Colchester Archaeological Trust

Written scheme of investigation
for an evaluation by trial-trenching on
land north of Clacton Road, Elmstead Market, Essex,
CO7 7FD

November 2022

CAT project ref.: 2022/10b
ECC code: tbc

Written scheme of investigation for an evaluation by trial-trenching on land north of Clacton Road, Elmstead Market, Essex.

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NGR: TM 07300 23885

Planning district.: Tendring
Planning ref.: pre-application

CAT project ref.: 2022/10b

ECC code: tbc
ECC monitor: Teresa O'Connor
OASIS id: colchest3-510549

WSI prepared by: Emma Holloway
Figures by: Chris Lister

commissioned by: Christopher Board (ABC Planning)
on behalf of: Lanswood Limited

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Issued:	03/11/2022	

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Site location and description

The proposed development site is a field located to the south-east of Elmstead Market on the northern side of Clacton Road (A133), opposite the current Lanswood Park Business Centre (Fig 1). The site is centred on national Grid Reference (NGR) TM 07300 23885. The 8.1 hectare plot is currently an area of undeveloped agricultural farmland.

Proposed work

The proposed development comprises of mixed commercial and residential use. The southern half will include an educational farm facility for Market Field School, an area of supported living accommodation and three commercial units. The northern half will involve enabled residential housing. All areas will include associated access, landscaping and parking.

Archaeological background

The following archaeological background includes extracts of the CAT Report 1575 and the Essex Historic Environment Records (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex (accessed via http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk).

The site lies within the south-western edge of the Tendring plateau, a high, flat area, largely characterised by large areas of former heathland (Medlycott 2008, 82). Bedrock geology for the site is Thames Group, clay silt and sand, with superficial deposits of cover sand (clay, silt and sand) to the north of the site and Kesgrave catchment subgroup (sand and gravel) over the centre and southern area of the site[1].

The Tendring plateau, is an area dominated by cropmarks. When excavated, these cropmark sites generally reveal multi-period occupation centred on the prehistoric and Romano-British periods.

The site is located within an area of cropmarks known as 'south of Bottles Hall' (EHER 17573). Figure 2 shows the interpretation of features recorded on the rectified cropmarks, which, include numerous field boundaries, ditches, pits, quarry pits, a road/trackway and a possible circular enclosure.

Land opposite, on the southern side of Clacton Road, also has substantial cropmarks that are likely part of the same complex as the current site (EHER 2593). CAT evaluated the Lanswood Park site in 2020. A cropmark of a trackway aligned towards the village of Elmstead Market was found and Iron Age pottery was retrieved from it. A ring-ditch was also identified during the evaluation, and other features on the site relating to cropmarks contained dating evidence ranging from the prehistoric to the post-medieval period.

A further excavation phase was carried out on the northern corner of the site (CAT Report 1575). A small scattering of prehistoric flints which indicated a passing activity in the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods was recorded. Other prehistoric evidence included a group of fifty-one cuts (from the uprooting of wooden posts) arranged in two or three overlapping oval patterns, of which nineteen contained Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age pottery. The beginning of a sustained period of activity belongs to the 1st century AD, when a Late Iron Age/early Roman enclosure was laid out, initially containing two unurned cremation burials. Although a small number of features can be dated to this 1st century phase, the later first and early second century saw a massive increase in activity (continuing into the third century), with the laying out of an enclosure (half of which lay within the excavated area), approached by at least four trackways or droveways. A significant element of the site was a Roman timber well.

What was difficult to interpret is the large volume of Roman pottery (55 kg). This is surely indicative of a settlement in the immediate vicinity. Likewise, the large group of Roman brick and tile (53 kg) must indicate the presence of a nearby Roman masonry structure with a tiled

[1] British Geological Survey – https://geologyviewer.bgs.ac.uk/

roof and a hypocaust. It may be concluded that the excavated site was a farmyard belonging to an adjacent and substantial Roman-period structure with a tiled roof and a hypocaust, most likely to be of 1st century date and associated with the early enclosure and cremation burials mentioned above. The pottery found on the excavated site was presumably used by the inhabitants of this building and then dumped as waste in the adjacent farmyard. Significantly, the fact that brick, roof tile and flue-tile fragments from the building found their way into the farmyard ditches must imply that the building was demolished or at least remodelled during the lifetime of the farm.

Project background

The project is currently at pre-application stage. However, as the site lies within an area highlighted by the EHER as having a high potential for archaeological remains the Essex County Council Historic Environment Advisor (ECCHEA) was approached for advice. It was advised that a programme of archaeological investigation in the form of a trenched evaluation would be recommended as a condition for any planning application submitted to Tendring District Council, in line with the guidance given in the National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 2021).

Requirement for work (Figs 2-3)

The archaeological work will consist of an archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching. No brief was provided for this project, but the ECCHEA recommended trial-trenching comprising of a 4% of the site, with an additional 1% held in reserve.

CAT proposes the evaluation to comprise of 59 linear trenches covering the site in a linear array, except for specific trenches rotated to target the rectified cropmarks. All trenches will measure 30m long, by 1.8m wide, except T45 and T48 that are 45m long by 1.8m wide. This equates to 1,800m of trenching covering an area of 3,240m^2.

The initial work will comprise of the trial-trenching which will be followed by a site meeting with the ECCHEA. Further archaeological work may be required. This will be decided by the ECCHEA on completion of the trial-trenching and report.

Specific project aims

- To determine the presence or absence of archaeological deposits or remains associated with the cropmarks and in areas where cropmarks have not been identified.
- To record the character, date and state of preservation of any archaeological remains on site.

General methodology

All work carried out by CAT will be in accordance with:

- Professional standards of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, including its *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2014a-c)
- East of England Standards and Frameworks published by East Anglian Archaeology (Gurney 2003, Medlycott 2011) and the recent review updates on https://researchframeworks.org/eoe/
- Relevant Health & Safety guidelines and requirements (CAT 2022)
- Project advice given by the ECC Historic Environment Advisor

Professional CAT field archaeologists will undertake all specified archaeological work, for which they will be suitably experienced and qualified.

Notification of the supervisor/project manager's name and the start date for the project will be provided to the ECCHEA one week before start of work.

Unless it is the responsibility of other site contractors, CAT will study mains service locations and avoid damage to these.

At the start of the project (when the WSI is written) an OASIS online record http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/ will be initiated and key fields completed (Activity type, Location and Reviewers/Admin areas). At the end of the project all parts of the OASIS online form will be completed for submission to the EHER. This will include an uploaded .PDF version of the entire report.

A project or site code will be sought from the ECCHEA and/or the curating museum, as appropriate to the project. This code will be used to identify the project archive when it is deposited at the curating museum.

Staffing

The number of field staff for this project is estimated as follows: One CAT project officer and five archaeologists for seventeen days.

In charge of day-to-day site work: Nigel Rayner

Evaluation methodology

Where appropriate, modern overburden and any topsoil stripping/levelling will be performed using a mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket under the supervision and to the satisfaction of a professional archaeologist. If no archaeologically significant deposits are exposed, machine excavation will continue until natural geology is reached.

Where necessary, areas will be cleaned by hand to ensure the visibility of archaeological deposits.

If archaeological features or deposits are uncovered time will be allowed for these to be excavated, planned and recorded.

There will be sufficient excavation to give clear evidence for the period, depth and nature of any archaeological deposit. All features or deposits will be excavated by hand. This includes a 50% sample of discrete features (pits, etc), at least 10% of linear features (ditches, etc) in 1m wide sections, and 100% of complex structures/features. Complex archaeological structures such as walls, kilns or ovens will be carefully cleaned, planned and fully recorded, but where possible left *in situ*. Only if it can be demonstrated that the complex structure/ feature is likely to be destroyed by groundworks, and only then after discussion with the ECCHEA, will it be removed.

Fast hand-excavation techniques involving (for instance) picks, forks and mattocks will not be used on complex stratigraphy.

The depth and nature of colluvial or other masking deposits will be established. Therefore, a sondage will be excavated in each trench to test the stratigraphy of the site. This will occur in every trench unless it can be demonstrated that a feature excavated within a particular trench has clearly penetrated into the natural geology.

A representative section will be drawn of each trench, to include ground level, the depth of machining within the trench and the depth of any sondages.

Trained CAT staff will use a metal detector to scan all trenches both before and during excavation. All spoil heaps will also be scanned and finds recovered.

Individual records of excavated contexts, layers, features or deposits will be entered on proforma record sheets. Registers will be compiled of finds, small finds and soil samples.

All features and layers or other significant deposits will be planned, and their profiles or sections recorded. The normal scale will be site plans at 1:20 and sections at 1:10, unless circumstances indicate that other scales would be appropriate.

The photographic record will consist of general site shots, and shots of all archaeological features and deposits. A photographic scale (including north arrow) shall be included in the case of detailed photographs. A photographic register will accompany the photographic record. This will detail as a minimum feature number, location, and direction of shot.

The trenches will not be backfilled until they have been signed off by the ECCHEA.

Site surveying

The evaluation trenches and any features will be surveyed by Total Station or GPS, unless the particulars of the features indicate that manual planning techniques should be employed. Normal scale for archaeological site plans and sections is 1:20 and 1:10 respectively, unless circumstances indicate that other scales would be more appropriate.

The site grid will be tied into the National Grid. Corners of excavation areas will be located by NGR coordinates.

Environmental sampling policy

The number and range of samples collected will be adequate to determine the potential of the site, with particular focus on palaeoenvironmental remains including both biological remains (e.g. plants, small vertebrates) and small sized artefacts (e.g. smithing debris), and to provide information for sampling strategies on any future excavation. Samples will be collected for potential micromorphical and other pedological sedimentological analysis. Environmental bulk samples will be 40 litres in size (assuming context is large enough).

Sampling strategies will address questions of:

- The range of preservation types (charred, mineral-replaced, waterlogged), and their quality.
- Concentrations of macro-remains.
- Differences in remains from undated and dated features.
- Variation between different feature types and areas of site.

CAT has an arrangement with Val Fryer / Lisa Gray whereby any potentially rich environmental layers or features will be appropriately sampled as a matter of course. Trained CAT staff will process the samples and the flots will be sent to Val Fryer or Lisa Gray for analysis and reporting.

Should any complex, or otherwise outstanding deposits be encountered, VF or LG will be asked onto site to advise. Waterlogged ‘organic’ features will always be sampled. In all cases, the advice of VF/LG and/or the Historic England Regional Advisor in Archaeological Science (East of England) on sampling strategies for complex or waterlogged deposits will be followed, including the taking of monolith samples.

Human remains

CAT follows the policy of leaving human remains *in situ* unless there is a clear indication that the remains are in danger of being compromised as a result of their exposure or unless advised to do so by the project osteologist or the ECCHEA. If circumstances indicated it were prudent or necessary to remove remains from the site during the evaluation, the following criteria would be applied; if it is clear from their position, context, depth, or other factors that the remains are ancient, then normal procedure is to apply to the Department of Justice for a

licence to remove them and seek advice from the project osteologist. Following Historic England guidance (2018) if the human remains are not to be lifted, the project osteologist should be available to record the human remain *in situ* (i.e. a site visit). Conditions laid down by the DoJ license will be followed. If it seems that the remains are not ancient, then the coroner, the client, and the ECCHEA will be informed, and any advice and/or instruction from the coroner will be followed.

Photographic record

Will include both general and feature-specific photographs, the latter with scale and north arrow. A photographic register giving context number, details, and direction of shot will be prepared on site, and included in the site archive.

Finds

All significant finds will be retained.

All finds, where appropriate, will be washed and marked with site code and context number.

Most of our finds reports are written internally by CAT staff under the supervision and direction of Philip Crummy (Director) and Laura Pooley (Post-excavation Manager). This includes specialist subjects such as:

ceramic finds (pottery and ceramic building material): Matthew Loughton
animal bones: Alec Wade (or Adam Wightman/Pip Parmenter - small groups only)
small finds, metalwork, coins, etc: Laura Pooley
non-ceramic bulk finds: Laura Pooley
flint: Adam Wightman
environmental processing: Bronagh Quinn
osteology: (human remains): Megan Seehra

or to outside specialists:
animal and human bone: Julie Curl (*Sylvanus*)
environmental assessment and analysis: Val Fryer / Lisa Gray
archaeometallurgy: David Dungworth
radiocarbon dating: SUERC Radiocarbon Dating Laboratory, Glasgow
conservation/x-ray: Laura Ratcliffe (LR Conservation) / Norfolk Museums Service, Conservation and Design Services

Other specialists whose opinion can be sought on large or complex groups include:
flint: Tom Lawrence
prehistoric pottery: Stephen Benfield / Nigel Brown / Paul Sealey
Roman pottery: Stephen Benfield / Paul Sealey / Jo Mills / Gwladys Monteil
Roman brick/tile: Ian Betts
Roman glass: Hilary Cool
small finds: Nina Crummy
other: EH Regional Adviser in Archaeological Science (East of England).

All finds of potential treasure will be removed to a safe place, and the coroner informed immediately, in accordance with the rules of the Treasure Act 1996. The definition of treasure is given in pages 3-5 of the Code of Practice of the above act. This refers primarily to gold or silver objects.

Requirements for conservation and storage of finds will be agreed with the appropriate museum prior to the start of work, and confirmed to the ECCHEA.

A contingency will be made in the budget for scientific assessment/analysis if suitable deposits are identified. This can include soil micromorphological and geochemical analysis of floors and dark earth deposits and/or absolute dating (such as archaeomagnetic and radiocarbon). The Historic England Regional Science Advisor will be consulted for advice.

Post-excavation assessment

An updated post-excavation assessment will be submitted within 2 months or at an alternatively agreed time with the ECCHEA.

Where archaeological results do not warrant a post-excavation assessment then agreement will be sought from the ECCHEA to proceed straight to grey literature / publication.

Results

Notification will be given to ECCHEA when the fieldwork has been completed.

An appropriate archive will be prepared to minimum acceptable standards outlined in *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (Historic England 2015).

The report will be submitted within 6 months of the end of fieldwork, with a copy supplied to the Historic Environment Advisor as a single PDF.

The report will contain:

- Location plan of trenches in relation to the proposed development. At least two corners of each excavated area will be given a 10 figure grid reference.
- Section/s drawings showing depth of deposits from present ground level with Ordnance Datum, vertical and horizontal scale.
- Archaeological methodology and detailed results including a suitable conclusion and discussion.
- Appropriate discussion and results section assessing the site in relation to the Regional Research Frameworks (Brown and Glazebrook 2000, Medlycott 2011. https://researchframeworks.org/eoe/).
- All specialist reports or assessments
- A concise non-technical summary of the project results.

An OASIS summary sheet will be completed at the end of the project and supplied to the ECCHEA. This will be completed in digital form with a paper copy included with the archive. A copy (with trench plan) will also be emailed to the Hon. Editor of the Essex Archaeology and History Journal for inclusion in the annual round-up of projects (paul.gilman@me.com).

Publication of the results at least a summary level (i.e. round-up in *Essex Archaeology & History*) shall be undertaken in the year following the archaeological fieldwork. An allowance will be made in the project costs for the report to be published in an adequately peer reviewed journal or monograph series.

A PDF copy of the full report will be uploaded by CAT to the OASIS website and the Colchester Archaeological Trust's Online Report Library (http://cat.essex.ac.uk/), both of which are publicly accessible.

Archive deposition

The requirements for archive storage shall be agreed with the Curating museum.

If finds are retained from the site the full archive will be deposited with Colchester Museum unless otherwise agreed in advance. (A full copy of the archive shall in any case be deposited). If there are no finds a full digital archive will be deposited with ADS Archaeology.

By accepting this WSI, the client agrees to deposit the archive, including all artefacts, at Colchester & Ipswich Museum.

The requirements for archive storage will be agreed with the curating museum.

If the finds are to remain with the landowner, a full copy of the archive will be housed with the curating museum and provision must be made for additional recording (e.g. photography, illustration and analysis) as appropriate.

The digital archive resulting from the work will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (www.archaeologydataservice.ac.uk) to safeguard the long-term curation of the digital records. The ECCHEA will be notified when the digital archive has been deposited. Prior to deposition CAT's data management plan (based on the official guidelines from the Digital Curation Centre [DCC 2013]) will ensure the integrity of the digital archive. A summary of the contents of the archives shall be supplied to the ECCHEA at the time of their deposition.

The ECCHEA will be notified when the digital archive has been deposited.

Monitoring

ECCHEA will be responsible for monitoring progress and standards throughout the project, and will be kept regularly informed during fieldwork, post-excavation and publication stages.

Notification of the start of work will be given ECCHEA one week in advance of its commencement.

Any variations in this WSI will be agreed with ECCHEA prior to them being carried out.

ECCHEA will be notified when the fieldwork is complete.

The involvement of ECCHEA shall be acknowledged in any report or publication generated by this project.

Public outreach

As part of CAT's public outreach programme, CAT is committed to engaging our local community with their archaeological resource. Among other activities, CAT regularly invites volunteers to engage in finds processing tasks at our office, such as washing, marking, sorting and packing bulk archaeological finds from commercial archaeological projects. Our volunteer programme is not designed to replace the work of paid archaeologists but to compliment it, and to provide greater public benefit by means of community engagement and participation.

CAT volunteers are fully trained in all tasks they are engaged in and are fully supervised by a CAT employee at all times. Finds processing volunteers are managed and supervised by a Senior Post-Excavation Assistant, whose role is to ensure that all volunteer processing is carried out to the highest possible standard and within professional guidelines. This is overseen by the Post-Excavation Manager and Director.

CAT will never use volunteers in place of employees when funding is agreed for the latter, or if doing so would disadvantageously affect the timetable of works agreed between CAT and our clients.

CAT's liability insurance policies cover the activities of volunteers and liability towards them. All activities are carried out according to CAT's 'Volunteer and work experience policy' and 'Outreach, public relations and publicity policy'.

Events, activities and social media

In addition, the CAT website (www.thecolchesterarchaeologist.co.uk) and social media sites are updated regularly with information on our events and activities, with copies of our archaeological reports freely available at http://cat.essex.ac.uk/. Staff regularly give talks/lectures to groups, societies and schools, information on which (including any fees) is

available by contacting the office on 01206 501785. CAT also works in partnership with both the Colchester Archaeological Group and Young Archaeologists Club providing venues for their meetings, advice and assistance.

References

Note: all CAT reports, except for DBAs, are available online in PDF format at http://cat.essex.ac.uk

Brown, N & Glazebrook, J	2000	*Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 2. Research agenda and strategy.* East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 8 (EAA **8**)
CAT Report 1094	2017	*Archaeological evaluation at Blue Barn Farm, Elmstead Market, Essex, April 2014,* by L Pooley
CAT Report 1209	2018	*Archaeological evaluation at Blue Barn Farm (Phase 2, Plots 6 and 7), Clacton Road, Elmstead Market, Essex, CO7 7DF December 2017,* by E Holloway
CAT Report 1575	2022	*A prehistoric ring-ditch and Roman landscape: Evaluation and excavation at Lanswood Park, Clacton Road, Elmstead Market, Essex, June-July 2020 and March-June 2021,* by H Brooks
CAT	2022	*Health & Safety Policy*
CIfA	2014a	*Standard and Guidance for archaeological evaluation.* Revised October 2020
CIfA	2014b	*Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials.* Revised October 2020
CIfA	2014c	*Code of Conduct.* Revised October 2022
Digital Curation Centre (DCC)	2013	*Checklist for Data Management Plan v. 4.0*
Gurney, D	2003	*Standards for field archaeology in the East of England.* East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA **14**).
Historic England	2015	*Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)*
Historic England	2018	*The Role of the Human Osteologist in an Archaeological Fieldwork Project*. By S Mays, M Brickley & J Sidell
Medlycott, M	2008	*Tendring District Historic Environment Characterisation Project.* Essex County Council Historic Environment Team.
Medlycott, M	2011	*Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 24 (EAA **24**)
MHCLG	2021	*National Planning Policy Framework.* Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

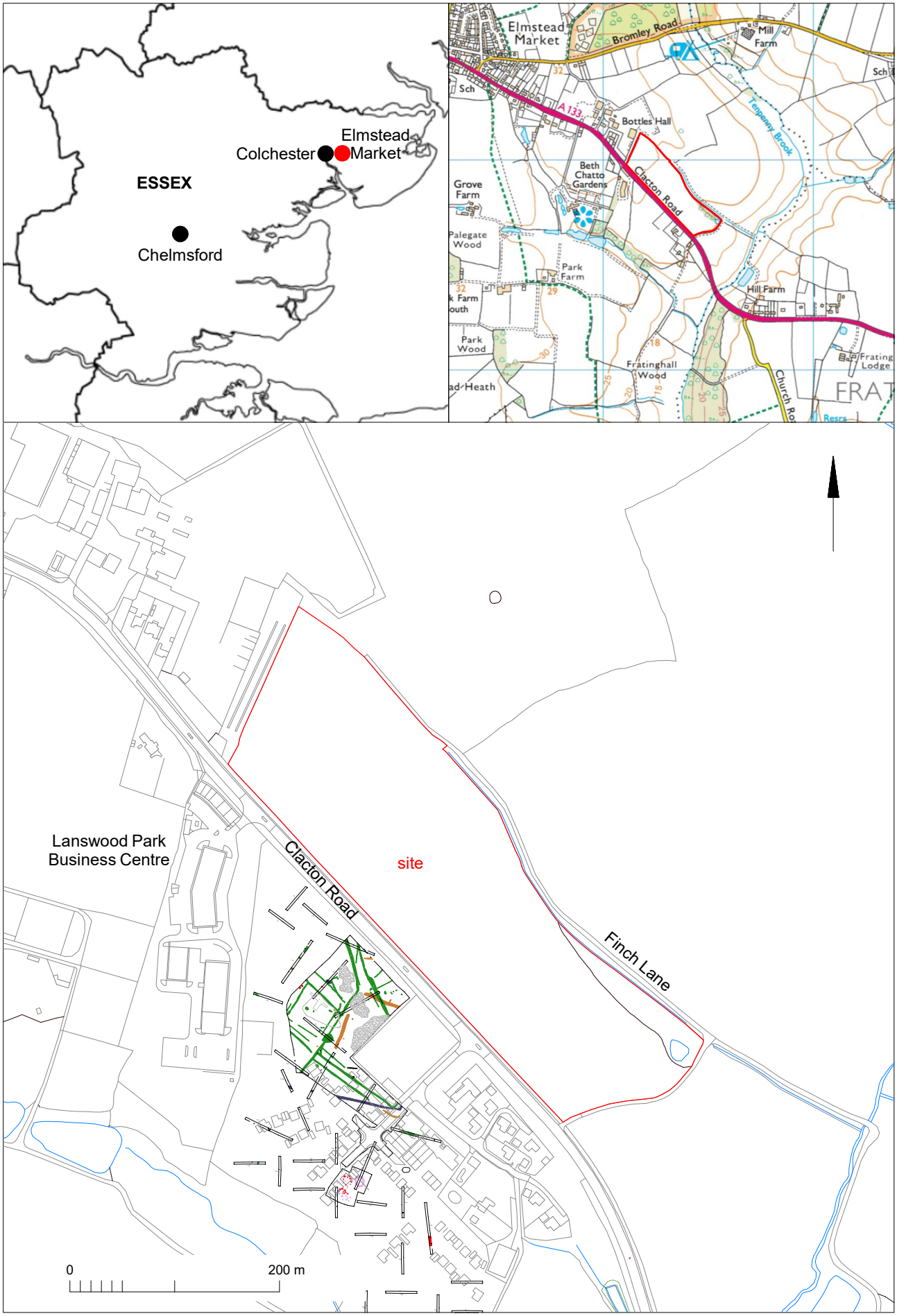

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Fig 1 Site location, showing 2020 evaluation trenches and 2021 excavations undertaken to the south of the proposed development.

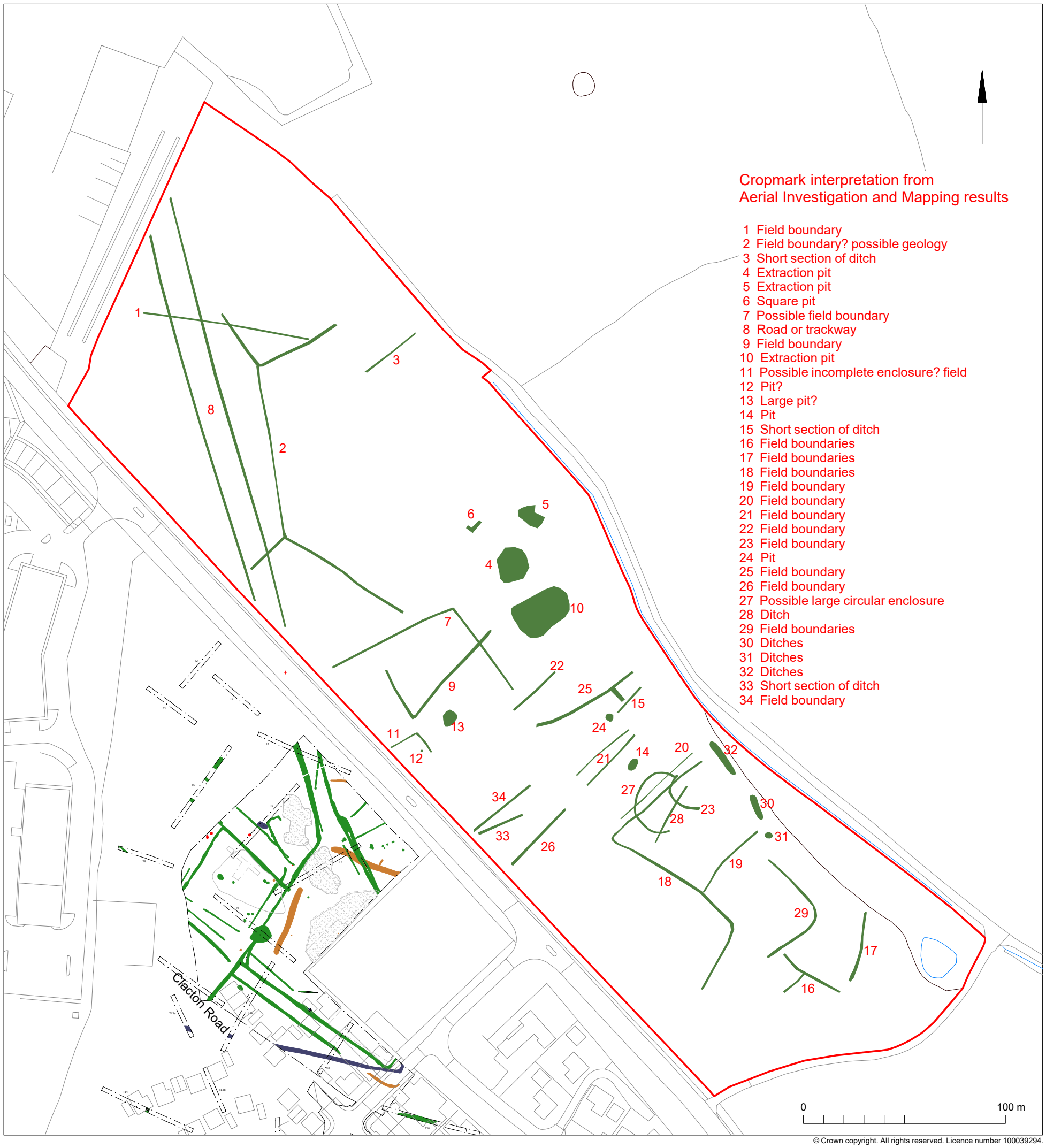

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Fig 2 Rectified cropmarks within the proposed development area.

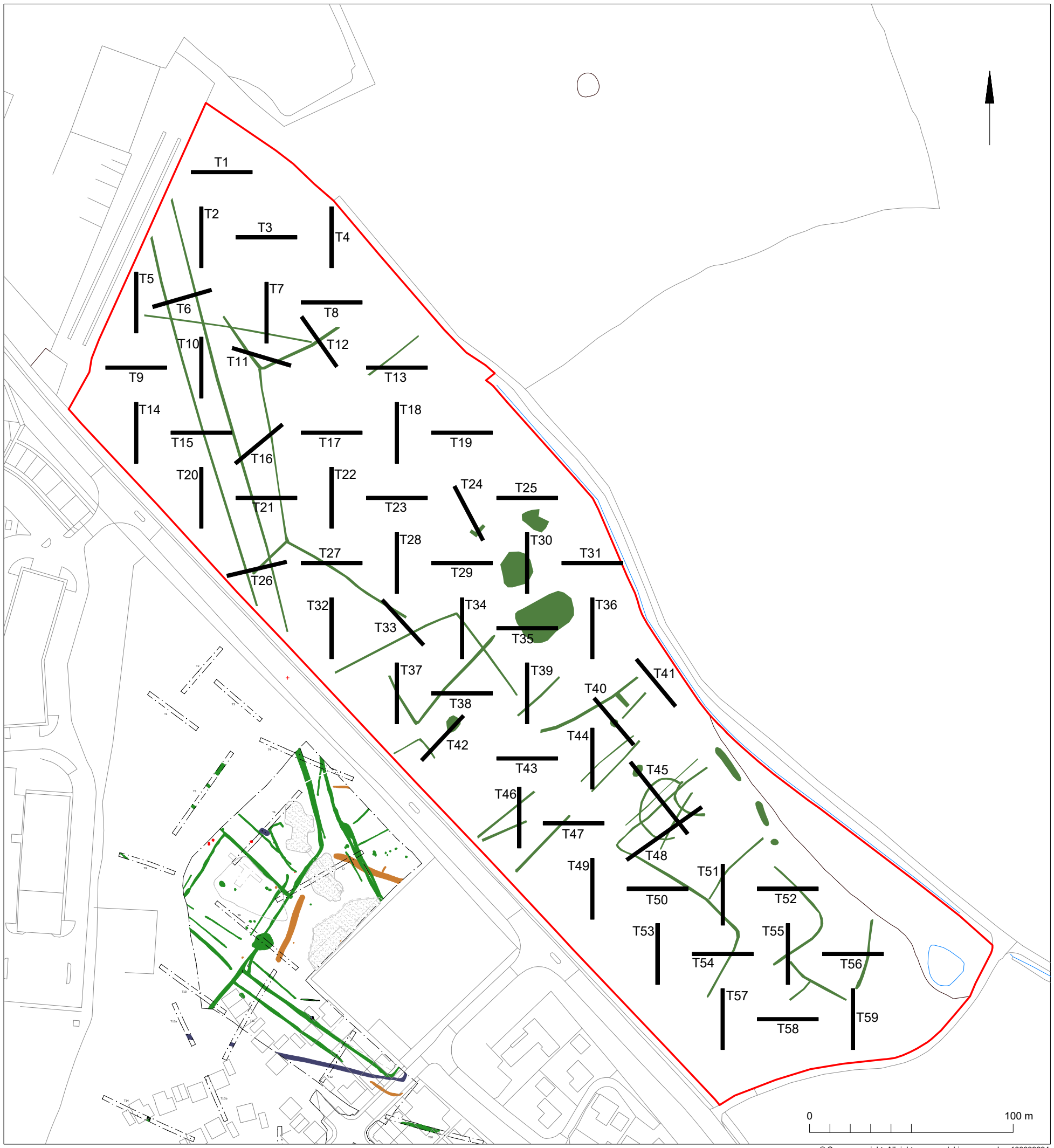

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Fig 3 Proposed trench plan.