making sense of heritage

Mill Farm Solar Farm, Grantham, Lincolnshire

Archaeological Evaluation

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archaeology

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Archaeological Evaluation

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* I = Internal Draft; E = External Draft; F = Final

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Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting to carry out a programme of archaeological evaluation trenching on land at Mill Farm, Grantham, Lincolnshire. The work was undertaken in advance of the proposed construction of a new solar farm.

A total of eight trenches were excavated across approximately 15ha of land. The trenches targeted anomalies thought likely to represent ditched field boundaries, which had been detected by an earlier geophysical survey.

Generally, there was an excellent level of correspondence between the geophysical survey data and the remains revealed in the evaluation trenches. The combined results reveal that Site contains an unenclosed farmstead dating from the Late Iron Age to the Early/Mid-Romano-British period. Archaeological traces of this chiefly comprise up to five large-diameter (13m to 21m-diameter) ring-gullies and a group of linear and curvilinear ditches. It is thought the ring-gullies probably drained the sites of former roundhouses (of which no direct traces were apparent), with the other ditches representing a sequence of agricultural enclosures, probably related to stock-handling.

The layout of the Site suggests that it changed gradually and incrementally, with some occasional more-radical reorganisation. The farmstead lay within a well-established open landscape comprising grassland and arable fields. The finds assemblage is of modest size with mostly utilitarian items in a limited range of materials present. The animal bone assemblage is relatively small and dominated by remains of cattle. There is no evidence that the Site is of any particular palaeoenvironmental significance.

Overall, the remains are fairly typical for the period and region, although the large diameter of the ring-gullies is unusual. The Site has some potential to make a limited contribution to established research aims.

It is recommended that the project archive resulting from the excavation be deposited with The Collection, administered by Lincolnshire County Council. The Council has agreed in principle to accept the project archive on completion of the project, under the accession code **LNCC:2015.174**. Deposition of any finds with the Museum will only be carried out with the full agreement of the landowner.

Mill Farm Solar Farm, Grantham, Lincolnshire

Archaeological Evaluation

Acknowledgements

The archaeological evaluation was commissioned by CgMs Consulting by Paul Gajos. Thanks are extended to Jenny Young, Senior Historic Environment Officer for Heritage Lincolnshire, archaeological advisors to South Kesteven District Council, who provided curatorial support and guidance.

The trenching was carried out by Callum Bruce, Alex Cassels, Michael Howarth, Hannah Holbrook and Chris Swales, and directed by Ashley Tuck. The report was written by Patrick Daniel, with illustrations by Alix Sperr. The animal bone was assessed by Lorrain Higbee, with pottery assessed by Ian Rowlandson and Lorraine Mepham, who also assessed the other finds. Environmental samples were processed by Tony Scothern and assessed by Sarah Wyles. The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Christopher Swales.

Mill Farm Solar Farm, Grantham, Lincolnshire

Archaeological Evaluation

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology has been commissioned by CgMs Consulting (hereafter 'the Client') to carry out a programme of archaeological evaluation trenching in advance of a proposed solar development on land at Mill Farm, Grantham, Lincolnshire, NGR 494930, 331210 (hereafter 'the Site').

1.1.2 A Desk-based Assessment (CgMs 2015a) and geophysical survey (GSB Prospection Ltd 2015) was carried out prior to the archaeological evaluation. The geophysical survey identified a range of archaeological features likely to be associated with Iron Age and Romano-British settlement.

1.1.3 Following discussions between the CgMs and Jenny Young, Senior Historic Environment Officer for Heritage Lincolnshire, archaeological advisors to South Kesteven District Council, a scope of works was agreed for archaeological evaluation trenching. A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was produced (CgMs 2015b) outlining how the requirements of the work would be met. The WSI was approved by Jenny Young on behalf of South Kesteven District Council.

1.2 Site location and topography

1.2.1 The Site is located 5.5km to the south-east of the centre of Grantham and is situated approximately halfway between the villages of Little Ponton and Boothby Pagnell, within the South Kesteven district of Lincolnshire. It lies within open agricultural countryside, with fields on all sides (**Figure 1**).

1.2.2 The Site lies on a gentle south-facing slope with a shallow valley running from north-west to south-east across the western portion. The highest point of the Site lies at approximately 118m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) in the north and drops to approximately 110m aOD at the south-western boundary.

1.2.3 The British Geological Survey (BGS) 1:50,000 records the solid geology of the Site as Sandstone and Limestone belonging to the Rutland Formation. The drift geology is recorded as Mid-Pleistocene Diamicton (http://www.bgs.ac.uk.). The soils of the Site are recorded as Ragdale (712g): slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged clayey and fine loamy over clayey soils.

1.2.4 According to the terminology of the Historic Landscape Characterisation project for Lincolnshire, the Site lies within the Kesteven Parklands Character Zone of the Southern Cliff Regional Character Area. The Kesteven Parklands are described as rolling countryside similar to the Lincolnshire Wolds, with small nucleated villages and significant survival of planned enclosure landscapes (Lord and Macintosh 2011, 76).

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The following text is drawn from the Desk-based Assessment (CgMs 2015a).

Prehistoric

2.1.2 There are no records within the Historic Environment Record (hereafter 'HER') of any finds or features of Prehistoric date from within the 1km search area surrounding the Site, although there are a reasonably large number of Prehistoric monuments known from the wider area.

2.1.3 Evidence of Iron Age occupation in the immediate vicinity of the Site is sparse although there are several possible Iron Age enclosures recorded from aerial photography in the surrounding 2-3km, and the Salters Way road (*c*. 2.5km north-west) is generally considered to have been used in the pre-Roman period. Iron Age pottery has been found during excavations at the Roman settlement at Saltersford, (Grantham water works also *c.* 2.5km to the north-west).

Romano-British

2.1.4 The HER records two sites of Romano-British date from within the search area. The first is the major north-south Roman road now known as Ermine Street, which runs under the current B6403, around 500m to the east of the Site. The second record of Romano-British activity within the Site comes from chance finds of artefacts, including pottery, lamps and coins, from a field c.400m to the north-east of the Site.

2.1.5 The main focus of Roman activity in the wider area would appear to be at Saltersford, around 2.5km north-west of the Site, where a Roman settlement (possibly Causennis mentioned in the Antonine Itinerary) grew up around the crossing point of the 'Salter's Way' across the River Witham (the Salter's Way being an ancient route from the salt production sites on the Lincolnshire coast to the interior of the country that appears to have been formalised in the Roman period).

Saxon and medieval

2.1.6 There are no sites or features of Saxon date recorded on the HER within the Site or the surrounding search area. The Site is well removed from any known Saxon settlements

2.1.7 The only activity of potential medieval date recorded on the HER from the search area relates to three areas of woodland believed although not proven to date from the early medieval period.

Post-medieval and modern

2.1.8 The only records on the HER dating to the post-medieval period relate to the continued use of the three areas of woodland mentioned above. The 1888 edition of the Ordnance Survey map is the first to show the Site in any detail; a spring is marked towards the southern boundary of the Site. The arrangement of fields within the Site is shown as it remains today, with the arrangement of field divisions remaining unchanged in subsequent editions.

2.2 Recent investigations in the area

2.2.1 The HER records a very low level of organised archaeological investigation in the immediate vicinity of the study site.

2.2.2 The archaeological potential of the development site was considered through a desk-based assessment ('DBA') (CgMs 2015a). The DBA confirmed that no designated or non-designated archaeological heritage assets are recorded on the Site.

2.2.3 The DBA was accompanied by a geophysical survey, which identified a number of archaeological features within the Site (GSB Prospection Ltd 2015). The most significant of these relate to an apparent Iron Age settlement, potentially with an industrial function, that appears to be superseded by a later enclosure, which may have been related to possible stock enclosures in the south-western part of the Site. Numerous sets of linear positive magnetic anomalies representing probable ridge and furrow cultivation were also noted by the geophysical survey.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Aims and objectives

General

3.1.1 The general aims of the project were:

- *to determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any archaeological remains within the development site;*
- *to verify the results of the geophysical survey;*
- *to assess the artefactual and environmental potential of the archaeological deposits encountered;*
- *to provide further information on the archaeological potential of the Site to enable that archaeological implications of the proposed development to be assessed;*
- *to assess the impact of previous land use on the Site;*
- *to provide information that will enable the archaeological remains to be placed within their local, regional and national contexts;*
- *to integrate the results into the wider cultural and environmental context and with specific research aims;*
- *to produce an accurate and comprehensive record and report of any archaeological deposits identified during the evaluation; and*
- *to inform formulation of a strategy to avoid or mitigate impacts of the proposed development on surviving archaeological remains*

3.2 Fieldwork methodology

3.2.1 The work was carried out in accordance with the approved WSI (CgMs 2015b), Wessex Archaeology's procedures and industry standards and guidelines (CIfA 2014a and b).

3.2.2 Fieldwork occurred between 24th and 31st August 2015, during a period of fine summer weather.

3.3 Monitoring

3.3.1 A monitoring visit was carried out by Jenny Young, Senior Historic Environment Officer for Heritage Lincolnshire, on the 27th August 2015.

3.4 Machine excavation

3.4.1 Topsoil was removed using a 14-tonne tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a 6' toothless ditching bucket, working under the continuous direct supervision of a suitably qualified archaeologist. Ploughsoil and any overburden were 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.

3.5 Hand excavation

3.5.1 Structures and any archaeological features were cleaned as necessary to allow inspection and to define the extent of any archaeological features and deposits. Archaeological features were hand excavated, with care taken not to compromise the integrity of archaeological features or deposits, which may have been deemed suitable for preservation by record or preservation *in situ*. However, excavation was sufficient to understand and record the full stratigraphic sequence, down to naturally occurring deposits.

3.6 Recording

3.6.1 All deposits were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording sheets and a continuous unique numbering system. A stratigraphic matrix was compiled to record the relationships between features and deposits.

3.6.2 Excavated areas and deposits were located by means of an RTK GPS system and tied into the OS grid with a tolerance of better than + or - 100mm. All deposits had spot heights recorded in relation to Ordnance Datum, correct to two decimal places.

3.6.3 A full photographic record was maintained consisting of 35mm monochrome prints and digital images.

4 RESULTS OF EVALUTION TRENCHING

4.1 Typical soil profiles

4.1.1 All of the trenches were machined down to the level of the natural geological horizon. This was generally encountered at 0.4m to 0.5m below the modern ground surface and typically consisted of clay of various grey, yellow and brown hues, with frequent stone inclusions, including flint and stone. This material equates with the Mid-Pleistocene Diamicton recorded by the BGS.

4.1.2 A subsoil was recorded overlying the natural substrate in all of the trenches; this generally consisted of a yellow or brown silty clay, and was typically between 0.1 and 0.2m thick. A thick dark brown silty clay/loam ploughsoil formed the modern ground surface within each trench. This supported a ripe cereal crop at the time of the evaluation.

4.2 Trench 1

4.2.1 Trench 1 was located in the south-western corner of the Site, and targeted geophysical anomalies representing a fragmentary rectilinear enclosure and features within it (**Figure 2**). The enclosure was exposed in the evaluation trench, where it was numbered **106**. Excavation established that ditch **106** was 1.5m wide by 0.6m deep with an artefactually sterile orangey brown clay fill.

4.2.2 Located some 30m to the west of ditch **106**, a second linear feature was recorded. This was numbered **103** and measured 1.2m wide by 0.38m deep and contained two fills: a dark grey clay basal deposit overlain by a brown/orange secondary fill (**Figure 6.1**; **Plate 2**). Four small fragments of animal bone from the upper fill were the only finds recorded in this feature, and indeed this trench.

4.2.3 Ditch **103** may represent either the western side of the enclosure partially defined by ditch **106**, or an internal division within it.

4.3 Trench 2

4.3.1 Trench 2 was also situated in the south-western corner of the Site and was positioned to intercept linear and curvilinear geophysical anomalies, as well as to test a geophysically 'blank' area (**Figure 2**). Three features were recorded within it, moving from south to north they were a north-south aligned gully terminal (numbered **204**), an east-west aligned ditch (numbered **206**-**Figure 6.2**) and another east-west aligned ditch: **208**. Only the latter had a corresponding geophysical anomaly. Excavation revealed that ditch **208** was 2.24m wide by 0.4m deep with a shallow bowl-shaped profile. It contained a single fill of greyish brown sandy clay from which a small assemblage of animal bone (11 pieces/29g) was recovered. The other two features in Trench 2 were artefactually sterile.

4.3.2 The remaining trenches excavated during the evaluation (Trenches 3-8) targeted a concentration of penannular and rectilinear anomalies lying on the opposite (i.e. eastern) side of the ditched watercourse and field boundary that crosses the Site.

4.4 Trench 3

4.4.1 Trench 3 targeted a fairly large (*c.* 13m dia.) penannular geophysical anomaly, along with a number of more amorphous features lying to its east (**Figure 3**). Both the eastern and western sides of the penannular feature were exposed in the evaluation trench, where they were numbered **305** and **307**, respectively. The width of the ditch varied between 1.15m and 1.24m, and attained a maximum depth of 0.5m. Each intervention recorded a similar flared, concave profile containing a similar mid-brown silty clay fill, with some stones present at depth within in it (**Figure 6.3**; **Plate 2**). No finds were recovered from the western intervention, but the eastern, **305**, was the most pot-rich of the evaluation, containing 29 sherds (1579g) of a single shell-gritted scored ware jar dating to the Middle to Late Iron Age. A modest assemblage of animal bone (2 pieces/5g) and a large fragment of probable daub accompanied the pottery.

4.4.2 The penannular ditch is thought to represent a ring-gully relieving the drainage around the site of a (now vanished) roundhouse. This is discussed further in section 7 below.

4.4.3 A further, somewhat amorphous feature was recorded within Trench 3. This lay approximately 3.4m to the east of the penannular ditch described above, where it appeared to correspond with a north-south aligned geophysical anomaly. Numbered **304**, excavation established that the feature was approximately 0.75m wide but just 0.1m deep, with an artefactually sterile mid-brown silt clay fill.

4.4.4 No archaeological traces of the other geophysical targets of the trench were apparent.

4.5 Trench 4

4.5.1 Trench 4 targeted a second large (*c.* 19m dia.) penannular geophysical anomaly, amorphous signals lying within the area enclosed by it, and a broad, north-east to south-west aligned linear anomaly to the south-east (**Figure 3**).

4.5.2 Upon excavation, the penannular anomaly was found to be defined by a sequence of two superimposed ditch cuts (**Figure 6.4**; **Plate 3**). The earlier was numbered **406**. This measured 1.8m wide by 0.5m deep, and had a broad, flared, 'U'-shaped profile. A small assemblage of pottery (5 pieces/79g) and animal bone (17 pieces/79g) was recovered from its very dark brownish grey sandy clay fill. The pottery comprised fragments of grey ware jars of late 1st- to 2nd-century AD date.

4.5.3 Ditch **406** had been cut on its north-western side by ditch **408**. This measured 1.2m wide by 0.39m deep, with a bowl-shaped profile containing very dark grey silty clay. Ditch **408** was the most bone-rich feature recorded during the evaluation: 80 pieces, 1531g. Other finds comprised an iron nail and a small mixed assemblage (15 pieces/324g) of Romano-British pottery of mid- to late 2nd-century AD date.

4.5.4 The penannular ditch is thought to represent either a ring-shaped livestock enclosure, or more probably a ring-gully relieving the drainage around the site of a (now vanished) roundhouse. This is discussed further in section 7 below.

4.5.5 An area of disturbed gravelly mid-grey/brown silt was recorded in the central part of the trench (**410**). This was 0.2m deep, although its full extent in plan was somewhat indistinct. No finds were recovered. This feature was somewhat vague and its interpretation is uncertain, although it did correspond with one of the amorphous geophysical signals lying within the area enclosed by the penannular ditch.

4.5.6 At the southern end of the trench, ditch **404** corresponded with the broad, north-east to south-west aligned linear geophysical anomaly. This measured approximately 7.3m wide, and a machine dug sondage was excavated to a depth of 1.4m deep. Fill **405** was a dark grey silty sandy clay, which contained a small assemblage of animal bone (3 pieces/30g) and pottery (5 pieces/30g). The pottery comprised undiagnostic Roman sherds and coarsely gritted earlier prehistoric material. Discussions with the landowner suggest that this may represent an infilled post medieval water channel leading to a nearby pond. The fill representing the remains of a bank beside the channel.

4.6 Trench 5

4.6.1 Trench 5 lay close to the eastern Site boundary and was positioned to intercept linear enclosure-related anomalies (**Figure 4**). Ditch **503** crossed the central portion of the trench and corresponded with a prominent north-east to south-west aligned geophysical anomaly. Upon excavation the feature was found to be 1.47m wide by 0.25m deep with an irregular dish-shaped profile (**Figure 6.5**). It contained a single fill of mid-brown silty clay from which four sherds (23g) of Romano-British pottery were recovered.

4.6.2 The other feature recorded within Trench 5 had no corresponding geophysical signature. It lay 5.8m to the south of ditch **503**, and appeared to share its alignment. Numbered **505**, this second feature also resembled a ditch, continuing as it did beyond the eastern and western edges of the trench. Upon excavation the feature was found to be 1.3m wide by 0.15m deep with a similarly irregular dish-shaped profile, and identical mid-brown silty clay. No finds were present within ditch **505**, however.

4.7 Trench 6

4.7.1 Trench 6 was positioned to investigate a concentration of geophysical anomalies, including a large penannular geophysical anomaly (*c.* 21m dia.), traces of a superimposed rectilinear enclosure, and various, more amorphous signals (**Figure 5**). Correspondingly, Trench 6 was found to contain the densest cluster of archaeological features of all the excavated trenches.

4.7.2 Both the north-eastern and north-western sides of the penannular feature were exposed in the Trench 6, where they were numbered **607** and **605** respectively.

4.7.3 The width of the penannular feature varied between 1.2m and 1.3m, and it attained a maximum depth of 0.5m. Both interventions recorded a similar flared profile (**Figure 7.6**; **Plate 4**). Some variation was apparent in the fills: within slot **607** the fill was a dark blueish brown clay, contrasting with the pale orangeish brown silty clay recorded in slot **605**.

4.7.4 Ninety-nine fragments of animal bone weighing 508g were recovered from the north-eastern slot (**607**) with a further seven fragments (88g) coming from the north-western slot (**605**). All of the pottery assemblage (28 fragments/268g) from the penannular feature came from the north-eastern slot (**607**) and comprised a small group of shell-gritted sherds of Late Iron Age date.

4.7.5 Slots **605** and **607** lay either side of ditch **603**, which crossed the trench on a north-south alignment. Excavation established that ditch **603** was 0.92m wide by 0.38m deep with a concave, bowl-shaped profile (**Figure 7.7**). Twenty-four fragments of animal bone and one piece of fired clay were recovered from its sole fill of mid-brownish grey silty clay. Ditch **603** correlated with a prominent linear geophysical anomaly forming the western edge of a large rectangular enclosure.

4.7.6 The terminal of a north-east to south-west aligned gully was recorded some 3.5m to the east of ditch **603**. This was at least 1.05m in length, and continued beyond the northern limit of excavation. The feature, numbered **614**, was 0.4m wide by 0.1m deep, with no finds recovered from its dark brown clay loam fill. This feature was one of the few exposed in the evaluation trenching that did not have a corresponding geophysical signature.

4.7.7 A north-west to south-east linear anomaly was seen crossing the central part of the trench. Upon excavation it was found to consist of two parallel cuts. Ditch **612** was the earlier; it had been cut on its south-western side by ditch **610**. Both features contained similar dark brown silty clay fills and were around 0.35m deep, with concave profiles (**Plate 5**). Twenty fragments of bone (605g) and seven fragments of pottery (71g) were recovered from the earlier ditch (**612**). The pottery was shell-gritted ware of Iron Age date. The later ditch was artefactually sterile. On the basis of the geophysical evidence, this feature would appear to be a subsidiary enclosure ditch related to the penannular feature in Trench 6, which also produced Iron Age ceramics.

4.7.8 A large pit-like geophysical anomaly was investigated at the eastern end of Trench 6. Within the trench this measured 6m east-west. Two sondages were dug into the feature, one on its western side and one on its eastern side. Within the western sondage, numbered **616**, the pit was over 0.65m deep, with a reasonably gentle profile. A sequence of three fills was recorded: a 0.15m thick deposit of stony dark grey clay, overlain by a 0.28m-thick deposit of dark yellow clay, sealed by an uppermost fill of dark grey brown clay, 0.18m thick. An incomplete T-shaped brooch of mid- to late 1st-century AD date was recovered from the uppermost fill. Sixteen sherds of pottery (124g) were recovered from pit **616**; these were largely undiagnostic Romano-British sherds, although a rolled rim jar dating from the mid- to late 2nd century AD was present.

4.7.9 Within the eastern sondage, numbered **620**, the pit contained a dark, mottled yellow grey clay, and was just 0.2m deep, again with a reasonably gentle profile. A small assemblage of undiagnostic Romano-British pottery (14 pieces/94g), including grey ware and oxidised sherds, was recovered from this portion of the pit, along with ten fragments of animal bone (183g).

4.7.10 Finally, a small posthole, **622**, was recorded cutting the eastern edge of the pit. This was 0.4m in diameter by 0.3m deep, with a single fill of dark, mottled yellow grey clay found to contain a single shell-gritted sherd of potential Romano-British date.

4.8 Trench 7

4.8.1 Three linear features were recorded crossing Trench 7, with each corresponding to one of the trio of geophysical anomalies that the ditch was positioned to investigate (**Figure 5**).

4.8.2 The northern ditch was numbered **708** and formed part of the northern boundary of a large rectangular enclosure visible on the geophysical survey. Upon excavation ditch **708** was found to be 1.6m wide by 0.28m deep with a shallow, irregular dish-shaped profile (**Figure 7.9**). It contained a single deposit of stony greyish brown silty clay, from which an assemblage of animal bone, pottery and glass was recovered. The pottery (18 pieces/168g) is of Early Roman-British date. The glass (two small fragments possibly belonging to the same vessel) is also of Romano-British date, but the fragments are too small to assign a closer date range.

4.8.3 The central feature within Trench 7, numbered **706**, ran on a north-east to south-west alignment and was 0.97m wide. Upon excavation it was found to be 0.29m deep with a bowl-shaped profile. It contained a single deposit of very dark grey silty clay which was found to contain one scrap of potentially Iron Age handmade pottery.

4.8.4 The southern ditch within Trench 7 was numbered **704**. It was 0.5m wide by 0.25m deep with a concave bowl-shaped profile containing a single fill of mid-grey brown silty clay. A few small fragments of animal bone (16 pieces/69g) and three pieces of fired clay were recovered from this feature.

4.8.5 Ditch **704** ran on a perpendicular alignment to ditch **706**, with the two possibly forming part of a contemporary scheme of land division.

4.9 Trench 8

4.9.1 Three broadly north-south aligned archaeological features were seen crossing Trench 8 (**Figure 5**). The westernmost feature matched the location of a curvilinear geophysical anomaly likely to represent a further large (*c.* 18m dia.), albeit fragmentary, penannular ditch. The feature was numbered **804**, and was 0.5m wide. Excavation revealed it to have a maximum depth of 0.2m, and a broad, flared profile similar to the other ring-gullies investigated during the evaluation (**Figure 7.8**). A small assemblage of animal bone (four pieces/11g) was recovered from the mid-yellowish brown silty clay fill ditch of **804**.

4.9.2 The central and easternmost of the three features within Trench 8 corresponded with the eastern boundary of a large rectangular enclosure detected by the geophysical survey. The central feature was numbered **806**, and was 0.4m wide. Excavation revealed it to have a maximum depth of 0.14m, with no finds recovered from its dark brown silty clay fill (**Plate 6**). The easternmost feature, **808**, lay some 7m to the east of ditch **806**. Ditch **808** measured 0.7m wide by 0.39m deep (**Figure 7.10**; **Plate 7**). The artefactual assemblage from the dark brown clay fill comprised seven fragments (9g) of animal bone.

4.9.3 Ditches **806** and **808** may represent the redefinition of the eastern side of the large rectangular enclosure, although the relative date of the two features cannot be established, and so it is uncertain whether the enclosure expanded or contracted over time. Alternatively, the eastern side of the rectangular enclosure may have been marked by a double-ditched boundary.

5 ARTEFACTUAL EVIDENCE

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The evaluation has produced a finds assemblage of moderate size, in a restricted range of material types, dominated by animal bone and pottery. The date range of the assemblage is Iron Age to Romano-British, with a small amount of modern material.

5.1.2 All finds have been quantified by material type within each context, and the results are presented in **Table 1**.

5.2 Pottery

5.2.1 An archive for the pottery has been produced to comply with the requirements of the Study Group for Roman Pottery (Darling 2004) using codes and system developed by the City of Lincoln Archaeological Unit and those used by the author for the south of the county (Darling and Precious 2014; Davies 1995; Precious 2001; Rowlandson 2014) augmented by the codes for vessel attributes established by Knight (1998). Tables 2 and 3 summarise fabrics and forms, while a tabulated summary by context is presented in Table 4. The date provided represent the pottery recorded here: the main text of the report and other specialist contributions should be consulted to ascertain the overall date attributed to each context. It is recommended that this pottery should be deposited with the relevant local museum along with the rest of the archive. In the event of further work on the Site the pottery from this evaluation ought to be integrated into any final report.

5.2.2 One hundred and forty-three sherds from a maximum of 63 vessels (2.770kg, RE1.78) were retrieved. The pottery present ranged in date from a mid-to late Iron Age Scored ware jar from ring-gully **305** and a late Iron Age bead rimmed jar from ring-gully **607** to a range of early to mid- Roman groups. No evidence of 3rd- to 4th-century AD activity was evident. The majority of pottery was recovered from ditches and, with the exception of a group of sherds from a single vessel (ring-gully **305**), none of the contexts contained in excess of 25 sherds.

5.2.3 A typical range of Iron Age shell-gritted wares was retrieved, including some examples with punctate brachiopod shells and a number also including grog or clay pellets. Few vessels had distinctive features, with the exception of the Scored ware from ring-gully **305** and the bead rimmed jar from ring-gully **607**.

5.2.4 The only fine ware present was a colour-coated bag-shaped beaker from ring-gully **408**. Small quantities of light-fired white wares, white-slipped wares and oxidised wares were also present. The majority of the Roman pottery retrieved could be attributed to grey ware fabrics including types typical of early Roman activity in Southern Lincolnshire and the Nene Valley (NVGY and NVGYS) along with a group of unsourced grey wares, presumably from local sources (GREY). The forms present were almost exclusively jars including rusticated types, necked jars including wide-mouthed necked types. Smaller quantities of wheel-made grey wares with grog-grits (GROG) including a jar with a rolled rim and earlier mixed gritted wares (IAGR) were also found.

5.2.5 On the basis of this assemblage it appears likely that there was Iron Age and Roman occupation until the end of the 2nd century AD on the Site although it is difficult to infer more on the basis of this small assemblage.

5.3 Ceramic building material (CBM)

5.3.1 Forty-four fragments of CBM from gully **708** are likely to represent modern drainpipe.

5.4 Fired clay

5.4.1 Four fragments of fired clay were recovered. This includes one large fragment from ring-gully **305** with possible wattle impressions; all four fragments are likely to be of structural origin.

5.5 Glass

5.5.1 Two small fragments of glass from gully **708** are of pale blue vessel glass of Romano-British date, and could belong to the same vessel. One fragment, from a convex body, carries part of a tooled rib. The fragments could belong to a convex jug (e.g. Price and Cottam 1998, figs. 66 and 71), but the fragments are too small to identify definitively, and thus to assign a closer date range.

5.6 Metalwork

5.6.1 The metalwork comprises one copper alloy and two iron objects. The copper alloy object is a brooch, an incomplete hinged T-shaped brooch with the catchplate and pin missing. The type falls within the range of Colchester-derivative brooches, and has a date range in this country of mid- to late 1st century AD (Bayley and Butcher 2004, 157, fig. 127).

5.6.2 The iron objects are both nails, both handmade with large, flat heads of irregular shape, and with off-centre shanks.

5.7 Animal bone

5.7.1 A total of 317 fragments (or 3.821kg) of animal bone was recovered from the Site, once conjoins are taken into account this falls slightly to 241 fragments (Table 5). Animal bone was recovered from Iron Age and Romano-British features located in Trenches 1–4 and 6–8 of the evaluation. Most (74%) of the bones were recovered by hand during the normal course of excavation, the rest were retrieved from the sieved residues of ten bulk soil samples.

Results

5.7.2 Bone preservation varies from good to fair but is generally consistent within individual contexts. Gnaw marks were observed on just six fragments. Approximately 22% of fragments are identifiable to species and skeletal element. Cattle bones are common and a relatively large concentration was recovered from ditch **408**. The bones from this feature include the mandibles from two senile cattle (mandibular wear stage (or MWS) = I, after Halstead 1985). Sheep/goat is the second most abundant species and recovered bones came from both adults and lambs (MWS = C and G, after Payne 1973). Pig and horse are represented by one specimen each. The pig proximal metacarpal and horse mandible fragments both came from ditch **607**.

Conclusions

5.7.3 The assessment results indicate that bone preservation is good across the proposed development area therefore any future mitigation strategy has the potential to recover a larger and more informative assemblage that should provide some insight into the nature of the local livestock economy during the Iron Age and Romano-British periods.

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

Context	Animal Bone	Metal (No.)	Pottery	Other Finds
105	4/8			
209	11/29			
306	2/5		29/1579	1 fired clay
405	3/30		5/30	
407	17/79		5/79	
409	80/1531	1 Fe	15/324	
504			4/23	
601		1 Fe		
604	24/648			1 fired clay
605	7/88			
607	38/51		5/16	
608	61/457		23/252	
611	3/6			
613	20/605		7/71	
617		1 Cu	3/20	
618			6/49	
619	9/10		7/55	
621	10/183		14/94	
623			1/7	
705	16/69			3 fired clay
707			1/3	
709	1/1		18/168	2 glass; 44 CBM
805	4/11			
809	7/9			
Total	*317/3821*	*2 Fe; 1 Cu*	*143/2770*	

CBM = ceramic building material; Cu = copper alloy; Fe = iron

Table 2: Pottery fabric summary

Fabric code	Fabric group	Fabric details	Sherd	Sherd %	Weight (g)	Weight %	Total RE %
CC1	Fine	Colour coated fabric 1	4	2.74%	16	0.58%	30
CR	Oxidised	Roman cream wares (various)	1	0.68%	9	0.32%	0
OX	Oxidised	Misc. oxidized wares	2	1.37%	3	0.11%	0
OX?	Oxidised	Misc. oxidised wares	1	0.68%	3	0.11%	0
OXWS	Oxidised	Oxidized with white slip	3	2.05%	19	0.68%	0
GREY	Reduced	Miscellaneous grey wares	33	22.60%	303	10.90%	53
GROG	Reduced	Grog-tempered wares	9	6.16%	129	4.64%	34
IAGR	Reduced	Native tradition/transitional grit-tempered wares	5	3.42%	32	1.15%	7
NVGY	Reduced	Earlier Nene Valle grey ware	9	6.16%	92	3.31%	34
NVGYS	Reduced	As NVGY with rare shell	3	2.05%	197	7.09%	13
IALIM	Calcareous	Iron Age Limestone tempered	2	1.37%	17	0.61%	0
IAOOL1	Calcareous	Iron Age- Early Roman oolitic gritted fine wares	1	0.68%	28	1.01%	7
IASH1	Calcareous	Iron Age Shell Gritted: Site Fabric 1	22	15.07%	224	8.06%	0
IASH3	Calcareous	Iron Age Shell Gritted; Site Fabric 3	41	28.08%	1666	59.93%	0
IASH7	Calcareous	Iron Age Shell Gritted: Site Fabric 7	5	3.42%	16	0.58%	0
SHEL	Calcareous	Miscellaneous undifferentiated shell-tempered	2	1.37%	10	0.36%	0
IAGROG	Grog	Iron Age Grog tempered wares	1	0.68%	6	0.22%	0

Table 3: Pottery form summary

Form	Form Type	Form Description	Sherd	Sherd %	Weight (g)	Weight %	Total RE %
BKEV	Beaker	Everted rim	4	2.74%	16	0.58%	30
BCAR	Bowl	Carinated	4	2.74%	25	0.90%	0
CLSD	Closed	Form	53	36.30%	446	16.04%	0
J	Jar	Unclassified form	10	6.85%	78	2.81%	0
JBR	Jar	Bead rimmed	1	0.68%	28	1.01%	7
JCUR	Jar	Curved	3	2.05%	30	1.08%	15
JEV	Jar	Everted rim	1	0.68%	9	0.32%	7
JL	Jar	Large	30	20.55%	1617	58.17%	12
JNK	Jar	Necked	2	1.37%	46	1.65%	37
JRUST	Jar	Rusticated	3	2.05%	60	2.16%	0
JWM	Jar	Wide-mouthed as RPNV 3-5	4	2.74%	216	7.77%	17
JBK	Jar/Beaker	Small jar or beaker	9	6.16%	53	1.91%	3
JBKNK	Jar/Beaker	Necked	1	0.68%	6	0.22%	10
JBKBR	Jar/Bowl	Bead-rim	2	1.37%	23	0.83%	15
JBL	Jar/Bowl	Large	2	1.37%	35	1.26%	0
JBNK	Jar/Bowl	Necked	2	1.37%	27	0.97%	25
-	Unknown	Form uncertain	15	10.27%	65	2.34%	0

Table 4: Iron Age and Roman pottery dating summary

F No	F Type	Context	Spot date	Comments	Sherd	Weight (g)	Total RE %
305	Ring-gully	306	MLIA	Fragments from a single shell-gritted scored ware jar.	29	1579	0
404	Linear	405	Roman	A small group including a fragment from a jar with everted rim and coarsely gritted earlier prehistoric sherds.	5	30	7
406	Ditch	407	L1-2	Fragments from grey ware necked jars.	5	79	41
408	Ring-gully	409	ML2	Fragments from a bag-shaped colour-coated beaker, a grey ware rusticated jar and a wide mouthed necked jar.	15	324	43
503	Ditch	504	E Rom	Small sherds from sample no. 10.	4	23	0
607	Ring-gully	607	IA	Shell-gritted sherds from a single vessel.	5	16	0
607	Ring-gully	608	LIA	A small group of shell-gritted sherds including a fragment from a jar with a bead rim.	23	252	7
612	Ditch	613	IA	A small group of shell-gritted sherds.	7	71	0
616	Pit	617	Roman	A small group including the rim from a grey ware jar.	3	20	7
616	Pit	618	ML2+	A small group including a fragment from a jar with a rolled rim.	6	49	15
616	Pit	619	Roman	A small group of grey ware and shell-gritted sherds.	7	55	0
620	Pit	621	Roman	A small group including grey ware and oxidised sherds.	14	94	12
622	Post hole	623	Roman?	A single shell-gritted sherd.	1	7	0
706	Ditch	707	IA?	A single handmade sherd.	1	3	0
708	Ditch	709	E Rom/ modern	A small group including fragments from a necked grey ware jar and a bead-rimmed jar. Also present were a large number of fragments from a modern drain in a light-fired fabric probably from an intrusive feature.	18	168	46

Table 5: Animal bone: number of identified specimens present (or NISP)

Species	Iron Age and Romano-British
cattle	30
sheep/goat	20
pig	3
horse	1
Total identified	*54*
Total unidentifiable	*187*
Overall total	*241*

6 ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 A series of sixteen bulk samples was taken from a range of ditches and gullies of Iron Age and Romano-British date to evaluate the presence and preservation of

palaeoenvironmental remains. The samples were processed for the recovery and assessment of charred plant remains and charcoal. Three of these samples were also sub-sampled and processed for the recovery and assessment of waterlogged remains.

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 recorded in Table 6. 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, page 28 and 5, page 65), for cereals.

6.2.2 The flots were generally large with moderate to high numbers of roots and modern seeds. The charred material evinced varying degrees of preservation.

6.2.3 The charred plant assemblages were relatively small in all of the trenches. The cereal remains included hulled wheat, emmer or spelt (*Triticum dicoccum/spelta*), grain, glume base and spikelet fork fragments and barley (*Hordeum vulgare*) grain fragments. The weed seeds included seeds of docks (*Rumex* sp.), vetch/wild pea (*Vicia/Lathyrus* sp.), oat/brome grass (*Avena/Bromus* sp.), bedstraw and (*Galium* sp.). Other remains included hazelnut (Corylus avellana) shell fragments, sloe (Prunus spinosa) stone fragments, a tuber of false oat-grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius var. bulbosum*) and monocotyledon stem fragments.

6.2.4 The assemblages are compatible with Iron Age and Romano-British date and appear to be indicative of settlement waste and activities in the general area. The weed seeds are typical of grassland, field margins and arable environment. There is some evidence for hedgerow/scrub/woodland edge 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 Table 6. High numbers of charcoal fragments greater than 2mm were recovered from ditch **103** in Trench 1 and ring-gully **607** in Trench 6. The assemblages included mature wood fragments.

6.4 Waterlogged plant remains

6.4.1 Sub-samples of 1 litre were taken from bulk samples from ring-gully **406** in Trench 4, from enclosure ditch **603** in Trench 6 and from ditch **706** in Trench 7 and were processed for the recovery of waterlogged remains. Laboratory flotation was undertaken with flots retained on a 0.25mm mesh and residues on a 0.5mm mesh. The flots were visually inspected under a x10 to x40 stereo-binocular microscope to determine if waterlogged material occurred.

6.4.2 No waterlogged material was present within these samples.

6.5 Land and aquatic molluscs

6.5.1 Mollusc shells were noted in eight of the bulk samples. These were assessed to provide some information about shell preservation and species representation. Nomenclature is according to Anderson (2005) and habitat preferences according to Kerney (1999) and

Davies (2008). The presence of these shells may aid in broadly characterising the nature of the wider landscape.

6.5.2 The mollusc assemblage recorded from ring-gully **305** in Trench 3 included shells of the open country species *Vallonia excentrica, Vallonia costata, Vertigo pygmaea* and *Pupilla muscorum*, and the intermediate species *Trochulus hispidus*.

6.5.3 The mollusc assemblages recovered from ring-gully **406** in Trench 4 included shells of the open country species *Vallonia excentrica, Vallonia costata* and *Pupilla muscorum*, and the intermediate species *Trochulus hispidus*.

6.5.4 There is some variation within the assemblages observed in the samples from enclosure ditches within Trench 6. The assemblage from enclosure ditch **603** included shells of the open-country species *Vallonia excentrica* and *Vallonia costata*, the intermediate species *Trochulus hispidus* and *Cochlicopa* sp., the shade-loving species *Aegopinella nitidula* and *Merdigera obscura*, and the amphibious species *Galba truncatula*. The assemblage from ring-gully **607** included shells of the open-country species *Vallonia excentrica, Vallonia costata* and *Vertigo pygmaea*, the intermediate species *Trochulus hispidus* and *Cepaea* sp., the shade-loving species *Merdigera obscura*, and the aquatic species *Galba truncatula* and *Radix balthica*. The more limited assemblage from enclosure pit **616** included shells of the open-country species *Vallonia excentrica* and *Vallonia costata*, the intermediate species *Trochulus hispidus,* and the amphibious species *Galba truncatula*. *Galba truncatula* 'inhabits marshy grassland, shallow ephemeral ponds, roadside trickles, flushes and dune slacks' while *Radix balthica* 'occurs in aquatic habitats of all kinds from the richest rivers and canals to the meanest ephemeral ponds and ditches and can withstand seasonal desiccation' (Kerney 1999).

6.5.5 The small mollusc assemblage recorded from gully **704** included shells of *Vallonia* excentrica and *Vallonia costata*.

6.5.6 These mollusc assemblages appear to be reflective of a generally well-established open landscape with some areas of shade such as longer grass, hedgerow, scrub or woodland in the vicinity of Trench 6. There is also evidence in the same area for the presence an aquatic environment, most likely one of long damp grass with seasonal flooding and desiccation.

6.6 Further potential

Charred plant remains

6.6.1 The analysis of the charred plant assemblages has very limited potential to provide information on the nature of the settlement, the surrounding environment and local agricultural practices and crop husbandry techniques due to the relatively small quantities of remains within the assemblages. No further work is proposed on these samples.

Wood charcoal

6.6.2 The analysis of the wood charcoal has the potential to provide some limited information on the species composition, management and exploitation of the local woodland resource on the Site. No further work is proposed on these samples.

Land and aquatic molluscs

6.6.3 Detailed analysis of the mollusc assemblages has a small potential to provide further limited information on the nature of the local landscape and aquatic environment. No further work is proposed on these samples.

Table 6: 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 1 - Ditches												
103	105	15	32	175	65	B	C	Hulled wheat + barley grain frags, glume base frags	B	*Rumex, Vicia/Lathyrus*	10/25 ml	-
106	107	16	27	100	65	-	-	-	-	-	10/10 ml	-
Trench 2 - Ditch												
208	209	14	36	200	70	C	B	Indet grain frags, glume base + spikelet fork frags	-	-	5/5 ml	-
Trench 3 - Ring-gully												
305	306	17	30	175	70	-	-	-	-	stems	0/2 m l	Moll-t (A)
Trench 4 - Ring-gully												
406	407	12	25	175	70	B	-	Barley grain frags	B	*Vicia/Lathyrus, Galium, Avena/Bromus,* sloe stone frag, stems	3/5 ml	Moll-t (A)
	407	12 W	1	10	50	-	-	-	-	-	0/<1 ml	Moll-t (C)
Trench 5 - Ditch												
503	504	10	39	175	75	C	-	Barley grain frag	-	-	5/5 ml	-
Trench 6 - Enclosure ditches, ring-gully and pit												
603	604	6	33	175	75	C	-	Barley grain frag	-	-	5/10 ml	Moll-t (A), Moll-f (C)
	604	6 W	1	15	50	-	-	-	-	-	1/1 ml	Moll-t (C)
605	606	7	28	175	75	C	-	Hulled wheat + barley grain frags	C	*Avena/Bromus*	2/3 ml	-
607	608	9	34	250	75	C	-	Hulled wheat + barley grain frags	C	*Corylus avellana* shell frag, *Galium*, stem frags	25/20 ml	Moll-t (A), Moll-f (A)
616	618	13	29	130	70	C	-	Barley grain frags	-	-	10/10 ml	Moll-t (A), Moll-f (A)
Trench 7 - Ditches												
706	707	1	31	200	75	-	-	-	-	-	2/3 ml	-
	707	1 W	1	15	50	-	-	-	-	-	0/<1 ml	-
708	709	5	27	175	80	-	-	-	C	*Avena/Bromus, Arrhenatherum*	5/7 ml	-
Trench 7 - Gully												
704	705	2	39	225	75	C	C	Indet. grain frag, glume base frags	C	*Corylus avellana* shell frag	3/7 ml	Moll-t (C)
Trench 8 - Enclosure ditch												
808	809	3	23	150	75	-	-	-	C	*Corylus avellana* shell frag	2/5 ml	-
Trench 8 - Enclosure ditches and ring-gully												
804	805	4	38	175	75	C	-	Indet. grain frag	C	*Avena/Bromus*	2/3 ml	-

Feature	Context	Sample	Vol (L)	Flot size	Roots %	Grain	Chaff	Cereal Notes	Charred Other	Notes for Table	Charcoal > 4/2mm	Other
806	807	8	36	225	75	-	-	-	C	*Galium*	<1/2 ml	-

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

7 DISCUSSION

7.1 Summary

7.1.1 The south-eastern part of the Site contains an unenclosed farmstead dating from the Late Iron Age to the Early/Mid-Romano-British period. Archaeological traces of this chiefly comprise large-diameter ring-gullies and a group of linear and curvilinear ditches. It is thought the ring-gullies probably drained the sites of former roundhouses (of which no direct traces were apparent), with the other ditches representing a sequence of agricultural enclosures, probably related to stock-handling. The remains appear to be plough-truncated. The artefactual assemblage is unexceptional, and there is no evidence that the Site is of any particular palaeoenvironmental significance. Overall, the remains are fairly typical for the period and region, although the large diameter of the ring-gullies is unusual. The Site has some potential to make a limited contribution to established research aims.

7.2 General

7.2.1 The remains excavated in the trenches show a high degree of correlation with the geophysical anomalies. The combined results of the trench evaluation and the geophysical survey demonstrate that the south-east part of the Site contains a concentration of archaeological remains dating from the Late Iron Age to the Early/Mid-Romano-British period. Features present upon the Site chiefly comprise boundary ditches forming part of an evolving pattern of enclosures – probably for livestock handling – along with large penannular ditches.

7.2.2 Up to five examples of the latter class of feature were revealed. From their form in plan and the presence of gaps in their eastern or south-eastern portions, they would appear to represent ring-gullies related to former roundhouses. The diameter of the areas enclosed by the ring-gullies varies between 13m and 21m, positioning them at the upper end of the range of known examples (Pope 2003, 101-6; Glover, Flintoft and Moore, in prep.).

7.2.3 Therefore, on account of their large size, the penannular ditches are not thought to be structural/load-bearing elements themselves, but were probably dug to relieve the drainage around the former sites of roundhouses. In addition, the generally shallow and flared profile of the ring-gully cuts (**Figures 6.3-4** and **7.6-7**;**Plates 2-4**) suggests that they do not represent foundation trenches (for a post ring or similar) but that they had a drainage function instead. Such features may have also served to protect the roof thatch from grazing livestock (Pope 2003). Of the roundhouses themselves, no direct traces were apparent.

7.2.4 An alternative interpretation for the penannular ditches, prompted by their unusually large size and absence of any structural details, would be that they functioned as circular stock corrals. This is thought less likely, however, as their characteristics best match those of roundhouse drainage gullies.

7.2.5 Overall, the range of feature-types was limited, with, for instance, no burials, hearths, industrial features, or occupation surfaces apparent during the evaluation, and only a handful of pits and postholes recorded.

7.2.6 Pottery and (with less precision) the morphology of the archaeological features provide the dating evidence. Activity on the Site occurred between the Late Iron Age and Early/Mid-Romano-British period. In some instances, such as the apparent

superimposition of the large rectangular enclosure on the ring-gully in Trench 6, a radical reorganisation of the layout of the Site can be seen to have occurred. More often, apparently later features appear to respect pre-existing elements, suggesting that the use of space developed gradually and incrementally over time. There is insufficient evidence to fit the remains into either a predetermined 'Iron Age phase' or 'Romano-British phase', and the layout of the Site suggests that such an exercise would be misrepresentative in any case.

7.2.7 The shallowness of the excavated features and the absence of any occupation spreads or working surfaces suggest the state of preservation is not particularly high, with the Site seemingly showing the effects of plough truncation.

7.2.8 The finds assemblage from the Site is of modest size. The recovered items are essentially utilitarian with a restricted range of materials present. The animal bone assemblage is relatively small (317 fragments/3.821kg). Cattle bone predominates, with a lesser amount of sheep/goat and one fragment each of pig and horse. In this the assemblage conforms to expectations.

7.2.9 The environmental remains overall reflect a well-established open landscape, with grassland and field margins. There is some evidence for damper conditions and hedgerow/scrub/woodland edge in the vicinity. There were indications for arable agriculture, with cereal remains sparse but widespread within the bulk samples. The results of the palaeoenvironmental assessment record that waterlogged or other conditions conducive to organic preservation did not exist within the sampled deposits, and the Site is seemingly of no particular palaeoenvironmental significance.

7.2.10 The archaeology of Lincolnshire reveals that, by the Late Iron Age, the landscape was reasonably well settled, with farmsteads and field systems commonly occurring. The settlement hierarchy of the county shows some degree of sophistication, with large proto - urban centres at Dragonby and Sleaford, the latter reasonably near to the Site, lying less than 20km to its north-east. At this time, however, the majority of the population lived in small farming settlements dispersed fairly extensively over the landscape, and the Site appears to be such a lower order farmstead.

7.2.11 In closer proximity to the Site, there are indications of Iron Age settlement around 2km to the north-east and north-west of the Site (earthworks at Burgh Banks (HER34015) and cropmarks near Little Ponton (HER 36289)), with substantial Iron Age and Romano-British settlement remains excavated at Colsterworth and Saltersford.

7.2.12 Continuity of settlement into the Romano-British period is common for such sites (Willis 2006, 110), although this was not prolonged here. Evidence on the Site suggests that activity did not extend into the second half of the Romano-British period. It is possible that the Site's inhabitants moved elsewhere to better exploit the developing infrastructure and economic opportunities of the Roman province. Alternatively, the imposition of new local tenurial arrangements that potentially accompanied Imperial governance may have forced the abandonment of the Site. This is, however, speculative as the reasons for the apparent abandonment of the Site cannot be determined from the current evidence.

7.2.13 Overall, the combined results of the trench evaluation and the geophysical survey indicate that the Site has some potential to make a limited contribution to established research aims, namely those relating to the evolution of settlement hierarchies and intra-regional variations of field systems (Knight, Vyner and Allen 2012, 59), although the remains are fairly typical for the period and region (Willis 2006, 107).

7.3 Conclusions

7.3.1 From the foregoing discussion it will be appreciated that the trench evaluation achieved its aims and objectives.

8 STORAGE AND CURATION

8.1 Museum

8.1.1 It is recommended that the project archive resulting from the excavation be deposited with The Collection, administered by Lincolnshire County Council. The Council has agreed in principle to accept the project archive on completion of the project, under the accession code LNCC:2015.174. Deposition of any finds with the Museum will only be carried out with the full agreement of the landowner.

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 Lincolnshire County Council, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; CIfA 2014c; Brown 2011; ADS 2013).

8.2.2 All archive elements will be marked with the site and accession code (LNCC:2015.174), and a full index will be prepared. The physical archive comprises the following:

- one file/document case of paper records & A3/A4 graphics;
- one standard archive box of finds.

8.2.3 A copy of this report will be supplied to the Lincolnshire HER and uploaded to OASIS: **wessexar1-226118** (**Appendix 2**).

8.3 Discard policy

8.3.1 Wessex Archaeology follows the guidelines set out in Selection, Retention and Dispersal (Society of Museum Archaeologists 1993), which allows for the discard of selected artefact and ecofact categories which are not considered to warrant any future analysis. The pottery assemblage, however, should be retained *in toto*, as providing useful evidence for the local and regional ceramic sequence. Any discard of artefacts will be fully documented in the project archive.

8.3.2 The discard of environmental remains and samples follows nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1993; 1995; English Heritage 2011).

8.4 Security copy

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.

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10 APPENDICES

10.1 Appendix 1: Context descriptions by trench

Trench No. 1	Description:	Dimensions: 50 x 2.0m
Context No.		**Depth: 0.5m**
100	Topsoil – Friable mid-brown loamy sand with frequent stones and chalk	0 – 0.3m
101	Subsoil – Mid brown course silty clay. Frequent chalk and stones	0.3 – 0.04m
102	Natural – Variable sands	0.4m+
103	Cut of ditch – filled with 104 and 105	0.4 – 0.75m+
104	Lower fill of 103	0.4 – 0.75m
105	Upper fill of 103	0.4 – 0.75m
106	Cut of boundary dtich	?
107	Fill of 106	?

Trench No. 2	Description:	Dimensions: 50 x 1.85m
Context No.		**Depth: 0.4m**
201	Topsoil - Dark brown silty clay with occasional stones.	0 – 0.2m
202	Subsoil – Dark brown sandy clay with occasional flint inclusions	0.2 – 0.26m
203	Natural – Orange brown sandy clay	0.26m+
204	Cut of Gully ditch – Filled with 205	0.26 – 0.34m
205	Secondary fill of 204 – Mid black brown silty clay with occasional chalk and flint stones	0.26 – 0.36m
206	Cut of boundary ditch – Filled with 207	0.26 – 0.6m
207	Secondary fill of 206 – Grey orange sandy clay with occasional small angular stones	0.26 – 0.6m
208	Cut of ditch – Filled with 209	0.26 – 0.66m
209	Secondary fill of 208 – Mid greyish brown sandy clay with occasional rounded stone	0.26 – 0.66m

Trench No. 3	Description:	Dimensions: 50 x 1.8m
Context No.		**Depth: 0.45m**
300	Ploughsoil – Dark grey silty clay .	0 – 0.23m
301	Subsoil – Mid yellowish brown silty clay with occasional course gravel.	0.23 – 0.45m
302	Natural – Mid yellowish brown clay	0.45m+
303	Cut of possible feature – Filled with 304	0.1m
304	Secondary fill of 304 – Mid brown silty clay with frequent stone and flint peices. Animal bone	0.1m
305	Cut of ring-gully – Filled with 306	0.45m
306	Secondary fill of 305 – Mid orange brown silty clay with occasional medium gravel patches. Pottery and animal bone	0.45m
307	Cut of ring-gully – Filled with 308	0.5m
308	Secondary fill of 307 – Mid greyish brown silty clay with occasional small to large stones	0.5m

Trench No. 4	Description:	Dimensions: 50 x 1.85m
Context No.		**Depth: 0.66m**
401	Topsoil – Dark brownish grey silty clay with a few small pebbles.	0 – 0.34m
402	Subsoil – Light brownish grey silty clay with	0.34 – 0.46m

	few flint fragments	
403	Natural – Pale yellowish brown clay with frequent chalk and flint fragments	0.46m+
404	Cut of pit – filled with 405	1.2m+
405	Secondary fill of 404 – Dark grey silty clay with occasional sub rounded stones. Pottery and animal bone	1.2m+
406	Cut of ring-gully – filled with 407	0.49m
407	Secondary fill of 406 – Dark brownish grey sandy clay. Occasional chalk chunks. Pottery and bone	0.49m
408	Cut of ring-gully – Filled with 409	0.39m
409	Secondary fill of 408 – Dark grey silty clay with many large chunks of stone, flint and chalk. Pottery and bone	0.39m
410	Cut of quarry pit – Filled with 411 and 412	0.2m+
411	Secondary fill of 410 – Mid grey brown silt	0.1m
412	Primary fill of 411 – Frequent gravel inclusions	0.1m

Trench No. 5	**Description:**	**Dimensions: 50 x 2m**
Context No.		**Depth: 0.4m**
500	Topsoil – Mid black brown silty clay.	0 – 0.3m
501	Subsoil – Mid brown silty clay	0.3-0.4m
502	Natural – Mid yellow brown silty clay with many pieces of flint	0.4m+
503	Cut of small ditch, filled with 504	0.2m
504	Secondary fill of 503 – Mid-brown silt with 20% stone	0.2m
505	Cut of ditch – Filled with 506	0.15
506	Secondary fill of 505 – Mid-brown silt with 20% stone	0.15

Trench No. 6	**Description:**	**Dimensions: 50 x 1.8m**
Context No.		**Depth: 0.5m**
600	Topsoil – Dark brownish grey silty clay with infrequent medium gravel	0-0.32m
601	Subsoil – Mid yellowish brown silty clay clay with infrequent medium gravel	0.32-0.5m
602	Natural – Mid yellow brown clay with frequent medium and coarse gravel	0.5m+
603	Cut of ditch – Filled with 604	0.38m
604	Secondary fill of 603 – Mid-brownish grey silty clay with infrequent medium gravel	0.38m
605	Cut of ring-gully – Filled with 606	0.47m
606	Secondary fill of 605 – Pale brown silty clay with large subangular stone	0.47m
607	Cut of ring-gully – Filled with 608 and 609	0.5m
608	Secondary fill of 607 – Lower fill, dark blueish brown clay	0.5m
609	Tertiary fill of 607 – Upper fill, stony brownish yellow clay	0.5m
610	Cut of ditch – Filled with 611. Cuts 612	0.33m
611	Secondary fill of 610 – Dark yellowish brown silty clay with occasional subangular stones	0.33m
612	Cut of ditch – Filled with 613. Cut by 610.	0.4m
613	Secondary fill of 612 – Dark brown/black silty clay with occasional subangular stones	0.4m
614	Cut of gully terminal , filled with 615	0.1m
615	Secondary fill of 615 – Dark stony brown clay loam	0.1m
616	Cut of pit– Filled with 617, 618 and 619	0.65m+

617	Secondary fill of pit 616 – Uppermost fill, dark grey brown clay with occasional large stones	0.18m
618	Secondary fill of pit 616 – Central fill, dark yellow brown clay with occasional large stones	0.28m
619	Secondary fill of pit 616 – Basal fill, dark grey clay with frequent large stones	0.15m
620	Cut of pit/hollow. Filled with 621, cut by 622	0.2m
621	Backfill of pit/ hollow 620 – Dark mottled yellow grey clay with occasional large stones	0.2m
622	Cut of posthole. Filled with 623, cuts 620	0.3m
623	Secondary fill of posthole 622 – Dark mottled yellow grey clay with occasional large stones	0.3m

Trench No. 7	**Description:**	**Dimensions: 50 x 1.85m**
Context No.		**Depth: 0.38m**
701	Topsoil – Very dark grey sandy silt, infrequent stones	0 – 0.26m
702	Subsoil – Greyish brown clay	0.26 – 0.38m
703	Natural – Pale greyish brown clay with abundant stone inclusions, including flint and chalk	0.38m+
704	Cut of gully – Filled with 705	0.25m
705	Secondary fill of gully 704 – Mid-grey-brown silty clay with abundant stones	0.25m
706	Cut of enclosure ditch – Filled with 707	0.29m
707	Secondary fill of enclosure ditch 706 – Very dark grey silty clay with abundant stones	0.29m
708	Cut of ditch – Filled with 709	0.28m
709	Secondary fill of ditch 709 – Greyish brown silty clay with abundant stones	0.28m

Trench No. 8	**Description:**	**Dimensions: 50 x 1.85m**
Context No.		**Depth: 0.4m**
800	Topsoil – Dark brown clay loam.	0 – 0.3m
801	Subsoil – Yellow brown clay loam (mixed topsoil and natural)	0.3 – 0.4m
802	Natural – Mixed yellow brown and grey clays with flint and other stones	0.4m+
803	VOID	
804	Cut of ring-gully – Filled with 805	0.2m
805	Secondary fill of gully 804 – Mid-yellow brown silty clay with occasional stones	0.2m
806	Cut of gully – Filled with 807	0.14m
807	Secondary fill of gully 806 – Mid-brown black silty clay with occasional stones	0.14m
808	Cut of enclosure ditch – Filled with 809	0.39m
809	Secondary fill of enclosure ditch 808 – Dark brown clay	0.39m

10.2 Appendix 2: OASIS form

OASIS ID: wessexar1-226118

Project details

Project name	Proposed Solar Development, Mill Farm, Grantham, Lincolnshire
Short description of the project	Wessex Archaeology carried out a programme of archaeological evaluation trenching on land at Mill Farm, Grantham, Lincolnshire, in advance of the proposed construction of a new solar photovoltaic farm. A total of eight trenches were excavated across approximately 6ha of land. The trenches targeted anomalies thought likely to represent ditched field boundaries, which had been detected by an earlier geophysical survey. Generally, there was an excellent level of correspondence between the geophysical survey data and the remains revealed in the evaluation trenches. The combined results reveal that Site contains an unenclosed farmstead dating from the Late Iron Age to the Early/Mid-Romano-British period. Archaeological traces of this chiefly comprise up to five large-diameter (13m to 21m-diameter) ring-gullies and a group of linear and curvilinear ditches. It is thought the ring-gullies probably drained the sites of former roundhouses (of which no direct traces were apparent), with the other ditches representing a sequence of agricultural enclosures, probably related to stock-handling. The finds assemblage is of modest size with mostly utilitarian items in a limited range of materials present. The animal bone assemblage is relatively small and dominated by remains of cattle. Overall, the remains are fairly typical for the period and region, although the large diameter of the ring-gullies is unusual. The Site has some potential to make a limited contribution to established research aims.
Project dates	Start: 24-08-2015 End: 01-09-2015
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	110580 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	LNCC:2015.174 - Museum accession ID
Type of project	Field evaluation
Current Land use	Cultivated Land 3 - Operations to a depth more than 0.25m
Monument type	PIT Roman
Monument type	RING DITCH Late Iron Age
Monument type	DITCH Roman
Monument type	DITCH Late Iron Age
Significant Finds	POT Iron Age
Significant Finds	POT Roman
Significant Finds	BROOCH Roman
Methods & techniques	"Targeted Trenches"
Development type	Not recorded

Development type	Solar farm
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Position in the planning process	Pre-application

Project location

Country	England
Site location	LINCOLNSHIRE SOUTH KESTEVEN GREAT PONTON Proposed Solar Development, Mill Farm, Grantham, Lincolnshire
Postcode	NG33 5DW
Study area	6 Hectares
Site coordinates	SK 949300 312100 52.869653627306 -0.589533459247 52 52 10 N 000 35 22 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 110m Max: 118m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Wessex Archaeology
Project brief originator	with advice from County Archaeologist
Project design originator	Wessex Archaeology
Project director/manager	Chris Swales
Project supervisor	Ashley Tuck
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Island Green Power

Project archives

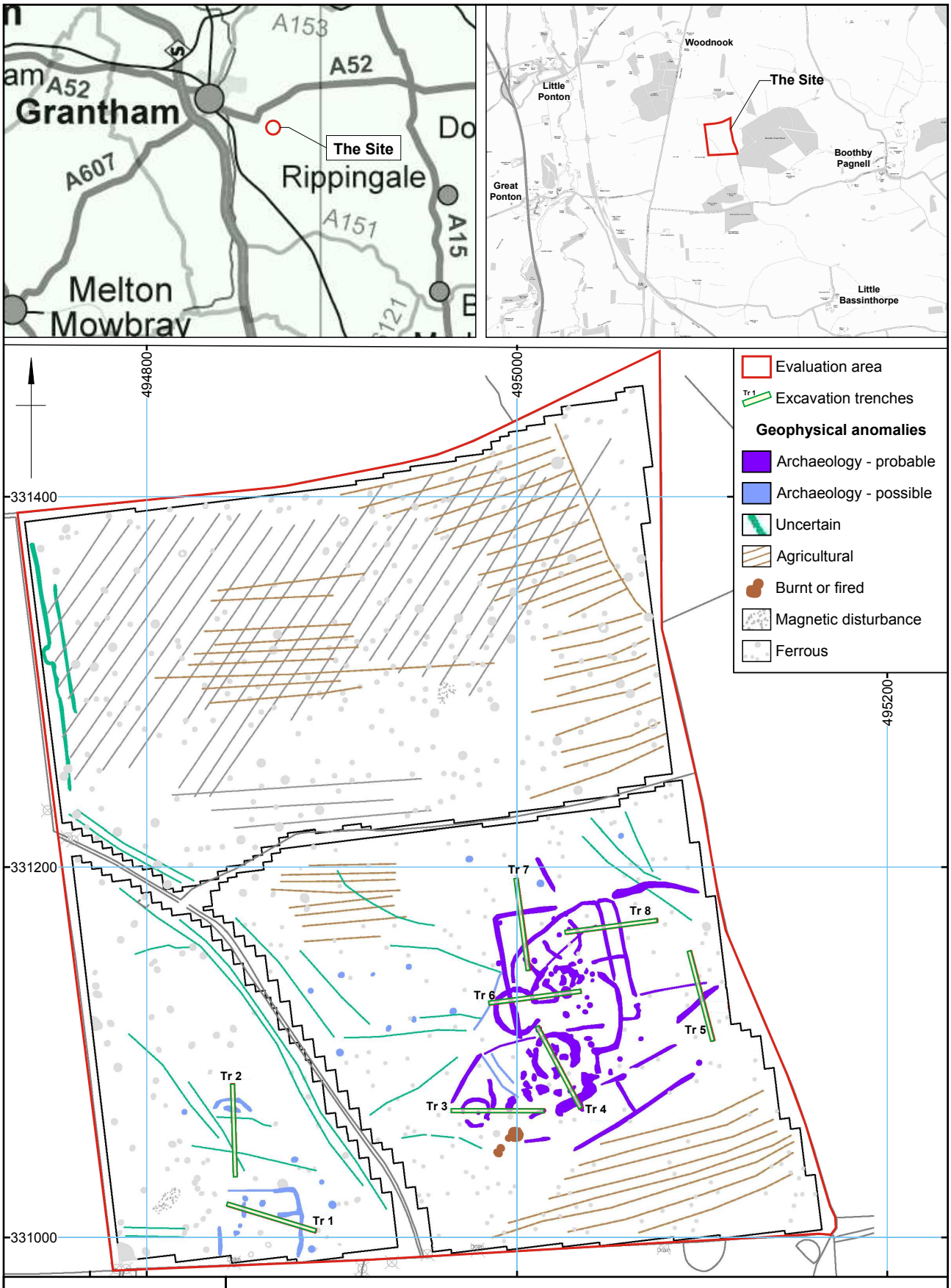
Physical Archive recipient	The Collection (Lincolnshire)
Physical Archive ID	LNCC:2015.174
Physical Contents	"Animal Bones","Ceramics","Metal"
Digital Archive recipient	The Collection (Lincolnshire)
Digital Archive ID	LNCC:2015.174
Digital Contents	"Animal Bones","Ceramics","Environmental","Stratigraphic","Survey"
Digital Media available	"Database","Images raster / digital photography","Spreadsheets","Survey","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	The Collection (Lincolnshire)

Paper Archive ID	LNCC:2015.174
Paper Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Diary","Drawing","Map","Plan","Report","Section"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Proposed Solar Development, Mill Farm, Grantham, Lincolnshire. Archaeological Evaluation
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Daniel, P.
Date	2015
Issuer or publisher	Wessex Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	Sheffield
Description	c.40 page comb-bound A4 report with colour plates and figures.

Entered by	Patrick Daniel (p.daniel@wessexarch.co.uk)
Entered on	9 October 2015



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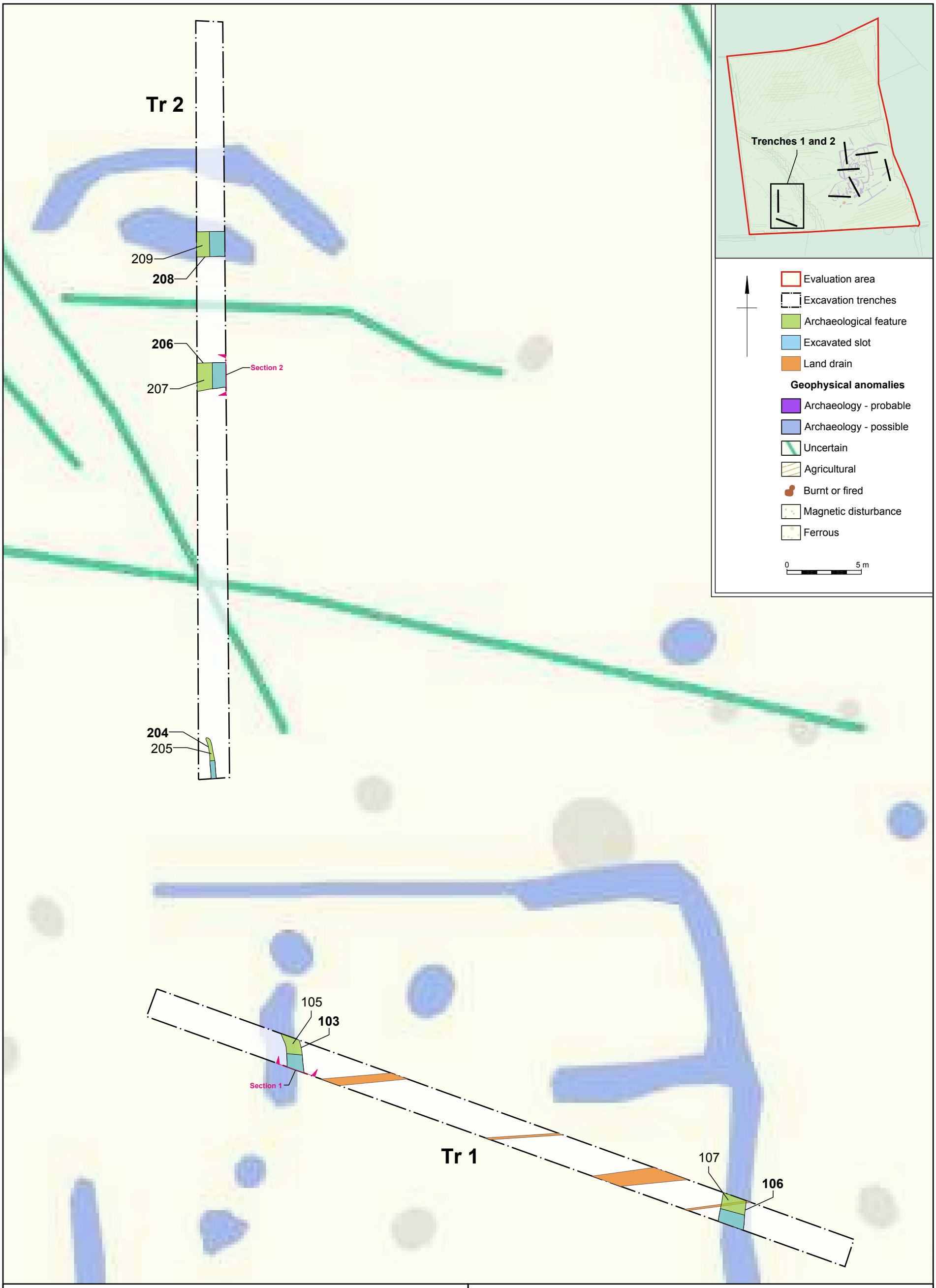
Site location and plan of trenches

Figure 1



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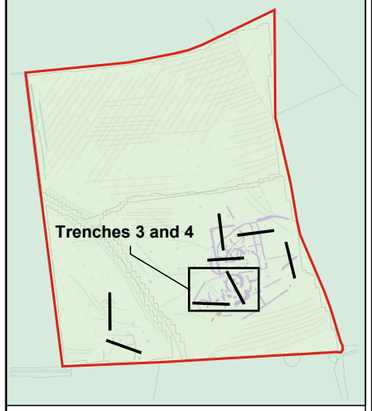
Plan of Trenches 1 and 2

Figure 2



Evaluation area
Excavation trenches
Archaeological feature
Excavated slot
Excavated slot found to contain Romano-British finds
Land drain

Geophysical anomalies

Archaeology - probable
Archaeology - possible
Uncertain
Agricultural
Burnt or fired
Magnetic disturbance
Ferrous

0 5 m

408
409
Section 4
407
406
410
411
Tr 4
405
404
Section 3
304
Tr 3
307
308
305
306
303

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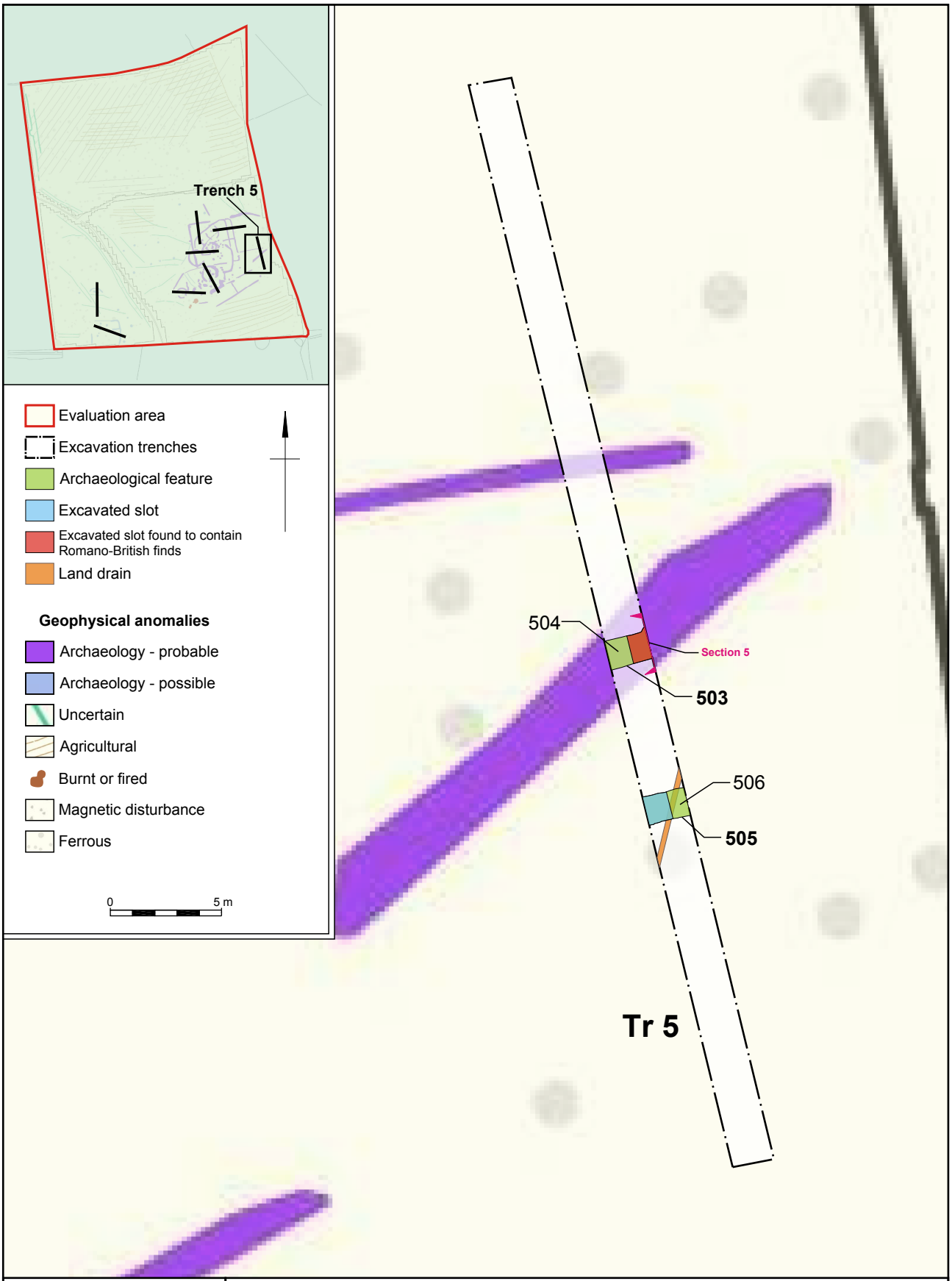
Plan of Trenches 3 and 4

Figure 3



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Plan of Trench 5

Figure 4

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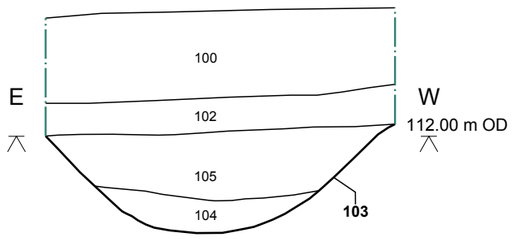
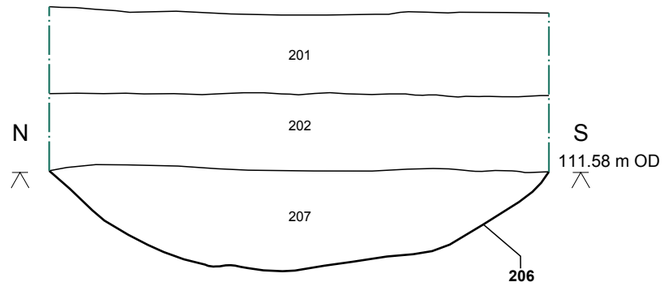
Plan of Trenches 6, 7, and 8

Figure 5

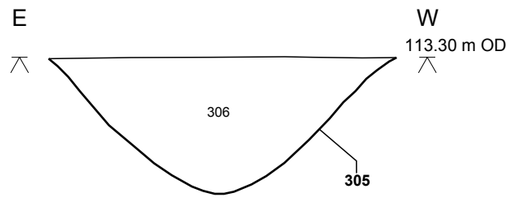
Section 1



Section 2



Section 3



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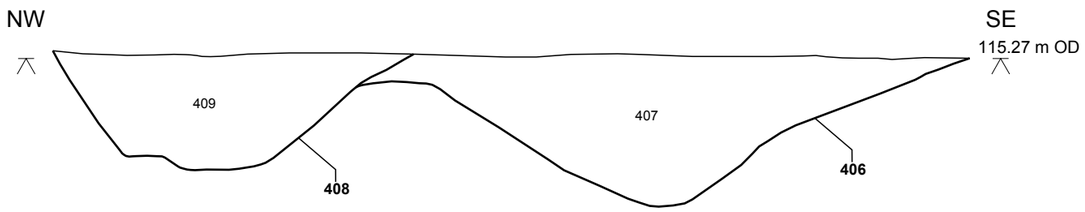
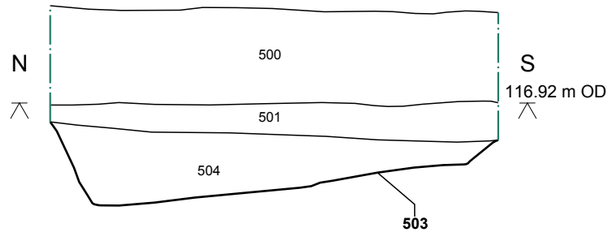


Section 5



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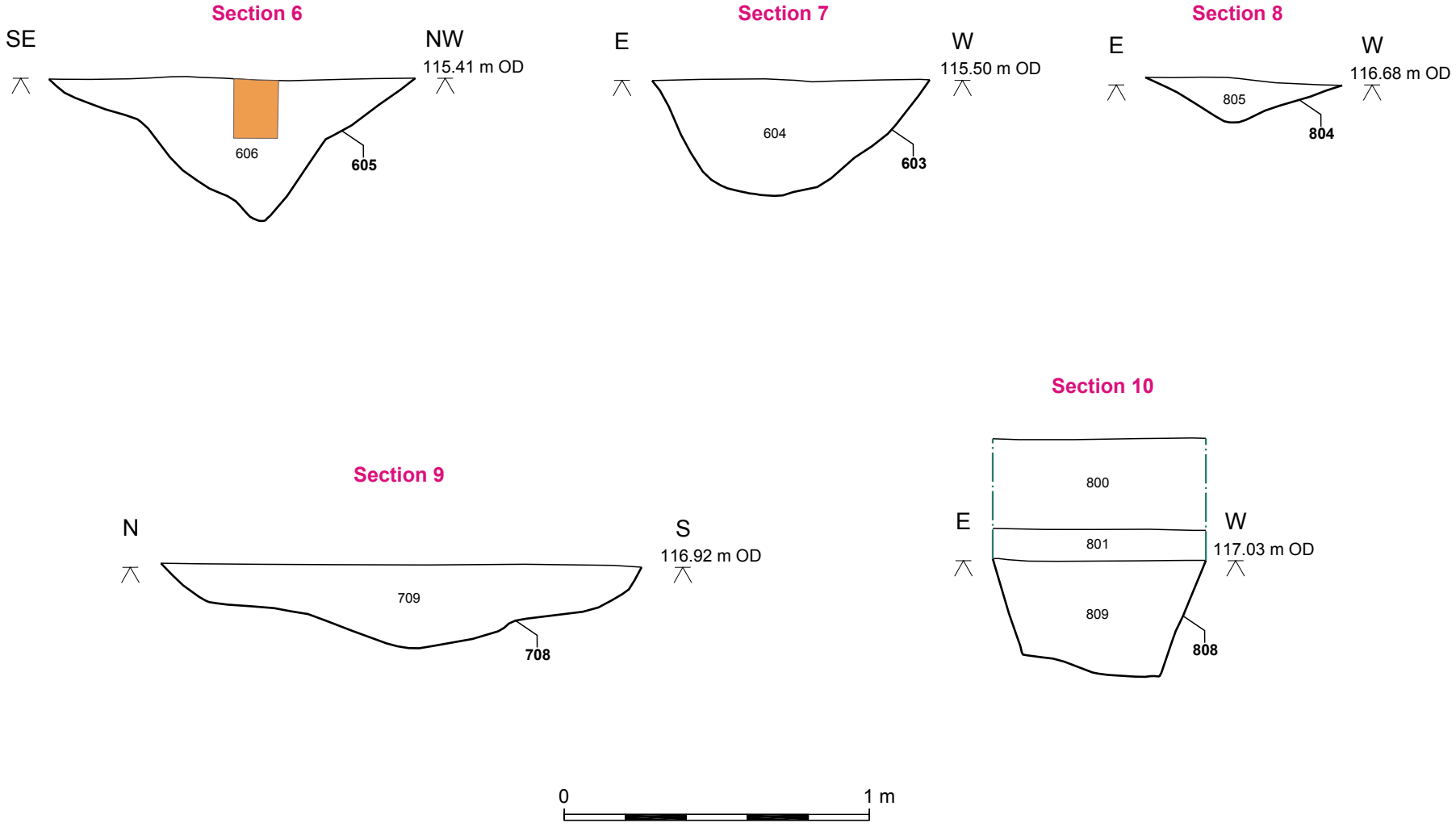
Sections 1 - 5

Figure 6



Land drain

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Sections 6-10

Figure 7

Plate 1: Ditch 103, south-facing section

Plate 2: Ring-gully 307, north-facing section

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Plate 3: Ring-gullies 406 and 408, north-east-facing section

Plate 4: Ring-gully 607, south-east-facing section

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Plate 5: Ditches 610 and 612, north-west-facing section

Plate 6: Ditch 806, south-facing section

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Plate 7: Ditch 808, north-facing section

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