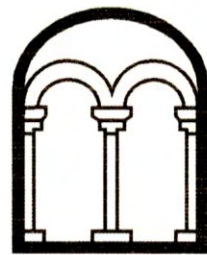


**65 STATION ROAD  
LOWER STONDON  
BEDFORDSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD EVALUATION  
AND HERITAGE STATEMENT**

**Albion**  
archaeology



**65 STATION ROAD  
LOWER STONDON  
BEDFORDSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD EVALUATION  
AND HERITAGE STATEMENT**

Project: SR3483  
HER search no: 201819/291  
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Produced for:  
Woods Hardwick Planning Ltd

On behalf of:  
John Burgess & Co Ltd

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*The figures are bound at the back of the report.*



## Preface

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## Acknowledgements

*The project was commissioned by Woods Hardwick Planning Ltd on behalf of John Burgess & Co Ltd.*

*This report has been prepared by Gareth Shane (Archaeological Supervisor). The fieldwork was undertaken by Gareth Shane. Digitisation of site drawings and illustration were undertaken by Joan Lightning. The project was managed by Wesley Keir. All Albion Archaeology projects are under the overall management of Drew Shotliff.*

*Fieldwork was monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Slawek Utrata (Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeological Officer).*

## Version History

<i>Version</i>	<i>Issue date</i>	<i>Reason for re-issue</i>
<i>1.0</i>	<i>25/04/2019</i>	<i>N/A</i>
<i>1.1</i>	<i>01/05/2019</i>	<i>Addition of Luton Culture accession no.</i>
<i>1.2</i>	<i>03/05/2019</i>	<i>Additional photographs requested by the CBCAO</i>

## Key Terms

Throughout this report the following terms or abbreviations are used:

CBCAO	Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeological Officer
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
HER	Central Bedfordshire and Luton Historic Environment Record
LPA	Local planning authority
PDA	Proposed development area
WSI	Written scheme of investigation



## **Non-Technical Summary**

*Wood Hardwick Planning is gathering information in support of a planning application on behalf of John Burgess and Co Ltd for the construction of 27 residential units and associated access at 65 Station Road, Lower Stondon, Bedfordshire. As the proposed development area (PDA) is situated in an area of archaeological potential, the Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeological Officer (CBCAO) advised that any planning application should be accompanied by a Heritage Statement, based on the results of an archaeological trial-trench evaluation. This report presents the results of the evaluation.*

*Archaeological trial trenching took place between 8th and 10th April 2019. Eight trenches were excavated, within which the only features revealed were a posthole and a ditch, neither of which contained any finds. However, both appeared to have been sealed beneath the subsoil suggesting they may be of some antiquity.*

*The significance of the few remains identified by the field evaluation is assessed as negligible. They have no potential to address local or regional research objectives. Residential development of the site could have an adverse impact on sub-surface archaeological remains. However, the significance of any such impact is assessed as negligible, given the negligible significance of the remains identified within the PDA.*

*A full archive of the records generated during the project will be compiled in accordance with Historic England (MoRPHE) standards. It will be kept secure at all stages of the operation prior to its deposition with Luton Culture.*

*Details of the project and its findings will be submitted to the OASIS database in accordance with the guidelines issued by Historic England and the Archaeology Data Service (reference no.: albionar1-345295).*



## 1. INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1 *Planning Background*

Woods Hardwick Planning is gathering information in support of a planning application on behalf of John Burgess and Co Ltd for the construction of 27 residential units and associated access at 65 Station Road, Lower Stondon, Bedfordshire.

As the proposed development area (PDA) is situated in an area of archaeological potential, the Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeological Officer (CBCAO) advised that any planning application should be accompanied by a Heritage Statement based on the results of an archaeological trial-trench evaluation.

Albion Archaeology was commissioned to undertake the trial trenching and produced a Written Scheme of investigation (WSI) outlining the methodology (Albion Archaeology 2019). The WSI was agreed by the CBCAO. This report presents the results of the trial-trench evaluation.

### 1.2 *Site Location, Topography and Geology*

Lower Stondon is a small village situated in Central Bedfordshire, close to the border with Hertfordshire, c.4km south-west of the village of Henlow.

The PDA lies in the north-east part of the village, off Station Road and to the south-west of Henlow greyhound stadium (Figure 1). It is c.1.3ha in size and is fairly level at c.67m OD. It is centred on TL 15567 35455. Currently the Station Road frontage is occupied by no. 65 and its gardens and outbuildings. The rear of the site comprises an area of pasture with occasional trees, c.0.9ha in extent.

The underlying geology is West Melbury Marly Chalk Formation, a sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 94 to 101 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period. Superficial deposits were only recorded<sup>1</sup> over part of the PDA and included Oadby Member - Diamicton formed up to 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period.

### 1.3 *Archaeological Background*

Prior to the works, data was obtained from the Central Bedfordshire and Luton Historic Environment Record (HER search no: 201819/291). The data recorded within a 500m-radius of the PDA, referred to as the 'study area', is summarised below.

#### 1.3.1 *Prehistoric*

Evidence of prehistoric activity in the study area comprised cropmarks (HER402, HER403, HER16791 and HER16792) to the north representing series of rectilinear, circular and sub-rectangular enclosures. Cropmarks (HER16792) have been confirmed as early to middle Iron Age settlement by trial-trench evaluation (H. Firth, pers. comm., 21-03-2019) (Triskelion Heritage 2018).

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>



Located directly to south-east of the PDA excavations revealed evidence of early to middle Iron Age enclosures, possibly representative of agricultural activity (e.g. paddocks) (HER16793, HER19455, EBD1571, EBD1248 and EBD1471).

Late Iron Age finds (eight coins and a mount in the form of a bull or ram head) were also uncovered by metal-detecting in the adjacent field to the north of the PDA (HER18392, HER18795, HER18815 and HER18981)

### 1.3.2 Roman (AD 43–c. AD 410)

Cropmarks (HER402, HER403, HER16791 and HER16792), in the adjacent field to the north, while assigned a prehistoric date could well also represent activity in the Roman period. This is corroborated by metal-detecting finds (HER18363, HER18389, HER18396, HER18795, HER18796, HER18798, HER18816 and HER18944) recovered from the same field, including 103 coins, six brooches, a bracelet, a pin and a copper axe head.

### 1.3.3 Anglo- Saxon (410-850)

Evidence of activity in the study area during this period is sparse, represented by two metal-detecting finds (HER18814 and HER18982) — a copper-alloy 6th-century brooch and pin, found in the adjacent field to the north.

The name "Stondon" derives from the Old English for Stone Hill.

### 1.3.4 Medieval (1066–1550)

Medieval Stondon, situated within the Clifton hundred, is thought to have been polyfocal, with two separate but interlinked hamlets: Lower Stondon (where the PDA is situated) and Upper Stondon (which is where the parish church is located).

There are two references to Stondon in Domesday Book, which assessed the two manors at 0.5 geld units (held by Ramsey Abbey) and 2.5 geld units (held by Wulfmer of Eaton Socon). This suggests a late Saxon or earlier origin for the hamlets of Lower and Upper Stondon.

The PDA lies outside the estimated medieval core of both Lower and Upper Stondon (HER387 and HER17117). To the west of the PDA is an area of earthworks (HER387) and the Church of All Saints (DBD2193) originally dating to the 12th–13th centuries and later rebuilt in the 19th century by subscription.

Situated immediately to the south-east of the PDA within Lower Stondon were areas of medieval ridge and furrow identified during archaeological investigations (HER19583 and HER 20310). The available evidence suggests that the villages of Lower and Upper Stondon were once much larger. This type of shrunken settlement was common in the medieval period with social and economic pressures in the 14th century causing many settlements to shrink or in some cases be abandoned entirely.

Medieval items (manly buckles) have been recovered during metal-detecting (HER18797, HER18946, HER18956 and HER18983) in the adjacent field to the north of the PDA.



Given the location of the PDA close to the historic core of Lower and Upper Stondon, there was deemed to be potential for the survival of archaeological deposits relating to the Saxon and medieval periods.

### 1.3.5 Post-medieval and modern (1550–1950)

Several post-medieval and modern heritage assets are recorded in the HER within the study area, predominantly comprising three undesignated buildings of 19th-century origin (HER4806, HER13663 and HER16376) c.300m to the south and west and the sites of demolished post-medieval cottages (HER9387) c.480m to the south-east. Also present were two listed buildings: a 17th-century farmhouse (HER4805) and cottage (HER4804), both located c.400m to the south.

Other heritage assets comprised a fish pond (HER 10643), c.350m to the west, and an old roadway (HER10643) c.400m to the north-west. Located c.125–250m to the south and south-west are the earthworks of post-medieval sand extraction pits (HER9295, HER9375, HER9380 and HER9382).

Two WW2 pill boxes (Type 22) (HER9290 and HER 9294) were located c.400–450m to the north-east and south-east of the PDA; these formed parts of a defensive ring around RAF Henlow.

The modern Greyhound Stadium is just beyond the study area, c.650m to the north-east.

The PDA has remained mainly undeveloped since at least 1881 when it was depicted on the OS 25-inch map as a field with buildings to the south-east.

## 1.4 Project Objectives

The principal purpose of the archaeological field evaluation was to recover information on the:

- location, extent, nature, and date of any archaeological features or deposits that might be present within the PDA;
- integrity and state of preservation of any archaeological features or deposits that might be present within the PDA;
- nature of palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions.

The relevant research frameworks are: for Bedfordshire, *Bedfordshire Archaeology. Research and Archaeology: Resource Assessment, Research Agenda and Strategy* (Oake et al. 2007) and for the wider area, *Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties* (Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Hertfordshire and Essex) (Brown and Glazebrook 2000) and its later revision, *A Revised Framework for the East of England* (Medlycott 2011).





## 2. METHOD STATEMENTS

### 2.1 Methodological Standards

The methodological approach to the project was detailed in the WSI (Albion Archaeology 2019), which was approved by the CBCAO prior to commencement of the work.

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

• Albion Archaeology	<i>Procedures Manual: Volume 1 Fieldwork</i> (3rd edn, 2017).
• CfA	<i>Charter and by-law; Code of conduct</i> (2014)
	<i>Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation</i> (2014)
	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i> (2014)
• EAA	<i>Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England</i> (2003)
• Luton Culture	<i>Procedures for preparing archaeological archives for deposition with Luton Culture</i> (2013)
• Historic England (formerly English Heritage)	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment PPN3: Archaeological Excavation</i> (2015)
	<i>Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation</i> . 2nd ed. (2011)

### 2.2 Implementation

The archaeological investigation was undertaken between 8th and 10th April 2019. A total of eight trenches were excavated (Figure 2). Five trenches measured 30m in length and three were 25m in length. All trenches were 2m wide.

The trenches were opened by a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, operated by an experienced driver, under constant archaeological supervision. The overburden was removed down to the top of undisturbed geological or archaeological deposits, whichever was encountered first. The soil heaps from the excavated trenches were scanned for artefacts. All deposits were recorded in a unique number sequence, using Albion Archaeology's *pro forma* sheets. The trenches were subsequently drawn and photographed as appropriate.

A monitoring visit was conducted with the CBCAO on 10th April 2019.



### **2.3 Archiving**

A full archive of the records generated during the project will be compiled in accordance with Historic England (MoRPHE) standards. It will be kept secure at all stages of the operation prior to its deposition with Luton Culture (accession no.: LUTNM: 2019/48).

Albion Archaeology adheres to strict archiving standards and ensures that all archive materials are stored appropriately. All storage material is of archival-quality and includes archival-quality photographic storage sleeves. As part of the archiving process all records are microfiched.

Details of the project and its findings will be submitted to the OASIS database in accordance with the guidelines issued by Historic England and the Archaeology Data Service (reference no.: albionar1-345295).



### 3. RESULTS

---

#### 3.1 *Introduction*

The results are presented below in chronological order. Where site recording numbers have been used they are distinguished by different bracket styles to indicate feature number = [\*\*\*] and fill number = (\*\*\*). Context numbers reflect the trench number e.g. [704] is a feature within Trench 7 and, therefore, the trench number is only given where necessary.

Detailed descriptions of each individual context are provided in Appendix 1. An all-features plan is illustrated in Figure 2 with selected photographs in Figures 3 and 4.

#### 3.2 *Overburden and Geology*

The depth of overburden within the trenches varied between 0.30 and 0.64m; the greatest depth was recorded in Trench 7.

The topsoil was 0.25–0.35m thick and consisted of friable, dark brown-grey clay silt. The underlying subsoil was a 0.1–0.3m thick, mid-brown-grey firm silt clay.

The undisturbed geological strata generally varied across the site between mid-grey and brown-orange clay silts and sandy gravel. In addition, an area of chalk was present within the southern half of Trench 7.

#### 3.3 *Archaeological Features*

Two archaeological features were revealed within the trenches. These comprised a posthole in Trench 5 and a ditch in Trench 7 (Figure 2).

The posthole was located near the north-west end of Trench 5; its sole fill contained no finds, though it appeared to have been sealed by the subsoil.

The NE–SW aligned ditch within Trench 7 also contained no finds and was sealed beneath the subsoil.



## **4. CONCLUSIONS**

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### **4.1 Summary of Results**

The archaeological field evaluation revealed only a few archaeological features within the PDA.

Neither of the two features in the trial trenches — a posthole and a ditch — contained any finds. They are, therefore, undated, although both appeared to have been sealed beneath the subsoil, suggesting they may be of some antiquity.

No artefacts were retrieved from either the topsoil or the subsoil.

### **4.2 Heritage Statement**

The significance of the few archaeological remains identified by the field evaluation is assessed as negligible. They have no potential to address local or regional research objectives.

Residential development of the site could have an adverse impact on sub-surface archaeological remains. However, the significance of any such impact is assessed as negligible, given the negligible significance of the remains identified within the PDA.



## 5. REFERENCES

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- Albion Archaeology, 2017 *Procedures Manual Volume 1 Fieldwork* (3rd ed)
- Albion Archaeology, 2019, *65 Station Road, Lower Stondon, Bedfordshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Field Evaluation*, Report no. 2019/35
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- Triskelion Heritage, 2018 *Land adjacent to Station Road, Lower Stondon: Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment, Walkover & Geophysical Survey and Archaeological Evaluation*, Report No. 17-11



## 6. APPENDIX 1: TRENCH SUMMARY

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**Trench: 1**

**Max Dimensions: Length: 30.00 m. Width: 2.00 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.4 m. Max: 0.43 m.**

**Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: TL15533/35484**

**OS Grid Ref.: TL15508/35459**

**Reason: To evaluate archaeological potential**

<b>Context:</b>	<b>Type:</b>	<b>Description:</b>	<b>Excavated:</b>	<b>Finds Present:</b>
100	Topsoil	Friable dark brown grey clay silt Topsoil/ploughsoil	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
101	Subsoil	Firm mid brown grey clay silt Subsoil	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
102	Natural	Firm mid grey clay Natural geology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**Trench:** 2

**Max Dimensions:** Length: 30.00 m. Width: 2.00 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.45 m. Max: 0.55 m.

**Co-ordinates:** OS Grid Ref.: TL15553/35499

OS Grid Ref.: TL15523/35500

**Reason:** To evaluate archaeological potential

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
200	Topsoil	Friable dark brown grey clay silt Topsoil	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
201	Subsoil	Firm mid brown grey silty clay Subsoil	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
202	Natural	Firm mid orange clay silt Natural geology	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
203	Natural	Compact mid orange sandy silt moderate small stones Natural geology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>





**Trench: 3**

**Max Dimensions: Length: 25.00 m. Width: 2.00 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.47 m. Max: 0.5 m.**

**Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: TL15544/35457**

**OS Grid Ref.: TL15520/35448**

**Reason: To evaluate archaeological potential**

<b>Context:</b>	<b>Type:</b>	<b>Description:</b>	<b>Excavated:</b>	<b>Finds Present:</b>
300	Topsoil	Friable dark brown grey clay silt Topsoil	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
301	Subsoil	Firm mid brown grey clay silt Subsoil	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
302	Natural	Firm mid brown orange clay Natural geology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
303	Natural	Firm mid grey clay occasional small chalk Natural geology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**Trench:** 4

**Max Dimensions:** Length: 30.00 m. Width: 2.00 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.3 m. Max: 0.6 m.

**Co-ordinates:** OS Grid Ref.: TL15542/35472

OS Grid Ref.: TL15570/35460

**Reason:** To evaluate archaeological potential

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
400	Topsoil	Friable dark brown grey clay silt Topsoil	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
401	Subsoil	Firm mid brown grey silty clay Subsoil	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
402	Natural	Compact mid orange sandy gravel frequent small stones Natural geology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**Trench: 5**

**Max Dimensions: Length: 25.00 m. Width: 2.00 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.48 m. Max: 0.48 m.**

**Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: TL15568/35498**

**OS Grid Ref.: TL15580/35476**

**Reason: To evaluate archaeological potential**

<b>Context:</b>	<b>Type:</b>	<b>Description:</b>	<b>Excavated:</b>	<b>Finds Present:</b>
500	Topsoil	Friable dark brown grey clay silt Topsoil	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
501	Subsoil	Firm mid brown grey silty clay Subsoil	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
502	Natural	Firm mid brown orange clay Natural geology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
503	Posthole	Oval sides: steep base: flat dimensions: max breadth 0.3m, max depth 0.08m Undated posthole	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
504	Fill	Dark grey silty clay occasional small stones Sole fill of posthole	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**Trench: 6**

**Max Dimensions: Length: 30.00 m. Width: 2.00 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.5 m. Max: 0.55 m.**

**Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: TL15538/35439**

**OS Grid Ref.: TL15563/35422**

**Reason: To evaluate archaeological potential**

<b>Context:</b>	<b>Type:</b>	<b>Description:</b>	<b>Excavated:</b>	<b>Finds Present:</b>
600	Topsoil	Friable dark brown grey clay silt Topsoil	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
601	Subsoil	Firm mid brown grey silty clay Subsoil	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
602	Natural	Firm mid orange clay Natural geology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**Trench:** 7

**Max Dimensions:** Length: 30.00 m. Width: 2.00 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.55 m. Max: 0.64 m.

**Co-ordinates:** OS Grid Ref.: TL15576/35453

OS Grid Ref.: TL15574/35424

**Reason:** To evaluate archaeological potential

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
700	Topsoil	Friable dark brown grey clay silt Topsoil	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
701	Subsoil	Firm mid brown grey clay silt Subsoil	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
702	Natural	Firm light grey white clay chalk Natural geology in southern part of trench	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
703	Natural	Compact mid brown orange silty sand frequent small stones Natural geology in northern part of trench	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
704	Ditch	Linear NE-SW sides: U-shaped base: concave dimensions: max breadth 1.1m, max depth 0.35m, max length 1.2m Small undated gully	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
705	Fill	Friable mid grey orange sandy silt occasional small stones Sole fill of small gully	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**Trench: 8**

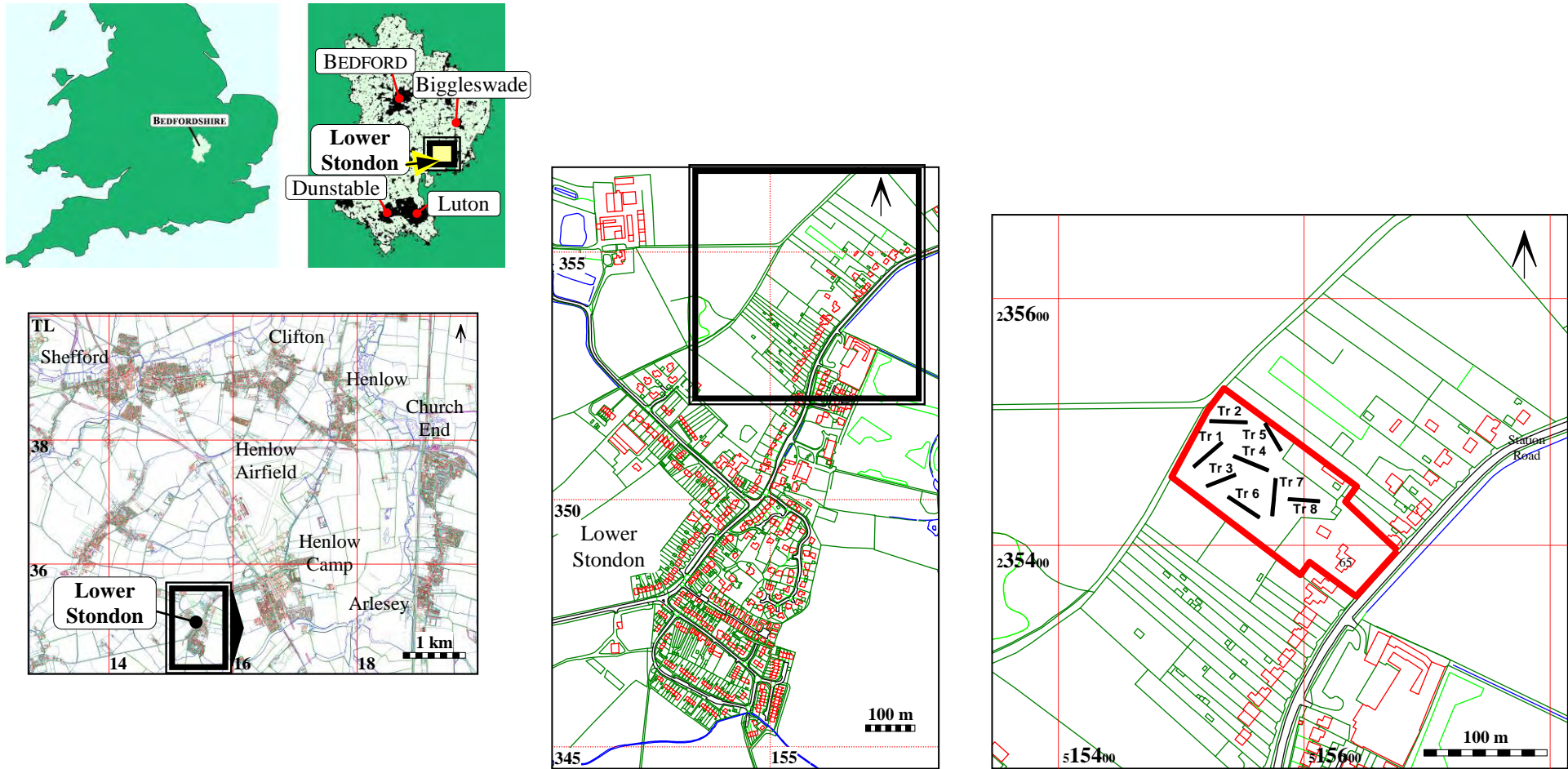
**Max Dimensions: Length: 25.00 m. Width: 2.00 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.4 m. Max: 0.6 m.**

**Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: TL15612/35435**

**OS Grid Ref.: TL15587/35437**

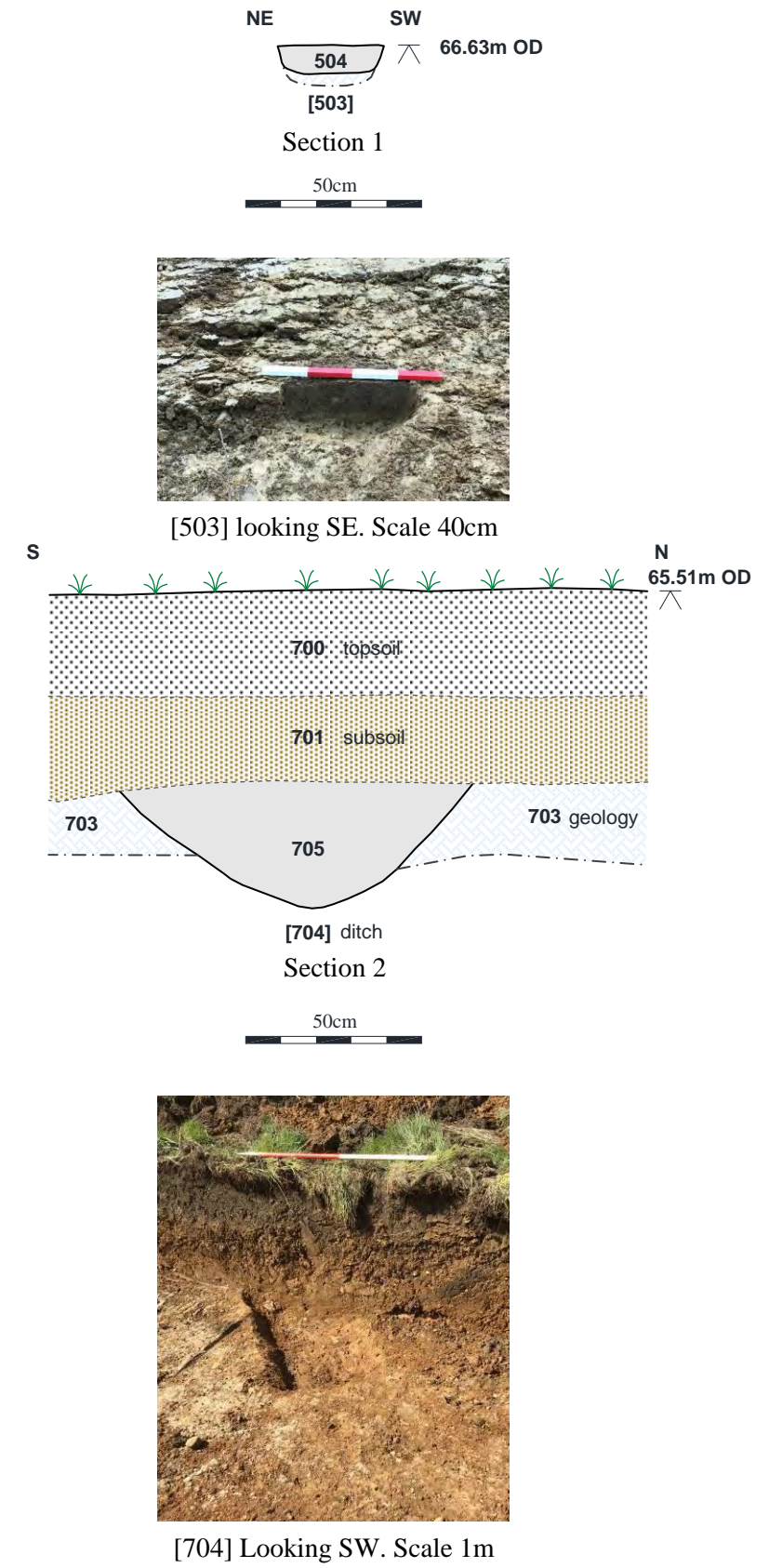
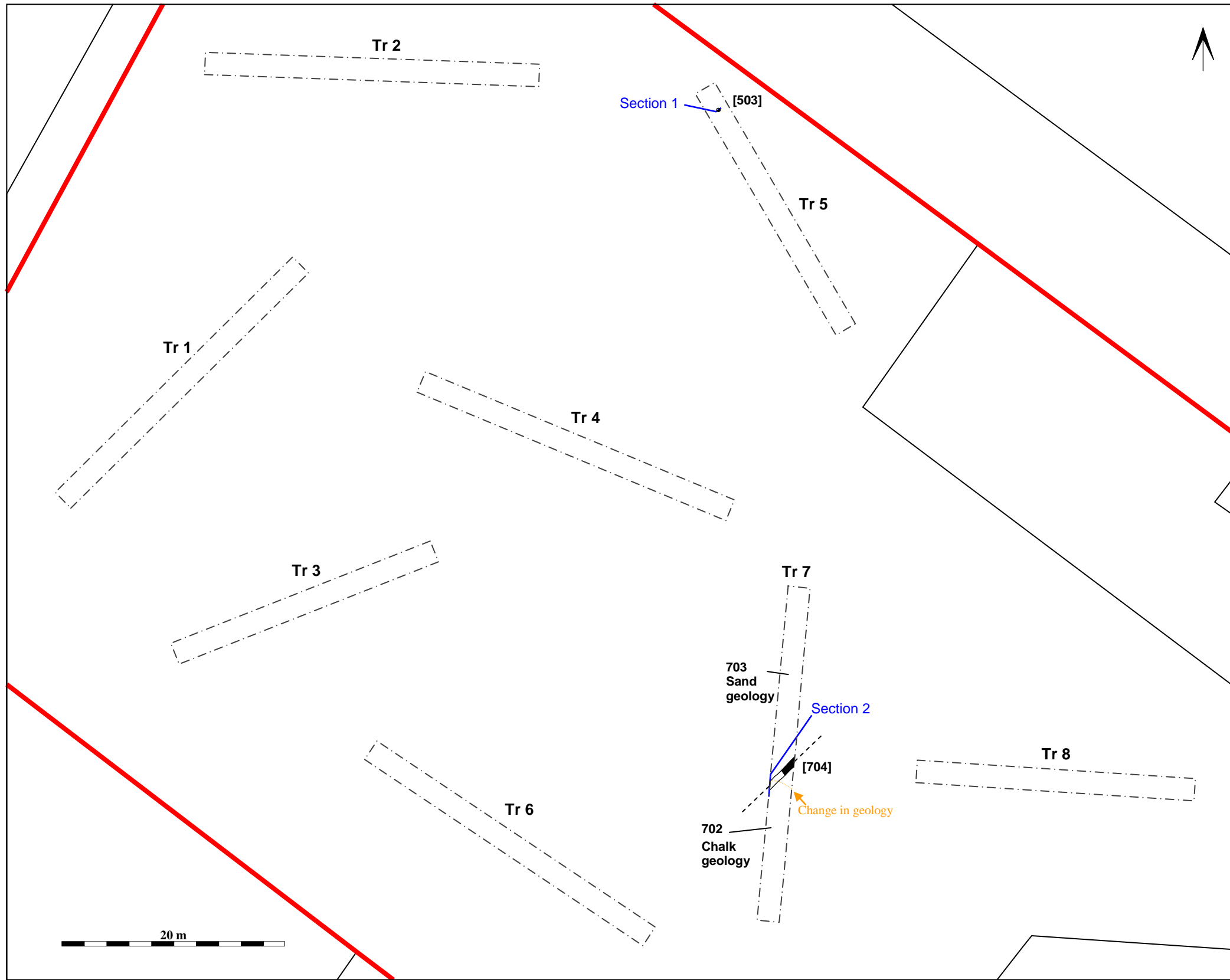
**Reason: To evaluate archaeological potential**

<b>Context:</b>	<b>Type:</b>	<b>Description:</b>	<b>Excavated:</b>	<b>Finds Present:</b>
800	Topsoil	Friable dark brown grey clay silt Topsoil	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
801	Subsoil	Firm mid brown grey silty clay Subsoil	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
802	Natural	Compact mid orange sandy gravel Natural geology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**Figure 1: Site location plan**

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**Figure 2: All-features plan and sections**

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View of the north-west end of the site (facing north-west)



View of the south end of the site (facing south)

**Figure 3:** General photographs of the site



Trench 7 (facing north) showing change in geology



Trench 8 (facing east)

**Figure 4:** Photographs of Trenches 7 and 8



Trench 1 (facing north-east)



Trench 2 (facing west)

**Figure 5:** Photographs of Trenches 1 and 2



Trench 3 (facing south-west)



Trench 4 (facing south-east)

**Figure 6:** Photographs of Trenches 3 and 4



Trench 5 (facing south-east)



Trench 6 (facing south-east)

**Figure 7:** Photographs of Trenches 5 and 6

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