SOUTH MOLTON RUGBY CLUB'S NEW PITCH
LAND ADJACENT TO ALSWEAR OLD ROAD
SOUTH MOLTON
DEVON

Results of an Archaeological Excavation

South West Archaeology Ltd. report no. 181123

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES & HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING
SOUTHWEST ARCHAEOLOGY

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heritage lottery fund
LOTTERY FUNDED

South Molton Rugby Club's New Pitch, Land adjacent to Alswear Old Road South Molton, Devon

Results of an Archaeological Excavation

By: **P. Webb, F. Balmond, B. Morris and S.H. Walls**

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Work undertaken by SWARCH for Neil Kingdon
South Molton Rugby Club

SUMMARY

South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) was commissioned the South Molton Rugby Club (the Client) to undertake an archaeological excavation prior to the creation of a new rugby pitch on land adjacent to Alswear Road, South Molton, North Devon. This work was undertaken in fulfilment of a planning condition, and follows on from a programme of geophysical survey (Bampton 2015) and evaluation trenching (Webb 2015). The archaeological excavation was carried out as part of a HLF-funded community project which involved members of the community and local school children in the excavation, post-excavation processing and other archaeologically-themed activities.

The work identified and excavated a total of 46 features, including ditches, gullies, pits and postholes, that reflect the Prehistoric and historic use of the site. The pottery indicates activity as early as the Bronze Age, although the principal features are all likely to date to the Iron Age, with early medieval re-use of an enclosure. Towards the centre of the site was a small and truncated probable settlement consisting of a single roundhouse built into the side of an oval enclosure with an entrance to the south-west side. This type of structure – with the roundhouse built into and integral to the enclosure – appears to be unique. The roundhouse appears to have been rebuilt a number of times. Associated with the site was a probable six-post structure, likely to pre-date the roundhouse and enclosure, and a scatter of pits, likely to be contemporary with the settlement. The very small amount of South West Decorated pottery, supported by a programme of C14 dating, indicates the site was occupied during the Middle Iron Age. At the south-east corner of the site a small but strongly-defended enclosure was sampled. Its ditch was 3.65m across and 2m deep and one section was re-cut at least once. This re-cut was radiocarbon dated to the early medieval period and joins a very small number of identified sites that were occupied or used during that period. The other features encountered on the site included a section of curving ditch with postholes and several curving parallel probable plough furrows.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

LOCATION: LAND ADJACENT TO ALSWEAR OLD ROAD
PARISH: SOUTH MOLTON
COUNTY: DEVON
NGR: SS 71669 25132
SWARCH REF: SMR17
PLANNING NO: 60621
DCHET REF: ARCH/DM/ND/28947A

1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) was commissioned by Neil Kingdon, of South Molton Rugby Club (the Client) to undertake an archaeological excavation in advance of the creation of a new rugby pitch. This work was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (Boyd 2016) drawn up in consultation with Stephen Reed of Devon County Historic Environment Team (DCHET) and in line with best practice.

This report follows pre-planning geophysical survey (Bampton 2015) and evaluation trenching (Webb 2015). The excavation was supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and carried out with community involvement.

1.2 TOPOGRAPHICAL, URBAN AND GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The site is located on the south-facing slopes of a low hill, at a height of between 144m and 149m AOD, in the south-west corner of a single large rectangular field on the south side of South Molton. The site is 2km south-west of the A361, 800m south of the centre of South Molton and 850m west of the river Mole, on agricultural land between the Old and New Alswear Roads (see Figure 1). A narrow green lane runs along the western boundary of the site (*Trigley Lane*) and to the west of this is South Molton Community College, a large comprehensive secondary school. South Molton Cemetery borders the field to the north. The site is open to agricultural fields to the south and east. The soils of this area are the well-drained fine loamy soils over slate or rubble of the Denbigh 2 Association (SSEW 1983). These overlie mudstones and siltstones of the Bude Formation (BGS 2017).

1.3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The place-name South Molton (unknown element *mol* + *OE Sud* and *tūn*), means 'the south estate at a place called mol' or 'south estate on the River Mole' (Watts 2011). It is, however, possible that the River Mole is a back-formation taken from this name. South Molton is one of a number of important estate centres in Devon that combine a river name with the suffix *tūn* (e.g. Tawton, Crediton, Okehampton).

In 1086 William I held the Manor of South Molton (*Sudmoltone*), and four priests held *c.*30 acres of land from the king, indicating the presence of a collegiate minster church. In the 13th century it was held by Lord Martin, under the Earl of Gloucester. It later passed to Lord Audley and then back to the crown. It was then held by royal grant by the Hollands, Dukes of Exeter, and then Margaret Countess of Richmond in 1487. Queen Elizabeth I granted it to Thomas Whitmore from whom it passed to Hugh Squier. The executors of William Squier purchased the manor in 1700. His father Hugh died in 1710 (Lysons 1814).

South Molton, in the hundred and deanery of that name, was created as a borough in the 12th century and a fair was granted in 1327 (Beresford & Finberg 1973). Numerous boroughs were

created in this period, principally for the purpose of boosting manorial incomes. The scheme was to concentrate the freemen of the manor in a settlement consisting of a wide main street with long narrow burgage plots to either side. The street would be wide enough to accommodate a regular weekly market from which the lord of the manor would take a levy. The prosperity of the borough of South Molton relied on the woollen and livestock trades. Prosperity declined in the 19th century and was modestly restored in the later 20th century.

In 1839 the site was owned and occupied by James Huxtable. The fields were under pasture and called 'Broom Park' and 'Broom Close'. *Broom* presumably refers to the common flowering shrub. The morphology of these fields clearly indicate they lay within the former large common Open Fields associated with the town, and this is supported by the pattern of intermixed landholding in 1839.

1.4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The site is located on land characterised as *modern enclosures adapted from post-medieval fields* (Devon HLC). The land surrounding the site, particularly to the west, is characterised as *medieval enclosures based on strip fields* thus falling into the category of *Anciently Enclosed Land* (AEL).

Archaeological investigation in the form of geophysical survey (Bampton 2015) and evaluation trenching (Webb 2015) has previously been carried out on this site. This identified a number of potential archaeological anomalies, and confirmed the existence of an enclosure that appeared as a cropmark on aerial photographs (MDV29582). The evaluation also identified a narrow shallow curving gully, tentatively identified as part of a roundhouse.

In recent years the amount of archaeological fieldwork undertaken around South Molton has increased, with an extensive geophysical survey with evaluation trenching undertaken to the west of the town off Gunswell Lane (ACA 2013), and monitoring works undertaken to the south of the site at Great Hele Barton (TVAS 2014; SWARCH *forthcoming*). These have produced fragmentary evidence for Prehistoric activity and occupation.

1.5 METHODOLOGY

The archaeological excavation was conducted in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (Boyd 2016) drawn up in consultation with Stephen Reed of Devon County Historic Environment Team (DCHET). The topsoil strip took place between 15th and 19th May 2017 under the supervision of SWARCH staff, and the archaeological excavation by volunteers, again under the supervision of SWARCH staff took place between the 22nd May and 2nd June 2017. The topsoil on the area of the new rugby pitch was striped by mechanical excavator using a toothless grading bucket. Exposed archaeological deposits were excavated by hand in accordance with the WSI and CIFA's *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Excavation* (2014). The weather was fine and dry for most of the excavation. With the exception of the enclosure ditch, most of the features were shallow and fairly ephemeral. Many of the fills were similar to the natural, and given a general lack of charcoal and finds, it is likely that some genuine features will not have been identified. The rocky nature of the natural substrate in some areas will have contributed to this, as it was only when Area A was cleaned back that the extent of the penannular gullies was revealed. The lack of charcoal also restricted the application of C14 dating.

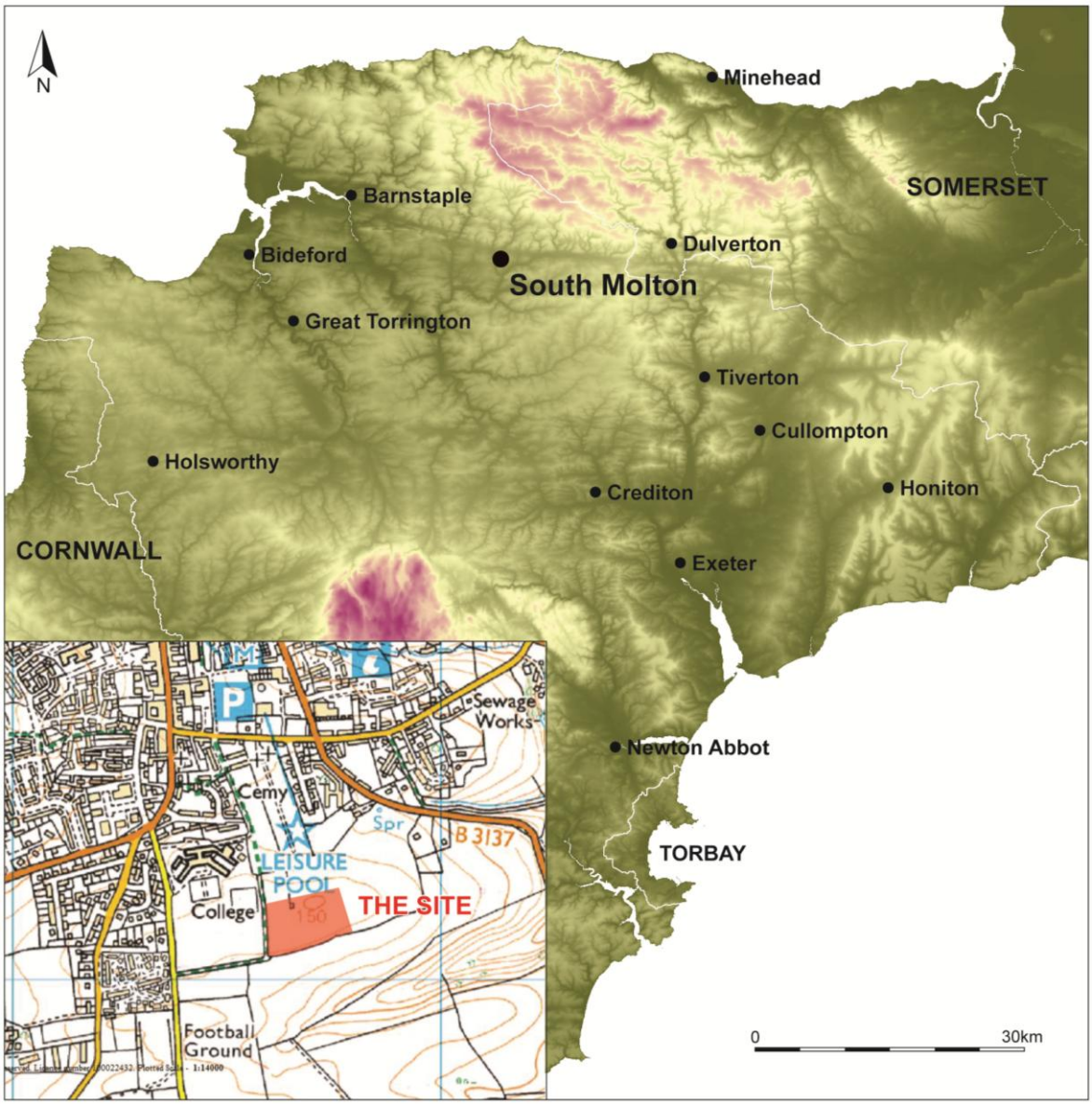

FIGURE 1: SITE LOCATION (THE SITE IS INDICATED).

2.0 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

2.1 COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN THE EXCAVATION

South Molton Rugby Club was successful in obtaining Heritage Lottery Funding for the archaeological work required prior to the construction of its new rugby pitch. The successful proposal principally involved working with local volunteers to carry out the excavation of the site. Volunteers were recruited through local publicity including posters, emails to local groups, and word of mouth through members of the rugby club. A public meeting was held on 6th February 2017 to which anyone interested in the project was invited. Prospective volunteers were asked to sign up and then contacted once the excavation had been arranged. A second meeting was held prior to the start of the excavation to run through health and safety considerations and other details. The excavation was led by SWARCH staff who delivered training on site to the volunteer participants. The excavation was scheduled to allow sufficient time on site for volunteers to be fully involved in the process. 25 local volunteers participated in the excavation during the 10 days on site, giving 95 days of volunteer time. An open day was held during the excavation, which was attended by approximately 50 local people.

2.2 ENGAGEMENT WITH LOCAL SCHOOLS

Children from a number of local primary schools were invited to participate in the project in order to learn more about the Prehistory of their local area. SWARCH delivered five taught sessions in the primary schools (approximately 160 children) prior to the excavation, exploring Prehistory through objects and activities and looking at the types of artefacts that might be encountered on a Prehistoric site. 125 children from these schools then visited the site and participated in the excavation. A small group of students from South Molton Community College visited the site on a number of occasions during the excavation, taking photographs and writing about progress on social media.

FIGURE 2: DR. BRYN MORRIS TRAINING THE NEXT GENERATION OF BUDDING ARCHAEOLOGISTS.

3.0 RESULTS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

An area of 10752m^2 was stripped of topsoil under archaeological supervision by a 21t mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless grading bucket. The soil was conveyed by two 30t dumpers to a spoil heap just north-west of the site, and stockpiled for reuse. In total, 45 archaeological features were identified. This included: five narrow curving gullies; 19 postholes; one large enclosure ditch; one other ditch; the base of two burnt pits; five other small pits; one removed historic field boundary; two service pipes; four irregular ?plough furrows; one tree-throw; and four areas of animal/root disturbance. What follows is a summary description of the results of the excavation. Figure 3 shows the whole site and the location of the excavated features. Detailed context descriptions can be found in Appendix 1, the finds concordance in Appendix 2, with specialist reports in Appendices 3-7. The photographic archive can be found in Appendix 8.

3.2 DEPOSIT MODEL

The site stratigraphy was fairly simple and consistent across the site, with a friable grey silt-loam topsoil (100) 0.20m–0.35m thick extending across the whole site. There was no surviving subsoil, and the topsoil directly overlay a natural substrate of firm yellow-grey silt-clay with a variable proportion of exposed bedrock. In general, the rocky bedrock was exposed in a clear wide band running approximately south-east to north-west across the centre of the site.

3.3 AREA A: CURVING GULLIES AND ASSOCIATED FEATURES

Gullies [101], [103], [105] [165], [253], [255], and [257]; Pits [139], [141], [143]; Post-holes [107], [109], [111], [117], [145], [147], [249], [251], [259], [261], [263], [269]; Deposits (265) and (266); Tree-throw [115].

Area A was located towards the north-west part of the site. The principal feature here were a series of truncated conjoining pennanular ring-gullies: [101], [103], [105], [165], [253], [255], and [257]. Each gully was 0.30m-0.40m wide and 0.15-0.20m deep with steep sides and flat base. Each gully contained a single fill: a friable grey silt-loam.

As a group they covered an irregular sub-oval area orientated approximately north-west to south-east and measuring approximately 18.50m by 11.80m, giving the appearance of overlapping but discrete features. By far the best surviving of these, gullies [103], [105], and [165], formed a sub-circular area, open to the north, measuring *c.*12 in diameter. Gully [103] (*c.*4.50m in length) formed part of the eastern quadrant; gully [105] (*c.*7m in length) formed the southern quadrant; and gully [165] (*c.*8m in length) formed the western quadrant. Towards the south-west of the feature, postholes [117] (at the western end of [105]) and [249] (at the southern end of [165]) formed an entrance into the internal space with a metalled threshold (266). The postholes and the surface were sealed by deposit (265), a grey silt-loam. Finds recovered from these features included: intrusive post-medieval pottery and iron slag from gully [105]. To the east gullies [101] and [253] formed the southern end of a possible overlapping pennanular ring-gully feature measuring *c.*7+m in diameter that adjoined the southern end of [105]. This feature may itself have replaced a pair of possible earlier curving Gullies [255] and [257], both poorly preserved. Finds recovered from these features included: intrusive clay pipe stem and coal from the fill of Gully [101]; a glass bead (SF1) was recovered from the surface of the natural just north of gully [101].

Three sub-oval pits, [139], [141], and [143], were identified to the north of the gullies. They measured up to 1.20m in diameter and 0.20m deep with gentle concave profiles. Iron Age pottery was recovered from pit [141], with charcoal was dated to 191-40 calBC at 95.4% probability (SUERC-78025); Bronze Age and Iron Age pottery was recovered from pit [143].

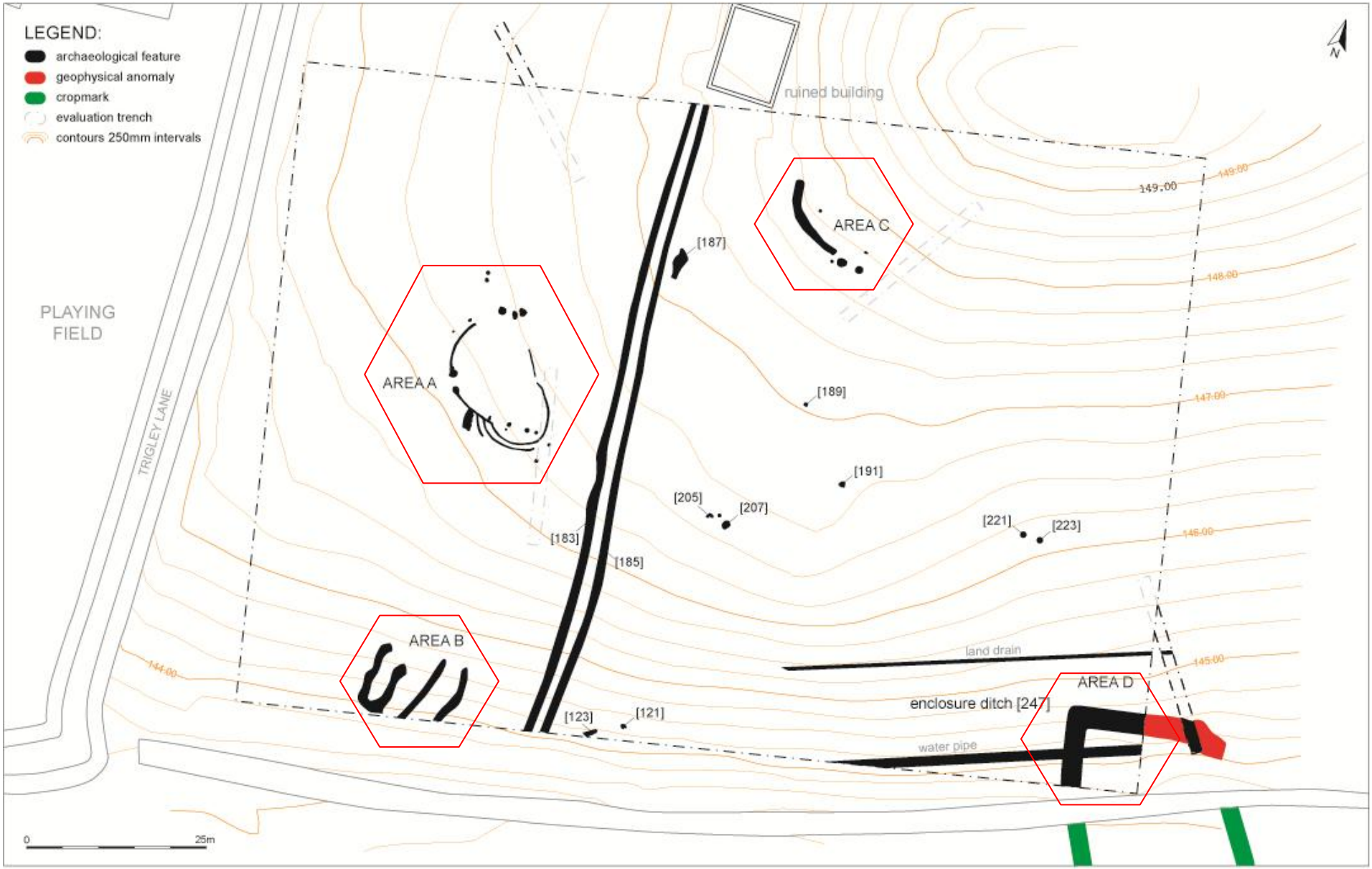

FIGURE 3: SITE PLAN SHOWING LOCATION OF DETAILED AREA PLANS AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL FEATURES.

FIGURE 4: GULLIES [101] AND [253], POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE EAST (2M SCALES).

FIGURE 5: PIT [143], SOUTH-WEST FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-WEST (1M SCALE).

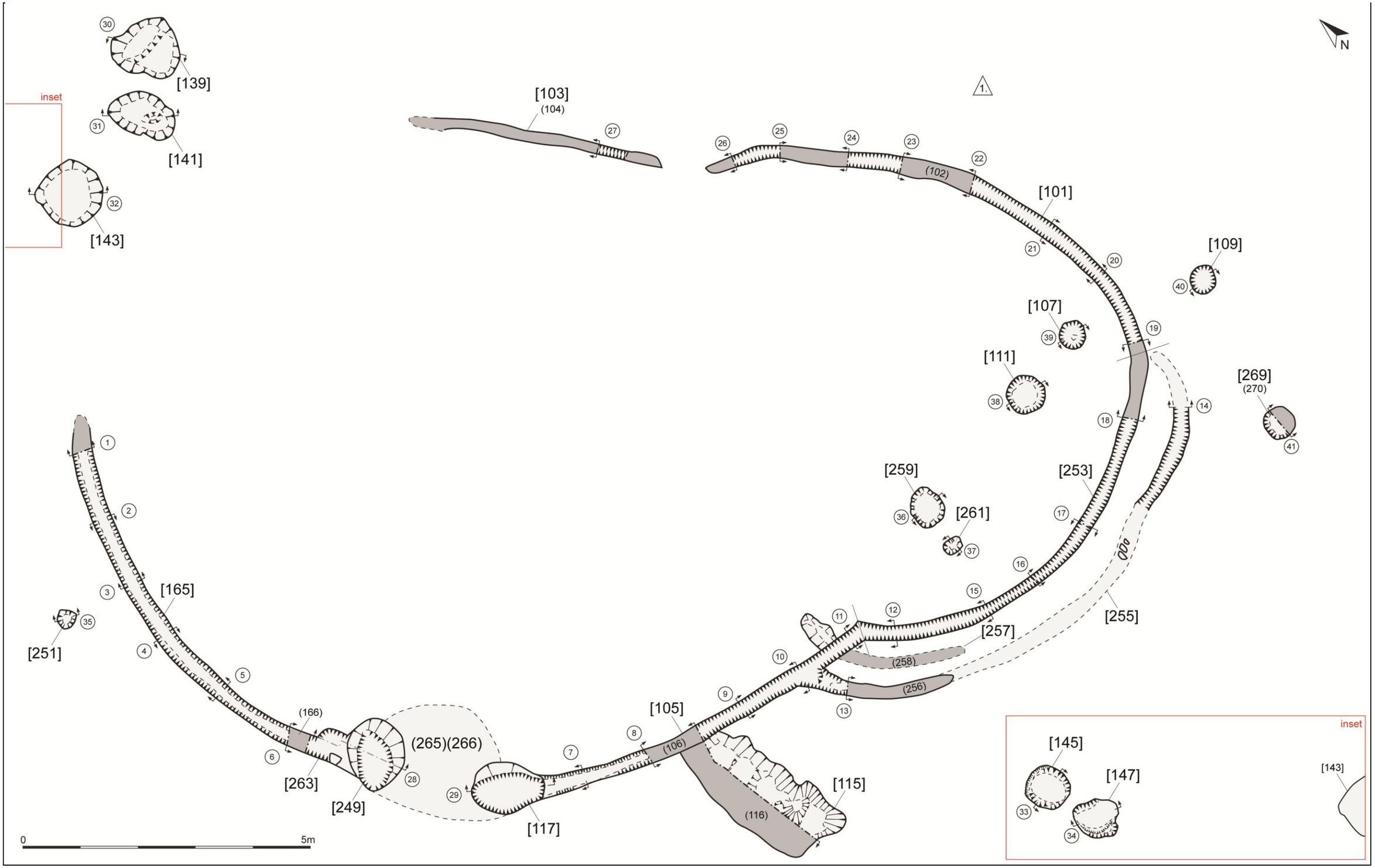

FIGURE 6: DETAILED PLAN OF AREA A.

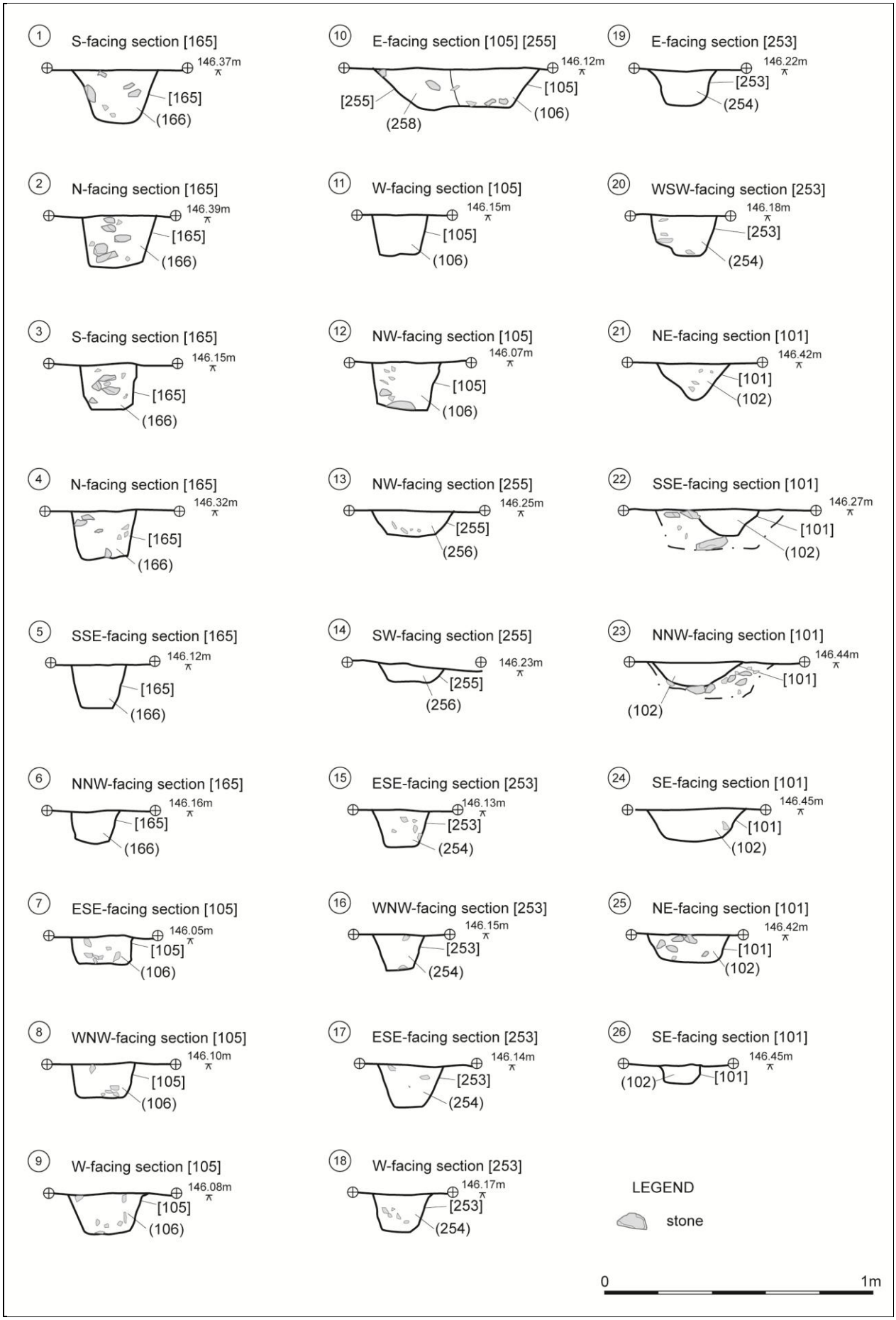

FIGURE 7: AREA A FEATURE SECTIONS; HEIGHTS AOD.

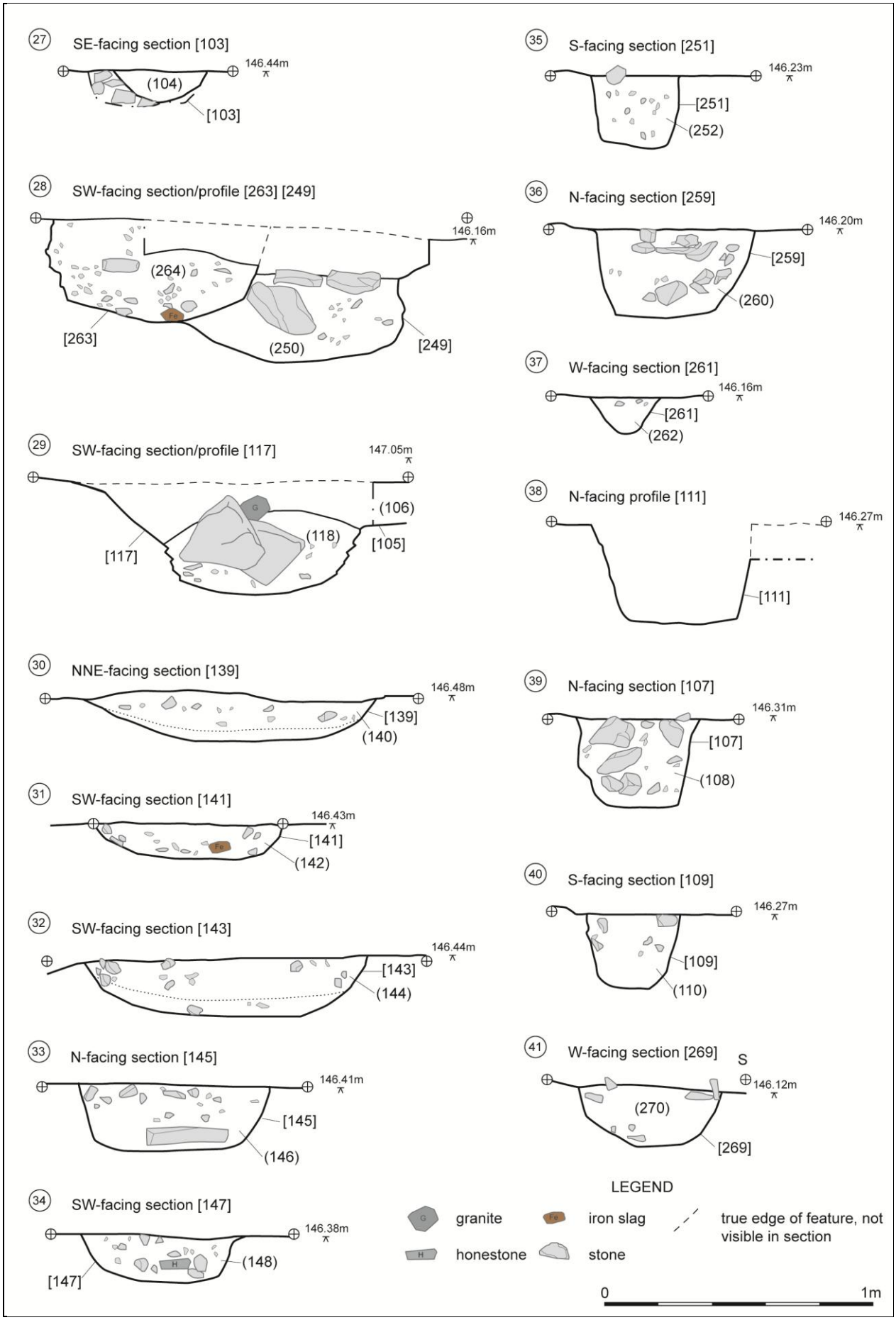

FIGURE 8: AREA A FEATURE SECTIONS; HEIGHTS AOD.

Straddling the south-eastern part of the gullies were six postholes: [107], [109], [111], [259], [261], and [269]. These were all sub-circular and measured up to 0.37-0.55m in diameter and up to 0.34m deep, with steep nearly vertical sides and slightly concave bases. Each posthole contained a single fill, a friable grey silt-loam. Posthole [109] and [111] contained *in situ* packing stones. The postholes enclosed a rectangular area orientated east to west and approximately 7m×3m across. A scrap of Iron Age pottery was recovered from the fill of posthole [111]; a possible burnt stone from posthole [269]; and intrusive post-medieval pottery from the fill of posthole [109]. Charcoal from posthole [109] was dated to 396-350 and 307-209 calBC at 95.4% probability (SUERC-78027).

Two postholes, [145] and [147], were identified north-west of pit [143]. These were sub-circular in plan and measured up to 0.70m in diameter and up to 0.38m deep, with near vertical sides and slightly concave bases. Both contained single fills of soft dark grey silt-loam. Charcoal was recovered from posthole [145] and a possible honestone from posthole [147]. A third posthole, [251], was located to the west of gully [165]. This was circular and measured 0.30m in diameter and 0.30m deep with vertical sides and flat base. At the centre of the base was a central deeper hole 0.06m in diameter and 0.08m deep. This posthole contained a single fill (252), a friable mid grey silt-loam with anthracite, bone, ceramic building material, clay pipe, and wood artefacts. This is interpreted as a modern feature. An irregular treethrow [115] was identified to the south of Gully [105].

3.4 AREA B: PLOUGH FURROWS

Irregular ditches [235], [239], [243] and [245]

Four parallel, slightly curving and closely-spaced but slightly irregular ditches [235], [239], [243] and [245] were exposed and investigated on the south-eastern edge of the site. They were all orientated NNE-SSW. Each linear feature had a gentle sloping profile with a gently-concave base, although ditch [239] had a much more pronounced concaved profile and base. One face of each ditch was steeper. They varied from 0.5m to 1.50m wide. All four were relatively shallow, at 0.16m to 0.30m deep. All four contained single fills of friable mid red-brown silt-clays with occasional shillet. There were no finds.

3.5 AREA C: CURVING DITCH AND POSTHOLES

Ditch [193]; Post-holes/Pits [195], [197], [199], [201], [203]

Area C was located on the northern edge of the site, just south-east of the ruined field barn. Area C contained the remnants of a curving ditch [193] and an associated group of small pits or postholes: [193], [195], [197], [199], [201] and [203]. The surviving segment of ditch was c.11m long, truncated at its northern, but terminating at its southern end next to two large postholes or small pits [197] and [199]. The linear feature was notably irregular, varying between 1-1.4m wide and 0.1-0.35m deep, and contained a single fill, (194), a soft yellow-grey re-deposited natural clay sit with abundant small rock fragments; a single corroded iron object was recovered from this fill.

Pit [197] and [199] were 1m-1.2m in diameter, with steep sloping sides and a flat or slightly concave base. Pit [199] was 0.50m deep and its profile appeared to have been re-cut; however, this was not apparent within its fills, all friable yellow-grey silt-clays.

A number of smaller sub-circular postholes were encountered in this area which varied in scale and profile. Posthole [195] was 0.30m in diameter and 0.24m deep, with vertical sides and a slightly concave base. It contained a single Fill (194) of yellow-grey silt-clay. Posthole [201] was 0.37m in diameter and 0.08m deep, with steep sloping sides and a flat base. It contained a single fill (202) a yellow-grey silt-clay. Posthole [203] was 0.74m diameter and 0.28m deep with a concave profile and base. It contained a single fill (204) of grey-brown silt-clay. There were no finds from these features.

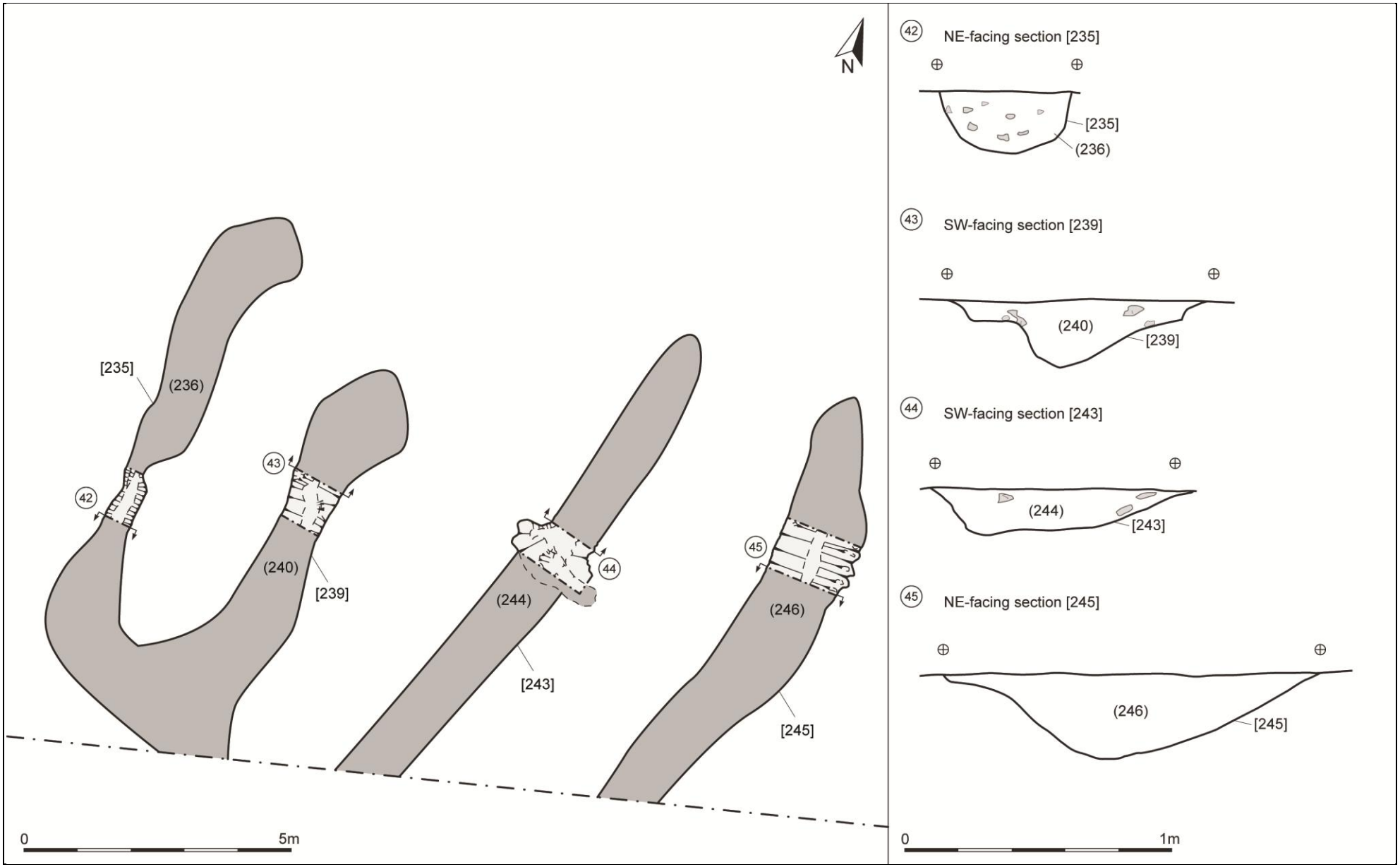

FIGURE 9: DETAILED PLAN OF AREA B WITH FEATURE SECTIONS; HEIGHTS AOD.

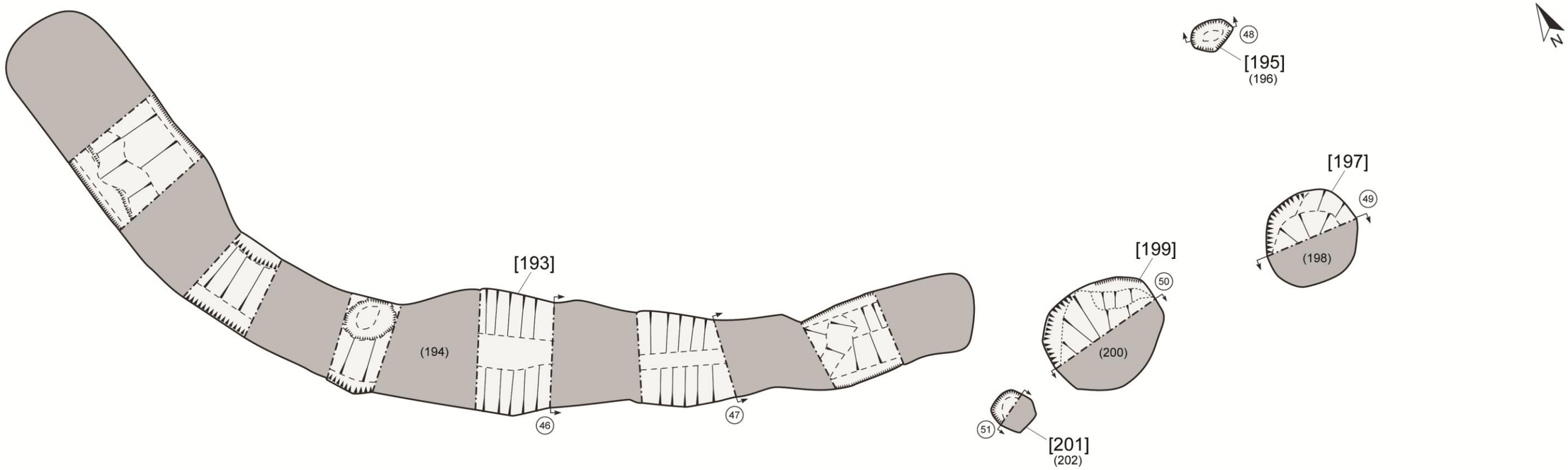

FIGURE 10: DETAILED PLAN OF AREA C WITH FEATURE SECTIONS. HEIGHT AT AOD.

3.6 AREA D: ENCLOSURE DITCH

Ditch [247]

Area D was located in the south-eastern corner of the site and contained a single archaeological feature: ditch [247]. This was the corner of the small sub-rectangular enclosure identified on aerial photographs, subsequently identified and sampled during the geophysical survey and evaluation trenching (Webb 2015). Ditch [247] was *c.*3.65m wide and 2m deep, with V-shaped shaped profile and narrow concave base. The stratigraphy of the ditch where it was sampled in the evaluation trench would suggest it had been re-cut. The character of the basal and lower fills (280), (279), and (278) would suggest of an initial period of the ditch silting up, that was sealed by coarse material slumped (or backfilled?) from the internal bank of the enclosure. These fills, (277), (276), (275) and (274), were dominated by poorly-consolidated re-deposited natural and shillet. The profile appears to have stabilised, as represented by silts (273) and (272). The final fills, (271) and (248), were friable grey-brown or grey yellow silts. Fill (248) contained the only finds from the feature: a fragment of iron slag and part of a modern earring (intrusive).

The profile of the ditch broadens towards the top, and the stratigraphy of the feature would suggest it may have been re-cut. Bulk samples were taken during the excavation, but these failed to produce any dateable material. Samples taken during the evaluation were then processed and charcoal sent for dating. Context (306) in the evaluation, which would form the initial fill of a posited re-cut/another feature, was dated to 474-85 and 536-642 calAD at 95.4% probability (SUERC-79144).

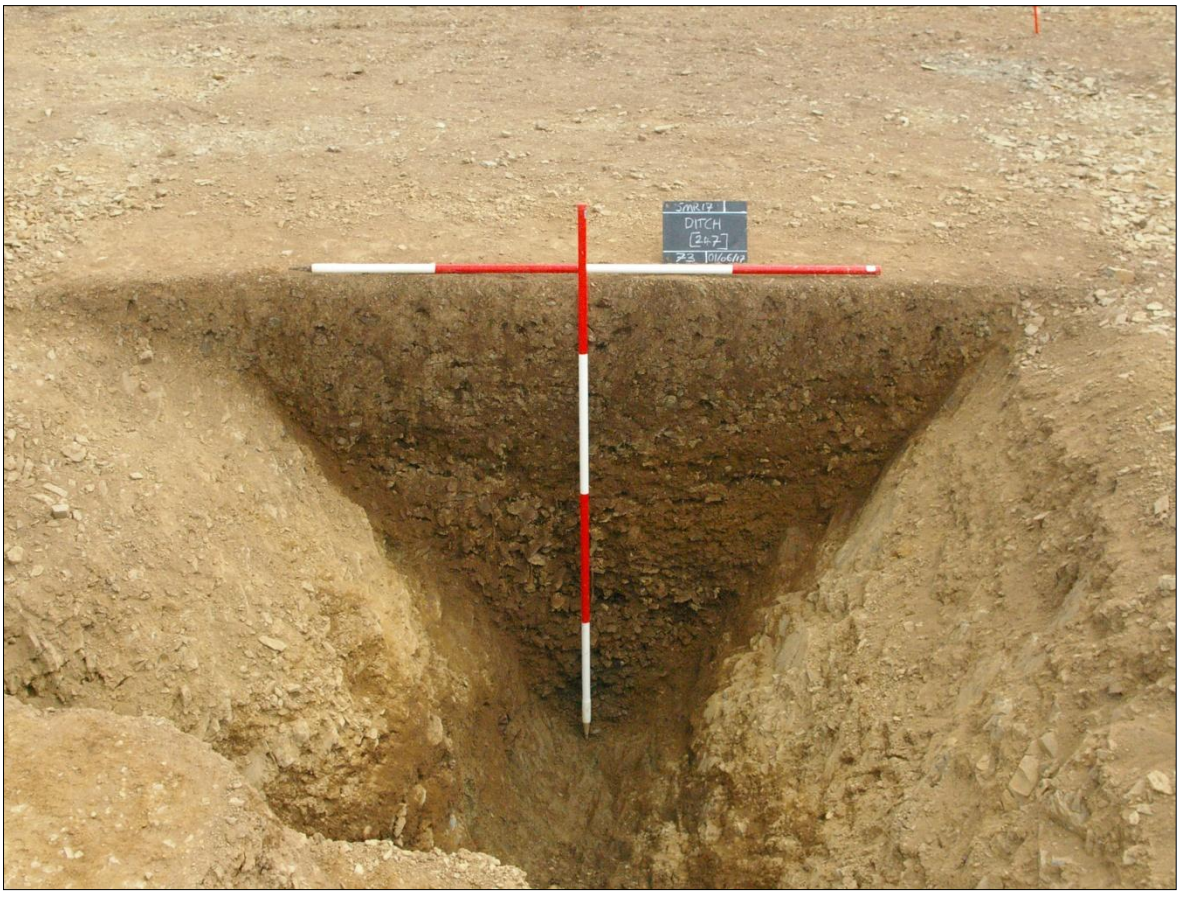

FIGURE 11: ENCLOSURE DITCH [247], NORTH-FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH (2M SCALES).

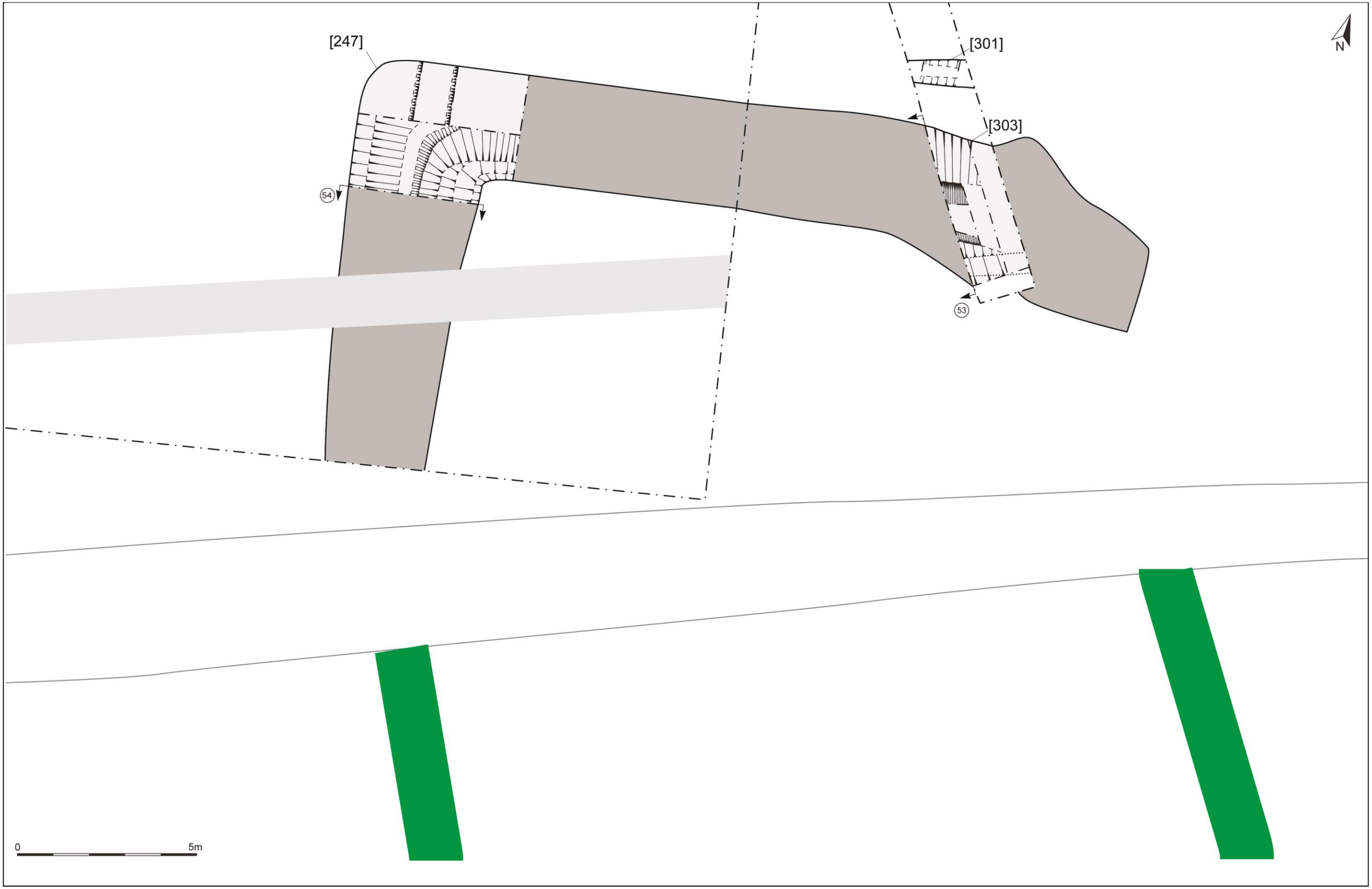

Figure 12: Detailed plan of Area D (approximate location of cropmark shown in green).

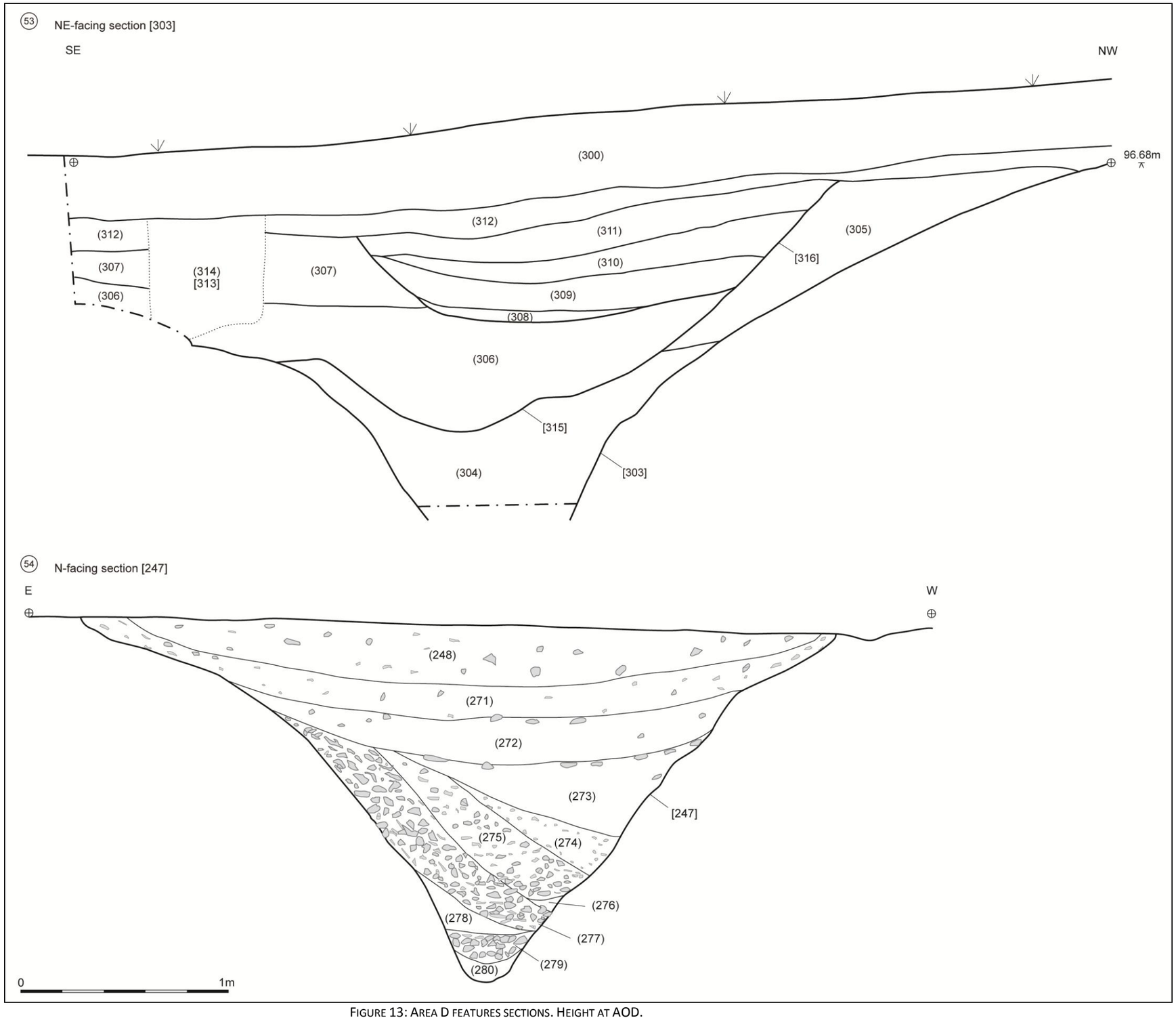

FIGURE 13: AREA D FEATURES SECTIONS. HEIGHT AT AOD.

3.7 OTHER FEATURES

Removed field boundary Ditches [183] and [185]; Pits [155] and [187]; Burnt Pits [189] and [191]; Postholes [221] and [223]; modern Service [227]; root/animal Disturbance [121], [123], [205], and [207].

A number of other features were identified during the excavation, the majority of which were modern or natural in origin. Crossing the centre of the site north-to-south were paired parallel ditches [183] and [185]. These were 0.8m-1.4m wide with friable grey-brown silt-loam fills. These ditches belonged to a historic field boundary removed after 1984 (see Figure 15). Post-medieval and modern artefacts were recovered by volunteers as unstratified finds.

Pit [155] north-west of Area A and was sub-circular in plan and measured *c.*1m in diameter and 0.16m deep, with moderately sloping sides and concave base. It contained a dark grey silt-clay with common shillet similar to the fills of the historic field boundaries indicating they were broadly contemporary. No finds were recovered.

Pit [187] to the east of ditches [183] and [185] was a short irregular linear *c.*5m×0.75m and 0.23m deep with moderately-sloping sides and concave base. It appeared to respect the historic boundaries, and contained a similar fill.

Burnt 'pits' [189] and [191] were located towards the centre of the site and can be more accurately described as heat-affected natural, with no true fills surviving to either feature. They were sub-oval in plan and measured 0.40-0.70m in diameter. What appeared to be fills was in fact a grey-yellow dirty natural silt-clay. No finds were recovered.

Towards the eastern boundary of the site postholes [221] and [223] were encountered. These were circular in plan, 0.20m in diameter and 0.10m deep with steep sloping sides and flat base. They contained single fills, soft dark grey-brown clay-silt; there were no finds.

A modern water pipe [227] ran across the south-eastern corner of the site and cut enclosure ditch [247]. The remaining features, [121], [123], [205], and [207], all appeared to be root or animal disturbance, being irregular in plan and profile with friable brown silt fills.

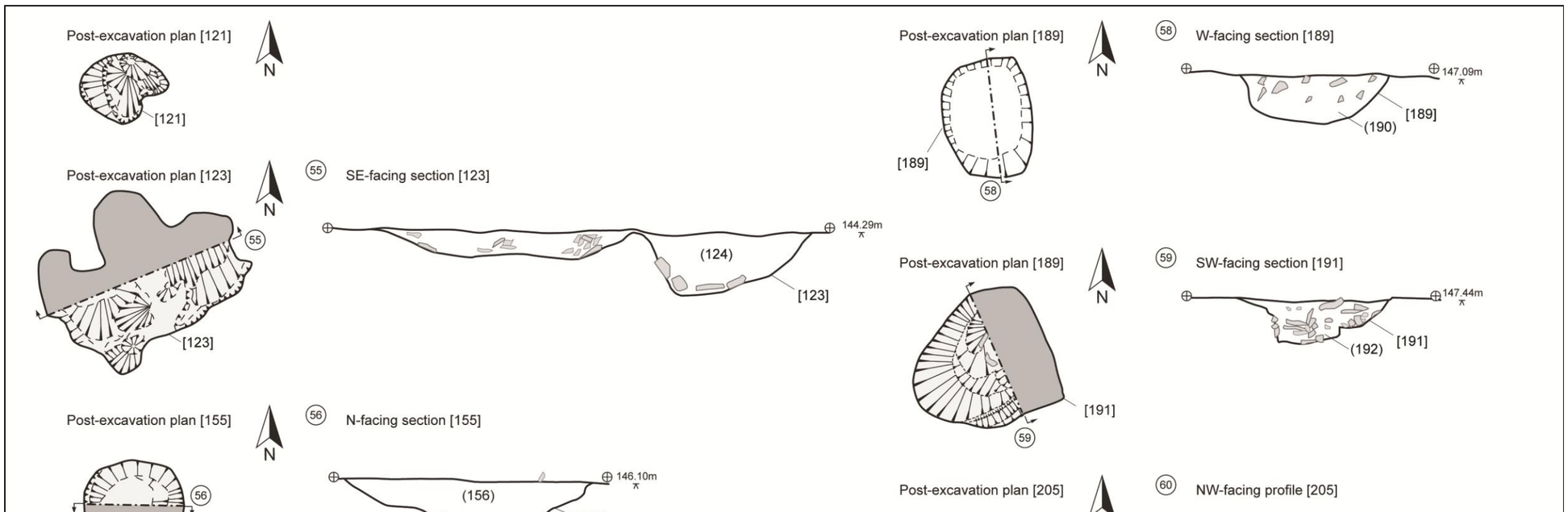

FIGURE 14: REMAINING FEATURE PLANS AND SECTIONS. HEIGHT AT AOD.

3.8 FINDS

Finds were sparse, and the bulk were unstratified or from post-medieval and modern features. In total 12 features contained finds, primarily metallurgical debris and scraps of Iron Age Pottery. A full finds concordance can be found in Appendix 2, with detailed metallurgical, ceramic and glass analyses in Appendices 3-5.

3.8.1 TOPSOIL AND UNSTRATIFIED

Topsoil (100) produced 7 sherds (32g) of industrial white wares, 4 sherds (38g) of Bristol or Staffordshire Yellow Slipware, 2 sherds (9g) of North Devon Scraffito pottery, 9 sherds (76g) of North Devon gravel-free pottery, 3 sherds (33g) of North Devon gravel-tempered pottery, 5 sherds (25g) of North Devon medieval coarseware and 1 sherd (11g) of Upper Greensand-type pottery. The topsoil also produced 3 fragments (66g) 17th-18th century dark green bottle glass, 7 stems or bowl fragments (18g) of clay tobacco pipe, 1 waste flake (4g) of flint, 1 fragment (2g) of clay pigeon; 1 plastic toy watering can (3g).

The other unstratified finds were predominantly picked up by school children and volunteers from around the fills of the relict field boundary [183] and [185]. These include 33 sherds (56g) of industrial white wares, 6 sherds (33g) of North Devon gravel-free pottery, 3 sherds (10g) of Bristol or Staffordshire Yellow Slipware, 13 sherds (42g) of North Devon medieval coarseware and 2 sherds (6g) of post-medieval creamware (6g). The non-ceramic finds included 14 fragments (56g) of modern glass, 10 fragments (84g) of 17th-18th century dark green bottle glass, 37 stems and bowl fragments (80g) of clay tobacco pipe, 4 fragments (78g) of pantile and 3 lumps (118g) of mortar. A single amber coloured glass bead (Late Iron Age) was recovered in Area A, just outside Ditch [101].

3.8.2 STRATIFIED FINDS

Area A

1 fragment (1g) of concrete, 1 stem (3g) of clay tobacco pipe and 1 fragment (2g) of coal from fill (102); 1 sherd (2g) of Bristol or Staffordshire Yellow Slipware cup handle and 2 lumps (4170g) of slag from fill (106); 1 sherd (2g) of post-medieval North Devon gravel-free pottery from fill (110); 1 sherd (<1g) of a reduced burnished (Iron Age/Roman) ware and 1 large (918g) smoothed stone from fill (112); 3 fragments (9g) of coal/cinker from Fill (126); 1 large sherd (19g) of South West Decorated (Iron Age) ware with incised decoration, 3 fragments (>1g) of burnt bone and 14 pieces (501g) of slag and pyrotechnical debris from fill (142); 3 sherds (2g) of South West Decorated (Iron Age) ware, 2 sherds (<1g) of medieval coarseware, 2 sherds (<1g) of Gabbroic fabric pottery, and 2 lumps (27g) of slag from Fill (144); 1 possible (1250g) honestone from fill (148); 1 scrap (1g) of brick fragment, 1 fragment (<1g) of bone, 1 stem (<1g) of clay tobacco pipe, 2 fragments (<1g) of painted wood and 1 fragment (<1g) of Anthracite from fill (252); and 1 possible (287g) burnt stone from fill (270).

Area C

1 corroded iron object (6g) from fill (194).

Area D

1 lumps (879g) of iron slag and 1 gold coloured plastic (<1g) screw-on earring from fill (248).

It is considered highly likely that many of the stratified finds are, in fact, intrusive, for example the two sheds of medieval coarseware from fill (144), and the Bristol/Staffordshire Yellow Slipware cup handle from fill (106), as they were located in features that are most likely to be Prehistoric in origin. The screw-on earring from fill (248) in enclosure ditch [247] would be intrusive given the Prehistoric/Romano-British/early medieval origins of this feature.

3.8.3 **DISCUSSION**

The small number of finds from the site relative to the area exposed and the volume of excavated material points to the material poverty of this site. The medieval and post-medieval material from the site reflects the proximity of the town of South Molton, with rubbish and night-soil from the town spread in the fields directly associated with the town. The presence of post-medieval material in some the features of Prehistoric date probably reflects the shallow topsoil and the truncation that is likely to have occurred as a result of medieval and post-medieval cultivation. It was noted during the topsoil strip that the stony natural between ditches [183] and [185], and that would have been protected by a hedgebank until after 1979, survived to a higher level and was markedly less weathered than the natural to either side. This would imply truncation to the degree of perhaps c.0.1-0.2m.

As noted, while some of the finds are likely intrusive, the rest demonstrate the Prehistoric origins of the site: the recovery of possible Early Bronze Age pottery from pit [143] indicating the earliest use of the site, although Middle Iron Age pottery recovered from the same feature suggests that the feature itself is later. Middle Iron Age pottery was also recovered from posthole [111] and pit [141] surrounding the penannular gullies, lending credence to an Iron Age date for this site.

The metallurgical analysis suggests that this Iron Age activity was associated with iron smelting. The relatively small size of the slag assemblage indicates smelting was not carried out anywhere within the area examined. This would point to the presence of slag on this site as forming part of an intentional (perhaps even structured) deposition of material.

4.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

4.1 DISCUSSION

4.1.1 GENERAL POINTS

The excavation at South Molton represents the final stage in a programme of archaeological fieldwork ultimately prompted by a series of aerial photographs (Figure 15). This photograph shows a sub-rectangular enclosure in an adjacent field alongside what appears to be a contemporary fieldsystem. In this photograph the site – still under pasture – betrays nothing of its archaeological potential. The ground slopes away quite gently from its peak to the east of the ruined field barn before dropping steeply down to the valley to the south. The rugby club site is located just below the summit, with most of the site located on a fairly level shelf just to the south-west.

The topsoil across the site was relatively thin (0.2-0.35m thick), and this has clearly had an impact on the survival of features across the site: with the exception of enclosure ditch [247], none of the archaeological features are more than 0.5m deep. Truncation, clearly demonstrated where levels had been preserved beneath the removed field boundary [183]/[185], reflects the medieval and post-medieval use of the site as one of the medieval common Open Fields attached to the town. The works were preceded by an extended spell of dry weather, and although the surface of the soil could be damp, the rest of the profile and underlying substrate was very dry; this has undoubtedly influenced the identification of features.

FIGURE 15: 1984 AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH SHOWING THE ENCLOSURE (INDICATED); THE SITE IS SHOWN IN YELLOW (SOURCE: DCHET).

4.1.2 AREA A

Area A contained a scattered of features: several pits, a group of postholes, and a series of narrow curving gullies. The narrow curving gullies lend themselves very readily to interpretation as the drip gullies and/or foundation trenches to a roundhouse. There are even postholes for a door to the south-west side with an area of metalling in the threshold. However, there are three main reasons why this interpretation is unsatisfactory: the gullies do not describe a circle; if it was a building it would be much larger than other contemporary excavated examples; and it lacks the ring of internal postholes that would surely be necessary to support such a building. The gullies define an oval area with a clear bulge to the south-eastern side, and on that side there are fragments of two other parallel curving gullies. It would appear most likely that – despite a general lack of comparanda – this is in fact a composite structure composed of a roundhouse c.8m in diameter attached to a small enclosure. The parallel gullies on the south-eastern side, and re-cut entrance posthole [249]/[263], would suggest this complex was occupied for an extended period and was rebuilt or refurbished at least twice. Dating for this complex is very tentative, but the (albeit limited) dating for the other features here, and the presence of iron slag in the gullies, would point to an Iron Age date (and see below).

The general paucity of material culture is notable despite the fact the site was very extensively and carefully excavated; the features also lacked charcoal. The single sherd of post-medieval pottery from [105] is most likely to be intrusive. Were it not for the general dearth of material culture in North Devon, it would be tempting to suggest this was not a domestic site in the usual sense. There is also some evidence for structured deposition focused on the entrance. Here the postholes and gullies contained a number of elongate river cobbles that must have been brought to the site from the valley below. Posthole [263] also produced a large fragment of furnace lining, which must also have been brought to site from elsewhere. Until comparison can be made with better preserved or less truncated sites, it is safest to conclude the site represents a small (impoverished and/or truncated) Iron Age farming settlement.

The three pits to the north of the gullies [139] [141] [143] were somewhat different, in that the fills contained charcoal and pottery (4 sherds (21g) of Middle Iron Age South West Decorated ware). Charcoal from pit [141] was dated to 191-40 calBC (95.4% prob. SUERC-78028). The purpose or function of these pits is open to speculation, but the charcoal from [141] and [144] is noted as highly vitrified (see Appendix 6, Table 1). This could be attributed to a high-temperature process (i.e. smelting), but experimental work has failed to demonstrate the link between charcoal vitrification and high temperatures (McParland *et al*. 2010). That said, the low taxonomic diversity of the charcoal (all from oak and hazel/alder) would point to its selective use, and oak was favoured for smelting operations. The fact that the hazel appears to be roundwood might hint at woodland management, as noted at North Tawton (see Gale 2009).

The two postholes further to the north [145] [147] are similar to these pits, but contained large stones that appeared to be placed. On that basis it is more likely they are postholes with remnant post-packing, but to no discernible purpose.

The six postholes to the south-east [107] [109] [111] [259] [261] [269] appear to define a structure that straddles the gully complex, indicating it pre- or post-dates that complex. This would have been a rectangular structure c.8×4m across and, if we suppose the south-western part was truncated or disturbed by gully [255], could be interpreted as an Iron Age four- or six-post structure. A single scrap of Middle Iron Age South West Decorated Ware was recovered from posthole [111], and a C14 date from [109] was returned as 396-350/307-209 calBC (95.4%, SUERC-78027). This is not the first instance of successive structures on the same site: at Middle Burrow Farm, East Worlington, a four-post structure was built on the site of a large Middle Iron Age roundhouse (Gillard *et al.* 2012). It is of interest that the charcoal from these postholes is similar to that of pits [139] [141] [143],

with low taxonomic diversity (oak, hazel/alder) and vitrification. This might imply contemporaneity or (given the divergent C14 dates) continuity of use or function.

In terms of comparison, a number of new Iron Age sites have been identified and excavated (e.g. at Ipplepen, Sherford, Spriddlestone, St Loyes Exeter, Straitgate Farm Ottery etc.) but the form of the settlement at South Molton appears unique. The Iron Age roundhouse at Middle Burrow Farm (9km to the SSE) is a more conventional structure, but is located on a south-facing slope just below the summit of a ridge. This does not appear to have been an isolated structure as geophysical survey in an adjoining field identified two further ring ditches (Bampton & Wapshott 2015). The closest analogy to the rugby club site is located off Gunswell Lane, c.1.5km to the NNW. Geophysical survey identified a ring ditch c.8m in diameter, and a larger circular monument c.18m in diameter; trenching located these features and the latter produced three sherds of pottery identified as Iron Age in date (ACA 2013). More significantly, the larger monument is located in an identical topographical location to the rugby club site: on a gentle south-west facing slope just below the summit. Further research would be required to determine if this represents a regional trend, and one that might explain why contemporary sites are so infrequently encountered.

4.1.3 AREA D

The most substantial feature investigated was enclosure ditch [247]. The excavated area extended across the north-west corner of the enclosure, but failed to locate any internal features. This is not altogether surprising: given the size of the ditch, most of this area would have been occupied by the corresponding bank. Like the gully complex, this enclosure is rather curious. It is located on sloping ground – and thus overlooked from above – just above a pronounced break of slope. Its substantial ditch (3.65m wide and 2m+ deep) is highly likely to have been complemented by a commensurate bank, but this would have left an internal space barely c.10×25m across. Prior to the excavation it was presumed to contemporary with the other features (i.e. Late Iron Age) and theorised to be a defended mortuary enclosure, settlement, or perhaps storage depot. Frustratingly, the excavation was unable to establish the use or purpose of the enclosure, and no dateable material was found. However, it was able to confirm an internal bank. The evidence for re-use is there but it is not straightforward. The uppermost fills in the section excavated *may* sit within a broad concave re-cut; the evidence from the evaluation is more compelling but it is unclear whether this is a re-cut of the ditch or a separate feature (e.g. a pit or similar) that happens to intersect with the ditch at this point. Retained bulk soil samples from the evaluation produced dateable charcoal from the fill of the re-cut, but the date – 474-484/536-642 calAD (95.4% prob. SUERC-79144) – was entirely unexpected and this monument joins a very select band of sites with evidence for early medieval use. The only comparable Devon example is an Iron Age enclosure at Hazard Farm, Harberton, which produced two post-Roman dates (e.g. 420-55 calAD SUERC-47025) (Pears & Rainbird 2014). Given the enclosure had a long or perhaps punctuated use-life it is probable its function changed over time. Further investigation would be required to establish whether this was indeed the case, and determine whether the early medieval date came from an isolated feature or whether it can be attributed to the whole monument.

4.1.4 AREAS B AND C

In terms of the other main concentrations of features, little further can be said. The short parallel curving ditches/furrows in Area B lend themselves most readily to interpretation as substantial plough furrows, but it is generally unclear what they actually represent. The length of curving ditch associated with postholes in Area C follows the contour around the summit of the hill, and thus it is *possible* its represents the remnants of a hilltop enclosure of Prehistoric date. The ditch peters out to the north and could not be located further to the east. In both instances differential truncation could be invoked – at the risk of special pleading – to explain its absence. The topsoil to the north of the site was at its shallowest (barely 0.2m), and to the east the site was crossed by a band of softer/degraded bedrock. It would be unwise to speculate further, though it could be noted that the smaller ring ditch on the Gunswell Lane site is located at the actual summit of the hill there.

4.2 CONCLUSION

This community project was made possible by HLF funding and largely undertaken by volunteers. Children from five local primary schools visited the site, and many local residents took the opportunity to attend the open day. The work facilitated the construction of a new rugby pitch, and will therefore contribute to the public good for years to come. The work identified and excavated a total of 46 features, including ditches, gullies, pits and postholes, that reflect the Prehistoric and historic use of the site. The pottery indicates activity as early as the Bronze Age, although the principal features are all likely to date to the Iron Age, with early medieval re-use of an enclosure. Towards the centre of the site was a small probable settlement consisting of a single roundhouse built into the side of an oval enclosure with an entrance to the south-west side. This type of structure – with the roundhouse built into and integral to the enclosure – appears to be unique. The roundhouse appears to have been rebuilt a number of times. Associated with the site was a probable six-post structure, likely to pre-date the roundhouse and enclosure, and a scatter of pits, likely to be contemporary with the settlement. The very small amount (4 sherds, 21g) of South West Decorated pottery, supported by a programme of C14 dating, indicates the site was occupied during the Middle Iron Age. At the south-east corner of the site a small but strongly-defended enclosure was sampled. Its ditch was 3.65m across and 2m deep. In the section dug during the evaluation it is apparent the ditch was re-cut or is cut by another feature; this was radiocarbon dated to the early medieval period and thus it joins a very small number of identified sites that were occupied or used during that period. The other features encountered on the site included a section of curving ditch with postholes and several curving parallel probable plough furrows.

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APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Context	Type	Description	Relationships	depth/thickness	Spot date
(100)	Topsoil	Topsoil of site; friable grey silt loam with common angular stone 20-60mm across (ploughed up from natural); no real subsoil; pockets of slightly more reddish-brown and stony soil. Finds = pottery, CBM, clay pipe and metal.	Overlies everything	Between 0.2m and 0.35m	Modern
[101]	Cut	Narrow curving ('ring') rock-cut gully; steep or near vertical sides, flat base with a diameter of c. 8.5m and width of 0.25-0.5m.	Filled by (102); same as [253] [105]	0.1-0.15m	
(102)	Fill	Fill of [101]. A mid-grey friable silty loam; variable amounts of smooth angular stones (20-40mm); large elongated river cobbles are found either side of the entrance.	Overlain by (100), overlies natural; fill of [101]	0.15-0.2m	
[103]	Cut	Short length of shallow slightly curved gully; to the north of [105]; rocky and uneven gentle sides, and flattish base, with a length of c.1.2m.	Filled by (104)	c.0.1m	
(104)	Fill	Fill of [103]. Friable greyish-brown silt loam; contains common angular stones measuring 20-40mm.	Overlain by (100), fill of [103]	c.0.1m	
[105]	Cut	Narrow curving ('ring') rock-cut gully; steep or near vertical sides, flat base, overall diameter of c. 12.0m and width of 0.3-0.4m. There is a clear entrance at the south-west side. Entrance flanked by [117] and [249]; metalling at threshold (266). Gully continues, as [253]; gullies [255] and [257] branch off [105] and arch parallel to [253]. Excavated as a sequence of block (B) numbers, in c.1m segments. Interpretation: Possible enclosure, no obvious structural evidence inside; dimensions are wrong for a roundhouse. However, stony natural for most of the enclosure makes conclusive interpretations difficult.	Filled by (106); butts [117] [263] [249], cuts (116), same as [253]	0.15-0.2m	
(106)	Fill	Fill of [105]. A mid-grey friable silty loam; variable amounts of smooth angular stones (20-40mm); large elongated river cobbles are found either side of the entrance. Bulk Sample 11 (15 litres).	Overlain by (100), overlies natural; fill of [105]	0.15-0.2m	
[107]	Cut	Posthole with steep/vertical sides; gently concave base and a length of 0.43m and width of 0.4m; rock-cut.	Filled by (108), cuts natural	0.34m	
(108)	Fill	Fill of [107]. Friable when dug, but otherwise firm grey or dark grey silty loam; common (×17) angular stones and blocky sub-angular stones, up to 140mm across; occasional charcoal flakes; small pottery fragment, <10mm. Bulk Sample 2 (5 litres).	Overlain by (100), fill of [107]	0.34m	
[109]	Cut	Posthole with steep/nearly vertical sides; gently concave base with a length of 0.37m and width of 0.38m; rock-cut; located just east of [111].	Filled by (110), cuts natural	0.28m	
(110)	Fill	Fill of [109]. Friable grey silty loam; common sub-angular stones, averaging 40mm across. 9 angular and sub-angular larger packing stones arranged in the fill around a central area; occasional charcoal. Bulk Sample 1 (5 litres).	Overlain by (100), fill of [109]	0.28m	
[111]	Cut	Posthole with very steep or vertical sides; gently concave base with a diameter of 0.55m; rock-cut.	Filled by (112), cuts Natural	0.34m	
(112)	Fill	Fill of [111]. Sub-angular and angular stones (c.40 stones), 100-150mm across; stones used for post packing, wedged around the inside of the cut; 1 stone may be a hone (i.e. sub-rounded, elongated, platey). Bulk Sample 7 (5 litres).	Overlain by (100), fill of [111]	0.34m	

[113]	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
(114)	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
[115]	Cut	Slightly irregular linear feature with a length of 2.8m and width of 1.1m; sides are steep and irregular, undulating surfaces of platey natural at sharp angles; this cut is a possible tree throw; unclear relationship with [105], [105] appears to cut (116).	Filled by (116), cut by [105]	0.66m	
(116)	Fill	Fill of [115]. Comprised of two parts: Upper part, 0.35m thick, yellowish brown slightly clayey silt; with frequent small angular platey stones, 40-60mm across; occasional charcoal. Lower part, 0.35m thick, soft brown silty loam; occasional angular stones, 40mm across; occasional charcoal.	Overlain by (265), fill of [115]	0.66m	
[117]	Cut	Oval posthole with vertical or slightly undercut sides 0.66m long and 0.46m wide; on the north-east sides there is a shallow sloping tail to the north-east; vertical to 'surface' on the south-west side; gully [105] enters or south-east side, relationship unclear but probably contemporary; rock-cut.	Filled by (118); abutted by [105], cuts natural	0.46m	
(118)	Fill	Fill of [118]. Firm stony dark-brownish grey silt loam; few angular stones, 40-60mm; two large packing stones on north-east side of post cut, 1. 340x270x70mm angular, 2. 240x220x60mm sub-angular with a smoothed surface (non-local stone). Fill of [105] contains several sub-rounded large stones. Bulk Sample 6 (5 litres).	Overlain by (265), fill of [117]	0.46m	
[121]	Cut	Rough square feature, Flat irregular base and step sloping sides 0.75 long and 0.68m wide, probably a natural feature	Filled by (122)	0.21m	?Post-med
(122)	Fill	Fill of [121]. Dark brown silt with common shillet fragments	Overlain by (100), overlies natural, fill of [121]	0.21m	?Post-med
[123]	Cut	Irregular in plan 2m long and 0.7m+ wide diameter to the west and narrower outline to the east; west end shallow with irregular bottom, east end has flat base. Area of root disturbance?	Filled by (124), cuts natural	0.24m	Post-med
(124)	Fill	Fill of [123]. Silt-clay with common shillet fragments, particularly towards the base. Finds = pottery, glass, clay pipe, charcoal.	Overlain by (100), fill of [123]	0.24m	Post-med
[125]	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
(126)	Deposit	Probable animal disturbance. Friable grey silt-loam within slight depression.	Overlain by (100); overlies natural	-	?Modern
[127]	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
(128)	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
129	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
130	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
131	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
132	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
133	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
134	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
135	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
136	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
137	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
138	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*

[139]	Cut	Shallow oval pit; feature was over-dug; rock-cut; gentle concave profile, 1.2m long and 0.85m wide.	Filled by (140), cuts natural	0.12m	
(140)	Fill	Fill of [139]. Hard/compact grey clay silt; frequent angular stone up to 80mm across, averages 40mm, poorly sorted; occasional charcoal fragments, <10mm. Bulk Sample 8 (15 litres).	Overlain by (100), fill of [139]	c.0.12m	
[141]	Cut	Oval pit with shallow concave profile; short vertical sides, with a length of 1.04m and width of 0.64m; rock-cut.	Filled by (142), cuts natural	0.12m	
(142)	Fill	Fill of [141]. Friable grey silty loam; common angler stones, poorly sorted, 30-50mm across; common charcoal fragments, 10mm; finds = pottery, slag, charcoal. Bulk Sample 14 (15 litres).	Overlain by (100), fill of [141]	0.12m	
[143]	Cut	Circular pit; steep, nearly vertical sides with a concave base, 1.05m long and 1.0m wide; rock-cut.	Filled by (144), cuts natural	0.2m	
(144)	Fill	Fill of [143]. Friable grey silty loam; frequent sub-angular and angular stone, poorly sorted; common charcoal fragments, <10mm; chunks of lighter yellowish-grey material near the base, possible clay. Bulk Sample 15 (20 litres).	Overlain by (100), fill of [143]	0.2m	
[145]	Cut	Posthole; vertical sides drop to a concave base, with a length of 0.7m and width of 0.66m; rock-cut.	Filled by (146), cuts natural	0.24m	
(146)	Fill	Fill of [145]. Loose soft dark grey silty loam; frequent small angular stones <20mm; 6 larger sub-rounded stones, 5 used for post-packing (not disturbed), a single large stone in the middle of the base (post-pad?); average large stone =150mm across, platey; central stone = 320×150×60mm. Bulk Sample 9 (15 litres).	Overlain by (100), fill of [145]	0.24m	
[147]	Cut	Posthole; adjacent to [145]; steep rock-cut sides; irregular base, cut into seam in bedrock, Length: 0.58m, width: 0.56m.	Filled by (148), cuts natural	0.38m	
(148)	Fill	Fill of [147]. Loose buff brownish-grey silty loam; frequent poorly sorted angular stones, 60-80mm, some from over-digging; 1 large stone 240×100×20mm, possible hone stone, laid flat in middle of feature towards the base. Bulk Sample 10 (10 litres).	Overlain by (100), fill of [147]	0.38m	
[149]	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
(150)	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
[151]	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
(152)	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
[153]	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
(154)	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
[155]	Cut	Irregular pit, sub-circular in plan; sloping concave sides; irregular slightly concave base and a diameter of c.1.0m.	Filled by (156), cuts natural	0.16m	
(156)	Fill	Fill of [155]. Dry dark-grey silt clay; occasional to rare sub-angular stones, shillet; clear pea-gravel at base of feature; finds= charcoal.	Overlain by (100), fill of [155]	0.16m	
[157]	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
(158)	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
159	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
160	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
161	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
162	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*

163	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
164	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
[165]	Cut	Narrow curving rock cut gully; steep or near vertical sides, flat base with a diameter of c. 8.5m and width of 0.25-0.5m. There is a clear entrance to the internal space at the south-east side. Entrance flanked by [249] and [117]; metalling at threshold (266).	Filled by (166); possibly same as [253] [105] [101],	0.1-0.15m	
(166)	Fill	Fill of [165]. A mid-grey friable silty loam; variable amounts of smooth angular stones (20-40mm); large elongated river cobbles are found either side of the entrance.	Overlain by (100), overlies natural; fill of [165]	0.15-0.2m	
[167]	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
(168)	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
169	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
170	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
171	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
172	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
173	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
174	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
175	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
176	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
177	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
178	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
179	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
180	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
181	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
182	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
[183]	Cut	Ditch; paired with [185]; linear feature representing a removed Devon hedgebank, that shows on historic mapping; located to west of hedgebank, which was marked out by unweathered natural. Width: 1.0-1.4m.	Filled by (184), cuts natural	-	Post-med
(184)	Fill	Fill of [183]. Friable stony mid greyish-brown silt loam; frequent poorly-sorted angular stone, up to 120mm across; finds = pottery, CBM, clay pipe, metal, charcoal.	Overlain by (100), fill of [183]	Not excavated	Post-med
[185]	Cut	Ditch; paired with [183]; linear feature representing a removed Devon hedgebank, that shows on historic mapping; located to east of hedgebank, which was marked out by un-weathered natural. Width: 0.8-1.2m.	Filled by (186), cuts natural	-	Post-med
(186)	Fill	Fill of [185]. Friable stony grey silt loam; frequent poorly-sorted angular stone, up to 100mm across; finds = pottery, CBM, clay pipe, metal, charcoal.	Overlain by (100), fill of [185]	Not excavated	Post-med
[187]	Cut	Cut of large irregular pit, probably a tree-throw, with concaved sides and slightly concaved base. c.3m long and 2m wide.	Cuts Natural, filled by (188)	0.24m	?Post-med
(188)	Fill	Fill of [187]. Dark grey silt-clay with common to abundant sub-angular, poorly sorted stones.	Fill of [187]	0.24m	?Post-med
[189]	Cut	Cut of large sub-ovoid pit/posthole, with a diameter of 0.44m.	Cuts Natural, filled by (190)	0.2m	
(190)	Fill	Fill of [189]. A friable grey-yellow silt-clay with common to occasional sub-angular shillet fragments.	Fill of [189]	0.2m	

[191]	Cut	Cut of large sub-ovoid pit/posthole with irregular steep sloping sides and flat irregular base, 0.72m long and 0.56m wide, possibly re-cut?	Cuts Natural, filled by (192)	0.18m	
(192)	Fill	Fill of [191]. Grey silt-clay with occasional sub-angular, poorly-sorted stones. Bulk Sample 16 (5 litres).	Fill of [191]	0.18m	
[193]	Cut	Cut of curving linear, with very irregular profile, etc. In general with steep sloping sides and steeply concaved base. c.12.5m long x 1.0-1.4m wide.	Cuts Natural, filled by (194)	c.0.1 – 0.35m	
(194)	Fill	Fill of [193]. Soft re-deposited natural a yellow-grey silt-clay with common to abundant shillet fragments.	Fill of [193]	0.1-0.35m	
[195]	Cut	Cut of possible posthole, with steep vertical sides and flat to slightly concaved base, with a 0.3m diameter.	Cuts Natural, filled by (196)	0.24m	
(196)	Fill	Fill of [195]. Clean soft yellow-grey silt-clay rare shillet fragments.	Fill of [195]	0.24m	
[197]	Cut	Cut of sub-circular pit, concaved sides to a largely flat to gently concaved base, over-dug, with a 0.5m diameter.	Cuts Natural, filled by (198)	0.14m	
(198)	Fill	Fill of [197]. Yellow-grey silt loam.	Fill of [197]	0.14m	
[199]	Cut	Cut of large irregular pit, with steep concaved sides and irregular base, possibly a tree throw, 0.7m long by 1.05m wide.	Cuts Natural, filled by (200)	0.35m	
(200)	Fill	Fill of [199]. Reddish-yellow silt, with rare shillet fragments.	Fill of [199]	0.35m	
[201]	Cut	Cut of sub-circular posthole, with sloping sides and flat base and a 0.36m diameter. Adjacent to [199].	Cuts Natural, filled by (202)	0.09m	
(202)	Fill	Fill of [201]. Yellow-grey silt loam with common shillet fragments.	Fill of [201]	0.18m	
[203]	Cut	Cut of pit, circular in plan, with steep concaved profile, with a c.0.74m diameter.	Cuts Natural, filled by (204)	c.0.3m	
(204)	Fill	Fill of [203]. Grey-brown silt-clay with occasional shillet fragments, mainly towards the top of the fill.	Fill of [203]	0.3m	
[205]	Cut	Possible posthole, within an area of root disturbance, steep slopping sides and gently concaved base, with a 0.28m diameter.	Cuts Natural, filled by (206)	0.24m	
(206)	Fill	Fill of [205]. Grey yellow silt-clay, occasional sub-angular shillet fragments.	Fill of [205]	0.24m	
[207]	Cut	Cut of irregular pit, sub-ovoid in plan with sloping sides and flat, undulating base, 0.8m long x 0.92m wide. Over-dug.	Cuts Natural, filled by (208)	0.1m	
(208)	Fill	Fill of [207]. Grey yellow silt-clay, occasional sub-angular shillet fragments.	Fill of [207]	0.1m	
[209]	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
(210)	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
[211]	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
(212)	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
[213]	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
(214)	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
[215]	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
(216)	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
[217]	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
(218)	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
[219]	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
(220)	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*

[221]	Cut	Small post hole; circular in plan; sloping sides and flat base, with a diameter of 0.2m.	Filled by (222), cuts natural	0.1m	
(222)	Fill	Fill of [221]. Soft dark grey-brown slightly clayey-silt.	Overlain by (100), fill of [221]	0.1m	
[223]	Cut	Posthole; circular in plan; steep sloping sides with flat base, with a diameter of 0.3m.	Filled by (224), cuts natural	c.0.2m	
(224)	Fill	Fill of [223]. Soft dark grey silt; occasional sub-angular stones.	Overlain by (100), fill of [223]	c.0.2m	
[225]	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
(226)	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
[227]	Cut	Cut for Alcathene pipe; straight cut with near vertical sides and base.	Filled by (228), cuts natural	c.0.12m	Modern
(228)	Fill	Fill of [227]. Dark grey silt.	Overlain by (100), fill of [227]	0.12m	Modern
[229]	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
(230)	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
[231]	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
(232)	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
[233]	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
(234)	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
[235]	Cut	Linear feature, north-south axis 0.9m long and 0.8m wide.	Filled by (236)	0.24m.	
(236)	Fill	Fill of [235]. Red-brown, fine crumbly, occasional shillet; yellow clay at bottom.	Fill of [235]	0.24m	
[237]	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
(238)	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
[239]	Cut	Ditch/furrow; linear, north-south axis; near vertical sides with slightly concave profile, length 12m and width: 0.52m; north end root or burrow disturbance.	Filled by (240), cuts natural	+0.23m	
(240)	Fill	Fill of [239]. Friable mid red-brown/grey silt-clay; sub-angular shillet stones; pea grit visible through fill.	Overlain by (100), fill of [239]	+0.23m	
[241]	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
(242)	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
[243]	Cut	Possible furrow.	Filled by (244), cuts natural		
(244)	Fill	Fill of [243]. Mid-red-brown silty fill.	Overlain by (100), fill of [243]		
[245]	Cut	Possible pit. Length 11m by 1.6m wide.	Filled by (246), cuts natural	c.0.5m	
(246)	Fill	Fill of [246]. Mid red-brown compacted; moderate amount of stone/shillet.	Overlain by (100), fill of [245]	c.0.5m	
[247]	Cut	Enclosure ditch; V-shaped profile, 3.6m wide; multiple fills; evidence of bank collapse to the east.	Filled by (248) (271) (272) (273) (274) (275) (276) (277) (278) (279) (280), Cuts natural	1.75m	Romano-British

(248)	Fill	Fill of [247]. Dry friable grey-brown slightly clayey-silt; occasional to common shillet fragments; similar to plough soil.	Overlain by (100), overlies (271), fill of [247]	up to 0.3m	Post-medieval or modern
[249]	Cut	Posthole; unusually complex, possible triple-posthole socket; deeper section has vertical or undercut sides; shallow sloping rim to north-east; rock-cut. 1.04m long by 0.85m wide.	Filled by (250), cut by [263], cuts natural	0.46m.	
(250)	Fill	Fill of [249]. Friable grey stony silt loam; common medium angular blocky stones, 60mm across; several large sub-rounded elongate water-worn stones, largest 300×100×80mm; large flat angular packing stones to north-east side of cut, 240×220×60mm; iron ore lump/slag/FE object, on edge of feature to north-west. Bulk Sample 4 (5 litres). Bulk Sample 13 (5 litres).	Overlain by (265), fill of [249], cut by [263]	0.46m	
[251]	Cut	Posthole; just west of [165]; sides look 'drilled' (i.e. something rotated in it); base fairly flat, deeper hole in centre (diameter: 0.06m, depth: 0.08m); looks modern. With a diameter of 0.3m.	Filled by (252), cuts natural	0.3m	
(252)	Fill	Fill of [251]. Friable grey loose silty loam; common small sub-angular stones, <40mm; finds = bone, clay pipe. Bulk Sample 5 (5 litres).	Overlain by (100), fill of [251]	0.3m	
[253]	Cut	Narrow curving ('ring') rock-cut gully; steep or near vertical sides, flat base with a diameter of c. 8.5m and width of 0.25-0.5m.	Filled by (254); same as [101] [105],	0.1-0.15m	
(254)	Fill	Fill of [253]. A mid-grey friable silty loam; variable amounts of smooth angular stones (20-40mm); large elongated river cobbles are found either side of the entrance.	Overlain by (100), overlies natural; fill of [253]	0.15-0.2m	
[255]	Cut	Narrow curving ('ring') gully, a slightly squashed arc; varies slightly in size; steep sides and flat base, 0.2-0.25m wide; runs parallel to eastern curving section of [105]/[253]; links to [105]/[253] at either end.	Filled by (256), same as [105], cuts natural	0.15-0.2m	
(256)	Fill	Fill of [255]. Mid-grey friable silty loam; variable amounts of small angular stone, 20-40mm; in one section 6 large water-worn cobbles exposed during machining, up to 200mm across, possibly fire-cracked.	Overlain by (100), fill of [255], same as (106)	0.15-0.2m	
[257]	Cut	Narrow curving ('ring') gully; in an arc parallel and south of [255]; steep sides and a shallow base, 0.2m wide; rock-cut; fades out to south-east, or machined out/very shallow; undetermined relationship with [105].	Filled by (258), cuts natural	0.05-0.1m	
(258)	Fill	Fill of [257]. Friable grey silt loam; common small angular stone, 20-40mm; similar to (106) (256).	Overlain by (100), fill of [257]	0.05-0.1m	
[259]	Cut	Posthole; very steep or vertical sides, gently concave base; rock-cut. Length: 0.58m, width: 0.5m	Filled by (260), cuts natural	0.3m	
(260)	Fill	Fill of [259]. Firm yet friable dark grey stony silt loam; common (×16) angular blocky stones, 80-140mm across, very stony compared to other adjacent postholes; occasional charcoal, <10mm. Bulk Sample 3 (5 litres).	Overlain by (100), fill of [259]	0.3m	
[261]	Cut	Possible posthole; irregular oval, asymmetrical sides and concave base; possibly not a feature. Length: 0.35m, width: 0.2m.	Filled by (262), cuts natural	0.12m	
(262)	Fill	Fill of [261]. Friable grey silty loam.	Overlain by (100), fill of [261]	0.12m	
[263]	Cut	Irregular posthole; steep or vertical sides and concave base. Length: 0.8m, width: 0.5m. Re-cut for posthole [249].	Filled by (264), cuts [249] (250)	0.4m	

(264)	Fill	Fill of [263]. Firm mottled yellowish-brown slightly clayey silt loam; frequent angular stones, platey, 20-40mm; ×3 elongate water worn sub-rounded pebbles, 200-240mm long and 40-60mm cross section, possible hones; infill of [105] to north-west contains same large water-worn stones; finds = slag. Bulk Sample 12 (5 litres).	Overlain by (265), fill of [263]	0.4m	
(265)	Layer	Friable grey silt loam; frequent small angular stones, 20-40mm; occurred with arc of gully [105]; sectioned at either end, conceals postholes [117] [249]; between postholes gully [105] does not occur; later covers a shallow depression in the natural, some fragmentary metalling may be found (266).	Overlain by (100), overlies (118) (250) (266)	0.03m	
(266)	Layer	Thin grey friable silty matrix; poorly sorted mix of stones, average 40mm across, occasionally up to 80mm; patchy coverage; remnant of possible metalling in entrance defined by [117] and [263]; sits in slight depression between the two post settings. 0.8m long by 0.7m wide.	Overlain by (265), overlies natural	0.03m	
[267]	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
(268)	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*	*VOID*
[269]	Cut	Sub-round post-hole/pit; steep concave sides, slightly concave base, with a diameter of c.0.45m.	Filled by (270), cuts natural	0.23m	
(270)	Fill	Fill of [269]. Slightly greyish-yellow silt; common/abundant sub-angular to sub-rounded stones, mostly angular.	Overlain by (100), fill of [269]	0.23m	
(271)	Fill	Fill of [247]. Mid-brown firm slightly clayey silt; common small shillet fragments and some roots.	Overlain by (248) (270), overlies (272), fill of [247]	c.0.15m	
(272)	Fill	Fill of [247]. Slightly reddish-brown soft to firm silt loam; rare medium sized angular shillet fragments at top and base of fill.	Overlain by (271), overlies (273), fill of [247]	c.0.15m	
(273)	Fill	Fill of [247]. Fine soft reddish-brown slightly clayey silt; very rare sub-angular shillet fragments; similar to (272).	Overlain by (272), overlies (274), fill of [247]	c.0.32m	
(274)	Fill	Fill of [247]. Slightly greyish-brown clayey silt; occasional small shillet fragments; upper fill of possible bank collapse.	Overlain by (273), overlies (275), fill of [247]	c.0.2m	
(275)	Fill	Fill of [247]. Soft to firm slightly reddish-grey silt loam; occasional to rare medium sized sub-angular shillet fragments; charcoal flecks.	Overlain by (274), overlies (276), fill of [247]	c.0.15m	
(276)	Fill	Fill of [247]. Fine soft reddish-brown silt lens; tipped/accumulated from west (i.e. silting up, not bank collapse)	Overlain by (275), overlies (277), fill of [247]	c.0.05m at most	
(277)	Fill	Fill of [247]. Grey to light-grey silt loam; common roots; abundant sub-angular medium shillet fragments; low amount of soil matrix; very loose, collapsed in northern section of the bank; charcoal noted in top of deposit; primary stony slump of former bank from the east/south.	Overlain by (276), overlies (278), fill of [247]	0.35m	
(278)	Fill	Fill of [247]. Fine soft reddish slightly clayey silt; rare small sub-angular stones; silting up deposit	Overlain by (277), overlies (279), fill of [247]	0.05m	
(279)	Fill	Fill of [247]. Dark-grey silt loam; abundant sub-angular shillet fragments, possibly stained black; moist and loose.	Overlain by (278), overlies (280), fill of [247]	0.15m	
(280)	Fill	Fill of [247]. Light yellow red silt; occasional to rare shillet fragments; basal fill of enclosure ditch [247]. Bulk Sample 17 (20 litres).	Overlain by (279), fill of [247], overlies natural	0.04m	

APPENDIX 2: FINDS CONCORDANCE

		POTTERY			OTHER			DATE
Context	**Notes**	**Sherds**	**Wgt. (g)**	**Notes**	**Frags.**	**Wgt. (g)**	**Notes**	
Topsoil		7	32	White Refined Earthenware	3	66	OE Wine Bottle	
		4	38	Bristol/Staffordshire Yellow Slipware including 1 Handle	7	18	Stem/Bowl Fragments	
		2	9	Scraffito	1	4	Flint	
		9	76	North Devon Gravel Free	1	2	Clay Pigeon	
		3	33	North Devon Gravel Tempered	1	3	Blue Plastic Toy Watering Can	
		5	25	Medieval Coarsewares some glazed				
		1	11	Upper Greensand?				
102					1	1	Concrete?	
					1	3	Clay Pipe Stem	
					1	2	Coal	
106	Block D				1	268	Slag	
	Block C	1	2	Bristol/Staffordshire Yellow Slipware Cup Handle	1	3902	slag	
110	From flot	1	2	Post-medieval glazed North Devon Gravel Free				
112		1	<1	Sherd of a reduced burnished vessel, burnt on exterior	1	918	Stone, 4 faces smoothed	
118					1	1030	Quartz Conglomerate, possibly concrete	
126					3	9	Coal/clinker	Modern
142		1	19	SW Decorated sherd, with incised decoration, burnt on exterior	3	<1	Burnt Bone Fragments Cremated?	
					10	181	Slag	
					1	9	Burnt Clay	
					3	311	Slag	
144		2	<1	Medieval Courseware	2	27	Slag/Clinker	
	From flot	2	<1	Gabbroic fabric, very fine base sherds				
	From flot	3	2	SW Decorated Ware				
146					n/a	3	Charcoal	
148					1	1250	Possible honestone	
194					1	6	Fe Object	
248					1	<1	Gold colour screw-on earring	
					1	879	Slag	
252					1	1	Ceramic Building Material	
					1	<1	Possible Burnt Bone	

					1	<1	Clay Pipe Stem	
					2	<1	Painted Wood	
					1	<1	Anthracite	
270					1	287	Stone, Possibly Burnt	
Unstratified		33	56	Industrials	14	56	Modern Glass Fragments	
		13	42	Medieval Coarsewares	4	78	Pantile	
		6	33	North Devon Gravel Free (Post Medieval)	37	80	Clay Pipe Stem/Bowl Fragments	
		3	10	Bristol/Staffordshire Yellow Slipware including 1 Handle	10	84	Onion Bottle	
		2	6	? Creamy fabric much like clay pipes	3	118	Mortar	
Unstratified E of RH1					1	<1	Amber coloured glass bead	
TOTALS		**99**	**398**		**122**	**9598**		

APPENDIX 3: ASSESSMENT OF AN THE METALLURGICAL AND PYROTECHNICAL DEBRIS *BY DR L.S. BRAY*

This report presents the results of an assessment of an assemblage of material classified during excavation as metallurgical and pyrotechnical debris. The assemblage consists of 23 fragments of material weighing a total of 5,562g. The composition, morphology and textures of each fragment in the assemblage was examined visually and a classification of the material made on this basis. Each fragment was then weighed and its maximum dimension, significant textures and other characteristics recorded.

Bag 1: Context (106), Block C, 1 fragment
Description: This bag contained a single, non-magnetic fragment with an amorphous morphology weighing 3,902g with a maximum dimension of 0.24m. It was composed predominantly of fired and semi-fired clay containing frequent inclusions of angular stone, ranging up to 30mm in size and some fragments of slag or vitrification that had been incorporated into the clay. The fragment is 120mm in width at maximum and across this distance displays a colour transition from the orange and reddish browns associated with oxidation, to the grey that indicates reducing conditions during heating. The latter side of the fragment has evidently been subjected to high temperatures as its surface is heavily vitrified showing flow textures which indicate the orientation of the piece during the process.

Interpretation: The size of this fragment, combined with the presence of grey colours typical of formation in reducing conditions and the heavy vitrification suggest that it originates as part of the superstructure of a smelting furnace. Although metal involved is unclear, iron is likely given the South Molton location and the high temperatures suggested by fragment's textures.

Bag 2: Context (106), Block D, 1 fragment
Description: This bag contained a single, non-magnetic fragment with a massive, blocky morphology and a high density. It measures 80 mm in its maximum dimension and weight 268g. It is composed entirely of a dense, hard material with a colour ranging from dark grey to rusty orange or red which is best identified as a metallurgical slag. In cross section, the fragment displays a slightly vessicular texture while cooling textures suggest an orientation with an upper and lower surface. This is supported by textures on these surfaces which, in the case of the latter suggest flow across an uneven surface while in the former indicate poorly formed flow structures typical of tap slags. Encrustations of reddish-brown material perhaps indicate a high iron oxide content.

Interpretation: The best interpretation for this fragment, although it is not certain is as a piece of tap slag, produced during smelting, most likely of iron.

Bag 3: Context (126), 3 fragments
Description: This bag contains three fragments weighing <1g, 3g and 5g and measuring 15mm, 25,, and 30mm respectively in their maximum dimensions. All have very low densities and are deep grey or black in colour displaying intensely vessicular, pumice-like texture. Also apparent in places is a lustre and surface textures reminiscent of coal.

Interpretation: The character of these fragments suggests an interpretation as clinker; material derived from the burning of coal or coke. It is likely that they are post-medieval in date.

Bag 4: Context (142), 15 fragments
Description: This bag contains 15 fragments weighing a total of 180g but individual ranging between <1g to 93g. Maximum dimensions vary between 50mm and 5mm. The majority of the fragments are composed of dark, grey or brown hard, dense material which is most likely metallurgical slag, but fired and vitrified clay fragments are also present with a predominantly orange-brown colour. One fragment, measuring 15mm in maximum dimension and weighing 3g has a distinctive orange colour and is magnetic suggesting it to be a corroded fragment of iron, possibly an artefact such as a nail head. The fragments are uniformly amorphous with few diagnostic textures although the largest may display some fragmentary flow textures similar to those seen on tap slags.

Interpretation: The assemblage from bag 4 consists of undiagnostic metallurgical slag and refractory material possibly derived from smelting or smithing activity.

Bag 5: Context (142), 1 fragment
Description: Amorphous, fairly dense fragment with a maximum dimension of 80mm and a weight of 298g. It is composed predominantly of a hard, dark grey material, probably metallurgical slag. It appears non-magnetic although

reddish brown encrustations may suggest a high iron oxide content. The most common apparent texture consist of impressions made by charcoal fragments when the material was semi-molten.

Interpretation: Given the amorphous morphology and the presence of charcoal impressions this fragment most likely originates within a smelting furnace within the combustion zone although it could also have been produced in a smithing hearth.

Bag 6: Context (144), 1 fragment
Description: Bag 6 contains a single fragment weighing 26g with a maximum dimension of 45mm. It is predominantly orange brown in colour, non-magnetic with an amorphous morphology. No distinctive textures are apparent although a stone inclusion 8mm in size is visible. The composition of the fragment is difficult to determine, but the presence of the inclusion suggests it is perhaps refractory material or, more likely given its hardness, vitrification.

Interpretation: Non-diagnostic fragment, likely derived from a metallurgical process.

Bag 7: Context (248), 1 fragment
Description: This bag contained a single fragment weighing 879g with a maximum dimension of 110mm. It is dense, consisting of a dark grey, hard material which is consistent with metallurgical slag. The fragment displayed several distinctive textures, the most obvious being the flow surfaces, typical of those seen in tap slags, denoting the upper surface. The opposite surface showed signs of having flowed over uneven ground. Morphologically, the fragment is angular and appears to have broken off a larger cake of slag as it displays a roughly tabular form with broken edges.

Interpretation: This is a fragment of a larger tap slag cake and thus diagnostic of smelting using a slag-tapping technology.

Discussion
Note: the following discussion does not consider any stratigraphic relationships of the contexts from which it was recovered.

Although of limited size, the character of the majority of the assemblage is consistent with derivation from smelting, probably or iron, using a slag-tapping technology. In particular, the presence of tap slag is diagnostic and suggests a date falling between the Late Iron Age and medieval periods is likely. The exception to this are the three fragments in Bag 3 which consist of clinker probably derived from burning coal and originate from a context which contained no metallurgical debris.

No inherent quality of the assemblage is indicative of date, although the probable slag-tapping technology suggests somewhere in the Late Iron Age to medieval period. This may be clarified by associated material from the same contexts.

One puzzling feature of the assemblage is it small size. Iron smelting, especially that using slag -tapping technologies, creates large volumes of waste which is not in evidence on this site. Therefore, the assemblage may represent stray material, perhaps at the edges of a smelting site which has been incorporated in the contexts from which it was recovered by accident. However, the incidence of abrasion and weathering of the assemblage is low, possibly indicating a lack of exposure at the surface and arguing against accidental deposition. Another possibility is that the material has been deliberately placed, as part of episodes of structured deposition which is perhaps more likely if the activity which produced it took place prior to the medieval period.

Recommendations
No further work is on the assemblage is required at this stage. However, it is recommended that, as the product of metallurgical activity in the South Molton area, the assemblage be retained for potential future comparison with other sites in the area or wider region which may come to light. This may, ultimately, allow the activity which produced it to be characterised more closely and its dating to be refined. The exception to this are the contents of bag 3 which are likely the product of a more recent process involving the burning of coal and thus can be discarded.

APPENDIX 4: POTTERY ANALYSIS *BY DR I.WOOD*

Introduction
The small assemblage of Prehistoric pottery recovered during the excavation and from the residues was assessed under a hand lens at ×20 magnification.

(144) {15} 2/4. Three sherds, one upper body and two rim sherds; the body sherd has a burnished reduced exterior and incised decoration representative of the standard style of South Western Decorated ware, indicating a Middle Iron Age date. The rim form is also consistent with this date. The fabric is a quartz-rich micaceous clay with sparse sandstone rock fragments suggestive of a local origin.

(142) One body sherd, reduced throughout, some traces of burnishing on exterior surface but condition poor. Incised decoration consisting of diagonal lines in band, suggestive of SWDW Middle Iron Age pottery. The fabric is the same as above, a quartz-rich micaceous clay with sparse sandstone rock fragments suggestive of a local origin.

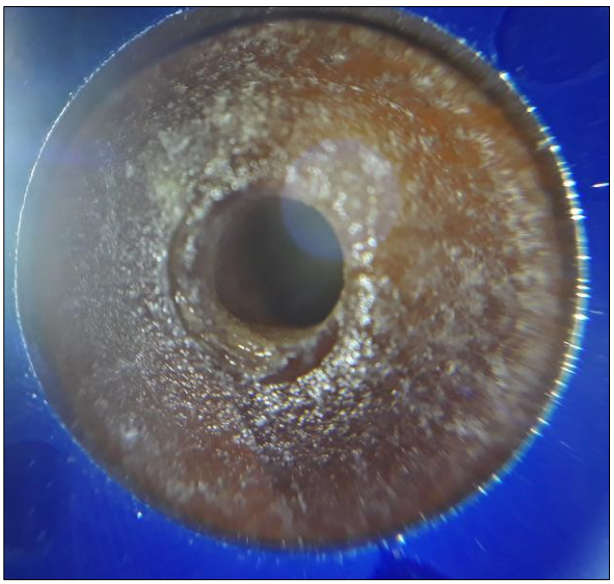
(112) Small possible neck sherd of reduced burnished vessel; fabric and limited form would indicate an Iron Age date.

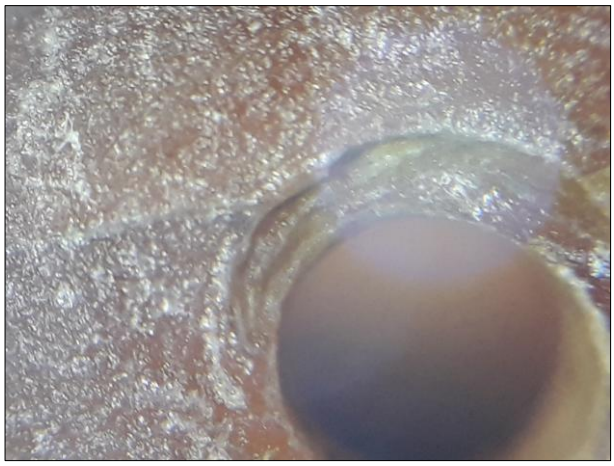
(144){15} 3/4. Two fine base sherds in a gabbroic fabric; perhaps Early Bronze Age (Beaker), but this is difficult to confirm without any decoration or indication of form.

This assemblage suggests many phases of activity in this vicinity. The type of pottery in not uncommon in Devon, but North Devon has few assemblages and thus adds to a valuable regional picture.

APPENDIX 5: THE GLASS BEAD *BY DR I. WOOD*

The bead found just east of Area A is amber in colour and most likely made of glass. It is 11mm in diameter with a 3mm central hole. There are some impression marks around the entrance to the hole that suggest glass work and not consistent with turning lath marks associated with amber.





LEFT: FIGURE 16: MAGNIFIED VIEW OF THE GLASS BEAD.
RIGHT: FIGURE 17: MAGNIFIED VIEW OF THE HOLE TO THE BEAD.

APPENDIX 6: WOOD CHARCOAL ASSESSMENT AND C14 SELECTION *BY D. CHALLINOR*

Seven samples from the excavations at South Molton Rugby Club were submitted for characterisation and selection of suitable charcoal for radiocarbon dating. Standard identification procedures were followed using identification keys (Hather 2000, Schweingruber 1990) and modern reference material. The charcoal was fractured and examined at low magnification (up to X45), with some fragments examined in longitudinal sections at high magnification (up to X400). Charcoal was mounted in a sand bath for examination at high magnification.

Condition was fair to poor, hampered by small fragment size and high vitrification which was noted in several samples. Two taxa were positively identified; *Quercus* sp. (oak) and *Corylus avellana* (hazel) (Table 1). The identification of hazel was confirmed for the pieces selected for radiocarbon dating, but other fragments were identified only as *Alnus/Corylus* (alder/hazel) as the key distinguishing characteristics were not examined. Much of the alder/hazel was observed to be from roundwood, but maturity could not always be determined. Fragments of hazel were selected from two samples (110) & (142) for radiocarbon dating, but there was no suitable charcoal in the scant material from (118).

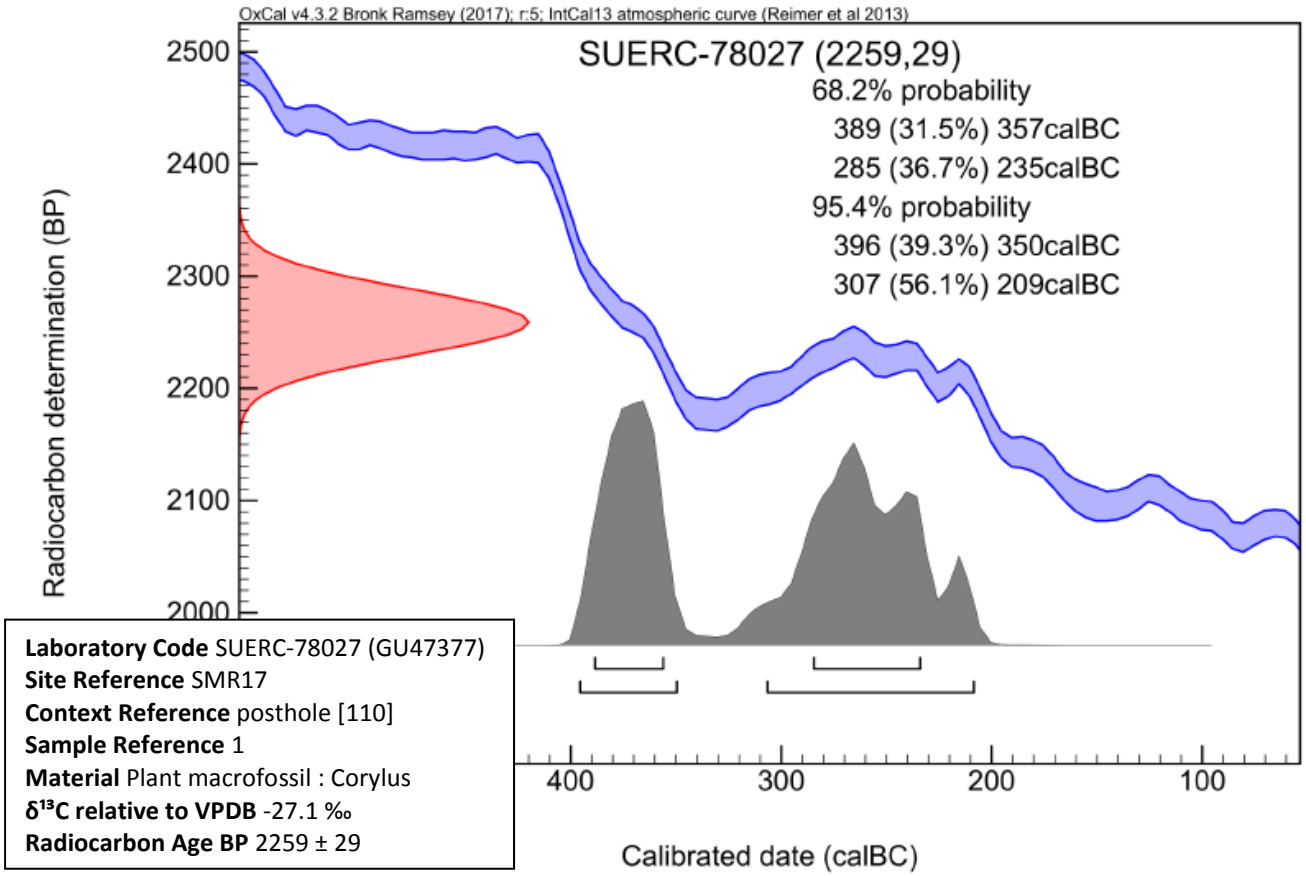
Table 1: Charcoal identifications

Sample no.	Context no.	Quantity	Identifications	Notes	C14 selection
1	110	++	*Quercus* *Alnus/Corylus*	Small frags, indeterminate maturity	*Corylus avellana* x 1
3	260	++	*Quercus* *Alnus/Corylus* rw	Small frags	-
6	118	2 frags tiny	*Quercus* (hw)	Highly vitrified	Not suitable
8	140	++/+	*Quercus*, *Alnus/Corylus* rw		-
9	146	++++	*Alnus/Corylus* rw, *Quercus* (rw)	Lots *Alnus/Coryus*	-
14	142	++++	*Quercus*	Lots comminuted charcoal, highly vitrified	*Corylus avellana* rw x 1 – incomplete but close to pith, 5 yrs+
15	144	+++	*Quercus* (sw) *Alnus/Corylus* rw	Highly vitrified	-

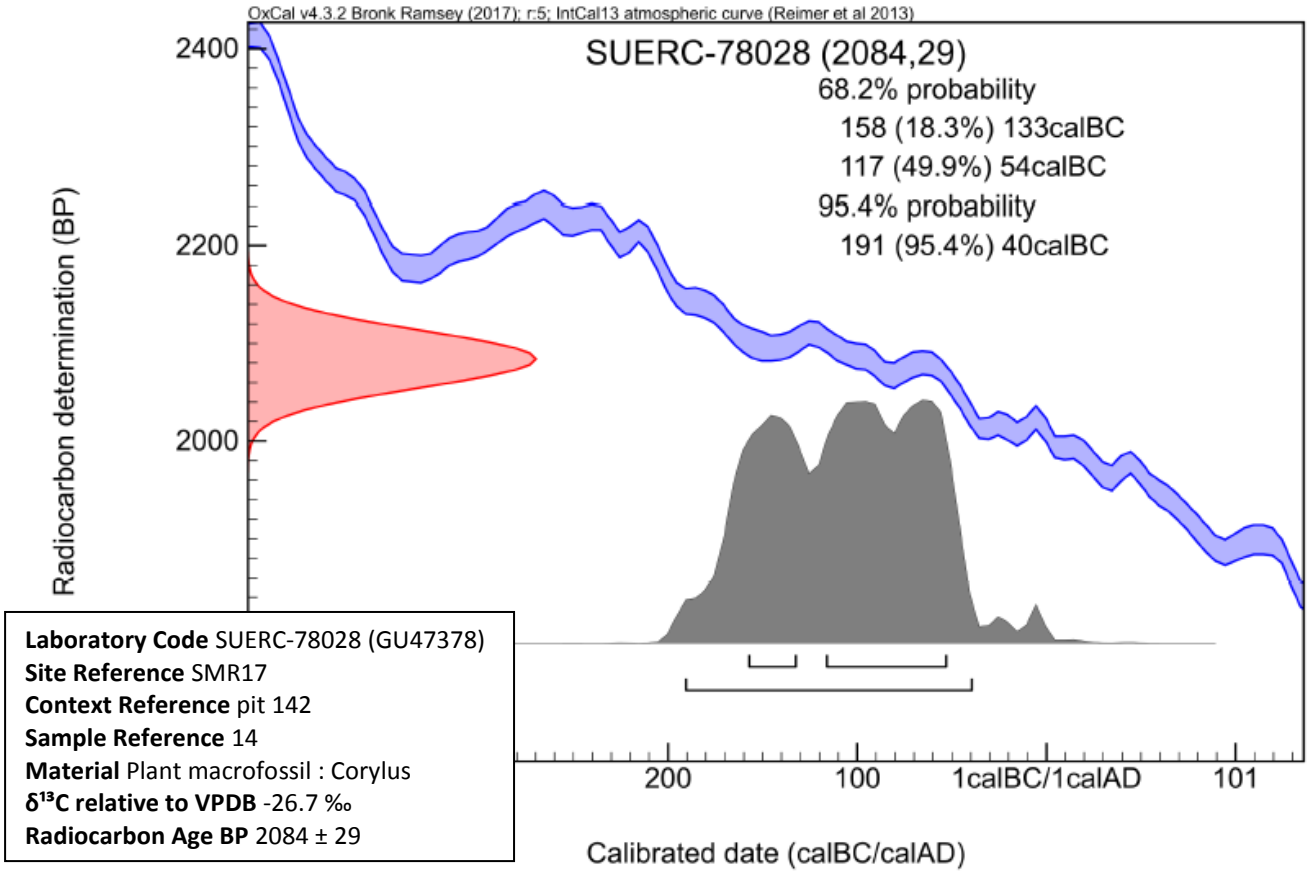
++=up to 25; +++=up to 100: ++++=>100; rw=roundwood; s=sapwood; h=heartwood

Charcoal was abundantly preserved in some samples, but it was apparent that there was low taxonomic diversity. All of the assemblages included oak, most with some (probably) hazel roundwood. Both of these taxa provide good firewood, and could have been used for domestic or industrial activities. The presence of iron slag in the enclosure gully suggests that the charcoal may have been associated with smelting, in which case it is likely that charcoal fuel was utilised. Oak (with lesser components of other taxa), was regularly used as charcoal fuel for iron working in the Iron Age and Romano-British periods. Additionally, oak-hazel woodland was dominant in Devon in prehistory (Wilkinson & Straker 2007) and would have been readily available.

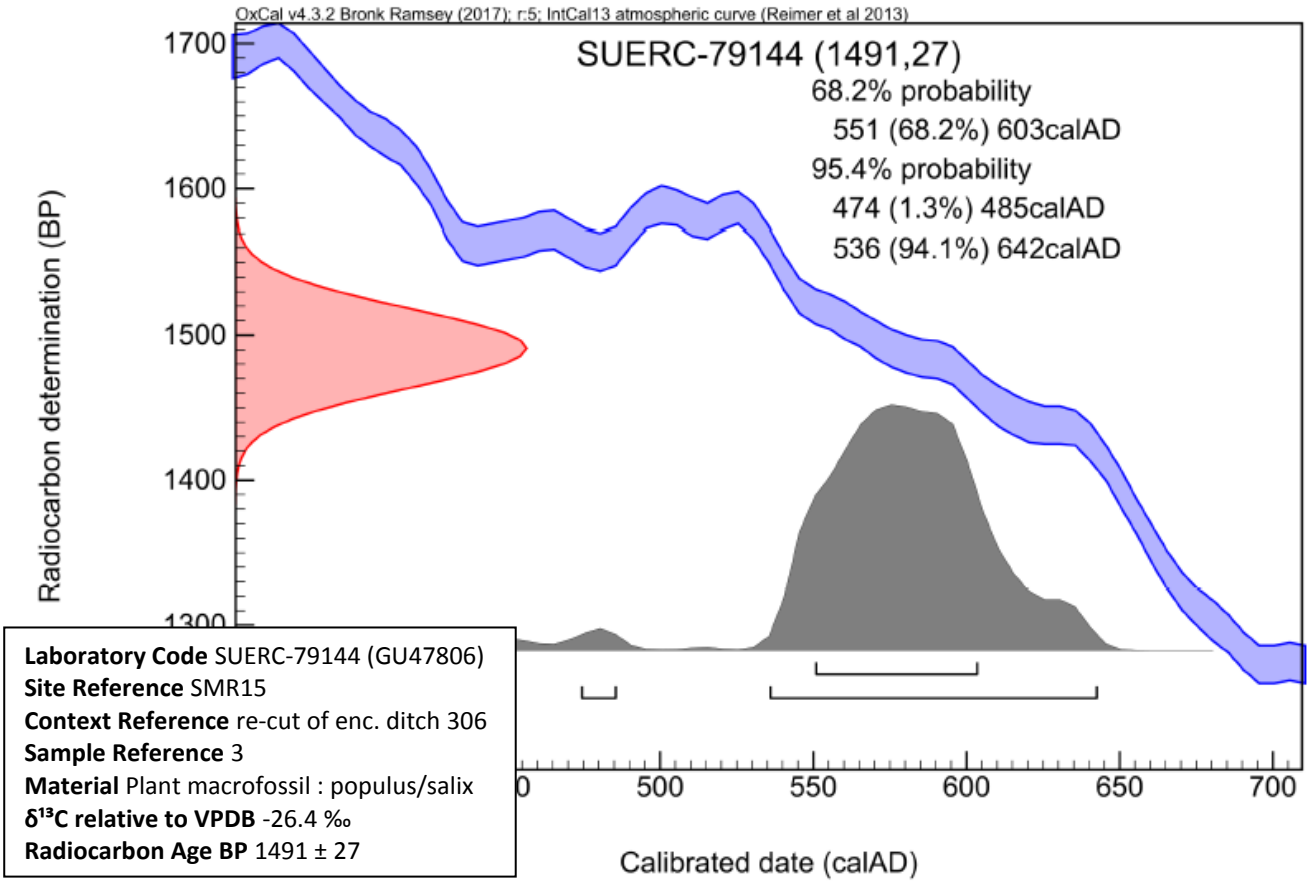
APPENDIX 7: RADIOCARBON DATES



Laboratory Code SUERC-78027 (GU47377)
Site Reference SMR17
Context Reference posthole [110]
Sample Reference 1
Material Plant macrofossil : Corylus
$\delta^{13}C$ relative to VPDB -27.1 ‰
Radiocarbon Age BP 2259 ± 29



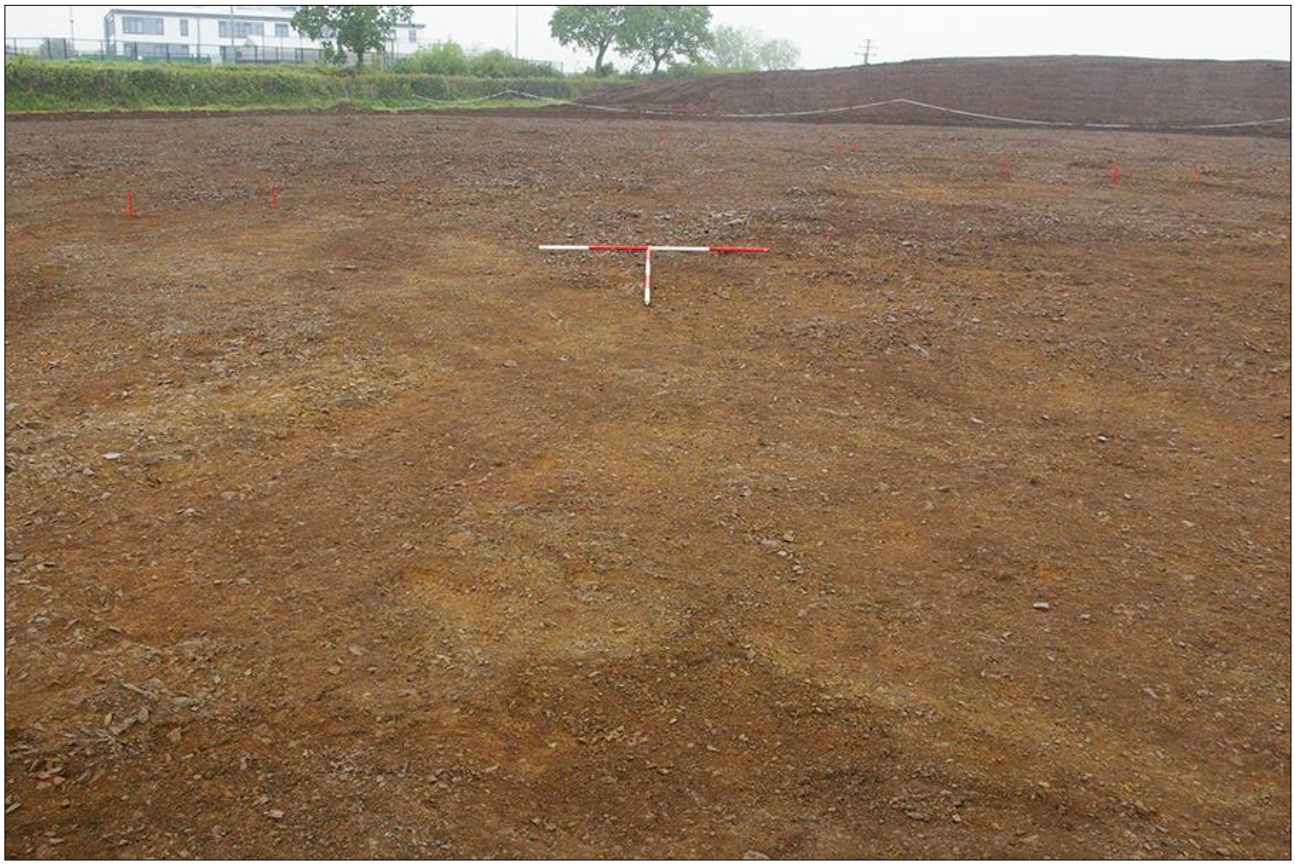
Laboratory Code SUERC-78028 (GU47378)
Site Reference SMR17
Context Reference pit 142
Sample Reference 14
Material Plant macrofossil : Corylus
$\delta^{13}C$ relative to VPDB -26.7 ‰
Radiocarbon Age BP 2084 ± 29



Laboratory Code SUERC-79144 (GU47806)
Site Reference SMR15
Context Reference re-cut of enc. ditch 306
Sample Reference 3
Material Plant macrofossil : populus/salix
$\delta^{13}C$ relative to VPDB -26.4 ‰
Radiocarbon Age BP 1491 ± 27

APPENDIX 8: PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVE

1. AREA A, PENANNULAR GULLIES, PRE-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-EAST (2M SCALES).



2. AREA A, PENANNULAR GULLIES, PRE-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-WEST (2M SCALES).

3. AREA A, PENANNULAR GULLIES, POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH (2M SCALES).

4. AREA A, PENANNULAR GULLIES, POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE EAST (2M SCALES).

5. AREA A, PENANNULAR GULLIES, POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-EAST (2M SCALES).

6. PENANNULAR GULLY [165] BLOCK 2, SOUTH-FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH (0.40M SCALE).

7. PENANNULAR GULLY [165] BLOCK 2, NORTH-FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE WEST (0.40M SCALE).

8. PENANNULAR GULLY [165] BLOCK 4, NORTH-FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH (0.40M SCALE).

9. PENANNULAR GULLY [165] BLOCK 4, SOUTH-EAST FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-EAST (0.40M SCALE).

10. DETAIL OF STONE PACKING WITHIN POSTHOLE [249], MID-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-WEST (0.40M & PART 2M SCALES).

11. POSTHOLE [249] MID-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE WEST-SOUTH-WEST (0.40M SCALE).

12. POST-HOLE [263], SOUTH-WEST FACING SECTION, SHOWING DETAIL OF STONE SETTINGS; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-WEST (0.40M SCALE).

13. POSTHOLE [263], WEST-SOUTH-WEST FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE WEST-SOUTH-WEST (0.40M SCALE).

14. POSTHOLE [249], POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-WEST (1M SCALE).

15. POSTHOLE [249] MID-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE EAST-NORTH-EAST (1M SCALE).

16. POSTHOLES [149] AND [263], POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-WEST (1M SCALE).

17. METALLED/COBBLED SURFACE (266); VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-WEST (1M SCALE).

18. METALLED/COBBLE SURFACE (266); VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-WEST (1M SCALE).

19. POSTHOLE [117], MID-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-WEST (1M SCALE).

20. POSTHOLE [117], POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-WEST (1M SCALE).

21. POSTHOLE [117], POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-EAST (1M SCALE).

22. RIVER COBBLES WHERE PENANNULAR GULLY [105] MEETS POSTHOLE [117], DURING EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-WEST (0.40M SCALE).

23. PENANNULAR GULLY [105] BLOCK 10 WITH POSTHOLE [117], POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE WEST (0.40M SCALE).

24. PENANNULAR GULLY [105] BLOCK 12, POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE EAST (0.40M SCALE).

25. PENANNULAR GULLY [105] BLOCK 14, POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE WEST (0.40M SCALE).

26. PENANNULAR GULLY [105] BLOCK 16, WHERE IT INTERSECTS WITH [115], EAST-FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE EAST (0.40M SCALE).

27. PENANNULAR GULLY [105] BLOCK 16, WEST-FACING SECTION NEXT TO [115]; VIEWED FROM THE WEST (0.40M SCALE).

28. FEATURE [115], NORTH-EAST FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE EAST (2M SCALE).

29. (LEFT) FEATURE [115], POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH (2M SCALE).

30. PENANNULAR GULLY [105] BLOCK 18, WHERE DIVERGES AS [253] FROM [255], EAST-FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE EAST (0.40M SCALE).

31. PENANNULAR GULLY [105] BLOCK 18, WHERE DIVERGES AS [253] FROM [255], EAST-FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE WEST (0.40M SCALE).

32. PENANNULAR GULLIES [253] BLOCK 21 AND [255] BLOCK 34, POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE EAST (0.40M SCALE).

33. PENANNULAR GULLY [253] BLOCK 23, POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE EAST (0.40M SCALE).

34. PENANNULAR GULLY [253] BLOCK 23, POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE WEST (0.40 SCALE).

35. PENANNULAR GULLIES [253] BLOCK 21 AND [255] BLOCK 34, POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE WEST (0.40M SCALE).

36. PENANNULAR GULLIES [253] BLOCK 25 AND [255] BLOCK 38, POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE EAST (0.40M SCALE).

37. PENANNULAR GULLIES [253] BLOCK 25 AND [255] BLOCK 38; VIEWED FROM THE WEST (0.40M SCALE).

38. PENANNULAR GULLY [101] BLOCK 27, POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH (0.40M SCALE).

39. PENANNULAR GULLY [101] BLOCK 27, NORTH-FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH (0.40M SCALE).

40. PENANNULAR GULLY [101] BLOCK 29, NORTH-FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH (0.40M SCALE).

41. PENANNULAR GULLY [103] BLOCK 31, NORTH FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH (0.40M SCALE).

42. PENANNULAR GULLY [103] BLOCK 31, NORTH-WEST FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-WEST (0.40M SCALE).

43. PENANNULAR GULLY [103] BLOCK 32, SOUTH-EAST FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-EAST (0.40M SCALE).

44. POSTHOLE [107], NORTH-FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH (0.40M SCALE).

45. POSTHOLE [107], POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH (0.40M SCALE).

46. DETAIL OF STONE PACKING WITHIN POSTHOLE [109]; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH (PART 2M SCALE).

47. POSTHOLE [109], SOUTH-FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH (0.40M SCALE).

48. POSTHOLE [109], POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH (0.40M SCALE).

49. POSTHOLE [111], NORTH-FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH (0.40M SCALE).

50. POSTHOLE [111], POST-EXCAVATION (OVER-DUG HOLE TO RIGHT); VIEWED FROM THE NORTH (0.40M SCALE).

51. POSTHOLE [259], NORTH-FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH (0.40M SCALE).

52. POSTHOLE [259], POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH (0.40M SCALE).

53. POSTHOLE [261], WEST-FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE WEST (0.40M SCALE).

54. POSTHOLE [269], WEST-FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE WEST (0.40M SCALE).

55. POSTHOLE [269], POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH (0.40M SCALE).

56. PIT [139], NORTH-NORTH-EAST FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-NORTH-EAST (1M SCALE).

57. PIT [141], SOUTH-WEST FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-WEST (1M SCALE).

58. PIT [143], SOUTH-WEST FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-WEST (1M SCALE).

59. PIT [143], POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH (1M SCALE).

60. POSTHOLE [145], NORTH-FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH (0.40M SCALE).

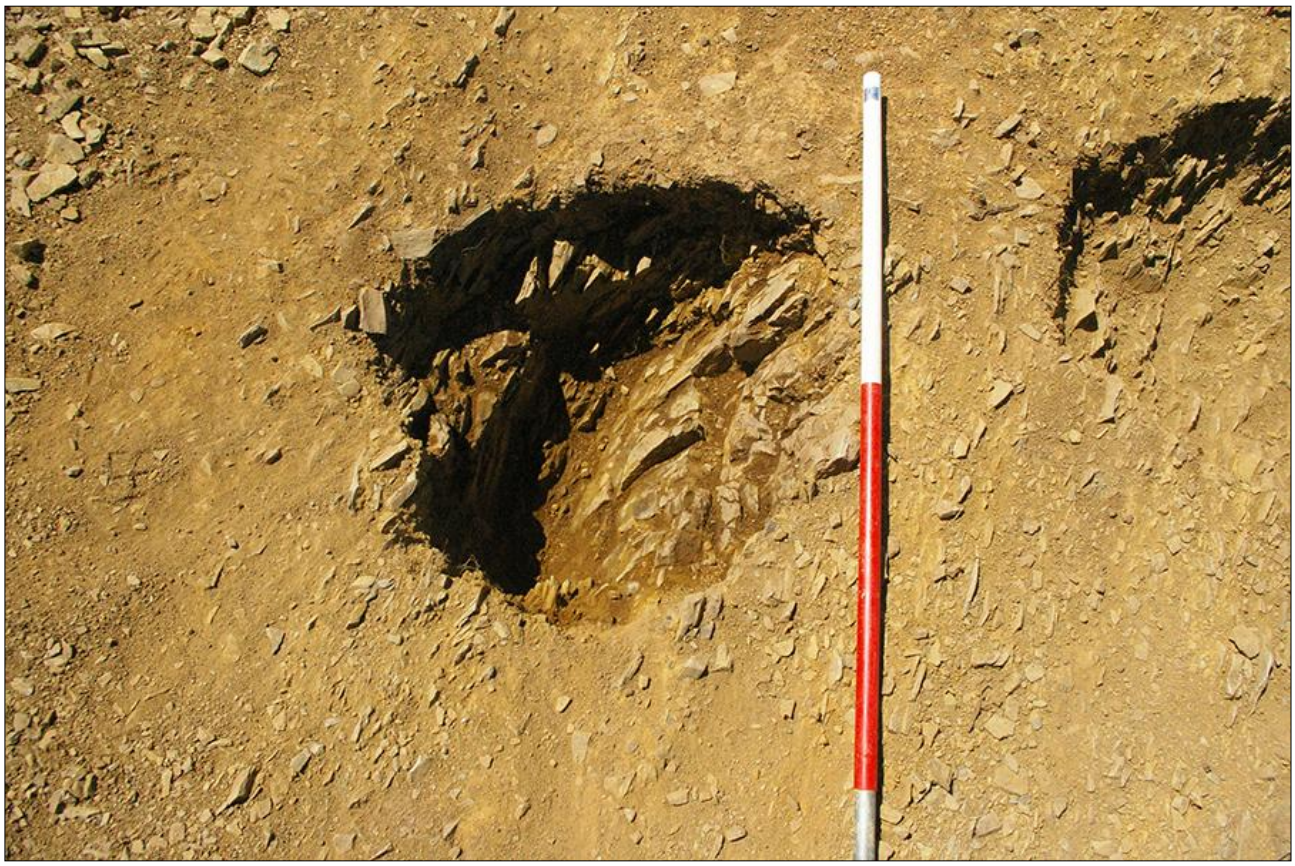
61. DETAIL OF POSTHOLE [145] SHOWING STONE POST SETTINGS; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH (0.40M SCALE).

62. POST-HOLE [145], NORTH FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH (0.40M SCALE).

63. POSTHOLE [145], POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE EAST (1M SCALE).

64. POSTHOLE [145], POST-EXCAVATION, WITH STONES REPOSITIONED; VIEWED FROM THE WEST (1M SCALE).

65. POSTHOLE [147], SOUTH-WEST FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-WEST (0.40M SCALE).



66. POSTHOLE [147], POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE WEST (1M SCALE).

67. POSTHOLE [147], POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE EAST (1M SCALE).

68. PIT [155], NORTH-FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH (1M SCALE).

69. POSTHOLE [251], SOUTH-WEST FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-WEST (0.40M SCALE).

70. POSTHOLE [251], POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-WEST (0.40M SCALE).

71. PIT [191], WEST-FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE WEST (0.40M SCALE).

72. LINEAR FEATURE [193] BLOCK 9, WEST-FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE WEST (1M SCALE).

73. LINEAR FEATURE [193] BLOCK 11, WEST-NORTH-WEST FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE WEST-NORTH-WEST (1M SCALE).

74. POSTHOLE [195], POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH (0.40M SCALE).

POSTHOLE [197], NORTH-WEST FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-WEST (0.40M SCALE).

75. PIT [199], NORTH-WEST FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-WEST (1M SCALE).

76. POSTHOLE [201], NORTH-EAST FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-EAST (0.40M SCALE).

77. POSTHOLE [203], SOUTH-SOUTH-WEST FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-SOUTH-EAST (0.40M SCALE).

78. LINEAR FEATURE [235], NORTH-FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH (1M SCALE).

79. LINEAR FEATURE [239], SOUTH-FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH (1M SCALE).

80. LINEAR FEATURE [243], SOUTH-FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH (1M SCALE).

81. LINEAR FEATURE [245], NORTH-FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH (1M SCALE).

82. TREETHROW [121], POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH (0.40M SCALE).

83. TREETHROW [123], POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH (1M SCALE).

84. ENCLOSURE DITCH [247], NORTH-FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH (2M SCALE).

85. GENERAL SITE SHOT, EAST END; VIEWED FROM THE WEST (NO SCALE).

86. GENERAL SITE SHOT, WEST END; VIEWED FROM THE EAST (NO SCALE).

87. WORKING SHOT; VIEWED FROM THE WEST (NO SCALE).

88. WORKING SHOT; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-EAST (NO SCALE).

89. WORKING SHOT; VIEWED FROM THE WEST (NO SCALE).

90. WORKING SHOT; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-EAST (NO SCALE).

91. WORKING SHOT; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH (NO SCALE).

92. WORKING SHOT; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH (NO SCALE).

93. WORKING SHOT, VOLUNTEERS EXCAVATING ENCLOSURE DITCH [247]; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH (NO SCALE).

94. WORKING SHOT; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-EAST (NO SCALE).

95. WORKING SHOT; VIEWED FROM THE WEST (NO SCALE).

96. WORKING SHOT; VIEWED FROM THE WEST (NO SCALE).

97. WORKING SHOT, VOLUNTEERS EXCAVATING PENANNULAR GULLIES, SOUTH-EAST FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-EAST (0.40M SCALE).

98. WORKING SHOT, VOLUNTEER EXCAVATING POSTHOLES/PITS; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-EAST (NO SCALE).

99. WORKING SHOT, VOLUNTEERS EXCAVATING FEATURES; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-EAST (NO SCALE).

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