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**Land to the rear of
33-43 ICKWELL ROAD
Northill, Bedfordshire**

HN1074

***ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EVALUATION REPORT***

THE HERITAGE NETWORK LTD

Registered with the Institute of Field Archaeologists as an Archaeological Organisation

Archaeological Director: David Hillelson, BA MIFA

**Land to the rear of
33-43 ICKWELL ROAD
Northill, Bedfordshire**

**Project ref.: HN1074
LPA ref.: CB/13/01187/PAPC
Accession No: BEDFM 2013.33**

Archaeological Evaluation

Prepared on behalf of Irwin and Simpson Property Development

by

James Snee, BSc (HONS) AIFA

Report no. 812

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The front cover shows the site, looking southwest

Acknowledgements

The evaluation fieldwork for this project was carried out by Robin Densem, Jenny Heinzelmann and James Snee and the report text and illustrations were compiled by James Snee and edited by David Hillelson.

The Heritage Network would like to express its thanks to Alan Irwin of Irwin and Simpson Property Developments, and Hannah Firth, Archaeology Team (AT) of Central Bedfordshire Council, for their co-operation and assistance in the execution of this project.

Summary

Site name and address:	Land to the rear of 33-43 Ickwell Road, Northill, Bedfordshire, SG18 9AB		
County:	Bedfordshire	District:	Central Bedfordshire
Village/town:	Northill	Parish:	Northill
Planning reference:	n/a	NGR:	TL 1503 4630
Client name and address:	Irwin and Simpson Property Developments, Unit 18, High Barns Farm, Roxton, Bedfordshire, MK44 3ET		
Nature of work:	Rural residential	Current land use:	Waste land
Site Status:	None	Reason for investigation:	Direction of local planning authority (NPPF)
Position in planning process:	Pre-application	Project brief originator:	Local Authority
Size of affected area:	c. 1530m ²	Size of area investigated:	120m ²
Site code:	HN1074	Alternate reference:	n/a
Organisation:	Heritage Network	Site Director:	David Hillelson
Project type, methods etc...	Field evaluation	Archive recipient:	Bedford Museum
Start of work:	23/07/2013	Finish of work:	25/07/2013
Related HER nos:	n/a	Periods represented:	Post-medieval, Modern
OASIS UID:	heritage1-153944	Significant finds:	Brick, Pot, Claypipe
Monument types:	Ditch, Pit, Structure		
Physical archive:	Brick, Pot, Claypipe		
Previous summaries/reports:	Snee, J. 2013 Land to the rear of 33-43 Ickwell Road, Northill, Bedfordshire; Interim Summary (Heritage Network report number 802)		

Synopsis:

In order to characterise the archaeological potential of the site of a proposed new development on land to the rear of 33-43 Ickwell Road, Northill, Bedfordshire, the Heritage Network was commissioned to undertake an archaeological field evaluation by trial trenching prior to the submission of a planning application for construction of two new dwellings with associated services, access and landscaping.

Three trenches were excavated across the site. Evidence of brick making was recovered from features in Trenches 2 and 3. A large pit or pond feature and the edge of a possible brick clamp kiln were revealed in Trench 3. Brick wasters, pottery sherds, and clay pipe dating to the late 17th/early 18th century were recovered during the course of this investigation.

On the basis of the results of the evaluation, the risk that the proposed development might disturb further archaeological remains of significance may be considered to be *Low* for the prehistoric, Iron Age, Romano-British, Anglo-Saxon and medieval periods, increasing to *High* for the post medieval period. Due to the presence of evidence for an important regional industry, the potential significance of such remains may be considered to be *Moderate*.

1 Introduction

1.1 This report has been prepared at the request of Irwin and Simpson Property Developments, to cover a programme of archaeological work carried out in advance of the submission of an application for planning permission for the proposed development of land to the rear of 33 to 43 Ickwell Road, Northill, Bedfordshire.

1.2 An application for planning permission for the development is intended to be submitted to Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC). On the advice of the Council's Archaeology Team (AT), and in line with paragraph 128 of the Department of Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF), further information regarding the impact of the proposed development on the historic environment has been requested. The extent of the information required has been defined in a *Brief for a Programme of Archaeological Field Evaluation at the Land to the rear of 33 – 43 Ickwell Road, Northill, Bedfordshire* (HF 03/06/2013), prepared by the Archaeology Team (AT). A full specification for the work is contained in the Heritage Network's approved Project Design, dated July 2013.

1.3 The proposed development site forms a strip of land on the eastern side of Ickwell Road, behind nos.33-43 which occupy the frontage, centred on NGR TL 1503 4630 (Figure 1). The site borders the Northill Conservation Area (DBD 3293) to the north, but the boundary of the defined medieval settlement (HER 17121) crosses the middle of the site. Northill is a medieval manorial settlement and the planning authority has been advised by the AT that development of the site could have an impact on buried remains that would constitute heritage assets of archaeological interest.

1.4 The aim of the evaluation has been to consider the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any remains that are liable to be threatened by the development, and to provide a local and regional, archaeological and historical context for them, in accordance with the current published regional research agenda (Glazebrook 1997, Brown and Glazebrook 2000, Oake *et al* 2007, Medlycott 2011), should they be discovered. It was considered that such investigation had the potential to identify archaeological deposits which might contribute to an understanding of the origins and development of Northill as an Anglo-Saxon and medieval settlement.

1.5 The development proposes the construction of two new dwellings with associated services, access and landscaping.

2 Fieldwork

TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

2.1 The proposed development lies on the northeastern end of the Mid Greensand Ridge (6b), on the outskirts of Northill village. The Mid Greensand Ridge forms a large scale ridge with a gently undulating ridge top characterised by medium to small villages and predominantly linear hamlets set in a mixed landscape of woodland, arable farming and residual heathland. The northeastern end overlooks the Lower Ivel Clay Valley (4b) (Land Use Consultants 2009). The site lies on fairly level ground at approximately 30mAOD.

2.2 Locally the soils belong to the Evesham 3 Association (411c) which are described as *“Slowly permeable calcareous clayey, and fine loamy over clayey soils. Some slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged non-calcareous clayey soils”* (SSEW 1983).

2.3 The underlying geology consists of mudstones of the Oxford Clay Formation, sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 154 to 164 million years ago in the Jurassic Period (British Geological Society website).

METHODOLOGY

2.4 All fieldwork was carried out in accordance with the approved Project Design, current health and safety legislation, and the appropriate IfA and ALGAO guidance documents.

2.5 The overburden was removed, under close supervision, to the first significant archaeological horizon, or to the natural geological horizon, as appropriate using a wheeled mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.6m wide toothless bucket.

2.6 Spoil from the machining was scanned for archaeological artefacts both visually and using a metal detector.

2.7 The exposed area was cleaned by hand, and potential archaeological features and deposits were sampled to ascertain their nature, depth, date, and quality of preservation.

2.8 All identified contexts were photographed and recorded using the appropriate pro-forma. Scaled plans and sections were drawn on drafting film at scales of 1:10 and 1:20.

RESULTS

2.9 Three trial trenches were excavated across the site. These were located with reference to the site boundaries, and formed a general sample of the site area (Figure 2).

Trench 1

2.10 Trench 1 was located towards the north end of the site and was oriented northeast-southwest. It measured 20m long by 2m wide and was excavated to a depth of c. 0.6m below the existing ground level (Figures 3 & 4, Plate 1).

Recorded data:

Length (m):	20.0	Width (m):	2.0	Maximum Depth (m):	0.60	Orientation	NE-SW	
Level at NE End of Trench (mOD)			Top	31.73	Level at SW End of Trench (mOD)		Top	31.17
			Base	31.11			Base	30.78
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)					
			Length	Width	Depth			
-	Layer	Gley 2 5/1 Greenish grey sandy silty clay with occasional pebbles and CBM.	> 20.0	> 6.0	0.35			
-	Layer	10YR 6/8 Brownish yellow slightly sandy silty clay.	> 20.0	> 6.0	0.25			
101	Cut	Curvilinear with steep sides and a flat base, oriented northeast-southwest, curving to north.	3.00	0.15	0.08			
102	Fill	10YR 4/4 Dark yellowish brown silty clay, with occasional gravel.	3.00	0.15	0.08			
103	Cut	Oval, with sloping sides and a stepped base.	0.74	0.54	0.15			
104	Fill	10YR 4/2 Dark greyish brown silty clay, with occasional gravel.	0.74	0.54	0.15			
105	Cut	Linear, with steep sides.	> 3.10	0.85	> 0.45			
106	Fill	10YR 4/4 Dark yellowish brown silty clay, with occasional gravel.	> 3.10	0.85	> 0.45			
107	Cut	Square, with steep sides and a flat base.	1.10	1.10	0.20			
108	Fill	10YR 5/6 Yellowish brown silty clay, with occasional gravel.	1.10	1.10	0.20			
109	Cut	Sub-rectangular, with sloping sides and a flat base, oriented northeast-southwest.	1.90	1.40	0.12			
110	Fill	10YR 5/4 Yellowish brown silty clay, with occasional gravel.	1.90	1.40	0.12			
111	Cut	Sub-circular, with steep sides and a rounded base.	1.20	> 0.35	0.32			
112	Fill	10YR 5/4 Yellowish brown silty clay with occasional gravel.	1.20	> 0.35	0.32			
113	Cut	Oval, with steep sides and a rounded base.	0.22	0.20	0.16			
114	Fill	10YR 4/2 Dark greyish brown silty clay, with occasional gravel.	0.22	0.20	0.16			
115	Cut	Circular, with irregular sloping sides and a rounded base.	0.17	0.17	0.14			
116	Fill	10YR 4/2 Dark greyish brown silty clay, with occasional gravel.	0.17	0.17	0.14			
-	Layer	10YR 8/6 Yellow silty clay.	> 20.0	> 2.0	> 0.20			

2.11 The stratigraphy in Trench 1 comprised c. 0.35m of greenish grey sandy silty clay topsoil, overlying c. 0.25m of brownish yellow slightly sandy silty clay subsoil, over yellow silty clay natural.

2.12 Cutting into the natural substratum at the southwestern end of the trench was a narrow curved linear feature [101], filled with dark yellowish brown silty clay (102) (Figures 3 & 4, Plate 2). Three sherds of post-medieval/modern pottery were recovered from this fill, with three fragments of tile.

2.13 To the northeast of linear [101] was an oval pit [103], filled with dark greyish brown silty clay (104) that contained finds of post-medieval/modern pottery and tile (Figures 3 & 4, Plate 3).

2.14 In the middle of the trench was a linear cut [105], oriented approximately north-south (Figures 3 & 4, Plate 4), containing a ceramic drain and a dark yellowish brown silty clay fill

(106). To the east of this linear was a shallow sub-rectangular cut [107] with a yellowish brown silty clay fill (108). Finds of post-medieval/modern pottery and tile were recovered from this fill (Figures 3 & 4, Plate 5).

2.15 At the northeast end of the trench was a second shallow sub-rectangular pit [109], filled with yellowish brown silty clay (110), which contained finds of post-medieval/modern pottery (Figures 3 & 4, Plate 6).

2.16 To the east of pipe trench [105], was the northwestern edge of a pit [111], filled with yellowish brown silty clay (112). Two possible postholes [113] and [115] were investigated; both had dark greyish brown silty clay fills (Figures 3 & 4, Plate 7).

Trench 2

2.17 Trench 2 was located to the south of Trench 1 and was oriented approximately northwest-southeast (Figure 2). It measured 20m long by 2m wide and was excavated down to a maximum depth of 0.5m (Figures 5 & 7, Plate 8).

Recorded Data

Length (m):	20.0	Width (m):	2.0	Maximum Depth (m):	0.50	Orientation	NW-SE
Level at NW End of Trench (mOD)		Top	30.79	Level at SE End of Trench (mOD)		Top	30.96
		Base	30.20			Base	30.42
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)				
			Length	Width	Depth		
-	Layer	10YR 4/1 Dark grey sandy silty clay with gravel and CBM fragments.	> 20.0	> 2.0	0.30		
-	Layer	10YR 6/6 Brownish yellow slightly sandy silty clay, with occasional gravel.	> 20.0	> 2.0	0.20		
201	Cut	Linear, with steep slightly irregular sides and a flattish base, oriented east-west.	> 3.00	0.86	0.30		
202	Fill	10YR 5/4 Yellowish brown slightly sandy silty clay with occasional gravel, frequent brick fragments and patches of 'salmon brick'.	> 3.00	0.86	0.30		
203	Cut	Linear, with near vertical sides and a flattish base, oriented east-west.	> 3.00	0.81	0.35		
204	Fill	10YR 5/4 Yellowish brown slightly sandy silty clay with occasional gravel and moderate brick fragments.	>3.00	0.81	0.35		
205	Cut	Sub-rectangular, with steep slightly irregular sides and a sloping base.	> 1.84	> 1.40	0.22		
206	Fill	10YR 5/4 Yellowish brown slightly sandy silty clay with occasional gravel and moderate brick fragments.	> 1.84	> 1.40	0.22		
-	Layer	10YR 8/6 Yellow silty clay.	> 20.0	> 2.0	> 0.20		

2.18 The stratigraphy in Trench 2 comprised c. 0.30m of dark grey sandy silty clay topsoil, overlying c. 0.20m of brownish yellow slightly sandy silty clay subsoil, over yellow silty clay natural.

2.19 Trench 2 contained two linear features and the base of a pit. In the middle of the trench was an approximately east-west oriented ditch [201] with a yellowish brown slightly sandy

silty fill (202). Fragments of brick and patches of ‘salmon brick’ were observed in the fill, and fragments of post-medieval and 17th/18th century clay pipe were collected (Figures 5 & 7, Plate 9).

2.20 Approximately 1.3m north of ditch [201], was a second parallel ditch [203]. This was filled with yellowish brown slightly sandy silty clay (204) that contained a number of post-medieval brick and tile fragments (Figures 5 & 7, Plate 10).

2.21 At the northwest end of the trench was a slightly irregular sub-rectangular pit [205], filled with yellowish brown slightly sandy silty clay (206) that contained fragments of 17th/18th century clay pipe and a considerable quantity of brick fragments of varying size (Figures 5 & 7, Plate 11). These appeared to be wasters of variable firing and of a fabric similar to the ‘salmon brick’ identified elsewhere on the site.

Trench 3

2.22 Trench 3 was located at the southern end of the site and was oriented approximately northeast-southwest. It measured 16m in length by 2m wide and was excavated to a maximum depth of c. 2.0m (Figures 6 & 7, Plate 13).

Recorded Data

Length (m):	16.0	Width (m):	2.0	Maximum Depth (m):	2.0	Orientation	NE-SW
Level at E End of Trench (mOD)		Top	91.84	Level at W End of Trench (mOD)		Top	92.02
		Base	91.36			Base	91.31
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)				
			Length	Width	Depth		
-	Layer	10YR 3/2 Very dark greyish brown sandy silty clay with occasional gravel and CBM fragments.	> 16.0	2.0	0.20		
301	Cut	Linear, with concave sloping sides and a rounded base, oriented north-south.	> 3.0	1.0	0.22		
302	Fill	10YR 8/6 Yellow silty clay with frequent ‘salmon’ brick.	> 3.0	1.0	0.22		
303	Cut	Sub-rectangular, with sloping sides, oriented north-south.	> 6.50	> 2.0	> 2.0		
304	Fill	10YR 5/2 Greyish brown silty clay with occasional gravel.	> 6.50	> 2.0	0.20		
305	Fill	10YR 2/1 Black sandy clayey silt with frequent ash and modern rubbish.	> 6.50	> 2.0	> 0.70		
306	Fill	10YR 8/4 Very pale brown silty clay.	2.50	> 2.0	0.30		
307	Fill	10YR 2/1 Black silty clay with occasional gravel.	> 3.50	> 2.0	0.50		
308	Fill	10YR 8/4 Very pale brown silty clay.	> 6.0	> 2.0	1.0		
-	Layer	10YR 8/8 Yellow silty sand.	> 16.0	2.0	> 1.8		

2.23 The stratigraphy in Trench 3 comprised c. 0.20m of dark greyish brown sandy silty clay topsoil, overlying yellow silty sand natural.

2.24 Approximately half way along the trench was a north-south oriented linear feature [301] with a yellow silty clay fill (302) that contained frequent patches of ‘salmon brick’ (Figures 6 & 7, Plate 14).

2.25 Approximately 1.5m to the west of linear [301] was the cut of a large pit or, possibly, a pond [303]. This contained a number of fills (Figures 6 & 7, Plate 12). The earliest observed was a 0.20m thick layer of greyish brown silty clay (304), overlain by black sandy clayey silt (305) that contained 20th century litter. Above (305) were a lens of very pale brown silty clay (306) and a layer of black silty clay (307). The final fill was very pale brown silty clay (308) that represented the backfilling of the feature with re-deposited natural.

FINDS ASSESSMENT

Finds Concordance

Context	Pottery		An Bone		Glass		CBM		Clay pipe		Other		Notes
	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	
102	3	20					3	70					
104	1	5					1	25					
106	6	40			1	20	29	1210	1	2			
108	2	15			1	3	3	40					
110							2 *1	35 235					*Brick
112					1	2	3	50	1	3			
114							1	10					
202	3	45	4	75			*12 2	2400 65	12	40	**1	10	*Brick **Fe Obj
204							2	45					
206							*16	8993	1	15			*Brick
302							3	565					
305	4	250			1	635					*1	160	*Ceramic Drain
Totals	16	330	5	75	4	660	80	13743	15	60	13	269	

Pottery

2.26 A total of sixteen sherds, weighing 330g, was recovered from across the site in six stratified contexts.

2.27 Trench 1 contained four contexts from which pottery was recovered, dating to the modern period. A total of three 20th century sherds, weighing 20g, was recovered from context (102), the fill of a curved linear [101]. One sherd of 20th century pottery, weighing 5g, was recovered from pit fill (104). Six sherds of 19th to 20th century pottery, weighing 40g, were recovered from pipe trench fill (106). A total of 2 sherds of 19th to 20th century pottery, weighing 15g, was recovered from pit fill (108).

2.28 In Trench 2, a total of three sherds, weighing 45g, were recovered from context (202), the fill of ditch [201]. These consisted of a sherd of clear glazed white slip decorated

earthenware, a sherd of black glazed earthenware, and one sherd of Westerwald salt glazed stoneware with cobalt blue decoration. All three sherds are post-medieval, but are of pottery types that have a long duration of use. The slip glazed pottery is likely to date to the early 18th century, the black glazed earthenware is undiagnostic, and blue decorated Westerwald stoneware began around 1650 and continued into the 20th century.

2.29 In Trench 3, four sherds of 20th century pottery were recovered from context (305), one of the lower fills of pit/pond [303].

Recommendations

2.30 As this assemblage is fragmentary, little further information of archaeological significance is likely to be obtained from the material. On this basis, no further work is proposed.

Ceramic Building Material

2.31 A total of eighty fragments of Ceramic Building Material (CBM), weighing 13743g, was recovered from eleven contexts across the site.

2.32 CBM was recovered from seven contexts in Trench 1. Fill (102) contained three fragments of tile, weighing 70g. A single fragment of brick, weighing 25g, was recovered from pit fill (104). A total of nine tile fragments, weighing 700g, and twenty fragments of brick, weighing 510g, were recovered from pipe trench fill (106). Pit fill (108) contained three fragments of brick, weighing 40g. Two fragments of brick and a single fragment of tile, weighing 270g, were recovered from pit fill (110). Three fragments of tile, weighing 50g, were collected from pit fill (112) and a single fragment of brick, weighing 10g, was found in possible post-hole fill (114). All of these dated to the late 19th to 20th century.

2.33 In Trench 2, CBM was recovered from three contexts.

- Ditch fill (202) contained two fragments of tile, weighing 65g, and twelve fragments of brick, weighing 2400g. The two fragments of tile were course, post-medieval roof tile, in a chalk tempered red fabric. The brick fragments were wasters, including examples that were either over fired or under fired. The brick fabric was badly-puddled and contained occasional gravel inclusions. The bricks were air dried, and one fragment contains a perpendicular stack mark. Although no complete bricks were recovered from this context, it could be determined that the finished bricks were 105mm (approximately 4 inches) wide and 64mm (approximately 2½ inches) high.
- Two fragments of post-medieval tile, weighing 45g, were recovered from ditch fill (204).
- A total of sixteen fragments of brick, weighing 8993g, was recovered from pit fill (206). These were badly-puddled and irregularly fired brick fragments, probably wasters. The fabric contained iron intrusions and gravel inclusions. The bricks were air dried and there was evidence of perpendicular stack marks. Two of the bricks were near complete and it was possible to determine the size of the finished bricks as 105mm (approximately 4 inches) wide, 64mm (approximately 2½ inches) high, and 215mm (approximately 8½ inches) long.

2.34 In Trench 3, three fragments of poorly fired brick, weighing 565g, were recovered from amongst the 'salmon' brick debris in ditch fill (302). These had badly-puddled fabric with gravel inclusions, and the largest fragment had the remains of a perpendicular stack mark.

2.35 All of the brick fragments from Trenches 2 and 3, were wasters and a by-product of brick making. Incomplete wasters that were of reasonable hardness, were used as footing bricks on sites close to the centre of brick making; usually within a quarter of a mile radius (400m). 'Salmon' brick, however, is not transported from the brick making site and is only re-used in covering the outside off the brick clamps. The presence of 'salmon' brick is likely to constitute direct evidence for brick making on this site.

Recommendations

2.36 The brick from this site represents a useful archaeological resource for interpreting and dating brick structures within the local area. On this basis, the brick should be retained as a reference collection of Northill brick.

Animal Bone

2.37 A total of four animal bone fragments, weighing 75g, was recovered from ditch fill (202). Two were small undiagnostic fragments, the others were a fragment of cow scapula and a fragment of sheep/goat metatarsus.

Recommendations

2.38 Given the fragmentary nature of the material, no further work is proposed on this assemblage.

Glass

2.39 Three fragments of glass and a glass bottle, weighing 660g, were recovered from four contexts across the site. Two pieces of clear window glass were recovered pit fills (108) and (112). A fragment of clear bottle glass was recovered from pipe trench fill (106). A whole cod bottle was recovered from fill (305) in Trench 3. This was marked on the side MARSOM & SONS, NORTHILL, BIGGLESWADE. The maker is given on the other side as RYLANDS 4 BARNSELY. The base is marked M & S. Documents from the Bedfordshire & Luton Archives & Records Service show that Martha Marsom purchased The Crown public house in 1913 as the licensee [GK141/1], and that she sold it in 1914 to Bedford brewers Newland and Nash [GK141/3]. Parish records dating between 1895 and 1907 [P10/1/21] show Martha Marsom to be resident at The Crown during this period. The Crown is located at no.2 Ickwell Road, immediately south of the church.

Recommendations

2.40 Given the late date of the assemblage, no further work is proposed on this material.

Clay Pipe

2.41 A total of fifteen clay pipe fragments, weighing 60g, was recovered from four contexts across the site.

2.42 Undateable fragments of clay pipe stem were recovered from pipe trench fill (106), and pit fill (112).

2.43 Eight fragments of stem and four fragments of pipe bowl were recovered from ditch fill (202). These fragments all appear to come from the same form of pipe; the bowls are of large capacity, with a sloping top and a flat heel. This type of clay pipe dates from the late 17th to the early 18th century.

2.44 A single clay pipe bowl, weighing 15g, was recovered from pit fill (206). This was a large capacity bowl with a sloping top and a flat heel, dating from the late 17th to the early 18th century.

Recommendations

2.45 Given the fragmentary nature of the material, no further work is proposed on this assemblage.

Metalwork

2.46 A single fragment of a square section hand forged nail, weighing 10g, was recovered ditch fill (202). This nail is probably post-medieval in date, and probably pre-dates the introduction of cut nails in the late 18th century.

Recommendations

2.47 No further work is proposed on this item.

3 Discussion

Archaeological Background

3.1 The Central Bedfordshire and Luton Historic Environment Record (HER) lists all documented heritage assets within the Central Bedfordshire and Luton Borough administrative districts, including evidence of archaeological activity, ranging from chance finds to full-scale excavations. The HER was consulted on 05th July 2013, covering a 500m radius from the site centre.

- Two or three Roman burials were found in Church Field in the mid-19th century (HER 425), c.500m to the southwest, and chance finds of Roman pottery have been made in Home Wood (HER 430), between 500 and 1000m to the west.
- Northill is first mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1087 as *Nortgiuele*, interpreted as ‘the Northern settlement of the tribe called Gifle’ (Mills 2011), the local Saxon tribe that gives its name to the river Ivel. This suggests that the settlement is Saxon in origin, though an earlier Roman settlement cannot be ruled out.
- The settlement is focused on St Mary’s Church (HER 2085), 300m to the north-northwest, which is mainly 14th century in date, and Northill Manor (HER 14910), 300m to the northwest, which is no longer extant but is likely to have been medieval in origins.
- A long rectangular pond (HER 15371), 250m to the north-northeast, is believed to be a medieval fishpond.
- Chance finds of late-medieval silver coins under the floor in the church (HER 426), and a medieval or post-medieval buckle from a garden in Garner Close (HER 15994), 200m to the north, are also indicative of medieval activity.
- Ickwell Bury Park (DBD 4533), a Grade II registered park, occupies a 140ha site on the western side of Ickwell Road.
- An imported decorated 17th century tile (HER 3452), was recovered c.250m to the northeast.
- A cluster of listed buildings of post-medieval date lie between 50 and 150m to the north (DBD 2881, DBD 3565, DBD 3783, DBD 3945, DBD 3951).
- The enclosure map of 1781 shows the present site occupied by a line of four buildings.

Research Design

3.2 The aim of the evaluation has been to consider the location, depth, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any remains that were liable to be threatened by the development, and to provide a local and regional, archaeological and historical context for them, in accordance with the current published regional research agenda (Brown and Glazebrook 2000, Medlycott and Brown 2008, Medlycott 2011), should they have been discovered.

3.3 It was considered that such an investigation had the potential to contribute to an understanding of the origins and development of Northill, from the prehistoric period onwards, with particular emphasis on the Saxon and medieval periods.

Collected Data

3.4 The archaeological evaluation revealed a number of archaeological features spread across the three trial trenches.

3.5 In Trench 1 there were a number of oval and sub-square pits that could be dated to the late post-medieval period by finds of pottery, brick and tile. The most likely interpretation of these features is that they were for planting. The linear feature [105] that traversed the trench in a north-south direction, contained a ceramic drain pipe indicating that it was a modern drain. The curved linear feature [101] was dated to the later post-medieval period by finds of pottery, brick and tile and was probably a garden feature. The two possible postholes were also interpreted as garden features.

3.6 In Trench 2 there were two linear features and a pit. The most southerly linear, [201] contained fragments of low fired brick and patches of soft 'salmon' brick, materials often associated with brick making by the 'clamp' firing method. Finds of clay pipe suggest this feature dates from the late 17th or early 18th century. North of [201] was a second linear, [203] which may have been a property boundary. Finds of pottery, brick and tile from the fill of this feature suggest a post-medieval date. The rectangular pit at the northwest end of the trench [205] contained a number of brick fragments of the same fabric as the brick making debris. These were also found in association with a late 17th to early 18th century clay pipe bowl. Some of the brick fragments were improperly fired, being soft in places and over-fired and blued in others.

3.7 A large pit or pond [303], with relatively modern fills, and a north-south oriented ditch [301] were revealed in Trench 3. The northeast edge of the pit/pond was partially excavated by machine to a depth of 2.0m, the section exposed was rapidly recorded and then the pond was backfilled for considerations of safety. The nature of the fills for this feature is indicative of backfilling. It is possible that this large pit may have been used for extracting raw materials for the production of bricks.

3.8 The ditch [301] contained a fill with significant quantities of under fired, or 'salmon', brick.

3.9 An examination of records held in the Bedfordshire & Luton Archives & Records Service, revealed a mortgage document [HY396] from 1714 that makes reference to John Green of Northill and gives his occupation as brickmaker. The first edition of the 25-inch Ordnance Survey of 1883 shows a rectangular pond located in the southwest corner of the site and this is still extant in 1960. The first edition OS also shows a substantial clay pit and brick and tile works within c.500m to the south of the site.

Conclusion

3.10 The study area is located close to the historic core of the village of Northill, on land to the rear of numbers 33 to 43 Ickwell Road.

3.11 No evidence for settlement activity was recovered that predated the post-medieval period, despite the potential highlighted in the research aims for the project. Nevertheless, the trial trenching did reveal a number of archaeological features dating from the late 17th century onwards. The most significant features were revealed in the southern half of the site, where evidence of brick making was recovered from a ditch and a pit, and the edge of a possible brick clamp, was revealed in Trench 3. Brick clamps are large temporary kiln structures that appear to leave only the external foundation ditches as evidence. The presence of late 17th / early 18th century clay pipe in the same contexts as wasters from the brick making, would date the industry to around the turn of the 18th century. A contemporary account of the late 17th century brick making process can be found in *The Academy of Armory* by Randle Holme (Alcock & Cox 2001).

3.12 If brick making was taking place on the site, it is likely that the large pit or pond revealed in Trench 3, and identified on early Ordnance Survey maps, was the clay extraction pit for the manufacture.

3.13 Brick making was an important industry in Bedfordshire in the post-medieval period. Historical documents show *brickmaker* as a trade in Northill in 1714, and brick kilns are shown in the vicinity on the 1883 Ordnance Survey map.

3.14 On the basis of the results of the evaluation, the risk that the proposed development might disturb further archaeological remains of any significance may be considered to be *Low* for the prehistoric, Iron Age, Romano-British, Anglo-Saxon and medieval periods, increasing to *High* for the post medieval period. Due to the evidence of an important regional industry, the potential significance of such remains is considered to be *Moderate*.

Confidence Rating

3.15 During the course of the fieldwork, the conditions were generally acceptable for the identification of potential features and deposits, and for their investigation. There were no circumstances which would lead to a confidence rating for the work which was less than *High*.

4 Sources Consulted

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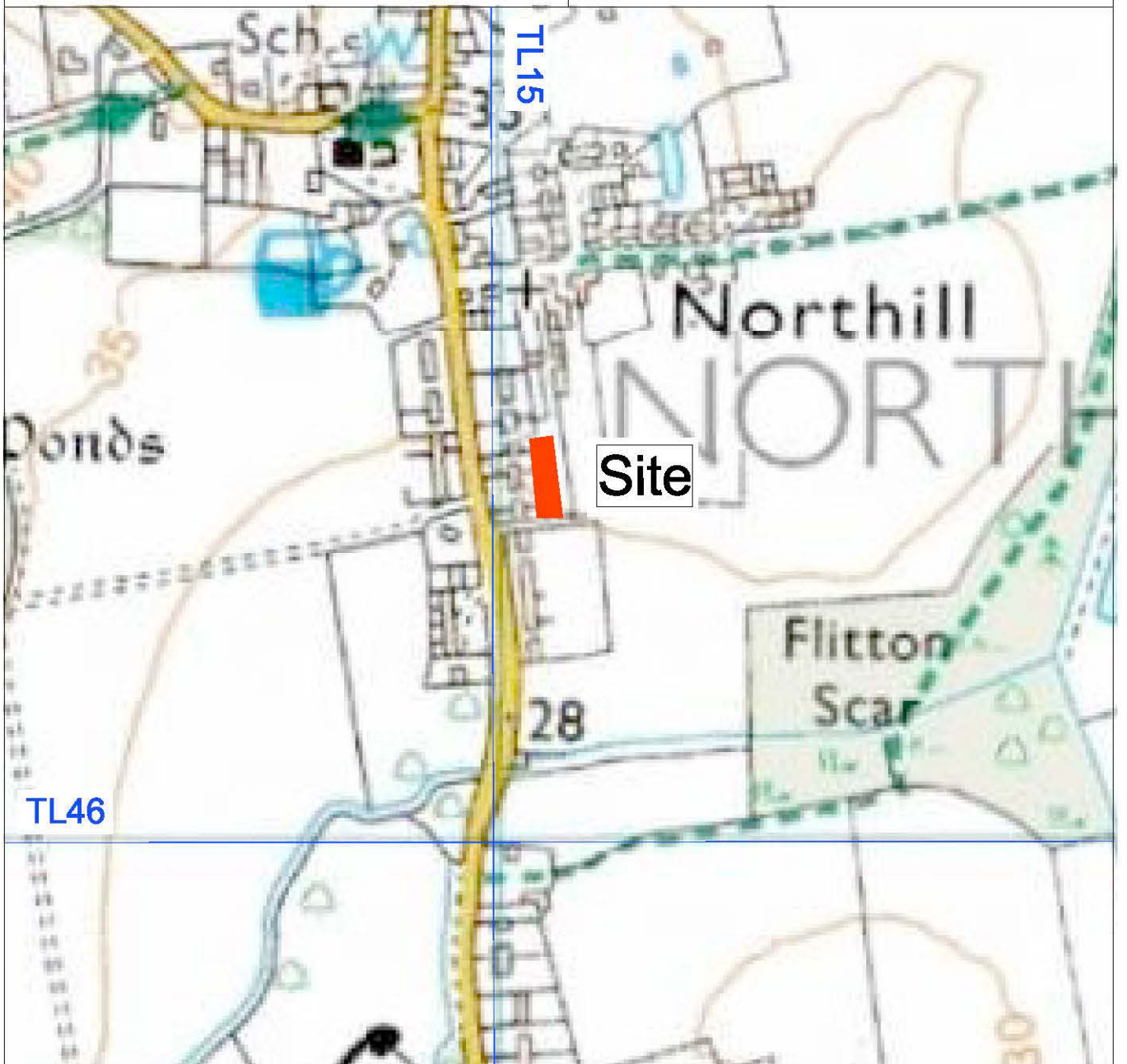
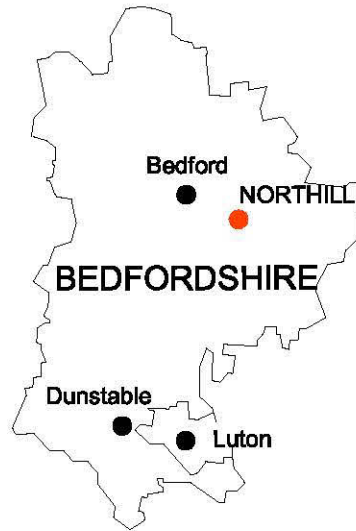
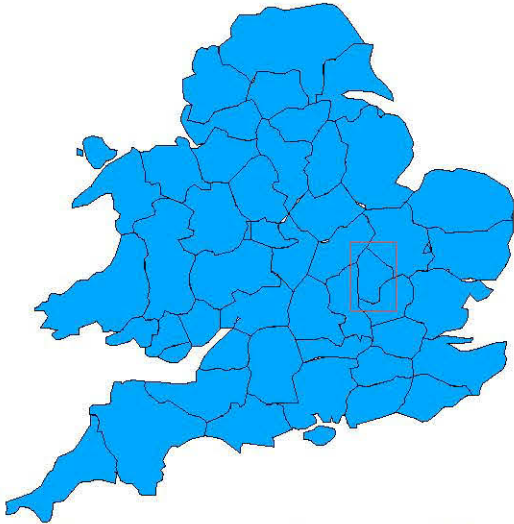
5 Illustrations

Figure 1	Site location
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Plate 2	Curved linear [101], looking north
Plate 3	Pit [103], looking southwest
Plate 4	Pipe trench [105], looking north
Plate 5	Pit [107], looking north
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Plate 7	Pit [111] and postholes [113] and [115], looking northeast
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THE HERITAGE NETWORK LTD

Land r/o 33-43 Ickwell Road, Northill

HN1074

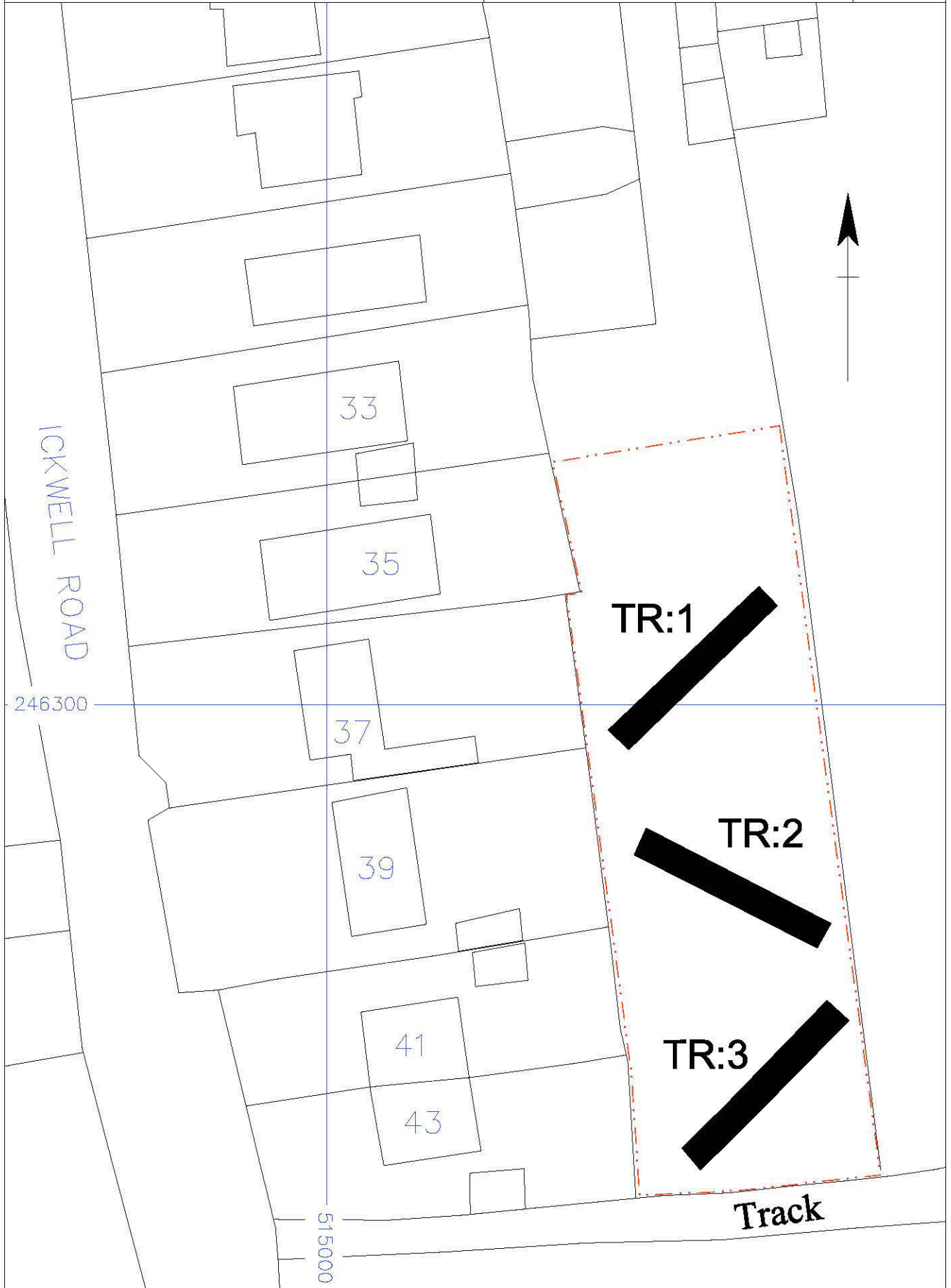


Site Location

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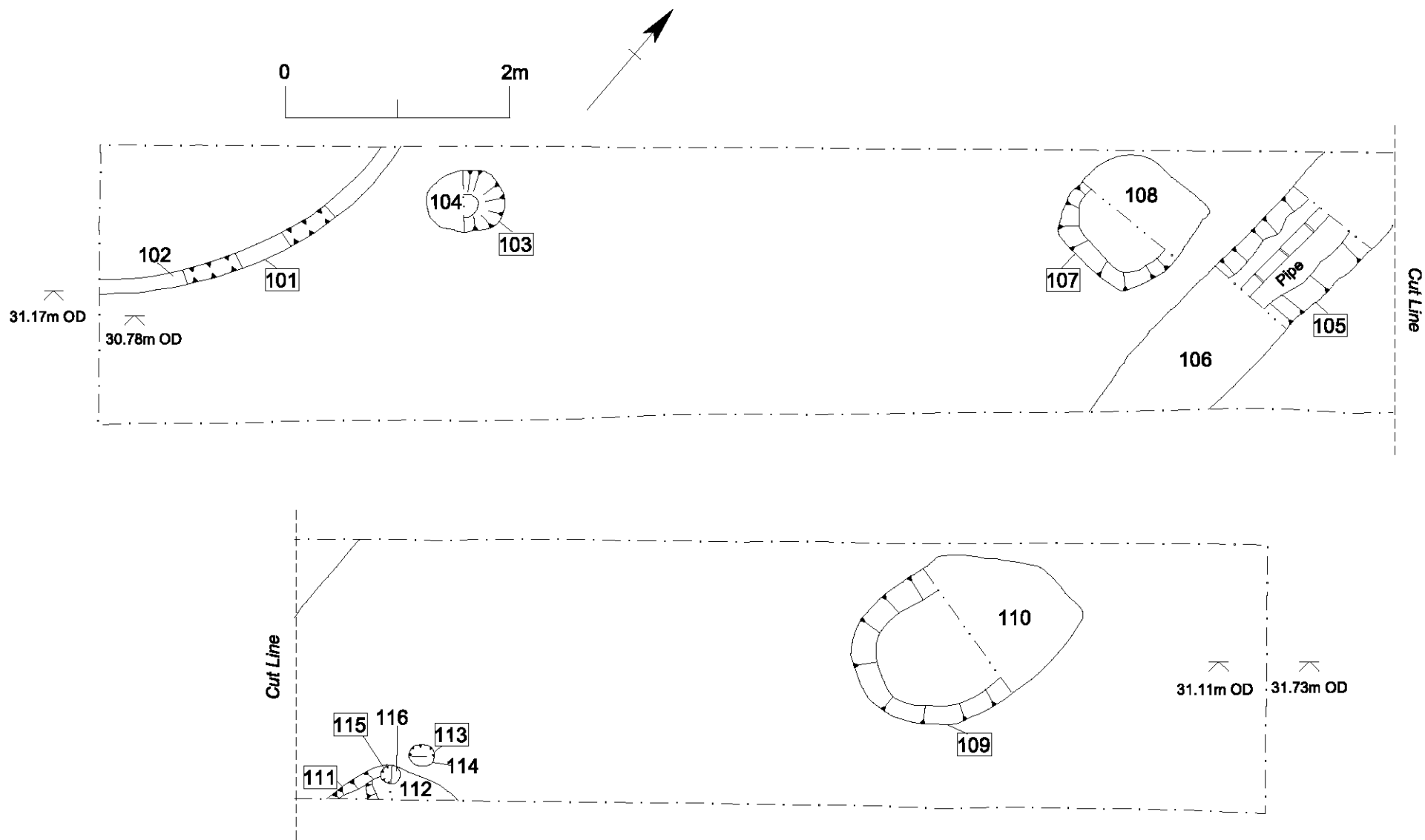
Figure 1



Proposed Trench Layout

Scale 1:500

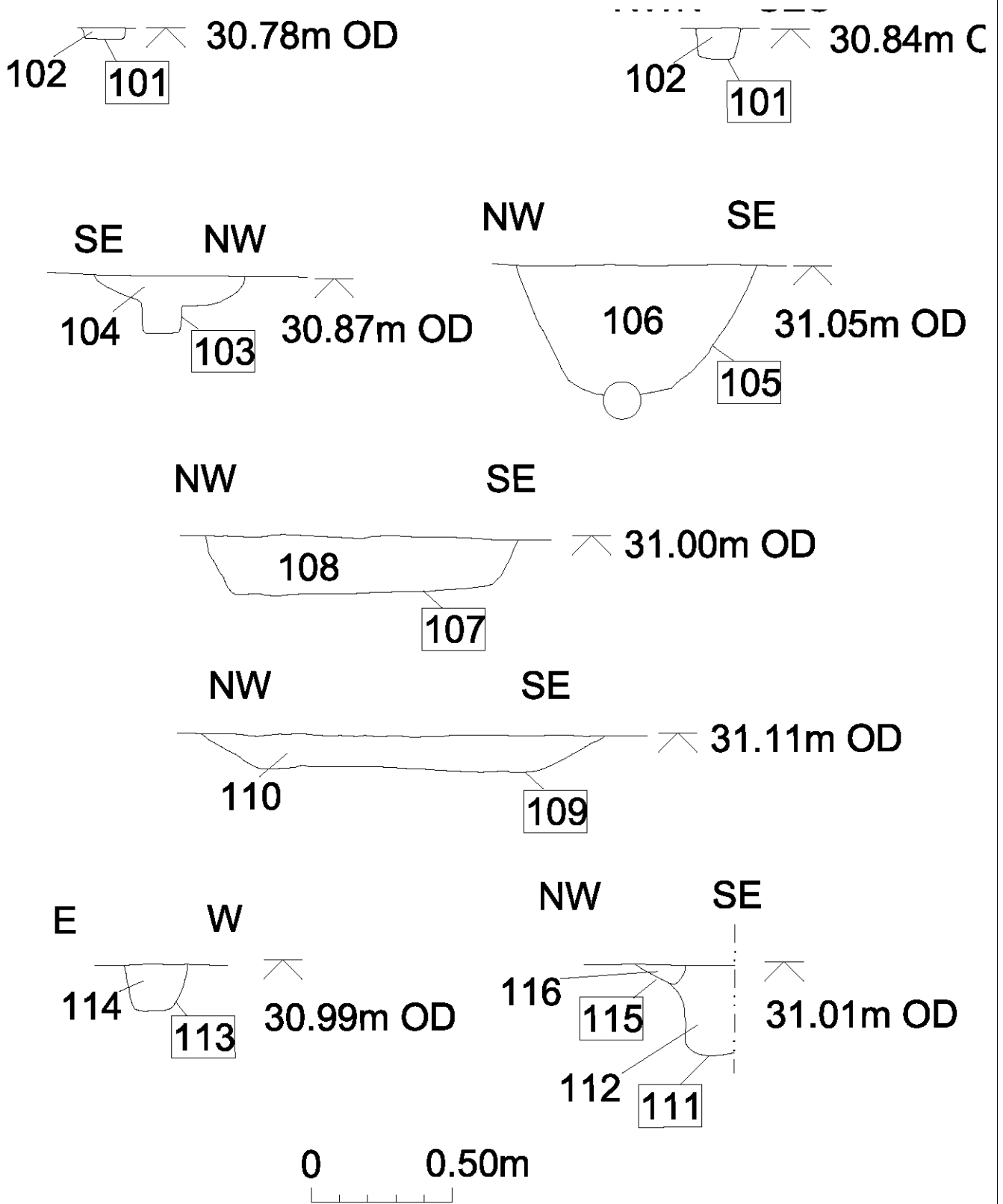
Figure 2



Trench 1: Plan

Scale 1:50

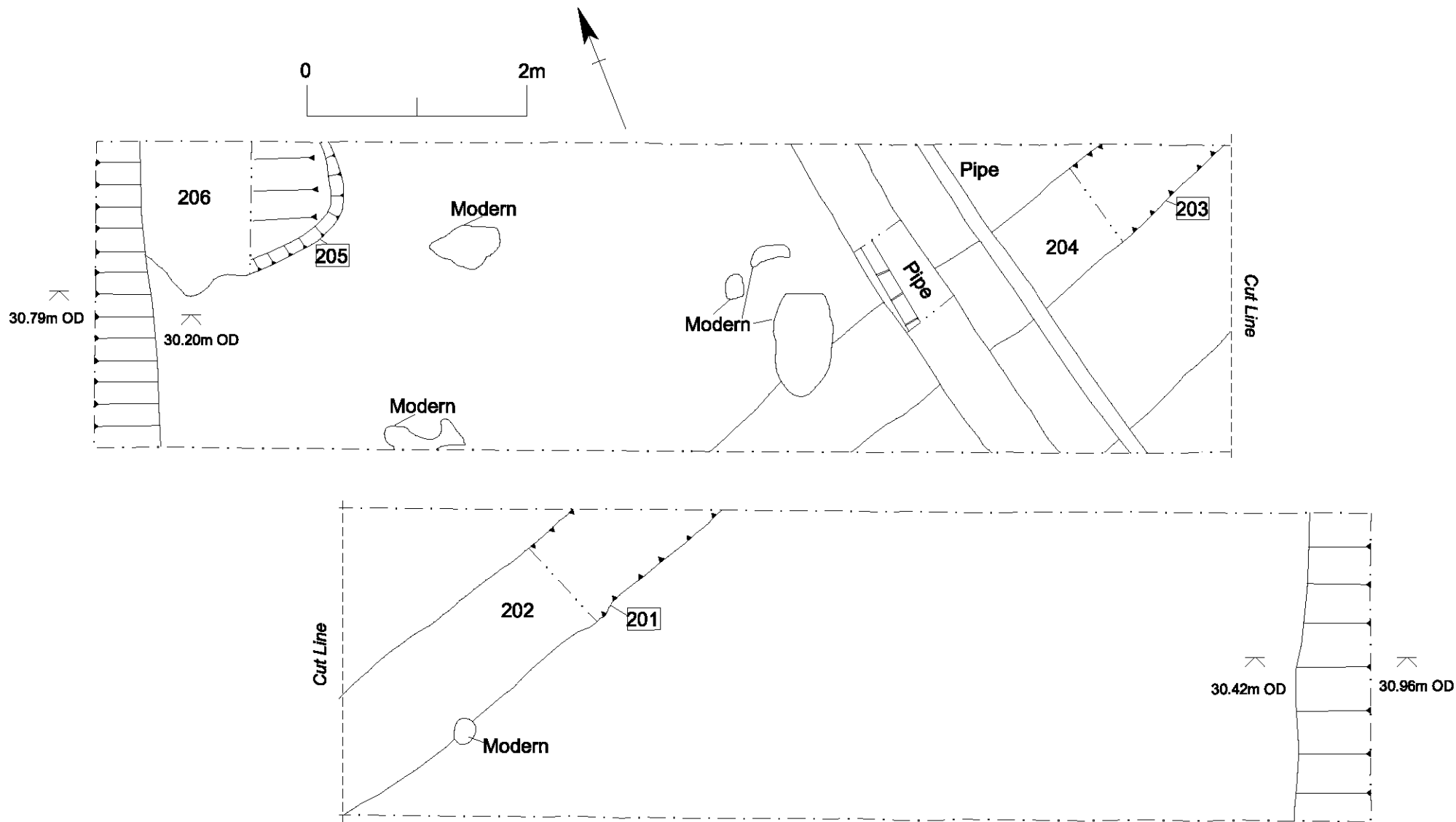
Figure 3



Trench 1: Sections

Scale 1:20

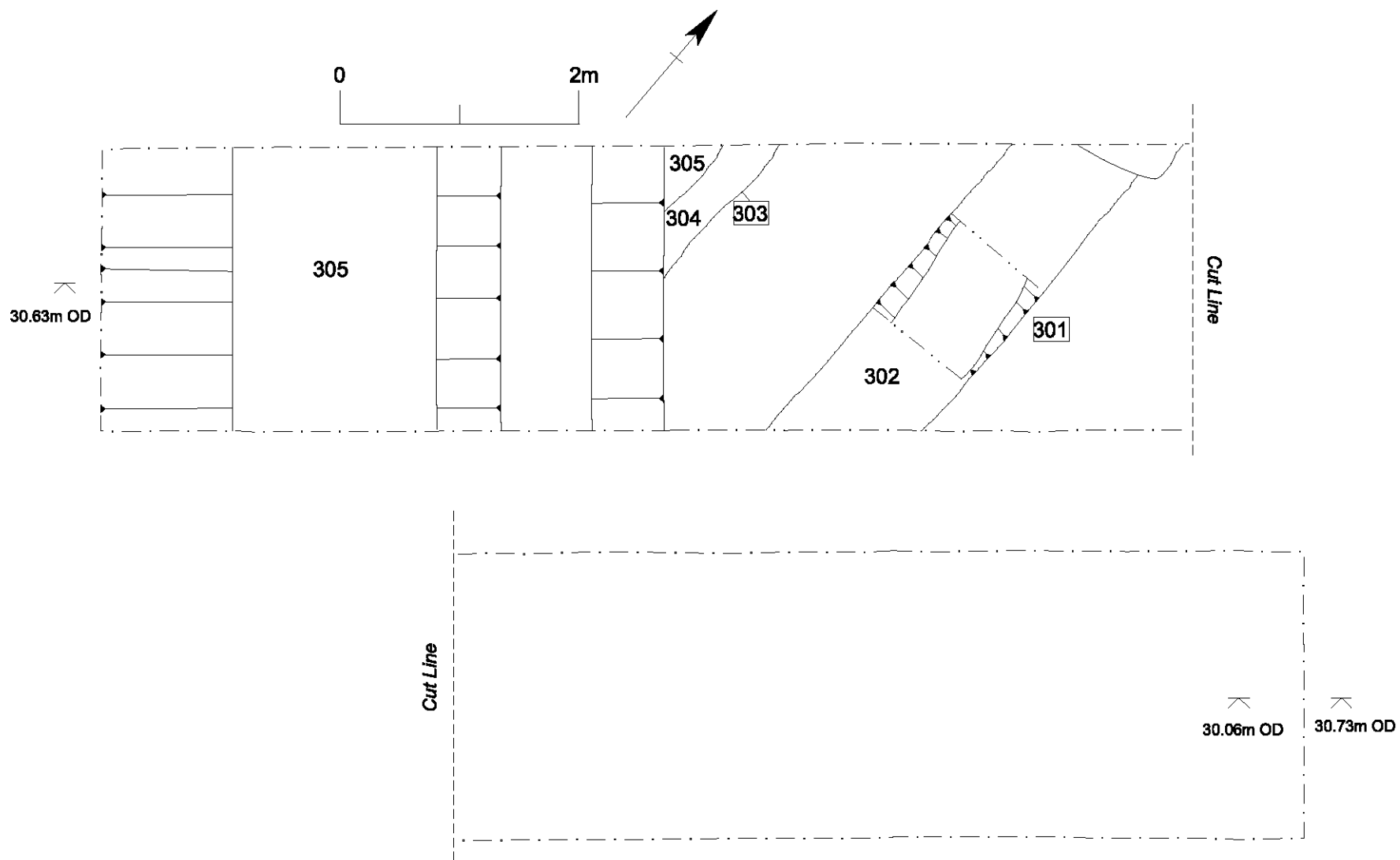
Figure 4



Trench 2: Plans

Scale 1:50

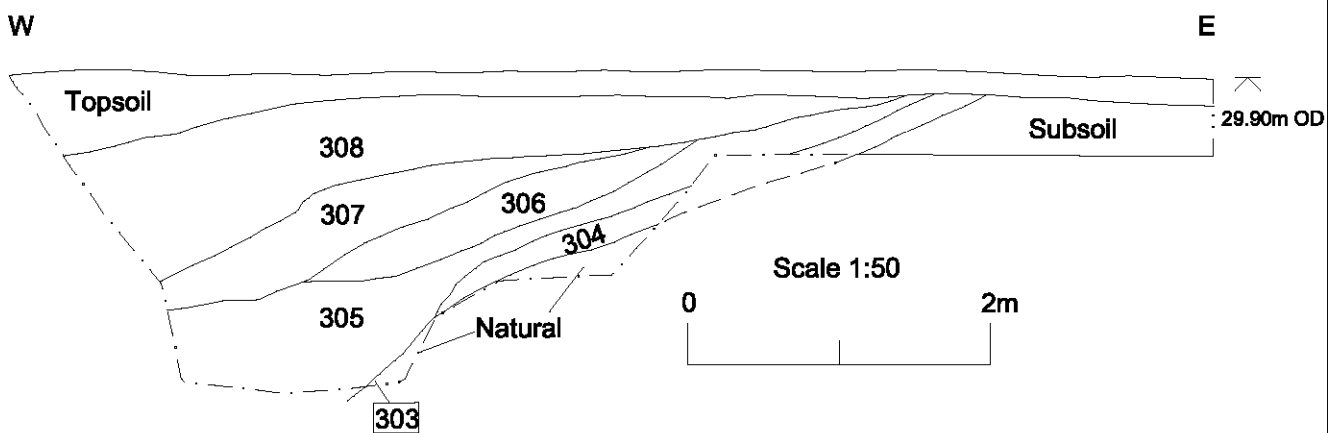
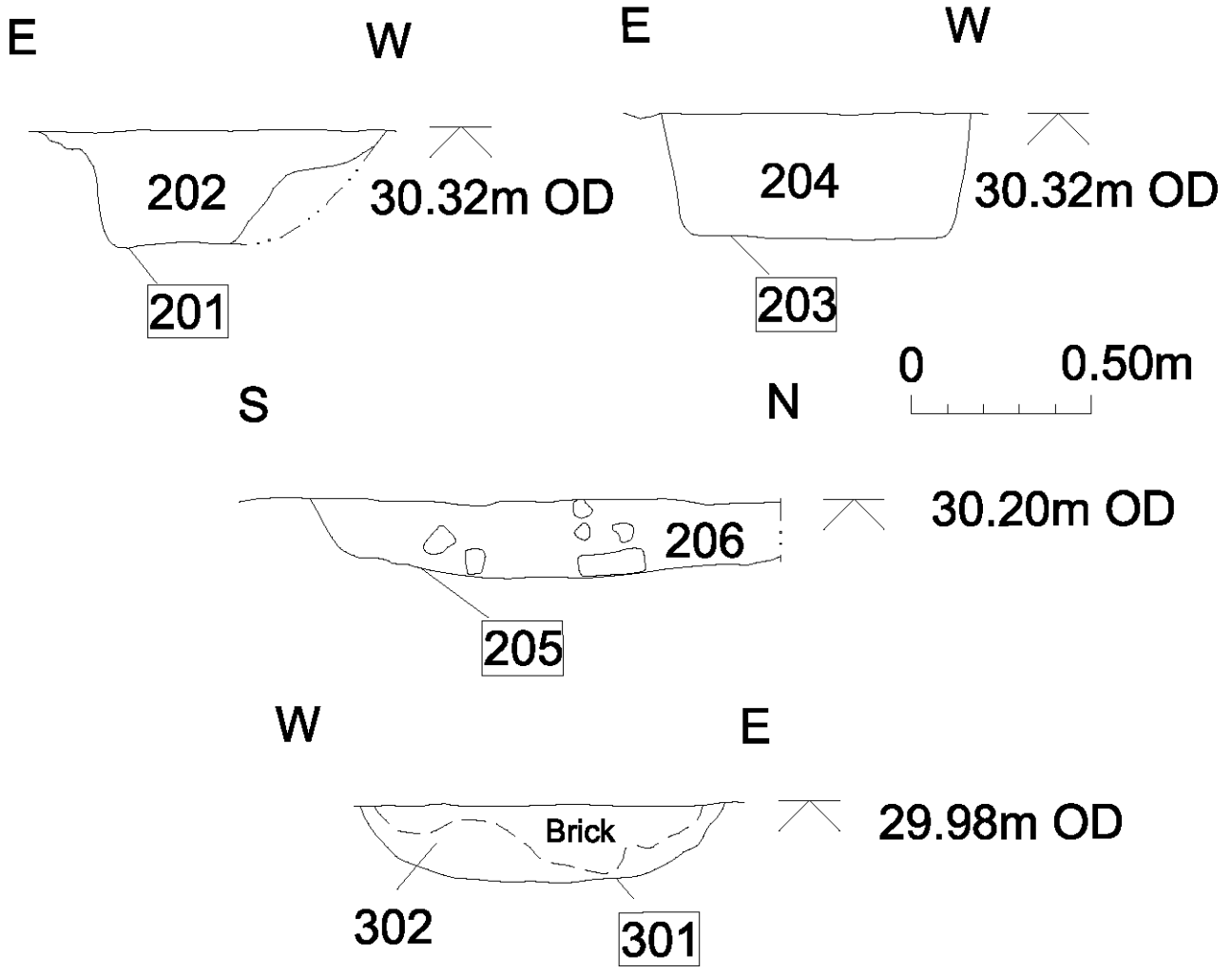
Figure 5



Trench 3: Plans

Scale 1:50

Figure 6



Trenches 2 and 3: Sections

Scale 1:20 & 1:50

Figure 7



Plate 1: Trench 1, looking northeast



Plate 2: Curved linear [101], looking north



Plate 3: Pit [103], looking southwest



Plate 4: Pipe trench [105], looking north



Plate 5: Pit [107], looking north



Plate 6: Pit [109], looking north



Plate 7: Pit [111] and postholes [113] and [115], looking northeast



Plate 8: Trench 2, looking southeast



Plate 9: Ditch [201], looking west



Plate 10: Ditch [203], looking west



Plate 11: Pit [205], looking northwest

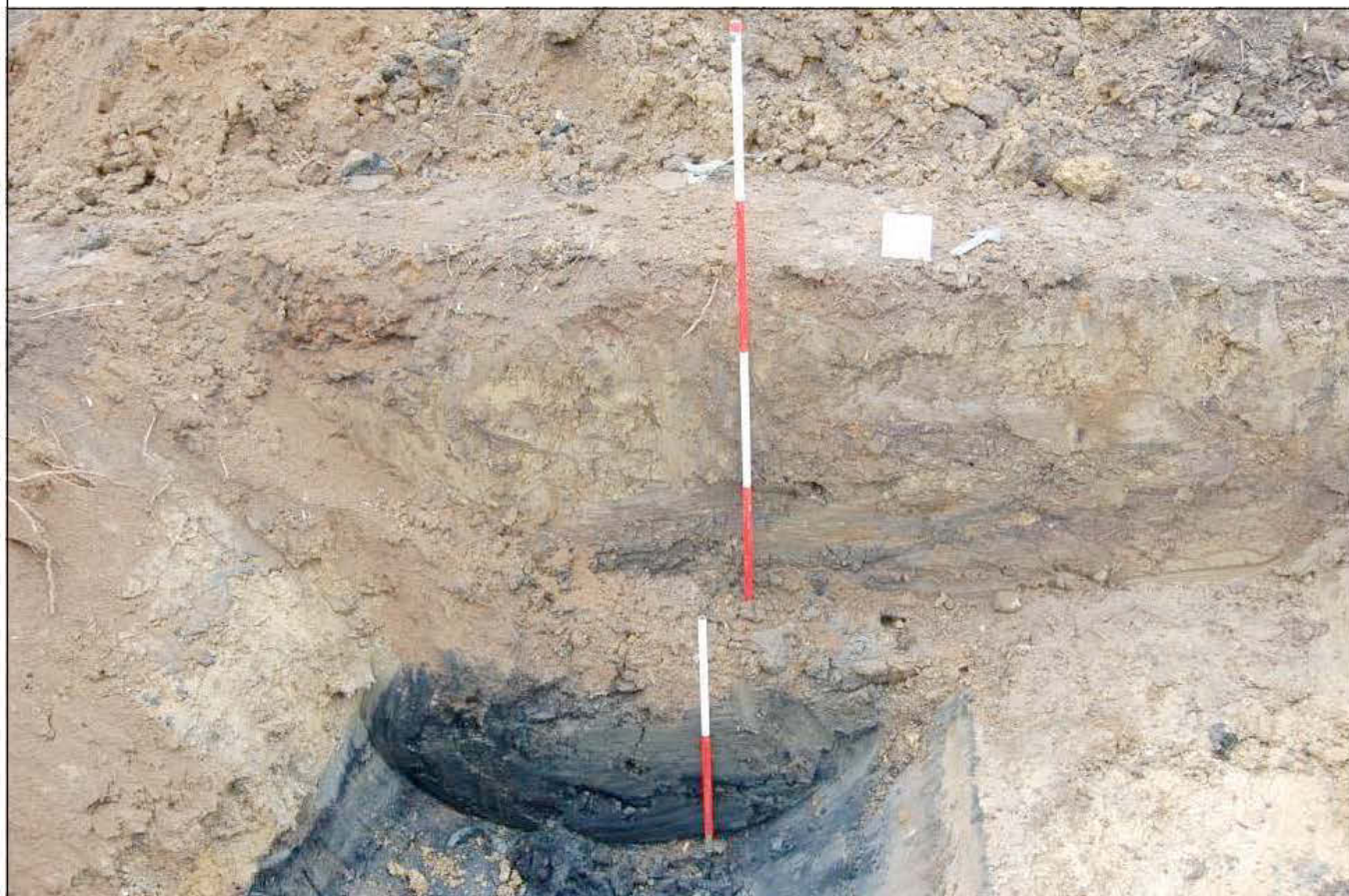


Plate 12: Trench 3, Pond [303], looking northwest



Plate 13: Trench 3, looking northeast

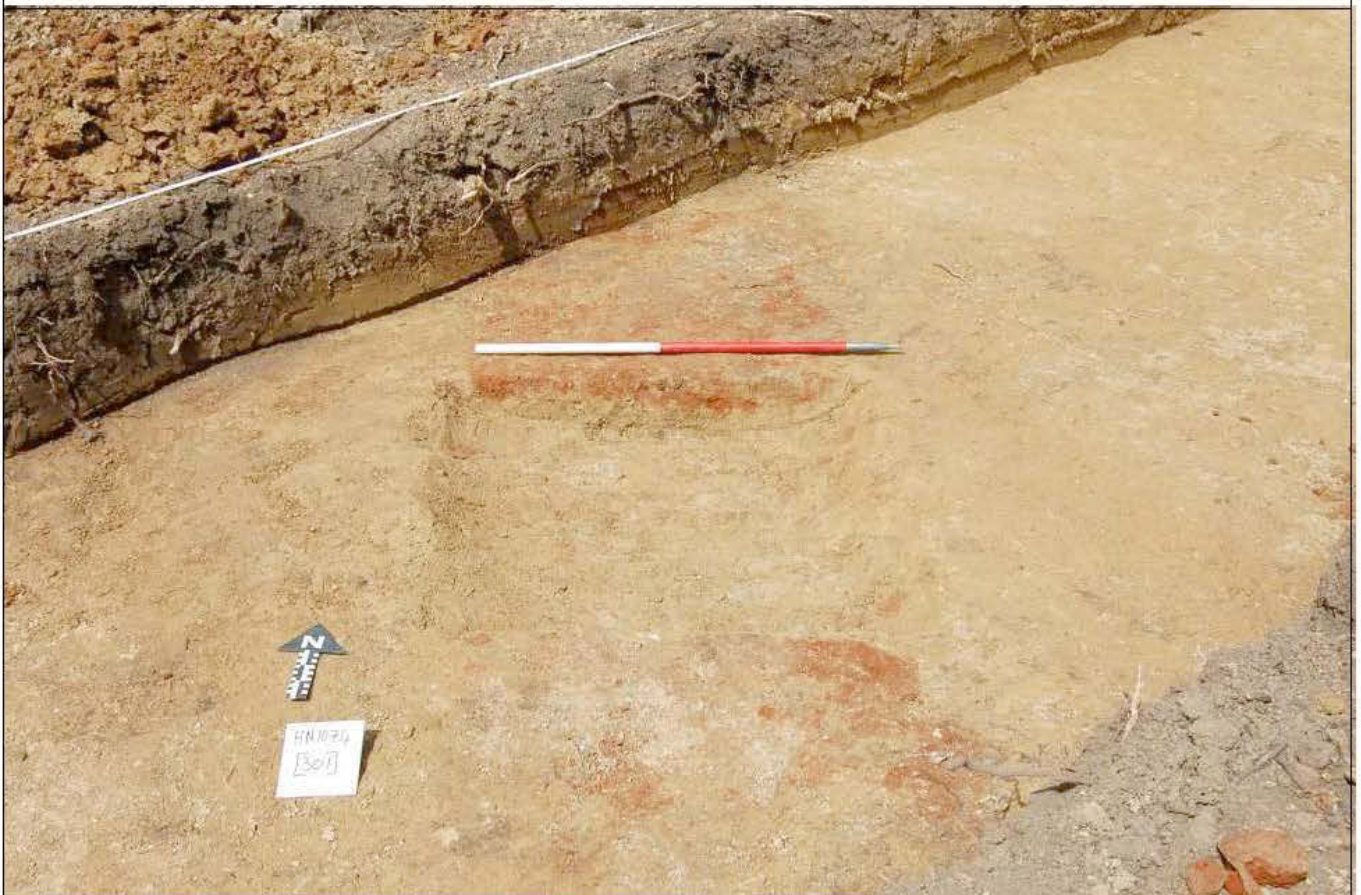


Plate 14: Ditch [301], looking north

Appendix

Oasis Summary Sheet

OASIS ID: heritage1-153944	
Project details:	
Project name	Northill, land r/o 33-43 Ickwell Road
Short description of the project	In order to characterise the archaeological potential of the site of a proposed new development on land to the rear of 33-43 Ickwell Road, Northill, Bedfordshire, the Heritage Network was commissioned to undertake an archaeological field evaluation by trial trenching prior to the submission of a planning application for construction of two new dwellings with associated services, access and landscaping. Three trenches were excavated across the site. Evidence of brick making was recovered from features in Trenches 2 and 3. A large pit or pond feature and the edge of a possible brick clamp kiln was revealed in Trench 3. Brick wasters, pottery sherds, and clay pipe dating to the late 17 th /early 18 th century were recovered during the course of this investigation. On the basis of the results of the evaluation, the risk that the proposed development might disturb further archaeological remains of any significance may be considered to be <i>Low</i> for the prehistoric, Iron Age, Romano-British, Anglo-Saxon and medieval periods, increasing to <i>High</i> for the post medieval period. Due to the evidence of an important regional industry, the potential significance of such remains is considered to be <i>Moderate</i> .
Project dates	Start: 23-07-2013 End: 25-07-2013
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Associated reference codes	HN1074 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Vacant Land 2 - Vacant land not previously developed
Monument type	Clamp Kiln Post Medieval
Monument type	PIT Post Medieval
Monument type	Ditch Post Medieval
Significant Finds	Brick Post Medieval
Significant Finds	Pottery Post Medieval
Significant Finds	Clay Pipe Post Medieval
Methods & techniques	'Annotated Sketch', 'Metal Detectors', 'Sample Trenches', 'Targeted Trenches', 'Visual Inspection'
Development type	Rural residential
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Position in the planning process	Pre-application
Project location	
Site location	BEDFORDSHIRE MID BEDFORDSHIRE NORTHILL land r/o 33-43 Ickwell Road
Postcode	SG18 9AB
Study area	120 Square metres
Site coordinates	NGR - TL 1503 4630 LL - 52.102635579 -0.320347913177 (decimal) LL - 52 06 09 N 000 19 13 W (degrees) Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 27.90m Max: 31.17m

Project creators	
Name of Organisation	Heritage Network
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Heritage Network
Project director/manager	James Snee
Project supervisor	James Snee
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Irwin and Simpson Property Developments.
Physical Archive recipient	Bedford Museum
Physical Contents	'Animal Bones','Ceramics','Glass','other'
Digital Archive recipient	Bedford Museum
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography'
Paper Archive recipient	Bedford Museum
Paper Media available	'Context sheet', 'Drawing', 'Plan', 'Report', 'Section'
Project bibliography 1	
Title	Archaeological Evaluation On Land r/o 33-43 Ickwell Road, Northill, Beds.
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Snee, J.
Other bibliographic details	HN1074
Date	2013
Issuer or publisher	Heritage Network
Place of issue or publication	Letchworth
Description	A4 Booklet, comb bound, green cover, 16 pages, 7 figures, 14 plates