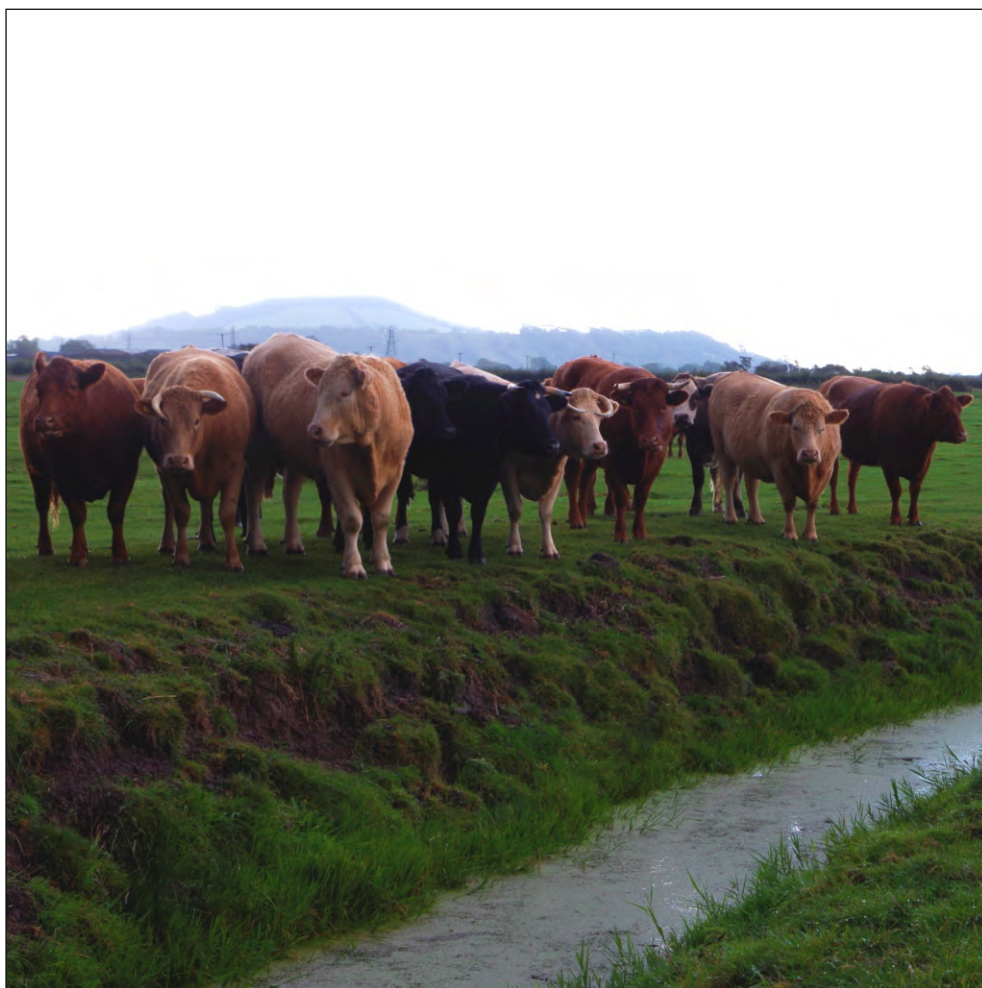




making sense of heritage

Land at Wick Farm, Lympsham, Somerset

Archaeological Evaluation Report



Museum Accession Code: TTNCM 115/2014
Ref: 106530.02
November 2014



**Land at Wick Farm, Lympsham,
Somerset**

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Land at Wick Farm, Lympsham, Somerset

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Cover: View south towards Brent Knoll

Plate 1: Representative section of trench 6

Plate 2: Representative section of trench 10



Land at Wick Farm, Lympsham, Somerset

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Summary

In October 2014 Wessex Archaeology excavated ten evaluation trenches, targeted on geophysical survey anomalies on land at Wick Farm, Lympsham, Weston-Super-Mare, Somerset. The evaluation revealed a Romano-British ditch in one trench and in seven trenches alluvial deposits contained evidence of probable Late Iron Age and Romano-British salt production.



Land at Wick Farm, Lympsham, Somerset

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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The evaluation was directed by Lynn Hume, assisted by Kerry Birnie, Ralph Collard, Amy Green, Cai Mason and Roy Krakowicz. This report was written and compiled by David Fallon and Cai Mason. The illustrations were produced by Nancy Dixon and Karen Nichols. The project was managed by Andy King. Environmental samples were processed by Tony Scothern and assessed by Sarah Wyles.



Land at Wick Farm, Lympsham, Somerset

Archaeological Evaluation Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology were commissioned by AB Heritage Ltd to undertake an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching on land at Wick Farm, Lympsham, Weston-Super-Mare, Somerset, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) ST 31662 54681 (hereafter 'the Site' Figure 1). The evaluation forms part of a programme of archaeological works being undertaken ahead of the proposed construction of a solar array.

1.1.2 The evaluation took place over four days, and comprised ten trenches. The Written Scheme of Investigation stipulated that these trenches should be 15m in length (AB Heritage 2014). However, on-site conditions dictated that the excavated trenches measured between 10.1m and 15m in length.

1.1.3 The trial trenching followed a geophysical survey (AB Heritage 2014) which informed the location of the trenches. The aim of the evaluation was to establish the nature and significance of the features identified by the geophysical survey, in order to provide Somerset County Council with sufficient information to inform a decision on the need for further archaeological investigation and/or mitigation.

1.2 The Site

1.2.1 The Site comprises nine fields of pasture to the south of Wick Farm, which is situated in the Somerset Levels, approximately 2km to the west of Lympsham and 2km to the east of Brean. The Site is surrounded by agricultural land. Field boundaries within the Site are defined by water-filled rhyes (drainage ditches), some of which are flanked by mature hedgerows. The topography of the Site is fairly level at height of approximately 6m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).

1.2.2 The underlying geology comprises mudstone of the Charmouth Mudstone Formation, which is overlain by estuarine alluvium of the Wentlooge Formation (British Geological Survey 2014; Allen & Scaife 2010, fig. 1).

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 Other than a programme of archaeological field walking accompanied by a geophysical survey carried out by GSB Prospection Ltd in 2003 and the geophysical survey by AB Heritage in 2014, there has been very little previous research undertaken on the Site.

2.1.2 The archaeological and historical background to the Site is drawn from a summary of the HER database in the *Written Scheme of Investigation* (AB Heritage 2014).

2.2 Prehistoric

2.2.1 There are no known prehistoric remains within the Site boundaries.



2.3 Roman

- 2.3.1 An assemblage of Roman-British ceramics was recovered during field walking along the eastern edge of the Site in 2003; these finds were interpreted as evidence of a possible settlement site (SHER 17756; Cottrell 2004).
- 2.3.2 There are a number of known Romano-British occupation sites in the surrounding area, but to date there is no conclusive evidence of any such activity within the Site boundaries.

2.4 Saxon and Medieval

- 2.4.1 There are no known Saxon or Medieval remains within the Site boundaries.

2.5 Post-medieval and modern

- 2.5.1 There are no known Post-medieval remains on the Site. There is a modern agricultural building adjacent to Wick Road.

2.6 Undated

- 2.6.1 A number of linear and rectilinear features of indeterminate type and date were located within the boundary of the site.
- 2.6.2 The HER database has four, undated, references to relevant to the site: an area of ridge and furrow (SHER 27997), a series of earthworks representing landscape remains (SHER 11152), and a small portion of an area highlighted as a settlement site (SHER 11153).

2.7 Geophysical Survey

- 2.7.1 Two geophysical surveys were undertaken of the site: The first, in 2003, was by GSB Prospection Ltd and the second by AB Heritage Ltd in 2014.
- 2.7.2 The 2003 GSB survey, which amounted to 3.4ha, encompassed the south-eastern corner of the Site. This survey identified linear and curvilinear features of potential archaeological origin in the south-eastern corner of the Site. These findings resulted in a subsequent programme of field-walking from which the Roman pottery was recovered (see 2.3.1 above).
- 2.7.3 In 2014 AB Heritage undertook a further geophysical survey, which identified two clusters of linear and rectilinear anomalies at the southern end of the Site and three sinuous linear features towards the north.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Aims and objectives

- 3.1.1 The aims of the archaeological work were to:
- To establish the presence or otherwise of any archaeological remains on the Site, and to define the date and nature of such activity;
 - Evaluate the likely impact of past land use and development;
 - If archaeological remains are found then the evaluation should provide sufficient information to enable the local authority archaeologist to develop an archaeological mitigation strategy.



3.2 Fieldwork methodology

- 3.2.1 The archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with the *Written Scheme of Investigation* (AB Heritage 2014).
- 3.2.2 Trenches were positioned in locations that targeted geophysical anomalies identified in the previous geophysical survey and avoided known land drains.
- 3.2.3 The trench locations were scanned by WA using a cable detecting device. The trenches were excavated under constant archaeological supervision using a tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless grading bucket. The turf, topsoil and subsoil were stored separately to facilitate appropriate backfilling and consolidation of each trench following the completion of recording.
- 3.2.4 All potential archaeological features and deposits were assigned a unique context number. Features were hand excavated in order to ascertain their nature, date and function, and were fully recorded using WA's *proforma* record sheets.
- 3.2.5 A photographic record was created using digital and 35mm cameras loaded with monochrome film. Particular attention was taken to record all trench locations to provide a full record of both the original and final condition of the trenches excavated. A full graphic record was maintained. The site drawings were drawn at a scale of 1:10 for sections and 1:20 for plans.
- 3.2.6 Site survey was carried 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. All survey data was recorded using the OSGB36 British National Grid coordinate system.
- 3.2.7 The archaeological fieldwork was monitored by Richard Brunning (SCC Archaeological Officer).

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The geology of the Site comprised laminated alluvial clays, which were overlain by 0.25-0.38m of modern topsoil. Archaeological features and deposits within the alluvial sequence are discussed below and illustrated on the site plan (**Figure 1**). **Plates 1** and **2** show typical deposit sequences.

4.2 Alluvial sequence

- 4.2.1 The earliest deposits of alluvial clay in Trenches 4 and 10 (**412-13** and **1006**; **Plate 2**) were sealed by a thin layer of black organic clay (**410** and **1005**), which was recorded at depths of 4.74m aOD and 4.46m aOD respectively. Both layers are likely to represent buried topsoil horizons. Layer **1005** was noted as containing charcoal. A similar black silt layer (**704**) was noted in the base of Trench 7 at a height of 4.57m aOD; this deposit contained fired clay, animal bone and two sherds of late Iron Age/early Romano-British pottery.
- 4.2.2 Layer **410** was sealed by alluvial clay **409**, which was in turn cut by ditch **403** (see below). Layer **1005** was sealed by alluvial clays **1003-4**; the upper surface of which appears formed a stabilisation horizon at 4.89m aOD. Layer **1003** contained pieces of fired clay, charcoal and small fragments of limestone. Deposits (**703** and **803**) of a similar nature to **1003** were noted in Trenches 7 and 8; both of which contained fragments of fired clay. The upper surface of layers **703**, **803** and **1003** formed a stabilisation horizon at a depth of



between 4.74m and 4.84m aOD. The stabilisation layer was sealed by further layers of alluvial clay (**702**, **802** and **1003**), one of which (**802**) contained fragments of fired clay, animal bone and Iron Age pottery.

- 4.2.3 Possible stabilisation horizons were noted at the interface between alluvial clays **602** and **603** in Trench 6 (**Plate 1**), and **902** and **903** in Trench 9, at a height of 4.42m aOD and 4.85m aOD respectively. Romano-British pottery was recovered from layer **902**; fired clay and animal bones were noted in layers **602** and **902**.
- 4.2.4 Trenches 1-3 and 5 contained similar sequence of alluvium (**103-4**, **204**, **303-4** and **503-4**) interspersed with stabilisation horizons (recorded at heights of between 4.84m aOD and 5.31m aOD), which were overlain by further deposits of alluvial clay (**102**, **202-3**, **302** and **502**), one of which (**302**) contained fragments of fired clay.

4.3 Romano-British

- 4.3.1 The only archaeological feature was a north-east to south-west aligned, 4.7m wide by 1.2m deep ditch (**403**; **Figure 3**) in Trench 4, which was filled with a sequence of clay fills; the earliest of which (**404-5**) appears to be natural silting. The primary Fill (**404**) contained animal bones and two sherds of Late Iron Age/early Romano-British pottery. Fill **405** was cut by ditch re-cut **411**, which appears to have been deliberately backfilled. The earliest fill of re-cut **411** was gritty silt (**406**) that contained common charcoal inclusions, fired clay and a piece of slag. Fill **406** was overlain by dumps of silty clay (**407-8**); the latest of which (**408**) contained charcoal, iron slag, Romano-British pottery and animal bones. Ditch **403** corresponds with a north-south aligned anomaly that was identified during the geophysical survey.

4.4 Post-medieval/modern

- 4.4.1 Post-medieval/modern ceramic land drains were uncovered in Trenches 6-8. The drain in Trench 6 clearly corresponds with one of the linear geophysical anomalies; the drain in Trench 7 also follows a similar alignment to a geophysical anomaly at the eastern end of the trench.

5 ARTEFACTUAL EVIDENCE

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 Approximately 3.5kg of finds were retained, derived from 14 contexts in seven of the excavated trenches. After cleaning, all the artefacts were quantified (number and weight of pieces) by material type within each context; this information is summarised in **Table 1**. All material types were also scanned on a context by context basis, to assess their date, range and condition. No metalwork was recovered, so the pottery has provided the primary dating evidence for the site. In general, the artefacts all survive in good condition.



5.1.2 **Table 1:** Finds totals by material type (number of pieces/weight in grammes) CBM = ceramic building material

	Animal bone	CBM	Fired clay	Pottery	Shell	Slag	Total
Trench	No./Wt.	No./Wt.	No./Wt.	No./Wt.	No./Wt.	No./Wt.	No./Wt.
3			3/105				3/105
4	157/1048		45/682	11/58	1/3	17/249	231/2013
6	1/1		3/7				4/8
7	1/1		8/145	2/2			11/148
8	7/40		2/3	22/53			31/96
9	13/86	5/163	10/106	7/61			35/416
10	18/17		38/621				56/638
Total	197/1196	5/163	109/1669	42/174	1/3	17/249	371/3451

5.2 Animal bone

5.2.1 A total of 197 fragments (1196g) of animal bone were recovered from deposits in six of the evaluation trenches (nos. 4 and 6-10). Once conjoins are taken into account, this figure falls to 128 fragments. The assemblage includes a large number of small unidentifiable pieces (approximately 54% of the total) recovered from the residues of two bulk soil samples (nos. 1 and 4; alluvial layer **1003** and ditch fill **404** respectively). The rest was recovered by hand during the normal course of excavation.

5.2.2 Where applicable, the following information was recorded: species, skeletal element, preservation condition, fusion and tooth ageing data, butchery marks, metrical data, gnawing, burning, surface condition, pathology and non-metric traits. This information was directly recorded into a relational database (in MS Access) and cross-referenced with relevant contextual information.

Preservation condition

5.2.3 Bone preservation was generally good to fair; the cortical surfaces survived intact (i.e. un-abraded or weathered), suggesting that bone fragments are from secure, primary deposits and that the burial environment was favourable for the survival of bone. Gnaw marks were recorded on only five fragments including several sheep/goat bones from the primary fill of ditch **403** in Trench 4. However, a significant number (26%) of the fragments were either entirely or partially charred or calcined. The largest group of burnt bone fragments came from ditch **403** and its recut **411** in Trench 4, and alluvial deposit **1003** in Trench 10. These deposits contained material of an industrial nature, possibly associated with salt-making.

Composition

5.2.4 Approximately 36% of fragments were identifiable to species and skeletal element, and all of the identified bones were from domestic species. Sheep/goat bones were common, accounting for 67% NISP (**Table 2**). Other identified species included cattle (24%), horse (6.5%) and pig (2.5%). These basic species proportions are fairly typical of other Late Iron Age/Romano-British rural sites in the Somerset Levels.



Table2: Animal bone: number and percentage of identified specimens present (or NISP).

Species	NISP	%
Cattle	11	24
Sheep/goat	31	67
Pig	1	2.5
Horse	3	6.5
Total identified	46	36
Total unidentifiable	82	64
Overall total	128	100

5.2.5 Sixty-three percent of the animal bone was recovered from ditch **403**, a further 8% from ditch recut **411**, and the remainder from a sequence of alluvial deposits in Trenches 6-10. The identified bones from ditch **403** were mostly from sheep/goat and cattle, and included a range of skeletal elements. Indirect evidence for horn-working was noted in the form of a sheep skull with detached horns and two cattle horn cores, both of which were recovered from ditch **403**. The other identified bones from **403** included the distal end of tibia and two metacarpals from a juvenile horse. The identified bones from ditch recut **411** included a few cattle bones and a single sheep/goat bone.

5.2.6 Most (61%) of the bone recovered from the alluvial deposits was small, unidentifiable fragments, the majority of which were burnt and from sample residues. Most of the identified bones from these deposits were from sheep/goat, represented by a range of different post-cranial elements.

5.3 Pottery

5.3.1 The pottery was of Iron Age and Romano-British date. To provide a basic minimum archive, sherds from each context were sub-divided into groups based on predominant inclusion type (e.g. shelly-limestone tempered ware), broad ware groups (e.g. greywares, oxidised wares) or known fabric types (e.g. Central Gaulish black slipped ware). Within these groups, the sherds were quantified by the number and weight of pieces present (**Table 3**). Spot-dates, used to inform the stratigraphic phasing, were then assigned to each fabric group and to the context as a whole.

5.3.2 Despite a low mean weight (approximately 4g; a figure between 10g and 20g is generally considered 'normal' for Romano-British sites in southern England), only slight surface abrasion and edge damage is apparent and, in the main, the assemblage survived in good condition.

5.3.3 **Table 3:** Pottery totals by ware type

Ware	No.	Wt. (g)
Calcite-tempered ware	22	53
Calcareous wares	11	72
Central Gaulish black slipped ware	4	8
Greyware	3	21
Severn Valley ware	1	18
Black Burnished ware	1	2
Total:	42	174

5.3.4 The calcite-tempered ware sherds were all found in alluvial layer **802**. Although all were undiagnostic plain-bodies probably derived from a single vessel, fabric comparisons with

other sites in the area (e.g. Woodward 2007, 43; Morris 1988, 29, table 1), suggest that they are of Middle/Late Iron Age date.

- 5.3.5 The calcareous wares, tempered with soft, white limestone and small quantities of quartz sand, were found in ditches **404** and **411**; alluvial layers **704** and **902** as well as the topsoil of trench 9. Diagnostic sherds, comprising two rims from round-shouldered, upright-necked jars/bowls (ditches **404** and **411**) and a bead rimmed jar from the topsoil of trench 9, suggested that these wares were of Late Iron Age/early Romano-British date, probably belonging within the first three-quarters of the 1st-century AD. The two sherds from alluvial layer **704** were both tiny and severely abraded, so may be residual in this context.
- 5.3.6 More Romanised wares, extending into at least the later 2nd/early 3rd century AD, included the base of a Central Gaulish black slipped ware beaker from alluvial layer **402** and a plain sandy greyware body sherd from ditch **411** (fill **408**). The other greyware bodies, the south-east Dorset Black Burnished ware sherd and the Severn Valley ware sherd, probably derived from a tankard, were all recovered from alluvial layer **902**. Although very small, the range of fabrics in this assemblage are well paralleled at sites such as Cambria Farm, near Taunton, the Cheddar Reservoir (Wessex Archaeology 2013a), at Winscombe and other sites along the Parrett river (Seager Smith 2003; Rippon 2008; Wessex Archaeology 2013b).

5.4 Slag

- 5.4.1 Although present in only small amounts, this material type also provided evidence for industrial activity in the vicinity. Two freshly broken, joining fragments (154g) of dense iron slag were also found in the secondary fill (**408**) of ditch **411**. These probably derive from a hearth bottom, indicative of iron smithing in the area.
- 5.4.2 The remaining pieces (layer **404** in ditch **403** and layer **406**, ditch **411**) consisted of 'Iron Age grey' or 'Midland grey' fuel ash slag. This lightweight, light-coloured (pale to mid-grey), vesicular material, often with a honeycombe-like structure, results from a reaction, in elevated temperatures, between alkaline fuels and silicates, present in a clay hearth lining or adjacent sandy ground, for example (Bayley *et. al.* 2001, 21). It is not necessarily related to metallurgical activity, but could derive from any high-temperature, pyrotechnical activity, such as a salt boiling hearth or even the conflagration of daub-built structures.

5.5 Shell

- 5.5.1 A single limpet shell found in ditch **403** (layer **404**) may indicate the minor exploitation of marine resources for food.

5.6 Ceramic building material

- 5.6.1 Ceramic building material was retained only from trench 9. All is likely to be of Romano-British date, but only one piece – a *tegula* roof tile flange fragment (alluvial layer 903) – could be assigned to a particular brick/tile type. The others, all undiagnostic featureless fragments, came from alluvial layer **902**.

5.7 Fired clay

- 5.7.1 This material type was present in Trenches 3-10. Most of the pieces were made in soft, poorly-wedged, very fine grained, virtually inclusion free fabrics although occasional quartz grains, grog, rock, ferrous particles and/or organic material were sometimes noted. Most were either fully or predominantly oxidised, sometimes exhibiting the white skin and/or pinkish-purple colouration often associated with the production of salt. Two freshly broken, joining fragments plus one other piece, all approximately 15mm thick with two flat



surfaces, found in alluvial layer **302**, for example, may derive from a salt evaporation tray. A small piece from the rim of a similar vessel came from alluvial layer **1002**, while part of a fired clay disc; approximately 17mm thick and in the region of 200-220mm in diameter, came from the fill (context **406**) of ditch **411**. Items such as these occur on numerous Romano-British kiln sites (Swan 1984, 41; 64-5), where they were used as temporary 'floors' or 'setters' to separate layers of vessels, to span gaps or to level layers within the load (*ibid.*, 40), although it is probable that they were also used in a wide variety of other domestic and industrial contexts.

- 5.7.2 The majority of the other fired clay pieces were too undiagnostic to be considered anything other than oven/hearth lining. However, three freshly broken joining fragments (116g), found in the secondary fill (layer **404**) of ditch **403**, preserved part of an original edge and had a vitrified surface with drip trails as well as part of a roughly circular, pre-firing perforation (c. 20mm across). These derived from the tuyère hole of a hearth or furnace.

5.8 Potential and recommendations

- 5.8.1 The evaluation results indicate that the burial environment at Wick Farm is favourable for artefact preservation. Chronological evidence from the pottery indicated activity extending from the Middle/Late Iron Age into the Romano-British period, while evidence from the fired clay, slag and to a lesser extent, the animal bone, suggest that much of this was of an industrial nature, probably including iron smithing, salt production and horn-working.
- 5.8.2 No further analytical work, conservation or illustration is required at this stage although a brief summary of the assemblage based on the results of this assessment, should be incorporated into any future publication of the fieldwork results. Any future mitigation work undoubtedly has the potential to produce a larger assemblage of securely stratified material that should provide further insight into the industrial and pastoral economy of the area during the later Iron Age and Romano-British periods.

6 ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 A total of five bulk samples were taken from layers and ditches within Trenches 4 and 10 to evaluate the presence and preservation of palaeo-environmental remains. This information can contribute in providing an indication of the archaeological significance of the site. The samples were processed for the recovery and assessment of charred plant remains and charcoal.

6.2 Charred plant remains

- 6.2.1 The bulk samples were processed by standard flotation methods; the flot retained on a 0.5 mm mesh, residues fractionated into 5.6 mm, 2mm and 1mm fractions and dried. The coarse fractions (>5.6 mm) were sorted, weighed and discarded. The flots were scanned under a x10–x40 stereo-binocular microscope. The preservation and nature of the charred plant and wood charcoal remains are recorded in **Appendix 2**. Preliminary identifications of dominant or important taxa are noted below, following the nomenclature of Stace (1997) for wild plants, and traditional nomenclature, as provided by Zohary and Hopf (2000, table 3, page 28 and 5, page 65), for cereals.
- 6.2.2 The flots varied in size with low to moderately high numbers of roots and modern seeds that may be indicative of stratigraphic movement and the possibility of contamination by later intrusive elements. Charred material comprised varying degrees of preservation.



- 6.2.3 A moderately high number of cereal remains was present in the sample from layer **1003** and small quantities of cereal remains were recovered from ditch **403** and ditch re-cut **411**. These included hulled wheat, emmer or spelt (*Triticum dicoccum/ spelta*), grain, glume base and spikelet fragment fragments.
- 6.2.4 The charred assemblage from ditch **403** contained a high number of weed seeds, while low numbers were noted in the assemblages from layer **410**, ditch re-cut **411** and layer **1003**. No charred remains were recovered from layer **1005**. The weed seeds included seeds of vetch/wild pea (*Vicia/Lathyrus* sp.), oat/Brome grass (*Avena/Bromus* sp.), ryegrass/fescue (*Lolium/Festuca* sp.) and clover/medick (*Trifolium/Medicago* sp.).
- 6.2.5 The charred assemblages appear to be indicative of settlement activity in the vicinity. The weed seeds are typical of those found in grassland, field margins and arable environments.
- 6.2.6 Typically spelt wheat is the dominant wheat over much of England during the Iron Age and Romano-British period (Greig 1991) but there appears to be a trend for 'more emmer wheat in Iron Age assemblages in this area than is seen on sites on the Wessex chalk lands and in the Thames Valley' (Simmons 2012; Campbell and Straker 2003). Emmer and spelt wheat were recorded from Iron Age deposits at Huntsworth (Stevens 2008), RNAS Yeovilton (Pelling 2005) and Aller (Simmons 2012) and from some assemblages from Romano-British deposits at Plot 4000, Avonmouth (Stevens 2007), RNAS Yeovilton (Pelling 2005), and Banwell Moor, North Somerset Levels (Jones 2000, 122-56).

6.3 Wood charcoal

- 6.3.1 Wood charcoal was noted from the flots of the bulk samples and is recorded in **Appendix 2**. Very little wood charcoal was recovered in these samples.

6.4 Land and aquatic molluscs

- 6.4.1 The flots (0.5mm) were rapidly assessed by scanning under an x10–x40 stereo-binocular microscope to provide some information about shell preservation and species representation. Nomenclature is according to Anderson (2005) and habitat preferences according to Kerney (1999) and Evans (1972). The presence of these shells may aid in broadly characterising the nature of the wider landscape.
- 6.4.2 Small numbers of shells were recovered from the samples from Trench 4. These included the shade-loving species *Aegopinella nitidula* and *Carychium* sp. and the brackish water species *Ecrobia ventrosa/Peringia ulvae*.
- 6.4.3 The larger assemblage recorded from layer **1003** included the open-country species *Vallonia* sp, the shade-loving species *Carychium* sp. and the brackish water species *Ecrobia ventrosa/Peringia ulvae*. The few shells noted in layer **1005** were those of the brackish water species *Ecrobia ventrosa/Peringia ulvae*.
- 6.4.4 *Ecrobia ventrosa* 'inhabits water of low to moderate salinities in quiet estuaries, ponds behind shingle bars, and lagoons and drainage ditches in coastal marshes', while *Peringia ulvae* is 'restricted to brackish or salt water in estuaries, intertidal mudflats and salt marshes' (Kerney 1999). These assemblages may be reflective of an area of damp grassland with some tidal inundation.
- 6.4.5 Other mollusc sequences from the North Somerset Levels examined as part of a study of the Romano-British exploitation of the coastal wetlands of the North Somerset Levels (Rippon 2000a) at 'Banwell, Kenn Moor and Puxton were overwhelmingly freshwater and

suggestive of ditches with a wide range of environments with only a significant brackish component in the upper fills of the Banwell ditches' (Davies 2000, 165-69). Although reclamation appears to have taken place in some areas of the North Somerset Levels during the Late Romano-British period to improve agricultural productivity, there is evidence that some areas such as the Brue Valley were left as tidal marshes and were exploited for their natural resources (Rippon 2000b). The mollusc assemblages from the site at Lympsham seem to have some similarities with those from areas such as the Brue Valley.

6.4.6 Further potential

Charred plant remains

6.4.7 The analysis of the charred plant assemblages has the potential to provide some information on the nature of the settlement, the surrounding environment and local agricultural practices and crop husbandry techniques.

Wood charcoal

6.4.8 There is no potential for the analysis of the wood charcoal to provide information on the species composition, management and exploitation of the local woodland resource on the site due to the paucity of remains recovered.

Land and aquatic molluscs

6.4.9 Further analysis of the mollusc assemblages is unlikely to define the nature of the local landscape and aquatic environment in any more detail.

7 CONCLUSIONS

7.1.1 The evaluation has identified alluvial deposits of Iron Age and Romano-British date in all of the trenches and a large Romano-British ditch (**403**) in Trench 4. Fragments of poorly fired clay, which appear to be pieces of salt evaporation pans, were recovered from alluvial layers in Trenches 3-10; finds from Trenches 7-9 suggest that these deposits are of Late Iron Age and Romano-British date.

7.1.2 Evidence of Iron Age salt production has previously been recorded at Badgworth, approximately 8km to the east of the Site, and at several locations on the North Somerset Levels (Rippon 1997; 2000a; 2004), whilst extensive remains of 1st and 2nd-century Romano-British salterns have been uncovered at Burnham, Highbridge and Huntspill, to the south of Brent Knoll (*ibid*). The evidence of salt manufacture in the vicinity of the Site, suggests that this industry also existed to the north of Brent Knoll, whilst the environmental remains suggest that the area was, at least in the earlier Romano-British period, left as marshland that was subject to occasional tidal inundation.

7.1.3 Ditch **403** may have been dug in the 1st-century AD, and it appears to have been re-cut at a later date. The environmental and finds evidence suggests that there was occupation, agriculture and industrial activity, possibly smithing, in the vicinity of this trench during the Roman period.

7.1.4 Trenches 6-10 were targeted on a cluster of geophysical anomalies that appeared to form a rectilinear enclosure towards the southern end of the Site. The evaluation demonstrated that at least one, possibly two of these anomalies were in fact caused by the presence of post-medieval/modern ceramic land drains. The presence of salt production waste and



Iron Age/Romano-British ceramics is however indicative of this activity in the vicinity of these trenches.

8 STORAGE AND CURATION

8.1 Museum

8.1.1 With the full agreement of the landowner the project archive will be deposited for long-term storage with The Museum of Somerset under Accession Number TTNCM 115/2014. Prior to deposition the archive will be temporarily stored at Wessex Archaeology's offices in Salisbury under Site Code 106530.

8.2 Preparation of Archive

7.2.1 The complete site archive, which will include paper records, photographic records, graphics and digital data, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by the Museum of Somerset, Taunton and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; IfA 2009; Brown 2011; ADS 2013).

8.3 OASIS

8.3.1 An OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/projects/oasis/> has been initiated for the work and key fields in regard of the evaluation has been entered under OASIS ID wessexar1- 194221. All appropriate parts of the OASIS online form will be completed for submission to the Somerset Historic Environment Record. This will include an uploaded .pdf version of the entire report (a paper copy will also be included with the archive).

8.4 Discard policy

8.4.1 Wessex Archaeology follows the guidelines set out in *Selection, Retention and Dispersal* (SMA 1993), which allows for the discard of selected artefact and ecofact categories which are not considered to warrant any future analysis. Any discard of artefacts will be fully documented in the project archive.

8.5 Security Copy

8.5.1 In line with current best practice (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.

8.6 Copyright

8.6.1 The full copyright of the written/illustrative archive relating to the Site will be retained by Wessex Archaeology Ltd under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with all rights reserved. The Museum, however, will be granted an exclusive licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use shall be non-profit making, and conforms to the *Copyright and Related Rights regulations 2003*.



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10 APPENDICES

10.1 Appendix 1: Trench Tables

Trench 1				
Dimensions: 12.30m x 2.00m x 1.17m				
Context	Description		Dimensions (m)	Depth below surface (m)
101	Topsoil	Turfed, rooted soft mid brown clay silt.	Whole trench	0-0.34
102	Alluvium	Heavily rooted mid grey brown clay. Frequent small manganese and very occasional small sub-angular limestone inclusions, and very occasional patches of iron panning. Well sorted inclusions. Sharp interface with 103.	Whole trench	0.34-0.78
103	Alluvium	Pale, grey-brown silt clay. Frequent small manganese and sub-angular limestone inclusions and iron panning. Moderately well sorted, darkens toward bottom of context. Clear interface with 104.	Whole trench	0.78-0.93
104	Alluvium	Mid, grey-brown, soft silt clay. Occasional small manganese and sub-angular limestone inclusions and iron panning. Moderately well sorted, darkens toward bottom of context with denser concentrations of iron panning.	Whole trench	0.93+

Trench 2				
Dimensions:				
Context	Description		Dimensions (m)	Depth below surface (m)
201	Topsoil	Turfed, rooted soft mid brown clay silt. Well sorted. Sharp interface with 202.	Whole trench	0-0.3
202	Subsoil	Heavily rooted mid grey-brown moderately tenacious clay. Frequent small manganese and very occasional small sub-angular limestone inclusions, and very occasional iron panning. Well sorted. Sharp interface with 203.	Whole trench	0.3-0.54
203	Alluvium	Pale, grey-brown silt clay. Frequent small manganese and small sub-angular limestone inclusions and iron panning. Moderately well sorted, darkens toward bottom of context. Clear interface with 204.	Whole trench	0.54-0.86
204	Alluvium	Mid, grey-brown, soft silt clay. Occasional small manganese and small sub-angular limestone inclusions and iron panning. Moderately well sorted, darkens toward bottom of context with denser concentrations of iron panning.	Whole trench	0.86+

Trench 3				
Dimensions: 12.00m x 2.00m x 1.00m				
Context	Description		Dimensions (m)	Depth below surface (m)
301	Topsoil	Turfed, rooted soft mid brown clay silt. Well sorted. Sharp interface with 302.	Whole trench	0.0-0.26
302	Alluvium	Heavily rooted mid grey-brown moderately tenacious clay. Frequent small manganese and very occasional, small sub-angular limestone inclusions and very occasional iron panning. Well sorted. Sharp interface with 303.	Whole trench	0.26-0.49
303	Alluvium	Mid brown-grey, tenacious clay. Decayed CBM gave the deposit a reddish hue. Moderate small mid-red fired clay and manganese inclusions, with charcoal flecks and iron panning.	Whole trench	0.49-0.7
304	Alluvium	Soft mid grey-brown silt clay. Occasional small manganese and small sub-angular limestone inclusions and iron panning. Moderately well sorted, darkens toward bottom of context with denser concentrations of iron panning.	Whole trench	0.70+



Trench 4				
Dimensions: 15.00m x 1.85m x 086m				
Context	Description		Dimensions (m)	Depth below surface (m)
401	Topsoil	Turfed, rooted soft mid brown clay silt. Well sorted. Sharp interface with 402.	Whole trench	0.0-0.26
402	Alluvium	Firm dark brown-grey silty clay with moderate lenses of decayed organic material. Well sorted.	Whole trench	0.26-0.82
403	Ditch Cut	North-east to south-west aligned linear cut with uneven concave sides and base.	4.70 wide x 1.10 deep	0.82-1.9
404	Ditch fill	Soft blue-grey clay. Very occasional charcoal flecks and sub-angular medium and coarse gravel inclusions. Well sorted. Sharp interface. Interpreted as a Secondary fill of 403.	0.25 thick	1.58-2
405	Ditch fill	Soft grey-brown clay silt with very frequent iron panning and occasional charcoal flecks. Well sorted. Clear interface. Interpreted as a Tertiary fill of 403.	0.3 thick	0.82-1.75
406	Ditch fill	Mixed, loose deposit comprising pink, black and brown components. Frequent grit, ash and charcoal flecks. Well sorted. Sharp interface. Interpreted as a dump of industrial waste into re-cut 411.	0.1 thick	0.82-1.6
407	Ditch fill	Mid pink-brown soft clay silt. Moderate lenses of burnt clay and charcoal flecks and very occasional sub-angular fine and coarse gravels. Well sorted. Sharp interface with 406. Interpreted as a secondary fill of 411.	0.7 thick	0.82-1.6
408	Ditch fill	Mid pink-brown soft silt clay. Occasional charcoal flecks. Well sorted. Clear interface with 407. Interpreted as a secondary fill of 411.	0.3 thick	0.82-1.25
409	Alluvium	Soft mid blue-grey silt clay. Well sorted. Clear interface with 410.	Whole trench	0.78-0.94
410	Alluvium	Black, humic silt. Well sorted. Sharp interface with 412.	Whole trench	0.94-1.02
411	Re-Cut	North-east to south-west aligned linear cut with concave sides and base.	4.38 wide x 0.60 deep	0.86-1.6
412	Alluvium	Soft mid grey silt clay with frequent iron panning and moderate lenses of friable silt clay. Well sorted. Sharp interface with 413.	Whole trench	1.02-1.62
413	Alluvium	Firm mid pink-brown silt clay. Well sorted.	Whole trench	1.62+

Trench 5				
Dimensions: 13.70m x 1.90m x 1.15m				
Context	Description		Dimensions (m)	Depth below surface (m)
501	Topsoil	Turfed, rooted soft mid-brown clay silt. Well sorted. Sharp interface with 502.	Whole trench	0-0.38
502	Alluvium	Soft mid grey-brown silt clay with frequent small manganese inclusions and moderate iron panning. Well sorted. Sharp interface with 503.	Whole trench	0.38-0.68
503	Alluvium	Soft grey-brown silt clay with frequent iron panning, small mica inclusions and moderate flecks of fired clay. Moderately well sorted, iron panning toward top of context.	Whole trench	0.68-1.03
504	Alluvium	Soft grey-brown silt clay with occasional small manganese inclusions and iron panning. Moderately well sorted, manganese inclusions peter out toward bottom of the deposit.	Whole trench	1.03+



Trench 6				
Dimensions: 13.50m x 1.90m x 1.10m				
Context	Description		Dimensions (m)	Depth below surface (m)
601	Topsoil	Turfed, rooted soft mid brown clay silt. Well sorted. Sharp interface with 602.	Whole trench	0-0.3
602	Alluvium	Soft mid yellow-brown silt clay with occasional small manganese inclusions. Well sorted. Defuse interface with 603.	Whole trench	0.3-0.9
603	Alluvium	Soft mid yellow-brown silt clay with frequent small manganese inclusions and iron panning. Moderately sorted, with lenses off light blue grey clay.	Whole trench	0.90+

Trench 7				
Dimensions: 10.10m x 1.90m x 1.20m				
Context	Description		Dimensions (m)	Depth below surface (m)
701	Topsoil	Turfed, rooted soft mid brown clay silt. Well sorted. Sharp interface with 702.	Whole trench	0-0.31
702	Alluvium	Soft mid yellow-brown silt clay with frequent manganese inclusions. Well sorted. Defuse interface with 703.	Whole trench	0.31-0.54
703	Alluvium	Soft dark grey-black silt clay. Moderately well sorted, darkens toward bottom of the deposit. Defuse interface with 704.	Whole trench	0.54-0.75
704	Alluvium	Soft black humic silt. Well sorted.	Whole trench	0.75+

Trench 8				
Dimensions: 14.20m x 1.85m x 1.85m				
Context	Description		Dimensions (m)	Depth below surface (m)
801	Topsoil	Turfed, rooted soft mid-brown clay silt. Well sorted. Sharp interface with 802.	Whole trench	0-0.3
802	Alluvium	Very stiff mid blue-grey silt clay. Very occasional burnt daub and small angular stone inclusions. Well sorted. Defuse interface with 803.	Whole trench	0.3-0.6
803	Alluvium	Bands of laminated soft mid and light blue-grey clay and soft brown-grey clay with frequent manganese inclusions. Well sorted with moderate iron panning present at bottom of revealed context.	Whole trench	0.6+

Trench 9				
Dimensions: 15.00m x 1.90m x 0.75m				
Context	Description		Dimensions (m)	Depth below surface (m)
901	Topsoil	Turfed, rooted soft mid-brown clay silt. Well sorted. Sharp interface with 902.	Whole trench	0-0.25
902	Alluvium	Soft mid grey-brown silt clay with moderate small manganese and occasional sub-angular fine gravel inclusions. Well sorted. Sharp interface with 903.	Whole trench	0.25-0.48
903	Alluvium	Soft light brown-grey clay silt with very occasional sub-angular fine and medium gravel inclusions. Well sorted.	Whole trench	0.48+

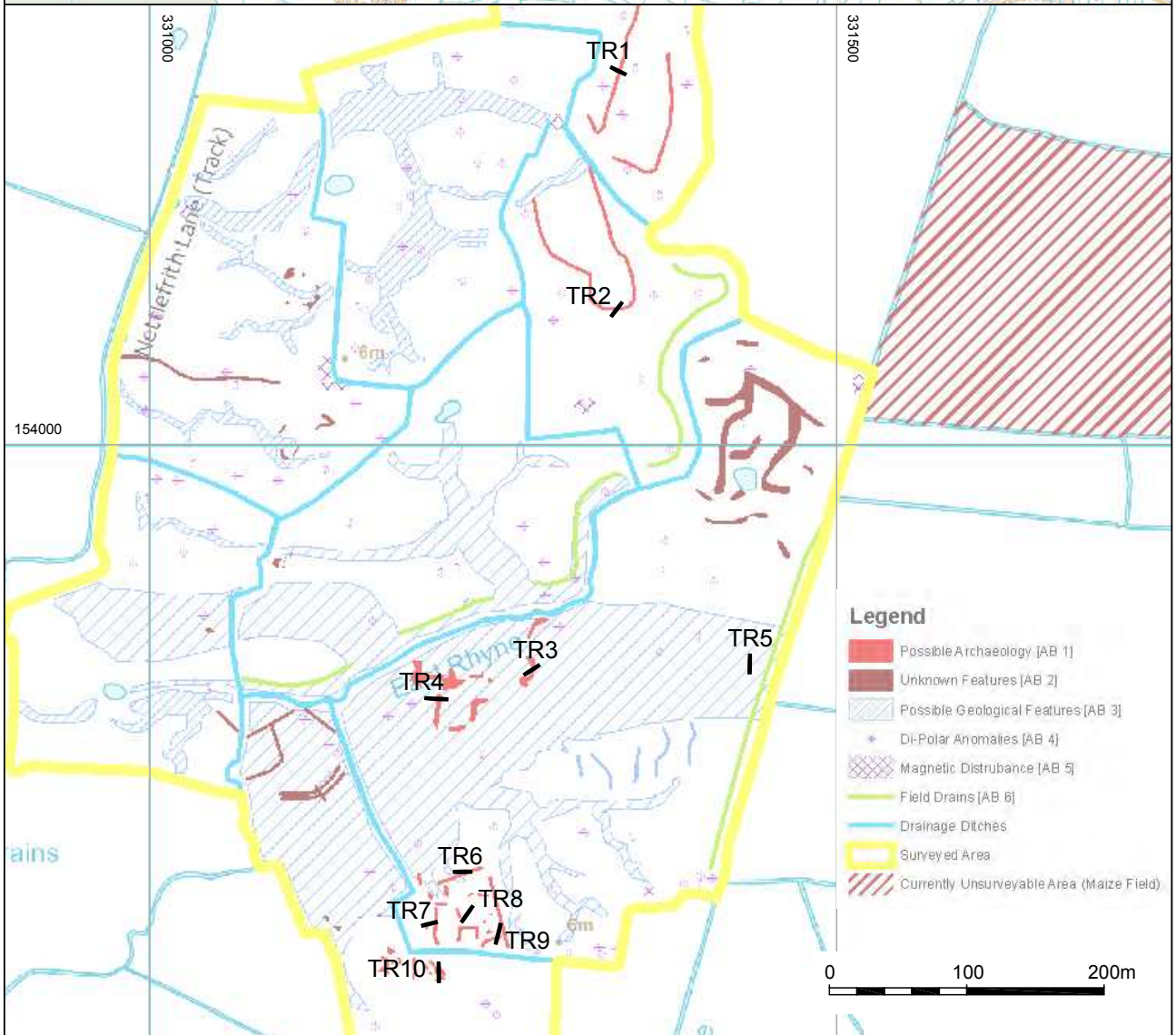
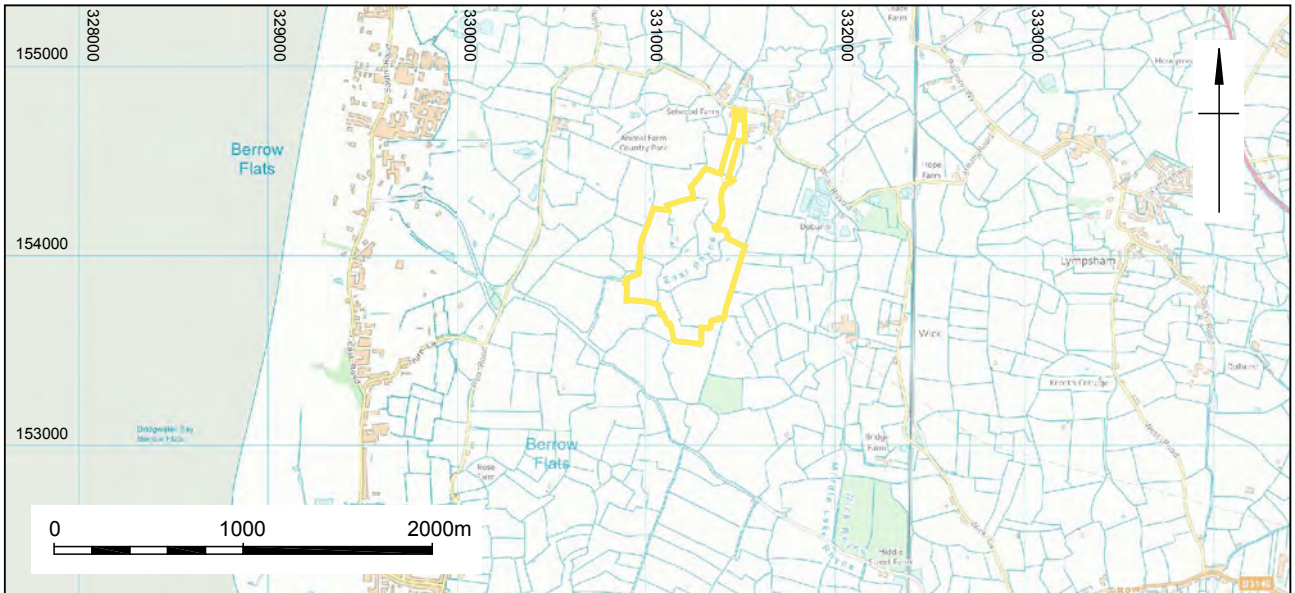


Trench 10		Dimensions: 12.70m x 2.00m x 1.14m		
Context	Description	Dimensions (m)	Depth below surface (m)	
1001	Topsoil	Turfed, rooted soft mid-brown clay silt. Well sorted. Sharp interface with 1002.	Whole trench	0-0.31
1002	Alluvium	Firm yellow-grey silt clay with moderate manganese inclusions. Well sorted. Sharp interface with 1003.	Whole trench	0.31-0.45
1003	Alluvium	Firm brown-grey silt clay with moderate flecks of charcoal and manganese, small fragments of CBM and occasional small angular stone inclusions. Well sorted. Sharp interface with 1004.	Whole trench	0.45-0.75
1004	Alluvium	Soft light blue-grey silt clay with frequent manganese inclusions. Well sorted. Sharp interface with 1005.	Whole trench	0.75-0.88
1005	Alluvium	Soft black charcoal-rich clay. Well sorted. Sharp interface with 1006.	Whole trench	0.88-0.90
1006	Alluvium	Firm light blue clay with frequent flecks of manganese. Well sorted.	Whole trench	0.9+

10.2 Appendix 2: Assessment of the charred plant remains and charcoal

Feature	Context	Sample	Vol (L)	Flot size	Roots %	Grain	Chaff	Cereal Notes	Charred Other	Notes for Table	Charcoal > 4/2mm	Other
Trench 4												
Layer												
	410	3	8	20	50	-	-	-	C	<i>Vicia/Lathyrus</i>	-	Moll-t (C), Moll-f (C)
Ditches												
403	404	4	10	10	10	-	C	Glume base frag	A	<i>Avena/Bromus, Lolium/Festuca, stem frags</i>	1/2 ml	Moll-t (C)
411	406	5	5	125	10	C	C	Hulled wheat grain frags, glume base frags, inc. spelt	C	<i>Medicago/Trifolium, Avena/Bromus, stem frags</i>	5/10 ml	Moll-f (C), slag
Trench 10												
Layers												
	1003	1	10	25	50	B	A	Hulled wheat grain frags, glume base and spikelet fork frags, inc. emmer	C	<i>Avena/Bromus, stem frag</i>	0/< 1 ml	Moll-t (B), Moll-f (A)
	1005	2	8	5	50	-	-	-	-	-	-	Moll-f (C)

Key: A*** = exceptional, A** = 100+, A* = 30-99, A = >10, B = 9-5, C = <5; Moll-t = terrestrial molluscs, Moll-f = aquatic molluscs;



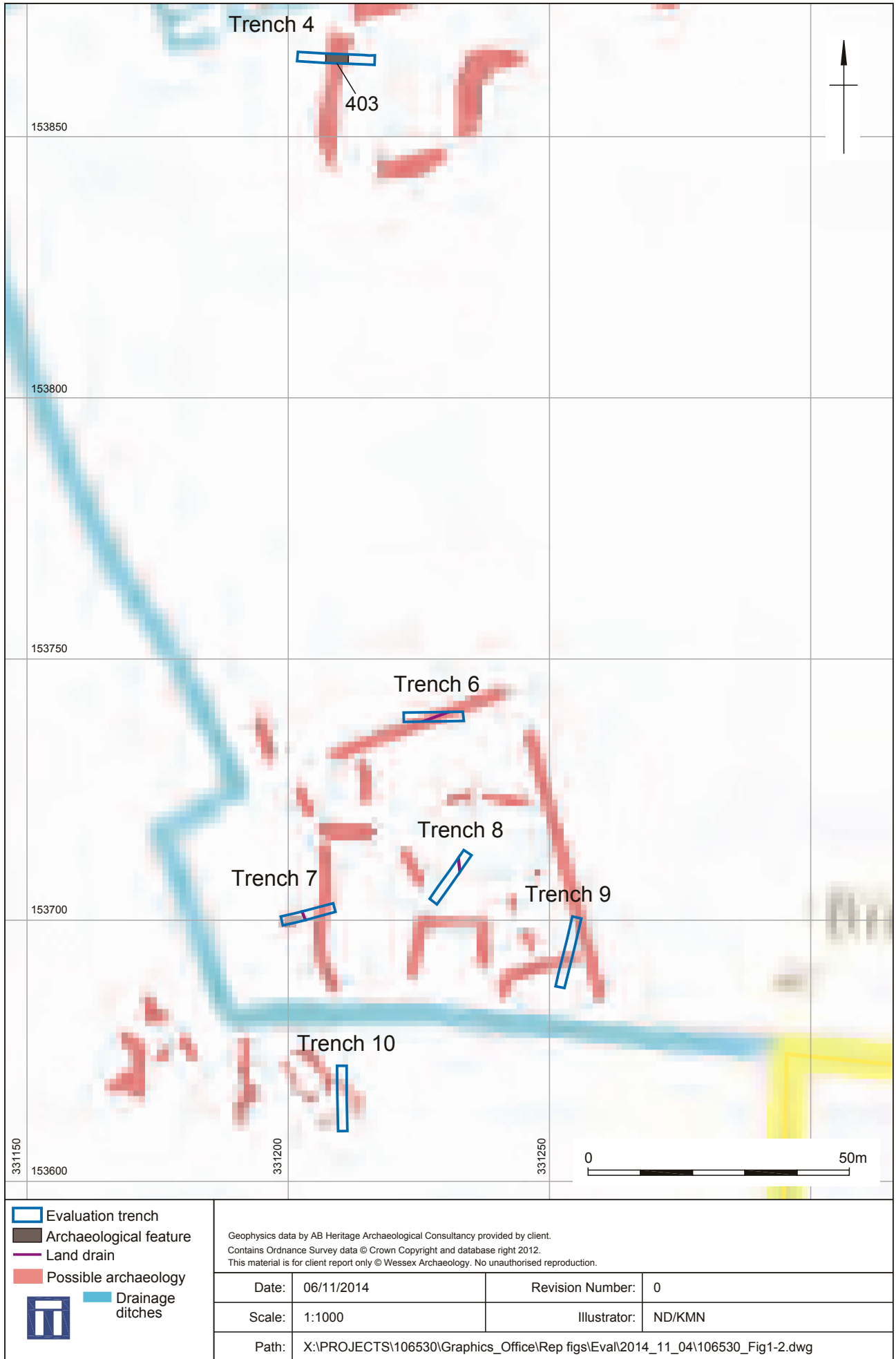
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Site plan showing trench locations

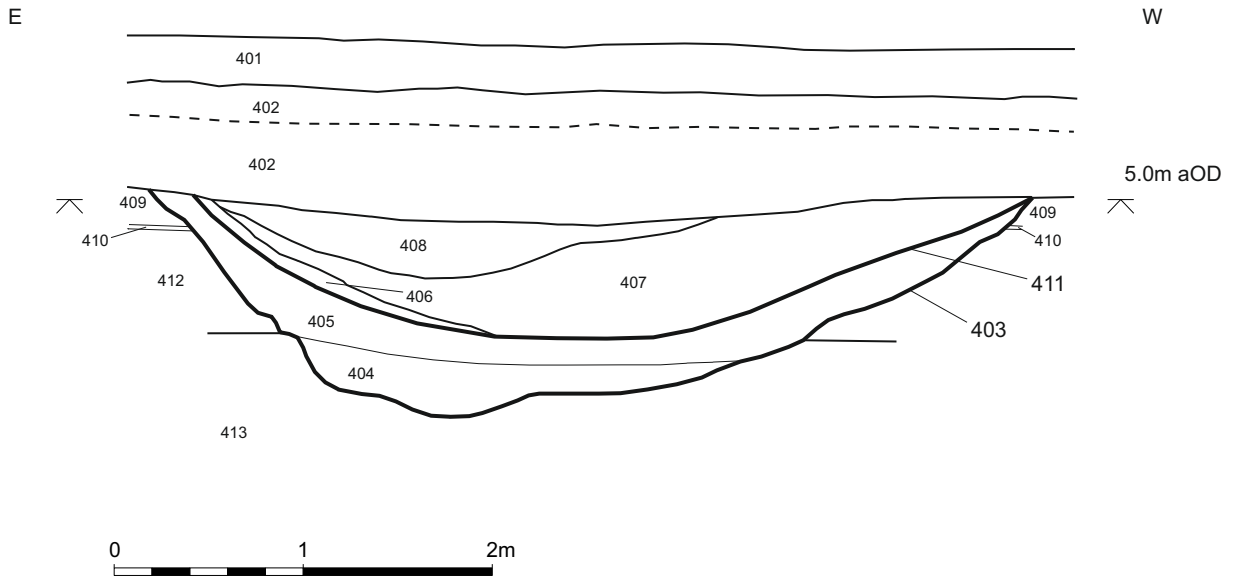
Figure 1



Plan of archaeological features in trenches 4 and 6 to 10

Figure 2

North facing section of ditch 403



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North facing section and photograph of ditch 403

Figure 3



Plate 1: Representative section of trench 6

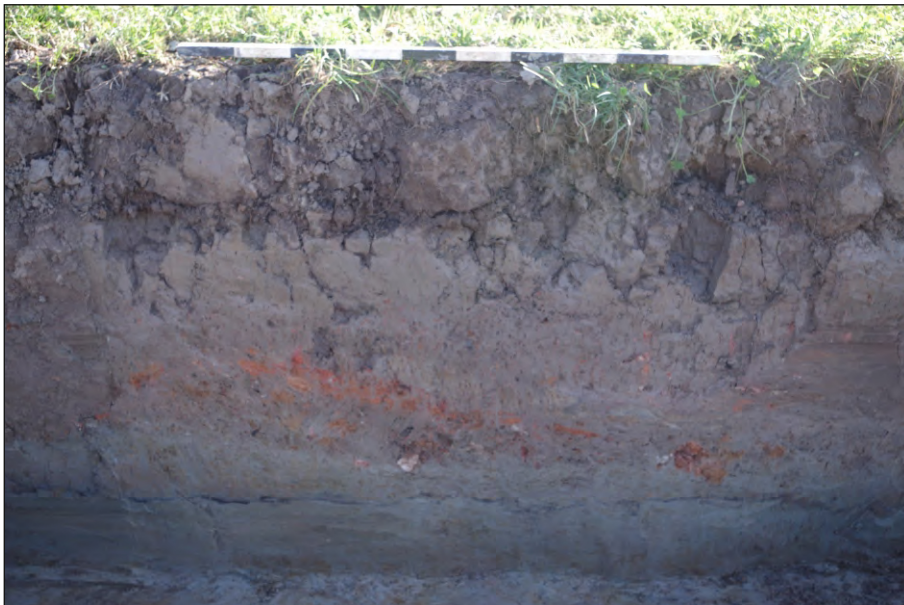



Plate 2: Representative section of trench 10

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