

**LAND EAST OF 5 TO 17 STOW ROAD,
SPALDWICK, CAMBRIDGESHIRE PE28 0TE**

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION**

Author: Vinny Monahan (Fieldwork and report)	
NGR: TL 1287 7269	Report No: 4928
District: Huntingdon	Site Code: ECB 4522
Approved: Claire Halpin MCIfA	Project No: 6369
Signed:	Date: 27 August 2015 Revised 8 September 2015

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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET			
Project details			
Project name	Land East of 5 – 17 Stow Road, Spaldwick, Cambridgeshire. An Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation		
<p>In August 2015 Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation on land east of 5-17 Stow Road, Spaldwick, Cambridgeshire PE28 0TE (NGR TL 1287 7269). The evaluation was undertaken in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for the proposed construction of four new dwellings with associated access, parking/turning and landscaping (Huntingdon District Council Ref. 1301639FUL). The evaluation was undertaken based on advice from Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team (CCC HET) requiring a programme of archaeological work.</p> <p>The site was disturbed in the past when it was used as an orchard and then waste ground. It was stripped prior to the commencement of the evaluation resulting in some wheel rutting of the natural. It is not felt that this disturbance was of such a high order as to wholly remove archaeological remains, if present.</p> <p>Features, principally gullies, were recorded in all three evaluation trenches but only those in Trench 2 (F1008 and F1012) are thought to be archaeological, and F1008 contained a sherd dated to the 1st century AD. The other features are thought to be natural, modern or represent a tree hollow.</p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	August 2015		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	N	Future work	TBC
P. number	6369	Site code	ECB 4522
Type of project	Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation		
Site status	Area of Archaeological Potential		
Current land use	Former waste ground		
Planned development	residential		
Main features (+dates)	Gullies		
1 Significant finds (+dates)	1 sherd of 1 st C AD		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	Cambridgeshire	Huntingdon	Spaldwick
HER/ SMR for area	Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CCC HER)		
Post code (if known)	PE28 0TE		
Area of site	3900 m ²		
NGR	TL 1287 7269		
Height AOD (max/ min)	c.23m AOD		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	Archaeological Solutions Ltd		
Funded by	Ambury Developments (UK) Ltd		
Full title	Land East of 5 – 17 Stow Road, Spaldwick, Cambridgeshire. An Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation		
Authors	Monahan, V.		
Report no.	4928		
Date (of report)	August 2015		

LAND EAST OF 5 TO 17 STOW ROAD, SPALDWICK, CAMBRIDGESHIRE PE28 0TE

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION

SUMMARY

In August 2015 Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation on land east of 5-17 Stow Road, Spaldwick, Cambridgeshire PE28 0TE (NGR TL 1287 7269). The evaluation was undertaken in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for the proposed construction of four dwellings with associated access, parking/turning and landscaping (Huntingdon District Council Ref. 1301639FUL). The evaluation was undertaken based on advice from Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team (CCC HET) requiring a programme of archaeological work.

The site lies within the historic core of the village. The 12th century parish church of St James lies 125m to the north west (HER MCB5497), and medieval earthworks have been recorded to the west (HER MCB931). Previous archaeological investigations to the north of the site found evidence of prehistoric and Saxon occupation (HER MCB14594; ECB3445).

The site was disturbed in the past when it was used as an orchard and then waste ground. It was stripped prior to the commencement of the evaluation resulting in some wheel rutting of the natural. It is not felt that this disturbance was of such a high order as to wholly remove archaeological remains, if present.

Features, principally gullies, were recorded in all three evaluation trenches but only those in Trench 2 (F1008 and F1012) are thought to be archaeological, and F1008 contained a sherd dated to the 1st century AD. The other features are thought to be natural, modern or represent a tree hollow.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In August 2015 Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation on land east of 5-17 Stow Road, Spaldwick, Cambridgeshire PE28 0TE (NGR TL 1287 7269; Figs. 1-2). The evaluation was undertaken in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for the proposed construction of four dwellings with associated access, parking/turning and landscaping (Huntingdon District Council Ref. 1301639FUL). The evaluation was undertaken based on advice from

Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team (CCC HET) requiring a programme of archaeological work.

1.2 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a brief issued by CCC HET (Gemma Stewart; dated 15th May 2015) and a specification compiled by AS (23rd July 2015) and approved by CCC HET. It followed the procedures outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2014). It also adhered to relevant sections of Gurney's (2003) *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*.

1.3 The aim of the evaluation was to determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed development.

Planning policy context

1.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2012) states that those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest are heritage assets. The NPPF aims to deliver sustainable development by ensuring that policies and decisions that concern the historic environment recognise that heritage assets are a non-renewable resource, take account of the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits of heritage conservation, and recognise that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term. The NPPF requires applications to describe the significance of any heritage asset, including its setting that may be affected in proportion to the asset's importance and the potential impact of the proposal.

1.5 The NPPF aims to conserve England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, with substantial harm to designated heritage assets (i.e. listed buildings, scheduled monuments) only permitted in exceptional circumstances when the public benefit of a proposal outweighs the conservation of the asset. The effect of proposals on non-designated heritage assets must be balanced against the scale of loss and significance of the asset, but non-designated heritage assets of demonstrably equivalent significance may be considered subject to the same policies as those that are designated. The NPPF states that opportunities to capture evidence from the historic environment, to record and advance the understanding of heritage assets and to make this publicly available is a requirement of development management. This opportunity should be taken in a manner proportionate to the significance of a heritage asset and to impact of the proposal, particularly where a heritage asset is to be lost.

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

3.1 The site lies within the historic core of the village, south of the High Street/The Green and set back to the east of properties fronting Stow Road to the west.

3.2 It comprises a plot extending to some 3900m², largely open but with a few former small outbuildings.

3 TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

3.1 The village of Spaldwick is located in a shallow valley through which the meandering east-west course of the Alconbury Brook East/Ellington Brook flows, passing c.300m to the north-west of the site. The site and village are situated on relatively flat land at c.23m AOD. The geology of the site comprises Oxford Clay (mudstone), overlain by Oadby Member (diamicton) and lime rich loamy and clayey soils.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 Evidence for pre-Iron Age prehistoric activity on the claylands surrounding the site is sparse, comprising a utilised flint blade recorded c.1km to the east (HER 00735), potentially of Upper Palaeolithic - Earlier Neolithic date.

4.2 Excavations on Thrapston Road c.150m north-west of the site (HER MCB19832) recorded the presence of a middle to late Iron Age settlement at Spaldwick that continued into, then declined and ceased in the Roman period. The evidence included a track way and settlement enclosure ditches, associated with domestic debris including pottery and a saddle quern. Ditches which also contained pottery, bone and carbonised material indicative of late Iron Age to early Roman domestic activity, potentially associated with an adjacent settlement or farmstead, have been recorded c.900m to the south-east (HER 02070).

4.3 The area of Thrapston Road c.150m to the north and north-west of the site appears to have formed the nucleus of the historic village in the late Saxon period. Excavations have recorded beam slots, post holes and drip gullies associated with former timber buildings within fenced enclosures (HER MCB19832 & CB14594).

4.4 At the time of the Domesday Survey, the manor of Spaldwick was held by the Abbey of Ely, who in 1106 granted it to the Bishop of Lincoln as part of a compensation payment. In the mid 12th century, the Bishops founded a palace

and demesne estate immediately to the south of Thrapston Road (HER CB14594). In 1215 the Bishop was also granted permission to 'inclose and inpark' his wood at Spaldwick. The medieval village appears to have been centred on the church of St. James (HER c.100m to the north-west (HER 04549), with the Bishop's Palace complex adjacent to the west at 'Danesfield' (HER 00719). The village was part of a medieval landscape that also included the (deserted) settlement at Upthorpe c.500m to the south (HER 00718) and a possible medieval mill further south-west in 'Bury Close' (HER 00720). Earthworks, ditches and possible plough furrows were recorded in Ferriman Road (HER CB14593).

4.5 The development of the historic core continued in the post-medieval period with extant buildings attributable to the 16th, and particularly the 17th century, on Thrapston Road and the High street to the north of the site. The buildings on Thrapston Road include the Forge and Hazel Cottage (HER MCB16653 & DCB3349). Those on the High Street include the Gables, the Limes, and the George (HER DCB3904, DCB3532 & DCB3905).

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 Three trenches, each measuring up to 30m x 1.80m were excavated (Figs. 2 - 3). Across the site the topsoil had been partially removed prior to the commencement of archaeological evaluation, and in many areas the subsoil had been exposed.

5.2 The remaining topsoil was removed under close archaeological supervision and control using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. All subsequent excavation was undertaken by hand

5.3 Exposed sections were cleaned and examined for archaeological features. Deposits were recorded using *pro forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale and photographed as appropriate. Open trenches and excavated spoil were manually/ visually searched and scanned by metal detector to enhance the recovery of archaeological finds.

6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

6.1 The individual trench descriptions are presented below:

Trench 1 (Fig. 2)

Trench 1 was not cut for practical reasons. Attempts were made to cut the trench but modern service pipes were exposed (DP s 11 – 14).

Trench 2 (Figs. 2 - 4)

<i>Sample section 2A:</i> <i>West end, South facing</i> <i>0.00m = 24.14 AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.13m	L1001	Disturbed Subsoil. Mid greyish brown silty clay with occasional intrusive building rubble.
0.13m+	L1002	Natural. Mid greyish yellow Oxford clay.

<i>Sample section 2B:</i> <i>East end, North facing</i> <i>0.00m = 23.95 AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.06m	L1000	Disturbed Topsoil. Dark brown silty sand with occasional intrusive building rubble.
0.06 - 0.36m	L1001	Disturbed Subsoil. As above.
0.36m +	L1002	Natural. As above.

Description: Trench 2 contained Gullies F1008 and F1012, and Pit F1010.

Gully F1008 was linear in plan (2.00+ x 0.70+ x 0.15m), orientated NW/SE. It had irregular sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1009, was a compact, mid yellow brown silty clay with occasional small angular and rounded flint and stones. It contained a pottery sherd dated to the 1st century AD (2g).

Gully F1012 was linear in plan (2.50+ x 0.65+ x 0.07m), orientated NW/SE. It had shallow gently sloping sides and a flattish base. Its fill, L1013, was a firm, mid reddish brown silty clay with occasional small angular flint and stones. It contained no finds.

Pit F1010 was irregular in plan (0.80+ x 0.87+ x 0.15m). It had irregular sides and a narrow base. Its fill, L1011, was a firm, mid reddish brown silty clay with occasional small angular flint and stones. It contained no finds.

Trench 3 (Figs. 2 - 4)

<i>Sample section 3A:</i> <i>North end, west facing</i> <i>0.00m = 24.12m AOD</i>		
0.00–0.09m	L1000	Disturbed Topsoil. As above Tr 2.
0.09m +	L1002	Natural. As above Tr.2.

<i>Sample section 3B:</i> <i>South end, east facing</i> <i>0.00m = 24.17m AOD</i>		
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0.00–0.13m	L1000	Disturbed Topsoil. As above Tr 2.
0.13m +	L1002	Natural. As above Tr.2.

Description: Trench 3 contained undated Gullies F1014 and F1016 which were broadly parallel.

Gully F1014 was linear in plan (2.00+ x 0.34+ x 0.12m), orientated E/W. It had moderately sloping sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1015, was a firm, light grey silty clay with occasional small rounded stones. It contained no finds.

Gully F1016 was linear in plan (2.00+ x 0.50+ x 0.22m), orientated E/W. It had steep sides and a flattish base. Its fill, L1017, was a firm, dark reddish brown silty mixed gravel with frequent small to medium rounded stones. It contained no finds.

Trench 4 (Figs. 2 - 4)

<i>Sample section 4A:</i> <i>West end, South facing</i> <i>0.00m = 24.26m AOD</i>		
0.00–0.18m	L1000	Disturbed Topsoil. As above Tr 2.
0.18m +	L1002	Natural. As above Tr.2.

<i>Sample section 4B:</i> <i>East end, North facing</i> <i>0.00m = 24.07m AOD</i>		
0.00–0.26m	L1000	Disturbed Topsoil. As above Tr 2.
0.26m +	L1002	Natural. As above Tr.2.

Description: Trench 4 contained undated Gullies F1004 and F1006. The gullies were curvilinear and broadly parallel.

Gully F1004 was curvilinear in plan (2.00+ x 0.42+ x 0.22m). It had moderately sloping sides and a narrow base. Its fill, L1005, was a friable, mid greyish brown silty clay. It contained no finds.

Gully F1006 was curvilinear in plan (2.00+ x 0.24+ x 0.12m), broadly parallel to F1004. It had moderately sloping sides and a narrow base. Its fill, L1007, was a friable, mid greyish brown silty clay. It contained no finds.

7 CONFIDENCE RATING

7.1 The topsoil and subsoil had been partially disturbed in the area of Trenches 2 – 4 nonetheless it is not felt that this factor inhibited the recognition of archaeological features or finds. Trench 1 could not be cut for practical reasons.

8 DEPOSIT MODEL

8.1 Uppermost was Topsoil L1000, a friable, dark brown silty sand with occasional intrusive modern building rubble. L1000 overlay Subsoil L1001, a friable, mid greyish brown silty clay with occasional intrusive modern building rubble. L1001 overlay the natural: L1002. The latter was a firm, mid greyish yellow clay with occasional small - large flint nodules and was recorded at depth below the current ground surface of between 0.09m and 0.36m.

8.2 Throughout the site a large amount of topsoil (L1000) had been removed to a depth of c.0.20m – 0.40m prior to the commencement of archaeological evaluation, in some areas exposing a subsoil layer (L1001) beneath, for example. Trench 2.

9 DISCUSSION

9.1 The recorded features are tabulated:

Trench	Context	Description	Spot date
2	F1008	Gully	1 sherd; 1 st C AD
	F1010	Pit	Undated
	F1012	Gully	Undated
3	F1014	Gully	Undated
	F1016	Gully	Undated
4	F1004	Gully	Undated
	F1006	Gully	Undated

9.2 The site lies within the historic core of Spaldwick. The area of Thrapston Road c.150m to the north and north-west of the site appears to have formed the nucleus of the historic village. Recent excavations (HER MCB19832) have indicated the presence of a middle to late Iron Age settlement at Spaldwick that continued into, then declined and ceased in the Roman period. The medieval church of St James lies some 100m to the north-west (HER 04549), and the Bishop's Palace complex is adjacent to the west at 'Danesfield' (HER 00719).

9.3 The site was disturbed in the past when it was used as an orchard and then waste ground. It was stripped prior to the commencement of the evaluation resulting in some wheel rutting of the natural.

9.4 Features were recorded in all of the trenches and largely comprised gullies. The features are undated. A highly fragmented and slightly abraded sherd dated to the 1st century AD was found within Gully F1008 (L1009) but this evidence is insufficient to date the feature. No other finds were present. Based on the similarity of their fills to the natural, Gullies F1014 and F1016 (Trench 3) may be natural features. The plan of the curvilinear Gullies F1004 and F1006 (Trench 4) suggest they may be modern ?tyre tracks. Pit F1010 (Trench 2) was irregular and may represent a tree hollow. Gullies F1008 and F1012 are the most likely archaeological features and F1008 contained the sherd dated to the 1st century AD.

10 CONCLUSION

10.1 The site was disturbed in the past when it was used as an orchard and then waste ground. It was stripped prior to the commencement of the evaluation resulting in some wheel rutting of the natural. It is not felt that this disturbance was of such a high order as to wholly remove archaeological remains, if present.

10.2 Features, principally gullies, were recorded in all three trenches but only those in Trench 2 (F1008 and F1012) are thought to be archaeological, and F1008 contained a sherd dated to the 1st century AD. The other features are thought to be natural, modern or represent a tree hollow.

DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

Archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited at the Cambridgeshire County Store. The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross referenced and checked for internal consistency.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions would like to thank GamPlan Associates for commissioning the project, in particular Mr Simon Richardson for his assistance, and the client Ambury Developments (UK) Ltd for funding the project and for their assistance (in particular Mr Tim Robbins).

AS would also like to acknowledge the input and advice of Ms Gemma Stewart of Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team.

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APPENDIX 1

CONCORDANCE OF FINDS

ECB4522, P6369, Land East of 5 – 17 Stow Road, Spaldwick, Cambridgeshire

Concordance of finds by feature

Feature	Context	Segment	Trench	Description	Spot Date (Pot Only)	Pot Qty	Pottery (g)	CBM (g)	A.Bone (g)	Other Material	Other Qty	Other (g)
1008	1009		2	Fill of Gully	1st C AD	1	2					

APPENDIX 2

SPECIALIST REPORT

The Pottery

Andrew Peachey CMIfA

Gully F1008 (L1009) contained a single sherd (2g) of pottery in a highly fragmented and slightly abraded condition. The sherds is wheel-made in a fabric tempered with common angular black grog (0.2-1mm), consistent with 'Belgic' grog-tempered wares (Tomber & Dore 1998, 214) produced in south-east England in the 1st century AD. Spaldwick is towards the north-western periphery of the typical distribution of 'Belgic' grog-tempered wares therefore it is perhaps more likely to post-date the Roman Conquest (AD43) although an earlier origin cannot be totally discounted.

Bibliography

Tomber, R. & Dore, J. 1998 *The National Roman Fabric Reference Collection*. Museum of London, London

The Environmental Samples

Dr John Summers

Introduction

Two bulk samples for environmental archaeological assessment were taken from deposits at Stow Road, Spaldwick, one of which (L1009 of F1008) contained pottery dated to the 1st century AD. This report presents the results from the assessment of the bulk sample light fractions and discusses the significance and potential of any remains recovered.

Methods

Samples were processed at the Archaeological Solutions Ltd facilities in Bury St. Edmunds using standard flotation methods. The light fractions were washed onto a mesh of 500µm (microns), while the heavy fractions were sieved to 1mm. The dried light fractions were scanned under a low power stereomicroscope (x10-x30 magnification). Botanical remains were identified and recorded using a semi-quantitative scale (X = present; XX = common; XXX = abundant). Reference literature (Cappers *et al.* 2006; Jacomet 2006) and a reference collection of modern seeds was consulted where necessary. Potential contaminants, such as modern roots, seeds and invertebrate fauna were also recorded in order to gain an insight into possible disturbance of the deposits.

The samples were 50% sub-sampled for the purpose of the assessment, with full processing conditional on the likelihood of recovering an assemblage of >30 identifiable items from a single deposit.

Results

The assessment data from the bulk sample light fractions are presented in Table 1.

Only undated ditch fill L1005 (F1004) contained carbonised remains, which were in the form of wheat (*Triticum* sp.) grains. Some of the grains were short and rounded, characteristic of free-threshing type wheat (*T. aestivum/ turgidum*). Free threshing type wheats are more common in deposits dating to the Anglo-Saxon to post-medieval periods.

Contaminants

The presence of abundant modern roots in the samples indicates that there could have been some disturbance of small items, such as carbonised seeds and grain, within the deposits.

Conclusions and statement of potential

The carbonised remains from Stow Road, Spaldwick were low in density and were absent from deposit L1009 (F1008). This suggests little association between the excavated features and the use and processing of cereals.

References

- Cappers, R.T.J., Bekker R.M. and Jans J.E.A. 2006, *Digital Seed Atlas of the Netherlands. Groningen Archaeological Studies Volume 4*, Barkhuis Publishing, Eelde
- Jacomet, S. 2006, *Identification of Cereal Remains from Archaeological Sites* (2nd edn), Laboratory of Palinology and Palaeoecology, Basel University

Site code	Sample number	Context	Feature	Description	Spot date	Volume taken (litres)	Volume processed (litres)	% processed	Flot (ml)	Cereals			Non-cereal taxa		Shell	Charcoal		Molluscs		Contaminants					Invertebrates
										Cereal grains	Cereal chaff	Notes	Seeds	Notes		Charcoal>2mm	Notes	Molluscs	Notes	Roots	Molluscs	Modern seeds	Insects	Earthworm capsules	
ECB4522	1	1005	1004	Fill of Ditch	-	40	20	50%	40	X	-	FTW (X), Trit (X)	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	XXX	X	X	-	-	-
ECB4522	2	1009	1008	Fill of Gully	1st C AD	20	10	50%	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	XXX	X	X	-	-	-

Table 1: Results from the assessment of bulk sample light fractions from XXXXXXXX. Abbreviations: FTW = free-threshing type wheat (*Triticum aestivum/ turgidum*); Trit = wheat (*Triticum* sp.).

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



1 Trench 2 looking east



2 Trench 3 looking north



3 F1008 in Trench 2 looking south



4 F1014 & F1016 in Trench 3 looking east



5 F1010 in Trench 2 looking south



6 Sample section 3B looking west



7 Trench 4 looking west



8 F1004 & F1006 in Trench 4 looking south-east



9
Sample section 4A looking north



10
Sample section 2A looking north



11
Attempted excavation of Trench 1



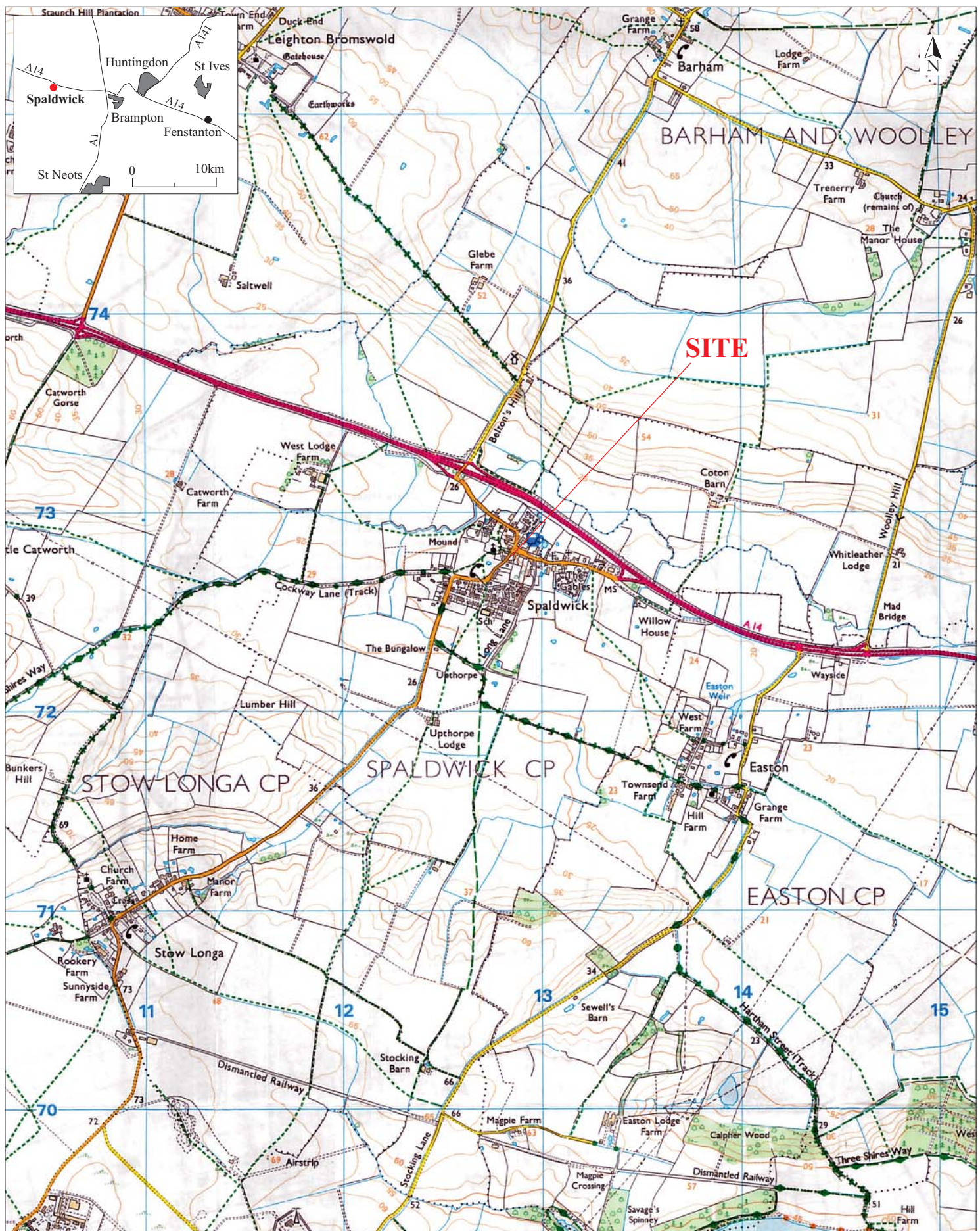
12
The area of Trench 1 disturbed by previously laid service pipes



13
Previously laid trench containing water pipes already in use and pipes for future electricity cables

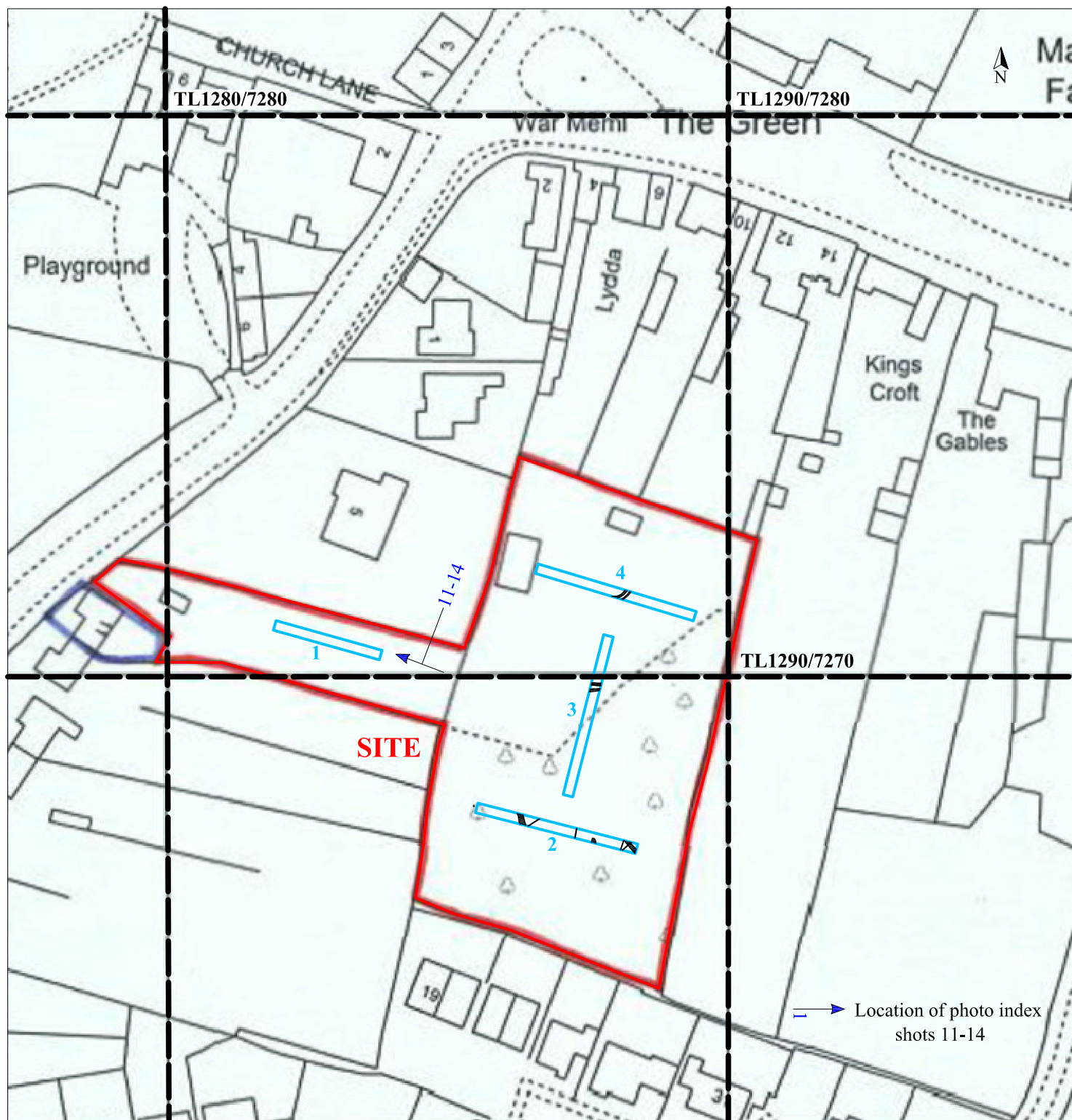


14
Loose rubble backfill in the area proposed for Trench 1



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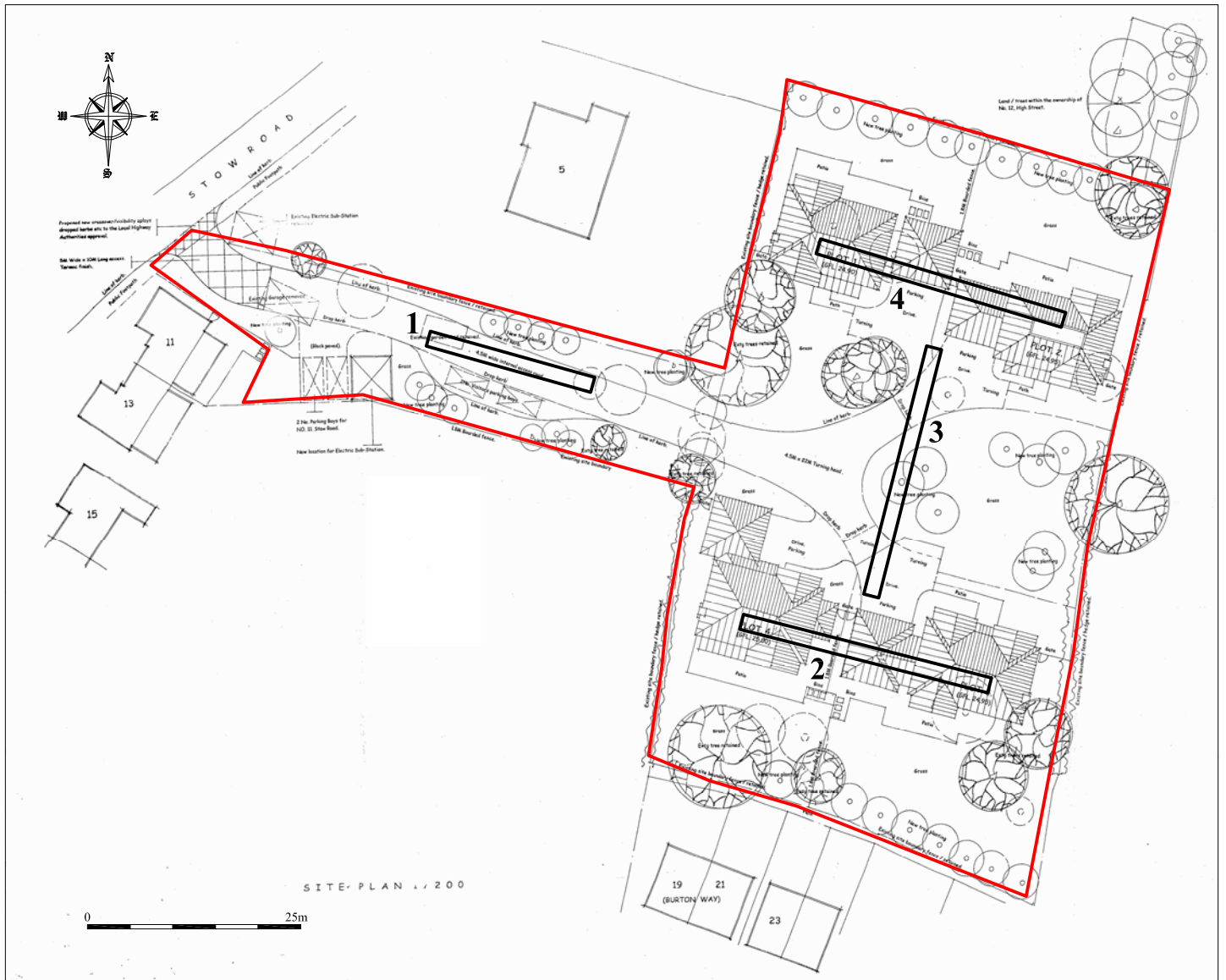
Archaeological Solutions Ltd
Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4
 Stow Road, Spaldwick, Cambs (P6369)



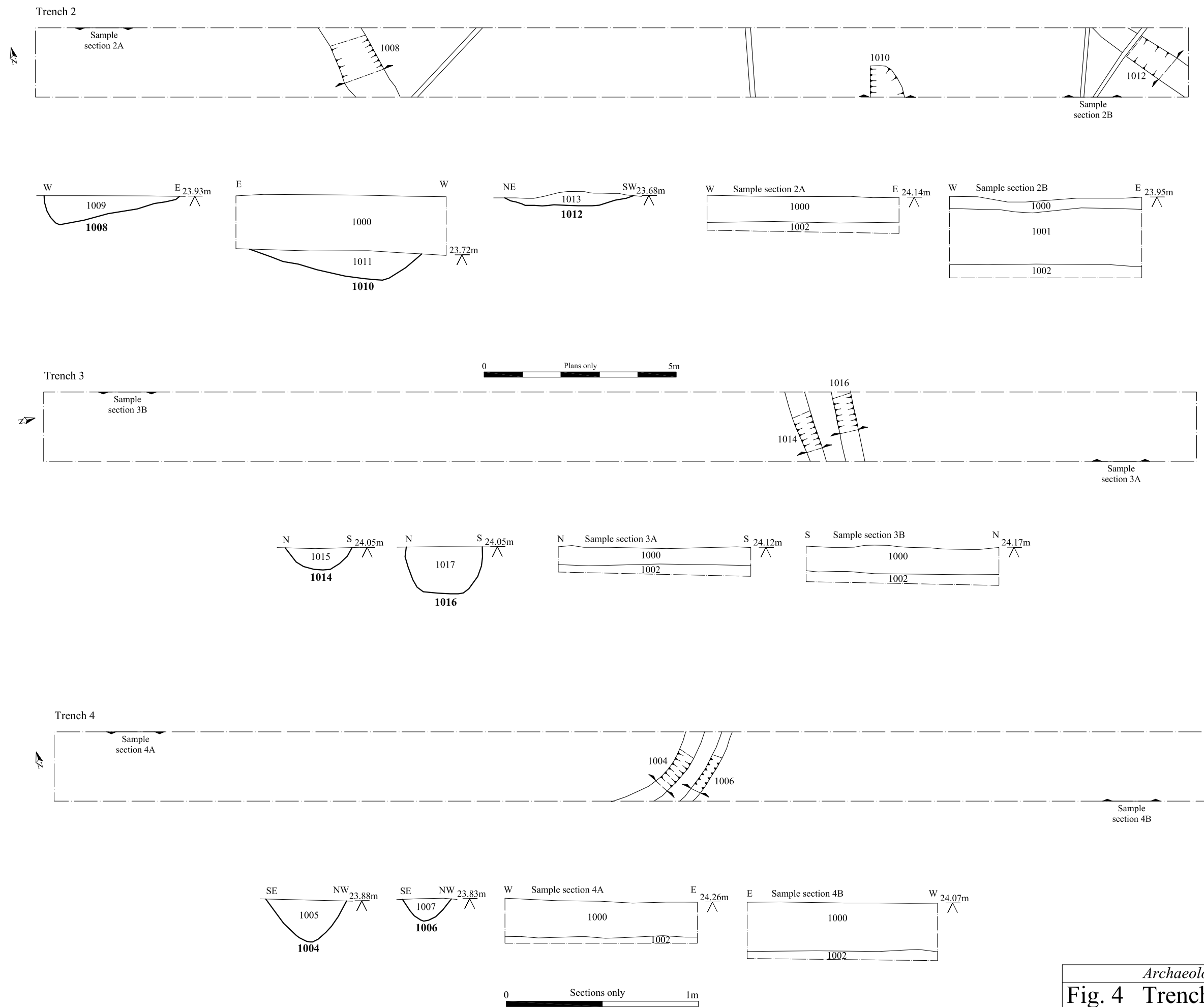
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0 75m

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Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan
Scale 1:1000 at A4
Stow Road, Spaldwick, Cambridgeshire (P6369)



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Fig. 3 Proposed development plan
Scale 1:750 at A4
Stow Road, Spaldwick, Cambridgeshire (P6369)



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Fig. 4 Trench plans and sections

Plans 1:100, sections 1:20 at A3

Stow Road, Spaldwick, Cambridgeshire (P6369)