Dorset Visual Impact Provision

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Dorset Visual Impact Provision

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Summary

Between the 2nd and 12th of October 2017 Oxford Archaeology undertook an archaeological evaluation comprising 10 trenches in the parishes of Winterbourne Abbas, Winterbourne Steepleton, Winterbourne St. Martin and Portesham (NGR SY605913) along the Proposed Project of the Dorset Visual Impact Provision.

A geophysical survey had previously identified several linear anomalies and other possible archaeological features. Some of these were targeted by this phase of work and were proven to be the remains of two round barrows in Trenches 20 and 29 in the northern part of the Proposed Project along with a demolished structure in Trench 26. In the central part of the Proposed Project, features in Trenches 42 and 150 could not be excavated due to depth. In Trench 47 a rectilinear enclosure was revealed and produced a worked flint assemblage of early prehistoric date. In the southern part of the site several large features were not excavated but may have been sink holes or chalk extraction pits. A lynchet in Trench 133 attests to the later prehistoric agricultural presence in the landscape in the southern part of the Proposed Project.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of work

1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by National Grid to undertake a trial trench evaluation in advance of the Dorset Visual Impact Provision. The project aims to enhance designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty through the relocation of above ground electrical services underground.

1.1.2 The work was undertaken to inform the Planning Authority in advance of a submission of a Planning Application. Although the Local Planning Authority had not set a brief for the work, discussions with the Senior Archaeologist for Dorset County Council and Historic England, established the scope of work required. This document outlines how OA implemented the specified requirements.

1.1.3 This evaluation forms the first phase of a proposed programme of works to mitigate the archaeological potential along the route of the preferred cable corridor. It is anticipated that further phases of trial trenching and subsequent mitigation, as appropriate, will be undertaken post planning determination. The full programme of the currently proposed works has been detailed in the 'Visual Impact Provision Dorset Project, Outline Archeological Written Scheme of Investigation' produced by RSK Environment on behalf of the National Grid. The outline WSI is in draft form at the time of the production of this document.

1.1.4 Current proposals are for a total of 154 trenches to excavated along the route of the Proposed Project. This first stage of evaluation was limited to 14 trenches (Figs. 2, 3, 4 and 5).

1.2 Location, topography and geology

1.2.1 The route of the Proposed Project lies within the parishes of Winterbourne Abbas, Winterbourne Steepleton, Winterbourne St. Martin and Portesham (NGR SY605913 to SY638852, Fig 1). It is approximately 8.8km in length and runs from a point north-west of Winterbourne Abbas, cutting across the A35 and south of Winterbourne Abbas in a south-easterly direction. It then turns slightly south, across the upper slopes of Corton Down on the South East Dorset Escarpment, to lower ground south of Friar Waddon Hill.

1.2.2 The area of proposed development consists of open chalk downland with medium to large-scale arable fields bounded by low hedges and a few trees. There is little development comprising dispersed farms and linear settlements associated with the A35 and B31590.

1.2.3 The geology of the area is mainly mapped as various chalk formations but at its southern end, in the Wadden area, it is likely to be limestone and mudstone. Throughout the route, drift deposits infill multiple dry valleys including Quaternary clay, silt, sand and gravel sediments of varying depths and extent. Collectively mapped as 'Head', these will include hillwash (colluvium) which may bury or mask archaeological sites or into which archaeological features may be cut. There are no major watercourses in the immediate vicinity of the route. However, winterbournes (seasonal springs) may be associated with the dry valleys and natural springs present issuing from the foot of the Chalk Escarpment (OA 2017).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 The archaeological and historical background of the site has been described in detail in the Historic Baseline Report (RSK, forthcoming), and will not be reproduced here. The following summary is provided to place the site in context.

1.3.2 The Proposed Project is located within a rich, multi-period archaeological landscape that has been settled since at least the Mesolithic period, with evidence of settlement from Purbeck, Portland and Weymouth on the coast and more extensive later settlement on the chalk downs. The route passes through the South Dorset Ridgeway which contains a high density of archaeological monuments and historic landscape features.

1.3.3 The large number of early prehistoric barrow monuments suggests a primarily funerary landscape with the potential for significant time depth, but the area also contains evidence for later activity including a prominent series of lynchets (cultivation terraces), Roman settlement, medieval and post-medieval settlement, and WWII military remains, especially at Black Down.

1.3.4 On the South Dorset Ridgeway is one of the most impressive groups of barrows, stretching for over 21km from White Horse Hill, Osmington in the east to Chilcombe Hill in the west. The archaeology and historic landscape features of the area have been mapped as part of the South Dorset Ridgeway Mapping Project and some of the barrows in the wider area have been investigated as part of a survey of the South Dorset Ridgeway barrows in 2010.

1.3.5 During the latter prehistoric period (c 600-100 BC) many hillforts were built, including those on Giant's Hill near the village of Cerne Abbas to the north of the scheme. Other hillforts closer to the search area are located at Poundbury Camp on the north-west edge of Dorchester, and Maiden Castle which lies south-west of Dorchester. Aerial photographs show a series of enclosures to the south-west of Winterbourne Steepleton and which may relate to late prehistoric settlement.

1.3.6 The Romans established a major base at Dorchester which developed into a substantial town with an amphitheatre, aqueducts and baths, town walls and houses. A Roman farmstead has been recorded at Poundbury Farm and the route of a Roman road leading from Poundbury to Town Hill is located 300m north-east of the scheme.

1.3.7 Principle settlements in the area include Winterbourne Abbas and Winterbourne Steepleton. Winterbourne Abbas is a designated conservation area and contains five listed buildings including its principal building the Church of St Mary which is Grade I listed. Winterbourne Steepleton is also a conservation area containing 14 listed buildings including the Church of St Michael which is Grade I listed, and Manor Farmhouse and Sherring Monument both of which are Grade II* listed.

1.3.8 There are further listed buildings beyond the principal settlement areas including a complex of buildings containing four listed Grade II at Friar Waddon and three listed buildings at Corton including the Grade II* Chapel of St Bartholomew. Bridehead Registered Park and Garden dates to the early 19th century. The park is designated Grade II and also contains an early 19th century lodge building which is listed Grade II and is also located within the search area. Further listed buildings located within the park are concentrated around the settlement of Littlebredy.

Geophysical Survey

1.3.9 In late 2016 and early 2017 a geophysical survey was carried out along the route of the preferred cable corridor (TigerGeo, 2017). The survey identified 107 anomalies of potential archaeological interest. These included potential enclosures, ring ditches and field boundaries, along with discrete features such as burials, pits, industrial features or natural geology.

1.3.10 Anomalies indicative of ridge and furrow cultivation, land drains and a possible radio mast with associated metalled trackway were also identified (RSK forthcoming).

1.3.11 The features investigated during the evaluation are discussed below with reference to the geophysical report.

2 EVALUATION AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

2.1.1 The project aims and objectives were as follows:

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

2.2 Site specific aims and objectives

2.2.1 Site specific aims and objectives were as follows;

x. To ground-truth the results of the geophysical survey

2.3 Methodology

2.3.1 The site specific methodology was as follows:

- The trenches were laid out as shown in Figures 3, 4 and 5 using GPS with sub 25mm accuracy, except where minor adjustments were required due to site obstructions.
- The trenches were excavated using an appropriately powered wheeled mechanical excavator with a toothless bucket and under direct archaeological supervision of an archaeologist. Spoil was stored adjacent to the trenches but at a safe distance, it was separated so that top soil was on one side and subsoil on the other.
- The trenches were machined in spits down to the top of the undisturbed natural geology or the first archaeological horizon depending on which was encountered first. Of the trenches that were deeper than 0.5m in depth no member of the team or any other individuals were allowed access due to health and safety constraints. No trenches were excavated beyond a depth of 1m.
- Once archaeological deposits had been exposed, further excavation proceeded by hand, where it was safe to do so.

- The exposed surfaces of the trenches were sufficiently clean to identify the presence or absence of any archaeological deposits. Where it was safe to do so features were excavated and recorded by hand. In places where it was not safe to enter the trenches potential features were recorded from outside of the trench.
- Upon completion each trench was backfilled by the machine, subsoil first and topsoil above it.

2.3.2 All features and deposits were issued with unique context numbers, and context recording was in accordance with established best practice and the OA Field Manual. Samples were allocated unique numbers, and bulk finds were collected by context.

2.3.3 Digital photos were taken of any archaeological features, deposits, trenches and the evaluation work in general, and form part of the project archive.

2.3.4 Plans were drawn at 1:50. Section drawings of features were drawn at a scale of 1:20 and located on the appropriate plans. The absolute height (mOD) of all principal strata and features, and the section datum lines were indicated on the drawings.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction and presentation of results

3.1.1 The results of the evaluation are presented below, and include a stratigraphic description of the trenches that contained archaeological remains. The full details of all trenches with dimensions and depths of all deposits can be found in Appendix A. Finds data and spot dates are tabulated in Appendix B.

3.1.2 Context numbers reflect the trench numbers unless otherwise stated e.g. ditch 2906 is a feature within Trench 29, while ditch 6104 is a feature within Trench 61.

3.1.3 Due to landowner access restrictions it was not possible to excavate three of the 14 proposed trenches (11, 53 and 67; Figs. 3, 4 and 5).

3.1.4 Some trenches were shortened for logistical reasons. Trench 20 was shortened from its proposed length due to the presence of overhead cables, and Trench 26 was shortened due to a positive reading from a CAT scan of the trench location prior to machining.

3.1.5 Where recorded features can be confidently matched to the anomalies recorded by the geophysical survey the numbers allocated in the geophysical report (TigerGeo, 2017) are given in italics to distinguish from context numbers.

3.2 General soils and ground conditions

3.2.1 The soil sequence between all trenches was fairly uniform. In the majority of the trenches the natural geology of chalk was overlain by a sandy silt subsoil measuring between 0.10m and 0.35mm in depth, which in turn was overlain by topsoil measuring between 0.24m and 0.4m in depth with around 0.3m being the most typical. In two of these trenches (42 and 150) the subsoil overlay a deposit of plateau drift into which the archaeological features were cut. In these trenches the chalk natural was not revealed as it was at below 1m in depth from the surface of the trench. In three trenches (20, 25 and 47) no subsoil was present and the topsoil directly overlay the chalk natural.

3.2.2 Ground conditions throughout the evaluation were generally good, and the trenches remained dry throughout. Archaeological features, where present, were easy to identify against the underlying natural geology.

3.3 General distribution of archaeological deposits

3.3.1 Archaeological features were present in all the trenches except Trench 25 which comprised topsoil overlying chalk bedrock (Plate 1). The following trench descriptions are supplemented by more detailed measurements and descriptions of deposits in Appendix A.

3.4 Trench 20 (Fig. 6)

3.4.1 Ditch 2004, situated in the northern part of the trench, was aligned east west and corresponded with the location of a possible ring ditch identified by the geophysical survey. It measured 2.3m in width and 0.41m in depth. Its sides were sloping but uneven and the northern side was stepped half way down. The base had a shallow concave shape. The feature contained three fills (2007, 2006, 2005). The fills were mid to light brown clay silts with varying degrees of chalk inclusions, more noticeably frequent in the earliest fill. No finds were

recovered from any of the fills. This ditch corresponds with the position of a possible ring ditch identified by the geophysical survey (*24*) and may be part of a barrow ring ditch.

3.4.2 A possible pit (2003) was partially revealed in the southern end of the trench, within the area that may have been enclosed by ring ditch 2004. It appeared to be sub-oval in plan, with gradually sloping but uneven sides and an uneven base. It measured 3.2m by 0.6m and was 0.3m in depth. Its single fill (2002) was a dark brown sandy silt with occasional chalk and flint inclusions. No finds were recovered from this feature.

3.5 Trench 26 (Fig. 7)

3.5.1 Trench 26 contained one feature, a possible wall foundation cut (2606), partially revealed in the western side of the trench.

3.5.2 The cut had vertical sides and a concave base, it was 1.5m in width and 0.6m in depth. The feature appears to be a construction cut for a rubble foundation and consisted of unworked blocks and fragments of chalk which all measuring greater than 0.12m in diameter. No datable material was recovered from the fill.

3.5.3 The upper part of the feature appears to have been robbed (2005) and this cut was backfilled with material very similar to the topsoil. The geophysical survey highlighted the presence of a probable structure in this location (*25* and *26*).

3.6 Trench 29 (Fig. 8, Plates 2 and 3)

3.6.1 Trench 29 contained seven ditches.

3.6.2 Ditch 2906 was situated at the north-eastern end of the trench and was a substantial ditch, measuring at least 2.04m in diameter and 0.52m in depth (Plate 2). It had moderately sloping, irregular sides and a narrow concave base. It contained three fills, which in section 2902 appear to have been deposited from the south-western side. The earliest fill was mainly fine chalk, followed by a fine silting deposit and then by an upper fill of silt and flint nodules. A large worked flint assemblage was recovered from this ditch.

3.6.3 At the south-western end of the trench, ditch 2913 measured 1.59m in width and 0.58m in depth but had been truncated on the south-western side. A single silty fill was recorded within the ditch (2914) and no finds were recovered from it. This ditch was truncated on the south-western side by a sequence of two possible recuts. Ditch 2916 was slightly shallower than the original ditch, measuring 0.31m in depth and 1.4m in width. It contained two mid greyish brown clay silt fills. The second possible recut (2919) was very shallow. No finds were recovered from this ditch.

3.6.4 Ditch 2910 was aligned NW-SE and measured 1.49m in width and 0.2m in depth with moderately sloping sides and a narrow concave base. It contained a single dark brown fill which contained worked flint. A large flint assemblage was recovered from this ditch along with pottery sherds from a single vessel of early prehistoric date.

3.6.5 In the area of the trench between these ditches two other shallower ditches or gullies were revealed. Ditches 2904 and 2902 were similar in size, with similar fills. Ditch 2902 measured 0.96m in width and 0.17m in depth and was aligned E-W across the trench. Ditch 2904 measure 0.84m in width and 0.14m in depth. Both were filled with dark grey clay silt with small chalk inclusions. No finds were recovered from either feature.

3.7 Trench 42 (Fig 9, Plate 4)

3.7.1 In Trench 42 several probable archaeological features were cut into a plateau drift deposit and were not excavated due to health and safety constraints. Natural chalk had not been reached at a depth of 1m. The trench corresponds with an area of strong magnetic anomalies suggesting potential features or areas of burning identified by the geophysical survey (*37*).

3.7.2 Three circular features were recorded (4204, 4206 and 4212). All three measured 0.5m-0.6m in diameter and were filled by mid to dark grey brown sandy silt with visible inclusions of chalk and possible charcoal fragments in 4206. The function of these features is not clear although they may be postholes, pits or cremation burials.

3.7.3 Three possible ditches (4208, 4210 and 4214) were also located within the trench and were not excavated. Ditch 4208 appeared to terminate within the trench, probably continuing to the south-west. It measured 0.8m in width and had charcoal inclusions visible in its greyish brown fill. Ditch 4210 was aligned with ditch 4208 and measured 1.6m in width. It had a mid to dark brown fill and flint inclusions were visible.

3.8 Trench 47 (Fig. 10, Plate 5)

3.8.1 Trench 47 was situated in the location of a possible enclosure identified by the geophysical survey (*40* and *41*).

3.8.2 Ditch 4705 was aligned NW-SE and measured 1.9m in width and 0.6m in depth. It had moderately sloping straight sides and a narrow concave base. It had two fills, the earliest of which, a mixture of mid brown silt and chalk fragments, appeared to have been deposited from the south-western side. The main fill was a mid-brown clay silt from which worked flint was recovered. This ditch appears to correspond with the eastern side of the enclosure identified by the geophysical survey (*40*).

3.8.3 Ditch 4702 was aligned E-W and measured 0.6m in width and 0.27m in depth it contained a similar fill to ditch 4705, but was notably narrower. No finds were recovered from the fill. This ditch appears to correspond with the possible internal division within the enclosure identified by the geophysical survey (*41*).

3.8.4 A large posthole was situated near to the south-western end of the trench. It measured 1m in diameter and 0.25m in depth. The upper fill consisted mainly of large flint nodules that may have been used for packing, supporting a post.

3.9 Trench 61 (Fig. 11, Plates 6 and 7)

3.9.1 Trench 61 contained a large circular feature (probably a pond) and three ditches, likely to form part of a field system identified by the geophysical survey (*48* and *49*). Three postholes were also within the trench, with the two largest situated alongside two of the ditches.

3.9.2 Feature 6110 is visible as a hollow on the site background mapping and the geophysics plan showed that it was probably situated next to a ditch on its southern side. Both features were revealed in the north-eastern part of the trench with the ditch almost certainly being feature 6108 (it was cut by 'pond' 6110). Ditch 6108 was aligned E-W and measured 0.52m in width and 0.2m in depth with a shallow concave profile. No finds were recovered from the silty fill. Another ditch (6104) was aligned N-S and probably formed part of a field system with

ditch 6108 as suggested by the geophysics. This ditch was 0.8m in width and 0.2m in depth, so comparable in size and had a similar profile. Both had similar single silty fills.

3.9.3 Ditch 6113 was also situated within this trench. It may represent another field boundary ditch situated beyond the area of the geophysical survey, being situated on the northern side of the possible pond. It was very similar in size and profile to the two described above and similarly had a single silty fill.

3.9.4 Posthole 6106 was situated on the southern side of ditch 6108 and measured 0.85m in diameter and 0.4m in depth. Feature 6117 was situated adjacent to the northern side of ditch 6113 and measured 0.7m in diameter and 0.55m in depth. Both features had shallow concave upper profiles with narrow vertical lower profiles suggesting that they were large postholes. A large flint blade was recovered from the fill of posthole 6117.

3.9.5 Pond 6110 was situated close to the junction of two probable field ditches shown on the geophysical survey (one of which is ditch 6113) The possible pond was clay lined and its full size was not revealed by the trench, but the portion present measured 8m long. It was 0.46m in depth and above the clay lining had been filled with a mid to dark greyish brown sandy silt.

3.10 Trench 75 (Plate 8)

3.10.1 Trench 75 contained three large possible chalk extraction pits or sinkholes (7503, 7505, 7507) and correspond with one the area of large anomalies seen on the geophysics plan (*65-72*) estimated to be c. 6m in diameter. Those found in trench 75 were 5 – 6m in diameter and were not excavated but are likely to be deep.

3.11 Trench 133 (Fig. 12)

3.11.1 Only one feature was located within trench 133. Feature 13301 was a lynchet (an earth terrace on the side of a hill caused by ploughing). It measured 20.3m in width and was excavated by machine. No finds were recovered from the deposit.

3.12 Trench 150 (Fig. 9 and Plate 9)

3.12.1 Features within Trench 150 truncated a plateau drift deposit, recorded approximately 0.65m below present ground level. A 1m deep sondage through the deposit did not expose natural chalk geology. Features within the trench were recorded but not excavated due to health and safety constraints (trench depth). The trench corresponds with an area of strong magnetic anomalies suggesting potential features or areas of burning identified by the geophysical survey (*37*).

3.12.2 The trench contained several linear features; 15003 appeared to be a short section of gully aligned NE-SW in the northern part of the trench. A larger ditch (15009) was situated in the middle part of the trench and may represent a larger boundary, perhaps and enclosure or field system ditch. Two other features were possible ditch terminals or pits only partially revealed by the trench (15015, 15019). Three discrete features (15005, 15007, 15013) were circular in shape and measured between 0.5and 1m in diameter. Their function is not known but postholes or cremation burials are both possibilities. One larger circular feature (15011) is most likely a pit.

3.13 Finds summary

Pottery (see Appendix B)

By Lisa Brown

3.13.1 Ten sherds (27g) of prehistoric pottery belonging to a single vessel were recovered from fill 2909 of a possible Bronze Age ring ditch (2910).

3.13.2 The pottery is handmade and all sherds are undecorated body fragments undiagnostic of form. The pottery is not closely dateable beyond the fact that the unrefined treatment and very mixed temper suggest an earlier prehistoric date. The vessel may even be Neolithic, and the fragments sufficiently abraded to allow the for the possibility that they are residual in the feature, but a date contemporary with the (presumed) Bronze Age ring ditch is also possible.

3.13.3 In addition to the prehistoric pottery a single 6g sherd of post-medieval oxidized ware was recovered from subsoil deposit 2601.

Worked Flint (see Appendix B)

By Michael Donnelly

3.13.4 This evaluation yielded a large flint assemblage of 152 struck pieces, two natural fragments and one fragment of burnt unworked flint weighing 4g. The bulk of this assemblage was recovered from just three contexts, two of which were very closely related. A very significant proportion of the flint was recovered from environmental samples taken from these three features and it is likely that all three contained large and important flint assemblages. The majority of the flint work is likely to be of Bronze Age date and may well be contemporary with the features from which they were recovered.

3.13.5 The flint assemblage recovered from this evaluation is of significance. The limited early prehistoric component suggests that there is some possibility of recovering a more substantial assemblage from this period, particularly if there is any tree throw holes or naturally infilled hollows in the landscape with relict soils in them. The ring ditch assemblage is also very important. It is large and any further work would easily recover a very statistically valid set of material for study. Moreover, any other barrow ditches in the vicinity may also contain similar assemblages and a plan should be put in place for a more systematic flint-recovery procedure should further work commence. These assemblages shine a very different light on the use of these monuments during their life as burial grounds and after they have ceased to be the main focus of burial activity.

Stone

By Ruth Shaffrey

3.13.6 A single piece of stone was submitted for analysis. It is a small and not obviously worked fragment of sandstone, which can be discarded.

Glass

By Ian Scott

3.13.7 A single small piece of vessel glass was recovered from a soil sample. The small sherd from context 2911 was probably from a medicine bottle. There is a fine raised vertical line present, probably framing an embossed inscription. The tops of three letters survive. One letter is 'E' or 'F' and the others could be 'I' or 'L'. The glass is colourless. It is probably of late 19th or early 20th century date.

Metal

By Ian Scott

3.13.8 A single metal artefact was found. A pocket or spring knife fragment comprising the spring and part of the handle was present. Spring knives were first made in the 17th century, but were very popular and widely used in the later 19th and early 20th century. This example dates to the later period.

3.14 Environmental Summary

By Sharon Cook

3.14.1 Three samples were taken during the evaluation at the Dorset Visual Improvement Provision Scheme in October 2017. All samples were taken from ditch fills: sample <1> (4706), the fill of 4705 in Trench 47 was 35L in volume; sample <2> (2909) the fill of ring ditch 2906) which was 38L and sample <3> (2911) was 40L from the fill of ditch 2910 both within Trench 29 and associated with a barrow. The features are all likely to be Bronze Age in date.

3.14.2 The flots from the samples all contained a quantity of modern roots and other material such as insects and seeds, this modern material comprises the majority of the volume for all samples. A very small amount of cereal grain was recovered from two samples and an onion couch grass tuber and two small fragments of hazelnut shell from one sample. Charcoal was present in all three samples but was small in size although clean and in fairly good condition.

3.14.3 The material in these samples demonstrate that charred plant remains survive on this site but little can be said with regard to site activity with such a small dataset. However, the lack of abrasion and good condition of some of this material would seem to indicate that there may be good results from sampling elsewhere on this site if further work is carried out.

4 DISCUSSION

4.1 Reliability of field investigation

4.1.1 The fieldwork was undertaken over a period of ten days in good weather conditions. The clear and dry conditions combined with the chalk natural geology meant features were clearly visible. In only two trenches (42 and 150) was this slightly more difficult, where features were cut into a deposit of plateau drift and the depth of the trenches meant that the features could not be safely excavated. The interpretation of these features was therefore more difficult and their function is not completely clear.

4.1.2 The results of the geophysical survey proved to be largely accurate with a very strong correlation between possible anomalies and the archaeological features excavated during the evaluation. However, the correlation between the results of the geophysical survey and features recorded as cutting the plateaux drift deposits (Trenches 42 and 150) was poor. Discrete features, pits and postholes, were also recorded in several trenches (20, 47, 61, 42 and 150) that were not identified in the geophysical survey, However, it should be noted that geophysics is often an unreliable method of identifying discrete features.

4.1.3 On the whole, there is a high level of confidence that the investigations have provided an accurate demonstration of the archaeological remains present within individual small areas of the Proposed Project, but the small number of widely spaced trenches excavated mean that this is insufficient to understand the archaeological character of the wider area.

4.2 Evaluation objectives and results

4.2.1 The aims and objectives of the evaluation are detailed above in section 2. The trenching has successfully confirmed the location of the archaeological features identified by geophysical survey and largely indicates that the results of the survey are an accurate reflection of the remains present. However, the small amount of pottery recovered means that many of the features cannot be confidently dated and provide little clear indication of their function. In the small number of contexts where worked flint and/or pottery was recovered interpretation was greatly aided and suggests a significant earlier prehistoric presence in the vicinity of the Proposed Project.

4.2.2 The evaluation has identified the presence of two round barrows of early prehistoric date. The barrow in trench 29 appears to consist of two concentric ring ditches and has produced a significant finds assemblage. It is not clear at present which of the three larger ditches form which part of the barrow due to the relatively small window of investigation. It is most likely that ditch 2906 forms part of the outer ditch and ditch 2910 forming the inner. The other side of the barrow is probably beyond the limits of the trench.

4.2.3 The earliest artefactual evidence for activity on the site came from the assemblage of 41 worked flints from ditch 4705 (Trench 47) and pottery recovered from context (2909) the fill of a probable barrow ring ditch (2910). The sherds are from a vessel of earlier prehistoric date (Neolithic or Bronze age). Worked flint assemblages recovered from ring ditches 2916 and 2910 (42 and 65 flints respectively) are difficult to date with certainty but are indicative of activity close to the monument from the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age to the mid to late Bronze Age.

4.2.4 The absence of finds from most interventions means features (particularly in trenches 42, 47 and 150) have been difficult to characterise. This was exacerbated by the fact that features in two of these trenches (42 and 150) could not be excavated due to trench depth. However, the relatively large number of features in these trenches and their relative proximity suggest significant activity in this area, although the date of this activity is not known.

4.2.5 Later prehistoric agricultural activity is suggested by the presence of a lynchet in Trench 133 towards the southern end of the Proposed Project, which although not dated by finds is a common feature of this period in this area.

4.2.6 A possible medieval or post medieval element may be suggested by a chalk filled feature in Trench 26. It has been postulated in the geophysics report and DBA that an anomaly with the appearance of a structure in this location may represent the remains of a demolished structure. The feature (2606) may represent a wall foundation. However, due to a lack of finds a date from the medieval to modern period is possible.

4.3 Interpretation

4.3.1 Although only a small number of trenches have been excavated the results so far suggest differing land use along the route of the Proposed Project.

4.3.2 Towards the northern end of the Proposed Project a funerary landscape is attested to by the presence of two probable barrows within Trenches 20 and 29. These are accompanied by a significant worked flint assemblage with characteristic of both earlier prehistoric and later flint working, suggesting that the monuments may have been revisited for flint napping activity or that earlier material in this location became incorporated in the barrow ditches during construction. Either way, an extended prehistoric presence here is demonstrated.

4.3.3 In the central part of the Proposed Project a large number of features in trenches 42, 47 and 150 (many unfortunately unexcavated) tentatively suggest a focus of activity although the character and date of this activity remains elusive due to the lack of excavation and therefore artefactual and ecofactual material.

4.3.4 Trenches in the southern part of the Proposed Project are characterised by possible agricultural activity. Undated ditches suggesting a broadly N-S and E-W aligned field system and a possibly associated pond were located in Trench 61. The presence of a worked flint blade (which may be residual) from a pit here further suggests an early prehistoric presence in this area.

4.3.5 Possible chalk extraction took place in the area of Trench 75 although these were not excavated and may instead represent sinkholes, a common feature in landscapes of chalk geology. Further south later prehistoric agricultural activity is attested to by a lynchet in Trench 133, although this feature was not dated by finds this is a common late prehistoric landscape feature in this area.

4.4 Significance

4.4.1 The evaluation has revealed evidence of two early prehistoric barrows further adding to the list of known barrow sites in this important prehistoric funerary landscape. Worked flint finds associated with them attest to a prolonged period of activity in the area, probably for a significant period after the construction of the monument.

4.4.2 An enclosure of earlier prehistoric date was also associated with a significant worked flint assemblage and further attests to activity on the site aside from the ritual focus.

4.4.3 The central area of the site has potential to reveal a focus of activity with unexcavated pits and ditches associated with a field system although the date of this activity is not currently known.

APPENDIX A TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 20						
General description					**Orientation**	N-S
Trench contained two features, a linear at NW end, running EW. At the S end a pit was partially revealed.					**Length (m)**	25.40
					Width (m)	1.60
					Avg. depth (m)	0.24
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
2000	Layer	-	0.24	Topsoil, dark brown sandy silt.	-	-
2001	Layer	-	-	Natural, degraded chalk.	-	-
2002	Fill	-	-	Fill of pit 2003, dark brown sandy silt, with occasional chalk and flint inclusions	-	-
2003	Cut	3.2	0.30	Cut of pit. Gradual, uneven sides with uneven base.	-	-
2004	Cut	2.6	0.41	Cut of ditch. Sloping, uneven sides, stepped on N edge. Shallow concave base.	-	-
2005	Fill	-	0.10	Fill of ditch 2004, light brown, clayey silt, frequent fragments of chalk.	-	-
2006	Fill	-	0.26	Fill of ditch 2004, brown, clayey silt, no inclusions.	-	-
2007	Fill	-	0.12	Fill of ditch 2004, brown, clayey silt, frequent fragments of chalk.	-	-

Trench 25						
General description					**Orientation**	N-S
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil overlying natural geology of chalk.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.60
					Avg. depth (m)	0.30
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
2500	Layer	-	0.30	Topsoil	-	-
2501	Layer	-	-	Natural, degraded chalk.	-	-

Trench 26			
General description		**Orientation**	NE-SW
Trench contains what appears to be a foundation cut (2606) of a possible structure or wall on the SE side of the trench, as well as a		**Length (m)**	33.70
		Width (m)	1.60

robber cut (2605) which was cut into the top of it. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of degraded chalk.					**Avg. depth (m)**	0.40
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
2600	Layer	-	0.20	Topsoil, grey brown, sandy silt.	-	-
2601	Layer	-	0.20	Subsoil, light grey brown, sandy silt, frequent chalk fragments.	Metal Flint	19th to 20th Century
2602	Fill	-	0.70	Fill of 2606, loose chalk fragments.	-	-
2603	Fill	-	0.66	Fill of 2606, light brown, clayey, chalk inclusions.	-	-
2604	Fill	-	0.38	Fill of 2605, sandy silt, brown, frequent chalk fragment.	-	-
2605	Cut	0.65	0.38	Possible robber cut. Vertical sides, flat base.		
2606	Cut	1.76	0.80	Possible foundation cut or solution hollow. Vertical sides, uneven, concave base.	-	-
2607	Layer	-	-	Natural, degraded chalk.	-	-

Trench 29						
General description					**Orientation**	NE-SW
Trench contains seven ditches, the two largest probably form two sides of a barrow ring ditch c. 30m in diameter. Two small ditches suggest an internal smaller ring ditch. Another ditch was probably of post-medieval date. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of degraded chalk.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.60
					Avg. depth (m)	0.40
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
2900	Layer	-	0.40	Topsoil, dark grey brown, clayey silt.	-	-
2901	Layer	-	-	Natural, degraded chalk.	-	-
2902	Cut	0.96	0.17	Cut of small ditch. Shallow uneven sides, concave irregular base.	-	-
2903	Fill	-	0.17	Fill of 2902, dark grey, clayey silt, small chalk inclusions.	-	-
2904	Cut	0.84	0.14	Cut of small ditch. Even shallow sides, regular concave base.	-	-
2905	Fill	-	0.14	Fill of 2904, mid brown grey, clayey silt, small chalk inclusions.	-	-

2906	Cut	2.04	0.52	Cut of possible ring ditch. Moderately sloped sides, concave base.	-	-
2907	Fill	-	0.22	Fill of 2907, mid light grey silty clay, frequent chalk inclusions.	-	-
2908	Fill	-	0.08	Fill of 2907, mid reddish brown, sandy silt, infrequent flint inclusions.	-	-
2909	Fill	-	0.26	Fill of 2909, mid reddish brown, sandy silt, large flint inclusions.	Pot, flint	Early Prehistoric
2910	Cut	1.49	0.20	Cut of possible ring ditch. Steep even sides, narrow concave base.	-	-
2911	Fill	-	0.20	Fill of 2910, dark brown, silty clay, infrequent chalk inclusions.	Flint Glass	Post medieval
2912	Layer	-	0.14	Subsoil, dark brownish grey, frequent chalk inclusions.	-	-
2913	Cut	1.59	0.58	Cut of ditch. Steep sides, flat base.	-	-
2914	Fill	-	0.41	Fill of 2913, dark greyish brown, clayey silt, frequent chalk inclusions.	-	-
2915	Fill	-	0.13	Fill of 2913, dark greyish brown, clayey silt, infrequent chalk inclusions.	-	-
2916	Cut	1.40	0.31	Cut of ditch. Gently sloping sides, concave base.	-	-
2917	Fill	-	0.14	Fill of 2916, mid brown silty clay, infrequent chalk inclusions.	-	-
2918	Fill	-	0.18	Fill of 2916, mid grey brown, clayey silt, no inclusions.	-	-
2919	Cut	2	-	Cut of ditch. Unexcavated.	-	-

Trench 42						
General description					**Orientation**	N-S
Trench contains numerous features cut into a plateau drift deposit. These features consisted of two small circular features (possible postholes, small pits or cremation burials) a ditch terminus and a ditch. Features were not excavated due to trench depth. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying plateau drift. Natural not reached.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.60
					Avg. depth (m)	1
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**

4200	Layer	-	0.40	Topsoil, mid brown, sandy silt.	-	-
4201	Layer	-	0.18	Subsoil, mid orangey brown sandy silt, infrequent flint inclusions.	-	-
4202	-	-	-	Number not used	-	-
4203	Layer	-	-	Plateau drift, mid/light orangey brown silty clay, frequent flint inclusions.	-	-
4204	Cut	0.60	-	Cut of circular feature. Unexcavated.	-	-
4205	Fill	-	-	Fill of 4204, dark brown, sandy silt, infrequent flint inclusions.	-	-
4206	Cut	0.60	-	Cut of circular feature. Unexcavated.	-	-
4207	Fill	-	-	Fill of 4206, mid greyish brown, sandy silt, some charcoal inclusions.	-	-
4208	Cut	1.05	-	Cut of possible ditch terminus. Unexcavated.	-	-
4209	Fill	-	-	Fill of 4208, mid brown sandy silt, moderately frequent flint inclusions.	-	-
4210	Cut	1.60	-	Cut of possible ditch. Unexcavated.	-	-
4211	Fill	-	-	Fill of 4210, mid/dark brown, sandy silt, frequent flint inclusions.	-	-
4212	Cut	0.50	-	Cut of circular feature. Unexcavated.	-	-
4213	Fill	-	-	Fill of 4212, mid dark brown, sandy silt, infrequent flint inclusions.	-	-
4214	Cut	1.30	-	Cut of possible ditch. Unexcavated.	-	-
4215	Fill	-	-	Fill of 4214, dark brown, sandy silt, infrequent flint inclusions.	-	-

Trench 47

General description					**Orientation**	NE-SW
Trench contains two enclosure ditches and a posthole. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of degraded chalk.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.60
					Avg. depth (m)	0.30
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
4700	Layer	-	0.30	Topsoil, dark grey, clayey silt.	-	-

4701	Fill	-	0.15	Fill of 4700. Brown, clayey silt, infrequent chalk inclusions.	-	-
4702	Cut	0.70	0.27	Cut of ditch. NE side almost vertical, SW side 45 degrees, uneven flat base.	-	-
4703	Fill	-	0.15	Fill of 4702. Brown, clayey silt, infrequent chalk inclusions.	-	-
4704	Fill	-	0.14	Fill of 4702. Brown, clayey silt, frequent chalk inclusions.	-	-
4705	Cut	1.90	0.60	Cut of possible boundary ditch. S side steeper than N side, uneven flat base.	-	-
4706	Fill	-	0.40	Fill of 4705. Mid brown, sandy silt, infrequent chalk inclusions.	Flint	Early Prehistoric
4707	Fill	-	0.48	Fill of 4705. Brown, clayey silt, infrequent chalk inclusions.	-	-
4708	Cut	1	0.25	Cut of posthole. 45 degree sides, concave base.	-	-
4709	Fill	-	0.25	Fill of 4708. Brown, clayey silt, frequent flint nodule inclusions.	-	-
4710	Layer	-	-	Natural, degraded chalk.	-	-

Trench 61						
General description					**Orientation**	NE-SW
Trench contained three ditches probably constituting part of a field system of unknown date. A pond was located in the corner of one of the possible fields. Two large postholes were located next to two of the ditches. A single smaller posthole was also found. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of degraded chalk.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.6
					Avg. depth (m)	0.30
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
6100	Layer	-	0.30	Topsoil, dark grey brown, silty clay.	-	-
6101	Layer	-	-	Natural, degraded chalk.	-	-
6102	Cut	0.30	0.60	Cut of posthole. Gently sloping upper part of sides, lower half very steep. Bottom not reached.	-	-
6103	Fill	-	0.60	Fill of 6103. Dark brown, silty clay, no inclusions.	-	-
6104	Cut	0.80	0.20	Cut of ditch. Sloping sides. Gently concave base.	-	-

6105	Fill	-	0.20	Fill of 6104. Brownish grey, silty clay, infrequent chalk inclusions.	-	-
6106	Cut	0.85	0.40	Cut of pit. Shallowly sloping sides, steeper towards base. Concave base.	-	-
6107	Fill	-	0.40	Fill of 6106. Dark brownish grey, clayey silt, occasional chalk flecks.	-	-
6108	Cut	0.52	0.20	Cut of ditch. Moderately sloped sides. Concave base.	-	-
6109	Fill	-	0.20	Fill of 6108. Mid orangey brown, sandy silt, infrequent chalk inclusions.	-	-
6110	Cut	1.14	0.46	Cut of clay-lined pond. Shallow to moderately sloping sides. Concave base.	-	-
6111	Fill	-	0.20	Fill of 6110. Light orangey brown with light grey patches, silty clay, no inclusions.	-	-
6112	Fill	-	0.16	Fill of 6110. Mid to dark greyish brown, sandy silt, frequent flint inclusions.	-	-
6113	Cut	0.60	0.20	Cut of ditch. Sloping sides, concave base.	-	-
6114	Fill	-	0.20	Fill of 6113. Mid yellowish brown, silt. No inclusions.	-	-
6115	Layer	0.80	0.33	Mid yellowish grey, clayey silt, infrequent chalk inclusions.	-	-
6116	Layer	-	0.10	Subsoil. Grey, silty clay, frequent chalk inclusions.	-	-
6117	Cut	0.70	0.55	Cut of pit. Sloping sides, getting steeper towards the base. Concave base.	-	-
6118	Fill	-	0.55	Fill of 6117. Dark yellowish brown, clayey silt, no inclusions.	-	-
6119	Cut	0.35	-	Cut of posthole. Unexcavated.	-	-
6120	Cut	0.50	-	Cut of posthole. Unexcavated.	-	-
6121	Cut	0.25	-	Cut of posthole. Unexcavated.	-	-
6122	Cut	0.25	-	Cut of posthole. Unexcavated.	-	-
Trench 75						
General description					**Orientation**	NW-SE

Trench contains three large probably chalk extraction pits or sink holes. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of degraded chalk.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.60
					Avg. depth (m)	0.50
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
7500	Layer	-	0.30	Topsoil, mid grey brown, clayey silt, infrequent chalk inclusions.	-	-
7501	Layer	-	0.20	Subsoil, mid brown, clayey silt, infrequent chalk inclusions.	-	-
7502	Layer	-	-	Natural, degraded chalk.	-	-
7503	Cut	10.1	-	Cut of pit or sinkhole. Unexcavated.	-	-
7504	Fill	-	-	Fill of 7503. Mid brown, clayey silt, infrequent flint inclusions.	-	-
7505	Cut	5.04	-	Cut of pit or sinkhole. Unexcavated.	-	-
7506	Fill	-	-	Fill of 7505. Mid brownish yellow, clayey silt, infrequent flint inclusions.	-	-
7507	Cut	6.40	-	Cut of pit or sinkhole. Unexcavated.	-	-
7508	Fill	-	-	Fill of 7507. Mid brown, clayey silt, infrequent chalk and flint inclusions.	-	-

Trench 133						
General description					**Orientation**	NW-SE
Trench contained a lynchet. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty sand.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.60
					Avg. depth (m)	0.42
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
13300	Layer	-	0.32	Topsoil, grey brown, clayey silt, no inclusions.	-	-
13301	Layer	1.60	0.30	Lynchet. Mid brown, sandy silt, frequent limestone inclusions.	-	-
13302	Layer	-	0.10	Subsoil, mid to light brown, clayey silt, no inclusions.	-	-
13303	Layer	-	-	Natural, light brown, clay.	-	-
13304	Layer	1.60	-	Tabula bedded limestone.		
13305	Layer	1.60	-	Tabula bedded limestone.	-	-

Trench 150		
General description	**Orientation**	E-W
	Length (m)	50

Trench contains numerous features cut into a plateau drift deposit which were not excavated due to trench depth. This includes two ditches and two possible ditch terminals. There are also several circular features which are likely to be either pits, postholes or cremation burials. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying plateau drift. Natural not reached.					**Width (m)**	1.60
					Avg. depth (m)	0.65
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
15000	Layer	-	0.30	Topsoil, mid brown, sandy silt, no inclusions.	-	-
15001	Layer	-	0.35	Subsoil, mid orangey brown, sandy silt. Infrequent flint inclusions.	-	-
15002	Layer	-	-	Plateau drift, mid/light orangey brown silty clay, frequent flint inclusions.	-	-
15003	Cut	0.30	-	Cut of ditch. Unexcavated.	-	-
15004	Fill	-	-	Fill of 15003. Dark greyish brown, sandy silt, frequent charcoal inclusions.	-	-
15005	Cut	0.60	-	Cut of pit. Unexcavated.	-	-
15006	Fill	-	-	Fill of 15005. Mid greyish brown, sandy silt, infrequent charcoal inclusions.	-	-
15007	Cut	1.10	-	Cut of pit. Unexcavated.	-	-
15008	Fill	-	-	Fill of 15007. Mid greyish brown, sandy silt, frequent flint and charcoal inclusions.	-	-
15009	Cut	2.2	-	Cut of ditch. Unexcavated.	-	-
15010	Fill	-	-	Fill of 15009. Dark brown, sandy silt, frequent flint inclusions.	-	-
15011	Cut	2.67	-	Cut of pit. Unexcavated.	-	-
15012	Fill	-	-	Fill of 15011. Mid greyish brown, sandy silt, frequent flint inclusions.	-	-
15013	Cut	0.53	-	Cut of posthole. Unexcavated.	-	-
15014	Fill	-	-	Fill of 15013. Dark brown, sandy silt, infrequent charcoal and flint inclusions.	-	-
15015	Cut	2.20	-	Cut of ditch terminus. Unexcavated.	-	-
15016	Fill	-	-	Fill of 15015. Mid brown, sandy silt, infrequent flint and charcoal inclusions.	-	-
15017	Cut	2.50	-	Cut of linear. Unexcavated.	-	-

15018	Fill	-	-	Fill of 15017. Dark brown, sandy silt, infrequent charcoal and flint inclusions.	-	-
15019	Cut	1.75	-	Cut of ditch terminus. Unexcavated.	-	-
15020	Fill	-	-	Fill of 15020. Dark brown, sandy silt, infrequent charcoal and flint inclusions.	-	-

APPENDIX B FINDS REPORTS

B.1 Pottery

By Lisa Brown

Introduction

B.1.1 Ten sherds (27g) of prehistoric pottery belonging to a single vessel were recovered from fill 2909 of a possible Bronze Age ring ditch (2910).

B.1.2 The site lies on the chalk downland near Winterbourne Abbas and components of the pottery fabric reflect the underlying geology. The fabric is a relatively fine sandy, slightly micaceous clay with black ferrous pellets and a few linear voids suggesting grasses. A mix of inclusions are incorporated, some of which are naturally occurring in the local clays. Sparse to moderate density ill-assorted white and grey calcined flint <5mm has been added as temper, while the ferrous inclusions, rare weathered chalk and quartzite, and rare fragments of distinctive 'beef calcite' are natural inclusions. 'Beef calcite' occurs in strata with shale in the Purbeck Beds of Dorset region and was identified in some of the Neolithic and Iron Age pottery fabrics from Maiden Castle (Cleal 1991, 173; Brown 1991, 186). 'Beef' is an old quarryman's term for this fibrous calcite formed under burial in shales and marls.

B.1.3 The pottery is handmade and all sherds are undecorated body fragments undiagnostic of form. The pottery is not closely dateable beyond the fact that the unrefined treatment and very mixed temper suggest an earlier prehistoric date. The vessel may even be Neolithic, and the fragments sufficiently abraded to allow the for the possibility that they are residual in the feature, but a date contemporary with the (presumed) Bronze Age ring ditch is also possible.

B.1.4 In addition to the prehistoric pottery a single 6g sherd of post-medieval oxidized ware was recovered from subsoil deposit 2601.

B.2 Flint

By Michael Donnelly

Introduction

B.2.1 This evaluation yielded a large flint assemblage of 152 struck pieces, two natural fragments and one fragment of burnt unworked flint weighing 4g. The bulk of this assemblage was recovered from just three contexts, two of which were very closely related. A very significant proportion of the flint was recovered from environmental samples taken from these three features and it is likely that all three contained large and important flint assemblages. The majority of the flintwork is likely to be of Bronze Age date and may well be contemporary with the features from which they were recovered.

B.2.2 Subsoil 2601 contained three flints, two flakes and blade. One of the flakes has either retouch or use along its right side but the condition of the piece makes any firm identification difficult.

B.2.3 Ring ditch interventions 2906 and 2910 produced large flint assemblages with 42 and 65 flints respectively, the vast majority of which originated from samples. Fill 2909, cut 2906

had 16 flakes and two blade forms as well as fine knapping chips (19), a core rejuvenation flake and one fairly atypical retouched blade. The blade was the only retouched piece from the entire evaluation, has fine edge trimming and damage along its right side and is a very expedient tool type. It has blade dimensions but lacks the structured regular flaking pattern that typifies early prehistoric blades. Fill 2911, cut 2910 yielded 18 flakes, two bladelets and numerous pieces of large (6) and fine waste (39).

B.2.4 Overall, the assemblages from the ring ditch slots are difficult to date with certainty. Part of the assemblage is very typical of middle-late Bronze Age knapping (squat, hard-hammer struck flakes with unmodified platforms) while the remainder is actually a much more proficiently knapped flake assemblage and could easily be seen as being late Neolithic-early Bronze Age in date. The most likely explanation for the assemblages from the ring ditch segments is that any barrow mound associated with them would have acted as a good source of flint nodules for knapping. This is a feature of barrows found on the chalk, the mound may well have contained both contemporary and earlier flint work from the immediate vicinity, gathered up as part of the construction sequence alongside unworked nodules of flint. Primary knapping would occur at the edge of the barrow and these flakes would add to earlier material that had slumped into the ditch. The lack of retouched forms suggests that tools were taken elsewhere for use. The volume of material recovered from the environmental samples suggests that a very large assemblage is most likely contained within this ring ditch.

B.2.5 Ditch 4705, fill 4706 also contained a significant assemblage with 41 pieces. This time the assemblage was more blade orientated with a high blade index of 33.33%. However, it is possible that much of this assemblage was redeposited as the flint is in worse condition than the material found in the ring ditch slots. The assemblage also lacked retouched forms and cores and can only be dated by the debitage. The assemblage includes an odd mix with some very large irregular flakes as well as quite sturdy blade forms and it is likely to represent an accumulation of material from various ages including an early prehistoric element. While this assemblage may also originate from a scavenged barrow, it appears more likely that this feature was part of an enclosure and the large assemblage is probably a product of localised truncation of flint-rich deposits.

B.2.6 Finally, pit 6117, fill 6118 contained a large and finely made blade of early prehistoric date. This piece is most probably residual but it confirms the theory that there is an early prehistoric component to the archaeology at this site.

Discussion

B.2.7 The flint assemblage recovered from this evaluation is of significance. The limited early prehistoric component suggests that there is some possibility of recovering a more substantial assemblage from this period, particularly if there are any treethrow holes or naturally infilled hollows in the landscape with relict soils in them. The ring ditch assemblage is also very important. It is large and any further work would easily recover a very statistically valid set of material for study. Moreover, any other barrow ditches in the vicinity may also contain similar assemblages and a plan should be put in place for a more systematic flint-recovery procedure should further work commence. These assemblages shine a very different light on the use of

these monuments during their life as burial grounds and after they have ceased to be the main focus of burial activity.

Methodology

B.2.8 The artefacts were catalogued according to OA South's standard system of broad artefact/debitage type (Anderson-Whymark 2013; Bradley 1999), general condition noted and dating was attempted where possible. The assemblage was catalogued directly onto an Open Office spreadsheet. During the assessment additional information on condition (rolled, abraded, fresh and degree of cortication), and state of the artefact (burnt, broken, or visibly utilised) was also recorded. Retouched pieces were classified according to standard morphological descriptions (e.g. Bamford 1985, 72-77; Healy 1988, 48-9; Bradley 1999). Technological attribute analysis was initially undertaken and included the recording of butt and termination type (Inizan et al. 1999), flake type (Harding 1990), hammer mode (Onhuma and Bergman 1982), and the presence of platform edge abrasion.

CATEGORY TYPE	Subsoil 2601	Ring ditch 2609	Ring ditch 2911	Ditch 4706	Total
Flake	2	16	18	8	44
Blade	1	1		1	4
Bladelet		1	2	3	6
Blade index	33.33% (1/3)	11.11% (2/18)	10% (2/20)	33.33% (4/12)	18.52% (10/54)
Irregular waste		3	6		9
Sieved chips		19	39	29	87
Core rejuvenation flake		1			1
Retouch blade		1			1
Total	3	42	65	41	152

No. burnt (%)	0%	2.38%	0%	2.43%	1.31% (2/152)
No. broken (%)	33.33%	4.35%	26.92%	58.33%	24.62% (16/65)
No. retouched (%)	0%	4.35%	0%		1.54% (1/65)

APPENDIX C ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS

C.1 Environmental Samples

By Sharon Cook

Introduction

C.1.1 Three samples were taken during the evaluation at the Dorset Visual Improvement Provision Scheme in October 2017. All samples were taken from ditch fills: sample <1> (4706), the fill of [4705] in Trench 47 was 35L in volume; sample <2> (2909) the fill of ring ditch [2906]) which was 38L and sample <3> (2911) was 40L from the fill of ditch [2910 both within Trench 29 and associated with a barrow. The features are all likely to be Bronze Age in date.

Methodology

C.1.2 The samples were processed by water flotation using a modified Siraf style flotation machine. The flot was collected on a 250µm mesh and the heavy residue sieved to 500µm; both were dried in a heated room, after which the residue was sorted by eye for artefacts. Nomenclature follows Stace 2010.

Results

C.1.3 The flots from the samples all contained a quantity of modern roots and other material such as insects and seeds, this modern material comprises the majority of the volume for all samples. Flot volumes were small for samples <1> and <2> which were both approximately 5ml. Sample <3> produced a much larger flot of 80ml, but most of this was modern root material with very little charred material actually present.

C.1.4 Charcoal was present in all three samples but was small in size although clean and in fairly good condition. Sample <1> contains two fragments of unidentifiable cereal grain in poor condition and a single small tuber of onion couch grass (Arrhenatherum elatiusis var bulbosum). A single goosefoot (Chenopodium sp.) seed is present which is likely to be modern. Occasional Cecilioides acicula are also present but as burrowing snails are probably modern.

C.1.5 Sample <2> contains two fragments of cereal grain which while well preserved externally are unidentifiable to species due to fragmentation; they appear to have suffered from very little abrasion indicating that they are likely to have been deposited shortly after burning. Half of a small legume is also present. Occasional (<5) small land snails were also noted but have not been identified.

C.1.6 Sample <3> contains two small fragments of hazelnut shell (Corylus avellana). Occasional small land snails are also present including further modern Cecilioides acicula.

C.1.7 The residues for all three samples contained struck flint which is reported upon elsewhere in this report.

Conclusions and Recommendations

C.1.8 The material in these samples demonstrate that charred plant remains survive on this site but little can be said with regard to site activity with such a small dataset. Ditches from

field systems rarely produce large quantities of charred material unless close to areas of settlement or industrial processes, and ditches associated with barrows are likewise often sterile even when other features in the vicinity are rich in material. The hazelnut shell and the onion couch grass tuber are fairly common finds in Bronze Age samples, with onion couch grass suggestive of abandoned arable land, ungrazed or sparsely grazed grassland (Robinson 2000). Onion couch grass may have been charred during turf burning; tubers been found associated with Bronze Age barrows elsewhere, for example at Raunds (ibid.).

C.1.9 The lack of abrasion and good condition of some of this material however would seem to indicate that there may be good results from sampling elsewhere on this site if further work is carried out. Any future excavations should incorporate a sampling policy in accordance with the most recent sampling guidelines (e.g. Oxford Archaeology 2005 and English Heritage 2011).

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APPENDIX E SITE SUMMARY DETAILS

Site name:	Dorset VIP
Site code:	DORIS17
Grid Reference	NGR SY 639 878
Type:	Evaluation
Date and duration:	2nd to 12th October 2017
Area of Site	94.6ha
Location of archive:	The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Dorset County Museum.
Summary of Results:	Between the 2nd and 12th of October 2017 Oxford Archaeology undertook an archaeological evaluation comprising 10 trenches in the parishes of Winterbourne Abbas, Winterbourne Steepleton, Winterbourne St. Martin and Portesham (NGR SY605913) along the Proposed Project of the Dorset Visual Impact Provision. A geophysical survey had previously identified several linear anomalies and other possible archaeological features. Some of these were targeted by this phase of work and were proven to be the remains of two round barrows in Trenches 20 and 29 in the northern part of the Proposed Project along with a demolished structure in Trench 26. In the central part of the Proposed Project, features in Trenches 42 and 150 could not be excavated due to depth. In Trench 47 a rectilinear enclosure was revealed and produced a worked flint assemblage of early prehistoric date. In the southern part of the site several large features were not excavated but may have been sink holes or chalk extraction pits. A lynchet in Trench 133 attests to the later prehistoric agricultural presence in the landscape in the southern part of the Proposed Project.

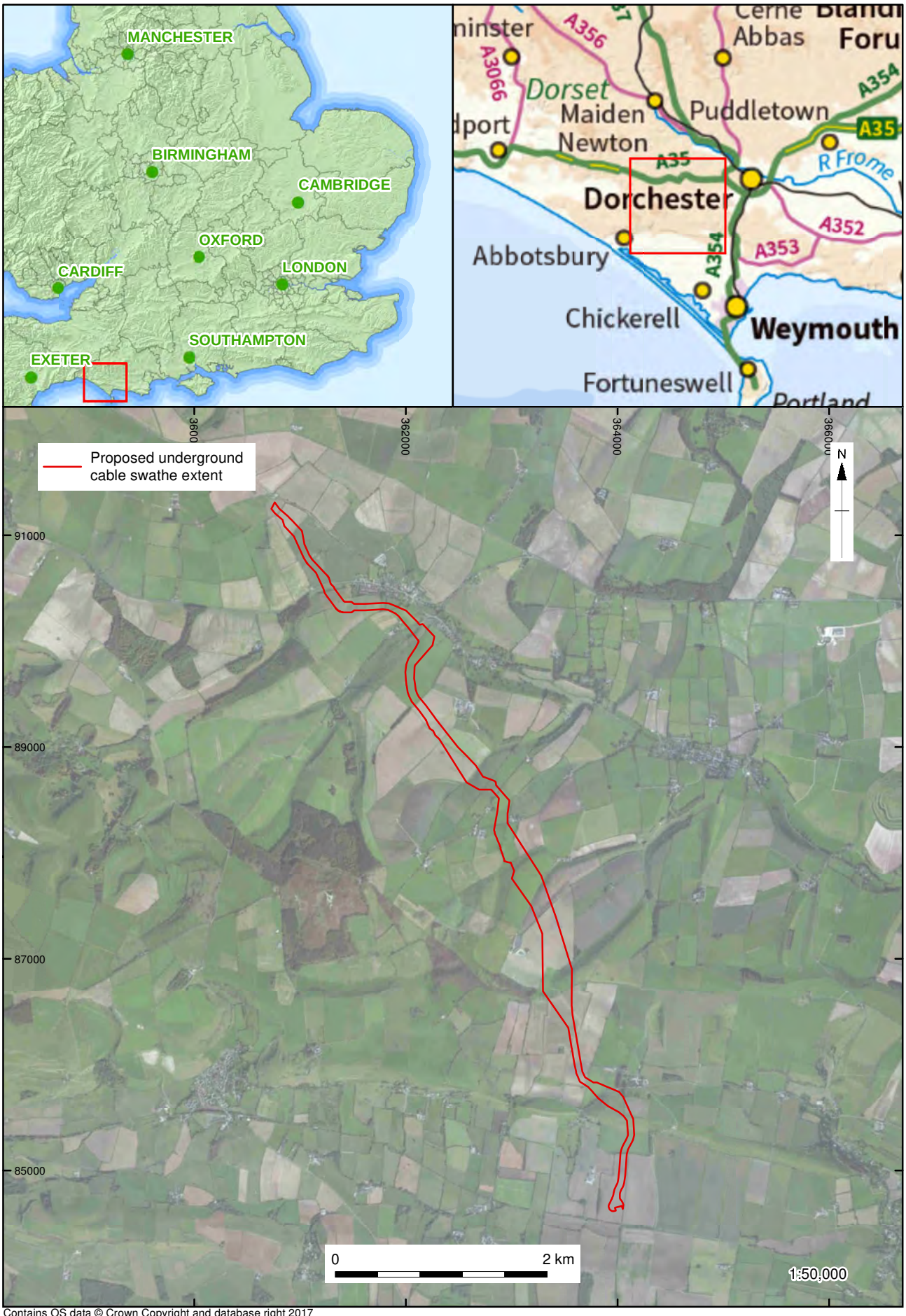

Figure 1: Site location

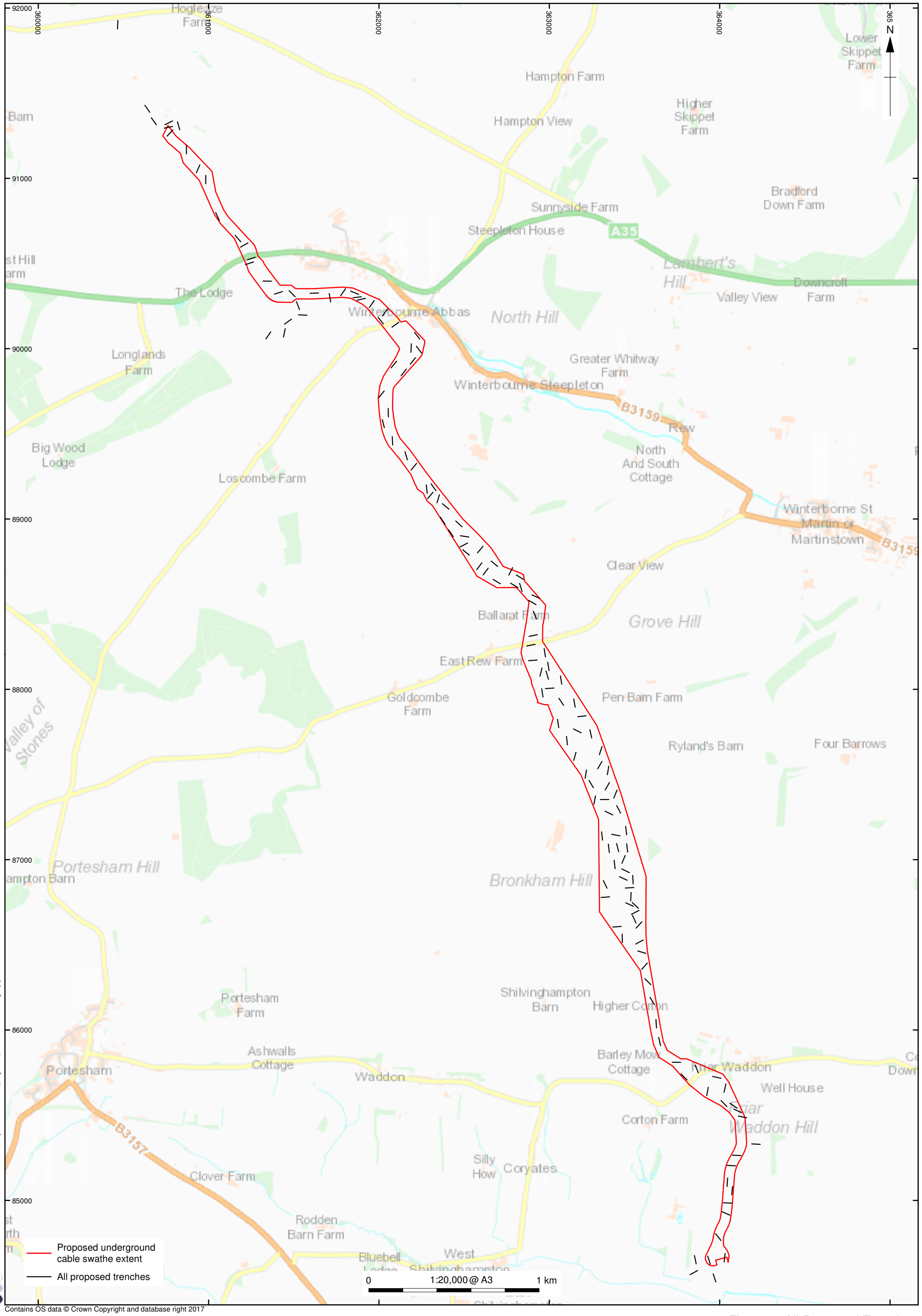

Figure 2: All Proposed Trenches

361500

362000

N

11

90500

26

20

29

25

Proposed underground cable swathe extent

Proposed trench

Proposed trench not excavated

Proposed future trenching

Winterbourne Abbas

Winterbourne Steepleton

B3159

150

42

0 1:4,000 @ A3 250 m

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Figure 3: Trenches 11, 25, 20, 26, 29, 42, and 150

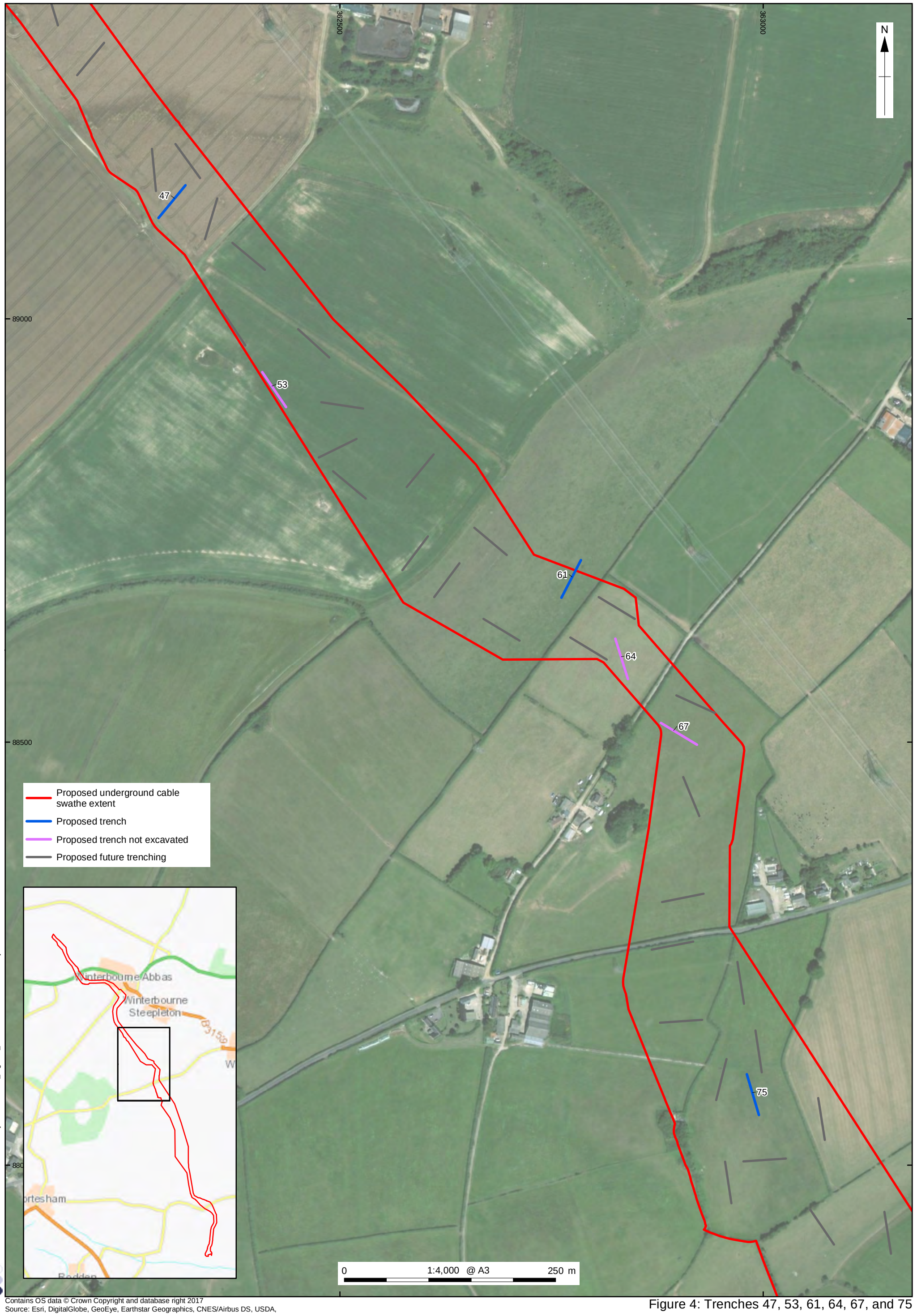

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Figure 4: Trenches 47, 53, 61, 64, 67, and 75

363500
364000
86000
85500
N
133
Winterbourne Abbas
Winterbourne Steepleton
B3159
esham
0
1:4,000 @ A3
250 m
Proposed underground cable swathe extent
Proposed trench
Proposed future trench
X:\d\Dorset VIP\010Geomatics\03 GIS Projects\DORISEV_Figure5_2017-09-15.mxd*matt.bradley*18/09/2017

Figure 5: Trench 133

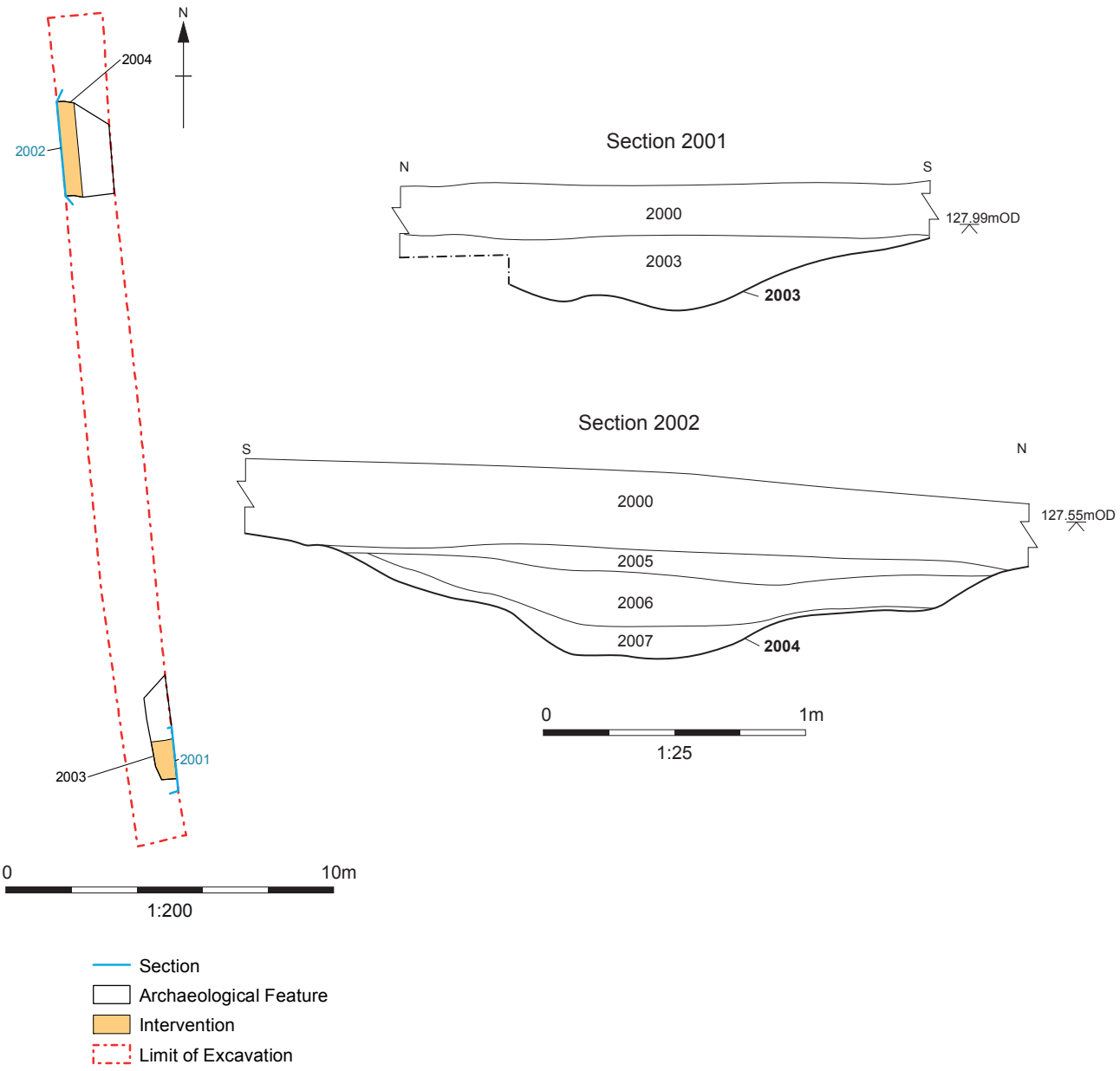
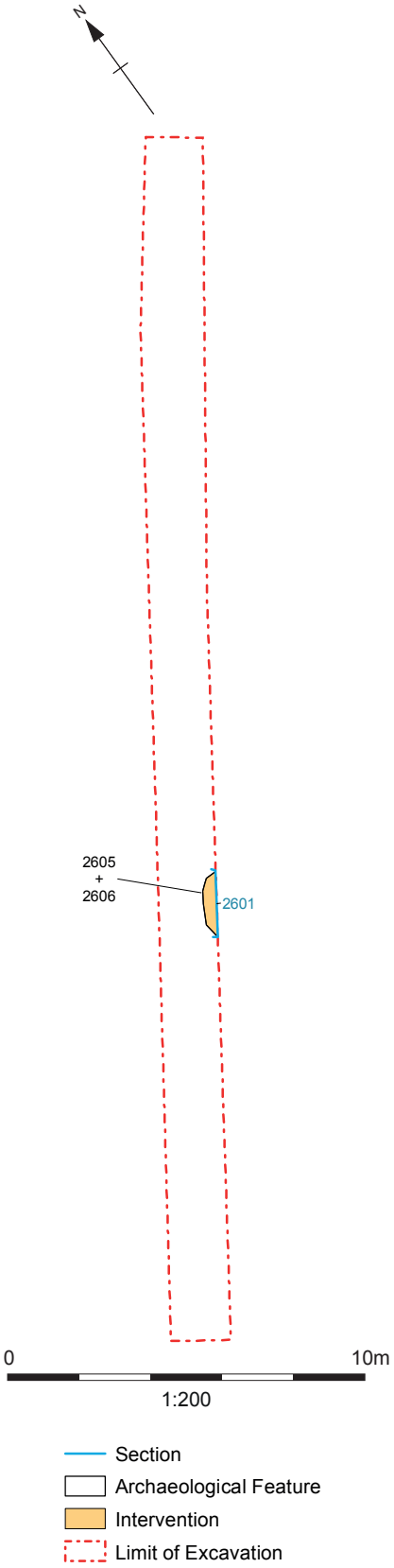


Figure 6: Trench 20



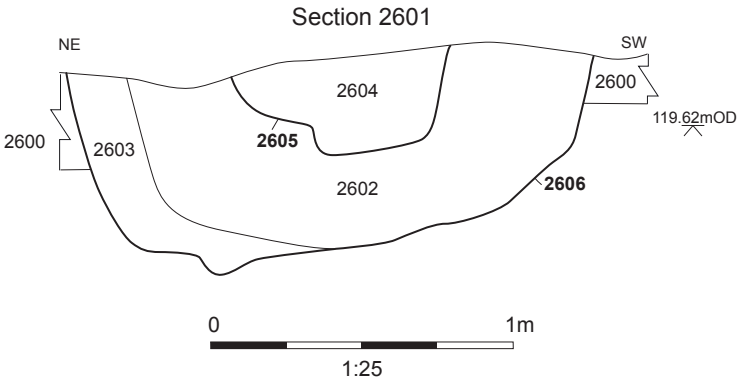


Figure 7: Trench 26

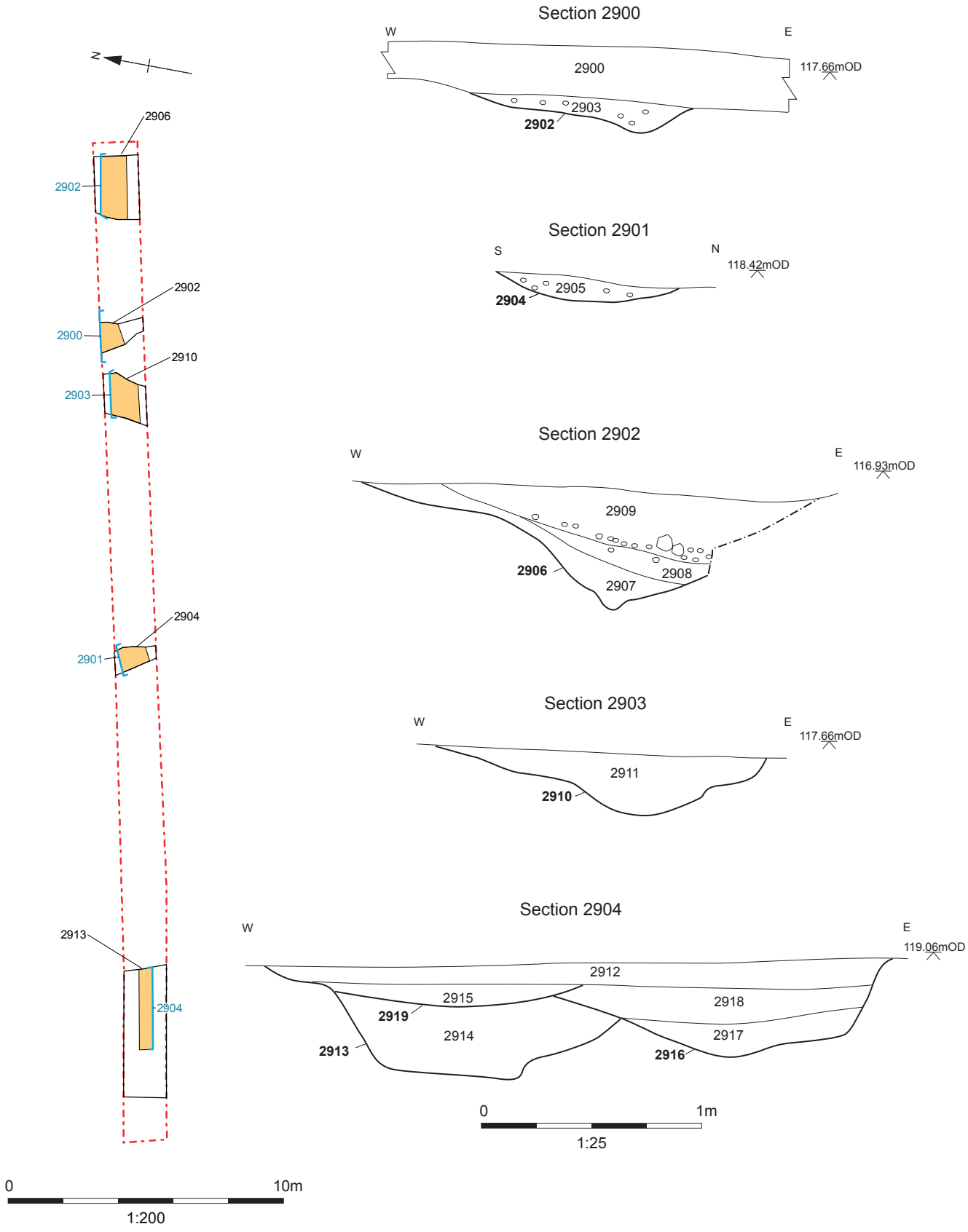


Figure 8: Trench 29

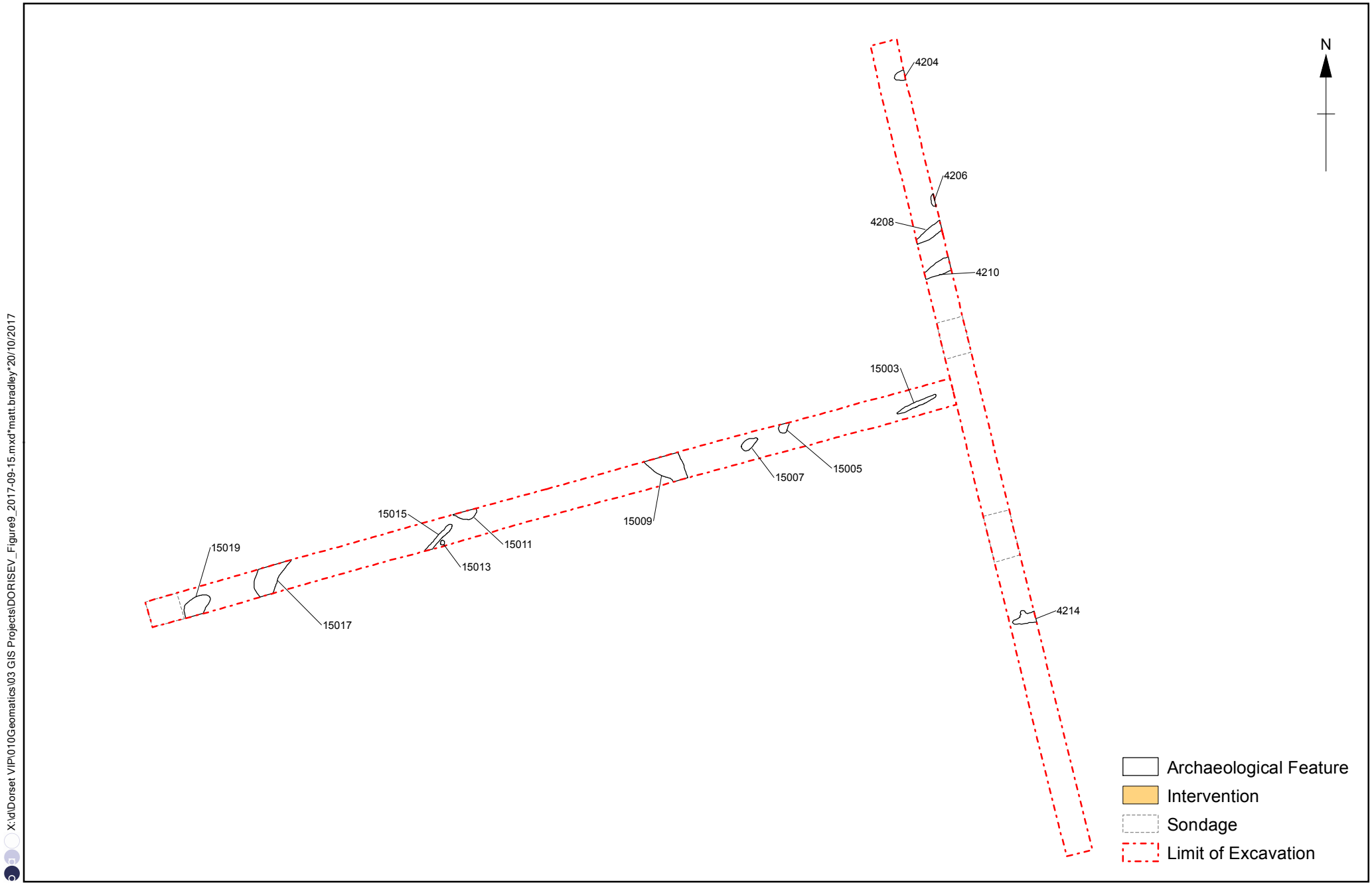


Figure 9: Trenches 42 and 150

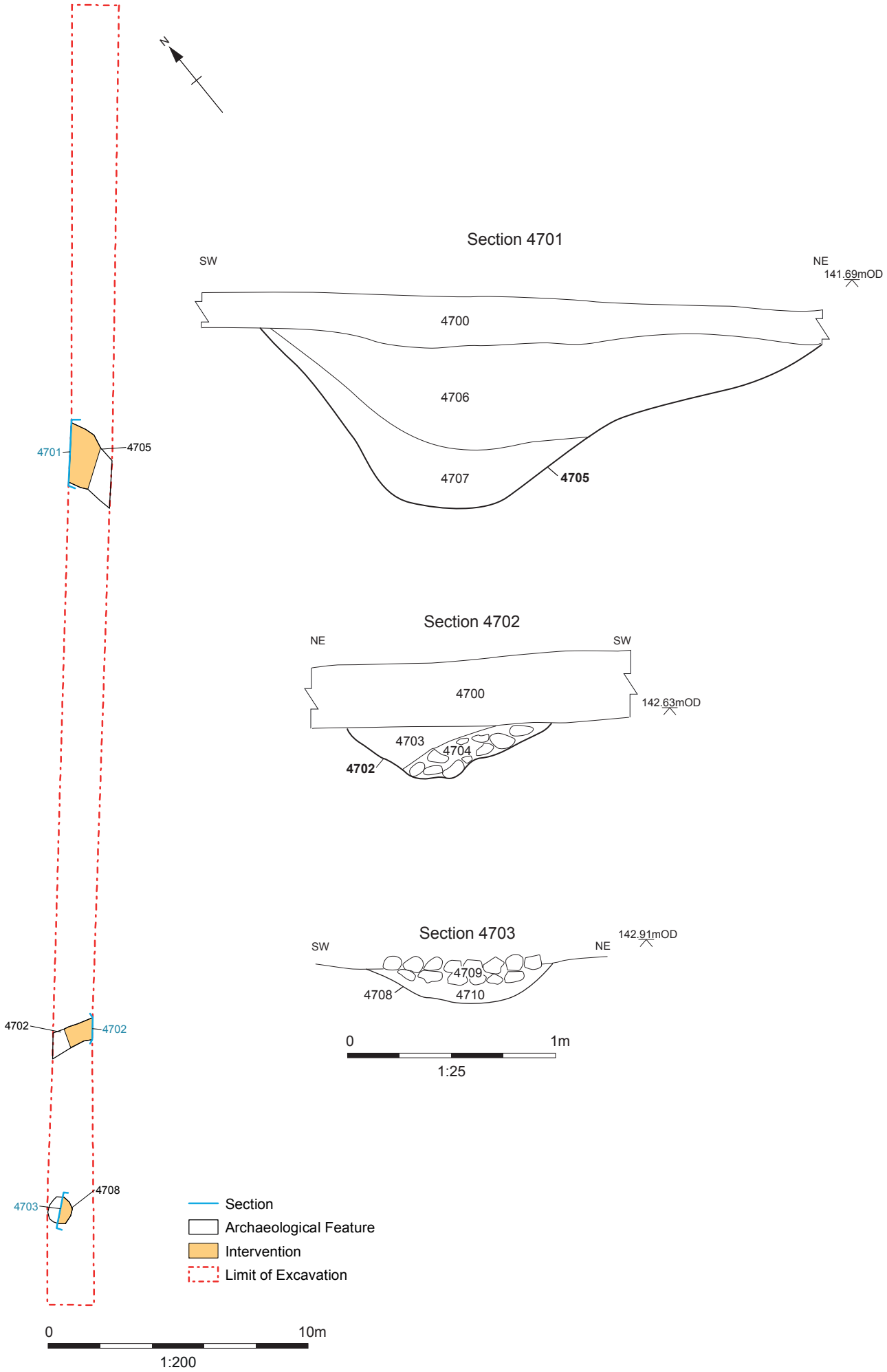


Figure 10: Trench 47

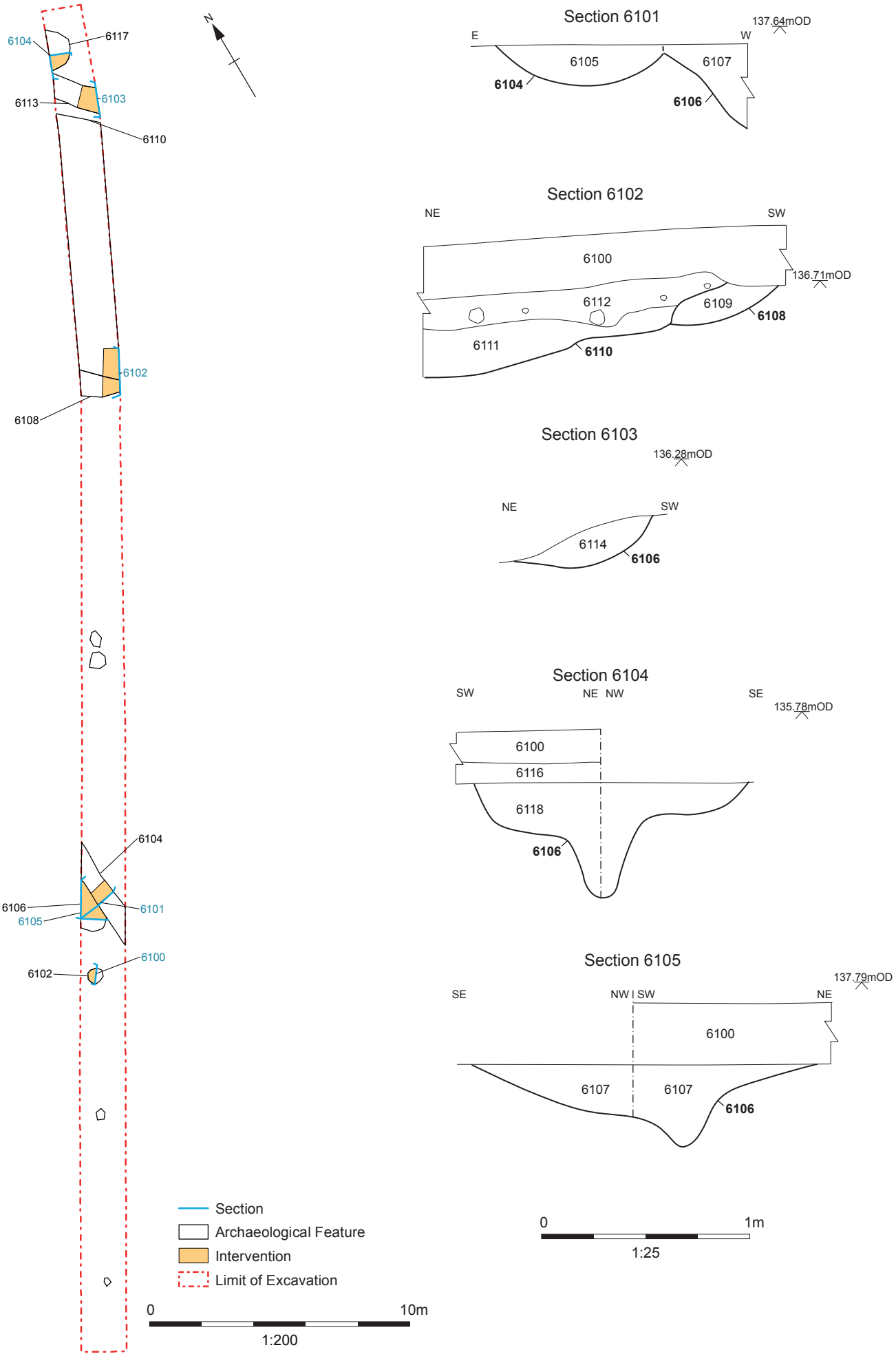


Figure 11: Trench 61

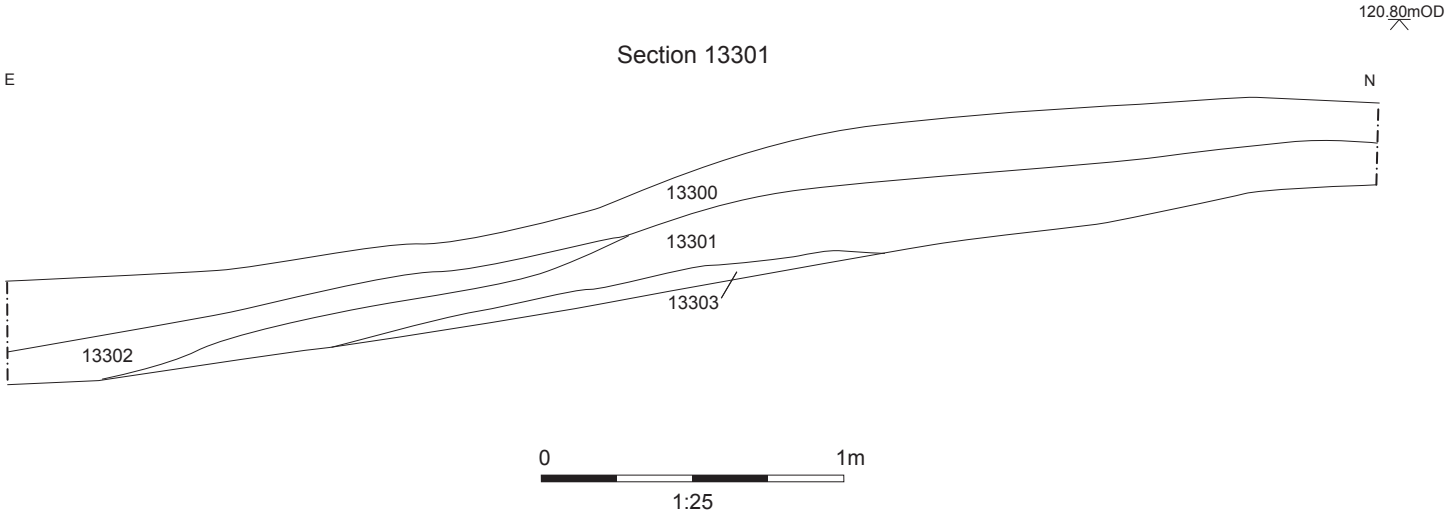


Figure 12: Section 13301

Plate 1: Trench 25 - view to N

Plate 2: Trench 29 - ditch 2906, view to NW

Plate 3: Trench 29 - ditch 2910, view to NE

Plate 4: Trench 42 - view to S

Plate 5: Trench 47 - ditch 4705, view to NW

Plate 6: Trench 61 - view to NE

Plate 7: Trench 61 - ditch 6104 and pit 6106, view to S

Plate 8: Trench 75 - view to NW

Plate 9: Trench 150 - view to NE

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