

**Archaeological Evaluation Report
Former HMRC Offices, Barrington Road
Durrington, West Sussex**

**NGR: 511850 103080
(TQ 11850 03080)**

**ASE Project No: 230006
Site Code: DBR23**

**ASE Report No: 2023098
OASIS id: archaeol6-515580
Worthing Museum & Art Gallery**

Bellway Homes Ltd (South London)



By Tom Munnery

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Prepared by:	Tom Munnery	Senior Archaeologist	
Reviewed and approved by:	Dan Swift	Project Manager	
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**Archaeology South-East
Units 1 & 2
2 Chapel Place
Portslade
East Sussex
BN41 1DR**

**Tel: 01273 426830
Fax: 01273 420866
Email: ase@ucl.ac.uk
www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology-south-east**

Abstract

This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation carried out by Archaeology South-East at Former HMRC Offices, Barrington Road, Durrington, West Sussex NGR 511850 103080, in two phases between the 25th January and 26th April 2023. Trenching was undertaken in advance of residential development. Seven trenches measuring up to 30m in length were excavated. The work was commissioned by Mills Whipp Projects on behalf of their client Bellway Homes Ltd (South London).

Demolition of the brickworks, construction of the former HMRC offices and/or their subsequent demolition have largely removed any potential archaeological deposits. The preservation of the archaeological horizon was only recorded in Trenches 3 and 4, but no significant archaeological features were encountered. The only feature, a probable quarry pit recorded in Trench 3 perhaps relates to the early 20th century brickworks that were formerly on the site.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

- 1.1.1 Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Mills Whipp Projects on behalf of their client Bellway Homes Ltd (South London). to undertake an archaeological evaluation in advance of the residential development of the former HMRC offices at Barrington Road, Durrington, West Sussex, hereafter referred to as 'the site'. The site is centred on National Grid Reference 511850 103080 and its location is shown in Figure 1.

1.2 Geology and Topography

- 1.2.1 The site is located in the north-western suburbs of Worthing and bound by residential properties on Barrington Road to the south and the Brighton to Southampton railway line to the north. The east is defined by WSCC offices and the west by vacant brownfield. The site itself was used until recently as HMRC offices and mostly comprised buildings and hard landscaping associated with this. The site is relatively flat and lies just below the 10m OD contour.
- 1.2.2 According to the British Geological Survey 1:50,000 scale geological mapping available online (BGS 2023), the basal geology consists of Lewes Nodular Chalk overlain by drift geology consisting of silt and gravel capped by brickearth. Raised beach deposits are noted by BGS in two areas approximately 600m to the south-east and south-west of the site. Recent geoarchaeological work on site has indicated that these raised beach deposits might be represented within the site boundary, in addition to potential buried land surfaces (Archaeology South-East 2023).
- 1.2.3 More broadly, the site is situated on the Sussex Coastal Plain between the southern edge of the South Downs and the coast at Goring-by-Sea. This is bisected approximately 8km to the west and the east by two large rivers, the Adur and Arun respectively. Ferring Rife runs west approximately 1.2km north of the site before turning south to the west of Ferring, where it then drains into the Channel.

1.3 Planning Background

- 1.3.1 Planning permission was granted by Worthing Borough Council in April 2021. The proposed development comprises:

Outline planning permission for the demolition and phased, comprehensive, residential-led redevelopment for a maximum of 287 dwellings (use class C3), of which up to 140 would be houses and up to 158 would be apartments/retirement apartments. Provision of a 68-bedroom care home (use class C2). Provision of car parking, landscaping and associated works. All detailed matters reserved except for access points at the site boundaries.

- 1.3.2 As the site lies within an area of archaeological potential, an archaeological condition was attached to the permission:

Planning condition (archaeology)

No development or demolition works shall commence within the site until:

A written scheme of investigation (below-ground archaeological investigation and recording) which should include provision for on-site field survey and recording and the analysis reporting publishing and archiving of the results has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: In order to ensure that heritage assets of archaeological interest will be adequately recorded before development and subsequently will be adequately reported.

- 1.3.3 Accordingly, a Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Evaluation (MWP 2023) was compiled, circulated to and approved by all parties prior to fieldwork.

1.4 Scope of Report

- 1.4.1 This report details the results of the archaeological evaluation which was undertaken on the site in two phases between 25th and 27th January and 25th and 26th April 2023.

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 A Desk-Based Assessment was undertaken by Mills Whipp Projects (MWP 2019) in advance of the project and a full archaeological background of the site can be found within this. The following archaeological background summarised from that document.

2.2 Prehistoric

- 2.2.1 A number of Palaeolithic coastlines have been identified in Sussex, collectively referred to as the Sussex Raised Beach Sequence. They include Boxgrove about 20km to the west of the site (which also produced early human remains) and the Brighton-Norton Raised Beach approximately 1km north of the site. BGS recorded two patches of raised beach deposits approximately 600m to the south-east and south-west of the site which represent the remnants of a later raised beach's wave cut platform. This suggests that the site may have lain underwater in the early Palaeolithic but occupied dry ground later in the Palaeolithic. The beach deposits were then buried beneath the more recent quaternary drift deposits culminating in a brickearth cap. Evidence for Palaeolithic activity is, however, limited consisting of isolated discoveries of flint handaxes from around Worthing.
- 2.2.2 In the Mesolithic, colluvial deposition at the base of the Downs masked the land surface and evidence from this period is not well represented. Nonetheless Mesolithic flint tools have been recorded at Worthing, Clapham and Angmering and more recently to the north of the site at Patching and Durrington.
- 2.2.3 Later, in the Neolithic period the general settlement pattern is broadly distributed between the more high-status monuments on the South Downs and occupation evidence on the Sussex coastal plain. A number of polished stone and flint axeheads are recorded on the coastal plain in the vicinity of Worthing, Durrington and Goring distributed relatively evenly across the area. A polished axe was recovered from the site during brickearth quarrying.
- 2.2.4 Nearby excavations showed early Bronze Age features were absent but several Mid to Late Bronze Age pits and ditches were recorded. A possible drove way at Titnore Lane controlling livestock suggests a far higher degree of land management in the later Bronze Age. It is likely that the greater focus of activity in the area would have been the pre-hillfort settlement at Highdown Hill about 3km north-west of the site.
- 2.2.5 Subsequently, in the Iron Age it seems the coastal plain was being significantly inhabited for the first time with evidence for settlement stretching along its full length.

2.3 Roman

- 2.3.1 Agricultural exploitation of the fertile coastal plain's soils continued into the Roman period, the quality of the soils being illustrated by the density of villa

sites in the area such as Highdown Hill, Angmering and Southwick and the large number of isolated finds of Roman pottery, coins and cremation burials recorded.

- 2.3.2 On the site a Roman coin hoard of 432 coins was discovered in 1907. They dated to the late 3rd or early 4th century and were in a small grey-ware flagon. Residual Roman pottery was recorded at various sites in the Goring area.
- 2.3.3 Within this managed landscape one of the principal features may have been the potential Roman road between Chichester and Brighton. Its projected line runs east / west approximately 2km north of the site although its course has yet to be fully proven.

2.4 Saxon

- 2.4.1 Early Anglo-Saxon occupation of West Sussex is largely centred on the higher ground of the South Downs. In the vicinity of the site, however, Highdown Hill was occupied with an early settlement and cemetery where 150 burials dating to the 5th-6th centuries have been excavated.
- 2.4.2 The large number of local placenames terminating in '-ing' (such as Goring, Worthing, Ferring etc) has been identified as indicating 7th century settlements but the archaeological evidence is sparse in support of this view.
- 2.4.3 Archaeological evidence indicates that Late Anglo-Saxon occupation, although limited, tended to centre on the coastal plain. Anglo-Saxon pottery has been recovered from Durrington and several post-holes and pits have been recorded on Worthing High Street. No significant Saxon finds have been reported from the vicinity of the subject site.

2.5 Medieval

- 2.5.1 The site lay within the manor of Goring. Goring Church is thought to date to the 13th century and the village granted a market in the 13th century. The Domesday Book (1086) lists a village possibly with a population of 150 persons in toto. Most of the parish at this time was given over to arable farming and the site lay in the hinterland of Goring.
- 2.5.2 Nearby excavations reveal 'low-intensity' agricultural land use represented by an enclosure and a series of ditches and pits.

2.6 Post Medieval

- 2.6.1 The earliest accurate map was produced in 1778 which shows the site as open fields to the north-east of Goring village. About 1845 the London Brighton & South Coast Railway built a line to Portsmouth which now defines the northern edge of the subject site. The site remained an open field.
- 2.6.2 By 1907 most of the subject site was being quarried for brickearth. The quarrying revealed a late Roman coin hoard and a Neolithic axe.

2.6.3 A World War II defensive line ran near the site, roughly north – south, and may cross the south-eastern corner of the site.

2.6.4 By 1951 the Inland Revenue was established and occupied a series of buildings. These are currently being cleared for archaeological access.

2.7 Project Aims and Objectives

2.7.1 The general aims of the mitigation were:

- *What is the nature of the natural geology?*
- *What is the evidence for prehistoric landuse or occupation?*
- *What is the evidence for Roman landuse or occupation?*
- *What is the evidence for Saxon landuse or occupation?*
- *What is the evidence for medieval landuse or occupation?*
- *What is evidence for early modern landuse?*
- *What is the evidence for early 20th century brick making and how extensive was the quarrying?*
- *What evidence is there for WW2 defences?*

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 Fieldwork Methodology

- 3.1.1 The trenches had to be largely relocated from the locations specified in the WSI (MWP 2023) due to restrictions on site. Trench 1 was subject to a minor repositioning by the contractor, but would not have had an impact on the results. Trench 2 was relocated from its original position within a road being used by contractors on site. It was moved approximately 30m north-west into an area formerly occupied by greenspace within the previous development. Trench 3 was moved 30m east to avoid a tree that was being retained on site. Trench 4 had its western end rotated south slightly to permit excavation through a clearly undisturbed area of the site. Trench 7 was relocated south of its proposed position to avoid a large accumulation of demolition derived concrete. Trenches 5 and 6 were located as specified by the WSI.
- 3.1.2 The location of trenches was established using Global Positioning System (GPS), except for Trenches 1 and 2, which had to be placed using site landmarks (Figure 2). Any subsequent observed features were recorded using GPS.
- 3.1.3 Excavation of the trenches was undertaken using a tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under the direct supervision of an archaeologist. Deposits were removed in spits no greater than 200mm in thickness. Machine excavation was carried down on to the top of archaeological deposits or the surface of natural deposits, whichever was uppermost. Care was taken not to machine off seemingly homogenous layers that may include the upper parts of archaeological features. The resultant surfaces were cleaned as necessary and planned using GPS.
- 3.1.4 All excavation and recording was carried out in line with the WSI (ibid), the relevant Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) Regulations, Standards and Guidance (CIfA 2023) and with Sussex Archaeological Standards (ESCC/WSCC, 2015).

3.2 Archive

- 3.3.1 The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE and will be deposited at Worthing Museum and Art Gallery in due course.

Context sheets	0
Section sheets	0
Plans sheets	1
Colour photographs	0
B&W photos	0
Digital photos	28
Context register	0
Drawing register	1
Watching brief forms	0
Trench Record forms	7

Table 1: Quantification of site paper archive

Bulk finds (quantity e.g. 1 bag, 1 box, 0.5 box 0.5 of a box)	1 bag
Registered finds (number of)	0
Flots and environmental remains from bulk samples	0
Palaeoenvironmental specialists sample samples (e.g. columns, prepared slides)	0
Waterlogged wood	0
Wet sieved environmental remains from bulk samples	0

Table 2: Quantification of artefact and environmental samples

- 3.3.2 The site archive will be assembled in accordance with the guidelines set out in: '*Archaeological Archives. A guide to best practice*' (AAF 2011); '*A Standard and Guide to best practice for Archaeological Archiving in Europe*' (EAC 2013); and '*Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections*' (SMA 2020).

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Trench 3

(Figure 3)

Context	Type	Interpretation	Length m	Width m	Thickness m	Height m AOD
3/001	Layer	Topsoil	trench	trench	0.15-0.20	10.27
3/002	Layer	Levelling deposit	trench	trench	0.10-0.15	10.12
3/003	Layer	Made ground	trench	trench	0.00-1.54	9.92
3/004	Layer	Made ground	trench	trench	0.00-1.23	10.01
3/005	Layer	Subsoil	trench	trench	0.11-0.12	8.66-9.13
3/006	Layer	Geology	trench	trench		9.02-9.92
3/007	Cut	Pit, quarry	6.1	trench	1.54	9.92

Table 3: Trench 3 list of recorded contexts

4.1.1 Trench 3 was excavated through a variable deposit of 20th century made ground overlying a possible remnant of subsoil [3/005]. Undisturbed geology was encountered at a depth of 1.20m below ground level at a height of between 9.02m and 9.92m OD. The edge of a large feature, most likely a quarry pit, was encountered within the base of the trench.

4.1.2 6.10m of the quarry pit was recorded, but its eastern edge continued beyond the limit of the trench. The feature was not excavated into because of the depth at which it was encountered. Its upper fill, however, comprised a dump of levelling material and was noted to contain brick, chalk and cinder.

4.2 Archaeologically Negative Trenches 1, 2 and 4-7 (Figure 4)

4.2.1 These trenches contained differing overburdens. Trenches 1 and 6 had been heavily disturbed by the demolition of the HMRC offices. Trenches 2, 5 and 7 had been reduced to a degree by the construction of the HMRC offices and prior demolition of the brickworks, leaving only a layer of crushed and broken bricks sat directly above the natural geology in Trenches 2 and 7. Trench 4 was similar in its overburden to Trench 3, comprising a thick layer of made ground over the natural geology.

Trench	Context	Type	Interpretation	Thickness m	Height m AOD
1/001	Layer	Made ground	trench	trench	0.70-1.90
1/002	Layer	Geology	trench	trench	
2/001	Layer	Topsoil	trench	trench	0.00-0.10
2/002	Layer	Made ground	trench	trench	0.18
2/003	Layer	Subsoil	trench	trench	0.26-0.30
2/004	Layer	Geology	trench	trench	0.20-0.33
2/005	Layer	Made ground	trench	trench	0.20-0.30
4/001	Layer	Topsoil	trench	trench	0.12-0.15
4/002	Layer	Made ground	trench	trench	0.07-0.11
4/003	Layer	Made ground	trench	trench	0.50-0.80
4/004	Layer	Made ground	trench	trench	0.09-0.16

Trench	Context	Type	Interpretation	Thickness m	Height m AOD
4/005	Layer	Subsoil	trench	trench	0.10-0.12
4/006	Layer	Geology	trench	trench	
5/001	Layer	Made ground	trench	trench	0.15-0.20
5/002	Layer	Geology	trench	trench	
6/001	Layer	Made ground	trench	trench	1.20-1.80
6/002	Layer	Geology	trench	trench	
7/001	Layer	Asphalt	trench	trench	0.00-0.10
7/002	Layer	Made ground	trench	trench	0.7
7/003	Layer	Destruction debris	trench	trench	0.45
7/004	Layer	Geology	trench	trench	

Table 4: Archaeologically negative trenches: list of recorded contexts

5.0 THE FINDS

5.1 Summary

5.1.1 The only find recovered from work was a single flint flake.

5.2 Worked Flint by Karine Le Hégarat

5.2.1 A single piece of worked flint weighing 20g was recovered from modern made ground [3/003]. It consists of a blade fragment, the proximal end of which is absent. The artefact is made from a mid-grey flint with a stained cortex. It is in a poor condition displaying extensive edge damage and a crushed ridge on the dorsal face. Rust marks were also recorded. The overall condition of the artefact indicates that it has been subject to successive redepositions. Only a broad Mesolithic to Early Bronze Age date can be proposed for the artefact.

6.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Overview of stratigraphic sequence

- 6.1.1 All of the trenches had overburdens comprising made ground resultant from demolition of the former brickworks, construction of the HMRC offices and/or the demolition of these offices. The natural geology was encountered at heights of between 8.47m and 9.92m OD, although the demolition of the HMRC offices reduced this height considerably in Trenches 1 and 6.
- 6.1.2 A single feature was recorded in Trench 3; a probable quarry pit perhaps relating to the early 20th century brickworks. Elsewhere across the site some deposits of bricks likely arising from the demolition of the brickworks were encountered in Trenches 2 and 7.

6.2 Deposit survival and existing impacts

- 6.2.1 The project was able to establish that both previous and current groundworks on site have significantly impacted any potential archaeological deposits on site, including relatively recent examples that might have related to the 20th century brickworks.

6.3 Discussion of archaeological remains by period

Prehistoric

- 6.3.1 A single flint of Mesolithic to Early Bronze Age date was recovered from levelling deposit [3/003] in filling a probable quarry pit [3/007]. This provides an additional piece to the suite of flintwork recovered from the area. Its clear post-depositional damage and 'rust' markings suggest it has been subject to some movement after its initial deposition.

Late post-medieval to modern

- 6.3.2 A small amount of crushed or broken brick was recorded within Trenches 2 and 7. These deposits likely relate to the demolition of the former brickworks that occupied the site, although they had been disturbed and/or placed during the construction of the HMRC offices in the late 20th century.
- 6.3.3 A single feature in Trench 3 likely relates to quarrying within the bounds of the site.
- 6.3.4 Previous and current groundworks have significantly impacted any potentially older archaeological deposits.

6.4 Consideration of research aims

- 6.4.1 The natural geology at the site was a mid-brown silty-clay. A single Mesolithic to Early Bronze Age worked flint flake forms the only prehistoric evidence. There is no Roman, Saxon or medieval evidence from the evaluation. Evidence for early modern landuse included made ground deposits representing the demolition of the former brickworks, construction of the HMRC offices and/or

the demolition of these offices. A probable quarry pit recorded in Trench 3 perhaps relates to the early 20th century brickworks that were formerly on the site. There is no WW2 evidence.

6.5 Conclusions

- 6.5.1 Seven evaluation trenches were excavated at the site. It was clear from these that the demolition of the brickworks, construction of the former HMRC offices and/or their subsequent demolition will have largely removed any potential archaeological deposits. The preservation of the archaeological horizon was only recorded in Trenches 3 and 4, but no significant archaeological features were encountered. The only feature, a probable quarry pit recorded in Trench 3 perhaps relates to the early 20th century brickworks that were formerly on the site.

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MWP, 2023 ex HMRC offices, Barrington Road, Durrington, Worthing, West Sussex: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation

Society for Museum Archaeology, 2020 *Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ASE would like to thank Mills Whipp Projects for commissioning the work on behalf of their client Bellway Homes Ltd (South London) and for their assistance throughout the project, and Place Services archaeological advisors to Worthing District Council for their guidance and monitoring. The excavation was directed by Tom Munnery. Lauren Gibson produced the figures for this report. Jon Sygrave managed the excavations and Dan Swift the post-excavation process.

HER Summary

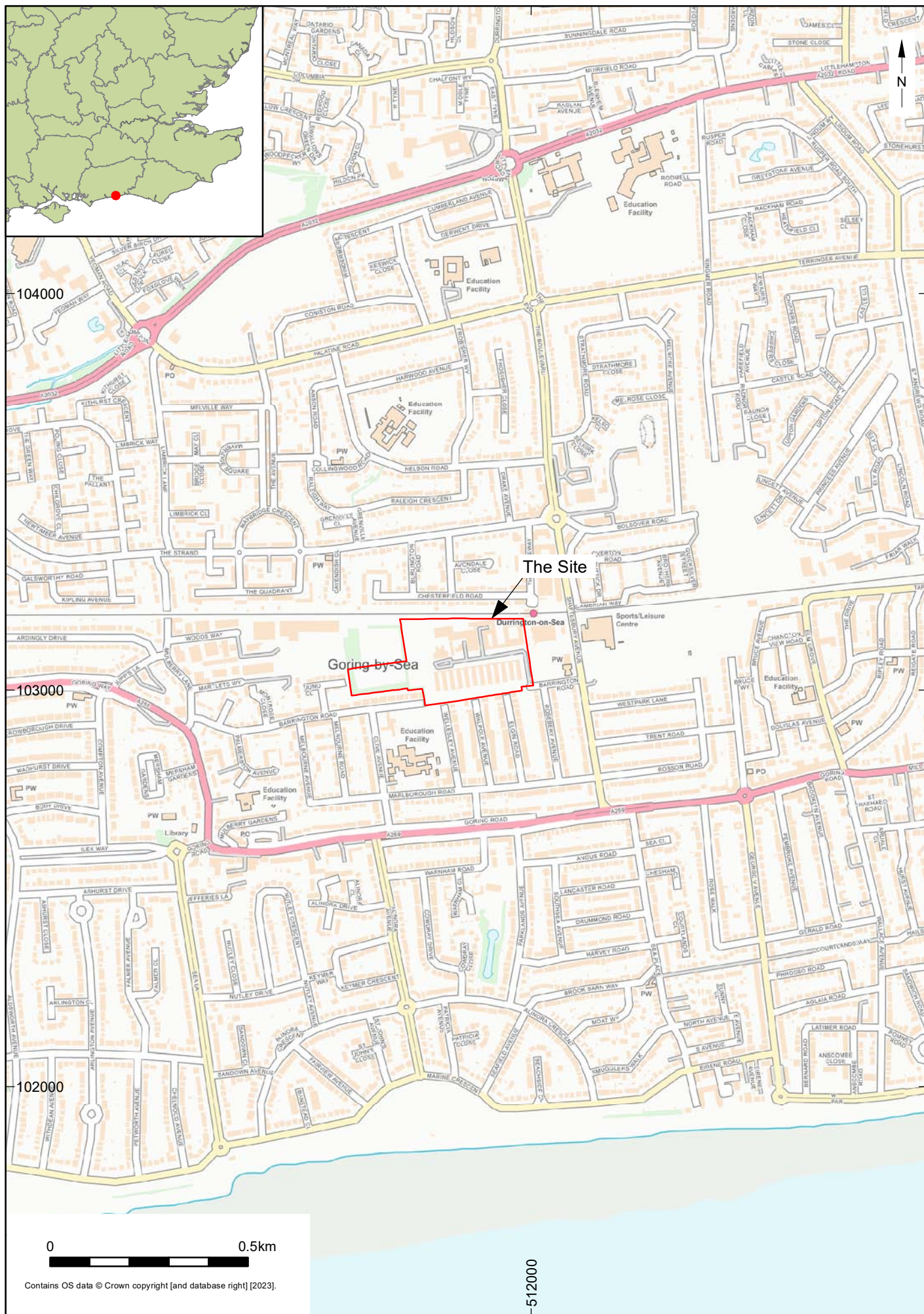
Site code	DBR23					
Project code	230006					
Planning reference						
Site address	Former HMRC Office, Barrington Road, Durrington, West Sussex					
District/Borough	Worthing					
NGR (12 figures)	511850 103080					
Geology	Brickearth					
Fieldwork type	Eval					
Date of fieldwork	25th and 27th January and 25th and 26th April 2023					
Sponsor/client	Mills Whipp Projects					
Project manager	Jon Sygrave					
Project supervisor	Tom Munnery					
Period summary		Mesolithic	Neolithic	Bronze Age		
				Post-Medieval		
Project summary	Seven evaluation trenches were excavated at the site. It was clear from these that the demolition of the brickworks, construction of the former HMRC offices and/or their subsequent demolition will have largely removed any potential archaeological deposits. The preservation of the archaeological horizon was only recorded in Trenches 3 and 4, but no significant archaeological features were encountered. The only feature, a probable quarry pit recorded in Trench 3 perhaps relates to the early 20th century brickworks that were formerly on the site.					

Finds Summary

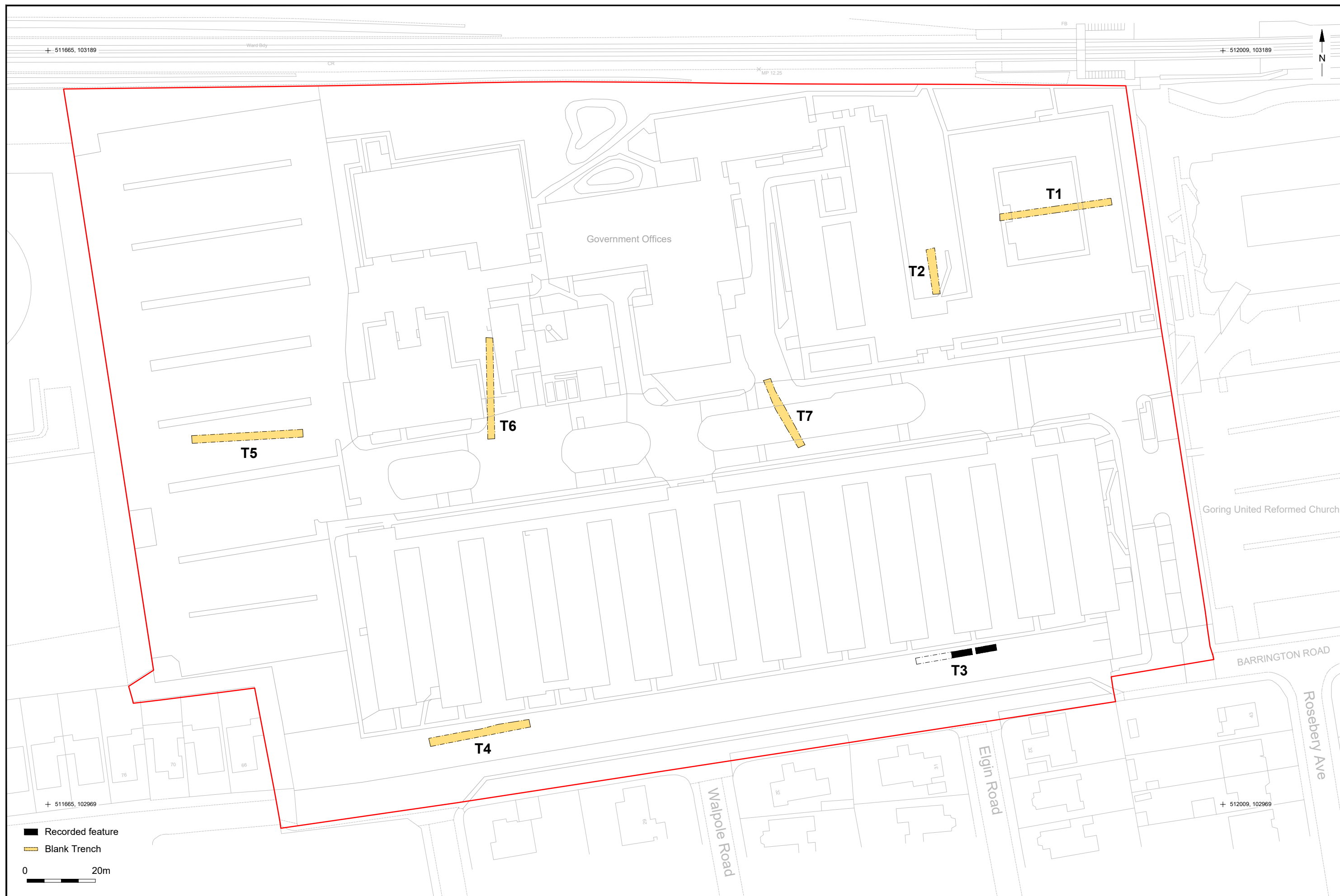
Find type	Material	Period	Quantity
Struck flint	Lithic	Prehistoric	1

OASIS Form

OASIS ID (UID)	archaeol6-515580
Project Name	Evaluation at Former HMRC Offices, Barrington Road, Durrington, West Sussex
Sitename	Former HMRC Offices, Barrington Road, Durrington, West Sussex
Activity type	Evaluation
Project Identifier(s)	210643
Planning Id	
Reason For Investigation	Planning requirement
Organisation Responsible for work	Archaeology South-East
Project Dates	25-Jan-2023 - 26-Apr-2023
Location	Former HMRC Offices, Barrington Road, Durrington, West Sussex
	NGR : TQ 11850 03080
	LL : 50.816476410479055, -0.413633661205648
	12 Fig : 511850,103080
Administrative Areas	Country : England
	County : West Sussex
	District : Worthing
	Parish : Worthing, unparished area
Project Methodology	Seven trenches excavated by machine. Trenches photographed and recorded by both GPS and hand.
Project Results	It was clear from these that the demolition of the brickworks, construction of the former HMRC offices and/or their subsequent demolition will have largely removed any potential archaeological deposits. The preservation of the archaeological horizon was only recorded in Trenches 3 and 4, but no significant archaeological features were encountered. The only feature, a probable quarry pit recorded in Trench 3 perhaps relates to the early 20th century brickworks that were formerly on the site.
HER	West Sussex HER - unRev - STANDARD
Person Responsible for work	Tom, Munnery
HER Identifiers	
Archives	Physical Archive, Documentary Archive, Digital Archive - to be deposited with Worthing Museum and Art Gallery;



© Archaeology South-East		Barrington Road, Durrington, West Sussex	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 230006	May 2023	Site Location	
Report Ref:	Drawn by: FG		





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Former HMRC Offices, Barrington Road, Durrington, West Sussex

Project Ref: 230006

May 2023

Report Ref: 2023098

Drawn by: LG

Trench 3 Plan and Photographs

Fig.3



Trench 1 looking East



Trench 2 looking North



Trench 4 looking East



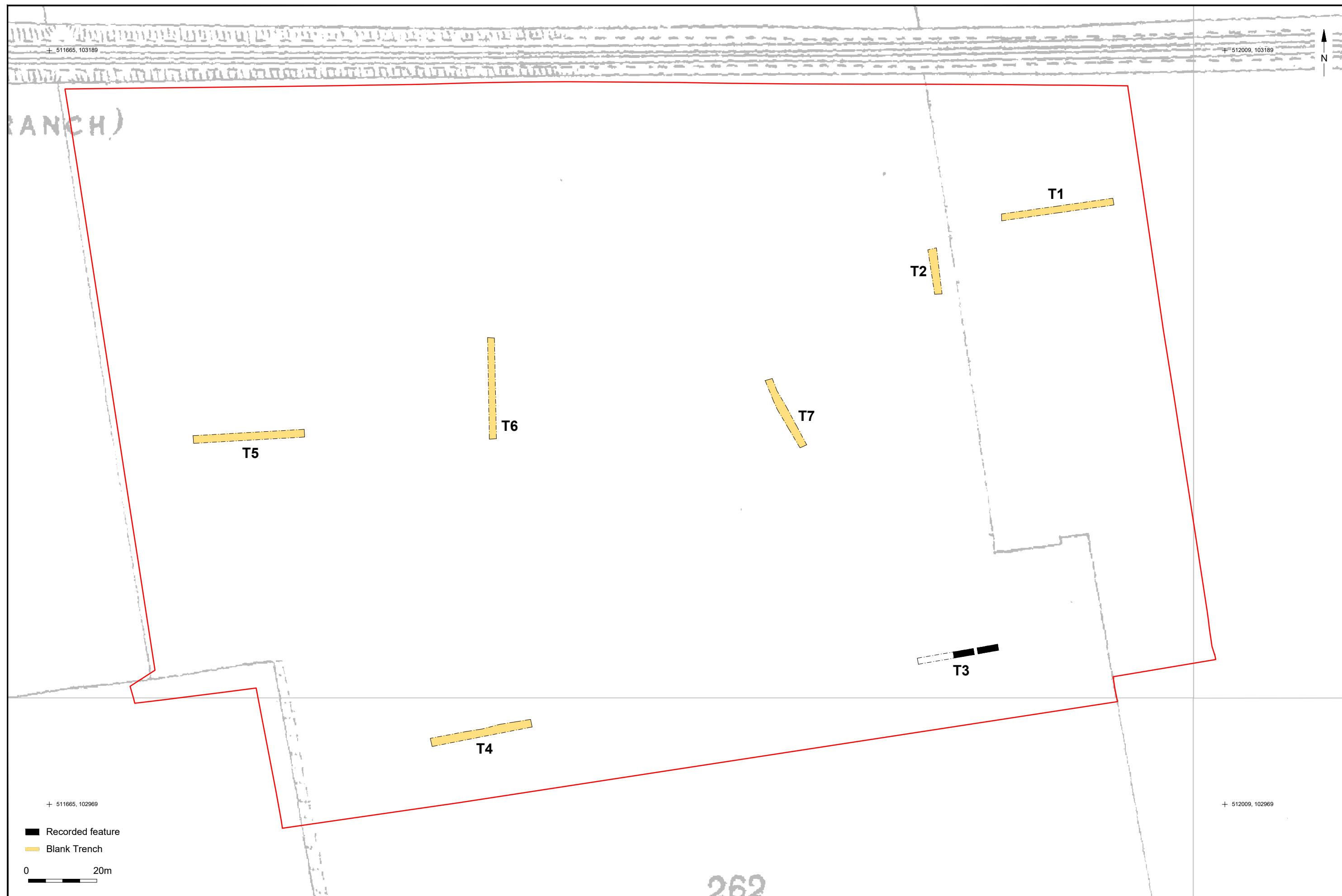
Trench 5 looking East

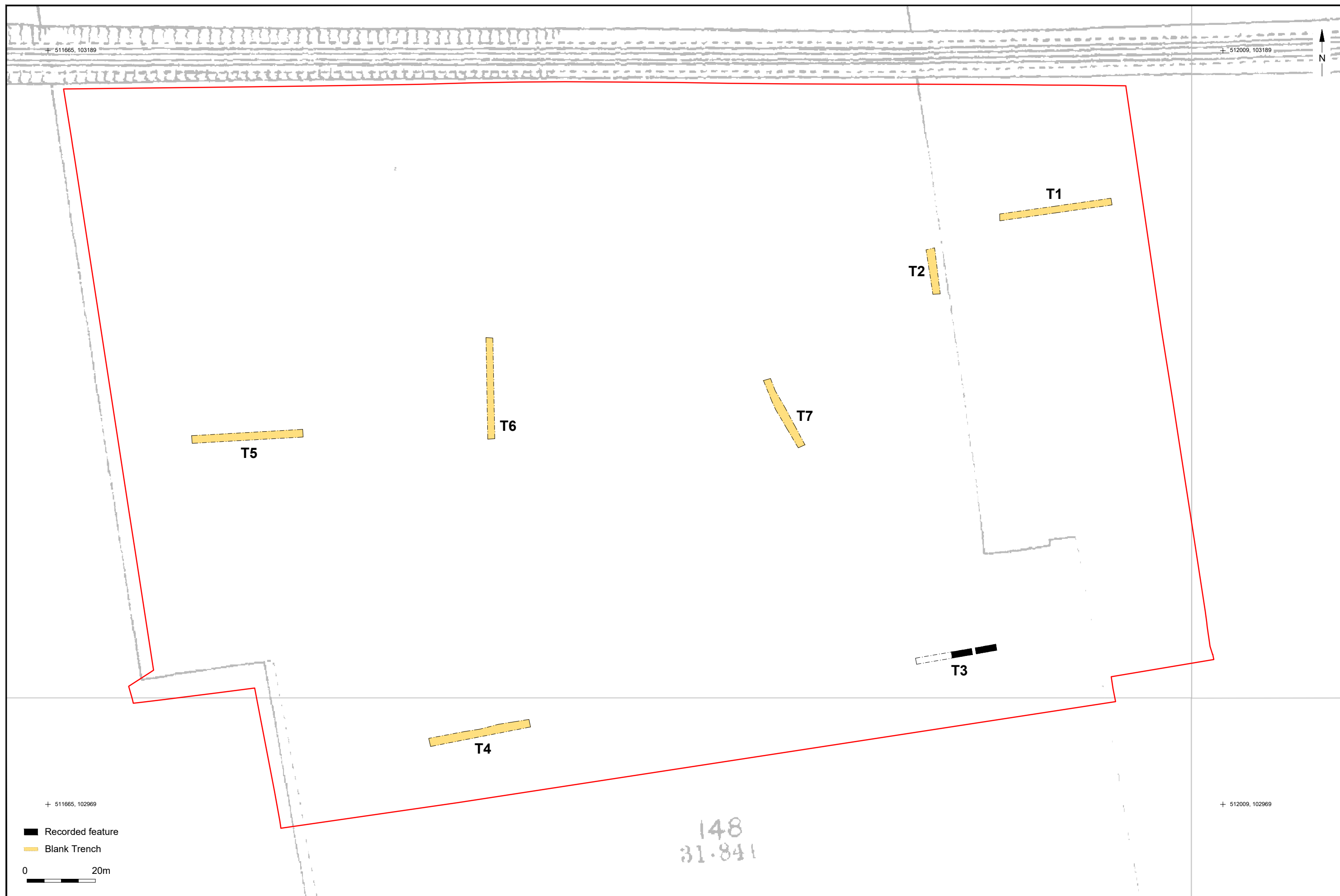


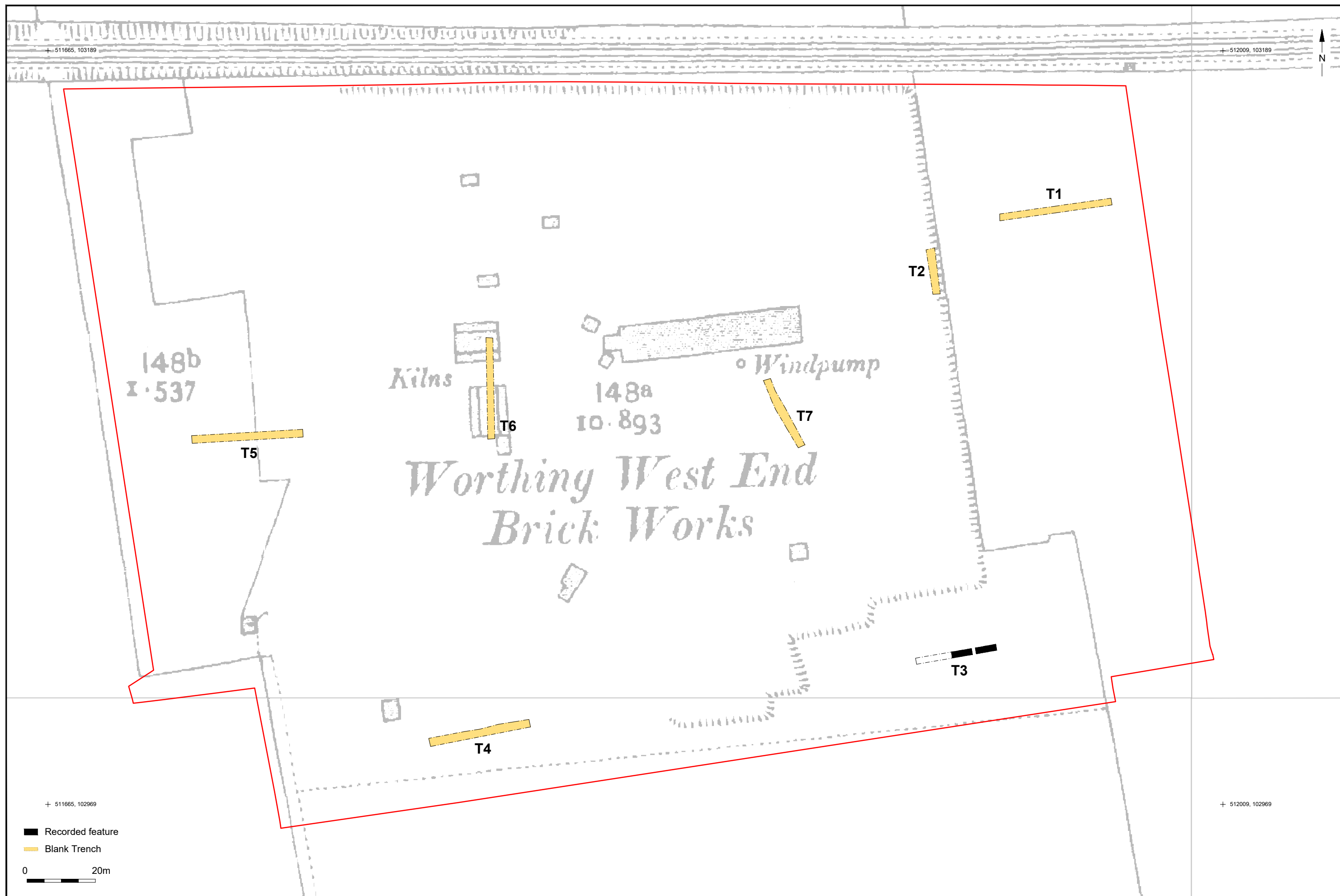
Trench 6 looking South

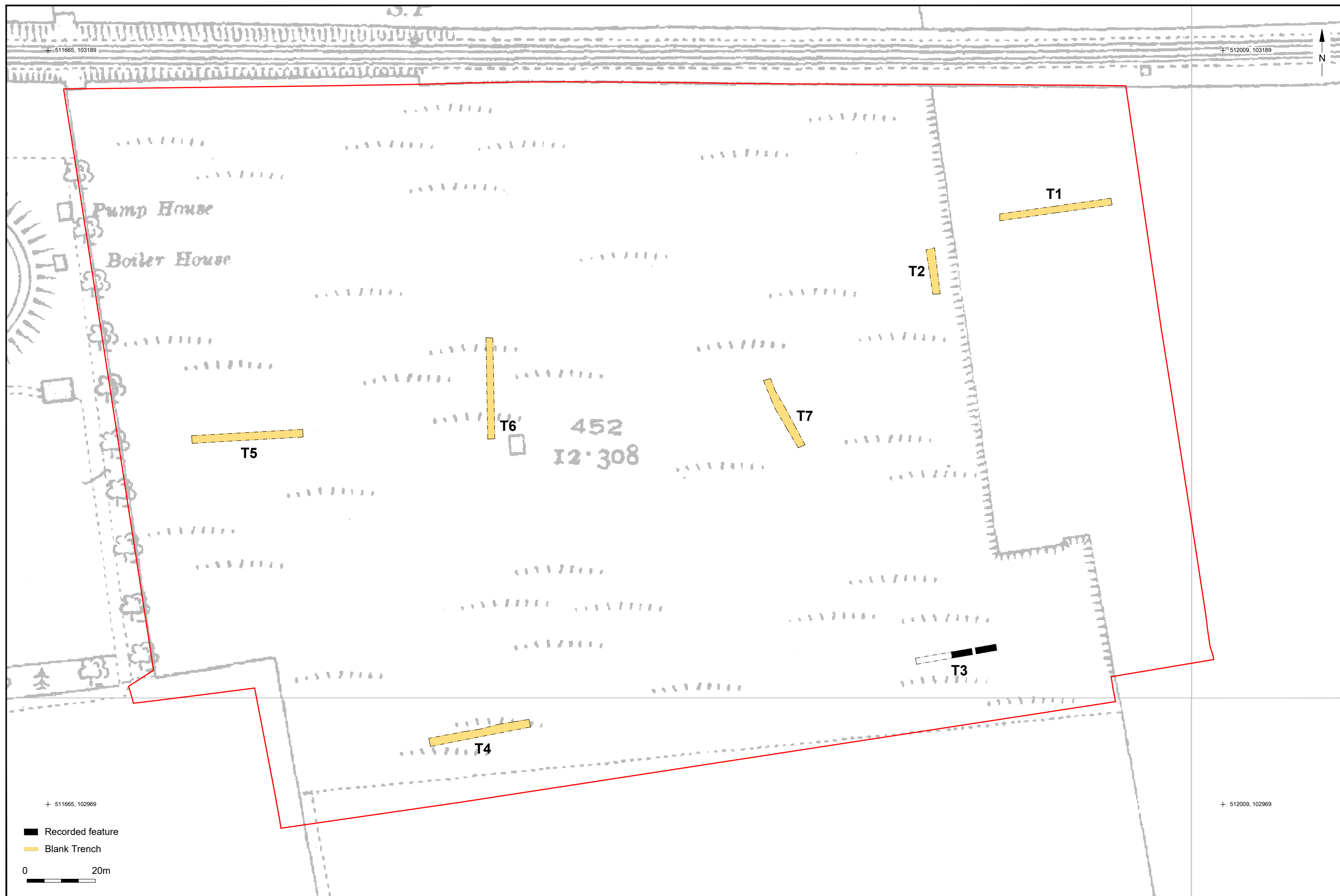


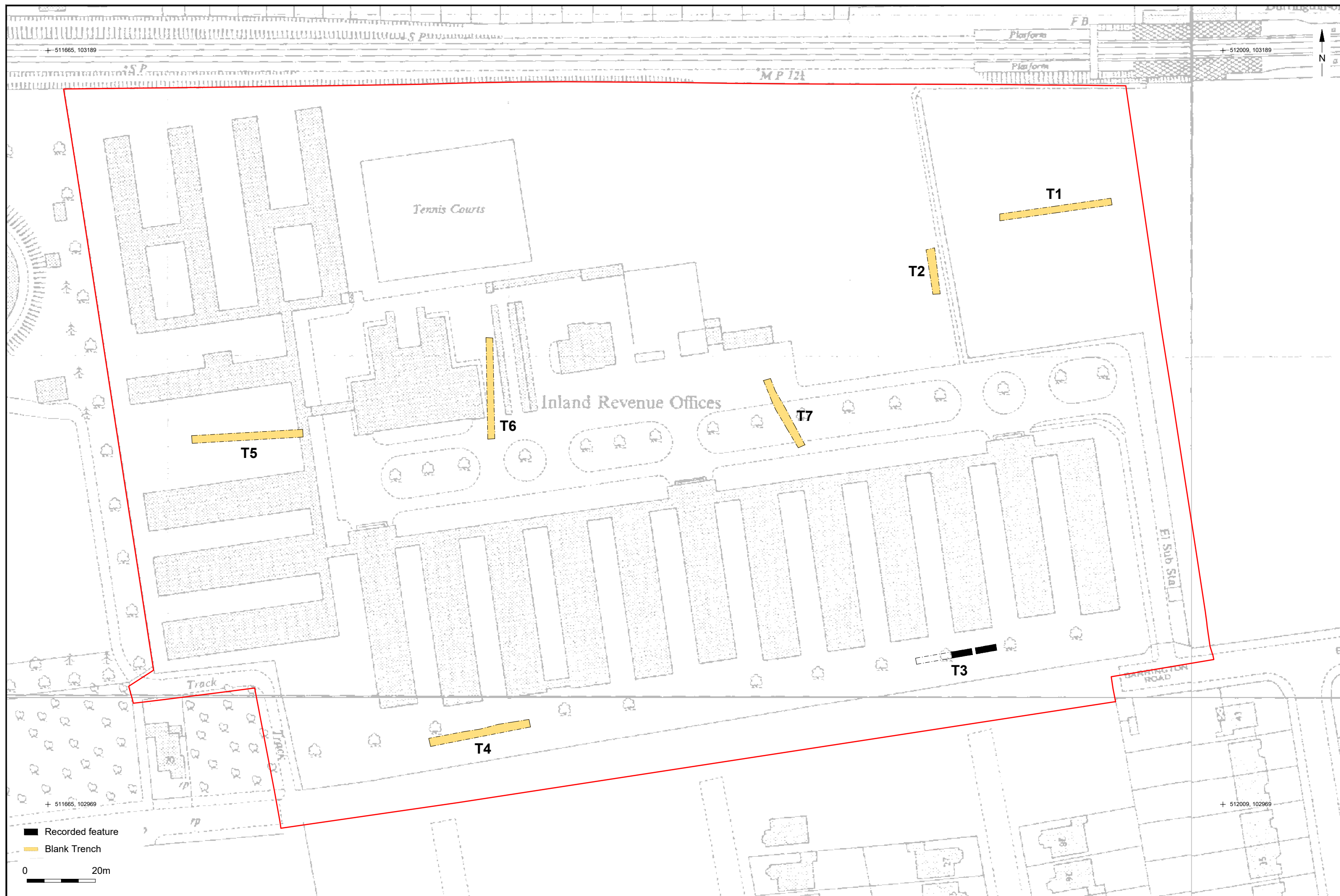
Trench 7 looking South-East













INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY

www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology-south-east

Sussex Office

Units 1 & 2
2 Chapel Place
Portslade
East Sussex BN41 1DR
tel: +44(0)1273 426830
email: ase@ucl.ac.uk

Essex Office

27 Eastways
Witham
Essex
CM8 3YQ
tel: +44(0)1376 331470
email: ase@ucl.ac.uk

London Office

Centre for Applied Archaeology
UCL Institute of Archaeology
31-34 Gordon Square
London WC1H 0PY
tel: +44(0)20 7679 4778
email: ase@ucl.ac.uk

