

Archaeological evaluation on land at the former Martello Caravan Park, Kirby Road, Walton-on-the-Naze, Essex, CO14 8QP

August-September 2016



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on behalf of **Lee Britton, Taylor Wimpey East London**

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1 Summary

Archaeological evaluation took place on land at the former Martello Caravan Park, Walton-on-the-Naze in advance of the construction of a new housing estate. Recent archaeological investigations to the west of the Martello Tower revealed multi-period agricultural activity from the prehistoric (early-mid Neolithic to the Late Bronze Age), Roman and medieval periods. Archaeological features and finds on the development site were scarce, but revealed a continuation of this agricultural activity to the north/northwest. Features included four field boundary ditches dated to the Late Bronze Age, Late Iron Age/early Roman and post-medieval periods. Associated with these were Bronze Age (2), medieval (3) and medieval/post-medieval (1) pits. None of the finds appeared to have been deliberately deposited but were probably incidental inclusions from nearby settlements.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the archive report for an archaeological evaluation that took place on land at the former Martello Caravan Park, Kirby Road, Walton-on-the-Naze, Essex which was carried out from 29th August – 12th September 2016. The work was commissioned by Lee Britton of Taylor Wimpey East London in advance of the construction of a new housing estate (216 dwellings) with associated works. The work was undertaken by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT).

In response to consultation with Essex County Council Place Services (ECCPS), Historic Environment Advisor Teresa O'Connor advised that in order to establish the archaeological implications of this application, the applicant should be required to commission a scheme of archaeological investigation in accordance with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for Archaeological Evaluation*, detailing the required archaeological work, written by Teresa O'Connor (ECCPS 2016), and a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with ECCPS (CAT 2016).

In addition to the brief and WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was done in accordance with English Heritage's *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (English Heritage 2006), and with *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England* (EAA 14 and 24). This report mirrors standards and practices contained in the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological evaluation* (CIfA 2014a) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (CIfA 2014b).

3 Archaeological background

The following archaeological background utilises the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford.

The Walton area is significant for the established presence of prehistoric archaeological remains, particularly of the later Neolithic, the discovery of much of which is linked to the results of the Hullbridge Survey (Wilkinson and Murphy 1995). Thousands of worked flints, including polished axes, have been collected from the vicinity of the Naze and form a large component of the entries in the EHER. More recently, a Middle Bronze Age bucket urn containing cremated human bone was recovered from the foot of the cliffs at the Naze having eroded from the exposed upper strata and presumably deriving from a grave.

At the northern end of the Naze, on the foreshore in front of low-lying marshland, remains described as 'red hills' have been noted (e.g. EHER 3511). These features are typically associated with salt working, and are usually of Late Iron Age or Roman date.

Towards the south of the Naze, Late Iron Age and Roman pottery was recovered during development on the west side of Old Hall Lane (EHER 3563/3564). Another potential 'red hill' has been recorded on low-lying land to the north-west of the site (EHER 3529). On farmland, also to the north-west of the site, cropmarks of former field boundaries have been plotted along with the tentatively identified remains of a possible ring-ditch (EHER 17239).

In the medieval period Walton was part of the 'soke' or estate of St Pauls, along with Kirby and Thorpe. Walton Hall was first recorded as a separate entity in 1222. The Tendring Historic Environment Characterisation Project notes that no buildings pre-dating the 18th century survive within Walton and that the town's historic core developed from the early 19th century onwards. The lack of earlier buildings can be blamed on coastal erosion as the medieval settlement originally extended further east with the former medieval church being lost to the sea in 1796. Medieval features and deposits have been identified around the periphery of Hamford Water, which probably relate to marsh edge farming whilst the marshes themselves were utilised for the grazing of both sheep and cattle.

Immediately to the east of the development site is Martello Tower K, built c 1810-1812 and one of the largest of the eleven Clacton Defence Tower. It is a grade II listed building (NHLE no. 1111504) and, along with a battery situated 80m further west (NHLE no. 1016787), is also a Scheduled Monument (SM 29434).

Recent archaeological investigation in the immediate area have revealed multi-period archaeological activity. Excavations to the south have identified three phases of prehistoric agricultural activity dating from the early-mid Neolithic period to the Late Bronze Age. To the north of this and directly adjacent to the southern end of the site further Late Bronze Age activity was excavated. In addition Roman and medieval activity was identified which may relate to nearby settlement (CAT Report 927; Ennis, 2016). To the north of the proposed development area cropmarks of a ring ditch have been recorded which could be a continuation of prehistoric landscape use in the area. A remnant of a former sea wall is also recorded which may extend south into the development site.

Topographically the site slopes from c.10m OD to below 5m OD towards an area of marsh and saltings. There is potential for further multi-period activity to be recorded across the site which may have taken advantage of the former landscape and coastal position.

A full archaeological and historic background can be found in *Archaeological Desk Based Assessment: Martello Caravan Park, Walton-on-the-Naze* by John Duffy, L-P: Archaeology (2015).

4 Results (Figs 2-5)

Forty-nine evaluation trenches were excavated by machine under archaeological supervision, each measuring 30m long by 1.8m wide. Evaluation trench T49 could not be excavated as an access road had already been built across this part of the site.

Three layers were identified across the evaluation site. Modern topsoil (L1, c 50-400mm thick, containing demolition from the caravan park) sealed a medium grey-clay subsoil (L2, c 80-500mm thick) which sealed natural clays (L3).

All of the trenches were disturbed by modern services relating to the former caravan park (plastic pipes, cables, manholes, drains) and by the subsequent demolition of that park (wheel ruts and demolition debris).

No significant archaeological horizons were identified in any of the following trenches: T4 (includes natural features F5-F6), T6, T10 (includes probable natural feature F35), T11, T12 (includes probable natural feature F22), T15, T16, T17 (includes natural feature F13), T18, T21, T24, T25, T26, T27, T32, T34, T35, T38, T42, T43 (includes natural feature F52), T45, T46, T47, T48, T50. Five natural features were excavated in trench T30 (F48, F49, F53-F55), one of which (F48) contained a Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age thumbnail scraper.

Trenches that contained significant archaeological horizons are listed below.

Trench 1 (T1)

Undated ditch F1, aligned northwest/southeast, was U-shaped and measured 0.8m wide by 0.3m deep. Ditch F1 appears to continue to the southeast as F4 (T2) and F9 (T5), making it of Late Iron Age/Early Roman date. A medieval pit (F3; late 12th/13th – 14th century) and natural feature (F2) were also excavated.



Photograph 1 T1, looking S

Trench 2 (T2)

Late Iron Age/Early Roman ditch F4, aligned northwest/southeast, measured 1.4m wide by 0.5m deep. Although ditch F4 had a more V-shaped profile it does appear continue to the northwest as F1 (T1) and the southeast as F9 (T5). A deep feature with stepped-sides (F8) was dated to the medieval/post-medieval period.

Trench 3 (T3)

One medieval pit (F7; late 12th/13th – 14th century).

Trench 5 (T5)

Undated ditch F9, aligned northwest/southeast, measured 1m wide by 0.2m deep and appears to have been recut. The initial ditch appears to be slightly more V-shaped with

the subsequent recut a more gentle sloping U-shape. Ditch F9 continues to the northwest as F1 (T1) and F4 (T2), making it of Late Iron Age/Early Roman date. Undated ditch F17, aligned east/west, measured approximately 2.3m wide and 0.5m deep.



Photograph 2 T5, looking S

Trench 7 (T7)

One medieval pit (F16; 13th – 15th/16th century).

Trench 8 (T8)

Undated ditch F10 (west) and gully F20 (east) were both aligned north/south and 4.5m apart. Ditch F10 was U-shaped measuring 1.64m wide by 0.31m deep. Ditch F20 was probably a small gully (overcut during excavation) measuring 0.50m wide and 0.38m deep, and probably continues to the south as gully F23 (T19).

Trench 9 (T9)

Ditch F42, aligned northeast/southwest, appears to be one of the post-medieval field boundaries shown in the Tithe Map of 1839-1840; although the ditch is not apparent in T7 further to the northeast. It measured 0.85m wide by 0.27m deep.

Trench 13 (T13)

Undated ditch F11, aligned northeast/southwest, measured 0.41m wide by 0.12m deep.

Trench 14 (T14)

Undated ditch F12, aligned north/south ditch, had a flat base and measured 1.11m wide by 0.3m deep.

Trench 19 (T19)

Undated ditch F19 (east) and gully F23 (west) were both aligned north/south. Ditch F19 had a flat base, measured 0.93m wide by 0.09m deep. Ditch F23 was a small U-shaped ditch measuring 0.45m wide by 0.11m deep, and probably continues to the north as gully F20 (T8).

Trench 20 (T20)

One undated pit (F18).

Trench 22 (T22)

Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age ditch F37, aligned north/south, measured 0.89m wide by 0.12m deep. Undated pit F38 and natural feature F36 were also excavated.

Trench 23 (T23)

Undated ditch F43, aligned northwest/southeast, measured 0.99m wide by 0.16m deep. A large Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age pit (F40), a modern posthole (F39) and a natural tree throw (F41) were also excavated.



Photograph 3 T23, looking N

Trench 28 (T28)

Undated ditch F24, aligned north/south, measured 1m wide by 0.36m deep. Undated ditch F27, aligned northeast/southwest, measured 0.4m wide by 0.16m deep. It appears to form a field entrance with undated ditch F28, which appeared to be aligned slightly more east/west. The ditch was mostly located outside of the trench so a full width or depth could not be ascertained.



Photograph 4 T28, F27 in foreground, F28 in distance, looking W

Trench 29 (T29)

Two undated pits (F14 and F15) and a large deep Bronze Age pit with stepped sides (F21).

Trench 31 (T31)

Medieval/post-medieval ditch F46, aligned northeast/southwest, measured 1.3m wide by 0.25m deep. Natural feature F45 was also excavated.

Trench 33 (T33)

Undated ditch F30, aligned northwest/southeast, measured 0.70m wide by 0.18m deep.

Trench 36 (T36)

One modern posthole (F25) and a natural tree throw (F26).

Trench 37 (T37)

Two small undated pits (F47 and F51).

Trench 39 (T39)

Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age ditch F44, aligned northeast/southwest, measured 1.9m wide by 0.35m deep. Undated ditch F50 ran almost parallel to F44, it measured 1.35m wide by 0.18m deep.



Photograph 5 T39, F44 and F50, looking N

Trench 40 (T40)

Undated ditch F33, aligned northeast/southwest, measured 1.25m wide by 0.10m deep. Two undated pits (F31-F32) were excavated to the east of the ditch.

Trench 41 (T41)

Ditch F29, aligned northeast/southwest, appears to be one of the post-medieval field boundaries shown in the Tithe Map of 1839-1840; although the ditch is not apparent in T46 further to the southwest. It measured 1.36m wide by 0.13m deep.

Trench 44 (T44)

One undated pit (F34).

5 Finds

by Stephen Benfield

Small quantities of finds were recovered from twelve features (Table 1). The finds consist of pottery, ceramic building material (CBM), fired clay, flints and burnt flints. Only very small quantities of finds were associated with any one feature and almost all of these are of small size and much of the pottery has some abrasion to edges and some is more heavily abraded. The finds range in date from prehistoric-medieval/post-medieval. The nature of the finds indicates that most have some significant history of deposition before arriving in these contexts and in many cases makes close dating difficult. The more closely datable of the pottery and flints suggests that the finds broadly divide into two periods, Bronze Age and medieval and indicate that these are the two main periods of activity generating the finds; although one piece of worked flint can be closely dated to the Late Neolithic-Early Bronze Age and some of the CBM (peg-tile) could date to the medieval or post-medieval period. One piece of pottery is probably of Late Iron Age or Early Roman date and one small piece of tile is possibly Roman. The small quantity of prehistoric finds does not suggest any significant density of occupation within the area of the site itself during that period, although there is clearly activity/occupation close-by. The Roman and medieval/post-medieval finds suggest manure scatter on an agricultural area away from the settlement sites. In terms of dating, composition and condition the finds assemblage is similar to that recovered from an archaeological evaluation close to the present site (CAT Report 927). The medieval pottery fabrics refer to the Essex post-Roman fabric series (Cunningham

1985 & CAR 7) and the Late Iron Age/Roman pottery fabric to the Essex (Chelmsford) Roman fabric type series (Going 1987).

The prehistoric pottery includes moderately thick flint with grog-tempered sherds together with sherds that have relatively well sorted small-medium flint-temper. Overall these appear typical of pottery dating to the mid-late Bronze Age; although the one certain worked flint recovered (there are two other dubious worked flints) is a small flint thumb-scraper that is typical of the Late Neolithic-Early Bronze Age (F44). The burnt flint is also undoubtedly part of the prehistoric activity here. Almost all of the prehistoric material is associated with ditches (F37, F40, F44 and F46). For most of these features the small quantity of prehistoric material is the only finds from them, although a small piece of peg-tile was also recovered from F46. One thick pottery sherd (F4) with a light grey internal surface has only grog-temper in the fabric and is probably from a heavily tempered storage jar (Fabric 44) dating to the Late Iron Age or Early Roman period rather than earlier, and one small tile piece (F16) is not closely identified and might be Roman. Most of the medieval/post-medieval finds come from pits (F3, F8, F7 and F16). The medieval pottery consists mostly of coarseware sherds (Fabric 20) typical of the period of the late 12th/13th-14th century, with one, thin, small sherd (F16) that has an internal pitted-glaze and appears also to be medieval (Fabric 21) rather than post-medieval. Some small pieces from peg-tiles are not closely dated other than of broadly medieval-post-medieval date but probably date to after c.1300 (Ryan & Andrews 1993).

Tr	Ctxt	Find no	Form/ description	Finds spot date
T1	F3 pit	2	Medieval pottery: (1, 2g) small sandy coarseware sherd	Med c L12/13-14C
T2	F4 ditch	1	Pottery: (1, 10g) thick sherd, with moderately hard sandy fabric (oxidised, orange abraded surface with light grey interior) with moderate inclusions of grog-temper/small clay pellets (fine-coarse), quite abraded, not closely dated but most probably LIA or Early Roman storage jar fabric	LIA/E Rom?
T2	F8 pit	4	CBM: Peg-tile (1, 8g) small piece (med-post-med)	Med-p-med
T3	F7 pit	3	Pottery: (1, 8g) medium size sherd (recently broken in two), very abraded, sandy reddish-brown fabric, fabric indicates a Roman or medieval date of which (based on the sandy fabric) a medieval date (c L12/13-14C) appears more likely	Med c L12/13-14C
T7	F16 pit	15	Medieval pottery: (1, 2g) small sherd, orange sandy fabric with internal greenish pitted-glaze over black surface, probably medieval. CBM: peg-tile (2, 20g) small pieces; tile (1, 12g) small piece of CBM in orange sandy fabric, one surface remaining, min. thickness 12-13 mm, fabric indicates it is probably tile (not closely dated Roman or thick peg-tile)	Med c 13-15/16C
T22	F37 ditch	9	Prehistoric pottery: (1, 14g) medium size sherd, only light abrasion to edges, dark fabric with common well-sorted small-medium flint-temper in a fine sand fabric, small round depression in surface from a piece of burnt out organic matter	LBA-EIA
T23	F40 sx1 ditch	10	Prehistoric pottery: (2, 2g) two small sherds small (fine) medium flint-temper, linear indentation on surface might indicate decoration but is more probably just an incidental mark from manufacture. Burnt stone: (3, 12g) small pieces of burnt flint	LBA-EIA
T29	F15 pit/p-h	5	Fired clay: (2, 8g) abraded small pieces, orange-red & buff-grey sandy fabric, not closely dated	Not closely dated
T29	F21 pit	7	Prehistoric pottery: (1, 14g) medium size sherd (recently broken in two), moderately thick, grog-	BA

Tr	Ctxt	Find no	Form/ description	Finds spot date
			tempered with occasional large flint inclusion	
T31	F46 ditch	13	Prehistoric pottery: (2, 6g) small sherd and a sherd fragment small-medium flint-temper with occasional larger piece. Burnt stone (4, 24g) small pieces of burnt flint. CBM: (1, 1g) small piece of thin tile, almost certainly peg-tile (med-p-med)	Med-p-med with residual prehistoric
T30	F48 pit	14	Flint: (1) Thumbnail scraper on a short, squat, secondary flake; short, abrupt retouch over long invasive retouch; also one possible deliberately struck flake but not clear and may be a machine strike	LN-EBA
T39	F44 ditch	11	Pottery: Prehistoric (2, 6g) common small-medium flint-temper. Burnt stone: (1, 20g) small piece of burnt flint. Flint(?): Secondary flake with use wear or edge damage along one edge, may be a thermal fracture	LBA-EIA

Table 1 Finds by context

6 Discussion

Archaeological horizons on the development site were sparse with dating evidence even more so. The earliest feature on the site was a small natural tree-throw containing a single thumbnail scraper of Late Neolithic to Early Bronze Age date (T30).

Two ditches and two pits date to the Bronze Age/Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age (T22, T23, T29, T39). The ditches are likely to be field boundaries and all four probably relate to the Late Bronze Age phase identified during the 2016 excavation (CAT Report 927) and 2015 evaluation (Ennis 2015) around the Martello Tower (Fig 8). This earlier work revealed three L-shaped ditches, three linear ditches, 30 pits/shallow irregular features and six post-holes all dated to the Late Bronze Age. The ditches and postholes were probably associated with stock management and the pits/irregular features with agricultural clearance. None of the finds appeared to have been deliberately deposited but were probably incidental inclusions from a nearby settlement established to exploit the resources of the marsh.

This evaluation confirms that a later Bronze Age phase does continue to the north/northwest but, as this activity is sparse, settlement is unlikely to be focussed here. Modern disturbance (caused by buildings and a swimming pool at the holiday park) and the newly built access road meant that no archaeological horizons could be identified in trenches T47-T50. This is unfortunate as the 2016 excavation and earlier 2015 evaluation suggested that a LBA settlement and any further agricultural activity may have been focussed to the west/southwest away from the marshes.

As during the earlier 2015 evaluation/2016 excavation, a very small phase of both Roman and medieval activity (late 12th/13th to the 14th century) was also identified in this evaluation. A LIA/early Roman ditch, three medieval pits and a medieval/post-medieval pit were concentrated to the north of the site in trenches T1-T3, T5 and T7, with another medieval/post-medieval ditch in T31. All were probably associated with agricultural activity on the periphery of a settlement. The LIA/Roman finds were probably the result of manure scatter with activity probably focussing on the Red Hills identified 800m to the north. Medieval features and deposits have also been identified around the periphery of Hamford Water, further to the north, which probably relate to marsh edge farming with the marshes themselves utilised for grazing both sheep and cattle. Given the evidence, it is likely that something similar was occurring in the area around the Martello Tower.

Two post-medieval ditches (T9 and T41) appear to represent the remains of old field boundaries visible on the Tithe Map of 1839-1840 and the later OS maps (Duffy 2015).

It is impossible to determine what phase of activity the large number of undated ditches and pits belong to. They are presumably associated with the dated features, although some may also be natural features.

7 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Lee Britton and Taylor Wimpey East London for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister, fieldwork was carried out by S Carter, B Holloway, R Mathieson, C Platts, N Rayner, J Roberts and A Wade. Figures are by BH, E Holloway and CL. The project was monitored for ECCPS by Teresa O'Connor.

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Note: all CAT reports, except for DBAs, are available online in PDF format at <http://cat.essex.ac.uk>

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9 Abbreviations and glossary

Bronze Age	period circa 2500- 700 BCE
CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
ClfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	specific location of finds on an archaeological site
ECCPS	Essex County Council Place Services
EHER	Essex Historic Environment Record
feature (F)	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain 'contexts'
Iron Age	period from 700 BC to Roman invasion of AD 43
layer (L)	distinct or distinguishable deposit of soil
medieval	period from AD 1066 to Henry VIII
modern	period from c AD 1800 to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
NGR	National Grid Reference
post-medieval	from Henry VIII to c AD 1800
prehistoric	pre-Roman
residual	something out of its original context, eg a Roman coin in a modern pit
Roman	the period from AD 43 to c AD 410
Section	(abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation

10 Contents of archive

Finds: none retained

Paper and digital record

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 1015)

ECC Evaluation Brief, CAT Written Scheme of Investigation

Original site record (Feature and layer sheets, Finds record, plans)

Site digital photos and log, Architectural plans, Attendance register, Risk assessment

11 Archive deposition

The paper and digital archive is currently held by the Colchester Archaeological Trust at Roman Circus House, Roman Circus Walk, Colchester, Essex CO2 7GZ, but will be permanently deposited with Colchester Museum under accession code: COLEM 2016.77

Distribution list:

Lee Britton, Taylor Wimpey East London
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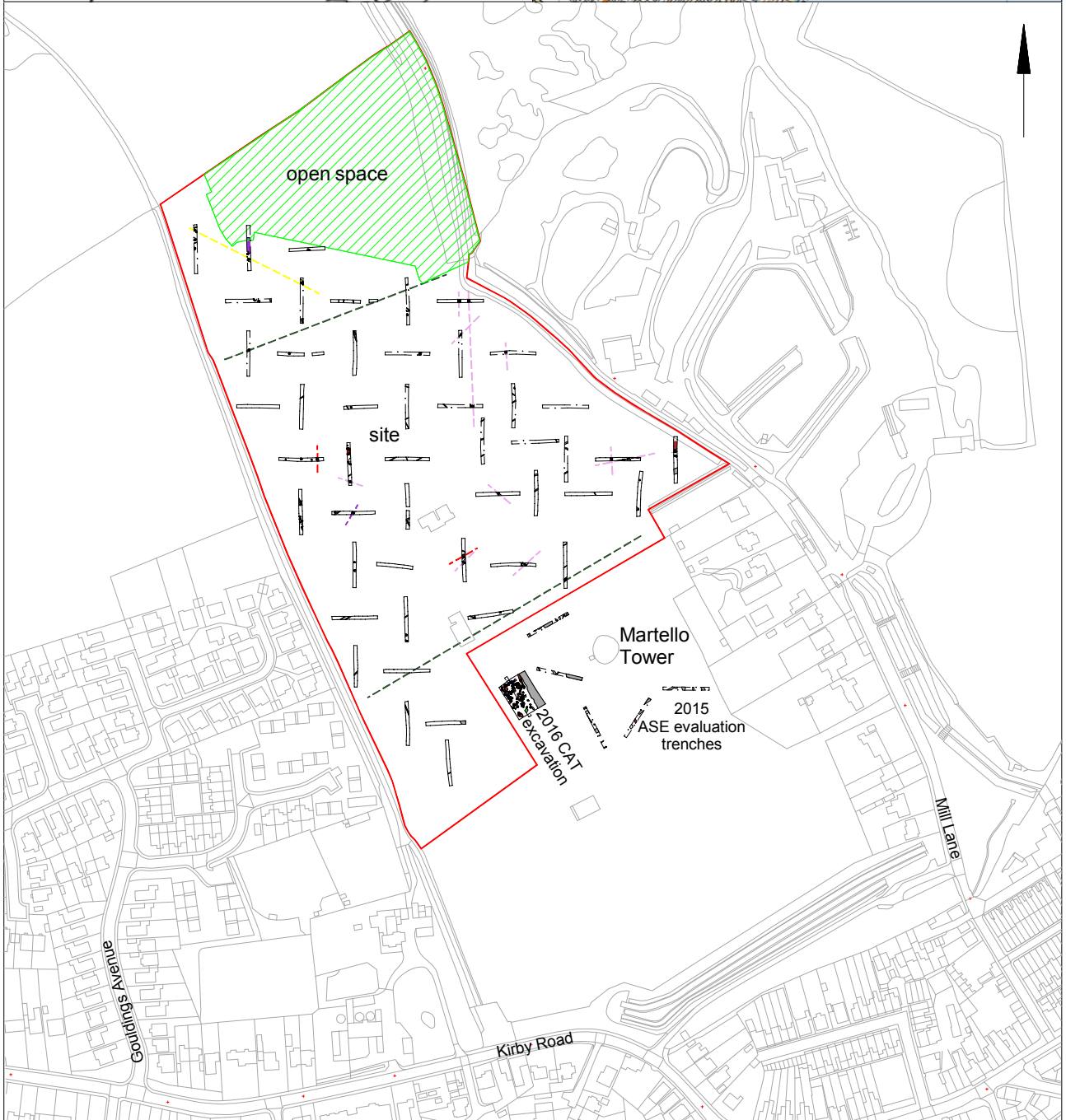


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Fig 1 Site location.

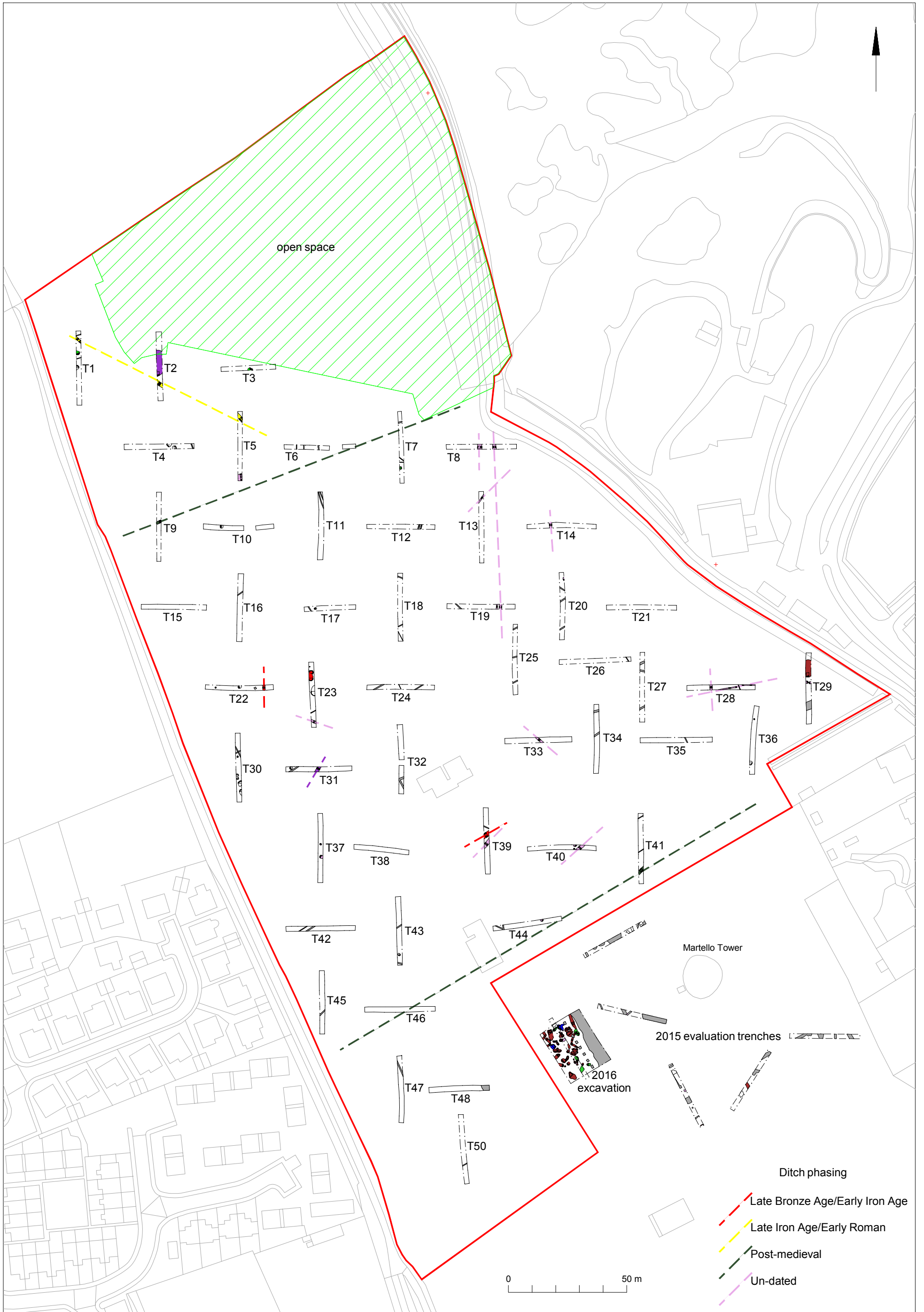


Fig 2 Results.

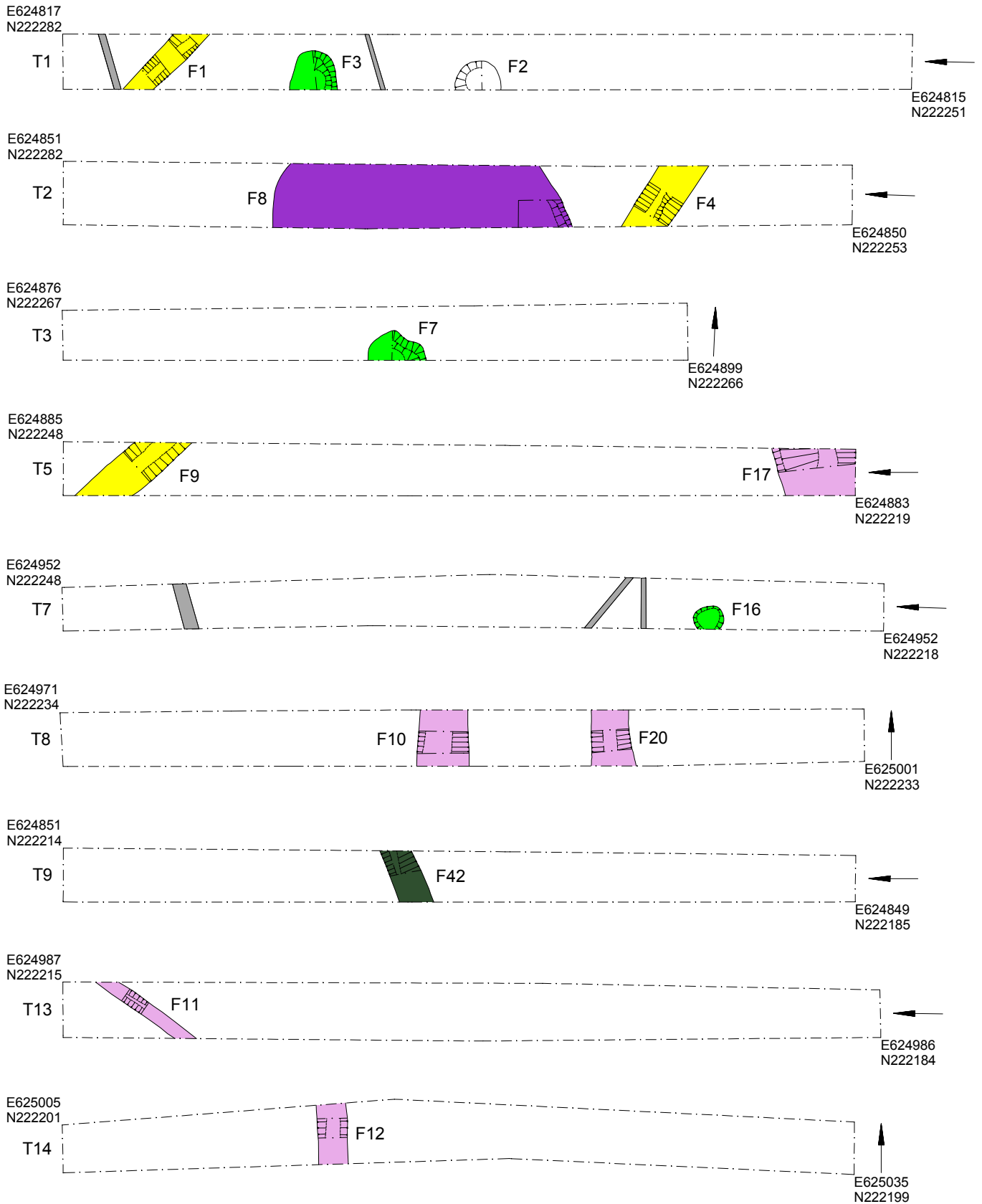


Fig 3 Trench plans of T1-T3, T5, T7-T9, T13-T14.



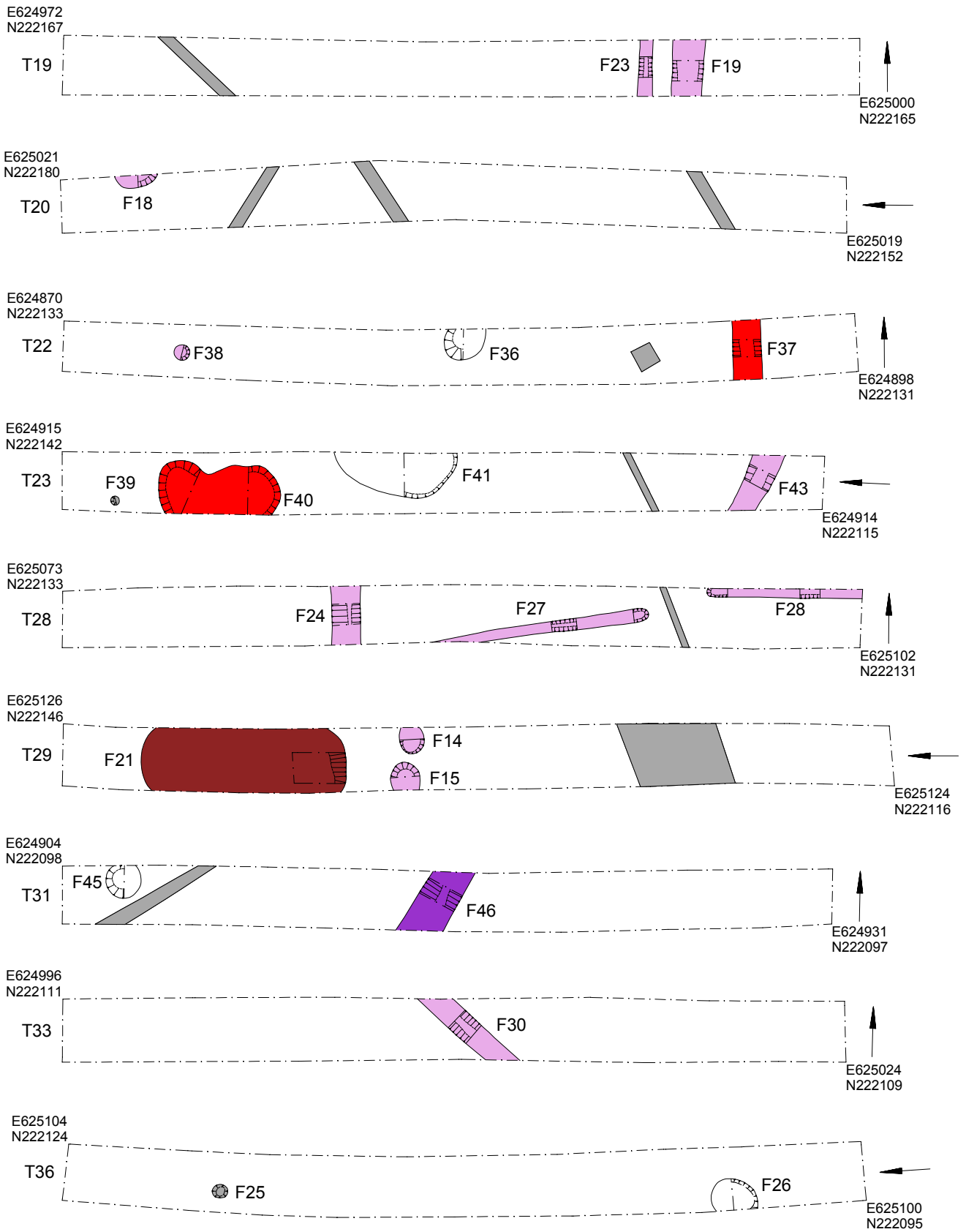


Fig 4 Trench plans of T19-T20, T22-T23, T28-T29, T31, T33, T36.



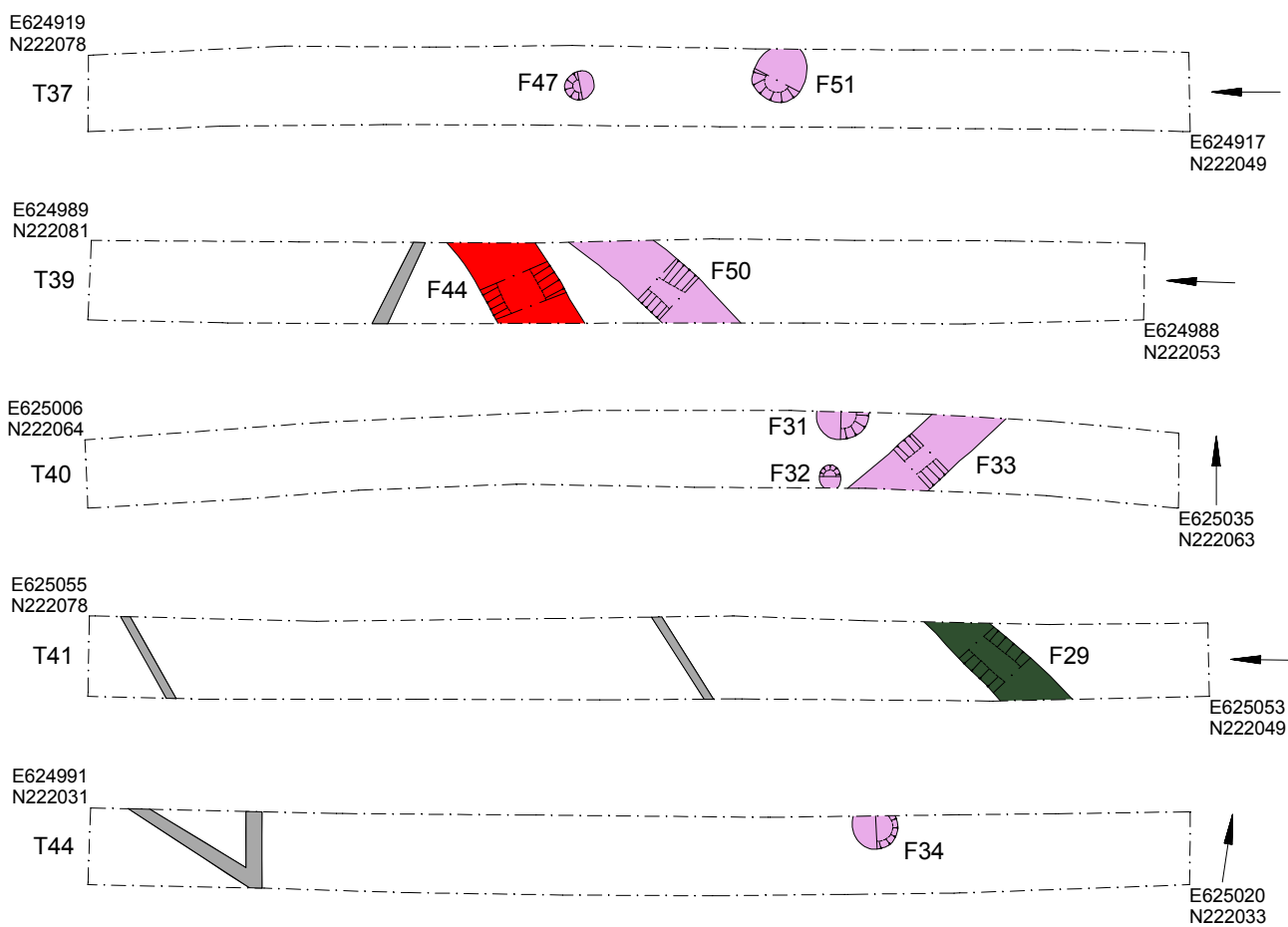


Fig 5 Trench plans of T37, T39-T41, T44.



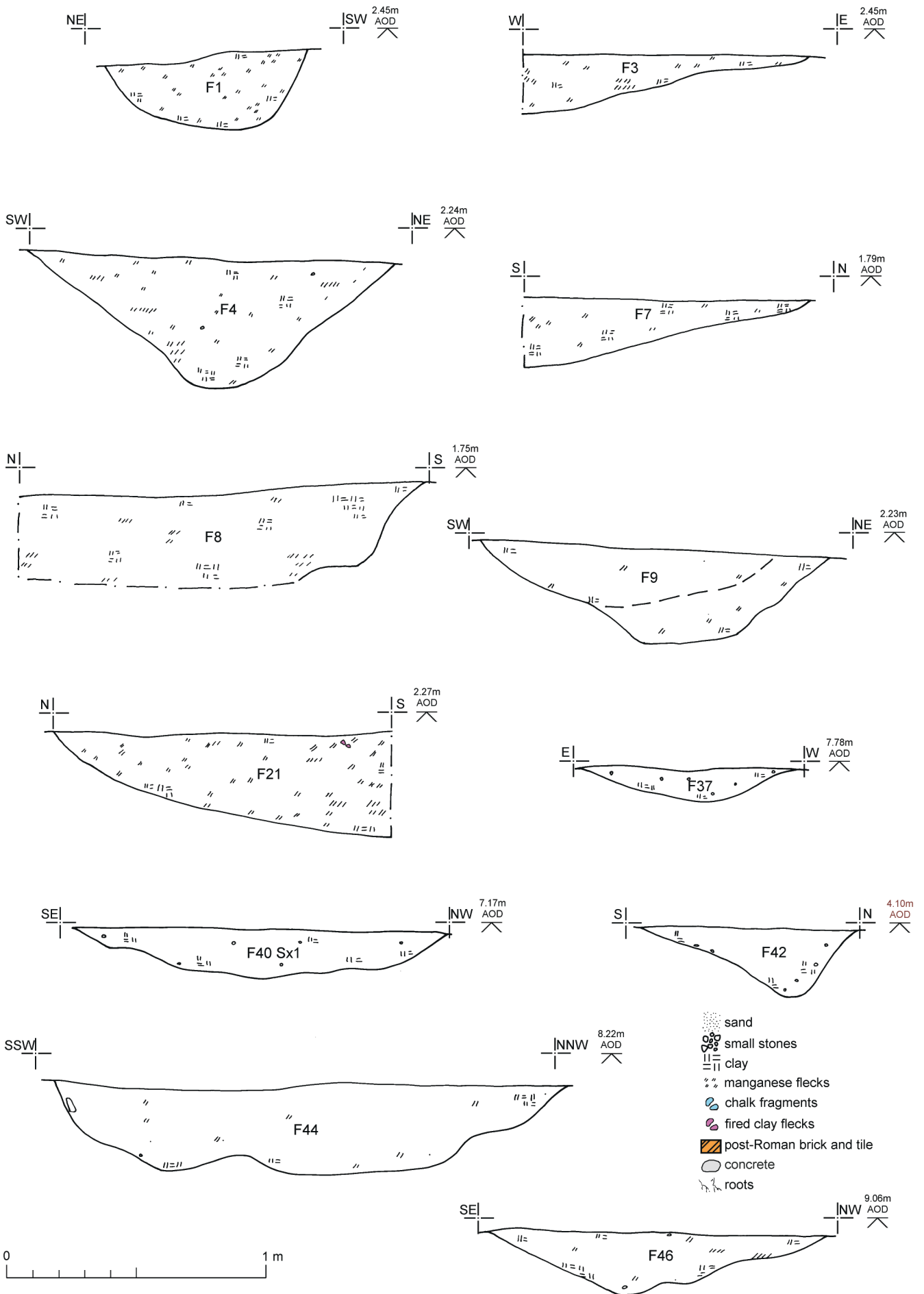


Fig 6 Feature sections.

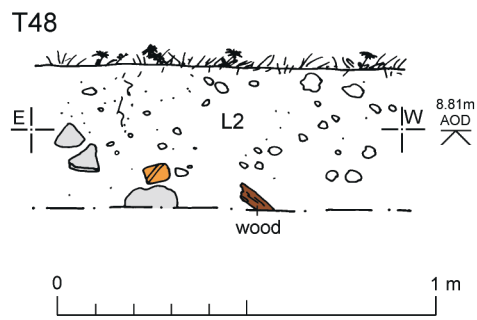
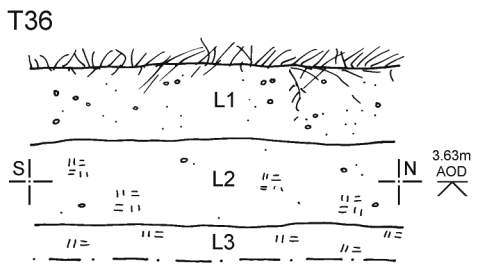
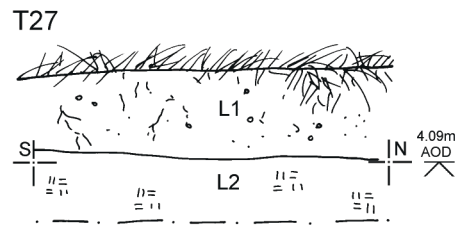
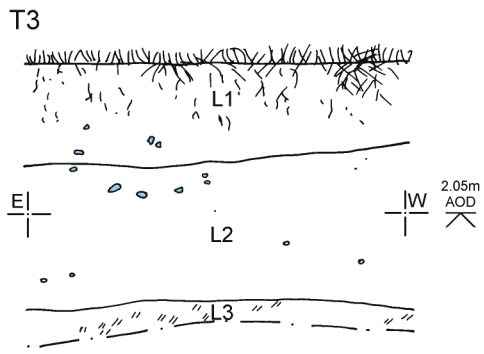


Fig 7 Representative trench sections.

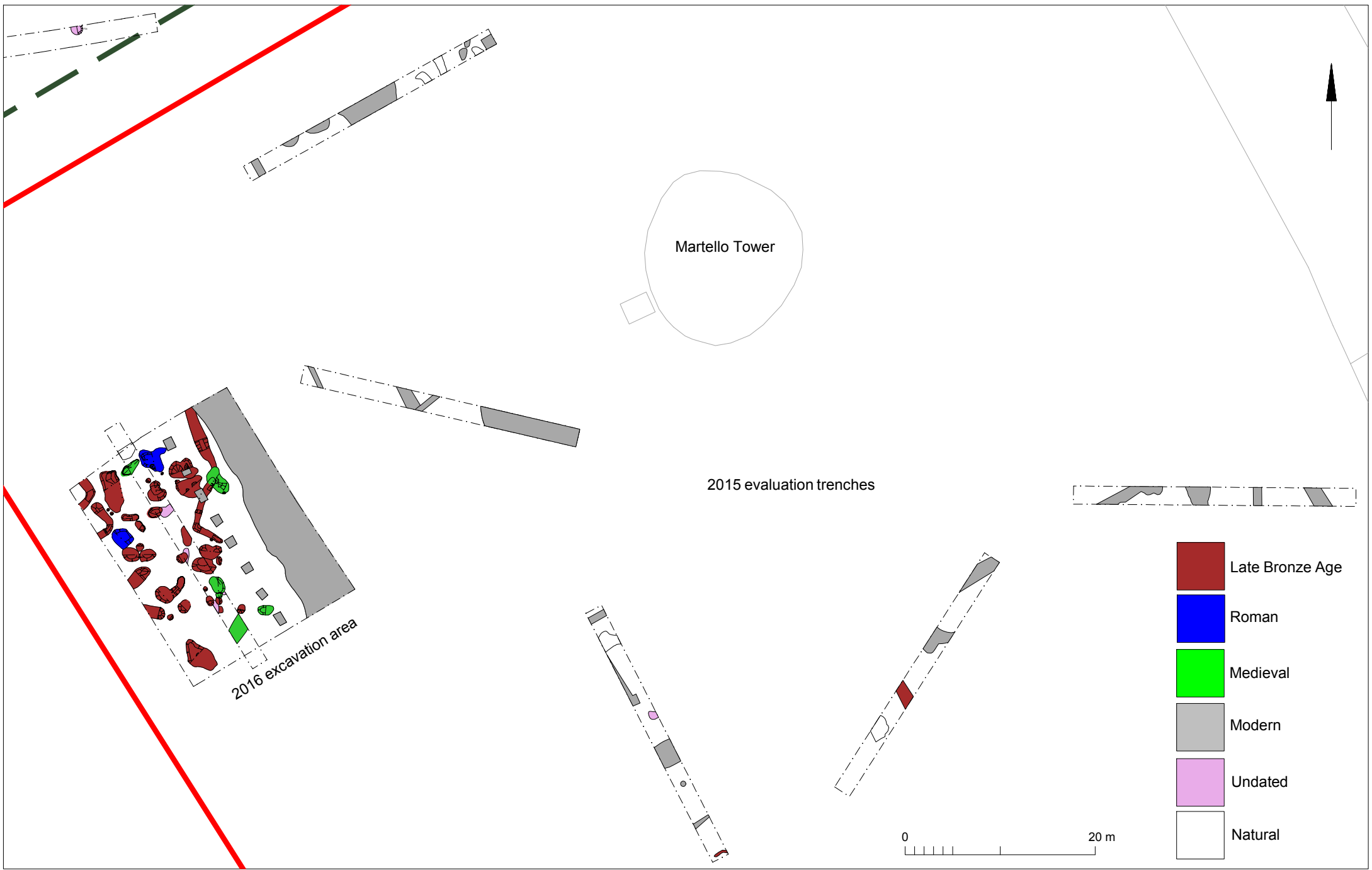


Fig 8 2015 evaluation results and 2016 excavation results

Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

Summary sheet

Address: former Martello Caravan Park, Kirby Road, Walton-on-the-Naze, Essex, CO14 8QP	
Parish: Frinton and Walton	District: Tendring
NGR: TM 24940 22155 (centre)	Site code: CAT project code: 16/07g ECC project code: FWMH16 OASIS project ID: colchest3-252243
Type of work: Excavation	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: 29th August – 12th September 2016	Size of area investigated: Forty-nine trenches each measuring 30m x 1.8m (2646m ²)
Location of curating museum: Colchester Museum accession code – COLEM: 2016.77	Funding source: Developer
Further seasons anticipated? No	Related EHER number:
Final report: CAT Report 1015	
Periods represented: Bronze Age, Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age, Late Iron Age/early Roman, medieval, post-medieval	
<p>Summary of fieldwork results: Archaeological evaluation took place on land at the former Martello Caravan Park, Walton-on-the-Naze in advance of the construction of a new housing estate. Recent archaeological investigations to the west of the Martello Tower revealed multi-period agricultural activity from the prehistoric (early-mid Neolithic to the Late Bronze Age), Roman and medieval periods. Archaeological features and finds on the development site were scarce, but revealed a continuation of this agricultural activity to the north/northwest. Features included four field boundary ditches dated to the Late Bronze Age, Late Iron Age/early Roman and post-medieval periods. Associated with these were Bronze Age (2), medieval (3) and medieval/post-medieval (1) pits. None of the finds appeared to have been deliberately deposited but were probably incidental inclusions from nearby settlements.</p>	
Previous summaries/reports: CAT Report 927	
Keywords: –	Significance: *
Author of summary: Laura Pooley	Date of summary: October 2016