

**TOWNSEND FARM, POYNTINGTON, DORSET**  
**REPORT OF GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY AND EXCAVATIONS**  
**2010-2011**

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## TOWNSEND FARM, POYNTINGTON, DORSET

### REPORT OF GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY AND EXCAVATIONS 2010-11

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#### Summary

*Geophysical survey and trial excavations were carried out at two fields Hanglands and Fairmile, at Townsend Farm, Poyntington, Dorset by SSARG during 2010 and early 2011. Gradiometry was carried out initially in a small area at the north end of Fairmile, where Romano-British pottery had been recovered from the surface by Mr Lewis. This small test area provided clear anomalies on a rectilinear alignment. However, due to timing with the crop rotation it was not possible to expand the area to examine the limits of the features. A limited ploughzone sampling exercise situated over the area surveyed produced minimal amounts of largely Romano-British pottery. This included at least one sherd associated with the very late (4-5<sup>th</sup> century AD) Black Burnished Ware industry.*

*Geophysical survey was also carried out across the entirety of Hanglands as this was in pasture. Despite having been seriously affected by ploughing produced evidence of linear cut features and an extensive area of disturbance which included what appear to be curvilinear structures which may represent roundhouses. Test excavation was carried out positioned over three anomalies with the aim of locating and characterising the geophysical anomalies, understanding the quality, preservation and potential of the archaeological resource, and gaining some chronological understanding of the site. Trenches 1 and 2 successfully identified the features which they were positioned on, part of an enclosure ditch and a curvilinear gully respectively. The pottery recovered from these features was later prehistoric and LIA/RB. Both trenches demonstrated that ploughing had probably produced a degree of truncation of features. Trench 3 was positioned on a long north-south linear anomaly which ran along the break in slope on the eastern side of the field. This trench, on the slope contained much deeper hillwash deposits. No cut feature was recognised, but there appeared to be a terrace into the hillside with a slight build up of colluvial deposits above it, which corresponded with the geophysical anomaly.*

## 1. Introduction

The work at Townsend Farm, Poyntington, Dorset was prompted by Mr Gareth Lewis in 2010, who had found a selection of pottery and burned stone whilst metal detecting in the northern end of a field called Fairmile, owned by Mr Nathan Hopkins. SSARG was invited to carry out a geophysical survey and exploratory excavation. Geophysical survey was carried out over a small area of Fairmile, but could not be extended due to the timing and crop rotation. A small surface sampling exercise examined the same area. Geophysical survey was also carried out in the adjacent field, Hanglands and excavation of three trial trenches took place in October 2010. It had been intended to carry out additional geophysical survey and evaluation, but it was subsequently not possible to arrange further access to the site.

### *Site Location, Topography and Geology*

The site is centred on Grid Reference ST 649 210, and covers two fields known as Hanglands and Fairmile. The bedrock geology in Hanglands is Fuller's Earth Rock Member – Limestone, which forms the promontory of which it consists, whilst Fairmile is Fuller's Earth Formation - Mudstone (BGS 2016). The soils are shallow loamy lime-rich free draining soils.

One field, to the west (Hanglands), covers the apex of a promontory c. 125m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) at the north end) with the eastern field boundary slightly down slope (c. 110-115m-aOD). There is a steep drop to the west and the land slopes away to the south (c. 100m aOD). This field was in grass. The second field (Fairmile), to the east, had spring barley sown in late 2010. Fairmile comprises the western side of a dry valley to the north of the source of a stream which runs north-south down towards the village of Poyntington (**Figure 1; Plate 1**). The slope is moderate from c. 125m to c. 95m aOD, north to south and generally c. 115m –c. 100m aOD west east creating a south east facing slope.



**Plate 1.** Fairmile, from the head of the dry valley looking south towards the village of Poyntington

Fig 1: Location of surveys

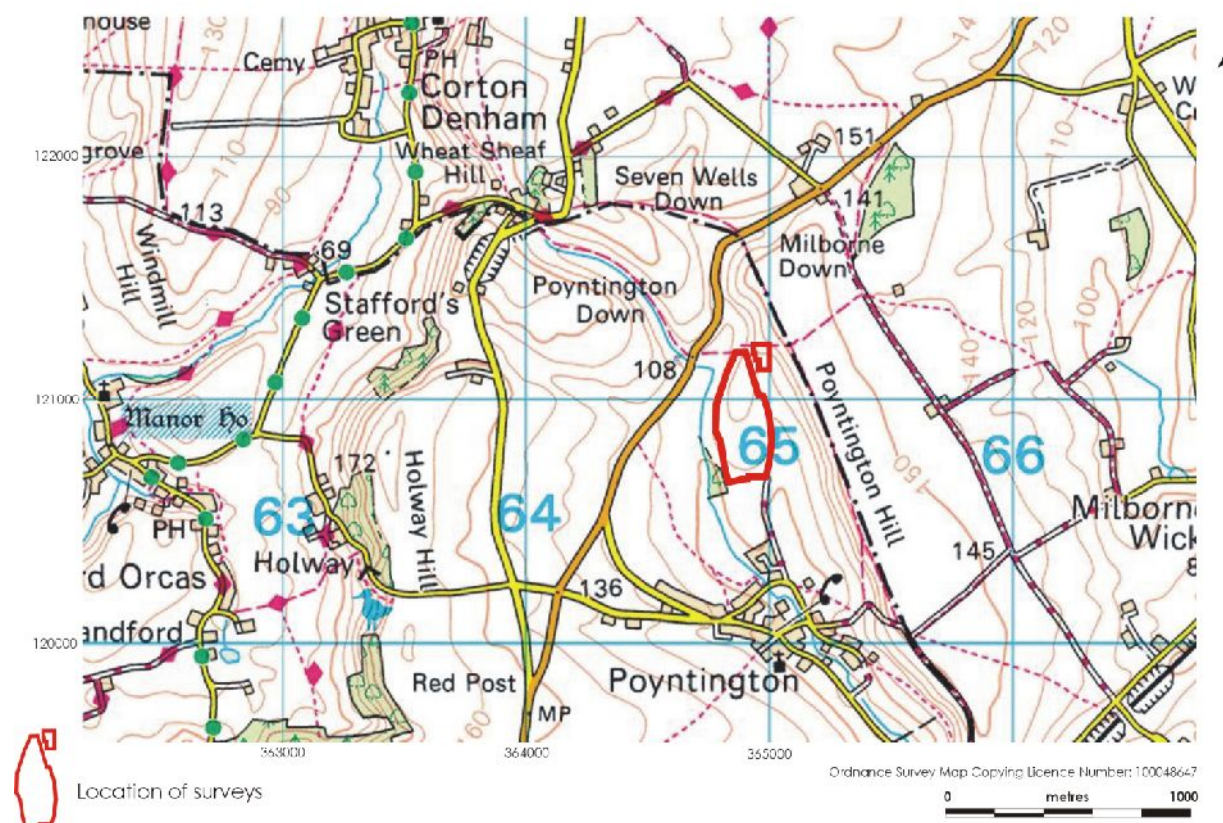


Figure 1. Site location (Dave Dukin).

## 2. Archaeological background

The current parish of Poyntington has had a complex history, having been part of the Horethorne Hundred, Somerset in Domesday and remaining part of Somerset until 1888. Poyntington transferred from the diocese of Bath and Wells and the Archdeaconry of Wells to the diocese of Salisbury and the Archdeaconry of Sherborne in 1937. The current parish and county boundary runs along the top of Poyntington Hill immediately to the east of the site, and follows the route of a Late Saxon herepath (Davey 2005, 102). The village of Poyntington c. 1km to the south of the site, is situated around the water courses and was held at Domesday in 1086 by William of Lestre from Robert, Count of Mortain. It consisted of land for three ploughs, meadow, pasture, a mill and 10 households. The church is of 12<sup>th</sup> century origin (RCHME 1974, 186) although earlier origins have been suggested. The Manor House and Court House, close to the church both have late medieval origins and there are medieval lynchets in the south-east part of the parish (RCHME 1974, 188-189). Poyntington has been suggested as a location for the Battle of Peonnum referred to in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for AD660 between the West Saxons under Cenwalh and the Britons (Kerslake 1876).

A number of archaeological sites are known in the Poyntington area. Apart from the medieval and post-medieval buildings within Poyntington itself, there are medieval strip lynchets as well as possible prehistoric barrows and fieldsystems. An unexplored promontory hillfort is known from Milborne Wick to the east (Table 1).

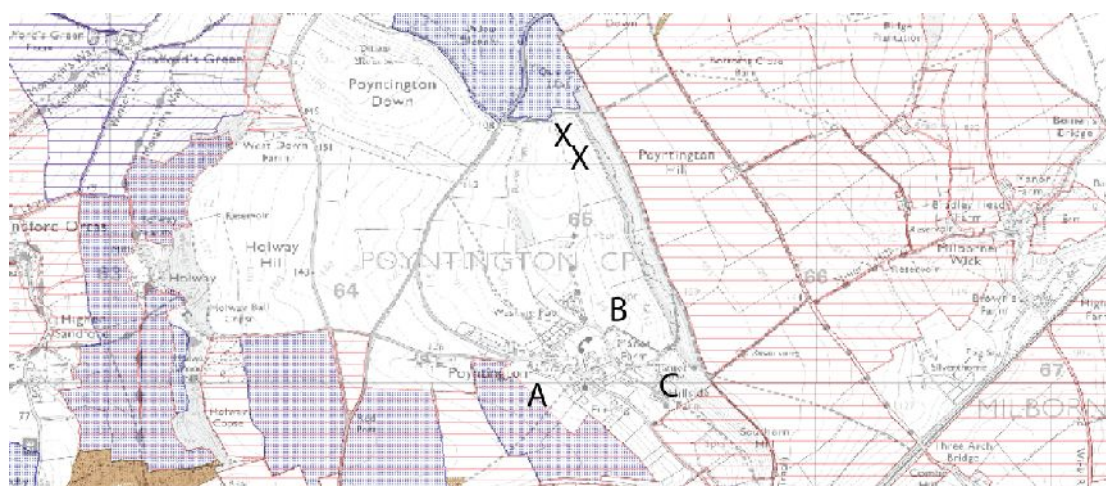
**Table 1: Prehistoric and Medieval sites in Poyntington. NB \*this area surveyed and excavated by SCEP (see below).**

Grid Reference	Site type	Period	Reference
ST 604 214	Enclosure	? Prehistoric	Pastscape
ST 644 205	Long Barrow?	?Neolithic	Pastscape
ST 6506 2122	? Barrows	Bronze Age	Pastscape
ST 671 206	Promontory hillfort	Prehistoric	VCH Somerset 1911
ST 646 215	Fieldsystems	Prehistoric?	Pastscape
ST 656 196	Strip lynchets and 'Celtic' field lynchets	Medieval and ?prehistoric	Pastscape
ST 6428 2141*	Pillow mounds and barrows	Medieval and BA	Grinsell 1982
ST6555 1900	Strip Lynchets	Medieval	Pastscape
ST 6565 1983	Lynchets and strip lynchets	Medieval	Pastscape
ST 6547 1947	Strip lynchets	Medieval	Pastscape
ST 652 202	Shrunken Medieval Settlement	Medieval	Pastscape

There are also a number of recorded find spots of Romano-British pottery within Poyntington parish (**Table 2; Figure 2**), although there are no finds recorded for the parish in the Portable Antiquities Scheme database. The site is immediately to the south of Poyntington Down, which had extensive gradiometry and some excavation as part of the South Cadbury Environs Project (SCEP) (Tabor 2008). Although most features examined as part of that work were Late Bronze Age and Iron Age in origin, scattered Romano-British pottery was noted in the topsoil in test pits.

**Table 2: Romano-British pottery find spots in Poyntington.**

Grid Reference	Site type	Reference	Comment
ST 6476 1988	Findspot	Pastscape - reported 2000	Along the track of a water pipe, 1951.
ST 6510 2033	Findspot	Bean 1950:78	On the surface near the ford north of Poyntington Manor
ST 653 199	Findspot	Leech 1982: 259	'in Yeovil Museum' but now lost (James Gerrard pers.comm.)



**Figure 2: Location of find spots of Romano-British Pottery in Poyntington parish. X= The Townsend Farm material, A= ST648 199, B= ST 651 203, C= ST 653 199. NB The recorded medieval shrunken settlement lies between findspots B and C in the vicinity of the manor house.**

Metal detecting had previously produced two Roman coins from Hanglands around NGR 364834 120975. Whilst detecting, in the north-western corner of Fairmile, Mr Lewis noticed further material, largely burned stone and pottery, and gathered a sample. On further examination by SSARG, two concentrations of material were noted, largely on the upslope side adjacent to the north-west hedge boundary. There is a notable scatter of limestone on the surface at 364963 121042. This coincides with the area that most of the Romano-British pottery came from, and some pieces appeared dressed. Additionally there were burnt stones present.

The locations of previously recognised Romano-British material evidently cluster around the outskirts of the modern village of Poyntington, and may have some association with the former medieval settlement. The new find spots are further up a north/south dry valley that drops away to the spring above the site of the former medieval settlement and manor. This begs the question of whether the current distribution of finds immediately around the village is fortuitous, or whether the later settlement's co-location with the Romano-British remnants indicate some form of real relationship.

### **3. Aims and Objectives**

The purpose of the work was to:

- Identify the extent and characterise the nature of archaeological features and deposits
- Assess the condition of the archaeological resource and its research potential
- To clarify the chronology of features and deposits.

### **4. Methodology**

A gradiometer survey was carried out in the northern end of Fairmile, but could not be extended due to the cropping regime. It did not prove possible to return to complete the work in the field. The survey of the neighbouring Hanglands was able to cover most of the field, apart from the areas where the terrain was too steep. A number of artefacts had previously been recovered from this part of the field, which had prompted the survey. A limited programme of ploughzone sampling was therefore undertaken in Fairmile, covering the same area which was covered by the gradiometry survey. This involved shovel pitting and entailed use of the same grid as the geophysical survey. At each grid point (every 20m) screening 40 litres of soil through a 10mm mesh sieve to retrieve and note all finds.

Targetted trial excavation was subsequently carried out within Hanglands. The trenches were based on targets identified from the geophysical survey, whilst taking into account the need to retain undisturbed a significant portion of the archaeological resource. The three trenches were located using the original geophysical grid- to ensure correct positioning. Excavation was carried out by hand (including topsoil removal) and recorded in accordance with the SSARG excavation recording system using standardised context/feature forms. A unique series of context numbers was allocated and relationships between contexts were noted, together with relevant stratigraphic information. Features were recorded by section at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20. Site plans were produced at scales of 1:20. A comprehensive photographic record of digital images was also created. Finds were washed (where appropriate), bagged and catalogued by material type.

## 5. Results

### *The Geophysical Survey – Liz Caldwell*

#### *Fairmile*

A small test survey in Fairmile (**Figures 3 & 4**), the field to the north-west, revealed a system of contiguous rectilinear positive and negative magnetic anomalies on a northeast-southwest alignment. Readings are suggestive of a stone structure with possible associated structures/enclosures.

#### *Hanglands*

The results are dominated by an extensive network of linear anomalies suggesting multi-phase activity on the site. At least four major systems are distinguishable by their orientation. The readings are generally within the range for ditches with thermo remanent or high organic content, and are consistent with those for field boundaries and enclosures. There is also a small grouping of curvilinear anomalies suggestive of circular structures southeast of the centre of the field. A weak but significant linear trend on an east-west alignment crosses the eastern side of the field, with readings and appearance consistent with those for plough marks. The results also reveal a number of other linear anomalies which are of differing alignment to each other and to the dominant linear systems.

There is a general scatter of non-linear anomalies across the survey area which are within the range for pits/cut features containing thermo remanent/organic material. Some of these appear concentrated in and around specific linear and curvilinear anomalies, suggesting an association. Some of these anomalies have a strong magnetic signature exceeding 20nT which is within the range for significant thermo remanent features, e.g. hearths or features with a fired or ferrous magnetic content. These appear to be concentrated around the central area of the field at the highest topographical point.

The major ferrous magnetic anomaly to the west of the field is due to a former quarry.

#### *Historic mapping – Clare Randall*

It is notable that when considering the gradiometer survey in relation to the boundaries indicated on the 1839 Tithe Map, there appears to be little correlation. Whilst some of the later boundaries coincide (for example along a short west-east section in the south-west corner of the field) or appear to be arranged on a similar alignment (for example a west-south-west to east-north east boundary in the centre of Hanglands), which appears parallel to a geophysical anomaly, they do not coincide. This may relate to inaccuracy of the surveying of the Tithe Map, however, other boundaries of the same Tithe Map field are not visible at all. The assumption therefore has to be that the vast majority of linear, and probably many other features, have a pre-19<sup>th</sup> century origin.

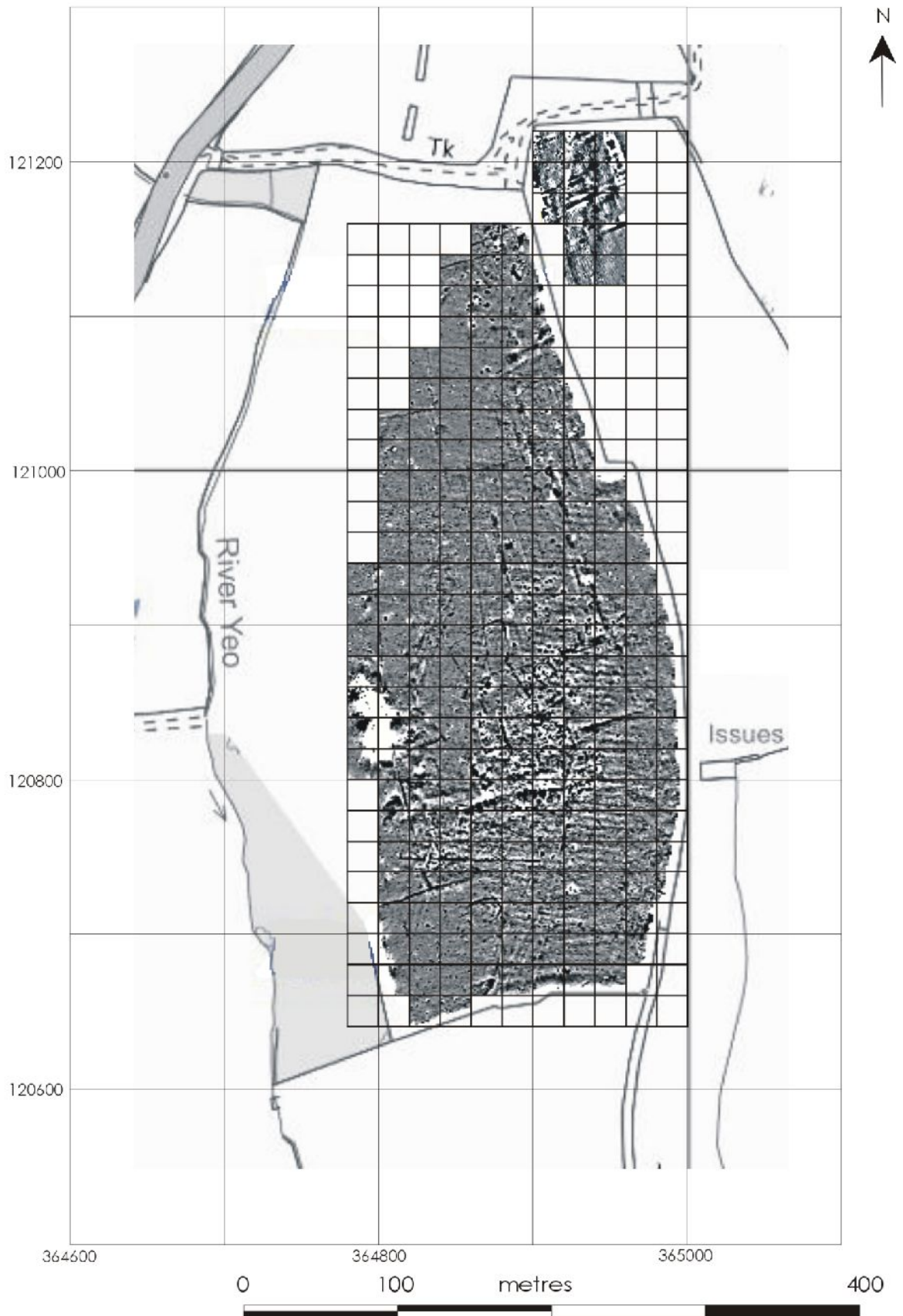


Figure 3: Gradiometer survey.



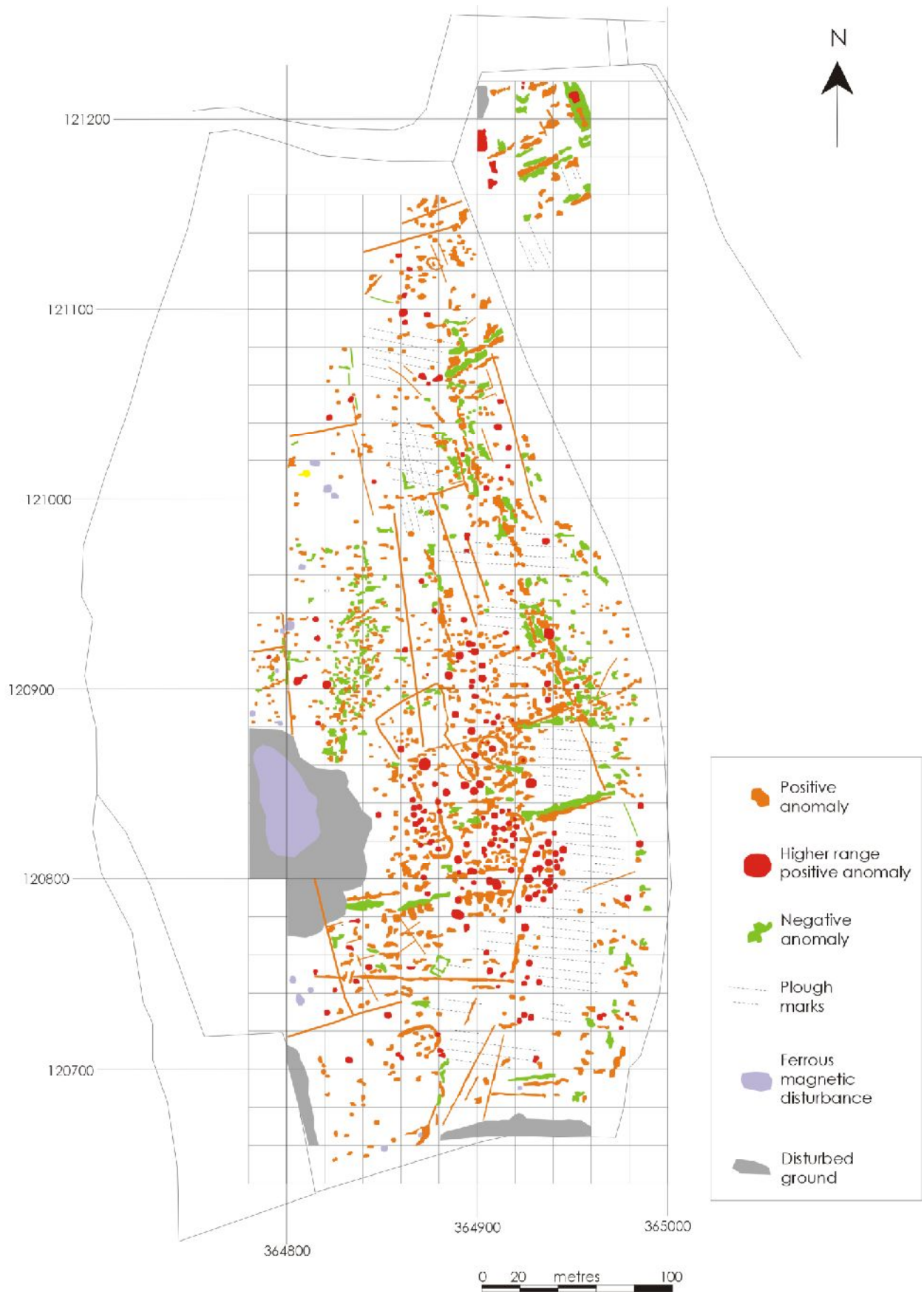


Figure 4: Gradiometry interpretation

*Surface collection in Fairmile*

The project was prompted by the hand collection of a variety of material by Mr Lewis and on a subsequent visit by SSARG members. Materials recovered included hand-made ceramic building materials, animal bone, flint, and Romano-British pottery which included BB1, a sherd of Savernake ware and a sherd of South East Dorset Orange Wiped Ware (from NGR 364923 121166), which provided a Late 4<sup>th</sup>–early 5<sup>th</sup> century date. Three coins were also recovered (see Section 6).

*Ploughzone sampling in Fairmile*

This exercise produced a small selection of post-medieval and Romano-British material, but at low levels which did not produce any noticeable concentrations of material in any one location. Given the location of the area on a slope at the head of the valley, with material having been retrieved non-systematically by the original finder in much larger quantities upslope, it is suspected that there has been a considerable degree of soil movement. It is suspected that the material retrieved from the area over the geophysical anomalies is likely to be derived from upslope (see comments on colluviation below with respect to Hanglands). The more substantial pieces of material retrieved upslope may be from deposits which have been disturbed by ploughing close in to the modern hedge line.

*The exploratory excavation in Hanglands*

Three test trenches, 5m x 1m were excavated by hand in Hanglands (**Figure 5**), all arranged on a east-west alignment, and positioned to examine anomalies noted on the geophysical survey at NGR 364880 120900 (TP1), 364917 120920 (TP2) and 364935 120940 (TP3). A context summary, with a provisional phasing is included in Appendix 1.

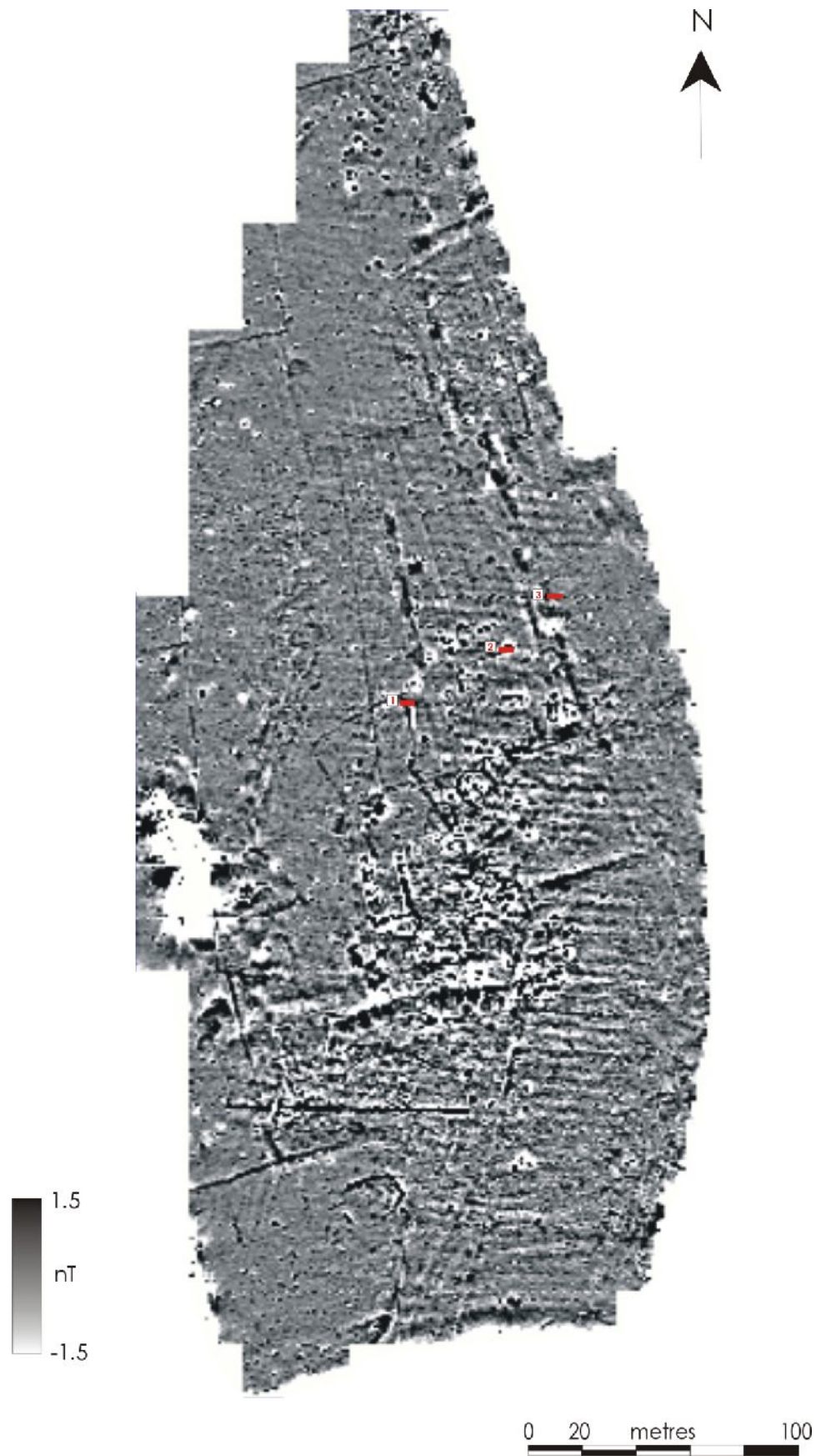


Figure 5. Trench locations

Features were identified in Trench 1 and Trench 3 (**Table 3**) which corresponded with anomalies on the gradiometry, with an additional feature in Trench 2.

**Table 3: Feature details**

Feature	Feature No	Description	Contexts
Ditch	F1001	Linear cut on a north-south alignment with a moderately shallow and concave side to the west, and a steep straight side on the west side, 2.20m wide and 0.58m deep. Cut into the natural, the initial fill (005), was a yellow-brown silt largely devoid of stones. This appeared to have been re-cut with a steep concave boundary, and filled with (004) which was similar but contained a considerable quantity of limestone and burned limestone. An upper fill (002) also contained more limestones.	(1002), (1003), (1004)
Gully/ditch	F2002	Linear cut on a east-north-east to west-south-west alignment with straight sides and flat base 0.48m wide and 0.22m deep. A shallow single fill (2002) of grey red yellow brown sandy clay silt with medium-large angular limestones burnt stone and charcoal flecks.	(2002)
Posthole	F2001	A sub circular shallow cut with steep sides, 0.48m in diameter and filled with yellow red brown sandy clay silt with limestones and sandy limestones, and burnt stones.	(2003)

Trench 1 (**Plate 2**) had been located to examine a linear anomaly which appeared to be a north-south aligned element of a sub-rectilinear enclosure. A ditch, F1001 corresponded completely with this anomaly. The entire feature was 2.20m wide and almost 0.60m deep (**Figure 6 & 7; Plate 3**), with a gently sloping concave side on the west. This cut was filled with a largely stone free silt (005) and was 0.41m deep. F1001 had apparently then been re-cut on the same alignment, but with a moderately steep concave western side, which more closely mirrored the steep cut into the natural limestone on the eastern side. This re-cut was 1.40m wide and 0.58m deep and filled with a similar yellow-brown silt, but which contained a considerably greater quantity of limestones, burned and unburned. A small selection of material was recovered from the top and sub-soil in Trench 1, but not from F1001.

Hanglands was laid to pasture, but was known to have been previously ploughed. In Trenches 1 and 2, on the plateau, the topsoil (contexts (1001) and (2001)) was a yellowish/reddish brown sandy silt with large number of angular and sub angular small to medium limestones. In Trench 3, the soil matrix of the topsoil (3001) was similar, but contained fewer, smaller and less angular limestone fragments. The topsoil in Trench 1 overlay a subsoil (1002) with a similar matrix, also containing large numbers of limestones as well as burnt material and cultural material, which overlay the natural limestone (1003). In Trench 2 the topsoil directly overlay the natural limestone (2004). In Trench 3, the limestone natural (3004) was overlain by a possible buried soil (3003) and hillwashes (3002) and (3005).



Plate 2. Trench 1 (facing W, 1m & 2m scales)



Plate 3. Trench 1, Ditch F1001, (facing N; 2m scales)

Poyntington - Hanglands 2010 TP 1 Plan

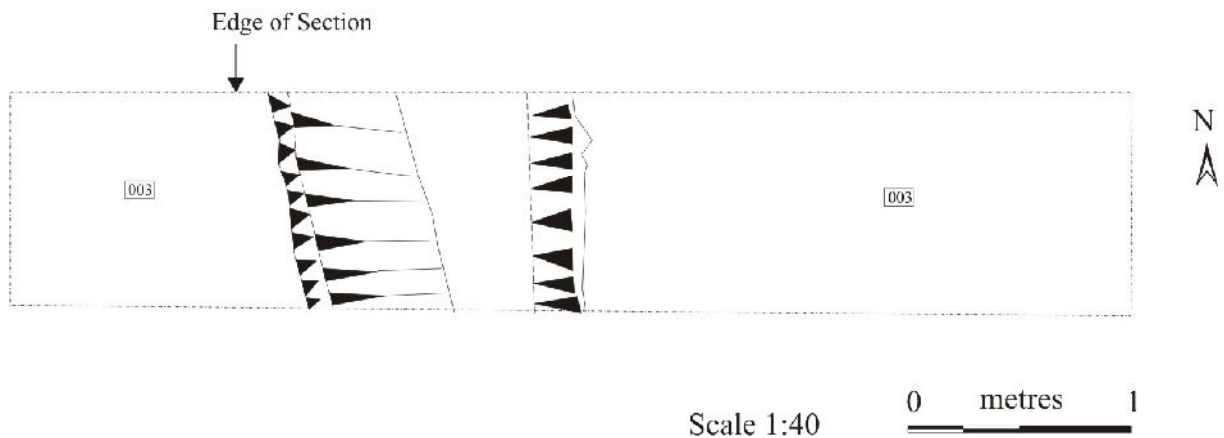
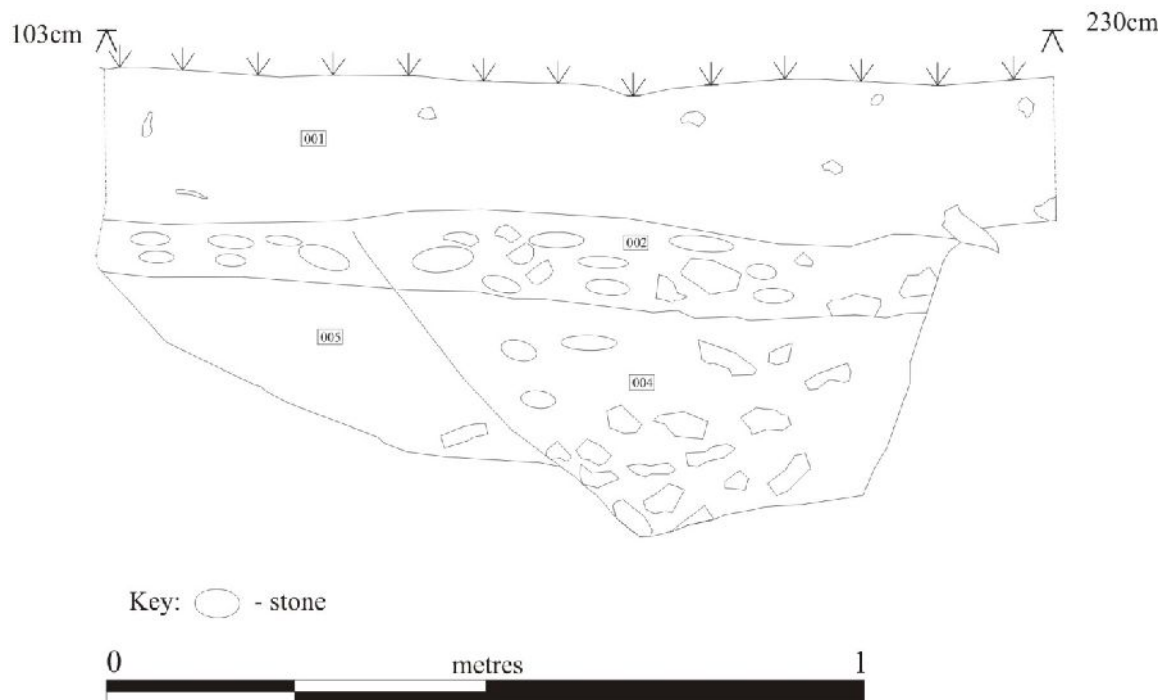


Figure 6. Plan, Trench 1

Poyntington - Hanglands 2010 TP 1 South-facing Section  
F001 1:10

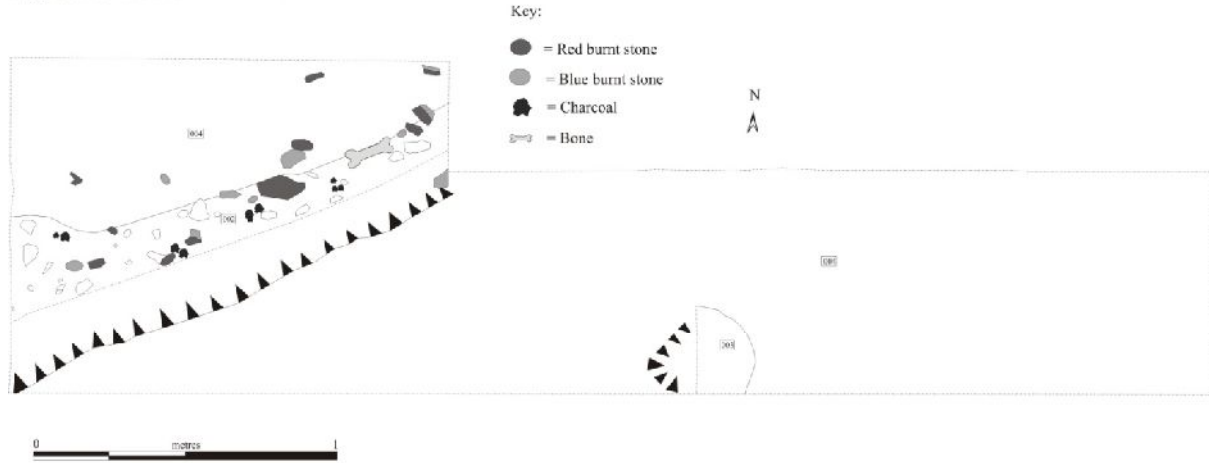


**Figure 7. Section, Trench 1**

Trench 2 was positioned over an area of more amorphous geophysical anomalies, in order to characterise them. A gully or shallow linear (F2002) was located which corresponded with one anomaly. This was on a broadly east-north-east to west-south-west alignment, and the trench was extended by 0.5m on the north side of the western end to see it more clearly in plan (**Figure 8; Plate 4**). It had straight sides and a flat base and was 0.48m wide and 0.22m deep. A shallow single fill (2002) of sandy clay silt contained some medium-large angular limestones as well as burnt stone and charcoal flecks. This context contained a number of sherds of later prehistoric pottery, animal bone and a single small fragment of vessel glass. A posthole or small pit (F2001) was also located in this trench (**Figure 9; Plate 5**), comprising a sub-circular shallow cut with near vertical sides, 0.48m in diameter, and contained a similar fill to F2002, including burnt stones. The exact nature of both of these features is difficult to discuss as they both appeared to be heavily truncated.

Trench 3 (**Figure 10; Plate 6**) was situated on the east facing slope towards the eastern boundary of Hanglands. It was positioned over a diffuse linear anomaly on the geophysics. This trench contained a subsoil (3002) of reddish yellowish brown sandy silt with moderate fine and medium sub-angular limestones which was 0.30m thick, interpreted as a colluvial layer. This sealed a similar layer (3003), which had built up on the natural limestone (3004). The natural was exposed in a strip across the centre of the trench (**Plate 7**), with another silty build up to the east of it. The location where it was exposed corresponded to the anomaly on the geophysics, and it seems likely that this represented a cultivation terrace as it followed the contour of the hill.

Hanglands 2010 TP 2 Plan Dn2 1:20

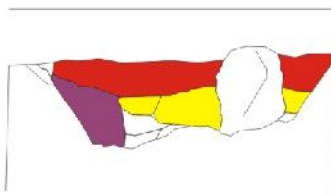


Hanglands 2010 TP 2 Dn3  
SE-facing Section 1:20



Figure 8. Plan, Trench 2

Hanglands 2010 TR 2 W-facing Section  
Feature 003 Scale 1:10



Key:

- = Sandy/red brown soil
- = Sandstone
- = Sandy rubble & sandstone

Hanglands 2010 TR 2 Plan Feature 003  
Scale 1:10

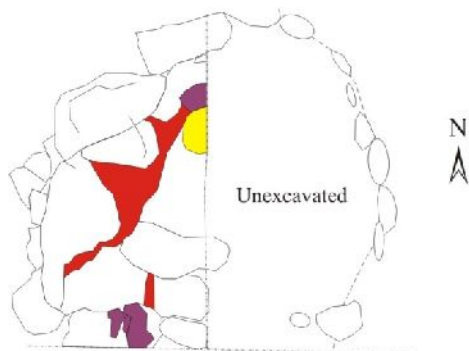


Figure 9. Plan and section F003, Trench 2





Plate 4. Trench 2, Gully F2002 (facing N; 1m & 2m scales)



Plate 5. Trench 2, pit/posthole F2001 (facing E; 1m scale)

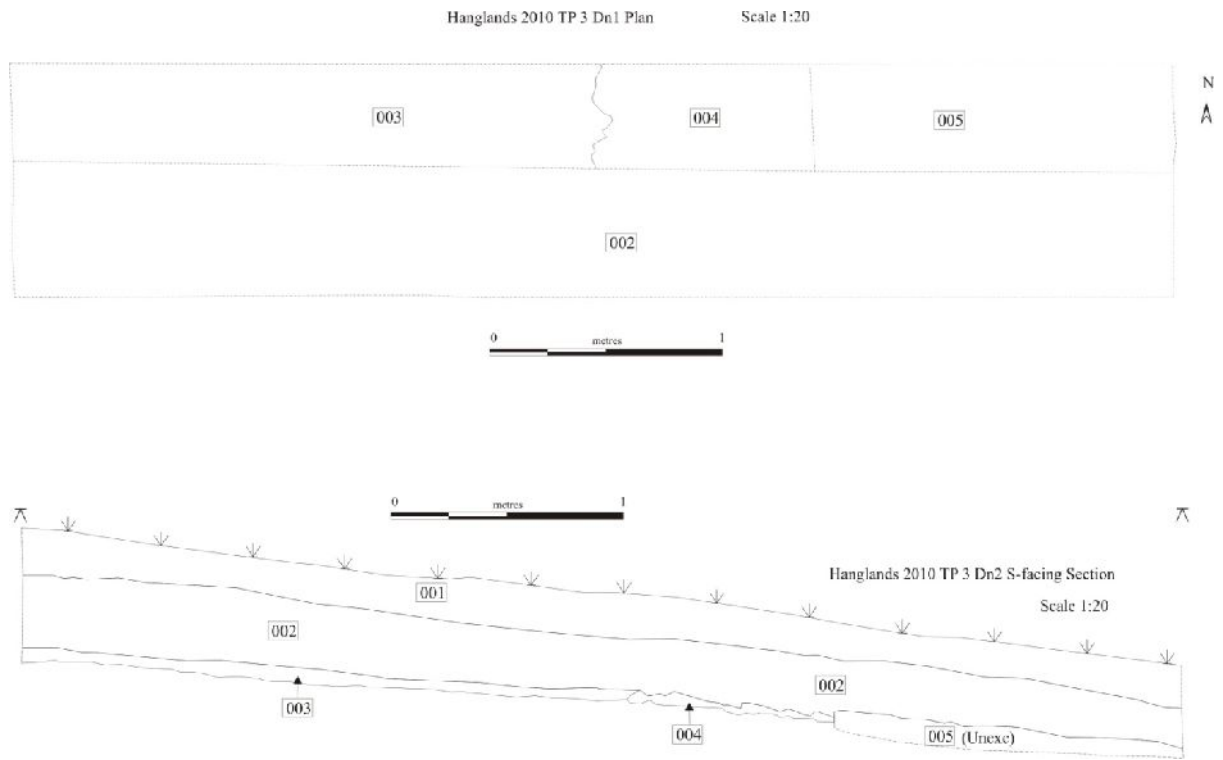


Figure 10. Trench plan and section, Trench 3



Plate 6. Trench 3 (facing W; 1m & 2m scales)



Plate 7. Trench 3, lynchet and hillwashes (facing N; 2m scale)

## 6. The Finds

### *The Pottery from the evaluation excavations, Clare Randall*

A total of 42 fragments of pottery were recovered from the three trenches (**Table 4**), almost half of it post-medieval in date, and the majority of the material from the topsoil. The material was examined primarily to determine the potential dates of features. No further work is needed on this assemblage.

16 sherds of post-medieval pottery were recovered, 15 from topsoil contexts and one small fragment of bone china in posthole (2003). This selection of material included probably locally produced glazed coarsewares, as well as 19<sup>th</sup> century transfer print table ware, white china, and imported glazed stoneware (**Table 4**).

**Table 4: Pottery**

Date	(1001)	(1002)	(2001)	(2002)	(2003)	(3001)	(3002)	Total
Prehistoric			1	5			1	7
MIA-LIA			3	3				6
LIA/RB			7	4			1	12
RB		1						1
Post-med	5		5		1	5		16
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>42</b>

A single very small and abraded sherd of probably Romano-British pottery came from layer (1002). A total of twelve undiagnostic, probably wall, sherds were identified as Late Iron Age/Romano-British sandy fabric. All but one of these came from Trench 2, with seven sherds from the topsoil and four

from the fill of F2002. The sherds from the topsoil were small and abraded, those from F2002 less so. A single sherd was recovered from the colluvial deposit in Trench 3.

Seven sherds were identified as prehistoric, in different fabrics, variously including calcite, flint, limestone and platy shell. Almost all of these sherds were small and very heavily abraded. They may be Iron Age in date, with some conceivably earlier. All but one sherd was from Trench 2, with five fragments coming from the fill of F2002. Their condition implies that they may have been redeposited. A single sherd came from the colluviums in Trench 3. Trench 2 also produced six sherds of shell tempered pottery which can be assigned a Middle Iron Age-Late Iron Age date. Three sherds came from the topsoil and three from F2002, and the largest and freshest prehistoric sherd, a wall fragment, came from this feature.

#### *Surface collected pottery, James Gerrard*

A single rim from an everted rim pie-crust decorated jar probably of Wessex Archaeology Type 12. The fresh sherd weighs 51g and has a single pre-firing perforation. The fabric appears consistent with South- East Dorset Orange Wiped Ware. These vessels have been discussed by Gerrard (2010) where they are argued to be one of the latest components of the Roman period Pole Harbour pottery industries. A date in the range of c.AD350-450 is appropriate for the sherd. Its appearance at Poyntington is of some interest as this is beyond its current known distribution in southern and eastern Dorset.

#### *The human remains, Clare Randall*

A single fragment of human bone was recovered from the topsoil of Trench 1. This comprised part of the proximal shaft of a left third metacarpal. The proximal end was fairly abraded, and the breaks at the distal end of the fragment (about mid-shaft) have a slightly ragged appearance indicating that the breakage occurred when the bone was no longer fresh. The bone condition is however good, with a Behrensmeyer score of 1.

#### *Faunal remains, Clare Randall*

A total of 22 fragments of animal bone were recovered (**Table 5**), 21 from Trench 2 and one from Trench 3. All of the material was fragmented and poor-average in condition. Cattle and sheep/goat were identified as well as cattle-sized and sheep-sized mammal bone, but more than half of the material came from topsoil contexts. The rest of the material came from the fill of F2002, the later Iron Age gully. Little can be said about this limited assemblage, but the presence of cattle and sheep/goat is to be expected in this period. A range of body parts was present, as well as evidence for gnawing (indicating the presence of dogs); aging information was limited. Whilst the material was fragmentary it indicates that should more material be recovered from this site it would be likely to have some research potential.

**Table 5. Faunal remains**

Species	Context		
	(2001)	(2002)	(3001)
Cattle	1	1	
Sheep/goat	1	2	
Cattle-sized		5	
Sheep-sized	2		
Unidentified	7	2	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>

*Stone and flint, Clare Randall*

Two small pieces of a micaceous red sandstone were recovered from the topsoil (2001) in Trench 2. A larger old red sandstone fragment with one flat face came from the topsoil (3001) of Trench 3. A total of three pieces of flint were also found in topsoil contexts. One very small chip came from Trench 2. A small unworked flake came from (3001) and another piece may be a plough damaged fragment of core. None of this material is inherently dateable, but it is likely that the flint and Old Red Sandstone fragment are later prehistoric in origin.

*The coins, Ciorstaidh Hayward Trevarthen*

Three coins were recovered from the topsoil in Fairmile and are identified in **Table 6**. These are all 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> century in date.

**Table 6. Coins**

Ruler	Description	Mint	Reference	Reece Period	Date (AD)
Claudius II	Obverse: illegible – Bust, right radiate Reverse: [IOVI VICTO]RI – Jupiter standing left holding sceptre in left and thunderbolt in right Diameter: 18.1 mm Weight: 1.75 g Die axis: 6 o'clock	Rome	Cunetio cf. no. 1997	13	268-270
Theodora	Obverse: illegible – female portrait facing right, braided hair Reverse: [PIETAS ROMANA] – Pietas standing facing, holding infants Diameter: 14.5 mm Weight: 0.74 g Die axis: 6 o'clock	-	-	17	337-340
Constans	Obverse: CONST[ANS ---] – Bust facing right, laureate, cuirassed Reverse: VICTORIAE DD [AVG Q NN] – Two Victories holding wreaths Mint mark: NR ligated/--- Diameter: 12.8 mm Weight: 1.52 g Die axis: 6 o'clock	Arles	LRBC Pt I, No.454	17	341-346

*Other finds, Clare Randall*

A small selection of other finds came largely from topsoil contexts (**Table 7**). Most of this material was non-diagnostic and does not require further analysis.

A total of six fragments of ceramic building material were recovered from Trench 2 and Trench 3. Most of this was of a clearly handmade appearance, but all was small and abraded. Five small fragments of fired clay were recovered from (1001). A single piece of clay pipe stem was also recovered from (1001).

Two nails came from Trench 3. One was a hand-made, but probably post-medieval, example from the topsoil, and one, a possible Romano-British hobnail from the buried soil (3003). One small piece of oyster shell came from the topsoil in Trench 1, whilst two pieces of post-medieval bottle glass came from (3001), with four pieces of iron slag. Three small pieces of clinker were recovered from the topsoil in Trench 2.

**Table 7. Other finds**

Material	Context					
	(1001)	(2001)	(2002)	(3001)	(3002)	(3003)
CBM		1		4	1	
Fired clay	5					
Clay pipe	1					
Iron					1	1
Shell	1					
Clinker		3				
Fe Slag				4		
Glass				2		

## 7. Discussion

The geophysical survey, surface collection and excavation of Hanglands and Fairmile have demonstrated that there is a nucleus of both prehistoric and Romano-British activity situated on the hilltop and at the head of the dry valley above the village of Poyntington. The small area of geophysical survey which could be undertaken in Fairmile has provided a tantalising glimpse of apparently regular, rectilinear anomalies which could represent a building. The surface finds and observed stone in this part of the field support the idea that a substantial Romano-British building or settlement may be present.

Metal detected material in Hanglands indicates that Romano-British activity spread upslope, although none of the features examined by the trial excavations could be dated to this period. No dateable material was recovered from the ditch in Trench 1, so the enclosure remains undated. A very small and abraded sherd of what may be Romano-British pottery came from the subsoil in this trench, but may be entirely unrelated. The gully in Trench 2 however produced clearly prehistoric pottery. This included Middle-Late Iron Age material, but also Late Iron-Age to Romano-British material. This feature therefore probably dates to the end of the Iron Age or early Romano-British period, but was evidently close to earlier Iron Age activity, given the fresh nature of the ceramic which was re-deposited in the feature. It is notable that the greatest concentration of prehistoric and LIA/RB pottery was also in the topsoil of Trench 2, which indicates that ploughing has affected the area and, given the shallowness of the features, has likely truncated the features. The only find from the very shallow posthole F2002 was a very small fragment of post-medieval pottery, but this may well be intrusive, and it is more likely that this was a largely ploughed out feature associated with the gully.

Trench 3 did not locate a cut feature which corresponded with the long north-south linear indicated on the geophysical survey. However, it did correspond with a break in the slope where there was an apparent slight terrace, which had accumulated what may be a thin buried soil on the upslope (west) side. The entire trench had a much deeper colluvial deposit which covered this. Unfortunately no dateable material was recovered from the buried soil. However, two sherds, one prehistoric, the other LIA/RB came from the colluviums, presumably derived from deposits up-hill which had been disturbed by ploughing.

Although no further work was possible in Fairmile to demonstrate the nature of the anomalies seen in the geophysics, these are clear anomalies and likely to be better preserved than those on the top of the rise in adjacent Hanglands. The surface collected finds from the area (probably generated

from where the plough is cutting into archaeological deposits along the upslope/north-west headland) are almost exclusively of Romano-British origin, with some indications of very late occupation. The indications are of a substantial structure/features dating to the Romano-British period situated in a sheltered but elevated south-facing slope on fertile agricultural land.

The surrounding landscape has been considered by John Davey, and a rectilinear field system on a north-west to south-east alignment identified which covers most of the Horethorne hundred (Davey 2005, 67; Figure 5.3), but is identifiable in the south-west, south and along the western boundary of the parish. The area of the Site appeared to have obliterated this pattern, but reconsideration of the geophysical survey indicates that there are the remnants of a rectilinear arrangement of boundaries on this alignment within Hanglands. Trench 3 sampled one of the linears included in this plan, but it remains undated. It appears that the overall system predates 1086, as the county boundary at that time appears to respect earlier boundaries, which fit with this alignment (Davey, 2005, 70). In addition, the field immediately to the north of Fairmile and Hanglands has a 'ham' name, indicative of habitation, and identified as part of a dispersed pattern of early settlement within Poyntington parish (Davey 2005, 52, 59). It may well be that there is some relationship between this indication of first millennium settlement in this area relates in some respect to this.

## **8. Conclusion**

Geophysical survey, supported by ground-truthing excavation, has demonstrated that there are extensive archaeological features and deposits in Hanglands, spreading into Fairmile. It seems likely that the extent of the archaeology in Fairmile is greater than that covered by the area which was available for geophysical survey. Trial excavation has indicated that ploughing has already affected the archaeology in Hanglands, leading to truncation of features and re-deposition of soils on the slopes. It is possible however that the potential building in Fairmile is more deeply stratified. It appears from surface collected finds, that the north end of Fairmile was the focus of activity in the Romano-British period, whilst the evidence from features in Hanglands appears to indicate an area of later prehistoric occupation, including round houses and field boundaries. Whilst dating evidence is scant, and mainly points to the later Iron Age, it is possible that the boundary seen in Trench 1 was earlier, possibly dating to the Bronze Age.

## **9. Acknowledgements**

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## Appendix 1 – Finds

## Material from trial excavation, Hanglands

Trench	Location	Context	Material	Comment
1		1001	Pottery	3 x sandy coarseware with green glaze, p-med
1		1001	Pottery	Glazed tableware with blue/white transfer print
1		1001	Pottery	Westerwald stoneware, p-med
1		1001	Fired clay	5 small fragments
1		1001	Clay pipe	1 small fragment of stem
1		1001	Shell	1 small fragment of oyster shell
1		1001	Bone	1 fragment of human metacarpal shaft
1		1002	Pottery	1 small sherd of sandy ware with grog and iron, ?RB
2		2001	Pottery	1 small abraded sherd of fine grey clay with sparse medium and large calcite and rare iron, prehistoric
2		2001	Pottery	3x small abraded sherds with platy shell and limestone pieces, Middle-Late Iron Age
2		2001	Pottery	3 x small abraded sherds of quartz fabric with flint ?LIA/RB
2		2001	Pottery	4 x small abraded sherds of sandy LIA/RB
2		2001	Pottery	3 sherds sandy coarseware with glaze, p-med
2		2001	Pottery	2 small fragments bone china with white glaze, p-med
2		2001	CBM	1 fragment brick/tile
2		2001	Lithic	2 fragments of micaceous red sandstone
2		2001	Flint	1 tiny chip of white flint
2		2001	Clinker	3 small fragments, very light, charcoal grey
2		2001	Bone	Cattle radius, Left, zones 1,2,3, Prox fused
2		2001	Bone	Sheep/goat maxilla, Left, zone 4, worn deciduous pm and molar with some siliceous calculus on buccal surface
2		2001	Bone	2 fragments sheep-sized mammal rib
2		2001	Bone	7 unidentified fragments animal bone
2	0,0	2002	Pottery	1 very small abraded sherd grey-buff fine sand with iron and rare limestone, prehistoric
2	-0,0	2002	Pottery	1 very small abraded pink-buff with rare shell, prehistoric
2	0,1	2002	Pottery	1 xbuff pink with sparse platy shell, frequent limestone and sparse flint, prehistoric
2	0,1	2002	Pottery	2 x black medium quartz, wall sherds 39.9mm 6.5mm wall &28.1mm, 4.8mm wall, prehistoric
2	-0,0	2002	Pottery	2 x black-pink with crushed shell and infrequent limestone, one small abraded, one wall sherd 54.3m, 8.5m wall, MIA-LIA
2	-0,0	2002	Pottery	1 x grey, 1 x red coarse quartz sand, LIA/RB
2	0,1	2002	Pottery	1 x black medium quartz, wall sherd 36mm x 6mm wall, LIA/RB
2	1,2	2002	Pottery	1 small abraded sherd grey-buff sandy fabric, LIA/RB
2	1,2	2002	Bone	1x cattle scapula, Left, zone 5,
2	1,2	2002	Bone	5 x cattle-sized mammal, 1 x sheep-sized mammal
2	0,1	2002	Bone	1 S/G tibia, Left, gnawed to distal, some root etching
2	0,0	2002	Bone	1 unidentified, 1 S/G deciduous 4 <sup>th</sup> Pm, stage f
2	-0,+1	2002	Bone	1 unidentified
2	0,0	2002	Glass	1 small fragment of fine blue-green vessel glass, hand made
2		2003	Pottery	1 very small fragment white china with white glaze – p-med
3		3001	CBM	4 fragments brick/tile, of which 3 appear hand made
3		3001	Pottery	1 small sherd china, white glaze, p-med
3		3001	Pottery	4 x coarseware with yellow/green glaze, p-med
3		3001	Glass	2 x modern bottle glass
3		3001	Fe	1 x handmade nail with square shaft
3		3001	Slag	4 x fragments of iron slag
3		3001	Bone	1 very small unidentified
3		3001	Stone	1 abraded piece old red sandstone with 1 flat surface, 63.5mm, 18mm thick
3		3001	Flint	1 irregular piece, dark grey with some cortex, appears plough struck but ?core fragment



3		3001	Flint	1 pale grey with darker mottles, struck flake
3	0,1	3002	Pottery	1 sherd black with red margin, large quartz, frequent flint and rare iron, prehistoric.
3	0,4	3002	Pottery	1 very small abraded sherd of quartz tempered, LIA/RB
3	0,4	3002	CBM	1 abraded fragment brick/tile, appears handmade
3	0,2	3003	Fe	Small handmade nail, square head and shaft, turned over at point

## Appendix 2 – Context summary Hanglands

Trench	Context	Date	Type	Description	Identified as	Under	Same as	Over	Length	Width	Depth
TP1	1001	Modern	Layer	Compact light yellowish reddish brown sandy silt with large number of angular and sub angular small and medium limestones	Topsoil	NA		(1002) (1003)	5m	1m	0.2m
TP1	1002	Undated	Layer	Setting of limestones and some burnt stones set in a matrix of yellowish brown sandy silt		(1001)		(1003)		0.95m	0.11m
TP1	1003	Natural	Layer	Compacted and angular and sub-angular limestone	Natural	(1003)		NA	5m	1m	NA
TP1	1004	Undated	Fill	Soft yellow brown silt with frequent limestones and very sparse charcoal and rare limestones burnt to red and blue hue	Fill of F1001	(1002)		(1003)	NA	0.9m	0.3m
TP1	1005	Undated	Fill	Yellow brown silt	Fill of F1001	(1004)		(1003)	NA	0.9m	0.21m
TP2	2001	Modern	Layer	Friable yellow red brown sandy clay silt with limestone and sandy limestone	Topsoil	NA		(2002) (2003) (2004)	5m	1m	0.10m
TP2	2002	Prehistoric IA	Fill	Compact grey red yellow brown sandy clay silt with medium-large angular limestones burnt stone and charcoal flecks	Fill of F2002	(2001)		(2004)	>2	0.48m	0.22m
TP2	2003	?Post-medieval	Fill	Compact yellow red brown sandy clay silt with limestones and sandy limestones, and burnt stones	Fill of F2001	(2001)		(2004)	0.48m		0.12m
TP2	2004	Natural	Layer	Fractured limestone	Natural	(2003) (2004)		NA	5m	1m	NA
TP3	3001	Modern	Layer	Friable dark brown sandy silt with moderate small sub-angular limestones	Topsoil	NA		(3002)	5m	1m	0.20m
TP3	3002	Modern	Layer	Compact reddish yellowish brown sandy silt with moderate fine and medium sub-angular limestones	Hillwash	(3001)		(3003) (3004) (3005)	5m	1m	0.30m
TP3	3003	Undated	Layer	Compact yellowish brown sandy silt with infrequent fine sub-angular limestones	Buried soil?	(3002)		(3004)	2.5m	0.5m	0.10m
TP3	3004	Natural	Natural	Limestone	Natural	(3003) (3005)		NA	1m	0.5m	NA
TP3	3005	Undated	Layer	Compact yellowish brown clayey sandy silt with few fine sub-angular limestones	Buried soil?	(3002)		(3004)	1.5m	1m	0.05m