



## ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Northern Archaeological Associates Ltd.

Marwood House  
Harmire Enterprise Park  
Barnard Castle  
Co. Durham  
DL12 8BN

t: 01833 690800

f: 01833 690801

e: [gb@naa.gb.com](mailto:gb@naa.gb.com)

w: [www.naa.gb.com](http://www.naa.gb.com)

**LOWHILLS, PETERLEE**

**CO. DURHAM**

Project No.: 1124  
Text: Greg Speed & Gary Brogan  
Illustrations: Dawn Knowles  
Edited by: Richard Fraser

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		<b>Name</b>	Greg Speed & Gary Brogan	Richard Fraser	Tania Simpson

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# LOWHILLS, PETERLEE, CO. DURHAM

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## LOWHILLS, PETERLEE, CO. DURHAM

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

#### *Summary*

*This document presents the results of an archaeological evaluation of Site A at Lowhills, Peterlee, Co. Durham, centred at NGR NZ 4190 4240. The evaluation has been undertaken in support of an outline planning application for a residential development extending to 50.03ha. It comprised the excavation of 57 archaeological trial trenches, representing a sample of approximately 1% of the development area. This report presents the findings of the extensive evaluation undertaken to date, and are sufficient to understand the likely effects of the proposed development on archaeology.*

*A desk-based assessment has highlighted that there is potential for the site to contain archaeological remains dating to the prehistoric to Roman period. A Bronze Age barrow is recorded approximately 500m to the south of the site and there is cropmark evidence for two possible later prehistoric or Roman rectilinear enclosures approximately 900m to the north-east. The assessment also revealed that a 6th century AD Anglian cemetery was located immediately north of the site on Andrew's Hill.*

*A geophysical survey of the site was conducted in February 2013. This revealed a double-ditched sub-rectangular enclosure close to the centre of this site surrounded by a wider complex of enclosures which may be part of a related field system extending across the southern edge of the site. A number of other discrete anomalies were recorded by the survey across the wider site. These included linear and curvilinear features, small pit-like anomalies and areas of magnetic 'noise' of uncertain origin.*

*An archaeological evaluation was subsequently undertaken to assess the geophysical anomalies as well as 'blank' areas of the site. It demonstrated that 40 of the 57 trenches contain archaeological features and that activity is present across the majority of the site. The trial trenching has confirmed that the results of the geophysics survey can be relied upon in terms of having identified the most significant features within the site. Although the survey has provided a reasonable guide to the archaeological potential across the site, the trenching has also demonstrated that a number of other archaeological features survive at the site in addition to those revealed by the geophysical survey.*

*The presence of the double ditched enclosure and the wider complex of enclosures, as well as other three other main areas of archaeological activity have been confirmed. No further evidence for the Anglian cemetery was present in the trenches although a possible Bronze Age barrow has been revealed on Andrew's Hill which may have formed a focus for the location of the cemetery.*

*It is considered that the archaeological remains that have been identified are of no more than regional importance and therefore do not pose an absolute constraint on development. On the basis of these results, it is considered that the archaeological interest in this site can be secured by condition. The mitigation strategy should comprise a programme of 'strip, map and sample' investigation and reporting to be agreed with Durham County Council Archaeology Section in advance of any proposed development.*

## LOWHILLS, PETERLEE, CO. DURHAM

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

#### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document presents the results of an archaeological evaluation of Site A at Lowhills, Peterlee, Co. Durham, centred at NGR NZ 4190 4240 (Fig. 1; Plate 1). The evaluation has been undertaken in support of an outline planning application for a residential development extending to 50.03ha. It comprised the excavation of 57 archaeological trial trenches, representing a sample of approximately 1% of the development area (Figs 2 and 3). The results are provisional as work on site is still on-going.
- 1.2 The evaluation has been undertaken by Northern Archaeological Associates Ltd (NAA) for Southlands Management Ltd. It has been carried out at the request of Durham County Council Archaeology Section to further inform the assessment of the potential impact of development on archaeology and to enable an appropriate mitigation strategy to be agreed with the local planning authority. It follows an archaeological desk-based assessment (NAA 2013a) and a geophysical survey of the site (GSB Prospection 2013).
- 1.3 The evaluation strategy followed a Written Scheme of Investigation (NAA 2013c) which was submitted to the Durham County Council Archaeology Section so that the works formed an agreed scheme of archaeological investigation agreed with the local planning authority.
- 1.4 The evaluation has been carried out in accordance with *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation* (IfA 2008) and *Yorkshire, the Humber and the North-East: A Regional Statement of Good Practice for Archaeology in the Development Process* (Regional Archaeological DM Officers 2009).

#### 2.0 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

- 2.1 Outline planning approval is sought for a residential development with landscape buffer on approximately 50.03ha of land (Site A). The site is located on the northern outskirts of Peterlee and south of Easington. The application area consists of a proposed residential development located to the south and west of the A1086 (Thorpe Road) (Fig. 1). The site is situated in an elevated position with the summit of Andrew's Hill (c.135m AOD) and Mickle Hill (c.150m AOD) within the western half of the proposed residential area. Within the site, the ground slopes down to the broad stream valley formed by Thorpe Beck (delineated by the A1086), where it is approximately 98m AOD. A

landscape buffer is proposed along the A19, which forms the western boundary of the site, and along the northern edge of the development which would screen the development from Easington.

- 2.2 The planning application includes an area of proposed new tree planting, landscaping and improved public access to the north-east of Little Thorpe hamlet and south-west of Easington Colliery (Site B). The development impacts will be slight and following discussions with Durham County Council Archaeology Section, it has been agreed to mitigate the effects of the development through an appropriate scheme of post-determination archaeological work.

### **Geology and soils**

- 2.3 The solid geology of the proposed development site is Magnesian Limestone of the Permian (Institute of Geological Sciences 1979) overlain by boulder clay (Institute of Geological Sciences 1977). The soils in the study area are unsurveyed (Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983).

### **Topography and land-use**

- 2.4 The application area is currently an arable landscape consisting of improved large and small fields. The site is mostly a large field which slopes down to the east from the summit of Mickle and Andrew's Hills. Two smaller fields on the north side of the large field are also earmarked for residential development.
- 2.5 The northern edge of the proposed development is bounded by Andrew's Lane, a very prominent and historic landscape feature, which is a marked sunken lane or hollow-way with earthen banks against the edge of the fields. The existing field boundaries are also prominent low earthen banks, surmounted by sporadic hedgerows, often with shallow ditches and which date probably to the 17th century. During the late 20th century many of the historic field boundaries were removed to create larger fields while the construction of Peterlee and the A19 brought modern development close to the southern and western boundaries of the site.

## **3.0 SUMMARY ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The site has been subject to a desk-based assessment (NAA 2013a), Environmental Statement (NAA 2013b) and a geophysical survey (GSB Prospection 2013). The account below summarises the evidence for past human activity within the vicinity of the proposed development area (Fig. 2). Heritage asset numbers (HA) refer to those within the desk-based assessment.



## **Prehistoric to Roman**

- 3.2 There are no known early prehistoric archaeological sites within the site boundary, though evidence of activity of both periods has been found locally and within the wider area. Mesolithic flint tools are relatively common finds in the locality although these are all from the coast, east of Easington Colliery. The earliest recorded archaeological remains within the area is a round barrow (**HA 8**) at Low Hills, approximately 500m south of the proposed development site. Archaeological excavation of the barrow in the early 20th century revealed a cremation burial, a flint scraper and 'prehistoric' pottery. The barrow, which is likely to have been Bronze Age in date, was removed in 1966 to make way for an industrial estate on the west side of the A19. A prehistoric flint flake (**HA 9**) has also been recovered from just south of the site of the barrow. The cropmark of a ring gully (**HA 10**), on the north side of Easington, is recorded by the HER as probably being prehistoric in origin. Although the size of the cropmark is not noted, it is possible that if it was prehistoric then it could represent a further round barrow.
- 3.3 There is cropmark evidence for later prehistoric/Roman settlement activity in the area. One of these cropmarks (**HA 11**) is characteristically rectangular in shape, and the other (**HA 12**), is squared and may consist of a double ditched enclosure. Ditched enclosures that contained one or more structures are a recognised settlement type within the region, dating from the Iron Age and into the Roman period.
- 3.4 Geophysical survey of the proposed residential development site has revealed a double-ditched sub-rectangular enclosure close to the centre of this site surrounded by a wider complex of enclosures which may be part of a related field system extending across the southern edge of the site. The enclosure has an entrance on the eastern side, where it also linked to a series of smaller enclosures which extend around its southern side. No internal structures are apparent within either the main enclosure or the subsidiary ones but it is apparent that there are several phases of activity (Figs 2 and 3).
- 3.5 A small ring gully is apparent c.180m to the south-east of the sub-rectangular enclosure and either cuts or is cut by a ditch associated with a series of small rectangular enclosures that may reflect small fields or paddocks. These enclosure features appear to be contemporary with the double-ditched enclosure as they appear to be linked to a ditch which runs south from its south-west corner. Some 200m to the west of the main enclosure, there is evidence of a small corner of field enclosure. It is unclear, however, whether this latter feature is part of the same field system identified to the east.
- 3.6 A number of other discrete anomalies are recorded on the geophysical survey across the wider site. These include linear and curvilinear features, small pit-like anomalies and areas of magnetic 'noise' of uncertain origin.

- 3.7 A 4th century belt buckle was found by a metal detector from, 'a field close to Thorpe Beck at the bottom of Andrew's Hill' (Hamerow and Pickin 1995, 35). Although the exact find spot is uncertain, this find may be indicative of the date of some of the features identified by the geophysical survey in this area.

### Early medieval

- 3.8 It is likely that there was an Anglian settlement somewhere in the vicinity of the proposed development that dates to the 6th to 7th century. Evidence for this comprises part of a cemetery (**HA 13**) which has been located on the brow of Andrew's Hill, immediately adjacent to the site of the proposed residential development. This was identified by metal-detectorist and part of the site was subject to limited archaeological investigation in 1991 and 1992. Nine inhumation burials, each with accompanying grave goods, were found on the north side of the boundary which cuts across the brow of Andrew's Hill, and which forms the northern boundary of the development area. The excavators believed that the core of the cemetery was identified and excavated, although the extent was not ascertained with any certainty. The deposit model was recorded as 800mm of topsoil over a compact 400mm thick layer of dark soil mixed with clay, stone and gravel. This layer contained Anglo-Saxon artefacts and was located over the natural subsoil which, on the brow of the hill, consisted of interleaved sands, gravels and lenses of clay (Hamerow and Pickin 1995, 37).
- 3.9 Two of the burials on Andrew's Hill were recorded below the boundary bank on the south side of the field containing the burials, raising the possibility that the cemetery extends southwards into the development site. Although heavily plough-disturbed, the large number of brooches (and other objects) recovered by the metal-detectorists suggests that the cemetery had once contained many more individuals than were uncovered during the excavation. However, neither the limited geophysical survey undertaken as part of the cemetery excavation project or the latest geophysical survey identified any further features which might represent burials in this area.
- 3.10 Outside of the site, Easington (**HA 14**) is likely to have originated as a late Anglo-Saxon estate centre which included Little Thorpe, Shotton and Eden (Hamerow and Pickin 1995, 35), although the possibility of earlier origins associated with the Anglian cemetery cannot be discounted. The earliest documentary reference to it dates to AD 900-915 (*ibid*) and this settlement is likely to have existed in the area of Seaton Holme and the church. A 10th or 11th century cross-slab (**HA 15**) has been reused within the Norman tower of St Mary's Church and a late Anglo-Saxon house and enclosure (**HA 16**) were found during investigations at Seaton Holme.

## Medieval

- 3.11 There are a number of dispersed medieval settlements in the vicinity of the proposed development, including the surviving village of Easington (**HA 14**) and hamlet of Little Thorpe (**HA 17**), mentioned in documents from the 12th century, and the deserted villages of Little Eden (**HA 18**) and Yoden (**HA 1**). Yoden, approximately 0.9km south-east of the proposed development site, was a significant settlement during the pre-conquest period. It was mentioned by Simeon of Durham in the early 12th century in relation to land acquisition by the Community of St Cuthbert in AD 880 and then by followers of King Ragnald in AD 913 (Turnball and Walsh 2004). However, the precise location of Yoden has recently been thrown into some doubt. Work carried out on the Scheduled Monument at Eden Lane in 2004 led the investigators to believe that the earthworks were part of a later planned medieval village, probably Horden.
- 3.12 The proposed development would have lain within the former open field system surrounding Easington and Little Thorpe, and the recent geophysical survey has revealed evidence of this across the site. The most widespread anomalies to be detected comprise extensive blocks of former ridge and furrow cultivation, presumably of medieval or early medieval date. Several blocks portray the 'reverse-S' form typical of this type of cultivation. The ridge and furrow appears to have been superimposed on a number of other, presumably earlier, features arranged on a differing orientation.
- 3.13 On the northern edge of the development site, Andrew's Lane (**HA 19**), a substantial and well-defined holloway, once led from Little Thorpe to the Easington to Stockton road and onto Thorpe Moor for summer stock grazing on Thorpe Moor. The substantial nature of this landscape feature would suggest that it has medieval, if not earlier, origins.

## Post-medieval and Modern

- 3.14 Easington (**HA 14**) saw a moderate amount of development in the later post-medieval period, notably during the 19th and 20th century to the south-west of the church and the south-east of the village green. Little Thorpe has remained as a small hamlet and has shrunk over the last 100 years. The major nearby impact on settlement has come from two new modern settlements. Easington Colliery (**HA 20**) was purpose-built at the end of the 19th century to service the pit. To the south of the proposed development lies Peterlee, a post war new town, created following the New Towns Act of 1946.
- 3.15 The post-medieval landscape of the site has changed since the enclosure awards of Easington Moor and Little Thorpe between 1656 and 1659 (Fordyce 1855, 352), with the loss of field pattern in the late 20th century for the creation of large agricultural units. The southern boundary to the proposed

residential development is a parish boundary (**HA 21**) and survives today as a ditch, which feeds Horden Dene, and a wide low bank surmounted by a sporadic modern hedgerow. The other surviving field boundaries within the development area are related to the 17th century enclosures and are low, wide, banks with ditches and sporadic sections of hedgerow.

- 3.16 A small building (**HA 24**), represented within the proposed development site on the 1898 Ordnance Survey map had gone by 1919, and was presumably a short-lived agricultural building. Thorpe Hospital (**HA 25**) opened in 1897 as a fever hospital, subsequently became a maternity hospital in the 1950's and closed in 1986, followed by demolition. The hospital site is excluded from the area proposed for residential development.
- 3.17 The rural character of the study area has also been affected in the last 50 years by the construction of the modern road layout and industrial estates, which formed as a result of the improved transport links. The A19 was built in the late 1960s and bisected the line of Andrew's Lane and the fields along the western edge of the proposed development site. The A1086 was constructed to link the A19 with the existing Thorpe Road and on to Sunderland Road (the coast road), with a new roundabout constructed on the west side of Little Thorpe. This new road bisected fields but has left Andrew's Lane intact, where it distinctively loops around the base of the northern side of Andrew's Hill.

#### **4.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

- 4.1 The development proposals comprise the construction of new housing, and the foundations for these, together with associated service trenches, roadways and other construction and service infrastructure together with associated landscaping would have an adverse impact on any surviving archaeological remains.
- 4.2 The main aim of the evaluation is to confirm the nature, extent and significance of archaeological remains within the proposed development area.
- 4.3 The objectives of the evaluation are:
- to characterise archaeological features identified by the geophysical survey;
  - to establish the presence, nature, extent, preservation and significance of any other archaeological remains within the site;
  - to provide a detailed record of any such archaeological remains;

- to recover and assess any associated structural, artefactual and environmental evidence;
- to test apparently 'blank' areas on the geophysical survey for the presence/absence of archaeological features;
- to determine which areas within the footprint of the proposed scheme require archaeological mitigation in the form of preservation *in situ*, open area investigation in advance of construction, or monitoring of soil stripping during construction works;
- to prepare an illustrated report on the full results of the evaluation to be deposited with the Historic Environment Record (HER) held by Durham County Council Archaeology Section and the National Monuments Record (NMR); and
- to evaluate the potential for further unrecorded significant archaeological remains to be present within the site.

4.4 Upon completion of the trial trenching, the requirement for further mitigation will be agreed through consultation between Southlands Management Ltd and Durham County Council Archaeology Section.

## 5.0 METHODOLOGY

5.1 The fieldwork comprised the excavation of 57 archaeological trial trenches (Figs 2 and 3), each measuring 50m by 2m except for two trenches which measured 40m by 2m. The trenches were located to sample geophysical anomalies and 'blank' areas of the site. Durham County Council Archaeology Section was consulted regarding the trench arrangement. The trench layout followed that proposed in the WSI (NAA 2013c)

5.2 Trenches were stripped of modern topsoil and subsoil, including colluvium, by mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision.

5.3 The NAA site code was LOP13.

5.4 Each trench was set out using a Topcon GRS-1 RTK Network GPS and a Topcon Hiper Pro Base Station GPS and tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid.

5.5 Written records of the trenches were created using NAA *pro forma* recording forms. Sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10; plans of the empty trenches

were drawn at 1:50. A photographic record was created using digital photographs (14Mps) and Black and White 35mm film.

5.6 All levels were tied in to Ordnance Datum.

5.7 Archaeological deposits considered suitable for palaeoenvironmental/dating potential were sampled.

5.8 For the purposes of the trench results presented below, area numbers given to the site during the geophysical survey have been retained and used below (Fig. 1). Areas 1-4 have been omitted from the final scheme design and are not now part of the application area. The area numbers are presented below:

- Area 7 is the western field containing Trenches 1-6
- Area 8 is the large main central field containing Trenches 7-47
- Area 6 is the north-eastern field containing Trenches 48-50
- Area 5 is the northern field containing Trenches 51-57

## 6.0 RESULT OF THE EVALUATION (Figs 2-6)

### Trench 1

6.1 Located at the north-western corner of the area, the trench was orientated north to south across a possible linear anomaly running from east to west. The trench was limited to a length of 40m, constrained by the field boundary to the north and a service to the south. The trench was machined to a maximum depth of 0.45m, removing some 0.3m of modern ploughsoil and up to 0.15m of mid brown clayey subsoil down to the surface of stony yellow-brown boulder clay. The surface of the boulder clay was cut by a sequence of heavily truncated plough furrows. A modern feature crossed the northern end of the trench, and a possible ditch corresponding to the targeted geophysical anomaly was visible crossing the trench some 9m from the northern end. No other archaeological features were identified.

### Trench 2

6.2 This trench was located to test a 'blank' area on the geophysical survey, and was aligned from north-west to south-east on a gently-sloping south-east facing slope. The trench was machined to a depth of 0.4-0.5m. Modern ploughsoil of up to 0.3m in depth overlay 0.2m of mid brown sandy clay subsoil over yellow-brown gravelly boulder clay. The natural clay was cut by furrows

orientated north to south, corresponding with the geophysical survey. No archaeological features were present. Several worked flints were recovered from the field surface in the general vicinity of this trench.

#### Trench 3

- 6.3 This trench was located to intersect an east to west aligned linear geophysical anomaly and several discrete responses. The trench was orientated from north to south, and ran down a gentle south-facing slope. The trench was machine-stripped to a typical depth of 0.45m. Some 0.35m of modern ploughsoil overlay a 0.1m thick layer of mid brown clayey subsoil above yellow-brown stony sandy boulder clay. A series of furrow bases crossed the trench from west to east. Towards the centre of the trench, a 7m wide area of darker brown clayey soil corresponds to the area of the targeted geophysical anomaly, which is likely to be related to the 17th century enclosure boundary. A ceramic land-drain crossed the trench near its northern end. No other archaeological features were identified.

#### Trench 4

- 6.4 This trench was located so as to transect a possible annular geophysical anomaly. The trench was orientated from north-east to south-west on almost level ground sloping slightly down to the south-west. Modern ploughsoil, between 0.3-0.35m thick, directly overlay the clean surface of natural yellowish brown stony sandy boulder clay. The geophysical anomaly was not identified; however a French drain crossed the trench from north-west to south-east in a position equating to its anticipated southern side. A potential 0.6m wide linear feature crossed the trench 10m from its northern end. No furrow bases were apparent although modern ploughmarks were clearly identifiable.

#### Trench 5 (Plate 2)

- 6.5 Located towards the south-western corner of the area, this trench was located in a 'blank' part of the geophysical survey. The trench was orientated from north north-west to south south-east on a south-east facing slope, and was machine-stripped to a depth of 0.30-0.55m. Some 0.3m of modern ploughsoil directly overlay yellow-brown sandy boulder clay, which had been cut by a sequence of furrows running from west to east. In addition, towards the southern end of the trench a French drain entered the trench from the west and then curved northwards. In the southern (downslope) section of the trench was mid grey which extended for some 20m. This appeared to have formed in wet conditions and removal of part of the grey clay layer revealed dark organic deposits and a possible boulder-revetment. These remains appeared to represent an in-filled former pond, ditch or channel.

#### Trench 6

- 6.6 This trench was positioned in order to transect a series of former plough-furrows, and was aligned running from north to south on a very gently sloping south-facing slope. It was machine-stripped to a depth of 0.4m, removing 0.3m of modern ploughsoil and the disturbed upper surface of the underlying yellowish brown boulder clay. This was cut by a sequence of furrow bases running from west to east. No other archaeological features were identified.

#### Trench 7

- 6.7 Trench 7 was located at the northern edge of Area 8 close to Andrew's Lane, and targeted a possible large circular geophysical anomaly. The trench was orientated from north-west to south-east and ran down a gentle south-east facing slope. It was machine-stripped to a depth of 0.40-0.55m, removing 0.25m of modern ploughsoil and up to 0.3m of mid brown clayey sand subsoil down to the surface of yellow-brown boulder clay. No archaeological features were present.

#### Trench 8

- 6.8 This trench was located near the north-western corner of Area 8 in an area where the geophysical survey had recorded a pattern of criss-crossing ridge and furrow and a number of pit-like anomalies. The trench was orientated from north-west to south-east, sloping down gently to the south-east. The trench was machine-stripped to a depth of 0.5-0.6m, removing 0.3m of modern ploughsoil and a similar thickness of mid brown subsoil down to the upper surface of gravely boulder clay. Much of the trench was crossed by furrows. Towards the south-eastern end, the trench was crossed from south-west to north-east by a ridge of clayey gravel that was 7.5m wide. This continued the line of a pair of parallel linear anomalies recorded further to the east, which may represent flanking ditches to the ridge, suggesting that it represents a former trackway. To the south-east of the gravel ridge, a circular pit, 0.9m in diameter, was identified within the end of the trench.

#### Trench 9

- 6.9 Trench 9 was located at the western edge of Area 8 in a 'blank' area on the geophysical survey which appeared to contain only ridge-and-furrow. The trench was aligned from east north-east to west south-west on a very gentle east-facing slope. The trench was stripped to a depth of 0.4-0.65m, revealing 0.25m of modern ploughsoil sealing a deposit of mid yellow-brown clayey subsoil over yellow-brown boulder clay. The surface of the boulder clay was possibly cut by a series of north north-west to south south-east aligned plough furrows, corresponding with the geophysical survey. No other archaeological features were present.



#### Trench 10

- 6.10 This trench was positioned in order to intersect several possible linear geophysical anomalies. It was aligned from north-east to south-west and ran down a gentle north-east facing slope. The trench was machine-stripped to a depth of 0.4-0.6m, deepening downslope, removing 0.25m of modern ploughsoil, up to 0.25m of mid yellow-brown clayey colluvium and the mixed upper surface of the underlying natural yellow-brown boulder clay. A furrow crossed the trench from north to south 20m from the south-western end. This ran on a similar alignment, but did not equate to any of the targeted anomalies. A test-pit was machine-excavated at the south-western end of the trench to confirm the nature of the boulder clay deposits which were more than 1m thick and represented an undisturbed natural drift deposit.

#### Trench 11

- 6.11 Trench 11 was located at the western end of Area 8 and was orientated from west to east on a gentle south-facing slope but itself also rising to the east. The trench was positioned in order to transect a broad curvilinear anomaly towards its western end. Up to 0.8m of deposits were stripped down to the yellow-brown boulder clay. These comprised some 0.25m of modern ploughsoil and yellow-brown subsoil which appeared to be filling a series of furrows aligned from north to south. A French drain crossed the trench some 6m from its eastern end. No feature was identified equating to the targeted geophysical anomaly and no other archaeological features were identified.

#### Trench 12

- 6.12 This trench was aligned from north-west to south-east on a south-east facing slope, and was positioned so as to transect two linear anomalies running from west south-west to east north-east. The trench was machine-stripped to a depth of 0.6-1.0m, deepening downslope. Some 0.25m of modern ploughsoil overlay a thick deposit of stony mid yellow-brown colluvium above the natural boulder clay. No archaeological features were found to be present.

#### Trench 13

- 6.13 This trench was positioned in an area on the geophysical survey which was 'blank' with the exception of an historic field-boundary. The trench was aligned from north-west to south-east, running across the east-facing hillslope so that it was fairly level along its length. Up to 0.65m of deposits were removed by machine, consisting of 0.25m of modern ploughsoil and up to 0.4m of stony yellowish brown colluvium. The trench was crossed from west south-west to east north-east by a series of broad furrows, and a ditch some 2m wide located 20m from the southern end of the trench equated to the former field boundary.

This was cut along its centre by a ceramic land-drain. No other archaeological features were identified.

#### Trench 14

- 6.14 Trench 14 was located running diagonally across the general east-facing hill-slope from north-west to south-east, so that it sloped steeply down from the north-west end onto a more level area. The trench was positioned in order to transect several linear geophysical anomalies. Modern ploughsoil, 0.25m thick, overlay a deposit of mid brown clayey colluvium which thickened downslope, so that the machined depth of the trench varied from 0.3m at the upslope end to 0.9m at the downslope end. The trench was stripped down to the upper surface of stony yellow-brown boulder clay. A French drain crossed the trench 13m from its south south-east end, corresponding with one of the geophysical anomalies. No archaeological features were present.

#### Trench 15

- 6.15 This trench was positioned across a possible curvilinear geophysical anomaly, and ran from north-west to south-east down a steep south-east facing slope. Below 0.25m of modern ploughsoil, up to 0.35m of mid brown soily colluvium was removed revealing substantial ridge-and-furrow crossing the trench, cutting into stony yellow-brown boulder clay. No archaeological features were present.

#### Trench 16

- 6.16 Trench 16 was located in a 'blank' area on the geophysical survey. It was aligned from north to south on a south-east facing slope, so that the trench sloped down slightly to the south. A 0.25m thick layer of modern ploughsoil sealed the well-preserved buried remains of ridge-and-furrow crossing the trench from east to west. As far as possible the furrows in this trench were machine-emptied, and proved to be up to 0.75m deep, cutting into gravely yellow-brown sandy boulder clay. No other archaeological features were present.

#### Trench 17

- 6.17 Trench 17 was positioned from north-west to south-east across the angle between two apparently intersecting linear geophysical anomalies forming part of an enclosure. Other anomalies suggested internal activity or sub-division. The trench lay on a general south-east facing hillslope, although the more northerly ditch anomaly ran down a slight linear depression in the hillside. The trench was machine-stripped to a depth of 0.3-0.5m, removing 0.3m of modern ploughsoil and up to 0.1m of mid brown clayey subsoil. The underlying stony yellow-brown boulder clay was cut by two ditches

corresponding to the geophysical anomalies and each up to 3m wide, and also by a possible trend of west to east aligned furrow bases. No other archaeological features were present.

#### Trench 18

- 6.18 Trench 18 was located within the angle of a bend in the drainage ditch forming the western boundary of Area 8, across a possible circular geophysical anomaly and potentially over the west side of the enclosure investigated by Trench 17. It was constrained to the north-east by the presence of a buried service and was intended to be 40m long; however, in the event the trench was shortened to 30m in order to avoid intersecting the drainage ditch to the south-west. The ground surface was fairly level. The trench was machine-stripped to a depth of 0.25-0.4m, removing 0.25m of modern ploughsoil and some mid brown subsoil down to the underlying boulder clay. A small ditch crossed the trench at right angles some 5m from its south-western end which may form the west side of the enclosure. No other archaeological features were identified.

#### Trench 19

- 6.19 Located towards the south-western corner of Area 8, Trench 19 was aligned from north to south across a linear geophysical anomaly running from east to west. The trench lay on a south-east facing slope, so that it sloped down to the south. Some 0.3m of modern ploughsoil directly overlay yellow-brown stony boulder clay. The archaeological feature within the trench was a 2m wide ditch crossing the trench 10m from its northern end, consistent with the geophysical anomaly.

#### Trench 20

- 6.20 Trench 20 lay immediately east of Trench 19 and ran from west to east down the hillslope in order to investigate an area of magnetic 'noise'. It was machine-stripped to a depth of between 0.3m (upslope) and 0.5m (downslope), removing 0.25m of modern ploughsoil over an increasing thickness of mid brown soil colluvium. No archaeological features were present.

#### Trench 21

- 6.21 This trench was orientated from north north-west to south south-east and positioned to intersect a linear anomaly running from east to west across its northern end, which was a former enclosure field boundary, and linear anomalies of uncertain origin within the southern end. The trench location was fairly level at the surface along its length (across an east-facing slope); however, the underlying boulder clay surface actually sloped down slightly to the north, so that the trench deepened from 0.5m at its southern to 0.75m to

the north. Modern ploughsoil, 0.3m thick, overlay 0.2-0.45m of yellow-brown stony colluvium. A series of furrows crossed the trench from east to west, and two 2m wide ditches crossed on a similar alignment 10m and 20m from the northern end; the northern one corresponded with the former field boundary revealed by the geophysical survey. A ceramic land drain cut the southern edge of the ditch.

#### Trench 22

- 6.22 The trench was located within a 'blank' area on the geophysical survey, and was aligned from east north-east to west south-west on fairly level ground towards the southern edge of the area. The trench was machine-stripped to a depth of 0.35m, removing 0.25m of modern ploughsoil and the plough-disturbed upper surface of the underlying yellow-brown boulder clay to a level at which only discrete plough-marks survived. No archaeological features were present.

#### Trench 23

- 6.23 Trench 23 was located within a 'blank' area on the geophysical survey to the south of the square ditched enclosure. It was aligned from east to west, running down an east-facing slope. The trench was stripped to a depth of 0.4m at the western (upslope) end, deepening to 0.6m to the east. Modern ploughsoil was 0.3m thick and overlay 0.1-0.3m of a mid brown sandy clay soil colluvium which thickened downslope. This overlay the sloping surface of yellow-brown boulder clay. A ceramic land-drain crossed the trench from south-west to north-east near its western end. No archaeological features were present.

#### Trench 24

- 6.24 This trench was located to the south of the double-ditched enclosure running from north north-west to south south-east across the east-facing slope, and was positioned to intersect parallel geophysical anomalies apparently forming part of the associated enclosure system and ridge and furrow. The trench was machine-stripped to a depth of 0.5-0.65m, removing 0.25m of modern ploughsoil and 0.25-0.4m of mid brown sandy clay subsoil. The natural boulder clay was cut by a series of furrows running from east to west. Three parallel ditches were also visible, corresponding to the geophysical anomalies. These were located 7m and 16m from the northern end of the trench, and 10m from the southern end, and were 1-2m wide. The northern ditch was cut along its northern edge by a ceramic land drain, and a second drain crossed the south-western corner of the trench running from north-west to south-east.

#### Trench 25

- 6.25 Trench 25 was located immediately to the west of the double-ditched enclosure and was aligned from east to west so as to intersect a broad curvilinear anomaly at its western end and a faint linear anomaly at its eastern end. The trench sloped generally down to the east. The trench was machine-stripped to a depth of 0.4-0.5m, removing 0.25-0.3m of modern ploughsoil and 0.1-0.2m of a fairly stone-free mid brown subsoil. The surface of the underlying boulder clay was cut by two features. Towards the western end was a 12m wide band of greyish-brown clay corresponding to the broad geophysical anomaly. This had the appearance of a former pond or stream-channel, and the surface topography and geophysical survey suggests that this was the same feature as seen in the northern end of Trench 26 to the north-east. The second feature was a small ditch some 0.7m wide crossing the trench 9m from its eastern end.

#### Trench 26 (Plate 3)

- 6.26 This trench, aligned from north north-west to south-south-east, was located to investigate the northern perimeter of the double-ditched enclosure, part of its interior and an area of magnetic 'noise' and vague anomalies outside the enclosure. The area of the enclosure occupied a fairly level plateau on the east-facing hillslope, but the ground dropped away fairly sharply to north-east into a slight valley running down the hillside. Within the enclosure the trench was stripped to a depth of 0.45m, shallowing to 0.25m over the perimeter features and then deepening to 0.8m down the slope to the north. The area was covered in 0.25m of modern ploughsoil either directly overlying archaeological deposits or varying depths of mid brown sandy clay subsoil. A ceramic land-drain ran along the centre of the trench, cutting all observed potential archaeological features. The enclosure perimeter features comprised two parallel ditches, the inner 3m wide and the outer 2m. On the inner (southern) edge of the inner ditch was a thin 6m wide gravelly clay deposit, which may have formed the basal layer of a bank and a similar deposit that was 4m wide may located between the ditches may represent the base of another bank. Within the enclosure, a possible small ditch near the southern end of the trench ran parallel to the perimeter features, and other features including pits may be present. External to the enclosure, a possible large stone-filled pit lay some 15m from the northern end of the trench, and other possible pits were present. At the northern end of trench the surface of the natural boulder clay dropped down sharply suggesting the location of a former watercourse. The course of the former stream was marked by grey clay.

#### Trench 27

- 6.27 Located to the north-east of the double-ditched enclosure, this trench was aligned from east north-east to west south-west across a particularly enhanced

area of ridge-and-furrow trends on the geophysical survey. The trench was also located to test whether a linear anomaly which ran north from a corner of the smaller enclosures to the east side of the double-ditched enclosure, on a very slightly different alignment to the ridge and furrow, was related to the enclosure activity. This anomaly would be at the western end of to the trench. The trench ran down an east-facing slope and was machine-stripped to a depth of 0.5-0.7m. Some 0.3m of modern ploughsoil directly overlay yellow-brown boulder clay, which to the east was overlain by an increasing thickness of mid brown soil colluvium. At the western end, the trench was crossed by several furrows corresponding to the geophysical survey. A 2m wide ditch on a similar alignment to the furrows ran across the trench about 11m from the west end of the trench. No other archaeological features were identified.

#### Trench 28 (Plate 4)

- 6.28 Trench 28 was orientated from north-east to south-west, and was positioned to transect a small linear anomaly running from north-west to south-east across its north-eastern end. The trench lay on an east-facing slope so that it sloped down to the north-east, and was machine-stripped to a depth of 0.5-0.7m. At the south-western end of the trench the yellow-brown natural boulder clay rose sharply and was directly overlain by 0.3m of modern ploughsoil. To the north-east the ploughsoil overlay up to 0.4m of mid brown soily colluvium. Within the north-eastern (downslope) end of the trench the boulder clay was overlain by a deposit of grey clay, indicating former wet conditions. This probably once formed part of the same former stream channel observed up-slope in trenches 25 and 26. A ceramic land drain crossed the trench from west to east, and a French drain crossed the trench near its north-eastern end from north-west to south-east, corresponding to the targeted geophysical anomaly. No archaeological features or ridge-and-furrow were present.

#### Trench 29

- 6.29 This trench was located in a 'blank' area on the geophysical survey. The trench was orientated from north north-west to south south-east across the east-facing hillslope, and was machine-excavated to a depth of 0.4-0.5m. Within the southern 30m of the trench 0.3m of modern ploughsoil directly overlay yellow-brown boulder clay. Within the northern part of the trench the clay was a deposit of mid brown colluvium which was cut by a small east to west aligned ditch.

#### Trench 30 (Plate 5)

- 6.30 Trench 30 was positioned to transect a small enclosure appended to the eastern side of the double-ditched enclosure (and sharing its outer ditch). The trench was orientated from west south-west to east north-east on an east-facing slope, and was machine-stripped to a depth of up to 0.75m. In general the area

was covered by 0.25m modern ploughsoil over 0.2-0.3m of mid brown subsoil overlying the natural boulder clay. The targeted enclosure ditches were each 1.3m wide and filled with a distinctive dark fill which contrasted with the fills of other elements of the enclosure system. The western ditch (the eastern outer ditch of the double-ditched enclosure) had a remnant of a possible bank running along its western (inner) edge, corresponding with that seen in Trench 26. A large pit or tree-bowl, 2m in diameter, lay just to the east of this ditch, with two other possible pits nearby. Just to the west of the ditch, the trench was crossed from south-west to north-east by a 0.85m wide dark gravelly filled ditch on a differing alignment. Another possible ditch some 0.75m wide and with a similar gravelly fill crossed the eastern end of the trench from south-east to north-west. Neither ditch was recorded by the geophysical survey. It is possible that these features represent a different, and earlier, phase of activity to the double-ditched enclosure.

#### Trench 31

- 6.31 This trench was aligned from north north-west to south south-east and was positioned to run southwards across the interior of the enclosure investigated by Trench 30 immediately to the north. The trench sloped slightly down to the north (on an otherwise east-facing slope). Machine-stripping removed 0.3-0.65m of material down to the natural boulder clay. The resulting undulating trench base was suggestive of former ridge-and-furrow crossing the trench from west south-west to east north-east. Some 0.25-0.3m of modern ploughsoil overlay a varying depth of mid brown sandy clay soil colluvium in-filling and sealing the possible furrows. There are further archaeological features within the trench but excavation has not progressed significantly in order to characterise them.

#### Trench 32

- 6.32 Trench 32 was sited just to the south of two possible geophysical anomalies in order to determine whether they continued further to the south than recorded by the geophysical survey. The trench was orientated from north-east to south-west and ran down a moderate east-facing slope. Modern ploughsoil was 0.25m thick and overlay 0.1-0.15m of mid brown subsoil over the boulder clay. The trench was crossed from north-west to south-east by two features corresponding to the linear anomalies. Some 3m from the north-eastern end of the trench was a small ditch or gully 1m wide. A second ditch towards the other end of the trench was also 1m wide and filled with grey clay. No other archaeological features were apparent.

#### Trench 33

- 6.33 This trench was positioned running from west south-west to east north-east down an east-facing slope in order to test an area of rather indistinct

geophysical responses. Some 0.25m of modern ploughsoil overlay up to 0.4m of mid brown subsoil over natural boulder clay. No archaeological features were present.

#### Trench 34

- 6.34 Trench 34 was located near the southern edge of the area in order to investigate two parallel linear geophysical anomalies; however, due to the proximity of overhead powerlines it had to be re-positioned 5m north-east of the planned position. The location lay on a south-east facing slope although the trench itself sloped down to the south-west. At the north-eastern end, 0.25m of modern ploughsoil overlay 0.1m of subsoil. To the south-west the underlying boulder clay sloped down, overlain by an increasing thickness of subsoil, before rising slightly again at the south-western end of the trench. The more westerly of the geophysical anomalies was recorded in the extreme south-western end of the trench. Located 16m to the north-east of this was a 2m wide ditch crossing the trench from north-west to south-east and this corresponded with the second geophysical anomaly. The only other feature was a ceramic land-drain crossing the trench from west to east between the two.

#### Trench 35

- 6.35 The position of this trench, near the southern edge of Area 8, was revised some 5m northwards from the planned position due to its proximity to overhead powerlines. Trench 35 was located to examine ditches forming part of the ditched enclosure complex recorded by the geophysical survey in this part of the site. It was orientated from north to south and sloped gently down to the north. Machine-stripping removed 0.3m of modern ploughsoil and up to 0.2m of mid brown subsoil down to the surface of yellow-brown boulder clay. Five ditches were revealed to cut the boulder clay, all aligned from east to west and two of these matched the geophysical anomalies, the other perhaps forming internal sub-divisions.

#### Trench 36

- 6.36 This trench was orientated from north-west to south-east on a gentle south-east facing slope, and located across an area of magnetic 'noise'. Some 0.3m of modern ploughsoil directly overlay the natural boulder clay. The trench was crossed by a sequence of furrows and drains aligned from east to west. An east to west aligned ditch, 1.2m wide, ran across the trench 10m from the south-east end of the trench. No other archaeological features were present



#### Trench 37

- 6.37 Trench 37 was positioned in order to investigate a particularly enhanced area of ridge-and-furrow on the geophysical survey. It lay on an east-facing slope and was aligned from north-east to south-west. The area of the trench was covered by 0.25-0.3m of modern ploughsoil above mid brown colluvium of which the upper 0.15-0.2m was machined off, revealing a modern pit at the south-western end of the trench, and slightly further to the north-east a 7m wide deposit of dark soil, coal debris and post-medieval refuse. Ridge-and-furrow, corresponding to the geophysical survey, also cut the colluvium, together with some land-drains.

#### Trench 38

- 6.38 Located in a 'blank' area on the geophysical survey, Trench 38 lay on fairly level ground and was orientated from north to south. Up to 0.3m of modern ploughsoil and 0.15m of mid brown subsoil were removed by machine down to yellow-brown boulder clay. Two linear features 1-1.5m wide were noted crossing the trench from east to west in the southern half of the trench, and these were probably related to furrows recorded by the geophysical survey. No other archaeological features were identified.

#### Trench 39

- 6.39 This trench was positioned to investigate any continuation of an enclosure ditch last recorded by the geophysical survey a short distance to the west, and also a group of enhanced furrow-type responses. The trench was orientated from north to south, on fairly level ground. The natural boulder clay dipped in the centre of the trench, so that 0.4m of material was removed at the northern end of the trench, up to 0.9m in the centre and 0.6m at the southern end. Some 0.3m of modern ploughsoil overlay up to 0.6m of mid brown soily subsoil. Several ceramic land-drains were observed and a French drain crossed the trench from north north-west to south south-east. Although not recorded by the geophysical survey, a narrow linear anomaly on a parallel alignment some 12m to the west was probably a French drain. The ridge-and-furrow crossing the centre of the trench was not present suggesting that this may have been cut entirely within the thicker depth of colluvial material. A small ditch crossing the trench some 10m from its southern end continued the line of the targeted enclosure ditch, suggesting that the feature is more extensive than portrayed by the geophysical survey.

#### Trench 40

- 6.40 This trench was positioned at the south-eastern corner of Area 8 and orientated from north-east to south-west in order to transect a rather sinuous geophysical anomaly running from north-west to south-east. Under 0.3m of modern topsoil

was boulder clay at either end of the trench. At the south-western end of the trench the clay was cut by two ceramic land-drains running from west to east. The clay sloped from either end of the trench towards a central depression filled with dark soil, which was machine-excavated to a depth of 1.1m. The nature of the feature, combined with the character of the overall geophysical anomaly, suggested that it represents a former stream channel.

#### Trench 41

- 6.41 Trench 41 was located on fairly level ground and orientated from north-west to south-east in order to intersect two parallel linear anomalies running from north north-west to south south-east. A diffuse linear anomaly also crossed the centre of the trench running from south-west to north-east. The trench was machine-excavated to a depth of 0.3-0.45m, removing 0.25-0.3m of modern topsoil and 0.1-0.15m of dark brown subsoil which thickened towards the centre of the trench. Narrow ditches between 0.6-0.8m wide were identified towards either end of the trench, corresponding in position to the targeted anomalies. The feature to the west had been cut along its length by a ceramic land-drain. The diffuse geophysical anomaly corresponded to a 15m-wide band of soil crossing the trench; by analogy to similar features elsewhere within the site this is likely to represent the in-filled channel of a small stream.

#### Trench 42

- 6.42 This trench was positioned running from north-west to south-east across the west-facing slope of a low knoll at the eastern edge of Area 8, and targeted several pit-like geophysical anomalies. The trench sloped slightly down towards each end. It was machined to a depth of 0.3-0.55m, removing 0.25m of modern ploughsoil and occasional thin skims of colluvium. The underlying boulder clay was much less stony and finer towards the north-western end of the trench. Some 14m from this end of the trench, and at the edge of the less stony clay, was a circular pit, 0.85m in diameter, with a dark brown fill which contained a small boulder. Sherds of hand-made prehistoric pottery and worked flints were recovered from the pit-fill. Several other possible pits were present within the central part of the trench. The small pits did not obviously correlate to the rather larger pit-like geophysical anomalies.

#### Trench 43

- 6.43 Trench 43 was located on the eastern side of the low knoll at the eastern edge of Area 8, on fairly level ground. It was aligned from west north-west to east south-east in order to intersect a linear geophysical anomaly running from north north-east to south south-west. The trench was stripped of 0.35-0.65m of topsoil and yellow-brown subsoil, generally down to stony boulder clay. At the north-western end of the trench a deposit of magnesian limestone rubble protruded up through the boulder clay. The only archaeological features were a

ditch 1.2m wide, corresponding to the targeted geophysical anomaly, and a possible pit located immediately to the south-east.

#### Trench 44

- 6.44 This trench was positioned so as to intersect a series of parallel geophysical anomalies running from south-west to north-east. The trench was orientated from north-west to south-east on ground sloping gently down to the north-west. It was positioned to examine a long linear anomaly running south-west to north-east (the same feature as targeted by Trench 45). The trench was machined to a depth of 0.4m throughout its south-eastern half, deepening to 0.95m towards the north-western end. Within the south-eastern part of the trench, 0.25m of modern ploughsoil overlay 0.15m of yellow-brown clayey coarse sand over yellow-brown sandy boulder clay. The targeted geophysical anomaly corresponded with a ditch crossing the centre of the trench, which was itself cut along its length by a ceramic land drain. A possible pit was noted immediately to the south-east of the ditch. Overlying the ditch, and throughout the north-western part of the trench, the modern ploughsoil overlay a deepening deposit of mid brown soil above the natural clay. The ditch cut what appeared to be the south-eastern edge of a palaeochannel containing layered deposits of grey clay and sands, and the north-western (deeper) part of the trench was wet. The geophysical survey suggests that this deeper area forms part of the channel of the possible former stream flowing downslope from the west. An investigation within the edge of this channel produced a sherd of medieval pottery and a worked flint.

#### Trench 45

- 6.45 This trench was located parallel and some 100m to the west of Trench 44, across the same linear geophysical anomaly. The trench was orientated from north north-west to south south-east across the base of the general east-facing hillside, and sloped slightly down to the north north-west. It was machine-stripped to a depth of 0.4-0.5m, removing 0.25m of modern ploughsoil and an underlying colluvial deposit of mid brown sandy clay. Within the north north-west (downslope) part of the trench the natural boulder clay was overlain by patches of grey clay, reflecting its position on the line of the possible former stream channel. A 2m wide ditch was present which coincided with the targeted geophysical anomaly and this had been cut along its length by a ceramic land drain.

#### Trench 46 (Plate 6)

- 6.46 This trench was located on level, low-lying ground towards the northern edge of Area 8, and was orientated from north-east to south-west. The trench was positioned across several possible north-west to south-east aligned linear geophysical anomalies. It was machine-stripped to a depth of 0.45-0.6m. Some

0.25m of modern ploughsoil overlay 0.2-0.3m of stony yellow-brown clayey sand subsoil above yellow-brown stony boulder clay. A geophysical anomaly towards the north-eastern end of the trench proved to be a furrow. A second anomaly aligned from north-west to south-east proved upon excavation to be a 1.8m wide and 0.85m deep ditch with very steep sides and a flat base. This did not contain any dating evidence.

#### Trench 47

- 6.47 Trench 47 was located towards the north-eastern corner of Area 8, in a 'blank' area on the geophysical survey. It had a similar alignment and soil profile to Trench 46 a short distance to the south-west. The north-eastern corner of the trench was crossed by a linear feature, either a ditch or a deep furrow, of which only part of one side was within the end of the trench. This corresponded to one of a series of parallel east to west aligned geophysical anomalies, possibly the south-eastern corner of the pattern of ridge and furrow recorded within Area 6 to the north. Several other archaeological features not identified by the geophysical survey were recorded. Some 26m from its eastern end, the trench was crossed from north to south by a small ditch or gully that was 0.75m wide. A short distance to the west, a gully curved through the trench from north-west to east to south-west. Near the western end of the trench a ditch that was 1.5m wide crossed the trench from north-west to south-east. These features did not contain dating evidence.

#### Trench 48 (Plate 7)

- 6.48 This trench was located at the south-west corner of Area 6 and was positioned running from east north-east to west south-west in order to investigate a curvilinear geophysical anomaly of possible archaeological origin and a 'trend' of possible parallel features aligned from north-west to south-east. Ploughsoil, 0.3m thick, was removed by machine down to the surface of yellow-brown stony boulder clay. The western end of the trench was crossed by a plough-furrow. Immediately to the east, the position of the geophysical anomaly corresponded to an intense concentration of individual plough-marks in the base of a second furrow, and it is possible that the magnetic response resulted from more modern (and magnetic) top-soil having been ploughed-in to a greater depth. Some 20m from the western end of the trench, a third furrow overlay a small linear gully, and was itself cut by a ceramic land-drain, all aligned from north north-west to south south-east. A number of other archaeological features were also revealed. A short distance to the east, the southern halves of two pits lay within the trench. Within its eastern end a small, slightly curving gully crossed the trench. None of these features produced any dating evidence.

#### Trench 49

- 6.49 Trench 49 was located towards the north-eastern edge of Area 6 and aligned from east north-east to west south-west across a linear geophysical anomaly aligned from north-west to south-east, and a second curvilinear or semi-circular anomaly a short distance to the west. The ground surface rose gradually to the east. At the eastern end of the trench 0.25m of stony dark brown sandy clay ploughsoil directly overlay yellow-brown stony boulder clay. The surface of the clay was fairly level for 15m at the eastern end of the trench, then sloped down gradually to the west where up to 0.55m of mid brown soily colluvium had accumulated. At its eastern end the trench was crossed by a ditch that was 1.3m wide aligned and aligned north to south. A short distance to the west was a slightly curving small slot or gully crossing the trench from north-west to south and some 0.6m wide. A group of three features lay 20m from the eastern end of the trench which may have represented pits or the terminals of ditches. Two of these features intercut and only the northern half of each lay within the trench. The larger pit or ditch was 1.4m wide. It is possible that these features represent the re-cut terminals of ditches associated with the large semi-circular anomaly revealed by the geophysical survey; a gap is discernible in the survey result corresponding to this location. A decorated lead spindle whorl was recovered from the colluvial deposit just above these features, but may have been an unrelated object. A slightly smaller, pit lay just to the north-east. This had been cut through by another ditch which was 1m wide and aligned north-west to south-east. The ditch corresponded to a slight linear geophysical anomaly. None of the excavated features produced any dateable finds. Within the 7m at the western end of the trench a natural hollow was present which was filled by silty material that contained animal bone.

#### Trench 50

- 6.50 Trench 50 was located towards the centre of Area 6 in a 'blank' area on the geophysical survey. The area was crossed by a faint magnetic 'trend' of former ridge-and-furrow running from south-west to north-east. The trench was orientated from north-west to south-south-east. Modern ploughsoil, 0.3m thick, overlay the surface of natural boulder clay which was cut by several parallel furrow bases up to 5m wide but only 0.2m deep. The only archaeological feature was a small gully which crossed the trench from east to west, but did not produce any dating evidence. The gully had subsequently been cut by a French drain.

#### Trench 51

- 6.51 Trench 51 was located within the lowest part of Area 5 at its north-eastern corner. The location lay at the foot of a steep east-facing hillslope, and also sloped slightly down to the north. The trench was orientated from north-west to south-east and was positioned within a 'blank' area on the geophysical survey.

Within the western half of the trench, 0.3m of modern ploughsoil directly overlay yellow-brown boulder clay which was crossed by a sequence of furrows aligned from north to south and typically 5m apart (centre to centre). Within the north-eastern half of the trench the boulder clay sloped down and here was overlain by an increasing depth of mid-brown soily colluvium. No furrows were apparent within this half of the trench, and no archaeological features were present. At the north-eastern end of the trench the boulder clay lay 1.22m below the modern field surface.

#### Trench 52

- 6.52 This trench ran diagonally from south-west to north-east across a steep east-facing hillslope. It was located in order to intersect several possible west north-west to east south-east aligned linear anomalies, and also a trend of probable ridge-and-furrow running from south-west to north-east. The trench had a consistent soil profile throughout its length, with 0.25m of modern ploughsoil above 0.1m of mid brown soily colluvium overlying the natural gravelly yellow-brown boulder clay. Furrows crossed the lower part of the trench from south-west to north-east. No other archaeological features were identified.

#### Trench 53

- 6.53 Trench 53 was located so as to intersect a linear anomaly, probably part of the same enclosure ditch targeted by Trench 54, running from south-west to north-east, several parallel features likely to be plough-furrows, and a vague linear anomaly running from south-west to north-east (also crossing Trench 54). The trench was aligned from north north-west to south south-east, running across the east-facing hillslope but also sloping down slightly to the north. A Roman samian rim-herd was recovered from the field surface at the southern end of the trench. The trench was machined to a depth of 0.3m at the southern end, deepening to 0.6m to the north. Some 0.25m of modern ploughsoil overlay an increasing depth of mid brown colluvium over yellow-brown colluvium. Several features were identified cutting the boulder clay including the targeted ditch, which measured 1.8m wide. Another ditch, consistent with a south-west to north-east aligned geophysical anomaly, crossed the trench at an angle near its northern end and was 2m wide. No dating evidence was recovered from these ditches.

#### Trench 54

- 6.54 This trench was positioned within the south-western corner of Area 5 and aligned from west to east down the gently sloping east-facing hillside. The trench was located to intersect a linear anomaly which crossed the trench from south-east to north-west, then turned to the north-east towards Trench 53. A faint parallel linear anomaly lay to the east. In addition, a third, broader anomaly crossed the trench position from south-west to north-east, also

crossing Trench 53. Trench 54 was machine stripped to a depth of 0.35-0.45m, removing 0.25m of modern ploughsoil and up to 0.2m of mid brown subsoil. The trench was crossed by three features which coincided with the geophysical anomalies. Towards the western end the trench was crossed by a 1.7m wide ditch, while a smaller parallel feature lay near the eastern end. Between these was a further linear feature which coincided with the south-west to north-east aligned anomaly.

Trenches 55, 56 and 57 (Plates 8 and 9)

- 6.55 These three trenches are treated together due to their similar location, purpose and results. They were located in a group near the north-western corner of Area 5 on the summit of Andrew's Hill in order to test for the presence/absence of further Anglian burials extending southwards from the group excavated in the adjacent field in 1991 and 1992.
- 6.56 Trench 55 was excavated nearest the field-corner, aligned from north north-east to south south-west across the south-east facing hillslope so that trench sloped up gently from the south south-west, steepening slightly at its northern end. Trench 56 lay a short distance to the east and ran from north-west to south-east down a slightly steeper slope. Trench 57 was aligned from south-west to north-east parallel to the existing northern field boundary, and also ran down a relatively steep slope. All three trenches were covered by 0.25m of modern ploughsoil, although this thinned to 0.2m at the western end of Trench 57. A small group of worked flints was recovered from the field surface in the area between trenches 55 and 56.
- 6.57 Within each of the trenches, the predominant natural material encountered within the down-slope part was a yellow-brown, fairly stone-free, sandy clay (possibly a relict 'natural' soil horizon), which a trial excavation at the lower end of trench 56 showed to be a thin horizon overlying stony boulder clay. This horizon was typically slightly more level than the modern ground surface suggested. At the upper end of each trench, there was a darker brown clayey sand which in Trench 57 rapidly became stony to the west. In Trench 56 this deposit was overlain by a 0.25m thick deposit of fairly stone-free mid yellowish brown clayey sand, and combined with the underlying darker material had a rather convex profile sloping down to the south-east. The downslope edges of these deposits were overlain by a darker brown colluvial deposit which had a surviving depth of up to 0.4m.
- 6.58 Hand-cleaning and intensive metal-detecting did not identify evidence for any additional Anglian graves, and it is possible that any that had once been present had been destroyed by plough truncation. Within Trench 55 a pair of small circular pits with dark charcoal-flecked fills lay just to the south of the raised deposit within the northern end of the trench. In trench 56 a small pit lay 8m south-east of the raised material.

6.59 It is possible that the raised deposits within these trenches represent the basal layers of an artificial mound, such as a large Bronze Age barrow, which if projected would have had a diameter of 55m (see Fig. 2). Such a monument could have subsequently served as a focus for the Anglian cemetery.

## 7.0 Conclusions

7.1 The archaeological evaluation has demonstrated that 40 of the 57 trenches contain archaeological features and that activity is present across the majority of the site. This report presents the findings of the extensive evaluation undertaken to date, and are sufficient to understand the likely effects of the proposed development on archaeology.

7.2 The trial trenching has confirmed that the geophysical survey results are broadly reliable although some additional remains are also present. The eastern third of the site contained a number of these additional features and therefore the potential for further archaeological remains in this area is considered greater than predicted by the geophysical survey. For example there are additional features in Trenches 41, 42, 47, 48, 49 and 50.

7.3 The results of the trenching have shown that the site has suffered varying degrees of plough truncation which has damaged archaeological remains throughout. This is most noticeable on the hilltops at the western and north-western ends of the site and in places down the slope, including over the double ditched enclosure in the centre of Area 8. Localised folds in the natural slope have led to greater depths of colluvial material in places which has helped to preserve some archaeological remains from greater plough damage.

7.4 The trenching has demonstrated the existence of at least four focal areas of activity within the site:

- The double ditched enclosure and associated field system in the centre and south-east Area 8. Evidence for occupation activity outwith the main enclosure has been demonstrated with a number of pits being identified in at least four trenches (26, 30, 31 and 32);
- A square or rectangular enclosure at the southern edge of Area 5. This has suffered from severe plough truncation with the entire eastern side potentially removed at the point where the ground slopes away to the east. The southern end of this enclosure may lie under the extant earthwork of the 17th century enclosure field bank and is therefore likely to be much better preserved;
- Settlement type features were located in Area 6, including a possible enclosure revealed in Trench 49. These features, together with those in Trenches 48 and



50, included pits, gullies and ditches. It is possible that this area of activity extended into the north-east corner of Area 8, and encompassed the ditches and gullies located in Trenches 46 and 47;

- A possible irregular enclosure was located in the south-west corner of Area 8. Ditches were revealed in Trenches 17 and 18 which correspond to linear geophysical anomalies. The geophysical survey suggests a circular anomaly in the eastern corner of the enclosure but work was not sufficiently advanced at this stage to determine if internal occupation features survive in Trench 17.

7.5 In addition to those areas mentioned above a number of dispersed features were identified across the site. One of these was a possible trackway in Trench 8, while a number of ditches were also identified within Trenches 1 and 4 in Area 7.

7.6 The site also contains evidence of a number of former watercourses, which are now all dry. One of these has possibly been identified running downhill in Area 8 from the west side of the double ditched enclosure, where it was located in Trench 25, around the north-west corner of the enclosure, where it was revealed in the north end of Trench 26, and then downhill to the north-east where it was picked up in Trenches 28, 45 and 44. The former watercourse was potentially a factor in the positioning of the double ditched enclosure and there may be potential for it to preserve organic deposits. A similar former watercourse or ditch was located in the southern end of Trench 5, and excavation has revealed a possible stone revetment on the north side and deposits with the potential to contain palaeoenvironmental remains.

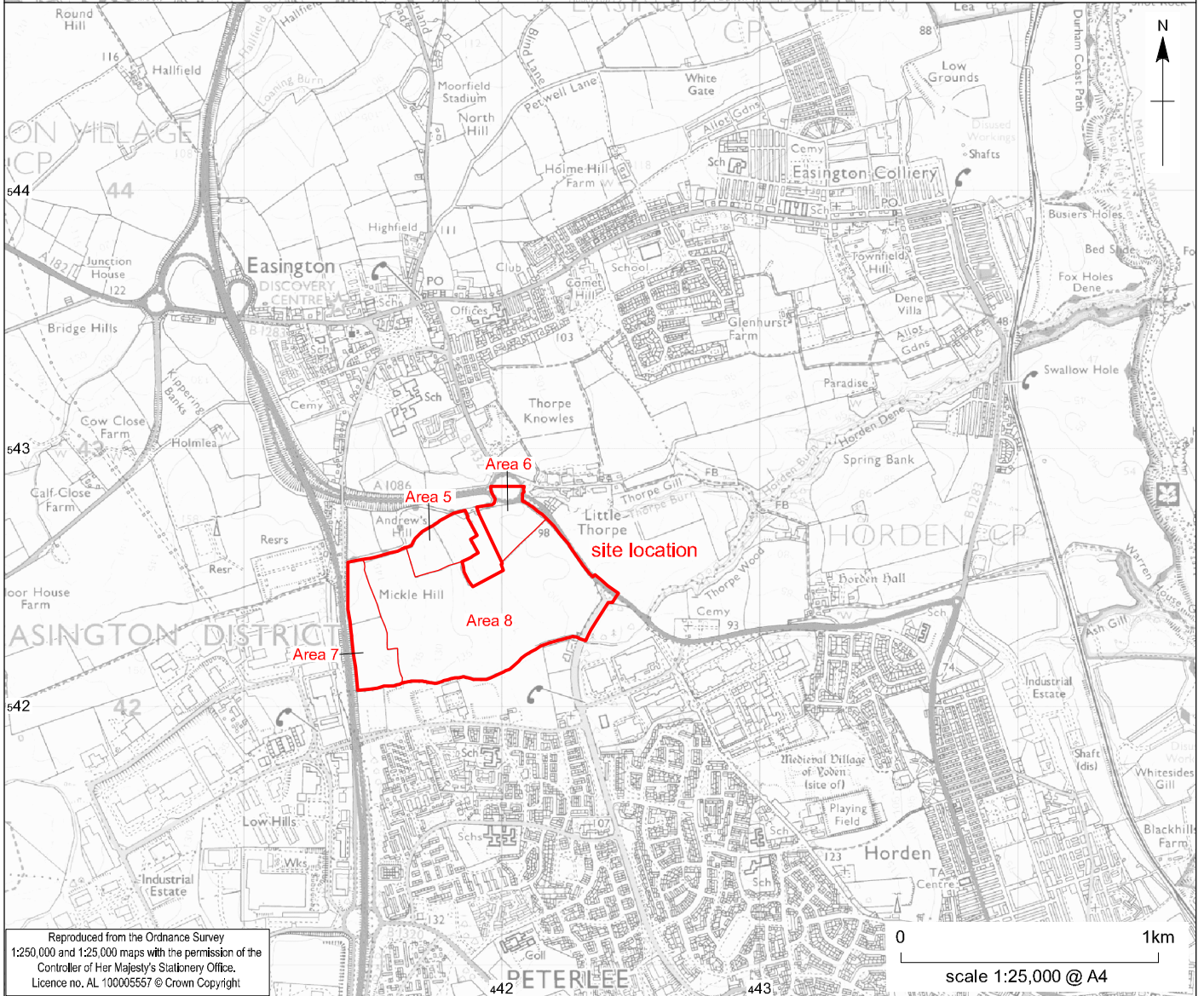
7.7 The trial trenching has revealed no further evidence for the Anglian cemetery within the northern edge of Area 5. However this area has revealed the base of a possible artificial mound, which if it was a pre-existing feature, may have formed the focus for the cemetery. The edge of the deposits forming the possible mound were located in Trenches 55, 56 and 57 and, if, projected provide a diameter of 55m. It is possible that these deposits represent the basal layers of a barrow of Bronze Age date, although it would constitute a large example of this type of monument.

7.8 The finds assemblage recovered from the evaluation work undertaken to date has been relatively limited. It has included worked flint, Iron Age, Roman and medieval pottery. A decorated lead spindle whorl recovered from a deposit sealing an undated ditch maybe medieval in date.

7.9 The trial trenching has confirmed that the results of the geophysics survey can be relied upon in terms of having identified the most significant features within the site. Although the survey has provided a reasonable guide to the archaeological potential across the site, the trenching has also demonstrated that a number of other archaeological features survive at the site in addition to

those revealed by the geophysical survey. In addition to the major features identified by the geophysical survey, the evaluation has confirmed that there are other more ephemeral features present such as pits, small ditches and gullies.

- 7.10 In conclusion, it is considered that the archaeological remains that have been identified are of no more than regional importance and therefore do not pose an absolute constraint on development. On the basis of these results, it is considered that the archaeological interest in this site can be secured by condition. The mitigation strategy should comprise a programme of 'strip, map and sample' investigation and reporting to be agreed with Durham County Council Archaeology Section in advance of any proposed development.

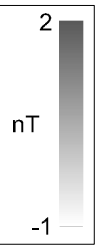


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Lowhills, Peterlee: site location

Figure 1

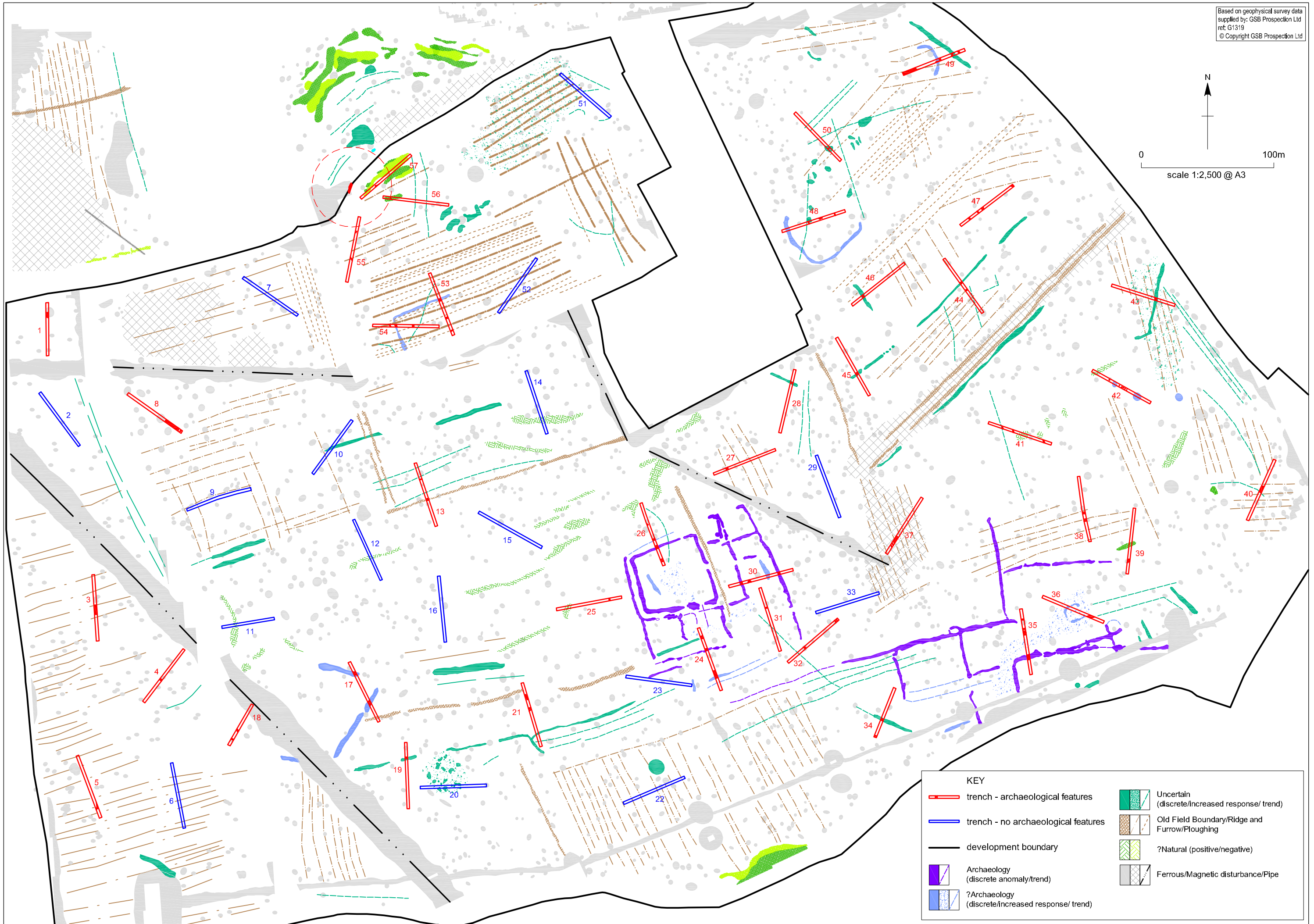
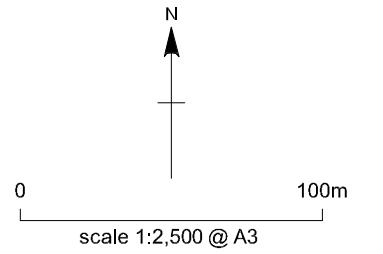


**KEY**

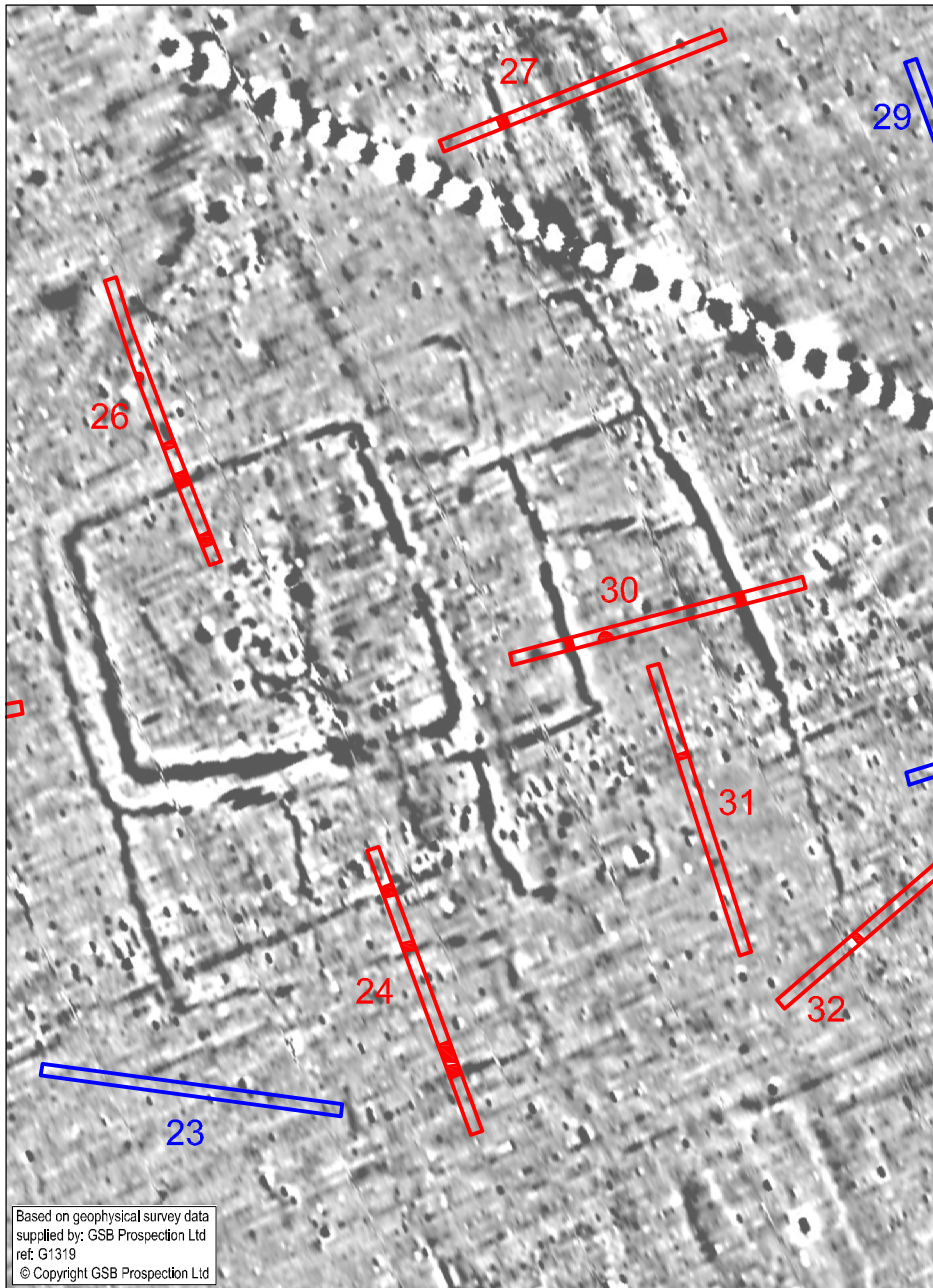
- trench - archaeological features
- trench - no archaeological features
- development boundary

0 100m  
scale 1:2,500 @ A3

N



KEY	
trench - archaeological features	Uncertain (discrete/increased response/ trend)
trench - no archaeological features	Old Field Boundary/Ridge and Furrow/Ploughing
development boundary	?Natural (positive/negative)
Archaeology (discrete anomaly/trend)	Ferrous/Magnetic disturbance/Pipe
?Archaeology (discrete/increased response/ trend)	



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Lowhills, Peterlee: detail 1

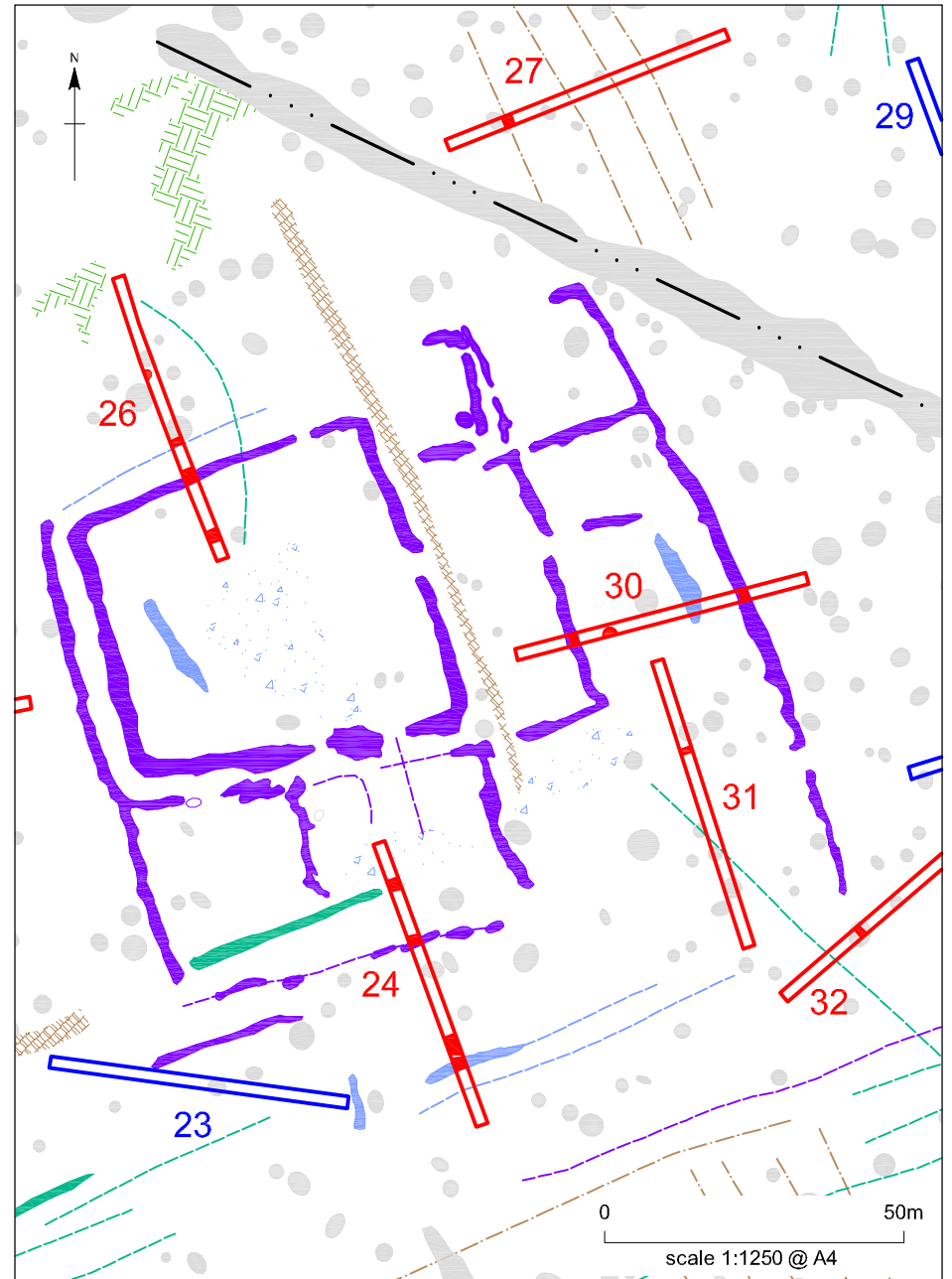
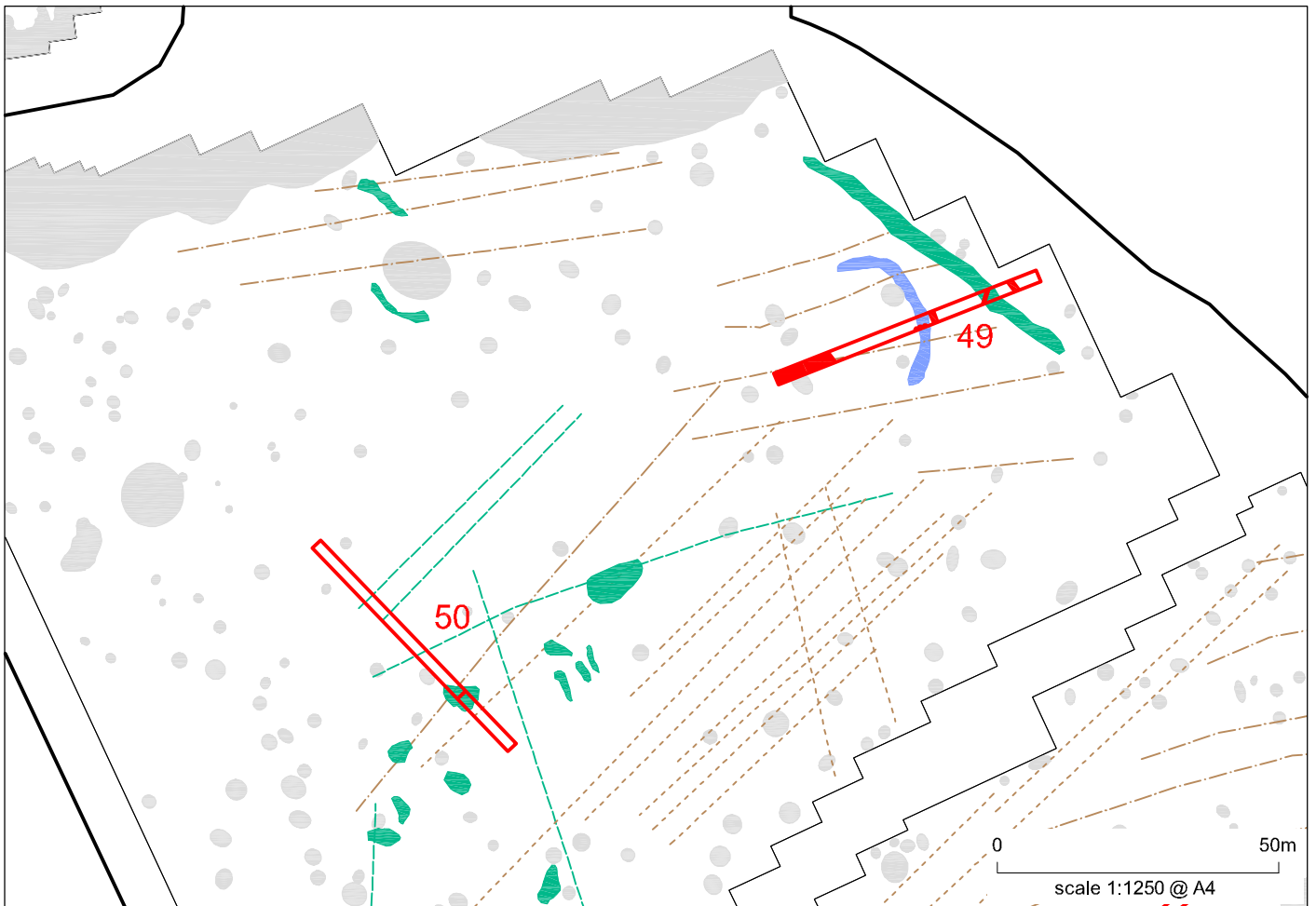
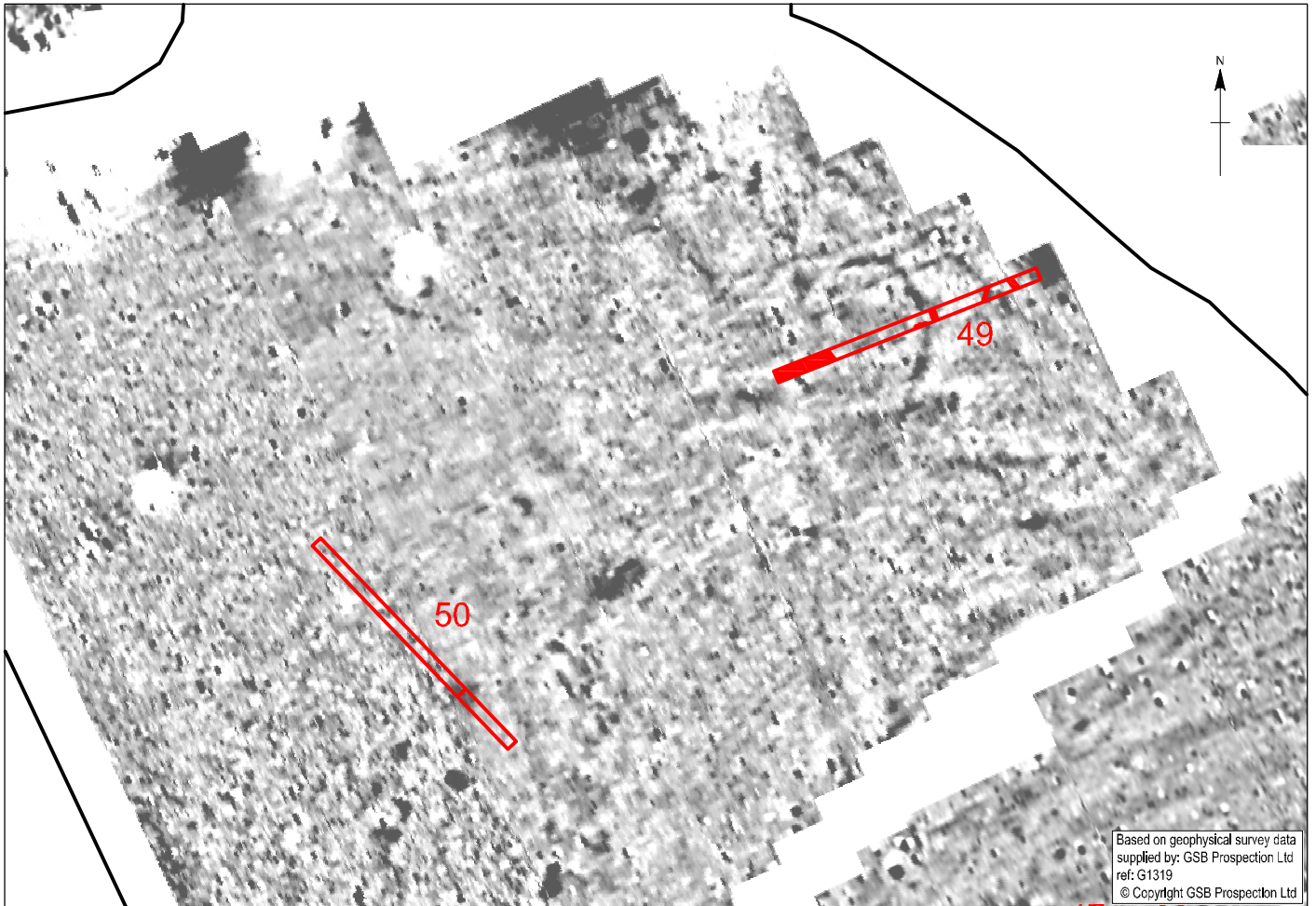


Figure 4









Aerial photograph courtesy of Sophie Laidler

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*Lowhills, Peterlee: aerial view of the site, looking south-east*

*Plate 1*



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*Lowhills, Peterlee: Trench 5*

*Plate 2*



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*Lowhills, Peterlee: Trench 26*

*Plate 3*



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*Lowhills, Peterlee: Trench 28*

*Plate 4*



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*Lowhills, Peterlee: Trench 30*

*Plate 5*



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*Lowhills, Peterlee: Trench 46*

*Plate 6*



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*Lowhills, Peterlee: Trench 48*

*Plate 7*



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*Lowhills, Peterlee: Trench 56*

*Plate 8*



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*Lowhills, Peterlee: Trench 57*

*Plate 9*