

Prehistoric and Roman Remains at Land West of Irthlingborough, Northamptonshire



Archaeological Evaluation Report



October 2012

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**Prehistoric and Roman Remains at Land West of Irthlingborough,
Northamptonshire**

Archaeological Evaluation


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Summary

Between the 10th and 20th October 2012, Oxford Archaeology East conducted an archaeological evaluation in advance of potential residential development at land to the west of Irthlingborough, Northamptonshire (centred on SP 708 936).

The archaeological evaluation revealed that large parts of the proposed development area had undergone significant modern disturbance as a result of subsidence associated with localised iron mining and subsequent attempts to reinstate and stabilise the ground.

A concentration of archaeological features, including possible boundary and enclosure ditches and a small number of pits were recorded on the high ground close to the centre of the development area. These remains may represent the surviving remnant of a wider settlement truncated by modern activity. Conversely, they might also indicate the presence of a putative Roman or prehistoric settlement on the high ground.

A Neolithic arrowhead was recovered from this area which is of note as it provides rare evidence for Prehistoric activity in the vicinity. Other than this find, very little material culture was recovered by the evaluation, which may suggest that the site formed part of the wider agricultural landscape rather than being an area of settlement and habitation.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 Between the 10th and 20th October 2012 Oxford Archaeology East (OAE) conducted an archaeological evaluation at land to the west of Irthlingborough, Northamptonshire (centred on SP 708 936) in advance of potential residential development (Fig. 1).
- 1.1.2 This archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Lesley-Ann Mather of Northamptonshire Archaeology, supplemented by a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by OA East in response to discussions with CgMs, following their consultation with Northamptonshire Archaeology.
- 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 Northamptonshire Archaeology, 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 proposed development site is located within the clay lands which characterise north Bedfordshire and eastern Northamptonshire. The British Geological Survey indicates that the solid geology of the proposed development site comprises the Oxford clays with Kellaway Beds of Jurassic date. Drift deposits of Pleistocene date comprise Boulder Clay up to 25m thick.
- 1.2.2 The surface disturbance of the site is extensive and the soil types are heavy clay loams which have been significantly degraded by re-working when the quarries in the south-west were operational.
- 1.2.3 The proposed development site lies on undulating ground above the River Nene and drains in a predominantly southern direction. A shallow valley drains towards the River Nene, south of the proposed development site from the former White Lodge Farm. The town of Irthlingborough occupies slightly lower ground to the east and south rising some 50m from the edge of the first gravel terrace in the river valley to 85m OD. The proposed site is bounded to the east by a mix of housing, and Whitworth's factory premises. To the south and west is farmland. To the north side is open arable land stretching westwards towards Finedon. The character of the development site and observations on the ground indicate the site has seen significant disturbance from the mining works during the late 19th and 20th century.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The archaeological and historical background summarised below is drawn from a Desk Based Assessment conducted by CgMs (Dawson 2007). This compiled the evidence from the Sites and Monuments Record within a search radius of 500m of the site and documentary evidence from the parish in the County Records Office. The majority of the evidence recorded by investigations within the vicinity is of early medieval and medieval date (RCHM 1975, 56-8; Page 1930, 207-212).

Prehistoric and Roman

- 1.3.2 There is no evidence for Prehistoric activity in the locality. Archaeological evidence from the study area relating to the Roman period has been recorded east of Poplar Barn (NHER 1906). The character of the finds recovered during field artefact collection suggests the location of a settlement typical of hillslope locations during the Roman period which occupy the River Nene Valley.
- 1.3.3 To the south of the site, the line of the Wellingborough Road may have originated in the Roman period road running south-west towards the Roman small town of Irchester, situated south of the River Nene (NHER 1760/1).

Saxon - Early Medieval

- 1.3.4 Irthlingborough is first recorded in the Saxon period as *Yrtlingaburg* in AD 780 as *Edinburne* in the Domesday survey of 1086, and as *Hyrtingberi* in 1137. The name, a combination of the old English *yrblinga* ploughmen and *burg* meaning fort, suggests a fortified location for protecting cattle during the early Saxon period. This may have been located on Crow Hill to the east, where a 13th century furlong name *aldeborough* refers to a promontory fortified in the Iron Age and Roman period.

The Medieval Landscape

- 1.3.5 When the Domesday Survey was written, the proposed development site probably lay amongst higher plough-land west of the village core of Irthlingborough. During the medieval period Irthlingborough may have comprised of two settlements focused on parish churches at All Saints in the east and St Peters. The villages lay in the Huxloe Hundred and were surrounded by six open fields. Within the proposed development area, ridge and furrow the remnants of medieval ploughing have been recorded north of the sports ground (NHER 1754/0/4) and beyond the proposed development site at (NHER1754/0/3). Together these two locations suggest that the proposed development site has been in agricultural use throughout the medieval period.
- 1.3.6 The medieval and later history of the proposed development site is almost certainly entirely agricultural and probably pasture, part of *west field*. The ridge and furrow seen in recent aerial photographs and plotted in 1998 by the County Heritage Service suggests any arable activity occurred on the higher ground of the valley sides rather than on the flood plain or first terrace.

Post Medieval Landscape

- 1.3.7 The Inclosure Award of 1808 shows the transition from open field cultivation to enclosed livestock farming. The movement away from the land had begun in the late 18th century with the rise of the boot and shoe trade and continued throughout the 19th century. The enclosure boundaries established in 1808 still provide the framework for the landscape today. However the greatest changes to the proposed development site were to take place in the late 19th century and early 20th century.

The Modern Landscape

- 1.3.8 By the mid 19th century the landscape and the region in general was beginning to accrue the characteristics of early industrialisation. The Midland Railway had been built between London and Leicester serving St Pancras by 1867. The first edition OS 1:10,000 40 NW shows the proposed development site still largely farmland with fields which reflect the Inclosure of 1806. However, industrial development based on limestone quarrying and brick and tile manufacturing began in the late 19th century.

1.3.9 The brick works of Dunn and Pendered situated to the south of the proposed development area began to extract materials from a quarry to the north (NHER 6389/1). Slightly later, in 1898, the plant added the production of cement, based on outcropping limestone (NSMR 6389), to its existing repertoire of brick and tile and in 1907 the site was rebuilt its name changed to the Premier Portland Cement Co. Meanwhile in the period from 1909 to 1915 land was assembled by Ebb Vale Steel Iron and Coal Co Ltd and in 1915 quarrying and mining began in the area around White Lodge. To serve the mines, a tunnel was driven beneath Wellingborough Road carrying a tramway and allowing access between the mines and the London and North Western Railway which carried the sintered ore to Ebb Vale. The site remained in operation during the middle part of the 20th century. However, reduced demand led to its closure on 30th September 1965. The mine galleries were emptied of equipment and the tunnels filled in between 1965 and spring 1966, although many of the buildings associated with the sintering plant to the south of Wellingborough Road remained derelict. Within the proposed development site the excavations around the former White Lodge Farm remained open and remain visible to the present day although much of the area was levelled in 1984.

1.4 Acknowledgements

1.4.1 The author would like to thank CgMs who commissioned the archaeological work on behalf of Hallam Land Management and Lesley-Ann Mather and Liz Mordue who monitored the archaeological work. The project was managed by James Drummond-Murray. Chris Thatcher directed and supervised the fieldwork with the assistance of Julian Newman, Gareth Rees, Rob Wiseman and Jemima Wolverton. The site survey was conducted by Gareth Rees. The illustrations were produced by Severine Bezie.

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 forty seven 40m trenches, totalling 1,880m of linear trial trenching, be excavated across the site (Fig. 1).
- 2.2.2 Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a tracked 360° type excavator using a toothless ditching bucket.
- 2.2.3 The site survey was carried out by Gareth Rees using Leica GPS 1200 system to lay out the trenches using Ordnance Survey co-ordinates, according to a pre-arranged trench plan provided by the client.
- 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 A total of five environmental samples (90L) were taken from features on the site, primarily for the recovery of charred plant remains and in one instance for lithic material.
- 2.2.7 Conditions on site were generally dry and bright. A number of the deeper trenches were slightly wet under foot where the ground water level was reached.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The evaluation revealed archaeological deposits surviving in the central part of the site, concentrated in the southern part of Field 2 (Fig. 2). These remains extended into the adjoining fields (3, 4 & 5). The results are presented below by field and trench (NB full details by trench/context appear in Appendix A).
- 3.1.2 The archaeological features and deposits were sealed by a mid grey brown, clay silt subsoil layer that varied in thickness between 0.10m – 0.70m. This was in turn overlain by a topsoil layer that was up to 0.35m thick and composed of a dark grey brown clay silt.
- 3.1.3 Evidence of plough scarring and field drains were recorded across the site. There was also significant disturbance as a result of subsidence, attributed to a disused iron ore mine underlying the site, and the subsequent backfilling of these collapses. This was characterised by circular depressions in the landscape that were particularly noticeable in Fields 3, 4 & 5 and resulted in several of the trenches being relocated (Trenches 20, 23, 24 & 25) or shortened (Trenches 9 & 10) in order to avoid areas of disturbance .

3.2 Field 1

- 3.2.1 Field 1 was situated in the north-eastern part of the development site. A total of seven trenches (1–7) were targeted on geological anomalies in this field that were recorded by the geophysical survey (Butler & Fisher, 2010). Of these, only one trench contained any archaeological remains (Trench 4) and this is described below. The remainder were on average 0.50m deep with the exception of Trench 3, where evidence for subsidence was recorded. This comprised a deepening of the soil deposits to over 1.20m. The underlying geology was still not visible at this depth and excavation of the trench was stopped in order to avoid possible collapse of the trench edges.
- 3.2.2 Up to three tree throws were investigated within Trench 6.

Trench 4 (Fig. 2)

- 3.2.3 This trench was 40m long and situated in the south-western corner of Field 1, aligned east to west. A large anomaly recorded by the geophysical survey (Butler & Fisher, 2010) was found to be an area of modern disturbance that was up to 4m in diameter and attributed to reinstatement of the land as a result of possible slumping.
- 3.2.4 At the western end of the trench two ditches were recorded (**76 & 78**) These both lay on a north-east to south-west alignment. Ditch **76** was 1.05m wide by 0.30m deep with a steep sided, flat based profile. It contained a single, homogeneous silty clay fill (**75**). No finds were recovered from this feature. A second ditch (**60**) was recorded to the east of the modern disturbance. This had a very similar profile and fill to ditch **76** and lay on the same north-east to south-west alignment. These features appeared to match those identified as possible furrows or cultivation features by the geophysical survey (Butler & Fisher 2010).

3.3 Field 2

- 3.3.1 Three trenches (8-10) were excavated in Field 2, which lay on the eastern side of the development area. Significant levels of modern disturbance were recorded in this field, and Trenches 9 and 10 were shortened (to 17m and 26m respectively) to avoid the

worst areas of disturbance. They were between 0.50m and 0.70m deep and no archaeological features or finds were recorded.

3.4 Field 3

- 3.4.1 Field 3, lay on the eastern side of the development area, immediately to the south of Field 2. The field was fallow and very uneven underfoot with significant variations in the depth of soil recorded (trench depths varied from 0.40m to 1.0m along their lengths). There was also significant modern disturbance to the underlying geology that, as with the preceding trenches, was attributed to activity related to mining in the locality.
- 3.4.2 Three trenches (11-13) were excavated here and no archaeological features or finds were recorded.

3.5 Field 4

- 3.5.1 Field 4 was located immediately to the south of Field 3. Two trenches (14-15) were excavated that were between 0.45m and 0.90m deep. No archaeological features or finds were recorded.

3.6 Field 5

- 3.6.1 Field 5 was located in the centre of the development area on a south-east facing slope. Six trenches (16-21) were excavated here. No archaeological features or finds were recorded in Trenches 16 to 19, which were between 0.42m and 0.60m deep.
- 3.6.2 Trenches 20 & 21 both lay in the north-west corner of Field 5. The archaeological remains recorded in them are described below.

Trench 20 (Fig. 2)

- 3.6.3 The alignment of Trench 20 was changed from its original position to run north-west to south-east in order to avoid an area of suspected subsidence. It was also necessary to shorten the trench to 32m. Four ditches (**80**, **92**, **111** & **113**) were recorded in the southern half of the trench.
- 3.6.4 Ditch **111** crossed the trench 12m from its south-eastern limit on an east to west alignment. It had a gently sloped profile and was 0.70m wide but only 0.12m at its deepest point. No finds were recovered from its single light yellow grey fill (110). Ditch **113** lay on the same alignment approximately 10m to the north-west. In section it was relatively shallow, at no more than 0.12m deep, but was steeper sided than **111**. No finds were recovered from its light grey brown fill (112). It seems likely that these ditches represent part of the strip farming system identified by the geophysical survey (Butler & Fisher 2010).
- 3.6.5 A third ditch (**80**) was recorded on the same alignment just 2m to the north-west of Ditch **113**. Ditch **80** was of comparable size and depth to Ditch **113** with steep sides and a flat base, its fill (79) contained a single body sherd of Romano-British coarse ware (App. B.1). The fourth ditch (**92**) was aligned perpendicular to Ditch **80**, intersecting with it at the trench's southern edge and continuing in a north-westerly direction beyond its limit. These features may represent the corner of an enclosure lying to the north-east of Trench 20. No finds were recovered from either ditch.

Trench 21 (Fig. 2)

- 3.6.6 Several ditches were recorded in this trench. Stratigraphically, the earliest feature was Ditch **103** which entered the trench from the south before terminating close to its

northern edge. It was relatively shallow and contained no finds. Lying approximately 4m to the west was a second north-east to south-west aligned ditch (**98**).

- 3.6.7 Ditches **98** and **103** appeared to be truncated by Ditch **100** which traversed the trench at an oblique angle perpendicular to Ditch **103** before curving gently onto a north-easterly trajectory and terminating close to the centre of the trench (Plate 3). Ditch **100** had a steep sided, relatively flat based profile, it contained a single fill (99) from which six sherds of 1st-3rd Century Roman coarse ware were recovered (Appendix B.1). Further to the east, Ditch **107** appeared to be a continuation of Ditch **113** in Trench 21 and as such has been interpreted as part of the strip farm system described above (para. 3.6.4). Although it ran parallel to Ditch **100**, it was far more shallow with a gently sloped profile and contained no finds.
- 3.6.8 Close to the western limit of the trench a steep sided, flat based ditch was recorded on a north-south alignment. At 0.96m wide by 0.48m deep Ditch **96** was the largest feature in the trench. No finds were recovered from either of its fill (94 & 95). The final feature was a pit, or possibly ditch terminal, recorded close to the trench's eastern limit (**109**).

3.7 Field 6

- 3.7.1 Field 6 was situated on a south-east facing slope in the southern part of the development area. No archaeological features or finds were recorded in ten of the eleven trenches (Trenches 22 – 31) excavated in this field. They were on average 0.50m deep. The central and eastern parts of the field had undergone significant levels of modern disturbance which necessitated moving Trenches 23, 24 and 25.

Trench 32 (Fig. 2)

- 3.7.2 Trench 32 was aligned east-west and located in the far north-western corner of the field, close to the boundary with Field 7. A single north-east to south-west aligned ditch (**87**) was recorded at the western end of the trench. It was 1.20m wide by 0.52m deep with steep-sloped sides, a broadly flat base, and a single mid grey brown silty clay fill (86). No finds were recovered from Ditch **87** (Section 87, Fig. 3).
- 3.7.3 An area of modern backfill, at least 4m in diameter that contained modern brick and tile was recorded approximately 4m to the east of Ditch **87**.

3.8 Field 7

- 3.8.1 Field 7 was situated in the northern part of the development area. The southern part of the field lay at the crest of a hill sloping northwards towards the modern A6 and southwards in Fields 5 and 6. The trenches on the low ground to the north (38-40) contained no archaeological features or finds.
- 3.8.2 The highest concentration of archaeological remains were encountered in trenches in this field.

Trench 33 (Fig. 2)

- 3.8.3 Trench 33 was located in the southern corner of the field on a north-south alignment. A relatively dense concentration of features was recorded. At the western end of the trench a shallow feature (**30**) (Section 30, Fig. 3) was partially exposed, this extended beyond the western trench edge and was truncated to the north by a later ditch (**32**). The visible portion of feature **30** appeared to be sub rectangular in plan and in profile it had very gently sloped sides, filled by a light yellow brown silty clay (29).

- 3.8.4 To the north a shallow ditch (**34**) was recorded on a north-west to south-east alignment before curving onto a southerly trajectory and being truncated by Ditch **32**. It was 0.75m wide by 0.26m deep and contained no finds. Ditch **32** was larger at 1.12m in width by 0.34m deep with a regular concave sided profile. It was aligned north-west to south-east. No finds were recovered from either feature.
- 3.8.5 Immediately to the north of Ditch **34** two relatively large pits (**36 & 38**) were partially exposed within the trench. These were shallow, at no more than 0.20m deep and gently sloped, no finds were recovered from their homogeneous grey brown silty clay fills (**35 & 37** respectively).
- 3.8.6 The most prominent feature in Trench 33 was Ditch **40** which crossed its centre on an east-west alignment, was 1.34m wide by 0.45m deep and contained a single, sterile fill composed of mid grey brown silty clay (**39**) (Section 40, Fig. 3). Further to the east were two intercutting, sub-circular features (**68 & 70**) that contained no finds and may have represented root disturbance.

Trench 34 (Fig. 2)

- 3.8.7 This trench lay to the north-east of Trench 33, also on a north-south alignment. It was extended southwards to a length of 50m in order to define the extent of the archaeological remains uncovered.
- 3.8.8 In the northern half of the trench three relatively evenly spaced ditches were recorded at approximately 10m intervals on east south-east-west north-west alignments (**57, 72 & 74**). These were on a very similar alignment to the ditches recorded in Trenches 20 & 21. They had almost vertical sides and flat bases and were on average 0.70m in width by 0.30m deep. No finds were recovered from these ditches and it is suggested that they represent elements of the strip farming system of Irthlingborough's medieval West Field that were identified by the geophysical survey (Butler & Fisher 2010).
- 3.8.9 Approximately 4m to the south of Ditch **72** was feature **85**. This may have represented part of a large pit or perhaps the eastern terminus of a ditch. At its westernmost point in the trench feature **85** was almost 3m in width, tapering sharply to the east to no more than a metre. In profile it was steep sided and 0.66m deep and contained two sterile, silty clay fills (**83 & 84**).
- 3.8.10 Two curvilinear ditches lay in the southern half of Trench 34 (**46 & 50**) (Sections 46 & 50, Fig. 3). Ditch **50** lay 7m to the south of Ditch **74**, it was 0.50m wide by 0.28m deep and was curving southwards; the trench was extended in order to establish whether it formed part of a ring ditch, in which case a return of the feature would be expected to the south. No such continuation was observed, however Ditch **40**, was recorded 10m southwards, this feature was 0.88m wide by 0.48m deep with a steep sided, flat based profile filled by three deposits (**47, 48 & 49**).
- 3.8.11 Two discrete features (**52 & 82**) were recorded. Pit **82** was not fully exposed within the trench. It was 0.66m wide by 0.30m deep, an abraded charred oat grain was recovered from the environmental sample taken from its fill (**81**). Feature **52** lay inside the arc described by ditch **50**. It was 0.34m wide by 0.20m deep and interpreted as a posthole.

Trench 35 (Fig. 2)

- 3.8.12 Trench 35 was situated towards the centre of Field 7. The earliest feature was slightly irregular in plan and possibly linear (**21**) (Plate 2). It contained an Early Neolithic leaf shaped arrowhead (App. B.2), a single wheat grain was recovered from the environmental sample from fill 22.

- 3.8.13 Feature **21** was truncated by a very shallow north-east to south-west aligned ditch (**19**). Three such ditches were recorded at a regular 10m spacing along the length of Trench 35 (**15**, **17** & **19**). They were fairly uniform in size at 0.90m wide by no more 0.25m deep and have been interpreted as part of the medieval or later strip farming system.

Trench 36 (Fig. 2)

- 3.8.14 Trench 36 was aligned east – west and situated in the south-western corner of the field. The four ditches (**2**, **4**, **6** & **8**) recorded in this trench were on a very similar alignment to those recorded in Trench 35 and have been interpreted as part of the same strip farming system. No finds were recovered from these features. Ditch **8** was substantially larger than the other ditches at 2.00m in width by 0.70m deep with a V shaped profile, it's fill was very pale in comparison with those attributed to the strip farming system and it may be that this feature represents part of an earlier enclosure system (Section 8, Fig. 3, Plate 1).

Trench 37 (Fig. 2)

- 3.8.15 Located just north of the centre of the field on an east-west alignment, the trench contained three north-south aligned ditches, spaced at 8m intervals (**12**, **41** & **43**). They were between 0.90m and 1m in width and on average 0.20m deep, with flat bases and relatively steep sides. As with many of the linear features recorded by the evaluation, it seems likely that these were part of the strip farming system identified by the geophysical survey (Butler & Fisher 2010).
- 3.8.16 At the eastern trench limit a relatively large feature was recorded that may have represented a ditch terminus or possibly a large pit (**27**) (Section 27, Fig. 3). It was 1.80m in diameter by 0.77m deep with steep, slightly irregular sides and contained two sterile, silty clay fills (54 & 55).

3.9 Field 8

- 3.9.1 Field 8 was situated in the far north-western corner of the development area. Five trenches were excavated in this location (Trenches 41-45). They varied in depth between 0.50m deep and down slope, in the northernmost corner of the field, up to 1.25m deep. No archaeological features or finds were recorded.

3.10 Finds Summary

- 3.10.1 The finds assemblage recovered by the evaluation was very sparse and consisted of small quantities of Roman coarse ware recovered from two contexts and a single Neolithic leaf-shaped arrowhead.

3.11 Environmental Summary

- 3.11.1 The samples did not produce significant plant remains; only two cereal grains were recovered. This is likely to be the result of the heavy clay soil, which is not conducive to the preservation of charred plant remains.

4 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Discussion

- 4.1.1 The archaeological evaluation revealed that large parts of the proposed development area had undergone significant modern disturbance particularly in Fields 1-6. This was primarily a result of subsidence associated with localised iron mining and subsequent attempts to reinstate and stabilise the ground.
- 4.1.2 There was however a concentration of possible boundary and enclosure ditches, along with a small number of pits, in the southern half of Field 7 and also on the high ground in the northern parts of Fields 5 and 6. Whilst these remains may simply represent the surviving remnant of a settlement truncated by modern activity, they might also indicate the presence of a putative Roman or prehistoric settlement on the high ground.
- 4.1.3 The site overlooks the putative line of the Roman Road to Irchester and evidence for Roman settlement has been found at Poplar Barn Farm to the north-east, on the opposite side of the modern A6 (Dawson, 2007). It may be that the remains within the development area represent part of a wider agricultural landscape. The general paucity of finds recovered certainly suggests that the site was at some remove from areas of settlement.
- 4.1.4 The recovery of a Neolithic arrowhead from feature **21** is also of note as it provides rare evidence for Prehistoric activity in the vicinity.

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						
General description				Orientation		E-W
No archaeological features or finds recorded.				Avg. depth (m)		0.50
				Width (m)		2
				Length (m)		37
Trench 2						
General description				Orientation		NW-SE
No archaeological features or finds recorded. Modern disturbance in the centre of trench				Avg. depth (m)		0.5
				Width (m)		2
				Length (m)		40
Trench 3						
General description				Orientation		NW-SE
No archaeological features or finds recorded. Large area of subsidence at south-eastern end.				Avg. depth (m)		0.7
				Width (m)		2
				Length (m)		40
Trench 4						
General description				Orientation		E-W
3 x ditches recorded.				Avg. depth (m)		0.55
				Width (m)		2
				Length (m)		30
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
59	Fill	0.81	0.25	Ditch Fill	-	-
60	Cut	0.81	0.25	Ditch Cut	-	-
75	Fill	1.05	0.3	Ditch Fill	-	-
76	Cut	1.05	0.3	Ditch Cut		
77	Fill	1.25	-	Ditch Fill		
78	Cut	1.25	-	Ditch Cut		
Trench 5						
General description				Orientation		NW-SE
No archaeological features or finds recorded.				Avg. depth (m)		0.45
				Width (m)		2
				Length (m)		40
Trench 6						
General description				Orientation		N-S
No archaeological features or finds recorded. 3 x Tree throws recorded (62, 64, 66)				Avg. depth (m)		0.6
				Width (m)		2
				Length (m)		40
Trench 7						

General description	Orientation	NW-SE
No archaeological features or finds recorded. 2 x areas of modern disturbance recorded.	Avg. depth (m)	0.55
	Width (m)	2
	Length (m)	40
Trench 8		
General description	Orientation	NE-SW
No archaeological features or finds recorded.	Avg. depth (m)	0.55
	Width (m)	2
	Length (m)	40
Trench 9		
General description	Orientation	NE-SW
No archaeological features or finds recorded.	Avg. depth (m)	0.65
	Width (m)	2
	Length (m)	17
Trench 10		
General description	Orientation	NW-SE
No archaeological features or finds recorded.	Avg. depth (m)	0.5
	Width (m)	2
	Length (m)	26
Trench 11		
General description	Orientation	NE-SW
No archaeological features or finds recorded. substantial modern disturbance recorded throughout.	Avg. depth (m)	0.7
	Width (m)	2
	Length (m)	40
Trench 12		
General description	Orientation	E-W
No archaeological features or finds recorded. substantial modern disturbance recorded throughout.	Avg. depth (m)	0.7
	Width (m)	2
	Length (m)	40
Trench 13		
General description	Orientation	NE-SW
No archaeological features or finds recorded. substantial modern disturbance recorded throughout.	Avg. depth (m)	0.6
	Width (m)	2
	Length (m)	38
Trench 14		
General description	Orientation	N-S
No archaeological features or finds recorded.	Avg. depth (m)	0.75
	Width (m)	2
	Length (m)	40
Trench 15		
General description	Orientation	E-W
No archaeological features or finds recorded.	Avg. depth (m)	0.51

		Width (m)	2			
		Length (m)	30			
Trench 16						
General description		Orientation	NW-SE			
No archaeological features or finds recorded.		Avg. depth (m)	0.42			
		Width (m)	2			
		Length (m)	40			
Trench 17						
General description		Orientation	NE-SW			
No archaeological features or finds recorded.		Avg. depth (m)	0.35			
		Width (m)	2			
		Length (m)	40			
Trench 18						
General description		Orientation	NW-SE			
No archaeological features or finds recorded.		Avg. depth (m)	0.6			
		Width (m)	2			
		Length (m)	40			
Trench 19						
General description		Orientation	NE-SW			
No archaeological features or finds recorded.		Avg. depth (m)	0.6			
		Width (m)	2			
		Length (m)	40			
Trench 20						
General description		Orientation	NW-SE			
4 x ditches recorded.		Avg. depth (m)	0.6			
		Width (m)	2			
		Length (m)	40			
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
79	Fill	0.76	0.16	Fill of Ditch	Pot	Roman C1-3
80	Cut	0.76	0.16	Cut of Ditch	-	-
92	Fill	0.6	0.23	Fill of Ditch	-	-
93	Cut	0.6	0.23	Cut of Ditch	-	-
110	Fill	0.8	0.12	Fill of Ditch	-	-
111	Cut	0.8	0.12	Cut of Ditch	-	-
112	Fill	0.54	0.11	Fill of Ditch	-	-
113	Cut	0.54	0.11	Cut of Ditch	-	-
Trench 21						
General description		Orientation		E-W		
5 x Ditches, 1 x Pit recorded.		Avg. depth (m)		0.44		
		Width (m)		2		

					Length (m)	40
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
94	Fill	1.1	0.4	Fill of Ditch	-	-
95	Fill	0.58	0.1	Fill of Ditch	-	-
96	Cut	1.1	0.48	Cut of Ditch	-	-
97	Fill	0.55	0.2	Fill of Ditch	-	-
98	Cut	0.55	0.2	Cut of Ditch	-	-
99	Fill	0.75	0.26	Fill of Ditch	Pot	Roman C1-3
100	Cut	0.75	0.26	Cut of Ditch	-	-
101	Fill	0.85	0.2	Fill of Ditch	-	-
102	Fill	0.85	0.2	Fill of Ditch	-	-
103	Cut	0.85	0.2	Cut of Ditch	-	-
104	Fill	0.55	0.05	Fill of Ditch	-	-
105	Cut	0.55	0.05	Cut of Ditch	-	-
106	Fill	0.4	0.1	Fill of Ditch	-	-
107	Cut	0.4	0.1	Cut of Ditch	-	-
108	Fill	0.6	0.3	Fill of Pit	-	-
109	Cut	0.6	0.3	Cut of Pit	-	-
Trench 22						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
No archaeological features or finds recorded.					Avg. depth (m)	0.5
					Width (m)	2
					Length (m)	40
					Trench 23	
General description					Orientation	E-W
No archaeological features or finds recorded.					Avg. depth (m)	0.6
					Width (m)	2
					Length (m)	30
					Trench 24	
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
No archaeological features or finds recorded.					Avg. depth (m)	0.45
					Width (m)	2
					Length (m)	38
					Trench 25	
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
No archaeological features or finds recorded.					Avg. depth (m)	0.65
					Width (m)	2
					Length (m)	42
					Trench 26	
General description					Orientation	NE-SW

No archaeological features or finds recorded.	Avg. depth (m)	0.45				
	Width (m)	2				
	Length (m)	40				
Trench 27						
General description	Orientation	NE-SW				
No archaeological features or finds recorded.	Avg. depth (m)	0.55				
	Width (m)	2				
	Length (m)	40				
Trench 28						
General description	Orientation	NE-SW				
No archaeological features or finds recorded.	Avg. depth (m)	0.45				
	Width (m)	2				
	Length (m)	40				
Trench 29						
General description	Orientation	N-S				
No archaeological features or finds recorded.	Avg. depth (m)	0.4				
	Width (m)	2				
	Length (m)	40				
Trench 30						
General description	Orientation	E-W				
No archaeological features or finds recorded.	Avg. depth (m)	0.5				
	Width (m)	2				
	Length (m)	40				
Trench 31						
General description	Orientation	E-W				
No archaeological features or finds recorded.	Avg. depth (m)	0.45				
	Width (m)	2				
	Length (m)	30				
Trench 32						
General description	Orientation	E-W				
1 x Ditch recorded.	Avg. depth (m)	0.55				
	Width (m)	2				
	Length (m)	30				
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
86	Fill	1.2	0.5	Fill of ditch	-	-
87	Cut	1.2	0.5	Cut of ditch	-	-
Trench 33						
General description	Orientation	N-S				
5 x Pits and 3 x Ditches	Avg. depth (m)	0.48				
	Width (m)	2				

						Length (m)	40
Contexts							
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date	
29	Fill	0.4	0.2	Fill of Pit	-	-	
30	Cut	0.4	0.2	Cut of Pit	-	-	
31	Fill	0.9	0.3	Fill of ditch	-	-	
32	Cut	0.9	0.3	Cut of ditch	-	-	
33	Fill	0.4	0.2	Fill of ditch	-	-	
34	Cut	0.4	0.2	Cut of ditch	-	-	
35	Fill	1	0.25	Fill of Pit	-	-	
36	Cut	1	0.25	Cut of Pit	-	-	
37	Fill	0.65	0.1	Fill of Pit	-	-	
38	Cut	0.65	0.1	Cut of Pit	-	-	
39	Fill	1.4	0.45	Fill of ditch	-	-	
40	Cut	1.4	0.45	Cut of ditch	-	-	
67	Fill	0.5	0.07	Fill of Pit	-	-	
68	Cut	0.5	0.07	Cut of Pit	-	-	
69	Fill	0.4	0.15	Fill of Pit	-	-	
70	Cut	0.4	0.15	Cut of Pit	-	-	
Trench 34							
General description					Orientation	N-S	
6 x Ditches, 1 x Pit and 1 x Post hole					Avg. depth (m)	0.42	
					Width (m)	2	
					Length (m)	50	
Contexts							
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date	
46	Cut	0.9	0.4	Cut of ditch	-	-	
47	Fill	0.6	0.2	Fill of ditch	-	-	
48	Fill	0.8	0.2	Fill of ditch	-	-	
49	Fill	0.8	0.18	Fill of ditch	-	-	
50	Cut	0.6	0.25	Cut of ditch	-	-	
51	Fill	0.6	0.25	Fill of ditch	-	-	
52	Cut	0.3	0.25	Cut of post hole	-	-	
53	Fill	0.3	0.25	Fill of post hole	-	-	
57	Cut	0.6	0.4	Cut of ditch	-	-	
58	Fill	0.6	0.4	Fill of ditch	-	-	
71	Fill	0.75	0.25	Fill of ditch	-	-	
72	Cut	0.75	0.25	Cut of ditch	-	-	
73	Fill	0.58	0.28	Fill of ditch	-	-	
74	Cut	0.58	0.28	Cut of ditch	-	-	

81	Fill	0.65	0.3	Fill of pit	-	-
82	Cut	0.65	0.3	Cut of pit	-	-
83	Fill	1.5	0.3	Fill of ditch	-	-
84	Fill	2.2	0.65	Fill of ditch	-	-
85	Cut	2.2	0.65	Cut of ditch	-	-
Trench 35						
General description					Orientation	E-W
3 x Ditches 1 x Pit					Avg. depth (m)	0.44
					Width (m)	2.10
					Length (m)	37.70
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
15	Cut	0.8	0.3	Cut of ditch	-	-
16	Fill	0.8	0.3	Fill of ditch	-	-
17	Cut	0.7	0.15	Cut of ditch	-	-
18	Fill	0.7	0.15	Fill of ditch	-	-
19	Cut	0.8	0.12	Cut of ditch	-	-
20	Fill	0.8	0.12	Fill of ditch	-	-
21	Cut	1.8	0.35	Cut of Pit	-	-
22	Fill	1.8	0.35	Fill of Pit	-	-
24	Fill	0.5	0.1	Fill of Pit	-	-
Trench 36						
General description					Orientation	E-W
4 x Furrows 1 x possible boundary ditch					Avg. depth (m)	0.44
					Width (m)	2
					Length (m)	40
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1	Fill	0.7	0.11	Fill of Furrow	-	-
2	Cut	0.7	0.11	Cut of Furrow	-	-
3	Fill	0.5	0.13	Fill of Furrow	-	-
4	Cut	0.5	0.13	Cut of Furrow	-	-
5	Fill	0.75	0.08	Fill of Furrow	-	-
6	Cut	0.75	0.08	Cut of Furrow	-	-
7	Fill	1.7	0.6	Fill of Ditch	-	-
8	Cut	1.7	0.6	Cut of Ditch	-	-
9	Fill	0.5	0.06	Fill of Furrow	-	-
10	Cut	0.5	0.06	Cut of Furrow	-	-
Trench 37						
General description					Orientation	E-W

3 x possible furrows, 2 x pits, 1x shallow gully	Avg. depth (m)	0.44
	Width (m)	2.10
	Length (m)	37.70

Contexts

context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
11	Fill	0.93	0.2	Fill of Ditch	-	-
12	Cut	0.93	0.2	Cut of Ditch		
13	Fill	1.01	0.33	Fill of Ditch		
14	Fill	0.82	0.11	Fill of Ditch		
27	Cut	2	0.73	Cut of Pit		
28	Cut	0.22	0.15	Cut of Gully		
41	Cut	1.01	0.37	Cut of Ditch		
42	Fill	0.84	0.16	Fill of Ditch		
43	Cut	0.84	0.16	Cut of Ditch		
44	Fill	0.28	0.17	Fill of Pit		
45	Cut	0.28	0.17	Cut of Pit		
54	Fill	2	0.28	Fill of Ditch		
55	Fill	2	0.47	Fill of Ditch	-	-
56	Fill	0.22	0.15	Fill of Gully	-	-

Trench 38

General description	Orientation	NW-SE
No archaeological features or finds recorded.	Avg. depth (m)	0.68
	Width (m)	2
	Length (m)	40

Trench 39

General description	Orientation	NW-SE
No archaeological features or finds recorded.	Avg. depth (m)	0.76
	Width (m)	2
	Length (m)	52

Trench 40

General description	Orientation	NE-SW
No archaeological features or finds recorded.	Avg. depth (m)	0.75
	Width (m)	2
	Length (m)	40

Trench 41

General description	Orientation	NE-SW
No archaeological features or finds recorded.	Avg. depth (m)	0.5
	Width (m)	2
	Length (m)	40

Trench 42

General description	Orientation	E-W
----------------------------	--------------------	-----

No archaeological features or finds recorded.	Avg. depth (m)	1.2
	Width (m)	2
	Length (m)	40
Trench 43		
General description	Orientation	E-W
No archaeological features or finds recorded.	Avg. depth (m)	0.8
	Width (m)	2
	Length (m)	40
Trench 44		
General description	Orientation	N-S
No archaeological features or finds recorded.	Avg. depth (m)	0.82
	Width (m)	2
	Length (m)	40
Trench 45		
General description	Orientation	WNW-ESE
No archaeological features or finds recorded.	Avg. depth (m)	0.5
	Width (m)	2
	Length (m)	40

APPENDIX B. FINDS REPORTS

B.1 Pottery

By Chris Faine

The assemblage

- B.1.1 Context 79 contained a single body sherd of Romano-British coarse ware weighing 2g. Context 99 contained two fragments of shell tempered Early Roman (C1st-3rd) coarse ware, along with six fragments of possibly grog tempered reduced ware of similar date. Total weight of pottery in this context was 25g.

B.2 Flint

By Chris Faine

Leaf shaped arrowhead

- B.2.1 One item of worked flint was recovered from context 23 in the form of an Early Neolithic leaf shaped arrowhead. Length: 33.1mm. Width: 17.9mm Weight: 1.1g.

APPENDIX C. ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS

C.1 Environmental samples

By Rachel Fosberry

Introduction

- C.1.1 Five bulk samples were taken during excavations at Land West of Irthlingborough to determine whether plant remains are present, their mode of preservation and whether they are of interpretable value with regard to domestic, agricultural and industrial activities, diet, economy and rubbish disposal.
- C.1.2 Samples were taken from pits and ditches dating to the Iron Age/Roman period. Finds during excavation were scarce.

Methodology

- C.1.1 One bucket (up to ten litres) of each of the samples were processed by tank flotation for the recovery of charred plant remains, dating evidence and any other artefactual evidence that might be present. The flot was collected in a 0.3mm nylon mesh and the residue was washed through a 0.5mm sieve. Both flot and residue were allowed to air dry. The dried residue was passed through 5mm and 2mm sieves and a magnet was dragged through each resulting fraction prior to sorting for artefacts. Any artefacts present were noted and reintegrated with the hand-excavated finds. The flot was examined under a binocular microscope and the presence of any plant remains or other artefacts are noted on Table 1.

Quantification

- C.1.1 For the purpose of this initial assessment, items such as seeds, cereal grains and small animal bones have been scanned and recorded qualitatively according to the following categories

= 1-10, ## = 11-50, ### = 51+ specimens ##### = 100+ specimens

Items that cannot be easily quantified such as charcoal, magnetic residues and fragmented bone have been scored for abundance

+ = rare, ++ = moderate, +++ = abundant

Results

Sample No.	Context No.	Cut No.	Feature Type	Trench No	Cereals	Charcoal <2mm	Charcoal > 2mm
1	22	21	Pit	35	#	+	
2	22	21	Pit	35			
3	81	82	Pit	34	#	+++	+
4	83	85	Ditch	34		+	
5	102	103	Ditch	21			

Table 1: Environmental samples XNN FRI 12

- C.1.2 Plant remains are preserved by carbonization. The carbonized material recovered is comprised of two single cereal grains with occasional charcoal fragments.
- C.1.3 A single wheat (*Triticum* sp.) grain is present in Sample 1, fill 22 of pit **21** and its compact, rounded morphology suggests bread wheat (*T. aestivum/compactum*). An abraded charred grain that has been tentatively identified as oat (*Avena* sp.) was recovered from Sample 3, fill 81 of Pit **82**.

Discussion

- C.1.1 The samples produced only two cereal grains which cannot be considered significant. The soil is a heavy clay that proved difficult to break down and most likely hindered preservation of charred plant remains and their subsequent recovery. Repeated flotation of the residues (once they have dried) may produce more charred plant remains.

Conclusions

- C.1.1 The environmental samples from Land West of Irthlingborough have not produced significant plant remains. If further excavation is planned in this area it is recommended that sampling is restricted to targeted deposits such as primary fills, hearths/ovens and rubbish pits. It is not considered that full analysis would add significantly to this interpretation and additional work is not recommended at this stage.

APPENDIX D. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- | | | |
|-----------------------|------|---|
| Butler, A & Fisher, I | 2010 | Archaeological geophysical survey on land to the west of Irthlingborough, Northamptonshire |
| Dawson, M | 2007 | Land West of Irthlingborough, Northamptonshire, Archaeological Desk Based Assessment |
| Drummond Murray, J | 2012 | Specification for Archaeological Evaluation at Land West of Irthlingborough, Northamptonshire |
| Mather, L | 2012 | Brief for an Archaeological Evaluation at Land West of Irthlingborough, Northamptonshire |

APPENDIX E. OASIS REPORT FORM

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

Project Details

OASIS Number	<input type="text" value="oxfordar3-135352"/>			
Project Name	<input type="text" value="Prehistoric and Roman remains at Land West of Irthlingborough, Northamptonshire"/>			
Project Dates (fieldwork)	Start	<input type="text" value="10-10-2012"/>	Finish	<input type="text" value="20-10-2012"/>
Previous Work (by OA East)	<input type="text" value="Yes"/>	Future Work	<input type="text" value="Unknown"/>	

Project Reference Codes

Site Code	<input type="text" value="XNNFRI12"/>	Planning App. No.	<input type="text"/>
HER No.	<input type="text"/>	Related HER/OASIS No.	<input type="text"/>

Type of Project/Techniques Used

Prompt	<input type="text" value="Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS 5"/>
Development Type	<input type="text" value="Rural Residential"/>

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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Targeted Trenches
<input type="checkbox"/> Dendrochronological Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Metal Detectors	<input type="checkbox"/> Test Pits
<input checked="" 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 checked="" 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
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Project Location

County	<input type="text" value="Northamptonshire"/>	Site Address (including postcode if possible)	<input type="text"/>
District	<input type="text" value="Irthlingborough"/>		
Parish	<input type="text" value="Irthlingborough"/>		
HER	<input type="text"/>		
Study Area	<input type="text"/>	National Grid Reference	<input type="text" value="SP 708 936"/>

Project Originators

Organisation	OA EAST
Project Brief Originator	Lesley-Ann Mather
Project Design Originator	Stephen Macaulay
Project Manager	James Drummond Murray
Supervisor	Chris Thatcher

Project Archives

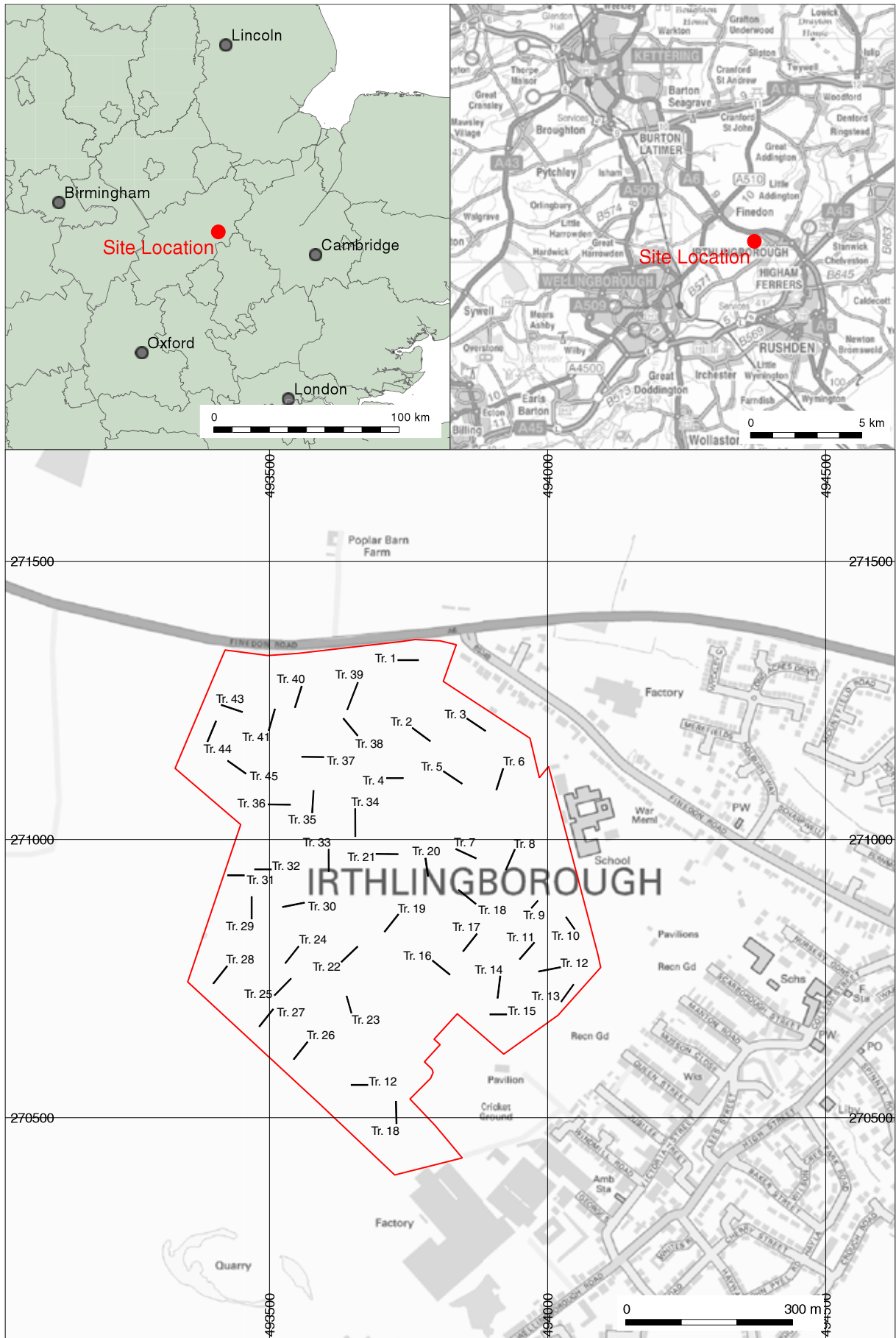
Physical Archive	Digital Archive	Paper Archive
OA East	OA East	OA East

Archive Contents/Media

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

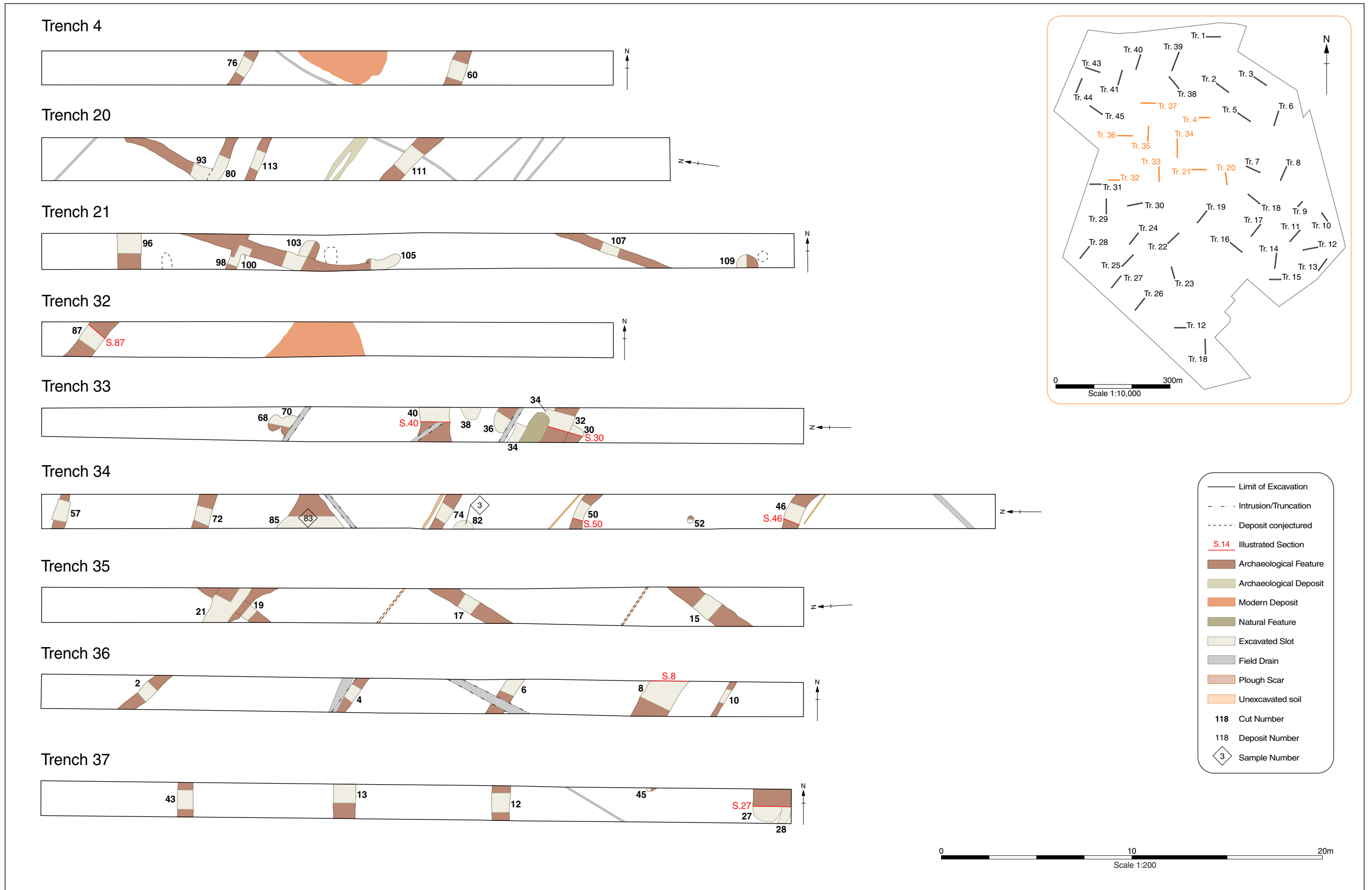


Figure 2: Trench plans

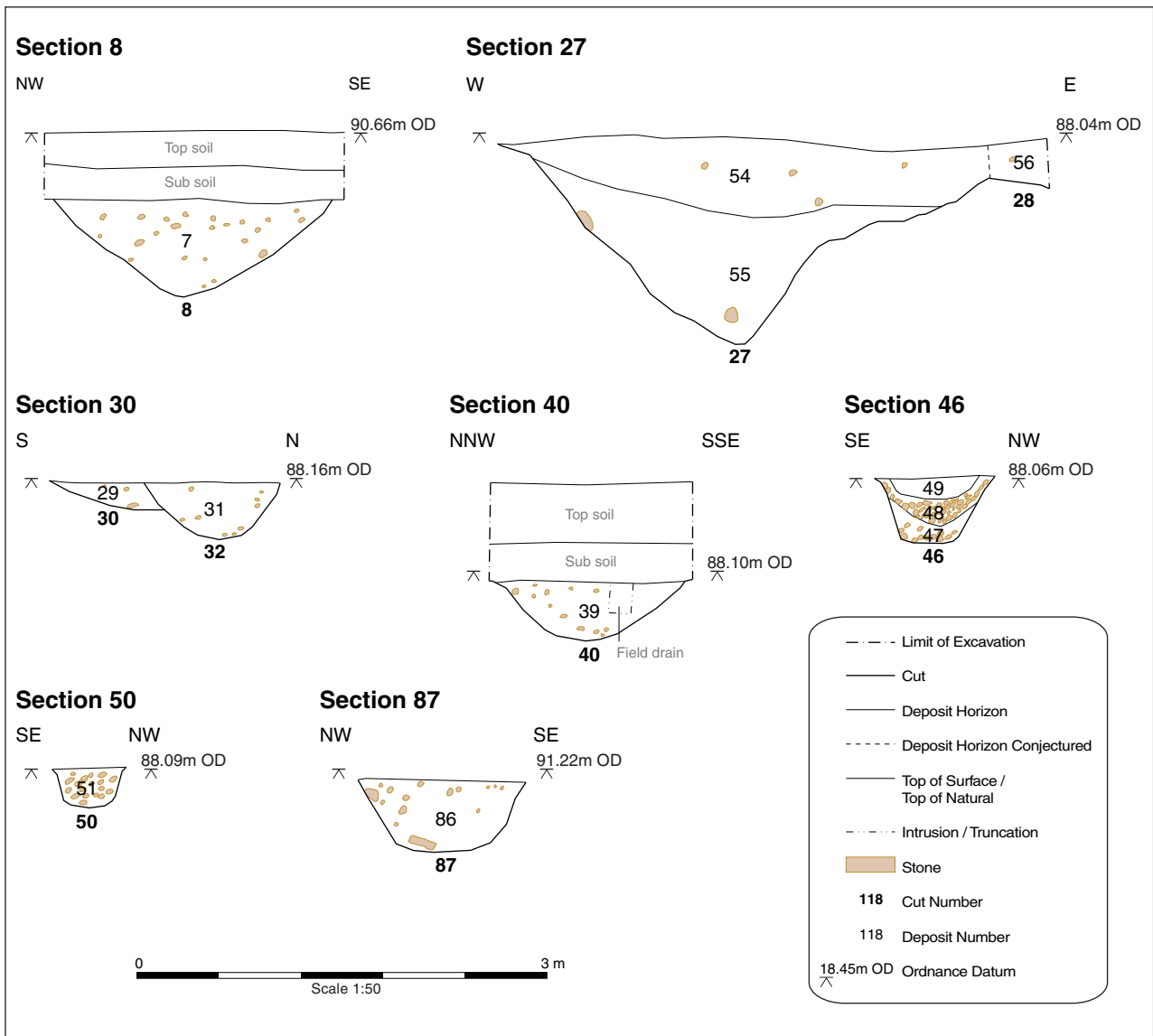


Figure 3: Selected sections



Plate 1: Ditch 8



Plate 2: Feature 21



Plate 3: Ditch 100



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