



# Car Park 14 and adjacent land, Laindon Link, Basildon, Essex

## Archaeological Evaluation Report

April 2023

**Client: Hill Partnerships Ltd and Sempra Homes**

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NGR: TQ 69854 88338





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## Car Park 14 and adjacent land, Laindon Link, Basildon, Essex

### *Archaeological Evaluation Report*

*Written by Jack Easen MA PCIfA*

*With illustrations by David Brown BA and Katharine Waring*

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## Summary

Between the 20th-22nd of March 2023 Oxford Archaeology conducted an archaeological evaluation at the site of Car Park 14 and adjacent land, Laindon Link, Basildon, Essex. A total of seven trial trenches, each measuring 30m in length, were excavated within the proposed development area to the east of the stream and historic parish boundary.

No archaeological remains were encountered in any of the trenches. It appears that the site was previously excavated and levelled for the construction of the car park, which would have truncated any archaeological features.

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## Acknowledgements

Oxford Archaeology would like to thank Hill Partnerships Ltd and Sempra Homes for commissioning this project. Thanks are also extended to Teresa O'Connor who monitored the work on behalf of Basildon Council.

The project was managed for Oxford Archaeology by Nick Gilmour. The fieldwork was directed by Jack Easen, who was supported by Mike Mathews and Jim Harris. Survey and digitising were carried out by Daria Adamson.

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Scope of work**

1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by Hill Partnerships Ltd and Sempra Homes to undertake a trial trench evaluation at the site of Car Park 14 and Adjacent Land, Laindon Link, Basildon, Essex (TQ 69854 88338; Fig. 1).

1.1.2 The work was undertaken as a condition of Planning Permission (planning ref. 22/01179/FUL) to inform the Planning Authority, Basildon Council. An Archaeological Brief was set by Place Services detailing the Local Authority's requirements for discharging the planning condition. A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was produced by OA outlining how OA implemented the specified requirements.

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

1.1.3 The site lies to the south of the Laindon Link Road within the town of Basildon. It is relatively flat at 27-28m OD. A stream (or ditch), which formed a historic parish boundary, crosses the site on a north to south alignment.

1.1.4 The area of proposed development consists mostly of a disused car park, with an area of grass/scrub to the west.

1.1.5 The geology of the area is mapped as clay, of the London Clay Formation, which is covered by superficial Head deposits of clay, sand and silt (British Geological Survey online map viewer <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html>, accessed February 2023).

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

1.3.1 The following section provides a summary of the archaeological and historic background of the site and is drawn from the WSI (Gilmour 2023), a 1km radius search of the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER; undertaken on the 01/03/2023) and Basildon Historic Environment Characterisation (2010-2011, Basildon Council). Selected EHER record numbers are shown on Figure 2.

1.3.2 Two historic parish boundaries are located within the site, both aligned NNW-SSE, with one following the line of a stream/ditch still present on site. The other followed the path of a disused road at the eastern edge of the development.

1.3.3 Due to the lack of archaeological work accompanying the construction of Basildon New Town in the 1950s and 60s and limited recent development in the Langdon Hills and Laindon area, few archaeological sites have been identified.

1.3.4 Generally, the surrounding historic landscape is characterised by rural, dispersed settlement with rectilinear field systems, typical of south and east Essex, which perhaps originated in the Middle Anglo-Saxon period.

1.3.5 In the 1950s construction of the Swan Mead School in the Basildon New Town residential area – approximately 1.2km to the east of the site – revealed a large Late Bronze Age hoard.



- 1.3.6 An excavation by Archaeology South-East at Nethermayne Plot 3a, Kingswood (EEX59490), south of the current site, revealed evidence of Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age land use in the form of three pits. An unenclosed Roman cremation cemetery of eight burials dating to the 1st/2nd century AD was also discovered, along with a small number of Roman ditches, pits and postholes. Most of the dated features were Early Anglo-Saxon, representing small scale settlement occupation.
- 1.3.7 At the Basildon New Water Reservoir (EEX18177), Iron Age and Roman occupation material (EHER 5267 and 5268) was discovered during bulldozing in the 1960s.
- 1.3.8 An excavation by the Colchester Archaeological Trust, west of Basildon College, Dry Street (EEX56184), revealed multi-period occupation with sporadic activity in the Neolithic and Bronze Age (EHER 47778) evidenced by occasional pottery and flint finds. This was followed by an Iron Age ditched system of rectilinear fields which was continued and adapted through the Roman and Anglo-Saxon periods (EHER 47779/47780).
- 1.3.9 Excavations east of Ballards Walk, north-west of the current site, revealed a single Bronze Age gully amongst a series of late medieval field boundaries (EEX58942/EHER 48834).
- 1.3.10 Approximately 4km west of the site in Langdon Hills and West Laindon is the medieval church and hall complex of Dunton Hall, of which the Old Rectory is a moated site. To the north of the current site at Church Hill is St Nicholas Church, dating to the 14th century with a 17th century annex called the 'Priest Hall' and Laindon Hall, now demolished, which was dated to the 15th century but possibly had earlier origins.
- 1.3.11 Within the new town of Basildon is Botelers Hall and church complex, which is a Scheduled Monument dating to the 14th century. The moated enclosure survives although the original building has been lost. An Ordnance Survey map from 1881 depicts a range of fishponds thought to be medieval in date. Within Basildon town centre cartographic records show the location of Barnstaple Hall, probably the focal point of the Barnstaple Hundred, first recorded in AD 1087.

## 2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Aims

2.1.1 The project aims and objectives were as follows:

- i. 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. Provide sufficient coverage to establish the character, condition, date and purpose of any archaeological deposits.
- iii. Provide sufficient coverage to evaluate the likely impact of past land uses, and the possible presence of masking deposits.
- iv. Provide – if archaeological remains are found – sufficient information to construct an archaeological mitigation strategy, dealing with preservation, the recording of archaeological deposits, working practices, timetables, and orders of cost.

2.1.2. Site specific research objectives of this site were:

- i. Test the area near to the stream for paleoenvironmental remains.

### 2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 The archaeological methodology was conducted in accordance with the approved WSI (Gilmour 2023) and in line with current best archaeological practice and the appropriate national and regional standards and guidelines. All work was conducted in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations.

2.2.2 All fieldwork was undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the OA fieldwork manual (publication forthcoming). Further guidance was provided to all excavators in the form of the OA Fieldwork Crib Sheets – a companion guide to the Fieldwork Manual.

2.2.3 Seven trenches (30m x 1.8m) were excavated in Car Park 14 (Trench 6-12) with the possibility of a further five trenches (Trench 1-5) being excavated as a contingency, in the adjacent scrub land to the west of the stream.

2.2.4 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.

2.2.5 All machine excavation was undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced archaeologist.

2.2.6 All trenches were excavated by a mechanical excavator to the depth of geological horizons, or to the upper interface of archaeological features or deposits, whichever was encountered first.

2.2.7 Surveying was undertaken using a survey-grade differential GPS connected to Leica Smartnet providing an accuracy of 5mm horizontal and 10mm vertical.

2.2.8 The site grid was accurately tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid and located on the 1:2500 or 1:1250 map of the area. Elevations were levelled to the Ordnance Datum.

2.2.9 All trenches were photographed and recorded on OA's digital system.

## **3 RESULTS**

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

3.1.1 The results of the evaluation are presented below. The locations of the excavated trenches (Trench 6-12) are shown in Figure 3. A further five proposed trenches in the scrub land to the west were not excavated (Trench 1-5). 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 in the trenches was fairly uniform. The natural geology of clay, bedrock of the London Clay Formation, was overlain by levelling materials in the form of sand and 'crush', which in turn was overlain by tarmac (Plates 1-4). Only Trench 6 differed with a layer of concrete underlying the tarmac. The levelling material varied in thickness across the site from 0.27-0.63m.

3.2.2 Ground conditions throughout the evaluation were good and the site remained dry throughout. Although no archaeological features were present it was easy to identify the underlying natural geology.

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

3.3.1 None of the seven trenches excavated by machine in the car park) revealed any archaeological features or deposits due to the car park area being excavated and levelled during construction. Beneath the tarmac, levelling materials were directly overlying the bedrock.

### **3.4 Finds summary**

3.4.1 No finds were recovered.

## **4 DISCUSSION**

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

4.1.1 The results of the evaluation are considered reliable. No archaeological features or deposits were discovered due to the excavation and levelling of the area during the construction of the car park. The clay geology meant that the geological horizon was clear when encountered.

### **4.2 Evaluation objectives, results and interpretation**

4.2.1 All the objectives laid out in section 2.1 of this report were achieved by this evaluation.

4.2.2 The results of this evaluation have clearly established that no archaeological remains were present in Car Park 14 and if any archaeological remains had existed, they would have been truncated during the construction of the car park.

### **4.3 Significance**

4.3.1 The evaluation revealed no remains of archaeological significance.

## APPENDIX A TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 6						
<b>General description</b>					<b>Orientation</b>	NNW-SSE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of tarmac overlying concrete, crush and sand onto the natural geology.					<b>Length (m)</b>	30
					<b>Width (m)</b>	1.8
					<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	0.39
<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Width (m)</b>	<b>Depth (m)</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Finds</b>	<b>Date</b>
-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Trench 7						
<b>General description</b>					<b>Orientation</b>	WSW-ENE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of tarmac overlying crush and sand onto the natural geology.					<b>Length (m)</b>	30
					<b>Width (m)</b>	1.8
					<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	0.27
<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Width (m)</b>	<b>Depth (m)</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Finds</b>	<b>Date</b>
-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Trench 8						
<b>General description</b>					<b>Orientation</b>	NNW-SSE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of tarmac overlying crush and sand onto the natural geology.					<b>Length (m)</b>	30
					<b>Width (m)</b>	1.8
					<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>
-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Trench 9						
<b>General description</b>					<b>Orientation</b>	WSW-ENE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of tarmac overlying crush and sand onto the natural geology.					<b>Length (m)</b>	30
					<b>Width (m)</b>	1.8
					<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	0.58
<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Width (m)</b>	<b>Depth (m)</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Finds</b>	<b>Date</b>
-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Trench 10						
<b>General description</b>					<b>Orientation</b>	WSW-ENE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of tarmac overlying crush and sand onto the natural geology.					<b>Length (m)</b>	30
					<b>Width (m)</b>	1.8
					<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	0.43
<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Width (m)</b>	<b>Depth (m)</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Finds</b>	<b>Date</b>
-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Trench 11						
<b>General description</b>					<b>Orientation</b>	WSW-ENE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of tarmac overlying crush and sand onto the natural geology.					<b>Length (m)</b>	30
					<b>Width (m)</b>	1.8
					<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	0.35
<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Width (m)</b>	<b>Depth (m)</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Finds</b>	<b>Date</b>
-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Trench 12						
<b>General description</b>					<b>Orientation</b>	NNW-SSE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of tarmac overlying crush and sand onto the natural geology.					<b>Length (m)</b>	30
					<b>Width (m)</b>	1.8
					<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	0.63
<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Width (m)</b>	<b>Depth (m)</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Finds</b>	<b>Date</b>
-	-	-	-	-	-	-

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## APPENDIX B BIBLIOGRAPHY

Basildon Council, 2010-2011, *Basildon Borough Historic Environment Characterisation Project*. Essex County Council Historic Environment Branch. Unpublished document

Gilmour, N., 2023, *Car Park 14 and Adjacent Land Laindon Link, Basildon, Essex. Written Scheme of Investigation*. Oxford Archaeology. Unpublished document

### ***Electronic Resources***

BGS Map Viewer <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html>  
accessed February 2023



## APPENDIX C SITE SUMMARY DETAILS / OASIS REPORT FORM

### Project Details

OASIS Number	oxfordar3-514302		
Project Name	Car Park 14 and Adjacent Land, Laindon Link, Basildon		
Start of Fieldwork	20/03/2023	End of Fieldwork	22/03/2023
Previous Work	No	Future Work	Unknown

### Project Reference Codes

Site Code	BALL23	Planning App. Number	22/01179/FUL
HER Number		Related Numbers	

Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
Development Type	Urban Residential
Place in Planning Process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

### 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
none	None	none	None

Insert more lines as appropriate.

### Project Location

County	Essex	Address (including Postcode) Car Park 14 and adjacent land, Laindon Link, Basildon, Essex SS15 5AB
District	Basildon	
Parish	Basildon	
HER office	Essex	
Size of Study Area		
National Grid Ref	TQ 69854 88338	

### Project Originators

Organisation	Oxford Archaeology East
Project Brief Originator	Essex County Council
Project Design Originator	Nick Gilmour
Project Manager	Nick Gilmour
Project Supervisor	Jack Easen

## Project Archives

	Location	ID
Physical Archive (Finds)	n/a	n/a
Digital Archive	ADS	BALL23
Paper Archive	No repository available	No repository available

Physical Contents	Present?	Digital files associated with Finds	Paperwork associated with Finds
Animal Bones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Glass	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Human Remains	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leather	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Metal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stratigraphic		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Survey		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Textiles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worked Bone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worked Stone/Lithic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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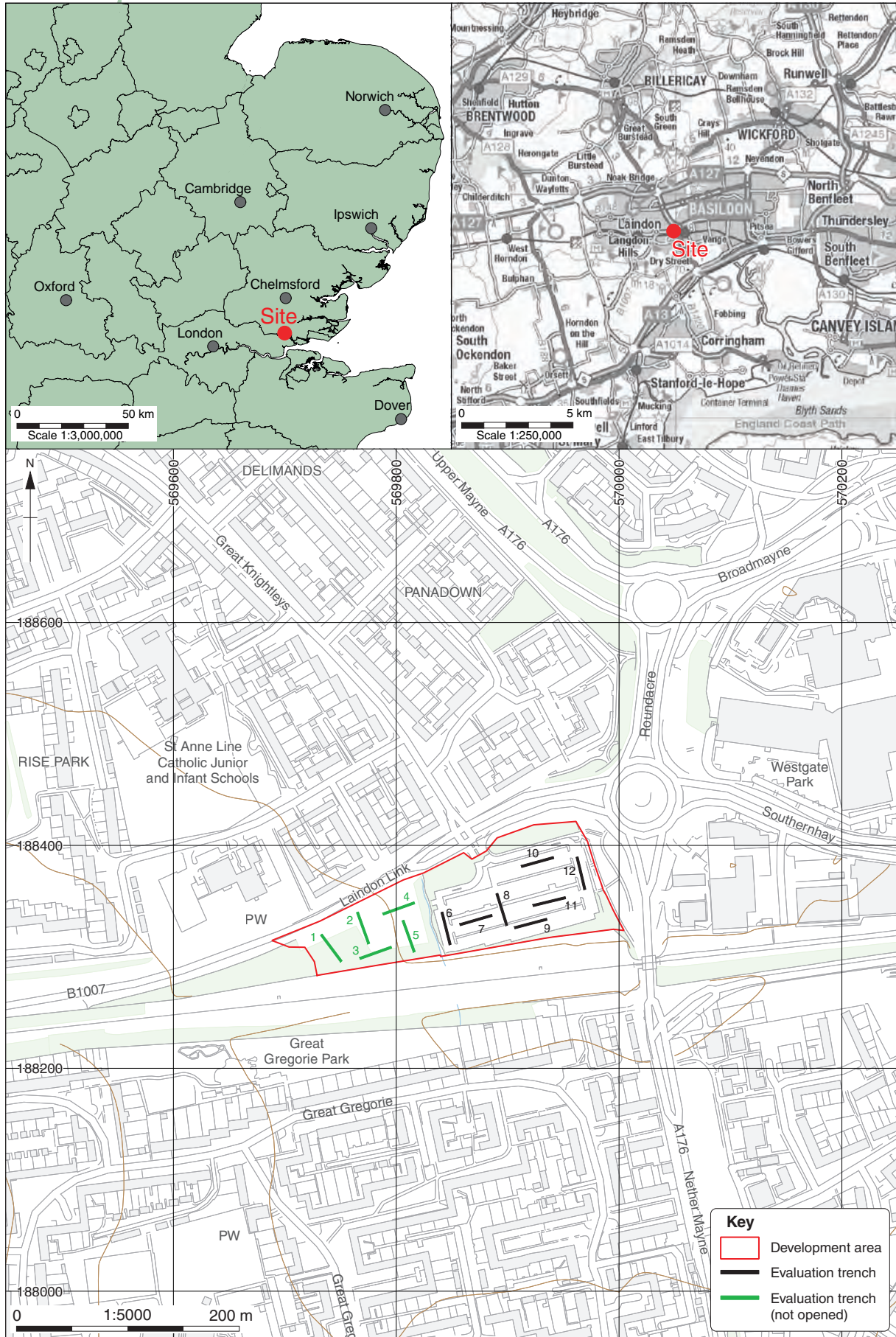
### Digital Media

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GIS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Geophysics	<input type="checkbox"/>
Images (Digital photos)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Illustrations (Figures/Plates)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Moving Image	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spreadsheets	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Survey	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Virtual Reality	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Paper Media

Aerial Photos	<input type="checkbox"/>
Context Sheets	<input type="checkbox"/>
Correspondence	<input type="checkbox"/>
Diary	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drawing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Manuscript	<input type="checkbox"/>
Map	<input type="checkbox"/>
Matrices	<input type="checkbox"/>
Microfiche	<input type="checkbox"/>
Miscellaneous	<input type="checkbox"/>
Research/Notes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Photos (negatives/prints/slides)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plans	<input type="checkbox"/>
Report	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Sections	<input type="checkbox"/>
Survey	<input type="checkbox"/>

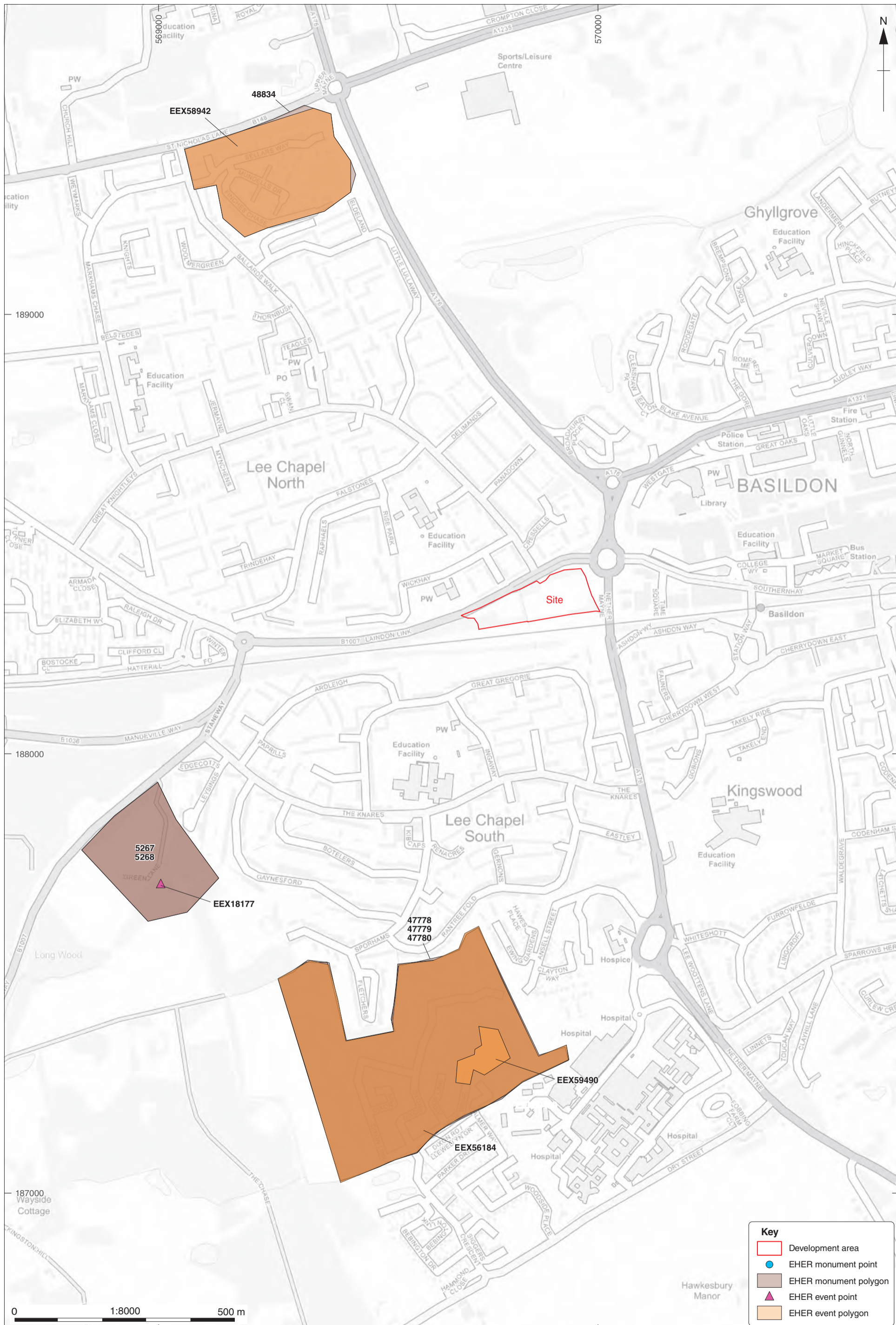
## Further Comments



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Figure 1: Site location map



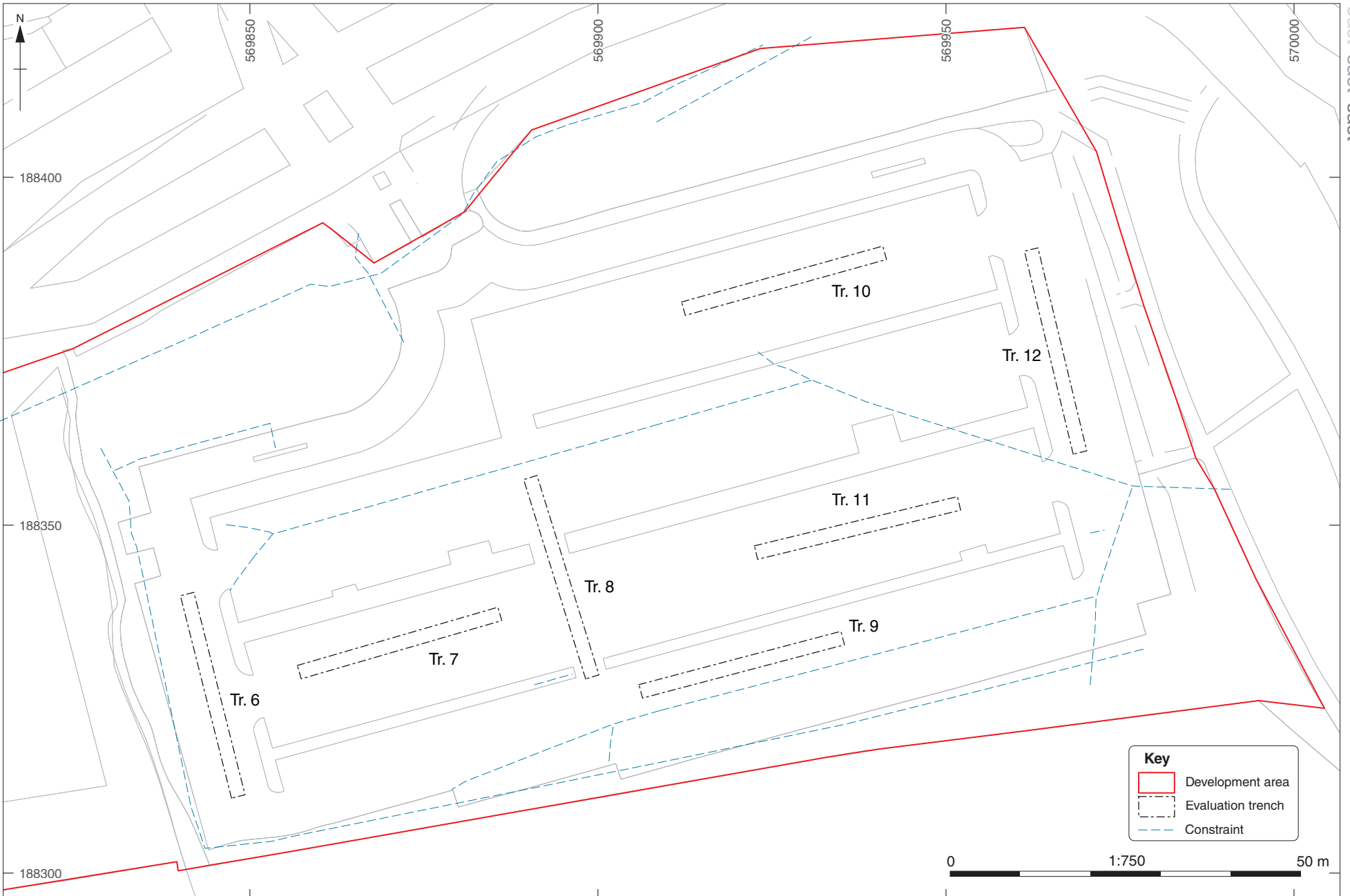


Key	
<span style="border: 1px solid red; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span>	Development area
<span style="color: blue;">●</span>	EHER monument point
<span style="background-color: brown; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span>	EHER monument polygon
<span style="color: purple;">▲</span>	EHER event point
<span style="background-color: orange; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span>	EHER event polygon

Figure 2: EHER entries

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Report Number 2654

Figure 3: Trench plan

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Plate 1: Trench 6, looking south



Plate 2: Trench 8, looking south





Plate 3: Trench 10, looking west



Plate 4: Trench 12, looking south





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