# LAND TO THE REAR OF THE HOO, 31 HIGH STREET, GREAT BARFORD, BEDFORDSHIRE

INTRUSIVE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

# Albion archaeology





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# INTRUSIVE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

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Produced for: Mr & Mrs Gerig

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#### **Preface**

Every effort has been made in the preparation of this document to provide as complete an assessment as possible, within the terms of the specification. 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.

The project was commissioned by Mr and Mrs Gerig. The project was monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Geoff Saunders, Archaeological Officer of Bedford Borough Council.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Kathy Pilkinton (Project Supervisor) and Ben Barker (Project Officer). This report has been prepared by Kathy Pilkinton (Project Supervisor), and Jackie Wells (Finds Officer). The figures were produced by Joan Lightning (CAD Technician). All Albion projects are under the overall management of Drew Shotliff (Operations Manager).

Albion Archaeology would like to thank Mr and Mrs Gerig for their commission and assistance during implementation of the project.

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## Version History

Version	Issue date	Reason for re-issue
1.0	25th October 2012	n/a

#### Structure of this Report

Section 1 serves as an introduction to the site, describing its location, archaeological background and the aims of the project. Section 2 describes the trial trenching methodology and Section 3 summarises the results. Section 4 is a bibliography. Appendix 1 contains trench summary information and detailed contextual data. Appendix 2 contains a summary of the investigation data submitted to the **O**nline **AccesS** to the **I**ndex of archaeological investigation**S** database (OASIS).



# **Key Terms**

Throughout this document the following terms or abbreviations are used:

AO Bedford Borough Council's Archaeological Officer

BBC Bedford Borough Council

Client Mr & Mrs Gerig

HER Bedford Borough Council's Historic Environment Record

IfA Institute for Archaeologists
LPA Local Planning Authority

Procedures Manual Volume 1 Fieldwork, 2nd ed, 2001

Albion Archaeology



## Non-Technical Summary

Bedford Borough Council has given planning permission (11/00878/FUL) for the erection of two dwellings and associated works at land to the rear of 31High Street, Great Barford, Bedfordshire (a property known as "The Hoo"). The 0.4ha development site is centred at NGR: 513113 252204. The main focus of the new development will be in the northern half of the existing plot, with a new driveway along the western boundary. It will impact upon less than 0.12ha of the site. The site lies at c. 21m OD on river terrace sands and gravels of the Ouse Valley formation.

As the proposed development lies within an area of archaeological sensitivity, the Historic Environment Team (HET) of Bedford Borough Council made a recommendation for an archaeological condition to be attached to the planning consent. Condition 19 requires that "No development shall take place until the applicant, or developer, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority". A written scheme of investigation was prepared by Albion Archaeology to define the scope of the works, a timetable and methodology. This was approved by the HET on 29/05/2012.

The proposed development site is located within the historic core of the medieval settlement of Great Barford (HER17150). The early core of the settlement appears to be located to the south-east, close to the church (HER1011) and the river crossing (HER996). Later development in the medieval period is likely to have focussed on the High Street and may well have included the present site. Work undertaken by Albion Archaeology (1998 and 2004) in advance of housing development to the south-east identified archaeological remains indicative of intermittent settlement activity from the Bronze Age onwards (HER609).

The evaluation was undertaken between 15th and 16th October 2012 in line with the approved WSI. The trenches were opened by a mechanical excavator fitted with a flatedged ditching bucket and operated by an experienced driver under the supervision of an archaeologist. The deposits were removed down to either the top of possible archaeological remains or undisturbed geological strata, whichever were encountered first.

The evaluation revealed no evidence for significant archaeological remains within the proposed development area. Where features were present they were generally dated to the post-medieval and modern periods. One ditch contained a single sherd of medieval pottery. This feature was parallel to the road and may represent an earlier property division.

The remains from the site have no further potential to address regional archaeological research frameworks.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

# 1.1 Planning Background

Bedford Borough Council has given planning permission (11/00878/FUL) for the erection of two dwellings and associated works on land to the rear of 31 High Street, Great Barford. A change of use is proposed that will divide the current plot. This will result in the reduction of the curtilage of The Hoo (the existing property) and construction of two new residential dwellings with associated garages, access, parking, and landscaping on the remainder of the plot.

As the proposed development lies within an area of archaeological sensitivity, the Historic Environment Team of Bedford Borough Council made a recommendation for an archaeological condition to be attached to any forthcoming planning consent. The evaluation was required in order to: "...ensure that remains of archaeological importance likely to be disturbed in the course of the development are adequately investigated and recorded and in accordance with Policy BE24 of the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2002."

Condition 19 of Planning Application 11/00878/FUL requires that "No development shall take place until an archaeological mitigation strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority." Bedford Borough Council's Historic Environment Team (HET) has prepared a brief for an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching.

Albion Archaeology was commissioned by Mr and Mrs Gerig to undertake an archaeological field evaluation in line with an approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) to satisfy Condition 19 of the planning application. The WSI (Albion 2021) was approved by the Bedford Borough Council HET on 29/05/2012 and the subsequent trial trenching began on 15/10/2012

# 1.2 Site Location and Description

The development site comprises 0.39ha of land to the rear of 31 High Street, Great Barford, Bedfordshire. It is on land to the north-east of the High Street, opposite the junction with Silver Street, centred at NGR: 513113 252204 (Figure 1). The main focus of the new development will be in the northern half of the existing plot and will impact upon less than 0.12ha of the site.

The site is flat relatively level and low lying, at around 21m OD. It is located on a solid geology of Oxford Clay overlaid by superficial sand and gravel river terrace deposits (British Geological Survey 2012).

The plot currently comprises garden land to the rear of and surrounding 31 High Street and its associated outbuildings. The siting of the trenching was partially constrained by the presence of root protection areas surrounding trees that are to be retained within the proposed development.



# 1.3 Archaeological Background

The site is located within an area of archaeological interest close to the centre of Great Barford (HER17150). The HET Brief summarizes the Bedford Borough Historic Environment Record (BBHER) held at Bedford Borough Council, Town Hall, Bedford. It indicates that:

"The proposed development site is located within the historic core of the medieval settlement of Great Barford (HER17150). The early core of the settlement appears to be located to the south-east close to the church (HER1011) and the river crossing (HER996). Later development in the medieval period is likely to have focussed on the high street and may well have included the present site. Work undertaken by Albion Archaeology (1998 and 2004) in advance of housing development to the south-east identified archaeological remains indicative of intermittent settlement activity from the Bronze Age period onwards (HER609). There is the potential for development groundworks to impact on important archaeological remains from the Bronze Age onwards and in particular from the medieval period."

The gravel terraces of the Great Ouse valley contain an extensive range of archaeological sites dating from the Palaeolithic onwards. Ring ditches (marking the location of probable early prehistoric burial mounds) are visible on aerial photographs to the north (HER604), south-east (HER2792) and south-west (HER596) of the site. Aerial photographs also reveal a system of trackways and enclosures to the south-west of the site (HER596, 597, 1629), marking the location of probable Iron Age / Romano-British settlements.

Settlement at Great Barford is first recorded in Domesday Book, indicating an origin in at least the late Saxon period. During the later medieval period Great Barford was a substantial and prosperous settlement. By the early 17th century it was at the head of navigation on the Great Ouse, stimulating considerable trading activity for at least half a century.

## 1.4 Project Objectives

The purpose of the archaeological field evaluation was to recover information on the:

- location, extent, nature, and date of any archaeological features or deposits that may be present within the application site;
- integrity and state of preservation of any archaeological features or deposits that may be present within the application site.

The purpose of this report is to assess the significance of any archaeological remains in relation to the published research frameworks for the area (Brown and Glazebrook 2000; Glazebrook 1997; Medlycott 2011; Medlycott and Brown 2008; Oake *et al* 2007). This will enable the need, if any, for any design solutions and/or mitigation schemes to be determined.



# 2. TRIAL TRENCHING METHODOLOGY

The evaluation was undertaken between 15th and 16th October 2012, in line with the approved WSI (Albion 2012). The trenches were opened by a mechanical excavator fitted with a flat-edged ditching bucket and operated by an experienced driver under the supervision of an archaeologist. The deposits were removed down to either the top of possible archaeological remains or undisturbed geological strata, whichever were encountered first.

The deposits and any potential remains were noted, cleaned, excavated by hand and recorded using Albion Archaeology's *pro forma* sheets. The trenches were subsequently photographed as appropriate. All deposits were recorded using a unique recording number sequence commencing at 101 for Trench 1, 201 for Trench 2 *etc*.

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

- IfA's Code of Conduct (2010)
- If A's Standards and Guidance for Field Evaluation (2008)
- Albion Archaeology's *Procedures Manual for Archaeological Fieldwork and the Analysis of Fieldwork Records* (2001)
- English Heritage's Management of Archaeological Projects in the Historic Environment (2009)
- English Heritage' Environmental Archaeology (second edition 2011)

The archive of finds and records generated during the project will be archived to the standards outlined in Appendix 3 of English Heritage's *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* and ALGAO *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*. The archive will be deposited at The Higgins Art Gallery and Museum under Accession No. BEDFM:2012.32.

Details of the project and, in due course, a digital copy of this report (subject to HET approval) will be submitted to the OASIS database in accordance with the guidelines issued by English Heritage and the Archaeology Data Service.

The site was visited by the AO on 15th October 2012. Permission to backfill the trenches was granted on 16th October 2012 on the completion of the archaeological investigation.



# 3. RESULTS

#### 3.1 Introduction

The development area was investigated by three trenches that were a minimum of 10m long and 1.8m wide. The results of the investigation are summarised below. More detailed information on the deposits revealed in the trenches and finds can be found in Appendices 1 and 2 respectively.

The results of the investigation are discussed by trench. The results are, where possible, discussed chronologically from earliest to latest. In the following discussion context numbers in square brackets refer to the cuts [\*\*\*] and round brackets to fills or layers (\*\*\*).

## 3.2 Overburden and Geological Strata

The topsoil was 0.15–0.25m thick, ranging from mid to dark brown grey in colour and from silty loam to clay silt in composition. The nature and thickness of this deposit suggest that it is a former cultivation soil. Below this was a mid grey orange to mid orange brown clay silt subsoil that was generally 0.1–0.3m thick.

Undisturbed geological deposits were generally a mid yellowish brown silty clay that became stonier to the southeast. It is likely that these deposits are alluvial and relate to superficial river terrace deposits from the Great Ouse.

# 3.3 Archaeological Remains

The trenches contained a total of five archaeological features. The distribution of these features is summarised below in Table 1. Figure 2 provides an overview of the area, showing the locations of the features.

Trench	Ditches	Pits	Modern features	Other	Total
1			2		2
2	1	1	1		3
3					

**Table 1**: Summary of archaeological features by Trench

#### 3.3.1 Trench 1

Trench 1 was extended 1m to the west to avoid the remains of a modern concrete surface at its eastern end. The existing ground level at the eastern end of the trench had been artificially raised to accommodate this surface, which was probably associated with a garage outbuilding. A north-south aligned ditch-like feature [104] was present at the western end of the trench. The fill of this feature contained modern brick and rubble characteristic of modern disturbance.

#### 3.3.2 Trench 2

Trench 2 contained three features at its southern end. The trench was extended by 1.5m to reveal more of their extent.



The earliest feature was a NW–SE aligned ditch [203]. It was 1.35m wide and 0.45m deep. It contained an abraded sand-tempered medieval pottery sherd (9g), datable to the 13th–14th centuries. Identified as Potterspury ware (Bedfordshire Ceramic Type Series fabric C10), the sherd represents a regional import from Northamptonshire, and is a commonly occurring ware on medieval sites throughout Bedfordshire. The feature also contained an amorphous piece of oxidised sand-tempered fired clay (6g), possibly a degraded brick or tile fragment.

Ditch [203] was truncated by a pit [205], the full extent of which was not visible within the trench. Its upper fill (207) contained an abraded piece of sand-tempered flat roof tile (14g), datable to the post-medieval period.

Both the ditch and pit were disturbed by a possible linear feature [208] located in the south-east corner of the trench. It was partially backfilled with sand and rubble and was characteristic of modern disturbance.

#### 3.3.3 Trench 3

Trench 3 contained no archaeological features. The top- and subsoil were heavily rooted with isolated patches of root disturbance penetrating into the underlying geological strata.

## 3.4 Summary

The evaluation revealed no evidence for significant archaeological remains within the proposed development area. Where remains were present they were generally dated to the post-medieval and modern periods. One ditch [203] contained medieval pottery and may represent an earlier property division aligned parallel to the High Street. The ditch appears to predate any boundary shown on the Ordnance Survey maps of Great Barford. However the abraded nature of the single sherd of pottery may indicate that it is residual within a later post-medieval boundary feature.

The remains from the site have no further potential to address regional archaeological research frameworks.



## 4. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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# 5. APPENDIX 1 - TRENCH SUMMARIES

Trench: 1

Max Dimensions: Length: 10.70 m. Width: 1.80 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.45 m. Max: 0.8 m.

Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 13126: Northing: 52241)

OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 13135: Northing: 52238)

Reason: Location of proposed building

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
100	Topsoil	Friable dark brown black silty loam Thickness: 0.15 - 0.25m	<b>✓</b>	
101	Make up layer	Loose mid yellow orange sandy gravel Thickness: 0.25m	<b>✓</b>	
102	Topsoil	Firm dark grey brown clay silt Thickness: 0.2 - 0.3m	<b>✓</b>	
103	Subsoil	Firm mid grey brown clay silt Thickness: 0.15m	<b>✓</b>	
104	Modern intrusion	Linear NE-SW sides: steep dimensions: min breadth 0.6m, min depth 0.4m min length 1.8m	ι, 🗆	
105	Fill	Firm mid brown grey clay silt frequent medium CBM		
106	Natural	Firm mid orange brown clay silt		

Trench: 2

Max Dimensions: Length: 11.50 m. Width: 2.00 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.5 m. Max: 0.6 m.

Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 13126: Northing: 52214)

OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 13121: Northing: 52204)

Reason: Location of proposed building

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
200	Topsoil	Friable dark grey brown clay loam Thickness: 0.3m	✓	
201	Subsoil	Friable mid grey brown clay silt occasional small stones Thickness: 0.3m	✓	
202	Natural	Friable mid brown orange clay silt frequent small stones		
203	Ditch	Linear NW-SE sides: 45 degrees base: concave dimensions: max breadth 1.35m, max depth 0.45m, max length 2.m	✓	
204	Fill	Firm mid brown grey clay silt occasional small stones Thickness: 0.45m		✓
205	Pit	Sub-circular sides: concave base: flat dimensions: min breadth 0.65m, max depth 0.6m, max length 1.9m Only partially visible in trench.	r	
206	Fill	Firm mid brown grey clay silt occasional small stones Thickness: 0.2m	✓	
207	Fill	Friable mid brown grey clay silt occasional small stones Thickness: 0.41m	✓	✓
208	Modern intrusion	Only partially visible in corner of trence. Possibly linear.		
209	Fill	Friable dark grey brown clay silt		
210	Backfill	Loose mid orange yellow sandy gravel		



Trench: 3

Max Dimensions: Length: 10.00 m. Width: 1.80 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.5 m. Max: 0.55 m.

Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 13079: Northing: 52209)

OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 13087: Northing: 52203)

Reason: Proposed access route

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated: Finds Pre	sent:
300	Topsoil	Friable dark grey brown silty loam Thickness: 0.4	✓	
301	Subsoil	Friable mid brown grey clay silt Thickness: 0.15m	✓	
302	Natural	Friable mid brown orange sandy silt moderate small stones		



# 6. APPENDIX 2 OASIS FORM

OASIS ID	albionar1-135594
PROJECT DETAILS	
Project name	The Hoo, 31 High Street, Great Barford
Short description of the project	Bedford Borough Council has given planning permission for the erection of two dwellings and associated works at land to the rear of 31High Street, Great Barford, Bedfordshire (a property known as "The Hoo"). The evaluation was undertaken in line with the approved WSI (Albion 2012). The trenches were opened by a mechanical excavator fitted with a flat-edged ditching bucket and operated by an experienced driver under the supervision of an archaeologist. The deposits were removed down to either the top of possible archaeological remains or undisturbed geological strata, whichever were encountered first. The evaluation revealed no evidence for significant archaeological remains surviving within the proposed development area. Where features were present they were generally dated to the postmedieval and modern periods. The only ditch containing a single sherd of medieval pottery runs parallel to the road and may represent an earlier property division.
Project dates	Start: 15-10-2012 End: 16-10-2012
Previous/future work	No/No
Any associated project reference codes	HH1978 - Contracting Unit No. BEDFM:2013.32 - Museum accession ID 11/00878/FUL - Planning Application No
Type of project	Field evaluation
Current Land use	Garden
Monument type	DITCH Medieval DITCH Post-medieval PIT Post-medieval
Significant Finds	POT Medieval
Methods & techniques	'Sample Trenches
Development type	Small-scale (e.g. single house, etc.)
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)
PROJECT LOCATION	
Country	England
Site location	BEDFORDSHIRE BEDFORD GREAT BARFORD The Hoo, 31 High Street, Great Barford
Study area	0.40 Hectares
Site coordinates	TL 1311 5220 52 0 52 09 21 N 000 20 47 W Point
PROJECT CREATORS	



Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Albion Archaeology
Project director/manager	Ben Barker
Project supervisor	Kathleen Pilkinton
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PROJECT ARCHIVES	
Physical Archive Exists?	Yes
Physical Archive recipient	Bedford Museum
Physical Archive ID	BEDFM:2012.32
Physical Archive Contents	Ceramics"
Physical Archive notes	N/a
Digital Archive Exists	yes
Digital Archive recipient	Albion Archaeology
Digital Contents	"Ceramics","other"
Digital Media available	"Database","GIS","Images raster / digital photography","Text"
Paper Archive Exists	Yes
Paper Archive recipient	Bedford Museum
Paper Archive ID	BEDFM:2012.32
Paper Contents	"Ceramics","other"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Correspondence","Microfilm","Miscellaneous Material","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section"
Paper Archive notes	To be stored at Albion Archaeology until deposition
DDO IECT DIDI IOCDADI IV 4	
PROJECT BIBLIOGRAPHY 1	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Publication type	, , ,
Title	Land to the rear of The Hoo, 31 High Street, Great Barford: Intrusive Field Evaluation
Author(s)/Editor(s)	'Pilkinton, K. and Wells, J.'
Other bibliographic details	2012/156
Date	2012
Issuer or publisher	Albion Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	Bedford
Description	Comb bound report



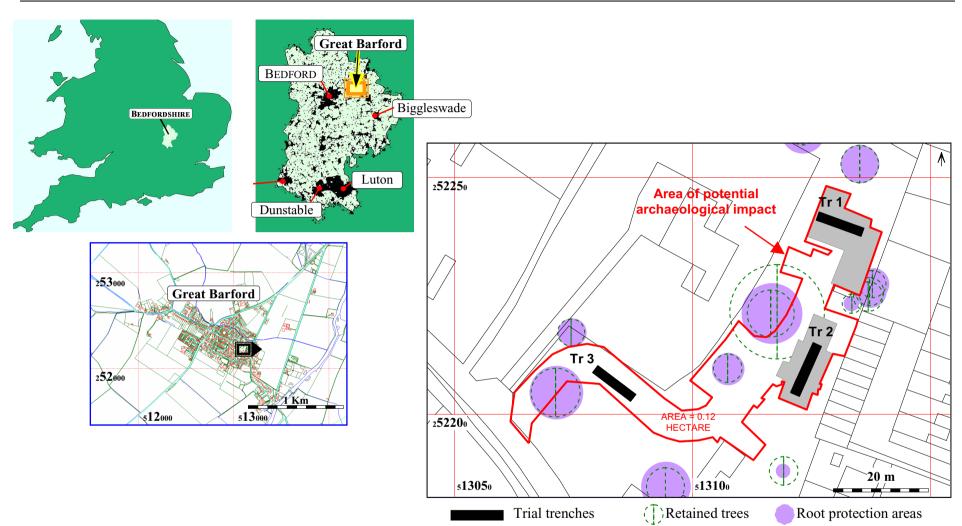


Figure 1: Site location

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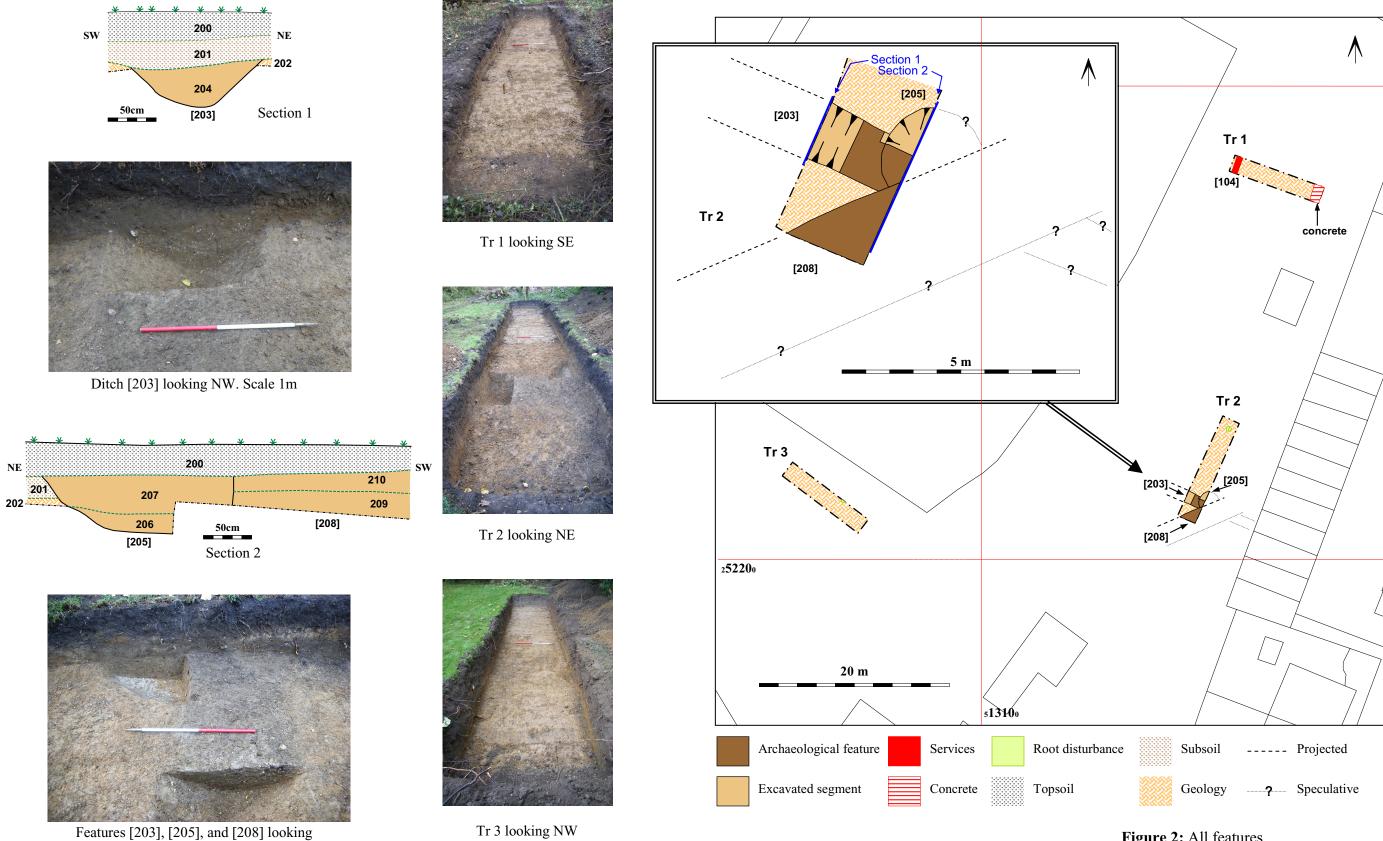


Figure 2: All features

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SE. Scale 1m



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