



KDK ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

Archaeological Evaluation Report

Thistlebrook Farm
Tring Road
Wingrave
Buckinghamshire

Event/Accession No. AYBCM 2023.38



Quality Check

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Summary

In March 2023 at Thistlebrook Farm, Tring Road, Wingrave, Buckinghamshire, KDK Archaeology undertook an Archaeological Evaluation as a requirement of the National Planning Policy Frameworks (NPPF) and Condition 16 of the Planning Consent. Five trenches were excavated prior to the development of a synchronous gas-powered standby generation facility. A single shallow, probably modern, pit containing the skeletal remains of a sheep was observed within Trench five. No further cut features, archaeological deposits or artefacts were encountered during the investigation.

1 Introduction

1.1 In March 2023, KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook an Archaeological Evaluation at Thistlebrook Farm, Tring Road, Wingrave, Buckinghamshire. The project was commissioned by Richard McCarron of Blackstone Energy Ltd, and was carried out according to a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by KDK (Watson, 2023), and approved by Phil Markham at Buckinghamshire Council Archaeological Service (BCAS), Archaeological Advisor (AA) to the Local Planning Authority (LPA), on behalf of the Local Planning Authority (LPA), Buckinghamshire Council. The relevant planning application reference is 22/01292/APP.

1.2 *Planning Background*

This project has been required under the terms of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in order to inform development proposals.

1.3 *The Site*

Location

The site is located to the south of the village of Wingrave, in the parish of Wingrave with Rowsham, within the administrative district of Buckinghamshire Council: Aylesbury Vale Area at National Grid Reference (NGR) SP 8695 1715 (Fig. 1)

Description

The development site is situated in an agricultural field c.500m southwest of Thistlebrook Farm, and it is bounded on all sides by other agricultural fields (Fig. 2).

Geology and Topography

The bedrock geology is sedimentary mudstone, siltstone and sandstone of the Gault and Upper Greensand Formations, formed between 113 and 93.9 million years ago during the Cretaceous period (<https://geologyviewer.bgs.ac.uk/>).

Proposed Development

The proposal calls for the installation of a synchronous gas-powered standby generation facility, plus ancillary infrastructure and equipment (Fig. 3).

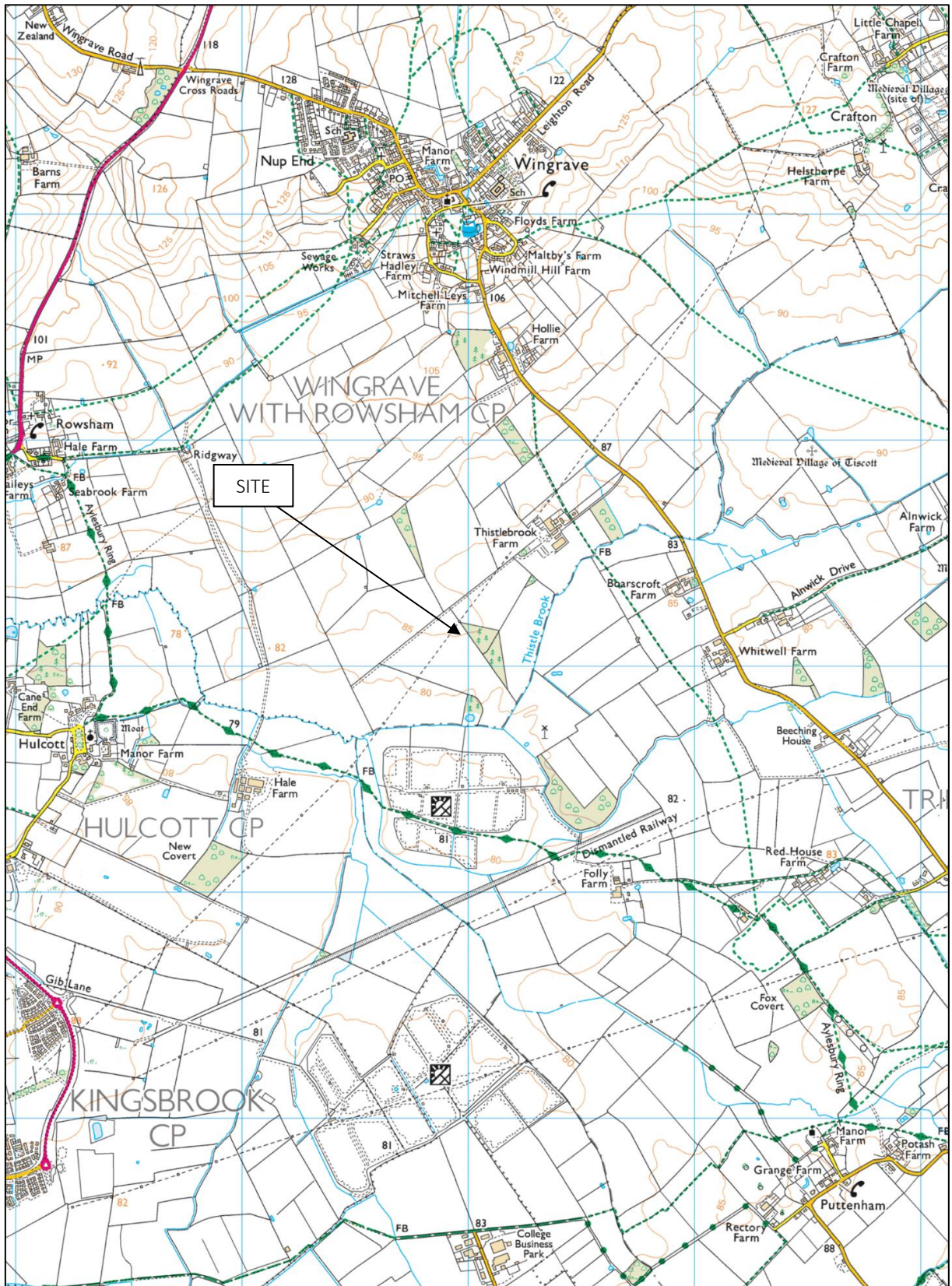


Figure 1: Site location (scale 1:25,000)

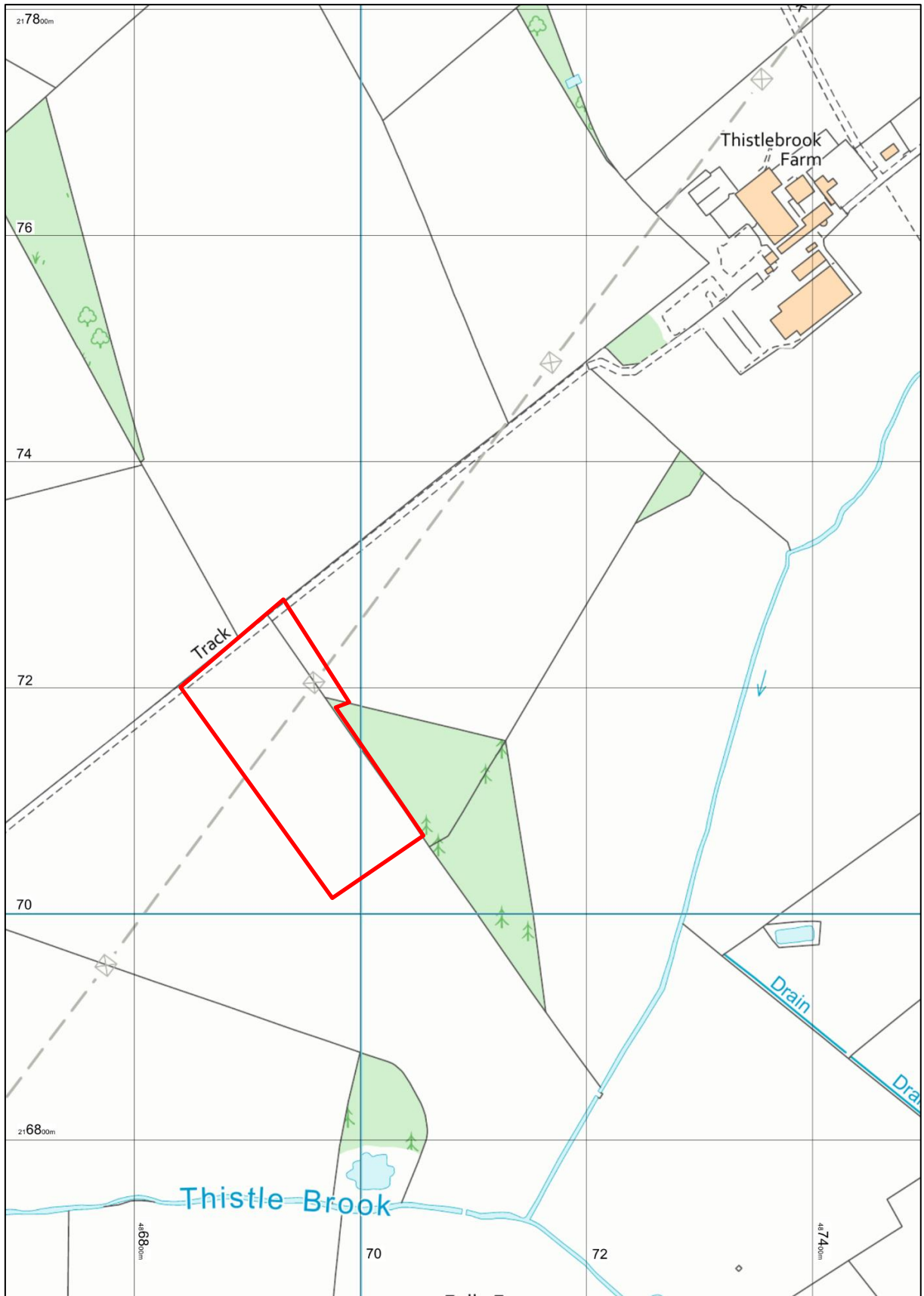


Figure 2: Site layout (scale 1:5000)

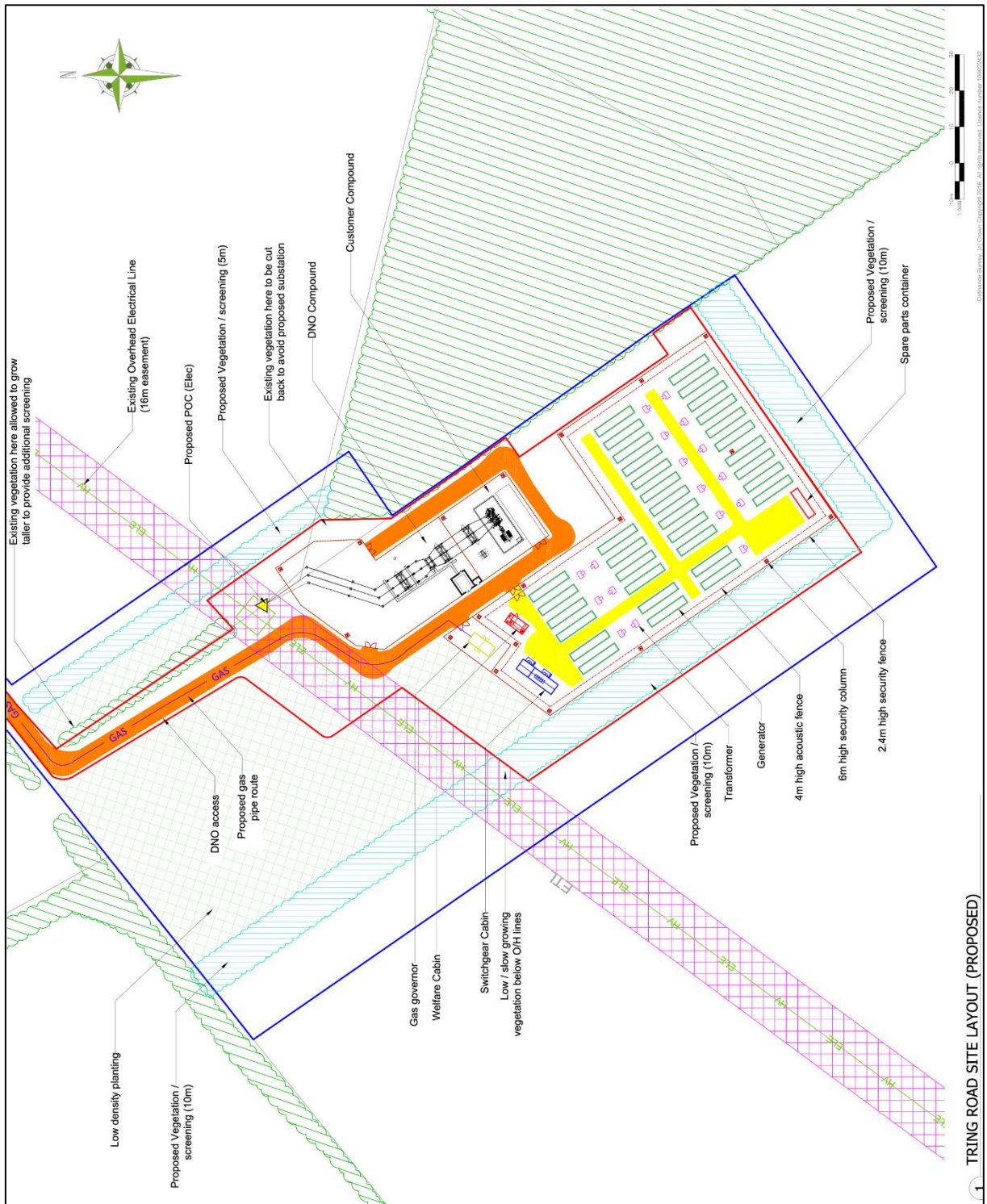


Figure 3: Development plan (scale as shown)



2 Aims and Methods

2.1 Aims

The aims of this project as defined in the approved WSI (Watson 2023) were:

- To establish the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation within the development area
- To establish the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscape
- To recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions.

2.2 Methods

In line with the requirements of the brief, the methods used were as follows:

- Five 30m x 2m evaluation trenches were excavated under close archaeological supervision to the natural geology, within and beyond the footprints of the proposed development (Fig. 4).

2.3 Standards

The work conformed to the following requirements:

- The relevant sections of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (CIfA 2020a)
- The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2021)
- Current English Heritage guidelines (EH 2008, HE 2015)
- Data Protection Act 2018

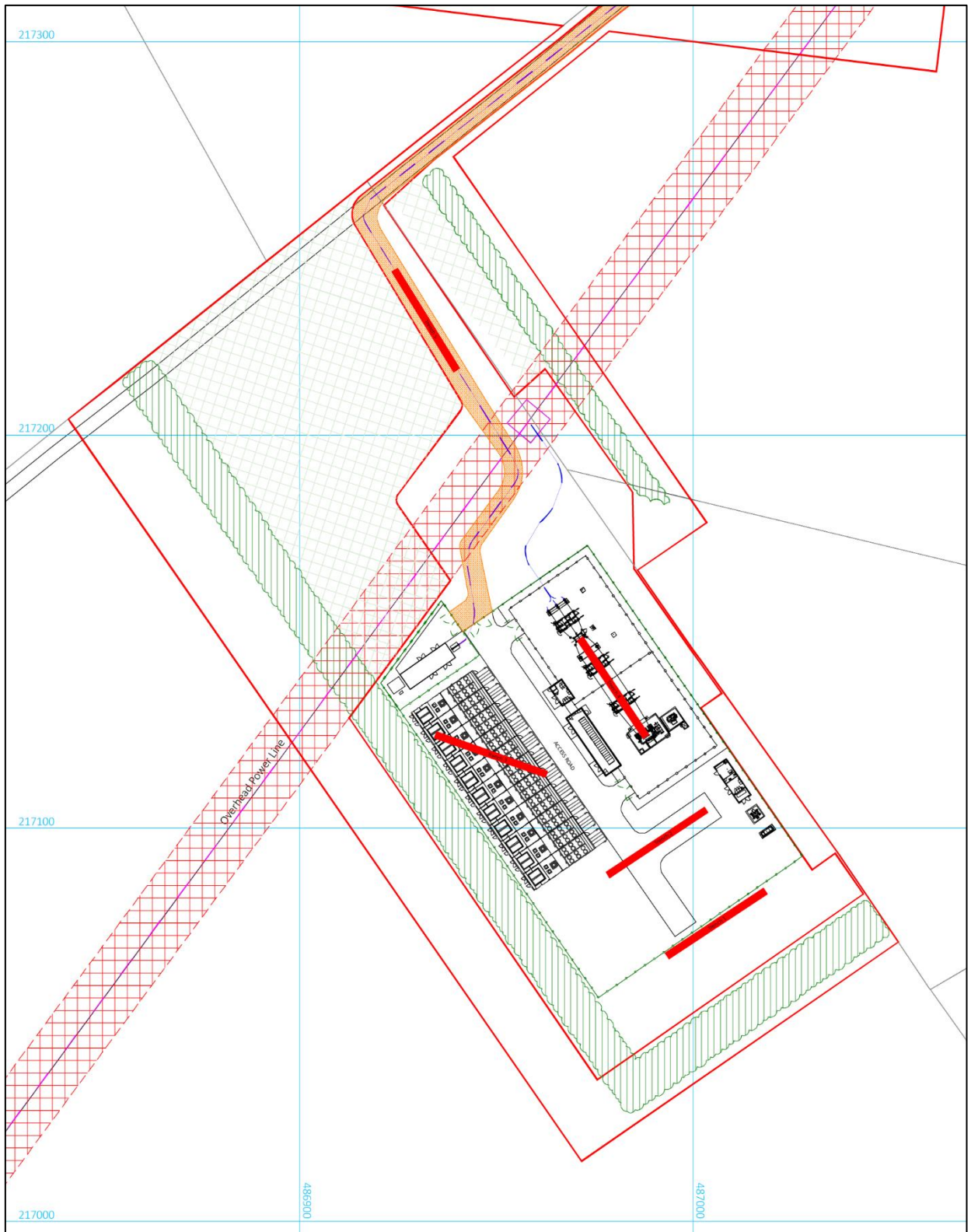


Figure 4: Trench location plan (scale 1:1500)



3 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 3.1 The village of Wingrave (HER 0280100000) is situated c.6km northeast of Aylesbury and 4.8km southwest of Wing, though the development site is located c.1.6km to the south and is closer to the village of Hulcott near Aylesbury. The general area has been inhabited since prehistory although the modern settlement has its origins in the Saxon period. The toponym derives from compounding the Old English elements *wēoh* (holy) + personal name + place-name (unknown) + *wīg* (idol, shrine) + *-ingas* (the people of...) + *grāf* (grove, copse) to mean 'Grove of Wiwa's people', alternatively, 'grove of the heathen temple people', or simply 'Wing's grove' (KEPN 2023). The development site is not situated within a Conservation Area or an Archaeological Notification Area.

This section has been compiled with information from the Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Record (HER; search ref: 1393), and reliable online sources. The HER data, with a 1km search radius from the development site, is shown in Fig. 5.

3.2 *Prehistoric (before 600BC) & Iron Age (600BC - AD43)*

Excavations along the Aylesbury-Steppingley pipeline encountered remains dating from the Late Neolithic to the Iron Age (HER 0630200000, 0630300000, 0959700000) located c.1km northwest of the development site. A Late Neolithic to Early-Mid Bronze Age to Mid-Late Iron Age features such as ditches (field system), linear features, pottery, a single Mesolithic/Neolithic axe trimming flake, all suggesting there were local settlements, or at activity, spanning these periods

3.3 *Roman (AD43 - c.450)*

Despite a considerable Roman presence in Aylesbury, the only remains from this period comprise pottery found on the ground surface c.300m southwest of the development site (HER 0215200000).

3.4 *Saxon (c.450 - 1066) & Medieval (1066 - 1500)*

Prior to the Conquest, the land around Wingrave was held by five different owners: Swein (son of Azur; held of King Edward), Almer (of Wooton), Brictric (of Waddesdon; a man of Queen Edith), Lemar and Ordmer (Brictric's men) (Page 1925; WRH 2023). Post-Conquest, the manors were held by Count Robert of Mortain, Miles Crispin, and Gunfrid of Chocques (Powell-Smith 2023).

No remains dated to the Saxon period are listed in the HER search area.

Wingrave originally comprised two settlements – a nucleated village of farm and agricultural buildings around the late 12th century Parish Church of St Peter and St Paul (Grade II*, NHLE: 1115952) and the small settlement of Nup End, situated a short distance to the north east of the Church (BAS 2023).

The entries for the medieval period comprise a possible medieval to post-medieval farmstead recorded on aerial photographs and in field survey that is located c.800m southeast of Hulcott Church (HER 0539200000; the settlement of Hulcott dates from the medieval period), and numerous large areas of areas of ridge & furrow, situated in an arc to the north of the development site. Ridge and furrow is an archaeological pattern of ridges and troughs created



by a system of ploughing used in Europe during the Middle Ages, and is typical of the open-field system.

3.5 ***Post-medieval (1500 - 1900) & Modern (1900 - present)***

The economy of the general area was based in agriculture and Thistlebrook Farm and its fields are characterized by the Buckinghamshire Historic Landscape Characterisation as parliamentary enclosures. A review of available cartographic evidence, dating from c.1798, indicates that no developments have occurred within the boundary of the development site, though a small barn is shown near the exterior south-eastern edge on late 19th century OS maps (Balmond & Morris 2018: 7-9).

The only entries for these periods in the HER search area are the sites of WWII decoy airfield for RAF Wing (HER 0787900000), c.1km northwest, and decoy shelter (HER 0787901000) located northwest of development site.

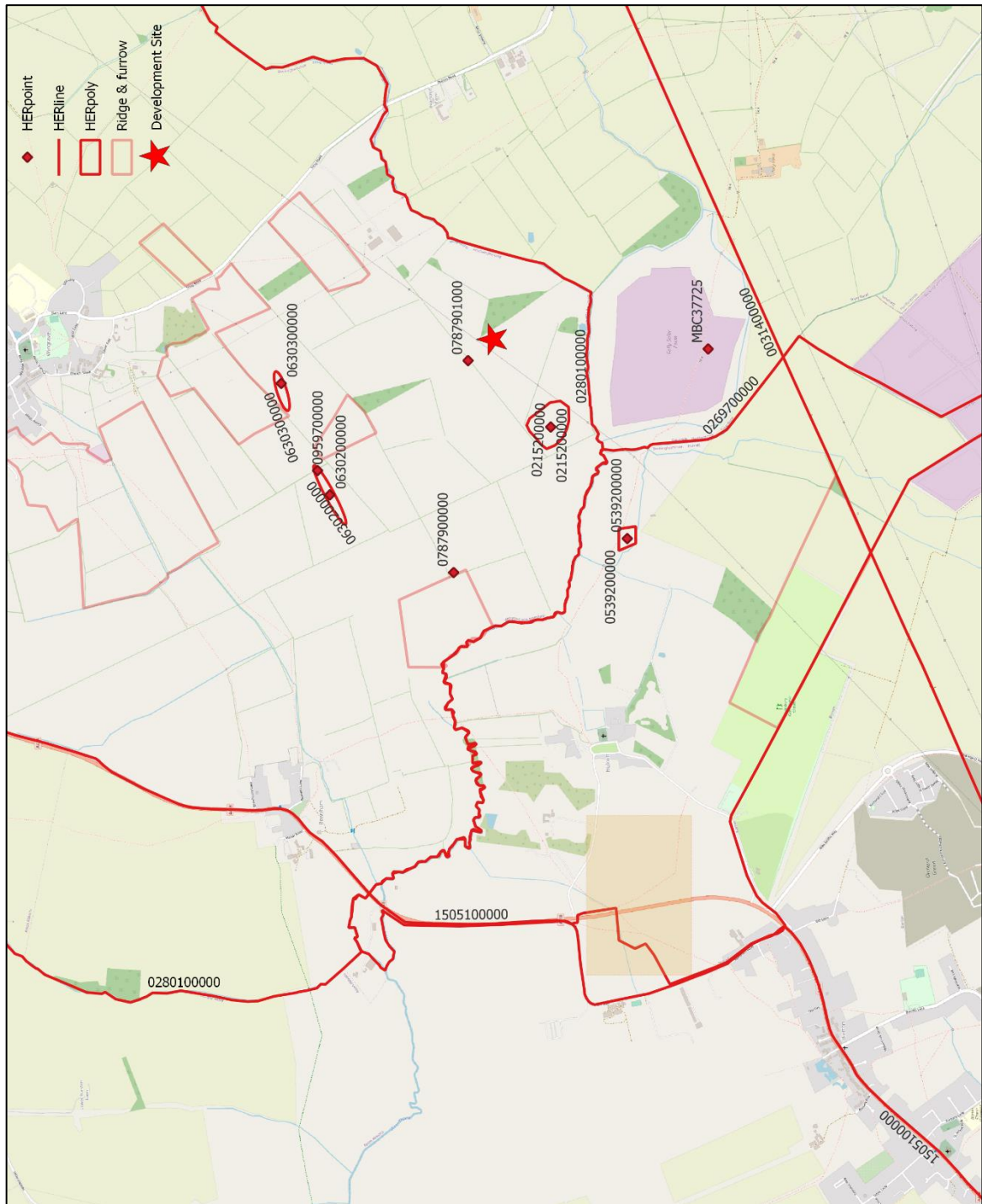


Figure 5: HER data plan (scale as shown)



4 Results

4.1 Introduction

Five 30m trenches were excavated using a 9-tonne tracked machine fitted with a 1.6m toothless ditching bucket.

The stratigraphy across the site was fairly uniform, consisting of a mid-greyish brown clay loam plough soil with occasional stone inclusions, ranging between 0.28m – 0.37m in depth across the five trenches. The natural geology was a mid-brownish yellow slightly silty clay mudstone with occasional rounded stone and flint inclusions. Patches of intermittent blue grey clay were also present (Fig. 6).

A single shallow, probably modern pit containing the skeletal remains of a sheep or goat was observed within Trench five (Plate 12). Apart from a modern geological test pit found in Trench 3, no other archaeological cuts or features were present in any of the other trenches (Plate 7). Land drains were present in all the trenches.

4.2 Trench 1

Context Table

<i>Context no.</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Dimensions (max in m.)</i>	<i>Description</i>
101	Topsoil	0.37	Plough soil. Mid greyish brown clay loam with occasional stone inclusions.
102	Natural geology	0.27	Mid brownish yellow, slightly silty clay mudstone with occasional rounded stone & flint inclusions. Intermittent patches of blue grey clay.

Trench 1 was located on the southern end of the site, orientated NE – SW and measured 30m long, 2.3m wide and 0.57m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.37m of mid greyish brown clay loam plough soil with occasional stone inclusions. This overlay 0.27m of a mid-brownish yellow, slightly silty clay mudstone with occasional rounded stones and flint inclusions. Intermittent patches of blue grey clay were also present. There were no cut archaeological features or deposits present (Fig. 6, Plates 1&2).

Trench 2

Context Table

<i>Context no.</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Dimensions (max in m.)</i>	<i>Description</i>
201	Topsoil	0.34	Plough soil. Mid greyish brown clay loam with occasional stone inclusions.
202	Natural geology	0.07	Mid brownish yellow slightly silty clay mudstone with occasional rounded stone & flint inclusions. Intermittent Patches of blue grey clay.

Trench 2 was also located on the southern end of the site, orientated NE-SW and measured 30m long, 2.25m wide and 0.41m deep. Similar to Trench 1, the stratigraphy consisted of 0.34m of mid greyish brown clay loam plough soil with occasional stone inclusions overlaying 0.07m



of a mid-brownish yellow, slightly silty clay mudstone with occasional rounded stones and flint inclusions. Intermittent patches of blue grey clay were also present and there were no cut archaeological features or deposits present (Fig. 6, Plates 3&4).

Trench 3

Context Table

<i>Context no.</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Dimensions (max in m.)</i>	<i>Description</i>
301	Topsoil	0.28	Plough soil. Mid greyish brown clay loam with occasional stone inclusions.
302	Natural geology	0.12	Mid brownish yellow slightly silty clay mudstone with occasional rounded stone & flint inclusions. Intermittent Patches of blue grey clay.

Trench 3 was located on the western edge of the site, orientated WNW – ESE measuring 30m long, 2.3m wide and 0.40m deep. The stratigraphy was similar to Trenches 1 and 2 with 0.28m of mid greyish brown clay loam plough soil with occasional stone inclusions overlaying 0.12m of a mid-brownish yellow, slightly silty clay mudstone with occasional rounded stones and flint inclusions. Intermittent patches of blue grey clay were also present (Fig. 6). No cut archaeological features or deposits were present, however, there was a geological test pit visible near the centre of the trench (Plates 5&6).

Trench 4

Context Table

<i>Context no.</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Dimensions (max in m.)</i>	<i>Description</i>
401	Topsoil	0.35	Plough soil. Mid greyish brown clay loam with occasional stone inclusions.
402	Natural geology	0.05	Mid brownish yellow slightly silty clay mudstone with occasional rounded stone & flint inclusions. Intermittent Patches of blue grey clay.

Trench 4 was centrally located on the site, orientated NW – SE measuring 30m long, 2.3m wide and 0.40m wide. The stratigraphy was similar to Trenches 1,2 and 3 with 0.35m of mid greyish brown clay loam plough soil with occasional stone inclusions overlaying 0.05m of a mid-brownish yellow, slightly silty clay mudstone with occasional rounded stones and flint inclusions. Intermittent patches of blue grey clay were also present. No cut archaeological features or deposits were present (Fig. 6, Plates 7&8).

Trench 5

Context Table

<i>Context no.</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Dimensions (max in m.)</i>	<i>Description</i>
501	Topsoil	0.28	Plough soil. Mid greyish brown clay loam with occasional stone inclusions.
502	Cut	0.11 L 0.75 W	Irregular oval depression, with irregular sides.



<i>Context no.</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Dimensions (max in m.)</i>	<i>Description</i>
503	Fill	Base not reached	Mid grey brown silty clay with occasional stone inclusions. Malleable & Sticky. Contained remains of sheep/goat. Base not universally reached.
504	Natural geology	0.09	Mid brownish yellow slightly silty clay mudstone with occasional rounded stone & flint inclusions. Intermittent Patches of blue grey clay.

Trench 5 was the northernmost trench, orientated NW-SE and measured 30m long by 2.3m wide and 0.45m deep. The stratigraphy was similar to all the other trenches, (Fig. 6), however, an irregular shallow oval shaped pit was present, situated approximately 13m from the SE corner. The fill of the pit was a malleable and sticky clay with occasional stone inclusions and contained the skeletal remains of a sheep or goat. The base was not universally reached and the remains were left in situ (Plates 9-11).

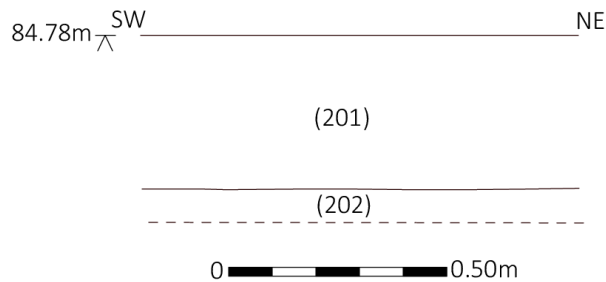


Figure 6: Representative site stratigraphy (scale as shown)

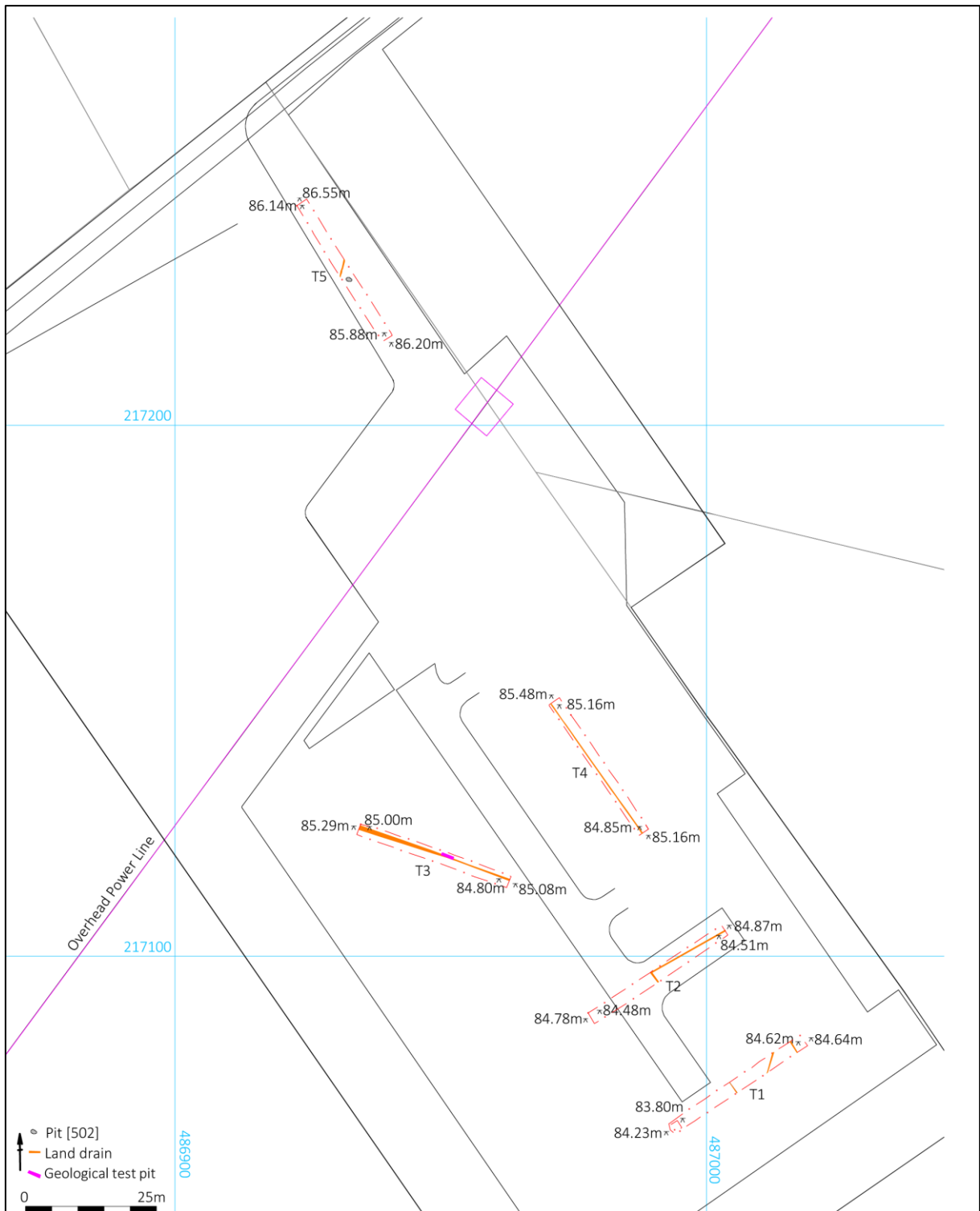


Figure 7: Trench layout plan



Plate 1: Trench1 looking southwest



Plate 2: Trench 1 stratigraphy



Plate 3: Trench 2 looking southwest



Plate 4: Trench 2 stratigraphy



Plate 5: Trench 3 looking west, northwest



Plate 6: Trench 3 stratigraphy



Plate 7: Trench 4 looking southeast



Plate 8: Trench 4 stratigraphy



Plate 9: Trench 5 looking southeast



Plate 10: Trench 5 stratigraphy



Plate 11: Trench 5 pit [502]



5 Conclusions

The village of Wingrave is situated c.6km northeast of Aylesbury and 4.8km southwest of Wing, though the development site is located c.1.6km to the south and is closer to the village of Hulcott, near Aylesbury. The general area has been inhabited since prehistory although the modern settlement has its origins in the Saxon period.

Despite its proximity to areas of archaeological interest, no evidence of archaeological activity was discovered in any of the trenches. The pit found in Trench 5 containing the remains of a sheep or goat was probably modern.

The stratigraphy across the five trenches was fairly uniform, each demonstrating the absence of subsoil through deep ploughing, though no plough scars were noted in the geology.

The absence of archaeology on the site could be a result of the trenches being positioned between widely dispersed features, or that the site lies in an area that was not settled in any time period.

As a result the original research aims of the project could not be advanced on this occasion.



6 Acknowledgements

KDK Archaeology is grateful to Richard McCarron for commissioning this report on behalf of Blackstone Energy Ltd. Thanks are also due to Paul Clements of Buckinghamshire County Council for providing historic environment records and other relevant documents; the staff of Buckinghamshire Archaeological Service for their assistance in the historic research and to Phil Markham of Buckinghamshire Council for monitoring the project.

The fieldwork was carried out by Laura Dodd MSc ACIfA and Phyllida Broadway MA. The report was written by Phyllida Broadway and edited by David Kaye BA ACIfA.



7 Archive

- 7.1 As Discover Bucks Museum does not accept archives for sterile projects, the archive will consist of a digital version of the report and the site photographs, which will be deposited with ADS.



8 References

Standards & Specifications

Allen J. L. & Holt A. St J. 1986 (with later updates) *Health & Safety in Field Archaeology*. London: Federation of Archaeological Managers & Employers.

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Watson, D. 2023 *Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Evaluation: Stage 1: Thistlebrook Farm, Tring Road, Wingrave, Buckinghamshire*. KDK Archaeology Ltd, 757/WTR/1.2

Books and Historical Sources

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Online Sources

British Geological Survey: <https://geologyviewer.bgs.ac.uk/> [accessed 21.03.2023]



Appendix 1: Photograph List

Shot	Digital	Subject
1	001	Trench 1 looking southwest
2	002	Trench 1 stratigraphy
3	003	Trench 2 looking southwest
4	004	Trench 2 stratigraphy
5	005	Trench 3 looking west, northwest
6	006	Trench 3 stratigraphy
7	007	Trench 3 geological test pit
8	008	Trench 4 looking southeast
9	009	Trench 4 stratigraphy
10	010	Trench 5 looking southeast
11	011	Trench 5 stratigraphy
12	012	Trench 5 pit [502]



Appendix 2: OASIS and Site Data

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name & Address	Thistlebrook Farm, Tring Road, Wingrave, Buckinghamshire	Project Site Code	757/WTR
OASIS reference	kdkarcha1-513329	Event/Accession no	AYBCM 2023.38
OS reference	SP 8695 1715	Study area size	343.5m ²
Project Type	Archaeological Evaluation	Height (mAOD)	
Short Description	In March 2023 at Thistlebrook Farm, Tring Road, Wingrave, Buckinghamshire, KDK Archaeology undertook an Archaeological Evaluation as a requirement of the National Planning Policy Frameworks (NPPF) and Condition 16 of the Planning Consent. Five trenches were excavated prior to the development of a synchronous gas-powered standby generation facility. A single shallow, probably modern, pit containing the skeletal remains of a sheep was observed within Trench five. No further cut features, archaeological deposits or artefacts were encountered during the investigation.		
Previous work	None	Site status	None
Planning proposal	The installation of a synchronous gas-powered standby generation facility, plus ancillary infrastructure and equipment	Current land use	Agricultural
Local Planning Authority	Buckinghamshire Council	Planning application ref.	22/01292/APP
Monument type	N/A	Monument period	N/A
Significant finds	N/A	Future work	N/A
RESEARCH AIMS			
Research framework	Section /Question	Summary of outcome	
N/A	N/A	N/A	
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	KDK Archaeology Ltd		
Project Brief originator	BCAS	Project Design originator	KDK Archaeology Ltd
Project Manager	David Kaye BA ACiFA	Director/Supervisor	Laura Dodd MSc MCiFA
Sponsor/funding body	Blackstone Energy Ltd		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	15.03.2023	End date	16.03.2023
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical		None	
Paper	Bucks HER	Evaluation report	
Digital	OASIS	Evaluation report containing all digital archive	
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title	Thistlebrook Farm, Tring Road, Wingrave, Buckinghamshire: Archaeological Evaluation Report		
Serial title & volume	KDK Archaeology Ltd 757/WTR/2.1		
Author(s)	Phyllida Broadway MA		
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