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# Land off Frearson Road, Coalville, Leicestershire

Targeted Area Excavation  
Post-excavation Assessment



Planning Reference: 11/01054/FULM  
Ref: 109900.01  
November 2015



## **Land off Frearson Road, Coalville, Leicestershire**

### **Targeted Area Excavation Post-excavation Assessment**

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## Land off Frearson Road, Coalville, Leicestershire

### Targeted Area Excavation Post-excavation Assessment

#### Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting to carry out a programme of Targeted Area Excavation on agricultural land to the west of Hugglescote and north of Donington le Heath, centered on NGR 441858, 312840, as a condition of planning consent for residential development.

The excavation confirmed the presence of a substantial southwest to northeast aligned enclosure ditch and internal ring gully as predicted by a previous geophysical survey. Middle Iron Age pottery and a beehive rotary quern were recovered from within the stone foundations of the ring gully, interpreted as the robbed out remains of a roundhouse. The stone-footed roundhouse was superseded by later phases of ring gully on the same footprint. A second ring gully 5m to the east was also identified and was possibly an ancillary enclosure or structure used for stock. This feature was not identified on the geophysical survey, most likely due to the very similar nature of the natural geology and fills of the features.

The relationship of these buildings with the enclosure is uncertain but it is suggested here that the earliest stone built roundhouse may belong to a different phase than the surviving sections of the enclosure ditch. It is suggested that there was an initial phase of settlement represented by a roundhouse with stone footings to the structure. This phase of activity produced frequent Middle Iron Age pottery and a rotary quern. The nearest sections of the enclosure ditch do not show any evidence of this settlement activity. This may suggest that either this stone built roundhouse predated the enclosure ditch or alternatively an earlier phase of enclosure ditch has been truncated by the enclosure ditch now visible on Site. The latest phase of ring gully construction was visible as a slightly oval structure with a realigned southeast facing entranceway. An ancillary structure was located 5m to the north and represented by a further ring gully of oval shape. These oval shaped gullies may relate to stock management enclosures rather than roundhouses. As such, we may be looking at a later phase of activity in which this part of the enclosure was used primarily for stock management rather than habitation. This may explain the paucity of finds from both these oval ring gullies and the enclosure ditch in this area. An alternate view would be that the localised deposition of finds identified on site may be the result of deliberate deposition within a significant setting, such as a ring gully terminus, and the various phases of ring gully and enclosure are of a similar date.

The enclosure ditch extended beyond the limits of excavation but was rectangular in plan with two visible entrances; one in each of the northern and southern sides of the enclosure. Two distinct phases for the southern side of the enclosure were identified. The environmental remains from the site are characteristic of general settlement waste and activities, and indicative of a farmstead was set within grassland, field margins and arable environments.

The value of this site lies largely in its contribution to mapping and understanding the local settlement pattern during the Middle Iron Age.

No further analysis of the artefacts or environmental remains is warranted. It is proposed that a brief summary of the results should be submitted for inclusion in the next edition of the *Transactions of Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society*.



It is also recommended that the project archive be deposited with the Leicestershire County Museum under accession number X.A75.2015, subject to landowner consent. The archive is currently stored at the Wessex Archaeology Sheffield office, under project number 109900.





# **Land off Frearson Road, Coalville, Leicestershire**

## **Targeted Area Excavation Post-excavation Assessment**

### **Acknowledgements**

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Fieldwork was directed by Martina Tenzer and carried out by Simon Evans, Emma Carter, Michael Keech, Callum Bruce, Jeanette Plummer Sires, Phillip Maier, Sam Bromage and Mike Howarth. This report was written by Chris Swales and Andrea Burgess, with contributions by Michael Keech. Illustrations were provided by Alix Sperr. The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Chris Swales.



# Land off Frearson Road, Coalville, Leicestershire

## Targeted Area Excavation Post-excavation Assessment

### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting to carry out a programme of targeted Area Excavation on agricultural land to the west of Hugglescote and north of Donington le Heath, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 441858, 312840 (hereafter 'the Site') as a condition of planning consent prior to construction of a residential development (**Figure 1**).
- 1.1.2 Full planning permission was granted, subject to finalisation, in May 2014 for the construction of 188 dwellings, infrastructure, construction of new access off Frearson Road and formation of open space (11/01054/FULM). Condition 8 of planning permission relates to archaeological issues and requires a programme of archaeological work to be undertaken.
- 1.1.3 The Site had been evaluated through geophysical survey (Stratascan 2010) and a programme of trial trenching in 2011 (Northamptonshire Archaeology 2011), in support of the planning application for the proposed development. This programme of archaeological evaluation identified a probable Iron Age enclosure with associated ring gully. Subsequent discussions between CgMs and the Principal Planning Archaeologist for Leicestershire County Council (LCC), agreed that a programme of archaeological excavation, targeting this enclosure and covering an area of 0.5ha, would be required to fulfil the archaeological conditions attached to planning consent.
- 1.1.4 CgMs produced a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (CgMs 2015) outlining how the work would be carried out. The WSI was approved by the Principal Planning Archaeologist for LCC (Richard Clarke) prior to work commencing. The WSI was prepared in accordance with current best practice and the guidance outlined in Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment ('MoRPHE', Historic England 2015a), and guidance provided by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014a, 2014b) and in accordance with CIfA Codes of Conduct (2014c).

#### 1.2 Site location, topography and geology

- 1.2.1 The Site is located on the western edge of Hugglescote and north of Donington le Heath, centred on 441858, 312840, with the 0.5ha strip, map and excavation area at the eastern side of the development area (**Figure 1**). It is bounded by Berry Hill Lane to the south, a public footpath and fields to the west, residential premises off St Mary's Avenue to the east, Frearson Road to the northeast and open fields to the northwest.
- 1.2.2 The topography of the area is generally flat and it lies at c.150m OD. The trial trenching in 2011 recorded topsoil to a depth of 0.12–0.41m, overlying 0.04–0.22m of subsoil. The



archaeological features revealed in Trenches 10, 11 and 12 were at a maximum of 0.55m depth below the current ground surface and were cut into the natural geology.

- 1.2.3 The bedrock geology comprises Triassic mudstone, siltstone and sandstone, overlain by diamicton (British Geological Survey online).

## **2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Introduction**

- 2.1.1 The following section summarises the archaeological background of the Site which was detailed in the WSI (CgMs 2015).

### **2.2 Prehistoric**

- 2.2.1 A Palaeolithic handaxe and Mesolithic flint have been recorded from fields north of the Site and Iron Age occupation has been identified in the surrounding area, northeast and east of the Site.

### **2.3 Romano-British**

- 2.3.1 Roman occupation evidence has been identified in the surrounding area, northeast and east of the Site. Artefacts have been recovered from the Iron Age and Roman-British periods from fieldwalking to the east of Snibston Grange in 1997 and 1999.
- 2.3.2 Coalville was the site of a suspected Roman Road. No definitive evidence for an associated settlement has been found, however a Roman coin hoard was discovered in 2003.

### **2.4 Medieval to post-medieval**

- 2.4.1 Medieval settlement had three focal points in the vicinity of the Site; at Hugglescote, the deserted medieval village at Snibston and manorial sites in Donington le Heath. Outside of these core settlements ridge and furrow has been identified which is likely to be of medieval origin.
- 2.4.2 Post-medieval settlement in the area shifted towards Coalville, largely as a result of the expanding coal industry.

### **2.5 Previous archaeological investigations**

- 2.5.1 A geophysical survey of the whole proposed development Site identified a rectangular enclosure, at least 60m long by 54m wide, on the eastern margin of the field (Stratascan 2010). Within the enclosure there was a single ring ditch, 13m in diameter. The northern and western arms of the enclosure were clearly defined, but the southeast arm was indistinct.
- 2.5.2 Subsequent trial trenching confirmed the presence of the rectangular enclosure and internal ring ditch identified during the geophysical survey (Northamptonshire Archaeology 2011). The limited dating evidence from the evaluation suggests that these features were Iron Age in date. The trenches situated away from the location of geophysical anomalies contained no additional significant remains.

### **3 METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Project aims**

- *to ascertain whether any associated archaeological features survived in the immediate vicinity of the features identified in the trial trenching, and to further investigate these features;*
- *to determine the date, character, function and significance of any features encountered;*
- *to produce a Site archive for deposition with an appropriate museum and to provide information for accession to the Leicestershire HER; and*
- *to undertake a programme of post-excavation analysis assessing the potential of the remains to contribute to wider research agendas and the scope for dissemination of the project results to a wider audience.*

#### **3.2 Fieldwork methodology**

3.2.1 The excavation comprised the machine stripping of a 0.5ha area of land, immediately followed by excavation of any archaeological features identified.

3.2.1 The work was carried out in accordance with the approved WSI (CgMs 2015) and Wessex Archaeology and industry standards and guidelines (CIfA 2014a-c).

3.2.2 Topsoil and subsoil were removed using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, working under the continuous direct supervision of a suitably experienced archaeologist. Topsoil or overburden was removed in a series of level spits down to the level of the upper archaeological horizon, or the level of the natural geology, whichever was reached first. Topsoil and subsoil were mounded and stored away from the edges of the stripped area.

3.2.3 The exposed surfaces were hand-cleaned where necessary to clarify the extent of archaeological remains. Where archaeological features and deposits were encountered, cleaning and excavation was carried out by hand. All features were investigated in order to establish their date, nature, extent and condition. All spoil and fills were scanned to retrieve finds.

3.2.4 All archaeological features and deposits encountered were recorded using Wessex Archaeology *pro forma* recording sheets and a continuous unique numbering system.

#### **3.3 Monitoring**

3.3.1 The fieldwork was monitored for Leicestershire County Council by Richard Clark (Principal Planning Archaeologist).

#### **3.4 Specialist strategies**

3.4.1 Finds were collected and treated in accordance with the relevant guidance (UKIC 2001; English Heritage 2005).

3.4.2 Bulk environmental soil samples for plant macro-fossils, small animal and fish bones and other small artefacts were collected and processed in accordance with current guidelines (English Heritage 2011).



## **4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS**

### **4.1 Summary**

- 4.1.1 The following is a summary of the information held in the Site archive. A full list of context numbers and descriptions is provided in **Appendix 1**.
- 4.1.2 The investigation confirmed the presence of a substantial Iron Age enclosure which extended beyond the limits of excavation into an area of existing residential development situated to the east of the Site (**Figure 2**).

### **4.2 Geological substrata**

- 4.2.1 The natural geological deposits consisted of compact silty clays, varying in colour from dark reddish-brown to mid yellowish-brown with occasional patches of sandier dark yellow material (**Plate 1**).
- 4.2.2 These deposits were directly overlain by a mid brownish-grey silty sand topsoil, with a typical depth of 0.43m and a thin mid-yellowish-brown silty sand subsoil, which was typically 0.06m thick.
- 4.2.3 The fills of the excavated features across the Site were very similar in colour and consistency to the natural deposits these features were cut through. This made recording features in plan and identifying stratigraphic relationships in section difficult.

### **4.3 Enclosure 1009 and 1027**

- 4.3.1 Two distinct phases of the enclosure ditch (**1009** and **1027**) were identified during the excavation (**Figures 2-5**; **Plates 2-5**).
- 4.3.2 The main enclosure ditch (**1009**) was rectangular in plan with two probable entrances; one in the northern and one in the southern side of the enclosure, at the northeast limit of excavation. The enclosure measured 53m wide (northwest to southeast) and 58m long (northeast to southwest) before reaching the eastern limit of excavation. During this phase of construction the enclosure ditch had an average depth of 0.75m and a width of between 2.2m to 2.6m (**Figure 3**; **Plate 3**).
- 4.3.3 Sixteen investigative slots were excavated through the ditch: **1004**, **1005**, **1010**, **1014**, **1015**, **1023**, **1034**, **1039**, **1052**, **1058**, **1072**, **1076**, **1083**, **1088**, **1092** and **1097** with slots **1004**, **1005** and **1058** being excavated through the ditch terminals at the entranceways.
- 4.3.4 The depth, profile and composition of the fills within ditch **1009** were consistent along its length. Possible slumping from an internal bank was only identified in slot **1005** at the northern entrance (**Figure 3**). Small amounts of Iron Age pottery were recovered from terminals **1005**, **1058** and from slot **1054** (see section 6 below).
- 4.3.5 Another phase of enclosure ditch construction (**1027**) was identified to the south of enclosure **1009**. Enclosure ditch **1027** was located at a maximum distance of 6m to the south of ditch **1009** at its easternmost limit, with the two ditches intersecting at the southwestern corner of the enclosure (**Figure 2**). Ditch **1027** had an average depth of only 0.16m and an average width of 2.6m (**Figure 5**; **Plate 5**). The probable southern entranceway identified within ditch **1009** was not present in ditch **1027**.
- 4.3.6 The shallowness of ditch **1027** and the very similar nature of the fills for ditches **1009** and **1027** hindered investigation of the stratigraphic relationship between the two phases of

enclosure and ultimately the sequence could not be determined with any confidence (**Figure 4; Plates 3 and 5**).

- 4.3.7 Enclosure ditch **1027** was not immediately obvious in the geophysical survey although there was some indication of further geophysical anomalies in this area. The lack of clarity from the geophysical survey is likely to be the result of the shallowness of this phase of the enclosure ditch and the similarity between the fill of the cut feature and the surrounding geology.

#### 4.4 Ring gully 1136

- 4.4.1 The entranceway to a ring gully, forming a probable roundhouse, lay c.32m south of the northern entrance to enclosure **1009**. A 16m length of ring gully **1136** had survived truncation by a later ring gully **1021** (**Figure 2**). Investigative slots **1044**, **1127** and **1130** through ring gully **1136**, found it had an average depth of 0.6m and an average width of 1.06m (**Figure 6**). The projected diameter of the ring gully is c.15.5m and it had a southeast-facing entrance. Only the western terminus to the entranceway survived, with the eastern entranceway truncated by later recut **2021**. Several large irregular stones were identified within the terminus of ring gully **1136** (**Plate 6**). Subsequent excavation revealed the closely packed remains of probable wall footings which included a quernstone (**Plates 7 and 8**). The remains of stone layer **1045** became more ephemeral and loosely packed away from the roundhouse entrance and it seems likely that the stone was robbed out after the roundhouse fell out of use. The ring gully was truncated by an irregular area of disturbance (**1046**) around the southern entranceway (**Figure 6**) and it seems likely that this occurred when stone was removed from the disused structure.

- 4.4.2 The bulk of the pottery recovered from the Site derives from this small section of ring gully **1044** (see **section 6** below) and its associated deposits.

#### 4.5 Ring gully 1109

- 4.5.1 Ring gully **1109** was only identifiable in a single excavated slot through the eastern side of ring gully **1136** (**Figure 6**). It truncated ring gully **1136** and had been later truncated by ring gully **1021**. No finds were recovered from this feature.

#### 4.6 Ring gully 1021

- 4.6.1 The projected diameter of ring gully **1021** was c.15.7m (**Figure 6**). Investigative slots **1019**, **1043**, **1049**, **1059**, **1062**, **1090**, **1099** and **1133** were excavated through the ring gully, revealing an average depth of 0.46m and an average width of 1.25m. The southeast facing entranceway was 3.1m wide, with both termini visible. The entranceway is aligned slightly differently to earlier ring gully **1136** and the overall shape of ring gully **1021** is slightly more oval.
- 4.6.2 Ring gully **1021** was the latest in the sequence of intercutting features in this area (**Figure 6; Plate 9**). No pottery was recovered from any of the eight interventions excavated across its length. No animal bone or charcoal was evident from any of the fills and no features were recorded in the interior of any of the ring gullies.

#### 4.7 Ring gully 1033

- 4.7.1 Ring gully **1033** was situated 15m to the south of the northern entrance to the enclosure (**Figure 2**). It had a single phase of construction and a southwest-facing entrance. Investigative slots **1095**, **1098**, **1101**, **1102** and **1134** were excavated through the ring gully, identifying an average depth of 0.33m and an average width of 1.2m (**Figure 7**). The ring gully was oval rather than circular, with an east to west diameter of c.12.9m and a



north to south diameter of c.8.9m. No pottery was recovered from the fills and no internal features were identified.

#### 4.8 Discrete features

- 4.8.1 The discrete features consist of two pits (**1118** and **1116**; **Figure 2**) located approximately 3m south of enclosure ditch **1027**. Pit **1118** was a steeply sloped oval pit with a diameter of 1.47m and a depth of 0.59m. Pit **1116** had a very shallow 'U'-shaped profile, with a diameter of 1.7m and a depth of 0.15m. No finds were recovered from either of these features. The other potentially archaeological features in this part of the Site were investigated and found to be of natural origin.

### 5 ARTEFACTUAL EVIDENCE

#### 5.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 The excavation produced a small assemblage of finds, which appear to be entirely of prehistoric date. Finds were recovered from six contexts, all stratified feature fills. All finds have been quantified by material type within each context, and the results are presented in **Table 1**.

**Table 1: All finds by context (number / weight in grammes)**

Context	Cut	Group	Spot date	Flint	Pottery	Stone
1006	1005	Enclosure 1009	Middle Iron Age	-	1/15	-
1045	1044	Ring gully 1136	Middle Iron Age	-	11/193	1/7340
1054	1052	Enclosure 1009	Middle Iron Age	-	1/1	-
1057	1058	Enclosure 1009	Prehistoric	1/6	-	-
1069	1044	Ring gully 1136	Middle Iron Age	1/8	16/301	4/2513
1124= 1045	1123= 1044	Ring gully 1136	Middle Iron Age	2/7	11/312	-
<b>Totals</b>				<b>4/21</b>	<b>40/822</b>	<b>5/9853</b>

#### 5.2 Pottery

- 5.2.1 Pottery makes up the bulk of the finds recovered from the Site, and provides most of the dating evidence (see spot dates in **Table 1**). All 40 of the sherds found are Iron Age. Fabrics are for the most part tempered with quartz grains and rock fragments (RQ1), giving a coarse, 'lumpy' texture, with coarse inclusions prominent on surfaces and in broken edges. Some of the rock fragments appear to be igneous, and suggest a local origin in the Charnwood Forest, location of the Mountsorrel granodiorite outcrop. A smaller proportion of sherds are in slightly finer, sandier fabrics (Q1). Two rim sherds, at least one of which is from a gently convex vessel, are present in context **1069**, together with a third, flat-topped rim from an unknown vessel form from context **1124**; all from ring gully **1136**. One body sherd from **1069** is scored. Fabrics and diagnostic sherds indicate a Middle Iron Age date for this small group of pottery. Parallels can be found, for example, in the Middle Iron Age assemblage from Wanlip (Marsden 1998).





### 5.3 Flint

- 5.3.1 Four pieces of worked flint were recovered. Three are waste flakes, made from gravel flint. One of the flakes from **1124** is heavily rolled and edge damaged. In the absence of any chronologically distinctive features, these flakes can only be broadly dated as Neolithic/Bronze Age. Two waste flakes were recovered from enclosure ditch **1009** and one from ring gully **1136**. The fourth is a rather rolled serrated blade, from **1069**. This piece is likely to be Early Neolithic and was found in ring gully **1136**.

### 5.4 Stone

- 5.4.1 One stone object was recovered. This is a complete (though damaged) upper rotary quernstone of beehive form, an Iron Age type (**Plate 10**). The upper surface has suffered extensive damage, exposing the side aperture for the handle. It was found in context **1045** (the stone foundations in ring gully **1136**).
- 5.4.2 In addition, four pieces of unworked, burnt stone came from context **1069** (also in ring gully **1136**).

## 6 ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

### 6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 A selection of six bulk samples taken from Iron Age features, enclosure ditch **1009**, ring gully **1021**, ring gully **1136** and ring gully **1033**, was 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 0.5mm mesh, residues fractionated into 5.6mm, 2mm and 1mm fractions and dried. The coarse fractions (>5.6mm) were sorted, weighed and discarded. The flots were scanned under a x10 – x40 stereo-binocular microscope and 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, tables 3 and 5, pp 28 and 65), for cereals.
- 6.2.2 The flots varied in size, with low numbers of roots and modern seeds. The charred material comprised varying degrees of preservation. A moderate assemblage was recovered from ring gully **1136** and small numbers of plant remains in the other five samples.
- 6.2.3 The cereal remains included hulled wheat, emmer or spelt (*Triticum dicoccum/spelta*), grain, glume base and spikelet fork fragments, barley (*Hordeum vulgare*) grain fragments, and culm nodes. Other remains included seeds of oat/brome grass (*Avena/Bromus* sp.), capsules of runch (*Raphanus raphanistrum*), hazelnut (*Corylus avellana*) shell fragments and a tuber.
- 6.2.4 The assemblages are compatible with an Iron Age date and are indicative of general settlement waste and activity in the vicinity.





### 6.3 Wood charcoal

- 6.3.1 Wood charcoal was noted from the flots of the bulk samples and is recorded in **Appendix 2**. A large quantity of charcoal fragments greater than 2mm was recovered from ring gully 1136. It included round and mature wood pieces.

## 7 STATEMENT OF POTENTIAL

### 7.1 Discussion

- 7.1.1 The archaeological fieldwork at Frearson Road revealed the remains of a Middle Iron Age settlement comprising a rectangular enclosure, one roundhouse and an ancillary structure or small enclosure. The roundhouse was defined by a ring gully infilled with the remains of a robbed out wall footing. Middle Iron Age pottery and a beehive rotary quern were recovered from within the stone foundations of the ring gully terminus, which formed one half of a southeast facing entranceway. The stone-footed roundhouse was truncated by later rebuilds on the same footprint but of uncertain date. The latest phase of ring gully construction was visible as a slightly oval structure with a realigned southeast facing entranceway. An ancillary structure was located 5m to the north and represented by a ring gully of less-regular shape, which could have been a small enclosure or a building. No internal features were identified within any of the ring gullies. The only other features on Site were undated pits lying beyond the enclosure to the south.

#### *Chronology*

- 7.1.2 The relationship of the ring gullies with the enclosure is uncertain but the earliest stone built roundhouse may belong to a different phase than the surviving sections of the enclosure ditch. Around 40 sherds of pottery and a rotary quern were recovered from amongst the robbed out stone wall of the ring gully with only a single sherd of pottery recovered from the nearest sections of the enclosure ditch located 22m to 32m away. Later recuts of the ring gully are artefactually sterile which more closely reflects the lack of settlement evidence from the enclosure ditch. The construction of the potential stock enclosure directly in front of the northern enclosure entrance suggests that it and the surviving sections of the enclosure may belong to different phases, but it is noted that the complete enclosure was not visible and it is possible that further entrances lay beyond the excavated area.
- 7.1.3 It is suggested that there was an initial phase of settlement represented by a roundhouse with stone footings to the structure. This phase of activity produced frequent Middle Iron Age pottery and a rotary quern. The nearest sections of the enclosure ditch do not show any evidence of this settlement activity. This may suggest that either this stone built roundhouse predated the enclosure ditch or alternatively an earlier phase of enclosure ditch has been truncated by the enclosure ditch now visible on Site. The latest phase of ring gully construction was visible as a slightly oval structure with a realigned southeast facing entranceway. An ancillary structure was located 5m to the north and represented by a further ring gully of oval shape. These oval shaped gullies may relate to stock management enclosures rather than roundhouses. As such, we may be looking at a later phase of activity in which this part of the enclosure was used primarily for stock management rather than habitation. This may explain the paucity of finds from both these oval ring gullies and the enclosure ditch in this area.

- 7.1.4 An alternate view would be that the localised deposition of finds identified on Site may be the result of deliberate deposition within a significant setting, such as a ring gully terminus, and the various phases of ring gully and enclosure are of a similar date.

#### *Economy*

- 7.1.5 The beehive rotary quern, the environmental evidence and probable stock enclosures provide some evidence of both arable and pastoral farming at the Site. Therefore the Frearson Road settlement appears to have been a small farmstead with local trade connections and a mixed agricultural economy, although animal bone is notably absent from the finds assemblage. The pottery is of typical local production and there is no evidence for any industrial activity.

#### *Duration of occupation*

- 7.1.6 Overall the finds assemblage indicates that the Site was first occupied during the Middle Iron Age, but the bulk of the pottery came from one feature (ring gully **1136**). The date of that building seems secure as a beehive rotary quern was recovered from the same fill. Beehive querns are indicative of a Middle to Late Iron Age date, with their introduction to Britain dated from c.400BC and their use becoming common place by the Late Iron Age (Watts 2014).
- 7.1.7 The later phases of the building are not dated and pottery from the enclosure ditch is scarce. As such the dateable pottery may not accurately reflect the duration of settlement. However, no Late Iron Age or Romano-British pottery or other datable artefacts were recovered, which suggests that the Frearson Road settlement was fairly short-lived, and was probably abandoned during the Middle or Late Iron Age. The environmental assemblages are all compatible with an Iron Age date and are indicative of general settlement waste and activity in the vicinity.

#### *Significance of the Site*

- 7.1.8 The typical settlement site type for central England during the Middle Iron Age is a rectangular ditched enclosure of not more than 0.5ha, containing one or two circular buildings (Cooper 2006). Whilst there is a large variation in morphology within this it would seem that farmsteads made up of small family or kin groups represent the norm. Comparable enclosed settlements are located at Ancaster Quarry (40 miles west), Wanlip (12 miles west), Elms Farm (35 miles west) and Gamston (45 miles northeast).
- 7.1.9 The site in Gamston (Nottinghamshire) provides a useful parallel to the development of the settlement and enclosure at Frearson Road. The Middle Iron Age phase 1 settlement at Gamston was represented by an open settlement with a series of four-post structures, a cluster of penannular gullies and a small enclosure (Knight and Howard 2004). During phase 2 these features were surrounded by a rectangular ditch, enclosing an area measuring c.32m by 20m (Knight and Howard 2004). Several of the penannular gullies are thought to be associated with the enclosure phase of activity.
- 7.1.10 The value of this site lies largely in its contribution to mapping the local settlement pattern during the Middle Iron Age.

## **7.2 Stratigraphic evidence**

- 7.2.1 The archaeology is relatively straightforward and additional stratigraphic analysis is unlikely to enhance its interpretation.

### **7.3 Artefactual evidence**

- 7.3.1 This is a small assemblage of finds and its potential for further research is correspondingly limited. Pottery is the most commonly occurring type and has already provided the dating for the Site.
- 7.3.2 The pottery and other finds have been recorded to an appropriate archive level and no further analysis is proposed. The information contained in this report could be summarised for inclusion in any publication report, and one or perhaps two of the rim sherds could be illustrated.
- 7.3.3 The whole finds assemblage should be retained for long-term curation, with the exception of the burnt, unworked stone.

### **7.4 Environmental evidence**

- 7.4.1 Further analysis of the charred plant assemblage has the potential to provide only very limited information on the nature of the settlement, the surrounding environment and local agricultural practices and crop husbandry techniques. Similarly, analysis of the wood charcoal could provide only limited information on the species composition, management and exploitation of the local woodland resource on the site. Therefore no further analysis is recommended.

## **8 RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **8.1 The archaeological evidence**

- 8.1.1 This is a relatively straightforward site with few feature intersections and a corresponding paucity of stratigraphic depth. Therefore no further analysis or research is proposed.
- 8.1.2 No further analysis is considered necessary for the small finds and environmental assemblages. All of the finds have been recorded to an appropriate level.

### **8.2 Publication**

- 8.2.1 The discovery of a Middle Iron Age settlement at Frearson Road is of local interest and also contributes to a growing body of evidence for regional settlement patterns during the Iron Age.
- 8.2.2 Publication within the *Transactions of Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* provides the most suitable route to disseminate these results. It is recommended that this should take the form of a short summary in the annual round-up of archaeological fieldwork.
- 8.2.3 An OASIS form for the project has been initiated (ref. 220222) and will be finalised when the project is completed.

### **8.3 Archiving**

- 8.3.1 It is recommended that the archive resulting from the excavation be deposited with the Leicestershire County Museum under accession number X.A75.2015. The museum has agreed in principle to accept the archive on completion of the project. Deposition of any finds with the museum will only be carried out with the full agreement of the landowner.



- 8.3.2 The complete site archive, which will include paper records, photographic records, graphics, artefacts, ecofacts and digital data, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by the recipient museum, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; ClfA 2014d; Brown 2011; ADS 2013).
- 8.3.3 All archive elements will be marked with the site and accession code, and a full index will be prepared. The physical archive comprises two cardboard boxes or airtight plastic boxes of artefacts, ordered by material type and one file or document case of paper records and graphics.
- 8.3.4 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. The discard of environmental remains and samples follows nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1993, 1995; English Heritage 2011).
- 8.3.5 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 PROGRAMME

### 9.1 Overview

- 9.1.1 A short summary of the results of the investigations will be prepared based on the information contained in this assessment report.
- 9.1.2 The summary will be prepared during **November 2015** and will be submitted to the editor of the *Transactions of Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* as part of Wessex Archaeology's annual submission to the journal, probably in **March 2016**.
- 9.1.3 The finds and archive will be prepared and deposited with the museum as soon as is practicable. It is anticipated that this will take place by the end of **March 2016**. The Client and Curator will be informed when the archive has been deposited.
- 9.1.4 Wessex Archaeology understands that submission of the article to the editor of the journal for publication and deposition of the finds and archive will represent the completion of the programme of archaeological work.

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## 11 APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Context summary

Context	Type	Fill of	Description	Interpretation	P/O Group
1000	Layer	N/A	Topsoil:Mid-grey brown silt	Topsoil	N/A
1001	Layer	N/A	Subsoil: Mid-brown-orange silty clay	Subsoil	N/A
1002	Layer	N/A	Natural: Light-grey orange silty clay with frequent stone inclusions	Natural	N/A
1003	Fill	1004	Ditch fill: Single fill of ditch	Secondary fill	1009
1004	Cut	N/A	Cut: Enclosure ditch terminus	MIA Enclosure ditch	1009
1005	Cut	N/A	Cut: Enclosure ditch terminus	MIA Enclosure ditch	1009
1006	Fill	1005	Ditch fill: Upper fill of ditch	Tertiary fill	1009
1007	Fill	1005	Ditch fill: Fill of ditch	Secondary fill	1009
1008	Fill	1005	Ditch fill: Lower fill of ditch	Primary fill	1009
1009	GRP	N/A	Group number for enclosure ditch	MIA Enclosure ditch	N/A
1010	Cut	N/A	Cut: pit cut into top of ditch 1014	Undated pit	N/A
1011	Fill	1014	Ditch fill: Upper fill of ditch	Tertiary fill	1009
1012	Fill	1014	Ditch fill: Fill of ditch	Secondary fill	1009
1013	Fill	1014	Ditch fill: Primary fill of ditch	Primary fill	1009
1014	Cut	N/A	Cut: Enclosure ditch	MIA Enclosure ditch	1009
1015	Cut	N/A	Cut: Enclosure ditch	MIA Enclosure ditch	1009
1016	Fill	1015	Ditch fill: Upper fill of ditch	Tertiary fill	1009
1017	Fill	1015	Ditch fill: Fill of ditch	Secondary fill	1009
1018	Fill	1015	Ditch fill: Primary fill of ditch	Primary fill	1009
1019	Cut	N/A	Cut: Ring gully	MIA ring gully	1021
1020	Fill	1019	Fill of ring gully	Secondary fill	1021
1021	GRP	N/A	Group number for ring gully	MIA ring gully	N/A
1022	Fill	1019	Fill of ring gully	Secondary fill	1021
1023	Cut	N/A	Cut: Enclosure ditch	MIA Enclosure ditch	1009
1024	Fill	1023	Ditch fill: Primary fill of ditch	Primary fill	1009
1025	Fill	1023	Ditch fill: Fill of ditch	Secondary fill	1009
1026	Fill	1023	Ditch fill: Upper of ditch	Secondary fill	1009
1027	GRP	N/A	Group number for enclosure ditch	MIA Enclosure ditch	N/A
1028	Void	Void	Void	Void	Void
1029	Void	Void	Void	Void	Void
1030	Void	Void	Void	Void	Void
1031	Void	Void	Void	Void	Void
1032	Void	Void	Void	Void	Void
1033	GRP	N/A	Group number for ring gully	MIA ring gully	N/A
1034	Cut	N/A	Cut: Enclosure ditch	MIA Enclosure ditch	1009
1035	Fill	1034	Ditch fill: Primary fill of ditch	Primary fill	1009
1036	Fill	1034	Ditch fill: Fill of ditch	Secondary fill	1009
1037	Fill	1034	Ditch fill: Fill of ditch	Secondary fill	1009
1038	Fill	1038	Ditch fill: Fill of ditch	Secondary fill	1009
1039	Cut	N/A	Cut: Enclosure ditch	MIA Enclosure ditch	1009
1040	Fill	1039	Ditch fill: Lower fill of ditch	Secondary fill	1009





Context	Type	Fill of	Description	Interpretation	P/O Group
1041	Fill	1039	Ditch fill: Fill of ditch	Secondary fill	1009
1042	Fill	1039	Ditch fill: Upper fill of ditch	Secondary fill	1009
1043	Cut	N/A	Cut: Ring gully	MIA ring gully	1021
1044	Cut	N/A	Cut: Ring gully	MIA ring gully	1136
1045	Str	1044	Structure: Robbed stone wall of roundhouse	Remnants of stone wall for roundhouse	1136
1046	Cut	N/A	Cut: Disturbance caused by robbing of 1045	Robber cut	N/A
1047	Fill	1046	Fill: Fill of robber cut 1046	Secondary fill	N/A
1048	Fill	1046	Fill: Fill of robber cut 1046	Secondary fill	N/A
1049	Cut	N/A	Cut: Ring gully	MIA ring gully	1021
1050	Fill	1049	Fill: Fill of ring gully	Secondary fill	1021
1051	Fill	1049	Fill: Fill of ring gully	Secondary fill	1021
1052	Cut	N/A	Cut: Enclosure ditch	MIA Enclosure ditch	1009
1053	Fill	1052	Ditch fill: Upper fill of ditch	Secondary fill	1009
1054	Fill	1052	Ditch fill: Fill of ditch	Secondary fill	1009
1055	Fill	1052	Ditch fill: Lower fill of ditch	Secondary fill	1009
1056=1045	Str	1044	Structure: Robbed stone wall of roundhouse	Remnants of stone wall for roundhouse	1136
1057	Fill	1058	Ditch fill: Fill of ditch	Secondary fill	1009
1058	Cut	N/A	Cut: Enclosure ditch	MIA Enclosure ditch	1009
1059	Cut	N/A	Cut: Ring gully	MIA ring gully	1021
1060	Fill	1059	Fill: Fill of ring gully	Secondary fill	1021
1061=1045	Str	1044	Structure: Robbed stone wall of roundhouse	Remnants of stone wall for roundhouse	1136
1062	Cut	N/A	Cut: Ring gully	MIA ring gully	1021
1063	Fill	1062	Fill: Fill of ring gully	Secondary fill	1021
1064	Void	Void	Void	Void	Void
1065	Cut	N/A	Cut: Possible posthole within ditch 1076	Posthole	N/A
1066	Fill	1065	Fill: Single fill of posthole 1065	Secondary fill	N/A
1067	Fill	1043	Fill: Fill of ring gully	Secondary fill	1021
1068	Void	Void	Void	Void	Void
1069	Fill	1044	Fill: Fill of ring gully	Secondary fill	1136
1070	Void	Void	Void	Void	Void
1071	Fill	1044	Fill: Fill of ring gully	Primary fill	1136
1072	Cut	N/A	Cut: Enclosure ditch	MIA Enclosure ditch	1009
1073	Fill	1072	Ditch fill: Lower fill of ditch	Secondary fill	1009
1074	Fill	1072	Ditch fill: Fill of ditch	Secondary fill	1009
1075	Fill	1072	Ditch fill: Upper fill of ditch	Secondary fill	1009
1076	Cut	N/A	Cut: Enclosure ditch	MIA Enclosure ditch	1009
1077	Fill	1076	Ditch fill: Lower fill of ditch	Secondary fill	1009
1078	Fill	1076	Ditch fill: Fill of ditch	Secondary fill	1009
1079	Fill	1076	Ditch fill: Upper fill of ditch	Secondary fill	1009
1080	Fill	1083	Ditch fill: Upper fill of ditch	Secondary fill	1009
1081	Fill	1083	Ditch fill: Fill of ditch	Secondary fill	1009
1082	Fill	1083	Ditch fill: Lower fill of ditch	Secondary fill	1009
1083	Cut	N/A	Cut: Enclosure ditch	MIA Enclosure ditch	1009
1084	Fill	1085	Ditch fill: Fill of ditch	Secondary fill	1027





Context	Type	Fill of	Description	Interpretation	P/O Group
1085	Cut	N/A	Cut: Enclosure ditch	MIA Enclosure ditch	1027
1086	Cut	N/A	Cut: Ring gully	MIA ring gully	1136
1087	Fill	1086	Fill: Fill of ring gully	Primary fill	1136
1088	Cut	N/A	Cut: Enclosure ditch	MIA Enclosure ditch	1009
1089	Fill	1088	Ditch fill: Fill of ditch	Secondary fill	1009
1090	Cut	N/A	Cut: Ring gully	MIA ring gully	1021
1091	Fill	1059	Fill: Fill of ring gully	Secondary fill	1021
1092	Cut	N/A	Cut: Enclosure ditch	MIA Enclosure ditch	1009
1093	Fill	1092	Ditch fill: Fill of ditch	Secondary fill	1009
1094	Fill	1092	Ditch fill: Fill of ditch	Secondary fill	1009
1095	Cut	N/A	Cut: Ring gully	MIA ring gully	1033
1096	Fill	1095	Fill: Fill of ring gully	Secondary fill	1033
1097	Cut	N/A	Cut: Enclosure ditch	MIA Enclosure ditch	1009
1098	Cut	N/A	Cut: Ring gully	MIA ring gully	1033
1099	Cut	N/A	Cut: Ring gully	MIA ring gully	1021
1100	Void	Void	Void	Void	Void
1101	Cut	N/A	Cut: Ring gully	MIA ring gully	1033
1102	Cut	N/A	Cut: Ring gully	MIA ring gully	1033
1103	Fill	1098	Fill: Fill of ring gully	Secondary fill	1033
1104	Fill	1102	Fill: Fill of ring gully	Secondary fill	1033
1105	Fill	1101	Fill: Fill of ring gully	Secondary fill	1033
1106	Fill	1107	Fill: Fill of ring gully	Secondary fill	1136
1107	Cut	N/A	Cut: Ring gully	MIA ring gully	1136
1108	Fill	1109	Fill: Fill of ring gully	Secondary fill	N/A
1109	Cut	N/A	Cut: Ring gully	MIA ring gully	N/A
1110	Fill	1099	Fill: Fill of ring gully	Secondary fill	1021
1111	Fill	1010	Fill: Fill of pit	Secondary fill	N/A
1112	Fill	1097	Ditch fill: Fill of ditch	Primary fill	1009
1113	Fill	1097	Ditch fill: Fill of ditch	Secondary fill	1009
1114	Fill	1097	Ditch fill: Fill of ditch	Secondary fill	1009
1115	Fill	1116	Fill: Fill of pit	Secondary fill	N/A
1116	Cut	N/A	Cut: Small pit	Undated pit	N/A
1117	Fill	1118	Fill: Fill of pit	Secondary fill	N/A
1118	Cut	N/A	Cut: Small pit	Undated pit	N/A
1119	Fill	1020	Ditch fill: Fill of ditch	Secondary fill	1027
1120	Cut	N/A	Cut: Enclosure ditch	MIA Enclosure ditch	1027
1121	Fill	1020	Ditch fill: Fill of ditch	Secondary fill	1027
1122	Cut	N/A	Cut: Enclosure ditch	MIA Enclosure ditch	1027
1123=1044	Cut	N/A	Cut: Ring gully	MIA ring gully	1136
1124	Fill	1123	Fill: Fill of ring gully	Secondary fill	1136
1125	Fill	1127	Fill: Fill of ring gully	Secondary fill	1136
1126	Fill	1127	Fill: Fill of ring gully	Secondary fill	1136
1127=1044	Cut	N/A	Cut: Ring gully	MIA ring gully	1136
1128	Fill	1130	Fill: Fill of ring gully	Secondary fill	1136
1129	Fill	1130	Fill: Fill of ring gully	Secondary fill	1136



Context	Type	Fill of	Description	Interpretation	P/O Group
1130	Cut	N/A	Cut: Ring gully	MIA ring gully	1136
1131	Cut	N/A	Cut: Ring gully	MIA ring gully	1136
1132	Fill	1133	Fill: Fill of ring gully	Secondary fill	1009
1133	Cut	N/A	Cut: Enclosure ditch	MIA Enclosure ditch	1009
1134	Cut	N/A	Cut: Ring gully	MIA ring gully	1033
1135	Fill	1034	Fill: Fill of ring gully	Secondary fill	1033



## Appendix 2: Environmental data

Feature	Context	Sample	Vol (L)	Flot size	Roots %	Grain	Chaff	Cereal Notes	Charred Other	Notes for Table	Charcoal > 4/2mm	Other
Iron Age												
Enclosure ditch group 1009												
1015	1016	1	28	40	20	C	C	Hulled wheat grain frags, glume base frags	-	-	2/5 ml	coal
1052	1055	9	24	15	15	-	-	-	C	<i>Raphanus</i>	1/2 ml	coal
1058	1057	7	32	15	20	C	-	Hulled wheat grain frags	-	-	1/2 ml	-
Ring gully 1021												
1059	1060	8	34	40	25	C	C	Hulled wheat + barley grain frags, glume base + spikelet frags	C	<i>Avena/Bromus, Corylus avellana</i> shell frags	1/3 ml	coal
Ring gully 1136												
1044	1069	11	28	250	2	B	A	Hulled wheat grain frags, glume base + spikelet frags	C	<i>Avena/Bromus, Corylus avellana</i> shell frags	40/60 ml	coal
Ring gully 1033												
1023	1124	18	16	60	20	C	B	Hulled wheat grain frags, glume base + spikelet frags, culm node	C	Tuber, <i>Avena/Bromus</i>	5/10 ml	-

Key: A\*\*\* = exceptional, A\*\* = 100+, A\* = 30-99, A = >10, B = 9-5, C = <5;



### Appendix 3: OASIS form

OASIS ID: wessexar1-220222

#### Project details

Project name	Land off Frearson Road, Coalville, Leicestershire
Short description of the project	The excavation confirmed the presence of a substantial southwest to northeast aligned enclosure ditch as predicted by a previous geophysical survey. However, the earliest activity at the site may have been unenclosed and comprised a roundhouse built on stone foundations set in a ring gully. Middle Iron Age pottery and a beehive rotary quern were recovered from within the ring gully. A second ring gully to the east may have been contemporary and was possibly an ancillary enclosure or structure used for stock. The stone-footed roundhouse was superseded by two rebuilds on the same footprint. The relationship of these buildings with the enclosure is uncertain but it is suggested here that the two later roundhouses were enclosed. The enclosure extended beyond the limits of excavation but it was rectangular in plan with two visible entrances; one in each of the northern and southern sides of the enclosure. Two distinct phases for the southern side of the enclosure were identified but the chronological relationship could not be established. The environmental remains from the site are characteristic of general settlement waste and activities, and suggest the farmstead was set within grassland, field margins and arable environments. The value of this site lies largely in its contribution to mapping and understanding the local settlement pattern during the Middle Iron Age. This is amplified by the scarcity of similar contemporary sites nearby.
Project dates	Start: 13-07-2015 End: 24-07-2015
Previous/future work	Yes / Yes
Any associated project reference codes	109900 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	11/01054/FULM - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Cultivated Land 1 - Minimal cultivation
Monument type	ENCLOSURE DITCH Middle Iron Age
Monument type	RING GULLIES Iron Age
Monument type	PITS Uncertain
Significant Finds	POTTERY Middle Iron Age
Significant Finds	FLINT Late Prehistoric
Significant Finds	STONE Middle Iron Age
Investigation type	"Part Excavation"
Prompt	Planning condition

#### Project location



Country	England
Site location	LEICESTERSHIRE NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE COALVILLE Land off Frearson Road, Coalville
Postcode	LE67 2HR
Study area	0.5 Hectares
Site coordinates	SK 441858 312840 52.87688450496 -1.343393975754 52 52 36 N 001 20 36 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 150m Max: 150m

#### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Wessex Archaeology
Project brief originator	CgMs Consulting Ltd.
Project design originator	CgMS Consulting Ltd
Project director/manager	Chris Swales
Project supervisor	Martina Tenzer
Type of sponsor/funding body	Consultant
Name of sponsor/funding body	CgMs

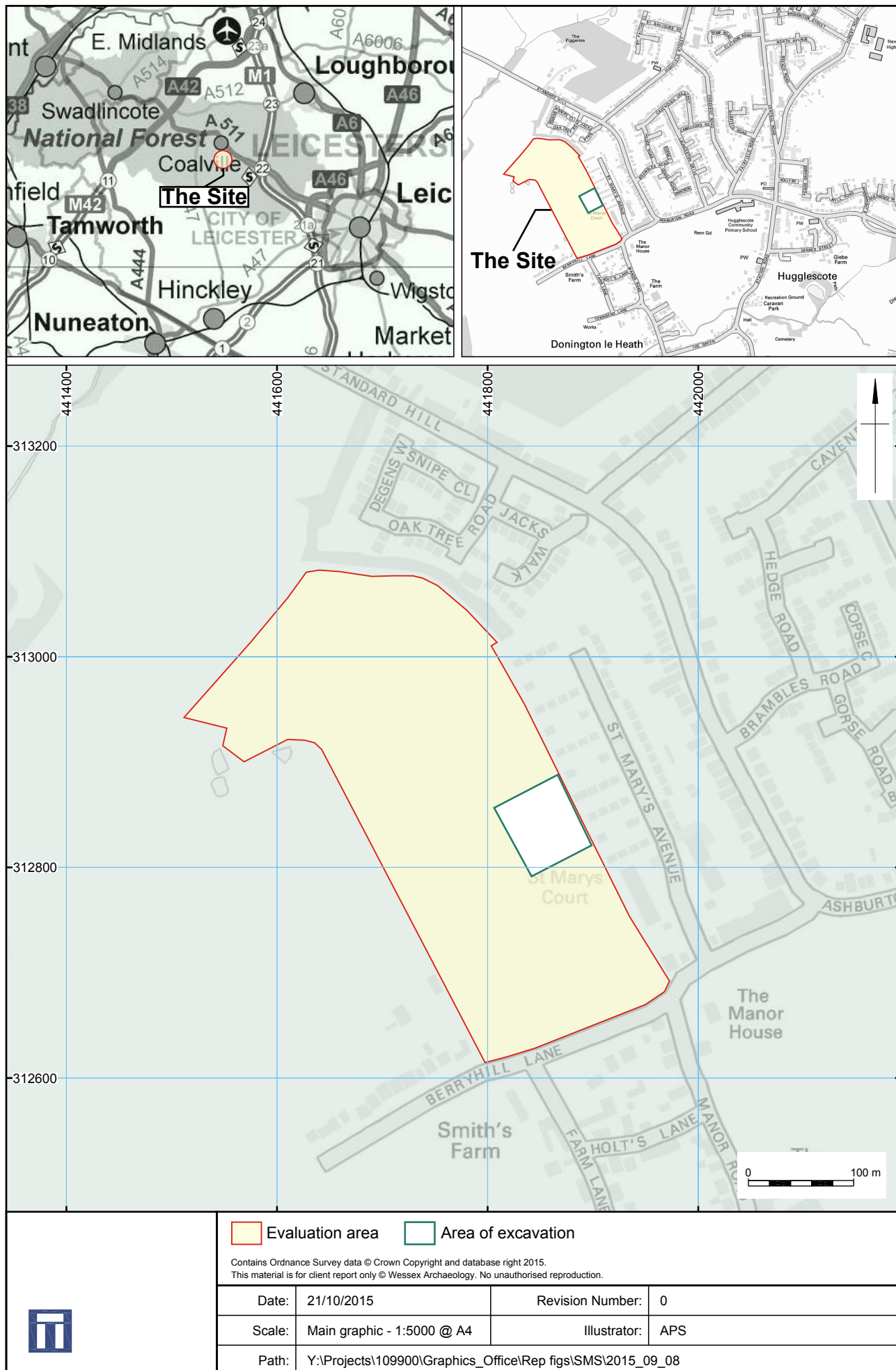
#### Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Leicestershire County Council Museums Service
Physical Archive ID	X.A75.2015
Physical Contents	"Ceramics", "Worked stone/lithics"
Digital Archive recipient	Leicestershire County Council Museums Service
Digital Archive ID	X.A75.2015
Digital Contents	"Ceramics", "Worked stone/lithics"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Leicestershire County Council Museums Service
Paper Archive ID	X.A75.2015
Paper Contents	"Ceramics", "Worked stone/lithics"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Diary", "Drawing", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report", "Section", "Unpublished Text"



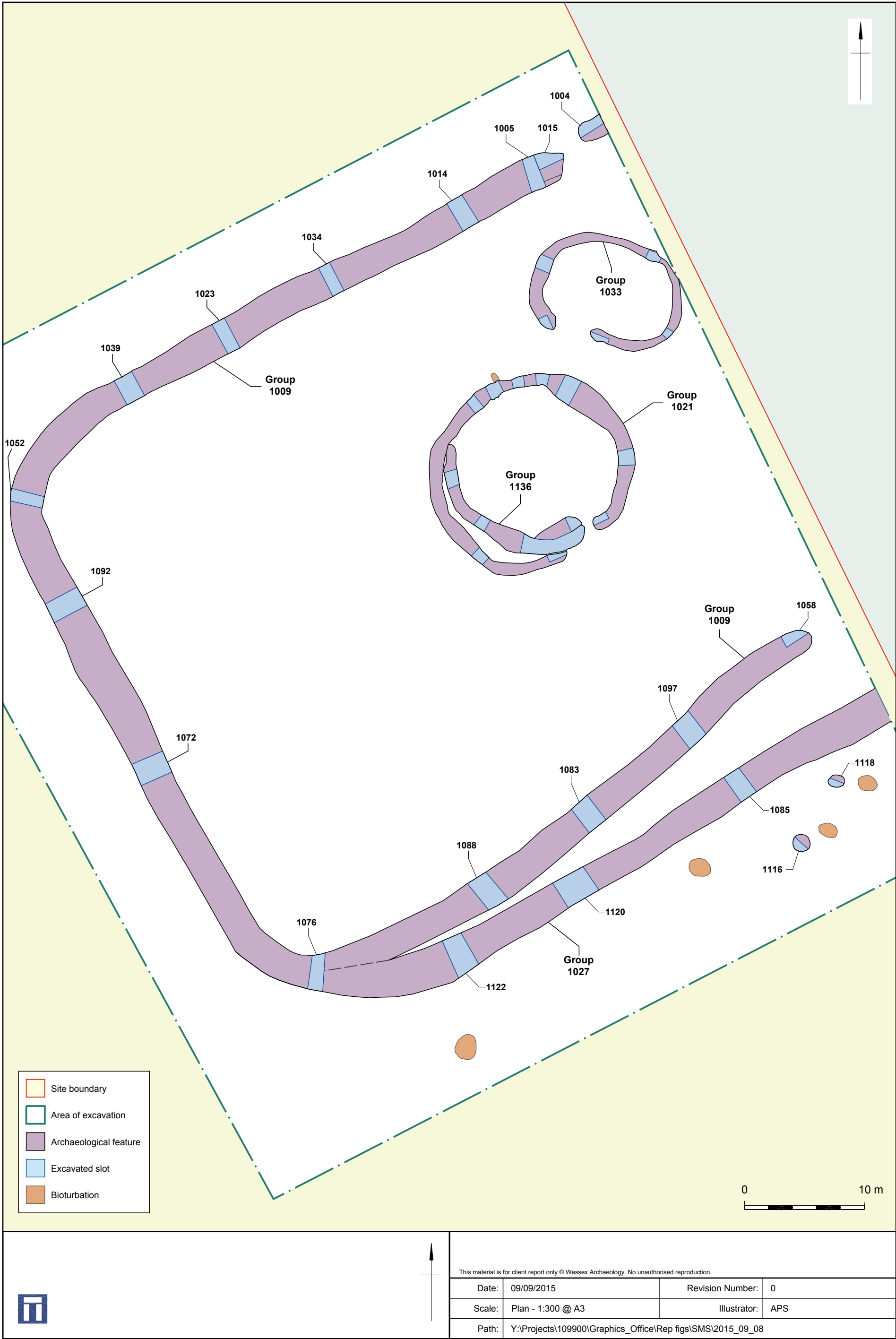
**Project  
bibliography 1**

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Land off Frearson Road, Coalville, Leicestershire, Archaeological Strip, Map and Excavation, Post Excavation Assessment
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Burgess, A.
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Site location

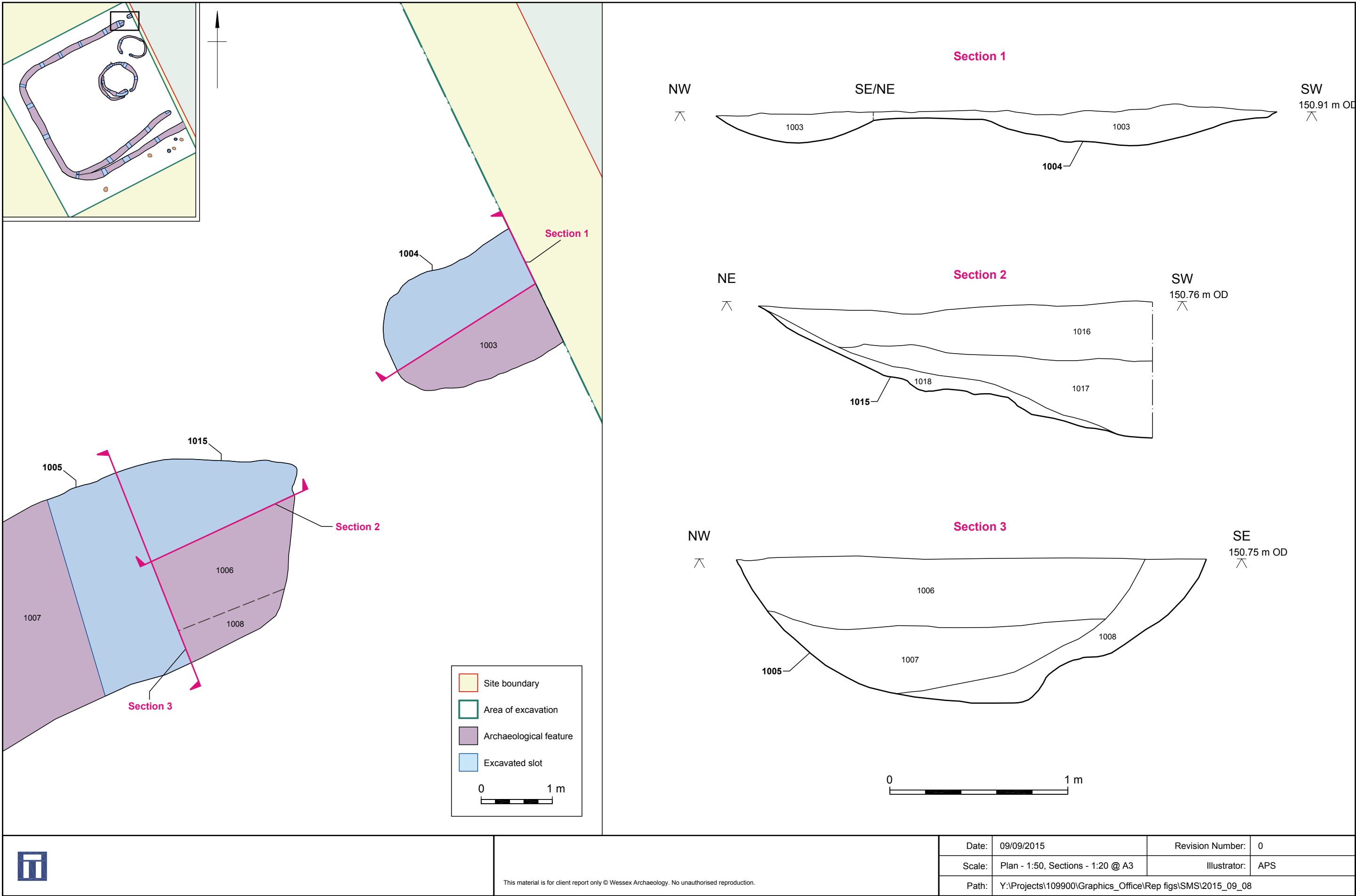
Figure 1



Plan of strip, map and sample area, showing key group numbers

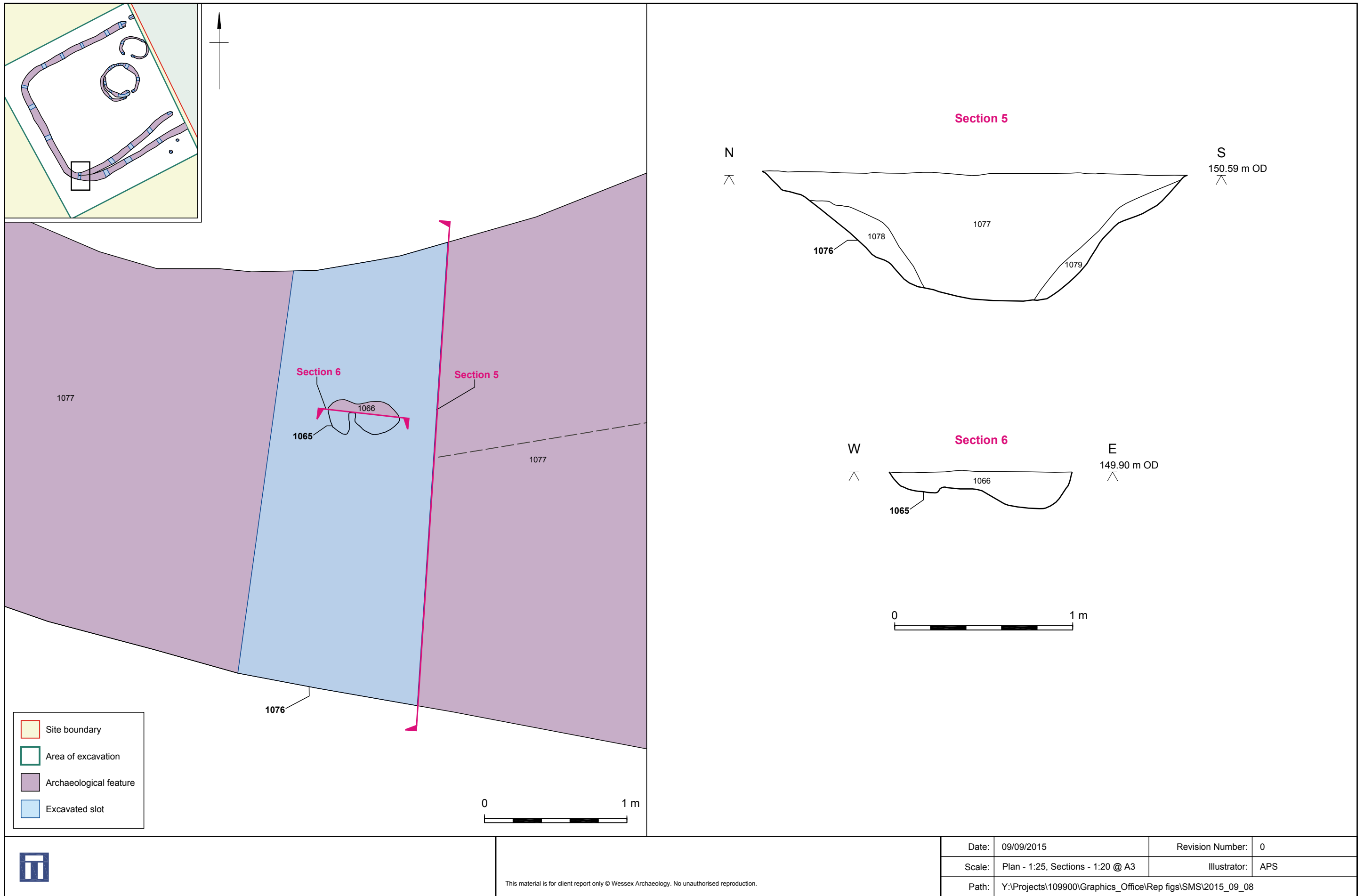
Figure 2





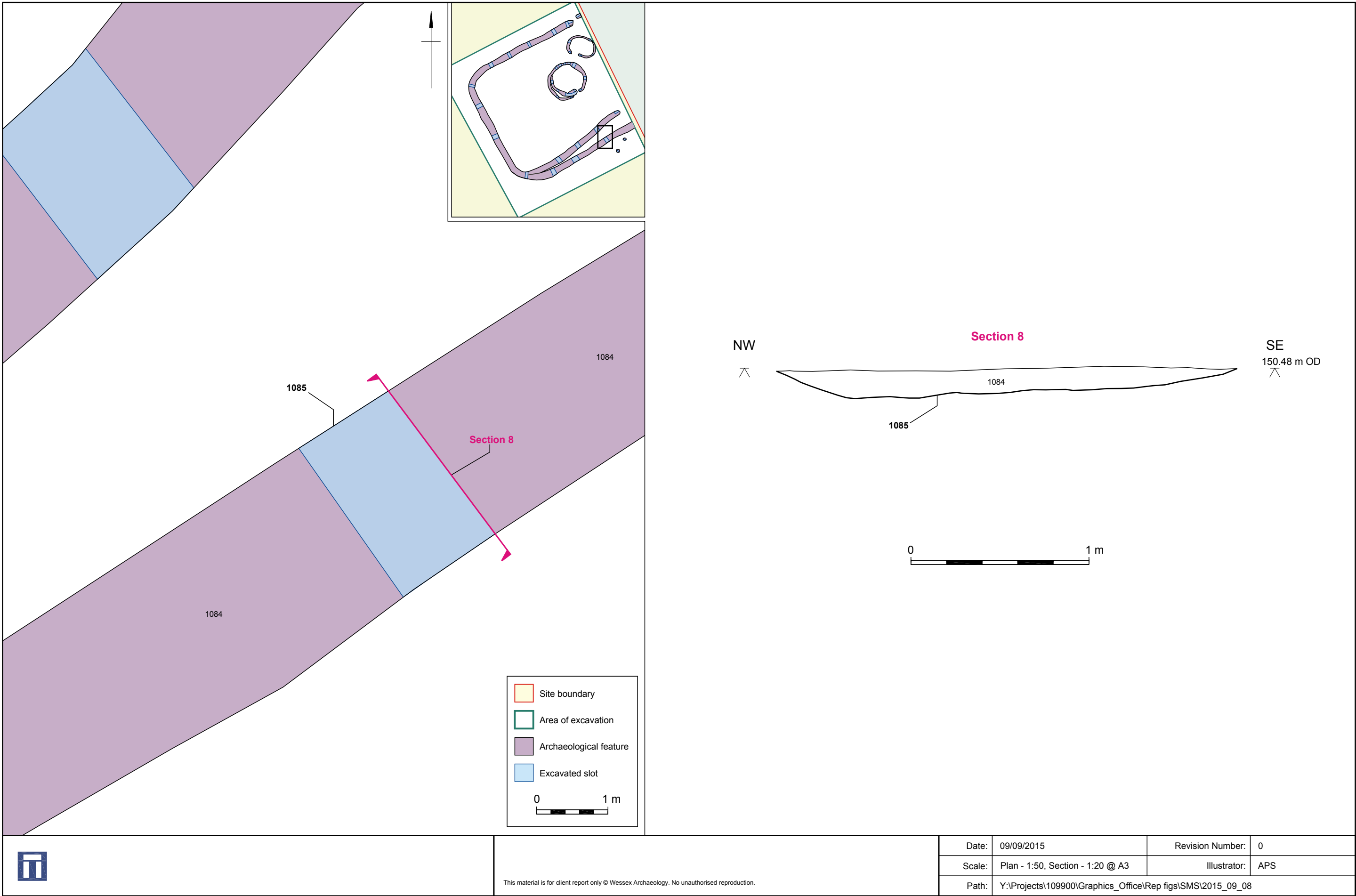
Plan and sections of northern entrance to enclosure ditch 1009

Figure 3



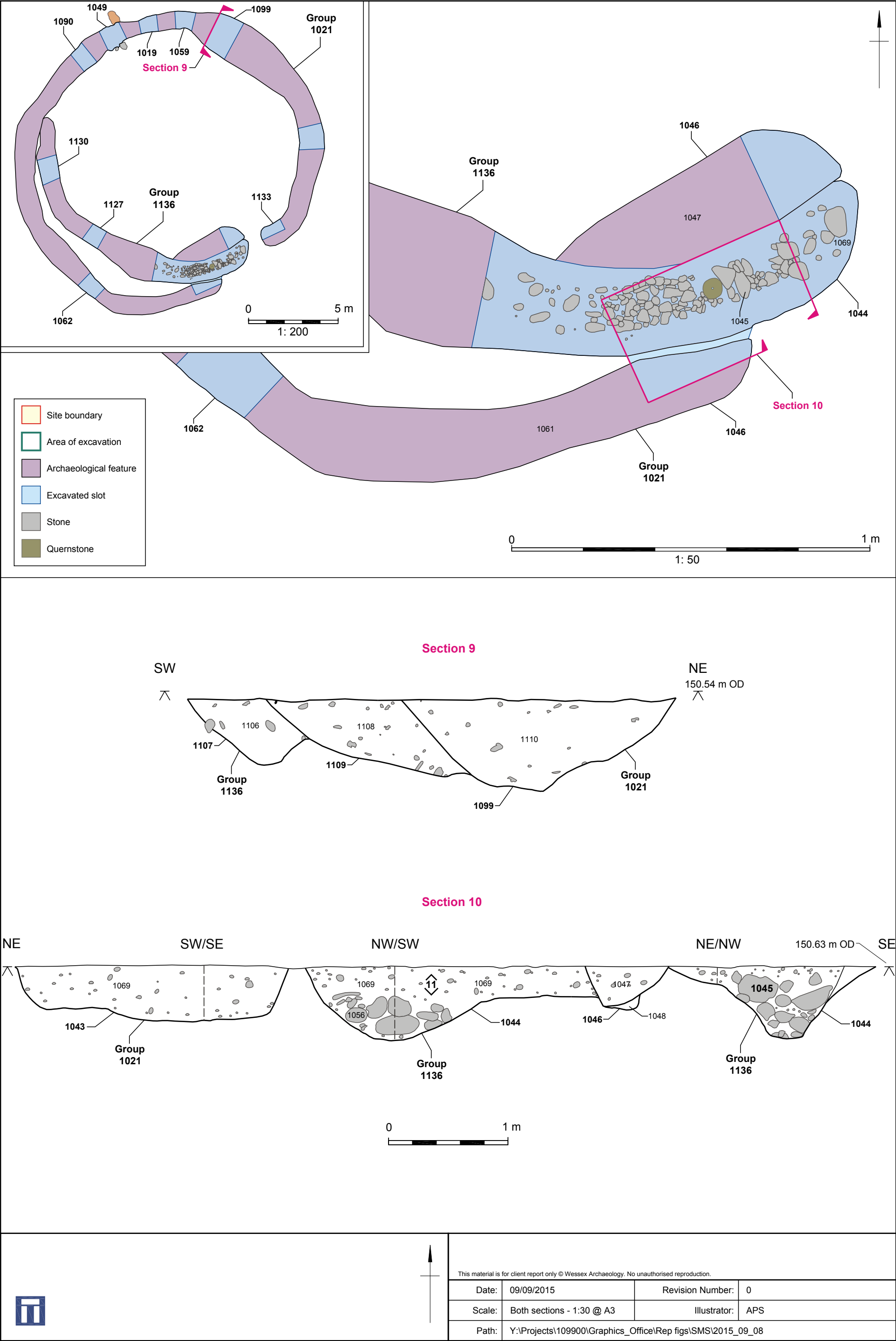
Plan and sections of relationship slot through enclosure ditches 1009 and 1027

Figure 4



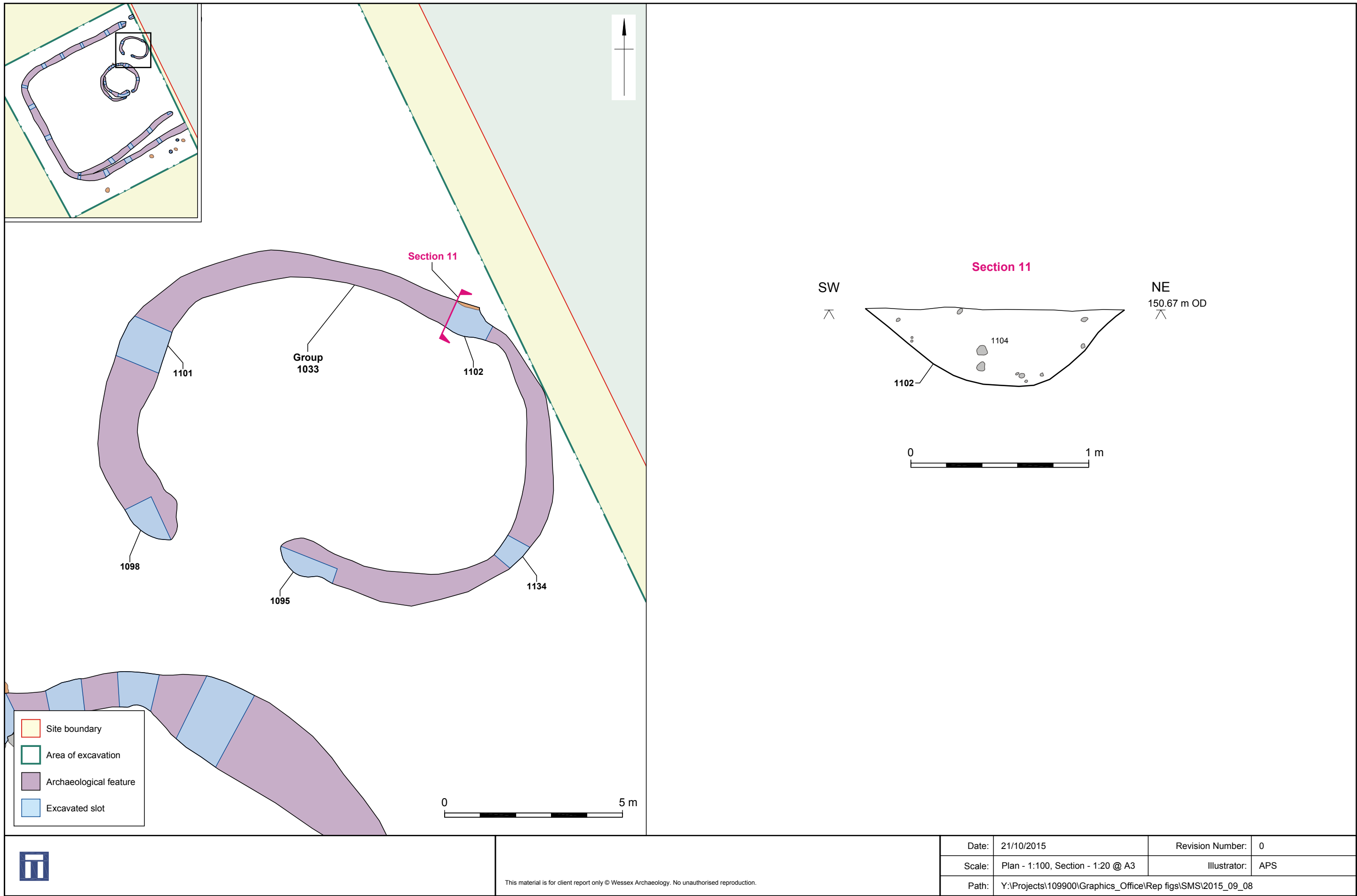
Plan and section through outer enclosure ditch 1027

Figure 5



Plans and sections through ring gullies 1021 and 1136

Figure 6



Plan and sections through ring gully 1033

Figure 7



Plate 1: The site during initial soil stripping



Plate 2: Ditch terminus at the northern enclosure entrance


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Plate 3: Typical profile of enclosure ditch 1009



Plate 4: Intersection of enclosure ditches 1009 and 1027


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Plate 5: Typical profile of enclosure ditch 1027



Plate 6: Ring gullies 1021 and 1136 during excavation


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Plate 7: Stone foundations in ring gully 1136 (including quern)



Plate 2: Stone foundations in ring gully 1136, extending northwest from entrance



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Plate 9: Intersection of gullies 1021 and 1136



Plate 10: Quern stone from ring gully 1136

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