



# Scot Elm Drive, West Wick Weston-super-Mare

Post-excavation Assessment and Updated Project Design



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## Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Bloor Homes South West to undertake an archaeological excavation on land at Scot Elm Drive, West Wick, Weston-super-Mare, centred on NGR 337563 162103.

The work was carried out as a condition (Condition 9) of outline planning permission (ref. 13/P/2409/O) for a residential development on a site of around 2.17 ha. In agreement with the Senior Archaeologist at North Somerset Council, the excavated area was reduced to 0.29 ha from the originally proposed 1.12 ha due, in part, to the extremely difficult working conditions. Despite this, the aims of the excavation were largely achieved.

The results, albeit limited and slightly inconclusive in some regards, are generally consistent with current understanding of the development and exploitation of the landscape from the 1st millennium BC onwards. The excavation uncovered a small number of features that can be broadly assigned to two phases of activity. The earliest of the phases is evidenced by pits, postholes, ditches, gullies and a large spread of material, associated with pottery, small quantities of animal bone and other debris. Potentially dating to the Early–Middle Iron Age, these are provisionally interpreted as the remains of a seasonal occupation site, probably used as a base for grazing livestock.

The second phase of activity, represented by a series of predominantly north-west to south-east ditches, is inconclusively dated due to an almost complete lack of finds. However, pottery, probably dating from the late 2nd-century AD, was recovered from the base of a similar ditch during earlier work on the site. The ditches appear to have been roughly contemporary with the formation of a thin layer of dark, organic-rich material, likely derived from the development of vegetation on a former ground surface that was subsequently buried by alluvium. It is suspected that the ditches are of Romano-British date and were associated with drainage/reclamation; comparable sequences have been recorded in the local area and other parts of the North Somerset Levels.

The stratigraphic and environmental evidence, as well as most of the finds, have little or no potential for further analysis. Nevertheless, the results, especially in terms of the evidence of Iron Age activity, are of at least local significance. Consequently, it is proposed that, following a brief programme of analytical work focussing on the pottery, the results of the excavation are set out in the form of a short, illustrated article, to be submitted for publication in the regional journal, the *Proceedings of the Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society*.

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# Scot Elm Drive, West Wick Weston-super-Mare

## Post-excavation Assessment and Updated Project Design

### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Project and planning background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Bloor Homes South West to undertake an archaeological excavation on land at Scot Elm Drive, West Wick, Weston-Super-Mare, North Somerset, BS24 7JZ, centred on NGR 337563 162103 (Fig. 1).

1.1.2 The work was carried out as a condition (Condition 9) of outline planning permission for the erection of 69 dwellings, associated infrastructure and landscaping on a site of around 2.17 ha. The application for outline planning permission (ref. 13/P/2409/O) was submitted to North Somerset Council in late 2013 and granted on appeal (ref. APP/D0121/A/14/2223975) on 18 March 2015. A subsequent reserved matters application (ref. 17/P/2087/RM) was approved by North Somerset Council on 19 October 2018.

1.1.3 The excavation was preceded by an archaeological desk-based assessment (DBA; GK Heritage Ltd 2013), submitted in support of the outline planning application. A subsequent trial trench evaluation (Cotswold Archaeology 2019a) was carried out in July 2019, in accordance with the archaeological condition attached to the grant of outline planning permission, as well as recommendations issued by the Senior Archaeologist at North Somerset Council. The evaluation identified archaeological remains indicative of later prehistoric and Romano-British activity in the central and southern parts of the development area. Similar evidence had previously been recorded within the site during a trial trench evaluation and watching brief that were unrelated to the current development (Avon Archaeological Unit (AAU) 2002a–b).

1.1.4 The excavation was carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI), which detailed the aims, methodologies and standards to be employed for the fieldwork and the post-excavation work (Wessex Archaeology 2019). The Senior Archaeologist at North Somerset Council approved the WSI, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority (LPA), prior to the fieldwork.

1.1.5 The excavation was undertaken between 28 October and 29 November 2019.

#### 1.2 Scope of the report

1.2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the provisional results of the excavation and to assess the potential of the results to address the research aims outlined in the WSI. Where appropriate, it recommends a programme of further analysis, and outlines the resources needed, to achieve the aims (including the revised research aims arising from this assessment), leading to dissemination of the archaeological results via publication and the curation of the archive.

#### 1.3 Location, topography and geology

1.3.1 The site lies in the West Wick area of Weston-super-Mare, a little to the south-west of Junction 21 of the M5 motorway. Prior to the eastward expansion of the town and its





merging with the once detached settlement of West Wick, the area lay within the North Somerset Levels, a vast expanse of former wetlands extending across the low-lying land on both sides of the Severn Estuary.

- 1.3.2 The development area coincides with a 2.17 ha parcel of agricultural land, under pasture at the time of the excavation. It is bounded to the north, east and south by Scot Elm Drive and to the west by the former West Acres Caravan Park. A drainage ditch, or rhyne, divides the north-west corner of the development area from the larger part of the site to the south. The excavation area, which covered 0.29 ha, was located to the south of the rhyne, in the central part of the development area.
- 1.3.3 The development site is generally flat and lies at an average of 5.5 m above Ordnance Datum (aOD), although the ground surface in the north-west corner of the excavation area was slightly raised.
- 1.3.4 The bedrock geology is mapped as Mercia Mudstone Group – Mudstone and Halite Stone, overlain by superficial (Holocene) tidal flat deposits of clay, silt and sand (British Geological Survey (BGS) 2020). The latter – commonly referred to as the ‘Wentlooge Formation’ – consists of a thickly accumulated sequence of intercalated Holocene peat and estuarine alluvium, overlying thin layers of late Pleistocene/early Holocene peat, sands and gravels. These deposits began to form as a result of the post-glacial rise in sea level and, although locally highly complex, are broadly uniform throughout the Severn Estuary Levels.

## 2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### 2.1 Previous investigations within the development site

#### *Trial trench evaluation (2002)*

- 2.1.1 Three archaeological trial trenches, with a total length of 150 m, were excavated in the central and southern parts of the development site in January 2002 (Fig. 1). The principal findings of the evaluation (North Somerset HER references in parentheses) were summarised as follows:

*‘...[the] trenches revealed evidence of a buried land surface at a depth of between c. 300 – 500 mm below the modern ground surface. The stabilisation surface was principally indicated by a thin horizon of organic-rich clay preserved between c. 4.9 m and 4.4 m aOD [and was sealed by layers described as silty clay/clay alluvium or alluvial subsoil]. A number of archaeological features were identified at the same stratigraphic level as the buried land surface and are considered to reflect contemporary activity. The features consisted of a series of ditches (MNS6969), all of similar NW–SE orientation. Dating of the ditches was provided by a collection of stratified Romano-British sherds including one largely complete Black Burnished ware type bowl.... Evidence of pre-Roman activity was restricted to a single archaeological soil feature... [which] consisted of an elongate pit or gully terminal (MNS6970)... filled with a highly mixed deposit containing nodules of heat affected clay, animal bone and small burnt, possibly cremated bone fragments and charred material. The feature also yielded a large part of a coarse earthenware pot of Iron Age type...’ (AAU 2002a, 3).*

#### *Watching brief (2002)*

- 2.1.2 A watching brief was maintained, in April and May 2002, during the re-cutting of rhyne on the southern and western boundaries of the development site. The watching brief also covered excavations associated with the installation of water pipes and placement of



foundations for a water transfer station immediately to the east of the site (Fig. 1; AAU 2002b).

- 2.1.3 Archaeological features and deposits recorded during the watching brief were similar to those encountered in the preceding evaluation. However, deeper excavations required for the installation of the water pipes, parallel with Scot Elm Drive, enabled the observation and recording of:

*'...layers of clay alluvium and earlier organic rich deposits containing well preserved environmental remains including abundant snail shells (MNS2742)... These deposits of organic material were usually recorded at 2.2 m aOD or lower, however, no related archaeological features or deposits were recorded and no dating evidence was recovered...'* (AAU 2002b, 3).

- 2.1.4 The alluvium and organic deposits recorded near the base of the water pipe trench can probably be attributed to the facies of the Middle Wentlooge Formation, which formed c. 5500–250 cal BC, and typically 'occur at about -1 to +3–4 m OD' across the Severn Estuary Levels (Allen and Scaife 2010, 5).

*Trial trench evaluation (2019)*

- 2.1.5 The evaluation undertaken in July 2019 (Cotswold Archaeology 2019a) entailed the excavation of seven trenches within the development site, each measuring 25 m by 1.8 m (Fig. 1). The results of the work were broadly consistent with those of the evaluation and watching brief carried out in 2002.
- 2.1.6 Archaeological features were recorded in all trenches except Trench 1, which was excavated in the north-west corner of the development site. The features predominantly consisted of north-west to south-east ditches, several of which could be correlated with features recorded in the 2002 evaluation trenches (AAU 2002a).
- 2.1.7 The ditches were cut into alluvial deposits (recorded as yellow and grey silty clay and blue clay), that were exposed between 0.5 m and 1.0 m below ground level (bgl). A dark 'organic soil horizon', which was typically around 0.1 m thick and suggested to be of late Romano-British or early post-Roman date, sealed the features (or their basal fills); this seems to be equivalent to the 'thin horizon of organic-rich clay' recorded in 2002 (AAU 2002a–b).
- 2.1.8 The sequence recorded in Trench 3 was slightly different. The trench contained a shallow curvilinear ditch (305), tentatively interpreted as the remains of a gully associated with a late prehistoric roundhouse, and another ditch (307) that was suggested to possibly form part of an enclosure (see Fig. 2). These features, along with two other ditches and a possible pit that were not excavated, were cut into the alluvium and overlain by an 'undated dark brown occupation deposit 303, which measured up to 0.3m in thickness' (Cotswold Archaeology 2019a, 8). No finds were retrieved from this 'occupation deposit' and environmental samples contained charcoal but no charred plant remains. The 'occupation deposit' was overlain by a thin 'dark organic soil horizon', which appears to be the same as that recorded in the other trenches. The 'dark organic soil horizon' was overlain, in all trenches, by a 0.5–0.7 m thick layer of 'brown-yellow alluvium', which was covered by the 0.25 m thick modern topsoil.
- 2.1.9 Only small quantities of finds, comprising Romano-British and (predominantly) late prehistoric pottery, fired clay, animal bone and 'industrial waste' (presumably fuel ash slag), were recovered. The majority of the prehistoric material – including possibly Middle Iron Age pottery – came from contexts excavated in Trench 3.

## 2.2 Archaeological and historical context

### *Mesolithic to Bronze Age (8500–700 BC)*

- 2.2.1 It is highly probable that the North Somerset Levels were extensively exploited from the Mesolithic onwards as the wetland habitats would have provided hunter-gatherers and early farming communities with opportunities for activities such as hunting, fishing, wild-fowling, reed cutting and grazing. These activities were presumably largely carried out on a seasonal basis; permanent occupation on the Levels is not clearly or widely evidenced until the Romano-British period. However, strata with the potential to contain remains derived from the activities of early prehistoric groups (ie, the facies of the Lower and Middle Wentlooge Formation) are now often buried beneath thick accumulations of alluvial material across much of the Severn Estuary Levels. This renders them largely inaccessible, except within very deep excavations, boreholes or, occasionally, where exposed on the coastal margin.

### *Iron Age and Romano-British (700 BC–410 AD)*

- 2.2.2 Archaeological remains dating to the Iron Age and Romano-British period are typically buried considerably closer to the surface across much of the North Somerset Levels. Consequently, dedicated research projects and numerous development-led investigations have enabled a comparatively detailed understanding of the development and exploitation of the former wetlands during these periods, as neatly summarised by Rippon (2006, 57):

*'On the eve of the Roman Conquest the North Somerset Levels were a vast expanse of untamed wilderness, with intertidal mudflats and saltmarshes towards the coast, occasionally inundated backfens in the lower-lying inland areas, and a freshwater peat bog in its north-east corner. This mosaic of natural environments was used for grazing livestock and producing salt by boiling sea water, yet by around AD 300 the area was protected from tidal inundation and was extensively settled and farmed.'*

- 2.2.3 Whilst the Levels were undoubtedly exploited during the Iron Age, permanent occupation was probably largely restricted to the higher and drier ground; activity during the period is most prominently evidenced by the numerous hillforts strung out along the limestone hills and ridges above the Levels, including those at Cadbury Hill, Banbury Hill and Worlebury Hill.
- 2.2.4 The reclamation of the Levels, for agriculture and settlement, probably began around the mid-3rd century AD, perhaps driven by the intensification of resource exploitation and, possibly, climatic change. The process may have been co-ordinated by the owners of the villa complexes at Wemberham, on the Congresbury Yeo, and others on the margins of the Levels as at Banwell, Locking and Wraxall (Rippon 2006, 77–80).
- 2.2.5 Evidence of Late Iron Age and Romano-British salt production has been recorded at several sites in the West Wick/Worle/St Georges area (Cotswold Archaeology 2010; Cox and Holbrook 2009; John Moore Heritage Services 2009) and widely across other parts of the Levels (eg, Rippon 2000; 2006). Indeed, salt-making was practised in this area since the Middle Bronze Age (as at Brean Down, Somerset; Bell 1990). It has also been suggested (GK Heritage Ltd 2013, 19; Rippon 2006, 67) that the burnt debris found in association with Iron Age pottery in the southern part of the development site during the 2002 evaluation (refer to section 2.1) may be derived from salt production rather than funerary activity, as suggested by the corresponding HER entry.
- 2.2.6 Trial trenching undertaken immediately to the west of the Scot Elm Drive site, at the former West Acres Caravan Park, in May 2019 uncovered ditches, pits and postholes that seem to be associated, primarily, with Romano-British occupation (Cotswold Archaeology 2019b).

*Post-Roman to medieval (410–1500 AD)*

- 2.2.7 The North Somerset Levels appear to have been largely abandoned at some point after the mid-4th century AD. This was probably due, in part, to wider socio-economic shifts. However, environmental change also seems to have played a major role; rising sea levels, precipitated by climatic fluctuation, combined with the failure of the flood defences, appear to have resulted in the inundation of the Levels and the reversion of much of the low-lying land to salt marsh and tidal mudflats.
- 2.2.8 Rippon (2006, 67, fig 5.3; 70; 80–1) has studied this in detail, citing several investigations in and around the West Wick area, and other parts of the Levels, that have provided evidence for the burial of the later Roman land surface. Indeed, the results of the 2002 investigations at the Scot Elm Drive site (refer to section 2.1) are mentioned in support of the discussion. At many of these sites, the (probable) Romano-British ground surface is evidenced by a buried soil horizon or thin layer of dark organic-rich material, encountered at around 0.6–1.1 m bgl (c. 4.4–4.9 m OD) and sealed beneath alluvium (*ibid.*, 70). Similar sequences have subsequently been reported at other sites in the local area (eg, Cotswold Archaeology 2017; Cox and Holbrook 2009), including at the former West Acres Caravan Park site, where the Romano-British features were overlain by a thin ‘dark organic soil horizon’, covered by a 0.2–0.8 m thick layer of alluvium (Cotswold Archaeology 2019b).
- 2.2.9 Areas of post-Roman settlement were probably largely confined to the higher ground surrounding the Levels, as indicated by the evidence of post-Roman occupation at the Cadbury-Congresbury hillfort (Rahtz *et al* 1992) and the cemetery at the adjacent Henley Wood site (Watts and Leach 1996). However, the Domesday survey of 1086 indicates that the Levels had been extensively re-occupied by the end of the 11th century. The recolonization of the Levels seems to have been achieved, in its early stages – probably around the 10th century, by the establishment of embanked and moated enclosures known as ‘infields’ and their adjoining ‘outfields’ (Rippon 2006). Concerted efforts continued to be made, during the 11th to 13th centuries, to reclaim the fertile land, which provided high crop yields and lush pasture and meadow, and to support the expansion of settlement (Aston and Lewis 1994, 8).
- 2.2.10 West Wick, reportedly mentioned in the 13th century (MNS2490), probably has early medieval origins, although the core of the settlement is likely to have lain to the south-west of the Scot Elm Drive development area. Excavations undertaken approximately 300 m south-west of the site uncovered a complex of intercutting ditches and pits derived from several phases of activity, including features associated with pottery of 10th–12th century date (Oxford Archaeology 2006; Powell 2009).

*Post-medieval to modern (1500-present)*

- 2.2.11 The process of draining the North Somerset Levels continued in the post-medieval period, and many of the extant land divisions and rhynes are likely to have been established at this time. The distribution of settlement across the Levels appears to have largely maintained continuity with the medieval period. Indeed, the pattern of dispersed settlements spread across a predominantly pastoral landscape has changed little into the modern day – the main exception to this being the rapid expansion of Weston-super-Mare from the mid-20th century onwards. Ordnance Survey mapping, however, reveals that the development site remained largely unchanged from the late 19th century, when it coincided with parts of three fields, until at least 1990, after which the surrounding area was gradually developed.



### **3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

#### **3.1 Aims**

3.1.1 The aims (or purpose) of the excavation, as stated in the WSI and with reference to the ClfA' *Standard and guidance for archaeological excavation* (ClfA 2014a), were to:

- determine the presence or absence of archaeological features, deposits, structures, artefacts or ecofacts within the specified works area;
- record and establish, within the constraints of the works, the extent, character and date of the late Romano-British dark soil formation horizon (Cotswold Archaeology 2019a);
- record and establish, within the constraints of the works, the extent, character, form, function and date of the ditches (Cotswold Archaeology 2019a);
- record and establish, within the constraints of the works, the extent, character and date of the settlement (Cotswold Archaeology 2019a);
- record and establish, within the constraints of the works, the extent, character, date, condition and quality of any additional surviving archaeological remains;
- place any identified archaeological remains within a wider historical and archaeological context in order to assess their significance; and
- to analyse and interpret the results of the excavation and disseminate them.

#### **3.2 Research objectives**

3.2.1 Following consideration of the archaeological potential of the site and the regional research framework (Grove and Croft 2012), the research objectives of the excavation were to:

- determine the date, nature and extent of the dark soil formation horizon, and its development in the late Romano-British period;
- determine the date, nature and extent of the settlement activity, and its development in the Iron Age and Romano-British periods;
- determine the date, extent and character of landscape organisation, and its development from the Iron Age to the Romano-British period; and
- assess the potential for the recovery of artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region.

### **4 METHODS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

4.1.1 All works were undertaken in accordance with the detailed methods set out within the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2019a), excepting where stated below, and in general compliance with the standards outlined in ClfA guidance (ClfA 2014a).

4.1.2 The excavation had initially been proposed to cover 1.12 ha (Wessex Archaeology 2019a). In the event, the excavated area was reduced to 0.29 ha, with the agreement of the Senior Archaeologist at North Somerset Council. At the request of the Senior Archaeologist, an additional area of 225 square metres was excavated to the south of the main excavation area.



- 4.1.3 The reduction of the excavation area was largely due to the extremely difficult working conditions (refer to section 5.1; plates 1–4), but also because the initial results suggested that some features and deposits previously recorded in the central and southern parts of the development site were potentially of more recent origin and lower archaeological significance than had been indicated by the preceding investigations at the site (AAU 2002a–b; Cotswold Archaeology 2019a) – an hypothesis that has since been revised. The final excavated area was located a little to the north of the evaluation trenches excavated in 2002 and coincided wholly or partially with Trenches 2–4 of the 2019 evaluation (Fig. 1).

## 4.2 Fieldwork methods

### *General*

- 4.2.1 The excavation area was set out in the same position as that proposed in the WSI using a Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) (Fig. 1). The topsoil/overburden was removed in level spits using a 360° excavator equipped with a toothless bucket, under the constant supervision and instruction of the monitoring archaeologist. Machine excavation proceeded in level spits until the archaeological horizon or the natural geology was exposed.
- 4.2.2 Where necessary, the surfaces of archaeological deposits were cleaned by hand to aid visual definition. A sample of archaeological features and deposits identified was hand-excavated, sufficient to address the aims of the excavation. A sample of natural features such as tree-throw holes was also investigated.
- 4.2.3 Spoil derived from machine stripping and hand-excavated archaeological features was visually scanned for the purposes of finds retrieval. A metal detector was also used. Artefacts were collected and bagged by context. All artefacts from excavated contexts were retained, although those from features of modern date (19th century or later) were recorded on site and not retained.

### *Recording*

- 4.2.4 All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's pro forma recording system. A complete drawn record of excavated features and deposits was made, including plans and sections drawn to appropriate scales (generally 1:20 or 1:50 for plans and 1:10 for sections) and tied to the Ordnance Survey (OS) National Grid.
- 4.2.5 A Leica GNSS connected to Leica's SmartNet service surveyed the location of archaeological features. All survey data is recorded in OS National Grid coordinates and heights above OD (Newlyn), as defined by OSGM15 and OSTN15, with a three-dimensional accuracy of at least 50 mm.
- 4.2.6 A full photographic record was made using digital cameras equipped with an image sensor of not less than 16 megapixels. Digital images have been subject to managed quality control and curation processes, which has embedded appropriate metadata within the image and will ensure long term accessibility of the image set.

## 4.3 Artefactual and environmental strategies

### *General*

- 4.3.1 Strategies for the recovery, processing and assessment of artefacts and environmental samples were in line with those detailed in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2019a). The treatment of artefacts and environmental remains was in general accordance with: *Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (ClfA 2014b) and *Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation* (Campbell et al. 2011).
-



#### **4.4 Monitoring**

- 4.4.1 The fieldwork was monitored by the Senior Archaeologist for North Somerset Council. Any variations to the WSI, if required to better address the project aims, were agreed in advance with the client and the Senior Archaeologist.

### **5 STRATIGRAPHIC RESULTS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

##### *Summary of archaeological features and deposits*

- 5.1.1 The fieldwork was severely hindered by poor weather and groundwater ingress, which resulted in repeated flooding of the excavation area (Front Cover; Plates 1–4). The extremely wet conditions caused the edges of the excavated area to collapse. Archaeological features and deposits were obscured by standing water and unavoidable disturbance of the saturated ground surface. Despite efforts to mitigate these effects (eg, through repeated hand cleaning of areas, limiting access and the use of mechanical pumps), the difficulties experienced during the fieldwork inevitably restricted the capacity of the excavation team to identify, investigate and survey archaeological features and deposits.
- 5.1.2 Nevertheless, the principal aims of the fieldwork were largely achieved. The results were generally consistent with the findings of the 2002 and 2019 evaluations (refer to section 2.1). However, some previously recorded features could not be identified during the excavation, and it was not possible to confirm some stratigraphic relationships recorded during the evaluations.
- 5.1.3 The excavation revealed a small number of features that can be broadly assigned to two phases of activity. The earliest of the phases is evidenced by several pits, postholes, ditches, gullies and a large spread of material. The layer and features were associated with Iron Age and less chronologically diagnostic late prehistoric (ie, dating from the 1st millennium BC) pottery. Environmental samples yielded small, poorly preserved, but varied assemblages that are consistent with an open, wetland environment and provide some, albeit limited evidence for exploitation of plant resources. The Iron Age features seem to relate to an area of activity that extended (though perhaps only a little) beyond the northern edge of the excavated area. An ecological buffer zone established along the rhyne to the north of the excavation area precluded any extension of the investigations to trace the continuation of these features. However, the absence of archaeological remains some 25 m to the north in Trench 1 of the 2019 evaluation (Cotswold Archaeology 2019a) suggests that the features did not continue far beyond the northern limit of the excavation.
- 5.1.4 The second phase of activity, represented by a series of predominantly north-west to south-east ditches, is inconclusively dated due to an almost complete lack of finds. During the 2002 evaluation, however, pottery, probably dating from the late 2nd-century AD, was recovered from the base of one of several ditches that are probably derived from the same episode of activity. The ditches appear to have been roughly contemporary with the formation of a thin layer of dark, organic-rich material, likely derived from the development of vegetation on a former ground surface that was subsequently buried by alluvium. It is suspected that the ditches are of Romano-British date and were associated with drainage/reclamation; similar sequences have been recorded in the local area and other parts of the North Somerset Levels (refer to sections 2.2 and 8.1).
- 5.1.5 There was no evidence of subsequent activity on the site, other than some localised areas of modern disturbance, seemingly caused by wheel-rutting.

### *Methods of stratigraphic assessment and quantity of data*

- 5.1.6 All handwritten and drawn records from the excavation have been collated, checked for consistency and stratigraphic relationships. Key data has been transcribed into a database for assessment, which can be updated during any further analysis. Preliminary phasing was undertaken using stratigraphic relationships and the spot dating from artefacts, particularly pottery.

**Table 1** Quantification of excavation records

Type	Quantity
Context records	122
Context registers	5
Graphics (A4 and A3)	28
Graphics (A1)	0
Graphics registers	2
Environmental sample registers	1
Object registers	1
Digital photographs	139

## **5.2 Soil sequence and natural deposits**

- 5.2.1 The earliest archaeological features and deposits were exposed at the upper surface of a slightly blue, mid-grey layer of alluvial clay (33), at which point mechanical reduction of the excavation area ceased (Plates 5 and 10). Attributable to the Upper Wentlooge Formation, this layer (the 'lower alluvium') was encountered at an average of 4.5–4.6 m aOD, and at depths ranging from 0.85 m bgl at the eastern edge of the excavation area, to 1.2 m bgl in the north-west corner; approximately the same level as within the 2002 and 2019 evaluation trenches (AAU 2002a; Cotswold Archaeology 2019a). The lower alluvium contained no anthropogenic material and no significant variations in its composition were observed where localised, deeper excavations (eg, of archaeological features) took place.
- 5.2.2 Across the eastern part of the excavation area, the lower alluvium (33) was sealed by a very thin (averaging 0.03 m, but up to 0.1 m thick), dark layer of silty clay mixed with degraded organic material (15; Plate 5). Layer 15 seems to be equivalent to the 'thin horizon of organic-rich clay' and 'dark organic soil horizon' recorded in the 2002 and 2019 evaluation trenches (refer to section 2.1). Nine sherds (113 g) of Iron Age pottery and one sherd (8 g) of indeterminate late prehistoric date were retrieved from layer 15. Although the size and condition of the sherds might suggest otherwise, it is possible that the pottery was found residually in layer 15. In any case, the excavation results provide no reason to doubt earlier suggestions (AAU 2002a; Cotswold Archaeology 2019a) that the layer represents a former ground surface that had been buried, perhaps around the late Romano-British–early post-Roman period, by alluvium (layer 2; see below).
- 5.2.3 Layer 2 (the 'upper alluvium'), which overlaid deposit 15, was recorded as a mid-greyish brown clay, incorporating a 'reddish-brown lens', with common small, sub-angular stones (Plates 5 and 10). The deposit, which produced no finds, attained a maximum thickness of 0.85 m in the western part of the site. Layer 2 can be correlated with the upper alluvium/alluvial subsoil recorded in the 2002 and 2019 evaluation trenches, which was suspected to have been laid down from the late Romano-British–early post-Roman period onwards (refer to section 2.1). All the archaeological features and deposits identified during the excavation were sealed by layer 2; a single post-medieval/modern ditch recorded in the 2002 evaluation (AAU 2002b; Trench 1, ditch 104) was cut through the deposit. The upper part of layer 2 might be more accurately described as a subsoil; certainly, the upper alluvium



formed the parent material of the overlying topsoil (1), which was up to 0.42 m thick and consisted of a mid-grey brown silty clay (Plates 5 and 10). No finds were recovered from the topsoil.

### 5.3 Phase 1: Iron Age

5.3.1 Several features that were mostly confined to the slightly raised, north-west corner of the excavation area, can be attributed, with varying degrees of confidence, to (probably the Early–Middle part of) the Iron Age (Fig. 2). All were cut into the lower alluvium (33) and were overlain by the upper alluvium (2). Stratigraphic relationships between these features and the thin dark organic layer (15) or anthropogenic layer 75 (see below) could not be established, as the deposits did not extend into the north-western part of the excavation area.

#### *Curvilinear/penannular gullies and associated features*

5.3.2 Curvilinear gullies forming the remains of at least one possible circular structure (ie, a roundhouse) or, alternatively, a small penannular ditched enclosure, fenced enclosure or windbreak, were partially exposed in the north-west corner of the excavation area (Fig. 2 inset). The eastern side of the putative enclosure/structure was recorded as gully 122, whilst its western side seems to have either been formed by gully 120 or 121. The latter, of which gully 121 was the earlier, lay roughly parallel with each other, albeit on slightly different alignments, and converged to the south-east. A 5.5 m gap between the terminals of gullies 120, 121 and 122 presumably represents a south-facing entrance to the enclosure or structure, the projected internal diameter of which is around 10–12 m.

5.3.3 Gullies 120, 121 and 122 were 0.4–0.65 m wide, between 0.19 m and 0.45 m deep and typically had moderately steeply sloping concave sides and concave bases (Plates 6–7). In one excavated section (cut 41; Plate 6), the lower part of the slightly deeper gully 120 had much steeper, almost vertical sides and a flat base, which could indicate that the ‘gully’ had a structural function. The gullies contained similar fills, generally consisting of a mid or dark grey brown silty clays. Gully 120 contained three fills, whilst two fills were recorded in slots excavated through gullies 121 and 122.

5.3.4 Finds recovered from gully 120 comprise a very small amount of animal bone (9 g) and five sherds (82 g) of Iron Age pottery, including one relatively large sherd (39 g) of probable Early–Middle Iron Age date. A large quantity of Iron Age and less chronologically diagnostic, but nevertheless late prehistoric pottery (162 sherds, 4.44 kg) was retrieved from the fills of gully 122. Most of this material (123 sherds, 4.29 kg) was found in the upper fill (18) in one excavated section (cut 20). Other finds from gully 122 comprised animal bone (280 g), fuel ash slag (2 g) and a possible (intrusive) fragment of 19th century mudstone brick. Gully 121 produced pottery of Iron Age (two sherds, 51 g) and late prehistoric (seven sherds, 18 g) date, animal bone (94 g), fired clay (148 g) and fuel ash slag (21 g). Bulk sediment samples from the gullies contained small amounts of charcoal, charred and waterlogged plant remains, mollusc shell, small animal bones, foraminifera, invertebrate remains, fish bones and scales, and vitrified inorganic material.

5.3.5 Two possible postholes (22 and 65; Fig. 2 inset) were intercut with the gullies – again, suggesting that the latter might have been associated with a structure. Posthole 65 was seemingly truncated by gully 121, but the relationship between posthole 22 and gully 122 could not be determined due to the similarity of their fills. The postholes were 0.15 m deep, less than 0.5 m in diameter, had moderately steeply sloping concave sides and concave bases, and contained single fills. Six sherds (8 g) of Iron Age pottery and a small amount of

animal bone were recovered from posthole 22, but posthole 65 produced no finds. Samples of the fill of posthole 22 contained remains similar to those from gullies 120–2.

- 5.3.6 A short length of linear ditch (126) extended between the outer edge of gully 122 and the probable enclosure ditch immediately to the east (124; see below). Gully 122 was thought to truncate ditch 126, although the stratigraphic relationship was not clearly established. It is possible that these features were contemporary, ditch 126 perhaps having been a drainage/run-off channel, although its specific function is unclear. Ditch 126 was between 0.5 m and 1 m wide, and 0.25 m to 0.63 m deep, being wider and deeper to the east, where it cut enclosure ditch 124 and continued beyond the northern limit of the excavation area. No finds were recovered from the ditch, although bulk sediment samples produced small quantities of palaeoenvironmental materials.
- 5.3.7 No trace of the potentially Iron Age ring gully recorded in Trench 3 of the 2019 evaluation (Cotswold Archaeology 2019a; ditch 305) was recognised during the excavation. This could be because the ditch did not extend far beyond the confines of the trench, although flooding of the excavation area may have precluded its identification. It is possible, however, that the northward continuation of the ring gully was recorded as ditch/gully 101 (see below).

#### *Enclosure*

- 5.3.8 Part of a probable small ditched enclosure was exposed at the northern edge of the excavation area, immediately to the east of gullies 120–3. Formed by four intercutting ditches (101 and 123–5; Fig. 2 inset), the enclosure appears to have been the product of several phases of alteration and/or maintenance.
- 5.3.9 The latest phase of the enclosure was defined by ditch 124, which enclosed an area measuring at least 12.5 m by 4.4 m across. Due to its limited exposure, it is unclear whether the ditch formed the slightly rounded corner of an enclosure, or if this formed part of a small oval enclosure. The ditch was up to 1.05 m wide and 0.5 m deep and had moderately steeply sloping sides and a concave base (Plate 8). Between one and three fills were recorded in the three slots excavated through the ditch. Typically described as mid or dark grey brown silty clay, and often incorporating flecks or small fragments of charcoal, the ditch fills were thought to have been formed through a combination of natural silting processes and dumping of waste/debris. Similar types and quantities of finds were recovered from each excavated section; in total, the ditch fills produced 55 sherds (1.1 kg) of Iron Age pottery, some of which is probably of Early–Middle Iron Age date, animal bone (1.1 kg), two small pieces of fired clay (20 g) and two pieces of stone.
- 5.3.10 Shallow ditch/gully 123 extended north-west to south-east across the interior of the enclosure. The feature was intercut, at its south-western end, with ditch 124 but their stratigraphic relationship could not be determined (Plate 8). Ditch/gully 123 was up to 0.45 m wide, just 0.17 m deep and contained a single fill, recorded as a mid-grey brown silty clay, from which 12 sherds (54 g) of late prehistoric pottery and a few fragments of animal bone (4 g) were recovered. The feature may have represented a contemporary or later stage in the development of the enclosure, or an internal division.
- 5.3.11 Ditch/gully 123 truncated another ditch (125), which seemed to have been re-cut along its southern edge by ditch 124 (see above; Plate 8). Slightly curvilinear in plan, ditch 125 did not form a continuous circuit; both terminals of the ditch, roughly 10 m apart, were exposed within the excavation area. The ditch was of roughly the same dimensions as ditch 124 but had slightly less steeply sloping sides. It contained a single fill, consisting of a mid-dark grey brown silty clay. Three refitting sherds of Iron Age pottery (116 g) and animal bone were found in one of two slots (cut 86) excavated through the ditch.



- 5.3.12 The eastern end of ditch 125 truncated another small ditch or gully (101) that may have been associated with the early development of the enclosure. Ditch/gully 101 was around 0.32 m wide and 0.2 m deep and was infilled with a mid-grey silty clay. It contained no finds. An alternative interpretation is that this feature was the continuation of ring gully 305, recorded during the 2019 evaluation (Cotswold Archaeology 2019a), although the stratigraphic relationships would suggest otherwise.

#### *Pits*

- 5.3.13 Three probable Iron Age pits (27, 59 and 73) were located in the immediate vicinity of the gullies (120–2) associated with the putative penannular enclosure/circular structure (Fig. 2).
- 5.3.14 Feature 27 extended beyond the northern limit of the excavation area and so could have been the terminal of a ditch rather than a pit. It measured at least 0.4 m by 0.6 m across and was 0.52 m deep (Plate 9). The feature had steeply sloping, slight concave sides and a concave base. It contained two fills, the earliest of which (28) was a 0.16 m thick mid-grey brown clay incorporating flecks of charcoal, which was probably formed through natural silting. No finds were recovered from context 28, but the overlying fill (29) contained 92 sherds (591 g) of late prehistoric pottery and a few tiny fragments of animal bone (5 g). The darker grey clay upper fill, which also contained flecks of charcoal, was possibly formed through backfilling and/or dumping of waste in the partially infilled and disused feature. Samples of the upper fill of the pit contained similar types of remains to those from Iron Age gullies 120–122.
- 5.3.15 Pit 59, located between the terminals of gullies 120–2, was 0.95 m in diameter, 0.22 m deep and had moderately steeply sloping concave sides and a slightly concave base. Its two fills (60–1) also seemed to have formed through initial silting and weathering of the feature sides, followed by deliberate infilling, although these contained no artefactual material.
- 5.3.16 Pit 73, roughly 1.5 m south of pit 59, was around 1 m wide and 0.14 m deep. The feature seems to have coincided with a patch of bioturbated alluvium, which may account for its slightly irregular shape in plan. It contained a single fill (74), consisting of a mid-grey brown silty clay, possibly formed through natural silting. Animal bone (187 g), two sherds (6 g) of late prehistoric pottery and a flat piece of stone – possibly a tile – were recovered from the pit.

#### *Other cut features*

- 5.3.17 A small number of other features in the north-western part of the excavation area, described below, are possibly contemporary with the more convincingly dated Iron Age features to the north. However, this cannot be conclusively demonstrated based on their stratigraphic relationships and because none of them yielded any finds.
- 5.3.18 A short section of curvilinear gully (71; Fig. 2) was exposed around 11 m south of the probable enclosure formed by ditches 101 and 123–5. The gully terminated to the east and was at least 3 m long. It possibly continued to the south-west, beneath layer 75 (see below), although this could not be confirmed due to repeated flooding of the excavation area. The gully was 0.65 m wide, 0.1 m deep and had shallow sloping, concave sides and a concave base. It contained a single fill formed of mid grey brown silty clay. The function of the gully is unclear.
- 5.3.19 Another shallow gully (92; Fig. 2), which terminated to the east and continued beneath the western limit of the excavation area, 1.2 m to the west, was located between layer 75 and gullies 120–2. It was 0.5 m wide 0.18 m deep and contained two fills; its primary fill was a

light grey clay and its upper fill was recorded as a mid-blue grey clay. Again, its function is uncertain.

- 5.3.20 Two possible closely spaced postholes (90 and 94; Fig. 2) lay near the western limit of the excavation area and the northern edge of layer 75 (see below). These were around 0.5 m in diameter, less than 0.1 m deep, and each contained a single mid-grey silty clay fill. Their function is not immediately apparent.
- 5.3.21 Another possible posthole, or pit (69) was located 11 m east of postholes 90 and 94, and close to curvilinear gully 71 (see above; Fig. 2). The feature measured 0.64 m in diameter, was 0.25 m deep and had moderately steeply sloping concave sides and a concave base. It contained a solitary fill (70), consisting of a mid-grey silty clay.
- 5.3.22 Feature 67 (Fig. 2 inset), recorded as a possible 2.1 m wide and 0.25 m deep ditch terminal, situated roughly 5 m ESE of enclosure ditches 124–5, could not be clearly defined in plan and section due to difficulties distinguishing between its single fill and the lower alluvium (33). Its possible continuation, to the south-west, was obscured by flooding of the excavation area and despite hand cleaning, its full extent could not be discerned. The feature can be projected to the south-west to coincide with a ditch of similar width, recorded in Trench 3 of the 2019 evaluation (Cotswold Archaeology 2019a; ditch 308). The ditch was not excavated during the evaluation, although it was overlain by the ‘undated dark brown occupation deposit’ (*Ibid.*; context 303) which is thought to be equivalent to probable Iron Age layer 75 (see below). No other trace of the ditch from the evaluation was encountered during the excavation and, consequently, it is uncertain whether feature 67 represented the continuation of this feature.

#### Layer 75

- 5.3.23 Layer 75 overlaid the lower alluvium (33) in the south-western part of the excavation area (Plate 10), to the south of the Iron Age features described above (Fig. 2). The layer, exposed beneath the upper alluvium (2) at around 4.6 m OD, was amorphous in plan, extended beyond the limits of the excavation and covered an area of at least 40 m by 26 m.
- 5.3.24 Layer 75 appears to be equivalent to the ‘undated dark brown occupation deposit’ recorded in Trench 3 of the 2019 evaluation (Cotswold Archaeology 2019a; context 303). During the excavation, the layer was also recorded as a single context, described as a mixed dark grey and orange clay, up to 0.3 m thick, and incorporating occasional, poorly sorted sub-angular and sub-rounded stones (<90 mm). However, layer 75 may, at least in some localised areas, have consisted of several discrete layers of material laid down during one or more episodes of deposition.
- 5.3.25 Finds assigned to layer 75 comprise Iron Age pottery (20 sherds, 103 g; some attributable to the Middle/Late Iron Age), a tiny sherd of (potentially intrusive) Romano-British pottery (1 g), animal bone (104 g), fired clay (749 g; including a large fragment identified as briquetage), fuel ash slag (24 g), an iron nail shank, and possible quern stone and sandstone tile fragments. Bulk sediment samples taken from layer 75 contained small quantities of charred and waterlogged plant remains, charcoal, mollusc shell, small animal bones, invertebrate remains and inorganic vitrified material. No finds were recovered from layer 303 during the 2019 evaluation; environmental samples from the evaluation contained charcoal but no charred plant remains (Cotswold Archaeology 2019a).
- 5.3.26 The date of the layer is uncertain although its formation was probably broadly contemporary with, or slightly later than the Iron Age features to the north. The ‘undated dark brown occupation deposit’ recorded during the 2019 evaluation (as 303) was observed to overlie

potentially Iron Age features (including ditch 307, which produced Middle Iron Age pottery), suggesting that it post-dated them (Cotswold Archaeology 2019a). In turn, the 'occupation deposit' was sealed by the 'dark organic soil horizon' that seems to be equivalent to layer 15. During the excavation, however, this thin layer of organic-rich clay (15) was not observed to extend across the part of the excavation area containing layer 75. Additionally, no archaeological features were seen to underlie layer 75 following its removal, using a mechanical excavator, to expose the underlying alluvium (33; at around 4.4 m OD). Layer 75 was, however, cut by several ditches that are potentially of Romano-British date (refer to section 5.4).

- 5.3.27 Layer 75 may have been deliberately deposited to raise the ground level in the slightly lower-lying and potentially wetter area to the south of the demonstrably Iron Age features. Alternatively, the layer might have accumulated as a consequence of occupation/other forms of activity in the immediate vicinity, possibly from a slightly later phase than the Iron Age features to the north.

## 5.4 Phase 2: Romano-British(?)

### Overview

- 5.4.1 Several other, predominantly north-west to south-east aligned ditches were partially exposed in the north-eastern and south-western parts of the excavation area (and the supplementary excavation area immediately to the south) (Fig. 2). Their fills were generally quite distinct from those of the Iron Age features, suggesting to the excavators that they derived from a separate phase of activity. Specifically, these features were considered likely to be of post-medieval date at the time of the fieldwork. No finds were retrieved from any of the features, excepting two small pieces of fired clay (weighing just 8 g) from the basal fill of ditch 80 (see below). However, re-examination of the site records, combined with a review of earlier work on the site and the local area, suggests that these features are likely to be of rather earlier origin.
- 5.4.2 North-west to south-east ditches were also recorded to the south of the excavation area during the 2002 and 2019 evaluations (Figs 1 and 2; AAU 2002a; Cotswold Archaeology 2019a). Most contained very few finds, but the primary fill of a ditch in Trench 3 of the 2002 evaluation produced 33 sherds of pottery from a single vessel, possibly dating from the late 2nd-century AD (AAU 2002a, 15; Trench 3, ditch 307). One of the ditches in the main excavation area (ditch 23; see below) can be projected to form the continuation of a previously recorded ditch (Cotswold Archaeology 2019a; Trench 4, ditch 406). Two others in the supplementary excavation area to the south are almost certainly the same as ditches identified in the evaluation trenches (*ibid.*; Trench 5, ditches 507 and 509; AAU 2002b; ditch 307); these features were not examined during the excavation due to rapid flooding of the area.
- 5.4.3 The shared alignment of the ditches, the similarity of their fills and stratigraphic relationships (with layer 15) suggest that all belong to broadly the same phase of activity. Significantly, all of the ditches attributed to this phase (including those identified in the evaluation trenches) were overlain by the upper alluvium (2), whilst most, if not all seem to be roughly contemporary with, or slightly earlier than the formation of the thin layer of organic rich clay (15). Comparable sequences of deposits in the local area and other parts of the North Somerset Levels have been interpreted as evidence for the burial of ground surfaces beneath layers of alluvium during the late Romano-British/early post-Roman period (refer to sections 2.2 and 8.1). Consequently, it is suspected that the ditches described below are of Romano-British date and that they were associated with drainage/reclamation.

*Ditches in the north-eastern part of the excavation area*

- 5.4.4 Four north-west to south-east ditches, spaced between 3.5 m and 6 m apart, were cut into the lower alluvium (33) in the north-east corner of the excavation area (Fig. 2). Three were excavated (7/13, 23 and 35) but the western-most example was not investigated due to flooding of the excavation area and disturbance – possibly caused by modern wheel rutting – which also obscured the full extent of the ditches. The ditches varied between 1.6 m and 2.95 m wide and 0.4 m and 0.85 m in depth. Two of the ditches (23 and 35) had convex profiles and contained similar sequences of fills (Plates 11 and 12). The earliest deposits in ditches 23 and 35 consisted of layers of mid-grey alluvial clay, which were sealed by the same thin layer of organic-rich clay (15) that overlaid the lower alluvium (33). Recorded as fills 25 and 37 in ditches 23 and 35, respectively, the thin organic-rich layers in both ditches were overlain by deposits of light orange/brown grey slightly silty clay, probably formed through natural silting under wet conditions. Ditch 7/13 had a more concave profile and ostensibly contained a single fill, similar to the uppermost deposits in ditches 23 and 25. However, a very thin and intermittent layer of dark grey, slightly organic material – possibly the same as, or derived from layer 15 – was also exposed at the base of the feature.
- 5.4.5 Ditches 7/13 and 23 intersected with two narrower and shallower ditches (9/16 and 11), also cut into the lower alluvium (33). Spaced roughly 1.5 m apart and orientated north-east to south-west, ditches 9/16 and 11 probably also intersected with ditch 35, although the point where they would have converged had been too heavily disturbed to be certain. Another short section of north-east to south-west ditch (4) was located between ditches 9/16 and 11. Ditches 4, 9/16 and 11 varied between 0.5 m and 0.8 m wide and 0.1 m to 0.25 m deep, and had similar, concave profiles. All contained single fills consisting of mid-brown grey silty clay although, as with ditch 7/13, very thin, intermittent layers of degraded organic material – possibly derived from, or contiguous with layer 15 – overlaid the bases of the ditches (Plate 13).
- 5.4.6 Where intersections were excavated, it was not possible to conclusively distinguish stratigraphic relationships between the two groups of ditches in the north-east corner of the site due to the similarity of their fills. However, it is unlikely that these features were contemporary.

*Ditches in the south-western part of the excavation area*

- 5.4.7 Three other north-west to south-east ditches, spaced between 4.5 m and 7 m apart in the south-western part of the excavation area, were cut into the surface of the potentially Iron Age layer(s) recorded as context 75 (Fig. 2). A further ditch (80), also cut into layer 75, was orientated perpendicular to the western-most of the three ditches. All four ditches, which were between 1.2 m and 2.6 m wide, were overlain by the upper layer of alluvium (2); their relationship with the thin organic-rich layer 15 is uncertain as this deposit was not observed to continue into the south-western part of the site. Additionally, none of the ditches were investigated prior to the mechanical removal of layer 75, although the base of ditch 80 was subsequently excavated. The excavated remainder of ditch 80 was 0.45 m wide and 0.18 m deep, had moderately steeply sloping, concave sides and contained a solitary fill was recorded as a mid-grey silty clay. Three flat pieces of stone were found at the base of the ditch, although these do not seem to have been worked or deliberately placed for any immediately apparent purpose (Plate 14).

**5.5 Other features**

- 5.5.1 A pair of shallow, slightly curvilinear features, each around 0.7 m wide, extended parallel to the northern edge of the excavation area for roughly 40 m. Plastic was found in the features during their excavation suggesting that they were the result of modern disturbance –



perhaps wheel rutting. These features seemed to follow roughly the same alignment as a series of parallel ditches, at least one of which was probably of Romano-British date, recorded in the eastern end of Trench 2 of the 2019 evaluation (Cotswold Archaeology 2019). However, the previously recorded ditches were not found to continue across the excavation area (again, possibly due to the extremely difficult working conditions).

- 5.5.2 A further possible archaeological feature, somewhat amorphous in plan and measuring 7 m by at least 1.7 m across, was partially exposed and surveyed towards the centre of the northern limit of the excavation. However, this part of the site rapidly flooded and the unstable edges of the excavation repeatedly collapsed, precluding further investigation of the feature.

## 6 FINDS EVIDENCE

### 6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 All finds recovered from the site are discussed here. All finds have been cleaned (with the exception of the metal object) and quantified by material type from each context; this information is summarised in Table 2. The primary dating evidence is provided by the pottery, which is concentrated in the later prehistoric (Late Bronze Age to Late Iron Age) with a single sherd of Roman pottery recovered. Little closely dated material amongst the other finds types was present.

**Table 2** Finds by material type (number of pieces/weight in grammes)

Context	Animal bone		Fired clay		Iron		Pottery		Fuel ash slag		Stone		Total	Total
	Ct.	Wt.(g)	Ct.	Wt.(g)	Ct.	Wt.(g)	Ct.	Wt.(g)	Ct.	Wt.(g)	Ct.	Wt.(g)	Ct.	Wt.(g)
3			1	1212									1	1212
15							10	121					10	121
18	45	117					123	4286			3	170	171	4573
21	7	8					6	8					13	16
29	3	5					92	591					95	596
31	7	135					6	40					13	175
32	13	20					27	101	1	2			41	123
40	1	1	5	27			2	51					8	79
44	2	2					2	27					4	29
46	54	833	2	20			27	368			2	634	85	1855
50	22	91	5	121			6	14					33	226
52	4	2					1	4	9	21			14	27
54	2	2											2	2
56	4	5					5	55					9	60
58	3	4					12	54					15	58
74	8	187					2	6			1	302	11	495



Context	Animal bone		Fired clay		Iron		Pottery		Fuel ash slag		Stone		Total	Total
	Ct.	Wt.(g)	Ct.	Wt.(g)	Ct.	Wt.(g)	Ct.	Wt.(g)	Ct.	Wt.(g)	Ct.	Wt.(g)	Ct.	Wt.(g)
75	18	104	363	749	1	3	21	104	3	24	15	1469	421	2453
81			2	8									2	8
85	8	34					16	227					24	261
87	9	192					3	116					12	308
98	16	228					12	514					28	742
<b>Total</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>1970</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>2137</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>6687</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>2575</b>	<b>1012</b>	<b>13419</b>

## 6.2 Pottery

6.2.1 A total of 373 sherds (weighing 6687 g) was recovered from 18 deposits. The group was recorded according to accepted guidelines (Barclay *et al* 2016) to a digital database which will form part of the permanent archive. Sherds were sorted by fabric groups based on principal inclusions and quantified by sherd count, weight (g) and EVEs (estimated vessel equivalents). Where possible forms, rim morphology, decoration and evidence for use (residues, sooting etc) were noted.

6.2.2 Ditch fills produced the majority of the group (66% by sherd count) with 25% recovered from two pits. Layer 75 produced 6% of the group whilst deposit 15 produced the remaining 3%. The assemblage is in a good condition, with a mean sherd weight (MSW) of 17.9 g. Few full profiles are discernible, but enough of the profile has survived in the calcite-gritted wares to attribute form classes.

### *Later prehistoric*

6.2.3 A total of 122 sherds (33% of the assemblage) are in a grog-tempered fabric. This group is only broadly dateable, from the Late Bronze Age to the Late Iron Age. The group is highly fragmented, with a low mean sherd weight of 5.9 g, and retains no form indicators to aid in closer dating.

### *Iron Age*

6.2.4 The majority of the sherds from the assemblage (250, 67%) are dateable to the Iron Age. The fabric range is limited, with the majority (217 sherds) occurring in calcite-gritted fabrics. Twelve sherds are in vesicular fabrics, possibly leached variants of the calcite-gritted wares. Calcite-gritted wares are common in the area, thought to have been sourced from the calcite mudstones around Christon (Morris 1988, 29), 5km to the south of the site.

6.2.5 Identifiable vessels in the calcite-gritted fabrics are limited to jars. The only vessel identified in the vesicular fabric is a lid-seated jar from layer 75, probably of South Cadbury form JC1, a form also recovered from ditch 124 (cut 82, fill 85) in the calcite-gritted fabric with plain, flattened rim. These jars are thought to be of Middle Iron Age date at South Cadbury (Tabor forthcoming). Jars with simple or everted rims, of similar style to Ham Hill vessel classes J3 and J4 (Morris 1987, 38) were also recovered from ditch 124 (cut 45, fill 46; cut 97, fill 98), the vessels dated from the 5th to mid-3rd centuries BC (Early to Middle Iron Age). One example of a Ham Hill vessel class J7 (*ibid.*, 39), an ovoid jar with incurving rim, of broadly Iron Age date, was recovered from ditch 122 (cut 20, fill 18).





6.2.6 Smaller amounts (19 sherds) occur in a black-firing, quartz-rich fabric. No source is suggested for these, but as with the calcite-gritted wares they are likely to be fairly local to the site. Fewer vessels are identifiable within this group. A shouldered bowl of form BD6.1 (Tabor forthcoming), in South-west decorated style, was recovered from layer 75, with tooled linear (diagonal) decoration at the shoulder. A jar was recovered from ditch 124 (cut 45, fill 46), paralleled with vessel class J4 from Ham Hill (Morris 1987, 38).

*Roman*

6.2.7 A single sherd (amounting to less than 1% of the assemblage) is dateable to the Roman period. Recovered from layer 75, the greyware body sherd retains no form indicators or decoration and can only be broadly dated.

**6.3 Fired clay**

6.3.1 The fired clay group amounts to 379 fragments (2154 g) and was recovered from seven deposits. The fragments mostly occur in pale-firing fine, silty fabrics, probably typical of the area which is known for its tidal flat deposits comprising sand, silt and clay (BGS 2020), with a few fragments also containing moderate crushed flint. Few original surfaces are preserved.

6.3.2 Of particular interest is a large fragment of briquetage – a pedestal that would have been used in salt-working to support large pans of brine over heat sources (Morris 2009, 109). This is, therefore, suggestive of such activities in the vicinity, corroborating evidence for Iron Age and Romano-British salt-working from sites local to Scot Elm Drive (Cotswold Archaeology 2010, 12; Morris 2009, 109).

**6.4 Stone**

6.4.1 A small group of stone fragments, totalling 21 items (2575 g), was recovered from four deposits. The majority appear to be sandstones but the group is highly fragmentary, rendering identification of original function difficult. Possible architectural fragments were recovered from ditch 124 (cut 45, fill 46) and pit 73 (fill 74). A single fragment of possible ‘Bath brick’ – a mudstone brick made in Bridgwater during the 19th century, for cleaning, was recovered from ditch 122 (cut 20, fill 18).

**6.5 Metalwork**

6.5.1 A single item of metal, an iron nail, was recovered from a bulk soil sample of deposit 75. The nail is of a standard form, with square shank and round head, a form introduced in the Roman period and which continues largely unchanged until industrialisation in the post-medieval period. Consequently, it cannot be closely dated.

**6.6 Animal bone**

*Introduction*

6.6.1 A total of 226 fragments (1.970 kg) of animal bone came from the fills of several Early to Middle Iron Age features. Once refits are accounted for the total falls to 190 fragments (Table 3). The assemblage includes hand-recovered and sieved material.

**Table 3** Animal bone: number of identified specimens present (or NISP) by feature

Feature	cattle	sheep	horse	dog	Unidentifiable	Total
curvilinear gully 120	-	-	-	-	6	6



curvilinear gully 121	1	3	-	-	22	26
curvilinear gully 122	5	3	1	2	52	63
enclosure ditch 123	-	2	-	-	1	3
enclosure ditch 124	7	15	5	1	37	65
enclosure ditch 125	4	-	-	-	3	7
pit 27	-	-	-	-	1	1
pit 73	2	1	1	-	3	7
spread 75	3	1	-	-	8	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>190</b>

### *Methods*

- 6.6.1 The assemblage was rapidly scanned in accordance with current guidelines for best practice (Baker and Worley 2019) and the following information quantified where applicable: species, skeletal element, preservation condition, fusion and tooth ageing data, butchery marks, metrical data, gnawing, burning, surface condition, pathology and non-metric traits. This information was directly recorded into a relational database (in MS Access) and cross-referenced with relevant contextual information.

### *Results*

- 6.6.2 Bone preservation is generally good, however most of the fragments recovered by sieving are highly fragmented and unidentifiable. Evidence of gnawing is low, indicating that the assemblage has not be significantly biased by the bone-chewing habit of scavenging carnivores.
- 6.6.3 Bone fragments came from three curvilinear gullies (120–2) in the north-west corner of the development area. The sieved material comprises numerous small unidentifiable fragments, many of which are burnt. Identified fragments came from gullies 121 and 122 and include several cattle and sheep/goat bones, a fragment of horse skull and the scapula and pelvis from a puppy. The cattle and sheep/goat bones include both cranial and post-cranial elements, and some of the cattle bones show signs of butchery.
- 6.6.4 A relatively large number of cattle and sheep/goat bones came from enclosure ditches 123–5. The broad range of skeletal elements is indicative of mixed waste deposits from various stages in the carcass reduction sequence, from slaughter and butchery to meat consumption. Five horse bones came from ditch 124; the bones include fragments of mandible, pelvis, femur, fourth metatarsal and first phalanx. The femur from a puppy also came from ditch 124.
- 6.6.5 A single unidentifiable fragment came from pit 27. Several identified bones from pit 73 include a cattle tibia and cervical vertebra, a sheep/goat tibia and part of a horse femur. A few fragments of cattle bone came from spread 75, including a piece of burnt skull, a scapula and loose tooth; the tibia from a lamb also came from this deposit.
- 6.6.6 The assessment results suggest that the livestock economy was one based on sheep- and cattle-farming. The presence of a few lamb bones further indicates that some material was



deposited during the spring and early summer, which may be significant to terms of the occupation of the site given its marginal location on the edge of the North Somerset Levels.

## 7 ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

### 7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 Nine bulk sediment samples were taken from a range of features of Iron Age chronology, including gullies, a pit, a posthole, a ditch and a spread, and were processed for the recovery and assessment of the environmental evidence. The bulk samples break down into the following feature groups:

**Table 4** Sample summary

Feature type	No. of bulk samples	Volume (litres)
Gully	5	47
Pit	1	10
Posthole	1	19
Ditch	1	18
Spread	1	37
<b>Totals</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>131</b>

### 7.2 Aims and methods

7.2.1 The purpose of this assessment is to determine the potential of the environmental remains preserved at the site to address project aims and to provide data valuable for wider research frameworks. The nature of this assessment follows recommendations set out by Historic England (Campbell *et al.* 2011).

7.2.2 The size of the samples varied between 5 and 37 litres, and on average was around 15 litres. Some of the samples were pre-soaked in a solution of water and hydrogen peroxide to help break up the clayey sediment. The samples were processed by standard flotation methods on a Siraf-type flotation tank; the flots retained on a 0.25 mm mesh, residues fractionated into 5.6/4 mm and 1 mm fractions. The coarse fractions (>5.6/4 mm) were sorted by eye and discarded. The environmental material extracted from the residues was added to the flots. The grid method was used to split a large fine residue into a smaller residue subsample. The fine residue fractions and the flots were scanned using a stereo incident light microscopy (Leica MS5 microscope) at magnifications of up to x40 for the identification of environmental remains. The preservation and nature of the environmental remains were recorded. 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), for cereals. Abundance of remains is qualitatively quantified as an estimation of the minimum number of individuals.

### 7.3 Results

7.3.1 The flots were generally small (Appendix 1), with low to moderate numbers of modern roots that may be indicative of some stratigraphic movement and the possibility of contamination by later intrusive elements. The small and generally poorly preserved assemblage of



environmental evidence comprises plant remains preserved by waterlogging and carbonisation, small amounts of mature and round wood charcoal, terrestrial and aquatic molluscs, small animal bones, fish bones and scales, insect remains, earthworm eggs and foraminifera. Vitriified inorganic material was also noted in some samples.

- 7.3.2 Charred remains include grains and glume bases of *Triticum* sp. (wheat, some grains only tentatively identified due to poor preservation), tentatively identified grains of *Hordeum vulgare* (barley) and Triticeae (unidentified cereal) grain fragments, seeds of Cyperaceae (sedges), *Juncus* sp. (rushes), *Poa/Phleum* (meadow grass/cat's tail) and Viciae (vetches), as well as *Corylus avellana* (hazel) nut shell fragments.
- 7.3.3 The waterlogged plant assemblage comprises moderate to high amounts of vegetative parts including leaves (some identified as Lycopsideae (mosses)), monocot stems, twig/wood fragments and buds. Also present are seeds of rushes, sedges, *Chenopodium* sp. (goosefoot), *Ranunculus* sp. (buttercup family), Cardueae (thistles), *Picris* sp. (oxtongue), Lamiaceae (mint family), *Daucus carota* (wild carrot), *Rubus* sp. (blackberry/raspberry), Polygonaceae (knotweeds, including seeds and fruit of *Rumex* sp. (dock)), Trifolieae (clover family), and lemma of *Avena sterilis/fatua* (wild oat).

## 7.4 Discussion

- 7.4.1 The charred plant assemblage is very limited but suggestive of residual remains from plant exploitation activities in the area, which are consistent with the presumed Iron Age chronology of the deposits, based on the presence of hulled wheats. Although vitriified inorganic material has been found at some sites, the rarity of charcoal indicates there is very limited environmental evidence of industrial activity (eg salt making).
- 7.4.2 The remains preserved by waterlogging are representative of the surrounding environment: a largely open area (no arboreal taxa identified) with some wetland vegetation (rushes, sedges) and molluscs but mostly nitrophilous plants, perhaps suggesting sporadic inundation. The mollusc and invertebrate evidence is mostly of freshwater taxa, suggesting the inundation is typically of fluvial/pluvial nature, but with some possible but limited brackish influence (just one sample containing a small amount of foraminifera).

## 8 STATEMENT OF POTENTIAL

### 8.1 Stratigraphic potential

- 8.1.1 Despite the extremely difficult working conditions, the aims of the project (refer to section 3) were largely achieved. The results, albeit limited and slightly inconclusive in some regards, are generally consistent with current understanding of the development and exploitation of the landscape from the 1st millennium BC onwards.
- 8.1.2 Evidenced by the partially exposed remains of, perhaps, a roundhouse, a small ditched enclosure, a few pits and postholes and a (possibly slightly later) spread of material – associated with animal bone, pottery and other debris – the earliest identifiable phase of activity at the site dates to the (perhaps Early–Middle) Iron Age. As these features and deposits continued beyond the excavated area, their interpretation is necessarily open to question, and the full extent of the utilised area cannot be determined. Nevertheless, the preceding evaluations (AAU 2002a; Cotswold Archaeology 2019a) produced little evidence that the remainder of the site was used intensively at this time. In addition, almost no traces of contemporary activity were recorded during trial trenching at the neighbouring site to the west (Cotswold Archaeology 2019b). Consequently, the results of the investigations seem consistent with the use of the slightly elevated, and presumably drier ground in the north-



west corner of the excavation area for small scale, short-lived occupation – probably as a seasonal base for grazing livestock.

- 8.1.3 Broadly conforming to expectations, the associated environmental evidence is indicative of a freshwater wetland environment with some marine influence. The small quantities of cereal grains retrieved from Iron Age contexts probably represent crops transported to the site for consumption – the surrounding environment presumably being too wet and brackish to support widespread arable cultivation at this time. There are also some, albeit very limited suggestions of other plant resources being exploited but there is little evidence for other economically productive activities being undertaken. The recovery of a briquetage pedestal, alongside the very limited and slightly inconclusive evidence for salt production from previous investigations (AAU 2002a; GK Heritage Ltd 2013, 19; Rippon 2006, 67), is of minor note. However, salt production does not seem to have been undertaken within the excavated area on a significant scale given the paucity of charcoal from environmental samples, and the absence of characteristic features such as settling tanks, evaporation hearths, networks of channels and sluices or substantial layers of briquetage and burnt waste. Moreover, it is not certain that the briquetage from Scot Elm Drive is contemporary with the phase of occupation indicated by the Iron Age features.
- 8.1.4 Although more prevalent and conspicuous across areas raised above the former wetlands, remains derived from Early–Middle Iron Age activity are uncommon on the North Somerset Levels, which probably reflects that the environment was generally unsuited to permanent occupation or certain forms of agriculture until the Romano-British period. Late Iron Age–Romano-British activity is also more widely attested to in the local area – particularly in association with salt production (eg, Cotswold Archaeology 2010; Cox and Holbrook 2009; John Moore Heritage Services 2009; Rippon 2000; 2006). Therefore, the evidence from Scot Elm Drive, whilst limited, is unusual and of at least local significance.
- 8.1.5 The second phase of activity relates to the digging of a series of (predominantly) north-west to south-east ditches, that were buried by alluvium after they had become at least partially infilled. The date of the ditches, and the thin organic rich layer (15) associated with them, is uncertain. The ditches follow a similar orientation to existing land divisions/rhynes that were presumably laid out during the post-medieval period. However, it is likely that the ditches – and the former ground surface represented by layer 15 – are of somewhat earlier origin given the total absence of post-medieval finds, the difficulty of attributing a comparatively recent date to the overlying alluvium, and the earlier recovery of Romano-British pottery from the base of a very similar ditch (AAU 2002a, 15).
- 8.1.6 Very similar sets of ditches, often associated with former land surfaces, have been recorded at roughly the same OD height, sealed beneath alluvium (typically less than 1 m thick), elsewhere on the North Somerset Levels, including close by during construction of the West Wick Bypass (AAU 2002c), a little further west on Locking Moor (AAU 1995), and at Puxton Dolmoors (Rippon 2006, 47–9), Banwell Moor and Kenn Moor (Rippon 2000). Although sometimes inconclusively dated, these ditches have been interpreted as potential evidence for large scale drainage and reclamation of the levels during the Romano-British period (Rippon 2006, 70).
- 8.1.7 The possible Romano-British drainage ditches at Scot Elm Drive are of limited significance as their identification contributes little to existing understanding of the date, distribution, and character of drainage and reclamation works during the period. It seems that the excavated area was not used in any other archaeologically recognisable manner at this time, although a probable focus of contemporary activity has been revealed immediately to the west through trial trenching at the West Acres Caravan Park site (Cotswold Archaeology 2019b).

The results of excavations at the adjoining site, scheduled to start in Summer 2020 (Wessex Archaeology 2020), may, therefore, provide additional context for understanding the evidence from Scot Elm Drive. In isolation, however, further analysis of the stratigraphic evidence has negligible potential to conclusively determine the date of the ditches or, in accordance with the project aims, the thin, dark organic horizon associated with them.

- 8.1.8 Overall, there is very limited potential for further analysis of the stratigraphic evidence to further address the original project aims (or any additional aims). Nevertheless, the results – particularly in relation to the evidence of Iron Age activity – are of sufficient interest to merit dissemination through publication.

## **8.2 Finds potential**

- 8.2.1 Chronological evidence from the pottery assemblage indicates activity in the later prehistoric period, with a focus in the (perhaps Early–Middle) Iron Age. The fabrics and forms are consistent with other large assemblages from the area of similar date (eg, Wessex Archaeology 2019b; Wessex Archaeology 2019c; Morris 1988). Nevertheless, the Scot Elm Drive assemblage has the potential to add an understanding of the known Iron Age activity in the vicinity, although it is limited by being derived mostly (66%) from ditch deposits.
- 8.2.2 The briquetage pedestal adds to the picture of salt-production in the area but it, along with the remainder of the fired clay and other categories of finds, has little or no further research potential.
- 8.2.3 The animal bone assemblage is small and includes few bones suitable for further analysis. It has been fully recorded to complete the site archive and while no further analytical work is required, it is recommended that a summary of the assemblage is included in any future publication of the fieldwork results.

## **8.3 Environmental potential**

- 8.3.1 The assemblages recovered have little potential and require no further analysis.

## **8.4 Summary of potential**

- 8.4.1 The pottery merits additional, limited work, but further analysis of the stratigraphic sequence, environmental evidence and most categories of finds has little potential to provide additional information. The results, although relatively limited and notwithstanding some inevitable uncertainties, are generally consistent with existing understanding of the exploitation and development of the landscape from the 1st millennium BC onwards. Nevertheless, the potential discovery of an Early–Middle Iron Age seasonal occupation site/grazing camp is of at least local significance and warrants publication.

# **9 UPDATED PROJECT DESIGN**

## **9.1 Updated project aims**

- 9.1.1 The revised aims of the project are to place the results of the project in their local and regional context and to disseminate them.

## **9.2 Stratigraphic evidence – recommendations for analysis**

- 9.2.1 No further analysis of the stratigraphic evidence is proposed, although it is recommended that a review of grey literature reports and published sources is undertaken to enable the results to be placed in their local and regional context. Some minor updating of the database



and preliminary phasing may also be required following the specialist analyses recommended below.

### 9.3 Finds evidence – recommendations for analysis

- 9.3.1 Full pottery fabric descriptions are recommended at analysis stage, in line with currently accepted guidelines (Barclay *et al.* 2016). As the late prehistoric grog-tempered fabrics retain no indicator of vessel form, their usefulness in informing site dating or activities are limited and, therefore, no further work is recommended for this group. For the Iron Age material, few vessels appear to be reconstructable, although time should be allocated for study of some of the larger context groups, for example ditch 122 (cut 20, fill 18). Discussion of form and comparison with local assemblages should be included in the publication, with provision for the illustration of up to eight vessels.
- 9.3.2 The briquetage pedestal should be illustrated to accompany a short report. The stone should be scanned by a specialist and a short report included in the publication if appropriate. The results of the animal bone assessment should be summarised for publication.

### 9.4 Environmental evidence – recommendations for analysis

- 9.4.1 No further analysis of the environmental evidence is proposed, although it is recommended that the results of the assessment are summarised for publication.

### 9.5 Proposals for publication

- 9.5.1 It is proposed that the results of the excavation and the brief programme of analytical work recommended above are set out in the form of a short, illustrated article (estimated to be 8 to 10 pages in length), to be submitted for publication in the regional journal, the *Proceedings of the Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society*.

*Provisional synopsis of Proceedings of the Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society publication*

Working title: *A possible earlier Iron Age seasonal grazing camp and Romano-British land reclamation at West Wick, North Somerset*

by Simon Flaherty, with specialist contributions

Introduction	250 words
Results	1000 words
Finds and environmental reports	1500 words
Discussion	750 words

Total: approximately 3500 words, 3 figures, 1 plate, 2 tables

- 9.5.2 Alternatively, it may be possible – and desirable – to combine the results from Scot Elm Drive in a single publication with those from the forthcoming excavation at the adjoining site of the former West Acres Caravan Park (Wessex Archaeology 2020).



## 9.6 Programme for analysis and publication

9.6.1 Analysis and publication will only commence when this document and the proposals therein have been approved by the Senior Archaeologist at North Somerset Council on behalf of the Local Planning Authority, and the work has been commissioned in full by the client.

9.6.2 Typically, the analysis and publication programme for a project of this scale and complexity will take around nine months but will vary depending on the availability of specialists and external laboratories. A project-specific programme will be developed and agreed at the time of commission.

## 9.7 Personnel and resources

9.7.1 The following Wessex Archaeology core staff are scheduled to undertake the work as outlined in the task list for post-excavation analysis and publication (**Table 3**).

**Table 5** Task list

Task no.	Task description	Days	Staff
<b>Management and support</b>			
1	Project management and QA	1	R. Clarke (SPM)
2	Finds management	0.5	R Seager-Smith (SPM)
3	Publication/production management	1	P. Bradley (SPM)
<b>Pre-analysis</b>			
4	Check phasing and grouping, update site database	0.5	S. Flaherty (PO)
5	Digitisation of selected drawings	0.5	Graphics office (PO)
6	Project meetings	0.5	All
7	Background research	1	S. Flaherty (PO)
<b>Analysis and specialist reporting</b>			
<b>Stratigraphic</b>			
8	Stratigraphic analysis and reporting	1	S. Flaherty (PO)
<b>Finds</b>			
9	Pottery and other finds: analysis and reporting	2.75	K. Marsden (SPO)
10	Animal bone: reporting	0.5	L. Higbee (SPO)
11	Illustrations: finds (up to eight pottery vessels, and the briquetage pedestal)	1.5	Graphics office (PO)
<b>Environmental</b>			
12	Reporting	0.5	I López-Dóriga (SPO)
<b>Report compilation</b>			
13	Introduction and background	1	S. Flaherty (PO)
14	Compile and integrate report	0.5	S. Flaherty (PO)
15	Discussion	1	S. Flaherty (PO)
16	Bibliography	0.5	S. Flaherty (PO)
17	Prepare brief for illustrations and compile captions (figures, plates and tables)	0.5	S. Flaherty (PO)
18	Prepare illustrations	1	Graphics office (PO)
19	Review, edit and submit report	1	R. Clarke / P. Bradley (SPM)
20	Revise report following journal review	1	S. Flaherty (PO) Graphics office (PO)





Task no.	Task description	Days	Staff
21	Check proofs	0.5	All
22	Journal publication cost	Ext	Ext. (journal)
<b>Archiving</b>			
23	Finalisation/implementation of selection strategy	0.25	M. Taylor (PO)
24	Physical archive preparation	0.5	J. Whitby (PS)
25	Physical archive deposition	1	J. Whitby (PS)
26	Digital archive preparation	1	T. Burt (PS)
27	Digital archive deposition	£350	Ext. (ADS)
28	Box storage grant (1 box)	£50	Ext. (museum)

## 9.8 Management structure

- 9.8.1 Wessex Archaeology operates a project management system. The team will be headed by a Project Manager, who will assume ultimate responsibility for the implementation and execution of the project specification as outlined in the Updated Project Design, and the achievement of performance targets, be they academic, budgetary, or scheduled.
- 9.8.2 The Project Manager may delegate specific aspects of the project to other key staff, who will both supervise others and have a direct input into the compilation of the report. They may also undertake direct liaison with external consultants and specialists who are contributing to the publication report, and the museum named as the recipient of the project archive. The Project Manager will have a major input into how the publication report is written. They will define and control the scope and form of the post-excavation programme.
- 9.8.3 The Project Manager will be assisted by the Senior Research Manager and the Senior Publications Manager, who will help to ensure that the report meets internal quality standards as defined in Wessex Archaeology's guidelines.

## 10 STORAGE AND CURATION

### 10.1 Museum

- 10.1.1 The archive resulting from the excavation is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology in Salisbury. The Somerset Heritage Centre, Taunton, has agreed in principle to accept the archive on completion of the project, under the accession code WESTM:2019.45. Deposition of any finds with the museum will only be carried out with the full written agreement of the landowner to transfer title of all finds to the museum.

### 10.2 Preparation of the archive

#### *Physical archive*

- 10.2.1 The archive, which includes paper records, graphics and artefacts will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by the Somerset Heritage Centre and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; ClfA 2014c; Brown 2011).
- 10.2.2 All archive elements are marked with the site/accession code (WESTM:2019.45), and a full index will be prepared. The physical archive comprises the following:
- 2 cardboard boxes or airtight plastic boxes of artefacts and ecofacts, ordered by material type; and



- 1 file/document case of paper records and A3/A4 graphics.

10.2.3 Note that the quantity of finds boxes may reduce following implementation of the proposed selection strategy (see below).

#### *Digital archive*

10.2.4 The digital archive generated by the project, which will include born-digital data (survey data, databases and spreadsheets, photographs and reports), will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) to ensure its long-term curation. Digital data will be prepared following ADS guidelines (ADS 2013 and online guidance) and accompanied by full metadata.

### **10.3 Selection policy**

10.3.1 It is widely accepted that not all the records (physical and digital) and materials (artefacts and ecofacts) collected or created during the course of an archaeological project require preservation in perpetuity. These records and materials will be subject to selection in order to establish what will be retained for long-term curation, with the aim of ensuring that all elements selected to be retained are appropriate to establish the significance of the project and support future research, outreach, engagement, display and learning activities, ie the retained archive should fulfil the requirements of both future researchers and the receiving Museum.

10.3.2 The selection strategy, which details the project-specific selection process, is underpinned by national guidelines on selection and retention (Brown 2011, section 4) and generic selection policies (SMA 1993; WA's internal selection policy) and follows ClfA's 'Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives'. It should be agreed by all stakeholders (Wessex Archaeology's internal specialists, external specialists, local authority, museum) and fully documented in the project archive.

10.3.3 Project-specific proposals for selection are presented below. These proposals are based on recommendations by Wessex Archaeology's internal specialists and will be updated in line with any further comment by other stakeholders (museum, local authority). The selection strategy will be fully documented in the project archive.

10.3.4 Any material not selected for retention may be used for teaching or reference collections by Wessex Archaeology.

#### *Finds*

10.3.5 The finds assemblage is relatively small and of limited range but includes at least some categories with further research potential.

- *Pottery (373 sherds)*: mainly prehistoric. Providing primary chronological evidence for the site, but also further research potential beyond the limits of the current project, in augmenting regional prehistoric ceramic dataset; retain all.
- *Fired clay (379 fragments)*: almost exclusively comprises abraded and undiagnostic fragments of uncertain function; these have little archaeological significance and little or no further research potential. One piece of salt-working briquetage is of intrinsic interest; retain only this object.
- *Stone (21 pieces)*: mainly undiagnostic pieces showing no obvious signs of working or utilisation; only identifiable objects are likely to be of relatively recent date. Little or



no archaeological significance or research potential; retain none (unless geological identification reveals non-local stone of intrinsic interest).

- *Metalwork (1 object)*: undatable nail. No archaeological significance; no further research potential; retain none.

#### *Documentary records*

- 10.3.6 Documentary records comprise site records, hard copies of site reports and site graphics. All will be deposited with the Museum.

#### *Digital data*

- 10.3.7 Digital data comprise site records, photographs, reports, finds records and survey data. All should be deposited with ADS, although the photographs may be subjected to selection to eliminate duplicate and poor-quality shots, and any others not considered relevant to the archaeological deposits.

### **10.4 Security copy**

- 10.4.1 In line with current best practice (eg, 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.

### **10.5 OASIS**

- 10.5.1 An OASIS online record (<http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main>) has been initiated. A .pdf version of the final report will be submitted on acceptance by the Senior Archaeologist. Subject to any contractual requirements on confidentiality, copies of the OASIS record will be integrated into the relevant local and national records and published through the Archaeology Data Service ArchSearch catalogue.

## **11 COPYRIGHT**

### **11.1 Archive and report copyright**

- 11.1.1 The full copyright of the written/illustrative/digital archive relating to the project will be retained by Wessex Archaeology under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with all rights reserved. The client will be licenced to use each report for the purposes that it was produced in relation to the project as described in the specification. The museum, however, will be granted an exclusive licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use conforms to the *Copyright and Related Rights Regulations 2003*. In some instances, certain regional museums may require absolute transfer of copyright, rather than a licence; this should be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.
- 11.1.2 Information relating to the project will be deposited with the Historic Environment Record (HER) where it can be freely copied without reference to Wessex Archaeology for the purposes of archaeological research or development control within the planning process.

### **11.2 Third party data copyright**

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1 Environmental data

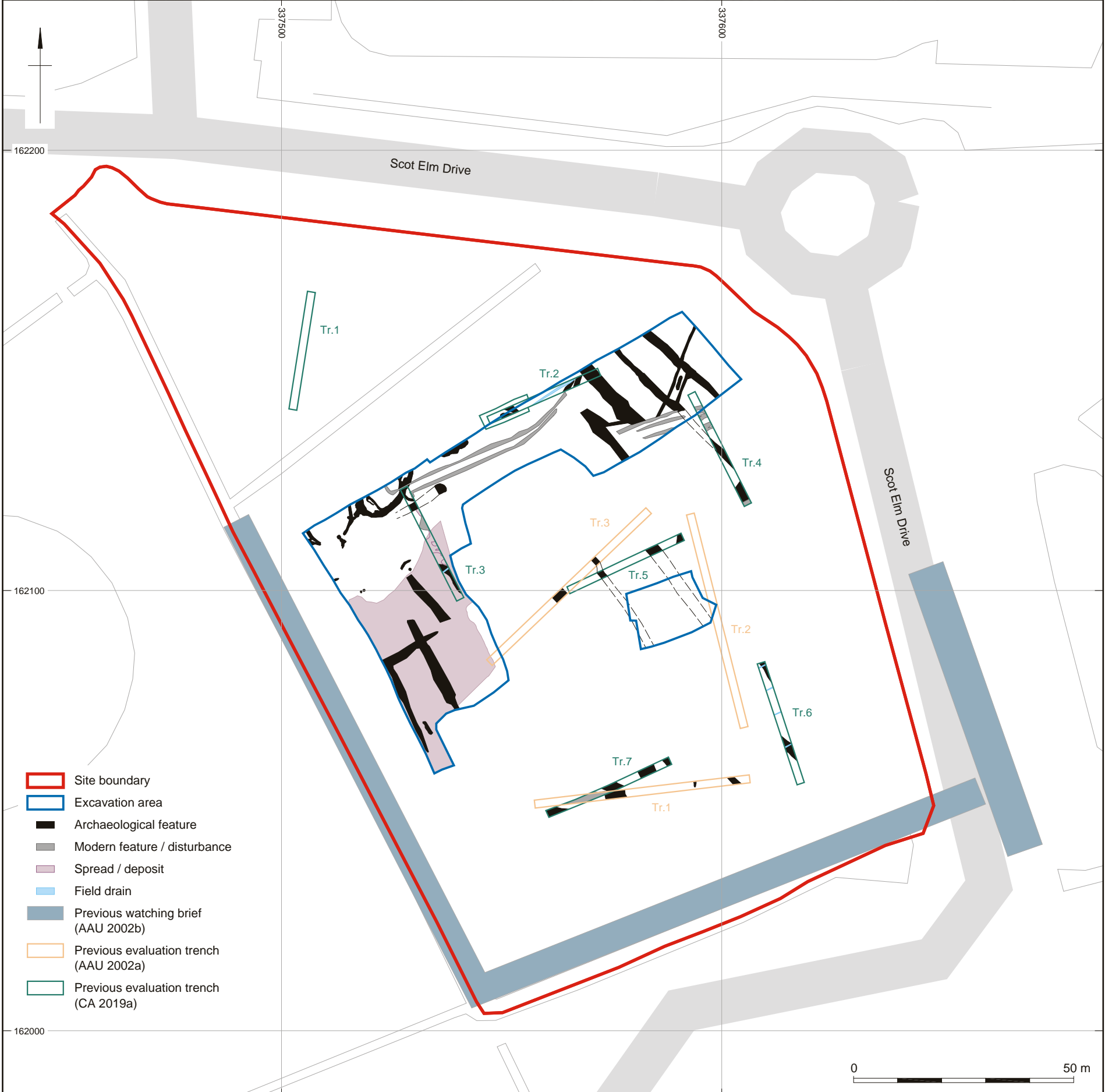
Feature (Group)	Context	Sample	Vol (l)	Flot (ml)	Bioturbation proxies	Grain	Chaff	Cereal notes	Charred other	Charred other notes	Charcoal > 2mm (ml)	Charcoal	Other	Vegetative parts (excluding roots)	Uncharred other	Invertebrates
Pit 27	29	1	10	25	40%	C	C	Triticeae grain, <i>Triticum</i> sp. glume base	-	-	Trace	Mature	Moll-t (C), Sab/f (C)	A** (inc. leaves, monocot stems, twig/wood fragments)	A ( <i>Juncus</i> sp., Cyperaceae, Polygonaceae, <i>Chenopodium</i> sp., <i>Ranunculus</i> sp., <i>Rumex</i> sp.)	E, I (C)
Posthole 22	21	2	19	30	25%	C	C	<i>Triticum</i> sp., glume base and grain; Triticeae grain fragment	-	-	Trace	Mature	Vitrified material (C), Sab/f (C)	A** (inc. leaves, monocot stems)	A (inc. <i>Juncus</i> sp., Cardueae, <i>Picris</i> sp.)	
20 (Gully 122)	18	3	8	20	25%	C	C	<i>Triticum</i> sp., glume base and grain	B	Cyperaceae, <i>Juncus</i> sp.	<1	Mature	Forams (B), Moll-f (C)	A** (inc. stems)	A* (inc. <i>Juncus</i> sp., Lamiaceae, <i>Chenopodium</i> sp.)	E (C)
49 (Ditch 126)	50	4	18	15	10%	C	-	Triticeae (inc. cf. <i>Hordeum vulgare</i> , cf. <i>Triticum</i> sp.)	C	Cyperaceae, <i>Corylus avellana</i>	Trace	Mature	Sab (C)	A* (inc. monocot stems)	A (inc. <i>Juncus</i> sp., <i>Picris</i> sp., <i>Daucus carota</i> , Cardueae, Cyperaceae)	E (C)
50 (Gully 121)	52	5	8	10	40%	-	-	-	C	Vicieae	Trace	Mature	Sab (C)	A*	A (inc. <i>Juncus</i> sp.)	E (C)
53 (Gully 120)	54	6	5	5	5%	-	-	-	-	-	<1	Mature + roundwood	Moll-f (C), Moll-t (C), Fish	A** (inc. leaves, buds, wood fragments)	A (inc. <i>Juncus</i> sp., Cardueae)	E (C)






Feature (Group)	Context	Sample	Vol (l)	Flot (ml)	Bioturbation proxies	Grain	Chaff	Cereal notes	Charred other	Charred other notes	Charcoal > 2mm (ml)	Charcoal	Other	Vegetative parts (excluding roots)	Uncharred other	Invertebrates
													scale (C)			
53 (Gully 120)	56	7	8	25	40%	-	-	-	-	-	<1	Mature	Moll-t (B)	A*	A (inc. <i>Juncus</i> sp., <i>Rubus</i> sp., Cyperaceae, Cardueae, <i>Chenopodium</i> sp., Polygonaceae)	E (C)
30 (Gully 122)	32	8	18	20	5%	C	-	Triticeae	C	<i>Poa/Phleum</i>	Trace	Mature	Vitrified material (C)	A* (inc. monocot stems, twig/wood fragments, Lycopsideae leaves)	A (inc. Trifoliae, <i>Ranunculus</i> sp., Cyperaceae, <i>Picris</i> sp.)	E (C)
Spread	75	9	37	60	10%	C	C	Triticeae (inc. cf. <i>Triticum</i> sp.) grains, <i>Triticum</i> sp. glume base	-	-	Trace	Mature	Vitrified material (B), Moll-t (C), Sab (C)	A* (inc. monocot stems, twig/wood fragments, leaves)	A* (inc. <i>Juncus</i> sp., Cardueae, <i>Chenopodium</i> sp., <i>Ranunculus</i> sp., <i>Picris</i> sp., Polygonaceae seed, <i>Rumex</i> sp. fruit, <i>Rubus</i> sp., <i>Avena sterilis/fatua</i> lemma, Cyperaceae)	E, I (C)

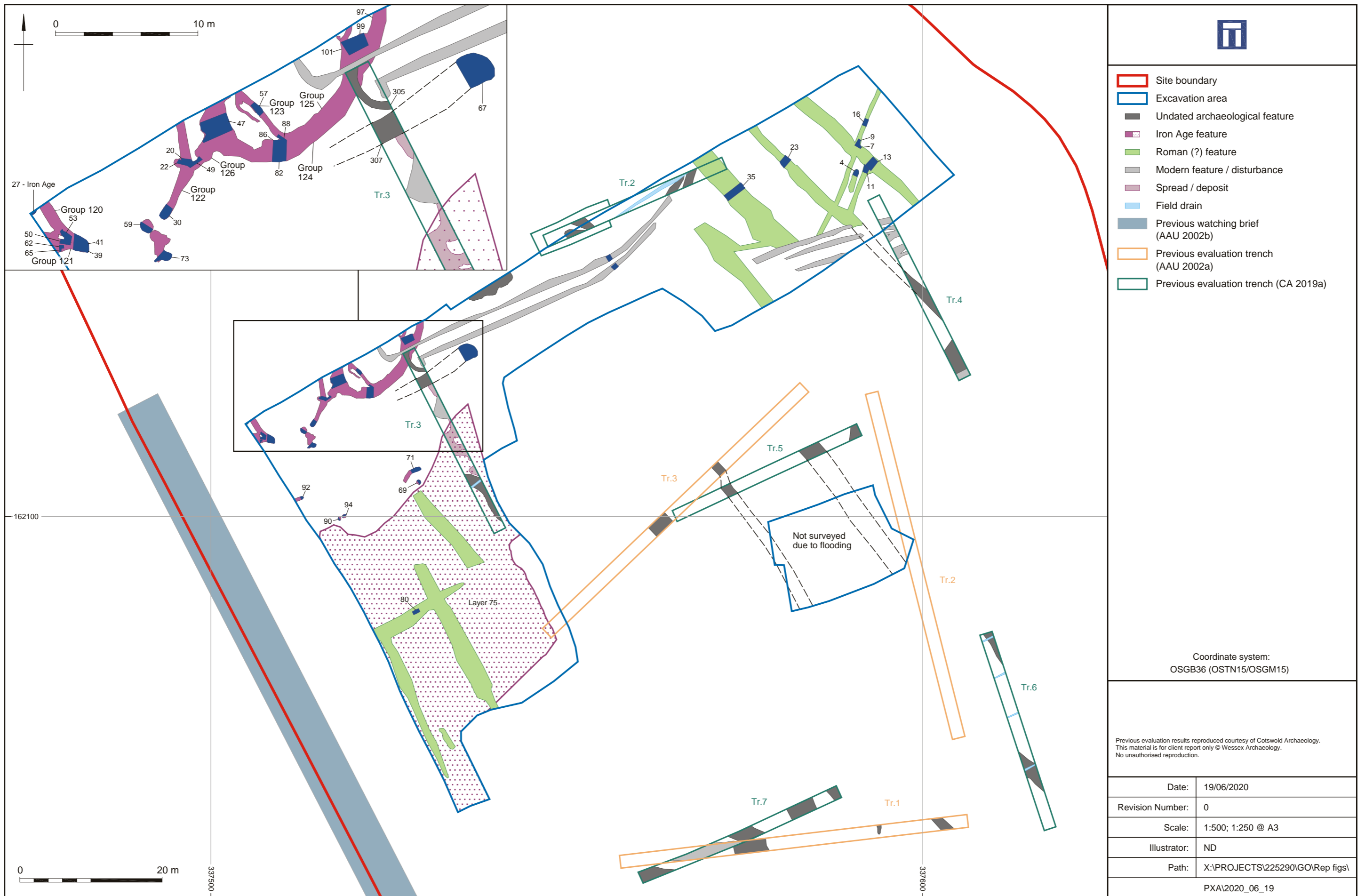
Key: Scale of abundance: A\*\*\* = exceptional, A\*\* = 100+, A\* = 30–99, A = 30–10, B = 9–5, C = <5; E = earthworm eggs, I = insects; Sab = small animal bones, Moll-t = terrestrial molluscs.



<p>Coordinate system: OSGB36 (OSTN15/OSGM15)</p> 	<p>Previous evaluation results reproduced courtesy of Cotswold Archaeology. Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright and database right 2020. This material is for client report only © Wessex Archaeology. No unauthorised reproduction.</p>	
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Site location plan

Figure 1



Phased site plan

Figure 2



Plate 1: Working/site conditions at the start of the fieldwork: west-facing view during excavation of ditches in north-east corner of the site



Plate 2: Working/site conditions at the start of the fieldwork: west-facing view during excavation of ditches in north-east corner of the site


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Plate 3: Working/site conditions following rainfall and groundwater ingress: south-west facing view from the northern edge of the excavation area



Plate 4: Working/site conditions following rainfall and groundwater ingress: east facing view from the north-west corner of the excavation area


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Plate 5: South-east facing section through deposits at northern edge of the excavation area (layer 15 exposed at base of section). Scale: 1 m



Plate 6: South-east facing section through Iron Age gullies 120 (cut 41) and 121 (cut 39). Scale: 0.5 m


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Plate 7: South-west facing section through Iron Age gully 122 (cut 30). Scale: 0.5 m



Plate 8: West facing section through Iron Age enclosure ditches 123 (cut 88), 124 (cut 82) and 125 (cut 86). Scale: 1 m


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Plate 9: View, from the south-east, of pottery exposed in Iron Age pit 27. Scale: 0.2 m

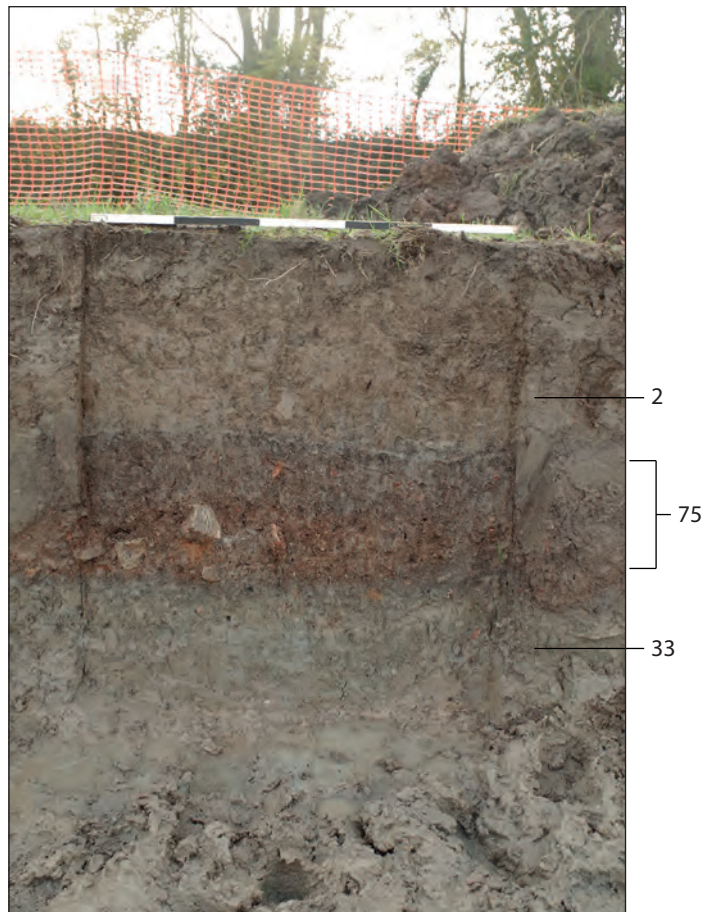


Plate 10: North-east facing section through deposits at western edge of excavation area, including Iron Age layer 75. Scale: 1 m


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Plate 11: North-west facing section through ditch 23 (deliberately overcut on eastern edge). Scale: 1 m



Plate 12: North-west facing section through ditch 35, viewed from the north. Scale: 2 m



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Plate 13: North-east facing section through shallow ditch/gully 4. Scale: 0.5 m



Plate 14: West-facing view of stones at base of ditch 80. Scale: 0.2 m

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