Land off Church Lane, Cold Ashby, Northamptonshire

An Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation

December 2015

PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

R22301

Land off Church Lane, Cold Ashby, Northamptonshire, NN6 6EE:

An Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation

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ABSTRACT

This report describes the results of an archaeological trial trench evaluation carried out by Pre-Construct Archaeology on land off Church Lane, Cold Ashby, Northamptonshire, NN6 6EE (NGR SP 65461 76335) between the 28th and the 30th September 2015. The archaeological work was commissioned by Melvyn King of rg+p Ltd on behalf of Barry Howard Homes Ltd in response to a planning condition attached to the construction of five residential dwellings and a new private access road. The aim of the work was to characterise the archaeological potential of the proposed development area.

The earliest activity on the site was a residual Mesolithic or early Neolithic blade-flake which was identified within a later medieval pit in Trench 3. This shows that there is prehistoric activity located within the vicinity of the site as suggested in the Desk Based Assessment within the fields to the south.

A single Saxo-Norman ditch was encountered within Trench 3 that contained domestic waste and a deposit of cereal processing detritus and hearth waste. Trench 2 contained a ditch that produced mid-12th to 14th century pottery alongside some cereal grains and grass/weed seeds.

The principal result of the evaluation was a series of parallel Post-medieval linear ditches, with associated perpendicular ditches, identified within Trenches 1, 3 and 4. The alignments of these ditches may be medieval in date that were re-dug or re-aligned in the later post-medieval/Modern periods.

Modern truncations such as foundations for a demolished pig-sty and out-house heavily disturbed large parts of the site, along with the overgrown nature of the site prior to the evaluation work taking place. As a result of this the evidence for earlier remains may well have been lost.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 An archaeological trial trench evaluation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (PCA) on land off Church Lane, Cold Ashby, Northamptonshire, NN6 6EE (centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (NGR) SP 65461 76335) from the 28th to the 30th September 2015 (Figure 1).

1.2 The archaeological work was commissioned by Melvyn King of rg+p Ltd in response to an archaeological planning condition attached to the construction of five new residential dwellings, including the formation of a new private access road (Planning Reference DA/2015/0118).

1.3 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by Donald Sutherland and Kathryn Brook of PCA (Sutherland & Brook 2015).

1.4 The aim of the evaluation was to determine the location, date, extent, character, condition and quality of any archaeological remains on the site, to assess the significance of any such remains in a local, regional, or national context, as appropriate, and to assess the potential impact of the development proposals on the site's archaeology.

1.5 A total of five trial trenches were excavated and recorded.

1.6 This report describes the results of the evaluation and aims to inform the design of an appropriate archaeological mitigation strategy. The site archive will be stored by PCA until such time as Northamptonshire Museum services have the facilities for storage.

2. GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

2.1 Geology

2.1.1 The underlying bedrock of the site is comprised of Northampton Sand Formation - Sandstone, Limestone and Ironstone (BGS, Website 1). The sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 172 to 176 million years ago in the Jurassic Period within a local environment previously dominated by shallow seas.

2.1.2 No superficial deposits are recorded for the site.

2.2 Topography

2.2.1 The site is located at the south-eastern corner of the village. West Haddon Road forms the site boundary to the north-west and to the south is Church Lane. The northern portion of the site slopes gently southwards with the ground level dropping off as it becomes very steep towards the south-east corner. An approximate height in the north-west corner was 203m AOD while the south-east corner was at an elevation of 199m AOD.

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 General

3.1.1 This archaeological and historical background has been drawn from the Desk-Based Assessment compiled by Kathryn Brook (Brook 2015) and the available 'grey literature' reports documenting the adjacent archaeological investigations.

3.2 Prehistoric

3.2.1 Three areas of possible prehistoric activity have been identified in the vicinity of the site. Fieldwalking undertaken in a field to the south of the site found a scatter of worked flint thought to date from the Late Neolithic or Early Bronze Age.

3.2.2 A possible Bronze Age burial site was identified in aerial photographs, c. 265m north of the site. This consisted of two round barrows and a possible pit. To the east of the burial site a collection of ditches, linear features and enclosure crop-marks, thought to be the site of a prehistoric settlement were discovered.

3.3 Roman

3.3.1 A Field walking survey in a field c.941m south of the site produced a scatter of Roman pottery, but no other Roman material, such as building material, was recorded.

3.4 Anglo-Saxon and Early Medieval

3.4.4 The exact origins of the village of Cold Ashby are unknown. It most likely developed as a settlement during the Saxon period. The village's inclusion in the Domesday Book supports the premise that a settlement was established in Cold Ashby before or during the late Saxon period. The Domesday Book records that in 1066 land at Cold Ashby was held by St Mary, Abbey of Coventry, Aeleva the widow and Leofric the noble son of Leofwin.

3.4.5 The NHER contained no entries for the Saxon Period. However, it is worth considering that a few of the linear medieval earthworks around the village could be of late Saxon date.

3.5 Medieval

3.5.1 The scheduled earthwork remains of the medieval Monastic Grange are visible in the field immediately north of Cold Ashby, Main Street located to the south is thought to have formed its southern boundary. It is unclear from surviving documentation, to which Abbey the Grange belonged to. It was either Pipewell Abbey, a monastery of the Cistercian order, or Sulby Abbey. The earthwork and buried remains of this Monastic Grange included, building platforms, tofts, enclosures, paddocks and a fishpond. The northern and eastern boundaries to the Monastic Grange are defined by ditches and low banks, just beyond the northern

boundary ditch are the remains of a Hollow way. This Hollow Way runs in a north-north-west to east-south-east direction continuing west beyond the Scheduled Area. The western extent of the Grange is unknown; today the scheduled area is defined by Bridle Lane. A possible medieval enclosure has been identified at Manor Farm immediately west of the Grange, but it's not clear if this is associated with the Grange. The development site lies within 136m of this Scheduled Ancient Monument.

3.5.2 The Church and churchyard of St Denys, located c. 190m east of the development site, is present in the eastern part of Cold Ashby. The Church is thought to date from the 12th century and contains many of its original 12th -14th century features, restoration work was carried out in the in the mid-19th century, c.1840. An archaeological watching brief during the rebuilding work on the retaining churchyard wall, encountered no archaeological features or material.

3.5.3 A collection of linear earthworks recorded adjacent to site, continuing southwards into the adjacent field beyond Church Lane, are thought to represent the southern extent of the medieval village. The earthworks included various linear features running north-south and east-west forming enclosed areas of possible dwellings and or paddocks as well as crofts, tofts and Closes.

3.5.4 The modern village of Cold Ashby is surrounded by the earthwork remains of the former medieval settlement indicating the village has shrunk. A change in population is the most likely course of this. The 1086 Domesday Book gives a recorded population of fourteen, and by 1377 eighty-two people over the age of fourteen are recorded as paying the Poll Tax, and by 1673 only thirty-nine people paid Hearth Tax (Royal Commission on Historical Monuments).

3.5.5 Seven areas of ridge and furrow have been recorded by the 'Midlands Open Fields Project' in the vicinity of the site. The closest ridge and furrow to the site is within the fields immediately south of the site and within the fields east of the Monastic Grange.

3.6 Post-Medieval

3.6.1 Evidence for 18th century activity comes from the standing buildings within Cold Ashby. These include 'Home Farm' and Old Bakehouse, possibly the former site of a bakery, constructed of brick and iron stone. These are the closest listed buildings to the site, located approximately 68m to the east. There are further structures of mid-18th century date located in the vicinity of the site including: The Old Forge and house and Cold Ashby Hall.

3.6.2 The Churchyard also contains a number of listed structures, including a 1730 chest tomb and the 19th century Lych Gate, erected in 1883. The lynch gate is a 'High Victorian Style' made of limestone.

3.6.3 The 19th century is further characterized by the 'The Old Vicarage', now a house. Many of the 18th century listed building had extensions and refurbishment in the 19th century.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 Excavation and Sampling

4.1.1 The Written Scheme of Investigation for the evaluation proposed the excavation of five trial trenches (Figure 2).

4.1.2 Ground reduction was carried out under archaeological supervision using an 8-ton wheeled mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.8m-wide toothless ditching bucket. Topsoil and subsoil deposits were removed in spits down to the level of the undisturbed natural geological deposits where potential archaeological features could be observed and recorded. Exposed surfaces were cleaned by trowel and hoe as appropriate and all further excavation was undertaken manually using hand tools. Overburden deposits were set aside beside each trench and examined visually and with a metal-detector for finds retrieval.

4.1.3 Metal-detecting was carried out during the topsoil and subsoil stripping and throughout the excavation process. Archaeological features and spoil heaps were scanned by metal-detector as they were encountered/ created.

4.1.4 Field excavation techniques and recording methods are detailed in the PCA Fieldwork Induction Manual (Operations Manual I) by Joanna Taylor and Gary Brown (2009).

4.1.5 All features were investigated and recorded in order to properly understand the date and nature of the archaeological remains on the site and to recover sufficient finds assemblages to assess the chronological development and socio-economic character of the site over time.

4.1.6 Discrete features such as pits and postholes were at least 50% excavated and, where considered appropriate, 100% excavated.

4.2 Recording Methodology

4.2.1 The limits of excavations, heights above Ordnance Datum (m OD) and the locations of archaeological features and interventions were recorded using a Leica 1200 GPS rover unit with RTK differential correction, giving three-dimensional accuracy of 20mm or better.

4.2.2 Manual plans and section drawings of archaeological features and deposits were drawn at an appropriate scale (1:10, 1:20 or 1:50).

4.2.3 Deposits or the removal of deposits judged by the excavating archaeologist to constitute individual events were each assigned a unique record number (often referred to within British archaeology as ‘context numbers’) and recorded on individual pre-printed forms (Taylor and Brown 2009). Archaeological processes recognised by the deposition of material are signified in this report by round brackets (thus), while events constituting the removal of deposits are referred to here as ‘cuts’ and signified by square brackets [thus]. The record numbers

assigned to cuts and deposits are entirely arbitrary and in no way reflect the chronological order in which events took place. All features and deposits recorded during the evaluation are listed in Appendix 2. Artefacts recovered during excavation were assigned to the record number of the deposit from which they were retrieved.

4.2.4 High-resolution digital photographs were taken at all stages of the evaluation process. Digital Photographs were taken of all archaeological features and deposits.

4.2.5 Artefacts and ecofacts were collected by hand and assigned to the record number of the deposit from which they were retrieved, receiving appropriate care prior to removal from the site (IfA 2001; Walker 1990; Watkinson 1981).

5. Archaeological Sequence

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The trenches are described below in numerical order, with technical data tabulated. Features and deposits are described from west to east or south to north depending on the alignment of the trench. Archaeological features and deposits were sealed by the subsoil, unless otherwise stated. The evaluation identified twelve parallel ditches aligned north-west to south-east with associated perpendicular north-east to south-west aligned ditches. Two post holes and two pits were also identified along with later occupational uses.

5.2 Trench 1

5.2.1 Trench 1 contained five ditches; three aligned north-west to south-east and two aligned north-east to south-west, ditch [17] contained four pieces of brick of late 18th to mid-20th century date and a single animal bone. Ditches [007], [11] & [013] may form a realignment of an existing boundary.

5.2.2 Ditch [017] (Figure 3) was located at the south-east end of the trench extending beyond both limits of excavation. It was curvilinear in plan, broadly aligned north-east to south-west, measuring 0.5m wide and 0.12m deep with gentle sides and a concave base. It contained a single fill (018) of greyish-brown silty sand. Four pieces of brick of later post-medieval/Modern date were present in this feature. Ditch [017] truncated Ditches [015] and [013].

5.2.3 Ditch [015] (Figure 3) was located at the south-east end of the trench extending beyond the southern limit of excavation. It was potentially curvilinear in plan, aligned north-east to south-west, measuring 0.45m wide and 0.1m deep with gentle sides and a concave base. It contained a single fill (016) of mixed grey brown silty sand and black ashy cinder. A sawn antler tine was present within this feature. Ditch [015] truncated Ditch [013] and was truncated by [017].

5.2.4 Ditch [013] (Figure 3) was located at the south-east end of the trench extending beyond both limits of excavation. It was linear in plan, aligned north-west to south-east, measuring 0.4m wide and 0.1m deep with gentle sides and a concave base. It contained a single fill (014) of pale grey brown silty sand. No finds were recovered from this feature. Ditch [013] was truncated by Ditches [015] and [017].

5.2.5 Ditch [011] (Figure 3) was located in the centre of the trench extending beyond both limits of excavation. It was linear in plan, aligned north-west to south-east, measuring 0.4m wide and 0.05m deep with gentle sides and a concave base. It contained a single fill (012) of pale grey-brown silty sand. No finds were present in this feature. Ditch [011] was parallel to Ditch [007] to the north and Ditch [013] to the south.

5.2.6 Ditch [007] (Figure 3) was located in the centre of the trench extending beyond both limits of excavation. It was linear in plan, aligned north-west to south-east, measuring 0.8m wide and 0.14m deep with moderately sloping sides and a concave base. It contained a single fill (008) of pale grey-brown silty sand. No finds were present in this feature. Ditch [007] was parallel to Ditches [011] & [13] to the south.

5.2.7 These features are likely to be boundary ditches, with the likelihood that they are post-medieval or modern in date. It is possible that some of these ditches have medieval origins given the fact they are perpendicular to Ditch [005] in Trench 3 which produced Saxo-Norman pottery.

TRENCH 1	**Figure 3**	**Plate 2**
Trench Alignment: NW-SE	Length: 20m	Level of Natural (m OD): 198.94

Deposit	**Context No.**	**Average Depth (m)**	
		SE End	**NE End**
Topsoil	(001)	0.35m	0.26m
Subsoil	(002)	0.28m	0.2m
Natural	(003)	0.65m	0.48m

Summary

Trench 1 was located in the north-eastern part of the site.

The trench contained five ditches; three aligned north-west to south-east and two aligned north-east to south-west, ditch [17] contained late 18th to mid-20th century brick pieces.

5.3 Trench 2

5.3.1 The trench contained two ditches, one aligned north-west to south-east and a second aligned north-east to south-west. Both ditches produced pottery finds of both medieval & post-medieval date.

5.3.2 This trench had to be relocated from its former location in the northern part of the site, due to the presence of Japanese Knotweed located throughout the north of the site.

5.3.3 Ditch [031] (Figure 4) was located in the southern part of the trench extending beyond both limits of excavation. It was linear in plan, aligned north-east to south-west, measuring 1.5m wide and 0.3m+ deep with moderately sloping sides. It contained a single fill (032) of mid to dark grey-brown silty sand. Two sherds of medieval pottery were recovered from this feature and a palaeo-environmental sample was taken that produced cereal grains and weed/grass seeds. It was located to the south of Ditch [029].

5.3.4 Ditch [029] (Figure 4) was located in the centre of the trench extending beyond both limits of excavation. It was linear in plan, aligned north-west to south-east, measuring 2.7m wide and

0.3m+ deep with moderately sloping sides. It contained a single fill (030) of mid to dark grey-brown silty sand. Five 18th century pottery sherds were recovered from this feature. It was located to the north of Ditch [031].

5.3.5 Both of these ditches contained finds of medieval and post-medieval date.

TRENCH 2	**Figure 4**		
Trench Alignment: NW-SE	Length: 15m	Level of Natural (m OD): 198.2	
Deposit	**Context No.**	**Average Depth (m)**	
		NW End	**SE End**
Topsoil	(001)	0.24m	0.3m
Subsoil	(002)	0.2m	0.1m
Natural	(003)	0.45m	0.45m

Summary

Trench 2 was located in the northern of the site.

The trench contained two ditches of medieval & post-medieval date.

5.4 Trench 3

5.4.1 The trench contained three ditches: two aligned east to west and one aligned north-east to south-west which produced sherds of medieval & early-modern pottery, and a pit which produced a residual Prehistoric flint.

5.4.2 Ditch [019] (Figure 5) was located in the southern part of the trench extending beyond both limits of excavation. It was linear in plan, aligned east to west, measuring 1.81m wide and 0.43m deep with moderately sloping sides and a concave base. It contained a single fill (020) of mid-grey-brown silty sand. This feature contained three sherds of early modern pottery, a single handmade brick, a mid-to-late 18th century wine glass fragment, animal bone and iron hearth slag. It was located to the south of Ditch [005] and continues into Trench 2.

5.4.3 Pit [009] (Figure 5) was located in the centre of the trench. It was sub-circular in plan, measuring 0.63m in length 0.8m wide and 0.1m deep with moderately sloping sides and a concave base. It contained a single fill (010) of mid to pale grey-brown silty sand. A single Mesolithic or early Neolithic blade-like flake was recovered from this feature, the palaeo-environmental sample produced cereal grains and weed/grass seeds indicative of a medieval date suggesting the worked flint was residual. It was located to the south of Ditch [005].

5.4.4 Ditch [005] (Figure 5) was located in the northern end of the trench extending beyond both limits of excavation. It was linear in plan, aligned north-east to south-west, measuring 1.33m wide and 0.27m deep with moderately sloping sides and a concave base. It contained a single fill (006) of mid-grey-brown silty sand. Fifteen sherds of Saxo-Norman pottery and burnt

animal bone fragments were recovered from this feature. A palaeo-environmental sample produced evidence for cereal processing detritus and/or the disposal of domestic hearth waste. Ditch [005] was located to the north of Pit [009] and to the south of Ditch [037].

5.4.5 Ditch [037] (Figure 5) was located at the north end of the trench extending beyond both limits of excavation. It was linear in plan, aligned east to west, measuring 1.06m wide and 0.33m deep with moderate to steep sides and a concave base. It contained a single fill (038) of mid-grey-brown silty sand, which contained a number of large angular limestone. No finds were present in this feature. Ditch [037] was located to the north of Ditch [005].

TRENCH 3	**Figure 5**	**Plates 3-5**	
Trench Alignment: NW-SE	Length: 15m	Level of Natural (m OD): 198.09	
Deposit	**Context No.**	**Average Depth (m)**	
		NW End	**SE End**
Topsoil	(001)	0.4m	0.32m
Subsoil	(002)	0.21m	0.3m
Natural	(003)	0.66m	0.62m

Summary

Trench 3 was located towards the west edge of the site.

The trench contained three ditches and a pit. Ditch [005] produced Saxo-Norman pottery and a Pit [009] that produced a Mesolithic or early Neolithic blade-like-flake.

5.5 Trench 4

5.5.1 The trench contained two ditches aligned north-west to south-east, two post-holes and a heavily truncated pit. No finds were recovered from these features.

5.5.2 Ditch [021] (Figure 6) was located at the western end of the trench extending beyond both limits of excavation. It was linear in plan, aligned north-west to south-east, measuring 0.67m wide and 0.22m deep with moderately sloping sides and a concave base. It contained a single fill (022) of mottled orange-brown silty clay and grey-brown silty sand. No finds were present in this feature. Ditch [021] was parallel to Ditch [023] located immediately to the north-east.

5.5.3 Pit [035] (Figure 6) was located at the eastern end of the trench extending beyond the northern limit of excavation. It was sub-oval in plan measuring 0.32m wide and 0.1m deep with gentle sides and a concave base. It contained a single fill (036) of mid to dark grey-brown silty sand. No finds were present in this feature. Pit [035] was truncated by Ditch [023].

5.5.4 Ditch [023] (Figure 6) was located at the eastern end of the trench extending beyond both limits of excavation. It was linear in plan, aligned north-west to south-east, measuring 0.51m wide and 0.1m deep with gentle sides and a concave base. It contained a single fill (024) of

grey-brown silty sand. No finds were present in this feature. Ditch [023] truncated Pit [035] and was truncated by Post-hole [025].

5.5.5 Post-hole [025] (Figure 6) was located at the eastern end of the trench just-extending beyond the northern limit of excavation. It was sub-circular in plan measuring 0.66m, 0.32m wide and 0.42m deep with steep near vertical sides and a concave base. It contained a single fill (026) of pale grey-brown silty sand. No finds were present in this feature. Post-hole [025] truncated Ditch [023].

5.5.6 Post-hole [027] (Figure 6) was located at the eastern end of the trench. It was sub-circular in plan measuring 0.32m in length, 0.34m wide and 0.27m deep with steep near vertical sides and a concave base. It contained a single fill (026) of pale grey-brown silty sand. No finds were present in this feature. Post-hole [027] was located immediately to the south-west of Ditch [023].

TRENCH 4	**Figure 6**		**Plates 6-7**	
Trench Alignment: E-W	Length: 10m		Level of Natural (m OD): 198.05	
Deposit		**Context No.**	**Average Depth (m)**	
			W End	**E End**
Topsoil		(001)	0.3m	0.32m
Subsoil		(002)	0.21m	0.31m
Natural		(003)	0.51m	0.63m
Summary Trench 4 was located in the south-western part of the site. The trench contained two ditches aligned north-west to south-east, two post-holes and a heavily truncated pit. No finds were recovered from these features.				

5.6 Trench 5

5.6.1 Trench 5 contained no archaeological features.

5.6.2 A deposit of Made Ground (004) was identified in the north-western part of the trench. This was associated with the levelling of a former pig-sty located in this part of the site in the 19th Century, as shown on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey Map of Cold Ashby.

5.6.3 Made Ground (004) (Figure 7) was located in the northern part of the trench extending beyond the limits of excavation. It was irregular in plan measuring 0.45m in depth. It consisted of a single deposit of grey-brown sandy silt containing a significant amount of brick and pan tile of 19th century date (Jane Young, pers. Comm.).

TRENCH 5	**Figure 7**	**Plate 8**
Trench Alignment: NW-SE	Length: 15m	Level of Natural (m OD): 197.09

Deposit	**Context No.**	**Average Depth (m)**	
		NW End	**SE End**
Topsoil	(001)	0.26m	0.24m
Subsoil	(002)	-	0.18m
Made Ground	(004)	0.45m	-
Natural	(003)	0.65m	0.42m

Summary

Trench 5 was located in the south-eastern part of the site.

The trench contained no archaeological features.

6. THE FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

6.1 Lithic Assessment *by Barry Bishop*

Introduction

6.1.1 The archaeological investigations at the above site resulted in the recovery of a single struck flint and a 'starch fractured' flint. The starch fractured flint is natural and will not be considered further. This report describes the struck flint and assesses their archaeological significance. The piece was recovered from the fill (10) of a pit [9] that also produced an environmental sample indicative of medieval wind-blown detritus and can be regarded as residually deposited. All metrical descriptions follow the methodology established by Saville (1980).

Description

6.1.2 Context [10]: Heavily recorticated, abraded and chipped blade-like flake, recent break showing it to be made of a fine-grained translucent grey flint. Its striking platform is missing but it has a diffuse bulb of percussion and a feathered distal termination (with recent break). Its dorsal surface consists of two narrow and parallel flake scars, both emanating from the same direction as the flake was struck, and a small patch of worn but still rough cortex near its distal end. It measures 22mm long by 10mm wide and is a maximum of 2mm thick.

Discussion

6.1.3 The blade-like flake having experienced some more post-depositional damage, belongs to a similar, blade-based, technological tradition that can be broadly dated to the Mesolithic or Early Neolithic periods. It also has remnants of a similar rough but weathered cortex and the blade-like flake is made from a good quality grey flint, although the type of flint used for the possible blade fragment is masked by recortication. Although is possible that the flint for both was brought from sources close to the parent chalk, it is perhaps most likely that it was obtained from glacial till sources, which are commonly present in the vicinity.

Significance and Recommendations

6.1.4 The struck flint indicates prehistoric activity at the site that can be dated to the Mesolithic or Early Neolithic period, perhaps being at least broadly contemporary with the evidence for land clearance, although the single flint is too small to indicate the precise chronology or nature of the activity. It does contribute to a wider appreciation of prehistoric landscape use in the area, and provides further evidence for prehistoric activity within the East Midlands claylands, an area believed until relatively recently to have been largely avoided during much of the prehistoric period (Clay 2002; 2006; Myers 2006).

6.1.5 Due to the size of the assemblage (a single flint) no further analytical work is warranted. As it has some potential in contributing to a wider appreciation of landscape use in the area it should be recorded in the Historic Environment Record and a brief description included in any published account of the fieldwork.

6.2 The Post-Roman Pottery *by Jane Young*

Introduction

6.2.1 Twenty-five sherds of post-Roman pottery were submitted for examination. The pottery recovered is of Saxo-Norman to early modern type.

6.2.2 The assemblage was quantified by three measures: number of sherds, weight and vessel count within each context. Reference has been made to the Northamptonshire Pottery Type Series (Blinkhorn 1996). The ceramic data was entered on an Access database using the Northamptonshire County Ceramic Type-Series fabric codes (CTS) where appropriate with a concordance to their full name (see Table 1). Recording of the assemblage was in accordance with the guidelines laid out in Slowikowski, *et al.* (2001).

Condition

6.2.3 The pottery is in a variable condition with most sherds being in a slightly abraded to abraded condition with the calcareous grains being completely leached from most sherds. Two vessels are represented by more than a single sherd.

Overall Chronology and Source

6.2.4 A range of nine pottery types was identified; the type and general date range for these fabrics are shown in Table 1. A limited range of form types is present, with most sherds coming from jars or bowls.

Northamptonshire CTS	Full name	Date	Total sherds	Total vessels	Weight in grams
100	St Neots-type ware	mid/late 9th to mid 12th	4	4	25
102	Thetford-type fabrics	mid/late 9th to mid 12th	2	2	2
319	Stanion/Lyveden ware Fabric A	mid 12th to 14th	1	1	5
320	Stanion/Lyveden ware Fabric B	13th to 14th	1	1	5
330	Shelly Coarseware	11th to 14th	9	3	50
415	Creamware	mid 18th to mid 19th	1	1	3
417	Nottingham stoneware	18th	4	2	19
418	Pearlware	late 18th to mid 19th	1	1	1
426	Brown glazed earthenware	late 17th to 18th	2	2	28

Table 1: Ceramic codenames and date ranges with total quantities by vessel count, sherd count and weight

6.2.5 The material was recovered from four deposits in four of the trenches excavated on the site with the highest number of sherds being recovered from ditch 5 in Trench 1.

6.2.6 Ditch 5 in Trench 1 produced a small group of fifteen sherds representing nine vessels. Most of the sherds are in heavily leached shell-tempered fabrics. Microscopic examination of a freshly broken edge at x20 suggests that four of these sherds come from St. Neots ware (CTS 100) jars or bowls. At least one sherd is of early type. This in-turned rim is from a bowl of 10th

to early/mid 11th century date. The other vessels in this fabric could date to anywhere between the 10th and mid 12th centuries. Nine other shell-tempered sherds from three vessels are in un-diagnostic fabrics (CTS 330) of 11th to 14th century date. Seven sherds are from a large jar with a rim similar to one from St. Peter's (McCarthy 1979, Fig. 100; 595). The vessel from this site however is more probably of mid 12th to 13th century date Two tiny flakes in reduced quartz-tempered fabrics are likely to be of Thetford-type (CTS 102). This small group appears to be of possible mixed date comprising mainly of sherds of pre-mid 12th century date together with at least one mid 12th to 13th century jar. The in-turned rim bowl indicates 10th to early/mid 11th century activity.

6.2.7 Three early modern sherds were recovered from Ditch 19 in Trench 2. A tiny sherd comes from a small Pearlware bowl or cup with a blue internal panted line. This vessel is of late 18th to mid 19th century date. An undecorated sherd is from a similar mid/late 18th to mid 19th century vessel in Creamware. The largest sherd (4grams) comes from an 18th century Nottingham Stoneware mug.

6.2.8 Ditch 29 in Trench 3 produce five sherds from three vessel of probable 18th century date. Two Brown-glazed Earthenware sherds (CTS 426) come from large jars or bowls with internal glazes over red slips. These vessels are of late 17th to 18th century type. The other three sherds come from a single 18th century Nottingham Stoneware mug.

6.2.9 Two leached Stanion/Lyveden-type sherds were recovered from Ditch 31 in Trench 6. One sherd is from a shell tempered Fabric A jar (CTS 319) whilst the other comes from an oolitic-tempered Fabric B jug or jar (CTS 320). The Fabric A jar is of mid 12th to 14th date and the Fabric B jug or jar of 13th to 14th century date.

Summary and Recommendations

6.2.10 The ceramic material recovered came entirely from four ditch fills. The material suggests that most of the pottery was deposited during the Saxo-Norman or late post-medieval to early modern period. The earliest closely dateable sherd is of 10th to early/mid 11th century date.

6.2.11 The assemblage is in a stable condition and should be kept for future study.

6.3 The brick *by Jane Young*

Introduction

6.3.1 Eight fragments of brick weighing 0.248 kgms. in total were submitted for examination. The material is entirely early modern in date. The fragments were examined both visually and at x 20 binocular magnification. The resulting archive was then recorded using codenames in an Access database and complies with the guidelines laid out in Slowikowski, *et al.* (2001) and the Archaeological Ceramic Building Materials Group (2001).

Condition

6.3.2 The collection is comprised of small and abraded flakes.

The brick

6.3.3 Eight small flakes representing a total of four bricks (BRK) were recovered from Ditches 17 within Trench 1 and 19 in Trench 3. The four pieces found in Ditch 17 all appear to come from separate bricks, although given the size of the fragments it is not possible to be certain. These flakes all come from handmade early modern bricks of late 18th to mid 20th century date. The surviving fragments suggest that the bricks were sand-moulded in an orange fabric containing abundant mixed fine to medium-sized quartz grains, moderate mixed iron-rich grains up to 8.0mm and moderate iron- cemented sandstone. Ditch 19 produced four abraded pieces from a single handmade brick in a marbled light orange and cream fine sandy fabric. This brick is likely to be of 18th to mid 20th century date.

Summary and Recommendations

6.3.4 The small group of brick recovered from this site suggests the use of early modern handmade brick in the areas of Trenches 1 & 3.

6.4 Animal bone *by Kevin Trott & Kevin Rielly*

Description of bones

6.4.1 The site collection, provided by a single medieval ditch [05], consisted of very small burnt bone fragments (06). A single sawn deer antler (16) was recovered from an undated ditch [15]. The snapped and slightly eroded cattle ulna and femur fragment was recovered from the fill (20) of a late 18th century ditch [19], with a single snapped sheep radius from the fill (18) of ditch [17]. Notably, while relatively fragmented, this bone assemblage was in good condition with little to no surface damage. The presence of fused bone elements from both cattle and sheep indicated this was clearly from animals used either for work purposes (in regards to the cattle) or for milk & wool/meat production. No further analysis is required.

6.5 The Metalworking Residue *By Grahame Morgan*

6.5.1 A total of 110 g of material labelled as slag was visually assessed, noting its morphology, colour and weight using the principals and systems set out in Bayley *et al.* (2001). The slag was visually diagnostic, providing unambiguous evidence for a specific metallurgical process. A diamond saw was utilized to section the residue.

6.5.2 Context (020): Vesicular Fayalite with charcoal & rust indicative of Iron working Hearth slag (110g).

6.5.3 The processed soil sample from both from this context (020) and other samples contexts did not produce any hammer scale indicative to suggest that iron working was processed on this site, as this was the only piece that was found and no other residues were identified it would suggest this hearth slag was residual in this context.

6.6 The Glass Report *By Kevin Trott*

Introduction

6.6.1 During the archaeological investigations a single fragment of glass were recovered from the fill (020) of ditch [19].

Catalogue

6.6.2 020: Curved green glass, 0.4mm thick, with traces of moulded/heat distortions – wine glass.

Discussion

6.6.3 The glass assemblage recovered from Cold Ashby comprises of a single wine vessel glass of a type typically seen in mid-late 18th century deposits.

Recommendations

6.6.4 No further analysis is recommended of the assemblage. It is recommended that the glass fragment is retained with the site archive. No conservation will be required on this piece (Graham Morgan, pers. Comm).

6.7 The Charred Plant Macrofossils and Other Remains *by Val Fryer*

Introduction and method statement

6.7.1 Evaluation excavations at Cold Ashby, undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology (PCA), recorded a limited number of features, most of which were securely dated. However, a single pit (feature [009]) contained a Mesolithic/early Neolithic blade-flake, whilst ditch [005] contained pottery of Saxo-Norman date and ditch [031] of twelfth to fourteenth century date. Samples for the evaluation of the content and preservation of the plant macrofossil assemblages were taken and three were submitted for assessment.

6.7.2 The samples were bulk floated by PCA and the flots were collected in a 300 micron mesh sieve. The dried flots were scanned under a binocular microscope at magnifications up to x 16 and the plant macrofossils and other remains noted are listed in Table 1. Nomenclature within the table follows Stace (2010). All plant remains were charred. Modern roots, seeds and arthropod remains were also recorded.

Results

6.7.3 Cereals and seeds are present at a low to moderate density within all three assemblages. Preservation is generally quite poor, with the majority of the cereals being puffed and distorted, probably as a result of exposure to high temperatures during combustion. Some macrofossils also appear abraded, possibly suggesting that they were exposed to the elements for some considerable period prior to incorporation within the feature fills.

6.7.4 Oat (Avena sp.), barley (Hordeum sp.), rye (Secale cereale) and wheat (Triticum sp.) grains are recorded, with wheat occurring marginally more frequently than barley. Oats are particularly common within the assemblage from ditch [005] (sample 3). Cereal chaff is exceedingly scarce, but barley and barley/rye type rachis nodes are recorded along with a single bread wheat (T. aestivum/compactum) type node.

6.7.5 Weed seeds occur most frequently within the assemblage from ditch [005], but individual specimens are also present within the pit fill [009] and ditch [031]. All are of common segetal weeds, with taxa noted including brome (Bromus sp.), cornflower (Centaurea sp.), black bindweed (Fallopia convolvulus), goosegrass (Galium aparine), grasses (Poaceae), wild radish (Raphanus raphanistrum) and dock (Rumex sp.). A single sedge (Carex sp.) nutlet is recorded from ditch [031] (sample 2). Charcoal/charred wood fragments are present throughout, but other plant macrofossils are very scarce.

6.7.6 Black porous and tarry residues are abundant within both of the pit assemblages. All are distinctly hard and brittle, probably suggesting that they are bi-products of the combustion of coal, small pieces of which are also recorded within both samples. Other remains are scarce, but ferrous globules are present within the assemblages from pit [009] and ditch [005].

Conclusions and recommendations for further work

6.7.7 In summary, the assemblage from pit [009] that contained a prehistoric flint and ditch [031] was clearly heavily dominated with later material, most of which would appear to be derived from either the spreading of night soil during the post-medieval period or the use of steam implements in the early modern era. It is, therefore, impossible to state with any degree of certainly whether any of the remains may be contemporary with the features from which the samples were taken. The assemblage from ditch [005] is probably derived from a small deposit of either late stage cereal processing detritus or domestic hearth waste. Its composition is largely typical of a deposit of medieval date, although again it is suggested that the coal fragments and the ferrous globules may be intrusive.

6.7.8 The Saxo-Norman feature would appear to be less contaminated than the 12th-14th century ditch and undated pit, therefore, it is suggested that if further interventions are planned, additional samples of approximately 20 – 40 litres in volume are taken from all features which are clearly well-sealed and dated.

Sample No.	**1**	**2**	**3**
Context No.	**010**	**032**	**006**
Feature No.	**009**	**031**	**005**
Feature type	**Pit**	**Ditch**	**Ditch**
Date	**Undated**	**Medieval**	**Saxo-Nor**
Cereals			
Avena sp. (grains)			xx
Hordeum sp. (grains)	x	x	x
(rachis node)			x
Hordeum/Secale cereale type (rachis node)			x
Secale cereale L. (grains)			x
Triticum sp. (grains)	x	x	xx
T. aestivum/compactum type (rachis nodes)			x
Cereal indet. (grains)	x	x	xxx
Herbs			
Bromus sp.		xcf	x
Centaurea sp.			x
Fabaceae indet.			xcf
Fallopia convolvulus (L.)A.Love			x
Galium aparine L.			x
Small Poaceae indet.			x
Large Poaceae indet.			x
Raphanus raphanistrum L. (siliquae)	x	xfg	xfg
Rumex sp.			x
R. acetosella L.			x
Wetland plants			

Carex sp.		x	
Other plant macrofossils			
Charcoal <2mm	xxx	xxx	xxx
Charcoal >2mm	xxx	xxx	xx
Charcoal >5mm	x	x	x
Charred root/stem	x		x
Ericaceae indet. (stem)			xcf
Indet. seeds			x
Other remains			
Black porous 'cokey' material	xx	xxx	
Black tarry material	xx	x	
Ferrous globules	x		x
Small coal frags.	xxxx	xx	x
Vitreous material	x		
Sample volume (litres)	**20**	**20**	**20**
Volume of flot (litres)	**0.2**	**0.1**	**0.2**
% flot sorted	**50%**	**100%**	**50%**

Key to Table

x = 1 – 10 specimens xx = 11 – 50 specimens xxx = 51 – 100 specimens xxxx = 100+ specimens

cf = compare fg = fragment Meso = Mesolithic C = century

7. DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Prehistoric Activity

7.1.1 Although the prehistoric activity has been located to the south of the site it was suggested to date to the later Neolithic or early Bronze Age periods. The presence of a Mesolithic or early Neolithic blade-flake on-site may indicate the possibility further prehistoric activity may extend northwards from the known southern location indicated on the SMR (Brook 2015).

7.2 Medieval Activity

7.2.1 A Saxo-Norman ditch was present within Trench 3 and a later medieval ditch was found within Trench 2, however given the lack of dating from a number of features on the site and potential shared alignments, further Saxo-Norman & medieval features may well be present on the site. Any further evidence for medieval activity is likely to have been truncated by the significant amount of rooting present throughout the site, especially given the ephemerality of the features identified.

7.2.2 It is also reasonable to suggest that some of the boundaries identified as being post-medieval or modern may well make use of existing, possibly medieval, boundaries.

7.2.3 The site lies close to documented medieval settlement in the adjacent field, consisting of medieval linear field systems, crofts and tofts (Brooke, 2015). The lack of definite medieval features is likely explained by reuse of existing boundaries over time.

7.3 Post-Medieval

7.3.1 A number of Post-medieval ditches were identified on the site, with their alignments consistent with buildings present along Crabtree Lane as shown on the OS Map of Cold Ashby (Website 1). These may be making use of existing, possibly former medieval, boundaries.

7.3.2 Trench 5 identified a deposit of Made Ground which may represent the levelling of a former building on the site. The 1st and 2nd editions of the Ordnance Survey Maps of the site show extant buildings, possibly a former pig-sty, occupying the south-eastern part of the site.

7.4 Conclusions

7.4.1 The trial trench evaluation has identified features reflecting three periods of activity on the site: one Saxo-Norman, one Medieval and a Post-medieval/Modern phase.

7.4.2 The archaeological features and deposits from both the Saxo-Norman and medieval periods are poorly preserved being truncated by both modern activity and rooting.

7.4.3 The archaeology present suggests that the site is on the peripheries of known medieval activity in the adjacent field.

7.4.4 Although the densest concentration of archaeology is in the north of the site, in view of the limited sample of the site's area provided by the trenching, the apparent lack of features in

the south-eastern part of the site may not be 'real', and may reflect the level of truncation present on the site.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

8.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Melvyn King of rg+p Ltd for commissioning the work and French Plant Hire for operating the excavator. PCA are also grateful to Liz Mordue of Northamptonshire County Council for their advice and for monitoring the work. The author would like to thank Kevin Trott for managing the project. The author would also like to thank the project team: Donald Sutherland and Steve Jones for their hard work, and finally PCA's CAD department for preparing the figures.

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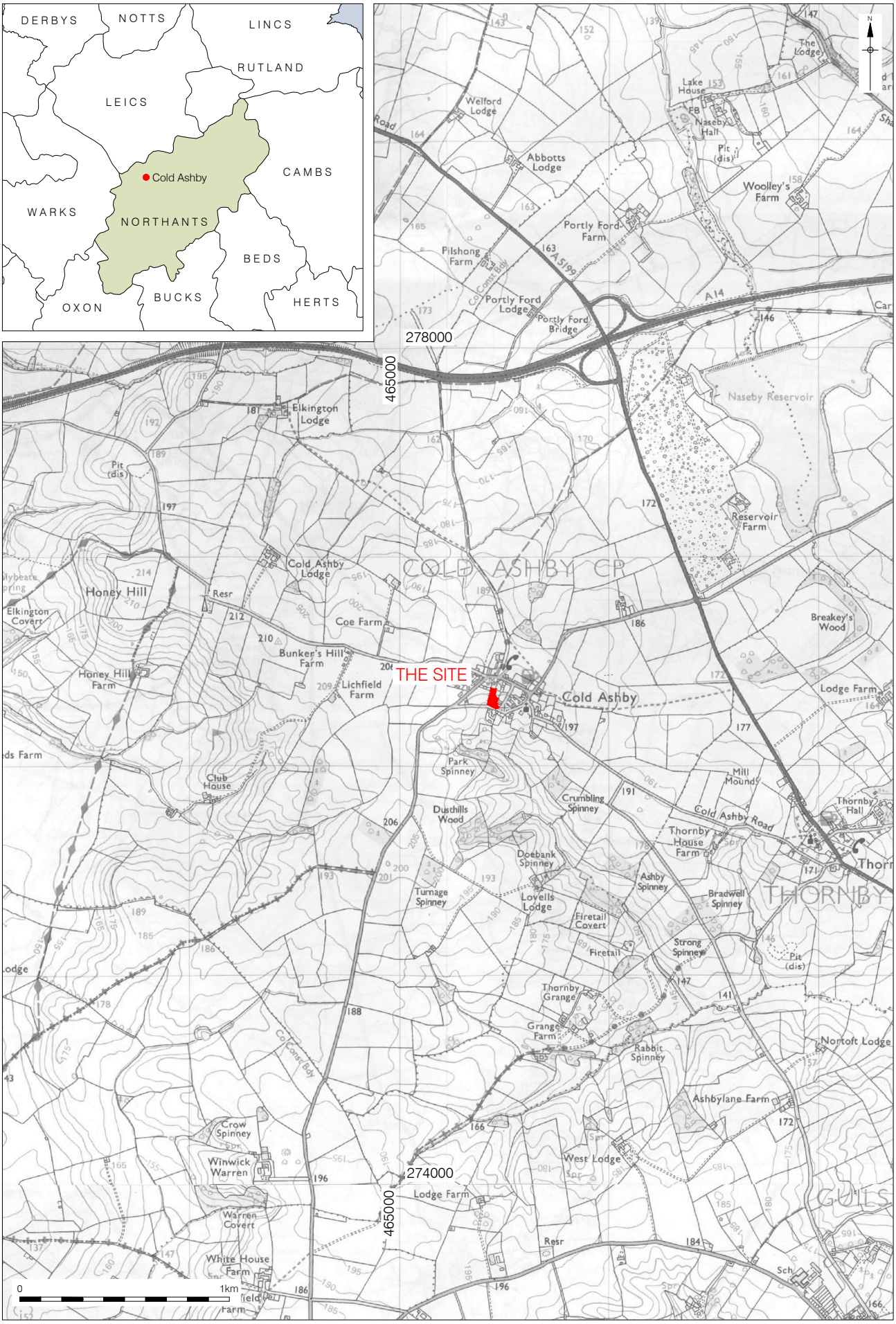
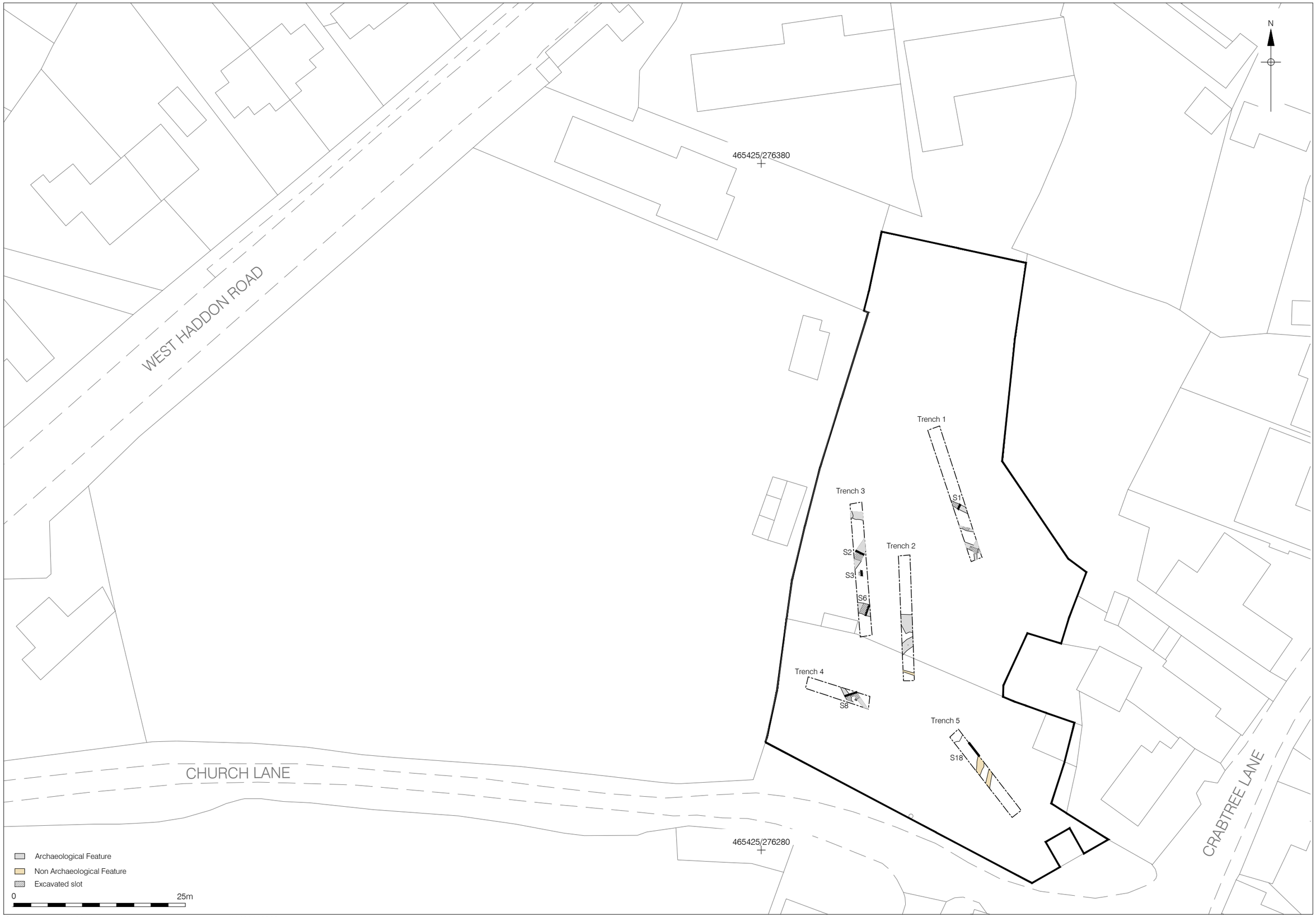


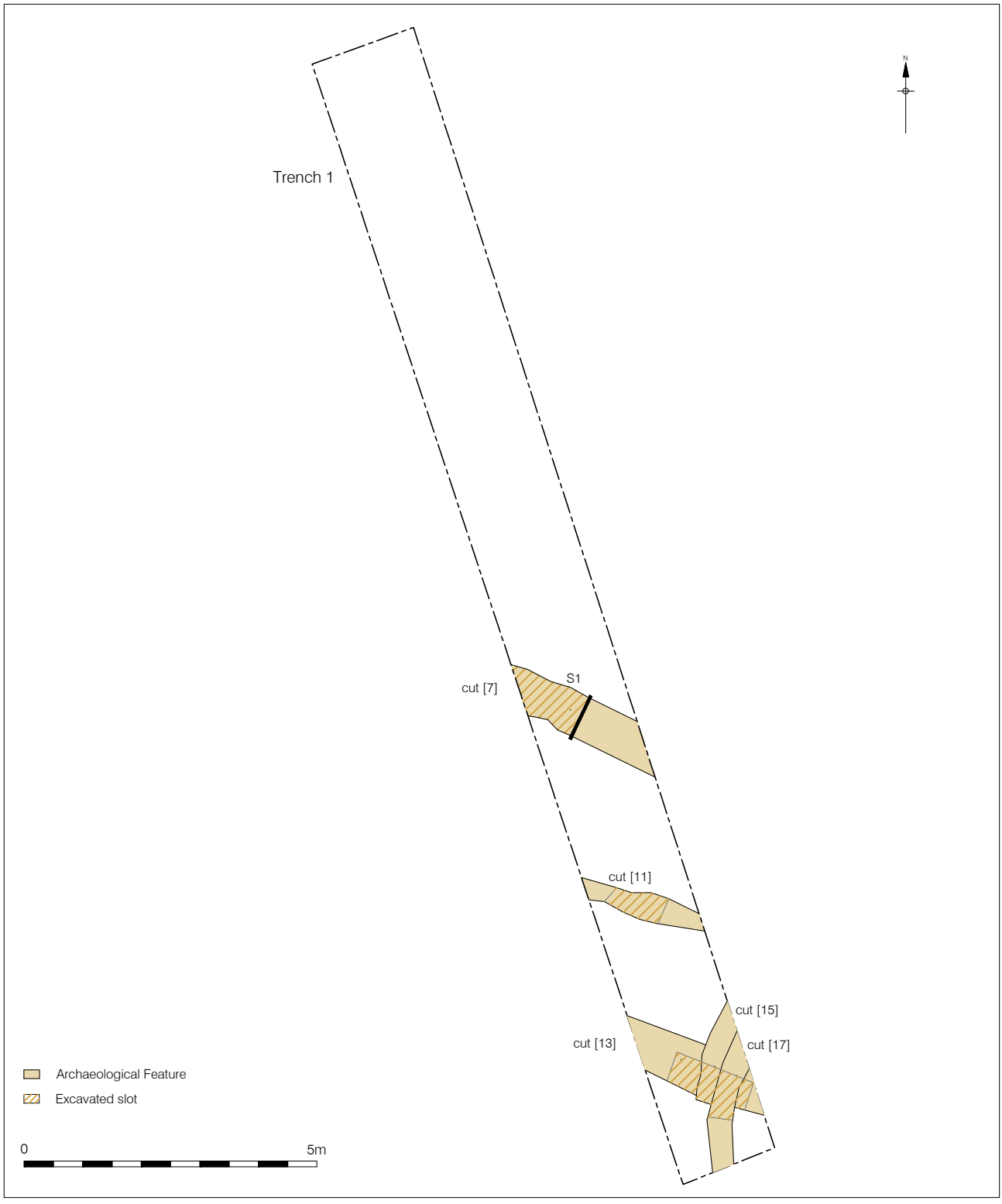
05/10/15 RM

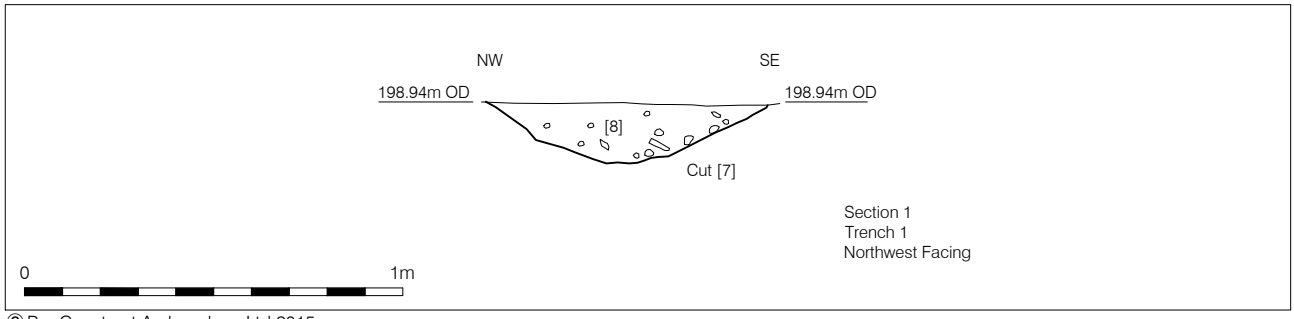
Figure 1
Site Location
1:200,000 & 25,000 at A4



06/10/15 RM

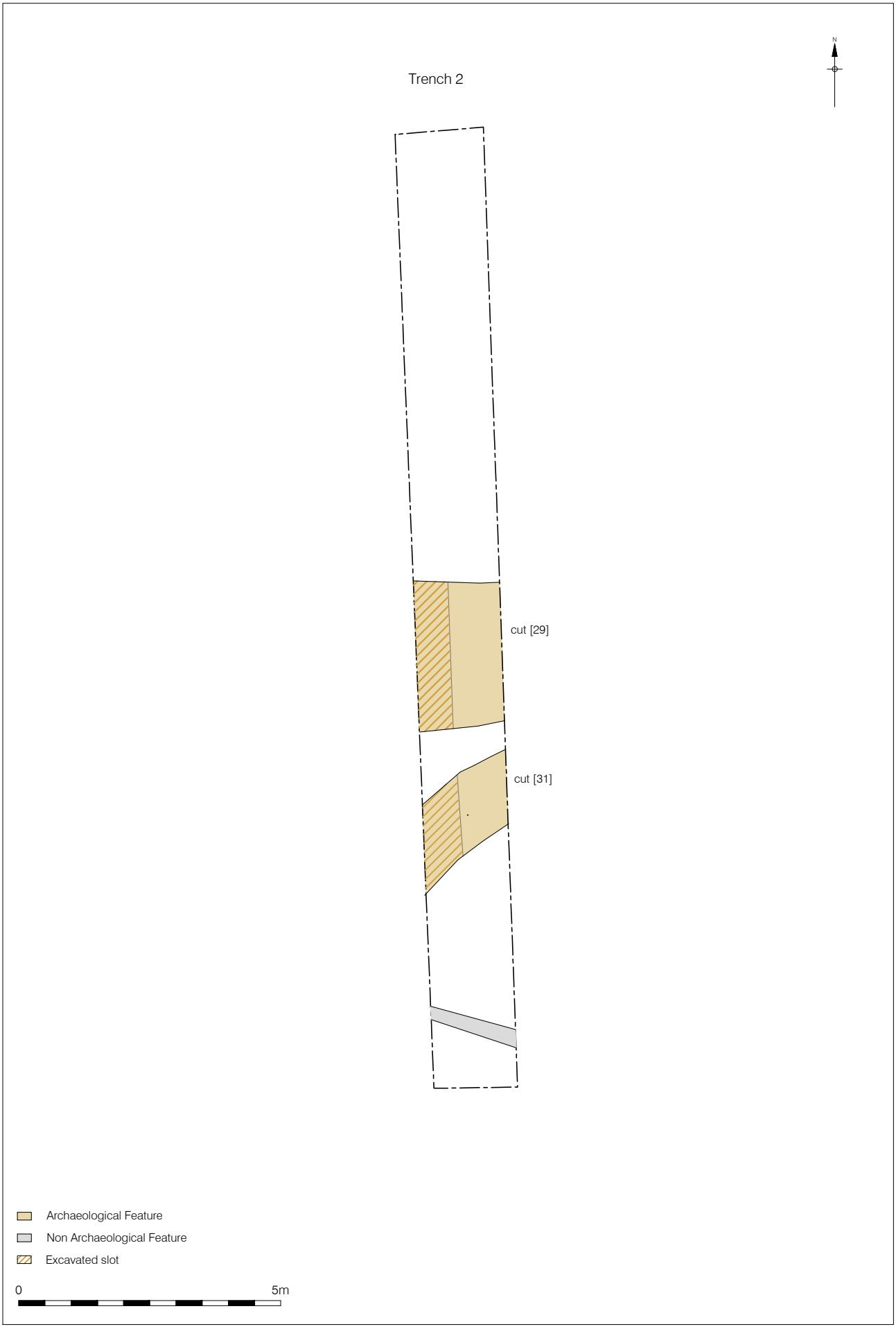
Figure 2
Detailed Trench Locations
1:500 at A3





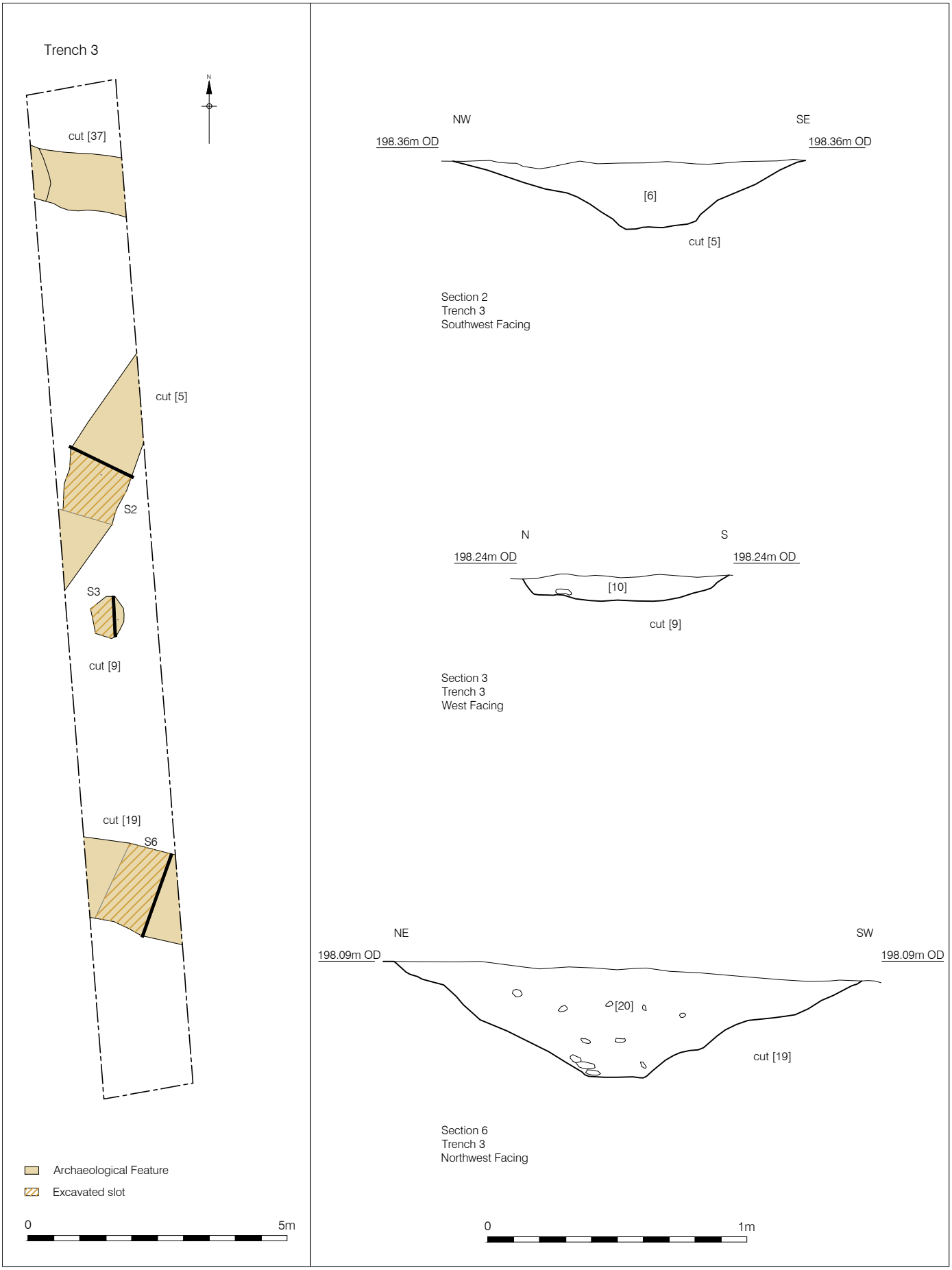
07/10/15 RM

Figure 3
Plan and section of Trench 1
Plan 1:100 and Section 1:20 at A4



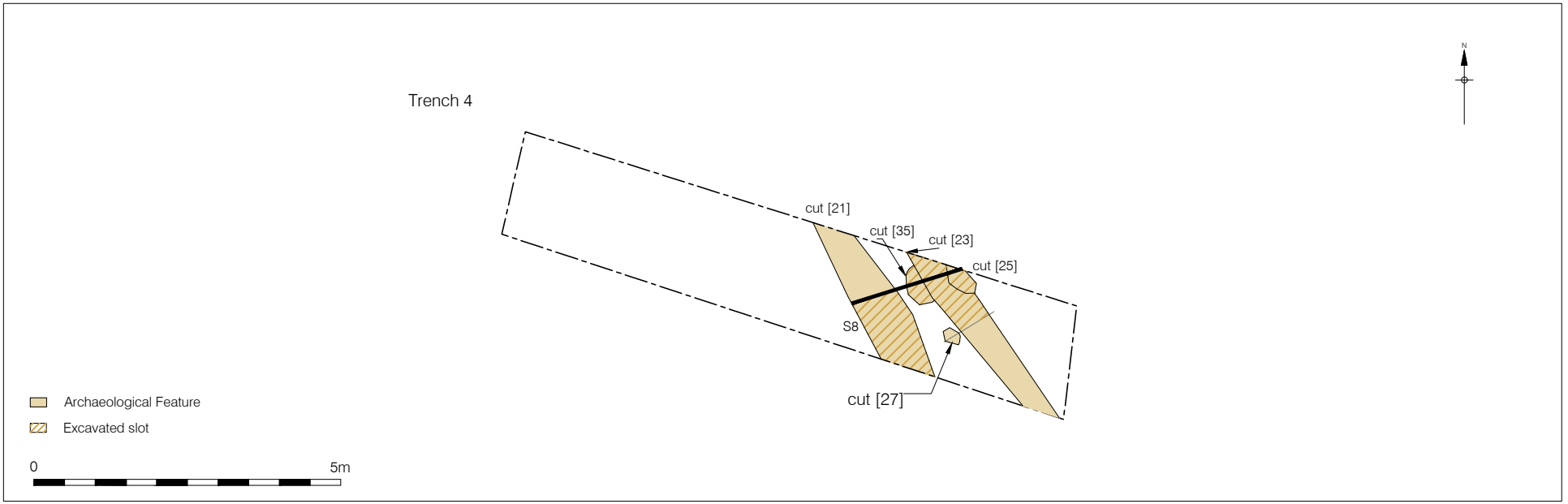
07/10/15 RM

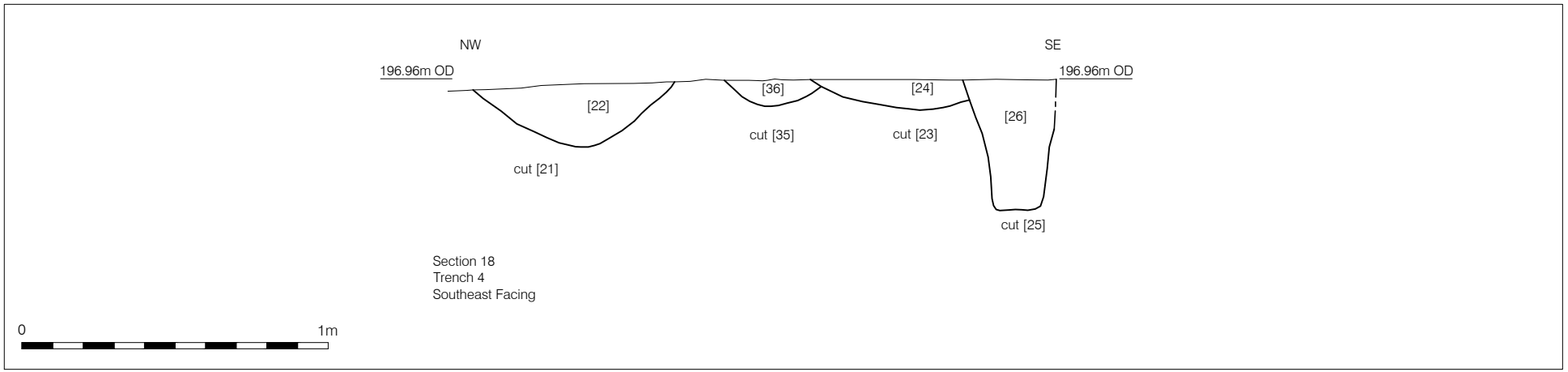
Figure 4
Plan of Trench 2
1:100 at A4



07/10/15 RM

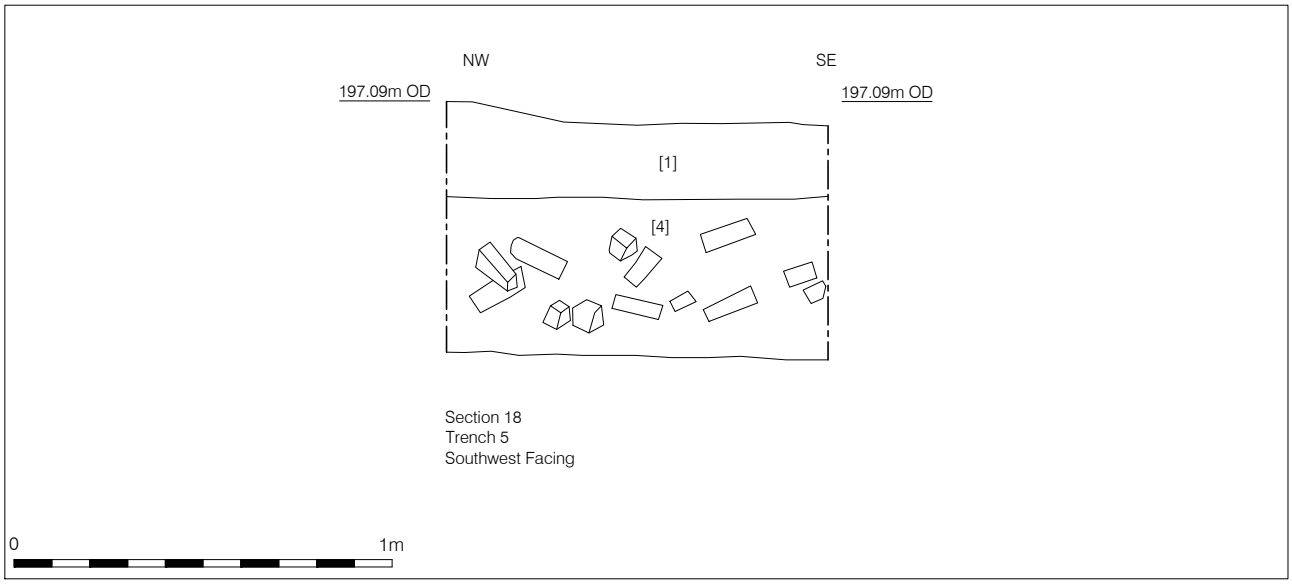
Figure 5
Plan and section of Trench 3
Plan 1:100 and Section 1:20 at A4





07/10/15 RM

Figure 6
Plan and section of Trench 4
Plan 1:100 and Section 1:20 at A4



07/10/15 RM

Figure 7
Plan and section of Trench 5
Plan 1:100 and Section 1:20 at A4

APPENDIX 1: PLATES

Plate 1: Site, view north

Plate 2: Trench 1, view north-west

Plate 3: Trench 3 under excavation, view north-west

Plate 4: Ditch [005], view north-east

Plate 5: Ditch [019], view south-west

Plate 6: Trench 4, view west

Plate 7: Ditches [021], [023], Post-holes [025], [027] and Pit [035]

Plate 8: Made Ground (004), view north-east

APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT INDEX

Context	Cut	Type	Category	Interpretation	Trench Number
001	-	Layer	Overburden	Topsoil	1-5
002	-	Layer	Overburden	Subsoil	1-5
003	-	Layer	Natural	Natural Geology	1-5
004	-	Layer	Overburden	Made Ground	5
005	005	Cut	Ditch	Boundary	3
006	005	Fill	Ditch	Boundary	3
007	007	Cut	Ditch	Boundary	1
008	007	Fill	Ditch	Boundary	1
009	009	Cut	Pit	Pit	3
010	009	Fill	Pit	Pit	3
011	011	Cut	Ditch	Boundary	3
012	011	Fill	Ditch	Boundary	3
013	013	Cut	Ditch	Boundary	1
014	013	Fill	Ditch	Boundary	1
015	015	Cut	Ditch	Boundary	1
016	015	Fill	Ditch	Boundary	1
017	017	Cut	Ditch	Boundary	1
018	017	Fill	Ditch	Boundary	1
019	019	Cut	Ditch	Boundary	3
020	019	Fill	Ditch	Boundary	3
021	021	Cut	Ditch	Boundary	4
022	021	Fill	Ditch	Boundary	4
023	023	Cut	Ditch	Boundary	4
024	023	Fill	Ditch	Boundary	4
025	025	Cut	Post-hole	Fence-line	4
026	025	Fill	Post-hole	Fence-line	4
027	027	Cut	Post-hole	Fence-line	4
028	027	Fill	Post-hole	Fence-line	4
029	029	Cut	Ditch	Boundary	2
030	029	Fill	Ditch	Boundary	2

031	031	Cut	Ditch	Boundary	2
032	031	Fill	Ditch	Boundary	2
033	033	Cut	Pit	Pit	3
034	033	Fill	Pit	Pit	3
035	035	Cut	Pit	Truncated Pit	4
036	035	Fill	Pit	Truncated Pit	4
037	037	Cut	Ditch	Boundary	3
038	037	Fill	Ditch	Boundary	3

Appendix 3: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-232642

Project details

Project name	Land off Church Lane, Cold Ashby, Northamptonshire
Short description of the project	The earliest activity on the site was a residual Mesolithic or early Neolithic blade-flake which was identified within a later medieval pit in Trench 3. This shows that there is prehistoric activity located within the vicinity of the site as suggested in the Desk Based Assessment within the fields to the south. A single Saxo-Norman ditch was encountered within Trench 3 that contained domestic waste and a deposit of cereal processing detritus and hearth waste. Trench 2 contained a ditch that produced mid-12th to 14th century pottery alongside some cereal grains and grass/weed seeds. The principal result of the evaluation was a series of parallel Post-medieval linear ditches, with associated perpendicular ditches, identified within Trenches 1, 3 and 4. The alignments of these ditches may be medieval in date that are re-dug or re-aligned in the later post-medieval/Modern periods.
Project dates	Start: 28-09-2015 End: 01-12-2015
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	CCAN15 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Vacant Land 2 - Vacant land not previously developed
Monument type	DITCH Early Medieval
Monument type	DITCH Medieval
Monument type	DITCHES Post Medieval
Methods & techniques	"Targeted Trenches"

Project location

Country	England
Site location	NORTHAMPTONSHIRE DAVENTRY COLD ASHBY Land off Church Lane, Cold Ashby, Northamptonshire
Study area	3793 Square metres
Site coordinates	SP 65461 76335 52.380751265391 -1.0381759062 52 22 50 N 001 02 17 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Project brief originator	Northamptonshire County Council
Project design originator	Kevin Trott
Project director/manager	Kevin Trott
Project supervisor	Matthew Jones

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Northamptonshire Museums Service
Physical Contents	"Animal Bones","Ceramics","Environmental","Glass","Metal"
Digital Archive recipient	Northamptonshire Museums Service
Digital Contents	"other"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Northamptonshire Museums Service

Paper Contents	"other"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Drawing","Map","Plan","Section","Unpublished Text"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Land off Church Lane, Cold Ashby, Northamptonshire, NN6 6EE: An Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Trott K
Other bibliographic details	R12301
Date	2015
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