

# Archaeological evaluation on land at Temple Lane (northern parcel), Silver End, Essex

June 2021



**by Emma Holloway**

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**commissioned by Peter Vellet (ADAS)  
on behalf of RSK ADAS Ltd**

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**CAT Report 1690**  
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OASIS summary sheet

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## 1 Summary

*An archaeological evaluation (twenty four linear trial-trenches) was carried out at Temple Lane, Silver End, in advance of a planning application. The site is close to ring-shaped cropmarks and the Environment Agency national lidar survey had recorded possible features within the site. Twenty-nine features were uncovered: two small pits, four large pits and a ditch all post-medieval-to-modern in date, an undated ditch and twenty-one natural features.*

## 2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the report for an archaeological evaluation on land at Temple Lane (northern parcel), Silver End, Essex which was carried out between 21st and 29th June 2021. The work was commissioned by Peter Velleth on behalf of RSK ADAS Ltd, and was undertaken by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT). The proposed development is an 18.41 hectare area to the west of Silver End. The current site is a 3.73 hectare plot of land within the development, known as the northern parcel, and is comprised of a single agricultural field.

In response to consultation with Essex County Council Place Services (ECCPS), Historic Environment Advisor Teresa O'Connor advised that in order to establish the archaeological implications of this site prior to planning application, the applicant should be required to commission a scheme of archaeological investigation in accordance with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (MHCLG 2019).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with pre-application advice from Teresa O'Connor (ECCHEA), and a written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by ADAS in response to the advice and agreed with ECCPS (ADAS 2021c).

All fieldwork and reporting was done in accordance with *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (Historic England 2015), and with *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England* (EAA 14 and 24). This report mirrors standards and practices contained in the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (ClfA 2014a).

## 3 Archaeological background

The following archaeological includes extracts of the WSI by ADAS (2021c), and data from the Essex Historic Environment Records (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex (accessed via <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk>).

For a full background see the Desk-Based Assessment and Heritage Statement for the site (ADAS 2021a and ADAS 2021b).

In summary the EHER records 138 heritage assets within 1 km of the proposed development. Thirty-six are represented by Scheduled Monument Crossing Temple Barn (EHER 6012), two Grade I Listed buildings (The Barley Barn, 40m northwest of Crossing Temple Farmhouse, EHER 29996) and Wheat Barn 36m northeast of Crossing Temple Farmhouse EHER 29997) and 33 Grade II Listed Buildings recorded by Historic England. The closest Grade II Listed building is the Barn 30m North of Cresley's Farmhouse (EHER 29976). The remaining heritage assets represent archaeological remains indicative of Prehistoric funerary monuments and settlement and agrarian land-use from the Prehistoric through to the Modern period (ADAS, 2021a). The site borders the Silver End Conservation Area.

There is one heritage asset recorded by the EHER within the proposed larger development area (EHER 14099). This asset relates one whole and one partial ring-shaped cropmark of unknown date. Given the presence of later Prehistoric settlement in the vicinity of the proposed development, it is possible that these ring-shaped cropmarks represent the ring ditches of round barrows or perhaps roundhouses. Neither of the cropmarks are located within the current Site and will not be investigated as part of the trial trenching evaluation of the northern parcel of the proposed development area (ADAS, 2021a).

Several LiDAR anomalies were identified within the Site and possibly represent a series of previously unidentified archaeological features. Their date and function is presently uncertain, although it is possible they represent a mixture of Prehistoric settlement and funerary monuments. The three large sub-circular features observed along the north-western edge of the Site could also represent bomb craters given the relative proximity of Rivenhall airfield (EHER 14183) to the north-east of the proposed development (ADAS, 2021a).

DEFRA records historic land-filling across the Site, although historic mapping from the mid-20th century indicates this was on a much smaller scale and outside of the Site boundary (ADAS, 2021a).

#### 4 Aim

The aim of the archaeological evaluation was to record the extent of any surviving archaeological deposits, and to assess the archaeological potential of the site to allow the ECCHEA to determine if further investigation is required.

#### 5 Results (Figs 2-6)

Twenty-four linear trial-trenches were machine-excavated under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist. All trenches were 30m long and 1.8m wide. In all trenches two layers were recorded: modern ploughsoil (L1, c 0.24-0.51m) which sealed natural (L2).

No features were recorded in ten of the trenches (T1-T3, T5, T7, T9, T11, T15, T22 and T23).

Archaeological features were rare. These include four large fairly shallow pits: F1 (T21, 8.08m long, 0.2m deep and extends beyond the trench), F4 (T20, 11.11m long, 0.38m deep and extends beyond trench edges), F15 (covers 8.5m of T18, continuing into the baulk on three sides, 0.28m deep) and F26 (T4, 7.03m wide, 0.32m deep and extends beyond the trench edges). Small fragments of brick, peg-tile and an iron nail suggest these features are post-medieval to modern in date. F6, a possible ditch or elongated pit (T10, 0.11m deep, 1.64m wide and crosses the trench) contained some brick flecking in the fill but no retrievable finds. F22 is a shallow pit that contained flecks of charcoal and small fragments of cbm (0.92m long, 0.26m deep and extends into the baulk). North-south aligned feature F27 is an undated v-shaped ditch (T17, 1.84m wide, 0.67m deep). F29 is a modern ditch which lines up with a land drain plotted on Fig 1. Modern brick and tile fragments were noted in the fill but not retained.



**Photograph 1** F26 section - looking south-southwest



**Photograph 2** Trench 17 showing F27 in the foreground - looking northwest.

The rest of the features recorded are wide shallow natural features of mid-brown silt and clay, mostly with either a flat (see F20 in photograph 4) or a slight v-shaped base (see F25 in Photograph 3 below). Others are shallow sub-rounded silty-clay patches (see F16 in photograph 5).



**Photograph 3** F25 section - looking southeast.



**Photograph 4** Trench 1 with F20 in the foreground - looking northeast



**Photograph 5** F16 section - looking northeast

A large sondage was machined through the southeastern end of T1 and smaller ones were dug in seven other trenches to both confirm that L2 was natural and to investigate areas for features on the LiDAR survey. These features were not present.

## 6 Finds

### 6.1 Ceramic and pottery finds

*by Dr Matthew Loughton*

The evaluation uncovered a modest assemblage of ceramic building material (henceforth CBM) of 28 sherds with a weight of 395g which was recovered from four features (Table 1).

Context	Description	Number	Weight (g)	MSW (g)
F1	Pit	3	115	38
F4	Pit	8	165	21
F22	Pit	16	7	1
F26	Pit	1	108	108
<b>Total</b>		<b>28</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>14</b>

**Table 1** Quantities of CBM by features

The CBM consists of sherds of medieval/post-medieval peg-tile (F1), pan tile (F4) dating from the 17th century AD onwards, and post-medieval/modern brick (F1, pit F26). F22 contained four sherds of baked clay (2g) and 12 CBM crumbs (5g) CBM possibly from peg-tile and Post-Medieval brick.

Table 2 summarizes the dating evidence for the features which date from the 17th to the 19th-20th century.

Context	Feature type	CBM	Overall date
F1	Pit	PT, BR	19th-20th century
F4	Pit	PANT	17th century+
F22	Pit	BC BR? PT?	Post-medieval
F26	Pit	BR	18th-19th century

**Table 2** Approximate dates for the individual features

### 6.2 Other finds

*by Laura Pooley*

An iron nail came from post-medieval pit F4 (finds no.3). It had a rectangular head and rectangular-sectioned shank which tapered to a flat point. The shank was clenched at 45°. Measurements: 76.7mm long, 34.7g.

## 7 Environmental assessment

*by Laura Pooley*

A single sample was taken from pit F22. Twenty litres of soil was processed by CAT using a Siraf-type flotation device, with the flot collected in a 300 micron mesh sieve then dried. The sample produced approximately 25 fragments of charcoal at 0.6g. No other charred plant remains were present and this material has not been sent for further assessment.

## 8 Conclusion

The evaluation at this site revealed sparse archaeological remains. Of the twenty-nine features uncovered only eight are archaeological. Except for undated ditch F26 the other archaeological features are all post-medieval to modern in date and likely agricultural in origin. These may include earlier field boundaries or in the case of the four large pits possibly ponds or dug for clay extraction. The other twenty-one features are natural in origin such as silt channels and deposits.

Although the Environment Agency lidar survey suggested there may be features within the site these areas were fully investigated (including looking in trench sections, sondages and plotted by GPS) and no archaeological features were present. Pits F1, F4 and F15 may possibly relate to areas noted on the survey covering T18, T20 and T21 (hatched blue areas, see Fig 1) but nowhere near as large as plotted on the lidar survey. As an arable field any earthworks would be consistently ploughed and eroded which would leave few, if any, surface traces (Historic England 2018, 31). As there were not archaeological features where lidar anomalies showed, and the ploughsoil is directly on top of the natural, it is likely these are simply undulations in the ploughsoil surface and therefore modern in date.

## 9 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Peter Vellet of RSK ADAS Ltd for commissioning and funding the work. Fieldwork was managed by C Lister and A Wightman and post-excavation by Laura Pooley. Fieldwork was carried out by B Holloway with Z Ekson, E Hicks, R Mathieson, N Pryke, B Quinn, M Seehra, A Smith and S Veasey. Figures are by B Holloway, E Holloway and C Lister. The report writing process was overseen by Philip Crummy, Director of CAT. The project was monitored for ECCPS by Teresa O'Connor.

## 10 References

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

- |                          |       |  |
|--------------------------|-------|--|
| ADAS                     | 2021a | <i>Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment: Land at Temple Lane, Silver End, Braintree</i> . Unpublished Client Document (Document Ref: ART69105-638-01 (00)).                |
| ADAS                     | 2021b | <i>Heritage Statement: Land at Temple Lane, Silver End, Braintree</i> . Unpublished Client Document (Document Ref: ART69105-638-02 (00)).                                  |
| ADAS                     | 2021c | <i>Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Trial Trenching Evaluation, Northern Parcel, Land at Temple Lane, Silver End, Braintree</i> . By N Grant             |
| Brown, N & Glazebrook, J | 2000  | <i>Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 2. Research agenda and strategy</i> . East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper <b>8</b> (EAA <b>8</b> ) |
| CAT                      | 2021  | <i>Health &amp; Safety Policy</i>  |
| ClfA                     | 2014a | <i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>  |
| ClfA                     | 2014b | <i>Code of conduct</i> . Updated 2019  |
| Gurney, D                | 2003  | <i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England</i> . East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers <b>14</b> (EAA <b>14</b> )                                      |
| Historic England         | 2015  | <i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i>  |
| Historic England         | 2018  | <i>Using Airborne Lidar in Archaeological Survey: The Light Fantastic</i> . By S Crutchly and P Crow   |
| Medlycott, M             | 2011  | <i>Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England</i> . East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers <b>24</b> (EAA <b>24</b> )             |
| MHCLG                    | 2019  | <i>National Planning Policy Framework</i> . Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government  |

## 11 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
ClfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	specific location of finds on an archaeological site
ECC	Essex County Council
ECCHEA	Essex County Council Historic Environment Advisor
ECCPS	Essex County Council Place Services
EHHER	Essex Historic Environment Record
feature (F)	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain 'contexts'
layer (L)	distinct or distinguishable deposit (layer) of material
medieval	period from AD 1066 to c 1500
modern	period from c AD 1800 to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
NGR	National Grid Reference
OASIS	Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations, <a href="http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main">http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main</a>
post-medieval	from c AD 1500 to c 1800
Roman	the period from AD 43 to c AD 410
section	(abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
wsj	written scheme of investigation

## 12 Contents of archive

**Finds:** none retained

### **Paper record**

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 1690)

Site trench sheets

Photographic archive thumbnails and log

Brief

WSI

Original and inked section drawings

### **Digital record**

ADAS WSI

Brief

The report (CAT Report 1690)

Site digital photographs, thumbnails and log

Graphic files

Survey data

## 13 Archive deposition

The archive is currently held by the Colchester Archaeological Trust at Roman Circus House, Roman Circus Walk, Colchester, Essex CO2 7GZ, but will be permanently deposited with Braintree Museum under reference SETL21.

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**Distribution list:**

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ECC Place Services Historic Environment Advisor  
Essex Historic Environment Record, Essex County Council



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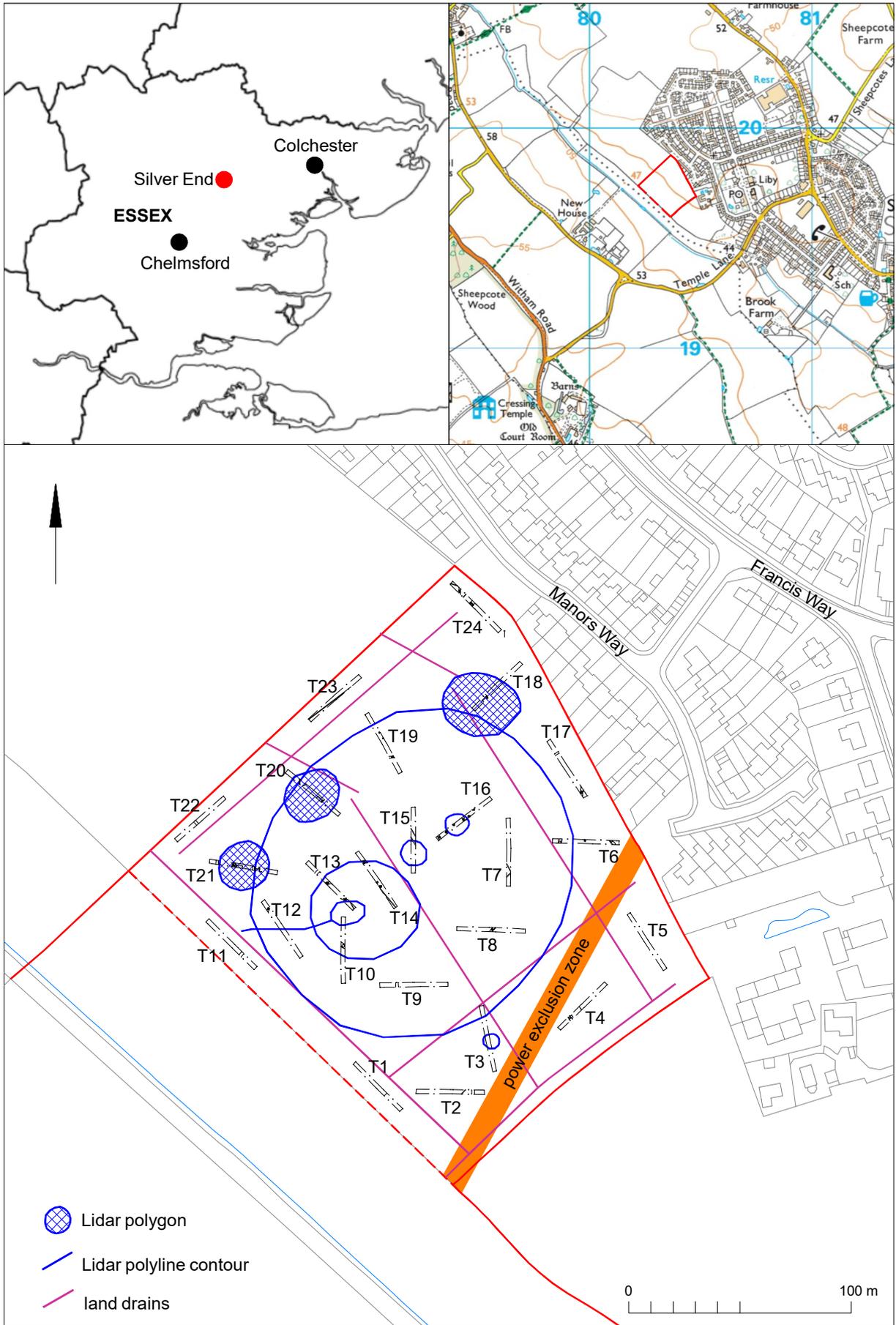
email: [eh@catuk.org](mailto:eh@catuk.org)

Checked by: Philip Crummy  
Date: 20.07.2021

**Appendix 1 Context list**

Context number	Trench number	Finds number or soil sample number (<1>)	Feature type	Soil description	Date
L1	All	-	Ploughsoil	hard moist medium brown clay and inclusions of: stone 1%	Modern
L2	All	-	Natural	hard moist light yellow/brown clay and inclusions of: stone 1%	Post-glacial
F1	T21	1	Pit	hard moist light yellow/brown clay with brick flecks, tile flecks and inclusions of: stone 1%	Modern
F2	T21	-	Natural feature	hard moist medium grey/brown clay and inclusions of: stone 25%	Post-glacial
F3	T21	-	Natural feature	firm moist medium orange/grey/brown sandy silty-clay and inclusions of: stone 25%	Post-glacial
F4	T20	3	Pit	hard dry medium grey/brown silty-clay	Post-medieval to modern
F5	T12	-	Natural feature	firm/hard dry medium grey/brown sandy silty-clay and inclusions of: stone 25%	Post-glacial
F6	T10	-	Ditch/elongated pit	hard dry light orange/brown clay with brick flecks and inclusions of: stone 1%	Post-medieval to modern
F7	T14	-	Natural feature	hard dry light brown clay and inclusions of: stone 1%	Post-glacial
F8	T14	-	Natural feature	hard dry medium orange/brown clay and inclusions of: stone 1%	Post-glacial
F9	T14	-	Natural feature	firm dry medium grey/brown clayey silt	Post-glacial
F10	T13	-	Natural feature	firm/hard dry light grey/brown sandy/silty-clay and inclusions of: stone 10%	Post-glacial
F11	T13	-	Natural feature	firm/hard dry medium orange/grey/brown sandy silty-clay and inclusions of: stone 10%	Post-glacial
F12	T19	-	Natural feature	firm moist medium brown clay	Post-glacial
F13	T19	-	Natural feature	firm moist medium brown clay	Post-glacial
F14	T19	-	Natural feature	firm moist medium brown clay	Post-glacial
F15	T18	-	Pit	firm moist dark grey/brown clay, small brick flecks	Post-medieval to modern
F16	T16	-	Natural feature	hard dry medium orange/grey/brown silty-clay	Post-glacial
F17	T16	-	Natural feature	hard dry medium orange/grey/brown silty-clay and inclusions of: gravel 2%	Post-glacial
F18	T16	-	Natural feature	hard dry medium orange/grey/brown silty-clay	Post-glacial
F19	T16	-	Natural feature	hard dry medium orange/grey/brown silty-clay	Post-glacial
F20	T16	-	Natural feature	hard dry medium orange/grey/brown silty-clay	Post-glacial
F21	T24	-	Natural feature	hard dry medium brown silty-clay	Post-glacial
F22	T16	<1>	Pit	firm/hard medium/dark orange/brown sandy silty clay and inclusions of: stone 10% cbm and charcoal flecks	Post-medieval to modern?
F23	T6	-	Natural feature	firm moist medium brown clay	Post-glacial

Context number	Trench number	Finds number or soil sample number (<1>)	Feature type	Soil description	Date
F24	T6	-	Natural feature	firm moist medium brown clay	Post-glacial
F25	T6	-	Natural feature	hard medium orange/grey/brown silty-clay	Post-glacial
F26	T4	4	Pit	Firm moist mid-brown silty-clay	Post-medieval to modern
F27	17	-	Ditch	firm/hard dry medium orange/grey/brown sandy silty clay and inclusions of: stone 10%	Undated
F28	8	-	Natural feature	firm dry medium orange/brown silty-clay	Post-glacial
F29	24	-	Ditch	firm moist medium brown clay	Modern



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Fig 1 Site location.

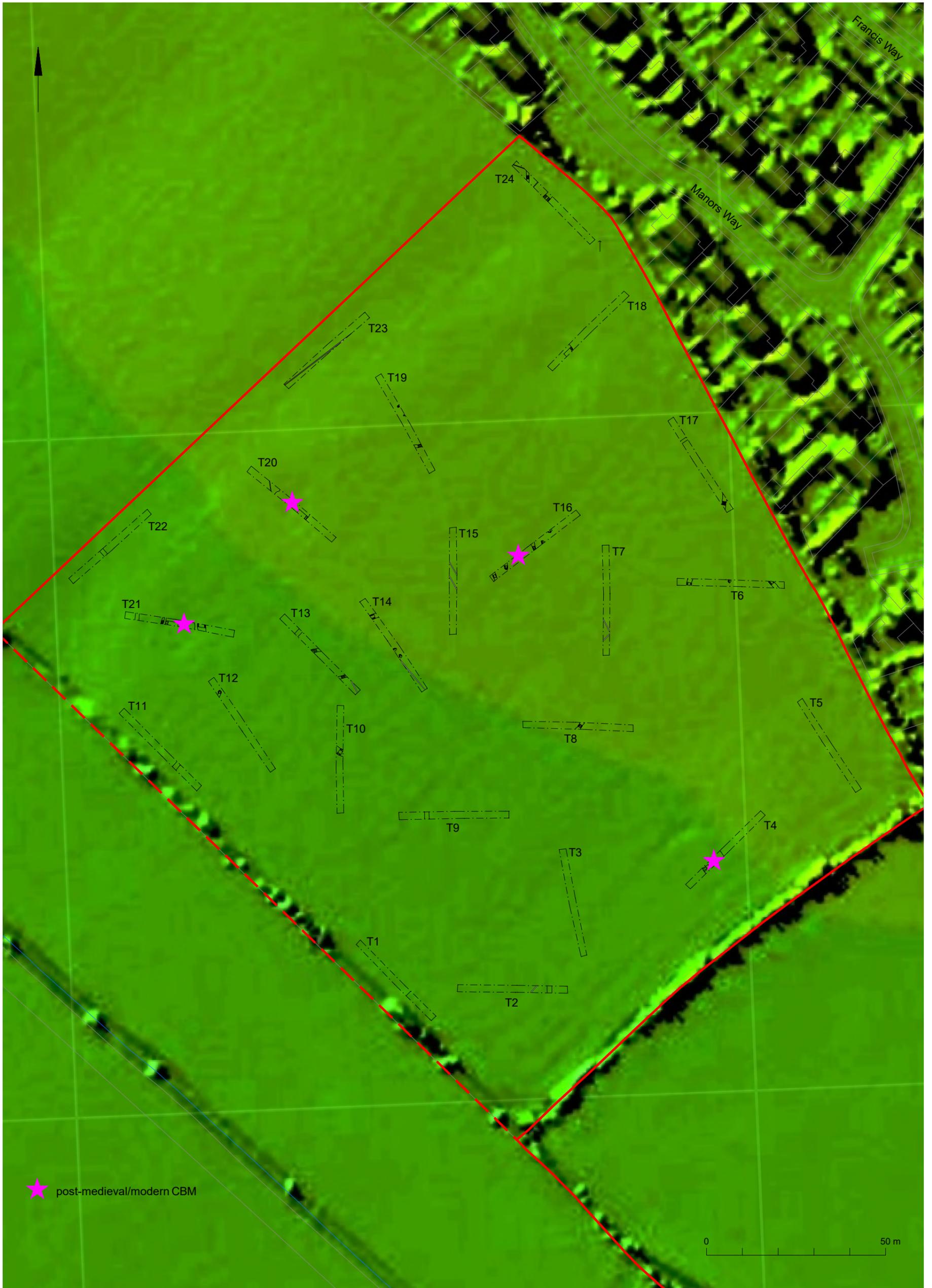


Fig 2 Results in relation to the Environment Agency national lidar survey data.

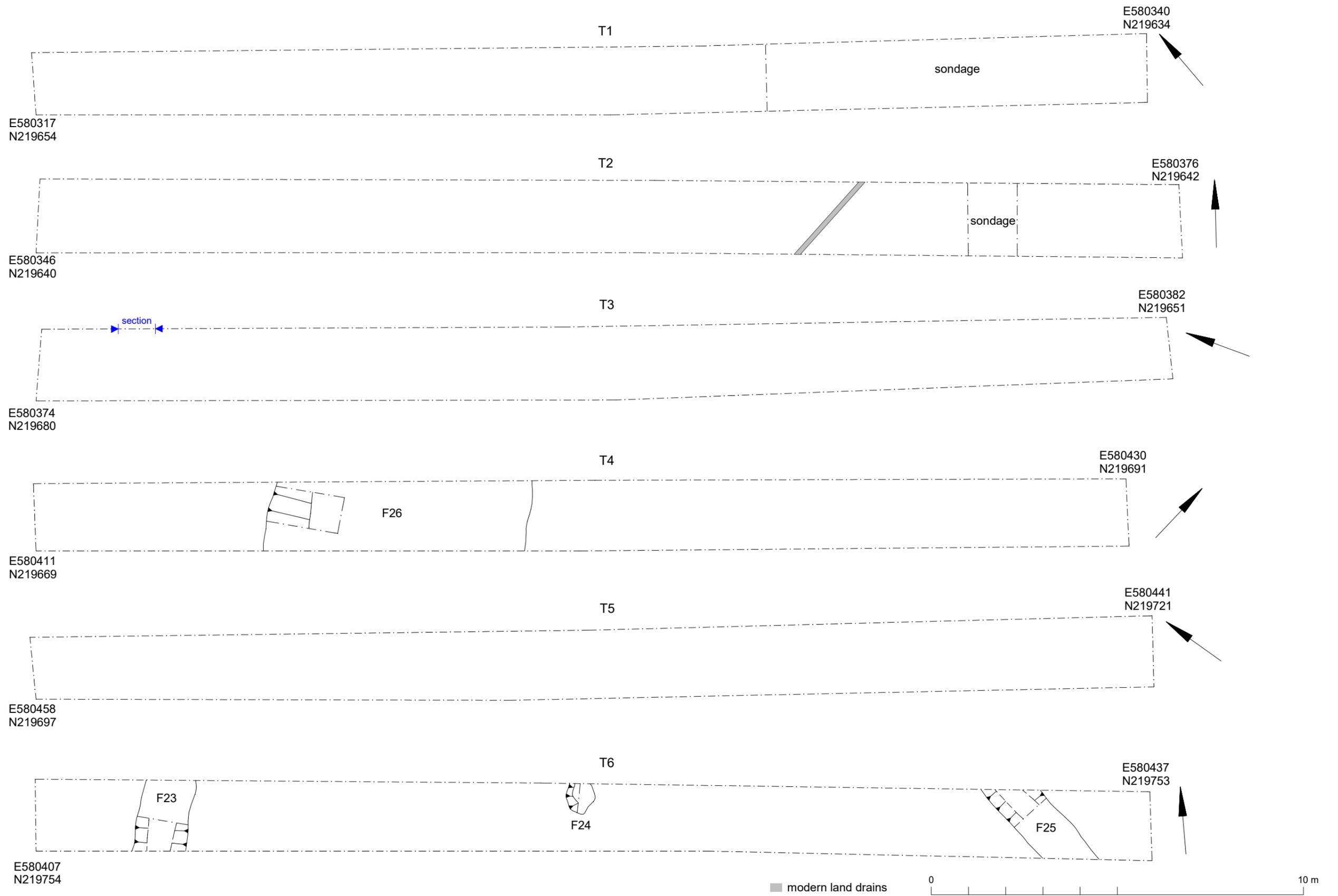


Fig 3 Trench results.

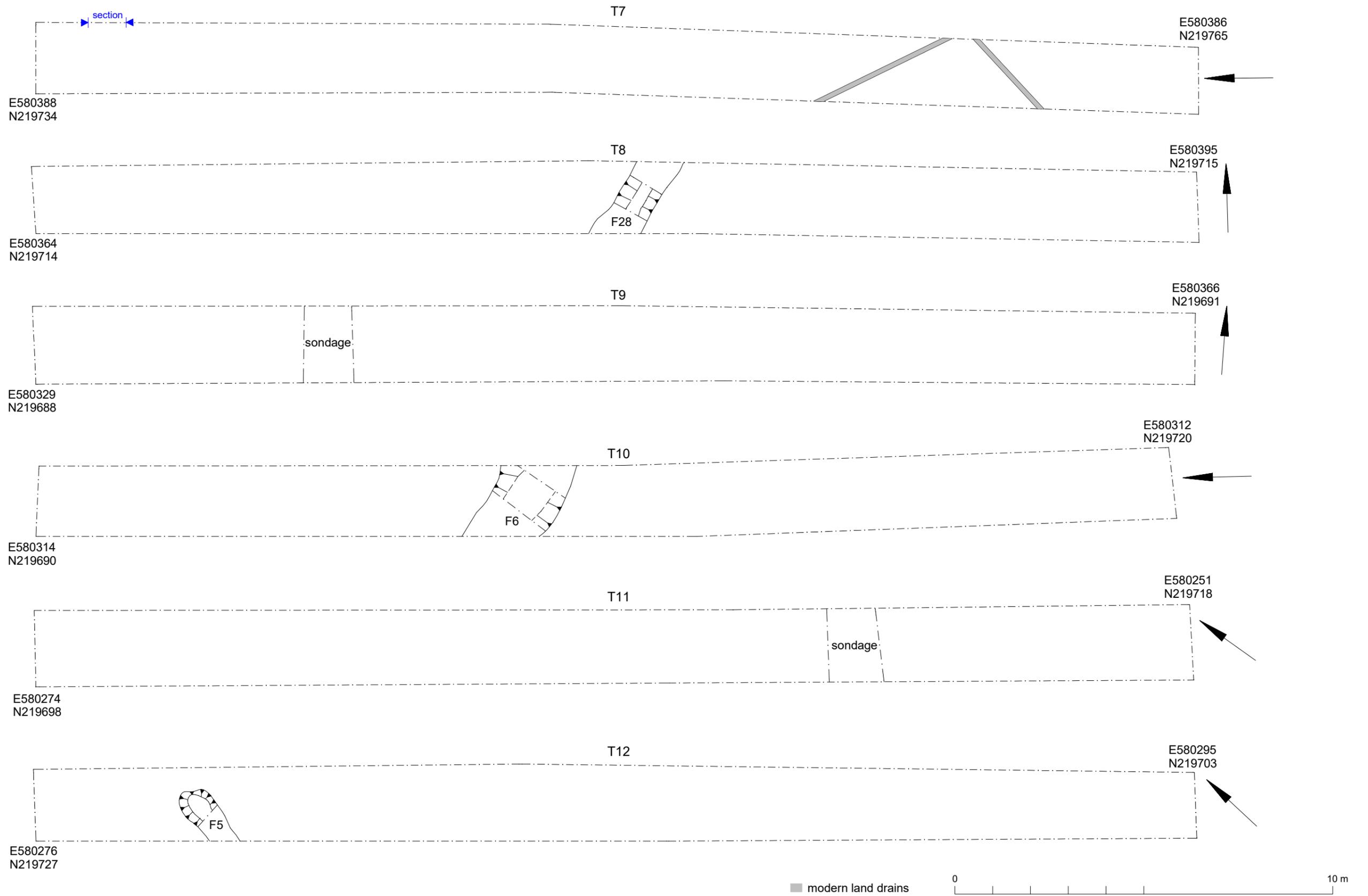


Fig 4 Trench results.

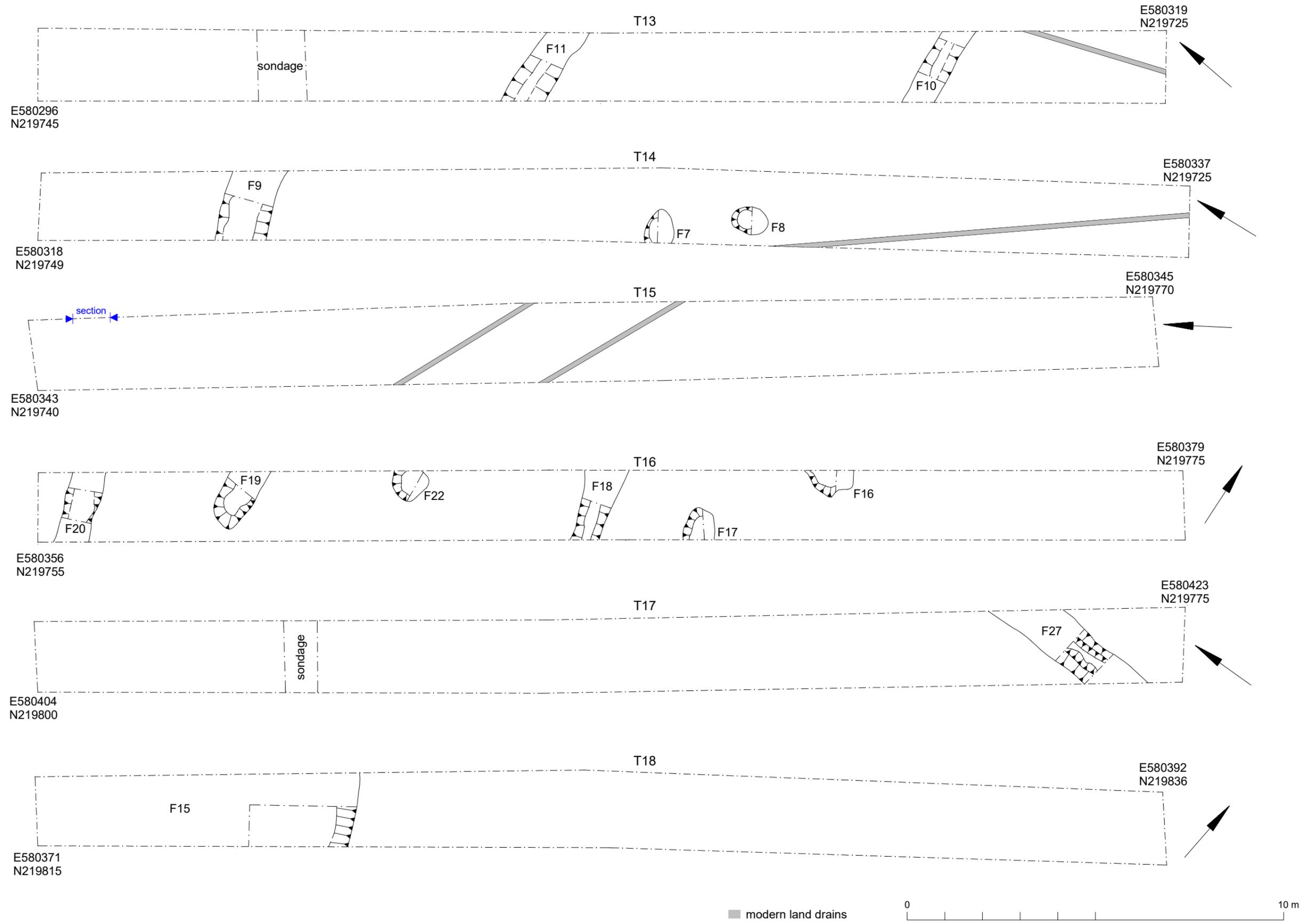


Fig 5 Trench results.

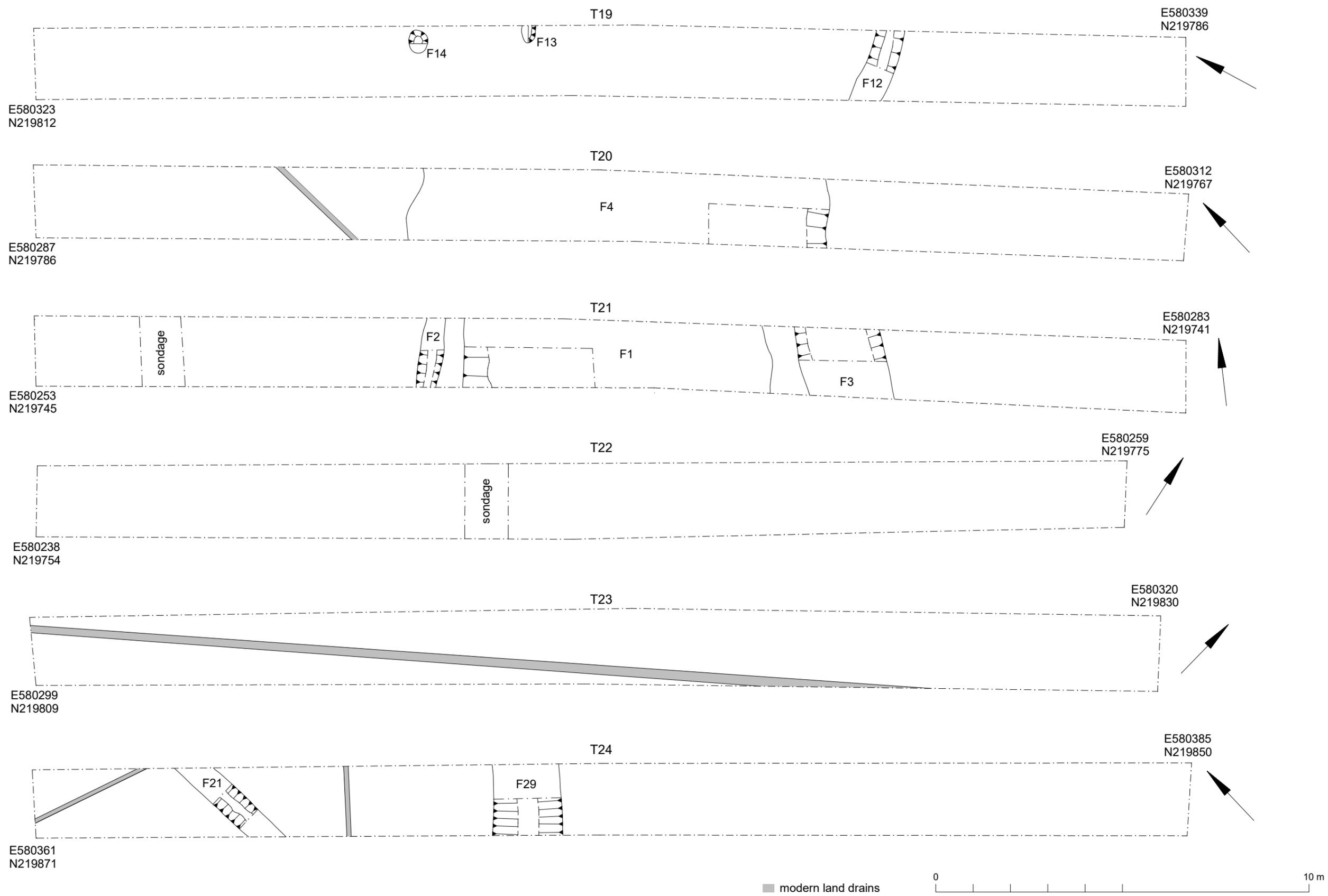


Fig 6 Trench results.



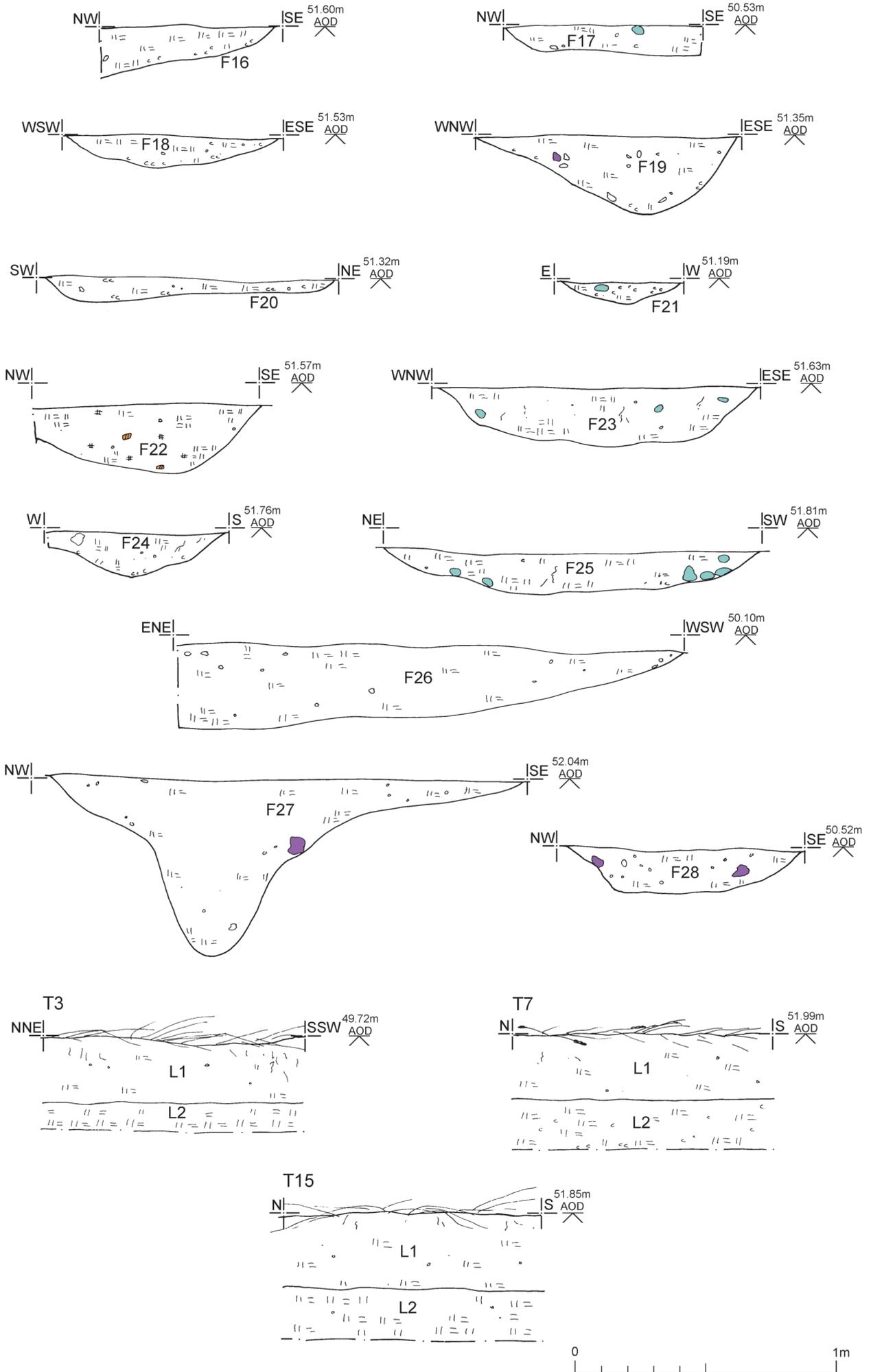


Fig 8 Sections.

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## Printable version

**OASIS ID: colchest3-426272**

### Project details

Project name	Archaeological evaluation on land at Temple Lane (northern parcel), Silver End, Essex
Short description of the project	An archaeological evaluation (twenty four linear trial-trenches) was carried out at Temple Lane, Silver End, in advance of a planning application. The site is close to ring-shaped cropmarks and the Environment Agency national lidar survey had recorded possible features within the site. Twenty-nine features were uncovered: two small pits, four large pits and a ditch all post-medieval-to-modern in date, an undated ditch and twenty-one natural features.
Project dates	Start: 21-06-2021 End: 29-06-2021
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	2021/05i - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	SETL21 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Cultivated Land 4 - Character Undetermined
Monument type	DITCH Uncertain
Monument type	PITS Modern
Monument type	DITCH Modern
Significant Finds	TILE Modern
Significant Finds	BRICK Modern
Significant Finds	IRON NAIL Modern
Methods & techniques	""Sample Trenches""
Development type	Rural residential
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Position in the planning process	Pre-application

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX BRAINTREE SILVER END land at Temple Lane (northern parcel), Silver End, Essex

Postcode CM8 3QP  
 Study area 3.73 Hectares  
 Site coordinates TL 80345 19748 51.846655910876 0.618535639895 51 50 47 N 000 37 06 E Point  
 Height OD / Depth Min: 48.81m Max: 52.37m

### Project creators

Name of Organisation Colchester Archaeological Trust  
 Project brief originator HEM Team Officer, ECC  
 Project design originator RSK ADAS Ltd  
 Project director/manager Adam Wightman  
 Project director/manager Chris Lister  
 Project supervisor Ben Holloway  
 Type of sponsor/funding body Consultant  
 Name of sponsor/funding body RSK ADAS Ltd

### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No  
 Digital Archive recipient Archaeological Data Service  
 Digital Archive ID SETL21  
 Digital Contents "other"  
 Digital Media available "Survey","Text","Images raster / digital photography"  
 Paper Archive recipient Braintree Museum  
 Paper Archive ID SETL21  
 Paper Contents "other"  
 Paper Media available "Context sheet","Map","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section"

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