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Blenheim Net Zero Project, Woodstock, Oxfordshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Contents

List of Figures

List of Plates

Summary

Oxford Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation on the site of a proposed solar farm that forms part of the Blenheim Net Zero Project, Woodstock, Oxfordshire, in October 2020. The fieldwork was commissioned by Blenheim Estate in support of a planning application.

A preceding geophysical survey of the 12ha site undertaken in May 2020 detected a small number of anomalies of possible and probable archaeological origin. These were suggestive of successive trackways or field boundaries, a D-shaped enclosure and a ring ditch. The geophysical survey results also reflect numerous variations in the natural geology and modern agricultural land use activities.

A total of 66 trenches were investigated across an 8.9ha area of the site that will be directly impacted upon by the proposed development, the majority of which were targeted upon geophysical anomalies. Of these, seven trenches were found to contain archaeological remains comprising a small number of ditches and pits concentrated in the south of the site. A moderately good correlation between the results of the geophysical survey and archaeological evaluation was demonstrated.

A small quantity of worked flint and a pit containing broadly middle Bronze Age to early Iron Age pottery provides limited evidence of low-level prehistoric activity on site and within the surrounding landscape.

A series of parallel ditches appear to have delineated a trackway that crossed the south of the site on an ENE–WSW alignment. The offset nature of one of the ditches is suggestive of a different phase of the same trackway or perhaps an associated field boundary. No associated metalled surfaces were revealed by the evaluation. Small quantities of early and middle Roman pottery and animal bones provide evidence of deposition that may have been related to nearby settlement activity. Earthwork and cropmark evidence suggest that the trackway was connected to a nearby Roman farmstead (Scheduled Monument No. 1006357). The trackway perhaps formed part of a local network associated with Akeman Street located to the north, connecting nearby settlement and villa sites to the major Roman road.

Limited late post-medieval/modern remains are demonstrative of agricultural use of the landscape during this period.

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The project was managed for Oxford Archaeology by John Boothroyd. The fieldwork was directed by Lee Sparks, who was supported by Chris Richardson, Philip Terry and Edward Tolley. Survey and digitising were carried out by Matt Bradley and Marjaana Kohtamaki. Thanks are also extended to the teams of OA staff that cleaned and packaged the finds under the supervision of Leigh Allen, processed the environmental remains under the supervision of Rebecca Nicholson, and prepared the archive under the supervision of Nicola Scott.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of work

1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by Blenheim Estate to undertake a trial trench evaluation on the site of a proposed solar farm that forms part of the Blenheim Net Zero Project, Woodstock, Oxfordshire. A total of 66 trenches were excavated in October 2020 across the proposed development site, targeted upon anomalies identified by a preceding geophysical survey (MS 2020).

1.1.2 The work was undertaken in support of a planning application (planning ref. 20/01817/FUL). Although no formal brief for the work was requested, discussions between OA and Richard Oram, Lead Archaeologist for Oxfordshire County Council, established the scope of work required. A written scheme of investigation (WSI) was produced by OA outlining how OA would implement the specified requirements (OA 2020a).

1.1.3 All work was undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for archaeological Field Evaluation* (CIfA 2014) and local and national planning policies.

1.2 Location, topography and geology

1.2.1 The site lies approximately 1km to the north-west of Woodstock, Oxfordshire (NGR SP 45588 18056; Fig. 1). Roughly triangular in shape, the site covers an area of approximately 12ha. It is bounded to the east by the Banbury Road and to the north and west by arable fields.

1.2.2 The area of proposed development consists of a single arable field. The site is relatively flat, ranging from 99m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) in the southern corner, to 102m aOD in the north-west.

1.2.3 The geology of the area is mapped as largely limestone of the Cornbrash Formation, a sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 164 to 168 million years ago in the Jurassic Period, though a discrete area of Kellaways Clay Member mudstone is recorded in the north of the site (BGS 2020). No superficial deposits are recorded.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 The archaeological and historical background of the site has been described in detail in a desk-based assessment (DBA; OA 2020b) and will not be reproduced here. The following summary is provided to place the current works into context.

1.3.2 Palaeolithic and Mesolithic activity within the vicinity of the site is evidenced by scatters of flint tools. Two Neolithic long barrows are located approximately 900m to the east of the site, one identified on historic mapping and the other as a cropmark.

1.3.3 The remains of a later prehistoric/early Roman settlement have been identified through geophysical survey approximately 1km to the south of the site. Anomalies identified on site were interpreted as ditches forming a rectangular enclosure, together with pits suggestive of associated activity. A subsequent trial trench

evaluation confirmed the presence and date of remains, corresponding with the anomalies identified by the survey, together with a possible well and a cremation burial within the confines of the enclosure.

1.3.4 The most notable features within a 1km radius of the site are two designated heritage assets. Immediately adjacent to the site on the western boundary is Hensington rectangular earthwork (Scheduled Monument No. 1006357). The earthwork forms a rectangular enclosure measuring 100m by 100m with an east-facing entrance indicative of a Romano-British farmstead. Pottery recovered from the area has been dated to the Romano-British period and associated features, including a field system and possible trackway, are visible as cropmarks. The second designated heritage asset is the Roman villa site at Tackley (Scheduled Monument No. 1006346), which is located approximately 750m to the north of the proposed solar farm. The villa was first identified as a series of cropmarks located to the south of the Roman road known as Akeman Street. The cropmarks defined a street running between a number of visible structures, including a possible circular temple within a walled enclosure. A second structure was identified in the field to the south. The villa was partially investigated during the construction of a gas pipeline. The excavation determined that the villa was formed of four or five rooms with substantial wall footings and appeared to have been in use between the 1st and 3rd centuries AD. In additional to the villa, a number of pits containing inhumation burials were excavated.

1.3.5 Other Roman remains in the vicinity of the site include the routes of two Roman roads, Akeman Street and the Oxford Ridgeway. A possible Roman settlement has been identified through the recovery of Roman pottery and ceramic building material approximately 1km to the west of the site.

1.3.6 From the early medieval period onwards, the site appears to have been in agricultural use. Development within the landscape was focused to the south-west with the establishment and growth of Woodstock, which was first recorded in AD 1000.

Geophysical survey

1.3.7 A geophysical survey of the site was undertaken in May 2020 (MS 2020). The survey comprised a fluxgate gradiometer survey and encompassed the whole 12ha area. The survey identified a small number of anomalies indicative of possible and probable archaeological remains, including successive trackways or field boundaries, a D-shaped enclosure and a ring ditch, in the south of the site (Fig. 2). Anomalies relating to modern agricultural use and variations in the natural geology were also detected across the site.

2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

2.1.1 The project aims and objectives of the evaluation, as stated in the WSI (OA 2020a), were as follows:

i. To determine the presence or absence of any archaeological remains which may survive,
ii. To determine or confirm the approximate extent of any surviving remains,
iii. To determine the date range of any surviving remains by artefactual or other means,
iv. To determine the condition and state of preservation of any remains,
v. To determine the degree of complexity of any surviving horizontal or vertical stratigraphy,
vi. To assess the associations and implications of any remains encountered with reference to the historic landscape,
vii. To determine the potential of the site to provide palaeoenvironmental and/or economic evidence, and the forms in which such evidence may survive,
viii. To determine the implications of any remains with reference to economy, status utility and social activity, and
ix. To determine or confirm the likely range, quality and quantity of the artefactual evidence present.

2.1.2 Site-specific aims and objectives of the evaluation were:

i. To ground truth the results of the geophysical survey, including targeting potential archaeological features and areas suggested to be devoid of archaeological remains.
ii. If possible, establish how remains identified within the site may relate to Hensington rectangular earthwork and use the results of this evaluation to help refine our understanding of the monument, including its possible date.

2.1.3 The programme of archaeological investigation was also conducted within the general research parameters and objectives defined by the *Solent-Thames Research Framework for the Historic Environment* (Hey and Hind 2014).

2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 The trial trench evaluation was focused upon an 8.9ha area that will be directly impacted upon by the proposed development of the 12ha site. The evaluation comprised the excavation of 66 trenches in total, measuring *c* 30m long by *c* 1.9m wide, equating to a 4% sample of the proposed development area. The trenches were positioned in order to investigate anomalies identified by the preceding geophysical survey (Fig. 2).

2.2.2 The trenches were located in accordance with the WSI (OA 2020a) and laid out using a GPS with sub-15mm accuracy. The trenches were excavated using a tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket under direct archaeological supervision. Spoil was stored adjacent to, but at a safe distance from, the trench edges. Machining continued in even spits down to the top of the undisturbed natural

geological deposits or the first archaeological horizon, whichever was encountered first.

2.2.3 The exposed surfaces were sufficiently cleaned to establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains. As outlined in the WSI (OA 2020a), a sample of each feature or deposit type, for example pits, postholes and ditches, were excavated and recorded to resolve the principal aims of the evaluation.

2.2.4 All features and deposits were issued with unique context numbers, and context recording was completed in accordance with established best practice and the OA Field Manual. Small finds and samples were allocated unique numbers. Finds, where present, were retrieved and collated by context.

2.2.5 Spoil produced from machine excavation, the surface or archaeological features and spoil from hand excavation was scanned by a metal detector to enhance finds retrieval.

2.2.6 Bulk soil samples were collected from deposits judged in the field to have potential for the recovery of environmental remains (eg carbonised or waterlogged plant macrofossils) and/or small artefacts and faunal remains.

2.2.7 A full photographic record comprising digital photos was collated and all archaeological features, deposits and trenches were photographed. In addition, a number of photographs representative of the general work on site were taken.

2.2.8 Sections of features were drawn at a scale of 1:20 and 1m-wide sample sections of stratigraphy were drawn at a scale of 1:10. All section drawings were located on the plan.

2.2.9 Upon completion of the works and in agreement with the local planning archaeologist, Richard Oram, the trenches were backfilled with the arising in reverse order of excavation.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction and presentation of results

3.1.1 The results of the evaluation are presented below and include a stratigraphic description of the trenches that contained archaeological remains. The full details of all trenches with dimensions and depths of all deposits can be found in Appendix A. Trenches entirely devoid of archaeological remains are not discussed in any further detail. Finds data and spot dates are tabulated in Appendix B.

3.2 General soils and ground conditions

3.2.1 The soil sequence in the trenches was fairly uniform. The natural geology of yellowish and reddish brown sandy silts with cornbrash was overlain by a grey-brown silty loam topsoil, *c* 0.20–0.34m thick.

3.2.2 Ground conditions became increasingly wet and trenches flooded as the evaluation progressed, making excavation and recording very difficult. Archaeological features, where present, were easy to identify against the underlying natural geology.

3.3 General distribution of archaeological deposits

3.3.1 Archaeological features were present in only seven of the 66 excavated evaluation trenches (Fig. 2). A low density and low complexity of features was encountered, all of which were concentrated in the south of the site. The features present largely comprised ditches, with a small number of pits also revealed. None of the features were found to be inter-cutting.

3.4 Trench 46 (Fig. 3)

3.4.1 Trench 46 was roughly aligned N–S and located in the south-west of the site to investigate two linear geophysical anomalies interpreted to comprise the archaeological remains of a trackway or field boundaries (Plate 5). Two ditches were revealed within the trenches, directly corresponding with the geophysical survey results. Three sherds of Roman pottery, dating to AD 120–200, were recovered from topsoil 4600.

3.4.2 Ditch 4604 crossed the northern half of the trench on an ENE–WSW alignment. Measuring 1.08m wide and 0.70m deep, it had moderately steep sides and a flat base (Fig. 7, Section 4601). It contained a single brown sandy silt fill (4605) with frequent limestone inclusions, from which eight small fragments (weighing only 5g in total) of broadly middle Bronze Age to early Iron Age pottery were recovered. Bulk soil sample 1, collected from this fill, yielded a small quantity of charred plant remains, including a barley grain, as well as a few small fragments of charcoal and a large quantity of snails.

3.4.3 Located *c* 11.2m to the south was parallel ditch 4602, which measured 1.5m wide and 0.55m deep. It had a similar profile and single fill to ditch 4604 (Plate 6). Six sherds of broadly Roman (AD 43–410) pottery and six fragments of animal bone, including pieces of cattle mandible and teeth, were recovered from this ditch.

3.4.4 Both ditches 4602 and 4604 continued beyond the trench limits; their eastward continuations were recorded in Trench 47. Corresponding with the geophysical survey results, the ditches appear to delineate a trackway of Roman date. The prehistoric pottery recovered from ditch 4604 is considered to have been residual within the ditch, given the Roman dating evidence recovered from other excavated interventions of the trackway ditches.

3.5 Trench 47 (Fig. 3)

3.5.1 This trench was positioned on a roughly N–S alignment in the south-west of the site, targeted upon two linear geophysical anomalies interpreted as a trackway or field boundaries (Plate 7). Two ditches encountered within the trench corresponded with the position of the geophysical anomalies.

3.5.2 Crossing the northern half of the trench was ENE–WSW aligned ditch 4707, which was 1.38m wide and 0.48m deep. It had moderately steep sides and a slightly flat base, and contained a sequence of two fills (Plate 8). A single sherd of broadly Roman pottery was recovered from its lower fill (4708); its upper fill (4709) was devoid of finds. Forming the northern ditch of the trackway, the westward continuation of ditch 4707 was seen in Trench 46. Its eastward continuation was not seen in Trench 55, though a shallow ditch (5404) was recorded on a similar alignment further eastward in Trench 54 and may have formed part of the same trackway ditch.

3.5.3 Located approximately 8.75m to the south was parallel ditch 4702. Measuring 1.52m wide and 0.5m deep, it had similarly steep sides and a slightly flat base (Fig. 7, Section 4700). It contained three fills suggestive of natural slumping/erosion and infilling. Fifteen sherds of early Roman pottery (dating to AD 43–100) and a poorly preserved cattle tooth were recovered from secondary fill 4704. Bulk soil sample 2, collected from this fill, produced two charred weed seeds, few fragments of charcoal and a small quantity of snails. No finds were recovered from naturally accumulated fills 4703 and 4705. Continuations of ditch 4702, which demarcated the south of the trackway, were recorded in Trench 46 to the west and Trench 56 to the east.

3.6 Trench 50 (Fig. 4)

3.6.1 Trench 50 was located towards the south-east of the site, positioned on a roughly N–S alignment to investigate an area devoid of geophysical anomalies of possible archaeological origin, though the trench coincided with an area of geological variation detected by the geophysical survey.

3.6.2 A single subcircular pit (5002) was revealed towards the centre of the trench. Due to adverse weather conditions and flooding, the pit could not be fully excavated and recorded. Nevertheless, it measured approximately 0.35m long and 0.40m wide, and was estimated to be no more than *c* 0.20m deep. Three sherds of prehistoric pottery, broadly dating between the middle Bronze Age and early Iron Age, were recovered from its partially excavated fill. A bulk soil sample was also collected from this fill (sample 4) and yielded a relatively large quantity of charcoal, some of which may be oak, and a small number of snails. No charred plant remains were identified.

3.7 Trench 53 (Fig. 5)

3.7.1 This roughly N–S aligned trench was located in the south-east of the site (Plate 9), targeted upon four linear geophysical anomalies, of which two were interpreted to be of probable archaeological origin, one as the remains of a late post-medieval trackway depicted on 19th-century Ordnance Survey mapping and another indicative of modern ploughing activity. A single ditch was revealed within the trench that closely, but not directly, corresponded with the position of the northernmost anomaly targeted by the trench.

3.7.2 Crossing the north of the trench on an ENE–WSW alignment was ditch 5302, which had moderately sloping sides and a flat base, measuring 0.70m wide and 0.18m deep (Fig. 7, Section 5300; Plate 10). Its single fill contained a relatively large assemblage of animal bone, comprising 59 pieces, the majority of which are indeterminate fragments, though several cattle teeth were identified. Although no dating evidence was recovered, the ditch is considered to be Roman in date, having formed part of the trackway ditches; the probable westward continuation of ditch 5302 was recorded in Trench 54.

3.8 Trench 54 (Fig. 6)

3.8.1 Situated towards the south-east of the site, Trench 54 was positioned on a NW–SE alignment to investigate two linear geophysical anomalies suggestive of a trackway or field boundaries (Plate 11). Two shallow ditches were identified within the trench, closely but not directly corresponding with the position of the geophysical anomalies. Four sherds of late 19th-/20th-century pottery were recovered from topsoil 5400.

3.8.2 Ditch 5402 crossed the northern half of the trench on an ENE–WSW alignment. Measuring 0.60m wide and 0.09m deep, it had moderately sloping sides and a flat, albeit slightly uneven, base (Plate 12). Four sherds of broadly Roman pottery and eight fragments of animal bone, including cattle teeth, were retrieved from its single fill. The probable eastward continuation of ditch 5402 was recorded in Trench 53, though it was not seen to continue into Trench 55 to the west.

3.8.3 Located *c* 12.10m to the south-east was ditch 5404, which appeared to cross the trench on a slightly more WNW–ESE alignment. It was of similar dimension, measuring 0.55m wide and 0.08m deep, and had moderately steep sides and a flat base (Fig. 7, Section 5401). Its single fill was devoid of finds. Continuations of this ditch were not encountered in nearby trenches, though it possibly formed part of the same northern trackway ditch recorded in Trenches 46 and 47 to the west.

3.9 Trench 56 (Fig. 3)

3.9.1 Aligned N–S, Trench 56 was located towards the south-west of the site, targeted upon at least three linear geophysical anomalies of possible and probable archaeological origin, as well as an anomaly indicative of modern agricultural activity (Plate 13). A single ditch was revealed within the trench, correlating with the position of the geophysical anomaly interpreted to be of probable archaeological origin.

3.9.2 Ditch 5602 crossed the north end of the trench on an ENE–WSW alignment and formed the eastward continuation of the southern trackway ditch recorded in

Trenches 46 and 47. The ditch measured 1.96m wide and 0.94m deep, with moderately steep sides and a slightly flat base (Fig. 7, Section 5600; Plate 14). It contained a sequence of three fills suggestive of natural infilling and deliberate backfilling. The secondary fill, 5604, contained two sherds of broadly Roman pottery and a relatively large assemblage of animal bone, comprising 57 fragments, the majority of which are indeterminate fragments, though cattle teeth and two adjoining fragments of medium mammal tibia were identified.

3.10 Trench 57 (Fig. 6)

3.10.1 Trench 57 was located towards the south of the site and positioned on a roughly E–W alignment in order to investigate a sub-circular geophysical anomaly suggestive of a ring ditch with a central discrete anomaly, both of possible archaeological origin (Plate 15). Below-ground archaeological remains corresponding with the ring ditch anomaly were not identified within the trench; however, a large dark area, possibly a pit, broadly correlating with the plotted position of the discrete anomaly was revealed.

3.10.2 Possible pit 5702 was partially exposed within the east of the trench and continued beyond the north trench limit. It appeared to be sub-rectangular in plan, measuring 1.5m wide and 0.3m deep, with steep sides and a flat base (Fig. 7, Section 5700; Plate 6). It contained a grey-black sandy silt fill (5703) with burnt limestone inclusions, from which a piece of red deer antler was recovered. A flint bladelet of earlier prehistoric (Mesolithic to early Neolithic) date was retrieved from a bulk soil sample (3) collected from this fill, together with moderate quantities of charcoal and snails. No charred plant remains were identified.

3.11 Finds summary

3.11.1 A small quantity and limited range of finds were recovered during the evaluation. The majority of finds comprise animal bones in very poor condition. Most are indeterminate fragments, though many of the teeth could be identified to taxa, specifically cattle.

3.11.2 A small assemblage of pottery was recovered, with the majority dating to the Roman period. Other phases of activity are also represented by the pottery assemblage, dating to the middle Bronze Age to early Iron Age and the late post-medieval/modern period.

3.11.3 Two pieces of worked flint provide very limited additional evidence of prehistoric activity within the wider landscape.

3.11.4 A small quantity of charred plant remains was recovered from the site, the majority of which was indeterminate, though a single barley grain and a few weed seeds were identified. Moderate assemblages of snails and charcoal, some of which may be oak, were also present within the collected bulk soil samples.

4 DISCUSSION

4.1 Reliability of field investigation

4.1.1 The trenches provided a good coverage of the proposed development area of the site and were located to maximise the potential for exposing archaeological remains. The machining was generally carried out cleanly, providing good visibility of features and deposits in the evaluation trenches. However, the ground and site conditions deteriorated as the evaluation progressed due to wet weather and flooding.

4.1.2 The evaluation results demonstrate the presence of archaeological remains associated with prehistoric, Roman and late post-medieval/modern activity on site. The results of the evaluation are considered to have a true reflection of the archaeological potential of the site highlighted by the DBA (OA 2020b).

4.1.3 The evaluation confirmed the partial reliability of the geophysical survey results and established the archaeological origins of a small number of the targeted geophysical anomalies.

4.2 Evaluation objectives and results

4.2.1 The trial trench evaluation is considered to have achieved its general and site-specific aims (see above). The evaluation established and recorded the presence and extent of archaeological features and deposits in seven of the 66 trenches investigated. A low density and low complexity of features, comprising ditches and pits, were recorded. All archaeological features were concentrated in the southern part of the site. The artefacts recovered comprise small quantities of pottery and animal bones, together with a couple of pieces of worked flint.

4.2.2 The evaluation also established the reliability of the geophysical survey results (Fig. 2). The majority of evaluation trenches were positioned to investigate and verify the results of the preceding geophysical survey, though in fact only a small number of trenches were targeted upon the few linear and discrete geophysical anomalies interpreted to be of probable and possible archaeological origin. Most trenches were targeted upon geophysical anomalies interpreted to indicate geological variations and modern agricultural activities or anomalies that were of indeterminate origin; the last were not identified as below-ground remains. Although limited, the geophysical survey results had a moderately good correlation with the archaeological remains recorded within the evaluation trenches.

4.2.3 The broadly parallel ENE–WSW aligned linear anomalies in the south of the site, interpreted as a possible trackway or field boundaries, were encountered as below-ground archaeological remains within Trenches 46, 47, 53, 54 and 56 in the form of parallel ditches indicative of at least one phase of trackway. The shallow depths of the ditches identified in Trenches 53 and 54 probably account for the weak nature of some of the positive magnetic anomalies detected by the geophysical survey. Pottery recovered from these ditches largely dates to the Roman period, with some sherds being more closely dated to the early Roman period. A few small sherds of prehistoric pottery broadly dated to the middle Bronze Age to early Iron Age are considered

residual within the northern trackway ditch investigated in Trench 46. Sherds of middle Roman pottery were also residual within the topsoil in Trench 46.

4.2.4 A possible ring ditch with internal discrete feature were detected by the geophysical survey as weak positive anomalies and interpreted to be of possible archaeological origin. Targeted by Trench 57, the sub-circular anomaly was not proved to be of archaeological origin, though a possible pit containing burnt material was revealed within the trench corresponding with the discrete anomaly. Dating evidence recovered from the pit is limited to a single worked flint of earlier prehistoric (Mesolithic to early Neolithic) date, with a few fragments of animal bone also retrieved.

4.2.5 The only other archaeological feature encountered during the evaluation was a small pit in Trench 50, which had not been identified as a geophysical anomaly. Although only partially excavated and recorded due to adverse weather conditions and flooding, a small quantity of middle Bronze Age to early Iron Age pottery suggest that the pit was of prehistoric date.

4.3 Interpretation

4.3.1 Archaeological remains encountered during the evaluation comprised a low density and low complexity of ditches and pits. Where possible, the recorded archaeological features have been dated on the basis of the associated diagnostic artefacts and are discussed below by period.

Prehistoric

4.3.2 The recovery of a very small quantity of worked flint provides evidence of a limited and perhaps transitory presence in the wider landscape during the prehistoric period. A possible pit excavated in Trench 57 contained burnt material from which animal bone and a probable Mesolithic or early Neolithic worked flint were recovered. It is unclear if the flint reflects the date of the pit or was residual within its fill. Nevertheless, the flint is suggestive of earlier prehistoric activity on site or at least within the vicinity.

4.3.3 Evidence of other prehistoric activity is limited to a single pit in Trench 50, which was only partially excavated due to flooding, and a small quantity of residual pottery in the northern Roman trackway ditch excavated in Trench 46. These remains are suggestive of low-level activity on site of broadly middle Bronze age to early Iron Age date, though an early Iron Age date may be more likely. A residual worked flint of possible later prehistoric date recovered from the topsoil in Trench 58 may have be related to this phase of activity.

Roman

4.3.4 The next substantive phase of activity occurred during the Roman period, with no clear evidence of continued occupation of the site from the early Iron Age. The majority of archaeological features revealed by the evaluation date to this phase of activity and comprise parallel ditches that demarcated a trackway on an ENE–WSW alignment. The trackway appears to have extended across the site for *c* 217m as suggested by the geophysical survey results. The ditches recorded in Trenches 46, 47, 56 and the southern ditch in Trench 54 appear to have formed the main ditches flanking the

trackway. A similar ditch further to the north, excavated across Trenches 53 and 54, may represent a different phase of the same trackway or perhaps an associated field boundary. Although the finds assemblages recovered from the trackway ditches are limited in both quantity and variety, slight concentrations of greater quantities of pottery and animal bones may be suggestive of specific episodes of waste deposition. The charred plant remains are also suggestive of nearby settlement activity. The dating of the Roman pottery suggests that activity took place in the early and middle Roman periods, though some sherds could only be more broadly dated.

4.3.5 Metalled deposits suggestive of a trackway surface were not revealed within the evaluation trenches. However, the proximity of the trackway to the Cirencester to Alchester section of the Roman road known as Akeman Street, together with the presence of samian ware within the trackway ditches, suggests that it formed part of a local network that was connected to the nearby main road. The proximity of a scheduled Roman villa site to the north (Scheduled Monument No. 1006346), which appears to have been occupied between the 1st and 3rd centuries, perhaps also demonstrates the well-connected nature of this area of the landscape.

4.3.6 No archaeological features indicative of associated Roman settlement or agricultural activity were revealed by the evaluation. It is possible, however, that Roman occupation activity was focused just to the west of the site, where the location of a Roman farmstead, in the form of a rectangular enclosure and associated field system is suggested by the scheduled Hensington earthwork (Scheduled Monument No. 1006357) and associated cropmark evidence (OA 2020b). The cropmark evidence also suggests that the trackway ditches encountered on the current site continued westwards towards the probable farmstead.

Post-medieval–modern

4.3.7 No clear features indicative of continued activity between the Roman period and modern era were identified within the evaluation trenches. The site falls within an extant field, with existing boundaries forming the site limits. Late 19th- and 20th-century Ordnance Survey mapping shows that the layout and agricultural nature of the site and the wider landscape has changed little during the late post-medieval and modern periods. Post-medieval and modern agricultural activities are considered to have resulted in the deposition of a few sherds of late 19th-/20th-century pottery within the topsoil in Trench 54.

4.4 Significance

4.4.1 The evaluation has identified archaeological remains indicative of a concentrated area of activity in the south of the site. Although limited, the pottery and flint assemblages collected during the evaluation provide evidence of a multi-period site with activity dating to the prehistoric (particularly the middle Bronze Age to early Iron Age), Roman and late post-medieval/modern periods.

4.4.2 The middle Bronze Age to early Iron Age pit and possible earlier prehistoric pit, together with the worked flint, are of limited local significance. The general paucity of prehistoric remains revealed by the evaluation corresponds with the limited evidence

identified within the wider landscape. Nevertheless, the evaluation results demonstrate a low level of activity within the landscape during the prehistoric period.

4.4.3 Although limited in extent, the Roman remains revealed by the evaluation are of local significance, adding to the known evidence of Roman activity within the landscape. The ditches recorded in the south of the site are indicative of a Roman trackway that appears to have continued westwards towards a Roman farmstead as indicated by the Hensington earthwork (Scheduled Monument No. 1006357) and cropmark evidence. Whilst no features suggestive of settlement and agricultural activity relating to the Hensington farmstead were revealed within the excavated evaluation trenches, the early and middle Roman pottery recovered from the site may potentially reflect a similar date of occupation for the nearby settlement activity. This also corresponds with the dating of the Roman villa site (Scheduled Monument No. 1006346) to the north of the site. Together this evidence has some potential to inform on the context and character of Roman settlement and associated local road/trackway networks within this location of the landscape.

4.4.4 The evidence of late post-medieval/modern agricultural activities on site, limited to a few sherds of pottery in topsoil deposits, is of little significance. The lack of remains demonstrate the agricultural use of the landscape during this time, supporting the historic mapping of the area.

APPENDIX A TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1							
General description						**Orientation**	NE-SW
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.27
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
100	Layer			0.27	Topsoil. Grey-brown silty loam with rare stones		
101	Layer				Natural. Red-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 2							
General description						**Orientation**	E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural.						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.28
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
200	Layer			0.28	Topsoil. Light grey brown silty loam		
201	Layer				Natural. Red-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 3							
General description						**Orientation**	E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural. 1x linear 1x pit/tt						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.24
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
300	Layer			0.24	Topsoil. Grey-brown silty loam		
301	Layer				Natural. Yellow-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 4							
General description						**Orientation**	N-S
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.3
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
400	Layer			0.3	Natural. Grey-brown silty loam		

401	Layer				Natural. Yellow-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 5							
General description						**Orientation**	E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.26
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
500	Layer			0.26	Topsoil. Grey-brown silty loam with rare stones		
501	Layer				Natural. Red-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 6							
General description						**Orientation**	N-S
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.27
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
600	Layer			0.27	Topsoil. Grey-brown silty loam with rare stones		
601	Layer				Natural. Red-brown silty sand with cornbrash		

Trench 7							
General description						**Orientation**	N-S
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.27
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
700	Layer			0.27	Topsoil. Grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
701	Layer				Natural. Red-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 8							
General description						**Orientation**	E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.2
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**

800	Layer			0.2	Topsoil. Grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
801	Layer				Natural. Yellow-grey sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 9							
General description						**Orientation**	N-S
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.26
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
900	Layer			0.26	Topsoil. Light grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
901	Layer				Natural. Yellow-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 10							
General description						**Orientation**	NE-SW
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.25
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
1000	Layer			0.25	Topsoil. Grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
1001	Layer				Natural. Brown sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 11							
General description						**Orientation**	N-S
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.28
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
1100	Layer			0.28	Topsoil. Grey-brown silty loam with rare stones		
1101	Layer				Natural. Yellow-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 12							
General description						**Orientation**	E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.26

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1200	Layer			0.26	Topsoil. Light grey-brown silty loam with rare stones		
1201	Layer				Natural. Red-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 13							
General description						**Orientation**	E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.28
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
1300	Layer			0.28	Topsoil. Grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
1301	Layer				Natural. Orange-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 14							
General description						**Orientation**	N-S
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.28
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
1400	Layer			0.28	Topsoil. Grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
1401	Layer				Natural. Red-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 15							
General description						**Orientation**	E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.26
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
1500	Layer			0.26	Topsoil. Grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
1501	Layer				Natural. Red-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 16							
General description						**Orientation**	NE-SW
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9

						Avg. depth (m)	0.27
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
1600	Layer			0.27	Topsoil. Light grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
1601	Layer				Natural. Yellow-grey sandy silts with cornbrash		
Trench 17							
General description						**Orientation**	E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.25
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
1700	Layer			0.25	Topsoil. Grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
1701	Layer				Natural. Yellow-brown silty sands with cornbrash		
Trench 18							
General description						**Orientation**	N-S
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.26
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
1800	Layer			0.26	Topsoil. Grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
1801	Layer				Natural. Yellow-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		
Trench 19							
General description						**Orientation**	E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.26
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
1900	Layer			0.26	Topsoil. Light grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
1901	Layer				Natural. Yellow-grey sandy silts with cornbrash and patches of red-brown silty sands and cornbrash		

Trench 20							
General description					**Orientation**		N-S
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural					**Length (m)**		30
					Width (m)		1.9
					Avg. depth (m)		0.22
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
2000	Layer			0.22	Topsoil. Grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
2001	Layer				Natural. Red-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 21							
General description					**Orientation**		E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural					**Length (m)**		30
					Width (m)		1.9
					Avg. depth (m)		0.25
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
2100	Layer			0.25	Topsoil. Light grey-brown silty loam		
2101	Layer				Natural. Orange-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 22							
General description					**Orientation**		N-S
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural					**Length (m)**		30
					Width (m)		1.9
					Avg. depth (m)		0.25
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
2200	Layer			0.25	Topsoil. Light grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
2201	Layer				Natural. Yellow-grey sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 23							
General description					**Orientation**		N-S
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural					**Length (m)**		30
					Width (m)		1.9
					Avg. depth (m)		0.3
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
2300	Layer			0.3	Topsoil. Grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
2301	Layer				Natural. Red-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 24							
General description					**Orientation**		E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural					**Length (m)**		30
					Width (m)		1.9
					Avg. depth (m)		0.24
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
2400	Layer			0.24	Topsoil. Grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
2401	Layer				Natural. Red-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		
Trench 25							
General description					**Orientation**		E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural					**Length (m)**		30
					Width (m)		1.9
					Avg. depth (m)		0.27
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
2500	Layer			0.27	Topsoil. Grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
2501	Layer				Natural. Orange-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		
Trench 26							
General description					**Orientation**		N-S
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural					**Length (m)**		30
					Width (m)		1.9
					Avg. depth (m)		0.24
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
2600	Layer			0.24	Topsoil. Grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
2601	Layer				Natural. Red-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		
Trench 27							
General description					**Orientation**		E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural					**Length (m)**		30
					Width (m)		1.9
					Avg. depth (m)		0.23
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
2700	Layer			0.23	Topsoil. Grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		

2701	Layer				Natural. Yellow-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 28							
General description						**Orientation**	N-S
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.25
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
2800	Layer			0.25	Topsoil. Grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
2801	Layer				Natural. Red-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 29							
General description						**Orientation**	NW-SE
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.27
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
2900	Layer			0.27	Topsoil. Light grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
2901	Layer				Natural. Yellow-grey sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 30							
General description						**Orientation**	E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.24
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
3000	Layer			0.24	Topsoil. Grey-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		
3001	Layer				Natural. Yellow-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 31							
General description						**Orientation**	NE-SW
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.24
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**

3100	Layer			0.24	Topsoil. Grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
3101	Layer				Natural. Orange-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 32							
General description						**Orientation**	N-S
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.3
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
3200	Layer			0.3	Topsoil. Grey-brown silty loam with rare stones		
3201	Layer				Natural. Orange-brown sandy silts		

Trench 33							
General description						**Orientation**	N-S
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.27
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
3300	Layer			0.27	Topsoil. Grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
3301	Layer				Natural. Yellow-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 34							
General description						**Orientation**	E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.28
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
3400	Layer			0.28	Topsoil. Grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
3401	Layer				Natural. Red-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 35							
General description						**Orientation**	NE-SW
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.28

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
3500	Layer			0.28	Topsoil. Grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
3501	Layer				Natural. Orange-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 36							
General description					**Orientation**		NW-SE
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural					**Length (m)**		30
					Width (m)		1.9
					Avg. depth (m)		0.25
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
3600	Layer			0.24	Topsoil. Dark grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
3601	Layer				Natural. Light yellow-brown sandy silts with cornbrash and patches of red brown silty clay		

Trench 37							
General description					**Orientation**		E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural					**Length (m)**		30
					Width (m)		1.9
					Avg. depth (m)		0.28
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
3700	Layer			0.26	Topsoil. Dark grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
3701	Layer				Natural. Light yellow-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 38							
General description					**Orientation**		E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural					**Length (m)**		30
					Width (m)		1.9
					Avg. depth (m)		0.28
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
3800	Layer			0.29	Topsoil. Dark grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
3801	Layer				Natural. Light yellow-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		

					and patches of red brown silty clay		
Trench 39							
General description						**Orientation**	E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.27
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
3900	Layer			0.27	Topsoil. Dark grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
3901	Layer				Natural. Yellow-brown sandy silts with cornbrash and patches of red-brown silty clay		
Trench 40							
General description						**Orientation**	E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.28
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
4000	Layer			0.28	Topsoil. Grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
4001	Layer				Natural. Orange-brown sandy silts with cornbrash and patches of red brown silty clay		
Trench 41							
General description						**Orientation**	N-S
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.27
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
4100	Layer			0.29	Topsoil. Dark grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
4101	Layer				Natural. Yellow-brown sandy silts with cornbrash and patches of red brown silty clay		
Trench 42							

General description						Orientation	N-S
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						Length (m)	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.28
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
4200	Layer			0.28	Topsoil. Dark grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
4201	Layer				Natural. Light yellow-brown sandy silts with cornbrash and patches of red-brown silty clay		

Trench 43							
General description						Orientation	NE-SW
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						Length (m)	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
4300	Layer			0.3	Topsoil. Dark grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
4301	Layer				Natural. Red-brown sandy silts with cornbrash and patches of light brown sandy silts		

Trench 44							
General description						Orientation	E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						Length (m)	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.24
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
4400	Layer			0.24	Topsoil. Grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
4401	Layer				Natural. Red-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 45							
General description						Orientation	N-S
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						Length (m)	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.28
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**

4500	Layer			0.28	Topsoil. Grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
4501	Layer				Natural. Red-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 46

General description	**Orientation**	N-S
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural. 2x ditches (trackway)	**Length (m)**	30
	Width (m)	1.9
	Avg. depth (m)	0.25

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
4600	Layer			0.25	Topsoil. Friable, dark brown silty loan with frequent stones	Pot	AD 120–200 (residual)
4601	Layer				Natural. Red-brown sandy cornbrash		
4602	Cut		1.5	0.55	Ditch. Southern trackway ditch		
4603	Fill	4602	1.5	0.55	Deliberate Backfill	Pot	Rom
4604	Cut		1.08	0.7	Ditch. Northern trackway ditch		
4605	Fill	4604	1.08	0.7	Deliberate Backfill	Pot	MBA–EIA

Trench 47

General description	**Orientation**	N-S
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural. 2x ditches (trackway)	**Length (m)**	30
	Width (m)	1.9
	Avg. depth (m)	0.26

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
4700	Layer			0.26	Topsoil. Friable, dark brown silty loam		
4701	Layer				Natural. Yellow-brown gravelly sands with frequent red-brown cornbrash patches		
4702	Cut		1.52	0.5	Ditch. Southern trackway ditch		
4703	Fill	4702		0.12	Primary Fill		
4704	Fill	4702		0.38	Primary Fill	Pot	AD 43–100
4705	Fill	4702		0.12	Primary Fill		
4706	Void						
4707	Cut		1.38	0.48	Ditch. Northern trackway ditch		
4708	Fill	4707		0.36	Primary Fill	Pot	Roman
4709	Fill	4707		0.12	Secondary Fill		

Trench 48

General description	Orientation	E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.9
	Avg. depth (m)	0.26

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
4800	Layer			0.26	Topsoil. Dark grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
4801	Layer				Natural. Light yellow-brown sandy silts with cornbrash and patches of red-brown silty clay		

Trench 49

General description	Orientation	E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.9
	Avg. depth (m)	0.3

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
4900	Layer			0.29	Topsoil. Dark grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
4901	Layer				Natural. Yellow-brown sandy silts with cornbrash and patches of red-brown silty clay		

Trench 50

General description	Orientation	N-S
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural. 1 X pit	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.9
	Avg. depth (m)	0.28

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
5000	Layer			0.31	Topsoil. Dark grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
5001	Layer				Natural. Orange-brown silty clay with cornbrash		
5002	Cut		0.35		Pit. Unexcavated due to wet conditions		
5003	Fill		0.4		Secondary Fill. Unexcavated fill of pit	Pot	MBA–EIA

Trench 51							
General description						**Orientation**	N-S
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.27
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
5100	Layer			0.26	Topsoil. Dark grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
5101	Layer				Natural. Orange-brown silty clay and red-brown silty clay with cornbrash and manganese flecks		

Trench 52							
General description						**Orientation**	NW-SE
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.26
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
5200	Layer			0.26	Topsoil. Dark grey-brown silty loam with moderate stone		
5201	Layer				Natural. Yellow-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 53							
General description						**Orientation**	N-S
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.3
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
5300	Layer			0.3	Topsoil. Friable dark brown silty loam		
5301	Layer				Natural. Yellow clayey silts with cornbrash		
5302	Cut		0.70	0.18	Ditch		
5303	Fill	5302			Primary Fill		

Trench 54							
General description						**Orientation**	NW-SE
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.32

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
5400	Layer			0.3	Topsoil. Friable dark brown silty clay	Pot	
5401	Layer				Natural. Yellow clayey silts with cornbrash		
5402	Cut		0.60	0.09	Ditch		
5403	Fill	5402			Secondary Fill	Pot, animal bone	Roman
5404	Cut		0.55	0.08	Ditch		
5405	Fill	5404			Secondary Fill		

Trench 55

General description	Orientation	N-S
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.9
	Avg. depth (m)	0.24

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
5500	Layer			0.24	Topsoil. Friable dark brown silty clay		
5501	Layer				Natural. Red-brown cornbrash with yellow sandy patches		

Trench 56

General description	Orientation	N-S
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural. 1x trackway ditch	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.9
	Avg. depth (m)	0.26

Context No.	Type	Fill Of	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
5600	Layer			0.26	Topsoil. Friable, dark brown silty loam		
5601	Layer				Natural. Yellow gravels with frequent red-brown cornbrash patches		
5602	Cut		1.96	0.94	Ditch. Trackway ditch		
5603	Fill	5602		0.28	Deliberate Backfill		
5604	Fill	5602		0.48	Deliberate Backfill	Pot	Roman
5605	Fill	5602		0.18	Secondary Fill		

Trench 57

General description	Orientation	E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural. Dark (modern?) patch/dump – possible pit	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.9

						Avg. depth (m)	0.27
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
5700	Layer			0.27	Topsoil. Friable dark brown silty clay		
5701	Layer				Natural. Compact red-brown cornbrash		
5702	Cut		1.5	0.3	Pit. Unknown feature, recorded as pit		
5703	Fill	5702	1.5	0.3	Secondary Fill. Dark blackened limestone lumps within fill. Grey sandy silts	Animal bone, flint	
Trench 58							
General description						**Orientation**	E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.28
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
5800	Layer			0.28	Topsoil. Friable dark brown silty loam		
5801	Layer				Natural. Yellow-orange sandy loam with frequent cornbrash		
Trench 59							
General description						**Orientation**	N-S
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.24
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
5900	Layer			0.24	Topsoil. Friable dark brown silty clay		
5901	Layer				Natural. Yellow sandy silts with frequent cornbrash		
Trench 60							
General description						**Orientation**	N-S
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.28
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
6000	Layer			0.28	Topsoil. Dark brown silty loam		

6001	Layer				Natural. Reddish brown sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 61							
General description						**Orientation**	E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.34
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
6100	Layer			0.34	Topsoil. Grey-brown silty loam		
6101	Layer				Natural. Red-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 62							
General description						**Orientation**	N-S
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.26
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
6200	Layer			0.26	Topsoil. Grey-brown silty loam		
6201	Layer				Natural. Yellow-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 63							
General description						**Orientation**	N-S
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.25
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
6300	Layer			0.25	Topsoil. Grey-brown silty loam		
6301	Layer				Natural. Yellow-brown sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 64							
General description						**Orientation**	E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural						**Length (m)**	30
						Width (m)	1.9
						Avg. depth (m)	0.3
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**

6400	Layer			0.3	Topsoil. Dark brown silty loam		
6401	Layer				Natural. Reddish brown silty sands with frequent cornbrash		

Trench 65							
General description					**Orientation**		NNW-SSE
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural					**Length (m)**		30
					Width (m)		1.9
					Avg. depth (m)		0.26
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
6500	Layer			0.26	Topsoil. Dark brown silty loam		
6501	Layer				Natural. Yellow-orange sandy silts with cornbrash		

Trench 66							
General description					**Orientation**		E-W
Trench consists of topsoil overlying natural					**Length (m)**		30
					Width (m)		1.9
					Avg. depth (m)		0.26
Context No.	**Type**	**Fill Of**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
6600	Layer			0.26	Topsoil. Brown silty loam		
6601	Layer				Natural. Red-brown clayey silts with cornbrash		

APPENDIX B FINDS REPORTS

B.1 Prehistoric pottery

By Alex Davies

B.1.1 The evaluation recovered 11 sherds (36g) of prehistoric pottery from two contexts over two trenches (Table 1). Both contexts probably date to the same period. This is most likely to be the early Iron Age, but a middle or late Bronze Age date is possible.

B.1.2 There are no diagnostic sherds, although the sherds recovered from pit fill 5003 are from a base. Dating is reliant on fabric, and all the sherds contain shell. The extensive excavations at nearby Yarnton provide the best comparative material. Shelly fabrics are common at Yarnton in the middle Bronze Age, declining but still present in the late Bronze Age, becoming common again in the early Iron Age (Booth 2011, 354–8; Hey *et al*. 2016, fig. 4.1). The coarser sherds from pit fill 5003 could belong to either the middle–late Bronze Age or early Iron Age, although the medium-grade sherds from ditch fill 4605 are more comfortably early Iron Age in date. Overall, the small assemblage makes certain phasing impossible, although an early Iron Age date is favoured.

Context	Sherds	Weight (g)	Fabric	Spot date	Comment
4605	8	5	Shell, med	MBA-EIA	Probably EIA
5003	3	31	Shell, coarse	MBA-EIA	Base sherds

Table 1: Prehistoric pottery assemblage

B.2 Roman pottery

By Edward Biddulph

Introduction

B.2.1 A total of 31 sherds of pottery, weighing 384g, were recovered from the evaluation. Each context group was sorted into fabrics, which were quantified by sherd count and weight in grams. Forms were identified by rim and quantified by minimum number of vessels (MV) and estimated vessel equivalents (EVE), which measure the surviving percentage of the rim circumference (thus, 0.25 EVE equals 25%). Forms and fabrics were assigned codes from OA's pottery recording system (Booth, nd). A summary of the pottery is provided in Table 2. The following fabrics were encountered (codes in brackets from Tomber and Dore 1998):

- E80 – Grog-tempered ware (SOB GT)
- O10 – Fine oxidised ware
- O80 – Coarse tempered oxidised ware
- R10 – Fine reduced ware
- R30 – Medium sandy reduced ware
- R90 – Coarse tempered reduced ware
- S30 – Central Gaulish samian ware (LEZ SA 2)

- S – Indeterminate samian wares

B.2.2 In addition, the following forms were noted:

- C – jar
- CD – medium mouthed jar
- CH – bead-rimmed jar
- E – beaker
- I – bowl or dish

Context	Fabric	No. of sherds	Weight (g)	Type	EVE	Spot date
4600	S30	1	3	I	0.05	AD 120-200
	S	1	1			
	O10	1	4	E	0.05	
4603	R30	2	8			AD 43-410
	O80	4	74			
4704	R30	3	4			AD 43-100
	R90	4	122	CD	0.2	
	E80	5	22			
	E80	3	14	C	0.1	
4708	R10	1	2	C	0.05	AD 43-410
5403	R30	3	72			AD 43-410
	R30	1	34			
5604	R30	2	24			AD 43-410
Total		31	384	MV = 5	0.45	

Table 2: Quantification of the Roman pottery by context

Assemblage composition

B.2.3 The earliest context group was 4704, a fill of ditch 4702. Grog-tempered ware (E80) in association with Roman-period sandy ware (R30) places deposition in the mid to late 1st century AD or later. Pottery supply in the 2nd century or later is indicated by the presence of Central Gaulish samian ware in the topsoil of Trench 46 (context 4600). The vessel's form is uncertain, but a Drag. 18/31 or Drag. 31 dish are possibilities. The remaining context groups – from context 4603 (fill of ditch 4602), 4708 (fill of ditch 4707), 5403 (fill of ditch 5402) and 5604 (fill of ditch 5602) – comprised undiagnostic reduced wares and, in group 4603, oxidised fabric O80 (belonging to a storage jar). These are broadly dated to the Roman period (*c* AD 43-410).

B.2.4 Apart from the samian ware dish or bowl, forms identified by rim are confined to jars and a single beaker. A base of another beaker was recorded in fabric R30, recovered from context 5403. A body sherd in fabric E80 from context 4704 has a burnt (?food) residue on its interior surface and belonged to a cooking vessel, presumably a jar, although the precise form is unknown.

Chronological summary

B.2.5 The pottery points to activity of early and middle Roman date at or close to the site. While the date ranges of some context groups extend to the end of the Roman period, there is no firm indication from current evidence of late Roman (*c* AD 240/50+) activity.

Condition and distribution

B.2.6 The condition of the pottery is mixed. The mean sherd weight (MSW; weight divided by the number of sherds) is 12g, while the mean rim percentage or mean EVE (EVE divided by MV) is 0.09 EVE. This is consistent with a generally fragmented assemblage of small sherds, although larger pieces are present. Mean sherd weights per context group range from 2g in context 4708 to 27g in context 5403 and, in context group 4704, some 20% (0.2 EVE) of the rim of a jar survived.

B.2.7 Pottery was recovered from trenches (46, 47, 54 and 55) targeting the flanking ditches of a trackway, which extended across the site on an ENE–WSW orientation. Though the assemblage is small, larger amounts of pottery were recovered from Trenches 46 and 47, suggesting that deposition was concentrated close to the south-western edge of the site. The condition of the pottery suggests that the material had undergone several episodes of redeposition, but the larger fragments do not preclude the possibility that the pottery was recovered relatively close to areas of pottery use and initial discard.

Status

B.2.8 The assemblage is too small to provide a reliable picture of site type or status, but the presence of samian ware indicates that the local population had access to wider trade networks, perhaps benefitting from the proximity of Akeman Street, or through the villa that is situated *c* 750 to the north of the site.

B.3 Post-Roman pottery

By John Cotter

Introduction and methodology

B.3.1 A total of four sherds of pottery, weighing 43g, were recovered from a single context. Given the small quantity present, this has not been separately catalogued but is fully described below. Post-medieval fabric codes referred to are those of the Museum of London (MOLA 2014).

Description

B.3.2 **Context (5400) Spot-date: *c* 1875-1950**. Description: 4 sherds (weight 43g). All in post-medieval red earthenware (Fabric PMR). Fairly small, abraded sherds from a minimum of 4 vessels. These comprise two body sherds from flowerpots, one in a pink non-local fabric typical of the late 19th and 20th centuries. There is also one sherd from an unglazed jug/jar handle and one sherd from a jar/bowl with a late-looking brown glaze internally. All four pieces are of broadly similar date.

Recommendations regarding the conservation, discard and retention of material

B.3.3 The pottery here has very little potential for further analysis and could be discarded if so desired.

B.4 Flint

By Michael Donnelly

Introduction and methodology

B.4.1 The evaluation yielded just two struck flints that were found over two separate contexts, comprising a bladelet from bulk soil sample 3, collected from pit fill 5703, and a flake from topsoil 5800 (Table 3).

B.4.2 The artefacts were catalogued according to OA's standard system of broad artefact/debitage type (Anderson-Whymark 2013; Bradley 1999), with general condition noted and dating attempted where possible. The assemblage was catalogued directly onto an Open Office spreadsheet. During the assessment, additional information on condition (rolled, abraded, fresh and degree of cortication), and state of the artefact (burnt, broken or visibly utilised) was also recorded. Retouched pieces were classified according to standard morphological descriptions (eg Bamford 1985, 72–7; Healy 1988, 48–9; Bradley 1999). Technological attribute analysis was initially undertaken and included the recording of butt and termination type (Inizan *et al*. 1999), flake type (Harding 1990), hammer mode (Onhuma and Bergman 1982), and the presence of platform edge abrasion.

Discussion

B.4.3 The bladelet from context 5703 (sample 3) is a soft-hammer struck example with an abraded platform margin and is very probably Mesolithic or early Neolithic in date. It is heavily corticated and exhibits edge damage and was likely to have been heavily reworked from its primary depositional context. The flake recovered from topsoil 5800 is a very crude example from the early stages of core shaping and may well be later prehistoric in date.

B.4.4 The results of this evaluation suggest only very limited flint-related activity here. The early prehistoric element may simply reflect a very limited knapping event or re-tooling episode by a mobile person or group passing through this locality. The flake indicates a minimal amount of core working during any period, most likely later prehistory, but perhaps even during the Roman or medieval periods. Such later flint working may have involved the shaping of flint nodules for use in construction, such as walls or foundations.

B.4.5 Although the results of this evaluation have been poor, any further work in this part of the evaluation area should take into account the possibility of encountering flint-rich deposits, particularly early prehistoric contexts such as buried soil or pit clusters that are difficult to identify during evaluations.

Context	Type	Sub-type	Notes	Date
5703	Bladelet	Inner	Heavily patinated soft-hammer bladelet with edge abrasion, Mesolithic or early Neolithic	EPH
5800	Flake	Misc trimming	Very poor quality flake with random flaking pattern, possibly later Prehistoric	?LPH

Table 3: Flint assemblage

APPENDIX C ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS

C.1 Environmental samples

By Sharon Cook

Introduction

C.1.1 Four samples were collected during the evaluation in order to evaluate the presence and condition of palaeoenvironmental remains and to establish whether any artefacts were present (Table 4).

C.1.2 The samples were processed by water flotation (using a modified Siraf system) for the recovery of plant remains and any bones or artefacts that might be present. Flots were collected in a 0.25mm nylon mesh and the residues were sieved to 0.5mm. The flots and residues were allowed to air dry in a heated room, and any bones and artefacts present were noted and reintegrated with the hand-excavated finds.

C.1.3 Dried flots were scanned under a low-power binocular microscope at magnifications between x10 and x20. Identifications of seeds and cereal chaff were made with reference to published guides (eg Jacomet 2006; Cappers *et al*. 2012) and the comparative seed collection held at OA. Nomenclature for the plant taxa follows Stace (2010).

Results

Sample no.	Context no.	Trench	Feature no.	Feature	Date	Sample vol. (L)	Flot volume (ml)	Notes
1	4605	46	4604	Fill of Ditch	MBA-EIA	40	50	10YR 5/6 Yellowish brown sandy silt loam with frequent sub angular stone
2	4704	47	4702	Fill of Ditch	ER	40	50	10YR 5/6 Yellowish brown sandy silt loam with frequent sub angular stone
3	5703	57	5702	Fill of Pit	U/D	40	60	10YR 2/2 Very dark brown sandy silt loam with frequent sub angular stone
4	5003	50	5002	Fill of Pit	MBA-EIA	8	100	7.5YR 5/4 Brown sandy silt loam with frequent sub angular stone

Table 4: Environmental samples

C.1.4 The flots for all samples are rich in fine modern roots, which comprise most of the volume in all cases. Modern seeds and insects are present together with *Cecilioides acicula,* a burrowing snail also of modern origin.

Trench 46

C.1.5 Sample 1 collected from the single fill of ditch 4604 in Trench 46 contains a large amount of anthracite and other material with a vitrified shiny appearance. Charcoal is rare, with <5 fragments of charcoal >2mm. Snails are very common with over 100 individuals represented, although the taxa appear to be limited.

C.1.6 Charred plant remains are rare and comprise a single damaged barley grain, a fragment of unidentifiable cereal and a single small fragment of glume base that could not be further identified due to its level of fragmentation.

Trench 47

C.1.7 Sample 2 collected from the fill of 4702 in Trench 47 also contains a large amount of anthracite and vitrified material with very little charcoal; no charcoal larger than 2mm is present. Snails are present although in smaller quantities than within sample 1.

C.1.8 Charred plant remains are again rare and comprise a single common chickweed (*Stellaria media*) and a broken vetch seed (*Vicia/Lathyrus*) approximately 4mm in size.

Trench 57

C.1.9 Sample 3 collected from the fill of possible pit 5702 in Trench 57 contains charcoal with approximately 50 fragments within the >2mm fraction, although some of these are thin in appearance and are unlikely to be suitable for identification. Small quantities of anthracite and occasional indeterminate fragments with a clinkered appearance are also present. Snails are again common with more than 50 individuals represented.

C.1.10 No other charred plant material is present within this flot. A single worked flint bladelet was present within the residue.

Trench 50

C.1.11 Sample 4 collected from pit 5002 in Trench 50 again contains a small quantity of anthracite and occasional indeterminate fragments with a clinkered appearance. Charcoal is more common within this flot with at least 100 fragments >2mm, although at least some are very thin and have the general appearance of oak (*Quercus* sp.). Small numbers of snails are present with fewer than 25 individuals noted.

C.1.12 No other charred plant material is present within this flot.

Discussion and recommendations

C.1.13 The ditch samples (samples 1 and 2) from this site contain only small quantities of charred material. This is not unexpected as ditch fills often contain only accidental deposits, largely the result of manuring fields using settlement waste, or the inclusion of wind-blown material, and this is likely to be the origin of the small quantity of charred material present. While the pottery present for these samples differs in date with context 4605 containing pottery of probably early Iron Age date and context 4704 containing pottery of an early Roman date, they do appear in plan to belong to the

same ditch and there is nothing present within either sample to suggest a different origin for the material present within the flots.

C.1.14 The pit samples (samples 3 and 4) both contain moderate quantities of charcoal in good condition, which show that charred material is well preserved on this site. Unfortunately, the lack of other charred material and finds within the samples means that these cannot be interpreted further than being the result of the disposal of waste from a fire. The assemblages appear to be similar, but the charcoal has not at this stage been identified to species.

C.1.15 Molluscs are very common within these features. All appear to be terrestrial snails and their condition is good. A range of taxa are present across the features, which shows potential for further work on the local environment of the site.

C.1.16 If further excavation is carried out on this site, it is recommended that bulk sampling of features for charred plant material should take place, ideally from a range of features across the site. In addition, as the preservation of molluscs appears to be extremely good, consideration should be made for the taking of incremental samples for snail analysis through suitable deposits. This sampling should be carried out in accordance with the most recent sampling guidelines (eg OA 2017; Historic England 2011).

Recommendations for retention/dispersal

C.1.17 The flots warrant retention until all works on site are complete, though it is not expected that further work on the flots will be required at this time.

C.1.18 While some samples contain only small quantities of charred material, the presence of other material, such as molluscs, should be considered when discarding, and it is therefore recommended that these flots should form a part of the archive for this site.

C.2 Animal bone

By Rebecca Nicholson

C.2.1 A small assemblage of animal bone comprising 133 fragments from five contexts, weighing a total of 455g, was recovered by hand during the evaluation. The bone was identified using the comparative osteological collection at OA and has been recorded in a Microsoft Access database. Tooth wear stages follow Grant (1982). Full records will be available in the site archive. Table 5 provides details of the assemblage by context.

C.2.2 Bone condition was scored on a subjective scale from 1 (as fresh) to 5 (extremely eroded, fragments crumbly and with all or most surfaces missing). Using this scale, the majority of fragments were scored as condition 5, reflecting the extremely poor preservation of animal bone across the excavated areas.

C.2.3 Undoubtedly due in part to the very poor bone condition, many of the identifiable fragments were loose cattle teeth, some of which are likely to have been from single jaws. This included at least two sets of mandibular teeth from Roman ditch fill 5604, all of which appear to be from fairly young animals and include a deciduous premolar

(Dp4) at Grant's wear stage g, indicative of a juvenile and M1/M2 teeth at Grant's wear stages e and f.

C.2.4 A shed red deer antler came from undated possible pit fill 5703. The feature also contained burnt stones and an early prehistoric worked flint, and so may be prehistoric in date.

Context	No. of fragments	Weight (g)	Period	Assemblage details
4603	7	53	Roman	Fragments of cattle mandible with loose premolar and molar teeth. Large mammal femur caput.
4704	1	15	Roman	Unworn cattle tooth
5303	59	200	Roman	Nine cattle teeth (5 mandibular molar/premolar and 4 maxillary molar/premolar). 6 tooth fragments and 44 indeterminate bone fragments.
5403	8	30	Roman	Three cattle mandibular molar/premolar teeth and fragments of large mammal mandible.
5604	57	238	Roman	Nine cattle mandibular molars and premolars from at least 2 jaws. Three cattle maxillary molars Also 8 fragmented cattle molar/premolar teeth, 1 medium mammal tibia shaft and 35 bone fragments.
5703	1	99	Undated	1 red deer antler (3 refitting fragments) including coronet and tine.

Table 5: Animal bone assemblage

Recommendations regarding the conservation, discard and retention of material

C.2.5 The assemblage is in very poor condition, and the fragments are very unlikely to be suitable for further scientific research including radiocarbon dating. However, it would be worth considering the assemblage alongside any bone recovered from any future excavation at the site, and the assemblage should be retained until that time, although long term curation in the archive is unlikely to be warranted.

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APPENDIX E SITE SUMMARY DETAILS

Site name:	Blenheim Net Zero Project, Woodstock, Oxfordshire
Site code:	WOBNZP20
Grid Reference	SP 45588 18056
Type:	Evaluation
Date and duration:	October 2020
Area of Site	12ha
Location of archive:	The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museum Service in due course, under the following accession number: OXCMS: 2020.75.
Summary of Results:	Preceding geophysical survey of the proposed development site in May 2020 detected a small number of anomalies of possible or probable archaeological origin, as well as those indicative of geological variations and modern agricultural land use. A total of 66 trenches were investigated across an 8.9ha area of the site that will be directly impacted upon by the proposed development. Of these, seven trenches were found to contain archaeological remains comprising a small number of ditches and pits concentrated in the south of the site. A moderately good correlation between the results of the geophysical survey and archaeological evaluation was demonstrated. A small quantity of worked flint and a pit containing broadly middle Bronze Age to early Iron Age pottery provides limited evidence of low-level prehistoric activity. A series of parallel ditches appear to have delineated a Roman trackway that crossed the south of the site on an ENE–WSW alignment. The offset nature of one of the ditches is suggestive of a different phase of the same trackway or perhaps an associated field boundary. Small quantities of early and middle Roman pottery and animal bones are suggestive of nearby settlement activity. Earthwork and cropmark evidence suggest that the trackway was connected to a nearby Roman farmstead (Scheduled Monument No. 1006357). The trackway perhaps formed part of a local network associated with Akeman Street located to the north. Limited late post-medieval/modern remains are demonstrative of agricultural use of the landscape during this period.

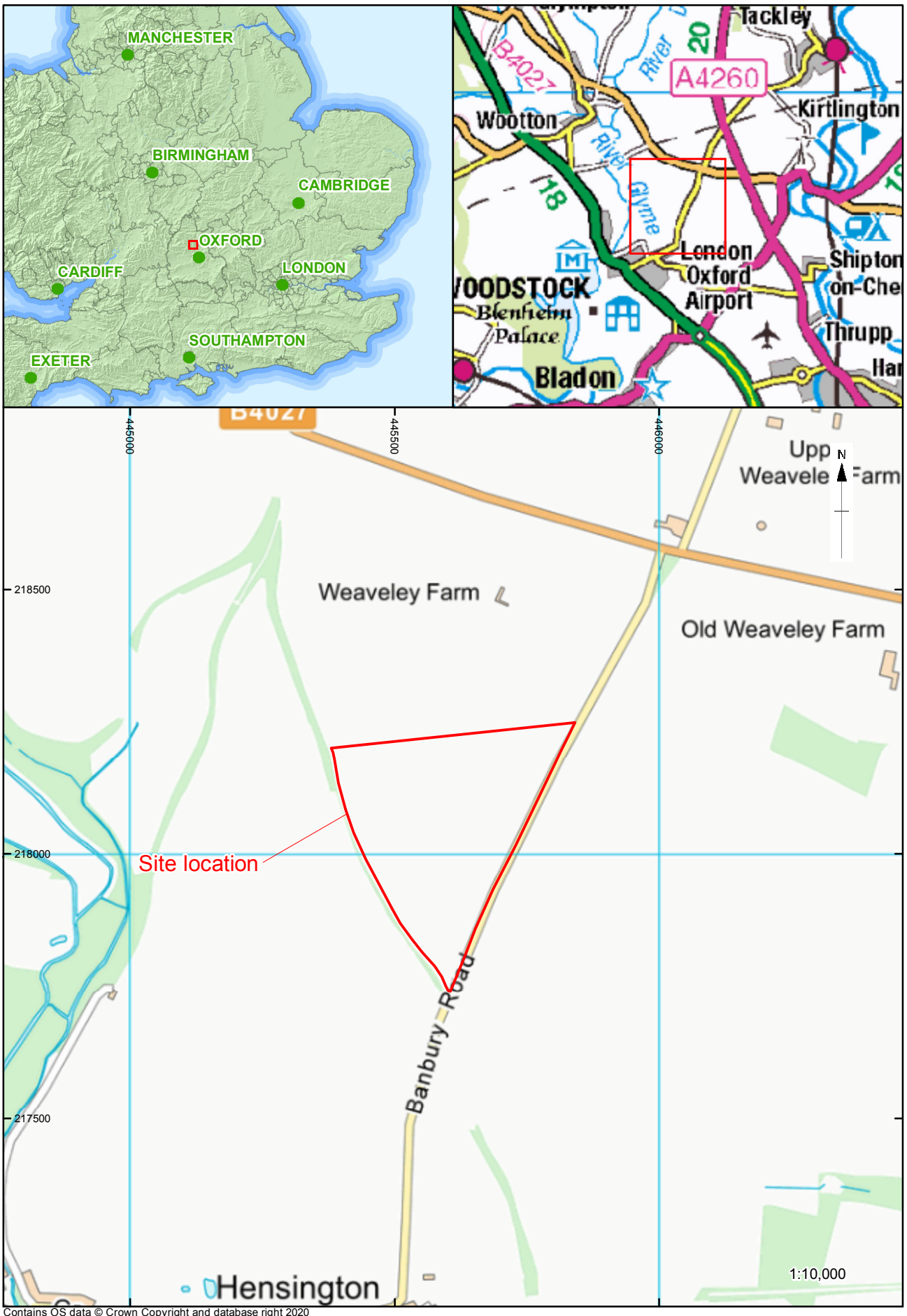

Figure 1: Site location

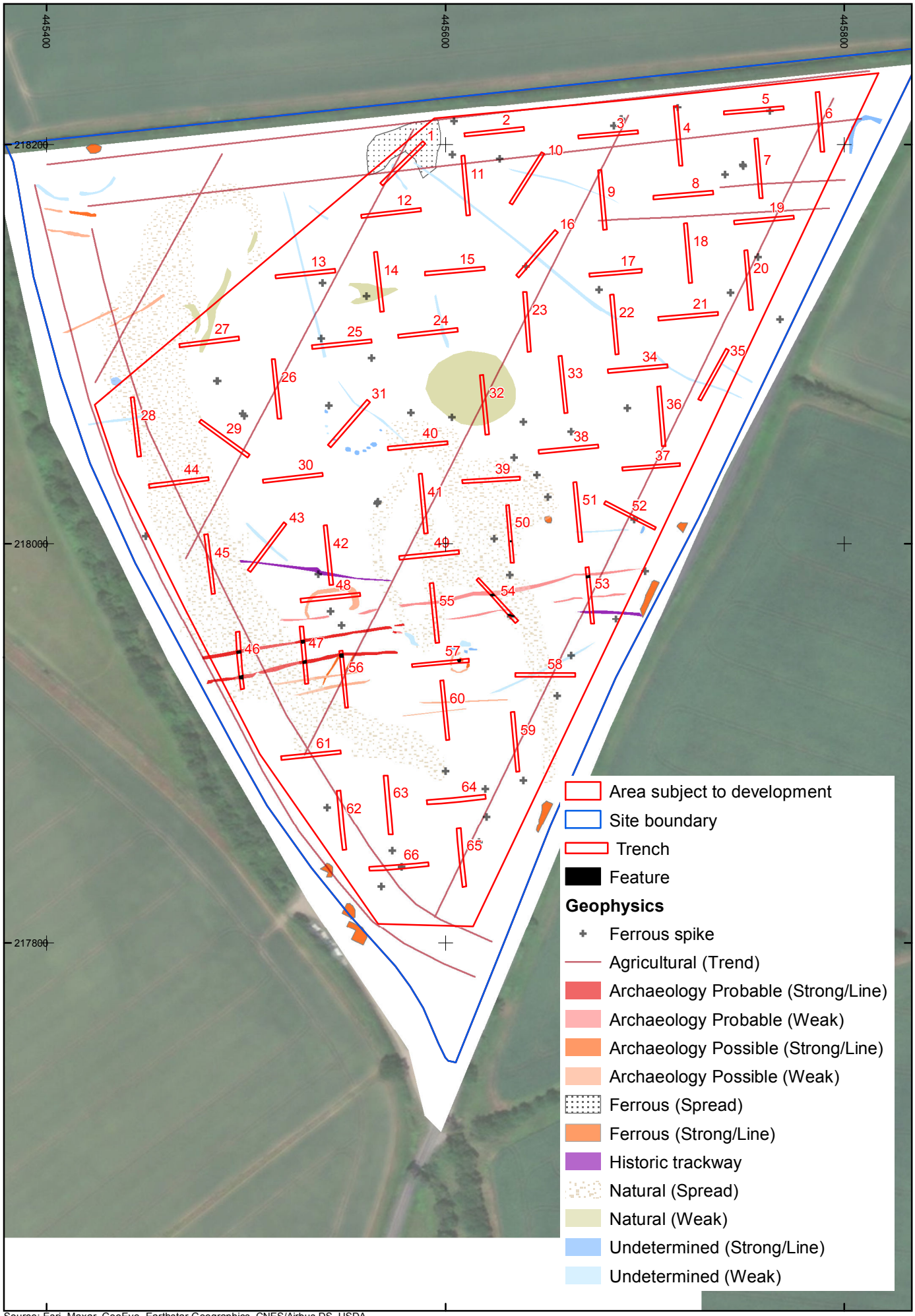

Figure 2: Trench location plan with geophysical survey interpretation

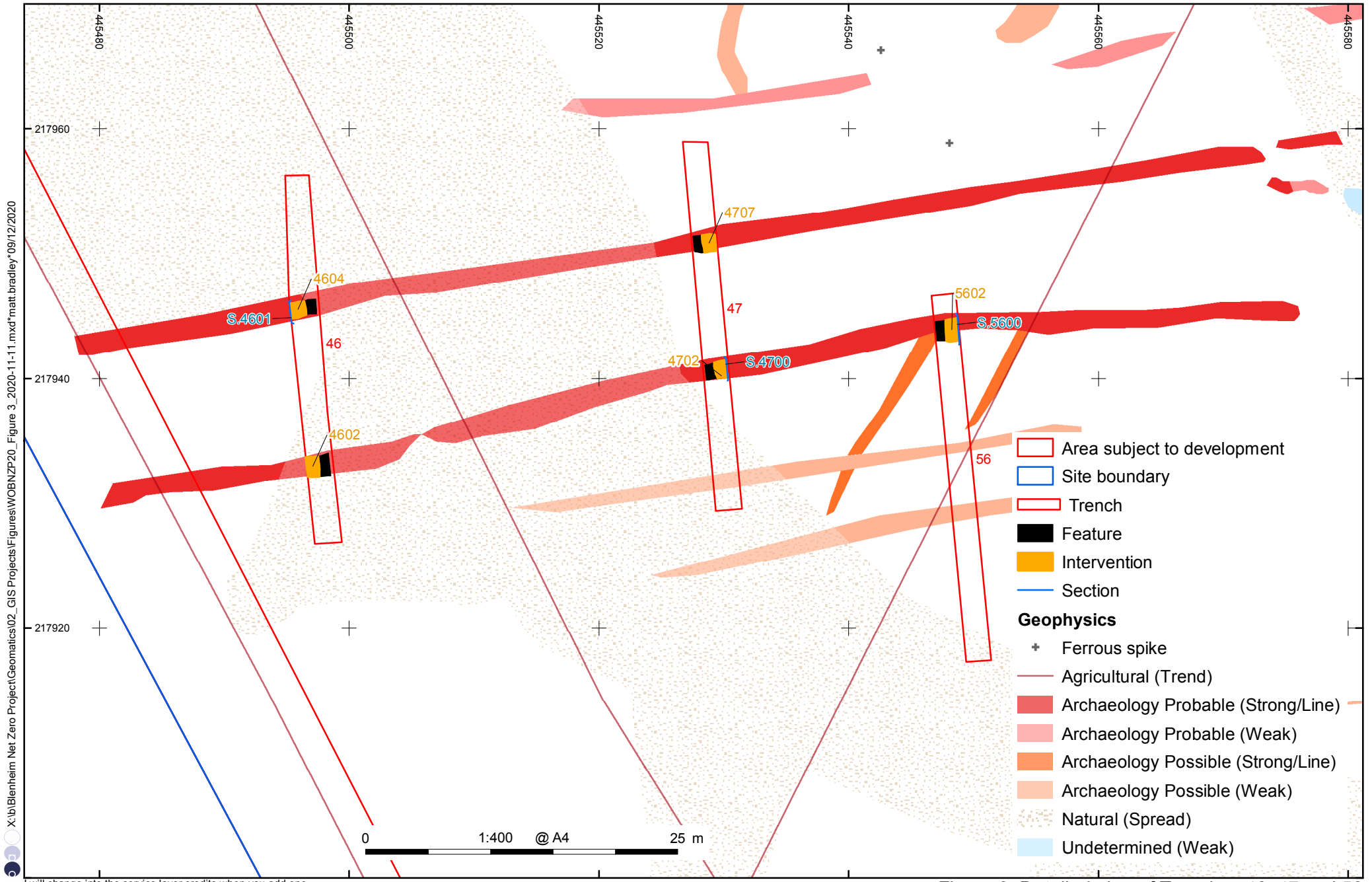

Figure 3: Detailed plan of Trenches 46, 47 and 56

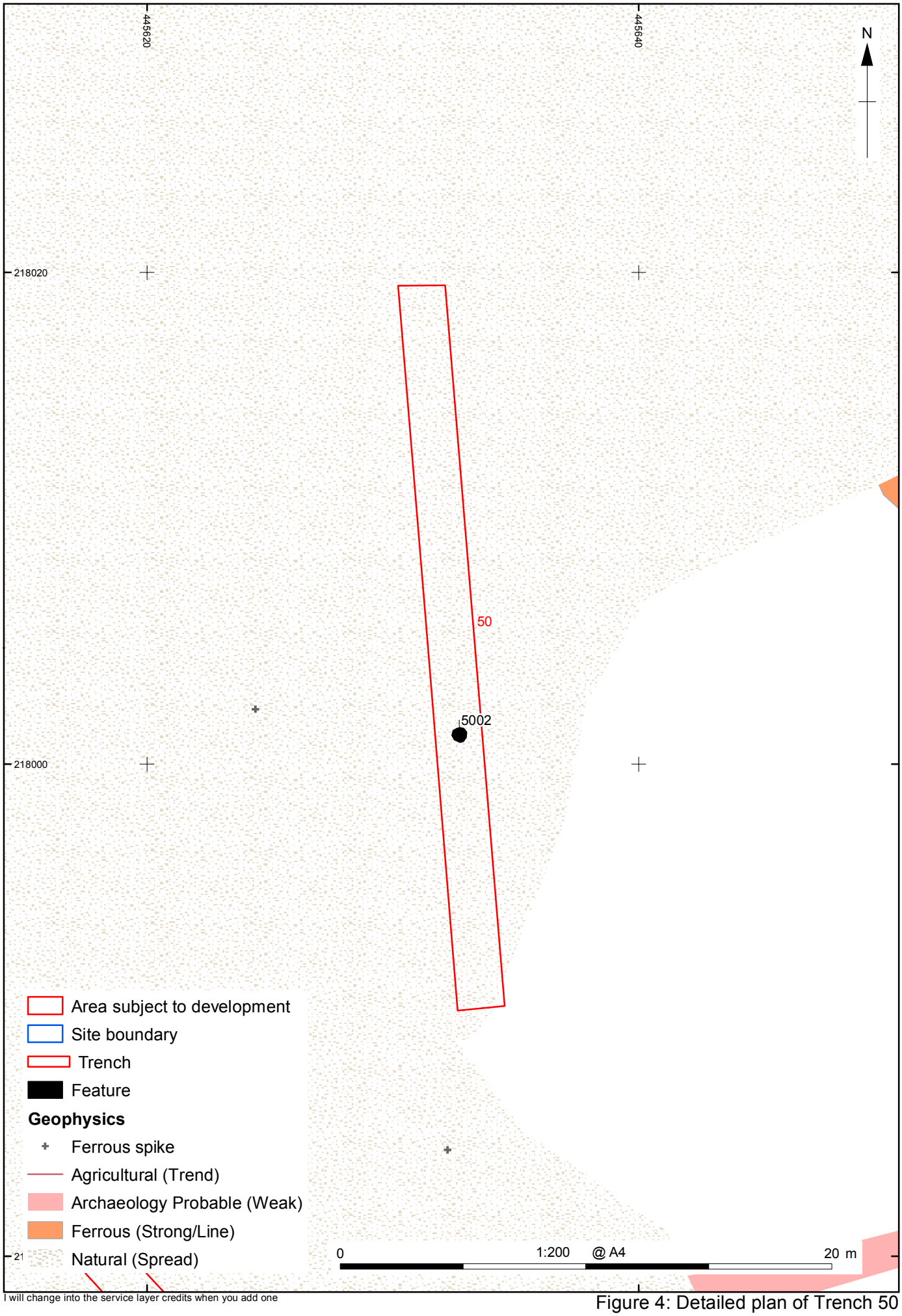

Figure 4: Detailed plan of Trench 50

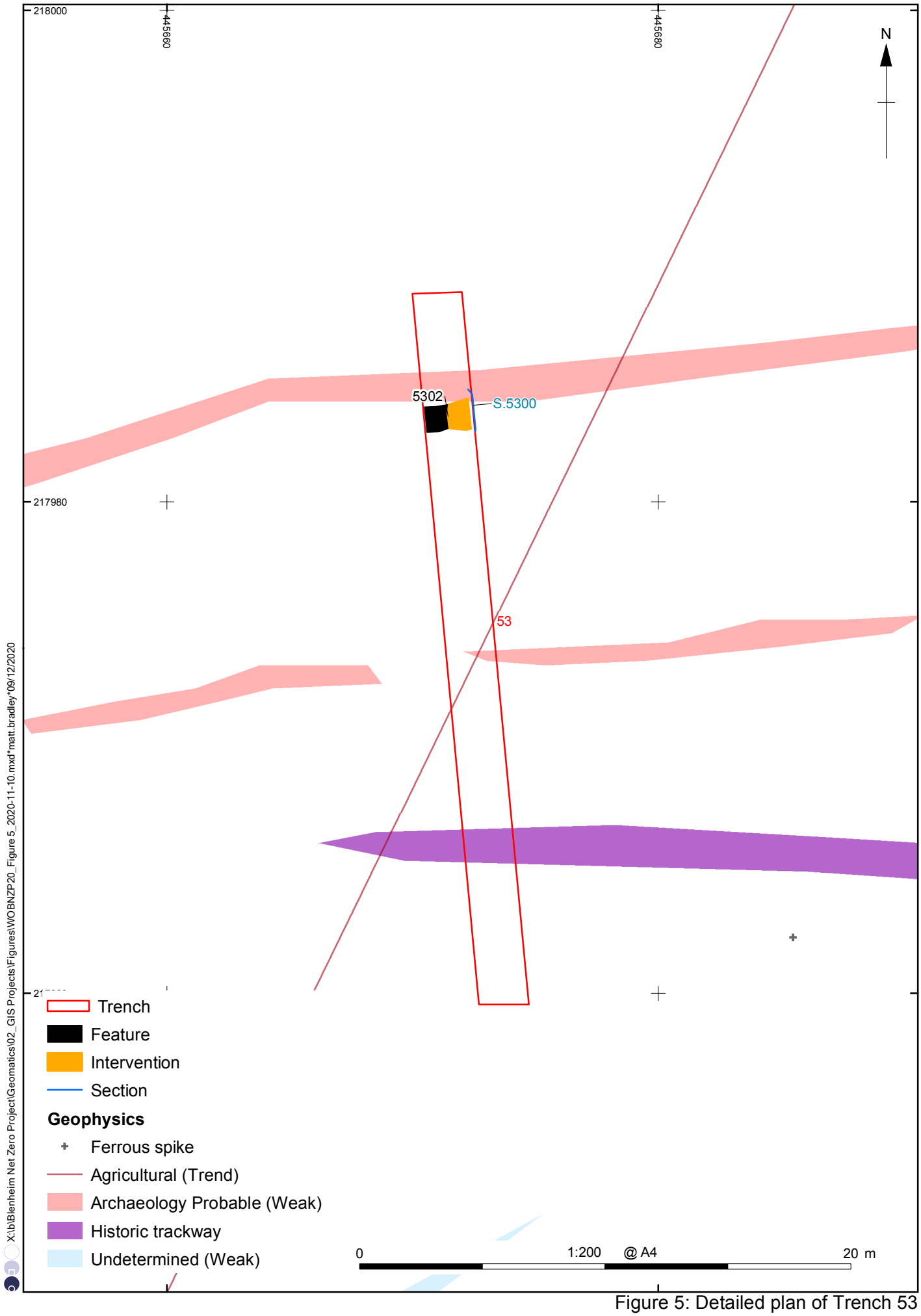

Figure 5: Detailed plan of Trench 53

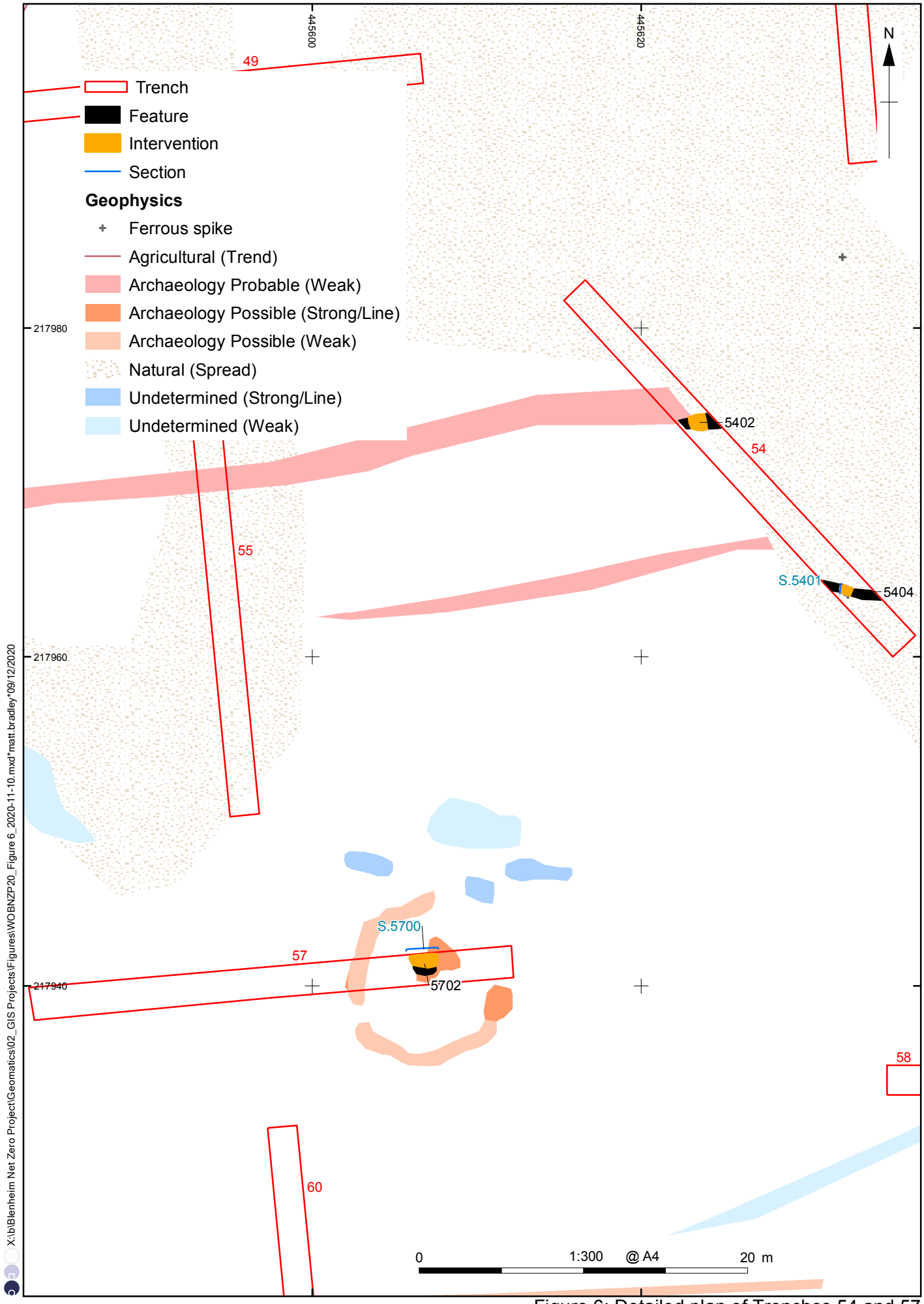

Figure 6: Detailed plan of Trenches 54 and 57

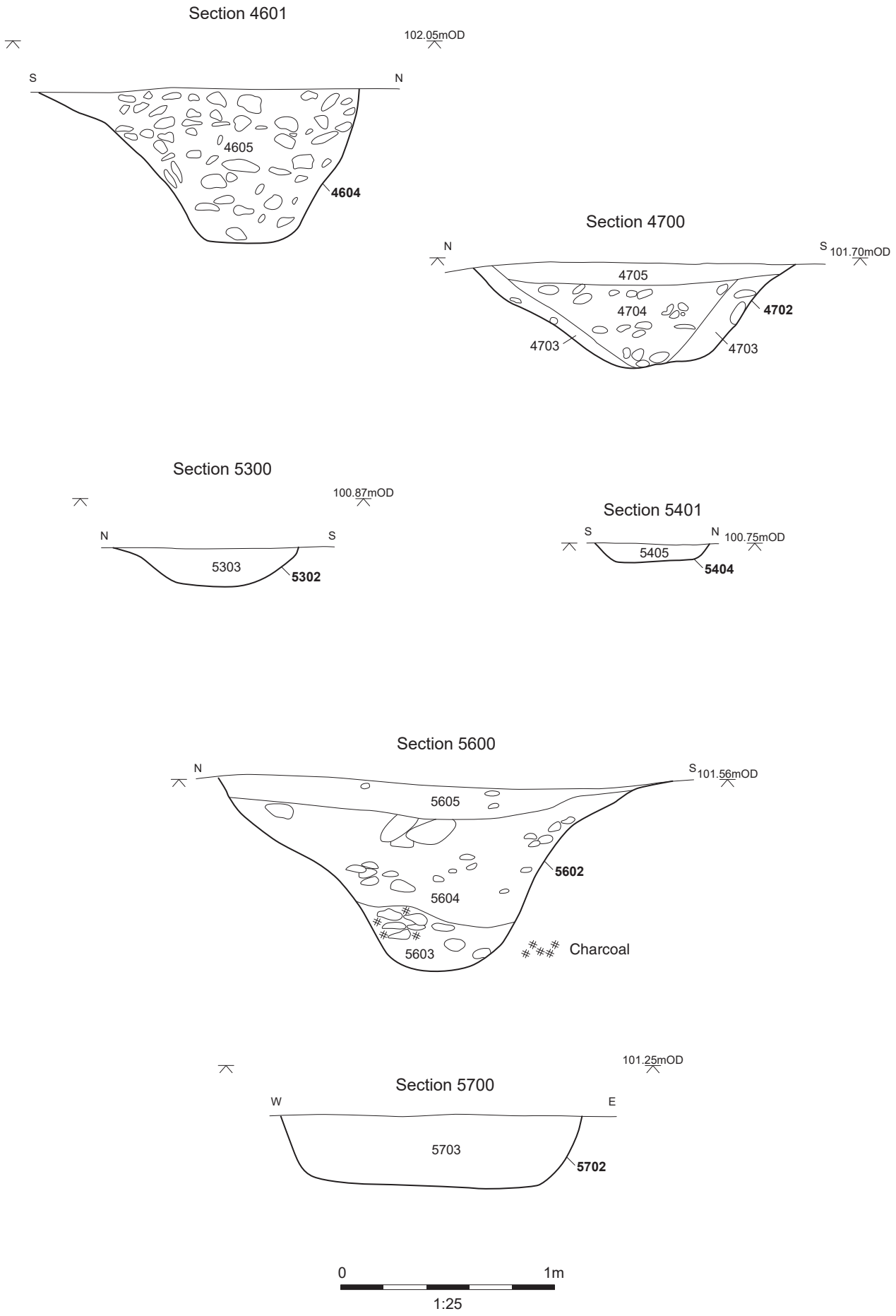

Figure 7: Sections

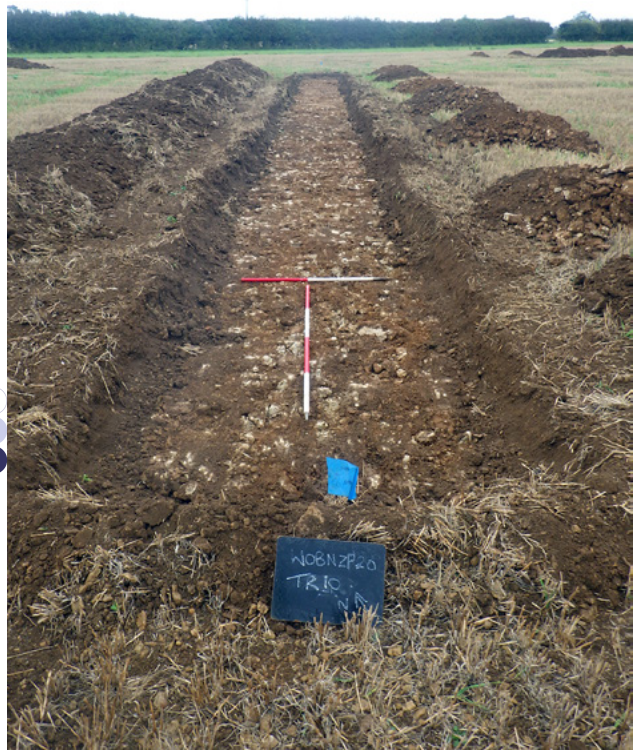

Plate 1: Trench 10, view to north-east

Plate 2: Trench 26, view to south

Plate 3: Trench 41, view to south

Plate 4: Trench 65, view to south

Plate 5: Trench 46, view to north

Plate 6: Ditch 4602 east-facing section

Plate 7: Trench 47, view to north

Plate 8: Ditch 4707 west-facing section

Plate 9: Trench 53, view to north

Plate 10: Ditch 5302 west-facing section

Plate 11: Trench 54, view to north-east

Plate 12: Ditch 5402 east-facing section

Plate 13: Trench 56, view to north

Plate 14: Ditch 5602 west-facing section

Plate 15: Trench 57, view to west

Plate 16: Pit 5702 south-facing section

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