

**An Archaeological Evaluation
at Land North of Peelings Lane and East of Hailsham Road, Stone Cross, BN24 5FB,
East Sussex**

**NGR: 561690 104580
(TQ 6169 0458)**

**ASE Project No: 161118
Site Code: PEE16**

**ASE Report No: 2017080
OASIS id: archaeol6-277735**



**Giles Dawkes
With contributions by
Karine Le Hégarat, Anna Doherty, Luke Barber,
Stacey Adams and Isa Benedetti-Whitton**

Illustrations by Justin Russell

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Abstract

This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation carried out by Archaeology South-East on land at Peelings Lane, Stone Cross, East Sussex between 13th and 21st February 2017. The fieldwork was commissioned by Archaeological Risk Management on behalf of their client, The KKH Banner Discretionary Settlement, in advance of a proposed residential development.

The 32 evaluation trenches identified two areas of archaeological remains, mostly comprising pits and ditches. In general, the areas divide both spatially and chronologically with medieval occupation adjacent to Hailsham Road in the west (Trenches 1 and 2) and later Iron Age/Early Roman occupation on top of Blackness Hill in the east (Trenches 18, 23-29). Significantly, evidence of salt-working, a resource available in the nearby Willingdon Levels, was identified in the latter area. Elsewhere, the other trenches were devoid of archaeological finds and features.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), the contracting division of The Centre for Applied Archaeology at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London (UCL), was commissioned by Archaeological Risk Management (hereafter 'the consultant') on behalf of their client, The KKH Banner Discretionary Settlement, (hereafter referred to as 'the client') to undertake an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land adjacent to Peelings Lane, Stone Cross, East Sussex (hereafter referred to as 'the site'), centred on NGR TQ 6169 0458 (Fig. 1).

1.2 Geology and Topography

1.2.1 The site comprises an irregular plot of 3.7 hectares lying north of Peelings Lane. It presently consists of an open field on the western side of Blackness Hill. The site is bounded by the A27 road to the north, Hailsham Road to the west and by a small parcel of woodland between the A27 and Peelings Lane to the east.

1.2.2 According to the online British Geological Survey 1:50,000 mapping, the site lies within the Weald Clay Formation of mudstone, formed approximately 134 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period (BGS 2016).

1.3 Planning Background

1.3.1 It is understood that an outline application for residential development of the site will be submitted to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) in the near future. Initial consultation between the consultant and the LPA's Archaeological Advisor (Greg Chuter, East Sussex County Council, hereafter 'the ESCC Archaeologist') established that any planning application for the site should be supported with the results of a programme of archaeological investigation in order to allow informed decisions to be made during the planning process.

1.3.2 Accordingly, ASE was commissioned to undertake a geophysical survey (ASE 2016a) and subsequent trial trench evaluation. In advance of the trial trenching, a method was set out in a *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI; ASE 2016b) and approved by Greg Chuter, ESCC. The aim of the trial trench evaluation was to establish the character, date, and state of preservation of any archaeological remains in order to allow the ESCC Archaeologist to provide formal consultation advice to the LPA during the planning process.

1.4 Scope of Report

1.4.1 This report details the results of the evaluation of 32 trial trenches undertaken between 13th and 21st February 2017. In addition, it suggests a potential mitigation strategy should planning consent be granted. Fieldwork was directed by Giles Dawkes (Senior Archaeologist). The work was managed by Neil Griffin (fieldwork) and Jim Stevenson (post-excavation work).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The following summary is taken from the WSI (ASE 2016b).

Prehistoric

2.1.2 Recent excavations to the southeast of the site along Rattle Road recorded Bronze Age field systems and two late Iron Age settlements (Greg Chuter *pers. comm.*).

Roman

2.1.3 The site lies on or adjacent to the route of a possible Roman Road. Margary's research in the 1930s postulates Peelings Lane as 'a definite route throughout the Roman' period and that a bank which lay at the northern edge of Peelings Lane at that time, approximately 160m east of Pickens Wood, conceals a metalled surface that extends some 16-feet northwards of the visible road surface; therefore lying within the southern edge of the site.

2.1.4 A second Roman road recorded on the Historic Environment Record (HER) lies on or very close to the northern boundary of the site. This is associated with an Archaeological Notification Area. A Roman field system and isolated pottery finds lie nearby.

2.1.5 The recent excavations noted above have identified a Roman settlement and a flint cobbled road (associated with a medieval settlement) which may be Roman in origin (Greg Chuter *pers. comm.*).

Medieval

2.1.6 Some Anglo-Saxon pottery is known from within the study area and the medieval manorial centres of Peelings and Sharnfold lie close to the site. Peelings Manor is recorded in the Domesday Book. The recent excavations noted above also identified an early Saxon cremation cemetery and a medieval settlement with flint cobbled road which may be Roman in origin (Greg Chuter *pers. comm.*).

2.2 Geophysical Survey

2.2.1 The results of the magnetometry survey suggested that numerous archaeological features, in the form of pits and ditches, were located on the site (ASE 2016a). However, while the trial trench evaluation did identify the archaeological remains of pits and ditches, they did not correlate with the locations proposed by the geophysical survey. The reasons for this discrepancy are uncertain, but are likely to be the effects of the underlying geology not lending itself readily to geophysical interpretation. Therefore, the geophysical results (Figure 15) can be disregarded and will not be discussed further.

2.3 Project Aims and Objectives

2.3.1 The general aims of the evaluation were:

- To define, insofar as possible, the date, character, form and function of any archaeological features observed on site.
- To establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains within the footprint of the proposed development and to preserve by record any such remains
- To determine the survival, extent and minimum depth below modern ground level of any such remains
- To determine the nature and significance of any archaeological deposits

2.3.2 The site specific aims of the evaluation were:

- To be sufficient to enable the ESCC Archaeologist to provide further advice to the LPA and to make an informed decision on the requirement for any mitigation work that may be required.
- To make public the results of the work, subject to any confidentiality restrictions.

2.3.3 In addition the project sought to inform on the following areas of research in line with the South-Eastern Research Framework (SERF):

- Communications: complete the main road network; gather all vehicle evidence (SERF Research Agenda – Roman Period Para 9).
- Communications: work could be done on the medieval re-use of Roman roads and the siting of medieval fords and bridges; routes used for transporting raw materials or finished products between town and county, the coast and the Weald need to be traced (SERF Research Agenda – Medieval Period Part A Para 4)
- Settlement pattern and tenure both of farmsteads and villages, using research from the built environment, farmstead characterisation and other vernacular studies integrated with landscape research (SERF Research Agenda – Historic Landscape Para 4)

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 Fieldwork Methodology

- 3.1.1 Trenches were located as proposed in the WSI (Fig. 2). The thirty-two 30m x 2.2m trenches comprised of a 5% sample of the c. 3.8 hectare. These were targeted on both the geophysical anomalies and the apparent blank areas.
- 3.1.2 The location of trenches was accurately established using survey grade differential global positioning system (DGPS). The trenches were scanned prior to excavation using a Cable Avoidance Tool.
- 3.1.3 The trenches were excavated using a 20-tonne 360° mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket.
- 3.1.4 All deposits were recorded using ASE standard context sheets. Vertical sections were taken across features where necessary and a comprehensive photographic record maintained throughout the work.

3.2 Archive

- 3.2.1 ASE informed Bexhill Museum prior to the commencement of fieldwork that a site archive would be generated and deposited but no accession number was issued. The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE and will be deposited at Bexhill Museum in due course. The contents of the archive are tabulated below (Table 1).

| | |
|----------------------|-----|
| Context sheets | 77 |
| Section sheets | 2 |
| Plans sheets | 0 |
| Colour photographs | 0 |
| B&W photos | 0 |
| Digital photos | 107 |
| Context register | 0 |
| Drawing register | 1 |
| Watching brief forms | 0 |
| Trench Record forms | 32 |

Table 1: Quantification of site paper archive

| | |
|--|--------|
| Bulk finds (quantity e.g. 1 bag, 1 box, 0.5 box 0.5 of a box) | 1 box |
| Registered finds (number of) | 1 item |
| Flots and environmental remains from bulk samples | 1 box |
| Palaeoenvironmental specialists sample samples (e.g. columns, prepared slides) | 0 |
| Waterlogged wood | 0 |
| Wet sieved environmental remains from bulk samples | 0 |

Table 2: Quantification of artefact and environmental samples

3.2.2 A county wide policy of selection and retention of archaeological finds is currently under review by the Sussex Archaeological Museum Group working party. Once the policy is agreed and in place, it will be implemented by Archaeology South-East. The finds archive will be revised in accordance with this policy in the event that it is implemented before deposition of the archive occurs.

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Trench 1 (Fig. 3)

| Context | Type | Interpretation | Length m | Width m | Depth m | Height m AOD |
|---------|---------|----------------|----------|---------|---------|--------------|
| 1/1 | Deposit | Topsoil | Tr. | Tr. | 0.22 | 24.99 |
| 1/2 | Deposit | Subsoil | Tr. | Tr. | 0.19 | 24.77 |
| 1/3 | Deposit | Natural clay | Tr. | Tr. | - | 24.58 |
| 1/4 | Cut | Ditch | Tr. | 0.55 | 0.03 | 24.58 |
| 1/5 | Fill | Ditch fill | Tr. | 0.55 | 0.03 | 24.58 |
| 1/6 | Cut | Ditch | Tr. | 1.23 | 0.25 | 24.56 |
| 1/7 | Fill | Ditch fill | Tr. | 1.23 | 0.25 | 24.56 |
| 1/8 | Cut | Ditch | Tr. | 1.9 | 0.21 | 24.6 |
| 1/9 | Fill | Ditch fill | Tr. | 1.9 | 0.21 | 24.6 |
| 1/10 | Cut | Pit | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.3 | 24.57 |
| 1/11 | Fill | Pit fill | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.3 | 24.57 |

Table 3: Trench 1 list of recorded contexts

4.1.1 Cut into the underlying natural clay [1/3] were three ditches and a pit. Of the three ditches, [1/4] and [1/6] were both small, shallow and filled by dark brown clays ([1/5] and [1/7] respectively). Ditch fill [1/7] contained finds of medieval pottery. North-west to south-east aligned ditch [1/8] was broad and shallow and filled by brown clay [1/9] with finds of medieval pottery sherds. An environmental bulk sample (<2>) from [1/9] produced frequent cereal caryposes of wheat (*Triticum* sp.), barley (*Hordeum vulgare*), oat (*Avena* sp.) and possibly rye (*Secale cereale*). Charcoal fragments of beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), oak (*Quercus* sp.), hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and field maple (*Acer campestre*) were also found.

4.1.2 Pit [1/10] was filled with dark brown clay [1/11] containing finds of post-medieval ceramic building material (CBM). The features were overlain by subsoil [1/2] and topsoil [1/1].

4.2 Trench 2 (Fig. 4)

| Context | Type | Interpretation | Length m | Width m | Depth m | Height m AOD |
|---------|---------|----------------|----------|---------|---------|--------------|
| 2/1 | Deposit | Topsoil | Tr. | Tr. | 0.14 | 23.25 |
| 2/2 | Deposit | Subsoil | Tr. | Tr. | 0.18 | 23.11 |
| 2/3 | Deposit | Natural clay | Tr. | Tr. | - | 22.93 |
| 2/4 | Cut | Ditch | Tr. | 3 | 0.16 | 22.91 |
| 2/5 | Fill | Ditch fill | Tr. | 3 | 0.16 | 22.91 |
| 2/6 | Cut | Ditch | Tr. | 3 | 0.16 | 22.91 |
| 2/7 | Fill | Ditch fill | Tr. | 3 | 0.16 | 22.91 |
| 2/8 | Cut | Ditch | Tr. | 1.47 | 0.38 | 22.95 |
| 2/9 | Fill | Ditch fill | Tr. | 1.47 | 0.38 | 22.95 |
| 2/10 | Cut | Pit | 0.4 | 0.4 | 0.07 | 22.93 |
| 2/11 | Fill | Pit fill | 0.4 | 0.4 | 0.07 | 22.93 |

Table 4: Trench 2 list of recorded contexts

4.2.1 Two ditches and a pit were cut into the underlying natural clay [2/3]. Ditch [2/8] was small, shallow and filled by yellow clay [2/9] containing finds of medieval pottery sherds. This ditch may well be the same as ditch [1/6] to the south. North-south aligned ditch [2/4 & 2/6] was broad and shallow and probably the same feature as ditch [1/8] to the south. Filled by brown clay [2/5 & 2/7], like ditch [1/8], these contained finds of medieval pottery.

4.2.2 Small pit [2/10] was filled by charcoal-enriched dark brown clay [2/11]. An environmental bulk sample (<1>) from the fill produced charcoal fragments of oak (*Quercus* sp.), apple (*Malus* sp.), pear (*Pyrus* sp.), whitebeam (*Sorbus* sp.) and hawthorn (*Crataegus* sp.). There were no finds from the fill.

4.2.4 The features were overlain by subsoil [2/2] and topsoil [2/1].

4.3 Trench 18 (Fig. 5)

| Context | Type | Interpretation | Length m | Width m | Depth m | Height m AOD |
|---------|---------|--------------------|----------|---------|---------|--------------|
| 18/1 | Deposit | Topsoil | Tr. | Tr. | 0.12 | 34.32 |
| 18/2 | Deposit | Subsoil | Tr. | Tr. | 0.17 | 34.2 |
| 18/3 | Deposit | Natural clay | Tr. | Tr. | - | 34.03 |
| 18/4 | Cut | Ditch | Tr. | 1.5 | 0.44 | 34.05 |
| 18/5 | Fill | Ditch fill | Tr. | 1.5 | 0.44 | 34.05 |
| 18/6 | Cut | Ditch | Tr. | 1.13 | 0.25 | 34.01 |
| 18/7 | Fill | Ditch fill | Tr. | 1.1.3 | 0.25 | 34.01 |
| 18/8 | Cut | Ditch terminus | 2.2 | 0.8 | 0.54 | 34.03 |
| 18/9 | Fill | Primary ditch fill | 2.2 | 0.35 | 0.11 | 34.03 |
| 18/10 | Fill | Upper ditch fill | 2.2 | 0.8 | 0.43 | 34.03 |

Table 5: Trench 18 list of recorded contexts

4.3.1 Three ditches were identified, all dug into the underlying natural clay [18/3]. Ditch [18/4], ditch [18/6] and ditch terminus [18/8] were variously aligned and all filled with grey clays ([18/5], [18/7], [18/9] and [18/10]). All of these fills produced datable finds, with Middle Iron Age pottery sherds from [18/5] of ditch [18/4] and Late Iron Age/Early Roman pottery sherds from the remainder.

4.3.2 The features were overlain by subsoil [18/2] and topsoil [18/1].

4.4 Trench 23 (Fig. 6)

| Context | Type | Interpretation | Length m | Width m | Depth m | Height m AOD |
|---------|---------|----------------|----------|---------|---------|--------------|
| 23/1 | Deposit | Topsoil | Tr. | Tr. | 0.13 | 34.38 |
| 23/2 | Deposit | Subsoil | Tr. | Tr. | 0.15 | 34.2 |
| 23/3 | Deposit | Natural clay | Tr. | Tr. | - | 34.05 |
| 23/4 | Cut | Ditch | Tr. | 1.62 | 0.16 | 34.04 |
| 23/5 | Fill | Ditch fill | Tr. | 1.62 | 0.16 | 34.04 |
| 23/6 | Cut | Pit | Tr. | 1.8 | 0.24 | 34.01 |
| 23/7 | Fill | Pit fill | Tr. | 1.8 | 0.24 | 34.01 |
| 23/8 | Cut | Pit | 2 | 0.6 | 0.17 | 34.05 |
| 23/9 | Fill | Pit fill | 2 | 0.6 | 0.17 | 34.05 |
| 23/10 | Cut | Posthole | 0.23 | 0.22 | 0.06 | 34.05 |
| 23/11 | Fill | Posthole fill | 0.23 | 0.22 | 0.06 | 34.05 |

Table 6: Trench 23 list of recorded contexts

4.4.1 The principal feature identified was north-west to south-east aligned ditch [23/4] filled with grey clay [23/5]. Adjacent was pit [23/8], filled with grey clay [23/9] and pit [23/6] filled with orange clay [23/7]. All of these fills produced finds of Late Iron Age/Early Roman pottery sherds.

4.4.2 To the north was posthole [23/10], filled with grey clay [23/11] containing no finds. All of the features were cut into the underlying natural clay [23/3] and sealed by subsoil [23/2] and topsoil [23/1].

4.5 Trench 24 (Fig. 7)

| Context | Type | Interpretation | Length m | Width m | Depth m | Height m AOD |
|---------|---------|----------------|----------|---------|---------|--------------|
| 24/1 | Deposit | Topsoil | Tr. | Tr. | 0.15 | 34.39 |
| 24/2 | Deposit | Subsoil | Tr. | Tr. | 0.22 | 34.24 |
| 24/3 | Deposit | Natural clay | Tr. | Tr. | - | 34.02 |
| 24/4 | Cut | Ditch | Tr. | 0.84 | 0.32 | 33.99 |
| 24/5 | Fill | Ditch fill | Tr. | 0.84 | 0.32 | 33.99 |
| 24/6 | Cut | Ditch | Tr. | 0.54 | 0.12 | 33.98 |
| 24/7 | Fill | Ditch fill | Tr. | 0.54 | 0.12 | 33.98 |
| 24/8 | Cut | Ditch | 2.4 | 0.45 | 0.38 | 34.02 |
| 24/9 | Fill | Ditch fill | 2.4 | 0.45 | 0.38 | 34.02 |
| 24/10 | Cut | Ditch | Tr. | 2 | 0.23 | 34.02 |
| 24/11 | Fill | Ditch fill | Tr. | 2 | 0.23 | 34.02 |

Table 7: Trench 24 list of recorded contexts

4.5.1 Four ditches were identified, all cut into the underlying natural clay [24/3]. Two ditches ([24/4] and [24/6]) were aligned north-east to south-west and both were filled with grey clays ([24/5] and [24/7] respectively). Fill [24/7] contained a single sherd of late prehistoric pottery. To the immediate east was short ditch length [24/8] filled by grey clay [24/9].

4.5.2 Ditch fill [24/9] was cut by later ditch [24/10] and this broad, shallow ditch was filled by yellow grey clay [24/11]. The single fill contained 20 sherds of salt-affected Early Roman pottery and a fragment of Roman CBM.

4.5.3 The features were overlain by subsoil [24/2] and topsoil [24/1].

4.6 Trench 25 (Fig. 8)

| Context | Type | Interpretation | Length m | Width m | Depth m | Height m AOD |
|---------|---------|--------------------|----------|---------|---------|--------------|
| 25/1 | Deposit | Topsoil | Tr. | Tr. | 0.26 | 33.64 |
| 25/2 | Deposit | Natural clay | Tr. | Tr. | - | 33.38 |
| 25/3 | Cut | Ditch | Tr. | 0.7 | 0.26 | 33.38 |
| 25/4 | Fill | Primary ditch fill | Tr. | 0.7 | 0.14 | 33.38 |
| 25/5 | Fill | Upper ditch fill | Tr. | 0.7 | 0.12 | 33.38 |
| 25/6 | Cut | Ditch | Tr. | 1.07 | 0.51 | 33.32 |
| 25/7 | Fill | Ditch fill | Tr. | 1.07 | 0.51 | 33.32 |
| 25/8 | Cut | Ditch | Tr. | 1.03 | 0.12 | 33.30 |
| 25/9 | Fill | Ditch fill | Tr. | 1.03 | 0.12 | 33.30 |
| 25/10 | Cut | Posthole | Tr. | 0.35 | 0.21 | 33.31 |
| 25/11 | Fill | Posthole fill | Tr. | 0.35 | 0.21 | 33.31 |
| 25/12 | Cut | Ditch | Tr. | 0.7 | 0.1 | 33.35 |
| 25/13 | Fill | Ditch fill | Tr. | 0.7 | 0.1 | 33.35 |

Table 8: Trench 25 list of recorded contexts

4.6.1 Four north-west to south-east aligned ditches were identified cut into the natural clay [25/2]. Ditch [25/3] was filled with yellow clay [25/4] and orange clay [25/5]. The former, lower fill contained finds of Late Iron Age/Roman pottery sherds. Ditch [25/6] was filled by

grey clay [25/7] with finds of Early Roman pottery sherds.

- 4.6.2 Further north were two undated ditches, [25/8] and [25/12]. The former was filled with brown clay [25/9] and the latter by grey clay [25/13]. Ditch [25/12] cut earlier posthole [25/10]. The posthole was also undated, filled by grey clay [25/11].
- 4.6.3 All the features were dug into the underlying natural clay [25/2] and overlain by topsoil [25/1].

4.7 Trench 26 (Fig. 9)

| Context | Type | Interpretation | Length m | Width m | Depth m | Height m AOD |
|---------|---------|--------------------|----------|---------|---------|--------------|
| 26/1 | Deposit | Topsoil | Tr. | Tr. | 0.22 | 33.77 |
| 26/2 | Deposit | Natural clay | Tr. | Tr. | - | 33.5 |
| 26/3 | Fill | Ditch fill | Tr. | 0.5 | 0.09 | 33.45 |
| 26/4 | Cut | Ditch | Tr. | 0.5 | 0.09 | 33.45 |
| 26/5 | Fill | Upper ditch fill | Tr. | 0.77 | 0.07 | 33.48 |
| 26/6 | Fill | Primary ditch fill | Tr. | 0.77 | 0.08 | 33.41 |
| 26/7 | Cut | Ditch | Tr. | 0.77 | 0.15 | 33.48 |
| 26/8 | Fill | Upper ditch fill | Tr. | 0.8 | 0.2 | 33.5 |
| 26/9 | Fill | Primary ditch fill | Tr. | 0.17 | 0.04 | 33.3 |
| 26/10 | Cut | Ditch | Tr. | 0.8 | 0.24 | 33.5 |

Table 9: Trench 26 list of recorded contexts

- 4.7.1 Three ditches were identified, all dug into the underlying natural clay [26/2]. Ditches [26/4] and [26/10] were aligned north-east to south-west and filled with grey clay and brown clays ([26/3], [26/8] and [26/9]). A continuation of ditch [26/4] was identified in Trench 27 to the immediate south (ditch [27/6]).
- 4.7.2 Ditch [26/7] comprised two lengths of contemporary ditches in a Y-shape. The upper fill [26/5] was a grey clay, while primary fill [26/6] was a charcoal-enriched grey and black clay.
- 4.7.3 No finds were recovered from any of the features. All of the features were overlain by topsoil [26/1].

4.8 Trench 27 (Fig. 10)

| Context | Type | Interpretation | Length m | Width m | Depth m | Height m AOD |
|---------|---------|----------------|----------|---------|---------|--------------|
| 27/1 | Deposit | Topsoil | Tr. | Tr. | 0.23 | 33.77 |
| 27/2 | Deposit | Natural clay | Tr. | Tr. | - | 33.54 |
| 27/3 | Fill | Pit fill | 0.5 | 0.5 | NE | 33.52 |
| 27/4 | Cut | Pit | 0.5 | 0.5 | NE | 33.52 |
| 27/5 | Fill | Ditch fill | Tr. | 0.6 | 0.14 | 33.54 |
| 27/6 | Cut | Ditch | Tr. | 0.6 | 0.14 | 33.54 |
| 27/7 | Fill | Pit fill | Tr. | 0.55 | 0.09 | 33.54 |
| 27/8 | Cut | Pit | Tr. | 0.55 | 0.09 | 33.54 |

Table 10: Trench 27 list of recorded contexts

- 4.8.1 It was apparent after the machine excavation of the overburden that this trench contained more complicated archaeological deposits than seen elsewhere. This comprised of a

series of intercutting features, principally pits and a ditch cut into the natural clay [27/2]. After discussion with Greg Chuter, ESCC, it was agreed that these features would be better served by excavation in an open area mitigation exercise, rather than in the narrow confines of the evaluation trench. While one sondage was excavated (in ditch [27/6] and pit [27/8]), the remainder was simply recorded and planned.

- 4.8.2 Ditch [27/6] was a clear continuation of ditch [26/4] to the north. A single sherd of later prehistoric pottery was recovered from grey silt fill [27/5]. The stratigraphic relationship between the ditch and pit [27/8] was uncertain. The pit was filled by grey silt [27/7].
- 4.8.3 To the immediate south of ditch [27/6] and pit [27/8], was an area approximately 5m by at least 2.2m of intercutting features. Most notable was sub-circular pit [27/4] filled with burnt deposits of red fired clay and frequent charcoal flecks [27/3]. A find of a fired clay salt-working pedestal was recovered from the upper surface of [27/3].
- 4.8.4 All the features were overlain by topsoil [27/1].

4.9 Trench 28 (Fig. 11)

| Context | Type | Interpretation | Length m | Width m | Depth m | Height m AOD |
|---------|---------|----------------|----------|---------|---------|--------------|
| 28/1 | Deposit | Topsoil | Tr. | Tr. | 0.25 | 33.09 |
| 28/2 | Deposit | Natural clay | Tr. | Tr. | - | 32.84 |
| 28/3 | Fill | Ditch fill | Tr. | 0.45 | 0.08 | 32.84 |
| 28/4 | Cut | Ditch terminus | Tr. | 0.45 | 0.08 | 32.84 |
| 28/5 | Fill | Ditch fill | 1.2 | 0.55 | 0.12 | 32.82 |
| 28/6 | Cut | Ditch | 1.2 | 0.55 | 0.12 | 32.82 |
| 28/7 | Fill | Pit/ditch fill | 1 | 1 | 0.18 | 32.78 |
| 28/8 | Cut | Pit/ditch | 1 | 1 | 0.18 | 32.78 |

Table 11: Trench 28 list of recorded contexts

- 4.9.1 Two ditches were identified dug into the underlying natural clay [28/2]. Ditch terminus [28/4] was filled with grey brown clay [28/3]. To the south, was another ditch terminus ([28/6]) filled with a similar grey brown clay ([28/5]). At the southern end of the trench was feature [28/8]. It is possible that this was another ditch terminus, with a similar profile to [28/4] and [28/4] but its greater width and shape in plan suggested that it could have been a pit. Pit/ditch [28/8] was partially seen and filled with brown clay [28/7]. No finds were recovered from these shallow features.

- 4.9.2 All three features were overlain by topsoil [28/1].

4.10 Trench 29 (Fig. 12)

| Context | Type | Interpretation | Length m | Width m | Depth m | Height m AOD |
|---------|---------|----------------|----------|---------|---------|--------------|
| 29/1 | Deposit | Topsoil | Tr. | Tr. | 0.22 | 32.65 |
| 29/2 | Deposit | Natural clay | Tr. | Tr. | - | 32.43 |
| 29/3 | Fill | Ditch fill | 2 | 0.35 | 0.12 | 32.41 |
| 29/4 | Cut | Ditch | 2 | 0.35 | 0.12 | 32.41 |
| 29/5 | Fill | Ditch fill | Tr. | 0.2 | 0.19 | 32.43 |
| 29/6 | Cut | Ditch | Tr. | 0.2 | 0.19 | 32.43 |
| 29/7 | Fill | Ditch fill | Tr. | 0.33 | 0.12 | 32.36 |
| 29/8 | Cut | Ditch | Tr. | 0.33 | 0.12 | 32.36 |
| 29/9 | Fill | Ditch fill | 1.1 | 1.1 | 0.15 | 32.33 |

| | | | | | | |
|-------|-----|-------|-----|-----|------|-------|
| 29/10 | Cut | Ditch | 1.1 | 1.1 | 0.15 | 32.33 |
|-------|-----|-------|-----|-----|------|-------|

Table 12: Trench 29 list of recorded contexts

4.10.1 Four ditches were identified in the trench, all cut into the underlying natural clay [29/2]. The ditches ([29/4], [29/6], [29/8] and [29/10]) were all small, shallow and filled with grey brown clays ([29/3], [29/5], [29/7] and [29/9] respectively). The only find from these features was a single sherd of medieval pottery from ditch fill [29/3].

4.10.3 All the features were overlain by topsoil [29/1].

4.11 Archaeologically negative trenches

4.11.1 Apart from those trenches described above, all of the other trenches (Trenches 3-17; 19-22 and 30-32) were devoid of archaeological features and deposits (Fig. 2). Subsoil was largely absent in the trenches on the top of the hill (Trenches 19-22 and 30-32) but where seen, it ranged in thickness between 0.12m and 0.27m thick. Topsoil varied between 0.1m and 0.27m thick.

5.0 THE FINDS

5.1 Summary

5.1.1 A moderate-sized assemblage of finds was recovered during the evaluation on land at Peelings Lane, Stone Cross. All finds were washed and dried or air dried as appropriate. They were subsequently quantified by count and weight and were bagged by material and context. Hand-collected finds have been tabulated below (Table 13). A single registered find was recorded; as this is an object of fired clay, it is described with other bulk finds in this material class in section 5.6. All finds have been packed and stored following ClfA guidelines (2014).

| Context | Lithics | Weight (g) | Pottery | Weight (g) | CBM | Weight (g) | Stone | Weight (g) | Iron | Nails | Weight (g) | Charcoal | Weight (g) | Fire Cracked Flint | Weight (g) | Fired Clay | Weight (g) |
|---------|---------|------------|---------|------------|-----|------------|-------|------------|------|-------|------------|----------|------------|--------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 1/0 | | | 6 | 32 | | | | | | | | 2 | 1 | | | | |
| 1/7 | | | 6 | 32 | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 | 5 |
| 1/9 | | | 15 | 82 | | | | | | | | | | | | 3 | 14 |
| 1/11 | | | | | 2 | 32 | | | 6 | | 33 | | | | | | |
| 2/5 | | | 28 | 145 | 1 | 42 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2/7 | | | 3 | 7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2/9 | | | 30 | 99 | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 4 |
| 2/11 | | | | | | | | | | 6 | | | | | | | |
| 18/5 | | | 10 | 24 | | | 2 | 17 | | | | | | | | 1 | 5 |
| 18/7 | 1 | 24 | 5 | 13 | | | | | | | | | 2 | 45 | 2 | 9 | |
| 18/9 | | | 6 | 10 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 18/10 | | | 21 | 73 | | | | | | | | | | | | 3 | 15 |
| 23/5 | | | 2 | 8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 23/7 | | | 1 | 5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 23/9 | | | 4 | 15 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 24/7 | | | 1 | 12 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 24/11 | | | 26 | 89 | 1 | 83 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 25/4 | | | 3 | 8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 25/7 | | | 7 | 20 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 27/3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 4 | 81 |
| 27/5 | | | 6 | 10 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 29/3 | | | 1 | 40 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 29/7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total | 1 | 24 | 173 | 724 | 4 | 157 | 2 | 17 | 6 | | 33 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 45 | 17 | 337 |

Table 13: Quantification of hand-collected finds

5.2 The Flintwork by Karine Le Hégarat

- 5.2.1 The evaluation produced an irregular flake weighing 24g and two fragments (46g) of burnt unworked flint. The flake from context [18/7] is made from a dark grey flint with a stained abraded cortex, but it is chronologically undiagnostic.

5.3 The Prehistoric and Roman Pottery by Anna Doherty

- 5.3.1 A total of 92 sherds of prehistoric and Roman pottery, weighing 287g, was recovered during the evaluation, probably predominantly of Middle Iron Age to earlier Roman date. Although the assemblage is fairly modest in size it is concentrated in just a few trenches towards the east of the site, suggesting that this area might be located close to areas of settlement; however, the pottery is all notably abraded and fragmented indicating the possibility that it may have undergone redeposition.
- 5.3.2 At this stage the pottery has been examined for the purposes of spot-dating and characterisation but has not been fully quantified according to a fabric and form type-series. It is recommended that the pottery should be retained for possible further recording in the event of further archaeological work which might produce a larger assemblage.
- 5.3.3 Nineteen sherds, weighing 67g are associated with prehistoric tempered wares which are likely to pre-date the 1st century AD. Possibly the earliest of these is a fairly coarse flint-tempered ware with a non-sandy matrix, found as a residual piece, alongside Late Iron Age/Roman pottery in context [18/7]. Fabrics of this type are probably most characteristic of the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age.
- 5.3.4 The remainder of the tempered wares contain no diagnostic feature sherds although they probably all belong broadly to the later 1st millennium BC. Many of the fabrics identified in contexts [23/5], [23/7], [23/9] and [24/7], including fine glauconitic wares and fine sandy wares, are comparable to material recorded in recent excavations at Pocock's Field, Eastbourne (ASE 2016c); however, unlike in that assemblage, predominantly dated to c. 500-300BC, there are relatively few flint-tempered sherds, perhaps suggesting a slightly later period of activity, broadly within the Middle Iron Age. One context, [18/5], contained sherds in a coarse sandy ware very similar to a fabric identified at Pocock's Field (QUAR2) which was almost exclusively found in later Middle Iron Age (or transitional Middle/Late Iron Age) groups.
- 5.3.5 Most of the remainder of the assemblage, found in contexts [18/7], [18/9], [18/10], [24/11] and [25/4] comprises grog-tempered bodysherds. In the largest individual group, from [24/11], these were associated with a single unsourced oxidised Roman sandy fabric. Grog-tempered wares appear through the Late Iron Age and Roman period in the local area so it is difficult to assign a precise spot-date to any specific context. Looking at the assemblage as a whole however, the lack of association with other fabric types, either of earlier Iron Age or later Roman type, suggests that the pottery is probably most likely to belong to the 1st century AD.
- 5.3.6 In both the Iron Age tempered and grog-tempered assemblages there is quite a high proportion of sherds oxidised to a pinkish-orange hue. This was particularly the case in Iron Age contexts [23/5] and [23/9] and Late Iron Age/Roman contexts [18/9], [18/10], [24/1] and [27/5]. These firing characteristics are typical of assemblages found on salt-

working sites although it is unclear whether they suggest vessels actively used in salt production/transport or just similarities in manufacturing techniques in the production of briquetage and domestic pottery in coastal or marshy environments.

5.4 The Post-Roman Pottery by Luke Barber

5.4.1 The archaeological evaluation recovered 81 sherds of post-Roman pottery, weighing 396g, from six individually numbered contexts. The material has been fully listed in Table 14 as part of the visible archive. Medieval fabrics have been provisionally allocated a source but detailed fabric concordance with the fabric series from Lewes and Polegate has yet to be undertaken.

| Context | Fabric | Period | No | Weight | Comments and Estimated No. of Vessels |
|---------|--|--------|----|--------|--|
| 1/007 | Moderate/abundant flinty ware (Abbot's Wood) | EM/HM | 4 | 18g | Bowl x1 (squared bead, externally sooted), uncertain form x3 |
| 1/007 | Sparse/moderate flinty ware (Abbot's Wood) | HM | 2 | 14g | Cooking pot x2 |
| 1/009 | Moderate/abundant flinty ware (Abbot's Wood) | EM/HM | 2 | 10g | Cooking pot x2 (x1 with applied thumbed strip) |
| 1/009 | Sparse/moderate flinty ware (Abbot's Wood) | HM | 3 | 18g | Cooking pot x2 |
| 1/009 | Fine sandy ware with rare/sparse flints to 0.5mm (Early Ringmer of Abbot's Wood) | HM | 1 | 8g | Jug x1 (green glaze patches) |
| 1/009 | Fine/medium sandy ware (probably Ringmer) | HM | 9 | 44g | Cooking pots x2, jugs x2 (green glazed patches) |
| 2/005 | Moderate/abundant flinty ware (Abbot's Wood) | EM/HM | 14 | 62g | Cooking pot x2 (everted rim) |
| 2/005 | Sparse/moderate flinty ware (Abbot's Wood) | HM | 7 | 36g | Cooking pots x2 (x1 with applied thumbed strip) |
| 2/005 | Fine/medium sandy ware (probably Ringmer) | HM | 7 | 46g | Cooking pots x2, jug x1 (thumbed base) |
| 2/007 | Sparse/moderate flinty ware (Abbot's Wood) | HM | 1 | 2g | Jug x1 (inturned rim) |
| 2/007 | Fine/medium sandy ware (probably Ringmer) | HM | 1 | 2g | Uncertain form x1 |
| 2/009 | Moderate/abundant flinty ware (Abbot's Wood) | EM/HM | 16 | 60g | Cooking pots x3 (tapering club rim) |
| 2/009 | Sparse/moderate flinty ware (Abbot's Wood) | HM | 8 | 26g | Cooking pots x4 |
| 2/009 | Fine/medium sandy ware (probably Ringmer) | HM | 5 | 10g | Uncertain form x2 |
| 29/003 | Moderate/abundant flinty ware (Abbot's Wood) | EM/HM | 1 | 40g | Bowl x1 (simple squared rim) |

Table 14: Post-Roman pottery assemblage (EM – Early Medieval c. 1050-1200/25; HM - High Medieval c. 1200/25-1350/75).

5.4.2 The pottery is generally in poor condition. Although much of this is likely to result from burial in an acidic subsoil, the small average sherd size (4.9g) suggests the material has seen some reworking as well. However, a few larger fresher sherds are present (for example, context [29/3]) and this, together with the quantities involved suggest medieval

occupation within or very near the evaluation trenches. The assemblage is fairly typical for a low-status domestic one from the area. Abbot's Wood products dominate, with a sprinkling of Ringmer-type wares. Decoration is rare and where jugs are glazed this is often sparingly done with poor quality patchy coverage. Overall the assemblage suggests a single period of activity spanning c. 1175/1200 to 1300.

- 5.4.3 The pottery assemblage is small, abraded and generally lacking in feature sherds. Context groups are also small.

5.5 The Ceramic Building Material by Isa Benedetti-Whitton

5.5.1 The ceramic building material (CBM) assemblage comprised two fragments of post medieval peg tile from pit fill [1/11] and two less definite pieces of CBM from ditch fills [2/5] and [24/11], collectively weighing 125g. The fragment from [2/5] was vitrified and much degraded, but based on the approximate shape is most probably a fragment of Roman tegula roof tile, although this identification is somewhat tenuous given the condition of the fragment.

5.5.2 The identification of a piece of CBM from [24/11] is equally uncertain. It is the approximate shape of a fragment of Roman brick, but underfired by Roman standards and in a fabric with moderate flint inclusions which is not particularly characteristic for CBM. If not Roman brick, this fragment could equally be a piece of fired clay, although if so an undiagnostic fragment. The Roman CBM, if Roman, most likely represents redeposited building debris rather than a primary deposit. The pieces of peg tile cannot be dated any more specifically than post-medieval, although an 18th century or earlier date is most probable.

5.6 The Fired Clay by Isa Benedetti-Whitton

5.6.1 Seventeen pieces of fired clay weighing 337g were collected from seven contexts: [1/7; [1/9]; [2/9]; [18/5]; [18/7]; [18/10] and [27/3]. This includes a piece of registered briquetage pedestal, RF <1>, found in [27/3]. All the fired clay has been recorded on standard recording forms and quantified by fabric, form, and weight.

5.6.2 The bulk of this small fired clay assemblage was undiagnostic and much of it clearly burnt, although whether intentionally or passively due to proximity to a heat source was not clear. Some mostly reduced fragments from [1/9] may be broken pieces of an object, since fragmented and abraded, and one of the non-pedestal fragments from [27/3] had a wattle impression, suggesting this and the associated undiagnostic fragments from the same context, in the same clay, to all be pieces of daub. Generally, however, with the exception of pedestal <1> this is an undiagnostic assemblage, and as the pedestal cannot be dated as a solo artefact none of the fired clay can provide any dating evidence.

5.7 The Metallurgical Remains by Luke Barber

- 5.7.1 Residues were recovered from the environmental samples from contexts [1/9] and [2/11]. That from [1/9] produced four tiny scraps of slightly vitrified fuel ash slag (<1g). The magnetic fraction from the same deposit produced burnt granules of ferruginous siltstone and sandstone (2g). Neither these, or the fuel ash slag is diagnostic of metal-working; both could have been produced from the heat of a domestic hearth. The magnetic fraction from [2/11] produced a further 3g of ferruginous stone granules.
- 5.7.2 The slag assemblage is not considered to hold any potential for further analysis and has been discarded.

5.8 The Geological Material by Luke Barber

- 5.8.1 Context [18/5] contained two pieces of weathered, unworked fine ferruginous Wealden sandstone (17g). The stone assemblage is not considered to hold any potential for further analysis and has been discarded.

5.9 The Bulk Metalwork by Trista Clifford

- 5.9.1 Six nail stems weighing 33g in total were hand collected from context [1/011], and bulk environmental sample <1> [2/011] produced a further six nail fragments weighing 6g. None are complete, deriving from square sectioned general purpose nails of probable post-medieval date. The assemblage is recommended for discard.

6.0 THE ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLES by Stacey Adams

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 Two samples were taken during excavations at Peelings Lane from pit fill [2/11] and ditch fill [1/9] for the recovery of environmental remains such as plant macrofossils, wood charcoal, fauna and mollusca. The following report details the preservation of the charred plant material and discusses its potential to inform on the diet, arable economy and local environment of the site as well as fuel selection and use.

6.2 Methods

6.2.1 The 40 litre flotation samples were processed by flotation tank with a 250µm mesh for retention of the flot and a 500µm mesh for the heavy residue, before being air dried. The heavy residues were passed through graded sieves of 8, 4 and 2mm and each fraction sorted for environmental and artefactual remains (Table 15). Artefacts recovered from the samples were distributed to specialists, and are incorporated in the relevant sections of this volume where they add further information to the existing finds assemblage. The flots were scanned, in their entirety, under a stereozoom microscope at 7-45x magnifications and their contents recorded (Table 16). Provisional identification of the charred remains was based on observations of gross morphology and surface cell structure and quantification was based on approximate number of individuals. Nomenclature follows Stace (1997) for wild species and Zohary and Hopf (1994) for cereals.

6.2.2 Charcoal fragments recovered from the heavy residues and flots were fractured along three planes (transverse, radial and tangential) according to standardised procedures (Gale & Cutler 2000). Specimens were viewed under a stereozoom microscope for initial grouping, and an incident light microscope at magnifications up to 500x to facilitate identification of the woody taxa present. Taxonomic identifications were assigned by comparing suites of anatomical characteristics visible with those documented in reference atlases (Hather 2000; Schoch *et al* 2004; Schweingruber 1990). Genera, family or group names have been given where anatomical differences between taxa are not significant enough to permit more detailed identification. Ten fragments were submitted for identification from samples with >3g of wood charcoal from the residues. Quantification and taxonomic identifications of charcoal are recorded in Table 15 and nomenclature follows Stace (1997).

6.3 Results

Samples <1> [2/011] and <2> [1/009].

6.3.1 The heavy residues contained fragments of pot, metal, fire-cracked flint, stone, burnt clay, industrial material and magnetic material. Charcoal fragments and charred plant macrofossils were the only environmental material recovered from the residues. Charcoal fragments were available in sufficient quantities (>3g from the >4mm fraction of the heavy residues) to be submitted for identification.

6.3.2 The flots contained between 60 and 80% uncharred material mostly of modern roots and a single recent buttercup (*Ranunculus* sp.) seed in pit fill [2/11]. Charcoal fragments were frequent within both of the flots and occasional worm capsules were noted.

Charred Plant Macrofossils

- 6.3.3 Charred plant macrofossils were identified within both of the flots from Peelings Lane and the overall preservation was moderate. Pit fill [2/11] contained only a single knotweed (*Persicaria* sp.) seed. Cereal caryopses were frequent in both the flot and residue from ditch fill [1/9] and were identified as wheat (*Triticum* sp.), barley (*Hordeum vulgare*) and oat (*Avena* sp.) as well as the potential presence of rye (*Secale cereale*). A number of the wheat grains were short and rounded and were subsequently recorded as the free-threshing variety. One barley grain retained the vertical indentations of the hulls indicating it was of the hulled variety. None of the more diagnostic cereal chaff was present within the flots thereby limiting the cereal identifications.
- 6.3.4 A sizeable amount of large and small wild grasses (Poaceae) was present in ditch fill [1/9] including that of rye-grass (*Lolium* sp.). A small number of sedges (*Carex* sp.) and docks (*Rumex* sp.) were also identified as well as those belonging to the carrot family (Apiaceae).

Charcoal

- 6.3.5 Overall preservation of the charcoal from Peelings Lane was good with all fragments identifiable to genus and occasionally species-level. A single fragment of oak (*Quercus* sp.) from pit [2/11] was affected by radial cracks, a feature often associated with the burning of fresh or damp wood (Keepax 1988).
- 6.3.6 Oak was the dominant taxon identified in pit fill [2/11] accompanied by charcoal fragments from the apple sub-family (Maloideae) which consist of apple (*Malus* sp.), pear (*Pyrus* sp.), whitebeam (*Sorbus* sp.) and hawthorn (*Crataegus* sp.). All of the fragments from pit fill [2/11] derived from round wood.
- 6.3.7 Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), oak, hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and field maple (*Acer campestre*) were identified from ditch fill [1/9]. One fragment from the ditch was recorded as hazel/ alder (*Corylus/ Alnus*) due to the absence of complete scalariform perforation plates and indistinct spiral thickenings within the vessels. Oak, hazel and field maple were all present as round wood whilst the fragments of beech all derived from large branches or stem wood.

6.4 Discussion

- 6.4.1 The cereal remains from Peelings Lane indicate the adoption of a mixed arable economy at the site with wheat, barley and possibly rye and oat cultivated. The accompanying weed seeds have the potential to inform on various aspects of the crop husbandry regime including growing season, cultivation methods and soil types if further identification is applied.
- 6.4.2 Wood fuel at Peelings Lane appears to be largely based on the collection of small branches and twigs indicated by the domination of round wood fragments. The wood of oak, beech, hazel, field maple and that of the apple sub-family all have excellent burning properties (Austin 2003) and were likely deliberately selected for this purpose. The presence of hazel indicates the exploitation of hedgerows and scrub whilst field maple is a light-loving taxon growing in open areas (Rodwell 1991; Polunin & Walters 1985). Beech was likely growing on the nearby chalklands of the South Downs whilst oak would have been collected from local woodland.

Table 15: Residue quantification (* = 1-10, ** = 11-50, *** = 51-250, **** = >250) and weights in grams

| Sample Number | Context | Context / Deposit Type | Sample Volume (L) | Charcoal >4mm | Weight (g) | Charcoal 2-4mm | Weight (g) | Charcoal Identifications | Other Charred Botanicals | Weight (g) | Other (eg. pot, flint etc.) (presence/ weight) |
|---------------|---------|------------------------|-------------------|---------------|------------|----------------|------------|---|--------------------------|------------|---|
| 1 | 2/11 | Pit | 40 | *** | 13 | **** | 5 | <i>Quercus</i> sp. (8) [RW:8, RC:1] Maloideae (2) [RW:2] | | | Pot (* /2g) FCF (* /6g) Metal (* /6g) Stone (* /<1g) Mag.Mat. >2mm (** /2g) Mag.Mat. <2mm (***/<1g) |
| 2 | 1/9 | Ditch | 40 | *** | 36 | *** | 8 | <i>Fagus sylvatica</i> (4) <i>Quercus</i> sp. (3) [RW:1] <i>Corylus avellana</i> (1) [RW:1] <i>Corylus/ Alnus</i> (1) [RW:1] <i>Acer campestre</i> (1) [RW:1] | ** | <1 | Pot (* /10g) Ind.Mat. (* /<1g) B.Clay (* /7g) FCF (* /30g) Mag.Mat. >2mm (** /2g) Mag.Mat. <2mm (***/1g) |

Table 16: Flot quantification (* = 1-10, ** = 11-50, *** = 51-250, **** = >250). Preservation (+ = good, ++ = moderate, +++ = good)

| Sample Number | Context | Weight (g) | Flot Volume (ml) | Uncharred (%) | Seeds Uncharred | Charcoal >4mm | Charcoal 2-4mm | Charcoal <2mm | Crop Seeds Charred | Identifications | Preservation | Weed Seeds Charred | Identifications | Preservation | Insects, Fly Pupae etc. |
|---------------|---------|------------|------------------|---------------|-------------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|--------------------|--|--------------|--------------------|--|--------------|-------------------------|
| 1 | 2/11 | 5 | 40 | 60 | <i>Ranunculus</i> sp. * | ** | *** | **** | | | | * | <i>Persicaria</i> sp. (1) | ++ | * |
| 2 | 1/9 | 18 | 110 | 80 | | ** | *** | **** | *** | FTW <i>Triticum</i> sp. <i>Cerealia</i> indet. <i>Avena</i> sp. cf. <i>Secale cereale</i> <i>Hordeum vulgare</i> (hulled) | ++ | *** | <i>Carex</i> sp. Poaceae (small) Apiaceae <i>Lolium</i> sp. Poaceae (large) <i>Rumex</i> sp. | ++ | * |

7.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Overview of stratigraphic sequence

- 7.1.1 The geology varied in height between c. 24.5m OD in the west adjacent to Hailsham Road, rising to c. 34m OD on top of Blackness Hill. The natural clay geology varied from an orange sticky clay to a gravellier clay. Lenses of manganese were frequent. These variations were localised and did not form any distinctive areas or patterns.
- 7.1.2 The archaeological features identified broadly divide, both chronologically and spatially, into two areas. At the bottom of the hill, adjacent to Hailsham Road, were medieval ditches and on the flat top of Blackness Hill were later Iron Age to early Roman enclosures. Most of the features identified were ditches, although some small pits were found, and significantly a pit containing possible salt-working debris in Trench 27.
- 7.1.3 The evaluation trenching demonstrated the apparent ineffectualness of geophysical survey on this particular type of geology. The trenching exercise was able to identify cut archaeological features, although the variations in the geology, particularly the manganese staining, created initial confusion in identification, which could only be resolved by hand excavation. Despite the unsuccessful geophysical survey, the confidence in the evaluation trench findings are high, as the features were clearly visible, and on excavation produced both finds and environmental remains.

7.2 Deposit survival and existing impacts

- 7.2.1 While the archaeological features may have suffered some horizontal truncation from ploughing, there was no evidence of any other forms of truncation present. The features were located at approximately 24.5m OD adjacent to Hailsham Road and at 34m OD on top of Blackness Hill, sealed by between c. 0.3m and 0.4m of overburden. No colluvium was observed on the western slope of the hill.

7.3 Discussion of archaeological remains by period

Later Iron Age/Early Roman

- 7.3.1 The occupation on top of Blackness Hill appears to represent a succession of enclosures, beginning in the Middle Iron Age and continuing until the early Roman period (Fig. 13). The ditches were mostly aligned in a rectilinear pattern on north-east to south-west and north-west to south-east alignments. While there were no large finds assemblages recovered, these enclosures may represent periodic activity, utilising the resources of the adjacent Willingdon Levels.
- 7.3.2 In the late prehistoric and Roman period, the Willingdon Levels were still a mosaic wetland and probably extended close to the southern edge of Blackness Hill. While less apparent today, as one of the highest points in the area, Blackness Hill formerly had panoramic views across the levels, extending from the South Downs in the west to modern day Hastings in the east.

- 7.3.3 The levels would have offered opportunities for exploiting resources, including fishing, wild-fowling, as well as pasture on the salt-marshes. Another important resource was salt, which could be extracted from brine by evaporation. The evidence from pit [27/4] and the salt-affected pottery sherds from ditch fill [18/9] suggest that this process was being undertaken in the vicinity of Blackness Hill.
- 7.3.4 The importance of salt-working to the former communities living next to the Willingdon Levels is increasingly being recognised in the archaeological record. In particular, a recent excavation at Pocock's Field, c. 3km to the south-west, identified a large-scale enclosed Early Iron Age salt-working site (Dawkes forthcoming). The evidence from Blackness Hill is important in being one of the first examples of Late Iron Age/early Roman salt-working identified adjacent to the levels.

Medieval (Late 12th to 13th century)

- 7.3.5 Medieval ditches identified in Trenches 1 and 2 appear to represent some form of occupation related to the use of Hailsham Road as a routeway in the medieval period. The exact nature is uncertain, but they may represent field boundaries or an enclosed occupation.
- 7.3.6 A single ditch ([29/4]) of likely medieval date was also identified on top of Blackness Hill. This was mostly likely contemporary with the activity recorded in Trenches 1 and 2, and also suggests that some of the other, undated archaeological features on the hill-top are also medieval.

7.4 Potential impact on archaeological remains

- 7.4.1 While the exact nature of the re-development is to be decided, due to the shallowness of the overburden, groundworks undertaken in the vicinity of Trenches 1-2, and Trenches 18, 23-29, are almost certain to impact on the archaeological horizon.
- 7.4.2 Areas of potential archaeological significance have been shown on Figure 14. These may require a mitigation strategy should planning consent be granted. It may be required to extend these areas of mitigation should significant archaeological remains extend beyond the anticipated boundaries.

7.5 Consideration of research aims

- 7.5.1 The general research aims have all been achieved, with the date, character, form and function of the archaeological remains discerned as far as possible. In addition, this report fulfils the site specific research aims (see section 2.3.2).
- 7.5.2 How the results from the site inform on the areas of research identified in SERF, can be considered:
- Communications: There was no evidence of the Roman road associated with Peelings Lane, proposed by Margary (see section 2.3.1; SERF Research Agenda – Roman Period Para 9). However, the occupation identified in Trenches 1 and 2 may relate to the use of

Hailsham Road in the medieval period (SERF Research Agenda – Medieval Period Part A Para 4).

- Settlement: The investigation succeeded in identifying occupation or minor settlement of later Iron Age/early Roman date on top of Blackness Hill. Significantly, this occupation was, at some point, associated with salt-working, and represents uncommon evidence for this process close to the Willingdon Levels for this period (SERF Research Agenda – Historic Landscape Para 4)

7.6 Updated Research Aims

- 7.6.1 The evaluation results have raised several potential research priorities should planning consent be granted.

What is the nature and function of the Middle Iron Age or earliest phase of activity on top of Blackness Hill?

When was salt-working undertaken? What processes can be identified, for instance were there any primary evaporation hearths or was this site more typical of the secondary processing activities more usually identified inland?

Can any other resource exploitation of the Willingdon Levels be identified in the archaeological record? Can the proximity of the wetland be estimated?

7.7 Conclusions

- 7.7.1 The 32 evaluation trenches identified two areas of archaeological remains, mostly comprising pits and ditches. The areas divide both spatially and chronologically: medieval occupation adjacent to Hailsham Road in the west (Trenches 1 and 2) and later Iron Age/Early Roman occupation on top of Blackness Hill in the east (Trenches 18, 23-29; Fig. 13). Notably, evidence of salt-working, a resource available in the nearby Willingdon Levels, was identified in the latter area. Elsewhere, the other trenches were devoid of archaeological finds and features.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ASE would like to thank Archaeological Risk Management and The KKH Banner Discretionary Settlement for commissioning the work and for their assistance throughout the project, and Greg Chuter, County Archaeologist and Chris Greatorex, Assistant County Archaeologist, East Sussex County Council for their guidance and monitoring.

HER Summary

| | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|-------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|-------|
| HER enquiry no. | 512/16 | | | | | |
| Site code | PEE16 | | | | | |
| Project code | 161118 | | | | | |
| Planning reference | - | | | | | |
| Site address | Land at Peelings Lane, Stone Cross, East Sussex | | | | | |
| District/Borough | Eastbourne | | | | | |
| NGR (12 figures) | 561690 104580 | | | | | |
| Geology | Weald Clay | | | | | |
| Fieldwork type | Eval | Excav | WB | HBR | Survey | Other |
| Date of fieldwork | 13 th and 21 st February 2017 | | | | | |
| Sponsor/client | Archaeological Risk Management on behalf of The KKH Banner Discretionary Settlement | | | | | |
| Project manager | Neil Griffin | | | | | |
| Project supervisor | Giles Dawkes | | | | | |
| Period summary | Palaeolithic | Mesolithic | Neolithic | Bronze Age | Iron Age | |
| | Roman | Anglo-Saxon | Medieval | Post-Medieval | Other | |
| Project summary (100 word max) | Archaeology South-East undertook 32 evaluation trenches, all measuring 30m by 2.2m. Two areas of archaeological remains were identified, mostly comprising of pits and ditches. The areas divide both spatially and chronologically with medieval occupation adjacent to Hailsham Road in the west (Trenches 1 and 2) and later Iron age/early Roman occupation on top of Blackness Hill in the east (Trenches 18, 23-29). Notably rare evidence of salt-working, a resource available in the nearby Willingdon Levels, was identified in the latter area. Elsewhere, the other trenches were devoid of archaeological finds and features. | | | | | |

Finds summary

| Find type | Material | Period | Quantity |
|------------------|----------------------------------|--|-----------------|
| Ceramics | Pottery | Prehistoric, Roman, medieval | 1 box |
| CBM | Tile | Roman, post-medieval | 1 box |
| Fired Clay | Pedestal, undiagnostic fragments | Undated | 1 bag |
| Environmental | Residues and flot | Prehistoric, Roman, medieval and undated | 1 box |
| Flint | flintwork | Prehistoric | 1 bag |

OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-277735

Project details

Project name Peelings Lane

Short description of the project

This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation carried out by Archaeology South-East at land at Peelings Lane, Stone Cross, East Sussex between 13th and 21st February 2017. The fieldwork was commissioned by Archaeological Risk Management on behalf of their client, The KKH Banner Discretionary Settlement, in advance of a proposed residential development. The 32 evaluation trenches identified two areas of archaeological remains, mostly comprising of pits and ditches. The areas divide both spatially and chronologically with medieval occupation adjacent to Hailsham Road in the west (Trenches 1 and 2) and later Iron age/early Roman occupation on top of Blackness Hill in the east (Trenches 18, 23-29). Notably rare evidence of salt-working, a resource available in the nearby Willingdon Levels, was identified in the latter area. Elsewhere, the other trenches were devoid of archaeological finds and features.

Project dates Start: 13-02-2017 End: 21-02-2017

Previous/future work Yes / Yes

Any associated project reference codes PEE16 - Sitecode

Any associated project reference codes 161118 - Contracting Unit No.

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status None

Current Land use Cultivated Land 2 - Operations to a depth less than 0.25m

Monument type PIT Iron Age

Monument type DITCH Roman

Monument type DITCH Medieval

Significant Finds POTTERY Iron Age

Significant Finds POTTERY Roman

Significant Finds POTTERY Medieval

Methods & techniques "Sample Trenches", "Targeted Trenches"

Development type Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.)

Prompt Planning condition

Position in the planning process Pre-application

Project location

Country England

Site location EAST SUSSEX EASTBOURNE EASTBOURNE Land at Peelings Lane, Stone Cross, BN24 5FB, East Sussex

Postcode BN24 5FB

Study area 3 Hectares

Site coordinates TQ 56169 10458 50.871911477587 0.219815656748 50 52 18 N 000 13 11 E Point

Lat/Long Datum Unknown

Height OD / Depth Min: 24m Max: 34m

Project creators

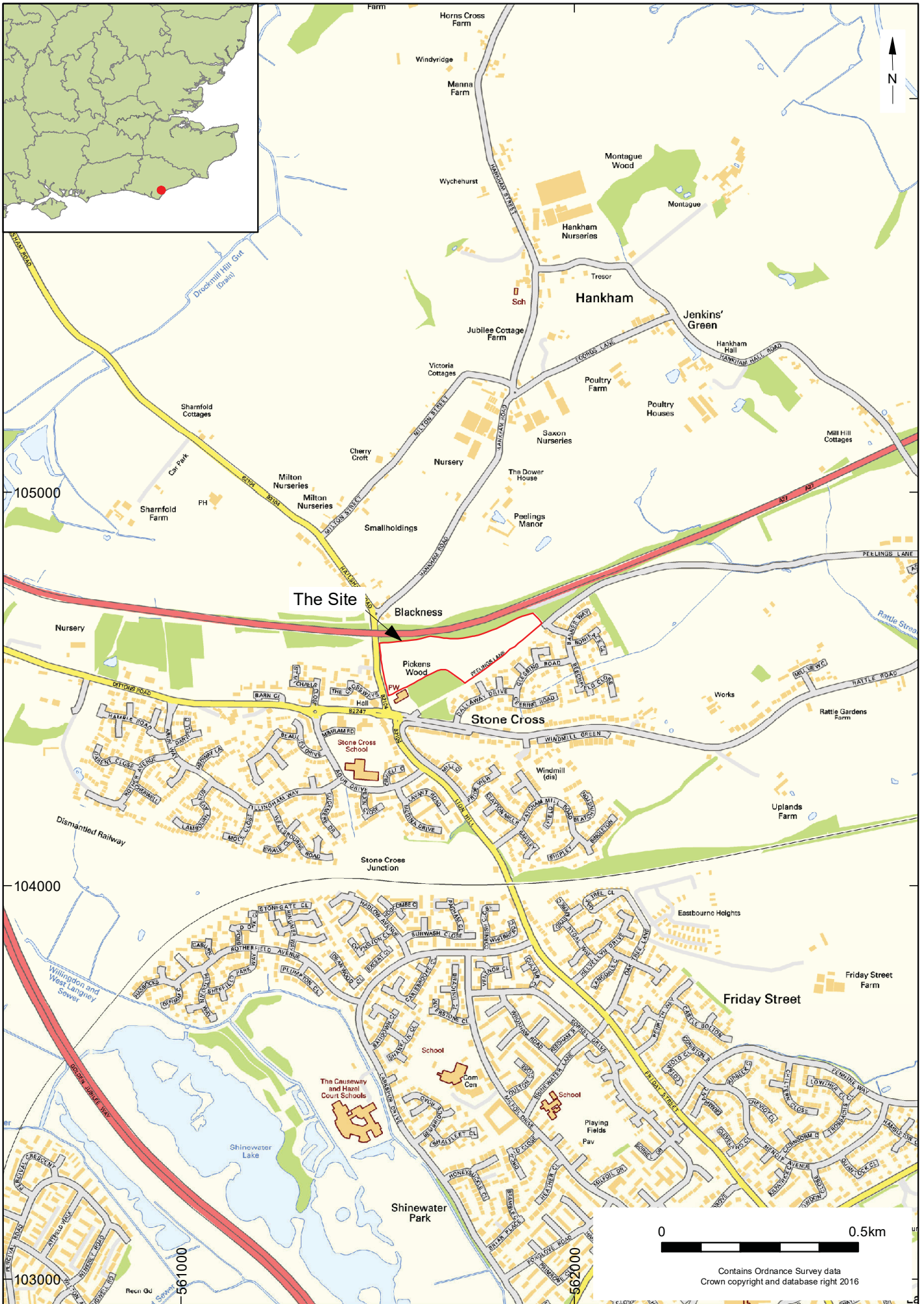
Name of Organisation Archaeology South-East

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Project brief originator | East Sussex County Council |
| Project design originator | East Sussex County Council |
| Project director/manager | Neil Griffin |
| Project supervisor | Giles Dawkes |
| Type of sponsor/funding body | Private |
| Project archives | |
| Physical Archive recipient | Local Museum |
| Physical Contents | "Ceramics", "Environmental", "Glass", "Worked stone/lithics" |
| Digital Archive recipient | Local Museum |
| Digital Contents | "Ceramics", "Environmental", "Stratigraphic", "Survey", "Worked stone/lithics" |
| Digital Media available | "Database", "Spreadsheets", "Survey", "Text" |
| Paper Archive recipient | Local Museum |
| Paper Contents | "Ceramics", "Environmental", "Glass", "Stratigraphic", "Survey", "Worked stone/lithics" |
| Paper Media available | "Context sheet", "Correspondence", "Map", "Miscellaneous Material", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report", "Section", "Survey", "Unpublished Text" |
| Project bibliography | |
| 1 | |
| Publication type | Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript) |
| Title | An Archaeological Evaluation at Land at Peelings Lane, Stone Cross, BN24 5FB, East Sussex |
| Author(s)/Editor(s) | Giles Dawkes |
| Other bibliographic details | 2017080 |
| Date | 2017 |
| Issuer or publisher | Archaeology South-East |
| Place of issue or publication | Portslade |
| Description | grey report |
| Entered by | Giles Dawkes (giles.dawkes@ucl.ac.uk) |
| Entered on | 28 February 2017 |

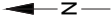
Appendix 1: List of recorded contexts in archaeologically negative trenches

| Context | Area | Type | Interpretation | Parent | Dimensions |
|---------|------|---------|----------------|--------|---------------------|
| 3/001 | T3 | Layer | Topsoil | | L: T, W: T, D: 0.12 |
| 3/002 | T3 | Deposit | Subsoil | 3/002 | L: T, W: T, D: 0.16 |
| 3/003 | T3 | Deposit | Natural clay | 3/003 | |
| 4/001 | T4 | Layer | Topsoil | | L: T, W: T, D: 0.11 |
| 4/002 | T4 | Deposit | Subsoil | 4/002 | L: T, W: T, D: 0.18 |
| 4/003 | T4 | Deposit | Natural clay | 4/003 | |
| 5/001 | T5 | Layer | Topsoil | | L: T, W: T, D: 0.12 |
| 5/002 | T5 | Deposit | Subsoil | 5/002 | L: T, W: T, D: 0.19 |
| 5/003 | T5 | Deposit | Natural clay | 5/003 | |
| 6/001 | T6 | Layer | Topsoil | | L: T, W: T, D: 0.10 |
| 6/002 | T6 | Deposit | Subsoil | 6/002 | L: T, W: T, D: 0.17 |
| 6/003 | T6 | Deposit | Natural clay | 6/003 | |
| 7/001 | T7 | Layer | Topsoil | | L: T, W: T, D: 0.21 |
| 7/002 | T7 | Deposit | Subsoil | 7/002 | L: T, W: T, D: 0.21 |
| 7/003 | T7 | Deposit | Natural clay | 7/003 | |
| 8/001 | T8 | Layer | Topsoil | | L: T, W: T, D: 0.10 |
| 8/002 | T8 | Deposit | Subsoil | 8/002 | L: T, W: T, D: 0.17 |
| 8/003 | T8 | Deposit | Natural clay | 8/003 | |
| 9/001 | T9 | Layer | Topsoil | | L: T, W: T, D: 0.12 |
| 9/002 | T9 | Deposit | Subsoil | 9/002 | L: T, W: T, D: 0.26 |
| 9/003 | T9 | Deposit | Natural clay | 9/003 | |
| 10/001 | T10 | Layer | Topsoil | | L: T, W: T, D: 0.15 |
| 10/002 | T10 | Deposit | Subsoil | 10/002 | L: T, W: T, D: 0.18 |
| 10/003 | T10 | Deposit | Natural clay | 10/003 | |
| 11/001 | T11 | Layer | Topsoil | | L: T, W: T, D: 0.13 |
| 11/002 | T11 | Deposit | Subsoil | 11/002 | L: T, W: T, D: 0.17 |
| 11/003 | T11 | Deposit | Natural clay | 11/003 | |
| 12/001 | T12 | Layer | Topsoil | | L: T, W: T, D: 0.13 |
| 12/002 | T12 | Deposit | Subsoil | 12/002 | L: T, W: T, D: 0.15 |
| 12/003 | T12 | Deposit | Natural clay | 12/003 | |
| 13/001 | T13 | Layer | Topsoil | | L: T, W: T, D: 0.18 |
| 13/002 | T13 | Deposit | Subsoil | 13/002 | L: T, W: T, D: 0.17 |
| 13/003 | T13 | Deposit | Natural clay | 13/003 | |
| 14/001 | T14 | Layer | Topsoil | | L: T, W: T, D: 0.13 |
| 14/002 | T14 | Deposit | Subsoil | 14/002 | L: T, W: T, D: 0.20 |
| 14/003 | T14 | Deposit | Natural clay | 14/003 | |
| 15/001 | T15 | Layer | Topsoil | | L: T, W: T, D: 0.12 |
| 15/002 | T15 | Deposit | Subsoil | 15/002 | L: T, W: T, D: 0.15 |
| 15/003 | T15 | Deposit | Natural clay | 15/003 | |

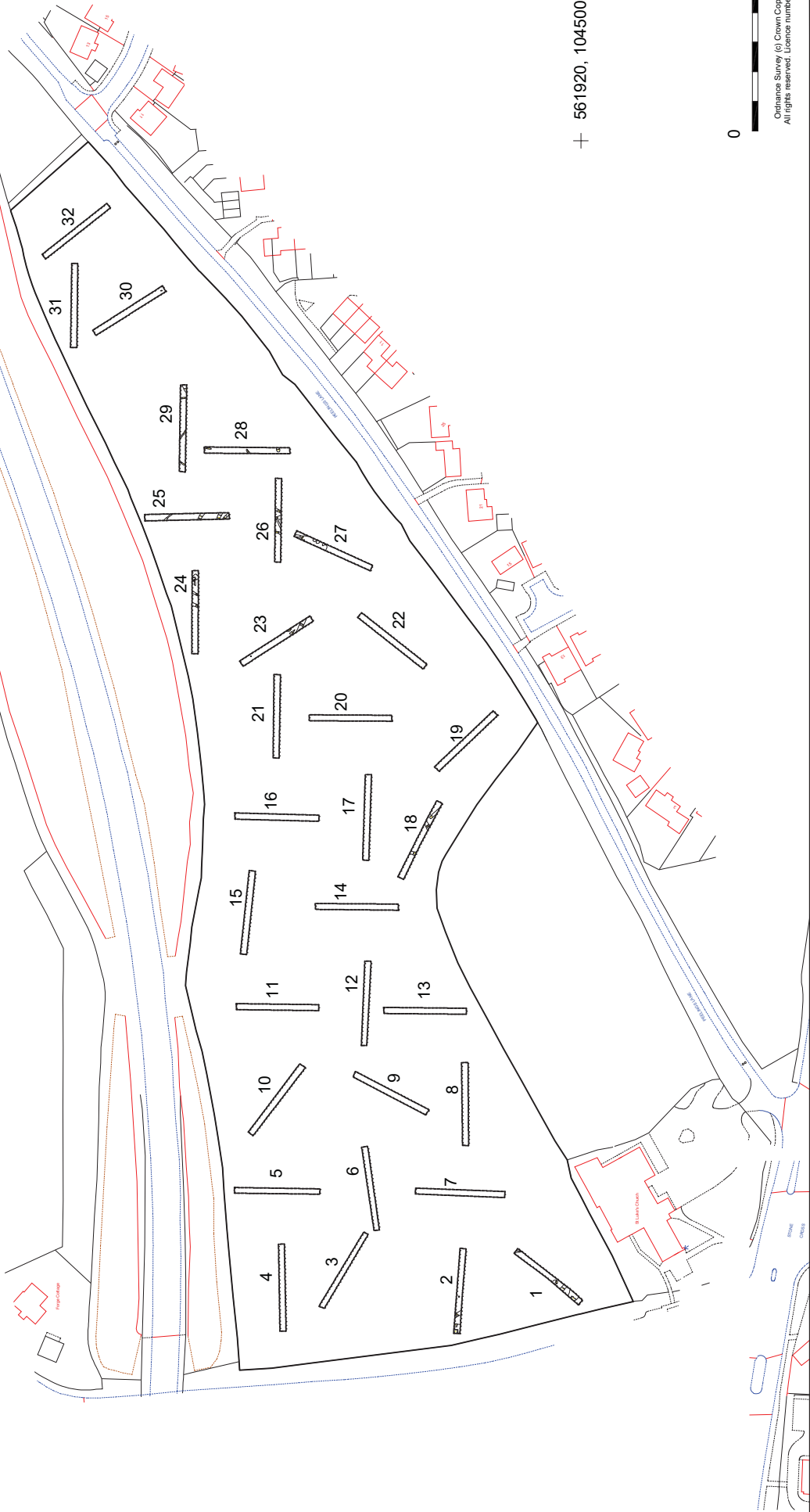
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|--------|-----|---------|--------------|--------|---------------------|
| 16/001 | T16 | Layer | Topsoil | | L: T, W: T, D: 0.13 |
| 16/002 | T16 | Deposit | Subsoil | 16/002 | L: T, W: T, D: 0.12 |
| 16/003 | T16 | Deposit | Natural clay | 16/003 | |
| 17/001 | T17 | Layer | Topsoil | | L: T, W: T, D: 0.10 |
| 17/002 | T17 | Deposit | Subsoil | 17/002 | L: T, W: T, D: 0.12 |
| 17/003 | T17 | Deposit | Natural clay | 17/003 | |
| 19/001 | T19 | Layer | Topsoil | | L: T, W: T, D: 0.11 |
| 19/002 | T19 | Deposit | Subsoil | 19/002 | L: T, W: T, D: 0.12 |
| 19/003 | T19 | Deposit | Natural clay | 19/003 | |
| 20/001 | T20 | Layer | Topsoil | | L: T, W: T, D: 0.14 |
| 20/002 | T20 | Deposit | Subsoil | 20/002 | L: T, W: T, D: 0.17 |
| 20/003 | T20 | Deposit | Natural clay | 20/003 | |
| 21/001 | T21 | Layer | Topsoil | | L: T, W: T, D: 0.15 |
| 21/002 | T21 | Deposit | Subsoil | 21/002 | L: T, W: T, D: 0.14 |
| 21/003 | T21 | Deposit | Natural clay | 21/003 | |
| 22/001 | T22 | Layer | Topsoil | | L: T, W: T, D: 0.14 |
| 22/002 | T22 | Deposit | Subsoil | 22/002 | L: T, W: T, D: 0.13 |
| 22/003 | T22 | Deposit | Natural clay | 22/003 | |
| 30/001 | T30 | Layer | Topsoil | | L: T, W: T, D: 0.27 |
| 30/002 | T30 | Deposit | Natural clay | 30/002 | |
| 31/001 | T31 | Layer | Topsoil | | L: T, W: T, D: 0.25 |
| 31/002 | T31 | Deposit | Natural clay | 31/002 | |
| 32/001 | T32 | Layer | Topsoil | | L: T, W: T, D: 0.24 |
| 32/002 | T32 | Deposit | Natural clay | 32/002 | L: T, W: T |



| | | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------|---|--|--------|
| © Archaeology South-East | | Land adjacent to Peelings Lane, Stone Cross | | Fig. 1 |
| Project Ref: 161118 | March 2017 | Site location | | |
| Report Ref: 2017080 | Drawn by: JLR | | | |



+ 561490, 104720



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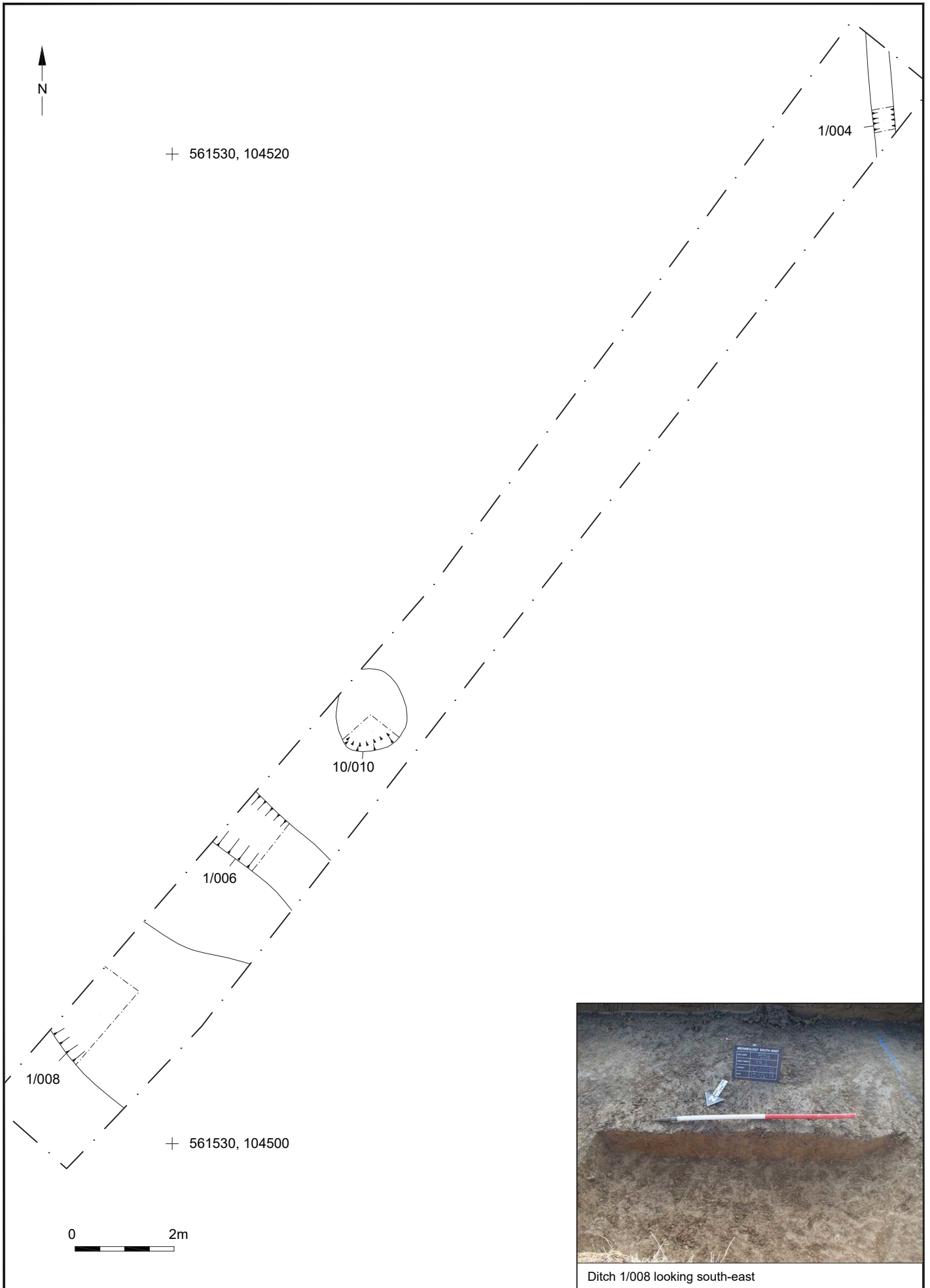
March 2017

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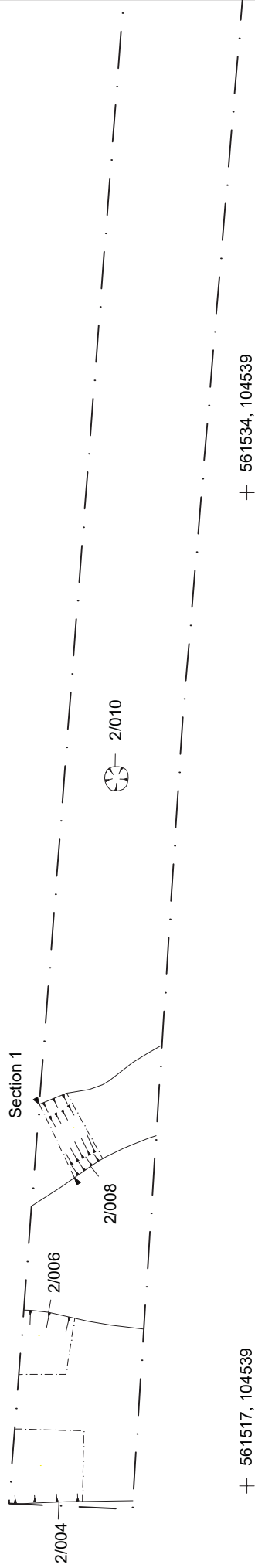
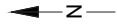
Land at Peelings Lane, Stone Cross

Trench location

Fig. 2

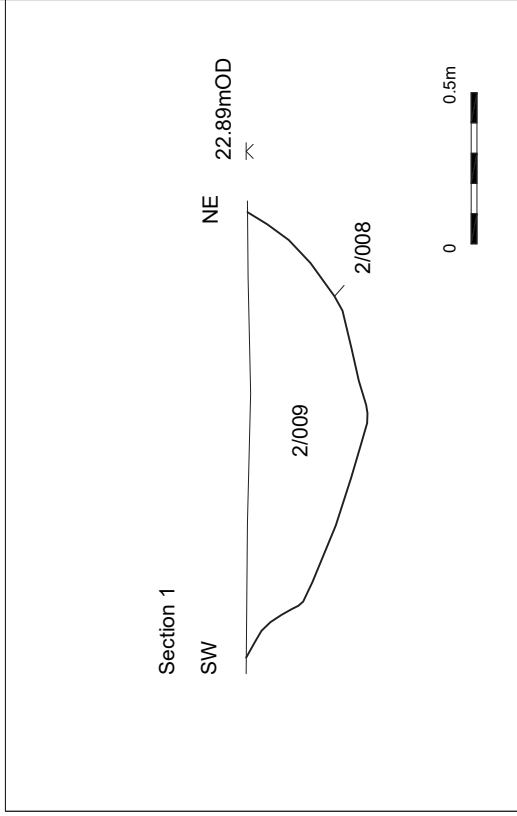


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|--------------------------|---------------|------------------------------------|--------|
| © Archaeology South-East | | Land at Peelings Lane, Stone Cross | Fig. 3 |
| Project Ref: 161118 | March 2017 | Trench 1 plan and photograph | |
| Report Ref: 2017080 | Drawn by: JLR | | |



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+ 561534, 104539



Section 1

SW

NE

22.89mOD

2/009

2/008

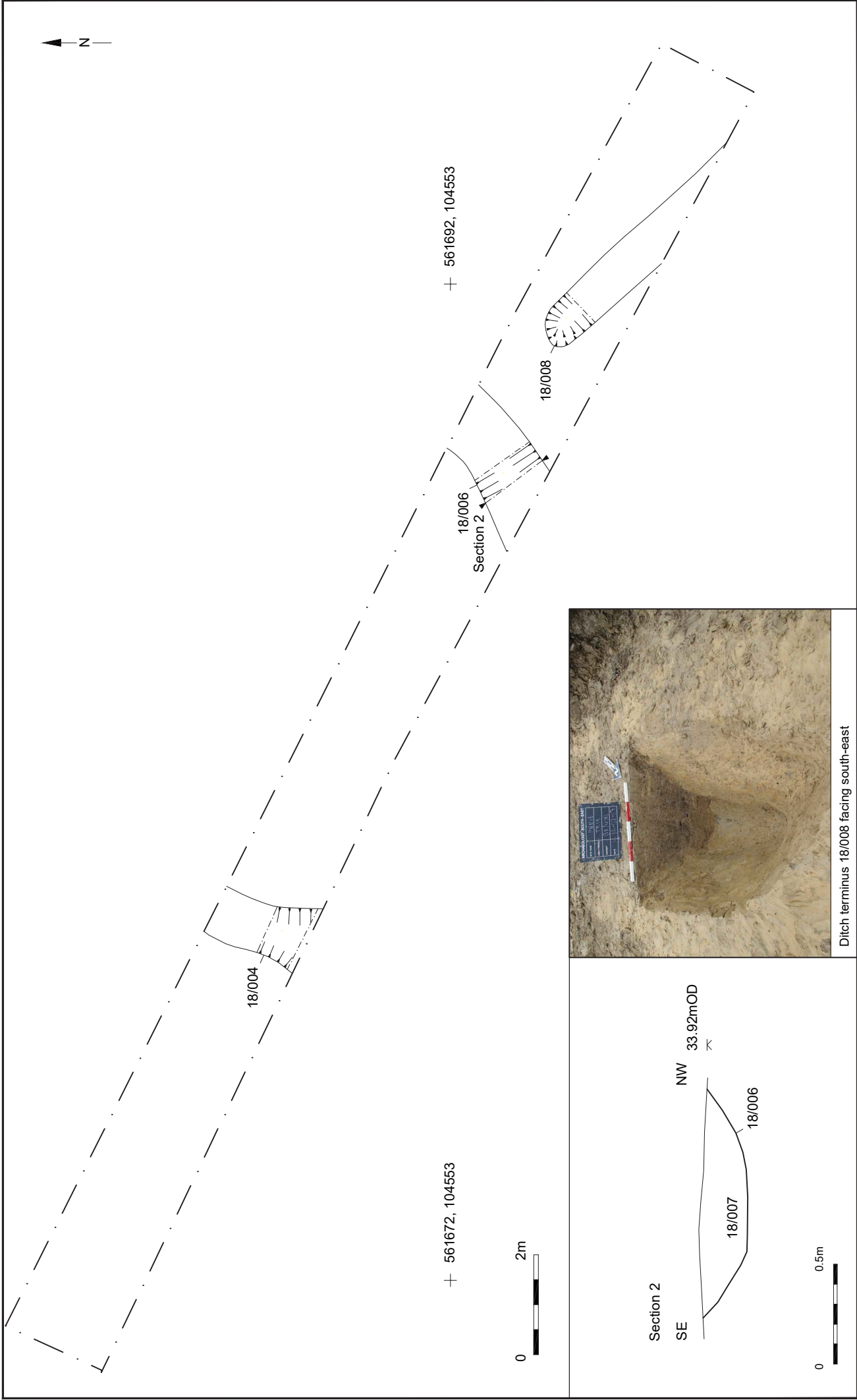


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|--------------------------|---------------|
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Land at Peelings Lane, Stone Cross

Trench 2 plan and section

Fig. 4



Ditch terminus 18/008 facing south-east

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Land at Peelings Lane, Stone Cross

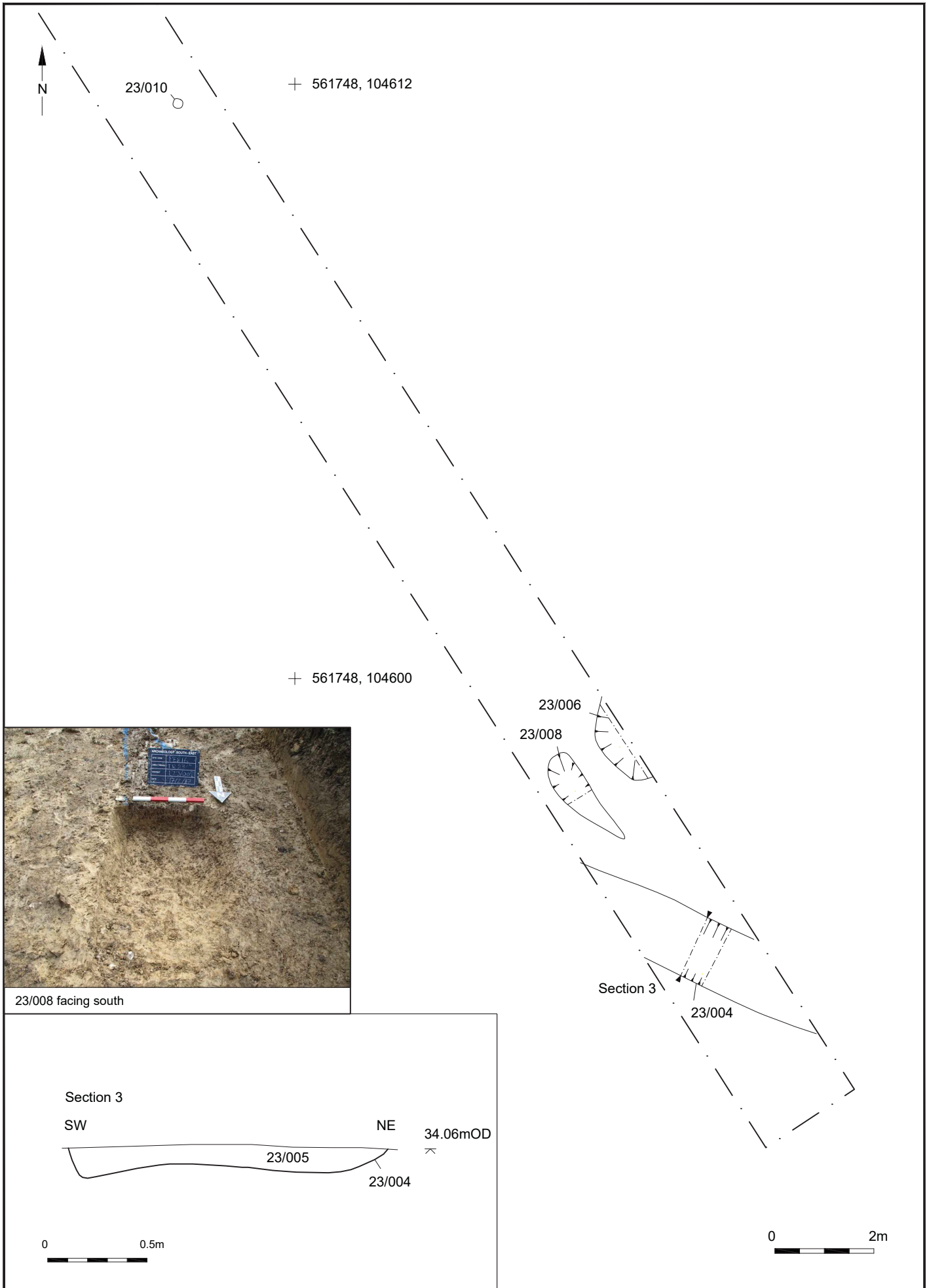
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March 2017

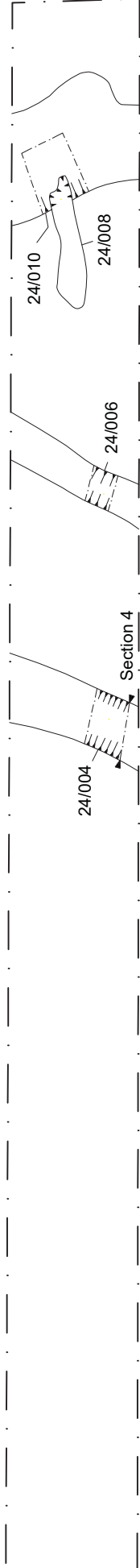
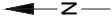
Trench 18 plan, section and photograph

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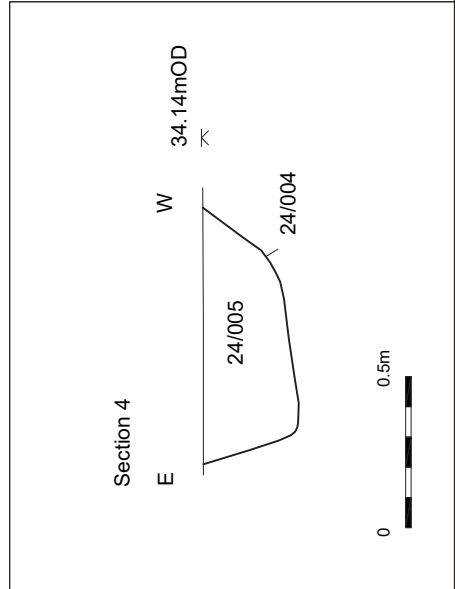


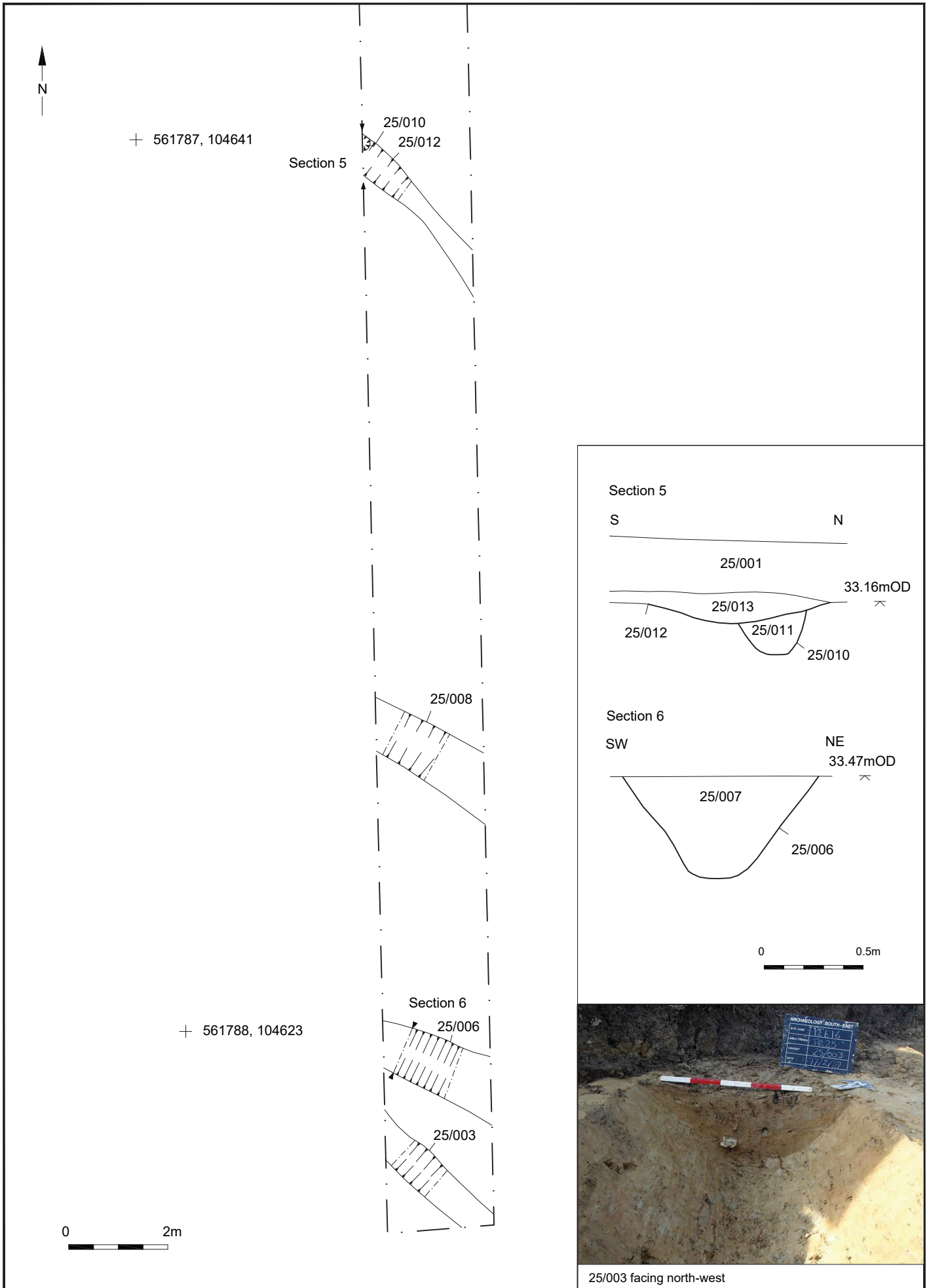
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| © Archaeology South-East | | Land at Peelings Lane, Stone Cross | Fig. 6 |
| Project Ref: 161118 | March 2017 | Trench 23 plan, section and photograph | |
| Report Ref: 2017080 | Drawn by: JLR | | |



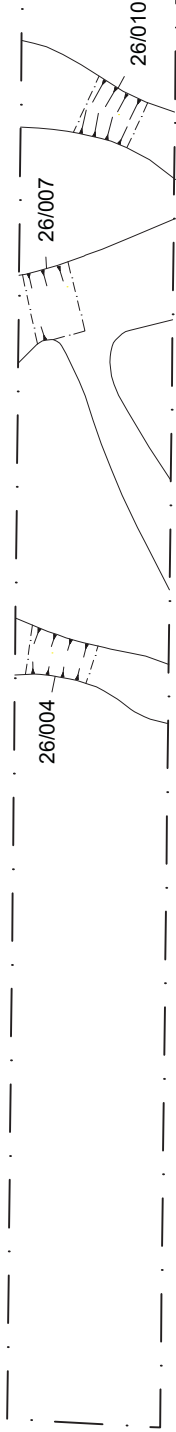
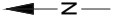
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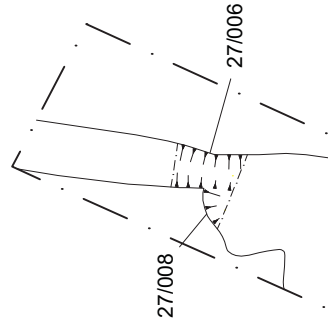


| | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------|---|--------|
| © Archaeology South-East | | Land at Peelings Lane, Stone Cross | Fig. 8 |
| Project Ref: 161118 | March 2017 | Trench 25 plan, sections and photograph | |
| Report Ref: 2017080 | Drawn by: JLR | | |



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March 2017

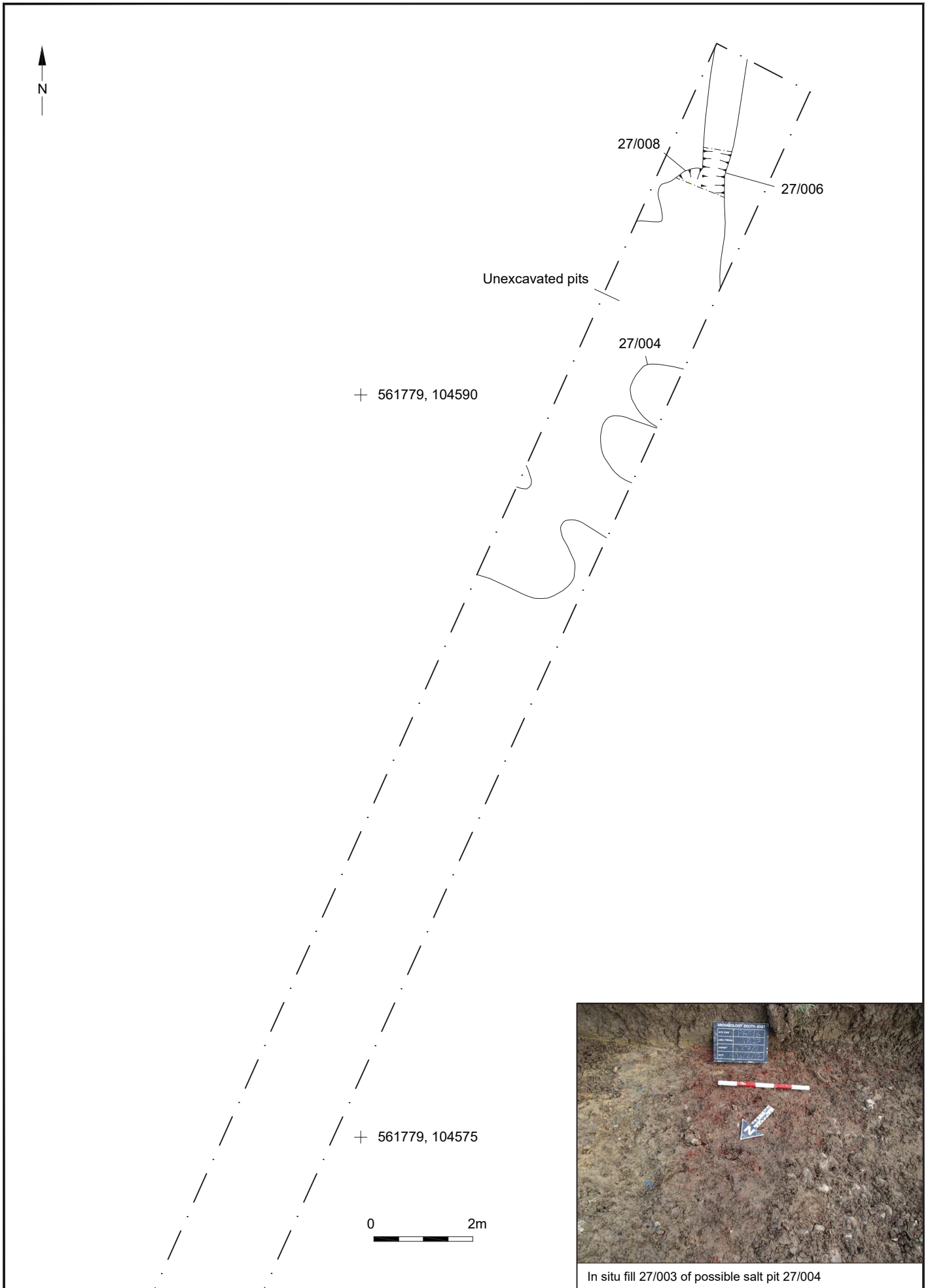
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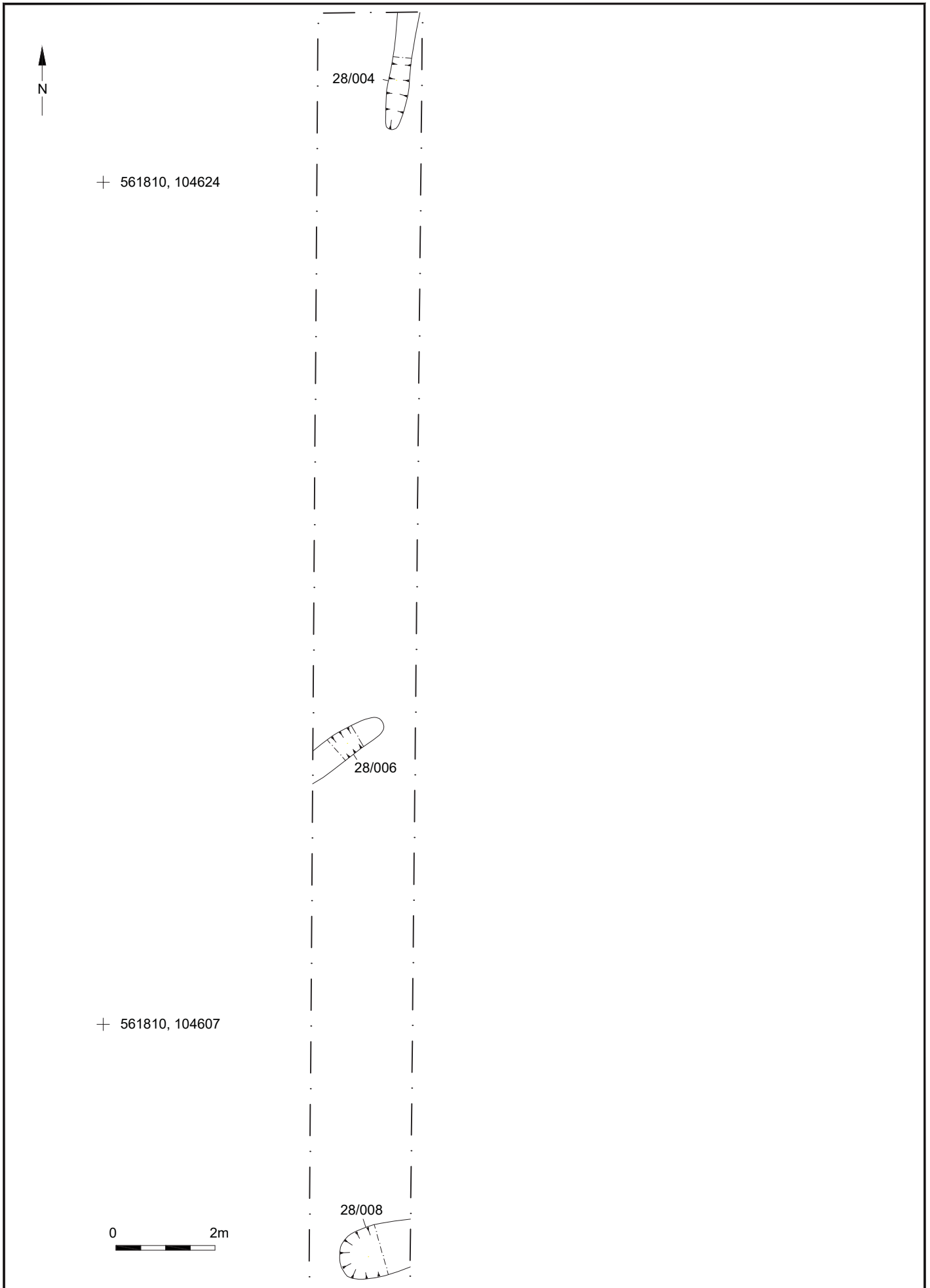
Land at Peelings Lane, Stone Cross

Trench 26 plan

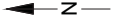
Fig. 9



| | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------|------------------------------------|---------|
| © Archaeology South-East | | Land at Peelings Lane, Stone Cross | Fig. 10 |
| Project Ref: 161118 | March 2017 | Trench 27 plan and photograph | |
| Report Ref: 2017080 | Drawn by: JLR | | |

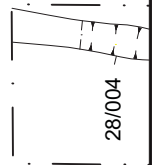
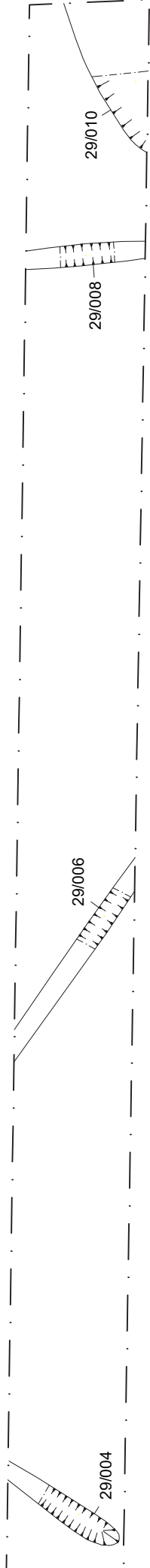


| | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------|------------------------------------|---------|
| © Archaeology South-East | | Land at Peelings Lane, Stone Cross | Fig. 11 |
| Project Ref: 161118 | March 2017 | Trench 28 plan | |
| Report Ref: 2017080 | Drawn by: JLR | | |



+ 561811, 104638

+ 561832, 104638



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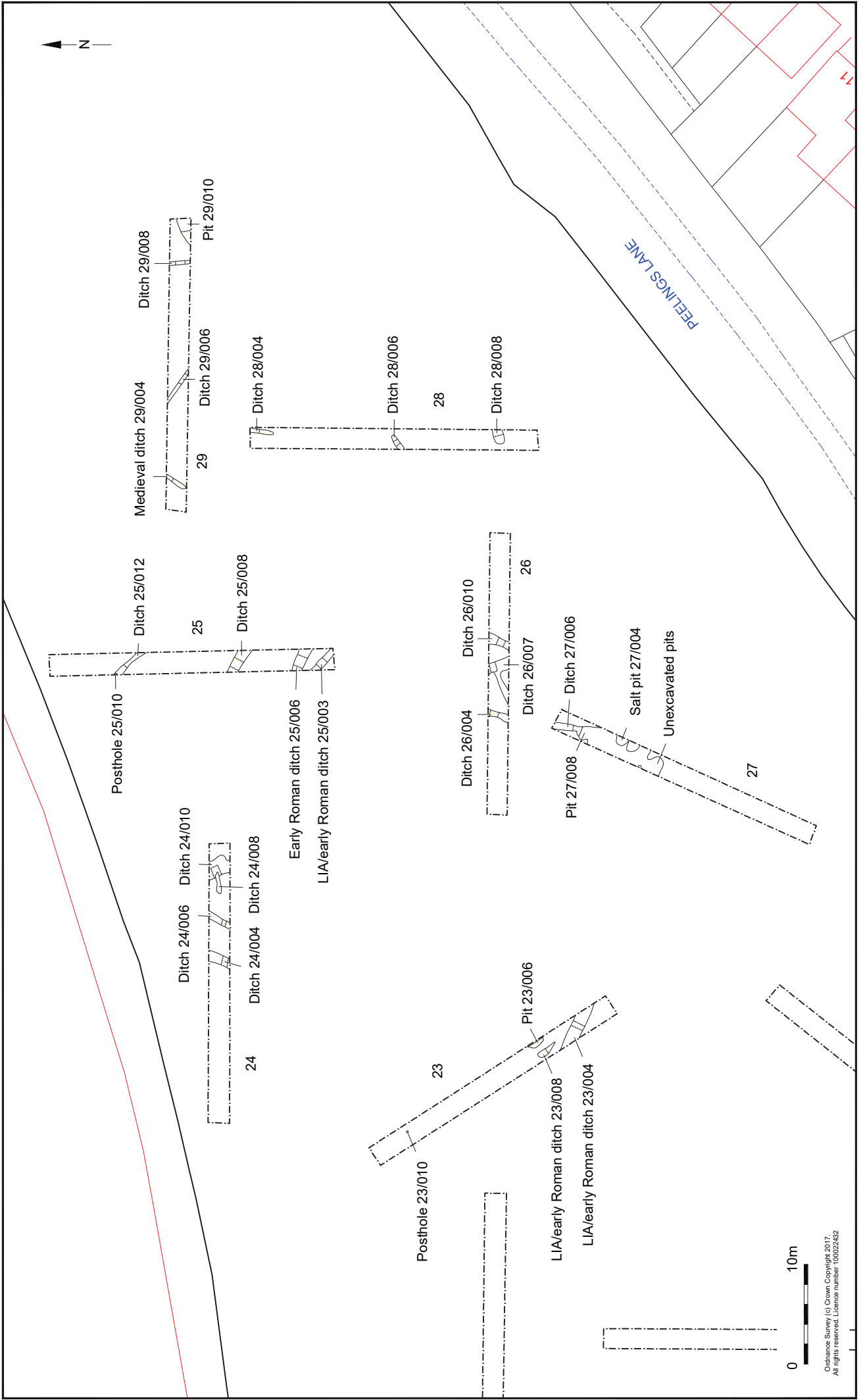
Report Ref: 2017080

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Land at Peelings Lane, Stone Cross

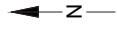
Trench 29 plan

Fig. 12

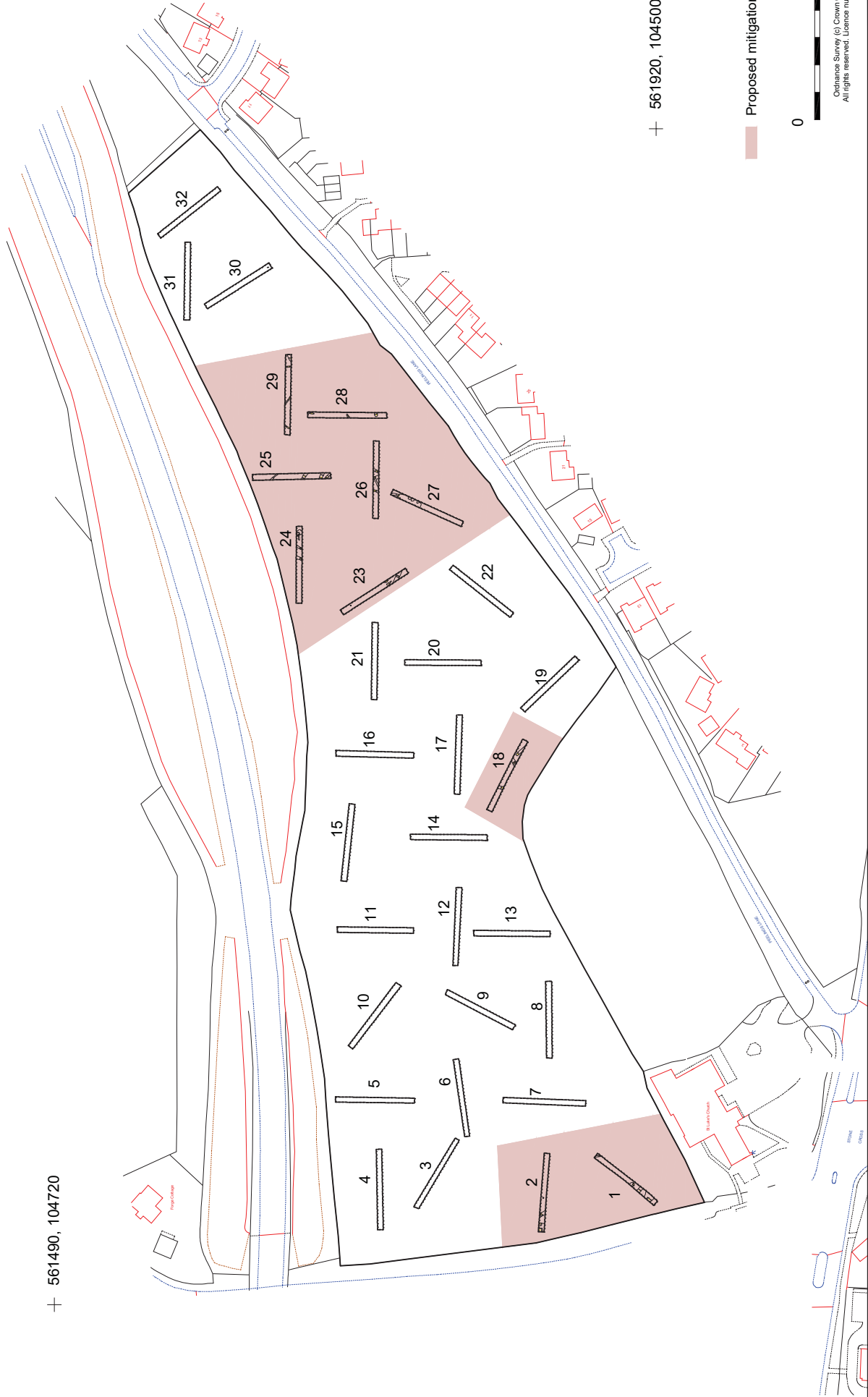


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 Project Ref: 161118 March 2017
 Report Ref: 2017080 Drawn by: JLR

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Proposed mitigation area

0 50m

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Land at Peelings Lane, Stone Cross

Project Ref: 161118

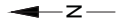
March 2017

Report Ref: 2017080

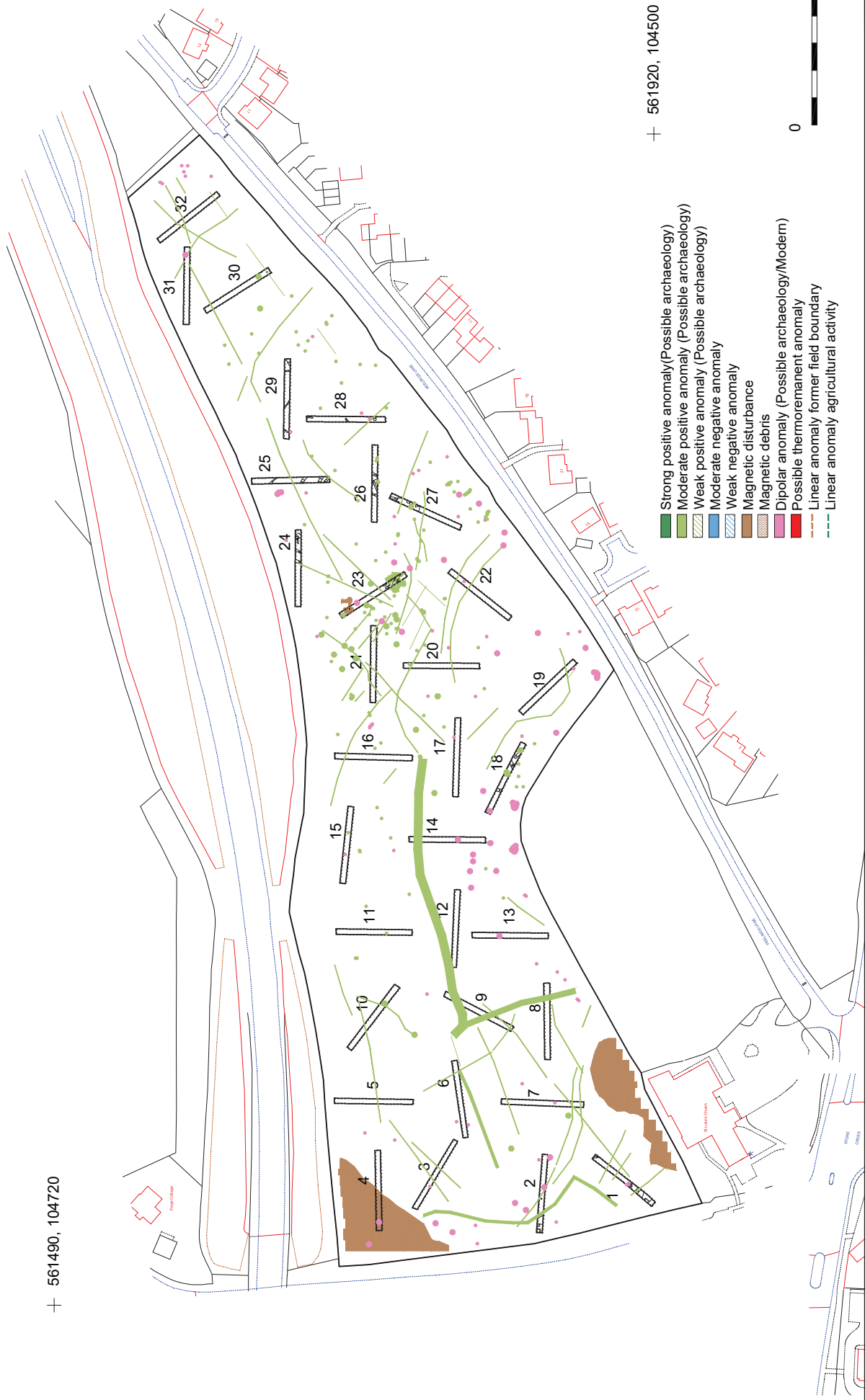
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Fig. 14

Proposed areas of archaeological mitigation



+ 561490, 104720



+ 561920, 104500

- Strong positive anomaly (Possible archaeology)
- Moderate positive anomaly (Possible archaeology)
- Weak positive anomaly (Possible archaeology)
- Moderate negative anomaly
- Weak negative anomaly
- Magnetic disturbance
- Magnetic debris
- Dipolar anomaly (Possible archaeology/Modern)
- Possible thermoremanent anomaly
- Linear anomaly former field boundary
- Linear anomaly agricultural activity



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Land at Peelings Lane, Stone Cross

Project Ref: 161118

Report Ref: 2017080

March 2017

Drawn by: JLR

Plan showing geophysical anomalies and archaeological features

Fig. 15

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tel: +44(0)1273 426830
email: fau@ucl.ac.uk
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