



# Former Crown Public House, High Street, Burwell, Cambridgeshire Archaeological Evaluation Report

January 2017

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A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Paul Spoerry".**Disclaimer:**

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# Former Crown Public House, High Street, Burwell, Cambridgeshire

## *Archaeological Evaluation Report*

*Written by Nicholas Cox BSc*

*With contributions from Carole Fletcher and illustrations by  
Gillian Greer and Markus Dylewski*

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## Summary

*Between the 20th and the 21st of December 2016 Oxford Archaeology East conducted an archaeological evaluation on land to the rear of the former Crown public house, High Street, Burwell. The evaluation was carried out to provide information concerning the potential impact of a development proposal on archaeological remains. To this end two trenches of 20m length were excavated.*

*The topography of the land and the findings in the trenches indicated that the area had been quarried out as part of the 19th century lime quarry that was located to the east. Any earlier remains had been truncated completely by the quarrying. A small number of features of modern date cutting into the quarry backfill were found in Trench 2 at the bottom of the quarried area. These were garden features and rubbish pits probably relating to the former public house.*

## Acknowledgements

Oxford Archaeology would like to thank Simon Butler-Finbow for commissioning this project on behalf of Crown Priory Ltd. Thanks is also extended to Kasia Gdaniec who monitored the work on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) for their advice and guidance.

The project was managed for Oxford Archaeology by Aileen Connor. The fieldwork was directed by Nicholas Cox. Survey and digitizing was carried out by Dave Brown. Thanks is also extended to the teams of OA staff that cleaned and packaged the finds under the management of Natasha Dodwell, and prepared the archive under the management of Kat Hamilton.



# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Scope of work

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology East (OAE) was commissioned by Simon Butler-Finbow on behalf of Crown Priory Ltd to undertake a trial trench evaluation at the site of the former Crown public house, High Street, Burwell, Cambridgeshire.
- 1.1.2 The work was undertaken to inform the Planning Authority in advance of a submission of a Planning Application. A brief was set by Gemma Stewart and a written scheme of investigation was produced by OAE detailing the Local Authority's requirements for work necessary to inform the planning process. This document outlines how OAE implemented the specified requirements.

## 1.2 Location, topography and geology

- 1.2.1 The site lies in the centre of Burwell village, on the edge of the fens, 16km north-east of Cambridge. The development is located in the corner of the junction of Burwell High Street and Newmarket Road.
- 1.2.2 The area of proposed development consists of a tarmac surfaced carpark associated, a standing building (formerly the Crown public house) and a small outbuilding. The area to the rear of the plot is laid to grass and there are a number of trees, several of which will be retained. The grass area is in a large depression that drops away to the south and east, to about 14m AOD (Fig 2).
- 1.2.3 The geology of the area is mapped as Zig Zag Chalk formation geology at roughly 15m AOD. (British Geological Survey 2014, (British Geological Survey online map viewer <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html>). (accessed 9th December 2016).

## 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The subject site is located centrally within the village of Burwell. There are a considerable number of HER records located in the surrounding area.
- 1.3.2 A very short distance to the east of the site a large Saxon cemetery was discovered during the excavation of Victoria Pits on the south side of Newmarket Road in the late 19th and early 20th century (CHERO6764). This was the site of a 6-7th century Anglo-Saxon cemetery, where 127 skeletons were found in 125 graves, over half of which contained grave goods (MCB8158). During the excavation of the cemetery, evidence was also found of a potential Roman settlement on the site (CHERO6764a).
- 1.3.3 The site of the former St Andrew's church and its burial yard is believed to have been in the north-east corner of the Newmarket Road/High Street junction (MCB8106). The unfenced yard may have been destroyed by the lime works on the north side of Newmarket Road.
- 1.3.4 The presence of an extensive Late Bronze Age settlement with associated funerary remains has been revealed by several investigations to the north and south of Newmarket Road immediately to the east of the subject site as follows:

- 1.3.5 An evaluation to the north of Newmarket Road (ECB4309) revealed evidence for two focii of Late Bronze Age activity: An area of approximately six hectares to the immediate east of Melton Farm, in the south-west corner of the site, revealed clusters of postholes from buildings, fence-lines or other structures along with several pits and a possible well which all indicate settlement activity in this part of the site.
- 1.3.6 The second area, approximately 300m to the north-east, revealed an isolated cremation as well as a small number of pits and tree throws which contained pottery and animal bone. The cremation vessel was almost complete and contained the cremated remains of an adult and a child. A short distance to the south-east of the site, at land to the rear of Nos 36-42 Newmarket Road, Burwell, an excavation was conducted by the CCCAFU in 2005 (Bailey and Popescu 2006; ECB1944) (MCB17427). The work revealed a large number of settlement features thought to be part of a larger Late Bronze Age settlement site.
- 1.3.7 An evaluation at Isaacson's Road (ECB4346) revealed evidence of Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age activity (MCB 20331). Evaluation on land to the rear of 58-60 Newmarket Road (ECB2840) revealed possible prehistoric settlement evidence in the form of undated postholes.
- 1.3.8 Further afield an evaluation at Reach Road in 2007 (ECB2610) in the footprint of a commercial building, revealed a series of features of prehistoric and Romano-British date, suggested to be the remains of field systems. Lithic material was also recovered, indicating some activity in the area from the later Neolithic/early Bronze Age. A former prehistoric water channel was also identified, on the edge of which were found the part remains of at least two individuals, indicated by radiocarbon to be date to the late Iron Age. A rising water table caused abandonment of the area, probably in the later Roman period.
- 1.3.9 Iron Age and Roman settlement is well attested to the south and west of the development site, particularly to the south-west of the scheduled ancient monument of Burwell Castle (SM29382).
- 1.3.10 Excavations on Reach Road (ECB4403, ECB4280) have revealed evidence for Roman and medieval settlement activity including a medieval lime kiln and a Roman inhumation found in a ditch.
- 1.3.11 There are records relating to medieval ridge and furrow (CHER00388 and CHER06703) approximately 600m to the north-east of the site.
- 1.3.12 A 19th century windmill is present within the farmyard of Melton Farm (CHER06495) just to the north-east of the site. This now comprises just the mill tower base. It is now thatched and used for farm storage.
- 1.3.13 Other excavations within Burwell have revealed 19th century quarrying at the village college (MCB16657) 750m to the north-west of the site, at Isaacson Road 350m to the south (ECB950) and at Mandeville (ECB14124) 700m to the south-west.

## 2 EVALUATION AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Aims

2.1.1 The project aims and objectives were as follows:

- i. To determine or confirm the general nature of any remains present.
- ii. To determine or confirm the approximate date or date range of any remains, by means of artefactual or other evidence.
- iii. To determine the presence/absence of paleo-soils and old land surface soils/deposits.
- iv. To determine the context of deposits and their contents within negative features.
- v. To determine the presence/absence of paleo-channels.
- vi. To determine site formation processes generally.

### 2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 A total of two trenches measuring 20m x 1.80m were excavated.
- 2.2.2 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.
- 2.2.3 All machine excavation was undertaken under the supervision of a suitably qualified and experienced archaeologist. Trial trenches were excavated by a mechanical excavator to the upper interface of the archaeological features. A toothless ditching bucket with a minimum bucket width of 1.8m was used to excavate the trenches.
- 2.2.4 Overburden was excavated in spits not greater than 0.1m thick. Topsoil, and archaeological deposits were kept separate during excavation, to allow for sequential backfilling of excavations.
- 2.2.5 Site survey was carried out using a survey-grade differential GPS (Leica GS08) fitted with "smartnet" technology with an accuracy of 5mm horizontal and 10mm vertical.
- 2.2.6 All features were investigated and recorded to provide an accurate evaluation of archaeological potential. All relationships between features or deposits were investigated and recorded.
- 2.2.7 All excavation of archaeological deposits was done by hand.
- 2.2.8 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.
- 2.2.9 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 high quality digital colour photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits.

## 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 fairly uniform. The natural geology of chalk was overlain by a chalky silt deposit backfilling the depression, 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 A post-medieval quarry and several modern pits were present in Trenches 1 and 2 (Fig. 2). The area evaluated was almost entirely taken up by a distinct hollow, now grassed over. The top of the hollow was at a height of approximately 16.8m OD and the lowest point was just under 13m OD giving a total depth of almost 4m and it was over 30m in diameter. The two trenches were positioned within the hollow. Trench 1 was positioned on the north-west slope of the hollow and Trench 2 was positioned near the base of the hollow.

### 3.4 Trench 1

- 3.4.1 The trench was 20m long and 0.55m deep at its north-western end, shallowing to 0.51m in the middle and then deepening again to 0.56m at the south-east (Plate 1).
- 3.4.2 In the centre of the trench was a large cut (3), 5.7m wide, 0.32m deep and extending beyond the trench in all directions. This probably represents the base of a former quarry, it was near vertically sided with a flat base, filled by a mid brown grey chalky silt (4) (Plate 2).
- 3.4.3 At the northern end of the trench was a shallow irregular pit, probably resulting from former tree roots.

### 3.5 Trench 2

- 3.5.1 Trench 2 was on a south-west to north-east alignment, 20m long, 0.53m deep at the north-east end and 0.37m deep at the south-west (Fig. 2, Plate 3).
- 3.5.2 The trench revealed a large cut (5) that was at least 16m across and continued beyond the edges of the trench. It was filled with 0.36m of mid brown grey chalky silt (6) (Plate 4) where it was tested. It probably represents the base of a large quarry pit, possibly the same as feature 3 in Trench 1 and both being part of the much larger hollow that is a visible earthwork.

- 3.5.3 A series of shallow features were cut into the top of the quarry backfill. In the middle of the trench were two sub-rectangular pits that extended beyond the southern baulk (Plate 5). Both were aligned north-west to south-east, the western pit (9) was 1.15m long in the trench, 1.19m wide and 0.25m deep. The pit was filled by a dark grey black sandy silt (10) which contained modern pottery, glass and large amounts of charred wood and burnt chalk. The eastern pit (7) was 1.1m long, 0.8m wide and 0.28m deep, filled by a dark grey brown sandy silt (11). The fill produced modern pottery.
- 3.5.4 At the western end of the trench was a shallow gully (11) on an east to west alignment, which extended 2.8m into the trench. Thus gully was 0.5m wide and 0.08m deep, filled by a dark grey brown sandy silt (12), which contained modern pottery.

### 3.6 Finds summary

- 3.6.1 Seven sherds of late post-medieval and modern pottery were recovered from the pits and quarries.

## **4 DISCUSSION**

### **4.1 Reliability of field investigation**

- 4.1.1 The features were all clearly visible, even where they were cut into the top of earlier quarrying and not the natural chalk. There were no other significant factors affecting the reliability of the results.

### **4.2 Evaluation objectives and results**

- 4.2.1 The evaluation revealed no significant archaeological remains and only a large amount of recent disturbance, no palaeosoils or channels were present.
- 4.2.2 The sequence of site formation is simple and clear.

### **4.3 Interpretation**

- 4.3.1 The large depression that takes up most of the lawn area in which the trenches are located is mostly likely part of the 19th century lime quarrying visible to the east on early OS maps (REF). This quarrying is further evidenced by the large cuts (3 and 5) found in the trenches. This quarrying has lowered the ground level in this area by approximately 4m.
- 4.3.2 All the other features found are clearly of modern date, the pits being used to deposit rubbish, probably related to the former pub. Pit 9 contained significant burnt material, possibly being used to dispose of the remains of a fire. These have all been dug into the backfill of the quarrying.
- 4.3.3 The topsoil (1) contained large amounts of modern material.

### **4.4 Significance**

- 4.4.1 The 19th century quarrying has significantly altered the whole area of the site and is deep enough to have completely truncated any earlier archaeological features that may have been located on the site. The only features found all postdate the quarrying and are modern activity probably relating to the pub.

## APPENDIX A TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1						
General description					Orientation	NW-SE
Trench contained a 19th century quarry pit. Consists of topsoil overlying natural geology of chalky silt.					Length (m)	20
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.54
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1	Layer	-	0.54	Topsoil	-	-
2	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
3	Cut	5.7	0.32	Quarry	-	19th century
4	Fill	-	0.32	Quarry	-	19th century

Trench 2						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench contained a 19th century quarry pit and various modern features. Consists of topsoil overlying natural geology of chalky silt.					Length (m)	20
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.42
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1	Layer	-	0.42	Topsoil	-	-
2	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
5	Cut	-	0.35	Quarry	-	19th century
6	Fill	-	0.35	Quarry	-	19th century
7	Cut	0.8	0.28	Pit	-	Modern
8	Fill	-	0.28	Pit	Pottery	Modern
9	Cut	1.19	0.25	Pit	-	Modern
10	Fill	-	0.25	Pit	Pottery	Modern
11	Cut	0.5	0.08	Gully	-	Modern
12	Fill	-	0.08	Gully	Pottery	Modern



## APPENDIX B FINDS

*By Carole Fletcher*

### *Introduction*

- B.1.1 The evaluation produced a pottery assemblage of seven sherds, weighing 0.056kg, representing a minimum of seven vessels. The assemblage contains both medieval and 19th century pottery.

### *Methodology*

- B.1.2 The Prehistoric Ceramics Research Group (PCRG), Study Group for Roman Pottery (SGRP), The Medieval Pottery Research Group (MPRG), 2016, A Standard for Pottery Studies in Archaeology and the MPRG, A guide to the classification of medieval ceramic forms (MPRG, 1998) act as standards.
- B.1.3 Recording was carried out using OA East's in-house system based on that previously used at the Museum of London. Fabric classification has been carried out for all previously described, Roman, medieval and post-medieval types. All sherds have been counted, classified and weighed on a context by context basis. The assemblage is recorded in the summary catalogue. The pottery and archive are curated by Oxford Archaeology East until formal deposition.

### *Assemblage*

- B.1.4 Three features in Trench 2 produced pottery. Pit 7 produced a sherd from a slip decorated Refined White Earthenware (industrial slipware) drinking vessel and a rim sherd from a Yellow ware flared bowl, both dating to the 19th century. Pit 9, contained a single small abraded residual sherd of Medieval Sandy Courseware, alongside Post-medieval Redware and a sherd from 19th century transfer printed Refined White Earthenware plate or bowl. The final feature, gully 11, produced a sherd from a Post-medieval Redware jar and a 19th-century Refined White Earthenware sherd.

### *Conclusion*

- B.1.5 Levels of pottery across the site are low. The assemblage is most likely domestic in nature, with a single residual medieval sherd and several post-medieval sherds, all of which have been reworked. Their presence indicates some medieval and post medieval activity in the vicinity of the area, this is to be expected in the centre of Burwell, however the sherds are most likely the result of reworking of the underlying quarry deposits, with the last phase of deposition in the 19th century. If further work is to be undertaken, this material should be taken into consideration alongside any new finds, however if no further work is undertaken, following catalogue act as a full record and the pottery may be deselected prior to archive deposition.



## Pottery Catalogue

Trench	Context	Cut	Fabric	Basic form	Sherd Count	Weight (Kg)	Minimum Number of Vessels	Pottery Date Range
2	8	7	Refined White Earthenware with slip decoration (blue and brown slip)	Drinking vessel body sherd, unabraded	1	0.013	1	1805-1900
			Yellow ware	Bowl rim sherd, unabraded (everted, simple rounded rim, diameter 106 mm)	1	0.019	1	1820-1900
2	10	9	Medieval Sandy Courseware	Body sherds, moderately abraded to abraded	1	0.004	1	1150-1500
			Post-medieval Redware	Body sherd, moderately abraded to abraded, external and internal honey coloured glaze	1	0.004	1	1550-1800
			Refined White Earthenware underglaze transfer-printed decoration (blue)	Plate or bowl/dish flat base sherd, relatively unabraded, internally decorated with Willow pattern -type print	1	0.004	1	1805-1900
2	12	11	Post-medieval Redware	Jar body sherd, moderately abraded, external dark greenish-brown glaze and internal patchy clear glaze	1	0.009	1	1550-1800
			Refined White Earthenware with slip decoration (blue slip)	Body sherd, unabraded	1	0.003	1	1805-1900
Total					7	0.056	7	

Table B.1.1: Pottery Catalogue

## B.2 Glass

*By Carole Fletcher*

### *Introduction*

B.2.1 The evaluation produced a partial white glass ashtray, possibly from the pub on the site, and the glass marble with a pale blue centre, both recovered from the topsoil in Trench 2, and both likely be 20th century. If further work is undertaken, this material should be taken into consideration alongside any new finds, however, if no further work is undertaken, the following catalogue act as a full record in the glass may be deselected prior to archive deposition.

Trench	Context	Count	Weight (kg)	Description	Date
2	1	1	0.069	Partial wall, rim and base from a relatively large flared, 140-160mm diameter translucent white glass ashtray, with a transfer print on the side (originally coloured blue) that reads HARVEST, possibly a pub or a beer/cider name.	20th century
		1	0.006	Complete, but badly cracked, clear glass marble with central pale blue swirl. No pontil mark is present and there are few bubbles within the glass, suggesting it is a mass-produced machine-made cats eye-type marble.	20th century
Total					

Table B.2.1: Glass Catalogue

## APPENDIX C      BIBLIOGRAPHY

Medieval Pottery Research Group 1998 *A Guide to the Classification of Medieval Ceramic Forms*.  
Medieval Pottery Research Group Occasional Paper I

PCRG SGRP MPRG, 2016 *A Standard for Pottery Studies in Archaeology*.

## APPENDIX D

## OASIS REPORT FORM

### Project Details

OASIS Number	Oxfordar3-274004		
Project Name	Former Crown Public House, High Street, Burwell, Cambridgeshire		
Start of Fieldwork	20-12-2016	End of Fieldwork	21-12-2016
Previous Work	No	Future Work	Unknown

### Project Reference Codes

Site Code	BURCRN16	Planning App. No.	
HER Number	ECB4880	Related Numbers	

Prompt	NPPF
Development Type	Urban Housing
Place in Planning Process	Pre-application

### 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 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

Quarry	Post Medieval (1540 to 1901)
Pit	Modern (1901 to present)
Gully	Modern (1901 to present)

### Object

### Period

	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.

### Project Location

County	Cambridgeshire	Address (including Postcode) High Street, Burwell, Cambridgeshire CB25 0HD
District	East Cambridgeshire	
Parish	Burwell	
HER office	Cambridgeshire	
Size of Study Area	2200 sqm	
National Grid Ref	TL 5894 6657	

### Project Originators

Organisation	Cambridgeshire County Council
Project Brief Originator	Gemma Stewart
Project Design Originator	Steve Graham
Project Manager	Aileen Conner
Project Supervisor	Nicholas Cox

## Project Archives

	Location	ID
Physical Archive (Finds)	n/a	n/a
Digital Archive	OA East	BURCRN16
Paper Archive	CCC Stores	ECB4880

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Environmental	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Glass	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Worked Stone/Lithic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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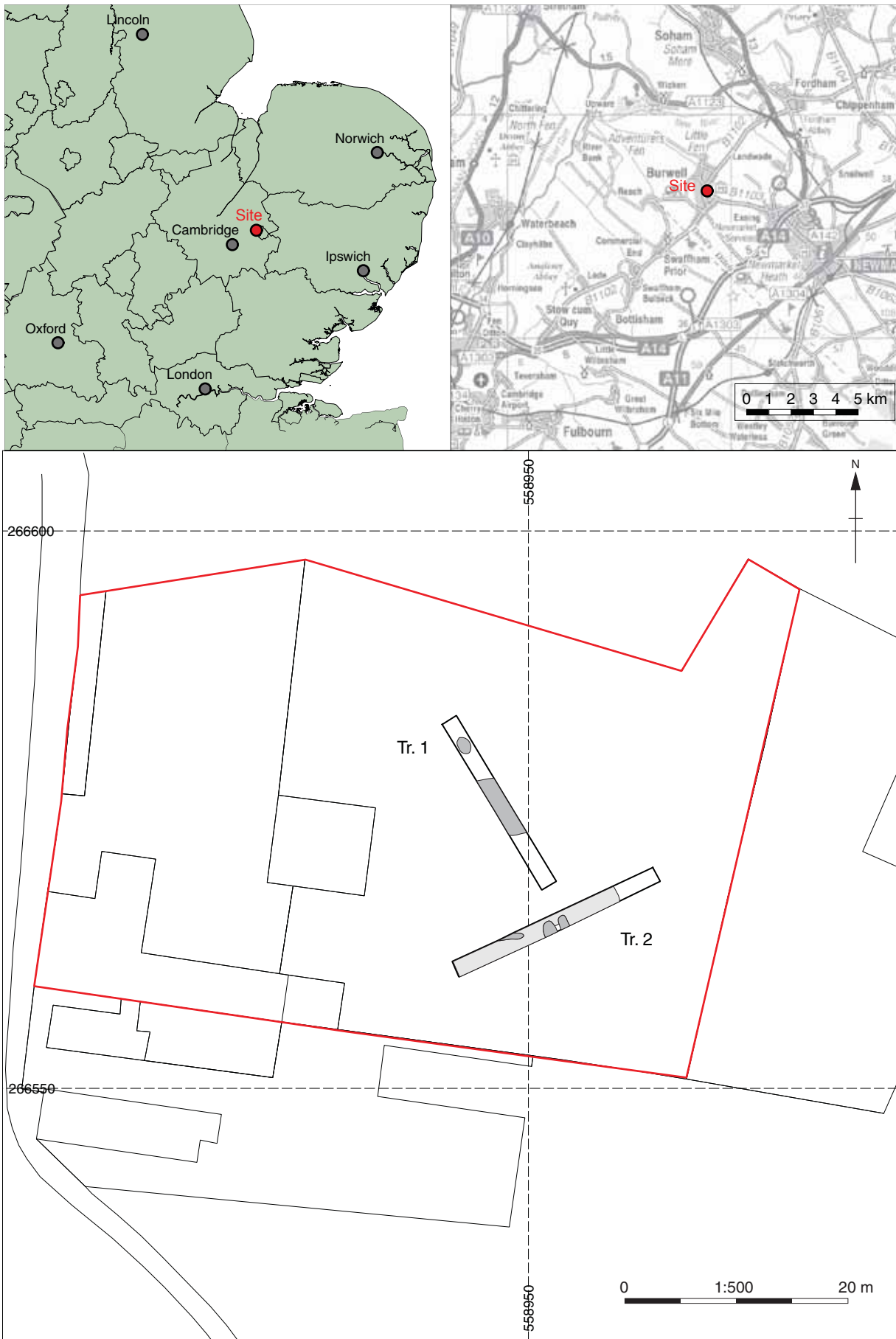
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Geophysics	<input type="checkbox"/>
Images (Digital photos)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Illustrations (Figures/Plates)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Moving Image	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spreadsheets	<input type="checkbox"/>
Survey	<input 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"/>





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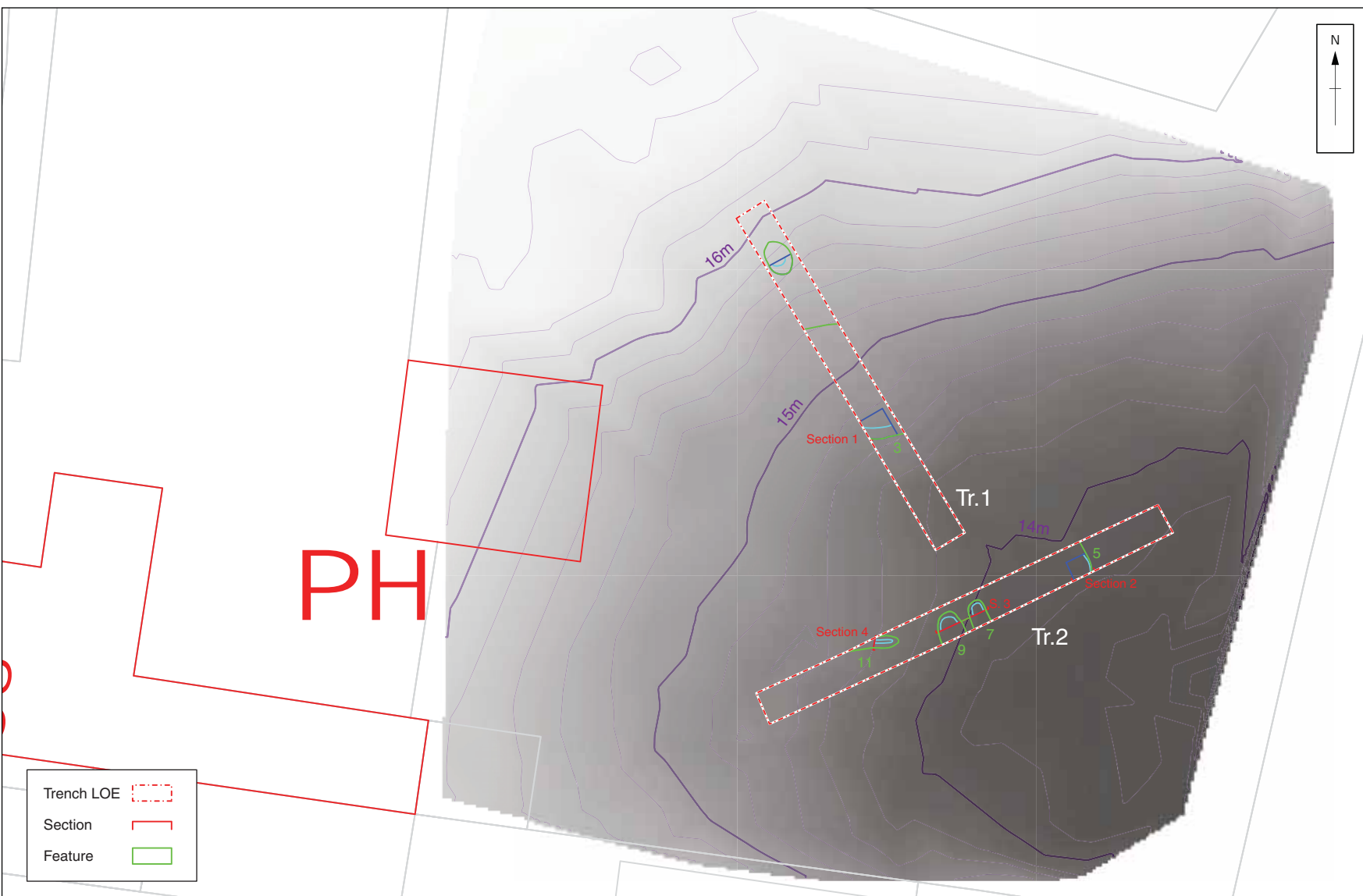


Figure 2: Site Topography and Trench plans





Plate 1: Trench 1, looking north-east



Plate 2: Quarry 3, Trench 1, looking south





Plate 3: Trench 2, looking east



Plate 4: Quarry 5, Trench 2, looking south



Plate 5: Pits 7 and 9, Trench 2, looking south





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