SUFFOLK ARCHAEOLOGY

• A HISTORY OF EXPERTISE •

Soakaway monitoring

Eriswell and Lakenheath,

RAF Lakenheath, Suffolk

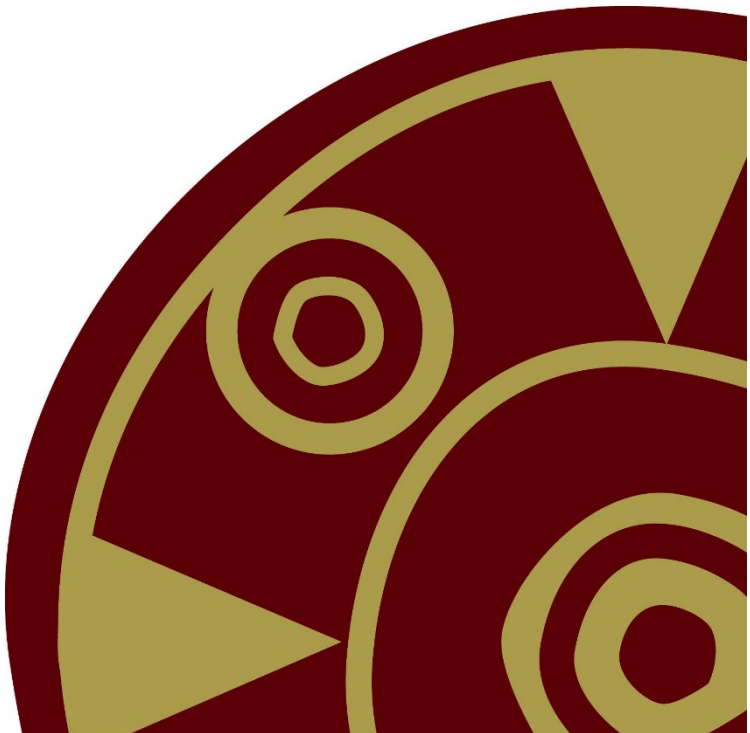
Client:
Defence Infrastructure Organisation

Date:
June 2017

LKH 391, ESF25485

ERL 250, ESF25485

Archaeological Monitoring Report
SACIC Report No. 2017/055
Author: Rob Brooks



HER Information

Site Code/Event Number:	**LKH 391/ESF 25485** **ERL 250/ESF 25485**
Report Number	**2017/055**
Planning Application No:	**N/A**
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Date: 16/06/2017

Approved By: Jo Caruth
Position: Senior Project Officer
Date: 16/06/2017
Signed:

Introduction

A monitoring was carried out on RAF Lakenheath, across the parishes of Eriswell and Lakenheath (Fig. 1) during construction of, and modification to, several soakaways. The work was carried out from the 16th November 2016 – 30th May 2017 by Rob Brooks and managed by Jo Caruth of Suffolk Archaeology CIC. An OASIS form has been completed for the project (reference no. suffolka1-287299 – Appendix 1) and a digital copy of the report will be submitted for inclusion on the Archaeology Data Service database (http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/library/greylit).

All the work was funded by the MoD Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO), commissioned through Volker Fitzpatrick. Suffolk Archaeology is grateful to Claire Bushnell (DIO) and Brian Donovan (Volker Fitzpatrick) and members of their teams for their support throughout the project.

RAF Lakenheath is located in West Suffolk, immediately east of Lakenheath village, approximately 2.5km north of Mildenhall and 9.5km west of Thetford.

Groundworks

The groundworks were undertaken by subcontractors working for Volker Fitzpatrick, under instruction from the DIO. The works consisted of an assessment of the condition and adequacy of existing drainage and soakaways with repairs and new construction as necessary. Archaeological work consisted of monitoring of the groundworks during the stripping for several new soakaways and trenching. Not all areas included in the contractor's work programme required archaeological work and in the case of Area 1 towards the south-east end of Rochester Road, an initial visit identified that the gully repairs and trenching were all in made-up ground, so further visits were not made.

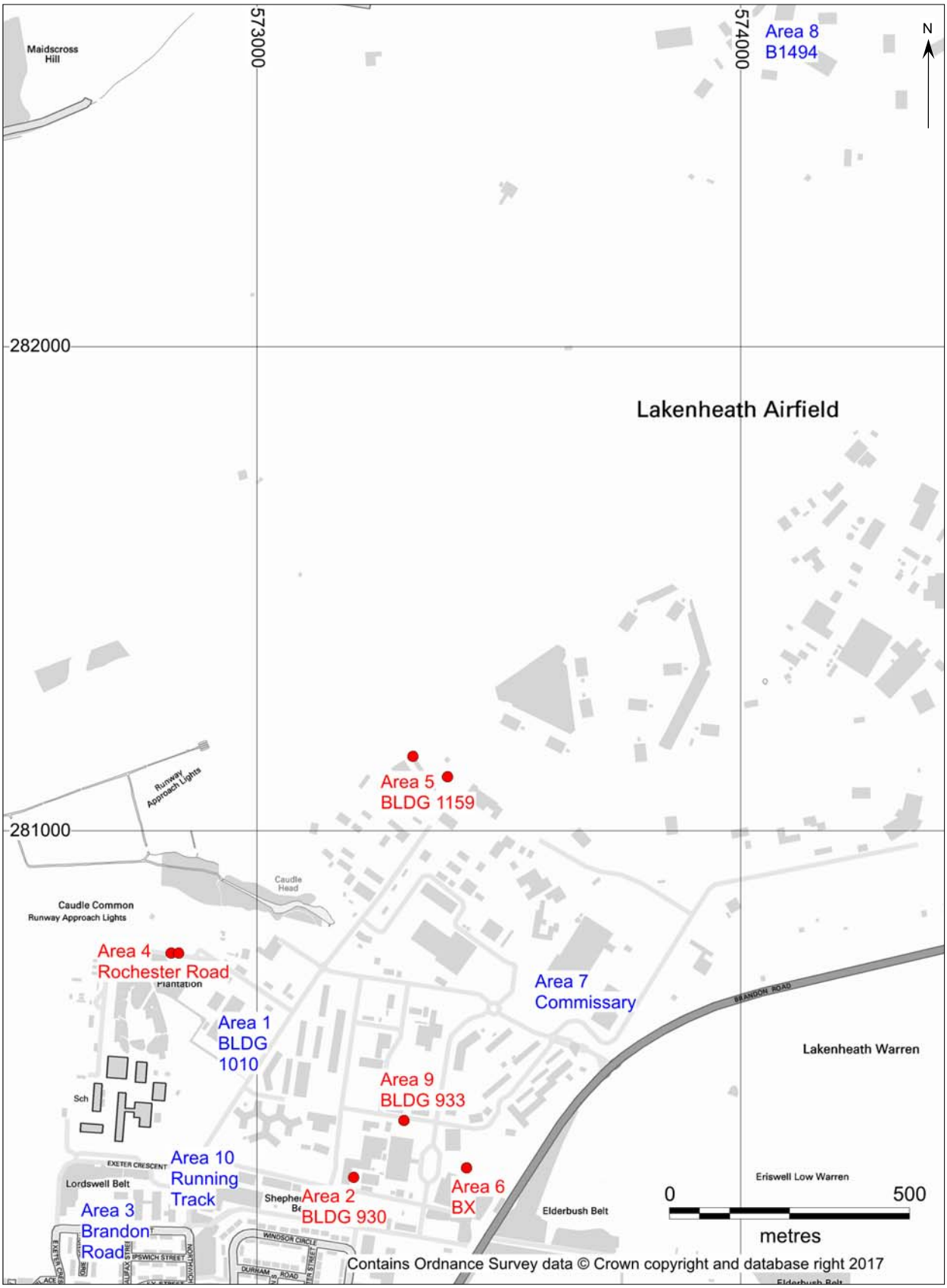

Figure 1. Approximate soakaway locations (red = monitored sites, blue = areas of no work)

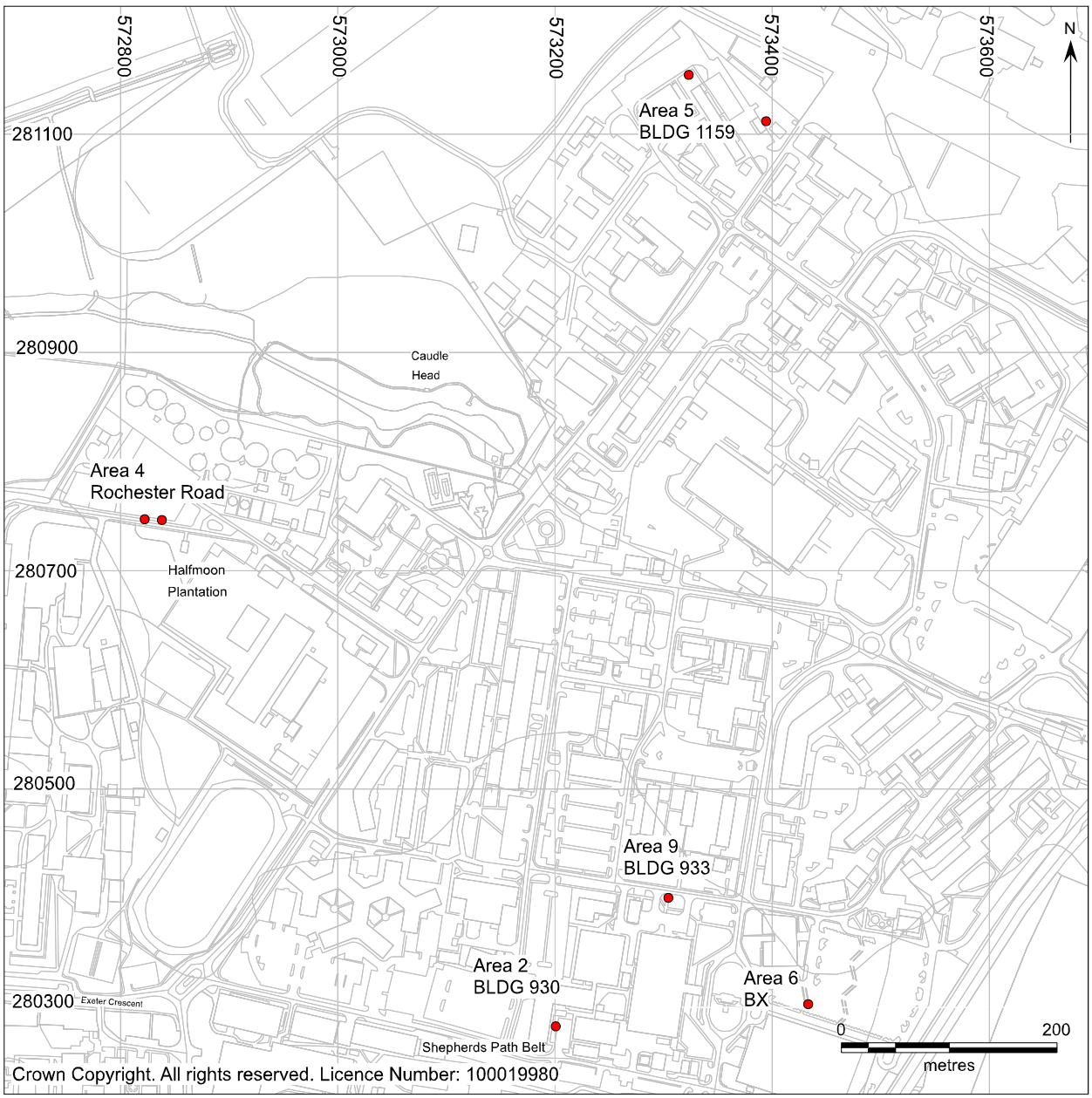

Figure 2. Monitored soakaway locations

Results

Of all the monitored areas, only three of the first four soakaway strips (in Area 4/ Rochester Road and Area 5/Building 1159) produced any features or finds. The remainder of the trenches were blank, with the soil profiles of these detailed in Table 1.

Area 4 – Rochester Road (ERL 250)

The two soakaways (each measuring *c.*0.6m x *c.*2.1m) were monitored on 16th November 2016 and were located on the northern verge of Rochester Road, immediately south of the sewage works (Fig. 3). Two electric cables ran parallel to/along the long edges of both soakaways, destroying the upper 0.5-0.55m of each profile. French drains ran north-south through the centre of each trench, causing further disturbance.

Soakaway 1

The profile of soakaway 1 (TL 72822 80747) revealed *c.*0.8m of disturbed topsoil, above *c.*0.55m of orange sand natural, above >0.35m of chalk natural (Pl. 1).

Pit/ditch 0001

One clear pit/ditch (0001) was recorded in the western end of the trench, with a basal dark brown-grey/black silty sand fill (0002) and a mid-dark grey-brown silty-sand upper fill (0003). It had a slightly irregular c.45° eastern end. The base and eastern edge were not visible. The alignment was north-south.

Feature 0004

A further feature (0004) was recorded in the northern profile, but it was unclear if it continued into the southern edge. As such it is not clear if it was a pit/posthole or ditch. It had near vertical sides and a flat base. Its fill was a single deposit of mid brown silty-sand (0005).

Plate 1. Rochester Road Soakaway 1 (facing north-north-east, 1m scale)

Soakaway 2

Soakaway 2 (TL 72836 80745) had no features recorded within it and the profile was recorded as a thin layer of turf/topsoil (0.05m) was recorded over 0.5m of orange-brown sand subsoil with occasional small flints. This came down immediately onto clean orange natural sand.

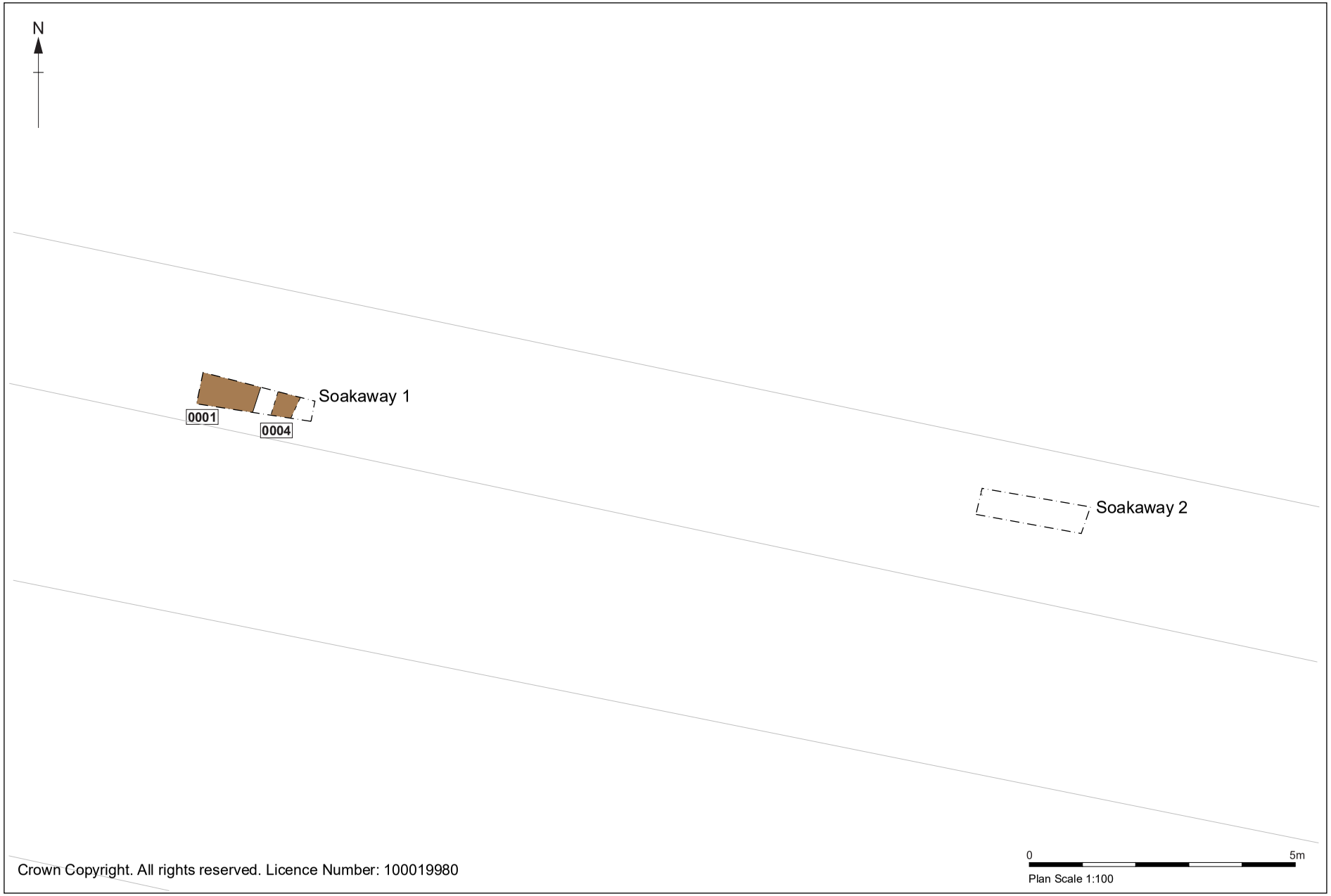

Figure 3. Plan of Rochester Road soakaways

Area 5 – Building 1159 (LKH 391)

Soakaway 1

Both soakaways in Area 5 produced archaeological features and finds (Figs. 4 and 5). The first soakaway (TL 73395 81112), located 67m east of the east corner of Building 1159, was monitored on 27th February 2017 and contained *c*.0.1m of topsoil/turf, above 0.16m-0.18m of greyish-brown loose sand with occasional small flints, with a diffuse lower horizon with mixed mid greyish-brown and orange sand with a sporadic mid brown lens at the base (the start of an iron pan layer). Cut into this was pit 0001.

Pit 0001

Pit 0001 was oval in plan, east-north-east to west-south-west, measuring 1.11m x 0.82m x 0.1m deep, with very gently sloping sides and a slightly concave base (Pl. 2). It was cut by a modern service trench. Fill 0002 was slightly mottled mid to dark greyish-brown soft sand, with common small flints and occasional charcoal flecks. This produced a flint flake of Late Bronze Age to early Iron Age type, as well as a single sherd of medieval pottery (3g) and two pieces of fuel ash slag. The presence of medieval remains on the airbase (both features and finds) is rare and it is possible that this piece was intrusive.

Plate 2. Building 1159 Soakaway 1, pit 0001 (facing south-south-east, 0.5m scale)

Soakaway 2

The second soakaway (TL 73323 81153), monitored on 23rd and 24th March 2017, was located *c.*15m north-east of Building 1159's northern corner. This contained one pit and two ditches. 0.4m of turf/topsoil and modern build up (orange sand, tile fragments, chalk rubble, flints, etc.), over a sporadic deposit of mid to dark grey and brown silty-sand, which was up to 0.15m thick and was interpreted as the remnants of an original topsoil horizon. This in turn overlaid a 0.23m-0.32m thick deposit of mid grey-brown silty-sand with rare tiny flints, that sealed the upper fills of the ditches (Figs. 4-5).

Pit 0014

Pit 0014 was oval in plan, aligned south-west to north-east, with 40-45° slightly concave sides and a near flat base, measuring >1.17m x 1.05m x 0.46m deep (Pl. 3). It was cut by ditch 0017. Basal fill 0015 consisted of mixed lenses of loose to firm pale grey and mid grey-brown silty-sand and orange sand, with occasional small flints. The middle fill, 0016, was made up of loose lenses of pale grey and dark grey-black silty-sand, with charcoal flecks and occasional heated stones. This produced sixteen sherds of middle Iron Age to late Iron Age pottery (66g) and a further prehistoric sherd (1g), as well as a large assemblage of fired clay. Fifty-four of these fragments weighed only 570g, whilst the remaining four pieces were much larger, weighing cumulatively 1722g. These pieces are thought to be structural remains and possibly part of a loomweight. Four pieces of struck flint (one a primary flake) were also recovered, with two pieces of heat-altered quartzite and several pieces of extremely fragmentary bone, one piece possibly from a small bird. A sample from this material contained charcoal, charred cereal grains, legumes, seeds, grass stems, bone fragments, as well as uncharred bone. Upper pit fill 0020 was made up of mid grey loose silty-sand with occasional small flints and no finds.

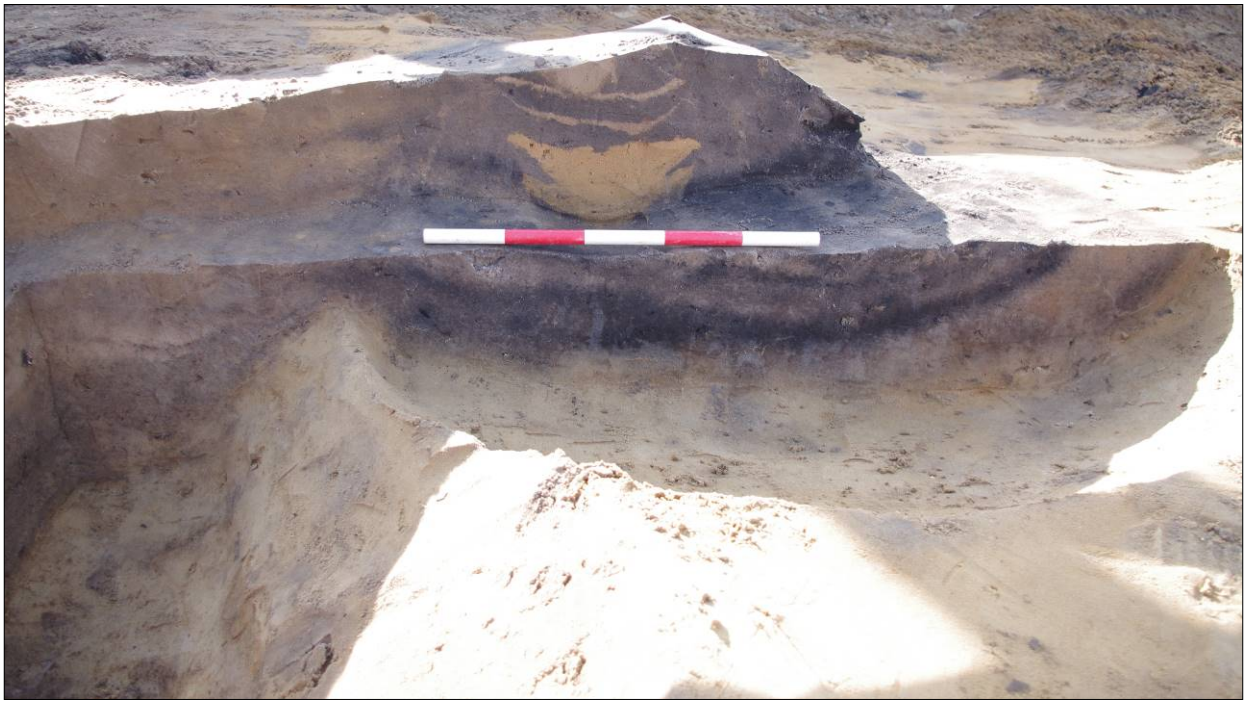

Plate 3. Building 1159 Soakaway 2, pit 0014, cut by ditch 0017 (facing south-south-east, 0.5m scale)

Ditch 0009/0017

Ditch 0009/0017 cut pit 0014 and was excavated in two sections and measured 1.4m wide x 0.73m deep (Pl. 4). It was north-north-west to south-south-east aligned, with 20°-30° slightly concave upper edges that broke to 45°-75° and were convex-concave. The base was straight/slightly sloping, but irregular in places. There was no clear relationship with ditch 0003 to the north and it appeared to be sealed by what was probably a wind-blown sand deposit. Basal fill 0010 consisted of firm lenses of yellow sand, dark grey silty-sand, orange-brown iron stained sand and pale grey sand, with occasional charcoal flecks and no finds. Middle fill 0021 was made up of layers of pale yellow and pale grey loose sand with occasional small flints and no finds. The upper fill, 0011, could not be differentiated from the upper fills of the ditches to the north and was probably made up of several mixed deposits. It consisted of mid orangish-grey silty-sand, with occasional small flints and charcoal flecks. It appeared to be sealed by what is probably a wind-blown sand deposit and contained two sherds of middle Iron Age to late Iron Age pottery (7g).


Plate 4. Building 1159 Soakaway 2, ditch 0009 (facing north-west, 2m scale)

Ditches 0003, 0005 and 0007

To the north or ditch 0009/0017 was a series of at least three ditches, made up of cuts 0003, 0005 and 0007 (Pl. 5). Whilst relationships were recorded in the section, these were often difficult to ascertain as the soil conditions were difficult to interpret and the features are likely to be contemporary cuts/recuts of the same boundary. Potentially the earliest cut was 0003, with 35°-40° slightly irregular sides and narrow concave base, cut by ditch 0005. It measured >1.52m x 0.52m deep. Basal fill 0004 was mottled pale grey and mid grey silty-sand, with occasional small flints and no finds. Upper fill 0012 was mid orangish-grey silty-sand, with occasional small flints and charcoal flecks and no finds.

Ditch 0005 appeared somewhat irregular in the oblique section, but was thought to cut 0003 and possibly be cut by 0007. It had 40°-70° irregular to concave sides and a wide straight/sloping base. It was up to 0.52m deep x >0.9m wide. Basal fill 0006 was mottled pale grey and mid grey silty-sand, with occasional small flints and no finds. Consistent mid grey-brown loose silty-sand, with occasional flints made up upper fill

0013, which had two struck flints, one being a core preparation flake of possible Late Bronze Age to early Iron Age date.

Ditch 0007 possibly cut ditch 0005 and had 70°-80° slightly convex-concave sides and a narrow concave base. Its single fill, 0008, was mid brown-grey loose silty-sand with occasional small flints and a Roman pottery rim sherd (9g).

Plate 5. Building 1159 Soakaway 2, ditches 0003, 0005 and 0007 (facing north-west, 2m scale)

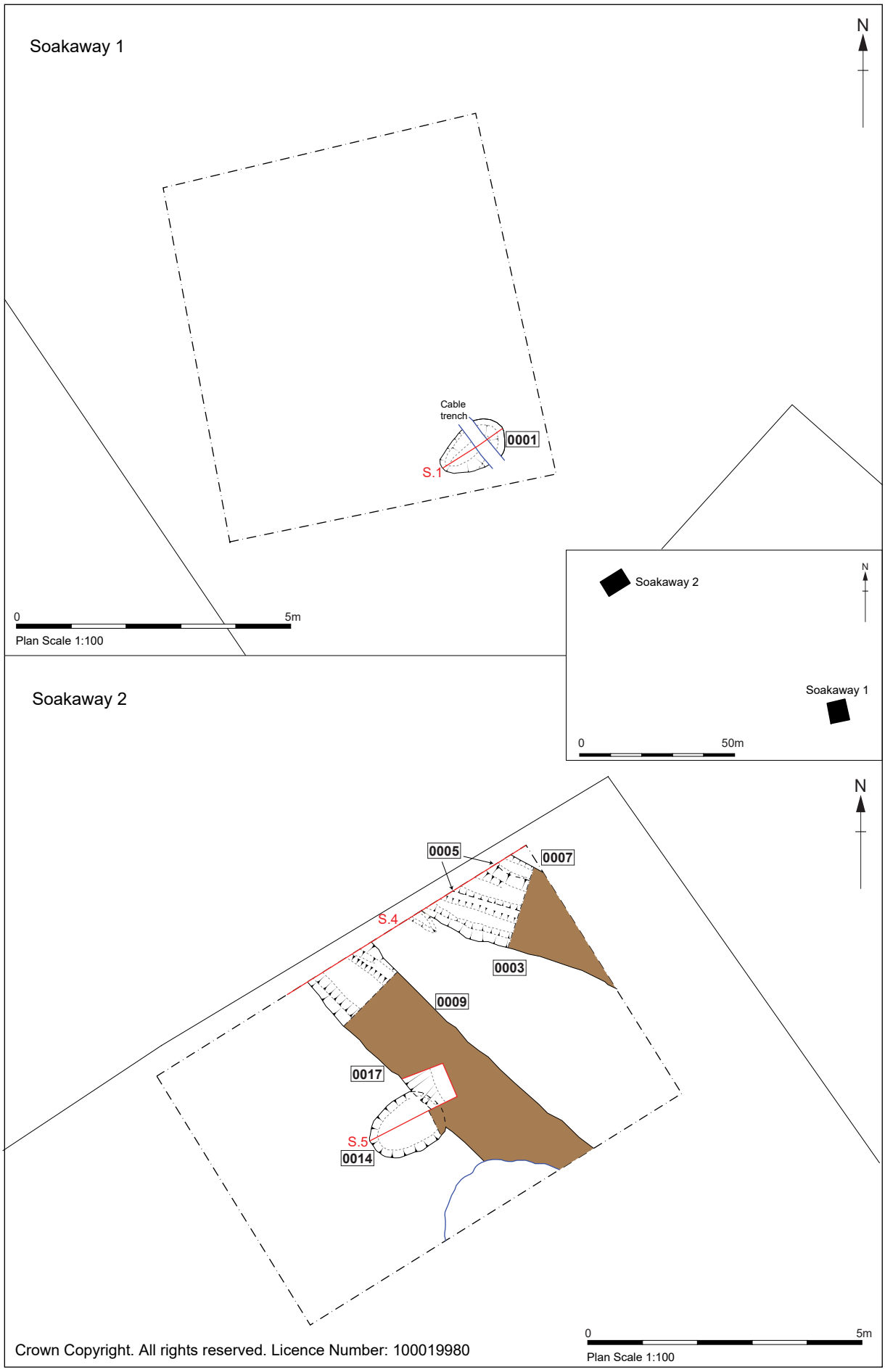

Figure 4. Building 1159 soakaway plans

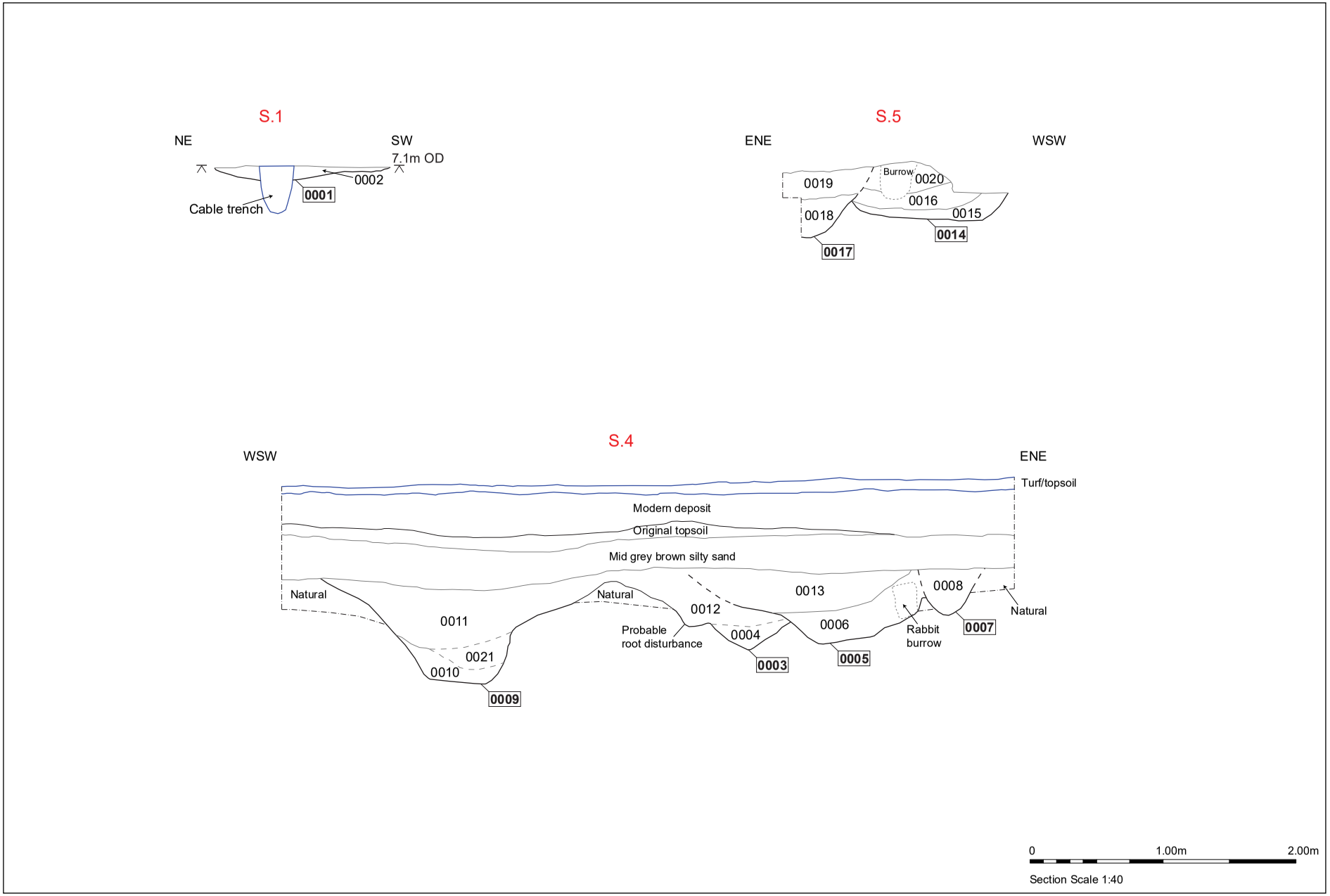

Figure 5. Building 1159 soakaway sections

Soil profiles from the remainder of the monitored groundworks

The following table summarises the results of the remaining soakaways and other groundworks that were monitored but produced no archaeological remains. Plans on the following pages show their mapped locations (Figs. 6-8).

Area and location	Profile and other notes
Area 2/ Building 930, TL 73200 80279	• Date of visit – 18th May 2017 • Dimensions – 1.3m x 10m x 1.8m deep (Fig. 6) • First profile recorded up to 0.25m of turf/topsoil, over a sporadic layer up to 0.3m deep of concrete pieces, Type 1 aggregate and other modern material, above 0.7m-0.75m of mid to dark brownish-orange loose sand, above >0.8m of degraded chalk and pale yellow silty-sandy-chalky material. • A further visit was scheduled, but the soakaway was backfilled before this occurred. • It was initially thought that this area was quite disturbed after the first visit, but the surviving brownish-orange sand was probably the uppermost natural geology as recorded at York Road.
Area 6/BX, TL 73431 80301	• Date of visit – 10th May 2017 • Dimensions – 0.9m x 6.1m x 0.8m deep (Fig. 7) • Profile – only modern deposits recorded • The disturbed nature of this profile reflected the presence of services in the vicinity and may not be representative of the whole area.
Area 9/ Building 933/York Road TL 73306 80399	• Date of visits – 30th-31st May 2017 • Dimensions of gully – 0.75m x 1.5m x 1.2m deep (Fig. 8) • Gully profile – 0.25m of modern material, above 0.48m-0.62m of rale to mid orangish-brown sand with occasional flints and iron pan layer at base, above >0.33m->0.47m of degraded sandy-chalk • Dimensions of trench – 8.23m x 0.3m x up to 1m deep • Trench profile – 0.6m-0.7m of turf and modern material, above 0.3m of pale to mid orangish-brown possibly undisturbed san. However, the whole profile was frequently disturbed by a number of service trenches and was also subsequently difficult to investigate. • The trenching was running to an existing soakaway that was *c.*8m+ deep and circular with a 5m plus diameter. It is assumed that the excavation for the installation of this must have disturbed a substantial amount of the surrounding area.

Table 1. Soil profiles for groundworks with no recorded archaeology

Figure 6. Area 2/Building 930 plan

Figure 7. Area 6/BX plan

Figure 8. Area 9/Building 933 plan

Finds and environmental evidence from LKH 391

Ioannis Smyrnaios (unless stated differently)

Introduction

A small quantity of bulk finds was recovered from the monitoring of the soakaways at Building 1159/LKH 391, which are listed by context below. There were no small finds.

Context No	Pot No	Pot Wt (g)	F clay No	F clay Wt (g)	Slag No	Slag Wt (g)	W Flint No	W Flint Wt (g)	A Bone No	A Bone Wt (g)
0002	1	3			2	6	1	1		
0008	1	9								
0011	2	7								
0013							2	15		
0016	17	67	57	2192			4	13	20	1

Table 2. Bulk finds

Pottery

The monitoring produced twenty-one sherds of pottery weighing 67 grams. The material derived from five contexts including one sample. The pottery consists of small and heavily abraded sherds, with only one diagnostic rim present. The assemblage is summarised by context in Table 3.

Context	Sample	Ceramic Period	Fabric	Form	Decoration	Sherd type	No	Wt/g	ENV	EVE	Rim diam (cm)	State	Fabric date
0002		Med				p	1	3	1			small frg	Med
0008		Rom	ESH	bowl	burnished	r	1	9	1	0.08	17		Rom
0011		Preh	QVF		smoothed	p	1	3	1			small frg	MIA-LIA
0011		Preh	QVF			p	1	4	1				MIA-LIA
0016		Preh	QVF	jar?	smoothed	r+p	7	42	1				MIA-LIA
0016		Preh	QVF			p	1	12	1			small frg	MIA-LIA
0016	2	Preh	QVF		two smoothed	p	8	12				small frg	MIA-LIA
0016	2	Preh	Q			p	1	1	1				?

Table 3. Quantification of pottery

Pit fill 0002 in Soak Away 1 produced the only medieval sherd in the assemblage and ditch fill 0008 in the same area produced a rim from an early shell-tempered (ESH)

Roman bowl. Ditch fill 0011 and pit fill 0016 in Soak Away 2 produced sandy wares with sparse flint and organic remains (fabric QVF), which date to between the Middle and Late Iron Age. A single tiny fragment from Sample 2 from pit fill 0016 is made from a dense coarse sandy fabric, the date of which is unclear.

Fired clay

Large quantities of fired clay, all made from a soft and low-fired sandy fabric, derived from pit fill 0016 in Soak Away 2. The fill produced fifty-eight pieces weighing 2,192 grams. The vast majority of such pieces are small and abraded, while their flat surfaces are in most cases curved. The same fill produced Middle to Late Iron Age pottery and the fired clay is most likely to be of contemporary date. The material is summarised in Table 4.

Context	Sample	No.	Wt/g	Flat surface	Impressions	Notes
0016		52	467	mostly pieces with curved surfaces		soft fabric
0016		1	228	large piece with one flat and curved side		
0016		1	142	piece of curved corner	thin (7mm) diagonal perforation	possible loomweight, although perforation is too thin
0016		1	541	curved piece of triangular shape	two pieces of charcoal from burnt organic material, one definitely a burnt rod, still inserted in one of the sides of the object	no perforation
0016		1	811	fairly round piece and relatively flat at least on one side	three small pieced of charcoal from burnt organic remains still attached on the surfaces	
0016	2	1	3			small frg

Table 4. Quantification of fired clay

Four pieces of significant weight are likely to represent structural remains, including a possible loomweight. More specifically, a large and fairly rounded piece with at least one flat surface, weighing 811 grams, has small pieces of charcoal from burnt organic remains attached to its surfaces, and therefore, it is likely to have been associated with a fire. Another curved and roughly triangular piece, weighing 541 grams, has two pieces of charcoal attached on its surfaces. The largest piece of charcoal is definitely a burnt rod, which was once inserted through one of the sides of the object. A third piece with a

large curved surface, weighing 228 grams, has no characteristic features but it appears to have become detached from a larger curved piece.

In addition, a medium-sized piece weighing 142 grams came from the rounded edge of a triangular object, which could have been a loomweight. This piece of fired clay has a thin perforation, 7mm in diameter, which was pierced through the two flat sides of the triangular object. Usually, loomweights tend to have wider perforation, often exceeding 10mm in diameter. Despite its resemblance to a loomweight, this specific piece of fired clay could also be structural.

Worked flint

Ioannis Smyrnaios (with identifications by Mike Green)

Seven pieces of worked flint weighing 29 grams were recovered from three contexts and one sample. The flint is dark black with moderate or absent patination, often preserving portions of the original cortex. The assemblage is summarised in Table 5.

Context	Sample	Category	Type	Patina	Utilised	No.	Wt/g	Cortex	Date	Comments
0002		flake	core preparation flake	moderate	no	1	1	1%	LBA-EIA	
0013		flake	core preparation flake	none	no	1	7	30%	LBA-EIA	modern wear
0013		flake	flaked piece	none	no	1	8	0%		frost pitting
0016		flake	primary flake	none	no	1	10	50%		modern wear
0016	2	chips	flaked pieces	none	no	3	3	0-40%		

Table 5. Quantification of struck flint

Pit fill 0002 in Soak Away 1 and ditch fill 0013 in Soak Away 2 produced core preparation flakes which are likely to date in the Late Bronze Age – Early Iron Age transition. Such flakes have been struck with hand hammer techniques from irregular angles. Pit fill 0016 in Soak Away 2 produced the only primary flake in the entire assemblage; its dating is uncertain but it could be associated with the Iron Age pottery found in the same fill. Sample 2 from the same context produced three chips which could not be dated.

Heat-altered stone

A single piece of heat-altered quartzite weighing 118 grams was recovered from pit fill 0016. Sample 2 from the same fill produced thirteen pieces of burnt flint. This material may date to the Mid to Late Iron Age as it was found with pottery of this date.

Slag

Two pieces of fuel ash slag weighing 6 grams derived from pit fill 0002 in Soak Away 1. Both pieces were highly abraded and bore no characteristic features. The same pit fill produced a single medieval sherd and a LBA-EIA core preparation flake. The date of the slag could not be determined.

Animal bone

Pit fill 0016 produced twenty small and highly abraded fragments of animal bone weighing 1 gram. No species could be identified due to the poor condition of the material, although it is likely that the bone comes from a mammal. Sample 2 from the same fill produced numerous thin and highly abraded fragments of bone weighing 2 grams in total. One of the fragments was calcined but bore no characteristic features that could allow further identification. A thin and relatively long bone from the same sample is likely to have come from a small bird.

Plant macrofossils

Anna West

Introduction and methods

Two bulk samples were taken during this monitoring. Both samples were from fills within pit 0014, which appeared to contain burnt refuse material and Iron Age pottery. For the purposes of this assessment Sample 1 from pit fill 0016 was processed in order to assess the quality of preservation of plant remains and their potential to provide useful data as part of further archaeological investigations.

The sample was processed in full using manual water flotation/washover and the flot

was collected in a 300 µm mesh sieve. The dried flot was scanned using a binocular microscope at x10 magnification and the presence of any plant remains or artefacts are noted below. The non-floating residue was collected in a 1 mm mesh and sorted when dry. Any artefacts/ecofacts recovered were retained for inclusion in the finds total.

Quantification

For the purposes of this initial assessment, items such as seeds, cereal grains and small animal bones have been scanned and recorded quantitatively according to the following categories:

= 1-10, ## = 11-50, ### = 51+ specimens

Items that cannot be easily quantified such as charcoal, magnetic residues and fragmented bone have been scored for abundance:

+ = rare, ++ = moderate, +++ = abundant

Results

Table 6 shows the contents of the two samples that were taken from the fill 0016 of pit 0014.

SS no	Context no	Feature/ cut no	Feature type	Approx. date of deposit	Flot contents
2	0016	0014	Pit	Iron Age	charred cereal grains #, charred legumes #, charred seeds #, charred grass stem frags #, charred bone frags +, bone frags+, charcoal +++

Table 6. Plant macrofossils and other remains from sample flot

The preservation of the plant macrofossils was through charring and was generally fair to poor. The flot produced by this sample was relatively small at just under 100 ml. The majority of this volume belonged to wood charcoal. The charcoal was rather fragmented and flaked, and the fragments present were generally too small to be suitable for species identification or radiocarbon dating. No attempt was made to identify the wood-types present for the purposes of this report; however, heather family (*Ericaceae*) stem fragments appeared to be present within this material.

Charred cereal grains were present in small numbers. Both wheat (*Triticum* sp.) and barley (*Hordeum* sp.) were noted in the samples. Some of these grains were too puffed and fragmented with honeycomb-like texture, which is characteristic for grains that have been subjected to high temperatures. No chaff remains suggestive of cereal processing were recovered from this sample.

A single charred pea (*Pisum* sp.) was present, although it too was abraded. Pulses were an important source of protein within the diet; however, as they did not require processing with the use of heat in the way that cereals often did, they are generally under-represented in the archaeological record. Their presence in the flot suggests that horticultural activities were taking place in the vicinity.

Charred grass (*Poaceae*) seeds were present in small numbers along with a single pulse/legume seed (*Pisum/Vicia*). These could represent arable weeds that were accidently collected along with the crop.

The bulbous basal clum internodes of false oat grass (Arrhenatherum tuberosum L.) also known as onion couch grass, were recovered in small numbers. This grass is intolerant to cutting or trampling and is unusually absent from pasture, but may be present in ungrazed grasslands or arable land that has fallen fallow. The swollen basal internodes often form a chain of bulbs that will vegetatively reproduce when severed through ploughing or harrowing; therefore, this grass can quickly become an invasive weed of arable crops unless winter ploughing or burning of the soil surface is carried out. The presence of such basal nodes and what appeared to be stem fragments, along with cereal grains in an Iron Age domestic context, suggests the grass may have been uprooted by hand, possibly whilst the crop was being harvested in this way (Roehrs et al. 2012).

Charred and uncharred animal bone fragments were present; therefore, it is possible that food waste was disposed within a domestic hearth or oven and the waste was then deposited within the backfill of the sampled feature. These animal bone fragments were observed whilst scanning the flot under a microscope and although their presence has been recorded, the material is too fragmented and sparse to require any further work by the relevant specialist.

Conclusions and recommendations for further work

In general, the sample was fair to poor in terms of identifiable material, containing insufficient density of material (*c*.+100 specimens) to allow quantification. Although the remains were relatively sparse, they clearly indicated that agricultural, horticultural and domestic activities were taking place in the vicinity. The presence of false oat suggested either open grassland or arable farming nearby. Charred heather remains suggested gathering of fuel, most likely collected within the vicinity of the site.

At this stage, it is not recommended that any further work is carried out on the flot material from this sample; however, if further interventions took place on this site, it is recommended that further sampling should be carried out with a view to investigating the nature of the possible agricultural, horticultural and domestic waste. Any additional weed assemblage could possibly provide useful information on the utilisation of local plant resources and agricultural activities on the site. Sample 2 from pit fill 0015 should also be included in any future assessment. The flot material from Sample 1 should be retained as part of the site archive.

Discussion of material evidence

The largest amount of artefactual and environmental evidence was recovered from fill 0016 of pit 0014 in Soak Away 2, which contained what appears to be the remains of a hearth or oven made up of burnt fired clay, together with heat-affected stone, charcoal and heather which may have been the fuel used. Small fragments of Middle to Late Iron Age pottery were also associated with this feature, together with small quantities of charred and uncharred animal bone and some grains and pulses.

Discussion and conclusions

Monitoring of the soakaway works and other trenching produced further evidence of prehistoric, Roman and possibly Saxon activity across certain parts of the base, whilst also highlighting preserved soil profiles in some areas and the levels of disturbance in others. However, in general the soil profiles across much of the base are thought to be well preserved, with any significant levels of modern truncation often being isolated in their spread.

One of the Rochester Road soakaways revealed two definite cut features; a probable ditch and pit/posthole. Previous archaeological works in the area have uncovered a range of prehistoric remains, but of greater significance have been the extensive Roman and Anglo-Saxon occupation deposits. A large soakaway, 55m to the north-east of the current site, recorded occupation soil that appeared to have formed throughout the Roman and Early Anglo-Saxon periods and possibly into the Middle Saxon period (ERL 236). This overlaid phases of Roman ditches, a possible beam slot/palisade fence and scattered small pits, as well as dense pits and a posthole. The earliest context was a later prehistoric layer (Brooks, 2015). Further excavations in the area have also highlighted similar occupation. The features recorded in the latest soakaways are therefore most likely a continuation of this activity, notably containing similar fills. The levels of truncation in these soakaways is indicative of the general levels of preservation in the area, i.e. that there are usually well preserved archaeological horizons still surviving under any modern disturbance.

The Building 1159 soakaways produced several ditches, pits and finds that are similar to those recorded nearby, such as at the Recycling Centre excavations (LKH 365) *c.*100m to the south-west (Brooks, 2016). Here, later Iron Age to early Roman pits preceded or ran concurrent with early Roman enclosure ditches, with further ditches dug over much of the site in the 1st and 2nd centuries, dominating the area. The ditches were interpreted partly as field and paddock enclosures, as well as possible droveways, whilst also functioning to drain the area that was clearly quite wet throughout the Roman occupation. A series of layers formed across the site towards the end of the Roman occupation in the 2nd century, associated with rising water levels. These were not recorded in the Building 1159 soakaways, where the level of the natural horizons were

*c.*0.8m+ higher, suggesting that it had avoided the worst of any inundation, although deposits of iron pan stained sand were recorded, cut by the features, indicating relatively significant groundwater throughflow. Pit 0014 in Soakaway 2 was unusual as it produced a reasonably large assemblage of unusual material. Also, its fills and environmental material clearly indicated a variety of middle to late Iron Age activity in the area, including the presence of a possible clay structure (possibly an oven or kiln) and potentially a loom in the vicinity. The material is made more unusual when compared to sites such as the Recycling Centre, where it is not thought that any of the pits produced such a large and varied assemblage. Excavations in 2001 at site LKH 210 (Caruth 2001) *c*.40m to the south, produced a small number of features containing hand-made Iron Age pottery, indicative of nearby activity of a similar date.

The works have highlighted the importance in monitoring further groundworks of this type in the future, which have provided evidence of Iron Age activity towards the airfield, whilst the other features were important in confirming the continuation of probable Roman activity more widely across the Base.

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