Springhill, Southmoor, Oxfordshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Springhill, Southmoor, Oxfordshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Summary

Between 13th and 21st February 2017, Oxford Archaeology undertook an archaeological evaluation comprising 23 trenches on the site of a proposed residential development near Springhill, Southmoor, Oxfordshire (NGR SU 3897 9795).

Archaeological features were present in 13 of the 23 trenches, representing at least three phases of activity on the site. The earliest phase dated to the Mesolithic and early Neolithic period and was indicated by a small assemblage of worked flints recovered from across the site and within treeholes. The second phase of activity was located within the south-west of the site and comprised middle Iron Age features including a small enclosure and associated pits in Trench 2 and a dense pit cluster in Trench 7. The third and final phase was focused in the north-east of the site and consisted of post-medieval field boundaries and a probable 19th-century building.

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The project was managed for Oxford Archaeology by Steve Lawrence and the fieldwork was directed by Mark Dodd, who was supported by Povilas Cepauskas and Raul Gonzalez. Survey and digitising was carried out by Povilas Cepauskas and Ben Brown. Thanks are also extended to the teams of OA staff that cleaned and packaged the finds under the management of Leigh Allen, processed the environmental remains under the management of Rebecca Nicholson, and prepared the archive under the management of Nicola Scott.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of work

1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by West Waddy ADP on behalf of MBC Estates to undertake a trial trench evaluation on land off Springhill, Southmoor, Oxfordshire.

1.1.2 The work was undertaken in support of a Planning Application for a proposed residential development of the site (planning ref. P16/V2568/O). Although a brief was not set for the work, discussions between OA and Hugh Coddington (Planning Archaeologist for Oxfordshire County Council) established the scope of the work required to effectively evaluate the site. A written scheme of investigation was produced by OA (2017) detailing the Local Authority's requirements for work necessary to inform the planning process. This document outlined how OA would implement the specified requirements and was approved by the Planning Archaeologist prior to the start of the evaluation.

1.2 Location, topography and geology

1.2.1 The site is located at the western edge of the village of Southmoor. It is bounded to the south by Springhill and to the north by the A420, and covers an area of 11.43ha. The site is within the administrative area of Vale of White Horse District Council.

1.2.2 The topography of the site slopes gently from a height of *c* 85m aOD in the south-west to *c* 77m aOD in the north-east. At the time of the fieldwork, the site was being used for arable cultivation and had stubble remains from the previous harvest.

1.2.3 The majority of the site is located on the bedrock deposits of the Kingstone Formation which is made up of sandstone formed approximately 156 to 161 million years ago during the Jurassic period. The lower lying eastern strip of the site lies on bedrock of the Hazelbury Bryan Formation which comprises sandstone, Mudstone and Siltstone that was formed during the Jurassic period. There are no recorded superficial geological deposits (British Geological Survey web site data).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 The archaeological and historical background to the site has been described in detail in an Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment produced by Oxford Archaeology (2016). The relevant parts from this report are summarised below.

Prehistoric period (500,000 BP - 43 AD)

1.3.2 Prehistoric activity has previously been recorded within the vicinity of the proposed development area.

1.3.3 A test pit evaluation undertaken off Pine Woods Road in 2006 revealed Mesolithic worked flint *c* 625m north of the site, although no significant concentrations of activity were identified.

1.3.4 Fieldwalking along the road corridor of the A420 Kingston Bagpuize and Southmoor bypass was undertaken in 1992 and identified numerous scatters of prehistoric

flintwork to the west, immediate north and east of the site. These included a Neolithic flint scatter comprising 111 struck flints, and another prehistoric flint scatter comprising 39 struck flints. These were located *c* 15m and 40m north of the site respectively.

1.3.5 A ring ditch cropmark was identified *c* 805m north-west of the site, and a pair of Bronze Age leaf-shaped socketed and looped spearheads and Bronze Age pottery have been recovered from a location *c* 625m north-west of the site. There are also unconfirmed reports of a palstave axe having been recovered close to this findspot.

1.3.6 Approximately 405m to the west of the site, a coin identified as a 'potin' issue of the Greek colony of Massalia (modern Marseilles) which dates to 150 BC, and a bronze Cunobelin coin were found.

Romano-British period (AD 43-410)

1.3.7 Whilst archaeological evidence for the Roman period has been identified within the vicinity of the proposed development, no archaeological remains dating to the Roman period have been identified within the site itself. A Romano-British occupation site was located during an archaeological evaluation in advance of the Kingston Bagpuize bypass (A420) construction in 1992. The settlement was identified *c* 635m north-east of the site.

1.3.8 Other findspots include two sherds of pottery recovered *c* 360m south-west of the site and a sestertius of Trajan found on Cox's Farm *c* 845m south of the site.

The medieval period (AD 410-1550)

1.3.9 No archaeological remains dating to the Saxon period have been recorded within the site and the surrounding 1km. During the Saxon period Southmoor was part of the manor of Draycote (Gelling 1974). The manor of Draycote lay within the parish of Longworth and was held by Abingdon Abbey before the Conquest and until the Dissolution (Page and Ditchfield 1924). The historic core of the settlement of Southmoor lies to the east of the site.

1.3.10 The evaluation works associated with the construction of the A420 Kingston Bagpuize and Southmoor bypass identified no evidence of medieval activity along their entire length. The first recorded specific mention of Southmoor is in 1396. Prior to this date it had been referred to as part of the manor of Draycote (Gelling 1974). A fragment of a medieval floor tile is the only identified archaeological material that dates to the medieval period to have been recovered from within the site. It seems probable that this relates to midden deposits spread on the fields for manuring, rather than direct evidence of medieval settlement within the site.

Post-medieval and modern periods (1550 – 2000)

1.3.11 There are 17 listed buildings within the 1km area surrounding the site, all of which date to the post-medieval period. A tree-lined avenue is shown within the site on Rocque's 1761 map. The avenue was related to the gardens of Longworth Lodge which is located to the north of the present-day A420. The footpath across the centre of the site appears to follow the line of the driveway to this house.

1.3.12 The Longworth and Charney Parish Tithe Map of 1846 records the site as having been occupied by agricultural fields at that date. The fields are recorded as a mix of arable and pasture indicating a mixed farming economy in the area at that time. A small building is recorded within the site adjacent to Springhill. This had been demolished prior to the publication of the first edition of the Ordnance Survey (OS) map in 1876.

1.3.13 The old line of Pine Woods Road crossed the western end of the site until it was diverted in the 1990s. This road is first recorded on the 1876 OS Map. The 1899 second edition OS Map shows the same layout as the 1876 edition.

1.3.14 There are no 20th-century archaeological assets recorded within the site and surrounding 1km area. The third edition OS Map of 1912 shows that a new gate lodge and driveway to Longworth House (formerly Longworth Lodge) had been constructed adjacent to Springhill. The Lodge survives and lies immediately outside the site boundary.

Geophysical survey

1.3.15 During January 2017, Bartlett-Clark Consultancy undertook a magnetometer survey within the proposed development boundary (BCC 2017; see Fig. 2). Towards the western extent of the site this survey identified a sub-rectangular enclosure with a possible curvilinear anomaly within its interior. Other features identified are likely to correlate with post-medieval field boundaries and the former driveway to Longworth House. Towards the southern limit of the eastern field a scatter of debris was identified which is likely to represent the remains of a building recorded on the Longworth and Charney Parish Tithe Map of 1846.

2 EVALUATION AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

2.1.1 The project aims and objectives were as follows:

i. establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains,
ii. determine and confirm the character of any remains present, without compromising any deposits that may merit detailed investigation or preservation,
iii. determine or estimate the date range of any remains from artefacts or otherwise,
iv. characterise any underlying archaeological strata down to undisturbed geology without significantly impacting upon significant younger (overlying) deposits where possible,
v. determine the geo-archaeological and palaeo-environmental potential of any archaeological deposits encountered,
vi. recover suitable materials for scientific dating where appropriate,
vii. establish what archaeological remains/deposits may be affected by any proposed development,
viii. make available the results of the investigation to inform subsequent mitigation strategies,
ix. produce a factual report, full archive and HER data submission,
x. disseminate the results of the investigation at a level appropriate to their importance.

2.1.2 The specific aims and objectives of the evaluation were:

i. investigate and characterise various anomalies identified through geophysical survey that may represent archaeological features, including the possible enclosure detected towards the west and the possible remains of a structure to the south-east,
ii. examine areas identified by the geophysical survey as being largely blank.

2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 The trenching programme comprised an array of 23 trenches, each measuring 50m by 1.8m. This equated to a 2% sample by area of the proposed 11.43ha development. The trenches were located to target specific geophysical anomalies and to also provide a representative sample of the 'blank' areas. The trench locations were submitted to, and agreed with Hugh Coddington (OCC) prior to the commencement of fieldwork.

2.2.2 Plough-disturbed soil horizons were removed by mechanical excavator fitted with a wide toothless bucket to expose archaeologically significant horizons or the surface of the superficial or solid geology, whichever was encountered first. Once archaeological deposits or those with the potential to contain artefacts were exposed, further excavation proceeded by hand. All features and deposits were issued with unique context numbers directly relating to the individual trench (eg Trench 18, context 1800, 1801, etc). The excavation and recording of archaeological features was undertaken as

outlined within the WSI following established OA practices and in line with CIfA and OCC standards.

2.2.3 Once the trenches had been excavated and recorded, approval was sought from OCC prior to the backfilling of the trenches. A site meeting was also arranged between OCC and OA to review the ongoing results and confirm that the fieldwork was meeting the aims of the investigation.

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 which contained archaeological remains. Details of all trenches with dimensions and depths of all deposits with associated spot dates form the content of Appendix A. Finds and environmental reports are presented in Appendices B and C.

3.1.2 Context numbers reflect the trench numbers unless otherwise stated: e.g. pit 102 is a feature within Trench 1, while ditch 304 is a feature within Trench 3.

3.2 General soils and ground conditions

3.2.1 The soil sequence across all trenches was fairly uniform, comprising natural geology overlain by a subsoil or buried former ploughsoil deposit sealed beneath the current ploughsoil. On the higher ground within the south-western limits of the site boundary, no subsoil was recorded in Trenches 1 and 4. Within Trench 5 an additional deposit was recorded between the topsoil and subsoil which was presumably an accumulation of colluvium.

3.2.2 The majority of the trenches revealed a natural geology comprising a mixture of sand and ferruginous sandstone. In the low-lying areas within the north-eastern limits of the site boundary, the natural geology comprised clayey sand, particularly in Trenches 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23 and the south-east end of Trench 16. Accordingly, the overlying subsoil and ploughsoil tended to have a higher clay content within these areas.

3.2.3 Ground conditions throughout the evaluation were generally good, and despite occasional rain showers, the free-draining geological deposits meant that the trenches remained dry throughout. Archaeological features, where present, were easily identifiable against the geological deposits.

3.3 General distribution of archaeological deposits

3.3.1 Archaeological features were present in 13 of the 23 trenches. The greatest concentrations of features were identified in Trenches 2 and 7, comprising dense clusters of prehistoric pits and a small enclosure. Evidence for further prehistoric activity was also recovered from treeholes in Trenches 3 and 6.

3.3.2 Post-medieval activity was identified from a road surface in Trench 11, a posthole in Trench 12, a pit in Trench 14 and boundary ditches in Trenches 15, 16, 18, 19 and 21. An undated ditch recorded in Trench 5 is also likely to be of post-medieval origin.

3.3.3 No archaeological features were identified in Trenches 1, 4, 8, 9, 10, 13, 17, 20, 22 and 23.

3.4 Trench 2

3.4.1 A probable ditched enclosure was identified by the geophysical survey and was targeted by Trench 2. The excavation revealed two ditches which corresponded with the northern and southern sides of the enclosure (Figs 2 and 3). The southern ditch,

202, measured 2.38m wide and had a total depth of 0.98m (Fig. 8 section 200 and Plate 1). It had a slightly irregular profile with steep sides and a step on the southern edge. It is possible that the step was indicative of a more than one phase of ditch being present, although this was not distinguishable within the homogenous mid grey brown, silty sand that filled the ditch. This contained a single sherd of pottery. The ditch on the northern side of the enclosure was recorded in plan only as cut 214.

3.4.2 Pit 206 was located within the interior of the enclosure, and was sub-circular in plan with a diameter of 1.82m (Plate 2). It had steep sides, and was 0.48m deep, and contained a single deposit of silty sand with yielded three sherds of middle Iron Age pottery. Feature 208 was also located within the interior of the enclosure. It was ovoid in plan and extended beyond the limits of the trench on a NNW-SSE alignment (Plate 3). It measured 1.45m wide and 0.5m deep with a steep sided profile. It was filled with a single deposit of mid brown, silty sand and also contained several large pieces of ferruginous sandstone which had been placed on the base of the feature. It also contained a sherd of middle Iron Age pottery.

3.4.3 To the south of the enclosure were pits 204 and 210. Pit 204 was circular in plan, measuring 0.9m in diameter and 0.3m deep (Fig. 8 section 201). It contained a mixed dumped deposit of dark silty sand (Plate 4). Although no artefacts were recovered from this feature an environmental sample of this deposit contained several fragments of charred cereal grains.

3.4.4 Pit 210 was only partially exposed within the trench but appeared to be a circular feature at least 2.4m wide (Fig. 8 section 204 and Plate 5). The full depth of the feature is not known as it extended beyond 0.9m deep, with steep, near vertical sides. It was filled with a mottled deposit of mid and light brown silty sand, with rare charcoal inclusions.

3.4.5 Feature 212/216 was located to the north of the enclosure and was left unexcavated. It was irregular in plan, and extended beyond the limits of the excavation. The irregular outline suggests that this represents a possible alignment of intercutting pits. It was filled with a brown, silty sand deposit, on the surface of which a single sherd of 3rd century AD mortarium was recovered.

3.5 Trench 7

3.5.1 Numerous pit-like features were recorded within Trench 7 (Fig. 4). Although none of them were fully exposed within the trench, the visible portions indicated that they were probably all sub-circular in plan.

3.5.2 Pit 703 was located towards the centre of the trench, and extended beyond the north-east edge. It measured at least 1.8m across and in excess of 0.4m deep, although it was not fully excavated due to the depth of the adjacent topsoil and subsoil (Fig. 8 section 703). It contained a fill of mid brown, silty sand and produced several sherds of pottery dated to the middle Iron Age.

3.5.3 Pits 706 and 705 were recorded in the south-east end of the trench with pit 705 measuring at least 1.35m across (Fig. 8 section 702 and Plate 6). It was excavated to a depth of 0.5m due to concerns over the stability of the trench edge. The single fill of this pit yielded several sherds of middle Iron Age pottery. An environmental sample

from this feature contained significant quantities of charred material including hazelnut shell fragments and cereal grains. The fill of pit 705 was truncated to the south by another pit (706), which measured 1.5m wide and 0.52m deep. This also contained a single deposit of mottled light brown, silty sand (Fig. 8 section 702).

3.5.4 To the north and adjacent to pits 705 and 706 was a group of intercutting pits or other features (707, 709 and 714) that covered an area 3.75m across and extended beyond the limits of the trench. Due to the complexity of the archaeology, they were not excavated and were recorded in plan only. In comparison to the other pits within the trench, their upper fills appeared to be slightly richer in material with a darker appearance and containing moderate amounts of charcoal. Pottery recovered from the surface deposits of these features was assigned to context 710 and dates to the middle Iron Age.

3.5.5 Pit 704 was also recorded in plan, further to the north at the edge of the trench. It was not excavated and contained a deposit of mid brown, silty sand of a similar appearance to the other pit features.

3.6 Trenches 3 and 6

3.6.1 Features 603 and 605 were recorded at the eastern end of Trench 6 as probable treeholes (Fig. 4). Although no finds were recovered from feature 603, excavation of 605 yielded several worked flints, a possible hammer stone and fragments of hazelnut shell. The cut was irregular in plan and measured 2.05m by 0.88m, with a depth of 0.33m (Plate 7). It was filled with a light grey, silty sand from which the worked stone and hazelnut shells were recovered. Trench 3 also contained a probable treehole, 303 (Fig. 3). It was filled with a deposit of mid grey sand, from which a single worked flint was recovered.

3.6.2 A north-south aligned ditch (607) was recorded within the western end of Trench 6. It was 0.74m wide and 0.21m deep with a shallow profile. It was filled with a sterile deposit of mid grey brown, clay sand.

3.7 Trench 5

3.7.1 Two ditches were revealed within Trench 5 (Fig. 4). Ditch 506 was recorded on a north-south alignment at the northern end of the trench. It measured 1.3m wide and 0.3m deep, with a fill of mid-brown silty sand (Fig. 9 section 500). This feature was aligned with ditch 607 to the south and is likely to be a continuation of the same boundary.

3.7.2 Ditch 503 was recorded cutting through the subsoil on an ENE-WSW alignment with a width of 2.5m and a depth of 1.3m deep. It contained an initial fill of mid brown silty sand (504), overlain by a sterile, dark grey brown, silty sandy, 503 (Fig. 9 section 500). Although no artefacts were recovered from this feature, the fact that it truncates the subsoil indicates a post-medieval date.

3.8 Trenches 12 and 14

3.8.1 An irregular-shaped pit (1205) and a posthole (1203) were recorded within the south-eastern end of Trench 12 (Fig. 6). The pit was 0.66m by 0.75m and up to 0.22m deep and was filled with a sterile dark brown grey, silty sand deposit that was truncated on

its western limit by posthole 1203 (Fig. 8 section 1200 and Plate 8). The posthole was filled with a deposit of dark grey silty sand which contained sherds of 19th-century pottery, clay pipe, glass and fragments of metalwork.

3.8.2 Trench 14 contained a single pit (1403) that was only partially exposed within the south-east end of the trench (Fig. 5). This appeared to be sub-rectangular in shape measuring 1.25m across and 0.4m deep (Fig. 8 section 1400 and Plate 9). It contained the partially articulated remains of at least two sheep sealed within a mixed backfill that produced a single sherd of 19th-century pottery.

3.9 Trench 11

3.9.1 Trench 11 was targeted upon a NW-SE aligned linear anomaly identified by the geophysical survey (Fig. 2). Excavation revealed a layer of limestone rubble (1101) sealed between the ploughsoil and subsoil (Fig. 9 section 1100 and Plate 10). It was 0.16m thick and 3.64m wide and cartographic evidence indicates that this was the remains of a track that led to Longworth House, north-west of the site. No other features were revealed within this trench, although two worked flints were recovered from the interface between the subsoil and the underlying geology.

3.10 Trenches 15, 16, 18, 19, 21

3.10.1 Ditches 1502 and 1505 were recorded on east-west and NW-SE alignments respectively (Fig. 5). Ditch 1505 was the larger of the two, although both had similar profiles and were filled with sterile deposits of mid brown, silty sand (Fig. 9 sections 1501 and 1502).

3.10.2 Ditch 1603 was the sole feature to be identified within Trench 16 (Fig. 5). It was oriented NE-SW, and 1.7m wide, 0.7m deep and contained a single dark grey brown, sandy silt deposit (Fig. 10 section 1600). Although no dating evidence was recovered from this feature, its location correlates to that of a 19th-century field boundary identified on the Longworth and Charney Tithe Map (1846).

3.10.3 Trench 18 identified two linear features aligned WNW-ESE that correlated to those identified by the geophysical survey (Figs 2 and 7). Ditch 1803 was the larger of the two measuring 1.6m wide and 0.52m deep (Fig. 10 section 1800). This was filled with a mixed deposit of brown and grey brown, silty clay. Ditch 1805 measured 1.3m wide with a very shallow concave profile, 0.12m deep (Fig. 10 section 1801). The limits of the feature were poorly defined and it was filled with a mid-brown, clay sand deposit that was very similar to the subsoil. It is possible that this was either the remains of a furrow or a very truncated boundary ditch.

3.10.4 Feature 1903 was recorded at the south-west end of Trench 19 (Fig. 7). It measured 4.5m wide and 0.35m deep with steep sides and an undulating flat base (Plate 11). A humic, dark grey deposit (1904) was present along the sides and base of the feature. It is possible that this represents a soil horizon within the base of the feature and this was buried beneath a deliberate backfill of mid brown grey, silty sand (1905). Animal bone and a sherd of 19th-century pottery were recovered from deposit 1904, and a worked flint was found within fill 1905. The function of this feature is unclear, although its broad and shallow profile suggests that it may have been a trackway.

3.10.5 Ditch 1906 was to the north-east of feature 1903. This was 1.9m wide and 0.3m deep and contained a naturally silted fill of dark grey brown, silty sand from which a single worked flint was recovered (Fig. 10 section 1901).

3.10.6 Feature 2105 was an L-shaped ditch orientated north-south and east-west (Fig. 7). It measured 1.3m wide and 0.55m deep with steep sides filled with a deposit of light grey clay overlain by mid brown, sandy clay. No artefacts were recovered from this feature.

3.10.7 Ditch 2107 was aligned east-west and measured 0.55m wide and 0.44m deep. It truncated the subsoil and contained a light grey, sandy clay deposit. At the northern end of the trench was ditch 2103, which contained a large ceramic field drain.

3.11 Finds summary

3.11.1 Fifty sherds of Iron Age and Roman pottery, weighing 804g, were recovered from the evaluation. Forty-nine sherds are of middle Iron Age date (*c* 400-100 BC) and a single sherd, from context 217, dated to the Roman period.

3.11.2 A total of 6 sherds of post-medieval pottery weighing 81g were recovered from three contexts. The condition of the material is generally good. This material is probably all of 19th-century date. Domestic pottery typical of Oxford and southern English sites is represented.

3.11.3 A total of 5 pieces of clay pipe weighing 7g, two pieces of CBM weighing 342g, a single copper alloy fragment and four small sherds of vessel glass, all dated to the 19th century, were recovered from a single context (1204).

3.11.4 A total of five pieces of stone were retained from the investigation. One of these, from context 606, is a cobble with soft peck marks visible on the main surviving face and one hollowed end suggestive of it being a hammer stone. The remainder were unworked.

4 DISCUSSION

4.1 Reliability of field investigation

4.1.1 Although short periods of wet weather were experienced during the investigation, the well-drained geology meant that this often had a positive effect by making the contrast between deposits that filled features and the natural geology more pronounced. Consequently, there is a high level of confidence that the remains recorded are an accurate reflection of the archaeology present within the excavated trenches.

4.1.2 Whilst drawing upon the results of the geophysical survey to help determine the potential for archaeological features in the remaining areas, it becomes apparent that there is an inconsistent correlation between the results of the evaluation and those of the geophysical survey. Although the possible enclosure and the associated features targeted with Trench 2 were successfully identified, many of the linear features had only been partially indicated by the survey, whilst other ditches and the cluster of pits identified within Trench 7 were not detected at all.

4.1.3 Consequently, with no evidence for associated enclosures or field systems, the full extent of the pit clusters remains uncertain. Furthermore, given the distances between trenches, there remains a strong possibility that further clusters or even more widely scattered features have remained entirely undetected by the two phases of investigation.

4.2 Evaluation objectives and results

4.2.1 The aims and objectives of the evaluation are detailed above within Section 2. The trenching successfully investigated the geophysical anomalies identified through the geophysical survey. The depth of the features excavated and lack of evidence for later ridge and furrow indicates that the remains are relatively well preserved. Although only a modest quantity of artefactual material was recovered, it was sufficiently evenly distributed to provide a good indication of the phases of activity present on the site. Despite the varied topography of the site, there was limited evidence for complex sequences or the presence of significant buried soil horizons.

4.2.2 A small assemblage of Mesolithic and early Neolithic worked flint was recovered from across the site, although few if any of the flints were discovered within their primary depositional context. Three of the worked flints were recovered from the treeholes recorded in Trenches 3 and 6 which have the potential to represent early prehistoric features. In particular, feature 605 also contained fragments of hazelnut shell and a piece of siltstone which had been utilised as a hammer stone.

4.2.3 Trench 2 identified a small enclosure approximately 11m in diameter, defined by a well-preserved ditch that was dated to the middle Iron Age. Due to a strong correlation with the geophysics at this location, the full extent of this enclosure is indicated on Figure 2. Within and to the south of the enclosure were a number of pits that have also been dated to the middle Iron Age, and were probably contemporary with the enclosure.

4.2.4 The dense cluster of middle Iron Age pits recorded in Trench 7 demonstrates a separate focus of activity to that around Trench 2 and perhaps indicates a wider spread

of activity. In comparison with the features recorded to the west these pits produced comparatively large quantities of pottery and charred grain. Although the charred remains were in poor condition due to sustained burning, the range of material does indicate the presence and good potential for the preservation of such remains.

4.2.5 A number of post-medieval features were also recorded, including a posthole within Trench 12, a rubbish pit within Trench 14 and the remains of a trackway or road within Trench 11. There were also several field boundary ditches recorded within Trenches 15, 16, 18, 19, and 21. Of these ditches, only 1903 was dated to the post-medieval period on the basis of artefactual evidence.

4.3 Interpretation

4.3.1 The results of the investigation have demonstrated at least three phases of archaeological activity within the site. The earliest phase dates to the early prehistoric period, specifically the Mesolithic and early Neolithic. The second phase is middle Iron Age in date, and the final phase dates to the post-medieval period.

4.3.2 The small assemblage of worked flints recovered from across the two fields provides an indication of Mesolithic and early Neolithic activity within the site. However, the general distribution of the material, particularly from secondary contexts, means that it is not possible to determine any specific concentrations or scatters or even if such densities may be present.

4.3.3 The combined evidence from the geophysical survey and the excavation of Trench 2 indicates the presence of a middle Iron Age enclosure and associated pits, both within the enclosure and externally. The purpose of the enclosure remains uncertain at this stage, although the finds assemblage and nearby pits are indicative of domestic activity.

4.3.4 Based on the similarities in the pottery recovered from the features within Trenches 2 and 7, it would appear that these represent contemporary activity. These trenches are approximately 170m apart. The dominance of cooking vessels and the charred grains recovered from the pits within Trench 7 indicates that these remains were also associated with domestic activities.

4.3.5 The single sherd of 3rd century AD pottery from the surface of an unexcavated feature in Trench 2 does provide the possibility that there was a further phase of activity during the Roman period. However, it should be noted that this was recovered as a surface find and exhibited a moderate amount of abrasion suggesting that it may have derived from the overlying ploughsoil. This artefact cannot be relied upon to date the pit above which it was located. Furthermore, no other features or artefacts were identified during the fieldwork to suggest further activity of this date.

4.3.6 The posthole recorded in Trench 12 corresponds with an area of magnetic disturbance highlighted by the geophysical survey. It is highly likely that both the posthole and the area of disturbance are the remains of a building that was indicated at this location on the Longworth and Charney Tithe Map (1846). Because the building does not appear on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map, and also due to the artefactual evidence, it appears that building was demolished between 1846 and 1876. The rubbish pit in

Trench 14 is probably contemporary with, and therefore possibly related to the activity at this location.

4.3.7 Ditches 1603, 1803 and 1906 correspond broadly with 19th-century field boundaries plotted on the Longworth and Charney Tithe map (1846). The undated ditches within Trenches 21 and 15 may also be field boundaries but they do not correlate with any boundaries recorded on 19th-century or later maps.

4.4 Significance

4.4.1 The flint assemblage recovered from the site, although small, may be an indicator of more significant remains that were not directly identified during the evaluation. Mesolithic sites are well known from the Corallian Ridge, and material from this period has previously been recorded in the vicinity. On the basis of this investigation there is a good potential for further remains of this date to be recovered from the site. However, as no significant buried soils or colluvial deposits were recorded during the evaluation (except at the northern end of Trench 5), it is unlikely that in-situ scatters are present.

4.4.2 The potential for Neolithic remains is considered to be slightly more significant. Although, again, only a small quantity was recovered during the investigation, structured fieldwalking exercises immediately to the north of the site (*c* 15m) have previously identified significant scatters (OA 1992). On the basis that surface scatters of Neolithic flint often relate to isolated pit groups (Garrow 2007), there remains some potential for isolated features of this nature to be present within the site boundary.

4.4.3 The middle Iron Age features identified during this evaluation have the potential to be regionally important. The Solent-Thames Research Framework points out that historically, development within the region has led to a geographical bias in the areas of archaeological excavation, leaving the Vale of White Horse and the Corallian Ridge underrepresented (Hey and Hind 2014). Consequently, the remains uncovered here could be important in redressing that bias for the middle Iron Age period. Furthermore, the possibility of middle Iron Age settlement at this location could also provide significant information concerning the wider context of the middle Iron Age fort at Cherbury, which lies approximately 2km to the south-west. However, the full extent of the full extent of the remains on this site cannot be accurately determined from the results of this evaluation.

APPENDIX A TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

MESO = Mesolithic
EPH = Early Prehistoric
MIA = Middle Iron Age

Trench 1						
General description					**Orientation**	E-W
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil overlying natural geology of sand and sandstone bedrock.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.25
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
100	Layer	-	0.25	Topsoil	-	-
101	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 2						
General description					**Orientation**	N-S
Trench contained at least 1 ditch and 4 pits as determined through excavation. A second ditch and two possible pits were also present but not excavated. Comprised topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of sand and sandstone.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.34
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
200	Layer	-	0.26	Topsoil	-	-
201	Layer	-	0.08	Subsoil	Flint	EPH
202	Cut	2.38	0.98	Ditch	-	-
203	Fill	-	0.98	Fill of 202, mid grey brown, silty sand		
204	Cut	0.9	0.3	Pit		
205	Fill	-	0.3	Fill of 204, mixed mid and light brown, silty sand		
206	Cut	1.82	0.48	Pit		
207	Fill	-	0.48	Fill of 206, mid and light brown, silty sand	Pottery	MIA
208	Cut	1.45	0.5	Pit		
209	Fill	-	0.5	Fill of 208, mid brown silty sand	Pottery	MIA
210	Cut	2.4	>0.9	Pit?		
211	Fill	-	>0.9	Fill of 210, mid and light brown, silty sand		
212	Cut	2.04	-	Possible pit (unexcavated)		
213	Fill	-	-	Fill of 212 (unexcavated)		
214	Cut	1.90	-	Ditch (unexcavated)		
215	Fill	-	-	Fill of 214 (unexcavated)		
216	Cut	1.75	-	Ditch? Intercutting pits? (unexcavated)		

217	Fill	-	-	Fill of 216 (unexcavated)	Pottery	AD 240-300
218	Layer	-	-	natural		

Trench 3						
General description					**Orientation**	NW-SE
Trench contained a single tree throw hole. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of sand.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.4
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
300	Layer	-		Topsoil	-	-
301	Layer	-		Subsoil	-	-
302	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
303	Cut	1.72	0.19	Tree throw hole	Flint	EPH
304	Fill	1.72	0.19	Fill of 303, mid grey sand	-	-

Trench 4						
General description					**Orientation**	ENE-WSW
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil overlying natural geology of sand and sandstone					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.3
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
400	Layer	-	0.3	Topsoil	-	-
401	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 5						
General description					**Orientation**	E-W
Trench contained two ditches. Consists of topsoil, subsoil and colluvium overlying natural geology of sand.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	1
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
500	Layer	-		Topsoil	Flint	EPH
501	Layer	-		Subsoil	-	-
502	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
503	Cut	2.5	1.3	Ditch	-	-
504	Fill	-	0.3	Fill of 503, mid brown silty sand	-	-
505	Fill	-	1.0	Fill of 503, mid to dark grey brown, silty sand	-	-
506	Cut	1.4	0.3	Ditch	-	-
507	Fill	-	0.3	Fill of 506, mid reddish brown, silty sand	-	-
508	Layer	-	-	Colluvium, thick interface between topsoil and subsoil	-	-

Trench 6						
General description					**Orientation**	ENE-WSW
Trench contained two tree throw holes and a ditch. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of sand and iron stone.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.7
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
600	Layer	-	0.4	Topsoil	Flint	EPH
601	Layer	-	0.3	Subsoil	-	-
602	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
603	Cut	1.82	0.18	Tree throw hole		
604	Fill	-	0.18	Fill of 603, light grey, clay sand		
605	Cut	2.05	0.33	Tree throw hole		
606	Fill	-	0.33	Fill of 605, light grey, silty sand	Flint	EPH
607	Cut	0.74	0.21	Ditch		
608	Fill	-	0.21	Fill of 607, mid greyish brown sand		

Trench 7						
General description					**Orientation**	SW-NE
Trench contained at least 7 pits, 3 of these were excavated the remainder were recorded in plan. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of sand.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.73
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
700	Layer	-	0.33	Topsoil	Flint	EPH
701	Layer	-	0.23	Subsoil	Flint	EPH
702	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
703	Cut	1.8	>0.4	Pit	-	-
704	Cut	1.35	-	Pit (unexcavated)	-	-
705	Cut	1.35	>0.5	Pit	-	-
706	Cut	1.5	0.52	Pit	-	-
707	Cut	2.75	-	Pit (unexcavated)	-	-
708	Fill	-	-	Fill of 707, mid to dark grey brown, silty sand (unexcavated)	-	-
709	Cut	1.55	-	Pit (unexcavated)	-	-
710	Fill	-	-	Fill of 709, mid to dark grey brown, silty sand (unexcavated)	Pottery	MIA
711	Fill	-	>0.4	Fill of 703, mid brown, silty sand	Pottery, Flint	MIA
712	Fill	-	>0.5	Fill of 705, mid grey brown and light brown, silty sand	Pottery	MIA

713	Fill	-	0.52	Fill of 706, mottled light brown, silty sand		
714	Cut	0.95	-	Pit (unexcavated)		
715	Fill	-	-	Fill of 714, mid to dark grey brown, silty sand (unexcavated)		
716	Fill	-	-	Fill of 704, mid brown, silty sand		

Trench 8						
General description					**Orientation**	SW-NE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of sand.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.68
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
800	Layer	-	0.38	Topsoil	-	-
801	Layer	-	0.3	Subsoil	-	-
802	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 9						
General description					**Orientation**	NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of sand.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.62
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
900	Layer	-	0.38	Topsoil	-	-
901	Layer	-	0.24	Subsoil	-	-
902	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 10						
General description					**Orientation**	N-S
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of sand.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.52
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
1000	Layer	-	0.28	Topsoil	-	-
1001	Layer	-	0.24	Subsoil	-	-
1002	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 11						
General description					**Orientation**	E-W
Trench contained the remains of a stone trackway sealed by topsoil and overlying the subsoil. The natural geology comprised sand and ironstone.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.54
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
1100	Layer	-	0.2	Topsoil	Flint	EPH
1101	Layer	-	0.16	Road Surface	-	-
1102	Layer	-	0.22	Subsoil	Flint	EPH
1103	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 12						
General description					**Orientation**	NNW-SSE
Trench contained two intercutting post-medieval pits. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of sand.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.7
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
1200	Layer	-		Topsoil	-	-
1201	Layer	-		Subsoil	-	-
1202	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
1203	Cut	0.7	0.46	Posthole	-	-
1204	Fill	-	0.46	Fill of 1203, dark grey silty sand	Pottery, Clay Pipe, Metal, Glass	1870-1920
1205	Cut	0.75	0.21	Pit	-	-
1206	Fill	-	0.21	Fill of 1205, mid to dark brownish grey	-	-

Trench 13						
General description					**Orientation**	SW-NE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of sand.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.47
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
1300	Layer	-	0.33	Topsoil	-	-
1301	Layer	-	0.14	Subsoil	-	-
1302	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 14						
General description					**Orientation**	NW-SE
Trench contained a single pit. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of sand.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.4
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
1400	Layer	-	0.25	Topsoil	-	-
1401	Layer	-	0.15	Subsoil	-	-
1402	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
1403	Cut	1.25	0.4	Pit	-	-
1404	Fill	-	0.4	Fill of 1403, mottled light brown and brown grey, silty sand	Pottery	1850-1900

Trench 15						
General description					**Orientation**	NE-SW
Trench contained two ditches. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of sand.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.55
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
1501	Layer	-	0.35	Topsoil	-	-
1502	Cut	1.46	0.3	Ditch	-	-
1503	Fill	-	0.3	Fill of 1502, mid brown silty sand		
1504	Void	-	-	-	-	-
1505	Cut	1.5	0.36	Ditch		
1506	Fill	-	0.36	Fill of 1505, mid brown, silty sand		
1507	Layer	-	0.2	Subsoil		
1508	Void	-	-	-	-	-
1509	Layer	-	-	Natural		

Trench 16						
General description					**Orientation**	NW-SE
Trench contained a single ditch. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of sand, with clay sand at the lower south-eastern end.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.45
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
1600	Layer	-	0.25	Topsoil	-	-
1601	Layer	-	0.2	Subsoil	-	-
1602	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
1603	Cut	1.7	0.7	Ditch	-	-
1604	Fill	-	0.7	Fill of 1603, mid to dark grey brown, sandy silt	-	-

Trench 17						
General description					**Orientation**	NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of sandy clay.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.53
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
1700	Layer	-	0.32	Topsoil	-	-
1701	Layer	-	0.21	Subsoil	-	-
1702	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 18						
General description					**Orientation**	E-W
Trench contained two ditches. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of sand.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.6
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
1800	Layer	-	0.4	Topsoil	-	-
1801	Layer	-	0.2	Subsoil	-	-
1802	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
1803	Cut	1.6	0.52	Ditch	-	-
1804	Fill	-	0.52	Fill of 1803, mixed brown, grey brown, silty clay	-	-
1805	Cut	1.3	0.12	Ditch	-	-
1806	Fill	-	0.12	Fill of 1805, mid brown clay sand	-	-

Trench 19						
General description					**Orientation**	NE-SW
Trench contained two ditches. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of sand.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.5
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
1900	Layer	-	0.25	Topsoil	Flint	EPH
1901	Layer	-	0.2	Subsoil	-	-
1902	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
1903	Cut	4.5	0.35	Ditch		
1904	Fill	-	0.2	Fill of 1903, very dark grey, sandy silt	Pottery	1850-1900
1905	Fill	-	0.22	Fill of 1903, mid brown grey, slightly silty sand	Flint	MESO
1906	Cut	1.9	0.3	Ditch	-	-
1907	Fill	-	0.3	Fill if 1906, mid to dark grey brown, silty sand	Flint	EPH

Trench 20						
General description					**Orientation**	E-W
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of sandy clay.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.49
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
2000	Layer	-	0.28	Topsoil	-	-
2001	Layer	-	0.21	Subsoil	-	-
2002	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 21						
General description					**Orientation**	NNE-SSW
Trench contained two ditches. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of sandy clay.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.6
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
2100	Layer	-	0.35	Topsoil	-	-
2101	Layer	-	0.25	Subsoil	-	-
2102	Fill	-	0.6	Fill of 2103, mid brown, silty clay	-	-
2103	Cut	0.9	0.6	Drain		
2104	Fill	-	0.3	Fill of 2105, mid brown, sandy clay		
2105	Cut	1.3	0.55	Ditch		
2106	Fill	-	0.44	Fill of 2107, mid grey brown, sandy clay		
2107	Cut	0.55	0.44	Ditch		
2108	Layer	-	-	Natural		
2109	Fill	-	0.2	Fill of 2105, light grey, sandy clay		

Trench 22						
General description					**Orientation**	NNW-SSE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of sandy clay.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.6
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
2200	Layer	-	0.3	Topsoil	-	-
2201	Layer	-	0.3	Subsoil	-	-
2202	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 23						
General description					**Orientation**	E-W
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of sandy clay.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.58
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
2300	Layer	-	0.28	Topsoil	-	-
2301	Layer	-	0.3	Subsoil	-	-
2302	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

APPENDIX B FINDS REPORTS

B.1 Iron Age and Roman Pottery

By Edward Biddulph

B.1.1 Fifty sherds of Iron Age and Roman pottery, weighing 804g, were recovered from the evaluation. The assemblage was recorded to identify fabrics and any evidence for form and function, and to provide spot-dates. Fabrics were assigned codes from OA's standard recording system for later Iron Age and Roman pottery (Booth 2014).

Table 1: Summary of Iron Age and Roman pottery by context

Context	Count	Weight (g)	Comments	Spot-date
207	3	56	AM3 body sherds. Granular sandy fabric with moderate mica. Dark grey fabric and surfaces	MIA
209	1	25	AM3 body sherd. Granular sandy fabric with moderate mica. Dark grey fabric and surfaces. Carbonised residue on interior surface	MIA
217	1	14	M22 Oxford white ware mortarium, Young (1977) type M17 or M18. Rim sherd (0.06 EVE)	AD 240-300
710	24	552	AM3 body and base sherds. Granular sandy fabric with occasional to moderate mica and occasional elongated voids indicating burnt-out grass or straw; dark grey fabric, and dark grey or reddish surfaces	MIA
711	8	22	AM3 body sherds. Fabric as in context 710	MIA
712	13	135	AM2 body and base sherds. Fabric as in context 710, but a little finer and more micaceous. Near-complete ?jar base present	MIA
TOTAL	50	804		

B.1.2 Forty-nine sherds are of middle Iron Age date (MIA; *c* 400-100 BC). The fabrics encountered in contexts 207, 209, 710, 711 and 712 are largely identical. All are sandy (A) and to lesser or greater extents micaceous (M), and have dark grey surfaces and cross-section, except where the vessels have presumably been exposed to heat from (probably) hearths, causing the external surfaces of some sherds to redden. The fabrics are medium-coarse (3 on the scale of coarseness, with 5 being the coarsest). The pottery from 712 seems a little finer (2) with the sand grains being smaller and less granular, though this could simply be a result of unintentional variation in production, rather than a deliberate attempt to produce a relatively fine vessel.

B.1.3 No rims were present and no forms were identified. However, the body sherds are relatively thick at *c* 8-13mm, and are likely to belong to jars or bowls. This is supported by the reddening and a carbonised residue, which points to the use of the pottery as cooking vessels.

B.1.4 The pottery has a mean sherd weight of 16g, with fairly large sherds present among smaller ones. Surfaces are in good condition. Overall, the pottery is relatively well preserved, suggesting that it has not undergone excessive episodes of disturbance and redeposition, and that it may have been found reasonably close to its area of use. That said, the thicker, more robust, sherds are likely to better withstand episodes of redeposition and to some extent bias measures of weight.

B.1.5 A single sherd, from context 217, dated to the Roman period. The rim is part of mortarium made in the Oxford region during the later 3rd century AD.

B.2 Post-medieval Pottery

By John Cotter

B.2.1 A total of 6 sherds of pottery weighing 81g were recovered from three contexts. The condition of the material is generally good. The pottery is probably all of 19th-century date. Domestic pottery typical of Oxford and southern English sites is represented. Given the small size of the assemblage a separate catalogue has not been constructed and instead the pottery is simply described and spot-dated below. Post-medieval pottery fabric codes referred to are those of the Museum of London (MoLA 2014).

Context (1204) Spot-date: c 1870-1920

B.2.2 Description: 4 sherds (67g). 2x fresh body sherds from the body and shoulder of a small very globular jar or jug. This is a miscellaneous industrial slipware vessel (Fabric FMSL), probably from Staffordshire, with the sort of refined colour-bodied fabric commonly used for teapots and tobacco jars etc in the later 19th and early 20th century. It has a refined very hard brown fabric covered all over inside and out with a white slip. From the shoulder up, the outside of the vessel has been 'dipped' or covered with a dark brown slip and the whole external surface then covered with a light brown glaze. The inside appears white under a clear glaze. This two-tone effect may be in imitation of brown salt-glazed stoneware jars and bottles which were commonly iron-dipped on their upper half. 1x sherd from the footring of a small ?jug in brown-glazed Rockingham ware (ROCK, *c* 1800-1900). 1x fairly large body sherd from the curved shoulder of a large storage vessel or drinks flagon in English stoneware with a brown salt glaze externally (ENGS). The latter is probably 19th-century in date.

Context (1404) Spot-date: c 1850-1900

B.2.3 Description: 1 sherd (11g). 1x sherd from the plain everted flanged rim of a plain dish or dinner plate in refined white earthenware (REFW, *c* 1806-1900+). Probably second half of the 19th century.

Context (1904) Spot-date: c 1850-1900

B.2.4 Description: 1 sherd (3g). 1x small sherd from the flat base of a plain dish or saucer in refined white earthenware (REFW).

B.3 Flint

By Michael Donnelly

Introduction

B.3.1 A small assemblage of 22 pieces of flint was recovered from this evaluation. The assemblage contained numerous blade forms including specialised core maintenance pieces known as crested blades. It also contained two tools that were both early in date and were very probably Mesolithic. In addition to this several flakes and a core fragment were also recovered. The assemblage was in a very varied condition with some fresh and uncorticated pieces along with heavily damaged and very heavily corticated examples. Most of the flints

were either topsoil (9) or subsoil finds (5); the remaining seven were recovered from two treeholes (303, 1 flint; 605, 3 flints), a pit (703, 2 flints) and two ditches (1905 and 1907, one flint each). The artefacts were catalogued according to OA South's standard system of broad artefact/debitage type, general condition was noted and dating was attempted where possible. 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.

Table 2: Summary of flint by context

Context	type	sub-type	notes	date
201	blade	side trimming	proximal segment	EPH
303	crested flake	inner flake	remains of dual crest, could be a rejuvenation flake but clearly related to core maintenance	EPH
500	flake, bladelet	inner x 2	medial and proximal segments	EPH
600	crested blade	side trimming	partial crest on lower half of blade	EPH
606	crested blade	side trimming	partial crest on lower third of blade	EPH
606	blade, bladelet	inner & side trimming		EPH
700	flake x 3	inner, prep & misc trimming		
700	bladelet	inner	proximal segment	EPH
701	flake	preparation		
711	bladelet	inner	distal segment	EPH
711	core fragment	flakes	from a complex flake core	
1100	end truncation	inner flake	either an end truncation or a fairly poor obliquely blunted microlith	EPH
1102	flake x 2	distal & misc trimming	distal trimming flake shows remnants of a crest so likely to be early	EPH
1102	bladelet	misc trimming	distal segment	EPH
1900	blade	side trimming		EPH
1905	microlith?	inner bladelet	probable microlith fragment snapped at the angle of the oblique retouch with the bladelet	Mesolithic
1907	Flake	side trimming	narrow and thin	EPH

Discussion

B.3.2 The two tools consisted of a probable microlith fragment from ditch 1903, fill 1905 and an end truncation or obliquely blunted microlith from context 1100, the topsoil in Trench 11. The microlith fragment was a distal bladelet segment with light trimming/use along its lower left edges and oblique blunting at the snap on its right hand side. The piece was not certainly a microlith but it was clearly retouched and displayed breakage at the angle between the oblique retouch and the short side of the tool that is typical of broken microliths. The second tool represented another obliquely trimmed distal blade segment. This complete example had

quite shallow oblique blunting running from the lower right to upper left edge. The blunting was slightly atypical for a microlith - these are usually far more pointed, and it may represent an end truncation, another common Mesolithic or earlier Neolithic tool form.

B.3.3 Treehole 303, fill 304 contained a crested flake or possible rejuvenation flake. These pieces are in use for a longer period than crested blades but are still likely to be early in date. Treehole 605, fill 606 contained three blade forms including one with a partial crest. While these pieces were all early in date, the small assemblage was still likely to be residual as all three displayed differing levels of edge damage and cortication.

B.3.4 Pit 703, fill 711 contained a bladelet and a core fragment from a complex flake core. Such cores are not diagnostic as such but they are seldom found in very late assemblages and so would most likely date to sometime between the Mesolithic and early Bronze Age. As both pieces were in good condition, it is possible that one or both may be contemporary with the pit fill.

B.3.5 Ditches 1903 and 1906 each produced one flint from fills 1905 and 1907 respectively. The probable microlith fragment from fill 1905 has already been mentioned and would clearly be considered residual. Ditch fill 1907 contained an undiagnostic side trimming flake.

Conclusion

B.3.6 This small assemblage did not contain many or possibly any flints in their primary depositional context. The most likely age represented here by some, if not all of the assemblage is the Mesolithic period. Mesolithic activity is well known from the immediate and nearby areas with Mesolithic scatters being identified immediately north of here during initial field walking and from around Kingston Bagpuize (OAU 1992), as well as excavated assemblages from further east at Tubney Wood (Bradley and Hey 1993; Simmonds *et al.* 2011).

B.3.7 Mesolithic or earlier Neolithic scatters are usually discovered within buried soil horizons. However, where suitable conditions exist, many of the flints from a scatter will work their way into natural horizons and it may be possible that some undisturbed portion of those assemblage or assemblages still exists within the evaluation area.

B.3.8 The assemblage could also largely date to the earlier Neolithic period. Neolithic scatters are also known from the immediate area (OAU 1992) and in many cases such surface scatters often relate to isolated pit groups (Garrow 2007) that are actually quite common in the Oxfordshire area (Anderson-Whymark 2011; Hey *et al*. 2016).

B.3.9 Although the assemblage could be considered small, given the nature of archaeology from the periods it represents and given the previous results in this area including immediately north of the evaluation, it would seem likely that the development area has high potential for producing important early prehistoric lithic-related activity.

B.4 Clay Tobacco Pipe

By John Cotter

B.4.1 A total of 5 pieces of clay pipe weighing 7g were recovered from a single context. The condition of the material is fairly poor. Given the small size of the assemblage a separate catalogue has not been constructed and instead the pipes are simply described and spot-dated below.

Context (1204) Spot-date: 19th century (probably c 1840-1900?)

B.4.2 Description: 5 pieces (7g): 1x smallish body sherd (rim missing) from the front of a typical 19th-century clay pipe bowl with moulded foliage (?acorn) decoration. Typical of local Oxfordshire pipes *c* 1840-1900. 4x short pieces of slender 19th-century pipe stems, two with rusty staining.

B.5 Ceramic Building Material and Fired Clay

By John Cotter

B.5.1 Two pieces of CBM weighing 342g were recovered during the course of the fieldwork. These have not been separately catalogued but are described below.

Context (1101) Spot-date: Late 19th to 20th century

B.5.2 Description: 1 piece (106g). Fresh end fragment from a curved land drain. This is machine-made in a fine light orange fabric.

Context (1204) Spot-date: 19th century

B.5.3 Description: 1 piece (236g). Fresh top left corner fragment from a peg tile with a sub-circular nail hole. The hole still has a piece of iron nail in situ. Fairly smooth slightly sandy light orange fabric characteristic of late post-medieval roof tiles. Fairly neatly made.

B.5.4 A single small scrap of fired clay (2g) was recovered from a sieved sample from context 205. It has a brown sandy fabric with a layered structure and is a darker brown on the 'edge' and outer surface.

B.6 Metal

By Ian Scott

B.6.1 There is a single copper alloy fragment from context 1204. Approximately square, with two adjacent smooth edges, and flat face and curved face. Probably a corner fragment. The block is made from heavy, probably leaded alloy. Function uncertain. 23mm x 24mm x 11mm. The fragment is not readily datable, but was probably not hand-made, but rather produced in a factory or by machine.

B.7 Glass

By Ian Scott

B.7.1 There are four small sherds of vessel glass from context 1204. The four pieces are of similar very pale green glass and of similar thickness. Two sherds are very slightly curved. Two sherds have evidence of embossing, and one of the sherds has parts of two letters visible: 'J A'.

B.7.2 The vessel from which the sherds derive is not closely datable, but was made in a mould. The type of the mould is unclear, because so little of the vessel survives. The vessel could date from the 18th century but is probably more likely to date from 19th or early 20th century.

B.8 Stone

By Ruth Shaffrey

B.8.1 A total of five pieces of stone were retained. Three small pieces from context 205 are unworked as is a larger fragment from context 710. One item from context 606 is a cobble with soft peck marks visible on the main surviving face and one hollowed end. The cobble appears to be a type of grey siltstone, but it is not familiar to the author. It is very smooth all over and appears to be a naturally worn cobble, but the peck marks suggest some use that involved things being tapped against it and the hollowed end could be a result of use. However, the precise function of the stone is unclear. This item should be retained whilst the unworked stones can be discarded.

APPENDIX C ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS

C.1 Environmental Samples

By Sharon Cook

Introduction

C.1.1 Three samples were taken during the evaluation at Springhill, Southmoor, Oxfordshire. Sample <1> (606) was a 40 litre sample taken from an undated treehole (605) in Trench 6. Sample <2> (205) was a 20 litre sample from a circular pit 204 in Trench 2 and sample <3> (712) was a 40 litre sample from pit 705 in Trench 7. Both sample <2> and <3> are believed to be Iron Age in date.

Method

C.1.2 The samples were processed in their entirety by water flotation using a modified Siraf style machine. The flots were collected on a 250µm mesh and the heavy residues sieved to 500µm; both were dried in a heated room, after which the residues were sorted by eye for artefacts. The dried flots were scanned using a binocular microscope at approximately x 10 magnification.

Results

C.1.3 Sample <1> produced a flot of 30ml of which 100% was scanned. The flot contains large quantities of modern fine roots with small charcoal fragments in good condition but not suitable for wood species identification due to their small size. Ten fragments of hazelnut shell (*Corylus avellana*) are present; these are small and slightly abraded but should provide enough material for dating if required. A single fragment of possibly worked flint was extracted from the residues.

C.1.4 Sample <2> also produced a flot of 30ml of which 100% was scanned. This also contains a large amount of fine modern roots with small fragments of charcoal. Ten unidentifiable cereal grain fragments were observed together with three fragments of oat/brome (*Avena/Bromus*) and four wheat grains (*Triticum* sp.). A small fragment of mammal bone and burnt stone was extracted from the residue.

C.1.5 Sample <3> produced a flot of 15ml of which 100% was scanned. Approximately 50% of the flot consists of modern material including roots and modern seeds. The charred material is richer in quantity than in the other samples with one small and very abraded hazelnut shell fragment (*Corylus avellana*), over thirty unidentifiable cereal grain fragments, over forty small glume base fragments, four rachis fragments and six wheat grains *(Triticum* sp.). In addition, there is a substantial amount of wild plant material including eight grass seeds, four oat/brome fragments (*Avena/Bromus*), over forty legume seeds 4-2mm in size which appear to be vetches (*Lathyrus/Vicia* sp.), six <2mm legumes and ten wild seeds which could not be identified due to poor condition. The charcoal is small and while in good condition is not suitable for identification. No artefacts were retrieved from the residues.

Discussion and Conclusion

C.1.6 Sample <1> contains very different material from the other two taken from this site. The flint and hazelnut shell present are consistent with an earlier prehistoric date, possibly Neolithic or Bronze Age, and are common in features of this type at this time.

C.1.7 Samples <2> and <3> are more typical of assemblages expected for the Iron Age period, but unfortunately, most of the material in both of these samples is in poor condition, probably due to the burning process rather than post-depositional degradation. In both cases the charred material is likely to represent secondary deposition rather than material burnt in situ. The charred weed seeds and legumes in sample <3> are from plants that are commonly found growing alongside crops in arable fields and together with the chaff fragments suggest the burning of waste material removed from the grain after harvesting. The grain present is largely fragmentary and consequently unidentifiable.

C.1.8 Due to the fragmentary condition of the charred remains further work on this assemblage is not required, but the material is suitable for radiocarbon dating. However, the survival of such a range of material would seem to indicate that preservation is sufficiently good to warrant a comprehensive sampling strategy if further work is carried out on this site, ideally from a range of features.

C.2 Animal Bone

By Lee Broderick

Introduction

C.2.1 A total of 116 animal bones were recovered from the site, mostly from contexts dated to *c* 1850-1900 (Table 3). The single context that could not be dated was the only one to contain material recovered from environmental samples (from the first fraction, greater than 10mm) with the rest of the material all being collected by hand. The bones were generally in good condition, as might be expected given the 19th-century date.

Table 3: NSP and total mass of specimens per context.

Context	NSP	Mass (g)
205	1	0
1404	114	1590
1904	1	56

C.2.2 98.3% of the assemblage came from one context, 1404, and this in turn was dominated by pig (*Sus scrofa domesticus*) bones. Given their ubiquity, it is likely that all of the medium mammal specimens recovered (n=41), mainly ribs and thoracic or cervical vertebrae, also belong to this species. No bone surface modifications were observed in the assemblage but a large number of specimens contributed ageing information to the dataset. Given this, it is possible to state that the context contained the front half of two juvenile pigs as well as the partial remains of three foetal pigs. It is possible that the foetal remains were associated with one or both of the juvenile pigs and it may be that the rest of the individuals would have been recovered had the trench been extended and the context excavated fully. It is also likely that environmental sampling of this context would have recovered more of the foetal specimens.

C.2.3 Given the 19th-century date it seems most likely that these remains represent the disposal of natural casualties – either due to disease or else (given the presence of foetal specimens) birthing difficulties.

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APPENDIX E SITE SUMMARY DETAILS

Site name:	Springhill, Southmoor, Oxfordshire
Site code:	SOSPR 17
Grid Reference	NGR SU 3897 9795
Type:	Evaluation
Date and duration:	13th – 21st February 2017 (7 days)
Area of Site	11.43ha
Summary of Results:	Between 13th and 21st February 2017, Oxford Archaeology undertook an archaeological evaluation comprising 23 trenches on the site of a proposed residential development near Springhill, Southmoor, Oxfordshire (NGR SU 3897 9795). Archaeological features were present in 13 of the 23 trenches, representing at least three phases of activity on the site. The earliest phase dated to the Mesolithic and early Neolithic period and was indicated by a small assemblage of worked flints recovered from across the site and within treeholes. The second phase of activity was located within the south-west of the site and comprised middle Iron Age features including a small enclosure and associated pits in Trench 2 and a dense pit cluster in Trench 7. The third and final phase was focused in the north-east of the site and consisted of post-medieval field boundaries and a probable 19th century building.
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 in due course, under the accession number OXCMS:2017.30.

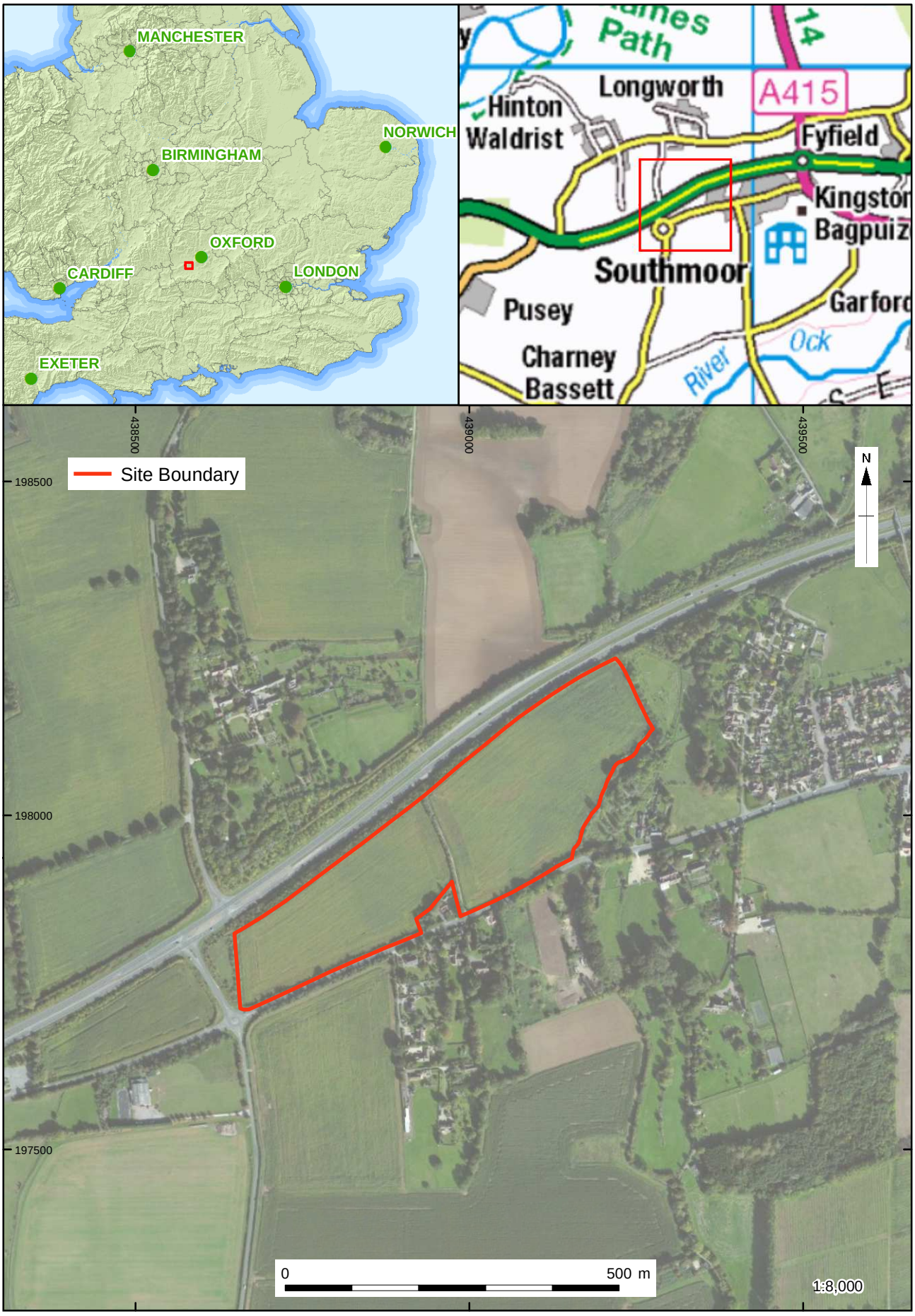

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Figure 1: Site location

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438519
198183

439394
198183

438519
197662

N

A 420

Lay-by

Springfield

Preston House

Likeys Lawn

Wayside House

BROOK VIEW

House

House

Little London

Wilderush

Blackmore

77.7m

Pump House

FB

FB

Track

Pond

Fallowfields

Springhill Farm

The Lodge

Springhill Cottage

Elm Cottage

Cedars

The White House

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23

Key

Site boundary

Evaluation trenches

Archaeological features

Geophysics Results

Magnetic anomalies (archaeological ?)

Possibly archaeological ?

Former boundary ?

Cultivation ?

Strong (recent ?) magnetic disturbances

Drain

Strong (ferrous) magnetic anomalies

Selected small background magnetic anomalies (natural ?)

0 100 m

Scale at A3 1:2500

Figure 2: Trench layout

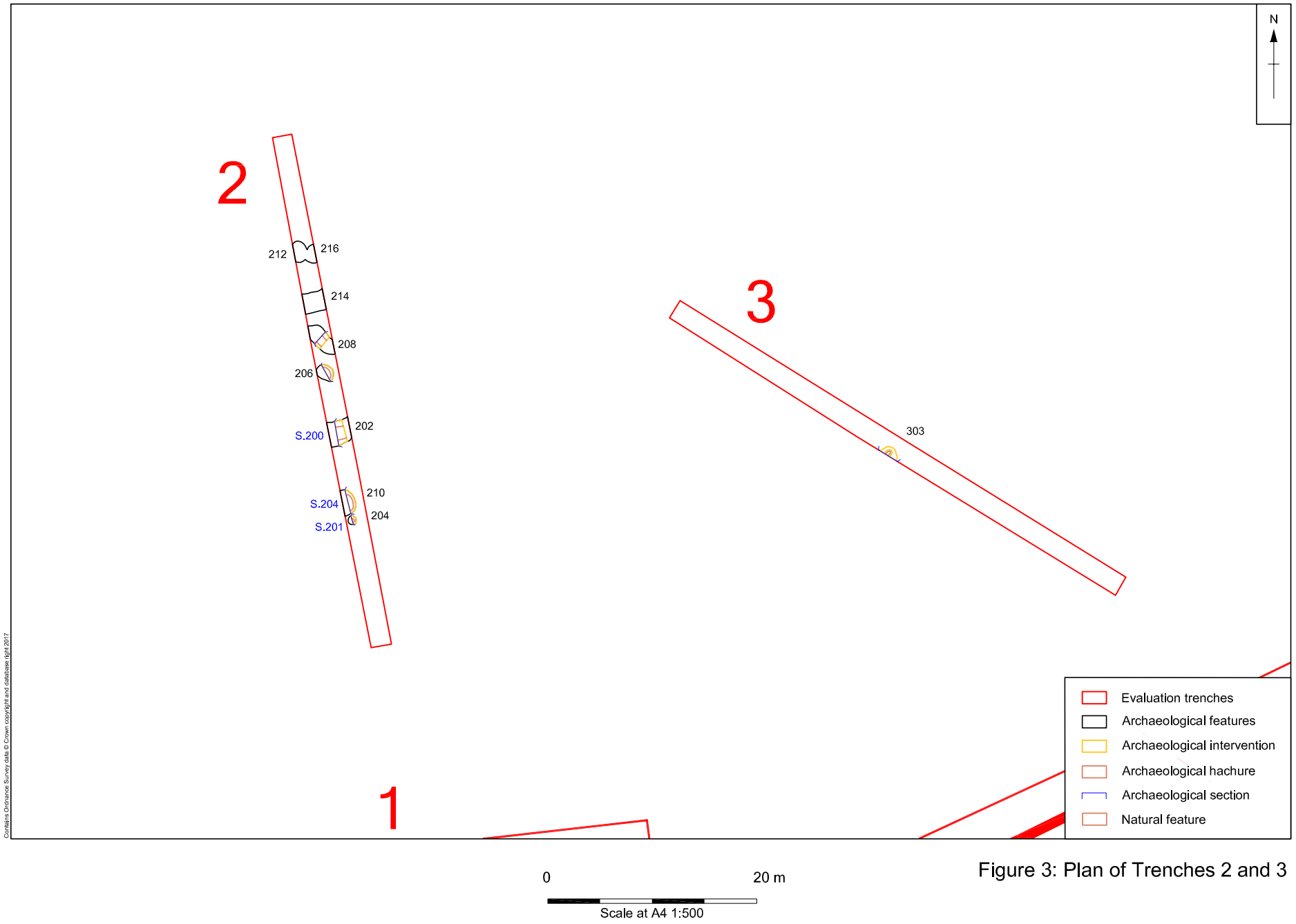

Figure 3: Plan of Trenches 2 and 3

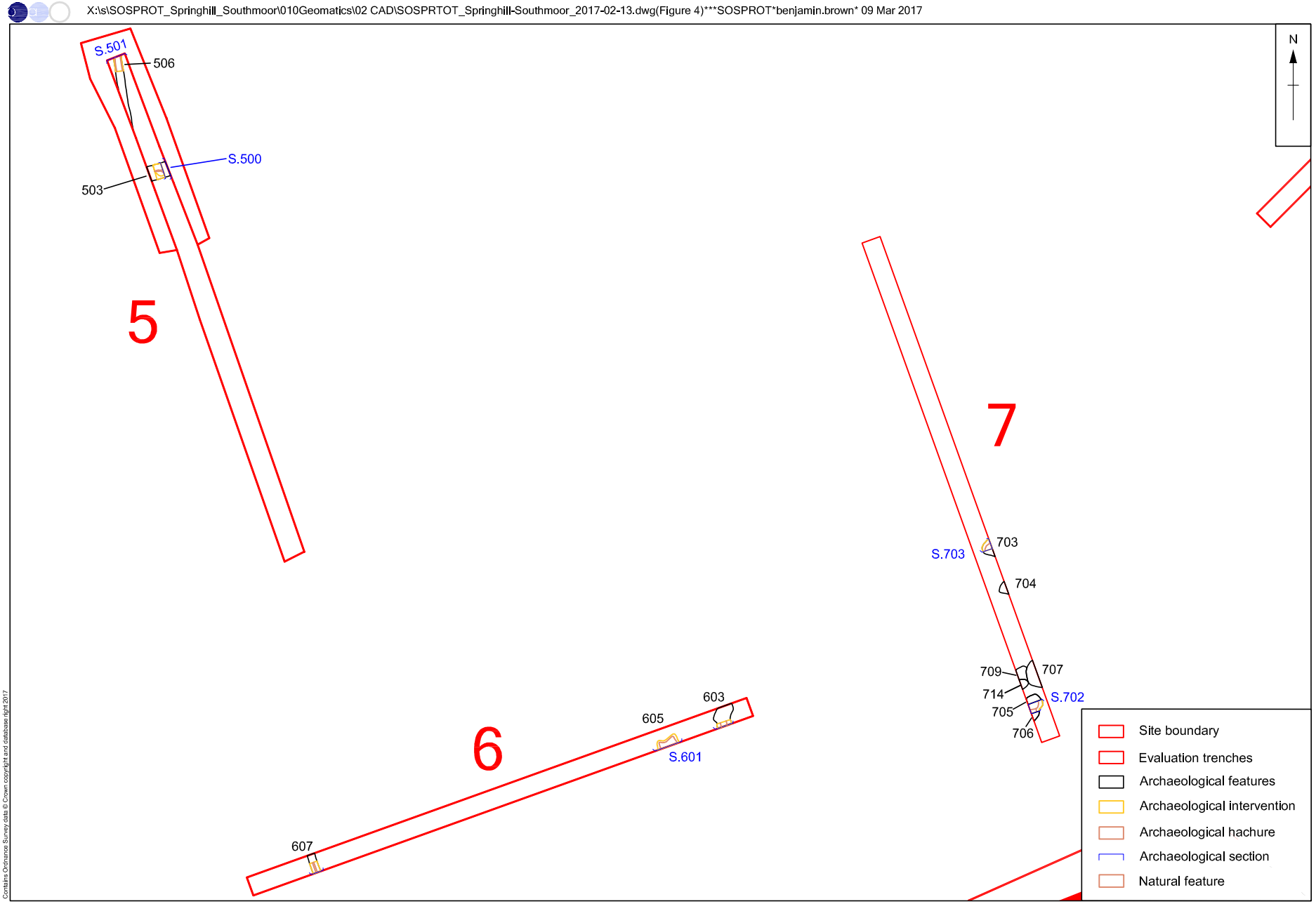

Figure 4: Plan of Trenches 5, 6 and 7

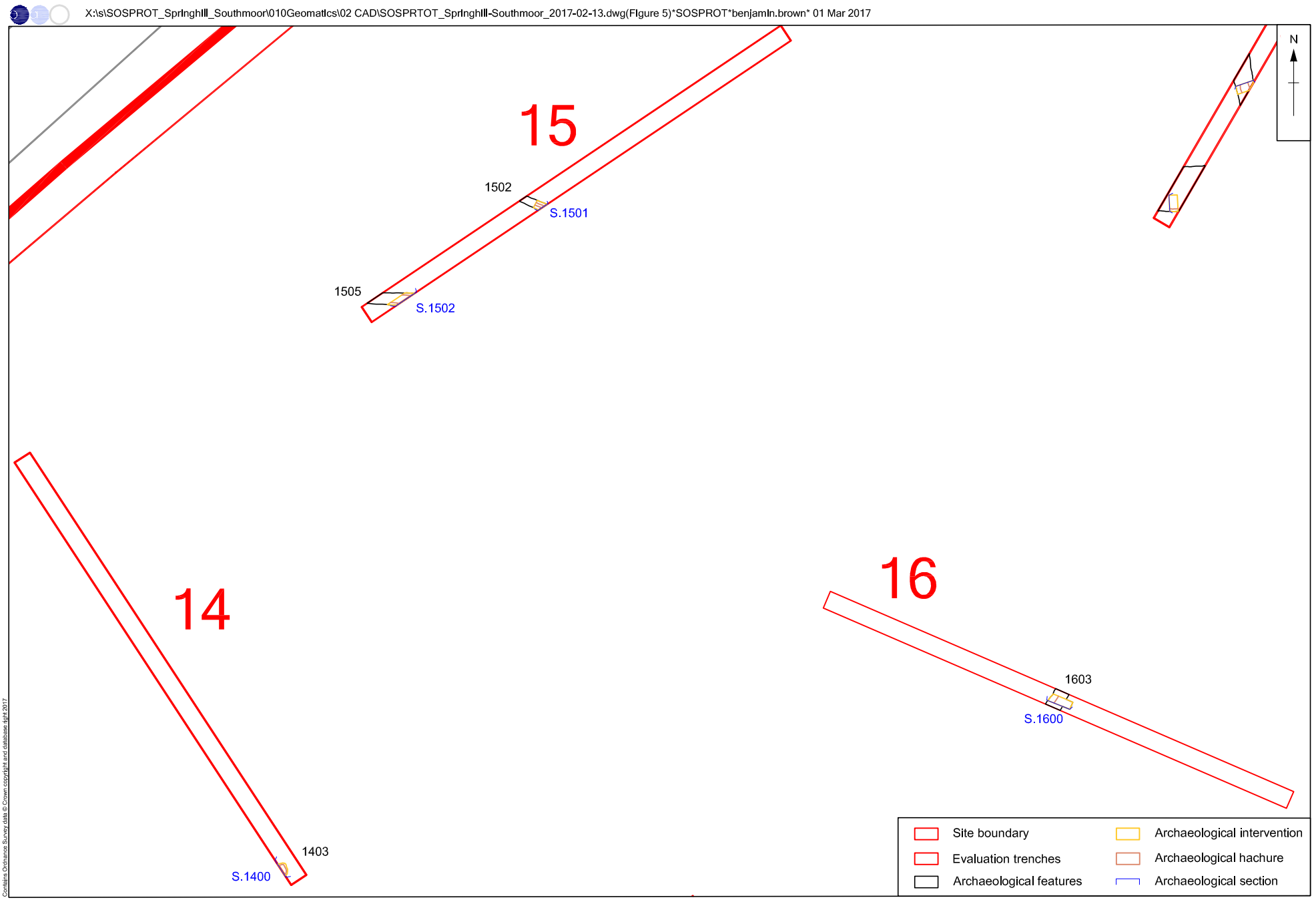

Figure 5: Plan of Trenches 14, 15 and 16

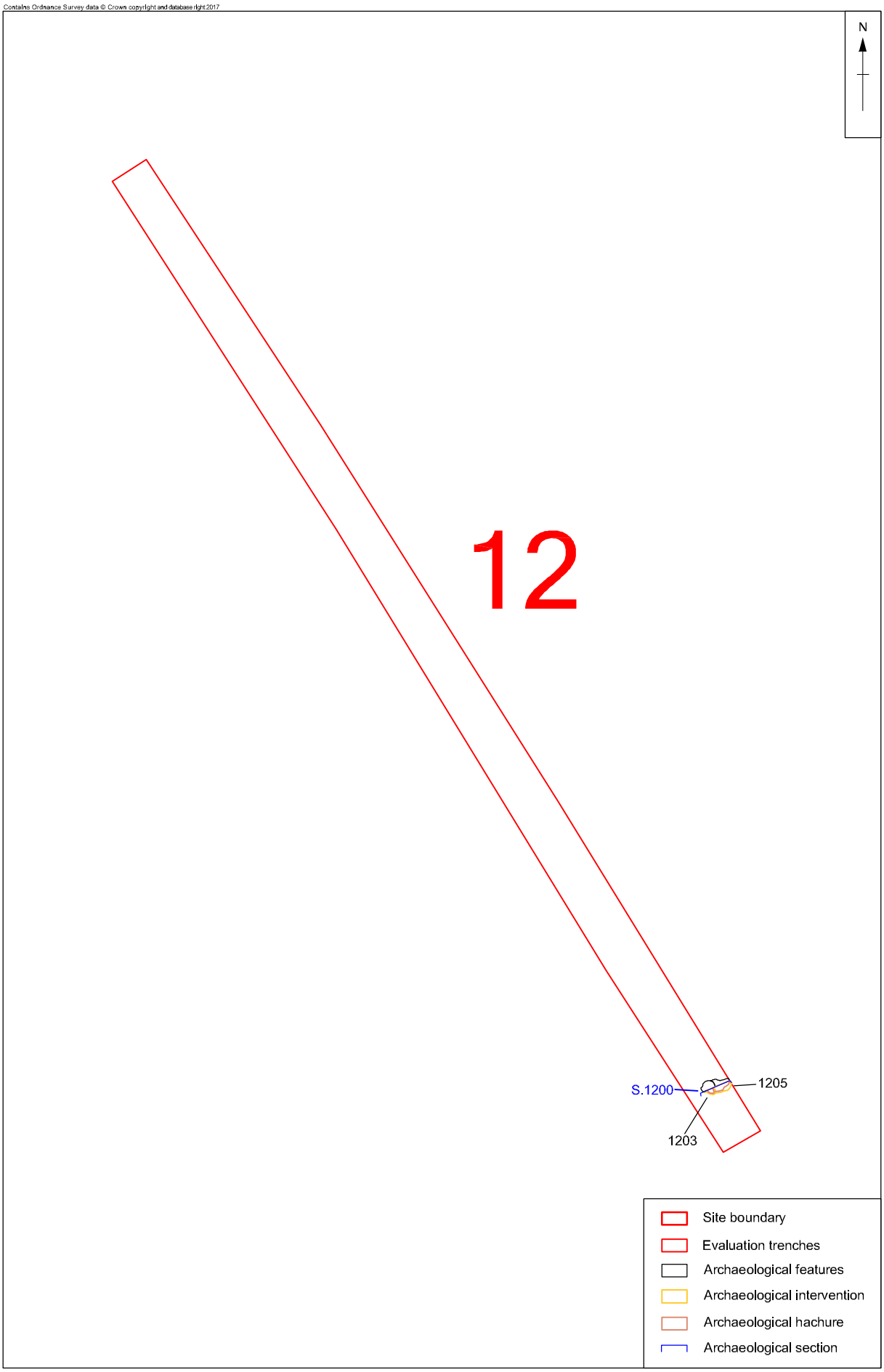

Figure 6: Plan of Trench 12

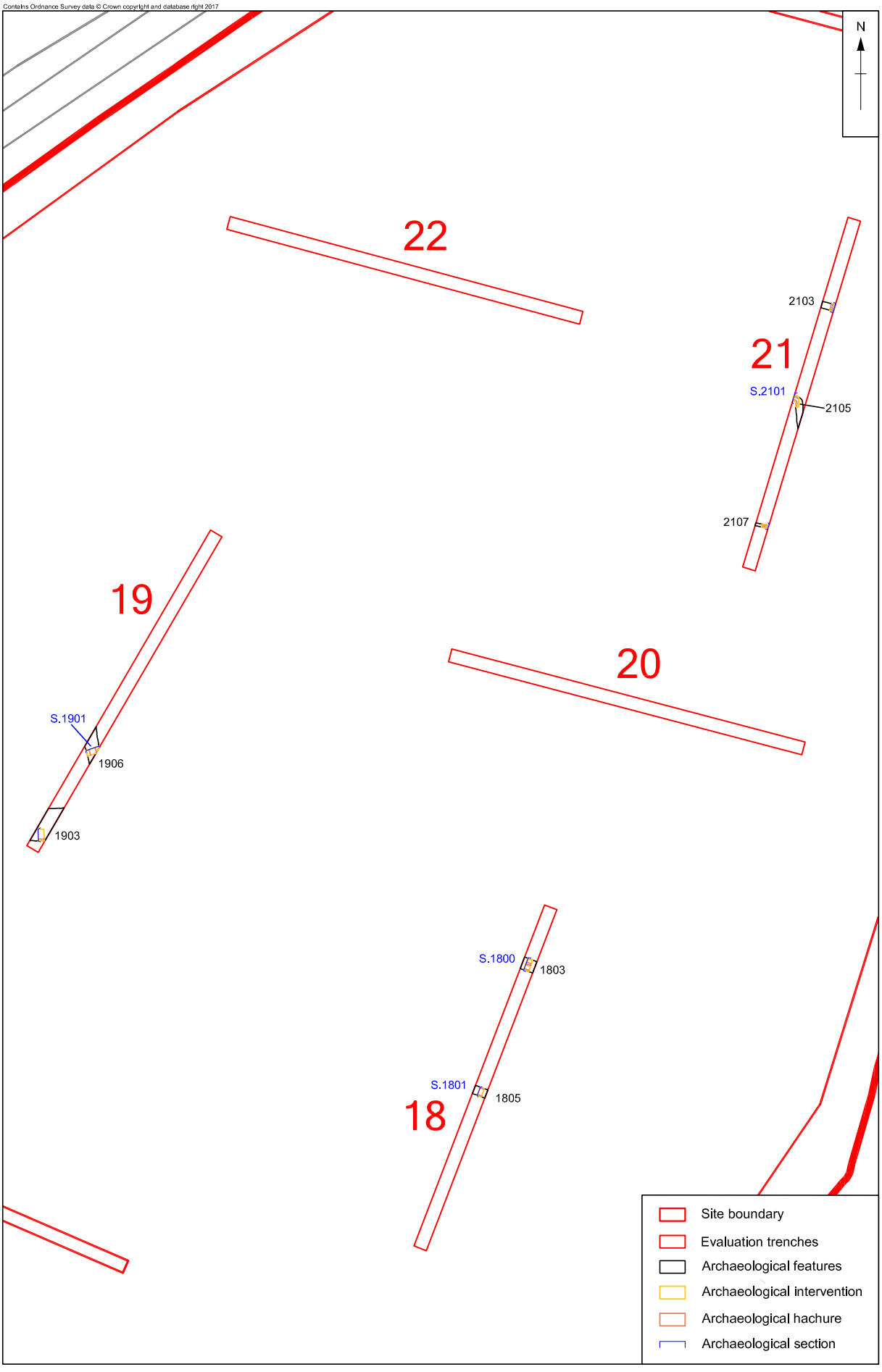

Figure 7: Plan of Trenches 18, 19 and 21

0 50 m

Scale at A4 1:750

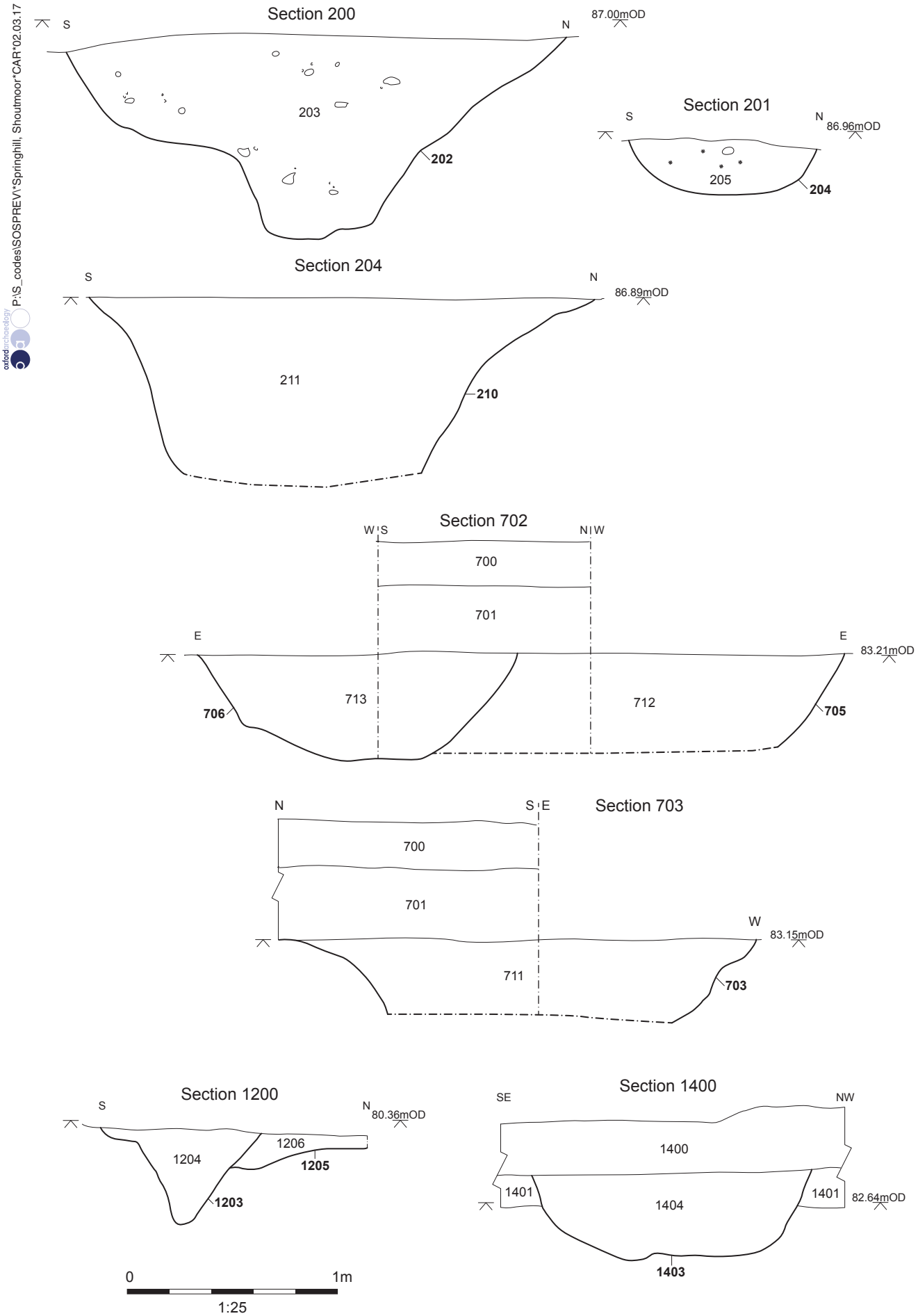

Figure 8: Sections 200, 201, 204, 702, 703, 1200 and 1400

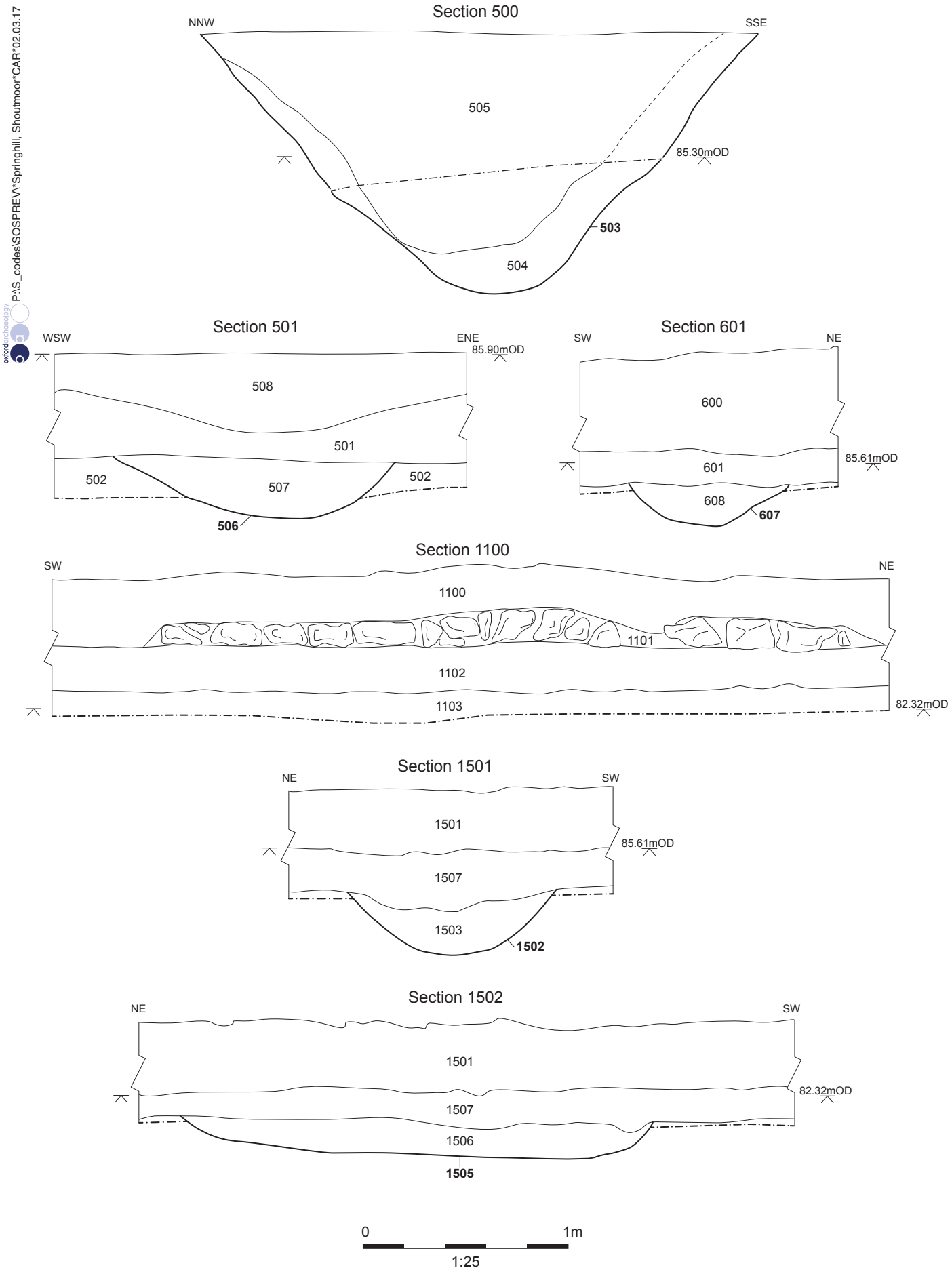

Figure 9: Sections 500, 501, 601, 1100, 1501 and 1502

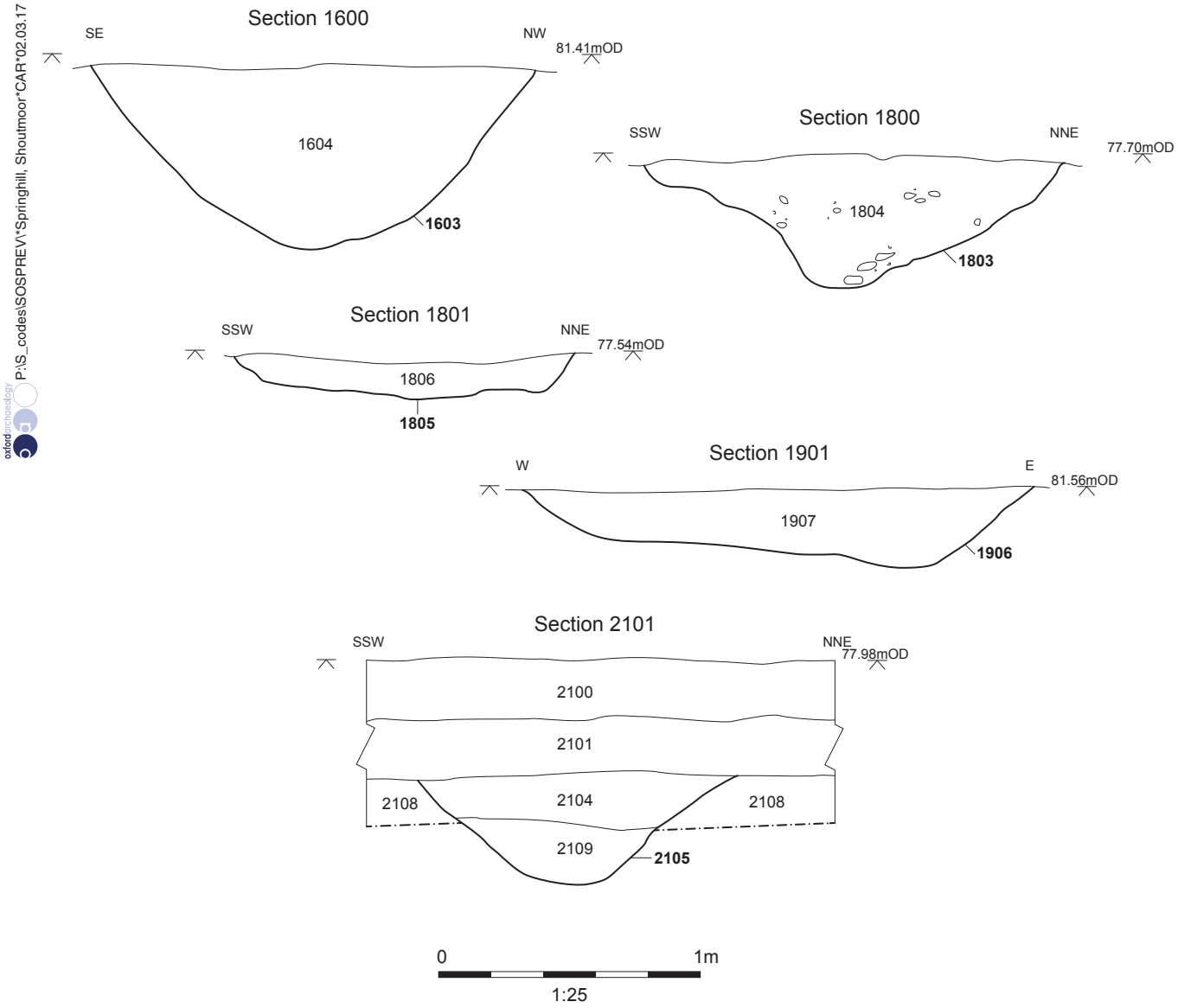

Figure 10: Sections 1600, 1800, 1801, 1901 and 2101

Plate 1: Ditch 202, looking north-east

Plate 2: Pit 206, looking south-west

Plate 3: Pit 208, looking north-west

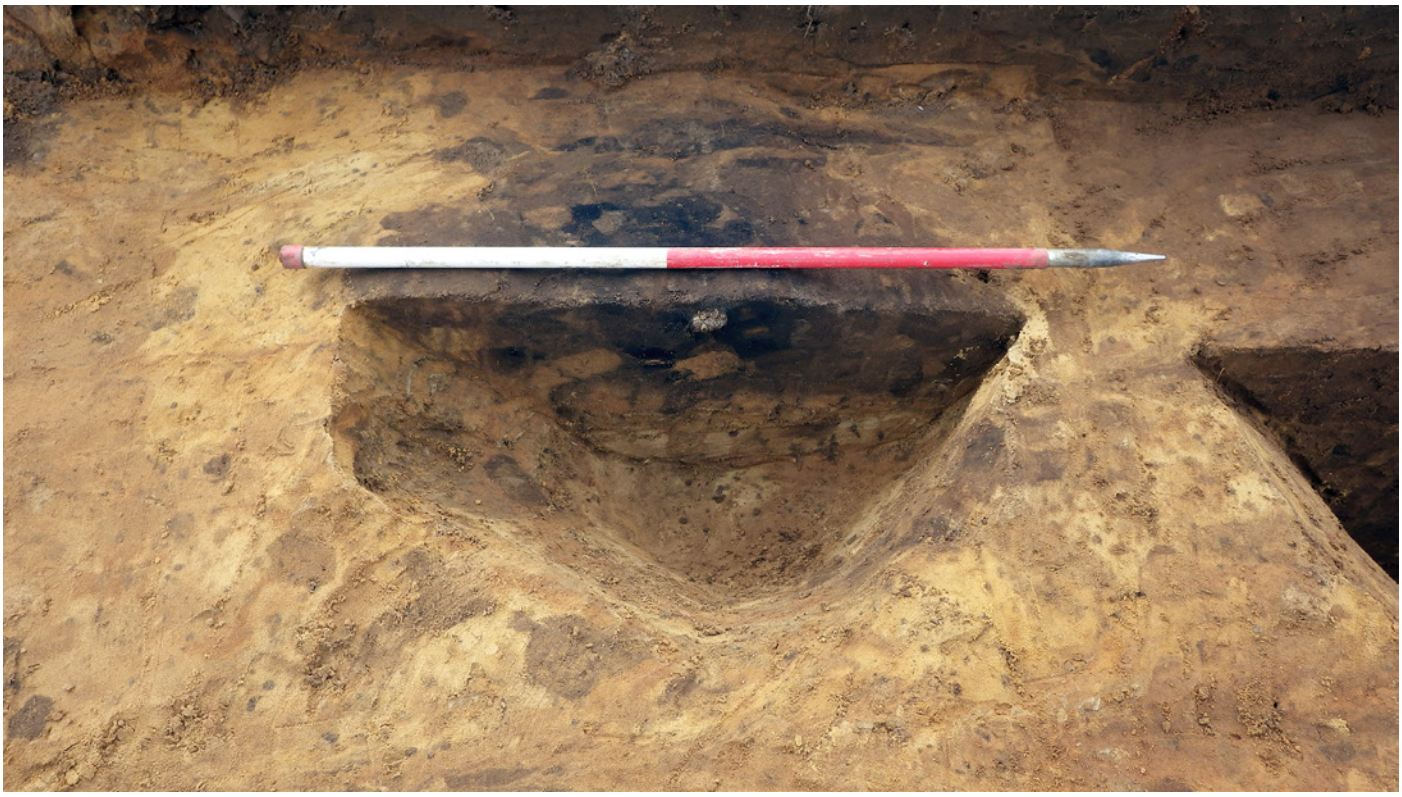

Plate 4: Pit 204, looking west

Plate 5: Pit 210, looking west

Plate 6: Pit 705, looking NNW

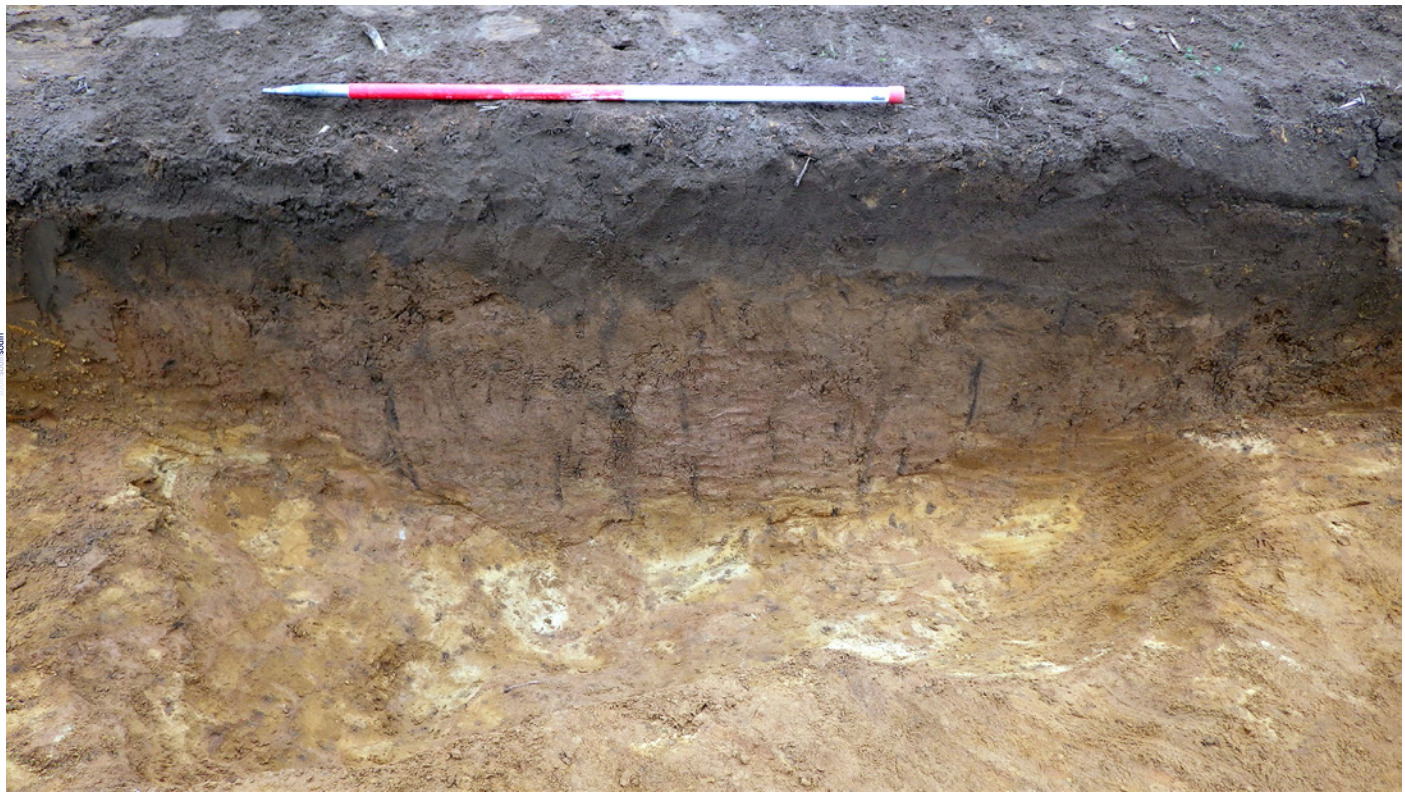

Plate 7: Tree hole 605, looking SSE

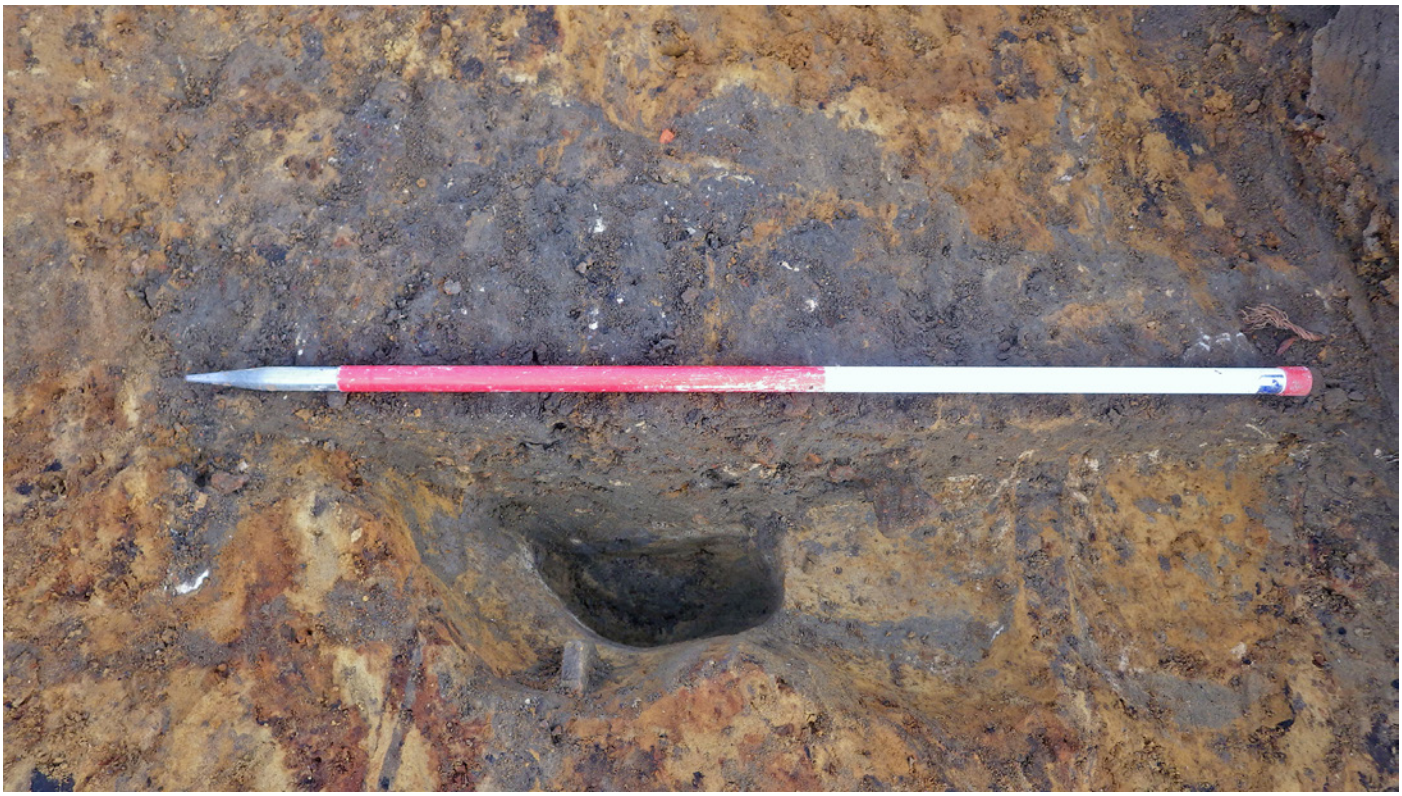

Plate 8: Posthole 1203, looking north-west

Plate 9: Pit 1403, looking south-west

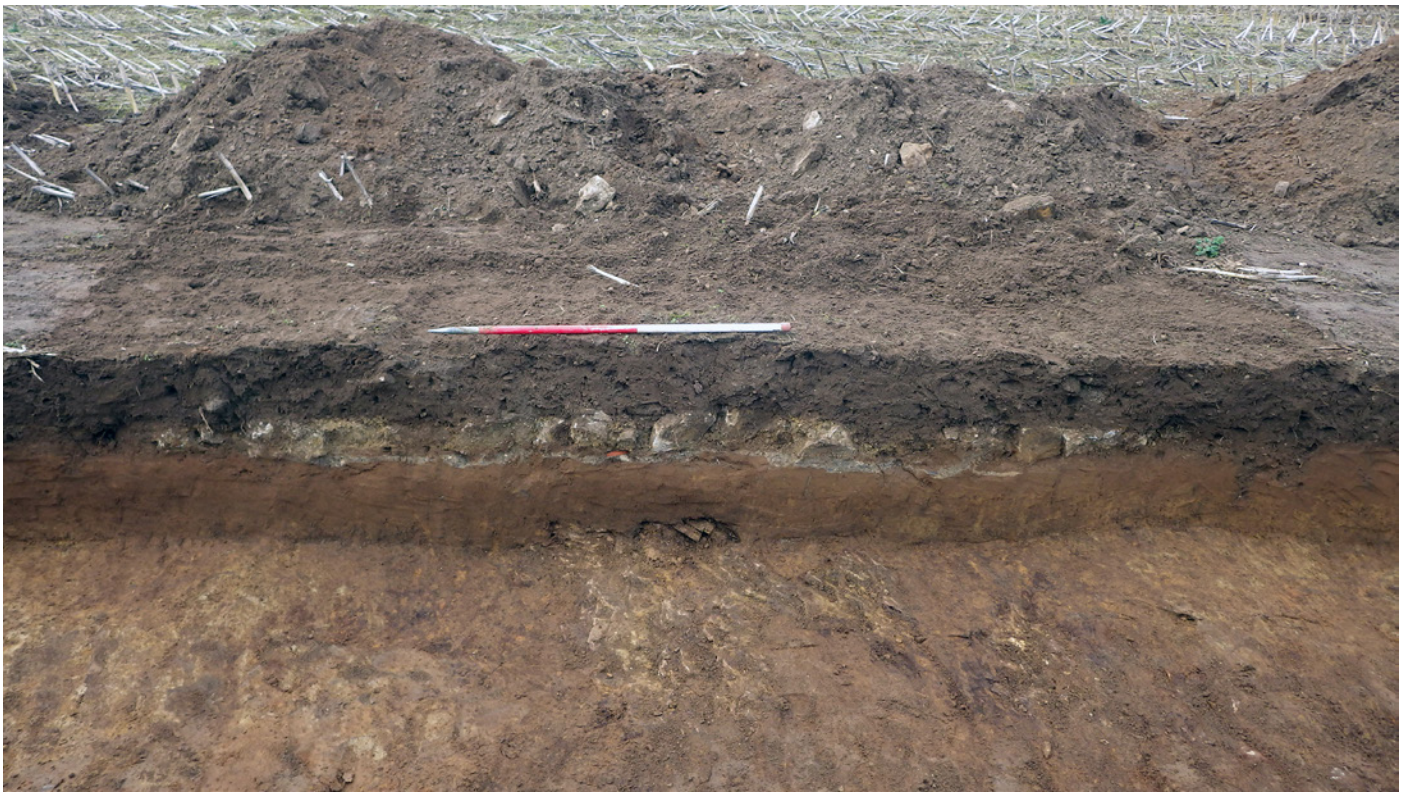

Plate 10: Road surface 1101, looking north-west

Plate 11: Ditch 1903, looking west

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