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# Manor Farm, Orcheston, Wiltshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report



Ref: 101450.02  
October 2013



**Manor Farm, Orcheston,  
Wiltshire**

**Archaeological Evaluation Report**

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## Quality Assurance

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# Manor Farm, Orcheston, Wiltshire

## Archaeological Evaluation Report

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## Figures and Plates

**Figure 1:** Site and trench location

**Figure 2:** Detailed plan and sections

**Plate 1:** Trench 1

**Plate 2:** South facing section of ditch 103

**Plate 3:** Trench 2

**Plate 4:** East facing section of ditch 203

**Plate 5:** South east facing section of feature 205

Front cover: Trench 1, view from NE



# **Manor Farm, Orcheston, Wiltshire**

## **Archaeological Evaluation Report**

### **Summary**

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Mr Spence to undertake an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at Manor Farm, Orcheston, Wiltshire prior to the determination of a planning application, which proposed the removal of redundant farm storage buildings and construction of three new dwellings with associated access and garage.

The Assistant County Archaeologist had advised the proposed development was positioned within an area of archaeological potential and prior to the determination of the planning application an archaeological field evaluation should be undertaken.

Two trial trenches each measuring approximately 20m by 1.6m were machine-excavated within the proposed development area. Two ditches and a pit like feature were recorded within the trenches. Small quantities of animal bone were recovered but no other archaeological finds were present and the features remain undated. The evaluation established that there is a reasonable potential for the presence of archaeological features at the site.

The fieldwork was carried out on the 2nd October 2013.



# **Manor Farm, Orcheston, Wiltshire**

## **Archaeological Evaluation Report**

### **Acknowledgments**

Wessex Archaeology would like to thank Mr Spence for commissioning the work. The help, advice and prompt site visit of Clare King, Assistant County Archaeologist is also gratefully acknowledged.

The evaluation was carried out by Piotr Orczewski who has also written and compiled this report. The illustrations were prepared by Kitty Foster. The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Sue Farr.



# Manor Farm, Orcheston, Wiltshire

## Archaeological Evaluation Report

### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Mr Spence ('the Client'), to carry out an archaeological trial trench evaluation of land at Manor Farm, Orcheston, Wiltshire centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 405975 144920 (hereafter 'the Site', **Figure 1**).
- 1.1.2 A planning application (S/13/0067) has been submitted to Wiltshire Council for the removal of redundant farm storage buildings and construction of three new dwellings with associated access and garage.
- 1.1.3 The Site lies within the medieval settlement area of Orcheston, immediately to the north of the church, and the Assistant County Archaeologist recommended a trial trench evaluation was undertaken prior to the determination of the planning application, to ascertain the archaeological potential of the Site.
- 1.1.4 A written scheme of investigation (WA 2013) setting out the strategy and methodology by which Wessex Archaeology would implement the archaeological trial trench evaluation was submitted to and approved by the Assistant County Archaeologist prior to the commencement of the fieldwork.
- 1.1.5 The evaluation was carried out on the 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2013.

#### 1.2 Site Location, Topography and Geology

- 1.2.1 The Site is located in the south of Orcheston village within the farmyard complex at Manor Farm. It is positioned within the south of the complex and is occupied by redundant farm buildings in the eastern and western limits of the Site.
- 1.2.2 The Site is bounded by Whatcombe Brow to the west, Elston Lane to the north, agricultural land to the east and St Georges Church to the south.
- 1.2.3 It is positioned on level ground at an elevation of approximately 92m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).

### 2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

#### 2.1 Designated sites

- 2.1.1 There are no Scheduled Monuments within the Site.
- 2.1.2 To the immediate south, the Church of St George is located and is Grade II\* listed (list entry: 1023021).





2.1.3 The Site is situated within the Orcheston Conservation Area.

## 2.2 Archaeological background

2.2.1 Although no known sites or find spots have been recorded within the Site itself, Orcheston is set within the archaeologically rich and nationally significant Salisbury Plain Training Area, which is noted for its highly well-preserved prehistoric landscapes.

2.2.2 A number of ring ditches and round barrows indicative of Bronze Age funerary activity are recorded around the village. In addition Church Pits, a Romano-British settlement site, is recorded to the north-east of the village.

2.2.3 Orcheston itself has medieval origins, and is recorded in Domesday as *Orchestone*. The church of St George to the immediate south of the Site has a Norman north door and 13<sup>th</sup> century windows in the nave and chancel. A watching brief undertaken during drainage improvements within the churchyard in 2005 disturbed several inhumations.

## 3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

### 3.1 Archaeological Field Evaluation

3.1.1 The aims of the archaeological field evaluation were to determine, as far as it was reasonably possible, the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be impacted by the proposed development.

## 4 METHOD STATEMENT

### 4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The full detailed methodology for the archaeological works was set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation (WA 2013), and is summarised below. All fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the guidance and standards outlined in the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (IfA 2008).

### 4.2 Fieldwork

4.2.1 A total of two trenches were positioned (**Figure 1**) within accessible areas of the proposed development area. Trench 1 measured 19.0m x 1.6m and was located immediately north of the church. Trench 2 was extended to 18.5m to fully record the extent of feature **205**.

4.2.2 The trenches were laid out using a Leica Viva series GNSS unit using the OS National GPS Network through an RTK network with a 3D accuracy of 30mm or below in general accordance with the pattern given in **Figure 1**. All survey data was recorded using the OSGB36 British National Grid coordinate system.

4.2.3 The trial trench excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision using a wheeled mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless grading bucket (1.6m). All overburden (tarmac and made ground) was carefully removed in spits to the top of the uppermost archaeological horizon or solid geological deposits (Upper Chalk), whichever was encountered first. The machine excavated arisings were stored at a minimum of 1m from the trench edge. The spoil was scanned for artefacts at regular intervals.



4.2.4 Once trenches were completed to the satisfaction of the Client and the Assistant County Archaeologist they were backfilled using the excavated material in the approximate order in which they were excavated and left level on completion. No other reinstatement or surface treatment was undertaken.

### 4.3 Recording

4.3.1 All features and deposits were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's standard methods and *pro forma* recording system, with all features and deposits being assigned a unique number. Soil descriptions were based on the Soil Science Handbook.

4.3.2 A complete drawn record of excavated and archaeological features and deposits was compiled. This includes both plans and sections, drawn to appropriate scales (1:20 for plans, 1:10 for sections). The Ordnance Datum (OD) height of all principal features and levels will be calculated and plans/sections will be annotated with OD heights.

4.3.3 Trench locations and all recorded archaeological features revealed were surveyed using a Total Station/GPS and tied in to the Ordnance Survey.

4.3.4 A full photographic record was maintained using digital cameras equipped with an image sensor of not less than 10 megapixels. Digital images will be subject to managed quality control and curation processes which will embed appropriate metadata within the image and ensure long term accessibility of the image set. The photographic record illustrates both the detail and the general context of features and trenches.

## 5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

### 5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The following summary details the results of the trial trench evaluation which comprised the machine excavation of two trenches (**Figure 1**) positioned within accessible areas of the development (**Plates 1 and 2**).

5.1.2 The length of Trench 2 (**Plate 3**) was extended slightly to fully expose feature **205**.

### 5.2 Natural deposits and soil sequences

5.2.1 The natural geology varied slightly between the trenches and was recorded at a depth of 0.50m in Trench 1, dropping to 1.0m in Trench 2 below ground level. The natural geology in Trench 1 consisted of degraded loose chalk mixed with pale grey brown clay. In Trench 2 similar natural chalk was exposed with the addition of periglacial stripes of reddish brown clay.

5.2.2 Immediately overlying the natural in both trenches were modern made ground deposits up to 1.0m in depth. The deposits in Trench 2 contained significant amounts of modern scrap iron. The absence of a well-developed topsoil or subsoil in either trench indicates the Site had been stripped prior to being levelled and built up.

### 5.3 Archaeological features

5.3.1 Ditch **103** was located at the western end of Trench 1 on a NW-SE alignment (**Figure 1** and **Plate 2**) and measured 0.72m wide and 0.50m in depth. A slot was hand excavated through the ditch but no archaeological finds were recovered from its single fill (**104**).



- 5.3.2 A ditch with a similar profile was recorded in Trench 2. It was E-W aligned and contained small amounts of animal bone. Similarly no dating evidence was recovered from its fill.
- 5.3.3 A large 'feature' **205 (Plate 5)** was recorded at the south end of Trench 2. Its exact purpose is unknown, but due to its irregular, diffuse sides and almost complete lack of archaeological finds it is likely to represent a natural hollow. The topography sloped down eastwards and it was considered likely that the area was infilled and raised to provide a level area for the farmyard. The fill contained small quantities of animal bone.
- 5.3.4 No deposits suitable for environmental sampling were identified.

## **5.4 Finds**

- 5.4.1 A small (307grams) quantity of animal bone was recovered from two separate features located in Trench 2. Bone preservation is generally good and only one fragment showed evidence of scavenger gnaw marks.
- 5.4.2 Identified fragments include a cattle tibia and pig mandible from ditch **203**, and a cattle upper molar and two cattle-sized long bone shaft fragments from feature **205**.

## **6 CONCLUSIONS**

- 6.1.1 The made ground deposits observed in Trenches 1 and 2 were of clearly modern origin and related to the general farm activity and ground levelling. Although the absence of subsoil in both trenches suggested the Site had been graded prior to being built up, the presence of periglacial striping and archaeological features within the trenches indicates that any site stripping and levelling is likely to have stopped at the top of the natural deposits.
- 6.1.2 Although no dating evidence was identified within the excavated features, the nature of the fills within both linears suggested some antiquity. It is difficult to directly link these features to either the nearby church or the manor, however, the features do represent archaeological activity in a zone of potential and it is possible further archaeological remains will therefore survive within the Site.

## **7 THE ARCHIVE**

### **7.1 Preparation of Archive**

- 7.1.1 The complete Site archive, which includes paper records, photographic records, graphics, and digital data, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by the appropriate Museum, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; IfA 2009; Brown 2011; ADS 2013)
- 7.1.2 The complete Site archive is currently held at the Wessex Archaeology offices in Salisbury under the WA project code 101450.

### **7.2 Security copy**

- 7.2.1 In line with current best practice (e.g. Brown 2011), on completion of the project a security copy of the written records will be prepared, in the form of a digital PDF/A file. PDF/A is an ISO-standardised version of the Portable Document Format (PDF) designed for the digital preservation of electronic documents through omission of features ill-suited to long-term archiving.



## 9 REFERENCES

- ADS 2013, *Caring for Digital Data in Archaeology: a guide to good practice*, Archaeology Data Service & Digital Antiquity Guides to Good Practice
- Brown, D.H., 2011, *Archaeological archives; a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation*, Archaeological Archives Forum (revised edition)
- English Heritage, 2002, *Environmental Archaeology; a guide to theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation*, Swindon, Centre for Archaeology Guidelines
- IfA 2009, *Standard and Guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives*, Institute for Archaeologists
- SMA 1993, *Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections*, Society of Museum Archaeologists
- SMA 1995, *Towards an Accessible Archaeological Archive*, Society of Museum Archaeologists
- Wessex Archaeology 2013, *Manor Farm, Orcheston, Wiltshire, Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation*, WA Ref: 101450.01



## APPENDIX 1: TRENCH SUMMARIES

bgl = below ground level

<b>TRENCH 1</b>			<b>Type:</b>	Machine excavated	
<b>Dimensions:</b> 19.0x1.60m		<b>Max. depth:</b> 0.60m		<b>Ground level:</b> 92.00m aOD	
<b>Context</b>	<b>Description</b>			<b>Depth bgl (m)</b>	
101	Tarmac	Modern tarmac.			0.00-0.13m
102	Made Ground	Various sand, clay and gravel made ground deposits.			0.13-0.50m
103	Cut	Cut of ditch.			0.50m
104	Fill	Secondary fill of ditch.			
105	Natural	Degraded loose greyish chalk mixed with pale grey brown clay.			0.50+

<b>TRENCH 2</b>			<b>Type:</b>	Machine excavated	
<b>Dimensions:</b> 18.50x1.60m		<b>Max. depth:</b> 1.20m		<b>Ground level:</b> 91.00m aOD	
<b>Context</b>	<b>Description</b>			<b>Depth bgl (m)</b>	
201	Tarmac	Modern tarmac.			0.00-0.31m
202	Made ground	Various sand, gravel made ground and farm waste material.			0.31m+
203	Cut	Cut of ditch.			0.90m
204	Fill	Secondary fill of ditch.			
205	Cut	Cut of pit.			1.00m
206	Fill	Fill of pit.			
207	Natural	Degraded loose greyish chalk mixed with pale grey brown clay. Stripes of red brown clay.			1.0m+

## APPENDIX 2: OASIS RECORD FORM

### OASIS ID - wessexar1-161015

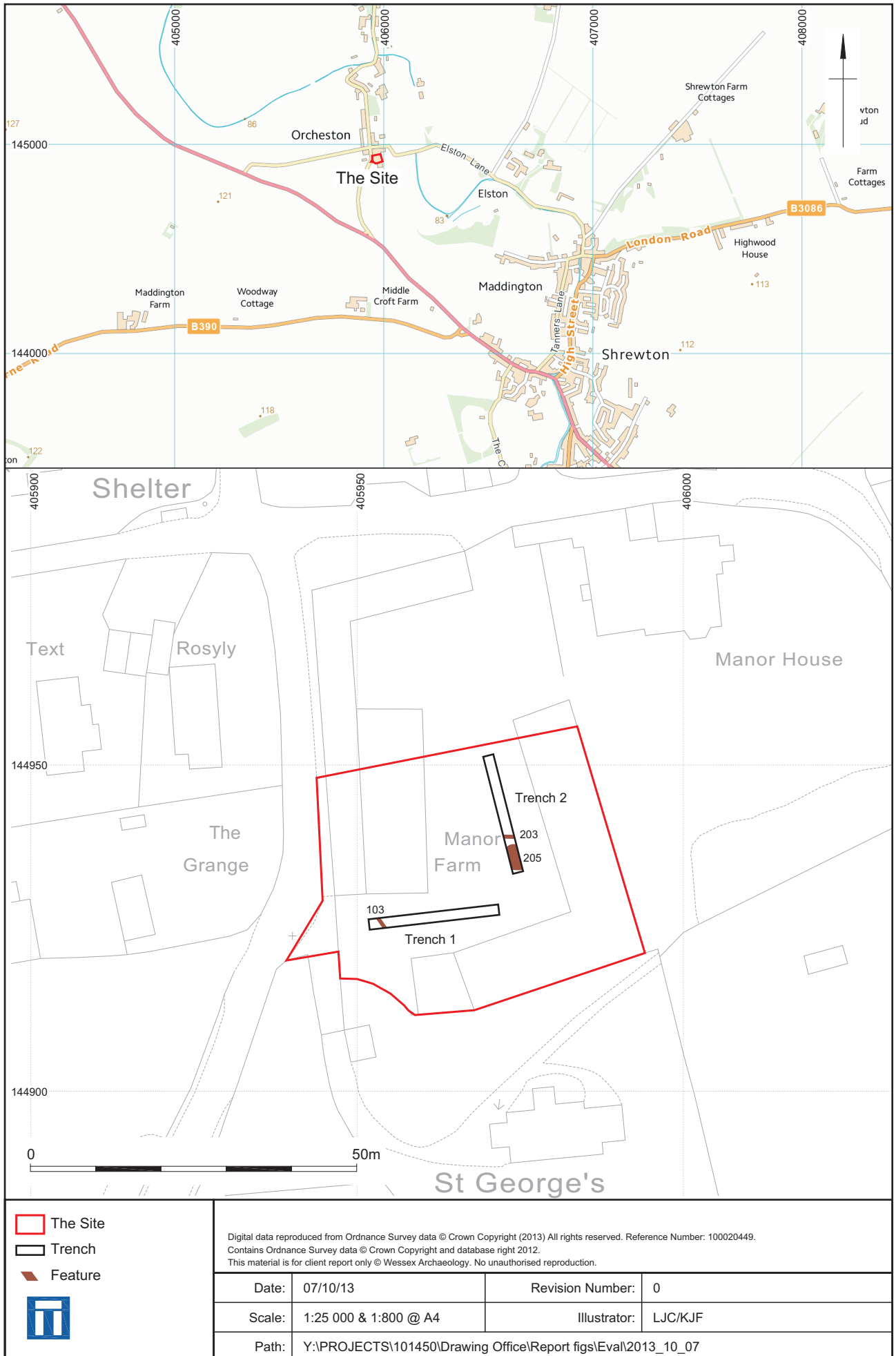
Versions				
View	Version	Completed by	Email	Date
<a href="#">View 1</a>	1	S Farr	s.farr@wessexarch.co.uk	10 October 2013
Completed sections in current version				
Details	Location	Creators	Archive	Publications
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1/1
Validated sections in current version				
Details	Location	Creators	Archive	Publications
No	No	No	No	0/1
File submission and form progress				
Grey literature report submitted?	No	Grey literature report filename/s		
Report release delay specified?	Yes	Release delay	Release into ADS library once signed off	
Images submitted?	No	Image filename/s		
Boundary file submitted?	No	Boundary filename		
HER signed off?		NMR signed off?		
<a href="#">Grey literature</a>	<a href="#">Upload images</a>	<a href="#">Upload boundary file</a>	<a href="#">Request record re-opened</a>	

## APPENDIX 1: TRENCH SUMMARIES

bgl = below ground level

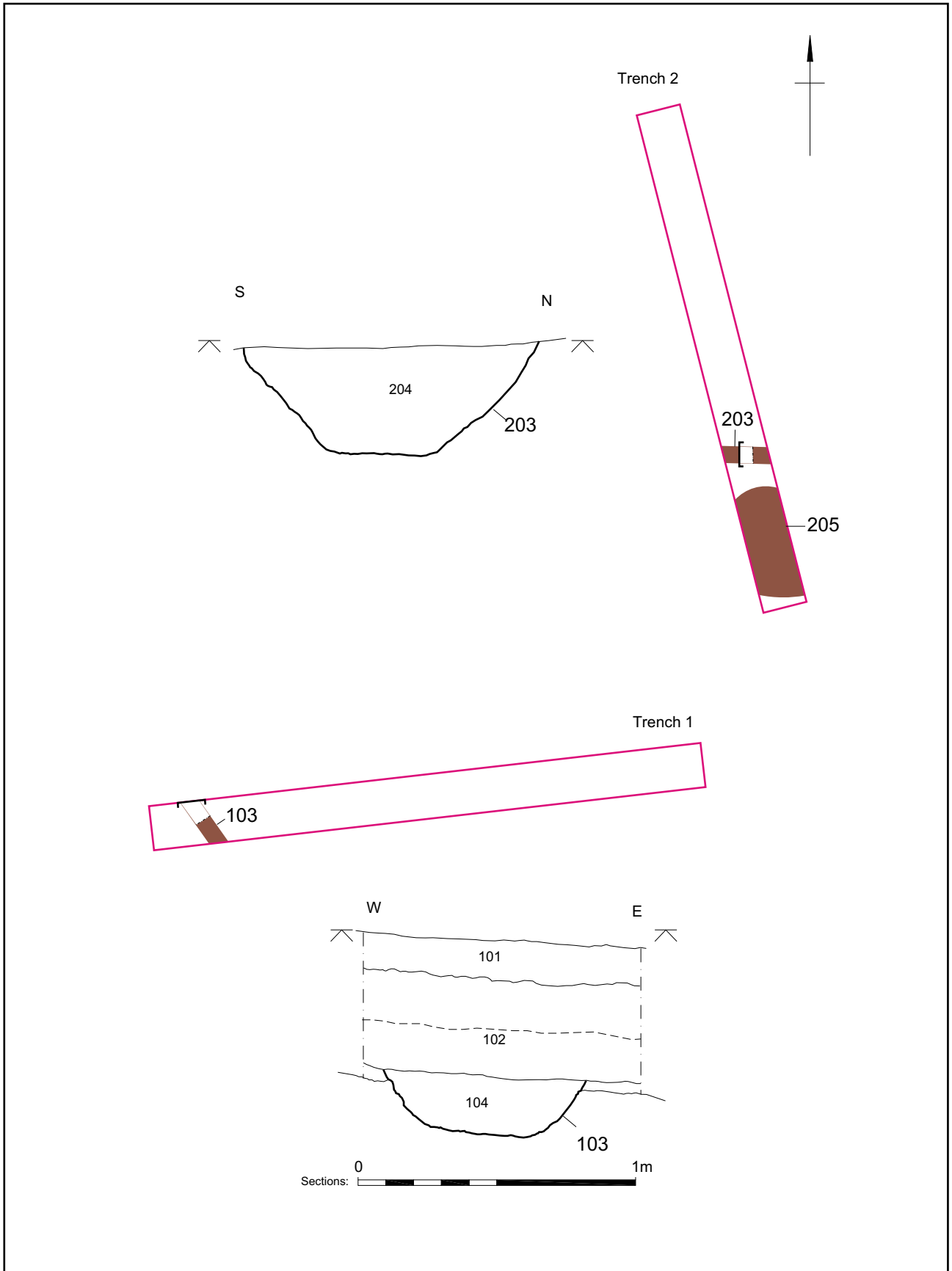
<b>TRENCH 1</b>			<b>Type:</b>	Machine excavated
<b>Dimensions:</b> 19.0x1.60m		<b>Max. depth:</b> 0.60m	<b>Ground level:</b> 92.00m aOD	
<b>Context</b>	<b>Description</b>		<b>Depth bgl (m)</b>	
101	Tarmac	Modern tarmac.	0.00-0.13m	
102	Made Ground	Various sand, clay and gravel made ground deposits.	0.13-0.50m	
103	Cut	Cut of ditch.	0.50m	
104	Fill	Secondary fill of ditch.		
105	Natural	Degraded loose greyish chalk mixed with pale grey brown clay.	0.50+	



<b>TRENCH 2</b>			<b>Type:</b>	Machine excavated
<b>Dimensions:</b> 18.50x1.60m		<b>Max. depth:</b> 1.20m	<b>Ground level:</b> 91.00m aOD	
<b>Context</b>	<b>Description</b>		<b>Depth bgl (m)</b>	
201	Tarmac	Modern tarmac.	0.00-0.31m	
202	Made ground	Various sand, gravel made ground and farm waste material.	0.31m+	
203	Cut	Cut of ditch.	0.90m	
204	Fill	Secondary fill of ditch.		
205	Cut	Cut of pit.	1.00m	
206	Fill	Fill of pit.		
207	Natural	Degraded loose greyish chalk mixed with pale grey brown clay. Stripes of red brown clay.	1.0m+	



Site and trench location plan

Figure 1



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	Date:	17/10/13	Revision Number:	0
	Scale:	Plan 1:200 & Sections 1:20 @ A4	Illustrator:	SEJ
	Path:	Y:\PROJECTS\101450\Drawing Office\Report figs\Eval\2013_10_07		

Detailed plan and sections

Figure 2





Plate 1: Trench 1



Plate 2: South facing section of ditch 103


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	Scale:	N/A	Illustrator:	KJF
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Plate 3: Trench 2



Plate 4: East facing section of ditch 203



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Plate 5: South east facing section of feature 205

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