



# Horseley Fen, Chatteris

## Archaeological Evaluation Report

July 2018

**Client: Terry Calvert**

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## Horseley Fen, Chatteris

### *Archaeological Evaluation Report*

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## Summary

In May 2018, Oxford Archaeology East (OA East) carried out an archaeological evaluation at Horseley Fen, Chatteris (TL 3923 8326). A single trench measuring 20m by 1.6m was opened that revealed two natural features, a modern borehole and a single north-south aligned furrow. The furrow was undated and no finds of any kind were recovered from the site. The evaluation has demonstrated that the land evaluated had been used for agricultural purposes, and that there is no other evidence of further human activity in the immediate vicinity.

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## Acknowledgements

Oxford Archaeology would like to thank Terry Calvert for commissioning this project. Thank you to Gemma Stewart and Kerry Hooper, who monitored the work on behalf of the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Team, for their advice and guidance.

The project was managed for Oxford Archaeology by Tom Phillips. The fieldwork was directed by the author. 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 supervision of Kat Hamilton.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Scope of work

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by Terry Calvert to undertake a trial trench evaluation adjacent to Middle Drove, Horseley Fen, Chatteris (Fig.1).
- 1.1.2 The proposed development is for the erection of a single-storey building for the use as a veterinary physiotherapy referral practice.
- 1.1.3 The work was undertaken as a condition of Planning Permission (planning ref. F/YR15/0513/F). A brief was set by Gemma Stewart of the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Team (CHET) (Stewart 2018), outlining the Local Authority's requirements for work necessary to inform the planning process. A written scheme of investigation was produced by OA (Gilmour and Phillips 2018), 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 is located on the fen edge at the southern end of Chatteris Island, at an elevation of roughly 4.9m OD (Fig.1). To the south, the ground gradually drops away and rises to the north towards Chatteris.
- 1.2.2 The geology of the area is mapped as having a bedrock geology of West Walton Formation and Ampthill Clay Formation. This is overlain by superficial River Terrace Deposits of sand and gravel (British Geological Survey, 2017).

### 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The following provides a summary of the pertinent archaeological background for the area around the site, based on information provided by the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER) (Fig.2).

#### Prehistoric

- 1.3.2 Several flint tools and struck flints have been found within a 1km distance of the current site. This includes a flint implement that was recovered approximately 250m south of site (CHER 03688) and three Neolithic axes (CHER 03680), found c. 650m to the south east. At Wood Farm, 900m to the northeast, another Neolithic axe was found (CHER 03699). Other flint scatters have been recorded in the area such as CHER 10906 located 1km to the east, and CHER 10909 c. 350m to the northeast.

#### Roman

- 1.3.3 In the field immediately to the north of the site an artefact scatter, including Roman pottery was recorded (CHER 10904). This may suggest occupation in the area during the Roman period.
- 1.3.4 A large 4th century AD coin hoard (over 1000 coins) was found in the 19th century (CHER 03691). The exact location of the hoard is uncertain, but believed to be roughly 750m to the west of the site, in the vicinity of a series of enclosures that are visible as

cropmarks (CHER 08912). A Roman ring was found at Wood Farm, 750m to the north (CHER 02026).

### **Medieval and post-medieval**

- 1.3.5 The site is located c. 800m south of the moated manor of Wood House (CHER 01097).
- 1.3.6 An evaluation along London Road, 1km to the northwest, revealed a post-medieval boundary ditch, most likely associated with the boundary of the former Black Jack public house (CHER ECB5281).

### **Undated**

- 1.3.7 An aerial photography survey was undertaken in a field to the southwest (CHER ECB4362), revealing a series of cropmarks, though the date of these features has not been determined



## 2 EVALUATION AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Aims

2.1.1 The project aims and objectives were as follows:

- i. To 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. To provide sufficient coverage to establish the character, date, condition and purpose of any archaeological deposits.
- iii. To provide sufficient coverage to evaluate the likely impact of past land uses and the possible presence of masking deposits.
- iv. To provide- in the event that archaeological remains are found- 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

2.2.1 The methodology follows that laid out in the WSI (Gilmour and Phillips, 2018)

2.2.2 A total of one trench measuring 20m by 1.6m was excavated across the footprint of the proposed building. Machining was monitored under the supervision of a suitably qualified and experienced archaeologist.

2.2.3 The trial trench was excavated by a mechanical excavator to the depth of geological horizons/the upper interface of any archaeological features or deposits. A toothless ditching bucket with a minimum width of 1.6m was used to excavate the trenches. Overburden was excavated in spits of no more than 0.1m thickness.

2.2.4 Spoil was stored alongside the trench, with the topsoil and subsoil separated to allow for sequential backfilling. The trench was not backfilled until permission had been obtained from the CHET.

2.2.5 The tops of archaeological deposits were first cleaned by machine, and then by hand. All excavation of features was done by hand.

2.2.6 Surveying was undertaken using a survey-grade differential GPS (Leica CS10/GS08) fitted with "smartnet" technology with an accuracy of 5mm horizontal and 10mm vertical.

2.2.7 Where appropriate, feature sections were drawn at 1:20 or 1:10 scale and trench plans at 1:50 scale. All drawings included the following information: site name, site code, scale, plan or section number, context or feature numbers, orientation, date and the name of the archaeologist who prepared the drawings.

2.2.8 The photographic record comprises high resolution digital photographs.

2.2.9 Registers of all contexts, trenches, drawings and photographs was kept.

2.2.10 All archaeological features and deposits were issued unique context numbers and documented on context sheets.

---

2.2.11 No deposits suitable for environmental sampling were encountered. Metal detecting was carried out but no metal artefacts were recovered.

## **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 archaeological remains within the single trench. The full details of the trench with dimensions and depths of all deposits is located in Appendix A.

### **3.2 General soils and ground conditions**

3.2.1 The natural geology of clay with sandy gravels was overlain by a silty clay subsoil, which in turn was overlain by topsoil.

3.2.2 Ground conditions throughout the evaluation were generally good, and the trench remained dry throughout. Archaeological features, where present, were easy to identify against the underlying natural geology.

### **3.3 Bucket sampling**

3.3.1 Ninety litre bucket samples were taken from the trench and hand sorted for the retrieval of artefacts, although this yielded no finds.

### **3.4 Trench 1**

3.4.1 Trench 1 (Fig 3., Plate 1.) contained two natural features, these two discrete features were half sectioned, and based on their shallow and irregular profile were determined to be tree throws. A single modern borehole and a furrow (**3**) were also revealed.

3.4.2 Furrow **3** (Plate 2.) was linear in plan, on a north-south alignment, with shallow sloping sides, breaking imperceptibly to a flat base, and measured 0.93m wide and 0.10m deep, and was filled by a single deposit (4), a dark greyish brown, silty clay, of firm compaction, with rare small sub-angular stone inclusions.

### **3.5 Finds summary**

3.5.1 No finds were recovered from the excavated features on site.

## 4 DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Reliability of field investigation

- 4.1.1 The single feature distinguished by its mid to dark grey and brown fill, was clearly visible within the evaluated area. This, the subsoil and topsoil layers, were clearly distinct from the yellowish brown of the clay and sandy gravel natural.
- 4.1.2 The absence of rain and good ground conditions ensured that standing water did not hinder the archaeological investigation.
- 4.1.3 For the above reasons, the results of this archaeological evaluation are believed to be reliable.

### 4.2 Evaluation objectives, results and interpretation

- 4.2.1 The aims of this evaluation were: to establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains on the site and characterise where they are found, and to establish the character, date, condition and purpose of any archaeological deposits.
- 4.2.2 To evaluate the likely impact of past land uses and the possible presence of masking deposits.
- 4.2.3 The only feature was an undated probable agricultural furrow (**3**) on a north-south alignment. The absence of finds of any period, despite nearby discoveries of prehistoric and Roman finds (see section 1.3), suggests the land has been in agricultural use with little evidence of intensive human occupation.

## APPENDIX A TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1						
<b>General description</b>					<b>Orientation</b>	SE-NW
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of clay and sandy gravels.					<b>Length (m)</b>	20
					<b>Width (m)</b>	1.8
					<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	0.55
<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Width (m)</b>	<b>Depth (m)</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Finds</b>	<b>Date</b>
1	Layer	-	0.39	Topsoil	-	-
2	Layer	-	0.15	Subsoil	-	-
3	Cut	0.93	0.10	Furrow	-	-
4	Fill	-	-	Fill of <b>3</b>	-	-

## APPENDIX B      BIBLIOGRAPHY

British Geological Survey, 2017, *Geology of Britain Viewer*, [online] Available at <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> [Accessed 31st May 2018]

Gilmour, N, Phillips, T. 2018, *Horseley Fen, Chatteris Written Scheme of Investigation*, Oxford Archaeology

Stewart, G. 2018, *Brief for Archaeological Evaluation*, Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Team

## APPENDIX C OASIS REPORT FORM

### Project Details

OASIS Number	Oxfordar3- 318549		
Project Name	Horseley Fen, Chatteris		
Start of Fieldwork	30/05/2018	End of Fieldwork	30/05/2018
Previous Work	No	Future Work	Unknown

### Project Reference Codes

Site Code	ECB5404	Planning App. No.	F/YR15/0513/F
HER Number	ECB5404	Related Numbers	

Prompt	NPPF
Development Type	Commercial
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 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 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	Period	Object	Period
Furrow	Uncertain	None	None
	Choose an item.		Choose an item.
	Choose an item.		Choose an item.

Insert more lines as appropriate.

### Project Location

County	Cambridgeshire	Address (including Postcode) Horseley fen Middle Drove Chatteris Cambridgeshire PE16 6SH
District	Fenland	
Parish	Chatteris	
HER office	Cambridgeshire	
Size of Study Area	0.53ha	
National Grid Ref	TL 3923 8326	

### Project Originators

Organisation	Oxford Archaeology East
Project Brief Originator	Gemma Stewart
Project Design Originator	Tom Phillips

Project Manager	Tom Phillips
Project Supervisor	Dan Firth

### Project Archives

	Location	ID
Physical Archive (Finds)	N/A	N/A
Digital Archive	OAE	CHAHOF18
Paper Archive	CCC	ECB5404

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"/>
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### Digital Media

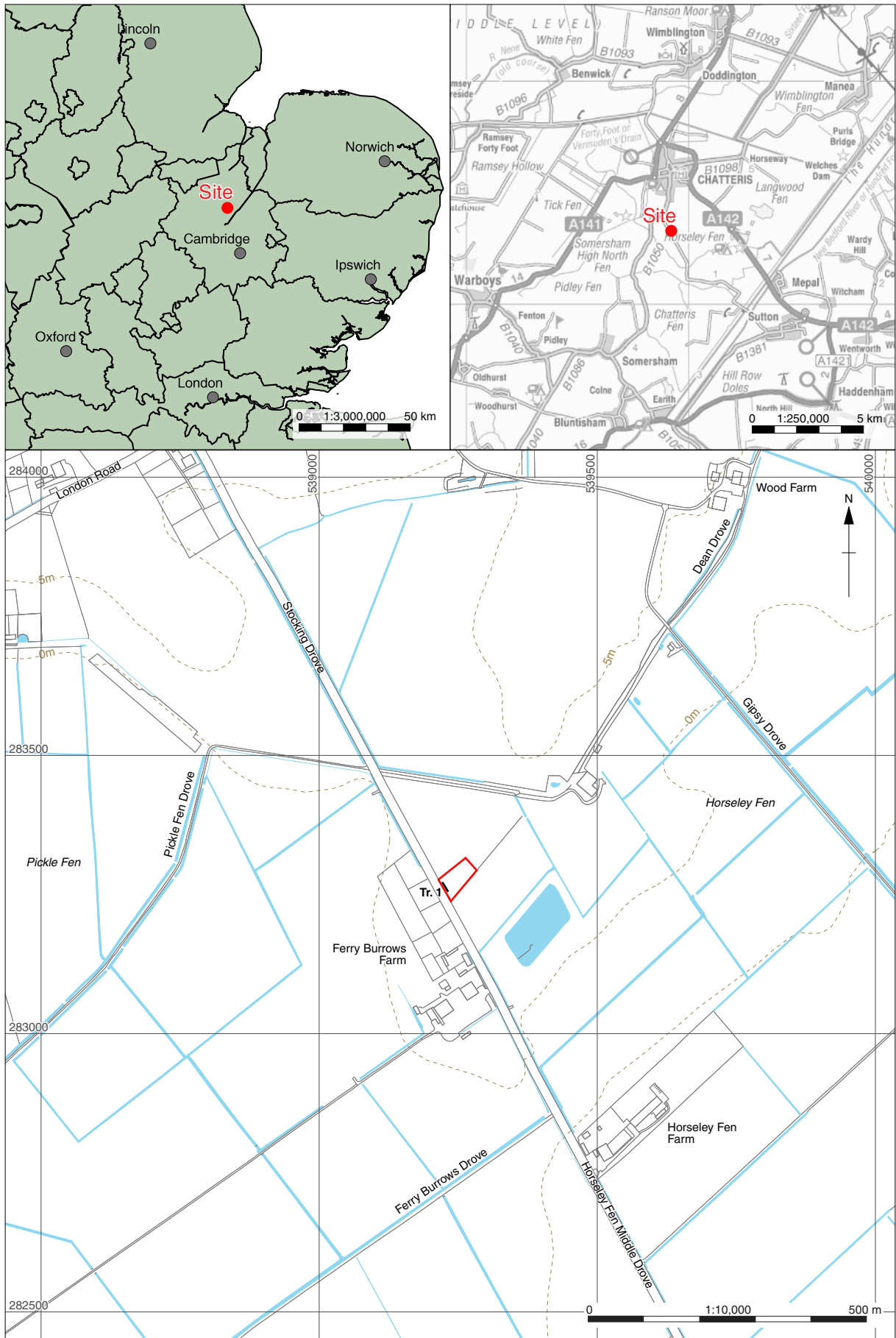
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GIS	<input type="checkbox"/>
Geophysics	<input type="checkbox"/>
Images (Digital photos)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Illustrations (Figures/Plates)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Moving Image	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spreadsheets	<input type="checkbox"/>
Survey	<input 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 type="checkbox"/>
Report	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Sections	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Survey	<input type="checkbox"/>



## Further Comments



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Figure 1: Site location map showing evaluation trench (black) and development area outlined (red)

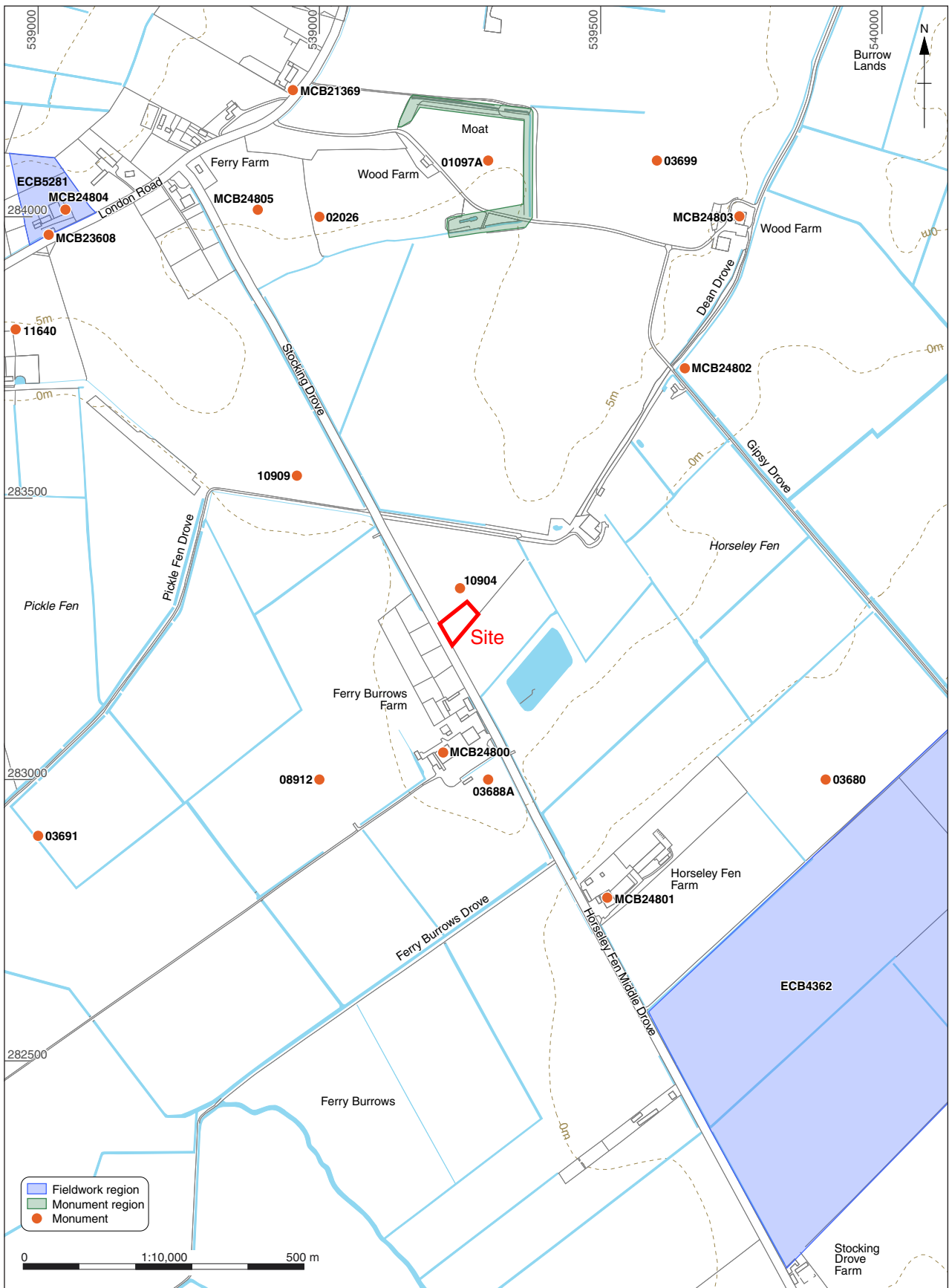


Figure 2: Map showing HER data

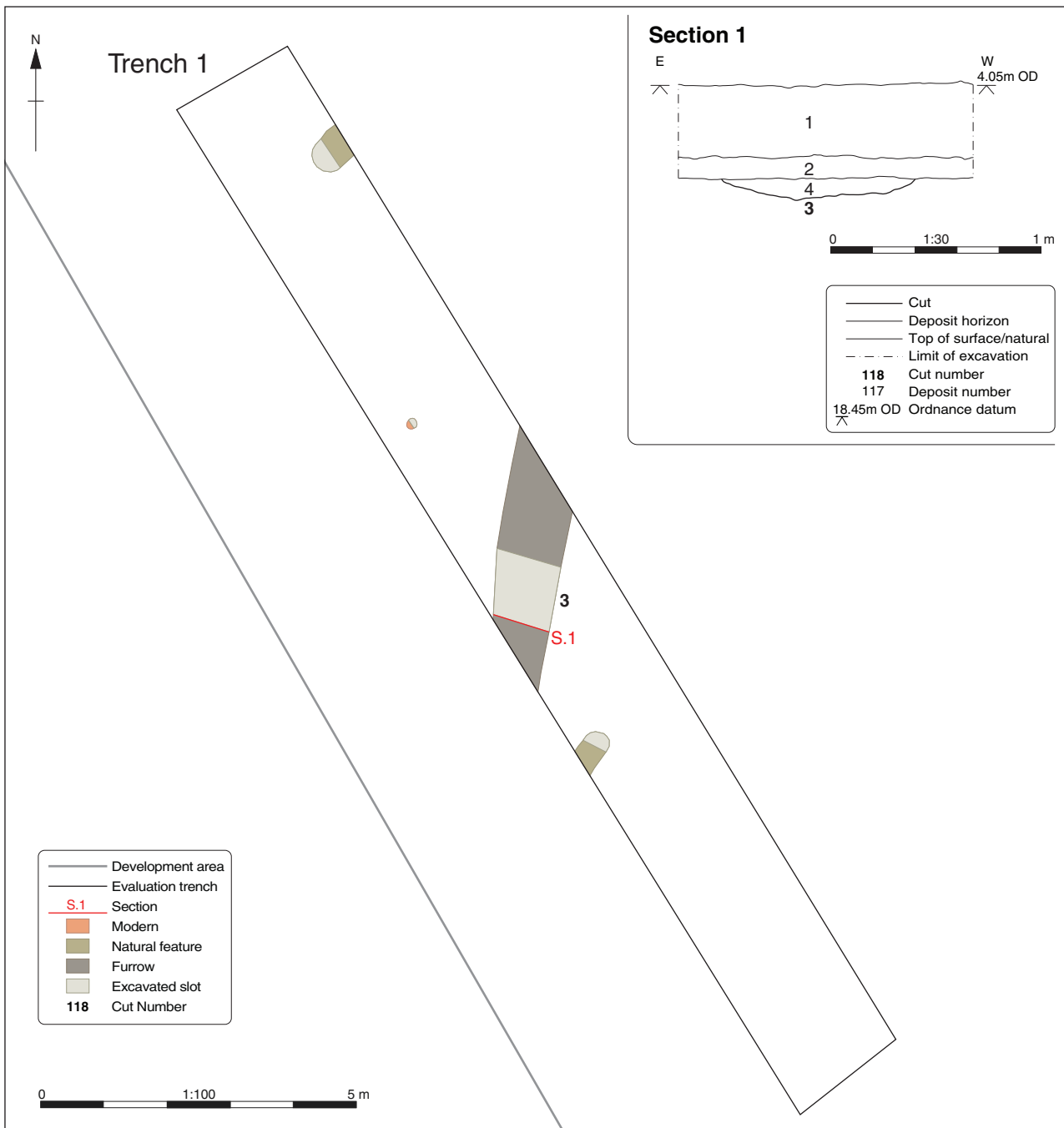


Figure 3: Trench plan and section drawing





Plate 1: Trench 1, looking northwest



Plate 2: Furrow 3, looking south



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