

**SPECIFICATION FOR A PROGRAMME OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION BY TRIAL TRENCHING:
FORMER CASTLE SPORTS COMPLEX, ALBION STREET, SPALDING, LINCOLNSHIRE**

Planning Reference:	pre-application
Client:	Willmott Dixon
National Grid Reference:	TF 2499 2312
Date:	6th August 2024
AAL Site Code:	SPAS 24
Accession Number:	LCNCC:2024.106

1.0 Summary

This document is the specification for an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching, on land at the former Castle Sports Complex, Albion Street, Spalding, Lincolnshire, which is required prior to determination of planning consent for a residential development. The fieldwork, recording and reporting will be carried out in a manner consistent with current national guidelines, as set out in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists '*Standard for archaeological field evaluation*' (CIfA 2020a) '*Universal guidance for archaeological field evaluation*' (CIfA 2023b), and the English Heritage document '*Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*' (English Heritage 2006) as well as local guidance in the '*Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook*' (LCC 2019).

2.0 Site Location and Description

The proposed development site is in Spalding, Lincolnshire, in the administrative district of South Holland. It is situated c.24.8km north-northeast of Peterborough and c.22.1km south-southwest of Boston. The site is approximately 5.28 hectares and presently occupied by a leisure centre site with associated buildings, sports pitches, and car parks. The site is centred at National Grid Reference (NGR) TF 24991 23123 and is c.7m above Ordnance Datum.

The bedrock geology comprises mudstone of the Oxford Clay Formation, with superficial geology of Tidal Flat deposits of clay and silt recorded (<https://www.bgs.ac.uk/mapviewers/geoindex-onshore/>).

3.0 Planning Background

A planning application is yet to be submitted for refurbishment and extension of the existing leisure centre. Following completion of an archaeological desk-based assessment (AAL 2023), and after consultation with the advising Historic Environment Officer, a programme of geophysical survey and trial trenching was advised. The geophysical survey has been completed (AAL 2024) and informs the programme of trenching set out in this document.

The approach adopted is consistent with the recommendations of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), with the particular chapter of relevance being 'Section 16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities 2023).

4.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

A desk-based assessment has previously been compiled for this site (AAL 2023), the results of which are summarised below.

Other than a single Mesolithic flint, there is no evidence for prehistoric activity in the study area. It is likely that early activity is sealed beneath subsequent marine transgressions.

Roman activity is represented by several find spots of Roman material as well as several pits and ditches recorded in the immediate vicinity of the site.

Spalding was a royal estate in the Anglo-Saxon period and was a populous settlement at the time of the Domesday Survey. It remained an important market centre in the medieval period but the current site is believed to be peripheral to the medieval settlement in an area subject to frequent flooding. It is possible that the site of Spalding Castle lay on or near to the southwestern part of the site, but there has been no physical evidence recovered.

The later town extended beyond its medieval core into the eastern part of the site, with development particularly along Albion Street.

The geophysical survey of the site (AAL 2024) revealed little of archaeological interest, with significant amounts of magnetic noise present in the results. A number of former field boundaries were present as well as potential geological variation.

5.0 Aims and Objectives

The purpose of the trial trench evaluation and monitoring will be to gather sufficient information for the archaeological curator to be able to formulate a policy for the management of the archaeological resources present on the site.

Evidence shall be gathered to establish the presence/absence, nature, date, depth, quality of survival and importance of any archaeological deposits to enable an assessment of the potential and significance of the archaeological remains, and to assess the impact of the development upon the archaeology.

6.0 Methodology

A programme of trial trenching will be undertaken, equivalent to approximately 3% of the total development area (excluding buildings to be retained) and comprising 25no 30m x 1.8m trenches and 2no 15m x 1.8m trenches as set out on the attached plan, or as near as possible as site conditions will allow (Figure 1). Additional contingency trenching, up to a further 1% (10 trenches) will be used, in agreement with the advising Historic Environment Officer for further investigation or clarification of initial results for instance to extend trenches over whole features, to enable safe excavation where deposits are deep and to check orientations or extents of significant remains should this prove necessary). Further trenching or deposit testing may be a requirement of the site monitoring visit if unclear archaeological remains or geomorphological features present difficulties in interpretation, or to assist with the formulation of a mitigation strategy.

No plant or vehicles will be permitted to track over any exposed archaeology prior to their investigation and sign-off.

In each trench, topsoil, subsoil, and underlying non-archaeological deposits will be removed by mechanical excavator with a toothless ditching bucket in spits no greater than 10cm in thickness. The process will be repeated until the first archaeologically significant or natural horizon is exposed. It is anticipated that machine excavated sondages will be excavated at the end of a selection of trenches to confirm the full stratigraphic sequence and to identify any deeply buried former land surfaces.

All further excavation will then be by hand. The trenches will be in the positions specified, or as near as site conditions allow. It is anticipated that a team of three archaeologists, led by a project supervisor will complete the fieldwork in eight days, at a date yet to be agreed, provisionally August 2024.

In the event of positive results in each or any of the excavated trenches or monitored areas, all features and deposits revealed will be investigated and recorded to determine their date, extent, level of preservation, form and where possible, function, unless otherwise agreed with the LCC HEO. It is not anticipated that the complete excavation of features will be necessary at this stage, although, where archaeologically relevant, some individual features may be excavated in their entirety.

Investigation slots through all linear features will be no less than 1m in width. Discrete features will be half-sectioned or excavated in quadrants where they are large or found to be deep. The use of a handheld auger (or a power auger where appropriate) may be used to gain information from very deep deposits/features and will be available in the staff tool kit. Machine assistance may be required (with the approval of the LCC HEO) for very large/deep features. Sections through linear features will be excavated at approximately 90° to the longitudinal axis to provide a cross-section profile. Cross-sections will be cut vertically and cleaned by hand in order to enhance the definition of stratigraphic sequences. Intersecting features will be investigated to determine the relationship between them. The full stratigraphic sequence within trenches will be recorded in section – e.g. for sections at trench edges, the vertical sequence to the top of the plough or topsoil should be cleaned to establish the presence/absence of vestigial old land surface soils and other stratified deposits, photographed, drawn and discussed in the report. As a minimum, a 1 metre wide representative section will be cleaned and recorded in each trench.

Trenches and spoil heaps will be metal detected. The use of metal detectors on site to aid the recovery of artefacts will be performed by competent metal detector user. The metal detector will not be set to discriminate against iron. Metal detected finds will be plotted on suitable plans within the report.

A full written record of the archaeological deposits will be made on standard Allen Archaeology Limited context recording sheets. Archaeological deposits will be drawn to scale, in plan and section (at scale 1:20 or 1:50), with Ordnance Datum heights being displayed on each class of drawing. Hand drawn plans may be supplemented with survey data gathered using a survey grade GPS or a total station theodolite.

Digital photography will form an integral part of the recording strategy, using a DSLR camera with 12mp sensors. Photographs will incorporate scales, an identification board and directional arrow where appropriate.

Should human remains be encountered, the coroner will be notified, and they will be left in situ, with excavation being limited to the identification and recording of such remains.

Any artefacts found during the investigation that are deemed to be 'treasure' (as defined by The Treasure (Designation) (Amendment) Order 2023) will be removed from site to a secure store and reported to the appropriate coroner's office.

All finds of all classes will be collected, processed, analysed, and published as appropriate. The spoil from the excavated trenches will be examined for further artefact recovery. Finds collected during the fieldwork will be bagged and labelled with the appropriate deposit context number, while registered finds will be 3D located and bagged individually with the deposit context number and small find number. Key specialists may be requested to visit the site during fieldwork to advise on the artefact collection and retention strategies. All finds will be processed (cleaned, marked, and labelled as appropriate) at the offices of Allen Archaeology Limited. These will then be submitted for specialist assessment as to their potential and significance for further analysis and study to the following organisations/persons (depending on their availability):

Sarah Percival	Early prehistoric pottery
Alice Beasley	Later prehistoric and Romano-British pottery
Dr Joshua Hogue	Worked lithic materials
Paul Blinkhorn	Post-Roman pottery and ceramic building material
Bryn Leadbetter	Animal bone
Tania Kausmally	Human bone
Adam Daubney	Other artefacts
Bryn Leadbetter	Environmental analysis
York Archaeological Trust	Conservation

Any changes to the above-named specialists will only be made in agreement with the Historic Environment Officer at Lincolnshire County Council.

If the evaluation results in the recovery of unstable artefactual remains (e.g., metallic objects or preserved wood/leather), Allen Archaeology Limited will commission the services of York Archaeological Trust to advise and implement conservation of unstable artefacts; to undertake x-ray analysis and to provide an assessment of potential summary, which will then be attached to the main report.

7.0 Environmental Works

Bryn Leadbetter is the named primary environmental consultant, who will be responsible for liaising with other specialists. Specialist advice will be sought, if necessary, from the environmental archaeologist, including a site visit to develop the sampling strategy and advise on any buried soils or palaeosols and their potential for soil micromorphological analysis, should such deposits be identified.

Bulk samples of approximately 40 litres in volume (or, where appropriate, entire feature fills) will be taken from a selection of dated and sealed contexts where appropriate. All sampling, assessment and analysis will be undertaken in accordance with English Heritage guidelines (English Heritage 2011).

Waterlogged plant macrofossil samples (of approximately 10 litres in volume) and samples for dendrochronological identification, soil micromorphology, pollen, insect remains, and mollusc analysis will also be taken where it is deemed appropriate to do so and as directed by the relevant specialists. Column samples may also be taken through ditch sections/palaeochannels, etc if necessary.

Radiocarbon, dendrochronology, archaeomagnetic, pollen and monolith samples will be collected where such sampling is necessary to inform the proposals for further stages of archaeological investigation.

Should industrial activity be noted during the works, large technological residues will be collected by hand, with separate samples (c.10ml) collected for micro-slugs (i.e., hammerscale and spherical droplets), with reference made to the documents '*Archaeometallurgy: Guidelines for best practice*' (Historic England 2015).

Animal bone, fish bone and small mammal/amphibian bones will be collected from all excavated features and from processed samples. These will be identified and assessed by the named specialist (Bryn Leadbetter).

8.0 Post-Excavation and Reporting

On completion of site operations, the records produced during the trial trenching will be checked and ordered and a stratigraphic matrix of all archaeological features and deposits prepared.

A fully illustrated assessment report text will then be prepared that will contain the following information:

- A non-technical summary of the results.
- Description of the topography and geology of the investigation area.
- Description of the methodologies used during the investigation.
- Detailed description of the historical and archaeological background of the site.
- A text describing the results of the investigation.
- Overall plan of the site showing evaluation trench locations, accurately located to the national grid.
- Plans of each of the individual trenches showing the archaeological features exposed.
- Sections of the trenches and archaeological features.
- Interpretation of the archaeological features exposed and their context within the surrounding landscape.
- Specialist reports on artefacts and ecofacts from the site.
- Appropriate photographs of the site and specific archaeological features or groups of features.
- A consideration of the significance of the results in local, regional, national, and international terms, including a review of the East Midlands Historic Environment Research Framework once artefact dating has been achieved and an understanding of the archaeological deposits has been achieved.
- A stratigraphic (Harris) matrix.
- A copy of the OASIS form will be included as an appendix.

The post-excavation reporting will be completed within six weeks of the completion of the fieldwork. If required, specialists will propose their own timescales during the post-fieldwork stage.

9.0 Archive

The documentation and records generated by the investigation will be assembled in accordance with the national guidelines in '*Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation*' (AAF 2011) and the local guidelines in '*Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook*' (LCC 2019). The archive will be deposited with Lincoln Museum, where it will be stored under the museum accession code LCNCC:2024.106. The agreed date of deposition is February 2025.

10.0 Report Dissemination

The report will be completed within six weeks of the completion of the fieldwork, and a copy will be sent to the client, to the Local Planning Authority, the Historic Environment Officer at Lincolnshire County Council, and the Lincolnshire Historic Environment Record. A summary account on the results of the investigation in the form of an OASIS form will be forwarded to the ADS in York following the completion of the works.

11.0 Curatorial Monitoring

Curatorial responsibility for the investigation on the site rests with the Historic Environment Officer at Lincolnshire County Council, who will be given at least two weeks' notice of the commencement of the fieldwork. Trenches will not be backfilled without the approval of the LCC HEO.

12.0 Variations to the Proposed Scheme of Works

Variations to the proposed scheme will only be made following written confirmation from the Historic Environment Officer at Lincolnshire County Council.

Should any further investigation be required beyond the scope of the brief for works, or this specification, then the cost and duration of those supplementary examinations will be negotiated between the client and the contractor.

13.0 Health and Safety

All work will be carried out in a way that complies with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and its related regulations and codes of practice. Employees of Allen Archaeology Limited will perform their duties in accordance with company safety policy, with senior staff responsible for monitoring compliance with health and safety requirements and legislation.

The archaeological site supervisor will be responsible for ensuring that all on-site archaeological work is carried out in a safety-conscious, sensible, and responsible manner with due regard for the relevant health and safety requirements and legislation. All staff involved in the scheme will be provided with a Risk Assessment document prior to commencement of site operations.

14.0 Insurance

Allen Archaeology Limited maintains Employers Liability Insurance to £10,000,000.00, Public Liability Insurance to £5,000,000.00 and Professional Indemnity Insurance to £2,000,000.00. Copies of insurance documentation can be supplied upon request.

15.0 Copyright

Allen Archaeology shall retain full copyright of any commissioned reports under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with all rights reserved; excepting that an exclusive license is hereby provided to the client for the use of such documents by the client in all matters directly relating to the project described in this document.

License is also given to the archaeological curator to use the documentary archive for educational, public and research purposes. This license does not cover commercial use of the material by the Lincolnshire HER, South Holland District Council or a third party.

In the case of non-satisfactory settlement of account then copyright will remain fully and exclusively with Allen Archaeology. In these circumstances it will be an infringement under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* for the client to pass any report, partial report, or copy of same, to any third party. Reports submitted in good faith by Allen Archaeology to any Planning Authority or archaeological curator will be removed from said Planning Authority and/or archaeological curator. The Planning Authority and/or archaeological curator will be notified by Allen Archaeology that the use of any such information previously supplied constitutes an infringement under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* and may result in legal action.

The author of any specialist contribution to a report shall retain intellectual copyright of their work and may make use of their work for educational or research purposes for further publication.

16.0 References

AAF, 2011, *Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation*, Archaeological Archives Forum

AAL, 2023, *Archaeological desk-based assessment: Former Castle Sports Complex, Albion Street, Spalding, Lincolnshire*. Allen Archaeology Ltd, Report Number AAL 2023155

AAL, 2024, *Archaeological evaluation report: geophysical survey by magnetometry at the former Castle Sports Complex, Albion Street, Spalding, Lincolnshire*, Allen Archaeology Limited report number 2024074

CIfA, 2023a, *Standard for archaeological field evaluation*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, Reading

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Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 2023, *National Planning Policy Framework*. London, Department for Communities and Local Government

English Heritage, 2011, *Environmental Archaeology*. English Heritage

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Prepared by Chris Clay
Director, Allen Archaeology
6th August 2024

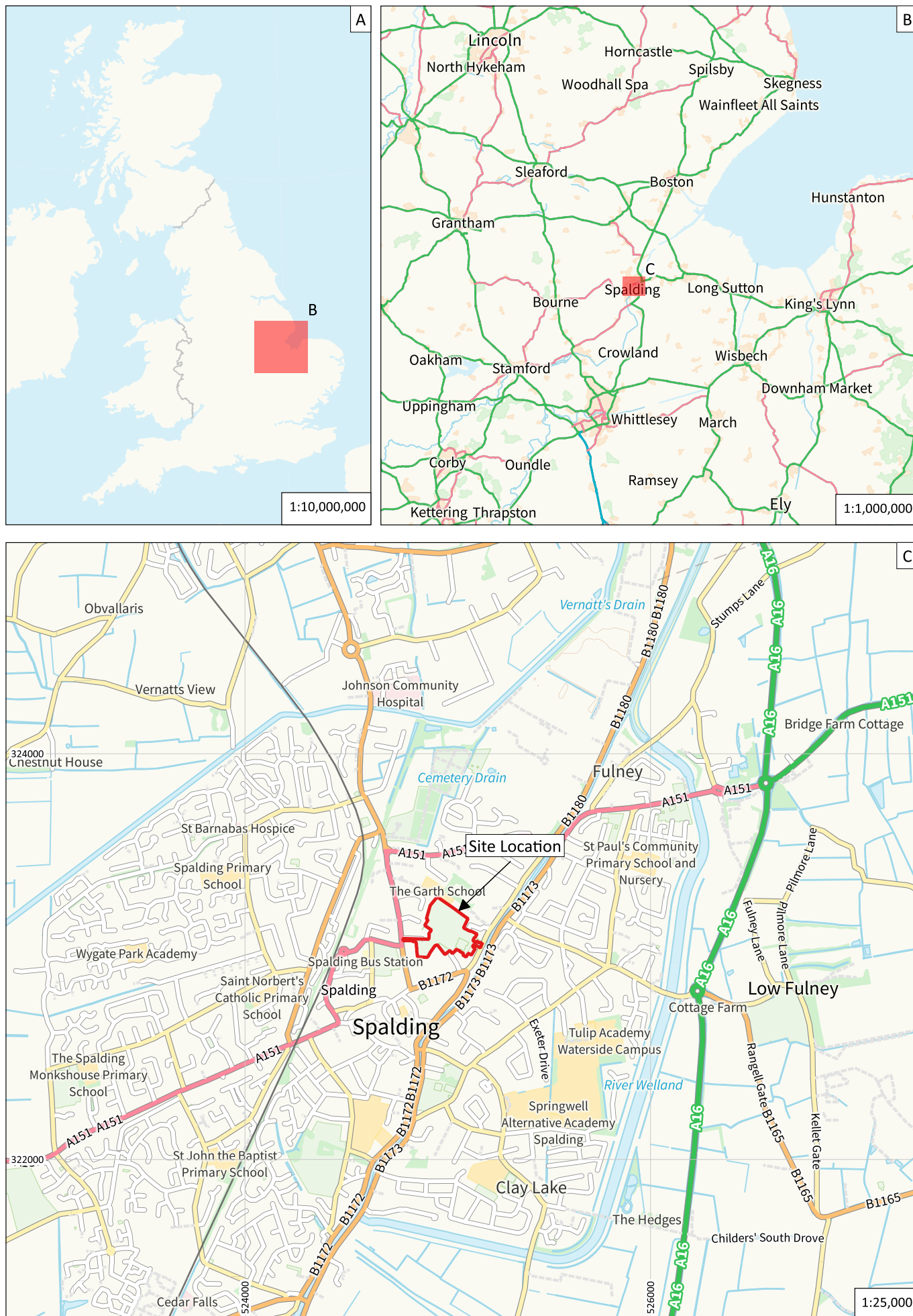


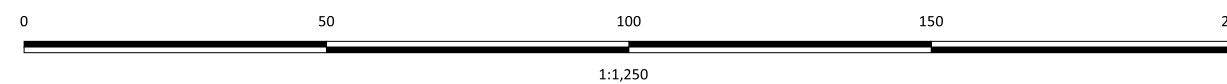
Figure 1: Site location outlined in red



Castle Sports Complex,
Albion Street, Spalding
Site Code: SPAS 24



Figure 2: Plan of proposed trial trenches over proposed development



Key
 Archaeological trench

Castle Sports Complex,
 Albion Street
 Site Code: SPAS 24

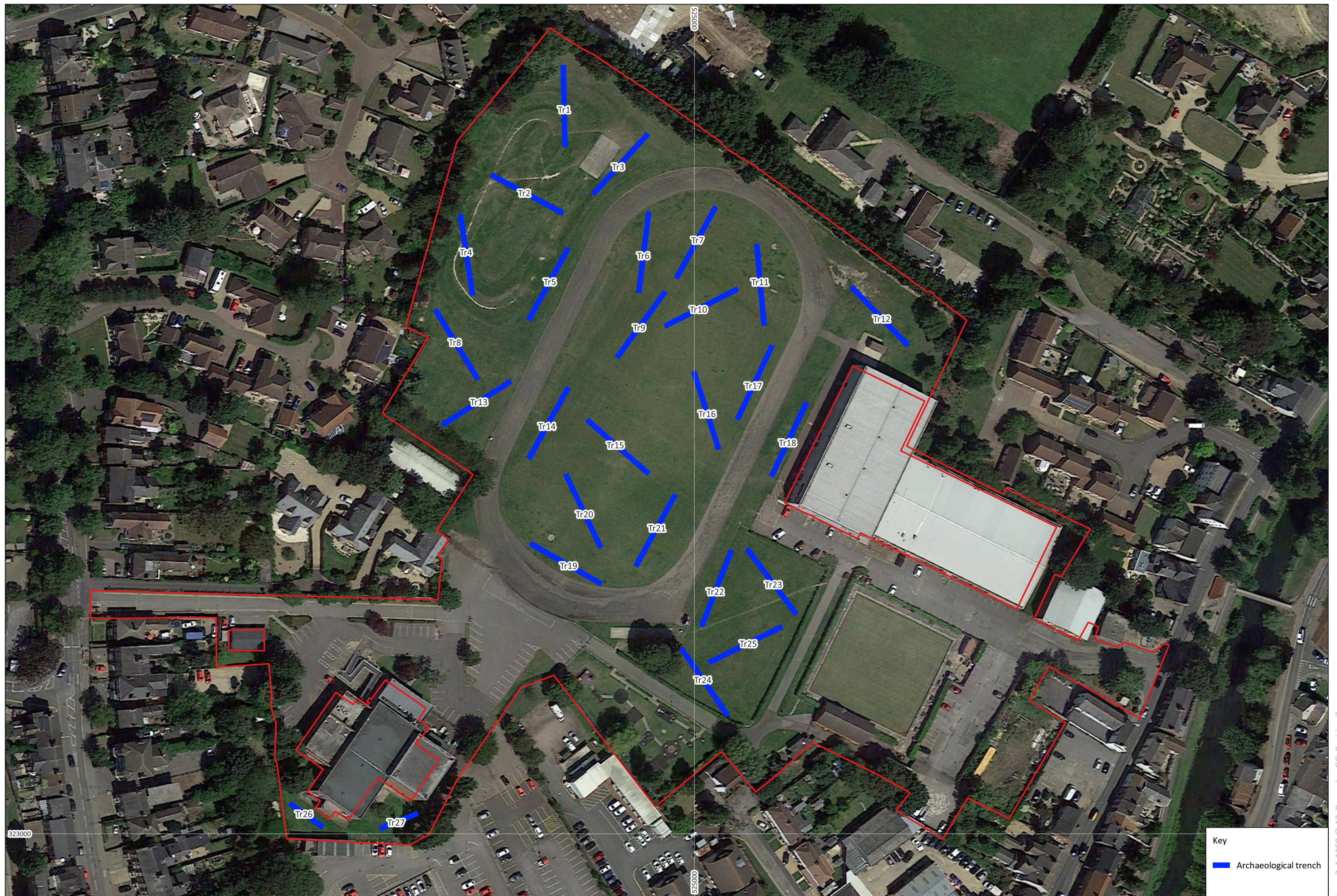
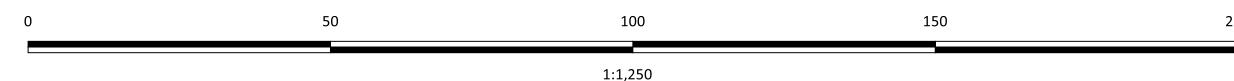


Figure 3: Plan of proposed trial trenches over satellite image



Key
 Archaeological trench

Castle Sports Complex,
 Albion Street
 Site Code: SPAS 24

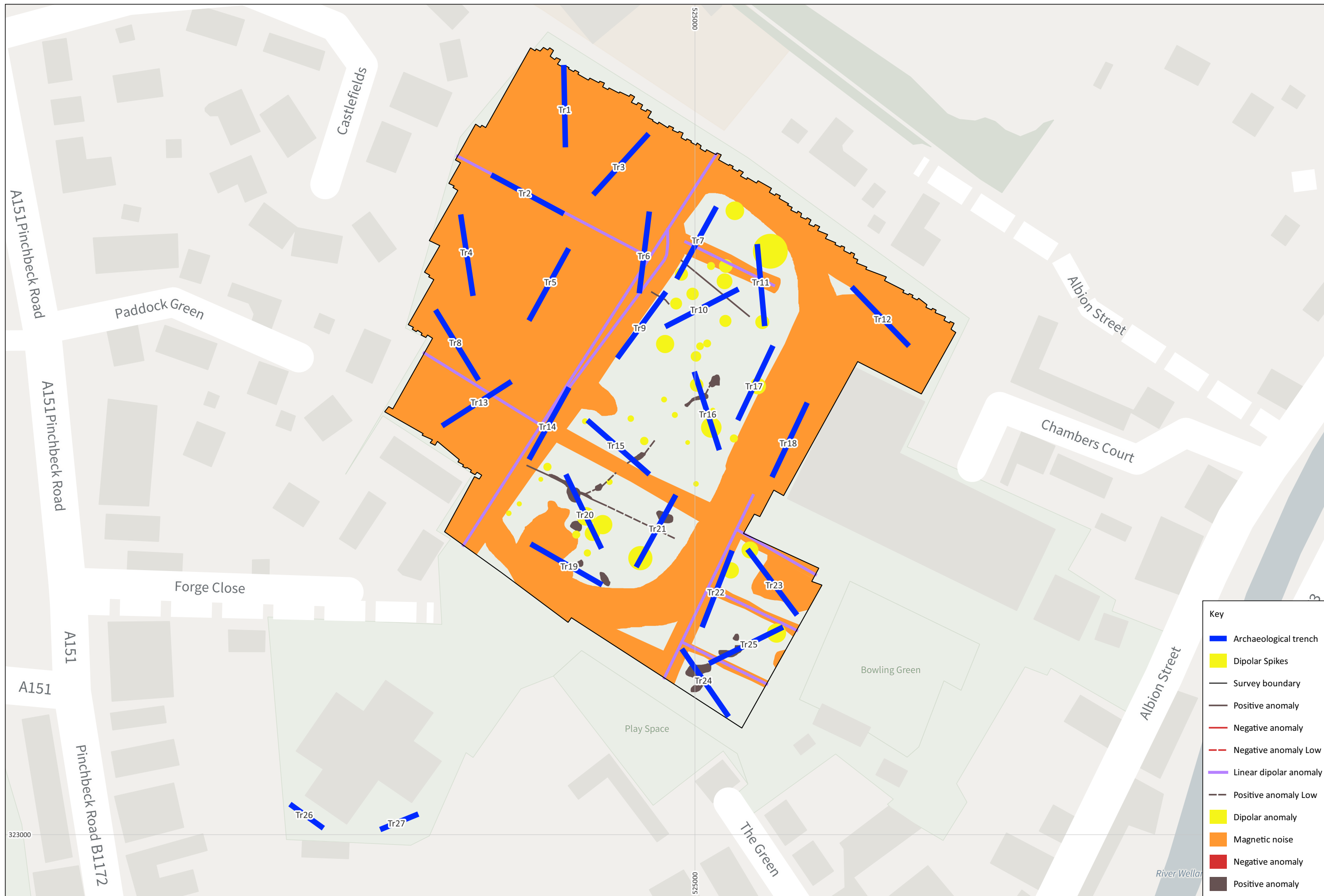
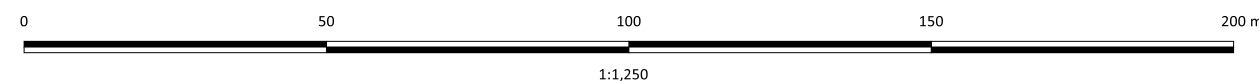


Figure 4: Plan of proposed trial trenches over geophysical survey interpretation



Castle Sports Complex,
Albion Street
Site Code: SPAS 24