

# Land North of Stevenage Hertfordshire

*Archaeological Evaluation*

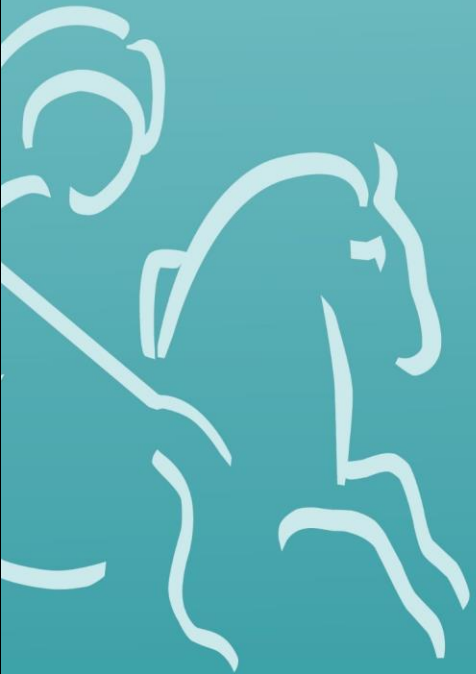


*for:*  
RPS

*on behalf of:*  
Miller and Bellway

CA Project: MK0708  
Site Code: LNS22  
CA Report: MK0708\_3

November 2022



# Land North of Stevenage Hertfordshire

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## SUMMARY

<b>Project name:</b>	Land North of Stevenage
<b>Location:</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>NGR:</b>	TL 23494 26943
<b>Type:</b>	Evaluation
<b>Date:</b>	1-21 September 2022
<b>Planning reference:</b>	17/00862/OPM
<b>Location of Archive:</b>	To be deposited with Stevenage Museum and the Archaeology Data Service (ADS)
<b>Site Code:</b>	LNS22

In September 2022, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation of Land North of Stevenage, Hertfordshire. A total of 25 trenches were excavated across the 74.30ha site, as a second phase of evaluation.

The current evaluation further confirmed and augmented the results of the preceding geophysical survey and trial trenching, along with those from trenching of an immediately adjoining area in 2018, further demonstrating that an area of occupation, potentially spanning the Middle Iron Age to Late Roman period, although not necessarily continuously, is located on a ridge of higher ground in the northwest of the current site.

The central focus of activity within the current site was an irregular enclosure, measuring approximately 50m by 40m in diameter, the ditch of which appears to have been recut at least once. The enclosure was abutted to the north-east and south-west by other ditches, probably forming associated enclosures for settlement or stock and field systems.

A further zone of Late Iron Age Roman activity, albeit much less dense than that in the northwest, was encountered in the central-southeast part of the site, in trenches 46, 47, 48, 49 and 51. This appears to be an area largely comprised of field systems/ cultivation furrows, although pottery and environmental material from a pit in trench 51 suggests that a settlement focus may lay in the immediate vicinity, close enough for this feature to have been used for the dumping of domestic rubbish.

A number of undated ditches or possible furrows were also encountered, most likely relating to the Late Saxon, Medieval and post-medieval agricultural use of the landscape, a use that has continued through to the present day.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. In September 2022, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation of land known for planning purposes as Land at North Stevenage, Hertfordshire (centred at NGR: TL 23494 26943; Fig. 1). This evaluation was undertaken for RPS, acting on behalf of Miller and Bellway.
- 1.2. The evaluation comprised an additional 25no. trenches, requested by Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Advisory Team (HCCHEAT), on fields evaluated previously with additional trenches within the Landscape Park area to the north-east. The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by CA (2022) and approved by HCCHEAT. The trial trenching was a condition 28 of application Stevenage North 17/00862/OPM as advised on 23/11/21 by K2, the consortium's development consultants.
- 1.3. The evaluation was also in line with *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014; updated October 2020), *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) PPN 3: Archaeological Excavation* (Historic England 2015) and *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide* (Historic England 2015).

### The site

- 1.4. The development site lies on the north and west edge of the present extent of Stevenage, adjacent to 20th century urban expansion on Granby Road and Chancellor's Road. Further urban development lies to the east bounded by Great Ashby Way, whilst a small buffer of undeveloped land lies to the west, itself bounded by the A1(M). To the north there is extensive agricultural land. The landscape is rolling chalk hills topping at approximately 120m AOD and dropping to less than 110m AOD towards the east end.
- 1.5. The underlying bedrock geology within the majority of the Site is mapped as Lewes nodular Chalk Formation and Seaford Chalk Formation, with a band of Chalk Rock formation towards the west end. No superficial deposits have been recorded (BGS 2022).

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## 2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. The archaeological background is based on a search of the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record (HHER) made in March 2020 (HHER code 177/20). Reference has also made to the Stevenage Extensive Urban Survey (EUS; Thompson 2002) as well as previous archaeological work in the vicinity of the site, including a Desk-based Assessment (CA 2018) and trial-trench evaluation (CA 2019) undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology for an immediately adjoining area to the north of the current site.

2.2. A total of 82 monument records and 57 event records were returned by the HER search and a selection of the most relevant of these is presented below. Although there are no designated monuments within the site boundary there is one Scheduled Monument at Wymondley Priory to the northwest.

### Previous archaeological works

2.3. A Heritage Assessment (Dawson 2013) has been carried out for the site itself and surrounding area. Subsequent to this a geophysical survey of the site was undertaken in 2014 (Walford 2014). The survey demonstrated that the area had a high archaeological potential with a focus at the western edge of the site, close to North Road, where a probable Late Neolithic to Early Bronze Age ring ditch and an enclosure complex of probable Iron Age or Roman date were identified. Other features of possible archaeological interest were detected elsewhere in the survey area, in addition to a number of anomalies of geological origin.

2.4. An initial phase of trial trenching, comprising thirty eight trenches, were excavated across the development area in 2016 (Jones 2017, HER event EHT8186). A focus of Iron Age and Romano-British activity was identified in trenches in the north-west corner of the development area. The trenching also confirmed the survival of the Neolithic/Bronze Age ring ditch. The rest of the trenches contained no archaeological features, only furrows and areas of geological origin.

2.5. Immediately to the north of the current site, geophysical survey and trial trenching undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in 2018 demonstrated that the Iron Age and Roman remains identified in the northwest part of the current site did extend into the southeast part of that site. The features encountered mostly dated to the Late Iron Age - Early Roman period, although Early to Middle Iron Age and mid to Late Roman activity was also indicated by the pottery assemblage. The domestic nature of the

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pottery recovered, largely comprising coarse wares, with fine wares and imported vessels being virtually absent, suggested that the settlement was a locally-focussed rural farmstead (CA 2019).

### Early prehistoric

- 2.6. No Palaeolithic artefacts have been identified or recovered to date within the site itself or immediately surrounding area. Similarly, no Mesolithic finds have been identified within the site or surrounding area.

### Neolithic and Bronze Age

- 2.7. Previous to the current works, no prehistoric settlement focus had been identified in the Stevenage area, although the Extensive Urban Survey has noted that recorded findspots indicate the presence of long-established and possibly widespread occupation in Stevenage area during the early prehistoric periods, with finds including Neolithic stone axes and struck flint tool assemblages. Neolithic/Early Bronze Age pottery and flints (MHT99) were recovered south-west of the site during works in advance of the Little Wymondley bypass and a collection of undated, but prehistoric flints (MHT6649/6653) were recovered during fieldwalking near J8 of the A1M, to the west of the site.
- 2.8. Bronze Age activity, especially funerary, is more obvious than the earlier prehistoric remains in the archaeological record, and there is the suggestion that some sites continued in use into the Iron Age or at least were present in some form. Excavations and field walking have recorded a range of features and artefacts. A ring ditch type monument, probably a barrow (MHT31556), was identified within the site itself (Walford 2014, Jones 2017, see below); although of Bronze Age origin, the upper portion of the ring ditch was still seemingly open in the Iron Age.

### Iron Age

- 2.9. Settlement of this period is well represented in the region as scattered farmsteads generally located on south-facing slopes (Thompson 2002). The geophysical survey and later trial trenching (Jones 2017) identified evidence for a farmstead (MHT61557) that in character may be Iron Age in origin, with continued use into the Roman period. The central focus was an irregular enclosure, measuring approximately 50m by 40m in diameter, which may have been recut at least once. The enclosure is abutted to the north-east and south-west by other ditches, probably forming associated enclosures or boundaries. Pottery from the late Iron Age to the 2ndC AD was

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recovered (Jones 2017). An Iron Age to Romano-British farmstead (MHT4533) lies close to the west at Graveley Lane, Wymondley; associated fieldwalking recovered Iron Age and Roman pottery (MHT6654). A possible Iron Age or earlier enclosure (MHT6650) has also been identified via cropmarks to the north-west of the site adjacent to the A1M, J8. The BHER records the recovery of flint artefacts dating from the Neolithic (BHER MBC6380 and MBC6921) which have been identified at Manor Farm immediately south of the site and Bourton Grounds, c.600m southeast of the site (BHER MBC6370 and MBC15218). Flint artefacts from White House Farm, c.720m east of the site, are described as Neolithic to Bronze Age (BHER MBC6799).

- 2.10. The scheduled earthworks of a probable Iron Age hillfort have been identified by aerial photograph at Maids Moreton, c.960m northeast of the site (NHLE 1018453; BHER MBC2505), and Late Iron Age to Roman pits and ditches recorded during archaeological investigations at Bourton Grounds c.600m southeast of the site (BHER MBC6374)
- 2.11. A single Iron Age coin was found at the southwestern edge of the site during a metal-detector survey (BHER 20612).

### Roman

- 2.12. During the Roman period, the Stevenage area appears to have been populated with fairly dense rural occupation sites. There are two known villas near to the site, a villa or farmstead at Little Wymondley (MHT2607) to the west, and at another at Chels. The settlement activity at Little Wymondley extends over at least 3 hectares and includes building foundations and surfaces, along with two possible kilns or ovens. Other Roman settlement, possibly farmsteads, have been recorded at Lob's Hole and Boxfield (Dawson 2013). Other Roman finds include a coin of Septimius Severus (MHT429) near Corey's Mill and a copper alloy clip (MHT435) found to the south of the site at Walkern Way. Additionally, the route of a Roman Road, Viatores route 221 (MHT4635), passes to the west of the site between Baldock to the north and Langley, near Hitchin, to the southwest.

### Saxon

- 2.13. There is limited evidence for Saxon activity within the development area. This could be owing to the early Saxons preferring lowland areas with lighter soils (Rowe, Williams 2013). Stevenage is first recorded in the Domesday Survey of AD 1086 as Stithenaece and as Stigenace, meaning either Stipa's hatch or strong gate. Graveley,

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to the north, was recorded at the same time and the HER records earthworks of house platforms, an enclosure and a linear bank related to an earlier part of the village, now deserted (MHT4225). The village also retains the 12th century St Mary's Church (MHT4303). North-east Hertfordshire is recorded as being well populated at the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century. The manor of Stevenage was owned by Westminster Abbey, and it is recorded that 28 households occupied the area.

- 2.14. The Augustinian Priory at Wymondley (MHET1037) was originally established as a hospital in 1203-1207 with the priory itself founded before 1231. After the Dissolution in 1536 the priory buildings were converted into a house (MHET15660). Archaeological investigation in the 1970s recorded parts of the nave and cloister. The site of the priory sits within a large enclosure (MHET75), and there are associated earthworks (MHET159) in the vicinity.
- 2.15. St Nicholas' Church (MHT846, LB 365235) stands immediately to the south of the site on Rectory Lane; it has 12th century origins and may have had a timber precursor. There are two moated house sites in the locality, at Wymondley (MHET363) and at Graveley (MHET364).
- 2.16. The DBA (Dawson 2013) examined the evidence from historic maps and has determined that the proposed development area may be located within the area of two medieval open fields of the parish: Gravel Dell Field to the north-west and Stevenage North Field to the east.
- 2.17. The modern extent of the town of Stevenage included two medieval parishes, Stevenage and Shephall, and parts of the parishes of Knebworth, Datchworth and Graveley. The Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) for Hertfordshire has recorded that the bulk of the site can be categorised as late enclosure with a small part in the north-western corner as post 1950s boundary loss with relict elements.

### **3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

- 3.1. The general objective of the evaluation was to provide further information on the likely archaeological resource within the site, including its presence/absence, character, extent, date and state of preservation. This information will enable the local planning authority, as advised by the HCCHEAT, to identify and assess the particular significance of any archaeological heritage assets within the site, consider the impact of the proposed development upon that significance and, if appropriate, develop



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strategies to avoid or minimise conflict between the conservation of those heritage assets and the development proposal. This process is in line with policies contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF; MHCLG 2021).

- 3.2. The specific objective of the evaluation was to further test the results of the geophysical survey (Walford 2014) and augment the results of the first stage of trial trenching (Jones 2017), in order to more-fully clarify the extent of any archaeological features within the Site. A further objective of the project is to compile a stable, ordered, accessible project archive.

## 4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1. The evaluation fieldwork comprised the excavation of 25 trenches, each measuring 50m long by 1.8m wide, in the locations shown on Figure 2. The trench numbers (39-63) followed on from the previous phase of work.
- 4.2. The trenches were located to test geophysical anomalies and to provide a representative sample of the remainder of the site.
- 4.3. Trenches were set out on OS National Grid co-ordinates using Leica. Overburden was stripped from the trenches by a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless grading bucket. All machining was conducted under archaeological supervision to the top of the natural substrate, which was the level at which archaeological features were first encountered.
- 4.4. Archaeological features/deposits were investigated, planned and recorded in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 1: Fieldwork Recording Manual*. The extent of each trench and any features within the trench were accurately recorded using survey grade Real-Time Kinematic (RTK) Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) equipment, operating to a 3D tolerance of  $\pm 0.05\text{m}$  to Ordnance Survey National Grid and Datum. The data was overlaid at a scale of 1:500 onto the Ordnance Survey National Grid (using digital map data). Records were entered directly into the CA Digital Recording System (DRS) and/or on pro-forma context sheets. Deposits were recorded in plan electronically using Leica GPS as appropriate (normally scale 1:20), and through drawn sections (scale 1:10 or 1:20 as appropriate). Where detailed feature planning was undertaken using GPS this was carried out in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 4: Survey Manual*.

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- 4.5. Any archaeological deposits/features identified were cleaned and hand excavated in an archaeologically controlled and stratigraphic manner, sufficient to meet the aims and objectives of the investigation. Hand excavation was targeted to provide information on the form, function and date of the features. Stratigraphic relationships between features were investigated and recorded. A minimum of one section of 1m length was excavated through each linear feature. Sections through linear features were excavated at approximately 90° to the longitudinal axis to provide an accurate cross-section profile. Pits and other discrete features were half-sectioned. All archaeological features were investigated unless otherwise agreed.
- 4.6. A photographic record utilising high resolution digital photography of a minimum of 10 megapixels and in RAW format, was maintained during the course of the fieldwork. All photography was carried out in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 1: Fieldwork Recording Manual* and conformed to industry best practice (e.g. HE 2015). Images will be converted to uncompressed baseline v.6 TIFF for archiving, and will have accompanying metadata specifying; photo ID, capture device, converting software, colour space, bit depth, resolution, date of capture, photographer, caption, and any alterations made to the image. General site photographs were also taken in order to provide a visual overview of the site, particularly prior to commencement of works and after backfilling of trenches. Overall shots of each trench were taken together with detailed shots of individual features and feature groups as appropriate. All photographs, except general site shots or specific shots for publication included a north arrow and suitable photographic scale(s).
- 4.7. Deposits were assessed for their palaeoenvironmental potential, and samples were taken in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 2: The Taking and Processing of Environmental and Other Samples from Archaeological Sites*. Bulk environmental soil samples were taken from securely dated, sealed archaeological features or deposits for plant macro fossils, small animal bones and small artefacts. The sampling volume was context and sediment specific, generally comprising 40 litres or the maximum amount of material that could be recovered, whichever was less. All samples were processed to 0.25mm using the flotation technique in order to retrieve seed, charcoal and mollusc remains. All the resultant residues were then sorted by hand to retrieve bones and other finds.
- 4.8. Artefacts were processed in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 3: Treatment of Finds Immediately after Excavation*. Artefacts were collected and bagged by context

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and all artefacts from stratified excavated contexts were collected. Artefacts from topsoil, subsoil and unstratified contexts were noted where applicable but not retained unless they were of intrinsic interest.

- 4.9. CA will make arrangements with Stevenage Museum for the deposition of the project archive and, subject to agreement with the legal landowner(s), the artefact collection. A digital archive will also be prepared and deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS). The archives (museum and digital) will be prepared and deposited in accordance with *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives* (ClfA 2014; updated October 2020).
- 4.10. A summary of information from this project, as set out in Appendix D, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

## 5. RESULTS

- 5.1. This section provides an overview of the evaluation results. Detailed summaries of the recorded contexts are given in Appendix A. Details of the artefactual material recovered from the site are given in Section 6 and Appendix B. Details of the environmental samples (palaeoenvironmental evidence) are given in Section 7 and Appendix C.
- 5.2. The natural substrate varied depending on location within the site. On the lower ground it comprised chalky slabs with patches of reddish hue brown clay silt. On the higher elevations to the north-west and centre of the site it consisted of a firm reddish brown clay sand with frequent limestone gravels and greyish blue and orange clay with some areas of outcropping limestone bedrock. The depth at which the natural substrate was encountered also varied, with the deepest trenches occurring at the north-western side of the site, at the base of the slope, where the natural substrate was encountered at an average depth of approximately 2m deep. The trenches shallowed moving away from the valley base, to approximately 0.3m in depth in the north-west, centre and east of the site.
- 5.3. Colluvium was encountered in the trenches 41, 58 and 61, overlain by the ploughsoil, and comprising a reddish brown silty, firm with moderate sub-angular stones and flint, averaging 2m thick. Ploughsoil/ topsoil, comprising dark greyish brown silty clay, sealed the colluvium and natural substrate and averaged 0.3m thick.

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5.4. Trenches 41, 43, 44, 45, 47, 50, 52, 55, 56, 58 and 60-63 were devoid of archaeology and are not discussed further beyond noting that trenches 47 and 63 contained three features that were tested at the request of the HCCHEAT and found to be of natural origin.

5.5. Furrows were recorded in Trenches 46-48, 53 and 54. They averaged 2.10m wide.

#### **Trench 39 (Figs. 8, 9)**

5.6. Six features were exposed within Trench 39. Ditch 3902, measuring >4m long by 0.25m deep and 0.60m wide, running NE-SW. It had straight and steeply sloping sides and concave base with sharp break of slope. Roman pottery was recovered from the single fill 3904, and it is conjectured to belong to the Romano-British field system present within the site

5.7. Gully 3905 was 2.9m long by 0.13m deep and 0.49 wide. Linear in shape, running in NE-SW direction, it had gradually sloping sides and concave base. Roman pottery was again recovered, and the feature is also conjectured to be part of the Romano-British field system present within the site. A bulk environmental sample (sample 3) contained no charred plant remains and only a minimal amount of charcoal.

5.8. Ditch 3908 was exposed running on a north/south alignment through the north-western half of Trench 39. It correlated with a linear anomaly on the geophysics and measured 0.65m wide by 0.12m deep, with gentle sloping concave sides and a flat base. It contained a single undated fill cut by gully 3911 (see below).

5.9. Gully 3911 was exposed running west/east. It measured 0.3m wide by 0.24m deep with steep slope sides and flat base and truncated earlier ditch 3908. Romano-British pottery was recovered from the single fill, 3912.

5.10. Ditch 3913 ran through the south-eastern side of Trench 39 on an east/west alignment, correlating with a linear anomaly identified by the geophysics. It measured 0.9m wide by 0.18m deep with moderate convex sides and an uneven base, and contained a single fill, 3914, that produced Roman pottery.

5.11. Gully 3915 ran through the centre of Trench 39 on a northeast/southwest alignment and is again also likely to be a part of the Roman field/stock enclosure system. It measured 0.40m wide by 0.12m deep with moderate straight sides and a gentle concave base. One sherd of Roman pottery was recovered from the single fill, 3916.

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### **Trench 40 (Fig. 10)**

- 5.12. Trench 40 exposed two ditches and a gully, all identified on the geophysical survey and previous trial trenching (Jones 2017). Intercutting ditches 4004 and 4006 ran through the trench on a northeast/southwest alignment and both produce large quantities of Roman pottery, especially the fill of 4004 (4005). Measuring 1.10m wide by 0.16m deep and 1.40m wide by 0.73m deep respectively, the earlier ditch, 4006, was cut by ditch 4004, which seemingly marked a re-establishment of the originally boundary/enclosure ditch represented by ditch 4006.
- 5.13. Northeast/southwest aligned gully 4002, in the centre of the trench, measured 0.50m wide by 0.25m deep with moderate concave sides and a concave base. Roman pottery was recovered from the single fill, 4003.

### **Trench 41 (Fig. 11)**

- 5.14. A colluvial layer (4102) was removed mechanically at the north-eastern end of the trench. This comprised a mid-reddish brown silty clay with moderate sub-angular limestones and chalky stones as inclusions. It measured 11.10m in length, spreading beyond the NE end of the trench, and 0.75m in depth. No artefactual material was recovered to suggest a date for the deposit and no features were found to be sealed beneath it.

### **Trench 42 (Fig. 12)**

- 5.15. Ditch 4202 was the only feature revealed in the Trench 42. It ran through the south-eastern end of the trench on a northwest/southeast alignment, measuring 0.92m wide by 0.18m deep with moderate concave sides and a flat base and contained a single undated fill. A bulk environmental sample contained no charred plant remains and only a very small amount of charcoal. This assemblage is likely to be indicative of wind-blown/dispersed waste material.

### **Trench 47 (Fig. 13)**

- 5.16. At the request of the HCCHEAT two features of suggested natural origin were tested and recorded (4702 and 4703). Both features were shown to be the result of geological variations.

### **Trench 48 (Fig. 14)**

- 5.17. Ditch 4802 ran through the south-western half of Trench 48 on an east/west alignment. The ditch did not correlate with any anomalies identified by the geophysical survey nor align with any feature detected by the previous trial trenches

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(Jones 2017). It measured 0.74m wide by 0.30m wide with moderately sloping sides and V-shaped base and contained a single undated fill.

#### **Trench 49 (Fig. 15)**

- 5.18. Two features were exposed in the Trench 49. Ditch 4902 ran through the north-western half of the trench on a north-east/south-west alignment and did not correlate with any anomalies identified by the geophysical survey or any features detected before by the previous trial trenches (Jones 2017). It measured 1.15m wide by 0.44m deep with steep sides and a flat base and contained a single undated fill (4903).
- 5.19. Ditch 4904 ran through the south-east end of the trench on a north/south alignment and again did not correspond with any anomalies identified by the geophysical survey or appear to align with any features recorded during the previous phase of trial trenching (Jones 2017). It measured 1.45m wide by 0.24m deep with straight sides and a flat base. One sherd of Late Iron Age pottery was recovered from the single fill 4905.

#### **Trench 51 (Figs. 16, 17)**

- 5.20. Five features were exposed within the Trench 51. All of them were excavated; of the three linear features none were identified by the geophysics or by the previous trial trenching (Jones 2017).
- 5.21. Ditch 5102 was located in the south-east end of Trench 51. It ran through the trench on a north-east/south-west alignment and measured 0.99m wide by 0.22m deep with moderate concave sides and a concave base. It contained a single fill (5103), comprising mid yellowish brown silty clay, from which a small amount of Roman pottery was recovered.
- 5.22. Ditch 5104 ran through the south-eastern half of Trench 51 on a north-east/south-west alignment. It measured 0.73m wide by 0.27m deep, with a moderate concave side and flat base, and contained a single undated fill (5105). A bulk environmental sample (19) contained a single seed of oat/brome grass as well as a small amount of charcoal. This assemblage is likely to be representative of wind-blown/dispersed waste material.
- 5.23. Possible posthole 5106 was located in the middle of trench. Sub-ovoid in shape with steep concave side and flat base, it measured 0.33m diameter by 0.13m deep with straight sides and a flat base, and contained a single undated fill.



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5.24. Pit 5108 was located in the north-western half of the trench. Sub-ovoid in shape with concave sides and an uneven base, it measured 0.71m diameter and 0.15m deep. The undated single fill, 5109, comprised a dark brownish grey silty clay containing moderate quantities of charcoal and burnt clay. A bulk environmental sample (sample 14) of the fill contained a moderately large number of cereal grains, many of which showed signs of abrasion and vitrification. Those that were identifiable included barley and wheat. A single charred vetch/wild pea seed was also noted alongside a few charcoal fragments. This assemblage is likely to be reflective of a dump of domestic food waste material (see section 7 below).

5.25. Ditch 5110 ran through the north-western end of Trench 51 on a north-east/south-west alignment. It measured 0.61m wide by 0.29m deep with a moderate concave side and concave base. Roman pottery was recovered from its fill (5111).

#### **Trench 57 (Figs. 17, 18)**

5.26. Three linear features were exposed within Trench 57, all identified by the geophysical survey.

5.27. Ditch 5702 ran through the west end of the trench on a north-east/south-west alignment. It measured 1.10m wide by 0.24m deep with moderate slope sides and an uneven base. Roman pottery was recovered from the single fill (5703) including a sherd of a Baetican amphora, this being the only continental import recovered from the site during this phase of trenching.

5.28. Ditch 5704 ran through the west end of the trench on a north/south alignment. It measured 2.10m wide by 0.24m deep with moderate concave sides and an uneven base and produced Roman pottery from the single fill, 5705.

5.29. Ditch 5706 ran through the east half of the trench on a north-west/south-east alignment. It measured 0.68m wide by 0.12m deep with moderate concave sides and a flat base. No dating evidence was recovered from the single fill (5707).

#### **Trench 58 (Fig. 19)**

5.30. Colluvial layer 5802 was removed mechanically along most of the trench, measuring 41.6m in extent and 1.65m thick at its deepest point. The colluvium again comprised a mid-reddish brown silt clay with moderate sub-angular limestones and chalky stones as inclusions.

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### Trench 59 (Fig. 20)

- 5.31. One pit, 5902, was exposed within the Trench 59. Located in the south-western half of trench, it was sub-ovoid in shape with steep sides and flat base and measured 1.26m diameter by 0.35m deep. A lot of fragments of animal bones were recovered from its fills 5903 and 5904. Late Iron Age pottery was found in fill 5904. Two bulk environmental samples were recovered from the pit (samples 23 and 24). Both assemblages contained a small number of charred hazelnut shell fragments; charcoal was also observed in low quantities from both samples. These assemblages are likely to be indicative of wind-blown/dispersed hearth waste material.

### Trench 61 (Fig. 21)

- 5.32. Colluvial layer 6102 was removed mechanically along most of the length of the trench. Comprising a mid-reddish brown silty clay with moderate sub-angular limestones and chalky stones as inclusions, at the deepest part of the trench it was 1.15m thick.

### Trench 63 (Fig. 22)

- 5.33. At the request of the HCCCHEAT, a postulated natural feature was tested and recorded (6302). Natural feature 6302 was linear and ran through the south-western end of Trench 47 on a northwest/southeast alignment. It measured 1.38m wide by 0.20m deep and seemed to be the result of a geological variation comprising a naturally formed band of reddish clayey silt against the predominant chalky bedrock.

## 6. THE FINDS

- 6.1. The artefactual material was recovered from 17 deposits: the fills of ditches, furrows, pits and gullies (Appendix B). The material was recovered by hand and from four bulk soil samples. It is recorded in accordance with the ClfA Specialist Recording Toolkit (ClfA 2021).

### Pottery

- 6.2. The pottery from the evaluation has been recorded direct to an Excel spreadsheet from which Appendix B (Table 1) is derived. This forms part of the project archive. The assemblage was examined by context, using a x10 binocular microscope and quantified according to sherd count and weight per fabric type. The fabrics are described in summary in Appendix B (Table 2) in accordance with the national guidelines (Barclay *et al.* 2016) and where appropriate a concordance with the National Roman Fabric Reference Collection has been provided (Tomber and Dore

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1998). The post-Roman fabric codes are based on Sue Anderson's post-medieval fabrics series (*unpublished*). Thompson's form series (1982) is referred to regarding Late Iron Age/Early Roman transitional forms.

The pottery assemblage (275 sherds, 4174g) is in moderately good condition; fractures and surfaces exhibit minor signs of wear in most instances. The assemblage is not overly fragmented with a mean sherd weight of 15.2g.

#### *Late prehistoric*

Ten sherds (52g) of handmade pottery can be dated to the late prehistoric period. Ditches 4006 and 4904 and gully 3905, produced a small quantity of pottery containing flint inclusions (FL/QFL), these fabrics are the most common amongst the late prehistoric group. The use of flint as an additive to pottery was common throughout much of prehistory in the Hertfordshire region (Partridge 1989), however, based on the firing and size of inclusions an Early Iron Age date is considered most likely for this material. Also present, in smaller quantities, are sandy (Q) and shell-tempered fabrics (SH), however, due to an absence of diagnostic features these sherds can only be assigned a broad Iron Age date.

#### *Late Iron Age/Roman*

The largest period group is the Late Iron Age/Roman assemblage. A total of 78 sherds (836g) are made in grog-tempered fabrics (**SOB GT/UNS SHGR**) which date to the Late Iron Age/Early Roman transitional period. Two jars with everted or out-curved rims (B1-3), a tall necked jar (B1-4) and a large storage jar rim (C6-1) were recorded from ditch 3902, ring gully 3911, pit 5108 and ditch 4004 respectively. All can be dated to the 1st century AD (Thompson 1982, 97 and 257). A small bowl with an out-curved rim and rounded shoulder (D2) was also recovered from ring gully 3911 and is likely to be of a similar date (*ibid* 318). Fully Romanised reduced (UNS BSW/UNS GW) and oxidised sandy coarsewares (UNS OX) make up the largest Roman fabric group. Identifiable forms are not common but include a carinated jar, a jar with a corrugated/rippled shoulder and a jar decorated with horizontal rilling, all of which are suggestive of an Early Roman date. Verulamium-region white ware sherds (**VER WH**) are also a common component of the assemblage and are likely to have been produced approximately 20km southwest of the Stevenage area during the mid-1st and 2nd centuries AD. A ring-necked flagon, from ditch 4004, is likely to be of Flavian date (Davies *et.al.* 1994, 42). Continental imports are rare and are

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represented by a single amphora sherd (**BAT AM2**) which is most likely contemporary with the rest of the assemblage.

#### *Post-medieval/modern*

A small bowl rim (13g) made in glazed red earthenware (GRE) was recorded from furrow 5402. This dates to between the 16th and 18th centuries.

#### *Summary*

The pottery provides evidence for activity during the Iron Age, Roman and post-medieval periods. The Iron Age material is largely residual in later features although the sherds from ditch 4904 and pit 5902 are the only dateable evidence from these features. The focus of activity at the site took place during the Late Iron Age/Early Roman period (c. 1st and 2nd centuries AD). The dominance of jars and bowls made in coarseware fabrics suggests activity which was domestic in nature. The scarcity of finewares and Continental imports is indicative of low status Roman rural settlement with limited access to markets supplying regional or imported wares. The post-medieval assemblage is most likely the result of agricultural activity.

#### **Ceramic building material**

- 6.3. Four fragments (68g) of ceramic building material (CBM) are recorded from two deposits. The assemblage is made in oxidised medium sandy fabrics (ms), some with clay pellet (cp) or calcareous (c) inclusions. Three fragments from ditch 4006 are soft fired and powdery. Although forms are absent, based on the characteristics of firing, a Roman date is considered possible. One fragment of tile from furrow 5402, is, based on its fabric, thickness and conditions of firing, most likely of post-medieval or modern date.

#### **Flint**

- 6.4. Seven fragments of flint (10g) were recovered from three bulk soil samples. A small blade and two flakes came from pit 5902. The use of blade technology was common during the Mesolithic and Early Neolithic periods. This example is well made and exhibits signs of heavy recortification perhaps suggesting a Mesolithic, rather than Neolithic, date. Both flakes are made in grey-brown flint, one has suffered heavy dorsal surface damage and both exhibit signs of moderate recortification. The remainder of the assemblage are small chips.

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## 7. THE BIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

### *Palaeoenvironmental Assessment by Emma Aitken*

- 7.1. Six environmental samples (104 litres of soil) were processed from Trenches 39, 42, 51, and 59 from an archaeological evaluation. The samples were taken to evaluate the preservation of palaeoenvironmental remains in the area and with the intention of recovering environmental evidence of industrial or domestic activity on the site. It was also hoped that the environmental remains may aid in the dating of undated ditches 4202 and 5105. The samples were processed by standard flotation procedures (CA Technical Manual No. 2).
- 7.2. Preliminary identifications of plant macrofossils are noted in Table 3, Appendix C, following nomenclature of Stace (1997) for wild plants, and traditional nomenclature, as provided by Zohary *et al* (2012) for cereals.
- 7.3. The flots varied in size from small to medium with high numbers of rooty material and uncharred seeds. The charred material comprised varying levels of preservation. Due to the poor to moderate preservation levels, it was difficult to identify many of the charred cereal grains to species, but where possible this was achieved.
- 7.4. Any dates discussed within this report have been obtained through the spot dating of finds (see Banks, this report).

### *Trench 39*

- 7.5. Sample 3 of Late Iron Age/Early Roman gully 3905 contained no charred plant remains and only a minimal amount of charcoal. This assemblage is likely to be reflective of wind-blown/dispersed waste material.

### *Trench 42*

- 7.6. The environmental assemblage from undated ditch 4202 contained no charred plant remains and only a very small amount of charcoal. This assemblage is likely to be indicative of wind-blown/dispersed waste material.

### *Trench 51*

- 7.7. Fill 5109 (sample 14) of Roman pit 5108 contained a moderately large number of cereal grains, many of which showed signs of abrasion and vitrification. Those that were identifiable have the preliminary identifications of barley (*Hordeum vulgare*) and wheat (*Triticum* sp.). A single charred vetch/wild pea (*Vicia/Lathyrus* sp.) seed was

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also noted alongside a few charcoal fragments. This assemblage is likely to be reflective of a dump of domestic food waste material.

- 7.8. Sample 19 of undated ditch 5104 contained a single seed of oat/brome grass (*Avena/Bromus* sp.) as well as a small amount of charcoal. This assemblage is likely to be representative of wind-blown/dispersed waste material.

#### *Trench 59*

- 7.9. Two samples were recovered from Iron Age pit 5902 (sample 23 and sample 24). Both assemblages contained a small number of charred hazelnut (*Corylus avellana*) shell fragments. Charcoal was also observed in low quantities from both samples. These assemblages are likely to be indicative of wind-blown/dispersed hearth waste material.

#### *Summary*

- 7.10. From the environmental remains it appears that domestic settlement activities were taking place in the nearby vicinity of Trench 51, in particular around Roman pit 5108. The remaining assemblages are reflective of features that are on the fringes of a main settlement area and do not provide any insight into their possible use or functions. Due to the lack of environmental material in the undated features it is not possible to provide a potential date.

#### *Marine Shells by Tom Brown*

- 7.11. Marine Mollusc remains were recovered from a single ditch in Trench 40 on the site. Preservation was very poor with all shells only being preserved as fragments (see Table 4, Appendix C).
- 7.12. Fill 4008 of Late Iron Age/Early Roman ditch 4006 contained five right valve fragments (6g) of native oyster (*Ostrea edulis*).

#### *Discussion/Summary*

- 7.13. All the marine shells recovered from the site were those of an edible species. There is a small indication from this assemblage that marine shell may have augmented the local diet during the Late Iron Age/Early Roman period.

## **8. DISCUSSION**

- 8.1. The current evaluation further confirmed and augmented the results of the preceding geophysical survey and trial trenching (Jones 2017), along with those from trenching



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of an immediately adjoining area in 2018 (CA 2019), further demonstrating that an area of occupation, potentially spanning the Middle Iron Age to Late Roman period, although not necessarily continuously, is located on a ridge of higher ground in the northwest of the current site. Within the current site, the central focus of the area was an irregular enclosure, measuring approximately 50m by 40m in diameter, the ditch to which appears to have been recut at least once. The enclosure is abutted to the north-east and south-west by other ditches, probably forming associated enclosures, for settlement or stock and field systems.

- 8.2. A further zone of Late Iron Age Roman activity, albeit much less dense than that in the northwest, was encountered in the central-southeast part of the site, in trenches 46, 47, 48, 49 and 51. This appears to be an area largely comprised of field systems/cultivation furrows, although pottery and environmental material from a pit in trench 51 suggests that a settlement focus may lay in the immediate vicinity, close enough for this feature to have been used for the dumping of domestic rubbish.
- 8.3. In regard to the main area of activity, the pottery provides evidence for activity during the Iron Age, Roman and post-medieval periods. The Iron Age material is largely residual in later features although the sherds from ditch 4904 and pit 5902 are the only dateable evidence from these features. The focus of activity at the site, within the area investigated by the current phase of trenching, seemingly took place during the Late Iron Age/Early Roman period (c. 1st and 2nd centuries AD), although Early to Middle Iron Age and mid to Late Roman activity was also indicated by the pottery assemblage from the adjacent part of the settlement investigated by CA in 2018. The dominance of jars and bowls made in coarseware fabrics suggests activity which was domestic in nature. The scarcity of finewares and Continental imports is indicative of low status Roman rural settlement with limited access to markets supplying regional or imported wares, a conclusion also support by the 2018 evaluation.
- 8.4. While the environmental remains suggest that domestic settlement activities were taking place in the nearby vicinity of Trench 51, in particular around pit 5108, the remaining sample assemblages are either reflective of features that are on the fringes of the main settlement area, derive from features that were not used for the dumping of domestic waste, or did not provide depositional environment conducive to the preservation of environmental material. Consequently, they do not provide any insight into their possible use or functions.

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- 8.5. A number of undated ditches or possible furrows were also encountered, most likely relating to the Late Saxon, Medieval and post-medieval agricultural use of the landscape, a use that has continued through to the present day (trenches 42, 47, 48, 53, and 63).

## 9. CA PROJECT TEAM

- 9.1. Fieldwork was undertaken by Joan Roig, assisted by Mark Davies, Jake Hewson, Ben Carrick, Jacopo Gelmi, Callum Ruse, Eduardo Cabrera, Samuel Cross and Georgina Matthews. This report was written by Joan Roig. The finds and biological evidence reports were written by Pete Banks, Emma Aitken and Tom Brown. The report illustrations were prepared by Helena Munoz-Mojado. The project archive has been compiled and prepared for deposition by Molly Agnew-Henshaw. The project was managed for CA by Antoni Nowak.

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## APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Interpretation	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth/thickness (m)	Spot-date
39	3900	layer	3900	Ploughsoil	Mid greyish brown. Silty clay. Friable. Moderate small sub-angular stones as inclusions.		1.8	0.2	
39	3901	layer	3901	Natural	Mid orangey brown with some whitish chalk patches. It contains flint and limestone as inclusions. Gravely clay. Compact.		1.8		
39	3902	cut		Ditch	NE-SW Curvilinear, straight steeply sloping sides, concave base, sharp break of slope at base.		0.6	0.25	
39	3903	fill	3902	Primary Fill	Mid orangish grey, silty clay, compact, frequent medium angular stones.		0.47	0.11	
39	3904	fill	3902	Secondary Fill	Mid orangish brown, clayey silt, friable, frequent medium, large angular stones, occasional charcoal.		0.6	0.15	
39	3905	cut		Other Cut	NE-SW linear Gully, straight gradually sloping sides, concave base imperceptible break of slope at the base.		0.49	0.13	
39	3906	fill	3905	Primary Fill	Mid orangish grey, silty clay, compact, frequent medium angular, rounded stones.		0.38	0.04	
39	3907	fill	3905	Secondary Fill	Light greyish brown, clayey silt, friable, frequent medium angular stones.		0.49	0.09	
39	3908	cut		Ditch	Linear, No Corners, Straight Sides with Gentle Slope, Flat, North to South. 108 - 2072, 2073, 2076, 2077		0.65	0.12	
39	3909	fill	3908	Primary Fill	Mid Orangish Brown, Clay, Hard, Single Chalk Inclusion, Flint 15%, Clear, Low, MTS Damp/Dry. 108 - 2076 2077.		0.65	0.12	
39	3910	fill	3908	Primary Fill	Mid Orangish Brown, Clay, Hard, Flint 15%, Clear, Low, MTS Dry/Damp. 108 - 2072, 2073		0.1	0.12	
39	3911	cut		Gully	Linear, No Corners, Straight Sides Steep Slope, Flat, West to East. 108 - 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075		0.3	0.24	
39	3912	fill	3911	Primary Fill	Dark Orangish Brown, Clay, Hard, 10% Flint, Clear, Low, MTS Damp/Dry. 108 - 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075		0.3	0.24	
39	3913	cut		Ditch	Linear, No Corners, straight with moderate slope, Uneven, West to East. 108 - 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090.		0.9	0.18	
39	3914	fill	3913	Primary Fill	Dark Blackish Brown, Clay, Compact, 40% Flint, Clear, Low, MTS Damp. 108 - 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090.		0.9	0.18	
39	3915	cut		Ditch	Gully		0.4	0.12	



39	3916	fill	3915	Secondary Fill	Mid orangish brown, clayey silt, friable. Moderate small sub-angular stones.		0.4	0.12	
40	4000	layer	4000	Ploughsoil	Mid greyish brown. Silty clay. Friable.		1.8	0.2	
40	4001	layer	4001	Natural	Mid reddish brown. Clayey silt. Chalk, limestone and flint gravels as inclusions. Compacted.		1.8	0.38	
40	4002	cut		Gully	Mid greyish brown. Silty clay. Friable.		0.50	0.25	
40	4003	fill	4002	Primary Fill	Mid reddish brown. Clayey silt. Chalk, limestone and flint gravels as inclusions. Compacted.		0.50	0.25	
40	4004	cut		Ditch	Linear ditch, running NE-SW. Gradual slope sides and flat and uneven base.		1.10	0.16	
40	4005	fill	4004	Deliberate Backfill	Mid greyish brown. Silty clay. Compact. 50% flint and chalk as inclusions.		1.10	0.16	
40	4006	cut		Ditch	Linear ditch, running NE-SW. Steeply slope sides. Concave base.		1.40	0.73	
40	4007	fill	4006	Deliberate Backfill	Light reddish brown. Silty clay. Compact. Frequent flint, limestone and chalk as inclusions.		1.40	0.73	
40	4008	fill	4006	Deliberate Backfill	Dark greyish brown. Silty clay. Compact. 60% flint, limestone and chalk as inclusions.		1.72	0.23	
41	4100	layer	4100	Ploughsoil	Mid greyish brown. Silty clay. Friable.		1.8	0.25	
41	4101	layer	4101	Natural	White chalky bedrock with orangey brown patches. Flint and limestone as inclusions. Sandy clay. Compacted.		1.8		
41	4102	layer	4102	Colluvial Layer	Mid reddish brown. Silty clay. Friable. Flint and limestone as inclusions.		1.8	0.8	
42	4200	layer	4200	Ploughsoil	Mid greyish brown. Silty clay. Friable.		1.8	0.2	
42	4201	layer	4201	Natural	Mid reddish brown. Limestone and flint gravels as inclusions. Clayey silt. Compacted.		1.8	0.12	
42	4202	cut		Ditch	Linear NW-SE aligned ditch, moderate slopes, flattish base.		0.92	0.18	
42	4203	fill	4202	Secondary Fill	Mid reddish brown, silty clay, firm, occasional subangled small flints.		0.92	0.18	
43	4300	layer	4300	Ploughsoil	Mid greyish brown. Silty clay. Friable.			0.25	
43	4301	layer	4301	Natural	Mid reddish brown and patches of chalk. Clayey silt. It contains flint and limestones inclusions. Compacted.				
44	4400	layer		Ploughsoil	Mid greyish brown. Silty clay. Friable.			0.2	
44	4401	layer		Natural	Light whitish brown and reddish brown patches. Chalky gravels with flint and limestone inclusions. Compacted.				
45	4500	layer		Ploughsoil	Mid greyish brown. Silty clay. Friable texture.			0.25	
45	4501	layer		Natural	Light whitish brown. Chalky composition. Compacted.				

46	4600	layer		Ploughsoil	Mid greyish brown. Silty clay. Friable.			0.25	
46	4601	layer		Natural	Light brownish white. Compound by chalk and lime clay. Compacted.				
47	4700	layer		Ploughsoil	Mid greyish brown. Silty clay. Friable.			0.25	
47	4701	layer		Natural	Light whitish brown. Chalk and lime clay. Compacted.				
47	4702	layer		Other Layer	Natural feature.				
47	4703	layer		Other Layer	Natural feature.				
48	4800	layer		Ploughsoil	Mid greyish brown. Silt clay. Friable.			0.25	
48	4801	layer		Natural	Light whitish brown. Chalk and lime clay. Compacted				
48	4802	cut		Ditch	NW - SE aligned linear. Moderate rounded slopes, concave v shaped base. Undated		0.74	0.3	
48	4803	fill	4802	Primary Fill	Mid yellow brown, silty clay, firm, occasional subangled flint and chalk		0.57	0.15	
48	4804	fill	4802	Secondary Fill	Mid reddish brown, silty clay, firm, occasional subangled flints.		0.74	0.15	
49	4900	layer		Ploughsoil	Mid greyish brown. Silty clay. Friable.			0.25	
49	4901	layer		Natural	Light orangey brown. Clayey silt. Contains chalk patches. Compacted.				
49	4902	cut		Ditch	Linear running NE to SW containing one fill 4903		1.15	0.44	
49	4903	fill	4902	Secondary Fill	Mid brown silty clay secondary fill containing 20% flint inclusions and chalk flecks		1.15	0.44	
49	4904	cut		Ditch	Cut of ditch running N-S direction flat base concave sides		1.46	0.25	
49	4905	Fill	4904	Secondary Fill	Mid brown silty clay. Firm.		1.48	0.25	
50	5000	layer		Ploughsoil	Mid greyish brown. Clayey silt. Loose. Moderate sub-angular limestones as inclusions.			0.3	
50	5001	layer		Natural	Light whitish brown. Gravely clay. Compact. Frequent chalk gravels and flint as inclusions.				
51	5100	layer		Ploughsoil	Mid greyish brown. Silty clay. Friable.			0.25	
51	5101	layer		Natural	Light yellowish brown and reddish brown. It contains flint and limestone inclusions. Sandy clay. Compacted.				
51	5102	cut		Ditch	Linear ditch, running NE-SW. Moderate sloping sides. Concave base.		0.99	0.22	
51	5103	fill	5102	Secondary Fill	Mid yellowish brown. Silty clay. Firm. Occasionally sub-angular flint.		0.99	0.22	
51	5104	cut		Ditch	Linear ditch, running NE-SW. Moderate slope.		0.73	0.27	
51	5105	fill	5104	Secondary Fill	Mid yellowish brown. Silty clay. Firm. Occasional sub-angular small flint.		0.73	0.27	
51	5106	cut		Posthole	Sub-obval. Steep concave slope. Flat base.		0.29	0.13	

51	5107	fill	5106	Secondary Fill	Mid greyish brown. Silty clay. Firm. Occasional sub-angular flint.		0.29	0.13	
51	5108	cut		Pit	Sub-obval. Gentle to moderate slope. Uneven base.		0.7	0.15	
51	5109	fill	5108	Secondary Fill	Dark brown grey. Silty clay. Firm.		0.7	0.15	
51	5110	cut		Ditch	Linear, running NE-SW. Moderate slope and concave base.		0.61	0.29	
51	5111	fill	5110	Secondary Fill	Mid yellowish brown. Silty clay. Occasional sub-angular small flint.		0.61	0.29	
52	5200	layer		Ploughsoil	Mid greyish brown. Silty clay. Friable.			0.25	
52	5201	layer		Natural	Mid orangey brown. Sandy clay. Limestones and flint inclusions. Compacted.				
53	5300	layer		Ploughsoil	Mid greyish brown. Silty clay. Friable.			0.25	
53	5301	layer		Natural	Light greyish brown with also parts of reddish brown. Clayey silt with chalky patches. Chalk, flint and limestones inclusions. Compacted.				
54	5400	layer		Ploughsoil	Mid greyish brown. Silty clay. Friable texture.			0.25	
54	5401	layer		Natural	Mid reddish brown. Gravely and limestones inclusions. Compacted.				
54	5402	cut		Plough Furrow	Rectangular shaped in plan. Moderate sloping down sides cut and uneven base.				
54	5403	fill	5402	Deliberate Backfill	Mid greyish brown. Silty clay. Frequent small sub-angular stones, gravels and flint as inclusions.				
55	5500	layer		Ploughsoil	Mid greyish brown. Silty clay. Friable.			0.25	
55	5501	layer		Natural	Mid reddish brown with chalk patches and limestones and flint inclusions. Clayey and sandy silt. Compacted.				
56	5600	layer		Topsoil	Mid yellow brown. Silty loam, friable occasional small flints.			0.47	
56	5601	layer		Natural	Light brown orange, silty clay with large flint deposits.				
57	5700	layer		Ploughsoil	Mid greyish brown. Silty clay. Friable.		1.8	0.25	
57	5701	layer		Natural	Mid orangey brown. It contains limestone and flint's gravels as inclusions. Sandy clay. Compacted.		1.8		
57	5702	cut		Ditch	Linear, running NE-SW. Moderate straight sides and gentle concave base.		1.10	0.24	
57	5703	fill	5702	Secondary Fill	Dark greyish brown. Silty clay. Firm. Occasional stones, occasional bones and pot.		1.10	0.24	
57	5704	cut		Ditch	Linear, running N-S. Moderate straight sides and gentle concave base.		1.15	0.12	
57	5705	fill	5704	Secondary Fill	Mid greyish brown. Silty clay. Firm. Frequent stones and one sherd of pot.		1.15	0.12	

57	5706	cut		Ditch	Linear, running NW-SE. Moderate straight sides. Flat base.		0.90	0.14	
57	5707	fill	5706	Secondary Fill					
58	5800	layer		Ploughsoil	Mid greyish brown. Silty clay. Friable.		1.8	0.25	
58	5801	layer		Natural	Mid orangey brown. Sandy silt. It contains limestones and flint as inclusions. Compacted.		1.8		
59	5900	layer		Ploughsoil	Mid greyish brown. Silty clay. Friable.			0.25	
59	5901	layer		Natural	Mid reddish brown with chalk patches. Clayey silt. Flint and limestone as inclusions. Compacted.				
59	5902	cut		Pit	Sub-oval shape in plan. Steep and concaved side and concaved and uneven base.		1.27	0.35	
59	5903	fill	5902	Deliberate backfilling	Mid orangey brown. Silty clay. Hard. Moderate small sub-angular stones as inclusions.		1.27	0.26	
59	5904	fill	5902	Deliberate backfilling	Dark blackish grey. Silty clay. Compact. Moderate small sub-angular stones and flint as inclusions.		0.47	0.24	
60	6000	layer		Ploughsoil	Mid greyish brown. Silty clay. Friable.			0.2	
60	6001	layer		Natural	Light whitish brown and patches of reddish brown. Chalky gravels with flint and limestone inclusions. Clayey silt. Compacted.				
61	6100	layer		Ploughsoil	Mid greyish brown. Silty clay. Friable.		1.8	0.25	
61	6101	layer		Natural	Mid greenish grey patches and orangey red gravels. Flint and limestone gravels as inclusions. Compacted.		1.8		
61	6102	layer		Colluvial Layer	Mid reddish brown. Silty clay. Friable. Flint and limestone as inclusions.		1.8	0.75	
62	6200	layer		Ploughsoil	Mid greyish brown. Silty clay. Friable.		1.8	0.2	
62	6201	layer		Natural	Light yellowish white. Chalk gravels with flint and limestone as inclusions. Clayey silt. Compacted.		1.8		
63	6300	layer		Ploughsoil	Mid greyish brown. Silty clay. Friable.		1.8	0.25	
63	6301	layer		Natural	Light yellowish white with reddish brown patches. Chalk gravels and flint and limestone as inclusions. Compacted.		1.8		
63	6302	layer		Other Layer	Natural feature.				

## APPENDIX B: THE FINDS

Table 1: Finds Concordance

Context	Class	Sample No.	Description	Fabric Code*	Count	Weight (g)	Spot-date
3904	LIA/Roman pottery		Southern British grog-tempered ware	<b>SOB GT</b>	12	157	LIA/ERB
3907	LIA/Roman pottery	3	Southern British grog-tempered ware	<b>SOB GT</b>	1	16	LIA/ERB
	Late prehistoric pottery		Quartz and flint-tempered fabric	QFL	1	12	
	Flint		Chip		1	1	
3912	LIA/Roman pottery		Southern British grog-tempered ware	<b>SOB GT</b>	14	115	LIA/ERB
3914	LIA/Roman pottery		Southern British grog-tempered ware	<b>SOB GT</b>	1	3	LIA/ERB
3916	LIA/Roman pottery		Southern British grog-tempered ware	<b>SOB GT</b>	1	11	LIA/ERB
4005	Roman pottery		Unsourced black fired sandy ware	UNS BSW	43	712	MLC1
	LIA/Roman pottery		Southern British grog-tempered ware	<b>SOB GT</b>	1	67	
	Roman pottery		Verulamium-region white ware	<b>VER WH</b>	55	1253	
	Roman pottery		Unsourced sandy oxidised ware	UNS OX	14	96	
	Roman pottery		Unsourced sandy grey ware	UNS GW	65	947	
4007	LIA/Roman pottery		Southern British grog-tempered ware	<b>SOB GT</b>	20	272	MC1-C2
	Late prehistoric pottery		Quartz and flint-tempered fabric	QFL	2	6	
	LIA/Roman pottery		Unsourced shelly grog-tempered ware	UNS SHGR	1	10	
	Roman pottery		Unsourced sandy grey ware	UNS GW	3	7	
	Roman pottery		Verulamium-region white ware	<b>VER WH</b>	2	3	
	Roman pottery		Unsourced sandy oxidised ware	UNS OX	1	1	
4008	LIA/Roman pottery		Southern British grog-tempered ware	<b>SOB GT</b>	1	50	LIA/ERB
	CBM			msscpc	3	51	
4905	Late prehistoric pottery		Flint-tempered fabric	FL	3	14	EIA
5103	LIA/Roman pottery		Southern British grog-tempered ware	<b>SOB GT</b>	5	12	LIA/ERB
5109	LIA/Roman pottery	14	Southern British grog-tempered ware	<b>SOB GT</b>	8	71	RB
	Late prehistoric pottery		Shell-tempered fabric	SH	3	11	
	Roman pottery		Unsourced sandy oxidised ware	UNS OX	1	5	
	Roman pottery		Shell-tempered ware	UNS SH	1	9	
	LIA/Roman pottery		Southern British grog-tempered ware	<b>SOB GT</b>	1	5	
5111	LIA/Roman pottery		Southern British grog-tempered ware	<b>SOB GT</b>	9	24	LIA/ERB
5403	Post-medieval pottery		Glazed red earthenware	GRE	1	13	C16-C18
	CBM		Tile	ms	1	17	
5703	Roman pottery		Baetican amphora	<b>BAT AM2</b>	1	240	C1-C3
5705	LIA/Roman pottery		Southern British grog-tempered ware	<b>SOB GT</b>	3	23	LIA/ERB
5903	Flint	23	Blade, Chip		2	2	
5904	Late prehistoric pottery	24	Sandy fabric	Q	1	9	IA
	Flint		Flakes, Chips		4	7	

\* National Roman Fabric Reference Collection codes in bold (Tomber and Dore 1998).

Table 2: Summary of pottery by fabrics

Period	Fabric Description	Fabric Codes*	Count	Weight (g)
Late prehistoric pottery	Flint-tempered fabric	FL	3	14
	Quartz and flint-tempered fabric	QFL	3	18
	Sandy fabric	Q	1	9
	Shell-tempered fabric	SH	3	11
LIA/Roman pottery	Southern British grog-tempered ware	<b>SOB GT</b>	77	826
	Unsourced shelly grog-tempered ware	UNS SHGR	1	10
	Unsourced black fired sandy ware	UNS BSW	43	712
	Unsourced sandy grey ware	UNS GW	68	954
	Unsourced sandy oxidised ware	UNS OX	16	102
	Unsourced shell-tempered fabric	UNS SH	1	9
	Verulamium-region white ware	<b>VER WH</b>	57	1256
	Baetican amphora	<b>BAT AM2</b>	1	240
Post-medieval pottery	Glazed red earthenware	GRE	1	13
<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>275</b>	<b>4174</b>

\* National Roman Fabric Reference Collection codes in bold (Tomber and Dore 1998).

## APPENDIX C: THE PALAEOENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

Table 3 Assessment of the palaeoenvironmental remains

Feature	Context	Sample	Processed vol (L)	Unprocessed vol (L)	Flot size (ml)	Roots %	Grain	Chaff	Cereal Notes	Charred Other	Charred Other Notes	Charcoal > 4/2mm	Other
Trench 39													
Gully 3905	3907	3	14	0	12	98	-	-	-	-	-	*/*	-
Trench 42													
Ditch 4202	4203	4	18	0	8	98	-	-	-	-	-	-/*	-
Trench 51													
Pit 5108	5109	14	20	20	55	90	****	-	indet grain; barley; wheat	*	<i>Vicia/Lathyrus</i>	*/*	-
Ditch 5104	5105	19	20	20	35	98	-	-	-	*	<i>Avena/Bromus</i>	*/*	-
Trench 59													
Pit 5902	5903	23	13	0	25	98	-	-	-	*	<i>Corylus avellana</i>	*/*	-
	5904	24	19	0	35	90	-	-	-	*	<i>Corylus avellana</i>	**/**	-

Key: \* = 1–4 items; \*\* = 4–20 items; \*\*\* = 21–49 items; \*\*\*\* = 50–99 items; \*\*\*\*\* = >100 items

Table 4 Marine shell by context

Site Code	Trenc	Featur	Cut	Conte	Oyster left val ve	Oyster right val ve	Oyster MNI	Total (MNI)
LNS22	40	Ditch	400	4008	0	5	5	5
							<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>

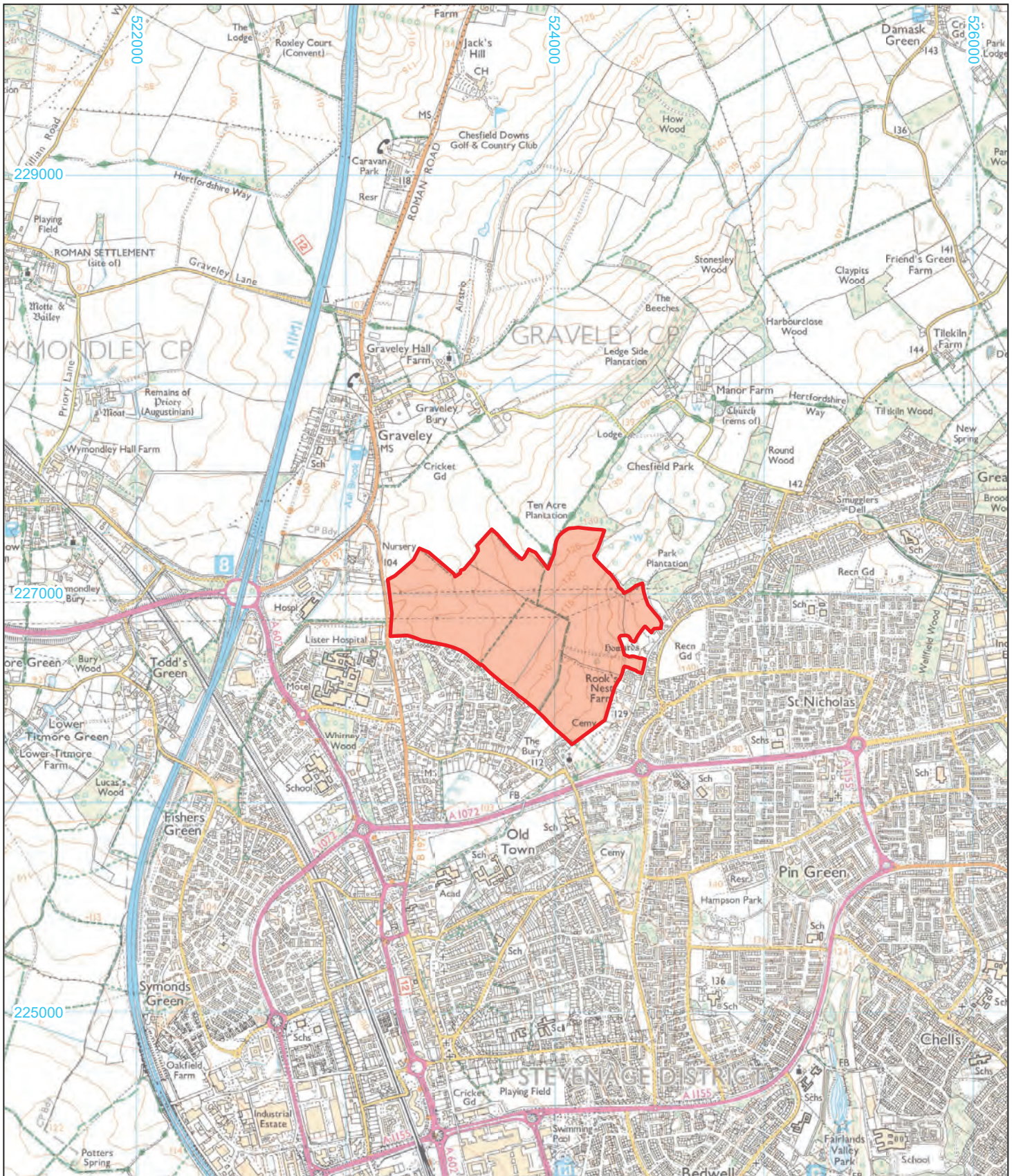


## APPENDIX D: OASIS REPORT FORM

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		
Project name	Land North of Stevenage	
Short description	<p>In September 2022, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation of Land North of Stevenage, Hertfordshire. A total of 25 trenches were excavated across the 74.30ha site, as a second phase of evaluation.</p> <p>The current evaluation further confirmed and augmented the results of the preceding geophysical survey and trial trenching, along with those from trenching of an immediately adjoining area in 2018, further demonstrating that an area of occupation, potentially spanning the Middle Iron Age to Late Roman period, although not necessarily continuously, is located on a ridge of higher ground in the northwest of the current site.</p> <p>The central focus of activity within the current site was an irregular enclosure, measuring approximately 50m by 40m in diameter, the ditch of which appears to have been recut at least once. The enclosure was abutted to the north-east and south-west by other ditches, probably forming associated enclosures for settlement or stock and field systems.</p> <p>A further zone of Late Iron Age Roman activity, albeit much less dense than that in the northwest, was encountered in the central-southeast part of the site, in trenches 46, 47, 48, 49 and 51. This appears to be an area largely comprised of field systems/cultivation furrows, although pottery and environmental material from a pit in trench 51 suggests that a settlement focus may lay in the immediate vicinity, close enough for this feature to have been used for the dumping of domestic rubbish.</p> <p>A number of undated ditches or possible furrows were also encountered, most likely relating to the Late Saxon, Medieval and post-medieval agricultural use of the landscape, a use that has continued through to the present day.</p>	
Project dates	September 2022	
Project type	Field evaluation	
Previous work	Jones, Christopher, 2017 <i>Archaeological trial trench evaluation on land north of Stevenage, Hertfordshire December 2016</i>	
Future work	Unknown	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
Site location	Land North of Stevenage, Hertfordshire, SG1 4BB	
Study area (m <sup>2</sup> /ha)	74.30ha	
Site co-ordinates	523494 226943	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project brief originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project design (WSI) originator	Herefordshire County Council	
Project Manager	Antoni Nowak	
Project Supervisor	Joan Roig	
<b>MONUMENT TYPE</b>	Enclosure, pit, ditch, furrow	
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS</b>	Pottery, animal bone	
<b>PROJECT ARCHIVES</b>		
	<b>Intended final location of archive (museum/Accession no.)</b>	<b>Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone etc)</b>
	<b>Recipient of each type of archive</b>	<b>Indicate the contents of each archive box</b>
Physical	North Hertfordshire Museum	CBM, pottery, animal bones

Paper	North Hertfordshire Museum	Context sheets, photo registers, trench sheets. drawing, report
Digital	Archaeology Data Service	Database, digital photos, report
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		
Cotswold Archaeology 2022 <i>Land North of Stevenage, Hertfordshire: Archaeological Evaluation report</i> MK0708_3		





 Site boundary



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**PROJECT TITLE**  
 Land North of Stevenage, Hertfordshire

**FIGURE TITLE**  
 Site location plan

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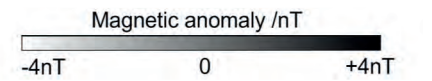
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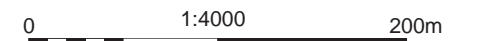


- ▭ Site boundary
- ▭ Evaluation trench
- Archaeological feature

Geophysical survey results  
Northamptonshire Archaeology  
(2013)



Colluvial



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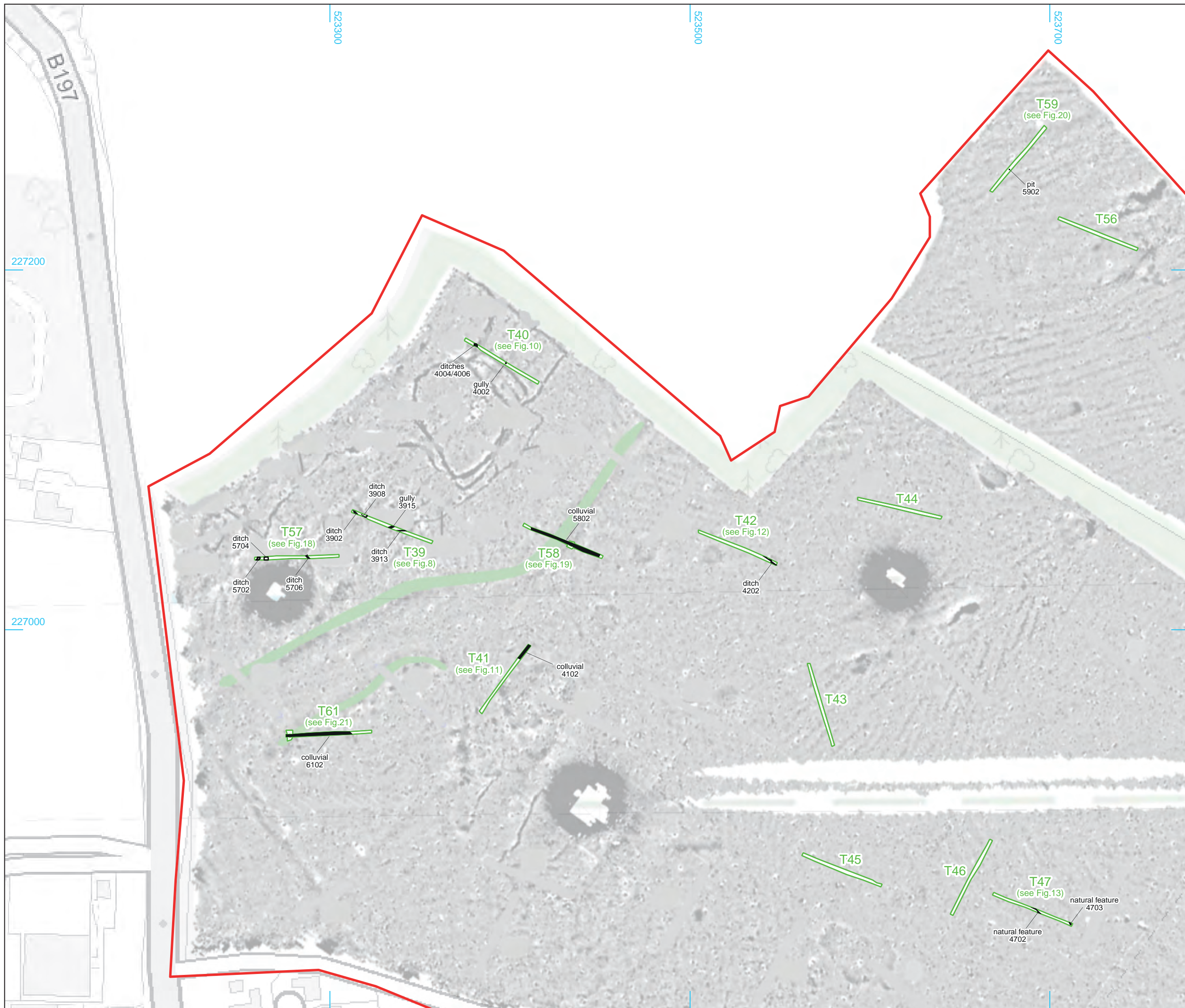
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PROJECT TITLE  
Land North of Stevenage, Hertfordshire

FIGURE TITLE  
Trench location plan showing  
geophysical survey results

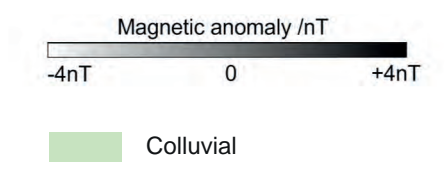
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- Site boundary
- Evaluation trench
- Archaeological feature

Geophysical survey results  
Northamptonshire Archaeology  
(2013)



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PROJECT TITLE  
Land North of Stevenage, Hertfordshire

FIGURE TITLE  
**Detailed north-west trench location plan including archaeological features and geophysical survey results (1:2000)**

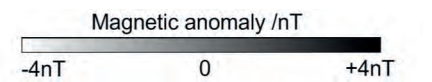
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APPROVED BY	AN	SCALE@A3	1:2000	





- Site boundary
- Evaluation trench
- Archaeological feature

*Geophysical survey results*  
 Northamptonshire Archaeology  
 (2013)



Colluvial



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**PROJECT TITLE**  
 Land North of Stevenage, Hertfordshire

**FIGURE TITLE**  
 Detailed south-centre trench location plan  
 including archaeological features and  
 geophysical survey results (1:2000)

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CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	20/10/2022	4
APPROVED BY	AN	SCALE@A3	1:2000	





Pre-excavation general view, looking south-east



Pre-excavation general view, looking north-west



Pre-excavation general view, looking south-east



Pre-excavation general view, looking north-west


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PROJECT TITLE  
**Land North of Stevenage, Hertfordshire**

FIGURE TITLE  
**Site shots**

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Trench 39, looking north-west (1m scales)



Trench 44, looking south-east (1m scales)



Trench 39, looking north-east (1m scale)



Trench 44, looking south-west (1m scale)


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FIGURE TITLE  
**Blank trenches shots**

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APPROVED BY	AN	SCALE	@A3 NA	





Trench 52, looking south-west (1m scales)



Trench 62, looking north-west (1m scales)



Trench 52, looking south-east (1m scale)



Trench 62, looking north-east (1m scale)

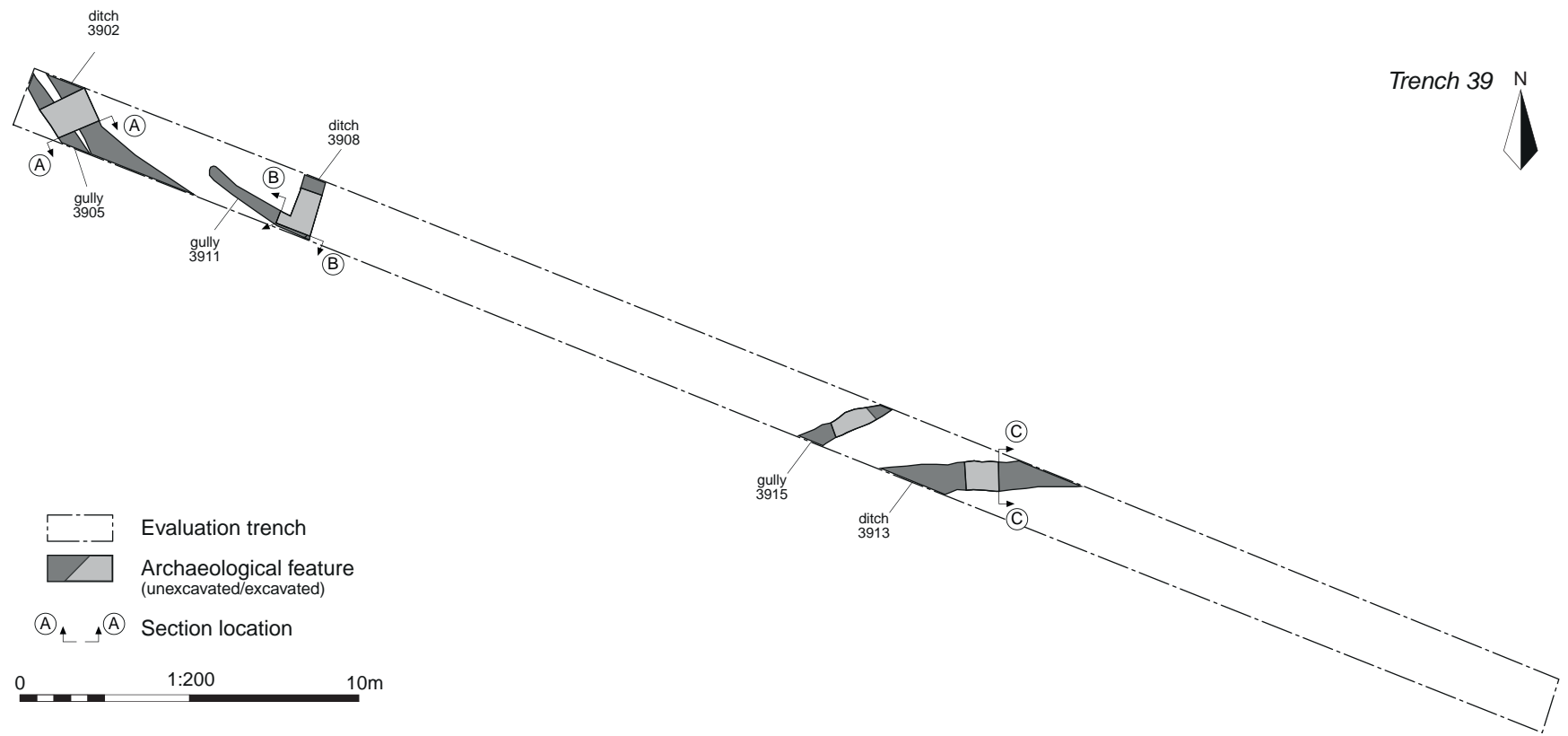

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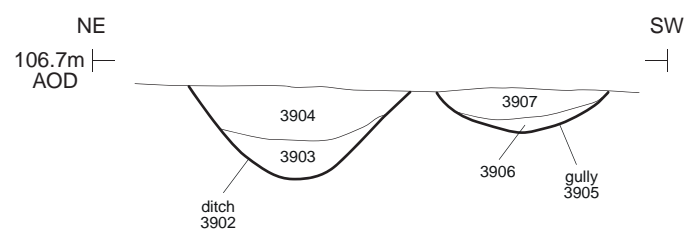
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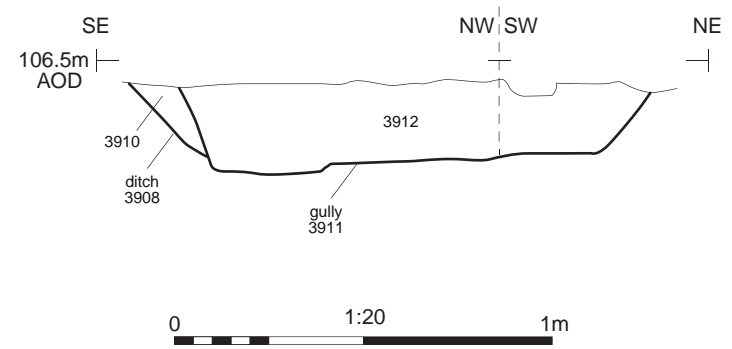




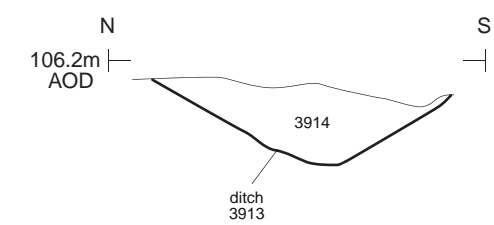
Section AA



Section BB



Section CC



Ditch 3902 and gully 3905, looking south-east (1m scale)



Ditch 3908 and gully 3911, looking south-west (1m scale)



Ditch 3913, looking east (0.3m scale)

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FIGURE TITLE  
 Trench 39: plan, sections and photographs

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Gully 3915, looking north-east (0.3m scale)



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Land North of Stevenage, Hertfordshire

FIGURE TITLE

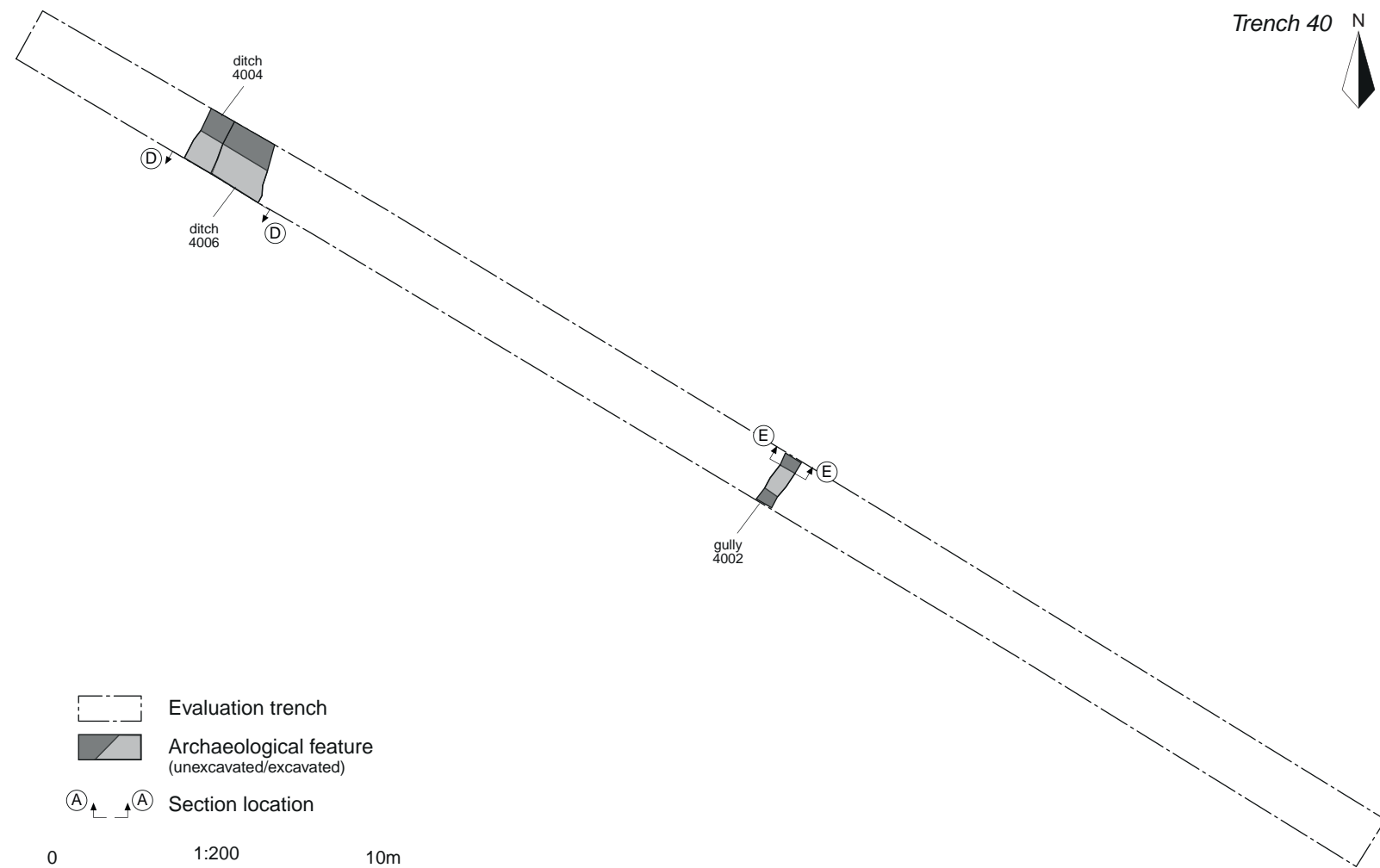
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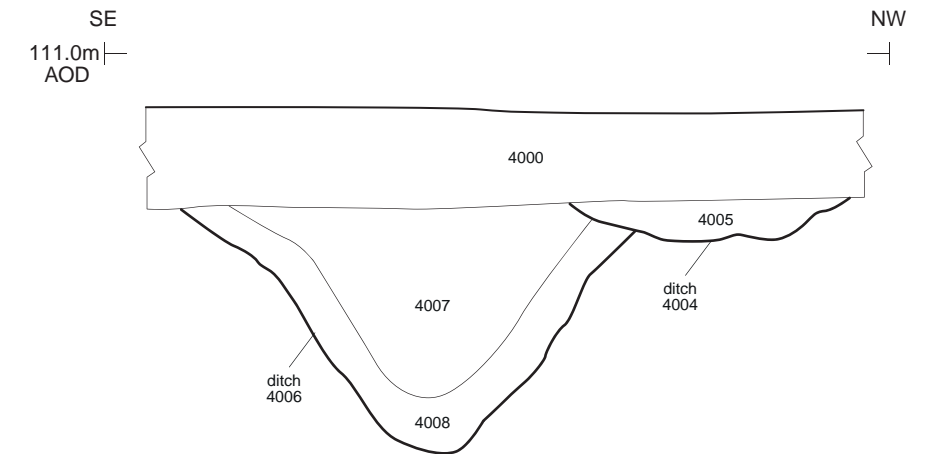
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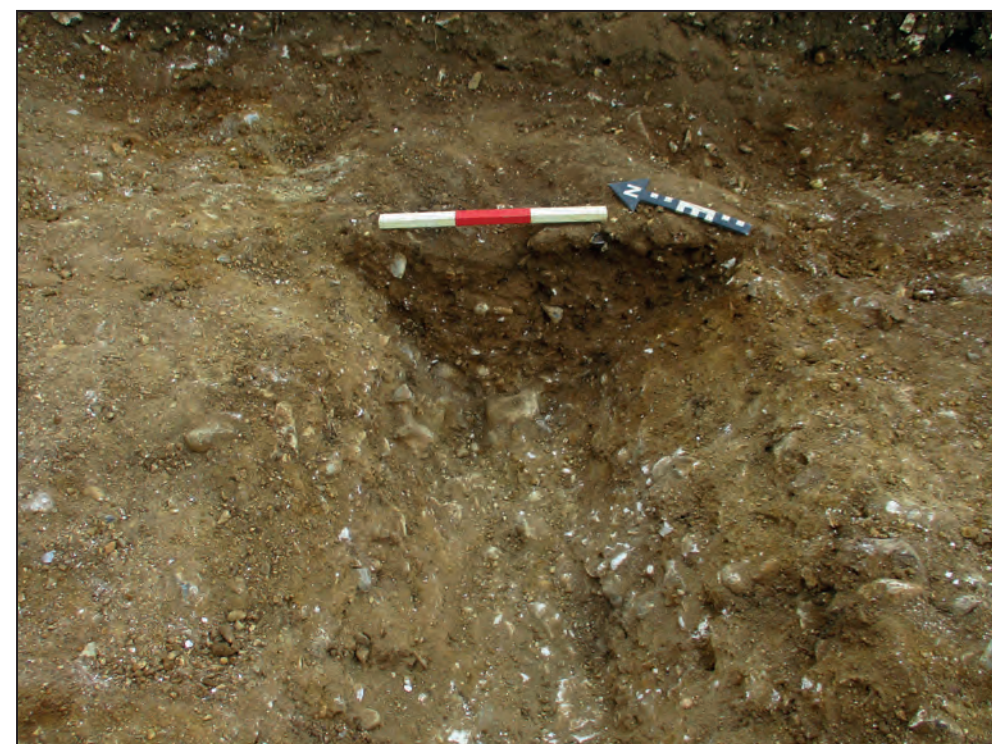
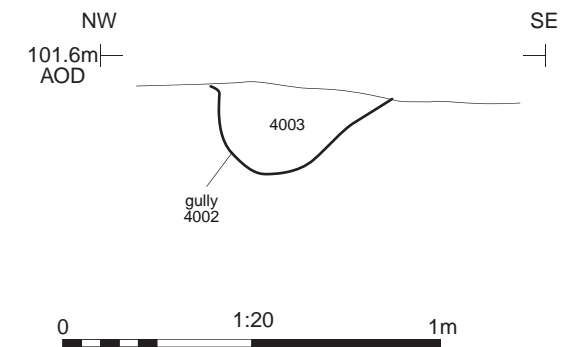




Section DD



Section EE

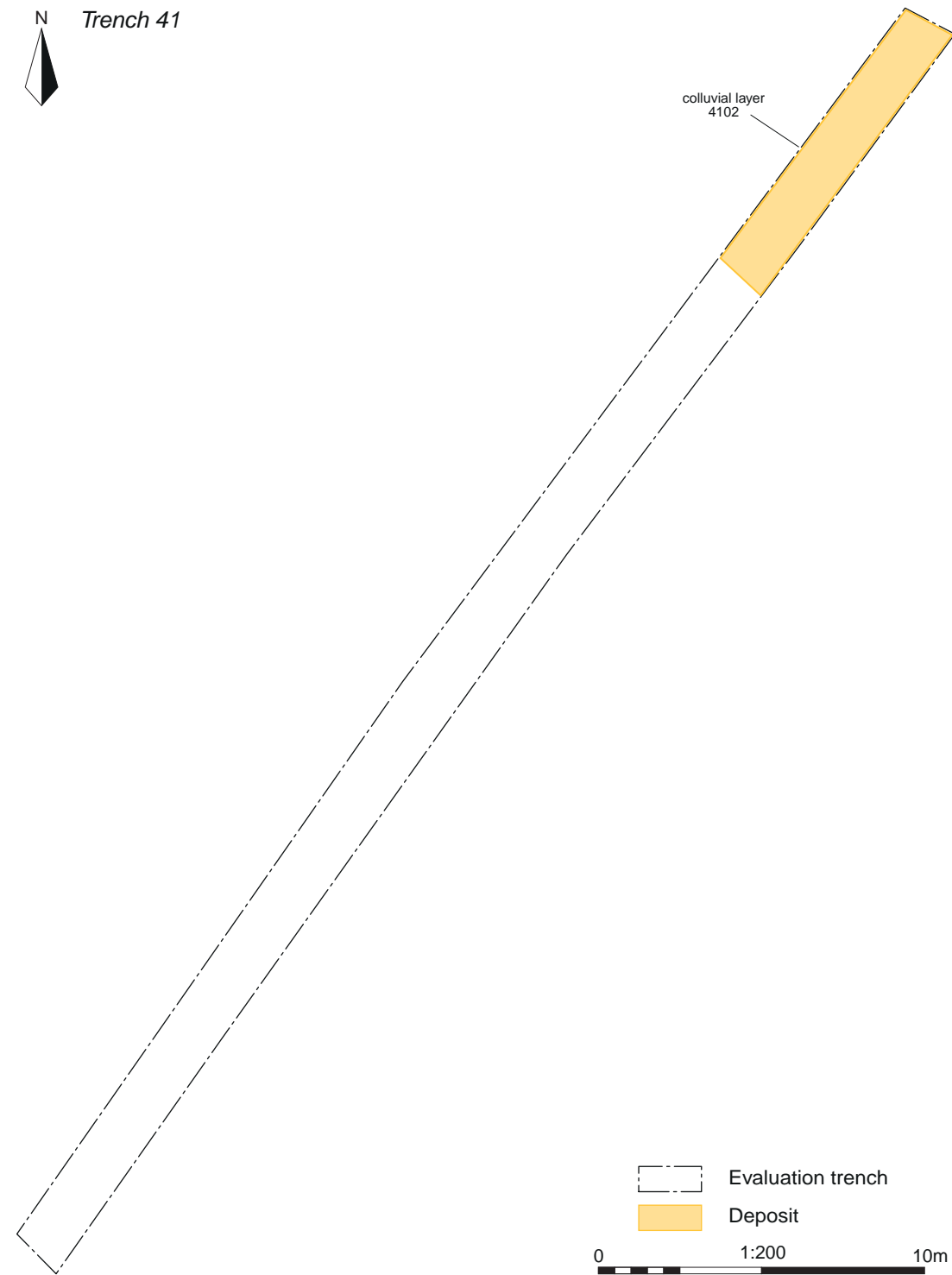
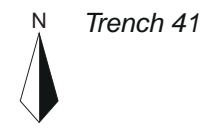


Gully 4002, looking north-east (0.3m scale)



Ditches 4004 and 4006, looking south-west (2m scale)





Trench 41, looking south-west (1m scales)



Colluvial layer 4102, looking south-west (1m scale)

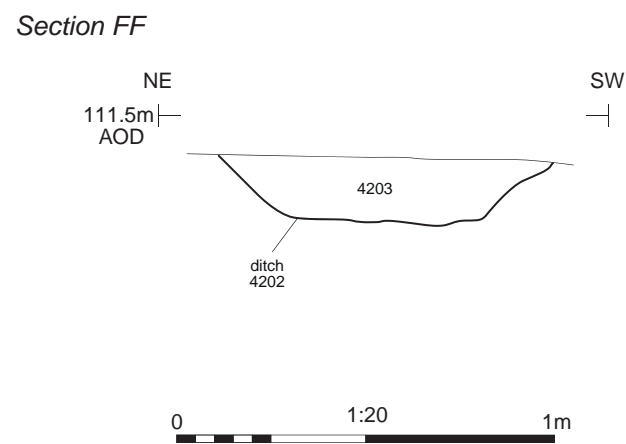
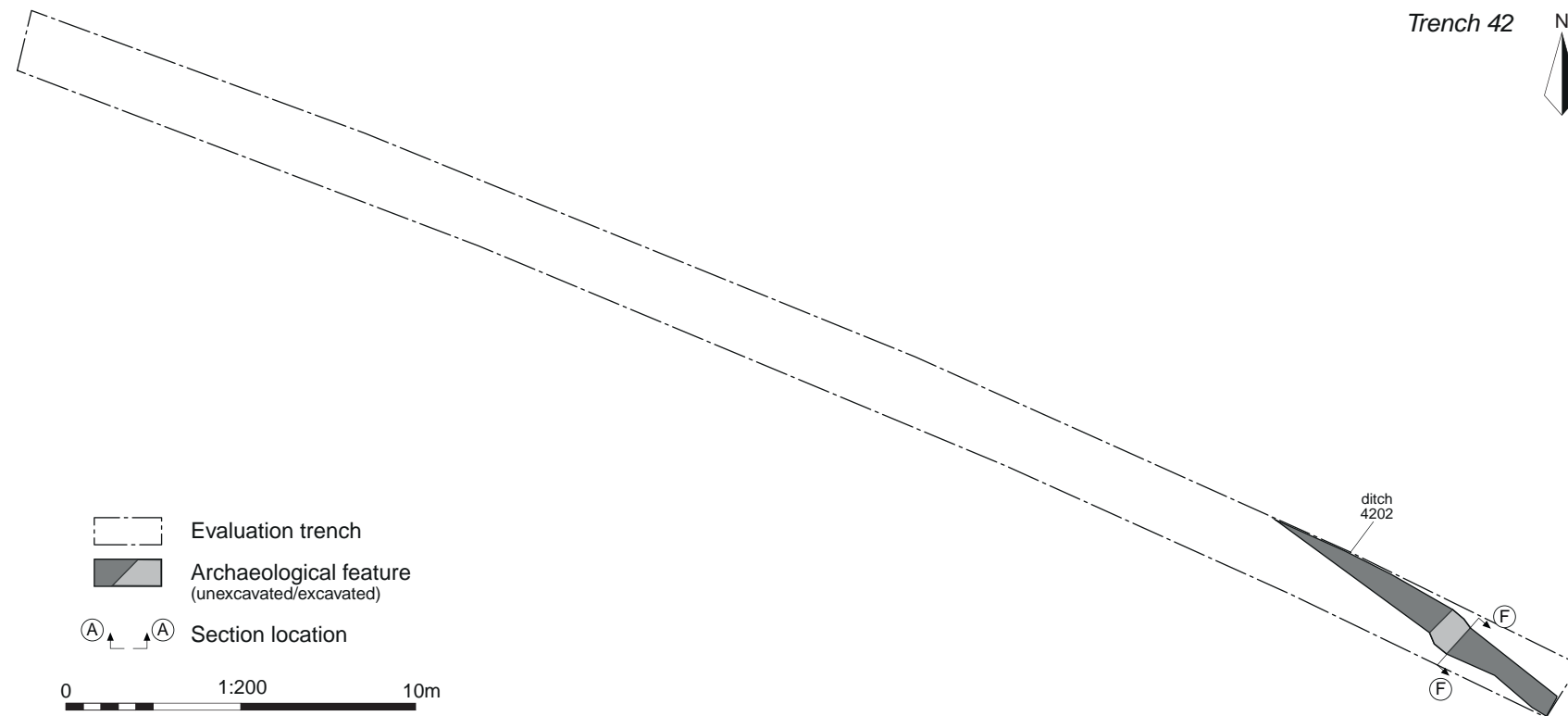
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FIGURE TITLE  
Trench 41: plan and photographs

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Ditch 4202, looking south-east (1m scale)

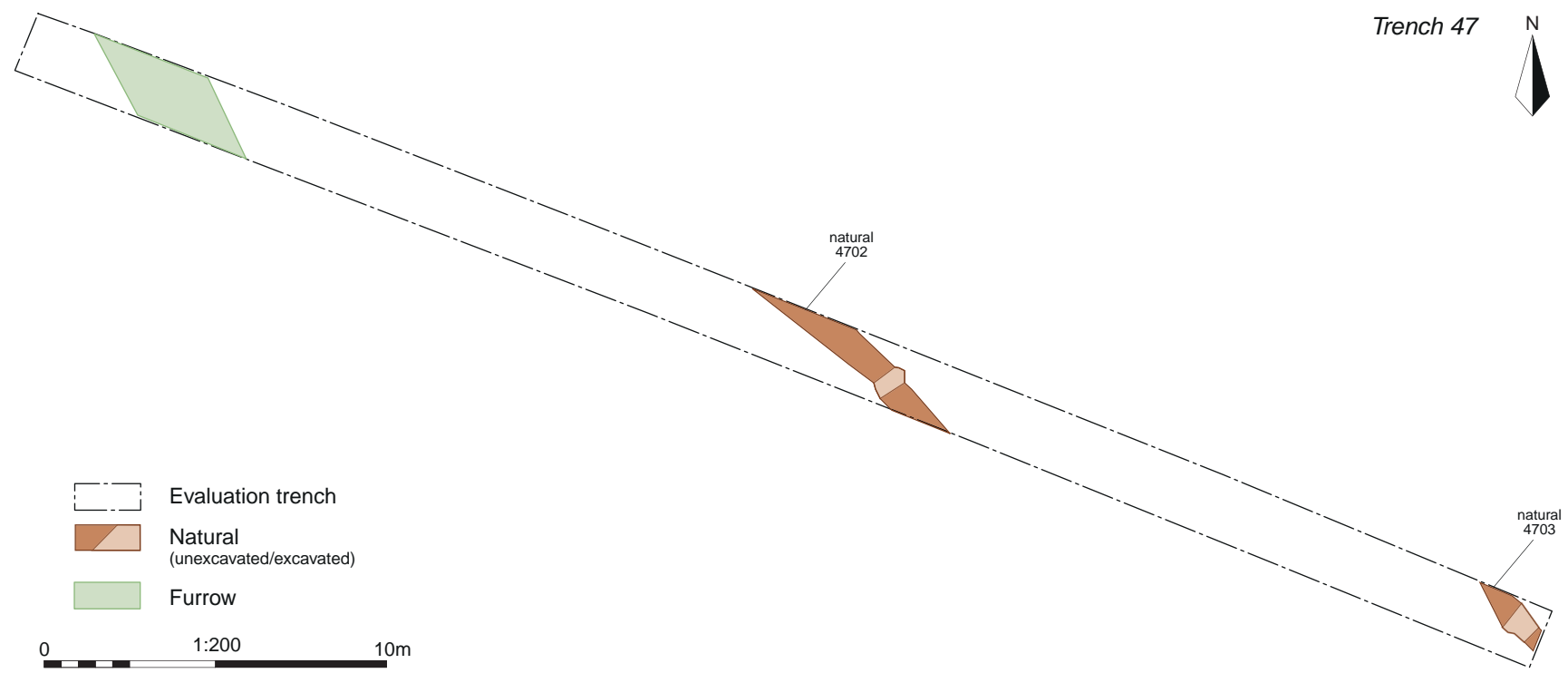
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PROJECT TITLE  
 Land North of Stevenage, Hertfordshire

FIGURE TITLE  
**Trench 42: plan, section and photograph**

DRAWN BY	HMM	PROJECT NO.	MK0708	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	20/10/2022	12
APPROVED BY	AN	SCALE@A3	1:20 & 1:200	





Natural feature 4702, looking north-west (0.3m scale)



Natural feature 4703, looking north-west (0.3m scale)

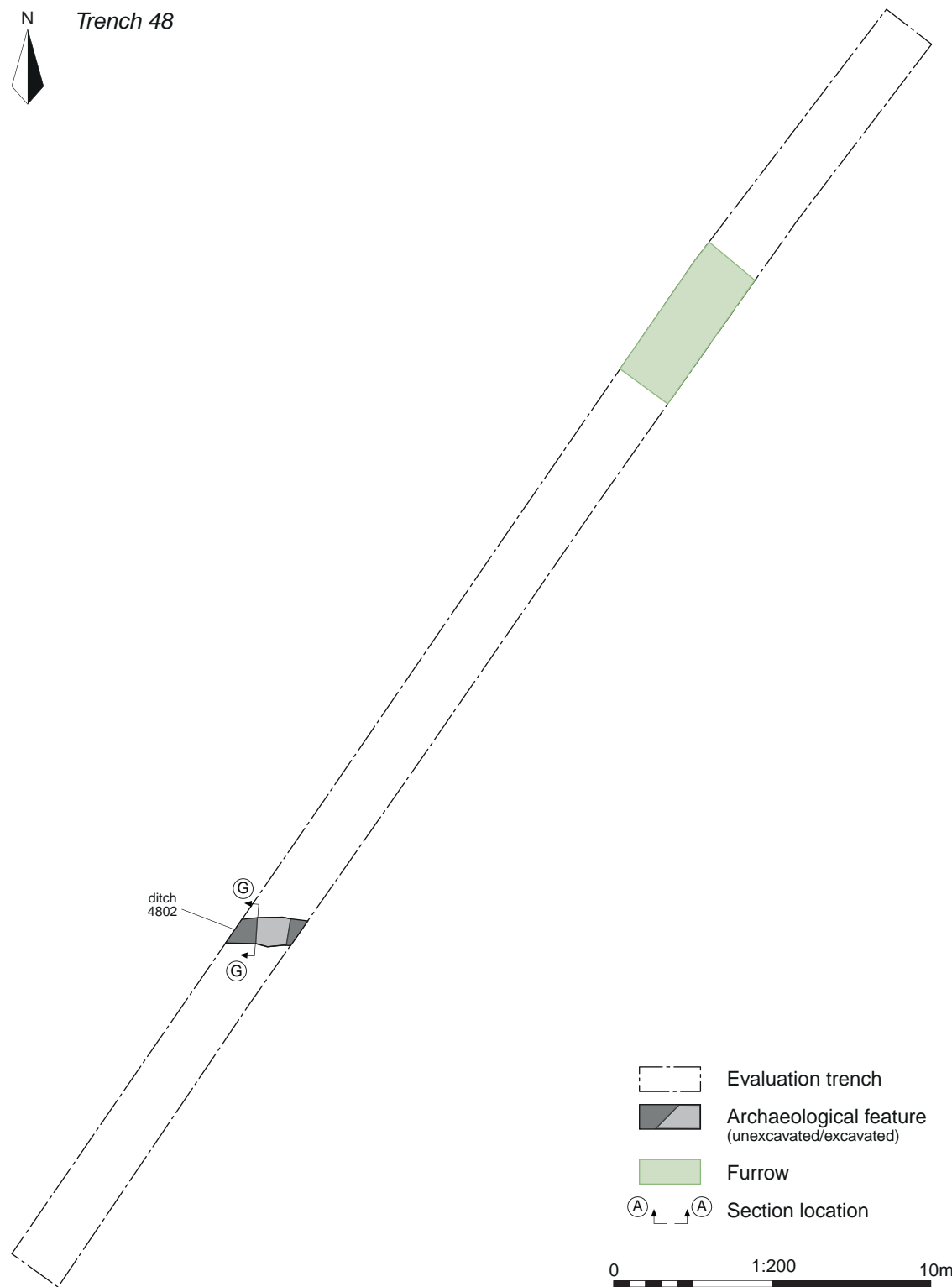
**Cotswold Archaeology**

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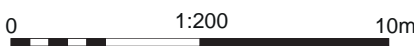
PROJECT TITLE  
 Land North of Stevenage, Hertfordshire

FIGURE TITLE  
 Trench 47: plan and photographs

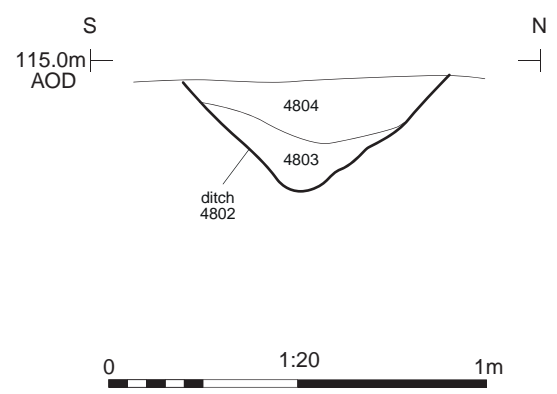
DRAWN BY	HMM	PROJECT NO.	MK0708	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	21/10/2022	13
APPROVED BY	AN	SCALE	@A3 1:200	



- Evaluation trench
- Archaeological feature (unexcavated/excavated)
- Furrow
- Section location



Section GG



Ditch 4802, looking west (1m scale)

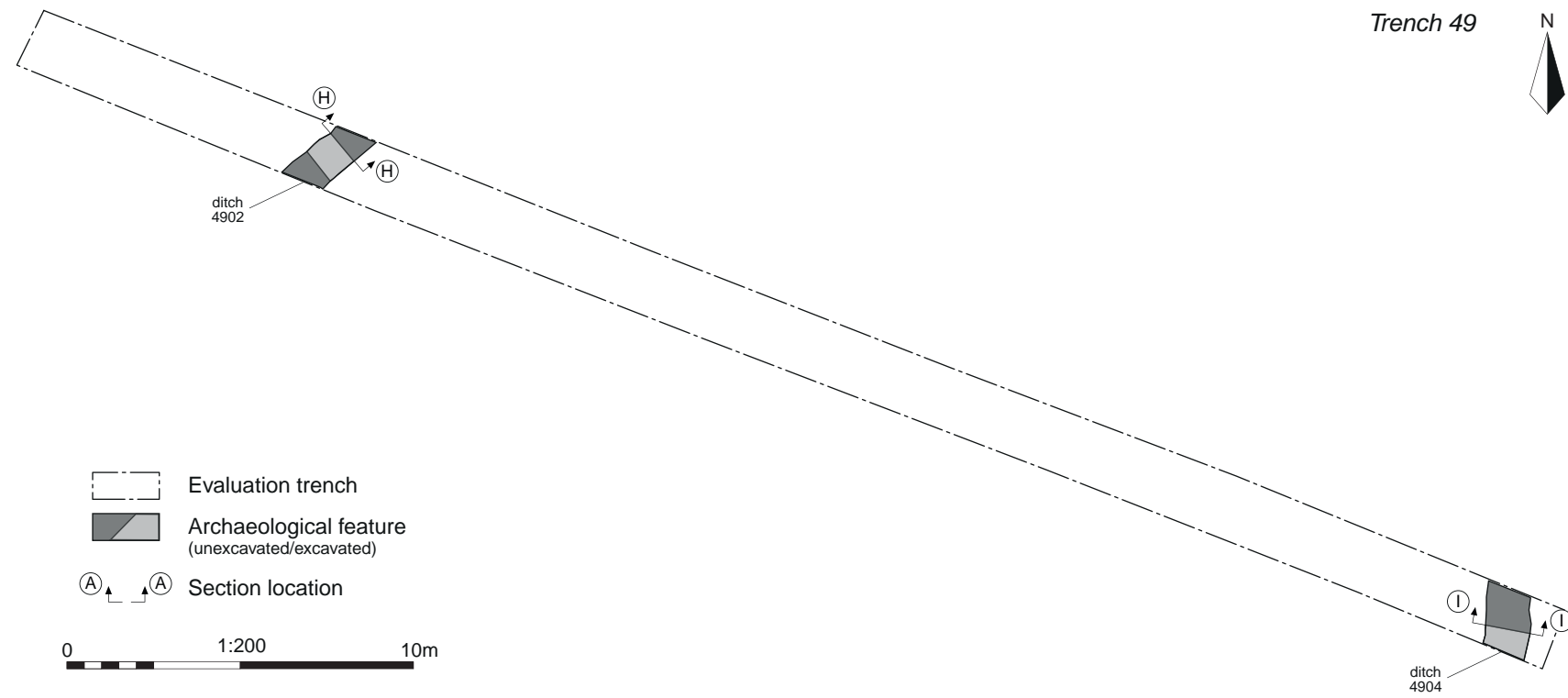
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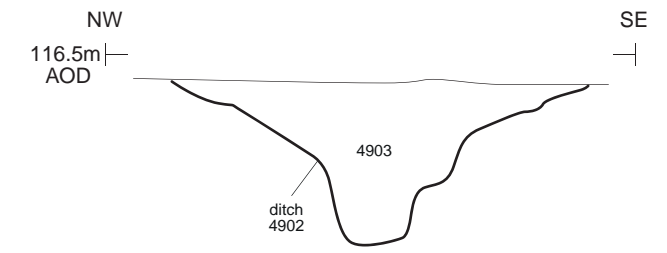
FIGURE TITLE  
**Trench 48: plan, section and photograph**

DRAWN BY	HMM	PROJECT NO.	MK0708	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	21/10/2022	14
APPROVED BY	AN	SCALE@A3	1:20 & 1:200	

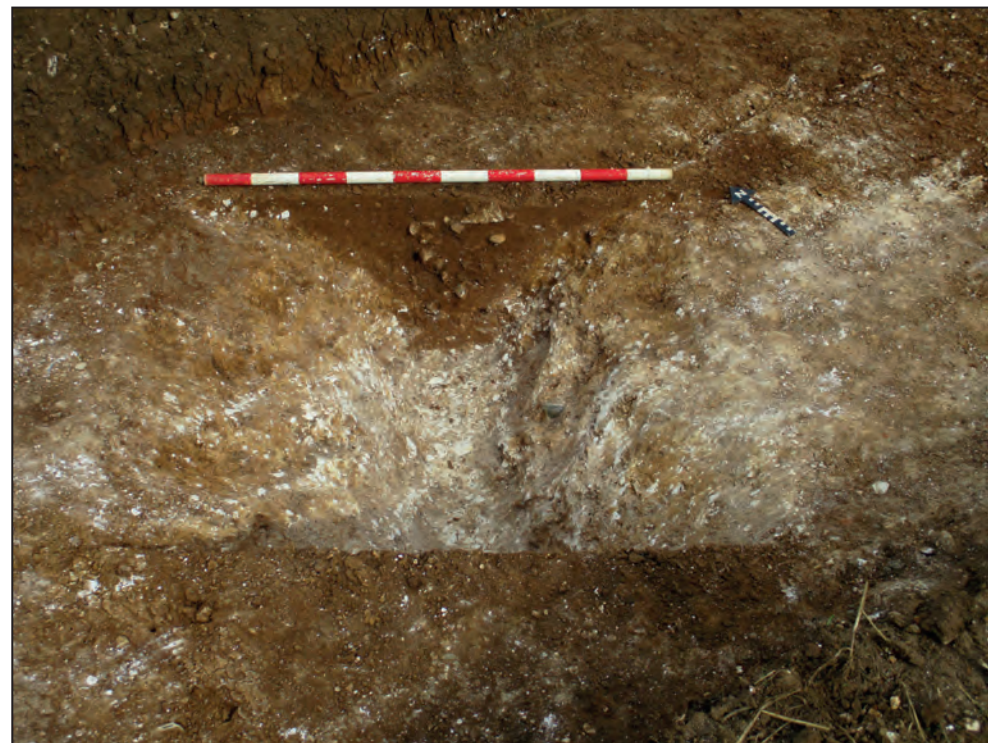
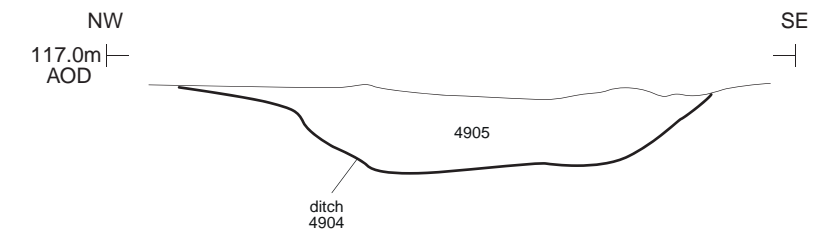




Section HH



Section II



Ditch 4902, looking north-east (1m scale)



Ditch 4904, looking north-east (1m scale)

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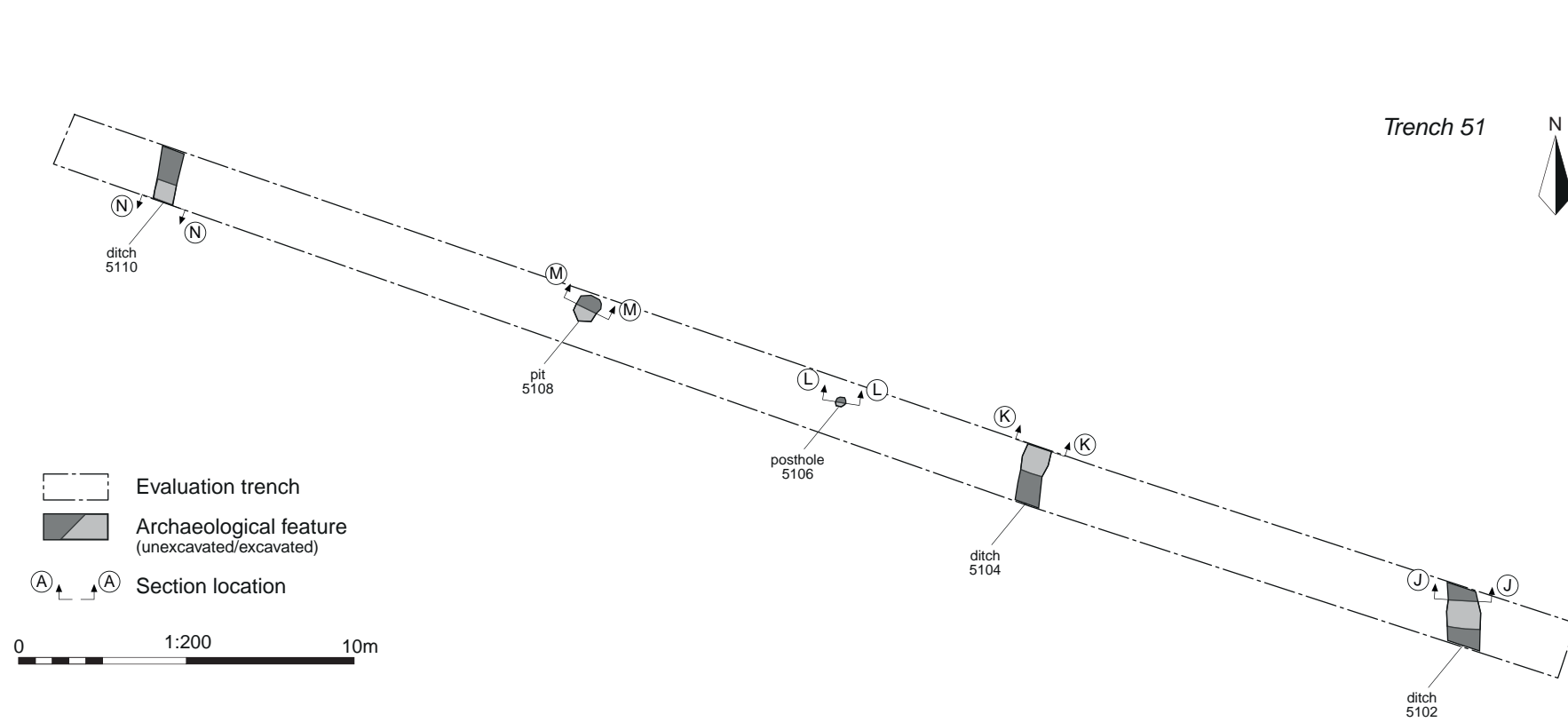
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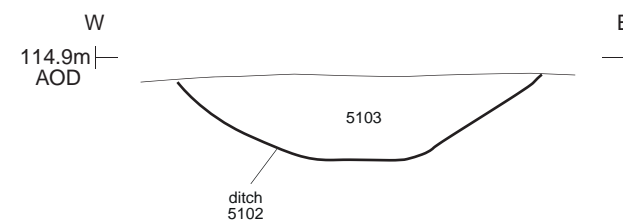
FIGURE TITLE  
**Trench 49: plan, sections and photographs**

DRAWN BY HMM PROJECT NO. MK0708 FIGURE NO.  
 CHECKED BY DJB DATE 24/10/2022  
 APPROVED BY AN SCALE @A3 1:20 & 1:200 **15**

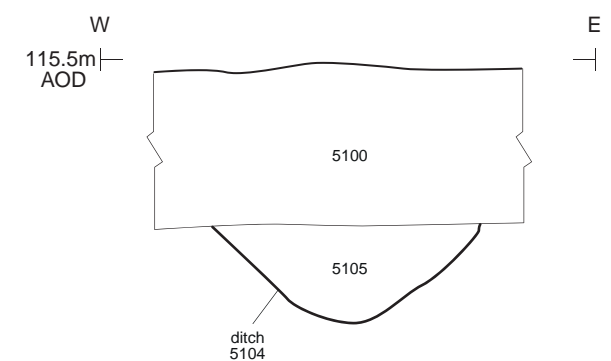




Section JJ



Section KK



Ditch 5102, looking north-west (1m scale)



Ditch 5104, looking north-east (1m scale)

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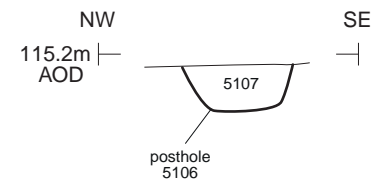
PROJECT TITLE  
 Land North of Stevenage, Hertfordshire

FIGURE TITLE  
**Trench 51: plan, sections and photographs**

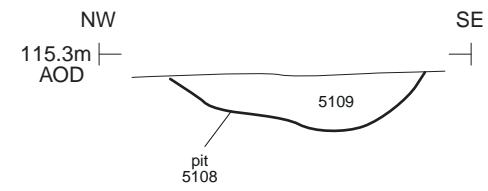
DRAWN BY HMM PROJECT NO. MK0708 FIGURE NO.  
 CHECKED BY DJB DATE 24/10/2022  
 APPROVED BY AN SCALE @A3 1:20 & 1:200 **16**



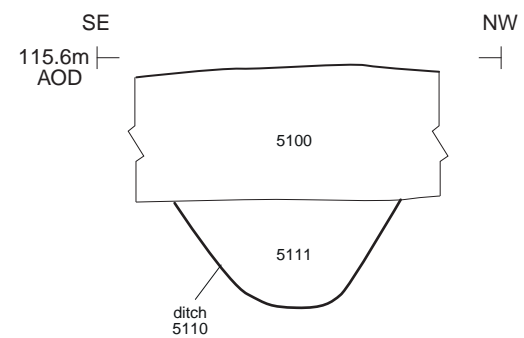
Section LL



Section MM



Section NN



Posthole 5106, looking north-east (0.2m scale)



Pit 5108, looking north-east (0.3m scale)



Ditch 5110, looking south-west (1m scale)


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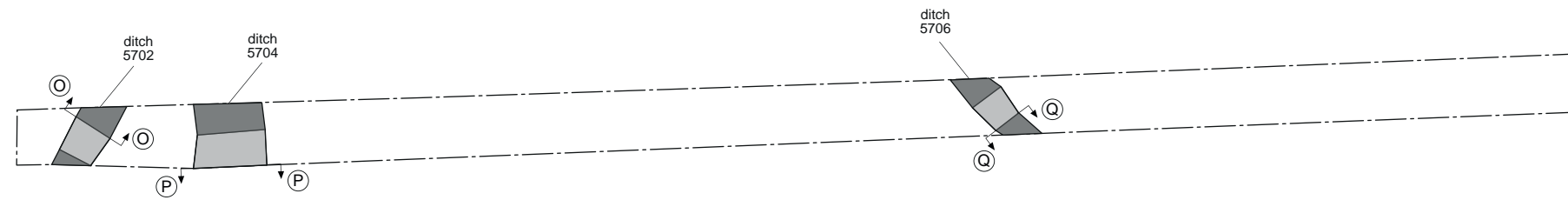
PROJECT TITLE  
**Land North of Stevenage, Hertfordshire**

FIGURE TITLE  
**Trench 51: sections and photographs**

DRAWN BY	HMM	PROJECT NO.	MK0708	FIGURE NO.
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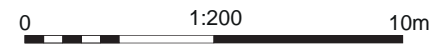


Trench 57



- Evaluation trench
- Archaeological feature (unexcavated/excavated)

Section location



Ditch 5702, looking north-east (1m scale)

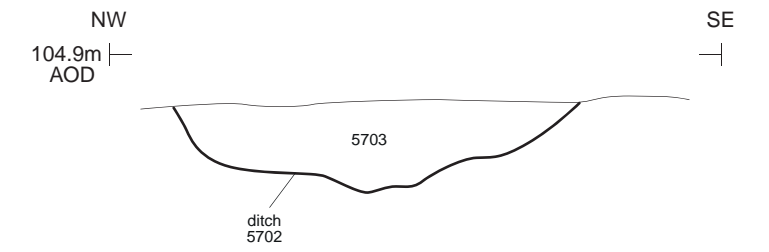


Ditch 5704, looking south (1m scale)

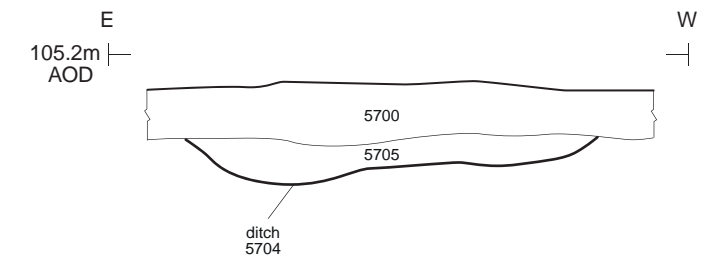


Ditch 5706, looking south-east (1m scale)

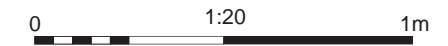
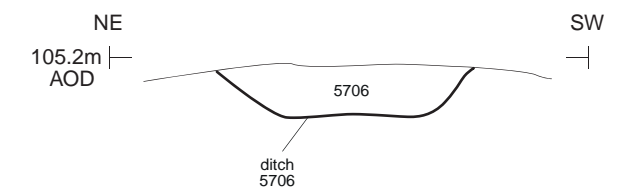
Section OO



Section PP



Section QQ



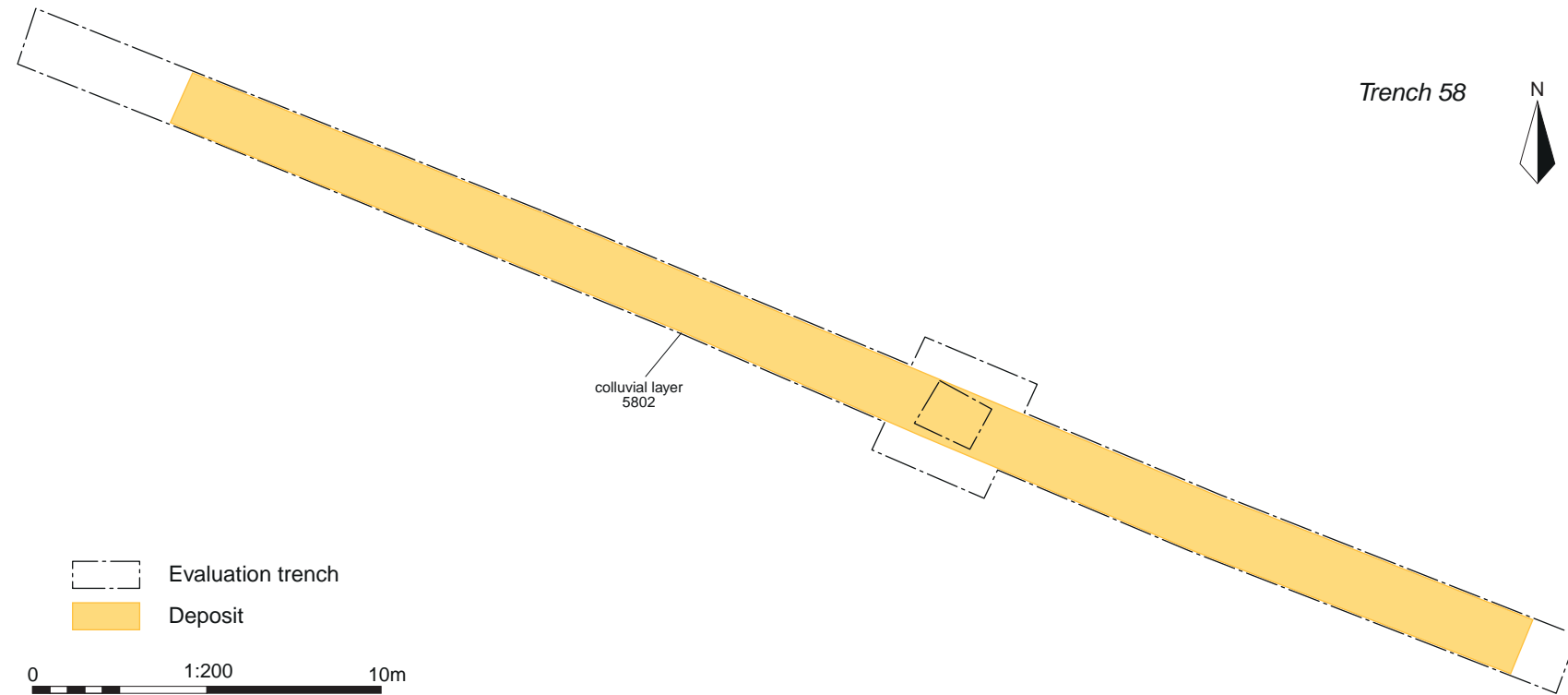
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PROJECT TITLE  
Land North of Stevenage, Hertfordshire

FIGURE TITLE  
Trench 57: plan, sections and photographs

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Colluvial layer 5802 before to be removed, looking north-west (1m scales)

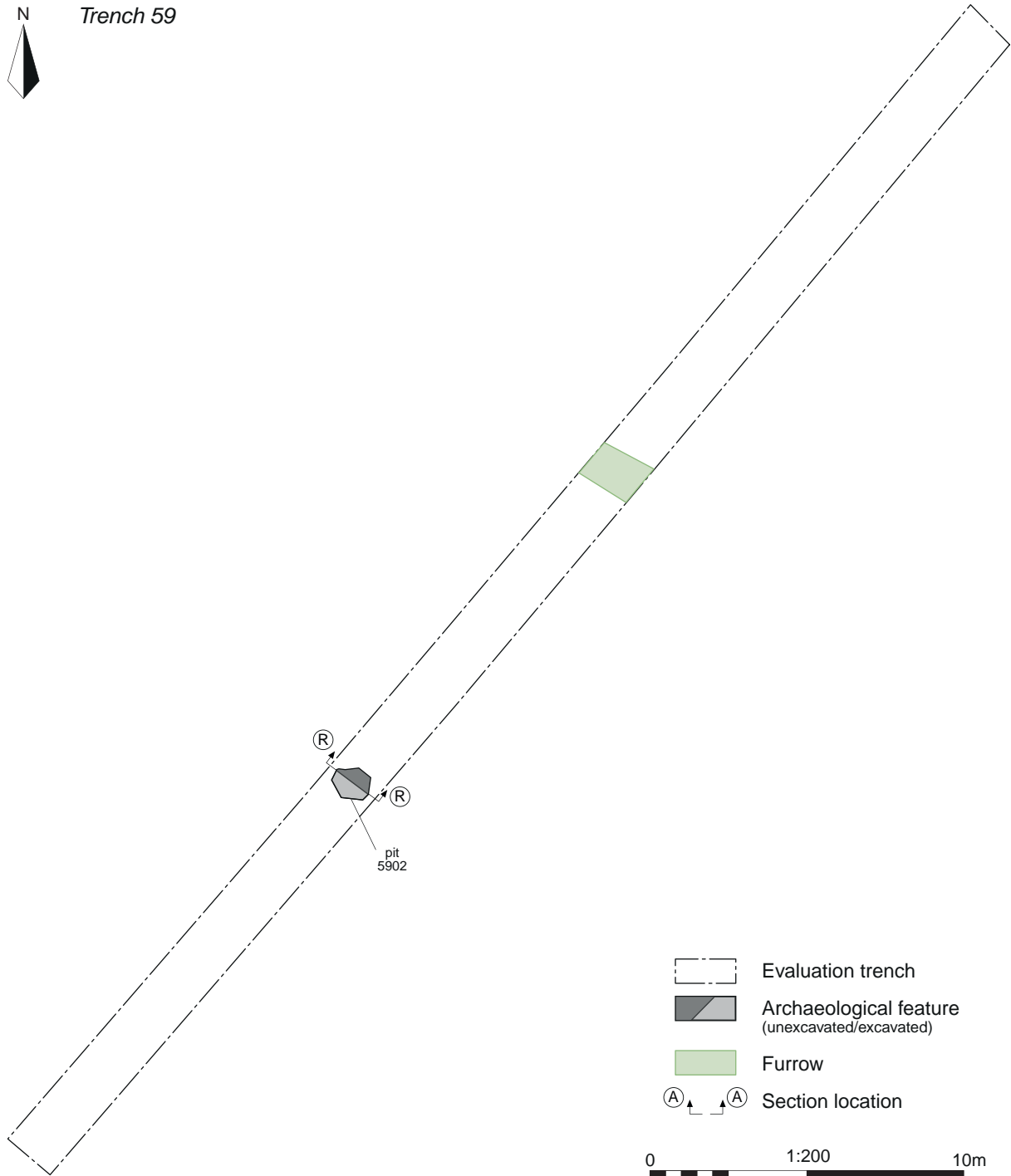
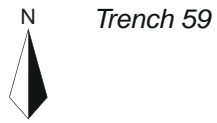






5801 after removing the colluvial layer 5802, looking south-east (1m scales)



Test pit and natural 5801, looking south-east (1m scales)

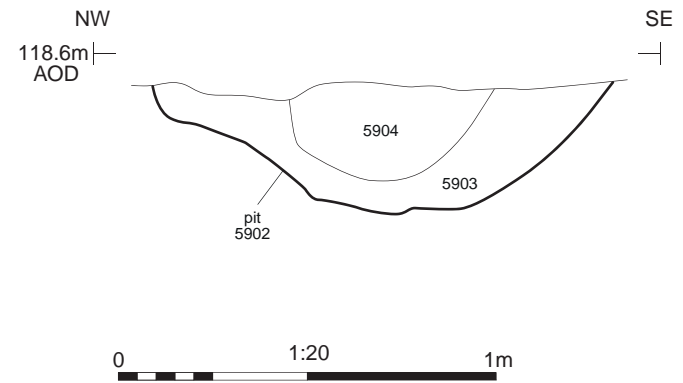




-  Evaluation trench
-  Archaeological feature (unexcavated/excavated)
-  Furrow
-  Section location

0 1:200 10m

Section RR



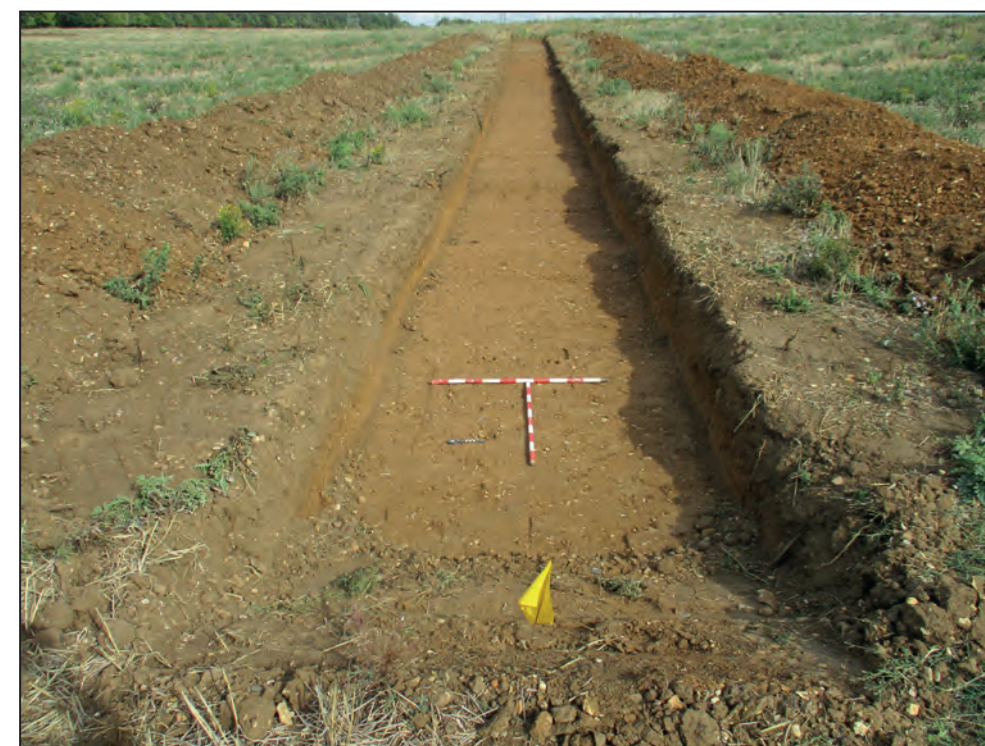
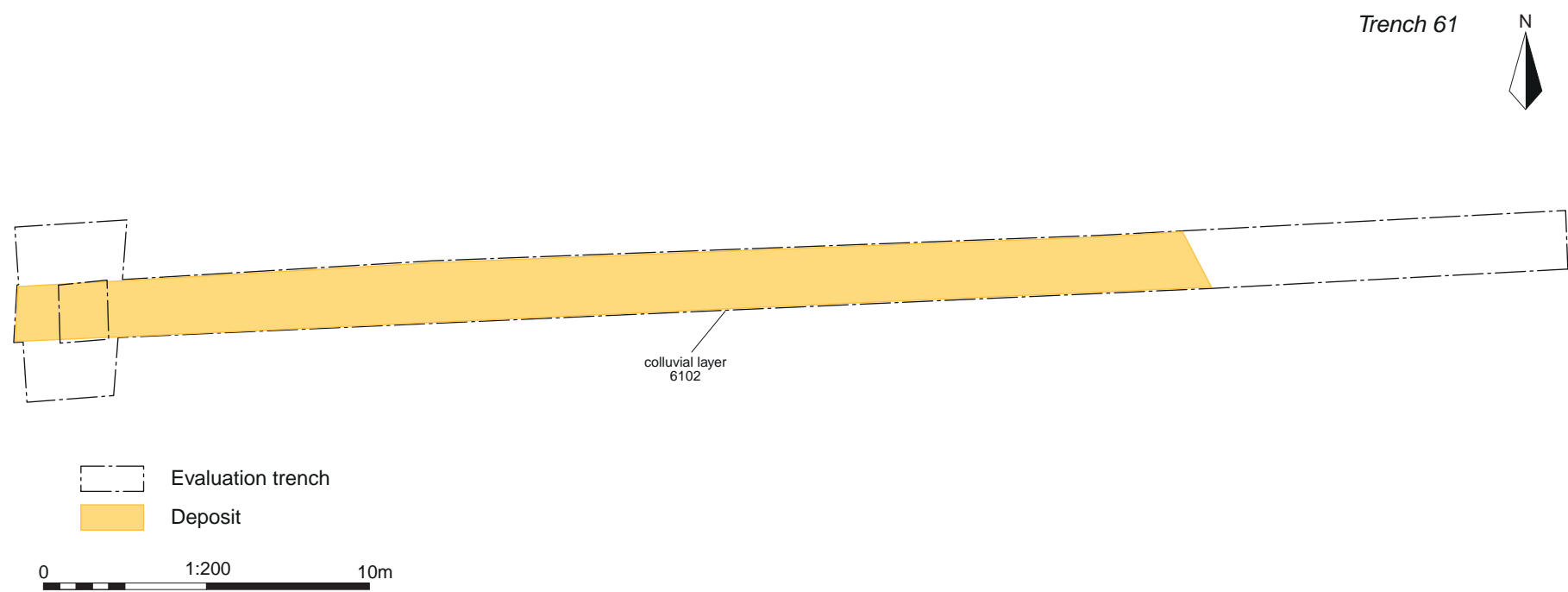
Pit 5902, looking north-east (1m scale)

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FIGURE TITLE  
**Trench 59: plan, section and photograph**





Trench 61 before removing the colluvial layer 6102, looking east (1m scales)



Trench 61 after removing the colluvial layer 6102, looking east (1m scales)



Test pit at the western end of trench 61, looking south (1m scales)

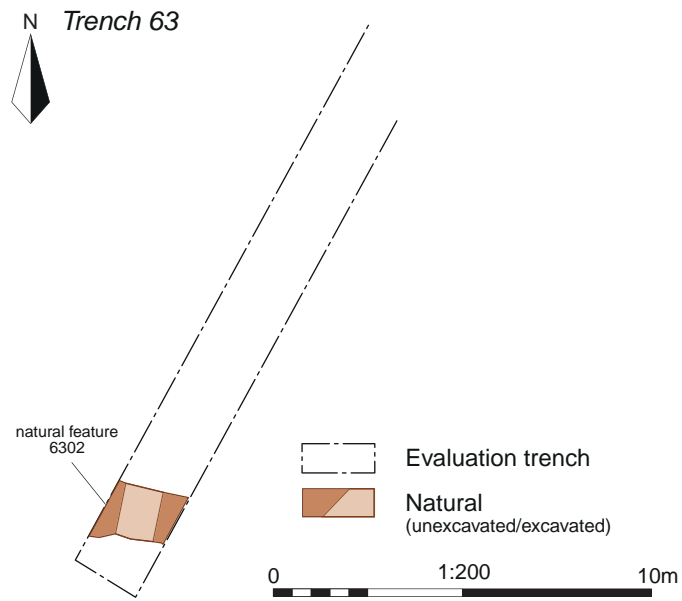
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FIGURE TITLE  
 Trench 61: plan and photographs

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Natural feature 6302, looking west (1m scale)



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PROJECT TITLE

Land North of Stevenage, Hertfordshire

FIGURE TITLE

Trench 63: plan and photograph

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FIGURE NO.

22





General view of the backfilling looking, looking north-west



Trenches 62 and 63 backfilled at the Eastern field, looking west



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PROJECT TITLE

Land North of Stevenage, Hertfordshire

FIGURE TITLE

Site shots after backfilling

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FIGURE NO.

23

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