



Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological evaluation of
land at Avon Mills, Malmesbury
Wiltshire
November 2011



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**Northamptonshire
County Council**

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Report 11/254
December 2011



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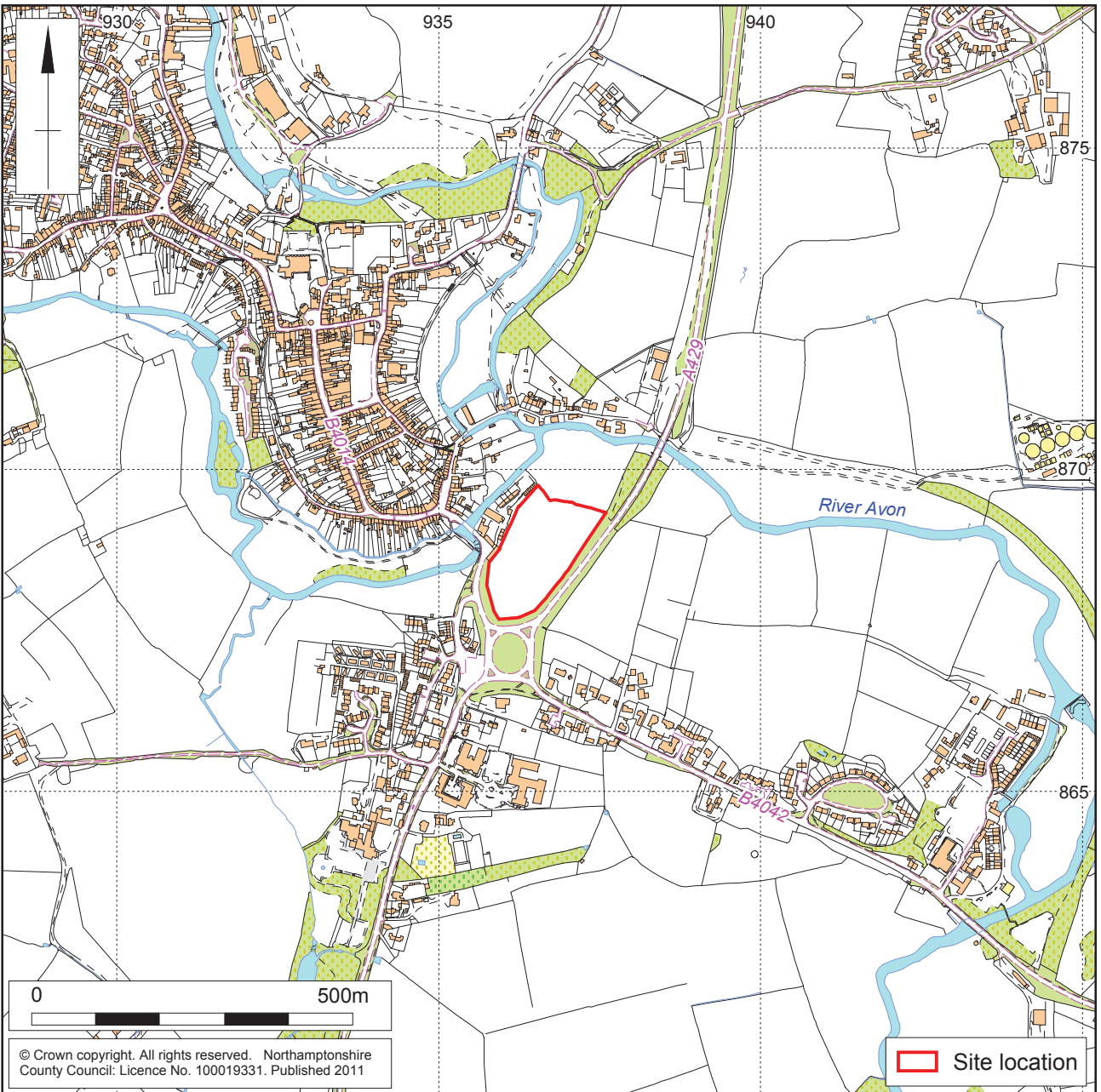
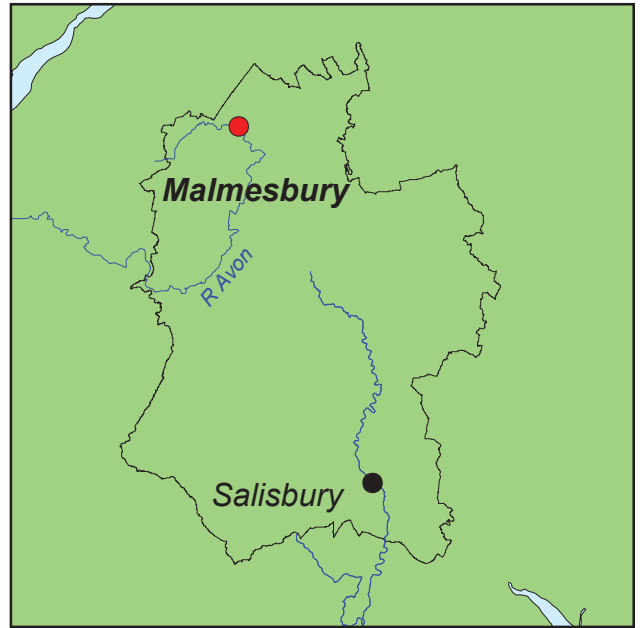
PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	Avon Mills, Malmesbury	
Short description	In November 2011, an archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology, on behalf of Prospect Archaeology, on land at Avon Mills, Malmesbury, Wiltshire. The evaluation largely proved the veracity of the geophysical survey results with the excavation of a number of late Iron Age/early Romano-British ditches and pits and post-medieval field boundaries. A possible small settlement originated in the late Iron Age and appears to have been defined by one or more rectangular enclosures. The activity is concentrated at the southern end of the site; towards the centre there were a few ditches which may be the remnants of an associated field system. There was no activity of this date at the northern end of the field. There was activity at the site through into the Roman period although it appears to have been abandoned by the end of the 2nd century. There were a number of ditches that dated to the post-medieval period which may be former field boundaries. A trade token dated to 1651 was found in the base of one of the ditches.	
Project type	Evaluation	
Site status	None	
Previous work	Desk-based assessment (Prospect Archaeology 2011) and Geophysical Survey (Archaeological Surveys Ltd 2011)	
Current Land use	Arable	
Future work	unknown	
Monument type/ period	Late Iron Age/Roman and medieval/post-medieval	
Significant finds	None	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Wiltshire	
Site address	Avon Mills, Malmesbury	
Study area	2 ha	
OS Easting & Northing	ST 937 869	
Height OD	76m aOD	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originator	Prospect Archaeology	
Project Design originator	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Director/Supervisor	Tim Upson-Smith	
Project Manager	Ian Meadows	
Sponsor or funding body	Prospect Archaeology Ltd, Simons Developments Ltd	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	11/2011	
End date	12/2011	
ARCHIVES	Location	Content
Physical	Wiltshire Heritage Museum	Pottery and bone
Paper	Wiltshire Heritage Museum	Evaluation pro forma sheets, context sheets, colour slides, black and white contact prints, digital photographs, plans and section drawing
Digital	Wiltshire Heritage Museum	Report text and figures
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
OF LAND AT AVON MILLS, MALMESBURY
WILTSHIRE
NOVEMBER 2011**

Abstract

In November 2011, an archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology, on behalf of Prospect Archaeology on land at Avon Mills, Malmesbury, Wiltshire. The evaluation largely proved the veracity of the geophysical survey results with the excavation of a number of late Iron Age-early Romano-British ditches and pits and post-medieval field boundaries.

A possible small settlement originated in the late Iron Age and appears to have been defined by one or more rectangular enclosures. The activity is concentrated at the southern end of the site; towards the centre there are a few ditches which may be the remnants of an associated field system. There was no activity of this date at the northern end of the field. There was activity at the site into the Roman period although it appears to have been abandoned by the end of the 2nd century.

There were a number of ditches that dated to the post-medieval period which may be former field boundaries. A trade token dated to 1651 found in the base of one of the ditches.

1 INTRODUCTION

Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA) was commissioned by Prospect Archaeology Ltd, on behalf of Simons Developments Ltd, to conduct an archaeological trial trench evaluation in advance of a proposed development scheme on land to the rear of Avon Mills, Malmesbury, Wiltshire. The works have been required in response to a forthcoming planning application in line with *PPS5 Planning for the Historic Environment*.

The programme of archaeological investigation involved the excavation of nine trenches across the development area, the results of which are presented in this report.

This tranche of works follows a Heritage Assessment (Rosenburg 2011) and detailed magnetometer survey (Archaeological Surveys Ltd 2011). The geophysical survey identified areas of archaeological potential within the development area.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location, geology and topography

The site comprises a single arable field, c 2ha in extent, on the southern side of Malmesbury, centred at NGR ST 937 869 (Figs 1 and 2). It is bounded to the south-east by the A429, to the south by the B4042, on the northwest by Avon Mills and to the north by fields. It occupies part of a meander in the River Avon and attains an elevation of about 76m AOD. The geology of the site is mapped as cornbrash and mudstone.



The north of the site, looking north-west Fig 2

2.3 Archaeological background

Malmesbury stands on a steep hill almost surrounded by the Tetbury and Sherston branches of the Bristol Avon affording natural protection. Recent excavations along the eastern side of the medieval town wall at Nun's Walk and Holloway have uncovered a complex sequence of ramparts and ditches of a multivallate Iron Age hillfort, which was established in the early Iron Age (Collard and Havard 2011). Successive remodelling and enhancement of the defences occurred during the middle-late Iron Age.

There is little evidence of Roman settlement in the area apart from a hypocaust floor which was found in 1887 off Oxford Street, some 500m to the north of the site.

There was a tradition that the settlement founded by Maildulph in the mid-7th century, which later became the nucleus of the monastery called Malmesbury, was founded on a fortified place known as Bladon or Ingelbourne (VCH 1991). In 878 AD, Malmesbury was sacked by the Danes and shortly afterwards was included by King Alfred in his system of defences for Wessex. The burh defences were remodelled in the 10th or 11th centuries and further enhancement was undertaken during the early 12th century. After a period of neglect the defences were reconstructed during the Civil War before being slighted by the Parliamentary forces in 1646.

Evidence suggests that the cloth and leather trades were prominent in the town during the medieval period. By the 16th century there were a number of mills on the outskirts of the town and a new fulling mill, Cannop's Mill, was built beside St John's Bridge, adjacent to the site, in about 1600. It may have replaced an earlier mill called 'Schotesbure' Mill, which stood beside a road leading south from the town in the late 13th or early 14th centuries (ibid). Although this business later failed, the mill was revived in 1790, when Francis Hill bought the site and built Burton Hill Mill. In 1850 it

was converted into a silk mill to produce ribbon. The mill continued to produce goods until the middle of the 20th century.

The Desk-Based Assessment (Rosenberg 2011) noted that no archaeological remains are known from the area itself except for some Roman brooch fragments (HER no: ST98NW313), however, a number of discoveries have been made within the general vicinity.

Geophysical Survey was undertaken by Archaeological Surveys Ltd (Archaeological Surveys 2011). The survey located a substantial complex of ditched enclosures and possible droeways, which were interpreted as an occupation site of Iron Age or Romano-British date (Fig 3). The activity extended across the southern half of the area surveyed but appeared to be absent from the northern part. The survey results also demonstrated the presence of medieval or later ridge and furrow across at least the northern part of the site along with either geological changes or possible quarrying.

3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Objectives

The aims of the archaeological evaluation are specified in the Written Scheme of Investigation (NA 2011).

General aims comprised the following:

- Establish the date, nature and extent of the activity or occupation on the development site
- Recover artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region
- Recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine past local environmental conditions

Specific research objectives will be drawn from the national and regional research frameworks (EH 1991; Webster 2007).

3.2 Methodology

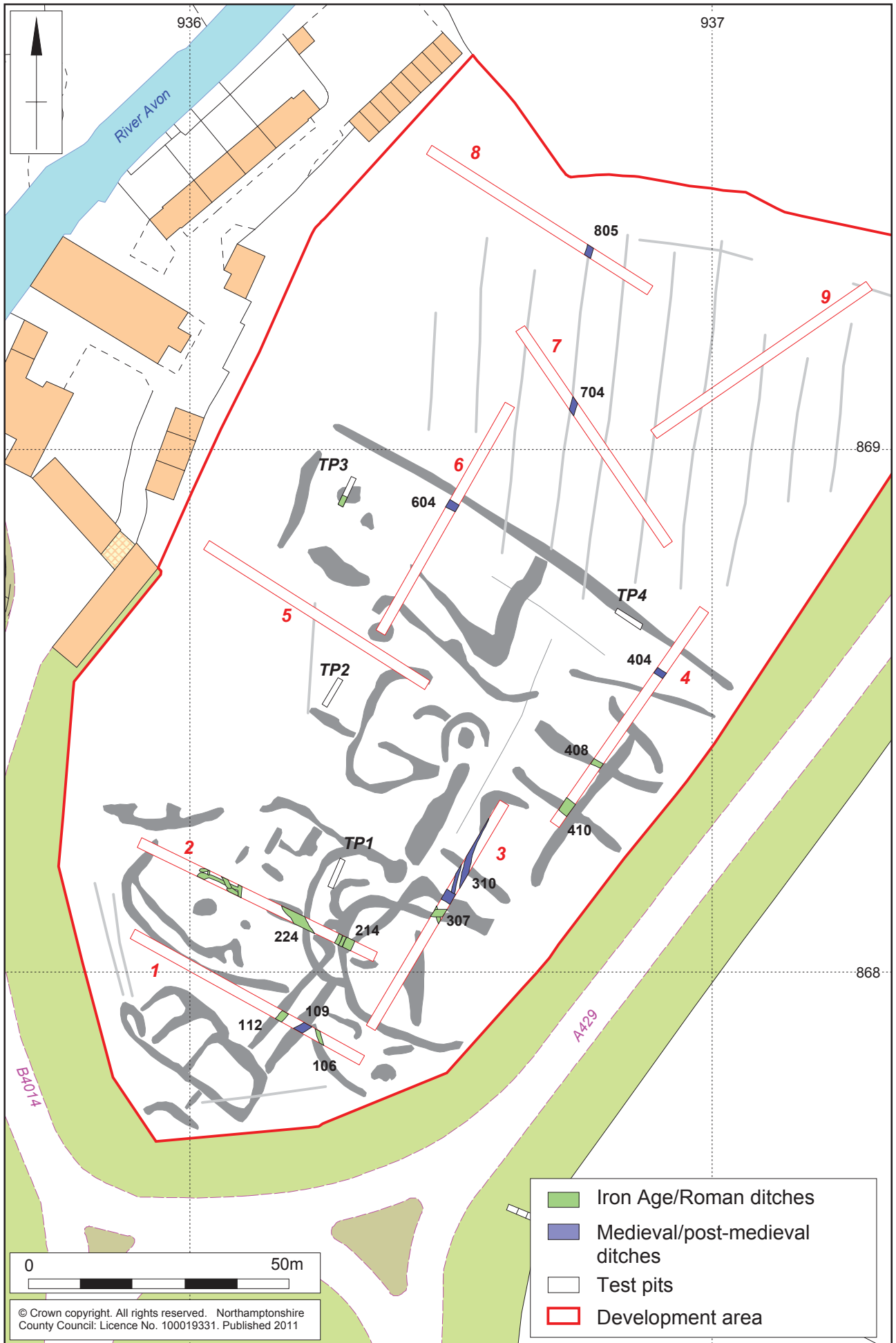
The works were conducted in accordance with the specification, *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 1994, revised 2008) and the *Code of Conduct* of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 1985, revised 2010). The work was monitored by the County Archaeological Advisor to Wiltshire County Council

Nine 50m trenches were machine-excavated using a toothless ditching bucket (Fig 4). The trenches were positioned in accordance with the trench location plan approved by County Archaeological Advisor to Wiltshire and have been related to Ordnance Survey National Grid (Fig 4). On completion of archaeological recording the trenches were backfilled. There was no requirement for specialist re-instatement.



Scale 1:1250 (A4)

Magnetometer survey and interpretation Fig 3



Scale 1:1000 (A4)

Main archaeological features Fig 4

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The topsoil, subsoil and non-structural post-medieval and later deposits were removed to reveal archaeological remains or, where absent, to the natural. The topsoil was stacked separately from the subsoil and other deposits. The trenches were cleaned sufficiently to enable the identification of any features.

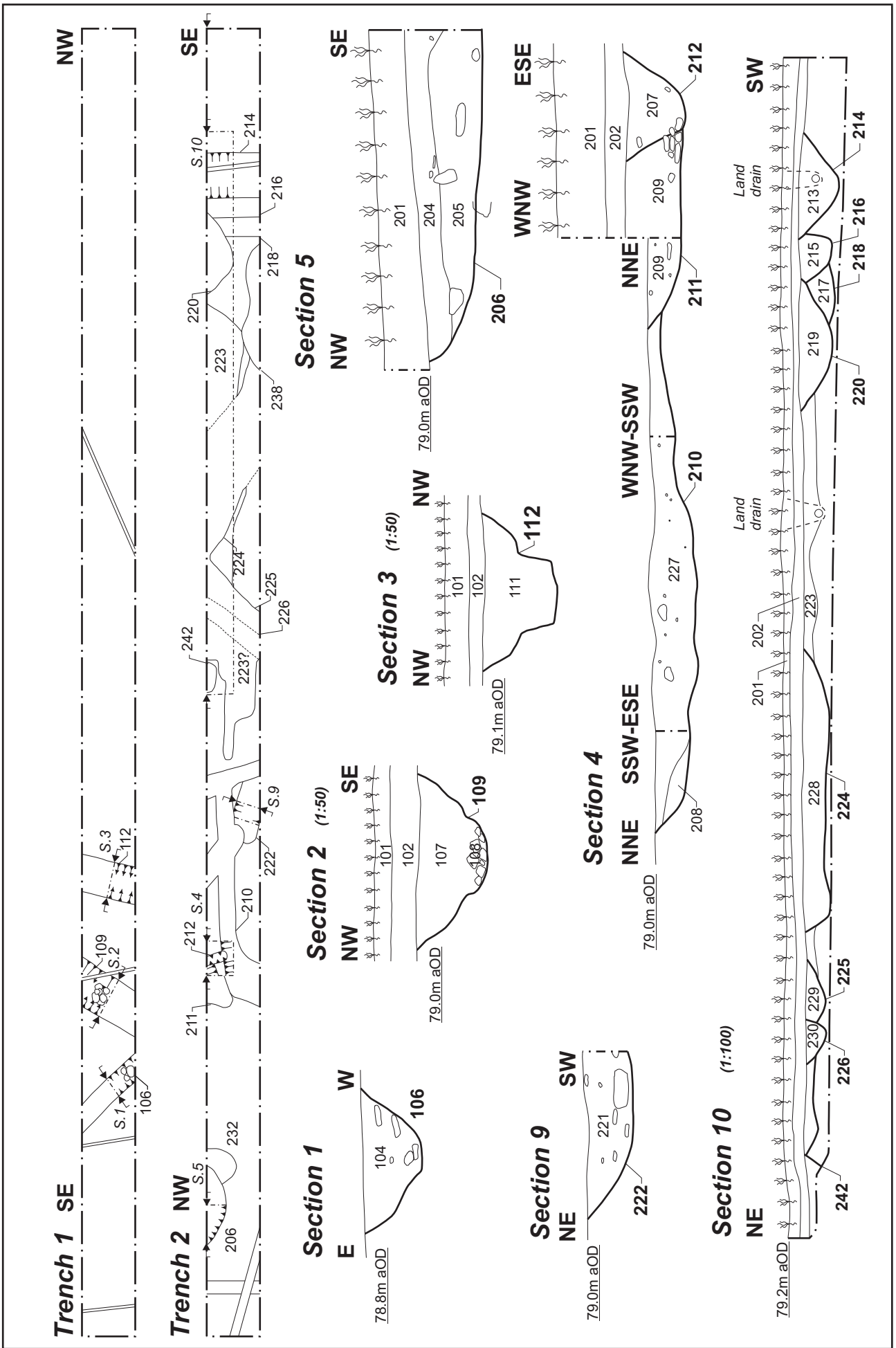
All deposits encountered during the course of the excavation were given a separate context number and fully recorded. Recording followed standard Northamptonshire Archaeology procedures (NA 2006). Deposits were described on pro-forma context sheets to include details of the context, its relationships, interpretation and a checklist of associated finds.

The trenches were planned at a scale of 1:100. Sections of the sequence of deposits in each trench were drawn at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20 and related to Ordnance Datum. The excavated area and spoil heaps were scanned visually to ensure maximum finds retrieval.

A full photographic record comprising both 35mm black and white negatives and colour transparencies was maintained, supplemented with digital images. The field data was compiled into a site archive with appropriate cross-referencing.



Trench 2, looking north, showing the archaeology prior to excavation Fig 5



Scales, Plans 1:200, Sections 1:25, 1:50 and 1:100 (A4)

Trenches 1 & 2, plans and sections 1-5, 9 & 10 Fig 6

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

4.1 General comments

The trenches were typically aligned north-east to south-west or south-east to north-west, positioned to provide a full coverage of the development area, and to provide more detailed coverage where the geophysical survey had identified any possible archaeological features. Nine trenches were excavated (Fig 5).

Trench 9 contained no archaeological features. In Trenches 6 to 8 there were single ditches that appeared to be former field boundaries. In Trench 5 there was a single pit but no other archaeological features. The late Iron Age-early Roman activity was concentrated in the southern part of the site, particularly in the area of Trenches 1 and 2. A sondage 22.50m long was machine-excavated through the complex, intercutting archaeological deposits in Trench 2 at the request of the County Archaeologist. This was undertaken in order to better characterise the deposits.

A series of geotechnical test pits were excavated during the course of the evaluation (Fig 6; TP1-4). A single archaeological feature was seen in TP 3.

4.2 The late Iron Age/Romano-British settlement

The geophysical survey had located a complex of ditches and possible droveways.

The ditched enclosures and boundary ditches were generally aligned on a north-west to south-east axis, with evidence of possible sub-square enclosures on the geophysical survey results. Late Iron Age pottery was recovered from the topsoil of Trench 2 and from features within Trenches 2 and 3, although it was probably residual in both these features. This suggests that although there was activity on the site during this period, no focus has yet been found.

There were a series of ditches at the east of Trench 2 (Fig 7). Ditch [218] was aligned north-east to south-west and at least 1.20m wide and 0.50m deep but had been mostly truncated by later features (Fig 7, Section 10). It was cut to the east by ditch [216], also on the same alignment, 0.95m wide and 0.52m deep. Ditch [216] was cut on its eastern edge by a substantial ditch, [214], which was also aligned north-east to south-west and was 2.10m wide and 0.75m deep (Figs 6 and 7, Section 10). The mid brown sandy clay fill contained frequent pieces of limestone; these were particularly concentrated at the base of the fill. These ditches may have formed the arm of an enclosure or a boundary ditch which was successively redefined over time. Pottery was only recovered from ditch [214] and could only be broadly dated to the Roman period.

There was a complex series of intercutting features within the central and eastern part of Trench 2. There was a possible occupation layer [223] through which other features seemed to cut (Fig 7, Section 10). The mid brown sandy clay contained frequent pieces of limestone and pottery dating to the 1st century AD. There was what appeared to be a number of pits or ditch terminals. The geophysical survey interpretation indicates that feature [220] may be the terminal of a curvilinear ditch (Figs 6 and 7). It was 2.50m wide and 0.62m deep, with steep edges and a concave base. The fill (219) was mid brown sandy clay with large pieces of limestone and pottery dating to the 1st and 2nd centuries. Just to the south was a further feature [237] which was not excavated but which also appeared to be the terminus of a ditch on the geophysical survey interpretation.

In Trench 1, ditch [112] was aligned north-east to south-west, was 1.40m wide and 0.60m deep with stepped edges and a flat base (Figs 6 and 7, Section 3). It is possible that this ditch formed a continuation of feature [237].

There was a further broad feature [224], although it was not clear what it was either within the trial trench or from the geophysical survey interpretation. It was 5.25m wide and 0.50m deep, although it was at an oblique angle to the trench and its true width was probably 2.60m (Fig 7, Section 10). To the west of this were two possible adjoining ditches [225] and [226], aligned north-west to south-east, although they were only seen in section. Ditch [225] was at least 1.15m wide and 0.40m deep. It seemed to be cut by ditch [226] which was at least 0.80m wide and 0.35m deep (Fig 7, Section 10).

In the centre of the trench were a series of shallow gullies not identified by the geophysical survey (Figs 6 and 7, Section 4). Gully [211] was cut by curvilinear gully [210] which was up to 1.40m wide and 0.27m deep. Its relationship with gully [236] to the east was not defined but, since it did not continue beyond [236], it is possible that it turned to the south. Gully [211] was truncated by gullies [212], [222] and [234]. Gully [222] was 1.00m wide and 0.30m deep with a broad U-shaped profile and fill of mid brown-grey silty loam (221). Pottery from the gully dated to the 1st century AD.

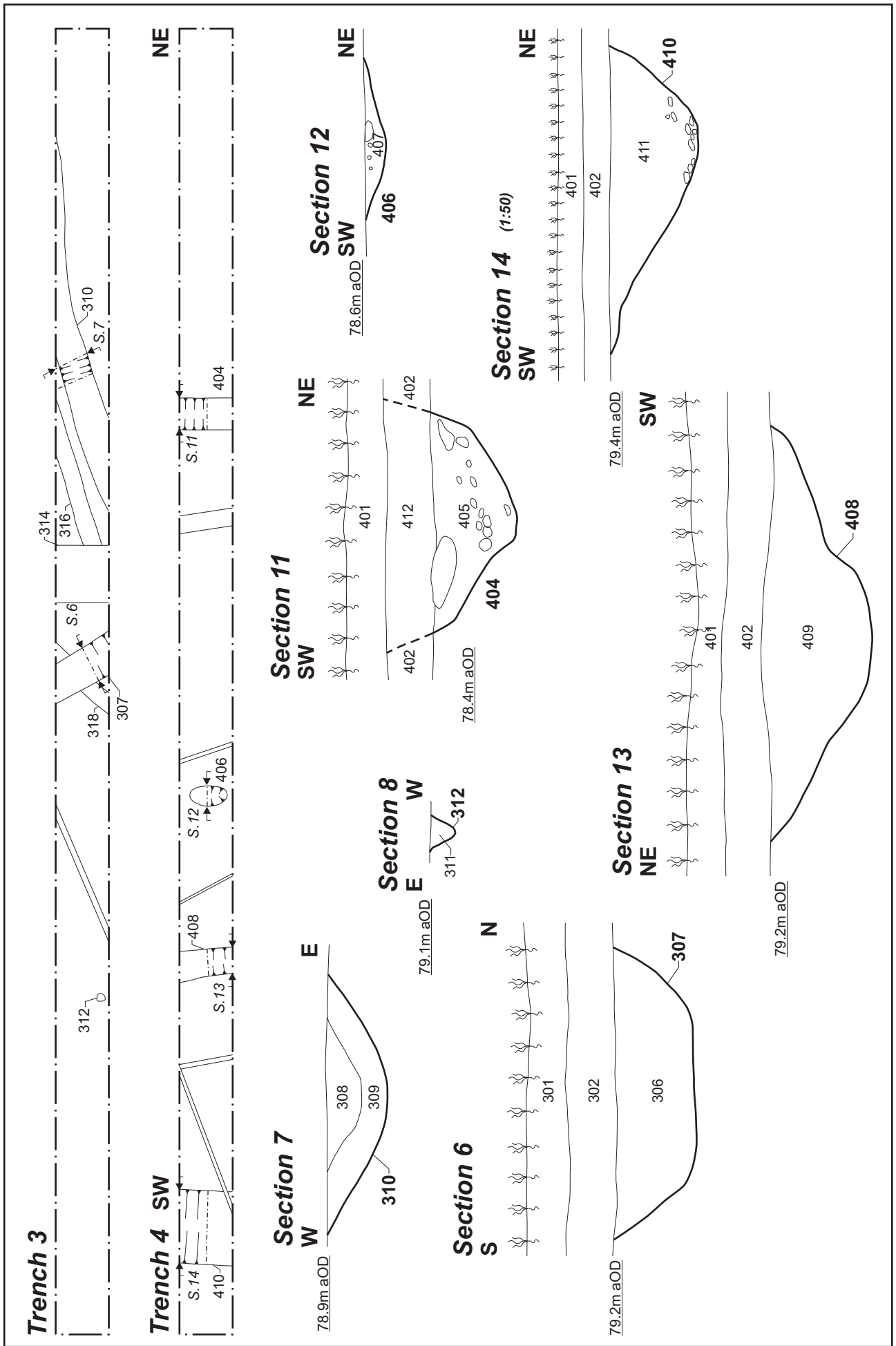
At the north end of Trench 2 there was an oval-shaped feature [232] which was later cut by a further oval-shaped feature [206], which was at least 3.00m long, 0.70m wide and 0.37m deep (Fig 7, Section 5). The feature may be a pit or a ditch terminal.

Ditch [106] was aligned north-west to south-east, although the geophysical survey results indicate that it may have been part of a curvilinear ditch extending beyond the eastern site boundary (Figs 6 and 7, Section 1). It was 0.70m wide and 0.29m deep with a U-shaped profile. The mid brown sandy clay fill (104) contained frequent limestone pieces, concentrated towards the base.



Ditch [106], looking south-east Fig 7

In Trench 3, ditch [318] was aligned north-west to south-east and 0.60m wide, but was not excavated (Fig 9). It was cut by ditch [307] which was aligned north-east to south-west, 1.40m wide and 0.37m deep with a wide U-shaped profile (Figs 6 and 9, Section 6). Pottery from the fill (306) dated to the 2nd century AD. A fragment of a polishing stone was also found.



Scales, Plans 1:200, Sections 1:25 and 1:50 (A4)

Trenches 3 & 4, plans and sections 6-8, 11-14 Fig 8

At the south end of the trench was a single posthole [312] which was 0.16m in diameter and 0.11m deep (Fig 9, Section 8). Two small groups of pottery, contexts (304) and (305), lay on the machined surface just to the north of the posthole, possibly dragged from the fill during machining. Context (304) was one of the largest assemblages of pottery found on site and included several sherds from a single vessel, a Severn Valley ware tankard.

In Trench 4, there were two parallel ditches aligned north-west to south-east. At the south end of the trench, ditch [410] was 2.90m wide and 0.83m deep with an asymmetrical profile (Figs 6 and 9, Section 14). The mid brown-orange silty-clay contained frequent limestone concentrated towards the base of the feature. There were no finds in the ditch suggesting that it may have been located some distance from settlement activity. Ditch [408], 10m to the north, was 2.00m wide and 0.53m deep with mid grey-yellow clay fill (409) and a single sherd of pottery dated to the 2nd century AD. Just to the north, pit [406] was 1.40m long, 0.77m wide and 0.10m deep (Fig 9, Section 12). The fill (406) was mid brown-grey silty clay with orange mottling. There were frequent pieces of limestone in the fill including burnt examples as well as pottery dating to the 1st/2nd centuries.

There was a further isolated pit, [504], in Trench 5. It was 1.43m in diameter and 0.33m deep (Fig 10, Section 16). Pottery from the fill dated to the 1st century AD. The geophysical survey and excavation evidence suggests that this feature lies on the outer edge of the settlement activity.

There was a probable Romano-British ditch in TP3 (Fig 6). It appeared to be aligned north-west to south-east and was at least 2m wide and 0.90m deep

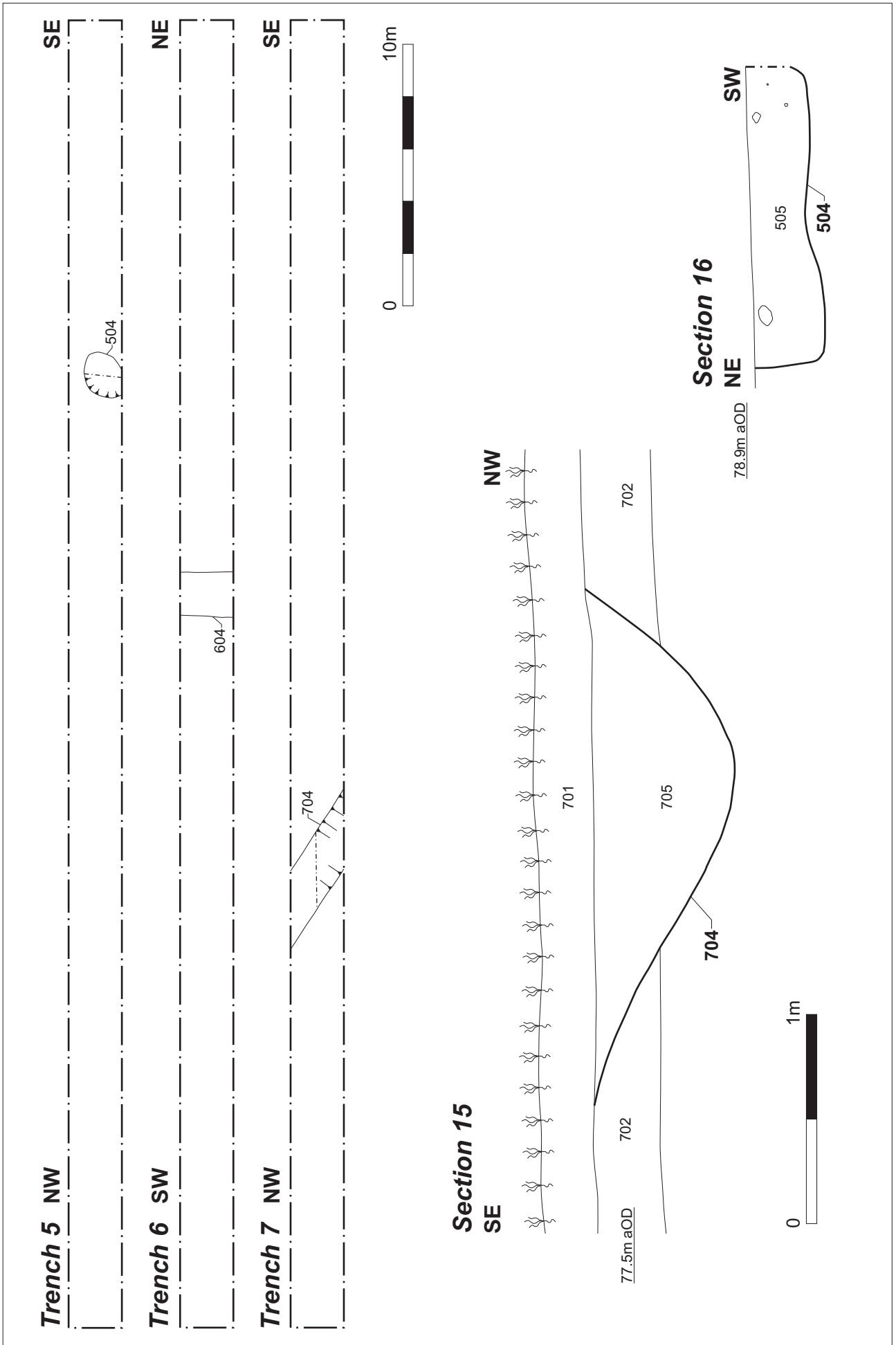
4.3 Medieval/post-medieval field boundaries

There were a number of ditches that may be former field boundaries. In Trench 3, ditch [310] was aligned north to south, 1.12m wide and 0.29m deep with a 'dish-like' profile (Fig 9, Section 7). The primary fill (309) was mid orange-brown silty clay from which came a trade token issued by a mercer trading in Malmesbury in the mid-17th century. A sherd of pottery similar to that made at the Minety kilns was also recovered. Just 0.80m to the north was ditch [316] which was also aligned north to south and may, therefore, be of a similar date. It was 0.70m wide but was not excavated.

Ditch [314] appeared to cut ditch [316] and may also be post-medieval in date (Fig 9). It was 2.20m wide, but was not excavated. The geophysical survey results suggest the ditch extended about 6m further to the west before turning south. Ditch [109] in Trench 1, which was aligned north-east to south-west, may be this southern continuation. Ditch [109] was 1.60m wide and 0.74m deep with a stepped profile and flat base (Figs 6 and 7, Section 2). The base of the ditch was filled with frequent large pieces of limestone. A few fragments of pottery from the fill could be either Roman or medieval in date.

At the north end of Trench 4, ditch [404] was aligned north-west to south-east and 1.22m wide and 0.63m deep (Figs 6 and 9, Section 11). The ditch fills contained Roman pottery, but this may have been residual, since the ditch seemed to cut through the subsoil suggesting it was of no great antiquity. The continuation of this ditch was observed in Trench 6. Ditch [604] was 1.70m wide but was not excavated.

There was a probable field boundary aligned north to south in Trenches 7 and 8 (Figs 6 and 10, Section 15). Ditch [704] was 2.47m wide and 0.68m deep with an asymmetrical profile and was filled with dark brown loamy clay (705). In Trench 8, ditch [805] was 5.80m wide and 0.68m deep with a similar profile and fill. A fragment of bottle glass was found in the fill.



Scales, Plans 1:200, Sections 1:25 (A4)

Trenches 5, 6 & 7, plans and sections 15 & 16 Fig 9

5 FINDS

5.1 The pottery by Jane Timby

Introduction

The archaeological work resulted in the recovery of a modest assemblage of 202 sherds of pottery weighing 1270g. Most of this dates to the early Romano-British period but small quantities of possible medieval and post-medieval material are also present. In addition five small pieces of fired clay (16g) were included with the pottery. Pottery was recovered from 16 separate contexts with quantities ranging from single sherds up to a maximum of 87 sherds. Thirteen contexts (81%) produced fewer than 11 sherds.

In general terms the assemblage was in quite fragmented condition, reflected in the overall average sherd weight of just 6.3g. In detailed terms the condition was more variable and the low average weight is the result of two very fragmented vessels from context (304). Other sherds were better preserved.

At this stage no detailed research work has been carried out to specifically compare the assemblage with other material from the immediate locality. Following a comment on the methodology used, the assemblage is briefly described by broad period. A section follows this on the potential of the group and further work.

Methodology

The assemblage was sorted into broad fabric groups based on inclusions present, the frequency and grade of the inclusions and the firing colour. Known regional or traded wares were coded following the system advocated for the National Roman reference collection (Tomber and Dore 1998).

The sorted assemblage was quantified by sherd count and weight for each recorded context. A summary is presented in Table 1.

The dating is purely based on the ceramic material without knowledge of the stratigraphic relationships. In many cases the dating is slightly uncertain, particularly where contexts have produced unfeatured local wares or just single sherds.

Late Iron Age-early Roman

Some 22 sherds are from handmade vessels in fabrics typical of the later Iron Age but which could have continued in use through to the later years of the 1st century AD. These include shelly limestone; limestone; sand and grog-tempered wares.

These sherds were recovered from three contexts (201, 221 and 305). In the latter two contexts the pieces occurred alongside wheel-made pieces indicating a more likely early Roman date.

The greatest number of sherds, 13 in total, came from topsoil (201). The sherds comprise eight grog-tempered pieces, three shelly-limestone wares and two black sandy wares all of which are more typical of later Iron Age traditions.

Table 1: Quantification of pottery by context, number and weight (g)

Context/ feature	IA/ native	Roma n				post- Ro?	Tot No	Wt (g)	Date
		sam	Regional	SAVGT	Other				
104/ditch 106	-	-	-	1	3	-	4	33	1st/2nd centuries
107/ditch 109	-	-	-	2	5	2	9	59	1st/2nd centuries /?post-medieval
201 topsoil	13	-	-	-	-	-	13	114	Late Iron Age-early Roman
204/ditch 204	-	-	-	1	9	-	10	86	1st/2nd centuries Late Iron Age-early Roman
207/gully 212	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Roman
213/ditch 214	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	7	Roman
219/pit 220	-	-	-	4	1	-	5	113	1st/2nd centuries
221/ditch 221	4	-	-	1	4	-	9	120	1st century
223 layer	-	-	-	1	6	-	7	69	1st century late 1st century- early 2nd century
304 on nat'l	-	-	15	-	72	-	87	279	early 2nd century
305 on nat'l	5	-	-	-	3	-	8	63	1st century
306/ditch 307	-	-	-	-	6	-	6	57	2nd century 2nd century/?
309/ditch 310	-	2	1	2	18	1	24	162	Medieval?
405/ditch 404	-	-	-	-	9	-	9	20	1st/2nd centuries
407/pit 406	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	4	1st/2nd centuries
409/ditch 408	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	9	2nd century
505/pit 504	-	-	-	4	4	-	8	75	1st century
Totals	22	2	16	16	143	3	202	1270	

Roman

Roman wares occur for the bulk of the assemblage, some 175 sherds, and 85.4% by sherd count. The pottery appears to span the 1st to 2nd centuries and is dominated by local wares, accompanied by modest amounts of continental and regional imports.

Continental imports are represented by two very small fragments of Central Gaulish samian. Both came from fill (309) of ditch [310] suggesting a 2nd century date. Regional imports are limited to a single sherd of Dorset black burnished ware also from (309), and 15 sherds from Severn Valley ware tankards from (304). The latter sherds are mainly from a single tankard with a pegged handle, accompanied by a rim from a second vessel.

The remaining Roman assemblage appears to be mainly local wares with 16 sherds of Savernake ware storage jar (SAV GT), black, wheel-made sandy, oxidised and reduced (grey) sandy wares. The black sandy wares, often with a burnished finish, have been found in dated contexts at Cirencester and were made from the Neronian period through into the early 2nd century. The oxidised and reduced wares are probably from the North Wiltshire industry which dates from the later 1st-2nd century. The only other distinct ware noted is a very micaceous grey sandy ware of unknown source but presumed to be a local product.

Post-Roman

Three sherds were noted which may be of post-Roman date; one from fill (309), of ditch [310] and two from fill (107), of ditch [109]. The sherd from (309) is from a curved wall dish with a flat-rim in a pale oxidised, oolitic limestone fabric similar to that made at the Minety kilns, North Wiltshire which would indicate a medieval date.

The two sherds from (107) are plain orange earthenware with no distinguishing characteristics, which could possibly be Roman but are more likely to be post-medieval pieces.

Potential and recommendations

This is an interesting early Roman assemblage which appears to span the early-mid 1st century through to the early-mid 2nd century. The group is quite small and contains very few featured sherds and thus as a group of material does not merit further detailed analysis. Its importance, however, lies in signalling the presence of an early Roman settlement worthy of further investigation should the occasion arise.

5.2 Worked stone by Andy Chapman

From the fill (306) of ditch [307], there is a triangular fragment of fine-grained grey sandstone, 105mm long by 88mm wide and 30mm thick, with no original edges and two flat and parallel surfaces, which are highly worn through use. This is presumably a fragment from some sharpening or polishing stone.

5.3 Metalworking debris by Andy Chapman

From the fill (204) of pit [206], there are four small irregular fragments of vesicular ferrous slag, weighing 110g, that denote some metalworking being carried out, most probably smithing.

5.4 The other finds by Tora Hylton

The excavation produced four finds: a 17th century copper alloy trade token, two iron nails and a body sherd from a cylindrical wine bottle in green glass.

The only object worthy of note is the trade token which was recovered from fill (309), of ditch [310], Trench 3. Tokens were issued by merchants in response to the lack of small change during times of unrest. This example represents a farthing and it was issued by William Wayte, a mercer trading in Malmesbury during the mid 17th century.

Obverse: WILLIAM WAYTE, around an inner circle of rope pattern with Grocer's Arms within

Reverse: IN MAMSBURY. 1651 around an inner circle of rope pattern, with W.W. within.

The nails were recovered from Trenches 1 (108) and 3 (309) and the fragment of bottle glass from Trench 8 (804).

6 THE FAUNAL REMAINS

6.1 The animal bone by Laszlo Lichtenstein

The animal bone was identified using Northamptonshire Archaeology's vertebrate reference collection, and further guidelines from Schmid (1972), Driesch (1979), Sisson & Grossman (1953) and Feher (1990). Due to anatomical similarities between sheep and goat the criteria set out by J. Boessneck (1969) were used to separate the two species. Ageing data and tooth eruption and wear were categorised according to Grant (1982), Hillson (2005) with the identification of juveniles after Amorosi (1989) and Schmid (1972).

The following were recorded for each bone: species, anatomical element, fragmentation, side, fusion, cut- or animal teeth marks and sex (where applicable). Bones that could not be identified to species were, where possible, categorised according to the relative size of the animal represented (large ungulate size: cattle or horse sized, small ungulate size: pig or sheep/goat). Presence of large and medium vertebrae and ribs was recorded for each context, although these were not counted. All teeth and a restricted suite of parts of the postcranial skeleton were recorded and used in counts.

A total of 120 (1.55kg) animal bone elements and fragments were collected from a range of features and trenches during the excavation. Following cleaning and drying all fragments of these hand collected animal bone were recorded, using standard zooarchaeological methods. This material was analysed to determine the taxa present, state of preservation and it is potential to provide evidence on the function and economy of the site.

The material was recovered from fills of Roman features and layer, apart from ditches [107] and [309] which were possibly medieval.

Roman period

A total of 87 (NISP, 1.26kg) hand-collected animal bone elements and fragments were analysed from the Roman period. Employing standard zooarchaeological methodological procedures 84 specimens (96.6% of the total NISP) were identified to taxa and parts of anatomy, representing three mammalian (*Bos*/cattle; *Equus*/horse, *Ovicaprid*/sheep or goat) species (Table 2). The majority of bones came from cattle (42.5%) and sheep/goat (19.6%) and one avian (*Gallus*/domestic fowl). No fish or amphibian bones were recovered.

Table 2: Species present in the animal bone assemblage by fragment count (including teeth)

Species/taxa	Roman Count	Roman Percentage	Medieval Count	Medieval Percentage
<i>Bos</i> /cattle	37	42.5%	1	3%
<i>Equus</i> /horse	1	1.2%	1	3%
<i>Ovicaprid</i> /sheep/goat	17	19.6%	5	15.2%
<i>Gallus</i> /domestic fowl	1	1.2%	-	-
Large ungulate size	19	21.8%	26	78.8%
Small ungulate size	9	10.3%	-	-
Unidentified	3	3.4%	-	-
Total	87	100%	33	100%

Taphonomy

The bones were generally in good condition, but the fragmentation was high (Table 3), with the majority (54.2%) being less than 50mm in size. Surface abrasion was low. There were no complete long bones, since the proximal and the distal ends were damaged, although some measurements were noted. Taphonomic factors affecting the material included gnawed and recently broken bones. Some bones were smashed in antiquity signifying a chosen method of disposal and many bones showed signs of fresh breaks.

Canid gnawing was seen on 4.7% of bone, which is relatively high. Canid gnawing was noted on ovicaprid tibia from fill (111), of ditch [112] large ungulate-size animal diaphysis fragment of humerus from fill (221), of ditch [222] and on small ungulate-size animals diaphysis fragments of long bone from fill (505), of ditch [504].

Some 5.7% of the assemblage had been affected by butchery, which is high. Knife marks on bone were noted on large ungulate size animal fragments of shoulder blade from fill (111) and pelvis from fill (306) of ditch [307] and fill (405) of pit [404]. No evidence for burning, pathological conditions or bone working was observed.

Table 3: Size of the animal bone assemblage (excluding the teeth) in the Roman period

Size (mm)	Roman Count	Roman Percentage	Medieval Count	Medieval Percentage
<20	5	6%	6	18.8%
20-50	40	47.6%	14	43.7%
50-100	32	38.2%	11	34.4%
100-150	3	3.6%	1	3.1%
150-200	2	2.3%	-	-
200-250	2	2.3%	-	-
250-300	-	-	-	-
Total	84	100%	32	100%

Ageing

Little ageing data was available from the ovicaprid teeth wear and eruption (Table 4). Tooth wear evidence of a sheep/goat severely worn down molars indicating two adult beast in fill (207) of gully [212].

Table 4: Ageing data after teeth eruption in the Roman period

Context	Species	Years
207	sheep/goat	Adult (TWS e, 10 years)
207	sheep/goat	Juvenile (TWS j, 14 years)

All the horse and cattle teeth and bone fragments were from adult individuals.

Table 5: Minimum number of individuals identified

Common name	MNI
Cattle	2
Horse	1
Sheep/Goat	2
Domestic hen	1

Discussion

Fragmentation of the assemblage was high. Some 64.6% could be identified to species, with the assemblage being dominated by cattle (42.5%), followed by lower numbers of sheep/goat (19.6%), horse (1.2%) and hen (1.2%). The dominance of cattle and sheep/goat is not unusual during this period (Table 4). Its presence is likely to be the result of domestic waste disposal.

Gnawing was noted on large ungulate-size animal from fill (221), small ungulate-size animal from fill (505) and ovicaprid from fill (111) bone fragments. The dog gnawing was of relatively high frequency (little more than 4.7% of the total NISP). The presence of canid gnawing on bones suggests that dogs had access to the bones before they

were buried and indicates that dogs were present on the site despite none of their bones being recorded in the faunal assemblage.

None of the hand collected bones from the contexts was burnt.

Marine shells

A total of 3g of marine shell was recovered from one context. This material was analysed to provide information on preservation and taxa present.

All of the pieces were Oyster (*Ostrea edulis*) shells. Fragmentation and abrasion were high. Evidence of modification was not observed on the Oyster shells. The presence of marine species indicates trade with the coast.

Medieval

The material was recovered from the fills of ditches [109] and [310]. A total of 33 NISP (0.29kg) hand-collected animal bone elements and fragments were analysed from these contexts. Employing standard zooarchaeological methodological procedures three specimens (21.2% of the total NISP) were identified to taxa and parts of anatomy, representing at least three mammalian (*Bos*/cattle; *Equus*/horse; *Ovicaprid*/sheep or goat) species. No *sus*, small mammalian, fish or amphibian bones were recovered.

Taphonomy

The bones were generally in poor condition. The fragmentation was high (Table 3), with the majority (62.5%) being less than 50mm in size. No complete long bones recorded, because the proximal and the distal end were damaged. Taphonomic factors affecting the material were recorded including recently broken bones. Canid gnawing was seen only two ovicaprid metapodium bone fragments (107). There was no evidence for burning, butchery or bone working was observed.

Table 6: Minimum individuals identified in the medieval assemblage

Common name	MNI
Cattle	1
Horse	1
Sheep or goat	1

Discussion

The size of the assemblage means little can be said of the economy of the site at this date. The fragmentation was very high. Only 21.2% of the assemblage could be identified to species. Little can be said of the animal economy of the site due to the paucity of material.

The assemblage is dominated by cattle. The dominance of cattle and sheep is not unusual of this period. Its presence is likely to be the result of domestic waste disposal (Table 6).

7 DISCUSSION

The trial trenching has confirmed the results of the geophysical survey in that it has recovered evidence for late Iron Age/early Roman activity on the site. However, there are a number of features present that were not identified by the geophysical survey and a number of features on the survey that were not present within the trenches.

The late Iron Age/early Roman activity appears to be represented by a number of overlapping enclosures probably dating to the late 1st century BC to 2nd century AD. It seems to be a fairly discrete area of activity and does not seem to extend any further north than the area defined in the geophysical survey. The main area of settlement appears to have been in the vicinity of Trench 2; ditches in trenches to the north may be the remains of a field system extending out from the settlement. Other than enclosure/boundary ditches there were a small number of pits and a posthole.

The modest pottery assemblage from the site is largely composed of local wares with a few regional and continental imports.

The medieval/post-medieval activity appeared to comprise a small number of ditches, probably field boundaries. There was little pottery from any of the ditches, although a trade token dating to the 17th century was found in the base of one of the ditches.

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APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
1	50m x 2m NW-SE		79.60m aOD	0.43m, 79.17m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
101	Topsoil	Dark brown loam with occasional small stones and chalk fragments	0.19-0.23m thick	
102	Subsoil	Mid brown silty loam, rare limestone	0.13-0.20m thick	
103	Natural	Mixed light brown-yellow loose sand and gravel	–	
104	Fill of ditch [106]	Mid brown sandy clay	0.21m thick	Pottery (1st-2nd century), bone
105	Fill of ditch [106]	Layer of limestone in base of ditch	0.07m	
106	Ditch	Aligned N-S, U-shaped	0.70m wide 0.29m deep	
107	Fill of ditch [109]	Firm, dark grey-brown sandy clay with limestone	0.51m thick	Pottery (1st-2nd century/post-med?), bone
108	Fill of ditch [109]	Layer of limestone in base of ditch	0.23m thick	
109	Ditch	Aligned N-S, steep sides with narrow, vertical-sided slot in base	1.60m wide 0.74m deep	
110	Natural banding	Firm orange-brown sandy clay	–	
111	Fill of ditch [112]	Friable mid brown-orange sandy clay with limestone	0.60m thick	Bone
112	Ditch	SW-NE aligned, steep sides with narrow, vertical-sided slot in base	1.40m wide 0.60m deep	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
2	50m x 2m N-S		79.50m aOD	0.44m, 79.06m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
201	Topsoil	Dark brown loam with occasional small stones	0.11-0.24m thick	Pottery (late Iron Age-early Roman)
202	Subsoil	Mid brown silty clay, occasional limestone	0.10-0.20m thick	
203	Natural	At NW: Cornbrash, at SE: orange sandy clay	–	
204	Fill of pit/ditch terminal [206]	Friable dark brown sandy clay, occasional limestone, charcoal	0.14m thick	Pottery (1st-2nd century), bone, slag
205	Fill of pit/ditch terminal [206]	Firm yellow-orange sandy clay, occasional limestone	0.23m thick	–
206	Pit/ditch terminal	Possible oval, aligned NW-SE, steep sides and broad, flat base	3.00m long, 0.70m wide 0.37m deep	
207	Fill of gully [212]	Loose mid brown-green sandy clay with orange-brown patches. Frequent stones	0.28m thick	Pottery (late Iron Age –early Roman)
208	Fill of gully [210]	Friable mid orange-yellow sandy clay	0.08m thick	–
209	Fill of gully [211]	Loose mid-dark grey-brown sandy clay	0.27m thick	–
210	Gully	NW-SE aligned, turning to south at north. Fairly steep sides and undulating base	1.40m wide 0.27m deep	
211	Gully	NW-SE aligned, terminating at north. Wide U-shaped profile	0.32m wide 0.25m deep	
212	Gully	N-S aligned, steep sides narrow flat base	0.52m wide 0.28m deep	
213	Fill of ditch [214]	Firm mid-brown sandy clay. Limestone at base	0.75m thick	Pottery (Roman)
214	Ditch	N-S aligned, fairly steep sides and a narrow, concave base	2.10m wide 0.75m deep	
215	Fill of ditch [216]	Firm mid brown sandy clay, with some large pieces of limestone	0.52m thick	–
216	Ditch	NE-SW aligned, almost vertical sides, flat base	> 0.95m wide 0.52m deep	
217	Fill of ditch [218]	Firm light brown sandy clay, occasional limestone	0.50m thick	–

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
2	50m x 2m N-S		79.50m aOD	0.44m, 79.06m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
218	Ditch?	NE-SW aligned? No visible edges, concave base	>1.20m wide 0.50m deep	
219	Fill of pit [220]	Firm mid brown sandy clay, some large pieces of limestone at base	0.62m thick	Pottery (1st-2nd century)
220	Pit	Circular, fairly steep edges, concave base	2.50m wide 0.62m deep	
221	Fill of ditch [222]	Loose mid brown-grey silty loam, frequent stone	0.30m thick	Pottery (1st century), bone
222	Ditch	NW-SE aligned, fairly steep sides and flat base. Cut by [206]	1.00m wide 0.30m deep	—
223	Layer	Firm mid brown sandy clay with patches of frequent limestone. Undulating base	Up to 0.25m thick	Pottery 1st century
224	Ditch/pit	NE-SW aligned, steep edges, undulating, slightly concave base	c 5.25m wide 0.50m deep	
225	Ditch?	NE-SW aligned, fairly shallow edges and narrow concave base	> 1.15m wide 0.40m deep	
226	Ditch?	NE-SW aligned, steep SW side, shallow NW side, rounded base	> 0.80m wide 0.35m deep	—
227	Upper fill of gully [210]	Loose grey-brown sandy clay, frequent stones	0.27m thick	—
228	Fill of ditch? [224]	Firm mid brown sandy clay, regular pieces of limestone some large	0.50m thick	—
229	Fill of ditch? [225]	Firm mid brown sandy clay, occasional medium limestone	0.40m thick	—
230	Fill of ditch? [226]	Firm mid brown sandy clay, frequent small pieces of limestone	0.35m thick	—
231	Fill of pit [232]	Not excavated	—	—
232	Pit/ditch terminal	Circular/oval in plan, not excavated	At least 1.10m wide	—
233	Fill of gully [234]	Not excavated	—	—
234	Gully	N-S aligned, not excavated	0.90m wide	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
2	50m x 2m N-S		79.50m aOD	0.44m, 79.06m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
235	Fill of gully [236]	Not excavated	–	–
236	Gully	N-S aligned, not excavated	0.80m wide	–
237	Fill of feature [239]	Not excavated	–	–
238	Feature	Irregular in plan, NW-SE aligned	> 2.30m long 0.30m wide	–
239	Fill of pit/ditch [240]	Not excavated		–
240	Pit/ditch	Large undefined feature	> 4.50m long 0.60m wide	–
241	Fill of pit [242]	Mid grey-brown sandy clay	> 0.30m thick	–
242	Pit? [242]	Oval in plan? Steep edges, base not reached	> 1.60m wide 0.30m deep	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
3	50m x 2m NE-SW		79.60m aOD	0.56m, 79.04m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
301	Topsoil	Dark brown loam clay with occasional small stones/chalk flecks	0.18-0.25m thick	
302	Subsoil	Medium brown sandy clay	0.28-0.31m thick	
303	Natural	Orange-brown slightly sandy clay with limestone patches at SW	–	
304	–	Group of pot sherds lying on natural	–	Late 1st-early 2nd AD pottery
305	–	Group of pot sherds lying on natural	–	1st century AD pottery
306	Fill of ditch [307]	Friable mid brown sandy clay with limestone inclusions	0.37m thick	Pottery (2nd century AD), bone
307	Ditch	N-S aligned fairly shallow edges, concave base	1.40m wide 0.37m deep	–
308	Upper fill of	Soft mid brown sandy	0.18m thick	Bone

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
3	50m x 2m NE-SW		79.60m aOD	0.56m, 79.04m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
	ditch [310]	clay, limestone inclusions		
309	Primary fill of ditch [310]	Soft mid brown-orange silty clay	0.20m deep	Pottery (2nd century AD and possible medieval), bone, trade token of 1651
310	Ditch	N-S aligned, shallow edges and concave base	1.12m wide 0.29m deep	–
311	Fill of posthole [312]	Loose mid brown silty clay	0.11m thick	–
312	Posthole	Circular, steep edges, narrow, concave base	0.16m diam 0.11m deep	–
313	Fill of ditch [314]	Not excavated	–	–
314	Ditch	NW-SE aligned, not excavated	2.20m wide	–
315	Fill of ditch [316]	Not excavated	–	–
316	Ditch	N-S aligned, not excavated	0.70m wide	–
317	Fill of ditch [317]	Not excavated	–	–
318	Gully	NW-SE aligned, not excavated	0.60m wide	–

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
4	50m x 2m NE-SW		79.10m aOD	0.43m, 78.64m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
401	Topsoil	Dark brown loam	0.20-0.25m thick	
402	Subsoil	Mid brown sandy clay	0.16-0.18m thick	
403	Natural	Orange slightly sandy clay with rare grey mottling	–	
404	Ditch	NW-SE aligned, steep, slightly irregular sides, narrow, concave base	1.22m wide 0.63m deep	–
405	Fill of [404]	Soft mid brown clay, frequent limestone	0.63m thick	Pottery (1st-2nd century AD)
406	Pit	Oval, shallow edges	1.40m long,	–

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
4	50m x 2m NE-SW		79.10m aOD	0.43m, 78.64m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/ Samples</i>
		concave base	0.77m wide 0.10m deep	
407	Fill of [406]	Mid brown-grey silty clay with frequent limestone and burnt stone	0.10m thick	Pottery (1st-2nd century AD)
408	Ditch	SE-NW aligned, edges initially shallow becoming steeper towards base, concave base	2.00m wide 0.53m deep	–
409	Fill of ditch [408]	Mid grey-yellow clay with rare stone	0.53m thick	Pottery (2nd century AD)
410	Ditch	N-S aligned, steep N edge, shallow S edge, concave base	2.90m wide 0.83m deep	–
411	Fill of ditch [410]	Mid brown-orange silty clay, frequent limestone concentrated at base of feature	0.83m thick	–
412	Upper fill of ditch [404]	Mid brown-grey silty clay with frequent limestone	0.25m thick	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
5	50m x 2m NW-SE		77.50m aOD	0.41m, 77.09m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
501	Topsoil	Dark brown loam	0.16-0.24m thick	
502	Subsoil	Mid brown sandy clay	0.03-0.17m thick	
503	Natural	At SE: yellow-orange sandy clay, centre is limestone, NW: grey and yellow mottled clay	–	
504	Cut	Circular, almost vertical edges and undulating base	1.43m diam 0.33m deep	–
505	Fill of pit [504]	Mid brown sandy clay with occasional limestone inclusions	0.33m thick	Pottery (1st century AD), bone

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
6	50m x 2m NE-SW		78.60m aOD	0.36m, 78.24m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
601	Topsoil	Dark brown loam	0.23-0.26m thick	
602	Subsoil	Mid brown sandy clay	0.06-0.10m thick	
603	Natural	At NE: light brown sandy clay, in centre: orange-yellow sandy clay, at SW: frequent limestone	–	
604	Ditch	NW-SE aligned, not excavated	1.70m wide	
605	Fill of ditch [604]	Not excavated	–	–

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
7	50m x 2m N-S		77.50m aOD	0.43m, 77.07m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
701	Topsoil	Dark brown loam	0.23-0.25m thick	
702	Subsoil	Mid brown sandy clay (only in S half of trench)	0.07-0.18m thick	
703	Natural	Mid orange-brown sandy clay with limestone	–	
704	Ditch	N-S aligned, steep N edge, more shallow S edge, concave base	2.47m wide 0.68m deep	
705	Fill of ditch [704]	Dark brown loamy clay with frequent poorly sorted limestone	0.68m thick	–

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
8	50m x 2m NW-SE		74.50m aOD	0.48m, 74.02m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
801	Topsoil	Dark brown loam	0.13-0.18m thick	
802	Subsoil	Mid brown sandy clay (only in S half of trench)	0.10-0.30m thick	
803	Natural	Light brown sandy clay with limestone	–	
804	Fill of ditch [805]	Dark brown loamy clay with frequent poorly sorted limestone	0.68m thick	–
805	Ditch	N-S aligned, steep N edge, more shallow S edge, concave base	5.80m wide 0.68m deep	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
9	50m x 2m NE-SW		77.20m aOD	0.48m, 76.72m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
901	Topsoil	Dark brown loam	0.13-0.18m thick	
902	Subsoil	Mid yellow-brown sandy clay (only in S half of trench)	0.10-0.30m thick	
903	Natural	Light yellow sandy limestone	–	