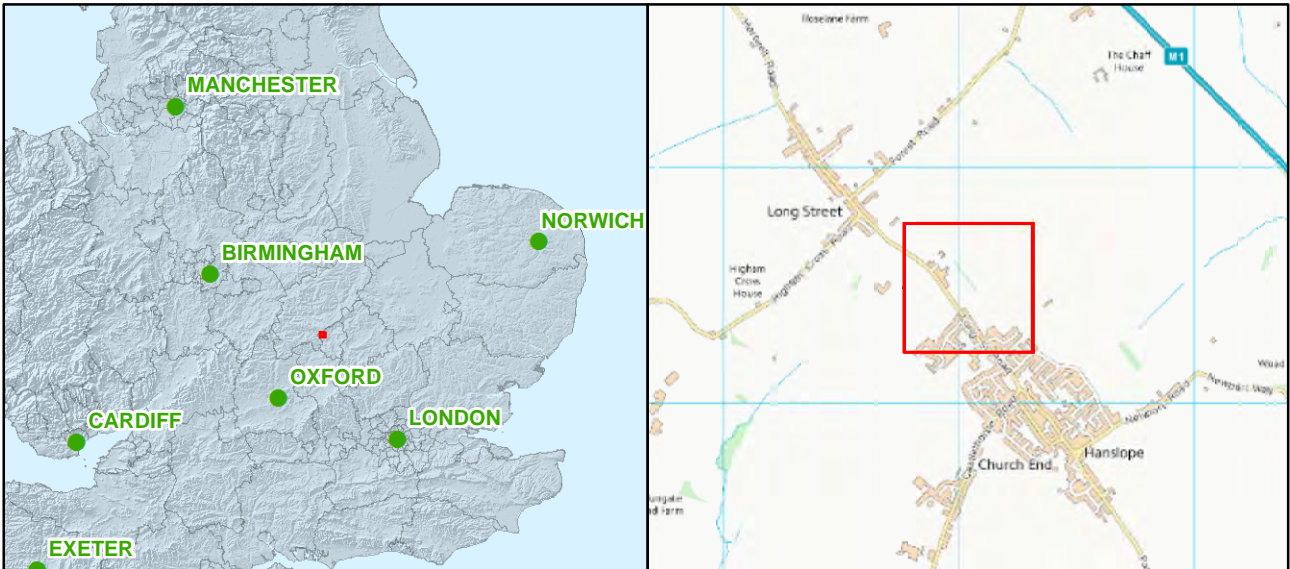
Area of site: 0.58ha

Summary of results: Oxford Archaeology undertook an archaeological evaluation on the north-east side of Long Street Road, Hanslope, Milton Keynes. Six trenches were excavated, each 25m long and 2m wide.

The site lies adjacent to the medieval Long Street Road, between Half-way Houses and Stocking Green, a medieval 'end' of Hanslope village. The evaluation was primarily concerned with identifying any evidence relating to the early development of the village, in particular whether this roadside plot was ever occupied by dwellings.

No significant archaeological features were identified, and no artefacts were recovered during the trenching.

Location of archive: The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with the Buckinghamshire County Museum in due course.



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Contains OS data © Crown Copyright and database right 2016
 Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA,

Figure 1: Site location

0 200 m

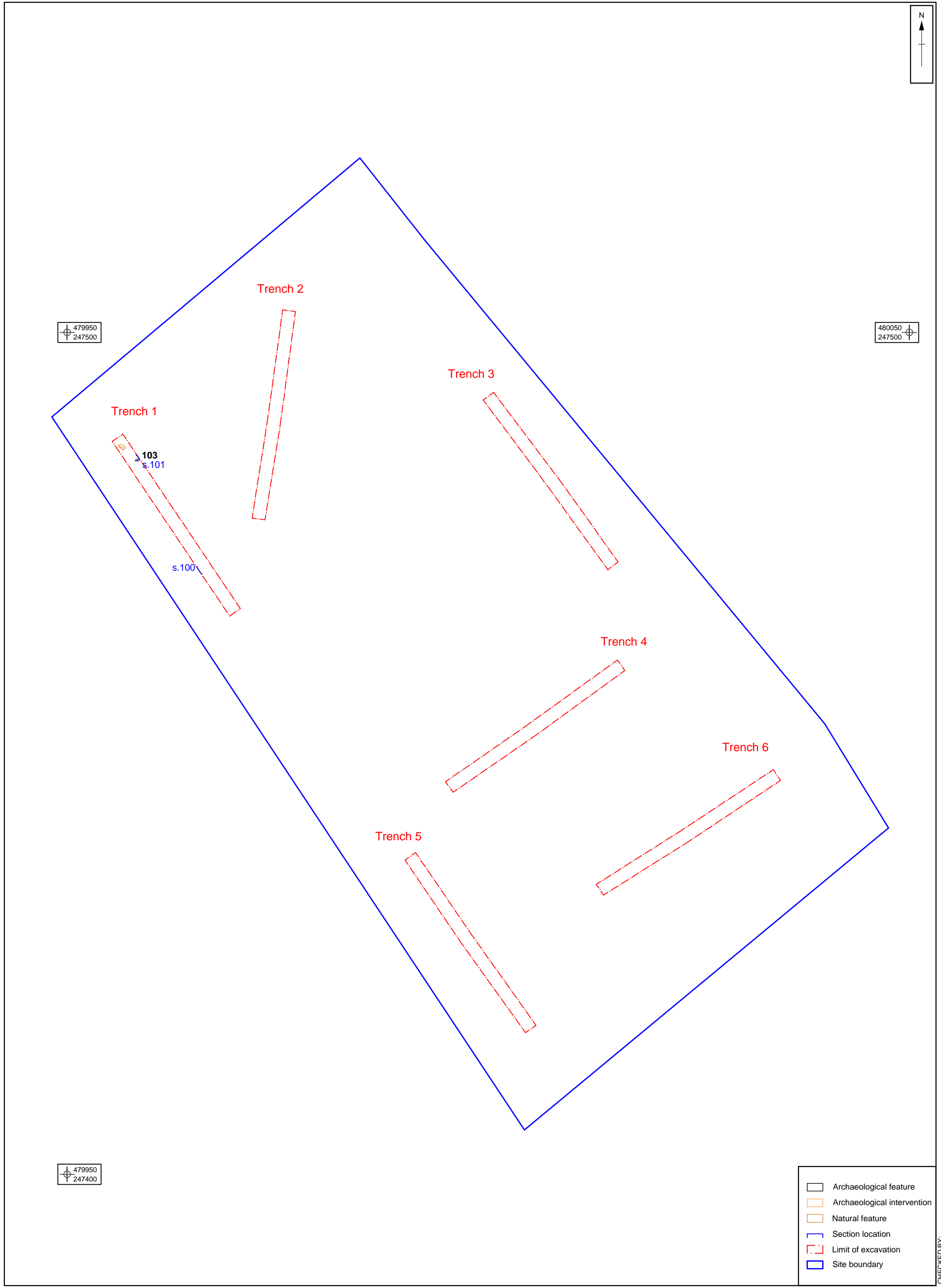


Figure 2: Trench location plan

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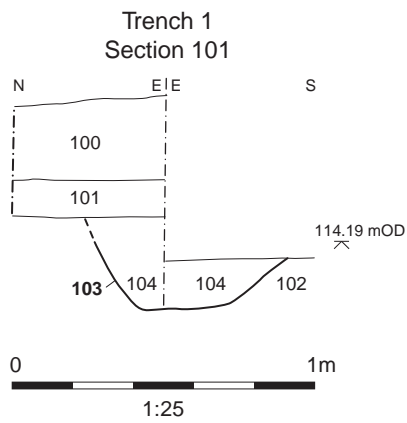


Figure 3: Section 101, pit 103



Plate 1: Section 101, pit [103]



Plate 2: Trench 1



Plate 3: Trench 2



Plate 4: Trench 3



Plate 5: Trench 4



Plate 6: Trench 5



Plate 7: Trench 6



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