

**Moorhouse Drive, Huntingdon,  
Cambridgeshire**

## Thomas Lyons

December 2007

**CAM ARC Report Number 978**

## **Moorhouse Drive, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire**

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### **An Archaeological Evaluation**

Thomas Lyons BA

Site Code: HUN MHD 07  
CHER Event Number: ECB 2721  
Date of works: 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> October 2007  
Grid Ref: TL 2433 7321

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**CAM ARC OASIS Report Form**  
cambridg1-34169

**OASIS Number:**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>				
Project name	Moorhouse Drive, Huntingdon: An Archaeological Evaluation.			
Short description	300m of trenching on recreational land adjacent to Moorhouse Drive, Huntingdon. No dateable archaeology was found.			
Project dates	Start	1/10/07	End	4/10/07
Previous work	Include HER numbers / report references	Future work		No
Associated project reference codes	HUNMHD07			
Type of project	Evaluation			
Site status	none			
Current land use (list all that apply)	Recreational land			
Planned development	Housing			
Monument types / period (list all that apply)	None			
Significant finds: Artefact type / period (list all that apply)	Please list significant artefact types that were found during the fieldwork. Should use <a href="#">MDA object thesaurus</a>			
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>				
County	Cambridgeshire	Parish	Huntingdon	
HER for region	Cambridgeshire			
Site address (including postcode)	Moorhouse Drive, Huntingdon			
Study area (sq.m or ha)				
National grid reference	TL 2433 7321			
Height OD	Min OD	18m	Max OD	20m
<b>PROJECT ORIGINATORS</b>				
Organisation	CAM ARC			
Project brief originator	Andy Thomas			
Project design originator				
Director/supervisor	Thomas Lyons			
Project manager	James Drummond Murray			
Sponsor or funding body				
<b>ARCHIVES</b>	<b>Location and accession number</b>	<b>Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone, database, context sheets etc)</b>		
Physical	Cambs. County Store			
Paper	Cambs. County Store	Plans, sections, context sheets		
Digital	CAM ARC	Photographs		
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>				
Full title	Moorhouse Drive, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire: An Archaeological Evaluation			
Author(s)	Thomas Lyons			
Report number	978			
Series title and volume				
Page numbers				
Date	October 2007			

## **Summary**

Between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> of October 2007 CAM ARC excavated 300m of trial trenches on the proposed development site adjacent to Moorhouse Drive, Huntingdon. No substantial archaeological remains or dateable finds were discovered.

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## **1 Introduction**

This archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Andy Thomas of the Cambridgeshire Archaeology, Planning and Countryside Advice team (CAPCA; Planning Application 0500385OUT), supplemented by a Specification prepared by CAM ARC, Cambridgeshire County Council (formerly Archaeological Field Unit).

The work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed redevelopment area, in accordance with the guidelines set out in *Planning and Policy Guidance 16 - Archaeology and Planning* (Department of the Environment 1990). The results will enable decisions to be made by CAPCA, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority, with regard to the treatment of any archaeological remains found.

The site archive is currently held by CAM ARC and will be deposited with the appropriate county stores in due course.

## **2 Geology and Topography**

The site overlies Oxford Clay (British Geological Survey 1987).

## **3 Archaeological and Historical Background**

The site is located on the north side of Huntingdon, just over 1km from the town centre, in an area that has seen few archaeological investigations. The Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER) records some individual finds located to the south west of the site, which include Palaeolithic flints, a Mesolithic axe and some Medieval pottery. An evaluation at Great Northern Street and test pitting at Ambury road (HER ref. ECB185 and ECB190, respectively), both within 1km of the site, found only one Post-Medieval feature between them.

This part of Huntingdon consisted of open fields until the latter C20th when it became almost entirely residential. It is possible that little archaeological remains exist in Huntingdon north of the original town centre.

## **4 Methodology**

The objective of this evaluation was to determine as far as reasonably possible the presence/absence, location, nature, extent, date, quality,

condition and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits within the development area.

The Brief required that:

Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a wheeled JCB-type excavator using a toothless ditching bucket.

Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal detector. All metal-detected and hand-collected finds were retained for inspection, other than those which were obviously modern.

All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using CAM ARC's *pro-forma* sheets. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales and colour and monochrome photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits.

A CAT scanner was used in the areas proposed for trenching. A long service pipe was recorded parallel with and between trenches **4** and **5**.

Seven trial trenches were opened totalling 300m. The trenches were between 30m and 60m in length and were dug with a 2m wide flat bladed bucket.

The trenches were planned at 1:50 scale and were located using a Leica Total Station Theodolite.

No environmental samples were taken.

## **5 Results**

The trenches were machined to a depth of between 0.45m and 0.7m. Topsoil was between 0.1m and 0.4m deep, beneath which was a clay subsoil. The underlying geology was slightly inconsistent and was a mixture of thick grey and yellow clays with some gravel.

Trench 1 was located in the south-east corner of site and aligned north-south. It was 40m long and was machined to a depth of 0.4m. Along the length of the trench was a modern pipe drain set in a ditch. The north end of the trench had seen much modern disturbance by a shallow feature containing modern and dark fill.

Trench 2 was located in the southern area of site and aligned north-south. It was 50m in length and was machined to a depth of 0.5m. Three shallow features, no deeper than 0.1m, were recorded towards the south end (203, 207 & 209) which contained several sherds of C18th and C19th pottery as well as coal and glass. A fourth feature,

209, was almost certainly a small machine bucket scoop, as teeth marks were visible in the natural clay.

Trench 3 was located in the south-west corner of site and aligned north-east south-west. It was 35m long and machined to a depth of 0.45m. No archaeological features were encountered other than modern field drains.

Trench 4 was located in the centre of the site and aligned east-west. It was 40m long and machined to a depth of 0.57m. It contained one ditch, 404, which was aligned north-west south-east and also present in trench 5 to the north (505). Ditch 404 was 1.3m wide and 0.35m deep and shared the same asymmetrical profile with 505. No finds were recovered from trench 4.

Trench 5 was located in the centre of the site, parallel with trench 4, but to the north. It was 60m long and machined to a depth of 0.7m. It contained three ditches. Ditch 503 was aligned south-east north-west, 0.5m wide and 0.2m deep and filled with a grey silty clay. No finds were recovered and it was not visible in trench 4 to the south. Ditch 505 was aligned south-east north-west, 1.3m wide and 0.35m deep and was also present in trench 4 to the south (404). It was filled by thick redeposited clay and contained no finds. Ditch 507 was aligned north-east south-west, 0.75m wide and 0.8m deep. It was filled by thick redeposited clay and contained no finds. The same ditch is present in trench 6 to the north but not in trench 4 to the south.

Trench 6 was located in the north-east corner of the site. It was L-shaped, 45m long and machined to a depth of 0.64m. It contained a single shallow or very truncated ditch, 604, which was also present in trench 5 (507). Ditch 604 was 0.75m, 0.05m deep and filled by thick redeposited clay.

Trench 7 was located in the north-west corner of site. It was 30m long and machined to a depth of 0.7m. No archaeological features were encountered.

## 6 Discussion

The orientations of the pairs of ditches 505 & 404, and 507 & 604 are possibly part of the same field system as their orientations form a right angle. Ditch 503 has a similar alignment. The fills of these features are similar homogenous redeposited clay suggesting a conceivably prehistoric date. This contrasts with the fills of the obviously more modern features in trench 2. These contained much more silt and were very dark in comparison; the presence of post-Medieval pottery, coal, glass and heavily burnt stone indicating recent activity.



## **7 Conclusions**

The lack of artefactual material from most of the excavated features at Moorhouse Drive means they cannot be conclusively dated. From the pale clay fills a prehistoric date can tentatively be suggested, although this is by no means certain. The absence of archaeology at Moorhouse Drive other than small drainage ditches is consistent with the known archaeological record for this part of Huntingdon. This type of negative evidence suggests that settlement evidence beyond the immediate town centre is unlikely to be found.

Recommendations for any future work based upon this report will be made by the County Archaeology Office.








## **Acknowledgements**

The author would like to thank Croudace Homes who commissioned and funded the archaeological work. The project was managed by James Drummond Murray. The fieldwork was carried out by Nick Gilmour and Ross Lilley, Séverine Bézie was responsible for the illustrations and the report was edited by Liz Popescu.

The brief for archaeological works was written by Andy Thomas, who visited the site and monitored the evaluation.

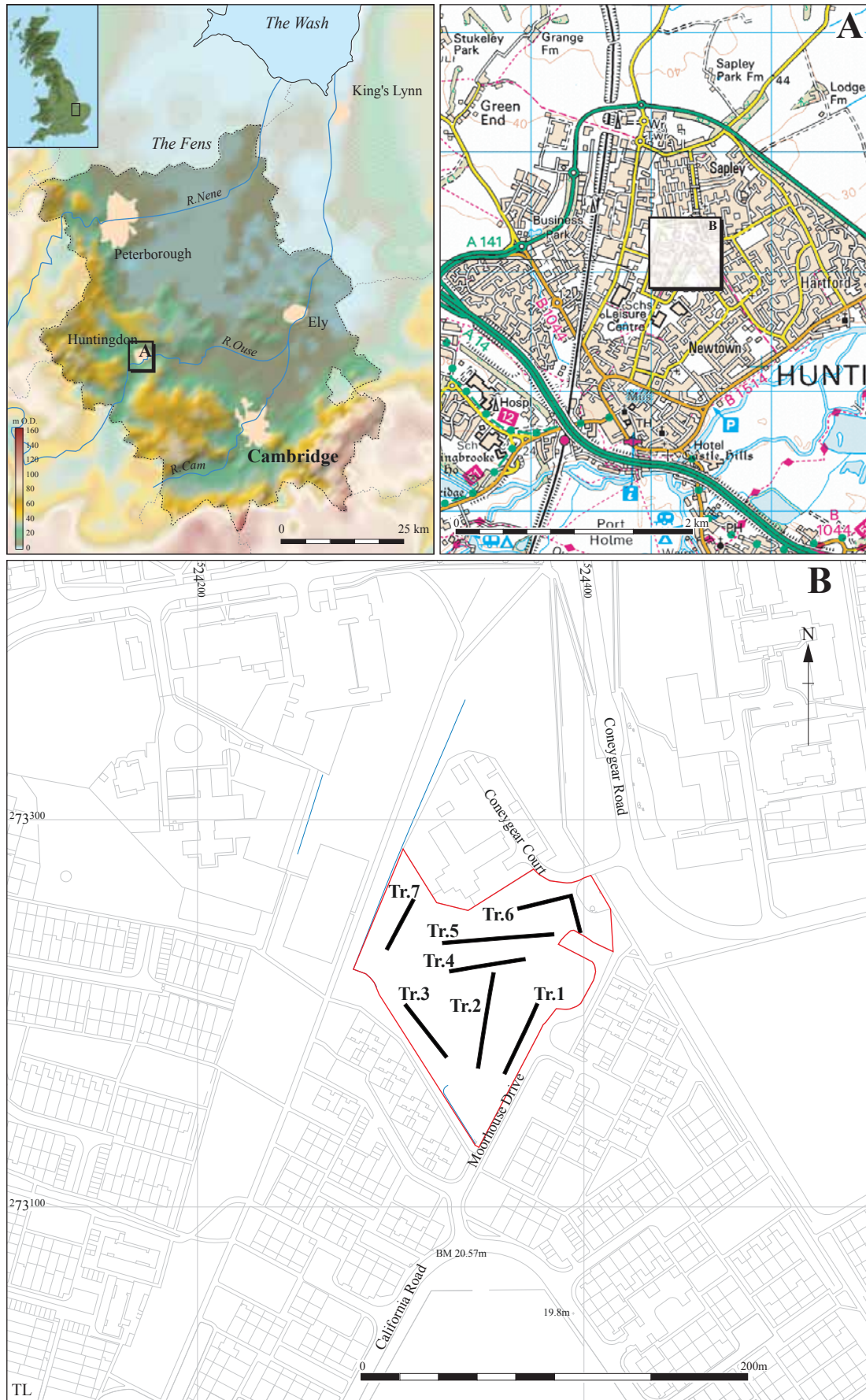
## Drawing Conventions

### Plans

Limit of Excavation	_____
Evaluation Trench	- - - - -
Deposit - Conjectured	- - - - -
Natural Feature	.....
Sondages/Machine Strip	- - - - -
Test Pit	- - - - -
Intrusion/Truncation	- - - - -
Illustrated Section	<span style="color: red;">S.14</span> _____
Archaeological Feature	
Archaeological Deposit	
Excavated Slot	
Modern	
Field Drain	
Concrete Lens	
Root	
Cut Number	<span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 0 2px;">118</span>

### Sections

Limit of Excavation	- - - - -
Cut	_____
Cut-Conjectured	- - - - -
Deposit Horizon	_____
Deposit Horizon - Conjectured	- - - - -
Intrusion/Truncation	- - - - -
Top Surface/Top of Natural	_____
Break in Section/ Limit of Section Drawing	- - - - -
Cut Number	<span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 0 2px;">118</span>
Deposit Number	117
Ordinance Datum	18.45m OD X



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Figure 1: Location of trenches (black) with the development area outlined (red)

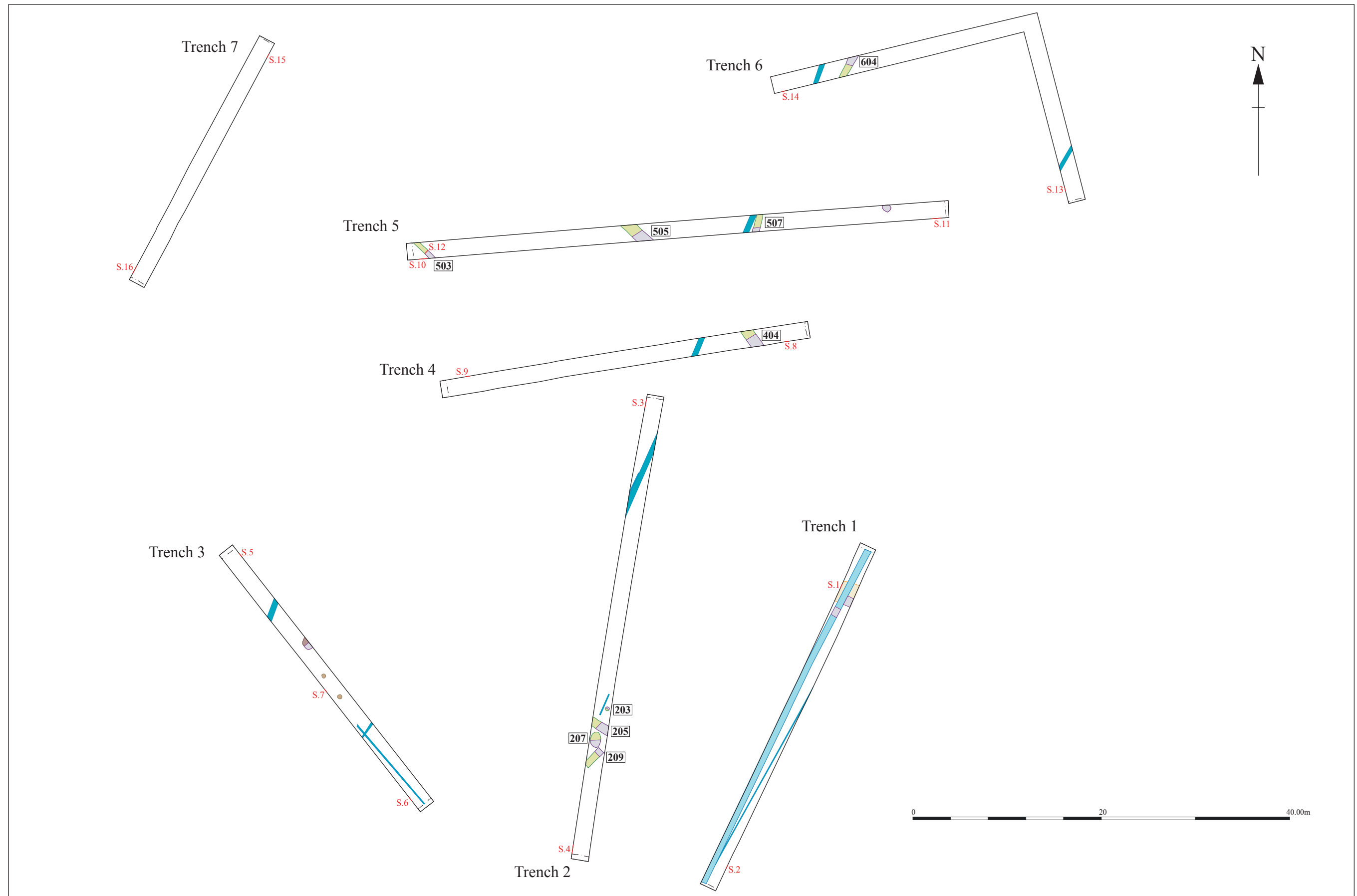


Figure 2: Trench plans

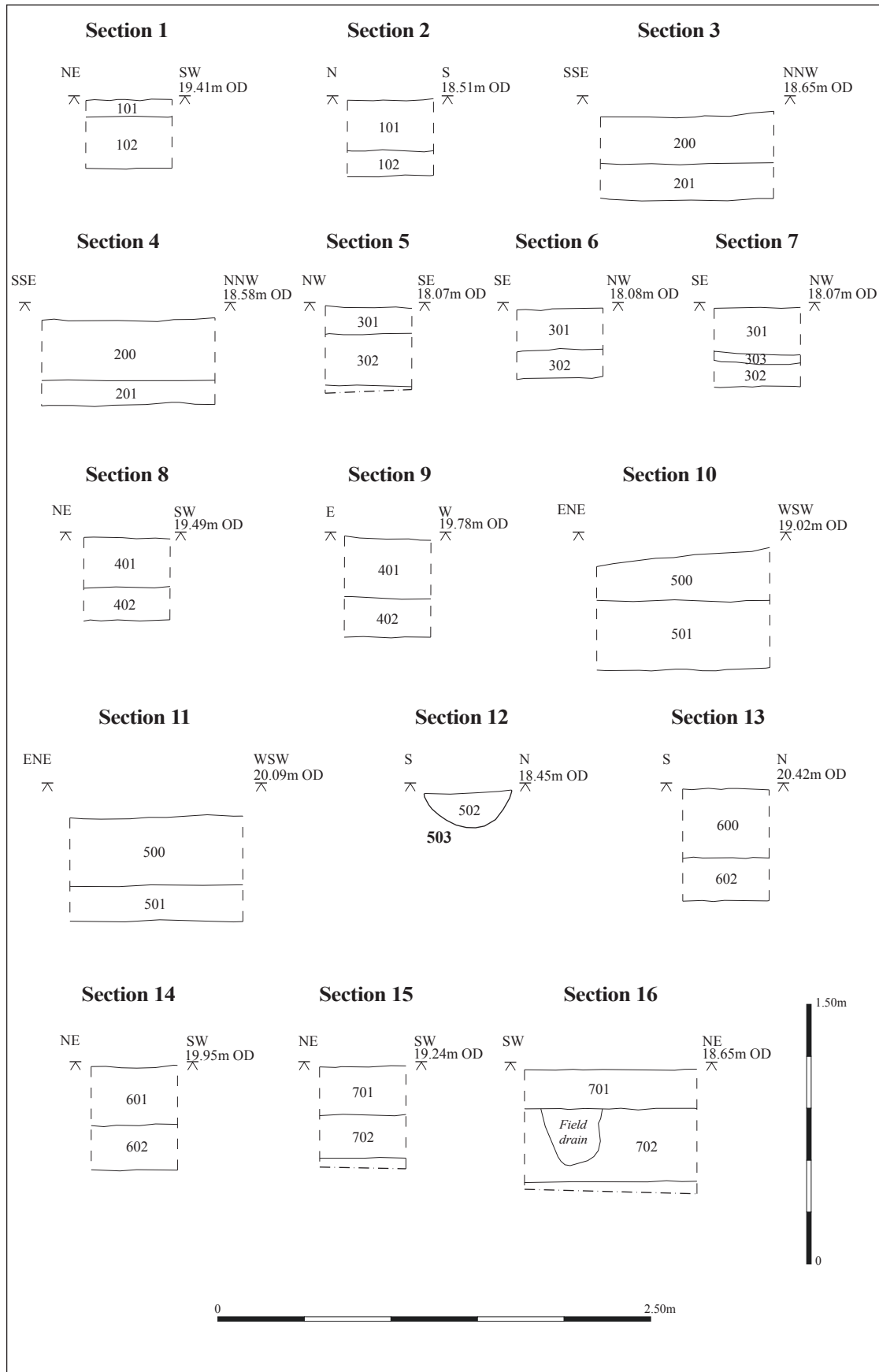
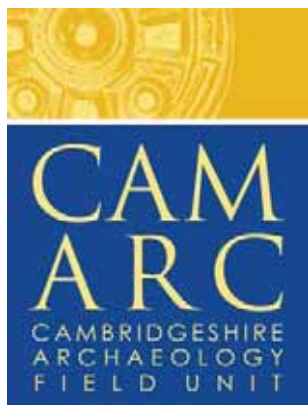


Figure 3: Section drawings



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