

Lynn Road, Swaffham, Norfolk

Archaeological Excavation Report

May 2024

**Client: NPS Property
Consultants**

Issue No: 2
OA Reference No: 2745
NGR: TF 8123 0913
NCCHEs Reference: CNF49367

Client Name: NPS Property Consultants
Document Title: Lynn Road, Swaffham, Norfolk
Document Type: Full Excavation Report
Report No.: 2745
Grid Reference: TF 8123 0913
Planning Reference: FUL/2023/0047
NCCHEs Ref. CNF49367
Invoice Code: XNFLRS24
Receiving Body NCCHEs
HER No: ENF155908
Accession No: NWHCM : 2024.59
Oasis No. oxfordar3-524000

OA Document File Location: <https://files.oxfordarchaeology.com/nextcloud/index.php/s/i9AmAysdQ8kA4mY>
OA Graphics File Location: <https://files.oxfordarchaeology.com/nextcloud/index.php/s/TsnssaALAppnpge>

Issue No: 2
Date: 05 June 2024
Prepared by: [REDACTED] (Project Supervisor)
Checked by: [REDACTED] (Senior Project Manager)
Edited by: [REDACTED] (Post-Excavation Project Officer)
Approved for Issue by: [REDACTED] (Head of Post-Excavation and Publications)
Signature: [REDACTED]

Disclaimer:

This document has been prepared for the titled project or named part thereof and should not be relied upon or used for any other project without an independent check being carried out as to its suitability and prior written authority of Oxford Archaeology being obtained. Oxford Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for the consequences of this document being used for a purpose other than the purposes for which it was commissioned. Any person/party using or relying on the document for such other purposes agrees and will by such use or reliance be taken to confirm their agreement to indemnify Oxford Archaeology for all loss or damage resulting therefrom. Oxford Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for this document to any party other than the person/party by whom it was commissioned.

Oxford office
Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford
OX2 0ES

Cambridge office
15 Trafalgar Way
Bar Hill
Cambridge
CB23 8SQ

Lancaster office
Mill 3
Moor Lane Mills
Moor Lane
Lancaster
LA1 1QD

t. +44 (0)1865 980 700

t. +44 (0)1223 850 500

t. +44 (0)1524 880
250

E: info@oxfordarchaeology.com
W: oxfordarchaeology.com
Oxford Archaeology is a registered Charity: No. 285627

Lynn Road, Swaffham, Norfolk

Archaeological Excavation Report

Written by [REDACTED] MA

With illustrations [REDACTED] MA

Contents

LIST OF FIGURES	5
LIST OF PLATES	5
SUMMARY.....	6
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	7
1 INTRODUCTION	8
1.1 BACKGROUND	8
1.2 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY	8
1.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.....	8
1.4 PREHISTORIC.....	8
1.5 ROMAN	9
1.6 ANGLO-SAXON AND MEDIEVAL	9
1.7 POST MEDIEVAL.....	10
1.8 PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK.....	10
2 EXCAVATION AIMS AND METHODOLOGY	11
2.1 GENERAL.....	11
2.2 SPECIFIC AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	11
2.3 RESEARCH FRAMEWORKS.....	11
2.4 FIELDWORK METHODOLOGY	11
3 RESULTS.....	13
3.1 INTRODUCTION AND PRESENTATION OF RESULTS.....	13
3.2 GENERAL SOILS AND GROUND CONDITIONS.....	13
3.3 GENERAL DISTRIBUTION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL DEPOSITS	13
4 DISCUSSION	14
4.1 RELIABILITY OF FIELD INVESTIGATION	14
4.2 EXCAVATION OBJECTIVES AND RESULTS.....	14
5 ARCHIVING	14
5.1 ARCHIVING, RETENTION AND DISPERSAL	14
APPENDIX A CONTEXT INVENTORY	15
APPENDIX B BIBLIOGRAPHY	16

APPENDIX C OASIS REPORT FORM.....17

List of Figures

- Figure 1 Site location map
Figure 2 HER records mentioned in text
Figure 3 Site plan showing features excavated during the evaluation
(Trench 24; after Reid 2023)

List of Plates

- Plate 1 North-east facing view of the site
Plate 2 South-west facing view of the site
Plate 3 North-west facing view of cremation burial (**E2404**; Reid 2023, plate 1)

SUMMARY

From the 25th to 28th of March 2024, Oxford Archaeology conducted an archaeological excavation on land south of Lynn Road, Swaffham, Norfolk as a condition of planning permission for a proposed SEN school.

The excavation covered an area 0.15 hectares and was targeted on the location of a single undated cremation burial previously revealed and excavated during trial trenching of the development area. However, no further features or finds were recorded during the excavation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Oxford Archaeology would like to thank NPS Property Consultants for commissioning this project. Thanks are also extended to [REDACTED] who monitored the work on behalf of Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Services.

The project was managed for Oxford Archaeology by [REDACTED]. The fieldwork was directed by [REDACTED]. Thanks are also extended to the team of OA staff that prepared the archive under the supervision of [REDACTED]

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by NPS Property Consultants to undertake an excavation at the site of a proposed SEN School (Fig. 1; NGR TF 8123 0913). The excavation followed on from a programme of trial trenching undertaken across the entire 3.3ha development area, and was targeted on a cremation burial found in one of the trenches in the western part of the site.

1.1.2 The work was undertaken as a condition of Planning Permission (planning ref: FUL/2023/0047). A brief was set by [REDACTED] outlining the Local Authority's requirements for work necessary to inform the planning process. A written scheme of investigation was produced by OA detailing the methods by which OA proposed to meet the requirements of the brief (Greef 2024).

1.1.3 All work was carried out in accordance with the Norfolk County Council's Historic Environment Services' *Standards for Development-Led Archaeological Projects in Norfolk* (Robertson *et al* 2018) and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct, Standard for archaeological excavation* (2023) and *Universal guidance for archaeological excavation* (2023).

1.1.4 The site archive is currently held by OA and will be deposited with the appropriate county stores under the Accession no. NWHCM : 2024.59 in due course.

1.2 Location, topography and geology

1.2.1 The site lies to the west of Swaffham and is centred on TF 8123 0913. The site is bounded by Lynn Road to the north, a residential caravan site to the east, Shouldham Lane to the south and farmland to the west.

1.2.2 The area of proposed development consists of 3.2ha of farmland (Fig. 1).

1.2.3 The geology of the area is mapped as chalk from the Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation. The superficial geology is diamicton of the Lowestoft Formation (BGS viewer [accessed 02/04/2024]).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 The summary background provided here is based on a search of Norfolk historic Environment Record for an area within 1km of the site (NHER enquiry 24_04_25; dated 29/04/2024) and also draws on the background presented in the evaluation report [REDACTED] 2023) and Written Scheme of Investigation ([REDACTED] 2024). The locations of selected records from the NHER noted in the text are shown in Fig. 2.

1.4 Prehistoric

1.4.1 Evidence for prehistoric activity in the area largely takes the form of unstratified surface finds. A palaeolithic hand axe was recovered from a

residential garden approx. 700m south-east of the site (NHER 25686), and a Mesolithic axehead was found some 850 metres to the east (NHER 13339). Most other prehistoric finds in the area, however, relate to Neolithic and Bronze Age activity and within the immediate environs of the site these include Neolithic and Early Bronze Age worked flints recovered during the excavation of a possible mill mound in Mount Close Field, approximately 180m to the north-east of the site (NHER 2655). Later activity is represented by an Iron Age coin recovered during metal detecting at a location around 200m south of the site (NHER 40969).

1.5 Roman

1.5.1 Romano-British activity is similarly evidenced largely by surface finds. These include finds found during metal detecting of the field in which the site itself lies, in the form of five coins, a handle in the form of a bird's head, a nail and a hairpin (NHER 31824). A single sherd of Iron Age to Roman pottery was also recovered some 500m to the south-east (NHER 51328), and a 2nd century coin was found to the north of the site (NHER 14678). Further Roman coins have been recovered during gardening at a location 160m east of the site (NHER 2675), and on an allotment directly to south of the site (NHER 2676).

1.6 Anglo-Saxon and medieval

1.6.1 The place-name Swaffham derives from Old English and means 'homestead (or settlement) of the Swabians' (Key to English Place-Names [<http://kepn.nottingham.ac.uk/>; accessed 03/04/2024]). The Domesday Book of 1086 lists two manors in Swaffham, held by the Count Alan of Brittany and by Walter Giffard, as well as a fishery and a mill (Open Domesday Book [<https://opendomesday.org/>; accessed 02/04/2024]). Evidence of early Anglo-Saxon activity within the modern area of the town, to the south-east of the site, is represented by an early Saxon cemetery discovered in 1970 (NHER 1125); 19 inhumation burials and a possible cremation were recorded, associated with several grave goods dating to the 6th century AD.

1.6.2 In 2004, a middle Saxon coin was found during metal detecting in the field in which the site lies (NHER 31824). In 1958, excavations on the site of the probable medieval mill mound noted above recovered late Saxon pottery (Thetford Ware; NHER 2655).

1.6.3 Medieval finds have been recovered during metal detecting of the field in which the site lies, including five coins and other medieval metal objects (NHER 31824), and metal detecting in fields to the south recovered two further medieval coins (NHER 40969). Medieval pottery and several metal objects were also recovered to the north of the site (NHER 29206). The site of the possible medieval mill mound excavated in 1958 (NHER 2655) produced medieval pottery and a quern fragment. Field walking carried out to the north-west of the site ahead of the construction of the Swaffham bypass recovered medieval pottery (NHER 15065) and a medieval quern (NHER 15066). Further north-west, a metal detecting survey in 2005 discovered a fragment of a medieval or post medieval copper alloy vessel (NHER no. 42710).

1.7 Post-medieval

1.7.1 Faden's map of 1797 shows the site as open ground, bounded by a road (Lynn Road?) on the north side and with no indication of structures. At the time of the OS six-inch map of 1883, the field containing the site was divided into several smaller fields. However, none of the boundaries associated with this layout fall within the area to be evaluated. On the six-inch map of 1929, buildings are shown to the east of the site, in the area now occupied by a caravan park, and by 1950 more intensive development had begun to the north of Lynn Road. By 1973 (as shown on the 1:10,000 OS map of that year) the field containing the site had been consolidated into a single block of land. There have been no significant changes in the layout of the area since 1973.

1.8 Previous archaeological work

- 1.8.1 A programme of informative trial trenching was carried out prior to determination across the development area (ENF152535; Reid 2023) as the first stage of a programme of archaeological mitigatory works. Out of 33 trenches excavated, only one contained any evidence of significant archaeological activity.
- 1.8.2 A single cremation burial, held in a small pit, was revealed in a Trench (Trench 24) in the western part of the site and was 100% excavated and its entire fill processed by wet sieving and flotation. This was not associated with any datable finds but was thought most likely to be of Bronze Age, or possibly Anglo-Saxon, date. The plant macrofossils within the assemblage and consistent with other cremation deposits, and the calcined bone came from one probably adult of indeterminate sex. No further work was possible due to the small volume and size of the bone recovered (Reid 2023).
- 1.8.3 A second small pit was recorded during trial trenching. The material within the sample recovered from this feature suggests that it was fairly modern in origin, being derived either from the nearby railway line or domestic hearth waste (Reid 2023).

2 EXCAVATION AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 General

2.1.1 The overall aim of the investigation was to preserve by record the archaeological evidence contained within the footprint of the development area and to recover as much information as possible on the origins, date, development, phasing, spatial organisation, character, function, status, significance, and the nature of social, economic and industrial activities on the site.

2.2 Specific aims and objectives

2.2.1 The project aims and objectives were as follows:

- i. To determine or confirm the general nature of any remains present.
- ii. To determine or confirm the approximate date or date range of any remains, by means of artefactual or other evidence.
- iii. To establish the nature and extent of the funerary remains present on site (located in Trench 24 of the trial trenching).

2.3 Research Frameworks

2.3.1 This project took place within the East of England and aimed to contribute to the goals of the Regional Research Frameworks relevant to this area:

- [REDACTED] (1997). Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern counties: 1. Resource Assessment. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 3
- [REDACTED] (2000). Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern counties: 2. Research Agenda and Strategy. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 8
- [REDACTED] (2011). Research and Archaeology Revisited: A Revised Framework for the East of England. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 24
- Updated Regional Research Framework for the East of England: <https://researchframeworks.org/eoe/>

2.4 Fieldwork Methodology

2.4.1 The methodology used followed that outlined in the brief (Hickling 2024) and detailed in the Written Scheme of Investigation (Greef 2024).

2.4.2 Machine excavation was carried out by a360-type excavator using a 2m wide flat-bladed ditching bucket under constant supervision of a suitably qualified and experienced archaeologist.

2.4.3 Spoil was scanned with a metal detector, and modern finds were discarded.

2.4.4 All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using OA's pro-forma sheets. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate

scales and colour and monochrome photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits.

- 2.4.5 Non-archaeological and modern features were observed during the excavation, but these were not recorded.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction and presentation of results

3.1.1 The results of the excavation are presented below. Details of all contexts are included in Appendix A. A plan of the excavation area is provided in Fig. 3; this shows the location of features excavated during the trial trench evaluation (after Reid 2023; cut numbers allocated during the evaluation have been prefixed 'E').

3.2 General soils and ground conditions (Plates 1 and 2)

3.2.1 The natural geology of sand (3) was overlain by a mid-reddish brown sandy silt subsoil (2), which in turn was overlain by ploughsoil with an average thickness of 0.36m (1).

3.2.2 Ground conditions throughout the excavation were generally good, and the site remained dry throughout. Modern features and disturbances, where present, were easy to identify against the underlying natural geology.

3.3 General distribution of archaeological deposits

3.3.1 Beyond those previously excavated during the evaluation (cremation burial **E2404**; Plate 3) and modern pit **E2406**) no archaeological features were present within the stripped area. No finds were retrieved during the mechanical stripping or during the metal detecting.

3.3.2 A summary of the two features excavated during the trial trenching, based on the results presented in the evaluation report (█ 2023), is provided below in Table 1.

Cut	Fill	Feature Type	Length/Width	Depth	Description	Finds/environmental remains
2404	2405	Cremation burial	0.3x0.4m	0.3m	Small pit, oval in plan, with single very dark grey charcoal rich fill with cremated bone. 100% excavated.	Hand excavation and wet sieving/flotation recovered 127.9g of cremated bone, including fragments of long bone and skull, probably belonging to a single adult/sub-adult individual. Associated charred plant remains included grassland herbs - ribwort plantain (<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>) and possibly buttercup (<i>Ranunculus</i> sp.) - and abundant wood charcoal.
2406	2407	Pit (modern)	0.5x0.6m	0.2m	Small pit, oval in plan, with single fill of mid greyish brown silty sand. Half sectioned	Wet sieving and flotation produced black porous and tarry concretions along with small pieces of coal <2mm in size (coal 'dust').

Table 1. Summary of features excavated during the trial trenching (information from █ 2023)

4 DISCUSSION

4.1 Reliability of field investigation

4.1.1 The horizon between the subsoil and superficial geology was clearly visible within the stripped area and contrasted strongly against the natural sand and flints. For this reason, the results of the excavation can be considered reliable.

4.2 Excavation objectives and results

4.2.1 The objectives laid out in Section 2.2 of this report have been achieved by the excavation, as it has determined that no archaeological remains, other than the features found during the evaluation, were present within the excavation area. Metal detecting also produced no artefacts from the spoil heaps. The cremation burial excavated during the evaluation in Trench 24 (E2404) remains undated, but as noted as in the evaluation report (Reid 2023), is most likely to relate to funerary activity of Bronze Age, Romano-British or, possibly, Anglo-Saxon date.

5 ARCHIVING

5.1 Archiving, Retention and Dispersal

5.1.1 The site archive (under Accession No. NWHCM : 2024.59) will be deposited with NCHES and comprises one document box.

APPENDIX A CONTEXT INVENTORY

Context	Category	Type	Description	Average Depth
1	Layer	Topsoil	Dark greyish brown sandy silt	0.36m
2	Layer	Subsoil	Mid greyish brown sandy silt	0.32m
3	Layer	Natural	Mid brownish yellow sand	

APPENDIX C OASIS REPORT FORM

Oasis Report Form - Excavation

Project Details

OASIS Number	oxfordar3-524000		
Project Name	Lynn Road, Swaffham, Norfolk		

Start of Fieldwork	25/03/24	End of Fieldwork	28/03/24
Previous Work	Yes	Future Work	No

Project Reference Codes

Site Code	ENF155908	Planning App. Number	FUL/2023/0047
HER Number	ENF155908	Related Numbers	XNFLRS24, CNF49367

Prompt	Planning condition
Development Type	Public Building

Techniques used (tick all that apply)

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photography – interpretation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open-area excavation | <input type="checkbox"/> Salvage Record |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photography - new | <input type="checkbox"/> Part Excavation | <input type="checkbox"/> Systematic Field Walking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Field Observation | <input type="checkbox"/> Part Survey | <input type="checkbox"/> Systematic Metal Detector Survey |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Full Excavation | <input type="checkbox"/> Recorded Observation | <input type="checkbox"/> Test-pit Survey |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Full Survey | <input type="checkbox"/> Remote Operated Vehicle Survey | <input type="checkbox"/> Watching Brief |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Geophysical Survey | <input type="checkbox"/> Salvage Excavation | |

Monument	Period	Object	Period
none	None	none	None

Insert more lines as appropriate.

Project Location

County	Norfolk	Address (including Postcode) Lynn Road, Swaffham, Norfolk, PE37 7PZ
District	Breckland District	
Parish	Swaffham	
HER office	NCCHEs	
Size of Study Area	0.15ha	
National Grid Ref	TF 8123 0913	

Project Originators

Organisation	Oxford Archaeology
Project Brief Originator	NCCHEs
Project Design Originator	[REDACTED]
Project Manager	[REDACTED]
Project Supervisor	[REDACTED]

Project Archives

	Location	ID
Physical Archive (Finds)	n/a	
Digital Archive	ADS and Norwich Castle Museum	ENF155908/NWHCM : 2024.59
Paper Archive	Norwich Castle Museum	ENF155908/NWHCM : 2024.59

Physical Contents	Present?	Digital files associated with Finds	Paperwork associated with Finds
Animal Bones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Glass	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Human Remains	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leather	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Metal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stratigraphic		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Survey		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Textiles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worked Bone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worked Stone/Lithic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
None	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Digital Media

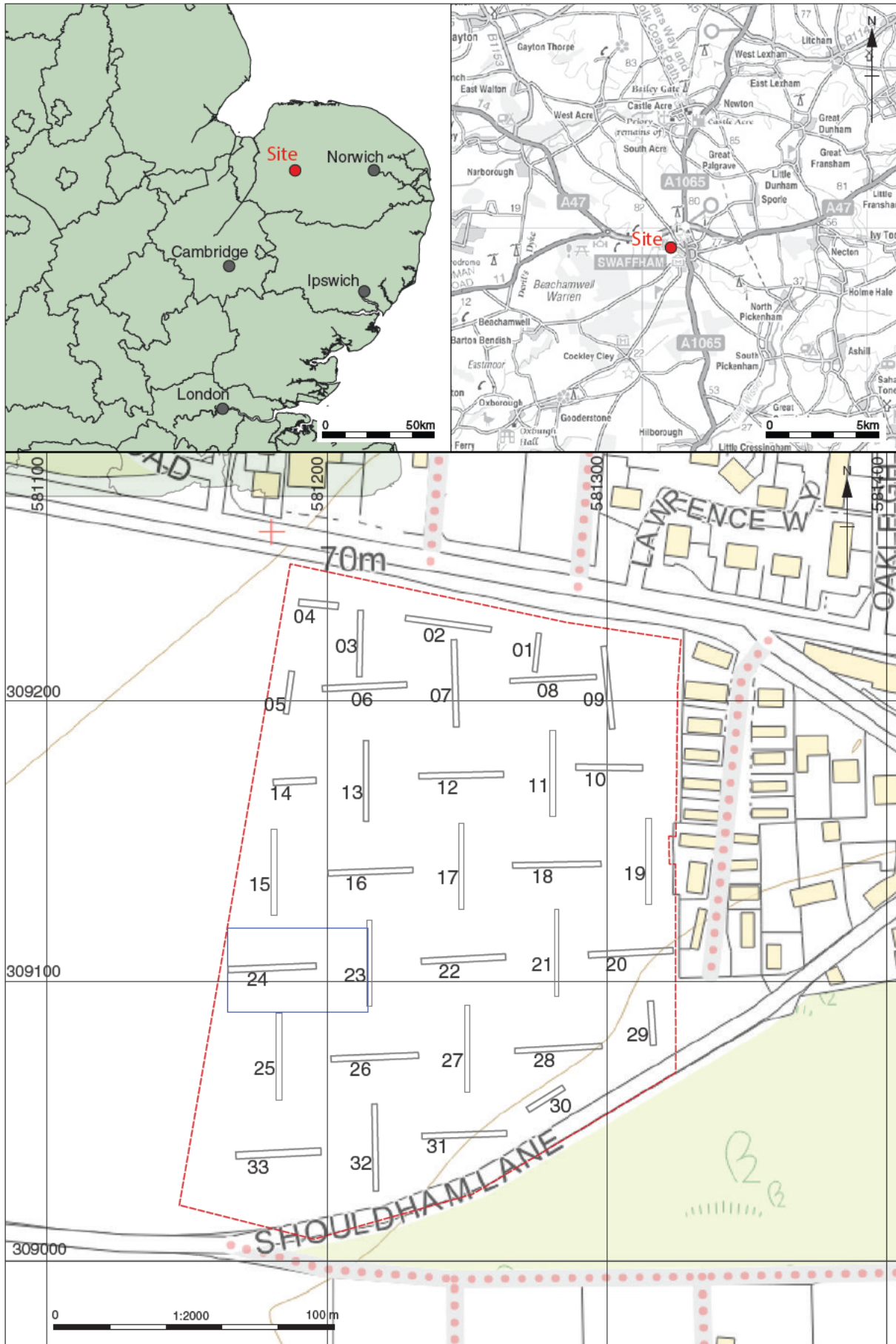
Database	<input type="checkbox"/>
GIS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Geophysics	<input type="checkbox"/>
Images (Digital photos)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Illustrations (Figures/Plates)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Paper Media

Aerial Photos	<input type="checkbox"/>
Context Sheets	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Correspondence	<input type="checkbox"/>
Diary	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drawing	<input type="checkbox"/>

Moving Image	<input type="checkbox"/>	Manuscript	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spreadsheets	<input type="checkbox"/>	Map	<input type="checkbox"/>
Survey	<input type="checkbox"/>	Matrices	<input type="checkbox"/>
Text	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Microfiche	<input type="checkbox"/>
Virtual Reality	<input type="checkbox"/>	Miscellaneous	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Research/Notes	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Photos (negatives/prints/slides)	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Plans	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Report	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Sections	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Survey	<input type="checkbox"/>

Further Comments



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2024. All rights reserved. CM 1158753

Figure 1: Site location showing excavation area (blue) in development area (dashed red) and previous trenching (grey)

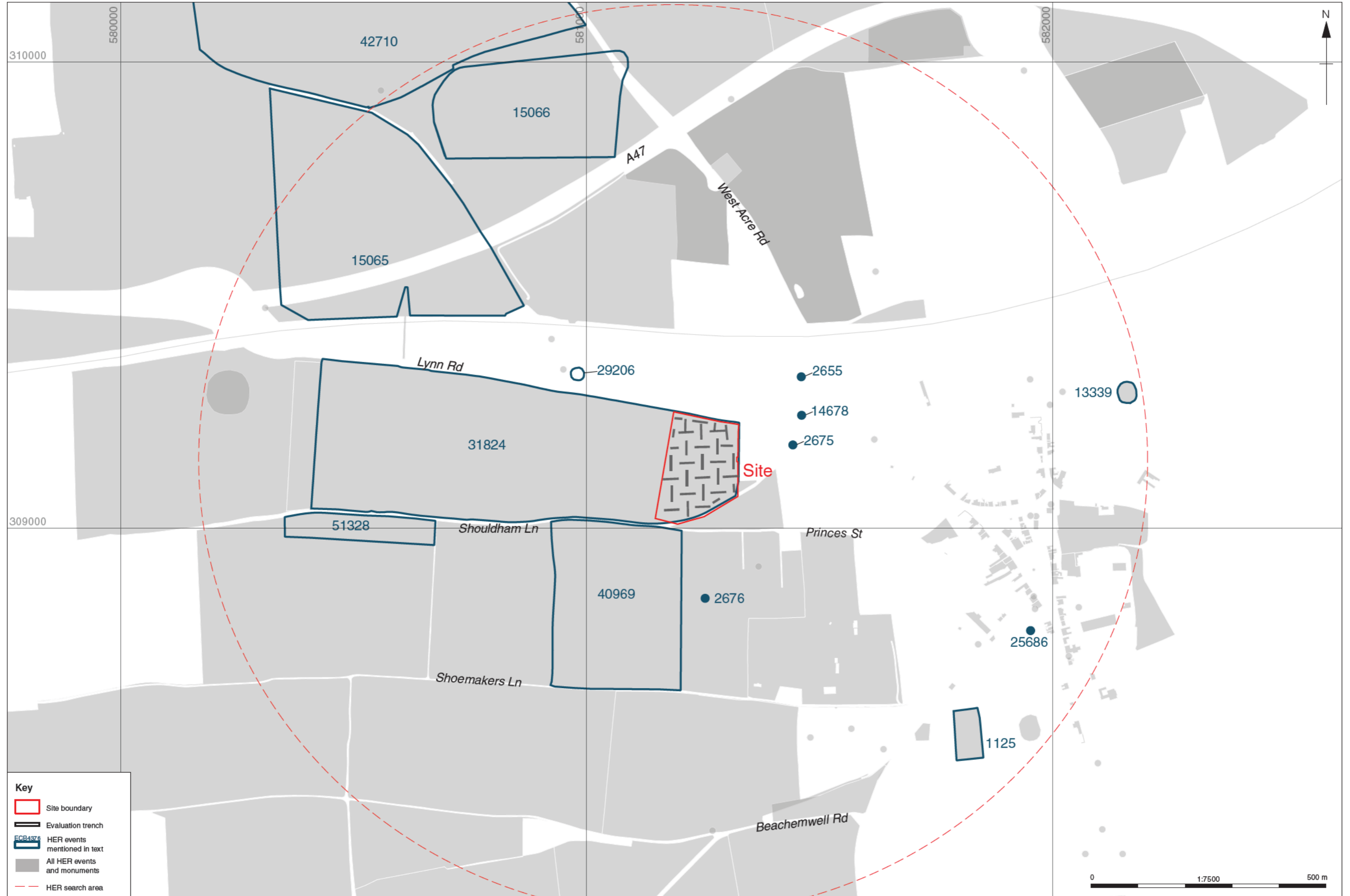


Figure 2: HER records mentioned in text

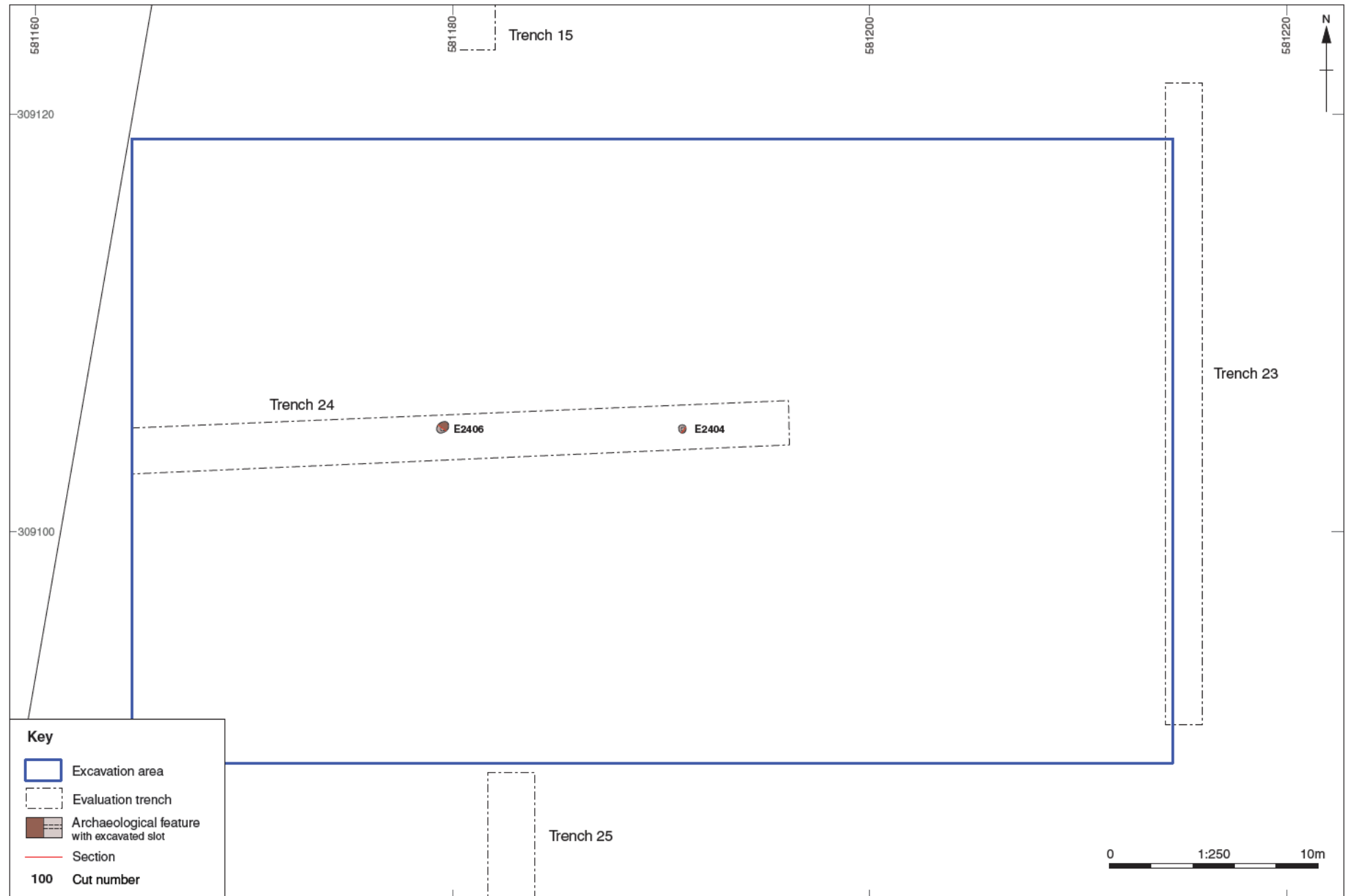


Figure 3: Site plan showing features excavated during the evaluation (Trench 24; after Reid 2023)



Plate 1: North-east facing view of the site



Plate 2: South-west facing view of the site



Plate 3: North-west facing view of cremation burial (**E2404**) excavated during the trial trenching (Reid 2023, plate 1)

Cambridge office

15 Trafalgar Way,
Bar Hill,
Cambridgeshire, CB23 8SQ

T: +44(0)1223 850500

E: info@oxfordarchaeology.com

Lancaster office

Mill 3,
Moor Lane,
Lancaster, LA1 1QD

T: +44(0)1524 541000

E: info@oxfordarchaeology.com

Oxford office

Janus House,
Osney Mead,
Oxford OX2 0ES

T: +44(0)1865 980700

E: info@oxfordarchaeology.com

W: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>



Chief Executive Officer
Ken Welsh, BSc, MCIfA, FSA
Oxford Archaeology Ltd is a
Private Limited Company, No: 1618597
and a Registered Charity, No: 285627