

**SITE ADJACENT TO CONGLAS FARM,
INVERURIE, AB51 5DN**

EXCAVATION AND EVALUATION REPORT



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ILLUSTRATIONS

(top) Trench 1 facing north (bottom) five burnt pottery sherds from pit [1]

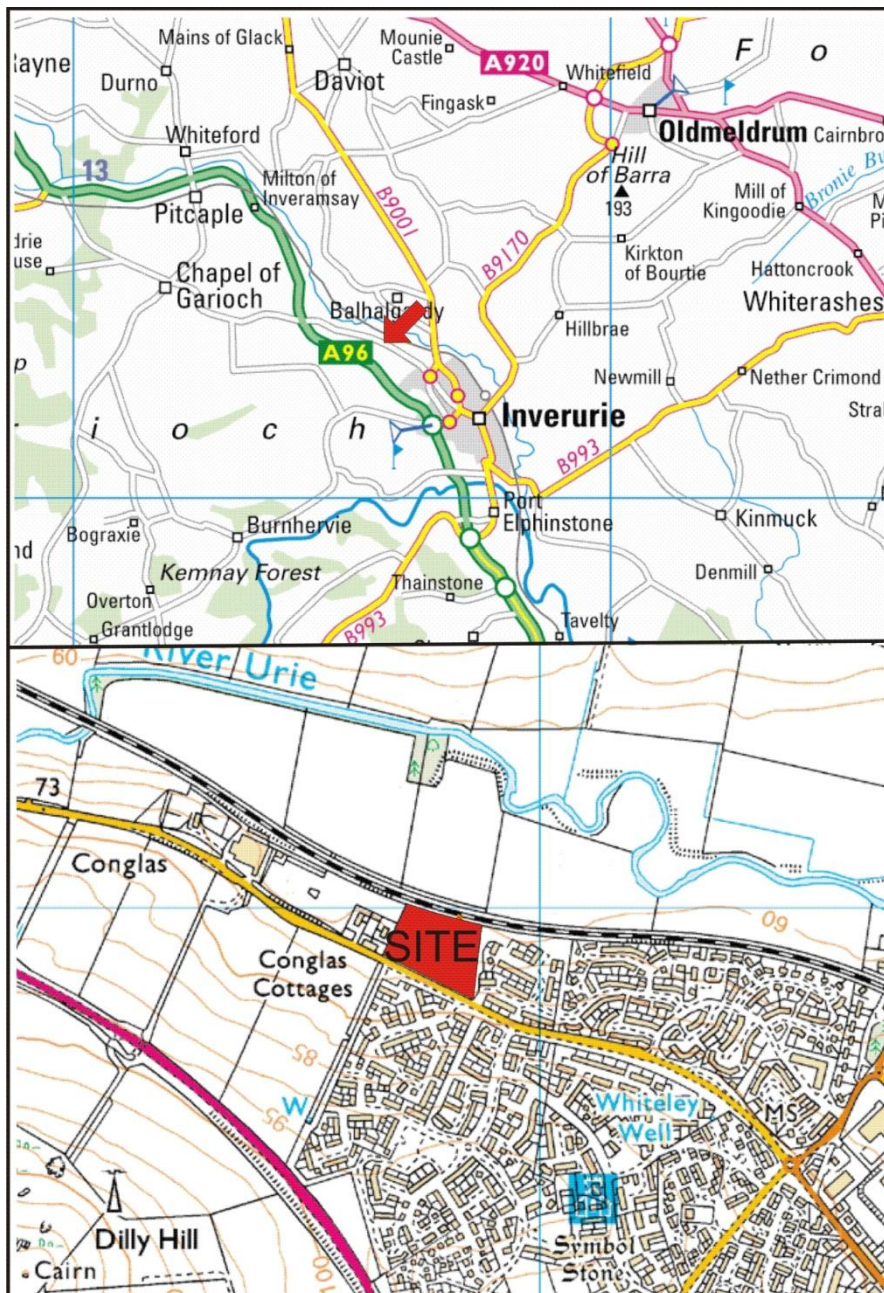
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SUMMARY

A 5% archaeological evaluation was undertaken on 20 September 2013 and a further investigation 24 October 2013. Archaeological features of prehistoric date were recorded in Trench 1 included ard marks and two ploughed out pit bases incorporating sherds of a prehistoric pot. A Post-Excavation Research Design (PERD) will now be produced but it is recommended that no further work is required on site during this current development.

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The site is located east of Conglas Cottages, south of the Aberdeen-Inverness railway line, north of an unnumbered road leading from the B9001 to the A96 and west of new housing (Ury Meadows). The site is at NJ 75791 22913, at 55-70m OD and in Inverurie parish. It is a cultivated field 2 hectares in size.
- 1.2 The work was commissioned by Harry McNab, Bancon Developments Ltd; an application APP/2013/2283 has been lodged with Aberdeenshire Council and a standard archaeology condition attached requesting a 5% archaeological evaluation.
- 1.3 All the archaeological work will be carried out in the context of Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) Planning Advice Note (PAN 2/2011) and Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP), which state that archaeological remains should be regarded as part of the environment to be protected and managed.



Illus 1 Location plan (Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2013)

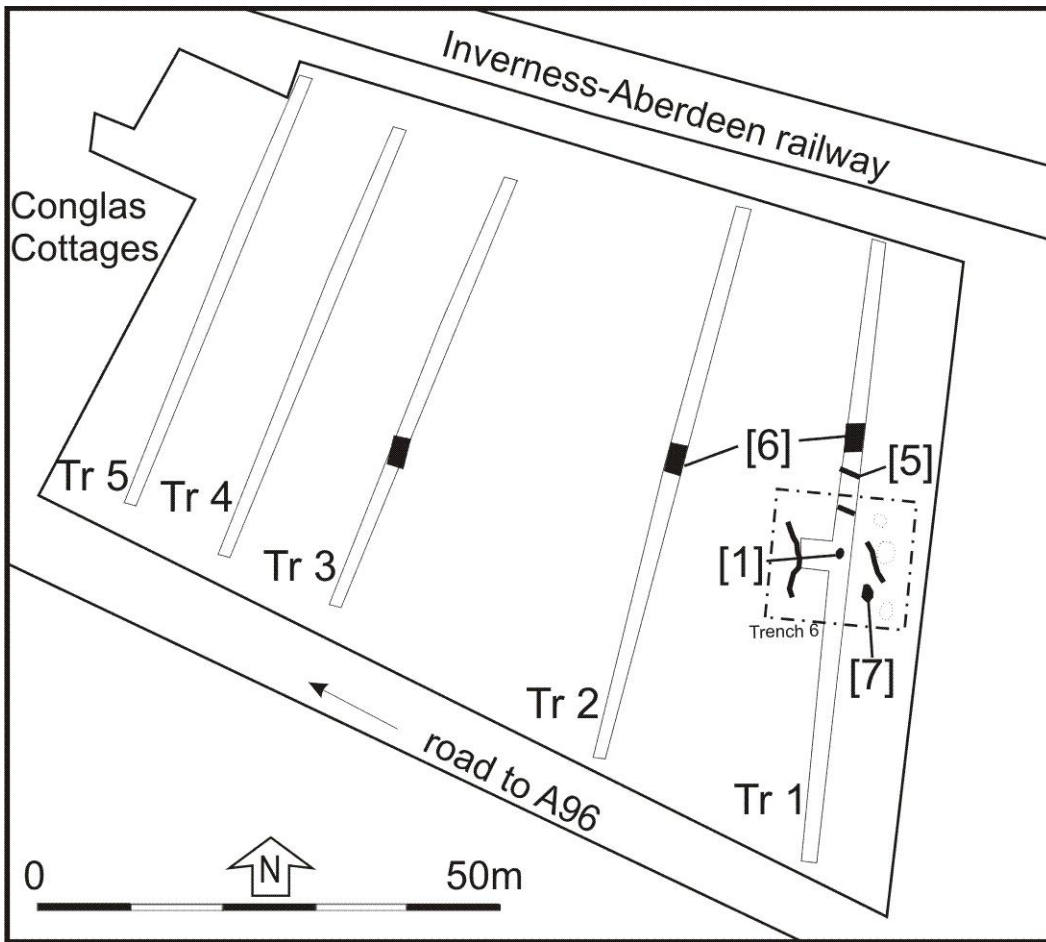
2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 There are no known archaeological sites within the proposed development area. There is one Scheduled Ancient Monument within 1km of the site; 0.9m SSE is the Brandsbutt Stone, a Class I stone is decorated with a crescent and V-rod and a serpent and Z-rod symbol, both incised, as well as being marked by a line of Ogham which are certainly contemporary with the symbols. This stone was broken and partly lost in the past but the remains have now been reassembled and are under guardianship.
- 2.2 Three standing or rubbing stones (NJ72SE 18, 219, 220) stood in a fields opposite Conglas Farm, c 0.5km WSW of the current site; NJ72SE18 has been removed but the other two are extant. Mr Steven of Conglas stated that cattle rubbing stones were erected in each field when the farm was first planned in the mid-19th century (Coles 1903, 89-90).
- 2.3 The nearby A96 is the supposed line of the Roman road (NJ72SE 27) running north from from Kintore to Fochabers (Crawford 1949, 115).
- 2.4 Rig and furrow (NJ72SE 120) is recorded on a low-lying promontory on the River Urie, 0.4km north of the current site, visible in low light on an aerial photograph (Greig 1994, 26).
- 2.5 A possible ring-ditch at Highfield (NJ72SE 167) on a slight NE-facing spur in arable ground at an altitude of 95m OD (NMRS, MS/712/87).
- 2.6 There is a diorite axe from 'Conglass' (Conglas: NJ 753 231) in Marischal Museum, Aberdeen (ABDUA: 19780; NJ72SE 308) and a barbed and tanged arrowhead (NJ72SE61).and two stone axes (NJ72SE78) from the Conglas area are now in Inverurie Museum.
- 2.7 There is a spindle whorl (NJ72SE 302) from 'Conglass' (Conglas: NJ 753 231) in Marischal Museum, Aberdeen (ABDUA: 19058). It measures 32mm in diameter by 16mm in thickness.
- 2.8 Conglas Farm appears on the First Edition OS map (Appendix 2); study of the early maps including Blaeu, Pont, Roy, Gordon and Moll have revealed no evidence of the name Conglas prior to the late 19th century and no evidence of previous land use. No features appear on aerial photographs of the proposed development area. 'Conglas' is changed to 'Conglass' in the naming of neighbouring streets and these spellings are now interchangeable.

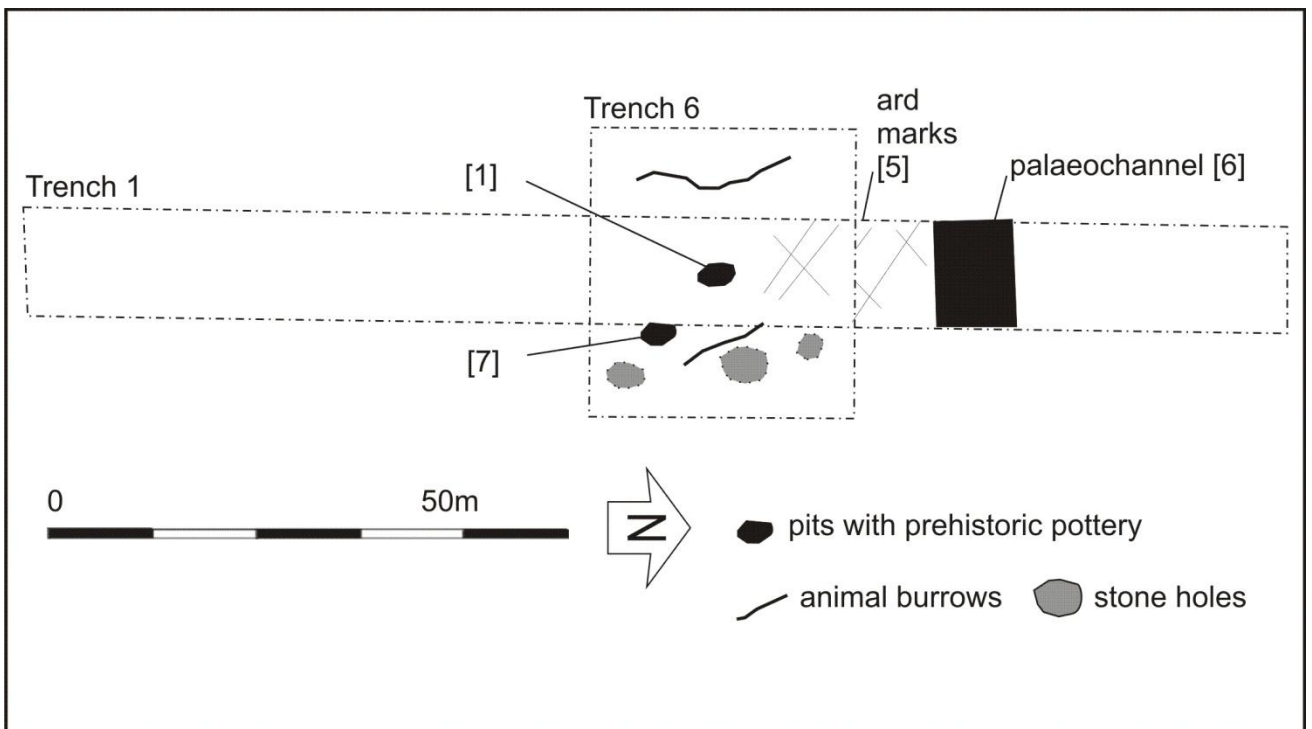
3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

An archaeological evaluation took place on 20 September 2013 using a tracked JCB with a 2m flat-edged ditching bucket. Five trenches totalling 5% of the 2 hectare site were opened and archaeological remains were uncovered in Trench 1 only. The field is on a north facing slope in the valley of river Urie, overlooked by Bennachie. Two sand knolls at the site were sampled in Trenches 2 and 3 but the trenches contained shallow topsoil (0.3m deep) and no archaeological evidence was found on these knolls.

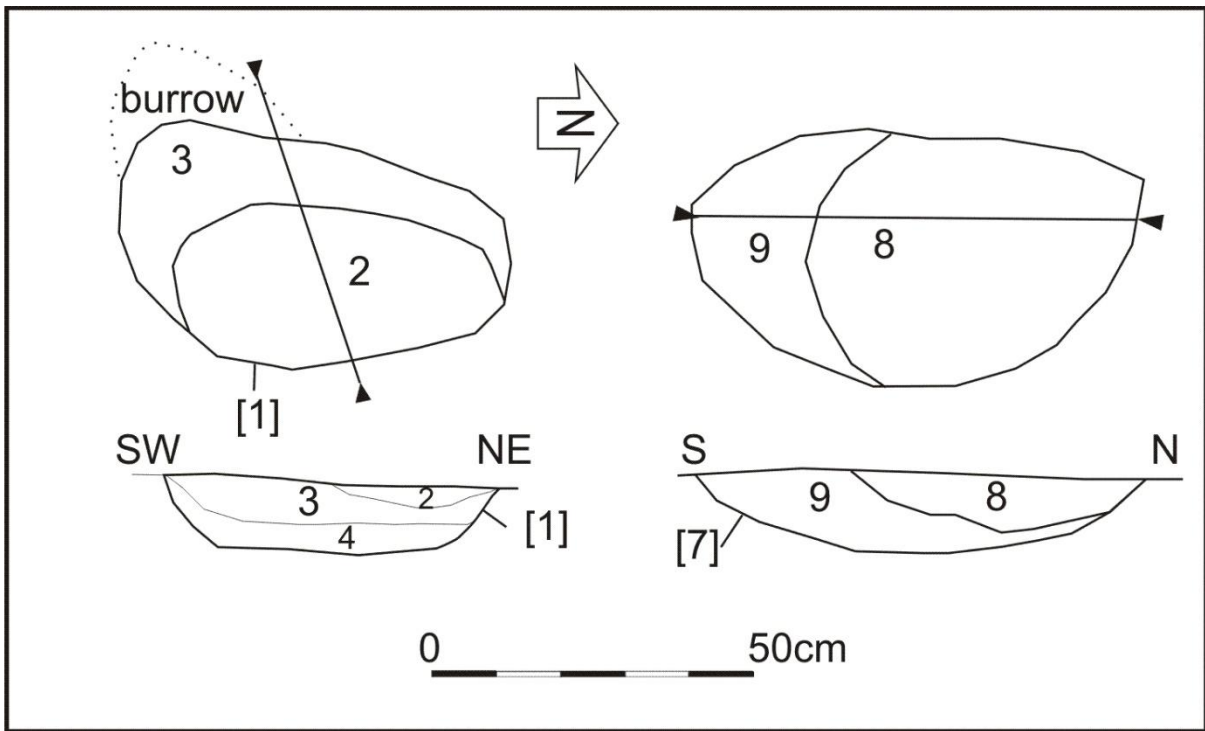
The topsoil of Trench 1 was also generally shallow, but deepened to 1m adjacent to palaeochannel (F6) and in these deeper areas ard marks (F5; Illus 3, 8) were recorded cut into the sandy clay (Illus 8). A small cut feature (F1) was 0.6 x 0.74m in size and survived to 0.12m deep (Illus 3, 4, 5). It had been truncated by ploughing and also by animal burrowing. An upper layer (2) was burnt sandy loam and charcoal and this layer contained five sherds of burnt prehistoric pottery including 2 rim sherds (SF1-5; Illus 6) and a flat burnt stone (SF6; Illus 7) which may be the remains of a cooking pot and hearth lining.



Illus 2 Trench plan



Illus 3 Plan of Trenches 1 and 6



Illus 4 Features 1 and 7 plan and section



Illus 5 Pit feature 1 facing west



Illus 6 SF1-5 burnt pottery including 2 rim sherds from Feature 1



Illus 7 Burnt flat stone, possibly from hearth lining



Illus 8 Ard marks F5, facing west

4 THE EXCAVATION

Trench 6 was opened on 24.10.13 forming a 20x20m box centred on pit F1. Several features were examined including F7 which was sectioned and appeared to be similar in nature to F1. It had an upper loam fill and a lower sandy fill which showed evidence of animal burrowing; a sherd of black burnished prehistoric pottery was found in this lower fill. Several animal burrows (Illus 10) were identified as well as several stone holes. No further prehistoric pits or pottery were found within the excavation area.



Illus 9 'Pit' F7 pre-excitation; a sherd of black burnished prehistoric pottery was found in the lower fill



Illus 10 Animal burrow (on left side of ranging rod)

5 CONCLUSIONS

Archaeological features of prehistoric date were recorded in Trenches 1 and 6 but these were heavily ploughed and burrowed. A Post-Excavation Research Design (PERD) will be produced which will include costs for a report on the two prehistoric pottery vessels. The samples were contaminated by ploughing and burrowing and they were sieved and discarded; no further anthropogenic material was found in the samples.

6 REFERENCES

Coles, F R 1903 'Report on the stone circles of North-Eastern Scotland, chiefly in Auchterless and Forgue, with measured plans and drawings, obtained under the Gunning Fellowship', *Proc Soc Antiq Scot*, vol.37, 89-90 fig. 7A.

Crawford, O G S 1949 *Topography of Roman Scotland north of the Antonine Wall*, Cambridge, 115.

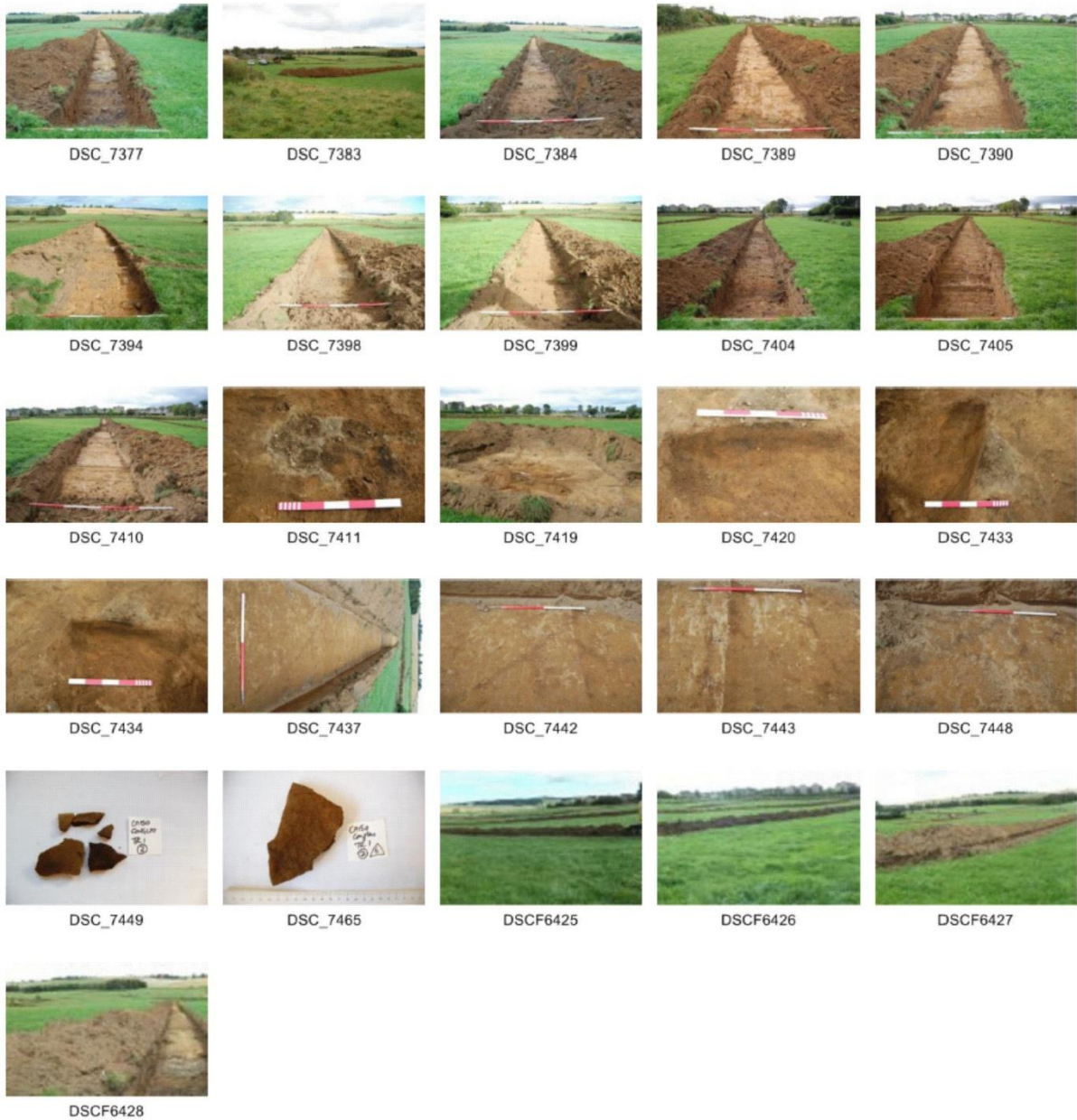
Greig, M 1994 'Sites identified while checking aerial photographs and maps held by GRC, or as the result of an aerial reconnaissance programme', *Discovery Excav Scot*, 26.

7 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to Harry McNab and Ben Freeman, Bancon Developments Ltd and to Bruce Mann and Claire Herbert, Aberdeenshire Archaeology Service.

APPENDIX 1 PHOTOGRAPHS

Photo no	Trench	Description	Facing
DSC7377-7379	1	Trench 1 completed	N
DSC7380-7383	1, 2, 3	Trench 1, 2, 3	W
DSC7384-7386	2	Trench 2 completed	N
DSC7387-7389	1	Trench 1 completed	S
DSC7390-7392	2	Trench 2 completed	S
DSC7393-7395	3	Tr 3	N
DSC7396-7398	4	Tr 4	N
DSC7399-7401	5	Tr 5	N
DSC7402-7404	5	Tr 5	S
DSC7405-7407	4	Tr 4	S
DSC7408-7410	3	Tr 3	S
DSC7411-7413	1	Feature 1 pre excavation showing pottery	W
DSC7414-7419	1	Feature 1 pre excavation	W
DSC7420-7430	1	Feature 1 half sectioned	N
DSC7431-7433	1	Feature 1 half sectioned	W
DSC7434-7436	1	Feature 1 half sectioned	N
DSC7437-7439	1	Trench 1 ard marks	N
DSC7440-7442	1	Trench 1 ard marks	W
DSC7443-7445	1	Trench 1 ard marks	W
DSC7446-7448	1	Trench 1 ard marks	W
DSC7449-7456		Five burnt pot sherds SF1-5	
DSC7457-7465		Burnt flat stone ? from hearth SF6	
DSCF6425		panoramic Tr 5, 4, 3	NE
DSCF6426		panoramic Tr 5, 4, 3	SE
DSCF6427		panoramic Tr 1, 2, 3	NW
DSCF6428		panoramic Tr 1	N



Trench 6

DSC7653-62	6	whole trench	NW
DSC7663-82	6	whole trench	WSW
DSC7683-88	6	whole trench	SW
DSC7689-93	6	whole trench	E
DSC7694-98	6	whole trench	NE
DSC7699-7704	6	animal burrow at west side of trench	W
DSC7705-7711	6	animal burrow at west side of trench	W
DSC7712-7716	6	Pit [1] with hazard tape in excavated section	
DSC7717-7721	6	pit [7]	E
DSC7722-7727	6	pit [7]	W
DSC7728-7732	6	pit [7]	W
DSC7733-7747	6	S-N section [7]	W

DSC7748-7758	6	stone hole NE of [7]	
DSC7759-7763	6	stone hole north edge of trench	
DSC7764-7768	6	whole trench	NW



DSC_7653



DSC_7661



DSC_7672



DSC_7690



DSC_7694



DSC_7699



DSC_7711



DSC_7713



DSC_7717



DSC_7726



DSC_7734



DSC_7747



DSC_7748



DSC_7763



DSC_7764

APPENDIX 2 CONTEXTS

Context no	Trench	Description
1	1	Pit 0.6 x 0.74m and 0.12m deep; fills 2, 3, 4
2	1	Black sandy loam and charcoal upper fill of F1
3	1	Light brown sand
4	1	Dark brown sand
5	1	Ard marks 0.05m wide
6	1, 2, 3	Palaeochannel 5m wide 0.4m deep
7	6	Pit 0.7 x 0.5m and 0.1m deep, oval, round bottomed
8	6	Black loam and charcoal
9	6	Medium grey sand; sherd black burnished prehistoric pottery

APPENDIX 3 FINDS

SF no	Trench	Context	Description
1	1	2	Pot sherd, prehistoric, burnt, rim
2	1	2	Pot sherd, prehistoric, burnt, rim
3	1	2	Pot sherd, prehistoric, burnt, body
4	1	2	Pot sherd, prehistoric, burnt, body
5	1	2	Pot sherd, prehistoric, burnt, body
6	1	2	Flat stone, burnt, part of hearth?
7	6	9	Small sherd black burnished prehistoric pottery

APPENDIX 4 SAMPLES

Sample no	Trench	Context	Description
1	1	2	soil and charcoal fill of pit [1] sieved and discarded
2	6	2	soil and charcoal fill of pit [1] sieved and discarded
3	6	8	soil and charcoal fill of pit [7] sieved and discarded
4	6	9	sandy loam fill of pit [7] sieved and discarded