

Medieval Remains on Land West of Church Road Brandon, Suffolk



Archaeological Evaluation Report



January 2017

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Medieval Remains on Land West of Church Road, Brandon, Suffolk

Archaeological Evaluation

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Summary

Oxford Archaeology East undertook an archaeological evaluation between the 12th and 15th of December 2016 on land west of Church Road, Brandon, Suffolk (centred TL 7754 8626). A total of seven 25m long trenches were excavated in an area immediately north of a site previously evaluated in 2013 by Oxford Archaeology East (BRD 227). Here, ditches and settlement-related features dating to the Late Saxon and medieval periods were investigated.

A total of 31 ditches were identified in the trenches. Four ditch alignments were recorded, many of which are the continuation of boundaries previously uncovered in the evaluation to the south. Two of the ditch alignments (west north-west to east south-east and north north-east to south south-west) were present across all of the trenches; these are likely to date to the medieval period. Towards the eastern end of the site, a small number of ditches on east north-east to west south-west alignments were revealed. Ditches on this alignment were also recorded in the south-west part of the area investigated during the 2013 evaluation. North to south aligned ditches were also noted in three of the trenches. These represent a continuation of the late medieval rectilinear field system identified to the south.

A small number of pits were uncovered across the site. Environmental sampling of these features produced charred remains of cereal grains, typical of the medieval period. Overall, very few finds were recovered from features. Bone was poorly preserved in the sandy soils, and only six sherds of pottery, dating both to the Roman and medieval period, were recovered. This represents a small finds assemblage compared to that from the 2013 evaluation, suggesting that this area was located towards the periphery of the main settlement zone, which lay closer to the roadside to the south.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 An archaeological evaluation was conducted at land west of Church Road, Brandon, Suffolk, centred TL 7754 8626 (Fig. 1).
- 1.1.2 This archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by James Rolfe of Suffolk County Council (SCC; Pre-Planning Application), supplemented by an approved Written Scheme of Investigation 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 SCC, 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 the historic core of Brandon, immediately to the west of the junction between Church Road and the access road to the sewage treatment works. The proposed site covers approximately 0.6ha, and is situated on agricultural land at between 5m and 7m AOD, sloping downwards slightly from east to west. The wider area is mostly level, with a gradual slope to the north towards the Little Ouse River.
- 1.2.2 The superficial geology consists of River Terrace Sand and Gravel deposits on a bedrock of Chalk (Holywell and New Pit formations; British Geological Survey Viewer <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 A full HER search was completed prior to commencing fieldwork. A summary of significant records is given below, these are plotted on Fig. 2. Areas immediately adjacent to the site have been the subject of a geophysical survey followed by evaluation trenching (BRD 227; Stocks-Morgan 2013) and watching briefs (Haskins 2011). In addition, the multi-period site at Staunch Meadow (most significant for its Middle Saxon archaeology) lies approximately 300m to the north-east.

Prehistoric

- 1.3.2 Activity around the Brandon area during the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic periods was primarily concerned with exploiting food resources and raw materials throughout the valley of the Little Ouse. This is attested to by find-spots of Upper Palaeolithic and Mesolithic flint tools that include isolated flint artefacts (largely waste flakes, blades and cores, which were occasionally reworked into tools) and also more concentrated scatters. Noteworthy amongst these are a Late Palaeolithic and/or Mesolithic lithic scatter approximately 350m to the west of the proposed development site (BRD 248), and a Mesolithic scatter found at Staunch Meadow (BRD 018).
- 1.3.3 Neolithic finds are confined to a scatter of Neolithic worked flint at Staunch Meadow as well as isolated finds elsewhere.

1.3.4 Aerial photographs show two circular enclosures immediately to the north of the site (BRD 026 & BRD 027). These were approximately 80m and 90m in diameter, respectively. At present these are undated but it is likely, given their morphology and situation along the valley edge, that they are prehistoric. In addition, a short section of a small curvilinear gully was observed during a watching brief at the sewage treatment works immediately to the north of the proposed development (Haskins 2011). Unfortunately, despite excavation, this produced no datable material.

1.3.5 Artefact scatters dated to the Bronze Age include a collection of small bronze tools (a chisel or leather-working tool and a tracer or awl: BRD 047).

Iron Age and Roman

1.3.6 The earliest confidently dated settlement within the landscape is of Iron Age provenance. Excavations at Staunch Meadow (BRD 018 & BRD 202) exposed enclosure ditches and possibly sections of roundhouse gullies.

1.3.7 Roman activity within Brandon is centred on the site of the modern day parish church, where a tessellated floor was reported to have been uncovered during restoration work (BRD 049), and where scatters of Roman material continue to be found (BRD 175). Further Roman material (such as re-used tiles built into Middle Saxon hearths) was found at Staunch Meadow.

Saxon and Early medieval

1.3.8 Excavations beginning in the 1970s at Staunch Meadow (modern day Remembrance Playing fields) revealed a high-status site (BRD 089) dating to the Middle Saxon period (c 650-850 AD). This comprised the remains of timber buildings, industrial working areas and a cemetery (BRD 018). It is likely to have been one of several dispersed settlements within the local landscape.

1.3.9 It appears that the focus of settlement migrated south-westwards during the Late Saxon period, forming the foundation of the historic core of the village. Little archaeological work has been carried out to establish the nature of this occupation. Several metalwork finds recovered in the vicinity attest to this shift in settlement focus; for instance during monitoring work at the Leisure Centre (BRD 170). The establishment of a church at this time, recorded in Domesday book (AD 1086), is indicative of a prosperous settlement. The exact location of the Saxon church is unknown, although it is likely to have been on the site of the present day church. The establishment of a manor complex (DSF3590), recorded directly west of the church, would also have acted as a focus for settlement.

1.3.10 An evaluation carried out immediately to the south of the site in August 2013 (BRD 227) uncovered multiple phases of medieval ditches indicative of long standing property boundaries, agricultural enclosures and roadside settlement beginning in the Late Saxon period.

Later medieval

1.3.11 The settlement centred on the church went through a period of expansion, eventually onto the main thoroughfare of London Road (BRD 209 & BRD 156) and Brandon became a prosperous market centre at the junction of Breckland and Fenland. Industry was dominated during the medieval period by arable farming and flint-knapping for building material. This expansion is reflected across the region and lowland England in general. An increase in the general prosperity of the population, due to a warmer climate and increased crop yields from the 12th century, continued into the 14th century.

- 1.3.12 During the 14th century there was a retraction of settlement across much of the country, caused by a worsening climate and outbreaks of disease affecting livestock as well as humans. The relatively low frequency of archaeological finds dating to the later medieval around Brandon is probably indicative of this trend.

Post-medieval

- 1.3.13 The post-medieval period is attested by isolated chance finds and metal-detected finds. Two listed buildings within the town (The Old Workhouse and Brandon Hall) have their origins in the later 17th to early 18th century. This small number may be partly accounted for by the serious fire in the town in May 1793. Brandon was also the centre for a gun-flint industry from the 1790s, its rise prompted by the outbreak of the Napoleonic Wars.

1.4 Acknowledgements

- 1.4.1 Oxford Archaeology East would like to thank Brandon Town Council for commissioning the work, particularly Christine Mason. Thanks are also extended to James Rolfe of Suffolk County Council for monitoring the site and for providing advice and guidance. The project was managed by Matt Brudenell. Site work was undertaken by the author with the assistance of Malgorzata Kwiatkowska, site survey was undertaken by Dave Brown.

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 seven trenches measuring 25m in length should be excavated to provide a 5% sample of the proposed site.
- 2.2.2 Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a wheeled 360° type excavator using a toothless ditching bucket measuring 2m wide.
- 2.2.3 The site survey was carried out using a leica GS08 system.
- 2.2.4 Trench footprints, 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 Environmental samples were taken from a number of features across all seven trenches. Pits were targeted but ditches were also sampled.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Archaeological features were recorded in all of the trenches, these comprised 31 ditches and eight pits (Fig. 3). The ditches identified were on a number of alignments and in some cases truncated one another. These features all appeared to date to the medieval period. The natural (252) consisted of a mottled orangey yellow sand. Subsoil (251) varied between 0.18m and 0.4m deep and consisted of a mid orangey brown sandy silt. Overlying this was a layer of topsoil (250) which measured between 0.28m to 0.6m deep and consisted of a dark brown grey sandy silt.

3.1.2 The results are presented below by trench and a full list of trench descriptions and context inventory can be found in Appendix A. Trench numbering follows on from that of the 2013 evaluation (Stocks-Morgan 2013). Detailed plans, sections and representative photographs are also supplied. Cut features are shown in **bold** in the text. Finds and environmental remains are noted in the descriptions where relevant, along with brief summaries at the end of this section. The full specialist reports are included as Appendix B and C.

3.2 Trench 11

3.2.1 Trench 11 was located at the western end of the field on a north-west to south-east alignment. It contained three ditches and two pits, both of which were located at the north-west end of the trench (Plate 1).

Pits

3.2.2 Pit **254** measured 0.52m wide and 0.2m deep with steep sides and a concave base. Its single fill (253) consisted of a dark grey silty sand that contained burnt stone.

3.2.3 Directly to the east was Pit **256** which measured 0.54m wide and 0.2m deep with steep sides and a concave base (Section 66, Fig. 4). Its single fill (255) consisted of a dark grey silty sand that contained one sherd of residual Roman pottery weighing 6g. The environmental sample taken from this fill contained charred rye grains, suggesting this this feature was probably Saxon or later in date.

Ditches

3.2.4 At the south-east end of the trench were two ditches (**313 & 315**). Ditch **313** was aligned north north-east to south south-west and measured 0.85m wide and 0.27m deep with steep sides and a concave base. Its single fill (314) consisted of a light brown grey silty sand that contained no finds. A possible return at the southern end (**315**) was aligned east south-east to west north-west and measured 0.73m wide and 0.19m deep, with steep sides and a concave base. Its single fill (316) consisted of a light brown grey silty sand that contained no finds.

3.2.5 The final ditch identified in Trench 11 cut through the subsoil. Ditch **258** had a north north-east to south south-west alignment and measured 0.84m wide, this ditch was not excavated. Its single fill (257) consisted of a light whitish grey silty sand that contained no finds.

3.3 Trench 12

- 3.3.1 Trench 12 was aligned north-east to south-west and contained a series of ditches and a gully.
- 3.3.2 Ditch **264** was only partially exposed at the north-east end of the trench but appeared to be aligned roughly north-west to south-east. It measured at least 1.7m wide and 0.28m deep with steep sides and a flat base. Its single fill (263) consisted of a mid whitish grey silty sand that contained no finds.
- 3.3.3 Close to the centre line of the trench was Ditch **262**, which lay on the same alignment and measured 1.86m wide and 0.3m deep with gently sloped sides and an irregular base (Plate 2. Section 69, Fig. 4). This ditch continued into Trench 14 as Ditch **326**. Its single fill (261) consisted of a mid brown grey silty sand that contained cattle and large mammal bone. It was truncated by Ditch **331** which had a north to south alignment and measured 0.7m wide and 0.12m deep with gently sloped sides and a concave base. Its single fill (332) consisted of a light to mid brown grey silty sand that contained no finds.
- 3.3.4 At the south-west end of the trench was small gully (**260**) that had an east south-east to west north-west alignment and measured 0.31m wide and 0.07m deep with gentle sides and concave base. Its single fill (259) consisted of a dark grey silty sand that contained no finds.

3.4 Trench 13

- 3.4.1 Trench 13 was aligned north-east to south-west and contained a series of ditches on a variety of alignments.
- 3.4.2 At the north-west end of the trench was Ditch **298**, which was aligned north north-east to south south-west and measured 1.76m wide and 0.22m deep with steep sides and an irregular base (Section 84, Fig. 4). Its single fill (297) consisted of a mid grey brown silty sand that contained no finds.
- 3.4.3 To the south-east was Ditch **296** which had a roughly east south-east to west north-west alignment and measured 0.72m wide and 0.08m deep with gently sloped sides and an irregular base. Its single fill (295) consisted of a mid grey brown silty sand that contained no finds. Ditch **294** lay 2m to the south, on the same alignment, and measured 1m wide and 0.31m deep with steep sides and a concave base (Plate 3). Its single fill (293) consisted of a mid grey silty sand. It was environmentally sampled but contained no preserved remains.
- 3.4.4 Directly to the south-east was Ditch **292**, which had a north north-east to south south-west alignment and measured 0.52m wide and 0.17m deep with steep sides and a concave base. Its single fill (291) consisted of a mid grey brown silty sand that contained no finds. Ditch **290** also had a north north-east to south south-west alignment and measured 0.5m wide and 0.13m deep with steep sides and a concave base. Its single fill (289) consisted of a mid grey brown silty sand that contained no finds.

3.5 Trench 14

3.5.1 Trench 14 was located in the centre of the proposed development site on a north-east to south-west alignment. It contained a number of ditches with various alignments and three small pits.

Pits

3.5.2 At the south-west end of the trench was Pit **318**, which measured 0.4m wide and 0.3m deep with vertical sides and a concave base. Its single fill (317) consisted of a light whitish grey silty sand that contained no finds. Approximately 5m north-east were two further pits (**322** & **324**). Pit **322** measured 0.41m wide and 0.28m deep with steep sides and a concave base. Its single fill (321) consisted of a dark grey silty sand that contained small fragments of undiagnostic fired clay weighing 9g. To the east, Pit **324** measured 0.37m wide and 0.2m deep with vertical sides and a concave base (Section 94, Fig. 4). Its single fill (323) consisted of a dark grey silty sand that contained small fragments of fired clay weighing 11g. Grains of barley, rye and oats were recovered from the sample taken from this feature.

Ditches

3.5.3 Ditch **320** lay between pits **318** and **322** on an east north-easterly alignment and measured 1.2m wide and 0.28m deep with steep sides and a concave base (Section 92, Fig. 4). Its single fill (319) consisted of a mid brown grey silty sand that contained no finds. To the north-east was Ditch **326**, which had a west north-westerly alignment and measured 1.8m wide and 0.34m deep with steep sides and a concave base (seen in Trench 12 as Ditch **262**). Its single fill (325) consisted of a mid grey brown silty sand that contained 9g of fired clay, a single sherd of medieval pottery weighing 6g and bone from a large mammal.

3.5.4 At the north-east end of the trench were two ditches. Ditch **330** had a north to south alignment and measured 2m wide and 0.58m deep with steep sides and a concave base (Plate 4). Its single fill (329) consisted of a sterile dark grey brown silty sand. This ditch was truncated by Ditch **328** which had a west north-west to east south-east alignment and measured 1.5m wide and 0.26m deep with gently sloped sides and a flat base. Its single fill (327) consisted of a light brown grey silty sand that contained no finds.

3.6 Trench 15

3.6.1 Trench 15 had a north-west to south-east orientation and contained a series of ditches on various alignments.

3.6.2 At the north-west end were two ditches (**299** & **303**) and a gully (**301**) on north to south alignments. Ditch **299** measured 0.7m wide and 0.18m deep with gently sloped sides and a concave base. Its single fill (300) consisted of a mid brown grey silty sand that contained a single fragment of bone from a large mammal. This ditch was truncated on its eastern side by Gully **301**, which measured 0.3m wide and 0.14m deep with steep sides and a concave base. Its single fill (302) consisted of a mid to dark brown grey silty sand that contained no finds.

3.6.3 Immediately east was Ditch **303** which measured 0.8m wide and 0.1m deep with gently sloped sides and a slightly concave base. Its single fill (304) consisted of a mid brown grey silty sand that contained no finds.

- 3.6.4 In the centre of the trench was Ditch **305**, which had a north-east to south-west alignment and measured 1.2m wide and 0.24m deep with gently sloped sides and a concave base (Plate 5. Section 86, Fig. 4). Its single fill (306) consisted of a mid brown grey silty sand that contained no finds.
- 3.6.5 Ditch **311** was aligned east south-east to west north-west and measured 0.7m wide and 0.22m deep with steep sides and a concave base. Its single fill (312) consisted of a mid brown grey silty sand that contained no finds.
- 3.6.6 At the south-eastern end of the trench were two east north-east to west south-west aligned gullies (Section 87, Fig. 4). Gully **307** measured 0.47m wide and 0.15m deep, whilst **309** measured 0.4m wide and 0.13m deep. Both had steep sides and concave bases and contained single, mid brown grey silty sand fills (308 & 310) from which no finds were recovered.

3.7 Trench 16

- 3.7.1 Trench 16 lay to the east on a north-east to south-west alignment. It contained three ditches and a large pit.

Pit 269

- 3.7.2 Pit **269** measured 2.69m wide and 0.5m deep with very steep sides and a slightly concave base (Plate 6). Its single fill (270) consisted of a mid brown grey silty sand that contained no finds but was environmentally sampled and contained charred barley, rye and black bindweed alongside a single wheat grain. This pit appeared to be slightly truncated on its western side by Ditch **267**.

Ditches

- 3.7.3 To the south-west was Ditch **265** which had an east south-east to west north-west alignment and measured 0.8m wide and 0.18m deep with gentle sides and a concave base. Its single fill (266) consisted of a mid brown grey silty sand that contained a single sherd of pottery (14g) dated to the 11th to 13th century.
- 3.7.4 Ditch **267** had a north north-east to south south-west alignment and measured 2.2m wide and 0.32m deep with gently sloped sides and a concave base (Section 72, Fig. 4). Its single fill (268) consisted of a mid brown grey silty sand that contained two sherds of residual Roman pottery weighing 15g. It appeared to truncate Pit **269**.
- 3.7.5 To the west was Ditch **271** which ran parallel to Ditch **267**. Ditch **271** measured 1.3m wide and 0.42m deep with steep sides and a concave base (Plate 7). Its single fill (272) consisted of a mid brown grey silty sand that contained fragments of cattle and large mammal bone.

Trench 17

- 3.7.6 This was the most easterly trench. It was aligned north-west to south-east and contained a series of ditches and pits, some of which were inter-cutting (Plate 8). A single fragment of quern stone, weighing 219g, was recovered from the topsoil.
- 3.7.7 At the north-west end of the trench was Pit **273**, which measured 0.6m wide and 0.29m deep with steep sides and a concave base (Section 75, Fig. 4). Its single fill (274) consisted of a dark brown grey silty sand that contained no finds but was environmentally sampled and contained barley, rye and a charred bean. To the south-east was a series of inter-cutting features.

- 3.7.8 Ditch **277** had a north north-east to south south-west alignment and measured 0.7m wide and 0.1m deep with gently sloped sides and a slightly concave base. Its single fill (278) consisted of a mid brown grey silty sand that contained no finds. This was truncated by Ditch **275** that had an east south-east to west north-west alignment and measured 0.8m wide and 0.2m deep with gently sloped sides and a concave base. Its single fill (276) consisted of a mid to dark brown grey silty sand that contained no finds.
- 3.7.9 To the south was Pit **279** that measured 0.85m wide and 0.16m deep and had a U-shaped profile. Its single fill (280) consisted of a mid grey brown silty sand that contained no finds. This pit was truncated by Ditch **281** that had an east north-east to west south-west alignment and measured 1.4m wide and 0.2m deep with gently sloped sides and a concave base (Section 77, Fig. 4). Its single fill (282) consisted of a mid brown grey silty sand that contained no finds.
- 3.7.10 At the south-east end of the trench was Ditch **287** that had an east north-east to west south-west alignment and measured 1m wide and 0.19m deep with gently sloped sides and a concave base (Plate 9). Its single fill (288) consisted of a dark brown grey silty sand that contained no finds. Directly north was Ditch **285** that also had an east north-east to west south-west alignment and measured 0.95m wide and 0.3m deep with steep sides and a concave base. Its single fill (286) consisted of a mid brown grey silty sand that contained no finds. This ditch was truncated on its northern side by Ditch **283** on the same alignment, this ditch measured 0.8m wide and 0.26m deep with steep sides and a concave base. Its single fill (284) consisted of a dark brown silty sand that contained no finds.

3.8 Finds Summary

- 3.8.1 Only a small number of finds were recovered from this evaluation, some of which derived from the topsoil. The pottery assemblage comprises just six small abraded sherds (72g) recovered from four features in Trenches 11, 14 and 16 (pit **256** & ditches **326**, **265** and **267**), with one sherd recovered from the topsoil in Trench 17. The assemblage comprises a mix of residual Roman pottery and medieval pottery. Undiagnostic fired clay fragments (29g) were recovered from pits **322**, **324** and ditch **326** in Trench 14.
- 3.8.2 Bone was poorly preserved on site, with only 13 fragments (145g) recovered from ditches **262**, **271**, **299** and **326** in Trenches 12, 14, 15 and 16. Where identifiable, the bone belongs to cattle and large mammals.

3.9 Environmental Summary

- 3.9.1 Environmental samples were taken from a variety of features on site. These yielded a small, poorly preserved charred plant assemblages comprising grains of cereals that were commonly cultivated and utilized in the medieval period.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The evaluation revealed a network of ditches and pits extending over the entire site. All trenches revealed archaeological features, with a total of 31 ditches and eight pits exposed. Although very few finds were recovered from the investigation (including three residual sherds of abraded Roman pottery), the features have been assigned to the medieval period based on the alignment of the ditches, the small number of medieval sherds retrieved (with a date range of the 11th-14th century) and the continuities with the archaeology revealed in the 2013 evaluation immediately south (Stocks-Morgan 2013).

4.2 Medieval ditch alignments

4.2.1 Ditches were uncovered in all of the trenches. These formed a series of field boundaries and plot divisions, and are thought to represent phases of agricultural division and re-organisation. Whilst the paucity of finds and the lack of inter-cutting makes phasing these systems impossible at this stage, four principle ditch alignment can be distinguished (Fig. 5).

North north-east to south south-west and west north-west to east south-east aligned ditches

4.2.2 The most prominent ditch alignment was that on a north north-east to south south-west orientation, followed by ditches on a west north-west to east south-east alignment. Combined, these ditches appear to form a rectilinear boundary system comprising small plots around 40m in width, and may constitute small fields or agricultural enclosures.

4.2.3 The extent of this system is difficult to establish, but it extends to the south, and is likely to continue to the west. Certainly, ditches on this orientation were recorded in the 2013 evaluation, suggesting it extends towards Manor Road. Interestingly, whilst most of the ditches were fairly narrow, ditch **328** in Trench 14, measured at least 1.5m wide and 0.26m deep. This may be a major boundary ditch, and could represent the northern limit to the ditch system. Dating evince is limited, but medieval pottery was recovered from Ditch **326**, Trench 14 and Ditch **265** from Trench 16.

East north-east to west south-west aligned ditches

4.2.4 A small number of ditches were identified on an east north-east to west south-west alignment in Trenches 15 and 17, all within the eastern side of the site. Ditches on this alignment were also identified in Trenches 6 and 7 in the south-west during the 2013 evaluation, where they were interpreted as land boundaries for individual plots alongside Manor Road. Those in Trenches 15 and 17 may therefore represent a continuation of this system. No finds were recovered from these ditches.

North to south aligned ditches

4.2.5 Only a small number of ditches on a north to south alignment were uncovered; a ditch orientation that was fairly common in the 2013 evaluation to the south. In this previous phase of work these ditches were tentatively interpreted as late-phase medieval field boundaries, post-dating the 14th century. No further clarity on the date of these ditches has been provided from this phase of trenching, but as no post-medieval finds were uncovered, these features are certainly likely to have gone out of use and silted up before the 18th-19th century.

4.3 Pits

- 4.3.1 A total of eight pits were excavated across the site, some of which contained finds of pottery and fired clay. Environmental samples taken from a selection of these pits yielded charred grains including rye, barley, oats and black-bindweed typical of the cereals that were cultivated in this region during the medieval period.

4.4 Significance

- 4.4.1 The evaluation has demonstrated the northern continuation of medieval activity previously uncovered in the 2013 evaluation immediately south of the site. The ditches and pits exposed in this phase of investigation are undoubtedly part of the same medieval 'site' or broad focus of activity, with ditches of similar character recorded on a similar series of orientations. Certainly, the dominant alignments described above are directly comparable, and echo both the orientation of the present day line of Manor Road to the south and Church Road to the east. As such, many of the conclusions reached by the 2013 investigation remain valid for this site, but with one or two important differences.
- 4.4.2 Firstly, and most crucially, there is the general paucity of finds from this evaluation compared to that in 2013. Very little material was uncovered, suggesting this area lay beyond the core of the medieval settlement focus, which is likely to be located along the roadside of Manor Road to the south. Supporting this interpretation is the second observation that no structural remains were uncovered in the evaluation, in terms of post-holes or beam-slot gullies. A scatter of pits were recorded, but these were generally small, shallow and contained very few finds. Instead, this area appears to be characterised by small field boundaries and plot divisions extending back from Manor Road and Church Road. These were evidently reordered and reorganised during the medieval period, though the sequencing is hard to decipher from the results of this evaluation.

4.5 Recommendations

- 4.5.1 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 11						
General description				Orientation		NW-SE
Trench contained two small pits and a series of ditches on various alignments. Natural consisted of a mottled orangey yellow sand				Avg. depth (m)		0.54
				Width (m)		2
				Length (m)		25
Contexts						
number	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
250	Layer	-	0.28-0.4	Topsoil	-	-
251	Layer	-	0.2	Subsoil	-	-
252	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
253	Fill	0.52	0.2	Pit	-	-
254	Cut	0.52	0.2	Pit	-	-
255	Fill	0.54	0.2	Pit	Pot	Roman
256	Cut	0.54	0.2	Pit	-	-
257	Fill	0.84	-	Ditch	-	-
258	Cut	0.84	-	Ditch	-	-
313	Cut	0.85	0.27	Ditch	-	-
314	Fill	0.85	0.27	Ditch	-	-
315	Cut	0.7	0.12	Ditch	-	-
316	Fill	0.7	0.12	Ditch	-	-
Trench 12						
General description				Orientation		NE-SW
Trench contained a series of ditches on a variety of alignments cutting into a mottled orangey yellow sand				Avg. depth (m)		0.76
				Width (m)		2
				Length (m)		25
Contexts						
number	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
250	Layer	-	0.36-0.48	Topsoil	-	-
251	Layer	-	0.34-0.4	Subsoil	-	-
252	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
259	Fill	0.31	0.07	Ditch	-	-
260	Cut	0.31	0.07	Ditch	-	-
261	Fill	1.86	0.3	Ditch	Bone	-
262	Cut	1.86	0.3	Ditch	-	-
263	Fill	1.7	0.28	Ditch	-	-
264	Cut	1.7	0.28	Ditch	-	-
331	Cut	0.7	0.12	Ditch	-	-

332	Fill	0.7	0.12	Ditch	-	-
Trench 13						
General description				Orientation		NW-SE
Trench contained a series of ditches on various alignments cut into a mottled orange yellow sand natural.				Avg. depth (m)		0.69
				Width (m)		2
				Length (m)		25
Contexts						
number	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
250	Layer	-	0.32-0.4	Topsoil	-	-
251	Layer	-	0.29-0.36	Subsoil	-	-
252	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
289	Fill	0.5	0.13	Ditch	-	-
290	Cut	0.5	0.13	Ditch	-	-
291	Fill	0.52	0.17	Ditch	-	-
292	Cut	0.52	0.17	Ditch	-	-
293	Fill	1	0.31	Ditch	-	-
294	Cut	1	0.31	Ditch	-	-
295	Fill	0.72	0.08	Ditch	-	-
296	Cut	0.72	0.08	Ditch	-	-
297	Fill	1.76	0.22	Ditch	-	-
298	Cut	1.76	0.22	Ditch	-	-
Trench 14						
General description				Orientation		NE-SW
Trench contained a number of ditches with various alignments, three small pits were also present cutting a mottled orange yellow sand natural				Avg. depth (m)		0.71
				Width (m)		2
				Length (m)		25
Contexts						
number	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
250	Layer	-	0.36-0.65	Topsoil	-	-
251	Layer	-	0.11-0.23	Subsoil	-	-
252	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
317	Fill	0.4	0.3	Pit	-	-
318	Cut	0.4	0.3	Pit	-	-
319	Fill	1.2	0.28	Ditch	-	-
320	Cut	1.2	0.28	Ditch	-	-
321	Fill	0.41	0.14	Pit	Fired Clay	-
322	Cut	0.41	0.14	Pit	-	-
323	Fill	0.37	0.2	Pit	Fired Clay	-
324	Cut	0.37	0.2	Pit	-	-

325	Fill	1.8	0.34	Ditch	Pot, Bone, Fired Clay	1075-1250
326	Cut	1.8	0.34	Ditch	-	-
327	Fill	1.5+	0.26	Ditch	-	-
328	Cut	1.5+	0.26	Ditch	-	-
329	Fill	2	0.58	Ditch	-	-
330	Cut	2	0.58	Ditch	-	-

Trench 15

General description	Orientation	NW-SE
A series of ditches and gullies on various alignments cutting an orangey yellow sand natural.	Avg. depth (m)	0.6
	Width (m)	2
	Length (m)	25

Contexts

number	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
250	Layer	-	0.35	Topsoil	-	-
251	Layer	-	0.25	Subsoil	-	-
252	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
299	Cut	0.7	0.18	Ditch	-	-
300	Fill	0.7	0.18	Ditch	Bone	-
301	Cut	0.3	0.14	Gully	-	-
302	Fill	0.3	0.14	Gully	-	-
303	Cut	0.8	0.1	Ditch	-	-
304	Fill	0.8	0.1	Ditch	-	-
305	Cut	1.2	0.24	Ditch	-	-
306	Fill	1.2	0.24	Ditch	-	-
307	Cut	0.47	0.15	Gully	-	-
308	Fill	0.47	0.15	Gully	-	-
309	Cut	0.4	0.13	Gully	-	-
310	Fill	0.4	0.13	Gully	-	-
311	Cut	0.7	0.22	Ditch	-	-
312	Fill	0.7	0.22	Ditch	-	-

Trench 16

General description	Orientation	NE-SW
Trench contained three ditches on various alignments. A pit is also present, all cutting a mottled orangey yellow sand	Avg. depth (m)	0.8
	Width (m)	2
	Length (m)	25

Contexts

number	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
250	Layer	-	0.4-0.6	Topsoil	-	-

251	Layer	-	0.18-0.4	Subsoil	-	-
252	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
265	Cut	0.8	0.18	Ditch	-	-
266	Fill	0.8	0.18	Ditch	Pot	1075-1250
267	Cut	2.2	0.32	Ditch	-	-
268	Fill	2.2	0.32	Ditch	Pot	2nd/3rd C
269	Cut	2.65	0.5	Pit	-	-
270	Fill	2.65	0.5	Pit	-	-
271	Cut	1.3	0.42	Ditch	-	-
272	Fill	1.3	0.42	Ditch	Bone	-

Trench 17

General description	Orientation	NW-SE
Trench contained pits and ditches on various alignments, some of which were intercutting. Natural consisted of a mottled orange yellow sand	Avg. depth (m)	0.65
	Width (m)	2
	Length (m)	25

Contexts

number	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
250	Layer	-	0.4	Topsoil	Pot and Quern	1150-1500, Roman/Med
251	Layer	-	0.25	Subsoil	-	-
252	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
273	Cut	0.6	0.29	Pit	-	-
274	Fill	0.6	0.29	Pit	-	-
275	Cut	0.8	0.2	Ditch	-	-
276	Fill	0.8	0.2	Ditch	-	-
277	Cut	0.7	0.1	Ditch	-	-
278	Fill	0.7	0.1	Ditch	-	-
279	Cut	0.85	0.16	Pit	-	-
280	Fill	0.85	0.16	Pit	-	-
281	Cut	1.4	0.2	Ditch	-	-
282	Fill	1.4	0.2	Ditch	-	-
283	Cut	0.8	0.26	Ditch	-	-
284	Fill	0.8	0.26	Ditch	-	-
285	Cut	0.95	0.3	Ditch	-	-
286	Fill	0.95	0.3	Ditch	-	-
287	Cut	1	0.19	Ditch	-	-
288	Fill	1	0.19	Ditch	-	-

APPENDIX B. FINDS REPORTS

B.1 Stone

By Sarah Percival & Carole Fletcher

- B.1.1 A single irregular fragment of burnt quartzite (0.219kg) was collected from topsoil in Trench 17. The upper surface is irregular, fractured and the stone has been reshaped; a small section of what appears to be original edge survives. The lower surface, which is relatively flat, has small areas of smooth, somewhat polished, surface, suggesting this may originally have been part of a rotary quern, perhaps subsequently reused as a hearth stone. The fragment is not closely datable, and may be Roman or medieval.

B.2 Pottery

by Carole Fletcher with Roman pottery identification by Alice Lyons

Introduction

- B.2.1 The evaluation produced a pottery assemblage of six sherds, weighing 0.072kg, representing a minimum of five vessels. The assemblage contains both Roman and medieval pottery.

Methodology

- B.2.2 The Prehistoric Ceramics Research Group (PCRG), Study Group for Roman Pottery (SGRP), The Medieval Pottery Research Group (MPRG), 2016 *A Standard for Pottery Studies in Archaeology* act as a standard.
- B.2.3 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 Roman, 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.2.4 Four trenches produced pottery and all sherds, apart from the single sherd recovered from the topsoil in Trench 17, are abraded, indicating reworking of the deposits. None of the sherds represent primary deposition and the low number of sherds recovered from features means they are not necessarily reliable dating indicators.
- B.2.5 Trench 11 produced a single abraded sherd from a thin-walled sooted jar, identified as Roman Sandy Grey ware Q from pit **256**. Ditch **326** in Trench 14 produced a single abraded, leached, wheel-made sherd of Shelly ware, which, although not closely datable, may be medieval. A similar abraded, leached sherd, which has lost some of its outer surface, was recovered from ditch **265** in Trench 16. Ditch **267**, also in Trench 16, produced two sherds from a Roman Sandy Grey ware vessel.

Conclusion

B.2.6 Levels of pottery across the site are low, with only Trench 16 producing more than one sherd of pottery. The assemblage is most likely domestic in nature, with several sherds showing evidence of sooting. All sherds, except the sherd recovered from the topsoil, have been heavily reworked, most likely due to agricultural processes. Their presence indicates some Roman and medieval activity in the vicinity of the area evaluated, however the pottery is not necessarily a reliable dating indicator for the features. If further work is undertaken, this material should be taken into consideration alongside any new finds, however if no further work is undertaken, the following catalogue acts as a full record and the pottery may be deselected prior to archive deposition.

Pottery Catalogue

Tr.	Ctxt.	Cut	Fabric	Basic Form	Sherd Count	Weight (kg)	MNV	Pottery Date Range
11	255	Pit 256	Sandy Grey ware Q (Quartz)	Jar body sherd, sooted, moderately abraded	1	0.006	1	Mid C1st-4th
16	266	Ditch 265	Shell tempered	Jar partial base angle, leached, moderately abraded to abraded	1	0.014	1	1075-1250
16	268	Ditch 267	Sandy Grey Ware	Body sherd, externally lightly sooted, moderately abraded to abraded	2	0.015	1	C2nd-3rd
14	325	Ditch 326	Shell tempered	Body sherd, leached, moderately abraded to abraded	1	0.006	1	1075-1250
17	Top soil		Medieval Sandy Greyware	Body sherd, relatively unabraded	1	0.031	1	1150-1500
Total					6	** Expres sion is faulty **	5	

Table 1: Pottery by context

B.3 Fired Clay

by Carole Fletcher

Introduction

B.3.1 Undiagnostic fragments of fired clay were recovered from three features, all within Trench 14. Similar fabrics between the three groups of fired clay suggests that the assemblage, weighing 0.029kg in total, may have a common origin. The fragments are small and abraded (reworked) and may have become incorporated into the features through post depositional processes such as manuring rather than deliberate deposition. The fired clay is of little significance other than to indicate domestic or agricultural/craft/industrial activity of uncertain date in the vicinity of the area under investigation. If further work is undertaken, this material should be taken into consideration alongside any new finds, however if no further work is undertaken, the following catalogue acts as a full record and the pottery may be deselected prior to archive deposition.

Tr.	Ctxt	Cut	Fabric	Basic Form	Frag Count	Fragment Size	Weight (kg)	Date Range
14	321	Pit 322	Dull red-orange fabric, poorly mixed, looks silty but feels slightly sandy, moderate iron-stained quartz, common voids	Undiagnostic irregular fragments	3	A range up to 23mm x 15mm	0.009	Not closely datable
14	323	Pit 324	Dull red-orange fabric, poorly mixed sandy fabric with common iron-stained quartz, large voids and occasional small flint inclusions	Undiagnostic fragment, sub-rectangular, two small slightly paler areas may represent the remains of surfaces, however the fragment is too small to be certain	1	29mm x 25mm	0.011	Not closely datable
14	325	Ditch 326	Dull red-orange fabric, some darker reduced areas, poorly mixed, looks silty but feels slightly sandy, moderate iron-stained quartz, common voids	Undiagnostic irregular fragments,	6	15mm x 5mm and 20mm x 10mm	0.009	Not closely datable
Total					10		0.029	

Table 2: Fired Clay by context

APPENDIX C. ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS

C.1 Environmental samples

By Rachel Fosberry

- C.1.1 Bulk samples were taken from features within Trenches 11, 13, 14, 16 and 17 in the evaluated area of Church Road, Brandon, Suffolk 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

- C.1.2 The total volume of each of the selected samples was processed by tank flotation using modified Siraff-type equipment for the recovery of preserved 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.
- C.1.3 The dried flots were scanned using a binocular microscope at magnifications up to x 60 and an abbreviated list of the recorded remains are presented in Table 1. Identification of plant remains is with reference to the Digital Seed Atlas of the Netherlands (Cappers et al. 2006) and the authors' own reference collection. Nomenclature is according to Zohary and Hopf (2000) for cereals and Stace (1997) for other plants. 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.1.4 For the purpose of this initial assessment, items such as seeds and cereal grains have been scanned and recorded qualitatively according to the following categories:

= 1-5, ## = 6-25, ### = 26-100, #### = 100+ specimens

Items that cannot be easily quantified such as charcoal have been scored for abundance

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

Results

Trench 11

- C.1.5 Fill 255 of undated pit **256** contains occasional charred rye (*Secale cereale*) grains which suggests that it is of Saxon date or later.

Trench 13

- C.1.6 The single fill (293) of ditch **294** did not contain any preserved organic remains other than fragmented animal bone.

Trench 14

- C.1.7 Two samples were taken from features within Trench 14. Feature **324** was one of two pits that appeared charcoal-rich on excavation. The sample from fill 323 produced a small charred cereal assemblage in which barley (*Hordeum vulgare*) predominates along with occasional grains of rye and oats (*Avena* sp.). A single charred seed of black-bindweed (*Fallopia convolvulus*) was also noted.

Trench 16

C.1.8 Fill 270 of pit **269** produced a similar assemblage to pit **324** with charred barley, rye and black-bindweed. A single wheat (*Triticum* sp.) grain is also present.

Trench 17

C.1.9 Fill 274 of pit **273** also contains occasional barley and rye grains and a charred bean (Fabaceae) was recovered.

Discussion

C.1.10 The environmental samples from Church Road, Brandon, Suffolk have produced small charred plant assemblages that are comprised of grains of cereals that were commonly cultivated and utilized in the medieval period in this region. The preservation of the carbonized material is generally poor, most probably due to the sandy soil but this could also be the result of degradation prior to burial. Consequently, the archaeobotanical potential of these samples is low and no further work is recommended.

Sample No.	Context No.	Feature No.	Feature Type	% context sampled	Area/trench No.	Volume processed (L)	Flot Volume (ml)	Cereals	Legumes	Weed Seeds	Charcoal <2mm	Charcoal > 2mm	Pottery	Large mammal bones
50	274	273	Pit	20	17	15	20	##	#	0	+++	+++	0	0
52	293	294	Ditch	<10	13	17	180	0	0	0	+++	++	0	###
54	270	269	Pit	<20	16	16	130	##	0	#	++	+	#	0
56	255	256	Pit	25	11	8	20	##	0	0	++++	+++	#	#
58	323	324	Pit	50	14	7	30	##	0	#	++++	++	##	0
60	329	330	Ditch	10	14	18	25	0	0	0	+++	++	0	0

Table 3: Environmental samples

C.2 Faunal Remains

By Zoe Ui Choileáin

Introduction

C.2.1 A total weight of 145g of animal bone was recovered from the excavations at Church Road Brandon.

Trench	Context	Cut	Element	No. frags	of	Taxon	Collection method	Erosion	Weight (g)
12	261	Ditch 262	Molar	1		Cattle	Hand	3	22
			Indet	4		Large mammal	Hand	5	21
10	272	Ditch 271	Mandible	2		Cattle	Hand	3	29
			Rib	1		Large mammal	Hand	3	12
15	300	Ditch 299	Radius	1		Large mammal	Hand	5	56
14	325	Ditch 326	Indet	4		Large mammal	Hand	5	5

Table 4: Results according to collection method (i.e. hand-collection or flotation).

Erosion grades (simplified version of Brickley & McKinley 2004, 14-15): 0 (surface morphology clearly visible, fresh appearance), 1 (light and patchy surface erosion), 2 (more extensive surface erosion than grade 1), 3 (most of bone surface affected by some degree of erosion), 4 (all of bone surface affected by erosive action), 5 (heavy erosion across whole surface, completely masking normal surface morphology).

APPENDIX D. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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OASIS ID: oxfordar3-269161

Project details

Project name	Land West of Church Road, Brandon, Suffolk
Short description of the project	Evaluation revealed a series of ditches and pits, thought to date to the medieval period. A total of 31 ditches were identified throughout the seven trenches. Four ditch alignments were noted, some of these being a direct continuation of those during the 2013 evaluation. A small number of pits were identified across the site, some of which contained charred remains of cereal grains, typical of the medieval period. Very few finds were recovered from these features, with the natural being sand, leading to poorly preserved bone and only six sherds of pottery.
Project dates	Start: 12-12-2016 End: 15-12-2016
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	XSFBRA16 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	BRD283 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	ESF25051 - HER event no.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Monument type	DITCH Medieval
Monument type	PIT Medieval
Significant Finds	ANIMAL REMAINS Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Medieval
Methods & techniques	"Metal Detectors","Sample Trenches"
Development type	Not recorded
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - Direction 4
Position in the planning process	Pre-application

Project location

Country	England
Site location	SUFFOLK FOREST HEATH BRANDON Land West of Church Road

Study area 5998 Square metres
Site coordinates TL 7754 8626 52.444984765199 0.612608488281 52 26 41 N 000 36 45 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation Oxford Archaeology East
Project brief originator Suffolk CC
Project design originator Matt Brudenell
Project director/manager Matt Brudenell
Project supervisor Kathryn Blackbourn
Name of sponsor/funding body Brandon Town Council

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient Suffolk County Stores
Physical Archive ID BRD283
Physical Contents "Animal Bones","Ceramics","Environmental","Metal"
Digital Archive recipient Oxford Archaeology East
Digital Archive ID XSFBRA16
Digital Contents "Environmental","Metal","Stratigraphic","Survey","Animal Bones","Ceramics"
Digital Media available "Database","Images raster / digital photography","Images vector","Spreadsheets","Survey","Text"
Paper Archive recipient Suffolk County Stores
Paper Archive ID BRD283
Paper Contents "Animal Bones","Ceramics","Environmental","Metal","Stratigraphic","Survey"
Paper Media available "Context sheet","Drawing","Map","Matrices","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section","Survey "

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title Medieval Remains on Land West of Church Road, Brandon, Suffolk
Author(s)/Editor(s) Blackbourn, K.
Other bibliographic details OAE report 2027
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Issuer or publisher Oxford Archaeology Ltd.

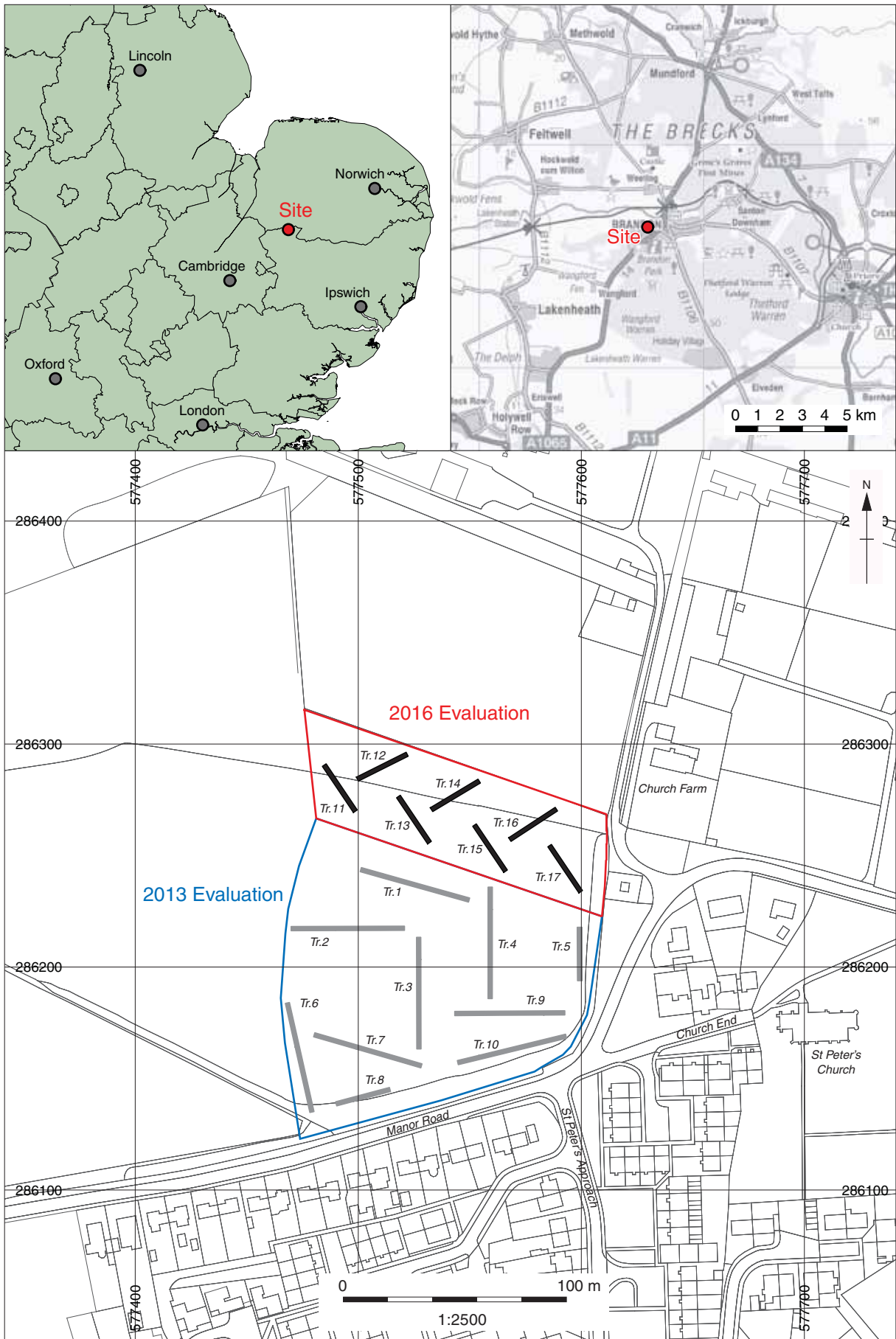
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Figure 1: Site location showing archaeological trenches (black) in development area (red)

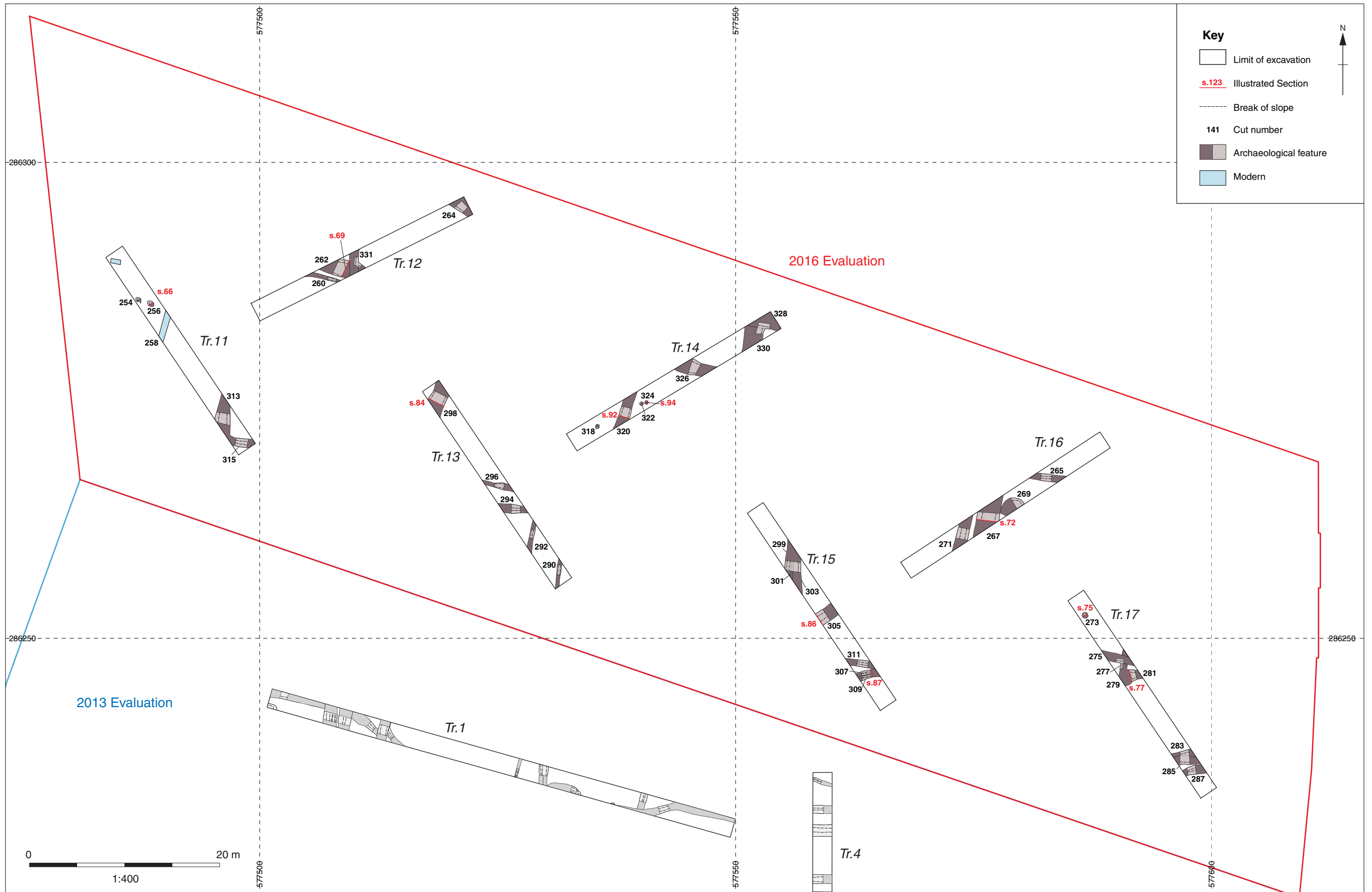


Figure 3: Plan of evaluation trenches.

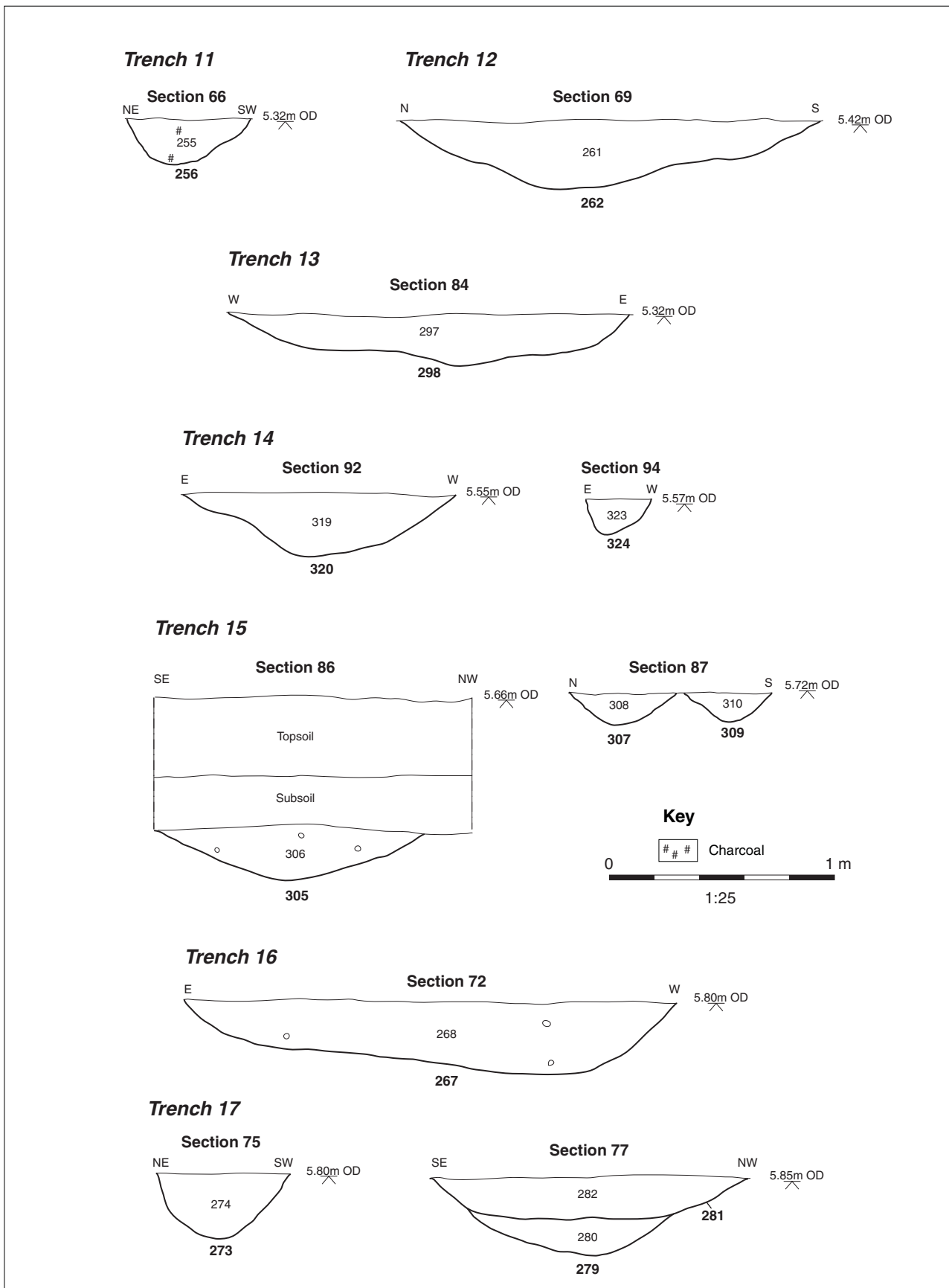


Figure 4: Selected sections

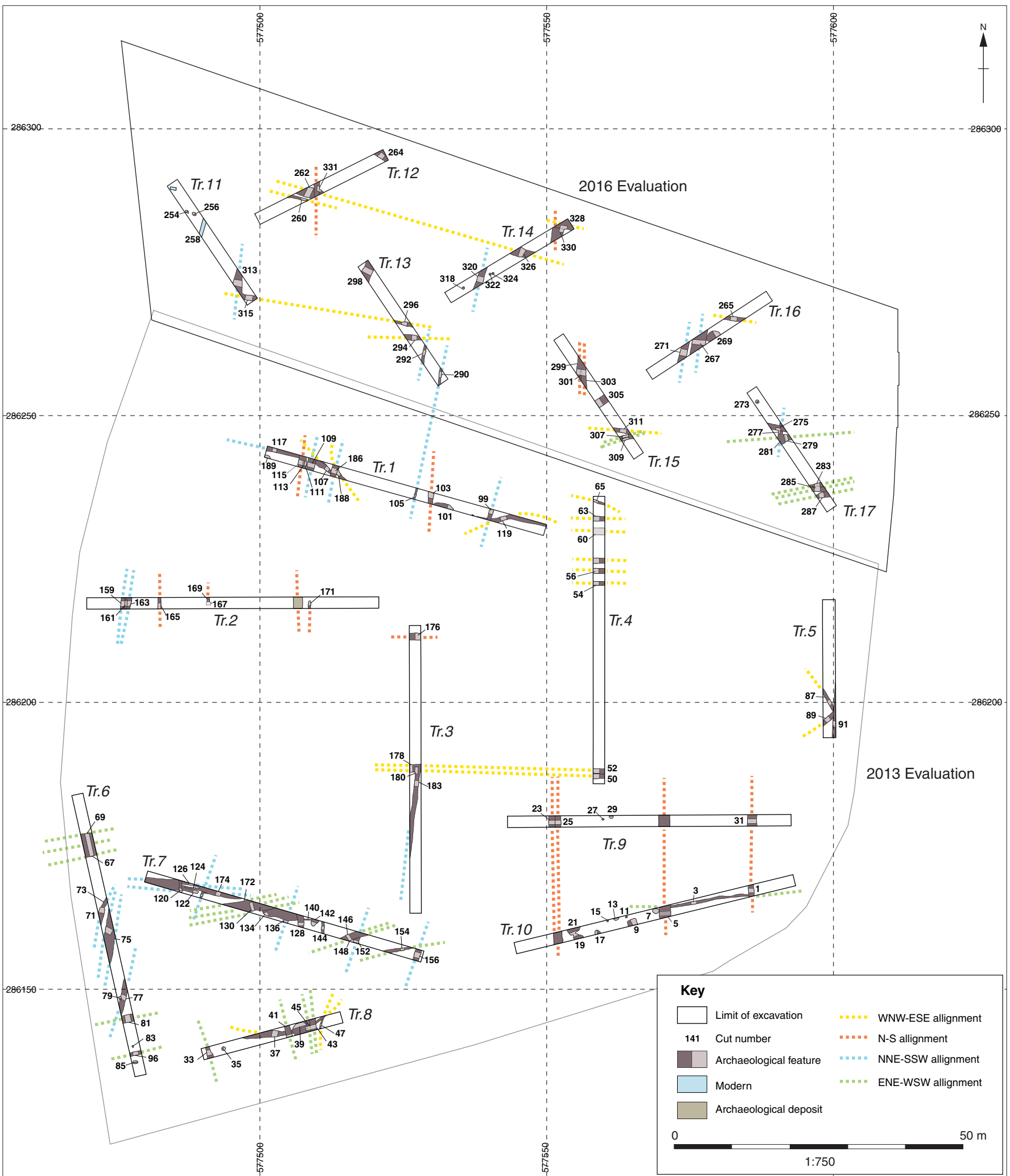


Figure 5: All features plan with interpretation of ditch alignments



Plate 1: Pits **254** and **256** (Trench 11), looking south-east



Plate 2: Ditches **260**, **262** and **331** (Trench 12), looking south-east



Plate 3: Ditch **294** (Trench 13), looking east south-east



Plate 4: Ditch **330** (Trench 14), looking south



Plate 5: Ditch **305** (Trench 15), looking north-east



Plate 6: Pit **269** (Trench 16), looking south-west



Plate 7: Ditch 271 (Trench 16), looking south south-west



Plate 8: Trench 17, looking south-east



Plate 9: Ditch 287 (Trench 17), looking east north-east



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