

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT:
TRIAL TRENCHING ON LAND OFF EAKRING ROAD, BILSTHORPE, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

Planning Reference: 20/00873/FULM
NGR: SK 64926 61428
AAL Site Code: BIER 20
Museum Accession Number: Pending
OASIS Reference Number: allenarc1-403236



Report prepared for Prospect Archaeology
On behalf of Keepmoat Homes Ltd

By
Allen Archaeology Ltd
Report Number AAL 2020099

September 2020



Allenarchaeology



Contents

| | |
|---|---|
| Executive Summary | 1 |
| 1.0 Introduction | 2 |
| 2.0 Site Location and Description..... | 2 |
| 3.0 Planning Background | 2 |
| 4.0 Archaeological and Historical Background..... | 3 |
| 5.0 Aims and Objectives | 3 |
| 6.0 Methodology | 3 |
| 7.0 Results..... | 4 |
| Trenches 1 - 10..... | 4 |
| 8.0 Discussion and Conclusions..... | 5 |
| 9.0 Effectiveness of Methodology..... | 5 |
| 10.0 Acknowledgements | 5 |
| 11.0 References..... | 6 |

List of Plates

| | |
|--|---|
| Plate 1: Trench 9, looking west, 1m and 1m scale | 4 |
| Plate 2: Sondage dug into 101, no scales | 4 |

List of Appendices

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Appendix 1: Context Summary | 7 |
| Appendix 2: Figures | 9 |

List of Figures

| | |
|---|----|
| Figure 1: Site location outlined in red | 9 |
| Figure 2: Trench location plan | 10 |
| Figure 3: sections | 11 |

Document Control

| Element: | Name: | Date: |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| Report prepared by: | Julian Thorley BA (Hons) | 11/09/2020 |
| Illustrations prepared by: | Dominika Czop MA (Hons) | 11/09/2020 |
| Report edited by: | Chris Clay BA MA (Hons) | 14/09/2020 |
| Report reviewed by: | Mick McDaid MM | 14/09/2020 |
| Version no.: | 2.0 | 14/09/2020 |

Cover image: Trench 4, looking south, 1m and 1m scale

Executive Summary

- Prospect Archaeology, on behalf of Keepmoat Homes, commissioned Allen Archaeology to undertake an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching on land off Eakring Road, Bilsthorpe, Nottinghamshire, prior to determination of planning consent for a residential development.
- The site is located in an area of moderate archaeological interest, with a few prehistoric finds nearby, a Roman road and Roman finds scatters as well as some potential ridge and furrow representing agricultural activity on the periphery of the medieval settlement. A preceding geophysical survey identified a few features of potential interest.
- Ten trenches were excavated across the proposed development area, and did not identify any archaeological finds or features. The results suggest a negligible potential for the proposed development area.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Keepmoat homes commissioned Allen Archaeology Limited (AAL) to undertake an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching on land near Eakring Road, Bilsthorpe, Nottinghamshire, prior to determination of a planning application for a residential development.
- 1.2 The excavation, recording and reporting conformed to current national guidelines, as set out in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) '*Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation*' (CIfA 2020)), and the Historic England document '*Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*' (Historic England 2015) and a specification prepared by Prospect Archaeology (Bonnor 2020). All Historic England guidelines on archaeological best practice were also followed (www.historicengland.org.uk/advice).
- 1.3 The archive will be submitted to Newark and Sherwood Museum Service, within six months of the completion of the report. The museum has been contacted for an accession code and a response is awaited.

2.0 Site Location and Description

- 2.1 The site is located in an arable field to the east of Eakring Road in the parish of Bilsthorpe, Nottinghamshire. It is bounded to the north by the cutting for the Bilsthorpe Colliery branch railway, to the west by Eakring Road, to the south by a concrete and wire fence, and to the east by the railway embankment for the Colliery. The site is centred at NGR SK 64926 61428.
- 2.2 The natural geology of the western half of the site comprises Nottingham Castle Sandstone Formation sedimentary bedrock. To the east is Retford Member Mudstone, both formed in between 246 to 251 million years ago in the Triassic period. There are no recorded superficial deposits.

3.0 Planning Background

- 3.1 The development consists of a residential development and attenuation pond on land near Eakring Road, planning reference 20/00873/FULM. Trial trenching was required in order that the archaeological potential of the Site could be clarified prior to determination of any potential further works.
- 3.2 The approach adopted is consistent with the recommendations of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), with the particular sections of relevance being Paragraphs 187 and 189 of '*Section 16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment*' (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government 2019).

4.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 4.1 The section below is a summary from the desk based assessment provided by Prospect Archaeology (Bonnor 2019).
- 4.2 There were two prehistoric finds in the study area; a stone axehead found c.800m to the northwest and a flint blade found a similar distance to the east.
- 4.3 The site sits within a fairly busy location of Roman activity with a Roman road identified from cropmarks, field walking and trial trenching. The course of the road is however uncertain, though its current alignment would take it very close to, or through the site. A Roman marching camp has been located from aerial photographs southwest of Farnsfield and a vexillation fort is known south of Kirklington. Further finds of coins and pottery are also known from the area.
- 4.4 There are no known early medieval remains in the area. Bilsthorpe is mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086 as Bilstorp, belonging to Ulf the Fenman before the Conquest and granted to Gilbert de Ghent by AD 1086. The name Bilsthorpe is derived from the old Norse personal name *Bildr* and the element *-thorp*, meaning outlying settlement or farmstead (Williams & Martin 2002).
- 4.5 The site was located in North Field and contained a land ownership pattern consistent with ridge and furrow cultivation.
- 4.6 A geophysical survey was undertaken in March 2017 to assess the potential for archaeological remains. Evidence for medieval ridge and furrow cultivation was found over much of the site as well as a single slightly curving boundary ditch, running approximately north-south, which does not coincide with any field boundaries on early maps (Bunn 2017).

5.0 Aims and Objectives

- 5.1 The purpose of the archaeological evaluation by trial trenching was to determine the presence or absence of archaeological remains.

6.0 Methodology

- 6.1 The evaluation methodology entailed the excavation of ten trenches, nine measuring 50m by 1.8m and one measuring 30m by 1.8m. In each trench, all topsoil, subsoil and underlying non archaeological deposits were removed by mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket. This was undertaken in spits of 0.1m thickness until the first archaeological horizon or natural geology, whichever was encountered first.
- 6.2 A full written record of the archaeological deposits was made on standard Allen Archaeology Limited context recording sheets. All excavated sections were drawn at a scale of 1:20. Photography formed an integral part of the recording strategy, and all photographs incorporated scales, an identification board and directional arrow, as appropriate.
- 6.3 Each deposit or layer was allocated a unique identifier (context number) consisting of three digits and accorded a written description, e.g. 101; a summary of these are included in Appendix 1.

7.0 Results

Trenches 1 - 10

- 7.1 None of the ten trenches revealed any archaeological finds, features or deposits, exposing only a natural stratigraphic sequence. This was fairly consistent throughout the site. The earliest deposit was the natural geology, a mid-yellow grey clay or brown mudstone (Plate 1). Sealing this was a mid-brown sandy silt topsoil, averaging 0.30m thick.



Plate 1: Representative section in Trench 9, looking west, 1m scale

- 7.2 A sondage was excavated by machine in Trench 1 to ascertain that this was a consistent natural deposit.



Plate 2: Sondage dug into 101, looking south

8.0 Discussion and Conclusions

- 8.1 The trial trenching did not identify any features or deposits of archaeological interest, suggesting a negligible archaeological potential for the proposed development area. No evidence of ridge and furrow were found or the geophysical anomalies noted in the survey, and there was no evidence for the postulated Roman road.

9.0 Effectiveness of Methodology

- 9.1 The trial trenching methodology was appropriate for the site and revealed no archaeological finds or features.

10.0 Acknowledgements

- 10.1 AAL would like to thank Prospect Archaeology, and their client Keepmoat Homes for the commission, AE Faulks for the provision of plant, plant operator Jim Thomas, and Shire for welfare provision.

11.0 References

Bonnor, J., 2019, *Land east of Eakring Road, Bilsthorpe, Nottinghamshire; Archaeological Desk Based Assessment*, Prospect Archaeology, report number KEE01-01v4

Bonnor, J., 2020, *Land east of Eakring Road, Bilsthorpe, Nottinghamshire; Written Scheme of Investigation – Archaeological evaluation*, Prospect Archaeology, report number KEE01-02

CIfA, 2014, *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation*. Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. Reading

Bunn, D., 2017, *Archaeological geophysical survey. Land to east of Eakring Road, Bilsthorpe, Nottinghamshire*, Pre-construct Geophysics, Unpublished report

Historic England, 2015, *Management of Archaeological Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide*, Historic England

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2019, *National Planning Policy Framework*. London: Department for Communities and Local Government

Williams, A. & Martin, G. H., 2002, *Domesday Book, A Complete Translation*, Penguin Books

Appendix 1: Context Summary

Trench 1

| Context | Type | Description | Length (m) | Width (m) | Thickness/depth (m) | Interpretation |
|---------|-------|--|------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------------|
| 100 | Layer | Firm dark greyish brown sandy silt | - | - | 0.38 | Topsoil |
| 101 | Layer | Firm light brown mudstone with moderate inclusions of small medium sized pebbles | - | - | | Natural geology |

Trench 2

| Context | Type | Description | Length (m) | Width (m) | Thickness/depth (m) | Interpretation |
|---------|-------|--|------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------------|
| 200 | Layer | Firm dark greyish brown sandy silt | - | - | 0.36 | Topsoil |
| 201 | Layer | Firm light brown mudstone with moderate inclusions of small medium sized pebbles | - | - | | Natural geology |

Trench 3

| Context | Type | Description | Length (m) | Width (m) | Thickness/depth (m) | Interpretation |
|---------|-------|--|------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------------|
| 300 | Layer | Firm dark greyish brown sandy silt | - | - | 0.36 | Topsoil |
| 301 | Layer | Firm light brown mudstone with moderate inclusions of small medium sized pebbles | - | - | | Natural geology |

Trench 4

| Context | Type | Description | Length (m) | Width (m) | Thickness/depth (m) | Interpretation |
|---------|-------|--|------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------------|
| 400 | Layer | Firm dark greyish brown sandy silt | - | - | 0.30 | Topsoil |
| 401 | Layer | Firm light brown mudstone with moderate inclusions of small medium sized pebbles | - | - | | Natural geology |

Trench 5

| Context | Type | Description | Length (m) | Width (m) | Thickness/depth (m) | Interpretation |
|---------|-------|--|------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------------|
| 500 | Layer | Firm dark greyish brown sandy silt | - | - | 0.30 | Topsoil |
| 501 | Layer | Compact light bluish yellow sandy clay with occasional inclusions of small to medium pebbles | - | - | | Natural geology |

Trench 6

| Context | Type | Description | Length (m) | Width (m) | Thickness/depth (m) | Interpretation |
|---------|-------|------------------------------------|------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------------|
| 600 | Layer | Firm dark greyish brown sandy silt | - | - | 0.28 | Topsoil |
| 601 | Layer | | - | - | | Natural geology |

Trench 7

| Context | Type | Description | Length (m) | Width (m) | Thickness/depth (m) | Interpretation |
|---------|-------|------------------------------------|------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------------|
| 700 | Layer | Firm dark greyish brown sandy silt | - | - | 0.36 | Topsoil |
| 701 | Layer | | - | - | | Natural geology |

Trench 8

| Context | Type | Description | Length (m) | Width (m) | Thickness/depth (m) | Interpretation |
|---------|-------|--|------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------------|
| 800 | Layer | Firm dark greyish brown sandy silt | - | - | 0.32 | Topsoil |
| 801 | Layer | Compact light bluish yellow sandy clay with occasional inclusions of small to medium pebbles | - | - | | Natural geology |

Trench 9

| Context | Type | Description | Length (m) | Width (m) | Thickness/depth (m) | Interpretation |
|---------|-------|--|------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------------|
| 900 | Layer | Firm dark greyish brown sandy silt | - | - | 0.30 | Topsoil |
| 901 | Layer | Compact light bluish yellow sandy clay with occasional inclusions of small to medium pebbles | - | - | | Natural geology |

Trench 10

| Context | Type | Description | Length (m) | Width (m) | Thickness/depth (m) | Interpretation |
|---------|-------|--|------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------------|
| 1000 | Layer | Firm dark greyish brown sandy silt | - | - | 0.30 | Topsoil |
| 1001 | Layer | Compact light bluish yellow sandy clay with occasional inclusions of small to medium pebbles | - | - | | Natural geology |

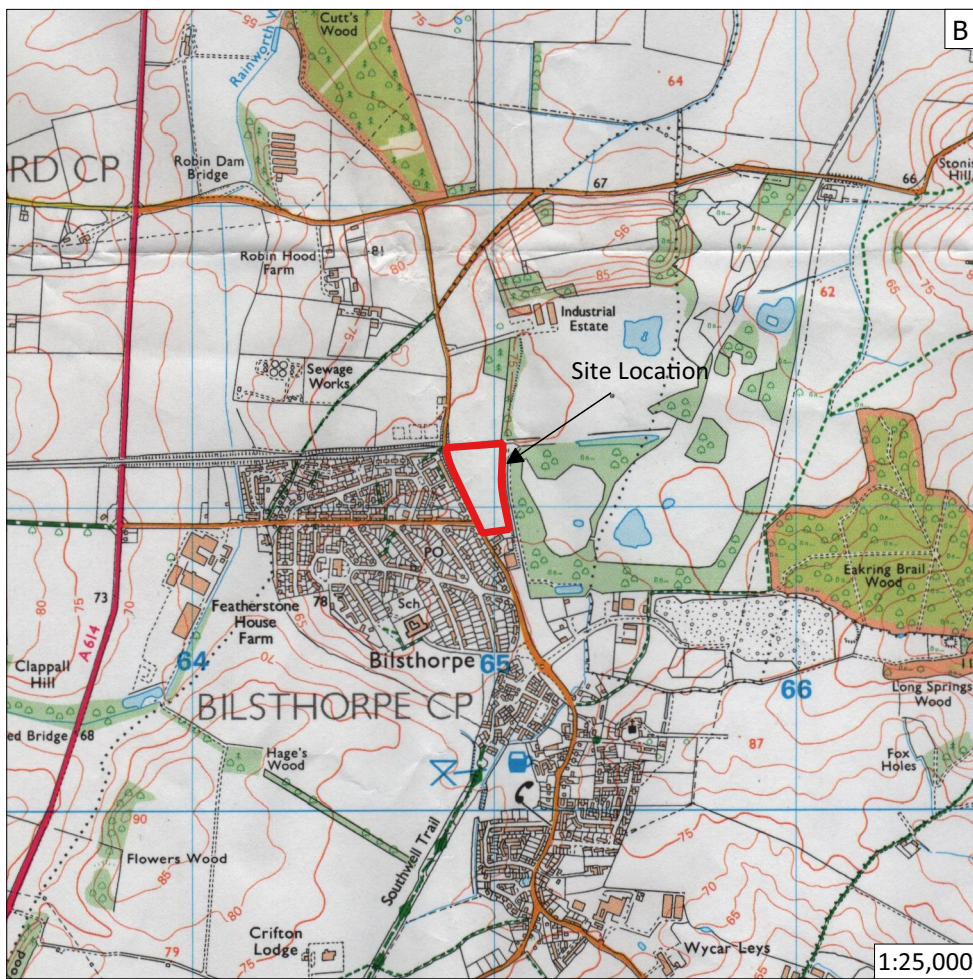
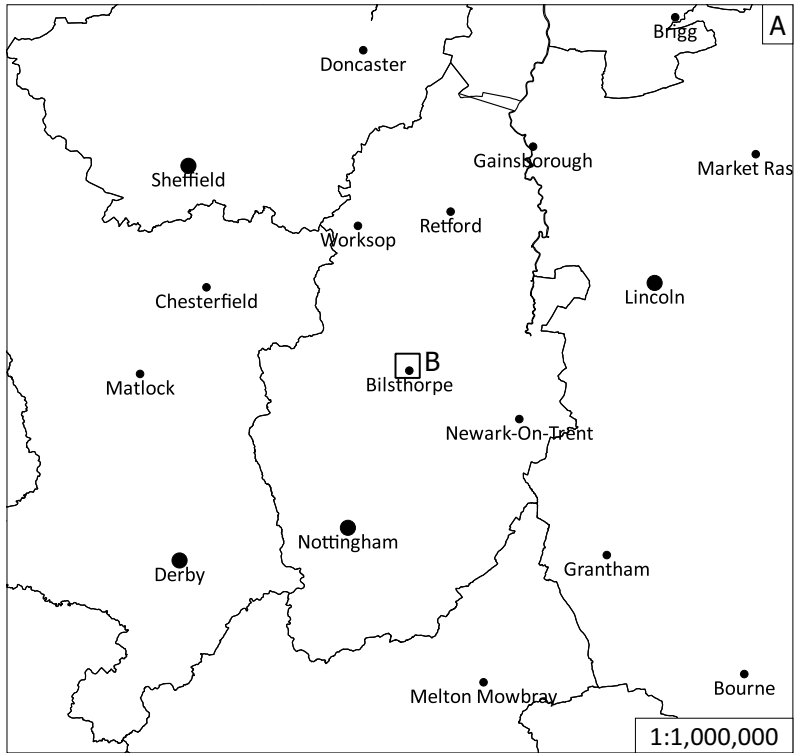
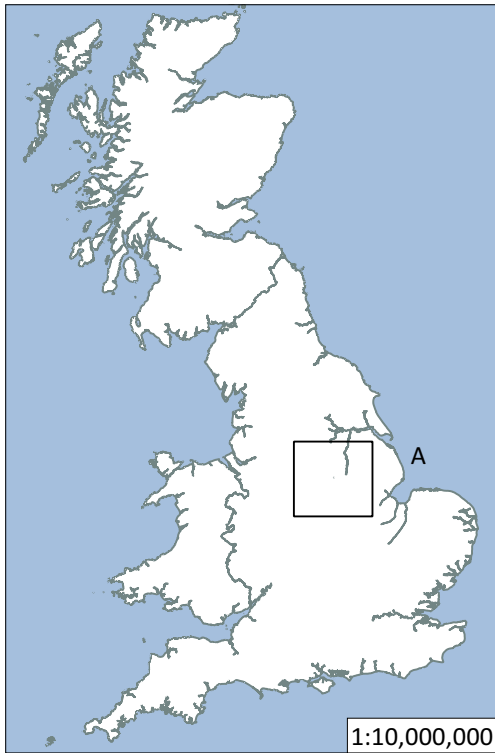


Figure 1: Site location outlined in red

© Crown copyright 2000. All rights reserved. Licence Number 100047330

| | |
|-----------|--|
| Site Code | BIER 20 |
| Scale | 1:10,000,000 1:1,000,000 1:25,000 @ A4 |
| Drawn by | D Czop |
| Date | 11/09/2020 |



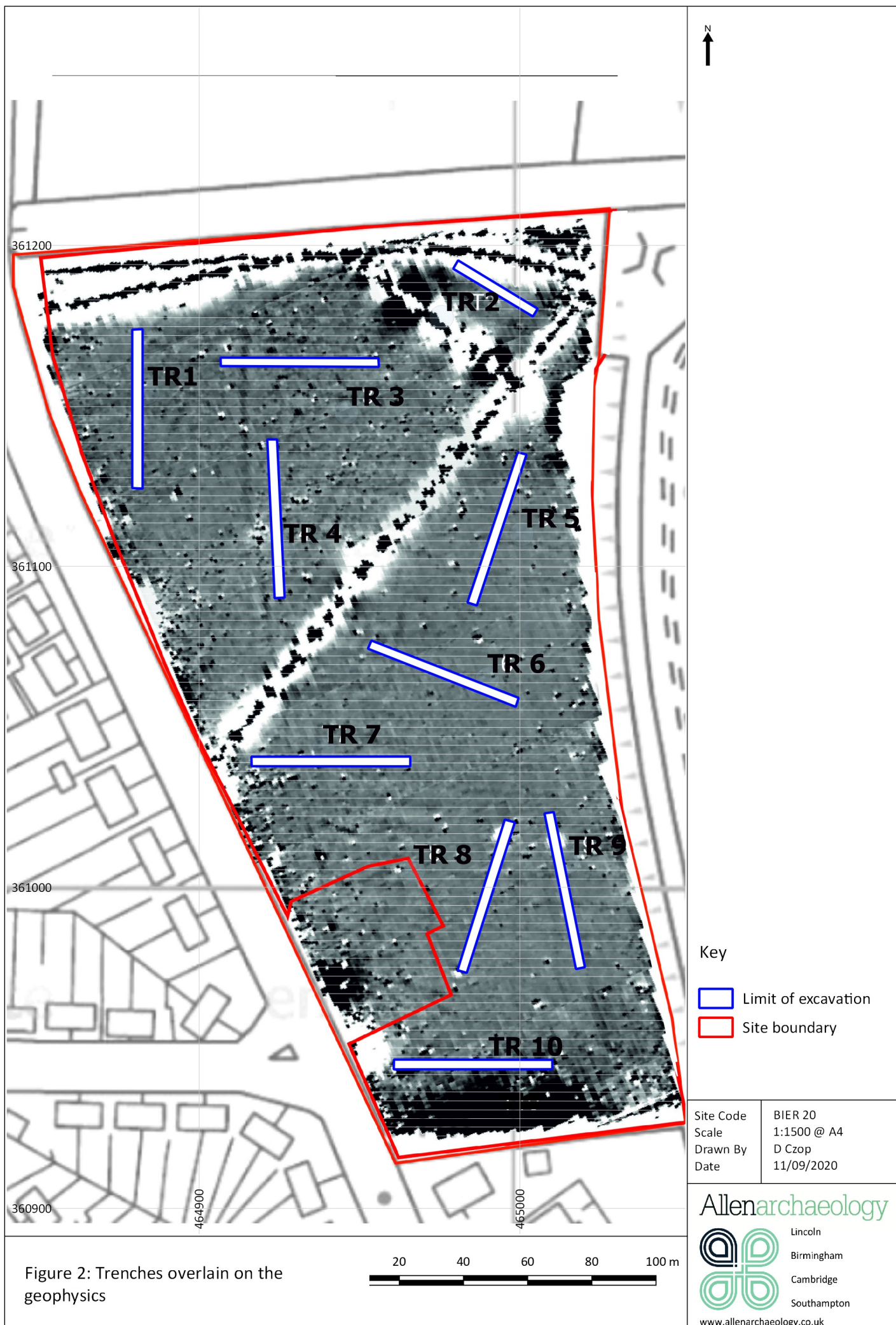


Figure 2: Trenches overlain on the geophysics

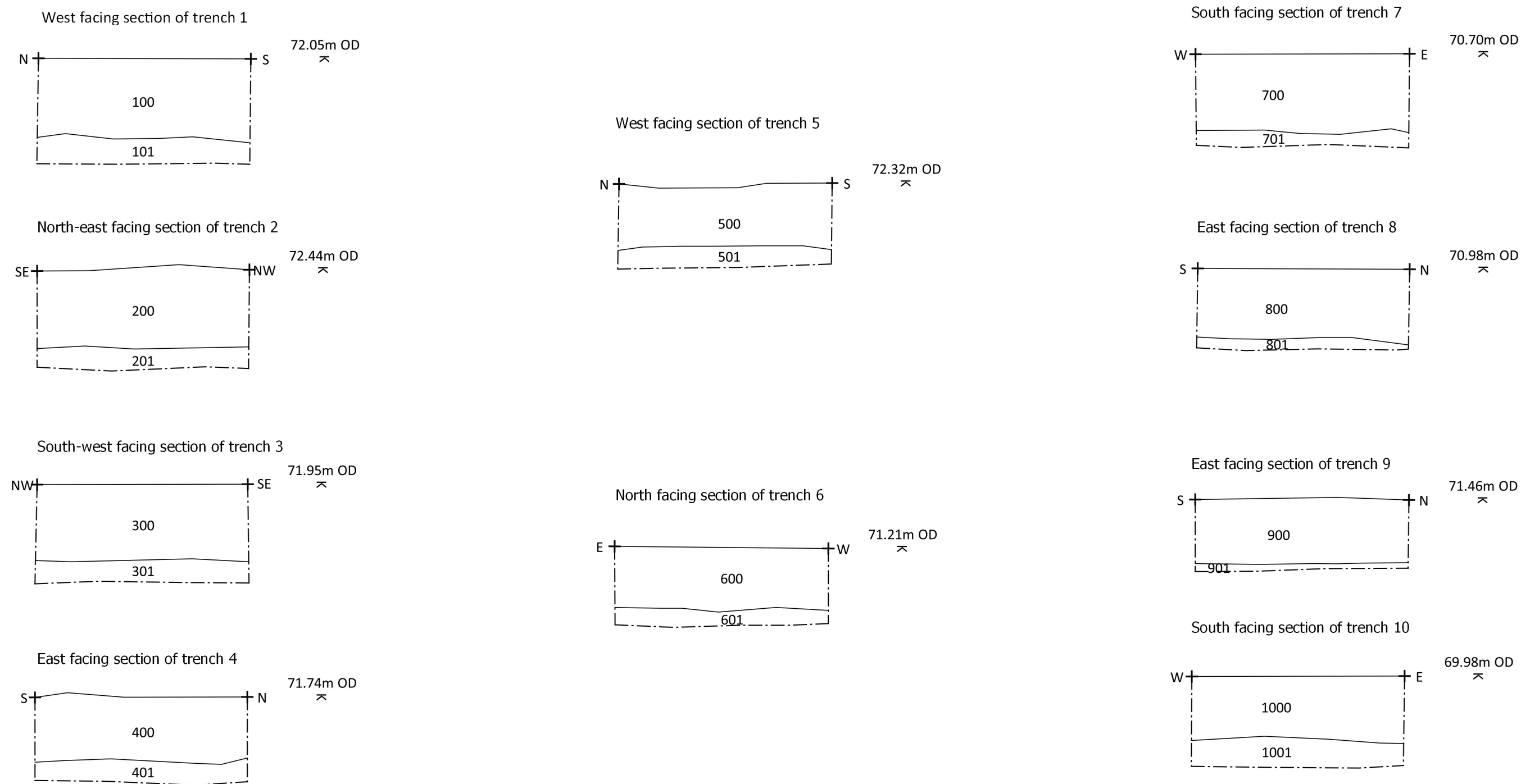


Figure 3: Representative sections in trenches



Allen Archaeology Limited
www.allenarchaeology.co.uk

Company Registered in England and Wales No: 6935529

Lincoln

Whisby Lodge
Hillcroft Business Park
Whisby Road
Lincoln
LN6 3QL

T: +44 (0) 1522 685356
E: info@allenarchaeology.co.uk

West

Arion Business Centre
Harriet House
118 High Street
Birmingham
B23 6BG

T: +44 (0) 800 610 2545
E: birmingham@allenarchaeology.co.uk

Northeast

1 Heathfield
Chester-le-Street
County Durham
DH2 2XN

T: +44 (0) 7710 099045
E: northeast@allenarchaeology.co.uk

East

Wellington House
East Road
Cambridge
CB1 1BH

T: +44 (0) 800 610 2550
E: cambridge@allenarchaeology.co.uk

Northwest

44 Little Lane
Longridge
Preston
PR3 3WS

T: +44 (0) 7710 099052
E: northwest@allenarchaeology.co.uk

South

International House
Southampton International Business Park
George Curl Way
Southampton
SO18 2RZ

T: +44 (0) 800 610 2555
E: southampton@allenarchaeology.co.uk