BHBO/01

LAND WEST OF BRETCH HILL, BANBURY, OXFORDSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

commissioned by Bloor Homes Limited

13/00444/OUT

November 2016

HEADLAND ARCHAEOLOGY

REGISTERED ORGANISATION CIfA

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project info

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PARISH	Banbury
LOCAL AUTHORITY	Cherwell District Council
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PROJECT SUMMARY

Archaeological field evaluation, via trial trenching, was undertaken by Headland Archaeology on Land west of Bretch Hill, Banbury, Oxfordshire. The investigation re-vealed traces of former ridge and furrow agriculture and undated ditches, confirming geophysical anomalies, which indicate the presence of a possible field enclosure to the western extent of the investigation area.

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land west of
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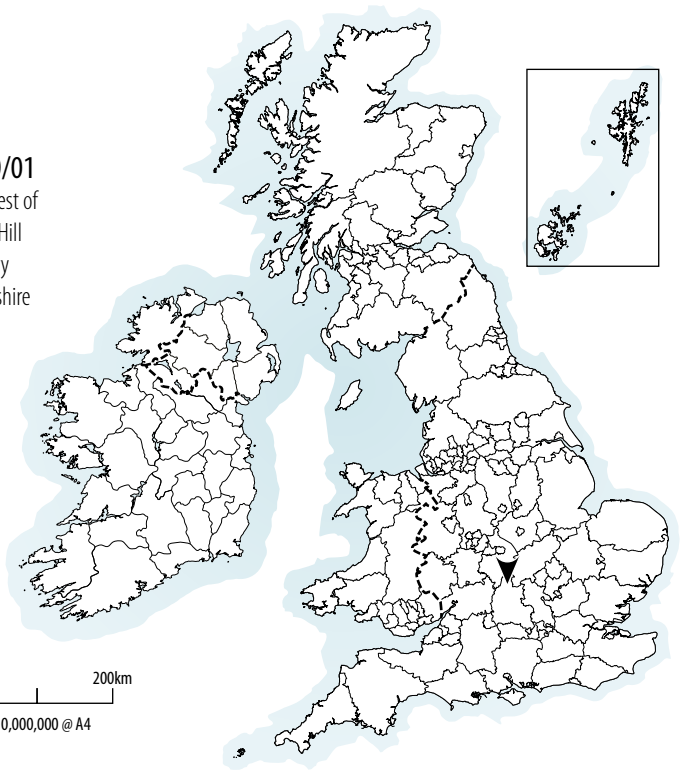

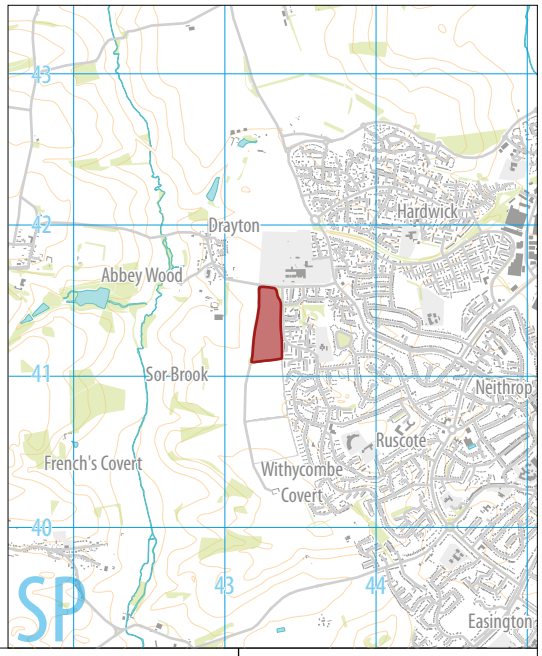

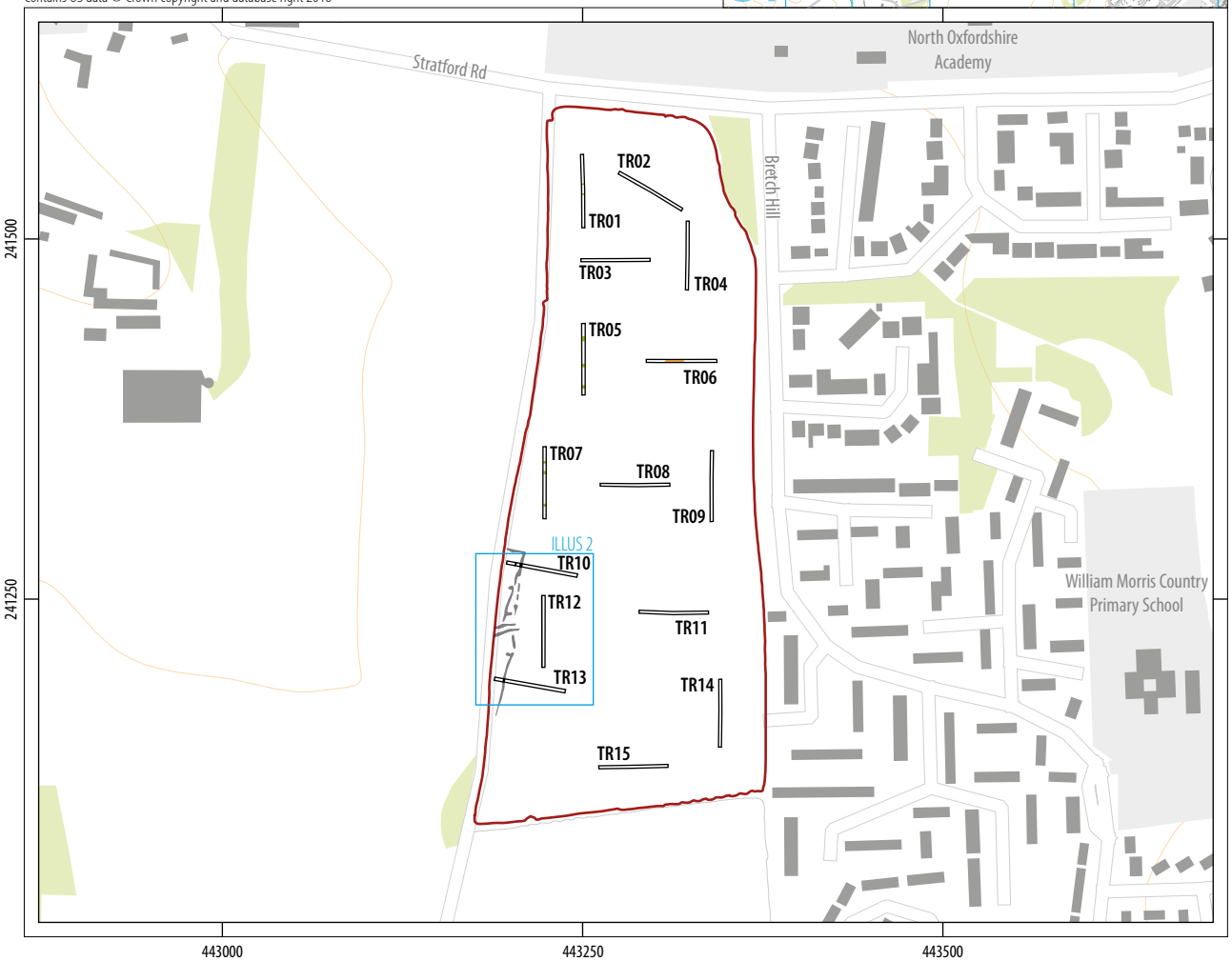

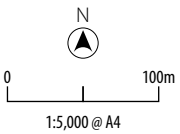

KEY

- development boundary
- trench location
- furrows (TR01,05,07)
- geological variation (TR06)

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ILLUS 1 Site location

LAND WEST OF BRETCH HILL, BANBURY, OXFORDSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

1 INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of an archaeological site investigation on land to the west of Bretch Hill, Banbury (centred at NGR SP 43290 40950). Headland Archaeology was commissioned by Bloor Homes Limited to undertake a programme of trial trench evaluation. A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was produced (Headland Archaeology 2015) and approved by the archaeological advisor to Cherwell District Council, Richard Oram.

1.1 PLANNING BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Planning permission has been sought from Cherwell District Council, (planning application no. 13/00444/OUT) for residential development of the site, subject to condition 4, which states:

> 'No development shall take place until a programme of archaeological work, including a Written Scheme of Investigation, has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. The scheme shall include an assessment of significance and research questions; and: a) The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording. b) The programme for post investigation assessment. c) Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording. d) Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation e) Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation f) Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation. 2) The development shall not be occupied until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition (A) and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition has been secured. '

1.2 SITE LOCATION, DESCRIPTION AND SETTING

The application area comprises three large arable fields within a rectangular parcel of land to the west of Banbury. The site is centred at NGR 43290 40950 and covers 26ha. It is bound to the north by the A422 Stratford Road, to the west by a farm track leading to Withycombe Farm and to the south by a public footpath beyond which lies arable farmland. The site is bound to the east by Bretch Hill, a residential housing estate. At the time of investigation the development area was under a wheat crop.

This stage of trial trenching relates to the northernmost field covering approximately 8 hectares.

The underlying bedrock consists of Marlstone Rock Formation – Ferruginous limestone and ironstone. No superficial deposits are recorded (NERC 2016). The soils in the north of the site are classified in the Soilscape 7 association, characterised as freely draining, slightly acid but base-rich soils (LandIS 2016).

1.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

A Desk-Based Assessment of the site (CgMs 2013) has established that no archaeological remains are recorded within the application area. The site is considered to have a low potential for all archaeological periods with the exception of the Roman period, for which a moderate potential is ascribed.

The site is located in an area where very little formal archaeological investigation has been undertaken and therefore little is known about the prehistoric and Roman potential of the site. The site of a possible Roman Villa has been identified 320m west of the application site after a number of Roman coins, a possible mosaic and a bath were found in the C19th (PRN 2347). The site of a Roman farmstead has also been recorded from pottery finds from fieldwalking 800m to the south of this site, 600m west of the application area (PRN 15894). Recent geophysical survey 650m south of the site has recorded a series of probable prehistoric enclosures and a small Iron Age farmstead has been excavated on the southern edge of the Town. Geophysical survey to the south of the Saltway,

1.5km south of the application site, has recorded a number of previously unknown Bronze Age barrows as well as a continuation of a causewayed enclosure. Further Barrows have been recorded from geophysical survey on two sites to the north of the town 1km north of the town. These barrows have proved difficult to identify during evaluation but have subsequently been recorded during excavation which might explain why so little is recorded for this period. This site therefore has the potential to encounter further, previously unknown, archaeological deposits related to the prehistoric and Roman period.

Geophysical survey of the investigation area (Headland 2016) indicated the potential for remains of a possible enclosure at the western edge of the site.

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the investigation were detailed in the Written Scheme of Investigation.

The primary objectives were identified as follows:

- to determine the presence or absence of buried archaeological remains within the proposed development site;
- to determine the character, date, extent and distribution of any archaeological deposits and their potential significance;
- to determine levels of disturbance to any archaeological deposits from plough damage or from any other agricultural/industrial practices or later building activities;
- to investigate and record all deposits and features of archaeological interest within the areas to be disturbed by the current development;
- to determine the likely impact on archaeological deposits from the proposed development; and
- to disseminate the results of the fieldwork through an appropriate level of reporting.

The specific aims are:

Where geophysical survey had been undertaken, two further objectives were identified:

- to determine if the anomalies revealed by the geophysical survey are of archaeological or geological origin;
- to determine the clarity of the geophysical results by assessing if any feature type was not seen due to ground and / or geological conditions.

3 METHOD

The fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the above mentioned WSI and in accordance with the following documents:

- ***Code of Conduct*** (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014a)
- ***Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations*** (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014b)

In accordance with the clients desire to undertake a phased approach to both the archaeological investigation and subsequent development, the Phase 1 evaluation amounted to 15 trenches in the north of the development area. Due to the presence of a crop in the field, this fieldwork took place in two stages. Trenches 5, 7, 10, 12 and 13 were excavated in April 2016, with the remaining 10 trenches excavated in July.

Trenches were set out using a differential GPS. Prior to excavation, utility plans were consulted and all trench areas, including a 2m additional buffer, were scanned using a cable avoidance tool to identify any potential buried services. Trenches were excavated using a tracked 25 tonne 360° mechanical excavator, fitted with a bladed bucket, to depths where archaeological features were identified or geological deposits encountered.

Exposed archaeological remains were recorded on Headland Archaeology Evaluation Trench sheets, with each identified feature and deposit assigned a unique context number.

Identified features were hand excavated and sampled to establish their form, character and function and retrieve dateable artefactual material where possible. Environmental samples were taken to further assist dating and interpretation of identified features.

Digital surveying of ditch sections and plans of features and trenches was also carried out.

All recording followed standard archaeological guidelines as set out by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA). The recorded contexts were assigned unique numbers and recording was undertaken on Headland Archaeology pro forma trench and context record sheets. Digital and black and white photographs were taken of all trenches and identified features, with a graduated metric scale clearly visible. An overall site plan of the trenches and recorded features was digitally produced. Digital surveying was undertaken using a Trimble dGPS system.

4 RESULTS

4.1 GENERAL STRATIGRAPHY

The earliest deposits encountered were represented by the underlying geology of the site. This was found to generally be a yellowish brown, brashy, eroded sandstone and ironstone bedrock (eg 0304, 1304 etc.). Within Trenches 1, 6 and 9, a light brownish grey sandy clay was also identified as a natural geological deposit. This was noted to be central to Trench 6 (**ILLUS 2**) which was located within a shallow basin towards the centre of the investigation area.

Geological deposits were encountered at variable depths, from as shallow as 0.44m deepening to 1.05m below ground surface.

Overlying the geological deposits was a 0.20 to 0.30m deep mid-brownish orange silty sand and angular stone subsoil layer (eg 0304) which was in turn sealed by a 0.25 to 0.35m deep mid-brownish red silty sand and angular stone subsoil (eg 0302).

Overlying the subsoils was a 0.30m thick mid-brownish grey sandy silt topsoil (eg 0301). The overall stratigraphic sequence was indicative of a brown earth soil profile, which varied in depth, largely due to variable outcropping and undulation of the underlying geological deposits. Occasional modern glazed ceramic sherds and ceramic building material fragments were observed within the topsoil but were not retained.

4.2 UNDATED DEPOSITS

Within Trenches 10 and 13 (**ILLUS 3**) ditches were identified sealed below subsoil deposits between 0.44 and 0.60m below ground surface.

In Trench 13 and oriented north-south, a linear cut [1304] was identified as a ditch (**ILLUS 4**). The ditch measured 0.97m wide and 0.40m deep and extended north and south beyond the limits of the trench. An orange brown sandy clay and stones (1305) containing rare charcoal flecks formed the single fill of the ditch. The top of the cut of the ditch lay 0.44m below ground surface. No dateable material was retrieved from the deposit.

In Trench 10 and also oriented north-south, a further ditch [1006] (**ILLUS 5**) measured 1.35m wide and 0.33m deep. A mid orangey brown stoney silty sand (1007) formed the single fill of the feature.

Located 2.65m to the west of [1006] and oriented north-northeast by south-southwest, a further ditch [1004] measured 0.60m wide and was highly truncated, surviving to only 0.06m in depth (**ILLUS 6**).

Assessment of the environmental material recovered (Appendix 2) identified charred plant remains in all three ditch slots. The most commonly occurring grains were moderately well preserved and were identified as bread/club wheat. Other cereal grains present were few in number and included barley, oats and glume wheat. Small quantities of magnetic residue were identified within ditches [1004] and [1006] (Appendix 3).

4.3 PROBABLE MEDIEVAL DEPOSITS

Trenches 1, 5 and 7 recorded a series of shallow linear features which were identified as furrows relating to a former ridge and furrow field system. The features were heavily truncated, with a section through furrow (0105) evidencing survival to only 0.05m depth (**ILLUS 7**) with only the base of the furrows surviving. A mid-brownish grey, slightly clayey, silty sand containing frequent angular ironstone and sandstone fragments (0104) formed the fill of the furrow. From the remains identified in Trenches 1 and 7, it is likely that the furrows were spaced some 6m apart, suggesting a medieval rather than post-medieval date for their origin.

No dateable material was retrieved from any of the furrows.

ILLUS 2 General view Trench 6, looking west

4.4 TRENCHES WITH NO ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS

Trench numbers, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14 and 15 contained no archaeological features with only the stratigraphic soil sequence and geological deposits revealed.

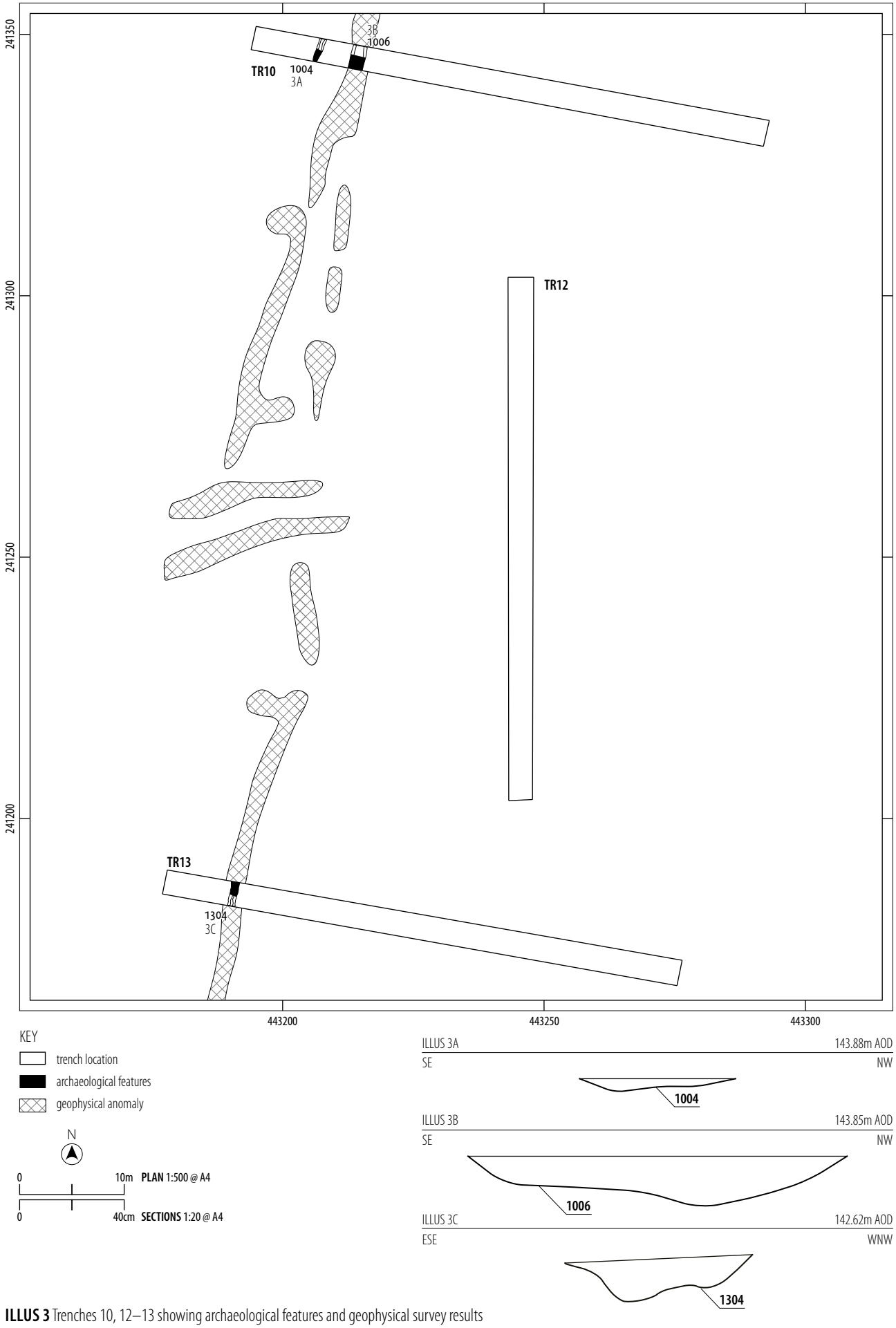
5 DISCUSSION

The evidence of ditches in Trenches 10 and 13 correspond with and corroborate anomalies identified during geophysical survey of the site, which appeared to indicate the eastern extent of some form of enclosure or ditch system towards the western edge of the investigation area.

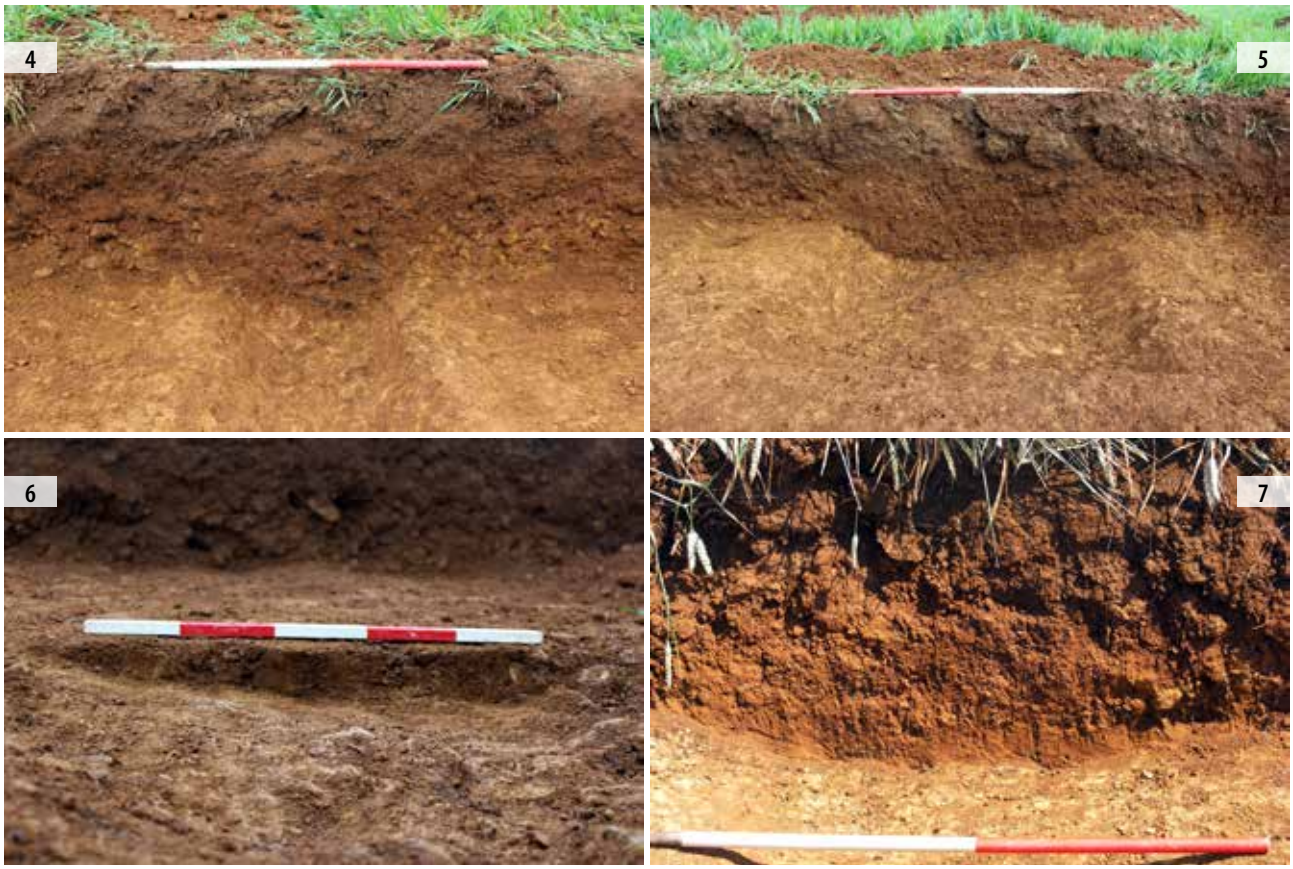
No dateable material was retrieved from the fills of the features, however the presence of charred plant remains within the environmental assemblage may indicate occupation in the vicinity of the features. Bread/club wheat is a feature of both prehistoric and later periods, and therefore does not shed further light on the dating of the features at this stage.

Ditch [1004] did not correspond with any geophysical anomalies, most likely due to its high degree of truncation. Its presence on a matching alignment may suggest that it relates to the adjacent enclosure ditch [1006].

The ridge and furrow field system recorded appear to be confined to the extreme west of the site, again with variable degrees of survival. Geophysical survey to the south of the investigation area recorded remains of probable ridge and furrow agriculture which displayed a characteristic 'S' curve, typically indicative of medieval furrow



ILLUS 3 Trenches 10, 12–13 showing archaeological features and geophysical survey results



ILLUS 4 Ditch [1304], N facing section **ILLUS 5** Ditch [1006], S facing section **ILLUS 6** Ditch [1004], NE facing section **ILLUS 7** Furrow [0105], W facing section

systems and it is highly probable that the remains identified during this investigation also relate to that period.

6 CONCLUSION

Trial trenching has corroborated the evidence of geophysical survey, indicating the presence of ditches which may form part of an enclosure or ditch system. The paucity of artefacts within the fills of the ditches may support an agricultural interpretation for the features recorded, however, the presence of charred plant remains may indicate human occupation either associated with the enclosure or in the immediate vicinity.

The presence of ridge and furrow agricultural remains of probable medieval date would appear to suggest that the site has existed for some time as primarily agricultural land, outwith the core of settlement.

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8 APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 TRENCH AND CONTEXT REGISTER

DBGL = Depth below ground level

TR01	ORIENTATION	L (M)	W (M)	AV. D (M)
	E-W	50	1.8	0.40

Context	Description	DBGL (m)
0101	Topsoil – Mid brown sandy silt containing occasional small angular stones	0–0.30
0102	Subsoil – Mid brownish red silty sand and angular stones	0.30–0.60
0103	Natural geological deposit – Light brownish grey sandy clay containing frequent ironstone fragments	0.53+
0104	Mid, greyish brown Slightly clayey, silty sand containing frequent angular ironstones and fragments – Fill of 0105	0.60
0105	Linear feature, 1.06m wide, 0.05m deep, E-W orientation , gradually sloping sides slightly concave base - Furrow	0.60
0106	Mid greyish yellow, clayey sand and sand-stone – weathered-eroded bedrock – Natural geological deposit	0.50–0.60
0107	Mid, greyish brown Slightly clayey, silty sand containing frequent angular ironstones and fragments – Fill of 0108	0.60
0108	Linear feature, E-W orientation, 1.22m wide - Furrow	0.60

Summary: Ridge and furrow remnants

TR02	ORIENTATION	L (M)	W (M)	AV. D (M)
	N-S	50	1.8	0.35

Context	Description	DBGL (m)
0201	Topsoil – Mid brown sandy silt containing occasional small angular stones	0–0.30
0202	Subsoil – Mid brownish red silty sand and an-gular stones	0.30–0.37
0203	Natural geological deposit – Sandstone bed-rock, brashy eroded/weathered outcropping bedrock	0.37+

Summary: No archaeological remains

TR03	ORIENTATION	L (M)	W (M)	AV. D (M)
	NNE-SSW	50	1.8	0.34

Context	Description	DBGL (m)
0301	Topsoil – Mid brown sandy silt containing occasional small angular stones	0–0.30
0302	Subsoil – Mid brownish red silty sand and an-gular stones	0.30–0.36
0303	Subsoil – Mid brownish orange, Silty sand and stone, sandstone and ironstone fragments	0.54–0.74
0304	Natural geological deposit – Sandstone bed-rock, brashy eroded/weathered outcropping bedrock	0.74

Summary: No Archaeological remains

TR04	ORIENTATION	L (M)	W (M)	AV. D (M)
	WNW-ESE	50	1.8	0.45

Context	Description	DBGL (m)
0401	Topsoil – Mid brown sandy silt containing occasional small angular stones	0–0.30
0402	Subsoil – Mid brownish red silty sand and an-gular stones	0.30–0.55
0403	Subsoil – Mid brownish orange, Silty sand and stone, sandstone and ironstone fragments	0.50–0.85
0404	Natural geological deposit – Sandstone bed-rock, brashy eroded/weathered outcropping bedrock	0.85 – 1.02+

Summary: No archaeological remains

TR05	ORIENTATION	L (M)	W (M)	AV. D (M)
	NE-SW	50	1.8	0.40

Context	Description	DBGL (m)
0501	Topsoil – Mid yellowish brown silty clay and stones	0–0.30
0502	Subsoil – Mid reddish brown sandy clay and stones	0.30–0.40
0503	Natural geological deposit – Mid orangey brown sandy clay and stone	0.40 (LOE)
0504	Linear cut – Furrow, 3.6m wide	0.40
0505	Fill of furrow 0504	0.40
0506	Linear cut – Furrow 2.38m wide	0.40
0507	Fill of furrow 0506	0.40
0508	Linear cut – furrow, 2.54m wide	0.40
0509	Fill of furrow 0508	0.40

Summary: Ridge and furrow remnants

TR06	ORIENTATION	L (M)	W (M)	AV. D (M)
	NE-SW	50	1.8	0.32

Context	Description	DBGL (m)
0601	Topsoil – Mid brown sandy silt containing occasional small angular stones	0–0.30
0602	Subsoil – Mid brownish red silty sand and an-gular stones	0.30 – 0.60
0603	Subsoil – Mid brownish orange, Silty sand and stone, sandstone and ironstone fragments	0.60–1.00
0604	Natural geological deposit – Sandstone bed-rock, brashy eroded/weathered outcropping bedrock	0.45–1.00
0605	Natural geological deposit – Light brownish grey sandy clay containing frequent ironstone fragments	0.60–1.00

Summary: No archaeological remains

TR07	ORIENTATION	L (M)	W (M)	AV. D (M)
	NE-SW	50	1.8	0.35

Context	Description	DBGL (m)
0701	Topsoil – Mid yellowish brown silty clay and stones	0–0.30
0702	Subsoil – Mid reddish brown sandy clay and stones	0.30–0.41
0703	Natural geological deposit – Mid orangey brown sandy clay and stone	0.41(LOE)
0704	Linear cut – furrow, E-W orientation 1.80m wide	0.40
0705	Fill of 0704	0.40
0706	Linear – furrow, E-W orientation, 2.28m wide	0.40
0707	Fill of 0708	0.40
0708	Linear cut – furrow, E-W orientation, 2.03m wide	0.40
0709	Fill of 0708	0.40

Summary: Ridge and furrow remnants

TR08	ORIENTATION	L (M)	W (M)	AV. D (M)
	NW-SE	50	1.8	0.50

CONTEXT	DESCRIPTION	DBGL (M)
0801	Topsoil – Mid brown sandy silt containing occasional small angular stones	0–0.30
0802	Subsoil – Mid brownish red silty sand and an-gular stones	0.30–0.48
0803	Subsoil – Mid brownish orange, Silty sand and stone, sandstone and ironstone fragments	0.48–0.70
0804	Natural geological deposit – Sandstone bed-rock, brashy eroded/weathered outcropping bedrock	0.70+

Summary: No archaeological remains

TR09	ORIENTATION	L (M)	W (M)	AV. D (M)
	NNE-SSW	50	1.8	0.45

Context	Description	DBGL (m)
0901	Topsoil – Mid brown sandy silt containing occasional small angular stones	0–0.30
0902	Subsoil – Mid brownish red silty sand and an-gular stones	0.30–0.55
0903	Subsoil – Mid brownish orange, Silty sand and stone, sandstone and ironstone fragments	0.50–0.70
0904	Natural geological deposit – Sandstone bed-rock, brashy eroded/weathered outcropping bedrock	0.50–0.80+
0905	Natural geological deposit – Light brownish grey sandy clay containing frequent ironstone fragments	0.60+

Summary: No archaeological remains

TR10	ORIENTATION	L (M)	W (M)	AV. D (M)
	E-W	50	1.8	0.35

Context	Description	DBGL (m)
1001	Topsoil – Mid yellowish brown silty clay and stones	0–0.29
1002	Subsoil – Mid reddish brown sandy clay and stones	0.29–0.59
1003	Natural geological deposit – Mid orangey brown sandy clay and stone	0.59+ (LOE)
1004	Linear cut, SSW-NNE orientation, Gradually sloping sides, rounded base, Heavily truncated ditch	0.59–0.65
1005	Mid-orangey brown slightly silty, sandy clay containing small stone fragments – fill of 1004	0.59–0.65
1006	Linear cut, gradually sloping sides, uneven base, N-S orientation, Ditch	0.50–0.83
1007	Mid-orangey brown silty sand containing occasional small ironstones – fill of 1006	0.50–0.83

Summary: 2 ditches

TR11	ORIENTATION	L (M)	W (M)	AV. D (M)
	NE-SW	15	1.8	0.38

Context	Description	DBGL (m)
1101	Topsoil – Mid brown sandy silt containing occa-sional small angular stones	0–0.30
1102	Subsoil – Mid brownish red silty sand and an-gular stones	0.30–0.60
1103	Subsoil – Mid brownish orange, Silty sand and stone, sandstone and ironstone fragments	0.60–1.00
1104	Natural geological deposit – Sandstone bed-rock, brashy eroded/weathered outcropping bedrock	0.60–1.00

Summary: No archaeological remains

TR12	ORIENTATION	L (M)	W (M)	AV. D (M)
	NW-SE	50	1.8	0.40

Context	Description	DBGL (m)
1201	Topsoil – Mid yellowish brown silty clay and stones	0–0.30
1202	Subsoil – Mid reddish brown sandy clay and stones	0.30–0.46
1203	Natural geological deposit – Mid orangey brown sandy clay and stone	0.46 (LOE)

Summary: No archaeological remains

TR13	ORIENTATION	L (M)	W (M)	AV. D (M)
	NW-SE	50	1.8	0.42

Context	Description	DBGL (m)
1301	Topsoil – Mid yellowish brown silty clay and stones	0–0.24
1302	Subsoil – Mid reddish brown sandy clay and stones	0.24–0.44
1303	Natural geological deposit – Mid orangey brown sandy clay and stone	0.44+ (LOE)
1304	Linear cut, N-S orientation, steeply sloping sides, uneven base N-S orientation – Ditch	0.44–0.84
1305	Mid orangey brown sandy clay containing occa-sional ironstone fragments and rare charcoal flecks – fill of 1304	0.44–0.84

Summary: Ditch

TR14	ORIENTATION	L (M)	W (M)	AV. D (M)
	WNW-ESE	50	1.8	0.37

Context	Description	DBGL (m)
1401	Topsoil – Mid brown sandy silt containing occa-sional small angular stones	0–0.30
1402	Subsoil – Mid brownish red silty sand and an-gular stones	0.30–0.50
1403	Subsoil – Mid brownish orange, Silty sand and stone, sandstone and ironstone fragments	0.50–1.05
1404	Natural geological deposit – Sandstone bed-rock, brashy eroded/weathered outcropping bedrock	0.75–1.05

Summary: No archaeological remains

TR15	ORIENTATION	L (M)	W (M)	AV. D (M)
	NE-SW	50	1.8	0.36

Context	Description	DBGL (m)
1501	Topsoil – Mid brown sandy silt containing oc-casional small angular stones	0–0.30
1502	Subsoil – Mid brownish red silty sand and angular stones	0.30–0.60
1503	Subsoil – Mid brownish orange, Silty sand and stone, sandstone and ironstone fragments	0.60–1.00
1504	Natural geological deposit – Sandstone bed-rock, brashy eroded/weathered outcropping bedrock	0.90–1.00

Summary: No archaeological remains

APPENDIX 2 ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Introduction

Three samples, each measuring 20 litres in volume, were recovered during archaeological work in relation to residential development at land west of Bretch Hill, Banbury, Oxfordshire. Samples were from the fills of 3 ditches of an undetermined date. The aims of the assessment were to assess the presence, preservation and abundance of any environmental remains in the samples and to determine their potential in providing material suitable for dating.

Method

Bulk samples were subjected to flotation and wet sieving in a Siraf-style flotation machine. The floating debris (the flot) was collected in a 250 µm sieve and once dry, scanned using a binocular microscope. Any material remaining in the flotation tank (retent) was wet-sieved through a 1mm mesh and air-dried. All samples were scanned using a stereomicroscope at magnifications of x10 and up to x100. Identifications, where provided, were confirmed using modern reference material and seed atlases including Cappers et al. (2006) and Zohary ***et al***. (2012). After careful consideration of the uncharred seeds present in the samples they were determined to be a modern intrusive component and were therefore not considered further.

Results

Results of the assessment are presented in Tables A2.1 (Retent samples) and A2.2 (Flot samples). Material suitable for AMS (Accelerated Mass Spectrometry) radiocarbon dating is shown in the tables. The majority of samples had varying proportions of modern roots and common intrusive uncharred seeds.

Wood charcoal

Wood charcoal was present in very small quantities in all 3 samples (**TABLE A2.2**). None of the samples yielded charcoal suitable for dating.

Cereal grain

Cereal grain was present in all samples (**TABLE A2.2**). The most commonly occurring gains were moderately well preserved and were identified as bread/club wheat (***Triticum*** c.f. ***aestivo-compactum***). Other cereal grains present were few in number and included barley (***Hordeum*** sp.), oats (***Avena*** sp.) and glume wheat. These grains exhibited mixed levels of preservation, but were generally more poorly preserved. A single glume base (chaff) was also recovered from context (1007) the fill of ditch [1006].

Other charred plant remains

A very small number of charred 'weed seeds', (here used to include seeds, fruits, achene, caryopses etc) were recovered from 2 samples. Of the weed taxa present the majority were grasses (Poaceae), with a single seed of docks (***Rumex*** sp.). These weed taxa are species common in arable fields and disturbed ground (Stace 1997).

Bone

Unidentifiable burnt bone fragments (< 1g) were present in the retent of context (1305) the fill of [1304].

Other finds

Finds will be discussed as the subject of a separate finds report.

Discussion

The charred plant remains provide some, limited, evidence for agricultural practices and possibly crop choices in the vicinity during occupation at the site. The assemblage with bread/club wheat as the main crop is a feature of both prehistoric and later periods and so it is difficult to determine the date of the features from the composition of the plant assemblage. However, the cereal remains are suitable for AMS dating. The paucity and heavily abraded nature of the majority of the grain suggests that it probably spent some time close to the surface before being incidentally incorporated into the backfill of negative features. The most common causes of grain becoming charred are during a conflagration event or during processing.

All of the samples contained notable numbers of blind snail (***Cecilioides acicula***) as well as a small number of worm egg capsules and modern insect fragments. The presence of these elements suggests that the features have been subjected to bioturbation and disturbance and as a result of this, it would be advisable to exercise caution when selecting material for dating.

Dating potential of the remains

All 3 samples contain material suitable for AMS dating, the samples and material type are listed in **TABLES A2.2**.

Recommendations

Given the small size of the cereal grain assemblage, further analysis would provide little additional information on the nature of the agrarian economy practiced at the site. The cereal remains could be used for AMS dating in order to provide a date for the features located in this area of the site. In the event that further archaeological works are required in the vicinity of the ditches, it is recommended that a full program of sampling be developed in collaboration with the Environmental department. This should enable the environmental data to be used to its full potential in contributing to the understanding the site and in creating a detailed site narrative.

REFERENCES

Cappers, RTJ, Bekker, RM & Jans, JEA 2006 ***Digital seed atlas of the Netherlands*** Barkhuis Publishing and Groningen University Library: Groningen

Stace, C 1997 ***New Flora of the British Isles*** (2nd edition) Cambridge University Press: Cambridge

Zohary, D, Hopf, M & Weiss, E 2012 ***Domestication of Plants in the Old World*** Oxford: Oxford University Press

CONTEXT	SAMPLE	FEATURE	SAMPLE VOL (L)	BURNT BONE			SHELL		UNCHARRED PLANT	MATERIAL AVAILABLE FOR AMS DATING	COAL	COMMENTS
				Mammal	Fish	Bird	Marine	Terrestrial				
1305	001	[1304]	20	+	–	–	–	–	+	No	+	unidentifiable burnt bone fragments < 1g
1007	002	[1007]	20	–	–	–	–	–	+	No	–	Modern weed seeds
1005	003	[1004]	20	–	–	–	+	–	–	No	–	Unidentifiable shell fragments

Key: + = rare (0–5), ++ = occasional (6–15), +++ = common (15–50) and ++++ = abundant (>50)

NB charcoal over 1cm is suitable for identification and AMS dating

TABLE A2.1 Retent sample results

CONTEXT	SAMPLE	FEATURE	TOTAL FLOT VOL (ML)	OAT	BARLEY	BREAD/CLUB WHEAT	WHEAT	INDET. CEREAL	CHAFF	OTHER CHARRED PLANT REMAINS	CHARCOAL		MATERIAL AVAILABLE FOR AMS DATING	COMMENTS
											Qty	Max size (mm)		
1305	001	[1304]	20	+	+	+	–	+	–	–	+	5	Yes	–
1007	002	[1006]	20	+	+	+++	++	++	+	+	++	2	Yes	–
1005	003	[1004]	20	–	–	++	+	–	+	+	++	4	Yes	Glume wheat grain and single glume base. Poaceae > 2mm

Key: + = rare (0–5), ++ = occasional (6–15), +++ = common (15–50) and ++++ = abundant (>50)

NB charcoal over 1cm is suitable for identification and AMS dating

TABLE A2.2 Flotation sample results

APPENDIX 3 FINDS ASSESSMENT

All finds were retrieved during soil sample processing. They comprise <1g of magnetic residues from the fills of two ditches in trench 10. A complete catalogue is given at the end.

The magnetic residues are very small in size with and low in quantity. Due to this they cannot be confidently tied to activities related to the ditches as they could have easily blown in or been transferred through bioturbation. The residues from (1006) [1007] look like small pieces of hammerscale, created during ironworking. The residues from (1005) [1004] are small fragments of what appears to be surface flakes of a corroded iron object. Neither are datable.

TR	CONTEXT	FEATURE	SAMPLE	WGT (G)	MATERIAL	OBJECT	DESCRIPTION
10	1007	[1006]	002	<1g	Industrial Waste	Mag Res	hammerscale
10	1005	[1004]	003	<1g	Industrial Waste	Mag Res	small magnetic fragments, probable iron corrosion product

TABLE A3.1 Finds catalogue

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