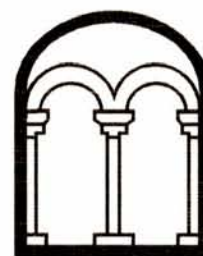


**LAND AT CANTELUPE FARM
HASLINGFIELD
CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION
AND WATCHING BRIEF**

Albion
archaeology



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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION
AND WATCHING BRIEF**

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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 project was commissioned by Liz Elbourn of Freedom Group on behalf of UK Power Networks. It was monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Dan McConnell of the Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology, Planning and Countryside Advice Office.

This report has been compiled by Ian Turner (Archaeological Supervisor), who also undertook the fieldwork with the assistance of Jessica Stevens (Archaeological Technician). Finds analysis and reporting were by Jackie Wells (Artefacts Officer). Joan Lightning (CAD Technician) produced the figures.

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Key Terms

Throughout this report the following abbreviations are used:

ALGAO	Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers
CAPCA	Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology, Planning and Countryside Advice office
CHER	Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record
IfA	Institute for Archaeologists



Non-Technical Summary

An archaeological area excavation and watching brief were carried out on part of the route of an electrical cable diversion located on land at Cantelupe Farm, Haslingfield, Cambridgeshire.

The route of the diversion passes through a landscape containing numerous cropmarks indicative of significant Iron Age/Roman settlement remains.

An earlier phase of trial trenching revealed ditches of probable Iron Age date that were well preserved and protected by a substantial depth of soil.

The archaeological area excavation and watching brief uncovered several archaeological features, the majority of which comprised ditches tentatively dated to the Iron Age.

Due to the limited extent of the revealed features within the investigations, and the paucity of finds, very little can be inferred about their function or purpose. The main conclusion that can be drawn is that they probably form part of an enclosure or boundary system associated with, but on the periphery of, the nearby scheduled monument. This is confirmed by the correspondence of some of the ditches with adjacent cropmarks that constitute the monument.

The findings also corroborate the results of trial trenching to the north of Cantelupe Farm which identified late Iron Age/early Roman field system remains associated with the scheduled monument.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 **Background**

The diversion and burial of overhead electricity cables was carried out on land at Cantelupe Farm, Haslingfield. Due to the archaeological potential of the route of the diversions, the Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Planning and Countryside Advice office (CAPCA) advised the Local Planning Authority that a condition for a scheme of archaeological work should be placed on the planning consent. This advice is in accordance with *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment*.

In September 2010 the first phase of this scheme of work, comprising evaluation by a reassessment of aerial photographic evidence followed by trial trenching (Albion Archaeology 2010), was carried out in accordance with a brief issued by the CAPCA office (CAPCA 2010).

As a result of this work, the CAPCA office recommended a second phase of fieldwork be carried out. This was to comprise an area excavation and watching brief on selected parts of the cable diversion route where archaeological remains were identified during the evaluation.

1.2 **Site Location, Topography and Geology**

Cantelupe Farm lies to the north-west of Haslingfield, and to the south of Bourn Brook (Figure 1).

The main part of the cable diversion scheme involves 33kV cables measuring approximately 1.84km in length and running from NGR TL4191/5479 in the north to TL4161/5340 in the south. The new cable is to be buried and replaces an existing power line that runs part underground and part overhead.

The archaeological excavation and watching brief works were targeted on the section of the diversion route located at the northern end of the scheme, to the west and north-west of Cantelupe Farm buildings.

The land in the area lies at a height of *c.*12m OD and comprises mainly open farm land. The geology of the area comprises River Terrace Gravels over Gault Clay.



2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 *Cambridge Historic Environment Record (CHER)*

The route of the diversion passes through a landscape containing numerous cropmarks indicative of substantial Iron Age/Roman activity.

The CHER lists the following records of archaeological interest located in or near to the site.

CHER ref.	Description
04376	Finds of Mesolithic flint artefacts, Neolithic arrowhead, and a Bronze Age arrowhead
04724 (SM75)	Extensive settlement complex indicated by cropmarks
09643	Complex enclosure system indicated by cropmarks
09644	Enclosure indicated by cropmarks
09645	Enclosure system indicated by cropmarks
MCB18433 (ECB3157)	Late Iron Age/early Roman remains

An archaeological investigation (ECB3157) comprising the excavation of seven trial trenches north of Cantelupe Farm identified the southern fringes of a late Iron Age/early Roman field system associated with the scheduled monument (SM75) to the north.

2.2 *Archaeological Evaluation Results*

2.2.1 *Aerial Photograph Reassessment*

The aerial photograph reassessment covered a study area comprising generally a 50m-wide buffer from the line of the proposed cable diversion (Figure 2). The following description of the findings is taken from the full report (Palmer 2010).

Photographs taken into the 1960s show that some fields were smaller than at present and that Bourn Brook was fringed by narrow pasture strips.

In recent years many of the fields have been used for crop trials. These occur on all the Google Earth photographs (i.e. since 2000) and seem to have been taking place on a small scale since the late 1980s. Crop trials create small blocks of crop within which it is unusual to identify archaeological features. This will have a sampling effect that may account for absences of evidence in the photographic and map record.

In the small triangular area in the eastern field north of the railway are what appear to be field drains. These may reflect the clayey nature of the subsoil and seem likely to have damaged archaeological ditches in that field.

Many photographs show soil differences in the fields abutting Bourn Brook. These may indicate slight alluvial deposits as the soil seems deeper close to the brook. It is thought that these differences are very slight and they appear on photographs as fairly diffuse spreads and so no attempt has been made to show these differences on the map. Among the soil differences are some slightly stronger lines that may indicate periglacial fissures.

An area of former coprolite extraction — now reclaimed land — is shown in the southern part of the area. This extends east towards the River Cam and corresponds well with the areas of coprolite working shown by Grove (1976, 26-



27). The depth of coprolite extraction is unknown but it is most probable that any archaeological features within that area were destroyed or severely damaged.

Aerial photographs record a series of superimposed enclosures and other features that lie mostly north of the old railway line. These are likely to be of prehistoric and/or Roman date and similar sites are known in this part of Cambridgeshire. North of the railway, these features have been well recorded in the central and east field (they extend north of the Study Area in the east field) but not in the western field where crops appear to have been equally responsive. This absence may be a real absence of archaeological presence in that field, or simply that aerial observers have concentrated on the more obvious features in the rest of the area. It is possible, therefore, that ditched features extend further west than the map shows and/or are of a slighter character than the ditches to the east.

In the central and eastern fields, the map shows many of these ditches in a more definite way than the photos suggest. On a map it is necessary that lines have hard edges but ditches of the largest enclosure (central to the NE long field) may be truncated — especially on its west side — as it has very diffuse edges in the photos that contrast with the more definite edges on the east side of that enclosure and most of the others.

The absence of archaeological features south of the railway may be a genuine absence unless the coprolite extraction was more extensive than can be seen on the photographs. The fact that areas of coprolite extraction and previous years crop trials are visible, indicates that crops are responding in the southern fields — yet only two lengths of ‘probable ditch’ have been identified there.

Early photographs show the ends of upstanding medieval ridge and furrow in grass fields that edged Bourn Brook on its north and south sides. These have now been levelled by later cultivation. There are also two fields east and west of Cantelupe Farm that held upstanding ridge and furrow until this was levelled after 1969. In the north-central field is a series of parallel lines (showing as ditches or deeper soil) that may also remain from medieval cultivation. It seems probable, therefore, that the whole Study Area was formerly used for ridge and furrow cultivation with furlongs aligned roughly perpendicular to the brook.

2.2.2 Trial Trenching

The results of the trial trenching along the route of the cable diversion demonstrated that the proposed works pass through contrasting areas of archaeological significance. Five trenches along the cable route to the south of Cantelupe Farm Cottages, together with two trenches along a spur to Cantelupe Farm, were largely devoid of archaeological evidence. The only archaeological features identified appeared to be of modern origin and relate to agricultural activity.

The results from the trenches along the proposed route to the north-west of Cantelupe Farm Cottages indicate that it passed through areas peripheral to the main foci of a significant late prehistoric settlement. The excavations confirmed that the majority of identified crop/soil marks that were targeted by the trenches survived as sub-surface archaeological features. These features were well preserved and most appeared to have been protected by a substantial depth of



subsoil. Although the investigation failed to date the majority of the features found in the trenches, it is likely that most are part of the extensive Iron Age/Roman field system and settlement associated with the nearby scheduled monument. This conclusion is supported by the recovery of six sherds of Iron Age pottery. The general paucity of finds from the excavated features supports the interpretation of the remains as peripheral to settlement foci.

The trial trenching also demonstrated that more sub-surface archaeological features are present than are visible on aerial photographs. The fills of these features are largely similar to the adjacent ditches, but presumably do not show up as cropmarks due to their shallower depth or non-linear nature.



3. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The overall purpose of the archaeological works was to investigate and record archaeological remains likely to be affected by the development works and to prepare and disseminate a report that fully describes the findings.

The results of the evaluation suggested that the further investigation at the northern end of the diversion scheme would produce remains dating to the Iron Age-early Roman period (c. 650BC-AD50), most likely in the form of backfilled ditches and pits and other features representing domestic and agrarian activities peripheral to the main foci of a settlement.

It was hoped that such findings would contribute to areas of Iron Age research as highlighted in research strategy documents for the region and county (Glazebrook 1997, Brown and Glazebrook 2000, Oake *et al* 2007, Medlycott and Brown 2008).

These areas are as follows:

- Settlement form and pattern – understanding of enclosed and unenclosed settlements, settlement distribution and association/utilisation of the surrounding landscape
- Settlement character – settlement function and use of space
- Settlement continuity – evidence for earlier and later settlement at the site
- Chronology – development of regional pottery sequences, clarification of the dating of pottery sequences
- Economy – nature of regional and local agrarian economy, identification of specialist production sites
- Material culture – artefact distribution studies may add to understanding of regional cultural differences possibly representing tribal divisions
- Environment – improve understanding of palaeoenvironmental resource, rate and extent of enclosure of landscape



4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

The archaeological excavation and watching brief works were carried out at the northern end of the cable diversion route, where significant archaeological remains were identified during the trial trench evaluation (Figure 3).

The excavation area was targeted on a stretch of the route where the trial trenching had indicated that the density of archaeological features should be greatest. The watching brief works were targeted on part of the route where a lower density of archaeological remains was anticipated.

The methodological approach to the project was detailed in the Project Design (Albion 2011) and is summarised below.

Throughout the project the standards set out in the following documents were adhered to:

Albion Archaeology	<i>Procedures Manual: Volume 1 Fieldwork</i> (2nd edn. 2001)
ALGAO (east)	<i>Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England</i>
CCC	<i>Deposition of Archaeological Archives in the Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Store</i> (HER 2004/1).
English Heritage	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i> (2009)
	<i>Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation</i> (2002/01)
IfA	<i>By-Laws and Code of Conduct</i>
	<i>Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation</i>

4.2 Area Excavation

The area excavation comprised the opening of a 330m long and 2.5m wide trench during April and May 2011. Topsoil and subsoil were removed by a mechanical excavator fitted with a flat-edged bucket under the supervision of an experienced archaeologist.

The overburden was removed down to the top of the archaeological deposits, which were generally encountered at the same level as the undisturbed geological deposits. The subsoil thickness varied considerably from 1.10m at the south end of the trench to 0.43m at the north end.

The spoil heaps were scanned for artefacts. Any potential archaeological features were noted, cleaned, excavated by hand, and recorded using Albion Archaeology's *pro forma* sheets. The excavation area was subsequently drawn and photographed as appropriate. All deposits were recorded using a unique number sequence.

4.3 Watching Brief

The watching brief on the machine excavation of a c.315m section of the cable trench by the groundworks contractor was undertaken between 11th and 15th July 2011. The machining initially comprised the excavation of a shallow trench



4.5m wide and 0.3m deep to remove the majority of the topsoil. This was followed by the cutting of the trench for the cable which was 0.45m wide and 1.15m deep. The machine excavations were continuously monitored and the spoil heaps were scanned for artefacts. Any potential archaeological features were noted, cleaned and recorded using Albion Archaeology's *pro forma* sheets. The features were subsequently drawn and photographed as appropriate. All deposits were recorded using a unique number sequence.



5. RESULTS

Dating the archaeological features found during the investigations is problematic due to the scarcity of finds. However, some datable artefacts were found and this evidence along with a comparison of feature characteristics and the results of the trial trenching has enabled the remains to be broadly classified as either Iron Age or modern.

NB. The numbers in brackets within the text below refer to features or deposits detailed in the figures or recorded in the project archive.

5.1 *Overburden and Geology*

The topsoil comprised dark grey sandy silt (2000), (2100) which was 0.28–0.45m thick. Beneath the topsoil was a subsoil which varied from mid orange brown sandy clay (2001), 0.07–0.38m thick, to light brown grey clay silt (2010), 0.15m thick.

The underlying geology (2000, 2010) consisted of light white orange sandy clay with patches of gravel and patches of light grey clay.

5.2 *Iron Age Features*

5.2.1 *Excavation Area*

Fourteen ditches were identified along the excavation trench. Their alignments varied from ENE-WSW to NNW-SSE (Figures 3-6). Five of the ditches [1204], [1208], [1304], [1306], and [1308] had previously been investigated during trial trenching. The remaining nine ditches [2006], [2008], [2011], [2014/2016], [2018], [2022/2047], [2024], [2026], [2040], ranged from concave to 45 degree sides with a pointed base in profile. They were 0.35–2.20m wide, 0.10–0.52m deep and contained deposits that varied from mid brown grey clay silt to mid orange grey clay. Ditch segment [2016] terminated within the trench.

Eighteen highly abraded animal bone fragments (48g) were collected from the fills of ditches [2011] and [2016]. They comprise indeterminate mammal long bone fragments and a broken cow molar. A piece of charcoal (1g) derived from the fill (2048) of ditch [2047].

One circular post-hole [2042] with vertical sides and a flat base was also identified. It contained mid brown grey sandy clay and no artefacts.

5.2.2 *Watching Brief*

Two ditches of probable Iron Age date were identified during the watching brief on the cable trench excavation (Figures 7 and 8). A curving-linear ditch [2106] that was previously investigated during trial trenching [904] was identified. The feature was visible for 25m but only appeared in the west-facing section of the trench suggesting that it was turning back towards the east. The ditch contained deposits that varied from mid orange grey sandy clay to dark brown grey clay silt with frequent charcoal flecks. Artefacts recovered from the fill comprised small quantities of pottery (7g), animal bone (63g) and unmodified burnt flint (179g). Two pottery body sherds deriving from a single vessel occur in a fine sand- and shell-tempered fabric type, and are datable to the early Iron Age.

Animal bone is represented by four large mammal long bone fragments, all with



surface erosion. During trial trenching a pottery sherd of early/middle Iron Age date was also recovered from this ditch.

Ditch [2103] contained no artefacts. Its firm naturally silted deposits were similar to the ditches identified in the excavation area and it is judged to be of early/middle Iron-Age date.

Ditch [1104] found during the trial trenching was not seen again in the cable trench during the watching brief.

5.3 Modern Features

5.3.1 Excavation Area

Three large pits were identified in the excavation trench (Figures 3-5). The pits extended beyond the limit of the trench. Pits [2051] and [2060] were located side by side. They had vertical sides and slightly concave bases. They were 3.10–3.60m wide, >1.3m deep and contained mixed backfill deposits that varied from light orange grey sand and gravel to black clay silt and straw and modern brick and tile fragments. The third pit [2045] was visible extending from the north baulk by 0.60m. It contained a loose deposit and a modern roof tile fragment. The pits are interpreted as gravel quarry pits due to their size, shape and the character of their backfill.

Two parallel inter-cutting ditches [2049], [2058] truncated the easterly pit of the pair of quarry pits. Their stratigraphic relationship to the pits indicates a modern date.

An additional gully [2037] was located close to the two parallel ditches. The gully contained a loose mixed deposit and no artefacts. The feature is judged to be of modern date based on the character of the deposit.

5.3.2 Watching Brief

A NNE-SSW aligned ditch [2113] was identified in the E-W segment of the cable trench, towards its eastern end. This ditch was previously investigated during trial trenching [1004] and corresponds with a feature on 19th-century maps and is therefore judged to be modern.

An E-W aligned ditch [2111] containing coal fragments was identified towards the southern end of the cable trench.



6. CONCLUSIONS

The archaeological investigations uncovered several archaeological features, as expected; the majority comprised ditches tentatively dated to the Iron Age.

Due to the limited extent of the features revealed within the excavation and watching brief areas, and the paucity of finds, very little can be inferred about their function or purpose. As a result, very few of the research objectives for the project can be fulfilled.

The main conclusion that can be drawn is that the remains probably form part of an enclosure or boundary system associated with, but on the periphery of, the nearby scheduled monument. This is confirmed by the correspondence of some of the ditches with the adjacent cropmarks that constitute the monument.

The findings of this project also corroborate the results of trial trenching to the north of Cantelupe Farm (see section 1.4.1) which identified late Iron Age/early Roman field system remains associated with the scheduled monument.

Both projects therefore support an Iron Age/Roman date for the settlement complex within the scheduled monument.



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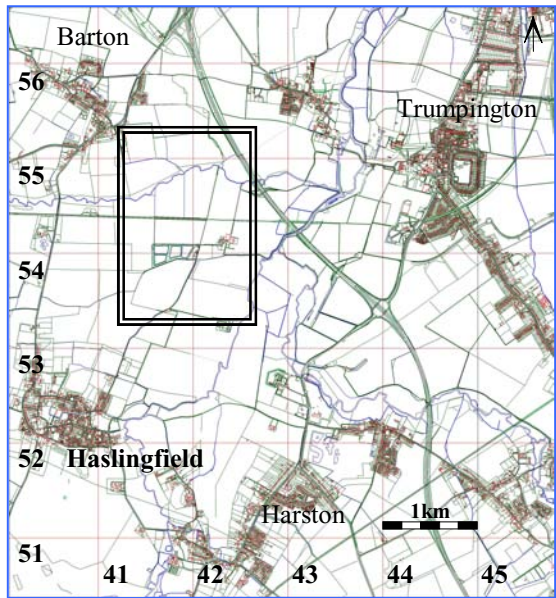
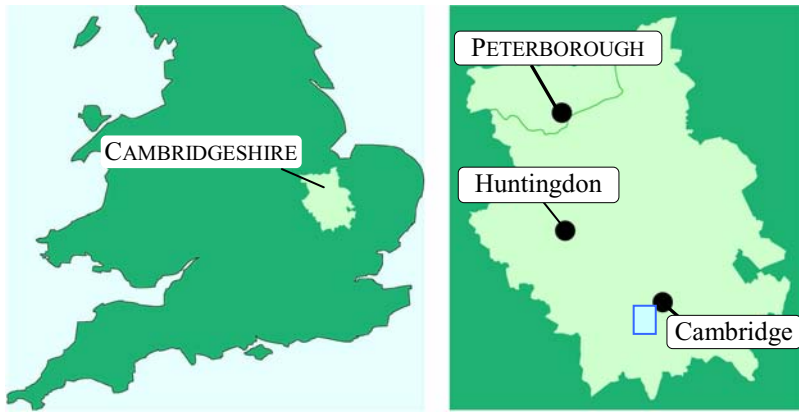
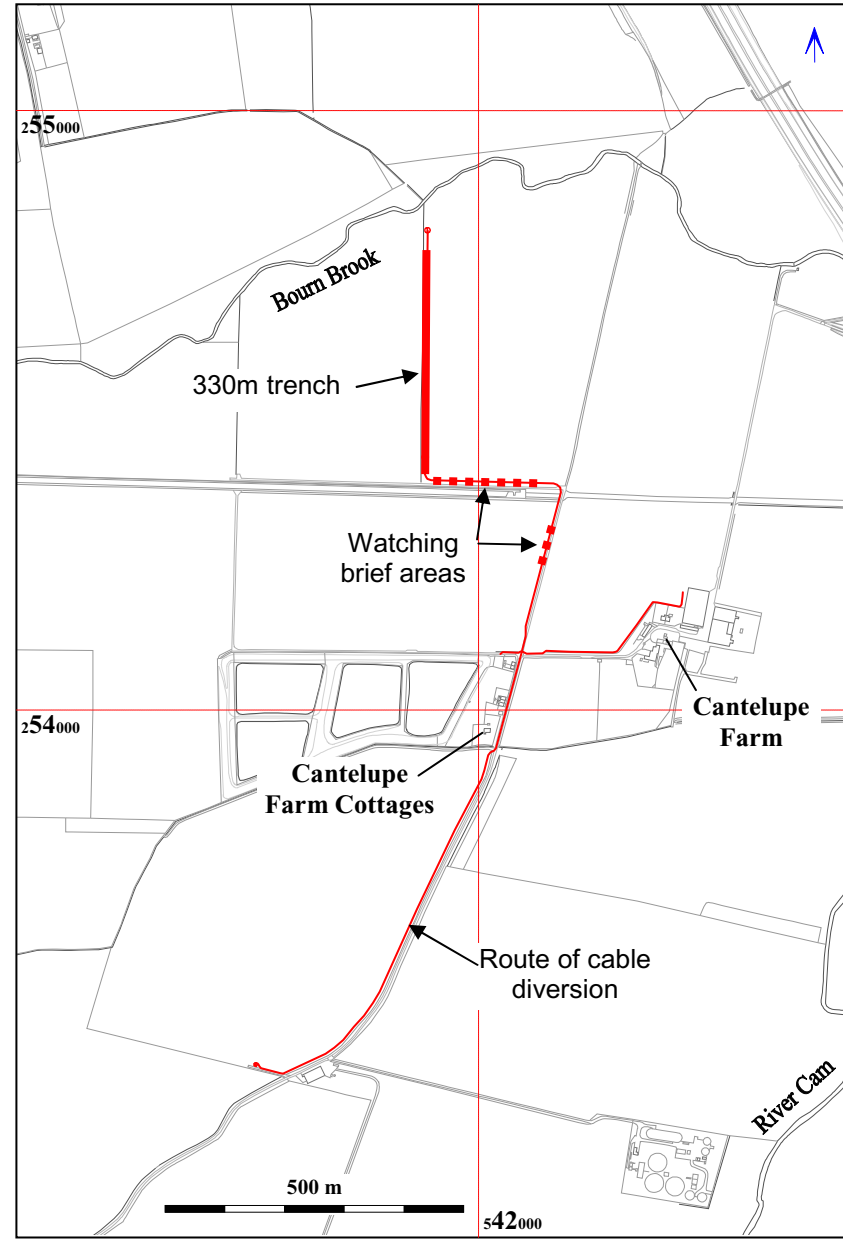
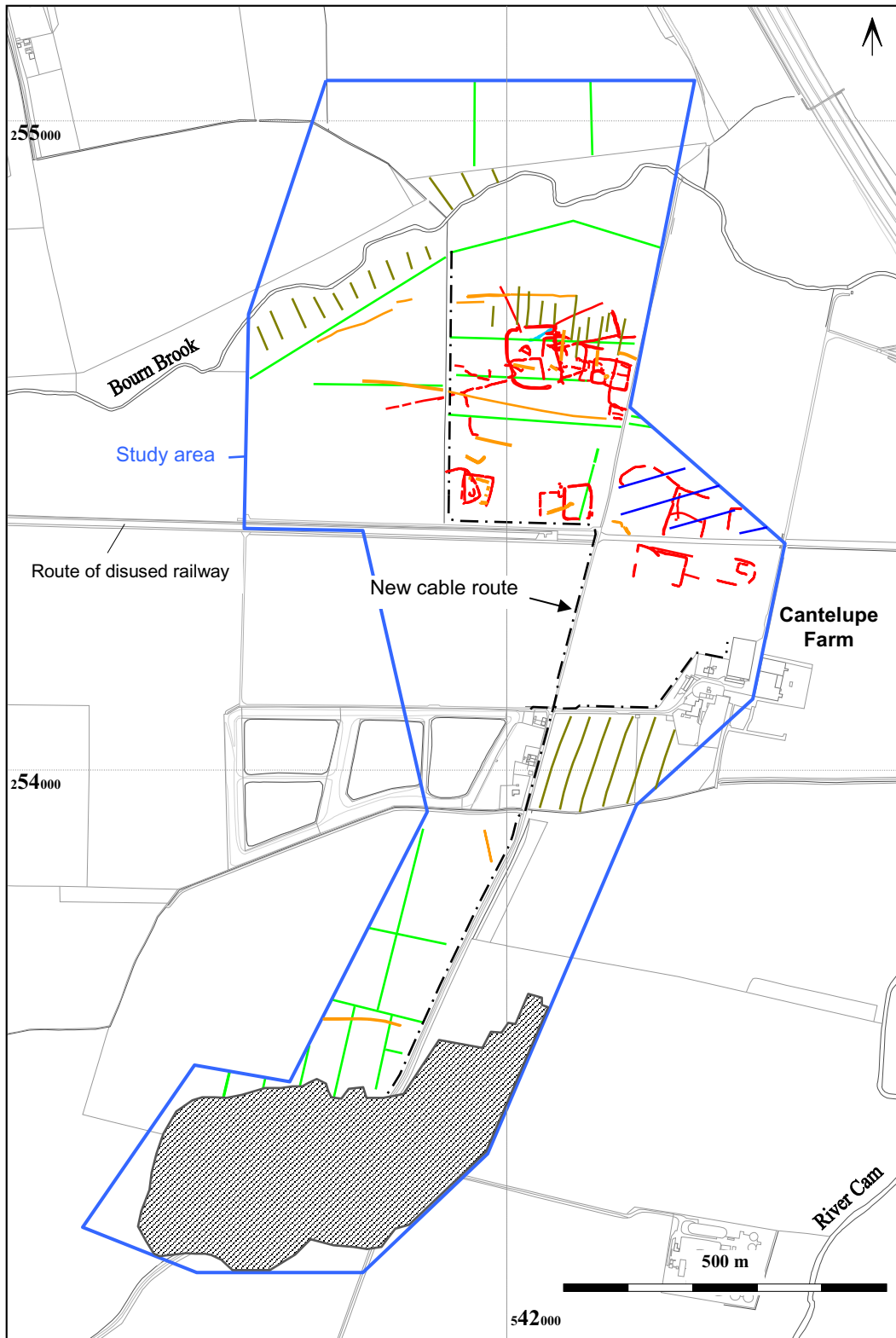


Figure 1: Site location plan

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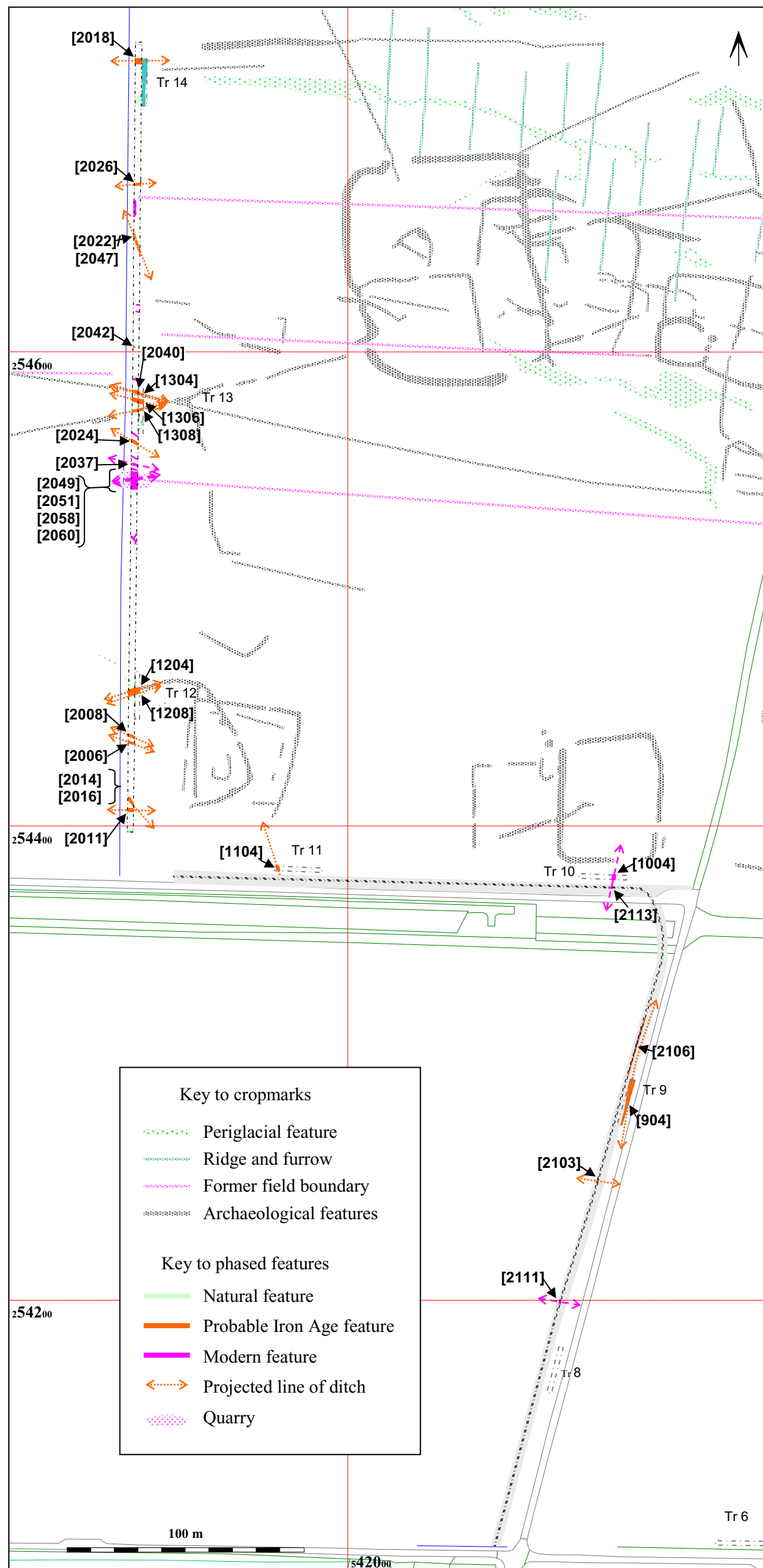


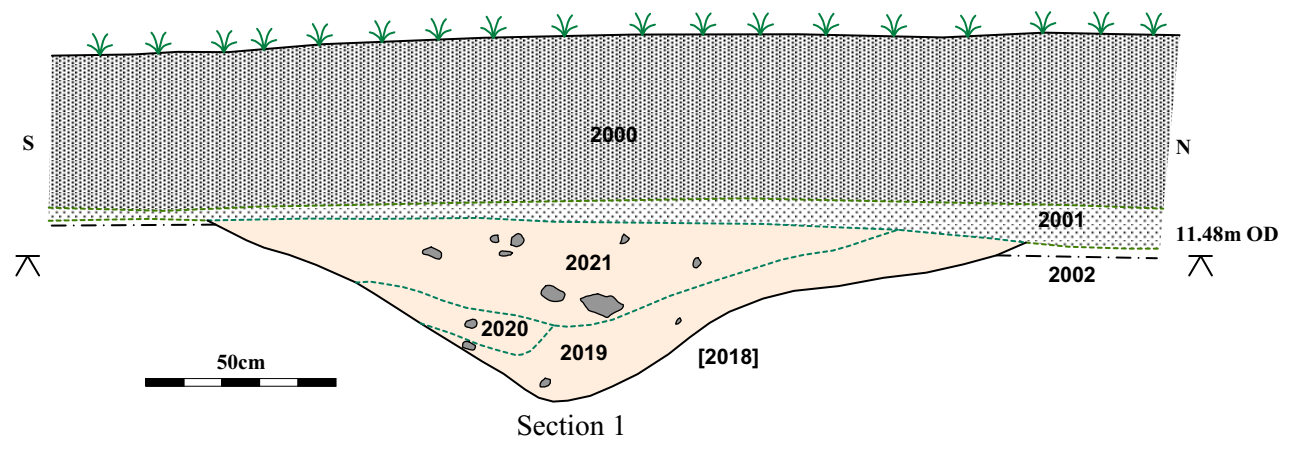
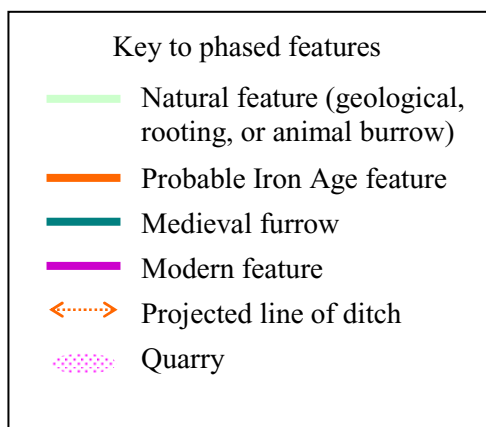
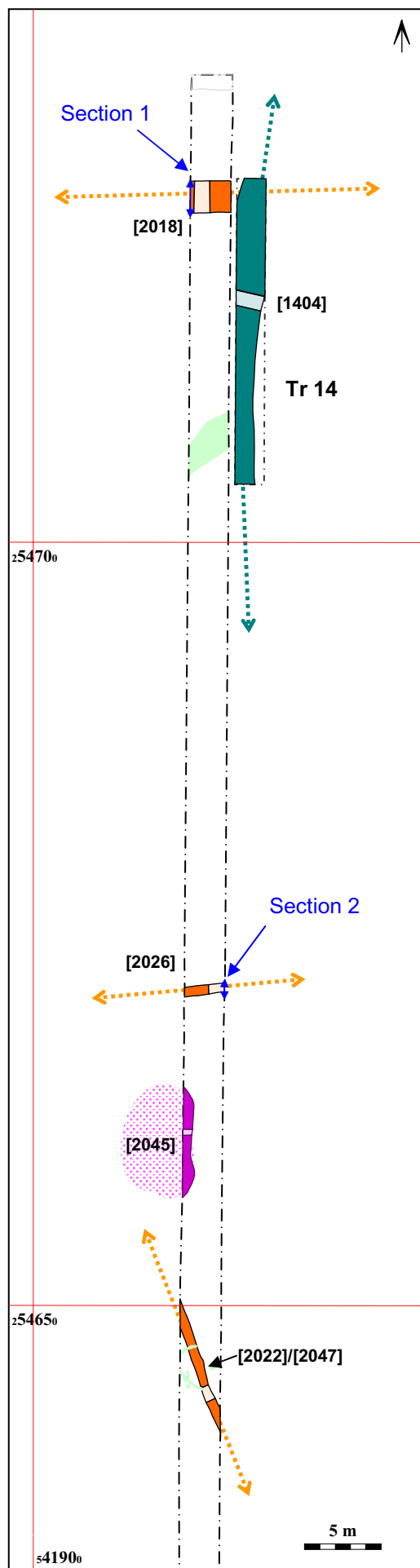


- | | |
|--|---|
| — Archaeological features | — Recent former field boundaries |
| — Possible archaeological features | — Land-drains |
| — Ridge and furrow | Coprolite mining |

Figure 2: Aerial photograph reassessment results (after Palmer 2010)

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Photograph of ditch [2018].
Looking west. Scale 1m



Photograph of ditch [2026].
Looking east. Scale 1m

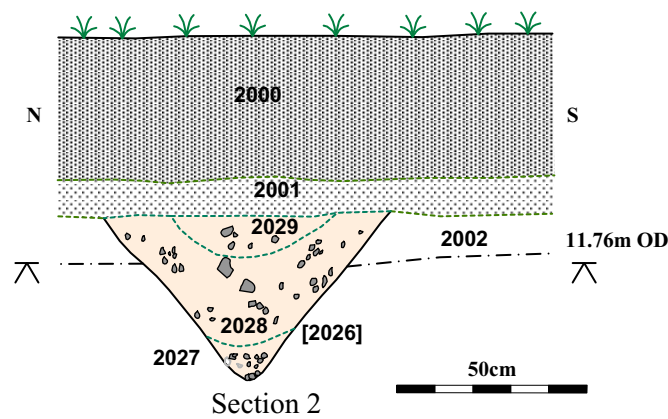


Figure 4: North end of 330m excavation trench

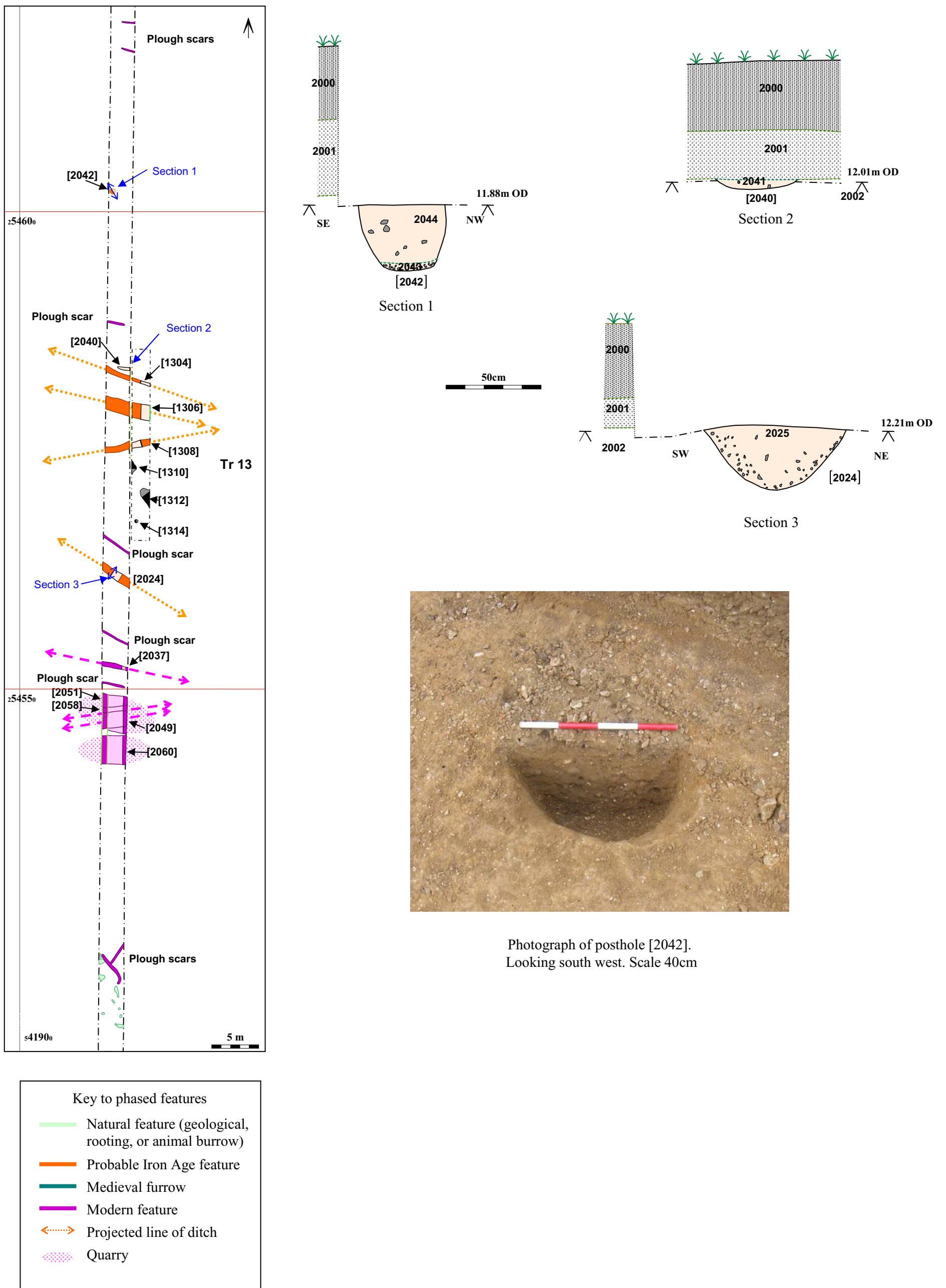


Figure 5: Centre of 330m excavation trench

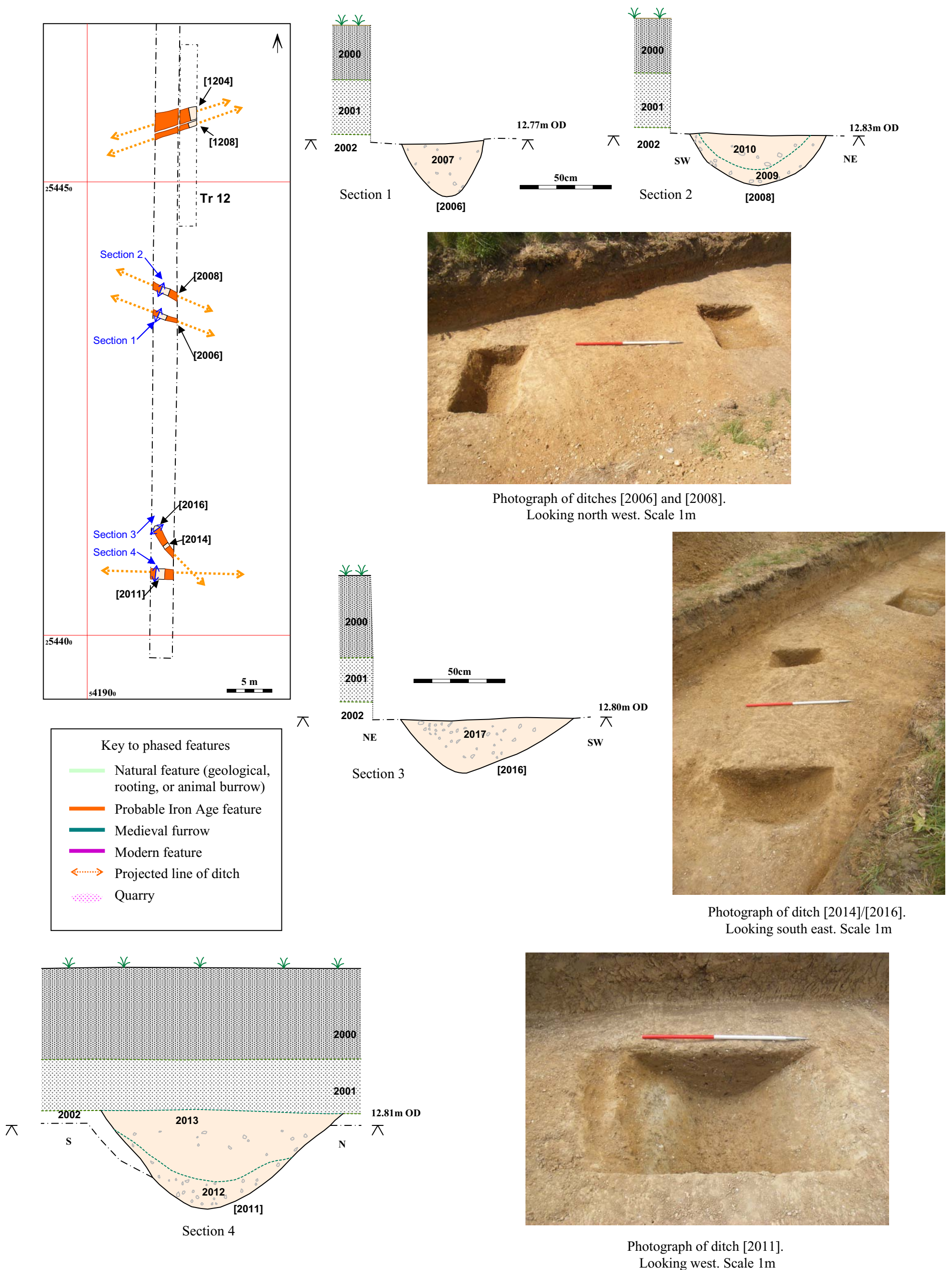
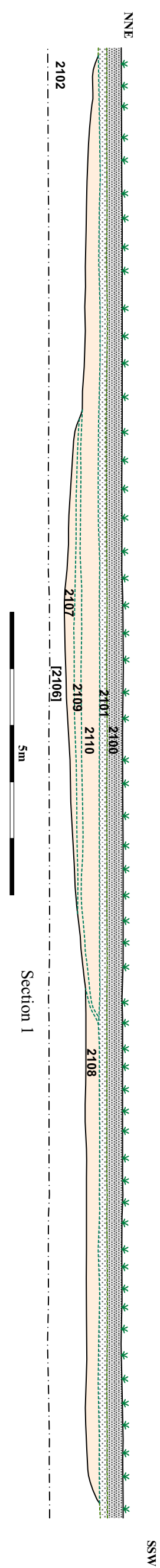
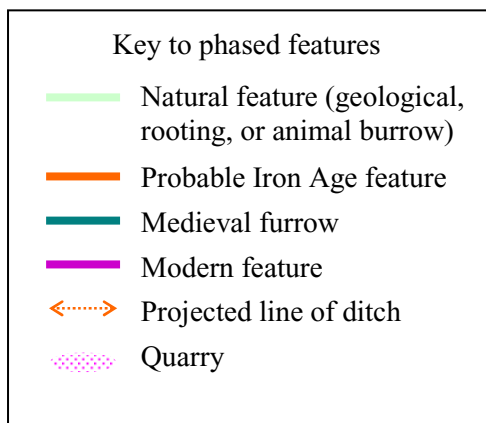
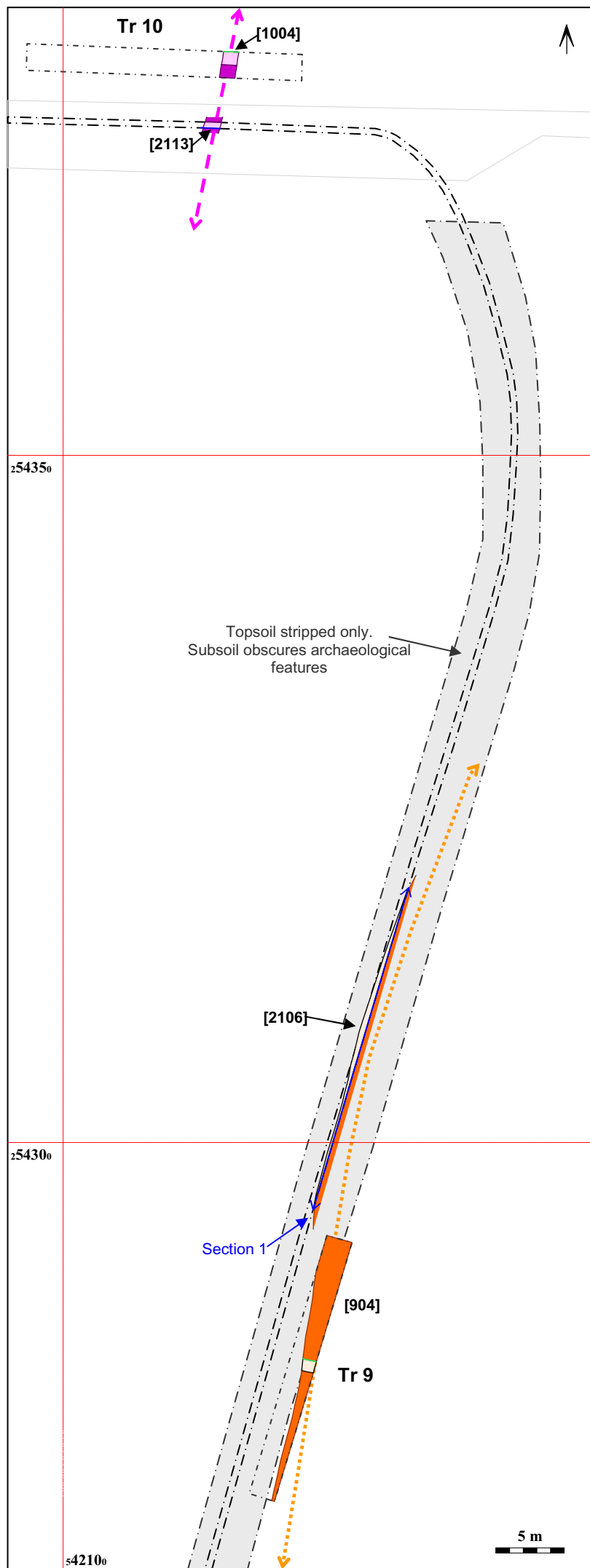
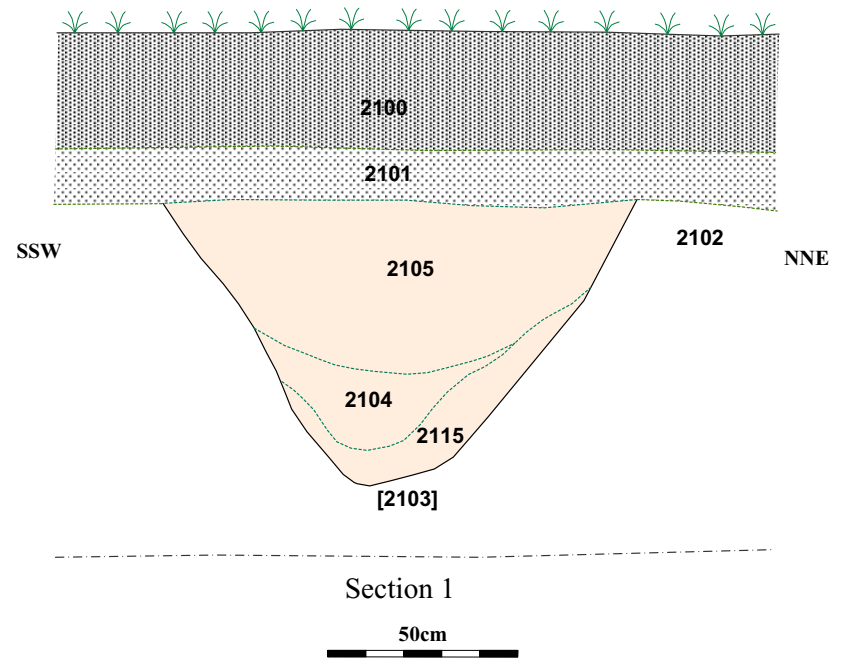
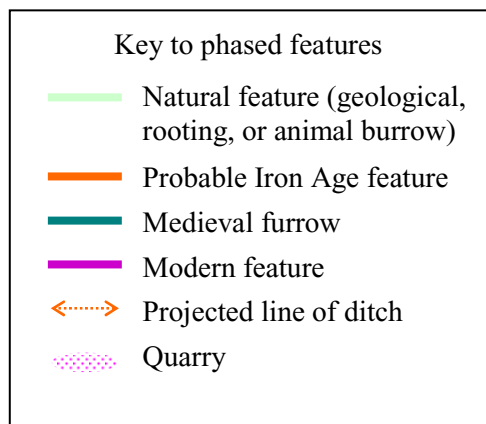
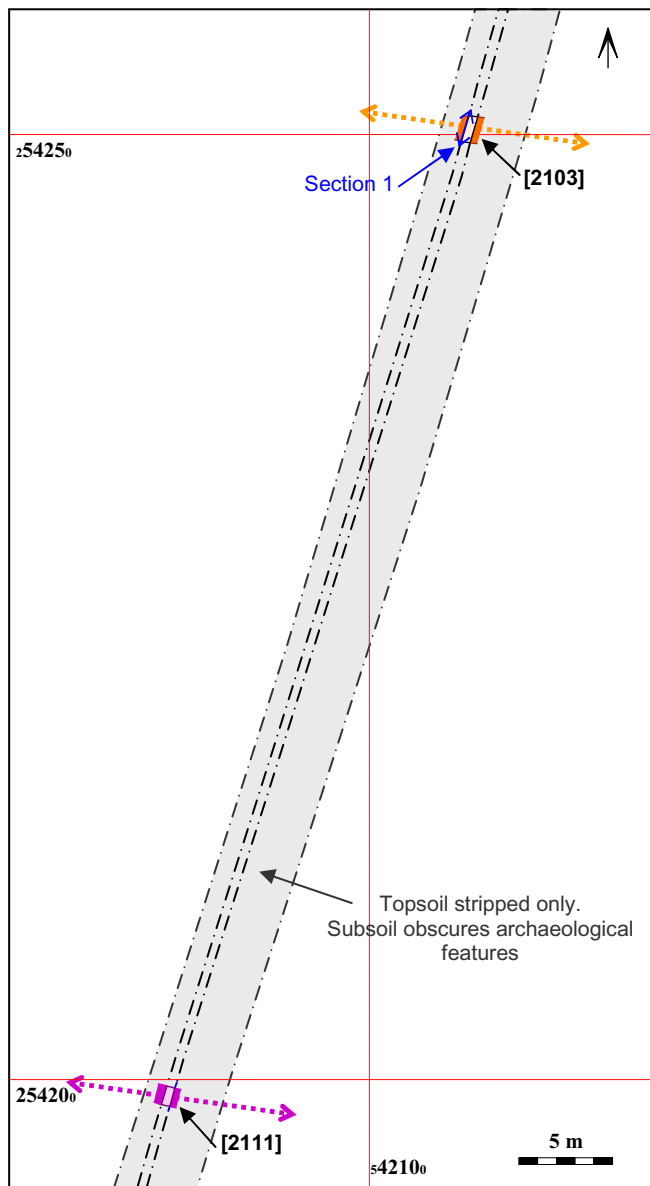


Figure 6: South end of 330m excavation trench



Photograph of ditch [2106]. Looking north east. Scale 2m

Figure 7: Cable trench watching brief. North end of NNE to SSW segment.



Photograph of ditch [2103].
Looking west. Scale 1m

Figure 8: Cable trench watching brief. Centre of NNE to SSW segment

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