

# Steeles Road, Woolpit, Suffolk



## Archaeological Evaluation Report



March 2014

### Client:

OA East Report No: 1602  
OASIS No: oxfordar-172441  
NGR: TL 976 618

**Evaluation at Steeles Road, Woolpit, Suffolk**

*Archaeological Evaluation*

*By Nick Gilmour MA AlFA*

*Editor: Chris Thatcher BA*

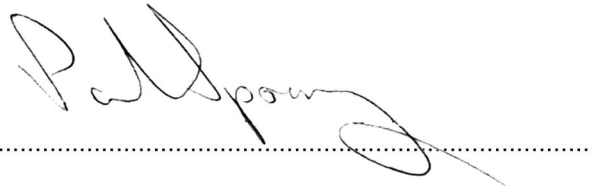
*Illustrator: Séverine Bézine BA MA*

*Report Date: March 2014*

**Report Number:** 1602  
**Site Name:** Steeles Road, Woolpit, Suffolk  
**HER Event No:** WPT 040  
**Date of Works:** March 2014  
**Client Name:** Lovell  
**Client Ref:**  
**Planning Ref:** 2228/13  
**Grid Ref:** TL 976 618  
**Site Code:** WPT 040  
**Finance Code:** XSFWOO14  
**Receiving Body:** Suffolk County Stores

**Accession No:**

Prepared by: Nick Gilmour  
Position: Project Officer  
Date: March 2014  
  
Checked by: Paul Spoerry  
Position: Regional Manager  
Date: March 2014  
Signed: .....



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**Oxford Archaeology East,**  
15 Trafalgar Way,  
Bar Hill,  
Cambridge,  
CB23 8SQ

t: 01223 850500  
f: 01223 850599  
e: oaeast@thehumanjourney.net  
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net/oaeast>

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## **Summary**

*Between the 4th and 5th of March 2014, Oxford Archaeology East carried out an evaluation on Land off Steeles Road, Woolpit, Suffolk. This was in advance of the proposed demolition of existing buildings, to be followed by the construction of new housing.*

*The evaluation revealed few archaeological remains. These comprised a single ditch and a natural hollow. A single sherd of pottery, probably of Iron Age date, was found in the natural hollow. In addition, several stuck flints were also recovered.*



## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 During March 2014 Oxford Archaeology East conducted an archaeological evaluation at land off Steeles Road, Woolpit, Suffolk (centred on TL 976 618). This archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Matthew Brudenell of Suffolk County Council (SCC; Planning Application 2228/13), supplemented by a Specification prepared by OA East.
- 1.1.2 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.
- 1.1.3 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 on boulder clay (BGS map sheet 189).

### 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The known archaeological activity within 1km of the current site is discussed below by period. The Suffolk Historic Environment Record number for each site is given in brackets.

#### ***Prehistoric***

- 1.3.2 Evidence for prehistoric activity within and around Woolpit is limited. A number of stray finds are recorded and these include a polished stone axe found c.1.2km to the east of Steeles Road (WPT014) and two fragments of socketed bronze axes found within Woolpit, one 750m north of the current site (WPT017), the other just over 1km to the north (WPT016). A cropmark of a ring-ditch, which may be a prehistoric feature, has also been recorded c.950m to the east of the current site.

#### ***Roman***

- 1.3.3 A scatter of Roman pottery was recovered from a field c.150m to the east of the current proposed development area (WPT 010), with a second scatter of pottery noted c.480m to the south-east (WPT 011). A Sestertius of Hadrian was also found in the garden of a house c.150m to the north-east of the site (WPT 001). In the wider area, Roman brooches were found c.900m to the west (DRK005).

#### ***Medieval***

- 1.3.4 The Church of St. Mary is located c.500m to the north-west of the current site (WPT007). The church dates from the Norman period, with much 14th century fabric surviving, including the porch. The medieval centre of the village, including the market place is located just to the east of the church. A scatter of 12th-14th century pottery was recovered from the surface of a field c.360m to the south-east of Steeles Road (WPT012).



***Previous archaeological work***

- 1.3.5 Two evaluations have previously taken place, c.150m to the north-west of the current site (WPT 034; WPT 035). Neither recorded any pre-modern features.

**1.4 Acknowledgements**

- 1.4.1 The author would like to thank Lovell, who commissioned and funded the work. Additional thanks go to Pat Moan, who carried out the survey and Lindsay Kemp who assisted with the fieldwork. The evaluation was monitored by Matthew Brudenell on behalf of Suffolk County Council.

## 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 a total of 210m of evaluation trench be excavated. Due to the presence of standing buildings, overhead and underground services and other obstructions, it was only possible to excavate a total of 175.5m of trenching.

2.2.2 Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a tracked 360° excavator, using a toothless ditching bucket.

2.2.3 The site survey was carried out using a Leica 1200 GPS, with Smartnet.

2.2.4 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 No deposits suitable for environmental sampling were present on the site.

2.2.7 Site conditions were good, with bright sunny weather.

### 3 RESULTS

#### 3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The results are presented below, by trench, with full descriptions given in Appendix A.

#### 3.2 Trench 1,

3.2.1 A single large feature (3), which appeared to represent a natural hollow, was present at the northern end of Trench 1. Feature 3 was 3.40m long, 2.04m wide and 0.24m deep, with gently sloping sides and a flat base.

3.2.2 It was filled by a single deposit (4) comprised of a dark brownish grey, silty clay. A single sherd of pottery (20g), of probable Iron Age date, along with two struck flints and 52g of animal bone were recovered from this deposit.

#### 3.3 Trenches 2, 3 and 4

3.3.1 No archaeological features were present within any of these trenches and no finds were retrieved.

#### 3.4 Trench 5

3.4.1 Ditch 1 crossed the northern end of Trench 5 on a south-west to north-east orientation. It was 0.82m wide and 0.10m deep, with gently sloping sides and a flat base.

3.4.2 A single mid brownish grey, silty clay deposit (2) filled this feature. A single struck flint was recovered from the slot excavated across this ditch, although this is likely to be residual.

#### 3.5 Trenches 6, 7, 8 and 9

3.5.1 None of these trenches contained any archaeological features and no finds were recovered from them.

#### 3.6 Finds Summary

3.6.1 Few finds were recovered from this evaluation and these are described below.

##### ***Struck Flint***

3.6.2 four fragments of struck flint were found during the evaluation. One (10g) was recovered from the fill of Ditch 1, this flake retains some cortex on its dorsal surface, along with several flake scars. Two small flakes (1g total), one in translucent black flint and the other in opaque grey flint, were recovered from the fill of natural hollow 3.

3.6.3 The final flint (23g) was recovered from the topsoil of a ploughed field at the southern end of the site. This is a thick, short flake manufactured from opaque back/grey flint, which retains some solid orangey brown cortex.

3.6.4 This small assemblage is not typologically closely datable, however, it does demonstrate a background level of prehistoric activity in the area of the site.

##### ***Pottery***

3.6.5 A single sherd (20g) of handmade pottery was recovered from fill 4 of natural hollow 3. This single body sherd is sand tempered with small quantities of grog and is most likely of Iron Age date. However, a Saxon date cannot be ruled out.

3.6.6 In addition, a single sherd (8g) from the rim of a coarse-ware vessel was recovered from the topsoil of the ploughed field. This abraded sherd dates from between the 12th

and 14th century AD and was probably deposited as a result of manuring of the fields during this period.

***Animal Bone***

- 3.6.7 A single fragment of animal bone (52g) was found within feature **3**. This is from a large mammal, probably a cow or a horse.

## 4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

### 4.1 Significance

- 4.1.1 The evaluation produced very little evidence for past activity on the site. The single ditch recorded (1) could not be dated. However, the fact that it was sealed by the subsoil suggests it was likely to have been dug in the medieval period or earlier. Without accurate dating, further discussion of the function and wider context of Ditch 1 is not possible.
- 4.1.2 The presence of a sherd of probable Iron Age pottery in natural hollow 3 hints at activity during this time within the surrounding area. However, no anthropogenic features of Iron Age date were present in any of the evaluation trenches.

### 4.2 Recommendations

- 4.2.1 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 1						
<b>General description</b>				<b>Orientation</b>		N-S
Trench contained a single feature, sealed by subsoil, overlying a natural of sandy clay.				<b>Max depth (m)</b>		0.89
				<b>Width (m)</b>		1.8m
				<b>Length (m)</b>		38.8m
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
6	Layer	-	0.35	Topsoil	-	-
7	Layer	-	0.56	Subsoil	-	-
3	Cut	3.40	0.24	Natural hollow	-	Iron Age?
4	Fill	3.40	0.24	Fill of Natural hollow 3	Pottery, flint	Iron Age?

Trench 2						
<b>General description</b>				<b>Orientation</b>		E-W
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of soil and subsoil overlying a natural of sandy clay.				<b>Max. depth (m)</b>		0.80
				<b>Width (m)</b>		1.80
				<b>Length (m)</b>		6.50
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
6	Layer	-	0.30	Topsoil	-	-
7	Layer	-	0.50	Subsoil	-	-

Trench 3						
<b>General description</b>				<b>Orientation</b>		N-S
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of soil and subsoil overlying a natural of sandy clay				<b>Max. depth (m)</b>		0.85m
				<b>Width (m)</b>		1.80
				<b>Length (m)</b>		14
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
6	Layer	-	0.35	Topsoil	-	-
7	Layer	-	0.50	Subsoil	-	-

Trench 4						
<b>General description</b>				<b>Orientation</b>	NE-SW	
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of soil and subsoil overlying a natural of sandy clay				<b>Max. depth (m)</b>	0.80	
				<b>Width (m)</b>	1.80	
				<b>Length (m)</b>	13.5	
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
6	Layer	-	0.30	Topsoil	-	-
7	Layer	-	0.50	Subsoil	-	-

Trench 5						
<b>General description</b>				<b>Orientation</b>	NE-SW	
A single shallow ditch crossed this trench, which could not be dated. It was sealed by subsoil and topsoil.				<b>Max. depth (m)</b>	0.75	
				<b>Width (m)</b>	1.80	
				<b>Length (m)</b>	13.2	
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
6	Layer	-	0.25	Topsoil	-	-
7	Subsoil	-	0.50	Subsoil	-	-
1	Cut	0.82	0.10	Ditch	-	-
2	Fill	0.82	0.10	Fill of Ditch 1	Flint	-

Trench 6						
<b>General description</b>				<b>Orientation</b>	E-W	
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of soil and subsoil overlying a natural of sandy clay				<b>Max. depth (m)</b>	0.67	
				<b>Width (m)</b>	1.80	
				<b>Length (m)</b>	24.45	
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
6	Layer	-	0.57	Topsoil	-	-
7	Layer	-	0.15	Subsoil	-	-

Trench 7						
<b>General description</b>				<b>Orientation</b>		N-S
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of soil and subsoil overlying a natural of sandy clay				<b>Max. depth (m)</b>		0.55
				<b>Width (m)</b>		1.80
				<b>Length (m)</b>		20.60
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
6	Layer	-	0.35	Topsoil	-	-
7	Layer	-	0.30	Subsoil	-	-

Trench 8						
<b>General description</b>				<b>Orientation</b>		E-W
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of soil and subsoil overlying a natural of sandy clay				<b>Max. depth (m)</b>		0.84
				<b>Width (m)</b>		1.80
				<b>Length (m)</b>		21.10
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
6	Layer	-	0.32	Topsoil	-	-
7	Layer	-	0.52	Subsoil	-	-

Trench 9						
<b>General description</b>				<b>Orientation</b>		NW-SE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of soil and subsoil overlying a natural of sandy clay				<b>Max. depth (m)</b>		0.77
				<b>Width (m)</b>		1.80
				<b>Length (m)</b>		23.20
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
6	Layer	-	0.31	Topsoil	-	-
7	Layer	-	0.46	Subsoil	-	-



## APPENDIX B. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Brudenell, M 2013      Brief for a trenched archaeological evaluation At Land at Steeles Road, Woolpit, Suffolk
- Gilmour, N. 2014      Specification for Archaeological Evaluation, Land at Steeles Road, Woolpit, Suffolk

## APPENDIX C. OASIS REPORT FORM

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

### Project Details

OASIS Number	oxfordar-172441		
Project Name	Evaluation at land off Steeles Road, Woolpit, Suffolk		
Project Dates (fieldwork) Start	04-03-2014	Finish	05-03-2014
Previous Work (by OA East)	No	Future Work	No

### Project Reference Codes

Site Code	WPT 040	Planning App. No.	2228/13
HER No.	WPT 040	Related HER/OASIS No.	

### Type of Project/Techniques Used

Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS 5
Development Type	Housing Estate

### Please select all techniques used:

<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Measured Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Targeted Trenches
<input type="checkbox"/> Dendrochronological Survey	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Photographic Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual Inspection (Initial Site Visit)
<input type="checkbox"/> Geophysical Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Rectified Photography	

### Monument Types/Significant Finds & Their Periods

List feature types using the [NMR Monument Type Thesaurus](#) and significant finds using the [MDA Object type Thesaurus](#) together with their respective periods. If no features/finds were found, please state "none".

Monument	Period	Object	Period
ditch	Uncertain	pottery	Iron Age -800 to 43
	Select period...	pottery	Medieval 1066 to 1540
	Select period...	flint	Late Prehistoric -4k to 43

### Project Location

County	Suffolk	Site Address (including postcode if possible)
District	Mid Suffolk	land off steeples Road Woolpit Suffolk IP30 9RE
Parish	Woolpit	
HER	Suffolk	
Study Area	0.71ha	National Grid Reference TL 976 618

### Project Originators

Organisation	OA EAST
Project Brief Originator	Matthew brudenall
Project Design Originator	Nick Gilmour
Project Manager	Paul Sporrey
Supervisor	Nick Gilmour

### Project Archives

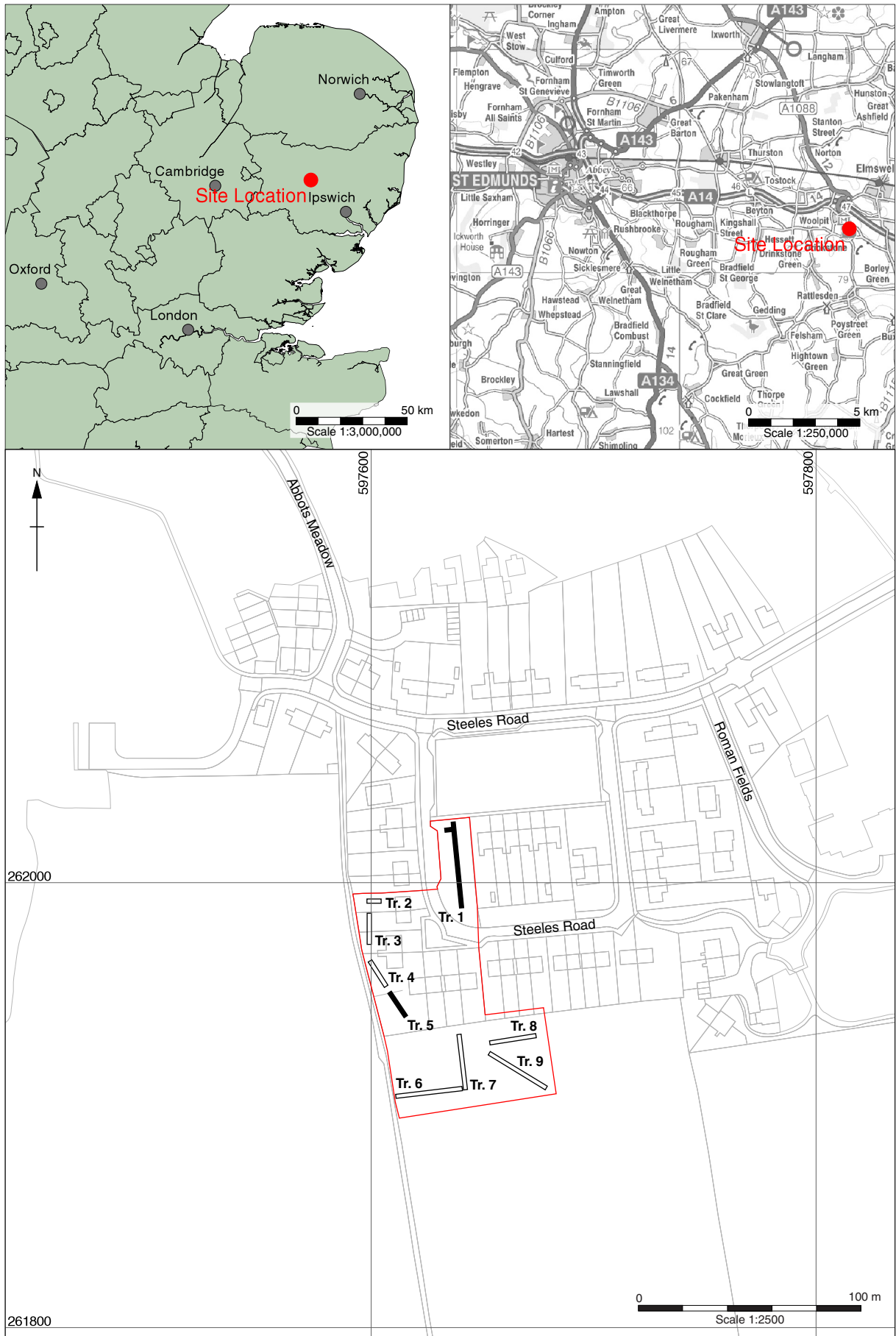
Physical Archive	Digital Archive	Paper Archive
Suffolk County Stores	OA East Office, bar Hill	Suffolk County Store
WPT 040	XSFWO014	WPT 040

### Archive Contents/Media

	Physical Contents	Digital Contents	Paper Contents
Animal Bones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Environmental	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Glass	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Human Bones	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Digital Media	Paper Media
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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Images	<input type="checkbox"/> Diary
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Illustrations	<input type="checkbox"/> Drawing
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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Matrices
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Text	<input type="checkbox"/> Microfilm
<input type="checkbox"/> Virtual Reality	<input type="checkbox"/> Misc.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Research/Notes
	<input type="checkbox"/> Photos
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plans
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Report
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sections
	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey

**Notes:**



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

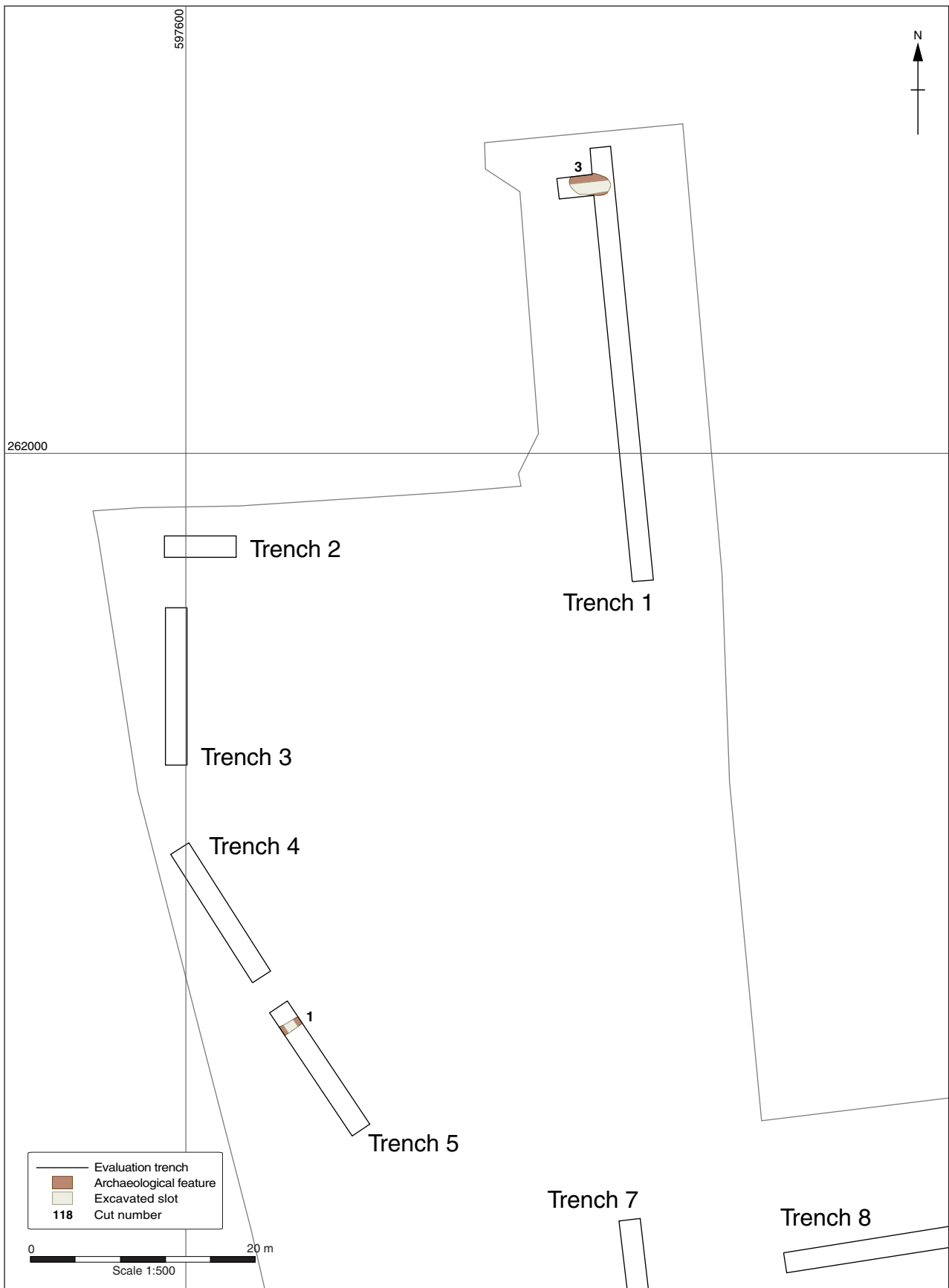


Figure 2: Trench plan showing excavated features



**Head Office/Registered Office/  
OA South**

Janus House  
Osney Mead  
Oxford OX2 0ES

t: +44 (0) 1865 263 800  
f: +44 (0) 1865 793 496  
e: [info@oxfordarchaeology.com](mailto:info@oxfordarchaeology.com)  
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>

**OA North**

Mill 3  
Moor Lane  
Lancaster LA1 1GF

t: +44 (0) 1524 541 000  
f: +44 (0) 1524 848 606  
e: [oanorth@oxfordarchaeology.com](mailto: oanorth@oxfordarchaeology.com)  
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>

**OA East**

15 Trafalgar Way  
Bar Hill  
Cambridgeshire  
CB23 8SQ

t: +44 (0) 1223 850500  
e: [oaeast@oxfordarchaeology.com](mailto: oaeast@oxfordarchaeology.com)  
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>



**Director:** Gill Hey, BA PhD FSA MIFA  
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