

LNCW/02



LAND NORTH OF CHIPPENHAM

Archaeological Evaluation – interim report

for the North Chippenham Consortium

N/12/00560/OUT

September 2016

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LAND NORTH OF CHIPPENHAM

Archaeological Evaluation – interim report

Archaeological trial trenches were targeted to collect further information on the extent of known archaeological sites, and to test previously unevaluated areas. Linear features were located in three areas. Most were undated, but Romano-British pottery was recovered from a group of intercutting features adjacent to an area of known archaeological remains.

1 INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of an archaeological site investigation on land north of Chippenham, Wiltshire.

1.1 Planning background and objectives

The Environmental Dimension Partnership Ltd (EDP) has produced a global Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) and Archaeological Management Plan (AMP) for the consented housing development (Morgan 2016), and has also designed the trench location plans submitted with this document. Through consultation with the archaeological advisor to the Planning Authority, Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger, these strategies were approved ahead of the commencement of fieldwork.

This interim report relates to the implementation of the first stage of the archaeological recording defined in the WSI, namely a phase of trial trenching. This report is intended to provide further information about the archaeological resource, to enable appropriate decisions to be reached regarding the final mitigation design. This document takes into account relevant ClfA and Wiltshire Standards and Guidance.

1.2 Site location and description

The site is located to the north of Chippenham, adjacent to Malmesbury Road (Illus 1) and comprises c. 46ha of agricultural land. It is bounded to the north by agricultural land and Bird's Marsh Wood; to the east by agricultural land and to the south and west by the northern outskirts of Chippenham town.

The entire proposed development area comprises approximately 14 open fields, to the west, south and south-east of Barrow Farm.

Topographically, the north-western part of the site lies on a hill at c.101m AOD at its highest point adjacent to the south-west corner of the wood named 'Bird's Marsh'. The ground slopes away to the south gradually at first, before dropping steeply from c. 96m to c. 78m AOD. In the eastern part of the site the ground slopes downwards to c. 82m AOD along the line of a small stream valley in the

landscape, before rising again to c. 86m near Barrow Farm.

The underlying solid geology is mapped as Kellaways Sands and Clay of the Upper Jurassic era (BGS 2016).

1.3 Archaeological background

Following a programme of non-intrusive survey in 2008 and trial trenching in 2009 (Bennett 2009), two main concentrations of archaeological remains were identified. Site 1, adjacent to Bird's Marsh, was interpreted as the remains of a co-axial settlement of Romano-British date. Site 2, located south and west of Barrow Farm, is interpreted as a possible settlement or agricultural system of medieval date. The extent of each of these areas were broadly defined.

2 AIMS & OBJECTIVES

In line with the WSI the main objectives of the evaluation works were:

- To provide further information on the extent of the archaeological remains at Sites 1 (Trenches 56, 57 & 59) & 2 (Trenches 60, 61 & 63), so that mitigation areas could be finalised;
- To further evaluate the archaeological potential of previously inaccessible or un-sampled areas of the site so that any additional mitigation areas could be defined (Trenches 10, 12, 13, 54, 55, 58 & 62).

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Fieldwork

The overall fieldwork methodology was defined in s5.5-5.16 of the WSI. Fieldwork was undertaken between the 5th and 9th of September 2016.

All trenches were set out using differential GPS, which was also be used to provide absolute heights above OD. Service plans were consulted in advance of excavation and safe digging techniques were observed.

All trenches were opened by a 14 tonne tracked excavator equipped with a 1.8m wide ditching bucket. All trenches were excavated by machine under direct archaeological supervision in controlled spits of no more than 0.20m thick. Machine excavation terminated at the top of the natural geology or the first significant archaeological horizon, whichever was encountered first. Spoil was stored beside the trench; topsoil and subsoil were kept separate by putting topsoil on one side of the trench and subsoil on the other.

Excavation of archaeological deposits and features required to satisfy the objectives of the evaluation continued by hand (except where agreed otherwise with the archaeological advisor). On completion of machine excavation, all faces of the trench that required examination or recording were cleaned using appropriate hand tools. The stratigraphic sequence was recorded in full in each of the trenches, even where no archaeological deposits were identified.

A sufficient quantity (to adequately evaluate the site) of identified features was investigated and recorded. This typically involved excavation of 50% of discrete features, and a 1m slot of linear features.

Trenches were backfilled by replacing excavated materials back in the hole in reverse order of excavation; and by tamping down with the excavator as tidily as practicable.

No backfilling of trenches took place without prior agreement with the archaeological advisor to the planning authority.

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 stratigraphy, with a graduated metric scale clearly visible. An overall site plan of the trenches was digitally produced. Digital surveying was undertaken using a Trimble dGPS system.

4 RESULTS

Full trench records are given in Appendix 1. The Finds assessment is at Appendix 2, with the full finds catalogue at appendix 3. Results are summarised here with reference to the objectives stated above.

4.1 Site 1

Trenches 56, 57 and 59 were excavated to collect further information on the extent of archaeological features located by geophysical survey and the earlier trial trenches 16-20. Trenches 57 and 59 contained no archaeological features, other than three sherds of Romano-British pottery recovered from the subsoil in Trench 59.

At the southern end of Trench 56 a tight group of three linear features of Iron Age or Romano-British date was recorded (Illus 2b). Ditch [5612] was the widest (2.3m) and deepest (0.60m), and appeared to have been cut by the narrower and shallower curvilinear feature [5608]. A second narrow and shallow gully [5607] lay to the south of [5612]. All features contained pottery of Iron Age or Romano-British date, as did a layer of colluvium (5603) which partially sealed them.

A colluvial deposit (5904) was also observed in Trench 59

4.2 Site 2

Trenches 60, 61 & 63 were positioned to further assess the extent of archaeological remains identified by previous trial trenches 40, 41 & 43. Trenches 60 & 61 contained no archaeological features, except for very small quantities of unstratified Romano-British pottery and a multi-platform core of Neolithic or Early Bronze Age date, which were recovered from the superficial deposits within these trenches.

Trench 63 contained a single narrow and shallow undated linear feature [6304]. The topsoil in this trench yielded two lithic artefacts, one probably scraper of Neolithic or Early Bronze Age date and a blade fragment of potentially earlier date.

4.3 Other features

Trench 13 located five narrow and shallow linear features with differing alignments (Illus 2a). These features contained no datable artefacts. A piece of undiagnostic slag was found in ditch [1309]. The other trenches in this area (10, 12 & 55) contained only modern field drains.

Trench 58 contained the remains of agricultural furrows.

4.4 Trenches with no archaeological remains

In addition to those blank trenches mentioned above, Trenches 54 and 62 were also negative.

2 DISCUSSION

4.5 Site 1

The presence of unstratified Romano-British pottery in the subsoil is expected in this area because of the presence of an archaeological site on the higher ground to the north. No particular significance should be attributed to the occurrence of this material in Trench 59.

The features in Trench 56 were located towards the currently estimated southern edge of Site 1. Their

separation from the features identified in the earlier evaluation, and the lack of features in the earlier Trench 21, might suggest the presence of a relatively discrete and separate area of archaeological remains.

4.6 Site 2

The undated linear feature found in Trench 63 is similar in type to those found in this area in the earlier phase of evaluation. It is notable that the greatest concentrations of datable artefacts were located within the western half of Site 2; Trench 63 tends to support the evidence from earlier trenches 41 & 43 that this area was further away from the focus of occupation activity.

4.7 Trench 13

Although undated, the linear features do not appear consistent with medieval or post-medieval agricultural remains as they have varied alignments and there was no evidence in the adjacent trenches of a wider system of furrows or field boundaries. These features may indicate an area of archaeological activity pre-dating the medieval period.

5 REFERENCES

5.1 Bibliographic sources

Bennett, J 2009 *Land North of Chippenham, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation* Cotswold Archaeology Report 09165.

Kimber, M 2016 *Land at North Chippenham: Contractor's Method Statement for Archaeological Evaluation* Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd.

Morgan, M 2016 *Land at North Chippenham: Written Scheme of Investigation and Archaeological Management Plan* The Environmental Dimension Partnership.

6 APPENDICES

6.1 Appendix 1 – Trench Register

TR10	Orientation	L (m)	W (m)	Av. D (m)
	N-S	50	1.85	0.49
Context	Description			Depth below ground level (m)
1001	Topsoil – Mid-greyish brown slightly sandy silty clay containing occasional gravel, rare coal fragments and rare CBM fragments			0-0.28
1002	Subsoil- Mid-yellowish brown clayey sand containing frequent angular gravel and occasional charcoal and manganese fragments			0.28-0.49
1003	Geological deposit- Mottled yellow and blue grey sandy clay with frequent angular gravel			0.49
Summary: No archaeological remains				

TR12	Orientation	L (m)	W (m)	Av. D (m)
	NE-SW	50	1.85	0.45
Context	Description			Depth below ground level (m)
1201	Topsoil – Mid-greyish brown slightly sandy silty clay containing occasional gravel, rare coal fragments and rare CBM fragments			0-0.27
1202	Subsoil- Mid-yellowish brown clayey sand containing frequent angular gravel and occasional charcoal and manganese fragments			0.27-0.45
1203	Geological deposit- Mottled yellow and blue grey sandy clay with frequent angular gravel			0.45
Summary: No archaeological remains				

TR13	Orientation	L (m)	W (m)	Av. D (m)
	NW-SE	50	1.85	0.40
Context	Description			Depth below ground level (m)
1301	Topsoil – Mid-greyish brown slightly sandy silty clay containing occasional gravel, rare coal fragments and rare CBM fragments			0-0.25
1302	Subsoil- Mid-yellowish brown clayey sand containing frequent angular gravel and occasional charcoal and manganese fragments			0.25-0.40
1303	Geological deposit- Mottled yellow and blue grey sandy clay with frequent angular gravel			0.4

1304	Linear cut, NE-SW orientation, heavily truncated, >3m long, 0.50m wide 0.11 deep, gradually sloping sides, rounded base – probable field drainage ditch	0.4
1305	Fill of 1304 – Light yellowish grey, silty clay containing rare gravel	0.4
1306	Linear cut, N-S orientation, >1.90m long, 0.60 wide, 0.16 deep, gradually sloping sides, rounded base,	0.4
1307	Fill of 1306, Light yellowish grey silty clay containing charcoal flecks and frequent manganese fragments	0.4
1308	Fill of 1309 – Mottled light grey and yellow brown sandy clay containing occasional charcoal flecks and manganese fragments and rare angular gravel	0.4
1309	Linear cut, N-S orientation >2m long, 1.08wide and 0.30 deep, steeply sloping sides, slight step eastern side, slightly uneven base – drainage/field ditch	0.4
1310	Fill of 1311, Mottled yellow brown and light grey sandy clay containing occasional angular gravel and rare charcoal fragments	0.4
1311	Linear cut, NNW-SSE orientation, steeply sloping sides, slightly uneven base – nr. Flat, Drainage/field ditch	0.4
1312	Linear cut, N-S orientation, >2.8m long, 0.50m wide, 0.17m deep, steep sides, flat base – field/drainage ditch	0.4
1313	Fill of 1312, mottled light yellowish grey sandy clay containing occasional gravel and charcoal fragments	0.4
Summary: 5 ditch cuts, undated		

TR54	Orientation	L (m)	W (m)	Av. D (m)
	E-W	50	1.85	0.5
Context	Description	Depth below ground level (m)		
5401	Topsoil – Mid-greyish brown slightly sandy silty clay containing occasional gravel, rare coal fragments and rare CBM fragments	0-0.25		
5402	Subsoil- Mid-yellowish brown clayey sand containing frequent angular gravel and occasional charcoal and manganese fragments	0.25-0.50		
5403	Geological deposit- Mottled yellow and blue grey sandy clay with frequent angular gravel	0.5		
Summary: No archaeological remains				

TR55	Orientation	L (m)	W (m)	Av. D (m)
	N-S	50	1.85	0.37

Context	Description	Depth below ground level (m)
5501	Topsoil – Mid-greyish brown slightly sandy silty clay containing occasional gravel, rare coal fragments and rare CBM fragments	0-0.25
5502	Subsoil- Mid-yellowish brown clayey sand containing frequent angular gravel and occasional charcoal and manganese fragments	0.25-0.40
5503	Geological deposit- Mottled yellow and blue grey sandy clay with frequent angular gravel	0.4
Summary: No archaeological remains		

TR56	Orientation	L (m)	W (m)	Av. D (m)
	NW-SE	50	1.85	0.50
Context	Description			Depth below ground level (m)
5601	Topsoil – mid-greyish brown slightly clayey, silty sand containing occasional CBM fragments and rare angular gravel			0-0.25
5602	Subsoil – Mottled light yellowish brown and light grey clayey sand containing frequent manganese fragments, occasional charcoal fragments and rare gravel			0.25-0.45
5603	Colluvial/hillwash deposit, 12m NW-SE, >1.85 wide, 0.20 deep, light grey clayey sand containing frequent manganese and charcoal fragments, rare angular gravel			0.45
5604	Geological deposit, 12m exposed NW-SE, mottled light grey and yellow brown clayey sand with frequent manganese fragments and occasional gravel.			0.65
5605	Geological deposit – NW of trench, c.40m, light yellow brown clayey sand with occasional manganese fragments and rare gravel			0.4
5606	Fill of 5607 – mottled light grey and light yellow brown clayey sand containing frequent charcoal fragments, manganese fragments and angular gravel			0.55
5607	Linear cut – ditch, NE-SW orientation, >2m long, 0.71 wide, 0.29 deep, steeply sloping sides, pointed, slightly concave base			0.55
5608	Slightly curvilinear cut, W-E orientation, >3.90m long, 0.80m wide, 0.50m deep, steep sides, rounded base – drainage ditch			0.65
5609	Fill of 5608 – mid to dark grey sandy clay containing frequent charcoal, rare manganese fragments – dumped material			0.65

5610	Fill of 5608 – yellow-greyish brown slightly silty, sandy clay containing rare charcoal fragments, manganese and gravel – primary fill of ditch	0.75
5611	VOID	-----
5612	Linear cut – NE-SW orientation, >2m long, 2.3m wide, 0.60m deep, steep sides, rounded base – drainage ditch	0.65
5613	Fill of 5612 – Mid grey clayey sand containing frequent manganese and charcoal fragments, rare angular gravel	0.65
Summary: Colluvial deposit, 3 x ditches, 2 phases minimum		

TR57	Orientation	L (m)	W (m)	Av. D (m)
	N-S	50	1.85	0.50
Context	Description			Depth below ground level (m)
5701	Topsoil – mid-greyish brown slightly clayey, silty sand containing occasional CBM fragments and rare angular gravel			0-0.18
5702	Subsoil – Mottled light yellowish brown and light grey clayey sand containing frequent manganese fragments, occasional charcoal fragments and rare gravel			0.18-0.50
5703	Geological deposit – Light yellow clayey sand with rare gravel fragments			0.5
Summary: No archaeological remains				

TR58	Orientation	L (m)	W (m)	Av. D (m)
	E-W	50	1.85	0.35
Context	Description			Depth below ground level (m)
5801	Topsoil – mid-greyish brown slightly clayey, silty sand containing occasional CBM fragments and rare angular gravel			0-0.25
5802	Subsoil – Mottled light yellowish brown and light grey clayey sand containing frequent manganese fragments, occasional charcoal fragments and rare gravel			0.25-0.35
5803	Geological deposit – Light yellow clayey sand with rare gravel fragments			0.35
5804	Fill of 5805 – Mid-greyish brown slightly clayey silty sand containing cinders, coal, glazed ceramic and CBM fragments			0.35
5805	3 linear cuts – furrows, part of R & F system, 1-1.5m wide, survive as scar in geological deposits			0.35
Summary: Ridge and furrow system				

TR59	Orientation	L (m)	W (m)	Av. D (m)
	NW-SE	50	1.85	0.45

Context	Description	Depth below ground level (m)
5901	Topsoil – mid-greyish brown slightly clayey, silty sand containing occasional CBM fragments and rare angular gravel	0-0.30
5902	Subsoil – Mottled light yellowish brown and light grey clayey sand containing frequent manganese fragments, occasional charcoal fragments and rare gravel	0.30-0.45
5903	Geological deposit – Light yellow clayey sand with rare gravel fragments	0.45
5904	Colluvial/hillwash deposit, extends c.12m N-S, 0'10m deep, Light grey slightly clayey sand	0.3
Summary: Colluvial deposit – no archaeological remains		

TR60	Orientation	L (m)	W (m)	Av. D (m)
	NE-SW	50	1.85	0.55
Context	Description			Depth below ground level (m)
6001	Topsoil – Dark brownish grey slightly silty clayey sand containing rare angular gravel			0-0.30
6002	Subsoil – Light brownish yellow clayey sand containing occasional gravel and charcoal flecks and fragments			0.30-0.55
6003	Geological deposit - Light orange and light yellow clayey sand with rare manganese fragments and gravel			0.55
Summary: No archaeological remains				

TR61	Orientation	L (m)	W (m)	Av. D (m)
	E-W	50	1.85	0.55
Context	Description			Depth below ground level (m)
6101	Topsoil – Dark brownish grey slightly silty clayey sand containing rare angular gravel			0-0.30
6102	Subsoil – Light brownish yellow clayey sand containing occasional gravel and charcoal flecks and fragments			0.30-0.55
6103	Geological deposit - Light orange and light yellow clayey sand with rare manganese fragments and gravel			0.55
Summary: No archaeological remains				

TR62	Orientation	L (m)	W (m)	Av. D (m)
	NW-SE	50	1.85	0.50

Context	Description	Depth below ground level (m)
6201	Topsoil – Dark brownish grey slightly silty clayey sand containing rare angular gravel	0-0.30
6202	Subsoil – Light brownish yellow clayey sand containing occasional gravel and charcoal flecks and fragments	0.30-0.50
6203	Geological deposit - Light orange and light yellow clayey sand with rare manganese fragments and gravel	0.5
Summary: No archaeological remains		

TR63	Orientation	L (m)	W (m)	Av. D (m)
	N-S	50	1.85	0.52
Context	Description	Depth below ground level (m)		
6301	Topsoil – Dark brownish grey slightly silty clayey sand containing rare angular gravel	0-0.32		
6302	Subsoil – Light brownish yellow clayey sand containing occasional gravel and charcoal flecks and fragments	0.32-0.52		
6303	Geological deposit - Light orange and light yellow clayey sand with rare manganese fragments and gravel	0.52		
6304	Linear cut – NW-SE orientation, >2m long, 0.75m wide, 0.15m deep, gradually sloping sides, flat base – drainage/field ditch	0.52		
6305	Fill of 6304 – Mid yellowish grey silty sand containing rare gravel, 0.15m deep	0.52		
Summary: No archaeological remains				

6.2 Appendix 2 – Finds Assessment

The finds assemblage numbered 35 sherds (199g) of pottery, six lithic finds, 83g of industrial waste and a small fragment of fired clay. Finds were found in eight separate trenches. The majority of the finds appeared to be of Romano-British date, with a small collection of earlier prehistoric material. The finds are summarised by feature in the Table 1, a complete catalogue is given at the end.

Tr	Feature	Pottery (PH) Count	Pottery (PH) Wgt	Pottery (RB) Count	Pottery (RB) Wgt	Lithics Count	Lithics Wgt	CBM Count	CBM Wgt	Ind Waste Count	Ind Waste Wgt	Dating
13	ditch 1309									1	2g	?
55	subsoil					1	2g					-
56	ditch 5612			5	26g							RB
56	dumped material 5609	3	26g					1	3g			IA/RB
56	hillwash	3	8g	1	21g							RB
56	linear 5607	9	59g	4	13g							RB
56	subsoil			1	12g							-
58	topsoil					1	12g					-
59	subsoil			3	13g					1	81g	-
60	subsoil			3	11g							-
60	topsoil					2	50g					-
61	subsoil			3	10g							-
63	topsoil					2	11g					-
Total		15	93g	20	106g	6	75g	1	3g	2	83g	

Table 1 – Summary of finds assemblage by feature with spot dating

Pottery

The pottery has been broadly identified by period, though not to fabric types. A little under half the assemblage (15 sherds, 93g) were of coarse handmade fabric and are of probable Iron Age or Romano-British date. The remainder of the assemblage (20 sherds, 106g) was clearly of Roman types, either oxidised redwares or reduced greywares. Sherds were typically soft and abraded. Finds were stratified in various features in trench 56, with further sherds from subsoil in trenches 59, 60 and 61.

Lithics

The lithic assemblage derived entirely from topsoil and subsoil deposits and included three tools, a core and two pieces of debitage. Diagnostic pieces include a multi-platform core and two scrapers which all point towards the Neolithic to early Bronze Age period.

Ceramic building material

A single piece of fired clay was found in dumped material (5609). It is too small to discern its source or function.

Industrial waste

The only stratified piece of slag was a small (2g) fragment found in ditch [1309] (1308). It appears to be fuel ash slag and might derive from any high temperature process whether industrial or domestic. A piece of iron slag (81g) found in subsoil in trench 59 is undiagnostic of any particular ironworking process.

Discussion

The finds assemblage was small but seems to indicate a Romano-British date for linears [5607] and [5612] and for dumped material [5609]. Further finds in subsoil within trenches 59, 60 and 61 show that the area of activity in this period probably stretched further afield.

A Neolithic or early Bronze Age presence is suggested by the lithics assemblage though the location of this activity cannot be discerned from the surviving evidence.

6.3 Appendix 3 – Finds Catalogue

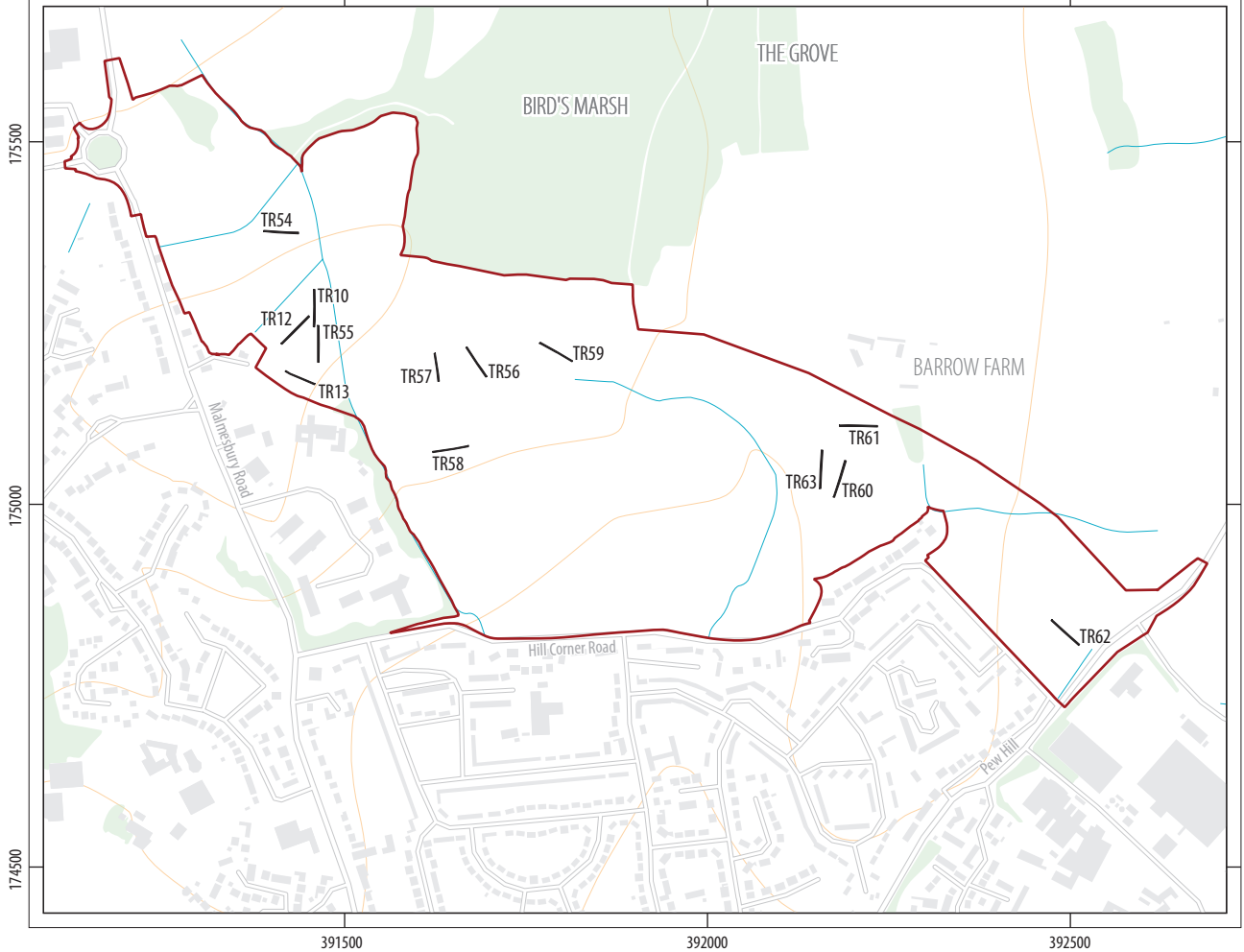
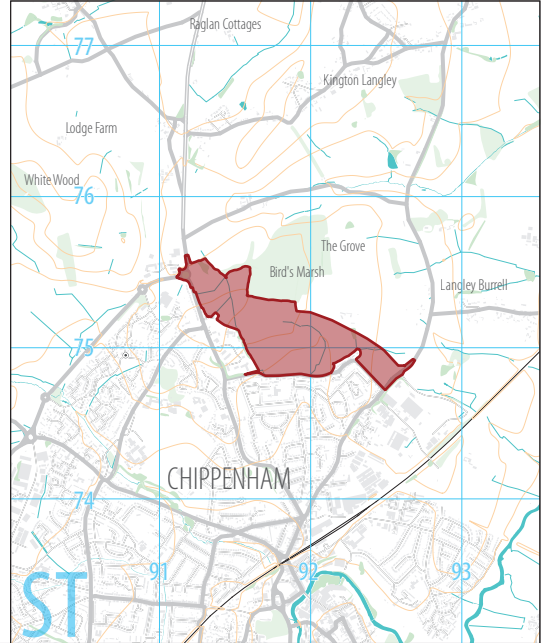
Trench	Context	Feature	Quantity	Weight (g)	Material	Object	Description	Spot Date
13	1308	ditch 1309	1	2	Industrial Waste	FAS	undiagnostic slag which is light and vesicular	-
55	5502	subsoil	1	2	Lithics	Tool	Edge retouched. Patinated and broken proximal fragment. Hard hammer flake with semi abrupt edge retouch to left lateral	PH
56	5602	subsoil	1	12	Pottery (Rom)	Grey		Rom
56	5603	hillwash	3	8	Pottery (PH)	IA?		IA?
56	5603	hillwash	1	21	Pottery (Rom)	Oxid		Rom
56	5606	linear 5607	9	59	Pottery (PH)	IA?	or Sax?	IA?
56	5606	linear 5607	4	13	Pottery (Rom)	Oxid		Rom
56	5609	dumped material 5609	1	3	CBM	Fired clay		-
56	5609	dumped material 5609	3	26	Pottery (PH)	IA?		IA?
56	5613	ditch 5612	3	20	Pottery (Rom)	Grey		Rom
56	5613	ditch 5612	2	6	Pottery (Rom)	Oxid		Rom
58	5801	topsoil	1	12	Lithics	Tool	Scraper. Hard hammer on platform, secondary flake with semi abrupt to abrupt retouch round majority of edge. Sub oval in shape	Neol-EBA
59	5902	subsoil	3	13	Pottery (Rom)	Grey		Rom
59	5902	subsoil	1	81	Industrial Waste	Iron slag	undiagnostic iron slag. Heavy and dense	IA or later
60	6001	topsoil	1	44	Lithics	Core	Multiple platform core. One main platform used, a second remaining at 90degree angle and some other removals indicate the potential there were others. for flake production	Neol-EBA
60	6001	topsoil	1	6	Lithics	Debitage	burnt and broken distal blade fragment.	PH
60	6002	subsoil	3	11	Pottery (Rom)	Oxid		Rom
61	6102	subsoil	3	10	Pottery (Rom)	Oxid		Rom
63	6301	topsoil	1	6	Lithics	Debitage	Corticated blade, missing distal end. Soft hammer on platform blade from a dual platform blade core. opposing platform not present as distal end is missing. Flakes from lateral edge are either edge damage or use wear but no retouch identifiable.	EPH
63	6301	topsoil	1	5	Lithics	Tool	Scraper/preform. Probable hard hammer flake but proximal end lost through modification. Roughly triangular flake with abrupt retouch to both laterals and proximal edge. May have functioned as a scraper or may be unfinished. Retouch is brown in colour while remaining faces are	Neol-EBA

Trench	Context	Feature	Quantity	Weight (g)	Material	Object	Description	Spot Date
							blue white, may be modification of an older flake.	

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Wiltshire

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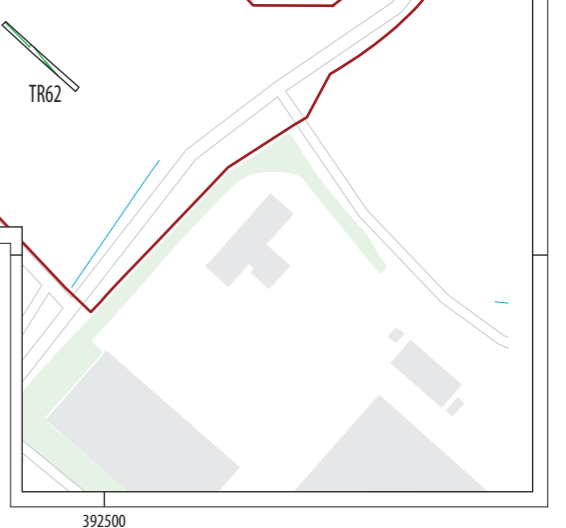
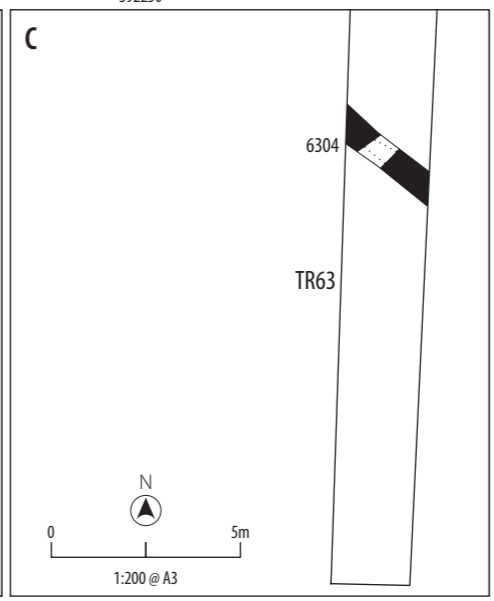
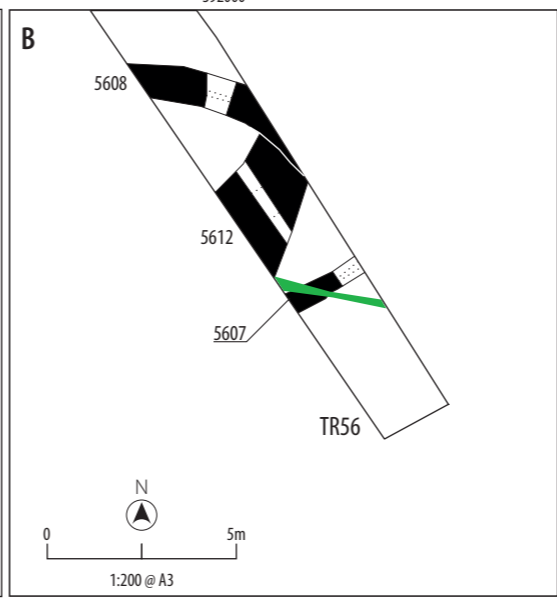
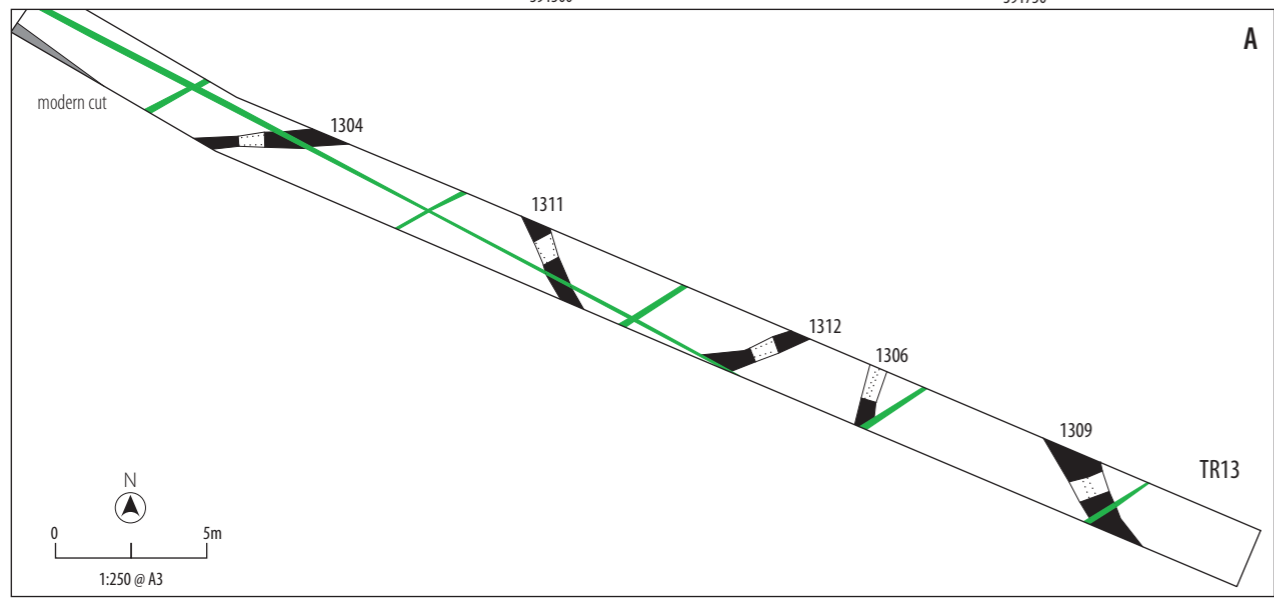
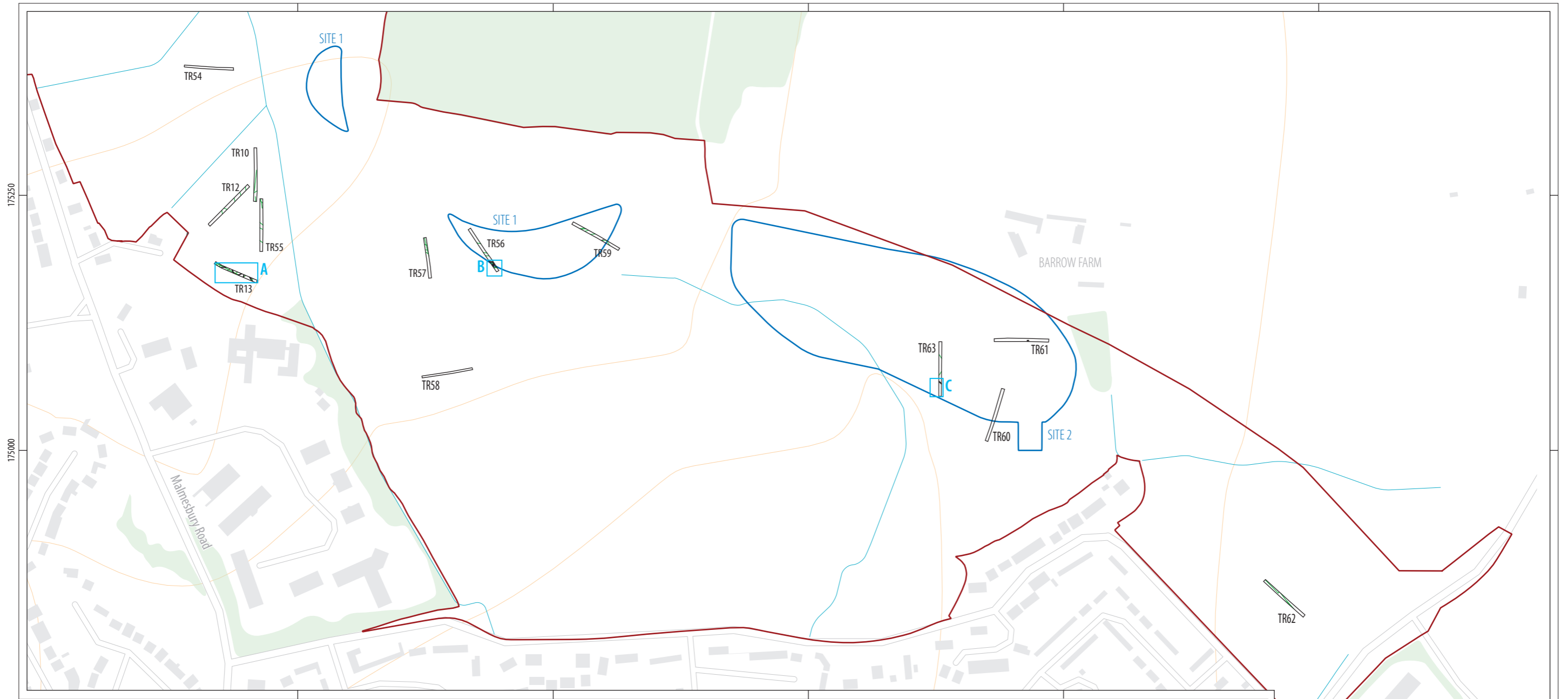
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1:10,000 @ A4

KEY
 development boundary
 trench location

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