

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EVALUATION ON LAND NORTH OF CLICKERS WAY,
ELMESTHORPE, LEICESTERSHIRE**

CENTRE: NGR 9680 4600

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On behalf of

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Summary

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological evaluation in advance of the proposed construction of a new development (Planning Ref: 10/0996/1/OX) on land north of Clickers Way (A47), Elmesthorpe, Leicestershire. 14 trenches, totalling approximately 420 metres in length were excavated to the underlying natural geology or uppermost archaeological horizon. The earliest dated features were three ditches (Trenches 4, 10 & 12) with pottery sherds of the medieval period. A series of undated ditches were located within Trenches 1 & 6 and contained lighter coloured fills, which may have had earlier origin. One ditch in Trench 1 is thought to be Saxon as it is on a similar alignment to a Saxon ditch recorded on the adjacent bypass evaluation. The other dated ditches were post-medieval.

A post-medieval ditch was seen crossing the site on an east west alignment, which can be seen on historic maps from the late 19th Century. This boundary ditch was sampled in three trenches and may have been contemporary with the ditches in Trench 9 of a similar date.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location and Geology (Figures 1a and 1b)

The application site is located immediately north of the A47 (Clickers Way) in Elmesthorpe near the border of Earl Shilton (NGR SP 459 967). Proposed development, and therefore this evaluation, is confined to north of the A47. The site lies on Wolston Clay, with Wolston Sand and Gravel deposits at the south-western corner of the site, overlying solid geology of the Mercia Mudstone Group.

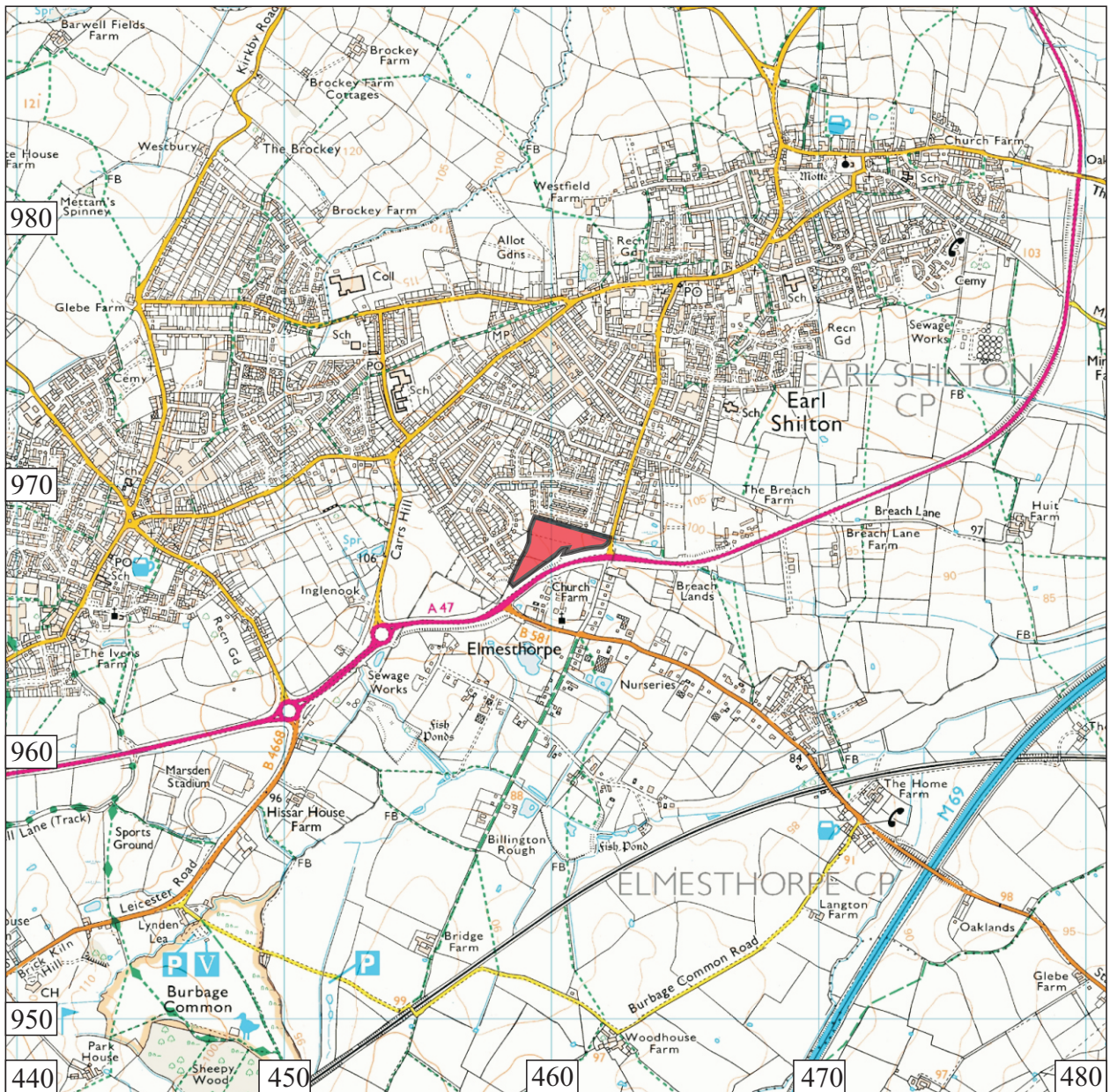
1.2 Planning Background

The archaeological work is considered necessary because it lies within the vicinity of known archaeological sites and there is potential for remains to exist on this site. A desk-based assessment of the area has been carried out (JMHS 2010). Previous archaeological work adjacent to the application area include investigations by ULAS (Browning *et al* 2002, Butler 2003 & Jarvis 2009). A geophysical survey (Austrams 2011) revealed the presence of a linear feature. Other anomalies represent modern activity and include a sewer.

1.3 Archaeological Background

The site contains the earthwork remains of fishponds, which are thought to have originated as 17th century ornamental garden ponds (Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record MLE69, MLE71). The remains of a deserted medieval village are recorded to the immediate south of the site (MLE70) and previous archaeological investigation in advance of construction of the A47 bypass revealed finds of prehistoric worked flint (MLE17742) and evidence of Roman, Anglo-Saxon and medieval activity (MLE17739, MLE17740).

A full archaeological background to the study site can be obtained from the desk based assessment (JMHS 2010).



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0 m 1000 m

Figure 1a. Site location

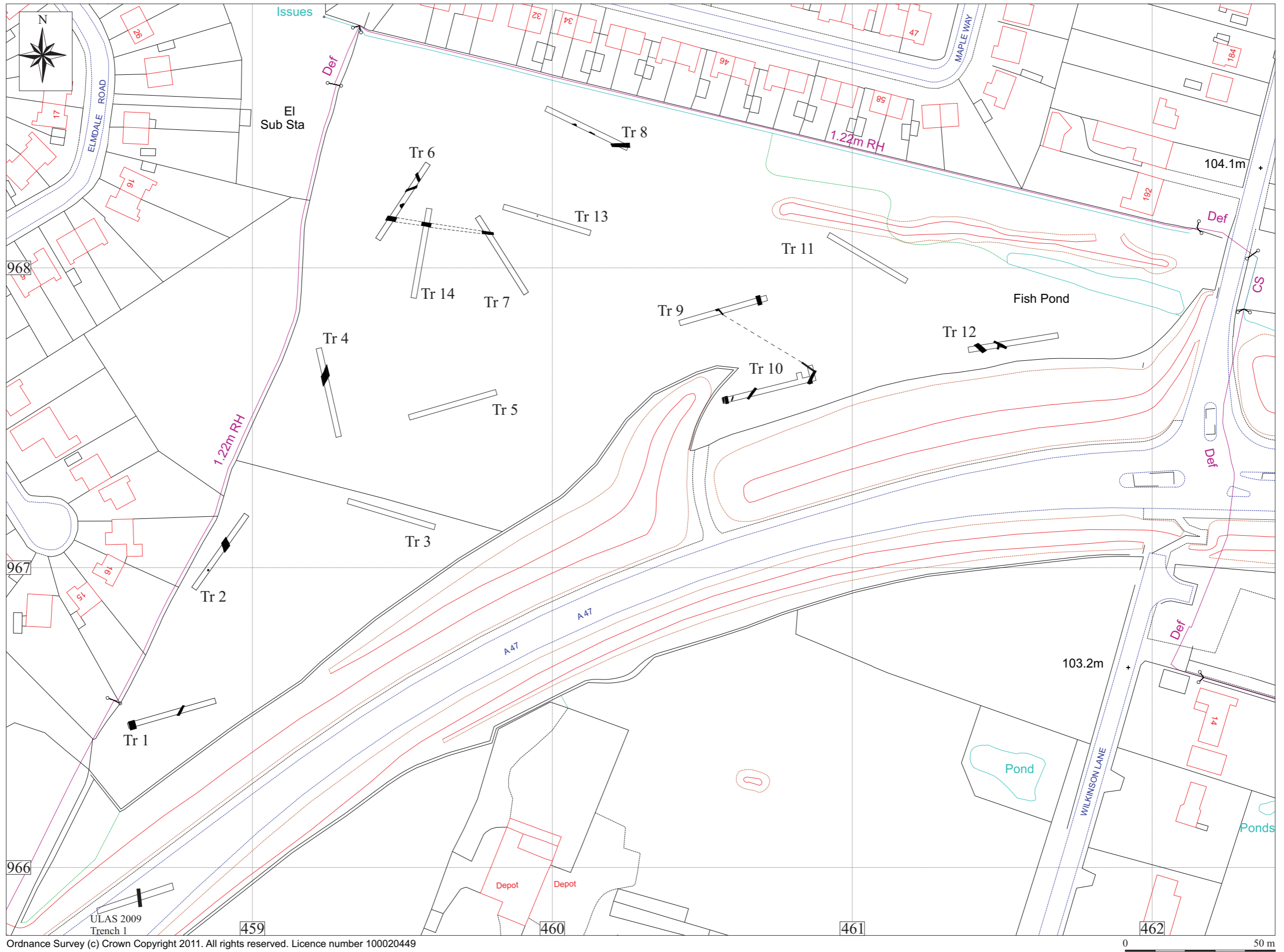


Figure 1b. Trench location

2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The aims of the investigation were set out at the start of the project and were to:

- establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains within the site and
- aim to gather sufficient information to generate a reliable predictive model of the extent, character, date state of preservation and depth of burial of important archaeological remains within the proposal area with particular reference to the former Roman, Anglo-Saxon, medieval and post-medieval landscapes.

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

Site procedures for the investigation and recording of potential archaeological deposits and features were defined in the specification and Written Scheme of Investigation (JMHS 2011). The work was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Institute for Archaeologists (1999) and the procedures laid down in MAP2 (English Heritage 1991).

3.2 Methodology

The trenching sample required was achieved through the excavation of 14 trenches measuring 30m long and 1.8m wide, locations shown on Figure 1b.

The trenches were excavated by 14 tonne 360° tracked excavator, fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. The resultant surfaces were cleaned by hand where necessary prior to hand excavation of the potential archaeological deposits and features.

Standard John Moore Heritage Services techniques were employed throughout, involving the completion of a written record for each deposit encountered, with scale plans and sections drawings. A photographic record was produced using colour transparency, black and white and digital cameras. The trenches were backfilled after a scheduled inspection meeting.

The work was monitored by the archaeological advisor to the Local Planning Authority (Teresa Hawtin) of Leicestershire Historic and Natural Environment Team (LHaNET).

4 RESULTS

All deposits and features were assigned individual context numbers. Context numbers without brackets indicate features i.e. pit cuts; while numbers in () show feature fills or deposits of material.

4.1 Excavation Results

The trenches were set out across the general area of the proposed new development. The lowest deposit noted within the trenches consisted of natural clays and sands, which was reached between varying heights of 96.60m to 108.79m AOD.

4.2 Trench 1 (Figure 2, Plates 1 & 5)

Trench 1 was excavated to a length of 30m (1.8m wide) and to varying depths of between 0.22m (108.07m AOD) at the north-eastern end and 0.80m (108.52m AOD) at the south-western end. Machine excavation ceased at the top of archaeology or the natural clay. Two ditches were seen aligned approximately north to south. Two other linear features were investigated but considered to be natural palaeo water channels.

Table 1: Summary of contexts within Trench 1

Context	Type	Description	Depth (m)	Width (m)	Length (m)	Finds	Date
Trench 1							
1/01	Deposit	Dark greyish brown silty clay topsoil	0.22	Tr.	Tr.	None	/
1/02	Deposit	Light orange grey silty sand subsoil	0.10-0.15	Tr.	Tr.	None	/
1/03	Deposit	Light mid brown grey silty subsoil	0.20	Tr.	c. 7	Tile	Medieval?
1/04	Deposit	Light greyish orange sandy silt with clay patches natural	/	Tr.	Tr.	None	/
1/05	Cut	Cut of ditch	0.25	0.70	2 (min)	/	/
1/06	Fill of 1/05	Mottled grey orange silty sand	0.25	0.70	2 (min)	None	/
1/07	Cut	Cut of palaeo channel	0.40	1.60	2	/	/
1/08	Fill of 1/07	light grey-silty sand with orange mottling	0.40	1.60	2	None	/
1/09	Cut	Cut of palaeo channel	0.30	1	2	/	/
1/10	Fill of 1/09	light grey silty sand	0.30	1	2	None	/
1/11	Cut	Cut of ditch	0.20	1.60	1.8 (min)	/	/
1/12	Fill of 1/11	Gravel	0.05	1.60	1.8 (min)	None	/
1/13	Fill of 1/11	mid brown-grey silt-sand	0.15	1.60	1.8 (min)	None	/

The stratigraphy within the trench consisted of the following layers (earliest to latest) (Fig 2; S: 1.1). The natural light greyish orange sandy silt with clay patches was seen at the base of the trench (1/04). At the south-western end of the trench there was 0.20m thick layer of subsoil (1/03). Overlying this was c. 0.10-0.15m thick light orange grey silty sand subsoil (1/02) overlain by c. 0.20m thick dark greyish brown silty clay topsoil (1/01). At the north eastern end of the trench was topsoil directly overlying natural clay (Fig 2; S. 1.6).

Linear Features - all cut into (1/04) and sealed by (1/02)

Ditch 1/05 was aligned north south with sharp concave sides forming a gently rounded base (Fig. 2; S. 1.5). It was filled by mottled grey-orange silty sand (1/06) with no finds.

Ditch/Palaeo-channel 1/07 was aligned north-south with sharp concave sides and a rounded base. It was filled by light grey-silty sand with orange mottling (1/08) with no finds (Fig. 2; S. 1.4).

Ditch/Palaeo-channel 1/09 was north-south aligned across the trench with sharp concave sides forming a rounded base. It was filled by light grey silty sand (1/10) with no inclusions or finds.

Sealed beneath layer (1/03) was Ditch 1/11 north-south aligned c. 1m wide with concave sides. The primary fill was a 0.05m thick layer of gravel (1/12) in a clay matrix above this a mid brown-grey silt-sand (1/13) 0.15m thick (Fig. 2; S. 1.1).

4.3 Trench 2 (Figure 2)

Trench 2 was excavated to a length of 30m and to varying depths of between 0.30m (107.34m AOD) at the northern end and 0.31m (108.79m AOD) at the southern end of the trench. Machine excavation ceased at the top of archaeology or the natural clay. The general stratigraphic sequence of the trench consisted of the following (earliest to latest). The light brown-orange natural clay was seen at the base of the trench (2/03). Overlying this was c. 0.15m thick light brown orange silt (2/02) subsoil and finally dark grey-brown silty clay topsoil (2/01) (Fig. 2; S. 2.3).

Table 2: Summary of contexts within Trench 2

Context	Type	Description	Depth (m)	Width (m)	Length (m)	Finds	Date
Trench 2							
2/01	Deposit	Dark black brown silty clay	0.12	Tr.	Tr.	None	/
2/02	Deposit	Mid brown silty clay	0.15	Tr.	Tr.	None	/
2/03	Deposit	Light brownish orange clay silt	/	Tr.	Tr.	/	/
2/04	Cut	Cut of Ditch	0.22	2.0	Tr.	/	/
2/05	Fill of 2/04	light-grey brown silty clay	0.22	2.0	Tr.	Pot, Tile	Post med?
2/06	Cut	Cut of shallow discrete	0.07	0.67	0.60	/	/
2/07	Fill of 2/06	Friable grey brown clay	0.07	0.67	0.60	Tile	Late medieval?

Linear features

Ditch 2/04 c. 2m wide was seen orientated approximately north-south with shallow concave sides and a roughly flat base (Fig. 2; S. 2.2). It was filled by light-grey brown silty clay (2/05) with rare flint gravels and ceramic building material (CBM) fragments.

Other features

A sub circular feature 2/06 with shallow sides and flattish base was filled by friable grey brown clay (2/07) with charcoal patches (Fig. 2; S. 2.1). This possibly truncated pit was sampled for environmental reasons (see section 5.4)

4.4 Trench 3 (Figure 2)

This trench was excavated to a length of 30m (1.8m wide) and to varying depths of between 0.35m (103.61m AOD) at the south-eastern end and 0.40m (105.11m AOD) at the north western end. The general stratigraphic sequence consisted of the following (earliest to latest). The natural orange brown clay was observed at the base of the trench (3/03). This was overlain by soft mid grey-brown clay silt subsoil (3/02) and 0.20m thick dark grey brown silty clay topsoil (3/01) (Fig 2; S. 3.1). No archaeological features or finds were observed in this trench.

Table 3: Summary of contexts within Trench 3

Context	Type	Description	Depth (m)	Width (m)	Length (m)	Finds	Date
Trench 3							
3/01	Deposit	Dark grey brown silty clay topsoil	0.10	Tr.	Tr.	None	/
3/02	Deposit	Mid grey brown clay silt subsoil	0.28	Tr.	Tr.	None	/
3/03	Deposit	Mid orange brown clay silt natural	/	Tr.	Tr.	None	/

4.5 Trench 4 (Figure 2, Plate 8)

This trench was excavated to a length of 30m (1.8m wide) and to varying depths of between 0.25m (104.26m AOD) at the north-western end and 0.38m (104.88m AOD) at the south-eastern end. The general stratigraphic sequence consisted of the following (earliest to latest). The natural with gravel patches was observed at the base of the trench (4/03). This was overlain by mid grey orange silty clay subsoil (4/02) and 0.10m thick dark greyish brown silty clay topsoil (4/01) (Fig 2; S. 4.2).

Table 4: Summary of contexts within Trench 4

Context	Type	Description	Depth (m)	Width (m)	Length (m)	Finds	Date
Trench 4							
4/01	Deposit	Dark greyish brown silty clay topsoil	0.10	Tr.	Tr.	None	/
4/02	Deposit	Soft light grey silty clay	0.15	Tr.	Tr.	None	/
4/03	Deposit	Light greyish orange clay silt natural	/	Tr.	Tr.	/	/
4/04	Cut	Ditch/hedgerow	0.15	1.8m	Tr.	/	/
4/05	Fill of 4/04	Light orange brown clay silt	0.15	1.8m	Tr.	/	/

Linear Features

Linear 4/04 was 1.8m in width with gently sloping concave sides and base orientated on an approximate north-east south-west alignment. It was filled by light orange brown clay silt with frequent flint gravels (4/05) with one sherd of medieval pottery (Fig. 2; S. 4.1).

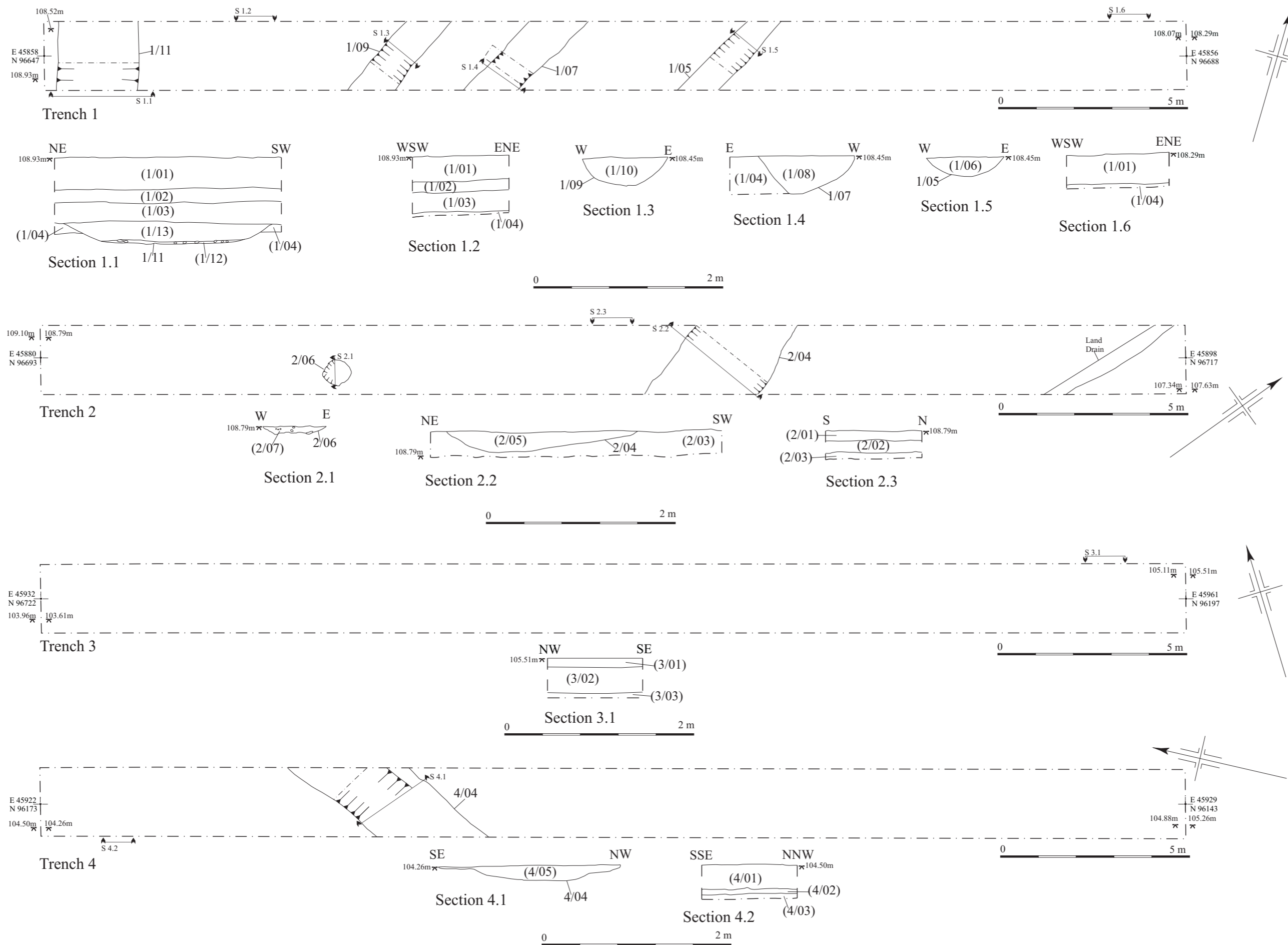


Figure 2. Trenches 1-4 Plans & Sections

4.6 Trench 5 (Figure 3)

This trench was excavated to a length of 30m (1.8m wide) and to varying depths of between 0.28m (101.37m AOD) at the north-eastern end and 0.25m (103.20m AOD) at the south-western end. The general stratigraphic sequence consisted of the following (earliest to latest). The natural light greyish orange clay silt with gravel patches was observed at the base of the trench (5/03). This was overlain by mid grey orange silty clay subsoil (5/02) and 0.10m thick dark greyish brown silty clay topsoil (5/01) (Fig 3; S. 5.1).

Table 5: Summary of contexts within Trench 5

Context	Type	Description	Depth (m)	Width (m)	Length (m)	Finds	Date
Trench 5							
5/01	Deposit	Dark greyish brown silty clay topsoil	0.10	Tr.	Tr.	None	/
5/02	Deposit	Soft light grey silty clay	0.15	Tr.	Tr.	None	/
5/03	Deposit	Light greyish orange clay silt Natural	/	Tr.	Tr.	/	/

There were no archaeological features or finds within this trench.

4.7 Trench 6 (Figure 3, Plate 2)

This trench was excavated to a length of 30m (1.8m wide) and to varying depths of between 0.36m (101.54m AOD) at the north-eastern end and 0.32m (102.52m AOD) at the south-western end. The general stratigraphic sequence consisted of the following (earliest to latest). The natural light greyish orange clay silt with gravel patches was observed at the base of the trench (6/03). This was overlain by mid grey orange silty clay subsoil (6/02) and 0.10m thick dark greyish brown silty clay topsoil (6/01) (Fig 3; S. 6.1).

Table 6: Summary of contexts within Trench 6

Context	Type	Description	Depth (m)	Width (m)	Length (m)	Finds	Date
Trench 6							
6/01	Deposit	Dark greyish brown silty clay topsoil	0.10	Tr.	Tr.	None	/
6/02	Deposit	Soft light grey silty clay	0.15	Tr.	Tr.	None	/
6/03	Deposit	Light greyish orange clay silt Natural	/	Tr.	Tr.	/	/
6/04	Cut	Cut of Ditch	0.31	1.60	1.80	/	/
6/05	Fill of 6/04	Dark grey brown silty clay	0.31	1.60	1.80	None/	/
6/06	Cut	Cut of Ditch	0.10	1.35	1.80	/	/
6/07	Fill of 6/06	Mid grey brown silty clay	0.10	1.35	1.80	None	/
6/08	Cut	Cut of Ditch	0.09	1.0	4.0	/	/

6/09	Fill of 6/08	mid grey brown silty clay	0.09	1.0	4.0	None	/
6/10	Cut	Cut of Ditch	0.10	1.0	2.4	/	/
6/11	Fill of 6/10	mid brown grey silty clay	0.10	1.0	2.4	Tile	medieval

Linear Features

Ditch 6/04 was orientated on a north-west south-east alignment, 0.31m in depth and had a sharp break of slope with concave sides forming a flat base. The ditch was filled by dark grey brown silty clay with charcoal flecking throughout (6/05) with no finds. This feature was also seen in Trench 14 and Trench 7 (Fig 1; Fig 3; S. 6.1).

Possible Ditch terminal 6/06 was orientated on a possible north-south alignment, 1.35m in width and 0.10m deep. It had concave sides forming a flat base filled by mid grey brown silty clay (6/07) with no finds (Fig 3; S. 6.2). If it was a ditch it did not continue into Trench 14.

Ditch 6/08 was orientated on a east-west alignment 1m wide and 0.09m deep. It had concave sides forming a gently rounded base and was filled by mid grey brown silty clay (6/09) with no finds (Fig 3; S. 6.3).

Ditch 6/10 was orientated on a rough north-south alignment and was 1m wide and 0.10m deep with concave sides, which formed a curving terminal near the edge of the trench. The ditch was filled by mid brown grey silty clay (6/11) which contained a fragment of brick (Fig 3; S. 6.4).

4.8 Trench 7 (Figure 3, Plate 7)

This trench was excavated to a length of 30m (1.8m wide) and to varying depths of between 0.36m (101.11m AOD) at the north-western end and 0.33m (101.80m AOD) at the south-eastern end. The general stratigraphic sequence consisted of the following (earliest to latest). The natural light greyish orange clay silt was observed at the base of the trench (7/04). This was overlain by light orange brown silty clay subsoil (7/02) and 0.10m thick dark greyish brown silty clay topsoil (7/01) (Fig 3; S. 7.1).

Table 7: Summary of contexts within Trench 7

Context	Type	Description	Depth (m)	Width (m)	Length (m)	Finds	Date
Trench 7							
7/01	Deposit	Dark greyish brown silty clay topsoil	0.10	Tr.	Tr.	None	/
7/02	Deposit	Soft light grey silty clay	0.15	Tr.	Tr.	None	/
7/03	Fill of 7/05	Dark orange brown silty clay	0.14	0.40	Tr.	Tile	Post-medieval
7/04	Deposit	Light greyish orange clay silt natural	0.12	0.40	Tr.	/	/
7/05	Cut	Cut of Ditch	0.12	0.40	Tr.	/	/

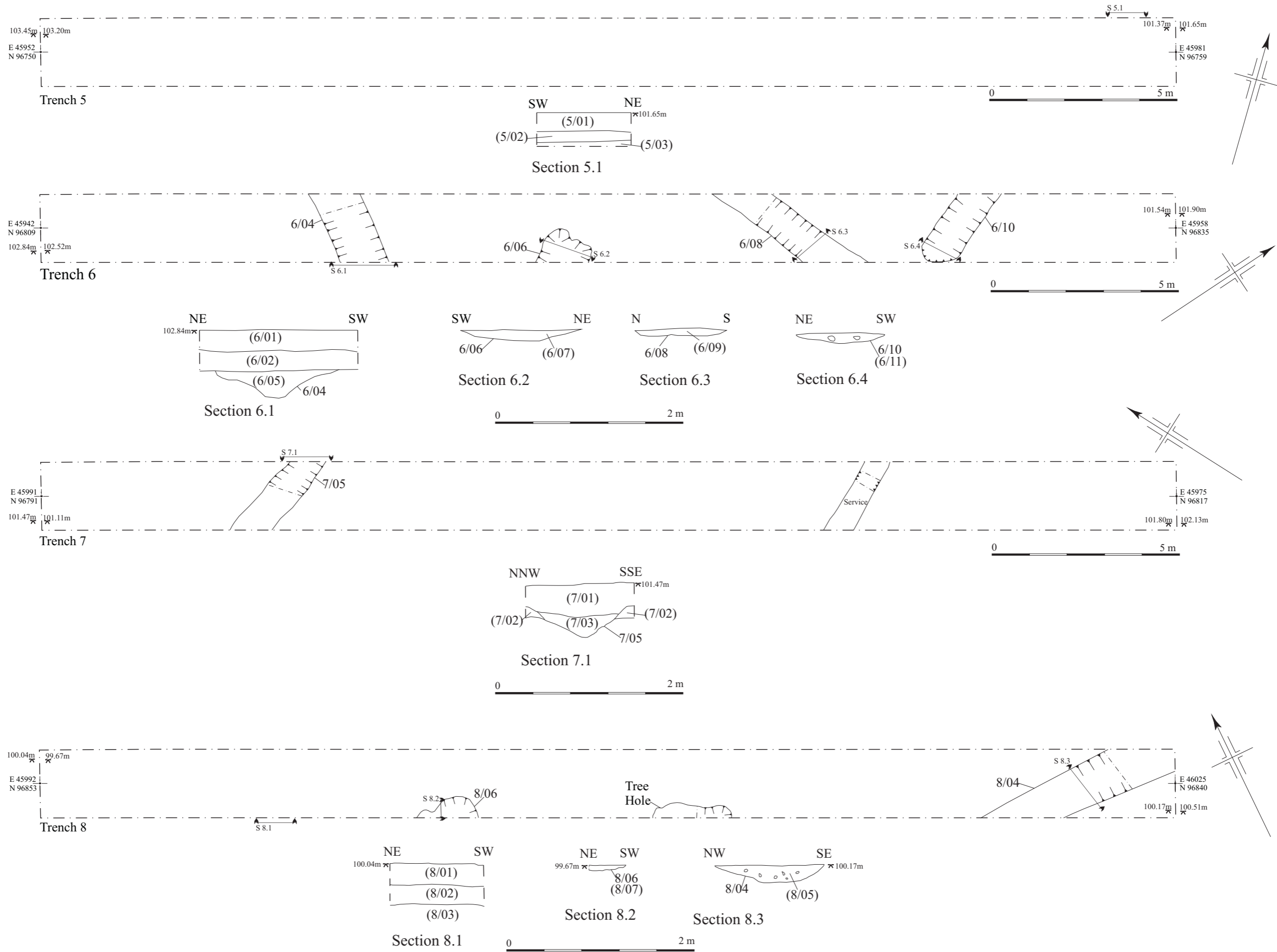


Figure 3. Trenches 5-8 Plans and sections

Linear Features

Linear 7/05 was 0.40m in width with gently sloping concave sides and rounded base orientated on an approximate east-west alignment. It was filled by dark orange brown silty clay (7/03) with rare gravels and fragments of post-medieval tile (Fig 3; S. 7.1). It was also seen in Trench 6.

4.9 Trench 8 (Figure 2, Plate 3)

Trench 8 was excavated to a length of 30m and to varying depths of between 0.37m (99.67m AOD) at the north western and 0.34m (100.17m AOD) at the south eastern end of the trench. Machine excavation ceased at the top of archaeology or the natural clay. The general stratigraphic sequence of the trench consisted of the following (earliest to latest). The light brown-orange natural clay was seen at the base of the trench (8/03). Overlying this was c. 0.15m thick light brown orange silt subsoil (8/02) and finally dark grey-brown silty clay topsoil (8/01) (Fig 3; S. 8.1).

Table 8: Summary of contexts within Trench 8

Context	Type	Description	Depth (m)	Width (m)	Length (m)	Findings	Date
Trench 8							
8/01	Deposit	Dark black brown silty clay	0.12	Tr.	Tr.	None	/
8/02	Deposit	Mid brown silty clay	0.15	Tr.	Tr.	None	/
8/03	Deposit	Light brownish orange clay silt	/	Tr.	Tr.	/	/
8/04	Cut	Cut of Ditch	0.18	1.15	1.50		
8/05	Fill of 8/04	Mid brown grey silty clay	0.18	1.15	1.50	Tile	Medieval
8/06	Cut	Cut of shallow discrete	0.06	0.55	1.70	/	/
8/07	Fill of 8/06	Light grey brown silty clay	0.06	0.55	1.70	/	/

Linear features

Ditch 8/04 was 1.15m wide orientated on an approximate NE-SW alignment and had concave sides with a flat base filled by 0.18m thick mid brown grey silty clay (8/05) with degraded fragments of medieval tile (Fig 3; S. 8.3).

Other features

An irregular shallow feature 8/06 with concave sides and a flat base 0.55m wide and 0.06m deep, filled by light grey brown silty clay (8/07) (Fig 3; S. 8.2). This could represent a heavily truncated pit.

4.9 Trench 9 (Figure 4, Plate 6)

Trench 9 was excavated to a length of 30m and to varying depths of between 0.39m (101.95m AOD) at the north eastern end and 0.43m (102.79m AOD) at the south western end of the trench. Machine excavation ceased at the top of archaeology or the natural clay. The general stratigraphic sequence of the trench consisted of the following (earliest to latest). The light

brown-orange natural clay was seen at the base of the trench (9/03). Overlying this was *c.* 0.15m thick light brown orange silt (9/02) subsoil and finally dark grey-brown silty clay topsoil (9/01) (Fig 4; S. 9.2).

Table 9: Summary of contexts within Trench 9

Context	Type	Description	Depth (m)	Width (m)	Length (m)	Findings	Date
Trench 9							
9/01	Deposit	Dark black brown silty clay	0.12	Tr.	Tr.	None	/
9/02	Deposit	Mid brown silty clay	0.15	Tr.	Tr.	None	/
9/03	Deposit	Light brownish orange clay silt	/	Tr.	Tr.	/	/
9/04	Cut	Cut of Ditch	0.20	1.30	Tr.	/	/
9/05	Fill of 9/04	Mid brown grey silty clay	0.20	1.30	Tr.	Tile	undated
9/06	Cut	Cut of modern disturbance	0.50 (min)	Tr.	4.0	/	/
9/07	Fill of 9/06	Dark red thick clay	0.50 (min)	Tr.	4.0	None	/
9/08	Cut	Cut of Ditch	0.16	0.40	2.0	/	/
9/09	Fill of 9/08	Dark grey brown silty clay	0.16	0.40	2.0	None	/

Linear features

Ditch 9/04 was orientated on a north south alignment and was originally seen on the geophysics survey (Austrums 2011). It was 1.30m wide with concave sides and a flat base, filled by mid brown grey silty clay (9/05) with rare gravels and charcoal flecks with one fragment of post-medieval CBM (Fig 4; S. 9.2).

Ditch 9/06 was a straight sided cut *c.* 0.50m in width, filled by dark red thick clay (9/07) with modern bricks seen throughout the fill.

Ditch 9/08 was *c.* 0.40m wide and orientated north east-south west filled by dark grey brown silty clay (9/09) with fragments of ceramic land drain pipe observed, not retained (Fig 4; S. 9.1). This could possible represent an early land drain as it was cut by a later land drain, which may have been a replacement.

4.10 Trench 10 (Figure 4)

Trench 10 was excavated to a length of 30m and to varying depths of between 0.20m (102.22m AOD) at the north eastern end and 0.43m (102.91m AOD) at the south western end of the trench. The trench was extended to the north in two separate areas in an attempt to clarify features extending outside the trench edges. Machine excavation ceased at the top of archaeology or the natural clay. The general stratigraphic sequence of the trench consisted of the following (earliest to latest). The mottled light brown-orange natural clay with gravel patches was seen at the base of the trench (10/03). Overlying this was *c.* 0.15m thick light

brown orange silt subsoil (10/02) and finally dark grey-brown silty clay topsoil (10/01) (Fig 4; S. 10.5).

Table 10: Summary of contexts within Trench 10

Context	Type	Description	Depth (m)	Width (m)	Length (m)	Finds	Date
Trench 10							
10/01	Deposit	Dark black brown silty clay	0.23	Tr.	Tr.	None	/
10/02	Deposit	Mid brown silty clay	0.20	Tr.	Tr.	None	/
10/03	Deposit	Light brownish orange clay silt	/	Tr.	Tr.	/	/
10/04	Cut	Ditch NW-SE Modern	0.50 (min)	0.50	2.5	/	/
10/05	Fill of 10/04	Dark red clay silt	0.50 (min)	0.50	2.5	None	/
10/06	Cut	Ditch orientated NE-SW	0.10	0.90	3.5	/	/
10/07	Fill of 10/06	Light –mid grey brown clay	0.10	0.90	3.5	Pot	Medieval
10/08	Cut	Linear – Natural palaeo-channel?	0.20	0.50	2.0	/	/
10/09	Fill of 10/08	Dark greyish brown silty clay	0.20	0.50	2.0	None	/
10/10	Cut	Cut of shallow scoop	0.05	0.25	1.80	/	/
10/11	Fill of 10/10	Dark brownish grey silty clay	0.05	0.25	1.80	None	/
10/12	Cut	Ditch N-S	0.04	0.50	1.75	/	/
10/13	Fill of 10/12	Dark greyish brown silty clay	0.04	0.50	1.75	None	/
10/14	Cut	Ditch N-S	0.13	0.90	1.8	/	/
10/15	Fill of 10/14	Dark greyish silty clay	0.13	0.90	1.8	Slate	Modern

Linear features

Ditch 10/04 was 0.50m wide orientated on a northwest - southeast alignment with almost straight sides, filled by thick dark red clay silt (10/05) with no finds. This feature was considered to be a machine cut drainage trench.

Ditch 10/06 was 0.90m wide and 0.10m deep with shallow concave sides filled by light –mid grey brown clay (10/07) with one sherd of medieval pottery (Fig 4; S. 10.5).

Ditch 10/08 0.50m wide and 0.20m deep had irregular sides and base and was considered by the excavator to have the characteristics of a natural relic water channel. It was filled by dark greyish brown silty clay (10/09) with no finds (Fig 4; S. 10.4).

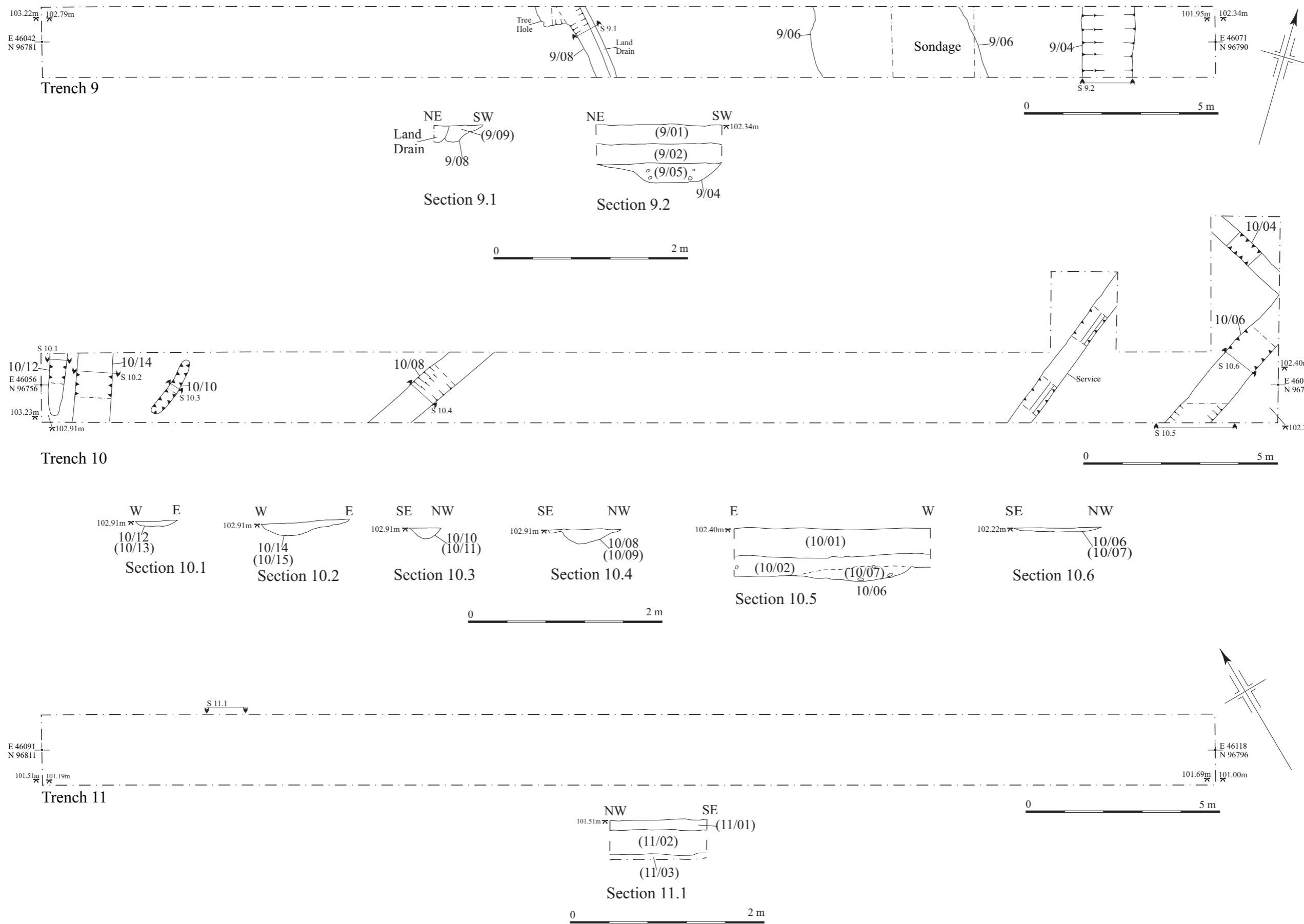


Figure 4. Trench 9-11 Plan and sections

A shallow lobate feature 10/10 was excavated and recorded but was probably another natural feature. It was filled by dark brownish grey silty clay (10/11) (Fig 4; S. 10.3).

Ditch 10/12 was very shallow 0.04m thick with concave sides seen at the far western end of the trench. It was filled by dark greyish brown silty clay (10/13) with no finds (Fig 4; S. 10.1).

Ditch 10/14 was 0.13m deep and 0.90m wide orientated approximately north-south with gently sloping concave sides forming a rounded base. It was filled by dark greyish silty clay with rare gravel inclusions and a fragments of modern slate (10/15) (Fig 4; 10.2).

4.12 Trench 11 (Figure 3)

This trench was excavated to a length of 30m (1.8m wide) and to varying depths of between 0.32m (101.19m AOD) at the north-western end and 0.31m (103.30m AOD) at the south-eastern end. The general stratigraphic sequence consisted of the following (earliest to latest). The natural light greyish red clay silt with gravel patches was observed at the base of the trench (11/03). This was overlain by mid grey orange silty clay subsoil (11/02) and 0.10m thick dark greyish brown silty clay topsoil (11/01) (Fig 4; S. 11.1).

Table 11: Summary of contexts within Trench 11

Context	Type	Description	Depth (m)	Width (m)	Length (m)	Finds	Date
Trench 11							
11/01	Deposit	Dark greyish brown silty clay topsoil	0.10	Tr.	Tr.	None	/
11/02	Deposit	Soft light grey silty clay	0.24	Tr.	Tr.	None	/
11/03	Deposit	Light greyish red clay silt Natural	/	Tr.	Tr.	/	/

There were no archaeological features or finds within this trench.

4.13 Trench 12 (Figure 5, Plate 4)

This trench was excavated to a length of 30m (1.8m wide) and to varying depths of between 0.34m (99.94m AOD) at the north-eastern end and 0.33m (100.33m AOD) at the south-western end. The general stratigraphic sequence consisted of the following (earliest to latest). The natural light greyish red clay silt with gravel patches was observed at the base of the trench (12/03). This was overlain by mid grey orange silty clay subsoil (12/02) and 0.15m thick dark greyish brown silty clay topsoil (12/01) (Fig 5; S. 12.1).

Table 12: Summary of contexts within Trench 12

Context	Type	Description	Depth (m)	Width (m)	Length (m)	Finds	Date
Trench 12							
12/01	Deposit	Dark greyish brown silty clay topsoil	0.15	Tr.	Tr.	None	/
12/02	Deposit	Soft light grey silty clay	0.18	Tr.	Tr.	None	/

12/03	Deposit	Light greyish red clay silt Natural	/	Tr.	Tr.	/	/
12/04	Cut	Ditch NW-SE	0.10	0.70	4.90	/	/
12/05	Fill of 12/04	Mid reddish brown clay silt	0.10	0.70	4.90	Pot, Slate	Medieval
12/06	Cut	Ditch N-S	0.10	0.70	1.40	/	/
12/07	Fill of 12/06	Mid reddish brown clay silt	0.10	0.70	1.40	None	/
12/08	Cut	Ditch NE-SW	0.13	1.50	Tr.	/	/
12/09	Fill of 12/08	Mid brown grey silty clay	0.13	1.50	Tr.	None	/

Linear Features

Ditch 12/04 was *c.* 0.70m wide orientated on a NW-SE alignment and had gradually sloping shallow concave sides. It was filled by mid reddish brown clay silt (12/05) with a sherd of pottery dated to the medieval period and a slate with a hole pierced through one end (Fig 5; S. 12.1).

Ditch 12/06 was 0.70m wide and 0.10m deep with shallow concave sides filled by mid reddish brown clay silt (12/07) an indistinguishable fill to that of ditch 12/04. A slot was positioned to investigate the relationship between the ditches but the exact chronological sequence could be determined (Fig 5; S. 12.2).

Ditch 12/08 was 1.50m wide and 0.13m deep with gradual curving concave sides forming a flat base. It was filled by mid brown grey silty clay (12/09) with no finds (Fig 5; S. 12.3). The edges were hard to define on this feature and it was considered that this feature may be a relic water channel.

4.14 Trench 13 (Figure 5)

This trench was excavated to a length of 30m (1.8m wide) and to varying depths of between 0.33m (101.19m AOD) at the north-eastern end and 0.34m (100.93m AOD) at the south-western end. The general stratigraphic sequence consisted of the following (earliest to latest). The natural light greyish red clay silt with gravel patches was observed at the base of the trench (13/03). This was overlain by mid grey orange silty clay subsoil (13/02) and 0.10m thick dark greyish brown silty clay topsoil (13/01) (Fig 5; 13.3).

Table 13: Summary of contexts within Trench 13

Context	Type	Description	Depth (m)	Width (m)	Length (m)	Finds	Date
Trench 13							
13/01	Deposit	Dark greyish brown silty clay topsoil	0.10	Tr.	Tr.	None	/
13/02	Deposit	Soft light grey silty clay	0.26	Tr.	Tr.	None	/
13/03	Deposit	Light greyish red clay silt Natural	/	Tr.	Tr.	/	/
13/04	Cut	Cut of posthole	0.04	0.20	0.20	/	/

13/05	Fill of 13/04	Mid brownish grey silty clay	0.04	0.20	0.20	None	/
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Discrete Feature

A subcircular shaped feature 13/04 with rounded concave sides and a flat base was observed near the centre of the trench. It was filled by mid brownish grey silty clay (13/05) with rare small gravel inclusions (Fig 5; 13.2). It possibly represents a heavily truncated posthole.

4.15 Trench 14 (Figure 5, Plate 9)

This trench was excavated to a length of 30m (1.8m wide) and to varying depths of between 0.33m (100.08m AOD) at the north-eastern end and 0.48m (101.36m AOD) at the south-western end. The general stratigraphic sequence consisted of the following (earliest to latest). The natural light brownish orange clay silt with gravel inclusions was observed at the base of the trench (14/03). This was overlain by mid grey orange silty clay subsoil up to 0.32m thick (14/02) and a 0.16m thick dark greyish brown silty clay topsoil (14/01) (Fig 5; 14.1).

Table 14: Summary of contexts within Trench 14

Context	Type	Description	Depth (m)	Width (m)	Length (m)	Findings	Date
Trench 14							
14/01	Deposit	Dark greyish brown silty clay topsoil	0.16	Tr.	Tr.	None	/
14/02	Deposit	Mid grey orange silty clay	0.18-0.32	Tr.	Tr.	None	/
14/03	Deposit	light brownish orange clay silt natural	/	Tr.	Tr.	/	/
14/04	Cut	Cut of Ditch NW-SE	0.04	0.20	0.20	/	/
14/05	Fill of 14/04	Dark grey brown silty clay	0.04	0.20	0.20	None	/

Linear Features

Ditch 14/04 was 1.32m wide and 0.35m deep with concave sides and rounded base. It was filled by dark grey brown silty clay (14/05) with charcoal flecking and gravel inclusions. This ditch was the same as seen in Trenches 6 & 7 (Fig 5; 14.1).

4.16 Reliability of Techniques and Results

The reliability of results is considered to be good. The excavation of the trenches took place in mainly favourable weather conditions.

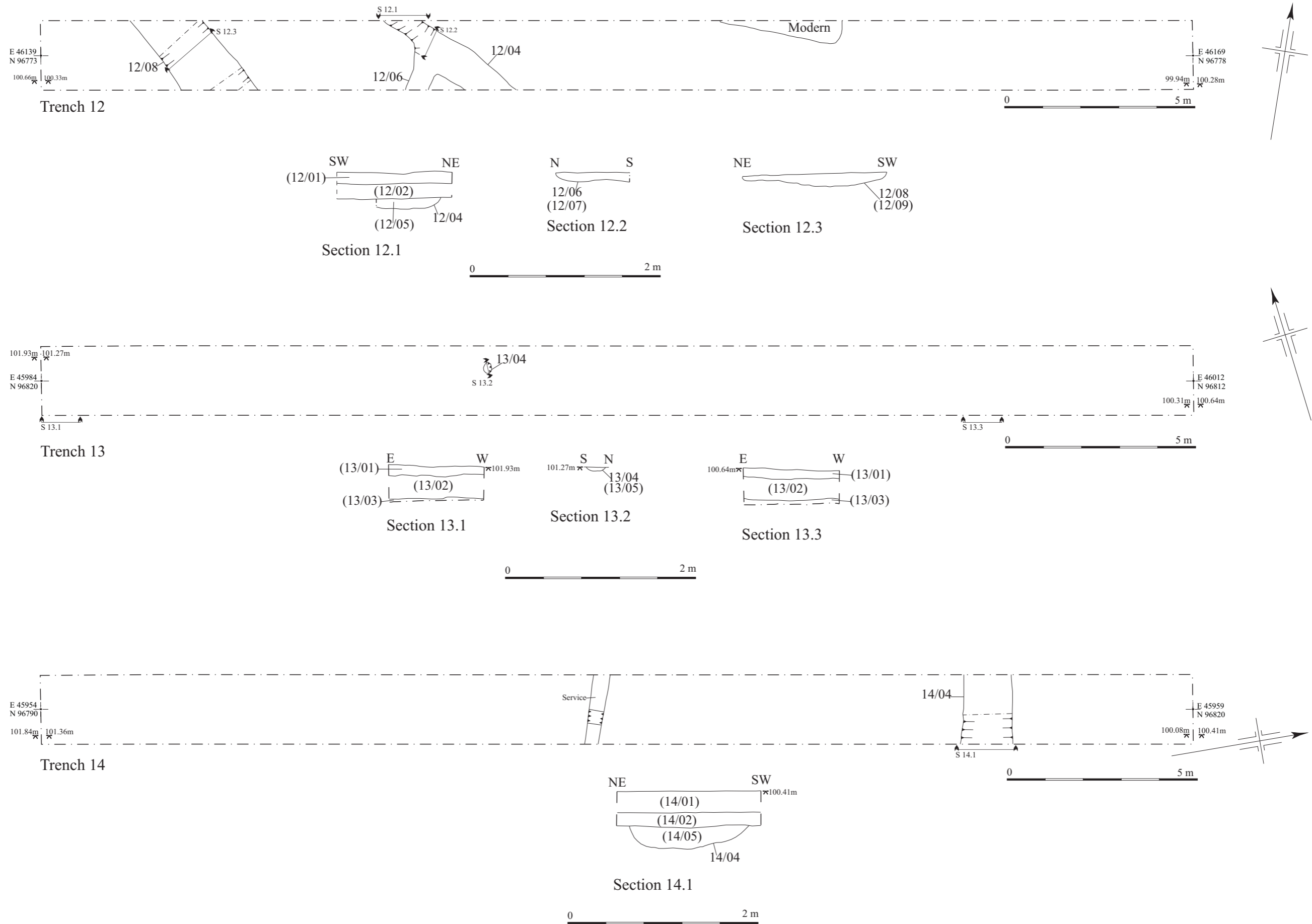


Figure 5. Trenches 12-14 Plans and sections

5 FINDS

5.1 The Pottery by Jane Timby

The archaeological work resulted in the recovery of three sherds of pottery weighing 67 g from five contexts. The assemblage is catalogued below. The sherds although quite large have abraded surfaces suggesting fairly hostile ground conditions. Provisionally the pottery appears to be of medieval date (13-15th century).

Catalogue

1. Context 2/05. Black sandy ware. Rimsherd with a slightly concave upper surface from a jar. Wt. 7 g.
2. Context 4/05. Pale brown very gritty fabric with a grey core. Hammer-head rim from a jar. Wt. 34g.
3. Context 10/07. Fabric as no. 1. Flaring rim from a jar. Wt. 26 g.

5.2 The Tile by Gwilym Williams and Paul Riccoboni

The archaeological work resulted in the recovery of twelve fragments of tile, from seven separate contexts. The assemblage is catalogued below.

Table 15: Description of medieval and Post medieval tile

Context	Description	Date
1/03	Tile fragment: Dark red 19mm x 65mm length with few sandy inclusions	Medieval?
2/05	Tile fragment: Dark brown glaze 54mm length x 10mm thick Tile fragment: Dark red unglazed 15mm thick x 63mm length with 1mm flint and quartz inclusions	Post medieval Post medieval?
2/07	Tile fragment: 71mm length x 36mm width	Late medieval?
6/11	Very small chip, probably ceramic building material. Wt. Less than 0.5g.	Post- Roman ?
7/03	Tile fragment: Dark red unglazed 11mm thick x 75mm length with few sandy inclusions.	Post medieval?
8/05	Six tile fragments from a single tile: Dark brown red colour micaceous sandy clay with quartz inclusions	Medieval?
9/05	Tile fragment: Dark red micaceous sandy clay 16mm thick x 41mm length	Indeterminate

5.3 The Slate by Paul Riccoboni

Two fragments of roof slate were recovered from two separate contexts. The assemblage is catalogued below.

Table 16: Description of slate

10/15	Slate fragment: greenish grey 6mm thick x 47mm length	Modern
12/05	Swithland? slate fragment with circular nail hole (5mm) at one end. Dark grey colour and irregular shape. 66mm diameter x 162mm length x 14mm thick.	Medieval?

5.4 Palaeoenvironmental Evidence by Hayley McParland

5.4.1 Introduction

Environmental samples taken

Two bulk samples were taken from a ditch of probable post-medieval date from evaluation Trench 7 and a shallow circular feature from Trench 2. The sample was processed for the recovery and assessment of charred plant remains charred plant remains and charcoal.

Methodology

The samples were processed by Hayley McParland, using standard methodology. Samples were processed outside using a 'Siraf' style flotation tank, with meshes of 0.5mm aperture for both retention of the flot and the residue. The residue was additionally bucket floated to obtain maximum possible retrieval of environmental evidence. Following air drying the residue was sorted, weighed and discarded, though it was not fractionated prior to sorting. Little environmental evidence was present in the residue, though finds from these samples - probable post-medieval ceramic building material - were retained. The flot was sorted and assessed by eye without the aid of a microscope; it was not fractionated prior to assessment.

Table 17: Sample Information

Phase	Trench 7						Comments
	No. of samples	Context and Sample no.	Sample Vol (litres)	Flot Vol (litres)	Residue weight (g)	Residue discard weight (g)	
Post-Medieval	1	<1> (7/06)	40	44g	6579g	6350g	One tile retained
	1	<2> (2/07)	40	9 ltrs/126g	/	/	-
Totals	2	-	80	450ml/170g	6579g	6350g	-

5.4.2 Charred Plant Remains

Sample <1> contained no charred plant remains. The flot <2> was large, with small quantities of modern unidentifiable roots, Poaceae (grass) fragments and modern seeds, including *Taraxacum officinalis* (Dandelion), which may have been introduced during processing. The presence of modern material within the sample is suggestive of stratigraphic profile migration and the possible intrusion of later material.

The flot was large and productive, with abundant, well preserved charcoal, though few seed remains were present, perhaps due to either lack of preservation or more likely lack of inclusion within the context. Some diagnostic seeds were present, though no distinct cultivars appear to be present.

It is unlikely that further analysis of the charred plant remains will reveal information regarding the processing or production of crops or subsistence, due to the lack of material representing these activities. The preservation is limited to charring and therefore it is unlikely that contemporary wild seed remains not subjected to charring will have survived sufficiently within the sample.

5.4.3 Wood charcoal

There is a large amount of wood charcoal present within Sample <2>, making up the bulk of the charred assemblage. It is likely that this could be identified to species and provide information on the management and exploitation of the woodland resource. Sample <1> had a small insignificant amount of charred round wood.

5.4.4 Potential and further work

Due to the paucity of charred plant remains, with the exception of a large quantity of charcoal, it is suggested that further assessment and analysis of charred plant remains may be of limited use at this stage, though some charred seeds were present. Further analysis of wood charcoal has the potential to reveal species and woodland management practices. This sample <2> demonstrates excellent preservation of charred remains, and should further work be carried out, it is suggested that further environmental sampling and assessment would be of benefit. It should be noted that this was a preliminary assessment of the potential for further assessment and analysis of these samples, carried out by eye without fractionation, some seeds, particularly wild plant seeds, would not be visible at this magnification.

6 DISCUSSION

The archaeological evaluation confirmed the presence of archaeological features and finds from the medieval period to the post-medieval period. The aims and objectives set out at the start of the project were fulfilled and a confidence rating is high that the best possible results were achieved.

The depth of the overburden was as expected approximately 0.30m from the surface to the natural clay or sand.

The ditches in Trenches 4 & 10 contained some of earliest dateable features identified at the site. Ditch 4/04 was a wide and shallow feature on a same approximate alignment as the existing hedgerow or western site boundary. It could be postulated that the existing hedgerow respects the vague alignment of an earlier medieval land division, although slightly shifted to the west. A similar feature was also seen with Trench 2, but was not aligned parallel with the existing hedgerow boundary and is of post-medieval date.

A ditch was recorded in Trench 1 of the ULAS evaluation on the route of the new A47 bypass, which contained a Saxon pottery sherd. If the ditch continued it would have crossed

into the area of the site covered by the current evaluation Trench 1. Two definite ditches 1.80m wide and 0.70m wide crossed the trench on a very similar alignment with a very similar soft light grey sandy fills. Ditch 1/11 was most likely to be the same ditch as the 'Saxon' ditch already discovered by ULAS (ULAS 2009) (located on Fig 1b).

Most of the undated features were mainly shallow in character with little or no finds. Ditch 12/04 contained medieval pottery sherds and a fragment of slate, which is considered to be Swithland Slate of possible medieval date. Roman slate fragments from this industry were diamond shaped, but straight fragments have been discovered which were used to 'fill gaps at the eaves' (McWhirr 1988). These finds helped to provide useful dating evidence not apparent within many other features across the site. The fill of ditches 12/04 & 12/06 consisted of a high red clay content which was usually only seen within the modern machine cut drainage ditches. The red clay fill within the ditches here may suggest rapid backfilling during the medieval period with re-deposited natural clay.

A post-medieval ditch seen in Trenches 6, 7 & 14 matches the rough location of a boundary, assumed to be a ditch, on the Tithe map of 1852 (JMHS 2010). By 1889 this boundary seems to have become a line of trees, one of which still exists on the site (next to trench 9). The ditches or drains 9/08 and 10/04 also seem to respect this boundary.

The ditches 9/04 and 10/14 seen in Trenches 9 & 10 match the anomalies seen on the geophysics survey (Austrums 2011, Fig. 6 No. 1), both contained 19th-20th century land-drain pipe fragments.

The ditch within Trench 8 contained degraded medieval tile and likely formed a medieval boundary. Although it had a darker fill it may be associated with the light brown filled ditches discovered within Trench 6 as it was on a similar alignment.

Conclusion

The medieval and Post medieval discoveries have potential importance at this site due to the potential impact of proposed development. The undated ditches with light coloured fills may have been prehistoric or Roman in date, but there was no dating evidence to support this theory. The features were generally shallow as a result of truncation seen by ploughing (Plate's 5 & 6) except in the very far western corner of the proposed development site. Even though the features have been adversely affected by modern farming the site will be better understood with more archaeological fieldwork across areas of impact.

Soil stripping and excavation associated with the construction of the proposed housing estate will remove or damage archaeological deposits proved to exist across the northern, eastern and western areas of the development site at shallow depths.

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*Maps referred to:***19th Century**

AD 1852

Elmesthorpe Tithe map

AD 1889

Ordnance Survey 1:10,560

20th Century

AD 1903

Ordnance Survey 1:10,560

Plate 1; Trench 1 – looking SW



Plate 2; Trench 6 looking NW



Plate 3; Trench 8- Looking NW



Plate 4; Trench 12 Looking NE



Plate 5; Plough marks Trench 1



Plate 6; Ploughmarks Trench 9



Plate 7; Ditch 7/05



Plate 8; Ditch 4/05



Plate 9; Ditch 14/04

