Land South of Burford Road, Minster Lovell, Oxfordshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Land South of Burford Road, Minster Lovell, Oxfordshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Summary

Oxford Archaeology undertook an archaeological trial-trench evaluation on the site of a proposed residential development on land to the south of Burford Road, Minster Lovell, Oxfordshire, in April 2023. The fieldwork was commissioned by Catesby Estates and managed by Pegaus Group for the client.

A total of 37 trenches were excavated across the development area representing a 2% sample by area and incorporated targeted trenching to investigate features identified by the preceding geophysical survey.

Three small, shallow, circular pits were identified, two of which yielded low quantities of animal bone. A single pit also yielded two small sherds of pottery of probable 10-13th century date. A field drain was also identified corresponding to the location of a linear feature identified by the geophysical survey.

Acknowledgements

Oxford Archaeology would like to thank Catesby Estates for commissioning this project. Thanks are also extended to Rebecca Ward of Pegasus Group acting as the archaeological consultant who managed the evaluation on behalf of Catesby Estates and to Richard Oram, Lead Archaeologist, Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services for Oxfordshire County Council who monitored the fieldwork.

The project was managed for Oxford Archaeology by Steve Lawrence. The fieldwork was directed by Lee Sparks, who was supported by Ben McAndrew and Chirs Richardson. Survey and digitising was carried out by Caroline Souday. Thanks are also extended to the teams of OA staff that cleaned and packaged the finds under the supervision of Leigh Allen, processed the environmental remains under the supervision of Rebecca Nicholson, and prepared the archive under the supervision of Nicola Scott.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Instruction and planning background

1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by Catesby Estates (the client) to undertake a trial trench evaluation of a proposed housing development on land to the south of Burford Road, Minster Lovell, Oxfordshire. Pegasus Group were the client's archaeological advisor managing the evaluation on behalf of Catesby Estates.

1.1.2 The work was undertaken to inform the planning authority in advance of determination of a planning application at West Oxfordshire District Council (planning ref: 22/03240/OUT). A brief was set by Richard Oram, Lead Archaeologist, Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services (OCAS), detailing the local authority's requirements for work necessary to inform the planning process. OA produced a written scheme of investigation (OA 2023) detailing how the brief would be fulfilled and this was approved by OCAS prior to commencing the fieldwork.

1.1.3 This document outlines how OA implemented the requirements of the brief and the results of the evaluation.

1.2 Location, topography and geology

1.2.1 The site lies at approximately 120m aOD and comprises 10.07ha of arable fields located *c* 4.5km west of Witney in West Oxfordshire (Fig. 1). The northern boundary of the proposed development is defined by Burford Road with recent residential development to the immediate east. The southern and western limits are bounded by hedgelines, open fields and a track leading to a farm.

1.2.2 The bedrock geology largely comprises limestone of the Forest Marble Formation with White Limestone Formation present across the central part of site.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 The archaeological and historical background of the site has been described in detail in the built heritage and archaeological assessment produced by Pegasus (2023). The following summarises or reproduces the content of that report.

Prehistoric period (pre–AD 43)

1.3.2 The geophysical survey has identified the edge of an enclosure and possible associated features immediately to the south of the site boundary (Archaeological Services 2022). These are of potentially prehistoric date, possibly Bronze Age or Iron Age.

1.3.3 Ten locations have been identified within 1km of the site that include prehistoric find spots, monuments or other elements such as field investigation.

1.3.4 Approximately 520m to the south of the site are the cropmarks of a presumed Iron Age banjo enclosure and a rectangular enclosure. Approximately 630m to the south-west of the site is a cluster of three individual find spots comprising a Neolithic polished stone axe, later prehistoric flints and pottery sherds, and an Iron Age silver coin. Just north of this cluster, *c* 750m west of the site, is the location of a Neolithic pit which contained pottery, bone and a flint tool. Approximately 1km west of the site is

the find spot of Neolithic pottery and a flint arrowhead, and slightly north of this, also 1km west of the site, is the find spot of a Neolithic polished flint axe.

1.3.5 Approximately 380m south of the site is the find spot of Neolithic and Bronze Age pottery sherds and *c* 540m south of the site is the find spot of a later prehistoric flint flake. Approximately 950m east of the site further Neolithic and Bronze Age pottery has been recorded.

Romano-British (AD 43-410)

1.3.6 No Romano-British remains have been identified within the proposed development boundary. A Romano-British date for the enclosure recorded by the geophysical survey cannot be ruled out.

1.3.7 Approximately 505m north of the site is the monument of Worsham Roman Villa and Bath House. This includes an enclosure, a stone-built bath house and a track, known through cropmarks and surface finds. A possible Roman settlement is also located nearby, approximately 580m north of the site. Two large pieces of Roman pottery were recorded approximately 500m north of site.

1.3.8 Approximately 630m south-west of the site is the find spot of some fragments of pottery, a Roman fibula, a Roman coin and some silver Roman coins. Two further find spots are recorded 150m and 1km to the east of the site comprising Romano-British pottery and animal bones.

Medieval (AD 410-1539)

1.3.9 No medieval remains have been identified within the proposed development site, although dates of these periods cannot be ruled out for some of the remains indicated by the geophysical survey anomalies to the immediate south of the site.

1.3.10 The village of Minster Lovell was recorded within the Domesday records as Minstre within the Hundred of Bampton in 1086. The earliest documentary reference for the parish church dates to 1183. It was rebuilt in the 15th century. The village also contain the ruins of the 15th-century Minster Lovell Hall.

1.3.11 Within the wider area there is one findspot, two groups of inhumations and one linear record that have been documented from this period. The linear record is that of Whitney Ridgeway which is a road that runs along the northern boundary of the site.

1.3.12 Approximately 630m south-west of the site, in a previously mentioned cluster of finds, is the find spot of an Anglo-Saxon iron spearhead. Also, *c* 750m west of the site is the site of three Anglo-Saxon inhumations with stone walled graves, and *c* 880m north-east of the site is another set of recorded Anglo-Saxon inhumations with the remains of three individuals and a dog.

Post-medieval and Modern (AD 1540-present)

1.3.13 The 1838 Tithe Map for the Parish of Minster Lovell shows the site falling across parts of two fields which are recorded to be owned by a Miss Shepperd and occupied by Thomas Maisley. Plot 44 is recorded as ‘Slat Field’ and 38 as ‘Middle Field’ with both having arable land use and being part of the landholding of a farm in Plot 74, north of

Burford Road. Only 'New Barn & Yards' had been constructed along Brize Norton Road to the east by this date.

1.3.14 The 1884 First Edition OS Map is the first to depict the row of Chartist Allotments either side of Brize Norton Road and Burford Road. These had been constructed from 1847 as part of the short-lived Chartist settlement. The First Edition map only shows the buildings that form part of the settlement with the allotment boundaries not shown until the 1922 issue, although some plots had been subdivided by then.

1.3.15 Aerial photographs from 1946-7 show a number of possible structures present along the north-south orientated field boundary within the site. The function and origin of these is uncertain but they were absent by the time of aerial photographs taken in 1949, when the dwelling to the west of the site was under construction. Recent maps record the increase in residential development to the east, including infill development between former Chartist dwellings.

1.3.16 No post-medieval or modern remains are recorded within the site boundary within the HER, although several entries exist for the surrounding area. These include an earthwork embankment and boundary ditches, west of the Charterville Allotments *c* 115m east of site. These are not specifically dated within the HER data but predate the 1842 allotments. Also to the south-east is a former primitive Methodist chapel *c* 400m from the site. Approximately 350m north of the site is also the record of a corn mill and Lower Field Farm known through documentary evidence.

1.3.17 Along the road to the north-east of the site is a selection of monuments and buildings from this period. These include a milestone with Witney pillar and iron plate design *c* 440m from site, a post-medieval quarry *c* 600m from site, a Methodist Chapel *c* 725m from site, a Toll House shown through documentary evidence *c* 840m from site, and a limekiln and quarry shown through documentary evidence *c* 895m from site.

1.3.18 Along Burford Road, *c* 820m south-west of the site is the site of another milestone recorded through documentary evidence.

1.3.19 Approximately 630m west of the site is Worsham blanket mill which was originally a corn mill located along the River Windrush. Also west of the site is the earthworks of post-medieval water meadows *c* 790m from site, and the earthworks of post-medieval ditched enclosures *c* 790m from site.

2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

2.1.1 The general aims of the evaluation were to record the presence or absence of archaeological deposits and features within the proposed development site and to inform subsequent planning decisions. In more detail these aims were:

i. to determine the presence or absence of any archaeological remains,
ii. to determine or confirm the approximate extent of any surviving deposits,
iii. to determine the date range of any surviving remains by artefactual or other means,
iv. to determine or confirm the likely range, quality and quantity of the artefactual evidence present,
v. to determine the condition and state of preservation of any remains,
vi. to determine the degree of complexity of any surviving horizontal or vertical stratigraphy,
vii. to assess the ecofactual and environmental potential of any archaeological features and deposits,
viii. to produce a factual report, full archive and HER data submission, and
ix. to recover and present adequate data to enable OCAS to make an informed decision on the planning application with regards to the archaeological potential and importance of the site.

2.1.2 The project took account of relevant elements of the regional (Solent Thames) resource assessment and research agenda available online: http://thehumanjourney.net/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=553&Itemid=277

2.2 Specific aims

2.2.1 The site-specific aims and objectives were:

x. to ground-truth the results of the geophysical survey.

2.3 Scope and methodology

2.3.1 A total of 37 evaluation trenches each measuring 30m by 1.8m were excavated according to the agreed trench arrangement (Fig. 2). This provided an overall coverage of the site representing an approximate 2% sample by area and incorporated targeted trenching to investigate the known geophysical features. There was a contingency for the excavation of additional trenches, although this was not requested following a monitoring visit and review of the results in the field by the planning archaeologist.

2.3.2 The trench locations and on site constraints were set out using a GPS immediately prior to the start of the fieldwork. Trench excavation was then undertaken using a 13 tonne mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket.

2.3.3 Hand excavation and recording was undertaken in line with OA's standard procedures as set out in the WSI (OA 2023). Artefacts were recovered where encountered and environmental samples were recovered from archaeological features where these had

the potential to inform the aims of the evaluation. Backfilling was then undertaken with the agreement of the planning archaeologist. Backfilling comprised the infilling of the trenches with the excavated material, with the topsoil replaced across the upper levels of the trenches and tracked into a level horizon by the machine.

2.3.4 The work was carried out in accordance with Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' standards (CIfA 2014a and 2014b).

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. Finds data and spot dates are tabulated in Appendix B.

3.2 General soils and ground conditions

3.2.1 The soil sequence in the trenches was fairly uniform (Fig. 5 and Plates 1-4). The limestone natural geology had a variable surface appearance reflecting the presence of both Forest Marble Formation and White Limestone Formation. The weathered surface of these bedrocks comprised mostly brashy limestone with areas of degraded limestone silt clays and clay. Occasional non-archaeological soil marks were present infilling hollows and reddish brown undulations in the surface of the geology.

3.2.2 The geology was overlain by a thin silty clay subsoil in some trenches. This was generally less than 0.1m thick. Ploughsoil was present across the entire field and directly overlay the limestone in a number of trenches. This was generally 0.2-0.25m thick.

3.2.3 Ground conditions throughout the evaluation were good, and the site remained dry throughout. Archaeological features, where present, were easy to identify against the natural geology.

3.3 General distribution of archaeological deposits

3.3.1 Archaeological features were present in Trenches 3, 12, 16 and 19 (Fig. 3). These comprised small pits in Trenches 3, 12 and 19 and a single linear feature that was recorded in both Trenches 16 and 19.

3.4 Trench 3

3.4.1 A single shallow pit (303) was recorded in Trench 3 (Figs 3 and 4). This was filled with a single clayey deposit that yielded 11 fragments of animal bone. The fill was otherwise sterile with no charred plant remains visible during the excavation and no other artefacts present.

3.5 Trench 12

3.5.1 Two features were investigated in Trench 12 (Figs 3 and 4). These comprised a single small pit (1203) and a treehole (1205). The pit was filled with a single deposit that contained charred remains largely comprising charcoal from oak and hazel and a single amorphous fragment of fired clay. Two fills were recorded in the treehole, the upper fill (1207) of which included occasional small fragments of charcoal.

3.6 Trench 16

3.6.1 A single narrow linear feature (1603) aligned N-S was recorded in Trench 16 and traced into Trench 19 (Figs 3 and 4, Plates 5 and 6). This had near vertical sides and a flat base

and was filled with a single sterile clayey deposit. This linear feature was identified by the geophysical survey and appears to be an historic field drain with clean-cut vertical sides and a flat base. The geophysical survey results show that this is part of an arrangement of drains with other linear features aligned off/into the N-S drain (Fig. 6).

3.7 Trench 19

3.7.1 The probable field drain (1905) was record in the western part of the trench reflecting the southern continuation of the same feature in Trench 16 (Figs 3 and 4, Plate 6).

3.7.2 A small shallow circular pit (1903) was present in the eastern part of the trench (Figs 3 and 4, Plate 7). This was filled with a single deposit that yielded a small amount of animal bone and two small sherds of pottery of probable 10th-13th century date.

3.8 Finds summary

3.8.1 A total of six sherds of pottery weighing 45g were recovered from three contexts. Four sherds were recovered from ploughsoil deposits and date to the post-medieval and modern periods. Two sherds of pottery of probable 10th-13th century date were recovered from a single pit in Trench 19.

3.9 Environmental summary

3.9.1 Two samples produced abundant, small-sized, charcoal comprising both diffuse porous and ring porous types including oak and hazel. The samples clearly demonstrate that charred remains occur at the site but the material recovered from the evaluation have limited interpretative value.

4 DISCUSSION

4.1 Reliability of field investigation

4.1.1 The ground conditions and weather experienced during the fieldwork both allowed reliable results to be recorded. Soil marks were also very clear and easy to identify against the limestone geology.

4.2 Evaluation objectives and results

4.2.1 The results of this evaluation have addressed the general aims of the investigation as outlined in the WSI for the work. The presence and absence of archaeological remains has been clearly defined and appropriate conclusions drawn about the condition and complexity of the remains. The evaluation has demonstrated that only very sparse or incidental archaeological remains are present and that these only contain very limited artefact and ecofact evidence.

4.2.2 This limited dataset means that little can be achieved in terms of applying regional research agendas with the site information unlikely to fulfil any objectives of that agenda.

4.2.3 The evaluation results also demonstrate that the geophysical survey results are reflective of the physical remains. The drainage feature identified in Trenches 16 and 19 correspond to the arrangement recorded by the survey (Fig. 6).

4.3 Interpretation

4.3.1 The archaeological results are limited to a sparse collection of small shallow pits recorded across the central part of the site. The fills of two pits had charcoal inclusions and yielded small amounts of animal bone. A single deposit yielded two small pottery sherds of 10th-13th century date perhaps indicating a low level presence of activity from that period within the centre of the site.

APPENDIX A TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1

General description	Orientation	NW-SE
Trench contains topsoil and subsoil overlying natural.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.25

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
100	Layer			0.2	Topsoil. Brown silty clays		
101	Layer			0.06	Subsoil. Orange brown silty clays		
102	Layer				Natural. Light brown silty clays with limestone Cornbrash and orange brown silty clay patches		

Trench 2

General description	Orientation	NE-SW
Trench contains topsoil and subsoil overlying natural.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.25

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
200	Layer			0.19	Topsoil. Brown silty clays		
201	Layer				Natural. Light brown silty clays with limestone Cornbrash and orange brown silty clay patches		

Trench 3

General description	Orientation	NE-SW
Trench consists of topsoil overlying subsoil which overlies natural. Pit in SW end.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.4

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
300	Layer				Topsoil		
301	Layer				Subsoil		
302	Layer				Natural		
303	Cut		0.66	0.2	Pit. Small, sub circular pit with moderate sides and a flat base		
304	Fill	303	0.66	0.2	Secondary Fill. Light grey brown clay	Animal bone	

Trench 4

General description	Orientation	NE-SW
Trench consists of topsoil overlying subsoil which overlies natural.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.8

						Avg. depth (m)	0.3
Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
400	Layer			0.18	Topsoil. Brown silty clays		
401	Layer			0.08	Subsoil. Orange brown silty clays		
402	Layer				Natural. Light brown silty clays with frequent limestone/ Cornbrash and orange brown silty clays		

Trench 5

General description	Orientation	NW-SE
Trench consists of topsoil overlying subsoil which overlies natural.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.3

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
500	Layer			0.28	Topsoil. Brown silty clays		
501	Layer				Natural. Light brown silty clays with limestone/Cornbrash and orange brown clay patches		

Trench 6

General description	Orientation	NE-SW
Trench consists of topsoil overlying subsoil which overlies natural.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.3

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
600	Layer			0.2	Topsoil. Brown silty clays		
601	Layer			0.07	Subsoil. Orange brown silty clays		
602	Layer				Natural. Light brown silty clays and orange brown silty clays with frequent limestone/ Cornbrash		

Trench 7

General description	Orientation	NW-SE
Trench consists of topsoil overlying subsoil which overlies natural.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.27

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
700	Layer			0.2	Topsoil. Brown silty clays		
701	Layer			0.09	Subsoil. Orange brown silty clay with Cornbrash		

702	Layer				Natural. Light brown/orange brown silty clays with frequent limestone/Cornbrash		

Trench 8

General description	Orientation	NW-SE
Trench consists of topsoil overlying subsoil which overlies natural.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.26

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
800	Layer			0.23	Topsoil. Brown silty clays		
801	Layer				Natural. Light brown silty clays with Cornbrash/limestone and orange brown clay patches		

Trench 9

General description	Orientation	NE-SW
Trench consists of topsoil overlying subsoil which overlies natural.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.3

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
900	Layer			0.25	Topsoil. Brown silty clays		
901	Layer			0.06	Subsoil. Orange brown silty clays with limestone Cornbrash		
902	Layer				Natural. Light brown silty clays with frequent limestone Cornbrash and orange brown silty clays patches		

Trench 10

General description	Orientation	NE-SW
Trench consists of topsoil overlying subsoil which overlies natural.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.4

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1000	Layer			0.21	Topsoil. Brown clayey silts		
1001	Layer			0.08	Subsoil. Mid-dark orange brown silty clay with infrequent Cornbrash		
1002	Layer				Natural. Mixed. Orange brown silty clay with Cornbrash/limestone and patches of light brown silty clay		

Trench 11

General description	Orientation	NE-SW
Trench consists of topsoil overlying subsoil which overlies natural	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.3

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1100	Layer			0.24	Topsoil. Brown silty clays		
1101	Layer				Natural. Mixed, light brown silty clays with limestone Cornbrash and orange brown silty clay patches		

Trench 12

General description	Orientation	NW-SE
Trench consists of topsoil overlying subsoil which overlies natural. Pit in trench	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.4

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1200	Layer			0.19	Topsoil. Brown silty clays		
1201	Layer			0.13	Subsoil. Orange brown silty clays		
1202	Layer				Natural. Light brown silty clays with limestone Cornbrash and orange brown silty clay patches		
1203	Cut		0.66	0.15	Pit. Sub circular with 1 fill		
1204	Fill	1203	0.66	0.15	Grey brown silty clay with charcoal flecks		
1205	Cut		0.66	0.27	Pit. Sub circular tree throw/pit with steep sides and a flat base		
1206	Fill	1205	0.66	0.27	Primary Fill. Light -mid brown silty clays		
1207	Fill	1205	0.23	0.06	Secondary Fill. Silty clay with rare charcoal inclusions.		

Trench 13

General description	Orientation	E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying subsoil which overlies natural.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.31

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1300	Layer			0.23	Topsoil. Brown silty clays		
1301	Layer		0.18		Subsoil. Orange brown silty clays		

1302	Layer				Natural. Light brown silty clay with limestone Cornbrash and orange brown silty clays patches		

Trench 14

General description	Orientation	NW-SE
Trench consists of topsoil overlying subsoil which overlies natural.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.9
	Avg. depth (m)	0.4

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1400	Layer			0.23	Topsoil. Brown silty clays		
1401	Layer			0.16	Subsoil. Orange brown silty clays		
1402	Layer				Natural. Light brown silty clays with limestone Cornbrash and orange brown silty clay patches		

Trench 15

General description	Orientation	E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying subsoil which overlies sandy clay natural.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.3

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1500	Layer			0.27	Topsoil. Brown silty clays	Pottery	*c* 1770-1900
1501	Layer			0.07	Subsoil. Orange brown silty clays		
1502	Layer				Natural. Light brown silty clays with limestone Cornbrash and orange brown silty clay patches		

Trench 16

General description	Orientation	E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying subsoil which overlies natural.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.27

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1600	Layer			0.22	Topsoil. Brown silty clays		
1601	Layer			0.16	Subsoil. Orange brown silty clays		
1602	Layer				Natural. Light brown silty clays with limestone Cornbrash and orange brown silty clays patches		
1603	Cut		0.7	0.4	Ditch. N-S ditch with near vertical sides and a flat base		
1604	Fill	1603	0.7	0.4	Secondary Fill. Light grey brown clay		

Trench 17

General description	Orientation	E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.22

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1700	Layer			0.21	Topsoil. Brown silty clays		
1701	Layer				Natural. Light brown silty clays with limestone Cornbrash and orange brown silty clay patches		

Trench 18

General description	Orientation	NW-SE
Trench consists of topsoil overlying subsoil which overlies natural.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.3

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1800	Layer			0.26	Topsoil. Brown silty clays		
1801	Layer				Natural. Light brown silty clays with limestone Cornbrash and orange brown silty clay patches		

Trench 19

General description	Orientation	E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying subsoil which overlies natural.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.4

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1900	Layer			0.24	Topsoil. Brown silty clays		
1901	Layer			0.09	Subsoil. Orange brown silty clays		
1902	Layer				Natural. Light brown silty clays with limestone Cornbrash and orange brown silty clays patches		
1903	Cut		0.65	0.14	Pit. Sub circular with vertical sides and a flat base.		
1904	Fill	1903	0.65	0.14	Firm brown silty clay	Pottery, Animal bone	*c* 900-1250
1905	Cut		0.65	0.43	Ditch. N-S ditch, same as in trench 16. Near vertical sides with slightly concave base		
1906	Fill		0.65	0.42	Compact, light grey brown clay		

Trench 20

General description	Orientation	NW-SE
Trench consists of topsoil overlying subsoil which overlies natural.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.5

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
2000	Layer			0.22	Topsoil. Brown silty clays	Pottery	*c* 1650-1800
2001	Layer			0.14	Subsoil. Orange brown silty clays		
2002	Layer				Natural. Light brown silty clays with limestone Cornbrash and orange brown silty clay patches		

Trench 21

General description	Orientation	E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying subsoil which overlies natural.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.5

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
2100	Layer			0.25	Topsoil. Brown silty clays		
2101	Layer			0.22	Subsoil. Orange brown silty clays		
2102	Layer				Natural. Light brown silty clays with limestone Cornbrash and orange brown silty clay patches		

Trench 22

General description	Orientation	NE-SW
Trench consists of topsoil overlying subsoil which overlies natural.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.3

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
2200	Layer			0.33	Topsoil. Brown silty clays		
2201	Layer				Natural. Light brown silty clays with limestone Cornbrash and orange brown silty clay patches		

Trench 23

General description	Orientation	E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying subsoil which overlies natural.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.3

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date

2300	Layer			0.25	Topsoil. Brown silty clays		
2301	Layer			0.08	Subsoil. Orange brown silty clays		
2302	Layer				Natural. Light brown silty clays with limestone Cornbrash and orange brown silty clay patches		

Trench 24

General description	Orientation	NW-SE
Trench consists of topsoil overlying subsoil which overlies natural.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.5

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
2400	Layer			0.25	Topsoil. Brown silty clays		
2401	Layer			0.22	Subsoil. Orange brown silty clays		
2402	Layer				Natural. Light brown silty clays with limestone Cornbrash and orange brown silty clay patches		

Trench 25

General description	Orientation	N-S
Trench consists of topsoil overlying subsoil which overlies natural	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.45

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
2500	Layer			0.19	Topsoil. Brown silty clays		
2501	Layer			0.16	Subsoil. Orange brown silty clays		
2502	Layer				Natural. Light brown silty clays with limestone Cornbrash and orange brown silty clay patches		

Trench 26

General description	Orientation	NW-SE
Trench consists of topsoil overlying subsoil which overlies natural.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.4

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
2600	Layer			0.21	Topsoil. Brown silty clays		
2601	Layer			0.13	Subsoil. Orange brown silty clays		
2602	Layer				Natural. Light brown silty clays with limestone Cornbrash and orange brown silty clay patches		

Trench 27

General description						Orientation	NE-SW
Trench consists of topsoil overlying subsoil which overlies natural.						Length (m)	30
						Width (m)	1.8
						Avg. depth (m)	0.3
Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
2700	Layer			0.27	Topsoil. Brown silty clays		
2701	Layer			0.07	Subsoil. Orange brown silty clays		
2702	Layer				Natural. Light brown silty clays with limestone Cornbrash and orange brown silty clay patches		

Trench 28

General description						Orientation	E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying subsoil which overlies natural						Length (m)	30
						Width (m)	1.8
						Avg. depth (m)	0.5
Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
2800	Layer			0.24	Topsoil. Brown silty clays		
2801	Layer			0.08	Subsoil. Orange brown silty clays		
2802	Layer				Natural. Light brown silty clays with limestone Cornbrash and orange brown silty clay patches		

Trench 29

General description						Orientation	NW-SE
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural.						Length (m)	30
						Width (m)	1.8
						Avg. depth (m)	0.2
Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
2900	Layer			0.19	Topsoil. Brown silty clays		
2901	Layer				Natural. Light brown silty clays with limestone Cornbrash and orange brown silty clays		

Trench 30

General description						Orientation	N-S
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural.						Length (m)	30
						Width (m)	1.8
						Avg. depth (m)	0.23
Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
3000	Layer			0.23	Topsoil. Brown silty clays		

3001	Layer				Natural. Light brown silty clays with limestone Cornbrash and orange brown silty clay patches		

Trench 31

General description	Orientation	NW-SE
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.23

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
3100	Layer			0.37	Topsoil. Brown silty clays		
3101	Layer			0.08	Subsoil. Orange brown silty clays		
3102	Layer				Natural. Light brown silty clays with limestone Cornbrash and orange brown silty clay patches		

Trench 32

General description	Orientation	E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.6
	Avg. depth (m)	0.22

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
3200	Layer			0.23	Topsoil. Brown silty clays		
3201	Layer				Natural. Light brown silty clays with limestone Cornbrash and orange brown silty clays patches		

Trench 33

General description	Orientation	NE-SW
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.23

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
3300	Layer			0.25	Topsoil. Brown silty clays		
3301	Layer				Natural. Light brown silty clays with limestone Cornbrash and orange brown silty clay patches		

Trench 34

General description	Orientation	NE-SW
Trench consists of topsoil overlying subsoil which overlies natural.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.21

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
3400	Layer			0.22	Topsoil. Brown silty clays		
3401	Layer			0.08	Subsoil. Orange brown silty clays		
3402	Layer				Natural. Light brown silty clays with limestone Cornbrash and orange brown silty clay patches		

Trench 35

General description	Orientation	E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying subsoil which overlies natural.	Length (m)	0.3
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.3

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
3500	Layer			0.22	Topsoil. Brown silty clays		
3501	Layer				Natural. Light brown silty clays with limestone Cornbrash and orange brown silty clay patches		

Trench 36

General description	Orientation	E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying subsoil which overlies natural.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.25

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
3600	Layer			0.24	Topsoil. Brown silty clays		
3601	Layer				Natural. Light brown silty clays with limestone Cornbrash and orange brown silty clay patches		

Trench 37

General description	Orientation	N-S
Trench consists of topsoil overlying subsoil which overlies natural.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.3

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
3700	Layer			0.25	Topsoil. Brown silty clays		
3701	Layer				Natural. Light brown silty clays with limestone Cornbrash and orange brown silty clay patches		

APPENDIX B FINDS REPORTS

B.1 Pottery

By John Cotter

Introduction

B.1.1 A total of six sherds of pottery weighing 45g were recovered from three contexts. Given the small quantity present, this has not been separately catalogued but is fully described below. Medieval fabric codes referred to are those of the Oxfordshire type series (Mellor 1994), whereas post-medieval fabric codes are those of the Museum of London (MoLA 2014).

Description

B.1.2 Context (1500) spot-date: *c* 1770-1900. Description: 1 sherd (weight 6g). Profile sherd from a dish/plate in a low-grade English porcelain (ENPO) or a Staffordshire-type refined whiteware with a porcellaneous fabric (REFW). Plain flanged rim. Undecorated.

B.1.3 Context (1904) spot-date: *c* 900-1250. Description: 2 sherds (weight 6g). Small abraded body sherds in a light brownish fabric tempered with rounded oolitic limestone inclusions. Probably Cotswold-type ware (OXAC, full date range c 900-1250). At Oxford this ware is commonest in the period *c* 1050-1250.

B.1.4 Context (2000) spot-date: *c* 1650-1800? Description: 3 sherds (weight 33g). All in post-medieval red earthenware (PMR, full date range *c* 1550-1900). Fresh sherds from three vessels – probably jars or jugs. Includes a probable jar rim with dark brown external glaze and two body sherds. One of the latter has a light brown external glaze while the other has a dark brown glaze inside and outside. The quality and glossiness of the glazes suggests a 17th-18th century dating for these sherds.

Recommendations regarding the conservation, discard and retention of material

B.1.5 The pottery has little potential to inform research through re-analysis and may be discarded, if desired.

B.2 Fired Clay

By Kirsty Smith

Description

B.2.1 One fragment of fired clay (7g) was recovered from context 1204, a fill of pit 1203. The fragment comprised an orange silty clay fabric and was 13mm thick and 32mm long. It was dark grey in colour at one end indicating that this had been subjected to heat in a reduced oxygen environment. The fragment is indeterminate in form and function.

Recommendations regarding the conservation, discard and retention of material

B.2.2 The fired clay has little potential to inform research through re-analysis and may be discarded, if desired.

APPENDIX C ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS

C.1 Environmental Samples

By Christopher Clark

Introduction

C.1.1 Two whole earth bulk samples of 19L and 36L (Campbell *et al*. 2011; OA 2017) were recovered to determine the presence and abundance of any charred remains or other ecofacts from features investigated during the evaluation.

Method

C.1.2 The samples were recovered from pit fills that appeared to include charred material based on visual inspection on site. They were processed in their entirety at Oxford Archaeology using a modified Siraf-type water flotation machine. The flots were collected in a 250µm mesh and heavy residues in a 500µm mesh and dried. The residue fractions were sorted by eye and with the aid of a magnet while the flot material was scanned using a low power (x10) binocular microscope to identify cereal grains and chaff, smaller seeds, and other quantifiable remains. Taxonomic nomenclature for seeds follows Stace (2010), and cereals were identified following Jacomet (2006), but identifications should be considered preliminary.

Results

C.1.3 Sample descriptions and flot details are provided in Table 1. Soil colouration follows the Munsell soil colour chart with soil texture described using published guidelines (Historic England 2015).

C.1.4 Sample 1 from fill 1204 of pit 1203 produced a charcoal rich flot which contained ring porous charcoal fragments, most of which was identified as oak (*Quercus* sp.) and diffused porous fragments which include hazel (*Corylus avellana*). Most of the charcoal in the flot was small-sized (<4mm in greatest dimension). Charred hazel nutshell fragments were also present in the flot. Fired clay was recovered from the heavy residue.

C.1.5 Sample 2 from fill 1904 of pit 1903 also produced a charcoal rich flot, the majority of fragments again being <4mm, with diffuse porous charcoal including hazel. A single clinkered wheat (*Triticum* sp.) was also identified. The flot also includes goosefoot seeds (Amaranthaceae) but these are likely to be modern. Animal bone was recovered from the heavy residue.

Table 1: Sample descriptions and results

Sample No.	Context	Trench	Feature/deposit	Date	Flot vol. (ml)	Floated vol. (L)	Charcoal >2mm	Grain	Chaff	Weeds	Molluscs	Other charred	Notes
1	1204	12	1203	Undated	30	36	++++					+	10YR 5/4 yellowish brown sandy clay
2	1903	19	1904	*c* 900-1250	19	40	+++	+					10YR 5/3 brown sandy clay.

Key: +=present (up to 5 items), ++=frequent (5-25), +++=common (25-100), ++++=abundant (100+)

Discussion

C.1.6 The two samples both produced abundant charcoal comprising both diffuse porous and ring porous types including oak and hazel. The majority of the charcoal is small-sized, however, and so not recommended for further identification and analysis. Few other charred remains are present. The two samples clearly demonstrate that charred remains occur at the site but beyond that the samples have limited interpretative value.

Recommendations regarding the conservation, discard and retention of material

C.1.7 The flots may warrant further identification of charcoal and should be retained if further work is undertaken ahead of development.

C.2 Animal Bone

By Adrienne Powell

Introduction

C.2.1 The evaluation recovered 17 (81g) animal bone fragments by hand from two contexts and four (7g) fragments from an environmental sample.

Description

C.2.2 The bone is in poor condition with extensive root etching and none of the cortical surface surviving. As a result, any evidence of gnawing or butchery which may have been present has not survived.

C.2.3 Context 304 contained the distal shaft of a cattle (*Bos taurus*) left humerus, and a blade fragment from a large mammal right scapula. The remaining nine specimens were indeterminate mammal fragments although at least two could have come from the scapula.

C.2.4 The hand recovered bone from context 1904, dated to the 10th-13th century, comprised a large mammal rib shaft segment, a medium mammal limb bone shaft fragment, possibly from a sheep/goat (*Ovis/Capra*) distal tibia, and an indeterminate fragment. Sample 2 from this context contained a sheep/goat maxillary first or second molar, in wear, a charred medial fragment of unfused distal epiphysis from a sheep/goat radius, a left mandible from a woodmouse (*Apodemus* sp.), and an indeterminate fragment.

Conclusion

C.2.5 The very small size of this assemblage and the low number of archaeological features encountered in the trenches limit the possibilities for making meaningful conclusions.

Recommendations regarding the conservation, discard and retention of material

C.2.6 The animal bone has little potential to inform research through re-analysis and may be discarded, if desired.

APPENDIX D BIBLIOGRAPHY

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APPENDIX E SITE SUMMARY DETAILS

Site name:	Land South of Burford Road, Minster Lovell, Oxfordshire
Site code:	MILBR23
Grid Reference	SP 3066 1054
Type:	Evaluation
Date and duration:	17th – 25th April 2023, 7 days
Area of Site	8.4ha (approx.)
Location of archive:	The archive is currently held at Oxford Archaeology, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, Oxfordshire, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museum in due course, under the accession number OXCMS:2023.33 .
Summary of Results:	Oxford Archaeology undertook an archaeological trial-trench evaluation on the site of a proposed residential development on land to the south of Burford Road, Minster Lovell, Oxfordshire, in April 2023. The fieldwork was commissioned by Catesby Estates and managed by Pegaus Group for the client. A total of 37 trenches were excavated across the development area representing a 2% sample by area and incorporated targeted trenching to investigate features identified by the preceding geophysical survey. Three small, shallow, circular pits were identified, two of which yielded low quantities of animal bone. A single pit also yielded two small sherds of pottery of probable 10-13th century date. A field drain was also identified corresponding to the location of a linear feature identified by the geophysical survey.

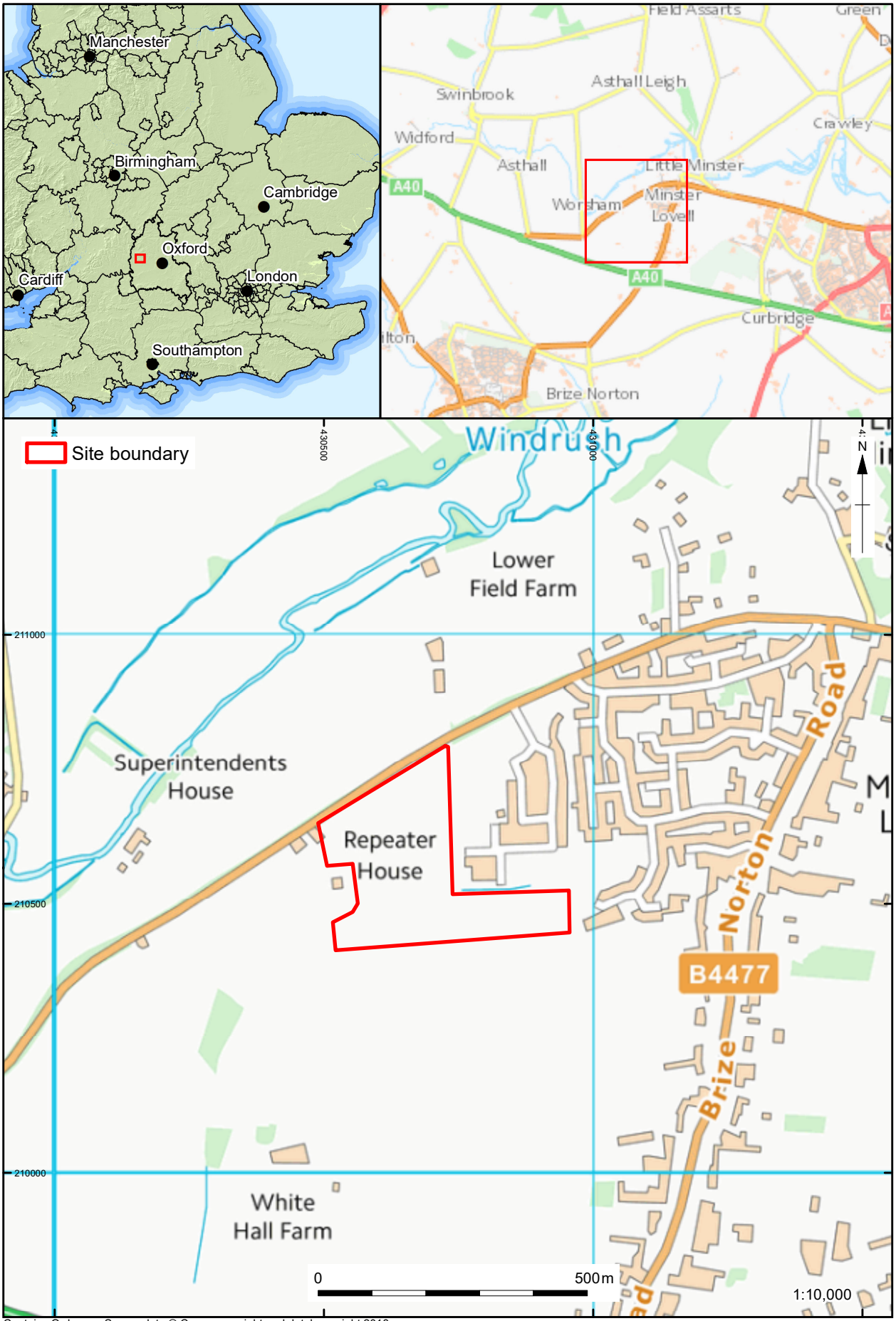

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Figure 1: Site location

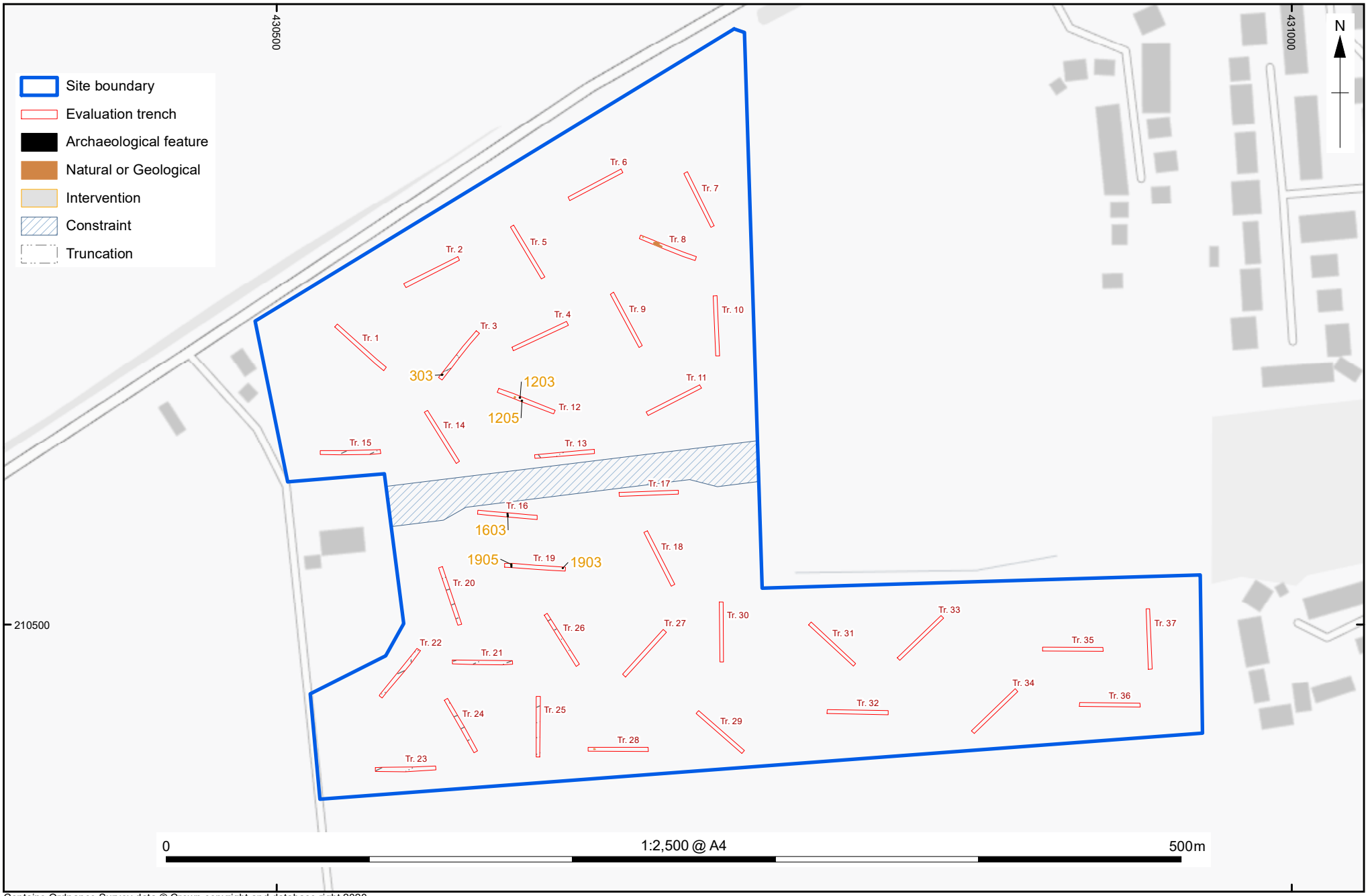

Figure 2: Trench locations

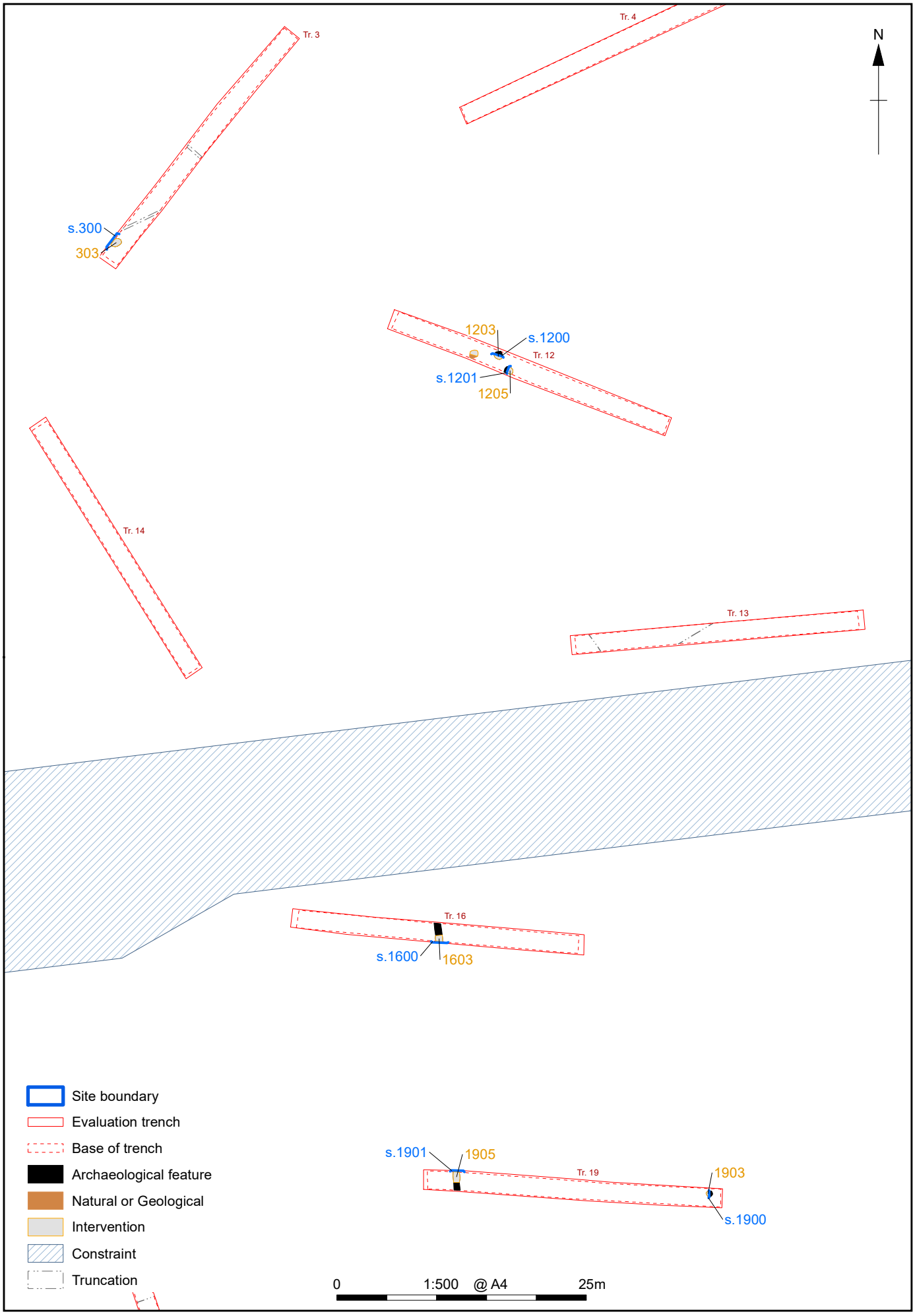

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Figure 3: Trenches with archaeological features

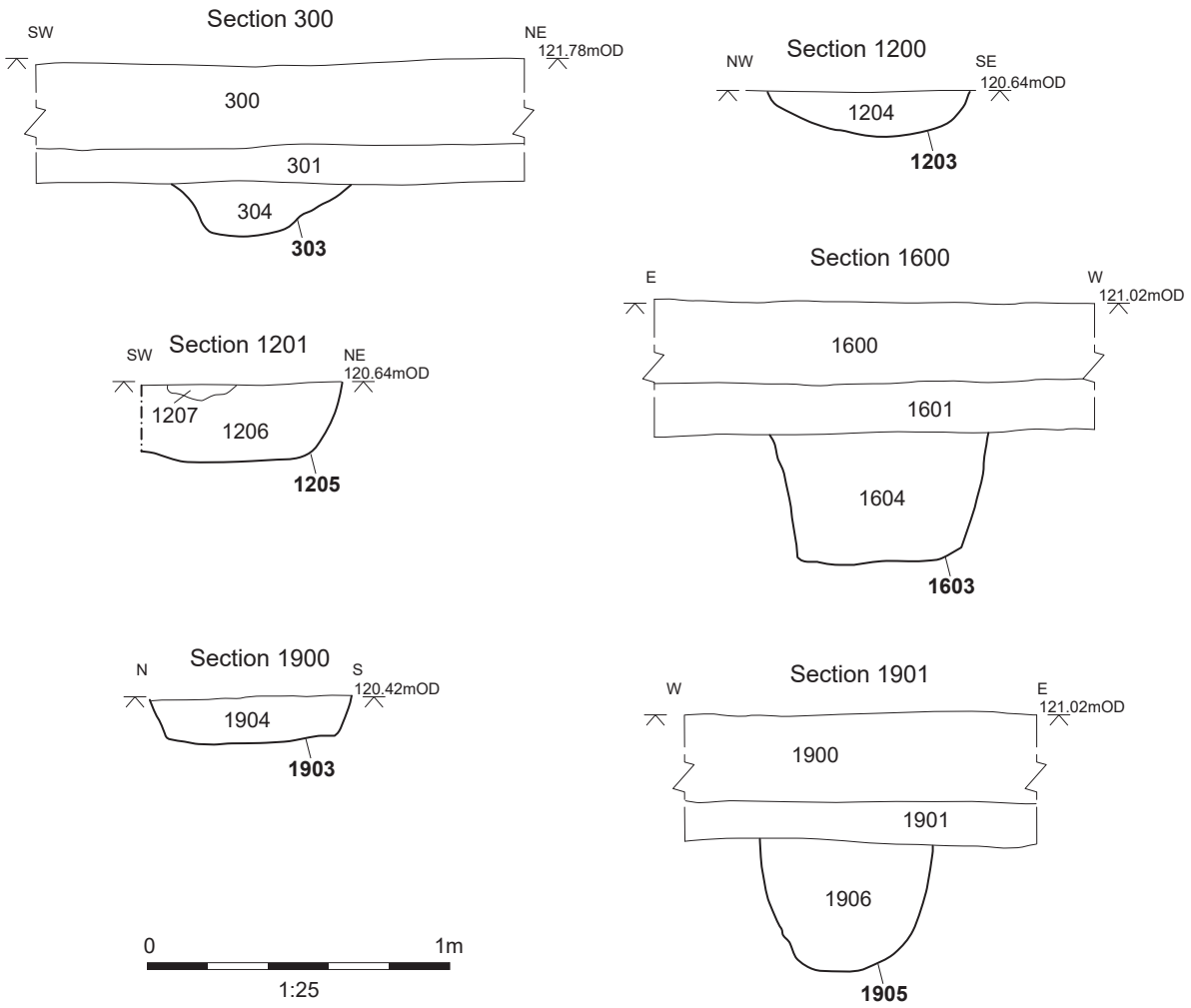

Figure 4: Sections

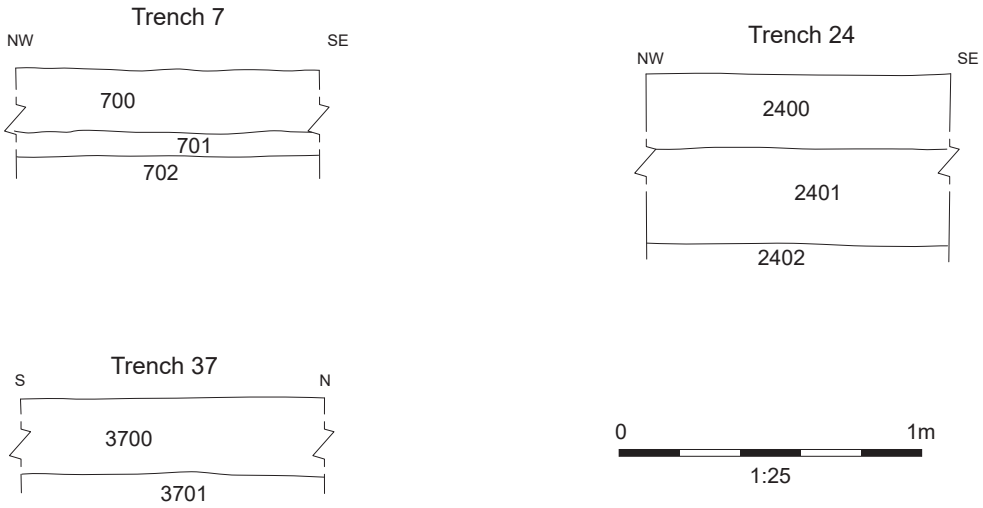

Figure 5: Typical soil stratigraphy sections

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Figure 6: Trench locations, features and geophysical survey results

Plate 1: Trench 3, General view

Plate 2: Trench 17, General view

Plate 3: Trench 25, General view

Plate 4: Trench 32, General view

Plate 5: Section 1600

Plate 6: Section 1901

Plate 7: Section 1900

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