Excavation Report

Pre-historic and Roman Remains at South Gate Hotel Thremhall Avenue Stanstead Airport

Excavation Report

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Prehistoric and Roman Remains at South Gate Hotel Site, Thremhall Avenue, Stanstead Airport.

Archaeological Excavation

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Summary

Between the dates of 05/05/2011 and 20/05/2011 Oxford Archaeology East carried out an archaeological excavation to the south of Stansted airport. The site is located within an area known within the greater Stansted airport development as South Gate, the sites southern boundary being formed by the east, west running A120.

Prior trial trenching was not required on the site, due to the extensive previous excavations surrounding the site. A brief was issued subsequent to the stripping of the agreed excavation area.

The excavation of the exposed archaeological deposits revealed Prehistoric remains that included a sequence of inter-cutting pits, some of which contained pottery of Bronze Age date. These features possibly represented watering holes that were either in continuous use or re-visited perhaps seasonally over an extended period of time. A large number of amorphous tree throws were recorded throughout the excavation area and a small number of these contained worked flints dating from the Mesolithic to early Bronze Age.

Early Romano-British field systems were also identified that formed part of a wider network of fields recorded during previous excavations.

At the western end of the site a palaeochannel was seen running roughly north-west to south-east. The deposits within the channel contained well stratified finds from each of the aforementioned periods, up to the post medieval period.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 In April 2011 an archaeological excavation was undertaken by Oxford Archaeology East (OAE) at South Gate Hotel Site, Thremhall Avenue, Stansted Airport in accordance with a Brief issued by Richard Havis of Essex County Council (ECC; Planning Application UTT/0557/09), supplemented by a Specification prepared by OA East (Clarke and Macaulay 2011).

1.1.2 The work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed redevelopment area, in accordance with the guidelines set out in *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment* (Department for Communities and Local Government 2010). The results will enable decisions to be made by ECC, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority, with regard to the treatment of any archaeological remains found.

1.1.3 The site archive is currently held by OA East and will be deposited with the appropriate county stores in due course.

1.2 Geology and topography

1.2.1 The site was located immediately to the north of the A120 carriageway (centred on NGR TL 54689 22026), 1.5km to the north-west of the village of Takeley and 2.5km south-east of the village of Stansted Mountfitchet. The course of Roman Stane Street lay further to the south.

1.2.2 In the immediate vicinity, modern re-development including the construction of road embankments and groundworks for recent developments, have had a significant impact on the landscape. The excavation was located on a small parcel of gradually undulating (at between 91m AOD and 88.5m AOD) and relatively undeveloped land given over to field systems. A partial section of a field boundary and associated hedgerow was surviving that crossed the excavation area.

1.2.3 The underlying geology was Boulder Clay overlying London Clay (BGS 1948). Colluvial deposits were recorded within the south-west corner of the adjacent site (Fig. 3: BAASG03).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 The proposed development lies within a landscape that has been extensively investigated over a number of years, most notably as part of the Stansted Project between 1985-1991 (Havis & Brooks 2004) and more recently between 1999 and 2004 by Framework Archaeology (Cooke, Brown and Phillpotts 2008). The scale of this work has enabled a detailed narrative of the changing nature of human activity, to be produced. The following summary draws upon these publications.

1.3.2 Archaeological remains, spanning the Neolithic to post-medieval periods, have been recorded within the locality. These range from settlements, fields and enclosures to cemeteries and ritual/ceremonial monuments and this evidence has contributed significantly to our understanding of a number of broad chronological themes and events including: the first major Neolithic incursions into the wooded claylands, expansion of settlement and forest clearance in the Bronze and Iron Ages, the establishment of large-scale agricultural landscapes in the Roman period and the development of more recognizable forms in the medieval period (Framework 2003).

1.3.3 Evaluation and excavation of the site immediately adjacent and to the east of the proposed development (known as South Gate Area 1A: BAAMP99) uncovered some of the earliest evidence for human activity comprising (residual) Mesolithic flints in addition to small quantities of Early and Middle Neolithic flint and pottery. Although generally scattered across the site and within tree-throws, there was a concentration of Neolithic activity on the western edge of the plateau overlooking Pincey Brook (Fig.3). Evidence for the Early Bronze Age was relatively sparse comprising small scatters of flint and pottery; no features were identified. Of interest to the site described here was the presence of a Middle Iron Age pit identified at the western extent of the excavation, close to the proposed development. This contained dumped material, probably deriving from domestic midden waste, including sherds from at least five vessels, suggesting nearby occupation.

1.3.4 During the Early Romano-British period an extensive network of rectilinear fields appear to have been laid out across the area. The corner of a large Late Saxon enclosure was also exposed in the north-west corner of the site and a number of contemporary features, including a cess pit, were also recorded. These were predominantly located in the northern half of the area, away from the proposed development (Fig. 3).

1.3.5 Further evidence of land division in the medieval and post-medieval periods was indicated by a ditch located along the southern edge of the site, close to the development area. It was orientated on a north-west to south-east alignment similar to elements of the Romano-British field system and may have been re-cut along the line of an earlier boundary.

1.4 Acknowledgements

1.4.1 The author would like thank Urban Innovations who funded the project and commissioned the archaeological work. The project was managed by Aileen Connor. The site was surveyed and pre-excavation plan was undertaken by Rachel Clarke. Thanks also to the site staff, Brenton Culshaw, Kate Clover, Michael Webster, Yvonne Heath, Lindsey Kemp, Dennis Morgan, Lian Waring, Stephen Colison, and Elizabeth Colison. The project was monitored by Richard Havis of ECC.

2 Aims and Methodology

2.1 Aims

2.1.1 The aims of the project were set out in the Project Design (Clarke and Macaulay 2011), these are re-iterated here:

2.1.2 The main aim of the project was to preserve the archaeological evidence contained within the excavation area by record and to attempt a reconstruction of the history and use of the site.

2.1.3 Given the location of the proposed development in relation to previous projects at Stansted it was hoped to be able to tie the project's aims into the broader thematic research framework developed by Framework Archaeology, with reference to the Regional Research Agenda (Brown and Glazebrook 2000).

The broad research framework (based on Framework Archaeology 2003) comprised:

1. general themes of human endeavour;

2. how people interact socially, spiritually, politically and economically;

3. how people interact with and exploit their environment and natural resources;

4. different trajectories of change for different aspects of human behaviour.

2.1.4 Several more specific research questions evolved during the course of excavations at the various Stansted sites, in particular the adjacent South Gate site, which were thought to be potentially applicable to the current site:

1. How and when was the area cleared of tree cover, and how did its use for agriculture and settlement develop through the prehistoric (and into later periods)? How early was the Boulder Clay brought into cultivation?

2. How did human activity develop through time in relation to subtle topographic features within what is, at face value, a fairly homogenous landscape?

3. How do changes in the transitory or more permanent nature of settlement activity relate chronologically and spatially to change or continuity in social groupings, land division, land use and environmental change?

4. When and how did the major prehistoric (and later) boundaries first develop, and how did the perception of their function change over time?

5. What were the routes and patterns of communication in prehistory, and how did these affect the social network of the inhabitants of the site?

2.1.5 Site Specific

Mesolithic

2.1.6 Although considered to have low potential, the project aim for this period was to seek further evidence of Mesolithic date.

Neolithic

2.1.7 Evidence relating to the Neolithic period was thought to have high potential based on the results of earlier archaeological work in the area which included the presence of natural tree throw hollows (possibly representing clearings) several of which had been

utilised and contained flint and pottery of Early and Middle Neolithic date, often in association with burnt material.

2.1.8 Although environmental samples from these features produced fairly poor results, it was hoped that further sampling may produce better results that would enable further reconstruction of the palaeoenvironment and exploitation of resources in this period.

2.1.9 Other sites within the vicinity (e.g. Mid Term Car Park) produced slightly different evidence in the form of pits containing Neolithic material. The contrast between areas of pitting and areas where utilised tree throws occur was thought to relate to different patterns of land use or attitudes towards the landscape. Radiocarbon determinations were obtained from material within two of these pits and suitable samples/deposits will be sought during excavation of the current site to further refine the chronology and extent of Neolithic land use in this area.

Bronze Age

2.1.10 Although Bronze Age pottery has been found in the vicinity much of it has come from later features. It was therefore proposed that the apparent absence of features of Bronze Age date should be further explored.

Iron Age

2.1.11 It was thought that features and finds of Middle Iron Age date had high potential given the evidence from the adjacent excavation.

2.1.12 The pit fills produced good environmental remains and pottery assemblage suggesting that similarly well-preserved remains may be present on the current site offering the potential to refine ceramic chronologies especially if combined with radio carbon dating.

Romano-British

2.1.13 It was considered highly likely that the field system revealed in the adjacent site extends into the proposed development area. Further evidence for the date, extent and longevity of these fields sought, in addition to any environmental remains that might indicate what agricultural regimes were being implemented.

Late Saxon

2.1.14 The presence of a substantial Late Saxon enclosure and a number of contemporary pits in the adjacent site, with associated field system to the east suggests that there is some potential for features of this date within the current development site. If present, activity of this date based on current evidence, is likely to be of a peripheral nature but will provide evidence for the organisation of the landscape in the post-Roman period.

Medieval and post-medieval

2.1.15 Previous investigations indicate that there is relatively low potential for features of medieval and post-medieval date within the current site. Again it is probable that field boundaries and other agricultural features are present – do the alignments in these periods mirror those of earlier periods and the local topography. What is the date of the extant hedgerow on the site and how does it relate to earlier alignments?

2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 The Methodology used followed that set out in the ECC Brief (Havis 2010) and the OAE Project Design (Clarke and Macaulay 2011).

2.2.2 Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a tracked 360 excavator using a toothless ditching bucket.

2.2.3 Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal detector. Only obviously modern artefacts were recovered and these were discarded.

2.2.4 All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using OA East's *pro-forma* sheets. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales and colour digital and monochrome photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits.

2.2.5 A pre-excavation plan of all features was produced using a dGPS (Leica 1200) receiving SmartNET correctional data.

2.2.6 All excavated features were planned by hand and located onto the Ordnance Survey using the dGPS; site levels were also recorded using this method.

2.2.7 All excavation areas were cleaned as necessary to facilitate the identification of archaeological features and buried soils.

2.2.8 Linear features were sample excavated to establish their date and allow an informed interpretation of their function. Excavation slots were generally be 1.0 to 1.5m in width but otherwise appropriate to the feature being investigated. They were appropriately spaced to provide a controlled sample of all ditches for comparison across the project. Intersections were targeted to establish contemporaneity or phasing and at undisturbed lengths of ditch to recover securely stratified assemblages.

2.2.9 Generally all discrete features were 50% sample excavated. Intersections were investigated to determine the relationship(s). A significant number of tree-throws were present and a *c*.30% sample of these was investigated. A large area of intercutting pits was present, this was excavated in quadrants.

2.2.10 Each feature was individually documented on context sheets and hand drawn in section and plan at an appropriate scale.

2.2.11 A total of 8 bulk samples (minimum 20L) were collected. Features sampled include pits and ditches dating from the prehistoric to the Roman period.

2.2.12 The site conditions were very dry, making excavation and finds retrieval difficult, however it is not thought this inhibited the archaeological work.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The results will be described by chronological period, beginning with the earliest activity to the latest, from west to east across the site. The phasing applied to the site is based on a combination of datable finds, stratigraphic associations, spatial patterns and character of individual features. It should be noted that the dating provided by finds is limited due to both the sparsity of the finds and in the case of the prehistoric pottery a difficulty in distinguishing between Neolithic and Bronze Age fabrics (Howard- Davis, Appendix). In addition stratigraphic associations are limited, thus much of the phasing is based upon spatial patterning and characteristics of individual features.

3.1.2 It should be noted that the site had clearly been subject to a previous topsoil strip and there were signs of modern wheel ruts cutting into the natural sub-soil, it may therefore be concluded that the site had suffered from a degree of horizontal truncation that may have disturbed or even removed any shallower features.

3.2 Prehistoric

3.2.1 Extensive silty clay deposits were recorded on the low ground in the south-west corner of the site. A series of test pits (161, 162, 164, 167, 168, 169) were excavated through these deposits and the finds retrieved from them suggested a gradual deposition over an extended period of time, quite probably as a result of silts washed into the hollow (colluvium). The filling of the hollow is likely to have occurred over a long period of time since the basal layers contained predominantly prehistoric artefacts, overlain by deposits containing Roman finds. In the far south-western corner of the site the deposits deepened and comprised a more silty material containing finds of post medieval date.

3.2.2 Overall the finds assemblage recovered by the excavation was very small, however there were sufficient finds, recovered from a range of distinct feature types, to enable the identification and relative dating of a proportion of the features (App. B).

3.2.3 The majority of the features attributed to the prehistoric period fall into two categories; tree throws and pits (App. A). Differentiation between pits and tree throws is ambiguous with form and shape being the best indicator of type as there was very little difference between fills. Pits and tree throws alike were found to contain occasional worked flint finds of similar date and type. In total 98 discrete features were identified, of these 29 were excavated and of those only 6 were identified as pits; these were generally located at the western side of the site. A total of nineteen tree throws were excavated and recorded, finds of any kind were only recovered from three of the features. Three refitting flint flakes were recovered from 103, and were consistent with early Bronze Age material. While the second two features contained a single worked flake, 136, and, 174. These features appear to be recognised in the surrounding landscape. “At Stansted evidence for Neolithic and Early Bronze Age (c 4000-c 1700 cal BC) activity is characterised by scattered pits and tree-throws into which a range of artefactual material was deposited.” (Cooke, Brown and Phillpotts. 2008). This apparent consistency across the landscape may represent a gradual tree clearance across the landscape leading up to the Middle Bronze Age.

3.2.4 In the western part of the excavation area a large area of disturbed ground was investigated by excavated quadrants (Fig.5;). This proved to be two groups of intercutting pits, and the stratigraphic relationships suggested that the larger,

southernmost pit (231 *et al*) sequence superseded the smaller group to the north-west (259 *et al*).

3.2.5 This sequence comprised a total of 34 intercutting pits of varying shape and size, two of which (**257** & **265,** both in the earlier pit group) contained Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age pottery (Appendix B2), a layer of slumped material (230) that sealed the features was also found to contain pot sherds of a similar date. The scarcity of finds and lack of diagnostic sherds prevented close dating of the sequence. Worked flint was recovered from eight deposits, the majority of this material was attributed to later prehistoric activity, which is consistent with the pottery. Flakes of probable earlier date, including a Mesolithic/Early Neolithic blade based removal flake (App. B1), are likely to represent residual finds within the pit deposits, possible derived from surface scatter prior to the pitting activity.

3.2.6 The pits varied in depth from 0.4m to 1.1m and were between 1m to 3m in width. The stratigraphic relationships were not always clear within the pits and it is possible that some of the cuts were made while earlier pits were still open, or partially open. The pit fills were generally homogeneous, comprising a mid yellowish brown silt clay, although occasional darker fills were encountered.

3.2.7 To the north of the intercutting pits, a tree throw (**103**) was excavated that contained three refitting secondary flakes of Early Bronze Age date (App. B1). Tree throw **103** was 1.8m in length, 1.4m in width and 0.15m in depth, with a sub-circular shape in plan with a light greyish yellow, silty clay fill (104).

3.2.8 Further to the east, an elongated pit (**291**) measuring 4.6m in length, 1m in width, and 0.36m in depth was investigated. Its fill was a mid yellow brown silty clay that contained a single flint object of Mesolithic/earlier Neolithic date, this may have been a residual find.

3.3 Romano-British

3.3.1 The features attributed to the Roman period comprised a series of ditches recorded traversing the site on a variety of alignments. Highly abraded Roman sherds were also recovered from the possible colluvial deposits (168) (Fig. 7, section 26) in the south-western corner of the site.

3.3.2 In the north-western corner of the excavation area a ditch (**105**) (fig 7, Section 2) was recorded on a north-west to south-east alignment. As it passed the pit group described above (para. 3.2.4) its alignment changed onto a more southerly course. Ditch **105** measured 0.55m in width by 0.21m in depth. Its fill, a mid yellowish brown silty clay, contained Roman pottery including the bottom half of a jar or flagon (App. B2).

3.3.3 Ditch **105**, was truncated by a perpendicularly aligned ditch (**209**), which also truncated the intercutting pits and measured 0.8m in width by 0.27m depth. The fill was a mid brown silty clay, from which a small number of residual worked flints were recovered.

3.3.4 To the south-east, another ditch (**223**) (fig. 7, section 46) was excavated that entered the excavation area from the south and continued for 65m before terminating, it was not clear whether this represented a ditch terminal or merely truncation of the feature by later activity. Ditch **223** was 0.8m in width, with a depth of 0.27m, it contained two fills (281 & 282) that yielded small abraded Roman pot sherds (App. B2).

3.3.5 Towards the eastern limit of the excavation, Ditch **223** was truncated by Ditch **316** (fig. 8, section 61) which lay on the same alignment as Ditch **209**, to the west. A clearly defined break in the ditch was recorded in the ditch which formed a 3m wide gap that

may have represented an entrance to an enclosure. Ditch **316** measured 0.55m in width and 0.34m in depth, it contained two fills, from which no finds were recovered.

3.4 Post Medieval / Medieval

3.4.1 Evidence of the former agricultural landscape survived within the development area in the form of a field boundary ditch (**321**) with dense vegetation forming a hedgerow (Plate 15). The ditch measured 2.7m in width, and 1.07m in depth, both measurements are taken from the top of the top soil, the ditch itself is only partially backfilled. The ditch edges were highly disturbed by root action and faunal activity.

3.5 Modern

3.5.1 During the machining of the site it became apparent that the topsoil had been removed across the majority of the development area. The remaining soils were approximately 0.15m thick, although soil coverage was greater in the low ground to the west and east of the excavation. The southern central part of the site was also highly disturbed by vehicle rutting that was between 0.02m and 0.1m in depth and, indicative of a vehicle reversing and turning in wet conditions. It seems likely that this disturbance was related to the construction of the A120 road immediately to the south.

3.5.2 At the eastern extremity of the excavation area the remains of previous evaluation trenches were observed (see fig. 3).

4 Factual Data and Assessment of Archaeological Potential

4.1 Stratigraphic data

4.1.1 207 contexts were allocated, 79 of which are categorised as cuts, 117 are fills and 11 layers. Of these the majority are tree throws, the majority of which contained no artefacts.

4.1.2 The majority of the datable features are likely to be later prehistoric in date and a group of intercutting pits, possibly for quarrying is the most notable feature group. There is also evidence for tree clearance (tree throws) in the prehistoric period and the vesitges of a Roman field system.

4.1.3 On its own the site contributes little to our understanding of the Stansted landscape, however in its wider context it provides a useful contribution to the overall picture, although not significant enough to warrant full publication, the results should be summarised for inclusion in a local journal.

4.1.4 The site archive comprises 207 context records, 67 section drawings, 52 plans, 238 digital photographs and 132 monochrome photographs

4.2 Finds Summary

4.2.1 The finds assemblages recovered by the excavation were very small and comprised only pottery, worked flints and animal bones, no small finds were recovered and despite sampling, no environmental remains were found (App. B).

4.2.2 116 worked flints and eight unworked burnt flints were recovered from the excavation. The flint assemblage is assumed to be largely residual, with the artefacts entering features from surface scatters. In light of the size and nature of the assemblage detailed technological analysis of the flintwork is considered unnecessary although any publication should include a brief presentation of the assemblage (App. B1).

4.2.3 The pottery assemblage comprises 127 sherds, many of which were small, friable and often abraded. The assemblage was also very mixed, containing material ranging in date from the Bronze Age (or earlier) to the Romano-British period. The assemblage is generally poorly preserved and there are few distinguishing traits such as surface treatments surviving. The pottery assemblage is not therefore considered to have good potential for further analysis (App. B2).

4.2.4 Few diagnostic examples are present in either the pottery or flint assemblage and this precludes tight dating of the site. However, it has been possible to make comparisons with the previously excavated Stansted assemblages.

4.3 Environmental Summary

4.3.1 The faunal assemblage was small and very fragmentary comprising only 35 fragments of which less than half are identifiable to species. The animal bone assemblage is not sufficiently large of well preserved to warrant further work.

4.3.2 A total of 8 bulk samples were taken from a range of features on site, all the samples proved to be devoid of ecofactual evidence. This may be due to adverse soil conditions, not conducive to preservation, or indicate that no settlement or agricultural practices, such as crop processing, were occurring in the vicinity. No further work is recommended.

5 Updated Research Aims and Objectives

5.1 General Aims

5.1.1 The main aim of the project; to preserve the archaeological evidence contained within the excavation area by record and to attempt a reconstruction of the history and use of the site is still valid.

5.1.2 The evidence retrieved from the site is insufficient to contribute towards the majority of the general themes developed by Framework Archaeology (2003). Although the excavation can contribute towards theme 3. how people interact with and exploit their environment and natural resources.

5.1.3 This excavation has provided additional evidence that can make a limited contribution towards some of the original aims listed above in section 2.1.4. The evidence for tree clearance, although limited is particularly relevant to these aims, as is the evidence for later field systems.

5.2 Site Specific

5.2.1 Mesolithic

Perhaps unsurprisingly, no archaeological features relating to this period were found on the site, however a Mesolithic/earlier Neolithic presence is indicated by a small number of flint artefacts, which is likely to represent occasional visits to the site.

5.2.2 Neolithic

Evidence relating to the Neolithic period was thought to have high potential based on the results of earlier archaeological work in the area which included the presence of

natural tree throw hollows (possibly representing clearings) several of which had been utilised and contained flint and pottery of Early and Middle Neolithic date, often in association with burnt material.

Although environmental samples from these features produced fairly poor results, it was hoped that further sampling may produce better results that would enable further reconstruction of the palaeoenvironment and exploitation of resources in this period.

Other sites within the vicinity (Mid Term Car Park) produced slightly different evidence in the form of pits containing Neolithic material. The contrast between areas of pitting and areas where utilised tree throws occur was thought to relate to different patterns of land use or attitudes towards the landscape. Radiocarbon determinations were obtained from material within two of these pits and suitable samples/deposits will be sought during excavation of the current site to further refine the chronology and extent of Neolithic land use in this area.

5.2.3 Bronze Age

Although Bronze Age pottery has been found in the vicinity much of it has come from later features. It was therefore proposed that the apparent absence of features of Bronze Age date should be further explored.

5.2.4 Iron Age

It was thought that features and finds of Middle Iron Age date had high potential given the evidence from the adjacent excavation.

The pit fills produced good environmental remains and pottery assemblage suggesting that similarly well-preserved remains may be present on the current site offering the potential to refine ceramic chronologies especially if combined with radio carbon dating.

5.2.5 Romano-British

It was considered highly likely that the field system revealed in the adjacent site extends into the proposed development area. Further evidence for the date, extent and longevity of these fields sought, in addition to any environmental remains that might indicate what agricultural regimes were being implemented.

5.2.6 Late Saxon

The presence of a substantial Late Saxon enclosure and a number of contemporary pits in the adjacent site, with associated field system to the east suggests that there is some potential for features of this date within the current development site. If present, activity of this date based on current evidence, is likely to be of a peripheral nature but will provide evidence for the organisation of the landscape in the post-Roman period.

5.2.7 Medieval and post-medieval

Previous investigations indicate that there is relatively low potential for features of medieval and post-medieval date within the current site. Again it is probable that field boundaries and other agricultural features are present – do the alignments in these periods mirror those of earlier periods and the local topography. What is the date of the extant hedgerow on the site and how does it relate to earlier alignments?

6 Discussion and Conclusions

6.1 Prehistoric

6.1.1 The earliest evidence for activity on the site came in the form of a small number of Mesolithic or earlier Neolithic artefacts. The assemblage is indicative of infrequent activity over an extended period of time and fits the pattern of occupation identified in the wider landscape by previous Framework excavations. “There is no direct evidence from the excavations at Stansted for this growth and the impact of Mesolithic inhabitation on the Stansted landscape is likely to have been minimal. The small quantity of diagnostic flints suggests that each episode of activity was not particularly prolonged or intensive.” (Cooke, Brown and Phillpotts. 2008). This continues to be true throughout the Neolithic, certainly within this excavation, with artefacts of the period appearing residually within features, or within tree throws.

6.1.2 A further trend identified within the surrounding landscape is the establishment of settled activity in the Middle Bronze Age. Although no clear evidence for settlement was recorded by the excavation, the sequence of intercutting pits is suggestive of the repeated re-use of the site, which may indicate that a settlement lay nearby. This may have been of slightly later date as aside from the earlier residual fragments, the pottery recovered from the pits was exclusively dated to the Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age.

6.1.3 The function of the pit sequence is less clear and the lack of parallels makes a definitive answer difficult. The pits have characteristics similar to quarry activity, however the raw material available for extraction would have been of limited use and it would appear that many of the pits were re-cut through earlier features and therefore not breaking virgin ground, making quarry activity unlikely. The paucity of material culture and apparent absence of nearby settlement, would also rule out domestic waste disposal. It appears most likely that the pits represent watering holes, perhaps for livestock. The intensity of the re-cutting may suggest a long period of use or intermittent re-visiting, possibly seasonal in nature.

6.2 Romano-British

6.2.1 The ditches recorded by the excavation fit the pattern observed in the wider landscape (fig 3). Based on their alignments it would appear that several of them can be incorporated into the “substantial series of rectilinear fields” identified within the BAASG03 site (Cooke, Brown and Phillpotts. 2008).

6.2.2 It appears likely that Ditch **223** and Ditch **105** formed the corner of a slightly irregular boundary, perhaps an earlier field system, that was either partially incorporated or superseded by a larger network of fields. The small assemblage of pottery recovered from the ditches ranged in date from the 1st to 2nd century, which is broadly in line with the findings of the earlier works nearby where it has been noted that close dating of the boundaries is problematic, resulting in their attribution to the Early Romano-British period (Cooke, Brown and Phillpotts. 2008).

6.3 Post Medieval / Medieval

6.3.1 The section of field boundary surviving within the excavation area can be seen on maps prior to the airport development (fig. 2). The hedgerow and ditch formed part of the field systems which existed prior to the construction of the airport, and subsequent associated developments.

6.4 Significance

6.4.1 The site should be considered in conjunction with the other excavations in the locality. Staged, large scale excavations of this nature provide a unique opportunity to contribute to a wider understanding of the development and use of the landscape.

6.5 Recommendations

6.5.1 It is recommended that the lithics assemblage should be placed in its wider context and the key objects illustrated as recommended in Appendix B1, this should be included with a summary of the results of the excavations and be submitted for inclusion in the journal *Essex Archaeology and History.*

Appendix A. Trench Descriptions and Context Inventory

Context	Cut	Category	Feature Type	Length	Breadth	Depth
101		layer	subsoil			0.1
102		layer	natural			
103	103	cut	tree Throw	1.8	1.4	0.15
104	103	fill	tree throw	1.8	1.4	0.15
105	105	cut	ditch	0	0.55	0.21
106	105	fill	ditch	0	0.55	0.21
107	107	cut	tree throw	0	2	0.07
108	1070	fill	tree throw	0	2	0.07
109	109	cut	tree throw	1.07	0.65	0.18
110	109	fill	tree throw	1.07	0.67	0.18
111	111	cut	tree throw	1.19	0.79	0.21
112	111	fill	tree throw	0.65	0.31	0.14
113	111	fill	tree throw	1.19	0.79	0.21
114	114	cut	post hole	0	0.2	0.07
115	114	fill	post hole	0	0.2	0.07
116	116	cut	tree throw	0.64	0.28	0.09
117	116	fill	tree throw	0.64	0.28	0.09
118	0	layer	Modern	0		
119	0	layer	Palaeo channel	0		
120	0	layer	Palaeo channel	0		
130	0	layer	buried soil	1	1	0.32
131	0	layer	natural	1	1	0.07
132	132	cut	post hole	0	0.5	0.15
133	132	fill	post hole	0	0.5	0.15
134	134	cut	post hole	0.32	0.36	0.15
135	134	fill	post hole	0.32	0.36	0.15
136	136	cut	tree bowl	0.7	0.35	0.25
137	136	fill	tree throw	0.7	0.35	0.25
138	138	cut	tree throw	0.9	0.61	0.23
139	138	fill	tree throw	0.9	0.61	0.23
140	0	layer	natural	1	1	0.35
141	0	layer	natural	1	1	0.14
142	142	cut	post hole	0.5	0.42	0.26
143	142	fill	post hole	0.5	0.42	0.26
144	144	cut	post hole	0.56	0.44	0.3
145	144	fill	post hole	0.56	0.44	0.3
146	146	cut	post hole	0.42	0.25	0.2
147	146	fill	post hole	0.42	0.25	0.2
148	148	fill	Palaeo channel	1	1	0.2

Context	Cut	Category	Feature Type	Length	Breadth	Depth
149	149	cut	tree bowl	1.2	0.6	0.18
150	149	fill	tree bowl	1.2	0.6	0.18
151	150	cut	tree bowl	2	0.6	0.08
152	151	fill	tree bowl	0		
153	153	cut	tree bowl	1.4	0.8	0.15
154	153	fill	tree bowl	0		
155	155	cut	pit	0.96	1.22	0.46
156	155	fill	pit	0.76	1.22	0.22
157	155	fill	pit	0.65	1.22	0.34
158	155	fill	pit	0.57	1.22	0.2
159	159	cut	pit	0	0.85	0.45
160	159	fill	pit	0		
161	0	fill	test Pit	1	1	0.42
162	0	fill	test pit	1	1	0.05
163	159	fill	pit	0		0.2
164	0	fill	test pit	1	1	0.14
165	0	layer	palaeo channel	0	1	
166	0	layer	Palaeo channel	1	1	0.1
167	0	fill	test pit	1	1	0.1
168	0	fill	test pit	1	1	0.43
169	168	fill	test pit	1	1	0.1
170	171	fill	tree bowl	1.42	1	0.12
171	171	cut	tree bowl	1.42	1	0.12
172	173	fill	pit	0.72	0.88	0.16
173	173	cut	pit	0.72	0.88	0.16
174	174	cut	tree bowl	2.4	1.2	0.28
175	174	fill	tree bowl	2.4	1.2	0.28
176	176	cut	tree bowl	1.5	1.1	0.47
177	176	fill	tree bowl	1.5	1.1	0.25
180	18	cut	pit	0	1.6	0.6
181	176	fill	tree bowl	0		
182	180	fill	pit	0	1.6	0.37
183	180	fill	pit	0	1.34	0.23
184	185	fill	ditch	0	1	0.3
185	185	cut	ditch	0	1	0.3
186	187	fill	tree bowl	1.12	1.09	0.13
187	187	cut	tree bowl	1.12	1.09	0.28
188	187	fill	tree bowl	1.12	1.09	0.15
189	189	cut	ditch	1	0.5	0.33
190	189	fill	ditch	1	0.5	0.17
191	189	fill	ditch	1	0.42	0.16
192	192	cut	pit	0	0.7	0.16

Context	Cut	Category	Feature Type	Length	Breadth	Depth
193	192	fill	pit	0	0.7	0.16
194	195	fill	pit	0	0.95	0.45
195	195	cut	pit	0	0.95	0.45
196	197	fill	pit	0	0.51	0.49
197	197	cut	pit	0	0.51	0.49
198	199	fill	pit	0	0.57	0.34
199	199	cut	pit	0	0.57	0.34
200	201	fill	ditch	0	0.56	0.32
201	201	cut	ditch	0	0.56	0.32
202	204	fill	ditch	1.1	0.93	0.39
203	204	fill	ditch	1	0.93	0.04
204	204	cut	ditch	1	0.93	0.43
205	206	fill	pit	1.11	0.92	0.28
206	206	cut	pit	1.11	0.92	0.28
207	207	cut	pit	0	0.8	0.4
208	207	fill	pit	0	0.8	0.4
209	209	cut	ditch	0	0.8	0.27
210	209	fill	ditch	0	0.8	0.27
211	211	cut	post hole	0.36	0.2	0.05
213	214	fill	pit	1.01	1.08	0.28
214	214	cut	pit	1.01	1.08	0.28
215	216	fill	pit	0	0.99	0.09
216	216	cut	pit	0	0.99	0.09
217	0	fill	tree bowl	0.46	0.26	0.05
218	219	fill	tree bowl	1.14	0.88	0.1
219	219	cut	tree bowl	1.14	0.88	0.1
220	221	fill	tree bowl	0.68	0.7	0.26
221	22	cut	tree bowl	0.68	0.7	0.26
222	223	fill	ditch	0	0.48	0.11
223	223	cut	ditch	0	0.8	0.38
224	223	fill	ditch	0	0.8	0.27
225	226	fill	wheel rut	0.13	0.4	0.1
226	226	cut	wheel rut	0.13	0.4	0.1
227	214	fill	pit	2.96	2.34	0.08
228	229	fill	natural	1	0.62	0.16
229	229	cut	hedgeline	1	0.62	0.16
231	231	cut	ditch	0		
232	231	fill	ditch	0		
233	233	cut	ditch	0		
234	233	fill	ditch	0		
251	251	cut	pit	2.2	2.95	0.48
252	251	fill	pit	1.8	2.8	0.14

Context	Cut	Category	Feature Type	Length	Breadth	Depth
253	251	fill	pit	1.1	2.64	0.3
254	251	fill	pit	0.8	2.26	0.12
257	257	cut	pit	0	3.06	0.72
258	0	fill	pit	0	3.06	0.72
259	259	cut	pit	2.92	1.2	0.66
260	259	fill	pit	2.92	1.2	0.66
261	261	cut	pit	0	2.04	0.45
262	261	fill	pit	0	2.04	0.45
263	263	cut	pit	0	1.64	0.25
264	263	fill	pit	0	1.64	0.25
265	265	cut	pit	0	2.94	1.02
266	265	fill	pit	0	2.94	0.88
267	268	cut	pit		1.12	0.3
268	267	fill	pit	0	1.12	0.3
269	0	cut	pit	0	1.14	0.6
270	269	fill	pit	0	1.14	0.6
271	271	cut	pit	0	1.14	0.34
272	271	fill	pit	0	1.14	0.34
273	0	cut	pit	0	0.6	0.5
274	273	fill	pit	0	0.6	0.5
275	278	fill	ditch	1.08	0.16	0.16
276	278	fill	ditch	0	0.27	0.22
277	278	fill	ditch	0	0.42	0.1
278	278	cut	ditch	0	0.54	0.25
279	279	cut	pit	0	0.7	0.18
280	279	fill	pit	0	0.7	0.18
281	283	fill	ditch	0	0.8	0.16
282	0	fill	ditch	0	0.58	0.28
283	283	cut	ditch	0	0.8	0.44
284	288	fill	ditch	0.9	0.56	0.21
285	288	fill	ditch	0.9	0.54	0.09
286	288	fill	ditch	0.9	0.52	0.11
287	288	fill	ditch	0.9	0.4	0.12
288	288	cut	ditch	0.9	0.56	0.39
289	289	cut	tree throw	0	0.48	0.14
290	289	fill	tree throw	0	0.48	0.14
291	291	cut	pit	4.6	1	0.36
292	291	fill	pit	4.6	1	0.36
293	293	cut	pit	0	0.21	0.55
294	293	fill	pit	0	0.21	0.4
295	296	fill	pit	0.59	0.37	0.24
296	296	cut	pit	0.59	0.37	0.24

Context	Cut	Category	Feature Type	Length	Breadth	Depth
297	298	fill	pit	1.48	1.23	0.59
298	298	cut	pit	1.48	1.23	0.59
299	300	fill	pit	0.92	0.44	0.31
300	300	cut	pit	0.92	0.44	0.31
301	302	fill	pit	1.03	0.81	0.21
302	302	cut	pit	1.03	0.81	0.21
303	304	fill	pit	1.44	0.81	0.32
304	304	cut	pit	1.44	0.81	0.32
305	306	fill	pit	1.21	1.08	0.37
306	306	cut	pit	1.21	0.81	0.37
307	308	fill	pit	1.03	0.96	0.15
308	308	cut	pit	1.03	0.96	0.15
309	293	fill	pit	0		
310	293	fill	pit	0		
311	311	cut	tree bowl	2.8	1.38	0.38
312	311	fill	tree bowl	2.8	1.38	0.32
313	311	fill	tree bowl	2		0.09
314	316	fill	ditch	0	0.55	0.2
315	316	fill	ditch	0	0.5	0.13
316	316	cut	ditch	0	0.55	0.34
317	319	fill	ditch	0	0.5	0.32
318	319	fill	ditch	0	0.75	0.2
319	319	cut	ditch	0	0.55	0.4
322	324	fill	ditch	0	0.61	0.35
323	324	fill	ditch	0	0.28	0.11
324	324	cut	ditch	0	0.61	0.39
325	265	fill	pit	0	2.84	0.58
326	265	fill	pit	0	1.46	0.46
327	271	fill	pit	0	1.14	0.2
328	257	fill	pit	0	3.06	0.34
329	316	fill	ditch	0	0.3	0.06
330	330	cut	post hole	0	0.3	0.35
331	330	fill	post hole	0	0.3	0.35
332	333	fill	post hole	0.5	0.32	0.15
333	0	cut	post hole	0.5	0.32	0.15

Table 1. Context inventory

APPENDIX B. FINDS REPORTS

B.1 Lithics

By Lawrence Billington

Quantification

B.1.1 A total of 116 worked flints and eight unworked burnt flints were recovered from the excavation. The assemblage is quantified by feature groups in table 2. Also submitted for analysis were 37 unworked, naturally thermally fractured pieces. The status of some of these pieces is ambiguous as the working of the thermally flawed raw material dominant at the site may have resulted in pieces lacking the diagnostic features of conchoidal fracture. Following a discussion of the raw materials and condition of the assemblage as a whole, the flintwork is discussed in relation to six feature/context based groups; layers and spreads, pits, natural features, ditches, the palaeochannel and unstratified pieces.

context group	primary flake	secondary flake	tertiary flake	bladelet	chip	irregular waste	retouched	irregular core	flake core	**total worked**	unworked burnt
layers/spreads		14	11		1		1		1	**28**	2
pits	2	22	15	3	2	1		1		**46**	4
natural features		1	1							**2**	
ditches	1	3	5	1			1			**11**	1
palaeochannel		3	3		2	2				**10**	1
unstratified		14	4						1	**19**	
totals	**3**	**57**	**39**	**4**	**5**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**2**	**116**	8

Table 2. Quantification of flint assemblage

Raw Materials

B.1.2 The assemblage is dominated by dark grey/black fine grained flint. Where present, cortex is varied but generally hard and relatively unweathered. Only a handful of pieces have the highly abraded cortex characteristic of flint from a fluvial gravel source. The quality of the raw material is compromised by common incipient flaws, caused by thermal fracturing. The relatively unweathered state of the flint together with frequent thermal flaws is characteristic of material derived from the boulder clay deposits, presumably local and readily accessible from the site itself.

Condition

B.1.3 The assemblage varied in terms of condition. Edge damage, heavy at times was common but some pieces were extremely fresh, particularly from some of the pits. 37 of the struck flints (32% of the assemblage) exhibit recortication, varying from a blue clouding to a heavy white which totally masks the original colour of the flint. This recortication does appear to have some chronological significance; all of the struck pieces exhibiting technological traits suggestive of a Mesolithic/earlier Neolithic date were recorticated, as were two flakes of probable later Neolithic date (see below). The unrecorticated pieces are largely thought to relate to later prehistoric (Middle Bronze Age onwards) flintworking but the presence of three unrecorticated refitting flakes

alongside a sherd of Beaker pottery from treethrow/pit fill [104] suggests that Early Bronze Age material at the site may also be unrecorticated.

Layers and Spreads

B.1.4 The assemblage is dominated by unretouched flake based removals. On the basis of technology and recortication it is clear that the assemblage is chronologically mixed. Deposit [161] produced a segment of a blade or blade like flake with partial abrupt retouch on a transverse break on its proximal end. The character of the blank and the retouch are suggestive of a Mesolithic date. Two hard hammer struck flakes, one from [120] and another from [140] are also blade like in morphology and exhibit traces of a relatively structure approach to core reduction in the form of platform trimming. These are likely to represent Neolithic flintworking. A coherent group of five hard hammer struck flakes from layer [230] are all large, fine, secondary or tertiary removals with regular dorsal scar patterns which are probably also of Neolithic date. The remainder of the assemblage consists of unrecorticated hard hammer struck flakes of varied morphology together with a flake core with one dominant striking platform marked by several incipient cones of percussion. This material appears to be the product of an unsystematic, expedient flake based reduction strategy of later prehistoric date. The only retouched piece associated with this later material is a naturally fractured piece with extensive abrupt retouch along one edge.

feature/deposit	context	other	primary flake	secondary flake	tertiary flake	bladelet	chip	irregular waste	retouched	irregular core	flake core	**total worked**	unworked burnt
spread	119			1								**1**	
spread	120			8	4				1		1	**14**	
layer (test pit)	140				2							**2**	
layer (test pit)	148	spit 1		1								**1**	
layer (test pit)	161			1	2		1					**4**	
layer	230				1							**1**	
layer	230			3	2							**5**	2
totals				**14**	**11**		**1**		**1**		**1**	**28**	**2**

Table 3. Flintwork from layers/spreads

Pits

B.1.5 Although small cut features such as the pits are most likely to contain coherent assemblages of flintwork broadly contemporary with the features from which they derive it is clear that the assemblages from most of these features are chronologically mixed and largely reflect residual material inadvertently caught up in the fills of these features. This is also reflected in the small size of the assemblages, only the fill of one pit, [258], containing more than 10 worked flints. The only clearly coherent assemblage consists of three refitting secondary flakes from [104], these removals are relatively broad hard hammer struck pieces consistent with an Early Bronze Age date. Earlier material is best represented by blade based removals of Mesolithic/earlier Neolithic date from [253], [258] and [292]. A large, fine tertiary flake from [250] has the dorsal scar pattern and faceted striking platform characteristic of later Neolithic levallois-like technologies (Ballin 2011). Aside from these potentially early pieces the pit assemblage is dominated by crude hard hammer struck flake based removals probably of later prehistoric date.

feature/deposit	context	other	primary flake	secondary flake	tertiary flake	bladelet	chip	irregular waste	retouched	irregular core	flake core	**total worked**	unworked burnt
tree throw/pit	104				3							**3**	
posthole	145			1	1							**2**	
pit	236			2								**2**	
pit	242			3								**3**	
pit	246				2							**2**	
pit	246	bottom		2								**2**	
pit	248		1									**1**	3
pit	250			1	1							**2**	
pit	253					1	1					**2**	1
pit	258		1	12	7	1	1	1		1		**24**	
pit	268				1							**1**	
pit	280			1								**1**	
pit	292					1						**1**	
totals			**2**	**22**	**15**	**3**	**2**	**1**		**1**		**46**	**4**

Table 4. Flintwork from pits/postholes

Natural Features

B.1.6 Just two worked flints were recovered, a flawed secondary flake with light recortication from **175** and a tertiary flake from **137**. These pieces were presumably incorporated into the features from surface scatters.

feature/deposit	context	primary flake	secondary flake	tertiary flake	bladelet	chip	irregular waste	retouched	irregular core	flake core	**total worked**
tree bowl	137			1							**1**
tree bowl	175		1								**1**
totals			**1**	**1**							**2**

Table 5. Flintwork from natural features

Ditches

B.1.7 As with the pits the assemblages recovered from the ditches were small and all are likely to be residual. Demonstrably 'early' material is absent and the expediently produced flake based material that dominates the assemblage as a whole is particularly in evidence here. A single retouched piece was recovered, a thermally fractured and recorticated piece with extensive abrupt retouch along one side and at one end.

feature/deposit	context	primary flake	secondary flake	tertiary flake	bladelet	chip	irregular waste	retouched	irregular core	flake core	**total worked**	unworked burnt
ditch	124		1								**1**	
ditch	210	1		2				1			**4**	

feature/deposit	context	primary flake	secondary flake	tertiary flake	bladelet	chip	irregular waste	retouched	irregular core	flake core	**total worked**	unworked burnt
ditch	224			1							**1**	1
ditch	234		1								**1**	
ditch	315		1	1	1						**3**	
ditch	334			1							**1**	
totals		**1**	**3**	**5**	**1**			**1**			**11**	**1**

Table 6. Flintwork from ditches

The palaeochannel

B.1.8 This small assemblage is again dominated by crude flake based material of probable later prehistoric date. The only exception is a fine recorticated flake with a faceted platform that appears to be the product of the levallois-like technique of the later Neolithic.

feature/deposit	context	other	primary flake	secondary flake	tertiary flake	bladelet	chip	irregular waste	retouched	irregular core	flake core	**total worked**	unworked burnt
channel	128			3	3		2					**8**	
channel	129	spit 3											1
channel	129							2				**2**	
totals				**3**	**3**		**2**	**2**				**10**	**1**

Table 7. Flintwork from the palaeochannel

Unstratified

B.1.9 The unstratified finds consist entirely of unrecorticated flakes and a single centripetally worked flake core. Some of the flakes are relatively fine with regular dorsal scars suggesting a measure of anticipation in working and may be the product of later Neolithic or Early Bronze Age technologies. The majority, however, is consistent with a later prehistoric date.

feature/deposit	context	primary flake	secondary flake	tertiary flake	bladelet	chip	irregular waste	retouched	irregular core	flake core	**total worked**
unstratified	100		3							1	
modern wheel ruts	225			1							
unstratified	999999		11	3							
totals			**14**	**4**						**1**	**19**

Table 8. Unstratified flintwork

Summary and recommendations

B.1.10 The excavations recovered a relatively small assemblage of prehistoric worked flint from a variety of contexts. Assemblages from individual contexts and features are invariably small and disparate, the vast majority probably being residual pieces ultimately derived from surface scatters of flintwork. Nonetheless the assemblage does give some insight into prehistoric activity at the site. A Mesolithic/earlier Neolithic presence is indicated by a few blade based pieces, although this may represent no more than fleeting task based activities at the site. The presence of two flakes probably produced from later Neolithic levallois-like cores also suggests some activity in this period. The vast majority of the assemblage is made up of irregular flake based material. Some of this, including the small assemblage from **104** may reflect Early Bronze Age activity but the characteristics of much of this material, including the use of flawed raw material, knapping errors and a unsystematic approach to reduction suggest a later prehistoric date for most of the flintwork.

B.1.11 Previous excavations in the area have recovered substantial assemblages of later prehistoric flintwork, most notably a large Middle Bronze Age assemblage (4297 worked flints) from excavations in advance of the construction of the mid term car park (MTCP) at Stansted airport (McLaren 2010). Bronze Age flintworking at the MTCP also appears to have exploited the local boulder clay and is characterised by expedient and unstructured flake based working. The retouched component is dominated by miscellaneous retouched pieces rather than formal tools including a relatively high proportion of retouched pieces on naturally fractured flints, such as the two retouched pieces from this assemblage.

B.1.12 In light of the size and nature of the assemblage detailed technological analysis of the flintwork is unnecessary. Any publication should include a brief presentation of the assemblage, with an emphasis on the later prehistoric material and should include more thorough comparisons with contemporary local assemblages such as the MTCP material. Provision could be made for illustrations of some of the later prehistoric flake cores and retouched pieces and perhaps for one or both of the later Neolithic flakes.

B.2 Pottery

By Chris Howard-Davis

B.2.1 A small assemblage of pottery was examined, comprising 127 sherds, with an overall weight of *c* 692g, giving an average sherd weight of *c* 5.4g. The low average sherd weight gives a good impression of the size and condition of the sherds, many of which were small, friable and often abraded. The assemblage was clearly very mixed, containing material ranging in date from the Bronze Age (or earlier) to the Romano-British period. It was analysed following the guidelines laid out in PCRG 2010, being quantified by sherd count and by weight. The poor preservation of the assemblage meant that it was recorded to the minimum recommended level, as in many cases traits such as surface treatments had been lost. Where preserved, however, these were recorded. In all, 10 separate fabrics were identified (Table 9), six of them Prehistoric in origin, the remainder Romano-British, where possible they have been equated with the extant fabric series for Stansted (Leiver 2008; Stansbie and Biddulph 2008). Quantification is shown below in Table 10.

Fabric	Description	Stansted (2008) equivalent
Prehistoric fabrics		
FL1	Hand-formed. Soft-medium-fired. Fine, small <0.5 inclusions, occasional angular flint, sand, ?natural mica. Incompletely reduced, outer surfaces orange-brown, inner black. Impressed whipped cord and incised line decoration. *Based on very small sherds, no obvious grog*	Beaker? Stansted GR4-GR6
FL2	Hand-formed. Medium, irregular angular calcined flint <3mm, common mica, probably natural.	
FL3	Hand-formed. Thick, hard-fired medium sandy, some ?natural mica, common unsorted angular and sub-angular inclusions up to *c* 7 mm, flint, and unidentified brown and black inclusions (iron?). Pinkish-brown with darker surfaces.	Stansted FL50
GR1	Hand-formed. Vesicular fabric with some red inclusions ?iron or grog. Soapy feel. Brown internally and exterior orange brown. Common, probably natural, mica.	
QU1	Hand-formed. Hard-fired but now very friable. Black with burnished surfaces. Common angular quartz to *c* 2mm, occasionally >6mm, occasional rounded iron. Thin-walled.	Stansted QU44
VE1	Hand-formed. Dark grey, some mica, largely burnt-out organic temper, occasional shell	
Romano-British fabrics		
RED1	Wheel-made. Fine, relatively hard orange oxidised fabric. Mica (<0.5 mm) but no other obvious inclusions. Possibly burnished.	RED: unsourced oxidised wares
RED2	Wheel-made. Very sandy, oxidised fabric with angular quartz (*c* 1 mm)	RED: unsourced oxidised wares
GRS	Wheel-made. Sandy greywares	GRS
UWW 10	Wheel-made. Fine, cream oxidised fabric.	UWW: unsourced white wares

Table 9: fabric series

Fabric	Sherd count	Weight (g)	Av sherd weight (g)
FL1	2	7	3.5
FL2	12	26	2.2
FL3	15	56	3.7
GR1	1	6	6
QU1	48	103	2.1
VE1	1	14	14
RED1	33	434	13.1
RED2	4	28	7
GRS	6	12	2
UWW	5	6	1.2
Totals	*127*	*692*	*5.4*

Table 10: representation of fabrics by sherd count, weight, and average sherd weight

Prehistoric fabrics

B.2.2 The distribution of Prehistoric sherds is shown in Table 11. Several of the prehistoric fabrics recognised were heavily flint tempered (FLI-3), as is commonly the case in both early Neolithic and Late Bronze Age pottery fabrics in the South of England (Leivers 2008). In the absence of chronologically diagnostic sherds, it has not proved possible to differentiate between the two periods with any confidence, and the dating of most cannot be further refined. This problem has been noted with regard to other multi-period sites in Essex (*ibid*). Similarly, although distinctive within the assemblage, fabrics GR5 and VE1 are represented only by single small and abraded sherds, and cannot be further identified.

B.2.3 Two very small fragments, both relatively thin-walled, probably derive from beakers (FLI), one with cord decoration is from context 258, the other, now abraded, with incised parallel lines is from context 128. These have been included in the Flint-tempered group as there is no obvious grog visible in the sherds (cf Stansted fabrics GR4-6), but both are very small and this absence could simply be accidental.

B.2.4 It seems likely that sherds of FL3, from contexts 281 and 282, represent a single thick-walled vessel, with an upright rim and possible fingernail impressions. It appears to bear a relatively close resemblance to Stansted fabric FL50, dated to the Middle Bronze Age, the vessel form and haphazard fingernail impressions suggests a small Deverel-Rimbury-type bucket-shaped vessel. It must be noted, however, that context 281 also produced Romano-British material, suggesting that the Bronze Age pottery here is residual.

B.2.5 Fabric QU1, mainly tiny fragments from contexts 119 and 258, appears to be of considerably later date, a small fragment of a short upright rim, and a tiny sherd with faint incised lines, hint at a Mid-Late Iron Age date, but again, nothing more can be said of the vessel/vessels represented.

Romano-British fabrics

B.2.6 The distribution of Romano-British sherds is shown in Table 10. All but two of the sherds of RED1 come from a single flat-based, wheel-thrown jar or flagon, but, as the upper half of the vessel is absent, the form cannot be described more closely. It comes from context 124, from which no other pottery was recovered. It seems most likely to be a first-second-century type. Two tiny fragments of a burnished rim, from context 106, are probably from a second vessel in the same fabric. Other fabrics, probably of a similar date range, are restricted to small, undiagnostic body sherds and cannot be dated with any more precision.

Context	FL1		FL2		FL3		GR1		QU1		VE1		RED1		RED2		GRS		UWW			
	no	wt	no	wt	no	wt	no	wt	no	wt	no	wt	no	wt	no	wt	no	wt	no	wt	no	wt
106													2	2							2	2
119									11	44											11	44
120			2	2	1	6			2	4	1	14			3	24	2	4			11	54
124													31	432							31	432

Context	FL1		FL2		FL3		GR1		QU1		VE1		RED1		RED2		GRS		UWW			
	no	wt	no	wt	no	wt	no	wt	no	wt	no	wt	no	wt	no	wt	no	wt	no	wt	no	wt
126			1	8																	1	8
128	1	6	5	8																	6	14
129															1	4					1	4
140									1	1											1	1
161			3	6																	3	6
230									3	6											3	6
258	1	1							31	48											32	49
265							1	6													1	6
281					10	24											2	6	5	6	17	36
282					4	26															4	26
us			1	2													2	2			3	4
	2	7	12	26	15	56	1	6	48	103	1	14	33	434	4	28	6	12	5	6	127	692

Table 11: distribution of fabrics between contexts by fragment count (no) and weight (wt) in grams

Appendix C. Environmental Reports

C.1 Faunal Remains

By Chris Faine

C.1.1 1.2kg of animal bone was recovered from the excavations at South Gate, Stansted. Thirty five fragments were recovered with 15 identifiable to species (42.8% of the total sample). Identifiable material was recovered from contexts 158, 224, 256 & 258. All elements recovered were from adult cattle, consisting largely of lower limb elements (tibiae, phalanges and loose teeth. Meat bearing elements in the form of humerus fragments were recovered from context 258.

C.2 Environmental samples

By Rachel Fosberry

Introduction and Methods

C.2.1 Eight bulk samples were taken during excavations at Stansted South Gate in order to assess the quality of preservation of plant remains, bones and artefacts and their potential to provide useful data as part of further archaeological investigations. Features sampled include pits and ditches dating from the prehistoric to the Roman period.

C.2.2 The samples were soaked in a solution of Sodium carbonate for two days prior to processing in order to break down the heavy clay.

C.2.3 Ten litres of each sample were processed by tank flotation for the recovery of charred plant remains, dating evidence and any other artefactual evidence that might be present. The flot was collected in a 0.3mm nylon mesh and the residue was washed through a 0.5mm sieve. Both flot and residue were allowed to air dry. The dried residue was passed through 5mm and 2mm sieves and a magnet was dragged through each resulting fraction prior to sorting for artefacts. Any artefacts present were noted and reintegrated with the hand-excavated finds. The flot was examined under a binocular microscope at x16 magnification.

Results

C.2.4 The samples were found to be devoid of any ecofacts or artefacts other than sparse charcoal.

Further Work and Methods Statement

C.2.5 The general lack of plant remains suggests that either the heavy clay soil conditions at the site do not favour preservation or that there is no evidence of any nearby settlement or of any agricultural practices such as crop processing.

C.2.6 No further work on these samples is required.

Appendix D. Bibliography

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APPENDIX E. OASIS REPORT FORM

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

Project Details

OASIS Number	oxfordar3-119607T		
Project Name	Pre-historic and Roman Remains at South Gate Hotel Site, Thremhall Avenue, Stanstead Airport.		
Project Dates (fieldwork) Start	05-05-2011	Finish	20-05-2011
Previous Work (by OA East)	No	Future Work	No

Project Reference Codes

Site Code	BAASH10	Planning App. No.	UTT/0557/09
HER No.	BAASH10	Related HER/OASIS No.	XEXSGH10

Type of Project/Techniques Used

Prompt: Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS 5

Please select all techniques used:

☐ Field Observation (periodic visits)	☒ Part Excavation	☐ Salvage Record
☐ Full Excavation (100%)	☐ Part Survey	☐ Systematic Field Walking
☐ Full Survey	☐ Recorded Observation	☐ Systematic Metal Detector Survey
☐ Geophysical Survey	☐ Remote Operated Vehicle Survey	☐ Test Pit Survey
☐ Open-Area Excavation	☐ Salvage Excavation	☐ Watching Brief

Monument Types/Significant Finds & Their Periods

List feature types using the NMR Monument Type Thesaurus and significant finds using the MDA Object type Thesaurus together with their respective periods. If no features/finds were found, please state "none".

Monument	Period	Object	Period
Field System	Roman 43 to 410	Ceramics	Roman 43 to 410
	Select period...		Select period...
	Select period...		Select period...

Project Location

County	Essex	Site Address (including postcode if possible)	
District	Braintree	Thremhall Avenue, Stansted, Essex, CM24 1PY	
Parish	Stansted		
HER	Essex		
Study Area	3045m2	National Grid Reference	TL 54689 22026

Project Originators

Organisation	OA East
Project Brief Originator	OA East
Project Design Originator	ECC
Project Manager	Aileen Connor
Supervisor	Jonathan House

Project Archives

Physical Archive	Digital Archive	Paper Archive
Braintree Museum	OA East Office (Bar Hill)	Braintree Museum
BAASH10	BAASH10	BAASH10

Archive Contents/Media

	Physical Contents	Digital Contents	Paper Contents
Animal Bones	☒	☐	☐
Ceramics	☒	☐	☐
Environmental	☒	☐	☐
Glass	☐	☐	☐
Human Bones	☐	☐	☐
Industrial	☐	☐	☐
Leather	☐	☐	☐
Metal	☐	☐	☐
Stratigraphic		☐	☐
Survey		☐	☐
Textiles	☐	☐	☐
Wood	☐	☐	☐
Worked Bone	☐	☐	☐
Worked Stone/Lithic	☐	☐	☐
None	☐	☐	☐
Other	☐	☐	☐

Digital Media	Paper Media
☐ Database	☐ Aerial Photos
☐ GIS	☒ Context Sheet
☐ Geophysics	☒ Correspondence
☒ Images	☐ Diary
☐ Illustrations	☒ Drawing
☐ Moving Image	☐ Manuscript
☒ Spreadsheets	☐ Map
☒ Survey	☐ Matrices
☒ Text	☐ Microfilm
☐ Virtual Reality	☐ Misc.
	☐ Research/Notes
	☒ Photos
	☒ Plans
	☒ Report
	☐ Sections
	☐ Survey

Notes:

Features investigated during the excavation consisted of tree throws, some of which contained worked flints, an area of intercutting Bronze Age pits, Romano British field system, and a paleochannel containing welll stratified finds from each of the aforemetioned periods, upto the Post medievil period.

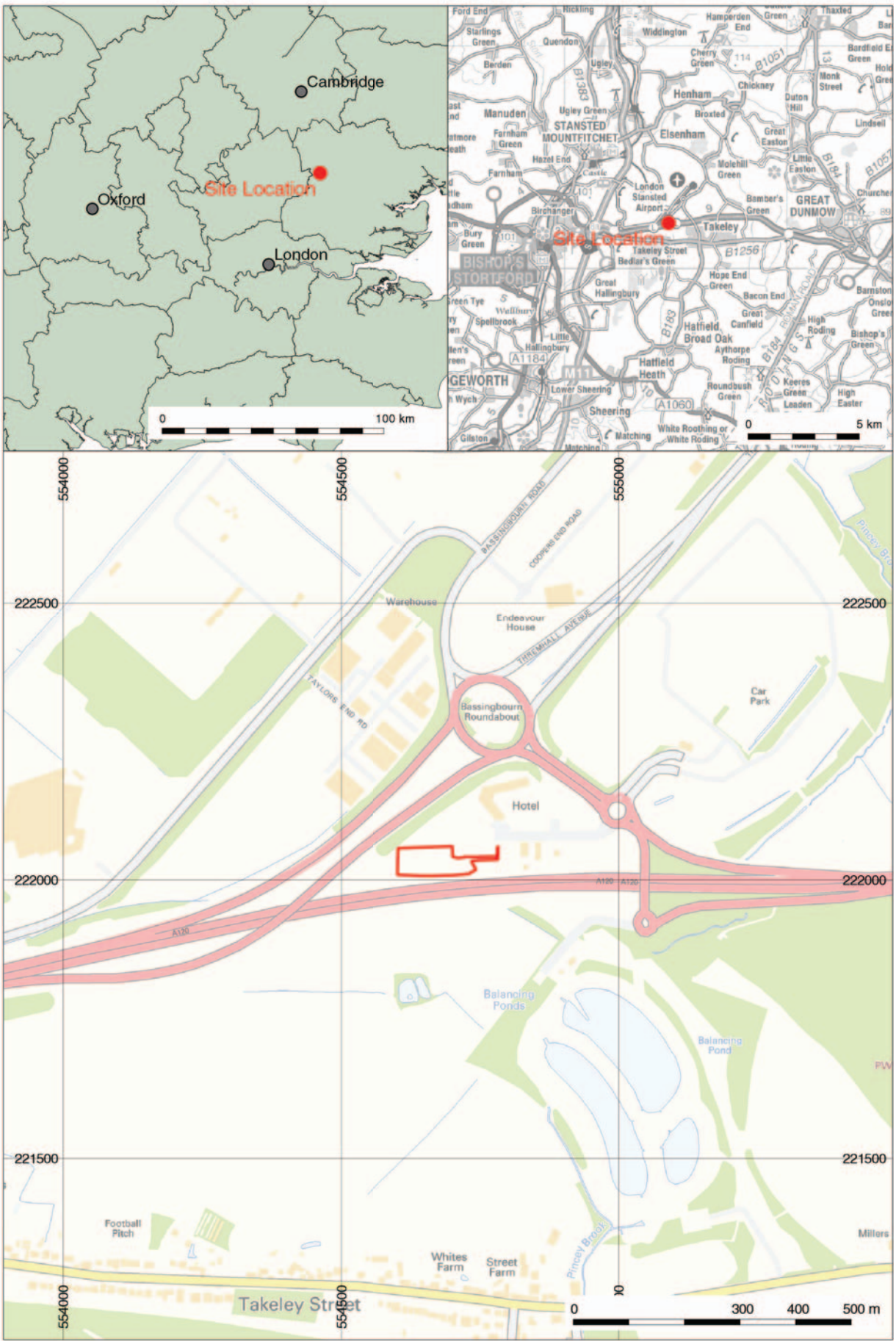

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Figure 1: Site location

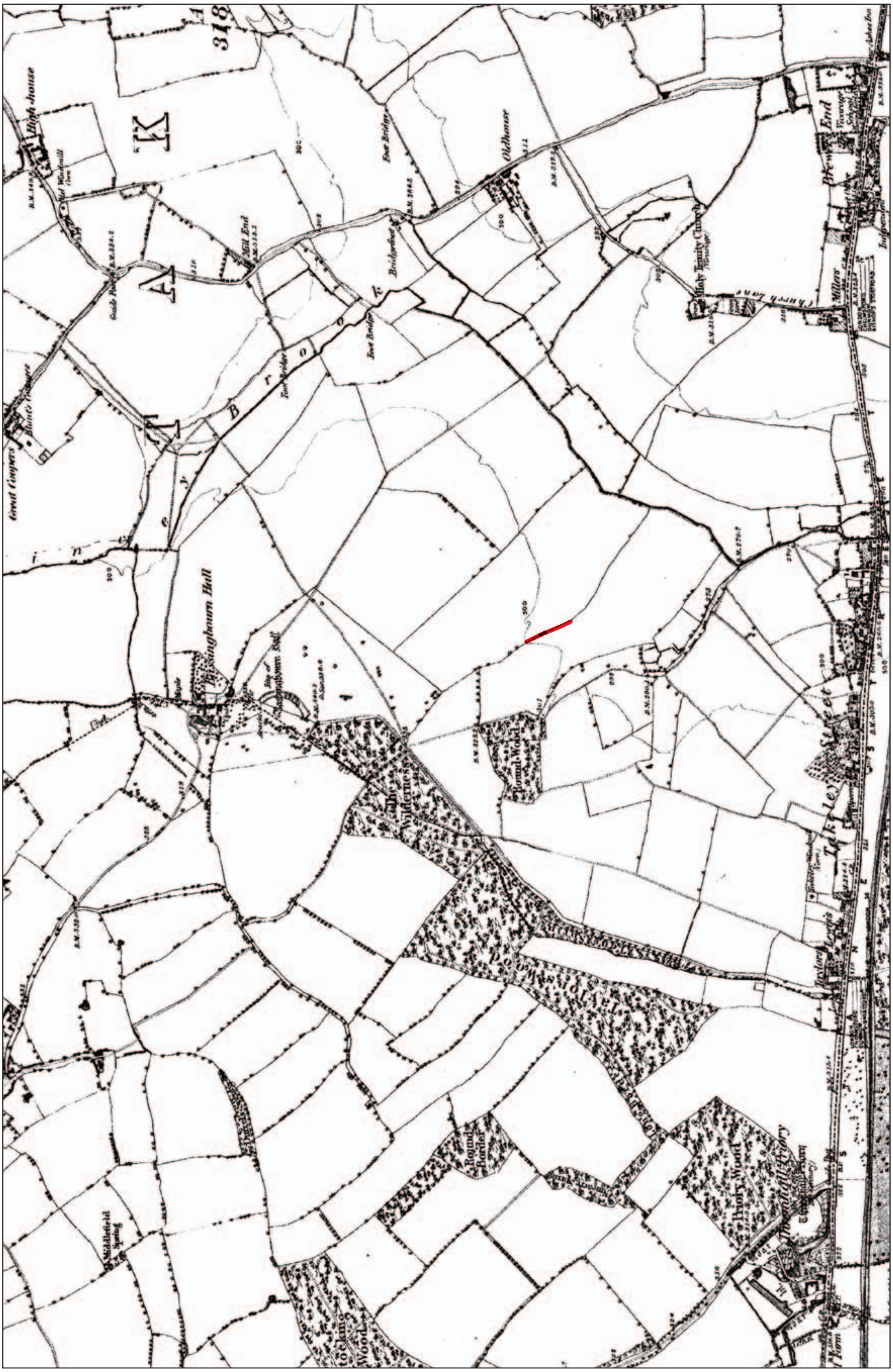

Figure 2: Extract from 6 inch Ordnance Survey Map (1881 edition)

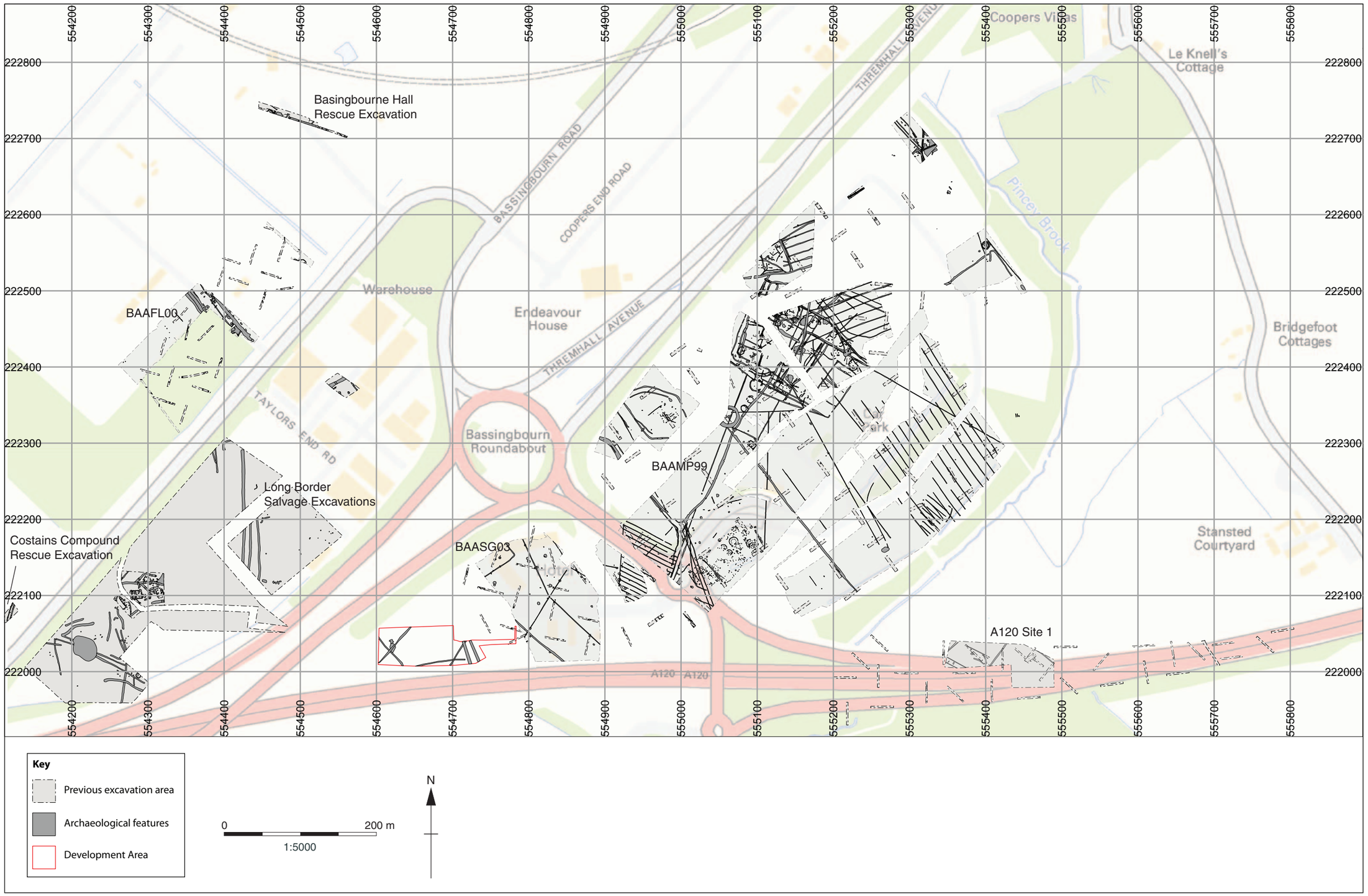

Figure 3: Development area (red) and previous excavations

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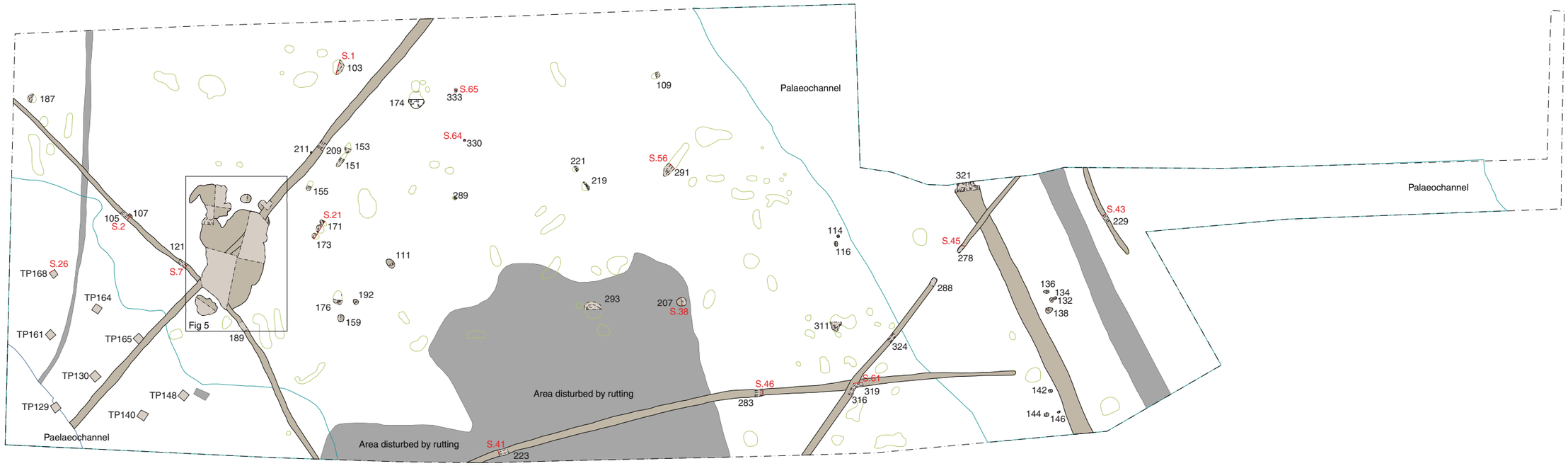

Key

- Archaeological features
- Excavated features
- Natural features
- Modern

0 20 m

1:500

Figure 4: Site plan, showing excavated and non-excavated features

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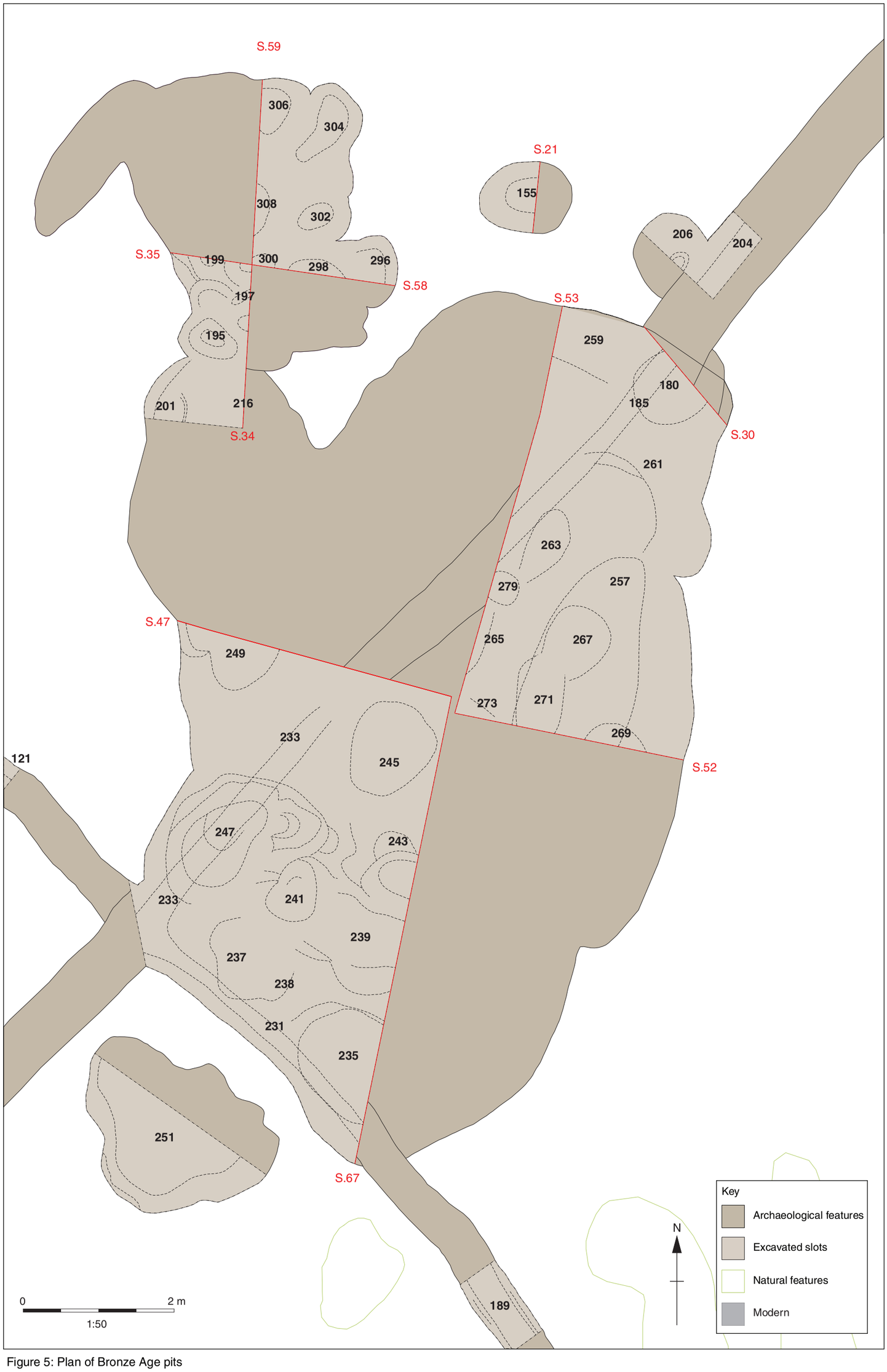

Figure 5: Plan of Bronze Age pits

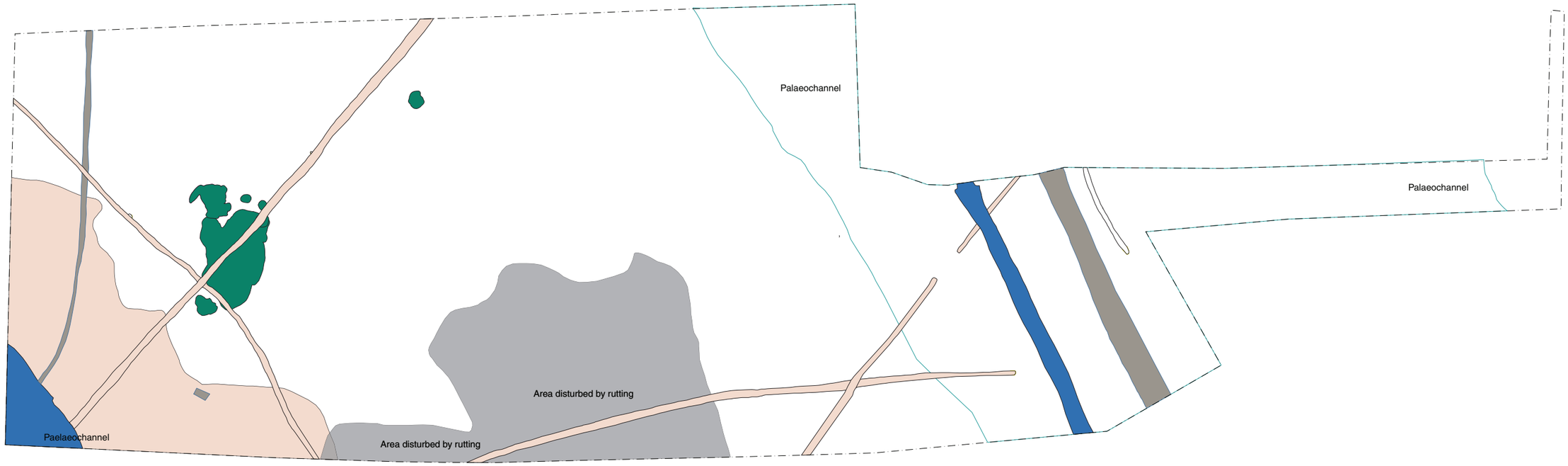

Figure 6: Phase plan

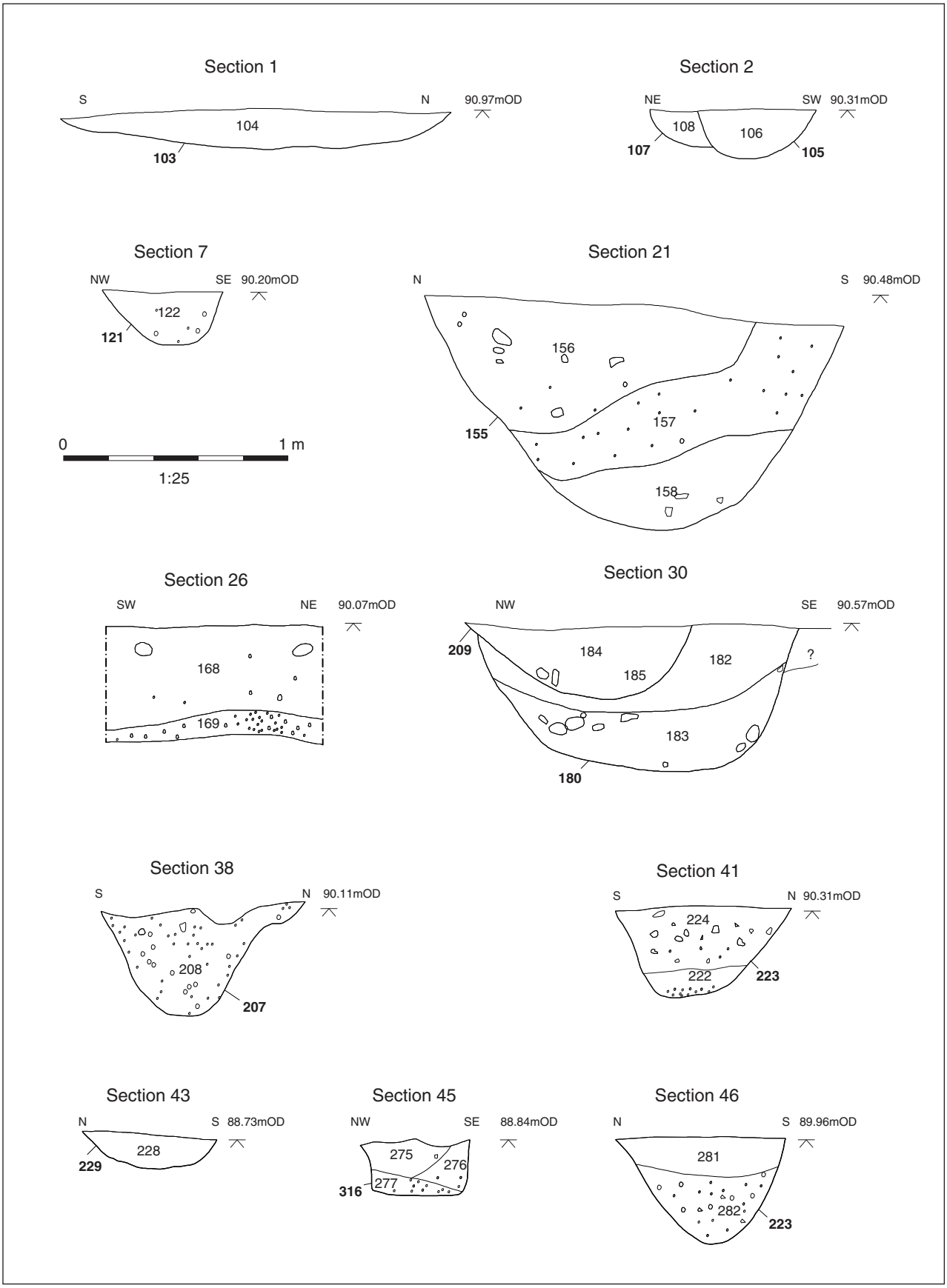

Figure 7: Sections page 1

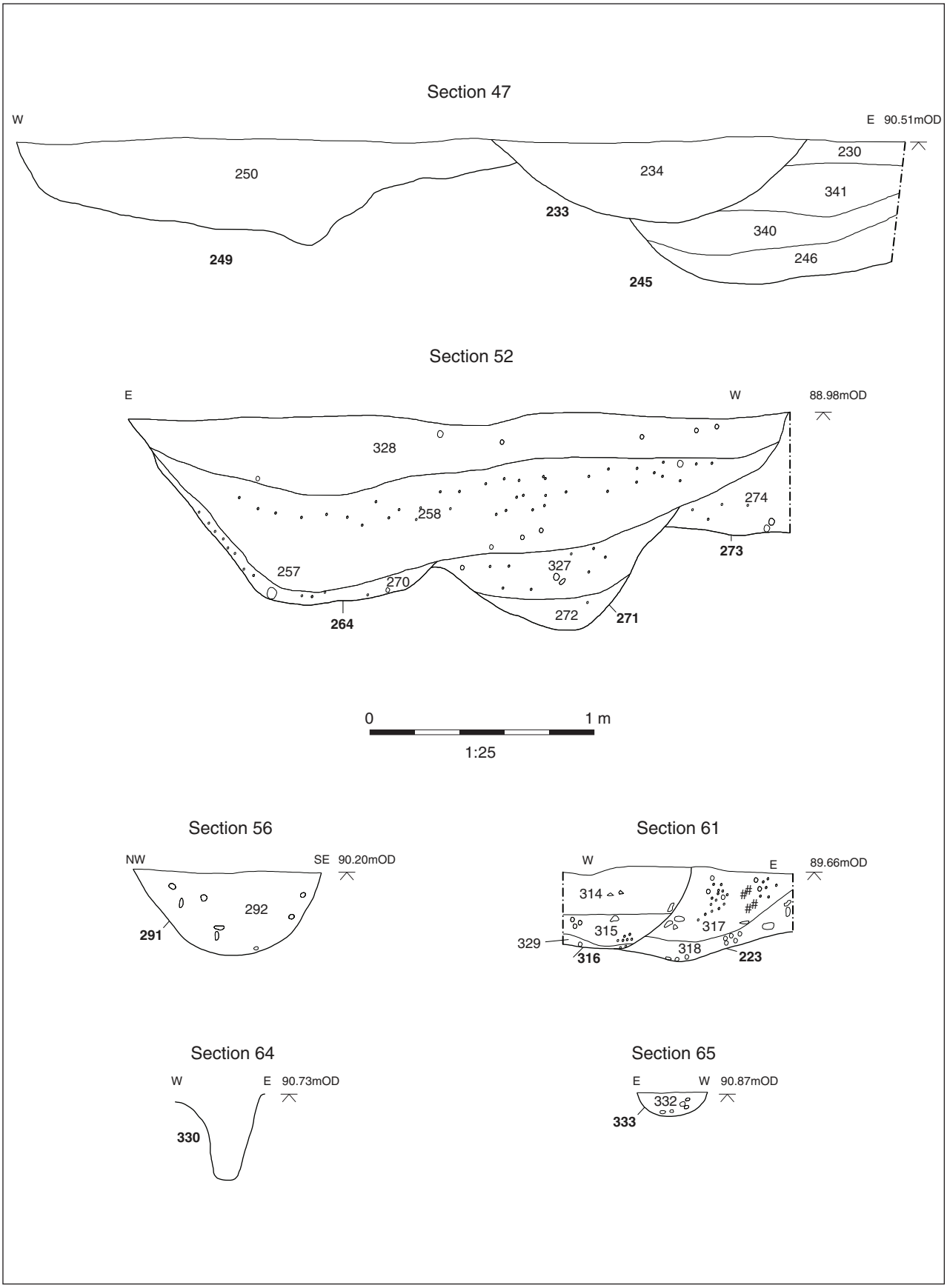

Figure 8: Sections page 2

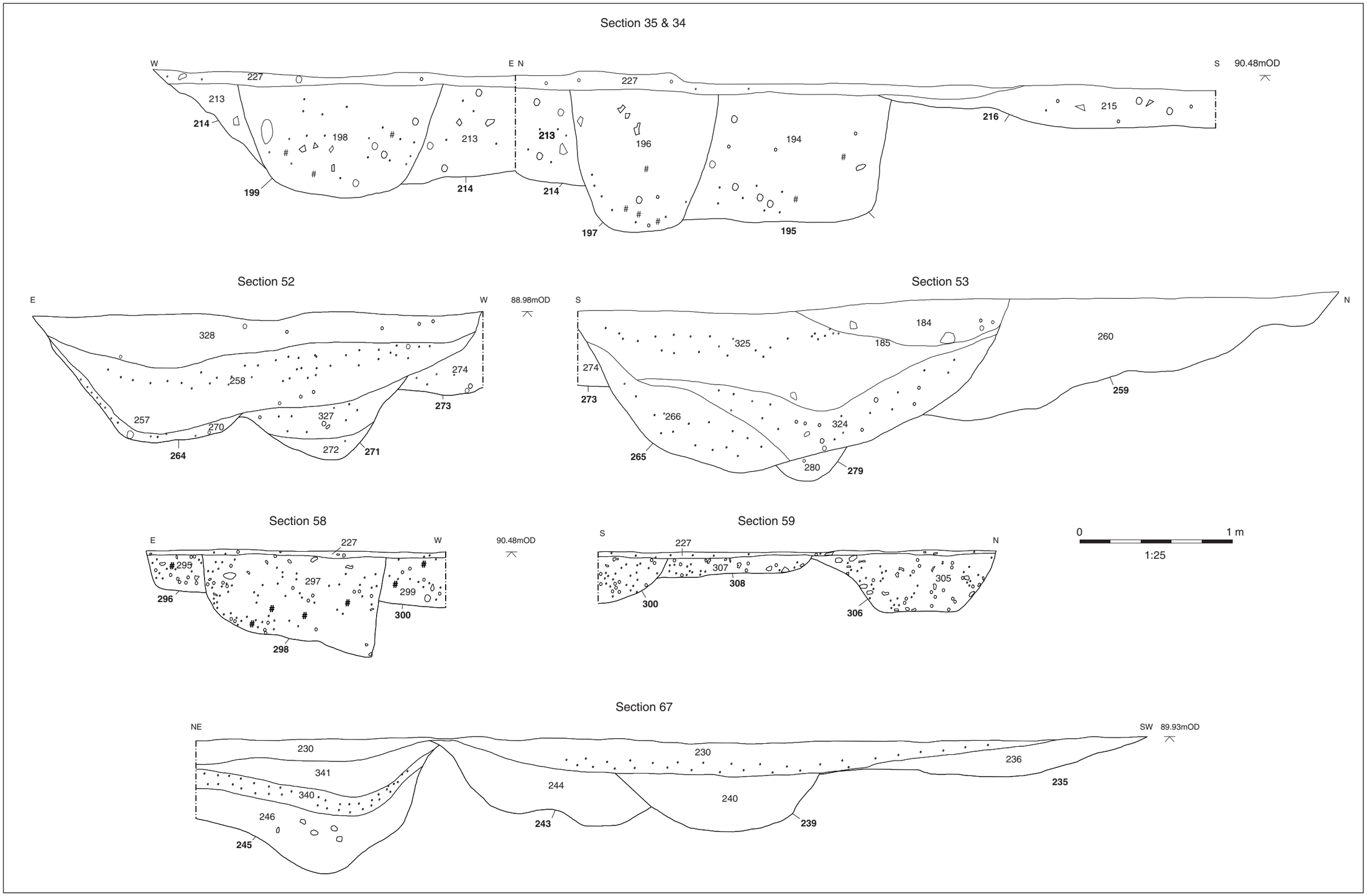

Figure 9: Sections page 3

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Plate 1: Palaeochannel during test pit excavation, taken from north-west

Plate 2: Photo of test pit (130), taken from south-east

Plate 3: Excavation area, taken from west.

Plate 4: Excavation area, taken from east.

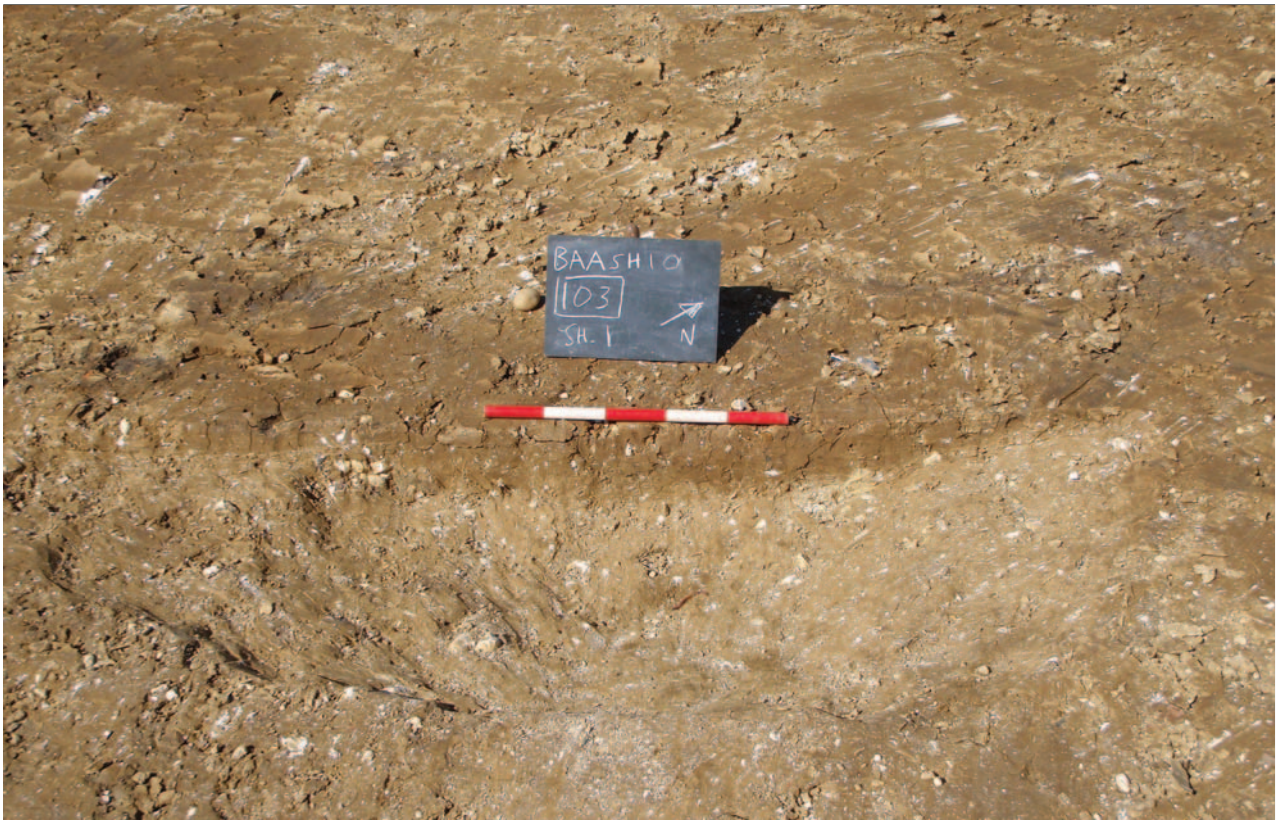

Plate 5: Feature 103, taken from south-east.

Plate 6: Feature 109, taken from east.

Plate 7: Bronze Age pits, north-east quadrant, north facing section.

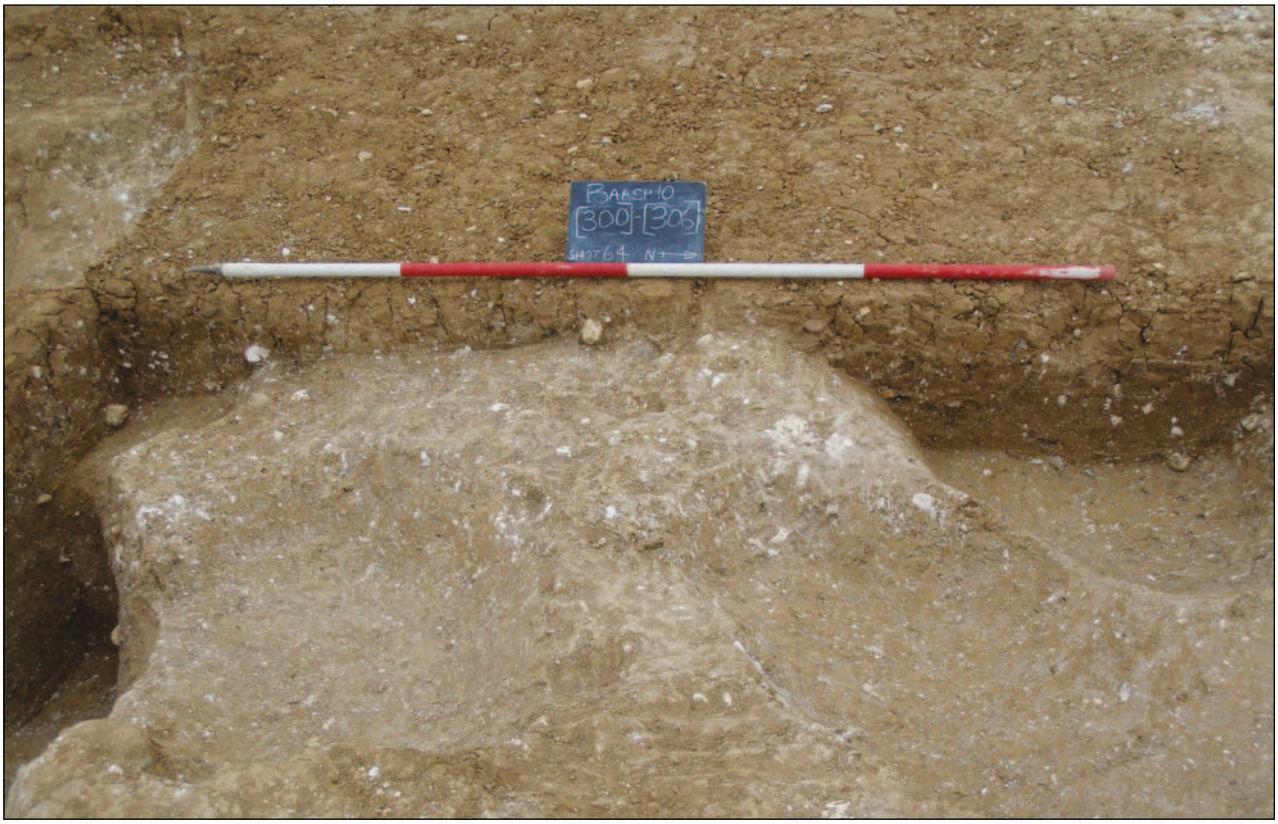

Plate 8: Bronze Age pits, north-east quadrant, east facing section.

Plate 9: Bronze age pits, south-west quadrant, south facing section.

Plate 10: Bronze Age pits, south-west quadrant, west facing section.

Plate 11: Area shot of Bronze Age pits, taken from south-south-west.

Plate 12: Feature 291, taken from south-south-west.

Plate 13: Ditch 105, taken from south-east.

Plate 14: Ditch 223, taken from south-east.

Plate 15: Field boundary, taken from south-east.

Plate 16: Excavation team.

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