Gunthorpe Road Solar Farm
Land south of Gunthorpe Road
Walpole Marsh
Wisbech
Norfolk and Lincolnshire

Archaeological Trial Trenching

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RUBICON archaeology

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Project Code	**RR1145**
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SUMMARY

Site name	Gunthorpe Road Solar Farm, Land south of Gunthorpe Road, Walpole Marsh, Wisbech, Norfolk and Lincolnshire
NGR	TF 47197 17521
Site activity	Archaeological Evaluation/ Trial trenching
Date and duration	1st and 12th December 2025, 10 working days
Site code	RR1145
Area of site	21 50m x 1.8m trenches across c. 78.64 ha
Monuments identified (referenced to the Thesaurus of Monument Types)	Palaeochannels
Location of the archive	Rubicon Archaeology Ltd., Unit K7, Capital Business Park, Cardiff, CF3 2PU

This report presents the results of a programme of archaeological trial trenching undertaken in advance of a proposed application for a Solar farm and battery storage facility with associated infrastructure located on land south of Gunthorpe Road, Walpole Marsh, Wisbech, Norfolk (centred at NGR: TF 47197 17521).

Excavation of 21 trenches across the c. 78.64 ha site was carried out between 1st and 12th December 2025 by Rubicon Archaeology Ltd for Enso Green Holdings R Ltd.

Trenches were targeted on previously identified geophysical anomalies and to test 'blank' areas of the Site. No significant archaeological finds or features were encountered during the trial trenching.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Project Background

1.1.1 Rubicon Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by Enso Green Holdings R Ltd to undertake a programme of archaeological trial trenching in advance of the installation of a solar farm and battery storage facility with associated infrastructure located on land south of Gunthorpe Road, Walpole Marsh, Wisbech, Norfolk (centred at NGR: TF 47197 17521) (figure 1 & 2).

1.1.2 Archaeological trial trenching of the site was undertaken by Rubicon Archaeology Ltd. from the 1st to 12th of December 2025 with works carried out according to a Written Scheme of Investigation (Red River Archaeology 2024). Location of trenches was partially informed by a heritage statement by Pegasus Group (2021) and a previous geophysical survey of the site by WYAS (2022a) (figures 3, 4.1 & 4.2).

1.2. Site Location & Description

1.2.1 The site is located south of Gunthorpe Road in Walpole Marsh (figure 1 and 2). The site is 7.9km northeast of Wisbech and 15km west in the county of Norfolk. The Site is 78.64ha and comprises a single arable field.

1.2.2 The north and south of the Site are bounded by arable fields. The west is bounded by the River Nene. The east is bounded by the village of Walpole Marsh. The land parcel is defined by a hedgerow boundary.

1.2.3 The Site is relatively flat, ranging from approximately 3m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) to 5m aOD.

1.2.4 The underlying bedrock deposits at the Site are mapped as Ampthill Clay Formation comprising mudstone formed between 163.5 and 157.3 million years ago during the Jurassic period. Superficial Tidal Flat Deposits (TFD) are mapped as overlying the Late Jurassic bedrock over the entirety of the site (British Geological Survey 2026a). The latter is presently 9 km south of the coast at Guy's Head, but prior to construction sea defences and drainage of the Wash from the 13th century onwards, was part of a large intertidal basin of 615 km2 size and stretching to present day Chatteris, 35 km south west of the site (Anon. 2010, appendix c). TFD are Holocene[1] deposits, and are described by the British Geological Survey (2026b) as '…. including mud flat and sand flat deposits', forming 'extensive nearly horizontal marshy land in the intertidal zone that is alternately covered and uncovered by the rise and fall of the tide. They consist of unconsolidated sediment, mainly mud and/or sand'. This geology is consistent across the site.

1.2.5 The soil across the site is comprised of SoilScape 21; loamy and clayey soils of coastal flats with naturally higher groundwater. (LandIS® 2026).

[1] The Holocene began 11,700 years ago and is the present geological epoch.

2. AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1. Aims of Works

2.1.1 The aims of the trial trenches were to:

- Determine the extent, condition, nature, character, date and significance of any archaeological remains encountered
- Determine the accuracy of the geophysics results and ground-truth the results of the survey in areas where anomalies have not been identified
- Establish the nature of the activity on the site
- Identify any artefacts relating to the occupation or use of the site
- Provide further information on the archaeology of the site from any archaeological remains encountered
- Determine the heritage significance of any archaeological remains encountered
- Make available to interested parties the results of the investigation subject to any confidentiality restrictions

2.2. Scope of Works

2.2.1 The scope of the work was to carry out a programme of archaeological trial trenching which comprised twenty-one (21) trenches, each measuring 50m x 1.8m. These were positioned to cover both blank areas, and areas of anomaly based on a geophysical survey (WYAS 2022a).

2.2.2 The overall objectives were:

- To define and identify the nature of archaeological deposits on site, and date these where possible
- To attempt to characterise the nature and preservation of the archaeological sequence and recover as much information as possible about the spatial patterning and extent of features present on the site
- To recover a well dated stratigraphic sequence which will attempt to determine the complexity of the horizontal and vertical stratigraphy present, and to recover coherent artefact, ecofact and environmental samples
- To determine the potential of the site to provide palaeoenvironmental and/or economic evidence and the forms in which such evidence may be present
- To define any research priorities that may be relevant should further field investigation be required with particular reference to the East Anglian Research Framework (Brown and Glazebrook, 2000; Medlycott 2011 and review documents (https://researchframeworks.org/eoe/) and the East Midlands Historic Environment Research Framework (https://researchframeworks.org/emherf/).

- To establish the significance of the archaeology encountered on site. The objectives of the trial trenching are to provide information about the archaeological resource within the site, including its presence/absence, character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality.

2.3. Methodology

2.3.1 All fieldwork was undertaken in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (Red River Archaeology 2024), current best practice and the CIfA's Standard and guidance for archaeological evaluation (CIfA 2023a, 2023b). Local guidance for the east of England (Brown & Glazebrook 2000, Gurney 2003, Medlycott 2011) and county specific guidance for Norfolk (Norfolk County Council 2018) and Lincolnshire (Lincolnshire County Council 2019). All invasive ground-breaking works were monitored by a suitably experienced and qualified archaeologist.

2.3.2 All trial trenching was undertaken by a 13 tonne 360 degree tracked excavator fitted with a toothless grading bucket under the supervision and control of qualified site archaeologists to the top of the undisturbed natural strata or archaeological deposits, whichever was highest in the stratigraphic sequence.

2.3.3 Topsoil, subsoil and non-significant overburden deposits were kept separate during trench excavation and stored in separate spoil heaps.

2.3.4 Where appropriate, the base of each trench and the upper surface of any archaeological remains surviving within them was hand cleaned and surveyed to produce a plan of the arrangement of features within the trenches across the Site.

2.3.5 All information identified in the course of the Site works was recorded stratigraphically, with sufficient pictorial record created to identify and illustrate individual features. It should be noted that, where possible, data was be collected and stored digitally and also in a format suitable for long term storage by the Archaeological Data Service (Richards et al, 2000). Primary records were available for inspection at all times.

2.3.6 All potential archaeological deposits encountered were planned and recorded. The work included, as a minimum, the recording of individual contexts on appropriate proformas; plan and section drawings of appropriate single contexts and features (at 1:20 and 1:10 scales, as deemed commensurate with the subject); photographs and other appropriate drawn and written records.

2.3.7 Site photography was by high resolution (14 megapixel) colour digital photography. Photography included general site shots, shots of each trench, and shots of individual features. All photographs were recorded on a photographic register detailing as a minimum the subject, location and direction of each shot.

2.3.8 All spoil heaps were examined for finds both visually and with the aid of a metal detector.

2.3.9 A Monitoring visit was conducted by the Planning Archaeologists of Norfolk and Lincolnshire on 8th December 2025.

2.3.10 Fully recorded and 'signed off' trenches were backfilled using the excavated material in the approximate stratigraphic sequence in which they were excavated. They were left level on completion. No other reinstatement or surface treatment was undertaken.

2.4. REPORTING AND ARCHIVING

2.4.1 The preparation of the report follows the standard and guidance published by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2023a, 2023b). Details of style and format were determined by Rubicon Archaeology Ltd.

2.4.2 An updated HER Enquiry (NHER Enquiry 26_03_22) was obtained to inform the archaeological background.

2.4.3 The results of the archaeological work form the basis of a full archive to professional standards, prepared in accordance with the CIfA Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials (2020a), Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives (2020b), Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-Term Storage (UKIC 1990), Standards and Guidance in the Care of Archaeological Collections (Society for Museum Archaeology 2020) and Archaeological Archives: a best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation (Brown 2007), as well as current Historic England guidelines (HE 2015b). It has been compiled in line with ADS digital records.

2.4.4 The archive from the archaeological works will be under the Accession no. provided by the Lincoln Museum: LCNCC: 2024.9.

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE BASELINE

3.1. Introduction

3.1.1 No previous archaeological excavations are recorded within the Site.

3.1.2 A Heritage Statement was produced in support of the planning application and reference should be made to that for the detailed archaeological background (Pegasus Planning 2021). A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared by Red River Archaeology Ltd prior to the commencement of works (2024). An updated HER Enquiry (NHER Enquiry 26_03_22) was obtained to inform the archaeological background (figures 4.1 & 4.2).

3.2. Archaeological Background

3.2.1 No known HER entries of sites or finds dating to the prehistoric or Romano-British periods have been recorded within the vicinity. Fieldwalking during the 1980s approximately 2km south-east of the site identified a small amount of finds of uncertain date which were focussed on the edges of watercourses known to have been in existence during the Iron Age. The River Nene, which lies to the west of the site, has a long history of serving as a navigation and formed part of the Roman water transport network and it connected east of Peterborough to the Car

Dyke, an artificial canal which likely dated to the early 2nd century AD. It is thought that some drainage and reclamation of the fenland was taking place during the Romano-British period, possibly evidenced by a potential sea defence/saltern at Ingleborough Farm. It has been suggested that the Roman Bank/Walpole Bank in this area may have originated during the Roman period, although it is currently considered to date to the late Saxon period.

3.2.2 A Middle and Late Saxon period settlement is recorded within the wider area at West Walton, Walpole St Peter, Walpole St Andrew and Ingleborough. The name Walpole is thought to have derived from the Old English 'pool by the wall', which relates to the Roman Bank/Walpole Bank sea wall. The medieval landscape in this area would have been divided by dykes/droves which would have aided flood prevention. It is likely that the remaining salt marsh within the area was drained during the medieval period and then the land used for the grazing of animals. The land remained in agricultural use until the modern period.

3.2.3 Approximately 420m to the south-west of the site, a possible saltern, former watercourses and post-medieval field boundaries were identified during geophysical survey in 2022, however subsequent trial trenching did not provide evidence of salt production (NHER: MNF74666) (see further detail below).

3.2.4 Post medieval activity within the wider area includes the Nene Outfall canal (NHER: MNF42344), which runs north-south along the western site boundary. This comprised of a canal dug in 1830 to make Wisbech into a port.

3.3. Previous Archaeological Work

3.3.1 A geophysical survey was undertaken over 73.3ha of the site in 2021 and 2022 (WYAS 2022a; Norfolk HER Event no. ENF151257). Anomalies of possible archaeological and uncertain origin were detected in the form of linear and curvilinear ditches and a ring ditch within the site boundary (NHER: MNF77069). Former field boundaries were detected along with modern ploughing. Geological responses were observed across the site and magnetic disturbance recorded associated with metal pylons and likely dumped ferrous material present on site.

3.3.2 The survey identified a number of magnetic anomalies in the form of sinous linear responses which have a relatively strong contrast with the background geology and have been identified as possible archaeological features that may also be palaeochannels or former watercourses from when the area was a marsh. Former field boundaries were identified, with a small amount of evidence of anomalies linked to agriculture.

3.3.3 Within the wider area, a metal detecting and borehole survey was undertaken in 2003-2004, in search of King John's Treasure, which produced negative results (HER 40716 - MNF44860).

3.3.4 Further geophysical survey (magnetometry) was performed by Archaeological Services WYAS at the proposed site of Walpole Bank solar array, Walpole, January 2022 (ENF151957). The results suggested a large number of anomalies were geological, with the addition of former field boundaries and a cluster of uncertain anomalies (WYAS 2022b). A geophysical survey of an additional area at the eastern end of this site in 2023 identified two linear anomalies that correspond with former field boundaries depicted on 19th-century maps but no other

potentially archaeologically significant responses. There was no evidence for surviving remains associated with two possible saltern mounds previously noted at this location (NHERs 19693 and 19694). Subsequent trial trenching demonstrated that both mounds were overlain by a clay silt layer that also sealed a palaeochannel identified by the geophysical survey. Two ditches were cut into this deposit, both of which were associated with the late post-medieval field boundaries. Single test pits excavated into the two mounds demonstrated that they both consisted of sequences of pale sand deposits. Neither of these small test pits encountered any debris from salt production and no finds were recovered (HER 65586 - MNF74666).

3.3.5 A geophysical survey (magnetometry) was undertaken by Headland Archaeology at land adjacent to National Grid substation, Walpole Bank, Walpole, April 2024. This survey identified no potentially archaeologically significant anomalies. Several sinuous low magnitude trends likely represented former water channels and/or tidal creeks (ENF156242). Subsequent trial trenching undertaken by Headland Archaeology at this site in September 2024, confirmed these results with only natural alluvial deposits encountered (ENF156645; MNF78149).

3.3.6 Trial Trenching was by Red River Archaeology at land west of Walpole Marsh, Walpole, February 2024 (ENF155448), followed by a Watching Brief by Rubicon Archaeology in September 2025 (ENF158786).

3.3.7 A Watching Brief was undertaken by Wessex Archaeology on the route of Grimsby to Walpole (G2W) project, Walpole/Walpole Highway/West Walton, January 2026 (ENF159112).

4. RESULTS

4.1. Introduction

4.1.1 Twenty-one trenches were excavated between the 1st and 12th of December 2025 (figures 1, 2, & 5.1–5.4; plates 1–42).

4.1.2 The conditions were variable with some sun, but weather was largely wet and rainy for much of the works.

4.1.3 All trench bases and spoil heaps were also examined for finds, but none were recovered.

4.2. General Deposit Sequence

4.2.1 The general deposit sequence was consistent across the development area. The natural geological substate (02) was a light yellow-brown friable sandy silt. Due to the pale and clear colouring of the natural, archaeological features were immediately visibly obvious. Overlying this was a subsoil (01) comprised of mid yellowish brown friable sandy silt, ranging from 0.2m to 0.8m thick. The topsoil (00) was a dark greyish brown friable sandy silt loam measured between 0.19m and 0.5m thick.

4.3. Trial Trenches

4.3.1 Trenches 3-5, 9 and 12 contained no archaeological find or features but had the natural tested (or in the case of 12 had asbestos present), whilst trenches 7, 10, 17, 20 and 21 contained no archaeological finds or features but were not further investigated. Sondages were also excavated to ensure the natural horizon had been reached in Trench 1.

4.3.2 Trench 1 included a field boundary ditch [00103] 1.98m wide running northwest to southeast through the southwestern third of the trench and cut the subsoil (00101) (figure 6, plate 1). The ditch was 0.55m deep and contained three distinct natural infills; the primary was a mid-red-brown silty sand (00104) up to 0.2m thick and above this was a light red-brown silty sand (00105) up to 0.23m thick. These two fills showed some evidence for lamination within the sediment, indicating low energy cyclical silting had occurred. The upper fill was a very light red-brown silty sand with no inclusions (00106) up to 0.33m thick (figure 6; plate 2). Fine beds and coarse laminations of alternating dark brown and light yellow brown colour are evidenced at approximately +2.4m OD in the basal fills (00104) and (00105) of ditch [00103] (figure 6). In (00104), the lower fine beds/laminations are picked out as iron stains. The fine beds/laminations are discontinuous, wavy and both parallel and non-parallel, while the relevant fills are overlain by a further fill that lack laminations (00106).

4.3.3 Three test pits were also excavated within the trench to test the natural, all measuring to 1.8m wide and to a depth of 1.2m (plates 3, 4 & 5). Test pit (1a) measured 2m in length and Test pits (1b) and (1c) measured 3.5m in length. They were located one at each end and one across the midpoint of Trench 2. No archaeological finds were identified. As feature cut the sub-soil it is likely to be modern.

4.3.4 Trench 2 contained two palaeochannels, [00203] and [00205], both roughly 1m wide and situated approximately 20m from its northern extent and 12m from its southern extent, respectively (figure 6, plates 6, 7 & 8). Palaeochannel [00203] was 0.04m in depth and contained a single laminated fill of moderately compact yellowish grey sandy silt with thin lenses of dark brown organic matter. Palaeochannel [00205] was 0.16m deep and contained a single moderately compact laminated fill of yellowish-brown sandy silt. Coarse laminations and fine beds are present in the fill (00205) of palaeochannel [00203] as dark brown, parallel, discontinuous bands in an other wise mid-brown stratum (plate 7). Three Test pits had been proposed to test the natural deposit but were not excavated as the palaeochannel was instead noted and excavated. No archaeological finds were identified.

4.3.5 Trench 3 contained no archaeology (plate 9), however, the natural was tested with a sondage measuring 5.7m in length, 2m wide and to a depth of 1.2m (plate 10). The test pit it was located to the centre of the trench.

4.3.6 Trench 4 contained no archaeology (plate 11), however, the natural was tested with two sondages, each measuring 7.4m in length and 2m wide and to a depth of 1.2m. One test pit was located to the centre and one to the east end of the trench (plate 12).

4.3.7 Trench 5 contained no archaeology (plate 13), however, the natural was tested with a sondage measuring 5.3m in length and 2m wide and to a depth of 1.2m. The sondage was located to the centre of the trench (plate 14).

4.3.8 Trench 6 contained a 10m wide palaeochannel [00603], running northwest to southeast through its midsection (figure 6, plates 15 & 16). This contained two sterile fills, a basal fill of (00604), measuring 1.2m wide and more than 0.3m deep and comprising of an organic rich dark brown silty sand and above this, (00605), a mid-yellowish-brown silty sand measuring 0.4m wide and 0.25m deep. A sample from (00604) (Sample 0601), produced seeds or fruits of dry land herbs and wetland or aquatic plants and tree or shrub macrofossils. Overall, the ecofact assemblage was indicative of plants growing within an area of agricultural land. Although no datable material was obtained from the sample, it was determined that the surviving ecofacts are indicative of a medieval or post-medieval context rather than a Roman one.

4.3.9 Trench 7, no archaeology (plate 17).

4.3.10 Trench 8 contained a ditch [00803] which cut the sub-soil (00801) and measured 0.5m wide and 0.4m deep with a U-shaped profile (figure 7, plates 18 & 19). It was filled with a mid-red-brown silty sand (00804) containing an articulated animal burial which analysis determined to be a modern sheep (plate 20)). A possible palaeochannel [00805] was also observed within the trench section, cutting the sub-soil (plate 21). It measured 1.97m wide and 0.40m deep. It contained a single fill of mid yellowish brown sandy silt (00806). As ditch [00803] contained a modern sheep and cut the sub-soil, it is therefore very likely to be modern. Feature [00805] also cut the sub-soil and is therefore likely to be modern.

4.3.11 Within Trench 9 an E-W there were some variations in the natural that were investigated but which did not turn out to be features. One, measuring 2.4m long and 0.62m wide was planned but not excavated (figure 7, plate 22). There were no archaeological finds recovered.

4.3.12 Trench 10, no archaeology (plate 23).

4.3.13 Trench 11 contained ditch [01103], measuring 0.7m in width and 0.3m in depth, with a U-shaped profile (figure 8, plates 24 & 25). It ran southwest to northeast through the centre of the trench and cut the sub-soil (1101). The ditch contained a single fill of mid reddish brown silty sand (01104). There were no archaeological finds recovered. As this ditch cuts the sub-soil and corresponds with a boundary on 1904 25" OS mapping, it is likely to be modern.

4.3.14 Trench 12 contained no archaeology (figure 8, plate 28). A modern asbestos cement drainage pipe [01204] was found running E-W, it measured 5m in length and was not fully excavated. Variation in the natural, possibly a palaeochannel, measured 2.8m in length and c.1.6m wide was not excavated. There were no archaeological finds recovered.

4.3.15 Trench 13 contained a palaeochannel [01303], measuring 3m wide and 0.7m deep with irregular sides and an irregular base (figure 9, plates 27 & 28). It ran east to west through the midpoint of the trench. The palaeochannel was filled by a laminated sterile reddish-brown silt mottled with pale yellow sand (01304). Fine beds and coarse laminations are present in fill (01304) of palaeochannel [01303]. The lamina strata wavy, parallel, discontinuous and are observed as

dark and iron-stained lenses in otherwise mid yellow brown deposits (figure 9). There were no archaeological finds recovered.

4.3.16 Trench 14 contained a palaeochannel and a ditch (figure 10, plates 29, 30 & 31). Palaeochannel [01403], was aligned northeast to southwest measuring 1.67m in width and 0.47m in depth, with irregular sides and base. It was filled by a single laminated friable red-brown silt and pale-yellow sand (01404). Coarse laminations and fine beds are associated with palaeochannel [01403] and are present both within the fill (01404), but also the deposits through which the channel has cut (01491). Indeed, several fine layers extend from the former into the latter, while laminations/fine beds entirely within (01404) have developed at increasingly acute angles upwards through the deposit. The laminations/fine beds are dark brown wavy, parallel and non-parallel in otherwise mid yellow brown strata (figure 10, plate 31). A ditch [01405] 1.6m wide and 0.46m deep was also present. It was filled with a sterile mid-red-brown friable silty sand (01406). This ditch corresponds with 1904 25" OS mapping and is likely modern. There were no archaeological finds recovered.

4.3.17 Trench 15; there were two variations in the natural that were investigated one of which did not turn out to be a feature, the other was a palaeochannel, [01503], measuring 2m in width and 0.66m in depth (figure 11, plates 32 & 33). It ran southwest to northeast, which was filled by a laminated friable reddish-brown silt with pale yellow sand (01504). Coarse laminations and fine beds are present in fill (01504) of palaeochannel [01503], and take the form of dark brown discontinuous, wavy, parallel bands within a light yellow brown stratum. As was the case for Trench 14, some laminations/fine beds seen at the base of fill (01503) continue into the deposit (01501) in which the palaeochannel is cut (figure 11, plate 33). There were no archaeological finds recovered.

4.3.18 Trench 16 contained a palaeochannel, [01603], measuring 1.66m wide and 0.66 deep (figure 12, plates 34 & 35). It ran northwest to southeast, which was filled by a single laminated friable sterile red-brown silt with pale yellow sand mottling (01604). Coarse laminations and fine beds are present as straight, continuous and parallel band of a dark brown colour within a light yellow brown stratum and is present in both the fill (01604) of palaeochannel [01603], but also through the stratum through which the latter is cut (01601) (, figure 12, plate 34). There were no archaeological finds recovered.

4.3.19 Trench 17, no archaeology (plate 36).

4.3.20 Trench 18 contained a modern ditch [01805] (unexcavated), 2m wide and running northeast to southwest (figure 13, plate 37). Modern plastic and other modern objects were found within the surface fill of these two features. There were no archaeological finds recovered.

4.3.21 Trench 19 contained two palaeochannels, [01904] and [01906], running northwest-southeast and east-west, respectively (figure 14, plates 38, 39 & 40). Palaeochannel [01904], measuring 3m wide and 0.6m deep, was filled by a single sterile laminated red-brown silt with pale yellow sand mottling (01905). Palaeochannel [01906], measured 3.6m wide and 0.6m deep. It was filled by a similar laminated sterile friable red-brown silt with pale yellow sand mottling (01907).

Coarse laminations and fine beds are present in the fills of two palaeochannel fills of Trench 19, namely (01905), the fill of [01904] and also in the earlier (01907) fill of [01906]. The lamination/fine beds continue across both fills are of straight and wavy, parallel, discontinuous dark brown bands in an otherwise light yellow brown stratum (figure 14, plates 39 and 40). There were no archaeological finds recovered. A small number of shells were observed within spoil derived from the palaeochannel (01905). Five of these were freshwater river orb mussel Sphaerium rivicola, a native species. Other shells noted were snail shells of burrowing species that were therefore likely intrusive.

4.3.22 Trench 20, no archaeology (plate 41).

4.3.23 Trench 21, no archaeology (plate 42).

4.3.24 Environmental samples were taken from features within trenches 6 (20 litres), 11 (20L), and 16 (1L) on request of the county archaeologist. No finds were recovered from any of the samples.

4.4 Faunal Remains by Hannah Lycett-Smith

Introduction

Animal bone (140 fragments weighing 589g) comprising the torso and left limbs of a singular caprine, recovered via hand collection from a modern ditch fill (00804). The skeleton was deposited in the ditch with no visible cut or variation in fill suggests that the remains are of modern origin. This report includes quantification of the animal bone assemblage recovered, with identification at species level, an assessment of significance, and recommendation(s) for any further work.

Methods

The animal remains were identified to element, side and to as low a taxonomic level as possible using the Rubicon Archaeology reference collection and published online identification guidance (BoneID; ArchéoZoothèque). Hand-collected remains were quantified by weight (g) and count. Diagnostic zoning after Dobney and Rielly (1988) was used on hand-collected remains.

This assessment has been undertaken in line with published standards and guidelines for zooarchaeology (Baker and Worley 2019; CIfA 2020a, 2021), with reference to a WSI for archaeological trial trenches at the site (Rubicon Archaeology 2024) and county specific archaeological frameworks (Norfolk County Council 2018; Lincolnshire County Council 2019).

Results

In total, 140 fragments of animal bone were recovered from context (00804) within Trench 8. The remains were recovered via hand collection. The remains were of a single adult caprine – most likely sheep rather than goat due to the flat and agricultural nature of the land. No fauna or microfauna was recovered from environmental samples.

Taphonomic Assessment

Bone surface preservation and fragmentation

Bone surface preservation varied throughout the assemblage from 'excellent' (1), to 'poor' (4) on a scale of 1 to 5 from 'excellent' to 'very poor'. Most specimens had a 'good' (2) level of surface preservation, 92.1% by count (n=129). Light root etching was present across all elements, suggesting the growth of small rooted plants in proximity to the remains. Ten elements, all ribs, showed strong abrasion – likely as a result of the waterlogged conditions on site. Fragmentation was high throughout the assemblage with only eight complete elements recovered, only 5.7% of the total assemblage.

Butchery

There was no evidence for carcass processing in the form of cut, chop, or slice marks. As there were no butchery marks, it is likely that the animal died of natural causes.

Animal interaction

There was no evidence for carnivore or rodent gnawing. As the site is situated on marshland, it is likely that the remains became submerged in ditchwater and mud shortly after deposition, thus deterring any scavenging animals.

Pathology

The distal left humerus showed possible early-stage osteophyte growth around the proximal epiphysial line. This suggests that the animal was potentially suffering from osteoarthritis, which may have led it to become 'lame' and likely contributed to a death by natural causes.

Burning and calcination

No burnt or calcified bone was recovered from the site.

Potential for measurement

One bone, the left femur, was suitable for taking measurements that might contribute to the estimation of animal size.

Potential for ageing and sexing

Bone fusion data was collected for one or both epiphyses for 25 elements. Epiphyseal fusion data suggests that the animal was at least 18-30 months of age at time of death (Wilson *et al* 1982). The pelvis was viable for sexing using methods after Hatting (1995), and suggested the remains were of probable female sex.

4.4.2. Discussion

The animal bone recovered during the archaeological trial trenches at Gunthorpe Road Solar Farm represents the remains of one caprine, most likely a sheep. It is modern and most likely agricultural in origin.

These remains are not of sufficient size, condition, or significance to conduct further analysis work. Findings show a minimal presence of zooarchaeological remains at the site.

4.4.3. Recommendations for future analysis and dissemination

No further work is recommended at this time. It is recommended that faunal remains from this site be discarded from the site archive due to their lack of archaeological significance.

4.5 Charred Plant Macrofossils and Other Remains by Val Fryer

Introduction and method statement

4.5.1 Five samples were taken for analysis (see Appendix III). All but one was sterile, the single sample that produced a plant macrofossil assemblage was taken from the fill of ditch [00604] (sample 0601).

4.5.2 The samples were bulk floated by Rubicon Archaeology, with the flot being collected in a 300 micron mesh sieve. Although clearly from a de-watered fill, the flot was air dried (to facilitate transport) prior to scanning under a binocular microscope at magnifications up to x 16. The material noted is listed in Table 1 and, with the exception of occasional flecks of charcoal/charred wood and charred seeds, all plant remains are preserved in a de-watered state. Nomenclature within the table follows Stace (2010).

Results

4.5.3 The assemblage is largely composed of de-watered root/stem fragments, including both rhizome fragments and occasional nodes. Seeds/fruits of dry land herbs, wetland/aquatic plants and tree/shrub macrofossils are recorded at varying densities, with all being moderately well-preserved despite some distortion as a result of the compaction of the deposit. Dry land species occur most frequently, with taxa noted including sandwort (Arenaria sp.), orache (Atriplex sp.), fat hen (Chenopodium album), persicaria (Persicaria maculosa/lapathifolia), greater plantain (Plantago major), dock (Rumex sp.), chickweed (Stellaria media) and stinging nettles (Urtica dioica). Wetland/aquatic taxa include club-rush (Bolboschoenus/Schoenoplectus sp.), sedge (Carex sp.), ragged robin (Lychnis flos-cuculi), water crowfoot (Ranunculus subg. Batrachium) and horned pond weed (Zannichellia sp.). Fragments of hawthorn (Crataegus sp.) fruit stone are also recorded along with a single grape (Vitis vinifera) 'pip'.

4.5.4 Other remains are generally scarce. However, water-flea egg cases (Cladoceran ephippia) and de-watered arthropod remains are both noted along with occasional fragments of caddis larval cases and a single fragment of mussel shell.

Table 1. Plant Macrofossils

Sample No.	**0601**
Feature No.	**00604**
Feature type	**Ditch**
Dry land species	
Aphanes arvesis L.	x
Arenaria sp.	xx
Atriplex sp.	xx
Chenopodium album L.	xxx
C. ficifolium Sm.	x
C. polyspermum L.	xx
Fallopia convolvulus (L.)A.Love	x
Papaver dubium L.	xcf
P. somniferum L.	xcf
Persicaria maculosa/lapathifolia	xxx
Plantago major L.	xx
Polygonum aviculare L.	x
Rumex sp.	xxxx
(tepal frags.)	xxx
Solanum nigrum L>	xcf
Sonchus asper (LK.)Hill	x
Stellaria media (L.)Vill.	xxx
Urtica dioica L.	xx
Viola sp.	x
Wetland/aquatic plants	
Bolboschoenus/Schoenoplectus sp.	x
Carex sp.	x xc
Juncus sp.	x
Lemna sp.	x
Luzula sp.	xcf
Lychnis flos-cuculi L.	x
Ranunculus subg. *Batrachium* (DC)A.Gray	xxxx
Zannichellia sp.	x
Tree/shrub macrofossils	
Crateagus sp.	x
Vitis vinifera L.	x
Other plant macrofossils	
Charcoal <2mm	x
Charred root/stem	x
Waterlogged root/stem	xxxx
Other remains	
Caddis larval cases	x
Cladoceran ephippia	xxx
Marine mollusc shell	x
Waterlogged arthropod remains	xxx
Sample volume (litres)	
Volume of flot (litres)	**0.1**
% flot sorted	**100%**

Key to Table

x = 1 – 10 specimens xx = 11 – 50 specimens xxx = 51 – 100 specimens xxxx = 100+ specimens

cf = compare c = charred

4.6 Conclusions and recommendations for further work

4.6.1 In summary, it was hoped to find material within this assemblage which could possibly suggest a date for the feature. However, this has not been possible. The single grape 'pip' could potentially have been decisive, but Walpole, which is situated on the northern silt fen, is within an area of intense activity dating from the Roman period onwards and, therefore, a single specimen is of little significance. Within the remainder of the assemblage, dry land herbs are dominant, but grasses are totally absent, which would appear to suggest that the seeds are indicative of plants growing on the edge of a ditch situated within an area of agricultural land. This hypothesis is possibly supported by the high density of annual weeds, which certainly appear to indicate that the land was being disturbed on a regular basis. Again, given the position of the site, this could be indicative of activity for the Roman period onwards, whereas a similar assemblage from the peat fen would suggest medieval or post medieval activity, as the Fen was drained. The ditch itself was almost certainly permanently waterfilled, possibly with a low to moderate flow of clean, fresh water, with the abundance of water crowfoot suggesting that the base of the feature may have been muddy, at least on a seasonal basis. The lack of anthropogenic detritus probably suggests that the feature was peripheral to any settlement activity.

4.6.2 As is made clear by the descriptions above, the lamina/fine bed structure seen in the Gunthorpe Road evaluation trenches is not only attested in the ditch and palaeochannel fills but is also seen in the TFD substrate through which those features are cut. Indeed, in several instances laminae/fine beds can be traced from the substrate through adjacent fills of palaeochannels and ditches. The only difference between lamination/fine beds in the two circumstances is that in the upper parts of ditch and palaeochannel fills laminations/fine beds are often high angled. Collectively these data suggest that lamination/fine bedding is not a primary depositional feature (i.e. is does not indicate oscillating deposition as discussed above), but is rather a post-depositional (diagenetic) phenomenon. As such, lamination/fine bedding is most likely the product of chemical alteration (i.e. oxidation) of the host sediment as a result of fluctuations in the water table, this resulting in colour changes. Ground water will have had a horizontal displacement over most of the site, but the ditches and palaeochannels are also likely to have acted as conduits. Fall in groundwater within these features post flood is likely to have followed stratigraphic displacement of the fills, hence leading to the curved and wavy laminations seen in the ditch and palaeochannel features.

4.6.3 As the assemblage is somewhat limited in composition, further quantification/analysis is not recommended. However, a summary of this assessment should be included within any publication of data from the site. Although it has not been possible to date the feature from the contents of the assemblage, none of the recovered material is suitable for C14 dating, as soluble carbon within the soil would almost certainly adversely affect any determination. However,

given the total absence of typical Roman detritus (for example, chaff), it is considered most likely that the feature is of medieval or post-medieval date.

5. CONCLUSION, SIGNIFICANCE AND POTENTIAL

5.1. No significant archaeological features were found during the archaeological trial trenching at Gunthorpe Road. A large number of anomalies identified from the geophysical survey were determined to be potentially geological in origin and likely to be remains of former palaeochannels (WYAS 2022a). The result of this survey correspond well with the results of the trial trenching, with eight of the ten features identified as palaeochannels during trial trenching correlating with those anomalies determined to be geological in the geophysical survey data.

5.2. There were six ditches found across the site during trial trenching. Those with trenches 1, 8 and 11 were found to be cutting the sub-soil. Ditches in Trenches 11 and 14 corresponds to field boundaries noted on the 1904 25" OS map. A ditch in Trench 8 contained a modern sheep skeleton, while a ditch and pit within Trench 18 contained modern plastic and other modern artefacts. Each of these factors would suggest a modern or post-medieval date to these features.

5.3. Trench 19 contained two palaeochannels, [01904] and [01906]. There were 5 freshwater river orb mussel shells observed within spoil from the latter. The river orb mussel (Sphaerium rivicola) prefers clean, well-oxygenated hard-water environments, typically inhabiting large, slow-flowing rivers and canals. They are commonly found in the middle to lower reaches of rivers, often in relatively deep water. Since they were recovered from spoil and therefore unstratified, the origin and date of these is unclear, however they could indicate either human activity or wider environmental conditions.

5.4. Soil samples, consisting of 5 bags/buckets, were taken to investigate the potential for recovery of material suitable for radiocarbon dating and or the recovery of any other dateable material. The material recovered was processed but only one found suitable for assessment. The ecofacts obtained from dich [00603] was indicative of plants growing on the edge of a ditch situated within an area of agricultural land. Although undated, the ecofact assemblage was more akin to a medieval or post-medieval rather than Roman context. The other material recovered from the soil samples was considered too sparse to provide any meaningful data.

5.5. Lamination was recorded within the fill of six of the palaeochannels and one boundary ditch [0103]. Lamination comprises of thin layers of fine-grained sediment produced through cyclic changes in the supply of sediment. It can occur in low energy riverine locations, including palaeochannels (Pears et. al. 2023). The River Nene runs directly to the west of the site, and the site serves a flood plain to the river. It is likely that the lamination has occurred due to repeated seasonal flooding events. The survival of such laminations suggests that these deposits have been

subject to minimal bioturbation suggesting that the channels remained filled with water for extended periods, prohibiting plant growth.

5.6. The results suggest that the site has been subject to agricultural use, peripheral to any settlement activity, with evidence for post-medieval and modern drainage and modern use of the site for grazing. The site is situated on a floodplain where palaeochannels and modern drainage ditches are common and pose no archaeological significance. The effect of the proposed development is likely to have no archaeological impact due to the absence of below ground archaeology identified within the trenches across the site.

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APPENDIX I - ARCHIVE STATEMENT

The site archive is comprised of the following materials:

Item	Quantity
Trenching and field recording sheets	21 double-sided A4 trench sheets 15 double-sided A4 context sheets 3 A4 sample sheets 2 A3 drawing sheets
GPS Plans	Digital data
Digital Photographs	128 JPG files
Registers (Finds, drawings, photographs, soil samples)	3 A4 pages
Finds Assemblage	140 Faunal Bone Fragments

The archive is currently stored by Rubicon Archaeology Ltd. at their Cardiff Office, Unit K7, Capital Business Park, The Levels, Cardiff.

APPENDIX II – CONTEXT INVENTORY

Context	Type	Fill of	Filled by	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth/ Thickness (m)	Description	Interpretation
(00100)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.4	Friable dark greyish brown sandy silt with no inclusions.	Topsoil
(00101)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.5	Friable mid yellowish brown sandy silt with no inclusions.	Subsoil
(00102)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	N/A	Friable light yellowish brown sandy silt with no inclusions.	Natural
[00103]	Cut	-	(00104) (00105) (00106)	>2	1.98	0.55	Linear running north to south. Moderately sloping sides and slightly V-shaped base.	Modern field boundary ditch
(00104)	Fill	[00103]	-	>2	1.35	0.2	Friable laminated mid reddish brown silty sand with no inclusions.	Fill of modern field boundary ditch
(00105)	Fill	[00103]	-	>2	1.05	0.23	Friable laminated light reddish brown silty sand with no inclusions.	Secondary fill of modern field boundary ditch

Context	Type	Fill of	Filled by	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth/ Thickness (m)	Description	Interpretation
(00106)	Fill	[00103]	-	>2	1.53	0.33	Friable very light reddish brown silty sand with no inclusions. Natural infilling.	Tertiary fill of modern field boundary ditch
(00200)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.37	Topsoil. Same as (00100).	Topsoil
(00201)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.5	Subsoil. Same as (00101).	Subsoil
(00202)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	N/A	Natural. Same as (00102).	Natural
[00203]	Cut	-	(00204)	>1.8	1	N/A	Linear - Unexcavated	Cut of palaeochannel.
(00204)	Fill	[00203]	-	>1.8	1	N/A	Unexcavated.	Fill of palaeochannel
[00205]	Cut	-	(00206)	>1.8	1	N/A	Linear - Unexcavated	Cut of palaeochannel.
(00206)	Fill	[00205]		>1.8	1	N/A	Unexcavated.	Fill of palaeochannel
(00300)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.48	Topsoil. Same as (00100).	Topsoil
(00301)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.54	Subsoil. Same as (00101).	Subsoil
(00302)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	N/A	Natural. Same as (00102).	Natural
(00400)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.4	Topsoil. Same as (00100).	Topsoil
(00401)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.5	Subsoil. Same as (00101).	Subsoil
(00402)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	N/A	Natural. Same as (00102).	Natural

Context	Type	Fill of	Filled by	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth/ Thickness (m)	Description	Interpretation
(00500)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.42	Topsoil. Same as (00100).	Topsoil
(00501)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.52	Subsoil. Same as (00101).	Subsoil
(00502)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	N/A	Natural. Same as (00102).	Natural
(00600)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.4	Topsoil. Same as (00100).	Topsoil
(00601)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.8	Subsoil. Same as (00101).	Subsoil
(00602)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	N/A	Natural. Same as (00102).	Natural
[00603]	Cut		(00604) (00605)	>1.8	10	N/A	Linear-not fully excavated	Cut of palaeochannel
(00604)	Fill	[00603]		>1.8	10	N/A	Very dark brown silt with a high organic content, moderately compact	Primary fill of palaeochannel
(00605)	Fill	[00603]		>1.8	10	N/A	Mid yellowish brown sandy silt, moderately compact	Secondary fill of palaeochannel
(00700)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.4	Topsoil. Same as (00100).	Topsoil
(00701)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.38	Subsoil. Same as (00101).	Subsoil
(00702)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	N/A	Natural. Same as (00102).	Natural
(00800)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.4	Topsoil. Same as (00100).	Topsoil

Context	Type	Fill of	Filled by	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth/ Thickness (m)	Description	Interpretation
(00801)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.4	Subsoil. Same as (00101).	Subsoil
(00802)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	N/A	Natural. Same as (00102).	Natural
[00803]	Cut	-	(00804)	>1.5	0.5	0.4	Linear running north-south. Steep sides with a U-shaped base.	Modern field boundary ditch
(00804)	Fill	[00803]	-	>1.5	0.5	0.4	Friable mid reddish brown silty sand with no inclusions. Modern articulated sheep skeleton deposited at base.	Singular fill of modern field boundary ditch
(00900)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.4	Topsoil. Same as (00100).	Topsoil
(00901)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.55	Subsoil. Same as (00101).	Subsoil
(00902)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	N/A	Natural. Same as (00102).	Natural
(01000)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.4	Topsoil. Same as (00100).	Topsoil
(01001)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.57	Subsoil. Same as (00101).	Subsoil
(01002)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	N/A	Natural. Same as (00102).	Natural
(01100)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.4	Topsoil. Same as (00100).	Topsoil
(01101)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.54	Subsoil. Same as (00101).	Subsoil
(01102)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	N/A	Natural. Same as (00102).	Natural

Context	Type	Fill of	Filled by	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth/ Thickness (m)	Description	Interpretation
[01103]	Cut		(01104)	>2	0.7	0.3	Linear running north-south. Steep sides with a U-shaped base.	Modern field boundary ditch
(01104)	Fill	[01103]		>2	0.7	0.3	Friable mid reddish brown silty sand with no inclusions.	Singular fill of modern field boundary ditch
(01200)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.4	Topsoil. Same as (00100).	Topsoil
(01201)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.54	Subsoil. Same as (00101).	Subsoil
(01202)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	N/A	Natural. Same as (00102).	Natural
(01300)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.4	Topsoil. Same as (00100).	Topsoil
(01301)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.54	Subsoil. Same as (00101).	Subsoil
(01302)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	N/A	Natural. Same as (00102).	Natural
[01303]	Cut	-	(01304)	>2	3	0.7	Linear with Sharp, irregular moderately sloping sides and irregular base. Cuts subsoil (01301).	Cut of palaeochannel
(01304)	Fill	[01303]	-	>2	3	0.7	Friable laminated reddish-brown silt mottled with pale yellow sand, no inclusions.	Laminated fill of palaeochannel
(01400)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.45	Topsoil. Same as (00100).	Topsoil

Context	Type	Fill of	Filled by	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth/ Thickness (m)	Description	Interpretation
(01401)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.5	Subsoil. Same as (00101).	Subsoil
(01402)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	N/A	Natural. Same as (00102).	Natural
[01403]	Cut	-	(01404)	>2	1.67	0.47	Linear running northeast-southwest. Sharp, irregular gently sloping sides with an irregular base.	Cut of linear palaeochannel
(01404)	Fill	[01403]	-	>2	1.67	0.47	Friable laminated reddish-brown silt and pale-yellow sand with no inclusions.	Singular fill of palaeochannel.
[01405]	Cut	-	(01406)	>2	1.6	0.46	Linear running northeast southwest. Gently sloping sides with a concave base. Cuts subsoil (01401).	Modern field boundary ditch
(01406)	Fill	[01405]	-	>2	1.6	0.46	Friable mid reddish brown friable silty sand with no inclusions.	Singular Fill of modern field boundary ditch
(01500)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.3	Topsoil. Same as (00100).	Topsoil
(01501)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.3	Subsoil. Same as (00101).	Subsoil
(01502)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	N/A	Natural. Same as (00102).	Natural

Context	Type	Fill of	Filled by	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth/ Thickness (m)	Description	Interpretation
[01503]	Cut	-	(01504)	>2	2	0.66	Linear running southeast-northwest. Sharp, irregular, moderately sloping sides with an irregular base. Cuts subsoil (01501).	palaeochannel,
(01504)	Fill	[01503]		>2	2	0.66	Friable laminated reddish-brown silt with pale yellow sand mottling, no inclusions.	Singular fill of palaeochannel
(01600)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.4	Topsoil. Same as (00100).	Topsoil
(01601)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.48	Subsoil. Same as (00101).	Subsoil
(01602)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	N/A	Natural. Same as (00102).	Natural
[01603]	Cut	-	(01604)	>2	1.66	0.8	Linear running northeast-southwest. Sharp, irregular, moderately sloping sides with an irregular base.	Palaeochannel,
(01604)	Fill	[01603]	-	>2	1.66	0.8	Friable laminated reddish-brown silt with pale yellow sand mottling, no inclusions.	Singular fill of palaeochannel
(01700)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.5	Topsoil. Same as (00100).	Topsoil

Context	Type	Fill of	Filled by	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth/ Thickness (m)	Description	Interpretation
(01701)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.48	Subsoil. Same as (00101).	Subsoil
(01702)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	N/A	Natural. Same as (00102).	Natural
(01800)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.45	Topsoil. Same as (00100).	Topsoil
(01801)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.55	Subsoil. Same as (00101).	Subsoil
(01802)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	N/A	Natural. Same as (00102).	Natural
[01803]	Cut			>1.8	2	N/A	Linear. Unexcavated.	Modern ditch
(01804)	Fill			>1.8	2	N/A	Fill of linear. Unexcavated.	Fill of modern ditch.
(01900)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.5	Topsoil. Same as (00100).	Topsoil
(01901)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.6	Subsoil. Same as (00101).	Subsoil
(01902)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	N/A	Natural. Same as (00102).	Natural
01903							Not Used	
[01904]	Cut	-	(01905)	>2	3	0.6	linear running northeast-southwest. Sharp, irregular sides and irregular base. Cuts subsoil (01901).	palaeochannel
(01905)	Fill	[01904]	-	>2	3	0.6	Reddish brown silt with pale yellow sand mottling. Laminated	Fill of palaeochannel

Context	Type	Fill of	Filled by	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth/ Thickness (m)	Description	Interpretation
[01906]	Cut	-	(01907)	>2	3.6	0.6	Linear running east-west. Sharp irregular sides and irregular base. Truncated by [01904].	Palaeochannel
(01907)	Fill	[01906]	-	>2	3.6	0.6	Friable laminated reddish-brown silt with pale yellow sand mottling, no inclusions.	Fill of palaeochannel
(02000)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.4	Topsoil. Same as (00100).	Topsoil
(02001)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.5	Subsoil. Same as (00101).	Subsoil
(02002)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	N/A	Natural. Same as (00102).	Natural
(02100)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.4	Topsoil. Same as (00100).	Topsoil
(02101)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	0.73	Subsoil. Same as (00101).	Subsoil
(02102)	Deposit	-	-	>50	>1.8	N/A	Natural. Same as (00102).	Natural

APPENDIX III- SAMPLE INDEX

Sample No.	Trench No.	Context No.	Cut No.	Feature Type	Total Weight (g)	Vol. (L)	Full Residue (g)	CPR (g)	Finds
601	*6*	*604*	*603*	*Ditch*	*12.5*	*7*	*0*	*0*	*0*
601	*6*	*604*	*603*	*Ditch*	*9.2*	*8*	*1.36*	*1.36*	*0*
1601	*16*	*1604*	*1603*	*Palaeochannel*	*1.1*	*0.5*	*0*	*0*	*0*
1101	*11*	*1104*	*1103*	*Palaeochannel*	*1.2*	*0.5*	*0*	*0*	*0*
1101	*11*	*1104*	*1103*	*Palaeochannel*	*1.1*	*0.5*	*0*	*0*	*0*

APPENDIX IV– FINDS TABLE

Trench No.	Context	Cut	Type	Date	Method of collection	Fragment weight	Notes
8	*804*	*803*	*Animal Bone*	*Modern*	*Hand*	*589g*	
19	*1905*	*-*	*Freshwater Mussel Shell*	*Unknown*	*Hand*	*n/a* *5 items*	*Not retained*
19	*1905*	*-*	*Snail Shell*	*Modern*	*Hand*	*-*	*Not retained as intrusive*

APPENDIX V - OASIS SUMMARY

OASIS ID (UID)	rubicona1-540714
Project Name	Gunthorpe Road Solar Farm Trial Trenching
Sitename	Gunthorpe Road Solar Farm
Sitecode	RR1145, GRFS24
Project Identifier(s)	GRFS24
Activity type	Trial Trenching
Planning Id	25/01114/FM, H18-0448-24
Reason For Investigation	Planning requirement
Organisation Responsible for work	Rubicon Archaeology Ltd
Project Dates	01-Dec-2025 - 12-Dec-2025
Location	**Gunthorpe Road Solar Farm** NGR: TF 47210 17503 LL: 52.73512708193369, 0.178865605272668 12 Fig: 547210,317503
Administrative Areas	Country: England County/Local Authority: Lincolnshire County/Local Authority: Norfolk
Project Methodology	21 trenches were targeted on previously identified geophysical anomalies and to test 'blank' areas of the Site. All fieldwork was undertaken in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (Red River Archaeology 2024), current best practice and the CIfA's Standard and guidance for archaeological evaluation (CIfA 2023a, 2023b). Local guidance for the east of England (Brown & Glazebrook 2000, Gurney 2003, Medlycott 2011) and county specific guidance for Norfolk (Norfolk County Council 2018) and Lincolnshire (Lincolnshire County Council 2019). All invasive ground-breaking works were monitored by a suitably experienced and qualified archaeologist.
Project Results	No significant archaeological finds or features were encountered during the trial trenching. Palaeochannels and a small number of modern features were encountered.
Keywords	Palaeochannels
Funder	Private or public corporation Enso Green Holdings R Ltd
HER	Lincolnshire HER - unRev - STANDARD Norfolk HER - unRev - STANDARD
Person Responsible for work	Gemma Stevenson
HER Identifiers	
Archives	Digital Archive - to be deposited with Archaeology Data Service Archive; Documentary Archive - to be deposited with The Collection: Art and Archaeology in Lincolnshire;

Report generated on: 19-02-2026:140







Legend

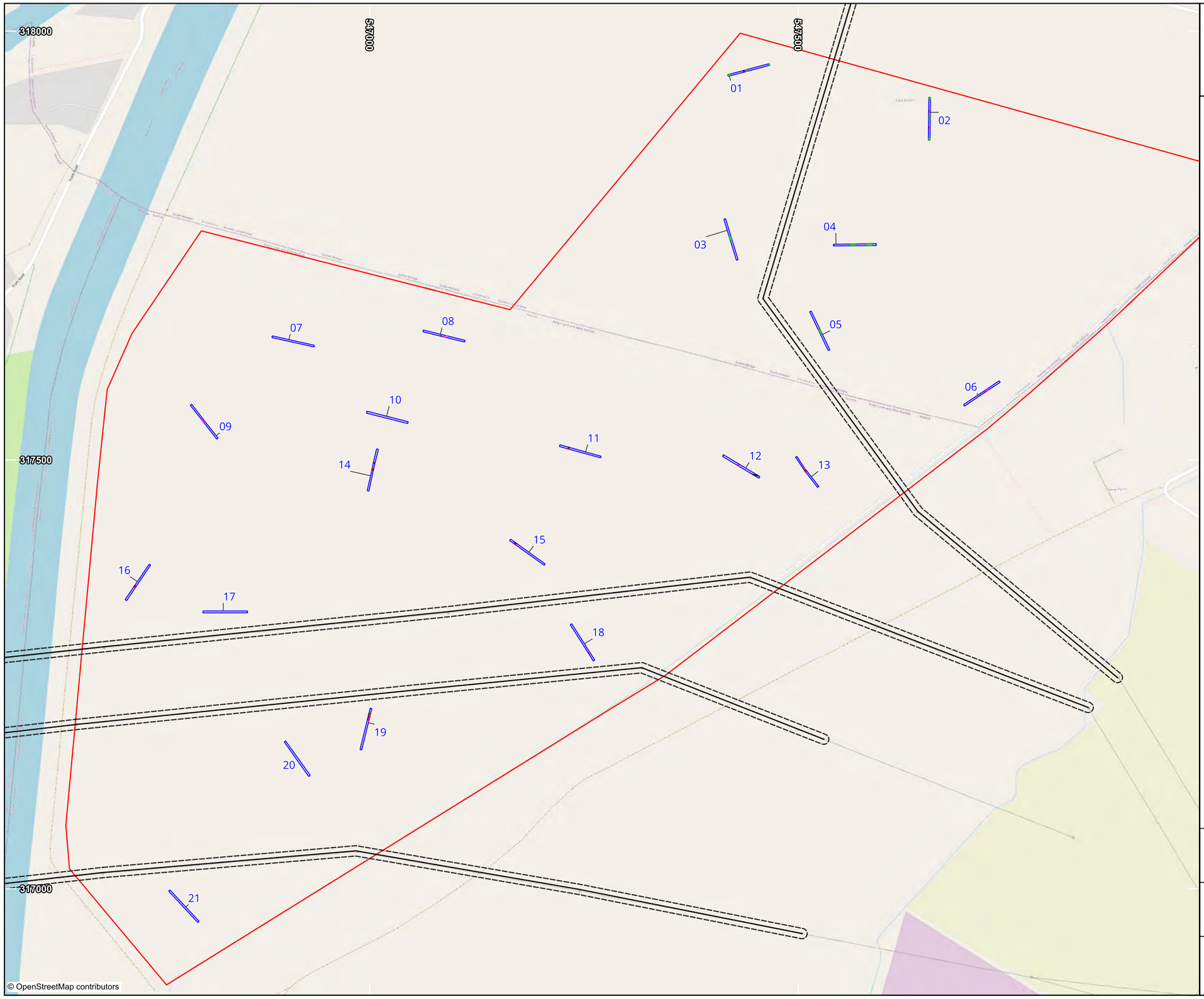
- Evaluation trench
- Site extent

Project Code: RR1145	Prepared by: M.Smithson
Project Name: Gunthorpe Road	Approved by: G.Stevenson
Status: Evaluation	Date: 01/04/2026
Revision: 1.0	Scale: 1:10,000 @ A4

200 400 600 800 1,000 m

RUBICON archaeology

Figure 1 - Site location



RUBICON archaeology

Legend

Survey

- Section line
- Break of slope

Archaeology

- Archaeology
- Modern feature
- Non-Archaeology
- Intervention
- Excavated evaluation trench

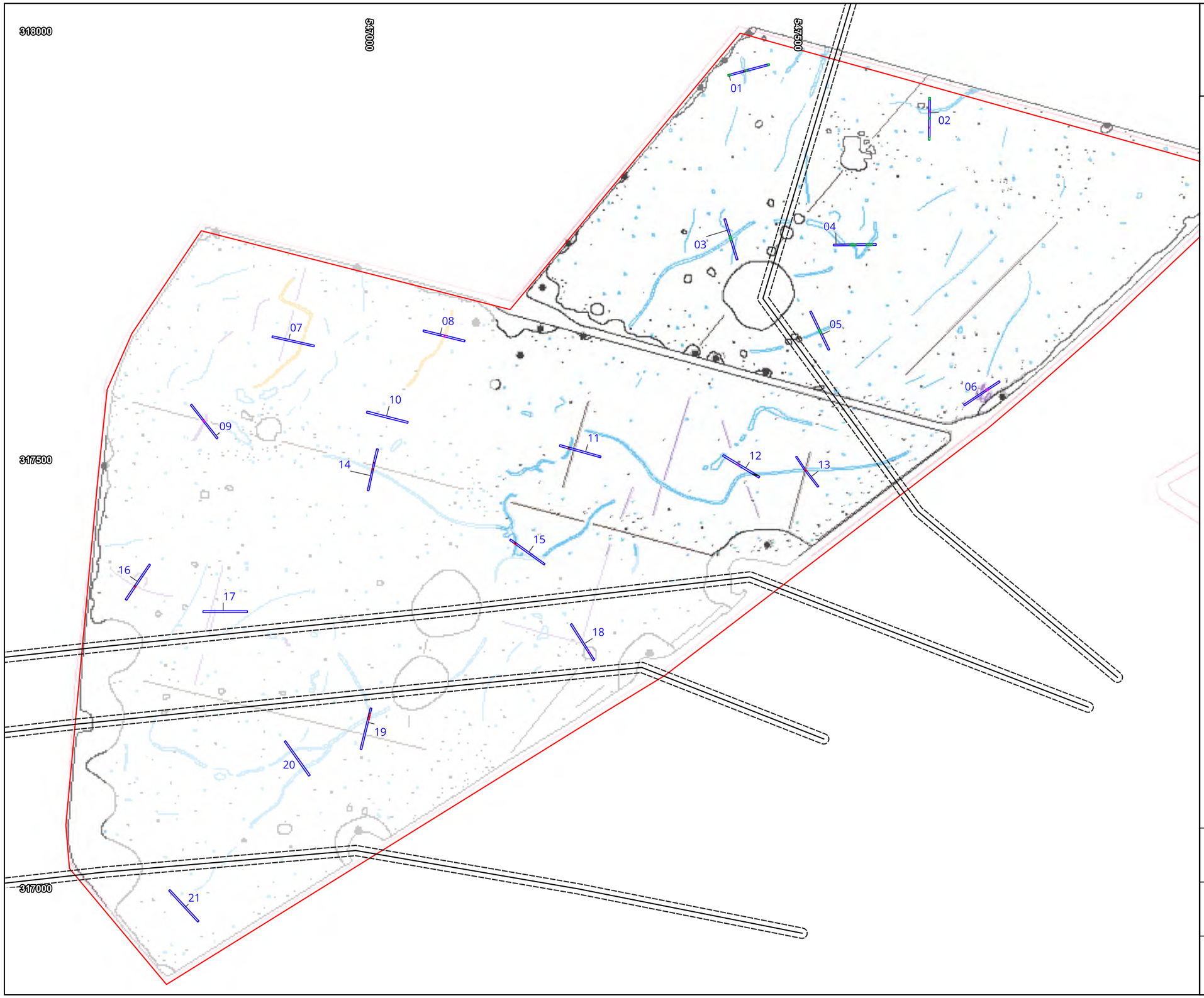
Site layout

- Services (overhead) 6m buffer
- Services (overhead)
- Site extent

Project: RR1145 - Gunthorpe Road, Walpole	Prepared by: M.Smithson Approved by: G.Stevenson
Status: Evaluation Draft: 1.0	Date: 01/04/2026 Scale: 1:4500 @ A3

50 100 150 200 250 m

Figure 2 - Site overview with archaeological results



RUBICON archaeology

Legend

Survey

- Section line
- Break of slope

Archaeology

- Archaeology
- Modern feature
- Non-Archaeology
- Intervention
- Excavated evaluation trench

Geophysics

- Archaeology
- Geology
- Uncertain
- Former field boundary
- Agricultural

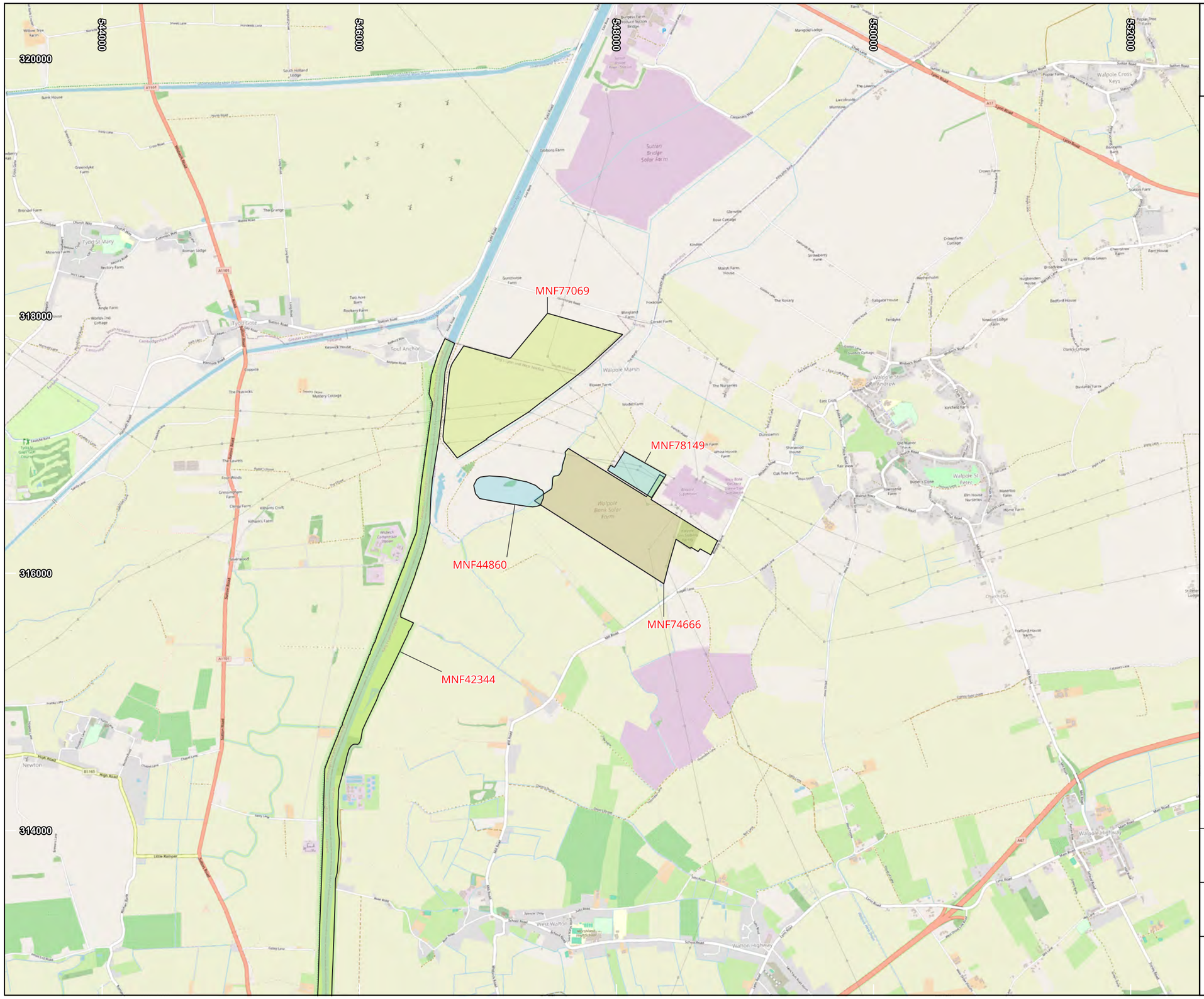
Site layout

- Services (overhead) 6m buffer
- Services (overhead)
- Site extent

Project: RR1145 - Gunthorpe Road, Walpole	Prepared by: M.Smithson Approved by: G.Stevenson
Status: Evaluation Draft: 1.0	Date: 01/04/2026 Scale: 1:4500 @ A3

50 100 150 200 250 m

Figure 3 - Site overview with archaeological results & geophysical survey results overlain (provided by WYAS Archaeological Services)



RUBICON archaeology

Legend

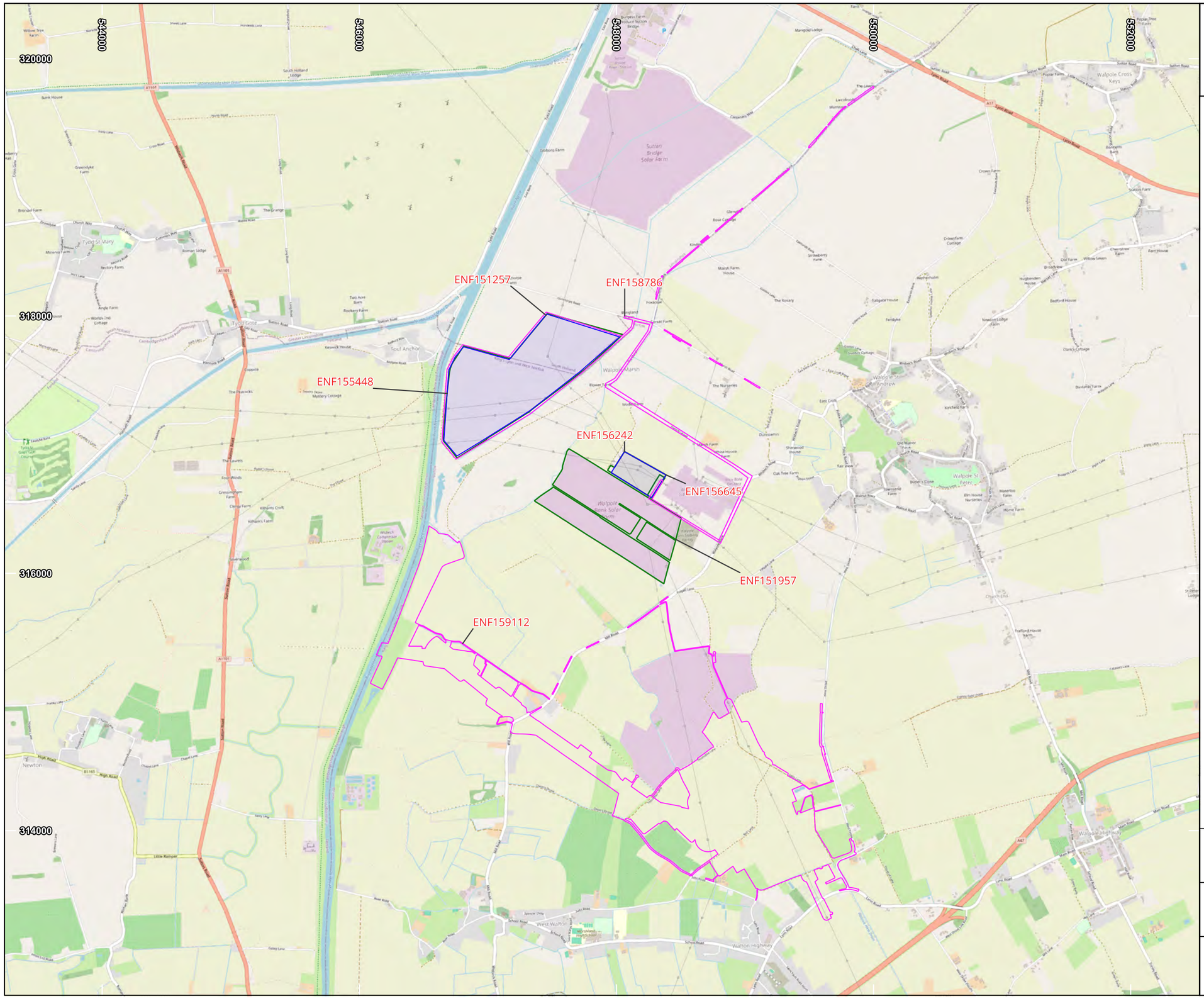
HER data

- Monument
- Negative evidence

Project: RR1145 - Gunthorpe Road, Walpole	Prepared by: M.Smithson Approved by: G.Stevenson
Status: Evaluation Draft: 1.0	Date: 01/04/2026 Scale: 1:4500 @ A3

300 600 900 1,200 1,500 m

Figure 4.1 - Site overview with HER data



RUBICON archaeology

Legend

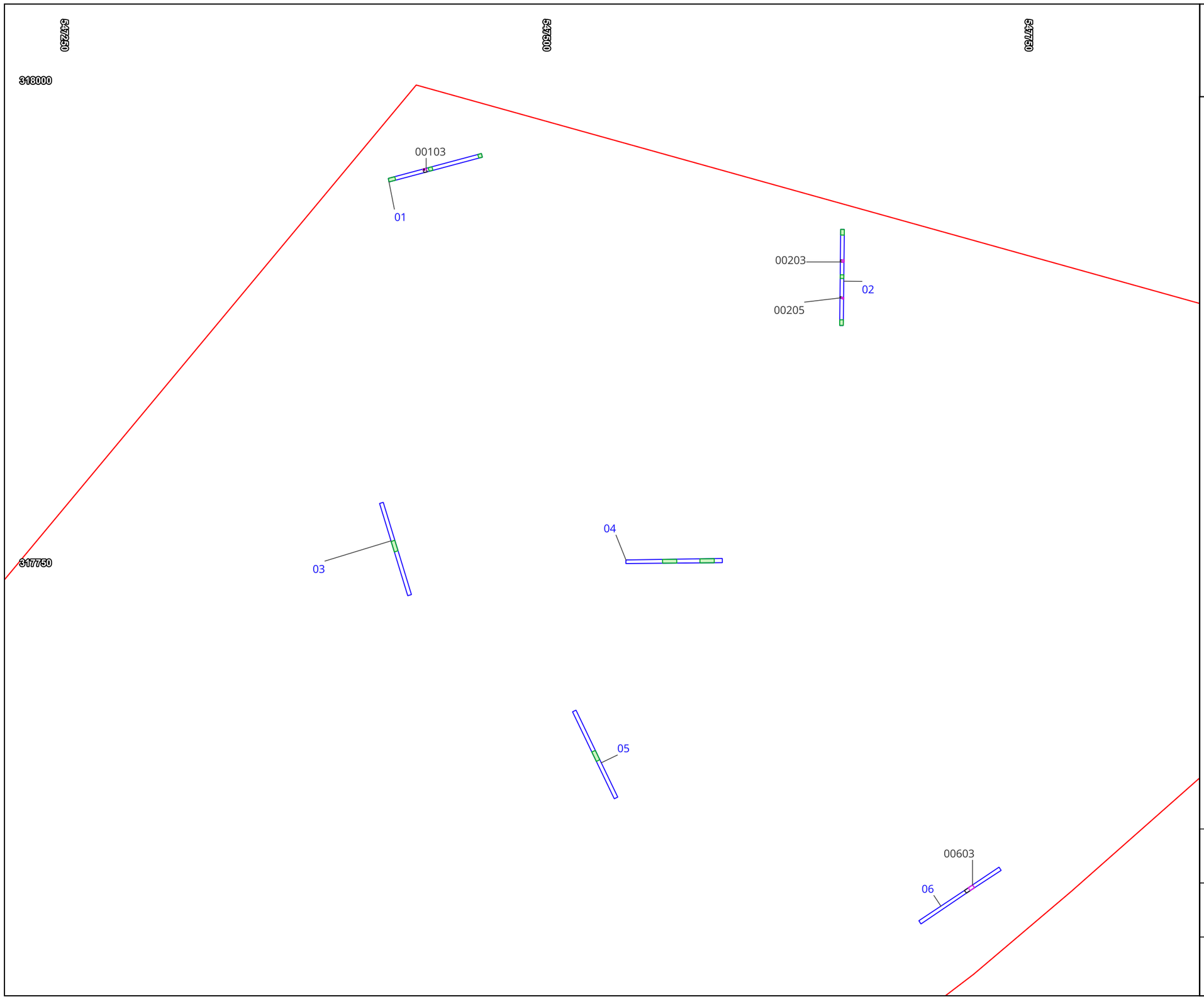
HER Events

- Evaluation
- Geophysical Survey (magnetometry)
- Watching brief

Project: RR1145 - Gunthorpe Road, Walpole	Prepared by: M.Smithson Approved by: G.Stevenson
Status: Evaluation Draft: 1.0	Date: 01/04/2026 Scale: 1:4500 @ A3

300 600 900 1,200 1,500 m

Figure 4.2 - Site overview with HER data



RUBICON archaeology

Legend

Survey

- Break of slope
- Intervention
- Non-Archaeology
- Test Pit

Archaeology

- Archaeology
- Excavated evaluation trench

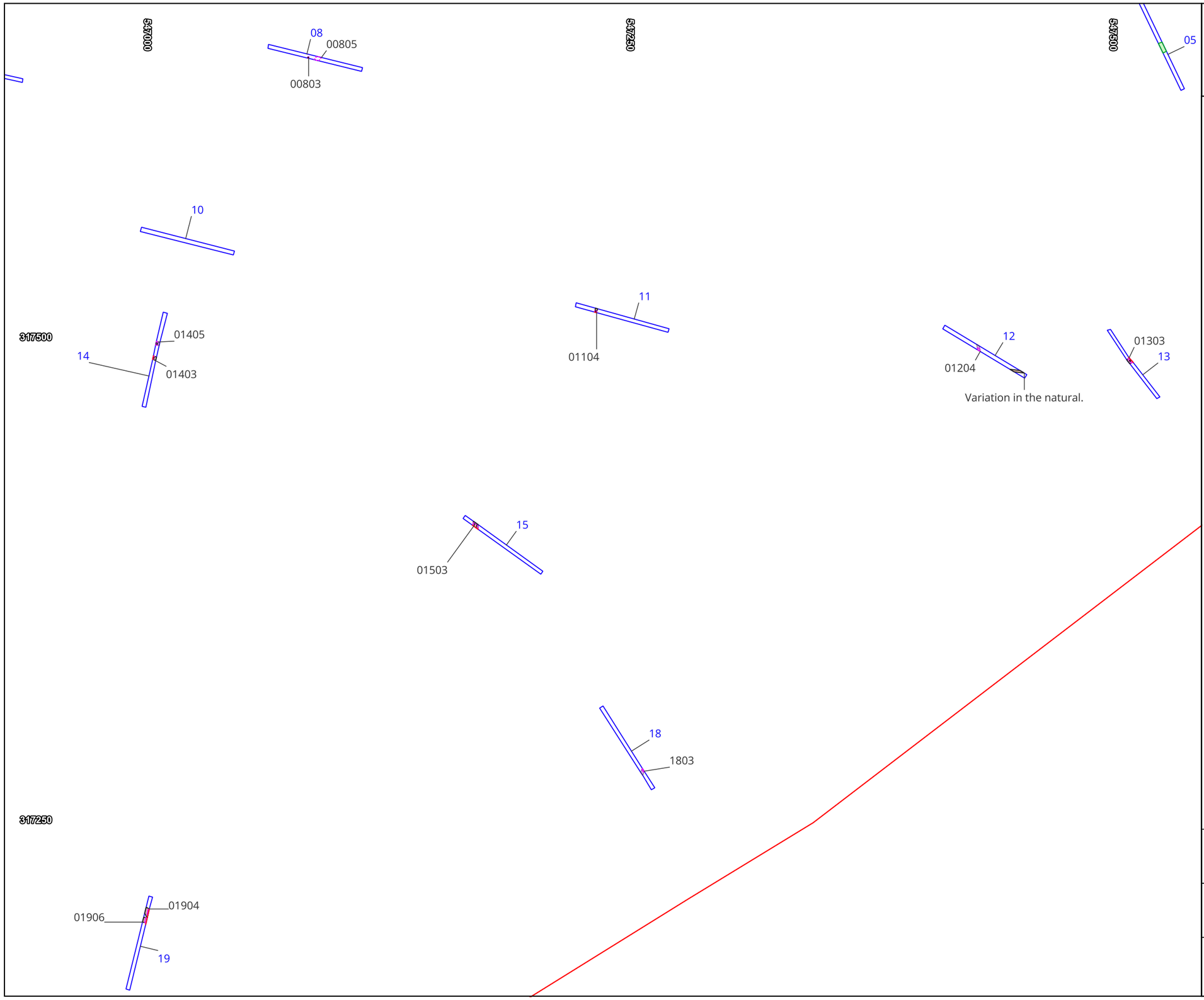
Site layout

- Site extent

Project: RR1145 - Gunthorpe Road, Walpole	Prepared by: M.Smithson Approved by: G.Stevenson
Status: Evaluation Draft: 1.0	Date: 01/04/2026 Scale: 1:2000 @ A3

20 40 60 80 100 m

Figure 5.1 - Labelled site overview



RUBICON archaeology

Legend

Survey

- Section line
- Break of slope
- Intervention
- Non-Archaeology

Archaeology

- Modern
- Projected extent of paleochannel
- Excavated evaluation trench

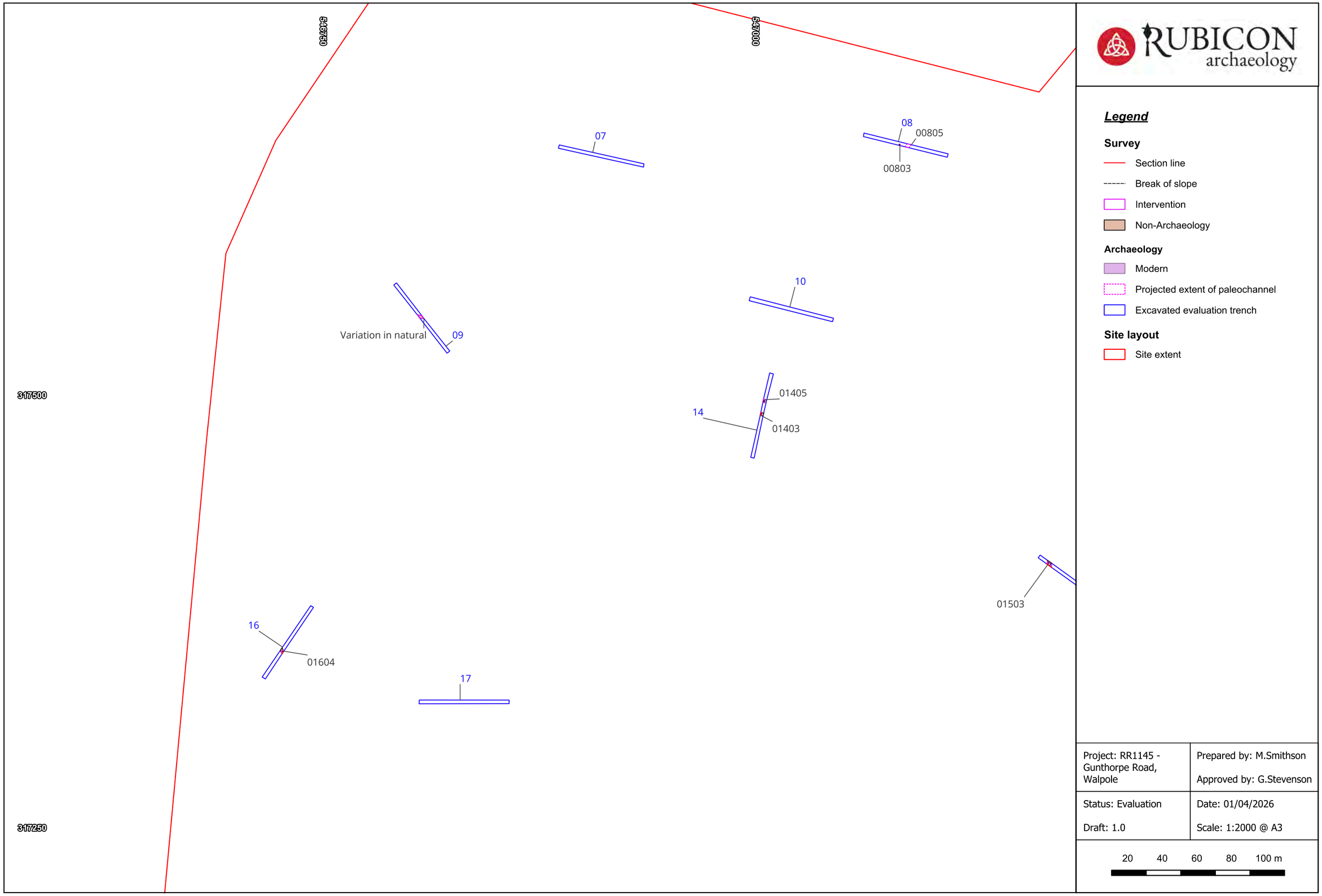
Site layout

- Site extent

Project: RR1145 - Gunthorpe Road, Walpole	Prepared by: M.Smithson Approved by: G.Stevenson
Status: Evaluation Draft: 1.0	Date: 01/04/2026 Scale: 1:2000 @ A3

20 40 60 80 100 m

Figure 5.2 - Labelled site overview



RUBICON archaeology

Legend

Survey

- Section line
- Break of slope
- Intervention
- Non-Archaeology

Archaeology

- Modern
- Projected extent of paleochannel
- Excavated evaluation trench

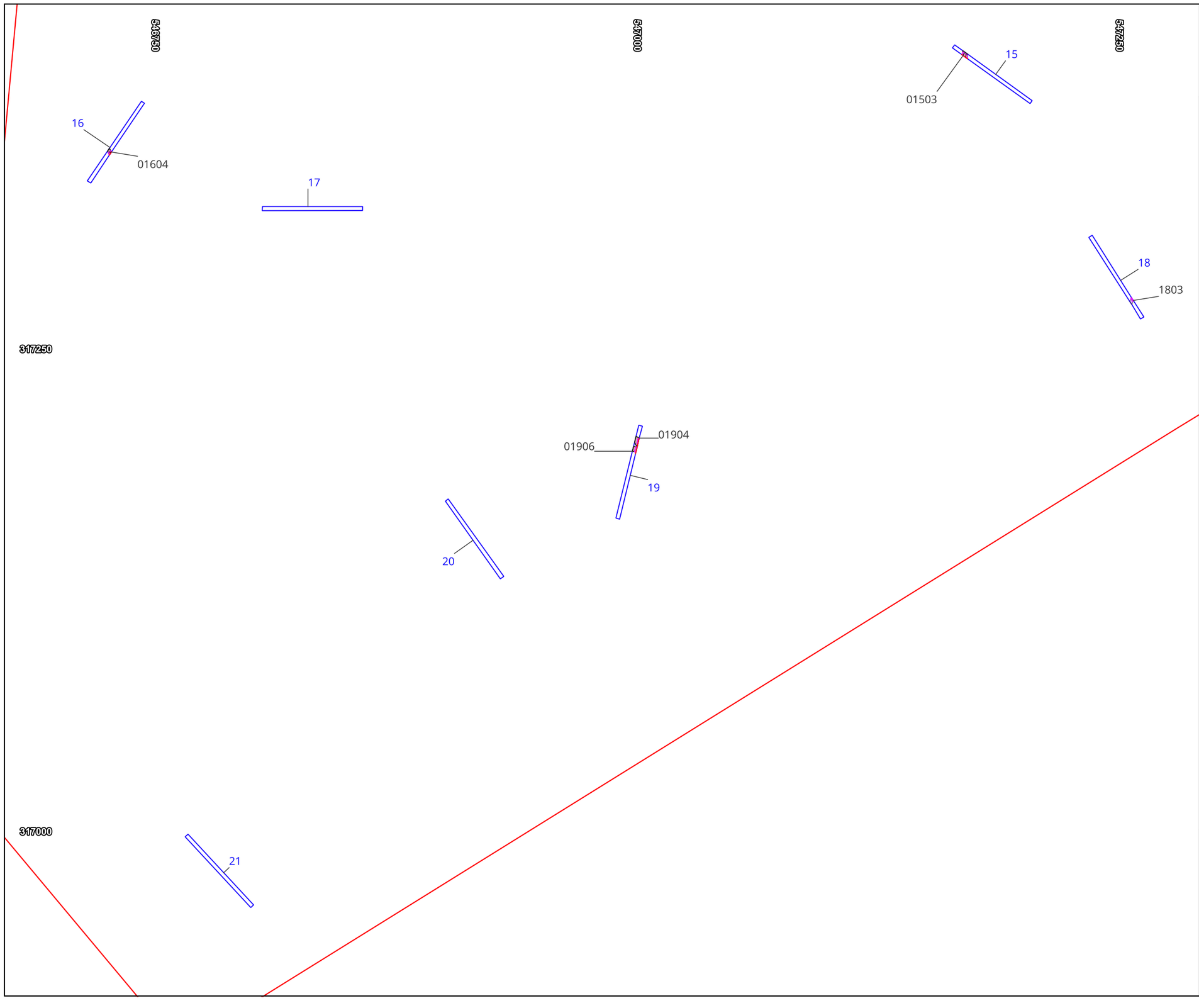
Site layout

- Site extent

Project: RR1145 - Gunthorpe Road, Walpole	Prepared by: M.Smithson Approved by: G.Stevenson
Status: Evaluation Draft: 1.0	Date: 01/04/2026 Scale: 1:2000 @ A3

20 40 60 80 100 m

Figure 5.3 - Labelled site overview



RUBICON archaeology

Legend

Survey

- Section line
- Break of slope
- Intervention
- Non-Archaeology

Archaeology

- Modern
- Excavated evaluation trench

Site layout

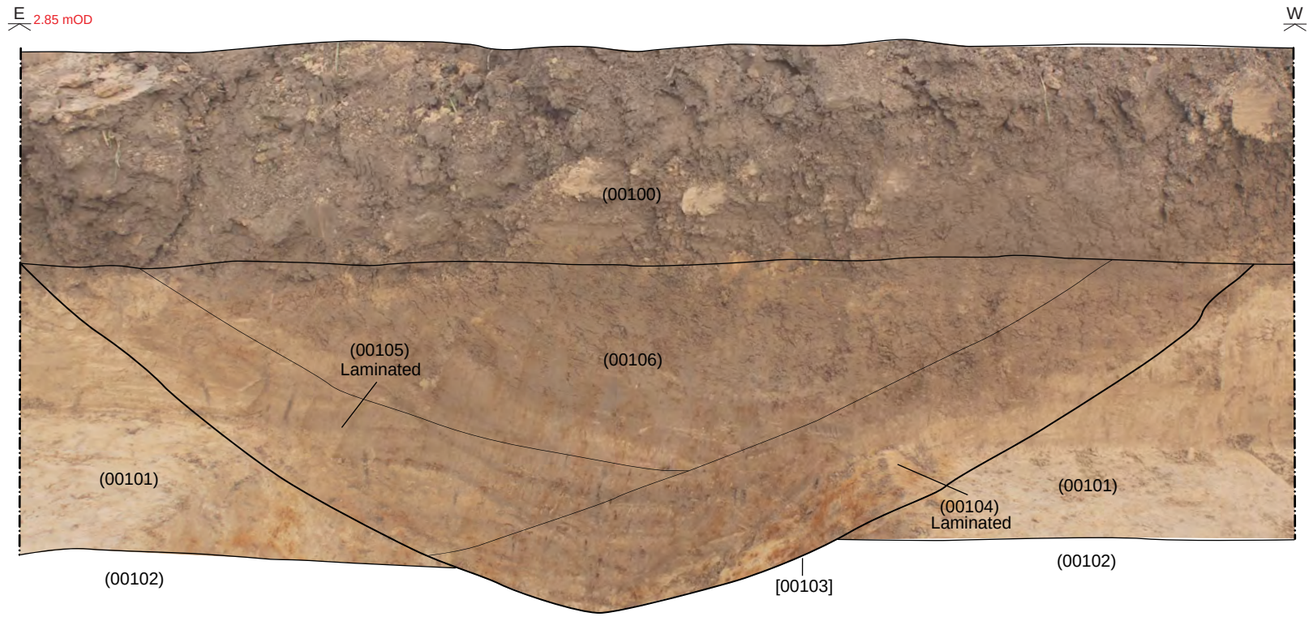
- Site extent

Project: RR1145 - Gunthorpe Road, Walpole	Prepared by: M.Smithson Approved by: G.Stevenson
Status: Evaluation Draft: 1.0	Date: 01/04/2026 Scale: 1:2000 @ A3

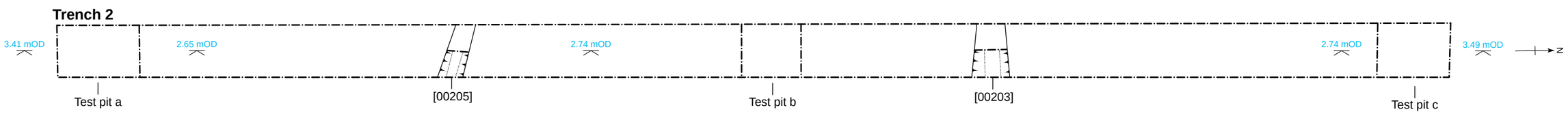
20 40 60 80 100 m

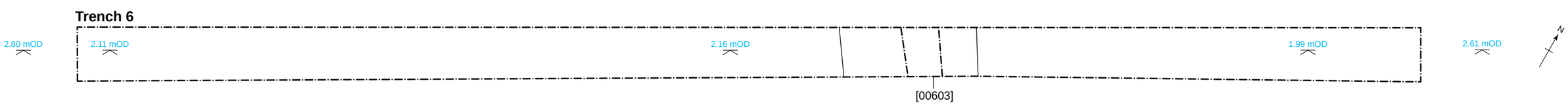
Figure 5.4 - Labelled site overview





Section 1.1 - South facing section of [00103]





RUBICON archaeology

0 7.5 m
Trench

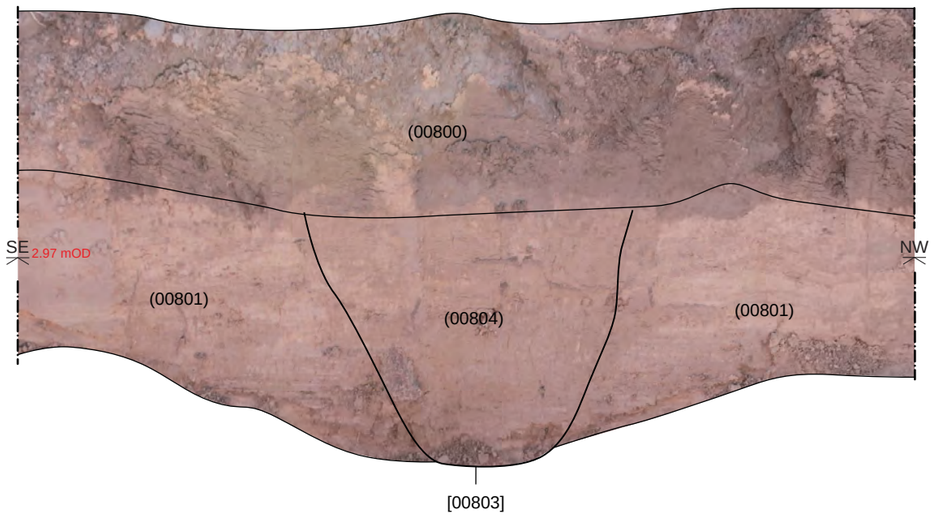
0 1 m
Section

Status: Evaluation Draft: 1.0	Date: 01/04/2026	Project: RR1145 - Gunthorpe Road	Prepared By: M.Smithson Approved By: G.Stevenson

Figure 6 - Detailed plan of trenches 1, 2 & 6 with sections shown.

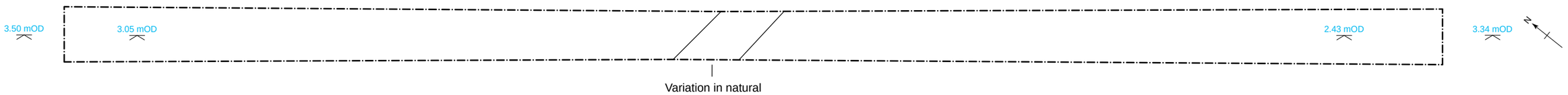
Trench 8





Section 8.1 - Northeast facing section of [00803]

Trench 9



RUBICON archaeology

Legend

Stone

0 7.5 m
Trench

0 1 m
Section

Status: Evaluation
Draft: 1.0

Date: 01/04/2026

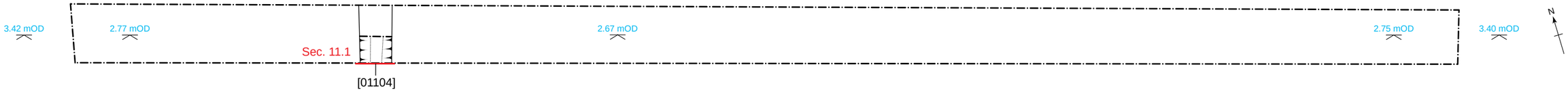
Project: RR1145 - Gunthorpe Road

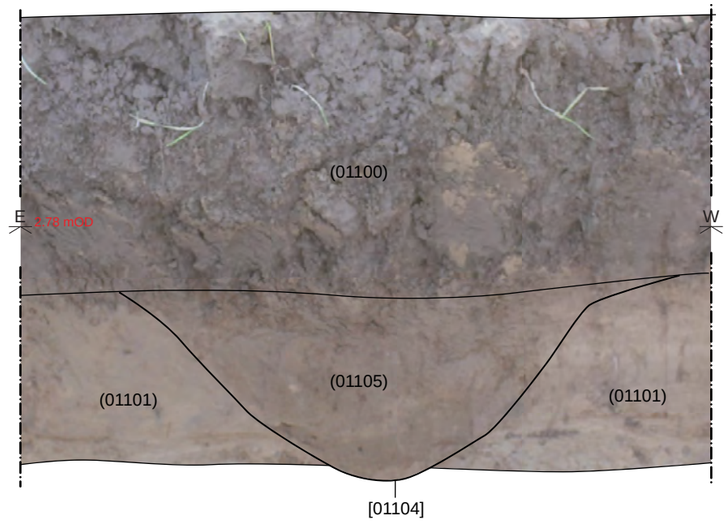
Prepared By: M.Smithson

Approved By: G.Stevenson

Figure 7 - Detailed plan of trenches 8 & 9 with sections shown.

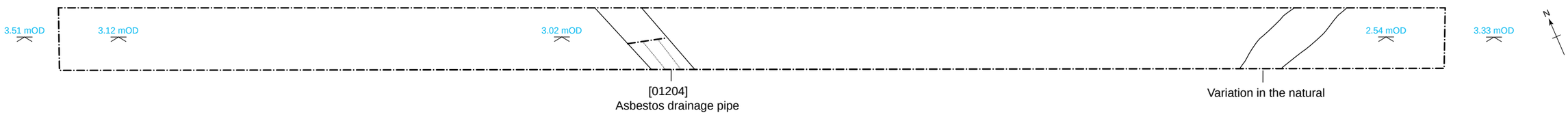
Trench 11





Section 11.1 - North facing section of [01104]

Trench 12



RUBICON archaeology

Legend

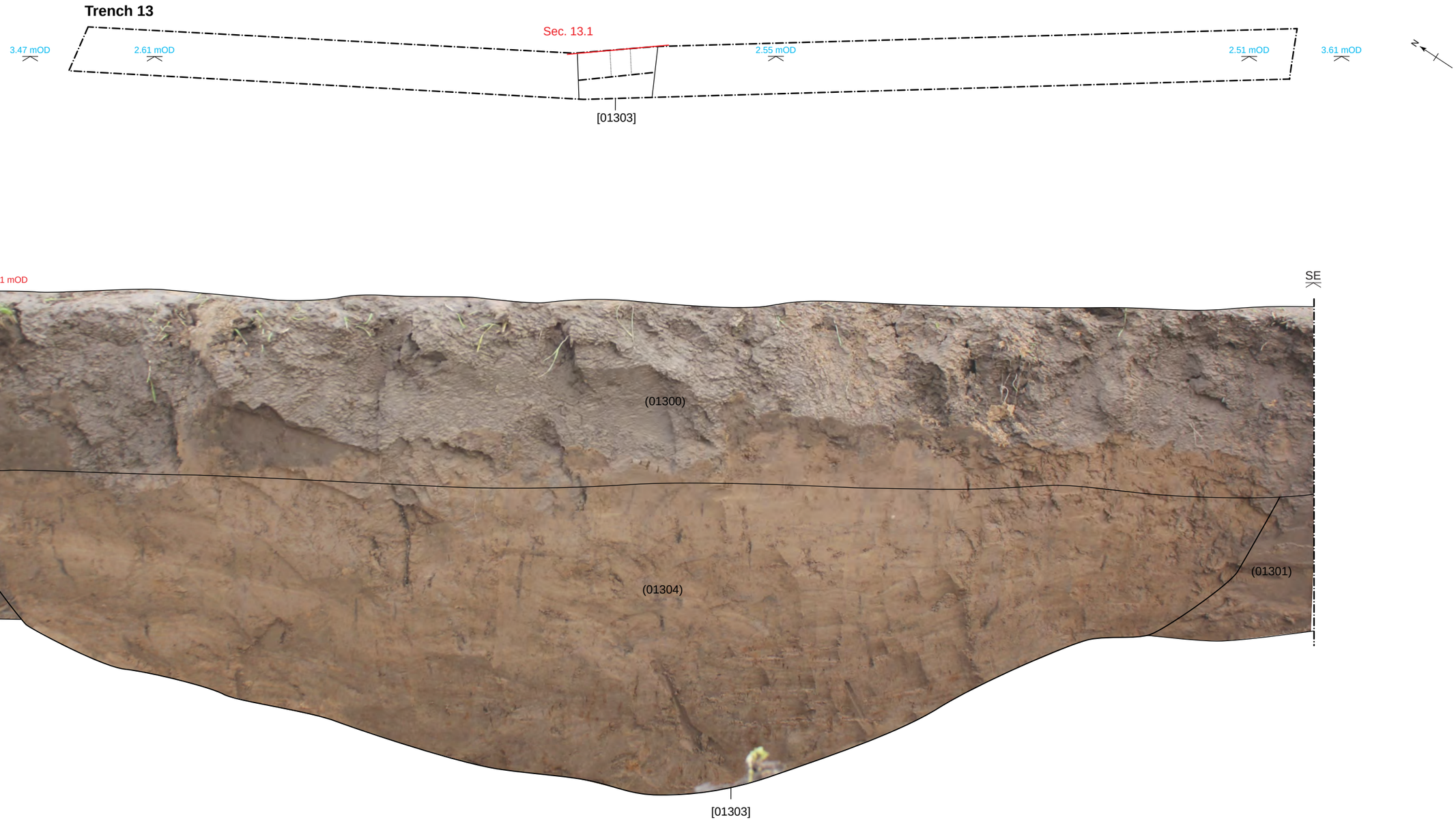
Stone

0 7.5 m
Trench

0 1 m
Section

Status: Evaluation Draft: 1.0	Date: 01/04/2026	Project: RR1145 - Gunthorpe Road	Prepared By: M.Smithson Approved By: G.Stevenson

Figure 8 - Detailed plan of trenches 11 & 12 with sections shown.



Section 13.1 - Southwest facing section of [01303]

RUBICON archaeology

Legend

0 7.5 m
Trench

0 1 m
Section

Status: Evaluation
Draft: 1.0

Date: 01/04/2026

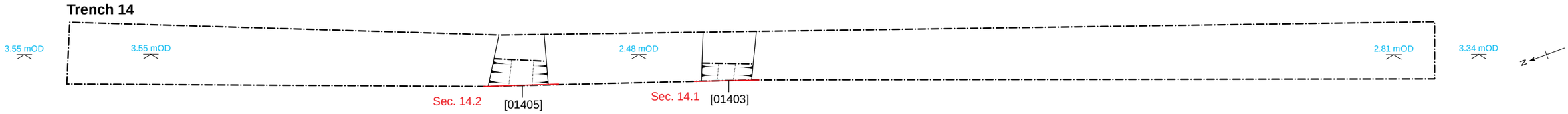
Project: RR1145 - Gunthorpe Road

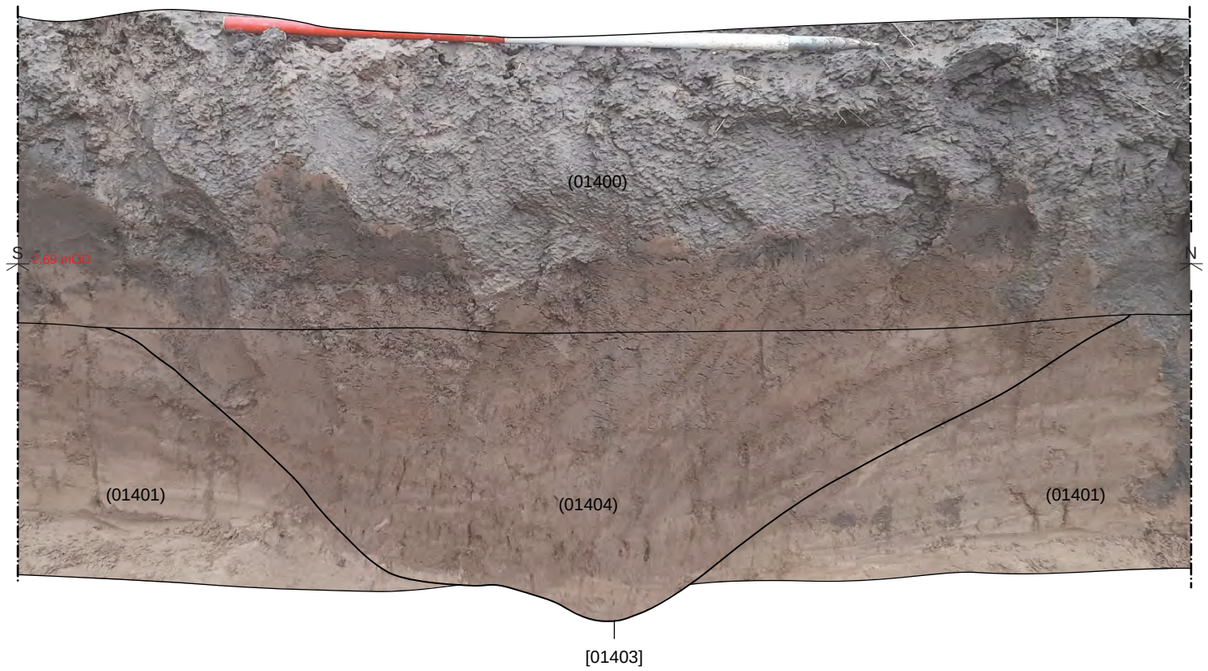
Prepared By: M.Smithson

Approved By: G.Stevenson

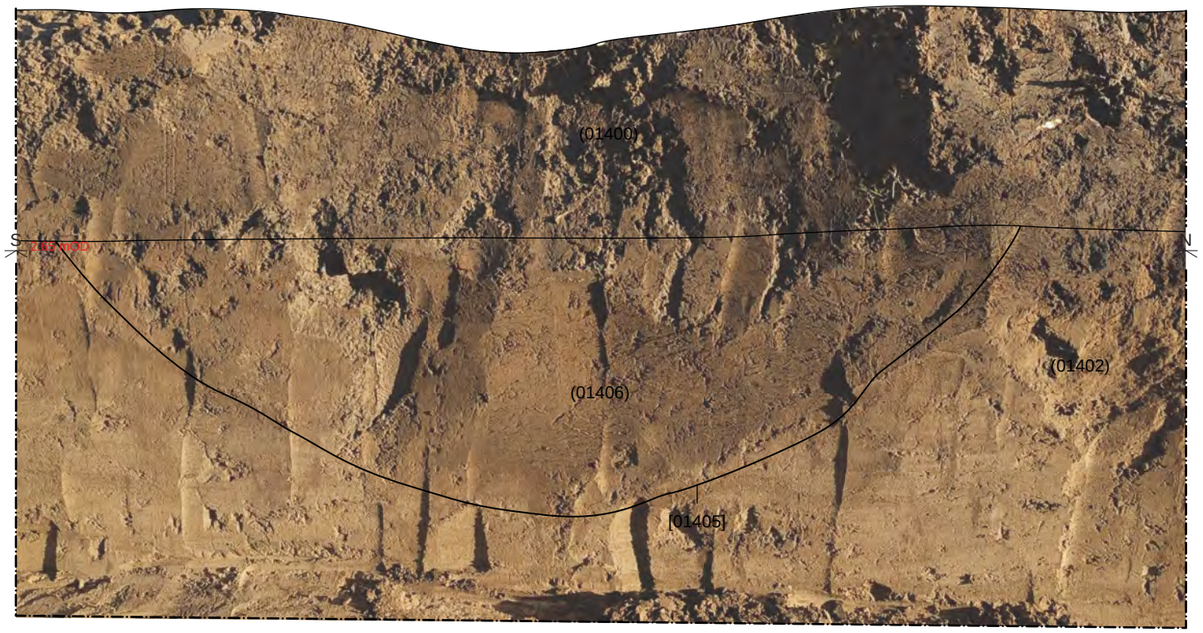
Figure 9 - Detailed plan of trench 13 with sections shown.

Trench 14





Section 14.1 - East facing section of [01403]



Section 14.2 - East facing section of [01405]

RUBICON archaeology

Legend

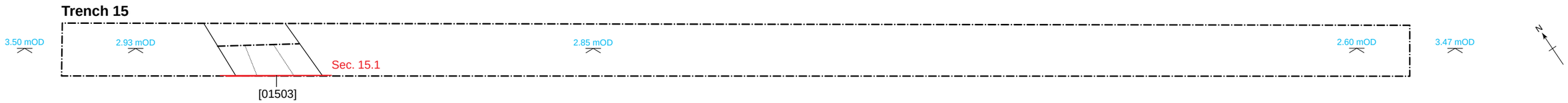
Stone

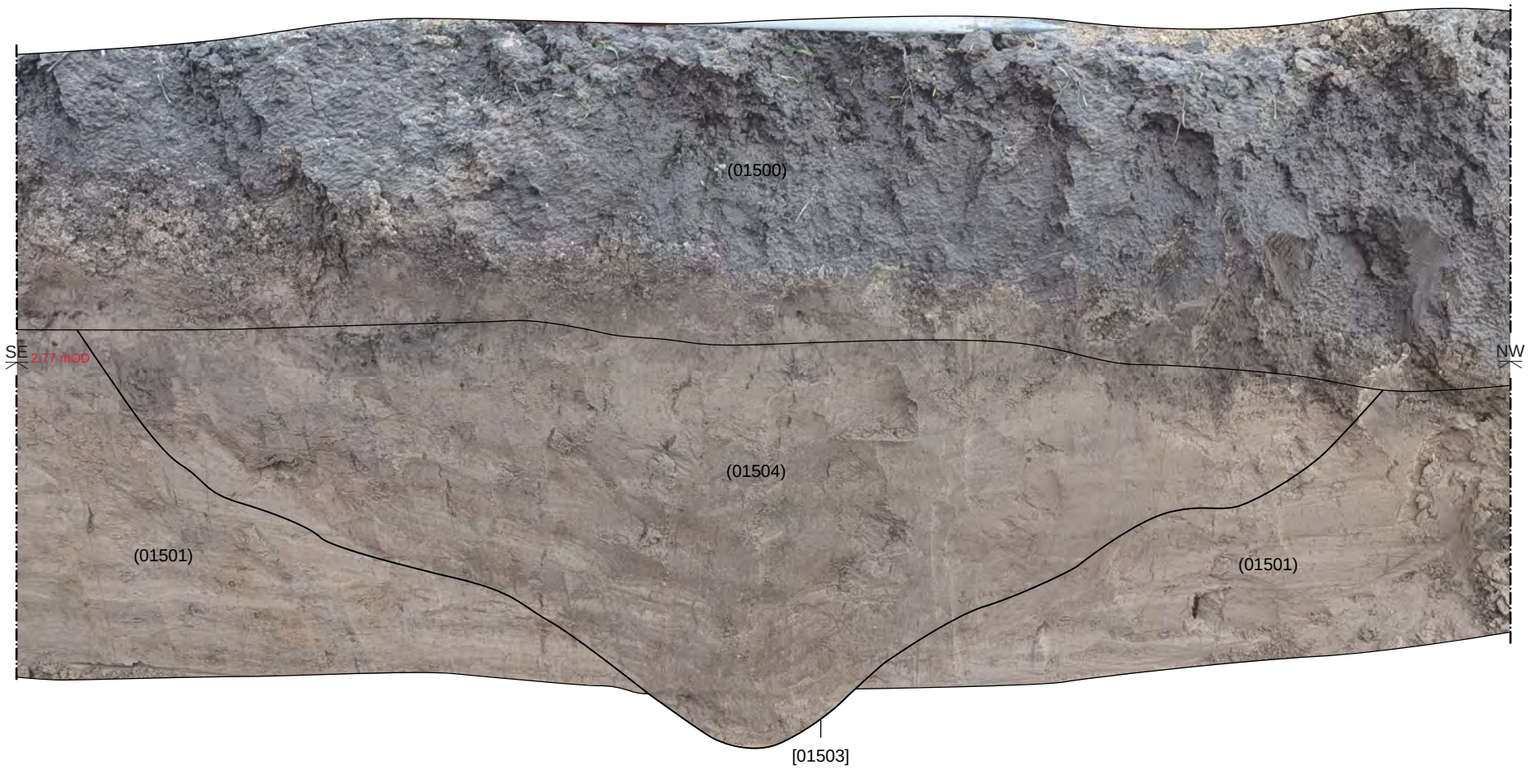
0 7.5 m
Trench

0 1 m
Section

Status: Evaluation Draft: 1.0	Date: 01/04/2026	Project: RR1145 - Gunthorpe Road	Prepared By: M.Smithson Approved By: G.Stevenson

Figure 10 - Detailed plan of trench 14 with sections shown.





Section 15.1 - Northeast facing section of [01503]

RUBICON archaeology

Legend

Stone

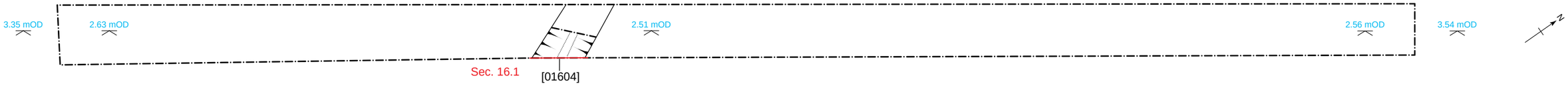
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Trench

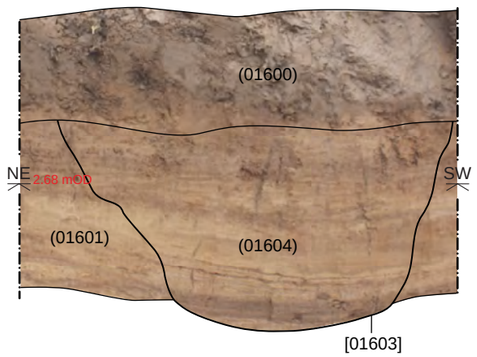
0 1 m
Section

Status: Evaluation Draft: 1.0	Date: 01/04/2026	Project: RR1145 - Gunthorpe Road	Prepared By: M.Smithson Approved By: G.Stevenson

Figure 11 - Detailed plan of trench 15 with sections shown.

Trench 16





Section 16.1 - Northwest facing section of [01603]

RUBICON archaeology

Legend

Stone

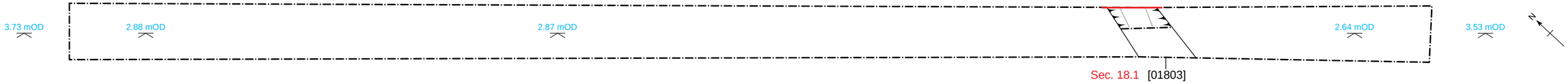
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Trench

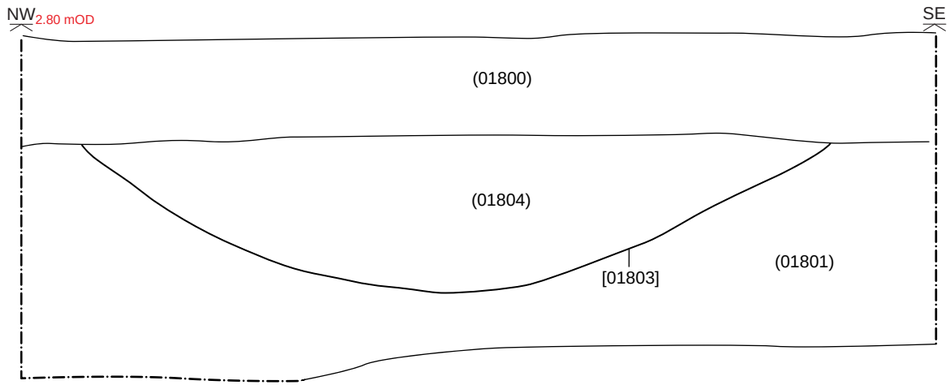
0 1 m
Section

Status: Evaluation Draft: 1.0	Date: 01/04/2026	Project: RR1145 - Gunthorpe Road	Prepared By: M.Smithson Approved By: G.Stevenson

Figure 12 - Detailed plan of trench 16 with sections shown.

Trench 18





Section 18.1 - Southwest facing section of [01803]

RUBICON archaeology

Legend

Stone

0 7.5 m
Trench

0 1 m
Section

Status: Evaluation
Draft: 1.0

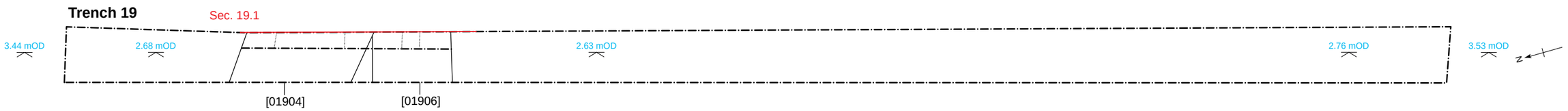
Date: 01/04/2026

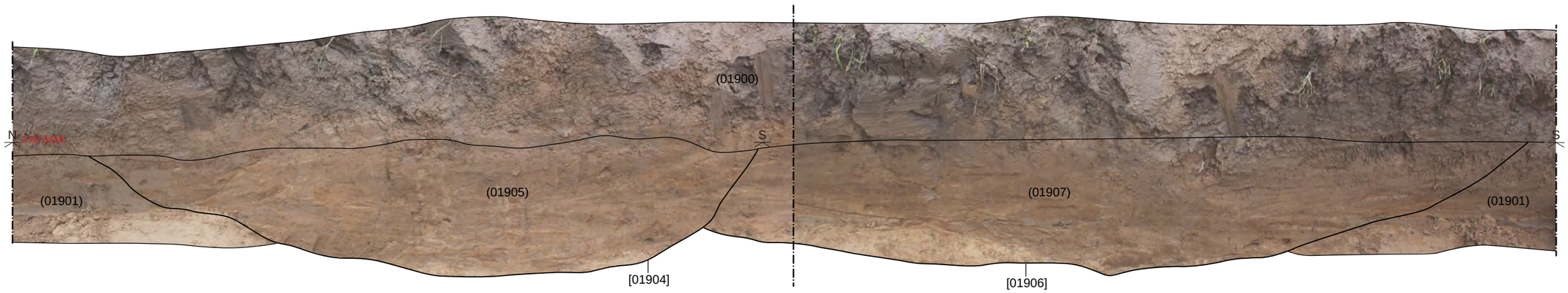
Project: RR1145 - Gunthorpe Road

Prepared By: M.Smithson

Approved By: G.Stevenson

Figure 13 - Detailed plan of trench 18 with sections shown.





Section 19.1 - West facing section of [01904] & [1906]

RUBICON archaeology

Legend

Stone

0 7.5 m
Trench

0 1 m
Section

Status: Evaluation
Draft: 1.0

Date: 01/04/2026

Project: RR1145 - Gunthorpe Road

Prepared By: M.Smithson

Approved By: G.Stevenson

Figure 14 - Detailed plan of trench 19 with sections shown.



Plate 1 - Trench 1, looking east-northeast. 2 x 1m scales



Plate 2 - South facing section of ditch [0103], looking north. 1m scale.



Plate 3 - Trench 1, Test pit 1a looking north. 1m scale.

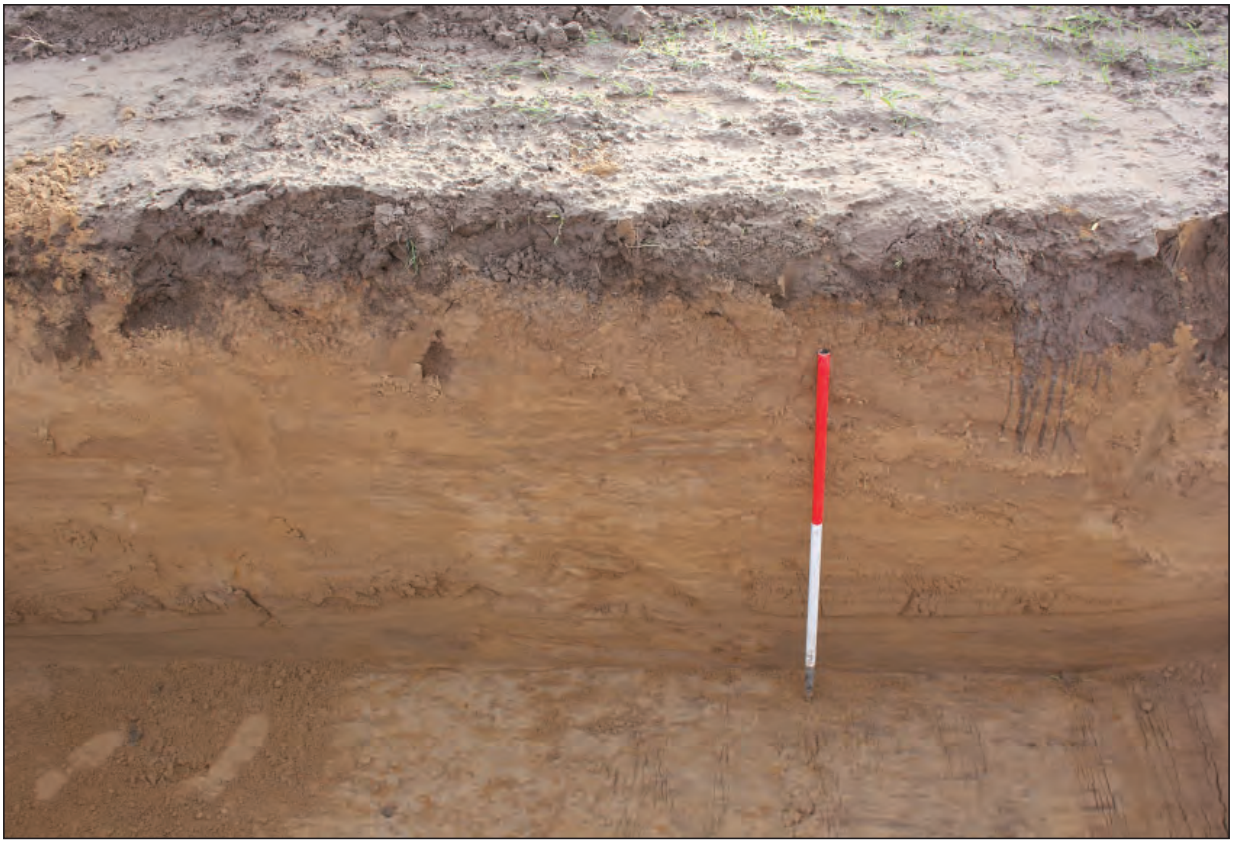


Plate 4 - Trench 1, Test pit 1b looking north. 1m scale.



Plate 5 - Trench 1, Test pit 1c looking north. 1m scale.



Plate 6 - Trench 2, looking north. 2 x 1m scales.



Plate 7 - West facing section of paleochannel [0203], looking east. 1m scale.



Plate 8 - West facing section of paleochannel [0205], looking east. 1m scale.



Plate 9 - Trench 3, looking southeast. 2 x 1m scales.



Plate 10 - Trench 3 test pit, looking northeast. 1m scale.



Plate 11 - Trench 4, looking east. 2 x 1m scales.



Plate 12 - Trench 4 test pit, looking north. 1m scale.



Plate 13 - Trench 5, looking north-northwest. 2 x 1m scales.



Plate 14 - Trench 5 test pit, looking northeast. 1m scale.



Plate 15 - Trench 6, looking southwest. 2 x 1m scales.



Plate 16 - North-east facing section of [0603]. Looking south-west. 1m scale.



Plate 17 - Trench 7, looking west-northwest. 2 x 1m scales.



Plate 18 - Trench 8, looking west-northwest. 2 x 1m scales.

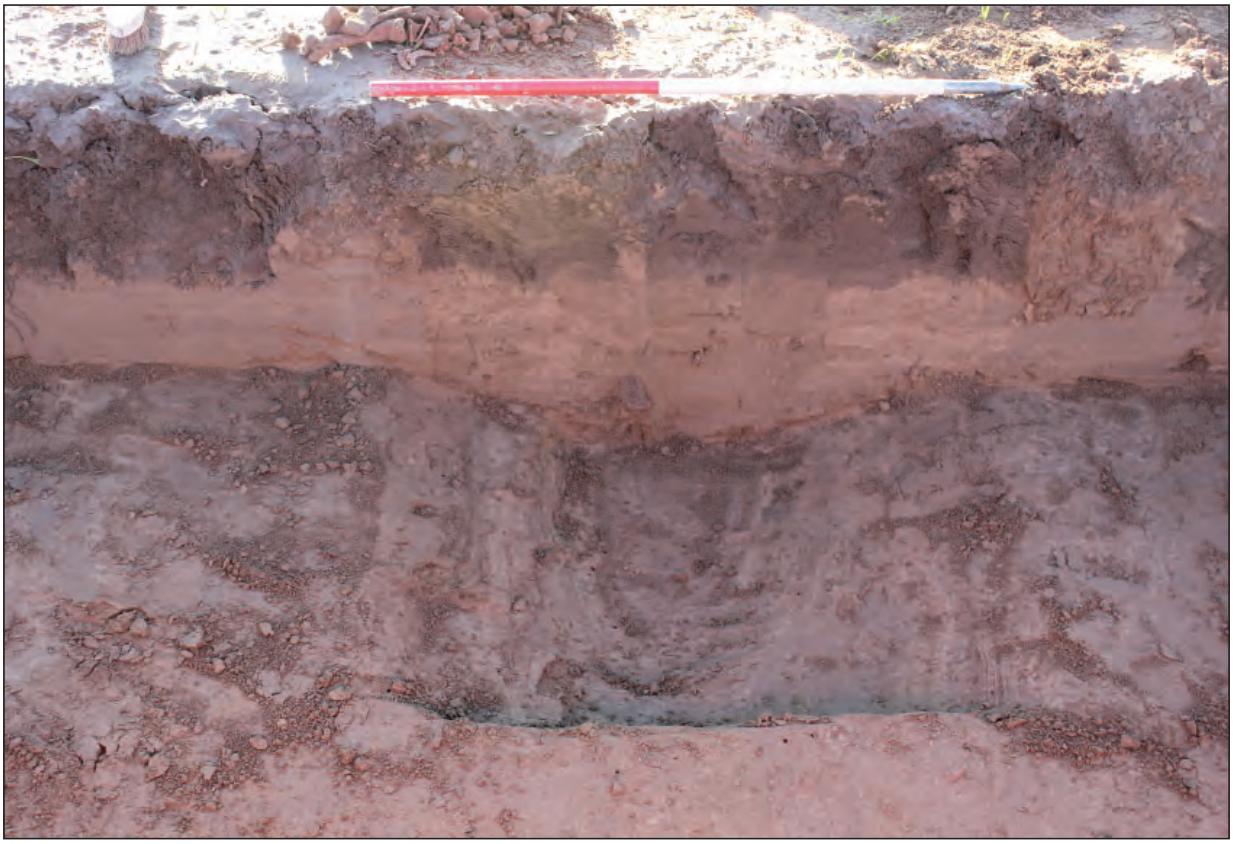


Plate 19 - North-east facing section of ditch [0803], looking south-west. 1m scale.



Plate 20 - Animal skeleton within trench 8, view in plan. 1m scale.

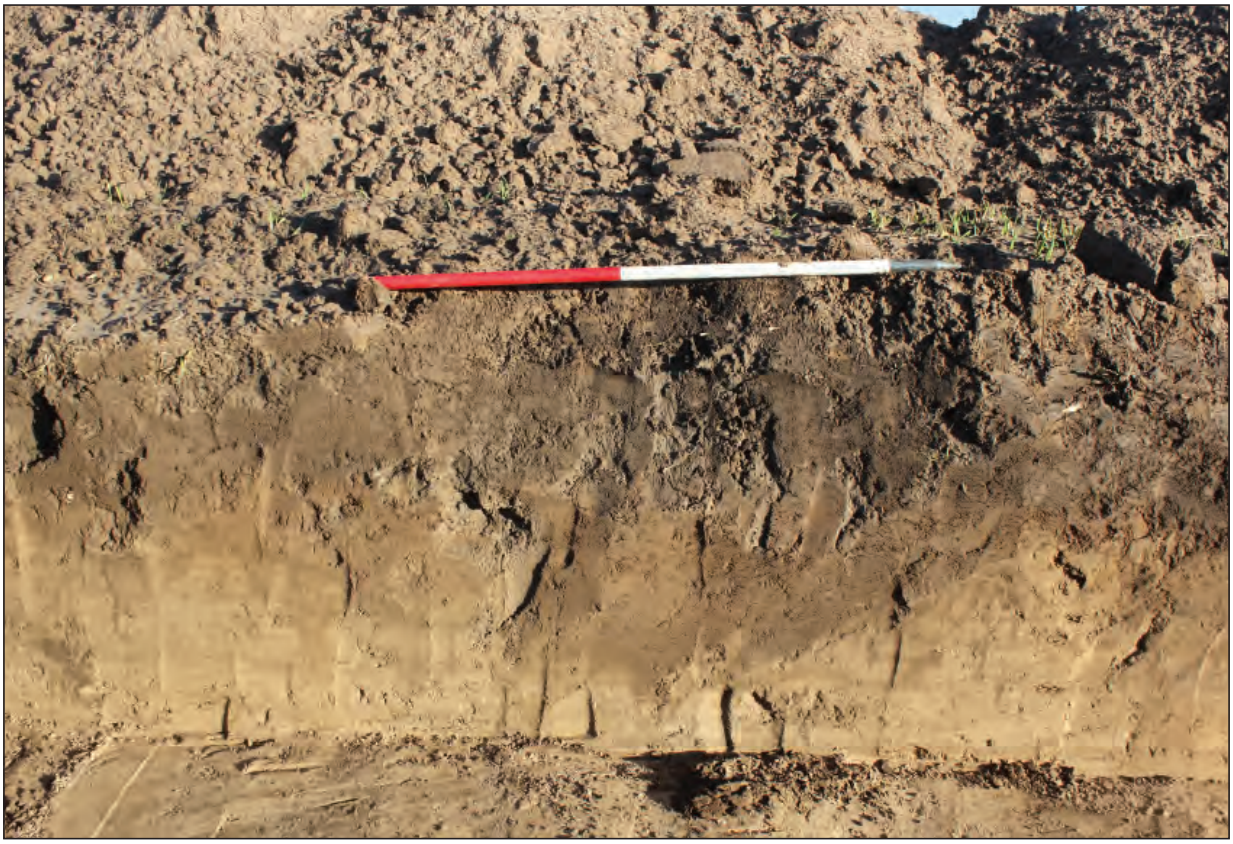


Plate 21 - North-east facing section of paleochannel [0805], looking south-west. 1m scale.



Plate 22 - Trench 9, looking northwest. 2 x 1m scales.



Plate 23 - Trench 10, looking west-northwest. 2 x 1m scales.



Plate 24 - Trench 11, looking west-northwest. 2 x 1m scales.



Plate 25 - South facing section of Ditch [1103], looking north. 1m scale.



Plate 26 - Trench 12, looking northwest. 2 x 1m scales.



Plate 27 - Trench 13, looking southeast. 2 x 1m scales.



Plate 28 - East facing section of paleochannel [1303], looking west. 1m scale.



Plate 29 - Trench 14, looking southeast. 2 x 1m scales.

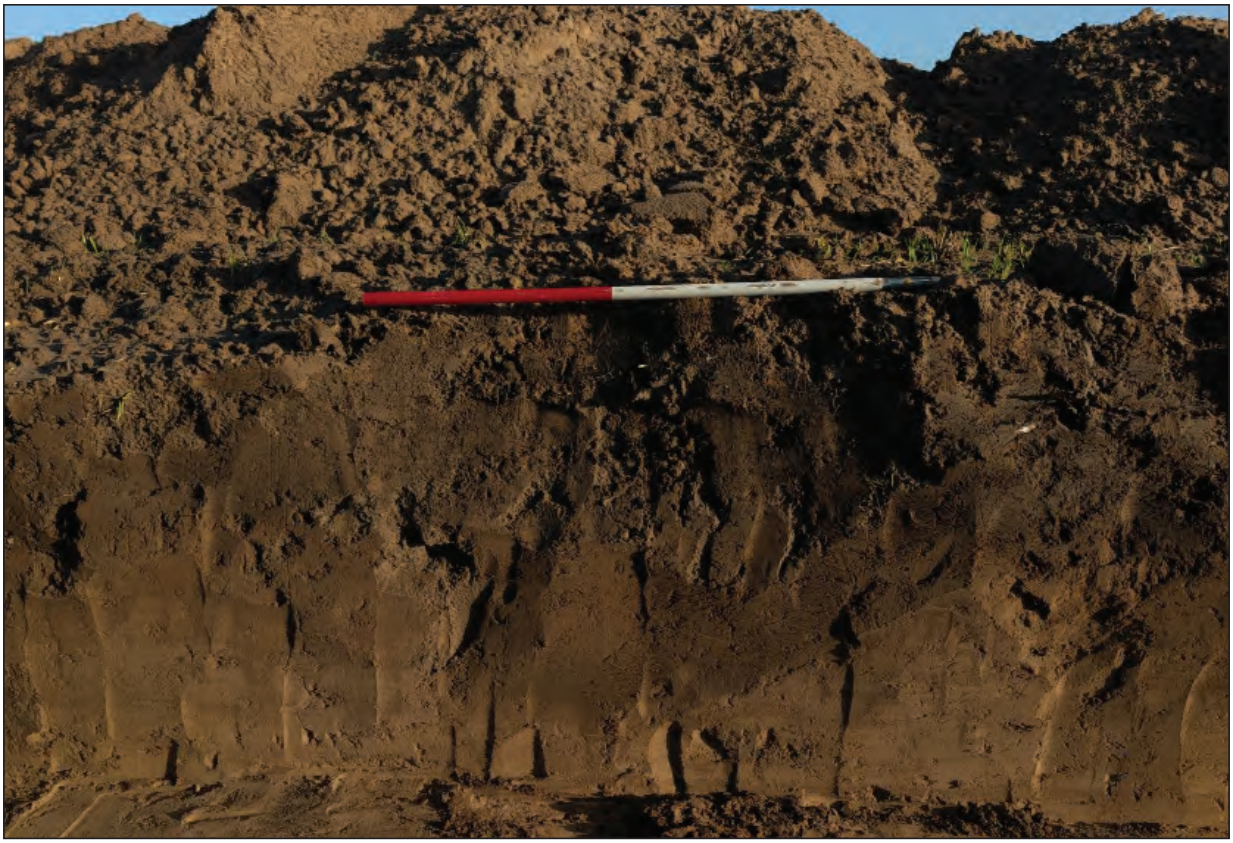


Plate 30 - Southeast facing section of ditch [1405], looking northwest. 1m scale.



Plate 31 - Southeast facing section of paleochannel [1403], looking northwest. 1m scale.



Plate 32 - Trench 15, looking north-northeast. 2 x 1m scales.

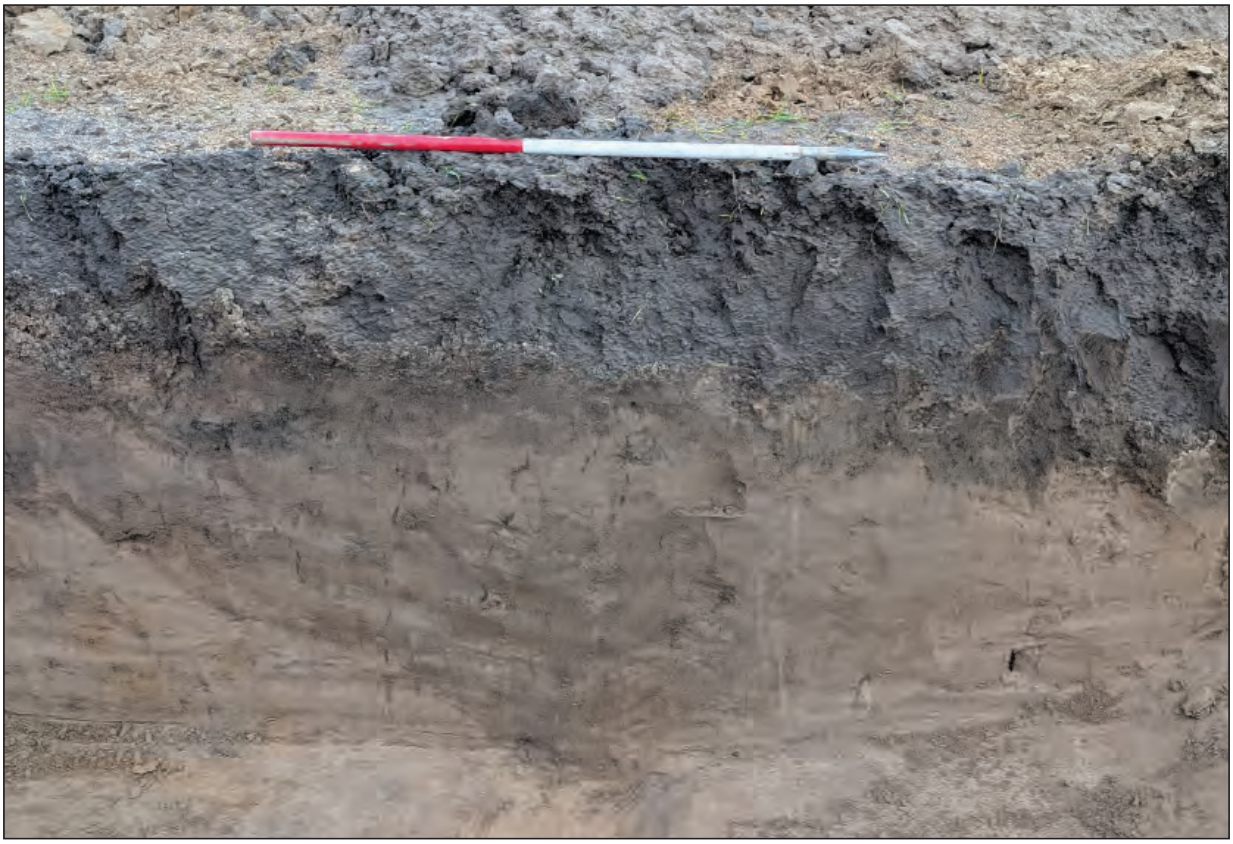


Plate 33 - South facing section of paleochannel [1503], looking north. 1m scale.



Plate 34 - Trench 16, looking northeast. 2 x 1m scales.



Plate 35 - South-east facing section of paleochannel [1603], looking northwest. 1m scale.



Plate 36 - Trench 17, looking east. 2 x 1m scales.



Plate 37 - Trench 18, looking northwest. 2 x 1m scales.



Plate 38 - Trench 19, looking north-northeast. 2 x 1m scales.



Plate 39 - West facing section of paleochannel [1904], looking east. 1m scale.



Plate 40 - West facing section of paleochannel [1906], looking east. 1m scale.



Plate 41 - Trench 20, looking northwest. 2 x 1m scales.



Plate 42 - Trench 21, looking northwest. 2 x 1m scales.