

Wessex Archaeology

A303 Stonehenge Archaeological Surveys

Archaeological Evaluation Report
Drainage Treatment Areas 2 and 6t

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**A303 STONEHENGE
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEYS**

**Archaeological Evaluation Report
Drainage Treatment Areas 2 and 6**

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A303 STONEHENGE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEYS

Archaeological Evaluation Report Drainage Treatment Areas 2 and 6

SUMMARY

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by the Balfour Beatty/Costain Joint Venture to undertake further archaeological evaluation along the published route of the A303 Stonehenge Improvements in Wiltshire. This document presents the results of the archaeological evaluation of Drainage Treatment Areas (DTAs) 2 and 6, located as follows:

| <u>DTA</u> | <u>Location</u> | <u>NGR</u> | <u>Appraisal Area</u> |
|------------|---|------------|-----------------------|
| DTA 2 | North of Winterbourne Stoke, west of River Till | SU 077415 | Area G |
| DTA 6 | North of A303, west of Countess Farm, Amesbury | SU 151421 | Area V |

Evidence from aerial photographs indicated that DTA 2 lay at the extreme eastern extent of a multi-period field system north-west of Winterbourne Stoke. Previous evaluation in the vicinity had identified Iron Age settlement evidence close by (Area 3). DTA 6 lay on the lower slopes of the valley side at the back of the higher floodplain of the River Avon. A single findspot of an Early Anglo-Saxon brooch was known from the site.

The evaluation of DTA 2 revealed no archaeological features. There were no remains or deposits that could relate to the Iron Age occupation evidence seen in evaluation of Area 2 close by. A possible ploughed-out lynchet could be the result of a variation in the geology. In DTA 6, a former river terrace defining the back of a former floodplain of the River Avon was revealed. Calcareous alluvial clays of possible post-Glacial date were recorded on the edge of the former floodplain. On the terrace edge, a relict brown forest soil of post-Glacial/Holocene date some 0.47m thick contained a near-*in situ* flint scatter of Late Mesolithic/Early Neolithic date. Extensive colluvial sequences were also recorded across DTA 6. Two broadly contemporary gullies appear to be related to land division and/or drainage; single fragments of medieval pottery and roof tile were recovered from one of the gullies.

The preserved forest soil and associated flint scatter are rare survivals and are unprecedented within the WHS; a preliminary assessment of importance indicates that this deposit is Moderately Important. The other archaeological features and the colluvial and alluvial sequences recorded in DTA 6 are of Minor Importance.

The evaluation demonstrated a poor correlation between geophysical anomalies and archaeological features. However, this is consistent with the results of trial trenching elsewhere along the A303 route corridor and it is considered that a reasonable reliance may be placed on the geophysical survey as a means of predicting substantial archaeological remains. It is considered unlikely that substantial archaeological

remains have been missed, although further small features are likely to occur. There is also some potential for features to be buried beneath the alluvial and colluvial sequences encountered within DTA 6; the survival of the forest soil demonstrates the potential for such remains to survive, both within DTA 6 and elsewhere along the published route, in topographically favourable locations. Nevertheless, a reasonable degree of confidence may be attached to the results of the evaluation of DTAs 2 and 6.

The survival of a forest soil with an associated near-*in situ* flint assemblage is unprecedented within the WHS and the deposit offers good potential for the survival of palaeo-environmental evidence. It is recommended that samples from monoliths recovered from test pit 3C should be assessed for pollen survival at this stage, in order to confirm the potential of the deposit. The results of the pollen assessment should be published, either independently or as part of an extended programme of analysis in the event that further archaeological investigation is required as part of the mitigation strategy for DTA 6. Further analysis of soil micromorphology and chemistry should also be considered.

**A303 STONEHENGE
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEYS**

**Archaeological Evaluation Report
Drainage Treatment Areas 2 and 6**

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The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Chris Moore. The evaluation was directed in the field by Vaughan Birbeck. This report was prepared by Chris Moore with the assistance of Angela Batt, Michael J. Allen (environmental evidence) and Lorraine Mephram (finds). The illustrations were prepared by Mark Roughley.

A303 STONEHENGE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEYS

Archaeological Evaluation Report Drainage Treatment Areas 2 and 6

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by the Balfour Beatty/Costain Joint Venture on behalf of the Highways Agency to undertake further archaeological evaluation of the published route of the A303 Stonehenge Improvement in Wiltshire.
- 1.1.2 A series of archaeological surveys including fieldwalking, geophysical survey and trial trenching has been undertaken previously during Stages 1 and 2 of the scheme. Further field evaluation of two proposed Drainage Treatment Areas (DTAs) was required in order to inform the development of a mitigation strategy. This document sets out the project background, results and conclusions of the further archaeological evaluation of DTAs 2 and 6, located to the north of Winterbourne Stoke and to the west of Countess Farm, Amesbury respectively (**Figures 1 and 2**).
- 1.1.3 An overall Field Evaluation Strategy (Wessex Archaeology 2001a) sets out the background and principles for the evaluation programme. Archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with this and a site specific Written Scheme of Investigation (Wessex Archaeology 2003a).
- 1.1.4 Fieldwork was undertaken between 15th and 19th of September 2003.

1.2 Site Description

- 1.2.1 DTA 2 (**Figure 1**) lies in Appraisal Area G in scheme field no. 43, located to the north of Winterbourne Stoke and west of the River Till (NGR SU 077415). The land here occupies a south-east facing valley side at *c.* 80m aOD and was laid to pasture at the time of the evaluation.
- 1.2.2 DTA 6 (**Figure 2**) comprises part of the Appraisal Area V in scheme field no 121, located on the north side of the A303, west of Countess Farm, Amesbury (NGR SU 151421). The land here occupies gently sloping ground on a south-facing dry valley at *c.* 70m aOD to *c.* 71m aOD, and was in use as a horse paddock at the time of evaluation.
- 1.2.3 The DTAs contain no Scheduled Monuments. DTA2 lies outside the Stonehenge World Heritage Site (WHS); DTA 6 lies within it. Adjacent to DTA 6, the buildings of Countess Farm include five Grade II listed structures (Amesbury 6/32-36).
- 1.2.4 The underlying geology comprises Middle Chalk.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The general archaeological background to DTAs 2 and 6 is described in the A303 Stonehenge Archaeological Appraisal (Mott MacDonald/Wessex Archaeology 2001, Areas G and V) and is not repeated here.

2.1.2 Both DTAs have been the subject of previous geophysical survey, together with a review of aerial photographic (AP) evidence. DTA 2 has also been subject to fieldwalking survey and trial trenching has been undertaken previously in adjacent parts of the road design here (Area 3). Geotechnical test pits in the vicinity of the DTAs were also subject to archaeological investigation. This section summarises the results of these previous surveys.

2.2 Archaeological Appraisal

2.2.1 The Archaeological Appraisal identified two sites in Areas G and V, within the vicinity of DTAs 2 and 6.

- Site 10, part of an undated field system, probably, extending across Parsonage Down and eastwards in to Areas G; this site does not appear to extend into DTA 2
- Site 1062, the findspot of an Early Anglo-Saxon brooch in Area V, field 121 (within DTA 6).

2.2.2 Although Monument Interest Values (Blore *et al.* 1995) calculated for Site 10 indicated that the field system as a whole is of Moderate Importance, the components of the field system potentially affected by the road scheme are considered to be of Minor Importance (Wessex Archaeology 2002a). Site 1062, as a single findspot, was given a score of 0 (Not Important) (Blore *et al.* 1995).

2.3 Previous Surveys

2.3.1 Geophysical survey of the southern part of DTA 2 (GSB 1999) identified only weaker trends and pit type anomalies. In DTA 6 (GSB 2003), a linear feature, presumably a field boundary, bisects Field 121 from north to south; a second possible field boundary is recorded perpendicular to this in the north of the surveyed area. A series of pit-type anomalies are also recorded in DTA 6, together with extensive magnetic disturbances in the eastern part of Field 121.

2.3.2 Fieldwalking of DTA 2 recovered a low level of material with no significant concentrations of artefacts (Wessex Archaeology 2000). No fieldwalking has been undertaken over DTA 6.

2.3.3 A re-examination of the aerial photographic evidence (by English Heritage in 2000/1) did not identify any additional sites in either DTA.

- 2.3.4 Geotechnical test pitting close to DTA 2 (Wessex Archaeology 2002b, TP 33) and DTA 6 (Wessex Archaeology 2003b, TP 190, 196) located no archaeological features or finds.
- 2.3.5 Previous trial trenching in Area G (Wessex Archaeology 2003c, Area 3) recovered Iron Age finds from a pit and tree throw north of Manor Farm in Area 3, together with an undated boundary ditch, less than 100m to the south-west of DTA 2. These finds may indicate settlement-related activity on the gentle south-facing slope above the floodplain here. No previous trial trenching has been undertaken in or close to DTA 6.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Trenching Strategy

3.1.1 A total of 7 trial trenches was proposed in the WSI, as follows:

| DTA | Appraisal Area | Survey area (ha) | Proposed no. of trenches | | | Proposed trench area (sq. m) | % sample |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------------|--------|-------|------------------------------|--------------|
| | | | 30x1.8m | 50x1.8 | 10x5m | | |
| 2 | G | 0.33 | 2 | | | 108 | 3.3% |
| 6 | V | 1.2 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 374 | 3.1% |
| TOTALS | | 1.53 | 7 | | | 482 | 3.15% |

3.2 Aims and Objectives

3.2.1 The general aims and objectives of the field evaluation survey were set out in the *Field Evaluation Strategy* (Wessex Archaeology 2001a). Site-specific objectives were set out in the *Written Scheme of Investigation* (Wessex Archaeology 2003a). These were (within the limits of the specified techniques and trench disposition):

- To confirm the nature of the geophysical anomalies, where targeted.
- To confirm the presence or absence of archaeological remains in areas not subject to the geophysical survey (DTA 2);
- To identify if present any evidence of settlement activity of Iron Age date suggested by the previous trial trenching (DTA 2); and
- To assess the degree of preservation of remains across the specified survey areas.

3.2.2 In addition to these general aims and objectives, a number of trench specific objectives were identified, relating to the investigation of particular geophysical anomalies identified in previous work. These objectives are reviewed in section 5 below.

4 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

4.1 Mechanical Excavation

- 4.1.1 All trenches were marked out on the ground and scanned using a Cable Avoidance Tool prior to the commencement of work.
- 4.1.2 Topsoil and overburden were removed using a JCB backhoe loader fitted with a toothless bucket, working under the constant direct supervision of a suitably experienced archaeologist.
- 4.1.3 The topsoil and overburden were removed in a series of spits down to the top of the first significant archaeological horizon.
- 4.1.4 Following completion of archaeological recording and inspection by external monitors, all trenches were carefully backfilled in a series of machine-consolidated spits.

4.2 Hand Excavation

- 4.2.1 All features of whatever origin requiring clarification were cleaned by hand and recorded in plan at an appropriate scale. Sufficient of the features located were investigated by hand in order to fulfil the aims of the project. In general, all features thought likely to be of archaeological origin were excavated. Where features were thought to be of natural origin, this was confirmed by the excavation and recording of one or two examples in each trench, as appropriate.
- 4.2.2 Care was taken not to compromise the integrity of archaeological features or deposits that might be better excavated under the conditions pertaining to full excavation.

4.3 Recording

- 4.3.1 All archaeological features and deposits encountered during the evaluation were recorded by Wessex Archaeology using *pro forma* recording sheets and a continuous unique numbering system.
- 4.3.2 A plan at an appropriate scale was prepared, showing the areas investigated and their relation to more permanent topographical features.
- 4.3.3 A representative section of each trial trench was recorded at an appropriate scale.
- 4.3.4 Other plans, sections and elevations of archaeological features and deposits were drawn as necessary at 1:10, 1:20 and 1:50 as appropriate. Drawings were made in pencil on permanent drafting film.
- 4.3.5 The spot height of all principal features and levels were calculated in metres relative to Ordnance Datum, correct to two decimal places.

- 4.3.6 A full photographic record was created using both monochrome prints and colour transparencies.
- 4.3.7 An environmental sampling strategy was developed during the course of the project. This broadly followed best practice developed by Wessex Archaeology during the Stonehenge Environs Project and was adopted throughout the Stage 1 evaluations. The strategy also took into account English Heritage's *Guidelines for Environmental Archaeology* (2002) and the recommendations contained in *Environmental archaeology and archaeological evaluations* (Association for Environmental Archaeology 1995).
- 4.3.8 The project archive was prepared in accordance with procedures outlined in *Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections* (Museum and Galleries Commission, 1992) and in accordance with the requirements of the Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum, who were consulted by Wessex Archaeology prior to commencement of the investigation.

5 RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 This section presents a summary of the principal archaeological features and deposits investigated. The objectives leading to the initial positioning of each trench or group of trenches are also reviewed.
- 5.1.2 A catalogue of the features and deposits found in each trench is presented in **Appendix 1** and detailed descriptions are available in the project archive.

5.2 DTA 2 (Figure 1)

Trenches 1-2

- 5.2.1 Trench 1 was positioned to investigate the nature of any activity in the northern part of DTA 2, which was not subject to geophysical survey. Trench 2 was positioned to investigate weak linear anomalies and pit-type anomalies located by the geophysical survey in the southern part of DTA 2.
- 5.2.2 A change in the geology within Trench 1 could be the remains of a remnant positive lynchet (not shown on Figure 1); no definite archaeological features were revealed. In Trench 2 no archaeological features were noted.

5.3 DTA 6 (Figure 2)

- 5.3.1 Trenches 3-7 were all positioned to investigate linear and pit-type anomalies seen in the geophysical survey.
- 5.3.2 The site of DTA 6 slopes gently southwards towards the river and a series of subtle, yet distinct benches or 'terrace edges' could be discerned in the field surface; these relate to the palaeo-topography and sedimentary sequence

revealed in the trenches. A broad former river terrace edge, extending roughly east-west across DTA 6 and defining the back edge of the former floodplain of the Avon, was revealed in Trenches 3 and 7; Trenches 4 and 6 lay on this terrace, while Trench 5 lay off the terrace edge, within the floodplain (**Figure 2**).

Trench 3

- 5.3.3 Situated towards the western limits of DTA 6, Trench 3 was orientated approximately north-west to south-east across the terrace edge, which was revealed as Coombe deposits of degraded chalk in the northern half of the trench. These were overlain by a silty brown forest soil up to 0.5m thick (**302-4**), which in turn lay below stony colluvium (**301, 315**) (**Figure 3, Section 1**). The pit-type anomalies seen in the geophysical survey could not be identified within the trench.
- 5.3.4 A highly localised worked flint scatter of Late Mesolithic or Early Neolithic date was identified within the forest soil. A series of four 1m² hand dug test pits, numbered 3A-D from north to south, was excavated through this soil to establish the northern and southern limits of the flint scatter. The test pits (**Figure 2, A-D**) were excavated in 150mm spits in order to record a vertical profile of the flint scatter.
- 5.3.5 The flint scatter was found to be confined predominantly within the relict soil just off the terrace edge (test pits 3B, 3C and 3D); it did not extend onto the terrace edge itself (test pit 3A). Worked and burnt flint was recovered throughout the thickness of the soil, although greater numbers of worked flint were present within the uppermost spits, notably in test pit 3C; worked flint was also recovered from overlying and underlying colluvial layers. The flint assemblage was in good condition, suggesting little post-depositional movement.

Trench 4

- 5.3.6 Trench 4 was situated in the northern part of DTA 6, on the terrace edge. Isolated pockets of silty brown forest soil were recorded, lying within natural hollows in the terrace geology; these may explain the pit-type anomalies seen on the geophysical survey. No archaeological features were found and a linear anomaly seen in the geophysical survey could not be identified within the trench.

Trench 5

- 5.3.7 Trench 5 was situated towards the southern limits of DTA 6, south of the terrace edge. It contained a colluvial sequence over 1m deep, overlying calcareous alluvial clays (**Figure 3, Section 2**). A single natural feature, **506**, was recorded. A linear anomaly seen in the geophysical survey could not be identified within the trench.

Trench 6

- 5.3.8 Trench 6 was situated on the terrace in the north-eastern part of DTA 6. A pit (**605**) of modern date was cut through the subsoil. A gully (**607**), possibly a boundary or drainage ditch, was also recorded on a roughly north-west to south-east alignment (**Figure 3, Section 3**). A single sherd of abraded medieval (12th-13th century) pottery and a piece of medieval roof tile were recovered from the fill. The gully was not detected by the geophysical survey.

Trench 7

- 5.3.9 Trench 7 was situated in the eastern part of DTA 6, across the terrace edge. In the northern part of the trench, on the terrace edge, gully **704** was orientated roughly east-west and cut the end of north-west to south-east orientated gully **705**, assumed to be a continuation of gully **607**; these are probably contemporary boundary or drainage features. Neither gully was definitely detected by the geophysical survey; a weak east-west linear trend may relate to the terrace edge.
- 5.3.10 In the southern part of the trench, the terrace edge dipped away and a colluvial sequence over 1m deep was revealed. Colluvial layer **702**, which produced a number of finds including a blade core of likely Bronze Age date, medieval (12th-13th century) pottery, and animal bone, extended over the whole trench, sealing the features on the terrace edge (**Figure 3, Section 4**).

6 FINDS

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 A small quantity of finds was recovered during the evaluation, from six of the seven trenches excavated. No finds were recovered from Trench 1, and only one worked flint from Trench 2 (DTA 2) – all other finds came from trenches within DTA 6 (Trenches 3-7). These have been quantified by material type within each context (**Table 1** below). The assemblage includes a small but significant group of early prehistoric (Mesolithic/Neolithic) worked flint deriving from a preserved forest soil in Trench 3; other datable material is restricted to very small quantities of medieval and post-medieval artefacts (pottery, ceramic building material (CBM), metalwork).

6.2 Worked and Burnt Flint

- 6.2.1 The lithic assemblage was concentrated within Trench 3, deriving largely from three test pits (3B, 3C and 3D: contexts **302-4, 306-8, 311**) dug through a preserved forest soil, but also from overlying layers (**300, 301**) and from underlying subsoil (**305, 310**). This group of worked flint appears to be largely consistent in its morphological and technological characteristics (with the exception of topsoil **300** and underlying layer **301**), and can be dated as

Late Mesolithic or early Neolithic. The group includes a significant blade component, including blade cores, as well as one failed microlith and a possible piece of axe debitage. The condition of this material is good, with little or no edge damage; patination is light or absent.

| DTA | Tr. | Context | Burnt Flint | CBM | Flint | Pottery | Other Finds |
|---------------|-----|---------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|------------|---|
| 2 | 2 | 200 | | | 1/6 | | |
| 6 | 3 | 300 | | | 13/334 | | |
| 6 | 3 | 301 | 4/104 | 2/59 | 18/250 | | |
| 6 | 3 | 302 | 51/703 | | 99/687 | | |
| 6 | 3 | 303 | 32/439 | | 33/68 | | |
| 6 | 3 | 304 | 1/12 | | 3/1 | | |
| 6 | 3 | 305 | 32/839 | | 5/27 | | |
| 6 | 3 | 306 | 24/827 | | 3/10 | | |
| 6 | 3 | 307 | 3/25 | | 2/18 | | |
| 6 | 3 | 308 | 8/84 | | 1/1 | | |
| 6 | 3 | 310 | 17/248 | | 26/629 | | |
| 6 | 3 | 311 | 5/41 | | 3/71 | | |
| 6 | 4 | 400 | | 2/66 | | | 1 iron |
| 6 | 5 | 500 | | 1/49 | | | 1 iron |
| 6 | 5 | 503 | | | 5/97 | | |
| 6 | 6 | 600 | | | 3/31 | | |
| 6 | 6 | 604 | 1/7 | | | | |
| 6 | 6 | 606 | | 1/60 | | 1/3 | |
| 6 | 7 | 700 | | 2/171 | 1/53 | | 1 glass; 1 iron; 1 cu alloy; 1 animal bone |
| 6 | 7 | 702 | 2/96 | | 9/222 | 2/1 | 2 animal bone |
| 6 | 7 | 707 | | | 1/1 | | |
| TOTALS | | | 180/3425 | 8/405 | 226/2506 | 3/4 | |

CBM = ceramic building material

Table 1: All finds by context (number / weight in grammes)

6.2.2 Worked flint from other trenches, and from upper contexts (**300, 301**) in Trench 3, is more difficult to characterise and is likely to be chronologically mixed, although probably largely of Bronze Age date. Flakes are broad and squat and cores unsystematic (although one blade core came from colluvial layer **702**). One scraper came from **301**; no other tools or utilised pieces were identified. This material is more variable in condition, with mixed patination and several pieces exhibiting edge damage and/or rolling.

6.2.3 Burnt, unworked flint occurred almost exclusively within Trench 3, associated with the Late Mesolithic/early Neolithic worked flint, and can be assumed to be of similar date.

6.3 Pottery and Ceramic Building Material

6.3.1 Only three sherds of pottery were recovered, all of medieval date. The sherd from Trench 6 (ditch **607**) is a sandy ware possibly of west Wiltshire type, while the two sherds from Trench 7 (colluvial layer **702**) are Laverstock-type coarsewares; all three can be broadly dated as 12th or 13th century.

6.3.2 The ceramic building material consists entirely of roof tile, three fragments of medieval date (layer **301** and ditch **607**), and the remainder post-medieval.

6.4 Other Finds

6.4.1 Other finds, deriving from topsoil contexts in Trenches 4, 5 and 7, and from colluvial layer **702**), are demonstrably or probably of post-medieval date. These comprise animal bone, vessel glass, iron horseshoes and a bronze medal, and were discarded following quantification.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

7.1 Site Location, Topography and Geology

7.1.1 No deposits of palaeo-environmental interest were identified within DTA 2.

7.1.2 DTA 6 is situated on the lower slopes of the valley side at the back of the higher floodplain. The river at this point flows in a large meander and today runs east-west to the south of the site. A broad former river terrace edge, which marks the mid- and upper part of the lower valley side and defines the back edge of the former floodplain, can be traced across the field from Trench 3 to Trench 7.

7.1.3 The geology observed in the trenches is Coombe Deposits (periglacial solifluction material) and gravels of varying types.

7.2 The Sedimentary Sequence

7.2.1 The upper slopes of the terrace edge/lower valley side (Trenches 3, 4 and 6) contain shallow rendzinas or brown earths over chalky Coombe.

7.2.2 The mid-slope contains shallow colluvial brown earths over highly localised colluvium (Trench 7). Elsewhere in the mid-slope, localised pockets of highly silty brown forest soils survive (Trenches 3 and 4). The silt is a relict loessic component, but the sequences are ancient forest soils, which may be earlier prehistoric (post-glacial) in date and may contain palaeo-environmental evidence in the form of pollen and/or soil micromorphology.

7.2.3 The lower slopes at the back of the floodplain (Trench 5) contain localised ancient calcareous alluvium.

7.2.4 The majority of the sequences observed are colluvial, derived from destabilisation of terrestrial soils on the very long valley slope. They indicate the presence of stony parent material and weakly calcareous brown earth in recent Holocene time. The presence of non-calcareous silty deposits indicates the presence of former thicker brown earths or forest soils.

7.2.5 There is little or no alluvial component on the lower valley slope profiles. The deposits at the back of the floodplain (Trench 5) are largely a colluvial soil matrix; the high concentration of flints may indicate colluvium derived from stony parent material, or the deposit may be alluvial flint gravel. The

only clearly alluvial deposits are the ancient calcareous alluvium and flint nodules in the base of the valley (Trench 5). These may be late glacial or early post-glacial in date.

7.3 Environmental Sampling and Recording

7.3.1 Two overlapping kubiena tins (samples 30 and 31) were taken through the argillic brown earth (brown forest soil; contexts 302, 303 and 304), in order to allow opportunity for more detailed pedological description, subsampling for pollen assessment and analysis, and analysis of the soil micromorphology.

7.4 Geoarchaeological Potential

7.4.1 There are two main zones of deposition, one of colluvial and terrestrial deposition and one of largely terrestrial with some older alluvial deposition.

7.4.2 The distribution of colluvium is enigmatic throughout the WHS, and the presence here provides an interesting record of the deposits. The archaeological investigation of late Glacial/early Holocene alluviums is particularly rare within the Stonehenge WHS, and provides opportunities for palaeo-environmental survival and preservation not present in the dryland chalk.

7.4.3 The brown forest soils are exceptionally rare in this landscape and provide important evidence of the earliest prehistoric lived in environments within the WHS. The presence of a near *in situ* Late Mesolithic and Early Neolithic flint assemblage associated with this soil is unprecedented within the WHS.

7.5 Palaeo-Environmental Potential

7.5.1 The deposits are weakly calcareous and land snails will not survive. Pollen is notoriously poorly preserved in colluvium, especially in calcareous and even weakly calcareous colluvium. The potential for pollen survival in the relict forest soils is, however, much greater; this is especially significant where they are associated with artefacts (Trench 3). It is recommended, therefore, that subsamples from the kubiena samples are submitted for assessment of pollen survival.

7.5.2 The calcareous silty alluvium with large flint nodules is a well-sorted silt with no potential for mollusc survival.

7.6 Archaeological Potential

7.6.1 The identification of the ecotone between the terrestrial and riverine environments suggests the likely location of past human activity within this part of the WHS landscape, as demonstrated by the stratified evidence in Trench 3. The localised survival of brown forest soils offers the potential for the survival of significant archaeology, which otherwise is low on the lower valley sides. There is limited potential for earlier prehistoric activity to have occurred and to have survived on the floodplain edge (Trench 5).

8 DISCUSSION

8.1 Summary

- 8.1.1 The evaluation of DTA 2 revealed no archaeological features. There were no remains or deposits that could relate to the Iron Age occupation evidence seen in evaluation of Area 2 close by (Wessex Archaeology 2003c). A possible ploughed-out lynchet recorded in Trench 1 could well be the result of a variation in the geology here.
- 8.1.2 In DTA 6, a former river terrace defining the back of a former floodplain of the River Avon was revealed. The earliest deposits encountered here are calcareous alluvial clays of possible post-Glacial date seen in Trench 5, on the edge of the former floodplain. The relict forest soil seen in Trench 3 is of post-Glacial/Holocene date; the presence of a near *in situ* Late Mesolithic/Early Neolithic flint assemblage associated with this deposit is particularly rare.
- 8.1.3 The two gullies excavated in Trenches 6 and 7 appear to be broadly contemporary and related to land division and/or drainage; single fragments of medieval pottery and roof tile were recovered from one of the gullies, these could be residual. A single pit cut through the subsoil in Trench 6 was of modern date.
- 8.1.4 Finds recovered during the evaluation comprised worked and burnt flint from Trench 3, including a blade/core assemblage of Late Mesolithic or Early Neolithic date, sundry flakes of probable Bronze Age date from elsewhere in DTA 6, and very small quantities of medieval and post-medieval pottery, CBM and metalwork.

8.2 Preservation of Archaeological Remains

- 8.2.1 The evaluation has demonstrated an absence of significant archaeological remains within DTA 2. Within DTA 6, the survival of the forest soil and associated flint assemblage is unprecedented in the WHS.

8.3 Assessment of Importance

- 8.3.1 Monument Interest Values (MIVs) have been calculated previously (Blore *et al.* 1995) for the known sites within DTAs 2 and 6. A possible ploughed-out lynchet in DTA 2 may represent part of Site 10. The MIV previously calculated for this site suggests that it is of Minor Importance; the evaluation has not provided any evidence to support the re-scoring of this site.
- 8.3.2 A preliminary assessment of the importance of the remains located by the evaluation (**Table 2** below) indicates that the forest soil and associated flint scatter recorded in DTA 6 (Trench 3) is Moderately Important. The other archaeological features located are of Minor Importance.

| Trench | Type | Survival | Potential | GV (cluster) | GV (assoc.) | Diversity | SAM/MPP | Total |
|--------|--|----------|-----------|--------------|-------------|-----------|---------|-------|
| 3 | Forest soil with assoc'd L. Meso/E. Neo flint assemblage | 3 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 3 | X | 29 |
| 6/7 | Boundary features (medieval or later) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | X | 5 |

KEY: L. Meso = Late Mesolithic, E. Neo = Early Neolithic

Table 2: Preliminary assessment of importance

8.4 Confidence Rating

8.4.1 The evaluation has located a limited range of archaeological features and identified the survival of important deposits of archaeological and palaeo-environmental interest. The general aims and objectives of the evaluation as set out in the WSI have, therefore, been met.

8.4.2 The evaluation has demonstrated a poor correlation between anomalies and archaeological features. This is consistent with the results of trial trenching elsewhere along the A303 route corridor and it is considered that a reasonable reliance may be placed on the geophysical survey as a means of predicting substantial archaeological remains.

8.4.3 In view of the relatively high sampled percentage (3.1-3.3%) of the evaluation areas, it is considered unlikely that substantial archaeological remains have been missed, although further small features are likely to occur within the evaluation areas. There is also some potential for features to be buried beneath the colluvial sequences encountered within DTA 6, as well as any further deposits of forest soils. The survival of the forest soil demonstrates the potential for such remains to survive, both within DTA 6 and elsewhere along the route, in topographically favourable locations. Nevertheless, a reasonable degree of confidence may be attached to the results of the evaluation.

8.5 Potential for Further Analysis

8.5.1 The archaeological features and the colluvial and alluvial sequences recorded in DTA 6 have little potential for further analysis. The forest soil in Trench 3 offers good potential for pollen survival, and the associated diagnostic flintwork allows any pollen data to be broadly dated and related to evidence of the earliest prehistoric lived-in environments known from elsewhere within the WHS. Assessment of samples from monoliths recovered from test pit 3C is recommended, therefore. Further analysis and publication of the results should be considered in conjunction with the mitigation strategy for DTA 6 in the first instance.

8.6 Recommendations for Mitigation

8.6.1 The survival of a forest soil with an associated near-*in situ* flint assemblage is unprecedented within the WHS and the deposit offers good potential for the survival of palaeo-environmental evidence. It is recommended that samples from monoliths recovered from test pit 3C should be assessed for pollen

survival at this stage, in order to confirm the potential of the deposit. The results of the pollen assessment should be published, either independently or as part of an extended programme of analysis in the event that further archaeological investigation of this deposit is required as part of the mitigation strategy for DTA 6. Further analysis of soil micromorphology and chemistry should also be considered.

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APPENDIX 1: TRENCH SUMMARIES

TRENCH 1 Dimensions: 30x1.6x0.40m max depth

| Context | Description | Depth | Finds |
|---------|---|---------|-------|
| 100 | Mid greyish brown silty clay loam topsoil with common chalk and flint inclusions. | 0-0.28m | |
| 101 | Natural: Degraded chalk and flint. | 0.28+ | |

TRENCH 2 Dimensions: 50x1.60x0.45m max depth

| Context | Description | Depth | Finds |
|---------|--|-----------|--------------|
| 200 | Turf/Topsoil layer: Grey brown silt clay loam, rare angular and sub-angular flint/gravel <0.03m. | 0-0.23m | Struck flint |
| 201 | Subsoil: Grey brown silt clay loam, common unsorted angular and sub-angular flint/gravel, very rare chalk particles. | 0.23-0.30 | |
| 202 | Natural: reddish brown silt, rare angular and sub-angular flint gravel <0.05m. | 0.30+ | |

TRENCH 3 Dimensions: 50x2x0.25m max depth

| Context | Description | Depth | Finds |
|---------|--|-----------|------------------------------|
| 300 | Topsoil: Mid grey brown silty clay loam with common flint and chalk inclusions. | 0-0.32m | |
| 301 | Mid brown grey silty clay loam with abundant (50%) flint and chalk inclusions. | 0.32-0.64 | |
| 302 | First spit of test pit 3C: mid red brown silty clay colluvium with sparse flint and chalk inclusions. | 0.72-0.87 | |
| 303 | Second spit of test pit 3C: mid red brown silty clay colluvium becomes gradually more clayey with depth. | 0.87-1.02 | |
| 304 | Third spit of test pit 3C: mid red brown silty clay colluvium much higher clay content and virtually no worked flint. | 1.02-1.20 | |
| 305 | Subsoil: mid grey brown silty clay with common sub angular flints >10% >0.08m and rare chalk flecks >1%. Sparse burnt flint rare worked flint. | 0.64-0.66 | Burnt flint/ worked flint |
| 306 | First spit of test pit 3B: colluvium mid orange brown silty clay with rare sub-angular flints >2%, >0.12m and rare chalk flecks >1%. Sparse burnt flint, rare worked flint | 0.66-0.81 | Burnt flint/ worked flint |
| 307 | Second spit of test pit 3B: colluvium mid orange brown silty clay with rare sub-angular flints >2%, >0.12m and rare chalk flecks >1%. Rare burnt flint, rare worked flint | 0.81-0.96 | Burnt flint/ worked flint |
| 308 | Third spit of test pit 3B: colluvium mid orange brown silty clay with rare sub-angular flints >2%, >0.12m and rare chalk flecks >1%. Sparse burnt flint, rare worked flint | 0.96-1.11 | |
| 310 | Subsoil: mid grey brown silty clay, common flint inclusions 80%, rare chalk flecking. Moderate burnt and worked flint. | 0.64-0.72 | Burnt/ worked flint |
| 311 | First spit of test pit 3D. Colluvium mid red brown silty clay, common/abundant flint inclusions 80% rare chalk flecking. Flint <0.07m, sub-angular well sorted. Fewer worked and burnt flints present. | 0.72-0.89 | Burnt/ worked flint |
| 312 | Second spit of test pit 3D: mid grey brown silty clay colluvium, common sub-angular flint inclusions <0.04m, rare flint nodules <0.10m rare chalk flecks. No worked or burnt flint present. | 0.89-1.02 | |
| 313 | Third spit of test pit: mid grey brown clay, rare flint inclusions, sub-angular <0.02m no worked or burnt flint present. | 1.02-1.10 | |
| 314 | Natural: degraded chalk, Coombe rock. | 1.10+ | |

| | | | |
|-----|--|-----------|--|
| 315 | Mid grey brown, abundant silty loam flint inclusions 70% sub-angular <0.06m. | 0.64-0.72 | |
|-----|--|-----------|--|

TRENCH 4 **Dimensions: 50x1.60x0.50m max depth**

| Context | Description | Depth | Finds |
|---------|---|-----------|---------------------------|
| 400 | Turf/Topsoil: grey brown silty clay loam rare angular/sub-angular flint/gravel <0.02m sparse chalk flecks and fragments <0.01m | 0-0.30 | CBM Fe object (horseshoe) |
| 401 | Subsoil: grey brown silty clay loam. Frequent unsorted angular-rounded flint/gravel and coarse grit <0.01-0.07m, sparse chalk flecks. | 0.30-0.44 | |
| 402 | Natural: red brown silt, very rare small flint/gravel fragments <0.01m very rare chalk particles (alluvial layer). | 0.44-0.72 | |
| 403 | Dark red brown clay silt, common sub-angular unsorted flint/gravel 0.01-0.07m. | 0.72-0.85 | |

TRENCH 5 **Dimensions: 30x1.60x1.41m max depth**

| Context | Description | Depth | Finds |
|---------|---|-----------|-------------------|
| 500 | Topsoil: mid grey brown silty loam, rare flint inclusions some root disturbance. | 0-0.25 | |
| 501 | Subsoil: mid red brown silty clay, flint inclusions c10% moderate poorly sorted angular <0.04m. | 0.25-0.50 | Fe Horseshoe, CBM |
| 502 | Mid red brown silty clay mixed with mid brown silty clay, angular/sub angular flint inclusions, c40% abundant, fairly well sorted <0.03m probably the result of fairly high energy deposition from ancient watercourse, alluvial deposit. | 0.50-0.69 | |
| 503 | Mid brown clay (with some silt) flint inclusions 90%, well sorted <0.03m angular. High-energy deposition, alluvial deposit. | 0.69-1.04 | Worked flint |
| 504 | Mid green grey clay, moderate angular flint inclusions <0.02m moist alluvial deposit the result of low energy infilling of natural feature 506. | 1.04-1.28 | |
| 505 | Light green grey clay moderate angular flint inclusions <0.12m poorly sorted nodule inclusions alluvial deposit, moist deposit the result of low energy infilling of natural feature 506. | 1.28-1.41 | |
| 506 | Cut of natural feature within the base of a former watercourse. | 1.04-1.41 | |
| 507 | Natural chalk: (Coombe chalk) | 1.04+ | |

TRENCH 6 **Dimensions: 50x1.60x0.80m max depth**

| Context | Description | Depth | Finds |
|---------|---|-----------|--------------|
| 600 | Topsoil: mid grey brown silty clay, rare sub-angular flints >1% >0.05m and rare chalk flecks >1%, rare CBM and struck flint | 0-0.20 | Struck Flint |
| 601 | Subsoil: light grey brown silty clay with sparse sub-angular flints >3%, >0.06m and rare chalk flecks >1% | 0.20-0.40 | |
| 602 | Mid orange brown silty clay alluvium with very rare sub-angular flints >1% >0.06m and rare chalk flecks >1%. | 0.40-0.57 | |
| 603 | Natural: mainly consists of degraded chalk natural with rare sub-angular flints >1%, >0.05m but also contains pockets of natural clay with flints (30%) mid orange brown silty clay with common sub-angular flints >40%, >0.08m and large chalk flecks >1%. Also contains pockets of natural silty sand 15%. Light yellowish grey silty sand with very rare sub-angular flint >1% >0.03m and rare chalk flecks >1%. | 0.57+ | |
| 604 | Fill of possible pit 605: mid brown grey silty clay common sub-angular flints 10% >0.08m and rare chalk inclusions >2% >0.04m. Rare burnt flint. The fill is probably modern in derivation as pit cuts through subsoil and composition is loose. | 0.31-0.96 | Burnt Flint |

| | | | |
|-----|---|-----------|-----|
| 605 | Cut of possible pit, pit is probably modern in origin as it cuts through the subsoil. | 0.31-0.96 | |
| 606 | Fill of ditch 607: mid brown grey silty clay, rare sub-angular flint >1% >0.08m very rare chalk flecks >1%. The fill may be medieval in origins although only one sherd of pottery recovered. | 0.25-0.53 | CBM |
| 607 | Cut of ditch: possibly medieval in origin one abraded sherd of pottery recovered from the fill. Feature may also be cut for drainage purposes. | 0.25-0.53 | |

TRENCH 7 **Dimensions: 50x2x0.30m max depth**

| Context | Description | Depth | Findings |
|---------|--|-----------|---------------------------------------|
| 700 | Topsoil: Mid-dark brown sandy silty clay loam with inclusions of fractured rubble <0.06m 20%. | 0-0.25 | Fe Object (medal) CBM, Flint, Bone |
| 701 | Band of gravel with clay, light brown gravel flints in a light brown silty clay matrix. | 0.25-0.45 | |
| 702 | Colluvial deposits, mid brown clay with fractured flints <0.10 10%. | 0.45-0.85 | Cow Scapula, Pot, Flint |
| 703 | Natural, Soliflucted chalk (Coombe deposit). | 1.32+ | |
| 704 | <i>Cut of East/West aligned gully. This gully appears to cut 705 although the two are thought to be contemporary. The ditch probably acted as a field boundary, following a change in the natural geology visible on the ground surface.</i> | 0.50-0.85 | |
| 705 | Cut of North/South gully. This is cut by 704 although they appear to be roughly contemporary. | 0.57-0.78 | |
| 706 | Fill of 704: light brown grey silty clay loam, fractured flint <0.06m 10% small calcareous inclusions as well. This fill is derived from the erosion of the topsoil. Identical to 708 | 0.50-0.65 | |
| 707 | Fill of 704: mid-light grey brown sandy clay loam, fractured flint fragments <0.07m 20% small calcareous inclusions <0.01m 10%. Lower fill of the gully, the deposit is derived from the erosion of the topsoil. Same as 709 | 0.65-0.85 | Flint |
| 708 | Fill of 705: light brown grey silty clay loam, fractured flint <0.06m 10% small calcareous inclusions as well. This fill is derived from the erosion of the topsoil. Same as 706 | 0.57-0.70 | |
| 709 | Fill of 705: mid-light grey brown sandy clay loam, fractured flint fragments <0.07m 20% small calcareous inclusions <0.01m 10%. Lower fill of the gully, the deposit is derived from the erosion of the topsoil. Same as 707 | 0.70-0.78 | |
| 710 | Colluvial deposit mid orange brown clay with a high percentage of flint nodules 0.15m <25% and fractured flints <0.15m 25%. | 0.85-1.32 | |

APPENDIX 2: SOIL PROFILE DESCRIPTIONS

Trench 3

Mid slope location (towards southern, downslope end described)

| <i>Depth (cm)</i> | <i>Description</i> | <i>Soil/deposit</i> |
|-------------------|---|---------------------|
| 0-30 | Grey silty loam with few stones – as elsewhere | A |
| 30-50 | Grey silty loam with abundant medium flints | A2 |
| 50-70 | Dark reddish yellowish brown – yellowish brown compact medium silt with common small flint pieces | colluvial B |
| 70- 110 | Compact firm stonefree silt, yellowish brown to brown – with flint artefacts – This is a relict or derived soil from a stonefree weakly calcareous brown earth soil. Contexts 302-4. | B2 |
| 110 | Chalky Coombe | R |

Trench 4

Upper and mid slope

| <i>Depth (cm)</i> | <i>Description</i> | <i>Soil/deposit</i> |
|-------------------|---|---------------------|
| 0-12 | Dark grey silty loam, moderate to well-developed medium to large crumb structure, many small and very small <u>chalk</u> pieces, sharp boundary | Ah |
| 12-22 | Grey silty loam with rare medium flints, weak large blocky structure clear boundary | A2 |
| 22-40 | - as above (grey silty loam) but with common to abundant small and medium flints, clear to sharp boundary | A3 |
| 40-70 | Brown to yellowish brown firm compact silty clay | B1/bB |
| 70-85 | Dark reddish brown (7.5YR) silty <u>clay</u> in common/abundant medium angular flints – transacted clay | Bt/Rw |
| 85+ | Chalky Coombe | R |

Trench 5

In the lowest location on the upslope/back edge of the floodplain or former floodplain, below terrace edge.

Topsoil over stony A2 over stony colluvial B into flint gravel (presumably over Coombe), at SW end flint gravel gives way to Coombe, which is very chalky and stony. Description centre N side (south facing).

| <i>Depth (cm)</i> | <i>Description</i> | <i>Soil/deposit</i> |
|-------------------|--|---------------------|
| 0-28 | Dark grey stony silt loam weak crumb structure: | A |
| 28-60 | Yellowish brown <u>silt</u> loam with common medium flints | colluvial B |
| 60-85 | Abundant small and medium packed flints (brecciated flints) in a dark reddish brown silty clay (possibly derived from clay – with-flints or Tertiary deposits) | Bt/B2 |
| 85+ | Many medium and large chalk pieces and flint nodules in a calcareous marl | R, Coombe Deposit |
| | At the southern end an alluvial deposit was present beneath the gravel: Light grey moist silty clay/calcareous silt with common large and very large flint nodules. | |

Trench 6

On higher slope (terrace).

Brown rendzinas – typical brown earths over chalky Combe Deposit.

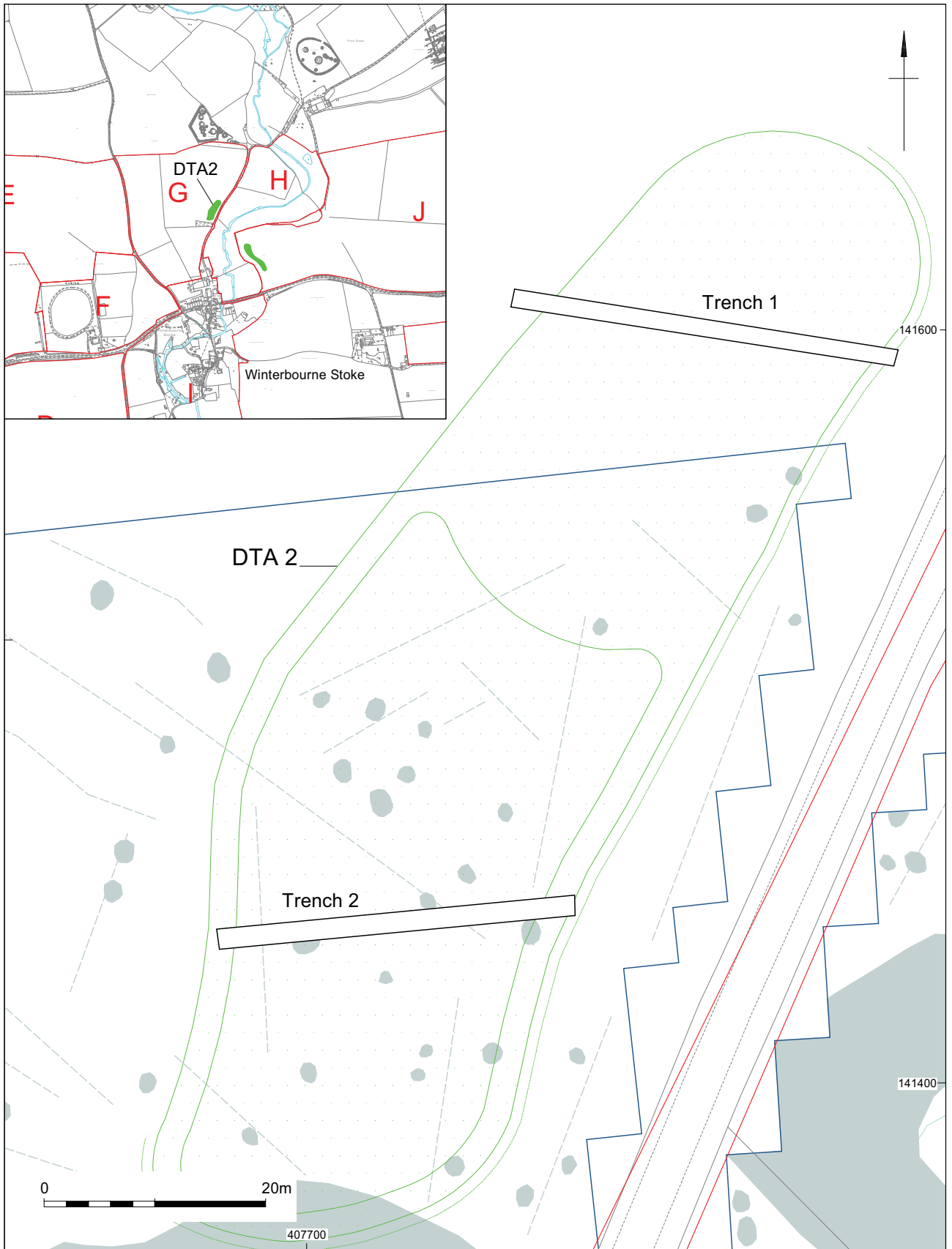
| <i>Depth (cm)</i> | <i>Description</i> | <i>Soil/deposit</i> |
|-------------------|--|---------------------|
| 0-30 | Dark grey silty loam with few medium flints, weak to moderate crumb structure, sharp boundary | A topsoil |
| 30-45 | Dark grey silty loam with common small and medium flints (stony horizon at base of A) | A2 |
| 45-50 | Yellowish brown compact <u>silty</u> loam with rare small and medium flints, some small and medium flints in clay pockets at base of profile | B (Bt) |
| 50+ | Chalky Coombe Deposit with common chalk pieces, degraded chalk in calcareous silty marl and extensive patches of fine flint gravel | R, Coombe Deposit |

Trench 7

Straddles the higher ground and a small terrace edge: Northern end as Trench 6; a clear but low drop/terrace edge gives rise to deeper deposits in the southern end. The terrace edge is shallow and is more prominent in the western (east facing) section. Flint gravel at base of edge (but could be just edge located, or extend under colluvium).

Colluvial brown earth over colluvium over flint gravel/periglacial deposits.

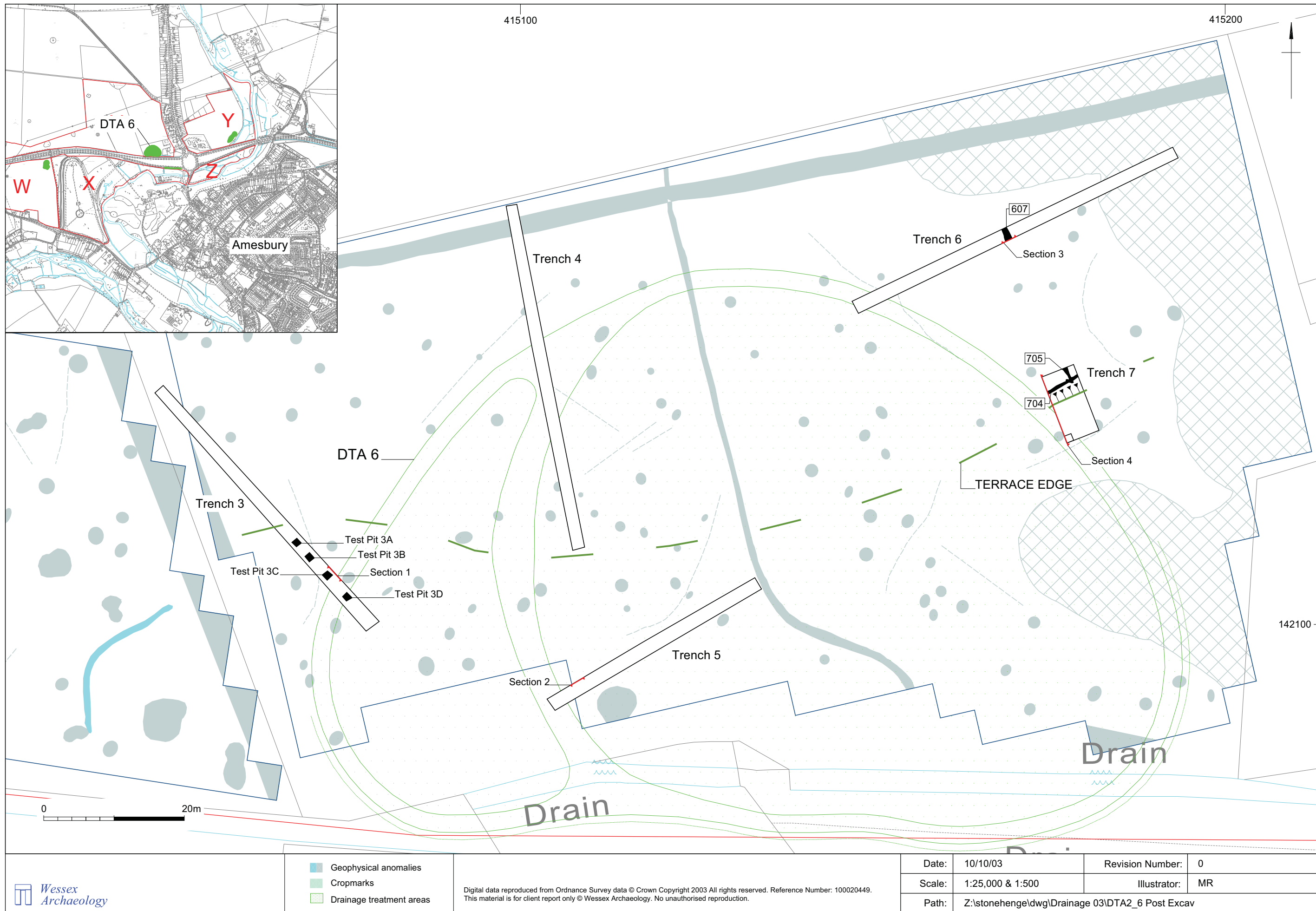
| <i>Depth (cm)</i> | <i>Description</i> | <i>Soil/deposit</i> |
|-------------------|---|---------------------|
| 0-25 | Dark grey stony silt loam, common medium flints, rare chalk pieces weak to moderate crumb structure, sharp boundary | A topsoil |
| 25-50 | Yellowish brown silty loam with common medium flints, only weakly to non-calcareous), clear boundary | colluvial B |
| 50-70 | Stonefree yellowish brown silt, non to weakly calcareous, sharp-clear boundary | Colluvium |
| 70+ | Strong brown dark yellowish brown silty clay matrix with abundant large and medium flint gravel at base of edge | R |



| | | | | |
|---|--|---|------------------|----|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Geophysical anomalies Cropmarks Drainage treatment areas | Digital data reproduced from Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright (insert year) All rights reserved. Reference Number: 100020449. This material is for client report only © Wessex Archaeology. No unauthorised reproduction. | | | |
| | Date: | 10/10/03 | Revision Number: | 0 |
| Wessex Archaeology | Scale: | 1:25,000 & 1:500 | Illustrator: | MR |
| | Path: | Z:\stonehenge\dwg\Drainage 03\DTA2_6 Post Excav | | |

DTA2: Trench locations

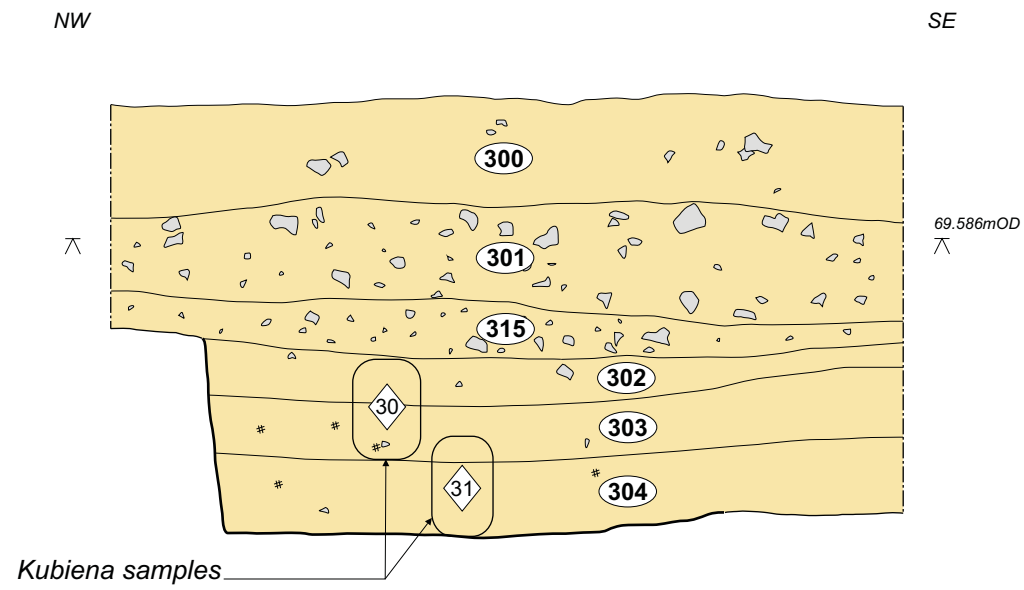
Figure 1



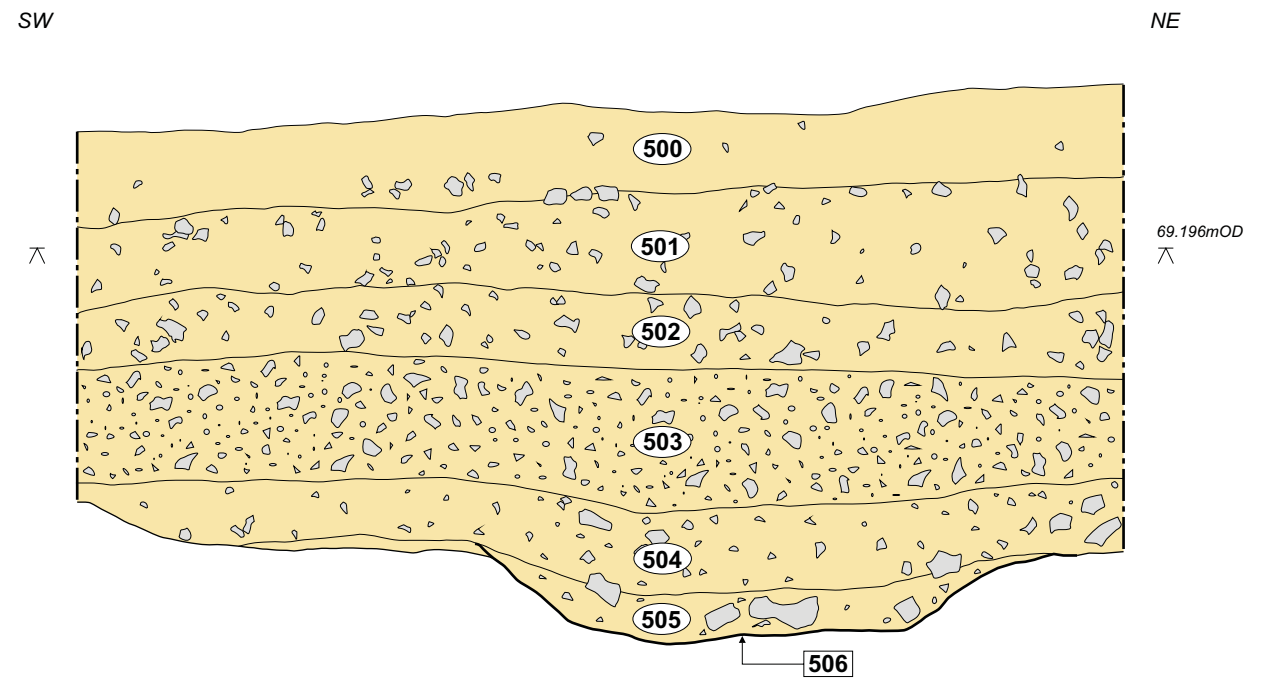
DTA6: Trench locations and excavated features

Figure 2

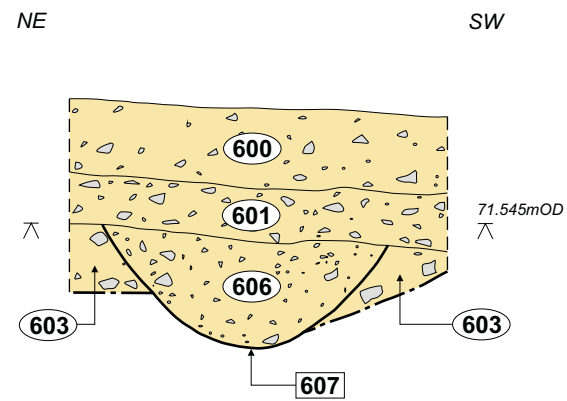
SECTION 1 (Trench 3)



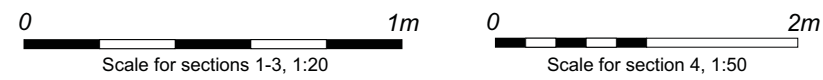
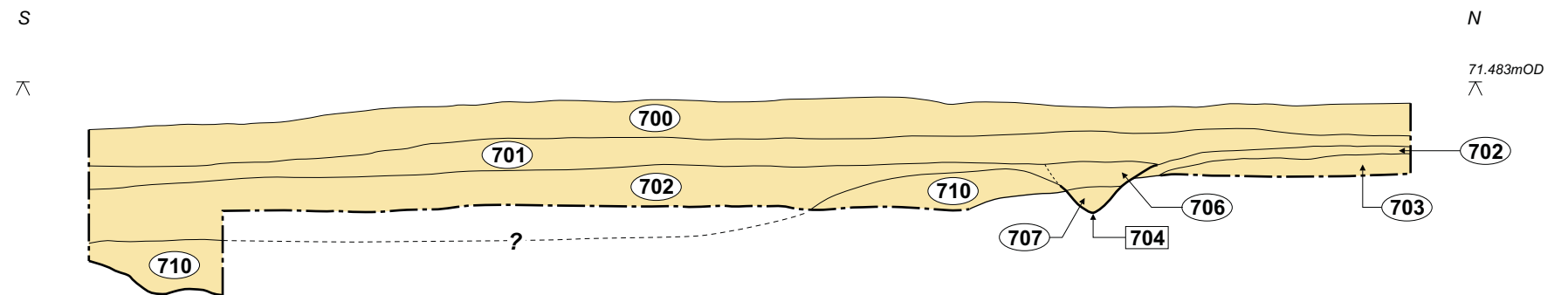
SECTION 2 (Trench 5)



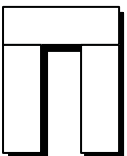
SECTION 3 (Trench 6)



SECTION 4 (Trench 7)



| | | | |
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