

Land at 53 High Street Chippenham Cambridgeshire



Archaeological Evaluation Report



July 2016

Client: Mr Terry Cross

OA East Report No: 1958

OASIS No: oxfordar3-257613

NGR: TL 6642 6983

Land at 53 High Street, Chippenham, Cambridgeshire

Archaeological Evaluation

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With contributions by Richard Mortimer MCIfA

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Report Date: July 2016

Report Number: 1958
Site Name: 53 High Street, Chippenham, Cambridgeshire
HER Event No: ECB4762
Date of Works: July 2016
Client Name: Mr Terry Cross
Client Ref:
Planning Ref: 15/01322/FUL
Grid Ref: TL 6642 6983
Site Code: CHPHIS16
Finance Code: CHPHIS16
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Prepared by: Stuart Ladd
Position: Project Officer
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Date: July 2016
Signed:



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Summary

On 13th July 2016 OA East opened 4 evaluation trenches in advance of the proposed development of a single house at 53 High Street, Chippenham, Cambridgeshire (TL 6642 6983). The site lies immediately east of the 12th century Church of Saint Margaret in the centre of the village of Chippenham. In total a length of 45m of trench was opened.

A single small mortar-filled pit was exposed in the side of Trench 1, closest to the church yard. This was undated but may relate to the construction of part of the church or one of its monuments, or perhaps to later standing buildings nearby.

No archaeology was found across the rest of the site and the finds assemblage was extremely small, with all three artefacts abraded.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 An archaeological evaluation was conducted at 53 High Street, Chippenham, Cambridgeshire.
- 1.1.2 This archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Kasia Ganiec of Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Team (CHET; Planning Application 15/01322/FUL), supplemented by a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by OA East (Mortimer 2016).
- 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 county stores in due course.

1.2 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The site is situated on second terrace gravel deposits of sand and gravel overlying Holywell Nodular Chalk formation. Trenches exposed silty sands and occasional gravel, no chalk was exposed.
- 1.2.2 Chippenham lies 5km north of Newmarket, sitting at around 19m OD. The site is 350m from the Lee Brook in the valley between the rivers Kennet and Snail.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

Introduction

- 1.3.1 Much of the following background is taken from the WSI (Mortimer 2016). Chippenham is mentioned in Domesday as 'Chipeham', meaning 'Cippa's farm/settlement/enclosure' (Reaney 1943). It lies between the valleys of the Rivers Kennet and Snail, both of which give their names to neighbouring parishes. Chippenham also contains the shrunken hamlet of Badlingham. The village is small, consisting of little more than a single street and the expanse of Chippenham Park (CHER 12336).
- 1.3.2 The proposed development site lies to the immediate east of the 12th century Saint Margaret's Church.

Palaeolithic

- 1.3.3 A pointed handaxe was recovered in the parish (CHER MCB19250).

Earlier Prehistoric (Mesolithic to Bronze Age)

- 1.3.4 It is thought that at least three linked prehistoric route ways crossed Chippenham parish: Icknield Way which formed the southern boundary of the parish, Ditchway and Street Way (or Ashwell Street), which is approximated by the line of Badlingham Road, passing around 100m north of the site.
- 1.3.5 A Mesolithic tranchet axe was recovered in the north of the village (CHER 07626).

-
- 1.3.6 Neolithic flints (CHER MCB16013) have been found around 800m northeast of the site. Several scatters of Bronze Age flints have also been found in the village (e.g. CHER 10231 and 10244). A number of items of Bronze Age metalwork have been found near Badlingham Road (Street Way/Ashwell Street), including a hoard (CHER 07573), spears (CHER CB14711 & MCB16005). Illegally metal detected objects were removed from the northwest of the village (CHER CB14708).
- 1.3.7 A number of Bronze Age barrows are found in the area, including two scheduled examples around 1.2km from the site: at Isleham Plantation (CHER07491 / Scheduled: DCB235); and in the east of the parish (CHER 08107 / Scheduled: DCB318).

Iron Age and Roman

- 1.3.8 There are several known Iron Age settlements in Chippenham and the neighbouring parishes. These settlements appear to be located close to water and to the prehistoric route ways (e.g. Street Way). Enclosure crop marks and an Iron Age coin are recorded c.400m west of the site (CHER 09028/A). Roman settlement is known from this area (CHER 11534). Iron Age and Roman pottery have been found c.500m north of the site (CHER 07621).
- 1.3.9 Recent excavations at Low Park Corner, 1km to the south-east on the west back of the Lee Brook, have recoded a relatively dense Middle and Late Iron Age settlement that continued into the early Roman period (CHER MCB20102 / ECB3158; Atkins 2013).

Undated burials were encountered in the 19th century, apparently with a sherd of Roman pottery, within the grounds of Chippenham Hall, c. 500m south of the development area (CHER 07475). This is close to an Early Saxon inhumation (below) and it is possible they were post-Roman burials.

Anglo-Saxon

- 1.3.10 An Early Saxon inhumation was found c.400m to the south of site, directly to the west of the Bury Road during construction work on the cricket ground (CHER 09768).
- 1.3.11 Further north, approximately 1km from the site is a possible Early to Middle Saxon settlement site and burial ground with three potentially related records over a c.300m area directly to the west of the Lee Brook (CHERs 07509e, 07512 and 07554b). Metal detecting has found an early 9th century silver hook tag to the south (CB14705).

Medieval and post-medieval

- 1.3.12 The development area lies within the core of medieval Chippenham only 40m to the east of the 12th century St Margaret's church (CHER 07494 / Scheduled: DCB951). The School House, across the High Street from the church, has medieval foundations (CHER MCB17331), potentially relating to the preceptory of the Knights Hospitallers (to whom the manor was granted in 1184), which is thought to have stood near the site of the medieval church (CHER MCB07425).
- 1.3.13 The remains of the shrunken village (CHER 07451) lie within the grounds of Chippenham Park (CHER 12336) to the south which was set out between 1696 and 1702. The registered Gardens of Chippenham Lodge (MCB19292) lie to the east.

1.4 Acknowledgements

- 1.4.1 The site was commissioned by Mr Terry Cross. Richard Mortimer managed the project with Stuart Ladd operating on site. Kasia Gdaniec of CHET monitored the site.

2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 The objective of this archaeological 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 45m of trenching. Due to the reduction in tree cover compared to recent site photographs, there was greater flexibility to spread the trenches around the site. Trenches were positioned to avoid a standing structure, large tree stumps and existing boundaries while maintaining a narrow access route along the field's northern boundary.
- 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 trenches were located on the site plan by measuring tape using the survey undertaken by Partners in Planning and Architecture (Drawing 14/115/101).
- 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. Top and subsoils were buckets sampled to retrieve finds.
- 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 environmental samples were taken as no suitable sealed contexts were uncovered.
- 2.2.7 Site conditions were dry and sunny.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 Results are described in order of trench number. The only archaeological feature encountered was in Trench 1.

3.2 Trench 1

Length: 18.8m

Topsoil: 0.25-0.35m

Subsoil: 0.25-0.30m

Geology: Silty sand

- 3.2.1 Lying closest to the church yard, this trench (Plate 1) exposed the edge of a small possible mortar mixing pit (3). This was 1.3m across and 0.15m deep (see Plates 2 and 3). It was filled with lime mortar comprising sand and soft limestone or chalk lumps (4). Small quantities of the same material (5) were visible at the base of the trench baulk nearby, sitting directly on the natural, but not within a cut (see Section 1, Figure 3).
- 3.2.2 This feature was clearly sealed by the subsoil (2). It is potentially medieval, relating to the construction of the church or one of its graveyard monuments (40m to the west). Later possible associates are Longwood house 45m to the north or potentially the churchyard wall (c.12m distant), although in its present form (mortared brick and flint) this is probably a more recent construction.

3.3 Trench 2

Length: 10.2m

Topsoil: 0.25-0.30m

Subsoil: 0.15-0.18m

Geology: Silty sand

- 3.3.1 No archaeology (Plate 4).

3.4 Trench 3

Length: 13.4m

Topsoil: 0.25-0.30m

Subsoil: 0.3-0.45

Geology: Sand and gravel

- 3.4.1 No archaeology (Plate 5).

3.5 Trench 4

Length: 2.6m

Topsoil: 0.15

Subsoil: 0.25

Geology: Silty sand

- 3.5.1 No archaeology (Plate 6). This trench enabled the exposure of an extra 2.6m by 1.9m of natural sand just to the east of Trench 3.

3.6 Bucket Sampling

- 3.6.1 Bucket samples were taken at the centre points of all four trenches but no artefacts were recovered. Three artefacts were collected whilst machining the trenches.

3.7 Finds Summary

3.7.1 Finds were only recovered from the top and subsoil: a flint from Trench 3 and pot sherds from top and subsoil in Trench 1 (see Appendix).

3.8 Environmental Summary

3.8.1 Lacking appropriate contexts, no environmental samples were taken.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Finds

- 4.1.1 No finds were recovered from sealed contexts. The flint from the subsoil in Trench 3 is not an uncommon find given the local geology and is highly abraded. The medieval pottery from Trench 1 is also highly abraded and is typical for soil in the centre of a village, notable on this site only for its scarcity. A single sherd of post-medieval pottery was recovered from the topsoil, again notable for its scarcity.

4.2 The Site in Context

- 4.2.1 The location of the site, immediately adjacent to the 12th century parish church, close to the line of a prehistoric track and within 2km of a river course (River Kennet) appeared, prior to excavation, to represent an area of high potential, particularly for the Saxon to Early Medieval periods. It is suspected that a Middle Saxon proto-manorial centre stood somewhere within the modern village, certainly the village has at least Late Saxon origins, being recorded in Domesday.
- 4.2.2 However, the evaluation exposed no features and no finds from this period. Roman and Saxon archaeology is principally found to the west and south, respectively, of the surviving village core. The suggestion that the Knights Hospitallers' preceptory stood on the site of the School House, with its medieval foundations west of the church, also hints at later Saxon settlement being focused in that direction rather than eastwards.

4.3 Significance

- 4.3.1 The single archaeological feature uncovered, mortar Pit **3**, does not represent archaeology of great significance. It is probably medieval or later but likely relates to the construction of structures that still stand: the church, perhaps the churchyard wall or nearby houses.
- 4.3.2 This evaluation has served to eliminate one possible geographical area of research into the origins of Chippenham.

4.4 Recommendations

- 4.4.1 Recommendations for any future work based upon this report will be made by the County Archaeology Office.

APPENDIX A. CONTEXT INVENTORY

Context	Cut	Trench	Category	Type	Comment	Thickness/Dimensions
1	-	All	Layer	Topsoil	Dark grey sandy silt	0.15-0.35m
2	-	All	Layer	Subsoil	Mid brown sandy silt	0.15-0.30m
3	3	1	Cut	Pit	Mortar pit, possible mixing pit	>1.3m x >0.35m x 0.15m
4	3	1	Fill	Pit	Lime mortar (sand and limestone/chalk)	0.15m
5	-	1	Layer	Deposit	Mortar lying outside pit 3	0.05m

Table 1: Contexts

APPENDIX B. FINDS

Richard Mortimer

B.1 Introduction

B.1.1 Only a brief summary of finds is given as the assemblage was small and none were recovered from sealed contexts.

Flint

B.1.1 Trench 3, context 2: single flake on poor quality pebble flint. Abraded and damaged. 4G (discarded).

Pottery

B.1.1 Trench 1, context 1: single sherd of post-medieval Yellow Ware (19th C), 4g (discarded).
Trench 1, context 2: single sherd extremely abraded Ely Ware (mid 12th-14th C), <2g (discarded).

APPENDIX C. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Atkins, R. 2013, *Iron Age to Roman Settlement at Low Park Corner, Chippenham* OA East Report 1275

British Geological Survey (BGS) 2016, British Geological Survey Geology of Britain Viewer <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> [accessed 13/7/2016]

Mortimer, R. 2016, *Written Scheme of Investigation, Archaeological Evaluation: Site name 53 High St, Chippenham, Cambridgeshire*, Project Number 19632

Reaney, P. H. 1943, *The Place-Names of Cambridgeshire and the Isle of Ely* Cambridge: CUP

APPENDIX D. OASIS REPORT FORM

Project Details

OASIS Number	oxfordar3-257613		
Project Name	Land at 53 High Street, Chippenham, Cambridgeshire		
Project Dates (fieldwork) Start	13-07-2016	Finish	13-07-2016
Previous Work (by OA East)	No	Future Work	Unknown

Project Reference Codes

Site Code	CHPHIS16	Planning App. No.	15/01322/FUL
HER No.	ECB4762	Related HER/OASIS No.	

Type of Project/Techniques Used

Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16
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 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 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
Pit	Uncertain	Pottery	Post Medieval 1540 to 1901
	Select period...	Flint	Neolithic -4k to -2k
	Select period...		Select period...

Project Location

County	Cambridgeshire	Site Address (including postcode if possible)
District	East Cambridgeshire	53 High Street Chippenham CB7 5PP
Parish	Chippenham	
HER	Cambridgeshire	
Study Area	0.2ha	National Grid Reference
		TL 6642 6983

Project Originators

Organisation	OA East
Project Brief Originator	Kasia Gdaniec, CHET
Project Design Originator	Richard Mortimer, OA East
Project Manager	Richard Mortimer, OA East
Supervisor	Stuart Ladd, OA East

Project Archives

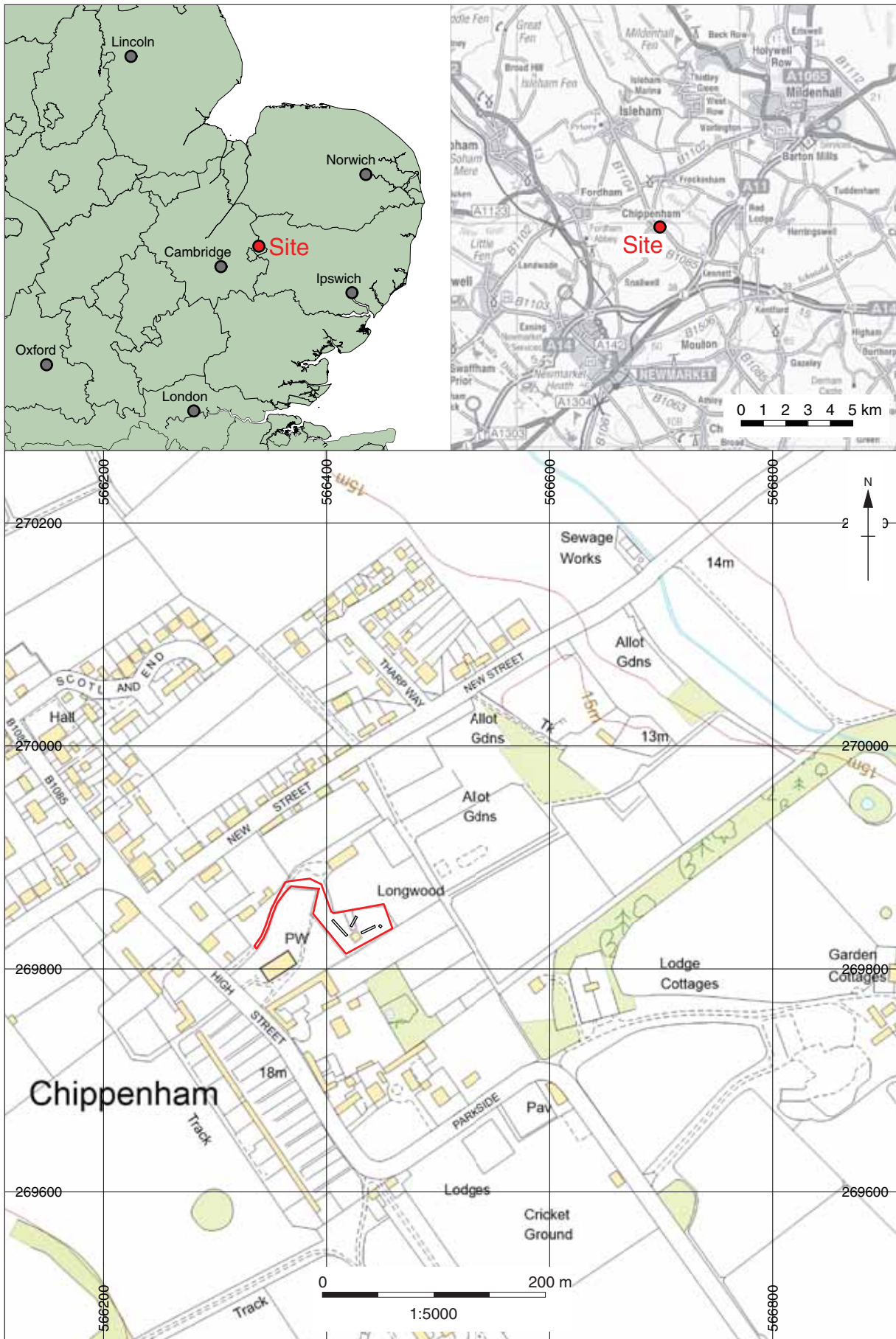
Physical Archive	Digital Archive	Paper Archive
OA East	OA East	OA East
CHPHIS16	CHPHIS16	CHPHIS16

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
<input type="checkbox"/> Database	<input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photos
<input type="checkbox"/> GIS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Context Sheet
<input type="checkbox"/> Geophysics	<input type="checkbox"/> Correspondence
<input 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
<input type="checkbox"/> Spreadsheets	<input type="checkbox"/> Map
<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Survey

Notes:



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

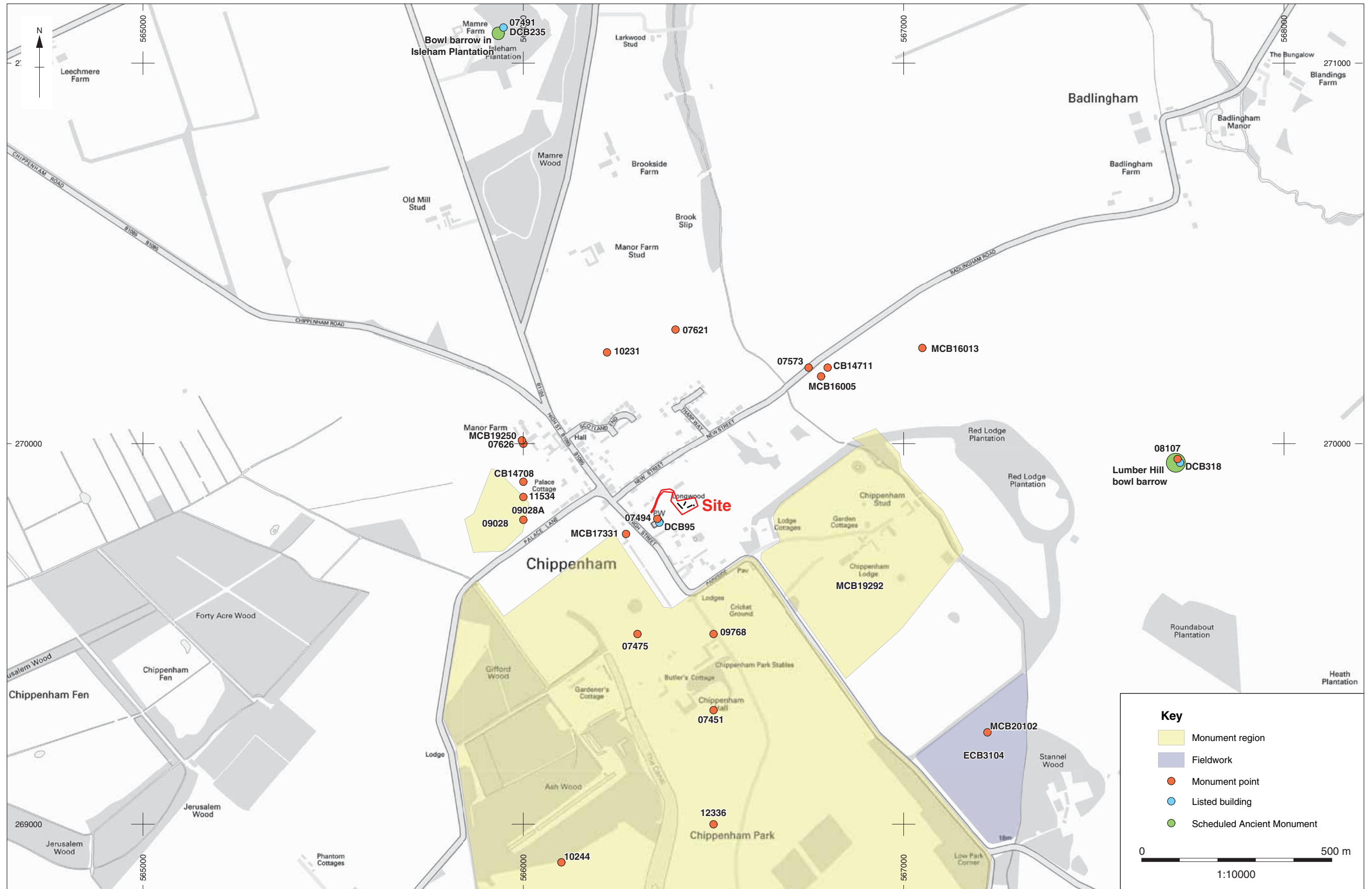


Figure 1b: Site location with HER entries mentioned in the text

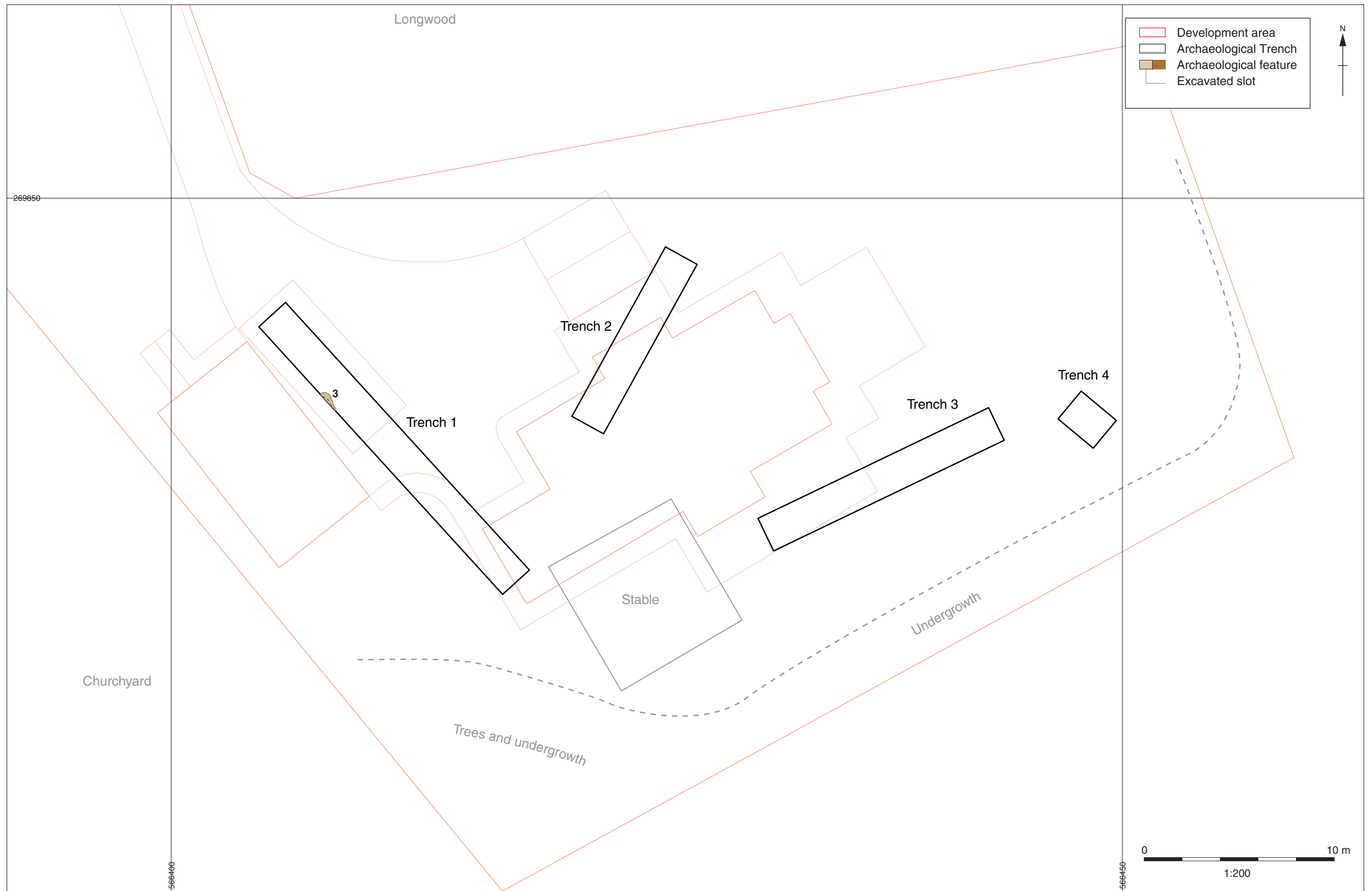


Figure 2: Trench plan and development area. Showing trenches (black), existing features (grey) and proposed development (red).