



Land opposite 20 Burwell Road, Reach, Cambridgeshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

January 2018

Client: Mr and Mrs J Reed

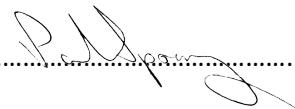
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Prepared by: Nicholas Cox (Supervisor)
Checked by: Tom Phillips (Senior Project Manager)
Edited by: Lawrence Billington (Project Officer)
Approved for Issue by: Paul Sperry (Regional Manager)
Signature:



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OA South

Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford
OX2 0ES

t. +44 (0)1865 263 800

OA East

15 Trafalgar Way
Bar Hill
Cambridge
CB23 8SG

t. +44 (0)1223 850 500

OA North

Mill 3
Moor Lane Mills
Moor Lane
Lancaster
LA1 1QD

t. +44 (0)1524 880 250

e. info@oxfordarch.co.uk
w. oxfordarchaeology.com

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Land opposite 20 Burwell Road, Reach, Cambridgeshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

Written by Nicholas Cox BSc.

*With illustrations by Daria Tsybaeva MA(Hons) MA, and
Gillian Greer BSc MCIfA*

Contents

List of Figures	v
List of Plates	v
Summary	vii
Acknowledgements	viii
1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Scope of work	1
1.2 Location, topography and geology	1
1.3 Archaeological and historical background	1
2 EVALUATION AIMS AND METHODOLOGY	3
2.1 Aims.....	3
2.2 Methodology	3
3 RESULTS	6
3.1 Introduction and presentation of results.....	6
3.2 General soils and ground conditions	6
3.3 General distribution of archaeological deposits.....	6
3.4 Trench 1.....	6
3.5 Trench 2.....	6
3.6 Trench 3.....	6
3.7 Finds summary.....	7
4 DISCUSSION	8
4.1 Reliability of field investigation.....	8
4.2 Evaluation objectives and results	8
4.3 Interpretation	8
4.4 Significance	8
APPENDIX A TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY	9
APPENDIX B BIBLIOGRAPHY	10
APPENDIX C OASIS REPORT FORM	11

List of Figures

Fig.1	Site location map
Fig.2	Trench Plan
Fig.3	Sections

List of Plates

Plate 1	Posthole 4 , Trench 1, looking north-west
Plate 2	Posthole 6 , Trench 2, looking north-west
Plate 3	Trench 2, looking north-east

Summary

Between the 8th and 9th January 2018 Oxford Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation on land opposite 20 Burwell Road, Reach, Cambridgeshire.

Three trenches measuring 25 x 1.6m, with a total length of 75m were excavated within the proposed development area.

Limited archaeological evidence was identified in all the trenches, including two undated postholes and a post-medieval pit.

Acknowledgements

Oxford Archaeology would like to thank Mr and Mrs Reed for commissioning this project. Thank you to Gemma Stewart, who monitored the work on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council, for their advice and guidance.

The project was managed for Oxford Archaeology by Tom Phillips. The fieldwork was conducted by Nicholas Cox. Survey and digitizing was carried out by Sarita Louzolo. Thank you to the teams of OA staff that cleaned and packaged the finds under the management of Natasha Dodwell, processed the environmental remains under the management of Rachel Fosberry, and prepared the archive under the management of Katherine Hamilton.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of work

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by Mr and Mrs J Reed to undertake a trial trench evaluation on land opposite 20 Burwell Road, Reach, Cambridgeshire.
- 1.1.2 The work was undertaken as a condition of Planning Permission (planning ref. 17/00967/OUT). A brief was set by Gemma Stewart outlining the Local Authority's requirements for work necessary to inform the planning process. A written scheme of investigation was produced by OA detailing the methods by which OA proposed to meet the requirements of the brief.

1.2 Location, topography and geology

- 1.2.1 The site lies on the eastern side of the historic village of Reach, in Cambridgeshire, around 8km west of Newmarket and 10km north-east of Cambridge.
- 1.2.2 The area of proposed development (2345 sq. m) is currently grassed and undeveloped, sitting at around 11.5m OD. Reach is a small village, located close to the fen-edge, sitting on a chalky peninsula with land dropping away to the west and north of the village. The history of the village is linked heavily to its position close to the fen edge – the south-east end of Reach Lode is located on the northern side of the village, close to a strip of land from which the village takes its name (*rece*). From the 12th century this strip was used for loading goods and merchandise on to boats using the Lode (Wareham & Wright 2002).
- 1.2.3 The geology of the area is mapped as West Melbury Marly Chalk Formation, with no superficial deposits recorded (accessed 10th November 2017: <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html>).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The following summary of the archaeological background for the area is drawn from the WSI (Phillips 2017), based on information provided by the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER) and secondary sources.
- 1.3.2 The village stands mainly along a green where the major earthwork of Devil's Dyke (National Heritage List for England reference 1003262, CHER 07801) meets the south-east end of Reach Lode. Devil's Dyke is formed of a large ditch and bank extending from marsh at Reach (fen) to clay land at Camois Hall, Woodditton. It is designated as Saxon but along with other linear earthworks in Cambridgeshire and further afield, it may be prehistoric in origin.

Prehistoric

- 1.3.3 There are plenty of prehistoric findspots in the surrounding landscape, including a cluster of finds (particularly Mesolithic) from an area 800m north-north-east of the site. These include a hoard of nine Mesolithic tranchet axes (06725), two single tranchet axes (06726 and 06732), a Mesolithic flint working site (CHER 06731), a Bronze Age jet bead (06734), a Bronze Age palstave and spear (06438), and to the

north-east a Neolithic polished axe (06439). Residual Late Mesolithic and Neolithic flints were also found during monitoring of a pipeline (MCB23037). Another Mesolithic findspot occurs at the end of The Hythe, 400m to the north-west (06410). There are further prehistoric findspots to the west and south-west of the village, all of which are c. 1km from the current site (06407, 06392A, 06394, 06432, 06442, 06809a and 06443).

- 1.3.4 Possible Iron Age settlement has been identified north-east of Devil's Dyke, about 1km south-east of the application site (06760). Iron Age pottery was found west of Swaffham Road (06809b) and further west on the south-east edge of Church Hill (06392), where it was associated with possible settlement.

Romano-British

- 1.3.5 The original Reach Lode (07896) was constructed in Roman times, as part of a system of fen drainage and navigation. It extended north-west for 5km towards the River Cam.
- 1.3.6 A Roman villa, now a Scheduled Monument (DCB400; 06809) was discovered in the late 19th century adjacent to Swaffham Road in the south of the village, approximately 1km to the south. Roman pottery was found close by (06443A) and a possible settlement to the east of Devil's Dyke (06760A).

Medieval and Post-medieval

- 1.3.7 To the north and north-west of the application area are deserted medieval settlement earthworks (11381, 06440, 06441). In addition, situated to the east of Saint Etheldreda's and Holy Trinity Church (06856; 175m west of the site) are the remains of an old chapel dedicated to St Etheldreda, virgin abbess of Ely AD 679 (06853). Manor House stands at the northern end of Chapel Lane, 250m north-west of the subject site (06666). The original house, perhaps of the early 16th century, consisted of a hall with chamber above.
- 1.3.8 The modern street, The Hythe (06858), reflects remains of a hythe or a large complex of channels, docks, wharves (see 06898 - 06903) and warehouses from the medieval period onwards. Most of the remains are shown on the Enclosure Map of Swaffham Prior. Hythe lies at the north-west end of Fair Green. It consists of a parallel-sided promontory with a pointed north end projecting into the fens, at the southern end of Reach Lode. Before encroachment by houses, the green extended as far as The Hythe.
- 1.3.9 The present appearance of Reach Lode is the result of a long and complex history of altering and recutting, mainly from the 17th century onwards. Up to the mid-17th century the alignment of the Lode was approximately as it is now except at the north-west end where it swung north of the present Lode to follow the present boundary between Swaffham Prior, Burwell and Wicken. Probably in the early 1650s a straight new Lode was cut by the Bedford Level Commissioners from Reach to Upware, south-west of the older Lode, on the line of the present Engine Drain and its continuation to the south-west.

2 EVALUATION AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

2.1.1 This evaluation will seek to establish the character, date and state of preservation of archaeological remains within the proposed development area. The following aims were established in the Written Scheme of Investigation:

- i. establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains on the site, characterise where they are found (location, depth and extent), and establish the quality of preservation of any archaeology and environmental remains
- ii. provide sufficient coverage to establish the character, condition, date and purpose of any archaeological deposits
- iii. provide sufficient coverage to evaluate the likely impact of past land uses, and the possible presence of masking deposits
- iv. provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological mitigation strategy, dealing with preservation, the recording of archaeological deposits, working practices, timetables, and orders of cost.

2.2 Methodology

Background research

2.2.1 A suitable level of documentary research was undertaken before work on site commenced. This research drew on information in the CHER and Cambridgeshire Records Office, and included historical sources, maps, previous archaeological finds, and past archaeological investigations in the vicinity. The results are incorporated into this report.

Event number and site code

2.2.2 An event number has been obtained from the CHER (ECB 5288), and a unique site code assigned to the project (REABUR18).

Trial Trenching

Excavation standards

- 2.2.3 The archaeological evaluation and analysis was conducted in accordance with current best archaeological practice and the appropriate national and regional standards and guidelines.
- 2.2.4 All work was conducted in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations.
- 2.2.5 All fieldwork was undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the OA Field Manual (ed. D Wilkinson 1992), and the revised OA fieldwork manual (publication forthcoming). Further guidance was provided to all excavators in the form of the OA Fieldwork Crib Sheets - a companion guide to the Fieldwork Manual. These have been issued ahead of formal publication of the revised Fieldwork Manual.

Pre-commencement

- 2.2.6 Before work on site commenced, service plans were checked to ensure that access and groundworks could be conducted safely.
- 2.2.7 In order to minimise damage to the site and disruption to site users, Oxford Archaeology agreed the following with the client before work on site commenced:
- the location of the entrance way
 - site for welfare units
 - soil storage areas
 - access routes for plant and vehicles across the site

Excavation methods

- 2.2.8 A total of three trenches were excavated, each measuring 25 x 1.6m each. This is equivalent to 5% of the development area.
- 2.2.9 Service plans were checked before work commenced on site. Before trenching, the footprint of each trench was scanned by a qualified and experienced operator using a CAT and Genny with a valid calibration certificate.
- 2.2.10 All machine excavation took place under the supervision of a suitably qualified and experienced archaeologist.
- 2.2.11 Trial trenches were excavated by a wheeled JCB excavator to the depth of geological horizons. A toothless ditching bucket with a bucket width of 1.6m was used to excavate the trenches. Overburden was excavated in spits not greater than 0.1m thick.
- 2.2.12 Spoil was stored alongside trenches. Topsoil, subsoil, and archaeological deposits were kept separate during excavation, to allow for sequential backfilling of excavations. Trenches were not backfilled without the approval Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Team.
- 2.2.13 The top of the first archaeological deposit was cleared by machine, then cleaned off by hand. Exposed surfaces were cleaned by trowel and hoe as necessary, in order to clarify located features and deposits.
- 2.2.14 All features were investigated and recorded to provide an accurate evaluation of archaeological potential, whilst at the same time minimising disturbance to archaeological structures, features, and deposits.
- 2.2.15 All excavation of archaeological deposits was done by hand, with discrete features being half-sectioned.

Bucket sampling

- 2.2.16 Bucket samples of up to 90 litres of excavated soil were taken from each trench, to characterise artefactual remains in the topsoil and other soil horizons above the archaeological level. Each sample was hand-sorted in order to retrieve artefacts.

Recording of archaeological deposits and features

- 2.2.17 Records comprise survey, drawn, written, and photographic data.

Survey

- 2.2.18 Surveying was done using a survey-grade differential GPS (Leica CS10/GS08 or Leica 1200) fitted with "smartnet" technology with an accuracy of 5mm horizontal and 10mm vertical.
- 2.2.19 The site grid is accurately tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid and located on the 1:2500 or 1:1250 map of the area. Elevations are levelled to the Ordnance Datum.

Written records

- 2.2.20 A register of all trenches, features, and photographs was kept.
- 2.2.21 All features, layers and deposits were issued with unique context numbers. Each feature was individually documented on context sheets, and hand-drawn in section and plan. Written descriptions are recorded on pro-forma sheets comprising factual data and interpretative elements.

Plans and sections

- 2.2.22 Site plans were drawn at 1:50.
- 2.2.23 Sections of features or short lengths of trenches were drawn at 1:10 or 1:20. All section levels will be tied in to Ordnance Datum.
- 2.2.24 All site drawings will include the following information: site name, site code, scale, plan or section number, relevant context or feature numbers, orientation, date and the name or initials of the archaeologist who prepared the drawing.

Photographs

- 2.2.25 The photographic record comprises of high resolution digital photographs.
- 2.2.26 Photographs include both general site shots and photographs of specific features. Every feature was photographed at least once. Photographs include a scale, north arrow, site code, and feature number (where relevant), unless they are to be used in publications. The photograph register records these details, and photograph numbers are listed on corresponding context sheets.

Metal detecting and the Treasure Act

- 2.2.27 Metal detector searches were undertaken at all stages of the excavation by an experienced metal detector user. Excavated areas were detected immediately before and after mechanical stripping. Both excavated areas and spoil heaps were checked. To prevent losses from night-hawking, features were metal detected immediately after stripping.
- 2.2.28 Metal detectors were not set to discriminate against iron.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction and presentation of results

- 3.1.1 The results of the evaluation are presented below, and include a stratigraphic description of the trenches which contained archaeological remains. The full details of all trenches with dimensions and depths of all deposits for the content of Appendix A. Finds data and spot dates are tabulated in Appendix B.

3.2 General soils and ground conditions

- 3.2.1 The soil sequence between all trenches was uniform. The natural geology of silty chalk was overlain by a chalky silt subsoil, which in turn was overlain by topsoil.
- 3.2.2 Ground conditions throughout the evaluation were generally good, and the trenches remained dry throughout. Archaeological features, where present, were easy to identify against the underlying natural geology.

3.3 General distribution of archaeological deposits

- 3.3.1 Archaeological features were present in all trenches.

3.4 Trench 1

- 3.4.1 This trench was located at the western end of the investigation area on a north-west to south-east alignment.
- 3.4.2 At the south-eastern end of the trench was located a small posthole (4), 0.3m across and 0.22m deep (Fig.3, Section 1; Plate 1). This was filled by a dark brown grey silt (5), which did not produce any finds.

3.5 Trench 2

- 3.5.1 The trench was located north-east of Trench 1, on a perpendicular alignment.
- 3.5.2 At the south-western end of the trench was a deep, narrow posthole (6). This was 0.35m wide and 0.45m deep (Fig.3, Section 2; Plate 2). It contained a dark brown grey silt (7), which produced no finds.

3.6 Trench 3

- 3.6.1 Trench 3 was to the north-east of Trench 2, and aligned north-west to south-east. The trench was located beyond a hedge, away from the rest of the site in an area not used as allotments. The topsoil contained a greater amount of artefactual material, all of post-medieval or modern date. A single sherd of post-medieval pottery was recovered from the subsoil.
- 3.6.2 On the south-western side cut from through the subsoil (2), was a large pit (8), 1.9m wide and 0.52m deep (Fig.3, Section 3). This was filled by a dark grey silt, which contained small lumps of clinker (9).

3.7 Finds summary

- 3.7.1 All the finds were retrieved during metal detecting and bucket sampling from the topsoil.
- 3.7.2 Metal detecting produced single modern nails from the topsoil of Trenches 1 and 2, and three modern nails from Trench 3.
- 3.7.3 Bucket sampling produced a single sherd of modern pottery from Trench 2 topsoil, and several sherds of pottery and a fragment of glazed floor tile from Trench 3, all modern.
- 3.7.4 As the material was all of modern date and came from the topsoil it was not retained.

4 DISCUSSION

4.1 Reliability of field investigation

- 4.1.1 The natural on site was a uniform chalk which made the fills of features easy to pick out against the natural geology.
- 4.1.2 The subsoil horizon was very uniform across the site and broadly undisturbed.

4.2 Evaluation objectives and results

- 4.2.1 The evaluation has found evidence for minimal archaeological remains within the development area. The remains found have been fully characterised and appear to be well preserved with no signs of disturbance.
- 4.2.2 The features found are all undated with no clear indications of their purpose.
- 4.2.3 The small amount of archaeological remains suggests only limited use of the area in the past.

4.3 Interpretation

- 4.3.1 The primary features on the site are two undated postholes in the Trenches 1 (**4**) and 2 (**6**). These are similar in diameter although posthole **6** is considerably deeper. These were relatively narrow up 0.35m across and may represent fence lines. As only one posthole was present in each trench it is not possible to determine the extent of these fence lines.
- 4.3.2 Trench 3 contained a post-medieval or modern pit, cut from below the topsoil and contained lumps of clinker.
- 4.3.3 Artefact characterisation and metal detecting from the topsoil and subsoil produced a larger quantity material from around Trench 3 than Trenches 1 and 2 (primarily from the topsoil). Trench 3 was located beyond a hedge from the other two trenches which were within an area used for allotments. Potentially this difference may be due to effects of the differing land use.

4.4 Significance

- 4.4.1 The evaluation found limited evidence of archaeological activity within the development area.

APPENDIX A TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1						
General description					Orientation	NW-SE
Trench contained a single posthole. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty chalk.					Length (m)	325
					Width (m)	1.60
					Avg. depth (m)	0.81
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1	Layer	-	0.30	Topsoil	Fe Nail	Modern
2	Layer	-	0.60	Subsoil	-	-
3	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
4	Cut	0.30	0.22	Posthole	-	-
5	Fill	-	0.22	Posthole Fill	-	-

Trench 2						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench contained a single posthole. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty chalk.					Length (m)	25
					Width (m)	1.60
					Avg. depth (m)	0.71
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1	Layer	-	0.26	Topsoil	Fe Nail, Pottery	Modern
2	Layer	-	0.49	Subsoil	-	-
3	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
6	Cut	0.35	0.45	Posthole	-	-
7	Fill	-	0.45	Posthole Fill	-	-

Trench 3						
General description					Orientation	NW-SE
Trench contained a single post-medieval pit. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty chalk.					Length (m)	25
					Width (m)	1.60
					Avg. depth (m)	0.80
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1	Layer	-	0.30	Topsoil	Fe Nail, Pottery, CBM, Clay Pipe	Modern
2	Layer	-	0.50	Subsoil	Pottery	Modern
3	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
8	Cut	1.90	0.52	Pit	-	-
9	Fill	-	0.52	Pit Fill	-	-

APPENDIX B BIBLIOGRAPHY

Phillips, T., 2017, *Land opposite 20 Burwell Road, Reach, Cambridgeshire, Written Scheme of Investigation*, OA East (unpublished)

Stewart, G., 2017, *Brief for Archaeological Evaluation, Land opposite 20 Burwell Road, Reach, Cambridgeshire*, CCCHET (unpublished)

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APPENDIX C

OASIS REPORT FORM

Project Details

OASIS Number	oxfordar3-306031		
Project Name	Land opposite 20 Burwell Road, Reach, Cambridgeshire		
Start of Fieldwork	08/01/2018	End of Fieldwork	09/01/2018
Previous Work	No	Future Work	No

Project Reference Codes

Site Code	REABUR18	Planning App. No.	17/00967/OUT
HER Number	ECB 5288	Related Numbers	

Prompt	Requirement from local planning authority
Development Type	Rural Residential
Place in Planning Process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Techniques used (tick all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photography – interpretation	<input type="checkbox"/> Grab-sampling	<input type="checkbox"/> Remote Operated Vehicle Survey
<input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photography - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Gravity-core	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sample Trenches
<input type="checkbox"/> Annotated Sketch	<input type="checkbox"/> Laser Scanning	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey/Recording of Fabric/Structure
<input type="checkbox"/> Augering	<input 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	Period	Object	Period
Posthole	Uncertain	None	None
Pit	Post Medieval (1540 to 1901)		Choose an item.
	Choose an item.		Choose an item.

Insert more lines as appropriate.

Project Location

County	Cambridgeshire	Address (including Postcode) Opposite 20 Burwell Road Reach Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB25 0JD
District	East Cambs	
Parish	Reach	
HER office	Cambridgeshire	
Size of Study Area	2345 sq. m	
National Grid Ref	TL 5686 6623	

Project Originators

Organisation	Oxford Archaeology East
Project Brief Originator	Gemma Stewart

Project Design Originator	Tom Phillips
Project Manager	Tom Phillips
Project Supervisor	Nicholas Cox

Project Archives

	Location	ID
Physical Archive (Finds)	CCC Stores	ECB 5288
Digital Archive	OA East	ECB 5288
Paper Archive	CCC Stores	ECB 5288

Physical Contents	Present?	Digital files associated with Finds	Paperwork associated with Finds
Animal Bones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Glass	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Human Remains	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leather	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Metal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stratigraphic		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Survey		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Textiles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worked Bone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worked Stone/Lithic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
None	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Digital Media

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

Paper Media

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

Further Comments



Figure 2: Trench plan.

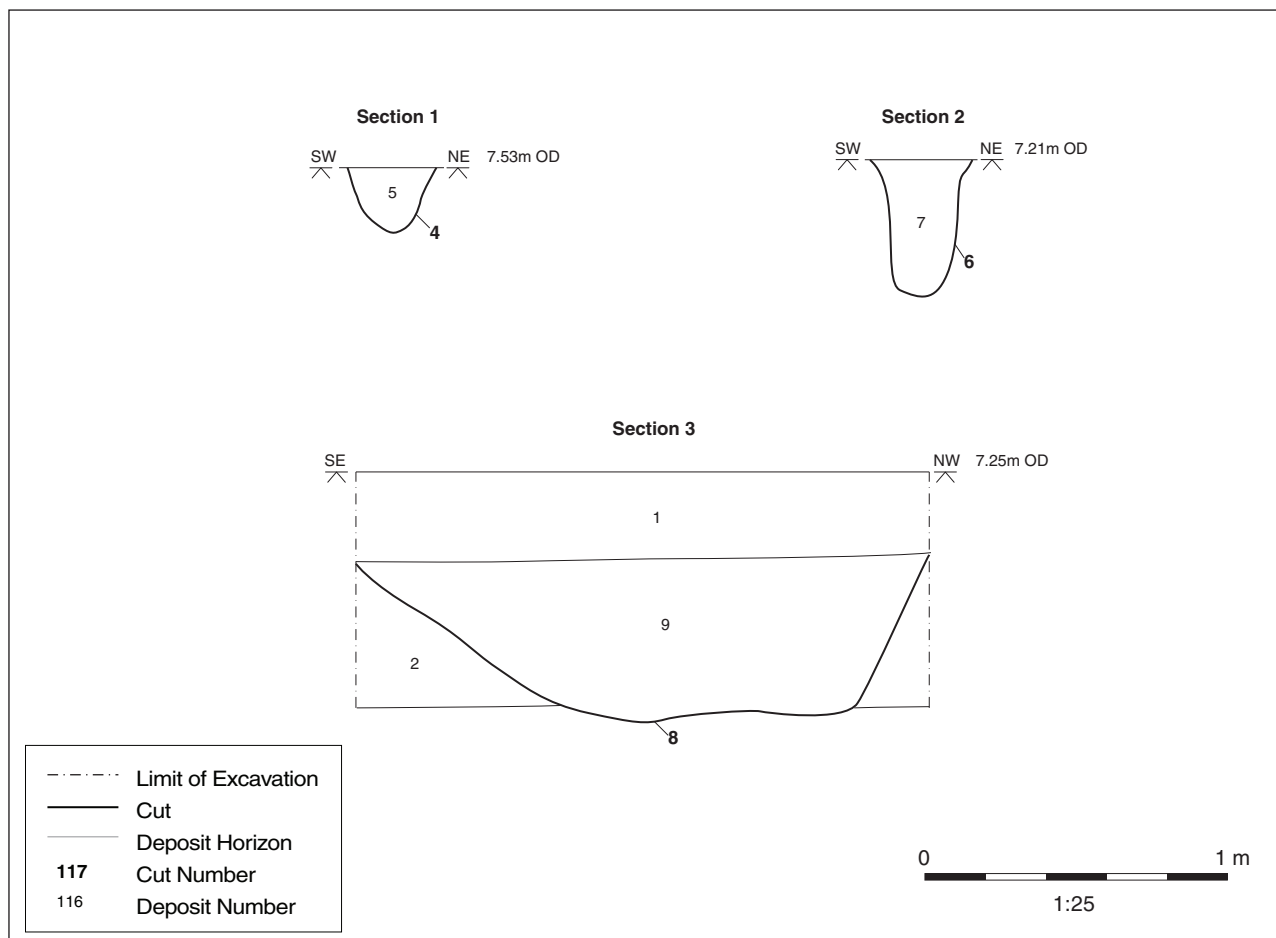


Figure 3: Sections. Scale 1:25



Plate 1: Posthole 4, Trench 1, looking north-west



Plate 2: Posthole 6, Trench 2, looking north-west



Plate 3: Trench 2, looking north-east



**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
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>

OA North

Mill 3
Moor Lane
Lancaster LA1 1QD

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 850 500
e: [oaeast@oxfordarchaeology.com](mailto: oaeast@oxfordarchaeology.com)
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>



Director: Gill Hey, BA PhD FSA MCIfA
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