Archaeology South-East

ASE

An Archaeological Evaluation on land immediately north of the Overton Water Treatment Works, Overton, Hampshire

SU 50443 50121
NGR 450443 150121

Project No: 4432
Site Code: SRV 06

ASE Report No: 2011025
OASIS ID: archaeol6-94476

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Abstract

An archaeological evaluation was conducted on land immediately north of the Overton Water Treatment Works, Overton, Hampshire. The work was carried out between 31st January and 2nd February 2011 by Archaeology South-East under commission from 4Delivery Limited (4D) on behalf of their client, Southern Water prior to the development of the land immediately north of the Overton Water Treatment Works to increase the capacity of the existing plant.

A total of six trenches measuring between 20 and 30 metres in length were excavated to assess the archaeological potential of the site in advance of a planning application.

The site lies on the Upper Chalk, indicated on British Geological Survey Sheet 283, and lies to the north of The Lynch to the north-west of Overton village.

The evaluation trenches encountered the natural geology at a maximum height of 105.78 mAOD in the northwest of the site (Trench 3) and a minimum of 101.75 mAOD in the mid-eastern side of the site (Trench 5).

Two lengths of linear ditch and a gully were identified as well as two pits. The ditch sections may represent a single, or possibly two ditches. One ditch contained probable Mesolithic or early Neolithic flint, while the other contained probable Middle or Late Iron Age pottery. One of the pits contained Beaker pottery, (2500-1700BC), and Neolithic flints.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site background

1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE) (a division of The Centre for Applied Archaeology at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London) were commissioned by 4Delivery Limited (4D) on behalf of their client Southern Water (hereafter referred to as the client) to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land immediately north of the Overton Water Treatment Works (NGR 450443 150121; Fig. 1) prior to development to increase the capacity of the existing plant.

1.1.2 A total of six trenches measuring either 20 or 30 metres in length by 1.80 metres were excavated to assess the archaeological potential of the site (Fig. 2).

1.2 Location and geology

1.2.1 According to the British Geological Survey 1:50,000 map (Survey Sheet 283, Andover) the site lies on Upper Chalk described as 'soft white chalk with many flint nodules'.

1.2.3 The site lies in a rural setting to the northwest of Overton village and is currently under pasture.

1.2.4 No desk based assessment of the site has been undertaken of the area however a large number of features plotted from aerial photography suggest an undated enclosure on the brow of the hill which lies directly northwest of the site. The site is bordered to the east by woodland, and to the west by pasture, with a railway line cutting close to its northern boundary.

1.3 Planning background

1.3.1 It is understood that the proposed development will be subject to a planning application in due course. At an early stage in the design process Archaeology South-East and their client were in consultation with David Hopkins, County Archaeologist with Hampshire County Council (HCC) in order to establish the level of archaeological investigation that would be required.

1.3.2 Based on the proposal to extend the current Water Treatment Works northwards into an area of known archaeological potential; a strategy of archaeological trial trenching was devised to establish whether archaeological remains would be affected by the proposed scheme.

1.3.3 A Written Scheme of Investigation for the evaluation was developed by ASE in response to the advice given by David Hopkins (ASE 2011).

1.3.4 All work was carried out in accordance with this document and the relevant Standards and Guidance of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA 2001).

1.4 Scope of the report

1.4.1 This report provides a detailed account of the archaeological evaluation. The work was undertaken between 31st January and 2nd February 2011 by Dylan Hopkinson (Archaeologist), Anna Doherty (Senior Archaeologist) and Ben Sharp (Assistant Archaeologist).

1.4.2 The fieldwork was managed by Neil Griffin (Project Manager) and the post-excavation analysis was managed by Jim Stevenson (Project Manager).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 No archaeological desk based assessment for the site has been compiled. However, consultation with the Hampshire County Council Historic Environment Register (HER) has highlighted the potential for archaeological remains of several periods with c. 1km of the site. These are summarised in Table 1 below (2.1.6) and their locations plotted on Figure 1.

2.1.2 The majority of HCC HER entries close to the site relate to ring ditches, enclosures and linear features identified from the interpretation of aerial photographs.

2.1.3 A number of isolated find spots were also included relating to an Early to Late Mesolithic Tranchet axe and Iron Age and Roman coins.

2.1.4 In addition a number of cottages on The Lynch to the south of the site are of post-medieval interest.

2.1.5 A watching brief was maintained by ASE at the site during the excavation four preliminary test pits, in advance of bore hole drilling (Meaton 2006). No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were encountered during the course of this work although the potential for colluvium to survive was noted.

HCC HER Ref. No.	OS Grid Ref. (SU)	Description	Period
18645	51200 49900	Mill race & sluices, Southington Mill	Post-medieval
18682	50800 49600	12th & 13th century pottery found whilst digging drains at Turrill House	Medieval
21111	51000 50000	Tranchet axe – imprecise location	Early to Late Mesolithic
33026	50945 49778	Site of Overton Silk Mill	Post medieval
33647	51300 50100	Overton Deer Park associated with episcopal residence of Bishops of Winchester at Court Farm	Medieval
36964	50500 50900	Ploughed out lynchets defining former field system	Uncertain
36967	50640 50480	Possible ring ditch identified on aerial photos	Early to Late Bronze Age
36968	51210 50310	Ploughed out lynchets defining former field system	Uncertain
36970	50320 50120	Complex of linear features identified on aerial photos	Uncertain
37329	49800 50400	Area of rectilinear features identified on aerial photos	Uncertain
37330	49660 50320	Curvilinear and linear features identified on	Uncertain

		aerial photos	
HCC HER Ref. No.	**OS Grid Ref. (SU)**	**Description**	**Period**
37995	49930 49830	Square enclosure, three possible barrows and structural remains identified on aerial photos	Uncertain
37957	49900 49590	Small square enclosure with linear features attached identified on aerial photos	Uncertain
37978	50890 49790	Rectilinear and linear features identified on aerial photos	Uncertain
37980	50320 49890	Complex of irregular linear features identified on aerial photos	Uncertain
39629	51454 50000	St Mary's Church and churchyard	Medieval to post-medieval
39677	50755 49543	Rim sherd of Porchester ware vessel at Turrill House	Anglo Saxon
39678	50130 49650	Deserted settlement at Northington Farm first documented in AD 1218	Medieval
42737	51460 49990	Bell casting pit, quarry pit and assorted finds probably associated with the construction of St Mary's church	Medieval
42800	50400 49727	Site of early post-medieval cottage in The Lynch demolished in c.1960	Post-medieval
42801	50442 49762	Site of a pair of semi-detached post-medieval cottages in The Lynch	Post-medieval
42802	50373 49697	Site of early post-medieval cottage in The Lynch	Post-medieval
42803	50432 49742	Site of early 17th century cottage in The Lynch	Post-medieval
42804	50391 49719	Site of early 19th cottage in The Lynch	Post-medieval
42805	50586 49759	Site of a pair of simple 16th or 17th century cottages in The Lynch	Post-medieval
54833	50574 49844	Iron Age & Roman coins north of Southington Mill	Iron Age & Roman
54834	50251 50072	Four Roman coins found south of Northington Belt	Roman

Table 1: Summary of data held on the HCC HER within c. 1km of the site

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 Methodology

3.1.1 The archaeological work was carried out in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI 2010) and the relevant Standards and Guidance of the Institute for Archaeologists (IFA 2001).

3.1.2 Six trenches were excavated across the area (Fig. 2), two were 20 metres by 1.80 metres while the remaining trenches were 30 metres by 1.80 metres. This represented an approximate 6% sample of the area and were placed to give a representative sample of the site and to target aerial photography plot features.

3.1.3 Once the trenches had been scanned using a CAT scanner, they were excavated using a toothless ditching bucket. They were recorded over three days by an archaeologist to assess the level of archaeological survival. All the trenches were left open to allow features to weather out.

3.1.4 Only undifferentiated topsoil and subsoil was removed by machine and stored separately on the trench edges. The excavation was taken down to the top of the first significant archaeological horizon or the top of the underlying 'natural', whichever was uppermost.

3.1.5 All archaeological deposits were recorded using ASE standard context sheets, with colours recorded by visual inspection.

3.1.6 Scale plans and section drawings of the overburden and excavated features were drawn on plastic drafting film, and a full photographic record was made recording all features and contexts.

3.1.7 The trenches were accurately laid out using a survey grade digital GPS and feature locations were recorded in reference to these pegs. All features were levelled in relation to Ordnance Datum heights.

3.2 Aims and objectives

3.2.1 The general aim was to determine as far as reasonably possible, the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains likely to be threatened by the proposed new development.

3.2.2 Specifically, given that a large number of crop marks exist within and in close proximity to the proposed extension to the site (Fig.3), the following specific objectives were laid out:

- To establish the presence or otherwise of any Bronze Age, Iron Age and Roman and/or earlier or later activity, and to define the date and nature of such activity.

- To establish the environmental context of any such activity.
- Evaluate the likely impact of past land use and development.
- Evaluate the impact that the proposed development will have on any such activity.
- Provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological mitigation strategy.

3.3 Site archive

3.3.1 The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE and will be deposited at the local museum in due course. The contents of the archive are tabulated below (Table 1).

3.3.2 Table 2: Quantification of site archive

Trench Record Sheets	6
Number of Context Sheets	21
Photographic Record Sheets	5
Drawing Sheets	5
No. of files/paper record	1
Photographs	32

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Natural and Overburden

4.1.1 The natural geology was friable mid yellowish brown clayey silt with frequent pieces of flint and chalk. This was the head deposit of the Upper Chalk and was identified at a maximum height of 105.78 mAOD in the northwest of the site (Trench 3) and a minimum of 101.75 mAOD in the mid-eastern side of the site (Trench 5).

4.1.2 The natural was overlain by subsoil between 0.26 and 0.50 metres thick which was deeper at the base of the slope (Trench 6) and was sealed by topsoil up to 0.30 metres thick.

4.2 **Trench 1** (Fig. 3)

4.2.1 The natural chalk head was identified at 105.64 mAOD [1/003].

4.2.2 In the middle of the trench a single cut feature was observed [1/004]. This was a linear ditch 1.30 metres wide and 0.75 metres deep that crossed the trench on a north to south alignment. The cut had a squared channel cut in the base creating a step in the steep sloping sides.

4.2.3 The cut contained two fills. The primary fill was 0.30 metres deep and a light greyish brown, clayey silt formed from weathered and eroded chalk in a clayey silt matrix [1/005]. The secondary fill was mid brown clayey silt 0.30 metres deep [1/006] and contained a single fragment of unidentifiable bone. In addition, several small prehistoric pottery sherds, were recovered from an environmental sample taken from this layer. These sherds could not be conclusively dated but are considered more typical of Middle or Late Iron Age assemblages.

4.2.4 This ditch was overlain by mid yellowish brown clayey silt layer 0.21 metres thick [1/002], in turn sealed by dark yellowish brown clayey silt topsoil 0.30 metres thick [1/001].

4.2.5 Table 3: List of recorded contexts in Trench 1

Context Number	Type	Description	Max. Length (m)	Max. Width (m)	Deposit Thickness (m)	Max Height m.AOD
1/001	Deposit	Topsoil	-	-	0.30	106.28
1/002	Deposit	Subsoil	-	-	0.27	105.98
1/003	Deposit	Natural	-	-	-	105.71

Context Number	Type	Description	Max. Length (m)	Max. Width (m)	Deposit Thickness (m)	Max Height m.AOD
1/004	Cut	Ditch Cut	Trench	1.30	0.75	105.36
1/005	Fill	Ditch Fill	Trench	1.10	0.30	105.36
1/006	Fill	Ditch Fill	Trench	1.30	0.30	105.36

4.3 Trench 2 (Fig. 4)

4.3.1 The natural chalk head was identified at 104.11 mAOD [2/003].

4.3.2 In the eastern end of the trench a single cut feature was observed [2/005]. This was a 4.00 metre wide cut which crossed the trench from north to south with roughly parallel sides and was 0.20 metres deep. The feature had a shallow and irregular base and was filled with dark reddish brown silty clay [2/004]. No finds were recovered from the fill.

4.3.3 Overlying the cut and sealing the whole trench was a deposit of mid yellowish brown clayey silt 0.26 metres thick, [2/002], in turn sealed by dark yellowish brown clayey silt topsoil 0.26 metres thick, [2/001].

4.3.4 This feature may represent a spread of material within a natural depression in the natural or could be an indication of cultural activity.

4.3.5 Table 4: List of recorded contexts in Trench 2

Context Number	Type	Description	Max. Length (m)	Max. Width (m)	Deposit Thickness (m)	Max Height m.AOD
2/001	Deposit	Topsoil	-	-	0.26	104.71
2/002	Deposit	Subsoil	-	-	0.26	104.45
2/003	Deposit	Natural	-	-	-	104.19
2/004	Cut	Ditch Cut	Trench	4.00	0.20	103.66
2/005	Fill	Ditch Fill	Trench	4.00	0.20	103.66

4.4 Trench 3 (Fig. 5)

4.4.1 The natural chalk head was identified at a maximum elevation of 105.61 mAOD in the north of the trench and sloped down to 104.30 mAOD in the south of the trench [3/003].

4.4.2 Two features were identified cutting the natural; in the north of the trench a

pit cut was observed [3/006] and four metres to the south a northeast-southwest aligned gully was observed [3/004].

4.4.3 Gully [3/004] was observed for a length of 2.00 metres within the trench and had a width of 0.51 metres. It was 0.21 metres deep and filled by a single fill of mid yellowish brown clayey silt. No finds were recovered.

4.4.4 Pit [3/006] measured 2.33 metres by 1.40 metres in plan aligned on a roughly north-south axis, and was 0.38 metres deep. The basal fill [3/007] was friable light brownish yellow weathered chalk in a silty matrix which filled the first 0.10 metres depth of the pit and was sealed by a fill of loose mid yellowish brown clayey silt [3/008]. No finds were recovered.

4.4.5 The features were sealed by 0.20 metres depth of mid yellowish brown subsoil [3/002] and in turn by 0.23 metres depth of dark yellowish brown topsoil [3/001].

4.4.6 Table 5: List of recorded contexts in Trench 3

Context Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Thickness	Max Height m.AOD
3/001	Deposit	Topsoil	-	-	0.23 m	106.39
3/002	Deposit	Subsoil	-	-	0.20 m	106.16
3/003	Deposit	Natural	-	-	-	105.96
3/004	Cut	Gully cut	2.00 m	0.51 m	0.21 m	105.40
3/005	Fill	Fill of Gully	2.00 m	0.51 m	0.21 m	105.40
3/006	Cut	Pit cut	2.33 m	1.40 m	0.38 m	105.61
3/007	Fill	Primary fill of pit	2.10 m	1.25 m	0.10 m	105.32
3/008	Fill	Secondary fill of pit	2.33 m	1.40 m	0.29 m	105.61

4.5 **Trench 4** (Fig. 6)

4.5.1 Trench 4 was aligned northwest to southeast; the natural [4/003] was identified at maximum elevation of 104.33 mAOD in the northwest and this dropped to 102.25 mAOD in the south-eastern end.

4.5.2 A northeast-southwest aligned ditch [4/004] was observed cutting directly into the natural. This ditch cut across the trench, was 1.65 metres wide and 0.66 metres deep. The ditch was filled with a 0.44 metre thick primary fill of friable light brownish yellow weathered chalk [4/005]. Several pieces of struck flint of Mesolithic or Neolithic date were recovered from this ditch.

4.5.3 This was sealed by mid yellowish brown clayey silt 0.33 metres thick [4/006] containing a fragment of sheep-sized radius.

4.5.4 Upon excavation, a small posthole cut [4/007] was observed in the eastern

side of the ditch that appeared to predate the primary fill [4/005]; however the fill of the posthole and the ditch were very similar and likely to be contemporaneous. The posthole measured 0.27 metres in diameter and 0.16 metres deep.

4.5.5 The feature was sealed by 0.25 metres depth of mid yellowish brown subsoil [4/002] and in turn by 0.25 metre depth of dark yellowish brown topsoil [4/001].

4.5.6 Table 6: List of recorded contexts in Trench 4

Context Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Thickness	Max Height m.AOD
4/001	Deposit	Topsoil	-	-	0.25 m	104.88
4/002	Deposit	Subsoil	-	-	0.25 m	104.63
4/003	Deposit	Natural	-	-	-	104.33
4/004	Cut	Ditch cut	2.00 m	1.65 m	0.66 m	104.04
4/005	Fill	Primary ditch fill	2.00 m	1.65 m	0.44 m	104.04
4/006	Fill	Secondary ditch fill	2.00 m	1.33 m	0.33 m	104.04
4/007	Cut	Posthole cut	0.27 m	0.16 m	0.16 m	103.96
4/008	Fill	Posthole fill	0.27 m	0.16 m	0.16 m	103.96

4.6 Trench 5 (Fig. 7)

4.6.1 Trench 5 was aligned roughly north to south; the natural, [5/003], was identified at maximum elevation of 103.10 mAOD in the north and this dropped to 101.75 mAOD in the southern end of the trench.

4.6.2 In the northern end of the trench a single cut feature was identified. [5/004]; this was a sub circular pit measuring 1.40 metres by 1.05 metres in plan and 0.30 metres in depth which had slightly undercut sides.

4.6.3 The primary fill was mid reddish brown weathered chalk that was located only on the north-western side of the cut [5/005]. This was sealed by a secondary fill of dark brown clayey silt containing charcoal flecks [5/006]. The secondary fill contained a dogs tooth and 4 sherds of probable Beaker pottery, from two separate vessels, which were unusually fresh and unabraded.

4.6.4 The base of the pit was excavated further to assess the possibility that the pit may have been partitioned vertically into two using a false floor of compacted chalk, however no indication of this was observed.

4.6.5 Table 7: List of recorded contexts in Trench 5

Context Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Thickness	Max Height m.AOD
5/001	Deposit	Topsoil	-	-	0.25 m	103.91
5/002	Deposit	Subsoil	-	-	0.25 m	103.66
5/003	Deposit	Natural	-	-	-	103.10
5/004	Cut	Pit cut	1.40 m	1.05 m	0.30 m	103.13
5/005	Fill	Primary pit fill	1.40 m	0.70 m	0.30 m	103.13
5/006	Fill	Secondary pit fill	1.30 m	1.05 m	0.30 m	103.13

4.7 Trench 6

4.7.1 Trench 6 was aligned roughly north to south; the natural, [6/003] was identified at 102.68 mAOD in the north which dropped to 101.95 mAOD in the southern end of the trench.

4.7.2 No archaeological features were identified within the trench; the natural was sealed by a layer of subsoil 0.50 metres thick [6/002], and in turn by a 0.30 metre thick layer of topsoil [6/001].

4.7.3 Table 8: List of recorded contexts in Trench 6

Context Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Thickness	Max Height m.AOD
6/001	Deposit	Topsoil	-	-	0.30 m	103.71
6/002	Deposit	Subsoil	-	-	0.50 m	103.46
6/003	Deposit	Natural	-	-	-	102.68

5.0 FINDS

5.1 Summary

5.1.1 A small assemblage of finds was recovered during the archaeological work at Overton. All finds were washed and dried after which they were counted, weighed and bagged by material and stored according to IFA guidelines. None of the finds require further conservation. The quantification table, below does not include finds recovered from the environmental samples which are quantified in Appendix A.

5.1.2 Table 9: Quantification of the Finds

Context	Pot	Wt (g)	A. Bone	Wt (g)	Flint	Wt (g)
1/006			6	<2		
3/002					1	18
4/005					2	36
4/006			1	6	19	213
5/006	4	14	1	<2	1	28
Total	4	14	8	6	23	295

5.2 **The Prehistoric Pottery** by Anna Doherty

5.2.1 Pit fill [5/006] produced 4 sherds of probable Beaker pottery, (2500-1700BC), weighing 12g, from two different vessels. Both are in a similar fabric type, containing sparse grog of around 1-2mm and rare/sparse ill-sorted flint of 0.5-2.5mm. One of the sherds features closely-spaced finger pinching, whilst the other has fine horizontal rows of comb impressions. Although the sherds are not large, they are unusually fresh and unabraded, suggesting that they are contemporary with the filling of the feature. This suggests the potential for a regionally significant assemblage to be recovered from the site, in the event of further excavation, as no Beaker settlement features are currently known from Hampshire (Gardiner 2007).

5.2.2 Soil sample 3 from [1/006], the secondary fill of ditch [1/004] produced several very small and fragmentary sherds probably from the same vessel (quantified in Appendix A). The dating evidence provided by these sherds is inconclusive; the fabric, which contains moderate medium fine quartz sand and very rare grains of glauconite, would be most typical of the Middle or Late Iron Age. Sandy fabrics, lacking grog - or flint-tempering can be encountered in Beaker assemblages but this sherd is unoxidised and lacks any traces of decoration and is probably unlikely to be contemporary with the sherds from [5/006].

5.3 **The Animal Bone** by Lucy Sibun

5.3.1 The evaluation produced eight fragments of poorly preserved bone from three contexts. Ditch fill [1/006] contained less than 2g of unidentifiable fragments, ditch fill [4/006] produced a fragment of sheep-sized radius and [5/006] contained a single dog canine. These fragments have no potential for further analysis.

5.4 **The Flint** by Karine Le Hégarat

5.4.1 A total of 23 flints considered to be humanly struck; weighing 295g was recovered during the course of the evaluation work at Overton (Table 10). Flints originated from context [3/002] within Trench 3, contexts [4/005] and [4/006] within Trench 4 and context 6 within Trench 5. Context [4/006] (secondary fill of ditch [4/004]) produced most of the material (19 pieces).

	[3/002]	[4/005]	[4/006]	[5/006]
	Deposit - Subsoil	Primary fill of ditch [4/004]	Secondary fill of ditch [4/004]	Secondary fill of pit [5/004]
Flake	1	1	8	1
Flake fragment			2	
Blade fragment		1		
Shattered piece			4	
Chip			5	

5.4.2 Table 10: The flintwork

5.4.3 With the exception of five flints from context [4/006] which display very light edge modification, probably caused by slight movement within the soil matrix, the majority of the flintwork exhibits fresh edge condition, implying that the material has undergone negligible post-depositional disturbance. All the flints are re-corticated. A flake from subsoil, [3/002], and a blade fragment from ditch fill context [4/005] display bluish white surface discolouration and the remaining pieces are re-corticated pale grey to white. Pieces not heavily corticated display moderate inclusions. A single break

indicates that at least one piece from [4/005] was manufactured from fine-grained light to dark grey flint. The off-white to white cortex is generally thick but mostly abraded to a smooth surface. The raw material is characteristic of chalk-derived flints and nodules could have been collected locally from head deposits which were observed in all the trenches or from other chalk flint sources located further afield. Three pieces display encrustation of light brown sediments or minerals. The concretion on the ventral face of the flake from [5/006] is particularly heavy. No burnt flints were recovered.

5.4.4 The assemblage consists entirely of pieces of flint debitage, including eleven complete flakes, two fragmentary flakes, a single blade fragment, four shattered pieces and five chips. Although no retouched or utilised tools were recovered, technological aspects can provide some limited dating evidence. The proximal end of the blade from the primary fill [4/005] of ditch [4/004] is absent. Nonetheless it is clear that the long piece with parallel lateral margins is a product of blade-based industry and it may therefore be of Mesolithic or Early Neolithic date. The secondary fill of the same ditch [4/004] produced a small assemblage of flint debitage and although none could be refitted and no core was present, the chips and primary flake indicate that knapping activity may have been performed in the vicinity of the trench. The narrow butts and diffuse bulbs of percussion are most characteristic of the Mesolithic and Neolithic. Pit [5/004] produced a thin tertiary squat flake with fresh edges. Although the bulb of percussion is pronounced, the small multi-directional flake scar removals on the dorsal face suggest careful reduction strategy and the piece could represent waste from tool manufacture or rejuvenation, such as an axe thinning flake. It may therefore indicate a Neolithic date. Nonetheless, the flake is not conclusively diagnostic and as possible Beaker pottery was also recovered from this feature, a Beaker attribution is not impossible.

5.4.6 Although the assemblage recovered during the evaluation is small and includes only pieces of flint debitage, it indicates earlier prehistoric activities.

5.5 Environmental Samples by Karine Le Hégarat

Introduction

5.5.1 Seven bulk soil samples were extracted during evaluation work at Overton. Soil samples were collected from ditch fill contexts within Trenches 1, 2 and 4, pit fill contexts within Trenches 3 and 5 as well as from a gully within Trench 3. Sampling aimed to establish the presence of environmental indicators such as wood charcoal, charred macrobotanical remains, fauna and mollusca. In addition sampling aimed to assist find recovery.

Methods

5.5.2 Samples were processed in a flotation tank and the residues and flots were retained on 500µm and 250µm meshes and were air dried prior to sorting. The residues were passed through 4mm and 2mm geological sieves and

each fraction sorted for environmental and artefact remains (Appendix A). The flots were scanned under a stereozoom microscope at magnifications of x7-45 and an overview of their contents recorded (Appendix B). Preliminary identifications have been provided for macrobotanical remains present through reference to modern comparative material and reference texts (Cappers *et al.* 2006, Jacomet 2006, NIAB 2004). Nomenclature used follows Stace (1997).

Results

5.5.3 Sample <1>, gully [3/004], fill [3/005]

The small flot (45ml) contained fairly high proportion of uncharred material (65%) including sediment and uncharred vegetation consisting mainly of fine roots and uncharred seeds such as common fumitory (*Fumaria officinalis*), knotgrass/dock (*Polygonum/Rumex sp.*), black-bindweed (*Fallopia convolvulus*) and seeds from the goosefoot (Chenopodiaceae) family. The sample produced a moderate quantity of land snail shells, infrequent burnt and unburnt small bone fragments, a small quantity of fly puparia as well as a limited amount of charred plant remains including scarce wood charcoal fragments and a very low number of charred macrobotanical remains. The latter comprised two poorly preserved charred cereal grains (one grain of wheat (*Triticum* sp.) and one indeterminate caryopsis (Cerealia)) as well as some charred wild/weed seeds including probable fescue/rye-grass (cf. *Festuca/Lolium* sp.), smaller grass seeds (Poaceae), borage (cf. *Borago officilanis*) and seeds from the goosefoot (Chenopodiaceae) family.

5.5.4 Samples <2> & <3>, ditch [1/004], primary fill [1/005] and secondary fill [1/006]

Small quantity of uncharred material was recorded in the flots. Both deposits contained numerous land snail shells, representing 45% of the flot volume from sample <2> (primary fill) and 87% of the flot volume from sample <3> (secondary fill). Sample <3> also contained a small cremated bone fragment and some undiagnostic prehistoric pottery sherds. Charred plant remains were again very scarce within these samples consisting of infrequent small wood charcoal fragments and a single possible degraded charred grain of wheat (cf. *Triticum* sp.).

5.5.5 Sample <4>, ditch [2/005], fill [2/004]

The flot was dominated by uncharred material including sediment (45%) and uncharred vegetation (45%) including fine roots, modern chaff elements and uncharred seeds. Land snail shells were again present in this deposit. The residue and flot produced a small quantity of unburnt bone fragments but they were almost devoid of charred plant remains with only a few flecks of charcoal noticed in the flot.

5.5.6 Sample <5>, pit [5/004], secondary fill [5/006]

The proportion of uncharred vegetation present in the flot was small, representing 10% of the flot volume. Although sample <5> produced the richest assemblage of charred botanical material including charcoal and charred macroplants, the quantity of the charred plant remains was small. The assemblage of charcoal included fragments measuring >4mm in size. They were moderately well preserved. The charred macroplant remains consisted of infrequent very fragmented and pitted caryopses, infrequent wild/weed seeds and a single hazelnut shell fragment (*Corylus avellana*). The charred grains were mainly indeterminate (Cerealia) although wheat (*Triticum* sp.) and possible barley (cf. *Hordeum* sp.) species were noticed. The charred wild/weed seeds included knotgrass/dock (*Polygonum/Rumex sp.*), black-bindweed (*Fallopia convolvulus*) and one indeterminate seed. A moderate amount of land snail shells was present in the deposit. While the residue contained a small quantity of unburnt mammal bone fragments, fly puparia were noted in the flot.

5.5.7 Sample <6>, ditch [4/004], primary fill [4/005]

Sample <6> produced a small flot (20ml) dominated by sediment (70%) and uncharred vegetation (20%). Charred plant remains were uncommon including infrequent flecks of charcoal and a single charred indeterminate cereal grain. A small amount of land snail shells and fly puparia were also recorded.

5.5.8 Sample <7>, pit [3/006], fill [3/007]

Uncharred material dominated the flot (90%). Charred botanical remains were limited to scarce small wood charcoal flecks. Other classes of biological remains included some infrequent unburnt bone fragments and a small amount of land snail shells.

Discussion

5.5.9 Bulk environmental samples taken during the evaluation have confirmed the presence of small amounts of environmental remains including charred botanicals, bones, land snail shells and fly puparia.

5.5.10 Uncharred botanicals are present in all the samples, although in most cases these do not dominate the flots. Nonetheless, the presence of uncharred vegetation could indicate a small degree of stratigraphic movement and potential contamination by later intrusive elements. As no waterlogged or anaerobic condition were present at this site, it is therefore highly probable that the uncharred seeds represent recent contaminants introduced through root actions. Fly puparia were recorded in four samples (<1, 5, 6 and 7>). Fly puparia are interesting as they suggest the presence of faecal matter, cess material or other organic general waste matter. Unless the deposits are waterlogged, the larval remains usually preserve by mineralisation. Unfortunately, these fly pupparia are not mineralised and as they originate from dry shallow deposits, they most probably represent modern cases.

5.5.11 The small assemblage of charred crop remains and wild/weed seeds provide very limited evidence for arable activities and past vegetation environment. However, the infrequent charred macrobotanicals held within the deposits most likely represent general waste materials and/or background scatters and the assemblage is overall too small and poorly preserved to enable significant interpretations relating to cultivation and local past vegetation environment.

5.5.12 Context [5/006] contained a small assemblage of wood charcoal fragments. Although they may be suitable for identification, the data would be limited and provide little indication of the woody vegetation and taxa targeted for fuel. The same assemblage of wood charcoal fragments may present material suitable for dating.

5.5.13 Although no further analysis on the environmental materials is thought worthwhile unless a more detailed record of the charcoal is desired, further work in the vicinity should continue to sample for richer deposits.

6.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 The results of this evaluation at the Overton Water Treatment Works indicate that the methodology was successful in assessing the character of archaeological preservation on the site.

6.2 A sparse concentration of archaeological remains were identified over the majority of the site, with the exception of Trench 6 all trenches contained at least one feature.

6.3 Overall the site stratigraphy seems to have been little modified with clearly defined features containing finds in generally good condition. In particular pit [5/004] which contained likely Beaker pottery in good condition.

6.4 There were some indicators of possible disturbance with north-south aligned plough marks in the natural in all trenches and a high recovery of uncharred botanic remains from the samples.

6.5 The depth of overburden on the site showed a greater accumulation of subsoil in Trench 6 where the elevation was lowest, supporting earlier observations of potential colluvial drifting.

6.6 The ditches in Trenches 1 and 4 are closely associated with potential features plotted from aerial photography (Fig. 2). These indicate a linear feature running between the trenches, however the alignments of the ditches excavated show that they head in slightly different directions and may represent two separate features If this is the case their relationship to each other is unclear as their projected alignments suggest that at least one would have been visible elsewhere in the eastern extent of trenches 1 and 4 (Fig. 2). This leaves the possibility that the ditches are either shorter and do not extend far enough to be identified elsewhere or are part of a single curvilinear feature between the two trenches, although the differences in ditch profiles might support separate features.

6.7 The finds from these ditch sections are not contemporaneous, flint from the fills of cut [4/004] are most likely to be Mesolithic or Early Neolithic while cut [1/004] yielded pottery fragments most typical of the Middle or Late Iron Age. However, the finds recovered were too few to provide conclusive dating evidence and it is possible, for example that the flintwork is residual.

6.8 The archaeological features identified are all generally located in the north-western half of the site and appear to be on the edges of a larger zone of activity indicated by the aerial photography; a possible enclosure or settlement on the higher ground further to the northwest.

6.9 The finds recovered suggest that the site was in use some time in the Mesolithic or Neolithic through the Bronze Age and into the Iron Age; the presence of Beaker pottery on the site is potentially regionally significant, as no Beaker settlement features are currently known from Hampshire (Gardiner 2007).

6.10 It is clear that the proposed development overlies areas of archaeological survival (Fig. 8).

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Acknowledgements

ASE would like to thank 4Delivery Limited and Southern Water for commissioning the project and David Hopkins the Assistant County Archaeologist for Hampshire County Council for his guidance throughout the project.

Appendix A: Residues quantification (* = 0-10, ** = 11-50, *** = 51 – 250, **** = >250) and weights (in grams)

Sample Number	Context	Context / deposit type	Sample Volume litres	sub-Sample Volume litres	Charcoal >4mm	Weight (g)	Charcoal <4mm	Weight (g)	Charred botanicals (other than charcoal)	Weight (g)	Bone and Teeth	Weight (g)	Crem bone >8mm	Weight (g)	Crem bone 4-8mm	Weight (g)	Land Snail shells	Weight (g)	Other (eg ind, pot, cbm)
1	3/005	Fill of gully [3/004]	40	40	*	<2	*	<2			*	<2			*	<2	**	4	Flint */<2g - FCF */10g
2	1/005	Primary fill of ditch [1/004]	40	40			*	<2									**	2	Flint */10g - FCF */4g
3	1/006	Secondary fill of ditch [1/004]	40	40	*	<2	*	<2					*	<2			***	12	Pot **/6g - FCF **/96g - Flint */6g
4	2/004	Fill of ditch [2/005]	40	40							*	<2					*	<2	FCF */10g - Flint **/22g
5	5/006	Secondary fill of pit [5/004]	40	40	***	12	***	8	*	<2	**	14					**	8	FCF ***/678g
6	4/005	Primary fill of ditch [4/004]	40	40			*	<2									**	<2	FCF */<2
7	3/007	Primary fill of pit [3/006]	40	40							*	<2					**	4	Flint */38g - FCF */<2g

Appendix B: Flots quantification (* = 0-10, ** = 11-50, *** = 51 – 250, **** = >250) and preservation (+ = poor, ++ = moderate, +++ = good)

Sample Number	Context	weight g	Flot volume ml	Uncharred %	sediment %	seeds uncharred	Charcoal >4mm	Charcoal <4mm	Charcoal <2mm	crop seeds charred	Identifications	Preservation	weed seeds charred	Identifications	Preservation	Insects, Fly Pupae etc min	fish, amphibian, small mammal bone	LSS
1	3/005	10	45	55	10	* *Fumaria officinalis, Polygonum/Rumex* sp.*, Fallopia convolvulus,* Chenopodiaceae				*	*Triticum* sp., Cerealia	+	*	Poaceae (small), cf. *Festuca/Lolium* sp., cf. *Borago officilanis,* Chenopodiaceae		** FP		*** 32% 4 types
2	1/005	8	40	45	10	* *Fumaria officinalis*, *Polygonum/Rumex* sp.												*** 45% 6 types
3	1/006	22	90	14	3	* *Fumaria officinalis*, *Sambucus nigra*, Chenopodiaceae, Caryophyllaceae			*	*	cf. *Triticum* sp.	+						*** 87% 5 types
4	2/004	14	50	45	45	* *Fumaria officinalis*, *Sambucus nigra*, Chenopodiaceae			*								*	** 10% 3 types
5	5/006	30	65	10	25	*** *Fumaria officinalis*, *Rubus* sp., *Polygonum/Rumex* sp.,	**	***	****	*	Cerealia, *Triticum* sp., cf. *Hordeum* sp.	+	*	Polygonum/Rumex sp., *Fallopia convolvulus,* indet. seed	++	** FP		*** 25% 5 types

						Chenopodiaceae												
Sample Number	**Context**	**weight g**	**Flot volume ml**	**Uncharred %**	**sediment %**	**seeds uncharred**	**Charcoal >4mm**	**Charcoal <4mm**	**Charcoal <2mm**	**crop seeds charred**	**Identifications**	**Preservation**	**weed seeds charred**	**Identifications**	**Preservation**	**Insects, Fly Pupae etc min**	**fish, amphibian, small mammal bone**	**LSS**
6	4/005	18	20	20	70	* *Fumaria officinalis*			*	*	Cerealia	+				* FP		** 10 % 4 types
7	3/007	18	60	45	45	* *Fumaria officinalis, Polygonum/Rumex* sp.			*							* FP		** 10% 6 types

HER Summary Form

Site Code	SRV 06					
Identification Name and Address	Overton Water Treatment Works The Lynch Overton Hampshire					
County, District &/or Borough	Basingstoke					
OS Grid Refs.	NGR 450443 150121					
Geology	Upper Chalk					
Arch. South-East Project Number	4392					
Type of Fieldwork	**Eval.** ✓	~~Excav.~~	~~Watching brief.~~	~~Standing Structure~~	~~Survey~~	~~Other~~
Type of Site	**Green Field** ✓	~~Shallow Urban~~	~~Deep Urban~~	~~Other~~		
Dates of Fieldwork	**Eval.** **31/01/11 - 02/02/11**	~~Excav.~~	~~W.B.~~	~~Other~~		
Sponsor/Client	4Delivery Limited.					
Project Manager	Neil Griffin					
Project Supervisor	Dylan Hopkinson					
Period Summary	~~Palaeo.~~	**Meso.** ✓	**Neo.** ✓	**BA**✓	~~IA~~	~~RB~~
	~~AS~~	~~MED~~	~~PM~~	~~Other Modern~~		

100 Word Summary.

Abstract

An archaeological evaluation was conducted on land immediately north of the Overton Water Treatment Works, Overton, Hampshire. The work was carried out between 31st January and 2nd February 2011 by Archaeology South-East under commission from 4Delivery Limited (4D) on behalf of their client, Southern Water prior to the development of the land immediately north of the Overton Water Treatment Works to increase the capacity of the existing plant.

A total of six trenches measuring between 20 and 30 metres in length were excavated to assess the archaeological potential of the site in advance of a planning application.

The site lies on the Upper Chalk, indicated on British Geological Survey Sheet 283, and lies to the north of The Lynch to the north-west of Overton village.

The evaluation trenches encountered the natural geology at a maximum height of 105.78 mAOD in the northwest of the site (Trench 3) and a minimum of 101.75 mAOD in the mid-eastern side of the site (Trench 5).

Two lengths of linear ditch and a gully were identified as well as two pits. The ditch sections may represent a single, or possibly two ditches. One ditch contained probable Mesolithic or early Neolithic flint, while the other contained probable Middle or Late Iron Age pottery. One of the pits contained Beaker pottery, (2500-1700BC), and Neolithic flints.

OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-94476

Project details

Project name	Overton Water Treatment Works
Short description of the project	***Abstract*** *An archaeological evaluation was conducted on land immediately north of the Overton Water Treatment Works, Overton, Hampshire. The work was carried out between 31st January and 2nd February 2011 by Archaeology South-East under commission from 4Delivery Limited (4D) on behalf of their client, Southern Water prior to the development of the land immediately north of the Overton Water Treatment Works to increase the capacity of the existing plant.* *A total of six trenches measuring between 20 and 30 metres in length were excavated to assess the archaeological potential of the site in advance of a planning application.* *The site lies on the Upper Chalk, indicated on British Geological Survey Sheet 283, and lies to the north of The Lynch to the north-west of Overton village.* *The evaluation trenches encountered the natural geology at a maximum height of 105.78 mAOD in the northwest of the site (Trench 3) and a minimum of 101.75 mAOD in the mid-eastern side of the site (Trench 5).* *Two lengths of linear ditch and a gully were identified as well as two pits. The ditch sections may represent a single, or possibly two ditches. One ditch contained probable Mesolithic or early Neolithic flint, while the other contained probable Middle or Late Iron Age pottery. One of the pits contained Beaker pottery, (2500-1700BC), and Neolithic flints.*
Project dates	Start: 31-01-2011 End: 02-02-2011
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	SRV 06 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Grassland Heathland 4 - Regularly improved
Monument type	DITCH Early Neolithic

Monument type	PIT Bronze Age
Significant Finds	POTTERY Late Neolithic
Significant Finds	FLINT Early Neolithic
Methods & techniques	'Metal Detectors','Targeted Trenches','Visual Inspection'
Development type	Pipelines/cables (e.g. gas, electric, telephone, TV cable, water, sewage, drainage etc.)
Prompt	Voluntary/self-interest
Prompt	Prior to planning application
Position in the planning process	Pre-application

Project location

Country	England
Site location	HAMPSHIRE BASINGSTOKE AND DEANE BASINGSTOKE Overton Water Treatment Works
Postcode	RG25 3
Study area	5215.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	450443 150121 450443 00 00 N 150121 00 00 E Point
Lat/Long Datum	WGS 84 Datum
Height OD / Depth	Min: 101.75m Max: 105.78m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	4 Delivery Ltd
Project design originator	Archaeology South-East
Project director/manager	Neil Griffin
Project supervisor	Dylan Hopkinson
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer

Name of sponsor/funding body	4D Ltd.

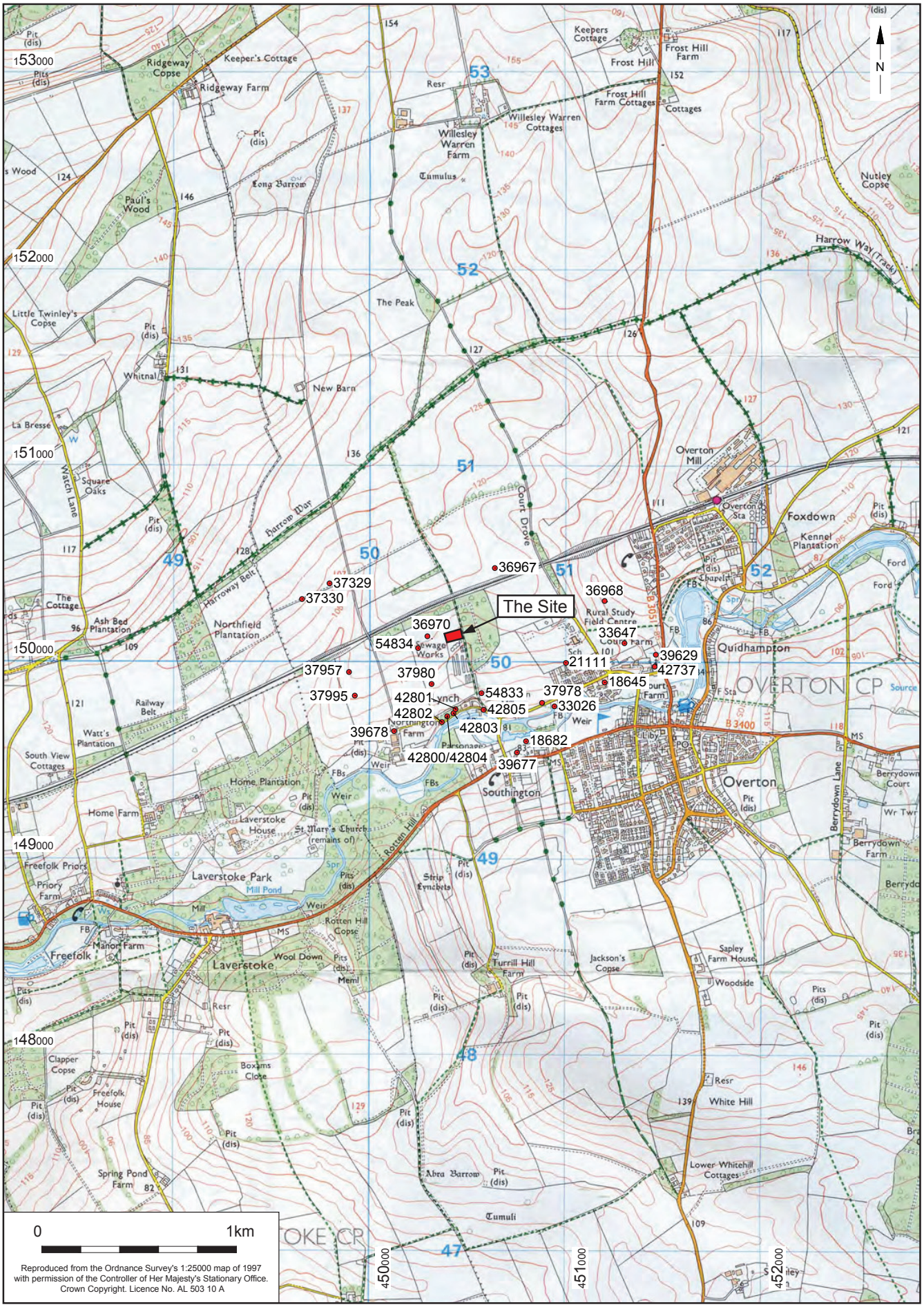
Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Local Museum
Physical Contents	'Animal Bones','Ceramics','Environmental','Worked stone/lithics'
Digital Archive recipient	Local Museum
Digital Contents	'Stratigraphic','Survey'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography','Spreadsheets','Text'
Paper Archive recipient	Local Museum
Paper Contents	'Stratigraphic','Survey'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Photograph','Report'

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	An Archaeological Evaluation on land immediately north of the Overton Water Treatment Works, Overton, Hampshire
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Hopkinson, D.
Other bibliographic details	ASE Report No: 2011025
Date	2011
Issuer or publisher	Archaeology South-East
Place of issue or publication	Portslade, Brighton
Description	29 page A4 bound report with 8 colour figures

Entered by	Dylan Hopkinson (dylan.hopkinson@ucl.ac.uk)
Entered on	25 February 2011



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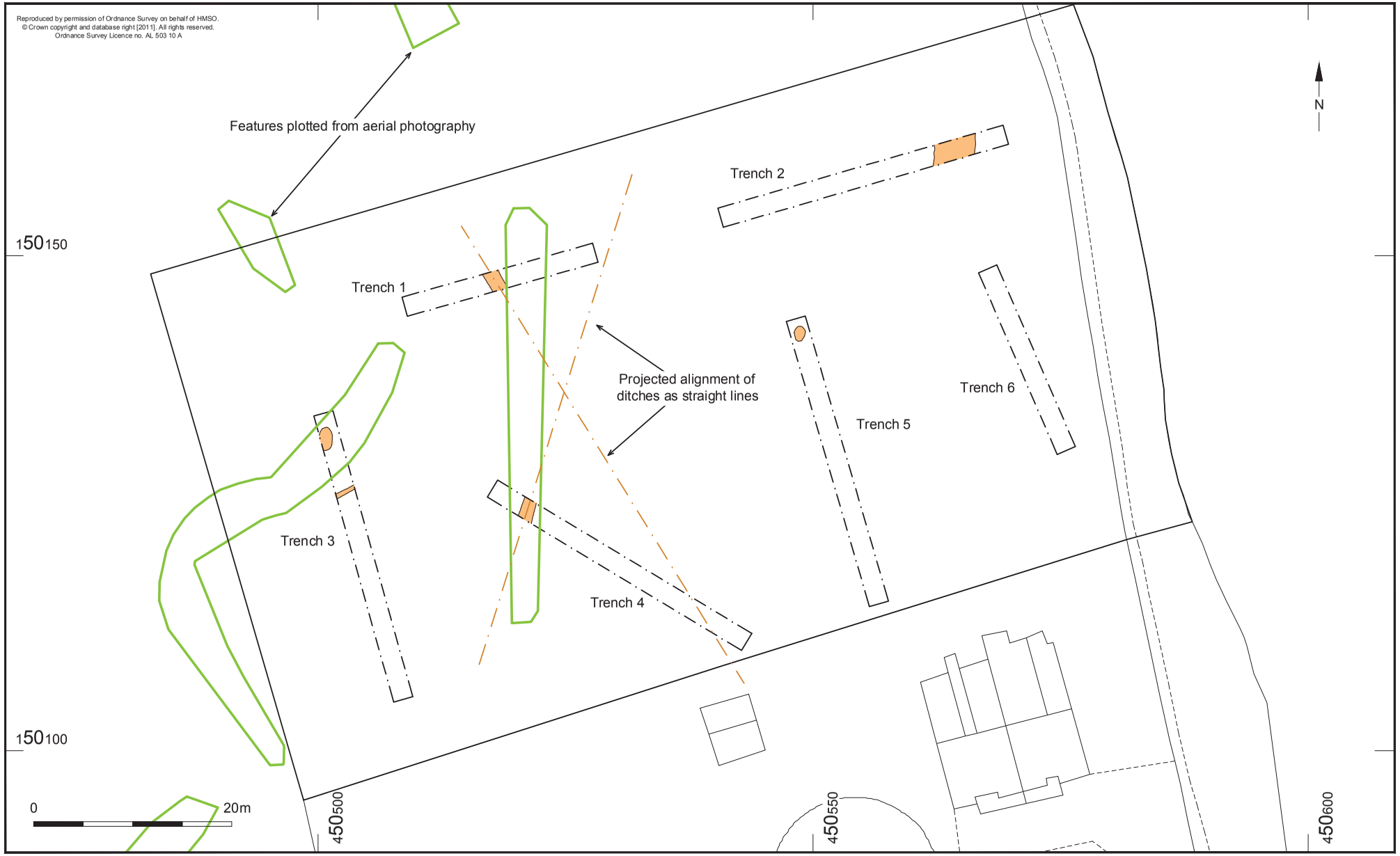
© **Archaeology South-East**		Overton Water Treatment Works	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 4432	Feb 2011	Site location and Hampshire County Council HER data	
Report Ref: 2011025	Drawn by: JLR		



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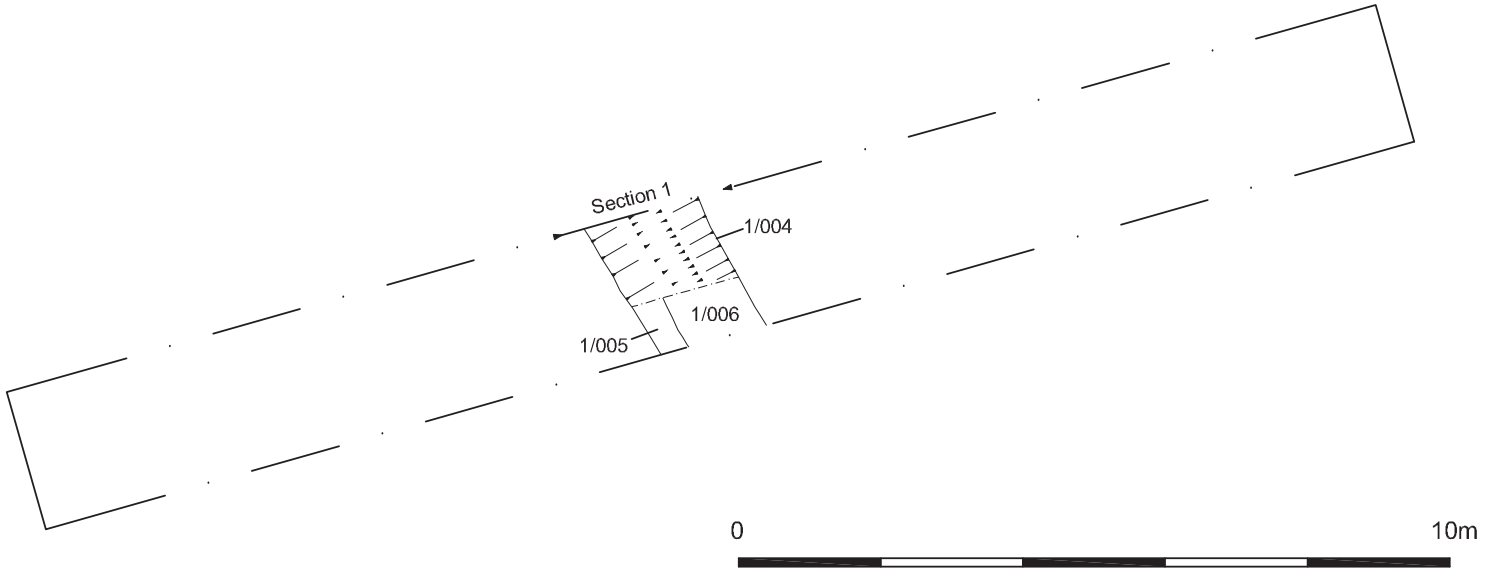
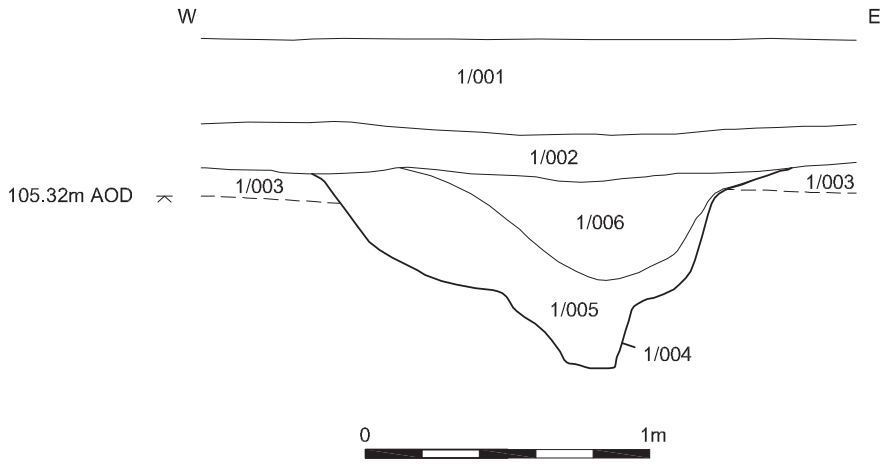
Report Ref: 2011025	Drawn by: DJH		





Section 1

1/004 looking north

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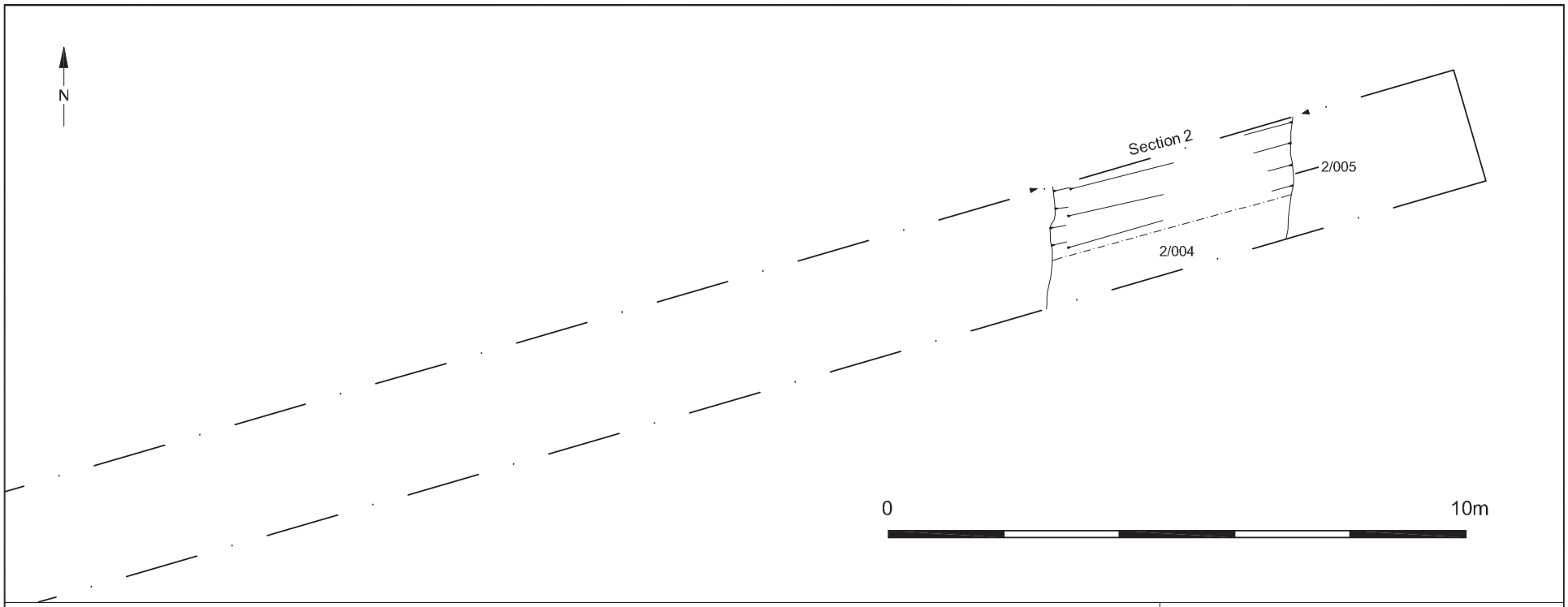
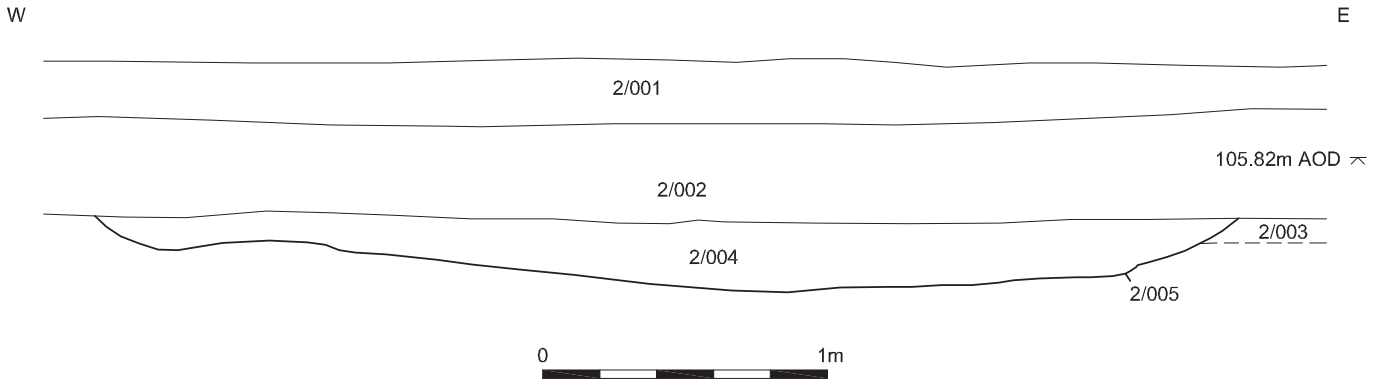
Report Ref: 2011025	Drawn by: DJH		





Section 2

2/005 looking north-east

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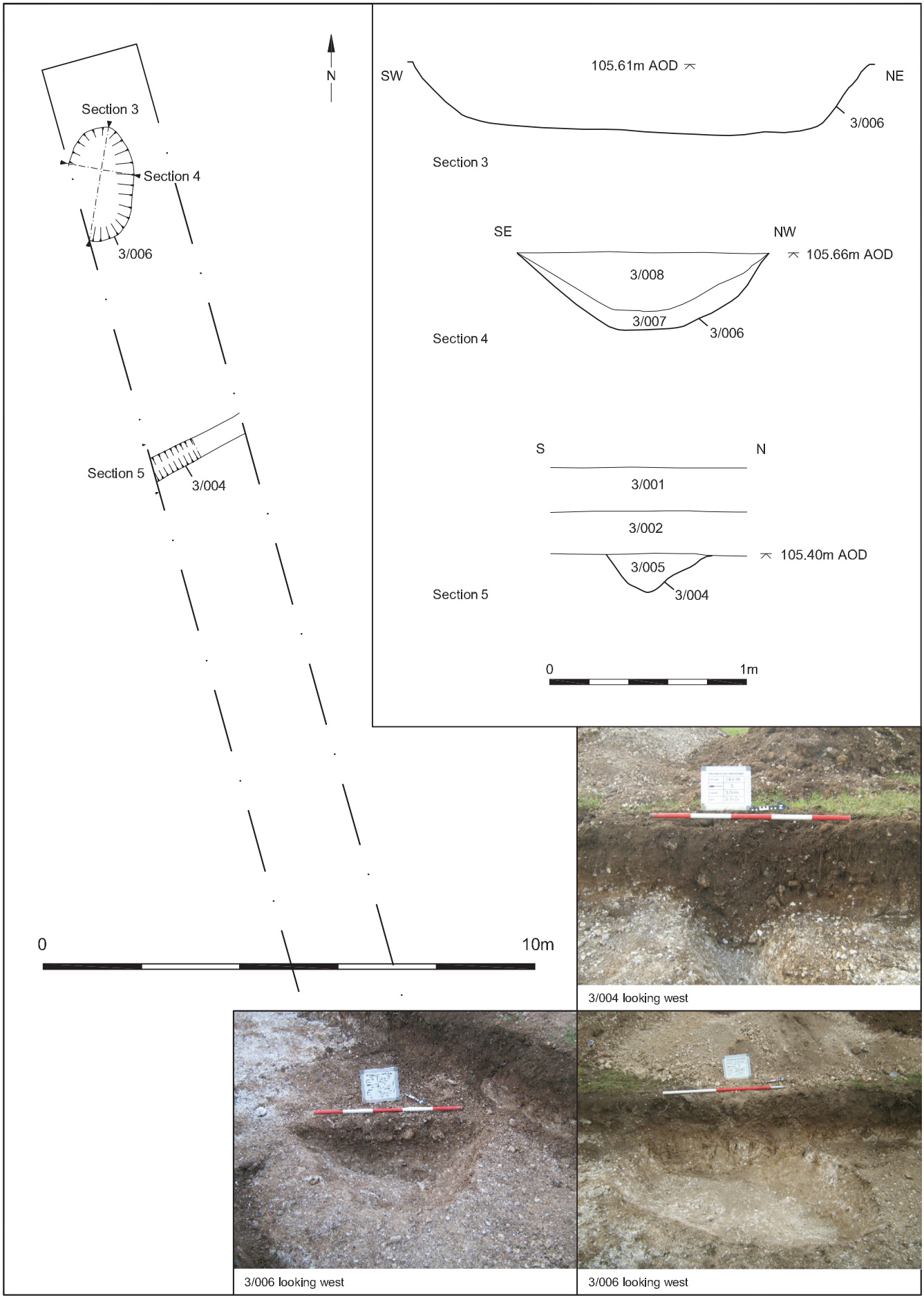
Report Ref: 2011025	Drawn by: DJH		



3/004 looking west

3/006 looking west

3/006 looking west

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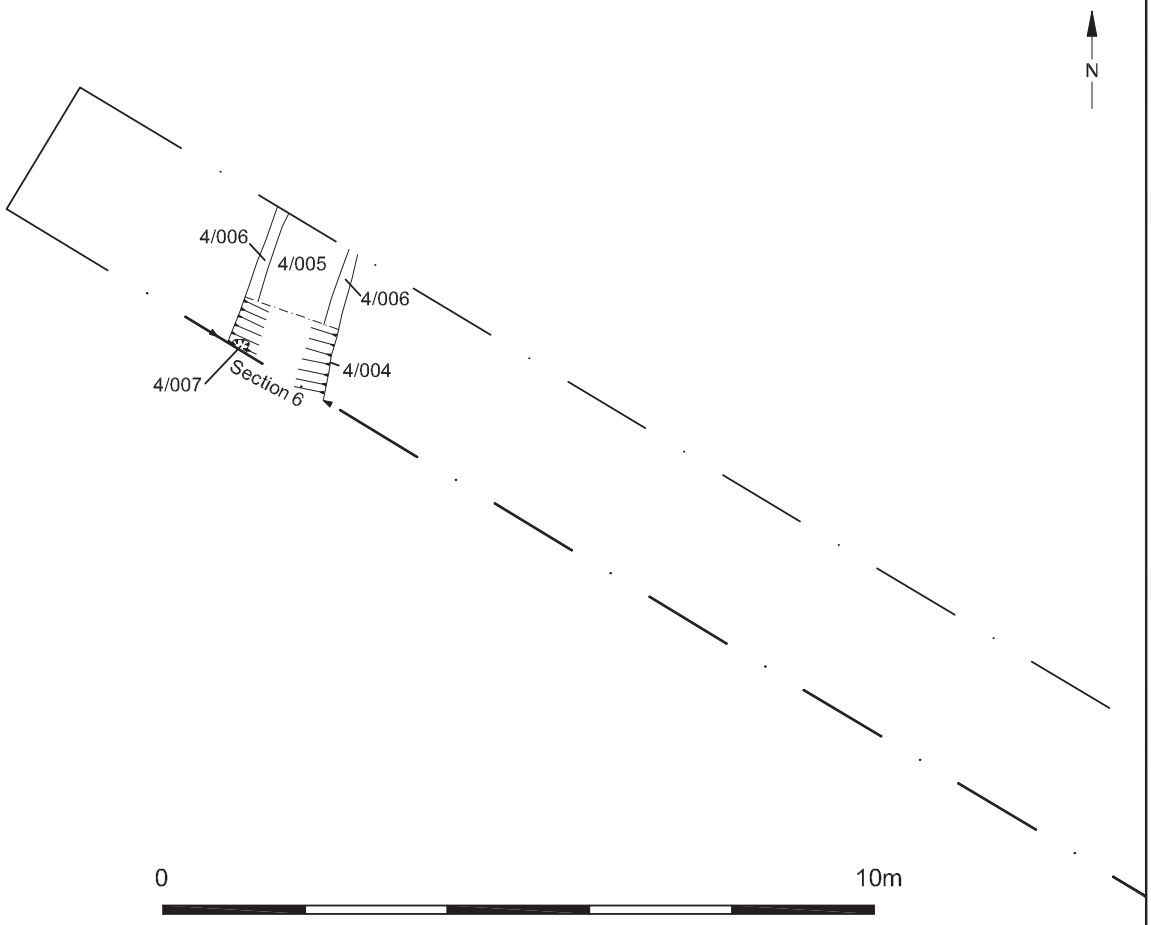
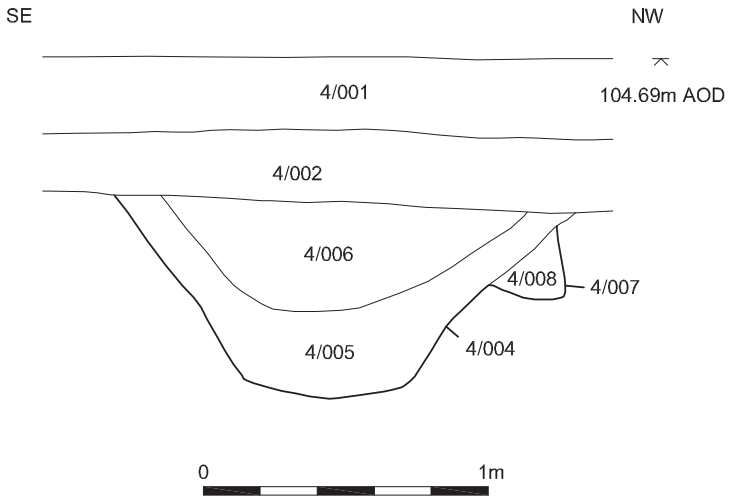
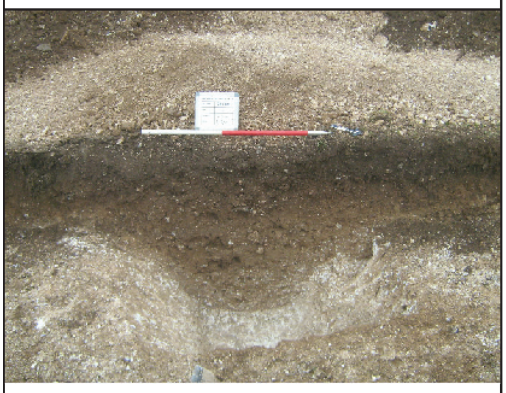




Section 6



4/004 looking west

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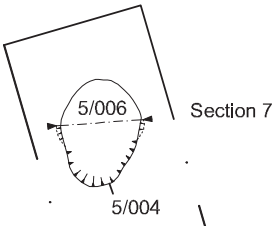

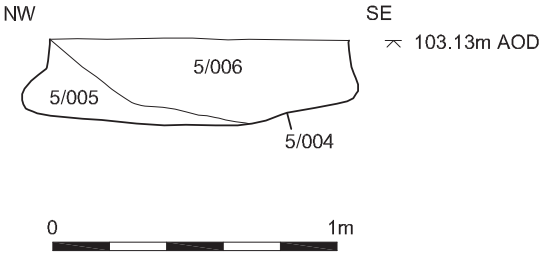

Section 7

5/004 looking northeast

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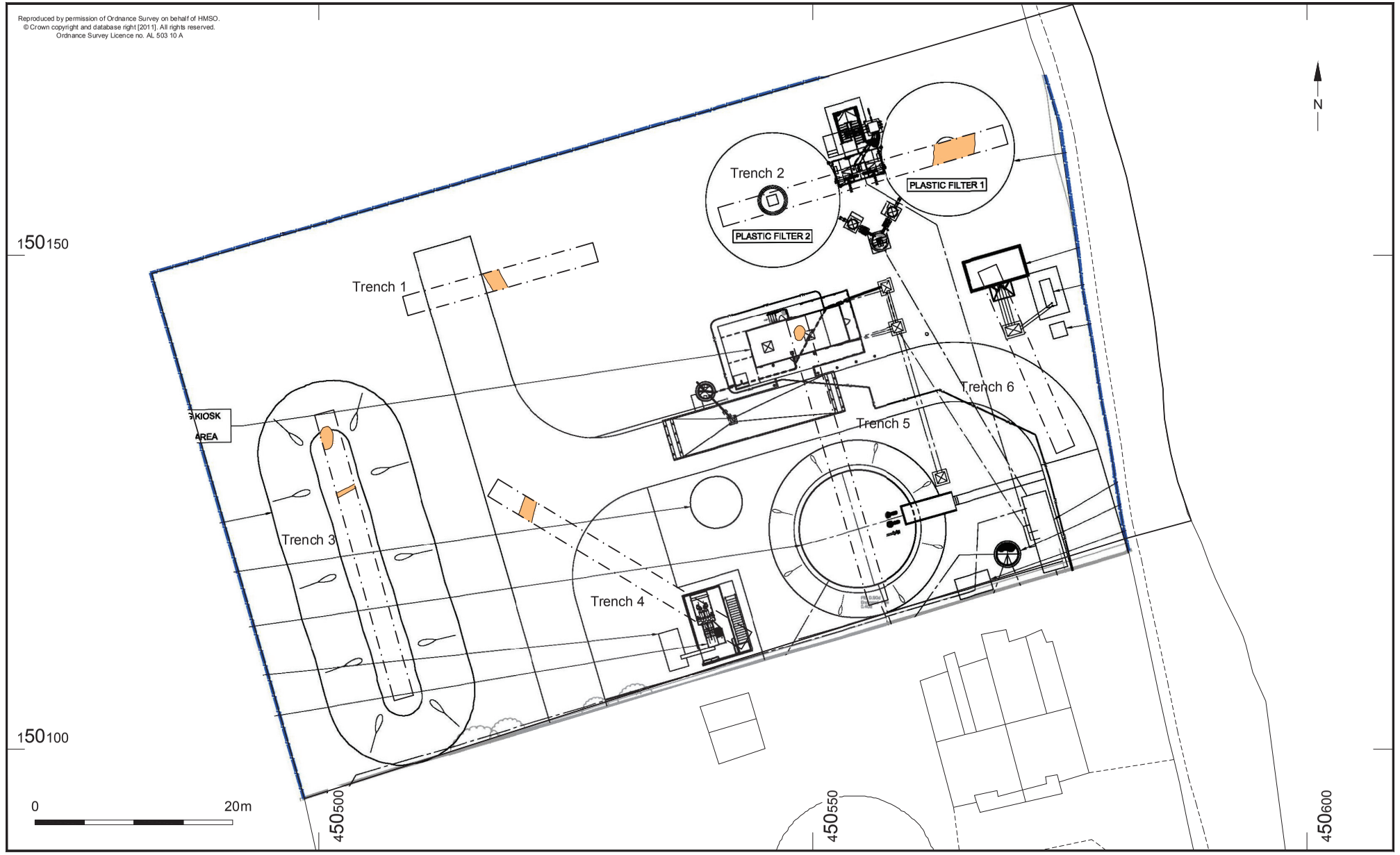

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Project Ref: 4432	Feb 2011	Archaeological features and proposed development	
Report Ref: 2011025	Drawn by: DJH		

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