# ULEY BURY GLOUCESTERSHIRE

# PROGRAMME OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING

For

# COTSWOLDS AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY PARTNERSHIP

on behalf of

**CHARLES GOLDINGHAM** 

CA REPORT: 04191

FEBRUARY 2005

# ULEY BURY GLOUCESTERSHIRE

## PROGRAMME OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING

## CA PROJECT: 1825 CA REPORT: 04191

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|-----------|------------------|------------------------|--|
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#### SUMMARY

| Site Name:           | Uley Bury  |
|----------------------|--|
| Location:            | Gloucestershire  |
| NGR:                 | ST 7847 9891   |
| Туре:                | Programme of archaeological recording                            |
| Date:                | September to December 2004                                       |
| Location of Archive: | To be deposited with Museum in the Park, Stroud, Gloucestershire |
| Site Code:           | UBG 04   |

A programme of archaeological recording was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology between September and December 2004 at the request of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership (on behalf of Mr. Charles Goldingham) at Uley Bury Hillfort, Gloucestershire. The works formed part of a management plan to enhance the nationally important Scheduled Ancient Monument and Site of Special Scientific Interest through the reduction of tree cover on the ramparts, reversion from arable to grassland throughout the hillfort interior, and the sustainable management of the resulting environment.

Although limited in scope, the programme of archaeological recording identified substantial deposits of crushed limestone, dated in the main to the Iron Age and probably representing the re-deposition of displaced bedrock during construction of the hillfort. The foundation of a Romano-British wall was also revealed on the outer edge of the hillfort's south-eastern terrace, confirming that use of the site continued into/was re-established in the Roman period.

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Between September and December 2004 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) undertook a programme of archaeological recording for the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership (on behalf of Mr. Charles Goldingham) at Uley Bury Hillfort, Gloucestershire (County Monument Glos. 54, SMR 261; centred on NGR: ST 7847 9891; Fig. 1).
- 1.2 The works formed part of a management plan to enhance the nationally important Scheduled Ancient Monument and Site of Special Scientific Interest through the reduction of tree cover on the ramparts, reversion from arable to grassland throughout the hillfort interior and the sustainable management of the resulting environment. The objective of the archaeological work was to record all archaeological remains exposed during intrusive groundworks associated with these works.
- 1.3 The archaeological fieldwork was carried out in accordance with a brief for archaeological recording (GCC 2003) prepared by Nick Russell, Historic Environment Countryside Advisor, Gloucestershire County Council Archaeology Service, and with a subsequent Archaeological Impact and Mitigation Statement and a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), both produced by CA (2004a & b) and approved by Mr Russell and Phil McMahon of English Heritage. The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Field Evaluation* issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1999) and the *Statement of Standards and Practices Appropriate for Archaeological Fieldwork in Gloucestershire* (GCC 1995).

#### The site

1.4 Uley Bury Hillfort occupies approximately 13 hectares on a natural promontory projecting from the main Cotswold escarpment, with three lines of defensive earthworks representing the artificial enhancement of the naturally sloping ground. Three entrances (at the south, east and north corners) have previously been identified (Fig. 2). The interior of the hillfort lies at approximately 235m AOD.

1.5 The underlying geology of the hillfort comprises an outcrop of Upper and Lower Inferior Oolite of the Middle Jurassic era amidst Lower Jurassic Cotteswold Sands (BGS 1970).

#### Archaeological background

1.6 Uley Bury Hillfort is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (County Monument Glos. 54). Archaeological rescue excavations during groundworks for a water pipe at the site in 1976 identified a cobbled trackway leading into the hillfort from its eastern entrance and a human inhumation of possible Roman or sub-Roman origin (Saville and Ellison 1983). A radiocarbon date obtained from a carbonised cereal grain found sealed in the construction layers of the upper terrace suggests that the hillfort was constructed, or was undergoing remodelling, in the 3rd century BC (ibid).

### Methodology

1.7 The following archaeological methodology was adopted following consultations between Messrs Russell and McMahon. The location of all groundworks is presented as Figure 2.

#### Gate posts

1.8 It was agreed that 50% of the gateposts (one post, usually the slamming post, per proposed gateway) should be hand excavated by the attendant archaeologist. Each trench measured 1m x 1m in plan and was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.9m below the existing ground surface or to the top of the natural substrate whichever was encountered first. All remaining gateposts were augured to a maximum depth of 0.9m with a 300mm auger.

#### Water supply

1.9 An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the mechanical excavation of the replacement water supply and associated water trough at the north-west limit of the site. Throughout the remainder of the site, the new water pipe was to remain on or above ground level.

#### Boundary markers

1.10 An archaeological watching brief was maintained during insertion of six stone boundary markers to demarcate land currently held by Mr Goldingham and Stroud District Council (stone boundary markers are also currently utilised in the south-east corner of the site). The boundary stones were located along the removed fence line within existing post holes wherever possible.

- 1.11 Written, graphic and photographic records were compiled in accordance with the CA Technical Manual 1: *Excavation Recording Manual* (1996). Deposits were assessed for their palaeoenvironmental potential in accordance with the CA Technical Manual 2: *The Taking and Processing of Environmental and Other samples from Archaeological Sites* (2003). All artefacts recovered were processed in accordance with the CA Technical Manual 3: *Treatment of Finds Immediately After Excavation* (1995).
- 1.12 Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner the finds and site archive will be deposited with Museum in the Park, Stroud, Gloucestershire.

#### 2. RESULTS

- 2.1 This section provides an overview of the evaluation results; detailed summaries of the recorded contexts and finds are to be found in appendices 1 and 2 respectively.
- 2.2 Of the 21 trenches excavated, ten revealed no archaeological features; the remainder exposed crushed limestone deposits associated with the construction of the Iron Age rampart, with the foundation of a Romano-British wall also being identified.

### Trenches without archaeological features

Trenches 1, 4, 14, 15 and 16-21

2.3 In trenches 1, 14 and 15 the cracked and worn upper surface of the oolitic limestone bedrock was exposed 0.3m-0.6m below the present ground level (BPGL), sealed by subsoil, which was in turn covered by modern topsoil. In trench 4, the natural bedrock was revealed 0.17m BPGL and was directly sealed by modern topsoil. Trenches 16 to 21 inclusive for the boundary stones were typically excavated to 0.35m BPGL and did not penetrate the modern topsoil.

#### Iron Age rampart

#### Trenches 2 and 3

2.4 Natural bedrock was revealed 0.74m BPGL in trench 2 and 0.47m BPGL in trench 3, in both instances it was heavily cracked on its upper surface. It was sealed by a deposit of crushed/powdered limestone measuring 0.3m deep in trench 3 and 0.4m deep in trench 2. Within trench 2 silty subsoil 203 was revealed overlying the crushed limestone deposits and was itself sealed by modern topsoil. In trench 3, the crushed limestone was directly overlain by the topsoil.

#### Trenches 5, 6, 8, 11 and 13

2.5 Trenches 5, 6, 8, 11 and 13 were characterised by relatively deep deposits of crushed/powdered limestone. The natural limestone bedrock was revealed in trenches 6 and 13 approximately 1m BPGL and was sealed by up to 0.8m of crushed limestone. Within trench 6 this latter deposit was cut by modern service run 604. Despite being excavated to over 1m BPGL, crushed limestone was the earliest deposit encountered in trenches 5, 8 and 11, with the bedrock remaining unexposed.

Trench 7 (Fig. 3)

2.6 Initially encountered 0.45m BPGL, the limestone bedrock, 704, was found to be severely cracked and fragmentary, being completely broken away in the eastern part of the trench. It was sealed by a layer of loose, but substantial limestone fragments, 703, which was in turn covered by 0.35m of crushed/powdered limestone 702. This was then sealed by modern topsoil 701.

### *Trench 10* (Fig. 4)

2.7 Limestone bedrock 1003 was encountered 0.45m BPGL and was found to step down in the south-western half of the trench by approximately 0.15m. This step corresponded in location with the break of slope between the hillfort's western bank and the flat lower terrace. The bedrock was sealed by up to 0.2m of crushed/powdered limestone 1002, which was in turn covered by 0.25m of modern topsoil 1001.

#### Trench 12

2.8 Trench 12 was not located on the oolitic limestone but on the surrounding Cotteswold Sand which was revealed 0.8m BPGL, and took the form of mottled green compacted clayey sand, 1204. This natural substrate was sealed by 0.44m of crushed/powdered limestone 1203, which was in turn covered by 0.16m of subsoil and modern topsoil.

### Iron Age rampart and Roman wall

Trench 9 (Figs. 5 and 6)

- 2.9 The earliest deposit exposed in trench 9 comprised crushed limestone fragments 911 revealed 0.84m BPGL. It was sealed by more substantial limestone fragments in a yellow sandy matrix, 910, which was in turn covered by a further broken limestone deposit, 904, measuring 0.3m depth.
- 2.10 Cutting deposit 904 was construction trench 905 for limestone wall footing 906. This structure was aligned north-east/south-west adjacent to the outer edge of the hillfort's upper terrace and survived to a height of 0.4m.
- 2.11 Subsoil deposit 903 abutted the wall footing and was cut by 'robber' trench 908 which was infilled with limestone rubble 909. The 'robber' trench and its backfill were sealed by modern topsoil 901/902.

#### The Finds

- 2.12 A limited number of Iron Age pottery sherds were recovered from the substantial crushed/powdered limestone deposits common outside of the hillfort's interior (from deposits 303, 802, and 1303). The sherd recovered from deposit 303 is the only one with recognisable form and is late Iron Age in date (100BC-AD43). However, two sherds of 18th-19th century pottery were recovered from crushed limestone deposit 502 within trench 5.
- 2.13 A coin dated to Tetricus II (270-273AD) was retrieved from limestone wall footing 906 in trench 9.

#### The Biological Evidence

2.14 Although assessed for their palaeoenvironmental potential, no deposits were sampled during the programme of archaeological recording.

#### 3. DISCUSSION

Iron Age

- 3.1 The banks and terraces of Uley Bury Hillfort were found to be characterised by substantial deposits of crushed limestone overlying the fragmented oolitic limestone bedrock. It is likely that this material represents the re-deposition of displaced bedrock during the construction of the hillfort. The identified deposits certainly bear comparison with those revealed during the previous excavation at the site (see Saville and Ellison 1983, 22-3)
- 3.2 Although only broadly dated to the Iron Age, the pottery recovered from the redeposited limestone supports the 3rd century BC radiocarbon date obtained previously for the hillfort's construction/remodelling (see archaeological background above). A single sherd of identifiable late Iron Age pottery was also retrieved from these deposits suggesting that further remodelling was possibly undertaken in the period 100BC-AD43. However, it should be noted that two sherds of 18th to 19th century pottery were recovered from crushed limestone deposit 502 within trench 5. Although these sherds may well be intrusive in nature (extensive root action was noted throughout this trench) the recovery of these post-medieval sherds is perhaps more indicative of the erosional processes that the hillfort terraces have undergone since their construction in the middle Iron Age.

#### Roman

3.3 The foundation of a limestone wall was identified within trench 9 aligned approximately north-east/south-west along the outer edge of the hillfort's south-eastern upper terrace. A coin of Tetricus II (270-273AD) established this wall as a Romano-British construct, providing further evidence for the hillfort's use in the Roman period (see 'Archaeological background,' above). The extent and function of

the wall was not established due to the small area of excavation. Furthermore it remains undetermined when the wall was demolished, as no artefactual material was retrieved from the robber trench.

#### Post-medieval

3.4 Fragments of post-medieval clay pipe stems and ceramic building material recovered from bedrock damage/weathering layer 204 in trench 2 suggest that the interior of the hillfort has been extensively disturbed by post-medieval agricultural activity, notably modern ploughing regimes.

#### Conclusions

3.5 Although limited in scope, the programme of archaeological recording at Uley Bury hillfort provided further information on the Iron Age construction of the monument. It also confirmed that use of the site continued into the Roman period and illustrated the potential for previously unknown Romano-British structures to be present.

### 4. CA PROJECT TEAM

4.1 Fieldwork was undertaken by Derek Evans, Alan Wright and John Webster. This report was compiled by Derek Evans. The illustrations were prepared by Liz Hargreaves. The archive has been compiled by Derek Evans, and prepared for deposition by Sam Inder. The project was managed for CA by Clifford Bateman.

### 5. **REFERENCES**

- BGS (British Geological Survey) 1970 Geological Survey of Great Britain (England and Wales), Solid and Drift Sheet 251: Malmesbury
- CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2004a Uley Bury, Gloucestershire: Statement of Archaeological Impact and Mitigation

- CA 2004b Uley Bury, Gloucestershire: Written Scheme of Investigation for a Programme of Archaeological Recording
- GCC (Gloucestershire County Council Archaeology Service (Environment Department)) 2003 Brief for an Archaeological Watching Brief
- Saville A. and Ellison A. 1983 'Excavations at Uley Bury Hillfort, Gloucestershire 1976' in: A
   Saville (ed.) Uley Bury & Norbury Hillforts: Rescue Excavations at two
   Gloucestershire Iron Age Sites Western Archaeological Trust Excavation
   Monograph 5

#### APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

| Trench | 1   |
|--------|---|
| 101    | Topsoil – grey-brown clayey silt. Depth 0.26m   |
| 102    | Subsoil – brown clayey silt with common limestione inclusions. Depth 70mm                                   |
| 102    | Cracked and fragmented limestone – appears to be broken bedrock material. Depth 0.1m                        |
| 103    | Crushed/powdered limestone. Depth 80mm  |
| 104    | Limestone bedrock   |
| 105    | Cut for modern disturbance associated with modern telegraph pole to SE of trench. Cuts 102, 103 and         |
| 100    | 104; not visible through 101 due the smilarity of fill 107 to 101   |
| 107    | Fill of modern disturbance 106; same as 101   |
| Trench |   |
| 201    | Turf line. Depth 30mm   |
| 201    | Topsoil – grey-brown clayey silt. Depth 0.21m   |
| 202    | Subsoil – brown clayey silt with common limestone inclusions. Depth 0.11m                                   |
| 203    |   |
|        | Broken limestone in a brown silty matrix; disturbance of 205. Depth 0.4m<br>Limestone bedrock               |
| 205    |   |
| 206    | Fill of 206 – modern plastic water pipe (defunct) in a silty matrix   |
| 207    | Serrvice cut for modern water pipe (defunct). Cuts 203 and 204  |
| Trench |   |
| 301    | Turf line. Depth 30mm   |
| 302    | Topsoil – grey-brown clayey silt. Depth 0.15m   |
| 303    | Crushed/powdered limestone in a silty matrix. Depth 0.29m   |
| 304    | Limestone bedrock   |
| Trench |   |
| 401    | Turf line. Depth 30mm   |
| 402    | Topsoil – grey-brown clayey silt; noticeably higher frequency of limestone inclusions than similar deposits |
|        | elsewhere. Depth 0.14m  |
| 403    | Limestone bedrock   |
| Trench |   |
| 501    | Topsoil – grey-brown clayey silt with common limestone inclusions. Depth 0.14m                              |
| 502    | Crushed/powdered limestone; extensive root action visible. Depth >0.85m                                     |
| Trench |   |
| 601    | Topsoil – grey-brown clayey silty with some limestone inclusions. Depth 0.23m                               |
| 602    | Crushed/powdered limestone; extensive root action visible. Depth 0.8m                                       |
| 603    | Limestone bedrock   |
| 604    | Cut for modern services (defunct). Cuts 302 and 603   |
| 605    | Modern metal service pipe (defunct) within 604  |
| 606    | Backfill of service channel 604 – similar to 602, but with a higher silt content and slightly darker colour |
| Trench |   |
| 701    | Topsoil – grey-brown clayey silt with limestone inclusions. Depth 0.1m                                      |
| 702    | Crushed/powdered limestone in a silty matrix. Depth 0.35m   |
| 703    | Limestone rubble – small-medium limestone fragments, much more substantial than 702. Depth >0.65m           |
| 704    | Limestone bedrock – visible in western half of trench only; very cracked and fragmented; steeply and        |
|        | unevenly sloped   |
| Trench |   |
| 801    | Topsoil – grey-brown clayey silt. Depth 0.2m  |
| 802    | Small-medium limestone chippings in a matrix similar to 801. Depth >0.8m                                    |
| Trench |   |
| 901    | Turf line. Depth30mm  |
| 902    | Topsoil – grey-brown clayey silt. Depth 0.22m   |
| 903    | Similar to 902, but with frequent limestone inclusions. Depth 0.1m  |
| 904    | Medium-large crushed limestone fragments, tightly packed together. Depth 0.3m                               |
| 905    | Construction cut for wall 906; cuts 904. Depth 0.1m; width 0.8m   |
| 906    | Wall footing composed of large, irregular limestone blocks. Quite disturbed, with no obvious bonding        |
|        | agent. Aligned NE/SW. Height 0.4m; width 0.5m   |
| 907    | Dark, silty backfill of construction cut 905  |
| 908    | 'Robber' cut relating to demolition of 906. Cuts 903  |
| 909    | Fill of 908 – meduim-large subangular limestone fragments in a dark silty matrix                            |
| 910    | Medium-large limestone fragments in a yellow sandy matrix. Depth 0.15m                                      |
| 911    | Crushed limestone fragments in a deep red sandy matrix. Depth > 0.1m  |
|        |   |

| Trench         | 10   |  |  |  |  |
|----------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| 1001           | Topsoil – grey-brown clayey silt. Depth 0.25m  |  |  |  |  |
| 1002           | Crushed/powdered limestone. Depth 0.2m max.  |  |  |  |  |
| 1003           | Limestone bedrock. Steps down approx. 0.15m in centre of trench from NE to SW                    |  |  |  |  |
| Trench         | Trench 11  |  |  |  |  |
| 1101           | Topsoil – grey-brown clayey silt. Depth 0.22m  |  |  |  |  |
| 1102           | Similar to 1101, but with frequent limestone inclusions. Depth 0.38m                             |  |  |  |  |
| 1103           | Crushed/powdered limestone. Depth > 0.45m  |  |  |  |  |
| Trench         | 12   |  |  |  |  |
| 1201           | Topsoil – grey-brown clayey silt. Depth 0.2m   |  |  |  |  |
| 1202           | Yellow-brown silty clay with high frequency of limestone inclusions. Depth 0.16m                 |  |  |  |  |
| 1203           | Crushed/powdered limestone. Depth 0.44m  |  |  |  |  |
| 1204           | Natural substrate – compacted mottled pale green/grey clayey sand                                |  |  |  |  |
| Trench 13      |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1301           | Topsoil – grey-brown clayey silt. Depth 0.23m  |  |  |  |  |
| 1302           | Subsoil – brown clayey silt with high frequency of limestone inclusions. Depth 0.31m             |  |  |  |  |
| 1303           | Crushed/powdered limestone; generally larger fragments than in similar deposits elsewhere. Depth |  |  |  |  |
|                | 0.51m  |  |  |  |  |
| 1304           | Broken/cracked upper surface of limestone bedrock  |  |  |  |  |
| Trench         |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1401           | Topsoil – grey-brown clayey silt. Depth 0.25m  |  |  |  |  |
| 1402           | Subsoil – brown clayey silt with common limestone inclusions. Depth 0.2m                         |  |  |  |  |
| 1403           | Limestone bedrock; upper 0.3m (approx.) is quite cracked   |  |  |  |  |
| Trench         |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1501           | Topsoil – grey-brown clayey silt. Depth 0.3m   |  |  |  |  |
| 1502           | Subsoil – brown clayey silt with common limestone inclusions. Depth 0.3m                         |  |  |  |  |
| 1503           | Limestone bedrock; upper 0.3m (approx.) is quite cracked   |  |  |  |  |
| 1504           | Service cut for modern water pipe (defunct). Cuts 1502 (same as 207)                             |  |  |  |  |
| 1505           | Fill of 1504 – modern plastic water pipe (defunct) in a silty matrix (same as 206)               |  |  |  |  |
| Trenches 16-21 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1601           | Topsoil – grey-brown clayey silt. Depth >0.35m   |  |  |  |  |

#### **APPENDIX 2: THE FINDS**

#### By Sam Inder

Small quantities of pottery, animal bone, flint, glass, clay pipe, glass and metal artefacts were recovered during excavations. A total of 21 sherds of pottery were recovered of which the majority are calcareous fabrics broadly dated to the Iron Age. A bead rim recovered from fill 303 is the only recognisable form and is late Iron Age in date. A sherd of 11th to 13th century Cotswold Oolitic ware was recovered from fill 902 alongside several sherds of residual Iron Age pottery. Post-medieval pottery comprising stoneware and glazed red earthenware was recovered from fills 206 and 502 respectively. A copper-alloy coin dated to Tetricus II (270-273AD) was retrieved from wall 906.

#### **Animal Bone**

The animal bone assemblage was in good condition although some fragments showed the early stages of weathering. The species identified were; horse, cattle, sheep/goat and pig. In context 302 there was a noticeable bias towards teeth particularly horse and cattle which may simply result from the fact that dental tissues being harder survive better. Context 902 (modern top soil) included some specimens which showed signs of root etching which occurs when material is buried at a shallow depth. A single fragment of burnt bone was observed, being black in colour it reflects combustion at a relatively low temperature. Two sheep phalanges had gnawing marks from rodent teeth. In context 909 (fill of robber cut) evidence of dog gnawing was observed and a single fragment of burnt bone of black colour was noted. Context 1303, a layer of crushed powered limestone, included a cow radius which has several fine cut marks on the inside surface close to the proximal articulation. This assemblage appears to represent domestic waste which was buried quite rapidly.

#### **Finds Concordance**

- 101 1 fragment of bottle glass (90g)
- 202 1 fragment of ceramic building material (21g)
- 203 1 flint flake (1g)
- 204 2 clay pipe stems (2g) 1 fragment of animal bone (2g); sheep. 1 fragment of ceramic building material (3g) 1 piece of coal (1g)
- 206 1 sherd of pottery (3g); stoneware Spot-date: 18th-19th century

302 26 fragments of animal bone (309g); horse, cattle, pig and sheep/goat, some fragments show signs of weathering and several have modern breaks.

1 fragment of fired clay (2g)

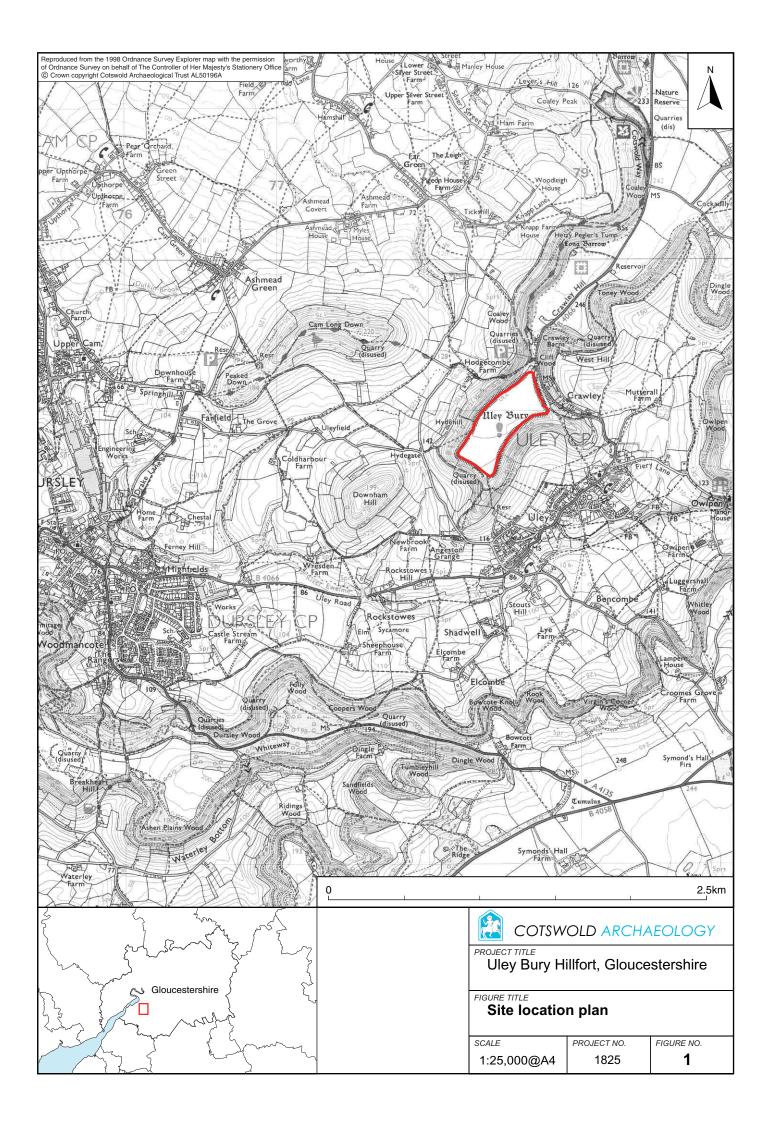
- 303 2 sherds of Iron Age pottery (12g); shell tempered Spot-date: Late Iron Age
- 502 2 sherds of post-medieval pottery (10g); glazed red earthenware Spot-date: 18th to 19th century
- 701 1 fragment of slate pencil (3g) Spot-date: Post-medieval
- 802 1 sherd of Iron Age pottery (7g); limestone tempered Spot-date: Iron Age
- 902 9 sherds of Iron Age pottery (27g);limestone/shell tempered 1 sherd of medieval pottery (23g); Cotswold Oolitic

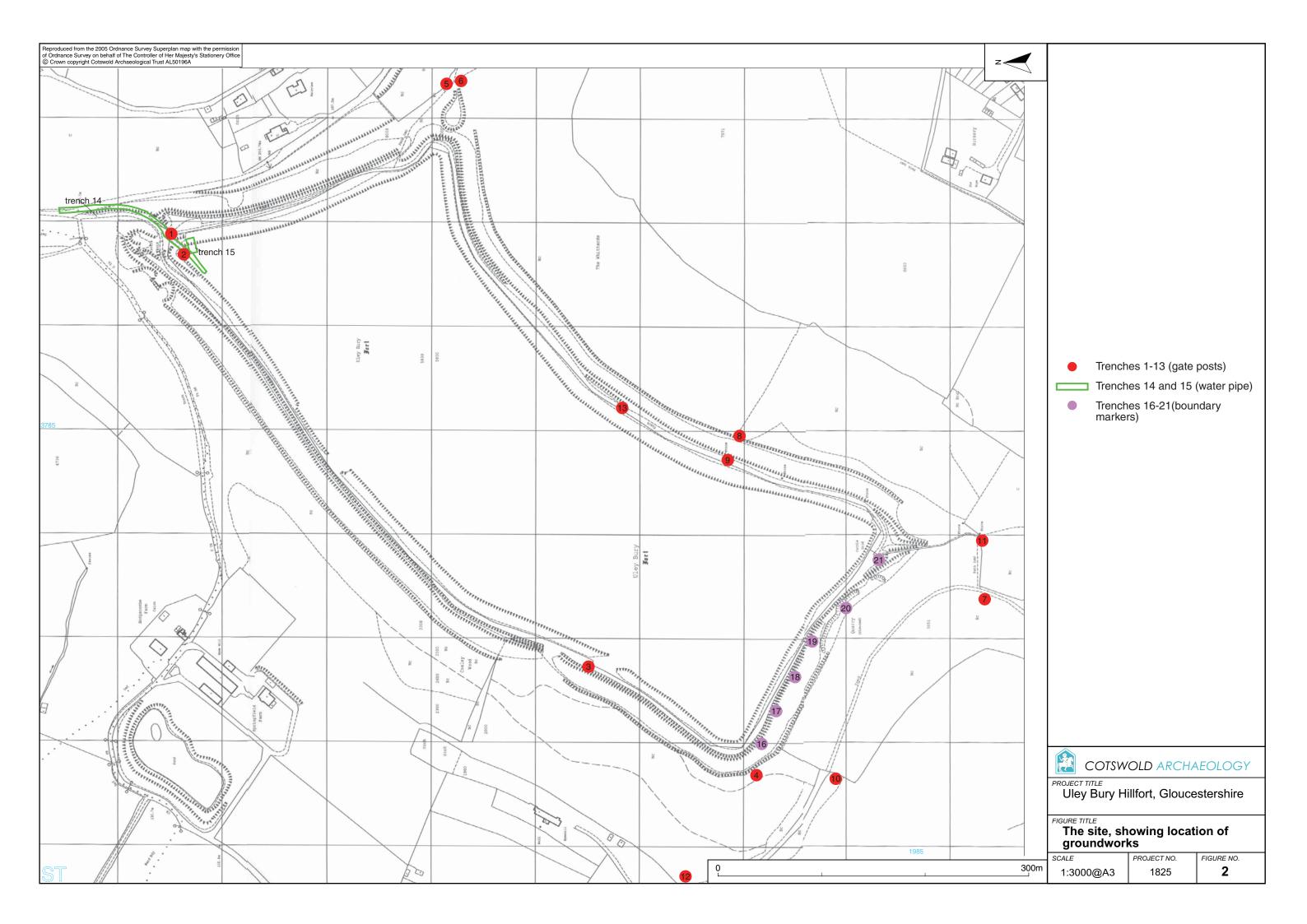
48 fragments of animal bone (120g); sheep/goat and pig, some fragments show signs of root etching, some fragments have been chopped, signs of rodent gnawing were also noted and a single fragment of burnt bone. *Spot-date: 11th to 13th century* 

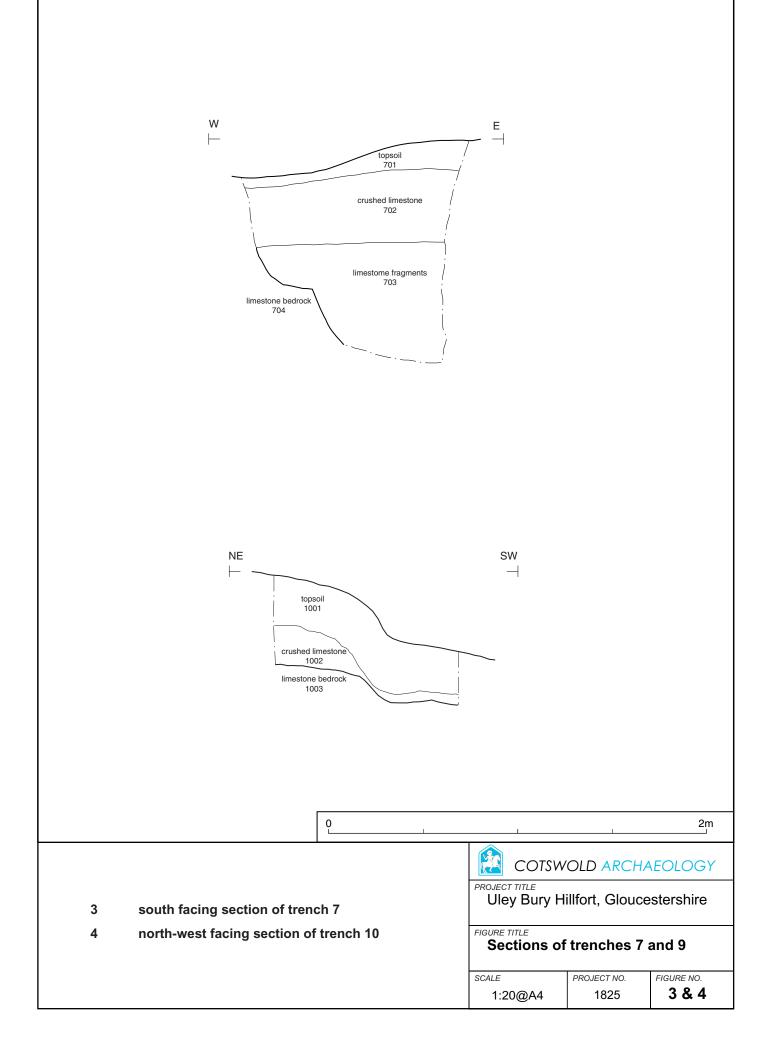
906 1 Cua coin (3g); Tetricus II 270-273AD

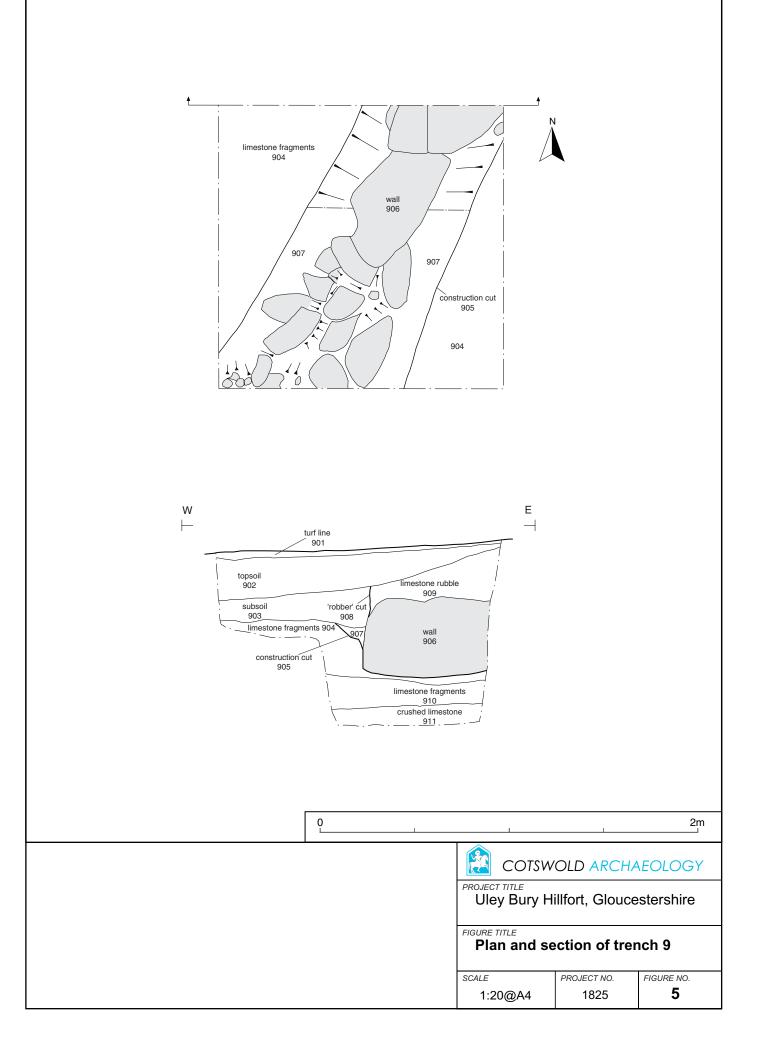
1 sherd of Iron Age? pottery (1g); shell tempered
4 fragments of animal bone (121g); horse cow sheep/goat and pig, some fragments are weathered and there are signs of gnawing by dog and a single fragment of burnt bone.
2 fragments of fired clay (4g)
Spot-date: Iron Age

4 sherds of Iron Age pottery (44g); shell tempered
4 fragments of animal bone (80g); cow and pig, cut marks present on cow radius, shaft had been chopped through.
Spot-date: Iron Age











| 6 photograph of limestone wall 906 | COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY<br>PROJECT TITLE<br>Uley Bury Hillfort, Gloucestershire |                                    |            |
|------------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|------------|
|                                    | FIGURE TITLE<br>Limestor   | FIGURE TITLE<br>Limestone wall 906 |            |
|                                    | scale<br>n/a   | PROJECT NO.<br>1825                | FIGURE NO. |