



# Land adjacent to Orchard Industrial Estate, Toddington, Gloucestershire

## Archaeological Evaluation Report

November 2022

**Client: EDP on behalf of Descram Holdings Ltd**

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# Land adjacent to Orchard Industrial Estate, Toddington, Gloucestershire

## *Archaeological Evaluation Report*

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## Summary

Oxford Archaeology was commissioned by EDP Ltd on behalf of Descram Holdings Ltd to undertake a trial trench evaluation of a land adjacent to Orchard Industrial Estate, Toddington. The work comprised the excavation of nine trenches and was undertaken between the 14th and 17th November 2022.

The trial trenching revealed a single undated pit in Trench 2. No significant remains were recorded, and all other features revealed were considered to be agricultural in origin.

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## Acknowledgements

Oxford Archaeology would like to thank Sarah Doherty of EDP for commissioning this project on behalf of Descram Holdings Ltd. Thanks are also extended to Toby Catchpole of Gloucestershire County Council who monitored the work on behalf of Tewkesbury Borough Council.

The project was managed for Oxford Archaeology by Gerry Thacker. The fieldwork was directed by Dan Sykes who was supported by Mike Simms and Harrysson Waldman. Survey and digitising was carried out by Caroline Souday. Thanks are also extended to the team of OA staff prepared the archive under the supervision of Nicola Scott.



## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Scope of work**

1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by EDP Ltd on behalf of Descram Holdings Ltd to undertake a trial trench evaluation at the site of a proposed development on land adjacent to Orchard Industrial Estate.

1.1.2 The work was undertaken to inform the Planning Authority in advance of a submission of a Planning Application. A specification was agreed between Toby Catchpole of Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) and Sarah Doherty of EDP, and a written scheme of investigation was produced by OA detailing the Local Authority's requirements for work necessary to inform the planning process (OA 2022). This document outlines how OA implemented the specified requirements.

### **1.2 Location, topography and geology**

1.2.1 The site lies around 1.2km to the west of the village of Toddington and measures 3.8 hectares. The site is triangular and bounded on all sides by roads, with the B4077 to the south, the B4087 to the west and the road defining the western edge of Orchard Industrial Estate to the east (Fig. 1). The site is located at National Grid Reference 402289 232664.

1.2.2 The area of proposed development consists of a single arable field which rises slightly to the south, with a mean height of around 60m above Ordnance Datum.

1.2.3 The geology of the area is mapped as Charmouth Mudstone Formation (BGS website).

### **1.3 Archaeological and historical background**

1.3.1 The archaeological and historical background of the site has been described in detail in a desk-based assessment (EDP 2022), which reviewed records for a 1km radius of the site, the results of which are summarised below.

#### ***Prehistoric***

1.3.2 The only identified prehistoric evidence in the study area is the possible remains of an Iron Age hillfort and associated earthworks including banks and ditch c. 760m to the south of the Site.

#### ***Romano-British***

1.3.3 Two sherds of Roman pottery and four 'U' profiled ditches were uncovered around 600m to the north-east of the site during pipeline works. The pottery may be derived from manuring and the ditches remain undated.

1.3.4 The Salt Way (Salters Way) is a Roman or prehistoric route which ran from Droitwich to Lechlade and lies 900m to the east of the site.

#### ***Anglo-Saxon and Medieval***

- 1.3.5 Toddington is identified as a medieval settlement in the Gloucestershire HER and is first mentioned in a document of 11th century date. It is possible that the village had Saxon origins.

#### *Post-medieval and modern*

- 1.3.6 Immediately to the south and east of the site the B4077 follows the route of the Cheltenham to Prestbury turnpike which was established in 1824.
- 1.3.7 The 17th century Toddington House with late 18th century formal gardens and early 19th century Toddington Manor are located 1.2km to the north-east of the site.
- 1.3.8 The site was previously used as an orchard and supplied fruit to the adjacent Naunton Field Jam factory which was constructed in the 1880s.

#### *Previous work*

- 1.3.9 A geophysical survey of the site was undertaken in 2022 by Lefort Geophysics (Fig. 2). The survey concluded that “A possible fragmentary enclosure has been detected along with a short ditch section that are both deemed to be of possible localised archaeological interest. Other anomalies detected include three concentrated areas of magnetically enhanced readings, numerous agricultural features, trends of uncertain origin and at least one modern service. The majority of the site produced no anomalies of archaeological potential”.
- 1.3.10 The survey also established the presence of numerous small pit-like anomalies which may be tree root holes, reflecting the site’s previous use as an orchard.

## 2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Aims

2.1.1 The project aims and objectives were as follows:

- i. To determine the presence or absence of any archaeological remains which may survive.
- ii. To determine or confirm the approximate extent of any surviving remains.
- iii. To determine the date range of any surviving remains by artefactual or other means.
- iv. To determine the condition and state of preservation of any remains.
- v. To determine the degree of complexity of any surviving horizontal or vertical stratigraphy.
- vi. To assess the associations and implications of any remains encountered with reference to the historic landscape.
- vii. To determine the potential of the site to provide palaeoenvironmental and/or economic evidence, and the forms in which such evidence may survive.
- viii. To determine the implications of any remains with reference to economy, status utility and social activity; and
- ix. To determine or confirm the likely range, quality and quantity of the artefactual evidence present.
- x. To assess the results and reliability of the geophysical survey.
- xi. The programme of archaeological investigation will be conducted within the general research parameters and objectives defined by The South-West England Research Framework <https://researchframeworks.org/swarf/>

### 2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 Trenches were set out by an OA Surveyor using a GPS with a sub 15mm accuracy.
- 2.2.2 Trenches were opened by a 13t excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision. Machining was undertaken in even spits to the surface of the natural geology, with topsoil and subsoil stored separately adjacent but at a safe distance from the trench edges.
- 2.2.3 All features and deposits were assigned unique context numbers and described using OA pro forma context records.
- 2.2.4 Digital photos were taken of any archaeological features, deposits, trenches and the evaluation work in general.
- 2.2.5 Plans were produced at an appropriate scale (normally 1:50 or 1:100) with larger scale plans of features produced as necessary. Sections of features will be drawn at a scale of 1:20. All section drawings were digitally located. The absolute height (m OD) of all

principal strata and features, and the section datum lines, was calculated and is indicated on the drawings.

- 2.2.6 On completion of the works and in agreement with Toby Catchpole of GCC all trenches were backfilled with arisings in reverse order of excavation.

## **3 RESULTS**

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

3.1.1 The results of the evaluation are presented below and include a stratigraphic description of the trenches that contained archaeological remains. The full details of all trenches with dimensions and depths of all deposits can be found in Appendix A. Finds data and spot dates are tabulated in Appendix B.

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

3.2.1 The soil sequence in the trenches was fairly uniform. The natural geology of mudstone clay with occasional gravel patches, mainly within the west of the site was overlain by a clay subsoil, which in turn was overlain by topsoil.

3.2.2 Ground conditions throughout the evaluation were generally good although there was occasional rain, and the site remained fairly dry throughout. Archaeological features, where present, were easy to identify against the underlying natural geology.

### **3.3 General distribution of archaeological deposits**

3.3.1 Plough furrows were present in the majority of trenches and were orientated north-south. Where examined these were no deeper than 50mm. French drains and mole drains were present in some trenches, although land drains were absent.

### **3.4 Trench 2**

3.4.1 Trench 2 revealed a single small pit, 203. It was sub-oval in plan, measuring 0.78m across and 0.23m deep. It contained a sterile deposit of blue-grey silty clay (204).

### **3.5 Trench 4**

3.5.1 A large probable tree throw hole was recorded in Trench 4. The full extent of the feature was not exposed but it measured at least 3m wide and 0.5m deep. It appeared to have been deliberately backfilled with a grey-brown silty clay deposit (404).

### **3.6 Finds summary**

3.6.1 No finds were recovered during the evaluation, and no deposits suitable for environmental sampling were present.

## **4 DISCUSSION**

### **4.1 Reliability of field investigation**

4.1.1 The trenches were all cleanly machined and although there was some ingress of rainwater this did not obscure any potential features. Where present features were easy to identify against the pale clay mudstone geology, and plough furrows where present were narrow and shallow.

### **4.2 Evaluation objectives and results**

4.2.1 The evaluation revealed only a single possible pit in Trench 2 and a large tree throw in Trench 4. No significant archaeological remains were identified and none of the anomalies highlighted by the geophysical survey were revealed other than those of agricultural origin.

### **4.3 Interpretation**

4.3.1 It has been established in the archaeological and historical background for this project that the site was formerly in use as an orchard. It is therefore reasonable to suggest that the large feature recorded in Trench 4 is a tree throw hole, resulting from the clearance activity when the orchard was no longer required. The undated pit in Trench 2 was an isolated feature of dubious archaeological origin. Without any associated features or dating evidence, no further interpretation is possible.

4.3.2 All other activity on the site appears to have been agricultural in nature, as evidenced by the north-south aligned furrows recorded across the site.

## APPENDIX A TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1						
<b>General description</b>					<b>Orientation</b>	NE-SW
Trench contained 4, N-S aligned plough furrows. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of firm pale yellow-brown clay with occasional orange gravels.					<b>Length (m)</b>	50
					<b>Width (m)</b>	1.8
					<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	0.4
<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Width (m)</b>	<b>Depth (m)</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Finds</b>	<b>Date</b>
100	Layer	-	0.2	Topsoil	-	-
101	Layer	-	0.2	Subsoil	-	-
102	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 2						
<b>General description</b>					<b>Orientation</b>	NE-SW
Trench contained a pit at the western end and N-S aligned plough furrows. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of firm pale yellow-brown clay with occasional orange gravels.					<b>Length (m)</b>	50
					<b>Width (m)</b>	1.8
					<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	0.4
<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Width (m)</b>	<b>Depth (m)</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Finds</b>	<b>Date</b>
200	Layer	-	0.2	Topsoil	-	-
201	Layer	-	0.2	Subsoil	-	-
202	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
203	Cut	0.78	0.23	Pit	-	-
204	Fill		0.23	Fill of 203, light bluish grey, silty clay	-	-

Trench 3a						
<b>General description</b>					<b>Orientation</b>	W-E
Trench contained 3 N-S aligned plough furrows. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of firm pale yellow-brown clay.					<b>Length (m)</b>	30
					<b>Width (m)</b>	1.8
					<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	0.30
<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Width (m)</b>	<b>Depth (m)</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Finds</b>	<b>Date</b>
300	Layer	-	0.2	Topsoil	-	-
301	Layer	-	0.15	Subsoil	-	-
302	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 3b						
<b>General description</b>					<b>Orientation</b>	W-E
Trench contained N-S aligned plough furrows. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of firm pale yellow-brown clay with occasional orange gravels.					<b>Length (m)</b>	20
					<b>Width (m)</b>	2
					<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	0.5
<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Width (m)</b>	<b>Depth (m)</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Finds</b>	<b>Date</b>
300	Layer	-	0.2	Topsoil	-	-
301	Layer	-	0.26	Subsoil	-	-
302	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 4						
General description					Orientation	W-E
Trench contained N-S aligned plough furrows and a tree throw hole at the western end. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of firm pale yellow-brown clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	2
					Avg. depth (m)	0.5
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
400	Layer	-	0.22	Topsoil	-	-
401	Layer	-	0.25	Subsoil	-	-
402	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
403	Cut	3	0.5	Tree throw hole.	-	-
404	Fill	3	0.5	Fill of 403, grey-brown, silty clay with occasional charcoal and burnt stone. Possible orchard clearance.	-	-

Trench 5						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench contained 4 N-S aligned plough furrows Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty sand. The geophysical anomaly that the trench was targeted on was not present.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	2
					Avg. depth (m)	0.5
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
500	Layer	-	0.2	Topsoil	-	-
501	Layer	-	0.26	Subsoil	-	-
502	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 6						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench contained 4 N-S aligned plough furrows Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of firm pale yellow-brown clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	2
					Avg. depth (m)	0.45
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
600	Layer	-	0.2	Topsoil	-	-
601	Layer	-	0.24	Subsoil	-	-
602	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 7						
General description					Orientation	NW-SE
Trench contained 4 N-S aligned plough furrows Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of firm pale yellow-brown clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	2
					Avg. depth (m)	0.5
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
700	Layer	-	0.2	Topsoil	-	-
701	Layer	-	0.25	Subsoil	-	-



702	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
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Trench 8						
<b>General description</b>					<b>Orientation</b>	N-S
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of firm pale yellow-brown clay with occasional orange gravels.					<b>Length (m)</b>	50
					<b>Width (m)</b>	2
					<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	0.4
<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Width (m)</b>	<b>Depth (m)</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Finds</b>	<b>Date</b>
800	Layer	-	0.2	Topsoil	-	-
801	Layer	-	0.22	Subsoil	-	-
802	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

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## APPENDIX B      BIBLIOGRAPHY

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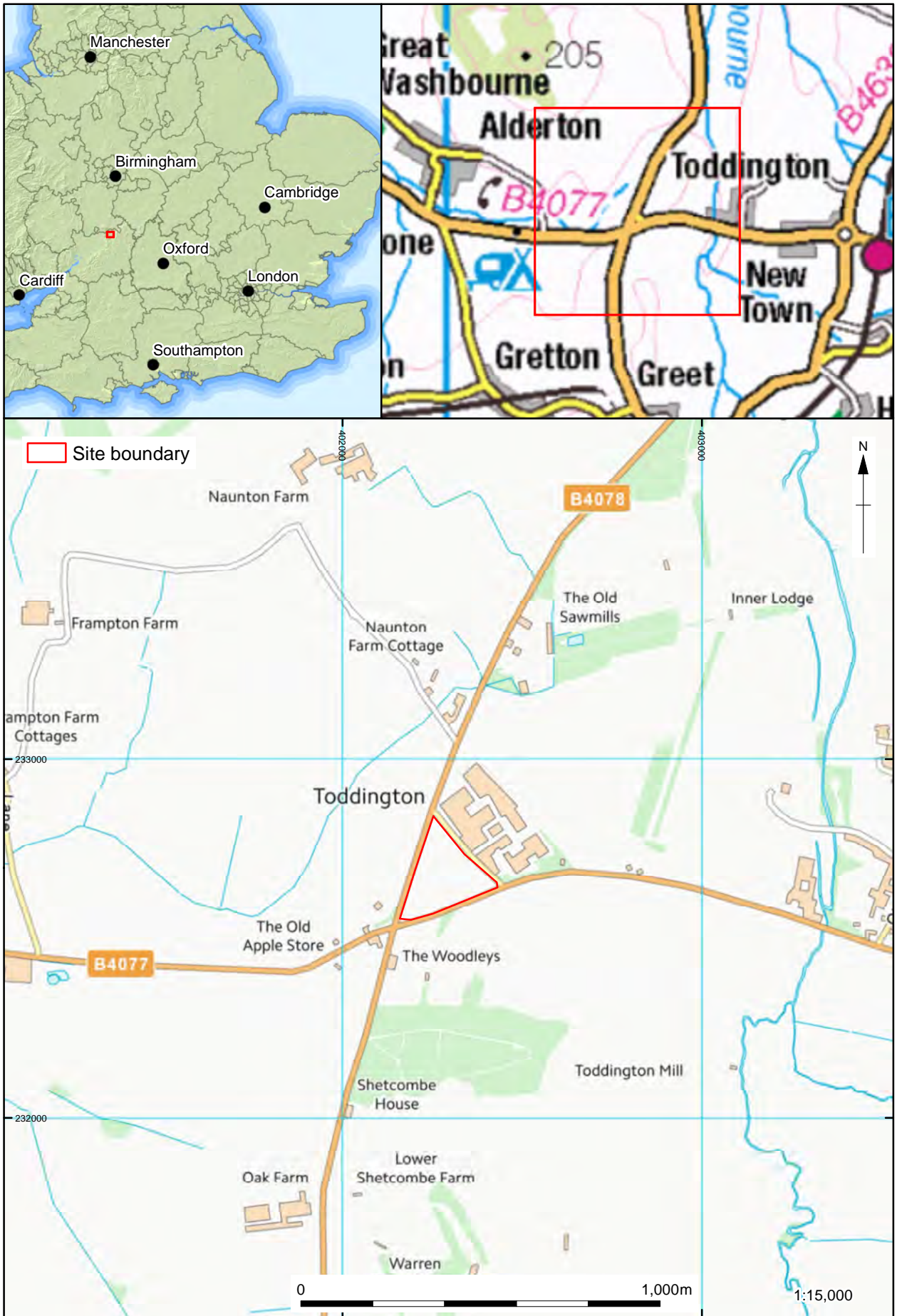
OA, 2022, Land Adjacent to Orchard Industrial Estate, Toddington, Gloucestershire: Written Scheme of Investigation, unpublished document

## APPENDIX C      SITE SUMMARY DETAILS

<b>Site name:</b>	Land Adjacent to Orchard Industrial Estate, Toddington
<b>Site code:</b>	OXTODD22
<b>Grid Reference</b>	SP0228932664
<b>Type:</b>	Evaluation
<b>Date and duration:</b>	14th to 17th November 2022
<b>Area of Site</b>	3.8ha
<b>Location of archive:</b>	The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with The Wilson in due course, under the following accession number: TBC.
<b>Summary of Results:</b>	<p>Oxford Archaeology was commissioned by EDP Ltd on behalf of Descram Holdings Ltd to undertake a trial trench evaluation of a land adjacent to Orchard Industrial Estate, Toddington. The work comprised the excavation of nine trenches.</p> <p>The trial trenching revealed a single undated pit in Trench 2. No significant remains were recorded, and all other features revealed were considered to be agricultural in origin.</p>



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Figure 1: Site location



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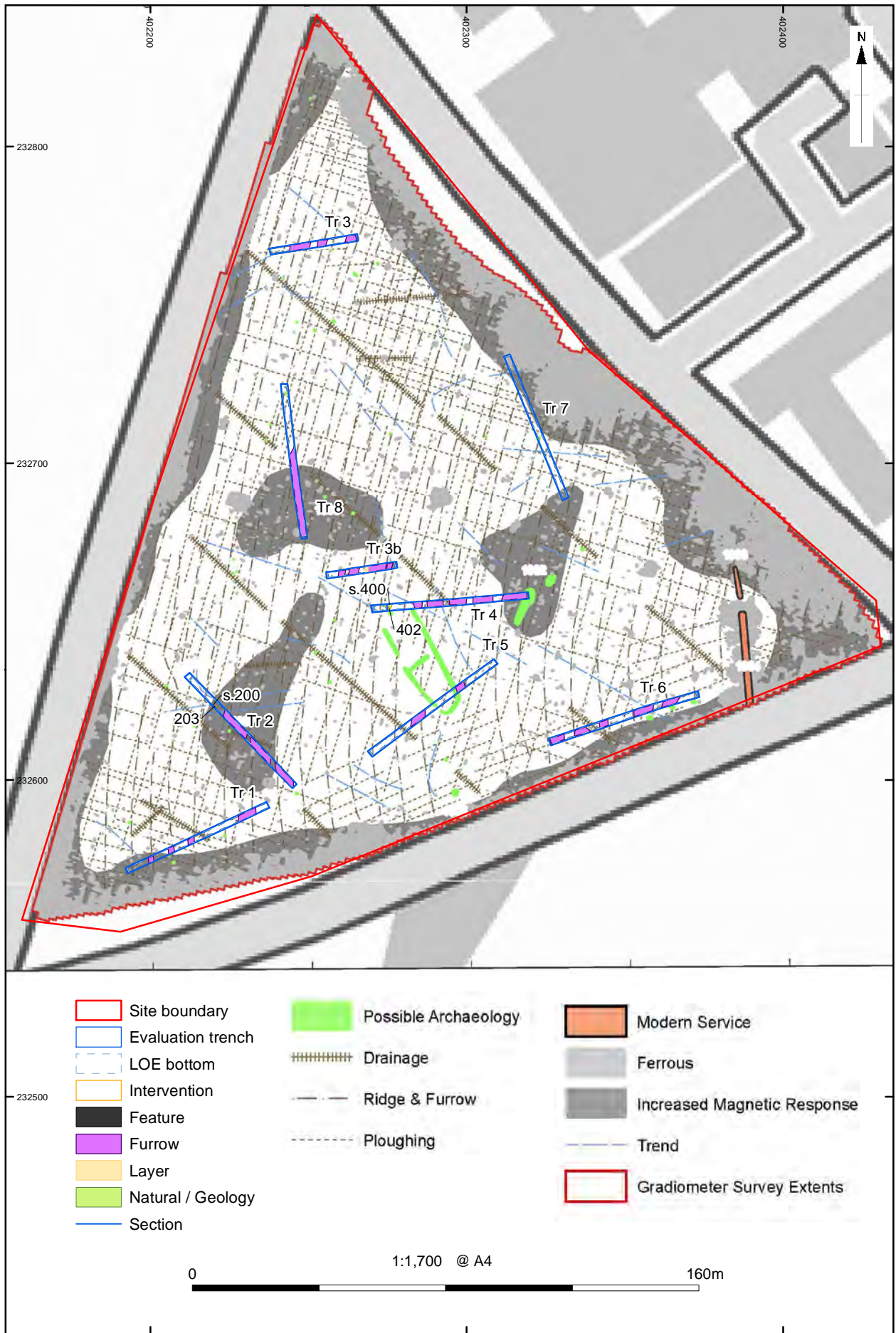


Figure 2: Plan of trenches and archaeological features





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