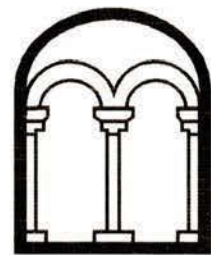


LAND ADJACENT 25 HIGH STREET
TILBROOK
CAMBRIDGESHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH
EVALUATION

Albion
archaeology



**LAND ADJACENT 25 HIGH STREET
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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH
EVALUATION**

Project: HT2207
CHER Event No. ECB4174
Oasis ref. no: albionar1-177354

Document: 2014/106
Version 1.0

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13th June 2014

Produced for:
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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 Mr and Mrs Shiner of 25 High Street, Tilbrook and monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Dan McConnell of the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Team.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Ian Turner (Archaeological Supervisor). This report was prepared by Robert Wardill (Project Manager) with contributions from Joan Lightning (CAD Technician) and Jackie Wells (Finds Officer).

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Version History

<i>Version</i>	<i>Issue date</i>	<i>Reason for re-issue</i>
<i>1.0</i>	<i>13/06/2014</i>	<i>n/a</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 (13/00142/FUL) for the erection of a detached residential dwelling together with access and car parking on land adjacent to 25 High Street, Tilbrook, Cambridgeshire has been approved by Huntingdon District Council.

Due to the archaeological potential of the site a condition was placed on the planning consent, requiring a scheme of archaeological work to be undertaken.

Cambridgeshire County Council's Historic Environment Team advised the Planning Authority that the first stage of work should be an archaeological evaluation of the site to determine the potential impact of the proposal on archaeological remains.

The results of the trial trenching will be used to characterise the archaeological potential of the site and determine whether further archaeological works are required.

Archaeological deposits and features of interest are present at the site appearing at a depth of c. 0.30–0.40m. These comprise soil layers of early medieval date overlying archaeological features of late Saxon and early medieval date.

Some of the features appear to represent structural remains, although their shallow nature suggests they may not be associated with a significant building such as a dwelling. However, it is possible that they have been truncated by later use of the site for food production during the early medieval period. This could have resulted in the development of the soil layers that overlie all of the earlier features. Overall, the assemblage of pottery from these deposits is highly fragmented — sherds have a mean weight of 6g — and survives in poor condition.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Planning Background*

A planning application (13/00142/FUL) for the erection of a detached residential dwelling together with access and car parking on land adjacent to 25 High Street, Tilbrook, Cambridgeshire has been approved by Huntingdon District Council.

Due to the archaeological potential of the site a condition was placed on the planning consent, requiring a scheme of archaeological work to be undertaken. Cambridgeshire County Council's Historic Environment Team (HET) advised the Planning Authority that the first stage of work should be an archaeological evaluation of the site to determine the potential impact of the proposal on archaeological remains. This is in line with the requirements of paragraph 141 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). A brief issued by the HET (2014) outlined the requirements for the archaeological evaluation.

The results of the evaluation will be used to characterise the archaeological potential of the site and will thereby allow the HET to determine whether further archaeological works are required

Prior to commencement of the fieldwork a project design (Albion Archaeology 2014) was submitted to the HET for approval.

1.2 *Site Location*

Tilbrook is a small village located in the western part of Cambridgeshire, within the valley of the River Til which forms a loop around the northern side of the village.

The site lies in the southern part of the village on the northern side of the High Street near its junction with Church Lane. It is currently an empty plot between the properties of 25 High Street and 2 Church Lane. It consists of a garden with a small brick and tile outbuilding and is bordered by hedgerows. It lies at the base of a north-facing slope between 45m and 40m OD and is centred on grid reference TL 0794 6899.

The underlying geology is Oxford Clay Formation Mudstone with no superficial layers recorded. The River Terrace Deposits of the River Til are not recorded to reach as far as the PDA¹.

1.3 *Archaeological and Historical Background*

Tilbrook is of Saxon origin and is mentioned in Domesday Book of 1086 when it consisted of four householders². Previous archaeological investigations in the village have found evidence dating to this period.

Evaluation trenches to the west and north-west of the Church of All Saints found evidence of two phases of mid to late Saxon occupation, dating from at

¹ Contains British Geological Survey materials © NERC [2014]

² <http://domesdaymap.co.uk/search/?geo=tilbrook>. Accessed: 17 April 2014.



least the 9th century AD (CHER MCB18229). The evidence comprised a series of ditches and recuts, running in all directions and recorded over an extent of more than 100m within four trenches. The alignment is in contrast to the regular gridded layout of modern Tilbrook, suggesting that the village was replanned probably in the later 11th century. A few probable medieval quarry pits were also found, probably dug for the extraction of gravel.

A large number of records for Tilbrook held by the CHER describe medieval ridge and furrow agricultural earthworks, showing that the land around the village was intensively cultivated during the medieval period.

Medieval house platforms (CHER MCB16816) have been recorded from aerial photographs to the north of Station Road. An evaluation at Chestnut Cottage in Station Road (CHER MCB 16876) revealed modern remains and a gully containing a fragment of 9th–11th-century pottery.

A moated site (CHER MCB18650) consisting of a partially water-filled medieval square homestead moat with a modern dwelling called Hardwicks, is located to the south of Tilbrook on the top of an east-west aligned spur of land. An extension of the moat to the west is recorded as a cropmark on 1996 aerial photographs. The manor house (CHER MCB00235) in the north of Tilbrook dates from the 17th century.

1.4 Project Objectives

The principal objective of the archaeological evaluation was to determine whether archaeological remains survived within the site and, if so, to determine their date, nature, extent, condition, and significance.

This information will be used to inform decisions with regard to the impact of the proposed development on potential archaeological remains and to help in the formulation of appropriate mitigation measures to protect remains either by preservation or excavation.



2. METHODOLOGY

The trial trenching took place between 27th and 28th May 2014. The work comprised the excavation of one trench measuring 9m x 1.6m (Figure 1).

The trench was 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 ECB4174.

Details of the project and its findings will be submitted to the Archaeology Data Service's OASIS database under reference number albionar1-177354.



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 and finds information in Appendix 2

3.2 Overburden and Geological Deposits

Overburden comprised 0.20–0.30m of topsoil (100), overlying 0.10–0.15m of dumping / demolition deposits (101) and (102), the former containing modern pottery sherds and bottle glass.

Geological deposits of light grey orange clay were encountered at a depth of *c.* 0.60m below ground level.

A number of modern features intruded into archaeological deposits including a wall, a land drain and a probable service trench.

3.3 Archaeological Findings

Layers (105) and (106) were encountered at 0.30–0.40m below ground level, beneath overburden deposits (101) and (102). Both layers are probably associated with early medieval occupation activity as they contained pottery sherds of this period, with the upper layer (101) also containing fragments of charcoal and being much darker in colour. However, the small pottery assemblage (113g) is highly fragmented and survives in poor condition.

A number of shallow archaeological features were found beneath layers (101) and (102). These comprised three pits [108], [110/128] and [130], a ditch [115/126] and a post hole [115] all dated by pottery finds to the early medieval period, and three probable post holes [117], [119] and [123] and a gully [121] all probably dating to the late Saxon period. Features [117] and [121] have been dated from recovered pottery sherds and features [119] and [123] from their similarity in fill composition and colour to [117] and [121]. Again, the small pottery assemblage (122g) is highly fragmented and survives in poor condition.



4. CONCLUSIONS

Archaeological deposits and features of interest are present at the site appearing at a depth of *c.* 0.30–40m. They comprise soil layers of early medieval date, overlying archaeological features of late Saxon and early medieval date.

Some of the features appear to represent structural remains, although their shallow nature suggests that they may not be associated with a significant building such as a dwelling. However, it is possible that they have been truncated by later use of the site for food production during the early medieval period. This could have resulted in the development of the soil layers that overlie all of the earlier features. Overall, the assemblage of pottery from these deposits is highly fragmented — sherds have a mean weight of 6g — and survives in poor condition.



5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Albion Archaeology 2014, *Site adjacent to 25 High Street, Tilbrook, Cambridgeshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Evaluation*. Document ref. 2014/73.

HET, 2014. *2 Church Lane, Tilbrook: Brief for Archaeological Evaluation*. April 30, 2014.



6. APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT DETAILS

Trench: 1

Max Dimensions: Length: 9.00 m. Width: 1.60 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.3 m. Max: 0.4 m.

Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: TL0794168992

OS Grid Ref.: TL0794768998

Reason: Assessment of archaeological potential

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
100	Topsoil		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
101	Dump material	Modern overburden.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
102	Demolition layer	Modern overburden.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
103	Wall	Single course of modern bricks.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
105	Layer	Dark brown silty clay with occasional charcoal fragments.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
106	Layer	Mid orange brown silty clay.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
107	Natural	Light grey orange clay.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
108	Pit		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
109	Fill	Dark brown silty clay.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
110	Pit		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
111	Primary fill	Mid orange grey silty clay.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
112	Secondary fill	Dark grey silty clay.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
113	Ditch		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
114	Fill	Mid orange grey silty clay.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
115	Posthole		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
116	Fill	Mid orange grey silty clay.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
117	Pit		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
118	Fill	Light grey silty clay.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
119	Pit	Possible natural disturbance.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
120	Fill	Light grey silty clay.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
121	Gulley		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
122	Fill	Mid brown grey silty clay.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
123	Pit		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
124	Fill	Light grey silty clay.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
125	Natural	Light orange clay.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
126	Ditch	Same as [113].	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
127	Fill	Mid orange grey silty clay.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
128	Pit	Same as [110].	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
129	Fill	Dark grey silty clay.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
130	Pit		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
131	Fill	Light grey silty clay.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
132	Pit	Modern pit.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
104	Fill	Mid grey clay silt.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



7. APPENDIX 2: ARTEFACT SUMMARY

7.1 Introduction

The assemblage comprises pottery and a small quantity of non-ceramic items; the largest deposits derive from layer (106) and pit [132] (Table 1).

Feature	Description	Fill	Date	Finds Summary
101	Make-up layer	101	Modern	Pottery (42g)
105	Layer	105	Early medieval	Pottery (40g)
106	Layer	106	Early medieval	Pottery (73g)
108	Pit	109	Early medieval	Pottery (31g); animal bone (1g)
110	Pit	112	Early medieval	Pottery (39g)
113	Ditch	114	Early medieval	Pottery (32g); burnt stone (8g)
115	Post hole	116	Early medieval	Pottery (4g)
117	Post hole	118	Late Saxon	Pottery (1g); burnt flint (1g)
121	Ditch	122	Late Saxon	Pottery (3g)
128	Pit	129	Early medieval	Pottery (8g); animal bone (2g)
130	Pit	131	Early medieval	Pottery (4g)
132	Pit	104	Modern	Pottery (69g)

Table 1: Artefact Summary

7.2 Pottery

Fifty-seven pottery sherds (346g), representing 52 vessels were recovered. The assemblage is highly fragmented, sherds have a mean weight of 6g and survive in poor condition. Fabric types identified are summarised in Table 2.

Fabric type	Sherd No.	Wt (g)	Fill / Sherd No.
<i>Late Saxon</i>			
St Neots type ware	19	60	(105):5, (106):1, (109):2, (112):3, (114):1, (118):1, (122):2, (129):2, (131):2
Stamford ware	1	2	(116):1
<i>Early medieval</i>			
Developed St Neots type ware	20	140	(105):3, (106):6, (109):1, (112):4, (114):2, (116):1, (129):2, (131):1
Sandy ware	5	33	(109):4, (112):1
<i>Post-medieval</i>			
Black-glazed earthenware	5	80	(101):2, (104):3
<i>19th century</i>			
Mocha ware	2	4	(101):2
Pearlware	2	16	(104):2
Transfer-printed ware	2	7	(101):2
White earthenware	1	4	(104):1

Table 2: Pottery type series

The majority of the assemblage spans the late Saxon and early medieval periods (c. 900–1250). Late Saxon pottery comprises nineteen sherds of shell-tempered St Neots type ware, and a glazed Stamford ware sherd, the latter a regional import from Lincolnshire. The shelly vessels survive in poor condition and are mainly represented by abraded body sherds. The characteristics and appearance of some of the St Neots type sherds suggest they date towards the later end of the range for these wares (c. 1050–1100). Feature sherds are two small everted rims, deriving from jars.



Early medieval pottery (*c.* 1050–1250) totals twenty sherds of developed St Neots type ware, and five contemporary sand-tempered sherds. Vessel forms are jars with everted or square rims, ranging in diameter from 110–150mm. A surviving base has a diameter of 180mm. Sooting on two shelly sherds suggests their use as cooking pots.

Make-up layer (101) and pit [104] yielded five sherds of 17th-century black-glazed earthenware, most deriving from large bowls, and seven sherds of mass-produced 19th-century tableware.

7.3 Other Finds

Two abraded, undiagnostic animal bone fragments (3g) were collected from early medieval pits [108] and [128]. Ditch [113] and pit [117] contained two pieces of burnt unworked flint (3g) and a fragment of burnt sandstone (6g). The latter have not been retained.

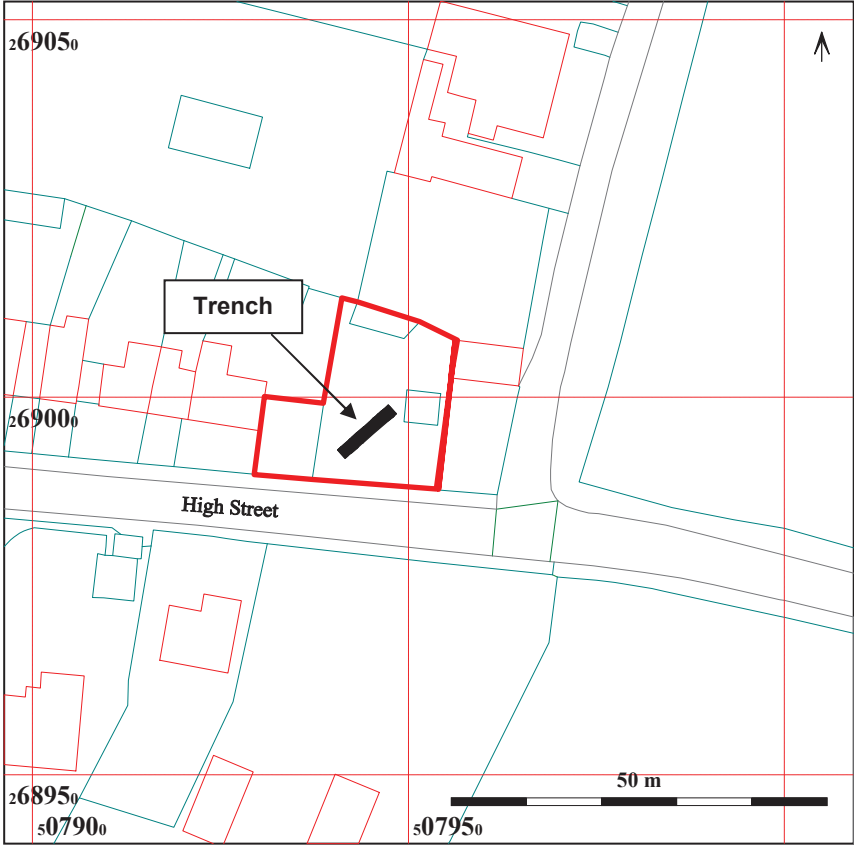
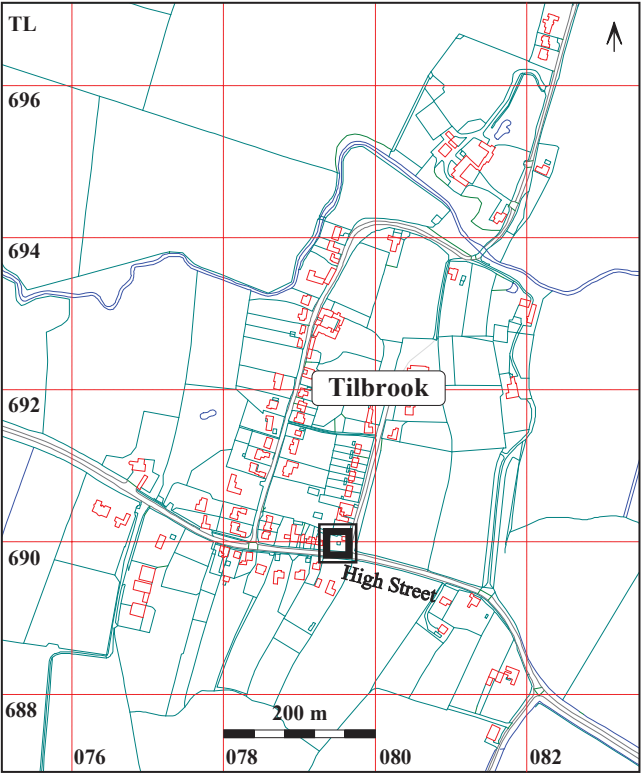
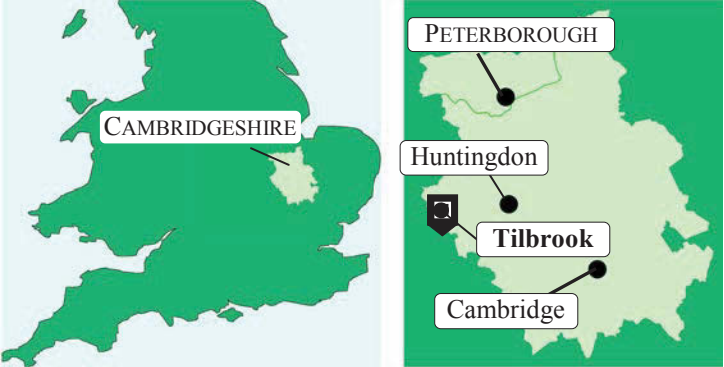
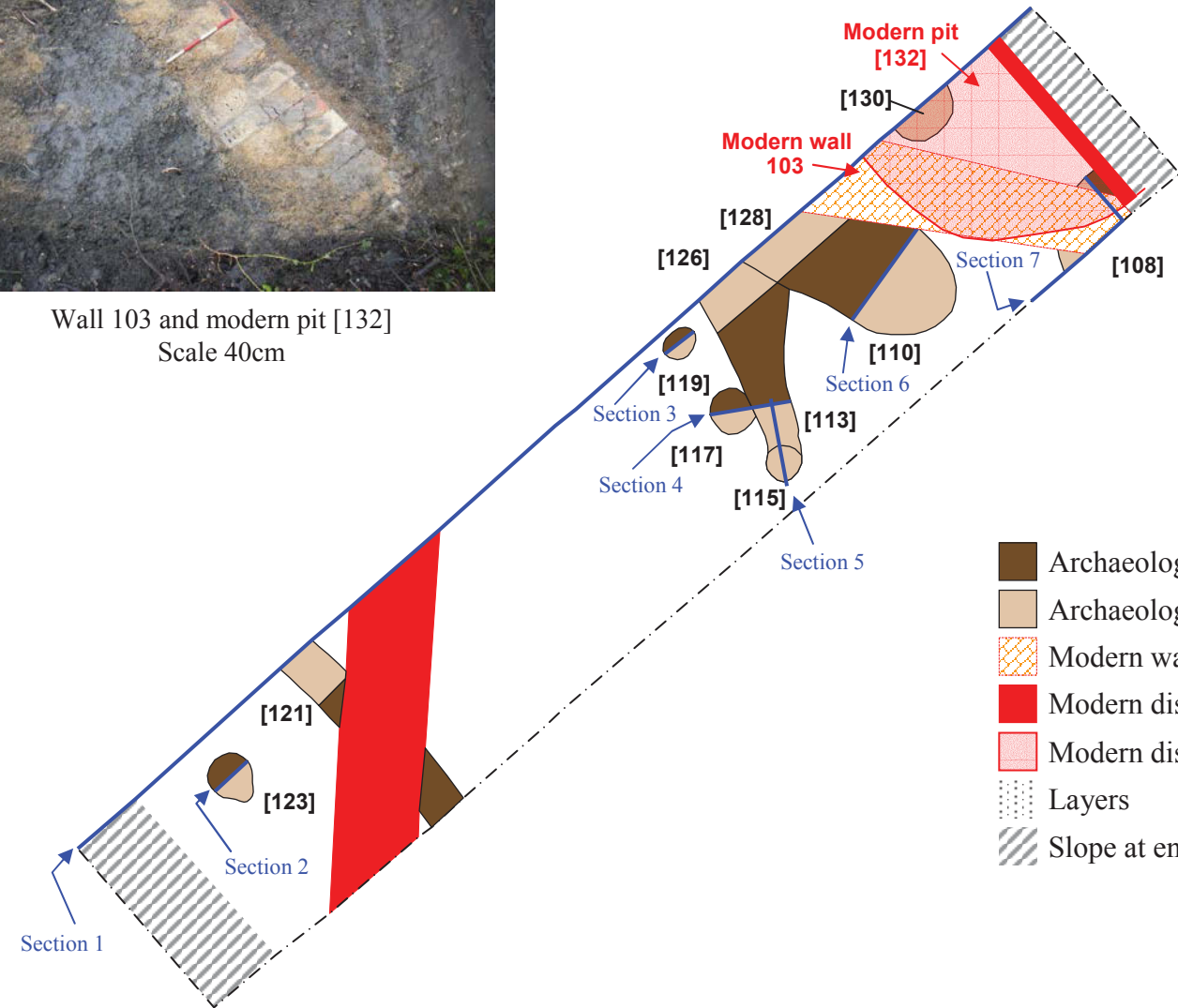


Figure 1: Site location

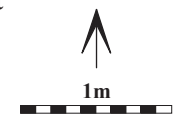
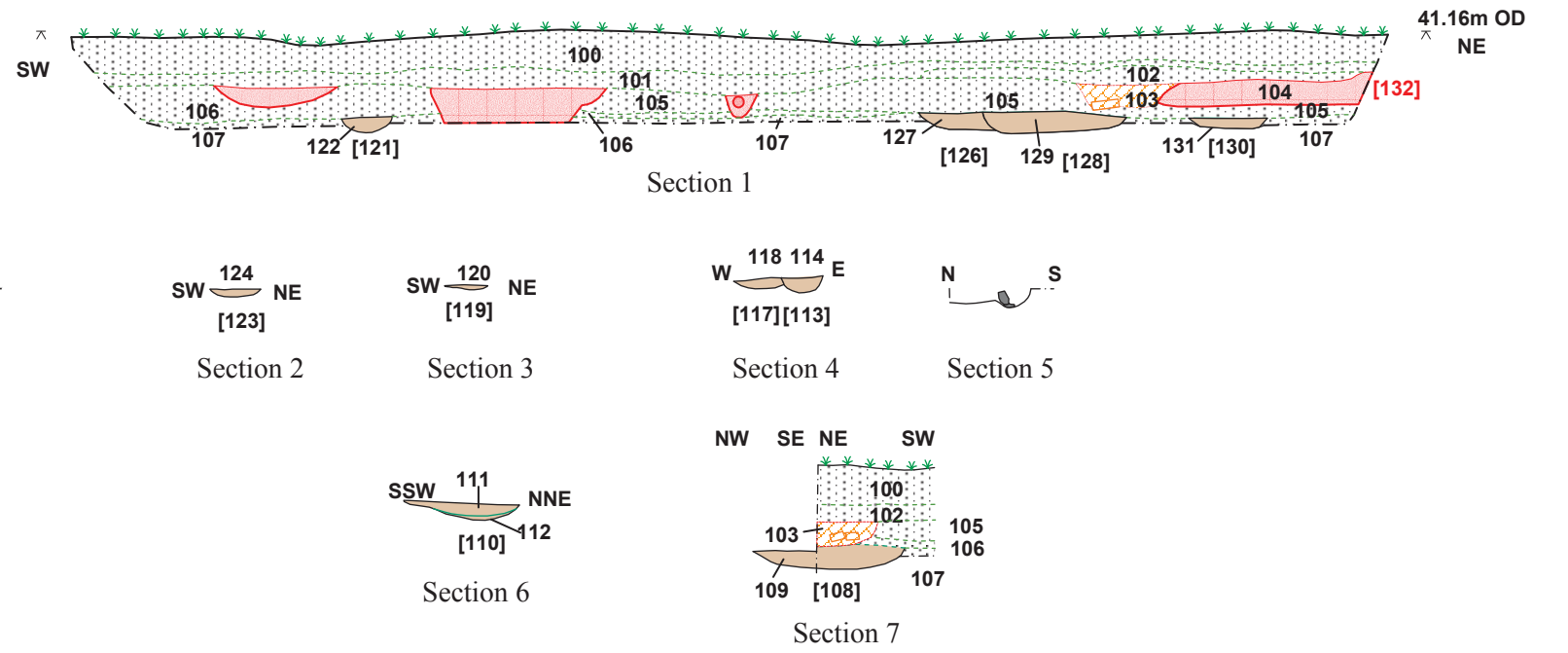
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Wall 103 and modern pit [132]
Scale 40cm



- Archaeological feature
- Archaeological feature- excavated segment
- Modern wall
- Modern disturbance
- Modern disturbance-machined segment
- Layers
- Slope at end of trench



Feature [110] Looking NW
Scale 40cm



Feature [108] Looking SE
Scale 40cm



Features [117], [113], and [115] Looking E
Scale 40cm



NE half of trench. Looking north.
Scale 1m

Figure 2: Evaluation results.



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