

UNION RAILWAYS LIMITED

CUXTON ANGLO-SAXON BURIAL

ARC CXT 97

An Archaeological Evaluation

Contract No. 194/870



Museum of London Archaeology Service
September 1997

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RAIL LINK ENGINEERING

**CUXTON ANGLO-SAXON BURIAL
Phase 1 and 2**

ARC CXT 97

An Archaeological Evaluation

Final Report
Volume 1 of 1

Contract No. 194/870

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Museum of London Archaeology Service
September 1997

***CUXTON ANGLO-SAXON BURIAL PHASES 1 and 2
CUXTON, KENT***

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

SUMMARY

As part of a larger programme of archaeological investigation along the route of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link, Union Railways Limited (URL) commissioned the Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS) to undertake a field evaluation at Cuxton. The site lay on land sloping down towards the River Medway to the west of the M2 Medway Bridge. Work was undertaken between 17th and 28th April 1997.

A large pit was revealed, dated by pottery to the Mid - Late Iron Age. The pit was half sectioned and contained a primary ashy fill, a secondary fill of chalk side collapse - suggesting that the pit had been left open for a period of time, a further ashy fill and a backfill. Animal bones, charred cereal seeds, two fragments of burnt and vitrified ceramic; thought to have come from a hearth, and over 6kg of burnt flint was retrieved. The pit was situated on high ground to the north of the site, next to a dry valley. Environmental and archaeological evidence suggests that this valley contained running water until relatively recently, probably until the 19th century, which may have entered the River Medway at the still extant creek to the south-west of the site.

No other archaeological features dated to before the post-medieval period. A probable road was seen aligned east - west across the lower slopes of the site and north - south field boundary ditches, running down the slope, were also recorded.

Re-grading of the hillside, probably dating from the 19th century, was noted in most trenches.

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SECTION 1: FACTUAL STATEMENT

1 BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 An archaeological evaluation, site code ARC CXT97 was undertaken by the Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS) commissioned by Union Railways Ltd from 17/4/97 - 28/4/97 on land sloping down towards the River Medway to the west of the M2 Medway bridge (Fig 1). Two railway lines border the site: the London to Chatham line running in a cut along the high, northern edge of the site and the Rochester to Maidstone line which runs on an embankment along the southern, lower, part of the site. The evaluation formed part of a wider programme of archaeological investigations along the line of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link. The Route Window is 18.
- 1.1.2 The very northern part of the site occupies a fairly level area of high ground on the apex of a curve in the River Medway. From here there is a large panoramic view; a stretch of the river can be seen both up and down stream (including Rochester castle), in addition and the land sloping up to the North Downs is visible for a considerable distance. From the high ground the site slopes down quite steeply to a reclaimed area bordering the river.
- 1.1.3 The work was carried out in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation, prepared by URL, detailing the scope and methods of the evaluation. The area of the evaluation is shown on Fig 2.

1.2 Geology, landscape and landuse

- 1.2.1 The site lies on solid chalk geology forming the northern terrace of the River Medway. A dry valley runs through the middle of the site and where this valley ran into the river the chalk had been eroded into a small, steep sided inlet. Into this area alluvial silts had been deposited, up to 5.50m thick. Trenches 1076TT, 1073TT, 1069TT, 1066TT and the southern end of 1063TT lie over this alluvial layer. Deep investigation in 1066TT showed that this material was sterile sands and silts, containing no marsh, peat or clay deposits.
- 1.2.2 The dry valley, only about 40m wide and relatively shallow, ran north - south through 1082TT, 1083TT, 1071TT, 1068TT, 1070TT, 1067TT, 1069TT and 1066TT. In the valley the lowest layer was a water washed chalky silt.
- 1.2.3 The ground surface of the evaluation, being on the side of a fairly steep valley, dropped from around 33.80m Ordnance Datum (OD hereafter) at 1081TT down to 5.56m OD at the southern end of 1066TT, over a horizontal distance of approximately 200m. Natural chalk was encountered at 33.53m OD at the top of the hill in 1084TT; at 4.50m OD at the western end of 1069TT and still not reached at -1.00m OD in the southern part of 1066TT.

- 1.2.4 The site is currently divided into two areas; the Phase 1 area south of the farm track (trenches 1063TT - 1079TT) and the Phase 2 area north of the farm track (trenches 1080TT - 1085TT). These areas are arable ploughland. There was evidence for two phases of post-medieval ploughing and terracing, grading and levelling on the lower (steeper) slopes of the Phase 1 area. The land to the west of 1077TT - 1079TT has been recently used as a landfill site, as has the wooded area to the west of 1082TT and 1083TT.

2 AIMS

2.1.1 In general the fieldwork shall aim to provide information to determine:

- the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains within the area of the evaluation
- the presence and potential of environmental and economic indicators preserved in any archaeological features or deposits;
- the local, regional and national importance of such remains, and the potential for further fieldwork to fulfil local, regional and national research objectives.

2.1.2 More specifically the fieldwork shall aim to provide information to determine:

- whether the Anglo-Saxon burial found during 19th century railway construction work is located within the URL construction site, and if so, whether it lies within a cemetery;
- assess the condition of any human skeletal remains and their potential for palaeopathological analysis;
- assess the potential for artefactual analysis of grave goods;
- determine the presence/absence etc. of any Palaeolithic deposits or artefacts.

3 METHODS

3.1 General

- 3.1.1 A detailed specification for the evaluation was agreed by URL with the County Archaeologist and English Heritage. The following text is intended only to amplify certain aspects of the evaluation methodology.

3.2 Survey

- 3.2.1 Twenty one trenches (Fig 2 1063TT - 1083TT) specified by URL were established using a total station EDM from URL permanent ground markers. Trenches 1084TT and 1085TT were located with tapes and surveyed in after excavation.
- 3.2.2 The central site coordinate according to the given URL grid was 51984/47349.

3.3 Excavation

- 3.3.1 The area evaluated at Cuxton was approximately square in shape 200m north - south and 240m to 280m east - west. In total 23 trenches, 2.00m wide and 30m in length, were excavated. Originally the Phase 2 trenches were situated to the west and north of the Phase 1 area, however, the western trenches were not excavated as no evidence for Anglo-Saxon burials were found in Phase 1. This was agreed on site with Kent County Council. Two trenches from the Phase 2 western area (trenches 1084TT and 1085TT) were relocated to the northern Phase 2 area..
- 3.3.2 The trenches were all excavated using a 360° tracked excavator to a depth of 1.20m unless archaeologically significant layers were encountered or the underlying solid geology was encountered. Variation orders allowed the deepening of a 4.00m length of 1066TT, 1069TT (to expose a full section through the alluvial strata to the south of the site, an area of potential Palaeolithic survival) and 1071TT (to expose a full section through the dry valley deposits). Trench 1066TT was deepened to c 6.50m; 1069TT and 1071TT were deepened to 2.00m.
- 3.3.3 Archaeological features were half-sectioned and large sample slots excavated across ditches. Environmental samples were taken from large feature fills and layers containing archaeological and colluvial material.

3.4 Recording

- 3.4.1 Recording was by the standard Museum of London single context recording system (MoLAS 1995, Archaeological Site Manual), but with modifications to adapt the system to the large area under evaluation. The trenches were excavated in two blocks; the southern area (Phase 1) being dug from east to west (beginning with 1063TT) and the northern area (Phase 2) being dug from west to east (beginning with 1083TT). The

various deposits that were encountered were numbered accordingly. Where a layer was judged to be the same in two or more trenches the same context number was used, if there was any doubt as to the equality of the layer a new context number was issued. In addition a trench sheet was completed for each trench, on the reverse of which a sketch plan was drawn with measurements and levels. Sample sections of the trench lengths were drawn on stable, gridded drawing film.

- 3.4.2 Where necessary plans were drawn at 1:20, sections/profiles drawn at 1:10, 1:20 and 1:50.
- 3.4.3 All trenches were levelled, each trench having a Temporary Bench Mark incorporated onto one of the survey marker pegs.
- 3.4.4 All trenches were photographed incorporating a scale, title board with the URL trench number and a north arrow. Individual features and sections were also photographed.

4 RESULTS: GENERAL

4.1 Iron Age pit

- 4.1.1 Even though the area adjacent to the London to Chatham railway line, at the very north of the site, had been severely truncated by modern ploughing, quarrying and the railway cutting, a large pit was recorded in 1081TT (Fig 3). It contained four fills, two of which held large amounts of burnt flint, charcoal, pottery, animal bones and daub. The primary fill consisted of dumped burnt material sealed by a secondary fill of chalk, possibly derived from side collapse suggesting the pit had been left open for a period of time. A third fill, very similar to the first, overlay the chalk and was then, itself, sealed by a backfill. Two fragments of burnt and vitrified ceramic, thought to have come from a hearth, were retrieved from the pit.
- 4.1.2 Trenches 1084TT and 1085TT are also located within this area but no archaeological remains were recorded due to truncation by modern ploughing which removed all layers above natural.

4.2 Dry valley and post-medieval farming, a road and terracing/grading

- 4.2.1 The dry valley, orientated broadly north-south, was recorded in trenches 1066TT-1071TT, 1082TT and 1083TT. Environmental and archaeological evidence suggests that it contained running water until relatively recently, probably until the 19th century, which may have entered the River Medway at the still extant creek to the south-west of the site.
- 4.2.2 Trenches 1063TT - 1080TT, 1084TT and 1085TT did not reveal any archaeological features or finds that dated to before the post-medieval period. A probable road was recorded in trenches 1070TT and 1077TT which was orientated roughly east-west. Field boundary ditches, aligned down the slope, were recorded in 1067TT and 1078TT.
- 4.2.3 Re-grading, dating from the 19th century, was noted in most trenches; modern squared pits were encountered in 1063TT and 1076TT.

5 TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS

Note: Due to the relative simplicity of the archaeology and the fact that the site does not readily break up into smaller parts it is clearer to treat the entire site as one single area and describe the archaeology under broad interpretative headings.

5.1 Sterile natural strata

Trenches 1063TT - 1071TT, 1073TT, 1076TT, 1077TT

- 5.1.1 The natural geology has been dealt with under section 1.2 above. Capping the natural blocked and weathered chalk [5] were a number of subsequent archaeologically sterile deposits. The most significant of these were the sands and silts laid down by the River Medway to the very south of the site. These sands and silts survived best in the area near where the dry valley originally entered the River Medway, around 1066TT. It is probable that the lower layers were laid down at the end of the last glaciation (*c* 12,000 - 10,000 BC) and all the layers appeared archaeologically sterile.
- 5.1.2 The most complete section (Fig 3) through this series of deposits was in the deepened trench 1066TT (a total of 5.40m deep). At the base of this section mid grey brown sandy silts [38] were mixed with a slumped degraded chalk [39] that was *c* 1.60m thick, with a top height of 0.60m OD. Overlying deposit [38]-[39] was a clean mid orange brown fine sand with silt [37], *c* 1.40m thick with a top height of *c* 2.00m OD. Above [37] was a lens of degraded chalk and flint nodules [36], 0.20m thick. Finally there was a layer of light orange brown sandy silt [4], which was *c* 2.40m deep, with a top height of 4.56m OD at the southern end of 1066TT.
- 5.1.3 A weathered chalk hillwash deposit [10] (0.15 - 0.20m deep) was recorded in 1064TT, 1065TT, 1066TT, 1067TT, 1069TT, 1073TT and 1077TT. This weathered deposit had accumulated at the base of the hill slope and probably relates to layer [36] or [39].
- 5.1.4 Layer [4] was recorded in the southern halves of 1063TT (5.40m OD - 9.25m OD), 1066TT (4.56 - 6.50m OD) and 1070TT (*c* 8.30m OD - 9.76m OD); in the middle of 1073TT (8.06m OD - where it subsequently fell away below the limit of excavation); and 1069TT (*c* 5.65m OD) and 1076TT (*c* 8.75m OD).
- 5.1.5 At the base of the hill, on the western side, there was a deposit of clean orange brown silt containing flint lenses [19] visible in 1069TT, 1073TT and 1076TT. This probably represents hillwash and formed a layer between 0.25m and 1.00m thick over the eroded surface of the alluvial silts [4]. In places the layer [19] was associated with water cut erosion gullies, such as cut [21] (filled with [20]) in 1076TT.
- 5.1.6 Colluvial layers [32] and [45], in the dry valley, survived in 1068TT, 1070TT, 1071TT, 1082TT and 1083TT. Layer [32] consisted of a series of colluvial lensing deposits of clean and sterile mid - light brown silt, light greyish white silt, mid - dark brown silt and occasional flint and chalk lenses. In the deepened eastern end of 1071TT this deposit was up to 1.40m deep. It overlay alluvial layer [4] in 1070TT. The monolith sample taken through the colluvium [32] deduced that the deposit accumulated over a long period of time. Water deposition infiltrating into a post-medieval road [29] in 1070TT implied that

the valley was still wet until relatively recent times. It is probable that the valley was infilled and its water source diverted with the construction of the railways in the 19th century. No finds were recovered from deposit [32].

5.2 Iron Age pit

- 5.2.1 A large roughly circular pit [40] was recorded in 1081TT (Fig 3) measuring *c* 2.00m in diameter and 1.00m deep. The pit contained four fills, two of which held large amounts of burnt flint (over 5kg), charcoal, some pottery, animal bones and daub. The pit had a primary burnt fill [44] of dark grey brown ashy silt (apparently not burnt in-situ), a secondary fill of chalk side collapse [43] suggesting the pit had been left open for a period of time, a third fill [42] very similar to the fill [44] and finally a lighter brown silt and chalk mix backfill [44].
- 5.2.2 Of the animal bones sampled from the fill, cattle were represented by elements from the head (teeth, mandible) and lower-limb (radius, ulna); sheep/goat were represented by elements from the head (mandible), upper (femur), and lower-limb (radius, tibia). Only one bone, a sheep/goat femur, showed clear butchery marks. There were no indications of gnawing. The bones were predominantly derived from adult animals, although unfused epiphyses indicate the presence of juvenile sheep/goat. There are no intact mandibular tooth-rows suitable for determination of age-at-death.
- 5.2.3 The fill was bulk sampled and the flot produced a small number of charred cereal grains; however, given the condition of this material, further identification of these grains was not possible. A large number of terrestrial snails were present but it is unlikely that this material can provide ecological information as the sample was recovered from an anthropogenic deposit rather than a natural feature.

5.3 Post-medieval farming activity

Trenches 1070TT, 1077TT, 1078TT, 1067TT, 1064TT, 1083TT

- 5.3.1 The earliest evidence for post-medieval activity was recorded in trench 1077TT (Fig 4) where a quarry pit was partially exposed. Its cut appeared rectilinear in shape (4.20m north to south by 0.5m east to west) with rounded corners and was originally at least 0.75m in depth (cut into the chalk). The fill was identical to layer [2] that sealed the pit, being a mid to light brown sandy silt with moderate angular chalk and flint pebbles, occasional animal bones, brick fragments and charcoal. It is presumed that the layer [2] was dumped to level up the area for the first phase of farming activity. Layer [2] appears in 1063TT, 1066TT, 1070TT (Fig 5) and 1077TT, grading the steeper slopes near the base of the hill.
- 5.3.2 A small, shallow, flat bottomed ditch [27] (0.60m wide x 0.30m deep), orientated north - south down the direction of slope, was recorded in 1078TT (Fig 6). The ditch was filled with a mid - light brown orange brown silt with moderate chalk flecks and occasional flint pebbles. The ditch cut chalk [5] and was sealed by topsoil [1] (0.30m thick).

- 5.3.3 A ditch [12] (1.15m wide x 0.40m deep), orientated north - south, was recorded following the direction of slope and in 1067TT (Fig 6). The sides of the ditch sloped at *c* 45° with a sharp break for a flat base. Fill [11] of ditch [12] was composed of a loosely compacted light brown slightly clayey silt containing moderate chalk flecks and occasional snail shells and small animal bone (five hare bones were recovered). It was overlain by up to 1.10m of relatively modern quarry waste [6], [7], [9] and 0.30m of topsoil.
- 5.3.4 Ditch [27] almost certainly represents a field boundary as all, or parts, of the bases of 1072TT, 1074TT, 1075TT, 1077TT - 1079TT contained natural chalk showing old plough strikes [14]. It also seem likely that ditch [12] represents a field boundary as plough strikes were revealed in 1065TT.
- 5.3.5 Tree boles were recorded in 1064TT (un-numbered), 1074TT (context [33]) and 1077TT (context [18]). These were all irregular in shape (roughly 1.40m x 1.00m x 0.20m deep). These tree boles had been truncated by deep plough action [14].
- 5.3.6 Limited remains of a buried plough soil [8] were recorded in the eastern half of 1064TT and the southern part of 1065TT. Deposit [8] was a mid to dark brown slightly clayey silt containing moderate chalk and charcoal, occasional slate, brick and pottery. It clearly overlay plough strikes in 1065TT and had been buried by up to 1.00m of relatively modern quarry waste [6], [7], [9] and 0.30m of topsoil [1].
- 5.3.7 A possible road was recorded, set in a cut, passing through 1070TT and 1077TT. It was orientated gently down the slope from west to east; the level was *c* 13.00m OD in 1077TT and *c* 10.50m OD in 1070TT. Where it passed through 1077TT there was only a cut [15], truncating the subsoil [2] to the south, with the northern end set into solid chalk. The cut [15] was *c* 4.00m wide and 0.50m deep at the northern end and was filled with a loosely compacted dark brown sandy silt [16] containing chalk flecks and flints (probably redeposited ploughsoil). Where the road cut the chalk for 1.50m north-south, it was not separately surfaced. As the road passed through the now dry valley, cut [28] was set into the dry valley colluvial deposit [32]. The cut was *c* 5.00m wide and 0.75m deep at the northern end. Its base was surfaced with a compact layer of medium sized flint nodules [29] set in a mid brown silt. Throughout the silt were white flecks which may indicate that water had frequently passed over the road, which implies the now dry valley was wet until relatively recently and may also account for the flint surfacing. The road, seen in 1070TT and 1077TT, did not appear to have been long in use as it was quite fresh and clean. It was sealed by up to 0.50m of quarry waste [6] and [9] which was capped by 0.30m of topsoil.

5.4 Infill of the valley, grading and quarry waste

Trenches 1063TT - 1073TT, 1077TT, 1082TT, 1083TT

- 5.4.1 The major event in the history of the site area appears to have been the cutting of the London to Chatham railway terrace and the opening up of the quarry pit to the north-east.
- 5.4.2 The area of 1063TT - 1067TT was re-graded which involved cutting into the chalk in some places (the northern parts of 1063TT, 1065TT and 1067TT) and raising the remaining areas. Material used to infill the valley and re-grade the hillside was composed of a mid - light brown silt containing frequent flint fragments (layer [7]) and a mid - light brown silt containing frequent chalk blocks (layer [9]) or smaller chalk fragments (layer [6]). In 1064TT, 1065TT and 1067TT the layers [6], [7] and [9] were intermixed and up to 1.10m deep. Within the dry valley, in 1071TT and 1083TT, layer [7] was up to 0.40m deep. Evidence of major terracing was recorded in 1082TT, with over 1.40m of mid reddish brown silts with large flint lenses [46] filling the valley. It is presumed that the material used in this re-grading is partly derived from upcast from the railway cutting and the quarry pit to the east.

5.5 Modern

- 5.5.1 Two square pits 2.00m wide and 1.35m deep were recorded, one in 1063TT and one in 1076TT. The fills of these cuts contained frogged bricks.
- 5.5.2 An augur borehole was recorded in 1077TT as being cut from directly beneath the topsoil. Although the borehole would have been cut through the topsoil, it was not possible to distinguish this from the surface.
- 5.5.3 Agricultural topsoil was visible in all trenches, generally 0.30m deep.

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVENTORIES

6.1 Table 1: Events dataset

EVENT NAME:Cuxton Anglo-Saxon Burial
EVENT CODE:ARC CXT 97
EVENT TYPE:Evaluation
CONTRACTOR:Museum of London Archaeology Service
DATE:17/4/97-28/4/97
GRID:51984/47349
PROJECT:CTRL
COUNTY:Kent
DISTRICT:Rochester upon Medway
PARISH:
SMR:
SITE_TYPE: Cultivated Land 3 - Operation to a depth >0.25m
PERIOD:Iron Age; Post-medieval
METHOD:Mechanical removal of topsoil; hand excavation and recording of archaeological features.
PHASING:One Iron Age pit; Post-medieval agricultural activity
ENVIRON:Fragmentary charred seeds from the Iron Age pit
FINDS:Pottery, building materials, flint, daub, animal bones mostly from Iron Age pit
GEOLOGY:Chalk
CONTEXT_NUM:46
THREAT: CTRL
SAMPLE:1%
SUMMARY:One large Iron Age pit at the northern and highest part of the site; the lower slopes showed evidence of the post-medieval field system (boundary ditches and ploughsoil) along with a possible post-medieval road.
ARCHIVE:
ACC_NUM:

6.2 Table 2: Archaeological context inventory*Key:*

PM Post-medieval

MLIA Mid to late Iron Age

TRENCH URL	CONTEXT	TYPE	PERIOD	ASSOC	COMMENTS
1063 - 1085TT	1	Deposit	Modern		Topsoil
1063TT	2	Deposit	PM		Grading
1065TT	2	Deposit	PM		Grading
1066TT	2	Deposit	PM		Grading
1069TT	2	Deposit	PM		Grading
1070TT	2	Deposit	PM		Grading
1077TT	2	Deposit	PM		Grading
1079TT	2	Deposit	PM		Grading
1082TT	2	Deposit	PM		Grading
1063TT	3	Deposit	PM		Grading
1063TT	4	Deposit	PM		Alluvium
1066TT	4	Deposit	PM		Alluvium
1069TT	4	Deposit	PM		Alluvium
1070TT	4	Deposit	PM		Alluvium
1073TT	4	Deposit	PM		Alluvium
1076TT	4	Deposit			Alluvium
1063TT	5	Deposit			Natural
1065TT	5	Deposit			Natural
1067TT	5	Deposit			Natural
1069TT	5	Deposit			Natural
1071TT	5	Deposit			Natural
1072TT	5	Deposit			Natural
1073TT	5	Deposit			Natural
1074TT	5	Deposit			Natural
1075TT	5	Deposit			Natural
1077TT	5	Deposit			Natural
1078TT	5	Deposit			Natural
1079TT	5	Deposit			Natural
1080TT	5	Deposit			Natural
1081TT	5	Deposit			Natural
1082TT	5	Deposit			Natural
1083TT	5	Deposit			Natural
1084TT	5	Deposit			Natural
1085TT	5	Deposit			Natural
1064TT	6	Deposit	PM		Grading
1065TT	6	Deposit	PM		Grading
1066TT	6	Deposit	PM		Grading
1073TT	6	Deposit	PM		Grading
1077TT	6	Deposit	PM		Grading
1064TT	7	Deposit	PM		Grading
1065TT	7	Deposit	PM		Grading
1066TT	7	Deposit	PM		Grading
1067TT	7	Deposit	PM		Grading
1071TT	7	Deposit	PM		Grading

TRENCH URL	CONTEXT	TYPE	PERIOD	ASSOC	COMMENTS
1072TT	7	Deposit	PM		Grading
1073TT	7	Deposit	PM		Grading
1083TT	7	Deposit	PM		Grading
1064TT	8	Deposit	PM		Ploughsoil
1065TT	8	Deposit	PM		Ploughsoil
1064TT	9	Deposit	PM		Colluvium
1065TT	9	Deposit	PM		Colluvium
1067TT	9	Deposit	PM		Colluvium
1070TT	9	Deposit	PM		Colluvium
1065TT	10	Deposit	PM		Chalk
1066TT	10	Deposit	PM		Chalk
1067TT	10	Deposit	PM		Chalk
1071TT	10	Deposit	PM		Chalk
1073TT	10	Deposit	PM		Chalk
1074TT	10	Deposit	PM		Chalk
1075TT	10	Deposit	PM		Chalk
1077TT	10	Deposit	PM		Chalk
1078TT	10	Deposit	PM		Chalk
1079TT	10	Deposit	PM		Chalk
1084TT	10	Deposit	PM		Chalk
1085TT	10	Deposit	PM		Chalk
1067TT	11	Deposit	PM	12	Ditch fill
1067TT	12	Cut	PM	11	Ditch
1071TT	13	Deposit			Layer
1072TT	14	Cuts	PM		Ploughmarks
1074TT	14	Cuts	PM		Ploughmarks
1075TT	14	Cuts	PM		Ploughmarks
1077TT	14	Cuts	PM		Ploughmarks
1078TT	14	Cuts	PM		Ploughmarks
1079TT	14	Cuts	PM		Ploughmarks
1083TT	14	Cuts	PM		Ploughmarks
1077TT	15	Cut	PM	16	Terrace
1077TT	16	Deposit	PM	15	Fill
1077TT	17	Cut	PM		Pit
1077TT	18	Cut	PM		Tree bole
1079TT	19	Deposit			Layer
1076TT	19	Deposit			Layer
1076TT	20	Deposit	PM	21	Fill
1076TT	21	Cut	PM	20	Gully
1076TT	22	Deposit	PM	23	Fill
1076TT	23	Cut	PM	22	Mod. Cut
1076TT	24	Deposit	PM		Grading
1073TT	25	Deposit			Hillwash
1078TT	26	Deposit	PM	27	Fill
1078TT	27	Cut	PM	26	Ditch
1070TT	28	Cut	PM	29	Terrace
1070TT	29	Deposit	PM	28	?Road
1070TT	30	Deposit	PM		Hillwash

1070TT	31	Cut	PM		Erosion cut
TRENCH URL	CONTEXT	TYPE	PERIOD	ASSOC	COMMENTS
1068TT	32	Deposit			Colluvium
1070TT	32	Deposit			Colluvium
1071TT	32	Deposit			Colluvium
1081TT	32	Deposit			Colluvium
1082TT	32	Deposit			Colluvium
1083TT	32	Deposit			Colluvium
1085TT	32	Deposit			Colluvium
1074TT	33	Cut	PM		Tree bole
1064TT	34	Cut	PM		Posthole
1078TT	35	Deposit			Hillwash
1066TT	36	Deposit			Hillwash
1066TT	37	Deposit			Alluvium
1066TT	38	Deposit			Layer
1066TT	39	Deposit			Layer
1081TT	40	Cut	MLIA	41 - 44	Pit
1081TT	41	Deposit		40	Fill #4
1081TT	42	Deposit	MLIA	40	Fill #3
1081TT	43	Deposit	MLIA	40	Fill #2
1081TT	44	Deposit	MLIA	40	Fill #1
1071TT	45	Deposit	?PM		Hillwash
1082TT	46	Cut	PM		Terrace

SECTION 2: STATEMENT OF IMPORTANCE

7 CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Extent of archaeological remains

Palaeolithic

- 7.1.1 Trenches 1066TT and 1069TT were deepened to expose chalk bedrock and expose a section through the alluvial deposits of the southern part of the site. The aim was to assess whether Palaeolithic deposits or buried peat survived in the area. The sections indicated that there is no survival in the immediate area.

Iron Age

- 7.1.2 The Iron Age occupation appears to have been limited to the area at the top of the hill.

Post-medieval

- 7.1.3 Evidence of the probably post-medieval field system survived in the area of 1063TT - 1079TT. There is evidence for three fields on the site, the central one being *c* 80m wide, the fields being ploughed (strikes were visible cutting the chalk) and bounded by ditches. The lower slopes of the hillside were graded with dumps.
- 7.1.4 A road set in a terrace cut was visible in 1070TT and 1077TT; a possible 240m length of this track may pass through the site (it is also possible that it has been truncated a short distance to the east of 1070TT).
- 7.1.5 The areas of 1063TT - 1073TT, 1077TT, 1082TT - 1083TT showed terracing, infilling and levelling.

7.2 Nature of archaeological remains

Palaeolithic

- 7.2.1 No Palaeolithic deposits appear to survive, although Prehistoric flint artefacts may occur redeposited in the waterlain sands along the southern limit of the site.

Iron Age

- 7.2.2 The Iron Age evidence was limited to a deep cut pit.

Post-medieval

- 7.2.3 The post-medieval remains were limited to two field boundary ditches (1067TT and 1078TT) indicating that at least three fields covered the lower area of the site; the field evidence being the truncated remains of some buried ploughsoil in 1064TT and 1065TT, and ploughstrikes in 1065TT, 1072TT, 1074TT, 1075TT, 1077TT, 1078TT and 1079TT.
- 7.2.4 A track/road passed through 1070TT and 1077TT, set in a terrace cut and surfaced with flints where it crossed the now dry valley in 1070TT. The flint surfacing only appeared in the area of the now dry valley, possibly indicating that the valley was often wet at this time.

- 7.2.5 Large-scale levelling and dumping of quarry waste was spread over the central and eastern parts of the site. It is probable that this material originated from the large quarry pit still extant to the east of the Cuxton phase 1 and 2 evaluation.

7.3 Character of the site

Palaeolithic

- 7.3.1 No surviving deposits.

Iron Age

- 7.3.2 Occupation on high ground where there is a panoramic view over a wide bend in the River Medway. The occupation was characterised by a single cut feature; the associated stratigraphy, if originally present, having been truncated by a combination of natural erosion and ploughing.

Post-medieval

- 7.3.3 Arable farmland following deforestation, bordering a trackway leading down to the River Medway and a shallow valley that appears to have often contained running surface water.
- 7.3.4 Re-grading and levelling by largescale dumping during the 19th century.

7.4 Date of occupation

Palaeolithic

- 7.4.1 No evidence for Palaeolithic occupation.

Iron Age

- 7.4.2 Pottery dates from the pit in 1081TT indicate occupation was of the Mid - Late Iron Age.

Post-medieval

- 7.4.3 Slate, pottery and brick fragments from the buried ploughsoil in 1065TT indicate a post-medieval date for the now buried ploughsoil, field system and road.

7.5 Environmental evidence

- 7.5.1 It was hoped that the alluvial silts bordering the River Medway would reveal evidence of palaeoenvironmental conditions, such as buried peat, but only clean river sands and silts were recorded. Environmental evidence from the Iron Age pit was generally good, the bones were in fair condition and some charred cereal seeds had survived. No samples were taken from the post-medieval deposits.

7.6 Truncation by ploughing and other activities

- 7.6.1 Most of the site has been truncated by post-medieval and modern ploughing. Where datable stratigraphy survives it is either post-medieval dumping (layer [2] in 1063TT, 1066TT, 1069TT, 1070TT, 1073TT and 1077TT); Post-medieval ploughsoil (layer [8] in 1064TT and 1065TT); or ?19th century dumping and infilling (layers [6], [7] and [9] in 1063TT - 1068TT, 1071TT, 1072TT, 1082TT, 1083TT). In 1074TT, 1075TT, 1076TT, 1078TT, 1079TT, 1080TT, 1081TT topsoil [1] physically overlay natural truncated chalk [5].

8 IMPORTANCE OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS

8.1 Survival/condition

Iron Age

- 8.1.1 The Iron Age was represented by a single large pit, sunk into the chalk on high ground to the north of the site. In this area there do not appear to be any deposits stratigraphically relating to Iron Age occupation. No Iron Age material was found in the colluvial layers further down the hillside and it seems that most of the evidence for Iron Age activity, with the exception of a few deep cut features, has been removed/truncated.
- 8.1.2 The Iron Age pit in 1081TT revealed significant amounts of burnt flint, a burnt river cobble (used for heating water), pottery, animal bones showing clear signs of butchery, daub and fragments of a hearth; the sample produced some un-identified cereal seeds. All this material shows that cultural/trade and palaeoenvironmental evidence does survive from the Iron Age within negative features.

Post-medieval

- 8.1.3 The post-medieval field system survives in the form of boundary ditches (two were found), small amounts of buried ploughsoil and plough strikes in the surface of the chalk geology.
- 8.1.4 The post-medieval road/trackway appears to survive quite well below a layer of dumping and topsoil to the west of the site. This road appeared to be in a fairly good condition; it did not exhibit signs of wear and use. No evidence for the road was found to the east of 1070TT and it may have been truncated by the 19th century re-grading.

8.2 Period

- 8.2.1 The Iron Age is represented by a single pit in 1081TT.
- 8.2.2 The post-medieval period is well represented by the dumping, field system and road. No exact dates can be assigned to these features due to a scarcity of datable pottery.
- 8.2.3 Recent, probably 19th - 20th century is well represented by largescale re-grading of the hillside and by a very large quarry pit.

8.3 Rarity

- 8.3.1 Iron Age sites have been rarely excavated in Kent and the period is in general poorly understood.
- 8.3.2 Evidence of post-medieval field systems is not uncommon in Kent.

8.4 Fragility / vulnerability

- 8.4.1 The evaluation has confirmed that there is evidence of Iron Age occupation along the south side of the London to Chatham railway, at the north end of the M2 Medway bridge. Unfortunately it seems that most of the archaeological resource has already been removed by hillwash, ploughing, quarrying, railway cutting and bridge building. The Iron Age archaeology survives in the form of a cut feature sealed by a maximum of 0.30m of topsoil so any ground disturbance is likely to remove these remains.

8.5 Diversity

- 8.5.1 There is no evidence for Palaeolithic deposits. One area in Phase 2, at the top of the hill in the north-east corner of the site revealed a large Iron Age pit.
- 8.5.2 The other parts of the site in both Phases 1 and 2 represent post-medieval farming and industrial activity.

8.6 Documentation

- 8.6.1 Documentary evidence states that an Anglo Saxon burial was discovered during the railway construction works in the 19th century. The reference appears to indicate that the body was found close to the Maidstone line that runs along an artificial embankment at the base of the hillside. No evidence of Saxon occupation was found on the site.

8.7 Group value

- 8.7.1 The Iron Age has not been well documented in Kent. It would appear that the proposed route of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link passes through a number of Iron Age - Early Roman sites which, if excavated, would reveal very useful information about this poorly recorded period.

8.8 Potential

- 8.8.1 Two trenches (1084TT and 1085TT) were added to the evaluation in order to further investigate the area around the Iron Age pit. No additional archaeological features were recorded, probably implying that the potential for further archaeological remains within the area of Cuxton Phases 1 and 2 are limited. It is possible that Iron Age or Saxon cut features may intrude into the area of Phase 2, in the extreme north-east corner of the site.

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APPENDIX 2

BUILDING MATERIALS

By Terence Paul Smith

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Building material from this site (ARC CXT97) consisted exclusively of fragments of daub, and that from only three contexts: [42], [43], and [44].

2 Fabrics

- 2.1 The daub from context [42] had a fine brown matrix with some sand; there were also some impressions of the straw used as a binder.
- 2.2 The daub from context [43] had a light brown, fairly sandy matrix; there were some impressions of straw and/or hay, used as a binder.
- 2.3 The daub from context [44] had a fairly 'lumpy' brown matrix with some calcium carbonate specks; there were impressions of the straw used as a binder.
- 2.4 Daub could be formed from numerous local superficial geological deposits, the basic material mixed with straw or hay, either direct or in the form of manure from farm animals. The daub from this site is almost certainly of local provenance.

3 Absence of wattle or timber impressions

- 3.1 No impressions of wattle or timbers were preserved in these small fragments.

4 Contexts and dating

- 4.1 The daub in contexts [42] and [44] was associated with pottery of the Mid - Late Iron Age; no pottery was associated with that from context [43]. All the daub may be of Iron Age date, although the material has been used for walling in all periods from the prehistoric to the present.

5 Assessment of Potential

- 5.1 These tiny fragments have little potential for increasing knowledge; they are almost certainly of local provenance.

6 Table 5: Bulk dataset, daub

Key:

PM Post-medieval

MLIA Mid to late Iron Age

TRENCH	CONTEXT	COUNT	WEIGHT	COMMENTS
1081TT	42	3	16	possibly MLIA
1081TT	43	1	4	possibly MLIA
1081TT	44	2	14	possibly MLIA

APPENDIX 3

ANIMAL BONES

By Alan Pipe

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The condition of the bone, which relates directly to the potential value of the assemblage for further study, was described using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 corresponds to bone in excellent condition with no surface damage, and 5 describes bone with sufficient surface erosion to prevent identification of species, skeletal element, butchery marks, fusion lines, and measurement points.
- 1.2 The bones were identified in terms of species and skeletal element ('bone') using MoLAS reference collections. When accurate identification was impossible due to excessive erosion and fragmentation, material was assigned to the approximate categories 'cattle-sized mammal', 'sheep-sized mammal', unidentified mammal, and long-bone fragment.

2 Results

- 2.1 The condition of the bone was poor to moderate with sufficient surface erosion to obscure the majority of surface detail, butchery marks, and measurement points. There was negligible inter-context variation in terms of condition; using the scale of 1 (excellent) to 5 (very poor), this material is predominantly in the 3-4 range.
- 2.2 The bones were moderately fragmented; with approximately 75% of the material in the 25-75mm size range. Much of the remainder of the material is smaller than <25mm; only a cow radius, and a hare tibia were longer than 75mm.
- 2.3 There was a total of 46 fragments/0.38 kg of bone; only 14 of these were identifiable to species. The species represented are cattle (4 fragments), sheep/goat (5 fragments), and hare (5 fragments); however, the majority of the fragments were allocated to the 'cattle-sized mammal', 'sheep-sized mammal', and unidentifiable mammal long-bone fragments.
- 2.4 Cattle were recovered only from [42], and are represented by elements from the head (teeth, mandible), and lower-limb (radius, ulna); sheep/goat were recovered from [42], and [44] and are represented by elements from the head (mandible), upper (femur), and lower-limb (radius, tibia); hare occurred in [1067] represented by upper-limb (femur), lower-limb (tibia, calcaneum), and feet (metapodials).
- 2.5 Only one bone, a sheep/goat femur from context [44], showed clear butchery marks. There were no indications of gnawing. A complete, measurable cattle radius was recovered from [42]; a small proportion of the sheep/goat bones were measurable. Hare tibia, calcaneum, and metacarpals were all measurable.

- 2.6 The bones were predominantly derived from adult animals, although unfused epiphyses indicate the presence of juvenile sheep/goat in [42], and [44]. There are no intact mandibular tooth-rows suitable for determination of age-at-death.

3 Summary

- 3.1 The small size and poor preservation state of this bone group indicate only limited potential of this material for further analysis. The recovery of mainly robust material from the larger domestic mammals may reflect the poor preservation rather than the real absence of more fragile species.

4 Table 6: Bulk dataset, animal bone

Key:

PM Post-medieval

MLIA Mid to late Iron Age

TRENCH	CONTEXT	COUNT	WEIGHT	COMMENTS
	11	11	14	Hare bones from Ditch [12]
	42	15	270	possibly MLIA
	44	20	100	possibly MLIAe

APPENDIX 5**FLINT***By Jonathan Cotton***1 Summary**

- 1.1 Eighty five pieces of flint were collected of which all but two are unworked burnt pieces.
- 1.2 The worked flint consists of two pieces of patinated bladelets, one broken and the other with traces of marginal damage.
- 1.3 This collection does not warrant any further work.

2 Table 9: Bulk dataset, flint

TRENCH	CONTEXT	MATERIAL	COUNT	WEIGHT	COMMENTS
1064TT, 1065TT	8	FLINT	1	22	Burnt. 1064TT - PM ploughsoil
1064TT, 1065TT	8	FLINT	2	3	1064TT - PM ploughsoil
1081TT	41	FLINT	14	700	possibly Mid - Late Iron Age
1081TT	42	FLINT	34	3160	possibly Mid - Late Iron Age
1081TT	44	FLINT	33	3600	possibly Mid - Late Iron Age

APPENDIX 6**SEDIMENTARY SAMPLES***By Graham Spurr with Dr Peter Allen***1 Introduction**

- 1.1 Two monolith tin samples were taken from a stratigraphic section exposed of trench 1071TT. The aim of the stratigraphic sampling was to provide a more detailed analysis of the different sedimentary units present in order reconstruct the nature of the palaeo-environmental conditions influencing their deposition and the site as a whole.

2 Methods

- 2.1 Monolith tins were placed vertically into the side of trench 1071TT in a staggered, overlapping fashion to retrieve continuous stratigraphic samples. The number of tins used was dependent upon the depth and/or significance of the stratigraphic sequence and the suitability of the stratigraphy for sampling. Each monolith tin was plotted on the section drawing of the relevant trial pit and related to Ordnance Datum (OD) by the supervising archaeologist. The monolith tins were then sealed and transported to the MoLAS Environmental laboratories. Once at the laboratories the monolith tins were described to standard sedimentary criteria (e.g. Gale and Hoare, 1991).

3 Results

- 3.1 The results of the sedimentary analysis of monoliths taken from 1071TT are as follows (from basal units upward):

3.2 Table 10: Monoliths from 1071TT

ARC CXT 97		
SEDIMENTARY UNIT	O.D. Height	DESCRIPTION
A	13.96m to 14.4m	5YR 4/4 Reddish brown silt dominated loam, unconsolidated at top (8-10cm) becoming compact below; numerous clasts randomly throughout including; subrounded to angular chalk fragments (increasing towards base of unit, flints and other iron nodules (sand based). Very occasional mollusc and some fine roots evident toward base. Very poorly sorted.
B	13.5m to 13.96m	10YR 7/4 Soft, weathered and fragmented chalk stained pale brown with subangular flint fragments (5-20mm) throughout. Sample terminated at base of trench.

4 Interpretation

- 4.1 Monolith tin sampling coupled with field observation indicate that a weathered chalk surface (Unit B) at the base of the trench, which represents the surface of a dry valley, formed, probably through solifluction or meltwaters, in a periglacial environment. This has been infilled with the poorly sorted colluvial material (Unit A) eroded off the slopes above and on the side of the valley. Field observations of the stratigraphy above the units sampled - which was unsampled by monolith tins because of its loose and flinty nature - indicates the colluvial and dumped infill of the dry valley was exacerbated by farming practices locally.

APPENDIX 1**POTTERY***By John Cotton & Roy Stephenson***1 Introduction**

- 1.1 The evaluation produced 11 sherds (111g) of prehistoric and post-medieval date. The sherds are in good condition; the average sherd weight is 10g. The pottery was examined using a x20 binocular microscope and recorded using standard MoLAS codes on pro-forma sheets. Quantification of the material was by sherd count and weight. Pottery was recorded from four contexts.

2 Fabric

- 2.1 The prehistoric sherds have been defined on the basis of their main inclusions, and were not divided into defined fabric types. The post-medieval fabrics are assigned to known wares.

2.2 Fabric groups**Prehistoric**

Glaucanite-tempered fabric, 1 sherd, 6g.

Mixed inclusions, comprising mainly sand and calcareous matter (shelly-limestone) with quartz, flint and possible calcite; some glauconite and organic matter are also present in some sherds, 8 sherds, 49g.

Post-Medieval

Post-med redware, 1 sherd, 4g

Pearlware, 1 sherd, 4g.

3 Forms

- 3.1 Four prehistoric sherds are from context 42, and five from context 44. The former include a plain rim sherd, one sherd with a lightly rusticated surface and one burnished sherd, which joins with another from context 44. Context 44 also includes a sherd with dimpled decoration. The post-medieval forms are a mug (PEAR) and a flower pot (PMR).

4 Chronology

- 4.1 For the prehistoric assemblage it is difficult to be precise on the basis of such a small sample but the lightly rusticated sherd and that with dimpled decoration suggest a date between 550 to 350/300 BC (Early to Mid-Iron Age). The post-medieval assemblage dates to 1800-1900.

5 General Comments

- 5.1 The prehistoric assemblage, although small is consistent with our current understanding of early - mid Iron Age pottery for this region. The surface treatment and decoration techniques seen on these sherds are known from other assemblages in Kent (Macpherson Grant 1980).

6 Assessment of potential and further work

- 6.1 The recovery of further material would greatly aid the interpretation of this site. The distribution of lightly rusticated wares and the dating of early-mid Iron Age pottery in this region requires further refinement and this assemblage could contribute to such work. Detailed comparison with assemblages from sites within the surrounding region is necessary to establish their exact date and cultural affinities and to determine appropriate fabric codes.
- 6.2 No further work is required on the post-medieval material.

7 Table 3: Bulk dataset, pottery

TRENCH	CONTEXT	MATERIAL	COUNT	WEIGHT	COMMENTS
1063TT-1085TT	1	Pot	1	4	PM 1800-1900
1064TT, 1065TT	8	Pot	1	4	PM 1800-1900
1081TT	42	Pot	4	54	Early -mid Iron Age
1081TT	44	Pot	5	49	Early - mid Iron Age

8 Pottery Small Finds

By Jackie Keily, with Angela Wardle

8.1 Quantification

- 8.1.1 Only one small find came from this site. Details of the it are given in the table below. It consists of two fragments of burnt and vitrified ceramic, thought to have come from a hearth. Context [44] included pottery sherds of possibly Early to Mid Iron Age.

8.2 Table 4: Finds dataset

TRENCH	CONTEXT	SPECIAL NO.	MATERIAL	OBJECT
1081TT	44	1	Ceramic	Hearth

8.3 Storage and curation

- 8.3.1 There are no particular storage or curation requirements for this find.

8.4 Further work

- 8.4.1 No further work is required.

9 Bibliography

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APPENDIX 4

1.1.1.1 PLANT REMAINS

By John Giorgi

1.1.1.1.1 Introduction

1.1.1.1.1.1 One 20 litre bulk sample was taken from this site for the recovery of charred plant remains; from a pitfill [41](sample <1>) cut into chalk and dated to the Iron Age.

1.1.1.1.1.2 The purpose of the assessment was to evaluate the quality of preservation and the abundance and diversity of the charred plant remains in the sample. On the basis of the results, recommendations for the analysis of the botanical remains are presented, and in the event of further excavations, the potential for further sampling at the site.

1.1.1.1.2 Methods

1.1.1.1.2.1 This sample was processed in a flotation tank and the flot recovered on a 0.25 mm mesh. The residue, retained on a 1mm sieve, was dried and sorted for biological and artefactual remains.

1.1.1.1.2.2 The dried flot was scanned under a binocular microscope. Modes of preservation, abundance and diversity of organic remains were noted. The results are summarised in figure 1. Abundance was recorded as follows : + = 1-10 items, ++ = 11-100 items, +++ = >100 items.

1.1.1.1.3 Result

1.1.1.1.3.1 *Iron Age Pitfill [41] (sample <1>, flot vol. 25ml.):* A small quantity of charred plant remains were present, which included poorly preserved cereal grain fragments and occasional seeds of wild plants. Small charcoal fragments and large numbers of terrestrial molluscs were also noted.

1.1.1.1.3.2 Table 7: Summary of organic remains in the flots

Sample	1
CHARRED PLANT REMAINS	
Grain	+
Seeds	+
Charcoal	++
MOLLUSCS	+++

1.1.1.1.4 Statement of Potential

1.1.1.1.4.1 The flot produced a small number of charred cereal grains; however, given the condition of this material, it is likely that very few of these grains can be identified further. A large number of terrestrial snails were present but it is unlikely that this material can provide ecological information as the sample was recovered from an anthropogenic deposit rather than a natural feature. On the basis of the low abundance and poor condition of the charred plant remains, it is recommended that no further work on this flot should be carried out. However, given the presence of charred plant remains, albeit limited and fragmentary, it is advised that bulk sampling of features should take place in the event of further excavations at the site because of the limited archaeobotanical evidence from this period and area of north Kent.

1.1.1.1.4.2 Table 8: Environmental Dataset, Plant Remains

TRENCH	CONTEXT	SAMPLE_NUM	METHOD	SUMMARY	COMMENTS
1081TT	41	1	Flotation (0.25mm sieve)	uncharred seeds+; charred seeds +; charred grain+; charcoal+++; molluscs+++	poor, no further work needed on flots

Phase 3

limit of excavation
limit of excavation
limit of excavation
limit of excavation
limit of excavation
limit of excavation
limit of excavation
limit of excavation
limit of excavation
limit of excavation
limit of excavation

Fig 2 Trench location plan (ARC CXT97)

Fig 3 North-east facing section of pit [40] *1081TT* (NW SE)

[1] [5] cut [40] [41] [42] [43] [44] section

Fig 3

North-east facing section of *1066TT*.

River Medway deposits from the end of the last glaciation

Fig 4 North-east facing section of stratigraphy
around terracing [15] and pit [17] *1077TT*

[1] [2] [6] [6] [14] [14] [14] cut [15] [16] [10] [10] [5]
cut [17]

Fig 5 North-east facing section of stratigraphy
around terracing [28] and gravelled road [29] *1070TT*

[1] [2] [30] [9] [29] terrace [28] [30] cut [31] [32] [4]
[1] [2] [4] [36] [37] [38] [39]

Fig 6 South-east facing section of ditch [27] *1078TT*

cut [27] 26 [1] [10] [35]

Fig 6 North-west facing section of ditch [12] *1067TT*

cut [12] [11] [10] [9]