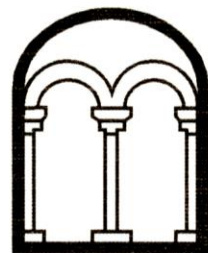


**LAND ADJACENT TO FAIR VIEW
BLUNTISHAM ROAD
NEEDINGWORTH
CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EVALUATION**

Albion
archaeology



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CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EVALUATION**

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Compiled by	Checked by	Approved by
David Ingham	Gary Edmondson	Drew Shotliff

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Preface

All statements and opinions in this document are offered in good faith. This document has been prepared for the titled project or named part thereof and was prepared solely for the benefit of the client. This document should not be relied upon or used for any other project without an independent check being carried out as to its suitability and the prior written authority of Albion Archaeology (a trading unit of Central Bedfordshire Council).

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Acknowledgements

The project was commissioned by Aspen Build Ltd, and was monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Kasia Gdaniec of Cambridgeshire County Council's Historic Environment Team (CHET).

The fieldwork was undertaken by David Ingham (Project Officer), who also prepared this report. The project was managed for Albion by Gary Edmondson (Project Manager), under the overall management of Drew Shotliff (Operations Manager).

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Version History

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<i>1.0</i>	<i>31/05/2018</i>	<i>n/a</i>

Key Terms

The following abbreviations are used throughout this report:

CHET	Cambridgeshire County Council's Historic Environment Team
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
CHER	Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record



Non-Technical Summary

Planning permission (17/01077/FUL) was granted by Huntingdon District Council for the construction of fourteen new houses on land off Bluntisham Road, Needingworth, St Ives, Cambridgeshire. The development occupies c. 0.56ha and is located at a height of 10–11m OD on the north-eastern side of Needingworth, a village which lies c. 2.5km east of St Ives.

No archaeological remains are recorded within the development area itself, but evidence for prehistoric and Roman sites is widespread beyond the immediate surroundings. This largely consists of find-spots of pottery, but crop-marks to the north and east of Needingworth are additionally believed to be prehistoric in origin. Known post-Roman remains are largely related to medieval agriculture and the village's post-medieval history.

Due to the site's archaeological potential, a condition was placed on planning consent, requiring a scheme of archaeological work to be undertaken prior to development. Cambridgeshire County Council's Historic Environment Team issued a Brief for an archaeological field evaluation (CHET 2017), to assess the archaeological nature and potential of the site.

Evaluation of the development area revealed three shallow, undated pits. These features are only of local significance, and do not warrant archaeological mitigation to counteract the negative impact on them that construction of the proposed houses will have.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 **Planning Background**

Planning permission (17/01077/FUL) was granted by Huntingdon District Council for the construction of fourteen new houses on land off Bluntisham Road, Needingworth, St Ives, Cambridgeshire.

Due to the site's archaeological potential, a condition was placed on planning consent requiring a scheme of archaeological work to be undertaken prior to development. Cambridgeshire County Council's Historic Environment Team (CHET) issued a Brief for an archaeological field evaluation (CHET 2017), to assess the archaeological nature and potential of the site.

Aspen Build Ltd commissioned Albion Archaeology to carry out the field evaluation, in line with a Written Scheme of Investigation (Albion Archaeology 2018) that was agreed in advance with the CHET. The results of the evaluation are presented in this report.

1.2 **Site Location and Description**

Needingworth, part of the civil parish of Holywell-cum-Needingworth in Huntingdonshire, is a village *c.* 2.5km east of St Ives. The development area lies *c.* 500m north-east of the village centre, 200m south of the A1123 and 2km west of the River Great Ouse.

The development covers *c.* 0.56ha in extent and consisted of rough grassland at the time of fieldwork. It lies at an approximate height of 10–11m OD and is centred on grid reference TL 3463 7259 (Fig. 1). The underlying geological deposits primarily comprise West Walton Formation and Ampthill Clay Formations, overlain by Holocene river terrace deposits of sand and gravel.

1.3 **Archaeological and Historical Background**

The known archaeological remains within a 1km radius of the development area are listed within the Brief (CHET 2017). Those which had a particular bearing on the likely archaeological potential of the site are summarised below.

No heritage assets are recorded within the development area itself. Closest to it are Victoria House (MCB20717), a 19th-century building that neighbours the site to the west, and a number of Roman pottery vessels (CHER 00881) that were found in a garden *c.* 120m to the east.

Evidence for prehistoric and Roman sites is widespread beyond the immediate surroundings, largely comprising find-spots of pottery, but also including crop-marks to the north and east of Needingworth that are believed to be prehistoric in origin. Excavations to the east at Barleycroft Farm Quarry and Flood Plains have also revealed extensive evidence for prehistoric occupation and Bronze Age settlement and field systems (ECB451, ECB1109, ECB1161, ECB1329 and ECB2545).



Saxon-period remains are limited to unstratified pottery (HER03711a), and Needingworth does not appear in the 1086 Domesday Survey. Evidence for medieval activity is largely restricted to the remains of ridge and furrow cultivation in the fields around the settlement core (MCB23255, MCB24337, CB15639, and CB15347), with most of the heritage assets within 1km of the development area dating to the post-medieval period.

1.4 Project Objectives

The objective of the evaluation was to provide information on any archaeological remains present, and, if warranted, to enable an appropriate mitigation strategy to be formulated. In particular, the evaluation sought to establish:

- the location, extent, nature and date of any archaeological features or deposits that were present; and
- the amount of truncation that may have affected any remains, and whether palaeosols or 'B' horizons were present.



2. METHOD STATEMENT

The methodological approach to the project is summarised below and detailed in the Written Scheme of Investigation (Albion Archaeology 2018).

2.1 Standards

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

• Albion Archaeology	<i>Procedures Manual: Volume 1 Fieldwork (3rd ed, 2017)</i>
• ALGAO (east)	<i>Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England (2003)</i>
• Archaeological Archives Forum	<i>Archaeological Archives: A Guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation (2011)</i>
• Cambridgeshire County Council	<i>Deposition of Archaeological Archives in Cambridgeshire (CCC April 2017)</i>
• CIfA	<i>Charter and by-law; Code of conduct (2014)</i>
	<i>Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation (2014)</i>
	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials (2014)</i>
• CHET	<i>Land Between Victoria House and Fairview, Bluntisham Road, Needingworth. Brief for Archaeological Evaluation. December 22nd 2017</i>
• Historic England	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) (2015)</i>
	<i>Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation (2015)</i>

2.2 Archaeological Trial Trenching

The trial trenching was undertaken between 22nd and 25th May 2018, and comprised the excavation of four trenches, each measuring c. 30m long and 1.85m wide (Fig. 2). This equated to just under a 4% sample of the development area, with the trenches targeted on the proposed house plots. Trench 4 had to be moved slightly from its location as shown in the WSI (Albion Archaeology 2018), in order to avoid obstacles on site.

The trenches were opened by a mechanical excavator fitted with a flat-edged ditching bucket. The machine was operated by an experienced driver under the supervision of an archaeologist. All archaeological excavation and recording was carried out by experienced Albion Archaeology staff. A 10-litre sample of topsoil and subsoil from each end of all four trenches was sieved by hand for the recovery of artefacts.

The trenches were inspected by Kasia Gdaniec of the CHET prior to their backfilling.



3. RESULTS

Linear earthworks were present on a roughly east–west alignment across the field, spaced at intervals of *c.* 11m (Fig. 2: section 2). They were visible along the surface of Trenches 2 and 3, particularly the former, and are likely to represent the remains of ridge and furrow cultivation characteristic of medieval and later arable agriculture. The cumulative depth of topsoil and subsoil where the ridges were located was as much as 1m, but the depth of overburden was mostly 0.55–0.8m across the site (Fig. 2: section 1).

Very little cultural material was observed within the overburden, except in Trench 4, where the uppermost deposit (400) represented a layer of dumped material. Sieving of the topsoil and subsoil in each trench produced only a handful of post-medieval, modern and undated artefacts (Table 1), which were not retained.

Trench	Deposit	Artefacts	Date and comments
2: north end	Subsoil (201)	Pottery (1g)	Undated: post-Roman? Very abraded
3: north end	Topsoil (300)	Animal bone (1g)	Indeterminate
3: south end	Topsoil (300)	Pottery (1g)	Undated: post-Roman? Very abraded
4: north end	Subsoil (401)	CBM (2g)	Gault clay tile: post-medieval or later
4: south end	Subsoil (401)	Pottery (1g)	19th/20th-century transfer-printed earthenware
		Clay pipe (2g)	19th-century stem fragment (narrow bore)

Table 1: Summary of artefacts from sieved deposits

No sub-surface archaeological features were present in Trenches 1 or 3, but a shallow pit [203] was partially revealed in Trench 2 (Fig. 2 and section 1). Two features [404] and [406] were identified in Trench 4; they appeared to be elongated pits, though the particularly sterile nature of their infill may indicate a periglacial origin. All three features were sealed by the subsoil and were cut into the uppermost layer of geological deposits, which mostly comprised clay but with occasional patches of silt, sand and gravel.

Summaries of all the deposits recorded within the trenches can be found in Table 2.



Trench:	1			
Length:	28.6m	Width:	1.85m	Depth to archaeological horizon: Min. 0.55m Max. 0.6m
Context	Type	Description		
100	Topsoil	Friable dark brownish grey sandy clay. 0.3m thick		
101	Subsoil	Firm mid orange-brown sandy clay. 0.25m thick		
102	Natural	Firm mid greyish orange silty clay		
Trench:	2			
Length:	28.9m	Width:	1.85m	Depth to archaeological horizon: Min. 0.6m Max. 0.65m
Context	Type	Description		
200	Topsoil	Friable dark brownish grey sandy clay. 0.35m thick		
201	Subsoil	Firm mid orange-brown sandy clay. 0.25m thick		
202	Natural	Firm mid orange clay with patches of sandy gravel		
203	Pit	Sub-square, concave sides, flat base. 1.25m long, >0.55 wide, 0.3m deep		
204	Fill	Firm mid orange-grey silty clay		
Trench:	3			
Length:	28.4m	Width:	1.85m	Depth to archaeological horizon: Min. 0.65m Max. 0.85m
Context	Type	Description		
300	Topsoil	Friable dark brownish grey sandy clay. 0.35m thick		
301	Subsoil	Firm mid orange-brown sandy clay. 0.4m thick		
302	Natural	Firm mid greyish orange sandy clay with patches of gravel		
Trench:	4			
Length:	26.7m	Width:	1.85m	Depth to archaeological horizon: Min. 0.6m Max. 0.8m
Context	Type	Description		
400	Topsoil	Friable dark brownish grey sandy clay. 0.15m thick		
401	Buried topsoil	Friable dark brownish grey sandy clay. 0.3m thick		
401	Subsoil	Firm mid orange-brown sandy clay. 0.25m thick		
402	Natural	Firm mid orange clay with patches of sand		
404	Pit	Oblong, E-W, concave sides, flat base. 0.9m wide, >1.5m long, 0.24m deep		
405	Fill	Firm mid orange-brown silty sand		
406	Pit	Oblong, E-W, concave sides, flat base. 0.8m wide, 1.8m long, 0.23m deep		
407	Fill	Firm mid orange-brown silty sand		

Table 2: Trench summaries



4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Discussion and Significance of the Archaeological Remains

Evaluation of the development area at Bluntisham Road, Needingworth revealed three shallow pits, or possibly periglacial features, which contained no finds. Their relationship with the subsoil suggests that their date is medieval or earlier, but their date and function are ultimately unknown. These features are only of local significance and have no further potential to address regional research objectives.

4.2 Impact Assessment

Construction of the proposed development will have a negative impact on the identified remains, but the features are not of sufficient significance to warrant archaeological mitigation.



5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Albion Archaeology 2018: *Land Adjacent to Fair View, Bluntisham Road, Needingworth, Cambridgeshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Evaluation*. Report 2017/201

CHET 2017: *Land Between Victoria House and Fairview, Bluntisham Road, Needingworth. Brief for Archaeological Evaluation*. December 22nd 2018



6. APPENDIX 4: OASIS SUMMARY FORM

6.1 OASIS ID: *albionar1-303191*

Project details

Project name	Bluntisham Road, Needingworth
Short description of the project	Trial trench evaluation on land off Bluntisham Road, Needingworth. Four trenches were excavated; three undated pits were found, from which no finds were recovered. Linear earthworks presumed to be ridge and furrow were also observed.
Project dates	Start: 22-05-2018 End: 25-05-2018
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	BR3290 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Vacant Land 2 - Vacant land not previously developed
Monument type	PIT Uncertain
Monument type	RIDGE AND FURROW Post Medieval
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches"
Development type	Rural residential
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	After full determination (e.g. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	CAMBRIDGESHIRE HUNTINGDONSHIRE HOLYWELL CUM NEEDINGWORTH Bluntisham Road, Needingworth
Postcode	PE27 4TA
Study area	0.56 Hectares
Site coordinates	TL 3463 7259 52.334447758251 -0.023859669984 52 20 04 N 000 01 25 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 10m Max: 11m

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	Gary Edmondson
Project supervisor	David Ingham
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer



Name of sponsor/funding body Aspen Build Ltd

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No

Digital Archive recipient Cambridgeshire County Store

Digital Contents "Stratigraphic"

Digital Media available "Text","Images raster / digital photography"

Paper Archive recipient Cambs County Archaeological Store

Paper Contents "Stratigraphic"

Paper Media available "Context sheet","Drawing","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section"

Project bibliography 1

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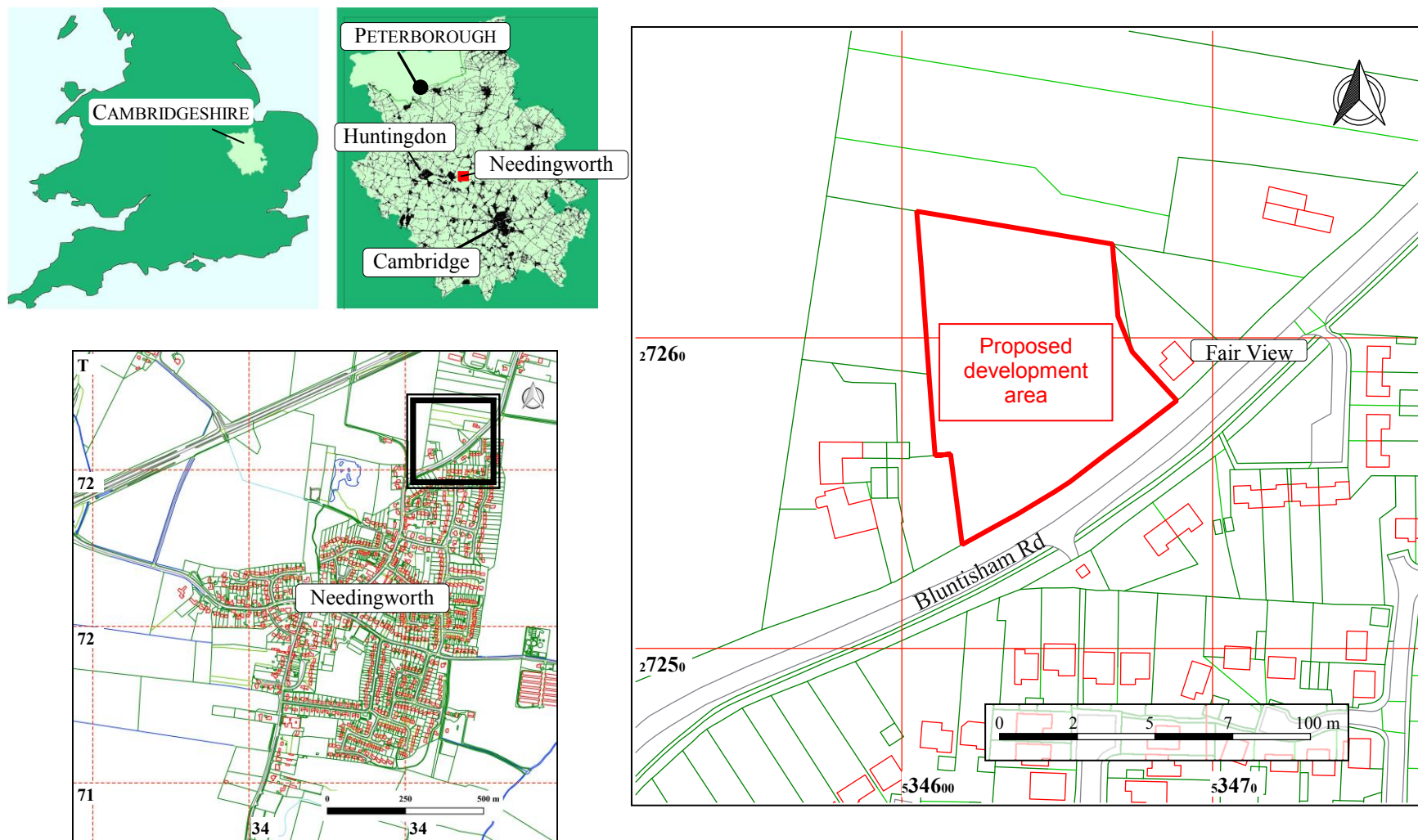
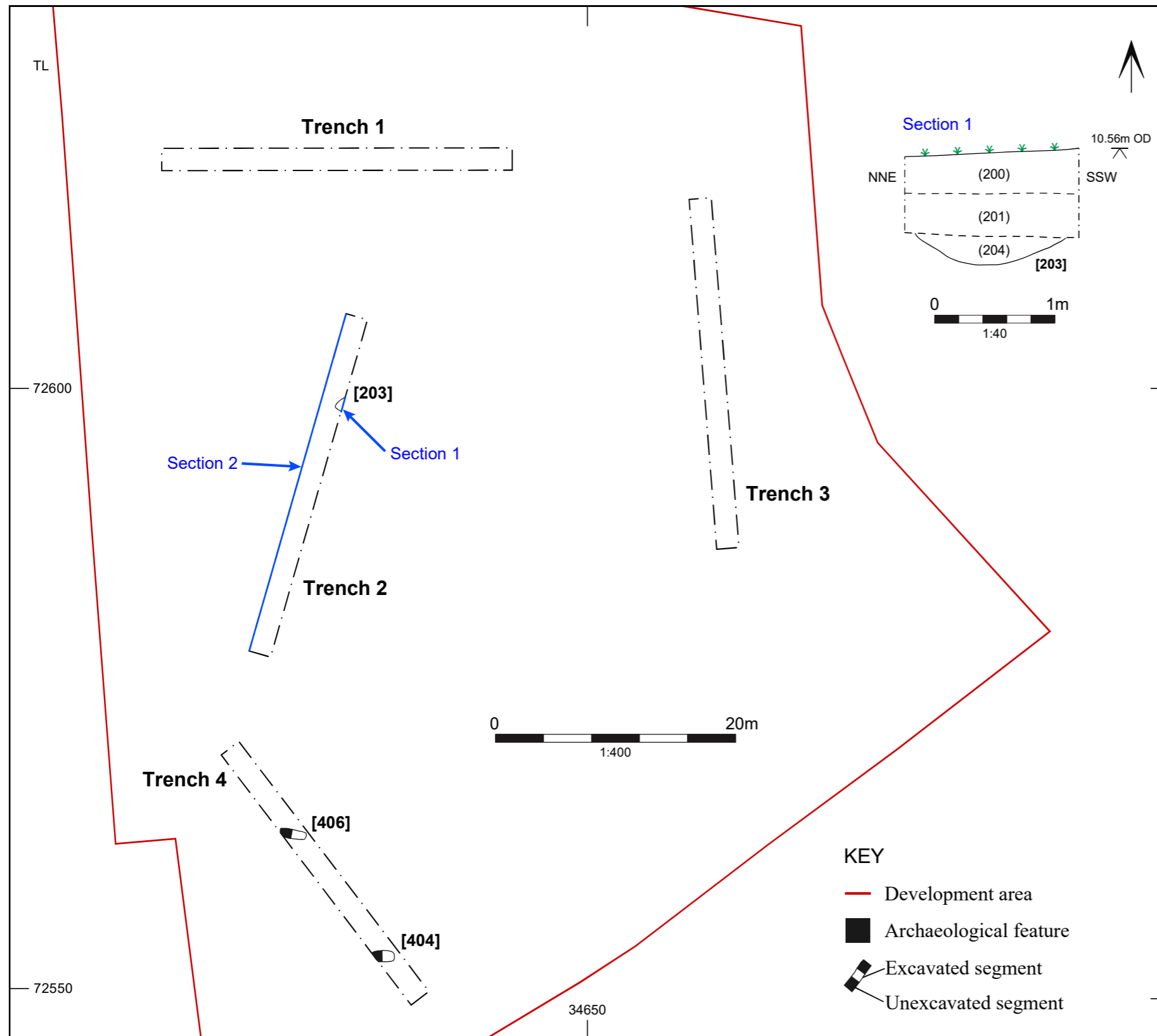


Figure 1: Site location

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Photograph A:
Trench 3, looking south. Scale 1m



Photograph B:
Trench 4, looking north-west.
Scale 1m



Photograph C:
Possible pit [406], looking west.
Scale 0.2m

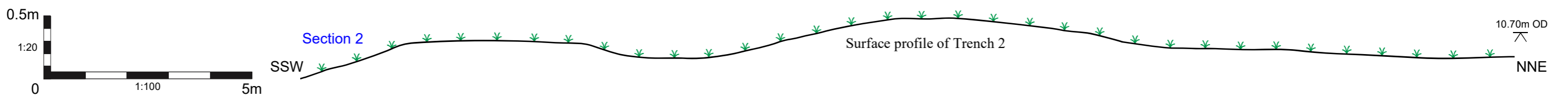


Figure 2: Plan of all features, with selected photographs and section drawings

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