

A Late Neolithic Henge at Ashwell



**Post-Excavation Assessment
& Updated Project Design**



December 2015

**Client: Robert Lombardelli Partnership
on behalf of Origin Housing**

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Post-excavation Assessment and Updated Project Design

By Andrew Greef BA

With contributions by Sarah Percival BA MA MifA, Lawrence Billington BA MA, Vida Rajkovača, Alice Rose, Rachel Fosberry AifA,

Editor: Liz Popescu BA PhD MifA FSA

Illustrators: Séverine Bézie BA MA, Gillian Greer BSc MifA

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Prepared by: Andrew Greef
Position: Assistant Supervisor
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Checked by: James Drummond-Murray
Position: Project Manager
Date: December 2015
Signed:



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Oxford Archaeology East,

15 Trafalgar Way,
Bar Hill,
Cambridge,
CB23 8SQ

t: 01223 850500
f: 01223 850599
e: oaeast@oxfordarch.co.uk
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>

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Summary

In May 2015 Oxford Archaeology East conducted an archaeological excavation on the eastern side of the village of Ashwell at the rear of a cul de sac (the Walkden's). The excavation was targeted on a ring ditch thought to belong to a ploughed out Bronze Age barrow. In fact, it formed the ditch of a Late Neolithic Class II henge monument. The henge had a 21 to 22 m internal diameter and a 25 to 26.5m external diameter. Its two opposing entrances were located at the north-west and south-east.

The remainder of the site (which was subsequently extended) was characterised by pits, both within the henge itself and to the north-west of the monument. Some of the pits inside the henge seemed to form part of an interior ring whilst the pits outside were not distributed in any particular pattern.

All features on the site were 100% excavated and the full length of the henge ditch was exposed. The base of the henge ditch was uneven and is thought to have been originally dug as a series of pits. Along the edge of the ditch and in places at the base were yet more pits. Some of these pits were thought to be dug when the ditch had not started to silt up to any significant degree and others were cut through the fill of the ditch.

One of these pits, which clearly cut the lower fill of the henge, contained cremated human bone which has been radiocarbon dated to the Bronze Age. This cremation was located in one of the terminal ends of the ditch at the south-eastern entrance and may suggest that the monument maintained its presence in the landscape long after activity on the site had ended.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology East conducted an archaeological excavation at Ashwell, which lies 6km to the north-east of Baldock (TL 27356 39711, Fig.1). This work was commissioned by Robert Lombardelli Partnership on behalf of Origin Housing in advance of a proposed development of 11 new houses and four flats. The site is located on the eastern side of the village of Ashwell, to the south of Ashwell Street and to the rear of The Walkdens – a cul de sac off Station Road. The 0.7 ha site comprises the northern part of one large field which is currently under arable cultivation. The site is bordered by a hedge to the north-west along Ashwell street and the gardens of houses to the north-east.
- 1.1.2 In September 2013 a geophysical survey carried out by Cranfield University on the proposed development area identified a sub-circular anomaly indicating the presence of a ring ditch. This feature was interpreted as the surrounding ditch of a Bronze Age barrow. This type of monument is not out of place in the surrounding landscape, with visible cropmarks just within the same field to the south-east and south-west interpreted as such (HER 2468,2469, Fig.2). Given the patchy nature of the results and the apparent non-existence of the south-eastern arc it was assumed that the surviving archaeology was heavily damaged by the plough.
- 1.1.3 In October of the same year a targeted evaluation (Phillips 2013) was carried out by OA East in order to characterise the monument and assess the level of preservation. Six trenches totalling 180m of trenching were excavated over the proposed development area with Trenches 1 and 6 targeting the ring ditch. This evaluation supported the interpretation of the geophysics as the ring ditch was very shallow in the exposed areas and heavy plough damage seemed likely. One anomalous slot excavated in Trench 6 was of a more substantial depth, meaning that the overall degree of truncation was unclear.
- 1.1.4 The lack of archaeological features in the other trenches led to a very specific area being targeted for excavation. In May 2015 an area of approximately 0.25ha was opened to expose the entirety of the surviving ring ditch. Surprisingly the ring ditch was much more substantial than previously thought and its nature much more significant. The first evaluation trench, which had been placed to span the diameter of the ring ditch, had unfortunately been aligned through breaks and shallow points in the ditch. The ring ditch was revealed to be in fact a small Class II henge rather than the external ditch for a barrow.
- 1.1.5 Following the excavation and recording of the archaeology contained within this area it was decided during consultation with Andy Instone of Hertfordshire County Council to strip the remainder of the 0.70ha site.
- 1.1.6 This assessment has been conducted in accordance with the principles identified in English Heritage's guidance documents *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*, specifically *The MoRPHE Project Manager's Guide* (2006) and *PPN3 Archaeological Excavation* (2008).

1.2 Geology and Topography

- 1.2.1 The underlying solid geology is chalk. No superficial deposits are recorded (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

- 1.2.2 Ashwell parish is located along a chalk belt which is part of the Chiltern Hills and runs from the south-west of England in a north-easterly direction to East Anglia. The village is located on a scarp of this chalk belt, on a spring line where the chalk of the hills meets the impermeable clay of the lowlands. Ashwell Springs can be found 250m to the north-west of the site, to the north of the High Street and west of Springhead where they form the source of the River Rhee.
- 1.2.3 The site lies on a north-east facing slope, ranging from approximately 60m OD in the north to 64.5m OD in the south.

1.3 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 1.3.1 The archaeological and historical background of the site was been examined in detail in the desk-based assessment (Clover 2013) and is summarised here, drawing mainly on the Extensive Urban Survey (EUS) and the Historic Environment Record for Hertfordshire, for which a 0.5km radius search was conducted (Fig.2).
- 1.3.2 Due to the nature of the monument, the prehistoric background has been expanded upon to provide a better understanding of its place within the landscape. Other henges and hengiform monuments have been considered which lie outside of the area that was the subject of the desk-based assessment.

Neolithic (c. 3500 – c. 2000 BC) and Bronze Age (c. 2000 – c. 800 BC)

- 1.3.3 Ashwell parish has been settled, apparently densely, since the Neolithic. Around the village, there is a great deal of evidence for burial on the higher ground in the form of cropmarks of ploughed-out Neolithic long barrows and a plethora of Late Neolithic/Bronze Age round barrows. The long barrows are placed where they would be visible against the skyline from below. Most of the ring-ditches are in similar positions, clustering near three of the earlier long barrows and sometimes in 'cemeteries' (Thompson 2002, 2). One possible long barrow lies within the Search Area to the south-west of the site (HER 2360) and shows as a very clearly-defined oval cropmark on aerial photographs.
- 1.3.4 There are seven ring-ditches within the search area, all south of Ashwell Street and showing on aerial photographs as cropmarks (HER 2469, 2468, 2424, 4717, 6113, 7687, 7911). These are likely to be barrows of probable Late Neolithic or earlier Bronze Age date. The two closest to the site are HER 2468 and 2469, with ring-ditch 2469 lying just 40m from the western boundary of the site. The EUS casts some doubt on whether all the cropmarks attributed to being long barrows and round barrows are genuine (Thompson 2002, 2).
- 1.3.5 A large group of prehistoric and later finds found in the garden of 'The Steppes' near Ashwell Springs includes 258 Neolithic and Bronze Age flints (HER 6979). These finds may be placed deposits, suggesting that the springs were a special place of possible religious significance for several centuries.
- 1.3.6 An archaeological evaluation carried out at Station Road in 2001, on the site that was to become The Walkdens, revealed the terminal ends of two parallel ditches (HER 11397; Ashworth 2001). Although of Roman date they contained residual worked flint flakes of probable Neolithic or Early Bronze Age date.
- 1.3.7 Several possible henges and hengiform monuments exist throughout Hertfordshire and are recorded as cropmarks. The nearest to the site is at Claybush Hill, 3km to the south-west (HER 7866), which appears to be 25m in diameter with two opposing entrances.

- 1.3.8 Larger henges are recorded at Weston and Norton to the west of the site by Letchworth. The Weston henge (HER 2583) measures 85m in diameter and has entrances facing east and west. The outer earthwork has been ploughed out but an internal platform remains. Neolithic arrowheads have been found within the 'Jack O' legs' cave (HER 2598) located in the centre of the monument.
- 1.3.9 The Henge at Norton (HER 2312; Fitzpatrick-Matthews 2015), 6.25km to the south-east of the site and located to the north-west of Baldock has been the subject of excavations in 2011 and 2013. It has a diameter of 55m and a single entrance facing east. Whilst this is thought to be an earlier 'formative henge', it appears to have had a long period of use and may well have been active when the henge at Ashwell was constructed.

Iron Age (c. 800 BC – AD 43)

- 1.3.10 The archaeological evaluation carried out immediately to the north-east of the site at The Walkdens in 2001 (HER 11397) revealed the terminal ends of two parallel ditches containing Late Iron Age to 2nd century AD pottery and a small amount of animal bone (Ashworth 2001). This is the only Iron Age evidence from within the Search Area, although locally there are historic monuments and cropmarks of this date.
- 1.3.11 Arbury Banks Iron Age hillfort, now largely removed by agriculture, is located 1.5km to the south-west. Medium-sized univallate hillforts such as Arbury Banks are generally thought to have been built as stock enclosures, redistribution centres, places of refuge or permanent settlements (Forde-Johnston 1976, 51). Excavations in the mid 19th century showed evidence of occupation within the banks of the hillfort, and also for lynchets and cropmarks outside it. Arbury Banks may have functioned as a 'special place' for the wider population of the time, a centre of the territorial unit in the eastern Chilterns (Thompson 2002, 3).
- 1.3.12 By the mid 1st century BC the focus of this territory had shifted from Arbury to Baldock, where a settlement with religious as well as domestic functions grew up (Thompson 2002, 4).
- 1.3.13 Through this organised landscape ran the Icknield Way, a term applied to what was probably a series of long-distance routes extending south-west to north-east along the chalk from Wessex as far as Norfolk and Suffolk. In this area the A505 from Letchworth to Royston roughly follows one possible course. In Ashwell, the broadly parallel routes of Ashwell Street and High Street may have been used as seasonal alternatives.

Roman (AD 43 – 410)

- 1.3.14 Ashwell did not develop into a Roman town; the nearest small town to Ashwell in this period being Baldock. Cropmark evidence shows that during the Roman period it was a well-organised rural area (Thompson 2002, 4). However, until systematic fieldwork is carried out, there remain unanswered questions as to how this area developed.
- 1.3.15 Approximately 0.75km to the north of the excavation area is the site of a Roman villa (<http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results>), while 1km to the north-east, a Late Iron Age and Romano-British cemetery has been excavated in a chalk pit at Guilden Morden (English Heritage Pastcape No. 365913, <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway>). Both sites are in Cambridgeshire.
- 1.3.16 Finds of Roman coins and pottery around the Ashwell Springs (HER 2973, 6979 and 4848), and towards the confluence of streams north of Ashwell End, have been recorded on the HER but they provide an incomplete picture and the nature of activity here is obscure (Thompson 2002, 4). Outside the Search Area many other Roman

coins have been found in Ashwell and Ashwell End, some of which formed part of hoards.

- 1.3.17 The site is located to the south of Ashwell Street, which is marked on old Ordnance Survey maps as a Roman Road and sometimes called 'Ashwell Street Way' (HER 4692). The road is ancient and, as mentioned in Section 1.3.13, may have been one element of the Icknield Way during the Iron Age. Nothing Roman has been recorded from the site itself but its location alongside a possible Roman or earlier routeway makes it a likely location for settlement or possibly burial.
- 1.3.18 The archaeological evaluation carried out immediately adjacent to the site in 2001 (HER 11397) prior to the construction of The Walkdens revealed the terminal ends of two parallel ditches (Ashworth 2001). They contained Late Iron Age to 2nd century AD pottery, a small amount of animal bone and one oyster shell. All the finds were small and abraded and were interpreted as being rubbish from nearby occupation; there were also five undated pits. Another Roman ditch and an undated pit was recorded at 22 Lucas Lane Ashwell, during an archaeological evaluation and later monitoring (Jones 2011a and 2011b; HER 17600).
- 1.3.19 The site of the 'Senuna Hoard' is located 1.5km to the north-west of the site at Bluegates Farm, Ashwell End, to the south of the River Rhee. This was a major discovery made by a metal detectorist in 2002 comprising a hoard of 3rd to 4th century gold and silver objects, including votive leaves decorated with the image of a goddess, a silver figurine of a similar goddess and a gold brooch with a central intaglio of a lion. Several of the plaques have inscriptions that show they were dedicated to a previously unknown goddess named Senuna, who may have been a water goddess local to the region. Limited excavations on the site revealed a chalk surface surrounding a hollow which was full of earlier Roman objects dating to the 1st and 2nd centuries. Hearths and debris around the hollow are thought to be evidence of ritual feasting. The Late Roman goddess plaques and jewellery are thought to have been a special deposit, possibly originally dedicated in a temple (HER 11726). Although well outside the Search Area this find serves to demonstrate the importance of the area that was to become 'Ashwell', and sheds some light perhaps on the Roman finds near Ashwell Springs. To quote the EUS 'the possibility of a religious focus centred on the springs needs to be considered' (Thompson 2002, 5).

Anglo-Saxon (AD 410 – 1066)

- 1.3.20 An inhumation burial was found in the field to the south-west of the site (HER 456) and was seen by a representative from Ashwell Museum. This appears to be an isolated burial and the date is unknown as there were no accompanying grave goods. The NGR is not precise, but the HER puts it 300m to the south-west of the site and very close to the cropmark of a small rectangular enclosure (HER 2319). The HER tentatively dates the burial as possibly Anglo-Saxon; buried before the practice of inhumation within church graveyards. The burial was not within or near a ring-ditch and therefore seems unlikely to be Bronze Age, although this possibility cannot be ruled out.
- 1.3.21 The nearest known Anglo-Saxon inhumation burials are from outside the Search Area at the Shire Bank; Slip End and at Odsey – all located at the edges of the parish.
- 1.3.22 The rectangular enclosure (HER 2319) shows up as an extremely well-defined cropmark with angular corners and measuring c. 25m x 16m. It is visible on certain aerial photographs which were viewed at the HER. No internal features and no entrance are visible and it remains undated. Although the enclosure is in a prominent position on the edge of the rising ground overlooking Ashwell Street and the spring, it is

unclear whether it is associated with the burial HER 456 or indeed if it is ancient at all. Historic maps do not show any former buildings where the cropmark is located.

- 1.3.23 The EUS gives an account of Ashwell's later Anglo-Saxon archaeology. In 1086 Ashwell was described as a borough - a planned town with rights given to its burgesses, and intended as a place of trade. It was not a Norman foundation, and its origin is usually assigned to the 9th century. Those boroughs, established in the 9th and 10th centuries, often had a defensive as well as a trading function, but there is no sign of any defences at Ashwell. The town is more likely to have been founded after the Danish attacks, in the later 10th or early 11th century. It would have been laid out by the owner of the existing Saxon estate for purposes of trade. The advantages of the location must have appeared greater than they do now. The source of the River Rhee is one obvious factor as is the road system.
- 1.3.24 It is possible that the curving boundaries of Mill Street and the rectory grounds represent the original Saxon estate centre of Ashwell Bury, with a timber hall possibly located where the rectory stands now, with a timber church, the watermill, and the springs adjacent. This is at the east end of the High Street. At the other end of the High Street the 'west manor', Westbury, also has Saxon origins and has yielded Saxo-Norman pottery. Both of these estates are likely to be earlier in date than the borough. The planned town consists of the slightly sinuous High Street running from one estate to the other, with an open market area at the western corner of Mill Street. The properties along the High Street consisted of a line of sizeable tofts. Back Street provided rear access to the properties on the south side. Many of these tofts are larger than the usual narrow burgage plot seen in medieval towns (Thompson 2002, 5).
- 1.3.25 Anglo-Saxon and medieval pottery, including a good deal of Saxo-Norman pottery was found in the garden of 'The Steppes', near Ashwell Springs (HER 6979) and this area is shown as near the site of a Late Saxon or medieval farmstead in the EUS (Thompson 2002, fig.6).
- 1.3.26 The site appears to be just outside the borough centre and therefore it is unclear what the usage of the land was during this period.

Medieval (AD 1066 – c. 1500)

- 1.3.27 A summary of Ashwell in the Middle Ages and its surviving medieval elements can be found in the EUS and will only be summarised here. In 1086 the borough of Ashwell was a thriving market town. Following the laying out of Baldock in the 1140s and the foundation of its market, the road from Baldock to Royston became the preferred line of the Icknield Way and Ashwell was bypassed. In 1300 Ashwell's market was still flourishing, but the other market towns gradually overtook it (Thompson 2002, 7).
- 1.3.28 Ashwell was a nucleated village surrounded by two open fields, to the south and north. There are also a number of hamlets or 'ends' within the parish which had their origins in Late Saxon or medieval times. There is no evidence for medieval archaeology within the site itself and the EUS shows this area as part of a medieval open field, to the rear of tofts backing onto Ashwell Street (Thompson 2002, fig. 6).
- 1.3.29 To the south of the site and outside the Search Area are several rabbit warrens or 'pillow mounds', the nearest being 0.7km south-west of the site.

Post-Medieval (c. AD 1500 – c. 1900)

- 1.3.30 At Ashwell Springs and outcropping elsewhere in the parish is a band of hard chalk - Totternhoe Stone - which can be used for building. Chalk from the pits was also converted into lime to use to fertilise the fields. A chalk pit and lime kiln can be seen to

the south of Ashwell Street on historic maps (HER 11359). Others are recorded on the HER outside the Search Area and there is a further chalk pit that was recorded during archaeological investigations at Station Road, on the site that was to become The Walkdens (HER 11397). All these quarries line Ashwell Street.

- 1.3.31 A cropmark of a former postmill is recorded on the HER south of Ashwell Street (HER 4457) and seems to be in a different place to the one shown on the Ordnance Survey 1st Edition map of 1877. These are located on rising ground to the south-west of the site.

1.4 Acknowledgements

- 1.4.1 The project was commissioned by Sam Jarman of Robert Lombardelli Partnership on behalf of the client, Origin Homes. Andy Instone and Kate Batt of Hertfordshire County Council monitored the archaeological evaluation. The project was managed by James Drummond-Murray, while the fieldwork was undertaken by Tam Webster, Rebecca Pridmore, Nick Cox, Stuart Ladd and the author. The GPS survey was conducted by Dave Brown and James Fairbairn and Lindsay Kemp provided specialist photography. The Author would like to thank Sarah Talks of the Ashwell Museum for organising the open evening and school visits to the site during the excavation.

2 PROJECT SCOPE

- 2.1.1 This report deals solely with the excavation carried out by Oxford Archaeology East in 2015. The results of the evaluation have already been analysed (Phillips,2013) and whilst they will be referred to when relevant, will not be included as part of this analysis.

3 INTERFACES, COMMUNICATIONS AND PROJECT REVIEW

- 3.1.1 The Post-Excavation Assessment has been undertaken principally by Andrew Greef (AG) and edited and quality assured in-house by Project Manager James Drummond-Murray (JDM) and Post-Excavation and Publication Manager Liz Popescu (EP). It will be distributed to the client (Sam Jarman of Robert Lombardelli Partnership on behalf of Origin Homes, SJ) and Andy Instone (AT) of Hertfordshire County Council for comment and approval.
- 3.1.2 Following approval of the Post-Excavation Assessment, specialist meetings will be arranged to discuss and timetable the analysis phase of the work. Following these meetings a post-excavation analysis and publication timetable will be produced.
- 3.1.3 Meetings will be arranged at relevant points during the post-excavation analysis with SJ and AT, or be conducted via telephone or email as appropriate.

4 SUMMARY OF RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The development area was excavated in two parts; first, the area immediately around the monument itself and subsequently the remainder of the footprint of the development were stripped. It is not useful archaeologically to treat these separately and the site is therefore discussed as one area. The features of the site have been split into groups with the ring ditch of the henge and the pits along it being described separately to the features enclosed within it and the features located outside it.

4.2 The Henge

4.2.1 The main feature on the site and the target of the excavation was a very slightly oval ring ditch with an internal diameter of 21 to 22m and an external diameter of 25 to 26.5m. Two entrances, almost but not precisely symmetrically aligned, were located to the north-west and to the south-east. The north-western entrance measured 2.7m across and the south-eastern entrance measured 2.1m across (Fig.4-5, Plate.1-5,7-8).

4.2.2 In general the ditch was more substantial in the north-eastern arc with a width ranging from 1.5m to 2.94m and a depth ranging from 0.16m to 0.5m. The south-western arc was much narrower and shallower in places with a width ranging from 1m to 2.5m and a depth ranging from 0.1m to 0.42m. No trace of a bank remained, suggesting that a fair amount of truncation must have taken place. The ditch was 100% excavated and a full list of dimensions is provided in Table 1. The upper fills of the henge were a fairly uniform grey brown silt with frequent chalk inclusions. The south-western arc of the henge generally had a higher level of chalk in its fill than the north-eastern arc. The lower fills of the henge were of a light grey silt and were very chalky throughout the length of the ditch.

Context	Breadth	Depth	Feature Type	Group
186	2.94	0.48	ditch	Henge (NE)
206	2.2	0.2	ditch	Henge (NE)
204	2.3	0.16	ditch	Henge (NE)
198	2.82	0.38	ditch	Henge (NE)
202	2.2	0.2	ditch	Henge (NE)
228	2.4	0.5	ditch	Henge (NE)
180	1.84	0.34	ditch	Henge (NE)
252	1.5	0.5	ditch	Henge (NE)
260	2.7	0.4	ditch	Henge (NE)
173	2.3	0.36	ditch	Henge (NE)
192	2.6	0.48	ditch	Henge (NE)

<i>Context</i>	<i>Breadth</i>	<i>Depth</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	<i>Group</i>
166	2.86	0.46	ditch	Henge (NE)
235	2.7	0.4	ditch	Henge (NE)
214	2.6	0.54	ditch	Henge (NE)
244	1.5	0.5	ditch	Henge (NE)
182	1.46	0.34	ditch	Henge (SW)
184	1.66	0.16	ditch	Henge (SW)
176	1.84	0.42	ditch	Henge (SW)
190	2.5	0.1	ditch	Henge (SW)
164	1.44	0.3	ditch	Henge (SW)
197	1.6	0.1	ditch	Henge (SW)
210	1	0.1	ditch	Henge (SW)
222	1.3	0.28	ditch	Henge (SW)
238	2.1	0.42	ditch	Henge (SW)
233	1.5	0.28	ditch	Henge (SW)
195	2.08	0.22	ditch	Henge (SW)

Table 1: Henge ditch dimensions (by arc)

4.2.3 Along the line of the henge ditch, both at its base and at the side were 13 small pits (Fig.4). These have been grouped with the ditch discussion as they seem associated with its use and were generally sealed by the ditch fill, suggesting that they were created at a time when the ditch was open and had not silted up. Alternatively some of these pits could pre-date the ditch and were perhaps truncated by its construction. With the exception of pits **217** and **255** which were slightly more substantial, these pits were generally fairly shallow, ranging from 0.05m to 0.22m deep. Generally, these pits were filled with a similar material to the henge ditch fill, however one exception is pit **270**. This feature clearly cut the lower fill of the ditch and contained cremated human bone. Further details of pit dimensions follows in Table 2.

<i>Context</i>	<i>Breadth</i>	<i>Depth</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	<i>Group</i>
241	0.6	0.3	pit	Henge pit
208	0.95	0.14	pit	Henge pit
212	0.52	0.21	pit	Henge pit
258	0.4	0.05	pit	Henge pit
217	0.9	0.3	pit	Henge pit
220	0.48	0.08	pit	Henge pit
224	0.7	0.22	pit	Henge pit
284	0.6	0.2	pit	Henge pit
249	0.49	0.16	pit	Henge pit
245	0.33	0.09	pit	Henge pit
247	0.7	0.09	pit	Henge pit
255	0.8	0.5	pit	Henge pit
270	0.68	0.11	pit	Henge pit (cremation)

Table 2: Pits along henge ditch

4.3 Internal Features

4.3.1 Within the boundary of the henge ditch were eight pits of varied form. Two were fairly small, shallow and irregular (**171, 178**) measuring under 0.40m in diameter. The remaining six pits (**152, 154, 156, 158, 160, 162**) were circular and varied in width from 0.55m to 0.92m, with a depth of 0.12m to 0.3m (Fig.4&6, Plate.6). Some of these pits (**152, 156, 158, 160, 162** in particular) could potentially have formed part of an inner ring or partial ring of pits within the interior of the henge. Given the level of truncation that the monument has experienced, it is likely that some pits have been lost, particularly in the south-eastern segment where the ditch was also at its narrowest.

<i>Context</i>	<i>Breadth</i>	<i>Depth</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	<i>Group</i>
154	0.55	0.17	pit	Henge internal
152	0.8	0.21	pit	Henge internal
171	0.37	0.09	pit	Henge internal
178	0.42	0.07	ditch	Henge internal
156	0.92	0.3	pit	Henge internal
158	0.9	0.12	pit	Henge internal
162	0.65	0.19	pit	Henge internal
160	0.71	0.14	pit	Henge internal

Table 3: Internal features

4.4 External Features

- 4.4.1 Located to the west of the henge and to the south of the road bounding the site were a spread of pits numbering 28 in total. Eight of these pits were clustered around a narrow curvilinear ditch (**342, 352, 354, 358, 360, 364**) which could have been the remains of a small ploughed out barrow. This ditch ranged in width from 0.22m to 0.48m and ranged in depth from 0.06m to 0.29m and seemed to be part of an incomplete ring ditch. Given the high level of truncation present in that area of the site (with the thinnest covering of topsoil) it is likely that the remainder of this feature has been ploughed away. Its position between the henge and the known barrow to the south-west (HER 2469) lends strength to the suggestion that it could be the remains of a small barrow ditch. The pits surrounding this feature were a variety of sizes and may or may not be related to its use. Pit **362** clearly cut the fill of the ditch and is therefore not contemporary. Full measurements of these pits appear in Table 4.
- 4.4.2 The remainder of the pits formed a general spread across the north-western area of the site and were for the most part fairly small and shallow, ranging from 0.06m to 0.28m in depth. At the north and north-west extremities of the site, however, the pits were generally deeper and more regular. These pits (**288, 290, 292, 294, 296, 298, 301**) were more similar in form to the very circular ones within the henge enclosure, although some were deeper, particularly the cluster in the north-west. These pits were up to 1m wide and 0.46m deep which, in part, may be due to the much greater depth of topsoil and subsoil at this northern edge of the site. Pit **337**, centrally located in the site and north-west of the henge entrance was remarkable due to its dimensions (0.9m wide and 0.6m deep, deeper than any other pit on the site) and also due to the high quantity of worked flint recovered from its fill. Additionally pit **315**, despite its more modest dimensions, contained a large amount of worked flint and also calcined bone both human and pig.

<i>Context</i>	<i>Breadth</i>	<i>Depth</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	<i>Function</i>
354	0.34	0.16	ditch	Barrow ditch
342	0.4	0.29	ditch	Barrow ditch
364	0.3	0.25	ditch	Barrow ditch
352	0.4	0.17	ditch	Barrow ditch
358	0.48	0.1	ditch	Barrow ditch
360	0.22	0.06	ditch	Barrow ditch
329		0.3	tree throw	External natural
333	0.64	0.24	natural feature	External natural
356	0.2	0.05	tree throw	External natural
327		0.3	tree throw	External natural
331	0.7	0.07	tree throw	External natural
231	1.25	0.1	tree throw	External natural
169	1.45	0.17	tree throw	External natural
313		0.2	tree throw	External natural
325	0.37	0.12	pit	External pit
323	0.35	0.11	pit	External pit
321	0.48	0.08	pit	External pit
317	0.4	0.06	pit	External pit
305	0.66	0.18	pit	External pit
315	0.5	0.16	pit	External pit
311	0.66	0.14	pit	External pit
309	0.66	0.2	pit	External pit
307	0.38	0.1	pit	External pit
303	0.42	0.1	pit	External pit
319	0.67	0.12	pit	External pit

<i>Context</i>	<i>Breadth</i>	<i>Depth</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	<i>Function</i>
366	0.45	0.27	pit	External pit
335	1.34	0.24	pit	External pit
368	0.85	0.28	pit	External pit
362	0.42	0.2	pit	External pit
350	0.3	0.15	pit	External pit
348	0.2	0.09	pit	External pit
346	0.45	0.12	pit	External pit
344	0.44	0.2	pit	External pit
340	0.45	0.1	pit	External pit
337	0.9	0.6	pit	External pit
370	0.36	0.1	pit	External pit

Table 4: External features

5 FACTUAL DATA AND ASSESSMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

5.1 Stratigraphic and Structural Data

The Excavation Record

- 5.1.1 All hand written records have been collated and checked for internal consistency, and the site records have been transcribed onto a MS Access database. Quantities of records are laid out in Table 5.

Type	Quantity
Context Register	11
Context records	222
Plan Registers	1
Plans	33
Sections register sheets	3
Sections	82
Sample Register sheets	9
Photo Register sheets	6
Black and White Films	2
Digital photographs	240

Table 5: Written and drawn records

Finds and Environmental Quantification

- 5.1.2 All finds have been washed, quantified and bagged. The catalogue for all finds has been entered into a Microsoft Access database. Total quantities for each material type are listed below.

Category	Weight (g)
Pottery	71.00
CBM	273
Worked flint	2666.4
Burnt flint	160.6
Animal bone	546

Table 6: Quantification of finds

5.1.3 Environmental bulk samples were collected from a representative cross-section of feature types and deposits. Bulk samples were taken to analyse the preservation of micro- and macro-botanical remains as well as for finds retrieval.

All of the pits within the henge were sampled, with representative samples from the external pits. Four bulk samples were taken from fills of the henge ditch located at the north, south, east and west.

Sample type	cremation	Pit	Ditch	Total
Flotation	2	32	4	38

Table 7: Quantification of samples by feature type

Range and Variety

5.1.4 The variety of features on the site was not great. Pits were the predominant feature type and varied from substantial, steep and circular to small, shallow and sub-circular. The ditches on the site formed rings or partial rings with the henge ditch being the main feature on the site. Two of the pits contained cremated human remains.

Condition

5.1.5 The site was heavily truncated by ploughing. The henge monument had been ploughed out and only the ditch remained. The ditch itself was likely much more substantial when constructed and some of the pits on the site were clearly truncated. Towards the road at the north the subsoil was considerably thicker and the features were better preserved in that area.

5.2 Artefact Summaries

Pottery (Appendix B1)

Summary

5.2.1 A total of 32 sherds weighing 71g were collected from 14 excavated contexts. The pottery is fragmentary and no complete vessels were recovered. The sherds are mostly small and poorly preserved and the average sherd weight is 3g. The assemblage comprises four decorated body sherds of Middle Neolithic Peterborough Ware, a scrap of Later Neolithic to Early Bronze Age Beaker and 18 sherds of Earlier Iron Age pottery. Nine small pieces of pottery are prehistoric but are otherwise not closely datable.

5.2.2 Peterborough Ware dates to c.3400-2500 BC (Gibson and Kinnes 1997), although an end date for the main period of its use may occur slightly earlier between 2900-2700 BC (A. Tinsley pers. comm.). This type of pottery is not often found at classic henge monuments, which are more commonly associated with Grooved Ware (Barrett *et al.* 1991). However, an early or formative henge recently excavated at Hundred Acre Field, Norton has produced sherds of both Early and Middle Neolithic date including Peterborough Ware (Fitzpatrick-Matthews 2015). A small quantity of comparable Peterborough Ware was also found within a smaller Neolithic ring ditch at Godmanchester which may provide a better parallel (Lyons in prep.).

5.2.3 The single sherd with incised or impressed decoration in grog-tempered fabric may be either Beaker or Grooved Ware. Both these forms are commonly found at henge monuments (Barrett *et al.* 1991, 92).

- 5.2.4 The Early Iron Age sherds represent limited activity at the site in the first millennium BC, perhaps around 800-350 BC.

Statement of Potential

- 5.2.5 The presence of Peterborough Ware is of particular interest, perhaps suggesting a Mid Neolithic date for the henge.
- 5.2.6 A short note is required discussing dating and local parallels for the small prehistoric assemblage.

Ceramic Building Material (Appendix B2)

Summary

- 5.2.7 A total of 27 pieces of ceramic building material weighing 273g were collected from six excavated contexts and from unstratified surface collection. Unstratified material forms 65% of the total assemblage. The CBM is fragmentary and mostly small and poorly preserved.

Statement of Potential

- 5.2.8 The assemblage is too small and fragmented to be of interest and no further work is required.

Stone (Appendix B3)

Summary

- 5.2.9 A total of 1.628kg of stone was collected from six excavated contexts. The assemblage comprises a quantity of heat affected pebbles and a possible rubber.

Statement of Potential

- 5.2.10 The heat affected stones and rubber have little research potential and no further work is required.

Lithics (Appendix B4)

Summary

- 5.2.11 The excavations recovered a total of 294 worked flints and 11 fragments of unworked burnt flint (160.6g). In terms of condition, raw materials and technology the assemblage is very coherent and gives every impression of being a single period assemblage. All stages of core reduction are present with chips and small flakes, decortication flakes, usable flakes, discarded cores and retouched tools all represented. Technologically the assemblage is characterised by generalised flake production alongside the use of more specialised levallois-like and discoidal cores. Twelve retouched pieces are present, making up 4% of the total worked flint. These retouched forms are dominated by well-made end scrapers manufactured on relatively large and regular flake blanks, together with two serrated pieces and three miscellaneous retouched flakes.

Statement of Potential

- 5.2.12 In order to address some of the potential issues highlighted adequately it is recommended that the following further work is carried out in connection with the assemblage.
- 5.2.13 Basic recording (including technological analysis) has been carried out for the whole assemblage but some additional analysis including more detailed recording and metric analysis of the retouched pieces and cores would be advantageous. It may also be

useful to attempt some refitting work on the larger assemblages from individual contexts, although assessment suggests this is unlikely to yield significant results.

- 5.2.14 The distribution and context of the lithic assemblage needs to be analysed in detail. In particular, it will be very important to establish the context of the lithic assemblage in terms of the stratigraphy/phasing of the monument and other discrete features on the site and how the assemblage relates to activities undertaken during the construction, use and 'afterlife' of the monument. This analysis should include comparison with the occurrence of other classes of artefacts/ecofacts, especially any pottery and faunal remains.
- 5.2.15 Attention should be given to comparing the assemblage with other later Neolithic flint assemblages, including those from other contexts (pits, lithic scatters) in the wider region as well as with flint assemblages recovered from henge monuments at a national scale.
- 5.2.16 Provision should be made for a full account of the flintwork to be included in any publication of the site, including illustration of selected pieces.

5.3 Environmental Summaries

Human skeletal Remains (Appendix C1)

Summary

- 5.3.1 Three deposits of cremated human bone were recovered from the site. Cremation deposit 316 was recovered from a circular pit (**315**) measuring 0.50m in diameter and 0.16m in depth. The cremated bone was within a dark grey-brown, clay silt matrix, which also contained occasional charcoal, flint and pot. Deposits 203 and 271, thought to relate to a single cremation burial, were recovered from the terminal end of henge ditch **202**. Deposit 271 was recovered from a sub-circular pit (**270**), measuring 0.86m in diameter and 0.11m in depth, which was cut into the lower fill of the henge ditch. The cremated bone was in a dark grey-brown, silty matrix, which also contained occasional flint debitage flakes. Deposit 203 comprised material that was excavated from above and around deposit 271, and probably represents disturbed material originating from 271.
- 5.3.2 The weight of cremation deposits 203 (28.7g), 271 (25.6g) and 316 (11.8g) was well below the expected range of 1000-2400g (average 1650g) for a full cremated adult (McKinley 2000a, 269). Even if the weights of 203 and 271, thought to have derived from the same deposit, are combined, the total weight (54.3g) is still well below the expected range. With deposit 203 probably representing material that originated from 271, it is clear that some level of post-burial disturbance/truncation had occurred. It should therefore be considered that some bone has been lost completely.
- 5.3.3 Interpretation of these deposits, in terms of their type and cultural significance, is therefore difficult. That said, it seems unlikely that they ever contained the expected amount of bone of a full cremated skeleton. It should be considered that the entire cremated remains were never included within the deposit. There was no evidence of burning *in situ*, and therefore the features probably represent redeposition of bone after the burning event. One interpretation could be that these are redeposited pyre debris (McKinley 2004, 10; McKinley 2000b). Alternatively, these cremations could represent a token deposit of cremated bone, buried as a memorial (cenotaph burials, McKinley 2000b, 42).

Statement of potential

- 5.3.4 No further osteological analysis is recommended as all available osteological data has been obtained from the cremation deposit, allowing for some limited observations regarding pyre technology and funeral rites.
- 5.3.5 Samples for radiocarbon dating have been selected from the deposits (charred hazelnut shell from 316 and cremated bone from 217). Once dated, the deposits should be considered as part of the wider burial landscape, alongside a review of similar, contemporary burials within the Hertfordshire region and further afield.

Faunal Remains (Appendix C2)

Summary

- 5.3.6 Just over 100 assessable specimens were recorded from the henge monument and associated features. The preservation of the material is poor, allowing only for a small proportion of bone to be assigned to species level (26 specimens/ 24.5% of the assemblage). Bone was heavily eroded and fragmentary, and it was not possible to recognise some elements. Despite this poor preservation, five different species of animal were identified including red deer antler and horse. Only three specimens were recorded as calcined, two of which came from pits situated to the north-west of the henge monument.

Statement of Potential

- 5.3.7 In the absence of ageing or biometrical data, it is difficult to assess the material any further simply based on the range of species. In addition to that, the assemblage is quantitatively insufficient for making propositions on animal use in the period, or to discuss economic patterns. Whilst no further work is required at this point, viewing the material against locally comparable assemblages could help us understand the differences in bone deposition between domestic and monument-associated contexts.

Environmental Remains (Appendix C3)

Summary

- 5.3.8 Thirty-eight bulk samples were taken during excavations at The Walkdens, Ashwell from a Neolithic henge ditch in addition to associated pits and two cremation deposits. Very few of the deposits that were sampled contained dating evidence; those samples from the lower fills of the henge are considered to be Neolithic whilst most of the pits are undated and cremation **271** has been radiocarbon dated to the Bronze Age.
- 5.3.9 Charred cereal grains are predominant within the individual assemblages although concentrations per litre of soil are very low. Barley and wheat grains are evident in several of the upper fills of the henge ditch and associated pits, along with occasional charred legumes. The henge is considered to be Neolithic in date; the period in which cultivation of cereals is first seen in Britain. Both barley and hulled varieties of wheat were grown in this period and wild foods including hazelnuts were also an important food source. The chalk geology of the site supports diverse mollusc communities, several species of which are burrowing snails and can cause movement of charred plant remains into lower contexts. Radiocarbon dating of the charred remains would verify or refute this conclusion. Charred hazelnut shell fragments occur in only two features and are considered to be far more likely to be contemporary with the deposits.
- 5.3.10 Despite extensive sampling (a total of 729 litres of soil were processed), very few ecofacts and artefacts were recovered from the samples. This is most probably an indication of the ceremonial/ritual function of the site throughout the prehistoric period

(and possibly beyond) that is also indicated by the deposition of a cremation in the henge ditch terminus during the Bronze Age.

Statement of Potential

- 5.3.11 Radiocarbon dating of a selection of the charred remains is recommended to establish contemporaneity or later intrusion. The choice of material could include a legume from an undated pit, a grain from the henge ditch and hazelnut fragments from cremation pit **316** (alternatively bone could be used to date this deposit).

6 RESEARCH AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

6.1 Introduction

The research aims for the project are partly based on those in '*Research and Archaeology: a Framework for the Eastern Counties*' (Brown and Glazebrook 2000) as well as the revised framework (Medlycott 2011). Where this is the case, the relevant sections are noted in italics below, and are followed by a brief discussion on how the results of this excavation can add to the debate on the specific research themes and objectives.

6.2 Regional Research Objectives

Further work, employing a variety of methods, is needed to establish or confirm the date and character of a representative sample of sites mapped by the NMP projects. Without dating such sites more closely, it is difficult to relate them to regional and national trends.

- 6.2.1 This site serves as an excellent example of how monuments identified by cropmarks and even geophysical survey can be incorrectly interpreted. Full excavation of this type of monument provides a valuable opportunity to aid classification of this size and style of monument.

Henge monuments are most famously represented by Maxey in the west of the region, with a wide range of cropmark sites in Cambridgeshire. In the east of the region, a range of possible, mainly small, henges are known from cropmarks, however, few have been dated by excavation

The excavation and study of cropmark complexes in areas outside those affected by gravel extraction is desirable, in order to address the geographical imbalances and test interpretations.

- 6.2.2 At present there is a bias towards certain geographical regions when it comes to excavated examples of this monument type. Better understanding of this henge and how it relates to other monuments in the local and regional landscape could help address this imbalance.

6.3 Local Research Objectives

- 6.3.1 The henge at Norton is currently the only other henge with reliable information—all others within Hertfordshire are suspected from cropmarks and aerial photographic data. (Lockyear 2015)

- 6.3.2 Henges are rare in Hertfordshire, excavated ones rarer still. It is essential to compare this monument with the larger henge at Norton as despite its likely earlier date and different style, there would have likely been some overlap in activity on the two sites.
- 6.3.3 Unexcavated henges within Hertfordshire also are worthy of comparison as are similar size and shape ring-ditches which may have been incorrectly classified. Such a comparison may lead to a better understanding of this monuments place within the landscape.

6.4 Site Specific Research Objectives

Further work on the development of chronologies for monument types would undoubtedly refine our understanding of their role in the landscape.

- 6.4.1 Understanding fully the period of activity on the site could help our interpretation of how it was regarded over time and its place within the landscape. The changing nature of use of the site and its place in the Bronze Age burial landscape is also worth exploring.
- 6.4.2 The alignment of the entrances of the henge may be worth further investigation. It may be useful to compare the alignment of this henge with the spring at Ashwell to the north-west, to other henges of this type and the landscape that they are placed in.

7 METHODS STATEMENTS FOR ANALYSIS

7.1 Stratigraphic Analysis

- 7.1.1 Contexts, finds and environmental data will be analysed using an MS Access database. The specialist information will be integrated to aid dating and complete more detailed phasing of the site. A full stratigraphic narrative will be produced and integrated with the results of the specialist analysis and will form the basis of the archive report (see below).

7.2 Illustration

- 7.2.1 All site plans and sections will be digitised in AutoCAD and report and publication figures will be produced in Adobe Illustrator. Finds recommended for illustration will be drawn by hand and then digitised or, where appropriate, photography of certain finds-types will be undertaken.

7.3 Documentary Research

- 7.3.1 Primary and published sources will be consulted where appropriate using the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record and other resources and will also include aerial photographs and reports on comparable sites locally and nationally in order to place the site within its landscape and archaeological context. This evidence will be collated and where relevant reproduced in the full grey literature report and any subsequent publication.

7.4 Artefactual Analysis

- 7.4.1 All the artefacts and environmental remains have been assessed/analysed with recommendations for any additional work given in the individual specialist reports (Appendices B1-4). Further work is recommended as follows:

Lithics:

- Additional analysis including more detailed recording and metric analysis of the retouched pieces and cores, and an attempt at some refitting work on the larger assemblages.
- The distribution and context of the lithic assemblage needs to be analysed in detail. This analysis should include comparison with the occurrence of other classes of artefacts/ecofacts, especially any pottery and faunal remains.
- Attention should be given to comparing the assemblage with other later Neolithic flint assemblages, including those from other contexts (e.g. pits, lithic scatters) in the wider region as well as with flint assemblages recovered from henge monuments at a national scale.
- Provision should be made for a full account of the flintwork to be included in any publication of the site, including illustration of selected pieces.

Pottery:

- A short note is required discussing dating and local parallels for the small prehistoric assemblage.

7.5 Ecofactual Analysis

7.5.1 All environmental remains have been assessed/analysed with recommendations for any additional work given in the individual specialist reports (Appendices C 1-3). Further work is recommended as follows:

Faunal remains:

- Although no further work is required at this point, viewing the material against locally comparable assemblages could help us understand the differences in bone deposition between domestic and monument-associated contexts.

Environmental samples:

- Radiocarbon dating of a selection of the charred remains is recommended to establish contemporaneity or later intrusion. The choice of material could include a legume from an undated pit, a grain from the henge ditch and hazelnut fragments from cremation pit **316** (alternatively bone could be used to date this deposit).

Human skeletal remains:

- No further osteological analysis is recommended as all available osteological data has been obtained from the cremation deposit.

8 REPORT WRITING, ARCHIVING AND PUBLICATION

8.1 Report Writing

Tasks associated with report writing are identified in Table 9.

8.2 Storage and Curation

8.2.1 Excavated material and records will be deposited with, and curated by, Hertfordshire Museum in appropriate county stores under the Site Code XHTASH15. A digital archive

will be deposited with OA Library/ADS. HCC requires transfer of ownership prior to deposition. During analysis and report preparation, OA East will hold all material and reserves the right to send material for specialist analysis.

- 8.2.2 The archive will be prepared in accordance with current OA East guidelines, which are based on current national guidelines.

8.3 Publication

- 8.3.1 It is proposed that the results of the project should be published in Hertfordshire Archaeology under the title 'A Late Neolithic Henge in Ashwell', by Andrew Greef.

9 RESOURCES AND PROGRAMMING

9.1 Project Team Structure

Name	Initials	Project Role	Establishment
James Drummond-Murray	JDM	Project Manager	OAE
Liz Popescu	EP	Post-Excavation and Publication Manager	OAE
Andrew Greef	AG	Project Supervisor and Author	OAE
Sarah Percival	SP	Prehistoric pottery specialist	OAE
Lawrence Billington	LB	Lithic specialist	Self employed
Rachel Fosberry	RF	Archaeobotanist	OAE
Severine Bezie	SB	Illustrator	OAE
Gillian Greer	GG	Finds illustration	OAE
Katherine Hamilton	KH	Archive Supervisor	OAE

Table 8: Project Team

9.2 Stages and Tasks

Task No.	Task	Staff	No. Days
Project Management			
1	Project management	JDM EP	2
2	Team meetings	JDM EP AG	2
3	Liaison with relevant staff and specialists, distribution of relevant information and materials	AG	1
Stage 1: Stratigraphic analysis			
4	Integrate ceramic/artefact dating with site matrix	AG	1
5	Update database and digital plans/sections to reflect any changes	AG	1
6	Finalise site phasing	AG	0.5
7	Add final phasing to database	AG	0.5
8	Compile group and phase text	AG	1
9	Compile overall stratigraphic text and site narrative to form the basis of the full/archive report	AG	2
10	Review, collate and standardise results of all final specialist reports and integrate with stratigraphic text and project results	AG	1
Illustration			
11	Digitise selected sections	SB/GG	1
12	Prepare draft phase plans, sections and other report figures	SB/GG	1
13	Select photographs for inclusion in the report	AG	0.5
14	Illustrate selected flints	GG	1
15	Digitise detailed post-ex plan of henge	SB	1
16	Research other henge monuments in East Anglia and beyond	AG	2
17	Consult records of crop marks within the local landscape.	AG	1
Artefact studies			
18	Prehistoric pottery: short publication report	SP	1

Task No.	Task	Staff	No. Days
19	Lithic assemblage: recording and analysis	LB	1
20	Comparison of lithic assemblage with other henge monuments	LB	1
21	Lithic assemblage: short publication report	LB	1
Environmental Remains			
22	Selection of additional samples for radiocarbon dating	RF	0.5
Stage 2: Report Writing			
23	Integrate documentary research	AG	1
24	Write historical and archaeological background text	AG	
25	Compile list of illustrations/liaise with illustrators	AG SB/GG	0.5
26	Write discussion and conclusions	AG	1
27	Prepare report figures	SB/GG	0.5
28	Collate/edit captions, bibliography, appendices etc	AG	1
29	Produce draft report	AG	3
30	Internal edit	EP	1
31	Incorporate internal edits	AG	0.5
32	Final edit	EP JDM	0.5
33	Send to HCC for approval	JDM AG	0.5
34	Approval revisions	AG	0.5
35	Produce draft publication	AG	3
36	Internal edit	EP	1
37	Incorporate internal edits	AG	0.5
38	Final edit	EP JDM	1
39	Send to publisher for refereeing	EP	0.5
40	Post-refereeing revisions	AG/EP	1
41	Copy edit queries	EP	1
42	Proof-reading	AG JDM	1

Task No.	Task	Staff	No. Days
		EP	
Stage 3: Archiving			
43	Compile paper archive	AG	0.5
44	Archive/delete digital photographs	AG	0.5
45	Compile/check material archive	AG/KH	1

Table 9: Task list

APPENDIX A. CONTEXT SUMMARY

<i>Context</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>Breadth</i>	<i>Depth</i>
150	150	cut	ditch	external ditch (ring)	0.42	0.06
151	150	fill	ditch		0.42	0.06
152	152	cut	pit	henge internal	0.8	0.21
153	152	fill	pit		0.8	0.21
154	154	cut	pit	henge internal	0.55	0.17
155	154	fill	pit		0.55	0.17
156	156	cut	pit	henge internal	0.92	0.3
157	156	fill	pit		0.92	0.3
158	158	cut	pit	henge internal	0.9	0.12
159	158	fill	pit		0.9	0.12
160	160	cut	pit	henge internal	0.71	0.14
161	160	fill	pit		0.71	0.14
162	162	cut	pit	henge internal	0.65	0.19
163	162	fill	pit		0.65	0.19
164	164	cut	ditch	henge (SW)	1.44	0.3
165	164	fill	ditch		1.44	0.3
166	166	cut	ditch	henge (NE)	2.86	0.46
167	166	fill	ditch			0.2
168	166	fill	ditch			0.3

<i>Context</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>Breadth</i>	<i>Depth</i>
169	169	cut	tree throw	external natural	1.45	0.17
170	169	fill	tree throw		1.45	0.17
171	171	cut	pit	henge internal	0.37	0.09
172	171	fill	pit		0.37	0.09
173	173	cut	ditch	henge (NE)	2.3	0.36
174	173	fill	ditch			0.2
175	173	fill	ditch			0.3
176	176	cut	ditch	henge (SW)	1.84	0.42
177	176	fill	ditch		1.84	0.42
178	178	cut	ditch	henge internal	0.42	0.07
179	178	fill	pit		0.42	0.07
180	180	cut	ditch	henge (NE)	1.84	0.34
181	180	fill	ditch		1.84	0.27
182	182	cut	ditch	henge (SW)	1.46	0.34
183	182	fill	ditch		1.46	0.34
184	184	cut	ditch	henge (SW)	1.66	0.16
185	184	fill	ditch		1.66	0.16
186	186	cut	ditch	henge (NE)	2.94	0.48
187	186	fill	ditch			0.18
188	186	fill	ditch			0.3
189	190	fill	modern			
190	190	cut	ditch	henge (SW)	2.5	0.1
191	190	fill	ditch		2.5	0.1
192	192	cut	ditch	henge (NE)	2.6	0.48

<i>Context</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>Breadth</i>	<i>Depth</i>
193	192	fill	ditch			0.19
194	192	fill	ditch			0.28
195	195	cut	ditch	henge (SW)	2.08	0.22
196	195	fill	ditch			0.22
197	197	cut	ditch	henge (SW)	1.6	0.1
198	198	cut	ditch	henge (NE)	2.82	0.38
199	198	fill	ditch			0.1
200	198	fill	ditch			0.24
201	180	fill	ditch			0.1
202	202	cut	ditch	henge (NE)	2.2	0.2
203	202	fill	ditch			0.2
204	204	cut	ditch	henge (NE)	2.3	0.16
205	204	fill	ditch		2.3	0.16
206	206	cut	ditch	henge (NE)	2.2	0.2
207	206	fill	ditch		2.2	0.2
208	208	cut	pit	henge pit	0.95	0.14
209	208	fill	pit			0.14
210	210	cut	ditch	henge (SW)	1	0.1
211	210	fill	ditch		1	0.1
212	212	cut	pit	henge pit	0.52	0.21
213	212	fill	pit		0.52	0.21
214	214	cut	ditch	henge (NE)	2.6	0.54
215	214	fill	ditch			0.1
216	214	fill	ditch			0.29

<i>Context</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>Breadth</i>	<i>Depth</i>
217	217	cut	pit	henge pit	0.9	0.3
218	217	fill	pit			0.2
219	217	fill	pit			0.2
220	220	cut	pit	henge pit	0.48	0.08
221	220	fill	pit		0.48	0.08
222	222	cut	ditch	henge (SW)	1.3	0.28
223	222	fill	ditch		1.3	0.28
224	224	cut	pit	henge pit	0.7	0.22
225	224	fill	pit		0.7	0.22
228	228	cut	ditch	henge (NE)	2.4	0.5
229	228	fill	ditch			0.2
230	228	fill	ditch			0.3
231	231	cut	tree throw	external natural	1.25	0.1
232	231	fill	tree throw		1.25	0.1
233	233	cut	ditch	henge (SW)	1.5	0.28
234	233	fill	ditch		1.5	0.28
235	235	cut	ditch	henge (NE)	2.7	0.4
236	235	fill	ditch			0.1
237	235	fill	ditch			0.28
238	238	cut	ditch	henge (SW)	2.1	0.42
239	238	fill	ditch			0.42
240	156	fill	pit			0.2
241	241	cut	pit	henge pit	0.6	0.3
242	241	fill	pit		0.6	0.3

<i>Context</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>Breadth</i>	<i>Depth</i>
243	244	fill	ditch		1.5	0.5
244	244	cut	ditch	henge (NE)	1.5	0.5
245	245	cut	pit	henge pit	0.33	0.09
246	245	fill	pit		0.33	0.09
247	247	cut	pit	henge pit	0.7	0.09
248	247	fill	pit		0.7	0.09
249	249	cut	pit	henge pit	0.49	0.16
250	249	fill	pit		0.49	0.16
251	252	fill	ditch		1.5	0.5
252	252	cut	ditch	henge (NE)	1.5	0.5
253	255	fill	pit		1.1	0.5
254	255	fill	pit		0.8	0.2
255	255	cut	pit	henge pit	0.8	0.5
256	252	fill	ditch			0.18
257	195	fill	ditch			0.22
258	258	cut	pit	henge pit	0.4	0.05
259	258	fill	pit		0.4	0.05
260	260	cut	ditch	henge (NE)	2.7	0.4
261	260	fill	ditch			0.1
262	260	fill	ditch			0.28
263	238	fill	ditch			0.42
264	233	fill	ditch		1.5	0.28
265	204	fill	ditch		2.3	0.16
266	204	fill	ditch		2.3	0.16
267	192	fill	ditch			0.19

<i>Context</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>Breadth</i>	<i>Depth</i>
268	192	fill	ditch			0.28
269	233	fill	ditch		1.5	0.28
270	270	cut	pit	cremation	0.86	0.11
271	270	fill	pit	cremation	0.86	0.11
272	184	fill	ditch		1.66	0.16
273	173	fill	ditch			0.2
274	173	fill	ditch			0.3
275	182	fill	ditch		1.46	0.34
276	222	fill	ditch		1.3	0.28
277	202	fill	ditch			0.06
278	202	fill	ditch			0.13
279	166	fill	ditch			0.2
280	166	fill	ditch			0.3
281	206	fill	ditch		2.2	0.2
282	198	fill	ditch			0.24
283	186	fill	ditch			0.3
284	284	cut	pit	henge pit	0.6	0.2
285	284	fill	pit		0.6	0.2
286	197	fill	ditch		1.6	0.1
287	152	fill	pit			0.1
288	288	cut	pit	external pit	0.95	0.22
289	288	fill	pit			0.22
290	290	cut	pit	external pit	0.9	0.14
291	290	fill	pit			0.14
292	292	cut	pit	external pit	0.86	0.28

<i>Context</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>Breadth</i>	<i>Depth</i>
293	292	fill	pit			0.28
294	294	cut	pit	external pit	0.93	0.45
295	294	fill	pit			0.45
296	296	cut	pit	external pit	1	0.46
297	296	fill	pit			0.46
298	298	cut	pit	external pit	0.85	0.42
299	298	fill	pit			0.24
300	298	fill	pit			0.24
301	301	cut	pit	external pit	0.88	0.3
302	301	fill	pit			0.3
303	303	cut	pit	external pit	0.42	0.1
304	303	fill	pit			0.1
305	305	cut	pit	external pit	0.66	0.18
306	305	fill	pit			0.18
307	307	cut	pit	external pit	0.38	0.1
308	307	fill	pit			0.1
309	309	cut	pit	External pit	0.66	0.2
310	309	fill	pit			0.2
311	311	cut	pit	external pit	0.66	0.14
312	311	fill	pit			0.14
313	313	cut	tree throw	external natural		0.2
314	313	fill	tree throw			0.2
315	315	cut	pit	external pit	0.5	0.16
316	315	fill	pit		0.5	0.16
317	317	cut	pit	external pit	0.4	0.06

<i>Context</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>Breadth</i>	<i>Depth</i>
318	317	fill	pit		0.4	0.06
319	319	cut	pit	external pit	0.67	0.12
320	319	fill	pit		0.67	0.12
321	321	cut	pit	external pit	0.48	0.08
322	321	fill	pit		0.48	0.08
323	323	cut	pit	external pit	0.35	0.11
324	323	fill	pit		0.35	0.11
325	325	cut	pit	external pit	0.37	0.12
326	325	fill	pit		0.37	0.12
327	327	cut	tree throw	external natural		0.3
328	327	fill	tree throw			0.3
329	329	cut	tree throw	external natural		0.3
330	329	fill	tree throw			0.3
331	331	cut	tree throw	external natural	0.7	0.07
332	331	fill	tree throw		0.7	0.07
333	333	cut	natural feature	external natural	0.64	0.24
334	333	fill	natural feature			0.24
335	335	cut	pit	external pit	1.34	0.24
336	335	fill	pit		1.34	0.24
337	337	cut	pit	external pit	0.9	0.6
338	337	fill	pit			0.5
339	337	fill	pit			0.4

<i>Context</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>Breadth</i>	<i>Depth</i>
340	340	cut	pit	external pit	0.45	0.1
341	340	fill	pit			0.1
342	342	cut	ditch	barrow ditch	0.4	0.29
343	342	fill	ditch			0.1
344	344	cut	pit	external pit	0.44	0.2
345	344	fill	pit			0.2
346	346	cut	pit	external pit	0.45	0.12
347	346	fill	pit			0.12
348	348	cut	pit	external pit	0.2	0.09
349	348	fill	pit			0.09
350	350	cut	pit	external pit	0.3	0.15
351	350	fill	pit		0.3	0.15
352	352	cut	ditch	barrow ditch	0.4	0.17
353	352	fill	ditch			0.17
354	354	cut	ditch	barrow ditch	0.34	0.16
355	354	fill	ditch			0.16
356	356	cut	tree throw	external natural	0.2	0.05
357	356	fill	tree throw			0.05
358	358	cut	ditch	barrow ditch	0.48	0.1
359	358	fill	ditch			0.1
360	360	cut	ditch	barrow ditch	0.22	0.06
361	360	fill	ditch			0.06
362	362	cut	pit	external pit	0.42	0.2
363	362	fill	pit			0.2

Context	Cut	Category	Feature Type	Group	Breadth	Depth
364	364	cut	ditch	barrow ditch		0.25
365	364	fill	ditch			0.05
366	366	cut	pit	external pit	0.45	0.27
367	366	fill	pit			0.27
368	368	cut	pit	external pit	0.85	0.28
369	368	fill	pit			0.28
370	370	cut	pit	external pit	0.36	0.1
371	370	fill	pit			0.1

Table 10: Excavation context inventory

APPENDIX B. FINDS REPORTS

B.1 Pottery

By Sarah Percival

Introduction and methodology

- B.1.1 A total of 32 sherds weighing 71g were collected from 14 excavated contexts. The pottery is fragmentary and no complete vessels were recovered. The sherds are mostly small and poorly preserved and the average sherd weight is 3g.
- B.1.2 The assemblage comprises four decorated body sherds of Middle Neolithic Peterborough Ware, a scrap of Later Neolithic to Early Bronze Age Beaker and 18 sherds of Earlier Iron Age pottery (Table 11). Nine small pieces of pottery are prehistoric but are otherwise not closely datable. A full list of fabric descriptions are available in Table 12.

Feature Type	Feature	Context	Spot Date	Quantity	Weight (g)
Ditch	204	266	Not closely datable	1	1
	260	262	Earlier Iron Age	1	1
Henge ditch	173	175	Mid Neolithic	1	2
	184	272	Earlier Iron Age	2	4
	186	188	Earlier Iron Age	5	7
			Later Neolithic early Bronze Age	1	3
	198	200	Earlier Iron Age	3	10
		283	Mid Neolithic	2	5
	202	277	Not closely datable	2	1
	222	276	Earlier Iron Age	1	6
	235	237	Earlier Iron Age	1	3
Pit	156	157	Mid Neolithic	1	13
	217	219	Earlier Iron Age	5	9
	290	291	Not closely datable	2	1
	292	293	Not closely datable	1	3

Feature Type	Feature	Context	Spot Date	Quantity	Weight (g)
	305	306	Not closely datable	3	2
Total				32	71

Table 11: Quantity and weight of prehistoric pottery by spot date

B.1.3 The assemblage was analysed in accordance with the Guidelines for analysis and publication laid down by the Prehistoric Ceramic Research Group (PCRG 2010). The total assemblage was studied and a full catalogue was prepared. The sherds were examined using a binocular microscope (x10 magnification) and were divided into fabric groups defined on the basis of inclusion types. Fabric codes were prefixed by a letter code representing the main inclusion present (F representing flint, G grog and Q quartz). Vessel form was recorded; R representing rim sherds, B base sherds, D decorated sherds and U undecorated body sherds. The sherds were counted and weighed to the nearest whole gramme. Decoration and abrasion were also noted. The pottery and archive are curated by OAE.

Middle Neolithic

B.1.4 The small Mid Neolithic assemblage comprises four coarsely flint-tempered body sherds with impressed decoration. The largest sherd, found in the fill of pit **156**, has a single row of bird bone impressions comparable to those present on a Peterborough Ware vessel of the Ebbsfleet sub-style found at Spong Hill, Norfolk (Healy 1988, fig.79, P199). A small sherd from the fill of henge ditch **173** has similar impressions. Two sherds from henge ditch section **198** have shallow fingertip impressions.

Later Neolithic/Early Bronze Age

B.1.5 A single sherd in shell, flint and grog-tempered fabric has impressed or incised bands running across the body. The sherd is perhaps of Grooved Ware or may be Beaker and was found in the fill of henge ditch **186**.

Early Iron Age

B.1.6 A total of 18 sherds weighing 40g were collected from seven contexts (Table 11). The assemblage includes a single pointed rim whilst the remainder are undecorated body sherds. A range of fabrics were identified including fine sandy burnished fabric Q1, flint-tempered fabrics (F1 and F2) and sandy fabrics with flint and or shell and grog (QF, QFG, QS and S1; Table 2).

B.1.7 The Early Iron Age pottery was recovered from seven excavated contexts including five sections from the henge ditch, one pit and a later ditch (Table 11) suggesting that it is largely redeposited.

Discussion

B.1.8 Peterborough Ware dates to c.3400-2500 BC (Gibson and Kinnes 1997), although an end date for the main period of its use may occur slightly earlier between 2900-2700 BC (A. Tinsley pers. comm.). This type of pottery is not often found at classic henge monuments, which are more commonly associated with Grooved Ware (Barrett *et al.* 1991) however an early or formative henge recently excavated at Hundred Acre Field, Norton has produced sherds of both Early and Middle Neolithic date including Peterborough Ware

(Fitzpatrick-Matthews 2015). A small quantity of comparable Peterborough Ware was also found within a smaller Neolithic ring ditch at Godmanchester which may provide a better parallel (Lyons in prep.).

B.1.9 The single sherd with incised or impressed decoration in grog-tempered fabric may be either Beaker or Grooved Ware. Both these forms are commonly found at henge monuments (Barrett *et al.* 1991, 92).

B.1.10 The Early Iron Age sherds represent limited activity at the site in the first millennium BC, perhaps around 800-350BC.

Statement of Research Potential and Further Work

B.1.11 The presence of Peterborough Ware is of particular interest, perhaps suggesting a Mid Neolithic date for the henge.

B.1.12 A short note is required discussing dating and local parallels for the small prehistoric assemblage.

Spot Date	Vessel type	Fabric	Description	Quantity	Weight (g)
Mid Neolithic	Peterborough Ware	F1	Common coarse flint >3mm in fine silty clay	4	20
Later Neolithic early Bronze Age	Beaker or Grooved Ware	SFG	Moderate fine shell plates, spare small angular flint and sparse sub-rounded grog	1	3
Earlier Iron Age		F1	Common coarse flint >3mm in fine silty clay	2	4
		F2	Common fine flint >1mm in fine silty clay	4	8
		Q1	Fine sandy fabric with common small rounded quartz	2	7
		QF	Fine sandy fabric moderate fine flint	5	7
		QFG	Fine sandy fabric, moderate fine flint, sparse grog	2	4
		QS	Fine sandy fabric fine shell plates	1	6
		S1	Moderate fine shell plates, common small rounded quartz	2	4
Not closely datable		F1	Common coarse flint >3mm in fine silty clay	4	5

Spot Date	Vessel type	Fabric	Description	Quantity	Weight (g)
		Q1	Fine sandy fabric	3	2
		QS	Fine sandy fabric fine shell plates	2	1
Total				32	71

Table 12: Quantity and weight of prehistoric pottery by fabric

B.2 Ceramic Building Material

By Sarah Percival

- B.2.1 A total of 27 pieces of ceramic building material weighing 273g were collected from six excavated contexts and from unstratified surface collection. Unstratified material forms 65% of the total assemblage. The CBM is fragmentary and mostly small and poorly preserved.

Feature type	Feature	Context	Type	Spotdate	Quantity	Weight (g)
Ditch	150	151	Brick	Post medieval	1	4
Henge ditch	192	193	Tile	Post medieval	4	31
	233	234	Brick	Post medieval	1	2
Modern feature	190	189	Tile	Post medieval	3	55
Pit	152	153	Brick	Undated	1	1
	154	155	Brick	Undated	3	1
Unstratified		99999	Tile	Roman	3	28
				Post medieval	11	151
Total					27	273

Table 13: Quantity and weight of ceramic building material by feature

Methodology

- B.2.2 The CBM was counted and weighed by form and fabric and any complete dimensions measured. Abrasion, re-use and burning were also recorded following guidelines laid down by the Archaeological Ceramic Building Materials Group (ACBMG 2002). Terminology follows Brodrigg (1987).

Nature of the Assemblage

B.2.3 The 27 small pieces of ceramic building material in a range of red orange sandy fabrics include three fragments of possible Roman tile, one with a swirled signature mark collected from unstratified surface collection. Eighteen fragments are of post-medieval roof tile and two are of post-medieval brick. These were found in the fills of the henge ditch, ditch **150** and modern feature **190**. The remainder of the assemblage is composed of undatable scraps recovered from pits **152** and **154**.

Discussion

B.2.4 The small assemblage represents redeposited scraps of building debris almost all of post-medieval date. The three pieces of Roman tile are too small to indicate the presence nearby of any substantial building.

Statement of Research Potential and Further Work

B.2.5 The assemblage is too small and fragmented to be of interest and no further work is required.

Type	Fabric	Spot Date	Quantity	Weight (g)
Brick	Sandy orange with common quartz sand, rare flint	Post-medieval	1	2
		Undated	1	1
	Sandy orange with common quartz sand, sparse ferrous inclusions	Undated	3	1
	Sandy orange with common quartz sand, sparse ferrous inclusions	Post-medieval	1	4
Tile	Cream fabric with sparse quartz sand inclusions	Post-medieval	2	11
	Fine orange fabric with sparse ferrous inclusions	Roman	3	28
	Sandy orange with common quartz sand, rare flint	Post-medieval	5	90
	Sandy orange with common quartz sand, sparse ferrous inclusions	Post-medieval	7	86
	Sandy orange with no visible inclusions	Post-medieval	4	50
Total			27	273

Table 14: Quantity and weight of ceramic building material by fabric

B.3 Stone

By Sarah Percival

Introduction

- B.3.1 A total of 1.628kg of stone was collected from six excavated contexts. The assemblage comprises a quantity of heat affected pebbles and a possible rubber.

Methodology

- B.3.2 The assemblage was analysed in accordance with the Guidelines for analysis and publication laid down by the Prehistoric Ceramic Research Group (PCRG 2010). The total assemblage was studied and a full catalogue was prepared. The sherds were examined using a binocular microscope (x10 magnification) and were divided into fabric groups defined on the basis of inclusion types. Fabric codes were prefixed by a letter code representing the main inclusion present (F representing flint, G grog and Q quartz). Vessel form was recorded; R representing rim sherds, B base sherds, D decorated sherds and U undecorated body sherds. The sherds were counted and weighed to the nearest whole gram. Decoration and abrasion were also noted. The pottery and archive are curated by OAE.

Heat Cracked Pebbles

- B.3.3 A total of 171 fragments of heat affected pebbles weighing .975kg were collected from five contexts (Table 15). The water-rounded pebbles were probably used during cooking being selected from the local glacial till for their heat retaining properties.

Context	Feature	Feature type	Object form	Petrology	Quantity	Weight
168	166	Henge ditch	Rubber	Modified quartzitic pebble	1	653
185	184	Henge ditch	Unworked cobble	Quartzitic cobble	1	556
272		Henge ditch	Burnt	Quartzitic cobble	4	82
203	202	Henge ditch	Unworked cobble	Sandstone	1	47
207	206	Ditch	Burnt	Micaceous sandstone	1	196
263	238	Henge ditch	Burnt	Quartzitic cobble	1	94
Total					9	1628

Table 15: Quantity and weight of heat affected pebbles by context

Rubber

- B.3.4 A possible utilised pebble weighing 653kg was found in the fill of henge ditch **166**. (Table 15). The water-rounded pebble has one smooth surface perhaps suggesting that it had been used as a rubber.

Discussion

- B.3.5 Heat affected pebbles form a common component of prehistoric assemblages and were used in cooking food. The possible rubber may have been used for grinding during food preparation.

Statement of Research Potential and Further Work

- B.3.6 The heat affected stones and rubber have little research potential and no further work is required.

B.4 Flint

By Lawrence Billington

Introduction and quantification

- B.4.1 The excavations recovered a total of 294 worked flints and 11 fragments of unworked burnt flint (160.6g). The assemblage is quantified by type and context in table 16. This report provides a basic quantification and characterisation of the assemblage together with a statement of its research potential and recommendations for further work.

Distribution and Context

- B.4.2 Whilst detailed analysis of the context and distribution of the flint assemblage has not been undertaken, preliminary assessment indicates that the majority of the assemblage derives from features making up the henge monument. These include the ditches themselves as well as pits and postholes identified within these ditches. The majority of the excavated sections through the ditches of the henge monuments produced flintwork; generally the flint was encountered in fairly low densities with a maximum of 17 worked flints being recovered from any individual context from the monument. Some pits, however, contained more substantial assemblages with pits **337** and **315** producing 53 and 28 worked flints respectively.

Composition and Characterisation

- B.4.3 In terms of condition, raw materials and technology the assemblage is very coherent and gives every impression of being a single period assemblage. All stages of core reduction are present with chips and small flakes, decortication flakes, usable flakes, discarded cores and retouched tools all represented. Technologically the assemblage is characterised by generalised flake production alongside the use of more specialised levallois-like and discoidal cores. Twelve retouched pieces are present, making up 4% of the total worked flint. These retouched forms are dominated by well-made end scrapers manufactured on relatively large and regular flake blanks, together with two serrated

pieces and three miscellaneous retouched flakes. The raw materials appear to almost exclusively derive from unweathered medium sized nodules of flint which may have been locally available from deposits associated with the Holywell Nodular Chalk Formation which BGS) shows outcropping just to the south of the site mapping (1:50,000 scale, sheet 204).

Dating

- B.4.4 The use of levallois-like technologies is highly characteristic of later Neolithic (Peterborough Ware and Grooved Ware associated) assemblages across Southern Britain as a whole (see Ballin 2011a). In the context of Eastern England the technological traits and retouched forms of the Ashwell assemblage are readily paralleled with well documented assemblages from Grooved Ware associated contexts such as those from Tye Field, Essex (Healy 1985); Linton, Cambridgeshire (Bishop 2008) and Edgerley Drain Road, Peterborough (Beadsmoore 2009) . There is no clear evidence for any earlier blade based material that might indicate Mesolithic or Earlier Neolithic activity at the site. It is not possible to rule out the presence of a later, Early Bronze Age, component within the assemblage, although, for the assemblage derived directly from the monument at least, this seems unlikely given an absence of diagnostic forms and the overall coherence of the assemblage.

Statement of potential

- B.4.5 Although only of moderate size, the flint assemblage recovered from Ashwell is of considerable interest at a regional scale. Chronologically unmixed Later Neolithic assemblages remain rare in the local area, with small assemblages known from Blackhorse Farm, Letchworth (Wymer 1988) and the Baldock Bypass excavations (Phillips 2009). In this respect the Ashwell assemblage represents an important addition to the regional dataset. Beyond this, the most significant aspect of the Ashwell assemblage is its context. Substantial lithic assemblages closely associated with henge monuments remain extremely rare across Southern Britain (Holgate 1988, 50; Ballin 2011b, 53-57). The only real exception to this are the large assemblages derived from the some of the very large 'henge enclosures' from the Wessex chalklands (Wainwright and Longworth 1971; Chan 2010). The only possibly comparable assemblage in the immediate region is that from the putative henge monument at Waulud's Bank, Luton (Dyer 1964; Lambdin Whymark 2008, 172). Recent re-evaluation of this assemblage has, however, demonstrated that the assemblage includes a large proportion of earlier Neolithic and Early Bronze Age material, and that diagnostically Later Neolithic material is actually comparatively poorly represented (Billington 2012).
- B.4.6 In this respect the Ashwell assemblage can be regarded as being of supra-regional importance in providing a rare opportunity to characterise a flint assemblage closely associated with a henge monument. In this context it is especially interesting that the assemblage is closely comparable in its composition to those recovered from other, ostensibly more 'domestic'/'mundane' contexts such as pit sites or lithic scatters, with little evidence of selective/structured deposition or the presence of unusual/elaborate retouched forms (cf Thomas 1999, 80-86).

Recommendations

B.4.7 In order to adequately address some of the potential issues highlighted it is recommended that the following further work is carried out in connection with the assemblage:

- Basic recording (including technological analysis) has been carried out for the whole assemblage but some additional analysis including more detailed recording and metric analysis of the retouched pieces and cores would be advantageous. It may also be useful to attempt some refitting work on the larger assemblages from individual contexts, although assessment suggests this is unlikely to yield significant results.
- The distribution and context of the lithic assemblage needs to be analysed in detail, In particular it will be very important to establish the context of the lithic assemblage in terms of the stratigraphy/phasing of the monument and other discrete features on the site and how the assemblage relates to activities undertaken during the construction, use and 'afterlife' of the monument. This analysis should include comparison with the occurrence of other classes of artefacts/ecofacts, especially any pottery and faunal remains.
- Attention should be given to comparing the assemblage with other later Neolithic flint assemblages, including those from other contexts (e.g. pits, lithic scatters) in the wider region as well as with flint assemblages recovered from henge monuments at a national scale.
- Provision should be made for a full account of the flintwork to be included in any publication of the site, including illustration of selected pieces.

Feature Type	context	cut no.	Chip (>10mm ²)	Irregular waste	Flake	Narrow flake	Blade like flake	End scraper	Horseshoe scraper	Retouched Flake	Serrated Flake	Serrated Blade	Single platform core	Discoidal core	Levallois like core	Core fragment	Total worked flint	unworked burnt flint (no.)	unworked burnt flint (g)
Ditch	165	164		2	2												4	2	30.7
Ditch	168	166		1	6	1											8	1	15.3
Ditch	175	173			8			1									9		
Ditch	181	180			3												3		
Ditch	185	184			2										1		3		
Ditch	188	186		2	14												16		

Feature Type	context	cut no.	Chip (>10mm ²)	Irregular waste	Flake	Narrow flake	Blade like flake	End scraper	Horseshoe scraper	Retouched Flake	Serrated Flake	Serrated Blade	Single platform core	Discoidal core	Levallois like core	Core fragment	Total worked flint	unworked burnt flint (no.)	unworked burnt flint (g)
Ditch	193	192			1												1		
Ditch	194	192	1		1												2		
Ditch	196	195					1										1		
Ditch	200	198		1	4												5		
Ditch	201	180		1	1								1				3		
Ditch	203	202	1	1													2		
Ditch	205	204			1												1		
Ditch	211	210			3									1			4		
Ditch	215	214	1														1		
Ditch	223	222			2									1			3	1	11.7
Ditch	230	228			8	1				1							10		
Ditch	234	233		1	1		1										3	1	46.4
Ditch	237	235	1		14	1						1					17		
Ditch	239	238			2					1							3	1	0.8
Ditch	251	252						1									1		
Ditch	257	195			1												1		
Ditch	262	260			14		2			1							17		
Ditch	263	238			6												6		
Ditch	264	233			1												1		
Ditch	265	204		1	3	1											5		
Ditch	266	204	2		7		1										10	1	12
Ditch	267	192			1			1									2		
Ditch	268	192			2												2		

Feature Type	context	cut no.	Chip (>10mm ²)	Irregular waste	Flake	Narrow flake	Blade like flake	End scraper	Horseshoe scraper	Retouched Flake	Serrated Flake	Serrated Blade	Single platform core	Discoidal core	Levallois like core	Core fragment	Total worked flint	unworked burnt flint (no.)	unworked burnt flint (g)
Ditch	269	233			6	1		1									8		
Ditch	272	184			1												1		
Ditch	273	173	1		4												5		
Ditch	274	173	1	1	1		1										4		
Ditch	275	182			1												1	1	1.1
Ditch	276	222			3				1								4		
Ditch	278	202			3												3	1	26.7
Ditch	280	166			8												8		
Ditch	281	206		2	3												5		
Ditch	282	198	1		3												4		
Ditch	283	186						1									1		
Pit	219	217			2												2		
Pit	219	217			1												1		
Pit	225	224			1												1		
Pit	253	255		1	3	1										1	6		
Pit	271	270			2												2		
Pit	293	292			1												1		
Pit	297	296			1												1		
Pit	300	298			2												2	1	14.4
Pit	316	315	1 1	1	14	1					1						28		
Pit	318	317			1												1		
Pit	338	337	8	2 6	17	2											53		

Feature Type	context	cut no.	Chip (>10mm ²)	Irregular waste	Flake	Narrow flake	Blade like flake	End scraper	Horseshoe scraper	Retouched Flake	Serrated Flake	Serrated Blade	Single platform core	Discoidal core	Levallois like core	Core fragment	Total worked flint	unworked burnt flint (no.)	unworked burnt flint (g)
Pit	363	362			1												1		
Pit	369	368		1	2												3		
Post Hole	248	247			1												1		
Ditch	151	150			1												1		
Tree throw	170	169																1	1.5
Tree throw	232	231		1													1		
Unstrat	99999	99999						1									1		
Totals			28	43	191	9	6	6	1	3	1	1	1	2	1	1	294	11	161

Table 16. Basic quantification of the flint assemblage.

APPENDIX C. ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS

C.1 Cremated Human Skeletal Remains

By Alice Rose

Introduction

- C.1.1 Three deposits of cremated human bone were recovered during the excavation. Cremation deposit 316 was recovered from a circular pit **315** measuring 0.50m in diameter and 0.16m in depth. The cremated bone was within a dark grey-brown, clay silt matrix, which also contained occasional charcoal, flint and pot. Deposits 203 and 271, thought to relate to a single cremation burial, were recovered from the terminal end of henge ditch **202**. Deposit 271 was recovered from a sub-circular pit **270**, measuring 0.86m in diameter and 0.11m in depth, which was cut into the lower fill of the henge ditch. The cremated bone was in a dark grey-brown, silty matrix, which also contained occasional flint debitage flakes. Deposit 203 comprised material that was excavated from above and around deposit 271, and probably represents disturbed material originating from within 271.

Methodology

- C.1.2 Excavation and recording of the cremation deposit was carried out in accordance with IfA and BABAO guidelines (Brickley and McKinley 2004). The deposit underwent whole earth recovery, followed by wet sieving. The material was then sorted into fractions (>10mm, 4-10mm, 2-4mm) to allow the degree of fragmentation to be assessed. The cremated bone was then analysed in order to assess colour, weight and maximum fragment size. Each fraction was examined for identifiable bone elements, the minimum number of individuals (MNI), age, sex and pathology.

Results

- C.1.3 A summary of the osteological data for deposits 203, 271 and 316 are presented in Table 17. Deposits 203 and 271 were analysed separately, but are considered as a single deposit within the Discussion.

Cremation 203

- C.1.4 The total weight of cremated bone recovered was 28.7g. 54.4% of the total bone weight was within the 4-10mm fraction, 42.2% was within the >10mm fraction and 3.48 was within the 2-4mm fraction.
- C.1.5 The cremated bone was 100% buff white in colour.
- C.1.6 The general shape and texture of all of the fragments was consistent human bone. The only identifiable elements were skull vault, making up 7.67% of the total cremated bone weight, rib shaft fragments making up 2.44% and an ulna shaft fragment, making up 3.1%. The MNI was estimated to be one, given that there were no repeated elements. No specific indicators of age or sex were present, although the general morphology of the bone was indicative of an adult. No pathology was observed.

Cremation 271

- C.1.7 The total weight of cremated bone recovered was 25.6g. 58.6% of the total bone weight was within the 4-10mm fraction, 34.8% was within the >10mm fraction and 6.6% was within the 2-4mm fraction.
- C.1.8 The cremated bone was 98% buff white and 2% pale blue in colour.
- C.1.9 The general shape and texture of all of the fragments was consistent human bone. The only identifiable elements were skull vault, making up 5.9% of the total cremated bone weight, rib shaft fragments making up 0.4% and a probable ulna shaft fragment, making up 6.6%. The MNI was estimated to be one, given that there were no repeated elements. No specific indicators of age or sex were present, although the general morphology of the bone was indicative of an adult. No pathology was observed.

Cremation 316

- C.1.10 The total weight of cremated bone recovered was 11.8g. 84.8% of the total bone weight was within the 4-10mm fraction, 10.2% was within the >10mm fraction and 5.1% was within the 2-4mm fraction.
- C.1.11 The cremated bone was 98% buff white and 2% pale blue in colour.
- C.1.12 The general shape and texture of most of the fragments was consistent human bone, two bones and a tooth crown were positively identified as being from a juvenile pig and were separated from the human bone. The only identifiable human elements were skull vault, making up 2.5% of the total cremated bone weight, rib shaft fragments making up 2.5% and a vertebral joint surface fragment making up 4.2%. The MNI was estimated to be one, given that there were no repeated elements. No specific indicators of age or sex were present, although the general morphology of the bone was indicative of an adult. No pathology was observed.

Deposit	Skeletal Region	>10mm	4-10mm	2-4mm	Colour, MNI, Age, Sex, Pathology
271	Skull	/	1.3g	0.2g	98% bone fragments buff white in colour, 2% blue MNI=1 Age and sex not recordable but probably adult
	Axial	/	0.2g (vertebra fragment) <0.1g (rib fragments)	0.1g (rib fragment)	
	Upper Limb	1.6g	/	/	

Deposit	Skeletal Region	>10mm	4-10mm	2-4mm	Colour, MNI, Age, Sex, Pathology	
		(?ulna shaft)			No pathology observed	
	Lower Limb	2.0g (femur shaft) 0.9g (tibia shaft)	/	/		
	Unid. Long Bone	3.6g	6.0g	/		
	Unid. Joint Surface	/	/	/		
	Unid. Hand/Foot	0.4g	/	/		
	Unid. Other	0.4g	6.8g	1.4g		
	Unid Total	4.4g	12.8g	1.4g		
	Total	8.9g	15.0g	6.64g		25.6g
Deposit	Skeletal Region	>10mm	4-10mm	2-4mm	Colour, MNI, Age, Sex, Pathology	
316	Skull	/	0.3g	/	98% bone fragments buff white in colour, 2% blue	
	Axial	/	0.3g (rib fragments) 0.5g (vertebral joint surface)	/		MNI=1
	Upper Limb	/	/	/	Age and sex not recordable but probably adult	
	Lower Limb	/	/	/		No pathology observed
	Unid. Long Bone	0.5g	0.9g	/		
	Unid. Joint Surface	/	1.6g	/		
	Unid. Hand/Foot	/	/	/		

Deposit	Skeletal Region	>10mm	4-10mm	2-4mm	Colour, MNI, Age, Sex, Pathology
	Unid. Other	0.7g	6.4g	0.6g	
	Unid Total	1.2g	8.9g	0.6g	
	Total	1.2g	10.0g	0.6g	11.8g

Table 17: Summary of osteological data for cremation deposits (203) (271) and (316)

Discussion

C.1.13 The weight of cremation deposits 203 (28.7g), 271 (25.6g) and 316 (11.8g) were well below the expected range of 1000-2400g (average 1650g) for a full cremated adult (McKinley 2000a, 269). Even if the weights of 203 and 271, thought to have derived from the same deposit, are combined, the total weight (54.3g) is still well below the expected range. With deposit 203 probably representing material that originated from 271, it is clear that some level of post-burial disturbance/truncation had occurred. It should therefore be considered that some bone has been lost completely. The context records for 316 do not indicate whether or not this feature was truncated.

C.1.14 Interpretation of these deposits, in terms of their type and cultural significance, is therefore difficult. That said, it seems unlikely that they ever contained the expected amount of bone of a full cremated skeleton. It should be considered that the entire cremated remains were never included within the deposit. There was no evidence of burning *in situ*, suggesting that the features probably represent redeposition of bone after the burning event. One interpretation could be that these are redeposited pyre debris (McKinley 2004, 10; McKinley 2000b). Alternatively, these cremations could represent a token deposit of cremated bone, buried as a memorial (cenotaph burials, McKinley 2000b, 42).

C.1.15 The buff white colour of the bone fragments in deposit 203, 271 and 316 indicate that the cremation process was efficient, reaching a temperature of at least 600°C (McKinley 2004, 11).

Recommendations for further work

C.1.16 No further osteological analysis is recommended since all available osteological data has been obtained from the cremation deposit, allowing for some limited observations regarding pyre technology and funeral rites.

C.1.17 Samples for radiocarbon dating have been selected from the deposits (charred hazelnut shell from 316 and cremated bone from 217). Once dated, the deposits should be considered as part of the wider burial landscape, alongside a review of similar, contemporary burials within the Hertfordshire region and further afield.

C.2 Faunal Remains

By Vida Rajkovača

Introduction

C.2.1 Just over 100 assessable specimens were recorded from the henge monument and associated features. The preservation of the material was poor, allowing only for a small proportion of bone to be assigned to species level (26 specimens/ 24.5% of the assemblage). Bone was heavily eroded and fragmentary, and it was not possible to recognise some elements. Only three specimens were recorded as calcined, two of which came from pits situated to the north-west of the henge monument.

Methods

Identification, Quantification and Ageing

C.2.2 The zooarchaeological investigation followed the system implemented by Bournemouth University with all identifiable elements recorded (NISP: Number of Identifiable Specimens) and diagnostic zoning (amended from Dobney & Reilly 1988) used to calculate MNE (Minimum Number of Elements) from which MNI (Minimum Number of Individuals) was derived. Identification of the assemblage was undertaken with the aid of Schmid (1972), and reference material from the Cambridge Archaeological Unit. Taphonomic criteria including indications of butchery, pathology, gnawing activity and surface modifications as a result of weathering were also recorded when evident.

C.2.3 Despite the poor preservation, five species were identified (Table 18). Although all four domesticates were mainly represented by finds of loose teeth and enamel fragments, several metapodii and meat-bearing elements were also identified. The presence of horse is somewhat problematic. Remains of horse have been identified in similarly dated assemblages, although the integrity of these finds is in question as the current situation implies that horses may be present from the Beaker period onwards, in small numbers. It is thus possible that the specimen in question is intrusive. Antler from **188** was identified as red deer, though the degree of erosion was such that it is unclear if the specimen is antler at all.

Taxon	Henge	Pits (base of henge ditch)	Pits NW of henge	Total NISP
Cow	12	1	1	14
Ovicaprid	4	1	.	5
Pig	5	.	.	5
Horse	1	.	.	1
?Red deer	1	.	.	1
Sub-total to species	23	2	1	26
Cattle-sized	18	5	.	23

Taxon	Henge	Pits (base of henge ditch)	Pits NW of henge	Total NISP
Sheep-sized	47	1	3	51
Mammal n.f.i.	6	.	.	6
Total	94	8	4	106

Table 18. Number of Identified Specimens for all species from all features; the abbreviation n.f.i. denotes that the specimen could not be further identified.

C.2.4 The larger percentages of cattle and pigs are in keeping with known patterns for the monument type and the period; although pigs tend to be the dominant species (see Serjeantson 2011).

Statement of potential

C.2.5 In the absence of ageing or biometrical data, it is difficult to assess the material any further simply based on the range of species. In addition to that, the assemblage is quantitatively insufficient for making propositions on animal use in the period, or to discuss economic patterns. While no further work is required at this point, viewing the material against locally comparable assemblages could help us understand the differences in bone deposition between domestic and monument-associated contexts.

C.3 Environmental Samples

By Rachel Fosberry

Introduction

C.3.1 Thirty-eight bulk samples were taken from a Neolithic henge ditch in addition to associated pits and two cremation deposits. Very few of the deposits that were sampled contained dating evidence; those samples from the lower fills of the henge are considered to be Neolithic whilst most of the pits are undated and cremation **271** has been radiocarbon dated to the Bronze Age. The purpose of this assessment is to determine whether plant remains are present, their mode of preservation and whether they are of interpretable value with regard to domestic, agricultural and industrial activities, diet, economy and rubbish disposal.

Methodology

C.3.2 The total volume (up to 49 litres) of each of the samples was processed by tank flotation using modified Siraff-type equipment. The floating component (flot) of the samples was collected in a 0.25mm nylon mesh and the residue was washed through 10mm, 5mm, 2mm and a 0.5mm sieve. Any artefacts present were noted and reintegrated with the hand-excavated finds. The dried flots were subsequently sorted using a binocular microscope at magnifications up to x 60 and an abbreviated list of the recorded remains are presented in Table 19. Identification of plant remains is with reference to the *Digital Seed Atlas of the Netherlands* and the authors' own reference collection. Nomenclature is according to Stace (1997). Carbonised seeds and grains, by the process of burning and burial, become blackened and often distort and fragment leading to difficulty in identification. Plant remains have been identified to species where

possible. The identification of cereals has been based on the characteristic morphology of the grains and chaff as described by Jacomet (2006).

Quantification

C.3.3 For the purpose of this initial assessment, items such as seeds, cereal grains and legumes have been scanned and recorded qualitatively according to the following categories:

= 1-10, ## = 11-50, ### = 51+ specimens ##### = 100+ specimens

Items that cannot be easily quantified such as charcoal, magnetic residues and fragmented bone have been scored for abundance:

+ = rare, ++ = moderate, +++ = abundant

Results

C.3.4 Plant remains are preserved by carbonisation and, although density and diversity are very low, charred plant remains are present in 19 samples. Wheat (*Triticum* sp.) and barley (*Hordeum* sp.) grains are present in 18 samples but the poor preservation precludes identification to species level. Legumes occur in six of the samples that also contain cereals; the size of the legumes suggests that both peas (*Pisum/Lathyrus* sp.) and beans (Fabaceae) are present.

C.3.5 Charred fragments of hazelnut (*Coryllus avellana*) shell occur in cremation deposit 316 (pit **315**), and all both fills (157 and 240) of pit **156**.

Sample No.	Context No.	Cut No.	Feature Type	Volume processed (L)	Cereals	Legumes	Hazelnut shell	Charcoal <2mm	Pottery	HSR	Burnt flint	Flint debitage
41	302	0	Pit	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
21	153	152	Pit	37	#	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	153	152	Pit	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
22	155	154	Pit	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6	155	154	Pit	17	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
27	240	156	Pit	30	#	#	#	++	#	0	0	0
26	157	156	Pit	49	#	0	#	+	0	0	0	0
7	157	156	Pit	18	0	0	#	+	0	0	#	0
25	159	158	Pit	26	#	#	0	+	0	0	0	0
23	161	160	Pit	16	#	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
8	161	160	Pit	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
24	163	162	Pit	16	#	#	0	+	0	0	0	0
9	163	162	Pit	9	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0

36	274	173	Ditch	16	#	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
10	179	178	Pit	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	181	180	Ditch Terminus	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
18	203	202	Ditch Terminus	35	#	#	0	+	0	##	0	0
16	209	208	Pit	14	#	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
17	213	212	Pit	22	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
19	221	220	Pit	28	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
37	225	224	Pit	25	#	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
20	227	226	Pit	2	#	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
33	264	233	Ditch	20	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
34	242	241	Pit	8	#	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
28	248	247	Pit	23	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
29	250	249	Pit	27	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
30	256	252	Ditch	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
31	254	255	Pit	17	#	#	0	+	0	0	0	0
32	259	258	Pit	4	#	#	0	0	0	0	0	0
35	271	270	Pit	36	#	0	0	+	0	##	0	0
38	289	288	Pit	18	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
39	293	292	Pit	19	#	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
40	300	298	Pit	19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
42	316	315	Pit	36	#	0	##	++	0	###	0	##
43	345	344	Pit	23	#	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
44	347	346	Pit	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
45	349	348	Pit	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
46	351	350	Pit	4	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0

Table 19: Environmental samples

Discussion

- C.3.6 Charred cereal grains are predominant within the individual assemblages although concentrations per litre of soil are very low. Barley and wheat grains are evident in several of the upper fills of the henge ditch and associated pits, along with occasional charred legumes. The henge is considered to be Neolithic in date; the period in which cultivation of cereals is first seen in Britain. Both barley and hulled varieties of wheat were grown in this period and wild foods including hazelnuts were also an important food source. The recovery of charred cereal grains from Neolithic contexts is rare and subsequent radiocarbon/AMS dating of these remains has frequently proven them to be intrusive (Stevens & Fuller 2012, 711). Legumes were first introduced in the Bronze Age (Tomlinson and Hall 1996) but, it is difficult to ascertain whether the plant remains recovered from the pits and henge ditch at this site are contemporary with the deposits. Both peas and cereals are known to have been grown at the site in recent times (Paul Foster, Senior Agronomist Agrii, pers comm.) and it used to be common to burn both cereal and pea stubble after harvest in order to return nutrients back into the soil. The chalk geology of the site supports diverse mollusc communities, several species of which are burrowing snails and can cause movement of charred plant remains into lower contexts. Radiocarbon dating of the charred remains would verify or refute this conclusion. Charred hazelnut shell fragments occur in only two features and are considered to be far more likely to be contemporary with the deposits.
- C.3.7 Despite extensive sampling (a total of 729 litres of soil were processed), very few ecofacts and artefacts were recovered from the samples. This is most probably an indication of the ceremonial/ritual function of the site throughout the prehistoric period (and possibly beyond) that is also indicated by the deposition of a cremation in the henge ditch terminus during the Bronze Age.

Recommendations

- C.3.8 Radiocarbon dating of a selection of the charred remains is recommended to establish contemporaneity or later intrusion. The choice of material could include a legume from an undated pit, a grain from the henge ditch and hazelnut fragments from cremation pit **316** (alternatively bone could be used to date this deposit).

APPENDIX D. RISK LOG

Risk Number: 1

Description: Specialists unable to deliver analysis report due to over running work programmes/ ill health/other problems

Probability: Medium

Impact: Variable

Countermeasures: OA has access to a large pool of specialist knowledge (internal and external) which can be used if necessary.

Estimated time/cost: Variable

Owner:

Date entry last updated:

Risk Number: 2

Description: non-delivery of full report due to field work pressures/ management pressure on Co-authors

Probability: Medium

Impact: Medium-High

Countermeasures: Liaise with OA Management team

Estimated time/cost: Variable

Owner:

Date entry last updated:

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APPENDIX F. OASIS REPORT FORM

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

Project Details

OASIS Number	<input type="text" value="oxfordar3-233854"/>			
Project Name	<input type="text" value="A Late Neolithic henge at Ashwell"/>			
Project Dates (fieldwork)	Start	<input type="text" value="28-04-2015"/>	Finish	<input type="text" value="19-06-2015"/>
Previous Work (by OA East)	<input type="text" value="Yes"/>	Future Work	<input type="text" value="No"/>	

Project Reference Codes

Site Code	<input type="text" value="XHTASH15"/>	Planning App. No.	<input type="text" value="14/00336/1"/>
HER No.	<input type="text"/>	Related HER/OASIS No.	<input type="text" value="oxfordar3-161792"/>

Type of Project/Techniques Used

Prompt	<input type="text" value="Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS 5"/>
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Please select all techniques used:

<input type="checkbox"/> Field Observation (periodic visits)	<input type="checkbox"/> Part Excavation	<input type="checkbox"/> Salvage Record
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Full Excavation (100%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Part Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Systematic Field Walking
<input type="checkbox"/> Full Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Recorded Observation	<input type="checkbox"/> Systematic Metal Detector Survey
<input type="checkbox"/> Geophysical Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Remote Operated Vehicle Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Test Pit Survey
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open-Area Excavation	<input type="checkbox"/> Salvage Excavation	<input type="checkbox"/> 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
Henge	Neolithic -4k to -2k	Flint	Neolithic -4k to -2k
barrow	Bronze Age -2.5k to -700	pottery	Late Prehistoric -4k to 43
pits	Neolithic -4k to -2k	animal bone	Late Prehistoric -4k to 43

Project Location

County	<input type="text" value="Hertfordshire"/>	Site Address (including postcode if possible)
District	<input type="text" value="North Hertfordshire"/>	<input type="text" value="The Walkdens, Ashwell, SG7 5RU"/>
Parish	<input type="text" value="Ashwell"/>	
HER	<input type="text" value="Hertfordshire"/>	
Study Area	<input type="text" value="0.7ha"/>	National Grid Reference <input type="text" value="TL 27356 39711"/>

Project Originators

Organisation	<input type="text" value="OA EAST"/>
Project Brief Originator	<input type="text" value="Andy Instone"/>
Project Design Originator	<input type="text" value="James Drummond-Murray"/>
Project Manager	<input type="text" value="James Drummond-Murray"/>
Supervisor	<input type="text" value="Andrew Greef"/>

Project Archives

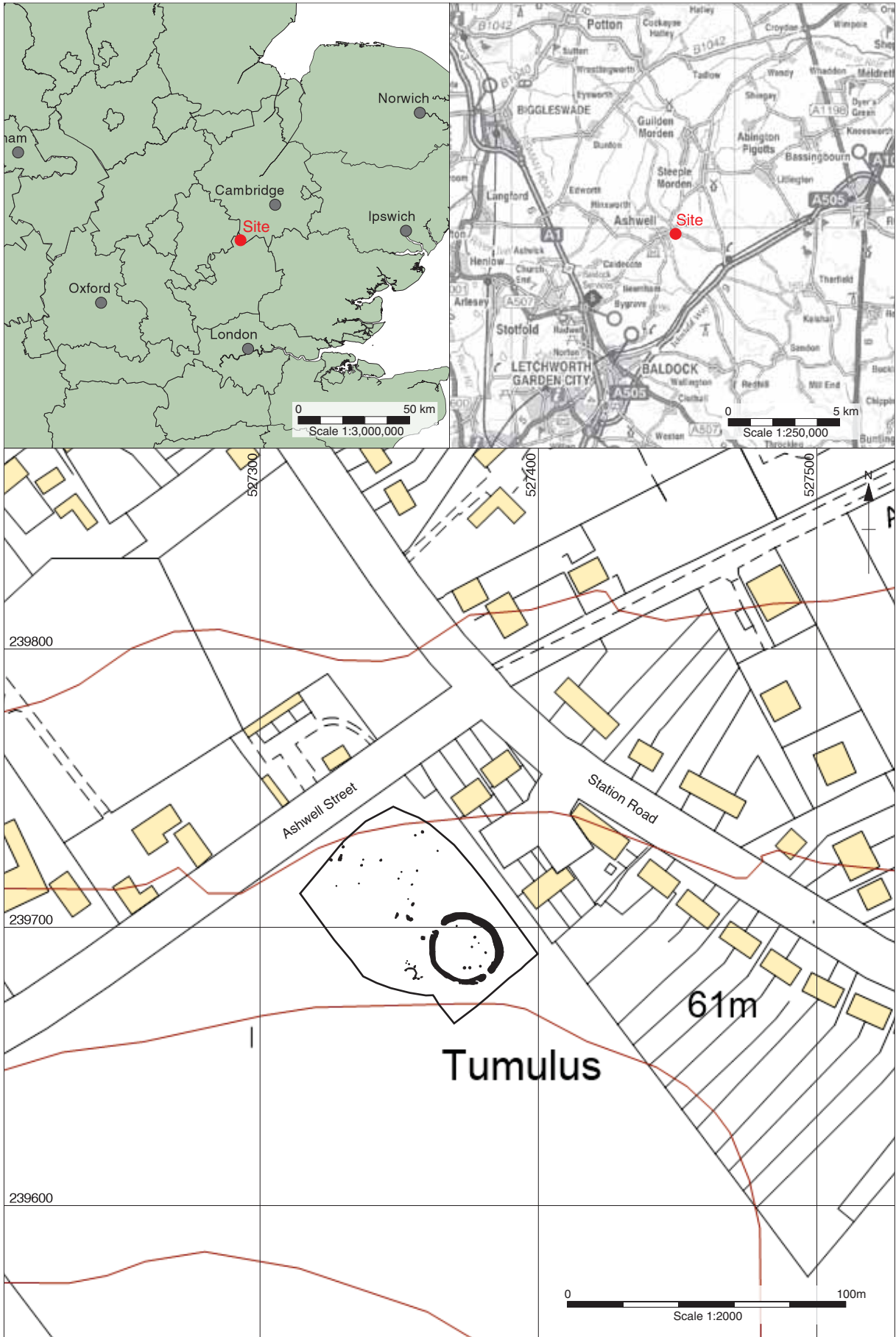
Physical Archive	Digital Archive	Paper Archive
<input type="text" value="North Herts Museum Service"/>	<input type="text" value="OA East"/>	<input type="text" value="North Herts Museum Service"/>
<input type="text" value="XHTASH15"/>	<input type="text" value="XHTASH15"/>	<input type="text" value="XHTASH15"/>

Archive Contents/Media

	Physical Contents	Digital Contents	Paper Contents
Animal Bones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Glass	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Human Bones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leather	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Metal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stratigraphic		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Survey		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Textiles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worked Bone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worked Stone/Lithic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Digital Media	Paper Media
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Database	<input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photos
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GIS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Context Sheet
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Geophysics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Correspondence
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Images	<input type="checkbox"/> Diary
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Illustrations	<input type="checkbox"/> Drawing
<input type="checkbox"/> Moving Image	<input type="checkbox"/> Manuscript
<input type="checkbox"/> Spreadsheets	<input type="checkbox"/> Map
<input type="checkbox"/> Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Matrices
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Text	<input type="checkbox"/> Microfilm
<input type="checkbox"/> Virtual Reality	<input type="checkbox"/> Misc.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Research/Notes
	<input type="checkbox"/> Photos
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plans
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Report
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sections
	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey

Notes:



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Figure 1: Site location

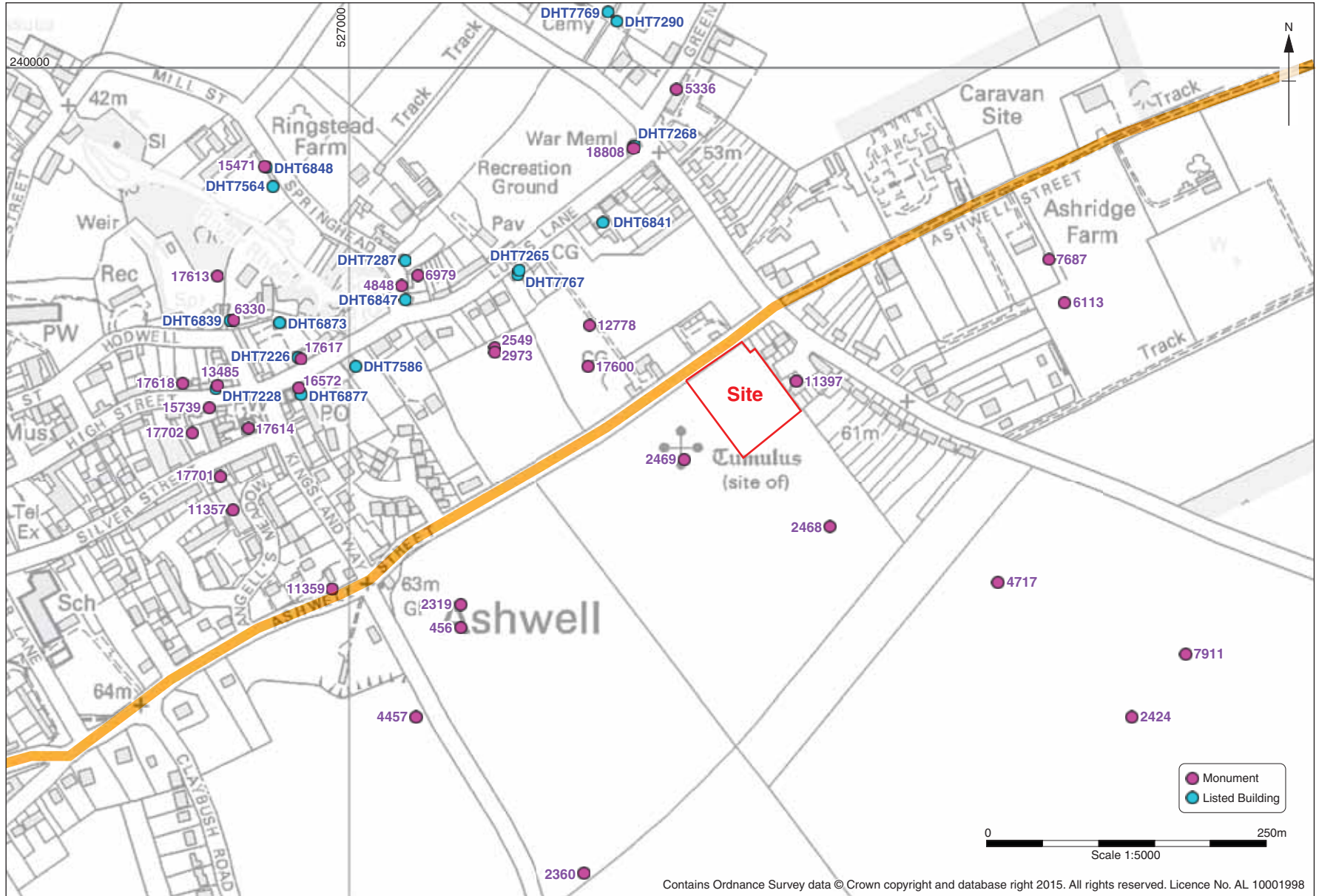


Figure 2: HER entries within a 0.5km radius of the site

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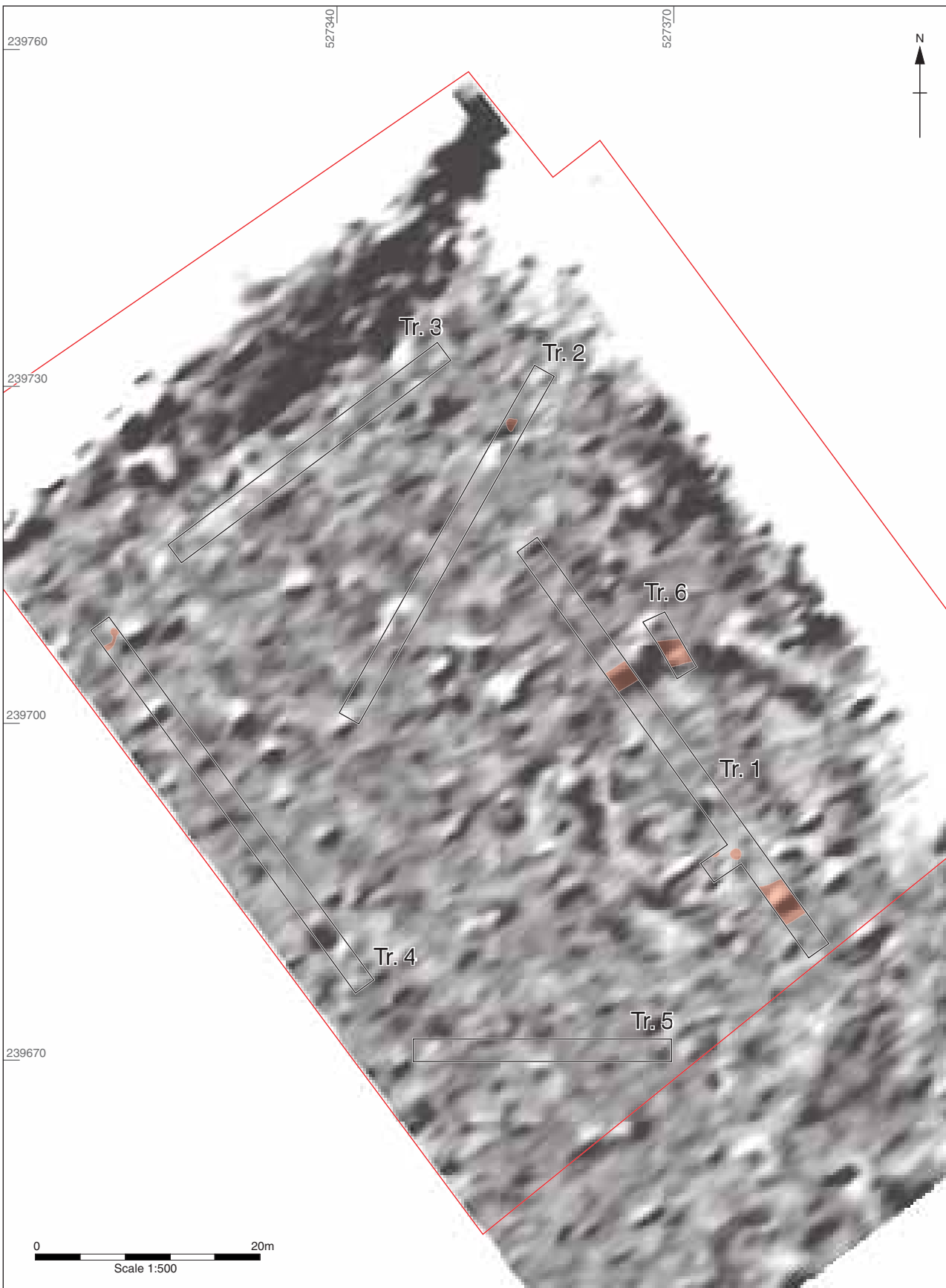


Figure 3: Geophysics and evaluation trench plan

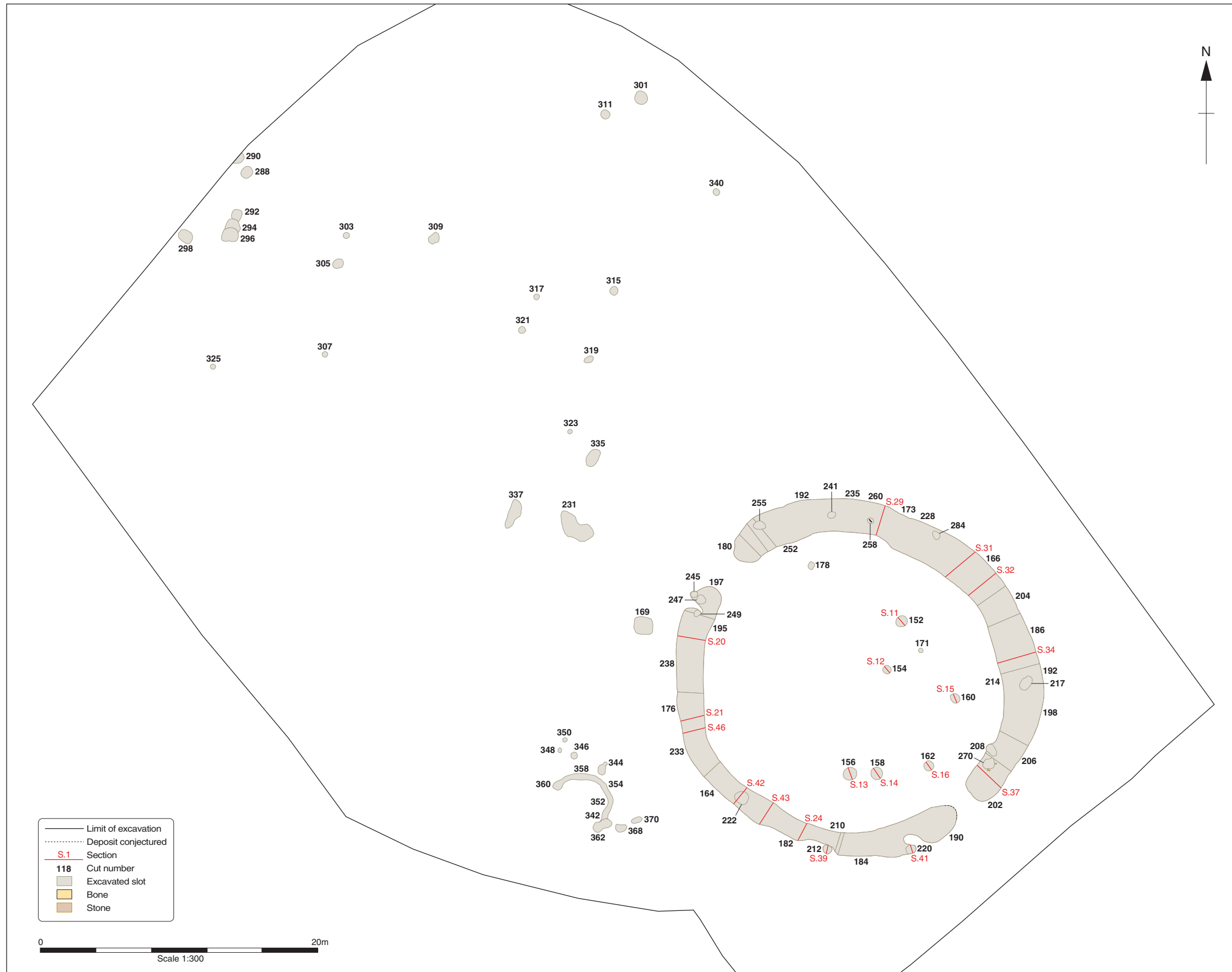


Figure 4: Excavation site plan

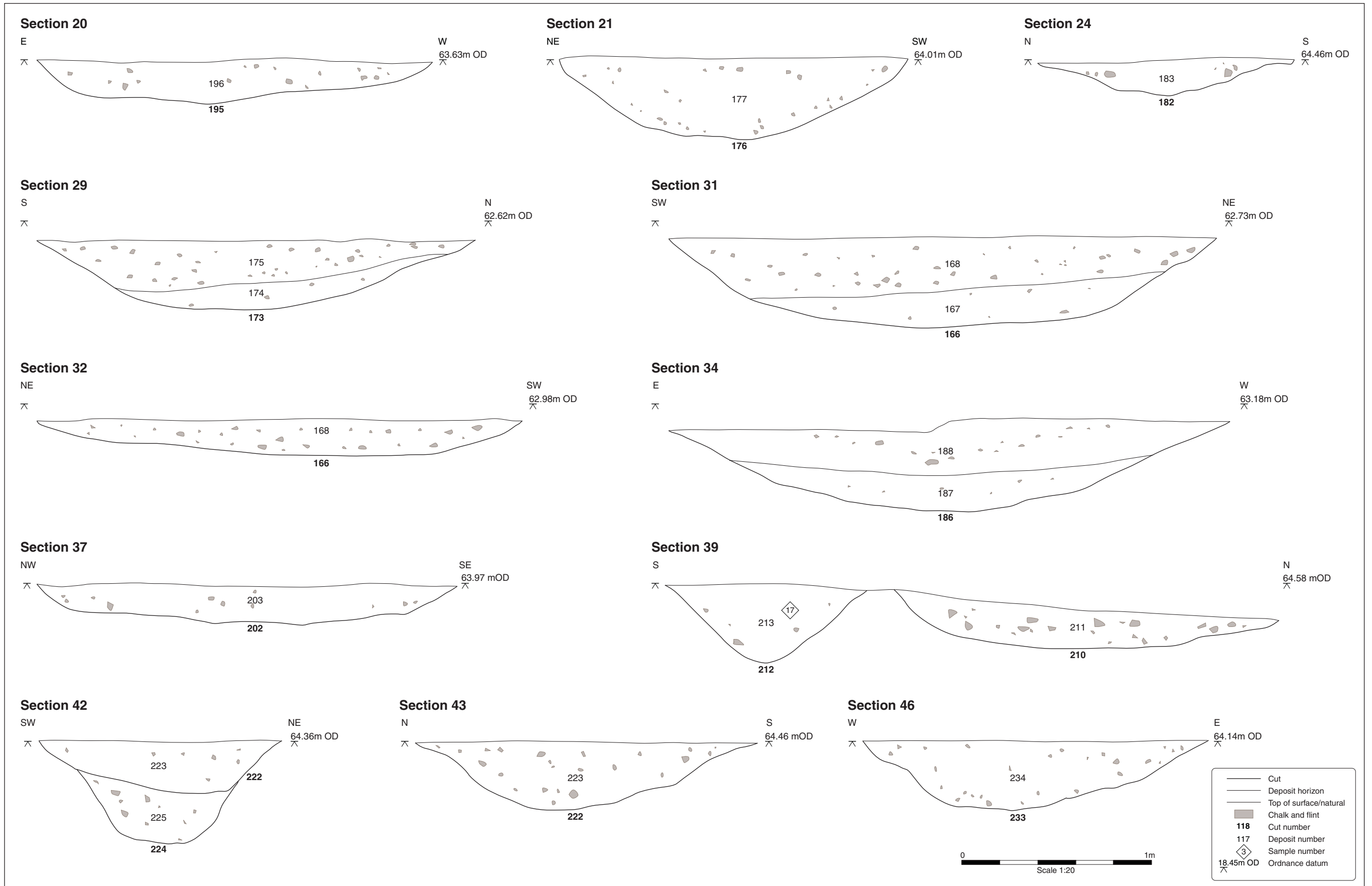


Figure 5: Sample ditch sections

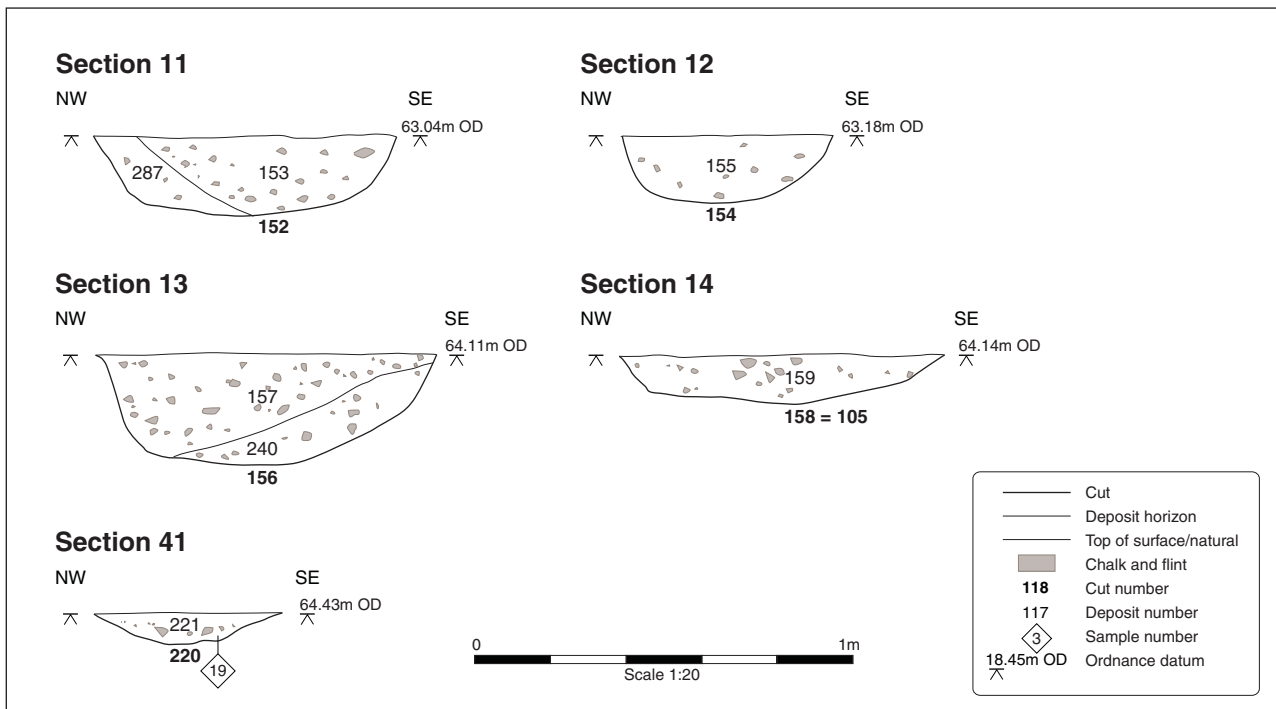


Figure 6: Sample pit sections



Plate 1: Henge looking north-east



Plate 2: Open day looking north



Plate 3: Henge looking north



Plate 4: Henge looking west



Plate 5: View along ditch looking east



Plate 6: Internal pits (fully excavated) looking north



Plate 7: Henge (fully excavated) looking south-east

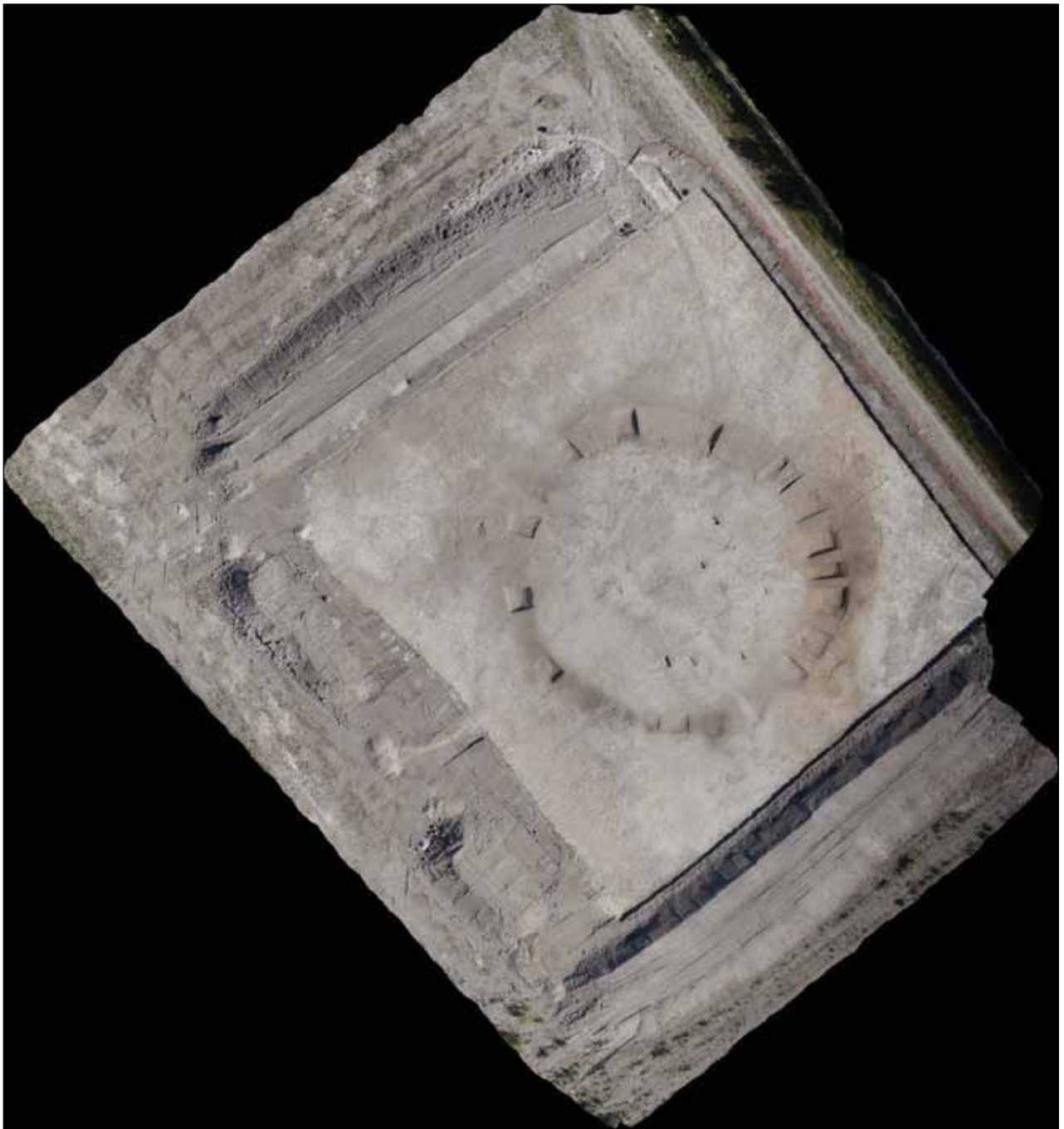


Plate 8: View of henge from drone



Head Office/Registered Office/ OA South

Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford OX2 0ES

t: +44 (0) 1865 263 800
f: +44 (0) 1865 793 496
e: info@oxfordarchaeology.com
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>

OA North

Mill 3
Moor Lane
Lancaster LA1 1QD

t: +44 (0) 1524 541 000
f: +44 (0) 1524 848 606
e: [oanorth@oxfordarchaeology.com](mailto: oanorth@oxfordarchaeology.com)
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>

OA East

15 Trafalgar Way
Bar Hill
Cambridgeshire
CB23 8SQ

t: +44 (0) 1223 850500
e: [oaeast@oxfordarchaeology.com](mailto: oaeast@oxfordarchaeology.com)
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>



Director: Gill Hey, BA PhD FSA MCIFA
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