

HERITAGE NETWORK



**PLOT 4002,
HINCHINGBROOKE BUSINESS PARK
Huntingdon, Cambs.**

HN694

Archaeological Evaluation Report



THE HERITAGE NETWORK LTD

Registered with the Institute of Field Archaeologists as an Archaeological Organisation

Archaeological Director: David Hillelson, BA MIFA

Plot 4002
HINCHINGBROOKE BUSINESS PARK
Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire

HN694

Archaeological Evaluation

Prepared on behalf of Lonsdale Property Ltd

by

David Kaye, BA PIFA

Report no. 433

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The cover illustration shows Trench 2, looking east

Acknowledgements

The fieldwork for this project was carried out by David Kaye and Alison Hudson. The report text and illustrations were prepared by David Kaye, and edited by David Hillelson.

The Heritage Network would like to express its thanks to Samantha Scott, Lonsdale Property Ltd., and Andy Thomas, CAPCA, Cambridgeshire County Council, for their co-operation and assistance in the execution of this project.

Summary

Site name and address:	Plot 4002, Hinchingsbrooke Business Park, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire		
County:	Cambridgeshire	District:	Huntingdonshire
Village/town:	Huntingdon	Parish:	The Stukeleys
Planning references:	06/04048/FUL	NGR:	TL 22080 72480
Client name and address:	Lonsdale Property Ltd, Hibiscus House, St Brelade's Bay, Jersey, JE3 8EA		
Nature of work:	New build	Present land use:	Waste ground
Site status:	None	Reason for investigation:	Direction of local planning authority (PPG 16)
Position in planning process:	After full determination (as a condition)	Project brief originator:	Local Authority
Size of affected area:	c. 3580m ²	Size of area investigated:	c. 180m ²
Site Code:	HN694	Other reference:	ECB 2729
Organisation:	Heritage Network	Site Director:	David Hillelson
Project type, methods etc.:	Evaluation	Archive recipient:	Cambridgeshire County Archaeological Store
Start of work	02/10/07	Finish of work	04/10/07
Related SMR Nos:	None	Periods represented:	Not determined
Oasis UID	heritage1 - 32316	Significant finds:	Pottery, flint
Monument types:	None		
Physical archive:	Pottery, flint		
Previous summaries/reports:	Interim Report HN694		

Synopsis: As a result of a condition on the planning permission for the construction of a new office building with associated access, car parking, landscaping and services at Plot 4002, Hinchingsbrooke Business Park, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, the Heritage Network was commissioned by Lonsdale Property Ltd to undertake a programme of archaeological evaluation.

One 40m x 1.5m trench, and four 20m x 1.5m trenches were excavated using a wheeled JCB fitted with a toothless bucket. Trench 2 contained a gully 0.7m wide by 0.45m deep, which may represent an agricultural boundary and which could encroach on the footprint of the proposed building. No reliable dating evidence was recovered from the single fill and no evidence of settlement was actively encountered in the course of the project.

On the basis of these findings it is considered that there is a reasonable risk that archaeological remains will be encountered in the course of the development of the site, but their significance is considered to be low.

1. Introduction

1.1 This report has been prepared on behalf of *Lonsdale Property Ltd.*, as part of the archaeological evaluation of a development site located at Plot 4002, Hinchingsbrooke Business Park, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire. The planning permission for the development (ref. 06/04048/FUL), controlled by Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC), was granted subject to a standard archaeological condition in accordance with the provisions set out in *Planning Policy Guidance Note No.16* (PPG16) on Archaeology and Planning. The scope of the required investigation was defined in a *Design Brief for Archaeological Evaluation* prepared by the Cambridgeshire Archaeology, Planning and Countryside Advice (CAPCA) section of Cambridge County Council, acting as advisers to the planning authority. The evaluation followed the provisions set out in the Heritage Network's approved *Project Design*, dated September 2007.

1.2 The study area lies at the western edge of Huntingdon, on former agricultural land located 360m south of the junction between the A14 and the A141 and centred on NGR TL 22080 72480 (Figure 1). The development proposed the construction of a new office building with associated access, car parking, landscaping and services.

1.3 The site lies in a well documented archaeological landscape containing evidence of activity from the Neolithic period onwards. Ermine Street, a major Roman road linking London and Lincoln, runs approximately 1.3km to the east. The Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER) details evidence of archaeological sites in the immediate vicinity of the present site, which include Bronze Age and middle Iron Age features at Hinchingsbrooke New School, approximately 300m to the south (CHER 13032); a middle Iron Age metal-working site and late Iron Age settlement at Park Road, approximately 300m to the west (CHER 13031); a Romano-British settlement, with nearby late Neolithic/early Bronze Age features, at Bob's Wood, approximately 400m to the southwest (CHER 13033); and a post-medieval ditch at Kingfisher Way, approximately 150m to the northeast (CHER MCB 16625). Significant evidence for Prehistoric and Roman activity has also been recorded at Huntingdon Racecourse, approximately 1.5km to the southwest and at Alconbury Airfield, approximately 4km to the northwest.

1.4 On this basis it was considered that archaeological investigation of the present site had the potential to contribute to an understanding of the origins, development and growth of settlement and land use in the vicinity of the study area from the Prehistoric period onwards.

1.5 The aim of the evaluation has been to consider the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any such remains which 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) should they be discovered.

1.6 The previously submitted interim report was intended to provide the planning authority with sufficient data to allow it to consider the archaeological implications of the proposed development, and to determine what further, if any, mitigation measures may be required to allow the development to proceed. The present report provides a full account of the findings of the evaluation programme.

2. Fieldwork

SITE TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

2.1 The study area consists of an area of former agricultural land at Plot 4002, Hinchingsbrooke Business Park, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire. It forms part of a small industrial area currently under development. The ground slopes down by approximately 1.6m from southeast to north-west.

2.2 The underlying geology is boulder clay, overlain by Jurassic and Cretaceous clay. The soils belong to the Evesham 3 Association (411d) described as *Slowly permeable calcareous clayey, and fine loamy over clayey soils. Some slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged non-calcareous clayey soils.* (SSEW 1983).

METHODOLOGY

2.3 All work was carried out in accordance with the approved *Project Design*, current health and safety legislation, and both IFA and ALGAO standards.

2.4 The trenches were triangulated from known points, using fibreglass tape measures.

2.5 Five trenches were opened under close archaeological supervision, using a wheeled JCB excavator fitted with a 1.5m wide toothless bucket (Figure 2).

2.6 The trenches were machined to the first significant archaeological horizon. Spoil from the machining was inspected for archaeological artefacts.

2.7 All 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 1:20 and 1:50.

RESULTS

Stratigraphy

2.9 The stratigraphy observed within the trenches consisted of 0.25m to 0.34m of dark olive brown (2.5Y 3/3) silty clay plough soil overlying a mottled brown (10YR 4/3) and yellowish brown (10YR 5/8) boulder clay with frequent chalk flecks and occasional flints.

Trench 1

Length (m):	40	Width (m):	1.5	Maximum Depth (m):	0.3	Orientation	NW-SE
Level at Northwest end of trench (mOD)		Top	19.08	Level at Southeast end of trench (mOD)		Top	19.40
		Base	18.88			Base	19.10
Context	Type	Description			Dimensions (m)		
					Length	Width	Depth
101	Layer	Dark olive brown (2.5Y 3/3) friable, silty clay with occasional flints <10mm. Ploughsoil.			40+	1.5+	0.27

102	Layer	Brown (10YR 4/3) & yellowish brown (10YR 5/8) mottled clay with frequent chalk flecks. Natural.	40+	1.5+	-
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2.10 Trench 1 was located parallel to the site's northeastern boundary of the site (Figure 2). No archaeological cut features, layers or deposits were encountered. No unstratified finds were recovered from the spoil.

Trench 2

Length (m):	20	Width (m):	1.5	Maximum Depth (m):	0.4	Orientation	NE-SW
Level at Northeast end of trench (mOD)		Top	19.71	Level at Southwest end of trench (mOD)		Top	20.64
		Base	19.40			Base	20.19
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)				
			Length	Width	Depth		
201	Cut	Linear. Probably a gully.	0.4+	0.7+	0.45		
202	Fill	Brown (10YR 4/3) firm, silty clay with occasional flints. Sole fill of [201].	0.4+	0.7+	0.45		
202	Layer	Dark olive brown (2.5Y 3/3) friable, silty clay with occasional flints <10mm. Ploughsoil.	20+	1.5+	0.3-0.34		
203	Layer	Brown (10YR 4/3) & yellowish brown (10YR 5/8) mottled clay with frequent chalk flecks. Natural.	20+	1.5+	-		

2.11 Trench 2 was located perpendicular to Trench 1, parallel with the site's southeastern boundary (Figure 2).

2.12 A probable gully cut [201] was noted, orientated southwest to northeast (Plate 1). It contained a single firm, brown (10YR 4/3) silty clay fill (202) which yielded a single fragment of pottery weighing less than 1g and a piece of possibly struck flint.

2.13 The pottery sherd appears to be quartz tempered greyware and is either Roman or medieval in date. However, its small size allows for the possibility that it may be intrusive and it cannot be considered to be secure dating evidence.

2.14 The flint weighed 15g and there appears to be no indication of retouching along any of its edges. It may represent a piece of debitage.

Trench 3

Length (m):	20	Width (m):	1.5	Maximum Depth (m):	0.36	Orientation	NE-SW
Level at Northeast end of Trench (mOD)		Top	19.80	Level at Southwest end of Trench (mOD)		Top	20.62
		Base	19.56			Base	20.32
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)				
			Length	Width	Depth		
301	Layer	Dark olive brown (2.5Y 3/3) friable, silty clay with occasional flints <10mm. Ploughsoil.	20+	1.5+	0.25-0.31		
302	Layer	Brown (10YR 4/3) & yellowish brown (10YR 5/8) mottled clay with frequent chalk flecks. Natural.	20+	1.5+	-		

2.15 Trench 3 was located parallel to Trench 2, in the centre of the site (Figure 2). No archaeological cut features, layers or deposits were present. No unstratified finds were recovered from the spoil.

Trench 4

Length (m):	20	Width (m):	1.5	Maximum Depth (m):	0.36	Orientation	NE-SW
Level at Northeast end of Trench (mOD)		Top	19.22	Level at Southwest end of Trench (mOD)		Top	19.75
		Base	18.75			Base	19.44
Context	Type	Description			Dimensions (m)		
					Length	Width	Depth
301	Layer	Dark olive brown (2.5Y 3/3) friable, silty clay with occasional flints <10mm. Ploughsoil.			20+	1.5+	0.25-0.31
302	Layer	Brown (10YR 4/3) & yellowish brown (10YR 5/8) mottled clay with frequent chalk flecks. Natural.			20+	1.5+	-

2.16 Trench 4 was located parallel to the northwestern boundary of the site (Figure 2). No archaeological cut features, layers or deposits were present. No unstratified finds were recovered from the spoil.

Trench 5

Length (m):	20	Width (m):	1.5	Maximum Depth (m):	0.4	Orientation	NW-SE
Level at Northwest end of Trench (mOD)		Top	20.00	Level at Southeast end of Trench (mOD)		Top	20.38
		Base	19.73			Base	20.00
Context	Type	Description			Dimensions (m)		
					Length	Width	Depth
301	Layer	Dark olive brown (2.5Y 3/3) friable, silty clay with occasional flints <10mm. Ploughsoil.			20+	1.5+	0.25
302	Layer	Brown (10YR 4/3) & yellowish brown (10YR 5/8) mottled clay with frequent chalk flecks. Natural.			20+	1.5+	-

2.17 Trench 5 was located in the southwestern corner of the site, parallel with the southern boundary (Figure 2). No archaeological cut features, layers or deposits were present. No unstratified finds were recovered from the spoil.

FINDS ASSESSMENT

Concordance of finds

Context	Pottery		Flint	
	No	Wt	No	Wt
202	1	<1	1	15
Total	1	<1	1	15

Pottery

2.18 A single undiagnostic sherd of pottery, weighing less than 1g, was recovered from the gully fill (202). It appears to be quartz tempered greyware and is possibly Roman or medieval in date. However, its small size allows for the possibility that it may be intrusive, possibly as a result of worm action, and it should not be considered to be secure dating evidence.

Recommendations

2.19 Due to the size and nature of the assemblage no further work is proposed.

Flint

2.20 A single piece of struck flint, weighing 15g, was recovered from gully fill (202). There is no evidence of retouch along any of its edges, suggesting that it may represent debitage.

Recommendations

2.21 Due to the size and nature of the assemblage no further work is proposed.

3. Discussion

3.1 Hinchingsbrooke Business Park is located at the western edge of Huntingdon, on former agricultural land. The development proposes the construction of a new office building with associated access, car parking, landscaping and services.

3.2 The site lies within a well documented archaeological landscape, with known archaeological sites, ranging in date from the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age period to the Post-medieval period, within a radius of 400m.

3.3 A single undated linear feature, [201], which has been interpreted as a gully, was revealed in Trench 2. The fill (202) was a homogenous firm silty clay, suggesting its deposition was a result of silting-up rather than back-filling. It was orientated northwest-southeast and its course suggested it would encroach on the footprint of the proposed building. No conclusive dating evidence was recovered from the fill.

3.4 The identified stratigraphy within the evaluation trenches was consistent across the site, comprising ploughsoil overlying the natural boulder clay. No artefacts were recovered from the spoil of any of the trenches.

Conclusion

3.5 The evaluation of the site has demonstrated the presence of a single undated linear feature. There was no evidence of structures or other archaeological features associated with settlement, and no unstratified artefactual evidence indicative of human occupation. The isolated nature of the linear feature encountered would suggest it may represent a boundary, possibly associated with agricultural activity, and that the site lay outside any potential settlement area.

3.6 The linear feature appears to be aligned such that its course would encroach on the footprint of the proposed building. On this basis, the risk that the proposed development would disturb archaeological remains may be considered to be High, but the significance of those remains may be considered to be Low.

Confidence Rating

3.7 In the course of the fieldwork, weather and ground conditions were acceptable for the identification of potential features and deposits, and for their investigation. There were no circumstances that would lead to a confidence rating for the work which was less than High.

4. Sources Consulted

Brown, N. & Glazebrook, J. 2000, *Research and Archaeology: a framework for the eastern counties, 2. Research agenda and strategy*. East Anglian Archaeology

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Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983 Soil Map Sheet 4, Eastern England, Scale 1:250,000

Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record accessed via Heritage Gateway:

www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway

5. Illustrations & Plates

Figure 1 Site Location

Figure 2 Trench Layout

Figure 3 Archaeology in relation to the proposed development

Figure 4Section and plan of gully cut [201]

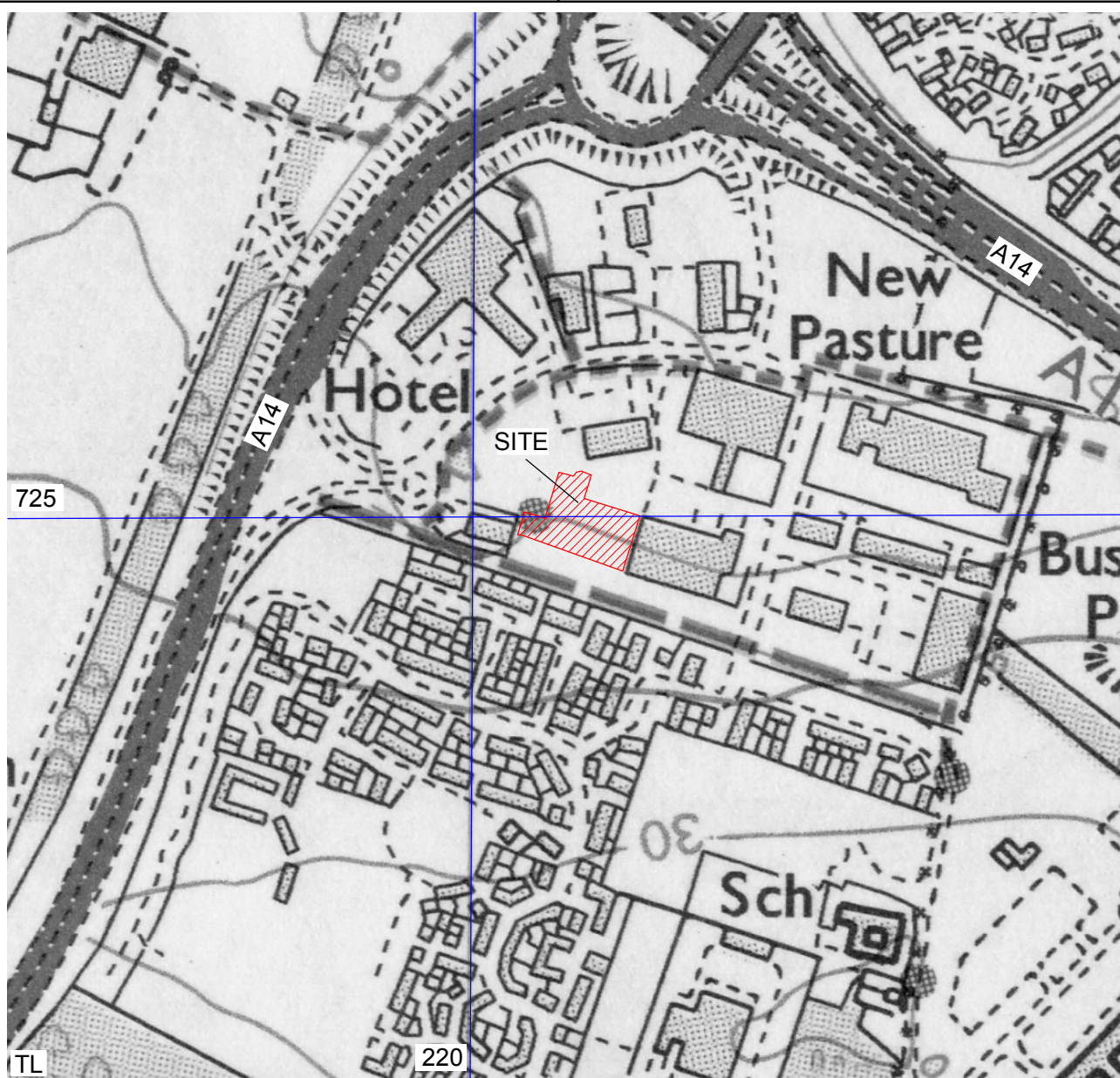
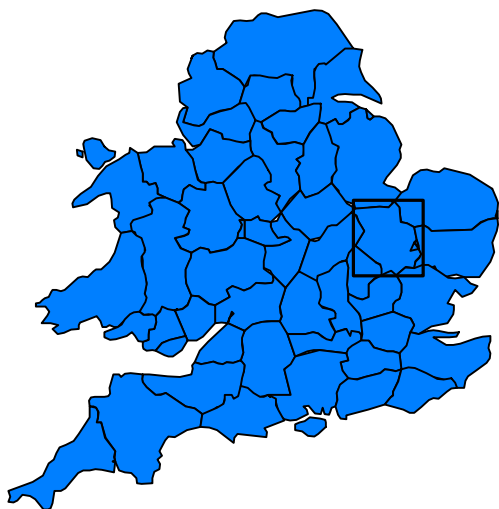
Plate 1Trench 2, looking southwest

Plate 2Gully cut [201]

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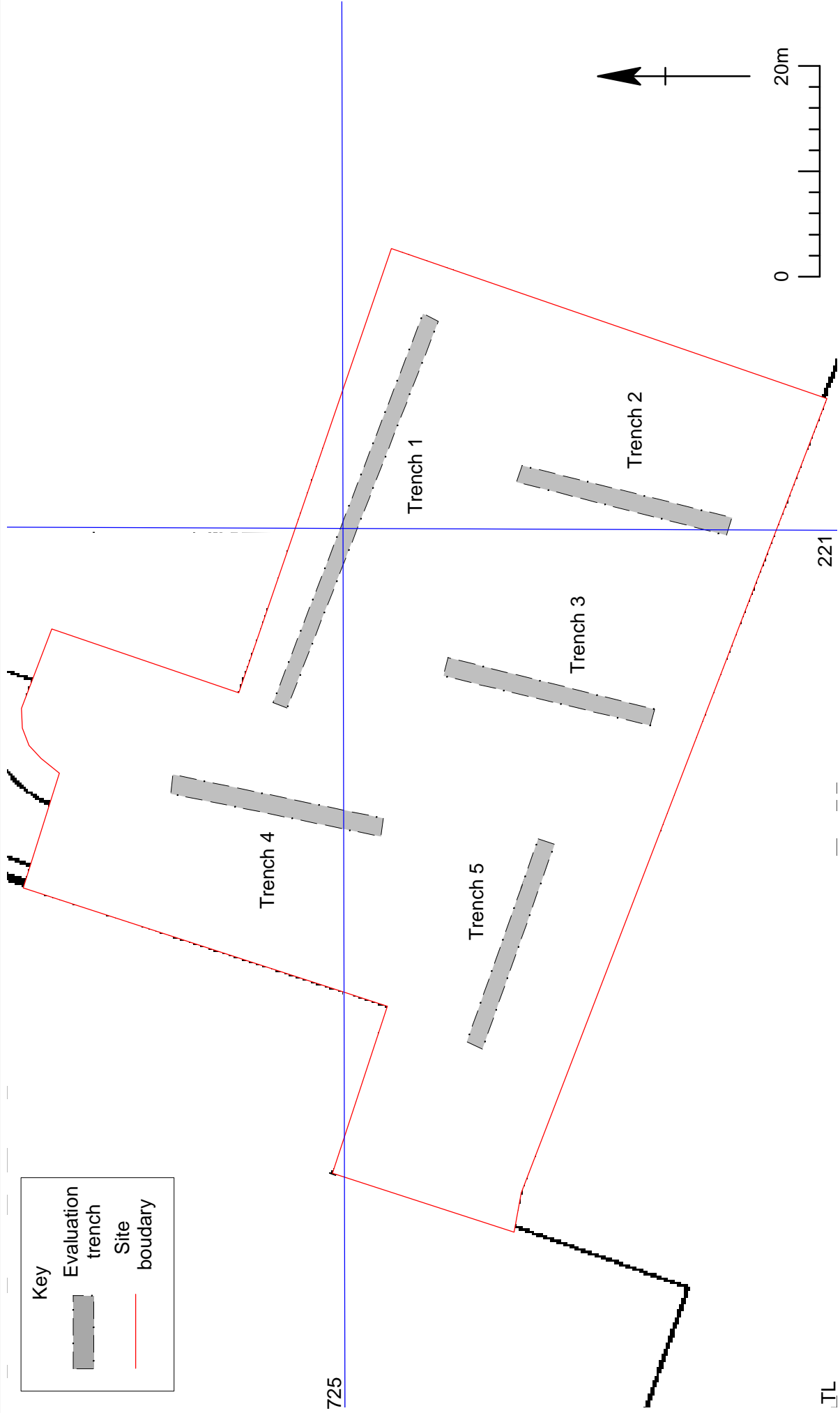
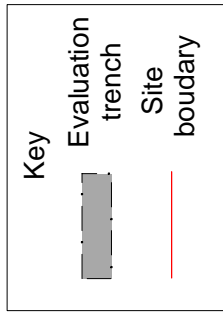


Site Location

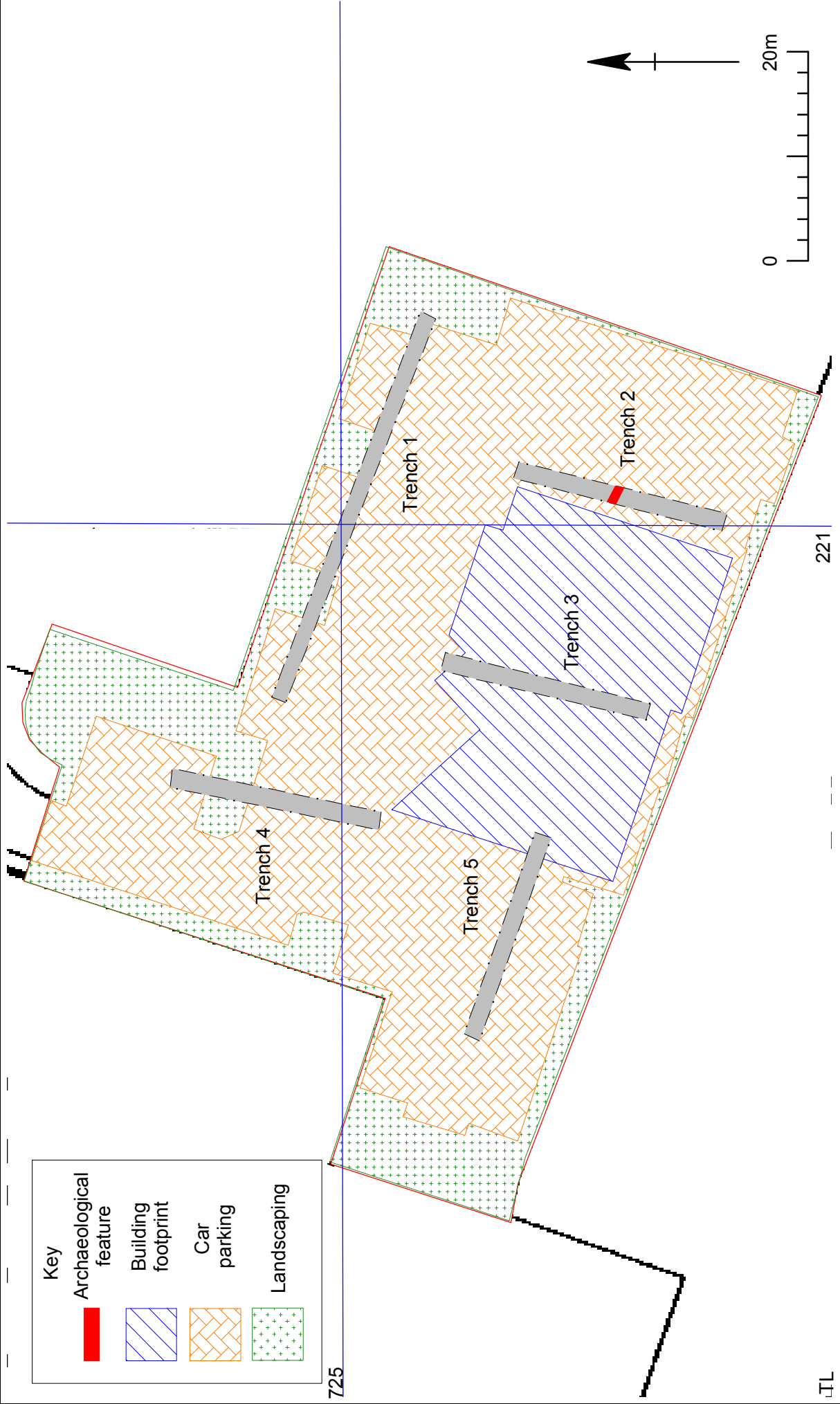
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Figure 1



Trench layout



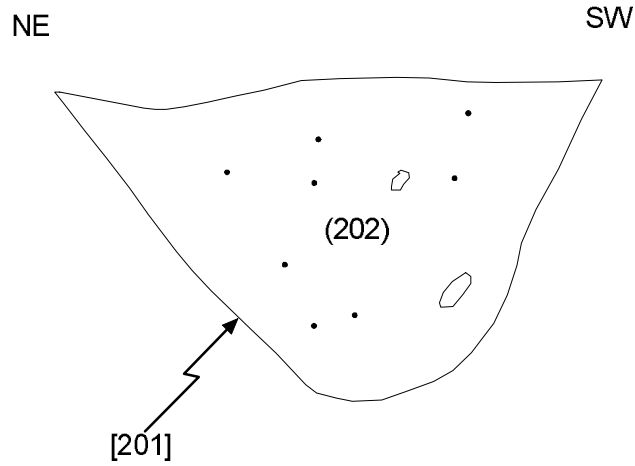
Archaeology in relation to the proposed development

Scale 1:500

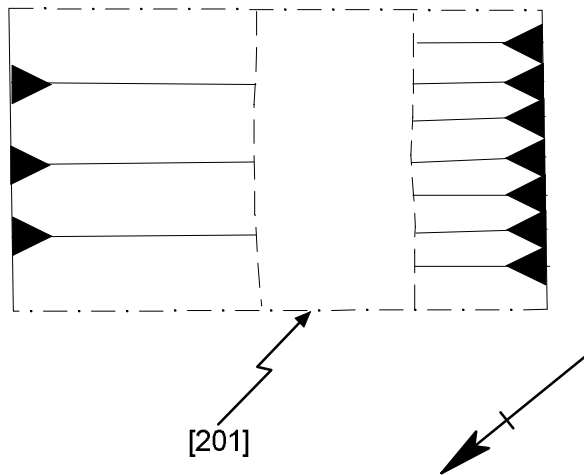
Figure 3

JTL

Northwest facing section of Gully [201]



Plan of Gully [201]



Section and plan of gully cut [201]

Scale 1:10

Figure 4



Plate 1: Trench 2, looking southeast



Plate 2: Gully [201]