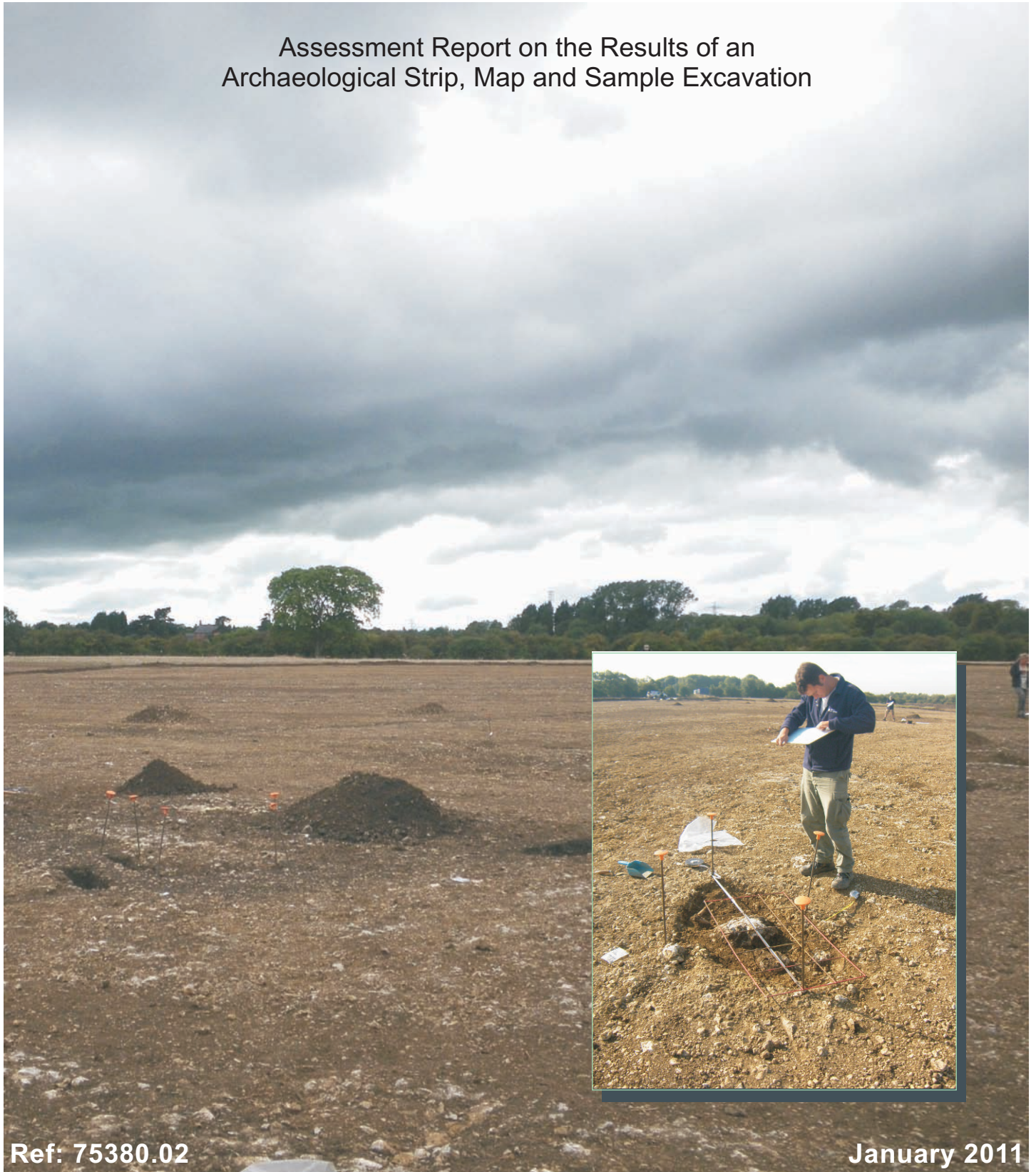




## Land at the Triangle Site South Marston, Swindon

Assessment Report on the Results of an  
Archaeological Strip, Map and Sample Excavation





**LAND AT THE TRIANGLE SITE,  
SOUTH MARSTON, SWINDON**

**Assessment Report on the Results of an  
Archaeological Strip, Map and Sample Excavation**

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SITE CODE	<b>75380.02</b>	ACCESSION CODE	<b>2010.3</b>	CLIENT CODE	
PLANNING APPLICATION REF.	<b>S/05/0830/RM</b>	NGR	<b>417695, 188855</b>		

VERSION	STATUS*	PREPARED BY	APPROVED BY	APPROVER'S SIGNATURE	DATE	FILE
01	I	RF	SF		17/12/10	\\PROJECTSERVER\WESSEX\PROJECTS\75380
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03	F	SF			24/1/11	\\PROJECTSERVER\WESSEX\PROJECTS\75380\REPORTV2

- I= INTERNAL DRAFT E= EXTERNAL DRAFT F= FINAL

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**LAND AT THE TRIANGLE SITE,  
SOUTH MARSTON, SWINDON****Assessment Report on the Results of an  
Archaeological Strip, Map and Sample Excavation****Summary**

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd, acting on behalf of Gazeley UK Ltd, to carry out a programme of Archaeological Strip, Map and Sample Excavation on Land at the Triangle Site, Highworth Road, Swindon, Wiltshire centred on National Grid Reference 417695, 188855. The work was required as a condition of planning consent granted by Swindon Borough Council for the construction of warehouses and general industrial units.

An earlier geophysical survey and subsequent archaeological evaluation identified a limited number of features dating to the Early to Middle Iron Age in two distinct areas within the site. One area encompassed Trenches 3, 5, 6 and 9 whilst another was located around Trench 20. Following agreement with the Swindon Borough Council Archaeological Adviser, a programme of Strip, Map and Sample Excavation was agreed in both areas. Area 1 measured c. 2.5ha and was located on the eastern side of the site within the footprint of a proposed unit. Area 2 was located towards the southernmost corner of the site and measured c. 0.15 ha.

The fieldwork in Area 1 confirmed the results of the earlier evaluation and revealed further features dating to the later prehistoric and early Romano-British period. The archaeological remains comprised an enclosure complex incorporating a series of pits, postholes, gullies and a probable roundhouse dating from the Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age. Although the overwhelming majority of features were postholes, only two discernible structures were identified, comprising a circular posthole structure with associated external hearth and a four-post structure. An associated north-west to south-east aligned ditch contemporary with the aforementioned features was also revealed diagonally bisecting Area 1. Overall, the complex is indicative of a small scale or seasonally occupied settlement.

Two crouched burials, one of which dates to the early Romano-British period, were also evident within Area 1 and are suggestive of the continuation of occupation of the site from the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age phase of activity. The grave goods included an iron brooch and whetstone.

Earlier prehistoric background activity was recorded within Area 1, represented by a very small quantity of worked flint flakes, assigned a broad time span of Neolithic/Bronze Age date and retrieved from some of the excavated gullies and postholes. Noteworthy is a Middle Bronze Age loomweight retrieved from a Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age pit.

The remainder of the features are of post-medieval/modern date and comprised postholes, especially in Area 2, agricultural furrows and a hollow. These were evident throughout both excavation areas. A number of furrows were both machine and hand excavated in order to confirm the nature of these features.

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## **LAND AT THE TRAIANGLE SITE, SOUTH MARSTON SWINDON**

### **Assessment Report on the Results of an Archaeological Strip, Map and Sample Excavation**

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Project Background**

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was appointed by CgMs Consulting Ltd, on behalf of Gazeley UK Ltd, to carry out an archaeological Strip, Map and Sample Excavation at Land at the Triangle Site, Highworth Road, Swindon (hereafter the Site) centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 417695 188855 (**Figure 1**). The total Site area covers an area of approximately 43ha.
- 1.1.2 Planning permission (S/05/0830/RM) has been granted by Swindon Borough Council (SBC) for the development of the Site to provide warehouses (Class B8), general industrial units (Class B2) with ancillary offices, car parking, landscaping and associated access.
- 1.1.3 A geophysical survey (Stratscan, 2004) and subsequent archaeological evaluation (Cotswold Archaeology, 2005) identified a limited number of features dating to the Early to Middle Iron Age in two distinct areas within the Site. The surveys informed the Cultural Heritage chapter of an Environmental Statement (RPS, 2005). Following discussions with the SBC Archaeological Adviser it was agreed that a programme of Archaeological Strip, Map and Sample Excavation would provide an appropriate level of mitigation to fulfil Condition 3 of the planning consent.
- 1.1.4 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (CgMs, 2010) was submitted to and approved by the SBC Archaeological Adviser prior to fieldwork commencing. The WSI proposed the excavation of two areas (Area 1-2) measuring 2.65ha in total.
- 1.1.5 This report presents an assessment of the excavation results and sets out proposals and recommendations for further analysis and publication.
- 1.1.6 The fieldwork was carried out between the 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2010 and 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2010.

### **1.2 The Site, location and geology**

- 1.2.1 The Site lies within a large triangle of arable land (c. 43ha) located to the north-east of Swindon. The Site is bounded to the east by Highworth Road (A361), to the north by Kingsdown Road (B4141) and to the south-west by the A419.
- 1.2.2 The Site is gently undulating, with a plateau at c. 112m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) in the central eastern part of the Site dropping in the northern, western and southern extents of the Site to c. 110 m aOD.



- 1.2.3 The underlying geology comprises Jurassic Lower Corallian Deposits (comprising silts and sands in the north and west overlain to the south and east by Upper Corallian Coral Rag (BGS Sheet 252).

## 2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1.1 The archaeological background was summarised in Chapter 7, Archaeology and the Historic Environment, (RPS, 2005) and the information set out below is largely drawn from that document. The geophysical survey report (Stratscan, 2004) and field evaluation report (CA, 2005) were consulted for further information.

- 2.1.2 The geophysical survey report (Stratscan, 2004) concluded that:

*'several positive linear, curvilinear and possible rectilinear anomalies have been located within the site. Apart from ferrous "spikes", geophysical anomalies were generally of a very low magnitude across the site, making confident abstraction and interpretation difficult.'*

- 2.1.3 The Cotswold Archaeology evaluation report (CA, 2005) confirmed that:

*'the correlation between anomalies identified by the geophysical survey and the features recorded in the evaluation trenches was limited. Trenches 3 and 8 contained linear features which correspond broadly to anomalies; Trench 3 also contained other features (pits and postholes) which are unlikely to have been picked up by geophysical survey. Within Trenches 1, 2, 10, 12, 17, 18 and 19, targeted on anomalies, there were no archaeological features recorded. In Trenches 6, 7 and 9 archaeological features were identified within 'blank' areas in the geophysical survey; again the size and shallowness of these features would be less susceptible to identification by the geophysical survey.'*

- 2.1.4 Only five features within three of the evaluation trenches (Trenches 3, 5 and 20) contained datable finds; each dating to the Early to Middle Iron Age. A further seven undated features were recorded within Trenches 7, 8 and 9. The animal bone and pottery recovered from the pits and gullies in Trench 3 and the pottery from a posthole in Trench 20 provided further evidence of domestic settlement, possibly associated with structures suggested by a number postholes in surrounding trenches. It was also suggested (*ibid.*) that the settlement would have been focused on the 'Coral Rag' geology as the areas off this geology were less likely to be conducive to settlement activity.

## 3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1.1 The primary objective of the fieldwork was:

- to excavate in the areas outlined on **Figure 1** (plus up to 10% contingency) sufficient to determine the extent, nature and state of

preservation of any features associated with those observed within the relevant evaluation trenches

3.1.2 Site specific objectives were also detailed.

- To establish the spatial extent of the prehistoric activity in the proposed excavation areas highlighted on **Figure 1**.
- To recover information relating to the nature and function of past human activity represented by the surviving archaeological remains.
- To interpret the nature of human activity at the Site and to place the Site within its local, regional and national context as appropriate.
- Assess the Site formation processes and the effects that these may have had on the survival and integrity of the archaeological features and deposits.
- To produce a Site archive for deposition with an appropriate museum and to provide information for the local HER to ensure the long-term survival of the excavated data.

## **4 EXCAVATION STRATEGY**

### **4.1 Excavation areas**

4.1.1 Full details of the excavation methodology are contained within the Specification for Strip, Map and Sample Excavation (CgMs Consulting, 2010) and will not be reiterated in detail here. In summary, two areas (Areas 1 and 2) were proposed for excavation (**Figure 1**) and partially positioned over trenches from the earlier evaluation undertaken on the Site (CA, 2005).

4.1.2 Area 1 measured c. 2.3ha and lay within the south-eastern corner of the proposed unit. It was partially located over Trenches 3, 5, 6, 8 and 9. Trench 3 had revealed evidence of Early to Middle Iron Age activity possibly relating to settlement and occupation.

4.1.3 Area 2 measured c. 0.15ha and was positioned over Trench 20 which contained a single posthole. A notable quantity of pottery was retrieved from the posthole which suggested Iron Age activity in the immediate vicinity, possibly relating to settlement and occupation.

## **5 METHODOLOGY**

### **5.1 Introduction**

5.1.1 The fieldwork was carried out in accordance with the relevant guidance given in the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation* (IfA 2008), excepting where they are superseded by statements made below.

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## **5.2 Health and Safety**

- 5.2.1 Health and Safety considerations were of paramount importance in conducting all fieldwork. Safe working practices overrode archaeological considerations at all times.
- 5.2.2 All work was carried out in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1992, and all other relevant Health and Safety legislation, regulations and codes of practice in force at the time.
- 5.2.3 Wessex Archaeology produced a Risk Assessment (WA, 2010) before the commencement of the fieldwork. All staff involved in the works signed and complied with this document.

## **5.3 Service Location**

- 5.3.1 Prior to any mechanical excavation, all archaeological areas were visually scanned for signs to indicate the location and alignment of unrecorded services. Each excavation area was positioned away from known services. Gas mains located in the lay-by to the east of the Site were known prior to fieldwork commencing and as a result the Site was accessed by all vehicles including plant via a field gate located at the north-east corner of the Site. A water pipe was the only recorded service on Site, the location of which was provided by the Client and shown on the Site plan. The Area 1 excavation and associated spoil heap zone was positioned away from the service pipe to the south and north respectively. All Site staff were made aware of the known utility locations prior to fieldwork operations.

## **5.4 Ecology Zones**

- 5.4.1 A total of three badger setts (1 to 3) were known prior to fieldwork commencing on the Site. The locations were made available by the consulting ecologist and transposed onto the Site plan. Sett 2 was the main sett with 1 and 3 being outliers not in use at the time of the excavations. Coordinates of each sett were made available prior to fieldwork and demarcated with road pins and barrier tape. All Site staff were made aware of the ecologically sensitive locations and each location remained undisturbed during the course of the fieldwork.

## **5.5 Bomb Disposal**

- 5.5.1 As a result of an Interim Explosive Ordnance Threat Assessment in respect of the Triangle Site, Swindon (BACTEC, 2010) a representative from BACTEC was present on Site for the duration of the machine excavation in Area 1. A further non-intrusive magnetometer survey was conducted throughout the entire Site including excavation Areas 1 and 2 during the archaeological fieldwork.

## **5.6 Fieldwork**

- 5.6.1 Each excavation area (Areas 1 and 2) was surveyed using a Leica GNSS GPS survey system. The coordinates given for Area 2 partially fell within an existing orchard at the south-west corner of the Site and overlay a thick hedgerow towards the northern edge of the area. As a result, Area 2 was

moved to the south-west side of the hedge-line in consultation with the client and the County Archaeologist. Nevertheless, the former trench was exposed and positioned broadly within the centre of Area 2.

- 5.6.2 Three 20t 360<sup>0</sup> mechanical excavators each equipped with a toothless grading bucket were used to remove the overburden (topsoil/subsoil) under the constant supervision of qualified professional archaeologists. Machine excavation continued down to the first recognisable archaeological horizon, (as identified in the evaluation trenches) or the natural geology, whichever was encountered first.
- 5.6.3 Spoil was transported away from excavation areas by 5 no. dumpers and stored in predetermined designated spoil heap zones, (in locations marked accurately on the ground using GNSS survey equipment). In Area 1 the spoil was stored to the south of the excavation area. The size of the zone was reduced due to a hedge-line to the south and the perimeter fence of the orchard to the south-east of Area 1. The spoil from Area 2 was stored on the north side of the stripped area.
- 5.6.4 The spoil from the excavation areas was scanned for artefacts both visually and with the use of a metal detector. A metal detector was further employed on the exposed surface of the excavation area in order to enhance artefact recovery.
- 5.6.5 On completion of the machine excavation the exposed surface was cleaned by hand and all archaeological features were surveyed using a Leica Viva series GNSS Unit through an RTK network with a 3D accuracy of 30mm or below. All survey data was recorded using the OSGB36 British National Grid coordinate system.
- 5.6.6 Further excavation of archaeological features or deposits was undertaken by hand. Excavation and sampling was undertaken as specified in the specification (CgMs Consulting, 2010), and was sufficient to resolve the principal aims of the excavation.
- 5.6.7 The overburden was approximately 0.30m thick across the Site. The stripped areas were delineated by the use of barrier tape and road irons.
- 5.6.8 Following the completion of the archaeological excavations the areas were not backfilled and remained open.

## **5.7 Human Remains**

- 5.7.1 The recovery and assessment of the human remains followed Wessex Archaeology's guidelines, which fully comply with all current legislation (*i.e.* post April 1<sup>st</sup> 2007) and standards set out by the Institute for Archaeologists (2008) and English Heritage (2002).
- 5.7.2 The excavation and assessment of the human remains was undertaken in compliance with a Licence for the Removal of Human Remains (License no. 10-0147) issued by the Ministry of Justice under Section 25 of the Burial Act 1857 in September 2009.

## **5.8 Other work**

- 5.8.1 Ground penetrative works were also carried out in the vicinity of Area 1. Two test pits located to the north and a series of Site Investigation (SI) pits around the perimeter of the area were machine excavated. Archaeological observations were undertaken.
- 5.8.2 During the initial stages of the archaeological fieldwork the engineering consultants Hydrock were present on Site conducting Core Penetration Testing (CPT)/ borehole testing. A plan of the works was made available to Wessex Archaeology prior to the commencement of the SI works. A number of the proposed boreholes were located within Area 1 and as a result were rescheduled to allow the completion of the archaeological mitigation.

## **5.9 Sampling Strategy**

- 5.9.1 All archaeological features and deposits encountered were sampled sufficiently to characterise and date them. Pits and postholes were subject to a minimum of a 50% sample. Sufficient lengths of all linear features were sampled in order to establish both the stratigraphic relationships and function of the features. All linear terminals were investigated.

## **5.10 Recording**

- 5.10.1 All exposed archaeological features and deposits were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording sheets and recording system. All features and deposits were assigned a unique context number.
- 5.10.2 Areas under archaeological observation were surveyed using a Leica GNSS GPS survey system and tied in to the Ordnance Survey. All interventions were located in relation to the Ordnance Survey national grid, and all archaeological features were related to Ordnance Survey Datum.
- 5.10.3 A complete drawn record of excavated archaeological features and deposits was compiled. This included both plans and sections, drawn to appropriate scales (1:20 for plans, 1:10 for sections), and with reference to a Site grid tied to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. The Ordnance Datum (OD) height of all principal features and levels were calculated and plans/sections were annotated with OD heights.
- 5.10.4 A full photographic record was maintained using both colour transparencies and black and white negatives (on 35 mm film). Digital photography was employed as appropriate. The photographic record illustrates both the detail and the general context of the principal features, finds excavated, and the Site as a whole.

## **5.11 Monitoring**

- 5.11.1 Two Site monitoring meetings were undertaken with the Archaeological Advisor to SBC, CgMs Consulting and Wessex Archaeology Project Manager in attendance.

## 5.12 Finds and Environmental Sampling

- 5.12.1 All recovered artefacts were retained unless they were undoubtedly of modern or recent origin. The presence of modern objects was, however, noted on context records
- 5.12.2 Provision was made for environmental sampling that was targeted upon potentially significant archaeological deposits or features, and predominantly examined sealed and well-dated contexts.
- 5.12.3 The environmental sampling strategy followed the guidance set out in English Heritage's *Environmental Archaeology: a guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation* (EH, 2002).

## 6 SUMMARY OF RESULTS

### 6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 The following sections provide a summary of the information held in the Site archive. Details of individual excavated contexts and features, and details of artefactual and environmental assessments are retained in the archive.

### 6.2 The Natural Soil Sequence

- 6.2.1 The majority of the Site revealed a similar sequence comprising a dark grey brown silty clay topsoil, approximately 0.20m in depth, either overlying a mid brown clay subsoil or directly overlying the natural geology that consisted of Upper Corallian Coral Rag and Corallian Deposits comprising limestone, silts and sands. The natural geology occurred approximately 0.30m and 0.50m Below Ground Level (BGL) in Area 1 and approximately 0.35m BGL in Area 2.
- 6.2.2 Beneath the topsoil within Area 1, subsoil was present in isolated pockets which corresponded to visible depressions or hollows prior to machine excavation along the north-east edge of the Site. A network of land drains were subsequently observed in this part of the Site. Subsoil was also evident towards the north-eastern end of Area 1.
- 6.2.3 Subsoil was recorded throughout Area 2, presumably because the ground was lower in this part of Site. The subsoil comprised a mid red/yellow brown clay with a slight silt content; Coral Ragstone fragments were evident throughout.

### 6.3 Site sequence

- 6.3.1 The archaeological features have been assigned to the following provisional phases (**Figure 2**): Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age, Late Iron Age/early Romano-British and post-medieval/modern. An earlier prehistoric presence was indicated through the recovery of residual flint flakes from a number of later prehistoric features. The phasing is almost entirely based upon the dates provided by the pottery, with additional information from stratigraphic relationships, where these occur. The pottery was mostly present in very small quantities, if at all, especially within the postholes. There were occasional instances of an unusually high quantity of pottery and on further

analysis these were identified as the remains of potentially one vessel in each case.

## 6.4 Archaeological Remains

*Late Bronze Age/ Early Iron Age (1100-400 BC)*

- 6.4.1 An extensive albeit shallow north-west to south-east aligned ditch, **4150** (**Figure 2, Plate 1**), was identified within and bisecting Area 1. The exposed area of the ditch measured approximately 209m in length and ranged from 0.50m to 1.00m in width and from 0.11m to 0.28m in depth. A ditch terminus was evident toward the south-eastern end of the feature, adjacent to the enclosure complex (see below). The gap measured 2m wide, directly west of the 'entrance' to the ring gully. All the excavated slots contained artefacts including struck flint, burnt flint, burnt local stone, animal bone and pottery. The latter was retrieved from the majority of the slots in small quantities and dated to the Late Bronze Age. Generally the ditch is indicative of an extensive land boundary contemporary with the enclosure activity and other structural elements elsewhere within the area.
- 6.4.2 Located towards the south-east corner of Area 1 an enclosure complex was identified (**Figure 2**) and comprised two distinct features; a partially surviving curvilinear gully, indicative of a roundhouse structure and a 3-sided, sub-rectangular enclosure.
- 6.4.3 Gullies **4012**, **4024** and **4049** formed the eastern arc of the curvilinear feature which would have originally measured c. 12.30m in diameter. The gullies measured up to 0.84m wide and 0.21m deep with shallow, slightly convex sides and a concave base. Although the continuation of the gully could not be confirmed, the shallow nature of the surviving elements suggests it may have been truncated by later ploughing evident across the Site. Each intervention through the surviving gully confirmed a similar fill sequence, comprising a single secondary mid to dark brown silty clay fill with occasional charcoal flecks. A gap of approximately 3.5m was evident between the northern gully, **4024** and the southernmost gully, **4049**, possibly forming an entrance to the east.
- 6.4.4 Within the curvilinear gully, several internal features were recorded. On the north-west side of the gully, three discrete postholes **4037**, **4039** and **4041** (**Figure 2**), were identified. Two were of similar dimensions measuring 0.70m x 0.55m and 0.77m x 0.52m respectively, with a smaller posthole **4039** sited midway between them. Each contained a single mid grey brown silty clay fill. These have provisionally been grouped with the ring gully due to their close proximity to each other and could provide evidence of an internal subdivision or structure within the possible roundhouse.
- 6.4.5 Two pits/postholes, **4033** and **4035** (**Figure 2**) were located to the west of the possible eastern entrance. The features produced a limited number of artefacts and the fragmentary nature of the pottery retrieved from pit **4033** was of indeterminate age. However the location of the pits within the partially surviving ring gully suggests a close association. To the south-west, a further pit **4014** was recorded and cut gully **4012** which was subsequently cut by gully **4049**.

- 6.4.6 East of ditch **4150** and south of the ring gully **4049** (described above), a sub-rectangular, 3-sided enclosure was recorded (**Appendix 1: Table 3, Figure 2**). The similar nature of the deposits along with the closely dated pottery has made it difficult to establish a clear relationship between the ring gully and the enclosure itself and both are considered to be contemporaneous with one another. The 3-sided enclosure consisted of gullies **4009, 4010, 4240** and **4241** and measured up to 0.52m wide and 0.17m deep with shallow concave sides and a concave base. Gully **4240** had been partially exposed and identified in the earlier evaluation (Trench 3, **309**). All excavated slots contained a single secondary fill comprising silty clay with frequent charcoal flecks. A possible entrance was noted on the easternmost side of the enclosure and measured approximately 3m across.
- 6.4.7 Two probable internal postholes, **4122** and **4128** (**Figure 2**), were identified to the immediate south-west side of the possible entrance. Although no artefacts were retrieved from the postholes, the similarity in the deposits and their positioning suggests all are contemporaneous and suggestive of posts to support a gate.
- 6.4.8 Within Area 1 the remains of two narrow, shallow gullies, **4243** and **4244**, were identified. The features measured from 5.80m to 8.17m in length, 0.40m to 0.57m in width and from 0.06 to 0.10m in depth. The north-east to south-western segment **4243** ran roughly parallel with and to the south-west side of the enclosure complex. The north-west to south-east aligned gully segment **4244** lay further towards the north-east. Both segments appear to respect and enclose the enclosure complex and represent the remains of the outermost extent complex. Although a very small quantity of later Iron Age pottery was retrieved from gully **4243**, the small fragments were very abraded in nature and likely to be intrusive; the features cannot categorically be assigned to a particular phase but based on its position has been included in this phase.
- 6.4.9 A total of five pits (**4006, 4030, 4052, 4115 & 4144**) have provisionally been assigned to the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age phase (**Figure 2**) due to the pottery recovered from their fills and a further two pits (**4097** and **4014**, see section 6.4.28) might also be considered in this phase due to their close proximity to, and/or stratigraphic sequence with, known phased features.
- 6.4.10 One pit, **4144** (**Plate 2**), was partially revealed in the evaluation (Trench 3, pit **304**) and was re-exposed during this stage of mitigation. The pit was located to the immediate south-west of ditch **4150** directly opposite the enclosure complex. This feature was the largest of its kind on Site measuring 2.55m in diameter and 0.97m in depth. Pit **4144** was partially truncated on the south-east side by a north-east to south-west aligned furrow. The pit contained a series of secondary deposits resulting from the rapid accumulation of silty clay deposits indicative of dumping episodes. Intermittent redeposited natural was noted and is thought to be indicative of the erosion of the sides due to being left open, with evidence of stabilisation occurring at the upper level of the pit. The pit contained a fragment of slag, animal bone and Late Bronze Age pottery.
- 6.4.11 To the south of the enclosure complex a shallow pit **4052** (**Plate 3**) was recorded. This pit was located on the immediate north-east edge of ditch



**4150** and had been truncated on the north-east side by a post-medieval/modern furrow. Pit **4052** measured 0.94m in width and 0.24m in depth. The pit contained two secondary deposits; the upper fill **4054**, produced Late Bronze Age pottery.

- 6.4.12 Pit **4030 (Plate 4)** was located toward the south-western end of Area 1 in the vicinity of a number postholes which date to the same period. Pit **4030** measured 1.28m in diameter and 0.64m in depth. The feature contained a series of four rapidly backfilled deposits indicative of episodic domestic refuse disposal. All fills produced artefacts including pottery, a flint flake (possibly residual), animal bone and a fired clay loomweight of Middle Bronze Age date (Object **1**). The pottery assemblage from this pit dates to the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age.
- 6.4.13 Pit **4115, (Plate 5)**, was located to the immediate north-west of an undated pit **4097**. Both were located on the south-west side of ditch **4150**, in relatively close proximity to the enclosure complex. Pit **4115** measured 1.4m in diameter and 0.32m in depth with stepped convex sides and a convex base. This feature contained two fills indicative of rapid refuse disposal. Both yielded artefacts particularly the upper fill that produced animal bone, fired clay and pottery dating to the Late Bronze Age.
- 6.4.14 An ovate pit **4006 (Plate 6)**, located to the far south-western end of Area 1, was relatively small measuring 0.82m in length, 0.68 in width and 0.32m in depth. Pit **4006** contained a single silty clay fill that produced a relatively high quantity of pottery dating to the Late Bronze Age. The feature was located in the vicinity of a number of postholes two of which were contemporary with the pit.
- 6.4.15 A total of seventy three postholes were identified and recorded in Area 1 (**Figure 1**). Of these, twenty one have been assigned to this phase from the pottery retrieved. Although most are scattered across the Site with no apparent patterning, two possible structures, **4245** and **4269**, were discernible.
- 6.4.16 Circular posthole structure **4269, (Appendix 1: Table 3, Figure 2, Plate 7)**, was located in the far south-eastern corner of Area 1. This structure lay to the south-west of ditch **4150** roughly opposite the enclosure complex. The structure measured approximately 5.60m in diameter, on a west to east axis and comprised of six shallow postholes; the depths ranged from 0.08m to 0.13m. **4269** appeared to have a northern 'entrance' measuring approximately 3.6m in width. Whilst the structure contained no apparent internal features a probable hearth feature, **4107**, was identified to the immediate west side of **4269**.
- 6.4.17 A four-post structure, **4245 (Figure 1, Plate 8)**, was also identified and has provisionally been assigned to the Late Bronze/Early Iron Age phase. Although **4245** was located towards the eastern fringe of similar features which were clearly structural in origin, no other clear formations or groups could be determined. The structure was 2.10m<sup>2</sup>, if measured from the outer edge of the postholes, and the depths of each ranged from 0.04m to 0.10m. Two of the postholes, **4175** and **4177**, contained pottery dating to the late Bronze Age/early Iron Age.

- 6.4.18 Also of note is feature **4181**, (**Figure 2 & 3, Plate 9**), located on the north-east side of ditch **4150** towards the eastern side of Area 1. Although this feature was situated in relative isolation, there are a number of small albeit shallow postholes in the vicinity. Post-pit **4181** measured 1.30m in diameter and 0.47m in depth and displayed distinct stepped sides indicative of a post towards the centre of the feature. It is possible that **4181** is a post-pit supporting a relatively substantial post, although no post-pipe was evident in section. Post-pit **4181** contained two fills possibly derived after the post's removal; both yielded pottery of Late Bronze Age date.

*Later Iron Age/Early Romano-British*

*Graves 4227 and 4238*

- 6.4.19 A total of two graves, (**4227** and **4238**), revealed within excavation Area 1 have been tentatively assigned to the later prehistoric/early Romano-British period (**Figure 2 & 3, Plates 10** and **11**) although only one of the graves produced datable artefacts. The graves were located on the north-western side of boundary ditch **4150**. The northernmost grave, **4238** was situated on the periphery of the archaeological activity. Both were in the vicinity of a number of postholes and in particular grave **4238** lay in close proximity to an undated pit **4130**. No other graves were identified within the Site.

- 6.4.20 Grave **4227** measured 1.08m in length, approximately 0.60m in width and 0.17m in depth. Grave **4238** measured 1.43m in length, 0.78m in width and 0.22m in depth. Both graves were sub-ovate in plan, with **4227** orientated north-east to south-west and **4238** orientated north-west to south-east.

*Burials 4228 and 4237*

- 6.4.21 Within grave **4227**, skeleton **4228** measured 0.58m in length and 0.40m in width. Within grave **4238** skeleton **4237** measured 0.99m in length and 0.49m in width. Burial **4228** lay on a north-east to south-west alignment with the head at the north-east end and **4237** was north-west to south-east aligned with the head at the north-west end.

- 6.4.22 Both burials were in a crouched position and both were interred with grave goods. Burial **4228** included thirty-six iron fragments (Objects **2** and **3**) (**Plate 12**), comprising a small iron bow brooch of probable early Romano-British date. The objects were found towards the neck part of skeleton **4228**. A whetstone (Object **5**) (**Plate 13**) was discovered with skeleton **4237** located at the mid-torso area.

- 6.4.23 The graves were deliberately backfilled with a silty clay material. No artefacts were retrieved from the backfill **4229**, of grave **4227**. One sherd of abraded pottery, of potential Iron Age date, was recovered from backfill **4236** of grave **4238**, but is presumed to be residual within the grave. Also of note within grave **4238** and recorded as part of the backfilling process was a substantial Coral Ragstone boulder (Object **4**). It could be postulated that this object was some form of capstone, suggestive of a final interment process.

- 6.4.24 One small posthole **4190** has provisionally been assigned to the later Iron Age period from the pottery retrieved during the excavation. The feature measured 0.21m in diameter and 0.07m in depth. Located to the extreme north-east of Area 1, the posthole lay in close proximity to similar undated features and approximately 30m due east of grave **4227**.

*Post-medieval/modern*

- 6.4.25 The features assigned to this phase mostly comprised regularly spaced north-east to south-west aligned linear furrows evident throughout Areas 1 and 2 (**Figure 1**). A number were excavated to verify their nature and date. Upon excavation the furrows were shown to be shallow; approximately 0.10m in depth. The finds retrieved from the surface of the furrows and contained within their fills included glass, iron nails, slate and CBM (ceramic building material) all of post-medieval/modern date. The furrows were visible prior to machine excavation particularly within Area 2.
- 6.4.26 Other modern features included seven postholes and a rectangular pit in Area 2 and were probably part of recent activity associated with the farmstead adjacent to the excavated area.

*Undated*

- 6.4.27 Seven pits out of a total of twelve identified in Area 1 remain undated (**Figure 1**). Five contained artefacts such as animal bone, burnt stone and burnt flint, whilst the remainder were devoid of any archaeological artefacts. From the total number, two pits have been phased, **4097** and **4114** (see section 6.4.8) due to the nature, close proximity to similar dated features and stratigraphic relationships. For example pit **4097** lay to the immediate south-east of pit **4115** of known Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age date. Although finds were retrieved from **4097**, no datable pottery sherds were recovered but may be tentatively associated. Similarly pit **4014** has been assigned to the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age phase due to the stratigraphic sequence within the ring gully enclosure. Pit **4014** is cut by gully **4049** to the south and cuts gully **4012** at the south-east end.
- 6.4.28 A total of fifty two postholes within Area 1 remain undated (**Figure 1**). This includes postholes associated with known phased features/structures. Given the similarity in form and nature to datable features in close proximity, it is likely that the majority are associated with the prehistoric activity recorded on the Site.
- 6.4.29 A possible hearth, **4107** (**Figure 2, Plate 14**), was also identified in the south of Area 1. This feature was located to the immediate west of circular posthole structure **4269**. The hearth was very shallow and sub-ovate in plan measuring 1.50m in length, 0.56m in width and 0.10m in depth. Although hearth **4107** contained highly fired clay and burnt local stone, no pottery was retrieved during excavation or from environmental analysis. Although this feature remains undated, it tentatively could be associated with occupation/settlement activity in the vicinity, particularly due to its close proximity to **4269**.

- 6.4.30 Other features identified include three tree throw holes (**Figure 1**), two of which **4004** and **4005**, located in the vicinity of known archaeological features, were investigated in order to confirm their nature and for artefact retrieval, residual or otherwise. The features proved to be archaeologically sterile.

## 7 FINDS

### 7.1 Introduction

- 7.1.1 The excavation produced a small finds assemblage, in which only animal bone, pottery and stone was recovered in any significant quantity. The date range is almost entirely prehistoric, with a few post-medieval items. The recovery of human remains from two inhumation graves, of presumed later prehistoric date, is of interest.
- 7.1.2 The condition of the assemblage is poor, and both bone and ceramic items have suffered high levels of abrasion.
- 7.1.3 All finds have been quantified by material type within each context, and totals are given in **Appendix 1: Table 4**. Following quantification, all finds have been at least visually scanned, in order to ascertain details of their nature, condition and potential date.

### 7.2 Pottery

- 7.2.1 With the exception of a single post-medieval sherd (furrow **4045**), all of the pottery is of later prehistoric date. However, assigning a closer date range within this period is hampered by the very poor condition of the assemblage, and the almost total absence of any diagnostic sherds. Fabrics tend to be soft, and all sherds are abraded to some degree, some heavily. The poor condition of the assemblage is underscored by the mean sherd weight, which is 5.4g.
- 7.2.2 The assemblage has been quantified (sherd count and weight) by broad ware group; totals are given in **Appendix 1: Table 5**. Spot dates have been assigned on a context-by-context basis, bearing in mind the caveats above.
- 7.2.3 Fabric groups comprise shelly, limestone-tempered, flint-tempered and sandy; all of these find parallels within the period from the Late Bronze Age to the Late Iron Age in the region. Shelly and sandy wares predominate; the limestone-tempered wares have a tendency to be finer, with smaller, well sorted inclusions, and could be described as 'finewares'. Diagnostic sherds are limited to three rims, all in shelly wares, one of which appears to belong to a jar form with a short everted, flattened rim (ditch terminal **4057**); one from a weak-shouldered jar (pit **4006**); and the third from a rounded vessel with a short upright rim, thickened and flattened (**4112**).
- 7.2.4 Comparison with an Iron Age assemblage from a nearby site at Watchfield, Shrivenham (Laidlaw 2001), which contained a similar range of fabric types, suggests that shelly wares were in use during the Early Iron Age, later superseded by calcareous, flint-tempered and grog-tempered wares in the Middle/Late Iron Age, while sandy wares were in use throughout the period. There are no grog-tempered wares at the Triangle Site, and the flint-

tempered wares can be more comfortably accommodated in the regional post-Deverel-Rimbury ceramic tradition of the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age. At Groundwell Farm, Blunsdon St Andrew, to the north-west of the Triangle Site, shelly and limestone-tempered fabrics are both found in Early Iron Age forms (Gingell 1981, fig. 13). Certainly all of the rim forms found at the Triangle Site can be paralleled there, although the weakly shouldered forms originate in the Late Bronze Age, and rounded forms continue into the Middle Iron Age at other sites in the region.

7.2.5 Overall, the coarseness of the fabrics at the Triangle Site suggests a Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age date range for the majority of the assemblage, with a possibility of some continuation into the Middle Iron Age.

7.2.6 In terms of the distribution of pottery across the Site, quantities are generally small. The three largest groups came from pit **4006** (101 sherds), gully **4009** (83 sherds) and gully **4112** (82 sherds) (both gullies form part of group **4241**), and in at least one case this total appeared to be made up of sherds wholly or largely from a single vessel. Only one other feature produced more than 25 sherds (48 sherds from pit **4115**), which clearly limits the potential of the pottery to provide unambiguous dating evidence. A single small sherd (sandy fabric) in the backfill of grave **4238** was clearly residual there.

### 7.3 Fired Clay

7.3.1 One ceramic object was identified amongst the fired clay comprising a small cylindrical loomweight of Middle/Late Bronze Age type, from pit **4030**.

7.3.2 One other fragment (from gully **4020**) has a wattle impression, but other pieces are undiagnostic; most are heavily abraded and in soft, friable fabrics.

### 7.4 Worked and Burnt Flint

7.4.1 The worked flint consists exclusively of small waste flakes. All are lightly patinated and show low levels of edge damage. In the absence of any tools or other diagnostic pieces, they cannot be closely dated; a Neolithic/Bronze Age date is suggested.

7.4.2 Three pieces of burnt, unworked flint could also be of prehistoric date, but are not intrinsically datable, nor necessarily of anthropogenic origin.

### 7.5 Stone

7.5.1 Most of the stone recovered was unworked, but showed signs of having been burnt. All pieces are of local stone types.

7.5.2 One flat, rectangular whetstone (Object No **5**) was found deposited as a grave good in one of the inhumation graves (grave **4238**). One other small piece (from pit **4115**) has one smooth, convex surface and could represent part of an object, although of unknown type and date.

### 7.6 Metalwork

7.6.1 Thirty six small fragments of iron were recovered from grave **4227**; these appear to derive from a single object, a small iron bow brooch of probable early Roman date (1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> century AD).

- 7.6.2 The remaining ironwork comprises seven small nails, all very corroded; these are of uncertain, but probably post-medieval date (tree throw **4003**, agricultural hollow **4047**, gully **4112**).

## 7.7 Animal Bone

### *Introduction*

- 7.7.1 The assemblage of animal bone consists of 467 fragments; this total falls to 434 when refits are taken into account. All of these fragments were hand recovered during the course of the excavation (a small quantity of animal bone from samples was not examined as part of this assessment).

- 7.7.2 Animal bone was recovered from a total of 42 contexts on the Site. Of these contexts almost a quarter, 10 in total, were undated. Of the remaining contexts 29 were dated to the Late Bronze Age, or Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age and the remaining three contexts broadly to the Iron Age.

### *Methodology*

- 7.7.3 The following information was recorded, where applicable/possible: species, skeletal element, preservation, fusion, ageing data, butchery marks, gnawing, burning, pathology as well as any non-metric traits. This information was recorded directly into a relational database, in MS Access and cross-referenced with contextual information. All data are held in the project archive.

## 7.8 Results

### *Preservation and Condition*

- 7.8.1 Much of the bone from the Site shows severe signs of weathering and root etching that has obliterated the external cortex. In fact the condition of the bone was in general so poor that almost half of the contexts (c. 43%) contain bones assigned to category 3 (1 being good and 4 being very poor). A further 17 contexts were recorded as having very poor bone condition (category 4). Only one context had bone which was recorded as being good, the remaining contexts were recorded as fair.

- 7.8.2 The evidence suggests that either the bones were exposed for a considerable period prior to their burial or that soil conditions (*i.e.* pH) were unfavourable. Most fragments also show signs of root etching to the surface of the bone. General weathering might have left bones susceptible to attack by roots; however the archaeology was also very shallow, which means that there is more likelihood of this type of damage.

- 7.8.3 As a consequence of the poor surface preservation of the bones there is very little evidence of butchery and gnawing. Indeed only two bones were recorded as showing signs of gnawing and only one fragment showed evidence of butchery.

### *Species Representation*

- 7.8.4 Due to the high levels of fragmentation and poor condition only 10% (44 fragments) of the assemblage could be identified to species or element. Of

the fragments which could be identified the following list shows the relative frequencies by percentage: sheep/goat (c. 39%), cattle (c. 44%), pig (c. 9%), deer (c. 4%), horse and cat (c. 2% each).

7.8.5 The table below quantifies the assemblage by period and number of identified specimens present (or NISP) for each species.

**Table 1: Number of identified specimens present (NISP) by period (LBA or Late Bronze Age and LBA/EIA or Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age).**

Species	LBA	LBA/EIA	Iron Age	Undated
cattle	6	12		1
sheep/goat	4	7	5	1
pig	3	1		
horse	1			
deer	1	1		1
cat		1		
unidentified	116	107	31	95
<b>Total</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>98</b>

7.8.6 The number of identified fragments is too small to offer an insight into the economy of the Site however, assemblages of this period from the Wessex region typically have high percentages of sheep, about c. 40-70% and low levels of pig (c. 0-20%; see Hambleton, 1999). This pattern is often linked to the high level of fertile arable land in the region and the downland topography. The general landscape is also one that is more suited to the raising of sheep as opposed to cattle or pigs for example. However, because of the poor preservation and high levels of fragmentation resulting in very low levels of identifiable material, it is impossible to say with confidence that the assemblage follows this pattern.

## 7.9 Other Finds

7.9.1 Other finds comprise 1 piece of modern glass (topsoil) and three tiny fragments of post-medieval ceramic building material from an agricultural hollow **4047**.

## 8 HUMAN BONE

### 8.1 Introduction

8.1.1 Human bone from the remains of two inhumation burials was subject to assessment. One grave (**4227**) has been securely dated to the Early Romano-British period, though the burial position (crouched on the right side) suggests both continuity with the Late Iron Age burial tradition and that the individual was probably native. The date of the second grave (**4228**), situated c. 26m to the north, is uncertain though it is likely to be later prehistoric or Early Romano-British.

### 8.2 Methodology

8.2.1 The degree of erosion to the bone was recorded using the writer's system of grading (McKinley 2004, fig. 7.1-7). Assessments of age and sex were based on standard methodologies (Bass 1987; Beek 1983; Buikstra and

Ubelaker 1994; Scheuer and Black 2000). Insufficient bone survived to allow the calculation of many indices but measurements were taken where possible (Brothwell 1972, 79-81 and 85; Brothwell and Zakrzewski 2004, tables 1-2) and non-metric traits were recorded in accordance with Berry and Berry (1967) and Finnegan (1978).

### 8.3 Results

8.3.1 A summary of the results is presented in **Table 2**.

8.3.2 Both graves had survived to a relatively good depth (0.17-0.20m) but some disturbance and removal of bone may have occurred in one case during machine stripping of the Site. That earlier disturbance to the burial remains had occurred, probably due to ploughing, is demonstrated by the heavily fragmented nature of the bone from both deposits. The bone is also in poor condition, with heavy root etching to all surviving and almost total loss of the trabecular bone, resulting in relatively poor skeletal recovery (**Table 2**).

**Table 2: Summary of result from scan of human bone**

context	cut	quantification	age/sex	pathology
4228	4227	c. 45%	adult c. 25-40yr. female	dental caries; calculus; ?dental abscesses; periosteal new bone (infection) - ribs (pulmonary) right femur & tibia; gall/kidney stone; mv - mandibular M3 variant osteophytes - T articular process
4237	4238	c. 65%	adult >50 yr. male	<i>ante mortem</i> tooth loss; calculus; dental abscess; <i>cribra orbitalia</i> ; osteoarthritis - occipito-atlas, C1/2, 1C, 1L; ?infection - T/L; enthesophytes - femur shaft

KEY: C/T/L - cervical/thoracic/lumbar vertebrae; M - molar; mv - morphological variation

8.3.3 Each grave contained the remains of one individual. Poor skeletal recovery meant it was not possible to take many measurements on the bone and few indices can be calculated (no estimated stature and no cranial index). The adult male was, however, clearly a robust individual with strongly marked masculine skull traits. Similarly the female was obviously of a fairly small and gracile build.

8.3.4 Numerous pathological lesions were recorded (**Table 2**). The female had suffered extensively from dental caries resulting in the total destruction of several tooth crowns, whilst the male had very heavily worn anterior teeth and extensive *ante mortem* loss of distal teeth possibly due to abscess lesions. Evidence of infection was found in both individuals, affecting the pulmonary cavity in the female and possibly the spine in the male.

## 9 PALAEOENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS

### 9.1 Introduction

9.1.1 A series of 15 bulk samples were taken from a range of features and were processed for the recovery and assessment of charred plant remains and charcoals. The generally low potential of the prehistoric features to contain



significant quantities of charred remains, due to the shallowness and obvious rooting within the features, was noted in the field. These samples were taken, taking care to avoid areas of obvious rooting as much as possible, from the features deemed to have the greatest potential for the retrieval of charred plant remains.

## 9.2 Charred Plant Remains

9.2.1 Bulk samples were processed by standard flotation methods; the flots retained on a 0.5mm mesh, residues fractionated into 5.6mm, 2mm and 1mm fractions and dried. The coarse fractions (>5.6mm) were sorted, weighed and discarded. Flots were scanned under a x10 – x40 stereobinocular microscope and the presence of charred remains quantified (**Appendix 1: Table 6**) to record the preservation and nature of the charred plant and wood charcoal remains. Preliminary identifications of dominant or important taxa are noted below, following the nomenclature of Stace (1997).

9.2.2 The flots were relatively small with high numbers of roots and modern seeds that are indicative of stratigraphic movement and raise the possibility of contamination by later intrusive elements. Charred material was poorly preserved and is probably related to the high amount of rooting.

9.2.3 Very few charred plant remains were recovered in the samples from the Middle/Late Bronze Age features. These included a few cereal remains.

9.2.4 Only three of the samples from the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age features produced low quantities of charred remains. These included cereal remains of wheat (*Triticum* sp.) and possibly of emmer wheat (*Triticum dicoccum*) and weed seeds of vetch/wild pea (*Vicia/Lathyrus* sp.) and brassicas (Brassicaceae).

9.2.5 A single seed of vetch/wild pea was recorded in the later prehistoric pits.

9.2.6 These small quantities of charred plant remains are indicative of settlement waste, although are relatively low in comparison to some settlement sites in the area, such as Blunsdon Road that was probably occupied for a longer period during the Iron Age (Stevens 2001). The small amount of material is comparable to that recovered from Ridge Green, Shaw to the south-west of Swindon where the poor preservation of remains was attributed to the shallow nature of the features and the high amount of rooting (Powell 2010).

## 9.3 Wood Charcoal

9.3.1 Wood charcoal was noted from the flots of the bulk samples and is recorded in **Appendix 1: Table 6**. Only small quantities of wood charcoal fragments were observed in these samples.

## 10 STATEMENT OF POTENTIAL

### 10.1 Stratigraphic and Structural analysis

10.1.1 The excavation revealed archaeological activity in a number of phases (the phasing pertains to datable features only): the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age, Late Iron Age/Early Romano-British and post-medieval/modern

periods. All of the archaeological features were concentrated in Area 1 and predominantly of Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age date.

- 10.1.2 The finds assemblage suggests an earlier prehistoric phase on the Site. This is represented by a small number of flint flakes (however these artefacts could be contemporary with the Late Bronze Age activity on Site). Also a loomweight of Middle Bronze Age date was retrieved from a Late Bronze Age pit.
- 10.1.3 The evidence for Late Bronze Age activity is represented by a rectangular enclosure, a possible roundhouse, a four post structure, a number of pits and numerous postholes pertaining to occupation/settlement activity. The roundhouse and enclosure along with a number of pits and postholes were concentrated in the south-west corner of Area 1 and may have been enclosed by an outer ditch. The complex is indicative of a small scale or seasonally occupied farmstead.
- 10.1.4 A cluster of postholes to the west of the enclosure complex is evident and the four-post structure forms part of this group. This interpretation for the four post structure is made on the basis that the sets of postholes are of similar shape and size, have a similar sequence of fills and are evenly spaced in a rough square. These four-post structures are commonly interpreted as raised floor granaries (e.g. Cunliffe 1991, 169).
- 10.1.5 The presence of Late Iron Age/Early Romano-British features is represented by two graves and a posthole suggesting a continuation of occupation in and within close proximity to the Site from the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age phase. Whilst one of the graves remains undated it is presumed both are contemporary due to the position of the skeletal remains and the close proximity to one another. The graves are indicative of a localised transitional period from the late prehistoric era into the Early Romano-British period that is represented by the crouched positions of the inhumations, (typical of earlier burial practices) and being buried with contemporary (modern for the time) objects such as the iron brooch. Given the low level of activity recorded within the Site for this phase of activity, the presence of two burials is anomalous.
- 10.1.6 The post-medieval/modern phase of activity is represented by the presence of agricultural features such as furrows Site wide, a number of postholes in Area 2 and tree throws in Area 1.
- 10.1.7 The excavation has demonstrated that a previously unidentified late prehistoric enclosure site pertaining to small scale settlement activity lay to the north-east fringe of Swindon and in relative close proximity to potentially contemporary sites at Groundwell Farm, Blunsden St. Andrew, Swindon; Ridge Green Shaw, Swindon and Watchfield, Shrivenham, Oxfordshire. The structural evidence recorded during the excavation is well-preserved in plan and includes at least 2 posthole structures and an enclosure complex. However the artefactual evidence and palaeo-environmental data from the associated gullies, pits and postholes was very limited and poorly preserved.

## **10.2 Finds**

10.2.1 The finds assemblage has no potential for further analysis. The assemblage is limited in the range of material types represented – only pottery, animal bone and stone were represented in any significant quantity, and the overall condition is poor. Apart from pottery, other functional items are almost entirely absent (one whetstone, one ceramic loomweight). As discussed above, the poor condition has severely hampered both the pottery dating, and the assignation of animal bone to species. The distribution of finds across the Site was dispersed – there were no large feature groups - which further limits the confidence with which features can be dated and their function interpreted.

## **10.3 Animal Bone**

10.3.1 The faunal assemblage has very little potential for further research as c. 90% of the assemblage is unidentifiable. As such there is very little that the assemblage can contribute to our understanding of the exploitation and husbandry of animals in Wessex in the Bronze Age or Iron Age. The fact that the majority of contexts (36 of the 42), have produced less than 20 fragments is further confirmation that the assemblage is unsuitable for further work. Furthermore almost half of the bone recovered, c. 45%, is from undated contexts.

## **10.4 Human Bone**

10.4.1 Full recording of the human remains has already been undertaken. Analysis of this data and comparison with contemporaneous burial remains will illustrate aspects of the individual's lifestyles and potentially their social status. The intriguing presence of a large lump of ragstone (32.5 kilos) laid directly over the axial area of the male's body suggests some form of deviant burial rite (Tsaliki 2008) and warrants further investigation for inclusion in the publication report.

## **10.5 Palaeo-Environmental**

10.5.1 There is no potential in analysing the charred remains due to the paucity of material recovered.

## **11 METHOD STATEMENTS**

### **11.1 Archaeological deposits**

11.1.1 The preparation of the provisional phasing and contextual data for the Site supported by the pottery spot-dating where appropriate has been substantially completed in order to compile this assessment report. This will be reviewed and revised by further analysis of the Site records. Reporting of the enclosure complex and posthole structural remains will concentrate on those features and deposits that can contribute to further aims of research.

11.1.2 An Access database and AutoCAD drawings have been constructed to facilitate rapid cross-examination and updating of the archive during the post-excavation analysis.

11.1.3 Once the initial post-excavation analysis is completed, revisions will be made as required. Advised by a post-excavation manager, the detailed

outline of the publication text will be written and specialists will make their contributions. Illustrations will be prepared to accompany the report.

## **11.2 Finds**

11.2.1 All finds have been recorded to an appropriate archive level, and no further analysis is warranted. The information gathered as part of this assessment phase, and discussed in this report, should be incorporated into the publication report.

## **11.3 Human Bone**

11.3.1 Due to the potentially unusual nature of the burial within grave **4238** it is recommended that a sample of bone is subject to radiocarbon dating to allow the data to be set in its correct temporal context. Full plans and photographs of this deposit should be included in the final publication report.

## **11.4 Palaeo-Environmental**

11.4.1 No further work is proposed.

## **12 PROPOSALS FOR PUBLICATION, ANALYSIS AND ARCHIVE**

### **12.1 Publication proposal**

12.1.1 It is proposed that the results of the excavation should be published as a short note (maximum 3000 words, with supporting illustrations), summarising the results presented in this assessment report, and incorporating relevant information from the evaluation report, and be submitted for publication in a suitable journal (The Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine) and made available online (OASIS).

12.1.2 The report will comprise a brief introduction detailing the circumstances of the project and its aims and objectives; a description of the archaeological remains recorded, summaries of the finds and environmental data contained in this report, the results of radiocarbon dating as detailed above; and a discussion of the results, placing the Site within its wider regional context.

12.1.3 A copy of this assessment report will be deposited with the NMR at Swindon and the Wiltshire Sites and Monuments Record.

12.1.4 In addition, an Online Access to Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/projects/oasis/> has been initiated. All appropriate parts of the OASIS online form have been completed for submission to the Wiltshire SMR. Once approved, this will include an uploaded .pdf version of the entire report (a paper copy will also be included with the archive).

### **12.2 Personnel**

12.2.1 The following Wessex Archaeology staff and nominated specialists are currently proposed to undertake the post-excavation analysis, report production and archive deposition:

Operations Director

Karen Walker

Project Manager  
Reports Manager  
Project Officer  
Illustrator  
Specialist  
Records Assistant

Sue Farr BA, MIFA  
Julie Gardiner BA, PhD, FSA, MIFA  
Rebecca Fitzpatrick  
Liz James  
Jacqueline McKinley  
Helen Macintyre

### **12.3 Programme**

- 12.3.1 The post-excavation programme is achievable within six months of an agreed start date, to be followed by submission of the draft publication report to a suitable journal (The Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine) and the availability of this report online (OASIS).

## **13 STORAGE AND CURATION**

### **13.1 Museum**

- 13.1.1 It is recommended that the project archive resulting from the excavation be deposited with Swindon Museum & Art Gallery. The Museum has agreed in principle to accept the project archive on completion of the project, under the Accession Code **2010.3**. Deposition of the finds with the Museum will only be carried out with the full agreement of the landowner.

### **13.2 Preparation of Archive**

- 13.2.1 The complete Site archive, which will include paper records, photographic records, graphics, artefacts and ecofacts, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by Swindon Museum, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (Walker 1990; SMA 1995; Richards and Robinson 2000; Brown 2007).
- 13.2.2 All archive elements will be marked with the site and accession codes, and a full index will be prepared. The archive comprises the following:
- 6 cardboard boxes or airtight plastic boxes of artefacts & ecofacts, ordered by material type
  - 3 files/document cases of paper records & A3/A4 graphics
  - 252 digital photographs
  - 1 A1 graphic

### **13.3 Conservation**

- 13.3.1 No immediate conservation requirements were noted in the field. Finds which have been identified as of unstable condition and therefore potentially in need of further conservation treatment comprise the metal objects. As these are all nails of probable post-medieval date, no further conservation treatment (including X-radiography) is proposed.

### **13.4 Discard Policy**

- 13.4.1 Wessex Archaeology follows the guidelines set out in Selection, Retention and Dispersal (Society of Museum Archaeologists 1993), which allows for the discard of selected artefact and ecofact categories which are not

considered to warrant any future analysis. In this instance, burnt, unworked flint has already been discarded (and documented in the archive). No further discard is anticipated.

- 13.4.2 The discard of environmental remains and samples follows the guidelines laid out in Wessex Archaeology's 'Archive and Dispersal Policy for Environmental Remains and Samples'. The archive policy conforms with nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1993; 1995; English Heritage 2002) and is available upon request.

### **13.5 Copyright**

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

### **13.6 Security Copy**

- 13.6.1 In line with current best practice, on completion of the project a security copy of the paper records will be prepared, in the form of microfilm. The master jackets and one diazo copy of the microfilm will be submitted to the National Archaeological Record (English Heritage), a second diazo copy will be deposited with the paper records, and a third diazo copy will be retained by Wessex Archaeology.

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## APPENDIX 1: FEATURE, FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL TABLES

**Table 3: Late Bronze Age/ Early Iron Age Structural Features**

Feature Type	Length/ Diameter	Width	Depth	Associated Gullies/ Postholes/ Features	Comments
<b>Semi-circular enclosure</b>	12.30m (distance between outer edge of opposing gullies 4012 and 4024)	0.50m (min) 0.84m (max) Of excav. gullies	0.07m (min) 0.21m (Max)	Comprised of gully terminals 4012, 4024 and group 4049. Also postholes 4037, 4039 and 4041 potentially made-up north-western side where gullies are absent. Internal pits 4033 and 4035 located inside terminal gap created by south end terminal 4024 and north end terminal of 4049. Group 4049 consists of the following excavated slots: 4010, 4016, 4020, 4022 and 4118. 4012 and 4024 single slots only hence no assigned group no..	4024 clipped to the north-west end by post-medieval/modern agricultural furrow. 'Entrance' east side.
<b>Square Enclosure</b>	90.30m (total length)	11.40m (total internal width) 0.20m (min) 1.10m (max) Of excav. gullies (Group 4241) 0.30m (min) 0.32m (max) (Group 4242)	0.07m (min) 0.32m (max) Of excav. gullies (Group 4241) 0.08m (min) 0.09m (max) Of excav. gullies (Group 4242)	Comprised of gully terminal group 4240, 'L'-shaped gully 4241 and gully group 4242. Posthole (possibly internal) 4128 to the immediate south-west side of 4240 terminal and posthole 4122 to the immediate south-west side of gully terminal (north-west) group 4241. Postholes 4099, 4101, 4103 and 4105 (probably external) located south-east side of gully group 4241 and south-west of gully group 4242. Group 4241 consists of the following excavated slots: 4009, 4027, 4056, 4112 and 4114. Group 4242 consists of the following excavated slots: 4029 and 4121.	Incorporates south-west end of 4049 on south-east side. 'Entrance' to the north-east.
<b>Outer possible enclosure</b>	5.80m (4243) 8.17m (4244)	0.40m (min) 0.57m (max) (4243) 0.45m	0.06m (min) 0.10m (max) (4243) 0.07m	Comprised of two gullies group 4243 and 4244. Group 4243 consists of the following excavated slots: 4091, 4093 and 4095. Group 4244 consists of the following	Group 4244 undated. Location, alignment and nature respecting the above enclosures and Group 4243 that is EIA in date.

		(min) 0.50m (max) (4244)	(min) 0.08m (max) (4244)	excavated slots: 4140 and 4142.	
<b>Circular posthole Structure</b>	5.30m	0.17m (min) 0.31m (max)	0.08m (min) 0.13m (max)	Comprised of six postholes: 4256, 4258, 4260, 4260, 4262, 4264 and 4266. North 'entrance'. Burnt feature/ hearth 4107 located externally to the west. No internal features.	'Entrance' to the north.
<b>Four-PostStructure</b>	2.10m <sup>2</sup>	0.36m (min) 0.40m (max)	0.04m (min) 0.10m (max)	Group 4245 comprised of postholes 4171, 4173, 4175 and 4177.	In close proximity (especially westward) to similar posthole features.

**Table 4: Finds totals by material type**

<b>Material Type</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Weight (g)</b>
Animal Bone	467	1318
Burnt Flint	3	140
Fired Clay	24	291
Worked Flint	9	47
Glass	1	78
Human Bone	2 individuals	-
Iron	7	11
Pottery	482	2647
Slag	7	30
Stone	344	45,430

**Table 5: Pottery totals by ware group**

<b>Date Range</b>	<b>Ware type</b>	<b>No. sherds</b>	<b>Wt. (g)</b>
Late Prehistoric	Flint-tempered ware	6	30

	Limestone-tempered ware	42	143
	Sandy ware	160	948
	Shelly ware	273	1522
Post-medieval	Redware	1	4
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>482</b>	<b>2647</b>

**Table 6: Assessment of charred plant remains and charcoal**

Feature Number	Context	Sample	Size Litres	Flot Size ml	Roots %	Grain	Chaff	Cereal Notes	Charred Other	Notes for Table	Charcoal >4/2mm	Other
Middle/Late Bronze Age												
Ditch												
4248	4249	35	10	30	50	-	-	-	-	-	1/1 ml	Moll-t (C)
Hearth												
4107	4108	30	2	4	50	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pits												
4006	4007	20	20	100	60	C	C	Indet. grain frag, culm node	-	-	5/5ml	Moll-t (B), Sab (C)
4030	4044	32	28	50	50	-	-	-	-	<i>Chenopodium</i> (prob. modern)	3/3 ml	Moll-t (C)
Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age												
Ditches												
4010 gp 4049	4011	1	20	15	80	C	-	Wheat grain frag	-	-	1/0 ml	Moll-t (B)
4022 gp 4049	4023	2	20	50	70	-	C	Glume frags inc ?Emmer	C	<i>Vicia/Lathyrus</i> , Brassicaceae, <i>Chenopodium</i> (prob. modern)	6/2 ml	Moll-t (A)
4024	4025	5	20	130	15	-	-	-	-	-	10/50 ml	Moll-t (B)
4138	4139	34	10	10	75	-	-	-	-	-	0/<1 ml	Moll-t (B)
Gullies												
4009	4008	6	10	30	60	-	-	-	-	-	0/1 ml	Moll-t (C), Sab (C)
4112	4111	7	30	35	75	-	-	-	-	-	3/1ml	Moll-t (C), Sab (C)
4126	4127	8	20	10	75	-	-	-	-	-	1/<1 ml	Moll-t (C)
Pits												

4115	4117	31	20	60	50	C	-	Indet. grain frags	-	<i>Chenopodium</i> (prob. modern)	2/3 ml	Moll-t (B)
4144	4125	9	15	10	75	-	-	-	-	-	0/1 ml	Moll-t (C)
Later Prehistoric												
Pits												
4033	4034	3	20	30	75	-	-	-	C	<i>Vicia/Lathyrus</i>	1/<1 ml	Moll-t (C)
4035	4036	4	20	30	65	-	-	-	-	-	3/2 ml	Moll-t (B)

## APPENDIX 2: OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: ENGLAND

**OASIS ID: wessexar1-91248**

### Project details

Project name            Land at the Triangle Site, South Marston, Swindon

Short description of the project    Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd, acting on behalf of Gazeley UK Ltd, to carry out a programme of Archaeological Strip, Map and Sample Excavation on Land at the Triangle Site, Highworth Road, Swindon, Wiltshire centred on National Grid Reference 417695, 188855. The work was required as a condition of planning consent granted by Swindon Borough Council for the construction of warehouses and general industrial units. The fieldwork in Area 1 confirmed the results of the earlier evaluation and revealed further features dating to the later prehistoric and early Romano-British period. The archaeological remains comprised an enclosure complex incorporating a series of pits, postholes, gullies and a probable roundhouse dating from the Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age. Although the overwhelming majority of features were postholes, only two discernible structures were identified, comprising a circular posthole structure with associated external hearth and a four-post structure.. Overall, the complex is indicative of a small scale or seasonally occupied settlement. Two crouched burials, one of which dates to the early Romano-British period, were also evident within Area 1 and are suggestive of the continuation of occupation of the site from the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age phase of activity. The grave goods included an iron brooch and whetstone. Earlier prehistoric background activity was recorded within Area 1, represented by a very small quantity of worked flint flakes, assigned a broad time span of Neolithic/Bronze Age date and retrieved from some of the excavated gullies and postholes. Noteworthy is a Middle Bronze Age loomweight retrieved from a Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age pit.

Project dates            Start: 03-08-2010 End: 14-01-2011

Previous/future work    Yes / No

Any project codes    associated reference    04209 - Contracting Unit No.

Any project codes    associated reference    J1934 - Contracting Unit No.

Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Cultivated Land 3 - Operations to a depth more than 0.25m
Monument type	BURIAL Roman
Significant Finds	BROOCH Roman
Investigation type	'Open-area excavation'
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	WILTSHIRE SWINDON SOUTH MARSTON Triangle Site
Postcode	SN3 4SZ
Study area	2.45 Hectares
Site coordinates	SU 176 884 51.5937003093 -1.745898302710 51 35 37 N 001 44 45 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 112.05m Max: 112.12m

### Project creators

Name Organisation	of Wessex Archaeology
Project originator	brief Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project originator	design CgMs

Project director/manager Sue Farr

Project supervisor Rebecca Fitzpatrick

Type of Developer sponsor/funding body

Name of Gazeley UK Ltd sponsor/funding body

### Project archives

Physical Archive SWINDON MUSEUM recipient

Physical Contents 'Animal Bones', 'Ceramics', 'Environmental', 'Human Bones', 'Metal', 'Worked stone/lithics'

Digital Archive SWINDON MUSEUM recipient

Digital Contents 'Animal Bones', 'Ceramics', 'Environmental', 'Human Bones', 'Metal', 'Stratigraphic', 'Survey', 'Worked stone/lithics'

Digital available Media 'Images raster / digital photography', 'Spreadsheets', 'Survey', 'Text'

Paper Archive SWINDON MUSEUM recipient

Paper Contents 'Animal Bones', 'Ceramics', 'Environmental', 'Human Bones', 'Metal', 'Stratigraphic', 'Survey', 'Worked stone/lithics'

Paper available Media 'Context sheet', 'Drawing', 'Notebook - Excavation', 'Research', 'General Notes', 'Photograph', 'Plan', 'Report', 'Section', 'Survey'

### Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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Title Land at the Triangle Site, South Marston, Swindon

Author(s)/Editor(s) Fitzpatrick, R

Other bibliographic details 75380.02

Date 2011

Issuer or publisher Wessex Archaeology

Place of issue or publication Salisbury

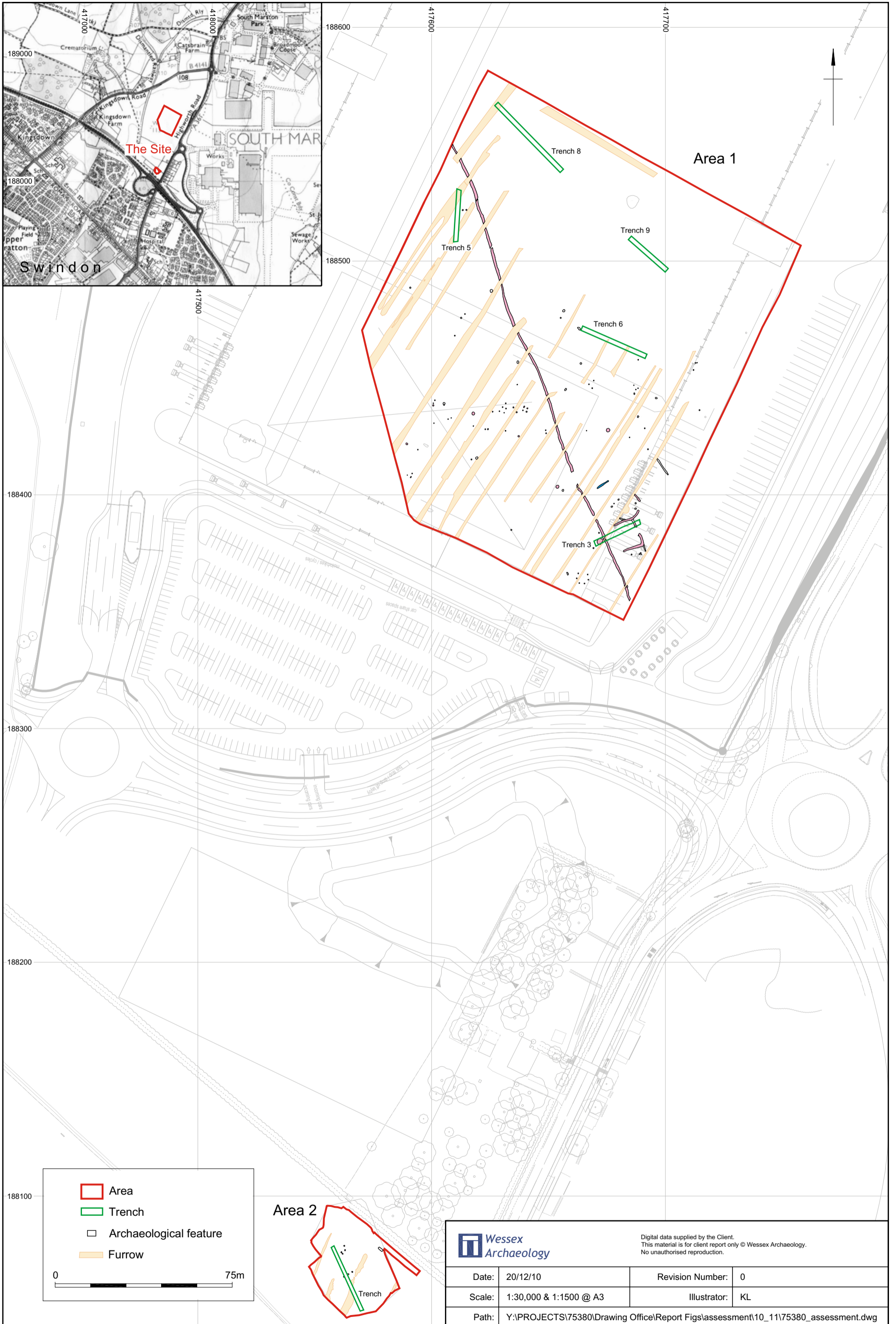
Description Assessment Report

Entered by Sue Farr (s.farr@wessexarch.co.uk)

Entered on 14 January 2011

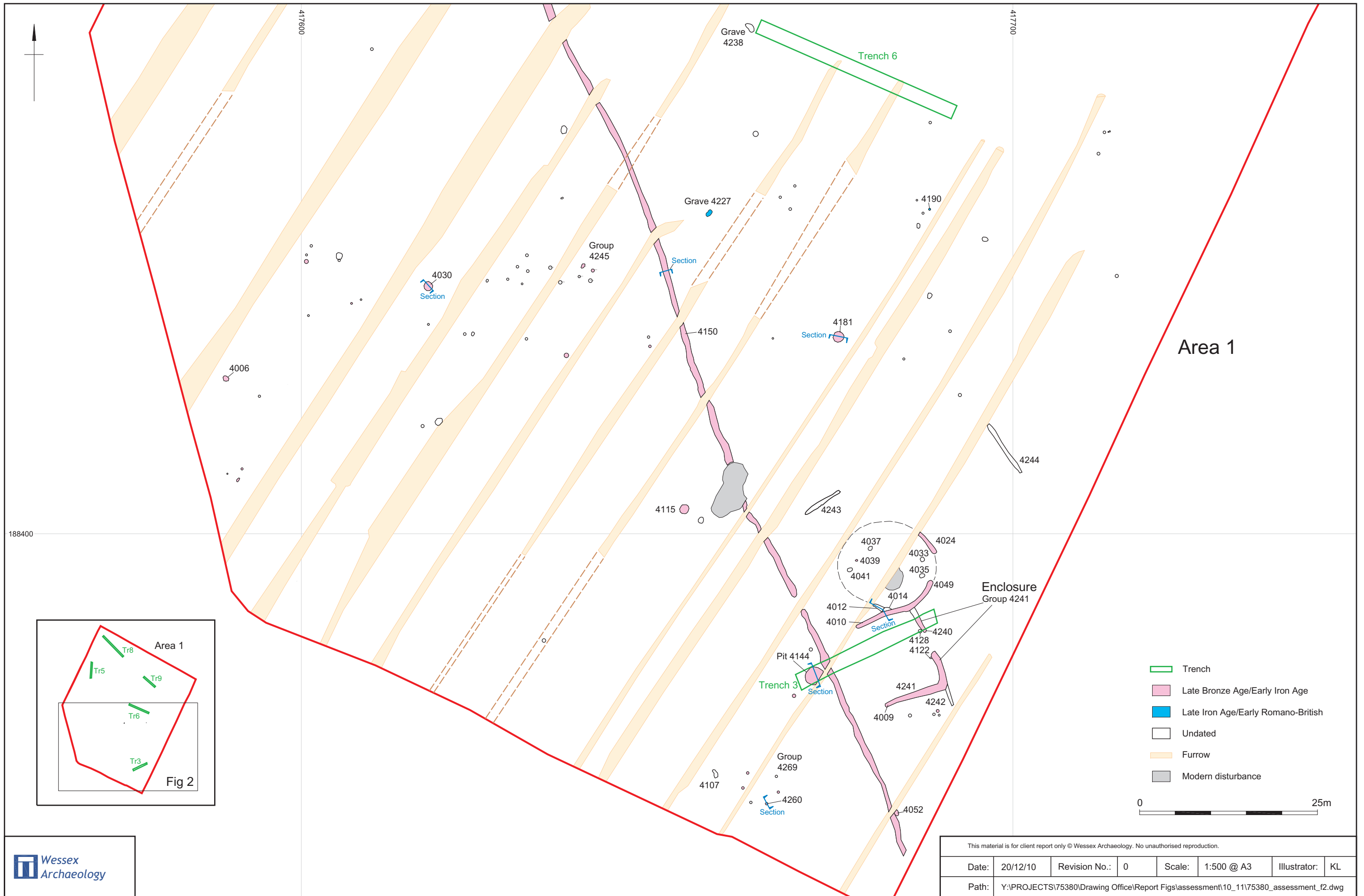
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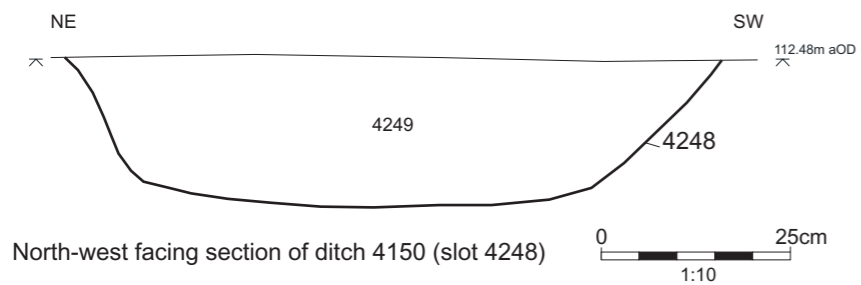
Site location plan

Figure 1



Plan of Area 1 south

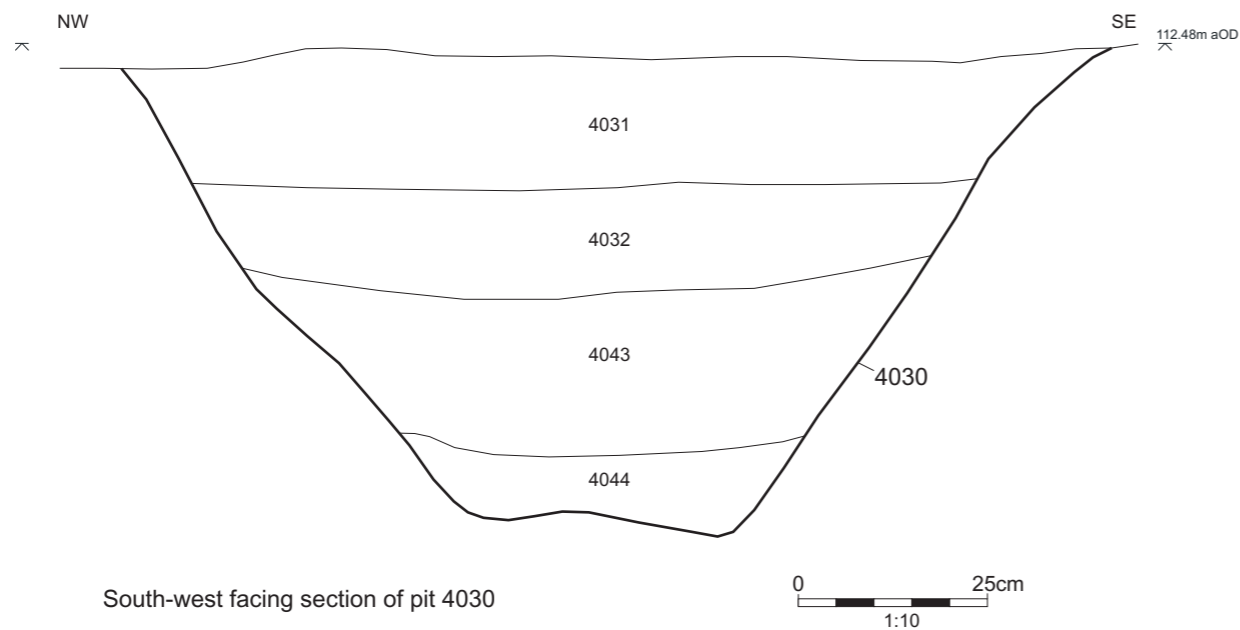
Figure 2



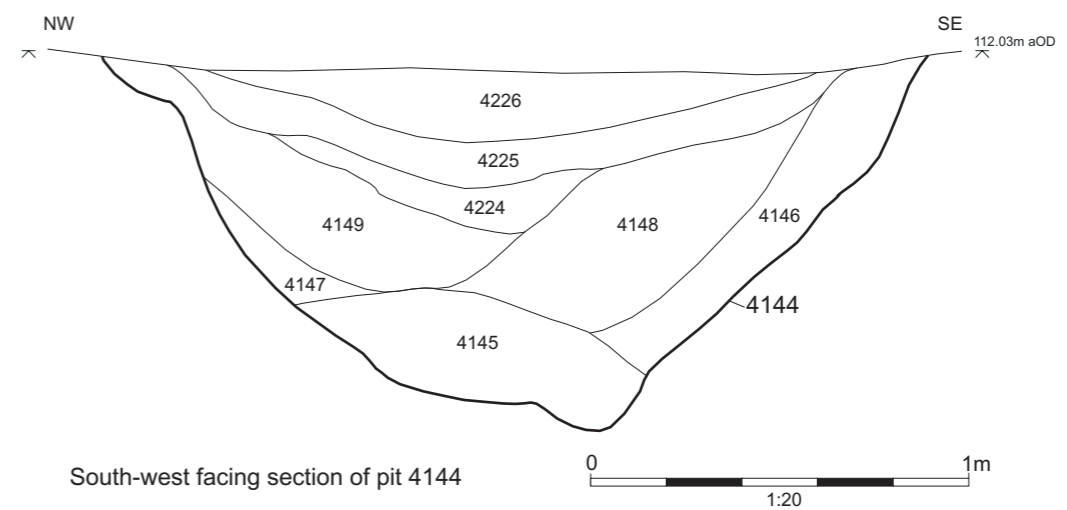
North-west facing section of ditch 4150 (slot 4248)



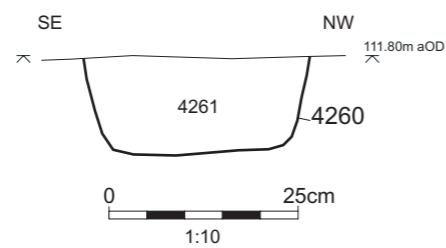
Intervention of gully 4049 (slot 4017), pit 4014 and gully terminal 4012



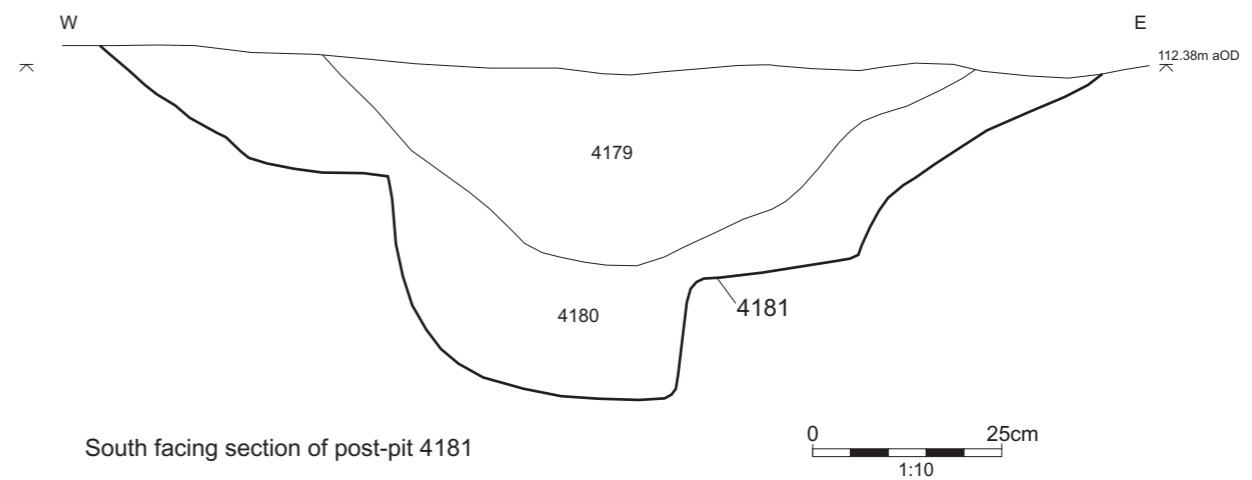
South-west facing section of pit 4030



South-west facing section of pit 4144



North-east facing section of posthole 4260 from structure 4269



South facing section of post-pit 4181



Plate 1: South-east facing section through ditch 4150



Plate 2: South-west facing section of pit 4144



Plate 3: South-east facing section of pit 4052



Plate 4: South-west facing section of pit 4030



Plate 5: East Facing section of pit 4115



Plate 6: South-west facing section of pit 4006



Plate 7: Overall view of Circular Posthole Structure 4269 from the South



Plate 8: Overall view of Four Posted Structure 4245 from the South



Plate 9: South facing section of post-pit 4181



Plate 10: Skeleton 4227 in Grave 4228



Plate 11: Skeleton 4238 with whetstone (Object 5) in Grave 4237



Plate 12: Close up of Iron Objects (2 and 3) with Skeleton 4227



Plate 13: North-east facing section of hearth 4107

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