

Archaeological Evaluation

**Land East of Mersea Island Holiday Park
Fen Lane, East Mersea
Essex**

Event No/Site Code: ECC3954

ASE Project No: 170096

ASE Report No: 2017156



May 2017

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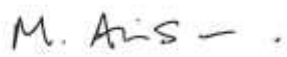
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Abstract

Archaeology South-East (ASE) was commissioned by Chris Butler Archaeological Services Ltd. (CBAS) on behalf of Away Resorts Ltd to conduct an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching within a greenfield site east of Mersea Island Holiday Park, off of Fen Lane, East Mersea, in advance of the construction of 67 additional static holiday caravans.

A recent desk-based assessment determined that the archaeological potential for the presence of below-ground prehistoric remains was high. A subsequent geophysical survey and cropmarks identified from aerial photography supported this potential.

Twenty-eight trenches were excavated across the site. Archaeological features were recorded in twenty-three trenches, comprising three possible ring-ditches, seventeen linear ditches and gullies, and twenty-one pits and postholes. These features define multi-phase occupation/land use ranging in date from the Early Neolithic to the post-medieval and modern periods. Most are concentrated in the western half of the site and along the southern periphery.

The evaluation results broadly concur with the desk-based assessment and to a variable extent with the cropmark and geophysical survey evidence. However, many of the irregular linear cropmarks/geophysical anomalies plotted across the site have been established to be wholly geological in origin. Some archaeological remains found were not previously detected as either cropmarks or geophysical anomalies.

Evidence of prehistoric land use within the site comprises three small pits, one of which is of Early Neolithic date and the others probably Bronze Age. Three substantial ring-ditches are likely to be remains of Early/Middle Bronze Age barrows, two of which appear to have been subsequently re-used in the Early/Middle Iron Age.

Roman ditches found in the northwest, and possibly in the west, of the site may indicate the presence of a rectilinear field system of apparent later Roman date. A single pit in the northwest attests to Early/Middle Saxon activity and could perhaps be the remains of a grubenhaus.

Possible medieval agricultural land use is hinted by two ditches in the west of the site that have the potential to predate the remains of a 1650 mapped field boundary. A number of post-medieval ditches are present that relate to agricultural land use and are recorded on historic mapping from 1650 to the 19th/20th centuries.

It is judged that there is moderate potential for significant archaeological remains to be present elsewhere within the site boundary. The impact of the proposed development on the below-ground heritage resource of this vicinity is therefore predicted to be moderately adverse, depending on the depth of intrusive works.

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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 (CAA), Institute of Archaeology (IoA), University College London (UCL), was commissioned by Chris Butler Archaeological Services Ltd. (CBAS) on behalf of Away Resorts Ltd to conduct an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching on an empty field east of Mersea Island Holiday Park, off of Fen Lane, on East Mersea, Colchester. The work was commissioned in advance of the proposed extension to the caravan park through the installation of 67 static holiday caravans.

1.2 Location, Topography and Geology

1.2.1 The site is centred at National Grid Reference TM 06368 14484. It comprises a roughly square plot of land covering an area of c. 2.97 ha immediately east of the existing holiday park (figure 1). The site is bounded by an arable field to the north, parking and open land of Cudmore Grove Country Park to the east, and open fields leading down to the River Colne that are used by the caravan park and the public to the south.

1.2.2 The site is located at the east end of Mersea Island, near the mouth of the River Colne. It lies at a height of between 9m and 10m aOD and gently slopes from north to south towards the coastline.

1.2.3 According to the British Geological Survey (BGS) 1:50,000 scale geological mapping, accessed online, there is no superficial geology across the site. The solid geology of the site comprised the Thames Group of clay, silt, sand, and gravel. These were manifest primarily as orange sand with frequent gravel where exposed during the evaluation (BGS 2017).

1.3 Planning Background

1.3.1 A planning application was submitted in September 2016 by Away Resorts Ltd to Colchester Borough Council requesting permission for the construction of 67 static holiday homes and associated landscaping (planning ref. 162442).

1.3.2 A desk-based assessment (DBA) was compiled in support of the planning application (Chapman and Russell 2016). This document established that the site had high potential to contain below ground prehistoric remains, especially in consideration of the aerial photographs revealing cropmarks consistent with field boundaries and possibly burial mounds/roundhouses (Colchester HER No. MCC8916). Additionally, the site also had potential for features related to post-medieval and modern farming.

1.3.3 A geophysical survey was also conducted by Stratascan in 2016, which supported the high archaeological potential for Bronze to Iron Age remains on the site. Numerous anomalies were recorded, including a likely roundhouse or barrow, which tended to correspond to the cropmarks (Russell 2017a).

- 1.3.4 Following on from the geophysical survey and the high potential results of the DBA, the Colchester Borough Council (CBC) Archaeological Advisor issued an archaeological brief requesting a trial trench evaluation be conducted to more firmly assess the archaeological potential of the site (CBC 2017).
- 1.3.5 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the archaeological evaluation of the site was prepared by CBAS (Russell 2017b) in accordance with the brief and was approved by CBC Archaeological Advisor prior to the commencement of fieldwork.

1.4 Scope of Report

- 1.4.1 This report presents the results of 28 archaeological evaluation trenches excavated on the site between the 27th of February and the 8th of March 2017. It followed the methodology laid out in the Written Scheme of Investigation (Russell 2017b) and the Risk Assessment Method Statement (ASE 2017).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The following information has been summarised from the Essex Heritage and Environment Records (EHER), the DBA for the site (Chapman and Russell 2016), and a DBA done for a nearby site at Coopers Beach Holiday Park (ASE 2015). Sites and find spots mentioned in the text (by their HER number) are shown on figure 1.

2.1.2 There are no known archaeological remains located within the site boundaries; however, the wider study area indicates a high potential for multi-period use and occupation.

2.2 Period summaries

Prehistoric

2.2.1 Early prehistory is lightly represented in the surrounding area by a small number of artefacts, including a Lower Palaeolithic biface, a scatter of Mesolithic flints, and Neolithic polished axes, scrapper, core, and waste flakes. On the foreshore between the country park and the holiday park, a buried land surface with struck and burnt flints was identified, known as Blackwater Site 17 (EHER 13636; Wilkinson and Murphy 1995). The site is potentially Mesolithic to Neolithic in date and may represent a habitation site, however temporary.

2.2.2 Scattered evidence for Bronze Age occupation of the area makes it probable although not concretely confirmed. There is record of a partially excavated bowl barrow containing a central cremation dated to the Bronze Age (EHER 12698) located c. 450m north of the site. Aerial photographs of the surrounding area (EHER 2237) and the site itself (EHER 2284) reveal cropmarks that may indicate an agricultural enclosure and additional ring-ditches that could represent other funerary monuments and/or roundhouses.

2.2.3 The Iron Age is barely represented within East Mersea. Some contents of the Blackwater Site 17 are potentially of this period rather than earlier or later; however, no secure dating has been obtained. The larger ring-ditches observed in the aerial photographs could indicate continuing occupation from the Bronze Age in the form of Iron Age roundhouses.

Roman

2.2.4 The Roman presence on Mersea Island is fairly well established with the remains of a round building and barrow located on West Mersea. Within the study area, several find spots of Roman date have been located, including a hoard of 657 coins to the west of Fen Farm (EHER 12591).

2.2.5 The production of salt and the cultivation of coastal resources, such as oysters, are also documented within the area (EHER 12564, 2169), and are mostly considered Roman in date.

Anglo-Saxon

2.2.6 There is no evidence of Saxon activity within the study area, and little for East Mersea in general. Scientific dating of timber piles from The Strood causeway

has established a probable construction date of AD684-702 (Crummy *et al* 1982) and it is postulated that a minster church was in existence, at the site of St Peter's Church, at West Mersea (Crummy 1982). A 1046 charter of Edward the Confessor granted lands at Mersea to the monastery of St Ouen at Rouen (Crummy 1982, 87).

Medieval and Post-Medieval

- 2.2.7 East Mersea was recorded in the Domesday Book as a manor with 22 households. By the 16th century, the village had increased in size around St. Edmund's Church, which is 12-13th century in origin and stands c. 1.2km west of the site.
- 2.2.8 Medieval period evidence from the study area solely consists of metal detecting find spots and field walking recovery. It is possible that the site itself was farmed during this period as it was in the ensuing era.
- 2.2.9 The nearest surviving listed building is Broman's Farmhouse (EHER 32124), which dates to the 16th century. The site itself may have been included in the attached tenements of this farm, although it appears to lie just south in a 1656 map.
- 2.2.10 During the 18th and most of the 19th centuries, the site appears to have been a part of various field plots, likely used for sheep grazing and/or farming. By the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1874, a north-south field boundary is clearly marked in the western portion of the site. The tree-lined remains of that boundary is clearly visible at the south boundary of the site.

Modern

- 2.2.11 During the 20th century, the site remained mostly unchanged. The western portion of the site was under cultivation in the 1940s, while the eastern side remained under long grass/scrub. By 1970, the north-south field boundary had been removed to make the site one field.

2.3 Previous Work

- 2.3.1 A detailed magnetometer survey was undertaken by Stratascan in 2016 (Russell 2017a), both the greyscale and interpretive plots of which are shown on Figure 2a and b. The survey identified numerous anomalies, mostly consistent with the previously photographed cropmarks. These included the two suspected ring-ditches, the post-medieval field boundary, and other linears and pit-like features. The trenches were targeted using the results of this survey and the aerial photographs.

2.4 Research Aims and Objectives

- 2.4.1 The general aims of the evaluation, as set out in the WSI (Russell 2017b), were to:
- Identify the date, approximate form and purpose of any archaeological deposit, together with its likely extent, localised depth and quality of preservation.

- Evaluate the likely impact of past land uses, and the possible presence of masking colluvial/alluvial deposits.
- Establish the potential for the survival of environmental evidence.
- Provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological conservation strategy, dealing with preservation, the recording of archaeological deposits, working practices, timetables and cost.

2.4.2 Specific research objectives for the archaeological work, as stated in the WSI (Russell 2017b), were:

RO1: The presence or absence of a Bronze Age/Iron Age settlement and burial site.

RO2: If there was any evidence of settlement activity prior to the Bronze Age/Iron Age.

RO3: The presence or absence of Palaeolithic deposits.

RO4: The extent of the archaeological evidence for site use after the prehistoric period, including Medieval and Post-Medieval agricultural use.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 Fieldwork Methodology

- 3.1.1 The trenches were all located without deviation in accordance with the WSI, and positioned to investigate selected plotted cropmarks and geophysical anomalies as detected and interpreted by the preceding survey (figure 2a and b).
- 3.1.2 All trenches were excavated using a 14-tonne tracked 360 excavator with a toothless bucket. The topsoil and, where present, subsoil were stripped under archaeological supervision down to the top of archaeological or geological deposits, whichever was encountered first, and cleaned using hand tools where appropriate.
- 3.1.3 A representative sample of the trenches (1, 4, 5, 9, 11, 15-17, 20, 21, 25, 26, 28) had an additional 1x1m test pit hand-excavated at one end and the spoil sorted for finds. Metal detecting was used to scan features and spoil for additional artefacts.
- 3.1.4 The trenches were recorded using standard ASE trench sheets. Archaeological features and deposits were recorded using the standard context record sheets. Discrete archaeological features were half-sectioned and slots excavated across linears, with their sections drawn on drawing film sheets. All exposed remains were planned and levelled from the site survey using a Digital Global Positioning System (DGPS).
- 3.1.5 A full photographic record comprising colour digital images was made. All trenches were photographed (trench shots) and all excavated contexts were photographed (context shots). In addition, a number of representative photographs of the general work on site were taken (working shots). The photographic register includes the shot number, location of shot, direction of shot and a brief description of the subject photographed.
- 3.1.6 Finds, where present, were retrieved from all investigated features/deposits. These were securely bagged and labelled with the appropriate site code and context number on site, and retained for specialist identification and study.
- 3.1.7 Bulk soil samples were collected from deposits judged in the field to have potential for the recovery of environmental remains (e.g. carbonised or waterlogged plant macrofossils) and/or small artefacts and faunal remains.

3.2 Archive

- 3.2.1 Guidelines contained in the ClfA Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives (2014d) and the Guidelines on the Preparation and Transfer of Archaeological Archives to Colchester Museums will be followed for the preparation of the archive for museum deposition.
- 3.2.2 Finds from the archaeological fieldwork will be kept with the archival material.

- 3.2.3 Subject to agreement with the legal landowner, ASE will arrange with the Colchester and Ipswich Museums Service for the deposition of the archive and artefact collection. The landowner will be asked to donate the finds to the local museum.
- 3.2.4 A digital vector plan will be included with the report which will be compatible with MapInfo GIS software so that it can be integrated with the Colchester Urban Archaeological Database. AutoCAD files will also be exported and saved into a format that can be imported into MapInfo (e.g. as .dxf or .TAB files).

Number of Contexts	107
Trench Records	28
No. of files/paper record	1
Plan and sections sheets	11
Bulk Samples	10
Photographs	128
Bulk finds	1 box
Registered finds	3
Environmental flots/residue	20

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 A total of 28 trenches, measuring 30 x 2.0m, were excavated. Twenty-three contained archaeological features that were investigated by hand and recorded (figure 2).
- 4.1.2 The natural deposits exposed in the trenches mainly consisted of orange sand with frequent gravel inclusions; although patches of fine light brown silt were also noted, some of which corresponded to the surveyed anomalies. In most of the trenches, the natural was overlaid by a dark brown topsoil and turf, varying in thickness from 0.28m to 0.64m. A light greyish brown silty sand subsoil was observed in trenches 4, 5, 8 and 28 in thickness from 0.08m to 0.43m.
- 4.1.3 Unless otherwise noted, all identified archaeological features were located below the topsoil and, where present, subsoil. All recorded features were cut directly into the natural deposit and comprised ditches, gullies, pits and postholes.
- 4.1.4 Where appropriate the evaluation results are compared and/or related to those of the geophysical survey and to the plotted cropmarks.

4.2 Trench 1

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Depth/ Thickness m	Height m AOD
1/001	Topsoil	Dark brown silty sand, frequent pebbles	30.00	2.00	0.31-0.33	10.85-11.14
1/002	Natural	Orange sand, frequent gravel	30.00	2.00	n/a	10.39-10.78
1/003	Fill	Firm dark greyish brown silty sand	3.48	2.00+	0.44	10.86
1/004	Cut	Oval pit	3.48	2.00+	0.44	10.42

Table 2: Trench 1 list of recorded contexts

- 4.2.1 Trench 1 was located in the northwest corner of the site and was orientated NNE/SSW (figure 2). It was positioned to investigate several linear and one large pit-like anomaly detected by the geophysical survey, some of which were also defined by cropmarks.
- 4.2.2 A large oval pit, [1/004], measuring 3.48m NNE/SSW x 1.8m+ WNW/ESE and 0.44m deep was located toward the southwest end of the trench (figure 3, section 1). It had gradual sloping sides and a flat base. The edges of the feature extended beyond the limit of the trench on the west and east sides. The fill [1/003] was a firm, dark greyish brown silty sand, with occasional small gravel inclusions and flecks of charcoal. Retrieved finds from it included 26 sherds of Early/Middle Anglo-Saxon date, one piece of pottery and eight pieces of ceramic building material (CBM) of Roman date that are likely intrusive/residual, a general purpose iron nail, and a lead off-cut. A bulk soil

sample (<5>) was taken, which yielded a small amount of burnt bone that was not conclusively animal or human in nature and a few fragments of hammerscale, indicating metalworking may have been taking place in the general area. It is possible that this pit is the remains of a Saxon grubenhaus (aka sunken-featured building). This archaeological feature correlated with the plotted position of the pit-like geophysical anomaly targeted by Trench 1, though it is noted that it is larger than seemingly detected.

4.2.3 The north/south and east/west linear anomalies recorded by the geophysical survey were not identified to correspond with below-ground archaeological remains, despite the extensive north/south linear anomaly being found to coincide with a cut feature in Trenches 12, 17 and 21 to the south. Two small patches of lighter sandy silt were located in the centre of the trench and were determined to be a different type of natural.

4.2.4 A 1x1m test pit was hand excavated in the southeast corner of the trench and the spoil sorted. Two pieces of likely post-medieval CBM were recovered from the topsoil [1/001].

4.3 Trench 2

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Depth/ Thickness m	Height m AOD
2/001	Topsoil	Dark brown silty sand, occasional gravel	30.00	2.00	0.35-0.46	11.01-11.09
2/002	Natural	Orange sand, frequent gravel	30.00	2.00	n/a	10.57-10.58
2/003	Fill	Firm mid brown silty sand	1.0+	1.22	0.17	10.60
2/004	Fill	Firm dark brownish grey silty sand	1.0+	0.86	0.06	
2/005	Fill	Firm light yellowish grey silty sand	1.0+	0.69	0.07	
2/006	Cut	Ditch	1.0+	1.22	0.30	10.30
2/007	Fill	Firm mid orange brown silty sand	0.81+	0.46	0.14	10.61
2/008	Cut	Oval pit	0.81+	0.46	0.14	10.47

Table 3: Trench 2 list of recorded contexts

4.3.1 Trench 2 was located ENE of Trench 1 and was orientated WSW/ENE (figure 2). It was positioned to investigate the locations of linear anomalies plotted from both cropmarks and geophysical survey results.

4.3.2 Ditch [2/006] was located toward the east end of the trench and was orientated NNW/SSE. It had a broad U-shaped profile with a flat base and contained three fills (figure 4, section 2). The intermediate fill [2/004] consisted of firm dark brownish grey silty sand with occasional gravel inclusions and was the only deposit to yield any finds. Seventeen sherds of broadly Late Roman pottery and one iron nail fragment were recovered. This ditch coincided with the cropmark/geophysical anomaly plotted to cross this end of the trench.

4.3.3 A small, likely oval pit [2/008] was uncovered southwest of the ditch. It consisted of shallow, concave sides, a slightly concave base, and contained a single sterile fill [2/007] with no finds. The extent of the feature is unknown as it was cut by the south limit of the trench. The pit has no obvious function and could possibly be a natural feature; it was not detected by the geophysical survey.

4.3.4 A linear geophysical anomaly and its corresponding cropmark at the west end of the trench did not correspond to underlying archaeological remains.

4.4 Trench 3

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Depth/ Thickness m	Height m AOD
3/001	Topsoil	Dark brown silty sand, occasional gravel	30.00	2.00	0.34-0.38	10.96-11.23
3/002	Natural	Orange sand, frequent gravel	30.00	2.00	n/a	10.49-10.83
3/003	Fill	Soft dark greyish brown clay silt	0.79	0.35	0.21	10.58
3/004	Cut	Oval pit	0.79	0.35	0.21	10.37
3/005	Fill	Soft mid reddish brown clay silt	1.0+	1.32	0.18	10.71
3/006	Fill	Soft mid yellowish brown silty sand, frequent pebbles	1.0+	1.41	0.30	
3/007	Fill	Soft mid yellowish brown silty sand	1.0+	0.32	0.06	
3/008	Fill	Soft mid reddish brown clay silt	1.0+	1.70	0.25	
3/009	Fill	Soft mid yellowish brown silty sand	1.0+	2.08	0.27	
3/010	Cut	Ditch	1.0+	2.72	0.57	10.14
3/011	Fill	Soft mid yellowish brown clay silt	1.0+	0.62	0.26	10.81
3/012	Cut	Gully	1.0+	0.62	0.26	10.65
3/013	Fill	Soft mid greyish brown silty sand		0.27+	0.14	10.72
3/014	Fill	Soft dark brownish black clay silt		0.52+	0.16	
3/015	Fill	Soft mid greyish brown silty sand		0.44+	0.05	
3/016	Cut	Oval pit	1.60	0.52+	0.35	10.37
3/017	Fill	Soft mid brownish grey silty sand		0.94	0.13	10.60
3/018	Fill	Soft mid greyish brown silty sand		0.63	0.11	
3/019	Cut	Circular pit	1.0	0.94	0.24	10.36

Table 4: Trench 3 list of recorded contexts

4.4.1 Trench 3 was orientated NNW/SSE and was located c. 3m northeast of Trench 2. It was located to investigate the plotted position of a circular cropmark part of which was also detected as a corresponding geophysical

anomaly (Fig. 2).

- 4.4.2 A small, oval pit [3/004] was present toward the northern end of the trench. It had steep, concave sides and a slightly concave base. Its single fill [3/003] appeared to have accumulated naturally and did not contain any finds.
- 4.4.3 Two ditches crossed the trench at roughly the same positions as the circular cropmark. Its excavated north segment [3/010] was 2.7m wide and had moderately steep sides with a slight step near the bottom and a concave base (figure 5, section 4). It contained five fills; the lower two [3/008] and [3/009] appear to have accumulated through natural silting, the middle lens [3/007] is likely redeposited natural, and the upper two [3/005], [3/006] are probable intentional backfills. It is possible that some interfaces between fills represent re-cutting or cleaning episodes. Only one sherd of pottery was recovered, from fill [3/009], which broadly dates to the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age. The primary fill [3/009] was bulk soil sampled (<9>), which on processing yielded a few small fragments of fire-cracked flint. The south side of the ring-ditch was not excavated, but was noted to be narrower, at c.1.9m wide. Together, the ditches define a ring-ditch with an external diameter of c.14m.
- 4.4.4 A narrow gully [3/012] ran across the trench c.1.5m immediately south of the ring-ditch. It had a U-shaped profile (figure 5, section 5) with a single sterile fill [3/011] from which no finds were recovered. It is uncertain if this gully was straight or curving and concentrically placed in relation to the ring-ditch. It was not identified to extend into adjacent Trenches 8 or 11 to the east and west. Nor was it defined as a cropmark or detected by the geophysical survey.
- 4.4.5 Two pits were located in the ring-ditch interior and may have been associated with it. The north pit [3/016] was only partially revealed as it extended beyond the eastern limit of excavation. It appeared to be oval in shape and at least 1.60m in length x 0.52m wide as excavated. At least 0.35m deep, it contained three fills [3/013], [3/014], and [3/015]. Middle fill [3/014] yielded 26 sherds of Early/Middle Iron Age pottery and a moderate amount of charcoal; it was consequently bulk sampled (<7>). The charcoal was subsequently identified as oak. The function of the pit is unclear, but it appeared to have been intentionally backfilled.
- 4.4.6 Pit [3/019] was located near the centre of the ring-ditch interior. It was circular in shape with a broad U-shaped profile (figure 5, section 6). Its two fills [3/017] and [3/018] appeared to be of natural accumulation and contained no dateable finds. The lower fill [3/018] was bulk sampled (<6>); however, little information was recovered other than the confirmation of modern root disturbance. A relatively well-preserved wood fragment was recovered from the base, possibly indicating a modern date for the feature; however, animal burrowing had disturbed the southwest side (figure 5, photo pit [3/019]). Neither pit was detected as a geophysical anomaly.

4.5 Trench 4

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Depth/ Thickness m	Height m AOD
4/001	Topsoil	Dark brownish grey silty sand	30.00	1.80	0.35-0.38	10.71-10.89
4/002	Subsoil	Mid greyish brown silty sand	8.00	1.80	0.30	10.41
4/003	Natural	Orange sand, frequent gravel	30.00	1.80	n/a	10.12-10.44

Table 5: Trench 4 list of recorded contexts

4.5.1 Trench 4 was orientated WSW/ENE (figure 2) and located toward the northeast corner of the site. It was not positioned upon any plotted cropmarks or geophysical anomalies.

4.5.2 No archaeological features were located within the trench, which corresponds with the lack of results from the geophysical survey and cropmark plot.

4.6 Trench 5

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Depth/ Thickness m	Height m AOD
5/001	Topsoil	Dark brownish grey silty sand	30.00	1.80	0.28-0.38	10.45-10.94
5/002	Subsoil	Mid brown silty sand	23.00	1.80	0.11-0.21	10.07
5/003	Natural	Orange sand, frequent gravel	30.00	1.80	n/a	9.89-10.53
5/004	Fill	Soft mid greyish brown clay silt	1.0+	0.54	0.10	9.95
5/005	Cut	Gully	1.0+	0.54	0.10	9.87
5/006	Fill	Soft mid greyish brown clay silt	1.01	0.70	0.14	10.50
5/007	Cut	Sub-circular pit	1.01	0.70	0.14	10.36
5/008	Fill	Firm light brown silty sand	1.0+	0.57	0.17	10.00
5/009	Cut	Gully	1.0+	0.57	0.17	9.83
5/010	Fill	Compact mid brown silty sand, patches of dark grey charcoal	1.75	0.81+	0.64	10.34
5/011	Cut	Oval pit	1.75	0.81+	0.64	9.70

Table 6: Trench 5 list of recorded contexts

4.6.1 Trench 5 was orientated NNE/SSW and located in the northeast corner of the site (figure 2). The trench was not positioned to investigate plotted cropmarks or geophysical anomalies; however, four archaeological features were present (figure 6).

4.6.2 NE/SW aligned gully [5/005] was located at the north end of the trench. It was quite narrow and shallow with moderately sloped sides and a flat base (figure 6, section 7), becoming more ephemeral towards the northeast. its single fill [5/004] appeared to have accumulated naturally and contained no finds.

- 4.6.3 A small, oval pit [5/007] was located toward the south end of the trench. It had a broad U-shaped profile (figure 6, section 8). Its single fill [5/006] appeared to have been the product of natural silting and contained no finds. Its function is unknown.
- 4.6.4 Gully [5/009] was located c. 1.5m south of [5/005] and orientated WNW/ESE. It was also narrow, shallow, and ephemeral, with gradual sloping sides and a concave base with a single sterile fill [5/008].
- 4.6.5 Gully [5/009] was cut by an oval pit [5/011], c.0.64m deep, that had stepped sides and a flat base (figure 6, section 9). The eastern half was not visible in plan as the feature extended beyond the limit of excavation. It had a single fill [5/010] that contained frequent charcoal and occasional patches of crumbling baked clay, none of which were recoverable by hand. No dateable material was found; however, it is likely to be of a later date as it cut through the subsoil unlike the majority of features on site. The fill was bulk sampled (<1>) and found to contain numerous charred plant macrofossils.
- 4.6.6 A 1 x 1m test pit was hand-excavated and sorted at the southeast corner of the trench. No additional archaeological features were revealed, but two pieces of post-medieval CBM were recovered from the topsoil [5/001].

4.7 Trench 6

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Depth/ Thickness m	Height m AOD
6/001	Made ground	Modern dump of orange/yellow sand	21.00	2.00	0.15-0.16	11.22-11.27
6/002	Topsoil	Dark brownish grey silty sand	30.00	2.00	0.34-0.39	11.12-11.17
6/003	Natural	Orange sand, frequent gravels	30.00	2.00	n/a	10.75-10.82
6/004	Cut	Ditch	1.0+	1.26	0.30	10.59
6/005	Fill	Friable dark greyish brown silty sand	1.0+	1.26	0.30	10.89
6/006	Cut	Ditch	1.0+	1.49	0.54	10.27
6/007	Fill	Friable mid brown silty sand	1.0+	1.49	0.54	10.81
6/008	Cut	Oval pit	0.85	1.52	0.38	10.45
6/009	Fill	Friable light orange brown silty sand		1.23	0.38	10.83
6/010	Fill	Friable dark greyish brown silty sand		1.27	0.21	10.81
6/011	Cut	Sub-circular pit	0.39	0.33	0.25	10.51
6/012	Fill	Friable mid greyish brown silty sand	0.39	0.33	0.25	10.76
6/013	Cut	Sub-circular pit	0.53	0.71	0.15	10.67
6/014	Fill	Friable reddish brown sandy silt	0.53	0.71	0.15	10.82

Table 7: Trench 6 list of recorded contexts

- 4.7.1 Trench 6 was orientated NNW/SSE and located along the northwest edge of

the site (figure 2). An area of magnetic debris detected by the geophysical survey was manifest as 0.15m-thick layer of made-ground [6/001] that was present along two thirds of the trench. This consisted of orange/yellow sand, similar to the natural deposits, without the presence of gravels. It is likely the by-product of quarrying done to the west of the site, prior to the construction of the holiday park. No geophysical anomalies or cropmarks were detected at this trench location prior to the evaluation

- 4.7.2 Two WSW/ENE aligned ditches were located within the trench. Ditch [6/004], uncovered at the SSE end of the trench, had a broad U-shaped profile and a concave base (figure 7, section 10). It contained a single fill [6/005] of friable dark grey brown silty sand with frequent pebbles, occasional charcoal, and a large amount of oyster shell, probably indicating an intentional backfill. Recovered finds included 30 sherds of later Roman pottery and two pieces of animal bone, one of which demonstrated butchering marks. It is possible this feature was a field boundary within an agricultural system. However, its continuation was not identified in Trenches 7 or 9 and it is possible that it formed a corner with a Roman ditch in Trench 12,
- 4.7.3 The second ditch [6/006] was located near the centre of the trench and had steeper, convex sides and a deeper, concave base (figure 7, section 11). Its single fill [6/007] appears to have been accumulated through natural silting and did not contain any finds. It was not identified to the east in Trench 7, though some of the slightly sinuous linear cropmarks and geophysical anomalies appear to head towards it (figure 2)
- 4.7.4 A moderate sized, slightly elongated oval pit [6/008] was located immediately south of ditch [6/006]. Its profile was varied, with a steeper SW side and a gently sloping NE edge to the base (figure 7, section 12). It contained two fills; the basal fill [6/009] appeared to have accumulated naturally, while the upper fill [6/010] was more likely an intentional backfill. Neither fills contained any finds.
- 4.7.5 Two smaller pits were located in the northern portion of the trench. Pit [6/011] consisted of steep sides and a concave base. It contained a single fill [6/012] with no finds. It was cut by the second pit [6/013], which was shallower with a broad U-shaped profile (figure 7, section 13). Its single fill [6/014] did not contain any finds, although some crumbled baked clay was present.

4.8 Trench 7

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Depth/ Thickness m	Height m AOD
7/001	Topsoil	Dark brownish grey silty sand	30.00	2.00	0.33-0.67	11.21-11.26
7/002	Natural	Alternating patches of orange sand with gravels and light greyish brown sterile silt	30.00	2.00	n/a	10.59-10.88

Table 8: Trench 7 list of recorded contexts

4.8.1 Trench 7 was located c. 31m east of the north end of Trench 6 and orientated NNE/SSW. It was positioned to investigate The geophysical survey had detected several intersecting linears cropmarks, some of which had also been detected as geophysical anomalies.

4.8.2 However, upon investigation it was determined that these were silty patches of sterile natural banded through the dominant natural deposit of orange sand with gravels. No archaeological features were encountered in this trench.

4.9 Trench 8

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Depth/ Thickness m	Height m AOD
8/001	Topsoil	Dark brownish grey silty sand	30.00	2.00	0.35-0.40	11.24-11.26
8/002	Subsoil	Dark orange brown clay silt	12.00	2.00	0.35-0.43	10.84
8/003	Cut	Ditch	1.0+	3.80	0.77	9.90
8/004	Fill	Loose mid yellowish brown sandy silt	1.0+	2.60	0.54	10.44
8/005	Fill	Loose dark yellowish brown silty sand	1.0+	3.80	0.23	10.67
8/006	Cut	Circular pit	1.89	0.87+	0.65	10.21
8/007	Fill	Firm dark brown clay silt	1.89	0.87+	0.65	10.86
8/008	Natural	Orange sand, frequent gravels	30.00	2.00	n/a	10.67-10.76

Table 9: Trench 8 list of recorded contexts

4.9.1 Trench 8 was orientated NW/SE and was located 10m south of the centre of Trench 2 (figure 2). It was positioned to investigate a large ring-ditch defined both by cropmarks and as an interrupted geophysical anomaly. Several other small pit-like anomalies were also plotted within and around the trench. Subsoil was observed to be present across the northern third of the trench, but had disappeared by the middle portion.

4.9.2 Two wide cut features were recorded to cross either end of the trench; these corresponded to the plotted positions of the targeted ring-ditch cropmark/geophysical anomaly (figure 8). The excavated northern segment [8/003] was a 3.8m wide ditch with a gentle convex slope on the NW edge and a steep convex side on SE edge, down to a concave base (figure 8, section 14). Two fills were observed in the ditch, both of which appeared to have accumulated through natural silting/slumping. The basal fill [8/004] contained two flint flakes, broadly dated to the Mesolithic/Neolithic periods. A bulk sample (<4>) was taken; however, no additional dating or environmental information was gathered from this material. One sherd from a Roman amphora was recovered from the upper fill [8/005]. It is probable that these finds are residual/intrusive.

4.9.3 The southern ring-ditch segment was not investigated, being excavated nearby in Trench 9. It was recorded to be c.2.4m wide. The ring-ditch has an

approximate external diameter of 26m.

4.9.4 A single, probably circular, pit [8/006] was located in the centre of the trench, extending beyond the eastern edge. Approximately 1.9m wide and 0.65m deep, it had steep, concave sides and a flat base. It contained a single, very dark brown fill [8/007] from which a single yellow ware sherd from a carinated bowl dated to c.1820, or later, was retrieved. This pit approximately corresponds to the discrete geophysical anomaly plotted in the middle of the trench. It was located off-centre within the ring-ditch interior.

4.10 Trench 9

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Depth/ Thickness m	Height m AOD
9/001	Topsoil	Dark brownish grey silty sand	30.00	2.00	0.31-0.60	11.14-11.44
9/002	Natural	Orange sand, frequent gravels	30.00	2.00	n/a	10.76-10.92
9/003	Fill	Compact mid greyish brown sandy silt	1.0+	3.85	0.25	10.92
9/004	Fill	Loose mottled brownish grey silty sand	1.0+	2.85	0.57	
9/005	Fill	Cemented light grey sandy gravel	1.0+	0.71	0.50+	
9/006	Fill	Compact mid yellowish brown sandy gravel	1.0+	4.90	0.30+	
9/007	Cut	Ditch	1.0+	4.90	1.12+	9.76
9/008	Fill	Loose mid grey silty sand	0.27	0.27	0.17	10.57
9/009	Cut	Posthole	0.27	0.27	0.17	10.40

Table 10: Trench 9 list of recorded contexts

4.10.1 Trench 9 was aligned NE/SW and positioned to investigate the southwest of the large ring-ditch cropmark/geophysical anomaly and several other linear anomalies, including an extensive north/south aligned cropmark interpreted to define a former field boundary shown on historic mapping (figure 2).

4.10.2 A large cut feature [9/007] crossed the north end of the trench on an apparent NW/SE alignment which coincides with the plotted southwest portion of the large ring-ditch cropmark/geophysical anomaly (figs 8 and 9). It is therefore assumed to be part of the same feature as ditch [8/003] in Trench 8. The 4.9m wide cut had gradual sloping upper sides that stepped down into almost vertical walls (figure 9, section 15). The ditch was not bottomed, excavation ceasing at a depth of 1.20m from ground level. This segment contained four fills. Lower fills [9/006] and [9/005] fills appeared to have accumulated during the ditch's use. A single flint flake was recovered from [9/005], broadly dating from the Mesolithic to the Late Bronze Age. Fill [9/004] appeared to have accumulated from natural processes once the ditch stopped being used; a single flint flake from the same broad period range was also collected from this fill. Finally, the upper fill [9/003] yielded a single flint flake, some fire-cracked flint, and three sherds of pottery from potentially mixed periods,

broadly dating it to Late Bronze Age up to Middle Iron Age.

- 4.10.3 A small circular posthole [9/009] was cut into the southwest edge of the ditch. It was likely contemporary with the original cut of the ditch, possibly for a structure or defensive reinforcement. It had vertical sides and a flat base. Its single fill [9/008] did not contain any finds.
- 4.10.4 A NNW/SSE linear was located in the centre of the trench, measuring c. 2.8m in width. It corresponded with the known position of the post-medieval field boundary as defined both by historic mapping and a cropmark. As a segment of this ditch was excavated in Trench 24, it was not further investigated here.
- 4.10.5 A 1 x 1m test pit was hand excavated at the SE corner of the trench. A single flint flake broadly dated as Neolithic to Early Bronze Age was recovered from topsoil [9/001].
- 4.10.6 The east/west irregular linear cropmark and geophysical anomaly plotted as crossing the trench was established to correspond to another patch of sterile silt, such as seen in Trench 7, cutting the regular natural deposit of orange sand with gravels.

4.11 Trench 10

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Depth/ Thickness m	Height m AOD
10/001	Topsoil	Dark brownish grey silty sand	30.00	2.00	0.35-0.42	11.21-11.22
10/002	Natural	Orange sand, frequent gravels	30.00	2.00	n/a	10.79-10.82
10/003	Cut	Gully	1.0+	0.85	0.13	10.66
10/004	Fill	Loose mid greyish brown sandy silt	1.0+	0.85	0.13	10.79
10/005	Cut	Sub-circular pit	0.65	0.56	0.19	10.64
10/006	Fill	Firm dark blackish brown clay silt	0.65	0.56	0.19	10.83

Table 11: Trench 10 list of recorded contexts

- 4.11.1 Trench 10 was located c. 8m south of the end of Trench 3 and orientated WSW/ENE (figure 2).
- 4.11.2 A narrow, shallow gully [10/003] was located in the east portion of the trench, running generally NNW/SSE. It consisted of gradual sloping sides and a slightly concave base (figure 10, section 16). Its single fill [10/004] appeared to have naturally accumulated in the gully, which did not contain any finds.
- 4.11.3 Small pit [10/005] appeared sub-circular in plan with steep sides and a flat base (figure 10, section 17). It was located in the west-central part of the trench and its north edge extended beyond the limit of excavation. It contained a single fill [10/006] that had a high frequency of charcoal and contained a few small body sherds of probable Middle Iron Age pottery, along with two pieces of amorphous fired clay. A bulk sample (<3>) was collected;

however, it proved unproductive on processing.

4.11.4 Several short linear cropmarks and a geophysical anomaly were detected at or just off either end of the trench (Fig. 2). None of these were identified as corresponding to below-ground features.

4.12 Trench 11

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Depth/ Thickness m	Height m AOD
11/001	Topsoil	Dark brownish grey silty sand	30.00	2.00	0.31-0.33	11.01
11/002	Natural	Orange sand, frequent gravels	30.00	2.00	n/a	10.64-10.66
11/003	Fill	Firm dark greyish brown silty sand	0.54	0.39+	0.21	10.71
11/004	Cut	Sub-circular pit	0.54	0.39+	0.21	10.50

Table 12: Trench 11 list of recorded contexts

4.12.1 Trench 11 was positioned in the northeast of the site and orientated NW/SE (figure 2). No cropmarks or geophysical anomalies were plotted to occur in its vicinity.

4.12.2 One small, sub-circular pit was located near the centre of the trench; its northeast edge extending past the limit of excavation. It consisted of fairly steep sides and a flat base (figure 11, section 18). Its single fill [11/003], which appeared to be an intentional backfill, yielded a significant quantity (31 sherds) of Early Neolithic pottery, a flint disc scraper, and three other flint flakes broadly consistent with an Early-Middle Neolithic date range. It was also bulk sampled (<8>), generally demonstrating use of local taxa for fire wood.

4.12.3 A 1 x 1m test pit was hand excavated at the NW end of the trench. One sherd of pottery dating to the 17-19th centuries and a piece of post-medieval CBM were recovered from topsoil [11/001].

4.13 Trench 12

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Depth/ Thickness m	Height m AOD
12/001	Topsoil	Dark brownish grey silty sand	30.00	2.00	0.31-0.34	10.97-11.11
12/002	Natural	Orange sand, frequent gravels	30.00	2.00	n/a	10.63-10.71
12/003	Fill	Loose mid greyish brown clay/sandy silt	1.0+	1.70	0.45	10.73
12/004	Cut	Ditch	1.0+	1.70	0.45	10.29
12/005	Fill	Loose mid greyish brown clay/sandy silt	1.0+	0.55	0.13	10.74
12/006	Cut	Gully	1.0+	0.55	0.13	10.61

Table 13: Trench 12 list of recorded contexts

4.13.1 WSW/ENE aligned Trench 12 was positioned to investigate the plotted locations of a north/south linear cropmark/geophysical anomaly and parts of an apparent arcing anomaly (figure 2).

4.13.2 A NNW/SSE orientated ditch [12/004] crossed the trench, just east of centre. It had a broad U-shaped profile (figure 12, section 19) and contained a single, naturally accumulated fill [12/003] from which two undiagnostic Roman pottery sherds were retrieved, along with two fragments of probable briquetage. The continuation of this ditch was identified to the south in Trenches 17 and 21, though not to the north in Trench 1. It is likely to have functioned as an agricultural field boundary.

4.13.3 East/west aligned gully [12/006] ran across the eastern end of the trench. It was narrow and very shallow, with gradually sloping sides and a concave base (figure 12, section 20). Its single fill [12/005] seemed to have accumulated through natural silting and did not contain any finds. The gully appeared to extend eastwards into Trench 13, where it terminated.

4.13.4 An arcing anomaly was detected by the geophysical survey; however, no evidence of it was encountered during the evaluation.

4.14 Trench 13

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Depth/ Thickness m	Height m AOD
13/001	Topsoil	Dark brownish grey silty sand	30.00	2.00	0.35-0.38	10.92-11.02
13/002	Natural	Orange sand, frequent gravels	30.00	2.00	n/a	10.56-10.59
13/003	Fill	Soft mid orange brown sandy silt	1.0+	1.40	0.30+	10.63
13/004	Cut	Ditch	1.0+	1.40	0.30+	10.27
13/005	Fill	Soft mid brownish orange sandy silt	1.0+	0.50	0.13	10.56
13/006	Cut	Gully	1.0+	0.50	0.13	10.43
13/007	Fill	Soft mid greyish brown sandy silt	0.35	0.32	0.20	10.43
13/008	Cut	Posthole	0.35	0.32	0.20	10.23
13/009	Fill	Soft mid brownish orange sandy silt	1.0+	0.20	0.08	10.56
13/010	Cut	Gully	1.0+	0.20	0.08	10.48

Table 14: Trench 13 list of recorded contexts

4.14.1 Trench 13 was located near the centre of the site. It was orientated WSW/ENE. Several cropmark and geophysical anomalies were detected to run through the trench, including the cropmark of the known north/south post-medieval field boundary.

4.14.2 Ditch [13/004] crossed the western part of the trench on a roughly north/south alignment. This corresponded to the plotted position of the post-medieval field boundary cropmark, further parts of which were identified in Trench 9 and 24.

As a full segment was excavated in Trench 24, this portion was only partially excavated sufficiently to confirm its relationship with an intersecting gully. No finds were recovered from that part of its single fill [13/003] excavated.

- 4.14.3 A linear gully extended across the eastern part of the trench on a WNW/ESE alignment. The excavation of segment [13/006] established that post-medieval boundary ditch [13/004] cut this gully. Its rounded, slightly bulbous, terminal was excavated as segment [13/010]. The gully had a broad U-shaped profile with a shallow, concave base (figure 13, section 21). No finds were recovered from the single fills of either segment, [13/005] and [13/009], which appeared to have accumulated naturally during the gully's use. This feature appears to be the eastward continuation of undated gully [12/006] in Trench 12.
- 4.14.4 Small posthole [13/008] was cut by gully segment [13/006]. It had almost vertical sides and a sloping base (figure 13, section 20). Its single fill [13/007] contained no finds and appeared to be a disuse deposit. It is uncertain as its function; no associated postholes were uncovered in this vicinity.
- 4.14.5 A 1 x 1m test pit was hand-excavated at the ENE end of the trench, yielding one piece of Roman box flue tile and one piece of post-medieval peg tile from the topsoil [13/001].
- 4.14.6 The NNW/SSE aligned intermittent geophysical anomaly/cropmark at the east end of the trench was not found to correspond to an underlying archaeological feature.

4.15 Trench 14

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Depth/ Thickness m	Height m AOD
14/001	Topsoil	Dark brownish grey silty sand	30.00	2.00	0.32-0.38	10.66-11.06
14/002	Natural	Orange sand, frequent gravels	30.00	2.00	n/a	10.33-10.72

Table 15: Trench 14 list of recorded contexts

- 4.15.1 Trench 14 was located near the centre of the site and orientated NNW/SSE (figure 2). It was positioned to investigate several linear cropmarks and geophysical anomalies plotted to cross the trench.
- 4.15.2 No archaeological features were identified to be present. A large linear patch of sterile silt was observed in the proximity of the northern cropmark/geophysical anomaly location. On investigation, this was determined to be a natural variation within the more typical orange sand with gravels.

4.16 Trench 15

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Depth/ Thickness m	Height m AOD
15/001	Topsoil	Dark brownish grey silty sand	30.00	2.00	0.32-0.37	10.72-11.03
15/002	Natural	Orange sand, frequent gravels	30.00	2.00	n/a	10.71-10.43

Table 16: Trench 15 list of recorded contexts

4.16.1 Trench 15 was located c. 20m east of Trench 14, in the east of the site, and orientated NNE/SSW (figure 2). The same linear cropmark/geophysical anomaly crossed this trench as crossed the northern end of Trench 14. A further north/south geophysical anomaly was plotted to cross the south end of the trench.

4.16.2 None of the cropmarks or geophysical anomalies were found to coincide with underlying archaeological remains. As in Trench 14, they were determined to be created by sterile silt patches in the more typical orange sand with gravels.

4.16.3 A 1x1m test pit was hand excavated at the NNE end of the trench, but no archaeological features or finds encountered.

4.17 Trench 16

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Depth/ Thickness m	Height m AOD
16/001	Topsoil	Dark brownish grey silty sand	30.00	2.00	0.33-0.34	10.63-11.00
16/002	Natural	Orange sand, frequent gravels	30.00	2.00	n/a	10.30-10.68
16/003	Fill	Loose dark brownish grey silty clay	0.70	0.88+	0.10	10.66
16/004	Fill	Loose grey silty clay	1.04	0.86+	0.16	10.56
16/005	Cut	Circular pit	1.04	0.88+	0.26	10.40
16/006	Fill	Loose darkish brown silty sand	0.80	0.48	0.16	10.45
16/007	Cut	Oval pit	0.80	0.48	0.16	10.29

Table 17: Trench 16 list of recorded contexts

4.17.1 Trench 16 was orientated NNW/SSE and was located along the eastern edge of the site (figure 2). No cropmarks or geophysical anomalies were plotted in this vicinity. The remains of two pits were uncovered.

4.17.2 Circular pit [16/005] was located at the northern end of the trench. It had fairly steep, concave sides and a concave base (figure 14, section 22) and extended beyond the eastern limit of excavation. It contained two fills [16/003] and [16/004], both of which appear to be the result of natural silting/slumping. One sherd of pottery was recovered from the lower fill [16/004], being most typical of the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age. This fill was bulk sampled (<2>) that yielded charcoal.

4.17.3 Pit [16/007] was located toward the south of the trench. It appeared to be irregularly oval in plan, with a steep side on its south edge and a more gradual slope on the north edge, down to a concave base (figure 14, section 23). It contained a single fill [16/006], which looked quite similar to the topsoil and contained no finds. It is probable that this feature is of natural origin.

4.17.4 A 1 x 1m test pit was hand excavated at the NNW end of the trench, yielding one small fragment of a Roman imbrex tile from the topsoil [16/001].

4.18 Trench 17

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Depth/ Thickness m	Height m AOD
17/001	Topsoil	Dark brownish grey silty sand	30.00	2.00	0.38-0.47	10.94-10.84
17/002	Natural	Orange sand, frequent gravels	30.00	2.00	n/a	10.30-10.52
17/003	Fill	Loose mid brownish grey sandy/clay silt	1.0+	1.50	0.36	10.35
17/004	Cut	Ditch	1.0+	1.50	0.36	9.99
17/005	Fill	Loose mid brownish grey clay/sandy silt	1.22+	0.80	0.25	10.46
17/006	Cut	Oval pit	1.22+	0.80	0.25	10.21

Table 18: Trench 17 list of recorded contexts

4.18.1 WSW/ENE aligned Trench 17 was located c.15m south of Trench 12, on the west side of the site (figure 2). Two linear cropmarks, one a continuation of geophysical anomalies further afield, were plotted to cross the trench on broadly perpendicular alignments.

4.18.2 A WSW/ENE ditch [17/004] was extended along the western half of the trench. Approximately 1.5m wide and 0.36m deep, it had a broad U-shaped profile with a concave base (figure 15, section 24). Its single fill [17/003] appeared to have accumulated naturally during the ditch's use and contained one small piece of medieval pottery (13th-14th century). It is possible that the eastward continuation of this ditch was identified in Trench 18 as [18/004] and so is presumably un-associated with the north-south ditch with which it intersects immediately south of Trench 17. It is possible that it is a medieval agricultural field boundary.

4.18.3 The NNW/SSE feature that crossed the eastern half of the trench coincided with the extensive north/south linear cropmark and so was not excavated as it was determined to be a part of the same ditch as [12/004], and also recorded in Trenches 17 and 21. It measured 1.70m wide in plan.

4.18.4 An oval pit [17/006] was located near the centre of the trench, alongside ditch [17/004]. Some 0.25m deep, it had moderately sloping sides with a concave base (figure 15, section 25). The single fill [17/005] looked to be the result of natural silting and contained two small pottery sherds, dated to the Middle

Iron Age.

4.19 Trench 18

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Depth/ Thickness m	Height m AOD
18/001	Topsoil	Dark brownish grey silty sand	30.00	2.00	0.31-0.39	9.98-10.72
18/002	Natural	Orange sand, frequent gravels	30.00	2.00	n/a	9.69-10.34
18/003	Fill	Firm mid brown silty sand	1.0+	0.78	0.19	10.25
18/004	Cut	Ditch	1.0+	0.78	0.19	10.06
18/005	Fill	Firm dark brown silty sand	0.61+	0.45+	0.12	9.94
18/006	Cut	Oval pit	0.61+	0.45+	0.12	9.82

Table 19: Trench 18 list of recorded contexts

4.19.1 Trench 18 was orientated NNW/SSE and located just south of the centre of the site (figure 2). Linear cropmarks, one with a corresponding geophysical anomaly, were plotted to cross the north and south ends. A ditch and a pit were recorded (figure (6)).

4.19.2 Roughly east/west aligned ditch [18/004] had a flat-bottomed U-shaped profile (figure 16, section 26) and contained a single fill [18/003]. No finds were recovered. The northern cropmark coincided with this feature and it is postulated that its westward continuation was recorded as ditch [17/004], possibly of medieval date. Its eastward continuation is not in evidence.

4.19.3 Possibly oval pit [18/006] was located near the centre of the trench and extended beyond its western edge. It had moderately sloping side and a flat base (figure 16, section 27). Its single fill [18/005] was quite similar to the topsoil, which may indicate a natural or modern origin. No finds were recovered from it.

4.19.4 The linear cropmark/geophysical anomaly plotted at the south end of the trench was not found to coincide with a below-ground archaeological feature.

4.20 Trench 19

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Depth/ Thickness m	Height m AOD
19/001	Topsoil	Dark brownish grey silty sand	30.00	2.00	0.29-0.34	10.29-10.45
19/002	Natural	Orange sand, frequent gravels	30.00	2.00	n/a	9.97-10.10
19/003	Fill	Firm dark brown silty sand	0.42+	0.54	0.25	10.10
19/004	Cut	Sub-circular pit	0.42+	0.54	0.25	9.85

Table 20: Trench 19 list of recorded contexts

4.20.1 Trench 19 was placed c. 12m ENE of Trench 18 and was positioned WSW/ENE (figure 2). Two linear anomalies, one of which was also evident as a cropmark, were plotted to cross the eastern and western ends of the trench. A single pit was recorded (figure 17).

4.20.2 Small sub-circular pit [19/004] was located in the east of the trench, extending into the northern limit of excavation. It had very steep sides and a flat base (figure 17, section 28). It contained a single fill [19/003] that had no finds recoverable in the field. However, due to the frequent amount of charcoal and fired clay, a bulk sample (<10>) was taken from which fragments of at least four cylindrical loomweights (RF <2>) of Bronze Age date and fragments of a possible spindle whorl or slingshot (RF <3>) of unknown date, were recovered.

4.20.3 None of the cropmarks/geophysical anomalies plotted in this vicinity were found as below ground remains within this trench.

4.21 Trench 20

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Depth/ Thickness m	Height m AOD
20/001	Topsoil	Dark brownish grey silty sand	30.00	2.00	0.28-0.34	10.03-10.63
20/002	Natural	Orange sand, frequent gravels	30.00	2.00	n/a	9.66-10.30
20/003	Fill	Loose mid brown silty sand	1.0+	2.42	0.18	9.79
20/004	Fill	Loose mid yellowish brown sand	1.0+	1.20	0.26	9.61
20/005	Cut	Ditch	1.0+	2.42	0.44	9.35

Table 21: Trench 20 list of recorded contexts

4.21.1 Trench 20 was located toward the southeast of the site, along its east boundary (figure 2). It was orientated NNW/SSE. Two cropmarks, one also defined by a dog-legged geophysical anomaly, were plotted to cross the north and south ends. A single ditch was found to be present (figure 18).

4.21.2 Ditch [20/005] was located at the south end of the trench. Its NW side was stepped, while the SE edge had a more gradual, convex slope down to a concave base (figure 18, section 29). Both fills [20/003], [20/004] were quite sterile, with only a single piece of oyster shell recovered from the upper deposit [20/003]. The ditch was recorded to curve to the south; however, its course was quite difficult to distinguish from the natural and it appeared to not extend into Trench 26 to the south. It corresponded to the plotted location of the southern cropmark/anomaly which shows a distinct kink or dog-leg that may be real.

4.21.3 The northern cropmark was not found to coincide with any archaeological remains in this trench.

4.21.4 A 1 x 1m test pit was hand excavated at the NNW end of the trench, yielding one sherd of 19th-20th century pottery from the topsoil [20/001].

4.22 Trench 21

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Depth/ Thickness m	Height m AOD
21/001	Topsoil	Dark brownish grey silty sand	30.00	2.00	0.42-0.64	9.91-10.76
21/002	Natural	Orange sand, frequent gravels	30.00	2.00	n/a	9.55-10.16
21/003	Cut	Unknown feature	0.68+	0.21+		
21/004	Fill	Mid brownish grey sandy silt	0.68+	0.21+		9.67

Table 22: Trench 21 list of recorded contexts

4.22.1 Trench 21 was located c.8m south of Trench 17 and positioned on a NW/SE alignment, toward the western edge of the site (figure 2). It was positioned to investigate two linear cropmarks/archaeological anomalies plotted to cross the trench.

4.22.2 A NNW/SSE aligned ditch crossed the southeast of the trench. It was not excavated here, as it was determined to be the same cropmark/geophysical anomaly ditch as investigated as [12/004] and also recorded in Trench 17. It was c.1.80m wide in this trench.

4.22.3 A 1 x 1m test pit was hand-excavated at the southeast end of the trench. The edge of a cut feature, [21/003], was uncovered underneath the topsoil. Only very limited excavation of its fill [21/004] was possible, with two pieces of Early to Middle Bronze Age pottery recovered from the top of it.

4.23 Trench 22

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Depth/ Thickness m	Height m AOD
22/001	Topsoil	Dark brownish grey silty sand	30.00	2.00	0.35-0.37	8.54-9.59
22/002	Natural	Orange sand, frequent gravels	30.00	2.00	n/a	8.17-9.23
22/003	Fill	Soft mid brownish grey sandy silt	1.0+	0.63	0.25	8.14
22/004	Cut	Ditch	1.0+	0.63	0.25	7.80
22/005	Fill	Soft mid orange brown sandy silt	1.0+	0.99	0.23	9.13
22/006	Cut	Ditch	1.0+	0.99	0.23	8.89

Table 23: Trench 22 list of recorded contexts

4.23.1 Trench 22 was located in the southwest corner of the site and was orientated NNE/SSW (figure 2). It was positioned to investigate a linear cropmark crossing the centre of the trench and two pit-like discrete geophysical anomalies. Two ditches were encountered (figure 20).

4.23.2 Ditch [22/004] was located at the southern end of the trench, running E/W. It had a V-shaped profile with a narrow concave base (figure 20, section 30). Its single fill [22/003] appeared to have accumulated naturally during the ditch's use and contained no finds. The ditch appears to extend east into Trench 23, as [23/004], but was not traced any further.

4.23.3 Ditch [22/006] crossed the northern end of the trench on a NE/SW alignment. It had a broad U-shaped profile with a slightly concave base (figure 20, section 31). It contained a single fill [22/005] that looked like the result of natural silting; no finds were recovered.

4.23.4 No archaeological features were found to coincide with any of the plotted cropmarks/anomalies, either linear or discrete. However, a few patches of natural silt interrupted the regular natural orange sand with gravel that might have been the origin of these.

4.24 Trench 23

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Depth/ Thickness m	Height m AOD
23/001	Topsoil	Dark brownish grey silty sand	30.00	2.00	0.34-0.51	8.70-9.71
23/002	Natural	Orange sand, frequent gravels	30.00	2.00	n/a	8.29-9.32
23/003	Fill	Soft mid brownish grey sandy silt	1.0+	0.93	0.12	8.25
23/004	Cut	Ditch	1.0+	0.93	0.12	8.13

Table 24: Trench 23 list of recorded contexts

4.24.1 Trench 23 was located east of Trench 22, in the southwest of the site, and was aligned NNW/SSE (figure 2). It was positioned to investigate the plotted locations of two linear cropmarks/geophysical anomalies at either end.

4.24.2 East/west aligned ditch [23/004] crossed the southern end of the trench. It appeared to be the continuation of ditch [22/004]; however, its profile differed her, being more of a broad U-shape, and shallower (figure 21, section 32). Its single fill [23/003] appeared to have accumulated naturally during the ditch's use and contained no finds.

4.24.3 No archaeological feature coincided with the northern plotted cropmark/geophysical anomaly. However, patches of the silty natural interrupting the natural orange sand were again observed in this area.

4.25 Trench 24

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Depth/ Thickness m	Height m AOD
24/001	Topsoil	Dark brownish grey silty sand	30.00	2.00	0.33-0.46	9.43-9.62
24/002	Natural	Orange sand, frequent gravels	30.00	2.00	n/a	8.97-9.29
24/003	Fill	Firm mid greyish brown sandy silt	1.0+	2.30	0.30	9.05
24/004	Fill	Compact light grey sandy silt	1.0+	1.30	0.31	8.75
24/005	Cut	Ditch	1.0+	2.30	0.61	8.44
24/006	Fill	Soft mid orange brown sandy silt	1.0+	0.38+	0.11+	9.14
24/007	Cut	Ditch	1.0+	0.38+	0.11+	9.03

Table 25: Trench 24 list of recorded contexts

4.25.1 Trench 24 was orientated WSW/ENE and positioned to investigate the extensive linear cropmark relating to the mapped historic boundary at its west end. A further small linear geophysical anomaly was plotted to cross the east of the trench (figure 2). Two ditches were encountered (figure 22).

4.25.2 The post-medieval boundary ditch was exposed at the western end of the trench and investigated. Its cut [24/005] was 2.3m wide and 0.6m deep, with a variable profile featuring a steep, concave ENE side and a steep and stepped edge on the WSW side culminating in a flattish base (figure 22, section 33). It contained two fills [24/003] and [24/004], both of which appeared to have accumulated naturally. One piece of post-medieval CBM was recovered from the upper fill [24/003]. Clearly coinciding with the cropmark and geophysical anomaly that defined this historic boundary, its northern continuation was recorded in Trenches 9 and 13.

4.25.3 The southern edge of probable linear ditch [24/007] was recorded at the eastern end of the trench. Broadly east/west aligned, it had a gradually sloping, concave southern side. Its fill [24/006] was observed to have likely accumulated during the ditch's use; no finds were recovered. It is possible that the eastward continuation of this ditch was recorded in Trench 25 as [25/004].

4.25.4 No archaeological feature was found to correspond to the short linear geophysical anomaly detected in the east half of the trench.

4.26 Trench 25

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Depth/ Thickness m	Height m AOD
25/001	Topsoil	Dark brownish grey silty sand	30.00	2.00	0.29-0.32	9.08-9.93
25/002	Natural	Orange sand, frequent gravels	30.00	2.00	n/a	8.66-9.60
25/003	Fill	Loose dark brown silty sand	1.0+	1.44	0.28	9.33
25/004	Cut	Ditch	1.0+	1.44	0.28	9.05

Table 26: Trench 25 list of recorded contexts

4.26.1 Trench 25 was located toward the southeast corner of the site and orientated NNW/SSE (figure 2). It was positioned to investigate two linear cropmarks, one with a corresponding geophysical anomaly, that were plotted to cross the north and south ends. The remains of a single ditch were found (figure 23).

4.26.2 Ditch [25/004] crossed the trench on a ENE/WSW alignment. Some 1/44m wide and only 0.28m deep, its profile was varied with a moderately steep, concave NNW side and a gradually stepped SSE side, culminating in a flattish base (figure 23, section 24). No finds were recovered from the single, naturally accumulated fill [25/003]. This ditch is very probably the eastern continuation of [24/007]. This, and its further eastward course, would appear to be substantiated by the linear cropmark slightly offset to the north of its projected line.

4.26.3 The southern cropmark/geophysical anomaly was not found to coincide with an archaeological feature; however, similar to other trenches, a large patch of natural silt was present amongst the general orange sand with gravels. This said, it is notable that the cropmark /geophysical anomaly maintains a relatively regular course to the east of Trench 25 and conspicuously aligns with the ditch in the south ends of Trenches 22 and 23 (22/004 and 23/004]).

4.26.4 A 1 x 1m test pit was hand excavated at the northern end of the trench from which two pieces of post-medieval CBM and a fragment of medieval pottery were recovered from the topsoil [25/001].

4.27 Trench 26

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Depth/ Thickness m	Height m AOD
26/001	Topsoil	Dark brownish grey silty sand	30.00	2.00	0.31-0.32	9.54-10.02
26/002	Natural	Orange sand, frequent gravels	30.00	2.00	n/a	9.22-9.70

Table 27: Trench 26 list of recorded contexts

4.27.1 Located in the southeast corner of the site, NW/SE aligned Trench 26 was positioned to investigate the proximity of linear cropmarks and geophysical plotted in this vicinity of the site (figure 2).

4.27.2 No archaeological features were identified to be present in the trench. Large patches of light brown silt were investigated and determined to be natural deposits interrupting the orange sand with gravel. These areas coincided with the detected anomalies.

4.27.3 A 1 x 1m test pit was hand excavated in the northwest end of the trench, yielding two pieces of Post-Medieval CBM and two pieces of fire-cracked flint from the topsoil [26/001].

4.28 Trench 27

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Depth/ Thickness m	Height m AOD
27/001	Topsoil	Dark brownish grey silty sand	30.00	2.00	0.52-0.59	8.53-9.45
27/002	Natural	Orange sand, frequent gravels	30.00	2.00	n/a	8.14-8.85
27/003	Cut	Ditch	1.0+	1.79	0.31	7.86
27/004	Fill	Compact light yellow brown sand	1.0+	1.04	0.16	8.02
27/005	Fill	Friable mid greyish brown silty sand	1.0+	1.79	0.20	8.17
27/006	Cut	Oval pit	1.10+	0.90+	0.19	8.14
27/007	Fill	Friable mid greyish brown silty sand	1.10+	0.90+	0.19	8.33

Table 28: Trench 27 list of recorded contexts

4.28.1 Trench 27 was located midway along the southern edge of the site and aligned NW/SE (figure 2). It was positioned to investigate a cropmark plotted to cross its northern end and a pit-like anomaly at its southern end. A ditch and a pit were recorded (figure 24).

4.28.2 WSW/ENE aligned ditch [27/003] crossed the southern end of the trench, at the plotted position of the discrete, pit-like, geophysical anomaly. The 1.8m wide, but relatively shallow, cut had a broad U-shaped profile with a concave base (figure 24, section 35). Its two fills appeared to have accumulated through natural silting/slumping. One piece of post-medieval CBM was recovered from the upper fill [27/005]. The alignment of this ditch corresponds to a field boundary still marked on the current OS map. It is perhaps likely that this was infilled relatively recently and may be part of the same field system as the NNW/SSE aligned ditch through Trenches 9, 13, and 24.

4.28.3 Probably oval pit [27/006] was located near the centre of the trench and extended beyond the limit of excavation. The 0.19m deep cut had a gradually sloping, concave western side with a flat base (figure 24, section 36). It contained a single fill [27/007], which appeared to have accumulated naturally and contained no finds. There was no clear function of this pit and it perhaps could be of natural origin.

4.28.4 No archaeological feature was identified at the northern end of the trench, where the NE/SW linear cropmark was plotted to cross.

4.29 Trench 28

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Depth/ Thickness m	Height m AOD
28/001	Topsoil	Dark brownish grey silty sand	30.00	2.00	0.38-0.41	8.53-9.05
28/002	Subsoil	Dark brown sandy silt with gravel	30.00	2.00	0.10-0.14	8.28-8.61
28/003	Natural	Orange sand, frequent gravels	30.00	2.00	n/a	8.14-8.50
28/004	Fill	Loose mid brown sandy gravel	1.0+	2.12	0.50	8.56
28/005	Fill	Compact light grey sand	1.0+	0.71	0.31	8.06
28/006	Cut	Ditch	1.0+	2.12	0.81	7.75
28/007	Fill	Loose light brown sandy silt with gravel	1.0+	2.43	0.27	8.62
28/008	Cut	Ditch	1.0+	2.43	0.27	8.35
28/009	Fill	Loose dark blackish brown silty sand	0.34	0.33	0.14	8.58
28/010	Cut	Posthole	0.34	0.33	0.14	8.44
28/011	Fill	Loose mid brown sandy gravel	1.0+	2.40	0.50	8.53
28/012	Cut	Ditch	1.0+	2.40	0.50	8.03
28/013	Fill	Firm mid greyish brown sandy silt	0.50+	0.32	0.17	8.54
28/014	Cut	Irregular pit	0.50+	0.32	0.17	8.37
28/015	Fill	Loose dark brownish grey silty sand	0.96	0.34	0.17	8.54
28/016	Cut	Oval pit	0.96	0.34	0.17	8.37
28/017	Fill	Firm dark brown silty sand	0.64	0.57	0.25	8.52
28/018	Cut	Circular pit	0.64	0.57	0.25	8.27

Table 29: Trench 28 list of recorded contexts

4.29.1 Trench 28 was located in the southeast corner of the site, on a WSW/ENE alignment parallel with the both the site edge and the historic boundary still shown on the current OS map (figure 2). It positioned to investigate two curvilinear paired cropmarks/geophysical anomalies, with a number of discrete pit-like anomalies also in general proximity. A number of ditches and small pits/postholes were encountered (figure 25).

4.29.2 Ditch [28/006] was located at the eastern end of the trench, coinciding with the easterly of the two curving geophysical anomalies. Any curvature was difficult to discern within the confines of the trench. The cut was 2.1m wide and 0.8m deep. Its profile varied with a steep, convex WSW side and a steep, stepped ENE side with a concave base (figure 25, section 37). It contained two fills [28/004], [28/005] that appeared to have accumulated naturally during the ditch's use. No finds were recovered.

4.29.3 At the west end of the trench, 2.4m wide ditch [28/012] had a similar, though shallower, profile to [28/006] (figure 25, section 38). Its single fill [28/011] was identical to the upper fill [28/004] of cut [28/006] and no finds were recovered.

It is possible that these two features represent opposing sides of a similar ring-ditch feature to those recorded in Trenches 3 and 8/9, with an apparent external diameter of c.18.5m.

- 4.29.4 Shallow north/south ditch was located immediately west of [28/006]. It was relatively broad and shallow, with gradual sloping sides and a flattish base (figure 25, section 37). Its single fill [28/007] appeared quite similar to the natural silt patches scattered across the site and it is suspected that this feature is in fact of natural origin. No finds were recovered and it was not detected as either a cropmark or a geophysical anomaly.
- 4.29.5 A small circular posthole [28/010] was cut into the upper fill [28/004] of ditch [28/006]. It had a V-shaped profile and contained a single fill [28/009] with no finds. No other postholes were located in the vicinity to suggest a structure; it is likely this feature is un-associated with the putative ring-ditch and perhaps more likely associated with the nearby historic boundary.
- 4.29.6 Three pits were located within the interior of the putative ring-ditch. Small oval pit [28/016] had moderately steep sides and a concave base (figure 25, section 39). Its single fill [28/015] contained no finds and was remarkably similar to the topsoil. It is likely this feature was of modern or natural origin.
- 4.29.7 Small pit/posthole [28/014] appeared quite irregular in plan and extended beyond the northern trench edge. It had a moderately steep, concave side and concave base. It contained a single fill [28/013] from which a single piece of bone, identified as a cat humerus, was recovered.
- 4.29.8 Small circular pit [28/018] was located just east of ditch [28/012] and had almost vertical sides and a flattish base (figure 25, section 40). Its single fill [28/017] did not contain any finds, but looked as though it may have been intentionally backfilled. It is possible the feature represents a large posthole within the possible ring-ditch.
- 4.29.9 A 1 x 1m test pit was hand excavated at the western end of the trench. Two pieces of post-medieval CBM, one piece of fire-cracked flint, and a fragment of a possible iron tool (RF <1>), of unknown date, were retrieved from the topsoil [28/001].

5.0 FINDS

5.1 Summary

5.1.1 A moderately large assemblage of finds was recovered during the evaluation on land off of Fen Lane, East Mersea. 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. Bulk finds are quantified by material and context in Appendix 1; in addition, three registered finds are quantified in Table 36. All finds have been packed and stored following ClfA guidelines (2014d).

5.2 Flintwork by Karine Le Hégarat

5.2.1 The evaluation produced a total of 31 pieces of struck flint weighing 319g (Table 30). The artefacts were recovered through hand-collection and from bulk soil samples. A small quantity of unworked burnt flint fragments (1541g) was also found, the majority deriving from soil samples (1481g). The burnt fragments were small. They displayed a reddish colour suggesting that the flint has been only slightly burnt. Burnt unworked flint is frequently associated with prehistoric activities, but the small quantity and condition of this assemblage could indicate a later date.

	Flakes	Bladelets, blades and blade-like flakes	Chip	Irregular waste	Core	Retouched forms	Total
No	17	5	1	1	1	6	31

Table 30: Quantification of worked flint by type

5.2.2 The majority of the pieces of struck flint (20 pieces) came from Trench 11, with the remaining pieces being thinly distributed over Trenches 8, 9, 10, 17 and 28. Overall, the flints are mid to dark grey with a thin stained outer surface. The condition varies from good to poor.

5.2.3 A large proportion of the assemblage of worked flint consists of unretouched pieces of flint débitage. The bladelet from [11/003] is a product of a blade-orientated industry, and it is likely to be Early Neolithic in date. Overall, flakes dominate (see Table 30). They are mainly small. They display a mixed hammer mode of production. Several display plain and sometimes cortical platforms, but others exhibit evidence for platform preparation. Thin flake scar removals were also occasionally recorded on the dorsal faces. Based on technological traits, the assemblage indicates a Neolithic – Early Bronze Age flake-orientated industry. The single platform flake core from [11/003] was used to remove small thin flakes. It could date to the Neolithic or Early Bronze Age.

- 5.2.4 A total of six modified pieces were recovered. They comprise three scrapers (an end scraper [28/001], a scraper [17/001] and a disc scraper [11/003]), and three retouched flakes. The disc scraper weighs 71g; it is made on a thick flake with a thick platform. It exhibits direct semi-abrupt and abrupt retouch along the distal end forming a convex edge. This type of scraper is characteristic of Middle–Late Neolithic date. The remaining retouch pieces cannot be dated with any certainty, and only a broad Neolithic to Bronze Age date range can be proposed for them.
- 5.2.5 The assemblage provides limited evidence for prehistoric presence at the site. No diagnostic pieces were recovered, but the disc scraper from pit fill context [11/003] strongly suggests Middle / Late Neolithic activity. Several pieces from this pit reflect flint use during the Neolithic to Early Bronze Age.

5.3 Prehistoric and Roman Pottery by Anna Doherty

- 5.3.1 A moderate-sized assemblage of prehistoric and Roman pottery (119 hand-collected sherds, weighing 1.54 kg, plus additional material collected from environmental samples) was recovered during the evaluation, including Neolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age and Roman sherds. The pottery has been examined with a x20 binocular microscope for the purposes of spot-dating and characterisation. It has not yet been fully quantified according to a fabric and form type-series. It is recommended that the pottery should be retained for possible full recording in the event of further archaeological work at the site.

Prehistoric

- 5.3.2 The earliest material comes from fill [11/003] of pit [11/004], which produced 31 hand-collected sherds, weighing 284g, as well as a further 155g of pottery recovered from environmental sample <8>. Most of the pottery appears to derive from c. 4-5 different vessels. Many of the sherds are fairly thick-walled with sparse but extremely coarse and ill-sorted flint, ranging from 1-7mm, set within a dense low-fired clay matrix. Accompanying the flint-tempered sherds are a few low-fired sandy wares, including one group of sherds in a very vesicular fabric with frequent voids deriving from burnt-out organic matter. Although no diagnostic feature sherds are present, the range of fabrics are almost certainly indicative of an Early Neolithic Mildenhall/Plain Bowl group. The pottery in fill [11/003] was associated with a moderate group of worked flints. Most of this material was broadly consistent with an Early Neolithic date, although one disc-scraper was considered characteristic of the Middle/Late Neolithic. The entirely undecorated character of the pottery would be very atypical of either of these periods. One other partial rimsherd, found in topsoil context [25/001], probably also belongs to the Mildenhall/Plain Bowl tradition. It comprises a crudely-formed necked profile, again associated with a coarse, very ill-sorted flint-tempered fabric.
- 5.3.3 Two relatively thick-walled conjoining sherds, in a low-fired coarse oxidised grog-tempered fabric, were noted in context [21/004], the fill of an unexcavated feature [21/003]. One possible example of coarse impressed decoration is present on the exterior surface although the abraded nature of the sherd makes this uncertain. The sherds are likely to belong to one of the

Bronze Age urn traditions, i.e. Early Bronze Age Collared and Biconical Urns or Middle Bronze Age Ardleigh-style Deverel-Rimbury (DR) Barrel and Bucket Urns. If the pottery is of DR type then it is likely to be from the early part of the tradition since later Ardleigh vessels tend to be flint-tempered and are less likely to feature impressed decoration.

- 5.3.4 Isolated sherds in moderately-coarse flint-tempered wares were found in fill [3/009] of ditch [3/010] and fill [16/004] of pit [16/005]. These contain moderate quantities of moderately-coarse flint (c.0.5-3mm) in non-sandy background matrixes. These sherds are difficult to date with certainty but they are most typical of the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age.
- 5.4.4 A moderate-sized diagnostic pot group (26 sherds, weighing 368g) – likely belonging to the earlier part of the Middle Iron Age – was recorded in fill [3/014] of pit [3/016]. The fabrics in this group are predominantly fairly coarse, quartz-rich wares. One or two examples contain some rare or sparse calcined flint and some feature fine linear burnt organic matter. The most substantial rim is from a jar with a carinated shoulder and a necked profile with slightly flaring, squared rim. Several smaller rims of broadly similar type are also present, including one with light finger-tipping along the rim top. These are form and decorative elements that have their origins in the Early Iron Age; however, the near absence of flint-tempering from this group – together with the occurrence of one other jar form with a more sinuous necked profile and rounded rim – probably places this group in the earlier part of the Middle Iron Age. Contexts [9/003], [10/006] and [17/005] each also produced a few bodysherds in probable Middle Iron Age sandy wares, occasionally containing one or two calcined flint inclusions. In ditch fill [9/003], two such sandy fabrics were associated with a somewhat coarser flint-tempered ware with a quartz-free matrix; this may therefore represent a residual piece of Early Neolithic or Late Bronze Age date.

Roman

- 5.4.5 Two moderate-sized groups of Roman pottery were recorded from fill [2/004] of ditch [2/006] and fill [6/005] of ditch [6/004]. Although neither is very closely datable, both are of broadly later Roman type (c.3rd-4th century AD). The majority of the pottery in both groups is made up by undiagnostic grey ware bodysherds. In terms of more diagnostic material, the former includes a sherd from a black-burnished style plain rim dish (Going 1987, form B1) and a jar probably of Going's type G34/35. Also present are a few sherds in a heavily-leached shelly ware.
- 5.4.6 Context [6/005] includes a strongly-everted example of a black-burnished style jar (Going 1987, form G9 3/4), a necked jar with a hooked rim profile (G24 2.1), the base from a tall beaker form, a large/storage jar with a beaded rim profile, sherds from a decorated central Gaulish samian Dragendorff 37 bowl and a bodysherd in an unsourced red/brown colour-coated ware probably influenced by the Oxfordshire/Hadham tradition. In addition, contexts [1/003], [8/005] and [12/003] each produced one or two bodysherds in Roman fabrics which are not closely datable; however, the two sherds in [12/003] are both slightly lower-fired black-surfaced fabrics which may hint they belong to the earlier Roman period. The single sherd from fill [1/003] appears to be residual in a Saxon pit.

5.4 Saxon Pottery by Paul Blinkhorn

5.4.1 The pottery assemblage comprised 26 sherds with a total weight of 330g. It all derives from a single context, fill [1/003] of pit [1/004], and is of Early/Middle Anglo-Saxon (5th – 9th century) date. The following fabric types were noted:

F1: Sand and Chalk. Sparse to moderate quartz up to 0.5mm, rare to sparse rounded chalk fragments up to 2mm. In all cases, the calcareous material had entirely leached out. 3 sherds, 64g.

F2: Sandy Organic. Fine sandy matrix, sparse to moderate organic voids up to 5mm, rare sub-round quartz up to 0.5mm. 9 sherds, 110g.

F3: Quartz. Moderate to dense sub-angular quartz up to 1mm. 13 sherds, 144g.

F4: Organic and Grog. Moderate organic voids up to 5mm, moderate angular red grog fragments up to 3mm. The grog is a fine sandy fabric with rounded quartz up to 0.5mm. 1 sherd, 12g

5.4.2 The assemblage is generally in fairly good condition, and appears reliably stratified. The range of fabric types, based around “brickearth” and/or organic material, is fairly typical of sites in the region, and is similar to those of the early/middle Anglo-Saxon pottery from Colchester (Cotter 2000, 21) and, particularly, Heybridge (Drury and Wickenden 1982, 13-15). The grog-tempered sherd is extremely unusual; such tempering material is rarely found in Anglo-Saxon vessels, but was fairly commonly used by Iron Age and Romano-British manufacturers. Its date must therefore remain uncertain.

5.4.3 Almost all the pottery is undecorated, and very little otherwise diagnostic material was present. One sherd of fabric F3 had what appears to be the terminal of combed, incised lines. Such pottery is usually of 5th – 7th century date (Myres 1977). Two rimsherds were noted, one of which was everted and the other upright. These are both common forms throughout the early/middle Anglo-Saxon periods. One sherd, in fabric F2, is from a sharply carinated, probably biconical vessel, and has a hollow neck above the shoulder. Myres (1977, 3) saw these as largely 5th-century date, but 6th century examples are also known.

5.5 Medieval and Later Pottery by Helen Walker

5.5.1 A total of six sherds of pottery weighing 64g was excavated from five contexts and has been catalogued according to Cunningham’s typology of post-Roman pottery in Essex (Cunningham 1985, 1-16; expanded by Drury et al. 1993 and Cotter 2000). One of Cunningham’s rim form codes is quoted in this report. The pottery data has been entered onto an Excel spreadsheet and the pottery is tabulated by ware in Table 31.

Pottery by ware	Sherd Nos	Wt (g)
Medieval coarseware	1	9
Mill Green fineware	1	1
Post-medieval red earthenware	1	11
Yellow ware	1	29
Nottingham/Derby stoneware	1	8
Modern white earthenware	1	6
<i>Total</i>	6	64

Table 31: Medieval and later pottery quantification, shown in approximate chronological order

Medieval

- 5.5.2 Only two of the sherds are medieval. One is a small abraded sherd of Mill Green fineware (from ditch fill [17/003]) showing typical white slip coating, although no glaze is present, this is datable to the mid-13th to 14th centuries. The second is a medieval coarseware flanged rim (sub-form E5) from a cooking-pot, it was excavated from topsoil [25/001] and is of a type datable to the late 13th to 14th centuries. Both sherds could be contemporary.

Post-medieval

- 5.5.3 The remaining pottery is post-medieval or modern, comprising single sherds of post-medieval red earthenware, yellow ware, Nottingham/Derby stoneware and modern white earthenware. All are from topsoil contexts, apart from the yellow ware sherd that was from the fill of a pit [8/007]. This comprises a fragment of carinated bowl, a form known as London Shape, which is datable to c.1820; although, a later date (of up to the 20th century) cannot be precluded. The sherd of post-medieval red earthenware could be as early as 17th century, although a 19th century date is just as likely. The sherd of Nottingham/Derby stoneware spans the 18th to 20th century and the sherd of modern white earthenware, a fragment from a plate, is 19th to 20th century.
- 5.5.4 The two medieval sherds indicate that there was some activity dating to the later 13th to 14th centuries in the vicinity. The post-medieval/modern pottery could derive from a nearby dwelling, but could equally well be the result of muck spreading of farmyard midden or deliberate ditch infill material that also contained discarded pottery.

5.6 Ceramic Building Material by Isa Benedetti-Whitton

- 5.6.1 Twenty-six pieces of ceramic building material (CBM) weighing 1076g were hand-collected from twelve evaluation contexts. Much of the assemblage was extremely fragmentary and abraded. The CBM that survived is not particularly dateable, particularly the peg tile fragments, which were the prevalent type of CBM found. However, a few contexts produced CBM that was definitely Roman, although are most likely to be redeposited fragments. There was not enough to suggest it was debris from a nearby structure and it was in very poor condition.
- 5.6.2 Early Saxon pit fill [1/003] produced the greatest quantity of Roman material, primarily shattered fragments of one or more Roman bricks, and also a small fragment of a curved roof tile or 'imbrex'. A piece of box flue tile was

recovered from topsoil [13/001] (alongside a much later fragment of peg tile) and a very chipped additional fragment of imbrex from topsoil [16/001].

- 5.6.3 The bulk of the remaining CBM is most likely of early/mid post-medieval date. The tile and brick pieces were made from a very similar red clay fabric with sparse unsorted quartz. Both brick pieces were essentially heavily abraded spall fragments, and thus revealed very few datable characteristics. However, the fabric itself was similar to early post-medieval fabrics, being underfired and quite fine, and so a date range of c.1500-1700 is suggested for the post-Roman CBM. Peg tile changes very little in form between c.1400-1800 and so cannot be assigned a more specific date.

5.7 Fired Clay by Elke Raemen

- 5.7.1 A small assemblage of fired clay comprising 59 fragments (weight 1256g) was recovered from four individually numbered contexts. Both hand-collected pieces and fragments retrieved from the bulk soil samples are included. All fragments are abraded and in a silty orange fabric. Fabric details are outlined in Table 32.

Fabric	Description
F1a	Silty orange clay with common fine quartz, moderate fine black and red iron oxides and rare moderate voids/organic temper
F1b	Silty orange clay with common fine quartz, moderate fine black and red iron oxides and moderate/common organics including elongated impressions
F2	Silty orange clay with moderate fine quartz and moderate medium quartz

Table 32: Overview of the fired clay fabrics.

- 5.7.2 The majority of fragments are amorphous. Included are pieces from [19/003] (sample <10>), all in Fabric 2. Most of these are likely to derive from loom weights in the same fabric from this context, which have been discussed with the Registered Finds (RF <2>).
- 5.7.3 Of interest are two probable briquetage vessel fragments (Fabric 1b), both found in [12/003]. They derive from the base or the rectangular wall of a crude vessel. One fragment retains both surfaces and measures 14mm thick.

5.8 Geological Material by Luke Barber

- 5.8.1 Three contexts produced stone during the evaluation; two hand-collected pieces, with the remainder coming from bulk soil sample <5>. The assemblage has been fully listed in Table 33.

Context	Stone type	No/weight	Comments
1/003 <5>	Ferruginous poorly cemented ill-sorted sandstone	1/8g	Weathered
9/003	Quartzite	2/116g	Cobble fragments. Heavily burnt
11/003	Milky quartz	1/20g	Pebble fragment

Table 33: Stone assemblage

5.8.2 With the exception of the soft ferruginous ‘sandstone’ (possibly of Tertiary origin), the assemblage consists of cobbles/pebble fragments in stone types probably originating to the north and west/north-west. All types are to be expected to occur naturally in the glacial till or Kesgrave (Thames) Gravels. With the exception of the single heat-damaged piece from context [9/003] there is no obvious sign of human modification.

5.8.3 The stone assemblage from the site is of naturally available local types and lacks deliberately worked pieces. As such, the material has been discarded.

5.9 Metallurgical Remains by Luke Barber

5.9.1 The evaluation produced a very small quantity of material initially classified as slag. The whole assemblage is listed in Table 34. Virtually all of the material was recovered from the magnetic fractions of the environmental residues retrieved from bulk soil samples.

Context	Sample	Fraction	Slag type	Weight	Comments
1/003	5	Magnetic	Magnetic fines	<1g	
1/003	5	Magnetic	Hammerscale	<1g	Flakes (to 2mm) x2
5/010	1	Magnetic	Magnetic fines	1g	
10/006	3	Magnetic	Magnetic fines	<1g	
16/004	2	-	Clinker	<1g	x2 scraps. Black, aerated
16/004	2	Magnetic	Magnetic fines	<1g	Flakes (to 2mm) <10, spheroid x2
19/003	10	Magnetic	Magnetic fines	<1g	

Table 34: Quantification of ‘slag’

5.9.2 Granules of clay and ferruginous stone whose magnetic properties have been enhanced through burning make up the majority of the material (the magnetic fines). These are not indicative of any particular process and could have been unintentionally formed by any burning event, including bonfires and domestic hearths.

5.9.3 The two pieces of clinker are waste from burning coal, most probably during the post-medieval period. However, the pieces are so small they could easily be intrusive.

5.9.4 The only evidence of actual metalworking comes from the two hammerscale flakes from Early Saxon pit fill [1/003]. This indicates some iron smithing activity in the vicinity, but as quantities are negligible, this was clearly not taking place near the excavated areas. The material could easily be intrusive into contexts and is not a reliable assemblage to comment on economy.

5.9.5 The slag assemblage is negligible in size and does not hold any potential for further analysis beyond that undertaken for this report. The material has been discarded.

5.10 Bulk Metalwork by Elke Raemen

5.10.1 Four fragments of metalwork (weight 47g) were recovered from three different contexts. None are intrinsically dateable. The single lead object, from Early Saxon pit fill [1/003], comprises an off-cut. The remainder of the small assemblage is iron and includes a general purpose nail ([1/003]), a heavy duty nail fragment (Late Roman ditch fill [2/004]) and a small hobnail, stud or tack shank fragment (possibly Middle Iron Age pit fill [10/006]).

5.11 Animal Bone by Hayley Forsyth-Magee

5.11.1 A small assemblage of animal bone, containing just three bone fragments weighing 274g, was recovered from the evaluation. The faunal remains were hand-collected from contexts [6/005] and [28/013] and are in a moderate-good level of preservation with minimal signs of surface erosion present. There are no complete bones within the assemblage.

5.11.2 The bones retrieved from later Roman ditch fill [6/005], based on the recovered pottery, included a large mammal rib fragment that had been butchered with a chop mark midshaft. This type of butchery is suggestive of portioning of the carcass. A cattle mandible was also recovered, with adult dentition present that produced a MWS (Mandible Wear Stage) of 51, indicative of a mature individual.

5.11.3 Undated pit/posthole fill [28/013] contained a single bone, identified as a fragment of cat humerus.

5.11.4 No evidence of burning, gnawing, non-metric traits or pathology was recorded. The animal bone assemblage suggests that butchery, domestic refuse disposal and animal-husbandry related activities were undertaken in this area.

5.11 Burnt Bone by Dr Paola Ponce

5.11.1 A small quantity of burnt bone was recovered from context [1/003], the fill of an Early Saxon pit that also contained some residual Roman material, and from context [16/004], the fill of a pit containing a sherd of possible Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age pottery.

5.11.2 The sampled fills underwent flotation and were processed as environmental samples <2> and <5>. Bone fragments were collected and subjected to careful recording and separated in sieve fractions of 2-4mm, 4-8mm and >8mm. The total amount of bone recovered from all contexts was 3.55 grams (Table 35).

Context	Weight (grams)			
	2-4mm	4-8mm	>8mm	Total
[1/003] <5>	0.05	1.10	2.20	3.35
[16/004] <2>	0.05	0.15	-	0.20
<i>Total</i>	<i>0.10</i>	<i>1.25</i>	<i>2.20</i>	<i>3.55</i>

Table 35: Quantification of burnt bone

5.11.3 Due to the small overall quantity of bone and high degree of fragmentation it was not possible to identify whether it was of animal or human origin.

5.11.4 With regards to the degree of oxidation of the organic component of bone, it was noted that 100% of the assemblage was fully oxidised white which suggests a highly efficient burning process at temperatures above c.600°C. Finally, no evident pathology was observed.

5.12 Shell by Elke Raemen

5.12.1 A medium-sized assemblage comprising 126 shell and shell fragments (weight 1483g) was recovered from three different evaluation contexts. Most derived from later Roman ditch fill [6/005], which contained 124 fragments and valves of Common Oyster (*Ostrea edulis*), representing 64 individuals. A total of 16 lower valves are distorted, suggesting overcrowding. Low levels of parasitic activity were noted and about a third of individuals are immature. Topsoil [13/001] and undated ditch fill [20/003] also each contained an oyster valve fragment, the latter again very distorted suggesting overcrowding.

5.13 Registered Finds by Elke Raemen

5.13.1 A total of three registered find numbers were allocated (Table 36). None of the registered finds require further conservation.

5.13.2 Potentially the earliest is a fired clay group (RF <2>) recovered from pit fill [19/003] sample <10>. It comprises several cylindrical loom weight fragments of Bronze Age date, amounting to a minimum of four weights. Fragments are very abraded.

5.13.3 RF <3>, also from [19/003] sample <10>, comprises a small fragment of shaped fired clay, possibly from a spindle whorl or a slingshot.

5.13.4 Finally, RF <1> represents a small iron tool fragment, possibly a chisel, from topsoil [28/001]. It is undiagnostic of date.

RF No	Context	Object	Material	Period	Wt (g)	Comments
1	28/001	?TOOL	IRON	UNK	17	Frag
2	19/003	LOOM	CERA	BA	2930	Minimum of four cylindrical loomweights
3	19/003	UNK	CERA	UNK	14	Poss slingshot or spindle whorl frag

Table 36: Summary of the registered finds

6.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLES by Mariangela Vitolo

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 Ten bulk soil samples were collected from pit fills for the recovery of environmental remains such as plant macrofossils, wood charcoal, fauna and Mollusca and to assist with finds retrieval. The following report summarises the contents of the environmental samples and discusses the information provided by the charred plant remains and charcoal on the arable economy and local environment of the site as well as fuel selection and use.

6.2 Methods

6.2.1 The bulk soil samples, ranging from 10 to 40L in volume, were processed by flotation 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 (Appendix 2). 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 (Appendix 3). 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 and 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 >4mm fraction of the residues. Quantification and taxonomic identifications of charcoal are recorded in Appendix 2 and nomenclature follows Stace (1997).

6.3 Results

Samples <1> [5/010], <2> [16/004], <3> [10/006], <4> [8/004], <5 > [1/003], <6> [3/018], <7> [3/014], <8> [11/003], <9> [3/009] and <10> [19/003].

6.3.1 Flots contained from 60 to 90% modern uncharred material, including rootlets, twigs and seeds of goosefoots (*Chenopodium* sp.) and ivy-leaved speedwell (*Veronica hederifolia*). This material indicates a degree of disturbance across the site. Charred plant remains were abundant in the fills of possibly modern pit [5/011] and Saxon pit [1/004]. These included

caryopses of wheat (*Triticum* sp.), barley (*Hordeum* sp.) and oat (*Avena* sp.), as well as seeds of possible crop weeds, such as stinking mayweed (*Anthemis cotula*), brome (*Bromus* sp.), grasses (Poaceae), daisy family (Asteraceae), knotweeds (Polygonaceae) and the rose family (Rosaceae).

6.3.2 Residues contained charcoal, a small amount of burnt bone and finds, including pottery, fired clay, fire cracked and worked flint, magnetic and industrial material. Identifications of woody taxa were attempted on charcoal fragments from pits [16/005], [1/004] and [3/016]. Ten fragments were randomly selected from each context. Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), oak (*Quercus* sp.) and field maple (*Acer campestre*) occurred with higher frequency, whilst cherry/blackthorn (*Prunus* sp.), hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and the Maloideae sub-family were less frequent. The latter group includes taxa that are not distinguishable on grounds of wood anatomy, such as apple (*Malus* sp.), pear (*Pyrus* sp.), whitebeams (*Sorbus* sp.) and hawthorn (*Crataegus* sp.). Charcoal preservation was generally good, except for a few fragments that displayed distortions of the wood anatomy. Roundwood fragments were not common.

6.4 Discussion

6.4.1 Retrieval of archaeobotanical remains from the bulk soil samples was variable. Whilst a degree of contamination was visible in all contexts, two pits yielded a large amount of charred crop remains. Caryopses of wheat and barley, as well as seeds of wild plants were abundant in these contexts and they could provide information on diet, agrarian economy and crop husbandry, as well as dating evidence, if required.

6.4.2 The woody taxa suggest that deciduous and mixed woodland, as well as woodland margins, scrub and hedgerows were utilised for fuel procurement. Both ash and oak are excellent fuels (Taylor 1981) and they might have been preferentially selected because of their burning properties.

6.4.3 These samples have shown that there is potential for the local deposits for the preservation of both charred plant macrofossils and charcoal. If further excavation work is carried out at the site, sampling should continue to focus on well-sealed primary deposits. In addition, if dating of the contexts is refined, samples <1> and <5> can be recommended for plant macrofossil analysis.

7.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Overview of stratigraphic sequence

- 7.1.1 Natural geology was encountered in all trenches at between 8.07m AOD (Trench 22) and 10.92m AOD (Trench 9). It consisted of primarily of orange sand with frequent gravel with a secondary type of light brown sandy silt occurring in patches throughout most of the trenches.
- 7.1.2 Above the natural deposits in four of the trenches (4, 5, 8, and 28) was a subsoil consisting of a light greyish brown sandy silt with occasional pebbles. Rare flecks of post-medieval CBM were noted in this layer. The evidence suggests that the subsoil was likely an intermittent interface between the natural deposit and the topsoil, possibly due to variable ploughing depth. A dark brownish grey silty sand topsoil overlaid the subsoil, or else the natural deposits, in all trenches. These overburden deposits generally comprised a 0.3-0.44m thickness, but in places reached a thickness of 0.6-0.7m.
- 7.1.3 Archaeological features were identified in twenty-three of the twenty-eight evaluation trenches. These were spread across the site with no notable/extensive areas of blank trenches. Almost all were overlain by topsoil and, where present, subsoil and cut directly into the natural deposit; a pit in Trench 5, cut through the subsoil, being the only recorded exception.
- 7.1.4 The range of feature types included pits, postholes, field boundary ditches, and ring-ditches. The greater concentration of features appeared to be in the northwest area of the site with another moderate cluster in the southeast corner (Trench 28). A generally low level of intercut complexity was evident.

7.2 Correlation between cropmark / geophysical survey and evaluation results

- 7.2.1 Most of the evaluation trenches were positioned to investigate and verify the results of the preceding geophysical survey and plotted cropmarks (EHER 2284). While confirming the archaeological origin of some cropmarks and geophysical anomalies, the majority tested by the evaluation have been demonstrated to be in fact of natural origin. Some archaeological features found by the evaluation were not previously detected, presumably due to their contents not being conducive.
- 7.2.2 The majority of the irregular, slightly sinuous, linear cropmarks/geophysical anomalies have been determined to be the product of variations in the natural deposits and have no archaeological significance.
- 7.2.3 The three ring-ditch cropmarks/anomalies at Trenches 3, 8/9 and 28 have been corroborated by the evaluation, with substantial correlating ditch remains being found.
- 7.2.4 The regular/straight linear cropmarks/geophysical anomalies have generally been shown to be indicative of the presence of below-ground remains of ditches, particularly those in the west of the site aligned north/south. It appears that the cropmarks provide a more accurate and expansive

indication of these features than the geophysical survey (e.g. Trenches 18, 25), although a significant proportion of both linear cropmarks and anomalies were established not to correspond to underlying ditch remains (e.g. Trench 1). A number of NE/SW aligned linear cropmarks in the vicinities of Trenches 9, 13, 18 and 24 were not manifest as archaeological features and their regular spacing and orientation suggests that they were former agricultural features perhaps confined to the ploughsoil. Both the cropmarks and the geophysical survey have not successfully detected all archaeological ditches with some of apparent Roman and medieval date being only revealed by evaluation (e.g. Trenches 6, 12/13, 22). As such, the wider extents of these remains are currently unknown.

- 7.2.5 Although relatively few discrete pit-like geophysical anomalies were investigated, of those that were (Trenches 1, 8, 22 and 27) only two were found to correspond with underlying archaeological remains – a pit in Trench 1 and ditch in Trench 27. However, it remains possible that some of the discrete anomalies plotted outside the evaluated trenches indicate the presence of archaeological features such as pits. It is noted that the incidence of discrete archaeological remains is higher than that detected by the geophysical survey, with a greater number of pits, postholes and minor gullies being found in the trenches.

7.3 Deposit survival and impacts

- 7.3.1 Archaeological features were recognised below the modern topsoil and subsoil where present, cutting the natural strata on average between 0.30-0.45m below ground level. Trenches 4, 5, 8, 9, 21, 27, and 28 had deeper overburden sequences up to 0.6-0.7m.
- 7.3.2 Due to the shallow nature of the natural deposits, it can be assumed that most of the archaeological features were truncated to some extent by historic agricultural activity. No other recent impacts, such as land drainage or quarrying, were observed during the evaluation.

7.4 Discussion of the archaeological evidence by period

- 7.4.1 Early Neolithic to post-medieval dates have been established, or are proposed, for a number of the recorded features (figure 26). However, a significant quantity is currently undated.

Earlier Prehistoric

- 7.4.2 A single pit in Trench 11 is of Early Neolithic date. It contained pottery and worked flints that are perhaps indicative of some level of occupation activity in this vicinity of the landscape at this time Pit [11/004] contained a moderate amount of pottery that is almost certainly from the Early Neolithic Mildenhall/Plain Bowl group as well as a small collection of worked flints, including a disc scraper.
- 7.4.3 Part of a feature found in the test-pit at the end of Trench 21 may be of Early to Middle Bronze Age date, pottery of this date being recovered from the top of its fill. A pit in the north end of Trench 16 may be of Middle Bronze Age to

Early Iron Age date.

- 7.4.4 Fragments of four Bronze Age loomweights were recovered from a small pit in Trench 19, which perhaps suggests some occupation activity in the vicinity.
- 7.4.5 A small quantity of residual worked flint dating broadly from the Mesolithic to the Late Bronze Age has also been retrieved by the evaluation. Overall, the evidence of earlier prehistoric remains at this site is sporadic and gives no coherent insights into the nature of land use and occupation.

Iron Age

- 7.4.6 The two northern ring-ditches (Trenches 3 and 8/9) are ostensibly of Iron Age date; a small quantity of pottery of probable Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age date was recovered from that in Trench 3. A pit in its interior contained a diagnostic assemblage of Early/Middle Iron Age pottery. The fill of the Trench 9 ring-ditch contained probable Middle Iron Age pottery and a presumed residual Early Neolithic or Late Bronze Age sherd. The centrally-positioned pit in its interior contained a sherd of 19th-20th century pottery.
- 7.4.7 Given the relatively substantial proportions of these ring-ditches it is unlikely that they represent either foundation trenches or eaves-drip gullies of Iron Age roundhouses. There is also a conspicuous lack of features and artefacts of an occupation nature in the surrounding trenches. A charcoal-rich pit in Trench 10 contained a few sherds of probable Middle Iron Age pottery. The only other Middle/Late Iron Age feature is a pit, at some distance from the ring-ditches, in Trench 17.
- 7.4.8 While not entirely discounted as remains of roundhouses, these ring-ditches seem more characteristic of prehistoric barrow remains. Prior to the Late Iron Age, Iron Age round barrows are very rare. It is possible that these ring-ditches are the remains of earlier barrows (Bronze Age?) that are reused in the Iron Age. It is notable that these ring-ditches are located on an area of high ground in this vicinity of the island, as might be expected of such prehistoric monuments. However, no evidence for a funerary function has been found in the excavated portions of their ditches and interior features to date.

Roman

- 7.4.9 Ditches of definite or probable Roman date were recorded in Trenches 2 and 6. Although neither were traced across multiple trenches, the continuation of the Trench 2 NNW/SSE ditch may be discerned from the cropmarks and geophysical survey results to extend southwards down the edge of the Trench 8 ring-ditch and beyond Trench 10. Together, these ditches may suggest the presence of a rectilinear field system of later Roman date in the north-west of the site.
- 7.4.10 Although the extensive NNW/SSE cropmark/geophysical anomaly down the west side of the site, recorded as a ditch in Trenches 12, 17 and 21, is seemingly aligned with that in Trench 2, only two sherds of broadly-dated Roman pottery were recovered from it. These could be entirely residual. That

said, the Trench 6 Roman ditch and the Trench 22 undated ditch could have run up to it to define further parts of a rectilinear field system.

Early/Middle Anglo-Saxon

7.4.11 The only evidence for Anglo-Saxon activity within the site is the single large and shallow pit in Trench 1. Its fill contained pottery, residual Roman tile, a very small quantity of hammerscale and charred cereals suggestive of rural settlement activity. Together with its overall proportions and flat bottom, this might indicate that the feature could be the partially exposed remains of a *grubenhaus* characteristic of the earlier Saxon period.

7.4.12 It is noted that the full shape and extents of this Saxon feature were not detected by the geophysical survey. It is therefore perhaps possible that other large, discrete and pit-like, geophysical anomalies or cropmarks in its vicinity could identify other potential sunken-featured buildings of this date. However, no conspicuous pairing of pit-like anomalies/cropmarks is obvious that might be indicative of a dispersed settlement.

Medieval (mid 13th-14th century)

7.4.13 The only evidence for Medieval activity was single small pottery sherds recovered from ditch [17/004] and topsoil in Trench 25. It is unclear whether or not the ditch is of medieval date; its sherd of mid 13th–14th century pottery could be residual. However, if it indeed continues eastward as the undated ditch found in Trench 18, it is possible that it predates the north/south post-medieval field boundary recorded in Trenches 9, 13 and 24.

Post-Medieval/Modern

7.4.14 The site contains ditches that seemingly conform to the orientation of the present landscape and define former historic field boundaries within it. The north/south post-medieval ditch recorded in Trenches 9, 13 and 24 corresponds to a boundary shown on historic OS mapping. The east/west ditch in Trench 27 marks another former field boundary also shown on historic and modern mapping. Both ditches appear on a 1650 map of East Mersea; one being removed by the 1st edition OS map in 1874, the other still apparent on 20th century aerial photographs.

7.4.15 Other than field boundaries, the only post-medieval features recorded by the evaluation are two pits in Trenches 3 and 8. This suggests that land use is more or less entirely agricultural in nature during the post-medieval and modern periods.

Undated

7.4.16 A number of recorded ditches, pits and postholes lacked any diagnostic finds evidence, morphological characteristics relationships or spatial patterning to date them. These are scattered across the site and often not further defined by cropmarks or geophysical anomalies. This includes the WNW/ESE aligned ditch that runs through Trenches 12 and 13 and others in Trenches 5, 6, 10, 20, 22, 23 and 24/25.

7.4.17 The third ring-ditch investigated in Trench 28 is undated as no artefacts were retrieved from the fills of its excavated segments. However, its ditch is similarly substantial and at c.18.5m diameter, is of middling size compared to the putative Early/Middle Iron Age examples in Trenches 3 and 8/9. As such, the same arguments for it being a probable prehistoric barrow apply here too.

7.5 Potential impact on archaeological remains

7.5.1 The evaluation results are overlaid on the proposed development plan in Figure 27, with ground surface and top of natural height data included.

7.5.2 Construction works that intrude below the base of the topsoil/subsoil (e.g. foundation and service trenches, roads, general ground reduction and landscaping, etc.) will have the potential to adversely impact any below-ground archaeological remains present within the site.

7.5.3 Such impact upon the archaeological resource is likely to be greatest across the western half of the site and the Trench 28 vicinity, the locations of the majority of the recorded archaeological features of significance.

7.6 Consideration of project aims and potential research objectives

7.6.1 The fieldwork has largely fulfilled the general aims of the evaluation by establishing the extent and quality of archaeological remains present on site. It has been determined that the remains over most of the site have likely been truncated by modern agricultural practices. No colluvial/alluvial deposits were identified in the field. Environmental sampling was limited in its success, although two deposits have the potential for further study.

7.6.2 No evidence of Palaeolithic deposits was found.

7.6.3 Evidence of Bronze Age settlement is minimal, as is that for land use in preceding prehistoric periods. However, if the three ring-ditches are accepted as probable Bronze Age barrows, there is potential to study the creation and use of sacred landscapes in this part of the island. This extends to the apparent reuse of at least one of these monuments in the earlier Iron Age. Away from the ring-ditches, Iron Age activity is restricted to only two or three pits that do not contain particularly informative artefact or environmental assemblages. The potential of this site to contribute to the understanding of wider land use in this period is evidence is therefore limited.

7.6.4 There is some slight evidence for agricultural land use in the later Roman period. It is likely the ditches recorded within the northwest, and possibly the west of the site, define parts of a rectilinear field system. Its extents are not clear. Much of the understanding of the Roman use of Mersea derives from the west of the island and further understanding of land use within East Mersea is therefore of significance.

7.6.5 Anglo-Saxon occupation of Mersea Island is largely circumstantial and based upon documentary evidence, though The Strood causeway has been dated to be of c.7th century construction. The single Early/Middle Saxon pit within the northwest of the site is a significant, though seemingly isolated,

occurrence. It is possible that it constitutes the partially exposed remains of a *grubenhau*. No further remains of this type or date have been found during the evaluation but further such features could be indicated by some of the larger pit-like cropmark and geophysical survey anomalies elsewhere within the site. It is possibly significant that this feature is located within the perceived extents of the later Roman field system.

- 7.6.6 The very small amount of medieval finds and potential features suggests that there was no significant use of the site during this period, beyond that of agriculture. However, the potential for at least two ditches (in 12/13 and 17/18) to predate a boundary shown on the 1650 map of East Mersea suggests there is some potential to understand the development of land enclosure and management from the later medieval to earlier post-medieval periods.
- 7.6.7 The post-medieval ditch remains all relate to historic agricultural land use and are recorded on OS mapping from 1650 onwards. As such, the form and development of this landscape is relatively well understood. Consequently, the remains relating to this period of land use are of low significance and offer little further research potential other than to help elucidate possible precedent medieval land use.

7.7 Conclusions

- 7.7.1 The evaluation has established that multi-phase archaeological remains are present across most of the site. Some of these correlate with plotted cropmarks and geophysical survey anomalies. However, many of the irregular linear cropmarks/geophysical anomalies have been established to be wholly geological in origin. Further archaeological remains have not been detected as either cropmarks or geophysical anomalies.
- 7.7.2 A low density and low complexity of archaeological remains has been recorded. These comprise ditches, gullies, pits and postholes of various periods. Most are concentrated in the western half of the site and along the southern periphery.
- 7.7.3 Evidence prehistoric land use within the site comprises three pits of Neolithic and Bronze Age dates, and three substantial ring-ditches that are probably the remains of Early/Middle Bronze Age barrows. These monuments may have been subsequently re-used in the Early/Middle Iron Age. These remains indicate use of the prehistoric landscape for funerary activities, though the presence of Bronze Age loomweight fragments in one of the pits may also hint at settlement activity in the vicinity.
- 7.7.4 Roman ditches found in the northwest, and possibly in the west, of the site may indicate the presence of a rectilinear field system of apparent later Roman date. A single pit in the northwest attests to Early/Middle Saxon activity and could constitute the remains of a *grubenhau*. Its incidence within a former later Roman field system may be of significance.
- 7.7.5 Possible medieval agricultural land use is hinted by two ditches in the west of the site, admittedly poorly dated and understood, that have the potential to

predate the remains of a 1650 mapped field boundary. A number of post-medieval ditches are present that relate to agricultural land use and are recorded on historic mapping from 1650 to the 19th/20th centuries.

- 7.7.6 It is judged that construction works that intrude below the base of the topsoil/subsoil will have the potential to adversely impact any below-ground archaeological remains present within the site.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeology South-East would like to thank the client, Away Resorts Ltd., for funding the project and the consultant, Dr Caroline Russell of Chris Butler Archaeological Services, for commissioning the project with ASE. Thanks are also due to Dr Jess Tipper, the Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor, for providing the brief and for monitoring the archaeological work.

The fieldwork was supervised by the author and assisted on site by ASE staff. The project management was carried out by Sarah Ritchie and the post-excavation work was managed by Mark Atkinson. The figures for this report were produced by Andrew Lewsey.

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APPENDIX 1: Quantification of Bulk Finds

Context	Lithics	Weight (g)	Pottery	Weight (g)	CBM	Weight (g)	Stone	Weight (g)	Iron	Weight (g)	Bone	Weight (g)	Fire Cracked Flint	Weight (g)	Fired Clay	Weight (g)	Shell	Weight (g)
1/001					2	88												
1/003			27	346	8	596			1	8								
2/004			17	186					1	12								
3/009			1	12														
3/014			26	368														
5/001					2	20												
6/005			30	546							2	272					120	1486
8/004	4	78																
8/005			1	68														
8/007	1	2	1	28	1	20												
9/001	1	4																
9/003	1	4	3	6			2	118				3	16					
9/004	1	2																
9/005	1	6																
10/001	1	12																
10/006			1	6											2	8		
11/001			1	10	1	12												
11/003	4	22	31	284														
12/003			2	12											2	30		
13/001					2	110												
16/001					1	26												
16/004			1	6														
17/001	3	46																
17/003			1	<2														
17/005			2	2														
20/001			1	6	1	88												
20/003																	1	10
21/004			2	16														
23/003															1	2		
24/003					1	24												
25/001			3	24	2	36												
26/001					2	34						2	20					
27/005					1	36												
28/001	3	188			2	26						1	24					
28/013											1	2						
Total	20	364	151	1926	26	1116	2	118	2	20	3	274	6	60	5	40	121	1496

APPENDIX 2: Environmental Residue Quantification

Use “ * “ rating for enviro remains quantification (* = 1-10, ** = 11-50, *** = 51-250, **** = >250), weight in grams

Sample Number	Context	Context / deposit type	Sample Volume litres	Sub-Sample Volume litres	Charcoal >4mm	Weight (g)	Charcoal <4mm	Weight (g)	Charcoal Identifications	Charred botanicals (other than charcoal)	Weight (g)	Burnt bone >8mm	Weight (g)	Burnt bone 4-8mm	Weight (g)	Burnt Bone 2-4mm	Weight (g)	Other (eg ind, pot, cbm)	
1	5/010	Pit	40		*	<1	**	<1		*	<1							Mag Mat >2mm ** 2g/ Mag Mat *** 2g/ FCF ** 56g/ Pot? * 1g	
2	16/004	Pit	40		*	<1	**	<1						*	<1	*	<1	FCF ** 95g/ Mag Mat >2mm * <1g/ Mag Mat <2mm ** <1g/ Industrial * <1g/ Pot * 2g	
3	10/006	Pit	40		***	17	**	1	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> 7, <i>Acer campestre</i> 1 (rw), Maloideae 2									FCF *** 850g/ Flint * <1g/ Fired Clay* 7g/ Pot * 4g/ Fe * <1g/ Mag Mat >2mm * <1g/ Mag Mat <2mm *** <1g	5% of 2- 4mm Charcoal Retained
4	8/004	Basal Fill of Ditch	40		*	<1	**	<1										Flint * 10g/ FCF ** 198g	

APPENDIX 3: Environmental Flot Quantification

Sample Number	Context	Weight g	Flot volume ml	Volume scanned	Uncharred %	Sediment %	Seeds uncharred	Charcoal >4mm	Charcoal <4mm	Charcoal <2mm	Crop seeds charred	Identifications	Preservation weed seeds charred	Identifications	Preservation	Land Snail Shells
1	5/010	14	100	100	60	10	** <i>Chenopodium</i> sp.		**	****	****	<i>Triticum</i> sp., <i>Hordeum</i> sp.	++/+	*** <i>Avena</i> sp., <i>Bromus</i> sp., Polygonaceae, small Poaceae, <i>Anthemis cotula</i> , Asteraceae	++	
2	16/004	8	100	100	90	10	*** <i>Chenopodium</i> sp.			*						
3	10/006	20	150	100	70	10	** <i>Chenopodium</i> sp.	*	**	****						
4	8/004	3	40	40	80	10	** <i>Chenopodium</i> sp.			**						
5	1/003	20	250	100	60	10	** <i>Chenopodium</i> sp.	**	***	****	***	<i>Hordeum</i> sp., <i>Triticum</i> sp., Cerealia	++/+	** Rosaceae, Poaceae, <i>Avena</i> sp.	++	

6	3/018	6	100	100	80	10	** <i>Chenopodium</i> sp.		*	**							
7	3/014	16	150	100	70	10	** <i>Chenopodium</i> sp.			**							
8	11/003	15	150	100	80	10	** <i>Chenopodium</i> sp., <i>Veronica</i> <i>hederifolia</i>			**							**
9	3/009	8	75	75	80	10	** <i>Chenopodium</i> sp., <i>Veronica</i> <i>hederifolia</i>			***							
10	19/003	11	100	100	70	20	** <i>Chenopodium</i> sp.		**	***							

APPENDIX 4: HER Summary Form

Site name/Address: Mersea Island Holiday Park, Fen Lane, East Mersea, Colchester CO5 8UB	
Parish: East Mersea	District: Colchester
NGR: TM 06368 14484	Site Code: ECC3954
Type of Work: Archaeological Evaluation	Site Director/Group: Samara King, Archaeology South-East
Date of Work: 27/02/2017-08/03/2017	Size of Area Investigated 2.97 ha
Location of Finds/Curating Museum: Colchester and Ipswich Museums	Funding source: Landowner/developer
Further Seasons Anticipated?: Not known	Related HER Nos: ECC3928
Final Report: EAH roundup	OASIS No: 281296
Periods Represented: Early Neolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age, Roman, Saxon, Medieval, Post-Medieval	
SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:	
<p>A trial-trenching evaluation was undertaken within a greenfield site east of Mersea Island Holiday Park, off of Fen Lane, East Mersea, in advance of the enlargement of the caravan park. A recent desk-based assessment determined that the archaeological potential for the presence of below-ground prehistoric remains was high. A subsequent geophysical survey and cropmarks identified from aerial photography supported this potential.</p> <p>Multi-phase archaeological features were recorded in 23 of 28 trenches, mostly concentrated in the western half of the site and along the southern periphery. Many of the irregular linear cropmarks/geophysical anomalies plotted across the site were established to be wholly geological in origin. Some archaeological remains found were not previously detected as either cropmarks or geophysical anomalies.</p> <p>Evidence of Bronze Age and earlier prehistoric land use within the site is minimal, comprising three small pits; one of Early Neolithic date. Three substantial ring-ditches of ostensibly Iron Age date may in fact be Early/Middle Bronze Age barrow remains that were subsequently re-used in the Early/Middle Iron Age.</p> <p>Roman ditches found in the northwest, and possibly in the west, of the site may indicate the presence of a rectilinear field system of apparent later Roman date. A single pit in the northwest attests to Early/Middle Saxon activity.</p> <p>Possible medieval agricultural land use is hinted by two ditches in the west of the site that have the potential to predate the remains of a 1650 mapped field boundary. A number of post-medieval ditches are present that relate to agricultural land use and are recorded on historic mapping from 1650 to the 19th/20th centuries.</p>	
Previous Summaries/Reports:	
<p>Chapman, E. and Russell, C. 2016, <i>An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment for Land at Mersea Island Holiday Park, Colchester, Essex, CO5 8UA</i>. Unpublished CBAS report</p> <p>Russell, C. 2017a, <i>Archaeological Geophysical Survey of Land at Mersea Island Holiday Park, Colchester, Essex, CO5 8UA</i>. Unpublished CBAS report</p>	
Author of Summary: Samara King	Date of Summary: April 2017

APPENDIX 5: OASIS Form

OASIS number: archaeol6-281296

Project details	
Project name	Land East of Mersea Island Holiday Park, Fen Lane, East Mersea
Short description of the project	Twenty-eight trenches were excavated in a vacant field east of Mersea Island Holiday Park in advance of the construction of 67 static holiday caravans. Twenty-five trenches were positive for archaeological remains, comprising three possible ring-ditches, twenty-one pits, and seventeen other linear features.
Project dates	Start: 27-02-2017 End: 08-03-2017
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	162442 - Planning Application No. ECC3954 – Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Grassland Heathland 3 - Disturbed
Monument type	PITS Early Prehistoric; Early Neolithic; Iron Age; Early Medieval; Post Medieval; Uncertain
Monument type	DITCHES Roman; Medieval; Post Medieval; Uncertain
Significant Finds	POTTERY Early Neolithic; Bronze Age; Iron Age; Roman; Early Medieval; Medieval
Significant Finds	LITHIC IMPLEMENT; FLAKE Early Prehistoric
Significant Finds	ANIMAL BONE Roman
Significant Finds	BRICK Post Medieval
Methods & techniques	"Targeted Trenches"
Development type	Holiday park extension
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Position in the planning process	Between deposition of an application and determination
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	ESSEX COLCHESTER EAST MERSEA Land East of Mersea Island Holiday Park, Fen Lane, East Mersea
Postcode	CO5 8UB
Study area	2.97 Hectares
Site coordinates	TM 06368 14484 51.790335415277 0.992721470701 51 47 25 N 000 59 33 E Point

Height OD / Depth	Min: 8.14m Max: 10.88m
Project creators	
Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	Colchester Borough Council
Project design originator	Chris Butler Archaeological Services Ltd.
Project director/manager	Sarah Ritchie
Project supervisor	Samara King
Name of sponsor/funding body	Away Resorts Ltd.
Project archives	
Physical/Digital/Paper Archive recipient	Colchester and Ipswich Museums Service
Physical Contents	"Animal Bones","Ceramics","Metal","Worked stone/lithics"
Digital Contents	"Animal Bones","Ceramics","Environmental","Survey","Worked stone/lithics"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Spreadsheets","Text"
Paper Contents	"Environmental","Stratigraphic"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Map","Notebook - Excavation',' Research',' General Notes","Plan","Report","Section"
Project bibliography	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Archaeological Evaluation: Mersea Island Holiday Park, Fen Lane, East Mersea, Colchester, Essex
Author(s)/Editor(s)	King, S.
Other bibliographic details	ASE Report No. 2017156
Date	2017
Issuer or publisher	Archaeology South-East
Place of issue or publication	Witham, Essex
Description	Approx. 100 pages of A4, including figures & appendices

APPENDIX 6: Written Scheme of Investigation



**Chris Butler MCifA
Archaeological Services Ltd**

**Written Scheme of Investigation
for a
Trenched Archaeological Evaluation
at
Mersea Island Holiday Park,
Fen Lane, East Mersea,
Colchester, CO5 8UB**

Centre point TM 06368 14484

Planning Application No. 162442

Project No: CBAS0784

By
Dr Caroline Russell

February 2017

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1** Chris Butler Archaeological Services Ltd (CBAS Ltd) has been commissioned by Away Resorts Ltd (the Client) to project manage a trenched archaeological evaluation at Mersea Island Holiday Park, Fen Lane, East Mersea, Colchester, CO5 8UA (centre point TM 06368 14484; Fig. 1). Dr Jess Tipper, Archaeological Advisor for Colchester Borough Council (CBC), requested that this trial trench evaluation follow on from a recent geophysical survey of the Site, to satisfactorily assess the archaeological potential of the Site prior to the determination of a planning application (No. 162442) for the proposed extension of the existing holiday park through the installation of 67 static holiday caravans (Fig. 2).
- 1.2** A recent archaeological desk-based assessment¹ established that the Site has high archaeological potential to contain below ground remains of prehistoric date. This potential is based on the Site's location within an area known to contain Pleistocene (Palaeolithic) deposits, and the assumption that some of the cropmarks identified from aerial photographs of the Site, may represent field boundaries, a burial mound/roundhouse and a possible enclosure of likely Bronze Age and/or Iron Age date. These undated cropmarks are interpreted by the Historic Environment Record (HER) for CBC as 'Linear features including field boundaries, several large pits which may be sunken houses or defensive, and two ring-ditches' (Colchester HER No. MCC8916). The Site also has high potential for producing archaeological features related to farming in the Post-Medieval and Modern periods.
- 1.3** The high archaeological potential of the Site for Bronze Age / Iron Age remains is supported by the results of the geophysical magnetometer survey (Colchester HER Event. No. ECC3928; Fig. 3)², which identified a likely roundhouse or barrow, several linear and curvilinear responses and numerous pit-like anomalies, likely to be of later prehistoric date. Most of these archaeological anomalies correspond with the cropmarks seen on aerial photographs (Fig. 3).
- 1.4** The Site is located within the east end of Mersea Island and is set slightly back from the south coastline of East Mersea, close to the mouth of the River Colne (Fig. 1). The Site is a vacant field of grass to the immediate east of the existing caravans. It is bounded by an arable field to the north, the buildings and open land of Cudmore Grove Country Park to the east, and two open fields used by the Holiday Park to the south.
- 1.5** The Site lies at a height of between *c.*9m and 10m aOD, on land that slopes gently south down towards the coastline. The geology of the Site is the Thames Group of clay, silt, sand and gravel³.

¹ Chapman, E. and Russell, C. 2016. An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment for Land at Mersea Island Holiday Park, Colchester, Essex, CO5 8UA. Project No. CBAS0762

² Russell, C. 2017. Archaeological Geophysical Survey of Land at Mersea Island Holiday Park, Colchester, Essex, CO5 8UA. CBAS0784.

³ <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>

- 1.6** This Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) covers an trenched archaeological evaluation comprising the opening of 28 trenches positioned to target the probable archaeology detected by the geophysical survey, as well as those areas identified as blank by the survey. The WSI has been prepared in response to an archaeological brief issued by the Archaeological Advisor⁴ and will be submitted to the Archaeological Advisor for formal approval.

⁴ Tipper. J. 19/01/2017. Brief for Trenched Archaeological Evaluation at Fen Lane, East Mersea, Colchester, CO5 8UB.

2.0 Aims and Objectives

2.1 The broad aims and objectives of the trenched archaeological evaluation are to:

1. identify the date, approximate form and purpose of any archaeological deposit, together with its likely extent, localised depth and quality of preservation;
2. evaluate the likely impact of past land uses, and the possible presence of masking colluvial / alluvial deposits;
3. establish the potential for the survival of environmental evidence;
4. provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological conservation strategy, dealing with preservation, the recording of archaeological deposits, working practices, timetables and orders of cost.

The results will inform whether archaeological mitigation work is required, which will ensure that any archaeological remains under threat of the proposed development are either excavated and recorded or preserved *in situ* and protected.

2.2 The specific research aims trenched archaeological evaluation are to establish:

1. the presence / absence on Site of a Bronze Age / Iron Age settlement site and prehistoric burial site;
2. whether the Site contains any archaeological evidence of prehistoric activity prior to the Bronze Age / Iron Age, such as that associated with settlement;
3. whether the Site contains Pleistocene (Palaeolithic) deposits; and
4. the full extent of archaeological evidence for the use of the Site after prehistory, including its agricultural use in the medieval / Post-Medieval periods.

3.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 3.1** An archaeological desk-based assessment has been prepared of the Site⁵, and should be referred to for the archaeological and historical background of the Site and its immediate surrounding landscape.
- 3.2** Stratascan undertook a geophysical survey of the Site in December 2016 (Colchester HER Event. No. ECC3928). The results are summarised by CBAS Ltd in a report to accompany the geophysical survey report produced by the sub-contractor⁶.

⁵ Chapman, E. and Russell, C. 2016. *An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment for Land at Mersea Island Holiday Park, Colchester, Essex, CO5 8UA*. Project No. CBAS0762

⁶ Russell, C. 2017. *Archaeological Geophysical Survey of Land at Mersea Island Holiday Park, Colchester, Essex, CO5 8UA*. CBAS0784.

4.0 Method Statement

- 4.1 The archaeological work will be carried out in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (2014) and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2014); the CBC's *Brief for Trenched Archaeological Evaluation*⁷; and the *Treasure Act* (1996); and *East Anglian Archaeology's Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England, Occasional Papers 14* (2003).
- 4.2 The trenched evaluation excavation will be carried out by Archaeology South-East, the Archaeological Contractor, on behalf of CBAS Ltd. The project will be managed for the Client by Dr Caroline Russell, Senior Project Manager at CBAS Ltd. The Client shall give the Archaeological Contractor access to the Site to undertake the fieldwork. The Client has no service plans available of the Site. No below-ground services were detected by the geophysical survey. The Archaeological Contractor are to obtain a copy of Landmark for their Risk Assessment and Method Statement (RAMS). A CAT scan will be undertaken prior to the excavation of the trial trenches and in the event of services being detected, the trenches will be repositioned accordingly.
- 4.3 A total of 28 trial trenches, measuring 30m long x 1.8m wide, are to be excavated to cover 5% of the total area of the Site. The trenches are to be positioned as shown on Fig. 3, to test the anomalies and 'blank' areas identified by the geophysical survey. The trenches will be excavated under constant archaeological supervision, using a machine fitted with a flat-bladed bucket. In the event of obstructions being encountered during excavation, the trenches will be repositioned to avoid them. In the event of any archaeological features being encountered at the edge of a trench which cannot be adequately interpreted, the trench may be extended by up to 1m in any direction in agreement with the Archaeological Advisor.
- 4.4 In addition to the machine excavated trial trenches, 1m x 1m test pits will be hand excavated at one or both ends of each trench, with the spoil (i.e. the topsoil, subsoil and any buried archaeological layers/deposits) sieved for finds recovery.
- 4.5 If any archaeological deposits or features are encountered, they will be archaeologically excavated and recorded. Cut features and structures that are not being preserved *in situ* will be excavated by hand and fully recorded prior to their removal. Excavation will be carried out down to a maximum depth of 1.2m, or the surface of the natural deposit if encountered earlier.
- 4.6 The spoil from the excavations will be inspected by archaeologists to recover any artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest. A metal detector will be used at regular intervals to scan spoil derived from the excavations. A record will be kept of which

⁷ Tipper, J. 19/01/2017. Brief for Trenched Archaeological Evaluation at Fen Lane, East Mersea, Colchester, CO5 8UB.

deposits/features are detected and the areas in which objects are found. The make and model of the metal detector will be noted in the final report.

- 4.7** Archaeological deposits or features of local or national significance will be reported to the Archaeological Advisor at the earliest opportunity. All finds that fall under the definition of the Treasure Act will be reported to the Coroner's Office and to the Essex Finds Liaison Officer.
- 4.8** In the event of human burials being discovered, a Licence will be required from the Ministry of Justice (in accordance with Section 25 of the *Burial Act 1857*) before the remains can be lifted. The need for a licence applies to both inhumation and cremated remains. Inhumations and cremations will be excavated completely within 24 hours of their exposure. The Archaeological Contractor will submit details of the procedures for the excavation and recording of burials if encountered. The Archaeological Advisor will be notified immediately.
- 4.9** All artefacts recovered during the excavations on Site are the property of the Client. They are to be suitably bagged, boxed and marked in accordance with the *United Kingdom Institute for Conservation, Conservation Guidelines No 2* and on completion of the archaeological post-excavation programme the Client will arrange for them to be deposited in Colchester and Ipswich Museums' Store.

5.0 Recording Systems and Scales, and Finds Collection Policy

- 5.1** Modern (i.e. post-1900) non-military features will only be recorded cursorily or not at all, unless of unusual intrinsic significance or where it is necessary to do so to indicate their impact on features of archaeological interest. All other features will be cleaned, planned, excavated and recorded.
- 5.2** Provision will be made for specialist environmental assessment of the Site, such as the retrieval of artefacts, biological remains for palaeoenvironmental and palaeoeconomic investigations, and samples of sediments and /or soils for micromorphological and other pedological/sedimentological analyses. Trial trenching must identify the location and extent of any waterlogged organic deposits and where appropriate and practical, retrieve suitable samples in order to assess the potential for the preservation of environmental remains and material for scientific dating. The evaluation, sampling and scientific assessment and analysis of waterlogged archaeological remains will be adequately provided. As the Site has high potential to produce Palaeolithic deposits, the specialist Dr Matthew Pope, Senior Geoarchaeologist for the Archaeological Contractor, will visit the Site if required.
- 5.3** Provision will be included for a column or core sample to be taken if necessary and for assessment (and where necessary full analysis) of the column/core sample, and where necessary for absolute dating of the sequence. Any core/column will be assessed for pollen and plant microfossils. In addition, any sample may be assessed for diatoms, foraminifera, insect and molluscs. Provision will be made for the dating of suitable deposits and requirements for any absolute dating.
- 5.4** Archaeological features will be recorded at a scale of at least 1:100 in relationship to a fixed point or temporary base lines and related to the Ordnance Survey national grid. Further plans at 1:20 and sections at 1:10 will be drawn as necessary on plastic tracing film.
- 5.5** All archaeological features will be photographed in digital format. A selection of digital working shots will also be taken during the project.
- 5.6** The Site will be levelled to the Ordnance Datum or from a Temporary Bench Mark derived from the Ordnance Survey Bench Mark. The position of plans will be planned on a copy of the Ordnance Survey base map of 1:2500 scale or greater.
- 5.7** All archaeological features and deposits will be recorded using a standard context record sheet. Soil colours will be recorded by visual inspection and not with reference to a Munsell Colour Chart.

- 5.8** All artefacts pre-dating 1900AD, except as detailed below, will be collected and retained, unless their size and number makes this impracticable. The following artefact types will be identified and recorded (counted and weighed) and discarded during post excavation work: burnt flint; building material (except where worked); burnt clay; and iron slag.
- 5.9** All retained finds will be washed and marked prior to deposition in Colchester and Ipswich Museums' Store. Suitable conservation measures (e.g. packaging with silica gel or with water) will be used to ensure the stabilisation of finds where relevant.

6.0 Post-excavation Analysis, Reporting and Archiving

- 6.1** Post-excavation analysis, reporting and archiving will follow the recommended requirements of the Cifa *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2014); the CBC's *Brief for Trenched Archaeological Evaluation*⁸; and East Anglian Archaeology's *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England, Occasional Papers 14* (2003).
- 6.2** The report will be completed within three months of the completion of the trenched archaeological evaluation. The Colchester Historic Environment Record (HER) will be supplied with a .pdf digital copy of the report (in PDF/A or PDF/Archive format), along with a digital vector plan compatible with MapInfo GIS software. AutoCAD files will be saved into a format that can imported into MapInfo (e.g. as a .dxf. or .TAB files). A Colchester HER event code for the fieldwork has been requested. The report will be recorded with OASIS. A copy of the complete OASIS form will be included as an appendix to the report.
- 6.3** In the event of complex archaeological features being encountered during the trenched archaeological evaluation, a programme of post-excavation analysis will be agreed. If the results are considered sufficiently important, an article will be prepared for submission in the relevant local journal, at the expense of the Client.
- 6.4** The site archive (comprising all records and finds) will be deposited in Colchester and Ipswich Museums' Store within five years from the date of completion of the investigation. An Accession Number has been requested.

7.0 Health and Safety

- 7.1** Adherence to standard health and safety requirements, together with any constraints imposed by the contractor's health and safety practices, will be paramount. Recording of deep excavations, including any which are judged to be unsafe, shall only be undertaken from the ground level.

⁸ Tipper. J. 19/01/2017. Brief for Trenched Archaeological Evaluation at Fen Lane, East Mersea, Colchester, CO5 8UB.

8.0 Monitoring and Standards

- 8.1** The project will be monitored by the Archaeological Advisor and project managed by Dr Caroline Russell, Senior Project Manager at CBAS Ltd. A site visit will be arranged at an agreed time between the Archaeological Advisor and the Project Manager. The Archaeological Contractor is to allow the Archaeological Advisor, or any designated representative of Colchester Borough Council, to inspect and examine the site records at any reasonable time, during or after the excavation work.
- 8.2** The Project Manager who will be responsible for ensuring that the works are implemented correctly in accordance with the following:
- a. All statutory provisions and by-laws relating to the work in question, especially the *Health and Safety at Work Act 1974*; and
 - b. The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *Code of Conduct* (2014).
- 8.3** The project will be carried out by Archaeology South-East, on behalf of CBAS Ltd. Archaeology South-East is a registered archaeological organisation and as such is committed to upholding the standards and policies set out by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.

9.0 Insurance

- 9.1** CBAS Ltd is insured for public liability to the sum of £5,000,000 for any one occurrence.



Fig. 1: Site location
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Fig. 2: Proposed development
(adapted from Landscape Architecture Masterplanning Ecology; Landscape Masterplan)



Fig. 3: Trench locations with geophysical survey interpretation
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Chris Butler Archaeological Services Ltd

Chris Butler has been an archaeologist since 1985, and formed the Mid Sussex Field Archaeological Team in 1987, since when it has carried out numerous fieldwork projects, and was runner up in the Pitt-Rivers Award at the British Archaeological Awards in 1996. Having previously worked as a Pensions Technical Manager and Administration Director in the financial services industry, Chris formed **Chris Butler Archaeological Services** at the beginning of 2002.

Chris is a Member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, and a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London. He was a part time lecturer in Archaeology at the University of Sussex, and taught A-Level Archaeology at Bexhill 6th Form College having qualified (Cert. Ed.) as a teacher in 2006.

Chris specialises in prehistoric flintwork analysis, but has directed excavations, landscape surveys and watching briefs, including the excavation of a Beaker Bowl Barrow, a Saxon cemetery and settlement, Roman pottery kilns, and a Mesolithic hunting camp. He has recently undertaken large landscape surveys of Ashdown Forest and Broadwater Warren and is Co-Director of the Barcombe Roman Villa excavation project.

His publications include *Prehistoric Flintwork*, *East Sussex Under Attack* and *West Sussex Under Attack*, all of which are published by Tempus Publishing Ltd.

Chris Butler Archaeological Services Ltd is available for Flintwork Analysis, Project Management, Military Archaeology, Desktop Assessments, Field Evaluations, Excavation work, Watching Briefs, Landscape and Woodland Surveys & Fieldwalking, Post Excavation Services and Report Writing.

Chris Butler MCIfA Archaeological Services Ltd

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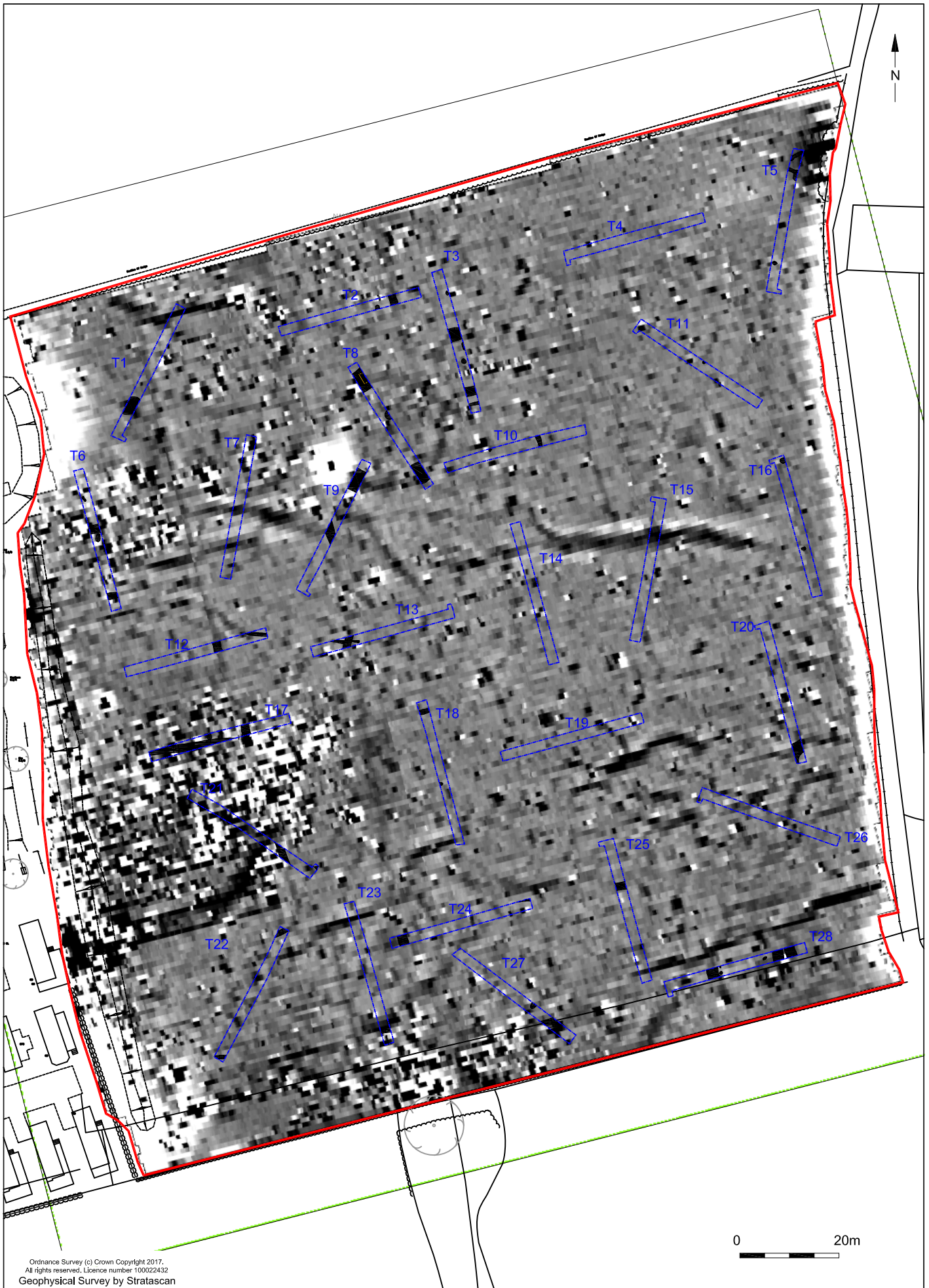
Tel: 01323 811785

e mail: chris.butler@cbasltd.co.uk

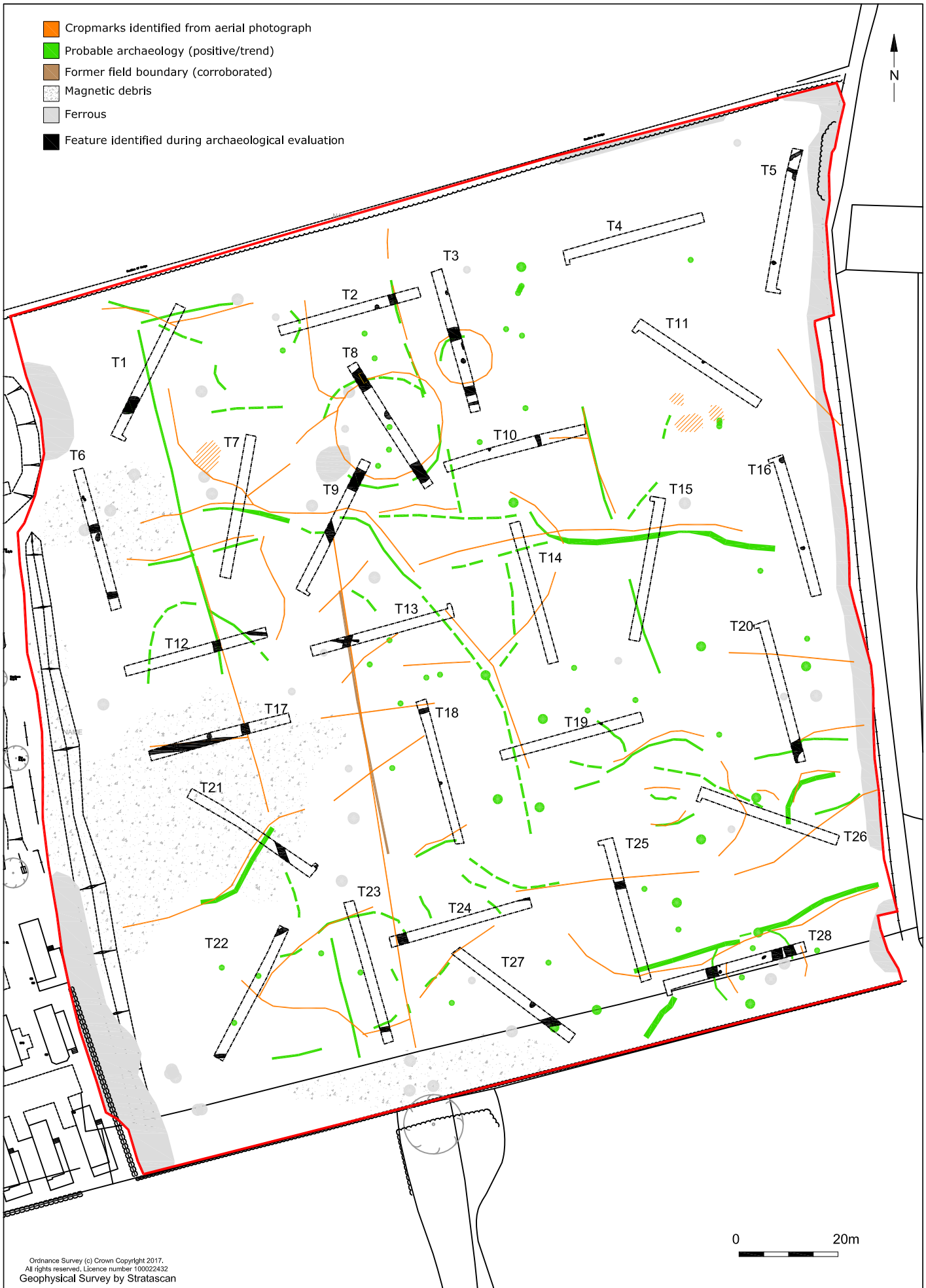


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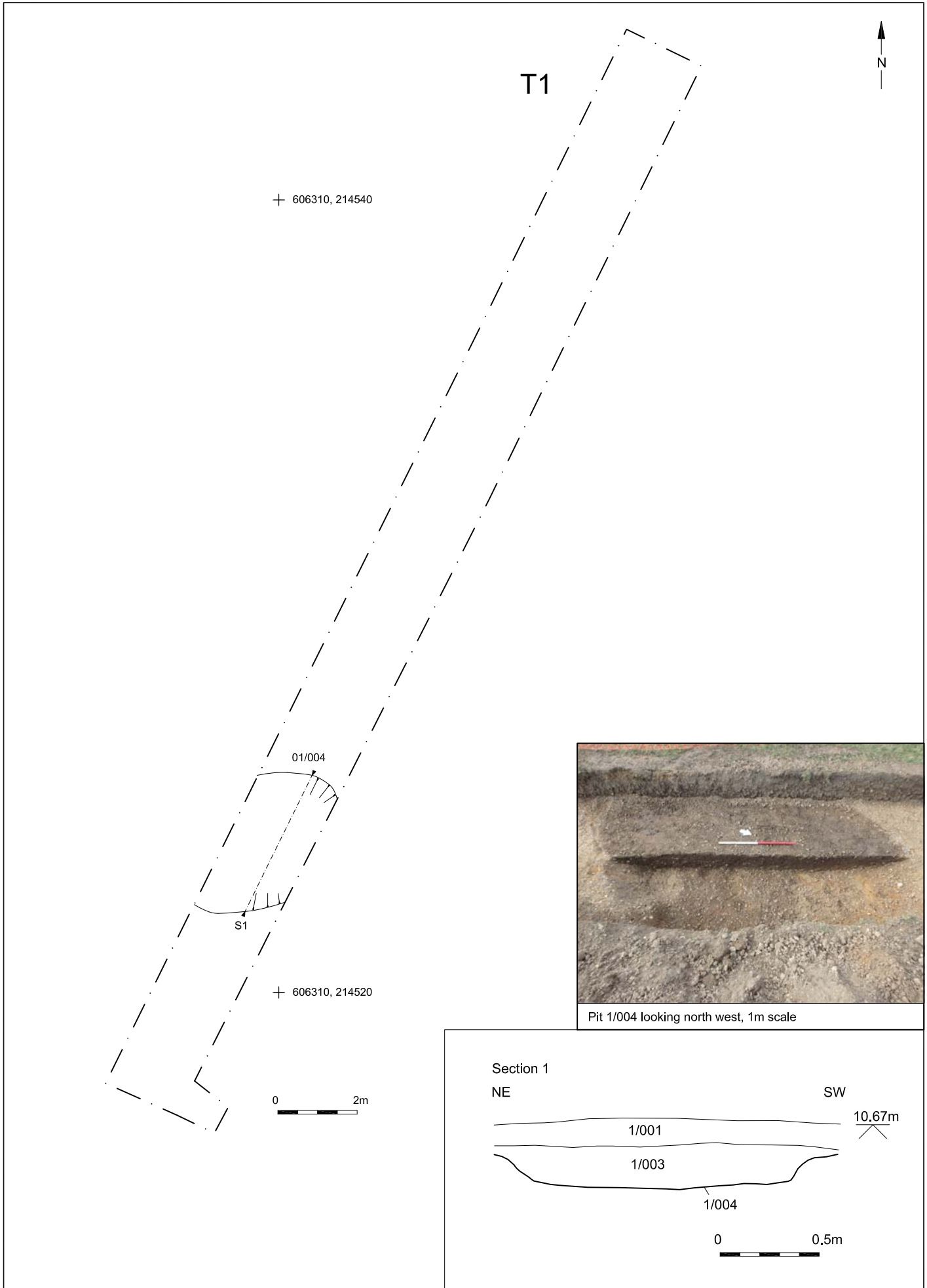
© Archaeology South-East		Land at Fen Lane, East Mersea		Fig. 1
Project Ref: 170096	Mar 2017	Site location with selected HER references		
Report No: 2017156	Drawn by: APL			



© Archaeology South-East		Land at Fen Lane, East Mersea	Fig. 2a
Project Ref: 170096	Mar 2017	Evaluation trenches with minimally processed gradiometer data	
Report Ref: 2017156	Drawn by: APL		



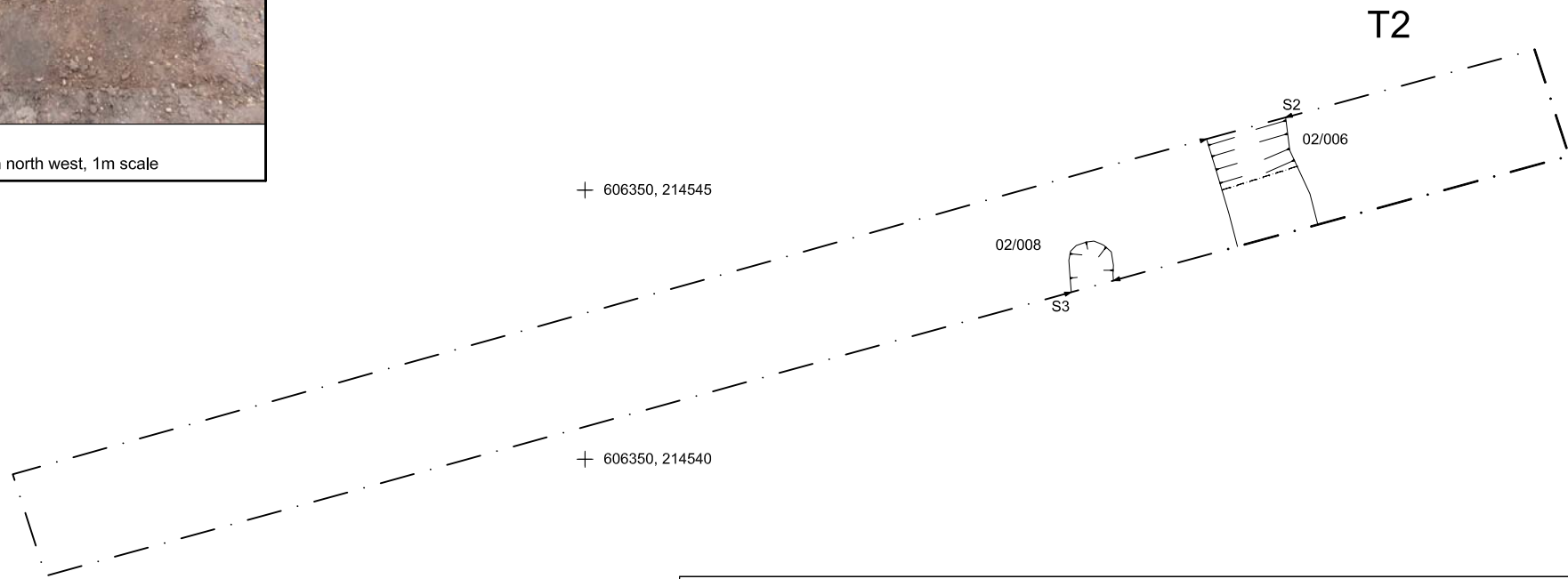
© Archaeology South-East		Land at Fen Lane, East Mersea	Fig. 2b
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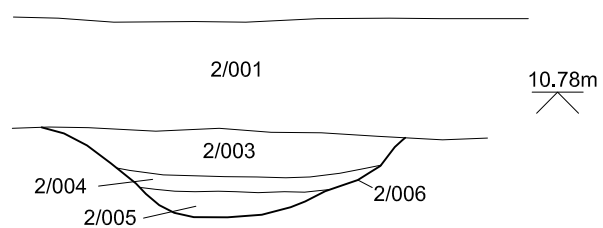
© Archaeology South-East		Land at Fen Lane, East Mersea	Fig.3
Project Ref: 170096	Mar 2017	Trench 1 plan, section and photograph	
Report Ref: 2017156	Drawn by: APL		



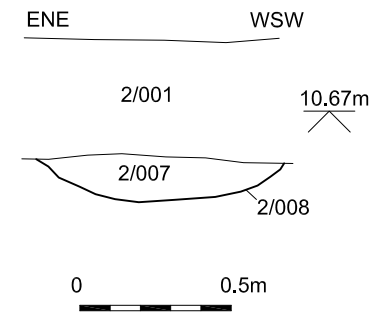
Ditch 2/006, looking north north west, 1m scale



Section 2
WSW



Section 3



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Land at Fen Lane, East Mersea

Project Ref: 170096

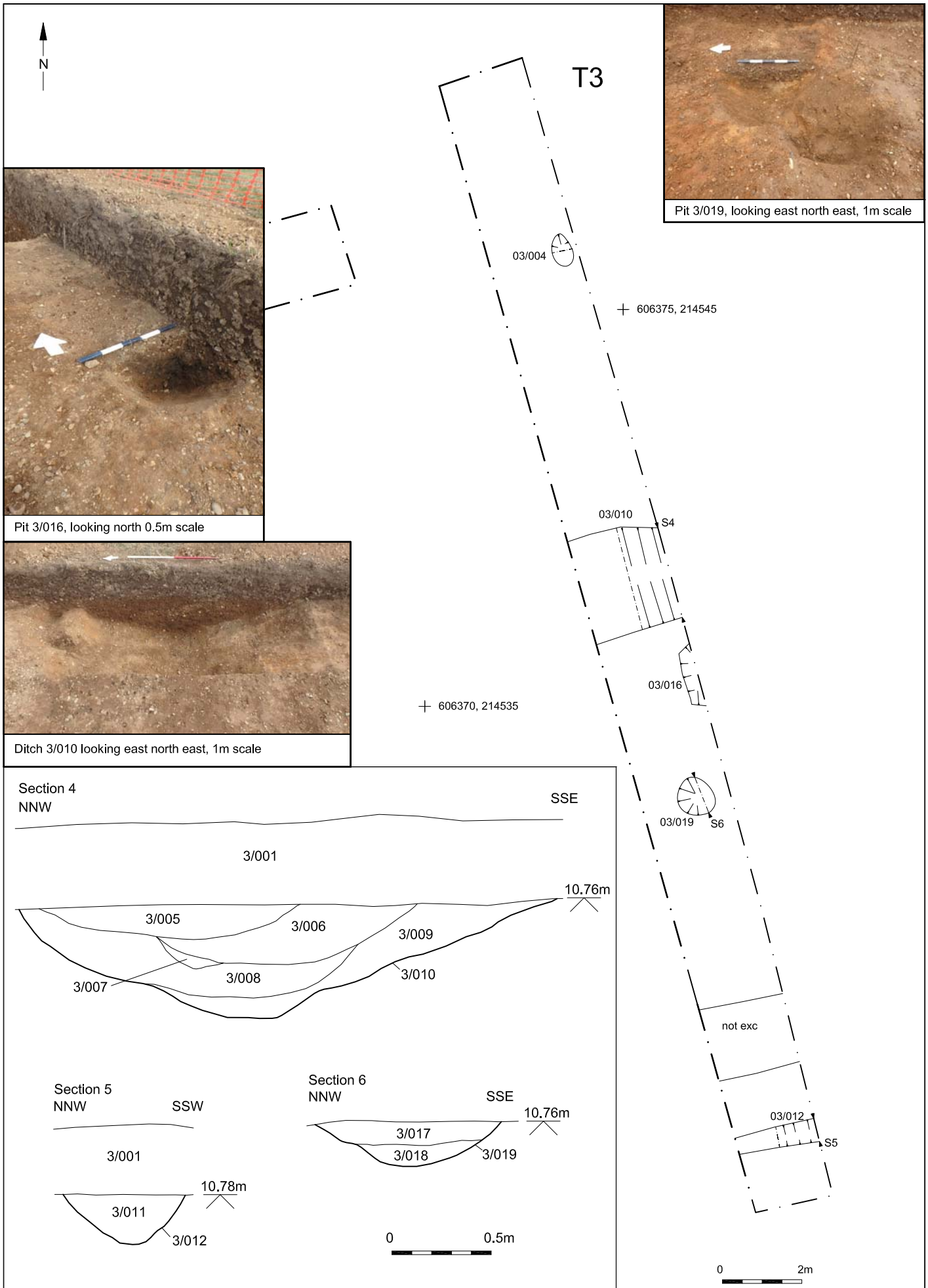
Mar 2017

Report Ref: 2017156

Drawn by: APL

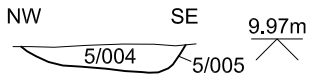
Trench 2 plan, sections and photograph

Fig.4

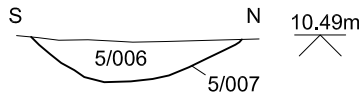


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Project Ref: 170096	Mar 2017	Trench 3 plan, sections and photographs	
Report Ref: 2017156	Drawn by: APL		

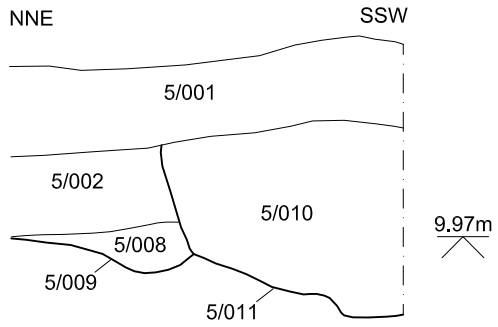
Section 7



Section 8

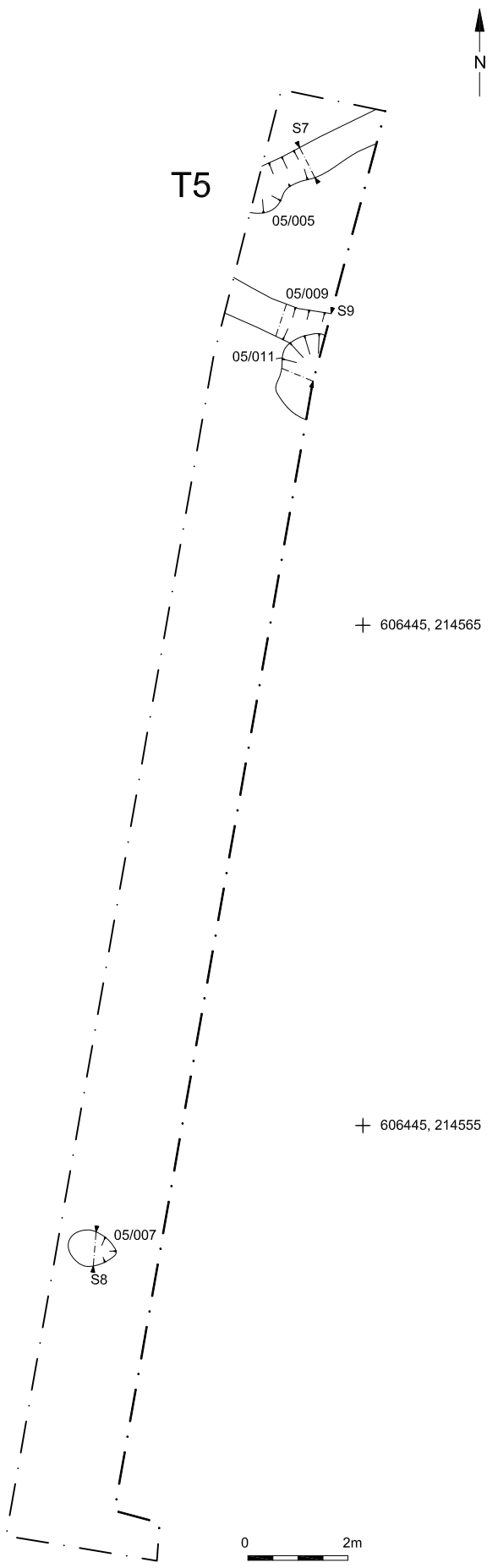


Section 9

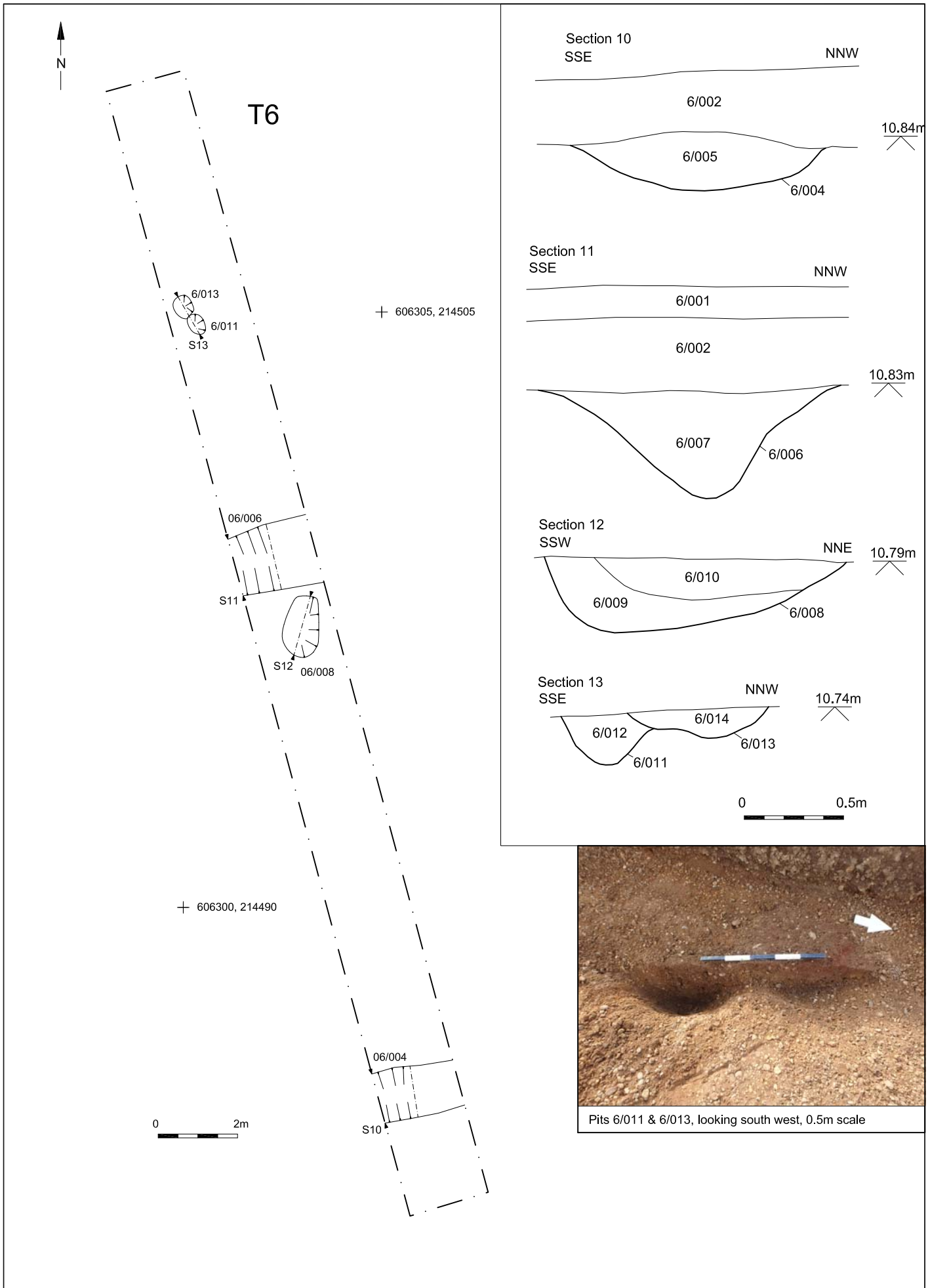


Gully 5/009 and pit 5/011 looking east south east, 1m scale

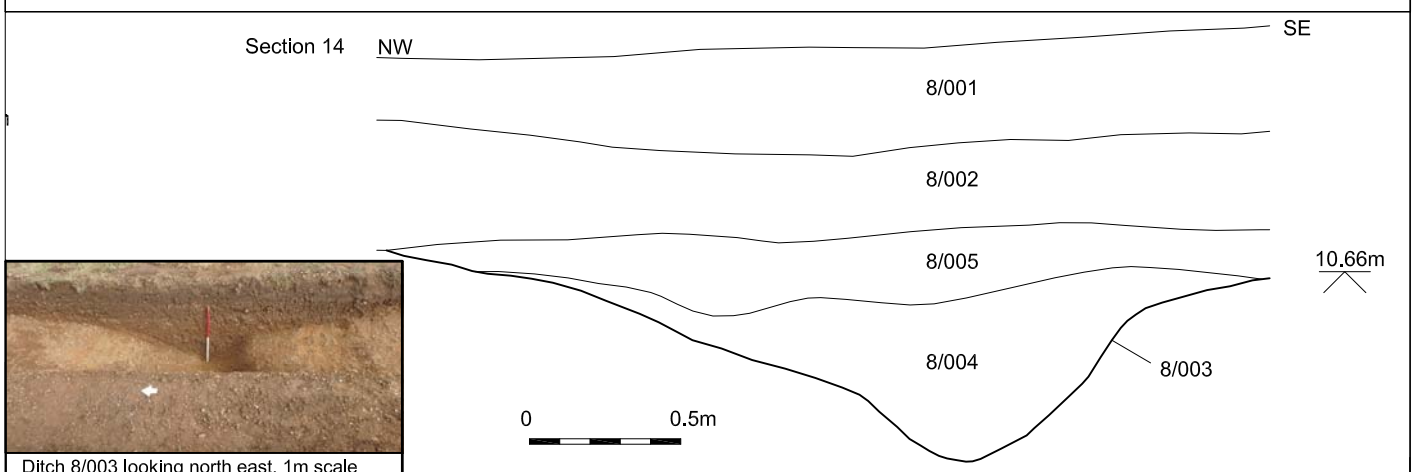
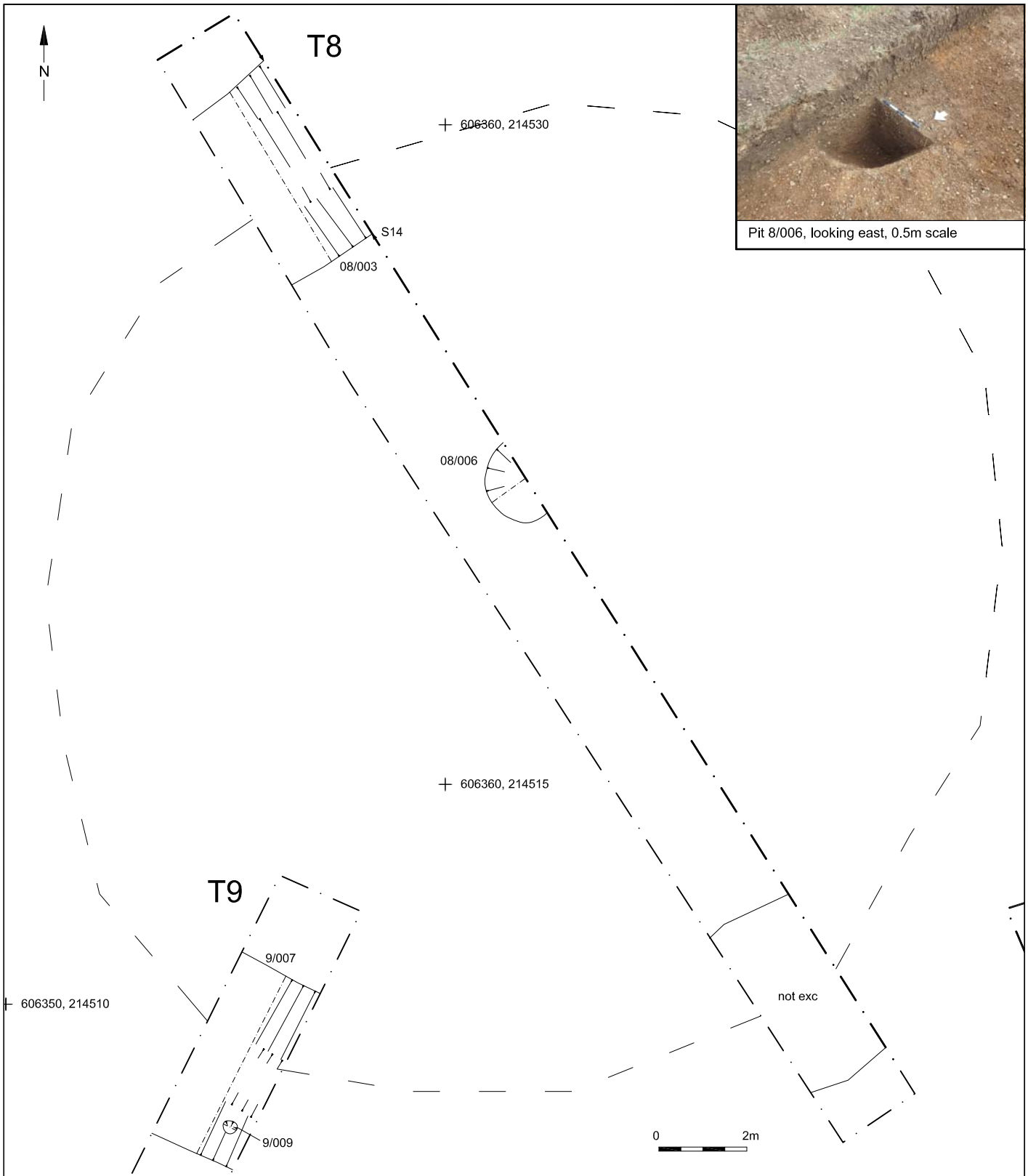
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Project Ref: 170096	Mar 2017	Trench 5 plan, sections and photograph	
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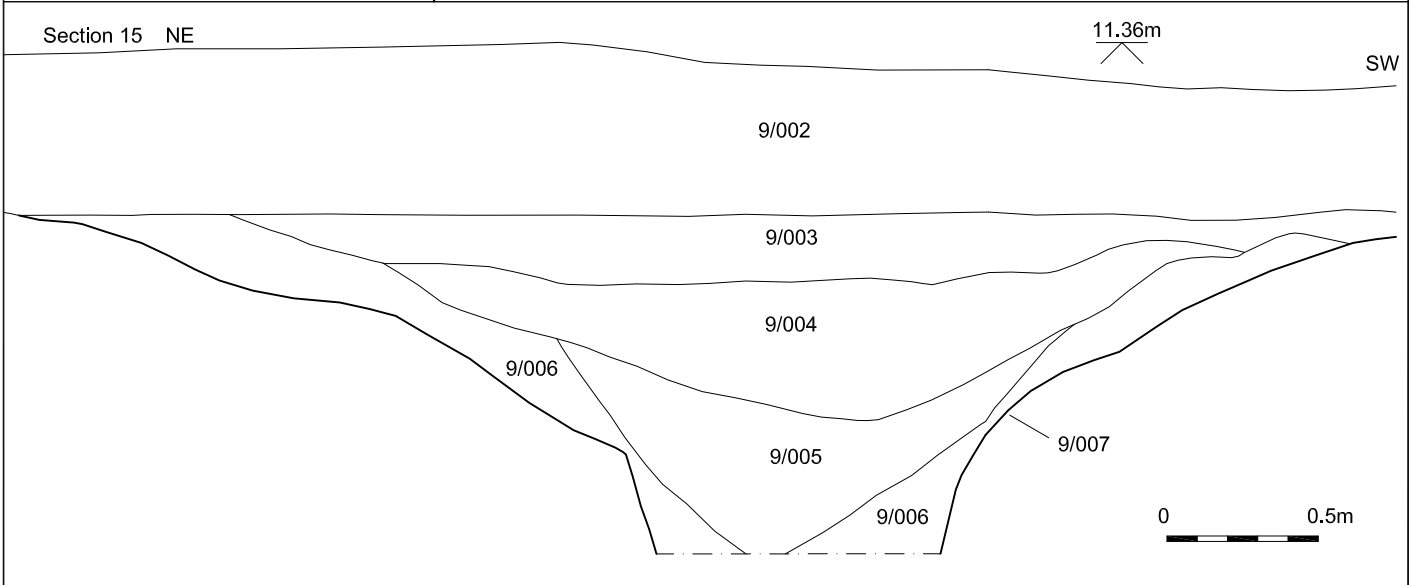
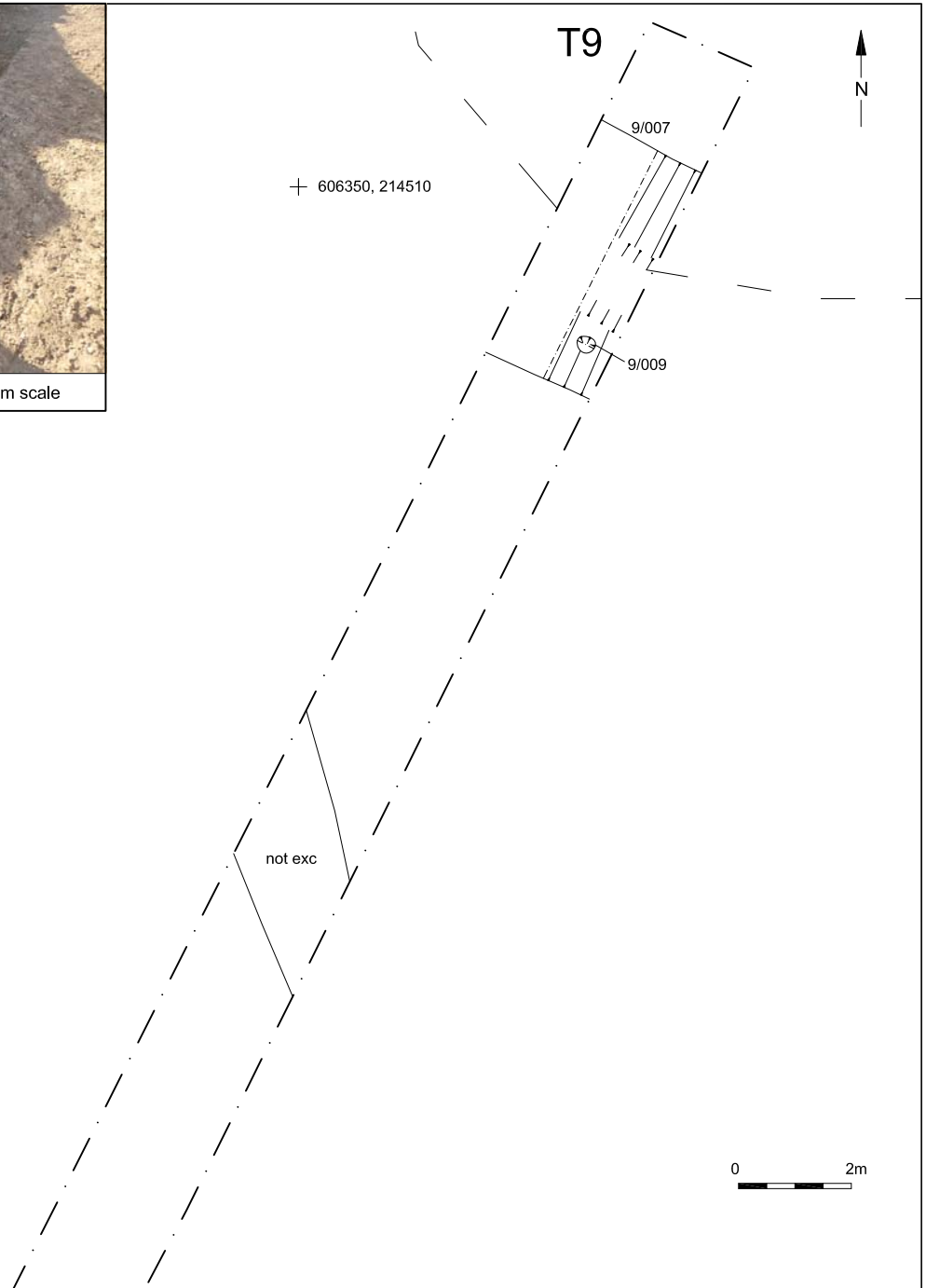


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Project Ref: 170096	Mar 2017	Trench 6 plan, sections and photograph	
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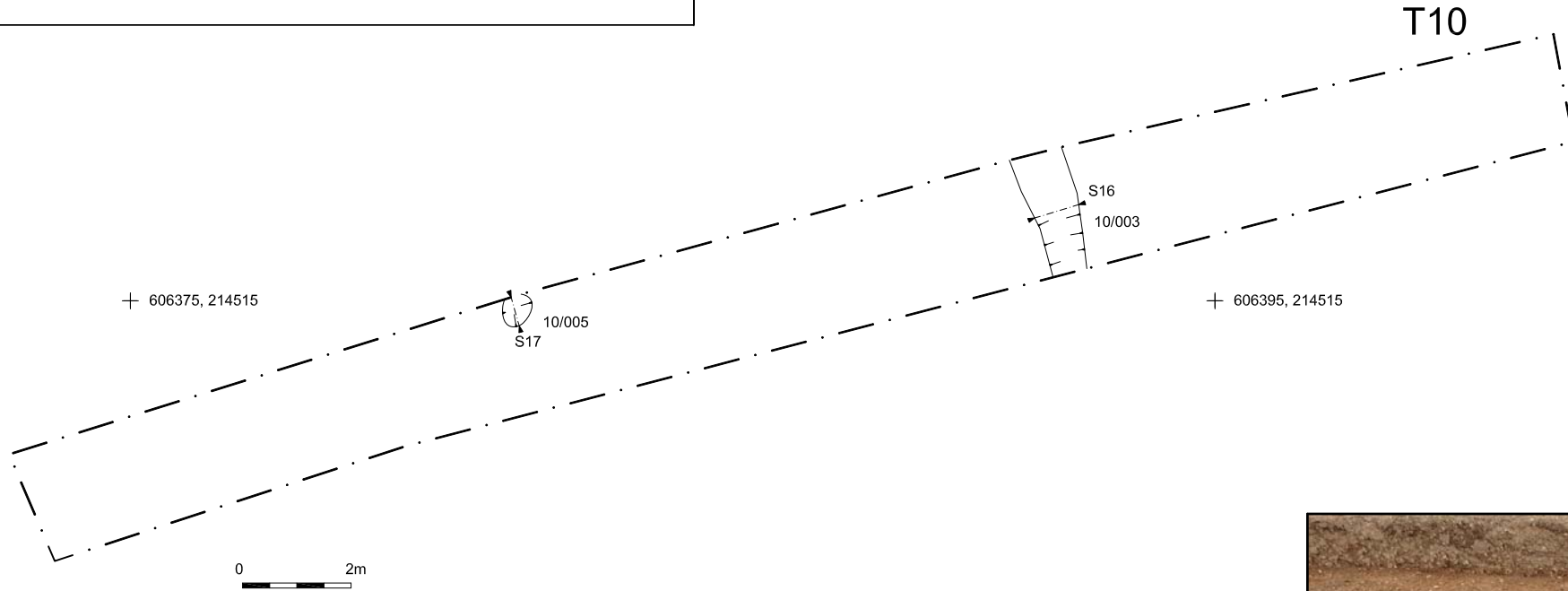
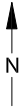
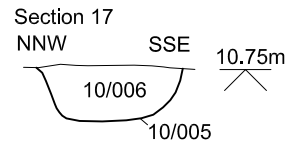
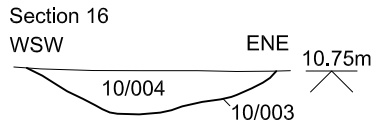




Ditch 9/007 and posthole 9/009 looking south, 1m scale



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Project Ref: 170096	Mar 2017	Trench 9 plan, section and photograph	
Report Ref: 2017156	Drawn by: APL		



Gully 10/003 looking north north west, 0.5m scale

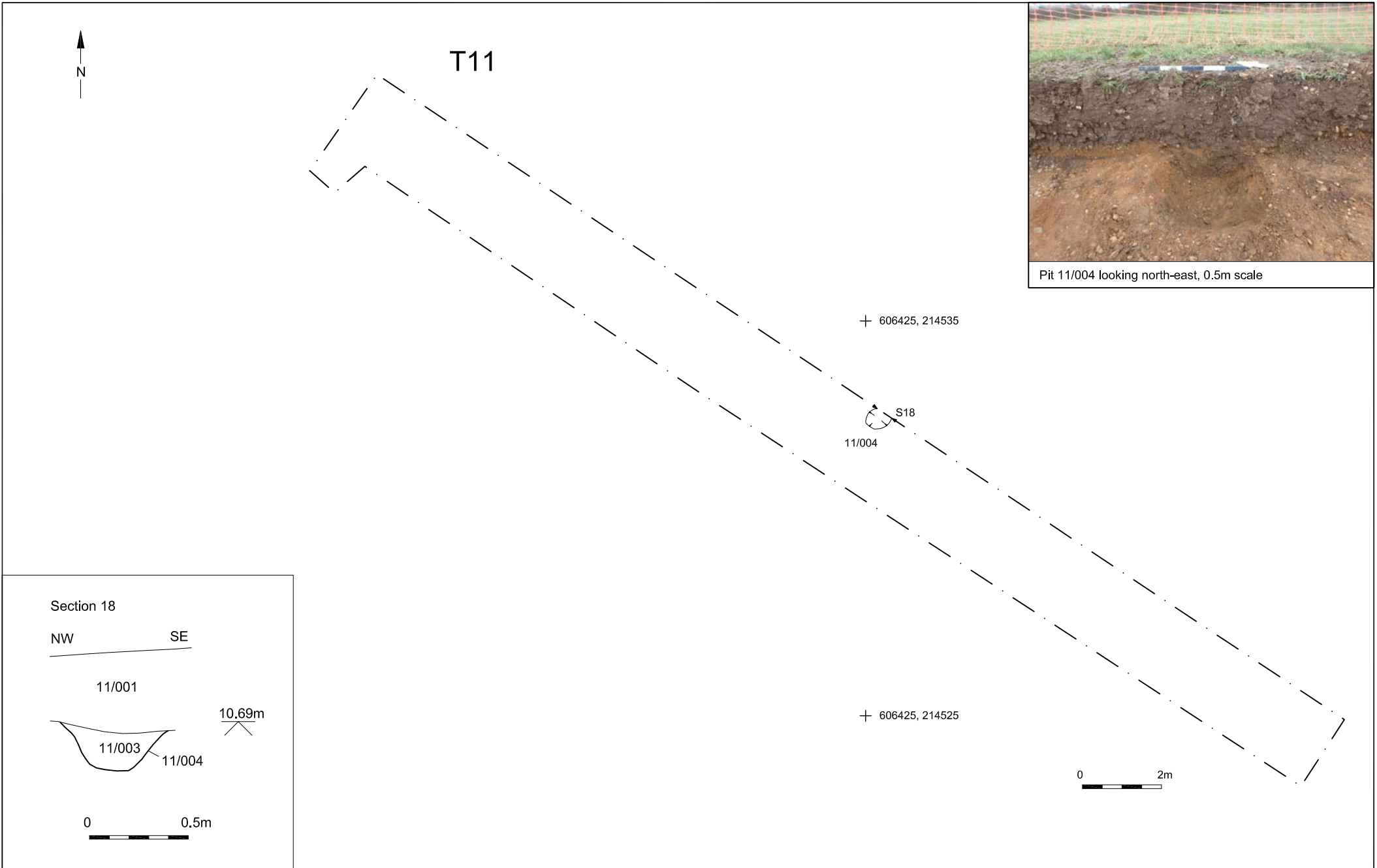
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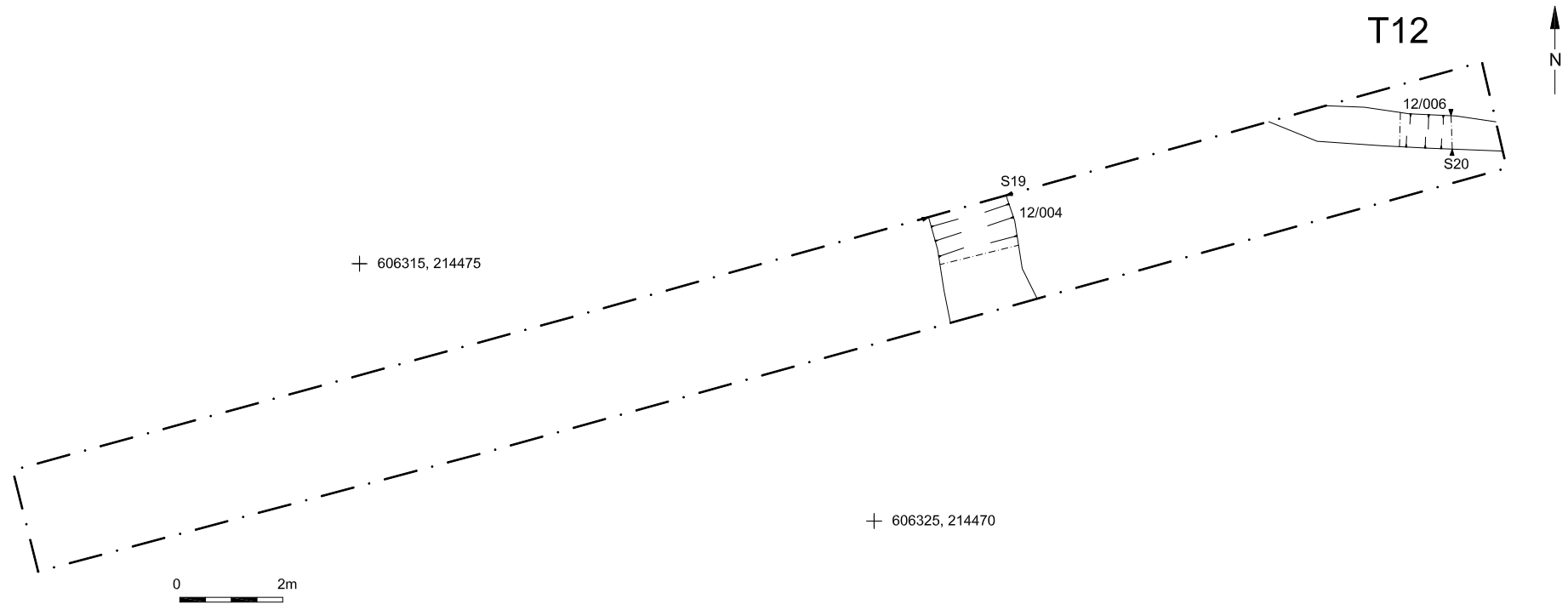
Land at Fen Lane, East Mersea

Trench 10 plan, sections and photographs

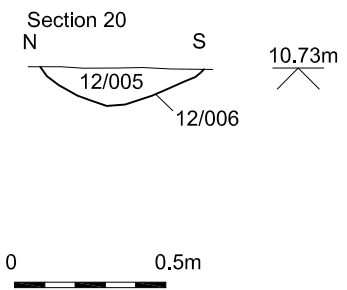
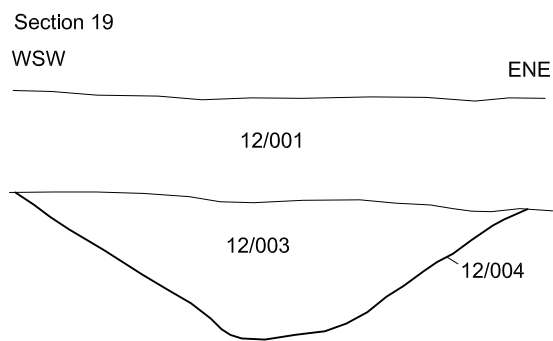
Fig.10

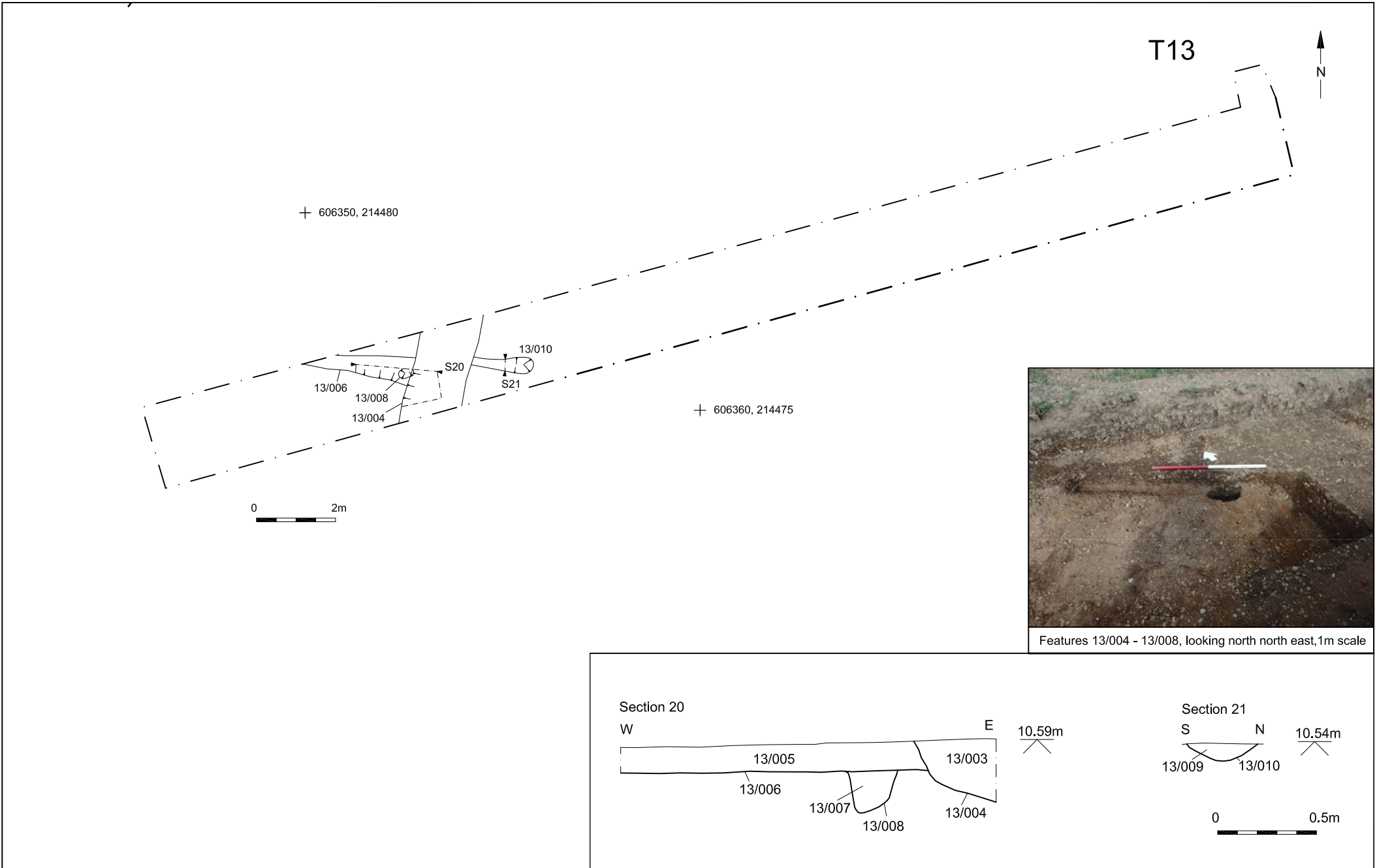


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Project Ref: 170096	Mar 2017	Trench 11 plan, section and photograph	
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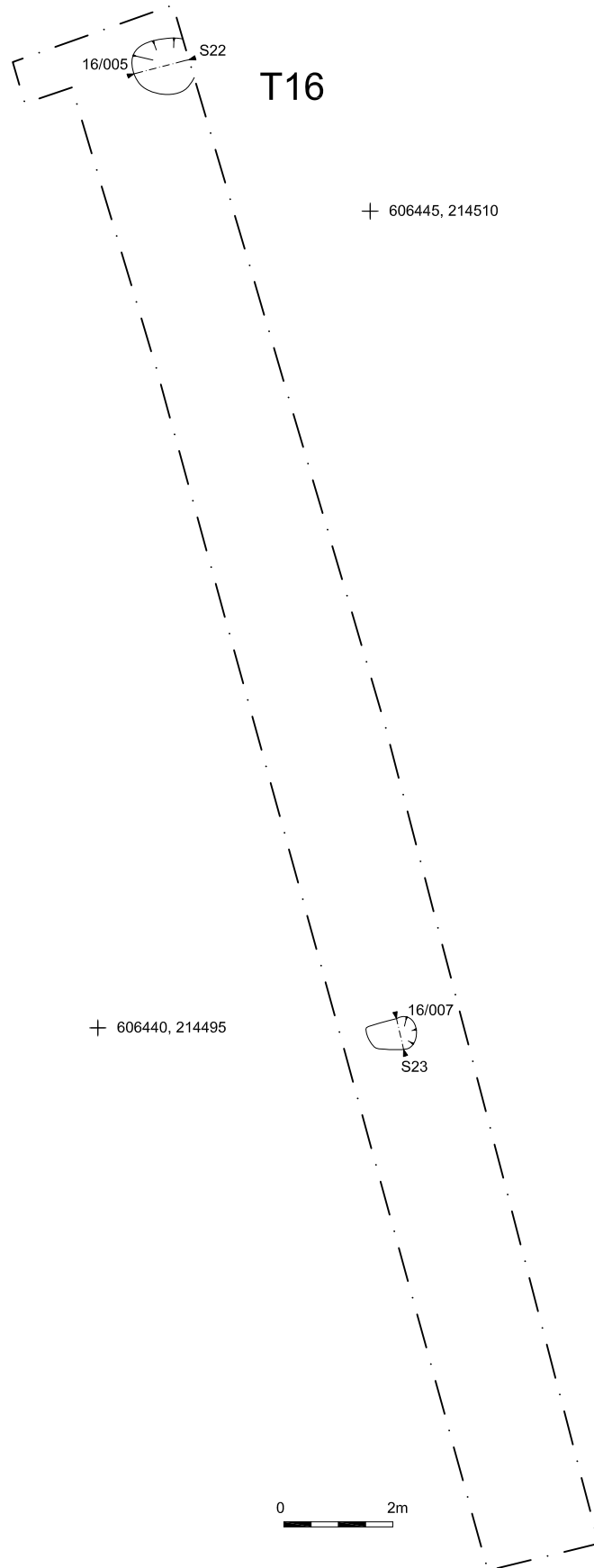
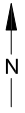


Ditch 12/004 looking north north west, 1m scale

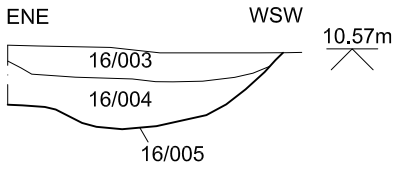




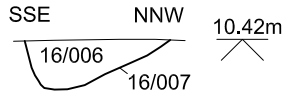
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Project Ref: 170096	Mar 2017	Trench 13 plan, sections and photograph	
Report Ref: 2017156	Drawn by: APL		



Section 22

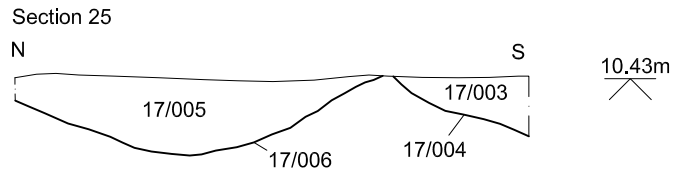
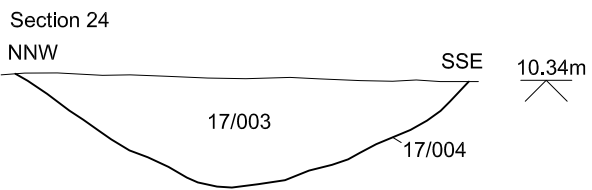
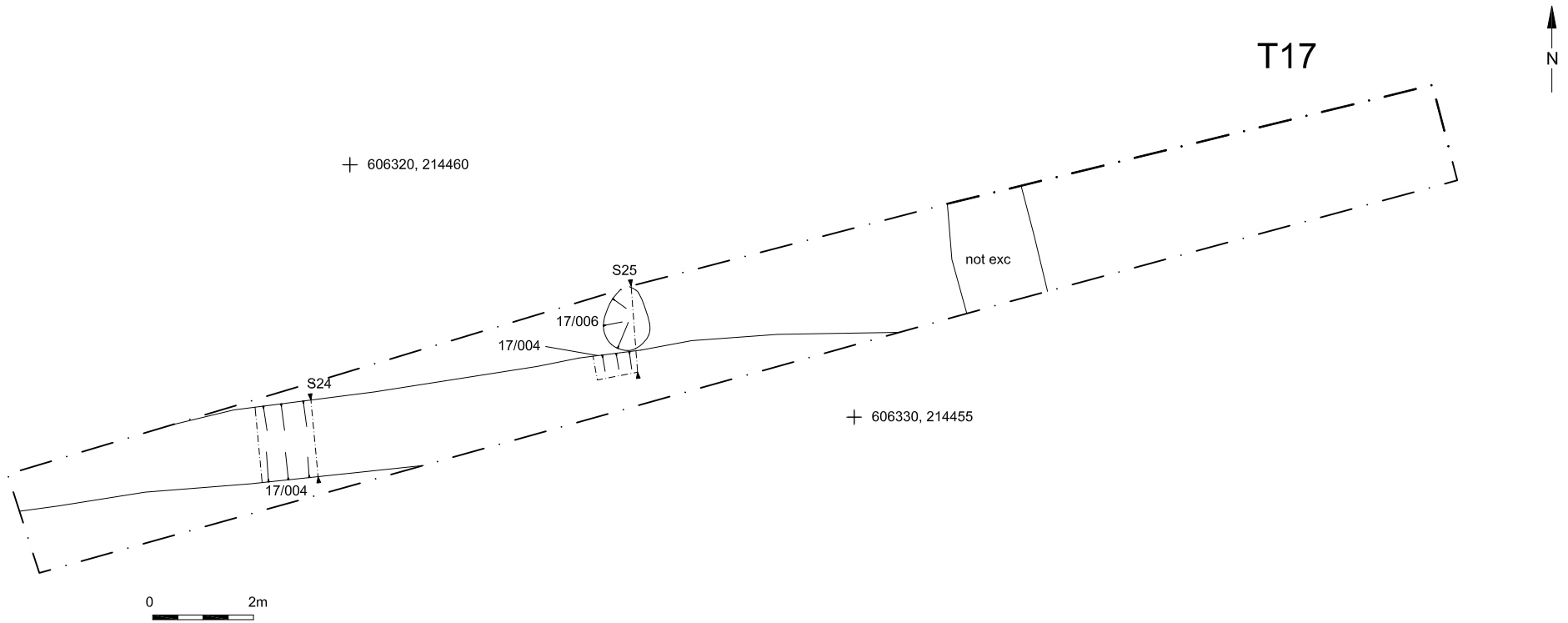


Section 23



Pit 16/005, looking south south east, 1m scale

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Project Ref: 170096	Mar 2017	Trench 16 plan, sections and photograph	
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Pit 17/006 and ditch 17/004 looking east, 1m scale

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Project Ref: 170096

Mar 2017

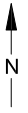
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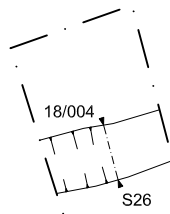
Land at Fen Lane, East Mersea

Trench 17 plan, sections and photograph

Fig.15



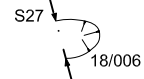
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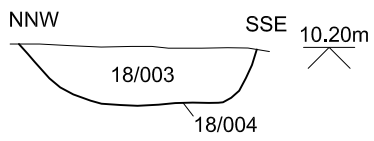
Ditch 18/004 looking ENE, 0.5m scale



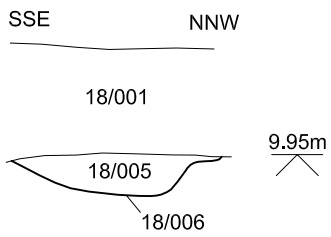
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Section 26



Section 27



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Land at Fen Lane, East Mersea

Project Ref: 170096

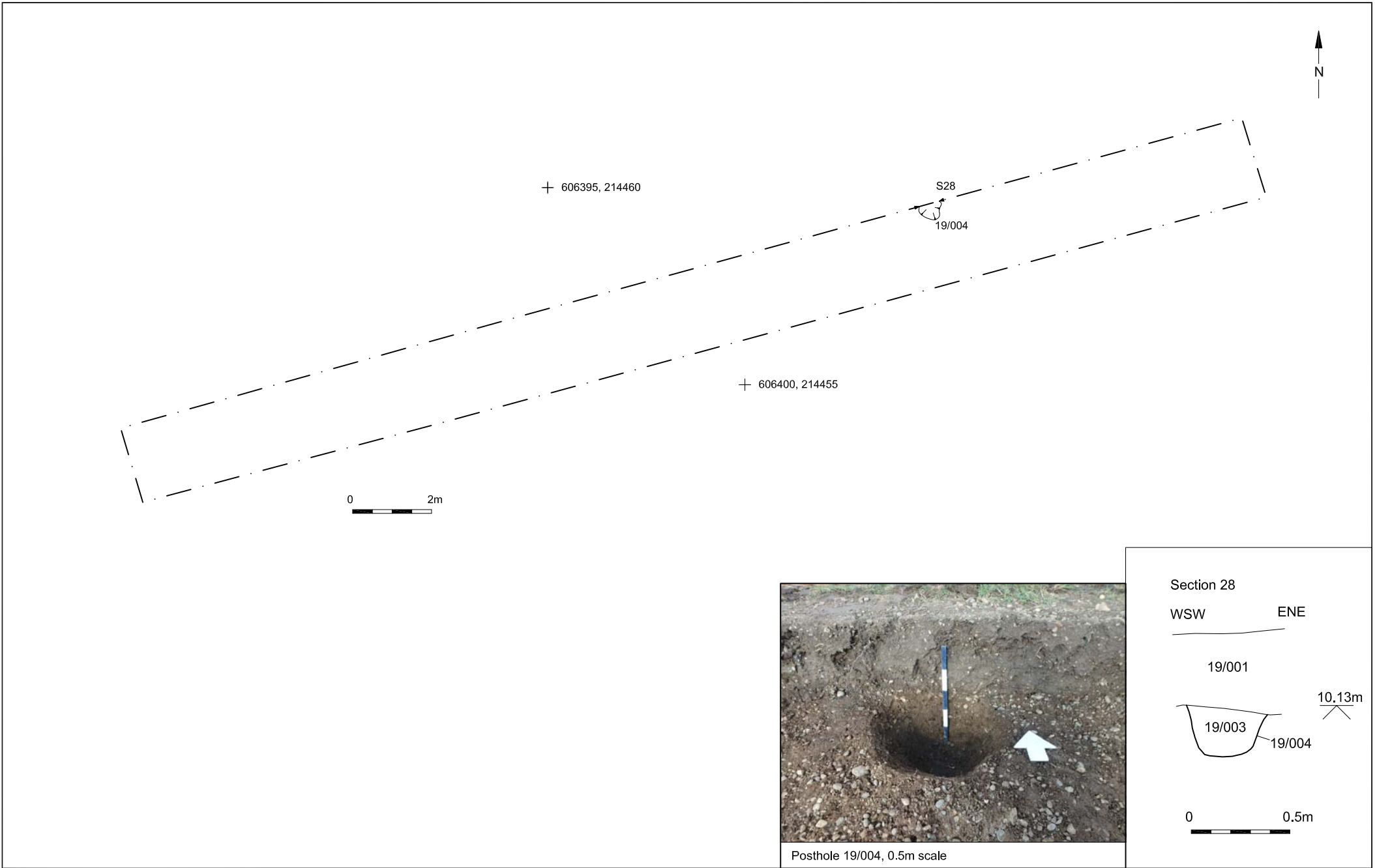
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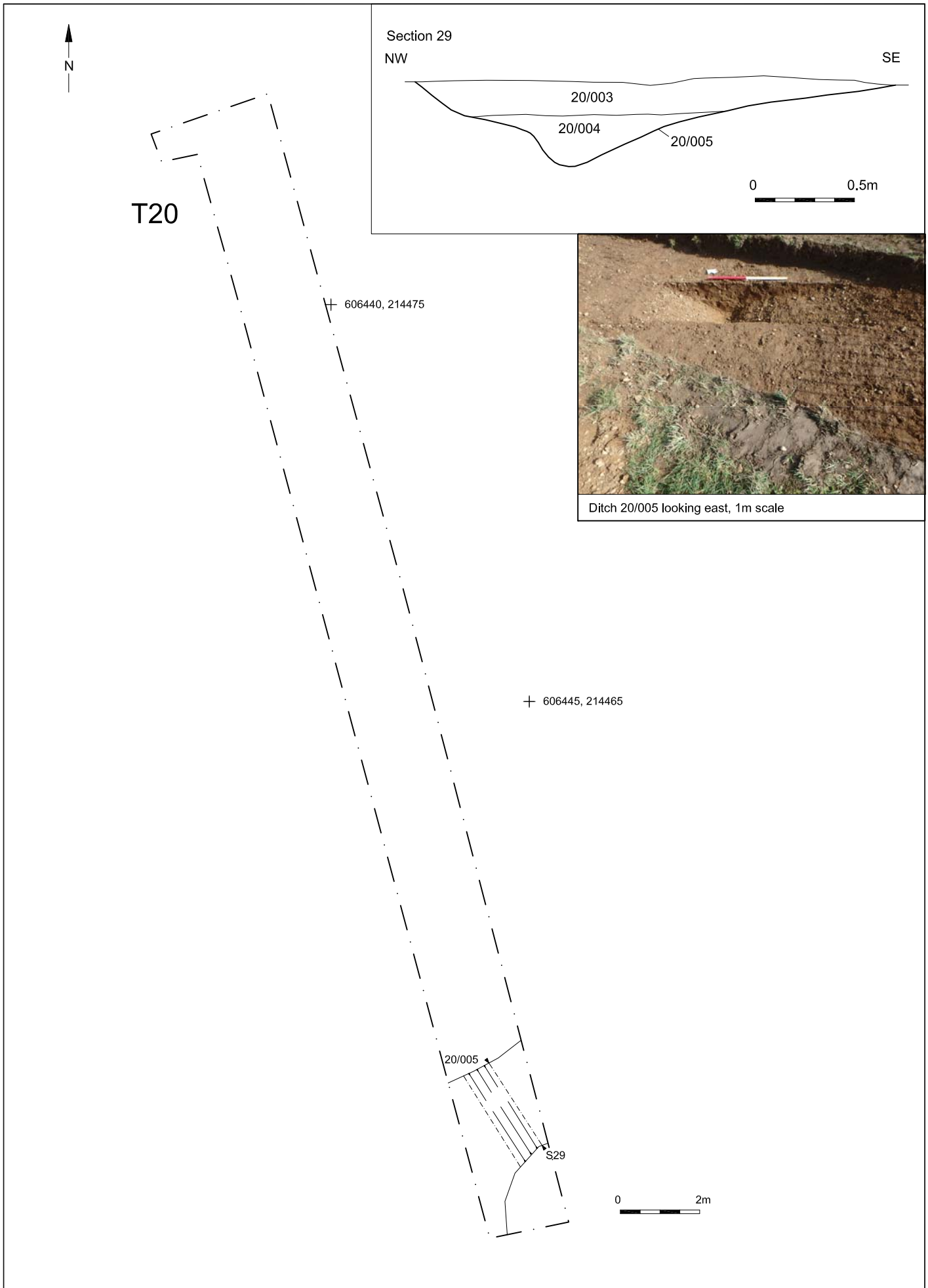
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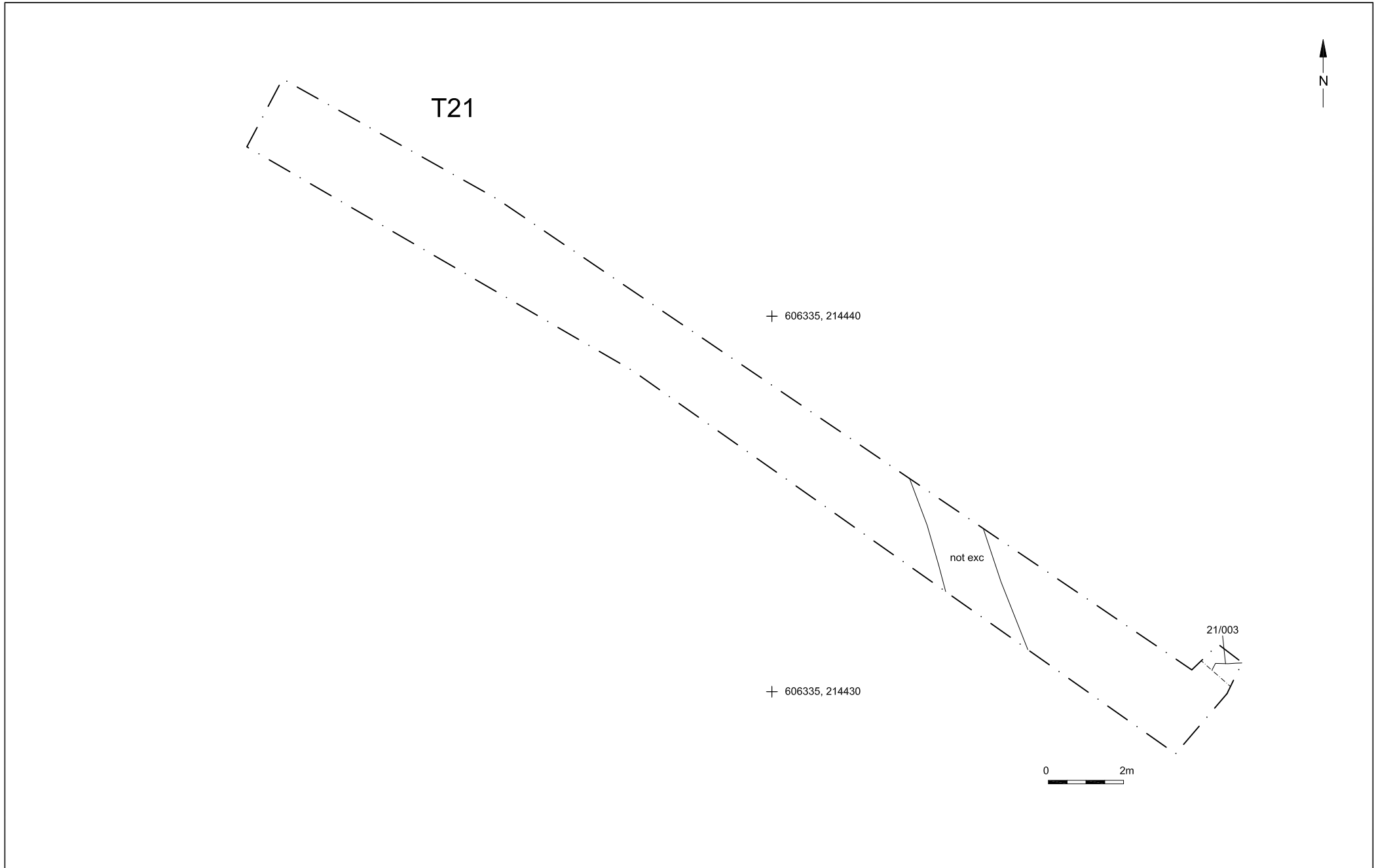
Trench 18 plan, sections and photograph

Fig.16





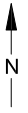
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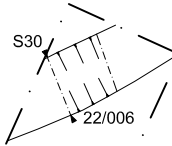
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Report Ref: 2017156	Drawn by: APL		



Ditch 22/006 looking south-west, 0.5m scale

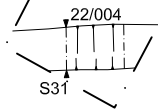


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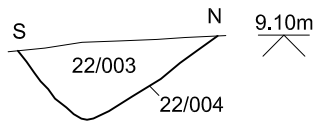
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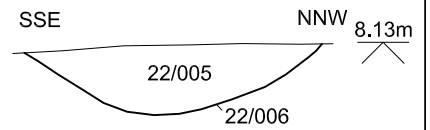


0 2m

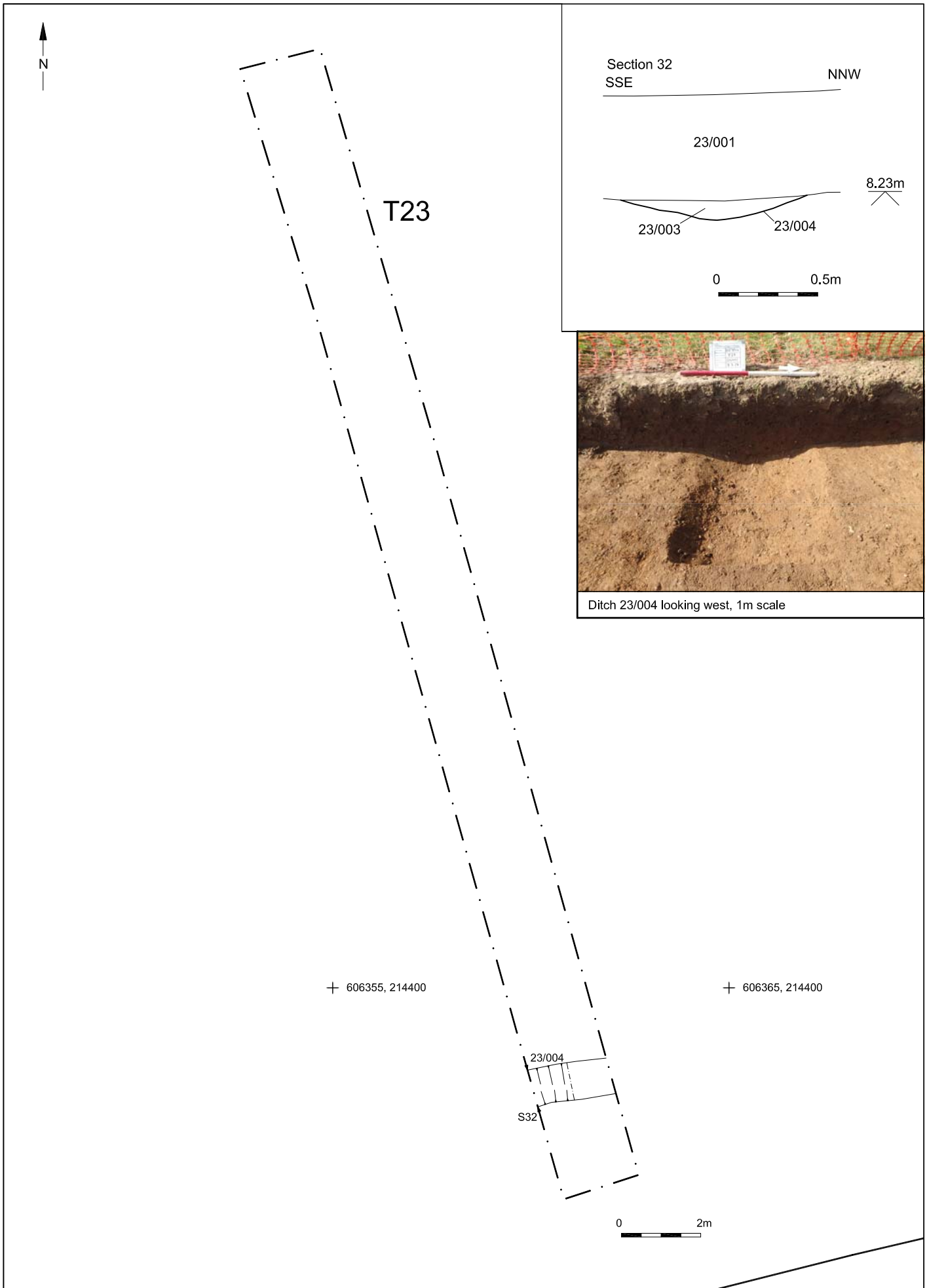
Section 30



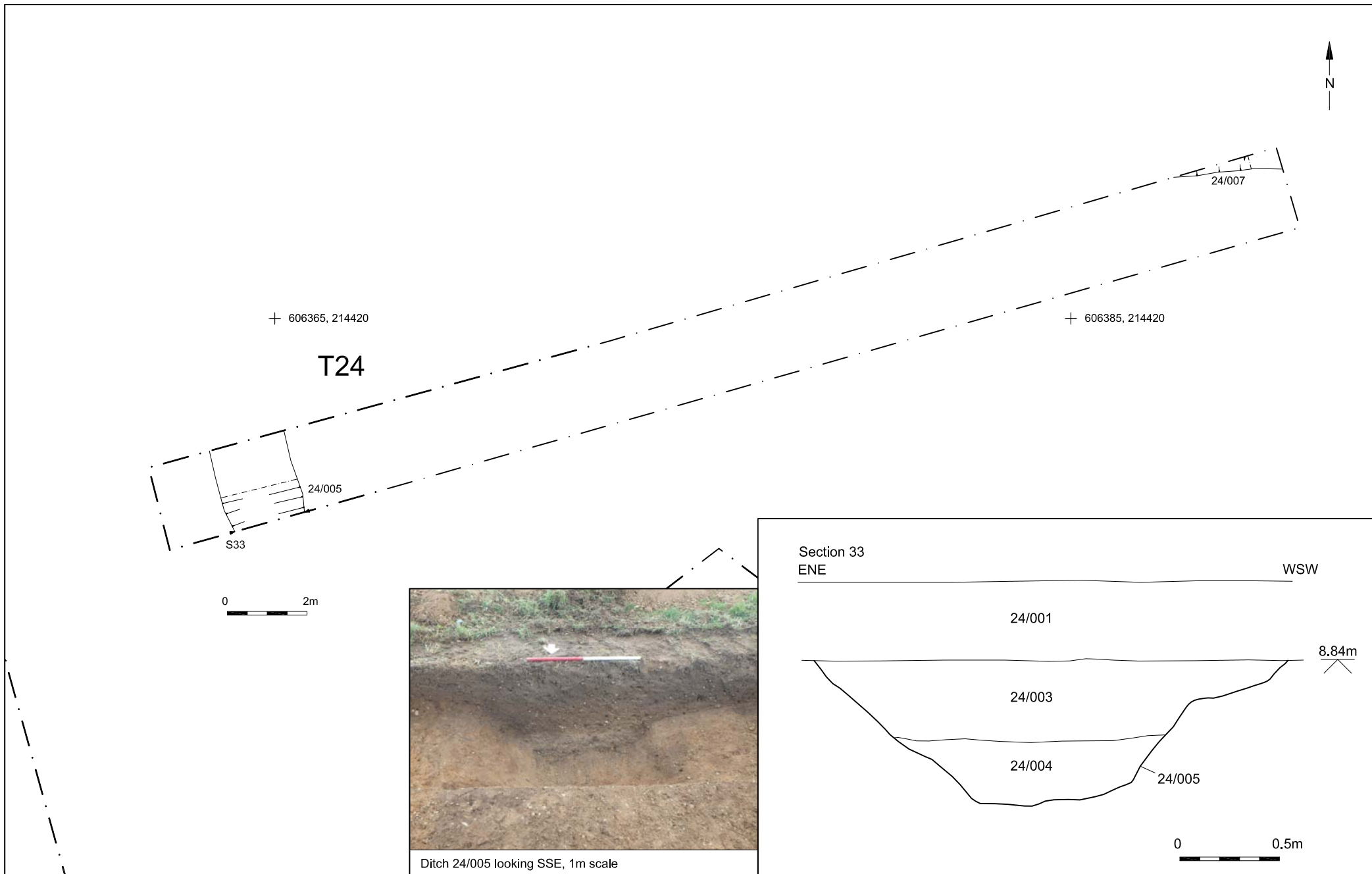
Section 31



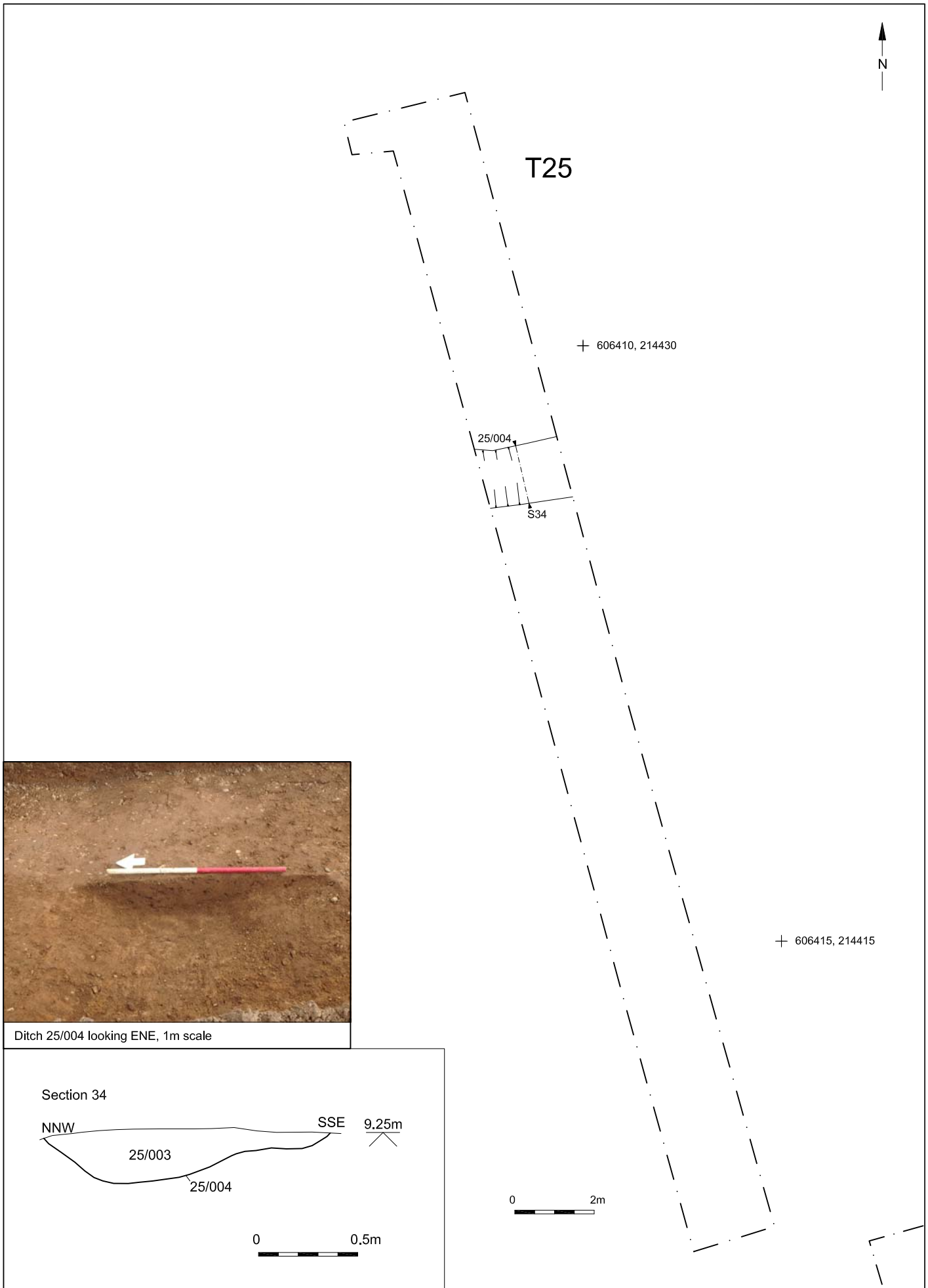
0 0.5m



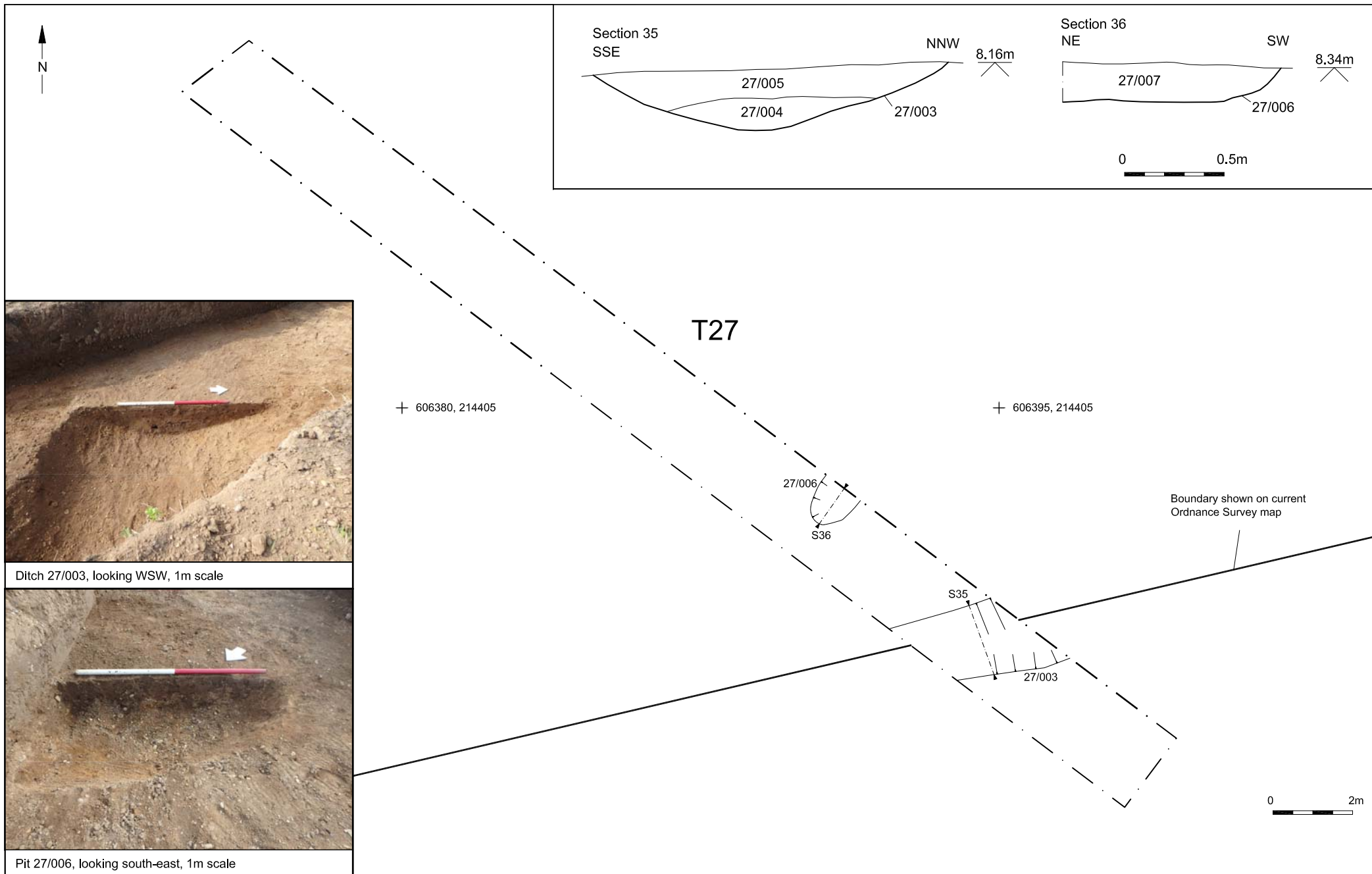
© Archaeology South-East		Land at Fen Lane, East Mersea	Fig.21
Project Ref: 170096	Mar 2017	Trench 23 plan, section and photograph	
Report Ref: 2017156	Drawn by: APL		



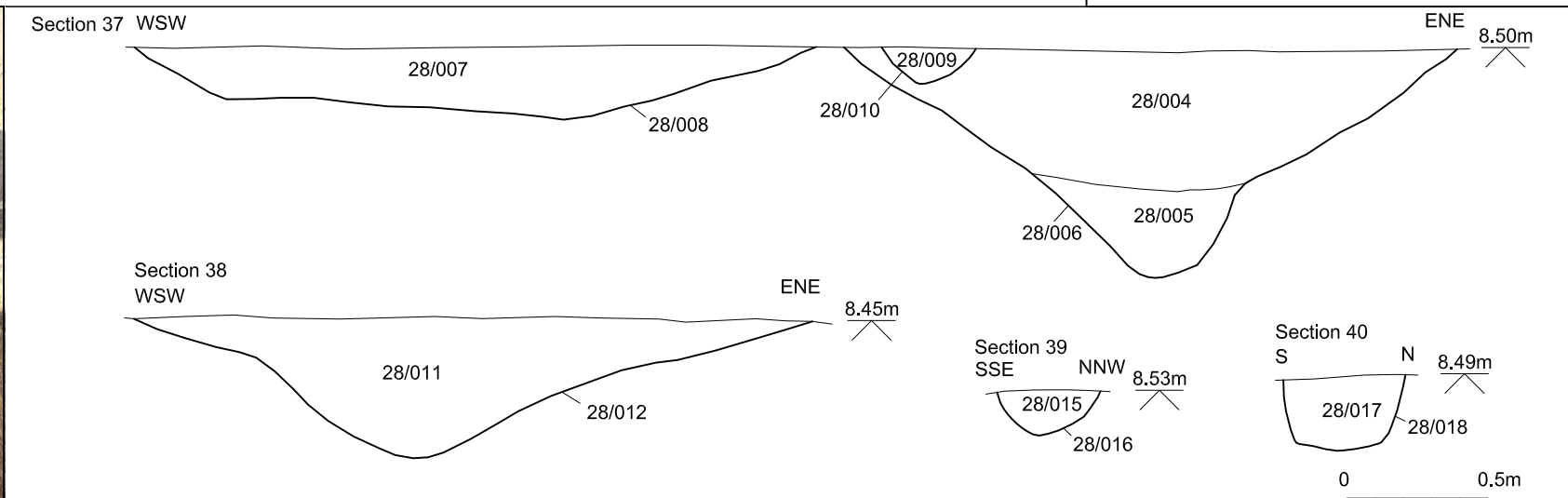
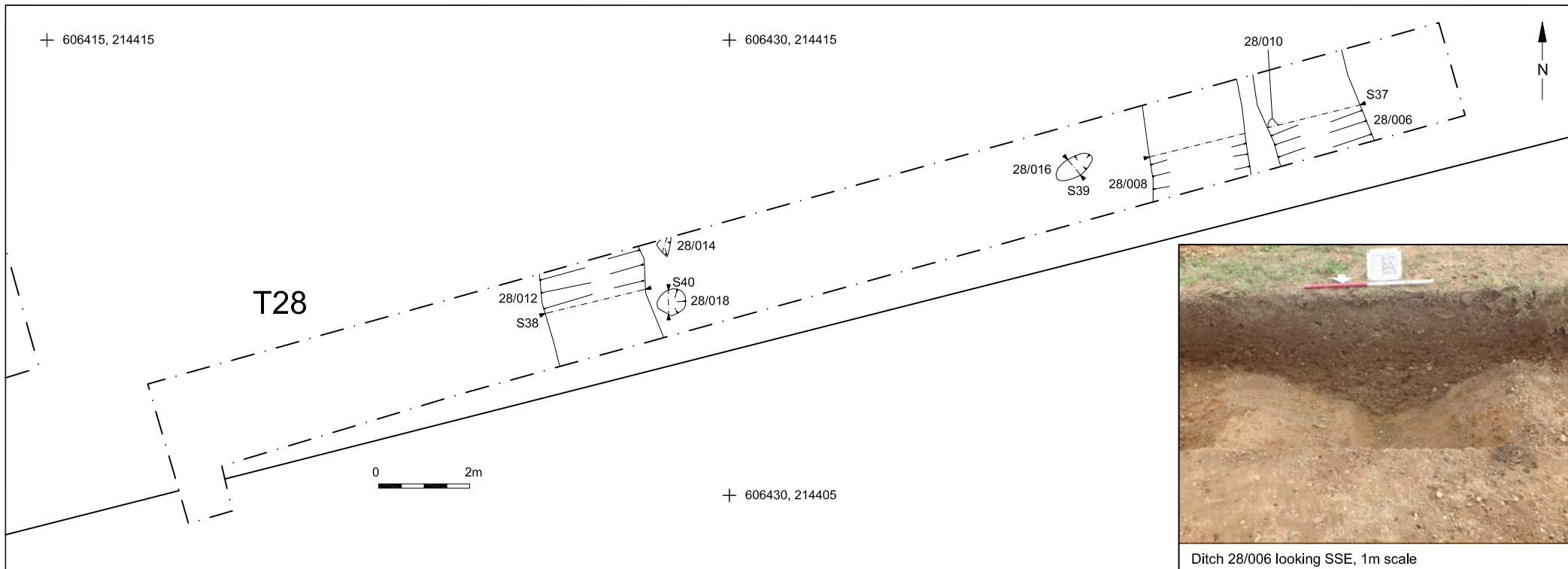
© Archaeology South-East		Land at Fen Lane, East Mersea	Fig.22
Project Ref: 170096	Mar 2017	Trench 24 plan, section and photograph	
Report Ref: 2017156	Drawn by: APL		



© Archaeology South-East		Land at Fen Lane, East Mersea	Fig.23
Project Ref: 170096	Mar 2017	Trench 25 plan, section and photograph	
Report Ref: 2017156	Drawn by: APL		

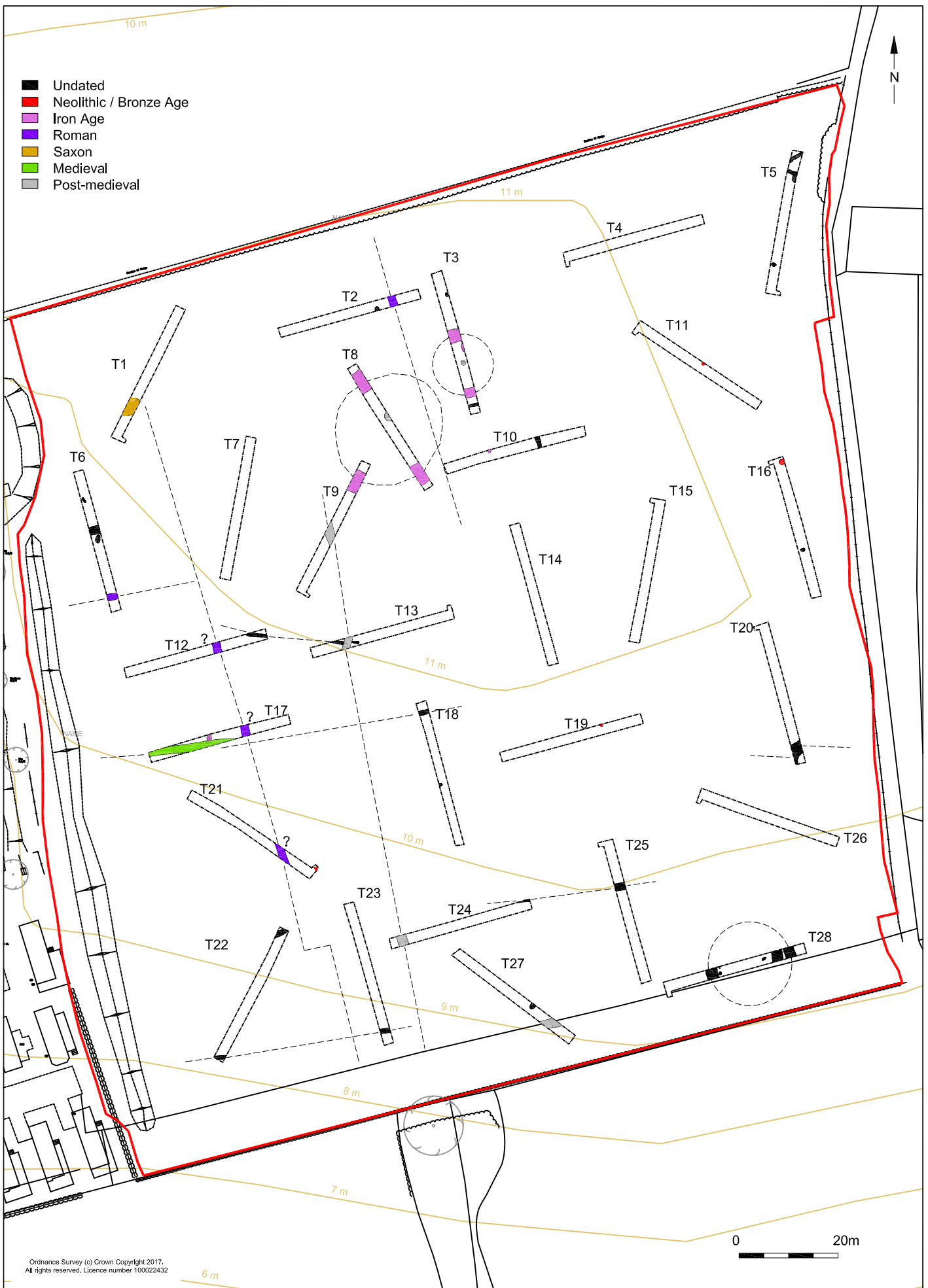


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Project Ref: 170096	Mar 2017	Trench 27 plan, sections and photographs	
Report Ref: 2017156	Drawn by: APL		



Pit 28/018, looking west, 0.5m scale

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Project Ref: 170096	Mar 2017	Trench 28 plan, sections and photographs	
Report Ref: 2017156	Drawn by: APL		



© Archaeology South-East		Land at Fen Lane, East Mersea	Fig. 26
Project Ref: 170096	Mar 2017	Evaluation trenches with dated features and contour lines	
Report Ref: 2017156	Drawn by: APL		



© Archaeology South-East		Land at Fen Lane, East Mersea		Fig.27
Project Ref: 170096	Mar 2017	Evaluation trenches with proposed development		
Report Ref: 2017156	Drawn by: APL			

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