

Archaeological Evaluation at 13 Hurdleditch Road, Orwell



Archaeological Evaluation Report



May 2014

Client: Hill Partnerships Ltd

OA East Report No: 1615
OASIS No: oxfordr3-177531
NGR: TL 3568 4998

Archaeological Evaluation at 13 Hurdleditch Road, Orwell

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Report Date: April 2014

Report Number: 1615
Site Name: 13 Hurdleditch Road, Orwell
HER Event No: CHER 4162
Date of Works: April 2014
Client Name: Hill Partnerships Ltd
Client Ref: 18726
Planning Ref: S/2379/13/FL
Grid Ref: NGR TL 3568 4998
Site Code: ORW HUR 14
Finance Code: ORW HUR 14
Receiving Body: Cambridgeshire County Council
Accession No: n/a
Prepared by: Steven Graham
Date: 23/4/14
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Table of Contents

Summary.....	5
1 Introduction.....	7
1.1 Location and scope of work.....	7
1.2 Geology and topography.....	7
1.3 Archaeological and historical background.....	7
1.4 Acknowledgements.....	7
2 Aims and Methodology.....	8
2.1 Aims.....	8
2.2 Methodology.....	8
3 Results.....	9
3.1 Introduction.....	9
3.2 Trench One.....	9
3.3 Trench Two and Four.....	9
3.4 Trench Three.....	9
3.5 Finds Summary.....	9
3.6 Environmental Summary.....	9
4 Discussion and Conclusions.....	10
4.1 Summary.....	10
4.2 Significance.....	10
4.3 Recommendations.....	10
Appendix A. Trench Descriptions and Context Inventory.....	11
Appendix B. Finds Reports.....	13
B.1 Pottery.....	13
Appendix C. Environmental Reports.....	13
C.1 Environmental samples.....	13
By Rachel Fosberry.....	13
Appendix D. Bibliography.....	14
Appendix E. OASIS Report Form.....	15

List of Figures

- Fig. 1 Site location map
Fig. 2 Trench Planning
Fig. 3 Section Through Ditch 4.

List of Plates

- Plate 1 Trench 1 from North west
Plate 2 Ditch 4 from East.

Summary

Summary

On the 14th April 2014, Oxford Archaeology East carried out an archaeological evaluation at 13 Hurdleditch Road, Orwell. This evaluation was carried out in advance of the erection of 15 dwellings including associated external works, roads and parking. One ditch was identified along with one post hole and an undetermined feature containing 2 sherds of post-medieval pottery. The ditch contained Late Iron Age pottery and animal bone, and is probably a prehistoric enclosure ditch.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 An archaeological evaluation was conducted at 13 Hurdleditch Road, Orwell on behalf of Hill Partnerships Ltd.
- 1.1.2 This archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Dan McConnell of Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC; Planning Application S/2379/13/FL), supplemented by a Specification 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 CCC, 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 on Gault Clay with the northern part of the village on West Melbury Marly Chalk (British Geological Survey 2002). The site lies at an average height of 31.0m aOD.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 A Neolithic stone axe has been found in the vicinity of Orwell (CHER 03283).
- 1.3.2 One Belgic Iron Age coin was found in the area of the Village in 1872 (CHER 03266).
- 1.3.3 South of the development site Romano-British pottery scatters have been recorded (CHER MCB3919, MCB 1030 and MCB 3928). Close by is the A603 which is the route of the Akeman Street Road as it runs southwest from Cambridge towards Ermine Street and Royston.
- 1.3.4 Saxon pottery has been found in the eastern end of the village (CHER 03270).
- 1.3.5 Orwell is mentioned in the Domesday Survey as Oreuelle (EPNS 1973) deriving from a spring located in the village. The village has a number of medieval features north east of the evaluation area including a moated site (CHER 09919), a possible motte (CHER 03267), a rectory (CHER 10846) and ridge and furrow (CHER 03406 and 11259). A scatter of medieval pottery has also been identified within the village (CHER 09161).

1.4 Acknowledgements

- 1.4.1 The author would like to thank Hill Partnerships Ltd who commissioned and funded the work. Additional thanks go to Louise Bush and James Fairburn for the site survey, Katherine Nicholls for excavation assistance and Severine Bezie for producing the illustrations. Additional specialist expertise was provided by Sarah Percival, Rachel Fosberry and Chris Faine. The project was managed by Stephen Macaulay. The brief for archaeological works was written by Dan McConnell.

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 100m of linear trenching were excavated to adequately sample the proposed development area. Four trenches were excavated, one 40m in length and three 20m long each.
- 2.2.2 Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a wheeled JCB-type excavator using a toothless ditching bucket.
- 2.2.3 The site survey was carried out by Louise bush and James Fairbairn using a lecia GPS 1200.
- 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 20 litres of fill from the identified prehistoric feature were sampled for environmental flotation and analysis.
- 2.2.7 Site conditions were generally good, with dry bright weather.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 Dimensions of each trench, together with Topsoil and Subsoil depths are given in Appendix A. Descriptions of Trenches and excavated features are given below.

3.2 Trench One

- 3.2.1 The trench contained one linear ditch (**004**) at the trenches north western end. The orientation of the ditch was east to west. The ditch comprised of one fill (**005**) of firm brownish grey clay containing a small amount of prehistoric pottery and one fragment of animal bone.
- 3.2.2 Further along the south east of the trench was a single post hole (**006**) in apparent isolation. This comprised of a single fill (**007**) of firm grey silty clay. There was no surviving evidence in the fill of either the post or packing nor of any finds.

3.3 Trench Two and Four

- 3.3.1 No archaeological finds or features were found in either of these trenches.

3.4 Trench Three

- 3.4.1 The only feature of note in this trench was a possible pit or ditch (**008**). Not enough of the feature was available in the trench to ascertain fully its nature, however 2 sherds of ceramic material, clearly post medieval, were recovered from its fill.

3.5 Finds Summary

- 3.5.1 A total of 20 sherds of pottery were recovered from the single ditch (**004**) in trench One. These were all late Iron Age in date and is fairly unabraded.. The two sherds of pottery from the feature in trench three (**008**) were both post medieval, late 19th or early 20th century.

3.6 Environmental Summary

- 3.6.1 A single bulk sample of 16 litres was taken from the prehistoric ditch and flotation sampled. All of the samples were devoid of plant remains or finds.
- 3.6.2 Eight fragments of animal bone were recovered from the ditch, three of these were identified as being cattle humerus and femur fragments and a partial horse astragalus.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Summary

- 4.1.1 The only archaeology encountered in the evaluation was a single ditch running on a north to south orientation at the end of Trench One in the western quadrant of the development area. The pottery is typical of later Iron Age local assemblages.

4.2 Significance

- 4.2.1 The site is indicative of possible Iron Age settlement activity taking place in the local vicinity with the ditch lying on the periphery of this but there is no evidence of Roman or medieval activity occurring within the application area.

4.3 Recommendations

- 4.3.1 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							
General description					Orientation		NW-SE
					Avg. depth (m)		0.60
					Width (m)		1.50
					Length (m)		40
Trench contained one ditch on NE end of trench and one post hole.							
Contexts							
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date	
001	Layer	-	0.28	Topsoil	-	-	
002	Layer	-	0.22	Subsoil	-	-	
003	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-	
004	Cut	0.90	0.42	Ditch	-	-	
005	Fill	0.90	0.42	Fill of Ditch 004	Pottery, Bone	Late Iron Age	
006	Cut	0.23	0.08	Post Hole	-	-	
007	Fill	0.23	0.08	Fill of Post Hole	-	-	
Trench 2							
General description					Orientation		NE-SW
					Avg. depth (m)		0.60
					Width (m)		1.50
					Length (m)		20
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of soil and subsoil overlying a natural of silty clay.							
Contexts							
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date	
001	Layer	-	0.30	Topsoil	-	-	
002	Layer	-	0.30	Subsoil	-	-	
003	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-	
Trench 3							
General description					Orientation		NW-SE
					Avg. depth (m)		0.60
					Width (m)		1.50
					Length (m)		20
Trench contains one post medieval intrusion on SE end of trench but is otherwise sterile.							
Contexts							
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date	
001	Topsoil	-	0.26	Topsoil	-	-	
002	Subsoil	-	0.30	Subsoil	-	-	
003	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-	

008	Cut	-	0.30	Pit/ditch?	-	-
009	Fill	-	0.30	Fill of 008	Pottery	Post Medieval.
Trench 4						
General description					Orientation	NW-SE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of soil and subsoil overlying natural clay					Avg. depth (m)	0.60
					Width (m)	1.50
					Length (m)	20
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
001	Topsoil	-	0.28	Topsoil	-	-
002	Subsoil	-	0.30	Subsoil	-	-
003	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

APPENDIX B. FINDS REPORTS

B.1 Pottery

By Sarah Percival

A total of 20 Iron Age sherds weighing 59g were recovered from a single feature, ditch [4]. All are undecorated body sherds in various micaceous, sandy fabrics with rounded quartz inclusions. One fabric also contains elongated voids typical of organic inclusions such as grass along with common fossiliferous shell and the other contains sand with moderate shell pieces. These fabrics are typical of Later Iron Age assemblages from the region and compare well with local contemporary assemblages such as that from Hinxton Road, Duxford (Percival 2011, table 15). The pottery is likely to date from c.350-100BC.

APPENDIX C. ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS

C.1 Environmental samples

By Rachel Fosberry

Introduction.

A single bulk sample was taken from a prehistoric ditch within the evaluated area at 13 Hurdleditch Road, Orwell 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.1.1 The total volume (sixteen litres) of the sample was processed by water flotation (using a modified Siraff three-tank system) for the recovery of charred plant remains, dating evidence and any other artefactual evidence that might be present. The floating component (flot) of the sample was collected in a 0.3mm nylon mesh and the residue was washed through 10mm, 5mm, 2mm and a 0.5mm sieve. Both flot and residue were allowed to air dry. A magnet was dragged through each residue fraction prior to sorting for artefacts. The dried flots were subsequently sorted using a binocular microscope at magnifications up to x 60.

Results

- C.1.2 All of the samples were devoid of plant remains and finds.

APPENDIX D. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Macaulay, S., 2014. Specification for Archaeological Evaluation:13 Hurdleditch Road. Oxford Archaeology East 16726.

Percival, S., 2011. 'The Pottery' in Lyons, A. *Life and Afterlife at Duxford, Cambridgeshire: archaeology and history in a chalkland community*. East Anglian Archaeology 141, 57-65. Bar Hill, Oxford Archaeology East,

APPENDIX E. OASIS REPORT FORM

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

Project Details

OASIS Number	oxfordr3-177531			
Project Name	13 Hurdleditch Road, Orwell			
Project Dates (fieldwork)	Start	14-04-2014	Finish	14-04-2014
Previous Work (by OA East)	No	Future Work	Unknown	

Project Reference Codes

Site Code	ORW HUR 14	Planning App. No.	S/0173/12/FUL
HER No.	4162	Related HER/OASIS No.	

Type of Project/Techniques Used

Prompt	Planning condition
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 type="checkbox"/> Sample Trenches
<input checked="" 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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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	Iron Age -800 to 43	Pottery	Iron Age -800 to 43
pit/ditch	Modern 1901 to Present		Select period...
	Iron Age -800 to 43		Select period...

Project Location

County	Cambridgeshire	Site Address (including postcode if possible)	
District	South Cambridgeshire	13 Hurdleditch road, Orwell	
Parish	Orwell		
HER	Cambridgeshire		
Study Area	0.63 ha	National Grid Reference	TL 3568 4998

Project Originators

Organisation	OA EAST
Project Brief Originator	Dan McConnell
Project Design Originator	Stephen Macaulay
Project Manager	Stephen Macaulay
Supervisor	Steven Graham

Project Archives

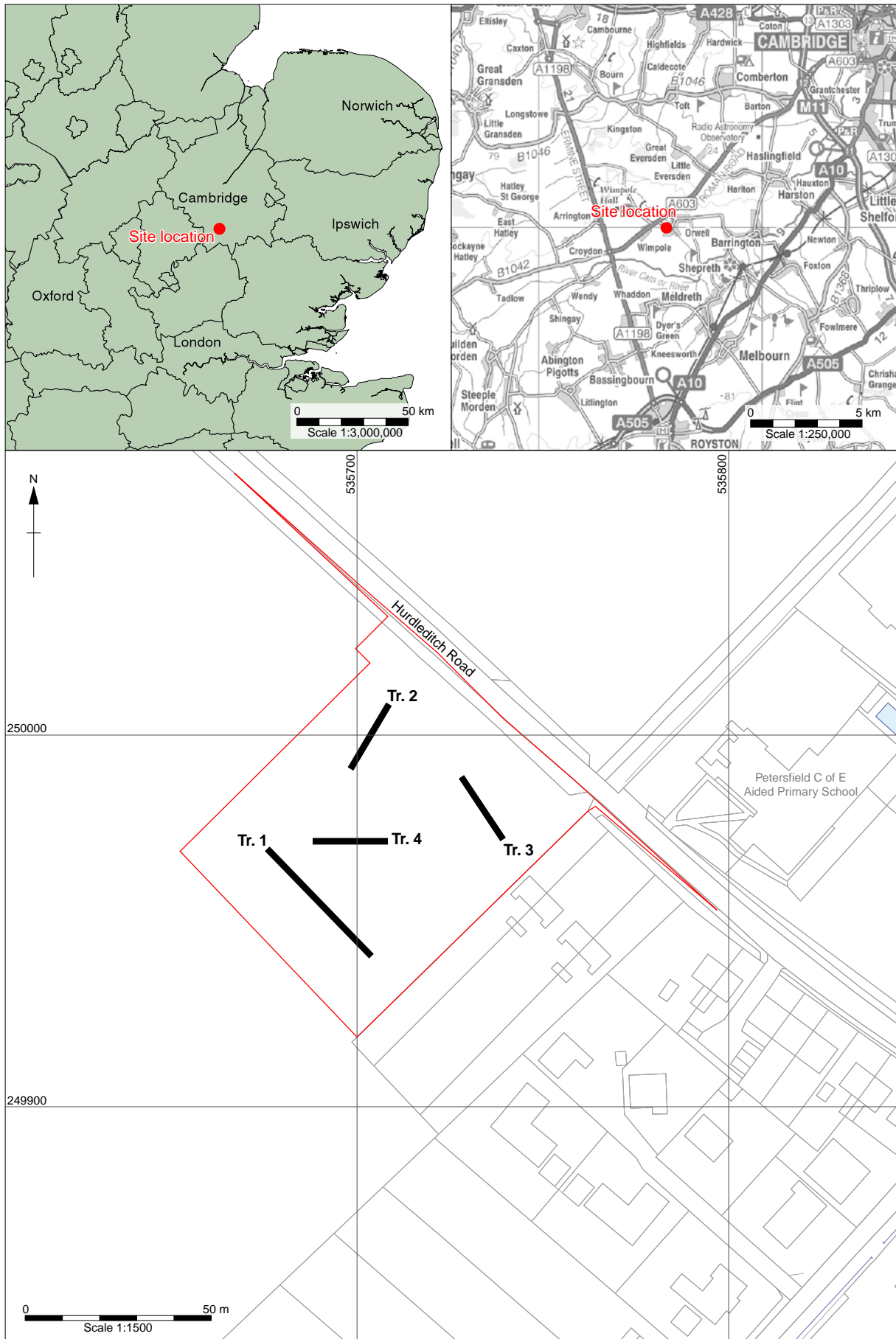
Physical Archive	Digital Archive	Paper Archive
Cambridgeshire County Stores	O A EAST	Cambridgeshire County Stores
ORW HUR 14	ORW HUR 14	ORW HUR 14

Archive Contents/Media

	Physical Contents	Digital Contents	Paper Contents
Animal Bones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics	<input checked="" 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 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input 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
<input type="checkbox"/> Database	<input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photos
<input type="checkbox"/> GIS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Context Sheet
<input type="checkbox"/> Geophysics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Correspondence
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Images	<input type="checkbox"/> Diary
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Illustrations	<input type="checkbox"/> Drawing
<input type="checkbox"/> Moving Image	<input type="checkbox"/> Manuscript
<input type="checkbox"/> Spreadsheets	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Map
<input 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 with trenches (black) and development area outlined (red)

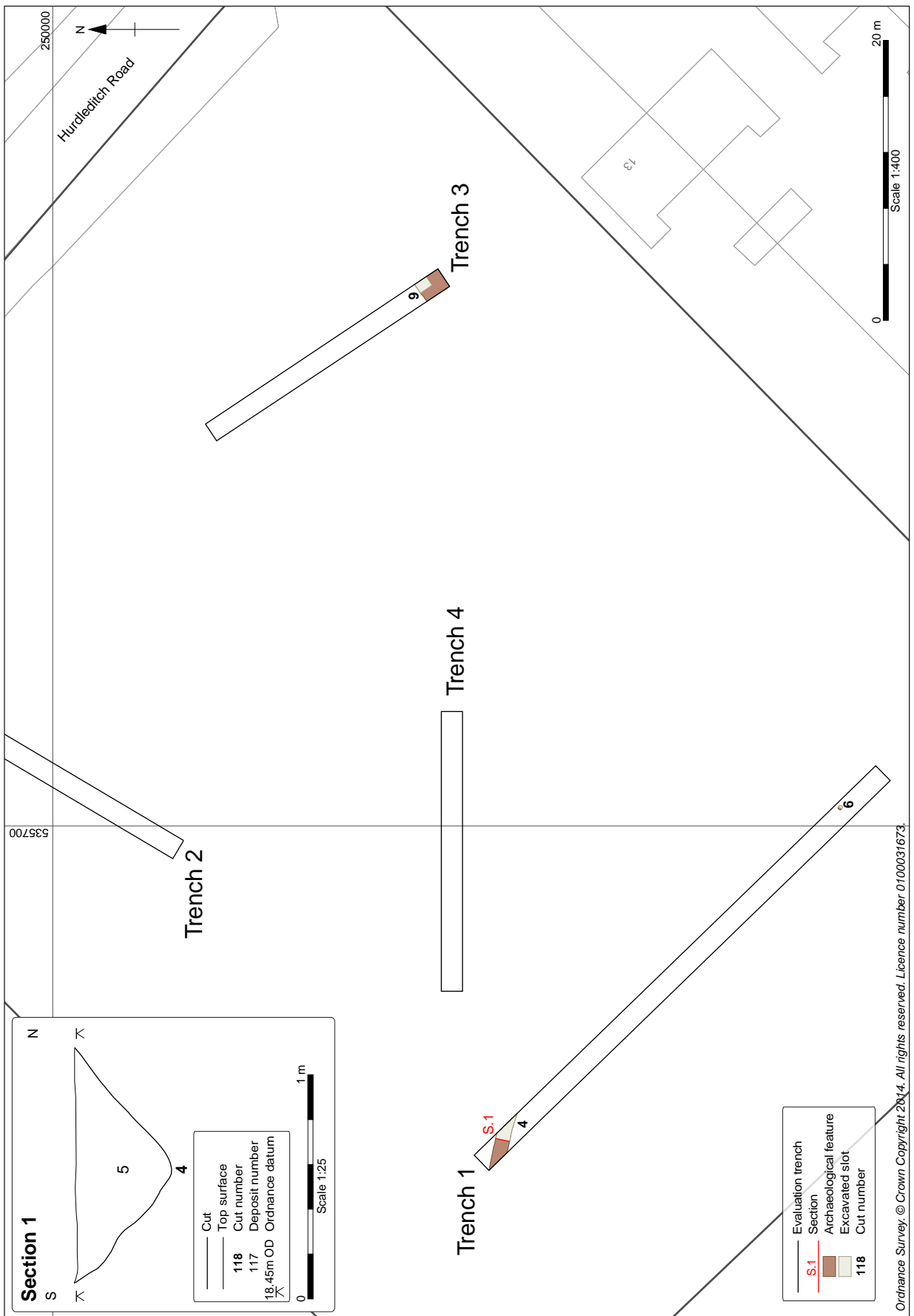


Figure 2: Trench plans and selected section



Plate 1: Trench 1 from north west



Plate 2: Ditch 4 from east



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