

Archaeological Evaluation and Excavation at the Garden Field JMI School, St Albans



Evaluation and Excavation Report



June 2015

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Archaeological Evaluation and Excavation at the Garden Field JMI School, St Albans

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Summary

Between the 16th and the 20th of February 2015 Oxford Archaeology East excavated five trenches totalling on land associated with proposed redevelopment at the JMI School ST Albans.

During the evaluation a tree bowl containing a residual neolithic flint flake and three small ditches dating to the Iron Age, one of which contained a moderate amount of early Iron Age pottery were uncovered. Following on from this an excavation which took place between 30th of March and the 3rd of April 2015 on an area adjacent to Trench 4, revealed a group of small post holes and the continuation of an early Iron Age field boundary, initially found during the evaluation.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 An archaeological evaluation and excavation was conducted at The Garden Field JMI School, St Albans.
- 1.1.2 This archaeological evaluation and excavation was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Simon West of Hertfordshire County Council, supplemented by a Specification prepared by OA East.
- 1.1.3 The work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed redevelopment area, in accordance with the guidelines set out in *National Planning Policy Framework* (Department for Communities and Local Government March 2012). The results will enable decisions to be made by Hertfordshire County Council, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority, with regard to the treatment of any archaeological remains found.
- 1.1.4 The site archive is currently held by OA East and will be deposited with St Albans county stores in due course.

1.2 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The site lies on the northern slopes of a low hill to the north of the River Ver. The hill slopes down from 125m AOD, 700m south-west of the site, to 99m AOD on Batchwood Drive at the foot of the site.
- 1.2.2 The underlying geology of the site is undifferentiated Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation and Seaford Chalk Formation. It is overlain by sands and gravels of the Kesgrave Catchment Subgroup (British Geological Survey, geology of Britain Viewer, www.bgs.ac.uk).
- 1.2.3 The site lies on a soil boundary, where the deep brown earths of the Carstens Association (581d) on the top of the hill give way to soils of the Bratcombe Association (582a) (Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983). Along the line of Batchwood Drive, which runs along the low point between two hills, there are also River Terrace Gravels.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

Palaeolithic, Neolithic, and Bronze Age

- 1.3.1 Three Palaeolithic hand axes have been found near the school: two 400 metres to the south-east (HHER 1052) and 1km to the north-east (HHER 13540). A Neolithic axe was found less than a hundred metres south-west of the school (HHER 16159).
- 1.3.2 Late Bronze Age pits, pottery, and stake-holes were recorded in two areas off Folly Lane (HHER 14653).

Iron Age

- 1.3.3 In the Late Iron Age, a major settlement of the Catuvellauni was located south of the Ver, 3km to the south-west of the site.

- 1.3.4 Immediately to the north-west of the school site, at the junction of Batchwood Drive and Harpenden Road is the southern end of the Beech Bottom Dyke (HHER14606), which is interpreted as a Late Iron Age dyke. It runs north-east for around 2km, measuring up to 30m wide and 10m deep.
- 1.3.5 Between Folly Lane and Temple View, roughly 900m south-west of the school site, a significant number of Late Iron Age finds have been recovered. A Late Iron Age field system is known (HHER 14532), including wells, pits and ditches. A major boundary ditch (HHER 14654) probably also dates from this time. Around 55AD, these were swept away for a major Late Iron Age burial, which was surrounded by a 5 acre rectangular ditched enclosure (HHER 14530, 14655). The burial involved a high status cremation on the site, with remains then interred in a shaft. Another shaft nearby contained remains of a wooden chamber, furniture and pottery.

Roman

- 1.3.6 The Roman town of Verulamium lay on the south side of the River Ver. The central basilica stood near the location of the present-day Verulamium Museum and St Michael's church, 1.7km from the school.
- 1.3.7 Immediately north of the river is evidence of typical extra-mural Roman activities. Between Folly Lane and the Hospital, are the town baths (HHER 14143, 14707), as well as butchery remains (HHER 14716), bread ovens (HHER 14718), kilns (HHER14665), metalworking (HHER 14719) and a variety of timber and masonry buildings (HHER 14261, 14664, 14658, 14659, 14660, 14661, 14662, 14673), some of which include 'cellars' (HHER 14667, 14668). Some of the buildings extended in use into the post-Roman period.
- 1.3.8 In the late 1st century AD, a Romano-Celtic temple was constructed over the Late Iron Age pyre site (HHER 14531) and appears to have been used for cult activities, with ritual pits being found nearby (HHER 14717). The temple was connected to the Verulamium theatre site by a road (HHER 14358), and at least four cemeteries are known between the temple and the town (HHER 14150, 14156, 14542, 14663). These date from the 2nd to the 5th centuries AD.
- 1.3.9 The road is presumed to have continued north-east from the Roman town and would have crossed the school excavation (HHER 14627), although no evidence has been found for it on the site. On the school site itself, a single sherd of Roman pottery has been recorded during a watching brief (HHER 10722).
- 1.3.10 Two Roman coin hoards are located in the area: one near Verulam Road (HHER 14171) and one just to the west of the Beech Bottom Dyke on Batchwood Drive opposite the school (HHER 14549).

Anglo-Saxon and Medieval

- 1.3.11 The HER records no Anglo-Saxon sites in the area around the school.
- 1.3.12 A number of medieval farms and granges are recorded in the wider area (HHER 6534, 14536, 14609). All of these, however lie at least 800m from the site. Medieval activity in the area was largely to the south of St Peter's Street, toward the centre of the medieval town.

- 1.3.13 Barnard's Heath, 300m to the south-east of the school was the site of the Second Battle of St Albans, fought in 1461. No archaeological remains from the battle have been found (HHER 14537).

Post-medieval

- 1.3.14 In the early post-medieval period, the area remained rural, with various farms recorded (e.g. HHER 17924, 18813, 30601). All are at some distance from the school.
- 1.3.15 During the 19th century, as St Albans expanded, the area was used for wasteland (HHER 12409, 13172), clay extraction (HHER 7061, 14621, 30359) and some industrial works (mostly around Barnard's Heath: HHER 12407). These included a brick and tile works (HHER 7062), brickworks (HHER 7063), tallow works (HHER 7060), a brewery (HHER 5389), and a waterworks (HHER 5657).
- 1.3.16 On the school site, a post-medieval clay pit has been identified (HHER 9624), and a 19th century brick kiln is recorded on Batchwood Gardens immediately to the north-east (HHER 17927).

1.4 Acknowledgements

- 1.4.1 The author would like to thank Stephen Ralph of Mouchel for commissioning and funding the project, Simon West the district Archaeological Officer for St Albans who visited and monitored the site. Also to Al Green and Charl de Bruin of the JMI School for their enthusiasm and interest for the work being carried out. Louise Bush and Dave Brown surveyed the site. The excavation was directed by James Fairbairn with the assistance of Emily Abrehart. James Drummond-Murray managed the project.

2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

Evaluation

2.1.1 The objectives of the evaluation were;

to determine as far as reasonably possible the presence/absence, location, nature, extent, date, quality, condition and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits within the development area.

to determine whether the existing ground level in the area of the present school building had been terraced prior to their construction.

Excavation

2.1.2 The objectives of the excavation were;

to investigate the area around the ditch to see if it relates to any settlement activity – the probable source of the pottery.

to obtain further dating evidence to refine the chronology of the site including scientific dating if suitable.

to determine the age and function of the Iron Age ditch found during the evaluation. To locate and characterise any associated features relating to the ditch.

2.2 Methodology

Evaluation

2.2.1 The Brief required that five trenches would be machine excavated in pre determined areas across the development site. In practise the trenches were shortened moved slightly due to live services and overhead power and telecommunication cables.

Excavation

2.2.2 The excavation stage required that an area measuring approximately 17m by 10m would be excavated close to the area of the Iron age ditch found during the evaluation stage of the work. Again due to live services and overhead power lines the excavation area was slightly modified.

2.2.3 Machine excavation during both the evaluation and excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a wheeled JCB-type excavator using a toothless ditching bucket.

2.2.4 The site survey was carried out by Louise Bush and Dave Brown using Leica GS08 GPS equipment.

2.2.5 Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal detector. All metal-detected and hand-collected finds were retained for inspection, other than those which were obviously modern.

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

2.2.7 Site conditions were overcast, dry and warm.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The results of the evaluation phase are presented first followed by those of the subsequent excavation. The trenches are discussed in numerical order with feature dimensions for the evaluation and excavation listed in the context inventory (Appendix A).

3.2 Evaluation

Trench 1 (Fig 2 and plate 1)

3.2.1 This east to west orientated trench was located at the eastern extent of the evaluation area. It was sited on a southern slope and measured 14.75m x 1.8m. It had a maximum depth of 1.78m. A shallow tree bowl **106** was recorded toward the western end of the evaluation trench (Plate 3). This contained a single dark brown silty sand fill (105) and within this was found a single flint flake thought to be part of a Neolithic date (Appendix B).

3.2.2 Although no other archaeological features were found in Trench 1, evidence of heavy landscaping and terracing could be seen in the section of the evaluation trench. (See sn1, Fig. 3). This would have occurred when the school was first built. A dark grey silty buried soil (104) was noted at 1.6m below present ground level (Plate 2). It is not certain whether this layer equates to a top soil or subsoil but its characteristics suggest that it is more likely to be a topsoil, which would make this the historical ground level prior to the advent of construction work.

3.2.3 Above this probable topsoil, various layers of modern build up can be seen, again these are related to the construction of the school buildings just to the south. These layers, 103, 107, 102 and 101 all contained chalk and fragments of building material. A modern turf line sealed the area of the evaluation trench.

3.2.4 Due to the presence of a modern service trench at the western end of Trench 1, a smaller trench (1a) was opened to compensate for the truncation.

Trench 1a (Fig 2 and plate 6)

3.2.5 Trench 1a, measuring 2.2m by 1.8m, was located approximately 9.5m to the west of Trench 1 and was orientated north-west to south-east. As with Trench 1 a modern service was encountered at a depth of 0.75m and it was therefore decided to abandon the trench.

Trench 2 (Fig 2 and plate 2)

3.2.6 Trench 2 was located perpendicular to the eastern end of Trench 1. It measured 6m x 8m and was dug to a maximum depth of 1m. Although no archaeology was encountered the historic ground level could be seen in the trench section. A reddish silty sandy clay subsoil (203) which equated to layer 104 in Trench 1, was overlain by a dark grey silty layer (202). This in turn was sealed by a modern build up of material which included brick and tile.

Trench 3 (Fig 2 and Sn 8)

- 3.2.7 Trench 3 was located on a small area between the access road to the school and an existing playground and was orientated on a north-east to south-west orientation. The trench measured 12.35m by 1.8m and was dug to a maximum depth of 1.10m.
- 3.2.8 The only archaeological feature recorded was a small north-west to south-east orientated gully (**304**) or ditch located centrally in the evaluation trench (Plate 8). The feature measured 0.70m wide and had a depth of 0.30m. It was cut into the natural sandy gravel geology and had gently sloping sides and a flatish bottom. The single fill of the feature (303) consisted of a grey brown silty sandy clay. This fill contained no finds.

Trench 4 (Fig 2 and Sn 5)

- 3.2.9 Trench 4 was orientated north-east to south-west and was located towards the western end of the evaluation area (Plate 9). It measured 9m x 1.8m and had a maximum depth of 0.70m. A small ditch **404** was found at the north eastern end of the evaluation trench. This feature was the only one found during the evaluation which provided any artefactual evidence. The ditch was 0.45m wide and had a depth of 0.20m with a slightly concave base (Plate 10). The fill (403) of the ditch contained a mid grey brown sandy silt material, and within this, a moderate amount of pottery was found (Appendix B). This flint tempered ware was considered to be of an Early Iron Age date.
- 3.2.10 The ditch was overlain by a mid brown sandy clay silt (402) that had a depth of 0.20m. A heavily disturbed mid grey clay silt subsoil topped by a turfline sealed the area of the trench.
- 3.2.11 Due to the trench length being shortened by the presence of services above and below ground it was decided to open another (Trench 4A) just to the west (Fig 2). Almost immediately a foul water pipe was discovered running centrally through the trench so it was decided to close it down.

Trench 5 (Fig 2 and Sn 6)

- 3.2.12 Trench 5 was located on an existing hard surfaced sports area (Plate 12) between two access roads. It was orientated north-west to south-east, measured 16m by 1.8m and was dug to a maximum depth of 0.80m.
- 3.2.13 As with Trench 4 a single feature (**503**) (Plate 13) was recorded in Trench 5, again this was a small gully or ditch that contained a single fill. The feature had a width of 0.50m and a depth of 0.19m and lay on a north to south orientation. The eastern side of the ditch was eroded but the western side probably gave a true indication of its original profile (sn7). The fill of the ditch (502) consisted of a grey brown sandy silt that only contained a few small stones and naturally occurring flint.
- 3.2.14 A mid to light brown subsoil layer (501) sealed ditch (**503**). This layer had a depth of 0.64m and showed signs of modern truncation. No upper soil level remained. This had been removed to give a firmer base to an asphalt sports surface that had been in turn sealed by a more recent surface (sn 6)

Trench 6 (Fig 2 and plates 15 and 16)

- 3.2.15 Trench 6 was located within the school playground adjacent to the school building. After studying service plans and scanning the area it was clear that services truncated the proposed trench in this area. As the main purpose of Trench 6 was to look for evidence for the terracing of the natural ground levels it was decided to open a small area between the drainage services.

- 3.2.16 After removal of the asphalt layer more unrecorded services were seen and the machine stripping was halted. A small hand dug test pit between the services revealed a natural sandy gravel at a depth of 0.30m. The reddish brown subsoil above this contained several bricks and had been heavily disturbed during building work, indicating that the upper soil layers had been removed from this area and pushed down hill towards Trenches 1 and 2.

3.3 Excavation

Following the evaluation it was decided to open a wider around evaluation Trench 4, to try and determine a function for, and more precisely date the Iron Age ditch **403**.

An excavation area measuring approximately 17 by 10m was machine dug to the level of feature **403** (Fig 2 and Plate 18). Within this area a continuation of the Iron Age linear ditch and a localised group of post holes were recorded.

Continuation of ditch 404 (Fig 2 and plates 10 and 22)

- 3.3.1 The ditch first noted during the evaluation continued both to the east and west as far as edge of excavation and most probably beyond.
- 3.3.2 Three 1m sections were excavated along the length of the ditch (Fig 2 and plate 19). These were all of broadly similar dimensions and all contained a single fill in a shallow “u” shaped cut which had gently sloping sides and a flat base.

Ditch section 505 (Fig 2 and plate 21)

- 3.3.3 This was the northernmost of the three interventions dug into the ditch during the excavation. It was dug against the northern bulk (Plate 21) of the excavation and measured 1m x 0.52m and had a depth of 0.12m. The single silty brownish grey fill (504) contained small stones and unworked flint but no artefacts.

Ditch section 507 (Fig 2 and plate 22)

- 3.3.4 The second of the three interventions dug into the linear ditch feature measured 1m x 0.48m and had a depth of 0.12m. The single fill (506) contained the same silty brown fill again with small stones and flint contained within. This was the nearest of the three interventions to the section of the ditch excavated during the evaluation stage but no further traces of pottery were found.

Ditch Section 509 (Fig 2 and plate 22)

- 3.3.5 This was the western most intervention through the Iron Age ditch and measured 1m x 0.50m and was dug to a depth of 0.12m. It contained a brownish grey silty fill (504) which contained a moderate amount of small stones and naturally occurring flint.

Post Holes (Fig 2 and plate 20)

- 3.3.6 A group of nine concentrated post holes were recorded 9m to the east of the Iron Age ditch. These were all of broadly similar dimensions and two (**512** and **515**) had remnants of post pipe within their fills.

Post Hole 512 (Fig 2 and Sn 13)

- 3.3.7 This steep sided post hole had a diameter 0.35m and a depth of 0.23m. It contained two fills,. The post pipe (510) and post packing (511) The post packing consisted of a light yellowish brown silty clay and the post pipe fill was dark grey sandy silty clay material. The post pipe was environmentally sampled (Appendix C), charcoal was noted. This was most probably present due to the practice of charring the end of the post to prevent the wood from rotting.

Post Hole 515 (Fig 2 and Sn 14)

- 3.3.8 This was the second of the post holes to contain evidence of a post pipe. The post hole had a diameter of 0.25m and a depth of 0.25m The sides were steep and the base concave. The packing fill (513) consisted of a friable yellowish grey silty clay material, which contained occasional small stones and were not regarded as deliberate post packing. The post pipe (514) was a dark grey sandy silty clay which again contained charcoal flecks.

Post Hole 517 (Fig 2 and Sn 15)

- 3.3.9 Post hole **517** was sub-circular in shape and measured 0.2m in diameter and had a depth of 0.16m. It contained a single grey sandy silty clay fill (516) that contained small amounts of charcoal, although no indication of post pipe fill. The post hole was slightly removed from the more concentrated group but still close enough to have an association.

Post Hole 519 (Fig 2 and Sn 16)

- 3.3.10 This sub circular post hole measured 0.3m in diameter and had a depth of 0.16m. It was steep sided and had a concave bottom. It had a single sandy clay silt fill (518).

Post Hole 521 (Fig 2 and Sn 17)

- 3.3.11 Post hole **521** had a diameter of 0.27m and a depth of 0.13m. It was sub circular in shape with steep sides and a concave base. It contained a single fill (520) which consisted of a mid brownish grey silt material.

Post Hole 523 (Fig 2 and Sn 18)

- 3.3.12 This sub circular steep sided post hole measured 0.30m in diameter and had a depth of 0.13m. It contained a single mid grey brown sandy silty fill (522). No finds were recorded within the fill.

Post Hole 525 (Fig 2 and Sn 19)

- 3.3.13 Post hole **525** was sub-circular in shape with moderately steep sides. It measured 0.20m in diameter and had a depth of 0.08m. This posthole was the shallowest of the group. The fill of the feature consisted of a mid greyish brown sandy clay silt that contained no finds.

Post Hole 527 (Fig 2 and Sn 20)

- 3.3.14 Post hole **527** was located centrally to the group of nine. It was sub-circular in shape measured 0.23m in diameter with a depth of 0.14m. Its steep sided cut contained a single mid brownish grey sandy clay silt fill (526) which was devoid of finds.

Post Hole 529 (Fig 2 and Sn 21)

- 3.3.15 This post hole had a diameter of 0.15m and a depth of 0.13m. It was sub circular in shape and had steep sides with a concave base. The fill (528) consisted of a mid brownish grey sandy clay silt that was again devoid of finds.

3.4 Finds Summary

- 3.4.1 Although the artefactual evidence found during the evaluation at the JMI School was sparse, what was found does provide evidence of land clearance and occupation on the site now occupied by the school.
- 3.4.2 A tree bowl **106** was recorded in Trench 1 and within the fill of this feature a single flake of probable neolithic date was discovered (Appendix B). Although residual in nature it does suggest that clearance of woodland was taking place on the site of the school in prehistoric times.
- 3.4.3 A moderate amount of pottery was found within the fill of a small ditch **404** in Evaluation Trench 4. The pottery was dated to the Early Iron Age (Appendix B) and strongly suggests occupation close by.
- 3.4.4 The only artefactual evidence from the excavation stage was found during environmental processing. Small amounts of charcoal were recovered from samples taken from fills in post holes **512**, **515** and **517**. These most likely relate to the practice of charring the post to aid preservation.
- 3.4.5 The evidence of post packing in some of the features suggest that the group were post holes rather than stake holes. The post pipes uncovered probably occurred when the post rotted in situ. Post hole **515** showed signs that the post had been deliberately removed.

3.5 Phasing

- 3.5.1 Two phases of activity were recorded during the evaluation and excavation at the school.

Phase 1 Neolithic (3500-2500BC)

- 3.5.2 The earliest phase of activity on the site of the seems to relate to forest clearances. Evidence for this was seen in tree bowl **106** in Trench 1. A small flint flake was found within the fill of the feature. This was dated to the Neolithic period (Appendix B).

Phase 2 Early Iron age (800-350 BC)

- 3.5.3 The second phase of activity on the site relates to the Early Iron Age. A small linear feature found firstly in Trench 4 of the evaluation and again during the subsequent excavation. The pottery found within the ditch was dated tentatively to the Early Iron Age. The continuation of the ditch and full excavation of its length failed to produce any

further finds. Further ditches of similar dimensions were also recorded in Trenches 3 and 5 but due to lack of finds it was unable to date these features.

- 3.5.4 It is entirely possible, however, that these features may be contemporary with the ditch found in Trench 4 and may indicate the presence of an Early Iron Age field system. If the features were related to the Roman or medieval periods then they would be unlikely not to produce at least some artefactual evidence.
- 3.5.5 The post holes found during the excavation most probably also have some relationship to the Early Iron Age settlement of the area. As with the ditch sections, the post hole fills failed to produce finds of any sort but their close proximity to the ditch and the lack of artefactual evidence suggests an Early Iron Age date.
- 3.5.6 The function of this group of post holes is unclear. The fact that the post holes were of a broadly similar size and closely grouped may suggest that the posts were periodically removed and re-inserted. Post hole **515** showed evidence that the post had been removed. The point of the post in this feature seemed to have been angled with the action of agitating its before removal.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Discussion

- 4.1.1 The evaluation and excavation at the Garden Field School did provide some evidence for both Neolithic land clearance and Early Iron Age settlement within the area now occupied by the school grounds.
- 4.1.2 It is known that although the speed at which forest clearances were taking place in the Neolithic and Early Bronze age varied due to topographical and socio-economic reasons. This was already taking place in other parts of Hertfordshire and the evidence found during the evaluation of the school suggests it was also taking place on the hillsides around St Albans.
- 4.1.3 It also seems likely that the area now occupied by the school was not densely populated either in the Roman or Medieval periods.

4.2 Significance

- 4.2.1 The results of the evaluation and excavation at the school sheds further light on what is already known about the historic use of the land at this part of St Albans.

APPENDIX A. CONTEXT INVENTORY

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Context</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Breadth</i>	<i>Depth</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	<i> Finds</i>	<i> Date</i>
1	101		layer		0.52	Build up		
1	102		layer		0.37	Made up ground		
1	103		layer		0.3	Made up ground		
1	104		layer	2	0.25	Buried soil		
1	105	106	fill	2.95	0.3	Tree bowl	Flint	Neolithic
1	106	106	cut		0.3	Tree bowl		
1	107		layer		0.2	Chalk deposit		
2	201		layer		0.6	Built up ground		
2	202		layer		0.3	Buried soil		
2	203		layer		0.8	Subsoil		
3	301		layer		0.42	Topsoil		
3	302		layer		0.58	Subsoil		
3	303	304	fill	0.85	0.3	Gully		
3	304	304	cut	0.85	0.3	Gully		
4	401		layer		0.4	Topsoil		
4	402		layer		0.2	Subsoil		
4	403	404	fill	0.45	0.2	Gully	Pottery	Early Iron Age
4	404	404	cut	0.45	0.2	Ditch/gully		
5	501		layer		0.64	Subsoil		
5	502	503	fill	0.5	0.1	Ditch		
5	503	503	cut	0.5	0.19	Ditch/gully		
	504	0	fill	0.5	0.12	Ditch		
	505	0	cut	0.5	0.12	Ditch		
	506	507	fill	0.5	0.12	Ditch		
	507	0	cut	0.5	0.12	Ditch		
	508	509	fill			Ditch		
	509	0	cut	0.5	0.12	Ditch		
	510	512	fill	0.3	0.23	Post hole		
	511	512	fill	0.2	0.17	Post hole	Charcoal	
	512	0	cut	0.35	0.23	Post hole		
	513	515	fill	0.2	0.25	Post hole	Charcoal	
	514	0	fill	0.15	0.17	Post hole		
	515	515	cut	0.25	0.25	Post hole	Charcoal	
	516	0	fill	0.2	0.16	Post hole		
	517	0	cut		0.16	Post hole		
	518	0	fill	0.3	0.16	Post hole		
	519	0	cut	0.3	0.16	Post hole		
	520	521	fill	0.27	0.13	Post hole		
	521	0	cut	0.27	0.13	Post hole		

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Context</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Breadth</i>	<i>Depth</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	<i>Finds</i>	<i>Date</i>
	522	0	fill	0.3	0.13	Post hole		
	523	0	cut	0.3	0.13	Post hole		
	524	525	fill	0.2	0.08	Post hole		
	525	0	cut	0.2	0.08	Post hole		
	526	0	cut	0.23	0.14	Post hole		
	527	0	cut	0.23	0.14	Post hole		
	528	0	fill			Post hole		
	529	0	cut	0.12	0.13	Post hole		

APPENDIX B. FINDS REPORTS

B.1 Pottery

By Sarah Percival

- B.1.1 A total of 18 sherds weighing 45g were collected from ditch **404**. The sherds are made of coarse flint-tempered fabric speckled through with fine sub-angular flint pieces and rare red grog in a sandy clay matrix. All are undecorated body sherds with the exception of one small, simple base angle. The sherds are probably Early Iron Age.

B.2 Flint

By Anthony Haskins

- B.2.1 A single narrow flake was recovered from a tree bowl **106**. This flake was made of a light brownish-grey opaque flint with a thick chalky unabraded cortex. Previous removals suggest a structured pattern and it is likely that the flake is of Neolithic date although this cannot be confirmed.

APPENDIX C. ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLES

by Rachel Fosberry

Introduction

- C.1.1 Bulk samples were taken from three undated post holes **512**, **515** and **517** within the excavated areas at JMI School St Albans, Hertfordshire in order to assess the quality of preservation of plant remains and their potential to provide useful data as part of further archaeological investigations.

Methodology

- C.1.2 The total volume of each bulk sample was processed by water flotation (using a modified Siraff three-tank system) for the recovery of charred plant remains, dating evidence and any other artefactual evidence that might be present. The floating component (flot) of the samples was collected in a 0.3mm nylon mesh and the residue was washed through 10mm, 5mm, 2mm and a 0.5mm sieve. Both flot and residues were allowed to air dry. A magnet was dragged through each residue fraction prior to sorting for artefacts. The dried flots were subsequently sorted using a binocular microscope at magnifications up to x 60.

Results

- C.1.3 All of the samples were devoid of plant remains other than sparse charcoal fragments. No finds were recovered from the sample residues.

Discussion

- C.1.4 The presence of charcoal in post holes is probably due to the practice of charring the ends of the posts prior to positioning in the hole as a means of preventing the post from rotting. The charcoal recovered is in the form of fine flakes and would not be suitable for species identification. It is possible that there is sufficient volume for radiocarbon dating should this be required.

APPENDIX D. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Niblett, R. 1995. Roman Hertfordshire.
- Niblett, R. 2001. A Neolithic dugout from a multi-period site near St Albans,

APPENDIX E. OASIS REPORT FORM

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

Project Details

OASIS Number	Oxford3-215389			
Project Name	Archaeological Evaluation and Excavation at the Garden Field JMI School, St Albans			
Project Dates (fieldwork)	Start	16-02-2015	Finish	01-04-2015
Previous Work (by OA East)	No		Future Work	No

Project Reference Codes

Site Code	XHTJMI15	Planning App. No.	
HER No.		Related HER/OASIS No.	

Type of Project/Techniques Used

Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG15
Development Type	Other

Please select all techniques used:

<input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photography - interpretation	<input type="checkbox"/> Grab-Sampling	<input type="checkbox"/> Remote Operated Vehicle Survey
<input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photography - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Gravity-Core	<input type="checkbox"/> Sample Trenches
<input type="checkbox"/> Annotated Sketch	<input type="checkbox"/> Laser Scanning	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey/Recording Of Fabric/Structure
<input type="checkbox"/> Augering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Measured Survey	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Targeted Trenches
<input type="checkbox"/> Dendrochronological Survey	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Metal Detectors	<input type="checkbox"/> Test Pits
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Documentary Search	<input type="checkbox"/> Phosphate Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Topographic Survey
<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Sampling	<input type="checkbox"/> Photogrammetric Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Vibro-core
<input type="checkbox"/> Fieldwalking	<input type="checkbox"/> Photographic Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual Inspection (Initial Site Visit)
<input type="checkbox"/> Geophysical Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Rectified Photography	

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
Tree throw	Neolithic -4k to -2k	Lithic	Neolithic -4k to -2k
Ditches	Iron Age -800 to 43	Pottery	Iron Age -800 to 43
	Select period...		Select period...

Project Location

County	Hertfordshire	Site Address (including postcode if possible)
District	St Albans	Garden Fields JMI School, Townsend Drive, St Albans, Hertfordshire AL3 5RL
Parish	St Albans	
HER	St Albans museum	
Study Area	420sqm	National Grid Reference TL 1466 0860

Project Originators

Organisation	OA EAST
Project Brief Originator	Hertfordshire County Council
Project Design Originator	Simon West
Project Manager	James Drummond-Murray
Supervisor	James Fairbairn

Project Archives

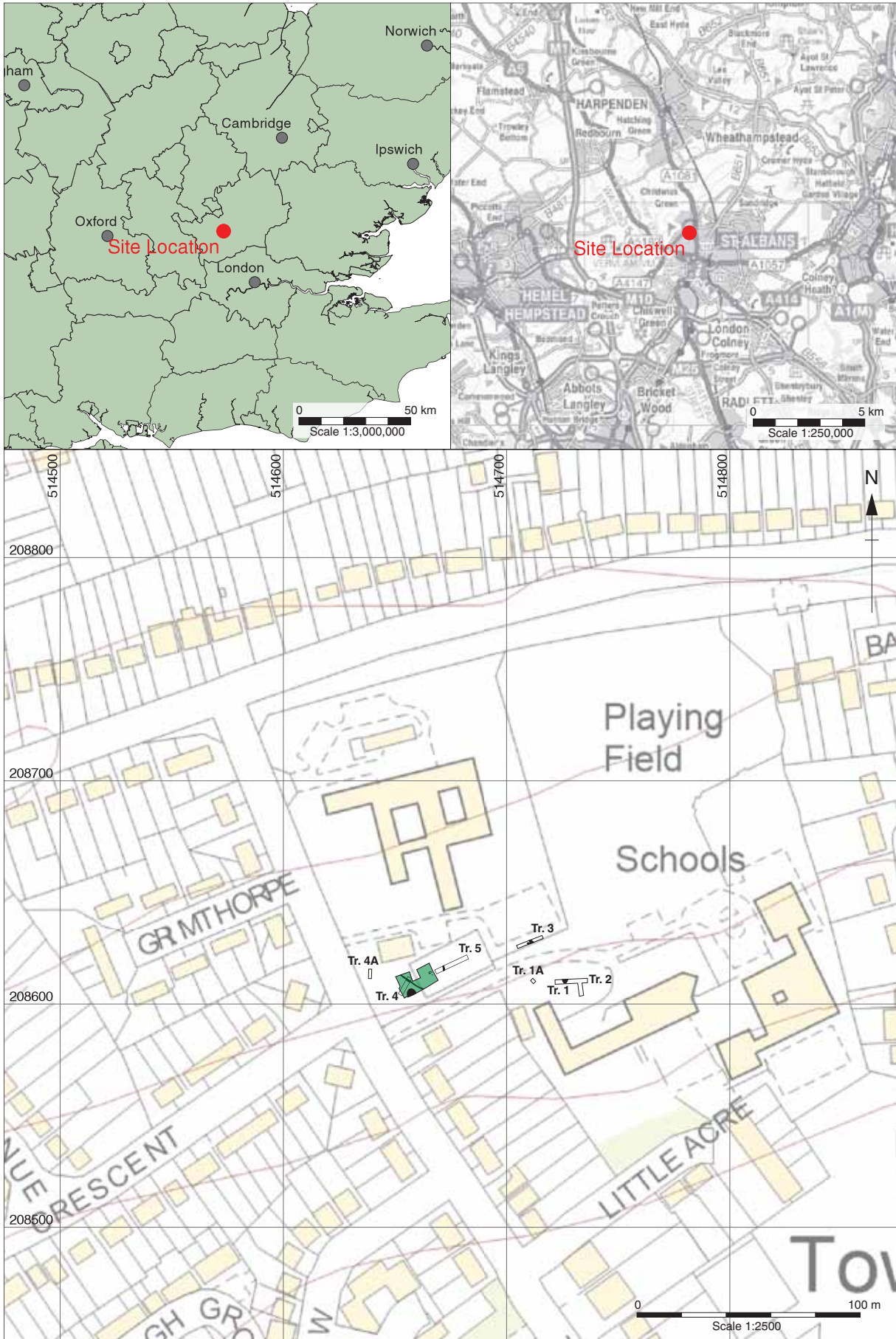
Physical Archive	Digital Archive	Paper Archive
OA EAst	OA EAST	OA EAST
XHTJMI14	XHTJMI14	XHTJMI14.

Archive Contents/Media

	Physical Contents	Digital Contents	Paper Contents
Animal Bones	<input 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 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 checked="" 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
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<input type="checkbox"/> GIS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Context Sheet
<input type="checkbox"/> Geophysics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Correspondence
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<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 checked="" 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 map showing evaluation trenches (black) and excavation area (green)

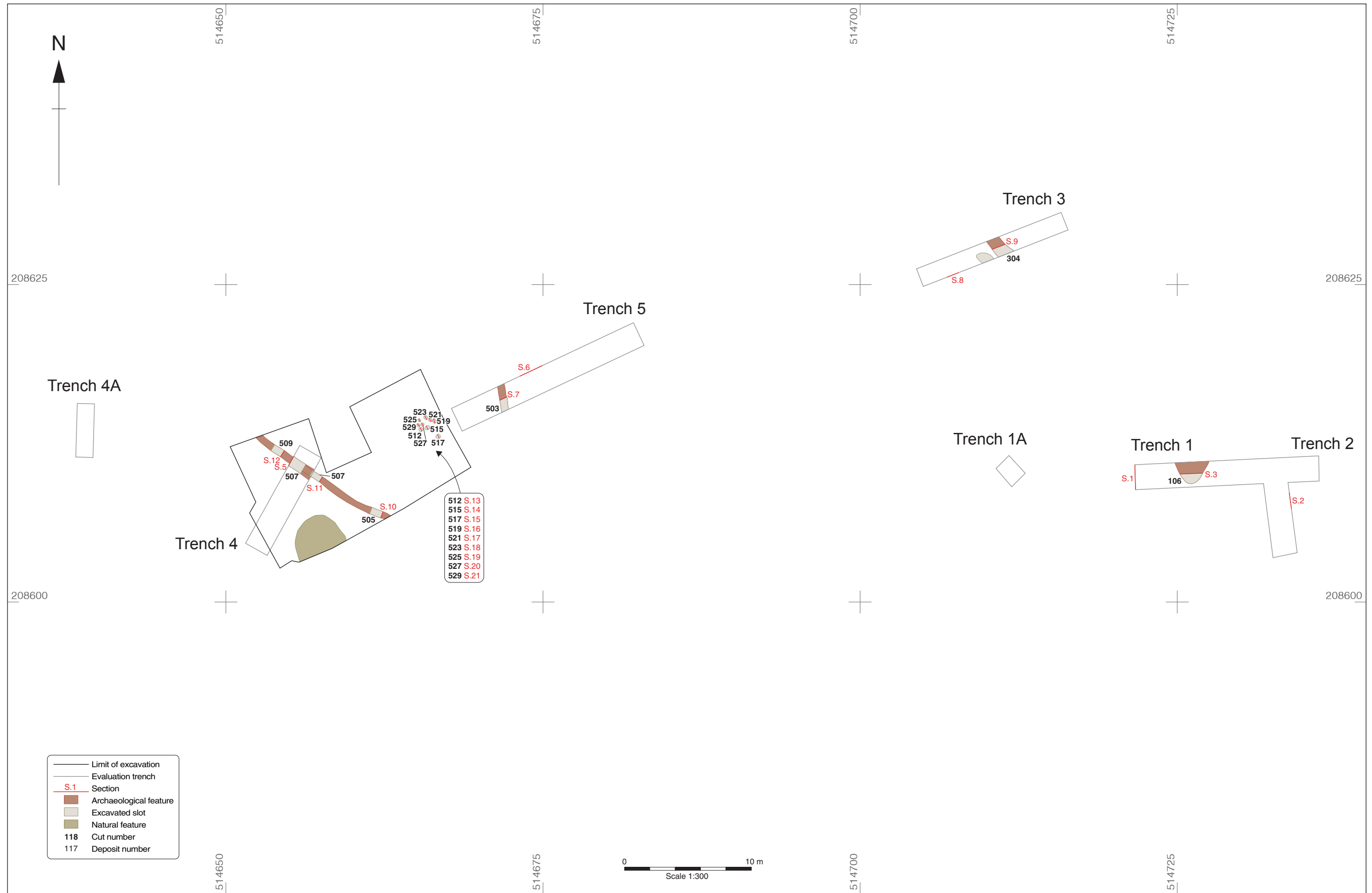


Figure 2: Evaluation and excavation plan

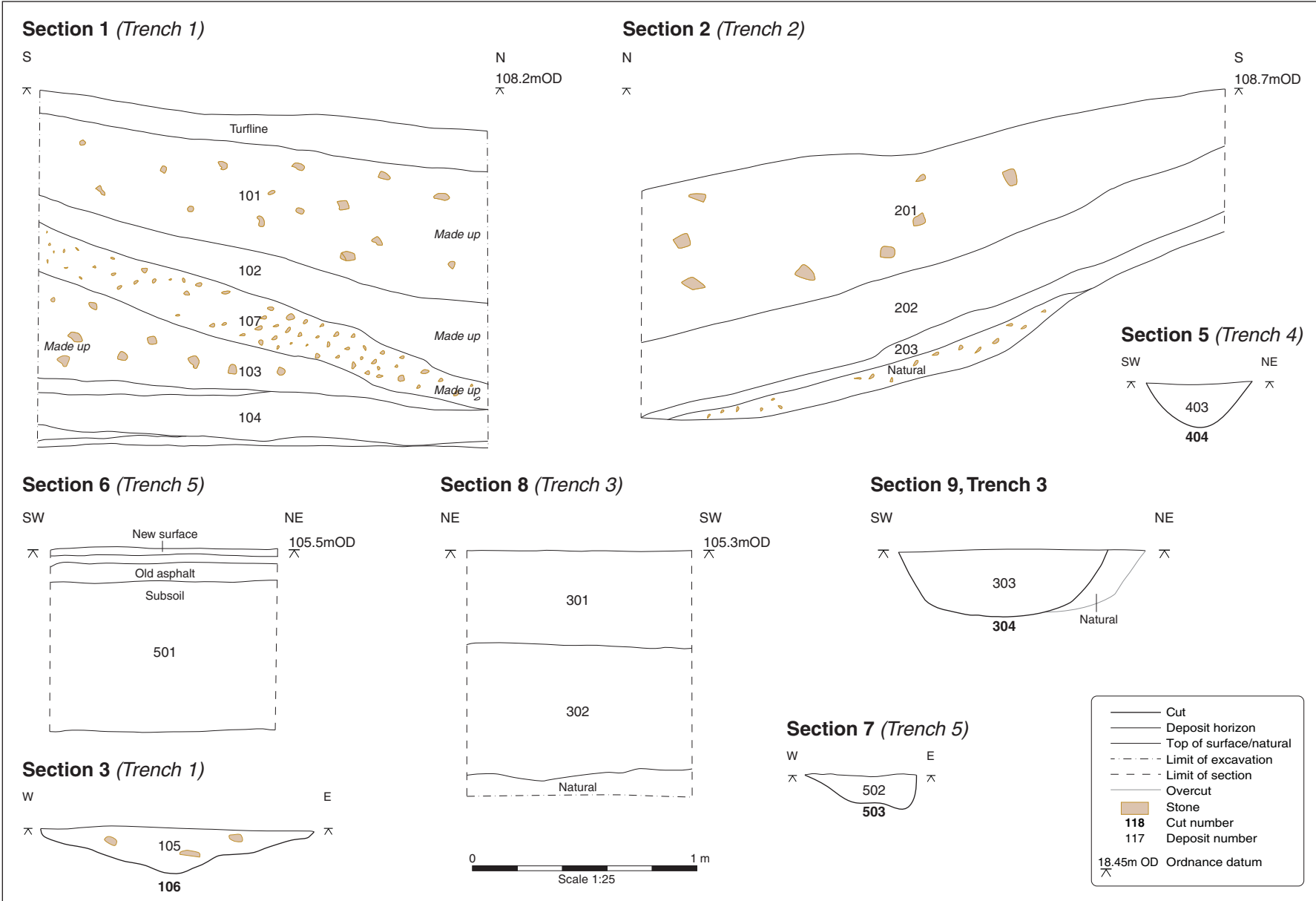


Figure 3: Selected sections of features recorded in the evaluation trenches

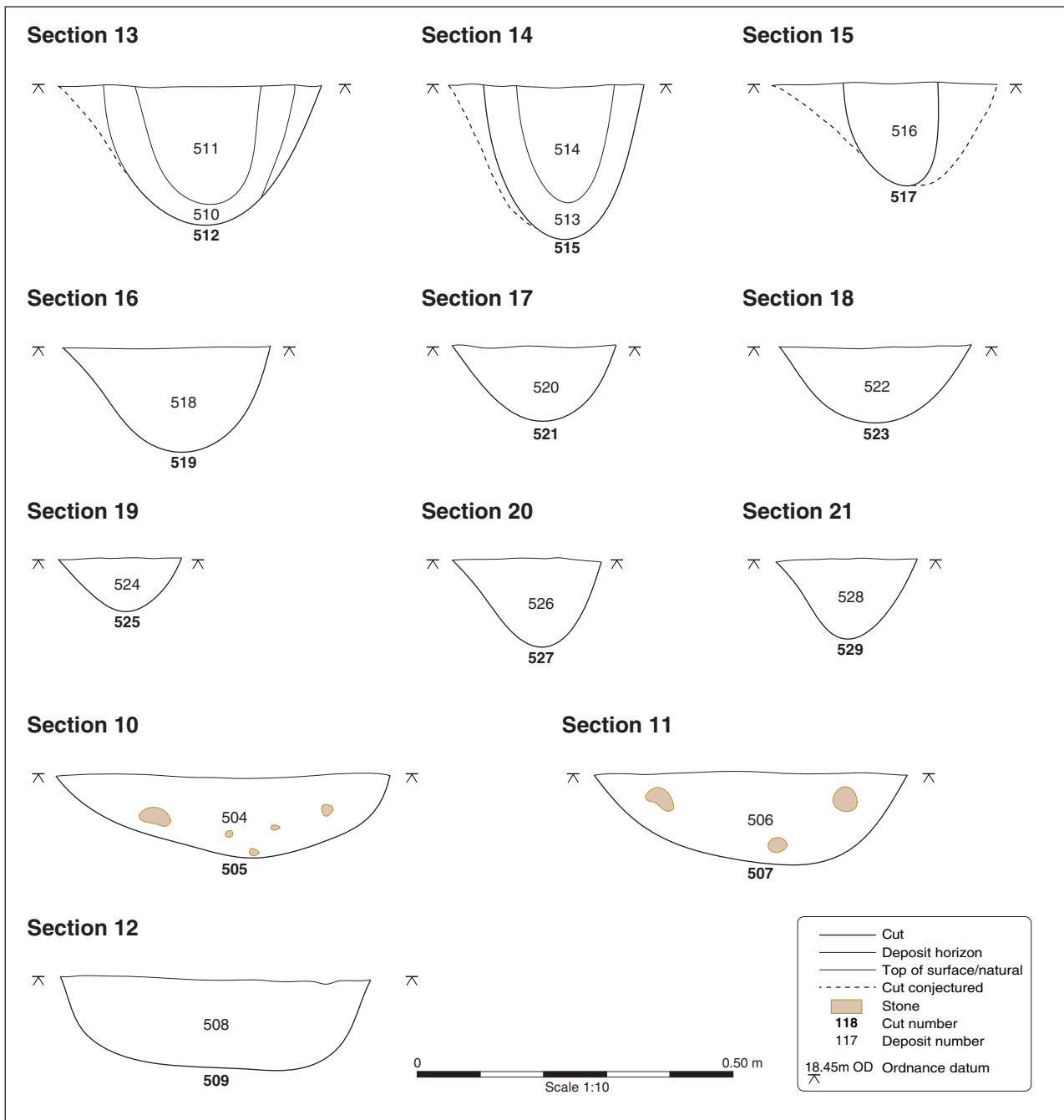


Figure 4: Sections of post holes and linear ditch feature



Plate 1: Trench 1 looking east



Plate 2: West facing section in Trench 2



Plate 3: Tree bowl. Feature 106



Plate 4: Trench 2 looking northwest



Plate 5: Section of baulk in Trench 2



Plate 6: Buried soil in Trench 1A



Plate 7: Trench 3 looking south-west



Plate 8: Trench 3. Feature 304



Plate 9: Trench 4 looking north-east



Plate 10: Feature **404** in Trench 4



Plate 11: Trench 4A looking north and showing truncation by modern services



Plate 12: Trench 5 looking north-east



Plate 13: South facing section of feature **503** in Trench 5



Plate 14: Detail of feature **503**



Plate 15: Trench 6



Plate 16: Natural geology in test pit 6



Plate 17: Excavation are being machine stripped



Plate 18: Area of concentrated post holes looking north-east



Plate 19: Group of post holes



Plate 20: Post hole 515



Plate 21: Ditch section 505



Plate 22: Iron Age ditch looking north



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