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Archaeological Evaluation Report

August 2022

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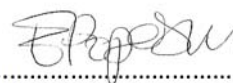


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Stortford Road, Great Dunmow, Essex

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Summary

Between the 27th and 30th June 2022, Oxford Archaeology East carried out archaeological trial trenching on the site of a proposed development off Stortford Road, Great Dunmow, Essex on behalf of Vistry East. A total of 16 trenches measuring 30m long by 2m wide were investigated in advance of the submission of a planning application.

Despite the evaluation area being immediately to the south of Roman Stane Street, as well as Iron Age and medieval settlement activity previously identified by Pre-Construct Archaeology in 2020, a low density of archaeological remains was uncovered during the works. A small number of features (five in total) were found in three of the sixteen trenches, all located within the northern half of the field. All the features were undated with the exception of a ditch terminus in Trench 11, which contained a varied assemblage of early medieval pottery, animal bone, oyster shell and metalworking waste. The remaining thirteen trenches produced no archaeological remains.

Acknowledgements

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The project was managed for Oxford Archaeology by Andrew Greef. The fieldwork was directed by Toby Knight, who was supported by Maria Anna Rogers and Jack Everett. Survey and digitising were carried out by Gareth Rees and Maria Anna Rogers. Thanks are also extended to the teams of OA staff that cleaned and packaged the finds under the supervision of Natasha Dodwell, processed the environmental remains under the supervision of Rachel Fosberry, and prepared the archive under the supervision of Katherine Hamilton.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of work

1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology East (OA East) was commissioned by Vistry East to undertake a trial trench evaluation on land west of Great Dunmow, Essex in advance of proposed residential and infrastructural development (TL 60801 21579; Fig. 1).

1.1.2 The work was undertaken to inform Essex County Council planning department in advance of the submission of a planning application. Although the Local Planning Authority did not set a brief for the work, discussions with the Historic Environment Officer at Essex Place Services established the scope of work required and a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was produced by OA East (Greef 2022) detailing the Local Authority's requirements for work necessary to support the planning application. This document outlines how OA implemented the specified requirements.

1.2 Location, topography and geology

1.2.1 The site is located to the south of Stortford Road (B1256) and to the west of Butleys Lane, at the western edge of Great Dunmow, and has previously been used as arable farmland. The nearest watercourse is a tributary of the River Roding located approximately 750m north of the site.

1.2.2 The site slopes gradually from 96m OD in the north-east to 94m OD in the south-west.

1.2.3 The geology of the area comprises bedrock belonging to the London Clay Formation, consisting of clays, silts and sands overlain by a superficial diamicton of the Lowestoft Formation (Geology of Britain viewer – British Geological Survey (bgs.ac.uk); accessed 1st July 2022).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 The following is a chronological summary of the data presented within the Desk Based Assessment (DBA) produced by CgMs for the proposed development (Stewart-Phillips 2019), updated with the results of recent excavations carried out immediately to the north of the site (PCA 2022). Relevant Essex HER entries within a 1km radius of the site are listed in the text and referenced in Fig. 2.

1.4 Bronze Age

1.4.1 A possible Late Bronze Age field system (MEX1036222) was identified approximately 375m south-east of the site. An assemblage of Late Bronze Age pottery (MEX10362; not shown) was recovered from a tree throw approximately 640m south-east of the site and a small Late Bronze Age pit (MEX1033960) was identified approximately 640m to the north-west.

1.5 Iron Age and Romano-British

1.5.1 A number of Iron Age sites and finds have been identified within the study area.

1.5.2 The Iron Age trackway of Stane Street (MEX16441) is projected to run along the northern edge of the site, following the route of the B1256 Stortford Road. This is

thought to have been metalled and straightened during the Romano-British period (MEX4497).

- 1.5.3 A Middle to Late Iron Age settlement (MEX1036216) was identified approximately 200m south of the site comprising pits, ditches, gullies and four-post structures with associated finds including pottery, animal bone and evidence for weaving.
- 1.5.4 An assemblage of Late Iron Age coins was recovered at Folly Farm (MEX36744) approximately 900m east of the site, which included two silver units and two blank gold staters. A probable Romano-British farmstead (MEX36741) has also been identified through cropmark analysis in this area, with identified features including walls, ditches and buildings.
- 1.5.5 An additional Romano-British farmstead (MEX1033960) consisting of ditches, gullies, pits and a small cemetery (26 cremations and one inhumation) was recorded c. 545m to the north-west.
- 1.5.6 Roman findspots recorded in the local area include fragments of abraded CBM (MEX1039696, c. 850m to the north-east), a Squat Colchester buff flagon and horse jawbone (MEX38260, c. 195m to the north-west) and a concentration of pottery and tile (MEX39532, c. 545m to the north-west).

1.6 Medieval

- 1.6.1 The settlement of Dunmow is recorded in The Domesday Book (AD 1086), with 17 villagers, 17 smallholders, 12 slaves, 1 freeman and a priest detailed (Open Domesday).
- 1.6.2 Medieval settlement activity is recorded to the south and south-east of the site comprising a ditch with associated finds (MEX3953, c. 230m to the south, not shown), a scatter of pottery (MEX39537, 415m to the south-east) and a hearth, pit and gully (MEX1036220, 375m to the south-east)
- 1.6.3 Highwood Farmhouse (MEX1013144), a 15th-century timber framed house is located immediately to the south of the site.

1.7 Post-medieval to modern

- 1.7.1 Post-medieval and modern sites have been identified within 1km of the site but will not be discussed as they do not directly relate to or lie within the study site. A map regression exercise (Stewart-Phillips 2019) has illustrated that the site was utilised as agricultural land through the 18th and 19th centuries and saw no development.

1.8 Previous work

- 1.8.1 Excavations carried out immediately to the north of the site (north of Stortford Road) in 2020 (PCA 2022; Fig. 2) revealed a Late Bronze Age enclosed settlement with activity continuing into the Early Iron Age, as well as a Middle Iron Age enclosed settlement in the south-west of the development area (less than 100m north of the site). Possible Late Iron Age to Early Romano-British cultivation channels were also recorded across the site along with medieval settlement and agricultural activity.

2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

2.1.1 The project aims and objectives were as follows:

- i. To establish the character, date and state of preservation of archaeological remains within the proposed development area.
- ii. To establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains on the site, characterise where they are found (location, depth and extent), and establish the quality of preservation of any archaeology and environmental remains.
- iii. To provide sufficient coverage to establish the character, condition, date and purpose of any archaeological deposits.
- iv. To provide sufficient coverage to evaluate the likely impact of past land uses and the possible presence of masking deposits.
- v. To provide – in the event that archaeological remains are found – sufficient information to construct an archaeological mitigation strategy, dealing with preservation, the recording of archaeological deposits, working practices, timetables, and orders of cost.

2.1.2 The site specific objectives of the evaluation were:

- i. To establish if the Iron Age activity recorded immediately to the north (PCA 2022) continues to the south of Stortford Road.
- ii. To assess the presence of any remains associated with Roman Stane Street.

2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 A total of 16 trenches measuring 30m long by 2m wide were excavated (Fig. 3). This is equivalent to 5% of the development area. Prior to machine stripping, the initial location of trenches was altered to avoid the presence of a water pipe whilst still providing trench coverage across the evaluation area.

2.2.2 The trenches were set out by a survey-grade differential GPS connected to Leica Smartnet providing an accuracy of 5mm horizontal and 10mm vertical. Before trenching, the footprint of each trench was scanned by a qualified and experienced operator using a CAT and Genny with a valid calibration certificate.

2.2.3 Trial trenches were excavated by a mechanical excavator to the depth of geological horizons, or to the upper interface of archaeological features or deposits, whichever was encountered first. A toothless ditching bucket with a minimum bucket width of 2m was used to excavate the trenches. All machine excavation was supervised by a suitably qualified and experienced archaeologist.

2.2.4 Spoil was stored alongside trenches with topsoil, subsoil, and archaeological deposits being kept separate during excavation, to allow for sequential backfilling of excavations. Trenches were backfilled upon approval from Essex Place Services.

2.2.5 Excavated areas were metal detected immediately before and after mechanical stripping. Both excavated areas and spoil heaps were checked. To prevent losses from night-hawking, the features were metal detected immediately after stripping.

-
- 2.2.6 All archaeological features were excavated and recorded in line with the requirements of Essex Place Services to adequately characterise the remains on site and to allow decisions to be made with regard to future mitigation, whilst at the same time minimising disturbance to archaeological structures, features and deposits. All relationships between features or deposits were investigated and recorded and the archaeological sequence down to undisturbed natural deposits was characterised.
 - 2.2.7 All excavation of archaeological deposits was done by hand with all discrete features half sectioned and a 1m slot excavated through all linear features.
 - 2.2.8 An environmental sample (up to 40 litres) was taken from a potentially datable feature to target the recovery of plant remains, fish, bird, small mammal and amphibian bone, along with small artefacts.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction and presentation of results

3.1.1 The results of the evaluation are presented below and include a stratigraphic description of the trenches that contained archaeological remains. The full details of all trenches with dimensions and depths of all deposits can be found in Appendix A. Trenches that lacked any archaeological features (1, 2, 4-10, 12-14 and 16) will not be further discussed (Fig. 3). Plate 1 of Trench 14 shows a general example of the appearance of the blank trenches.

3.2 General soils and ground conditions

3.2.1 The soil sequence in the trenches was fairly uniform. The natural geology of clay was overlain by a silty clay subsoil, which in turn was overlain by a clayey silt topsoil.

3.2.2 Ground conditions throughout the evaluation were generally good, with occasional showers causing no issues. Archaeological features, where present, were easy to identify against the underlying natural geology.

3.3 General distribution of archaeological deposits

3.3.1 Archaeological features were present in Trenches 3, 11 and 15.

3.4 Trench 3 (Fig. 4)

3.4.1 Trench 3 contained a cluster of archaeological features, located at the south-west end of the trench, consisting of a gully **03**, ditch terminus **05** and posthole **09**. Gully **03** was orientated north-west to south-east, measuring 0.5m wide and 0.09m deep, with a stepped western side, steep eastern side and a flat base (Fig. 6, Section 1; Plate 2). It contained single fill (04), a mid greyish brown silty clay.

3.4.2 Although gully **03** and ditch terminus **05** partially intersected, the relationship was not caught in the excavated slot. Ditch terminus **05** was orientated east to west, measuring 0.64m wide and 0.22m deep, with gradual southern and steep northern sides and a flat base (Fig. 6, Section 2; Plate 2). It contained four distinct fills (06-08 and 12), probably formed from varying natural processes.

3.4.3 Posthole **09** truncated gully **03** and was 0.8m wide and 0.58m deep with steep sides and a concave base (Fig. 6, Section 3; Plate 3). It contained two fills; a mid orangey brown silty clay outer fill (10) and a mid greyish blue silty clay central fill (11) measuring 0.4m wide and 0.5m deep from the stripped horizon. No finds were recovered from any of the features in this trench.

3.5 Trench 11 (Fig. 5; Plate 4)

3.5.1 This trench contained an east-north-east to west-south-west aligned ditch terminus **19**, which was present for a length of 6m within the trench. Although the extent of the ditch was partially obscured by the trench baulk, it measured at least 0.8m wide and 0.3m deep with a gradually sloping side and a concave base (Fig. 6, Section 5; Plate 5). It contained a single fill (20) of mid yellowish brown silty clay from which 16 fragments (174g) of two animal bones, one oyster shell (28g), five pieces of metalworking waste

(329g) and six sherds (70g) of early medieval pottery were recovered. A sample of this fill was also found to contain a very small quantity (2ml) of charcoal and carbonised hazelnut shell.

3.6 Trench 15 (Fig. 5)

Trench 15 contained one north-north-west to south-south-east aligned ditch (**15**), located centrally in the trench. It measured 1.44m wide and 0.38m deep, with a gradually sloping western and steeply sloping eastern side, and a concave base (Fig. 6, Section 4; Plate 6). It contained three fills in total, two distinct fills (16 and 17) slumping in from the east and a main fill (18) of mid orangey brown silty clay. No finds were recovered from this feature.

3.7 Finds summary

- 3.7.1 The entire finds assemblage came from the single fill (20) of ditch terminus **19** in Trench 11. Six sherds (70g) of early medieval pottery were recovered, and the other finds within the fill, although not directly dateable, are thought to be contemporary. The rest of the assemblage consisted of 329g of metalworking waste comprising slag and vitrified fired clay, one oyster shell (28g) and 16 fragments of two animal bones (174g).

4 DISCUSSION

4.1 Reliability of field investigation

- 4.1.1 The results of the trial trenching are considered reliable, with archaeological features and deposits being clearly visible in contrast to the clay geology.

4.2 Evaluation objectives and results

- 4.2.1 The project aims and objectives defined in the WSI (Greef 2022) are listed in Section 2.1. The following statements outline the remains encountered on the site and how these help in achieving those objectives.
- 4.2.2 Archaeological features were encountered in three out of sixteen trenches. The features were spread across the evaluation area but solely in the northern half of the site. The paucity of artefacts means that all but one feature (ditch terminus **19**) remain undated. Ditch terminus **19** contained a varied finds assemblage dated to the early medieval period based on the pottery (six sherds, 70g) alongside metalworking waste, animal bone and oyster shell.
- 4.2.3 Despite the presence of Iron Age activity immediately to the north (PCA 2022), no features dating to the Iron Age were uncovered during the evaluation. This suggests contemporary settlement activity did not continue south of the Iron Age trackway which went on to become Roman Stane Street. Despite the proximity of this major Roman thoroughfare, no evidence of Romano-British activity was uncovered during the evaluation.
- 4.2.4 The small size and poor preservation of the faunal and plant remains assemblages recovered during the evaluation suggests that the potential for the survival of such material at the site is low.

4.3 Interpretation

- 4.3.1 The close proximity of the site to an Iron Age settlement and to Roman Stane Street suggested that further evidence of Iron Age and Romano-British activity was likely across the proposed development. However, no such remains were uncovered during the trial trenching.
- 4.3.2 Although surprising, the lack of Romano-British evidence is somewhat consistent with the results of excavations to the north, which despite equal proximity to Stane Street, identified no features dating to the Romano-British period and recovered only a small assemblage of pottery (170g, 26 sherds) (PCA 2022). The absence of Romano-British activity on both sides of Stane Street therefore suggests that this stretch of the Roman road did not entail high levels of contemporary road-side activity.
- 4.3.3 With ditch terminus **19** containing early medieval pottery sherds, some having evidence of domestic food preparation (App. B.2), as well as small-scale metalworking waste, it suggests low level continuation of the medieval activity uncovered during the 2020 PCA excavations. During these investigations, low status farmsteads with associated field enclosure ditches dating to around the 12th to 13th centuries were excavated, which also revealed evidence for small scale ironworking (PCA 2022). Ditch

terminus **19** therefore suggests that some activity (namely rubbish deposition) continued south of Stane Street, but was only visible in one trench (Trench 11) close to the road and does not extend across the evaluated area.

- 4.3.4 Ditch **15** potentially correlates with a ditch excavated during work to the north of Stortford Road/Stane Street (Fig. 3), however during the excavation to the north it was found to truncate the Bronze to Iron Age settlement activity and was interpreted as a post-medieval field boundary (PCA 2022). Considering that Stane Street was an established thoroughfare from the Iron Age period onwards, it is potentially unlikely that the field boundary would have continued unbroken across the road. This may therefore mean that ditch **15** is in fact a separate feature and explains why it was not visible in Trench 16 immediately to the north.
- 4.3.5 A concentration of smaller undated features consisting of a gully, ditch terminus and posthole were found at the western end of Trench 3. The linear features however did not appear to continue into neighbouring trenches, nor did similar features occur elsewhere within the evaluation, suggesting this was perhaps an isolated area of small-scale activity of an unknown date.

4.4 Significance

- 4.4.1 The low density of remains recorded by the evaluation suggests that the site is of limited archaeological significance, despite the proximity of Stane Street and Iron Age and medieval settlement activity to the north. Although ditch terminus **19** within Trench 11 contained a variety of artefacts, overall, the assemblage is too small to draw any conclusions other than characterising the material as small-scale rubbish deposition from nearby farmsteads.

APPENDIX A TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1		
General description	Orientation	ENE-WSW
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of clay.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	2
	Avg. depth (m)	0.56

Trench 2		
General description	Orientation	NNW-SSE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of clay.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	2
	Avg. depth (m)	0.53

Trench 3						
General description					Orientation	ENE-WSW
Trench contained gully 03 , ditch terminus 05 and posthole 09 . Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of clay.					Length (m)	30
					Width (m)	2
					Avg. depth (m)	0.63
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
01	Layer	-	0.29	Topsoil	-	-
02	Layer	-	0.34	Subsoil	-	-
03	Cut	0.5	0.09	Gully	-	-
04	Fill	-	0.09	Fill of gully	-	-
05	Cut	0.64	0.22	Ditch	-	-
06	Fill		0.08	Fill of ditch	-	-
07	Fill		0.12	Fill of ditch	-	-
08	Fill		0.22	Fill of ditch	-	-
09	Cut	0.8	0.58	Post-hole	-	-
10	Fill		0.34	Fill of post-hole	-	-
11	Fill		0.5	Fill of post-hole	-	-
12	Fill		0.1	Fill of ditch	-	-

Trench 4		
General description	Orientation	NNW-SSE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of clay.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	2
	Avg. depth (m)	0.63

Trench 5		
General description	Orientation	ENE-WSW
Trench devoid of archaeology but contained a natural hollow. A potential posthole was also investigated and found to be bio-	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	2
	Avg. depth (m)	0.66

turbation. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of clay.		
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Trench 6		
General description	Orientation	ENE-WSW
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of clay.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	2
	Avg. depth (m)	0.68

Trench 7		
General description	Orientation	NNW-SSE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of clay.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	2
	Avg. depth (m)	0.6

Trench 8		
General description	Orientation	NNW-SSE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of clay.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	2
	Avg. depth (m)	0.62

Trench 9		
General description	Orientation	NNW-SSE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of clay.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	2
	Avg. depth (m)	0.57

Trench 10		
General description	Orientation	ENE-WSW
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of clay.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	2
	Avg. depth (m)	0.53

Trench 11						
General description					Orientation	ENE-WSW
Trench contained ditch terminus 19 . Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of clay.					Length (m)	30
					Width (m)	2
					Avg. depth (m)	0.63
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Findings	Date
19	Cut	0.8	0.3	Ditch terminus	-	-
20	Fill	-	0.3	Fill of ditch terminus	Bone, pot, slag and shell	Medieval
21	Layer	-	0.27	Topsoil	-	-
22	Layer	-	0.36	Subsoil	-	-

Trench 12		
General description	Orientation	NNW-SSE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of clay.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	2
	Avg. depth (m)	0.68

Trench 13		
General description	Orientation	ENE-WSW
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of clay.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	2
	Avg. depth (m)	0.48

Trench 14		
General description	Orientation	NNW-SSE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of clay.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	2
	Avg. depth (m)	0.48

Trench 15						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench contained ditch 15. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of clay.					Length (m)	30
					Width (m)	2
					Avg. depth (m)	0.49
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
13	Layer	-	0.35	Topsoil	-	-
14	Layer	-	0.14	Subsoil	-	-
15	Cut	1.44	0.38	Ditch	-	-
16	Fill	-	0.13	Fill of ditch	-	-
17	Fill		0.14	Fill of ditch	-	-
18	Fill		0.38	Fill of ditch	-	-

Trench 16		
General description	Orientation	ENE-WSW
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of clay.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	2
	Avg. depth (m)	0.5

APPENDIX B FINDS REPORTS

B.1 Metalworking waste

By Carole Fletcher with vitrified clay by Ted Levermore

Introduction and methodology

B.1.1 A small assemblage of slag and associated material was recovered during archaeological works. The slag was weighed and rapidly recorded, with basic description and weight recorded in the text of this report. The terminology used in the report is taken from Historic England *Archaeometallurgy Guidelines for Best Practice* (2015).

Assemblage

B.1.2 Seven irregular, somewhat magnetic, fragments of slightly vesicular dull grey (with shiny areas) slag having sandy vitrified material adhering to one of more surfaces (0.027kg) were recovered from the terminus of ditch **19**, alongside early medieval pottery. Three re-fitting fragments from a small smelting hearth base (0.298kg) were also found.

B.1.3 The hearth base is somewhat vesicular, grey/brown to dull reddish brown and maroon in colouration, 74x78x31–48mm thick, with an uneven lower surface having some sandy material adhering. The upper surface has a darker raised lump and a maroon area, both of which are highly magnetic and may be fragments from a bloom.

B.1.4 A single fragment of vitrified fired clay (0.004kg) was also recovered from ditch **19**. It is a thin, slightly curved fragment of a heavily sintered fine sandy clay, with a small area of medium to coarse pores. It has an oxidised pinkish-red face with a buff-brown reverse and a dark grey-blue reduced core. This fragment is a product of a high heat process, probably metalworking or similar industry, which utilised a clay lining or vessel.

Discussion

B.1.5 The slag and vitrified fired clay assemblage is fragmentary, and its significance is uncertain, other than to indicate high temperature metalworking (bloomery) in the vicinity of Trench 11, as it is unlikely that the slag was transported far from its point of origin. Ditch **19** also produced medieval pottery and, although the slag cannot be closely dated, it is reasonable to assume that it is contemporary with the pottery.

Retention, dispersal or display

B.1.6 Should further work be undertaken, more slag may be recovered, although only at low levels. This statement acts as a full record.

B.2 Post-Roman pottery

By Carole Fletcher

Introduction and methodology

- B.2.1 Archaeological works produced a small assemblage of pottery, six sherds, weighing 0.066kg, from a single feature in Trench 11. The condition of the assemblage is moderately abraded and the average sherd weight is low at 0.011kg.
- B.2.2 The Prehistoric Ceramics Research Group (PCRG), Study Group for Roman Pottery (SGRP), The Medieval Pottery Research Group (MPRG 2016) *A Standard for Pottery Studies in Archaeology* and the MPRG (1998) *A guide to the classification of medieval ceramic forms* act as standards. Rapid recording was carried out using OA East's in-house system, based on that previously used at the Museum of London.
- B.2.3 Fabric classification has been carried out for all previously described post-Roman types using Essex fabric types (Cotter 2000), based on those of Cunningham (1985) where possible and dating is necessarily broad. All sherds have been counted, classified, and weighed on a context-by-context basis. The assemblage is recorded in Table 1. The pottery and archive are curated by Oxford Archaeology East until formal deposition or dispersal.

Assemblage and discussion

- B.2.4 Trench 11 produced six sherds of pottery, from the terminus of ditch 19. The sherds are somewhat abraded, representing a minimum of three vessels, including sooted vessels, suggesting food preparation.
- B.2.5 The small size of the assemblage makes conclusions difficult to draw, other than to say that the vessels present are very probably domestic in nature and that the pottery may relate to rubbish deposition from nearby occupation.

Retention, dispersal or display

- B.2.6 Should further work be undertaken, pottery may be recovered, although only at low levels and this report should be incorporated into any later catalogue. If no further work on the site is undertaken, this statement acts as a full record and the medieval pottery may be retained or dispersed.

Trench	Context	Cut	Fabric	Description	MNV	Count	Weight (kg)	Date Range
11	20	19	Early Medieval Sandy ware (Fabric 13)	Moderately abraded body sherd	1	1	0.004	1025-1225
				Abraded ?base sherd	1	2	0.004	
				Base sherd and base angle (convex, obtuse), externally sooted	1	3	0.058	
Total					3	6	0.066	

Table 1: Pottery

APPENDIX C ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS

C.1 Environmental remains

By Martha Craven

Introduction

C.1.1 A single bulk sample was taken from ditch **19** (Trench 11) within the evaluated area. This sample was taken in order to assess the quality of preservation of plant remains and their potential to provide useful data as part of further archaeological investigations. The deposit is thought to be medieval in date.

Methodology

C.1.2 The sample was soaked in a solution of sodium carbonate for 24hrs prior to processing to break down the heavy clay matrix. The total volume (14L) of the sample was processed by tank flotation using modified Sīraf-type equipment for the recovery of preserved plant remains, dating evidence and any other artefactual evidence that might be present. The floating component (flot) of the sample was collected in a 0.3mm nylon mesh and the residue was washed through 10mm, 5mm, 2mm and a 0.5mm sieve.

C.1.3 The dried flot was scanned using a binocular microscope at magnifications up to x 60 and an abbreviated list of the recorded remains are presented in Table 2. Identification of plant remains is with reference to the *Digital Seed Atlas of the Netherlands* (Cappers *et al.* 2006) and the OAE's reference collection. Nomenclature is according to Stace (2010). Plant remains have been identified to species where possible.

Quantification

C.1.4 For the purpose of this initial assessment, items such as nutshells have been scanned and recorded qualitatively according to the following categories:

= 1-5, ## = 6-25, ### = 26-100, #### = 100+ specimens

Key to tables:

f=fragmented

Results

C.1.5 Preservation of plant remains is by carbonisation and is quite poor. The flot contains rootlets which may have caused movement of material between contexts.

C.1.6 Sample 1, fill 20 of ditch **19**, contains a small quantity of charcoal and a single fragment of hazelnut shell (*Corylus avellana*). A small quantity of pottery was recovered which may be suitable for dating.

Trench No.	Sample No.	Context No.	Cut No.	Feature Type	Volume Processed (L)	Flot Volume (ml)	Tree/shrub Macrofossils	Charcoal Volume(ml)	Pottery
11	1	20	19	Ditch	14	5	#f	2	#

Table 2: Environmental samples from SRGD22

Discussion

- C.1.7 The recovery of a small quantity of hazelnut shell and charcoal fragments from Sample 1 suggests that there is limited potential for the preservation of plant remains at this site.
- C.1.8 The paucity of plant remains recovered from this sample indicates that this feature is unlikely to be related to settlement activity. The recovery of a small quantity of hazelnut shell fragment could hint at the collection of wild resources for food but this is only tentative. Alternatively, carbonised hazelnut shell fragments could be the result of the burning of hazel wood, naturally or otherwise.
- C.1.9 If further excavation is planned for this area, it is recommended that environmental sampling is carried out in accordance with Historic England guidelines (2011).

C.2 Animal bone

By Zoë Uì Choileàin

Introduction and methodology

- C.2.1 A single context produced animal bone.
- C.2.2 All bone was identified using Schmid (1972). Surface preservation was evaluated using the 0-5 scale devised by Brickley and McKinley (2004, 14–15), where 0 marks no change and 5 marks the total erosion of the cortical bone. Age estimations were based on fusion of the epiphyses using Silver (1970).

Assemblage and Discussion

- C.2.3 The preservation of bone is fair, best representing a 2 on the McKinley scale. This means that some but not all of the surface of the cortical bone is masked by erosion.
- C.2.4 A total of 2 recordable fragments are present one of which is identifiable to taxon. The bone was collected from context 20, Trench 11. The bone consists of a distal horse radius and fragments of a large mammal humerus. The distal epiphysis of the horse radius was fused indicating an age over 36 months (Silver 1970).
- C.2.5 The assemblage is very small and poorly preserved. Both fragments represent domestic mammals. There is little further information to be gleaned from this assemblage.

Retention, dispersal and display

- C.2.6 No further work is required unless further excavations take place on the site and all bone should be retained for the archaeological record.

C.3 Mollusca

By Carole Fletcher

Introduction and Methodology

- C.3.1 A single marine bivalve shell was collected by hand during the evaluation, recovered from a feature in Trench 11. The shell recovered is an edible example of oyster *Ostrea edulis*, from estuarine and shallow coastal waters. The shell was weighed, recorded by species, and right or left valves noted, using Winder (2011; 2017) as a guide. The data is recorded in the text of this report.
- C.3.2 The shell assemblage is moderately well-preserved and does not appear to have been deliberately broken or crushed, although it has undergone post-depositional damage. The marine mollusca and archive are curated by Oxford Archaeology East until formal deposition.

Assemblage and Discussion

- C.3.3 An incomplete, medium oyster left valve (0.027kg) was recovered from the terminus of ditch **19**; the shell has major damage along the anterior/ventral edge. The shell probably became incorporated into the ditch as general rubbish deposition and there are not enough bivalve shells to indicate a single meal, however, the oyster may have been combined with other foods. Although not closely datable, the shell may be dated by its association with pottery or other material also recovered from the ditch terminus, in this case early medieval pottery.
- C.3.4 The assemblage is too small a sample to draw any but the broadest conclusions, in that marine bivalves were reaching the site from coastal regions.

Retention, dispersal and display

- C.3.5 The assemblage indicates that, should further work take place, additional shell could be found. If no further work is undertaken, the catalogue acts as a full record and the shell may be deselected prior to archive deposition.

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APPENDIX E SITE SUMMARY DETAILS / OASIS REPORT FORM

Project Details

OASIS Number	oxfordar3-506568		
Project Name	Stortford Road, Great Dunmow		
Start of Fieldwork	27/6/22	End of Fieldwork	30/6/22
Previous Work	No	Future Work	n/a

Project Reference Codes

Site Code	SRGD22	Planning App. No.	n/a
HER Number	SRGD22	Related Numbers	n/a

Prompt	NPPF
Development Type	Residential housing
Place in Planning Process	Pre-application

Techniques used (tick all that apply)

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photography – interpretation | <input type="checkbox"/> Grab-sampling | <input type="checkbox"/> Remote Operated Vehicle Survey |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photography - new | <input type="checkbox"/> Gravity-core | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sample Trenches |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Annotated Sketch | <input type="checkbox"/> Laser Scanning | <input type="checkbox"/> Survey/Recording of Fabric/Structure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Augering | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Measured Survey | <input type="checkbox"/> Targeted Trenches |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dendrochronological Survey | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Metal Detectors | <input type="checkbox"/> Test Pits |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Documentary Search | <input type="checkbox"/> Phosphate Survey | <input type="checkbox"/> Topographic Survey |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Environmental Sampling | <input type="checkbox"/> Photogrammetric Survey | <input type="checkbox"/> Vibro-core |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fieldwalking | <input type="checkbox"/> Photographic Survey | <input type="checkbox"/> Visual Inspection (Initial Site Visit) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Geophysical Survey | <input type="checkbox"/> Rectified Photography | |

Monument	Period	Object	Period
Ditch	Medieval (1066 to 1540)	Pottery	Medieval (1066 to 1540)
Ditch	Uncertain	Animal bone	Medieval (1066 to 1540)
Gully	Uncertain	Slag	Medieval (1066 to 1540)
Posthole	Uncertain	Shell	Medieval (1066 to 1540)

Insert more lines as appropriate.

Project Location

County	Essex	Address (including Postcode) Land off Stortford Road, Great Dunmow, Essex, CM6 1WY
District	Uttlesford	
Parish	Great Dunmow	
HER office	Essex	
Size of Study Area	2 ha	
National Grid Ref	TL 60801 21579	

Project Originators

Organisation	Essex Place Services
Project Brief Originator	No brief issued
Project Design Originator	Andrew Greef
Project Manager	Andrew Greef
Project Supervisor	Toby Knight

Project Archives

	Location	ID
Physical Archive (Finds)	Saffron Walden Museum	SRGD22
Digital Archive	OA East	XEXSRD22
Paper Archive	Saffron Walden Museum	SRGD22

Physical Contents	Present?	Digital files associated with Finds	Paperwork associated with Finds
Animal Bones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Glass	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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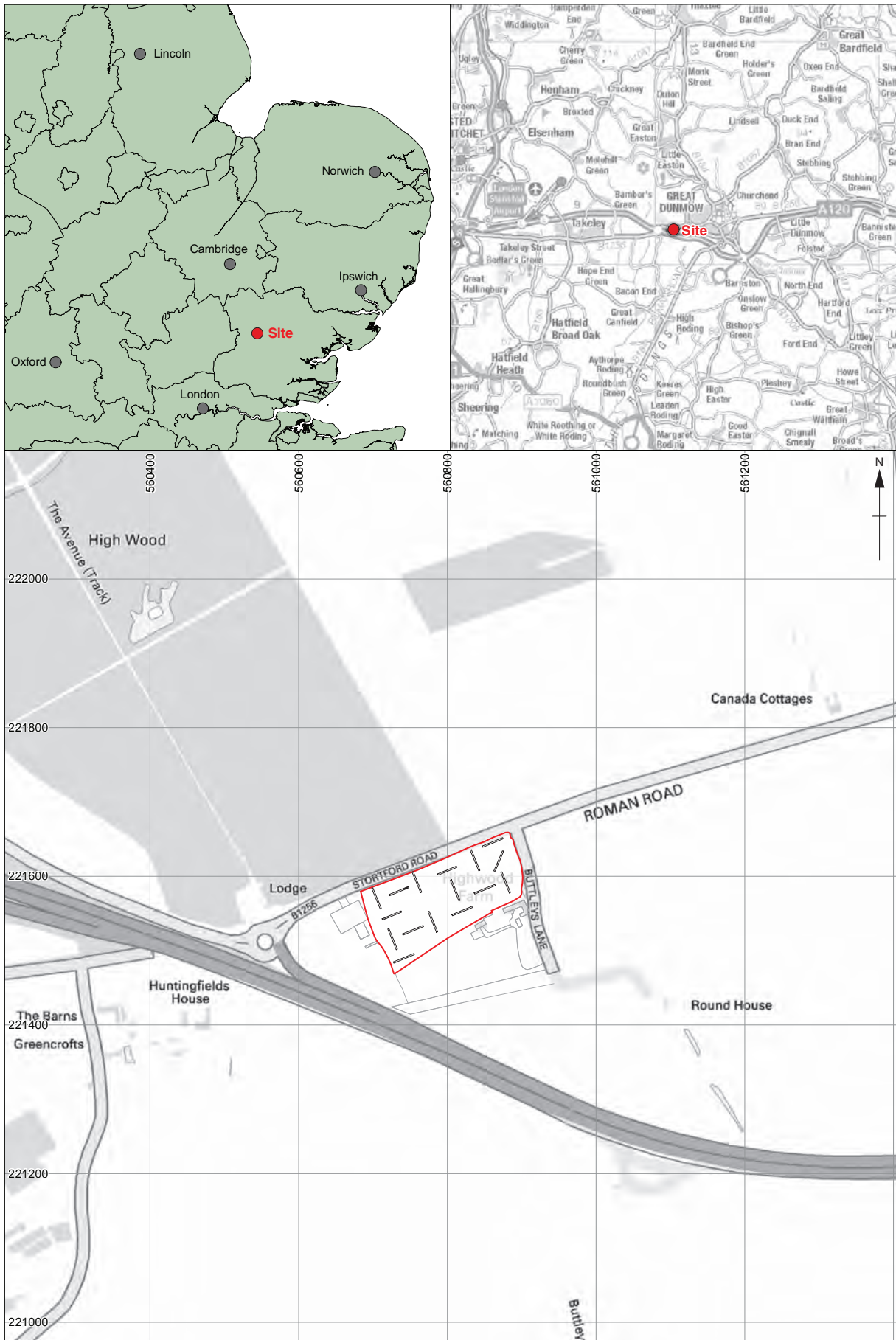
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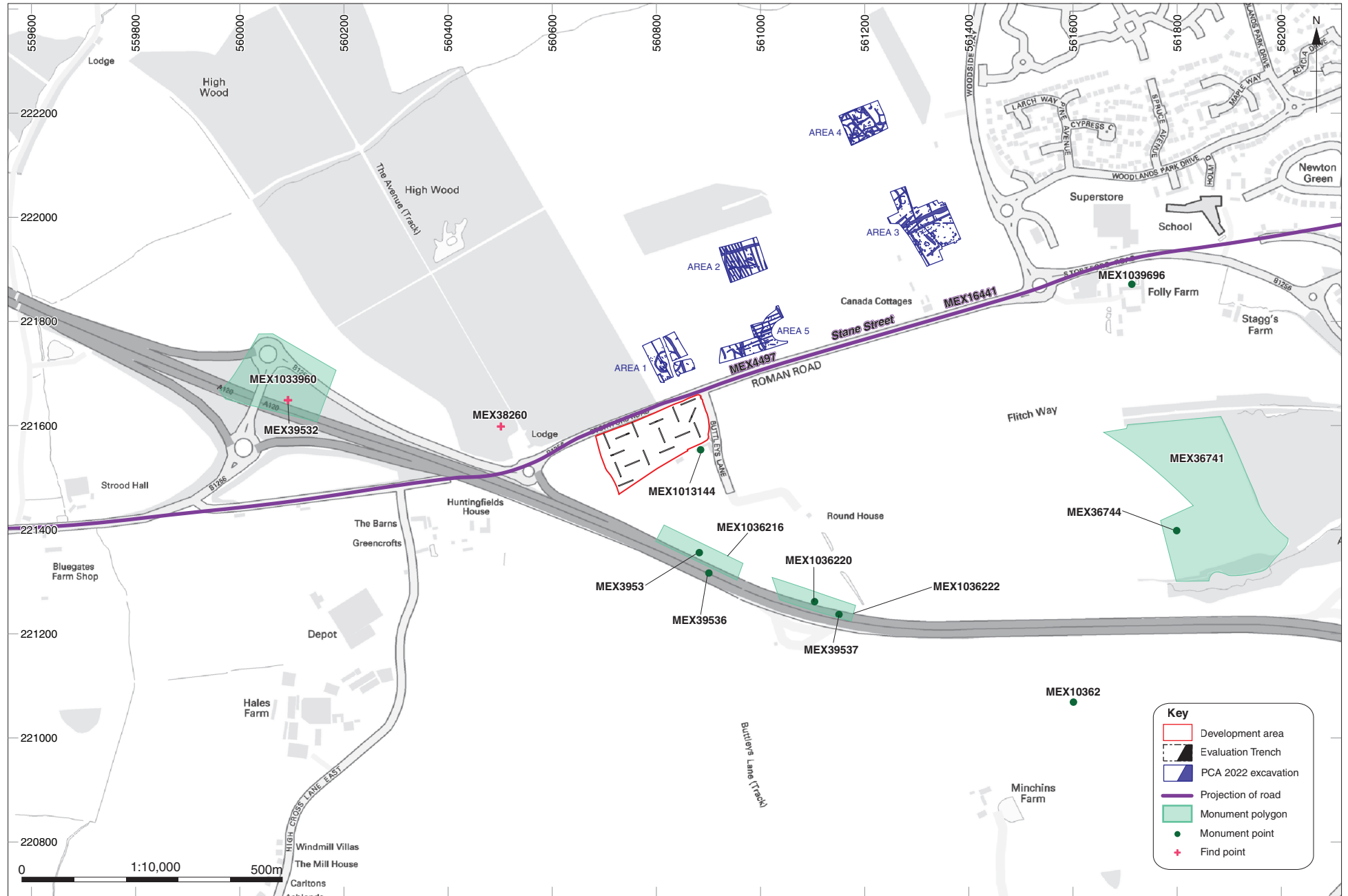
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Photos (negatives/prints/slides)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plans	<input type="checkbox"/>

Report	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Sections	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Survey	<input type="checkbox"/>



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Figure 1: Site location showing evaluation trenches (black) in development area (red)



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Figure 2: Relevant HER data (adapted from Stewart-Phillips 2021) and PCA 2022 excavation areas



Figure 3: Trench plan with PCA 2022 Area 1 excavation plan

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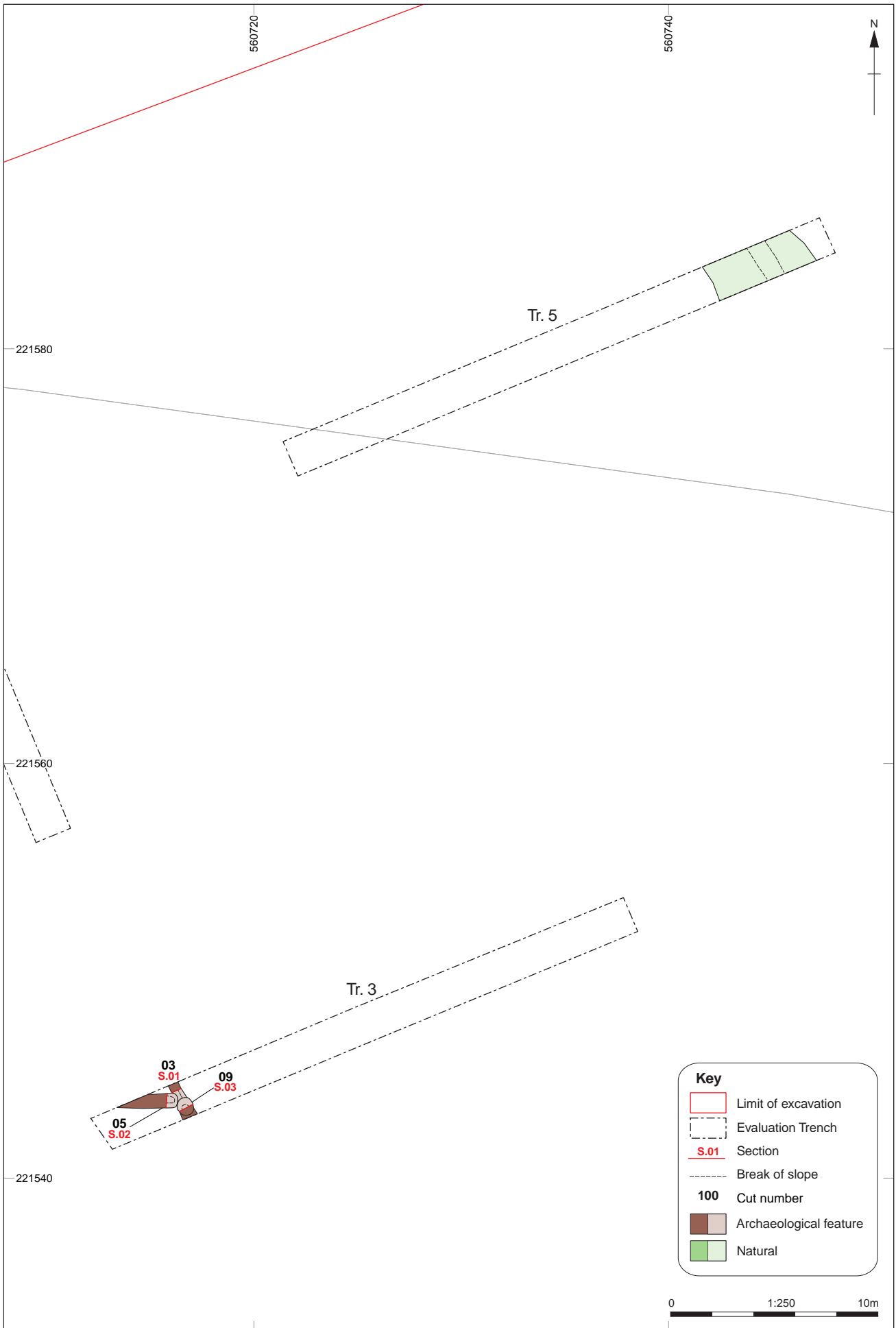


Figure 4: Trenches 3 and 5

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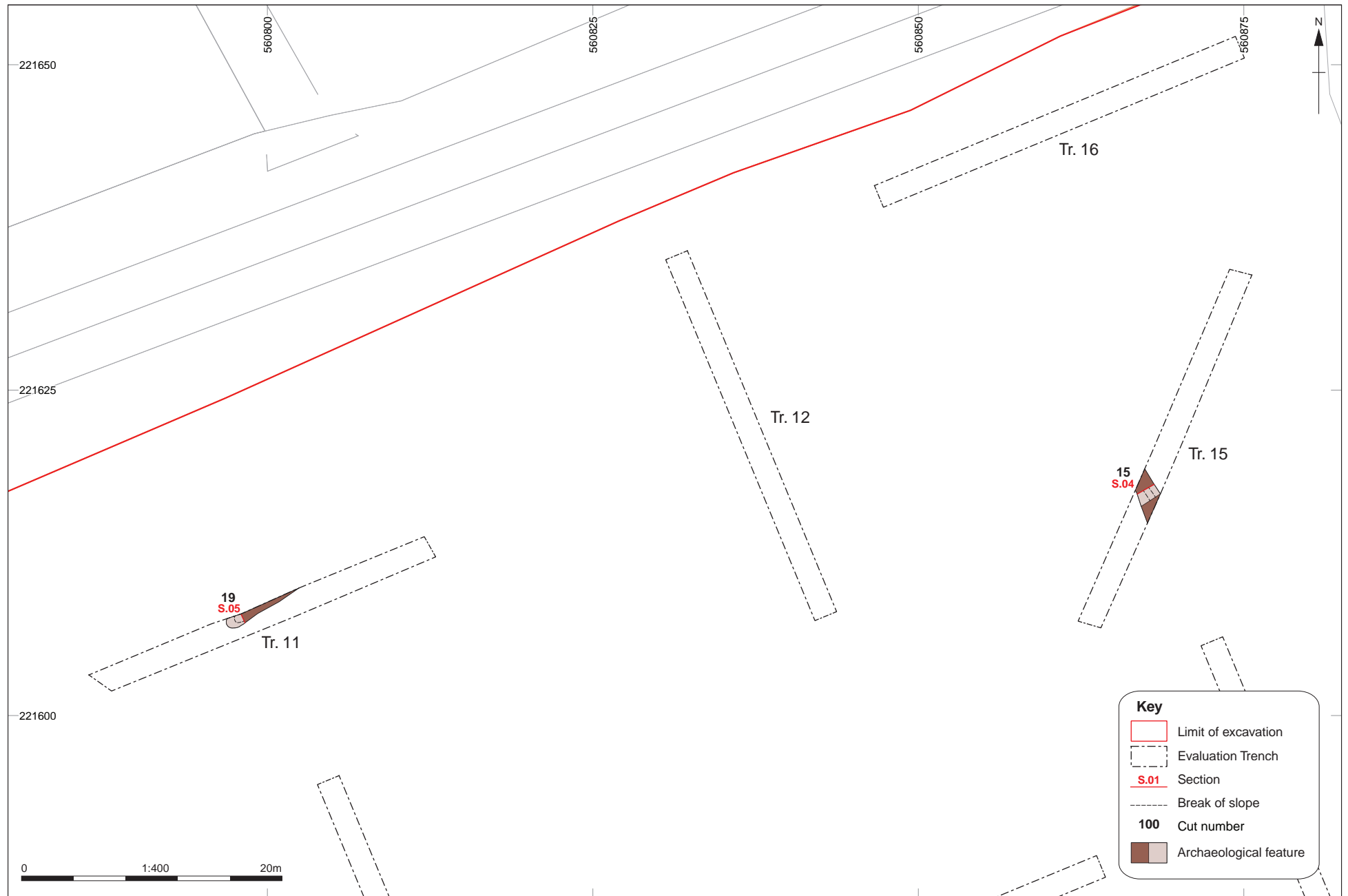


Figure 5: Trenches 11 and 15

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Key

- Limit of Excavation
- Top surface
- Cut / conjectured
- Deposit Horizon conjectured
- - - Break in Section
- 117 Cut Number
- 116 Deposit Number
- 32.26 m OD Level
- Stone

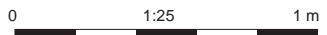
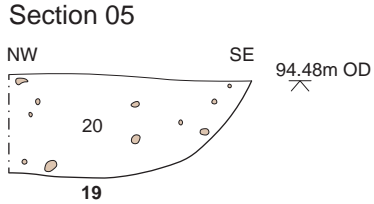
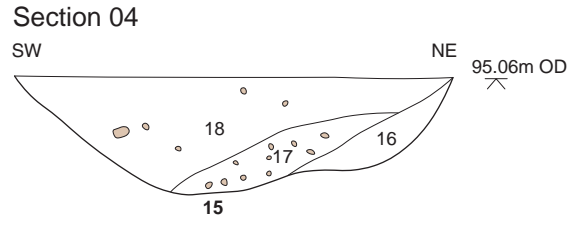
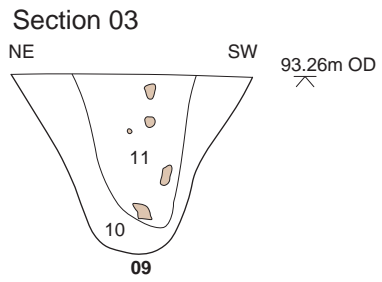
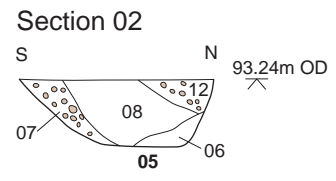
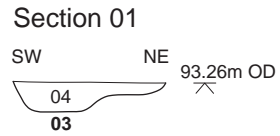


Figure 6: Selected sections



Plate 1: Trench 14, looking north-west



Plate 2: Trench 3, gully **03** and ditch terminus **05**, looking north-west



Plate 3: Trench 3, posthole **09**, looking south-east



Plate 4: Trench 11, looking north-east



Plate 5: Trench 11, early medieval ditch terminus **19**, looking north-east



Plate 6: Trench 15, ditch **15**, looking north-north-east



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