

**LAND BETWEEN 4 AND 10 ERMINE STREET
GREAT STUKELEY
CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH
EVALUATION**

Albion
archaeology



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EVALUATION**

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Compiled by	Checked by	Approved by
Kathy Pilkinton	Robert Wardill	Drew Shotliff

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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 NLS Builders and monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Kasia Gdaniec of the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Team.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Kathy Pilkinton (Archaeological Supervisor). This report was prepared by Kathy Pilkinton with contributions from Joan Lightning (CAD Technician) and Jackie Wells (Finds Officer).

*Albion Archaeology
St Mary's Church
St Mary's Street
Bedford, MK42 0AS
☎: 0300 300 8141
Fax: 0300 300 8209
e-mail: office@albion-arch.com*

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<i>1.1</i>	<i>18/02/2013</i>	<i>Amendments requested by the HET</i>

Key Terms

The following abbreviations are used throughout this report:

CHER	Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record
HET	Historic Environment Team of Cambridgeshire County Council
IfA	Institute for Archaeologists
LPA	Local Planning Authority



Non-Technical Summary

A planning application (1200544FUL) for the development of land between 4 and 10 Ermine Street, Great Stukeley, Cambridgeshire has been submitted to Huntingdon District Council. The application proposes the construction of a single detached house, double garage, access and driveway within the plot, along with the replacement of an existing garage at the adjacent property of Denmark House.

Due to the archaeological potential of the site, Cambridgeshire County Council's Historic Environment Team advised that an archaeological evaluation of the site was required to determine the potential impact of the proposal on archaeological remains. The evaluation took place between 8th and 11th October 2013 and comprised the excavation of three trenches.

Archaeological features of limited interest were revealed in two of the three evaluation trenches. One trench contained a single posthole, probably dating to the early medieval period. The presence of late Saxon pottery within the posthole ties in with the known date for the origins of settlement in the area.

A second trench revealed that a linear depression bisecting the site had once been much deeper. Its form and location suggest it probably functioned as a drainage ditch which was largely backfilled during the early 20th century. However, the width of the existing earthwork suggests it may have originated as a natural feature, possibly a small watercourse.

Although the identified features are of interest they are of limited archaeological significance. The ditch appears not to be of great antiquity and the single posthole does not demonstrate concentrated medieval settlement activity on the site.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Planning Background*

A planning application (1200544FUL) for the development of land between 4 and 10 Ermine Street, Great Stukeley, Cambridgeshire has been submitted to Huntingdon District Council. The application proposes the construction of a single detached house, double garage, access and driveway within the plot, along with the replacement of an existing garage at the adjacent property of Denmark House.

Due to the archaeological potential of the site, Cambridgeshire County Council's Historic Environment Team (HET) advised that an archaeological evaluation of the site was required to determine the potential impact of the proposal on archaeological remains. A brief issued by the HET (2012) outlined the requirements for a programme of archaeological investigation of the proposed development site.

The first stage of this programme was evaluation by trial trenching. The trial trenching evaluation has been accompanied by documentary research, including consultation with the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER), to set the results in their geographical, topographical, archaeological and historical context.

Prior to commencement of the fieldwork a project design (Albion Archaeology 2013) was submitted to the HET for approval.

The results of the evaluation will be used to characterise the archaeological potential of the site and determine whether the development will have any impact on it.

1.2 *Site Location*

The village of Great Stukeley lies in the Great Ouse river valley approximately 2.3 miles to the north-east of Huntingdon. The site of the proposed development is located in the centre of Great Stukeley, on the south-west side of Ermine Street (B1043), between house numbers 4 and 10 (Figure 1).

The site was previously part of the gardens of the adjacent Denmark House and is currently grassed over with occasional mature trees and perimeter hedges to the north, east, and west. It measures approximately 0.08ha in area and is centred on grid reference TL 21927 74642.

The plot lies at a height of around 38m OD but is bisected by a shallow, wide NE-SW running linear depression that extends out from a culvert running beneath Ermine Street. The underlying geology of the area comprises Pleistocene Till deposits over Oxford Clay Mudstone¹.

¹ www.bgs.ac.uk/opengeoscience.



1.3 **Archaeological Background**

Great Stukeley is a medieval village with Saxon origins. Stukeley is listed in the Domesday survey of 1086 as a reasonably large manor consisting of 27 households with 26 acres of meadow, woodland and a church².

The current parish church of St Bartholomew lies *c.* 200m to the south-west of the site. It dates from the 13th century but incorporates building material from a 12th-century church (Page, et al. 1932).

The development plot is on the south side of Ermine Street Roman road (CHER MCB15034), which headed north-west from *Durovigutum* (Godmanchester Roman town) to skirt the fen edge on high ground before routing northwards towards *Durorivae*, a major Roman settlement at Peterborough. Two scheduled monuments comprising Roman burial mounds are located close to the development site. One lies *c.* 75m to the north-west (SM33351) on the north side of Ermine Street, and the other 75m to the south-east (SM33352) on the south side of the road.

While no Roman settlement is known in the village, the road became a focus of later settlement. A recent development to the south-east of the site revealed Saxon and early medieval domestic remains and enclosure boundaries (CHER MCB18131). Earthworks of house platforms, boundaries and hollow ways are known from Stukeley Park just to the east, overlain and/or surrounded by fields with surviving earthworks of ridge and furrow cultivation.

1.4 **Project Objectives**

The principal objective of the evaluation was to determine whether archaeological remains were present at the proposed development site and, if so, to determine their location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality.

The broader objective of the project was to add to the knowledge and understanding of the origins and nature of past human activity in the area.

² <http://domesdaymap.co.uk/place/TL2174/great-stukeley/> Accessed 19 March 2013



2. METHODOLOGY

The trial trenching took place between 8th and 11th October 2013. Three trenches were opened (Figures 1 and 2). Trenches 1 and 2 initially measured 10m long and 1.6m wide. Trench 3 was shortened to 8m to avoid underground services. Trench 2 was later extended at its NW end to investigate a large liner feature.

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

Any potential archaeological features were cleaned, excavated by hand and recorded using Albion Archaeology's pro forma sheets. All deposits were assigned a unique context number commencing at 100 for Trench 1, and 200 for Trench 2 etc. Each trench was subsequently drawn and photographed as appropriate.

The project adhered throughout to the standards prescribed in the following documents:

• 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> (2011)
• IfA	<i>By-Laws and Code of Conduct</i>
	<i>Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation</i>

The archive of finds and records generated during the project will be deposited with the Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Store under event number ECB3942.

Details of the project and its findings will be submitted to the Archaeology Data Service's OASIS database under reference number albionar1-161816.



3. RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

All deposits found during the investigations are described below and shown in Figure 2. Detailed information on all features and deposits can be found in Appendix 1.

3.2 Overburden and Undisturbed Geological Deposits

Topsoil comprising dark brown grey clayey silt and measuring 0.3–0.45m thick was present in all trenches.

Subsoil comprising mid greyish brown silty clay, with occasional chalk flecks, was present in all trenches and was a maximum of 0.35m thick.

The underlying geology consisted of light brown grey clay with chalk and flint fragments.

3.3 Trench 1

In Trench 1, a single shallow posthole [103] produced three pottery sherds. Two derive from a late Saxon St Neots-type inturned rim bowl (13g), and one from an undiagnostic shell-tempered vessel (5g), datable to the 12th-13th century. The posthole measured up to 0.45m wide and 0.14m deep and was filled with dark grey silty clay with occasional charcoal flecks.

3.4 Trench 2

Trench 2 cut into the linear depression that bisected the entire width of the site (c.28m) and measured approximately 8m wide. The continuation of the depression into a deep ditch [203] was apparent and the trench was extended to further investigate the feature.

The base of the ditch was reached at a depth of c. 2.2m below ground level. Dark blackish grey clay (205), c. 0.6m thick, was present at the base. It was heavily waterlogged and contained a large amount of decaying organic material, a late 19th- / early 20th-century glass mineral water bottle (Marshall Bros. Huntingdon), a mid-19th-century stoneware ink bottle and the rim from a ceramic preserve pot.

Re-deposited natural in the grey clayey upper deposits may indicate deliberate backfilling during the 20th century, as confirmed by the presence of a Gault clay brick/paviour fragment (117g) in deposit (204). The SE side of the ditch was truncated by a modern ceramic pipe [208].

3.5 Trench 3

Trench 3 revealed a modern pipe leading from the shed on the edge of the plot and a soakaway [303].



4. CONCLUSIONS

Archaeological features of limited interest were revealed in two of the three evaluation trenches. Trench 1 contained a single posthole, probably dating to the early medieval period. The presence of late Saxon pottery within the posthole ties in with the known date for the origins of settlement in the area. The findings in Trench 1 accord with the results of a previous archaeological investigation to the south-east of the site where domestic settlement remains of a similar date were found (see section 1.3).

Trench 2 revealed that the linear depression bisecting the entire width of the site (*c.*28m) site had once been much deeper. Its form and location running off from a culvert beneath Ermine Street suggest it probably functioned as a drainage ditch, which was largely backfilled during the early 20th century. However, the width of the existing earthwork (*c.*8m) suggests it may have originated as a natural feature, possibly a small watercourse. There is no evidence on the ground for this feature continuing beyond the boundary of the development site but the land to the south-west has been redeveloped relatively recently and this may have destroyed the feature in that area.

Early mapping does not help identify the feature (Figure 3). The 1st edition 25-inch Ordnance Survey map (1888) shows two rows of trees on the line of the feature, although the feature itself is not shown. No corresponding features are shown on the 1816 enclosure map.

Although the identified features are of interest they are of limited archaeological significance. The ditch in Trench 2 appears not to be of great antiquity and the single posthole in Trench 1 does not demonstrate concentrated medieval settlement activity on the site.



5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Albion Archaeology 2013, *Land Between 4 and 10 Ermine Street, Great Stukeley, Cambridgeshire: Project Design for Archaeological Evaluation*. Document ref. 2013/56.

HET, 2012. *Land between 4 and 10 Ermine Street, Great Stukeley, Cambridgeshire: Brief for Archaeological Evaluation*. Kasia Gadaniec, HET, November 29 2012.

Page W, Proby G, Ladds, I (eds). 'Parishes: Great Stukeley', *A History of the County of Huntingdon: Volume 2* (1932), pp. 230-234. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=42488> Date accessed: 19 March 2013.



6. APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT DETAILS



Trench: 1

Max Dimensions: Length: 10.00 m. Width: 1.60 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.7 m. Max: 0.75 m.

Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 21935: Northing: 74635)

OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 21930: Northing: 74627)

Reason: Area of footings for proposed building

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
100	Topsoil	Friable, dark brown grey, clayey silty. Thickness: 0.3m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
101	Subsoil	Firm, mid greyish brown, silty clay. Occasional chalk flecks. Thickness: 0.35m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
102	Natural	Firm, light brownish grey, clay. Moderate small-medium chalk fragments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
103	Posthole	Oval sides: steep base: flat dimensions: max breadth 0.35m, max depth 0.14m, max length 0.45m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
104	Fill	Firm dark brown grey silty clay occasional flecks charcoal Thickness: 0.14m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



Trench: 2

Max Dimensions: Length: 11.00 m. Width: 2.80 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.55 m. Max: 0.75 m.

Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 21926: Northing: 74634)

OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 21918: Northing: 74642)

Reason: Area of footings for proposed building

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
200	Topsoil	Friable, dark brown grey, clayey sily. Thickness: 0.3m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
201	Subsoil	Firm, mid greyish brown, silty clay. Occasional chalk flecks. Thickness: 0.35m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
202	Natural	Firm, light brownish grey, clay. Moderate small-medium chalk fragments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
203	Ditch	Linear NE-SW sides: steep dimensions: min breadth 5.m, min depth 2.2m, min length 2.8m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
204	Backfill	Friable mid brown grey silty clay occasional small chalk Includes re-deposited natural. Thickness: 0.3m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
205	Fill	Plastic dark grey black silty clay Contained large amount of twigs, roots and decaying organic material. Thickness: 0.6m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
206	Fill	Friable mid brown grey clay silt Thickness: 0.45m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
207	Backfill	Friable mid grey brown clay silt Thickness: 0.55m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
208	Land drain	Linear NE-SW sides: vertical	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
209	Backfill	Friable dark brown grey silty clay	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
210	Fill	Firm mid grey brown silty clay	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Trench: 3

Max Dimensions: Length: 8.00 m. Width: 1.60 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.55 m. Max: 0.55 m.

Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 21926: Northing: 74654)

OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 21920: Northing: 74648)

Reason: Area of footings for proposed building

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
300	Topsoil	Friable, dark brown grey, clayey silty. Thickness: 0.3m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
301	Subsoil	Firm, mid greyish brown, silty clay. Occasional chalk flecks. Thickness: 0.35m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
302	Natural	Firm, light brownish grey, clay. Moderate small-medium chalk fragments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
303	Modern intrusion	Soakaway	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
304	Fill	Fill of soakaway	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
305	Ditch	NW side of ditch [208] Trench 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
306	Fill	Friable mid grey brown silty clay	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



7. APPENDIX 2: OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM

OASIS ID: albionar1-161816

Project details

Project name	Land between 4 and 10 Ermine St, Great Stukeley
Short description of the project	<p>Planning application (1200544FUL) for the development of land between 4 and 10 Ermine Street (Plot 1), Great Stukeley, Cambridgeshire has been submitted to Huntingdon District Council. The application proposes the construction of a new single detached house, double garage, access and driveway within the plot, along with the replacement of an existing garage at the adjacent property of Denmark House. Due to the archaeological potential of the site, Cambridgeshire County Council's Historic Environment Team (HET) advised that an archaeological evaluation of the site was required to determine the potential impact of the proposal on archaeological remains. A brief issued by the HET (2012) outlined the requirements for a programme of archaeological investigation of the proposed development site. The trial trenching took place between 8th and 11th October 2013. Three trenches were opened to investigate the footprint of the building. The three trenches all revealed evidence of previous activity on site; the archaeological significance of the remains, however, is limited. The site is bisected by a linear depression, which was investigated in Trench 2. The presence of 19th- / 20th-century artefacts indicates that it was open within the last 200 years. Its exact function is unclear. However, the natural depression in the ground combined with the steeper side of the backfilled ditch suggests a natural channel utilised and cleared out to provide drainage. Contour lines also suggest the ditch lies at a low point in the surrounding countryside. The single posthole in Trench 1 suggests activity during the late Saxon/early medieval period. However, as no further features of this date were revealed, it would appear that settlement activity was not centred on the development area.</p>
Project dates	Start: 08-10-2013 End: 11-10-2013
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	ES2098 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	ECB3942 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	1200544FUL - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Monument type	POST HOLES Early Medieval
Monument type	DITCH Modern
Significant Finds	POTTERY Early Medieval
Methods &	"Sample Trenches"



techniques

Development type	Small-scale (e.g. single house, etc.)
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	After full determination (e.g. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	CAMBRIDGESHIRE HUNTINGDONSHIRE THE STUKELEYS Land between 4 and 10 Ermine St, Great Stukeley
Study area	825.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 2192 7464 52 0 52 21 21 N 000 12 34 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	Robert Wardill
Project supervisor	Kathleen Pilkinton

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Cambs County Archaeological Stores
Physical Contents	"Ceramics"
Digital Archive recipient	Cambs County Archaeological Stores
Digital Contents	"Ceramics","other"
Digital Media available	"Database","Images raster / digital photography","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Cambs County Archaeological Store
Paper Contents	"Ceramics","other"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Correspondence","Microfilm","Miscellaneous Material","Photograph","Report"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Land between 4 and 10 Ermine St. Great Stukeley
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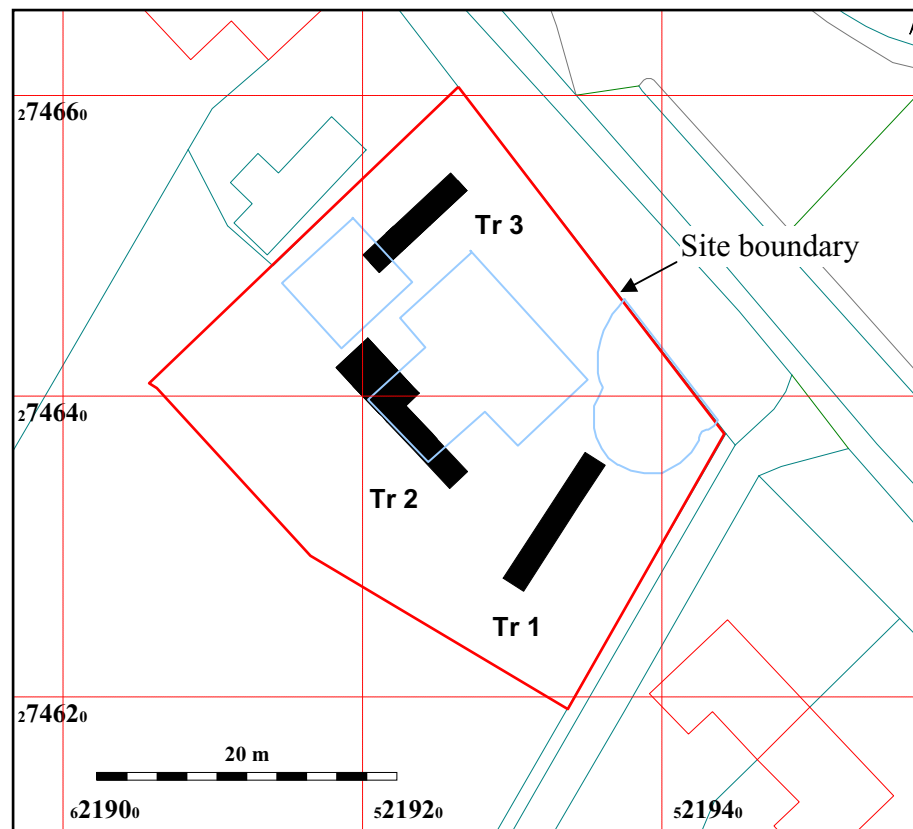
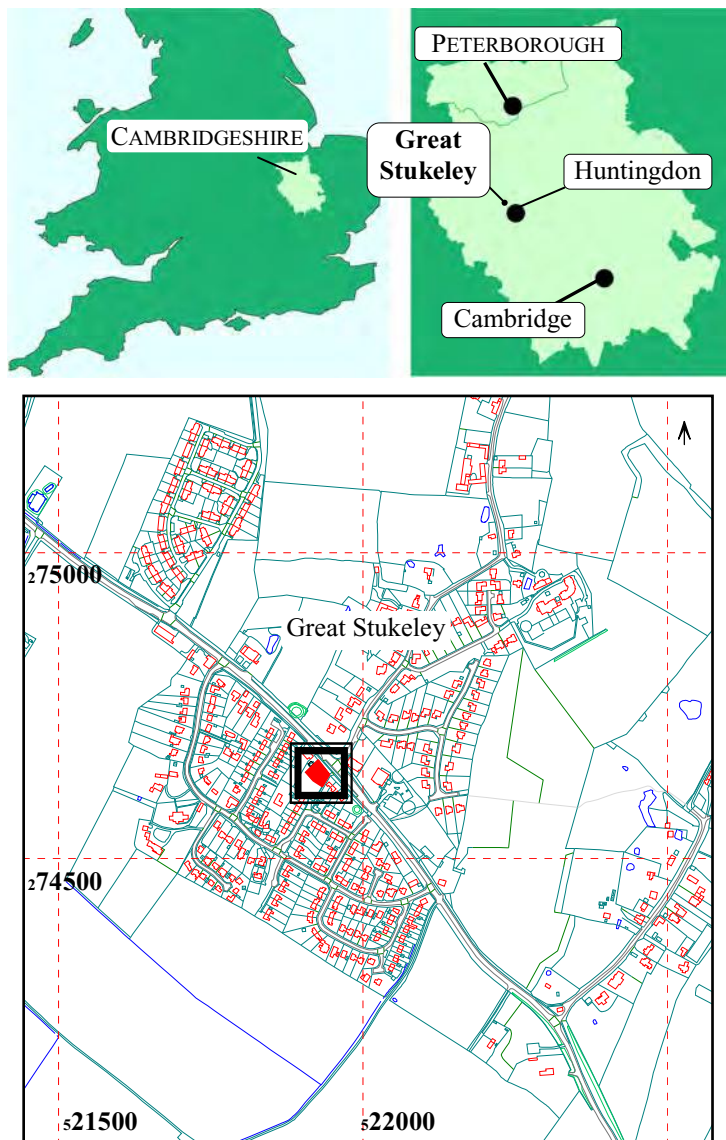


Figure 1: Site and trench location

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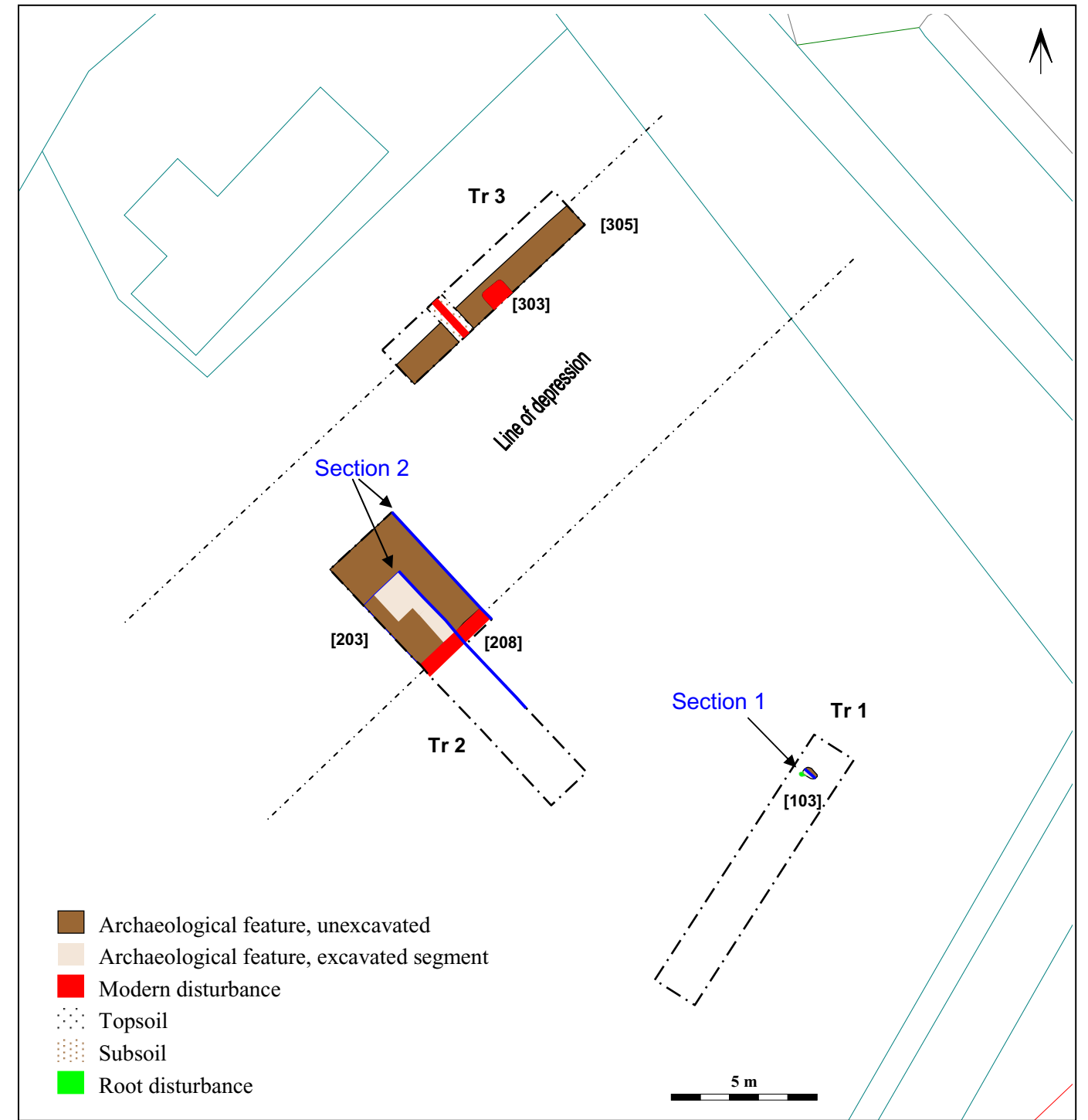
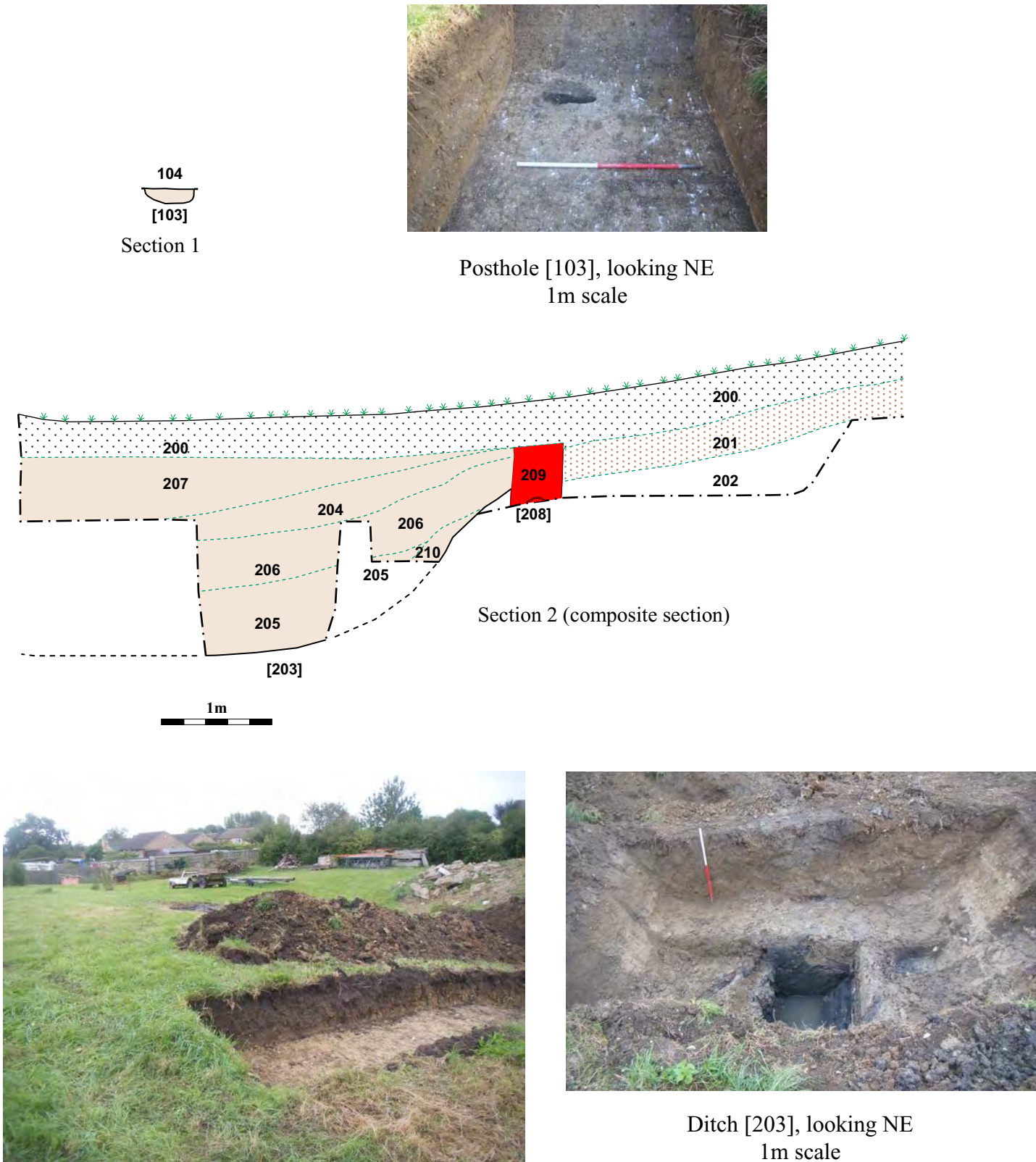


Figure 2: Evaluation results.



1816 Enclosure map



1888 1st Ed. Ordnance Survey

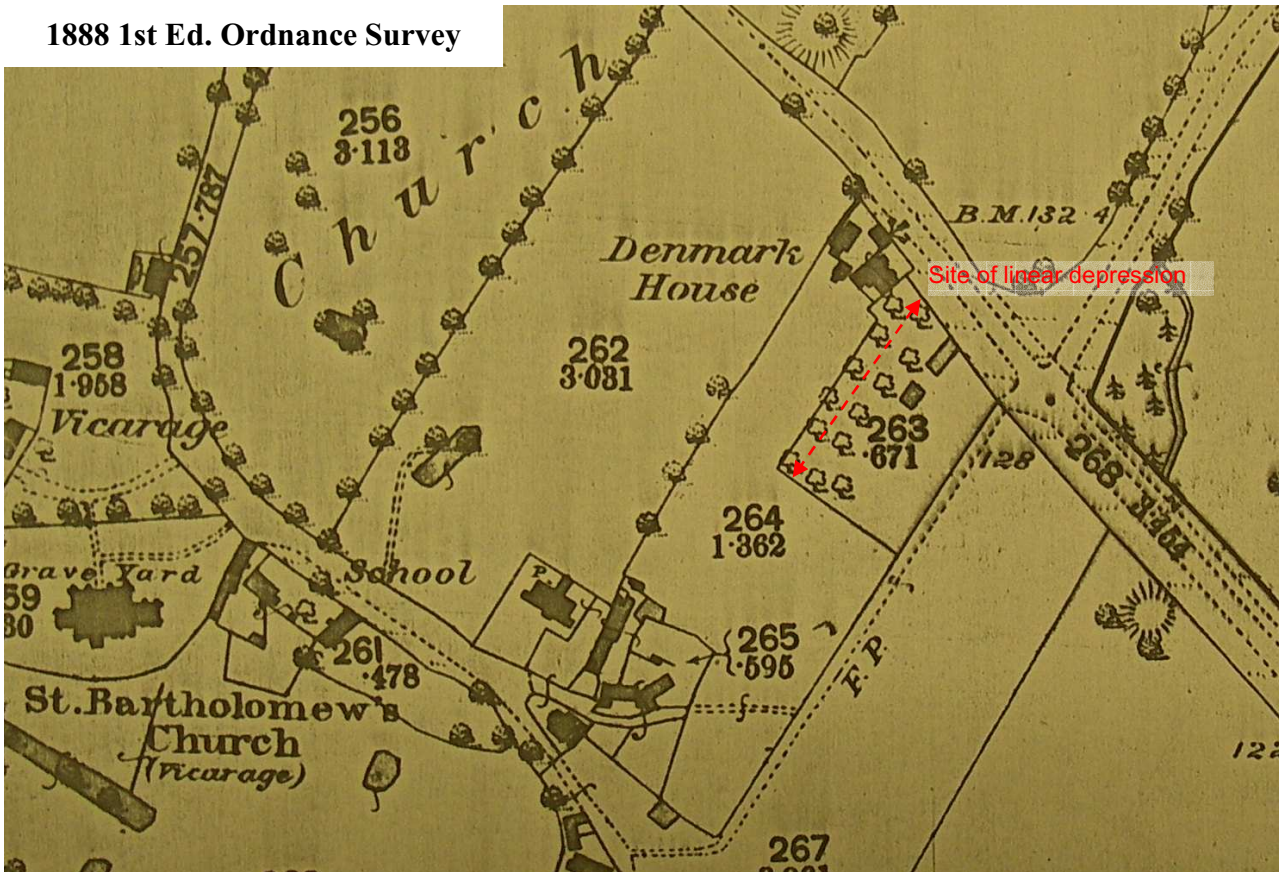


Figure 3: Old maps.



Albion
archaeology



Albion Archaeology
St Mary's Church
St Mary's Street
Bedford
MK42 0AS

Telephone 01234 294000
Email office@albion-arch.com
www.albion-arch.com

