

**PEDLEY FARM
CLIFTON
BEDFORDSHIRE**

**RESULTS OF
ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH
EVALUATION**

Albion
archaeology



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EVALUATION**

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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.

Albion Archaeology was commissioned to undertake the project by Campbell Buchanan. Fieldwork was monitored by the Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologist, Martin Oake.

The project was managed for Albion Archaeology by Rob Wardill (Project Manager). Fieldwork was supervised by Iain Leslie (Archaeological Supervisor) and undertaken with the assistance of Adam Williams (Assistant Supervisor), Clare Lockwood and Ben Carroll (Archaeological Technicians). All Albion Archaeology projects are under the overall management of Drew Shotliff (Operations Manager).

This report has been prepared by Christiane Meckseper (Project Officer) and Iain Leslie (Archaeological Supervisor), with contributions from Joan Lightning (CAD Technician). It was approved by Drew Shotliff.

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Version History

Version	Issue date	Reason for re-issue
1.0	09/01/2012	n/a
1.1	01/02/2012	Reflect comments of the CBCA

Structure of the Report

Section 1 is an introduction to the project, the methodology for which is described in Section 2. The results of the fieldwork are presented in Section 3, with a summary in Section 4. Section 5 is a bibliography.

Detailed descriptions of the archaeological deposits encountered can be found in Appendix 1.

Key Terms

The following terms or abbreviations are used throughout this report:

CBCA	Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologist
HER	Central Bedfordshire Council Historic Environment Record
Client	Campbell Buchanan
IfA	Institute for Archaeologists
DA	Development Area
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation (Albion Archaeology 2011)



Non-Technical Summary

Planning permission (MB/08/01664/FULL) was granted in 2008 by Mid Bedfordshire District Authority (now Central Bedfordshire Council) for the construction of eleven new houses at Pedley Lane, Clifton. Because the proposed development lies within an area of archaeological sensitivity, a condition (16) was attached to the planning permission requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological work.

This programme included the undertaking of an archaeological trial trench evaluation. The results of the evaluation will be used in the formulation of an appropriate mitigation strategy for any significant archaeological remains that might be impacted by the development.

However, the trial trench evaluation demonstrated that no significant archaeological remains are present within the DA. The remains present consisted of an undated gully, probably associated with a modern field boundary or a drainage ditch; several modern field drains; and the remains of a possible building or yard surface in the northern part of the site. As the DA is still shown as an empty field on the enclosure map of 1832, it is likely that this structure either dates to the late 19th century or 20th century when agricultural buildings began to be established on the site.

In addition, layers of alluvium were identified in the western part of the site that possibly represent a palaeochannel aligned N-S which drained into the River Flit to the north of the DA.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Project Background*

Planning permission (MB/08/01664/FULL) was granted in 2008 by Mid Bedfordshire District Authority (now Central Bedfordshire Council) for the construction of eleven new houses at Pedley Lane, Clifton.

The development will include demolition of agricultural structures and a barn currently on the site, and the construction of associated car parking and access road. The scheme also involves the conversion of the Grade II listed barn in the north-eastern part of the site (subject to a separate planning application).

Because the proposed development lies within an area of archaeological sensitivity, a condition (16) was attached to the planning permission requiring the implementation of a scheme of archaeological work. The condition was in accordance with government planning policy guidance (PPG 16 *Archaeology and Planning* and subsequently PPS 5 *Planning for the Historic Environment*).

A brief (CBC 2011) was issued by the Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeology Officer (CAO) setting out the requirements for the programme of archaeological works.

The brief outlined a programme of work comprising several stages:

- Stage 1: An archaeological field evaluation of the site.
- Stage 2: Appraisal of the results of the trial trench evaluation and their significance with regard to the proposed development.
- Stage 3: Implementation of an agreed programme of archaeological investigation and recording, if required.

Albion Archaeology produced a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) which set out the scope of the evaluation and the methods to be used for Stages 1 and 2 of the works (Albion Archaeology 2011). The results are presented in this report.

1.2 *Site Location and Description*

Clifton is a village in the south-east of Central Bedfordshire and lies *c.* 2.5km west of the A1 Great North Road (Figure 1). It lies on fairly level ground just south of the confluence of the Rivers Flit and Ivel and in between the villages of Shefford and Henlow.

The development area (DA) lies on the northern edge of the village but close to its historic centre to the south-west. It is centred on NGR TL 1629 3907 and comprises *c.* 0.5ha of land at *c.* 42m OD. It is currently occupied by a range of agricultural sheds and a large barn on an area of concrete hardstanding. A range of agricultural buildings along the current access road from Grange Street to the east include a Grade II listed barn. Parts of the site are overgrown with shrubs and low trees and a range of agricultural vehicles and caravans are stored on the site. The DA is bounded on all sides by residential development and private gardens.



The underlying geology comprises soils of the “Milton” association, a gleyed brown earth found in Bedfordshire on the loam and gravel terraces of the Rivers Ouse and Ivel (Taylor 1982). The solid geology is sandstone and mudstone of the Lower Greensand Group.

1.3 **Archaeological Background**

Clifton today is classed as a ‘large village’ but it grew out of a much smaller settlement that was most likely polyfocal in nature (HER 17110). There are two likely cores to the village: the Stockbridge Road/Church Street crossroads in the north, centred on the parish church; and the area at the southern end of Church Street in the vicinity of the village pond and former triangular village green.

The Clifton Conservation Area description includes a further core — the Grange Street and Pedley Lane junction immediately north-east of the DA. However, it is not certain on what evidence this description is based.

The DA lies close to the village centre around the green to the south-east and the Conservation Area extends into the north-western part of the DA just to the west of the Grade II listed barn (Figure 1). All of the heritage assets near the DA which are listed in the HER are therefore mainly to the west and south-west of Pedley Farm.

Clifton is listed in the Domesday Survey of 1086 as ‘Clistone’ and extending to 3 hides and ½ virgate (Page 1908). It is therefore most likely Saxon in origin; however, the location of this settlement is unclear. It is possible that it was close to the 14th-century manorial site (HER 3575) and associated earthworks (HER 2523) c. 200m to the north of the DA. The earthworks are now ploughed out but a three-sided moat still exists designating the location of the early manor house.

The route of a Roman road (HER 5342) was suggested to run along the northern boundary of the DA along Pedley Lane. This was one of many roads identified by the *Viatores* group in the South Midlands (*Viatores* road no. 176). However, its existence was later discounted (Simco 1984).

The Conservation Area classification describes Clifton as a settlement of rural character based on farming. This is in evidence by the relatively large number of farm buildings close to the DA. The DA itself is an agricultural property incorporating a Grade II listed barn (DBD398). The barn dates probably from the early 17th century and is of timber frame on a stone base. Pedley Farm house (HER 7088), immediately to the north of the DA, has a 16th-century core with later alterations.

It is possible that the DA was used as agricultural land throughout the medieval period. No buildings are shown on the site on estate maps of the 18th and 19th centuries. The 1832 Enclosure Award map shows Pedley Farm to the north-east of the DA and buildings of The Grange complex along its southern boundary, but the DA itself is shown as an open field.



Many of the buildings in the vicinity of the DA within the Conservation Area date from the 16th–19th century and are listed as assets in the HER (for example HER 9190, 9191, 9193 and 6653). These tell of the expansion of the village from its three cores outwards, filling in the areas along the main roads and shaping Clifton into the village it is today. A further timber-framed barn (HER 16385) was located to the south-east of the DA but it fell into disrepair and collapsed sometime after 1995.

A further Grade II listed building, The Grange (HER 6652), is located to the south-east of the DA. This dates from the 16th century, with later additions and alterations, and lies in extensive grounds, whose 17th-century garden wall and garden gate (HER 6653) are also Grade II listed.

The field bordering the northern side of Pedley Lane near the DA is the suggested site of a post-medieval clay pit (HER 7643), as it is marked as “Clay Pit Close” on an estate map of 1745. The residential housing bordering the DA in the north and west is late 20th century in date.

1.4 Project Objectives

The general aim of the evaluation was to establish the character, date and function of any archaeological features within the Development Area (DA), and to determine the need for a programme of archaeological mitigation.

Based on regional and local research frameworks and agendas (Medlycott 2011 and Oake *et al* 2008) the following site specific and general research objectives were formulated in the WSI (Albion Archaeology 2011):

1. Is there any evidence for Saxon occupation in this part of Clifton?
2. Is there any medieval settlement evidence that may shed further light on the origin, location and development of the suggested early settlement focus near the junction of Pedley Lane and Grange Street?
3. Can further evidence be revealed on the medieval and post-medieval expansion and development of Clifton from the village green northwards?
4. Is there any evidence for post-medieval occupation on the site and what was its nature? Can information be revealed on the extent, role and social status of the farmstead on the site?
5. Establishing the date, nature and extent of any activity or occupation on the DA.
6. Recovering palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions.



2. METHODOLOGY

Trial trenching took place between 12th and 16th December 2012. An initial layout of six trenches measuring 20m by 2m and covering 5% of the proposed new development area was agreed with the CBCA. Minor alterations were made to the location of Trench 2 to avoid a chicken coop and Trench 3 was split in two and relocated slightly to avoid obstacles and machinery on site. Trench 5 was extended on its northern side by a 1.5m x 2m area to expose a possible linear feature. The revised layout is shown on Figure 2.

Trenches were opened by a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket, under close archaeological supervision. Overburden was removed down to the top of the archaeological deposits or undisturbed geological deposits, whichever were encountered first, and the spoil heaps were scanned for artefacts.

As a thick layer of alluvium was encountered in Trenches 1, 2 and 6 a sondage was machine excavated at each of the southern ends of Trenches 1 and 6. These revealed natural gravels at a depth of c. 1.6m. The sondages were recorded photographically and backfilled.

The bases and sides of all trenches were cleaned as necessary by hand. Any potential archaeological features were investigated by hand and recorded using Albion Archaeology's *pro forma* sheets. Each trench was subsequently drawn and photographed as appropriate. All deposits were recorded using a unique number sequence, commencing at 101 for Trench 1, 201 for Trench 2 *etc.*

A full methodology is provided in the WSI (Albion Archaeology 2011). The trenches were inspected by the CAO on 19th December, prior to their backfilling.

The project adhered throughout to the standards set out in the following documents:

- Albion Archaeology *Procedures Manual: Volume 1 Fieldwork* (2nd edn, 2001).
- Bedford Borough Council *Preparing Archaeological Archives for Deposition in Registered Museums in Bedford* (2010)
- EAA *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003)
- English Heritage *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) Project Managers' Guide* (2006)
Management of Archaeological Projects (MAP2) (1991)
Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation (2002/01)
- CBC *Brief for a programme of Archaeological Investigation, Recording, Analysis and Publication of Land at 1 Pedley Lane, Clifton, Bedfordshire.*



- IfA¹

*(V1 2nd June 2011 MKO)
By-Laws and Code of Conduct
Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field
Evaluation (updated 2008) and finds (updated
2008)*

¹ All IfA codes, standards and guidelines are available at: <http://www.archaeologists.net/codes/ifa>.



3. RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

All the deposits and features of archaeological interest are summarised below. Their location and extent are shown on Figures 2–4. Detailed technical information on all archaeological features and deposits can be found in Appendix 1.

3.2 Overburden and Undisturbed Geological Deposits

Overburden across the DA consisted of a fairly uniform topsoil which was 0.23–0.30m thick and consisted of friable dark grey silty clay with occasional small stones. This lay above a mid greyish brown silty clay subsoil which increased in thickness from c. 0.10m in the south-eastern corner of the site (east end of Trench 5) to 0.6m in the north-western corner (north end of Trench 1). The subsoil probably represents a mixture of plough soil and colluvium.

Natural geological deposits consisted of light yellow to orange brown clayey gravels. They were revealed at a minimum depth of 0.3m below present ground level in the south-east of the DA and a maximum of 1.6m in the north-west.

3.3 Alluvium

A thick layer of mid orange brown silty clay with frequent small and occasional medium sized stones was revealed in Trenches 1, 2 and 6. This was up to 0.8m thick and most likely represents an alluvial layer, probably the remains of a palaeochannel draining into the River Flit to the north.

3.4 Modern Features

Trench 2 contained a brick structure (204) located on the northern side of the trench that may represent either a wall foundation or the remains of a brick yard surface. It survived to a height of one brick course and was a minimum of 1.5m wide and 13.9m long.

The brickwork lay above a subsoil (205) of firm dark brownish grey clayey silt with frequent gravel inclusions that was 0.35m thick.

A modern intrusion containing modern brick fragments was visible along the southern edge of Trench 2 that could clearly be seen to cut the subsoil. It is likely to be associated with the brick structure to the north.

Modern field drains were observed in Trenches 2, 5 and 6. A linear feature exposed by an extension to Trench 5 proved to be one of these field drains.

3.5 Undated Gully

A linear gully aligned E-W extended beyond both ends of Trench 4. It had a shallow, concave profile and was 0.51m wide and 0.12m deep. No artefacts were recovered even though the majority of the exposed part of the gully was excavated. However, its alignment with a drain in Trench 5 suggests it represents either a modern field boundary or drainage ditch.



4. CONCLUSIONS

The trial trench evaluation has demonstrated that no significant archaeological remains are present within the DA. The revealed remains consisted of an undated gully, probably associated with a modern field boundary or a drainage ditch; several modern field drains; and the remains of a possible building or yard surface in the northern part of the site. As the DA is still shown as an empty field on the enclosure map of 1832, it is likely that this structure either dates to the late 19th century or 20th century when agricultural buildings began to be established on the site.

In addition, layers of alluvium were identified in the western part of the site that possibly represent a palaeochannel aligned N-S which drained into the River Flit to the north of the DA.



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6. APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT SUMMARY



Trench: 1

Max Dimensions: Length: 20.00 m. Width: 2.00 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: m. Max: m.

Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 16252: Northing: 39075)

OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 16256: Northing: 39058)

Reason: To evaluate archaeological potential of area

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
101	Topsoil	Friable dark grey silty clay Thickness 0.3m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
102	Subsoil	Friable mid grey brown silty clay Thickness 0.6m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
103	Alluvium	Firm mid orange brown Thickness 0.3m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
104	Alluvium	Firm light orange brown silty clay Thickness 0.4m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
105	Natural	Firm mid orange brown gravel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Trench: 2

Max Dimensions: Length: 20.00 m. Width: 2.00 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: m. Max: m.

Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 16264: Northing: 39082)

OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 16283: Northing: 39087)

Reason: To evaluate archaeological potential of area

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
201	Topsoil	Friable dark grey clay silt Thickness 0.19m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
202	Make up layer	Firm dark brown grey clay silt frequent small-large CBM, frequent small-large stones Thickness 0.56m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
203	Foundation trench	Linear NNE-SSW sides: near vertical base: flat dimensions: min breadth 1.5m, max depth 0.17m, min length 13.4m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
204	Foundation		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
205	Buried subsoil	Firm dark brown grey clay silt frequent small-medium stones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
206	Alluvium	Friable mid orange brown clay silt	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
207	Natural	Friable mid orange brown clay silt	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Trench: 3

Max Dimensions: Length: 10.00 m. Width: 2.00 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: m. Max: m.

Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 16291: Northing: 39067)

OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 16293: Northing: 39058)

Reason: To evaluate archaeological potential of area

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
301	Topsoil	Firm dark grey clay silt Thickness 0.2m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
302	Subsoil	Firm mid grey brown clay silt Thickness 0.3m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
303	Natural	Firm light orange silty clay	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Trench: 4

Max Dimensions: Length: 20.00 m. Width: 2.00 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.6 m. Max: 0.6 m.

Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 16275: Northing: 39039)

OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 16295: Northing: 39038)

Reason: To evaluate archaeological potential of area

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
401	Topsoil	Firm mid grey brown clay silt Thickness 0.3m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
402	Subsoil	Firm mid yellow brown sandy silt Thickness 0.3m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
403	Natural	Firm light yellow brown sandy clay	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
404	Ditch	Linear E-W sides: V-Shaped base: concave dimensions: max breadth 0.51m, max depth 0.12m, min length 1.15m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
405	Fill	Firm mid grey brown sandy clay frequent small-medium stones Thickness 0.12m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Trench: 5

Max Dimensions: Length: 20.00 m. Width: 2.00 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: m. Max: m.

Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 16275: Northing: 39026)

OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 16294: Northing: 39033)

Reason: To evaluate archaeological potential of area

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
501	Topsoil	Friable dark grey clay silt Thickness 0.45m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
502	Subsoil	Friable mid grey brown clay silt Thickness 0.39m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
503	Natural	Firm mid orange brown silty clay	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Trench: 6

Max Dimensions: Length: 25.00 m. Width: 2.00 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: m. Max: m.

Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 16262: Northing: 39044)

OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 16261: Northing: 39019)

Reason: To evaluate archaeological potential of area

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
601	Topsoil	Friable dark grey clay silt Thickness 0.35m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
602	Subsoil	Friable mid grey clay silt Thickness 0.45m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
603	Alluvium	Firm mid orange brown clay silt Thickness 0.8m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
604	Natural	Firm mid orange brown silty gravel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Trench: 7

Max Dimensions: Length: 10.00 m. Width: 2.00 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: m. Max: m.

Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 16282: Northing: 39051)

OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 16291: Northing: 39054)

Reason: To evaluate archaeological potential of area

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
701	Topsoil	Friable mid grey brown clay silt Thickness 0.24m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
702	Make up layer	Firm mid grey brown clay silt frequent small-large CBM Thickness 0.25m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
703	Subsoil	Friable mid grey brown silty clay Thickness 0.36m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
704	Natural	Firm light yellow brown sandy clay	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

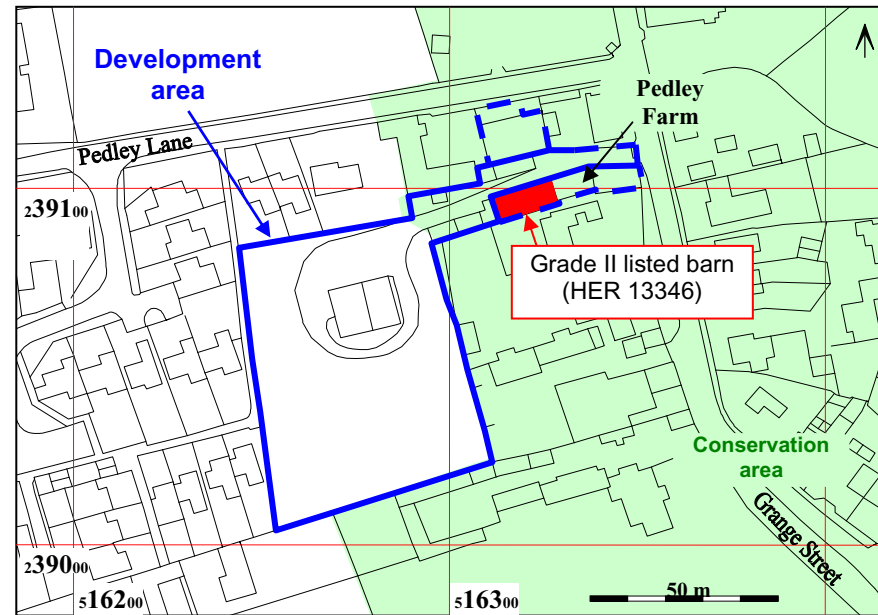
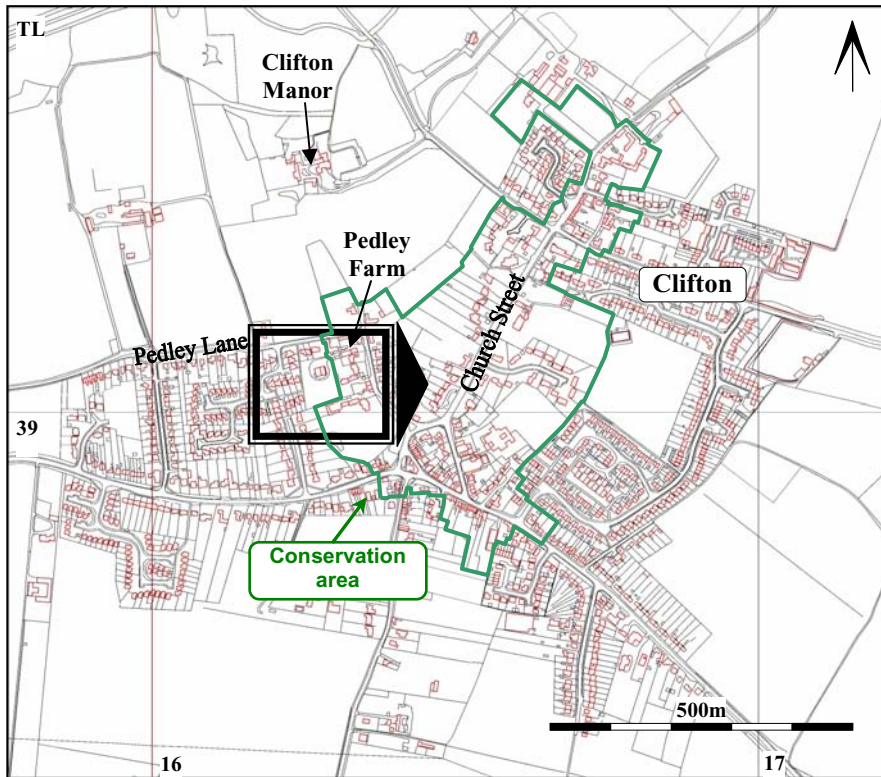
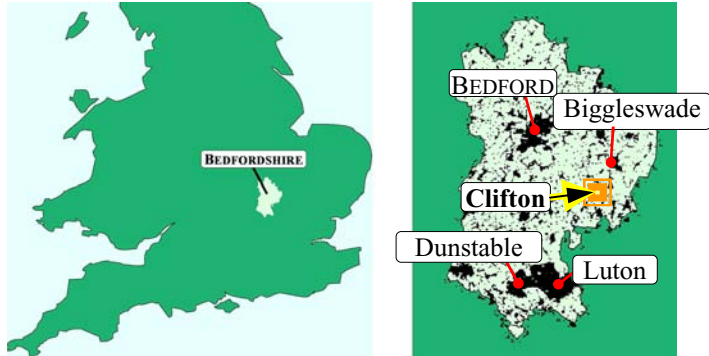
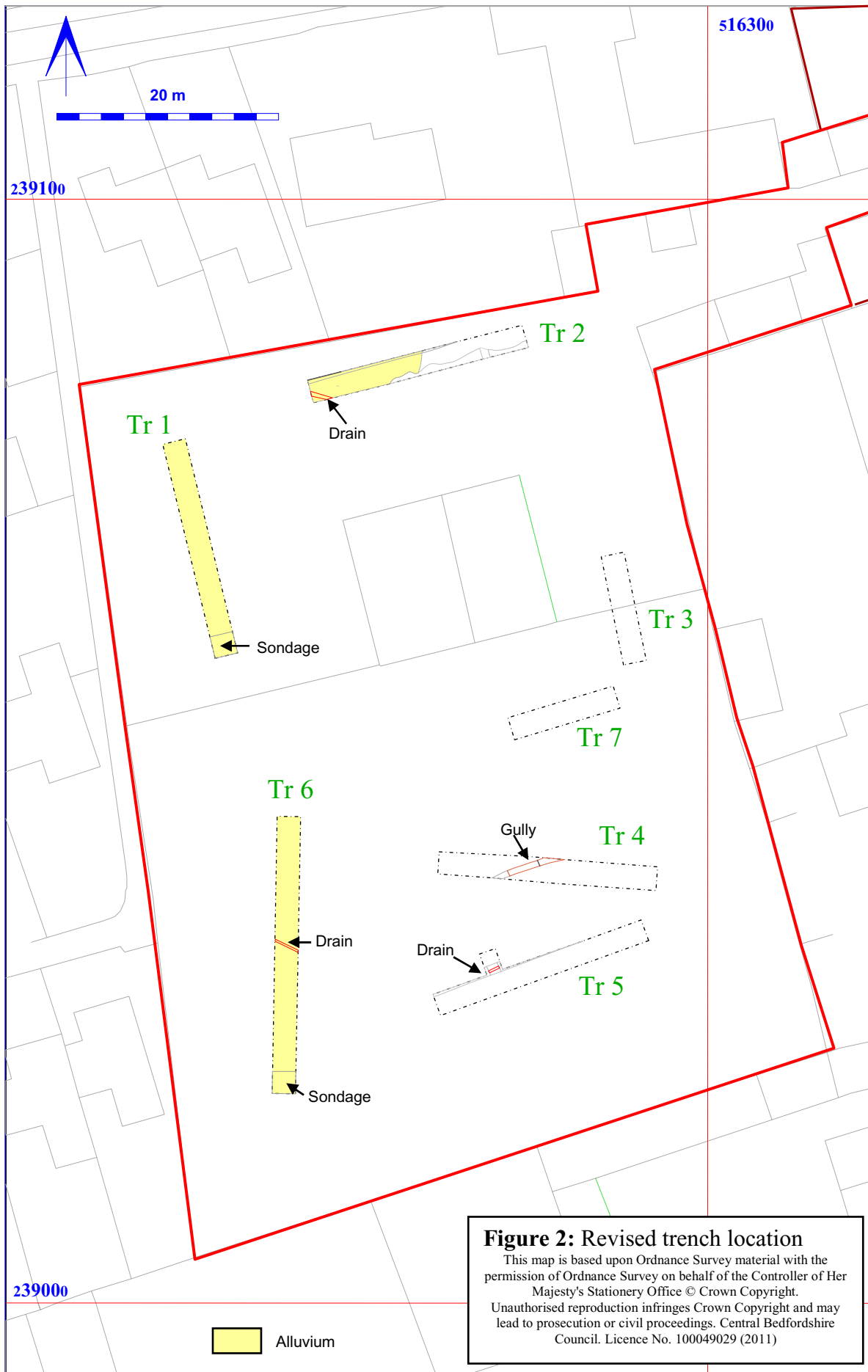


Figure 1: Site location

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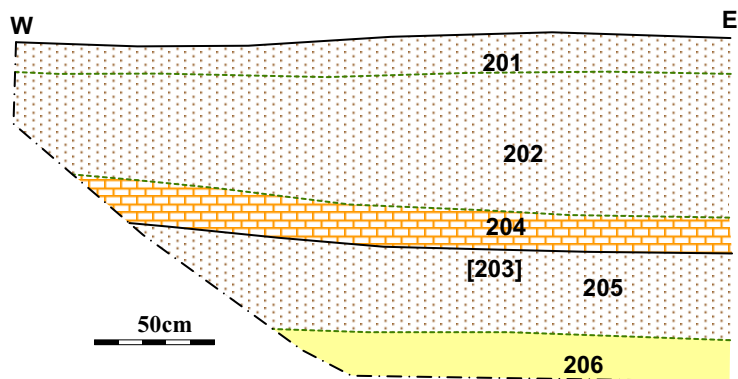
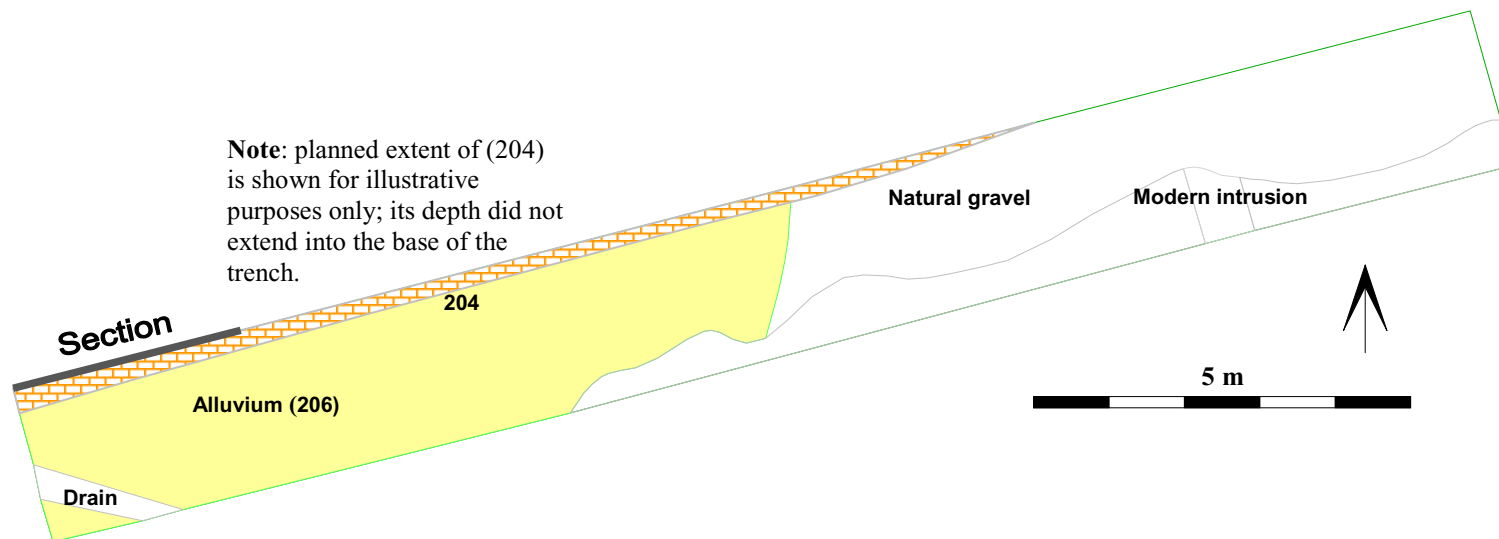


Figure 3: Trench 2 - plan, section and photo of north-western trench section

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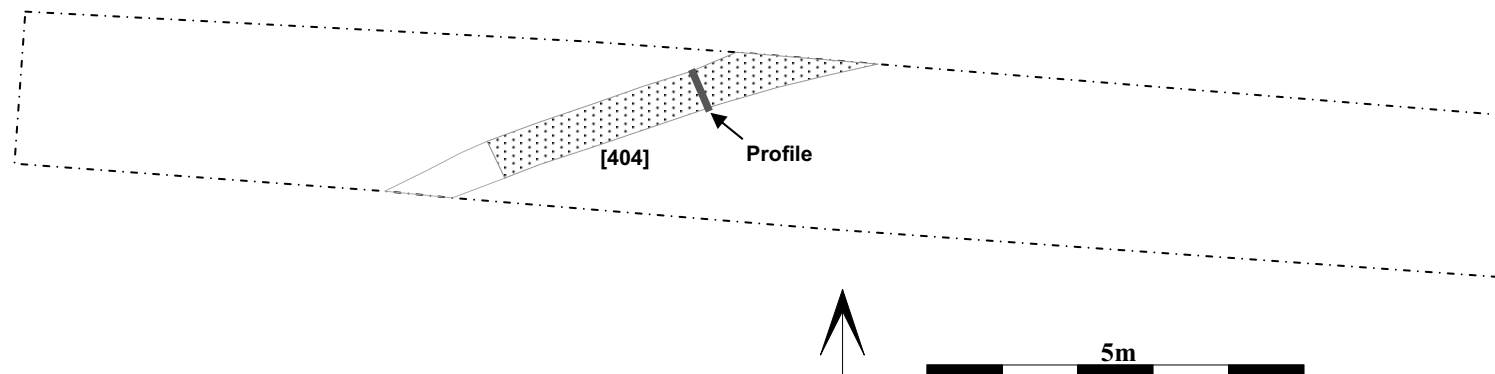
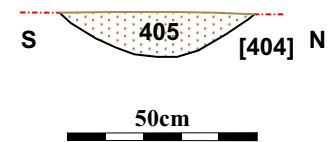


Figure 4: Trench 4 - plan and SW-facing profile and photo

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