
Holyhead Water Treatment Works and Associated Pipeline Improvements

Villages Scheme

Archaeological Mitigation

GAT Project No. 1750

Report No. 575

March 2005

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Prepared for Galliford Try

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HOLYHEAD WATER TREATMENT WORKS AND ASSOCIATED PIPELINE IMPROVEMENTS

VILLAGES SCHEME

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MITIGATION (G1750)

SUMMARY

A watching brief was undertaken during construction of a new pipeline from Caergeiliog and Valley to Penrhos, Holyhead. There was no direct impact upon those features recommended to be avoided: namely features A1, B1, B3, B4, B5, B6, C2, C3, D3. Where features were due for reinstatement, the work is complete with the exception of construction work at Four Mile Bridge, where work is ongoing. Four new sites were recorded during the watching brief, namely D5, 6 and 7 which were buried deposits at Trearddur Bay, and E9 an area of cobbles at Tyddyn Uchaf, Trearddur Bay.

INTRODUCTION

A new waste water treatment works has been constructed at Penrhos, Holyhead. In order to serve the new works, a series of existing pipelines were upgraded, and a new effluent discharge pipeline was constructed. The pipeline improvements were divided into three schemes: final effluent, urban and villages. This report contains the results of archaeological mitigation work, consisting of a watching brief, undertaken during the upgrading of the villages pipeline, including works at Caergeiliog, Valley, Trearddur Bay and Four Mile Bridge. The work was commissioned by Galliford Try, and undertaken by Gwynedd Archaeological Trust. The work was monitored for Welsh Water by Gwynedd Archaeological Planning Service.

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

An archaeological assessment of the route was undertaken in October 2002 (GAT Report No. 465), and updated in December 2003 (GAT Report No. 465a), to take into account minor variations in the route and the results of a programme of field evaluation.

WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

Introduction

The watching brief was undertaken intermittently from April 2004 through to January 2005. Some areas were covered with a comprehensive watching brief (an archaeologist was present continuously), though most of the route was walked as soon after the topsoil strip (usually within 24 hours) as possible. Areas of potential interest were recorded, and cleaned by hand. Certain features could not be fully examined because of health and safety issues – these are noted below where relevant.

The feature numbers below refer to the features identified during the archaeological assessment, and described in GAT Report No. 465a. The location of each is shown on fig's 1-5.

Area A

A1 Gorad fishweir (PRN 7193) SH29128080

The Gorad fishweir is a scheduled ancient monument (Cadw reference An 145), and it was necessary for the outfall to pass through a part of the scheduled area, though there was to be no direct impact upon the weir or associated remains. An intensive watching brief was carried out during the dismantling of the existing outfall pipe and during the construction of the slightly larger replacement which runs along the same alignment. No archaeological features were noted. At present the structure is visually intrusive at low tide but will become less obvious as vegetation becomes established. The

site of the pumping station did not reveal any features of archaeological interest. The new building is not obtrusive, and does not impact upon the setting of the ancient monument.

Area B

B1 Pen-Caledog (PRN 11143) SH30107890

There was no impact on this feature.

B2 Valley racecourse (PRN 16638) SH295791

No remains associated with the racecourse were noted. The area consisted of clean sand under a thin topsoil crossed by one fragmentary wall. From the nature of its construction, of sharp quarried stone, this appeared to be modern, and linked to an adjoining garden wall.

Valley Pumping station, Station Road, Valley (SH 294792)

A watching brief was maintained during the construction of a new pumping station at Station Road, Valley. The watching brief did not reveal any features of archaeological interest. Monitoring of construction revealed made-up ground for the first 0.3m, followed by clean sand deposits exhibiting no archaeological layers or features of interest. This area would have lain under tidal water prior to the construction of the dam at Tyddyn y Cob in the late 18th century.

B3 Tre Ifan (PRN 11216) SH30517863

There was no impact on this feature.

B4 Toll House, Caergeiliog (PRN 2527) SH30497858

There was no impact on this feature.

B5 Telford's Road and walling

There was no impact on this feature.

Area C

C1 Bridge, Pontrhydybont (PRN 16639) SH28007836

Work is still ongoing at this site. New pipes are being installed alongside the bridge to replace the old, and it is hoped to use the existing supports. The new pipes will be a less obtrusive colour than the old. No structural changes are being made to the bridge.

C2 Quay, Pontrhydybont (PRN 16640) SH27967834

There has been no impact on this site.

C3 Ford, Pontrhydybont SH27983850

There has been no impact on this site.

Area D

D1 Capel Gwyngenu (PRN 2017) SH26797809

No features were noted in the vicinity of the chapel. The trench was dug along the road, and thus conditions were not ideal for observing archaeology.

D2 Roman coin hoard (PRN 2012) SH25218259

No remains were noted that could be associated with the Roman coin hoard.

D3 Capel St Ffraid (PRN 2001; SAM An107) SH25637899

There was no impact on this site.

D4 Brooch findspot (PRN 2011) SH25468251

No remains were noted that could be associated with the brooch.

D5 Buried soil, Trearddur Bay Pumping station SH25747887

A new pumping station was constructed in the car park at Trearddur Bay. This station lies at the south-east end of the carpark alongside the junction of Ravenspoint Road with Lôn St Ffraid. A watching brief was undertaken to see if buried soil horizons remained within the sand deposits that could be compared with a series recorded during archaeological excavation of a cemetery site further to the north (Site D3 above). It was discovered that the first 0.65m of deposit was modern sand blow lying over the hard standing of the 1970's car park. The car park hard standing lay below, and then a layer of clean sand some 0.6m deep below the hard standing. At an approximate depth of 1.5m below the present surface was a dark humic layer, typical of those previously identified in the area as representing former turf lines during periods of sand stability. No dating evidence was recovered, though the nature of the sand above it was lighter in colour, resembling the modern wind-blown sand that lay above the car park hard standing, whereas the sand below it was darker in colour and of a slightly coarser nature. No plough marks were visible within the humic layer. At approximately 2m depth a dark red clay layer was reached. This was interpreted as glacial boulder clay. No further excavation was undertaken.

D6 Buried soil, Trearddur Bay SH25807895

During the digging of deep excavations across the road from the carpark evidence was found, 2m down, of a buried soil horizon within the sand deposits, approximately 10cm thick. It was not possible to gain access into the hole for reasons of health and safety. However, this must represent a stable period within the sand incursions, possibly within prehistoric times, as the depth is similar to the peat deposits found further north (D7 below). No dating evidence was found.

D7 Peat layer, Trearddur Bay SH25747910

Behind the post office a large area was stripped of topsoil revealing relatively clean sand into which deep piling was inserted. It was noted by the contractors that the piling cut through quantities of wood remains, including substantial tree trunks and lesser branches. These lay at a depth of approximately 2 metres below the surface. The method of working by the contractors precluded obtaining more information from the site. The remains may be of similar date to those visible at low tide in the bay, which are thought to date from *circa* 5000 BC. It has been suggested that the general area was formerly a pre-glacial course of the River Alaw, and that Trearddur Bay was once the mouth of the river (see Greenly 1919). The area has stayed wet, thus preserving the wood remains. A sample of wood has been retained, and though it is not suitable for dendro-chronological dating, a C14 date could be obtained from it.

Area E

E1 Roman coin hoard (PRN 2502) SH25908000

No remains were noted that could be associated with the Roman coin hoard.

E2 Burial chamber, Trearddur (PRN 2504) SH25978003

The route of the pipeline was altered in the vicinity of feature E2 to take advantage of less rocky ground and although this took the line closer to the site of the former chamber, no features of archaeological interest were noted.

E3 Trefignath burial chamber (PRN 2500; SAM An11) SH25868055

There was no direct impact on this site. No features of archaeological interest were noted in the vicinity of the tomb.

E4 Possible prehistoric settlement (PRN 14587) SH25738062

There was no impact on this site.

E5 Romano-British settlement, Trefignath (PRN 14599) SH25548075

The site was avoided, and there was no impact.

E6 Pen y Lon cottage, Trefignath (PRN 14588) SH25578080

A comprehensive watching brief was maintained in the vicinity of this site. The route did not impact directly upon the former cottage, however, in the vicinity a deeper level of topsoil was noted. Though initially this was interpreted as the result of increased cultivation depths in the vicinity of the cottage, the stratigraphy suggested that it was more likely to be associated with top soil dumping that took place both following the construction of Anglesey Aluminium and during the construction of the A55 dual carriageway.

E7 Romano-British settlement, Ty Mawr (PRN 14602) SH25548097

There was no impact on this site. The pipeline passed close to the east side of the site, but no features were noted. A series of trial excavations undertaken to the north of the site also failed to locate any archaeological remains (see GAT Report No. 524).

E8 Chester to Holyhead Railway Line SH25708102

The railway line was tunnelled under with no direct impact on the structure.

E9 Cobbled area opposite Tyddyn Uchaf SH25938018

An area of cobbling was uncovered, investigated and sectioned before removal. The site lay on the opposite side of the road to the farm of Tyddyn Uchaf. The road runs north-south, with Tyddyn Uchaf on the east side, and the cobbled area on the west. An area roughly 2.5m long lay the full width of the pipeline (approximately 3m at this point), and appeared to continue on both sides (east and west). The south edge was defined by a ditch that led into a pond on the opposite side of the road. The feature may form part of an earlier track, or an external yard associated with the farm at Tyddyn Uchaf. There was no dating evidence, and no other features were noted in the area. Cobbling of this type would usually date from anywhere within the period 1780 to 1920.



Figure 1: Location of archaeological sites in Area A. Scale: 1:8,000

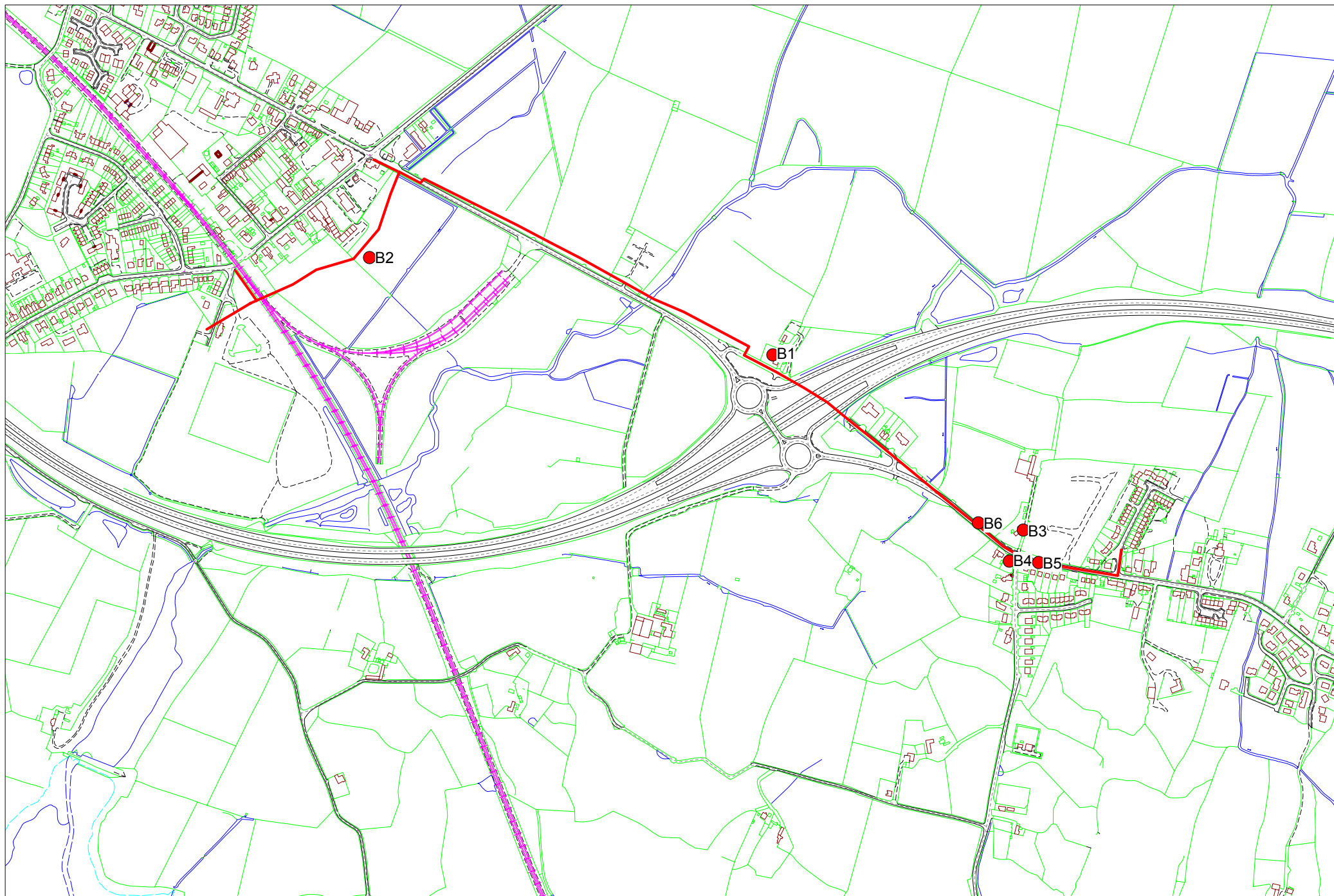


Figure 2: Location of archaeological sites in Area B. Scale: 1:8,000

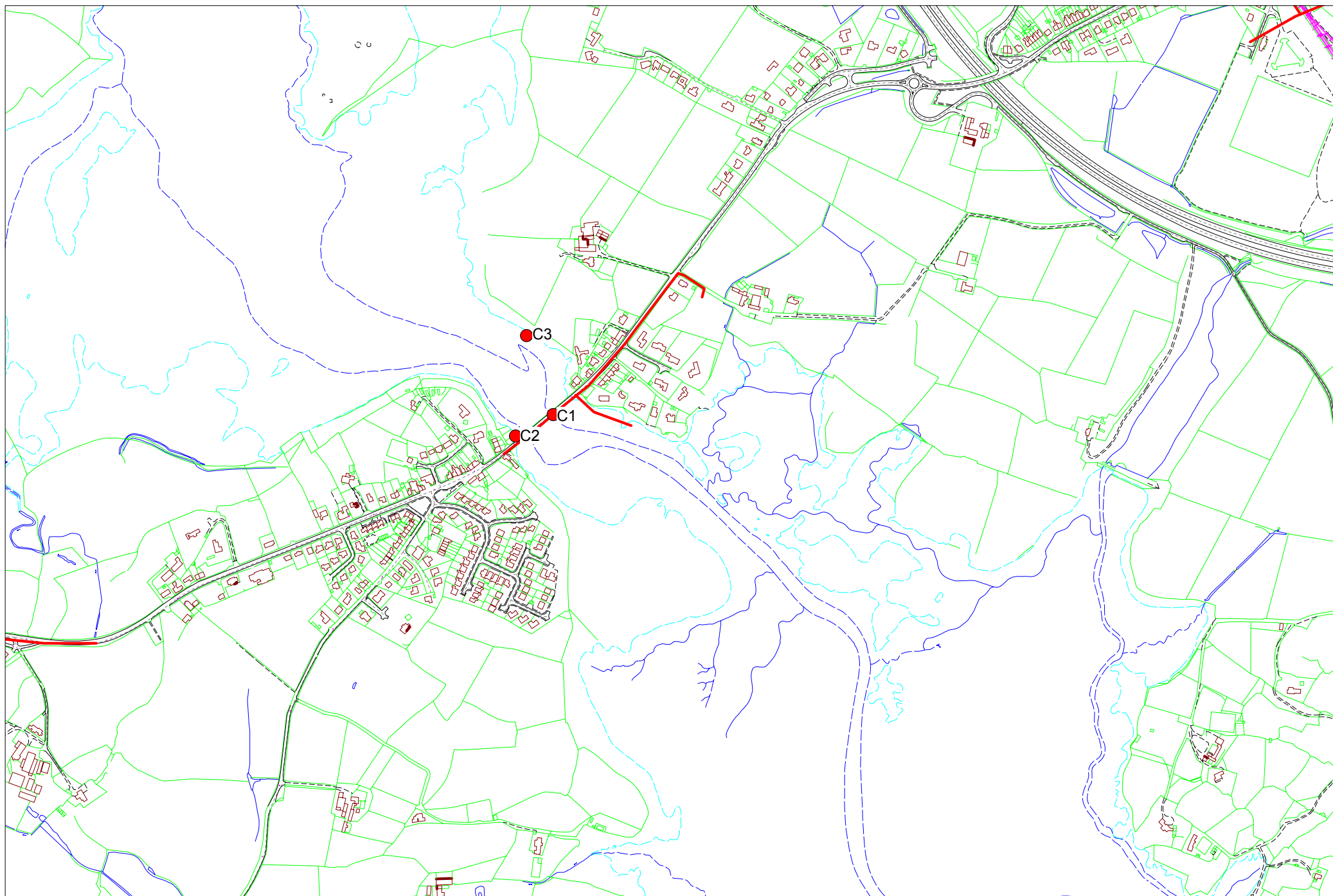


Figure 3: Location of archaeological sites in Area C. Scale: 1:8,000

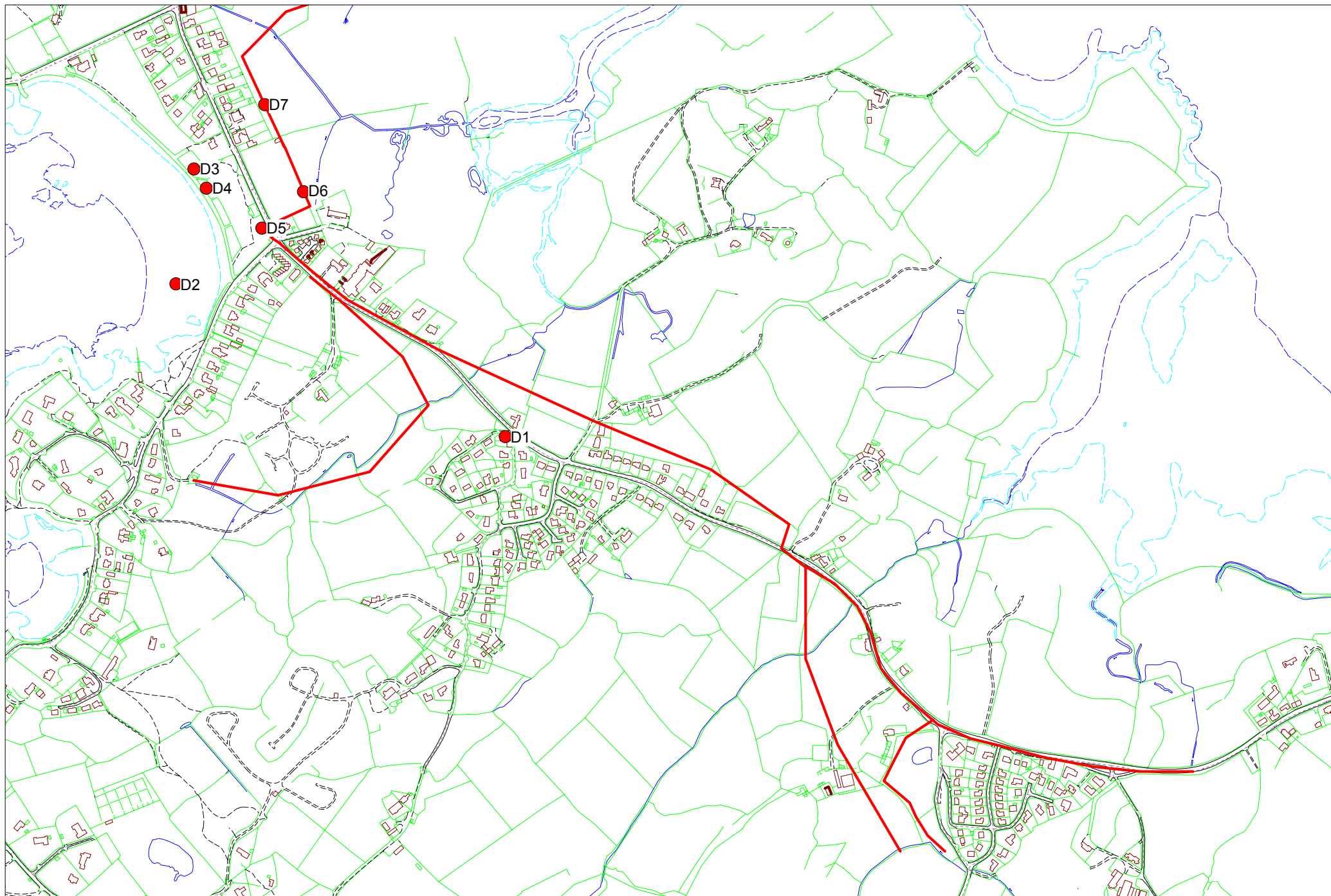


Figure 4: Location of archaeological sites in Area D. Scale: 1:8,000

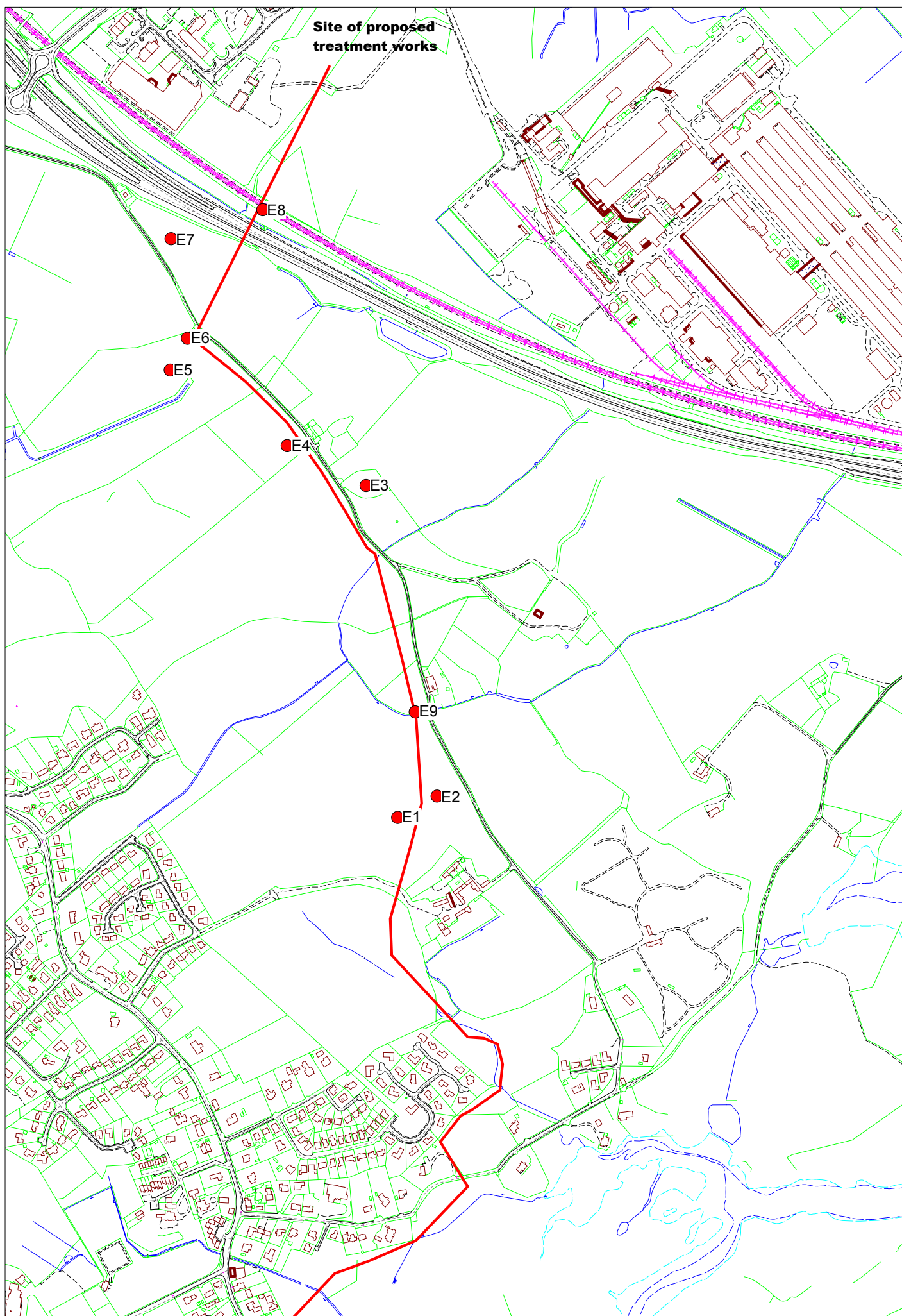


Figure 5: Location of archaeological sites in Area E. Scale 1:8000