



# Land adjacent to Thame Road, Longwick, Buckinghamshire

## Archaeological Excavation Report

July 2017

**Client: Croudace Homes**

Issue No: 1

OA Reference No: LOTREX

NGR: SP 7875 0525

oxfordarchaeology



southsouthsouth



Client Name: Croudace Homes  
Document Title: Land adjacent to Thame Road, Longwick, Buckinghamshire  
Document Type: Excavation Report  
Grid Reference: SP 7875 0525  
Planning Reference: 15/08455/OUT  
Site Code: LOTR17  
Invoice Code: LOTREX  
Receiving Body: Buckinghamshire County Museum  
Accession No.: AYBCM:2017.33

OA Document File Location: \\10.0.10.86\Projects\Longwick Thame Road\_Excavation\002Reports\Excavation report\FINAL  
OA Graphics File Location: O:\L\_codes\LOTREX

Issue No: 1  
Date: April 2017  
Prepared by: Kirsty Smith (Project Officer)  
Checked by: Richard Brown (Senior Project Manager)  
Edited by: Edward Biddulph (Senior Project Manager, Post-Excavation)  
Approved for Issue by: Dave Score MClfA (Head of Fieldwork)  
Signature:



**Disclaimer:**

*This document has been prepared for the titled project or named part thereof and should not be relied upon or used for any other project without an independent check being carried out as to its suitability and prior written authority of Oxford Archaeology being obtained. Oxford Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for the consequences of this document being used for a purpose other than the purposes for which it was commissioned. Any person/party using or relying on the document for such other purposes agrees and will by such use or reliance be taken to confirm their agreement to indemnify Oxford Archaeology for all loss or damage resulting therefrom. Oxford Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for this document to any party other than the person/party by whom it was commissioned.*

**OA South**

Janus House  
Osney Mead  
Oxford  
OX2 0ES

t. +44 (0)1865 263 800

**OA East**

15 Trafalgar Way  
Bar Hill  
Cambridge  
CB23 8SG

t. +44 (0)1223 850 500

**OA North**

Mill 3  
Moor Lane Mills  
Moor Lane  
Lancaster  
LA1 1QD

t. +44 (0)1524 880 250

e. [info@oxfordarch.co.uk](mailto:info@oxfordarch.co.uk)  
w. [oxfordarchaeology.com](http://oxfordarchaeology.com)

Oxford Archaeology is a registered Charity: No. 285627



**FAME**  
Federation of Archaeological Managers & Employers



**British Expertise**  
INTERNATIONAL  
promoting professional services worldwide



**Acclaim SSIP**  
Accreditation

SAFETY  
SCHEMES IN  
PROCUREMENT

## Land adjacent to Thame Road, Longwick, Buckinghamshire

### *Archaeological Excavation Report*

*Written by Kirsty Smith*

*With contributions by Martyn Allen, Edward Biddulph and  
illustrations by Benjamin Brown*

### Contents

Summary .....	i
<b>1 INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Scope of work.....	1
1.2 Location, topography and geology.....	1
1.3 Archaeological and historical background.....	1
<b>2 EVALUATION AIMS AND METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1 General aims .....	5
2.2 Specific aims and objectives .....	5
2.3 Methodology.....	5
<b>3 RESULTS .....</b>	<b>7</b>
3.1 Introduction and presentation of results .....	7
3.2 General soils and ground conditions.....	7
3.3 General distribution of archaeological deposits.....	7
3.4 Area 1.....	8
3.5 Area 2.....	10
3.6 Finds summary.....	10
<b>4 DISCUSSION .....</b>	<b>11</b>
4.1 Reliability of field investigation.....	11
4.2 Excavation objectives and results .....	11
4.3 Interpretation.....	11
<b>APPENDIX A CONTEXT INVENTORY .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>APPENDIX B FINDS REPORTS.....</b>	<b>17</b>
B.1 Pottery .....	17
B.2 Ceramic building material .....	17
B.3 Animal bone .....	17
<b>APPENDIX C BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>18</b>

---

APPENDIX D	SITE SUMMARY DETAILS.....	20
------------	---------------------------	----

## List of Figures

- Fig. 1 Site location
- Fig. 2 Roman sites within 10km radius of Longwick (RSRB 2016) CC-BT-SA
- Fig. 3 Results of the geophysical survey 2017
- Fig. 4 Trench and Area layout from 2017 evaluation and excavation
- Fig. 5 Area 1 excavation plan
- Fig. 6 Area 2 excavation plan
- Fig. 7 Sections

## List of Plates

- Plate 1 Section 5 (ditches 10021, 10023) facing south
- Plate 2 Section 8 (ditch 10035, pit 10037) facing south-west
- Plate 3 Section 11 (ditch 10044) facing north-west
- Plate 4 Section 13 (ditch 10049) facing north-west



## Summary

In June and July 2017 Oxford Archaeology was commissioned by Croudace Homes to undertake an archaeological excavation of land adjacent to Thame Road in Longwick, Buckinghamshire. The site, centred on NGR SP 7875 0525 and lying at 85m above Ordnance Datum, has been proposed for a new housing development.

The excavation was undertaken to further investigate features that were discovered during the April 2017 evaluation by Oxford Archaeology. Two Areas were excavated (1 and 2) and this took place from the 27th June to the 3rd July 2017.

The results of the excavation revealed part of a possible Roman trackway orientated NNW-SSE, which may have linked to the Lower Icknield Way (a prehistoric or Roman trackway) to the south. This trackway was formed by two ditches 10m apart containing Roman ceramic building material and pottery. One of these ditches appeared to be the same ditch found during the evaluation where pottery was found dating to the 2nd or 3rd century AD.

The excavation also revealed a number of undated parallel ditches orientated north-west to south-east, which may be evidence of medieval to early post-medieval strip farming.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Scope of work

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by Croudace Homes to undertake an archaeological excavation of the site of a proposed housing development.
- 1.1.2 The work was undertaken as a condition of planning permission (planning ref: 15/08455/OUT). Although the local planning authority has not set a brief for the work, discussions with the planning archaeologist Philip Markham established the scope of work required. The scope of work included geophysical survey followed by evaluation trenching and later an excavation of two areas of the site in accordance with the planning condition. This document outlines how OA implemented the specified requirements.
- 1.1.3 All work was undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation* (2014) and local and national planning policies.

### 1.2 Location, topography and geology

- 1.2.1 The site is located on the north-east side of the Thame Road, to the north of the village of Longwick and to the south of Wheelwright Road. It is centred on NGR SP 7875 0525 (Fig. 1). The site currently consists of two fields divided by a hedge and part of a larger field to the east. It is at a height of approximately 85m above Ordnance Datum.
- 1.2.2 The geology of the area is mapped as a bedrock of Gault Formation (mudstone) with a superficial deposit of Head (clay, silt, sand and gravel) (British Geological Survey 2017).

### 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The archaeological and historical background of the site is discussed in a desk-based assessment (Thames Valley Archaeological Services 2015) and will not be repeated in any detail here. In summary, the desk-based assessment found that prior to 2015 there had been no known archaeological investigations on the site. In addition, fieldwalking had taken place to the west of the site and found Neolithic to post-medieval finds.

#### *Previous investigations*

- 1.3.2 In April 2017 Oxford Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation of the site combining geophysical survey and trench investigation (Magnitude Surveys 2017; Oxford Archaeology 2017a and b). These revealed a modest number of linear features, laid out on an approximately NW-SE alignment, parallel to Thame Road (Fig. 3). Some of the features, in the two most northerly of the three fields under investigation, were also parallel with present-day field boundaries. Although most of these features remain undated, Roman pottery was recovered from one of them and medieval pottery was recovered from unstratified contexts.

#### *Prehistoric evidence*

- 1.3.3 In 2001 a watching brief 1.2km north-east of the site found two NW-SE aligned ditches. These were undated but a sherd of late Bronze Age pottery was found in the topsoil above the ditches. This does not indicate that the ditches dated to the Bronze Age but does indicate there may have been Bronze Age activity within the vicinity (Bashford 2001).
- 1.3.4 In 2004 an evaluation 2km south-east of the site found evidence for an Iron Age settlement. In the southern part of the evaluation area, features excavated included pits, postholes and ditches containing Early to Middle Iron Age pottery (Wessex Archaeology 2004).
- 1.3.5 The 2015 desk-based assessment noted that within the 500m study area there was a potential for prehistoric remains. Neolithic to Bronze Age flints were found c 500m west of the site (Thames Valley Archaeological Services 2015).
- 1.3.6 Longwick is located just north of the Lower Icknield Way (the B4009), which is orientated north-east to south-west. The origins of this route is subject to much debate, but it is popularly believed to have prehistoric origins and was reused during the Roman period (English Heritage 2009, 12).

### *Roman period*

- 1.3.7 The Rural Settlement of Roman Britain project indicates Roman activity within a 10km radius of the site (Fig. 2). This includes several sites in the locality of Princes Risborough c 2.5km south-east of the site and Aylesbury c 9km north-east of the site. A Roman trackway was located c 3.4km west of the site, orientated NNW-SSE. This trackway linked the SW-NE Dorchester to Aylesbury road with High Wycombe to the south (RSRB 2016).
- 1.3.8 During fieldwalking 500m west of the site Roman pottery and mortaria sherds were found (Thames Valley Archaeological Services 2015).
- 1.3.9 A large sherd of Roman pottery was recovered during the 2017 evaluation, which may have been deposited reasonably close to a focus of settlement (Oxford Archaeology 2017b).

### *Saxon*

- 1.3.10 During the later Saxon period the site was located close to two estates, the Princes Risborough estate to the south-west and the Monks Risborough estate to the south-east. It is unclear which estate the site may have been part of, although Longwick later became part of the parish of Princes Risborough. Therefore, the site may have been part of this estate.
- 1.3.11 The Princes Risborough estate was large with 47 households, 24 ploughlands, two mills and woodland with 1000 pigs. The Princes Risborough estate was owned by Earl Harold in 1066 and King William in 1086 (Palmer 2017).
- 1.3.12 The nearby estate of Monks Risborough had 44 households. This estate was owned in 1066 by Canterbury Christ Church and the hamlet of Owlswick to the north-east of the site was included within this manor (VCH 1908, 256-260). In AD 903 the boundary of the Monks Risborough estate was noted in a charter by King Edward (c 874-924)

(Sawyer 2017, S 367). This charter mentions the Lower Icknield Way (now the B4009) to the south of the site, indicating it was in existence by AD 903. It also suggests that there were several ditches and boundary lines separating the manors of Waldridge from Monks Risborough and Kimble.

- 1.3.13 There are two late Saxon to medieval settlements near to the site, which may predate the settlement at Longwick. During the late Saxon period the site may have belonged to the Waldridge estate or the hamlet of Owlswick.
- 1.3.14 The Waldridge estate was located north of the site and the charter above suggests it was in existence by AD 903. Domesday records it as having three households in 1066 (Palmer 2017) and although the location of the Saxon settlement is unknown it may have been on the site of the medieval manor house. The medieval house and settlement of Waldridge was located 1.8km north of the site and is scheduled (Historic England, list entry number 1017520). The settlement was situated to the north-west of a NW to SE orientated road, which joined the Lower Icknield Way to the south.
- 1.3.15 The hamlet of Owlswick (from the name this may have had a Viking connection) was part of the manor of Monks Risborough and was mentioned in pre 11th century grants to Canterbury Christ Church (VCH 1908, 256-260). This hamlet is located c. 700m north of the site and, like the settlement of Waldridge, is located to the north-west of a NW to SE orientated road which joined the Lower Icknield Way to the south.

### *Medieval and post-medieval evidence*

- 1.3.16 The settlement of Longwick was not recorded in the Domesday survey and may not have been in existence until the later medieval period. The results of the 2017 evaluation by Oxford Archaeology identified ditches or boundaries, the character of which suggested that the site was subject to strip farming (pre-enclosure land divisions dating to the medieval and early post-medieval periods). The geophysical survey also indicated agricultural linear features orientated north-west to south-east within Area 2 (Fig. 3). During the evaluation, five sherds of medieval pottery were found within the topsoil of trench 6 (600) and the subsoil of trench 11 (1101). These comprised Brill/Boarstall ware, dated to the 13th or 14th century AD. Although this material may have been redeposited, it does indicate activity during the 13th or 14th century AD in the vicinity of the site.
- 1.3.17 The settlement of Longwick was in existence by 1574 as it is shown on Saxton's map (Thames Valley Archaeological Service 2015, fig. 2). During the 17th century, a water mill was recorded as Longwick Mill (VCH 1908, 260-267). The hamlet of Longwick became part of the parish of Princes Risborough, probably by 1568 when Princes Risborough was granted town status. Jeffrey's map of 1770 (Thames Valley Archaeological Service 2015, fig. 3) shows that a linear settlement had developed in Longwick either side of a wide road orientated roughly north-west to south-east. This road to the west of the site (A4129) later became the Thame to Risborough turnpike road, which was granted by an Act of Parliament in 1825 and was constructed by 1830 (English Heritage 2009, 12).
- 1.3.18 Map regression by Thames Valley Archaeological Service (2015, figs 4-9) indicates that from the site was used as agricultural land during the 19th and 20th century. The

organisation of the three fields appears to have been in place by the Princes Risborough Enclosure map of 1823 (Thames Valley Archaeological Service 2015, fig. 5).

## 2 EVALUATION AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 General aims

2.1.1 The general aims of the excavation were to determine and understand the nature, function and character of the archaeological remains within their cultural and environmental setting.

### 2.2 Specific aims and objectives

2.2.1 The project aims and objectives were as follows:

- i. To determine or confirm the general nature of any remains present.
- ii. To determine the extent, date and relationships between the linear features identified during the evaluation by means of artefactual or other evidence.
- iii. To determine the approximate date or date range of any other remains, by means of artefactual or other evidence.
- iv. To generate an accessible and useable archive which will allow future research of the evidence to be undertaken if appropriate.
- v. To disseminate the results of the work in a format and manner proportionate to the significance of the findings.

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

### 2.3 Methodology

2.3.1 The excavation comprised a programme of open area excavation within two areas of the proposed development. The two areas were targeted on the linear features revealed during the 2017 archaeological evaluation, as indicated on Figure 4.

2.3.2 The excavation was carried out by a team consisting of a Project Supervisor and Assistant Supervisor, under the management of Richard Brown MCIfA, Senior Project Manager, overseen by the Head of Fieldwork, David Score MCIfA.

2.3.3 All work specifically adhered to the written scheme of investigation laid out in a separate written scheme of investigation document (Oxford Archaeology 2017c).

2.3.4 A 14-tonne 360° tracked excavator fitted with a 1.8m toothless ditching blade was used for the trenching. All machine work was carried out under the direct supervision of an experienced archaeologist.

2.3.5 All topsoil was removed down to the first significant archaeological horizon in successive level spits, which in this case was the natural geological substrate.

2.3.6 The top of the first significant archaeological horizon was cleared by the machine, but was then cleaned by hand and inspected for features.

2.3.7 Sufficient of the archaeological features and deposits identified were excavated by hand through a specific or agreed sampling procedure to enable their date, nature, extent and condition to be described. No archaeological deposits were entirely

removed. It was not necessarily expected that the whole of Areas 1 and 2 would be fully excavated to natural subsoil, but the depth of archaeological deposits across the whole site was assessed.

- 2.3.8 The stratigraphy of Areas 1 and 2 was recorded even where no archaeological deposits were identified.
- 2.3.9 Spoil heaps were monitored to allow for the recording of the spatial distribution of artefacts.
- 2.3.10 All excavation, either by machine or by hand, was undertaken with a view to avoiding damage to any archaeological features or deposits that appeared to be worthy of preservation *in situ*.

## **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 the excavation with dimensions and depths of all deposits can be found in Appendix A. Finds information is provided in Appendix B.
- 3.1.2 Appendix A details the archaeological features that were found in both Area A and Area B. Contexts 10000-10048 were located within Area 1, as were ditch groups 10061-10069. Area 2 contained contexts 10049-10062 and ditch groups 10063 and 10070 (which were assigned during the post-excavation stage).

### **3.2 General soils and ground conditions**

- 3.2.1 Within Area 1, the upper soil sequence comprised a dark brown sandy clay topsoil (10000) and a light yellow brown sandy clay subsoil with occasional flint (10001). In Area 1 the light brown sandy clay natural deposit (10002) varied with patches of grey clay and flint inclusions.
- 3.2.2 Within Area 2, the topsoil (10060) comprised a dark grey brown sandy loam with occasional flint and the subsoil (10061), a mid brown sandy clay. The natural deposit in Area 2 (10062) varied with a red brown sandy clay but with patches of gravel within a sandy clay matrix, particularly to the north-west of Area 2.
- 3.2.3 During the excavation of Areas 1 and 2 the ground conditions were wet on the first few days of the excavation, but with drier conditions for the last few days. The natural geology contained variations across the site and as the fills were redeposited natural (and mostly sterile). It was therefore difficult to differentiate between natural and geological features. However, there did appear to be a higher clay content within the archaeological features compared with the geological features.

### **3.3 General distribution of archaeological deposits**

- 3.3.1 Archaeological features were present in Areas 1 and 2, as indicated during the evaluation phase. Trench 3 of the evaluation was located north-east to south-west across Area 1. Trench 6 of the evaluation phase was located north-east to south-west across Area 2 (Fig. 4).
- 3.3.2 Area 1 contained two linear features orientated NNW-SSE (Groups 10064, 10067) and two linear features orientated north-west to south-east (Groups 10065, 10066). It also contained two ephemeral north-east to south-west orientated features (Groups 10068, 10069). Area 2 contained NW-SE ditch Group 10063 and ditch Group 10070.
- 3.3.3 During the evaluation, several features were found in Trenches 3 and 6, which appear to be the same features as those later excavated in Areas 1 and 2. In Area 1, five linear features were found during the evaluation, four of which were excavated (ditches 302, 303, 304, and 314). In Trench 3 of the evaluation, fill 311 from ditch 302 contained a single sherd of pottery which dated to the Roman period (2nd or 3rd century AD).

### 3.4 Area 1

3.4.1 Area 1 lay in the southern half of Field 1a and contained six ditches and one pit (Fig. 5). Ditch 10067 contained Roman period pottery, while group 10064 contained ceramic building material (CBM) tentatively dated to the Roman period. Ditch groups 10065 and 10066 were devoid of any datable finds and therefore these ditches cannot be phased. Groups 10068 and 10069 were ephemeral features and the relationship between them and groups 10064-10067 was unclear.

#### *Ditches 10064 and 10067*

3.4.2 Ditch 10064 had steep sides and a flat base, and measured 0.80-0.85m wide and 0.24-0.30m deep (Fig. 7, section 10). It was investigated in two interventions (10027 and 10043), in which a single fill, a light grey sandy clay with reddish patches, was recorded. Fill 10042 within intervention 10043 contained an abraded piece of CBM which is possibly Roman in date. The ditch appears to be the same ditch as ditch 304 observed during the evaluation.

3.4.3 Another ditch (Group 10067) to the east was on the same alignment as group 10064 (NNW-SSE). Group 10067 was investigated in three interventions, 10010, 10018 and 10044 (Fig. 5). The ditch was 1-1.3m wide and 0.37-0.50m deep with a flat base and relatively steep sides. The northern part of the ditch had two fills (10016 and 10017) within cut 10018, both brown sandy clays. Two fills were also seen in the centre of the ditch within cut 10010, a light brown sandy clay (10008) and a light grey sandy clay (10009). To the south the ditch had one fill, 10048 within cut 10044, a brown orange grey clayey sand and sandy clay (Fig. 7, section 11). Fill 10048 contained three sherds (25g) of Roman pottery and three long bone fragments from a large mammal, probably cattle. Group 10067 appears to be the same ditch as 302, which was uncovered during the evaluation and contained pottery dating from the 2nd or 3rd century AD.

#### *Ditches 10065 and 10066, and shallow feature 10034*

3.4.4 Two parallel ditches, orientated north-west to south-east (Groups 10065 and 10066), were recorded in the centre of Area 1 were (Fig. 5).

3.4.5 Group 10065 measured between 0.7-1m wide and 0.22-0.25m deep and had steep sides and a slightly rounded base. Three interventions through the ditch (10013, 10032, 10041), showed the feature to have two fills (Fig. 7, section 7), though both varied in colour along the length of the feature.

3.4.6 A shallow feature (10034) was observed parallel to, and cut by, ditch 10065 (Fig. 5; Fig. 7, section 7). This linear feature had one fill (10033), a light brown sandy clay, measured 0.55m wide and 0.06m deep, and had a flat base. The feature may have been an earlier ditch or possible hedge line running parallel to 10065.

3.4.7 Ditch group 10066 was investigated in four interventions: 10005, 10021, 10035 and 10047. These revealed that the ditch was 0.9-1.3m wide at the northern end (cuts 10021 and 10047) and tapered down to 0.6m wide at the southern end (10035). The ditch appears in plan to terminate at the northern end (Fig. 5). However, this was due to truncation during excavation, which resulted in a depth of 0.22m at cut 10047. In

the centre, the ditch was observed to be 0.4m deep (cut 10021) and to the south (cut 10005) it was 0.34 deep and was cut by pit 10037 to the south (Fig. 7, section 8).

- 3.4.8 The fills within ditch 10066 varied, with two fills observed in cut 10047, comprising a lower fill (10046) of light greenish clay and a dark upper fill of brown sandy clay (10045). In the centre, the ditch contained a single fill (10022) of mid blue orange clay. To the south, the ditch had fills of light brown sandy clay (10003) and grey clay (10004), and a single fill of light orange grey sandy clay (10036) was observed in cut 10035.

### *Ephemeral features 10068 and 10069*

- 3.4.9 Two features were orientated roughly north-east to south-west (10068, 10069) within the eastern part of Area 1. Both these features were irregular in plan (Fig. 5) and shallow (being less than 0.10m deep), apart from the western part of group 10068, which was 0.45m deep, as seen in cut 10023 (Fig. 7, section 5). The relationship between these features and the other ditch groups 10065-10067 could not be established with any clarity, due to the similar nature of the fills. It may be that these features were truncated during excavation, or are natural features such as hedge lines, as they contain redeposited natural soil.
- 3.4.10 Group 10069 was identified through two interventions, 10007 and 10012, which both contained single fills of light grey sandy clay (10006 and 10011). The ditch was shallow with a flat base. It measured 0.70m wide and 0.05m deep at its west end and 1.30m wide and 0.10m deep at the eastern end.
- 3.4.11 Group 10068 was investigated through two interventions, 10020 and 10023. The orientation of the feature was generally north-east to south-west, though curved east-west at its east end, where it appeared to terminate (Fig. 5). The ditch was 0.80m wide and 0.08m deep at the eastern end and 0.8m wide and 0.45m deep at the western end. It had relatively steep sides and a flat base. The ditch contained a single fill (10019) within cut 10020, a light yellow grey sandy clay. Within cut 10023, the ditch was filled by a mid orange sandy clay (10024) and a mid blue orange clay (10025). Fills 10024 and 10025 appeared to be redeposited natural, probably formed by natural erosion of the feature.

### *Undated pit 10037*

- 3.4.12 An undated pit (10037) cut the southern end of ditch 10066 (Fig. 5). The pit was sub-oval in plan with a flat base and steep sides. It measured up to 2m wide and 0.3m deep, and contained a single fill (10038), a light orange grey clay, from which a cattle upper molar was recovered.

### *Natural feature 10029*

- 3.4.13 A natural feature (10029) was observed to the east of, and was cut by, ditch 10064. This feature was 3.30m long, 0.60m wide and 0.06m deep, with irregular edges and an undulating base. It contained one fill (10028), a light grey sandy clay. This may have been formed by a hedge line or tree disturbance.

### 3.5 Area 2

3.5.1 Area 2 was located within field 2a to the north of the site (Fig. 4). Ditch groups 10063 and 10070 were parallel to each other and two ditches uncovered during the evaluation (603 and 605). No dating evidence was found for the ditches.

#### *Ditches 10063 and 10070*

3.5.2 Ditch 10063 to the west of Area 2 was investigated in three interventions (10055, 10057 and 10059; Fig. 6). The ditch measured 0.55m-1.10m wide and had sloping sides and a rounded base. The depth of 10063 varied, being 0.30m deep to the north (as seen in cut 10055), 0.06m deep in cut 10057 and 0.15m deep in cut 10059 (Fig. 7, section 15). In plan, the ditch appears to have two terminals (Fig. 6), but these and the shallow depth could be explained by truncation during excavation and an animal burrow, which had truncated 10057.

3.5.3 The ditch contained two fills at the northern end (10055), both light grey sandy clay (10053 and 10054). Single fills, light grey sandy clay (10056, 10058), were observed in both central interventions. A putative upper fill here may have been lost through truncation.

3.5.4 Ditches 10049 and 10051 (Fig. 7, section 14) were assigned a group number during post-excavation as they were identified as belonging to the same ditch (group 10070). Ditch 10070 was 0.8-0.9m wide and 0.25-0.37m deep. The profile varied, having a flat base and sloping sides in intervention 10049, and a concave base and rounded sides in 10051. One fill was observed within the ditch, a yellow grey sandy clay (10050) within 10049 and a grey orange clay (10052) within feature 10051. Fill 10050 contained seven shaft fragments from a sheep/goat humerus.

### 3.6 Finds summary

3.6.1 A small number of finds were recorded during the excavation. These comprised five sherds of pottery, one piece of CBM, and 13 fragments of animal bone.

3.6.2 The five sherds of pottery from contexts 10001 and 10048 were all medium sandy reduced ware which can be broadly to the Roman period (c AD 43-410). A single piece of CBM from context 10042 was tentatively dated to the Roman period. The pottery and CBM was both abraded and may have been subject to episodes of redeposition.

3.6.3 Animal bone was found within contexts 10048, 10050 and 10038. Within 10048 three long bone fragments were found, probably cattle bones, and context 10038 produced a single, cattle upper molar. Evidence of sheep/goat was also found in context 10050, including seven shaft fragments from a humerus.

## 4 DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Reliability of field investigation

- 4.1.1 The trenches were excavated over in wet conditions for the first few days followed by drier conditions for the last few days of excavation.
- 4.1.2 Some of the archaeological features and the relationships between them proved difficult to positively identify, owing to natural variations in the geological substrate. This was particularly true when determining the nature of groups 10068 and 10069, which were irregular in plan, shallow and contained redeposited natural.
- 4.1.3 The excavation also revealed archaeological features that had not been picked up by the geophysical survey (Fig. 3). This may have been due in part to the natural spreads across the site which were identified during the survey.

### 4.2 Excavation objectives and results

- 4.2.1 The excavation built upon the results of the evaluation in revealing more of the ditches identified within Areas 1 and 2 (Figs 5 and 6). Dating evidence was identified from two of the ditches within Area 1, 10064 and 10067, which indicated these features are potentially Roman. Dating material was not found within the other features in Areas 1 and 2.
- 4.2.2 Area 1 contained ditch 10064 and 10067, both of which were orientated NNW-SSE. One of the fills of 10064 contained an abraded piece of CBM which is possibly Roman in date. Ditch 10064 appears to be the same ditch as that (304) recorded during the evaluation. Ditch 10067 appears to be the same feature as ditch 302 found during the evaluation. Ditch 10067 contained three sherds (25g) of Roman pottery and three long bone fragments from a large mammal, probably cattle. Though of broad Roman date, the pottery is consistent with pottery dating from the 2nd or 3rd century AD recovered from 302.
- 4.2.3 Area 1 also contained ditch 10065 and 10066 and a shallow feature, 10034, which may have been an earlier ditch on the same alignment as 10065. These ditches were orientated north-west to south-east and therefore may represent a different a different use of the site to that represented by ditched 10064 and 10067. Ditches 10065, 10066 in Area 1 were on a similar alignment to ditches 10063 and 10070 in Area 2. Features 603 and 605 excavated during the evaluation were also a similar alignment to ditches 10063 and 10070 within Area 2. This type of parallel row of ditches are indicative of medieval and early post-medieval strip farming.

### 4.3 Interpretation

- 4.3.1 The results of the excavation provide indications of land use of the site during the Roman and most likely the medieval and early post-medieval period.
- 4.3.2 Two groups of NNW-SSE ditches in Area 1 (groups 10064 and 10067) contained Roman CBM and pottery. Ditch 10067 appeared to be the same ditch as that found during the evaluation (302), where pottery dating to the 2nd or 3rd century AD was recovered.

Both ditches 10064 and 10067 were on the same alignment and contained Roman material and likely to be contemporary.

- 4.3.3 The distance between ditch 10064 and 10067 is around 10m and they may have formed part of a Roman trackway or droveway leading southwards, possibly to join the Lower Icknield Way, a routeway that dates at least to the late Saxon period and may have had prehistoric origins (English Heritage 2009, 12-13). A Roman trackway orientated NNE-SSW (RSRB 2016) is known to cut across the putative route of the Lower Icknield Way 3km south-west of the site (Fig. 2) and has the same orientation as ditches 10064 and 10067.
- 4.3.4 Excavations at Aston Clinton, 10km north-east of the site, by ULAS in 2014 revealed a trackway c 13m wide, with edges defined by long, straight ditches. The trackway appeared to follow the projected line of the Lower Icknield Way, although it was found to cut an enclosure that dated to the 1st or 2nd century AD (ULAS 2014). Regardless of the origins of the Lower Icknield Way itself, ditches 10064 and 10067 may have been part of a network of Roman trackways in the region.
- 4.3.5 There were two late Saxon settlements located near the site, the Waldrige estate, in existence by AD 903, located 1.8km north of the site and the hamlet of Owlswick, established by the 11th century and located 700m north of the site. Both of these settlements are associated with a NW to SE orientated road, which may have joined what was, by the late Saxon period, identified as the Lower Icknield Way to the south. Many of the modern roads around Princes Risborough reflect this north-west to south-east alignment, perhaps as drove roads linking the clay vales to the Chiltern Hills (English Heritage 2009, 12).
- 4.3.6 A number of undated ditches were found during the excavation (Groups 10065, 10066 in Area 1, 10063, and 10070 in Area 2) which were orientated north-west to south-east, reflecting the historic alignment discussed above. These ditches were undated but appear to be parallel and were around 0.5m wide. The alignments of these ditches is very similar to the modern field boundaries and the alignment of the A4129 to the west of the site. These ditches are likely to be the truncated remains of strip farming and may be medieval to early post-medieval in date. During the evaluation five sherds of 13th or 14th century AD pottery was found in the topsoil and subsoil suggesting some activity of this date in the area.
- 4.3.7 In summary, the results reflect a rural use of the site as part of a possible trackway during the Roman period. The excavation also revealed a number of undated parallel ditches orientated north-west to south-east which may be evidence of medieval to early post-medieval strip farming.

## APPENDIX A CONTEXT INVENTORY

Areas 1 and 2						
General description					Orientation	NA
<p>Area 1 consisted of topsoil (10000) and subsoil (10001) overlying natural geology of yellow brown sandy clay (10002). This area contained several groups of ditches including two N-S ditches (10064, 10067), two SW-NE ditches (10068, 10069) and two NW-SE ditches (10065, 10066). This area also contained one pit (10037) which truncated ditch 10035.</p> <p>Area 2 consisted of topsoil (10060) and subsoil (10061) overlying natural geology of red brown sandy clay (10062). This area contained two broadly NW-SE aligned ditches Groups 10063 and 10070 (10049, 10051).</p>					Length (m)	Area 1 = 30m, Area 2 = 17m
					Width (m)	Area 1 = 15, Area 2 = 15
					Avg. depth (m)	
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
10000	Layer	-	0.22	Topsoil (Area 1) over the whole trench		
10001	Layer	-	0.18	Subsoil (Area 1)		
10002	Natural	-		Natural (Area 1) – whole of Area 1		
10003	Fill		0.28	Fill of ditch 10005		
10004	Fill		0.10	Lower fill of 10005		
10005	Cut	1.15	0.34	Ditch NW-SE		
10006	Fill		0.05	Fill of ditch 10007		
10007	Cut	0.70	0.05	Possible ditch (very shallow)		
10008	Fill		0.20	Fill of ditch 10010		
10009	Fill		0.24	Lower fill of ditch 10010		
10010	Cut	1.30	0.42	A N-S ditch		
10011	Fill		0.10	Fill of 10012		
10012	Cut	1.30	0.10	A SW-NE aligned shallow feature		
10013	Cut	0.8	0.25	Linear NNW-SSE, more than 20m long		
10014	Fill		0.15	Fill of linear 10013		
10015	Fill		0.10	Top fill of shallow ditch 10013		
10016	Fill		0.28	Fill of ditch 10018		
10017	Fill		0.28	Lower fill of ditch 10018		
10018	Cut	1.30	0.50	A N-S ditch		
10019	Fill		0.08	Fill of 10020		
10020	Cut			A shallow SW-NE aligned ditch		

10021	Cut	0.9-1.3	0.4	Linear NNW-SSE, more than 20m long. Cut by E-W ditch 10023		
10022	Fill		0.4	Fill of 100021		
10023	Cut	0.8	0.45	Ditch which cuts 100021/. Length is more than 10m		
10024	Fill		0.15	Fill of ditch 100023		
10025	Fill		0.3	Top fill of ditch 100023		
10026	Fill		0.30	Fill of ditch 10027		
10027	Cut	0.85	0.30	A N-S ditch		
10028	Fill		0.06	Fill of natural feature 10029		
10029	Cut	0.60	0.06	Shallow natural feature 3.30m long		
10030	Fill		0.15	Fill of ditch 10032		
10031	Fill		0.08	Lower fill of ditch 10032		
10032	Cut	0.70	0.23	A NW-SE ditch. Cuts a shallower feature 10034		
10033	Fill		0.06	Fill of 10034		
10034	Cut	0.55	0.06	A NW-SE shallow cut parallel to ditch 10032, earlier ditch or hedge line?		
10035	Cut	0.6	0.1	Linear NNW-SSE, more than 20m long. Truncated by 10037		
10036	Fill		0.1	Fill of 10035		
10037	Cut	1.5-2	0.3	Cut of pit. Pit truncated ditch 10037		
10038	Fill		0.3	Fill of pit 10037	Animal tooth	
10039	Fill		0.22	Upper fill of ditch 10041		
10040	Fill		0.20	Lower fill of ditch 10041		
10041	Cut	1	0.22	Ditch NW-SE		
10042	Fill		0.24	Fill of ditch 10043	CBM (abraded)	
10043	Cut	0.80	0.24	Ditch NW-SE		
10044	Cut	1	0.37	Ditch, more than 20m long		
10045	Fill		0.08	Upper fill of ditch 10047		
10046	Fill		0.16	Fill of ditch 10047		
10047	Cut	1	0.22	NW-SE ditch		
10048	Fill		0.37	Fill of ditch 10044	Pottery/animal bone	
10049	Cut	0.8	0.25	Shallow ditch, more than 15m long. Same as 10051.		
10050	Fill		0.25	Fill of ditch 10049	Animal bone	

10051	Cut	0.90	0.37	Ditch (shallow) NNW-SSE. More than 15m long. Same as 10049.		
10052	Fill	0.90	0.30	Fill of ditch 10051		
10053	Fill		0.16	Fill of ditch 10055		
10054	Fill		0.30	Fill of ditch 10055		
10055	Cut		0.30	Ditch NW-SE		
10056	Fill		0.06	Fill of ditch 10057		
10057	Cut	0.75	0.06	Ditch NW-SE		
10058	Fill		0.15	Fill of ditch 10059		
10059	Fill	1.10	0.15	A NW-SE ditch		
10060	Layer		0.26	Topsoil over whole of Area 2		
10061	Layer		0.13	Subsoil over the whole of Area 2		
10062	Fill			Natural extends the width of Area 2		
10063	Group			Area 2 Group. Shallow undated NW-SE ditch (10055, 10057 and 10059)		
10064	Group			Area 1 Group. NNW-SSE ditch (10043 and 10027). Aligns to nearby Roman Road		
10065	Group			Area 1 Group. NW-SE ditch (10041, 10032, 10013). Possible earlier cut 10034		
10066	Group			Area 1 Group. NW-SE ditch (10047, 10021, 100005, 10035). It is cut by group 10068. It cuts Group 10069. It is cut by pit 100037.		
10067	Group			Area 1 Group. NNW-SSE ditch (10018, 10010, 10044). It cuts groups 10068 and 10069. Pottery found in 10044. Aligns to nearby Roman Road		
10068	Group			Area 1 Group. SW-NE ditch (10020 and 10023). It was cut by ditch group 10067 but cuts or contemporary with 10066		
10069	Group			Area 1 Group. SW-NE ditch (10007 and 10012). It was cut by 10066 and 10067. Shallow.		

10070	Group (added during post- excavat ion stage)			Area 2 Group. Shallow undated NW-SE ditch (10051 and 10049)		
-------	--	--	--	---	--	--

## APPENDIX B FINDS REPORTS

### B.1 Pottery

*By Edward Biddulph*

- B.1.1 Five sherds of pottery, weighing 35g, were recovered from the site. Context 10001 contained two body sherds (10g) in a medium sandy reduced ware, while context 10048 contained three sherds (25g), also in medium sandy reduced fabrics. Both groups can be dated broadly to the Roman period (c AD 43-410).
- B.1.2 The pottery adds to the assemblage of Roman-period recovered from the site; a rim sherd from a wide-mouthed jar or bowl in a sandy oxidised ware was collected from the evaluation. This material points to Roman activity in the vicinity of the site, although with a mean sherd weight of 7g, the condition of the pottery from the excavation suggests that the pottery had been subject to episodes of redeposition prior to final burial, and may therefore have been found away from areas of use.

### B.2 Ceramic building material

*By Edward Biddulph*

- B.2.1 A fragment of ceramic building material, weighing 12g, was collected from context 10042 and is possibly of Roman date. The fragment is in an orange sandy fabric. It has two flat surfaces, one of which is sanded, and is up to 12mm thick. No edges survive and the breaks are abraded.

### B.3 Animal bone

*By Martyn Allen*

- B.3.1 Three contexts produced a total of 13 fragments of animal bone. Three long bone fragments from a large mammal, probably cattle, and two fragments from a medium-sized mammal were recovered from context 10048 of ditch 10044. Context 10050 of ditch 10049 produced seven shaft fragments from a sheep/goat humerus, and context 10038 of pit 10037 produced a single, cattle upper molar.

## APPENDIX C      BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bashford, R, 2001 Ivy Cottage, Meadle, Buckinghamshire: Archaeological Watching Brief Report  
Oxford Archaeological Unit (unpublished client report)

British Geological Survey, 2017 Geology of Britain Map Viewer  
<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014, *Standards and guidance for archaeological Excavation*

English Heritage, 2009 *Princes Risborough Historic Town Assessment Report*,  
<http://rap.globalizeme.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/EH-Historic-Town-Assessment-Princes-Risborough.pdf>

Hey, G and Hind, J (eds) 2014 *Solent-Thames Research Framework for the Historic Environment: Resource Assessments and Research Agendas*, Oxford: Oxford Wessex, Monograph No. 6

Magnitude Surveys, 2017 *Geophysical Survey Report MSSP95 of Land Adjacent to Thame Road Longwick, Buckinghamshire*, unpublished report by Magnitude Surveys

Oxford Archaeology, 2017a Land adjacent to Thame Road, Longwick, Buckinghamshire: written scheme of investigation of archaeological evaluation, unpublished document by Oxford Archaeology, Oxford

Oxford Archaeology, 2017b Land Adjacent to Thame Road, Longwick, Buckinghamshire, unpublished evaluation report, Oxford Archaeology

Oxford Archaeology, 2017c Land adjacent to Thame Road, Longwick, Buckinghamshire: written scheme of investigation of archaeological excavation, unpublished document by Oxford Archaeology, Oxford

Palmer, J.J.N, 2017 Open Domesday, <http://opendomesday.org/>

RSRB 2016: Allen, M, Blick, N, Brindle, T, Evans, T, Fulford, M, Holbrook, N, Richards, J D, Smith, A, 2015 (updated 2016) *The Rural Settlement of Roman Britain: an online resource*  
<http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/romangl/map.html>

Sawyer 2017: S 367. A.D. 903. King Edward, with Æthelred and Æthelflæd of Mercia, at the request of Æthelfrith, dux, renews the charter of a grant by Athulf to Æthelgyth, his daughter, of 30 hides (cassati) at Monks Risborough, Bucks. Latin with English bounds, King's College London,  
<http://www.esawyer.org.uk/charter/367.html>

Thames Valley Archaeological Services, 2015 *Land adjacent to Thame Road, Longwick, Buckinghamshire: archaeological desk-based assessment*, unpublished report by TVAS, Reading

ULAS, 2014 Icknield Way and Roman settlement excavated at Aston Clinton, Buckinghamshire  
<https://ulasnews.com/2014/09/15/icknield-way-and-roman-settlement-excavated-at-aston-clinton-buckinghamshire/>

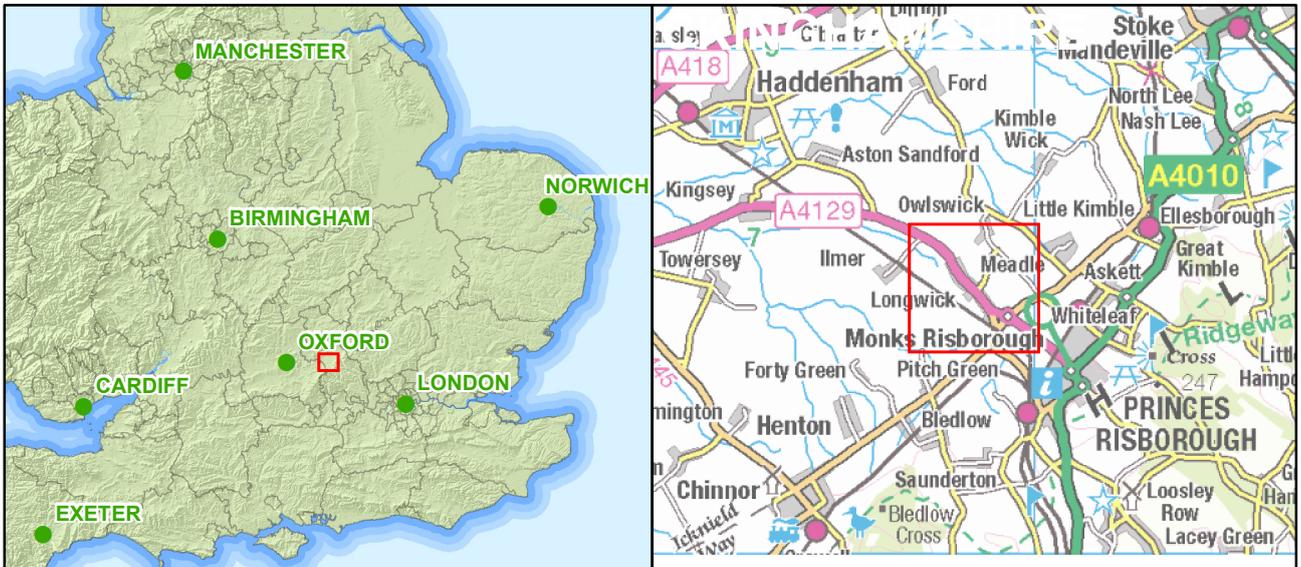
VCH 1908: Page, W, 1908 Monks Risborough, *A History of the County of Buckingham: Volume 2*, 256-260. British History Online <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/bucks/vol2/pp256-260> [accessed 27 July 2017].

VCH 1908: Page, W, 1908 Princes Risborough, *A History of the County of Buckingham: Volume 2*, 260-267. British History Online <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/bucks/vol2/pp260-267> [accessed 27 July 2017].

Wessex Archaeology, 2004 Park Mill Farm, Princes Risborough: Archaeological Evaluation (unpublished client report)

**APPENDIX D****SITE SUMMARY DETAILS**

<b>Site name:</b>	Land adjacent to Thame Road, Longwick Buckinghamshire
<b>Site code:</b>	LOTR17
<b>Grid Reference</b>	SP 7875 0525
<b>Type:</b>	Excavation
<b>Date and duration:</b>	27th June 2017 – 3rd July 2017
<b>Area of Site</b>	705 square metres (0.0705ha)
<b>Location of archive:</b>	The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Buckinghamshire County Museum in due course, under the following accession number: <b>AYBCM:2017.33.</b>
<b>Summary of Results:</b>	<p>In June and July 2017 Oxford Archaeology was commissioned by Croudace Homes to undertake an archaeological evaluation of land adjacent to Thame Road in Longwick, Buckinghamshire. The site, centred on NGR SP 7875 0525 and lying at 85m above Ordnance Datum, has been proposed for a new housing development.</p> <p>Two areas were excavated including Area 1 (15m x 30m) and Area 2 (17m x 15m), and it took place on five days from the 27th June to the 3rd July 2017.</p> <p>The results of the excavation revealed part of a possible Roman trackway orientated NNW-SSE which may have linked to the Lower Icknield Way to the south. This was formed by two ditches (Group 10064, 10067) containing Roman CBM and pottery. Ditch Group 10067 appeared to be the same ditch found during the evaluation (302) where pottery was found dating to the 2nd or 3rd century AD.</p> <p>The excavation also revealed a number of undated parallel ditches orientated north-west to south-east which may be evidence of medieval to early post-medieval strip farming.</p>



X:\llongwick\_Thame Road\_Geophys\_Eval\010Geomatics\03 GIS Projects\LOTREY\_Report\_Fig1\_2017\0421.mxd\\*toby.martin\21/04/2017

Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2014  
 (c) OpenStreetMap and contributors, Creative Commons-Share Alike License (CC-BY-SA)

Figure 1: Site location

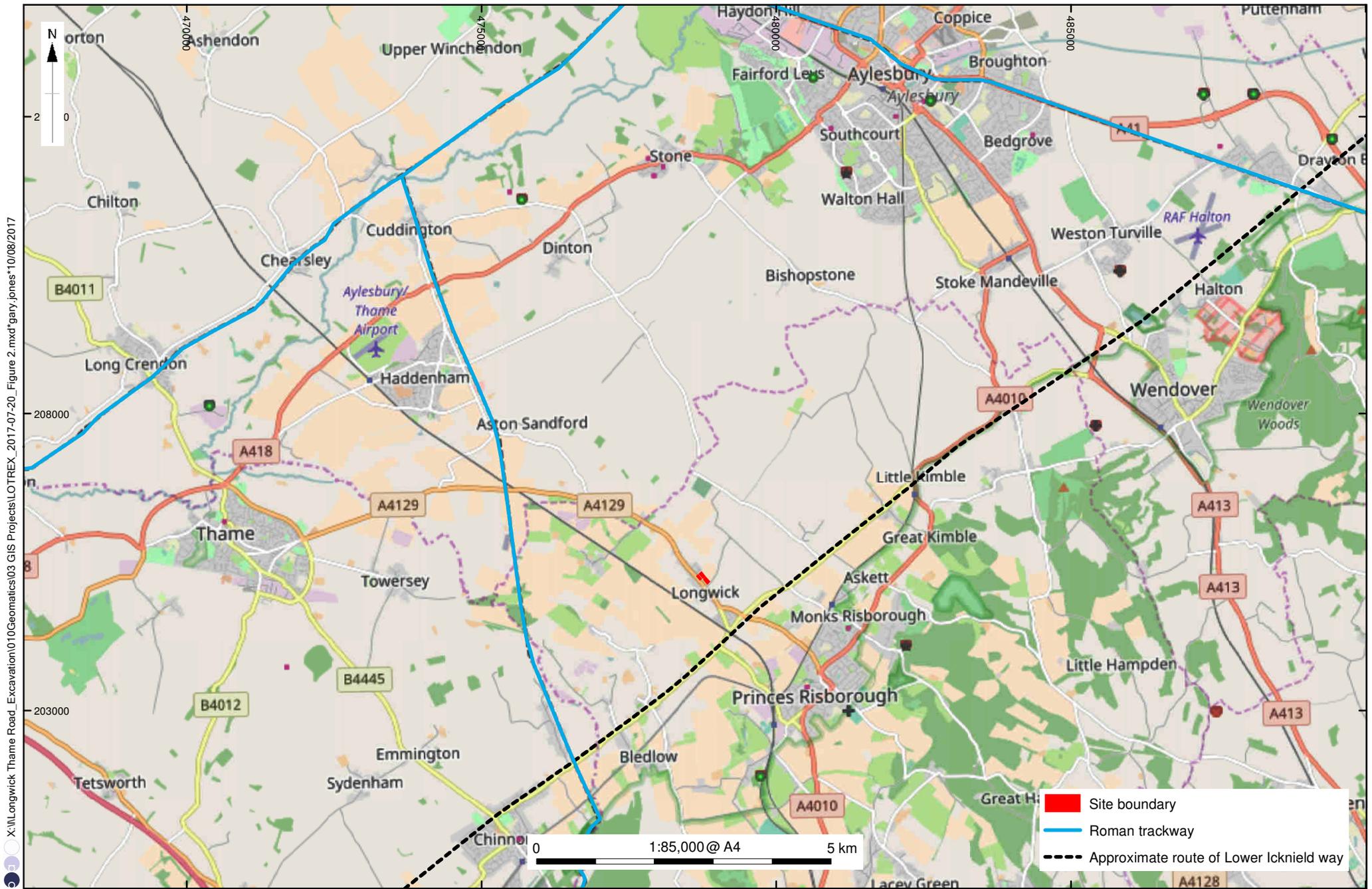


Figure 2: Roman sites within 10km radius of Longwick (RSRB 2016) CC-BT-SA

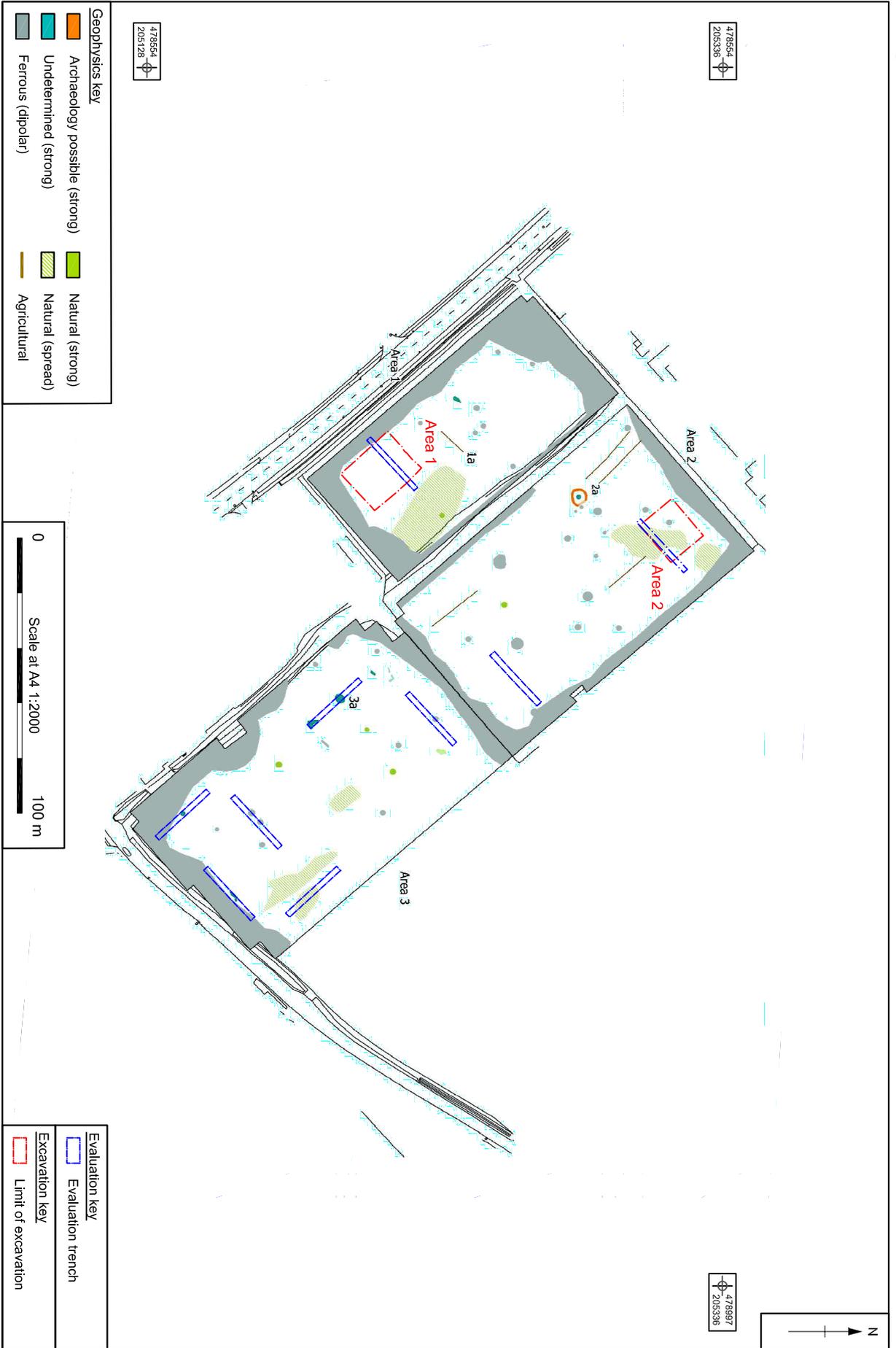


Figure 3: Results of the geophysical survey 2017

CHECKED BY:

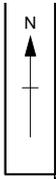


Figure 4: Trench and Area layout from 2017 evaluation and excavation

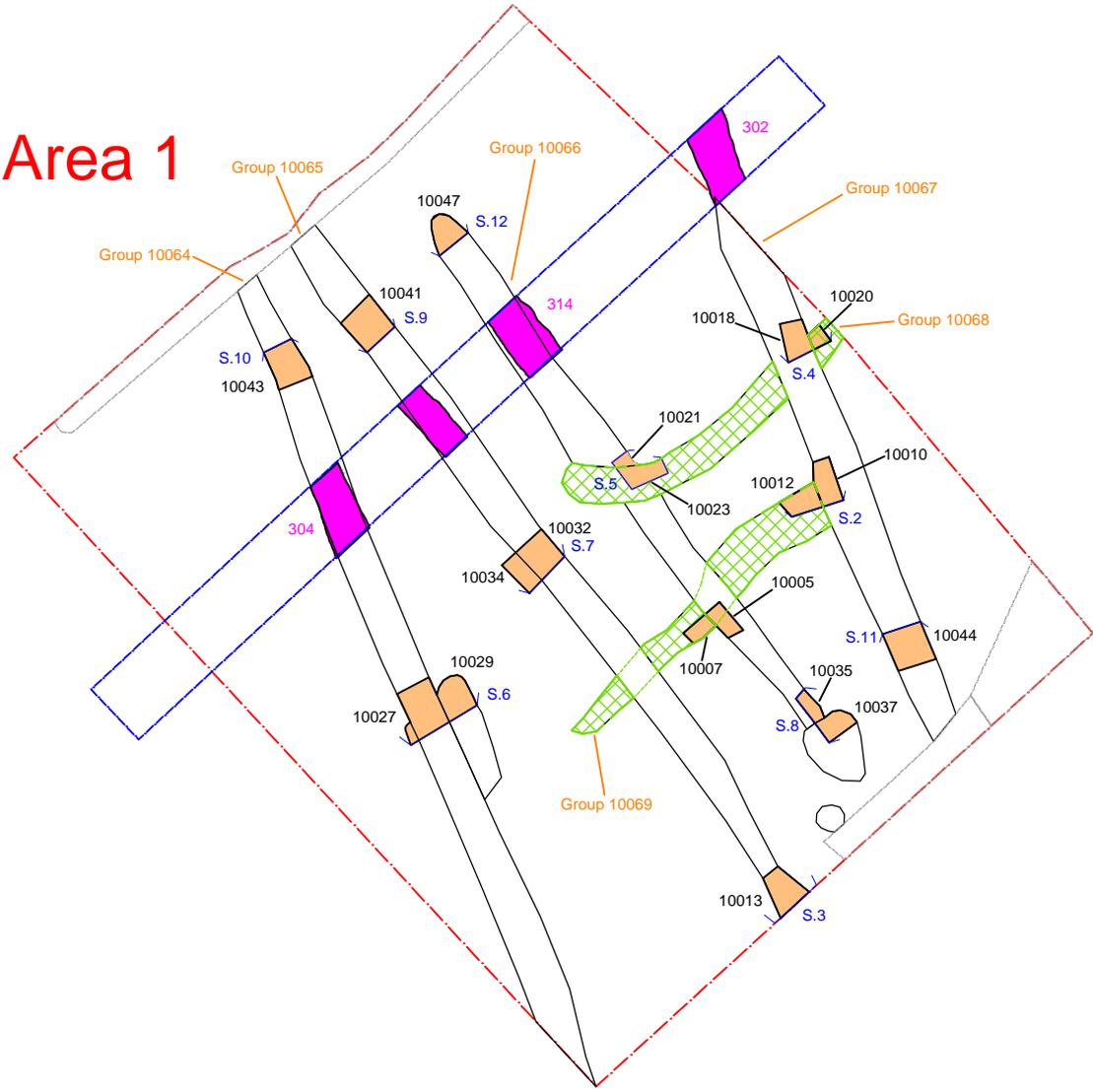
0 100 m

1:1,500 @ A4

X:\Longwick Thame Road\_Excavation\01\0Geomatics\02 CAD\LOTREX\_2017-07-05.dwg(Figure 5)\*\*\*LOTREX\gary\_jones\* 14 Aug 2017



# Area 1



Evaluation key	
	Evaluation trench
	Archaeological feature
Excavation key	
	Limit of excavation
	Archaeological feature
	Archaeological intervention
	Archaeological section
	Ephemeral feature
	Modern feature

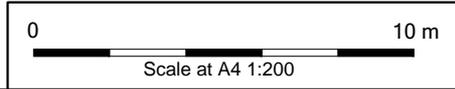
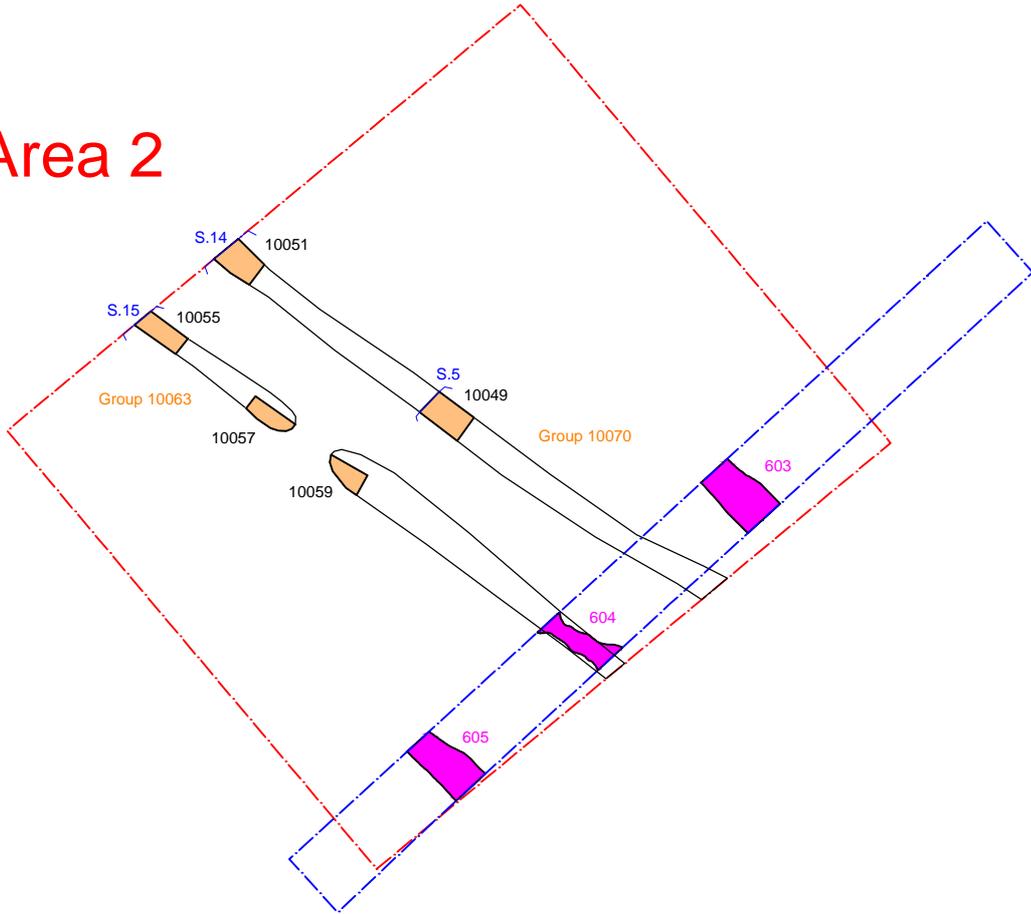


Figure 5: Area 1 excavation plan



# Area 2



X:\Longwick Thame Road\_Excavation\01\0Geomatics\02 CAD\LOTREX\_2017-07-05.dwg(Figure 6)\*\*\*LOTREX\gary\_jones\* 10 Aug 2017



Evaluation key	
	Evaluation trench
	Archaeological feature

Excavation key	
	Limit of excavation
	Archaeological feature
	Archaeological intervention
	Archaeological section

Figure 6: Area 2 excavation plan

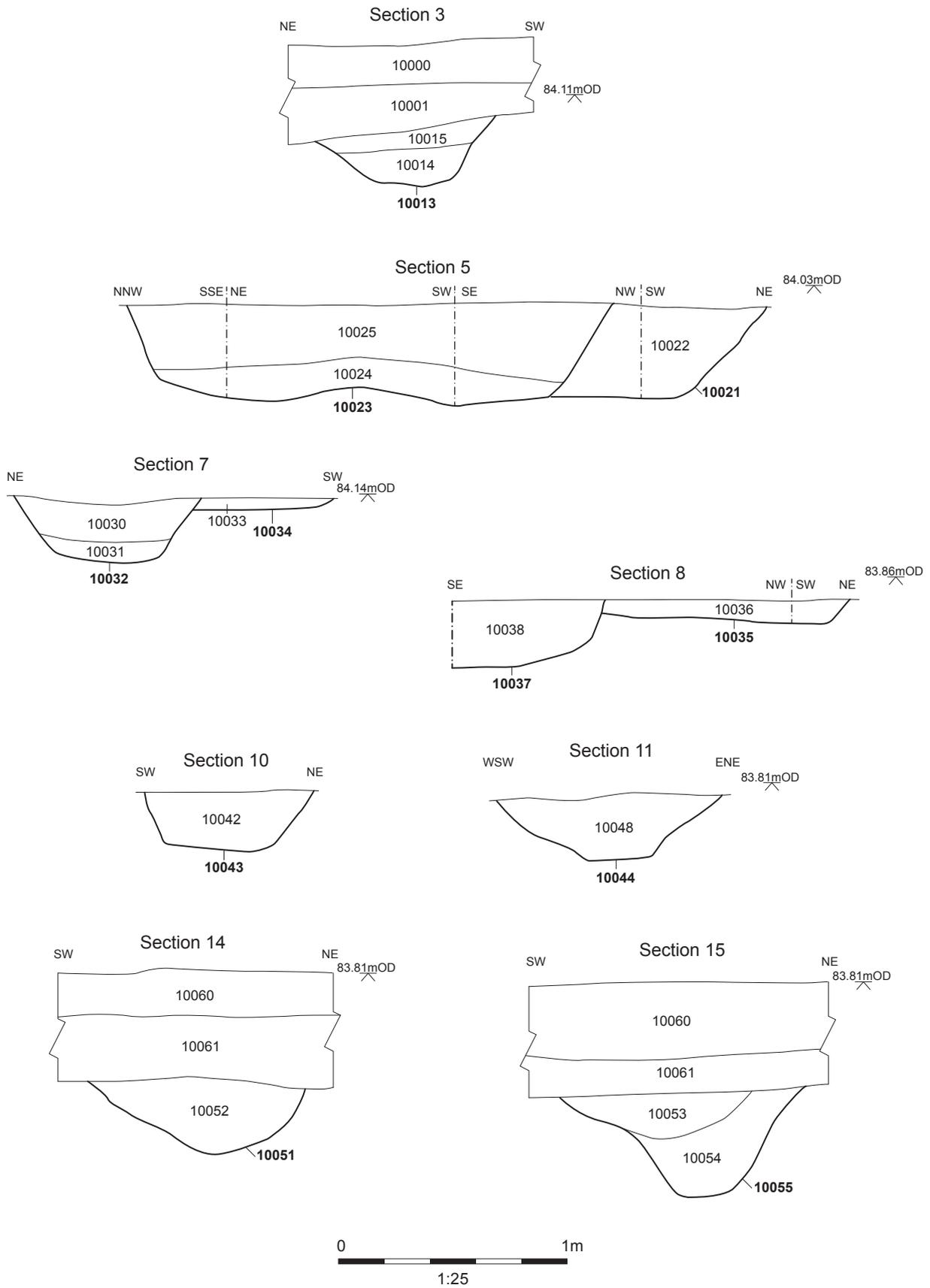


Figure 7: Sections



Plate 1: Section 5, ditches 10021 and 10023, facing south



Plate 2: Section 8, ditch 10035 and pit 10037, facing south-west



Plate 3: Section 11, ditch 10044, facing north-west



Plate 4: Section 13, ditch 10049, facing north-west



**Head Office/Registered Office/  
OA South**

Janus House  
Osney Mead  
Oxford OX20ES

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

**OA North**

Mill 3  
Moor Lane  
Lancaster LA1 1QD

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

**OA East**

15 Trafalgar Way  
Bar Hill  
Cambridgeshire  
CB23 8SQ

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



**Director:** Gill Hey, BA PhD FSA MCIfA  
*Oxford Archaeology Ltd is a  
Private Limited Company, N<sup>o</sup>: 1618597  
and a Registered Charity, N<sup>o</sup>: 285627*