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**LAND BETWEEN THE RAILWAY LINE, ST NEOTS
BYPASS AND POTTON ROAD, ST NEOTS,
CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION

CHER ECB 4785

Authors: Julie Walker (Field work & report) Andrew Peachey (Background research)	
NGR: TL 1902 5837	Report No: 5214
District: Huntingdonshire	Site Code: ECB 4785
Approved: Claire Halpin MCIfA	Project No: 6706
	Date: 18 November 2016

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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	<i>Land between the railway line, St Neots Road and Potton Road, St Neots, Cambridgeshire</i>		
<p><i>In October 2016, Archaeological Solutions Ltd carried out a trial trench evaluation on 4.15 hectares of land between the railway line, St Neots Bypass and Potton Road, St Neots, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 1902 5837). The survey was commissioned to inform and support a planning application for a proposed residential development of 79 dwellings on the site.</i></p> <p><i>An undated ditch was revealed in Trenches 5 (F1016) and 10 (F1002), and an undated pit (F1024) was recorded in Trench 5. Early finds were sparse. A residual late medieval (14th – 16th century) sherd was found within Furrow F1054 (Trench 1) and within the topsoil.</i></p> <p><i>The evaluation revealed furrows associated with a ridge and furrow field system identified during the previous geophysical survey. Though the latter records the furrows extensively across the site they were only evident in Trenches 1, 3, 5 - 6 and 8 – 10. The furrows consistently contained post-medieval (17th – 18th century pottery) and modern (19th – 20th) century pottery.</i></p> <p><i>The features mapped during the aerial photographic survey (Fig.3b) and geophysical survey (Fig. 3a) were not readily evident in the trenches. Only F1004/F1002 (Trench 10) correlated with geophysical survey Anomaly No.1.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	October 2016		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	N	Future work	
P. number	6706	Site code	ECB 4785
Type of project	<i>Trial Trenching</i>		
Site status	-		
Current land use	<i>Agricultural</i>		
Planned development	<i>Residential</i>		
Main features (+dates)	<i>Post medieval and modern furrows. Undated pit, undated ditch</i>		
Significant finds (+dates)	<i>Residual late medieval (14th – 16th century) pottery</i>		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Cambridgeshire</i>	<i>Huntingdonshire</i>	<i>Eynesbury Hardwicke</i>
HER/ SMR for area	<i>Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Record</i>		
Post code (if known)	-		
Area of site	<i>4.15ha</i>		
NGR	<i>TL 1902 5837</i>		
Height AOD (max/ min)	<i>c.20/30m AOD</i>		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	<i>Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team</i>		
Project supervisor/s	<i>Julie Walker</i>		
Funded by	<i>The Banks Trustees</i>		
Full title	<i>Land between the railway line, St Neots Road and Potton Road, St Neots, Cambridgeshire</i>		
Authors	<i>Walker, J.</i>		
Report no.	<i>5214</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>November 2016</i>		

LAND BETWEEN THE RAILWAY LINE, ST NEOTS BYPASS AND POTTON ROAD, ST NEOTS, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION

SUMMARY

In October 2016, Archaeological Solutions Ltd carried out a trial trench evaluation on 4.15 hectares of land between the railway line, St Neots Bypass and Potton Road, St Neots, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 1902 5837). The survey was commissioned to inform and support a planning application for a proposed residential development of 79 dwellings on the site.

A geophysical survey (Blagg-Newsome 2016) identified four positive trending linear anomalies (1-4) that are of potential archaeological significance. A further positive anomaly was observed in the west of the survey area that corresponds to an historic field boundary (5). A series of parallel positive linear responses of varying amplitudes can be seen in the data (6), which may represent ploughed-out medieval ridge and furrow, or alternatively, may represent modern plough marks.

An undated ditch was revealed in Trenches 5 (F1016) and 10 (F1002), and an undated pit (F1024) was recorded in Trench 5. Early finds were sparse. A residual late medieval (14th – 16th century) sherd was found within Furrow F1054 (Trench 1) and within the topsoil.

The evaluation revealed furrows associated with a ridge and furrow field system identified during the previous geophysical survey. Though the latter records the furrows extensively across the site they were only evident in Trenches 1, 3, 5 - 6 and 8 – 10. The furrows consistently contained post-medieval (17th – 18th century pottery) and modern (19th – 20th) century pottery.

The features mapped during the aerial photographic survey (Fig.3b) and geophysical survey (Fig. 3a) were not readily evident in the trenches. Only F1004/F1002 (Trench 10) correlated with geophysical survey Anomaly No.1.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In October 2016, Archaeological Solutions Ltd carried out a trial trench evaluation on 4.15 hectares of land between the railway line, St Neots Bypass and Potton Road, St Neots, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 1902 5837). The evaluation was commissioned to inform and support a planning application for a proposed residential development of 79 dwellings on the site. based on the advice of Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team (CCC HET).

1.2 A geophysical survey (Blagg-Newsome 2016) and aerial photographic assessment (Air Photo Services 2016) had been undertaken prior to the trial

trench evaluation.

1.3 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a brief issued by CCC HET (26th April 2016), and a specification compiled by AS (26th July 2016) and approved by CCC HET. It adhered to the ClfA *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2014) and the *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).

Objectives

1.4 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

1.5 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.

1.6 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 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

2.1 The site is located on the south-eastern edge of St Neots, bounded to the west by the main railway line, to the south by the St Neots Bypass and to the north east by Potton Road. It is a field in arable use, with a dense tree belt along its southern and north eastern edges. The open

area of the field extends to some 4.15ha.

2.2 The site lies at c.20-30m AOD, sloping upwards to the north east. The solid geology is Oxford Clay, with superficial Ouse valley gravels to the west.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 The site lies within an area of archaeological potential, where known extensive evidence of multi-period landscape activity is present dating from the prehistoric and Romano-British periods.

3.2 Mesolithic activity has been recorded close to the site but appears restricted to the areas of gravel immediately adjacent to watercourses, with a Mesolithic flint working site and flint artefacts recorded c.800m to the west adjacent to the River Great Ouse (HER 00377, 10198A and ECB1535), and Mesolithic perforated hammer-stones c.800m to the north adjacent to the Hen Brook, a tributary of the River Great Ouse (HER 00404). Further Mesolithic implements have been found elsewhere in the vicinity of the site (HER 00514).

3.3 Prehistoric monuments are present on the terrace gravels of the Ouse to the west. Archaeological investigations and aerial photographic assessments (HER ECB1649, EBB2432 and ECB1641) have identified an area of monumental ceremonial and funerary Neolithic activity. The most significant element of this landscape comprises a cursus monument with eastern, southern and northern sections (HER 06150, MCB17676 and 11671). A long barrow (HER00381), hengiform ring ditch (HER 00376), field system (HER 05689), and flint scatter (HER 10198B) have also been recorded. A flint scatter of Neolithic/Bronze Age date has also been recorded (HER 00447), as have possible Neolithic features at Ernulf School (HER MCB17395), a double enclosure (HER MCB17697) and Neolithic pits (HER MCB17698).

3.4 Monumental and settlement archaeology of Bronze Age date has, like the Neolithic evidence, also been recorded on the river gravels of the River Great Ouse. Bronze Age ring ditches have been recorded by excavation (HER 10198; MCB15828) and as cropmarks (HER 637; 00367), while urned and unurned cremations (HER MCB17703; 00381; 11671), and an enclosure and flint scatter (HER MCB17704 and 00447) have also been recorded.

3.5 Iron Age pottery, postholes and features have been recorded under the area of the Tesco superstore (HER 10198, MCB15825 and ECB323). Finds of this date have been made in the area of the Brickhills Estate (HER 00403A). Eynesbury Fields is the location of an extensive early Iron Age to Roman enclosure system and possible hengiform monument (HER 05689). Late Bronze Age to Iron Age features have been recorded at Barford Road (HER MCB15831) and a late a late Bronze Age/early Iron Age pit alignment has

been recorded to the west (HER MCB17704). Other finds include pottery (HER10198C).

3.6 Investigations in advance of proposed development to the north east of the current site have revealed an extensively utilised Iron Age/Roman landscape, with rural settlements and agricultural exploitation (HER ECB3024). Cropmarks adjacent to the current excavation area were shown to be more extensive than previously thought, and may extend into the current development area (HER09972).

3.7 Roman agricultural ditches and a trackway have been recorded to the west of the assessment site (HER 116174, MCB15950 and MCB17705), but the principal area of Roman activity appears to be to the north of the assessment site, moving away from the floodplain and on to the higher slopes of the river valley. Nonetheless, rural occupation evidence (HER 00403, ECB631, 11671A and 10898) may relate to a villa estate further to the west. Bronze coins of Vespasian (HER 00385), residual sherds of Roman pottery recovered in 1984 during field walking prior to the construction of the A428 (HER ECB2017), earthworks and pottery of Roman date (HER 00617), pottery (HER 101198D) also represent Roman activity in the area.

3.8 Anglo-Saxon Sunken Featured Buildings and a cemetery have been recorded to the west (HER 10198E and MCB17706). Other features have been recorded at Berkeley Street (HER MCB17687) and further SFBs and associated activity at Eynesbury Hardwicke (HER MCB19113)

3.9 The medieval period is represented by a building of this date (HER 00402) and evidence for ridge and furrow cultivation (HER10198F; MCB17211; MCB18827; HER ECB2121)

3.10 The site thus has a potential for further remains of Iron Age/Romano-British landscape activity, and also preceding Neolithic/ Bronze Age activity.

4 PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION

4.1 A geophysical survey has been undertaken (Blagg-Newsome 2016) (Fig.3a). In summary:

The geophysical survey identified a number of magnetic anomalies that appear to be of archaeological origin. Concentrated mainly in the central and eastern parts of the survey area, four potential features of archaeological origin are represented by positive linear trending anomalies synonymous with infilled ditch type features (1-4).

A further positive linear trending anomaly in the western portion of the site (5) is consistent with an historic ditch boundary observed in the Eynesbury Inclosure and OS Maps between 1800 to 1924.

A series of close set, parallel positive responses of varying amplitudes

and lengths were recorded in the data (6), which could represent the remains of ridge and furrow cultivation. However, the direction of modern agricultural activity on the site corresponds with these anomalies, which could also be derived modern plough ruts. A network of seemingly modern field drains were also recorded (7)

Numerous areas of magnetic disturbance and interference were recorded (10-13), which may have had the effect of masking responses from weaker archaeological anomalies in the affected areas of the site.

In the surveyed areas that are free of magnetic disturbance, the overall magnetic contrasts seen in the data were small, requiring additional data processing (compression) to draw out weaker responses. This would suggest that either the truncation of earlier features has occurred or that site formation processes, and underlying geological and pedological conditions, were not especially conducive to achieving a strong magnetic enhancement of infilling materials.

4.2 An aerial photographic assessment has been undertaken (2016) (Fig.3b). It concluded:

This assessment of aerial imagery has indicated that the site contains buried remains of pre-modern heritage assets.

These remains of former settlement enclosures extend to the north of the site, where they were previously recorded by Palmer in 2008. They form part of a wider multi period archaeological landscape of enclosures, tracks funerary monuments and ritual sites which are visible as crop marks in the valley of the River Ouse.

Remains of residual medieval ridge and furrow are visible around the site and it is likely that the site was ploughed in the medieval period.

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 The evaluation provided for a c.3% sample of the area to be subject to development to be trial trenched, with a further 1% contingency held to further define any features. Sixteen trenches, c.40m x 1.8m, were excavated (Figs. 2- 3). The trenches excluded the dense tree belt around the north eastern edge of the site. It targeted the geophysical anomalies/cropmarks and also the 'blank' areas.

5.2 The 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. The topsoil was excavated at each end of the trenches to characterise its artefact content.

6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

The individual trench descriptions are presented below:

Trench 1 (Figs. 2 - 4)

<i>Sample section 1A</i> 0.00m = 28.21m AOD		
0.00 – 0.20m	L1000	Topsoil. Firm, dark grey brown, clay silt with frequent small, sub-angular flint and occasional chalk.
0.20m+	L1001	Natural. Firm, mid yellow, chalky clay with frequent patches of orange clay silt.

<i>Sample section 1B:</i> 0.00m = 28.42m AOD		
0.00 – 0.25m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Tr.1
0.25m+	L1001	Natural. As above Tr.1

Description: Trench 1 contained six furrows (F1046, F1048, F1050, F1052, F1054 and F1056) and a modern land drain, F1058. Furrows F1048 and F1054 were also recorded in Trench 3.

Modern Land Drain F1058 was linear in plan (1.80 x 0.28 x 0.10m+) with steep sides. Its fill, L1059 was a firm mid grey brown silt clay, and a ceramic pipe was observed in this feature.

The furrows are tabulated:

Feature	Plan/ (dimensions)	Profile	Fill (s)	Relationships	Finds
F1046	Linear in plan (NE/SW) shallow sides and a concave base (2.00+ x 0.59 x 0.06m)		L1047. Firm, mid grey brown, silt clay with occasional chalk and moderate small, sub-angular flint.	Parallel to F1048, F1050, F1052 and F1056.	Fe Frag (6g)
F1048	Linear in plan (NE/SW) shallow sides and a concave base (2.00+ x 0.65 x 0.07m)		L1049. As above	Parallel to F1046, F1050, F1052 and F1056.	CBM (50g)
F1050	Linear in plan (NE/SW) moderately slopin		L1051. As above	Parallel to F1046, F1048,	CBM

	sides and a concave base (2.00+ x 0.54 x 0.14m)		F1052 and F1056.	(63g)
F1052	Linear in plan (NE/SW) moderately sloping sides and a concave base (2.00+ x 0.60 x 0.11m)	L1053. As above	Parallel to F1046, F1048, F1050 and F1056.	CBM (8g)
F1054	Linear in plan (NE/SW) shallow sides and a flat base (2.00+ x 1.31 x 0.08m)	L1055. Firm, mid yellow brown clay silt with moderate chalk.		Residual 14 th – 16 th C pot (1; 2g)
F1056	Linear in plan (NE/SW) shallow sides and a concave base (2.00+ x 0.58 x 0.08m)	L1057. Firm, mid grey brown silt clay with occasional chalk and moderate small, sub-angular flint.	Parallel to F1046, F1048, F1050 and F1052.	

Trench 2 (Figs. 2 - 3)

<i>Sample section 2A:</i> 0.00m = 25.61m AOD		
0.00 – 0.30m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Trench 1
0.30m+	L1001	Natural. As above Trench 1

<i>Sample section 2B:</i> 0.00m = 27.54 m AOD		
0.00 – 0.30m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Trench 1
0.30m+	L1001	Natural. As above Trench 1

Description: Trench 2 contained no archaeological features or finds.

Trench 3 (Figs. 2 - 4)

<i>Sample section 3A:</i> 0.00m = 26.73m AOD		
0.00 – 0.26m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Trench 1
0.26m+	L1001	Natural. As above Trench 1

<i>Sample section 3B:</i> 0.00m = 26.97m AOD		
0.00 – 0.30m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Trench 1

0.30m+	L1001	Natural. As above Trench 1
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Description: Trench 3 contained Furrows F1040 and F1042. These furrows were recorded in Trench 1 (Furrows F1054 and F1048, respectively).

Furrow F1040 (= F1054, Trench 1) was linear in plan (1.80+ x 0.55 x 0.11m), orientated north east / south west. It had moderately sloping sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1041, was a firm, mid yellow brown, silty clay with occasional chalk and small, sub-angular flint. It contained no finds.

Furrow F1042 (= F1048, Trench 1) was linear in plan (1.80+ x 0.82 x 0.09m), orientated north east / south west. It had moderately sloping sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1043, was a firm, mid grey brown silt clay with occasional chalk and moderate small, sub-angular flint. It contained CBM (112g).

Trench 4 (Figs. 2 - 3)

<i>Sample section 4A:</i> <i>0.00m = 24.53m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.30m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Trench 1
0.30m+	L1001	Natural. As above Trench 1

<i>Sample section 4B:</i> <i>0.00m = 24.90m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.36m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Trench 1
0.36m+	L1001	Natural. As above Trench 1

Description: Trench 4 contained no archaeological features or finds.

Trench 5 (Figs. 2 – 3 & 5)

<i>Sample section 5A:</i> <i>0.00m = 28.02m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.26m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Tr. 1
0.26m+	L1001	Natural. As above Tr. 1

<i>Sample section 5B:</i> <i>0.00m = 27.02m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.30m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Tr. 1
0.30m+	L1001	Natural. As above Tr. 1

Description: Trench 5 contained seven furrows (F1018, F1020, F1022, F1026, F1028, F1036 and F1044), Ditch F1016 and Pit F1024. Ditch F1016 was also recorded in Trench 10 (F1002).

Ditch F1016 was linear in plan (2.00+ x 0.92 x 0.21m), orientated north east /

south west. It had moderately sloping sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1017, was a firm, mid grey brown silt clay with occasional chalk and small, sub-angular flint. No finds were present.

Pit F1024 was sub-circular in plan (1.00+ x 0.77 x 0.35m). It had steep sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1025, was a firm, dark grey brown silt clay with occasional chalk and small, sub-angular flint. No finds were present.

The furrows are tabulated:

Feature	Plan/ (dimensions) Profile	Fill (s)	Relationships	Finds
F1018	Linear in plan (NE/SW) shallow sides and a flat base (2.00+ x 1.08 x 0.06m)	L1019. Firm, mid grey brown silt clay with occasional chalk and small, sub-angular flint.	Parallel to F1026, and F1028. Continuation of F1004 (Trench 10).	19 th – 20 th C pot (1; 3g); CBM (22g), clay pipe stem frag (7g)
F1020	Linear in plan (ENE/WSW) shallow sides and a flat base (2.00+ x 1.32 x 0.08m)	L1051. Firm, mid grey brown silt clay with occasional chalk and moderate small, sub-angular flint.	Parallel to F1022, and F1044.	17 th – 18 th C pot (1; 25g), CBM (25g)
F1022	Linear in plan (ENE/WSW) moderately sloping sides and a flat base (2.00+ x 0.77 x 0.09m)	L1053. As above	Parallel to F1020 and F1044.	None
F1026	Linear in plan (NE/SW) shallow sides and a flat base (2.00+ x 0.45 x 0.06m)	L1027. Firm, mid grey brown silt clay with occasional chalk and small, sub-angular flint.	Parallel to F1018, and F1028	18 th – 19 th C pot (1; 9g)
F1028	Linear in plan (NE/SW) shallow sides and a flat base (2.00+ x 1.00 x 0.08m)	L1029. As above.	Parallel to F1018, and F1026.	None
F1036	Linear in plan (ENE/WSW) moderately sloping sides and a flat base (2.00+ x 1.42 x 0.06m)	L1037. Firm, mid yellow brown, clay silt with moderate chalk.		17 th – 18 th C pot (2; 54g); CBM; (24g)
F1044	Linear in plan (ENE/WSW) steep sides and an irregular	L1045. Firm, mid grey brown silt clay with occasional chalk and	Parallel to F1020 and	CBM (32g)

	base (2.00+ x 1.06 x 0.11m)	moderate small, sub-angular flint.	F1022.	
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Trench 6 (Figs. 2 – 3 & 5)

<i>Sample section 6A:</i> 0.00m = 29.04m AOD		
0.00 – 0.23m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Tr.1
0.23m+	L1001	Natural. As above Tr.1

<i>Sample section 6B:</i> 0.00m = 28.95m AOD		
0.00 – 0.20m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Tr.1
0.20m+	L1001	Natural. As above Tr.1

Description: Trench 6 contained Furrows F1030, F1032 and F1034.

The furrows are tabulated:

Feature	Plan/ (dimensions)	Profile	Fill (s)	Relationships	 Finds
F1030	Linear in plan (NE/SW) shallow sides and a flat base (2.00+ x 0.59 x 0.06m)		L1031. Firm, mid grey brown silt clay with occasional chalk and small, sub-angular flint inclusions.	Parallel to F1032 and F1034 =F1008 (Tr. 10)	None
F1032	Linear in plan (NE/SW) shallow sides and a flat base (2.00+ x 0.71 x 0.07m)		L1033. As above	Parallel to F1030 and F1034	17 th – 18 th C pot (2; 6g); CBM (5g)
F1034	Linear in plan (NE/SW) shallow sides and a flat base (2.00+ x 0.71 x 0.05m)		L1035. As above	Parallel to F1030 and F1032 ? = F1014 (Tr.9)	19 th – 20 th C pot (1; 1g)

Trench 7 (Figs. 2 - 3)

<i>Sample section 7A:</i> <i>0.00m = 27.82m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.32m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Trench 1
0.32m+	L1001	Natural. As above Trench 1

<i>Sample section 7B:</i> <i>0.00m = 29.36m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.26m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Trench 1
0.26m+	L1001	Natural. As above Trench 1

Description: Trench 7 contained no archaeological features or finds.

Trench 8 (Figs. 2 - 3)

<i>Sample section 8A:</i> <i>0.00m = 25.98m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.25m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Trench 1
0.25m+	L1001	Natural. As above Trench 1

<i>Sample section 8B:</i> <i>0.00m = 6.14m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.39m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Trench 1
0.39m+	L1001	Natural. As above Trench 1

Description: Trench 8 contained Furrows F1060 and F1062.

Furrow F1060 was linear in plan (1.80+ x 0.57 x 0.09m), orientated north east / south west. It had steep sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1061, was a firm, mid yellow brown, silty clay with occasional chalk and small, sub-angular flint. It contained no finds.

Furrow F1062 was linear in plan (1.80+ x 0.72 x 0.08m), orientated north east / south west. It had steep sides and a shallow concave base. Its fill, L1063, was a firm, mid grey brown silt clay with occasional chalk and moderate small, sub-angular flint. It contained no finds.

Trench 9 (Figs. 2 – 3 & 6)

<i>Sample section 9A:</i> <i>0.00m = 23.06m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.36m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Trench 1
0.36m+	L1001	Natural. As above Trench 1

<i>Sample section 9B:</i> <i>0.00m = 23.90m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.25m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Trench 1
0.25m+	L1001	Natural. As above Trench 1

Description: Trench 9 contained Furrow F1014.

Furrow F1014 was linear in plan (2.00+ x 0.69 x 0.07m), orientated north east / south west. It had shallow sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1015, was a firm, mid grey brown silt clay with occasional chalk and small, sub-angular flint. No finds were present. F1014 was possibly a continuation of F1034 (Trench 6), based on the geophysical survey, but not observed in Trench 10.

Trench 10 (Figs. 2 – 3 & 6)

<i>Sample section 10A:</i> <i>0.00m = 26.23m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.34m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Trench 1
0.34m+	L1001	Natural. As above Trench 1

<i>Sample section 10B:</i> <i>0.00m = 24.61m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.34m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Trench 1
0.34m+	L1001	Natural. As above Trench 1

Description: Trench 10 contained undated Ditch F1002 and Furrows F1004, F1006, F1008, F1010 and F1012. F1002 was a continuation of F1016 (Trench 5).

Ditch F1002 was linear in plan (2.00+ x 0.60+ x 0.17+m), orientated north east / south west. It had moderately sloping sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1003, was a firm, mid grey brown silt clay with occasional chalk and small, sub-angular flint. No finds were present. F1002 was cut by Furrow F1004.

The furrows are tabulated:

Feature	Plan/ (dimensions)	Profile	Fill (s)	Relationships	Finds
F1004	Linear in plan (N/S) moderately sloping sides and a flat base (2.00+ x 1.29 x 0.16m)		L1005. Firm, mid yellow brown silt clay with occasional chalk and small, sub-angular flint	Parallel to F1006 and F1008 Continuation of F1018 in Trench 5.	CBM (91g), Fe. fragment (8g)

F1006	Linear in plan (N/S) moderately sloping sides and a flat base (2.00+ x 1.35 x 0.15m)	L1007. Firm, mid yellow brown silt clay with occasional chalk and moderate small, sub-angular flint	Parallel to F1004 and F1008	CBM (28g)
F1008	Linear in plan (N/S) shallow sides and a flat base (2.00+ x 1.80 x 0.07m)	L1009. Firm, mid yellow brown silt clay with occasional chalk and small, sub-angular flint	Parallel to F1004 and F1006 = F1030 (Tr.6)	18 th – 19 th C pot (2; 9g); CBM (369g), clay pipe stem frag (5g)
F1010	Linear in plan (NE/SW) moderately sloping sides and a flat base (2.00+ x 0.36 x 0.06m)	L1011. Firm, mid grey brown silt clay with occasional chalk and moderate small, sub-angular flint.	Parallel to F1012	CBM (8g), shell (12g); glass (58g)
F1012	Linear in plan (NE/SW) moderately sloping sides and a flat base (2.00+ x 0.39 x 0.07m)	L1013. As above	Parallel to F1010	Shell (17g)

Trench 11 (Figs. 2 - 3)

<i>Sample section 11A:</i> 0.00m = 22.17m AOD		
0.00 – 0.40m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Trench 1
0.40m+	L1001	Natural. As above Trench 1

<i>Sample section 11B:</i> 0.00m = 24.44m AOD		
0.00 – 0.34m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Trench 1
0.34m+	L1001	Natural. As above Trench 1

Description: Trench 11 contained no archaeological features or finds.

Trench 12 (Figs. 2 – 3 & 6)

<i>Sample section 12A:</i> 0.00m = 21.76m AOD		
0.00 – 0.39m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Trench 1
0.39m+	L1001	Natural. As above Trench 1

<i>Sample section 12B:</i> <i>0.00m = 24.19m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.36m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Trench 1
0.36m+	L1001	Natural. As above Trench 1

Description: Trench 12 contained ?Land Drain F1038

?Land Drain F1038 was linear in plan (1.80+ x 0.52+ x 0.19m), orientated north east / south west. It had moderately sloping sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1039, was a firm, dark grey brown silt clay with occasional chalk and moderate small, sub-angular flint. Slate (4g), animal bone (4g), glass (2g) and CBM (34g) was present. F1038 was possibly a modern land drain as the orientation of the feature was similar to surrounding drains.

Trench 13 (Figs. 2 – 3)

<i>Sample section 13A:</i> <i>0.00m = 20.79m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.37m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Trench 1
0.37m+	L1001	Natural. As above Trench 1

<i>Sample section 13B:</i> <i>0.00m = 22.04m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.31m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Trench 1
0.31m+	L1001	Natural. As above Trench 1

Description: Trench 13 contained no archaeological features or finds

Trench 14 (Figs. 2 - 3)

<i>Sample section 14A:</i> <i>0.00m = 20.41m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.37m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Trench 1
0.37m+	L1001	Natural. As above Tr.1

<i>Sample section 14B:</i> <i>0.00m = 21.29m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.33m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Tr.1
0.33m+	L1001	Natural. As above Tr.1

Description: Trench 14 contained no archaeological features or finds

Trench 15 (Figs. 2 - 3)

<i>Sample section 15A:</i> <i>0.00m = 20.16m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.37m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Tr.1
0.37m+	L1001	Natural. As above Tr.1

<i>Sample section 15B:</i> <i>0.00m = 20.71m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.37m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Tr.1
0.37m+	L1001	Natural. As above Tr.1

Description: Trench 15 contained no archaeological features or finds

Trench 16 (Figs. 2 - 3)

<i>Sample section 16A:</i> <i>0.00m = 20.05m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.20m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Tr.1
0.20m+	L1001	Natural. As above Tr.1

<i>Sample section 16B:</i> <i>0.00m = 19.91m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.37m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Tr.1
0.37m+	L1001	Natural. As above Tr.1

Description: Trench 16 contained no archaeological features or finds.

7 CONFIDENCE RATING

7.1 It is not felt that any factors inhibited the recognition of archaeological features or finds.

8 DEPOSIT MODEL

8.1 Topsoil L1000 was a firm, dark grey brown clay silt with frequent small, sub-angular flint and occasional chalk (0.20 – 0.40m thick). Below L1000 was the natural, L1001, a firm, mid yellow chalky clay with frequent patches of orange clay.

9 DISCUSSION

9.1 The recorded features are tabulated:

Trench	Context	Description	Findings
1	F1046	Furrow	-
	F1048 = F1040 (Tr.3)	Furrow	CBM
	F1050	Furrow	CBM
	F1052	Furrow	CBM
	F1054 = F1042 (Tr.3)	Furrow	Residual sherd of 14 th – 16 th century pottery
	F1056	Furrow	-
	F1058	Land Drain	-
3	F1040 = F1048 (Tr.1)	Furrow	-
	F1042 = F1054 (Tr.1)	Furrow	CBM
5	F1016 = F1002 (Tr.10)	Ditch	-
	F1018	Furrow	19 th – 20 th century pottery; CBM
	F1020	Furrow	17 th – 18 th century pottery; CBM
	F1022	Furrow	-
	F1024	Pit	-
	F1026	Furrow	18 th - 19 th century pottery; CBM
	F1028	Furrow	
	F1036	Furrow	17 th – 18 th century pottery; CBM
	F1044	Furrow	CBM
6	F1030	Furrow	
	F1032	Furrow	17 th – 18 th century pottery; CBM
	F1034	Furrow	19 th – 20 th century pottery;
8	F1060	Furrow	-
	F1062	Furrow	-
9	F1014	Furrow	-
10	F1002 = F1016 (Tr.5)	Ditch	-
	F1004	Furrow	CBM
	F1006	Furrow	CBM

	F1008	Furrow	18 th – 19 th C pottery; CBM
	F1010	Furrow	CBM
	F1012	Furrow	-
12	F1038	?Land Drain	CBM

9.2 The site is situated within an area of archaeological potential, where known extensive evidence of multi-period landscape activity is present dating from the prehistoric and Romano-British periods.

9.3 An undated ditch was revealed in Trenches 5 (F1016) and 10 (F1002), and an undated pit (F1024) was recorded in Trench 5.

9.4 Early finds were sparse. A residual late medieval (14th – 16th century) sherd was found within Furrow F1054 (Trench 1) and within the topsoil. The latter was excavated at each end of each trench to characterise its artefact content. Excepting the late medieval sherd only modern finds, for example, a golf ball, were present.

9.5 The evaluation revealed furrows associated with a ridge and furrow field system identified during the previous geophysical survey. Though the latter records the furrows extensively across the site they were only evident in Trenches 1, 3, 5 - 6 and 8 – 10. The furrows consistently contained post-medieval (17th – 18th century pottery) and modern (19th – 20th) century pottery.

9.6 The features mapped during the aerial photographic survey (Fig.3b) and geophysical survey (Fig. 3a) were not readily evident in the trenches. Only F1004/F1002 (Trench 10) correlated with geophysical survey Anomaly No.1.

10 CONCLUSION

10.1 Following the geophysical survey, the trial trenching detected some of the projected furrows in Trenches 1, 3, 5 - 6 and 8 - 10. A geophysical anomaly (1) noted in Trench 10 was also observed in Trench 5 as an undated ditch. However, other anomalies identified in the survey data were not identified within the trial trenches. The results from the gradiometer survey (Blagg-Newsome 2016) showed only small magnetic contrasts, most likely as a result of soil conditions on the site. It was necessary to compress the data to draw out weaker responses, which could have led to the enhancement of some natural magnetic variations and resulted in the misidentification of these as possible archaeological features.

10.2 Features recorded by the aerial photographic assessment were not identifiable. The trenches revealed modern plough scars cut into the natural deposits, which suggests that the anomalies were the result of modern activity, likely ploughing, and are not archaeological features.

10.3 An undated ditch was revealed in Trenches 5 (F1016) and 10 (F1002), and an undated pit (F1024) was recorded in Trench 5. Early finds were sparse. A residual late medieval (14th – 16th century) sherd was found within Furrow F1054 (Trench 1) and within the topsoil. The evaluation revealed furrows associated with a ridge and furrow field system identified during the previous geophysical survey. The furrows consistently contained post-medieval (17th – 18th century pottery) and modern (19th – 20th) century pottery.

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 Limited would like to thank the client, The Banks Trustees, for funding the project and Strutt & Parker LLP for their assistance (in particular Mr Will Nichols).

AS is pleased to acknowledge the advice and input of the Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team (CCC HET) (in particular Mr Andy Thomas and Ms Gemma Stewart).

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APPENDIX 1 Concordance of Finds

ECB4785 - P6706, Land Between the Railway Line, St Neots and Potton Road, St Neots

Feature	Context	Segment	Trench	Description	Spot Date (Pot Only)	Pot Qty	Pottery (g)	CBM (g)	A.Bone (g)	Other Material	Other Qty	Other (g)
	1000			Topsoil	19th-20th C with residual 14th-16th C Sherd	6	359					
1004	1005		10	Fill of Furrow				91		Fe.Frag	1	8
1006	1007		10	Fill of Furrow				28				
1008	1009		10	Fill of Furrow	18th-19th C	2	9	369		Clay Pipe	1	5
1010	1011		10	Fill of Furrow				81		Shell Glass	1 3	12 58
1012	1013		10	Fill of Furrow						Shell	1	17
1018	1019		5	Fill of Furrow	19th-20th C	1	3	22		Clay Pipe	1	7
1020	1021		5	Fill of Furrow	17th-18th C	1	8	25				
1026	1027		5	Fill of Gully	18th-19th C	1	9					
1032	1033		6	Fill of Furrow	17th-18th C	2	6	5				
1034	1035		6	Fill of Furrow	19th-20th C	1	1					
1036	1037		5	Fill of Furrow	17th-18th C	2	54	24				
1038	1039		11	Fill of Ditch				34	4	Slate Glass	1 2	4 2
1042	1043		3	Fill of Ditch				112				
1044	1045		5	Fill of Furrow				32				
1046	1047		1	Fill of Furrow						Fe.Frag	1	6
1048	1049		1	Fill of Furrow				50				
1050	1051		1	Fill of Furrow				63				
1052	1053		1	Fill of Furrow				8				
1054	1055		1	Fill of Furrow	Mid 14th-16th C	1	2					
1062	1063		8	Fill of Furrow					115			

APPENDIX 2 SPECIALIST REPORTS

The Pottery

Peter Thompson

The archaeological evaluation recovered 18 sherds weighing 448g from 8 features and the topsoil. A sherd of unprovenanced late medieval orange sandy ware (NLLM), came from Furrow F1054 (L1055). A flanged rim, probably from a bowl, in the same fabric came from the topsoil, as did earlier post-medieval sherds of brown glazed white ware, probably a Border Ware, and Staffordshire Marbled Slipware.

Methodology

The recording was done in keeping with the Medieval Pottery Research Group Guidelines (Slowikowski et al 2001 & MPRG 1998). The fabric codes in brackets applied to the stratified pottery is appropriate to Cambridgeshire.

Key

NLLM (5.00): unprovenanced late medieval ware mid 15th-16th

PMWW (6.20): brown glazed Border Ware mid 16th-18th

PMRE (6.10): Post-medieval red earthenware 16th-18th

GRE (6.12): Glazed red earthenware mid 16th-mid 18th

LPMBL: Late post-medieval black glazed red earthenware

LGRE (8.50): Late glazed red earthenware 18th+

ENGS: English stoneware 18th+

TPW (8.00): Transfer Printed Ware late 18th+

Feature	Context	Quantity	Date	Comment
Topsoil	1000	1x7g NLLM 1x5g STMBL 2x235 LPMBL 3x112g ENGS	19 th -20 th	NLLM: residual
Furrow 1008	1009	1x7g LGRE 1x2g PMRE	18 th -19 th	
Furrow 1018	1019	1x3g TPW	19 th -20 th	
Furrow 1020	1021	1x8g GRE	17 th -18 th	
Furrow 1026	1027	1x10g LPMRE	18 th -19 th	
Furrow 1032	1033	1x3g GRE 1x2g PMRE	17 th - 18 th	
Furrow 1034	1035	1x1g TPW	19 th -20 th	
Furrow 1036	1037	2x51g PMWW	17 th -18 th	PMWW: flat base, glaze mainly abraded off
Furrow 1054	1055	1x2g NLLM	Mid 14 th -16 th	

Table 1: Quantification of sherds by context

Bibliography

Slowikowski, A., Nenk, B. and Pearce, J. 2001 Minimum Standards for the Processing, Recording, Analysis and Publication of Post-Roman Ceramics,

The Ceramic Building Materials

Andrew Peachey MCIfA

The evaluation recovered a total of 27 fragments (978g) of post-medieval to early modern CBM (Table 2) in a highly abraded condition, predominantly contained in furrows and also in ditches, which suggests the CBM was re-deposited through agricultural processes. The CBM was recorded by fragment count and weight, with all data entered into an MS Excel spreadsheet that forms part of the site archive.

CBM type	Date	Fragment Count	Weight (g)
Soft red brick (50mm thick)	17-18 th C	4	553
Peg tile (calcareous fabric)	Post-medieval	21	279
Sewer Pipe	Victorian	1	34
Pantile	19-20 th C	1	112
<i>Total</i>		<i>27</i>	<i>978</i>

Table 2: Quantification of CBM

The poor level of preservation has removed the bulk of the diagnostic technological traits within the assemblage, though a single fragment of brick from Furrow F1008 preserves a thickness of 50mm with a rough base, suggesting it was manufactured in the 17-18th century, with other fragments in Furrows F1004, F1001 and F1050 appearing to have a comparable fabric. The remaining CBM is limited to very small fragments that curtail further discussion, and it appears almost certain that this material was re-deposited via manuring or to improve the drainage of soils, and is not directly related to a structure in the near vicinity.

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OASIS ID: archaeol7-275033

Project details

Project name	Land between the railway line, St Neots Road and Potton Road, St Neots, Cambridgeshire
Short description of the project	In October 2016, Archaeological Solutions Ltd carried out a trial trench evaluation on 4.15 hectares of land between the railway line, St Neots Bypass and Potton Road, St Neots, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 1902 5837). The survey was commissioned to inform and support a planning application for a proposed residential development of 79 dwellings on the site. An undated ditch was revealed in Trenches 5 (F1016) and 10 (F1002), and an undated pit (F1024) was recorded in Trench 5. Early finds were sparse. A residual late medieval (14th - 16th century) sherd was found within Furrow F1054 (Trench 1) and within the topsoil. The evaluation revealed furrows associated with a ridge and furrow field system identified during the previous geophysical survey. Though the latter records the furrows extensively across the site they were only evident in Trenches 1, 3, 5 - 6 and 8 - 10. The furrows consistently contained post-medieval (17th - 18th century pottery) and modern (19th - 20th) century pottery. The features mapped during the aerial photographic survey (Fig.3b) and geophysical survey (Fig. 3a) were not readily evident in the trenches. Only F1004/F1002 (Trench 10) correlated with geophysical survey Anomaly No.1.
Project dates	Start: 01-10-2016 End: 31-10-2016
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	P6706 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	ECB4785 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 15 - Other
Monument type	FURROWS Post Medieval
Monument type	FURROWS Modern
Monument type	PIT Uncertain
Monument type	DITCH Uncertain
Significant Finds	POTTERY Post Medieval
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches","Targeted Trenches"
Development type	Rural residential

Prompt Planning condition

Position in the planning process Pre-application

Project location

Country England

Site location CAMBRIDGESHIRE HUNTINGDONSHIRE EYNESBURY HARDWICKE Land between the railway line, St Neots Road and Potton Road, St Neots, Cambridgeshire

Study area 4.15 Hectares

Site coordinates TL 1902 5837 52.210267193124 -0.257884076178 52 12 36 N 000 15 28 W Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 20m Max: 30m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Archaeological Solutions Ltd

Project brief originator CCC HET

Project design originator Jon Murray

Project director/manager Jon Murray

Project supervisor Julie Walker

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient Cambridgeshire County Archaeological Store

Physical Contents "Ceramics"

Digital Archive recipient Cambridgeshire County Archaeological Store

Digital Contents "Survey"

Digital Media available "Images raster / digital photography","Survey","Text"

Paper Archive recipient Cambridgeshire County Archaeological Store

Paper Contents "Survey"

Paper Media available "Drawing","Photograph","Plan","Report","Survey "

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title Land between the railway line, St Neots Road and Potton Road, St Neots, Cambridgeshire

Author(s)/Editor(s) Walker, J

Other bibliographic details Archaeological Solutions Report No. 5214

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PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



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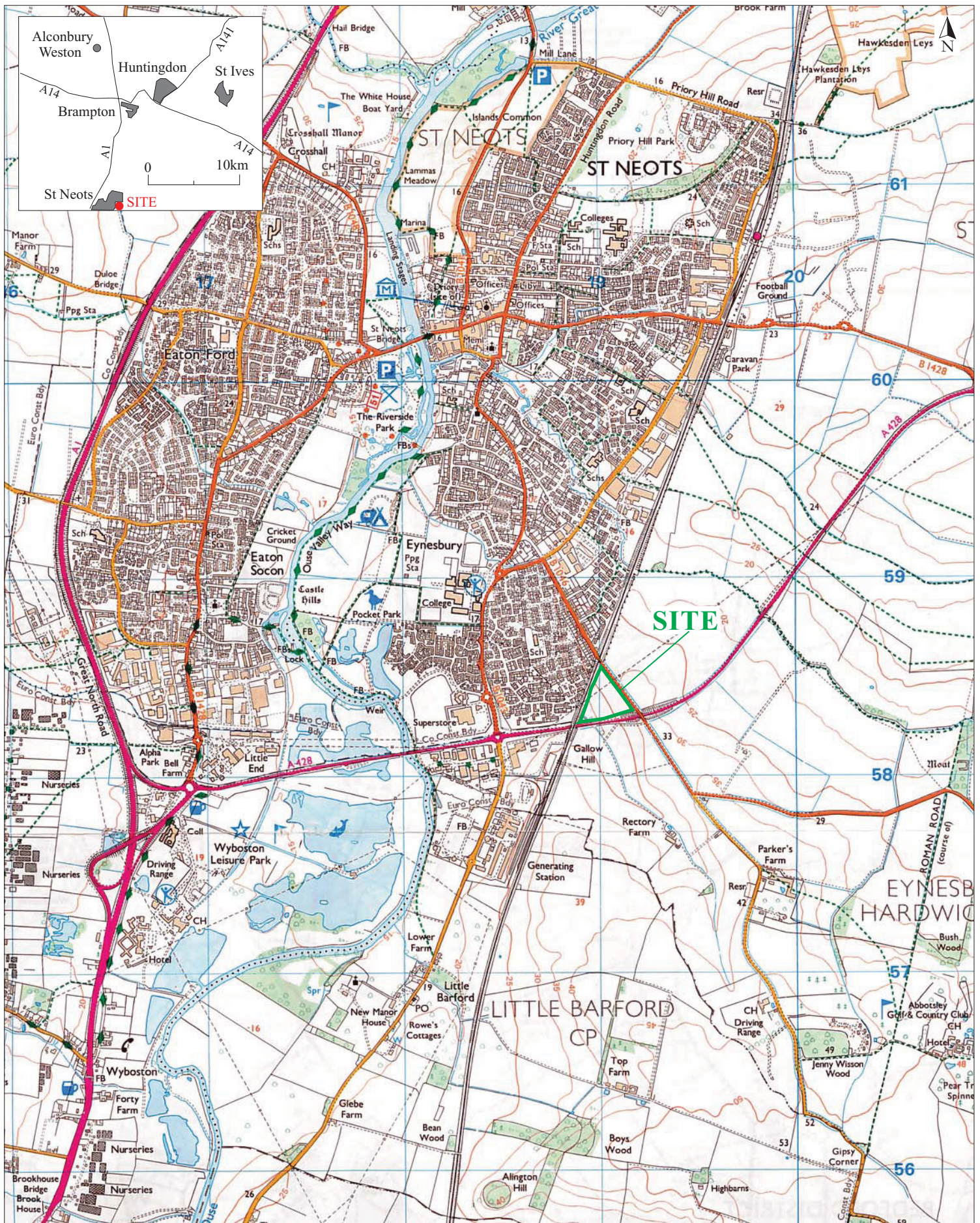
17
F1010 in Trench 10 looking south-west



18
Sample Section 10B in Trench 10 looking north

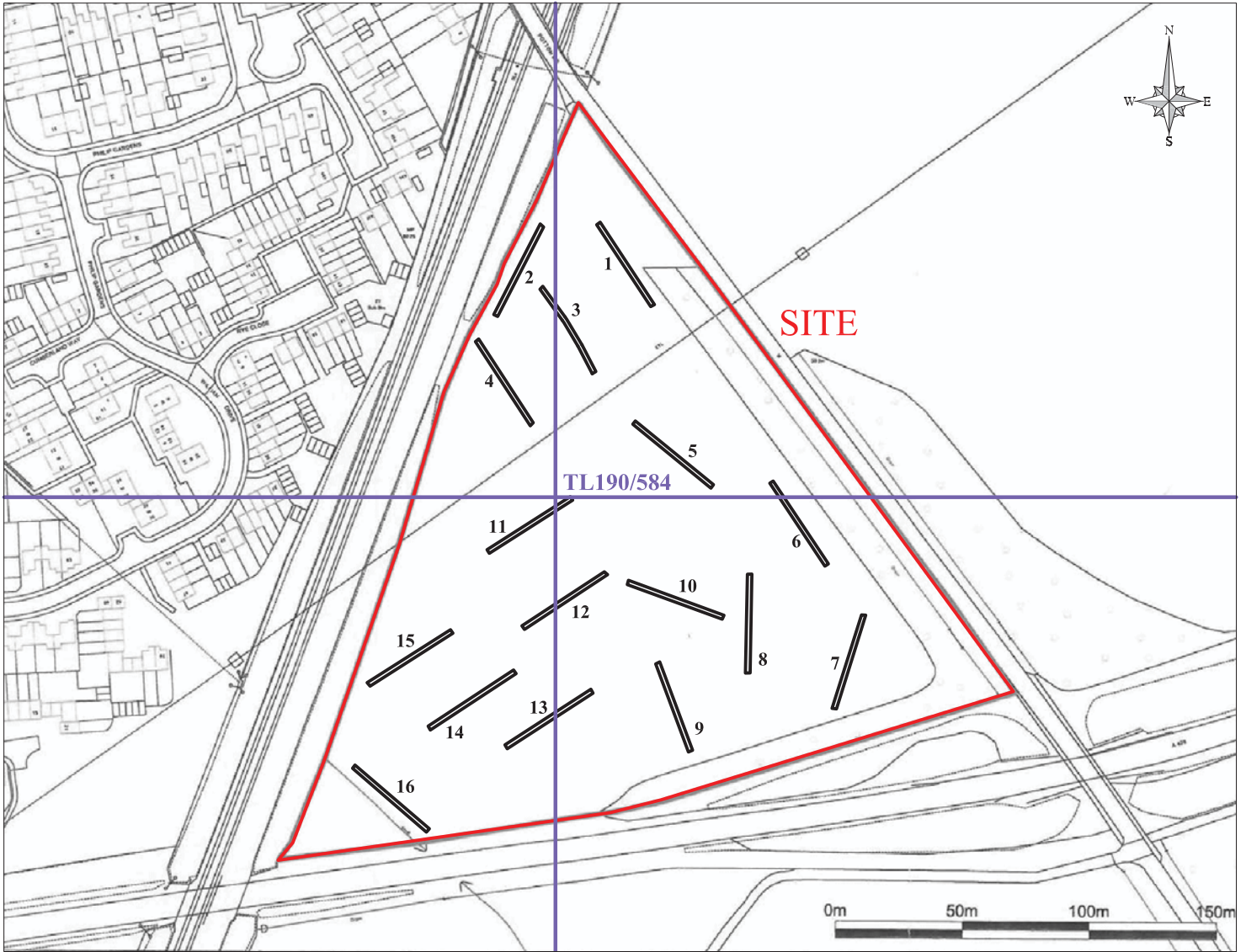


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F1038 in Trench 11 looking south-east



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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4
 Potton Road, St Neots (P6706)

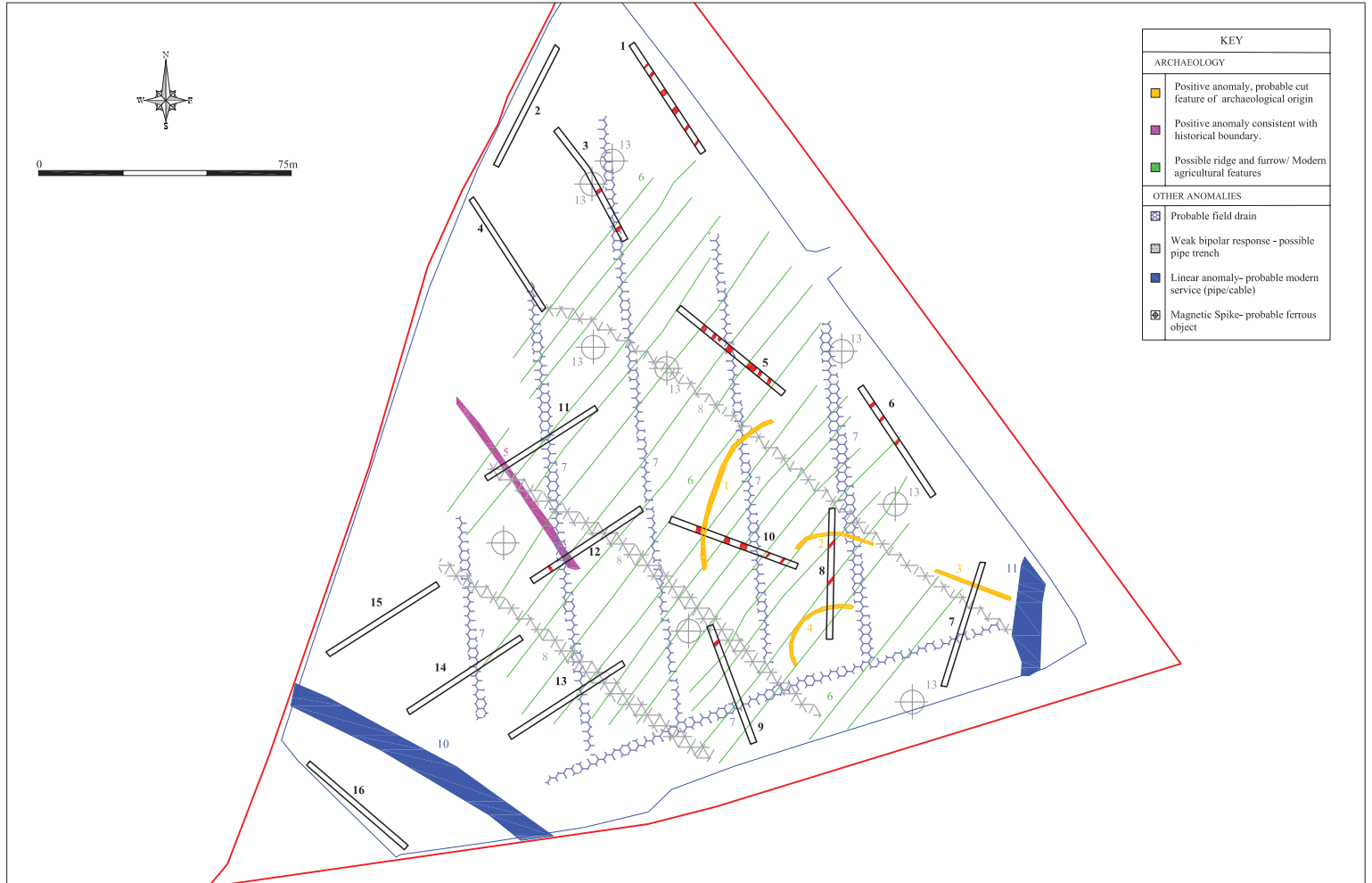


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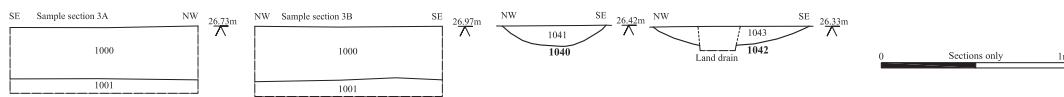
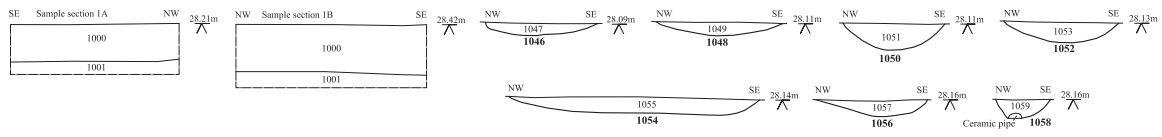
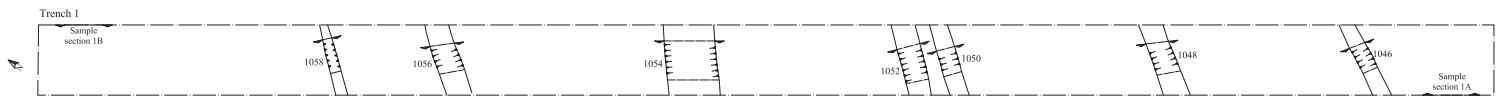
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Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan
Scale 1:2500 at A4
Potton Road, St Neots (P6706)



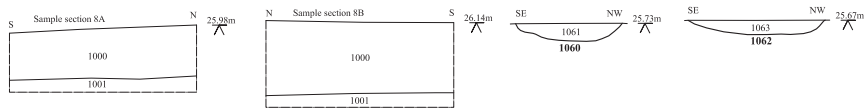
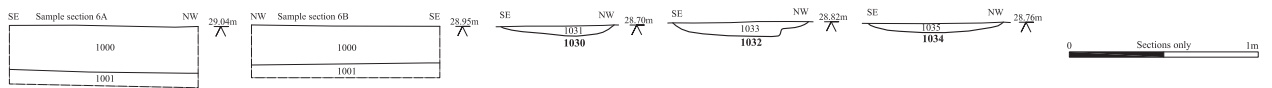
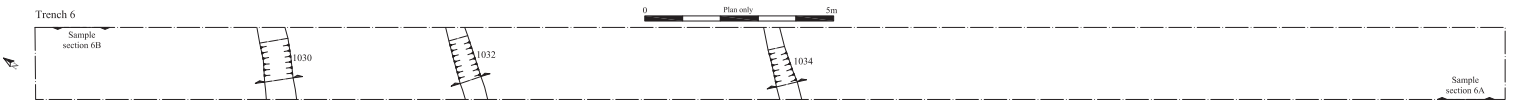
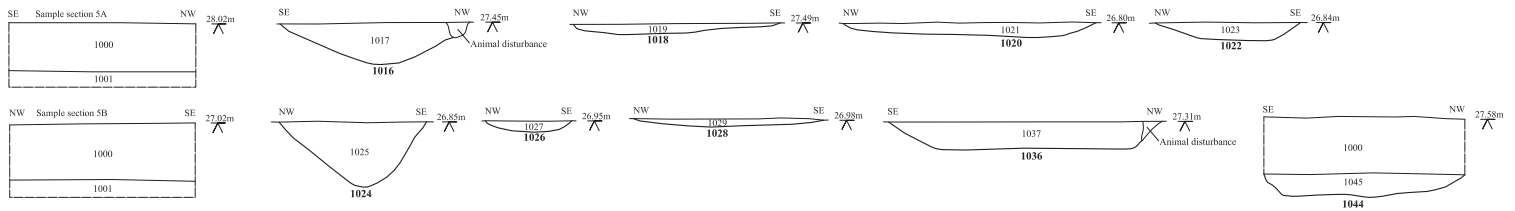
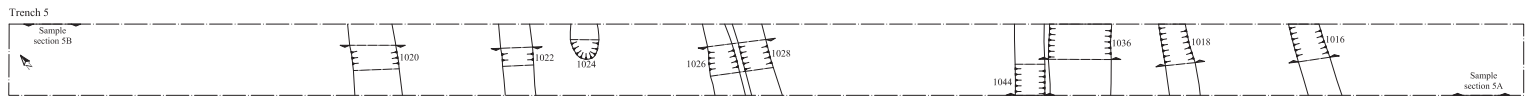
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Fig. 3b Trench locations on cropmark data
 Scale 1:1000 at A3
 Potton Road, St Neots (P6706)



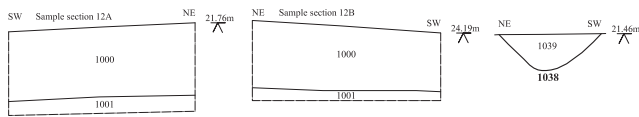
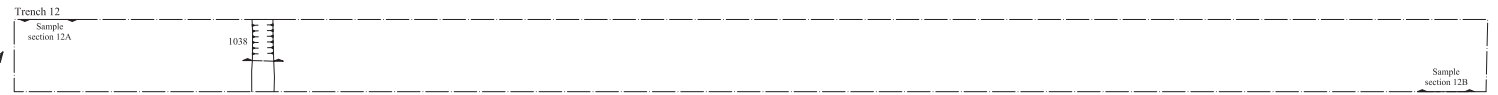
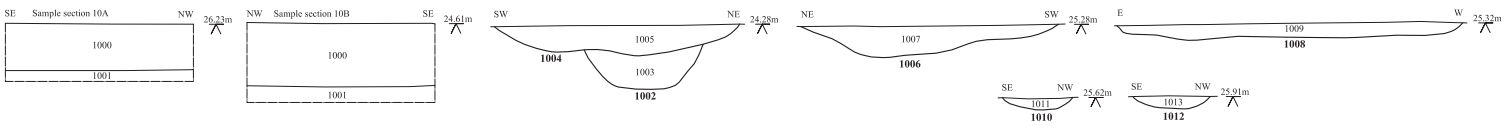
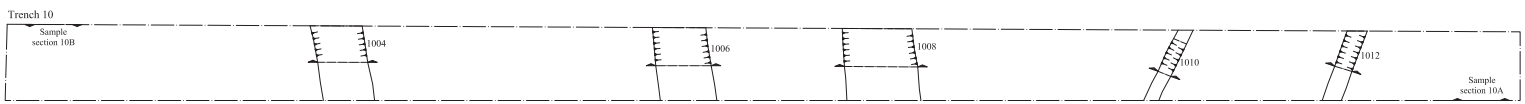
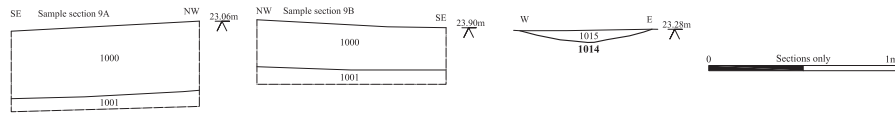
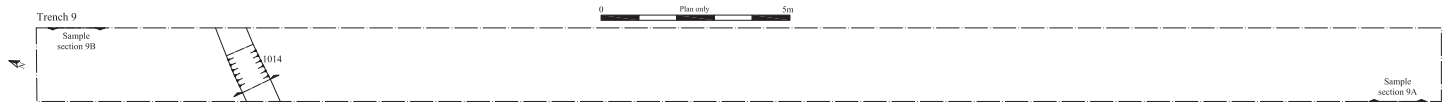
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Fig. 3a Trench locations on geophysical data
 Scale 1:1000 at A3
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Fig. 4 Trench plans and sections
Scale 1:100 and 1:20 at A3
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Fig. 5 Trench plans and sections
 Scale 1:100 and 1:20 at A3
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Fig. 6 Trench plans and sections
 Scale 1:100 and 1:20 at A3
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