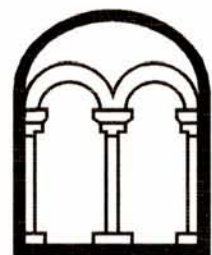


**AYLESBURY HIGH SCHOOL  
WALTON ROAD  
AYLESBURY  
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCHING**

**Albion**  
archaeology



**AYLESBURY HIGH SCHOOL  
WALTON ROAD  
AYLESBURY  
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCHING**

Project: AHS1753

Document: 2011/57  
Version 1.0

Compiled by	Checked by	Approved by
Ian Turner	Robert Wardill	Drew Shotliff

28th April 2011

Produced for:  
AT4 Architects

On behalf of:  
Aylesbury High School



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## **Preface**

*Every effort has been made in the preparation of this document to provide as complete an assessment as possible, within the terms of the specification. 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 AT4 Architects on behalf of Aylesbury High School. It was monitored by Eliza Alqassar, Archaeological Planning and Conservation Officer for Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority.*

*The fieldwork was undertaken by Ian Turner (Supervisor). This report has been prepared by Ian Turner, Jackie Wells (Finds) and Joan Lightning (Illustrations).*

*The project was managed by Robert Wardill (Project Manager) under the overall direction of Drew Shotliff (Operations Director).*

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## **Version History**

Version	Issue date	Reason for re-issue
1.0	28/04/11	n/a

## **Key Terms**

The following terms or abbreviations are used in this document:

APCO	Buckinghamshire County Council Archaeological Planning and Conservation Officer
BCAS	Buckinghamshire County Archaeology Service
BCM	Buckinghamshire County Museum
HER	Historic Environment Record
IfA	Institute for Archaeologists
LPA	Local Planning Authority



### **Non-Technical Summary**

*An application for planning permission has been submitted for the construction of a new 6th-form block at Aylesbury High School, Walton Road. Due to the impact of the development upon potential heritage assets in the form of sub-surface archaeological remains, the County Archaeological Service advised the LPA that a condition requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological work should be placed on the planning consent.*

*The proposed development site is located on the edge of the historic core of Walton, a settlement known to date from the Saxon period. A number of previous archaeological excavations in the Walton area have revealed the presence of extensive settlement remains of Bronze Age to Anglo-Saxon date in the vicinity.*

*The first stage of the programme of archaeological work comprised evaluation by trial trenching.*

*One ditch of possible late Iron-Age date was found in the trial trench. The lack of other features suggests that the ditch is an outlying settlement feature, possibly a field boundary.*

*This evaluation and previous archaeological work within the boundaries of the school confirm that sub-surface archaeological remains are present throughout the area. However, the results of the trial trenching suggest there is a relatively low density of archaeological remains in the location of the proposed new building.*



## 1. INTRODUCTION

---

### 1.1 *Project Background*

An application for planning permission has been submitted for the construction of a new 6th-form block at Aylesbury High School, Walton Road, Aylesbury (CC/04/11). Due to the potential impact of the development on potential heritage assets in the form of sub-surface archaeological remains, the County Archaeological Service's Archaeological Planning and Conservation Officer (APCO) advised the LPA that a condition requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological work should be placed on the planning consent. This is in accordance with *PPS 5 Planning for the Historic Environment*, Policy HE12.3.

The first stage of the programme of work was to comprise evaluation of the site by trial trenching. The results of this work will be used to characterise the archaeological potential of the site and determine whether there is any need for further investigations.

The trial trenching was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (Albion Archaeology 2011) which was approved by the APCO and was prepared in response to BCAS's generic brief for small to medium scale projects (BCAS 2011)

### 1.2 *Site Location and Description*

Aylesbury High School is located in the hamlet of Walton, approximately 1km to the south-east of Aylesbury town centre (Figure 1). It is bounded to the north-west by Walton Road and to the north-west by Turnfurlong Lane.

The site of the new 6th-form block lies on the Turnfurlong Lane side of the School, centred on grid reference SP82687/13335. It measures *c.* 18m x 15m (270m<sup>2</sup>).

### 1.3 *Archaeological Background*

The proposed development site is located on the edge of the historic core of Walton (HER 0009302000), a settlement known to date from the Saxon period.

A number of previous archaeological excavations in the Walton area have revealed the presence of extensive settlement remains of Bronze Age to Anglo-Saxon date in the vicinity of the proposed development. The Saxon settlement excavated at Walton is considered to be of at least regional significance.

A watching brief during previous construction works in the High School located early to late Iron Age and Roman features (HER 0637701000), suggesting there may be a late Iron Age/Roman farmstead in the vicinity. Further work at the school found additional evidence of Romano-British agricultural activity (HER 0637702000).



At a site 300m to the west, excavations revealed middle Bronze Age and middle Saxon settlement remains. Evidence for a pagan Saxon cemetery was also uncovered 250m north-east of the development site.

#### **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 extent, condition, nature and significance. This information is to be used in the formulation of an appropriate mitigation strategy for the archaeological remains.

The broader objective of the project was to add to the knowledge and understanding of the origins and nature of settlement in the area and to produce an archive report that fully describes the archaeological works. The Solent Thames Research Framework has described Walton/Aylesbury as “of exceptional importance as a rural site and an emerging town”. The project has the potential to contribute to knowledge of this important heritage asset.



## 2. METHODOLOGY

The trial trenching was carried out during 11th and 12th April 2011. It comprised the excavation of a single 'L'-shaped trench within the footprint of the proposed new building (Figures 1 and 2).

The trench was opened by a mechanical excavator, fitted with a flat-edged ditching bucket operated by an experienced driver under the supervision of an archaeologist.

Overburden was removed down to the top of geological/archaeological deposits. The base of the trench was cleaned by hand to reveal any potential archaeological features. All deposits were recorded in a unique number sequence, using Albion Archaeology's *pro forma* sheets. The trench was subsequently drawn and photographed as appropriate.

Prior to backfilling, the trench and exposed archaeological remains were inspected by the ACPO.

Throughout the project the standards set out in the following documents were adhered to:

• Albion Archaeology	<i>Procedures Manual: Volume 1 Fieldwork</i> (2nd edn, 2001).
• BCM	<i>Procedures for the Deposit of Archaeological Archives</i> (1999).
• English Heritage	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i> (2009)
• 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 Buckinghamshire County Museum under the accession number AYBCM:2011.158.

Details of the project and its findings have been submitted to the Archaeology Data Service's OASIS database under reference number albionar1-96375 (see Appendix 3).





### 3. RESULTS

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#### 3.1 Introduction

Deposits and archaeological features found during the trial trenching are summarised below and shown in Figure 2. Detailed information on all deposits, features and finds is presented in the appendices.

#### 3.2 Overburden

From top to bottom the overburden comprised:

- topsoil (100), comprising dark grey sandy silt topped with turf (0.05–0.33m thick) that had been built up to form a bank, sloping down from NE-SW.
- a buried former topsoil (101), comprising dark grey black sandy silt (0.20–0.27m thick), with occasional modern brick and tile fragments.
- a thin demolition spread (102), comprising mid white grey silty sand (0.03m thick), with moderate modern brick and tile fragments.
- a buried former topsoil (103), comprising dark grey brown sandy silt (0.37–0.44m thick), with post-medieval tile fragments.

#### 3.3 Undisturbed Geological Deposits

The undisturbed geological deposits comprised light grey white silt with bands of flints and fossilised shells (105) and large patches of mid brown orange clay (104).

#### 3.4 Archaeological Feature

A small NW-SE aligned ditch [106] terminated within the trench. It had concave sides, a flat base and a squared-off terminal end. It was at least 1.15m long, 0.68m wide and 0.16m deep. The ditch contained two deposits: mid orange brown clay silt (107) and dark grey brown sandy silt with occasional charcoal fragments (108).

The secondary fill (108) yielded a small, grog-tempered pottery sherd, datable to the late 'Belgic' Iron Age (*c.* 100BC - AD50). Three worked flint flakes, one of possible Mesolithic-early Neolithic date, a burnt stone and two charcoal fragments were also present.



## 4. CONCLUSIONS

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One ditch of possible late Iron-Age date was found in the trial trench. The lack of other features suggests that the ditch is an outlying settlement feature, possibly a field boundary.

This evaluation and previous archaeological work within the boundaries of the school confirm that sub-surface archaeological remains are present throughout the area. However, the presence of only a single feature within the trial trench suggests there is a relatively low density of archaeological remains in the location of the proposed new building.

The survival of the remains encountered was good. The ditch was sealed by a 0.37m thick layer of buried soil and a further c. 0.30m thick layer of later overburden.



## 5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Albion Archaeology 2011. *Land at Aylesbury High School, Walton Road, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Trial Trenching*. Document reference 2011/37

BCAS 2011. *Generic Brief for Archaeological Evaluation* (Small to medium scale projects)  
[http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/assets/content/bcc/docs/archaeology/Generic\\_evaluation\\_brief\\_PPS5v1.pdf](http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/assets/content/bcc/docs/archaeology/Generic_evaluation_brief_PPS5v1.pdf)



## 6. APPENDIX 1: FINDS REPORT

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Four pieces of post-medieval, sand-tempered peg tile (51g) were recovered from buried former topsoil (103).

The secondary fill (108) of ditch terminus [106] yielded a grog-tempered pottery body sherd (4g), datable to the late 'Belgic' Iron Age (c. 100BC - AD50). Three worked flint flakes, one of possible Mesolithic-early Neolithic date, a burnt stone (2g) and two charcoal fragments (1g) were also present.



## **7. APPENDIX 2: TRENCH SUMMARY**

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**Trench: 1**

**Max Dimensions: Length: 17.00 m. Width: 1.70 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.16 m. Max: 1.04 m.**

**Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: SP82710/13310**

**OS Grid Ref.: SP82722/13310**

**Reason: To ascertain depth, character and condition of any archaeology present.**

<b>Context:</b>	<b>Type:</b>	<b>Description:</b>	<b>Excavated:</b>	<b>Finds Present:</b>
100	Mound / bank	Loose dark grey black sandy silt moderate small-medium stones A landscaped bank, topped with turf, thickening to the north-east where it levels off at the height of Turnfurlong Road.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
101	Buried topsoil	Loose dark grey black sandy silt occasional medium CBM, occasional small-medium stones A buried former topsoil below built-up bank (100). Contains occasional modern brick and tile fragments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
102	Demolition layer	Loose mid yellow grey silty sand moderate medium CBM A thin demolition layer, containing moderate modern brick and tile fragments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
103	Buried topsoil	Firm dark grey brown sandy silt occasional medium CBM, occasional small-medium stones Buried former topsoil, containing occasional post-medieval tile fragments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
104	Geological stratum	Firm mid brown orange clay Undisturbed geological stratum that appears in large patches within geological stratum (105).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
105	Geological stratum	Friable light grey white silt moderate medium stones Undisturbed geological stratum, containing bands of flints and fossilised shells.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
106	Ditch terminus	Linear NW-SE sides: concave base: flat dimensions: min breadth 0.68m, min depth 0.16m, min length 1.15m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
107	Primary fill	Firm mid orange brown clay silt occasional small stones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
108	Secondary fill	Firm dark grey brown sandy silt occasional small-medium stones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



## 8. APPENDIX 3: OASIS FORM

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### OASIS ID: albionar1-96375

#### Project details

Project name	Aylesbury High School
Short description of the project	An application for planning permission has been submitted for the construction of a new 6th form block at Aylesbury High School, Walton Road. The first stage of the programme of archaeological work comprised a site evaluation by trial trenching. One ditch of possible late Iron-Age date was found in the trial trench. The lack of other features suggests that the ditch is an outlying settlement feature, possibly a field boundary. This evaluation and previous archaeological work within the boundaries of the school confirm that significant remains are present throughout the area, although the lack of other features within the trial trench suggests a low density of archaeological activity in the location of the proposed new building.
Project dates	Start: 11-04-2011 End: 12-04-2011
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	AHS1753 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	AYBCM:2011.158 - Museum accession ID
Type of project	Field evaluation
Monument type	DITCH Iron Age
Significant Finds	POTTERY Iron Age
Methods & techniques	'Sample Trenches'
Development type	Large/ medium scale extensions to existing structures (e.g. church, school, hospitals, law courts, etc.)
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS
Position in the planning process	Between deposition of an application and determination

#### Project location

Country	England
Site location	BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AYLESBURY VALE AYLESBURY Aylesbury High School
Study area	270.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	SP 82687 13335 51.8120750328 -0.800417641536 51 48 43 N 000 48 01 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	Ian Turner

### Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Buckinghamshire County Museum
Physical Archive ID	AYBCM:2011.158
Physical Contents	'Ceramics','Worked stone/lithics'
Digital Archive recipient	Albion Archaeology
Digital Contents	'Ceramics','Worked stone/lithics'
Digital Media available	'Database','Images raster / digital photography','Text'
Paper Archive recipient	Buckinghamshire County Museum
Paper Archive ID	AYBCM:2011.158
Paper Contents	'Ceramics','Worked stone/lithics','other'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Correspondence','Microfilm','Miscellaneous Material','Photograph','Report'

### Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Aylesbury High School, Walton Road, Aylesbury, Bucks: Archaeological Field Evaluation
Author(s)/Editor (s)	'Turner, I'
Author(s)/Editor (s)	'Wardill, R'
Author(s)/Editor (s)	'Wells, J'
Other bibliographic details	2011/57
Date	2011
Issuer or publisher	Albion Archaeology
Place of issue or	Bedford





publication

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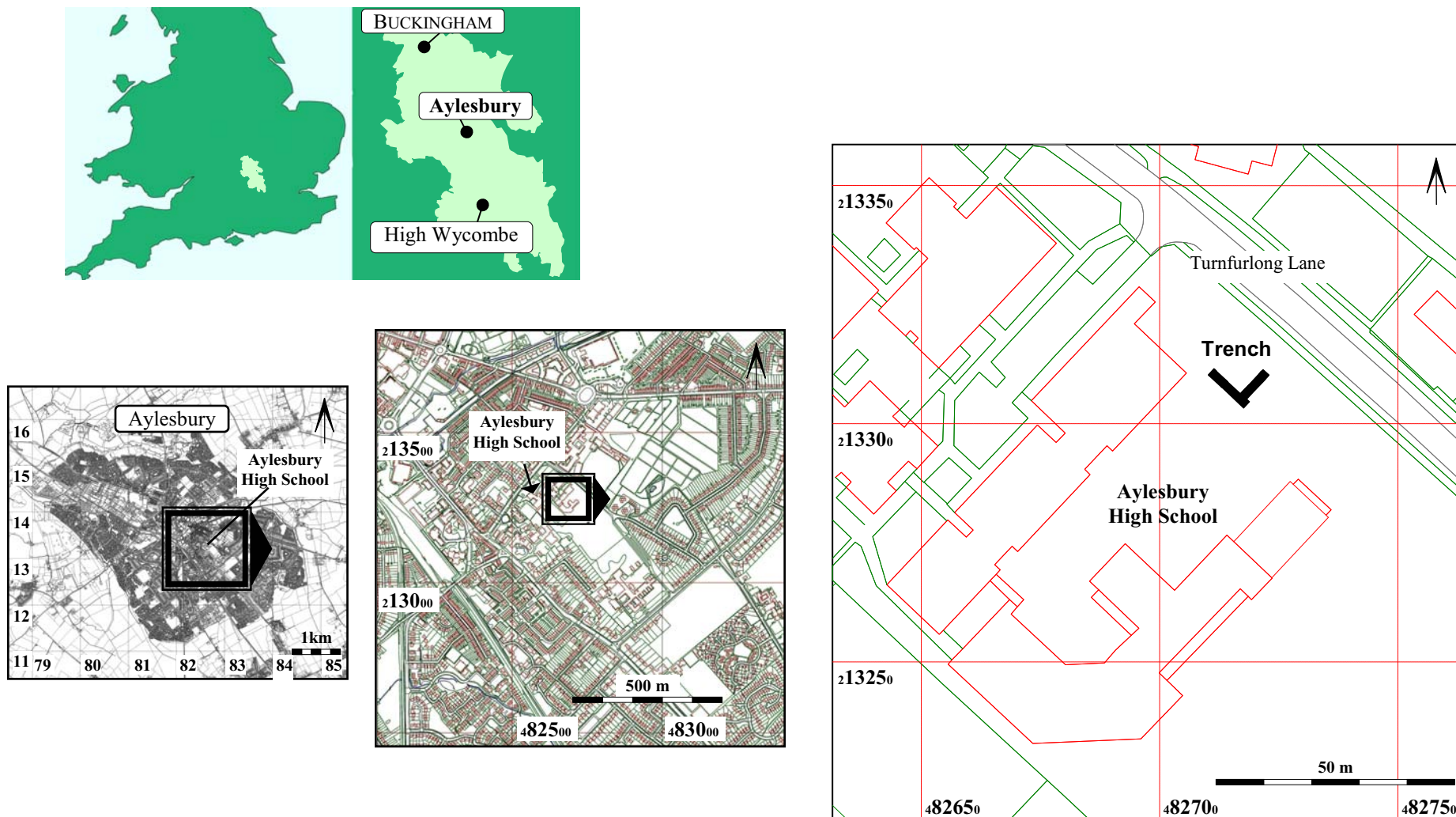
Entered on 27 April 2011

## OASIS:

Please e-mail [English Heritage](#) for OASIS help and advice

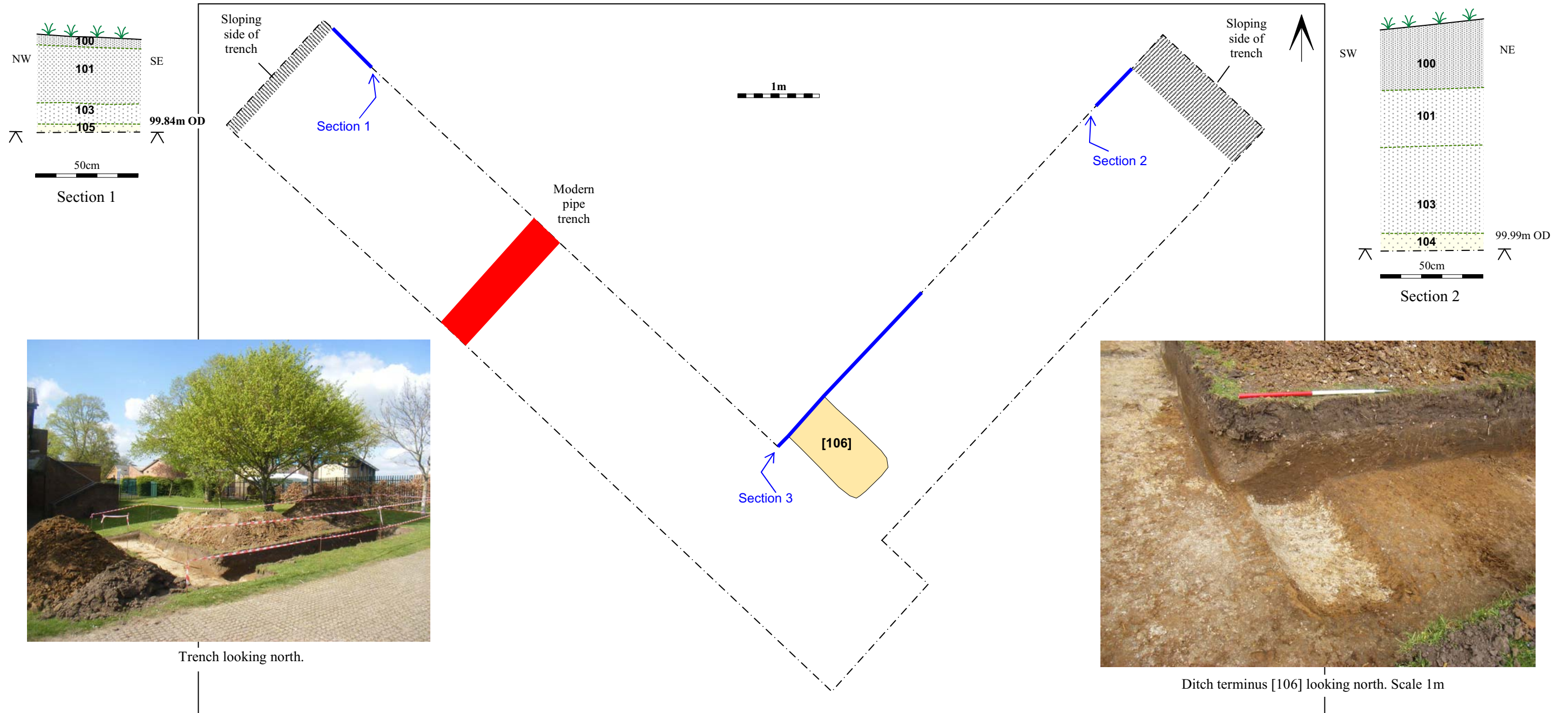
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**Figure 1: Site location**

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- Excavated feature
- Modern feature
- layers
- Natural geology

Figure 2: Trenching results

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