



University of  
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**Archaeological Services**



**An Archaeological Evaluation  
on land to the east of  
Roade, Northamptonshire.**

**NGR: SP 7768 5203**

Gavin Speed

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**SP 7768 5203**

**Gavin Speed**

**For: RSK Environment Ltd**

Approved by:

**Signed**



Date: 29/11/2011

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# **An Archaeological Evaluation on land to the east of Roade, Northamptonshire.**

**Gavin Speed**

## **Summary**

*University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) carried out an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching on land to the east of Roade, Northamptonshire (SP 7768 5203) on behalf of RSK Environment Ltd. The work was undertaken as part of an archaeological impact assessment in advance of a proposed construction of wind turbines.*

*The evaluation revealed undated archaeological features in one trench.*

*The site archive will be held by ULAS, accession no. ULAS\_ROADE2011, until a recipient organization for Northamptonshire has been established.*

## **1. Introduction**

An archaeological evaluation was carried out by ULAS for RSK Environment Ltd in November 2011 on land to the east of Roade, Northamptonshire (SP 7768 5203). This was undertaken in advance of the proposed construction of nine wind turbines.

The site lies to the east of Roade. The application area currently consists of several large arable fields with a few areas of woodland. The area is situated within a gently undulating landscape with numerous relative high-points, but no dominant hilltop.

The site lies within a landscape rich in archaeological activity. The Cultural Heritage chapter prepared for submission within the forthcoming Environmental Statement details all the known heritage assets within the study area (RSK2011). The assessment identified a number of archaeological sites predominantly dating to the prehistoric and Roman periods in the immediate area of the proposed development.

A geophysical survey was undertaken by RSK in early September 2011 within the areas of the highest potential impact. The survey identified a number of geophysical anomalies which may be of archaeological origin. An archaeological evaluation of the site by trial trenching was requested to assess the presence and significance of the potential features.

This report presents the results of the trial trenching, with an assessment of the potential impact on buried archaeological remains from groundworks associated with future development. This work fulfils the requirements of Stage 1 of the method statement and also provides further information for the Cultural Heritage chapter of the Environmental Statement.

## **2. Site Description, Topography and Geology**

The site lies to the east of Roade, to the west of the M1, to the north of Hartwell, and to the south of Courteenhall. The site consists of several arable fields over a gently undulating landscape. The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain shows that the underlying geology is mainly boulder clay over Great Oolite limestone.

### 3. Archaeological Background

The site is set within a landscape rich in archaeological activity as detailed in the Cultural Heritage chapter prepared for submission within the forthcoming Environmental Statement (RSK 2011). In summary the assessment has identified a number of archaeological sites predominantly dating to the prehistoric and Roman periods in the immediate area of the proposed development.

### 4. Aims and Objectives

The principal aims of the archaeological evaluation were:

- To identify possible areas of archaeological potential liable to be threatened by the proposed development.
- To establish the location, extent, date, and significance of any archaeological deposits located.
- To define the quality and state of preservation of these deposits.
- To assess the local, regional and national importance of any deposits.
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

The objective was to gain an indication of the nature, extent, date and significance of any archaeological deposits which may be present in order that an informed planning decision can be taken.

### 5. Methodology

Prior to any machining of trial trenches, general photographs of the site areas were taken. The trenches were excavated using a JCB mechanical excavator equipped with a 1.8m wide toothless ditching bucket. The topsoil and overlying layers were removed under full archaeological supervision until either the top of archaeological deposits or the natural undisturbed substratum was reached. Trenches were examined for archaeological deposits or finds by hand cleaning. The trenches were tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid and then were backfilled and leveled at the end of the evaluation.

The work followed the approved design specification (ULAS 2011) and adhered to the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct* and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations* (2008).

### 6. Results and Discussion

Eight trenches were excavated, and were spread across the development site and placed to target geophysical anomalies within the footprint of the proposed wind turbines (Figure 2). The topsoil, consisting of a dark grey-brown ploughsoil, was generally c.0.25m in depth. Below this was a brown clay subsoil observed in some trenches, ranging in thickness from 0.05m to 0.2m. Descriptions of all archaeological evidence and trench depths are provided in Appendix II.

#### *Trench 1*

Trench 1 was T-shaped, and measured 22m east-west and 10m north-south. It was located over the footprint of Turbine 1 (Figure 3). The geophysical survey had identified several

discrete anomalies of possible archaeological origin. The trench revealed evidence for two possible north-south aligned furrows and land drains on a similar alignment. No further archaeological finds or features were identified.

### ***Trench 2***

Trench 2 was T-shaped, and measured 20m north-east to south-west and 10m north-west to south-east. It was located over the footprint of Turbine 2 (Figure 4). The geophysical survey identified several discrete anomalies of possible archaeology “arranged in a very rough linear pattern...running NE-SW” (RSK 2011, 7). The trench revealed evidence for a gully [4], and a possible post-hole [1] both of which were undated (Figure 5-7). Gully [4] was orientated east-west and measured 2.5m long, 0.64m wide and 0.31m deep (Figure 8). The southern edge was more gradual than the corresponding steep northern edge. It ran into the edge of the trench and did not appear in the leg of the T-shaped trench. It contained four fills all of which were undated. The primary deposit consisted of a friable mid- grey brown silt-clay (7). Over this was a light orange red brown silt-sand (6). Overlying this was a friable dark grey-brown silt-clay (5). The final upper fill consisted of a friable mid- grey brown silt-clay (3). Post-hole [1] was located 6m west, it measured 0.5m by 0.3m and 0.1m deep (Figure 9). It was shaped like a figure of eight and had curved sides and base. It contained a single deposit of dark orange-brown silt-clay (2). This feature may be evidence for a double post setting, but its slightly irregular shape suggests that it may be a naturally occurring patch of silty clay, much like a similar ‘feature’ located close by.

### ***Trench 3***

Trench 3 was L-shaped, and measured 20m east-west and 10m north-south. It was located over the footprint of Turbine 3 (Figure 10). The geophysical survey had identified several positive polar responses that could be of archaeological origin (RSK 2011, 8). However the trench only revealed evidence for a recent field boundary that contained barbed wire, which corresponds with a field boundary seen on the 1885 Ordnance Survey map (Figure 16). No further archaeological finds or features were identified.

### ***Trench 5***

Trench 5 was L-shaped, and measured 20m north-east to south-west and 20m south-east to north-west. It was located over the footprint of Turbine 5 (Figure 11). The geophysical survey had identified several possible linear features (RSK 2011, 8), which were identified in the trench as modern land drains on a north-east to south-west alignment. No further archaeological finds or features were identified.

### ***Trench 6***

Trench 6 was linear and measured 30m north-west to south-east, and was located over the footprint of Turbine 6 (Figure 12). The geophysical survey had identified three discrete positive magnetic anomalies along the north-edge of the turbine (RSK 2011, 8). The trench revealed no evidence for archaeological finds or features, and the anomalies may relate to natural changes in the substratum.

### ***Trench 7***

Trench 7 was linear and measured 20m north-south, and was located over the footprint of Turbine 7 (Figure 13). The geophysical survey identified a series of parallel lines that cross the turbine area (RSK 2011, 9). These were identified in the trench as furrows on a north-west to south-east alignment. Half an undated copper alloy disc was recovered from the

plough soil close to Trench 7. No further archaeological finds or features were identified below the furrows or elsewhere in the trench.

### ***Trench 8***

Trench 8 was T-shaped, and measured 20m east-west and 20m north-south. It was located over the footprint of Turbine 8 (Figure 14). The geophysical survey had identified several parallel linear features thought to be an enclosure (RSK 2011, 9). The trench identified these as modern land drains orientated north-east to south-west. No further archaeological finds or features were identified.

### ***Trench 9***

Trench 9 was T-shaped, and measured 20m north-east to south-west and 10m north-west to south-east. It was located over the footprint of Turbine 9 (Figure 15). The geophysical survey identified an increase in magnetic susceptibility in the south-eastern edge of the turbine (RSK 2011, 9). The trench identified this as a recent field boundary/hedgerow; numerous roots within this were observed and it corresponds with a field boundary recorded on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1885 (Figure 16). No further archaeological finds or features were identified.

## **7. Conclusion**

The evaluation revealed very limited archaeological evidence consisting of an undated gully and post-hole in one trench (Trench 2). The remaining trenches contained no significant archaeological evidence, apart from recent field boundaries (Trenches 3 and 9), furrows (Trenches 1 and 7), and land drains (Trenches 1, 5 and 8).

## **8. Archive**

The site archive will be held by ULAS under accession number ULAS\_ROADE2011 until an appropriate recipient organisation is established for Northamptonshire.

The archive contains:

- 8 trench recording sheets
- 1 context summary record
- 7 context sheets
- 1 photographic recording sheets
- Sample records sheet
- Drawing Index sheet
- Drawing Index sheet (detail)
- CD containing digital photographs and report
- Survey data
- Unbound copy of this report
- Thumbnail print of digital photographs
- 33mm black and white contact sheet and negatives

The report is listed on the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) held by the Archaeological Data Service at the University of York, under ID: universi1-114780. Available at: <http://oasis.ac.uk/>

ID	OASIS entry summary
Project Name	Land to the east of Roade, Northamptonshire
Summary	<i>University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) carried out an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching on land to the east of Roade, Northamptonshire (SP 7768 5203). The work was undertaken as part of an archaeological impact assessment in advance of a proposed construction of wind turbines.</i>  <i>The evaluation revealed undated archaeological features in one trench.</i>
Project Type	Evaluation
Project Manager	Patrick Clay
Project Supervisor	Gavin Speed
Previous/Future work	Previous: DBA and geophysics / Future: likely
Current Land Use	Field
Development Type	Wind turbines
Reason for Investigation	PPS5
Position in the Planning Process	Condition
Site Co ordinates	SP 7768 5203
Start/end dates of field work	7/11/2011-15/11/2011
Archive Recipient	To be arranged
Study Area	4.3ha
Associated project reference codes	Project ID: ULAS_ROADE2011 OASIS form ID: universi1-114780

## 9. Publication

A summary of the work will be submitted for publication in the local archaeological journal *Northamptonshire Archaeology* in due course. The report has been added to the Archaeology Data Service's (ADS) Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) database held by the University of York.



## 10. Bibliography

Brown, D. 2008, *Standard and Guidance for the Preparation of Archaeological Archives*. Institute for Archaeologists.

IfA 2008, *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation, Excavations, and Watching Briefs*. Institute for Archaeologists.

IfA 2010, *Code of Conduct*.

ULAS 2011 *Design Specification for Archaeological Work east of Roade, Northamptonshire. 12/321*.

RSK 2011, *M1 Wind Farm Geophysical Report*. RSK unpublished report ,October 2011

## 11. Acknowledgements

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## Appendix I: Figures

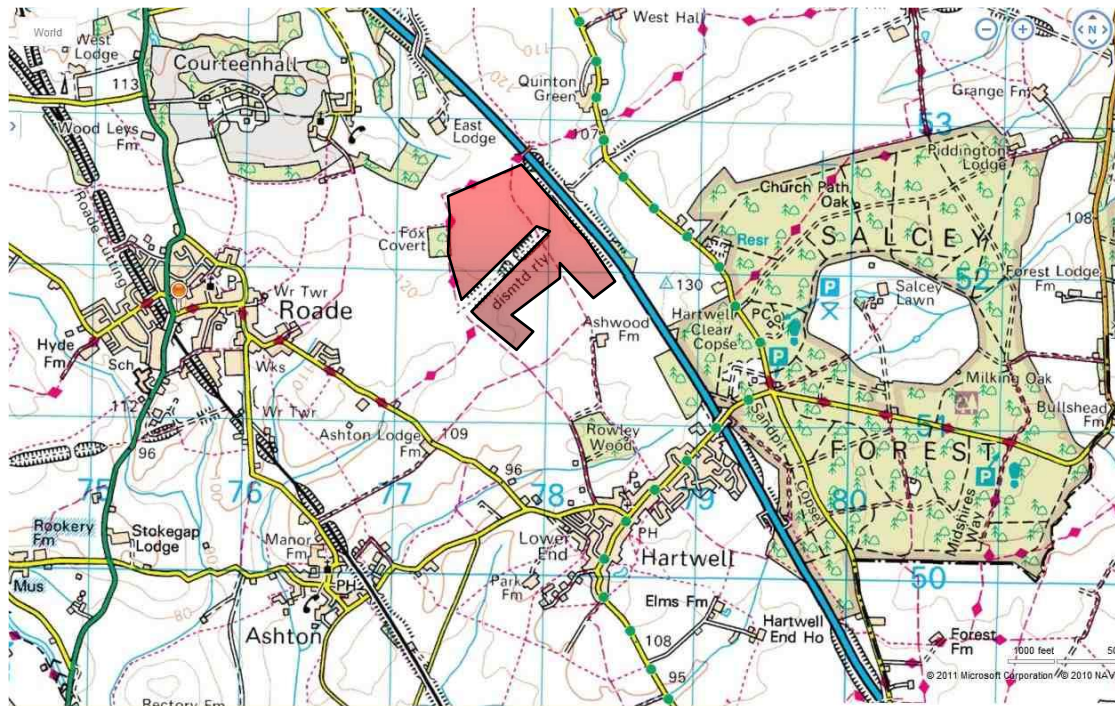


Figure 1: Site location (shaded)

Reproduced from the Explorer 233 Leicester & Hinckley area 1:25 000 map by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright 2005. All rights reserved. Licence number AL 100029495

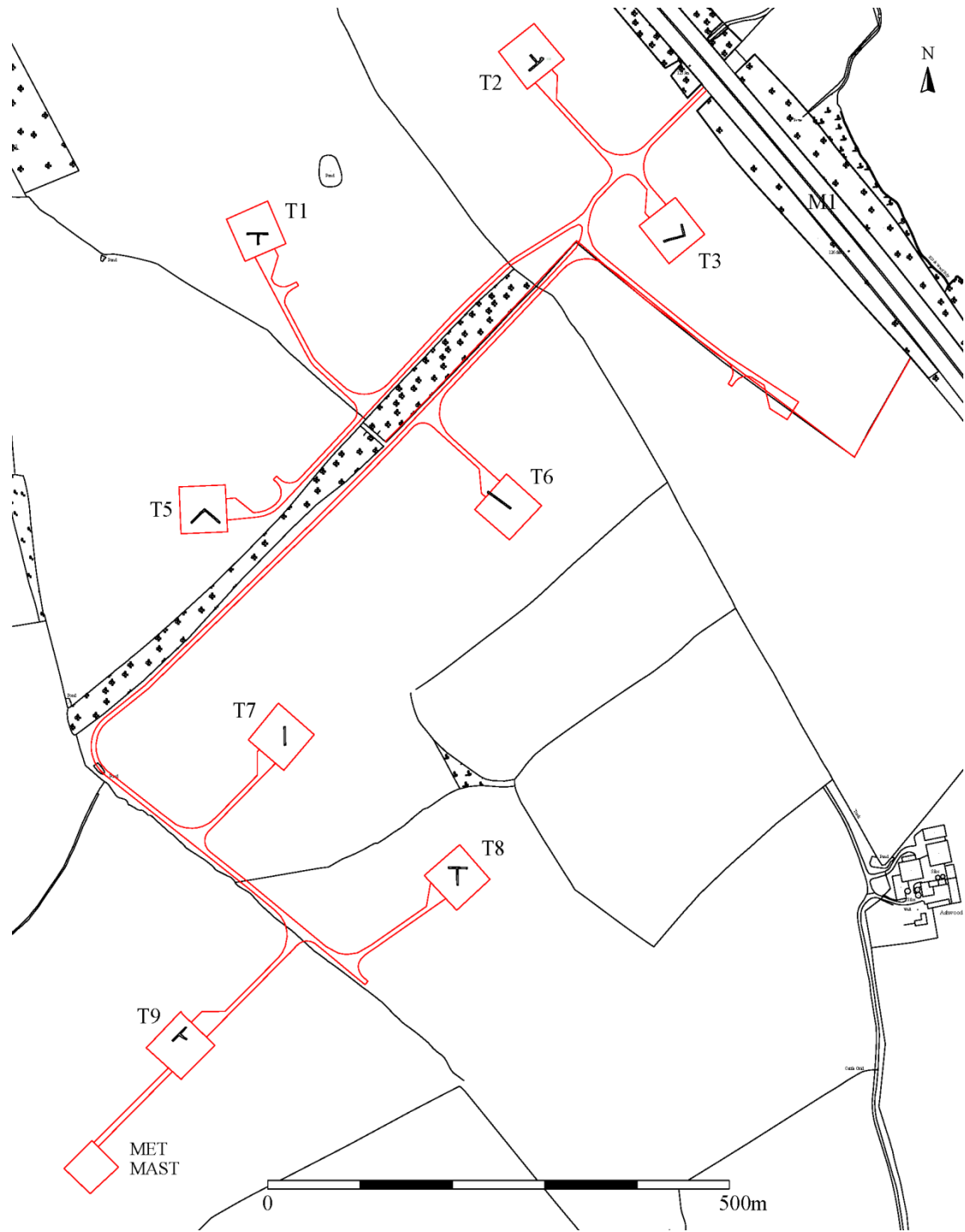


Figure 2: Trench plan

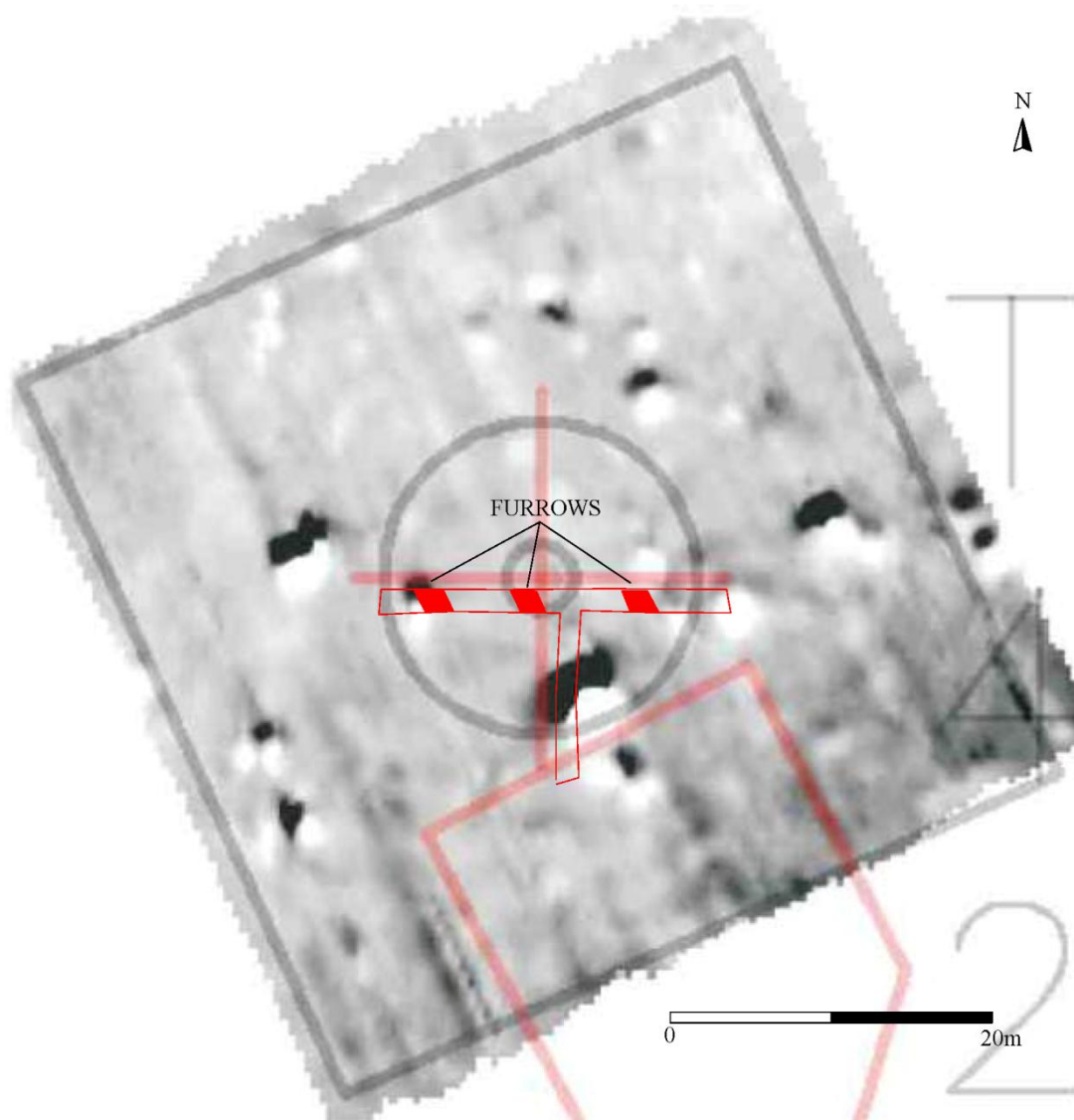


Figure 3: Trench 1 in relation to geophysical anomalies, showing furrows

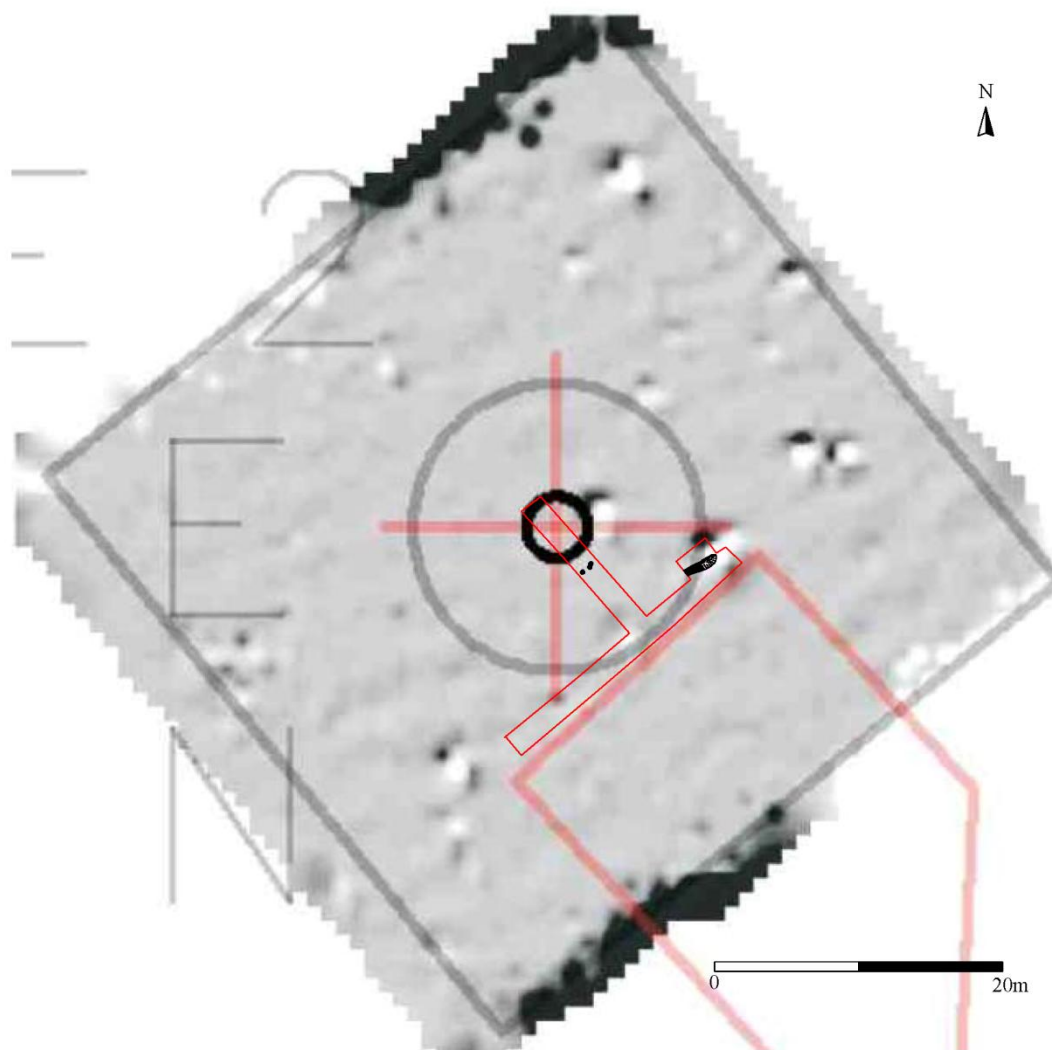


Figure 4: Trench 2, in relation to geophysical anomalies with archaeological features shaded

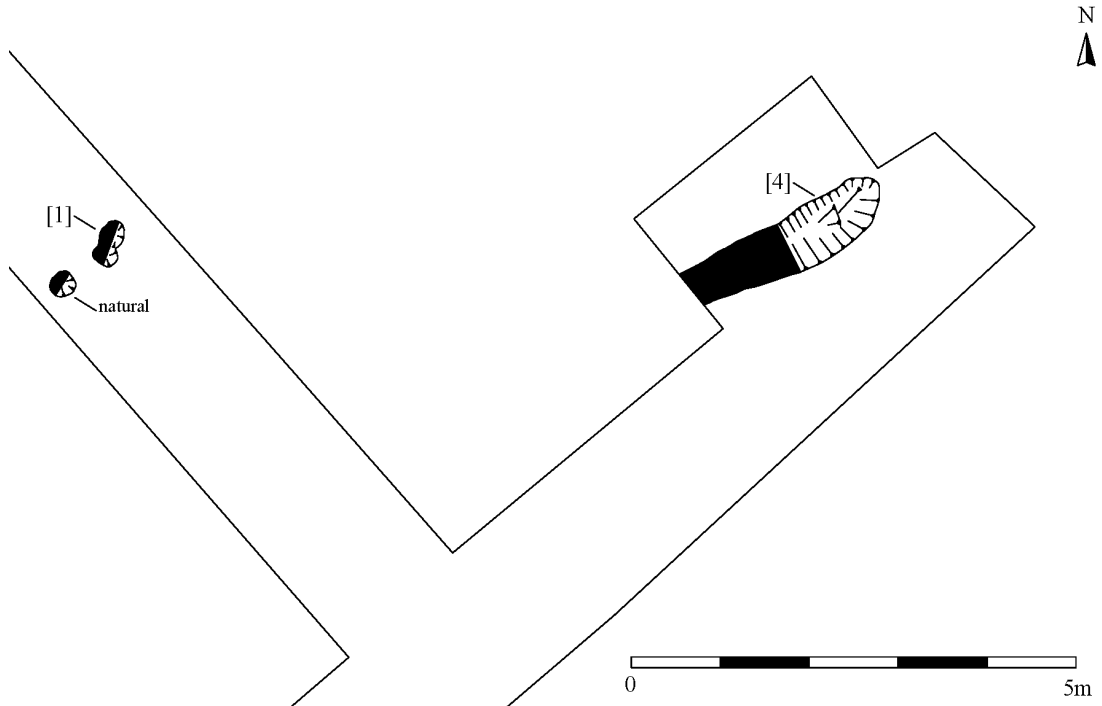


Figure 5: Plan of features within Trench 2

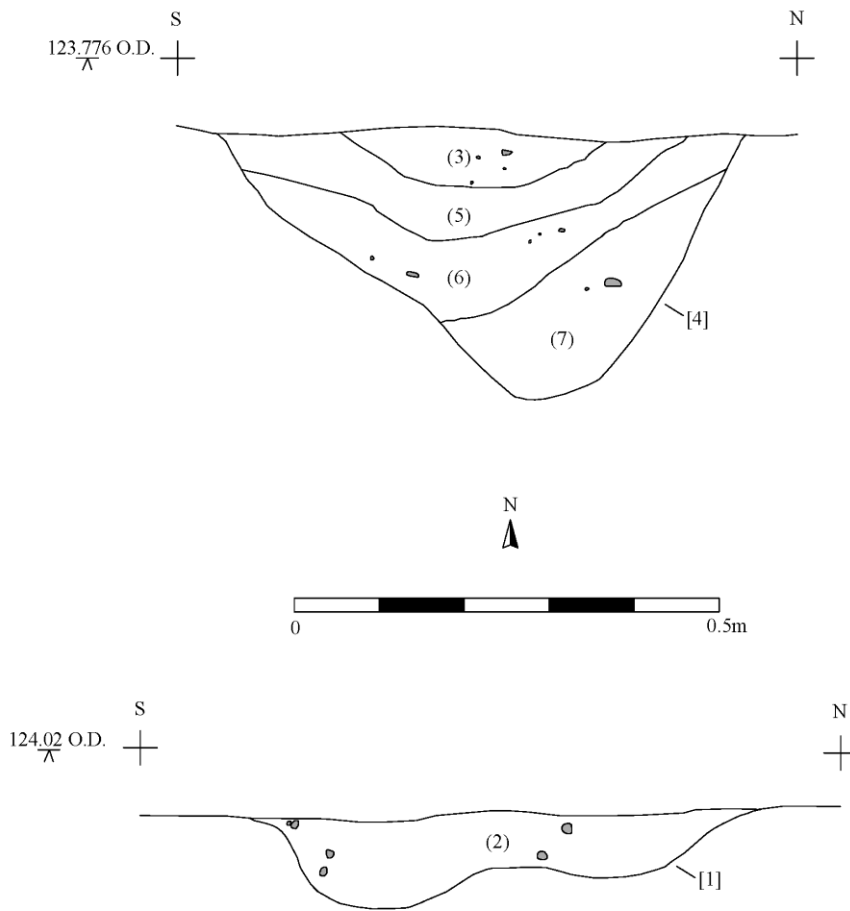


Figure 6: Sections of features within Trench 2





Figure 7: View of Trench 2, looking west, scale 2m. Gully [4] visible on the right.





Figure 8: View of gully [4], scale 0.5m.





Figure 9: View of post-hole [1], and natural feature to the left, scale 0.5m.

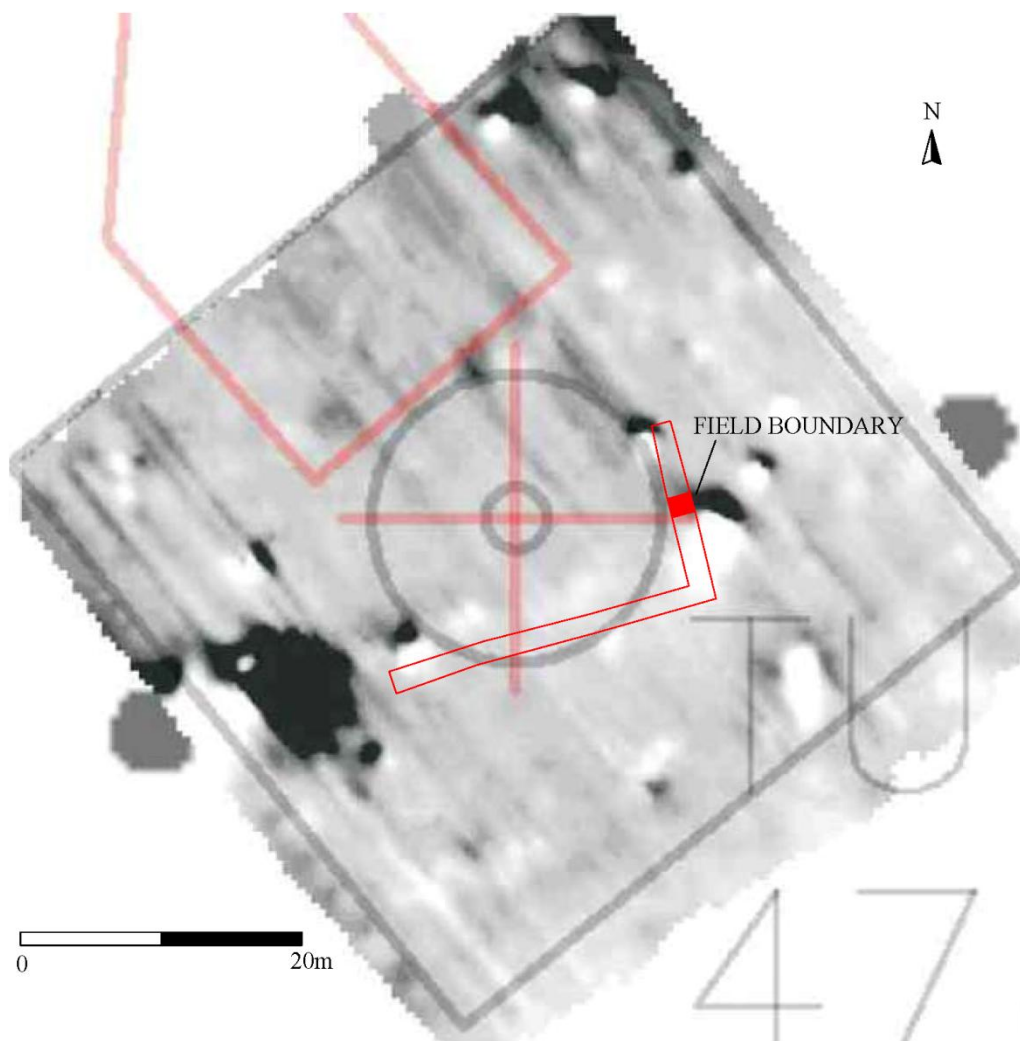


Figure 10: Trench 3 in relation to geophysical anomalies, showing field boundary

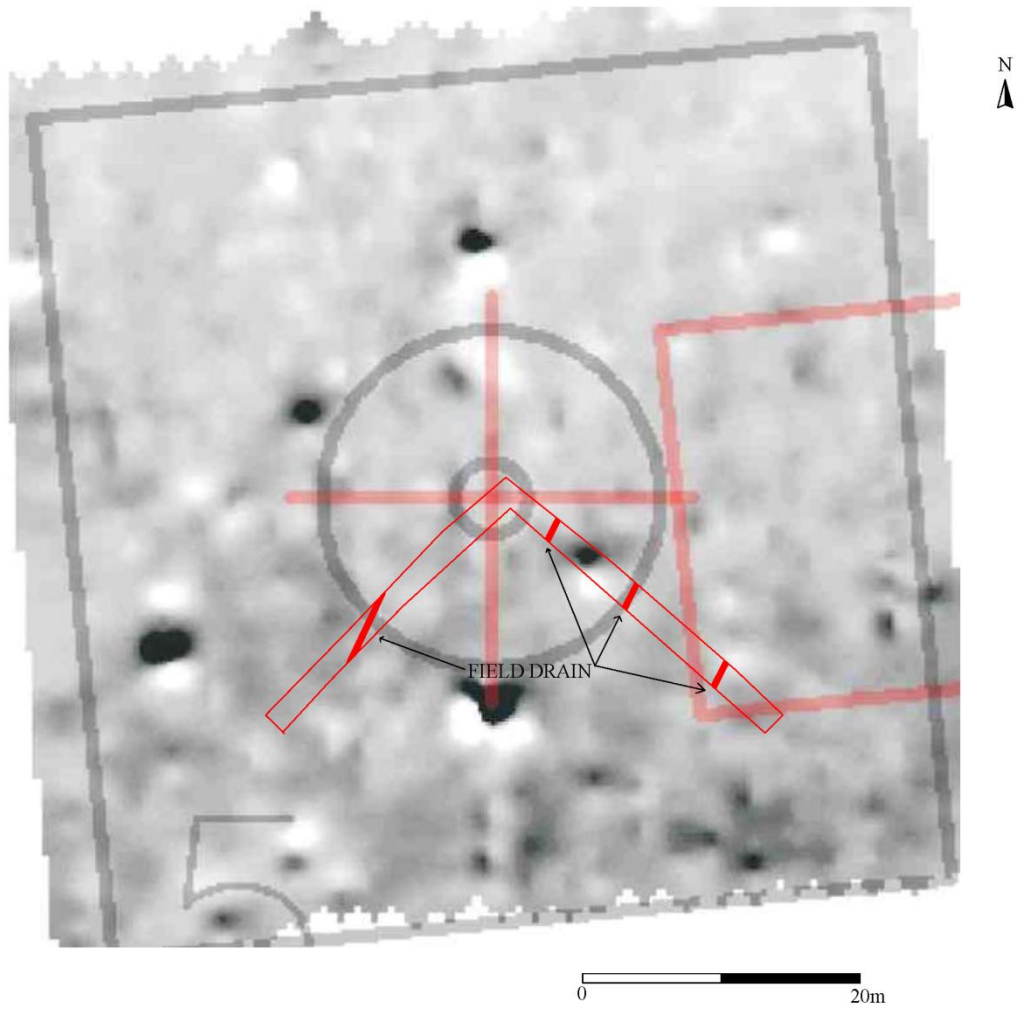


Figure 11: Trench 5 in relation to geophysical anomalies, showing field drains

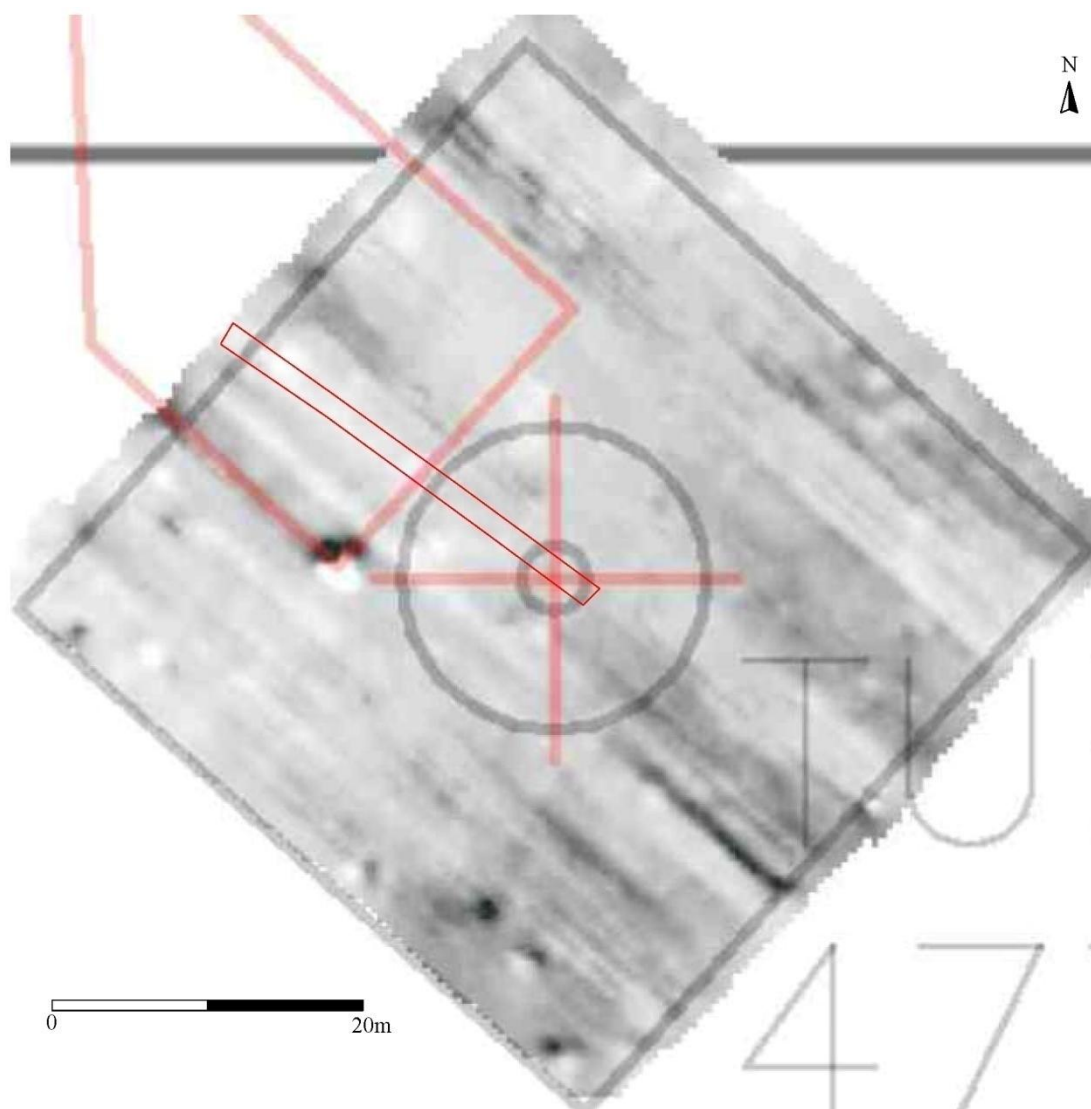


Figure 12: Trench 6 in relation to geophysical anomalies

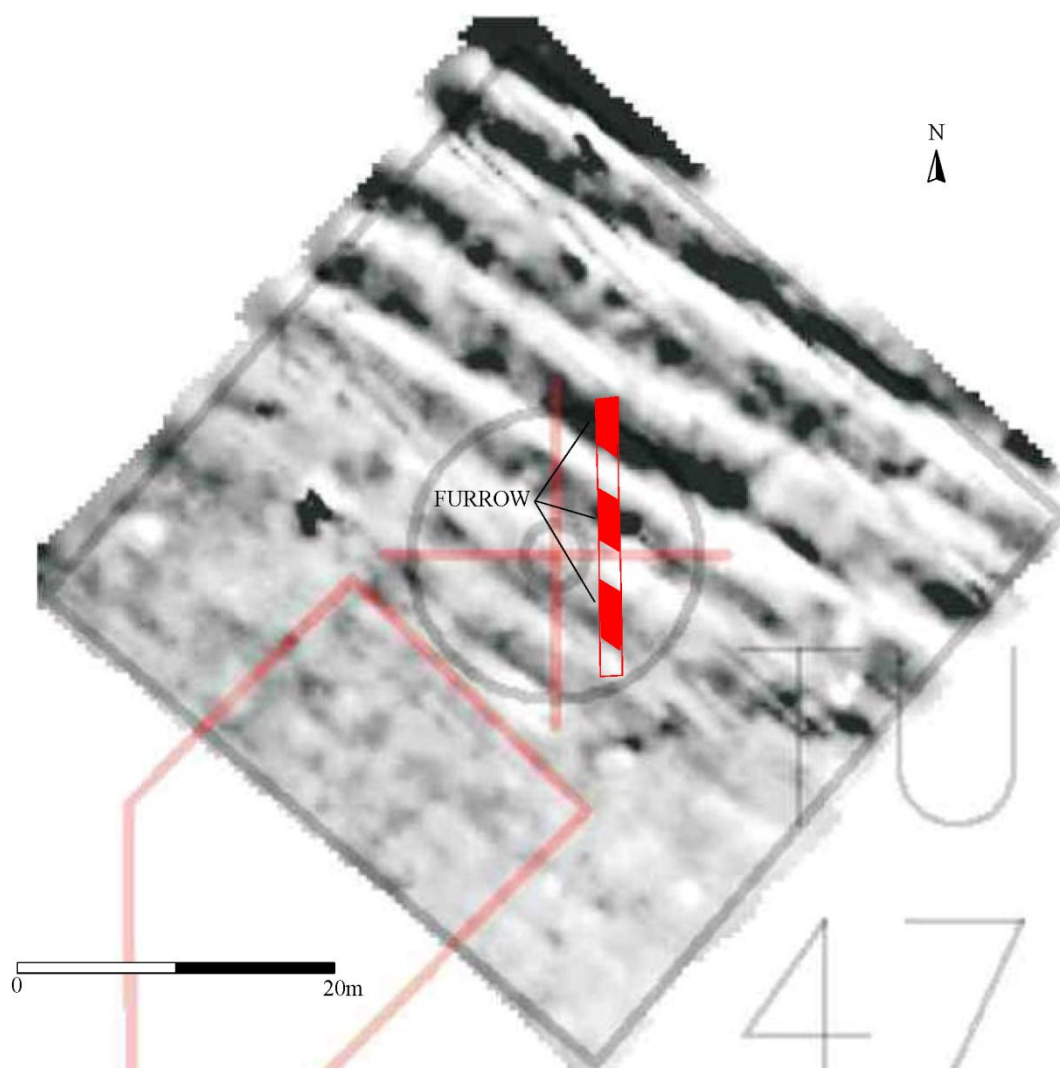


Figure 13: Trench 7 in relation to geophysical anomalies, showing furrows.



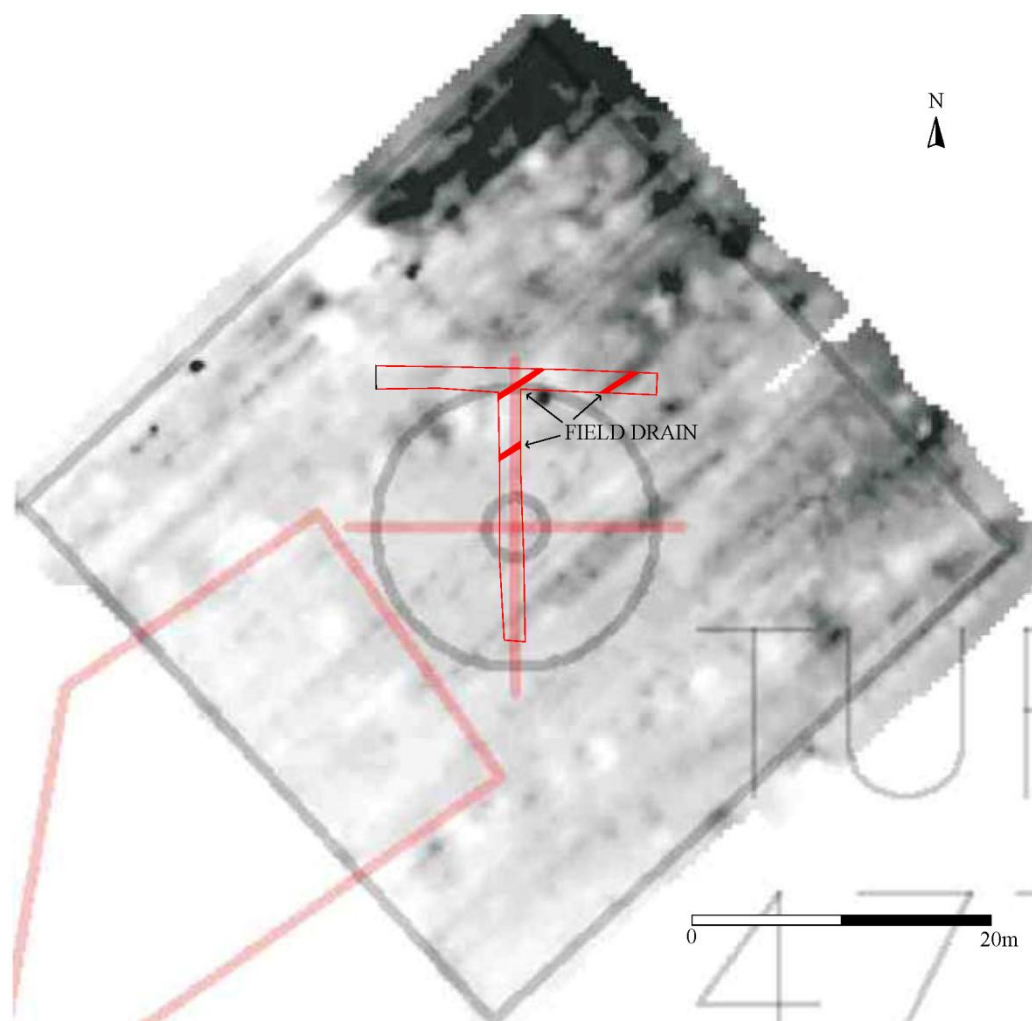


Figure 14: Trench 8 in relation to geophysical anomalies, showing field drains.

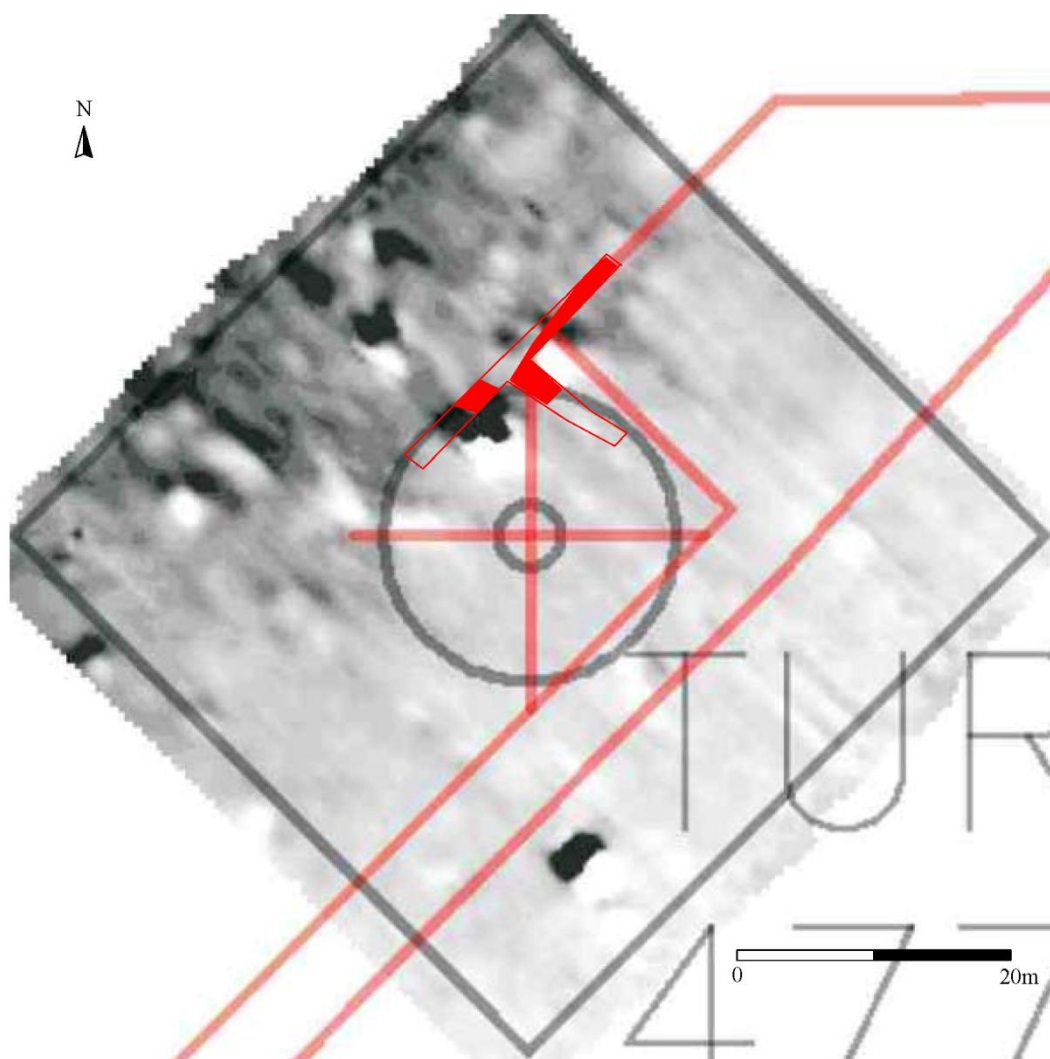


Figure 15: Trench 9 in relation to geophysical anomalies, with field boundary shaded.

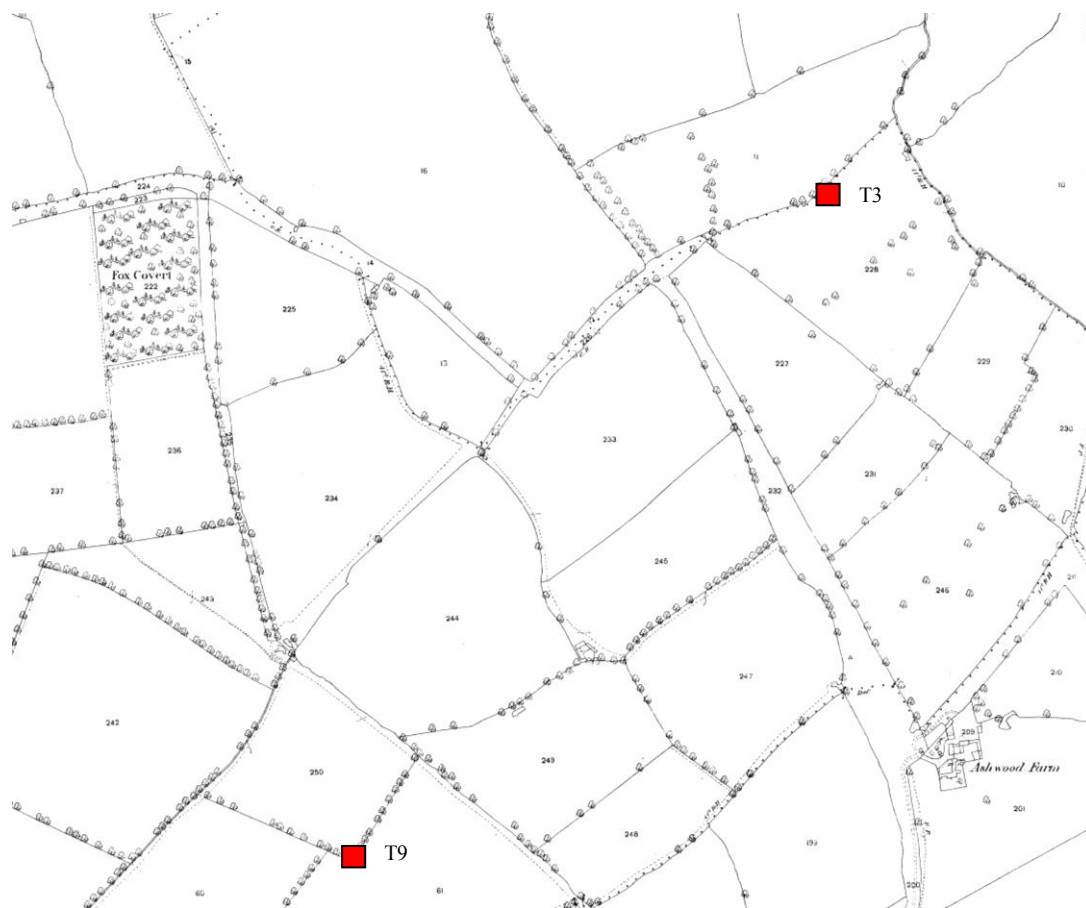


Figure 16: Detail of the 1885 Ordnance Survey map (county series 1:2500), showing the location of trench 3 and 9 overlying earlier field boundaries.



## Appendix II: Trench Details

TRENCH	ORIENTATION / SHAPE	CONTEXTS	DESCRIPTION	DEPTH (MIN-MAX m)	LEVEL OF ARCHAEOLOGY (metres above O.D)
1	T-shaped, 22m E-W, 10m N-S	N/A	No archaeological finds or deposits	0.29-0.32m	N/A
2	T-shaped, 20m NE-SW, 11m NW-SE	[1], (2), (3), [4], (5), (6), (7)	A gully [4], along with a possible double post-hole [1]. Both undated.	0.3-0.35m	123.76m O.D.
3	L-shaped, 20m E-W, 10m N-S	N/A	No archaeological finds or deposits	0.32-0.37m	N/A
5	L-shaped, 20m NE-SW, 20m SE-NW	N/A	No archaeological finds or deposits	0.26-0.74m	N/A
6	Linear, 30m NW-SE	N/A	No archaeological finds or deposits	0.25-0.34m	N/A
7	Linear, 20m N-S	N/A	No archaeological finds or deposits	0.24-0.33m	N/A
8	T-shaped, 20m E-W, 20m N-S	N/A	No archaeological finds or deposits	0.28-0.33m	N/A
9	T-shaped, 20m NE-SW, 10m NW-SE	N/A	No archaeological finds or deposits	0.29-0.39m	N/A

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