Land off Townsend Road, Shrivenham, Oxfordshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Land off Townsend Road, Shrivenham, Oxfordshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Summary

Between January and February 2017, Oxford Archaeology undertook an archaeological evaluation comprising 20 trenches on land off Townsend Road, Shrivenham, Oxfordshire (NGR SU 23100 88510). The work was undertaken as required by a planning condition for a proposed new housing development at the site.

A geophysical survey of the site had previously identified a number of linear anomalies and possible archaeological features. These were targeted during the evaluation and were proven to be the remains of ditched enclosures. The remains included an undated possible D-shaped enclosure within Trenches 1, 2, 3 and 5, towards the west of the site. A late Iron Age L-shaped enclosure was located in Trenches 7 and 9 and a previously undetected possible Bronze Age or early Iron Age ditch in Trench 4. Additional features included three undated pits in Trenches 1 and 8, which each contained burnt remains, and two possible ditches in Trench 14.

Overall, it appears that the archaeological activity on the site was limited to the later prehistoric periods and was predominantly agricultural in nature. Potentially spanning a long period between the Bronze Age and late Iron Age, it is not possible to determine whether this activity was the result of continuous occupation within the vicinity, or represents distinct and separate phases. Either way it appears to have been low intensity activity which may have been at the periphery of a more significant settlement.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of work

1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by CgMs Consulting (CgMs) on behalf of Bovis Homes to undertake a trial trench evaluation on land off Townsend Road, Shrivenham, Oxfordshire.

1.1.2 The work was undertaken as a condition of Planning Permission for a proposed new housing development (planning ref. P15/V0663/O; appeal ref. APP/V3120/W/15/3141276). A brief was set by Hugh Coddington (Oxfordshire County Council) and a written scheme of investigation was produced by CgMs outlining the work necessary to discharge the planning condition. This document outlines the results of the archaeological evaluation.

1.2 Location, topography and geology

1.2.1 The site lies on the western periphery of the village of Shrivenham, Oxfordshire, centred on NGR SU 23100 88510 (Fig. 1). At the time of investigation, the land comprised agricultural land, divided between arable fields within the south-west portion of the site and an area of pasture to north-east.

1.2.2 The limits of the proposed development area are defined by arable fields to the south-west and north and the A420 to the west. To the east lies existing residential development with Townsend Road forming the south-east boundary.

1.2.3 The overall topography is gently sloped from a height of approximately 100m aOD in the east of the site to approximately 90m aOD at the western limit. The geology of the area is mapped as ferruginous sandstone, a member of the Red Down Sand series (BGS online viewer).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 The archaeological and historical background of the site has already been established in a desk-based assessment completed by CgMs (2015), and is summarised below.

Prehistoric

1.3.2 Early prehistoric evidence within the immediate vicinity of the site is limited to a findspot of a handaxe (MOX94950), recovered approximately 100m to the south-east of the development area.

1.3.3 Excavations carried out by Cotswold Archaeology (CA) (2015) on land to the north of Shrivenham have revealed evidence of middle Bronze Age settlement approximately 1km to the north-east of the site.

Iron Age and Roman

1.3.4 Extensive evidence of early to middle Iron Age settlement and later Roman activity has also been identified on the ridge of high ground located to the north of Shrivenham (CA 2013, 2015). Excavation work carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology

(2012) has demonstrated that the western limit of this settlement focus is likely to be approximately 200m to the north-east of the proposed development area.

Saxon-Early Medieval

1.3.5 The name of Shrivenham is known from references in Anglo-Saxon documents from the 9th and 10th centuries and appears in the Domesday Book (1086) as Seriveham. The derivation of the first element remains obscure, but may be linked to the concept of shriving or confessing and receiving penance (Ekwall 1947). It is possible that this points to an ecclesiastical origin for the settlement.

Medieval

1.3.6 The only asset that can be dated firmly to the medieval period is the 12th century Church of St Andrew (NHLE 1284309). Shrivenham was a manor in the royal demesne at the time of Domesday, and the village developed around the church and manor house at the north-eastern end of the settlement, along the modern High Street (VCH 1972).

1.3.7 There is evidence of the site being used as arable agricultural land during the medieval period. This is in the form of ridge and furrow, which survives as earthworks in the northern part of the study site, along with ridge and furrow over the western half of the site as identified by a geophysical survey (Magnitude 2016).

Post-Medieval

1.3.8 Historic maps, including John Rocque's 1761 Map of Berkshire, the 1768 Map of the Hundred of Shrivenham and the 1771 map of farms in Shrivenham all indicate that the site was used for agricultural purposes during the 18th century. The 1844 Shrivenham Tithe Map and later Ordnance Survey mapping demonstrate that the area within the site boundary continued in agricultural usage until the present day.

Geophysical Survey

1.3.9 During September 2016, Magnitude Surveys carried out a magnetometer survey of the development site. This revealed evidence of enclosure type features of possible archaeological origin, and agricultural activity in the form of ridge and furrow ploughing schemes, as well as modern plough activity (Magnitude 2016).

2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

2.1.1 The project aims and objectives were as follows:

i. To investigate the geophysical anomalies on the site and determine their character, state of preservation and date to enable an assessment of significance

ii. To establish the presence/absence, extent and character of any archaeological features on the site, and to consider the archaeological interest of these in the wider context

iii. To examine any available evidence for economic activity, environmental conditions and industrial or craft activity

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 Methodology

2.2.1 The trenching programme comprised 20 trenches, each measuring 50m x 1.8m in plan, as shown on Figure 2. The trenches were numbered in a continuous sequence from 1-20. Prior to excavation, each trench was located and marked by an OA surveyor using GPS equipment following the approved trench plan within the WSI. The layout was designed to provide even coverage of the site at a *c* 3.5% sample of the available site area whilst also targeting the linear anomalies identified by the geophysical survey.

2.2.2 The locations of Trenches 12 and 13 were altered from the original trench plan due to the alignment of overhead services being different to that of the original plan. Trench 11 was shortened by 11m to avoid a buried water pipe and a 5m by 5m extension to the eastern end of Trench 8 was excavated to fully expose a large pit.

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

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

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction and presentation of results

3.1.1 The results of the evaluation are presented below, and include a stratigraphic description of the trenches which contained archaeological remains. The full details of all trenches with dimensions and depths of all deposits form the content of 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. pit 102 is a feature within Trench 1, while ditch 304 is a feature within Trench 3.

3.2 General soils and ground conditions

3.2.1 The soil sequence across all trenches was fairly uniform, comprising the natural geology of either sandstone bedrock or clay sand overlain by a subsoil, sealed by ploughsoil. Variations in the thickness of these deposits were identified across the site, with deeper colluvial subsoil layers preserved towards the western lower portion of the site, particularly within Trenches 1, 2, 3 5 and 7. Both ploughed out and extant remains of ridge and furrow also accounted for varied depths of subsoil throughout the remaining trenches.

3.2.2 Ground conditions throughout the evaluation were generally poor, with saturated geology resulting in the presence of groundwater within the majority of trenches. Although the sloped nature of the site prevented the trenches from being entirely flooded along their length, the high moisture content did make the cleaning and identification of features challenging.

3.3 General distribution of archaeological deposits

3.3.1 A low density of archaeological features was identified during this investigation, with a slight bias towards the western half of the site. The vast majority of features recorded related to the linear anomalies identified during the geophysical survey, including ditched enclosures within Trenches 1, 2, 3 and 5 and the L-shaped anomaly targeted with Trenches 7 and 9. Other features included a pair of possible ditches in Trench 10. Features not previously detected during the geophysical survey included ditches in Trenches 4 and 11, pits in Trenches 1 and 8 and two possible ditches in Trench 14.

3.3.2 No archaeological features were identified in Trenches 6, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20 (Plates 13-15).

3.4 Trenches 1, 2, 3 and 5 (Figure 3)

3.4.1 Ditch 103 was recorded in Trench 1 on a NE-SW alignment, measuring 1.6m wide and 0.7m deep, with steep sides and a concave base (Figure 6, section 100 and Plate 1). It was filled with an initial fill of yellow brown silty sand, 104 and a later deposit of reddish brown sandy silt, 105. The earlier fill contained a very small fragment of post-medieval pottery. Based on the correlation with the results of the geophysical survey, it is likely that this was a continuation of ditch 302 in Trench 3. Ditch 302 had a similar profile with a width of 1.1m and a depth of 0.46m (Figure 6, section 300 and Plate 2). It contained a single deposit of reddish grey, silty sand.

3.4.2 Towards the southern end of Trench 1 was a small discrete pit, 113. It measured 0.26m in diameter with a concave profile 0.08m deep (Figure 6, section 102 and Plate 3). It contained a single dumped fill of charcoal rich, grey brown sandy silt which contained unidentified cereal grains and fragments of chaff. No artefacts were recovered from this feature.

3.4.3 To the south of pit 113 was a possible ditch, 110. It measured 0.7m wide, with a shallow concave base, 0.15m deep (Figure 6, section 101). It was filled by a mottled grey brown deposit of sterile silty clay. The extent of the feature was difficult to determine but it did appear to be orientated NW-SE in a similar location to one of the possible geophysical anomalies.

3.4.4 Ditch 202 was located at the south-eastern end of Trench 2 on a ENE-WSW alignment. It had steep sides and a flattish base, measuring 1.75m wide and 0.74m deep (Figure 6, section 200 and Plate 4). It had been filled with a sterile deposit of mid yellow brown, sandy clay.

3.4.5 Within Trench 5 was a small ditch, 504. It was aligned NW-SE with a width of 0.3m. Excavation revealed steep sides and a flat base 0.19m deep with a single fill of reddish brown sand (Figure 7, section 501). No artefacts were recovered from this feature.

3.4.6 Based on the results of the geophysical survey it appeared as though ditches 110, 202 and 504 might form part of the same D-shaped enclosure.

3.4.7 Feature 502 was recorded as a possible pit within Trench 5. It was only partially revealed within the trench and measured at least 1.2m in across, with a concave profile 0.32m (Figure 7, section 500). It contained a sterile fill of reddish brown sand. Due to its sterile and diffuse nature it is uncertain whether it is of archaeological origin.

3.5 Trenches 7 and 9 (Figure 4)

3.5.1 Ditch 903 was on a NW-SE alignment with a width of 1.45m. Its sides were moderately sloped creating a broad V-shaped profile 0.4m deep (Figure 7, section 900 and Plate 5). It contained a single homogenous deposit of reddish brown, silty clay sand with rare charcoal flecks. Based on the results of the geophysical survey it is likely that this was a continuation of ditch 704, recorded in Trench 7. Ditch 704 measured 1.05m wide and 0.27m deep (Figure 7, section 701 and Plate 6). It had steep sides and a concave base containing a single fill of reddish brown sandy clay. Several sherds of possibly late Iron Age pottery were recovered from the fill of this ditch.

3.5.2 A probable furrow, 702, was recorded in Trench 7. It was aligned NE-SW and measured 1.38 wide and 0.19m deep (Figure 7, section 700). It had a broad concave profile and contained a deposit of greyish brown silty sand with a single sherd of post-medieval red-ware.

3.6 Trench 4 (Figure 3)

3.6.1 Trench 4 contained a single ditch not previously identified by the geophysical survey due to interference from an adjacent building. Ditch 402 was aligned NW-SE and measured 1.2m wide and 0.4m deep (Figure 6, section 400 and Plate 7). Its sides were slightly convex leading steeply into a concave base. A single deposit of mid yellow grey,

sandy clay filled the ditch. Three sherds of Bronze Age or early Iron Age pottery and some animal bone were recovered from the fill.

3.7 Trench 8 (Figure 4)

3.7.1 Two pits were located at the eastern end of Trench 8. Pit 803 was partially truncated by a modern land drain, but appeared to be circular in plan with a diameter of 0.75m. It had steep sides sloping into a broad concave base 0.32m deep (Figure 7, section 800 and Plate 8). It contained a single dumped deposit comprising mid to dark grey brown, sandy silt and frequent fragments of burnt stones and some charcoal.

3.7.2 The second pit, 805, was larger and sub-rectangular in shape. It measured 1.73m long and 1.1m wide with near vertical sides and an undulating base (Figure 7, section 801 and Plate 9). Within the base of the pit was a backfilled deposit of mid yellow grey sandy clay, 806. This was overlain by a dumped deposit (807) of dark brown silty sand, containing significant quantities of charcoal and burnt stone.

3.7.3 Relatively larger concentrations of charcoal were observed within pit 805, but neither feature showed any evidence of *in-situ* burning, and no artefacts were recovered during their excavation. Although a fragment of hazelnut shell was recovered from pit 803, no charred cereal remains were identified amongst the material sampled from these features.

3.8 Trench 10 (Figure 4)

3.8.1 Trench 10 was targeted upon two linear geophysical anomalies and revealed two very diffuse, possible ditch-like features. Ditches 1003 and 1005 (Figure 7, section 1001 and Plate 10) were near identical in their appearance, both with broad concave profiles and filled by a single sterile deposit of mid to light reddish brown, silty sand.

3.9 Trench 11 (Figure 4)

3.9.1 Ditch 1103 was recorded on a NW-SE alignment and measured 1.4m wide and 0.44m deep (Figure 7, section 1100 and Plate 11). Although groundwater made excavation difficult, it appeared to have a broad V-shaped profile and contained a single naturally accumulated fill of reddish brown, clayey silty sand. Although no finds were recovered from this feature it is aligned with a footpath, recorded on 19th century and 20th century mapping, which may have been defined by this ditch.

3.10 Trench 14 (Figure 5)

3.10.1 At the western end of the trench were two partially exposed possible ditches which terminated within the trench and extended beyond the northern edge of the excavation. Feature 1405 measured at least 1m in length, 0.48m wide and 0.13m deep (Figure 7, section 1402 and Plate 12). It had a shallow concave profile and contained a sterile fill of mid grey brown and mid yellow brown silty clay. Less than 1m to the east was a near identical feature, 1403, (Figure 7, section 1401) which contained a similar, naturally accumulated fill. No artefacts were recovered from these features.

3.11 Finds summary

3.11.1 Eleven sherds of pottery, weighing 77g, were recovered from the evaluation. The material ranged in date from broadly Bronze Age or early Iron Age through to the late Iron Age and 1st century AD. Two sherds of post-medieval pottery were also recovered.

3.11.2 A single flint dating to the Neolithic or early Bronze Age was recovered as a surface find during the investigation.

3.11.3 There was also a single piece of bottle glass dating to the 19th or early 20th century.

4 DISCUSSION

4.1 Reliability of field investigation

4.1.1 The fieldwork was undertaken over a period of ten days during varied weather conditions. Although wet weather was only encountered on a few days, the ground was already saturated from previous rainfall. The quantity of groundwater led to localised flooding within the trenches and also made it difficult to distinguish the fills of archaeological features from the natural geology.

4.1.2 The results of the geophysical survey proved to be remarkably accurate with a very strong correlation between possible anomalies and the archaeological features excavated during the evaluation. Due to the poor ground conditions and sterile deposits encountered, the majority of linear features were only identified because they had been detected by the geophysics.

4.1.3 Despite the difficult conditions there is high level of confidence that the combined investigations have provided an accurate demonstration of the archaeological remains present within the site. Nevertheless, the previously unidentified pits within Trench 8 do serve as a reminder that isolated discrete features may be present that are difficult to detect through geophysical survey.

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 the geophysical survey and largely indicates that the results of the survey are an accurate reflection of the remains present. However, the sterile nature of the deposits encountered means that many of the features cannot confidently be dated and provide little clear indication of their function or associated activities.

4.2.2 The earliest dated feature was ditch 402 in Trench 4, which contained a small quantity of Bronze Age or early Iron Age pottery. Possible late Iron Age pottery was recovered from the subsoil within the same trench and also from the L-shaped ditch identified in Trenches 7 and 9.

4.2.3 The most clearly defined ditches were focused in the western half of the site, but only a single small sherd of post-medieval pottery was retrieved from the two possible enclosures identified in Trenches 1, 2, 3 and 5.

4.2.4 Ditch 1103 contained no artefacts but does correlate with post-medieval field boundaries marked on historical maps.

4.2.5 A total of three discrete pits were also identified in Trenches 1 and 8. Pit 113 in Trench 1 contained a dump of charred cereal fragments providing evidence of grain processing nearby. The two pits in Trench 8 contained large quantities of burnt stone and charcoal but no definitive indication as to the activities they were associated with. Furthermore, none of the pits produced any dateable artefacts.

4.3 Interpretation

4.3.1 From the small quantity of pottery produced during the investigation it appears that the main phases of activity on site were during the Bronze Age or early Iron Age and the late Iron Age periods, with much later activity during the medieval and post-medieval periods.

4.3.2 The late prehistoric phases of activity are principally evidenced through the remains of ditched enclosures in Trenches 4 and 7. It is also likely that the undated elements of a possible D-shaped enclosure in Trenches 1, 2 and 5 were also in use during this period.

4.3.3 Although ditch 104 in the north-west of the site did contain post-medieval pottery, it should be noted that this was a single 3g sherd and is not necessarily conclusive dating evidence. Furthermore, there is no cartographic evidence that corresponds to this ditch or indicates a boundary at this location. Given the evidence of ridge and furrow within the site, it is quite possible that this sherd is intrusive.

4.3.4 The sterile nature of the ditch deposits and the lack of structural evidence within the enclosures indicates that these features were separated from either domestic or industrial activities. Therefore, it is most likely that they had an agricultural function, and most probably served as stock enclosures.

4.3.5 The charred cereal remains within pit 113 do indicate that there was some cereal processing on site. However, the lack of dating evidence means it is not possible to ascertain when this activity was taking place. Although the pit was located within the possible D-shaped enclosure, there is no evidence to suggest that they were contemporary features given the lack of charred remains within ditch 110.

4.3.6 Only pits 803 and 805 provided any evidence for significant human activity beyond that of agriculture. The large quantity of burnt stone and charcoal could indicate that they resulted from activities such as cooking. However, it is interesting to note the absence of pottery, charred grains or faunal remains which would normally be expected to be found in association with these pits if they had been situated near to domestic areas.

4.4 Significance

4.4.1 Overall, it appears that the evidence for late prehistoric activity was predominantly agricultural. Potentially spanning a long period between the Bronze Age and late Iron Age, it is not possible to determine whether this activity was the result of continuous occupation within the vicinity, or represents distinct and separate phases. Either way it appears to have been low intensity activity which may have been located at the periphery of a more significant settlement.

4.4.2 Bronze Age, Iron Age and Roman settlement evidence has been identified approximately 800km to the north-east (CA 2015) of this site with earlier phases of work at Farleigh Road (NA 2012) potentially defining a south-western limit to this settlement focus. There is a strong possibility that the remains uncovered during this investigation are evidence of peripheral activity related to these sites. However, the lack of additional artefactual or environmental evidence means that these remains

provide limited further insights. Consequently, the remains identified as a result of this investigation are of local significance only.

4.4.3 In discussions with CgMs and Hugh Coddington on site, it was provisionally agreed that unless anything significantly changed during post-excavation work, no further archaeological works would be required on this site. On the basis that nothing has changed significantly during post-excavation, it is likely that on approval of this report, the archaeological condition can be discharged.

APPENDIX A TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1						
General description					**Orientation**	N-S
Trench contained one ditch and the possible remains of a second, a small discrete pit was also observed. Features were sealed by topsoil and subsoil with an underlying natural geology of clay sand.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.6
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
100	Layer	-	0.29	Topsoil	-	-
101	Layer	-	0.43	Subsoil	-	-
102	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
103	Cut	1.1	0.7	Ditch	-	-
104	Fill	-	0.29	Fill of 103, yellowish brown and mottled red, silty sand	Pottery	17th-19th C
105	Fill	-	0.37	Fill of 103, reddish brown, sandy silt	-	-
106	Layer	-	0.3	Natural, mid yellow brown clay sand	-	-
107	Void	-	-	-	-	-
108	Void	-	-	-	-	-
109	Layer	-	>0.21	Natural, mid reddish brown, sandy silt	-	-
110	Cut	0.7	0.15	Ditch	-	-
111	Fill	-	0.34	Fill of 110, mottled reddish brown and grey brown, silty clay	-	-
112	Layer	-	0.25	Colluvial subsoil, brownish red, sandy silt	-	-
113	Cut	0.26	0.08	Pit	-	-
114	Fill	-	0.08	Fill of 113, grey brown, sandy silt, charcoal rich	-	-

Trench 2						
General description					**Orientation**	NW-SE
Trench contained a single ditch. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of sandy clay.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.6
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
200	Layer	-	0.3	Topsoil	-	-
201	Layer	-	0.3	Subsoil	-	-
202	Cut	1.75	0.74	Ditch	-	-
203	Fill	-	0.74	Fill of 202, yellow brown, sandy clay	-	-
204	Layer	-	-	Natural clay	-	-
205	Layer	-	-	Natural, bedrock	-	-

206	Layer	-	-	Natural		

Trench 3						
General description					**Orientation**	E-W
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty sand.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.7
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
300	Layer	-	0.31	Topsoil	-	-
301	Layer	-	0.3	Subsoil	-	-
302	Cut	1.6	0.46	Ditch	-	-
303	Fill	-	0.46	Fill of 302, reddish mid grey clay sand	-	-
304	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 4						
General description					**Orientation**	NNE-SSW
Trench contained a single ditch. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of clay sand.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.55
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
400	Layer	-	0.15	Topsoil	-	-
401	Layer	-	0.15	Subsoil	Pottery	?LIA
402	Cut	1.2	0.4	Ditch	-	-
403	Fill	-	0.4	Fill of 402, yellowish mid grey, sandy clay loam	Pottery	BA-EIA
404	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 5						
General description					**Orientation**	E-W
Trench contained a possible pit and a small ditch. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of clay sand.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.75
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
500	Layer	-	0.15	Topsoil	-	-
501	Layer	-	0.15	Subsoil	-	-
502	Cut	0.5	0.32	Pit	-	-
503	Fill	-	0.32	Fill of 502, reddish brown sand	-	-
504	Cut	0.3	0.19	Ditch	-	-
505	Fill	-	0.19	Fill of 504, reddish brown	-	-
506	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 6						
General description					**Orientation**	N-S

Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of clay sand.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.6
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
600	Layer	-	0.27	Topsoil	Pottery	AD 43-100
601	Layer	-	0.23	Subsoil	-	-
602	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 7						
General description					**Orientation**	NW-SE
Trench contained a probable furrow and an enclosure ditch. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of clay sand.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.6
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
700	Layer	-	0.3	Topsoil	-	-
701	Layer	-	0.3	Subsoil	-	-
702	Cut	1.38	0.19	Furrow	-	-
703	Fill	-	0.19	Fill of 702, greyish brown, clay sand	Pottery	17th-18th C
704	Cut	1.05	0.27	Ditch	-	-
705	Fill	-	0.27	Fill of 704. Light reddish brown, sandy clay	Pottery	?LIA
706	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 8						
General description					**Orientation**	WNW-ESE
Trench was extended with an extra 5x5m area to expose two pits. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of clay sand.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.6
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
800	Layer	-	0.3	Topsoil	-	-
801	Layer	-	0.3	Subsoil	-	-
802	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
803	Cut	0.75	0.32	Pit	-	-
804	Fill	-	0.32	Fill of 803, mid to dark grey brown, sandy silt	-	-
805	Cut	1.1	0.5	Pit	-	-
806	Fill	-	0.24	Fill of 805, mid yellow grey, sandy clay	-	-
807	Fill	-	0.29	Fill of 805, dark grey brown, sand	-	-

Trench 9						
General description					**Orientation**	NE-SW

Trench contained a single ditch. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of clay sand.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.5
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
900	Layer	-	0.27	Topsoil	-	-
901	Layer	-	0.33	Subsoil	-	-
902	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
903	Cut	1.45	0.4	Ditch	-	-
904	Fill	-	0.4	Fill of 903, mid reddish brown, silty clay sand	-	-

Trench 10						
General description					**Orientation**	E-W
Trench contained two ditches. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of clay sand.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.6
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
1000	Layer	-	0.3	Topsoil	-	-
1001	Layer	-	0.3	Subsoil	-	-
1002	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
1003	Cut	1.35	0.25	Ditch	-	-
1004	Fill	-	0.25	Fill of 1003, mid to light reddish brown, silty sand	-	-
1005	Cut	1.2	0.22	Ditch	-	-
1006	Fill	-	-	Fill of 1005, mid to light reddish brown, silty sand	-	-

Trench 11						
General description					**Orientation**	N-S
Trench contained a single boundary ditch. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of clay sand. Trench shortened to avoid water pipe.					**Length (m)**	39
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.5
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
1100	Layer	-	0.15	Topsoil	-	-
1101	Layer	-	0.15	Subsoil	-	-
1102	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
1103	Cut	1.4	0.44	Ditch	-	-
1104	Fill	-	-	Fill of 1103, mid reddish brown, clay silty sand	-	-

Trench 12		
General description	**Orientation**	E-W
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of sandy clay. Moved from original location due to overhead services.	**Length (m)**	48.5
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.6

Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1200	Layer	-	0.33	Topsoil	-	-
1201	Layer	-	0.3	Subsoil	-	-
1202	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 13						
General description					Orientation	E-W
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty sand. Moved from original location due to overhead services.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.45
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1300	Layer	-	0.3	Topsoil	-	-
1301	Layer	-	0.15	Subsoil	-	-
1302	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 14						
General description					Orientation	E-W
Trench contained a possible ditch terminus and a small pit. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of clay sand.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.45
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1400	Layer	-	0.18	Topsoil	-	-
1401	Layer	-	0.26	Subsoil	-	-
1402	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
1403	Cut	0.5	0.1	Ditch terminus	-	-
1404	Fill	-	0.1	Fill of 1403, mid grey brown, reddish brown flecks	-	-
1405	Cut	0.48	0.13	Pit	-	-
1406	Fill	-	0.13	Fill of 1405, mid grey brown and light brown, sandy silty clay	-	-

Trench 15						
General description					Orientation	N-S
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of stoney clay sand.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.30
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1500	Layer	-	0.18	Topsoil	-	-
1501	Layer	-	0.14	Subsoil	-	-
1502	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 16

General description					Orientation	NW-SE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of stoney sandy clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.34
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
1600	Layer	-	0.13	Topsoil	-	-
1601	Layer	-	0.15	Subsoil	-	-
1602	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 17						
General description					**Orientation**	NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of sandy clay.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.47
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
1700	Layer	-	0.22	Topsoil	-	-
1701	Layer	-	0.25	Subsoil	-	-
1702	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 18						
General description					**Orientation**	N-S
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of clay sand.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.65
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
1800	Layer	-	0.29	Topsoil	-	-
1801	Layer	-	0.35	Subsoil	-	-
1802	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 19						
General description					**Orientation**	NW-SE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of sandy clay.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.58
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
1900	Layer	-	0.25	Topsoil	-	-
1901	Layer	-	0.33	Subsoil	-	-
1902	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 20						
General description					**Orientation**	E-W
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of clay sand.					**Length (m)**	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.6

Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
2000	Layer	-	0.3	Topsoil	-	-
2001	Layer	-	0.3	Subsoil	-	-
2002	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

APPENDIX B FINDS REPORTS

B.1 Pottery

By Edward Biddulph

B.1.1 Eleven sherds of pottery, weighing 77g, were recovered from the evaluation. The assemblage was scanned to broadly characterise the fabrics and any evidence for form and function, and to provide spot-dates. Where possible, fabrics were assigned codes from OA's standard recording system for late Iron Age and Roman pottery (Booth 2014). The post-Roman pottery was identified by John Cotter.

Table 1: Summary of pottery by context

Context	Count	Weight (g)	Comments	Spot-date
104	1	3	Body sherd, red earthenware	17th-19th C
401	1	4	Body sherd, fabric with voids denoting leached shell; additional sand and clay pellets or grog. Dark grey fabric and interior surface, brown exterior surface	?LIA
403	3	15	Body sherds, coarse flint-tempered fabrics. One sherd, c 12mm thick, is slightly convex and may be part of the neck of the vessel; dark brown fabrics with red-brown exterior surface. Another sherd has a red-brown fabric and dark grey surface	BA-EIA
600	2	20	1x sherd of lower wall and junction with base in grog-tempered fabric (E80), diagonal incision (?decoration) made before firing; 1x base sherd in medium sand-tempered reduced fabric (R30)	AD 43-100
703	1	12	Body sherd, post-medieval redware (PMR)	17th-18th C
705	3	23	Body sherds from single vessel. Fine flint-tempered dark brown fabric	?LIA

B.1.2 The earliest pottery was recovered from ditch fill 403. The coarse flint-tempered pottery identified cannot be closely dated, though can be placed broadly within the Bronze Age or early Iron Age.

B.1.3 The shell-tempered pottery from subsoil 401 and the flint-tempered pottery from context 705 are consistent with a late Iron Age date, though could equally belong to the middle Iron Age. However, the later date is supported by the grog-tempered pottery from context 600, which dates to the late Iron Age or early Roman period, but

in this case, given its association with Roman-period fabric R30, was deposited in the mid-late 1st century AD or later.

B.1.4 The latest pottery, dating to the post-medieval period, comprises a sherd of earthenware, possibly flowerpot fabric, from context 104, and a sherd of post-medieval redware from context 703, a fill of a furrow.

B.1.5 With a mean sherd weight of 7g, the condition of the pottery is poor overall, although the flint-tempered pottery, which is likely to have been deposited as a single sherd, shows that sherd size is variable and potentially points to relatively well-preserved material across the site.

B.2 Flint

By Michael Donnelly

B.2.1 A single flint was recovered from this evaluation. The piece is a fine tool on a probable blade blank, but is snapped and so could actually just be from a long flake. The piece displays thermal cortex usually associated with later prehistoric expedient knapping, but at sites far from good chalk flint, other local sources are often used. The tool has well executed regular and parallel semi-abrupt retouch at its convex distal end and less regular invasive retouch along its left edge. It also has similar possible knife retouch on its right side, although this could simply relate to hafting damage as it is far less regular than on the left edge.

B.2.2 Although just a single piece, the flint is quite a fine tool and could indicate a prehistoric focus in the area dating to the Neolithic or early Bronze Age. Alternatively, it could simply be a stray loss by some passing individual(s).

Table 2: Summary of worked flint

Context	type	sub-type	notes	date
1000	Other retouch end scraper/knife	Side trimming blade	Probable snapped blade with quite fine scraper retouch distal and knife retouch left side, and possibly also right side.	Neo-EBA

B.3 Glass

By Ian Scott

B.3.1 There was a single piece of bottle glass (context 600), a body sherd from a moulded cylindrical bottle in pale green glass. It probably dates from the late 19th or early 20th century. D: *c* 80mm.

B.4 Stone

By Ruth Shaffrey

B.4.1 A total of 450 fragments of burnt stone were recovered during sieving. All are smashed/ heat shattered quartzite cobbles and pebbles suggesting exposure to rapid changes in temperature but not to direct flame. A total of approximately 350

fragments (6.7kg) were recovered from context 807 and 100 fragments (1.5kg) from context 804. The stone can now be discarded.

APPENDIX C ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS

C.1 Environmental Samples

By Sharon Cook

Introduction

C.1.1 Three samples were taken during the evaluation at Land off Townsend Road, Shrivenham in February 2017. All samples were taken from undated pit fills. Sample <1> (114) was 5 litres in volume and came from pit [113] in Trench 1. Sample <2> (804) and sample <3> (807) were both 40 litres in volume and came from pits [803] and [805] within Trench 8.

Method

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

Results

C.1.3 Sample <1> (114) has a flot of 15ml and sample <2> has a flot of 80ml, 100% of which was scanned for both samples. Sample <3> produced a flot of 200ml of which 100ml was scanned. Burnt stone was extracted from the residues of samples <2> and <3> although no other finds were noted. No finds were observed within sample <1>.

C.1.4 All three samples contained a moderate quantity of modern material, with the remainder of the flot volume consisting of charcoal in very good condition. The charcoal includes large fragments which may be suitable for species identification if required. Sample <1> has seven unidentifiable fragments of cereal grain and ten small fragments of cereal chaff. Sample <2> contains a single large fragment of hazelnut shell (*Corylus avellana*) which was extracted from the residue. No other charred material was observed within these flots. Sample <3> contained no charred seeds or grains within the scanned portion.

Discussion and Conclusion

C.1.5 The condition of the observed charcoal within these samples indicates that charred material survives well on this site. The lack of other charred material may indicate that these pits were removed from areas of intense human activity, the condition of the observed grain and chaff within sample <1> showing that this was likely to have been a secondary deposition episode.

C.1.6 If required, the cereal grain from sample <1> and the hazelnut shell from sample <2> should provide enough material for radiocarbon dating.

C.1.7 If further excavation is carried out, it is recommended that additional sampling should take place, ideally from a range of features across the site. This sampling should be

carried out in accordance with the most recent sampling guidelines (eg Oxford Archaeology 2005; English Heritage 2011).

C.2 Animal Bone

By Lee G. Broderick

Introduction

C.4.1 Two animal bones were recovered from the site, associated with a context dated to the Bronze Age to Early Iron Age (Table 3). The specimens were recovered by hand. These were a left and a right metacarpal of domestic cattle, one of which showed signs of having been gnawed by canids, suggestive of dogs being present on the site at this time.

C.4.2 No further work on this assemblage is recommended at this time. If further excavations take place, however, and more material is recovered, then these bones should be considered with that larger assemblage and included in the report.

Table 3: Total NISP and NSP figures per period from the site

	Bronze Age – Early Iron Age
domestic cattle	**2**
Total NISP	2
Total NSP	2

Table 4: Non-species data recorded from the assemblage

	Gnawed
domestic cattle	1
Total NSP	1

Table 5: Counts and total mass of specimens recovered per context

Context	NSP	Mass (g)
403	2	79

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APPENDIX D SITE SUMMARY DETAILS

Site name:	Land off Townsend Road, Shrivenham, Oxfordshire
Site code:	SHTR 17
Grid Reference	SU 23100 88510
Type:	Evaluation
Date and duration:	23rd January to 2nd February 2017
Summary of Results:	Oxford Archaeology undertook an archaeological evaluation comprising 20 trenches on land off Townsend Road, Shrivenham, Oxfordshire. A geophysical survey of the site had previously identified a number of linear anomalies and possible archaeological features. These were targeted during the evaluation and were proven to be the remains of ditched enclosures. The remains included an undated possible D-shaped enclosure within Trenches 1, 2, 3 and 5, towards the west of the site. A late Iron Age L-shaped enclosure within Trenches 7 and 9 and a previously undetected possible Bronze Age or early Iron Age ditch within Trench 4. Additional features included three undated pits within Trenches 1 and 8, which each contained burnt remains, and two possible ditches in Trench 14. Overall, it appears that the archaeological activity on the site was limited to the late prehistoric periods and was predominantly agricultural in nature. Potentially spanning a long period between the Bronze Age and late Iron Age, it is not possible to determine whether this the result of continuous occupation within the vicinity, or distinct and separate phases. Either way it appears to have been low intensity activity which may have been at the periphery of a more significant settlement.
Area of Site	5.18Ha
Location of archive:	The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museum in due course, under the following accession number: SHTR 16.

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X:\s\Shrivenham Townsend Road ev\010Geomatics\03 GIS Projects\SHTREV_Figure1.mxd*benjamin.brown*04/10/2016

Figure 1: Site location

X:\st\Shrivenham Townsend Road ev\010Geomatics\02 CAD\SHTREV_Proposed Trenches with Existing Services Plan_OS Grid.dwg(A3 landscape)***SHTREV*Benjamin.Brown* 09 Feb 2017

422893
188624

423332
188624

422893
188362

N

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

Rhyme's House
Swanhill Farm
Swanhill Farm House
FW
Holkham House
Meadow Edge
The Bungalow
Wks
Wks
CLEYCOURT ROAD
13
15
92.6m

Geophysics Key:

- Ridge and Furrow Trend
- Agricultural (Weak)
- Archaeology Possible (Strong)
- Archaeology Possible (Weak)
- Ferrous (Dipolar)
- Ferrous (Spread)
- Undetermined (Strong)
- Undetermined (Weak)
- Undetermined (Spread)

- Site boundary
- Limit of Excavation
- Archaeological features
- Archaeological interventions
- Archaeological sections
- Archaeological hachure
- Modern features

CHECKED BY:

Survey Data supplied by :
Ashley Strutt

0 50 m

Scale at A3 1:1250

Figure 2: Trench locations

X:\s\Shrivenham Townsend Road ev\010Geomatics\02 CAD\SHTREV_Proposed Trenches with Existing Services Plan_OS Grid.dwg(Fig 3)***SHTREV*benjamin.brown* 14 Feb 2017

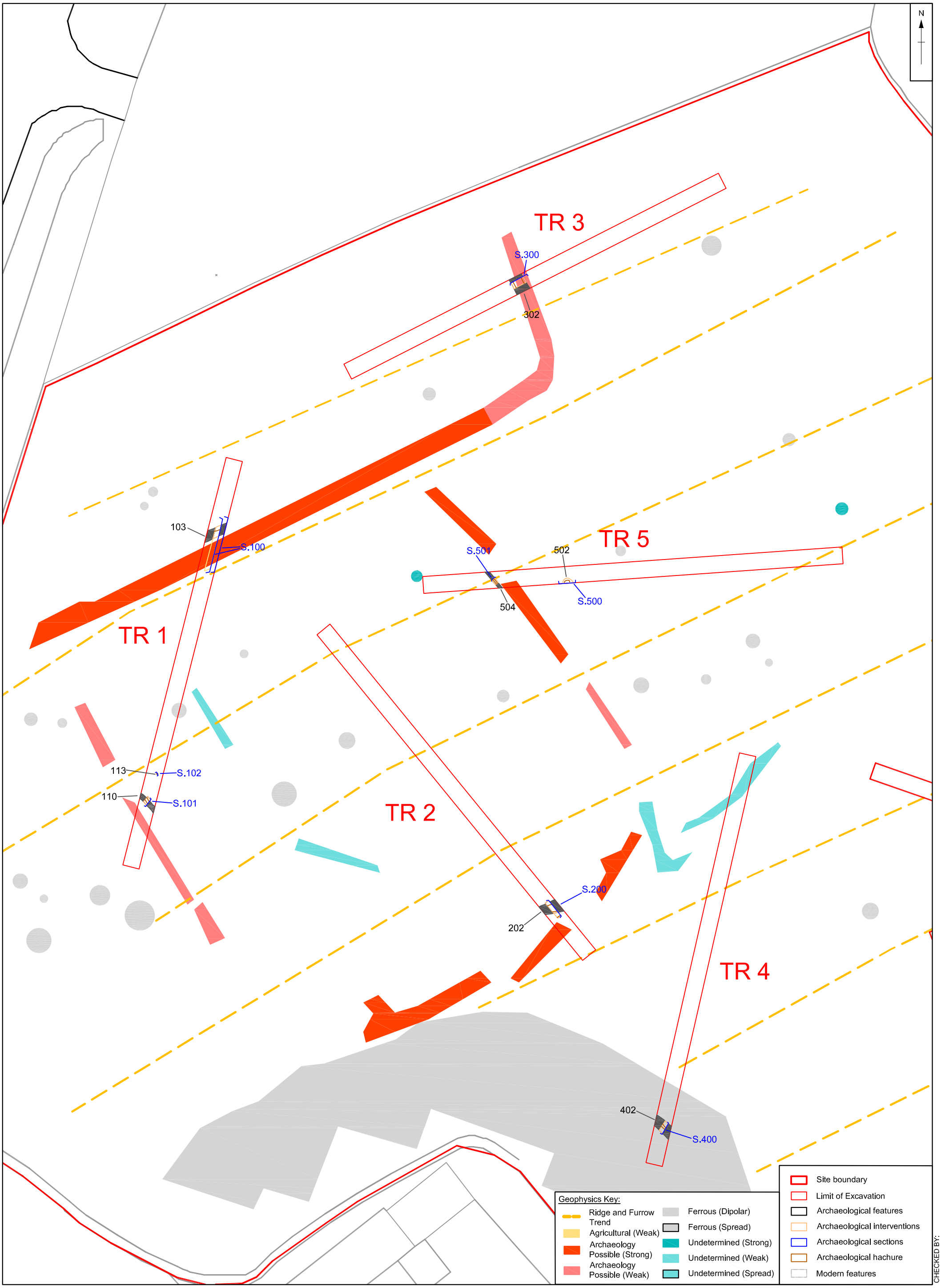

Figure 3: Detail of Trenches 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

X:\s\Shrivenham Townsend Road ev\010Geomatics\02 CAD\SHTREV_Proposed Trenches with Existing Services Plan_OS Grid.dwg(Fig 4)***SHTREV*mark.dodd* 23 Feb 2017

N

TR 6

TR 8

S.801

S.800

805

803

TR 20

S.1100

1103

TR 11

TR 19

TR 9

702

S.700

903

S.901

TR 7

704

S.701

S.1001

1003

1005

TR 10

Geophysics Key:

- Ridge and Furrow Trend
- Agricultural (Weak)
- Archaeology Possible (Strong)
- Archaeology Possible (Weak)
- Ferrous (Dipolar)
- Ferrous (Spread)
- Undetermined (Strong)
- Undetermined (Weak)
- Undetermined (Spread)

- Site boundary
- Limit of Excavation
- Archaeological features
- Archaeological interventions
- Archaeological sections
- Archaeological hachure
- Modern features

CHECKED BY:

0 20 m

Scale at A3 1:400

Figure 4: Detail of Trenches 6-11 and Trenches 19 & 20

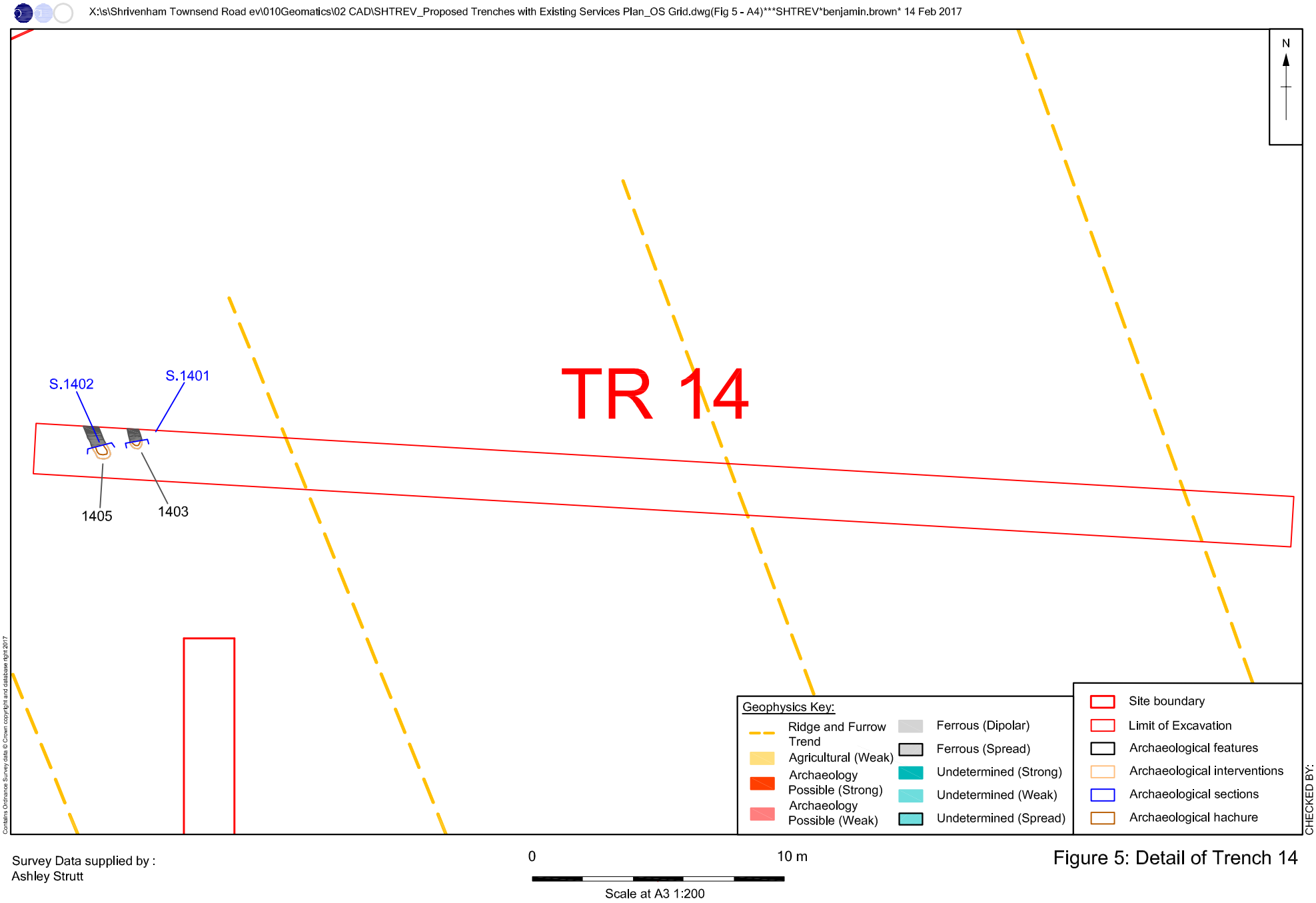

Figure 5: Detail of Trench 14

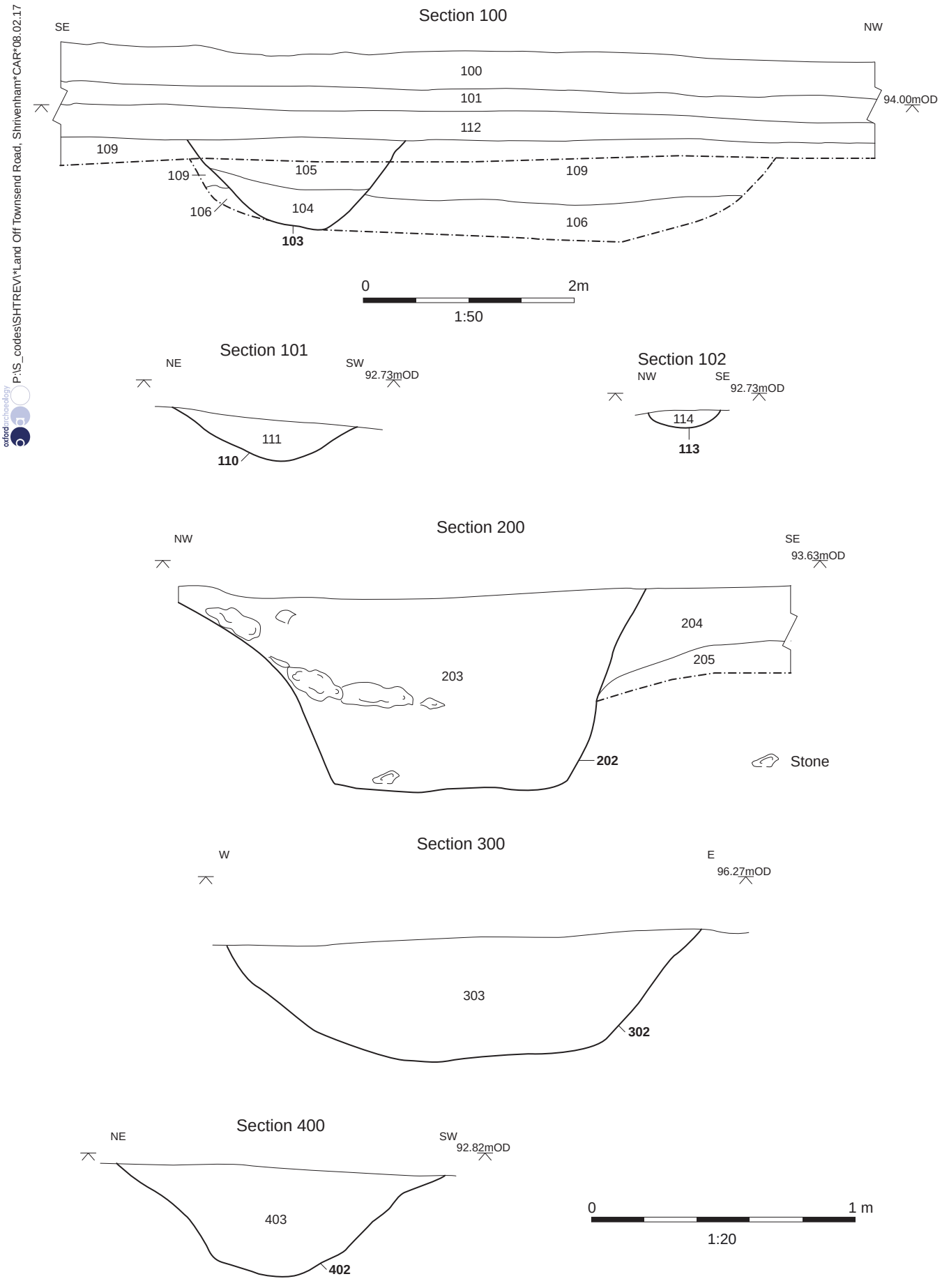

Figure 6: Sections 100, 101, 102, 200, 300 and 400

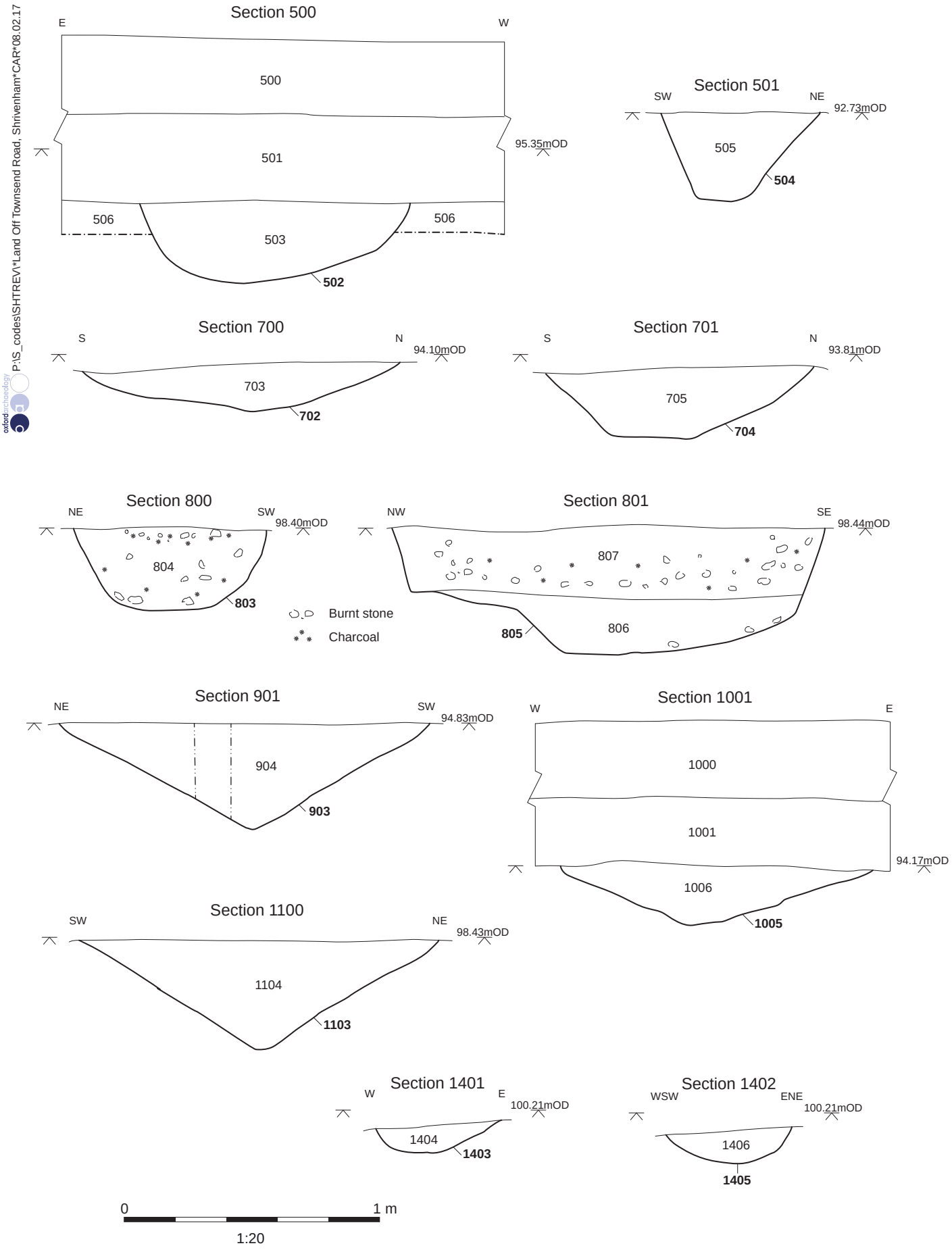

Figure 7: Sections 500, 501, 700, 701, 800, 801, 901, 1001, 1100, 1401 and 1402

Plate 1: Ditch 103, looking south-east

Plate 2: Ditch 302, looking north-west

Plate 3: Pit 113, looking north-east

Plate 4: Ditch 202, looking north-east

Plate 5: Ditch 903, looking south-east

Plate 6: Ditch 704, south-west

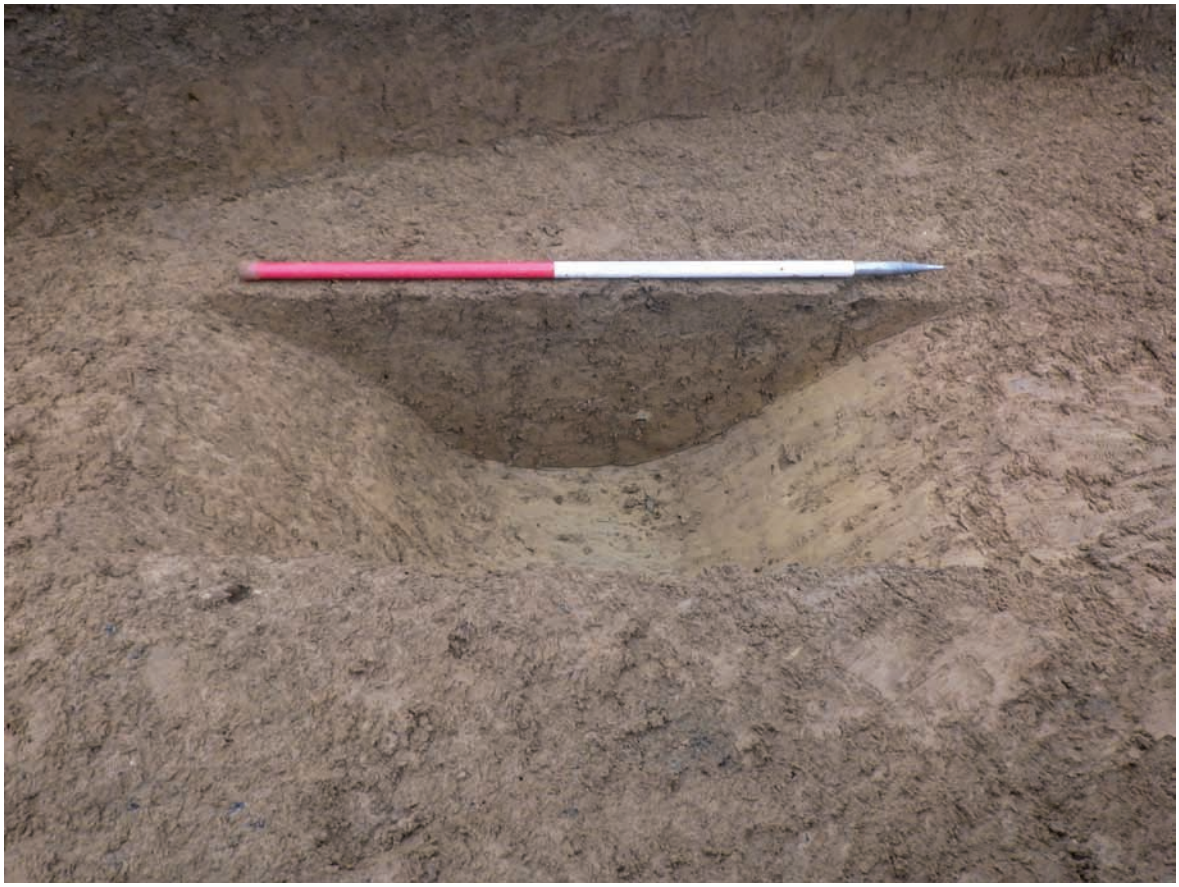

Plate 7: Ditch 402, looking south-east

Plate 8: Pit 803, looking east

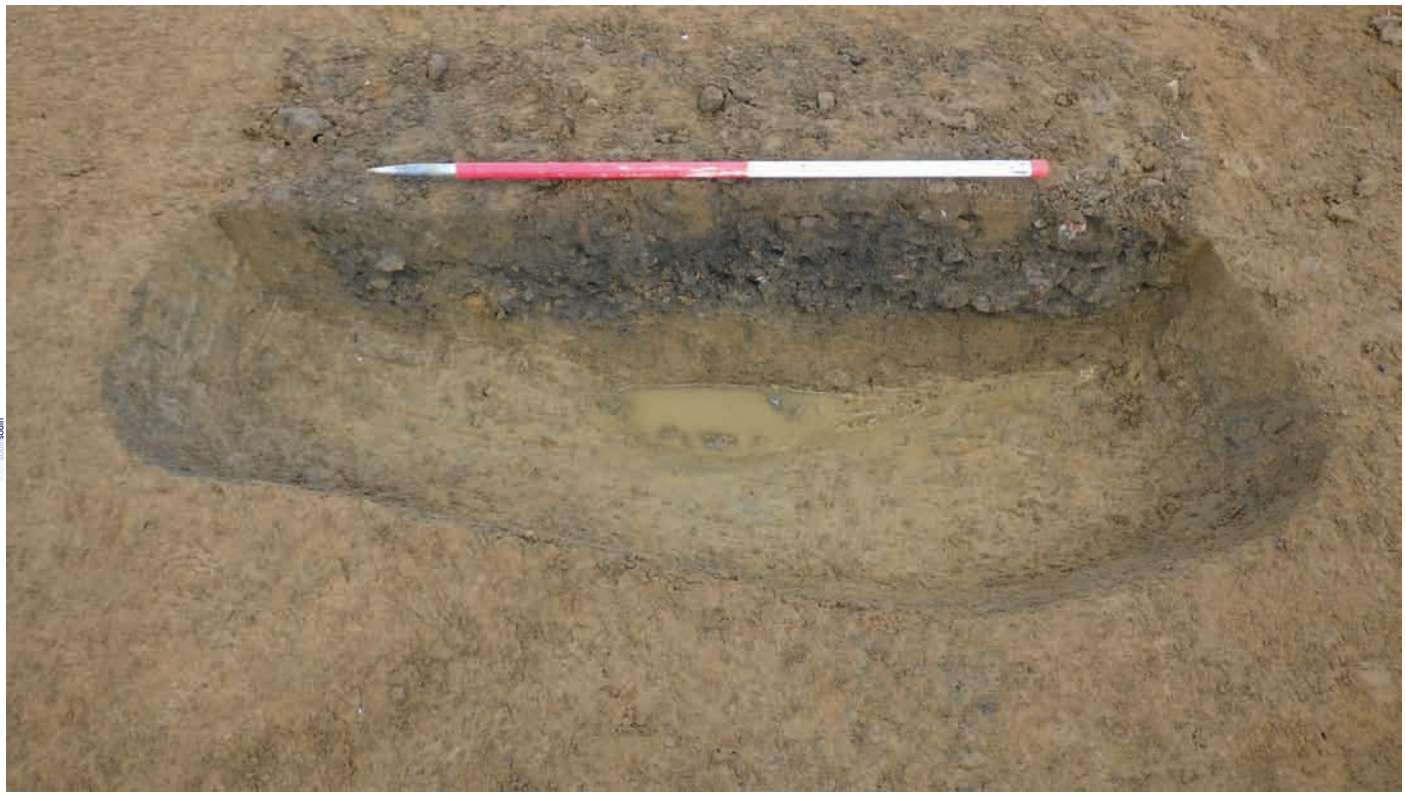

Plate 9: Pit 805, looking north-east

Plate 10: Ditch 1005, looking north

Plate 11: Ditch 1103, looking north-west

Plate 12: Ditch terminus 1405, looking north

Plate 13: General view of Trench 6, looking north

Plate 14: General view of Trench 16, looking north-west

Plate 15: General view of Trench 17, looking south-west

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