

**SILVERDALE
MANOR ROAD
KEMPSTON HARDWICK
BEDFORDSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH
EVALUATION**

Albion
archaeology



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Contents

Non-Technical Summary	3
1. INTRODUCTION	4
1.1 Planning Background	4
1.2 Site Location	4
1.3 Archaeological Background	4
1.4 Project Objectives	5
2. METHODOLOGY	6
3. RESULTS	7
3.1 Trench 1	7
3.2 Trench 2	7
4. CONCLUSION	8
5. BIBLIOGRAPHY	9
6. APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT SUMMARY	10
7. APPENDIX 2: ARTEFACT SUMMARY	13

List of Tables

Table 1: Artefact summary by trench and feature

List of Figures

Figure 1: Site location plan

Figure 2: Trenching results

The figures are bound at the back of the report.



Preface

Every effort has been made in the preparation of this document to provide as complete a summary as possible within the terms of the method statement. All statements and opinions in this document are offered in good faith. Albion Archaeology cannot accept responsibility for errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by a third party, or for any loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in this document.

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The fieldwork was undertaken by Marcin Koziminski (Archaeological Supervisor) who also prepared this report with contributions from Joan Lightning (CAD Technician) and Jackie Wells (Finds Officer).

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Key Terms

The following abbreviations are used throughout this report:

BBC	Bedford Borough Council
HER	Bedford Borough Council Historic Environment Record
HET	Historic Environment Team of Bedford Borough Council
IfA	Institute for Archaeologists
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation



Non-Technical Summary

Bedford Borough Council has granted planning permission (09/02543/FUL) for the construction of a detached dwelling and garage on land at Silverdale, Manor Road, Kempston Hardwick, Bedfordshire. Acting on advice received from the Council's Historic Environment Team, the Local Planning Authority attached a condition to planning consent requiring a programme of archaeological work to be carried out at the site due to its location within an area of archaeological sensitivity. This programme of work was to initially comprise a trial trench evaluation. The results of this work would be used in the formulation of an appropriate mitigation strategy for any revealed archaeological remains.

The development site occupies an area of c. 0.12ha. It lies in a landscape that has been occupied since prehistory, although relatively little is known about pre-medieval remains in its immediate vicinity largely due to a lack of archaeological fieldwork and extensive quarrying for the brick industries. However, extensive medieval activity has been recorded in the vicinity.

The trial-trench evaluation demonstrated that archaeological remains are present within the development site. These remains comprised one ditch in each of the two evaluation trenches. Both of these ditches appear to be re-cuts of earlier ditches.

Interpretation of the dating evidence from the features is not straightforward. It is possible that both ditches are Roman in origin with one of the re-cuts dating to the medieval period. However, only a limited quantity of pottery was recovered and all of it is abraded to some degree. It is, therefore, equally possible that the ditches were originally dug and re-cut in the medieval period or later. The small size of the pottery assemblage and its abraded condition also suggest that the development site is some distance from any focus of past settlement in the area.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Planning Background*

Bedford Borough Council (BBC) has approved planning application (09/02543/FUL) for the construction of a detached dwelling and garage at Silverdale, Manor Road, Kempston Hardwick, Bedfordshire. The Council attached a condition to the planning consent requiring a programme of archaeological work to be carried out at the site, due to its location within an area of archaeological sensitivity. This was in accordance with advice received from the Borough Council's Historic Environment Team (HET) and *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment*.

Albion Archaeology was commissioned to carry out this programme of archaeological work initially comprising preparation of a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (Albion Archaeology 2011) in consultation with the HET, followed by trial trench evaluation of the site.

This document presents the results of the trial trenching, which will be used to assess the archaeological potential of the site and determine the need for a programme of mitigation.

1.2 *Site Location*

The development area occupies *c.* 0.12ha of land within Kempston Hardwick at TL 0334 4418 (Fig. 1). It lies on roughly level ground at a height of *c.*34m OD, with the land falling away gently to the north. The underlying geological deposits comprise Lower Oxford Clay overlain by a variable layer of Head Deposits.

1.3 *Archaeological Background*

The development site lies in a landscape that has been occupied since prehistory, with settlement in the wider area dating back to the late Iron Age. Less is known about pre-medieval remains within the immediate vicinity of the development site largely due to a lack of archaeological fieldwork and extensive quarrying for the brick industries (cf. HER 6678 and HER 8474).

The earliest recorded activity within a 500m radius of the development site comes from a collection of Roman pots that were dug up in 1851 *c.*450m to the east, although the precise location is uncertain. Extensive medieval settlement has been recorded in the vicinity. The earthwork remains of a medieval moated enclosure (SAM 11553) lie 450m to the north-west, with the shrunken medieval settlement of Kempston Hardwick (HER 3286) occupying the area between the moat and the development site to the north of Manor Road. An undated village green (HER 4438) also lies at the road junction *c.* 200m east of the development site.

Post-medieval use of the area prior to the arrival of the brick industries was largely related to agriculture, with a 19th-century farmhouse recorded 300m to the north-west (HER 3122) and two 17th-century ones 200m to the east (HER 5964 and HER 5965).



1.4 Project Objectives

The principal objective of the trial trenching was to determine whether archaeological remains were present at the site and, if so, to determine their extent, condition, nature and significance. This information will be used in the formulation of an appropriate mitigation strategy for the archaeological remains.



2. METHODOLOGY

The trial trenching took place on 27th and 28th October 2011. Two trenches with a combined length of 25.5m were opened within the footprint of the proposed new buildings.

The trenches were opened by a mechanical excavator fitted with a flat-edged bucket, operated by an experienced driver under close archaeological supervision. Overburden was removed down to the top of the archaeological deposits or undisturbed geological deposits, whichever were encountered first.

The bases and sides of the trenches were cleaned by hand. Any potential archaeological features were cleaned, excavated by hand and recorded using Albion Archaeology's pro forma sheets. All features were assigned a unique context commencing at 101 for Trench 1, and 201 for Trench 2. Each trench was subsequently drawn and photographed as appropriate.

A full methodology is provided in the WSI (Albion Archaeology 2011). The project adhered throughout to the standards prescribed in the following documents:

• Albion Archaeology	<i>Procedures Manual: Volume 1. Fieldwork</i> (2nd edn, 2001).
• Bedford Borough Council	<i>Preparing Archaeological Archives for Deposition in Registered Museums in Bedford</i> (1998)
• EAA	<i>Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England</i> (2003)
• English Heritage	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) Project Managers' Guide</i> (2006)
• IfA	<i>By-Laws and Code of Conduct</i>
	<i>Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation</i> (2009)



3. RESULTS

All significant deposits and features found within the trial trenches are described below and/or shown on Figure 2. Detailed data on all features, deposits and artefacts can be found in Appendices 1 and 2.

3.1 Trench 1

3.1.1 Overburden and undisturbed geological strata

Overburden comprised a 0.10–0.26m thick deposit of topsoil mixed with modern brick rubble, overlying a 0.06–0.13m thick layer of subsoil.

Undisturbed geological deposits comprised red orange clay and sand with patches of grey blue clay.

3.1.2 Archaeological features

Trench 1 contained a ditch [107] on a NW-SE alignment measuring 1.2m wide and 0.48m deep, with a V-shaped profile (Figure 2). It cut an earlier probable ditch [104]. Feature [107] produced two very abraded sherds of early Roman pottery. No finds were present in feature [104].

3.2 Trench 2

3.2.1 Overburden and undisturbed geological strata

Overburden comprised a 0.19–0.26m thick deposit of topsoil mixed with modern brick rubble overlying a 0.20–0.28m thick layer of subsoil. The subsoil was replaced at the southern end of Trench 2 by a 0.23m thick layer (211) containing modern building debris.

Undisturbed geological deposits comprised red orange clay and sand with patches of grey blue clay.

3.2.2 Archaeological features

Trench 2 contained a ditch [204] on an E-W alignment. It was 2.2m wide and at least 0.76m deep (Figure 2). It cut an earlier ditch [209] which appeared to be on a similar alignment. Feature [204] produced two sherds of abraded early medieval pottery two sherds of very abraded Roman pottery and some animal bone. Feature [209] produced two abraded sherds of early Roman pottery.



4. CONCLUSION

The trial-trench evaluation has demonstrated that archaeological remains are present within the development site. These remains comprise one ditch in each of the two trenches. Both of these ditches appear to be re-cuts of earlier ditches.

The ditch segments revealed in the two trenches are on slightly different alignments but if they both continue beyond the edge of each trench they would certainly intersect. It may also be possible that the two lengths of ditch represent the same feature.

The function of the ditch or ditches is difficult to determine but features of this type and size often form land boundaries and drainage ditches.

Interpretation of the dating evidence from the features is not straightforward. It is possible that both ditches are Roman in origin with the re-cut in Trench 2 dating to the medieval period. However, only a limited quantity of pottery was recovered; all of it was abraded, including both Roman and medieval sherds. Given the possibility that the two lengths of ditch may represent the same feature, it is equally possible that they were originally dug and re-cut in the medieval period or later.

In summary, archaeological remains are present within the development site, although their dating is uncertain. The small size of the pottery assemblage and its abraded condition suggest that the development site is some distance from any focus of past settlement in the area.



5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Albion Archaeology 2011. *Silverdale, Manor Road, Kempston Hardwick, Bedfordshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation* (Document 11/126)



6. APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT SUMMARY



7. APPENDIX 2: ARTEFACT SUMMARY

Three features produced ten pottery sherds and four pieces of animal bone (Table 1). The pottery is highly fragmented with a low average sherd weight of 9g; it is all generally abraded.

Pottery datable to the early Roman period comprises two abraded samian ware sherds (Bedfordshire Ceramic Type Series category R01:9g) deriving from ditch [107]. Two abraded shell-tempered sherds (type R13: 8g) and a coarse sand-tempered sherd (R14: 2g) were recovered from ditch [209]. Two shelly sherds (R13: 13g) occurred as residual finds in medieval ditch [204].

Datable to the 12th-13th century, medieval pottery deriving from [204] comprises single undiagnostic sherds of shell (B07:6g) and sand-tempered pottery (C59B: 35g). The latter also produced an abraded flagon / jug handle sherd (20g), which may be either Roman or medieval in date.

Animal bone recovered from ditch [208] comprises two sheep / goat molars, and single mandible and long bone fragments (total weight 14g).

Tr.	Feature	Description	Context	Spot date*	Finds summary
1	107	Ditch	108	Early Roman	Pottery (9g)
2	204	Ditch	205	Early medieval	Pottery (74g)
	209	Ditch	210	Early Roman	Pottery (10g); animal bone (14g)

* - spot date based on date of latest artefact in context

Table 1: Artefact summary by trench and feature

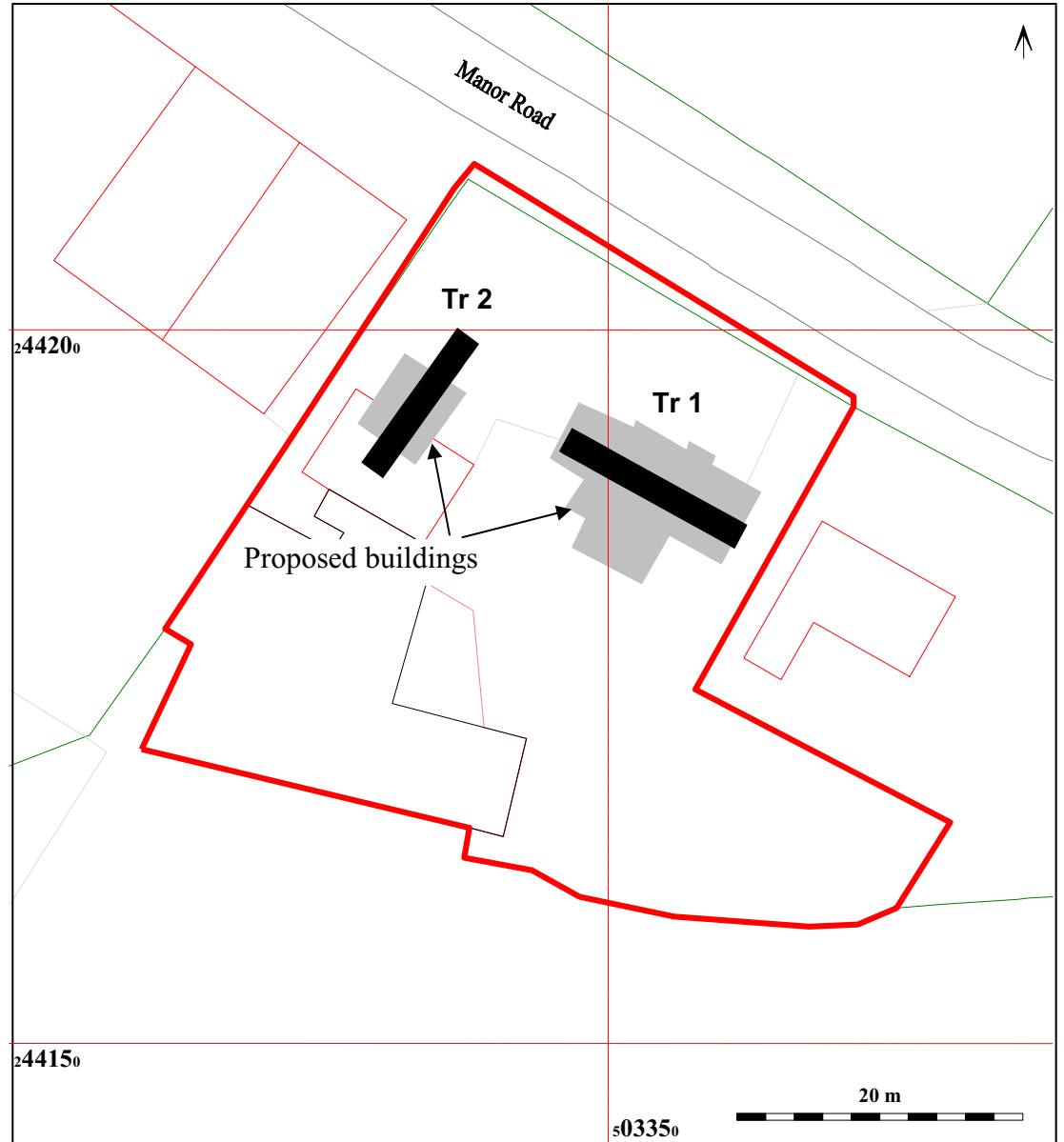
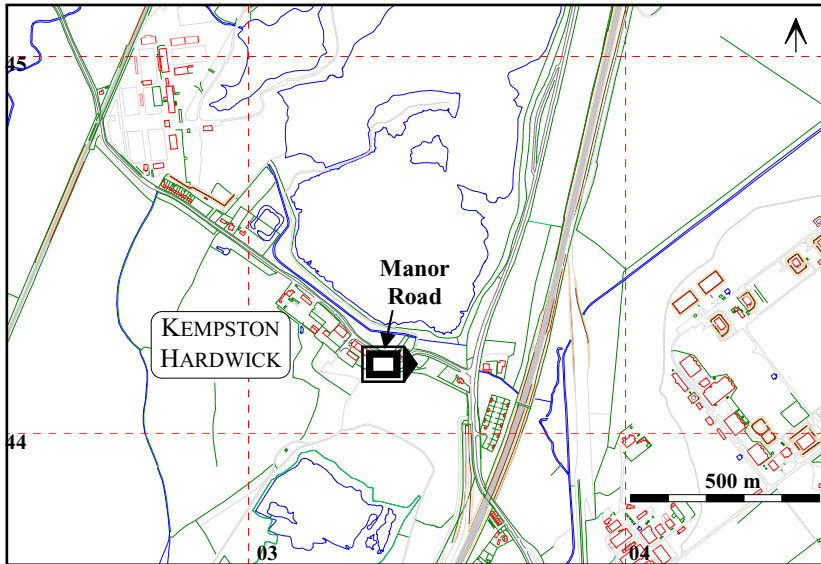
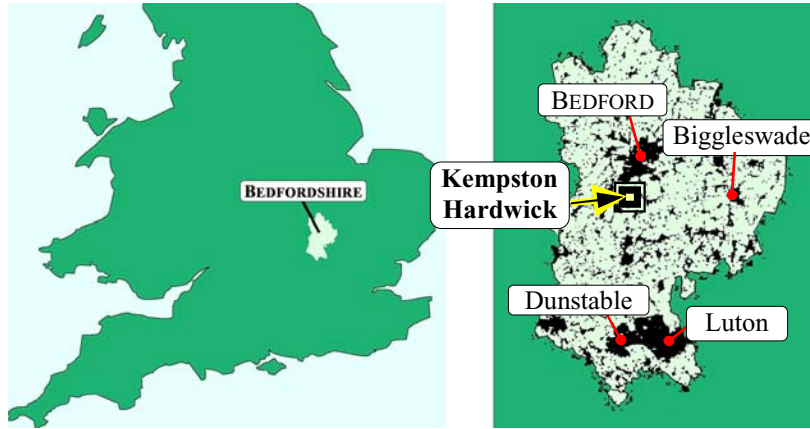
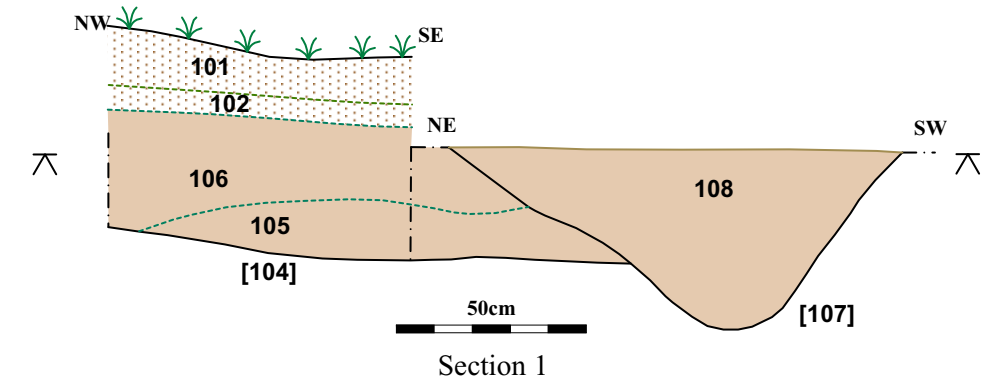
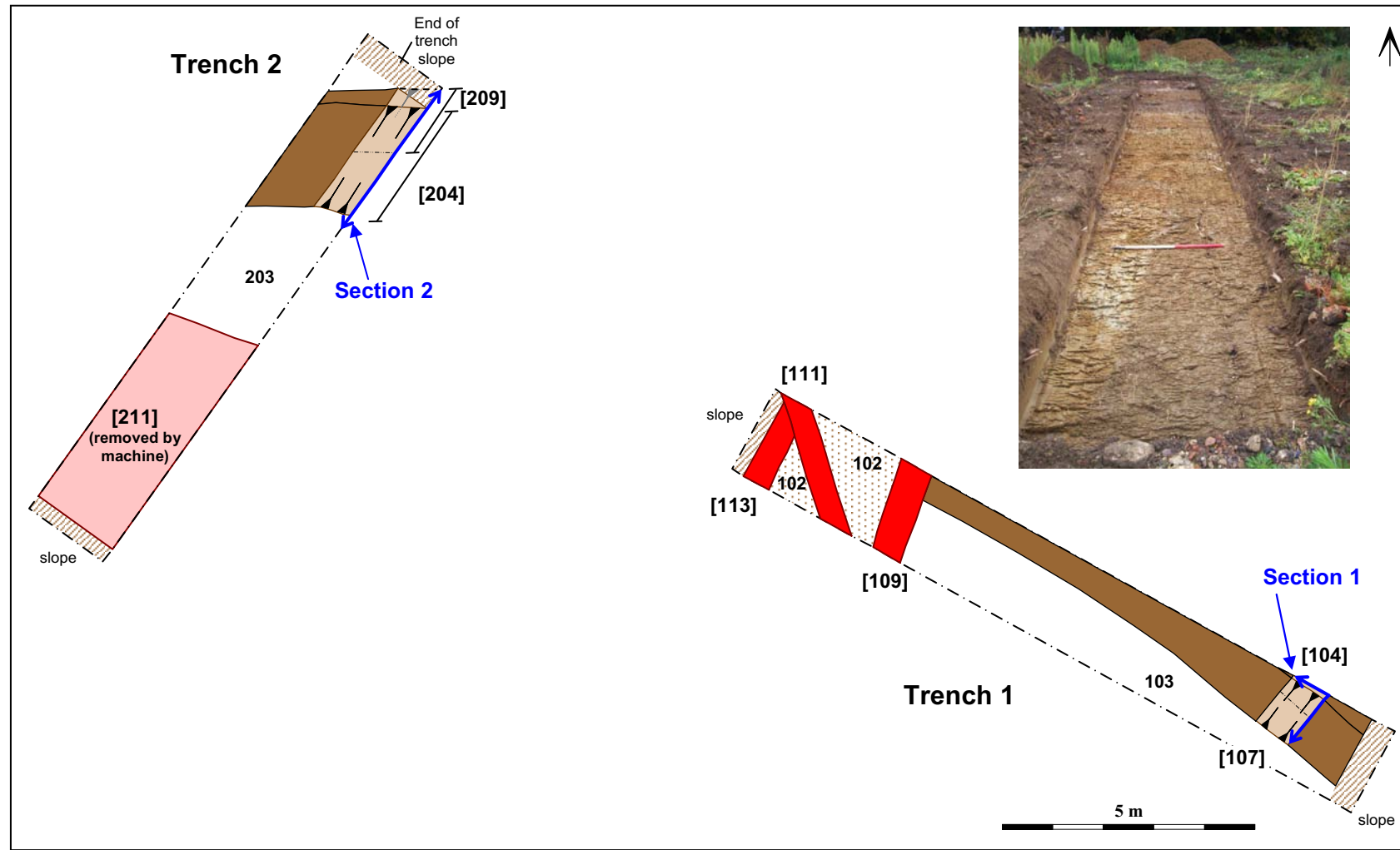
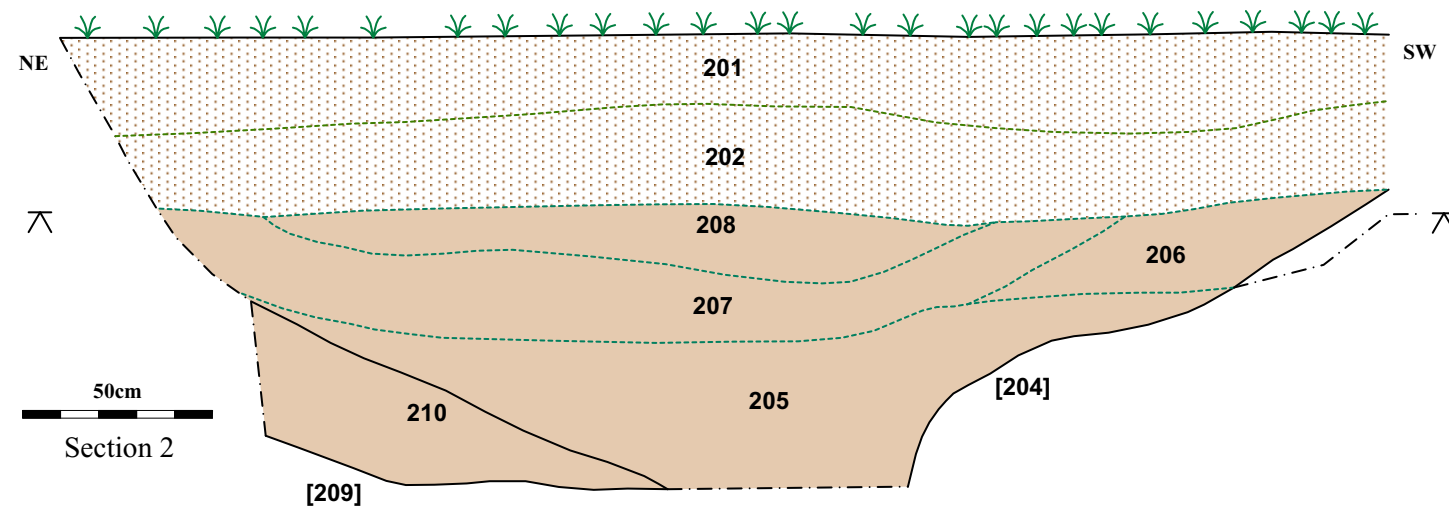


Figure 1: Site location plan

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Photograph of [104] and [107]. Scale 1m. Looking south-east



Photograph of [204] and [209]. Scale 1m. Looking south-east

Figure 2: Trenching results



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