LILBOURNE WIND FARM LILBOURNE NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL STRIP, MAP AND SAMPLE INVESTIGATION







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Every effort has been made in the preparation of this document to provide as complete a summary as possible within the terms of the method statement. All statements and opinions in this document are offered in good faith. Albion Archaeology cannot accept responsibility for errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by a third party, or for any loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in this document.

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The project was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd and monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Liz Mordue, Assistant Archaeological Advisor for Northamptonshire County Council.

The archaeological strip, map and sample investigation was undertaken by Ian Turner (Archaeological Supervisor) and Juha-Matti Vuorinen (Assistant Archaeological Supervisor). The project was managed by Rob Wardill (Project Manger) for Albion Archaeology and by Mike Dawson for CgMs Consulting Ltd.

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Key Terms

The following terms or abbreviations are used throughout this report:

Albion	Albion Archaeology
AAA	Northamptonshire County Council Assistant Archaeological
	Advisor
NA	Northamptonshire Archaeology
NCC	Northamptonshire County Council

Non-Technical Summary

Planning permission has been granted for the construction of a wind farm at Lilbourne Fields, Lilbourne, Northamptonshire. As the wind farm lies in an archaeologically sensitive area, a condition was attached to the planning permission requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological work.

An evaluation of the site was undertaken (NA 2013) resulting in three areas of archaeological sensitivity being defined.

A brief was issued by the Northamptonshire Assistant Archaeological Advisor for a programme of strip, map and sample investigation (SMS) of Areas 1 and 2. Area 3 will not be impacted by development and will be preserved in situ.

Albion Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd to produce a written scheme of investigation, to undertake the archaeological strip, map and sample investigation and to produce a report detailing the results (this document).

The investigation revealed a number of enclosure ditches dating to the late Iron Age/transitional early Roman period, located on Area 1. Previously it had been suggested that the enclosures were of an agricultural nature but the moderate assemblage of pottery retrieved during the mitigation now suggests that the enclosures could have been part of a small settlement.

The environmental samples from the features contained very little charcoal and only a very low quantity of charred seeds which could indicate that the enclosures were located at the edge of the settlement. The precise extent and density of the settlement remain unknown.

Both Areas 1 and 2 also contained agricultural furrows of medieval or later date.



1.1 Project Background

Planning permission (DA/2009/0731) has been granted on appeal by Daventry District Council for the construction of a wind farm at Lilbourne Fields, Lilbourne, Northamptonshire. As the wind farm lies in an archaeologically sensitive area, a condition (Condition 16) was attached to the planning permission requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological work.

An evaluation of the site was undertaken (NA 2013) in which a number of Iron Age and early Roman features were identified. As a result, three areas of archaeological sensitivity were defined.

A brief was issued by the Northamptonshire Assistant Archaeological Advisor (AAA) for a programme of strip, map and sample investigation (SMS) of Areas 1 and 2. Area 3, which will not be impacted by development, will be preserved *in situ* (NCC 2013).

Albion Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd to produce a written scheme of investigation (Albion 2013) in response to the brief and to undertake the archaeological works.

This report details the results of the strip, map and sample investigation of Areas 1 and 2.

1.2 Site Location, Topography and Geology

The development area is comprised of a series of arable fields which lie to the east of Lilbourne (Figure 1). The site is bounded in the west by the M1 motorway, in the north by the A14 and is bisected by the Yelvertoft Road. To the east and south are further arable fields.

The River Avon and one of its tributaries flows through the northern part of the site and the topography of the northern area is generally level at 90m OD. The underlying geology consists of Blue Lias Formation and Charmouth Mudstone Formation with superficial deposits of sand and gravel alluvium and River Terrace Deposits 2^1 underlying the strip, map and sample areas.

The strip, map and sample investigation areas are located in the northern part of the site, to the north of Yelverton Road (Figure 1). They are centred on grid reference SP 570 776.

¹ Contains British Geological Survey materials © NERC [2013]

1.3 Archaeological Background

The archaeological background is described in detail in a desk-based assessment (Dawson 2009), based on a 5km search radius around the site. Further background information is set out in the evaluation report (NA 2013).

While a large number of artefact and settlement sites are recorded within the 5km study radius around the site, very few findspots of archaeological material are located on the site itself. This suggests a generally low potential for the location of settlement or material of any period on the site but the assessment stressed that sites mapped through aerial photography can understate an area's potential, particularly in areas of colluvial or silt accumulation.

Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age flint scatters have been found within the 5km study area, notably at Catthorpe, east of Hill Top Farm, south-east of Thomley Hall Farm and on Cot Hill, suggesting that hunter-gatherer groups passed through the landscape.

Several crop mark enclosures have been identified through aerial photograph analysis. These are either of confirmed Iron Age date, like those at Stormsworth and Hovel Hill, Catthorpe Barn and New Gravel Hill Spinney, or of unknown but possible Iron Age date based on a similar morphology.

Iron Age activity, settlement and associated field systems were investigated to the south at the Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal (DIRFT) development and close to Junction 18 of the M1. Possible prehistoric burial grounds are located to the west of Lilbourne and in Kilsby. This pattern of settlement and enclosures suggests an extensive agrarian landscape.

Roman sites similarly consist largely of farm sites and field systems and are located at New Gravel Hill Spinney, near Stanford Hall, north of Yelvertoft, Catthorpe and north of Crick. A Roman villa is located near the Old Rectory at Shawell and a field system was identified near Clifton on Dunsmore.

Evidence for agricultural, rather than settlement, use of the area has been borne out by the evaluation undertaken at the site earlier this year (NA 2013). This identified no archaeological remains in the southern part of the site but a number of late Iron Age to early Romano-British features in the northern part, focussing on land overlooking the tributary stream of the River Avon.

The features consisted of a small number of pits and postholes and several ditches and gullies, most likely boundary features. A total of 13 pottery sherds (middle to late Iron Age and early Roman) were recovered from the features.

The wind farm is located close to the parish boundary between the parishes of Lilbourne and Yelvertoft which makes it likely that it was located some distance away from any Saxon or medieval settlement sites. Deserted medieval villages are located at Shawell and Stanford upon Avon which are within a 5km radius of the site.

Earthworks of the later medieval settlement remains of Lilbourne village lie to

the west of the site but were heavily truncated during the construction of the M1 motorway. Medieval ridge and furrow features were excavated on the site itself during the evaluation (NA 2013) showing that it was agricultural land.

Map evidence shows that in the post-medieval period the site was entirely in agricultural use.

1.4 Project Objectives

Based on the results of the evaluation, it was anticipated that the site would provide evidence of at least two phases of activity: middle to late Iron Age and early Romano-British.

The first objective was to further characterise the nature of the Iron Age and Romano-British activity on the site. Furthermore, the site might have had the potential to add to the understanding of Iron Age to Romano-British settlement and agricultural patterns which would inform several of the research objectives identified in the regional agenda, in particular those relating to Iron Age field systems (Objectives 4.6 in Knight *et al* 2012) and Romano-British rural settlement patterns and landscapes and the agricultural economy (Objectives 5.4 and 5.5 respectively in Knight *et al* 2012).

The specific research objectives for the archaeological investigation were as follows:

- To determine and understand the date, nature, function and character of past activity within the development site, in terms of its cultural and environmental setting;
- To establish the origins and development of past utilisation of the site;
- To determine whether there was any continuity, shift or break in the middle to late Iron Age to Romano-British activity;
- To determine the nature and development of Iron Age and Romano-British field and boundary systems and how they relate to each other and any potential contemporary settlement;
- To recover artefactual and environmental materials to assist in understanding former land use and indications of change over time;
- To determine the effectiveness of the evaluation field techniques in the light of the results of the extensive archaeological investigation;
- To produce a site archive for future deposition with an appropriate museum, and to provide information for accession to the Northamptonshire HER.

The research aims were reviewed throughout the project to ensure that:

- they were still relevant to the data being uncovered;
- methodologies were still appropriate.



2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Standards

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

•	Albion Archaeology	<i>Procedures Manual: Volume 1 Fieldwork</i> (2 nd ed, 2001).
		Lilbourne Wind Farm, Lilbourne, Northamptonshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Strip, Map and Sample Investigation and Publication (2013)
•	English Heritage	Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) Project Managers' Guide (2006)
		<i>Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory</i> <i>and Practice of Methods, from sampling and recovery</i> <i>to post-excavation (2011)</i>
•	IfA	By-Laws and Code of Conduct Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation (updated 2008), finds (updated 2008) and archives (2007)

2.2 Archive

An integrated project archive (including both artefacts/ecofacts and project documentation) was prepared on completion of the project. As the AAA brief (NCC 2013) notes, there is currently no archaeological archive depository able to accept material from this part of the county, although the issue is being actively addressed and it is hoped that suitable facilities will be available within 3-5 years.

Details of the project and its findings will be submitted to the OASIS database (ref: albionar1-166835) in accordance with the guidelines issued by English Heritage and the Archaeology Data Service.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

All features and deposits are described by area. An all features plan with section drawings and photographs is provided in Figure 2. Detailed information on the features and deposits can be found in Appendix 1. Where appropriate, the discussion includes information from the evaluation (NA 2013).

3.2 Area 1

Area 1 was targeted on NA Trench 11; it was 75m long and 5m wide, centred on grid SP 56881 / 77649. The machine strip depth of Area 1 varied from 0.35–0.75m, the deepest areas corresponding to locations where furrows were removed by machine in order to ascertain if archaeological remains survived beneath them.

3.3 Overburden and Geological Deposits

The topsoil (2000) consisted of dark grey brown clay silt, 0.18-0.28 m thick. The subsoil (2001) comprised mid brown orange clay silt, *c*. 0.16 m thick.

The undisturbed geological deposit (2002) comprised light grey yellow clay with moderate small and medium stones.

3.4 Archaeological Remains

Four ditches of late Iron Age to early Roman transitional date were present within Area 1. Three furrows were also identified.

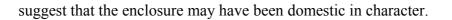
3.4.1 Two opposing ditch terminals (Figure 2)

Two opposing ditch terminals [2005] and [2009] that created a 2m-wide entrance gap were identified towards the centre of Area 1. Both ditches continued beyond the edge of excavation to the north and south.

The northern ditch terminal [2005] had previously been excavated during trial trenching (NA segment [1105]) and had produced pottery of middle to late Iron Age date (NA 2013). An additional 0.5m segment of the ditch was excavated during the open area excavation. The ditch was north to south aligned with 45 degree sides and a flat base measuring 0.75m wide and 0.24m deep. It contained a dark coloured deposit and no artefacts except for a small fragment of post-medieval pottery which is most likely an intrusive artefact introduced by the back-filling of the previously excavated segment after trial trenching.

The southern ditch terminal [2009] was NW to SE aligned with 45 degree sides and a concave base measuring 0.90m wide and 0.47m deep. It contained a dark coloured deposit and pottery sherds of late Iron Age to transitional early Roman date. The ditch also contained a large stone, measuring 0.42m x 0.29m, which was most likely deliberately placed in an upright attitude, 0.7m back from the edge of the terminal, possibly to support a post.

The dark coloured deposit within the ditches and the pottery within the features



3.4.2 Curving linear ditch terminal

A curving linear ditch [2003] that terminated within the open excavation area was identified towards the eastern end of Area 1. It continued beyond the edge of excavation to the north-west.

Ditch [2003] was broadly east to west aligned with a profile that varied from 45 degree sides with a narrow concave base to concave sides with a flat base at the terminal end, measuring 0.45-0.65m wide and 0.2-0.25m deep. It contained two large stones, measuring 0.30-0.35m x 0.15-0.18m, which were most likely deliberately placed at the base of the feature, side by side towards the terminal to support a post.

No artefacts were contained within the ditch but it is most likely contemporary with ditches [2005], [2007] and [2009] based on the similarity of its fills.

3.4.3 Curving linear ditch

A curving linear ditch [2007] was identified towards the west end of Area 1. It continued beyond the edge of excavation to the north and south-east.

Ditch [2007] had previously been excavated during trial trenching (NA segment [1108]) and had produced a single sherd of pottery of late Iron Age to transitional early Roman date (NA 2013). An additional 1m segment of the ditch was excavated during the open area excavation. The ditch was broadly NNW-SSE aligned and had a concave profile measuring 0.55m wide and 0.30m deep. It produced pottery sherds of late Iron Age date.

The ditch is interpreted as part of an enclosure boundary. The dark coloured deposit within the ditch and the moderate assemblage of pottery within the features suggest that the enclosure was domestic in character.

3.4.4 Furrows

Three furrows (all numbered [2014]) were present within Area 1. Two were north to south aligned, measuring c. 5m wide and 0.25m deep. One of the furrows contained a land-drain.

An additional furrow, on a markedly different north-east to south-west alignment, was identified at the western end of area 1. It was c. 1.25m wide and 0.10m deep and contained a land-drain.

This differing alignment may indicate either an earlier field system or a contemporary system set on a different alignment. The furrows may have been medieval in origin. However, the presence of the land-drains indicates that they were probably at least visible, and possibly still in use, into the modern period (post-1750).

3.5 Area 2

Area 2 was targeted on NA Trench 12 and was 75m long and 5m wide, centred



on grid SP 57013 / 77639. The machine strip depth of the area varied from 0.29-0.40m.

3.6 Overburden and Geological Deposits

The topsoil (3000) consisted of dark grey brown clay silt, c. 0.25m thick. The subsoil (3001) comprised mid brown orange clay silt, c. 0.10m thick.

The undisturbed geological deposit (3002) comprised light yellow clay with moderate small and medium stones.

3.7 Archaeological Remains

Four furrows and a post-medieval / modern pit were present in Area 2.

3.7.1 Furrows

Four furrows were present within Area 2. All numbered [3003], they were north to south aligned, 1.2–1.85m wide and *c*. 0.10m deep.

One of the furrows contained a fragment of roof tile of post-medieval date. Another contained a fragment of pottery of post-medieval date. The furrows may have been medieval in origin. However they share their north-south alignment with the furrows in Area 1 and may, therefore, have also remained in use into the modern period (post-1750).

3.7.2 An oval pit

An oval pit was identified at the north end of the area, extending beyond the limit of excavation to the north.

The pit [3005] was at least 3.50m long, 2.70m wide and 0.23m deep. The pit was not fully excavated; thus its depth is not known. It contained a single sherd of pottery of uncertain date. The pit truncated a furrow to the south and it is judged to be modern in date, based on its stratigraphic relationship with the furrow.

3.8 Artefacts

A small assemblage comprising pottery, ceramic roof tile and animal bone was collected. The material was examined to ascertain its nature, condition and, where possible, date range (Table 1).

Feature	Description	Context	Date range	Finds Summary
2005	Ditch	2006	Post-medieval	Pottery (1g)
2007	Ditch	2008	Late Iron Age	Pottery (148g); animal bone (46g)
2009	Ditch	2012	Late Iron Age / transitional early Roman	Pottery (180g)
3001	Subsoil	3001	Modern	Pottery (27g)
3003	Furrow	3004	Post-medieval	Pottery (7g); ceramic roof tile (28g)
3005	Pit	3006	Undated	Pottery (2g)

Table 1: Artefact summary by feature

3.8.1 Pottery and ceramic building material

Twenty-eight pottery sherds, representing ten vessels (365g) were recovered. The pottery is generally fragmented, with an average sherd weight of 13g, and survives in poor condition.

The majority of the assemblage (23 sherds, weighing 328g) is of late Iron Age date. The fill of ditch [2007] contained 14 abraded grog-tempered sherds (148g) from a jar with a rim diameter of 240mm. Nine grog-tempered sherds (180g), including an abraded bead rim jar and five shell- and sand-tempered sherds (128g) from a large storage-type vessel, were collected from ditch [2009]. The storage vessel may be of late Iron Age / transitional early Roman date.

Post-medieval pottery recovered from ditch [2005] and furrow [3003] respectively comprises two highly abraded earthenware fragments (1g), and a sherd of iron-glazed earthenware (7g: Northants. CTS Code 426). The furrow also contained a worn sand-tempered fragment of post-medieval ceramic roof tile (28g).

A piece of modern plant pot (27g) derived from subsoil (3001).

The fill of pit [3005] yielded an abraded, oxidised sand-tempered body sherd (2g) of uncertain date.

3.8.2 Animal bone

The fill of late Iron Age ditch [2007] contained six worn sheep molar fragments (46g).

3.8.3 Environmental samples

Bulk soil samples were taken from the fills of ditch segments [2003] (sample <1>), [2005] (sample <2>) and [2007] (sample <3>). The samples contained very sparse quantities of charcoal, with very low concentrations of charred seeds being recovered from samples <1> and <3>. These charred remains are very small and fragmented, with no analytical potential.

Very small fragments of bone, burnt bone and burnt clay were recovered from all three samples, with slightly more burnt clay being present in sample <3>.

The investigation revealed a number of enclosure ditches dating to the late Iron Age/transitional early Roman period, located in Area 1. Previously it was suggested that the enclosures were of an agricultural nature (NA 2013) but the moderate assemblage of, albeit abraded, pottery retrieved during the mitigation now suggests that the enclosures may have been associated with a settlement.

The environmental samples from the features contained very little charcoal and only a very low quantity of charred seeds which could indicate that the enclosures were located at the edge of the settlement. The lack of features predating the medieval period in Area 2 supports this argument. The precise extent and density of the settlement is unknown.

Areas 1 and 2 also contained a number of agricultural furrows, mainly on a north-south alignment. One furrow was set on a markedly different alignment to the other two suggesting either an earlier field system or a contemporary field system on a different alignment. The furrows may be medieval in origin. However, several furrows contained land-drains, suggesting that both field systems may have remained in use into the modern period (post-1750).

A pit identified in Area 2 is judged to be modern in date on the basis of its stratigraphic relationship with one of the furrows.

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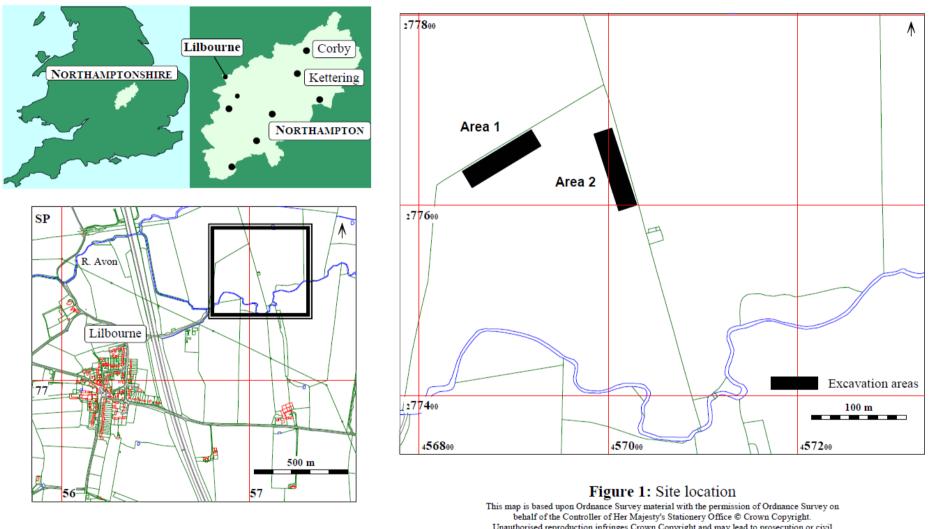
6 APPENDIX 1: AREA SUMMARIES

Area:1Extent (ha):0.04OS Co-ordinates:SP5688177649Description:Area 1 - targeted on trial trench 11

Context:	Туре:	Description: Excava	ited:	Finds Present:
2000	Topsoil	Friable dark grey brown clay silt occasional small-medium stones	✓	
2001	Subsoil	Friable mid brown orange clay silt		
2002	Natural	Firm light yellow grey clay moderate small-medium stones		
2003	Ditch	Curving linear E-W sides: concave base: flat dimensions: min breadth 0.5m, min depth 0.25m, min length 3.5m		
2004	Fill	Friable dark brown grey clay silt frequent small stones, occasional large stones. Two large stones had been deliberately placed in the base of the ditch terminal.		
2005	Ditch	Linear NNW-SSE sides: 45 degrees base: flat dimensions: min breadth 0.75m, min depth 0.24m, min length 1.3m	ı 🗌	
2006		Friable dark brown grey clay silt frequent small stones		\checkmark
2007	Ditch	Curving linear NW-SE sides: concave base: concave dimensions: min breadth 0.55m, min depth 0.3m, min length 5.5m		
2008	Fill	Friable dark brown grey clay silt moderate small stones		\checkmark
2009	Ditch	Linear NW-SE sides: 45 degrees base: concave dimensions: min breadth 0.9m, mi depth 0.47m, min length 2.25m	n 🗌	
2010	Primary fill	Friable light grey yellow silty clay occasional small stones		
2011	Primary fill	Friable light yellow grey silty clay occasional small stones		
2012		Friable dark brown grey clay silt moderate flecks charcoal, occasional large stones, occasional small-medium stones. A very large stone measuring 0.42m long x 0.29m wide had been deliberately placed in an upright attitude, 0.70m back from the terminal end of the ditch within this deposit.		
2013	Upper fill	Friable light orange brown silty clay. Re-deposited natural		
2014	Furrow	Linear N-S sides: concave base: flat dimensions: min breadth 5.3m, min depth 0.25m. General number for cut of furrows within area 1.		
2015	Fill	Friable mid grey brown clay silt moderate small-medium stones. General number for fill of furrows within area 1.		

Area:2Extent (ha):0.04OS Co-ordinates:SP5701377639Description:Area 2 - targeted immediately north-east of trial trench 12

Context:	Type:	Description: E	xcavated: Finds	s Present:
3000	Topsoil	Friable dark grey brown clay silt occasional small-medium stones		
3001	Subsoil	Friable mid brown orange clay silt		
3002	Natural	Firm light grey yellow clay moderate small-medium stones		
3003	Furrow	Linear N-S sides: concave base: flat dimensions: min breadth 1.2m, min dep	oth 0.1 m 🗌	
3004	Fill	Friable mid grey brown clay silt moderate small-medium stones		\checkmark
3005	Pit	Oval dimensions: min breadth 2.7m, min depth 0.23m, min length 3.5m. Co pit that truncated a furrow. The feature was not fully excavated to base.	ut of a	
3006	Fill	Friable dark grey brown clay silt occasional flecks charcoal, occasional small-me stones	edium	



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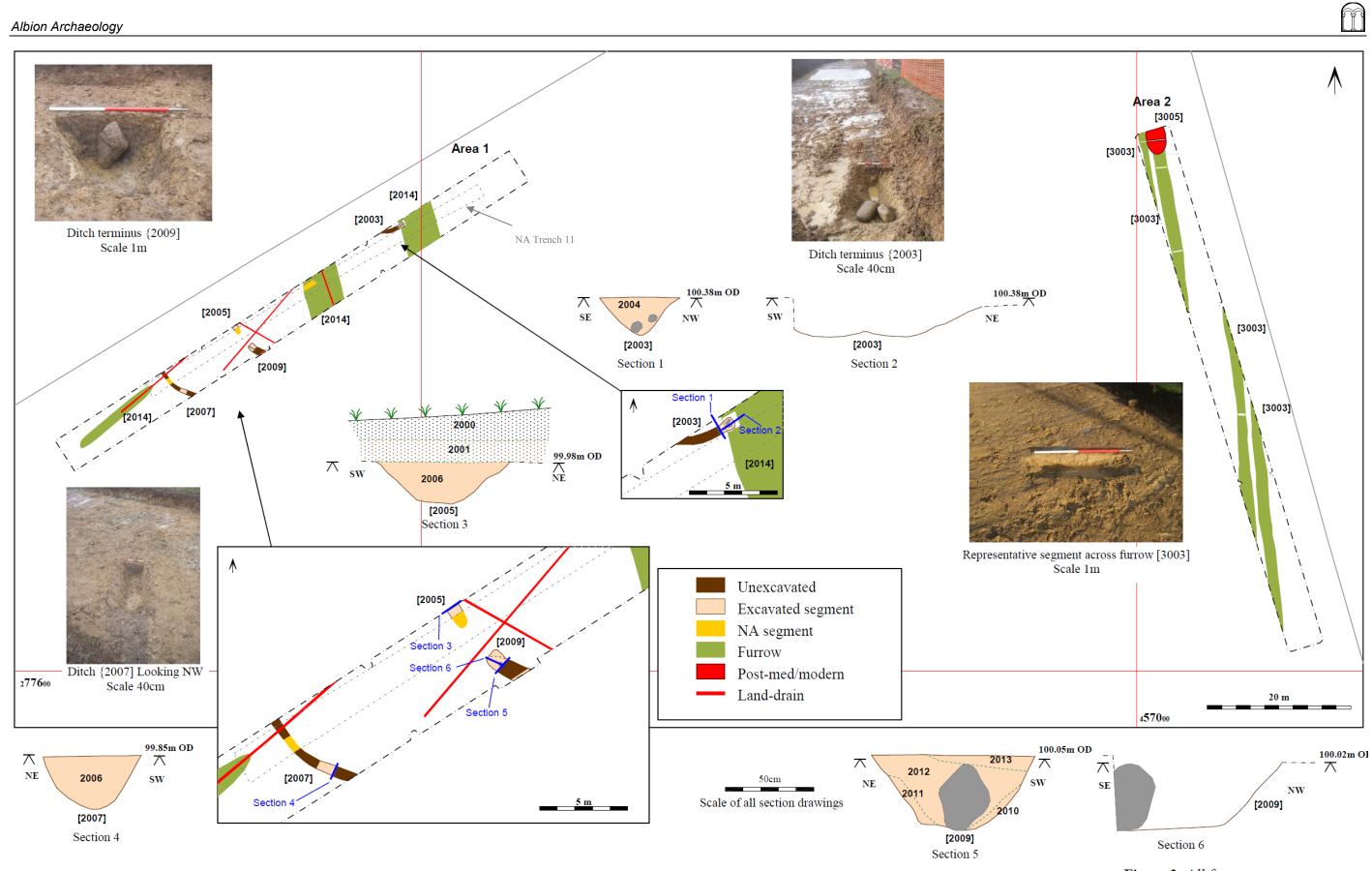


Figure 2: All features





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