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Land at Hayne Lane Honiton, Devon

Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation Report



Planning Ref: 13/2744/MOUT
Ref: 101311.01
May 2015



Land at Hayne Lane, Honiton, Devon

Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation Report

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Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Welbeck Strategic Land LLP and Combe Estate to carry out an archaeological evaluation at land proposed for redevelopment west of Hayne Lane, Honiton, Devon (centred on NGR 314225 099390). Development proposals (Planning Application 13/2744/MOUT) are for the intended construction of a residential development and associated infrastructure across five fields of Hayne Farm.

On the basis of the perceived archaeological potential for the area, and in consultation with Stephen Reed of the Devon County Council Historic Environment Team (HET), acting as the archaeological advisor to the local planning authority, a programme of archaeological trial trenching was agreed.

The evaluation comprised the excavation of five trenches targeted on anomalies identified by a previous geophysical survey. The fieldwork was carried out between 20th April and 22nd April 2015. A series of geotechnical test-pits were excavated concurrently with the evaluation trenches, however, no archaeological features were revealed in the test-pits.

A number of archaeological features were revealed in four of the evaluation trenches, most of which were medieval ditches. These features probably represent small agricultural enclosures, which are likely to be associated with a small settlement, possibly a farmstead, on or near the Site. This putative settlement may be a medieval predecessor to a pre-1840s cottage known as 'Hodges', which was demolished in the late 20th century.



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Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology would like to thank Welbeck Strategic Land LLP and Combe Estate for commissioning and funding the archaeological work. The collaborative support and advice of Stephen Reed (Devon County Council Historic Environment Team) is gratefully acknowledged.

The evaluation was directed by Sam Fairhead, assisted by Roy Krakowicz and Jamie McCarthy. This report was written and compiled by Sam Fairhead and Cai Mason. The illustrations were produced by Nancy Dixon and Rob Goller. Finds were assessed by Lorraine Mephram. The project was managed by Andy King.



1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Welbeck Strategic Land LLP and Combe Estate (Hereafter 'the Client') to carry out an archaeological evaluation at land proposed for redevelopment west of Hayne Lane, Honiton, Devon, centred on NGR 314225 099390, hereafter referred to as the 'Site' (**Figure 1**). The proposed development consists of the construction of a residential development and associated infrastructure (Planning Application 13/2744/MOUT).
- 1.1.2 The evaluation comprised the excavation of three 30m x 2m trenches, one 35m x 2m trench and one 50m x 2m trench, targeted on anomalies identified by a previous geophysical survey (WA 2013).
- 1.1.3 The principal aim of the evaluation was to characterise the geophysical anomalies and evaluate the survival of below-ground archaeological deposits across the proposed development site, checking for previously unknown areas of archaeological activity and/or confirming its absence. Where archaeological remains were present, the works identified the significance, nature and extent of these remains. The HET may request additional trenching or assessment if further characterisation is needed.

2 THE SITE

2.1 Location, topography and geology

- 2.1.1 Hayne Farm is situated approximately 200m south of the A30 at the western edge of Honiton. The evaluation trenches were located within three fields of the farm land, bounded by a railway line to the north and a track associated with Hayne Farm to the south, and established hedges forming the east and west boundaries.
- 2.1.2 Topographically, the Site was located on the southern slope of a valley which contains the River Otter, flowing approximately 500m to the north. The slope falls away to the north-west from around 105m aOD on the south-eastern Site boundary to around 95m aOD on the north-western Site boundary. The Site was mostly level at a height of c.25m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). The two western fields were separated by a shallow north-south aligned valley.
- 2.1.3 The underlying geology is mapped as the Sidmouth Mudstone Formation, overlain by Head of clay, silt and gravel formed from downslope soil and rock movement (APS 2013).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 Desk-based assessment

- 3.1.1 The following section summarises the results of a previous Desk-based assessment undertaken by Archaeology & Planning Solutions (APS 2013).
- 3.1.2 Prehistoric and Romano-British remains have been identified within 1km of the Site. Hayne Farm may have medieval origins and the fields are assumed to have been part of an agricultural landscape throughout the medieval and post-medieval periods.
- 3.1.3 Study of historic mapping revealed that a pre-1840s cottage, known as 'Hodges', was situated in the vicinity of Trench 2; this building was demolished in the late 20th century.



3.2 Geophysical Survey

- 3.2.1 In September 2013 a geophysical survey was carried out within the proposed development area (WA 2013). The results from the survey grids revealed anomalies that were thought to be possibly associated with the former location of 'Hodges' in the western part of the proposed development and to potentially indicate the presence of further associated buildings or enclosures.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Aims and Objectives

- 4.1.1 With due regard to the CIfA *Standard and Guidance for archaeological evaluation* (CIfA 2014), the generic aim of the evaluation trenching can be defined as;
- *To locate, identify and to investigate and record the presence/absence of archaeological features or deposits;*
 - *To confirm the extent, date, character, relationship, condition and significance of archaeological features, artefacts and deposits within the area impacted;*
 - *To inform the scope and nature of any requirements for any potential further fieldwork (whether additional watching brief, excavation or post-excavation work);*
 - *To enable the preservation by record of any archaeological features or deposits uncovered, and*
 - *To place any identified archaeological remains within their historical context, particularly with reference to the known prehistoric features found in the immediate and wider area.*
- 4.1.2 If archaeological remains were found then the evaluation was intended to provide sufficient information to enable the local authority archaeologist to determine the extent of a subsequent archaeological mitigation strategy.

4.2 Fieldwork methodology

- 4.2.1 The archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (Wessex Archaeology 2015). Trench locations were scanned using a cable detecting device. The trenches were excavated under constant archaeological supervision using a tracked mechanical excavator equipped 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.
- 4.2.2 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 *pro forma* record sheets.
- 4.2.3 A photographic record was created using digital cameras. 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.
- 4.2.4 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.

- 4.2.5 The archaeological fieldwork was monitored by Stephen Reed (Devon County Council HET).

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 Features of archaeological significance were revealed in Trenches 1, 3 and 4. Trench 2 contained an area of modern made ground. Trench 5 contained no archaeological features (**Figure 2**).
- 5.1.2 The stratigraphy varied from trench to trench, although the topsoil and subsoil remained consistent across the Site. The topsoil was a fairly loose mid brownish-grey silty sand, with moderate, fine to medium particle size, gravel inclusions. The subsoil was a mid greyish-brown sandy clay with common fine to medium gravel inclusions. The topsoil typically existed to a depth of 0.25m below ground level (bgl), and the subsoil to a depth between 0.3m and 0.8m bgl.
- 5.1.3 The uppermost archaeological features were encountered at 0.4m bgl, and the lowest at 0.56m bgl.

5.2 Trench 1

- 5.2.1 The natural geology in Trench 1 consisted of a mid-yellow sandy clay with common fine to coarse gravel and small cobble inclusions, encountered at 0.5m bgl.
- 5.2.2 Trench 1 revealed two ditches, aligned at right angles to each another.
- 5.2.3 The south-western ditch, context **108**, was aligned across the trench from east to west. The original cut was 1.15m in width and 0.53m in depth with steep, straight sides, filled by **109**, a mid-yellow sandy deposit which was likely to be weathered silting, derived from the sides of the feature whilst still in use. Most of deposit 109 had been cleared out by a re-cut, **104** (**Figures 2 & 7**). The fill of **104**, **105** produced a significant quantity of medieval pottery, a fragment of Roman tile, and four pieces of iron slag. The pottery was concentrated in small clusters, suggesting deliberate domestic waste disposal.
- 5.2.4 The north-eastern ditch, **106**, was exposed across the trench, aligned from north to south and measured 0.76m in width and 0.29m in depth with steep, slightly concave sides, similar to re-cut **104** (**Plate 1**). The fill of **106**, **107**, contained a small quantity of medieval pottery. Ditches **104** and **106** both appear to have naturally silted up after they fell out of use.

5.3 Trench 2

- 5.3.1 The natural geology in Trench 2 consisted of a mid pinkish-red clay with sparse coarse gravel inclusions, encountered at 0.35m bgl.
- 5.3.2 Trench 2 revealed an area of recent made-ground, filling a depression, context **204** exposed within the trench for approximately 18m across from north to south (**Figure 3**, **Plate 2**). Depression **204** was filled with several levelling-dumps of mixed rubble and silts (**205 – 211**), some of which may have come from the demolition of a post-medieval cottage known as Hodges formerly located in the immediate vicinity of this trench. Finds retrieved from deposits within **204** include 19th/20th-century ceramics and 20th-century glass.

5.4 Trench 3

- 5.4.1 The natural geology in Trench 3 comprised mid yellowish-brown sandy clay with common fine to coarse gravel inclusions, encountered at 0.56m bgl.
- 5.4.2 One ditch, corresponding to a surveyed geophysical anomaly, was revealed in Trench 3, aligned across the trench from north-east to south-west. The ditch, **304**, was 1.58m in width and 0.5m in depth, with moderate convex sides (**Figure 4**). Two fills were present, the lowest of which **305** appeared to be the result of colluvial action. The upper fill, **306**, was the result of erosion as the ditch went out of use and produced a single fragment of medieval pot.
- 5.4.3 At the southern end of Trench 3, part of the upper surface of another probable linear feature was exposed **308**, apparently on a steep north-west to south-east alignment and corresponding with a surveyed geophysical anomaly (**Figure 4**). Due to the steep and oblique alignment and partial visibility of the feature within the trench, this was not excavated, as it would not have been possible to obtain a meaningful interpretation without extending the trench.
- 5.4.4 A colluvial layer, **307**, was present in Trench 3, consisting of a mid greyish-brown silty clay with common fine to coarse gravel inclusions. This layer was encountered at 0.32m bgl and existed to a depth of 0.56m bgl overlying the natural geology and sealing ditch 304.

5.5 Trench 4

- 5.5.1 The natural geology in Trench 4 consisted of a mid brownish-red clay with patches of common coarse gravel, encountered at 0.9m bgl. This was overlain by a colluvial layer, **403**, identical to **307** in Trench 3, and extending between 0.6m and 0.9m bgl.
- 5.5.2 Overlying the colluvium was a dark grey-brown silt layer, **402**, extending between 0.4m and 0.6m bgl, underlying the subsoil. It seems likely that this layer was deposited by flooding from a palaeochannel **407** observed at the western end of the trench (**Plate 3**). The fill deposit within the channel **408** was minerogenic in nature and of limited, if any, palaeoenvironmental potential. Combined with the lack of associated archaeological remains 408 was considered unsuitable for sampling for further assessment.
- 5.5.3 A small ditch, **405**, was observed in section, cut through the silty layer, **402**, above (**Figures 5 & 7**). Ditch 405 was 0.64m in width and 0.31m in depth with steep, slightly concave sides. A small fragment of medieval pot was recovered from the fill **406**.
- 5.5.4 The relationship of colluvial deposit 403 with the archaeological feature in this trench was established and therefore no further sampling of this deposit was considered necessary.

5.6 Trench 5

- 5.6.1 The natural geology in Trench 5 consisted of a sandy clay varying in colour from yellow to light reddish-brown with patches of coarse gravel. The natural was encountered at 0.8m bgl. Although targeting a clear geophysical anomaly, no archaeological features were revealed in Trench 5 (**Figure 6**).

6 ARTEFACTUAL EVIDENCE

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 The evaluation produced a small quantity of finds, deriving from contexts in four of the five trenches excavated; no finds were present within Trench 5. The assemblage ranges in

date from prehistoric to modern. Quantities of finds by material type and by context are given in **Appendix 2**.

6.2 Pottery

- 6.2.1 Pottery provides the primary dating evidence for the Site. Of the 114 sherds recovered, five are post-medieval and the remainder are medieval. Condition ranges from fair to poor; the whole assemblage is very fragmentary, and the medieval sherds in particular are small and abraded. Mean sherd weight overall is 2.5g, and that drops to 2.1g for the medieval pottery alone.

Medieval

- 6.2.2 The majority of the medieval pottery came from ditch **104** (98 sherds), with smaller quantities from other features in Trenches 1 (ditch **106**), 3 (ditch **304**) and 4 (ditch **405**). All sherds are in similar coarseware fabrics, containing prominent rounded quartz and sub-angular chert and other rock fragments. Such fabrics are typical of east Devon and south-west Dorset between Exeter and Dorchester, and are likely to be of local manufacture; comparable wares have been found, for example, at Bridport (Mephram 2000). At Exeter the dominant chert-tempered fabric was in use from the early 11th to the 14th century (Allan 1984, fabric 20), but the presence here of several jar rims with convex ('dished') profiles suggests a date after the end of the 12th century, when such rim forms first appeared, at least for the sherds from ditch **104**.

Post-medieval

- 6.2.3 Post-medieval pottery was confined to modern levelling deposits within **204**, and comprises three sherds of unglazed redware flowerpots and two sherds of refined whiteware, all of 19th or 20th-century date.

6.3 Ceramic Building Material (CBM)

- 6.3.1 This category comprises one fragment of Romano-British tile (residual in ditch **104**), two fragments of post-medieval brick from **204**, and part of a modern glazed wall tile from the same feature.

6.4 Worked Flint/Chert

- 6.4.1 One flint flake was recovered from medieval ditch **104**, and two chert flakes from modern refuse pit **204**. These cannot be dated more closely.

6.5 Other Finds

- 6.5.1 Other finds include a small quantity (1329g) of iron smelting slag, associated with medieval pottery in ditch **104**.
- 6.5.2 Other finds are all of modern date, and comprise one complete glass screwtop bottle and fragments of two others, part of a small glazed plaster figurine, and two iron nails. Most of these came from **204**, apart from one of the nails (topsoil in Trench 1).

7 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1.1 The potential for colluvial deposits in this geology is primarily to bury and contain archaeological sites or features. Whilst elsewhere on calcareous or neutral soil types mollusc assessment can elucidate landscape change over time (Bell 1981), on acidic substrata such as this no mollusc preservation is present. Similarly the fill of an observed

undated palaeochannel had limited palaeoenvironmental potential, therefore no environmental sampling was considered necessary.

- 7.1.2 Geotechnical test-pits opened concurrently by specialist contractors in the immediate vicinity of the evaluation trenches were observed, no archaeological features were exposed by these works.
- 7.1.3 The ditches revealed in Trench 1 are likely to be associated with a small enclosure on the higher ground overlooking the Site. Concentrations of pottery in the ditch fills indicate secondary use for domestic waste dumping. Industrial activity is also hinted at, but not proven at this stage, by fragments of slag from the fill of one ditch.
- 7.1.4 The ditches in Trenches 3 and 4 are probably related to field drainage given the evidence for colluvial deposits in this part of the Site. Archaeological features both pre-date and post-date the colluvial layers observed in both trenches.
- 7.1.5 A number of archaeological features were revealed by this evaluation, most of which were medieval ditches, probably representative of agricultural enclosures. Finds recovered from the features suggest there would have been an associated small settlement, possibly a farmstead, on or near the Site. This putative settlement may be a medieval predecessor to either a pre-1840s cottage known as 'Hodges', which was demolished in the late 20th century or possibly in the location of the present Hayne Farm. The modern levelling deposits/demolition debris uncovered in Trench 2 are likely to represent material deriving from demolition rubble of the cottage after it became disused.
- 7.1.6 There is limited potential for significant archaeological features in these fields, further evaluation or open-area strip and record would probably reveal more of the medieval ditched enclosures but the location of the associated settlement remains unknown.

8 ARCHIVE

8.1 Museum

- 8.1.1 With the full agreement of the landowner the project archive will be deposited for long-term storage with Exeter Museum. At the time of writing the Museum Accession number has yet to be issued although a temporary reference number RAMM 15/22 has been applied to this stage of works. Prior to deposition the archive will be temporarily stored at Wessex Archaeology's offices in Salisbury under Site code 101311.

8.2 Preparation of Archive

- 8.2.1 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 Exeter Museum and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; IfA 2009; Brown 2011; ADS 2013).
- 8.2.2 The digital archive will be deposited with the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) and be made publically accessible in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (2012). The only suitable repository for digital archaeological archive currently is the ADS. The digital archive has been compiled in accordance with the standards and requirements of the ADS which are currently set out on their website: <http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/guidelinesForDepositors>.

8.3 OASIS

- 8.3.1 An OASIS online record has been initiated for the work and key fields in regard of the evaluation has been entered under OASIS ID wessexar1-208440. All appropriate parts of the OASIS online form will be completed for submission to the Devon 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*.

9 REFERENCES

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10 APPENDICES

10.1 Appendix 1: Trench Tables

Trench 1 Dimensions: 50m x 1.8m x 0.61m				
Context	Description		Dimensions (m)	Depth below surface (m)
101	Topsoil	Mid greyish-brown silty sand, with moderate fine to medium gravel inclusions	Whole trench	0-0.28
102	Subsoil	Mid greyish brown sandy clay, with common fine to medium gravel inclusions	Whole trench	0.28-0.5
103	Natural	Mid yellowish-brown sandy clay, with common gravel and moderate small cobble inclusions	Whole trench	0.5+
104	Ditch	East-west aligned linear cut with a concave profile. Re-cut of ditch 108	1.22 x 0.38	0.5
105	Ditch fill	Fill of 104. Mid greyish-brown silty clay, with common coarse and medium gravel and moderate small cobble inclusions.	1.22 x 0.38	0.5-0.88
106	Ditch	North-south aligned concave cut	0.76 x 0.29	0.5
107	Ditch fill	Fill of 106. Mid greyish-brown silty clay, with common fine and coarse gravel inclusions.	0.76 x 0.29	0.5-0.79
108	Ditch	East-west aligned linear cut with a concave profile	1.2 x 0.52	0.5
109	Ditch fill	Fill of 108. Yellowish-brown silt, with common fine and medium coarse gravel inclusions.	1.2 x 0.52	0.5

Trench 2 Dimensions:				
Context	Description		Dimensions (m)	Depth below surface (m)
201	Topsoil	Mid greyish-brown silty sand, with moderate fine to medium gravel inclusions	Whole trench	0-0.25
202	Subsoil	Mid brown silty sand, with common fine to medium gravel inclusions	Whole trench	0.25-0.35
203	Natural	Mid pink clay, with sparse coarse gravel inclusions	Whole trench	0.35+
204	Modern cut	Modern refuse pit	18 x 2+	0.35-1.2+
205-11	Modern fills	Modern landfill within 204. Mixed deposit containing metal, glass and brick inclusions.	18 x 2+	0.35-1.2+

Trench 3 Dimensions:				
Context	Description		Dimensions (m)	Depth below surface (m)
301	Ploughsoil	Mid greyish-brown silty clay, with sparse coarse gravel inclusions	Whole trench	0-0.2
302	Subsoil	Mid greyish-brown silty clay, with sparse fine gravel inclusions	Whole trench	0.2-0.32
303	Natural	Mid yellowish-brown sandy clay, with common coarse medium and fine gravel inclusions	Whole trench	0.32+
304	Ditch	South-west to north-east aligned linear cut with a concave profile	1.58 x 0.5	0.56
305	Ditch fill	Fill of 304. Mid greyish-brown silty clay, with common coarse medium and fine gravel inclusions.	0.73 x 0.21	0.86-1.07
306	Ditch fill	Fill of 304. Mid greyish-brown silty clay, with common coarse medium and fine gravel inclusions.	1.58 x 0.3	0.56-0.86
307	Colluvium	Mid greyish-brown silty clay, with common coarse gravel inclusions	Whole trench	0.32-0.56



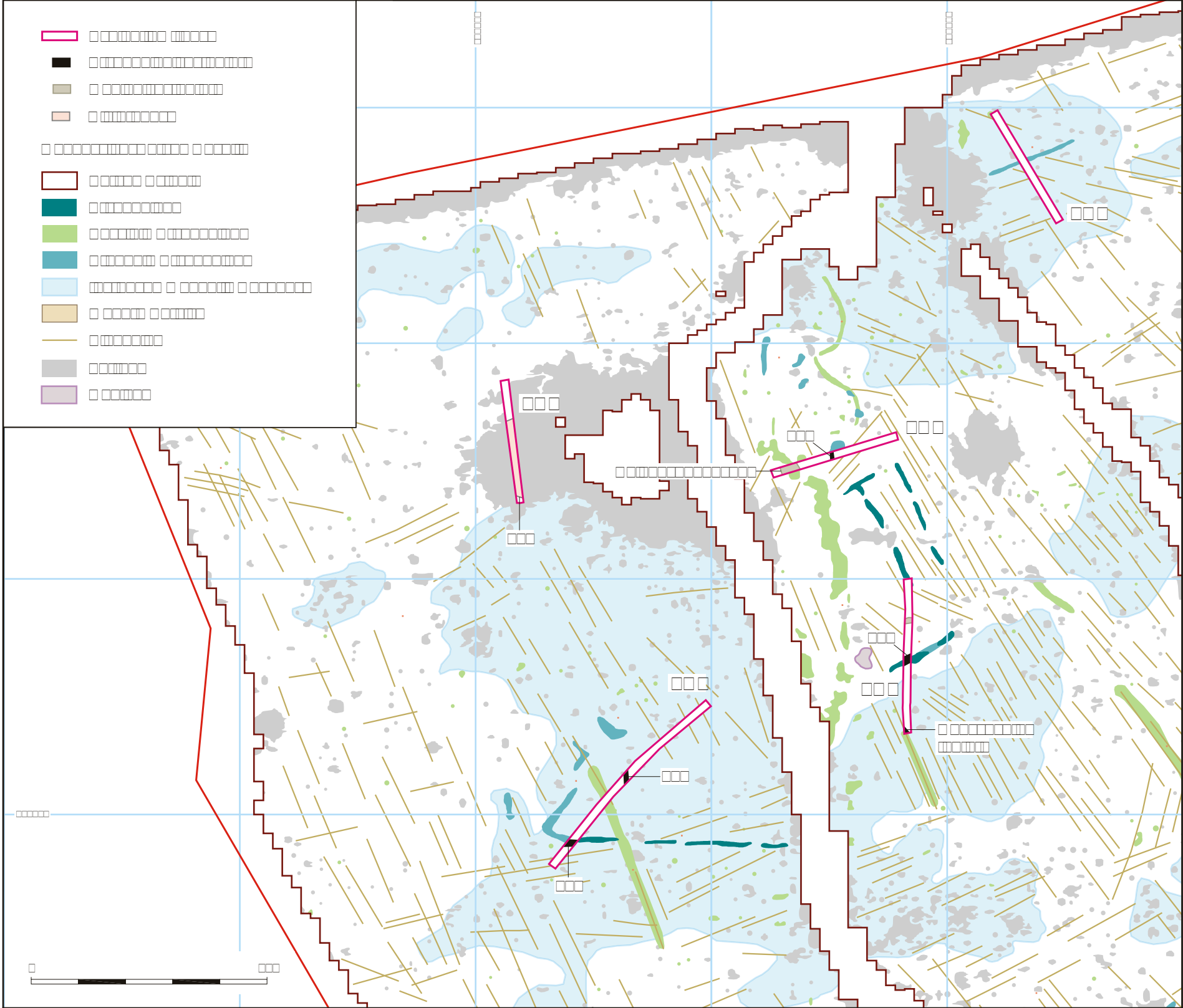
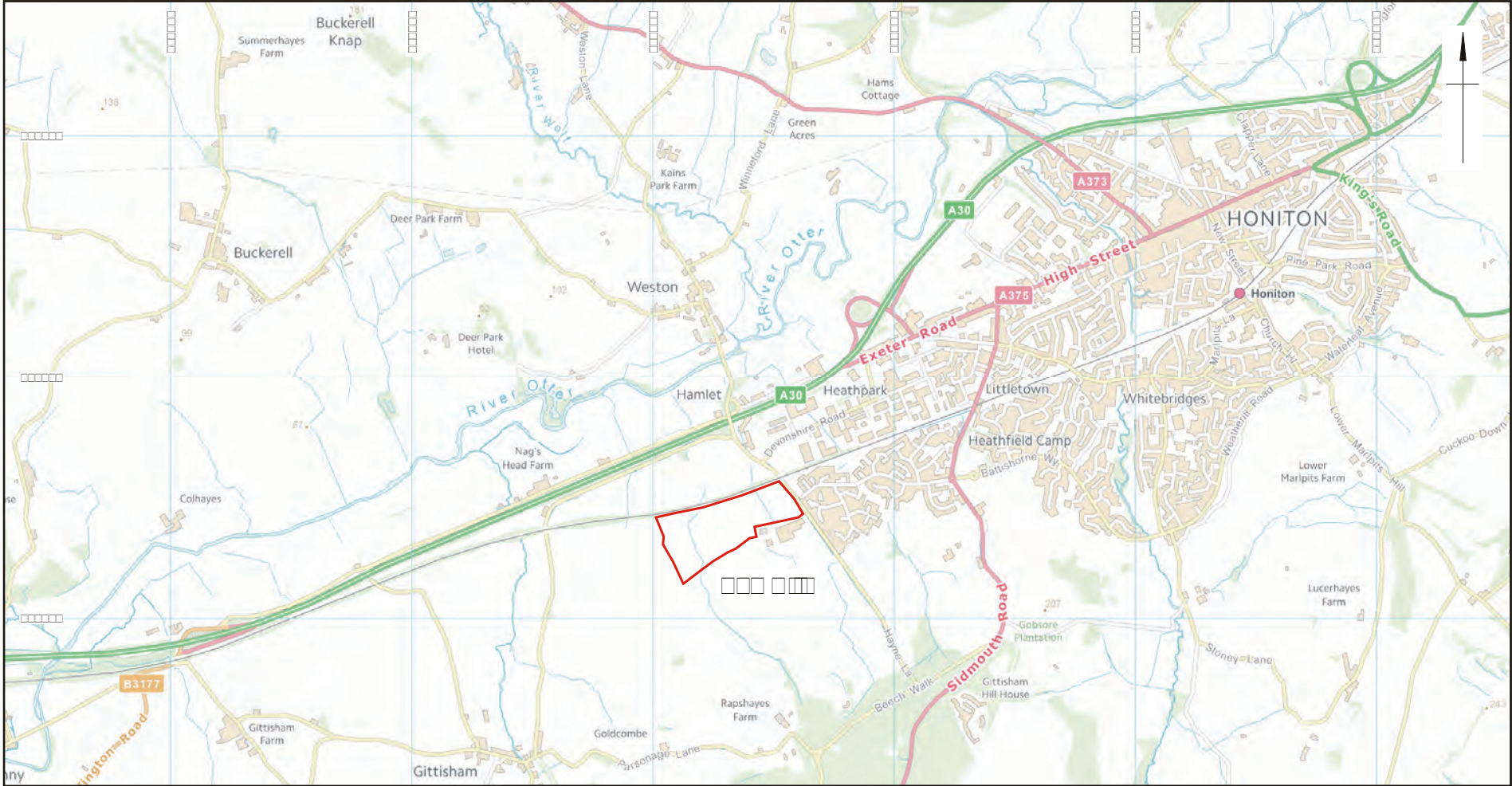
Trench 4				
Dimensions:				
Context	Description		Dimensions (m)	Depth below surface (m)
400	Topsoil	Light grey silty sand, with rare gravel inclusions	Whole trench	0-0.25
401	Subsoil	Mid greyish-brown silty clay, with sparse fine gravel inclusions	Whole trench	0.25-0.4
402	Soil layer	Dark greyish-brown sandy clay	Whole trench	0.4-0.6
403	Colluvium	Mid greyish-brown sandy clay, with common medium to coarse gravel inclusions	Whole trench	0.6-0.9
404	Natural	Mid yellowish-brown sandy clay, with common coarse medium and fine gravel inclusions	Whole trench	0.32+
405	Ditch	North-south aligned concave linear cut	0.64 x 0.3	0.45-0.75
406	Ditch fill	Dark greyish-brown sandy clay	0.64 x 0.3	0.45-0.75
407	Paleochannel	Shallow, north-south aligned linear cut	25+ x 1.8+	0.6-0.95+
408	Alluvium	Fill of 407. Pale bluish-grey clay.	25+ x 1.8+	0.6-0.95+

Trench 5				
Dimensions:				
Context	Description		Dimensions (m)	Depth below surface (m)
500	Topsoil	Light grey silty sand, with rare gravel inclusions	Whole trench	0-0.3
501	Subsoil	Mid greyish-brown sandy clay, with rare gravel inclusions	Whole trench	0.3-0.8
502	Natural	Mid yellowish-reddish brown clay, with common sparse gravel inclusions	Whole trench	0.8+

10.2 Appendix 2: All finds quantified by context (number / weight in grammes)

Context	CBM	POTTERY	Other finds
101			1 iron
105	1/92	98/185	1 flint; 4 slag
107		9/27	
208	2/95		2 flint; 1 iron
210	1/6	5/52	1 plaster figurine frag
306		1/12	
406		1/7	
Total	4/193	114/283	

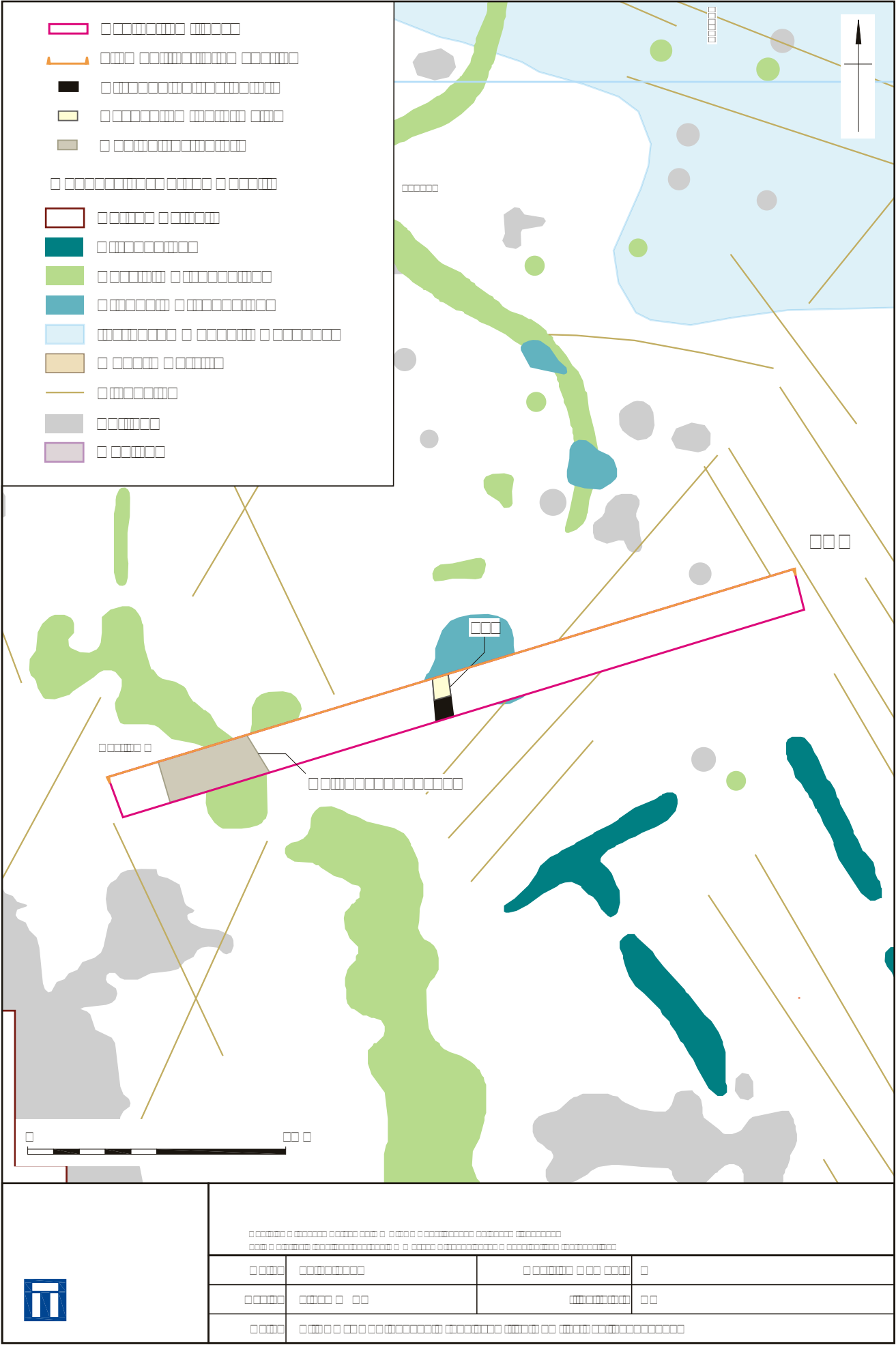
CBM = ceramic building material

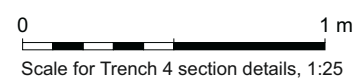
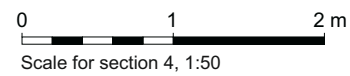
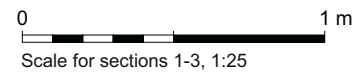


The map is a representation of the land and water resources of the area. It is not a guarantee of the accuracy of the information. The map is for informational purposes only.			
Map of the area	Legend	Scale	North Arrow
Map of the area	Legend	Scale	North Arrow
Map of the area	Legend	Scale	North Arrow









C: Trench 4, south-facing representative section
of eastern end of trench

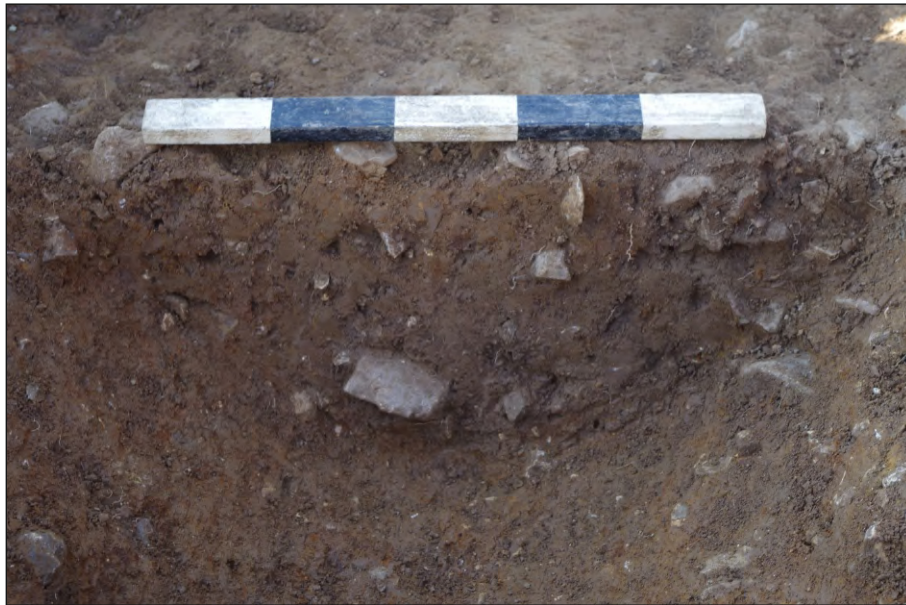


Plate 1: North facing section of ditch **106** (scale 0.5 m)



Plate 2: Trench 2 viewed from the south-west, showing modern made ground (scales: horizontal 1 m, vertical 2m)



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	Date:	29/05/2015	Revision Number: 1
	Scale:	N/A	Illustrator: ND/KMN
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Plate 3: Oblique view of Trench 4, viewed from the south-west (scale 2 m)



Plate 4: Oblique view of Trench 4, viewed from the south-west, (scale 2m)

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