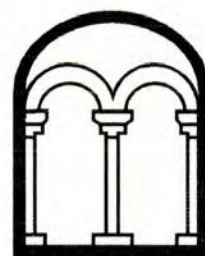


**LAND AT THE TWO BREWERS PUBLIC HOUSE
HITCHIN ROAD
STOTFOLD
BEDFORDSHIRE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION

Albion
archaeology



**LAND AT THE TWO BREWERS PUBLIC HOUSE
HITCHIN ROAD
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BEDFORDSHIRE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION

Project: TB2121
Museum accession no. BEDFM: 2013.22
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Document: 2013/100
Version 1.1

Compiled by	Checked by	Approved by
Richard Gregson	Wesley Keir	Drew Shotliff

12th June 2013

Produced for:
GPS Estates Ltd



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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.

Acknowledgements

The project was commissioned by GPS Estates Ltd and monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Martin Oake, the Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologist.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Wesley Keir (Project Officer), Richard Gregson (Archaeological Supervisor) and Gary Manning (Assistant Archaeological Supervisor). This report was prepared by Richard Gregson with figures produced by Joan Lightning (CAD Technician). Finds reporting was by Jackie Wells (Finds Officer).

All Albion projects are under the overall management of Drew Shotliff (Operations Director).

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Version History

<i>Version</i>	<i>Issue date</i>	<i>Reason for re-issue</i>
<i>1.0</i>	<i>06/06/2013</i>	<i>n/a</i>
<i>1.1</i>	<i>12/06/2013</i>	<i>Comments from the CBCA</i>

Key Terms

The following terms or abbreviations are used throughout this report:

CBC	Central Bedfordshire Council
CBCA	Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologist
HER	Central Bedfordshire and Luton Historic Environment Record
IfA	Institute for Archaeologists



Non-Technical Summary

Planning permission (CB/13/00737/FULL) has been granted for the conversion of the Two Brewers Public House in Stotfold into a residential dwelling, along with the construction of three new dwellings — two in the former public house car park and one in the former beer garden.

A condition attached to the planning consent (Condition 4) requires the implementation of a programme of archaeological investigation as a consequence of the development. This report represents the findings of the first stage of this programme — a trial trench evaluation carried out between 28th and 29th May 2013. The work comprised the excavation of two 15m x 2m trenches and one 10m x 2m trench located within the footprints of the three new dwellings.

Three ditches were revealed beneath the overburden during the trial trenching — one visible within both Trenches 1 and 2; and two within Trench 3. Of these, only ditch [306] within Trench 3 could be dated with any degree of confidence; two pottery sherds may indicate that it dates to the late Iron Age period. The pottery sherds, along with a small amount of recovered animal bone, shell and fired clay fragments suggest some level of settlement activity within the vicinity of the site. Evidence for late Iron Age settlement would be of particular interest in light of regional research themes regarding patterns of settlement nucleation and dispersal (Oake 2007, 11).

Though containing no artefacts that could be precisely dated, the two undated ditches were both sealed beneath the subsoil suggesting they are likely to date to no later than the post-medieval period. Ditch [309] in Trench 3 is stratigraphically later than the late Iron Age ditch [306] and did contain three very small pottery sherds. Their fragmentary and undiagnostic nature precludes positive dating, although their fabric tentatively suggests they could date from the early medieval period. Ditch [106/207] observed in Trenches 1 and 2 was of vastly different character, being much larger and containing a much lighter hued fill. Its similar alignment to that of Hitchin Road suggests the possibility that it could be of medieval or post-medieval date, though it matches no boundaries marked on 19th-century, or later, maps.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Project Background*

Planning permission (CB/13/00737/FULL) has been granted for the conversion of the Two Brewers Public House in Stotfold into a residential dwelling, along with the construction of three new dwellings — two in the former public house car park and one in the former beer garden.

A condition attached to the planning consent (Condition 4) requires the implementation of a programme of archaeological investigation as a consequence of the development. This is in line with the requirements of paragraph 141 of the *National Planning Policy Framework – Section 12: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment*¹. It is also in line with Policy 45 of the *Development Strategy for Central Bedfordshire* (Pre-submission version January 2013). The programme comprises:

- Stage 1 – Archaeological field evaluation
- Stage 2 – Appraisal of the results of the field evaluation. If significant archaeological remains are present at the site, then a mitigation strategy will be devised to preserve or further investigate remains that will be impacted by the development
- Stage 3 – Implementation of any required mitigation strategy

This report represents the findings of the Stage 1 evaluation which was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (Albion Archaeology 2013c) prepared in response to a brief issued by the CBC Archaeologist (CBC 2013).

1.2 *Site Location and Description*

The Two Brewers Public House is situated off Hitchin Road, Stotfold in Bedfordshire on a sub-rectangular plot of land measuring 1657.82 m² (Figure 1). The public house and associated utility/toilet block and garage are located within the centre of the plot. The northern half of the plot consists of a tarmac area associated with the public house car park; the southern half consists of a largely grassed area previously used as a beer garden with picnic area and children's play area.

The Two Brewers is situated in an area of mainly modern development, with 20th-century housing lying to the east, west and south. A row of mid 19th-century cottages survives immediately to the north.

The site is centred on grid reference TL 2111 3629 and lies on fairly level ground at *c.* 50m OD.

¹ National Planning Policy Framework, published by the Department for Communities and Local Government (2012). Available at: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/nppf>.



1.3 Archaeological and Historical Background

The first recorded references to Stotfold occur in an estate charter of *c.* 1007 (Mawer and Stenton 1926) and in Domesday Book of 1086. At the time of Domesday, the population of Stotfold can be estimated at just over 200 (Doggett 1983). Historical maps indicate that Stotfold may have developed from a number of hamlets or “ends” — around the church and Stotfold Green, and at Brook End (HER17163) *c.* 250m to the north of the site.

Though the site lies outside any of Stotfold’s historic settlement foci, a recent Heritage Asset Assessment (Albion Archaeology 2013b) submitted with the planning application identified that the site has the potential to contain archaeological remains associated with middle Bronze Age to middle Iron Age and late Saxon/Saxo-Norman settlement activity in particular.

An extensive area of middle Bronze Age – middle Iron Age settlement activity was revealed during archaeological investigations (Albion Archaeology 2011) undertaken to the east of the Pix Brook, *c.* 300m to the east of the site. The remains included large numbers of pits, postholes and boundary ditches associated with areas of unenclosed and enclosed settlement. Three distinct burial areas were also revealed containing both cremations and inhumations.

Artefact scatters (HER16050, 16803 and 16095; BCAS 1993) are further evidence of Bronze Age, and Neolithic, occupation in similar locations overlooking the Pix Brook. Evidence of Iron Age and Roman settlement has also been found in the wider landscape around Stotfold. It includes remains found at Queen Street, Stotfold (HER16829; Wessex Archaeology 2006); at Norton Way and Groveland Way (Albion Archaeology, in prep.); and more recently during investigations to the north of Arlesey Road (Albion Archaeology 2013a). Further sites likely to be Iron Age and/or Roman in date are known from cropmarks (HER3086, 16831 and 16832) or geophysical survey (HER19538).

Also revealed during the investigations to the east of the site was a large and intensive area of late Saxon/Saxo-Norman settlement appearing to generally date to between the 10th and 11th centuries (Albion Archaeology 2011). Three broad phases of late Saxon/Saxo-Norman settlement activity were identified that included at least 35 buildings, enclosures and isolated burials.

The Two Brewers Public House (HER17162) itself was built in 1933, replacing an earlier public house located to the north of the current building in the area of the car park. The earlier public house was formed out of the southernmost of four pairs of mid 19th-century cottages owned by Bryan Gibbins fronting onto Hitchin Road (Hyde 2002, 34); three pairs still survive today to the north of the site. In 1856 the dwelling was rented by Simpson, the Baldock brewers, who turned it into a ‘beer house’ and called it the Two Brewers (*ibid.*). It was demolished in 1933 and replaced by the current larger building.



2. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The principal purpose of the trial trench evaluation was to gather information on possible buried heritage assets at the site:

- to determine the date, nature, extent and condition of any archaeological remains present at the site;
- to determine the relationship of any remains to the surrounding contemporary landscape;
- to recover palaeo-environmental remains to characterise contemporary environmental conditions.

The Heritage Asset Assessment (*ibid.*) identified that the evaluation had the potential to uncover remains associated with prehistoric and late Saxon/Saxo-Norman settlement in particular. The development of enclosed and un-enclosed settlements within the Bronze Age and Iron Age periods has been identified as an important research area (Medlycott 2011, 29; Dawson 2007, 59). This is also the case for themes associated with settlement development and change during the later Saxon period (Oake 2007, 13; Medlycott 2011, 58). One of the main research objectives of the project was therefore to characterise the form and function of any such evidence found at the site.



3. METHODOLOGY

The trial trenching took place between 28th and 29th May 2013. An initial layout of two 15m x 2m trenches and one 10m x 2m trench located within the footprints of the three new dwellings was agreed with the CBCA. In addition, two geo-technical test pits measuring *c.* 1.5m x 1m x 1.8m deep were excavated under archaeological supervision — one within the area of the beer garden and one within the southern end of Trench 1 (see Figure 2).

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

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.* Context numbers in square brackets refer to the cuts [***] and round brackets to fills or layers (***). The trenches were inspected by the CBCA prior to their backfilling.

The project adhered throughout to the standards and requirements 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* (2009)
- Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation, 2nd edition* (2011)
- IfA *By-Laws and Code of Conduct*
- Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (updated 2009) and *finds* (updated 2008)

The project archive will be deposited with Bedford Museum (Accession No. BEDFM: 2013.22). Details of the project and its findings will be submitted to the OASIS database (ref: albionar1-151980) in accordance with the guidelines issued by English Heritage and the Archaeology Data Service.



4. RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

Two trenches (Trench 1 and 2) were opened in the car park to the north of the public house and one (Trench 3) to the south in the area of the garden, all within the footprints of the three new dwellings. The results of the trial trenching are summarised below and shown on Figure 2. Details of all the observed features and deposits are provided in Appendix 1.

4.2 Overburden and Undisturbed Geological Deposits

Similar deposits were observed beneath the tarmac car park surfaces within Trenches 1 and 2. These comprised sand and gravel make-up layers for the car park (102/202) overlying a layer of silty sand and brick rubble (103/203) likely to be at least partly derived from the demolition of the earlier, 19th-century Two Brewers public house known to have been located in this vicinity. A fairly thick subsoil of brown sandy silt (104/204/205) was sandwiched between these layers and the underlying sandy silt and gravel geological deposits (105/206).

Being located within the area of the beer garden, the overburden observed within Trench 3 comprised a garden soil (300) that overlay subsoil (303/304) similar to that observed in Trenches 1 and 2. In places, a thin sand and gravel layer (301) and an underlying buried topsoil (302) associated with some concrete bases present within the garden were observed between the garden soil and subsoil deposits. The underlying undisturbed geological deposits comprised gravely sand and sandy silt (305).

4.3 Possible Late Iron Age Ditch

A shallow N-S aligned ditch [306] was observed beneath the subsoil within the northern half of Trench 3. Only its western side lay within the confines of the trench where it was partially truncated by a later ditch (see [309] below). It contained two sandy silt deposits, of which the upper (308) contained two abraded pottery sherds (21g) in late Iron Age grog-tempered fabric types F06B and F09²; and two fired clay fragments (33g) in a soapy organic fabric, one possibly deriving from a hand-made slab or brick. Two oyster shell fragments (4g) and eleven pieces of animal bone (463g), the latter comprising undiagnostic limb bones and a partial goat mandible, were also collected from the fill.

4.4 Undated Ditches

A slightly curving, N-S aligned ditch [309] was observed beneath the subsoil truncating ditch [306] within the northern half of Trench 3. It contained a slightly darker fill than that of ditch [306] and produced three indeterminate sand-tempered pottery sherds (5g) of uncertain date.

A much larger, NE-SW aligned ditch [106/207] was observed beneath the subsoil within Trenches 1 and 2. Its fills (107 and 208) were distinctly lighter hued than those of either ditches [306] or [309]; they produced no artefacts.

² Fabric types defined in accordance with the Bedfordshire Ceramic Type Series, currently maintained by Albion Archaeology.



5. SUMMARY AND SIGNIFICANCE OF RESULTS

Three ditches were revealed beneath the overburden during the trial trenching — one visible within both Trenches 1 and 2; and two within Trench 3. Of these, only ditch [306] within Trench 3 could be dated with any degree of confidence; two recovered pottery sherds suggest it may date to the late Iron Age period. The pottery sherds, along with a small amount of recovered animal bone, shell and fired clay fragments suggest some level of settlement activity within the vicinity of the site. Several late Iron Age settlement sites are known from the wider area around the development site, the closest lying off Arlesey Road (Albion Archaeology 2013a) *c.* 600m to the north. Evidence for late Iron Age settlement at the development site would be of particular interest in light of regional research themes regarding patterns of settlement nucleation and dispersal (Oake 2007, 11).

Though containing no artefacts that could be precisely dated, the two undated ditches were both sealed beneath the subsoil suggesting they are likely to date to no later than the post-medieval period. Ditch [309] in Trench 3 is stratigraphically later than the late Iron Age ditch [306] and did contain three very small pottery sherds. Their fragmentary and undiagnostic nature precludes positive dating, although their fabric tentatively suggests they could date from the early medieval period. Ditch [106/207] observed in Trenches 1 and 2 was of vastly different character, being much larger and containing a much lighter hued fill. Its similar alignment to that of Hitchin Road suggests that it could be of medieval or post-medieval date, though it matches no boundaries marked on 19th-century, or later, maps.



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- Wessex Archaeology, 2006, *Land at Queen Street, Stotfold, Bedfordshire: Post-Excavation Assessment and Updated Project Design*



7. APPENDIX 1: TRENCH SUMMARIES





Trench: 1

Max Dimensions: Length: 15.00 m. Width: 2.00 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.6 m. Max: 0.75 m.

Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: TL 21112 36325

OS Grid Ref.: TL 21115 36310

Reason: To evaluate area.

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
100	Tarmac	0.1m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
101	Tarmac	0.1m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
102	Make up layer	Compact mid yellow orange sand frequent small-medium stones 0.1m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
103	Make up layer	Compact mid brown red silty sand frequent flecks CBM, moderate small-large CBM 0.15m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
104	Subsoil	Firm mid grey brown sandy silt occasional small stones 0.3m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
105	Natural	Firm mid yellow sandy gravel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
106	Ditch	Linear NE-SW sides: 45 degrees base: concave dimensions: max breadth 2.1m, max depth 0.8m, min length 2.5m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
107	Fill	Firm mid grey brown sandy silt occasional small-medium stones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Trench: 2

Max Dimensions: Length: 10.00 m. Width: 2.00 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.81 m. Max: 1.01 m.

Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: TL 21107 36316

OS Grid Ref.: TL 21103 36306

Reason: To evaluate area.

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
200	Tarmac	0.08m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
201	Tarmac	0.11m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
202	Make up layer	Compact mid yellow orange sand frequent small-medium stones 0.14m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
203	Make up layer	Compact mid brown red silty sand frequent flecks CBM, moderate small-large CBM 0.18m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
204	Subsoil	Firm mid grey brown sandy silt occasional small stones 0.33m thick. Overlies subsoil (205).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
205	Subsoil	Firm dark brown grey sandy silt moderate small stones 0.2m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
206	Natural	Compact mid brown orange silty sand moderate small-medium stones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
207	Ditch	Linear NE-SW dimensions: min breadth 0.95m, min length 6.m	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
208	Fill	Firm mid grey brown sandy silt occasional small-medium stones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Trench: 3

Max Dimensions: Length: 15.80 m. Width: 2.00 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.35 m. Max: 0.77 m.

Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: TL 21096 36287

OS Grid Ref.: TL 21091 36272

Reason: To evaluate area.

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
300	Topsoil	Friable dark brown grey sandy silt occasional flecks charcoal, moderate small stones 0.29m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
301	External surface	Friable mid grey sandy silt frequent small chalk, moderate small stones 0.08m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
302	Buried topsoil	Friable mid grey sandy silt occasional flecks charcoal, moderate small stones 0.18m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
303	Subsoil	Friable mid grey sandy silt moderate small stones 0.15m thick. Overlies subsoil (304).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
304	Subsoil	Friable dark brown grey sandy silt moderate small stones 0.21m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
305	Natural	Compact mid orange sand frequent small-medium stones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
306	Ditch	Linear N-S sides: concave dimensions: min breadth 1.m, max depth 0.33m, min length 6.2m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
307	Primary fill	Loose mid orange brown silty sand 0.12m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
308	Fill	Friable mid grey brown sandy silt 0.28m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
309	Ditch	Linear N-S sides: 45 degrees base: concave dimensions: max breadth 0.82m, max depth 0.24m, min length 8.25m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
310	Fill	Friable dark grey brown sandy silt occasional small-medium stones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



8. APPENDIX 2: OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM

OASIS ID: albionar1-151980

Project details

Project name Two Brewers PH, Hitchin Road, Stotfold

Short description of the project Planning permission was granted for the conversion of the Two Brewers Public House in Stotfold into a residential dwelling, along with the construction of three new dwellings — two in the former public house car park and one in the former beer garden. A condition attached to the planning consent (Condition 4) required the implementation of a programme of archaeological investigation as a consequence of the development. A trial trench evaluation comprising the excavation of two 15m x 2m trenches and one 10m x 2m trench located within the footprints of the three new dwellings represented the first stage of this programme of work.

Three ditches were revealed beneath the overburden during the trial trenching — one visible within both Trenches 1 and 2; and two within Trench 3. Of these, only ditch [306] within Trench 3 could be dated with any degree of confidence; two recovered pottery sherds indicate that it may date to the late Iron Age period. The pottery sherds, along with a small amount of recovered animal bone, shell and fired clay fragments suggest some level of settlement activity within the vicinity of the site. Though containing no artefacts that could be precisely dated, the two undated ditches were both sealed beneath the subsoil suggesting they are likely to date to no later than the post-medieval period.

Project dates Start: 28-05-2013 End: 29-05-2013

Previous/future work No / Not known

Any associated project reference codes TB2121 - Contracting Unit No.

Any associated project reference codes BEDFM:2013.22 - Museum accession ID

Any associated project reference codes CB/13/00737/FULL - Planning Application No.

Type of project Field evaluation

Monument type DITCH Late Iron Age



Monument type	DITCH Early Medieval
Monument type	DITCH Uncertain
Significant Finds	POTTERY Late Iron Age
Significant Finds	ANIMAL BONE Late Iron Age
Significant Finds	POTTERY Early Medieval
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches"
Development type	Small-scale (e.g. single house, etc.)
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	BEDFORDSHIRE MID BEDFORDSHIRE STOTFOLD Two Brewers PH, Hitchin Road, Stotfold
Study area	1657.82 square metres
Site coordinates	TL 2111 3629 52 0 52 00 40 N 000 14 06 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Albion Archaeology
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Albion Archaeology
Project director/manager	Wesley Keir



Project supervisor Richard Gregson

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient Bedford Museum

Physical Archive ID BEDFM:2013.22

Physical Contents "Animal Bones","Ceramics","other"

Paper Archive ID BEDFM:2013.22

Paper Contents "Animal Bones","Ceramics","other"

Paper Media available "Context sheet","Correspondence","Microfilm","Miscellaneous Material","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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Author(s)/Editor(s) 'Keir, W'

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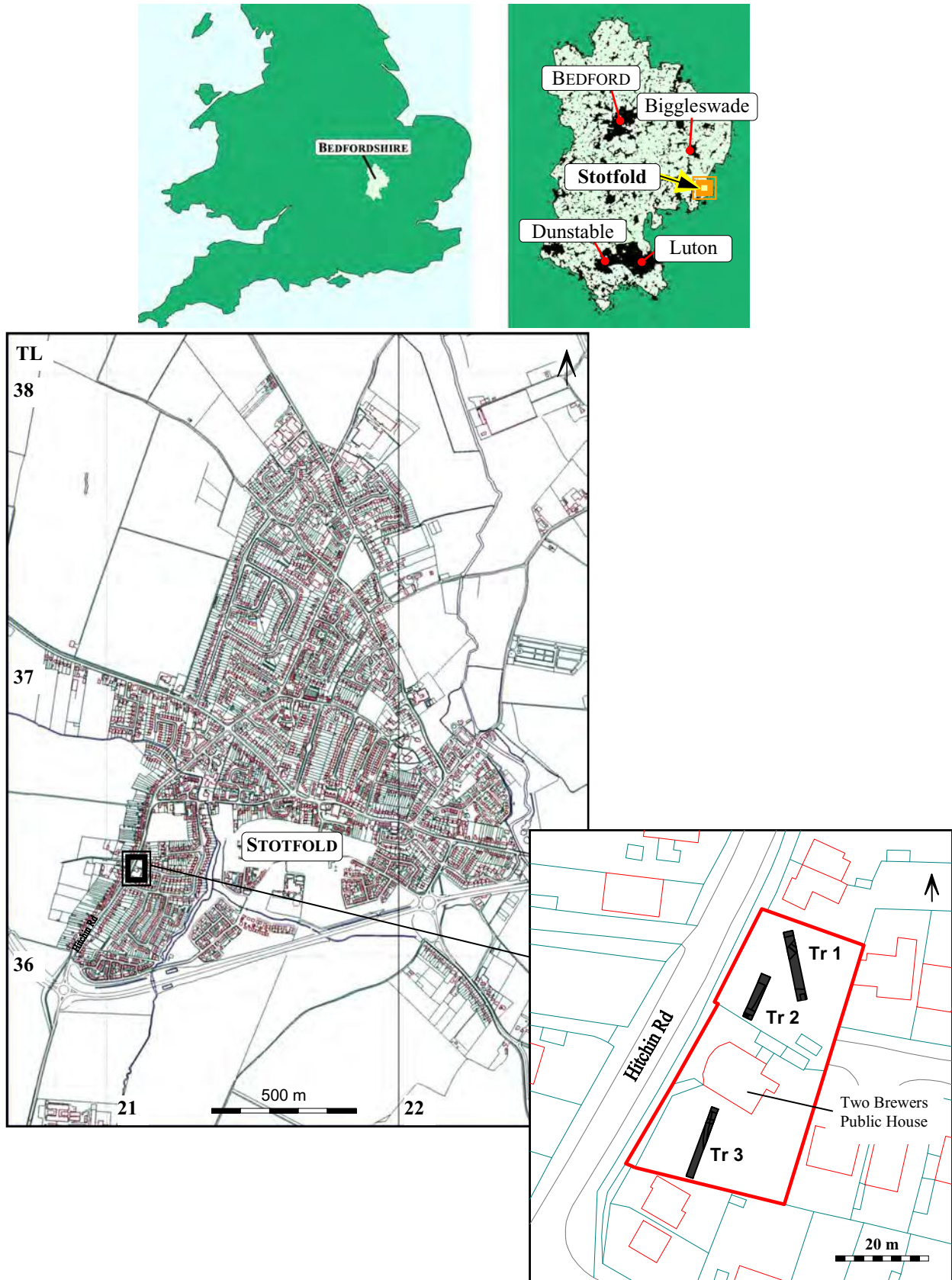
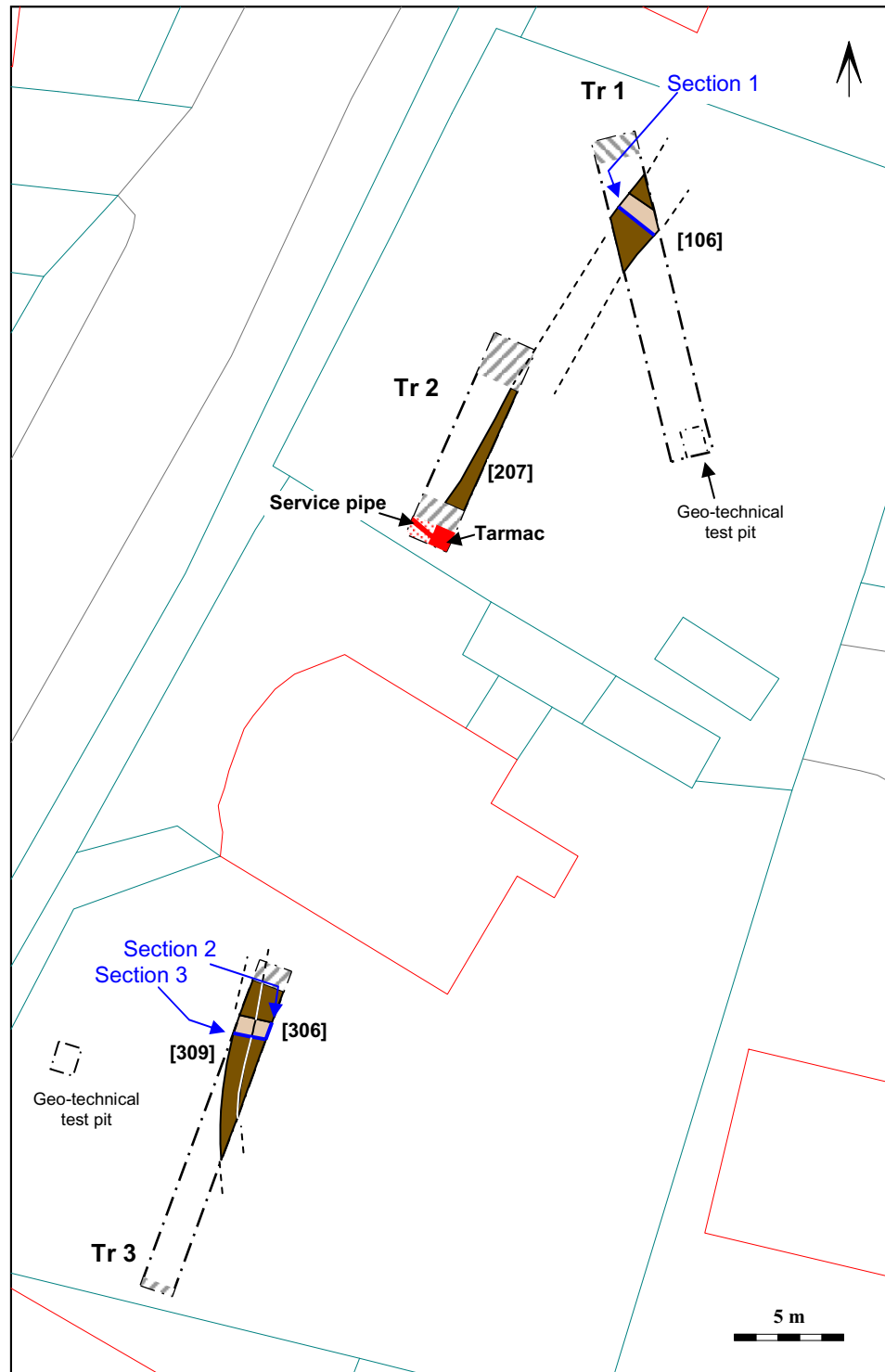
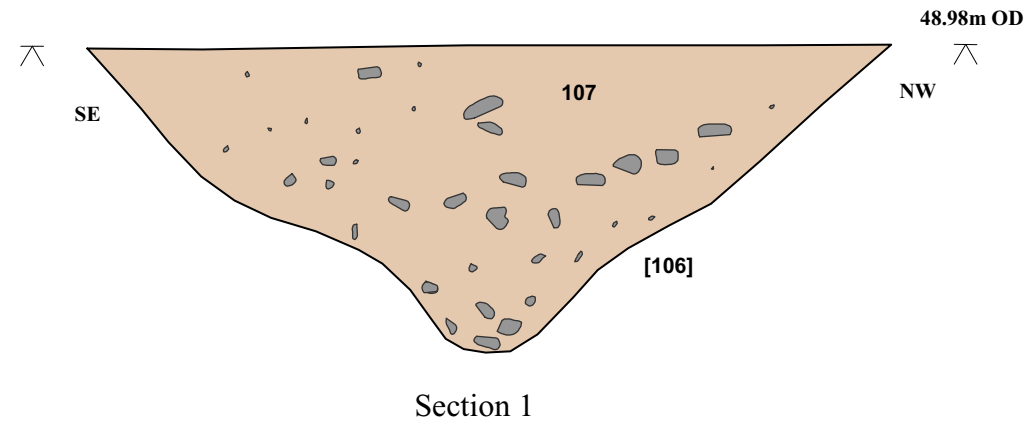


Figure 1: Site location

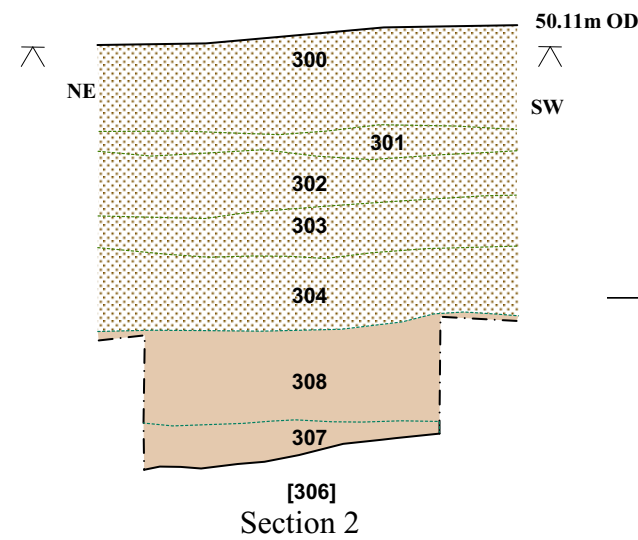
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- Archaeological feature; unexcavated
- Archaeological feature; excavated segment
- Modern disturbance
- Stone
- Layer
- Slope at trench end



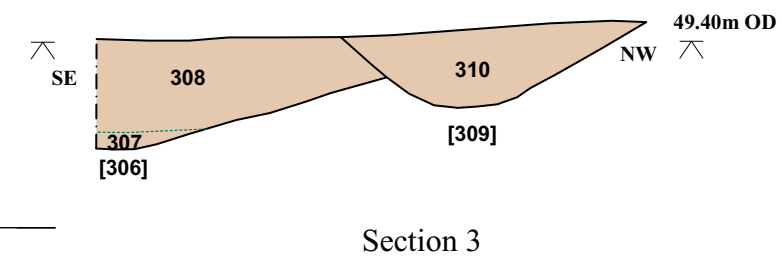
Ditch [106] excavated segment.
Scale 1m



50cm



Ditch [106] pre-excitation.
Scale 1m



Ditches [306] and [309] excavated segments
Scale 1m

Figure 2: Evaluation results

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