

**ORCHARD LODGE,
8A ELY ROAD,
LITTLEPORT.**

ECB4736

NGR: TL 563 862

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

June 2016
Report No. 1130



ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANCY, MANAGEMENT & FIELD SERVICES

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Quality Assurance

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SUMMARY

This report presents the findings of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by Foundations Archaeology between 24th and 26th May 2016 on land to the east and west of Orchard Lodge, 8A Ely Road, Littleport (NGR: TL 563 862 - centred). The project was commissioned by James Ringwood of M C Nurse Builders.

The archaeological evaluation has revealed the presence of three undated linear features in Trenches 3 and 5. The two features present in Trench 3 were similar in appearance and orientation to each other and were located less than 0.7m apart. Given the similarities, it is considered that these two linears are likely to be contemporary rather than representing the migration or realignment of a boundary. The feature in Trench 5 had the appearance of a former hedgerow. No clear evidence was identified to suggest that archaeologically significant features previously identified in the vicinity extended within the site area.

No charcoal was present within any of the excavated layers. This would suggest that the study area was a distance away from any settlement activity and that the identified linear features most likely represent land division or agricultural activity.

GLOSSARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Archaeology

For the purpose of this project, archaeology is taken to mean the study of past human societies through their material remains from prehistoric times to the modern era. No rigid upper date limit has been set, but AD 1900 is used as a general cut-off point.

CBM

Ceramic Building Material.

Medieval

The period between AD 1066 and AD 1500.

Natural

In archaeological terms this refers to the undisturbed natural geology of a site.

NGR

National Grid Reference from the Ordnance Survey Grid.

OD

Ordnance datum; used to express a given height above sea-level. (AOD Above Ordnance Datum).

OS

Ordnance Survey.

Post-medieval

The period between AD 1500 and AD 1900.

Prehistoric

The period prior to the Roman invasion of AD 43, traditionally sub divided into; *Palaeolithic* – c. 500,000 BC to c. 12,000 BC; *Mesolithic* – c. 12,000 BC to c. 4,500 BC; *Neolithic* – c. 4,500 BC to c. 2,000 BC; *Bronze Age* – c. 2,000 BC to c. 800 BC; *Iron Age* – c. 800 BC to AD 43.

Roman

The period traditionally dated AD 43 until AD 410.

Saxon

The period between AD 410 and AD 1066.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by Foundations Archaeology between 24th and 26th May 2016 on land to the east and west of Orchard Lodge, 8A Ely Road, Littleport (NGR: TL 563 862 - centred). The project was commissioned by James Ringwood of M C Nurse Builders.
- 1.2 The project was conducted in accordance with the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations* issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (rev. 2014) and the brief issued by Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Team CHET) (2016). It complies with the principles of *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012).

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The study area is bounded by residential housing to the east, south and west and by a sports ground to the north. The development area is situated in the south west part of Littleport, approximately 650m to the south of St George's and St John's Church and is located at a height of approximately 15.5m AOD.
- 2.2 The geology of the site comprises *Kimmeridge Clay Formation - Mudstone*. With superficial deposits of *Oadby Member – Diamicton* recorded (British Geology Viewer).
- 2.3 Previous works in the vicinity has revealed significant archaeological deposits.
- 2.4 Development at Highfields Farm to the south west of the study area contained evidence of enclosed Roman settlement and an Anglo-Saxon cemetery of 90 interments and three cremations. A geophysical survey carried out in 2005 by Stratascan (ECB2905) on land to the south of the Highfields Farm development revealed several linear and curvilinear anomalies, as well as a mottled area, which may correspond to an extension of the cemetery.
- 2.5 Just over 150m to the west northwest of the site boundary, an evaluation by Archaeological Project Services (1999) revealed evidence of Prehistoric activity. The features and finds present (which included Beaker pottery) suggested a high status site, with a possible spring head or deep well (CB15682), possibly indicating ceremonial activity near the hill top dated to the Neolithic and Bronze Age periods. An undated cremation was also found in this area during these works.

- 2.6 Further evidence of Romano-British and Iron Age activity have been revealed to the north (MCB20493) and south (MCB17479, 07212 and MCB20348) of the development area.
- 2.7 As a result of its identified archaeological potential, the Senior Archaeologist for Cambridgeshire County Council requested a programme of field evaluation to fully assess the potential impact on any heritage asset of archaeological interest, in accordance with paragraph 128 of the NPPF. The main archaeological potential of the site is therefore for the presence of finds or features of Prehistoric, Roman and Saxon date. This did not prejudice the evaluation against the recovery of data relating to other periods.

3 AIMS

- 3.1 The aims of the archaeological evaluation were to gather high quality data from the direct observation of archaeological deposits in order to provide sufficient information to establish the nature, extent, preservation and potential of any surviving archaeological remains; as well as to make recommendations for management of the resource, including further archaeological works if necessary. In turn, this would allow reasonable planning/mitigation decisions to be taken regarding the archaeological provision for the areas affected by the development.
- 3.2 These aims were achieved through pursuit of the following specific objectives:
- To determine, as far as reasonably practicable, the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains.
 - To establish the ecofactual and environmental potential of archaeological deposits and features encountered.
 - To assess the impact of previous land use on the site, including the nature and extent of existing disturbance and intrusions (foundations, services, drains etc).
 - To establish the potential for significant environmental deposits.
 - To provide sufficient information on the archaeological potential of the site to enable the archaeological implications of the proposed development to be assessed.

- To inform formulation of a strategy to avoid or mitigate impacts of the proposed development on any surviving archaeological remains.

4 METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The fieldwork strategy comprised the excavation of five 20m evaluation trenches within the development area, which constituted just over a 5% sample of the development area.
- 4.2 Non-significant overburden was removed, under constant archaeological supervision, to the top of archaeological remains or the underlying natural deposits, whichever was encountered first. This was achieved through the use of a JCB type excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket.
- 4.3 All excavation and recording work was undertaken in accordance with the WSI and the Foundations Archaeology Technical Manual 3: Excavation Manual.

5 RESULTS

- 5.1 A full description of all contexts identified during the course of the project is presented in Appendix 1. The following is a summary of the key results of the evaluation.
- 5.2 No significant archaeological deposits were present within trenches 1, 2 and 4.
- 5.3 A total of two linear features were present within the eastern half of Trench 3, on a similar north-south alignment. Both features were similar in size and appearance and, although undated, they were both securely sealed beneath the subsoil, which would suggest some antiquity.
- 5.4 Trench 5 also contained a linear feature, this time on a northeast-southwest alignment. This feature was also undated, however, due to root disturbance, the interface with subsoil (501) was diffuse and the physical relationship was not entirely clear. Nonetheless, the interpretation suggests that it was probably sealed by the subsoil and is therefore likely to be of some antiquity. The amount of root disturbance and profile of the feature suggest that it most likely represented a former hedgerow.
- 5.5 No finds pre-dating the 20th century were present within any of the features or trenches. No charcoal was present within any of the evaluated fills.

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The archaeological evaluation has revealed the presence of three undated linear features in Trenches 3 and 5. The two features present in Trench 3 were similar in appearance and orientation to each other and were located less than 0.7m apart. Given the similarities, it is considered that these two linears are likely to be contemporary rather than representing the migration or realignment of a boundary. The feature in Trench 5 had the appearance of a former hedgerow.
- 6.2 No charcoal was present within any of the excavated layers. This would suggest that the study area was a distance away from any settlement activity and that the identified linear features most likely represent land division or agricultural activity. No clear evidence was identified to suggest that archaeologically significant features previously identified in the vicinity extended within the site area.
- 6.3 The archive is currently held at the offices of Foundations Archaeology, but will be deposited in due course with the Cambridgeshire Archive. A short note will be submitted for publication in the relevant local archaeological journal and an OASIS form will also be submitted to ADS.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Foundations Archaeology would like to thank Kasia Gdaniec of the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Team and James Ringwood and Sarah Akred of M C Nurse Builders Ltd for their help during the course of the project.

Orchard Lodge, 8A Ely Road, Littleport: Archaeological Evaluation

APPENDIX 1: Trench Summaries

TRENCH 1 ; 20m, aligned east-west Top of natural deposits 15.62m aOD (average)						
CXT	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	DESCRIPTION	CUTS/ LATER THAN	CUT BY/ EARLIER THAN
100	Trench	Trench	0.23	Topsoil: Dark grey brown sandy silty clay, with occasional sub-rounded flint pebbles and root disturbance throughout.	101	-
101	Trench	Trench	0.37	Subsoil: Green/grey brown sandy silty clay, with occasional sub-rounded flint pebbles and root disturbance throughout.	natural	100
				Natural deposits: Orange brown clays and gravels.		101
				No archaeological finds, features or deposits were present within this trench. Brick drain present on northwest-southeast alignment.		

TRENCH 2 ; 20m, aligned northwest-southeast Top of natural deposits 15.55m aOD (average)						
CXT	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	DESCRIPTION	CUTS/ LATER THAN	CUT BY/ EARLIER THAN
200	Trench	Trench	0.26	Topsoil: Dark grey brown sandy silty clay, with occasional sub-rounded flint pebbles and root disturbance throughout.	201	-
201	Trench	Trench	0.39	Subsoil: Green/grey brown sandy silty clay, with occasional sub-rounded flint pebbles and root disturbance throughout.	natural	200
				Natural deposits: Orange brown clays and gravels.		201
				No archaeological finds, features or deposits were present within this trench. Two brick drains present on northeast-southwest alignment.		

TRENCH 3 ; 20m, aligned east-west Top of natural deposits 15.41m aOD (average)						
CXT	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	DESCRIPTION	CUTS/ LATER THAN	CUT BY/ EARLIER THAN
300	Trench	Trench	0.20	Topsoil: Dark grey brown sandy silty clay, with occasional sub-rounded flint pebbles and root disturbance throughout.	301	-
301	8+	Trench	Upto 0.40	Layer of demolition rubble present in the eastern half of the trench. Contained Modern brick and concrete.	302	300
302	Trench	Trench	0.21	Subsoil: Mid orange/yellow brown silty clay, with occasional sub-rounded flint pebbles.	[303], [305], natural	300, 301
[303]	1.6+	0.52- 0.8	0.18	North-south aligned linear feature, with shallow rounded profile. Contained (304).	natural	302, 304
304	1.6+	0.52- 0.8	0.18	Fill of linear [303]. Mid orange brown silty clay with frequent sub-rounded flint pebbles. No finds or charcoal were present within the excavated section.	[303]	302
[305]	1.6+	0.4- 0.52	0.12	North-south aligned linear feature, with shallow rounded profile. Contained (306).	natural	302, 306

Orchard Lodge, 8A Ely Road, Littleport: Archaeological Evaluation

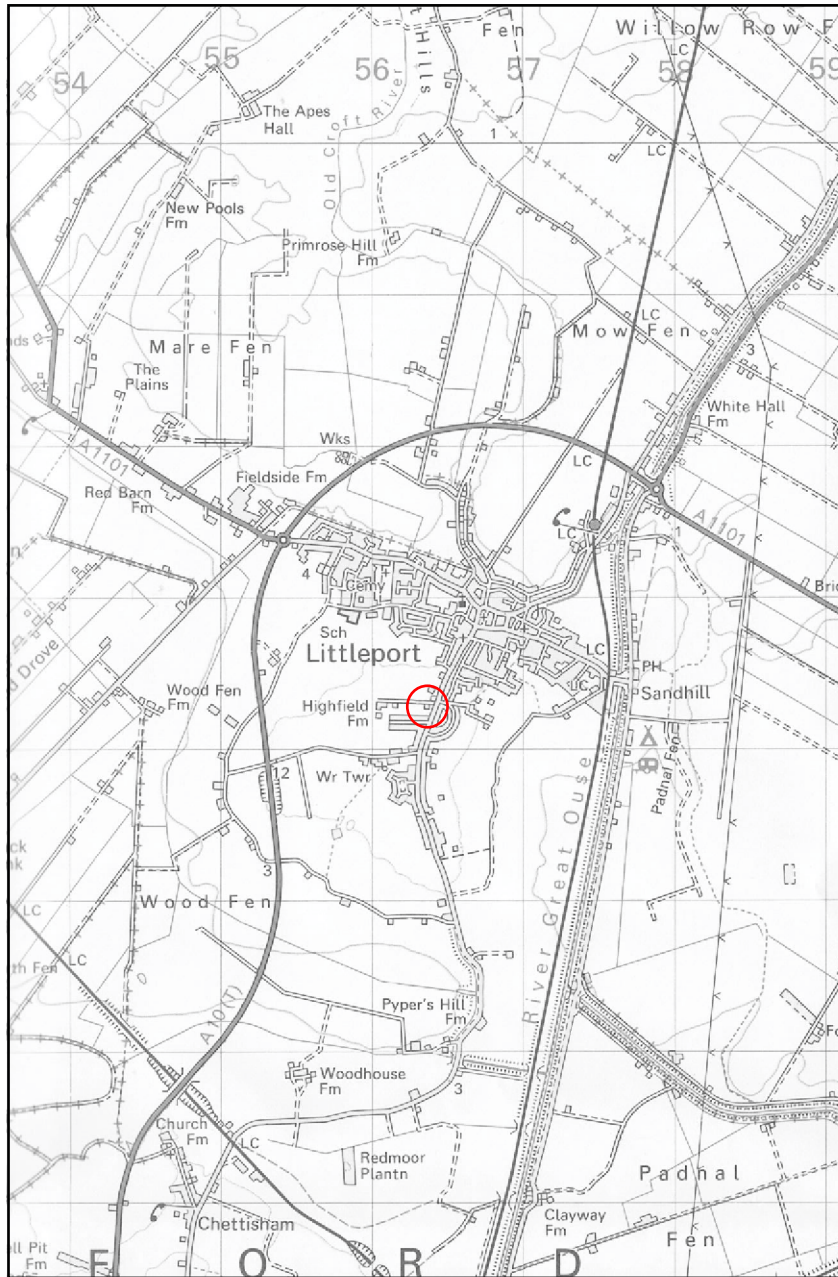
306	1.6+	0.4-0.52	0.12	Fill of linear [305]. Mid orange brown silty clay with frequent sub-rounded flint pebbles. No finds or charcoal were present within the excavated section.	[305]	302
				Natural deposits: Orange brown clays and gravels.		302

TRENCH 4: 20m, aligned north-south
Top of natural deposits 15.42m aOD (average)

CXT	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	DESCRIPTION	CUTS/ LATER THAN	CUT BY/ EARLIER THAN
400	Trench	Trench	0.23	Topsoil: Dark to mid brown silty sand.	401	-
401	Trench	Trench	0.37	Subsoil: Light mid brown silty clay, with occasional sub-rounded flint pebbles and rare flecks of calcareous deposits.	natural	400
				Natural deposits: Yellow brown clays and gravels.		401
				No archaeological finds, features or deposits were present within this trench. Modern service cut present on east-west alignment.		

TRENCH 5: 20m, aligned northwest-southeast
Top of natural deposits 15.44m aOD (average)

CXT	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	DESCRIPTION	CUTS/ LATER THAN	CUT BY/ EARLIER THAN
500	Trench	Trench	0.20	Topsoil: Dark grey brown sandy silty clay, with occasional sub-rounded flint pebbles and root disturbance throughout.	501	-
501	Trench	Trench	0.50	Subsoil: Mid brown sandy silty clay, with occasional sub-rounded flint pebbles and root disturbance throughout.	natural	500
502	1.6+	0.48	0.12	Fill of linear [504]. Grey clay silt with orange mottles. Rare sub-rounded flint pebbles. No charcoal or finds were present within the excavated section. Due to root disturbance, interface with subsoil 501 diffuse, so relationship unclear, but probably sealed by 501.	503, [504]	501?
503	1.6+	Up to 0.16	0.13	Fill of [504]. Grey brown clay silt, with large patches of orange brown clay silt (redeposited natural?) No charcoal or finds present within the excavated section. Only present along the northwestern edge of 502. Due to root disturbance, interface with subsoil 501 diffuse, so relationship unclear, but probably sealed by 501.	[504]	502, 501?
[504]	1.6+	0.56-0.6	0.13	Northeast-southwest aligned linear, with main profile shallow and rounded, but deep step along northwestern edge. Possible hedgerow? Contained 502 and 503.	natural	502, 503
				Natural deposits: Yellow brown clays and gravels.		501



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Site Code: OLL16
ECB Number: ECB4736

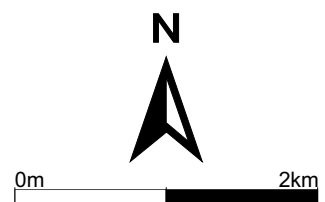
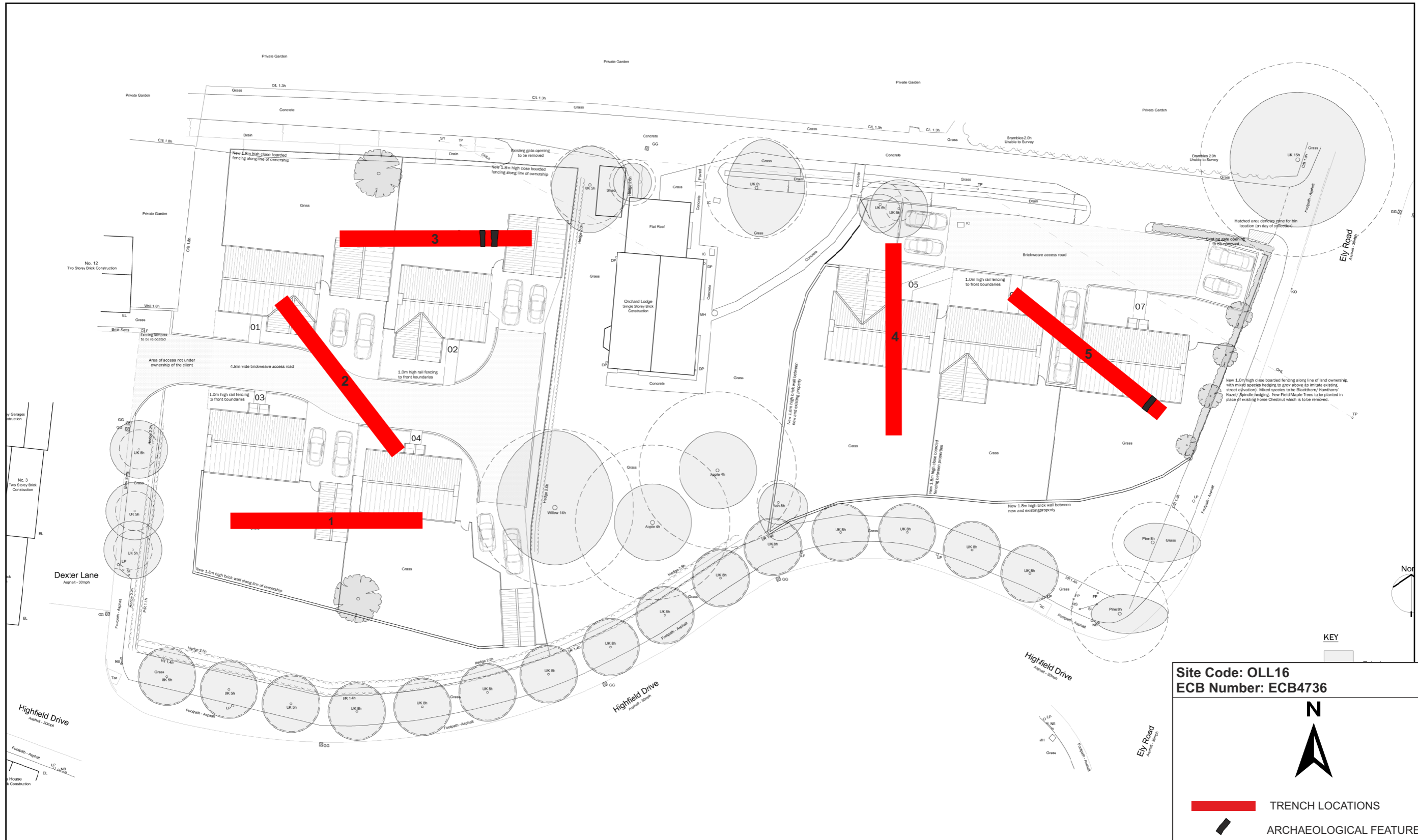


FIGURE 1: Site Location



Site Code: OLL16
ECB Number: ECB4736

N

TRENCH LOCATIONS

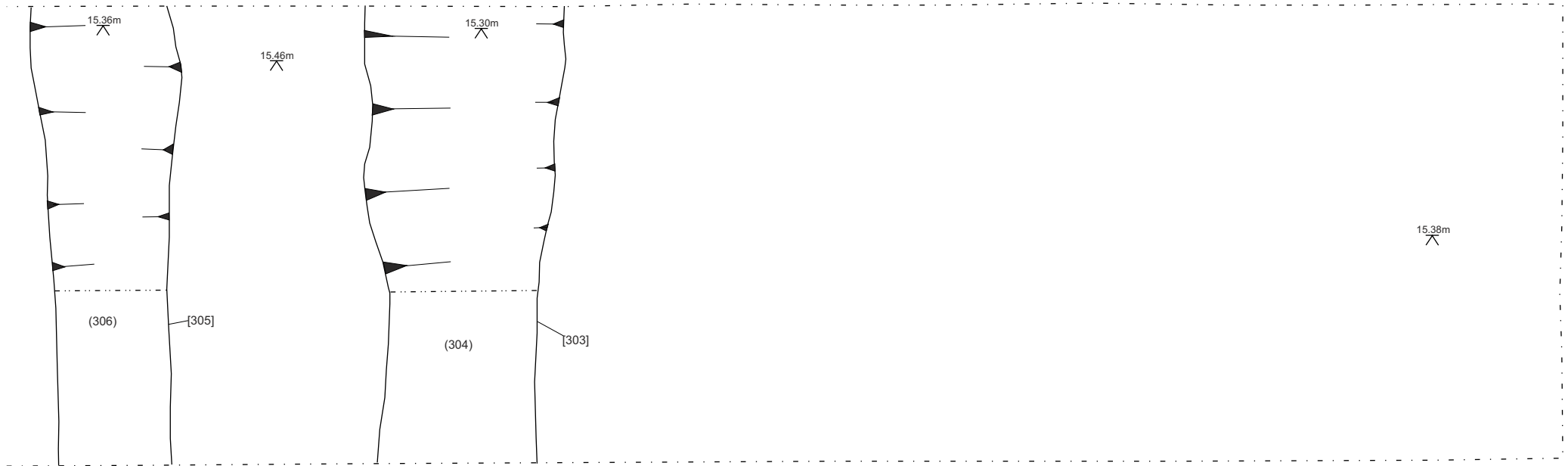
ARCHAEOLOGICAL FEATURES

0m 20m

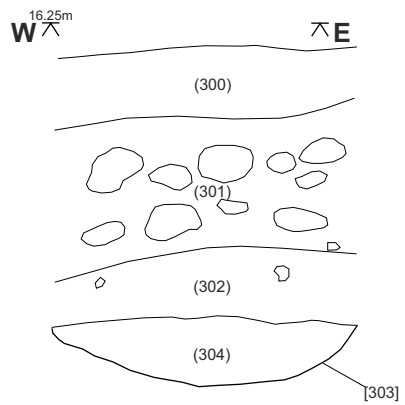
FIGURE 2: Study Area

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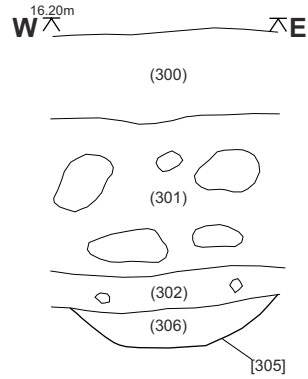
TRENCH 3



SOUTH FACING SECTION [303]

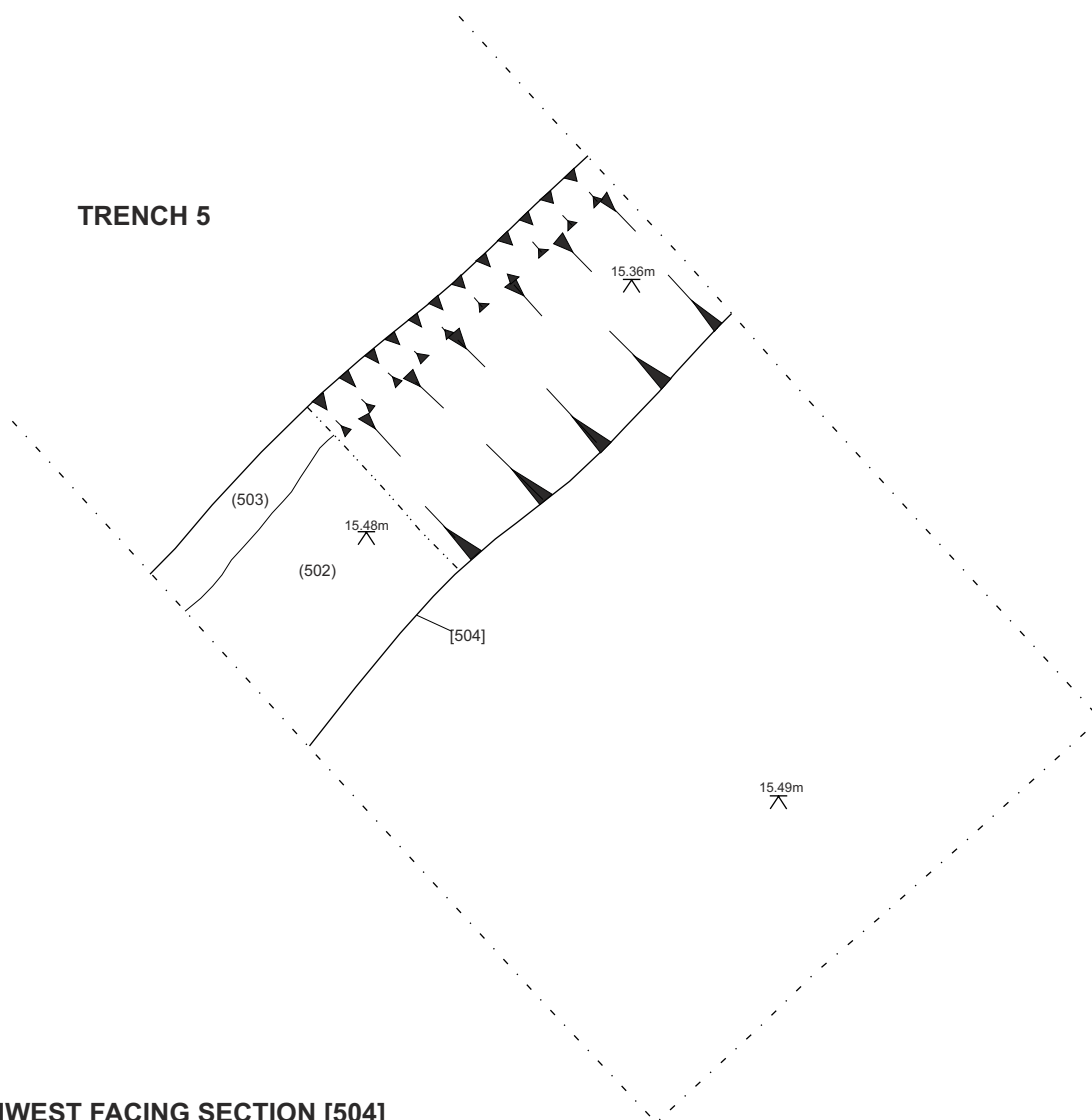


SOUTH FACING SECTION [305]

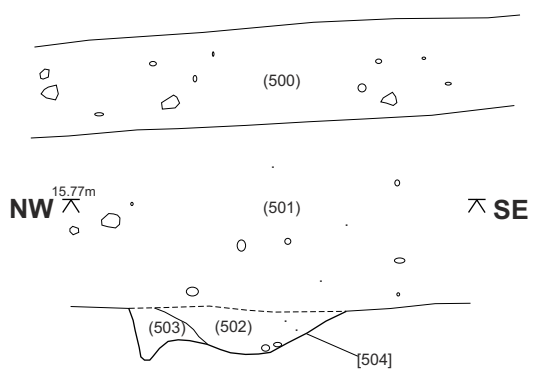




<p>Site Code: OLL16 ECB Number: ECB4736</p>
<p>FIGURE 3: Trench 3, Plan and Sections</p>

TRENCH 5



SOUTHWEST FACING SECTION [504]



Site Code: OLL16 ECB Number: ECB4736
 
FIGURE 4: Trench 5, Plan and Section