



# 162 Coates Road, Whittlesey

## Archaeological Evaluation Report

May 2017

**Client: Postland Developments Ltd**

Issue No: 1

Report No: 2090

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Event No: ECB 5122

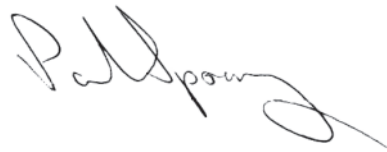


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## 162 Coates Road, Whittlesey

### *Archaeological Evaluation Report*

*Written by Kathryn Blackbourn BA ACIfA*

*With illustrations by Charlotte Walton BA MPhil MCIfA*

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## Summary

Oxford Archaeology East undertook an archaeological evaluation from the 22<sup>nd</sup> of May to the 23<sup>rd</sup> of May 2017 at land near 162 Coates Road, Whittlesey, Cambridgeshire (TL 3025 9741).

A total of six trenches were excavated across the development area, two measuring 20m in length and four measuring 40m in length. Topsoil and subsoil were observed overlying a natural of sandy gravels. All trenches were devoid of archaeology.

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## Acknowledgements

Oxford Archaeology would like to thank Postlands Developments Ltd for commissioning this project. Thanks are also extended to Gemma Stewart who monitored the work on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council for her advice and guidance.

The project was managed for Oxford Archaeology by Chris Thatcher. The fieldwork was directed by Kathryn Blackbourn, who was supported by Laura James. Survey and digitizing were carried out by Dave Brown.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Scope of work

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by Postland Development Ltd to undertake a trial trench evaluation at the site of 162 Coates Road, Whittlesey (Fig. 1) prior to a proposed new residential development.
- 1.1.2 The work was undertaken as a condition of Planning Permission (planning ref. F/YR13/0360/O) A brief was set by Gemma Stewart and a written scheme of investigation was produced by OA detailing the Local Authority's requirements for work necessary to inform the planning process/discharge the planning condition. This document outlines how OA implemented the specified requirements.

### 1.2 Location, topography and geology

- 1.2.1 The site is located in an area of March Gravels Member - Sand and Gravel. Superficial Deposits formed up to 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period, a local environment previously dominated by shorelines. The bedrock geology is Oxford Clay Formation – Mudstone, a sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 156 to 165 million years ago in the Jurassic Period in a local environment previously dominated by shallow seas. (British Geological Survey 2014).
- 1.2.2 The soil is chiefly a freely draining slightly acid black loam overlying a subsoil of clay or gravel (SSEW 1983).
- 1.2.3 The site lies at approximately 5.6m above Ordnance Datum and is relatively level.
- 1.2.4 The past landscape of the area was dominated by changing sea levels and numerous interconnecting waterways. Roddons (extinct riverbeds that have been left high due to differential erosion) are a feature of the local landscape and often attracted settlement along their length.
- 1.2.5 The proposed development site is currently under grass, surrounded by hedges.

### 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The site is located on the south side of Coates Road approximately midway between Eastrea and Coates. Although it is in the parish of Whittlesey it is in fact located much closer to the small village of Coates, which is part of the civil parish of Whittlesey. Coates with Eastrea is an ecclesiastical parish, formed in 1850 from the civil parish of Whittlesey, under the provisions of the "Whittlesey Improvement Act, 1849".

#### *Prehistoric and Roman*

- 1.3.2 Prehistoric artefacts have been found within 0.5km of the site, for example a Neolithic polished stone axe (CHER 07847) found approximately 0.5km to the south-east of the development site. Further afield, a prehistoric log boat (CHER 03736) was found approximately 1km to the south.
- 1.3.3 The most significant heritage asset lies approximately 0.5km to the west of the proposed development and comprises a Scheduled ring ditch and settlement site (DCB



028). Archaeological investigation close to the monument (ECB3404) revealed evidence for occupation during the Bronze Age and Iron Age, human remains of late Iron Age to Roman date were also recovered.

- 1.3.4 A number of ditched enclosures (CHER 11655) are recorded at Coates Field, less than 0.5km to the north of the development site. Their provenance is uncertain but they possibly date to the late prehistoric or Roman period. A Roman site found by field walking (10164) is located a similar distance to the north-west of the development site.
- 1.3.5 Archaeological investigations have taken place in a number of locations either side of Coates Road, particularly in Eastrea but also in Coates. Investigations in the village of Coates have so far found no significant archaeology. Eastrea by contrast has revealed significant evidence for past activity. Including Bronze Age/Iron Age settlement features (ECB 4175) and Iron Age/Roman settlement (ECB 3404).
- 1.3.6 A driveway (Lake Drove, also noted on 1st Edition Ordnance Survey) aligned approximately WNW to ESE lies to the south of the proposed development site and forms the boundary for a distinct change in land-use patterns.

#### *Post-medieval and modern*

- 1.3.7 A number of windmills are noted in the area. including a tower mill (CHER 03715), which lies just to the south-east.
- 1.3.8 To the north-west of the site (on the roadside) is a milestone shown on the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map and known as Whitecross Stone (CHER 03917). Whitecross Farm (MCB 23050, also shown on the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey) lies just to the south of the site. The western boundary of the site is 20th century in date (not shown on the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey).

## 2 EVALUATION AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Aims

2.1.1 The project aims and objectives were as follows:

- i. To establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains on the site, characterise where they are found (location, depth and extent), and establish the quality of preservation of any archaeology and environmental remains
- ii. To provide sufficient coverage to establish the form, date and purpose of any archaeological deposits
- iii. To provide sufficient coverage to evaluate the likely impact of past land uses, and the possible presence of masking deposits
- iv. set results in the local, regional, and national archaeological context – and, in particular, its wider cultural landscape and past environmental conditions
- v. provide – in the event that archaeological remains are found – sufficient information to construct an archaeological mitigation strategy

### 2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 A total of six trenches were excavated using a tracked 360 machine with a 1.8m wide ditching bucket. Four of the trenches measured 40m in length and the remaining two measured 20m in length (Fig. 2).
- 2.2.2 Service plans were checked before work commenced on site. Before trenching, the footprint of each trench was scanned by a qualified and experienced operator using a CAT and Genny with a valid calibration certificate.
- 2.2.3 Bucket samples of 90 litres of excavated soil were taken from the end of each trench, in order to characterise artefactual remains in the topsoil and other soil horizons above the archaeological level. These were sieved off site for the purposes of finds retrieval. No finds were recovered.
- 2.2.4 The spoil heaps were scanned with a metal detector.
- 2.2.5 All machine excavation was undertaken under the supervision of a suitably qualified and experienced archaeologist.
- 2.2.6 The trial trenches were excavated by a mechanical excavator to the upper interface of archaeological features or deposits. A toothless ditching bucket was used to excavate the trenches. Overburden was excavated in spits not greater than 0.1m thick.
- 2.2.7 Spoil was stored alongside trenches. Topsoil, subsoil, and archaeological deposits were kept separate during excavation, to allow for sequential backfilling of excavations.
- 2.2.8 Site survey was carried out using a survey-grade differential GPS (Leica CS10/GS08 or Leica 1200) fitted with "smartnet" technology with an accuracy of 5mm horizontal and 10mm vertical.
- 2.2.9 The site grid is accurately tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid and located on the 1:2500 or 1:1250 map of the area. Elevations are levelled to the Ordnance Datum. A register has been kept of all trenches, features, and photographs. Written

descriptions are recorded on pro-forma sheets comprising factual data and interpretative elements.

- 2.2.10 Site plans have been drawn at 1:50. Sections of features have been drawn at 1:20. All sections are tied in to Ordnance Datum.
- 2.2.11 All site drawings include the following information: site name, site code, scale, plan or section number, orientation, date and the name or initials of the archaeologist who prepared the drawing.
- 2.2.12 The photographic record comprises of high resolution digital photographs of each trench. Photographs include a scale, north arrow and site code. The photograph register records these details, and photograph numbers are listed on corresponding context sheets.

## **3 RESULTS**

### **3.1 Introduction and presentation of results**

3.1.1 The results of the evaluation are presented below. The full details of all trenches with dimensions and depths of all deposits can be found in Appendix A.

### **3.2 General soils and ground conditions**

3.2.1 The soil sequence between all trenches was fairly uniform. The natural geology of sandy gravels was overlain by a mid-orange brown silty subsoil, which in turn was overlain by a dark grey brown silty topsoil.

3.2.2 Ground conditions throughout the evaluation were generally good, and the trenches remained dry throughout.

### **3.3 Trench descriptions**

3.3.1 Trenches 1 to 4 were all 40m in length and on varying alignments (Plate 1 and 2). These trenches were set out to cover the central and southern part of the development area. Trenches 5 and 6 were 20m in length (Plate 3) and formed a T-shape in the northern part of the development area closest to the road. All six trenches were devoid of archaeology and full trench descriptions can be found in Appendix A.

## **4 DISCUSSION**

### **4.1 Reliability and Interpretation**

- 4.1.1 The trenches excavated provided a 5% sample of the development area. The geology consisted of sandy gravels and no archaeological features were identified, which would indicate that there had been little activity within the development site in the preceding periods.

## APPENDIX A TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty sand.					Length (m)	40
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.47
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1	Layer	-	0.3-0.33	Topsoil	-	-
2	Layer	-	0.12-0.13	Subsoil	-	-
3	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 2						
General description					Orientation	NW-SE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty sand.					Length (m)	40
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.48
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1	Layer	-	0.3-0.34	Topsoil	-	-
2	Layer	-	0.8-0.12	Subsoil	-	-
3	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 3						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of sandy gravels.					Length (m)	40
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.43
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1	Layer	-	0.27-0.34	Topsoil	-	-
2	Layer	-	0.11-0.15	Subsoil	-	-
3	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 4						
General description					Orientation	NW-SE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of sandy gravels					Length (m)	40
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.54
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1	Layer	-	0.25-0.36	Topsoil	-	-
2	Layer	-	0.12-0.2	Subsoil	-	-
3	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 5						
General description					Orientation	NW-SE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of sandy gravels.					Length (m)	20
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.39
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1	Layer	-	0.2-0.25	Topsoil	-	-
2	Layer	-	0.14-0.17	Subsoil	-	-
3	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 6						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of sandy gravels.					Length (m)	20
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.5
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1	Layer	-	0.24-0.3	Topsoil	-	-
2	Layer	-	0.14-0.3	Subsoil	-	-
3	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Stewart, G. 2017. *Land North West of 162 Coates Road, Coates, Whittlesey. Brief for Archaeological Evaluation.*

### *Electronic Sources*

British Geological Survey online map viewer, accessed 5/5/2017:

<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html>



## APPENDIX B OASIS REPORT FORM

### Project Details

OASIS Number	Oxfordar3-285850		
Project Name	162 Coates Road, Whittlesey		
Start of Fieldwork	22/05/2017	End of Fieldwork	23/05/2017
Previous Work	no	Future Work	no

### Project Reference Codes

Site Code	WHSCOA17	Planning App. No.	F/YR13/0360/O
HER Number	ECB 5122	Related Numbers	

Prompt	
Development Type	Rural Residential Housing
Place in Planning Process	Choose an item.

### Techniques used (tick all that apply)

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <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 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 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 type="checkbox"/> Geophysical Survey                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Rectified Photography  |   |

Monument	Period	Object	Period
N/A	Choose an item.	N/A	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.		Choose an item.
	Choose an item.		Choose an item.

Insert more lines as appropriate.

### Project Location

County	Cambridgeshire	Address (including Postcode) 162 Coates Road Whittlesey Cambs PE7 2BE
District	Fenland	
Parish	Coates	
HER office	Cambridge	
Size of Study Area	200m	
National Grid Ref	TL 3025 9741	

### Project Originators

Organisation	OA East
Project Brief Originator	Gemma Stewart
Project Design Originator	Aileen Connor

Project Manager  
Project Supervisor

Chris Thatcher
Kathryn Blackburn

**Project Archives**

	Location	ID
Physical Archive (Finds)	N/A	N/A
Digital Archive	OA East	WHSCOA17
Paper Archive	CCC	ECB 5122

**Physical Contents**

**Present?**

**Digital files associated with Finds**

**Paperwork associated with Finds**

- Animal Bones
- Ceramics
- Environmental
- Glass
- Human Remains
- Industrial
- Leather
- Metal
- Stratigraphic
- Survey
- Textiles
- Wood
- Worked Bone
- Worked Stone/Lithic
- None
- Other

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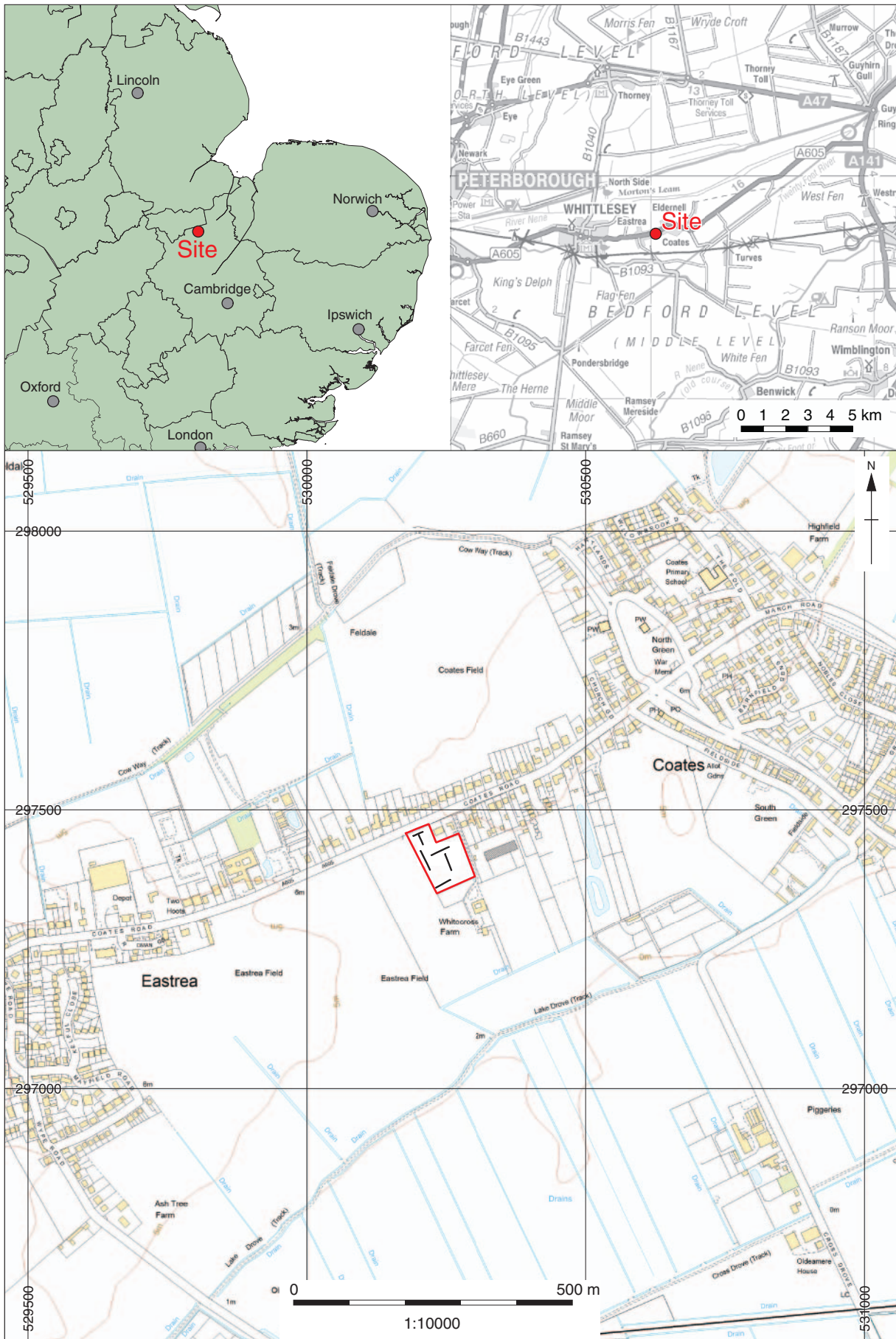
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**Digital Media**

- Database
- GIS
- Geophysics
- Images (Digital photos)
- Illustrations (Figures/Plates)
- Moving Image
- Spreadsheets
- Survey
- Text
- Virtual Reality

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- Context Sheets
- Correspondence
- Diary
- Drawing
- Manuscript
- Map
- Matrices
- Microfiche
- Miscellaneous
- Research/Notes
- Photos (negatives/prints/slides)
- Plans
- Report
- Sections
- Survey



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

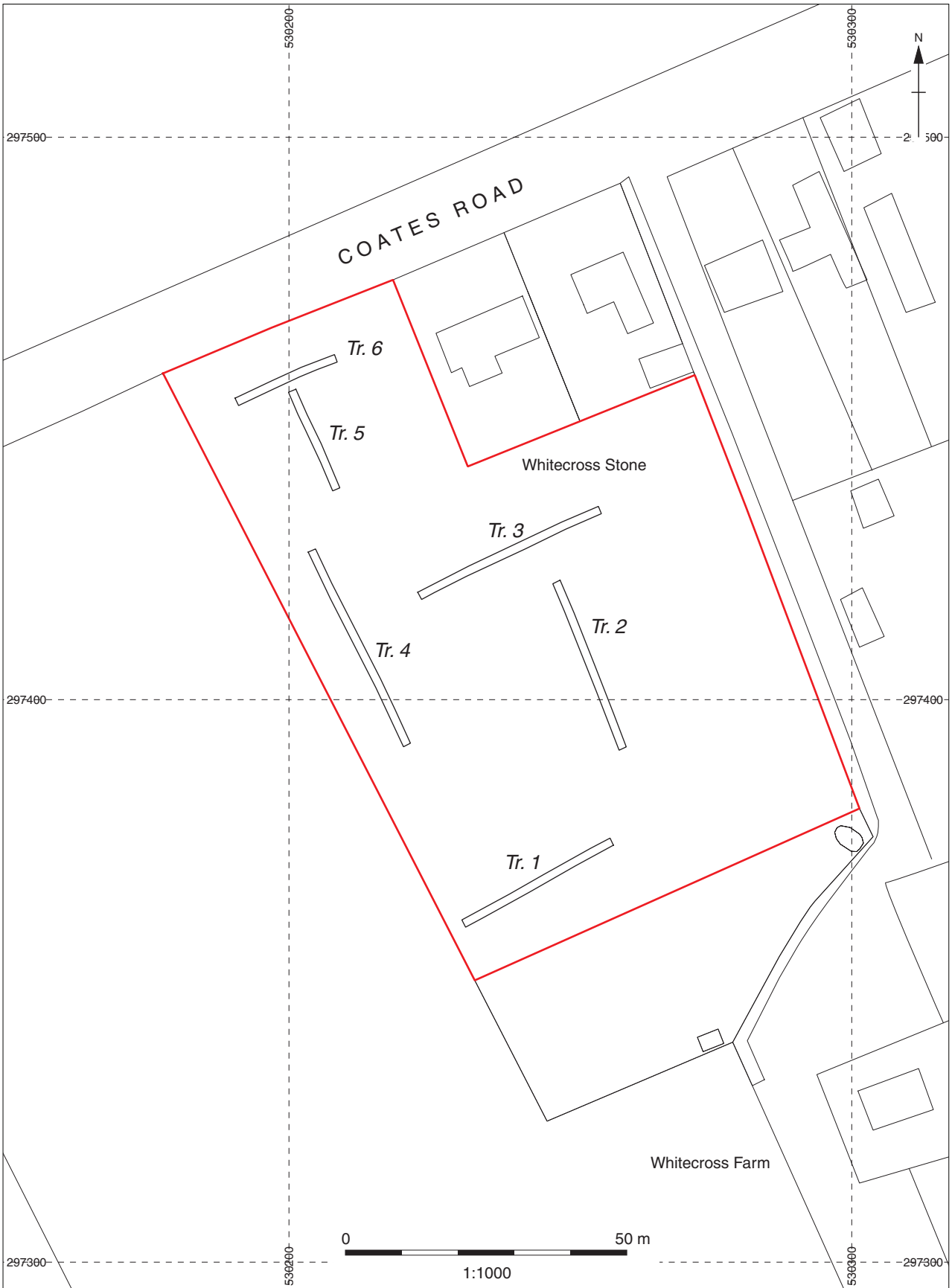


Figure 2: Trench layout plan

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Plate 1: Trench 1, looking east



Plate 2: Trench 3, looking north



Plate 3: Trench 6, looking east



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