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SITES 10D, 10E AND 10F,
Viscount Way
South Marston Industrial Estate
Swindon
SN3

County of Wiltshire

An archaeological evaluation report

June 2005

REGISTERED ORGANISATION IFA

MUSEUM OF LONDON

Archaeology Service

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Viscount Way
South Marston Industrial Estate
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SN3

County of Wiltshire

An archaeological evaluation report

Site code: WT-SMA05
National Grid Reference: 418750 188585

Project Manager	Robin Nielsen
Author	Portia Askew
Graphics	Jane Dunn

Museum of London Archaeology Service

Mortimer Wheeler House, 46 Eagle Wharf Road, London N1 7ED
tel 020 7410 2200 fax 020 7410 2201
email molas@molas.org.uk

Summary (non-technical)

This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation carried out by the Museum of London Archaeology Service on the site of South Marston Industrial Estate, Swindon, Wiltshire. The report has been commissioned from MoLAS by Michael Sparks Associates on behalf of Prologis Developments Limited.

Following consultation with the Wiltshire Libraries and Heritage Archaeological Service thirty-three evaluation trenches were excavated on the site between 29th March and 5th April 2005.

Of the thirty-three trenches excavated across the site, six indicated archaeological evidence for the Iron Age and Roman periods. Of this spread, four (Trenches 1,2 4 and 6) were located in the north-west corner of the site and mainly of Iron Age date and two (Trenches 15 and 17) were in the central southern part of the site and dated to the late Roman period. Trenches 1, 2, 4 and 6 revealed pits, postholes and ditches, whilst trenches 15 and 16, revealed spreads of late Roman pottery and two stone boundary walls, one medieval and the other post-medieval.

The field evaluation helped to refine the initial assessment of the archaeological potential of the site and in light of the revised understanding of the archaeological potential it was concluded that the proposed redevelopment would have an impact on archaeological remains of local – regional significance relating to the Iron Age or Iron Age – Roman transition period, and that an appropriate mitigation strategy for these remains would need to be implemented in the form of controlled archaeological excavation.

This report details the evidence found at the evaluation stage, and lead to defining two areas, Zone 1(north-west corner of the site) and Zone 2 (central southern part of the site) for further archaeological excavation.

350 upper Catallia

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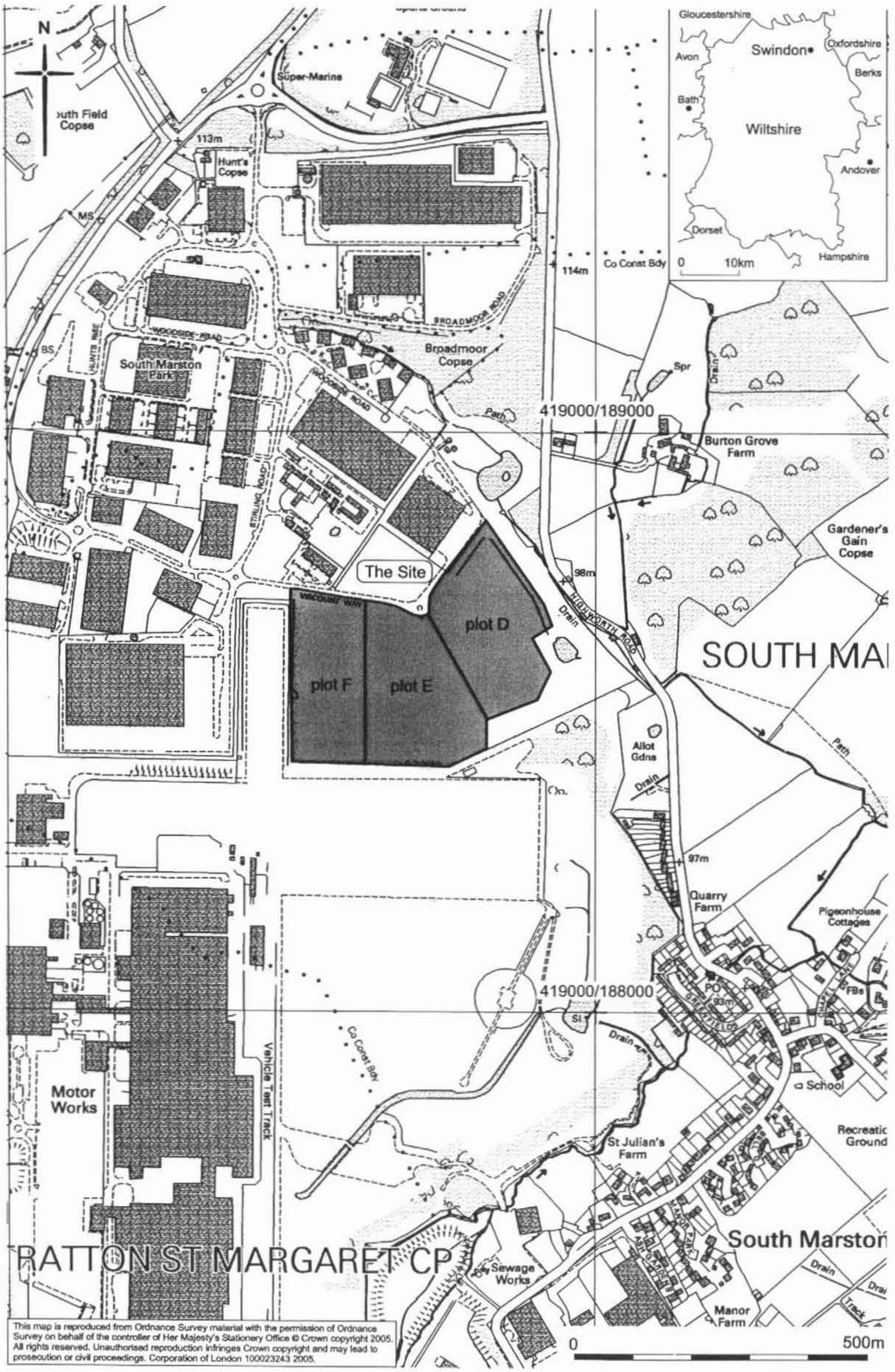

Fig 1 Site location

1 Introduction

1.1 Site background

The evaluation took place at Sites 10D, 10E and 10F, Viscount Way, South Marston Industrial Estate, hereafter called 'the site'. South Marston Industrial Estate is located just off the Highworth Road. The site is located on the southern side of Viscount Way (Fig 1). The OS National Grid Ref. for centre of site is 418485 188990. Modern ground level lies between 109.52m and 98.60m OD, with levels falling from the northwest to southeast. The MoLAS site code is WT-SMA05.

A desk-top *Archaeological assessment* was previously prepared, which covered the whole area of the site (Knight, 2005) The *assessment* document should be referred to for information on the natural geology, archaeological and historical background of the site, and the initial interpretation of its archaeological potential.

An archaeological field evaluation was subsequently carried out on thirty-three trenches between the 29th March and 5th April 2005.

1.2 Planning and legislative framework

The legislative and planning framework in which the archaeological exercise took place was summarised in the *Archaeological assessment* (see Section 2, Knight 2005) which informed the project design for the evaluation (Section 1, Nielsen, 2005)

1.3 Planning background

The site was granted planning permission (Application number S/03/00098ABB), subject to an archaeological condition (Condition 17) as follows:

> No development shall take place until the developer has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Planning Authority.
> Reason: To provide a record of any features of archaeological interest that may be revealed during construction.

1.4 Origin and scope of the report

This report was commissioned by Michael Sparks Associates on behalf of Prologis Development Limited and produced by the Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS). The report has been prepared within the terms of the relevant Standard specified by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA, 2001).

Field evaluation, and the *Evaluation report* are intended to provide information about the archaeological resource in order to contribute to the:

- formulation of a strategy for the preservation or management of those remains; and/or
- formulation of an appropriate response or mitigation strategy to planning applications or other proposals which may adversely affect such archaeological remains, or enhance them; and/or
- formulation of a proposal for further archaeological investigations within a programme of research

1.5 Aims and objectives

The aim of the evaluation was to determine the form, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains, the extent of horizontal truncation and the depth of surviving archaeological deposits. The information was used to formulate a proposal for further archaeological investigations within a programme of research.

2 Topographical and historical background

2.1 Topography

The site lies between 109.52m OD on the northwest side of the side and falls away to a height of 98.60m OD in the southeast. Natural clay is found approximately 0.30m below the current ground level (topsoil)

2.2 Prehistoric

Numerous Palaeolithic and Mesolithic flint artefacts have been recovered from the topsoil in the Kingsdown area, to the west of the site at the Kingsdown Crematorium which is situated 1.3km to the west of the site. Approximately 1km to the west of the site Neolithic worked flints including axes, blades and arrowheads have been recovered from a site to the southeast of Kingsdown Farm. One hundred and forty Neolithic worked flints, burnt flints, and a potsherd have come from Kingsdown Crematorium.

The fieldwork at the Crematorium site has also produced evidence of later occupation with 93 Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age worked flints. Abraded pottery sherds have been found to the south of Marston Copse 1.5km to the east of the site and Neolithic tools have been found in Stanton Fitzwarren.

Immediately to the south, at the Honda car plant, a group of Middle Iron Age features comprising nine linear features and three shallow pit-type features was found. A possible Iron Age pottery sherd was found during a watching brief of a water pipeline in area to the northeast of Kingsdown, approximately 1.08km to the southwest of the site.

2.3 Roman

Numerous sites along the 25km length of the A417 and A419 have produced archaeological finds from the Roman period. The most important find was near Birdlip Quarry where a farming settlement was discovered alongside Ermin Way. Three wells, a corn-drier and several hearths and ovens were excavated. The most significant discovery was a sequence of buildings between the 2nd and 4th centuries AD that showed a development from earlier circular timber structures to later stone buildings. In 1997, a digger preparing the ground for homes unearthed the remains of a Roman villa at Groundwell Ridge, to the northwest of Swindon. Further excavation revealed evidence of a vast Roman community with a 10-acre complex of sanctuaries, temples, pools and terraced gardens.

A Roman villa, which is now a scheduled ancient monument, was excavated in 1969 to the west of Stanton House, 1.7km to the northwest of the site At the Honda works

site, to the south, a watching brief by Thamesdown Archaeological Unit located a series of Romano-British field drains and possible field boundaries. Evidence of Roman occupation on the Honda car plant site has also been found in the form of pottery fragments, a possible building wall and three Romano-British linear features. Other evidence of Roman occupation in the area comes from pottery fragments recovered from the Kingsdown Crematorium site and the area to the northeast of Kingsdown Farm and a possible Roman Road has been identified on the western edge of South Marston Airfield, *c* 800m to the southwest of the site.

2.4 Saxon

South Marston is derived from the Old English *mersc*, meaning marsh, and *tun*, meaning farm or village. Apart from the entries in the Domesday Book very few other references to Swindon have survived. The only evidence of Saxon occupation near to the site was found 1.8km to the north, where a Saxon burial, which included a knife, was found in 1906 to the east of Stanton Fitzwarren.

2.5 Medieval

The site was occupied in the medieval period by a farmstead associated with Thomas le Hunt and the name Hunt's Copse Farm survived into the 20th century. The neighbouring Burton Grove Farm, *c* 600m to the northeast of the site, is also medieval in origin. Evidence for medieval occupation in the area includes the remains of at least three human skeletons, which were discovered in 1989 on the Honda works site to the south.

2.6 Post-medieval

Until very recently, South Marston was a totally agricultural community, with most of the inhabitants working on the farms in the area. In the late 18th century the site is located in an area that was once part of a large open field known as Studdy Field, showing farm buildings in the area to the northwest of Plot 10F. The tithe map of 1841 shows the enclosed field systems. The site is situated on an area that was once two fields, used as pasture and remained so until the late 1930s when it became the site of the Vickers aircraft factory. The Vickers factory continued to operate until the mid-1980s when Honda purchased the site and established a car manufacturing plant. The north–south airfield runway is visible today and is used as the car park adjacent to Plot 10F. The edge of the northeast–southwest runway defines part of the boundary of Plot 10E.

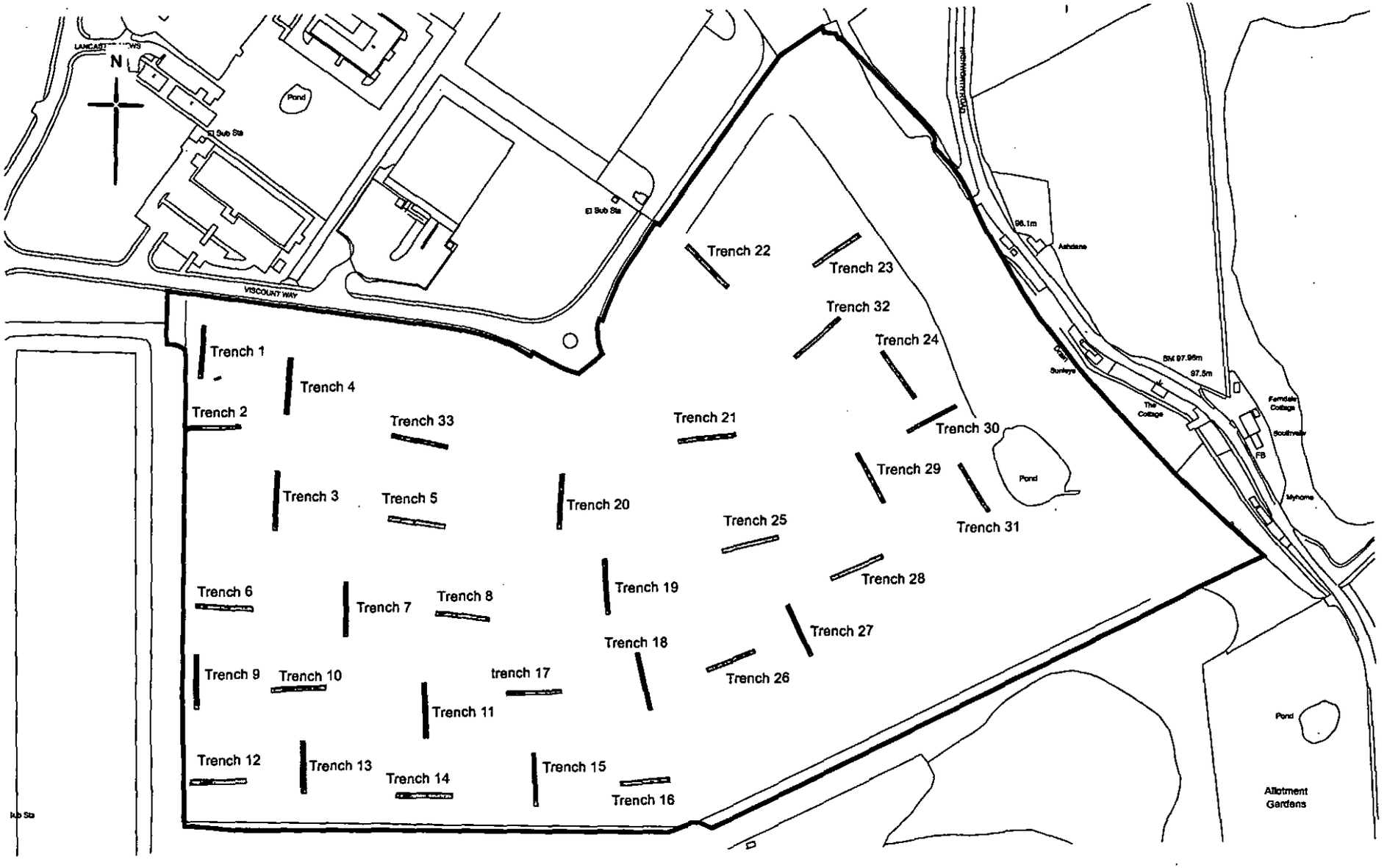

Fig 2 Trench location plan

3 The evaluation

3.1 Methodology

All archaeological excavation and monitoring during the evaluation was carried out in accordance with the preceding *Method Statement for an archaeological evaluation* (Nielson, 2005a), and the MoLAS *Archaeological Site Manual* (MoLAS, 1994).

Thirty-three evaluation trenches (Fig 2) were excavated down to the top of any archaeological survival, where it was present, by a tracked machine with a ditching bucket by contractors. Where no archaeological survival was evident excavation continued down top the top of the natural geological substrate. All work was monitored by staff from MoLAS.

The evaluation trenches were set out by the MoLAS field team. Trenches 1 to 15, 17 and 20 were located in relation to the OS grid by site engineer Martin Bullock, of Digital Terrain Surveys. The Ordnance Survey co-ordinates were used to produce a trench location plan[1]. The location of trenches 16 and 18 to 33 were recorded by the MoLAS Geomatics team and then plotted onto the OS grid, alongside the data supplied by Digital Terrain Surveys. All trenches were 30 metres long[2].

Where no archaeological deposits were encountered a written record of the natural deposits encountered was made on trench recording sheets. Levels were calculated using known heights supplied by Digital Terrain Surveys and from Temporary Bench Marks established on site by MoLAS, traversing from a height established by Digital Terrain Services on the pavement on the northern side of the site: value 106.57m OD. Where archaeological deposits were encountered a full record was made using context sheets, plans and sections, and trench recording sheets used for synopsis purposes.

Trial trenches were distributed to achieve a broad assessment of the potential of the site, within the proposed area of redevelopment. It is considered that this was achieved and a high level of confidence can be assigned to the result. There were no circumstances which mitigated against achieving this aim.

The site records can be found under the site code WT-SMA05, and are currently in the possession of MoLAS.

[1] Land at Viscount Way Drawing No DTS0102051B1, scale 1:500 dated February 2005

[2] The proposed locations of the trenches were configured according to Fig 2 in the method statement (Nielson, 2005).

3.2 Results of the evaluation

For trench locations see (Fig 2). Trenches without archaeological remains are recorded in tabular form without comment.

Evaluation Trench 1	
Location	Northwest area
Dimensions	30m by 2m by 0.26m deep
Modern topsoil level	109.52m OD (N) to 109.33m OD (S)
Base of topsoil	109.26m OD (N) to 109.07 OD (S)
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	80mm subsoil and cut features
Level of base of deposits observed	108.54 (deepest intrusive feature)
Natural observed	109.18m OD orange-yellow clay

Trench 1 revealed a group of five cut features: two ditches [16] and [18], two single postholes [8] and [12] and a double posthole [10] (Fig 3). Late Iron Age pottery was found in the fill of posthole [8], whilst the other, [12] contained pottery dating to the early Roman period and a coin, the latter not legible. Towards the southern end of the trench was a SW/NE aligned drainage or boundary ditch [16] measuring 1 metre wide by 0.40m deep. Some 4 metres to the north lay another ditch [18] measuring 1.65m wide by 0.32m deep, containing Roman pottery. Above the archaeological features as a shallow depth of subsoil, 80mm deep, sealed by a 0.26m depth of topsoil.

Evaluation Trench 2	
Location	Northwest area
Dimensions	30m by 2m by 0.30m deep
Modern topsoil level	109.15m OD (W) to 108.69m OD (E)
Base of topsoil	109.09m OD (W) to 108.63 OD (E)
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	0.24m subsoil and cut features
Level of base of deposits observed	108.52 (deepest intrusive feature)
Natural observed	108.71m OD orange-yellow clay

Trench 2 revealed a curvilinear ditch [4], cut through by a smaller one [2] and a ditch terminal [14] (Fig 4)). A 2.85m long by 1.10m wide and 0.36m deep, curved length of ditch was exposed. Pottery from the fill was dated to the late Iron Age/early Roman period. The later ditch [2], measured 2.25m long by 0.66m wide and 0.27m deep but did not produce any datable material. To the east and aligned in a north-south direction was a 1.28m long by 0.94m wide and 0.65m deep ditch terminal, containing pottery dated to the Late Iron Ag/early Roman period. Above the archaeological features was a 0.24 depth of subsoil, sealed by a 60mm depth of topsoil.

Evaluation Trench 3	
Location	Northwest area
Dimensions	30m by 2m by 0.32m deep
Modern topsoil level	108.39m OD (N) to 107.77m OD (S)
Base of topsoil	108.17m OD (N) to 107.55 OD (S)
Depth of deposits seen	0.10m subsoil
Natural observed	108.07m OD orange-yellow clay

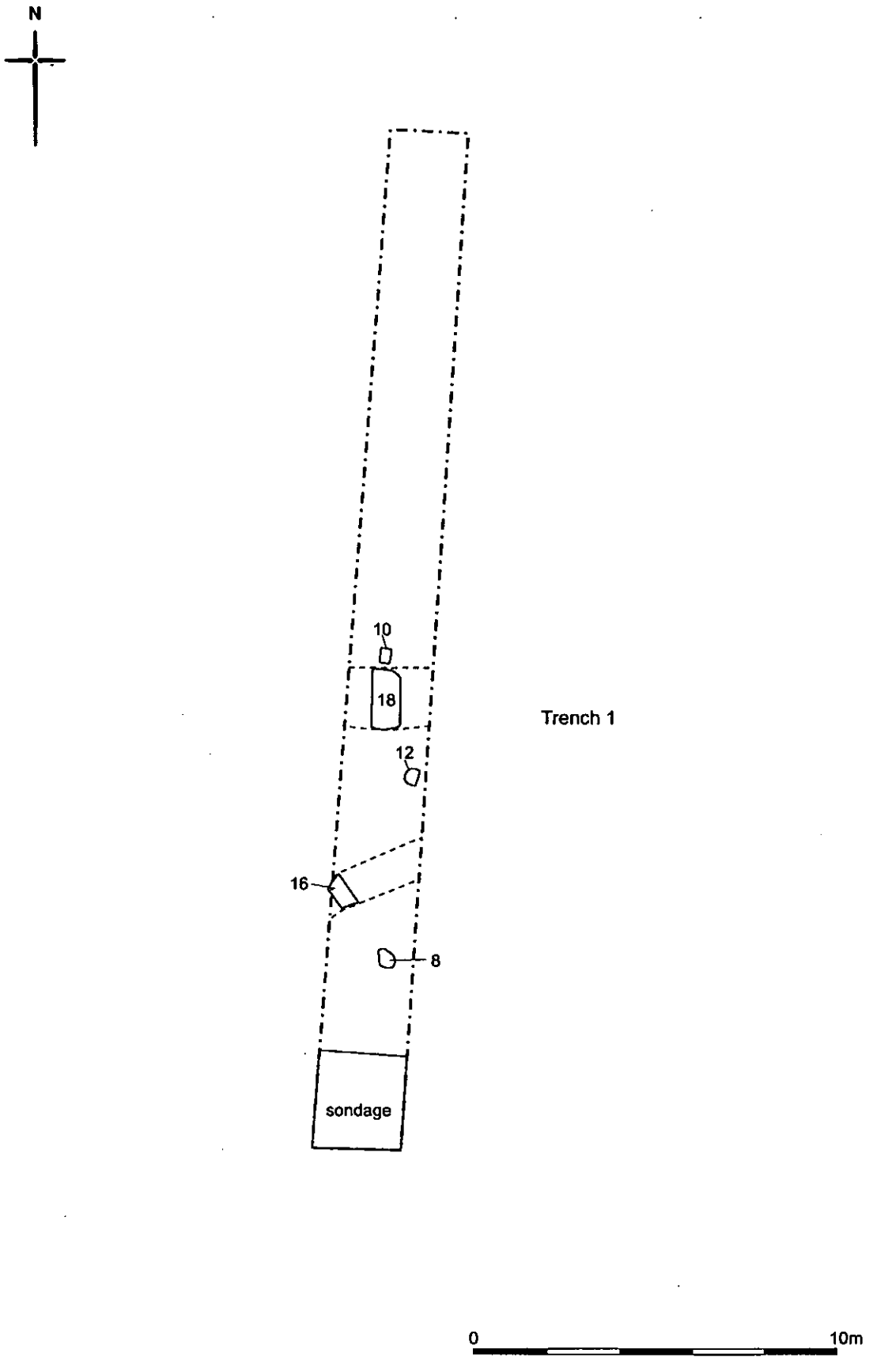

Fig 3 Trench 1 Archaeological survival

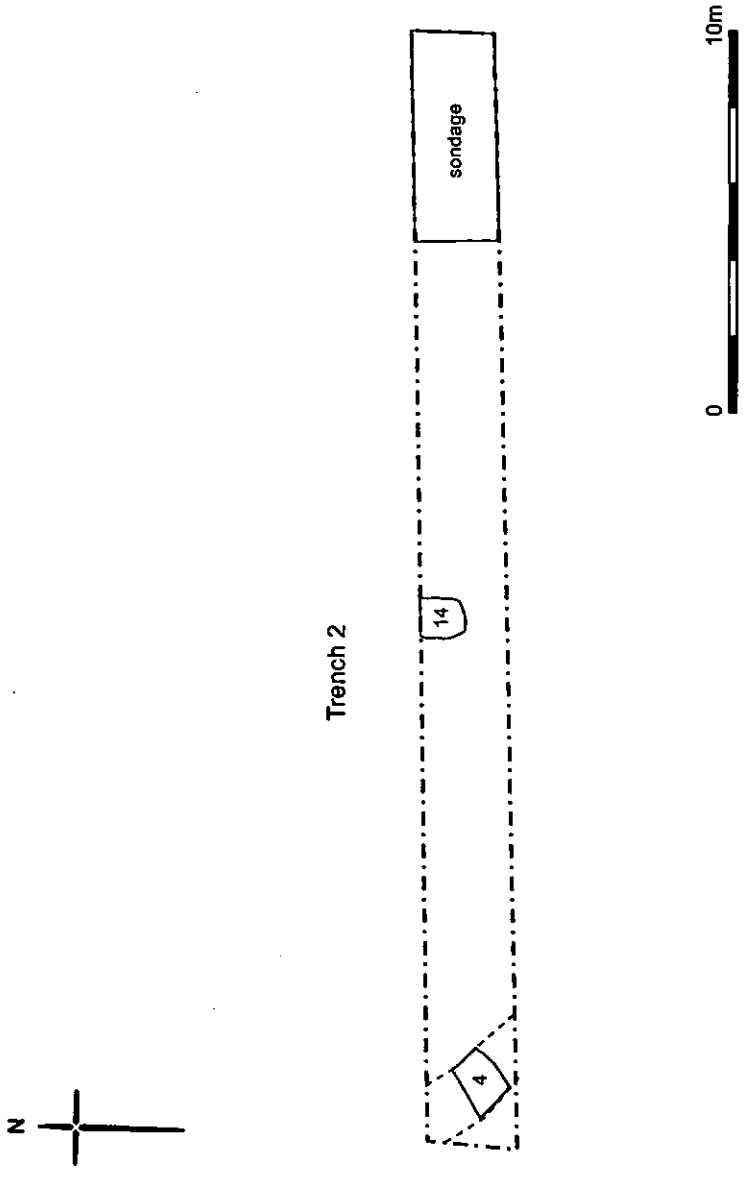

Fig 4 Trench 2 Archaeological survival

Evaluation Trench 4	
Location	Northwest area
Dimensions	30m by 2m by 0.40m deep
Modern topsoil level	108.32m OD (N) to 108.31m OD (S)
Base of topsoil	108.10m OD (N) to 108.09 OD (S)
Depth of deposits seen	0.10m subsoil
Natural observed	108.0m OD orange-yellow clay

Trench 4 revealed a sub circular cut measuring 1.40m long by 0.70m wide and 0.20m deep [23]. It could be interpreted as either a pit or the truncated remains of a ditch terminal. Within the backfill [22] was a single small worked flint flake and may date to the prehistoric period.

Evaluation Trench 5	
Location	Northwest area
Dimensions	30m by 2m by 0.40m deep
Modern topsoil level	107.07m OD (W) to 106.38m OD (E)
Base of topsoil	106.99m OD (W) to 106.30 OD (E)
Depth of deposits seen	0.24m subsoil
Natural observed	106.75m OD orange-yellow clay

Evaluation Trench 6	
Location	Southwest area
Dimensions	30m by 2m by 0.30m deep
Modern topsoil level	108.14m OD (W) to 107.58m OD (E)
Base of topsoil	107.94m OD (W) to 108.38 OD (E)
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	0.50m Cut feature
Level of base of deposits observed	107.19 (deepest intrusive feature)
Natural observed	107.84m OD orange-yellow clay

Trench 6 revealed a north-south aligned stream channel [20], at the western end of the trench (Fig 5)). The ditch was 2.09m wide by 0.50m deep. The basal fill consisted of a bluish grey waterlain silt sealed by another, containing Roman pottery dating to the 2nd and 3rd centuries. Above the archaeological features was a 0.20 depth of topsoil.

Evaluation Trench 7	
Location	Southwest area
Dimensions	30m by 2m by 0.25-30m deep
Modern topsoil level	106.90m OD (N) to 106.77m OD (S)
Base of topsoil	106.78m OD (N) to 106.65 OD (S)
Depth of deposits seen	0.35m subsoil
Natural observed	106.60m OD pale grey and orange clay

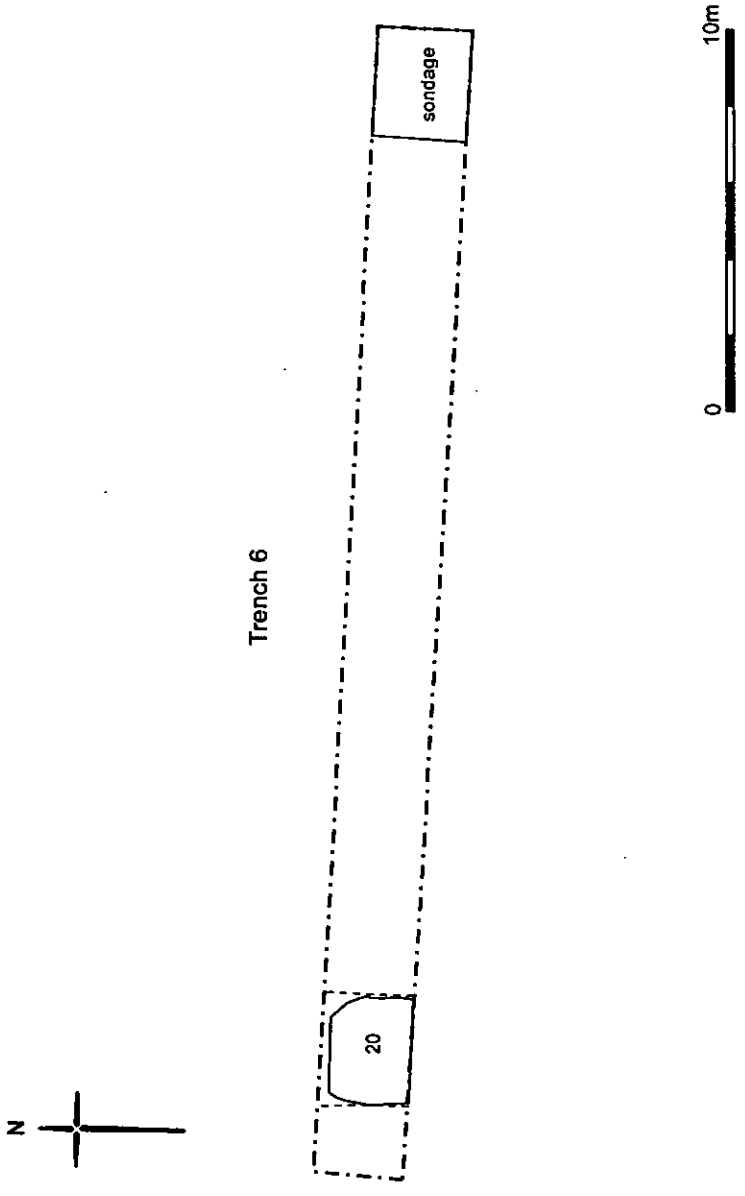

Fig 5 Trench 6 Archaeological survival

Evaluation Trench 8	
Location	Northwest area
Dimensions	30m by 2m by 0.40m deep
Modern topsoil level	107.07m OD (W) to 106.38m OD (E)
Base of topsoil	106.99m OD (W) to 106.30 OD (E)
Depth of deposits seen	0.24m subsoil
Natural observed	106.75m OD orange-yellow clay

Evaluation Trench 9	
Location	Southwest area
Dimensions	30m by 2m by 0.30m deep
Modern topsoil level	107.76m OD (N) to 107.35m OD (S)
Base of topsoil	107.54m OD (N) to 107.13 OD (S)
Depth of deposits seen	N/A topsoil directly over natural strata
Natural observed	107.46m OD orange and grey clay

Evaluation Trench 10	
Location	Southwest area
Dimensions	30m by 2m by 0.30m deep
Modern topsoil level	107.15m OD (W) to 106.85m OD (E)
Base of topsoil	107.05m OD (W) to 106.75 OD (E)
Depth of deposits seen	0.18.m subsoil
Natural observed	106.57-106.57m OD buff and grey clay

Evaluation Trench 11	
Location	Southwest area
Dimensions	30m by 2m by 32m deep
Modern topsoil level	105.93m OD (N) to 105.68m OD (S)
Base of topsoil	105.83m OD (N) to 105.58 OD (S)
Depth of deposits seen	0.38m subsoil
Natural observed	105.20-48m OD pale grey clay

Evaluation Trench 12	
Location	Southwest area
Dimensions	30m by 2m by 0.30m deep
Modern topsoil level	106.84m OD (W) to 106.57m OD (E)
Base of topsoil	106.62m OD (W) to 106.35 OD (E)
Depth of deposits seen	0.13.m subsoil
Natural observed	106.22-49m OD orangey-yellow clay

Evaluation Trench 13	
Location	Southwest area
Dimensions	30m by 2m by 32m deep
Modern topsoil level	106.76m OD (N) to 106.40m OD (S)
Base of topsoil	106.70m OD (N) to 106.34 OD (S)
Depth of deposits seen	0.20m subsoil
Natural observed	106.14-50m OD pale buff and grey clay

Evaluation Trench 14	
Location	Southwest area
Dimensions	30m by 2m by 0.30m deep
Modern topsoil level	105.93m OD (W) to 105.48m OD (E)
Base of topsoil	105.88m OD (W) to 105.43 OD (E)
Depth of deposits seen	N/A topsoil directly over natural strata
Natural observed	106.43-88m OD pale buff and grey clay

Evaluation Trench 15	
Location	Central southern area
Dimensions	30m by 2m by 30m deep
Modern topsoil level	104.80m OD (N) to 104.51m OD (S)
Base of topsoil	104.70m OD (N) to 104.41 OD (S)
Depth of deposits seen	0.17m subsoil, limestone fragments and pot
Natural observed	104.24-53m OD pale grey clay

At the end was a spread of Roman pottery and limestone blocks. At the northern end was an undated single course of limestone blocks aligned northwest-southeast.

Evaluation Trench 16	
Location	Central southern area
Dimensions	30m by 2m by 0.36m deep (E-W)
Modern topsoil level	103.43m OD
Base of topsoil	103.33m OD
Depth of deposits seen	0.22m subsoil
Natural observed	103.11m OD pale yellow/ buff clay

Evaluation Trench 17	
Location	Central southern area
Dimensions	30m by 2m by 0.30-0.40m deep
Modern topsoil level	105.38m OD (W) to 104.77m OD (E)
Base of topsoil	105.31m OD (W) to 104.70 OD (E)
Depth of deposits seen	0.24m subsoil, limestone fragments
Natural observed	105.00-0.46m OD orange brown clay

In the central are of the trench, aligned roughly north-south was a spread of limestone blocks.

Evaluation Trench 18	
Location	Central area
Dimensions	30m by 2m by 0.38m deep (N-S)
Modern topsoil level	103.95m OD
Base of topsoil	103.83m OD
Depth of deposits seen	0.24m subsoil
Natural observed	103.59m OD pale yellow/grey clay

Evaluation Trench 19	
Location	Central southern area
Dimensions	30m by 2m by 0.38m deep (N-S)
Modern topsoil level	104.36m OD
Base of topsoil	104.12m OD
Depth of deposits seen	0.18m subsoil
Natural observed	103.94m OD orange/buff/grey clay

Evaluation Trench 20	
Location	Central area
Dimensions	30m by 2m by 30m deep
Modern topsoil level	105.10m OD (N) to 105.46m OD (S)
Base of topsoil	105.03m OD (N) to 105.39 OD (S)
Depth of deposits seen	0.23m subsoil
Natural observed	104.16-0.80m OD orange/grey clay

Evaluation Trench 21	
Location	Central northern area
Dimensions	30m by 2m by 0.45m deep (E-W)
Modern topsoil level	102.90m OD
Base of topsoil	102.85m OD
Depth of deposits seen	0.25m subsoil
Natural observed	102.45-.60m OD orange grey sandy clay

Evaluation Trench 22	
Location	Northeast area
Dimensions	30m by 2m by 0.25-0.30m deep (NW/SE)
Modern topsoil level	101.50m OD
Base of topsoil	101.40m OD
Depth of deposits seen	0.15m subsoil
Natural observed	101.25m OD orange/buff clay

Evaluation Trench 23	
Location	Northeast area
Dimensions	30m by 2m by 0.25-0.30m deep (NE/SW)
Modern topsoil level	100.20m OD
Base of topsoil	100.10m OD
Depth of deposits seen	0.14m subsoil
Natural observed	99.86m OD orange/buff sandy clay

Evaluation Trench 24	
Location	Northeast area
Dimensions	30m by 2m by 0.34m deep (NW/SE)
Modern topsoil level	99.56m OD
Base of topsoil	99.46m OD
Depth of deposits seen	0.18m subsoil
Natural observed	99.28m OD orange/buff clay

Evaluation Trench 25	
Location	Central eastern area
Dimensions	30m by 2m by 0.45m deep (E-W)
Modern topsoil level	102.90m OD
Base of topsoil	102.80m OD
Depth of deposits seen	0.35m subsoil
Natural observed	102.45m OD orange/brown/grey sandy clay

Evaluation Trench 26	
Location	Central southern area
Dimensions	30m by 2m by 0.34m deep (NE/SW)
Modern topsoil level	102.34m OD
Base of topsoil	102.24m OD
Depth of deposits seen	0.35m subsoil
Natural observed	101.89m OD yellow/buff/grey clay

Evaluation Trench 27	
Location	South eastern area
Dimensions	30m by 2m by 0.40m deep (NW/SE)
Modern topsoil level	101.66m OD
Base of topsoil	101.54m OD
Depth of deposits seen	0.16-0.34m subsoil
Natural observed	101.19m-0.38m OD orange/brown/grey clay

Evaluation Trench 28	
Location	Southeast area
Dimensions	30m by 2m by 0.34m deep (NE/SW)
Modern topsoil level	100.44m OD
Base of topsoil	100.11m OD
Depth of deposits seen	0.17m subsoil
Natural observed	100.17m OD orange/buff clay

Evaluation Trench 29	
Location	Northeast area
Dimensions	30m by 2m by 0.30m deep (NW/SE)
Modern topsoil level	99.90m OD
Base of topsoil	99.77m OD
Depth of deposits seen	0.14m subsoil
Natural observed	99.63m OD orange/buff/brown/grey clay

Evaluation Trench 30	
Location	Southeast area
Dimensions	30m by 2m by 0.34m deep (NE/SW)
Modern topsoil level	98.70m OD
Base of topsoil	98.62m OD
Depth of deposits seen	0.16m subsoil
Natural observed	98.46m OD orange/yellow clay

Evaluation Trench 31	
Location	Southeast area
Dimensions	30m by 2m by 0.30m deep (NW/SE)
Modern topsoil level	98.62m OD
Base of topsoil	98.52m OD
Depth of deposits seen	0.20m subsoil
Natural observed	99.32m OD orange/buff clay

Evaluation Trench 32	
Location	Northeast area
Dimensions	30m by 2m by 0.35m deep (NE/SW)
Modern topsoil level	100.20m OD
Base of topsoil	100.10m OD
Depth of deposits seen	0.20m subsoil
Natural observed	99.90m OD orange/yellow clay

Evaluation Trench 33	
Location	Northwest area
Dimensions	30m by 2m by 0.30m deep
Modern topsoil level	107.08m OD (W) to 106.39m OD (E)
Base of topsoil	107.98m OD (W) to 106.29 OD (E)
Depth of deposits seen	0.20m subsoil
Natural observed	106.09-0.78m OD orange-yellow clay

3.3 Table of excavated contexts

Number	Trench	Type	Comment	Date
1	2	Fill of 2	Backfill of ring ditch	Iron Age
2	2	Cut	Ring ditch	Iron Age
3	2	Fill of 4	Backfill of ring ditch	Iron Age
4	2	Cut	Ring ditch	Iron Age
5	2	Fill of 6	Backfill	Undated
6	2	Cut	Linear cut	Undated
7	1	Fill of 8	Backfill	Iron Age
8	1	Cut	Posthole	Iron Age
9	1	Fill of 10	Backfill	Undated
10	1	Cut	Double Posthole	Undated
11	1	Fill of 12	Backfill	Roman
12	1	Cut	Posthole	Iron Age
13	2	Fill of 14	Backfill	Iron Age
14	2	Cut	Ditch terminal	Iron Age
15	1	Fill of 16	Backfill	Undated
16	1	Cut	Ditch	Undated
17	1	Fill of 18	Backfill	Roman
18	1	Cut	Ditch	Roman
19	6	Fill of 20	Secondary backfill	Roman
20	6	Cut	Water channel	Undated
21	2	Fill of 14	Backfill	Iron Age
22	4	Fill of 23	Backfill	? prehistoric
23	4	Cut	?Ditch/?pit	? prehistoric
24	6	Fill of 20	Primary waterlain fill	undated

3.4 The site archive and assessment: stratigraphic

Table 1. Stratigraphic archive

Type	Description	Quantity	Notes
Contexts	Evaluation	23	
Plans	1:500 trench location plan 'A4' 1:20 (no. of sheets)	2 5	Paper copy Trenches 1-20 Trench 1 (3), Trench 2 (1) Trench 6 (1)
Sections	'A4' 1:10 (no. of sheets		Trench 6 (1)
Matrices	'A4 Sheets	1	Paper copy
Photographs		Colour (7) B/W (7)	Total number of slides (includes duplicate images) Films 048/05 and 100/05
Indexes	Context Section Environmental Photographic	1 1 1 1	 1 film number
Miscell.	'A4' sheets	33	Trench sheets
Site diary	'A4' (no of sheets)	4	Paper copy (first 4 pages) relate to the evaluation stage of the archaeological investigations
Survey	Data of trenches baseline, sections and levels referenced to OS grid	MoLAS computer system	Paper copy Survey data Archive sheet of files on 'A4' sheets

3.5 Site archive and assessment: finds and environmental

Prehistoric/early Roman pottery	40 sherds.
Flint	2 small flakes
Accessioned finds	1 object (1 copper alloy coin stabilised by conservation and packed in a suitable container for archiving
Bulk Soil Samples	Dried flot from 3 samples; total 160ml.

4 Archaeological potential

4.1 Realisation of original research aims

The aim of the evaluation was to determine the form, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains, the extent of horizontal truncation and the depth of surviving archaeological deposits. The results of the evaluation helped to formulate a mitigation strategy for dealing with the archaeological remains identified, in order to discharge the planning condition.

Archaeological remains were present beneath the topsoil and subsoil deposits and consisted of cut features such as drainage ditches, ring ditches, pits and postholes, indicating a domestic occupation site and associated agricultural activity. Two areas indicated concentrations of archaeological survival: the northwest and the central southern area. Elsewhere the trenches produced negative results or indicated relatively recent features such as grubbed-up hedges or land-drain runs. The ceramic evidence from the two areas dated to the late Iron Age and the Roman periods.

The condition of the surviving archaeological remains was good; with the cut features containing fills rich in burnt and organic waste material, which were likely to be derived from domestic and industrial activities from the site. With the exception of the south-western area of the site, there was little evidence of horizontal truncation of archaeological deposits. The depth of the surviving cut features uncovered during the evaluation stage ranges from 0.20m to 0.65m deep.

4.2 General discussion of potential

The evaluation has shown that the potential for survival of ancient ground surfaces (horizontal archaeological stratification) on the site is low. However, there is high potential for survival of cut features, dating to the Late Iron Age and Roman periods on some parts of the site. The Iron Age features are located in the north-west part of the site, whilst the findings from the central southern part of the site indicated Roman activity.

4.3 Significance

The presence of a Late Iron Age/early Roman settlement is considered to be of local and regional significance in the area, mainly due to the types of pottery found on the site. The pottery dates from the 1st century BC to AD 200 with the most common being ILROMG (Late Iron Age Romanising Grey ware), dating 100BC-AD100. The assemblage indicates late Iron Age activity, which, while declining over the Roman period did not cease. It reflects the rural nature of the site and, when considered alongside a number of sites identified around South Marston Industrial Estate, has the potential to contribute to the understanding of the relationship between Roman rural and urban sites and of the late Iron Age/early Roman transition.

5 Proposed development impact and recommendations

The proposed works at Sites 10D, 10E and 10F, Viscount Way, South Marston Industrial Estate, Swindon involve the construction of industrial units. The impact of this on the surviving archaeological deposits will be to destroy the archaeological resource in those areas affected by construction and re-landscaping. The evaluation indicated that such deposits were limited to a relatively small part of the development area

The assessment of the significance above (Section 4) does not suggest that preservation *in situ* would be an appropriate mitigation strategy. MoLAS considers that the archaeological deposits relating to the Iron Age and Roman periods should be excavated archaeologically in advance of any further ground reduction (i.e. preservation by record), and that in accordance with previous advice from the County Archaeologist that groundworks elsewhere be subject to an archaeological watching brief.

The decision on the appropriate archaeological response to the deposits revealed within Site 10D, 10E and 10F at South Marston Industrial Estate rests with the Local Planning Authority and their designated archaeological advisor.

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8 NMR OASIS archaeological report form

A NMR OASIS archaeological report form will be completed recording the results of both evaluation and subsequent archaeological excavation and included in the Post-excavation Assessment Report.