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Interpretation, Design & Display

**symmetry park,
Bicester, Oxfordshire
Archaeological Evaluation**

Report No. MK050/16

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1. SUMMARY

CFA Archaeology Ltd carried out an archaeological evaluation on a proposed development on land east of Wretchwick Farm to the south-east of Bicester, Oxfordshire (centred on SP 60200 20650). The work was commissioned by Environmental Dimension Partnership on behalf of db symmetry. The Site comprised three pasture fields along the north-east side of Akeman Street, the former route of the Roman Road now under the A41. Two rectilinear Roman ditch systems were revealed in the south-east and north-west fields separated by an area largely devoid of archaeological features. The ditches of the two systems were regularly spaced, narrow, shallow and on four orientations, clearly dug as channels to drain the heavy clay soils on this side of Bicester. The two ditch systems are strung out along the north-east side of Akeman Street and may possibly have been drainage for field systems associated with two different settlements along the Road. A single C-shaped Iron Age enclosure ditch was identified in the south-east field, possibly representing a stock enclosure.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 General

2.1.1 This document presents the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by CFA Archaeology Ltd (CFA) between the 4th and 15th of April on a proposed construction site on land east of Wretchwick Farm to the south east of Bicester, Oxfordshire. The work was commissioned by Environmental Dimension Partnership on behalf of DBSymmetry.

2.1.2 The work was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), dated March 2016, covering this programme of works which was produced by CFA and approved by Oxfordshire County Council.

2.2 Background

2.2.1 The area of the evaluation (the Site) measures 15.8ha in extent and extends across 3 pastoral fields to the south-east of Bicester. The Site (Fig. 1) is bounded to the south by the A41 and to the west by an access road to Marlow JA & Son. The agricultural fields form the northern and eastern Site boundaries.

2.2.2 The local bedrock geology of the Site comprises of Peterborough Member Mudstone capped by sands and gravels. The Site is approximately 75m aOD .

2.2.3 A Heritage Assessment was prepared in 2015 to support the proposals to develop land at Akeman Park (Oakley 2015). The report concluded that there were no reorded archaeological remains present on the Site though there was the potential for Roman activity due to the close proximity of Akeman Street, the Roman Road which is now the A41.

2.2.4 A geophysical survey was carried out on the Site in March 2015. No archaeological anomalies were detected the archaeological potential of the Site was deemed to be low.

2.3 Objectives

2.3.1 The Research Objectives were to:

- Investigate the evidence for and origins of the different phases of land use and enclosure within the area, including any evidence for pre-Roman, Roman, Saxon, medieval and post-medieval activity
- Place the results of the investigation within the wider landscape context and contribute to an understanding of the pattern of land use
- Attempt to model the landscape and its transformation brought about by the settlement's inhabitants and due to natural events, using the spectrum of environmental techniques appropriate for this aspect of investigation.

3. WORKING METHODS

3.1 General

3.1.1 CFA Archaeology Ltd follows the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct, Standards and Guidance.

3.2 Trenching

3.2.1 The proposed evaluation was for thirty-five trenches each measuring 50m x 1.8m laid out on a grid; however, ten additional smaller trenches were also opened, each measuring between 9m and 26m x 1.8m, to identify the extent of areas of potential interest. Features in the extra trenches were recorded in plan only. Topsoil and cultivation soil (subsoil) were removed using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision. All features exposed were cleaned, surveyed and recorded in plan. A sample of these features were excavated by hand in the initial 35 trenches.

3.3 Excavation and Recording Strategy

3.3.1 All archaeological remains were recorded by means of drawings and written records conforming to Cifa standards (2014) and CFA's quality manuals. Excavated features were photographed and drawn in section at an appropriate scale. Sections were related in height to the ordnance datum using RTK initialized GPS equipment accurate to 12mm vertically. All trenches were surveyed using the above equipment which is accurate to 8mm horizontally. The photographic record consisted of digital photographs and 35mm B&W negatives.

4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

4.1 General

4.1.1 The locations of all trenches are shown in Fig. 1 and a summary of all trenches is contained in Appendix 1. NB Ridge and furrow or field drains have been identified in the illustrations while all other soil marks have been labelled as archaeological features irrespective of origin. Illustrations and photos referred to in the text can be found at the back of the report. A sample of archaeological features has been illustrated in detail (Figs. 3-17). Trenches containing archaeological features are described below in numerical order.

4.2 Topsoil, cultivation soil, natural deposits and Furrows

4.2.1 Topsoil deposits (**0101-0146**) were similar in all of the trenches, comprising a heavy silty-clay loam. Below this in most of the trenches was a cultivation soil (subsoil) which was similar in all trenches and was presumably created through 19th and 20th century ploughing and which yielded a range of residual pottery. This deposit (**0201-0246**) was a light orange-beige silty clay. Natural deposits in all of the trenches were found to be a beige-brown to yellow-grey silty clay mixed with occasional gravel (see Figs. 18-21 for general trench shots) (**0301-0346**). Several ceramic field drains were noted during trenching.

4.2.2 Furrows, relics of medieval or early post-medieval ridge and furrow agriculture, were visible in most of the trenches (Figs 2-4). The furrows were regularly spaced, cut some of the archaeological features and had light yellow-grey silty clay fills often containing frequent small fragments of coal. Residual pottery as well as more modern material was recovered from the furrows.

4.3 Trench 01 (Figs. 2a, 3a, 7)

4.3.1 At the south end were two linear ditches running parallel to each other (**0104**, **0106**). Both were on a south-west to north-east alignment (Figs. 22-23). The first (**0104**) was 0.68m wide and 0.22m deep with a re-cut and was filled with blue-grey silty clay (**0105**). Ditch **0106** was 0.80m wide and 0.42m deep filled with grey sandy clay (**0107**), and had a flattish base. In the middle of the trench was a third ditch (**0108**) (Fig. 24). This feature (0.8m wide, 0.4m deep) largely ran on an east to west alignment but curved gently to the north-east. The ditch was filled with a grey clayey silt (**0109**).

4.4 Trench 02 (Figs. 2a, 3b, 8)

4.4.1 At the south end of the trench was a ditch running on a south-west to north-east alignment, cut by a modern field drain. This ditch (**0210**) was visible for 4.5m and was 0.8m wide and 0.45m deep, filled with a blue-grey sandy silt (**0211**). Further north were two ditches running parallel to each other on a north-west to south-east alignment. The southernmost was 0.5m wide and 0.2m deep (**0204**), filled with a light grey and yellow silty sandy clay (**0205**). The northern one was 0.38m wide and 0.3m deep (**0206**), also filled with a grey and yellow sandy silty clay (**0207**). Further north was a shallow ditch on a north-east to south-west alignment, visible for 9m, which turned to the south-east. The ditch proved to be 0.4m wide and 0.12m deep at the north end (**0208**) filled with a grey-brown

sandy silty clay (**0209**), and 0.7m wide and 0.05m deep (**0212**) at the south end filled with grey silty sandy clay (**0213**).

4.5 Trench 03 (Figs. 2a, 3c, 9)

4.5.1 Three linear features close to each other were found in the south-east end of the trench. The northernmost, which was very slightly curved, was 0.8m wide and 0.35m deep (**0308**) and ran on a south-west to north-east alignment, filled with a grey and orange silty clay (**0309**). To the south was **0306**, a ditch 0.5m wide and 0.2m deep running on the same alignment. This feature was filled with a grey and orange silty clay (**0307**). The southernmost of the three ditches was 0.6m wide and 0.2m deep (**0304**) and also ran on a south-west to north-east alignment. This feature was filled with orange-brown silty clay (**0305**). Further to the north-west were two small pits and a curving ditch. The northern pit was not excavated (**0314**). The southern one was 0.7m by 0.4m by 0.15m deep (**0312**). This was filled with a grey-brown silty clay (**0313**). Nearby, a very slightly curved shallow ditch (**0310**) was found, 0.6m wide and 0.15m deep. At the north-west end of the trench was a gently curved ditch (**0315**) running on an approximate north-west to south-east alignment (not excavated).

4.6 Trench 04 (Fig. 2a)

4.6.1 One linear ditch was identified in the middle of this trench running on a south-west to north-east alignment, 0.6m wide and 0.3m deep (**0404**). This feature was filled with a dark-grey silty clay (**0405**). The ditch was cut by a furrow (**0407**). At the southern end of the trench, two tree-throw pits were identified (not illustrated).

4.7 Trench 06 (Figs. 2a, 3d, 10)

4.7.1 A long linear gully / ditch (**0605**) ran half way along the trench on a north-west to south-east alignment. Where excavated this gully was 0.5-0.6m wide and 0.3m deep, filled with a grey silty clay (**0605**). At the north-west end of the trench were two parallel ditches running north-east to south-west. Ditch **0606** was 0.4-0.6m wide and 0.25m deep. Ditch **0608** was 1m wide and 0.4m deep. Both were filled with grey silty clay (**0607**, **0609**).

4.8 Trench 07 (Figs. 2a/2b, 4a, 11)

4.8.1 A single ditch (**0708**) was exposed in the north-east half of the trench running north-east to south-west. Two slots were excavated: the first (**0706**) revealed approximately half the width of the feature and was 0.98m wide and 0.32m deep. The ditch here had a clear U-shaped profile and was filled with a dark-grey / orange silty clay with occasional charcoal lumps (**0707**). A single burnt flint was found. A second slot was excavated at the north-east of the feature where it turned sharply to the north-west (**0704**) (Fig. 25). Here the ditch was 0.8m deep, with a rough U-shaped profile, filled with a blue to light grey silty clay (**0705**) with a dark grey upper deposit containing charcoal lumps and bone. Two flints were found on the bottom of this upper deposit. Twenty-five small sherds of pottery (totaling 250g) were found ranging in date from Bronze Age

to Iron Age. At the south-west end of the trench was a modern ditch running north-south near a field drain (not illustrated).

4.9 Trench 08 (Fig. 2b)

4.9.1 Two potential pits were identified in this trench continuing into north-east profile. The visible part of pit **0804** was 0.6m long, 0.3m wide and 0.39m deep (**0804**) (Fig. 27). This was filled with grey sandy silty clay (**0805**). A second pit (**0806**) was found to the north-east (not excavated).

4.10 Trench 09 (Fig. 2b)

4.10.1 Two linear ditch features were exposed, one (**0905**) cutting the other (**0904**). Due to the high water level these were not excavated (not illustrated).

4.11 Trench 10 (Fig. 2b)

4.11.1 Two small ditches / gullies were identified at the southern part of the trench, both on a north-west west to south-east east alignment. The southern one was 0.8m wide and 0.34m deep (**1004**), filled with a light grey to orange sandy silty clay (**1005**). Next to it, to the north, was a similar ditch. This feature was 0.5m wide and 0.35m deep (**1006**), filled with light grey to blue silty clay (**1007**). In the middle of the trench was a wider linear feature running on a south-west west to north-east east alignment (**1008**), filled with dark grey silty clay (**1009**).

4.12 Trench 11 (Fig. 2b)

4.12.1 Two linear features (probable ditch features) were identified running north-east to south-west. Feature **1104** was filled with a light-grey silty clay (not excavated). Feature **1105** was narrower and filled with a dark grey silty sandy clay (also not excavated). This was cut by a modern water pipe.

4.13 Trench 12 (Figs. 2b, 4b, 12)

4.13.1 Six linear features and two pits were identified in this trench. At the north end was a shallow linear feature running on a north-east to south-west alignment, 0.9m wide and 0.2m deep (**1204**), filled with a greyish black silty clay (**1205**) (Fig. 28). Further south-west was a similar linear ditch running on an east-west alignment (**1206/7**). To the south-west were two pits, heavily truncated. One was 0.4m in diameter and 0.14m deep (**1208**), filled with a greyish black silty clay (**1209**). The second was 0.4m in diameter and 0.08m deep (**1210**), filled with a greyish and dark brown silty clay (**1211**). The latter feature may possibly be a tree-root hole. Four linear ditch / gully features with similar grey clay fills and U-shaped profiles were exposed to the south-west (**1206**, **1208**, **1210**, **1218**) running on the same north-west to south-east alignment.

4.14 Trench 13 (Fig. 2e)

4.14.1 One linear feature was exposed in the northern part of the trench, 0.7m wide and 0.3m deep (**1304**), running on east-west alignment. This was filled with grey and yellow silty sandy clay with occasional small angular stones (**1305**).

4.15 Trench 14 (Fig. 2e)

4.15.1 One linear feature (**1404**) running north-east to south-west was found in the eastern part of the trench. This was 0.4m wide and filled with light grey sandy silt.

4.16 Trench 18 (Figs. 2d/e, 4c, 13)

4.16.1 One pit (**1805**) was found in this trench located in the north-west corner and continuing into the north and west trench edge (Fig. 29). This measured 0.8m by 0.5m by 0.5m deep and was filled with a light grey sandy silty clay (**1806**).

4.17 Trench 20 (Fig. 2d)

4.17.1 Five linear features were identified in this trench, all running in the same north-west to south-east orientation. Ditch **2004** was 1.3m wide and 0.4m deep, filled with a grey silty clay (**2005**). To the north-west was **2006** which had a width of 0.8m, depth of 0.12m and was filled with a brown silty clay (**2007**). Features not excavated included **2008** to the south-east and **2009** and **2011** to the north-west, all filled with a grey silty clay.

4.18 Trench 21 (Fig. 2d)

4.18.1 Seven linear features running on a north-west to south-east alignment, ran across this trench and there was an elongated pit feature at the north-east end. Due to heavy rain, all of these features were covered by water therefore none were excavated. The pit feature was 1m wide and 2m long, continuing into the west trench edge. This was filled with a light grey and yellow sandy clay (**2110**). Further south was linear feature (**2111**), 0.8m wide, filled with a dark grey silty clay with occasional charcoal. A similar feature lay to the south, 0.7m wide, filled with a dark grey to orange silty clay (**2112**). Ten meters further south was another linear feature with a slight curve to the north in its eastern half. This was 0.8m wide and filled with dark grey silty clay with occasional small white stones (**2113**). In the middle of the trench was linear feature **2114**, 0.8m wide, filled with dark grey silty clay with occasional small white stones. To the south was linear feature **2115**, 0.9m wide, filled with dark grey and orange silty clay. South of this was **2116**, 1.4m wide, filled with dark grey silty clay. At the south-west end of the trench was **2117**, 0.8m wide, filled with dark grey and orange silty clay.

4.19 Trench 22 (Fig. 2c)

4.19.1 Ditch **2204** was located in the west half of the trench running on a north-east to south-west alignment measuring 0.4-0.5m wide and 0.28m deep with very steep sides and flat bottom. This feature was filled with a grey clay (**2205**). Ditch **2207** was located at the eastern end of the trench, crossing it at approximately 45

degrees, running on a south-east to north-west alignment. This was 0.8m wide and 0.45m deep, with steep sides and concave base, filled with grey-brown clayey silt (**2208**).

4.20 Trench 23 (Fig. 2c)

4.20.1 Four linear ditch features were exposed in this trench. At the south-west end was **2304**, a ditch running on a north-east to south-west alignment. This feature was 1.2m wide and 0.3m deep, with a V-shaped profile. The fill was a grey-brown silty clay (**2305**). Pieces of pottery were collected from this feature. Further north was a linear feature, 1.1m wide, filled with a dark grey/brown silty clay with charcoal lumps (**2311**) (not excavated). Roughly in the middle of the trench was a linear feature on a north-west to south-east alignment (**2307**), filled with grey clay containing occasional gravel (**2308**). The feature was steep on one side and shallow on the other. Feature **2309** was exposed in the northern part of the trench, running on a similar alignment as the feature described above. This was 1.1m wide and 0.3m with an uneven base due to burrowing or bioturbation, filled with grey clay (**2310**).

4.21 Trench 24 (Fig. 2c)

4.21.1 Three linear features and one pit were exposed in this trench. Linear feature **2409**, located at the western edge of the trench, ran on a north-east to south-west alignment and measured 1.6m wide and 0.4m deep, with a heavily bioturbated, dished base. This feature was filled with an orange-blue clay (**2410**). Nearby was pit **2407**, a very shallow scoop measuring 0.25m in diameter, filled with a dark grey-brown silty clay (**2408**). It is probable that this feature is simply a root mark rather than a plough-truncated pit. Further east was linear feature **2404** crossing the trench at approx. 30 degrees, running on a north-west to south-east alignment. This feature was cut by a modern field drain and measured 0.65m wide, 0.35m deep and had a U-shaped cut. The feature was filled with a grey-brown silty clay (**2405**) from which a pot fragment was recovered. A linear feature on a north-east to south-west alignment was exposed in the eastern part of the trench, but this was not excavated (**2406**). The feature was cut by a modern field drain and a 0.9m wide furrow. The fill was a dark grey-brown silty clay.

4.22 Trench 25 (Figs. 2c, 4d, 14)

4.22.1 Six pits and four linear features were exposed in this trench. At the south-west end were three pits of similar dimensions. One of these (**2514**) was excavated and was found to be only 0.12m deep, filled with dark grey silty sand (**2515**). The other pits (**2517**, **2516**) had similar fills; all three are probably vegetation marks. Close to the middle of the trench was a long curving ditch feature (**2510**) running first on a south-east to north-west alignment, and then turning 90 degrees sharply to the south where it was cut by a modern field drain. A slot dug through this ditch showed it to be 0.68m wide and 0.24m deep, with gently sloping sides ending in a V-shaped base. The fill was a very dark grey and brown silty clay with occasional yellow patches of the same material (**2511**). Another linear feature was identified adjacent to the one described above, measuring

0.85m wide and 0.25m deep (**2512**) (Fig. 30). A modern field drain and a furrow prevented investigation of the area where the two ditches appeared to join. It remains possible that they are the same feature as **2512** had a similar dark grey-brown silty clay fill (**2513**). North-west of the ditches was an irregular pit. This feature had a very irregular vertical cut and irregular base, measuring 0.5m long, 0.3m wide and 0.2m deep (**2508**), and was filled with dark grey silty clay (**2509**). It is probable that this feature is a burrow. To the north-east of the features described above was a linear **2518** running on an east-west alignment, widening towards the west. (not excavated). This measured 1.2-1.4m wide and was filled with a very dark grey and yellow silty clay. Further north-east was another linear feature cutting the trench at 40 degrees, also left unexcavated. This was 1.4m wide, filled with brown-grey-yellow silty clay (**2519**). Two pits were exposed at the north-east end of the trench. These were both 0.3m in diameter and filled with brown to dark grey sandy clay (**2520** and **2521**) (not excavated).

4.23 Trench 26 (Fig. 2c)

4.23.1 In the north-west corner was a linear feature cutting the trench at approx. 70 degrees, running on a north-west to south-east alignment, measuring min. 0.8m wide (the entire width was not exposed in the Trench) (**2608**). This feature was filled with a dark grey silty clay but was not excavated. Further to the south-east was a 1m wide linear feature cut by a field drain running on the same alignment. This feature was filled with very dark grey silty clay (**2609**), not excavated. Further east was another linear feature running on a similar alignment (**2606**). This heavily bioturbated ditch measured 0.5m wide and 0.2m deep, with irregular sides and a dished base. It was filled with a dark grey silty clay (**2607**). The last feature in this trench was a linear feature aligned south-west to north-east. This feature measured 0.8m wide and 0.31m deep (**2604**) with quite steep sides and a flat bottom, filled with a grey silty clay (**2605**) (Fig. 31).

4.24 Trench 27 (Fig. 2c)

4.24.1 Seven linear features were exposed in this trench. In the northern part were four very similar features each running north-east to south-west and measuring 1m wide, filled with grey-brown silty clay (**2704**, **2705**, **2706** and **2707**) (not excavated). In the middle of the trench was **2712**, running on the same alignment as the linear features described above. This was 1.1m wide and 0.45m deep, with a V-shaped cut, filled with a grey clay with darker clay at the base (**2713**) (Fig. 33). Further south were two linear features similar to each other, running on the same alignment as the other features in this trench, **2708** and **2710**. These were filled with grey silty clay (**2709**, **2711**) and were both 0.3m wide and 0.25m deep.

4.25 Trench 28 (Figs. 2c, 5a, 15)

4.25.1 Three linear features and three possible pits were found in this trench. At the north end was a linear ditch feature running on a north-west to south-east alignment, 2.5m wide. A 1m x 1m slot was dug, revealing a steep V-shaped cut, 0.4m deep (**2804**), filled with a very dark grey silty clay (**2805**). Nearby was linear feature **2806** running on a north-west to south-east alignment, 1.3m wide,

filled with a very dark grey sandy clay with occasional charcoal. This feature was not excavated. Roughly in the middle of the trench was a feature thought to be a possible pit continuing into the north-west trench edge. This feature was very shallow with a flat base, measuring min. 0.9m by 1.2m and 0.07m deep (**2808**), filled with dark brown and yellow silty clay with occasional very small white stones (**2809**), and appears to be a natural spread / vegetation hollow. Further south was another pit also continuing into the west trench edge, measuring min. 1.8m by 2.8m, filled with light brown and grey clay (**2811**). At the south end of the trench was narrow linear feature, running on a north-west to south-east alignment, cut by a modern field drain. This feature (**2812**) had a gentle south side and steep north side with round base, measuring 0.42m wide and 0.18m deep. The fill was a dark grey silty sandy clay (**2813**). Further south was a possible pit, again continuing into the west trench edge, measuring min. 0.6m by 1.8m, with irregular sides and double V-shaped bottom (**2814**), possibly bioturbated by roots, filled with dark grey and yellow silty sandy clay (**2815**).

4.26 Trench 29 (Figs. 2c, 29)

4.26.1 Near the west end of the trench was a possible pit continuing into the north trench edge, measuring 1m by 1.2m, filled with light grey silty sandy clay (**2914**) (not excavated). Nearby was linear feature **2915** running on a north-east to south-west orientation measuring 0.5m wide, filled with a very dark grey sandy silty clay with occasional small white stones (also not excavated). Further east was another linear feature running on a similar orientation measuring 0.6m wide, filled with dark grey silty clay with occasional charcoal (**2916**) (unexcavated). Nearby were two oval features and five possible pits. One of the oval features (**2912**) was excavated and proved to be 1m in diameter and only 0.05m deep filled with a dark grey organic silty clay (**2913**). The function of this feature is unclear; it may simply be a shallow tree-throw pit. The second oval feature (**2917**), measuring 1.4m by 0.9m, was filled with light brown and grey silty clay and was left unexcavated. Close to the oval features, two pits were investigated. Both were very small (0.22m in diameter) and extremely shallow and irregular, filled with sandy silty clay - either very dark grey (**2918**) or very dark brown (**2919**). The features are interpreted as vegetation/root hollows, probably associated with the oval features which may be tree-throw pits.

Nearby were three possible pits in a row oriented south-west to north-east. Feature **2908** was 0.34m in diameter and just 0.06m deep, with irregular sides ending with a concave bottom, filled with light grey and yellow sandy silty clay (**2909**). The second one (**2910**) was 0.4m in diameter and 0.2m deep with steep sides and an irregular base, filled with a very dark grey silty clay (**2911**), a probable burrow. The third possible pit, 0.25m in diameter, filled with dark grey silty clay (**2920**) was not excavated. Taken together the features in this area appear to represent tree disturbance with possible surrounding burrows, rather than features of anthropogenic origin. To the south-east was a linear feature with three likely vegetation hollows or burrows nearby. These were each 0.20-0.25m in diameter, filled with very dark grey silty clay (**2921**, **2923** and **2925**) (not investigated). The linear feature (**2904**) ran on a north-west to south-east alignment, measuring 0.5m wide and 0.28m deep, with steep sides and dished bottom, filled with grey and orange silty clay (**2924**).

Further south-east was a wider linear ditch feature on the same alignment. The feature measured 1m wide and 0.3m deep, with gentle sloping sides and dished base (2904), filled with light grey silty clay (2905). Further to the south-east was a narrow rectilinear feature running south-east to north-west, turning abruptly 90 degrees to the south-west (2906). A slot dug through this feature revealed it to be 0.4m wide and 0.1m deep, with gentle sides and dished bottom, filled with light grey silty clay (2907) (Fig. 32). This feature is interpreted as the plough-truncated remains of a ditch corner, as it lies on the same orientation as most of the other ditches in this part of the Site. At the south-east end of the trench was a pit, measuring 0.3m in diameter and filled with a very dark brown organic silt and sand (2922). This feature was identified as modern and not excavated.

4.27 Trench 30 (Figs. 2d, 5c, 17)

4.27.1 Three linear features were exposed in this trench. At the north-east end an irregular pit was just exposed in the north-west edge of the trench, filled with a dark silt (3010), not excavated. To the south was what appeared to be an L-shaped ditch feature. Excavation showed that the northern arm of the ditch (3006) was shallower and had cut the deeper north-south arm (3004). Both the fills (3007 and 3005) were similar blue-grey silty clays though the fill of the earlier ditch was darker. At the south end of the trench was a probable ditch (3008) on a north-east to south-west alignment filled with a grey silty clay (not excavated).

4.28 Trench 31 (Figs. 2d, 6a)

4.28.1 At the north-west end was a linear ditch feature running on a south-west to north-east alignment, slightly widening towards the south. A furrow sealed it (3106). This ditch (3104) measured 0.7m wide and 0.4m deep, with a steep sided V to U shaped cut, filled with a grey silty clay and re-deposited yellow clay with occasional flecks of charcoal (3105). Heavy tree root bioturbation was recorded. To the east was another linear feature on the same alignment measuring 1.15m wide, filled with grey clay (3107) (not excavated). Further east were two further linear features running on the same alignment, filled with blue silty clay (3109, 3114). Ten metres further east was another linear feature running on a north to south alignment. This feature (3111) was 0.8m wide, 0.3m deep and had a V-shaped cut, filled with a grey-blue clay (3112).

4.29 Trench 32 (Fig. 2d)

4.29.1 A single linear feature was exposed roughly in the middle of the trench, running on a rough west to east alignment. This measured 0.62m wide but only 0.1m deep (3205), filled with a medium brown-grey-blue silty clay with occasional fragments of charcoal (3206).

4.30 Trench 33 (Fig. 2d)

4.30.1 One linear feature 0.5m wide was exposed at the south-east end of the trench (3304), filled with a grey-blue silty clay. The feature was left unexcavated.

4.31 Trench 34 (Fig. 2d, 6b)

4.31.1 Five linear features were exposed in this trench, all running on the same north-east to south-west alignment. Two of the features were excavated. In the middle of the trench was one unexcavated linear feature, measuring 0.9m wide, filled with a grey silty clay (**3406**). Nearby to the east was another feature, measuring 0.92m wide and 0.34m deep with irregular steep sides and flat base (**3408**). The upper edge was heavily ploughed, thus making the exact depth of the feature difficult to assess. The feature was filled with a very dark grey silty clay (**3409**). Further to the east was a similar linear feature, measuring 1.4m wide (**3411**), and filled with the same material (**3412**). The upper edge was similarly heavily ploughed, and a piece of modern plastic was found in the fill; the feature was not excavated further. Nearby was a linear feature measuring 1.5m wide and filled with similar material as the features described above (**3414**). The last linear feature exposed at the east end of the trench, measured 1m wide (**3416**). This was filled with the same material as the previously described features.

4.32 Trench 35 (Fig. 2d)

4.32.1 A long narrow linear feature (**3505**) was revealed, 0.2m wide and 0.2m deep, with vertical sides and U-shaped base, running on a north to south alignment. This was filled with a light grey and yellow sandy silty clay (**3506**). The feature looked exactly like a cut for a field drain, though no ceramic pipe was found.

4.33 Trench 36 (Fig. 2c)

4.33.1 Five linear features and one possible pit were exposed in this trench but not excavated. In the south-eastern corner was a linear feature running on a north to south alignment. The exposed part of this feature was 0.5m wide, filled with dark brown silty clay (**3604**). The remaining three linear features ran on the same north-east to south-west alignment, each measuring 0.8m wide. Two of them were identified near the south end and in the middle of the trench, the latter one cut by a modern field drain and a furrow. The ditches (**3605** and **3607**) were filled with the same dark brown silty clay. At the northern end of the trench was a possible pit or vegetation mark (**3608**) located very close to a linear feature (**3609**) running north-east to south-west. The posthole / vegetation mark was 0.45m in diameter and filled with dark brown silty clay with occasional charcoal flicks (**3608**). The linear feature was filled with grey brown silty clay with occasional charcoal flecks (**3609**).

4.34 Trench 37 (Fig. 2c)

4.34.1 One oval feature and one linear feature were exposed in this trench; neither was excavated. The oval feature was located at the south-east corner of the trench and continued into its southern edge. This was min. 0.6m wide and 1.7m long, filled with medium brown silty clay with occasional flicks of charcoal (**3704**). Running from the middle of the trench to the north-west corner was a linear feature filled with dark-medium brown silty clay (**3705**).

4.35 Trench 38 (Fig. 2c)

4.35.1 Four probable ditch features were exposed, none of them excavated. Three of them ran on the same west to east alignment, measuring 0.6-0.8m wide, filled with dark grey-brown silty clay (**3804** and **3806**) or dark brown clayey silt (**3805**). In the middle of the trench was another linear feature running on a north to south alignment, 0.6m wide, filled with dark grey-brown silty clay (**3807**).

4.36 Trench 39 (Fig. 2c)

4.36.1 Two linear features were identified in this trench but not excavated. The first, on an east-west alignment, was 0.5m wide and filled with a blue-grey clay (**3905**). At the south end of the trench was another linear feature running north-east to south-west (**3906**).

4.37 Trench 40 (Fig. 2a/b, 4a)

4.37.1 This trench was excavated to find the continuation of ditch **0708** from Trench 07 as it turned 90 degrees to the north-west. The trench successfully exposed the ditch (**4004**) for 10.5m. A similar fill to the upper deposit of **0705** was found in the top of the trench (**4005**).

4.38 Trench 41 (Fig. 2a/b)

4.38.1 The corner of a large ditch-like feature was found in this trench running on a north-west to south-east alignment turning 90 degrees to the south-west. This measured 1.5m wide and was filled with a mottled mid grey-brown to orange sandy clay with occasional charcoal fragments (**4104**). The feature appears to be the same ditch as **0708** in Trench 07.

4.39 Trench 42 (Fig. 2a/b)

4.39.1 One possible squared/rectangular pit was found roughly in the middle of the trench, measuring 0.6m long and 0.3m wide, filled with a dark grey-brown sandy clay with 50% angular stones (**4204**), not excavated. This feature may be related to the ditch in Trenches 07 and 41.

4.40 Trench 43 (Fig. 2a/b, 4a)

4.40.1 This was a very small trench dug to find the north-east edge of ditch **0708** in Trench 07. The edge was successfully identified showing that the feature was 2.6m wide (**4304** and **4305**).

4.41 Trench 44 (Fig. 2a/b)

4.41.1 One linear feature was found in this trench running on a north-west to south-east alignment, not excavated. The feature measured 0.5m wide and was filled with a mid grey-brown clayey silt (**4405**).

4.42 Trench 46 (Fig. 2a/b, 4a)

- 4.42.1 One linear feature was found in the southern part of the trench. The feature was modern, cut from the topsoil, measuring 1m wide and filled with a light grey sandy silty clay (4604). This same ditch had been found in Trench 07 but abandoned.

5 Pottery

Introduction

- 5.1 A Total of 239 sherds of pottery weighing approximately 1945.85 was collected from 25 contexts.

Prehistoric pottery

- 5.2 The earliest dated pottery accounting for approximately 1-2% of the assemblage is probably of late Bronze Age to early Iron Age period (and thus may be attributed to the Post Deverel-Rimbury (Cunliffe, B. 1984) tradition), however this date is tentative due to a lack of diagnostic fragments. Body sherds of a heavily flint tempered ceramic from ditch deposit 1905 may be either daub or sherds of poorly fired Bronze age pottery. One of the heavily abraded sand tempered sherds from Post hole deposit 1505 have the remains of incised 'dotted' decoration suggestive of a Bronze to early Iron Age date. However the abrasion on the pottery suggests that it is not impossible that the sherds are residual.

Middle Iron Age to early Romano-British Pottery

- 5.3 The largest proportion of pottery (at least 94 %) can be attributed to the Middle to Late Iron Age/Romano-British period. Not all of the pottery is not closely dated due to a lack of diagnostic sherds within the contexts, however there are sufficient rims for overall dating. An abraded sandy greyware 'shouldered' jar (Mephram, L, 2000) sherd with external sooting from ditch deposit 1905 can be attributed to the Middle Iron Age (about 3rd- 4th century BC). Wheel made or wheel finished jar rim sherds from ditch deposit 1113 date to the Late Iron Age. A variety of finer pink to orange soft sandy oxidised wares (Cunliffe, B. 1984) are not closely dateable, but can probably be attributed to the late Iron Age. This includes body sherds with occasional quartz and ferrous inclusions from ditch deposit 1206.
- 5.4 A number of the vessels appear to have suspension holes. A coarsely flint tempered jar (with sherds of a similar fabric in 1305) from primary ditch deposit 1114 also appears to have the remains of suspension holes and possibly the remains of iron suspension 'hooks'. One of the body sherds of a very fine partially reduced micaceous orange pottery from ditch deposit 1115 (possibly hand-made and wheel finished) also has the remain of possible suspension hole and iron 'hook'. The fabric from this vessel is difficult to identify, although it is possible it may be an imported (Central Gaulish? (Compton 2015)) fabric and probably dates from the Late Iron Age to Early Roman-British period. Pottery of a similar fabric type has also been noted in Essex. The pedestal base of a possible Gallo-Belgic (Compton, J. 2015) vessel was noted in 0205, although it is not impossible that this may have been more locally produced.

6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Iron Age enclosure ditch

6.1.2 Trenches 07, 40, 41 and 43 revealed a rectangular C-shaped ditch probably dating to the early to late Iron Age period containing pottery, bone, charcoal and possible fragments from a loom weight. Several other trenches (Tr. 42, 44, 45, 46) were excavated to define the extent / corners of this feature but none succeeded. A single square pit in Trench 42 may possibly relate to activity inside or just outside of the enclosure. The absence of prehistoric finds in the other trenches on this part of the site suggests the remains are very localised. The ditch may represent the south-eastern and north-eastern sides of a stock enclosure.

6.2 The Roman ditch systems

6.2.1 The evaluation has identified many regularly spaced shallow ditches which are earlier than the medieval / post-medieval furrows and contain pottery dating to the Roman period. Most of these are aligned north-west to south-east or north-east to south-west: approximately the same orientation as the current field boundaries and the A41 (Akeman Street).

6.2.2 In a few of the trenches (Tr. 01, 02, 25, 29, 30, 38) the corners of these ditches were identified suggesting that the ditch layout may be rectangular or square in plan. The high water table on the Site suggests that the ditches were dug to drain the land, most likely for grazing animals or growing crops. This agricultural function may explain the relative sparsity of pottery.

6.2.3 Many of the ditches had disturbed cut lines consistent with bioturbation and rooting by vegetation. This is evidence that bushes and trees grew up in the ditches when they were in use, before they became infilled. This would have provided hedge-like boundaries for the small rectangular agricultural plots created by the ditches.

6.2.4 There appear to be two separate ditch systems, one in the north-west third of the Site and one in the south-east third, with an area largely devoid of ditches in the middle field around Trenches, 13 to 19. Though the two systems appear similar in nature, it is perhaps possible that the two agricultural systems relate to separate settlements strung out along Akeman Street. Another interpretation may be that these simply represent different phases of land drainage along the Road.

6.3 Features created by vegetation and bioturbation

6.3.1 Several features in the north-west end of the Site, initially thought to be of archaeological interest, proved on excavation to be shallow burrows, vegetation hollows and tree-throw pits. This included most of the 'pit' features originally identified in Trenches 29, 36 and 25. The lack of pottery in these trenches also suggests that the features are natural.

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APPENDIX 1: Trench Summary

Trench 01		Trench Size 57m x 1.8m	
Trench depth 0.55-0.7m	Topsoil depth 0.27-0.3m	Subsoil depth 0.35-0.4m	
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>		
0104	Cut of ditch		
0105	Fill of ditch		
0106	Cut of ditch		
0107	Fill of ditch		
0108	Cut of linear feature		
0109	Fill of linear feature		
Trench 02		Trench Size 52m x 1.8m	
Trench depth 0.58-0.74m	Topsoil depth 0.24-0.34m	Subsoil depth 0.34-0.4m	
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>		
0204	Cut of ditch		
0205	Fill of ditch		IA to Early RB
0206	Cut of ditch		
0207	Fill of ditch		
0208	Cut of slot A (linear feature)		
0209	Fill of slot A (linear feature)		
0210	Cut of ditch		
0211	Fill of ditch		
0212	Cut of slot B (linear feature)		
0213	Fill of slot B (linear feature)		
Trench 03		Trench Size 52m x 1.8m	
Trench depth 0.4-0.6m	Topsoil depth 0.3-0.4m	Subsoil depth 0.1-0.3m	
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>		
0304	Cut of ditch		
0305	Fill of ditch		
0306	Cut of linear feature		
0307	Fill of linear feature		
0308	Cut of linear feature		
0309	Fill of linear feature		
0310	Cut of gently curving feature		
0311	Fill of above		
0312	Cut of post hole		
0313	Fill of post hole		
0314	Cut of post hole (not excavated)		
0315	Linear feature (not excavated)		
Trench 04		Trench Size 52m x 1.8m	
Trench depth 0.55-0.68m	Topsoil depth 0.28-0.35m	Subsoil depth 0.2-0.3m	
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>		
0404	Cut of ditch		
0405	Fill of ditch		
0406	Furrow		
0407	Furrow		
0408	Furrow		
Trench 05		Trench Size 52m x 1.8m	
Trench depth 0.35-0.6m	Topsoil depth 0.15-0.25m	Subsoil depth 0.15-0.4m	
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>		
0504	VOID		
0505	VOID		
0506	Furrow		
0507	Furrow		
0508	Furrow		
Trench 06		Trench Size m x 1.8m	
Trench depth 0.4-0.6m	Topsoil depth 0.3-0.4m	Subsoil depth 0.1-0.3m	

<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
0604	Cut of ditch	
0605	Fill of ditch	
0606	Cut of ditch	
0607	Fill of ditch	
0608	Cut of ditch	
0609	Fill of ditch	
Trench 07		Trench Size 53m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.45-0.58m	Topsoil depth 0.1-0.2m	Subsoil depth 0.1-0.38m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
0704	Cut of slot A (linear feature)	
0705	Fill of slot A (linear feature)	
0706	Cut of slot B (linear feature)	
0707	Fill of slot B (linear feature)	
0708	Cut of ditch [final int.]	
0709	Fill of ditch [final int.]	
0710	Furrow	
0711	Furrow	
0712	Furrow	
0713	Furrow	
Trench 08		Trench Size 50m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.37-0.47m	Topsoil depth 0.22-0.28m	Subsoil depth 0.1-0.9m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
0804	Cut of possible pit (not excavated)	
0805	Fill of possible pit (not excavated)	
0806	Pit (not excavated)	
0807	Furrow	
Trench 09		Trench Size 51.5m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.5-0.6m	Topsoil depth 0.23-0.25m	Subsoil depth 0.15-0.33m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
Trench 10		
		Trench Size 51m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.45-0.58m	Topsoil depth 0.22-0.25m	Subsoil depth 0.15-0.2m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
1004	Cut of linear feature	
1005	Fill of linear feature	
1006	Cut of linear feature	
1007	Fill of linear feature	
1008	Cut of linear feature	
1009	Fill of linear feature	
Trench 11		Trench Size 50m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.48-0.9m	Topsoil depth 0.14-0.26m	Subsoil depth 0.12-0.16m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
1104	Linear feature (not excavated)	
1105	Linear feature (not excavated)	IA
1106	Furrow	LIA
1107	Furrow	LIA
Trench 12		Trench Size 50m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.5-0.62m	Topsoil depth 0.2m	Subsoil depth 0.2-0.24m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
1204	Cut of linear feature	
1205	Fill of linear feature	IA
1206	Cut of linear feature	
1207	Fill of linear feature	
1208	Cut of possible posthole	
1209	Fill of possible posthole	
1210	Cut of possible posthole	

1211	Fill of possible posthole	
1212	Cut of linear feature	
1213	Fill of linear feature	
1214	Cut of linear feature	
1215	Fill of linear feature	
1216	Cut of linear feature	
1217	Fill of linear feature	
1218	Cut of linear feature	
1219	Fill of linear feature	
Trench 13		Trench Size 50.5m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.47-0.55m	Topsoil depth 0.2-0.3m	Subsoil depth 0.12-0.21m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
1304	Cut of linear feature	
1305	Fill of linear feature	BA-IA
Trench 14		Trench Size 51m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.45-0.5m	Topsoil depth 0.24-0.25m	Subsoil depth 0-0.17m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
1404	Linear feature (not excavated)	1860-1900
Trench 15		Trench Size 51m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.37-0.43m	Topsoil depth 0.1-0.14m	Subsoil depth 0.17-0.2m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
1504	Furrow	
1505	Furrow	BA-IA
1506	Furrow	
1507	Furrow	
Trench 17		Trench Size 50.5m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.32-0.45m	Topsoil depth 0.08-0.1m	Subsoil depth 0.14-0.25m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
1704	Linear feature (not excavated)	
1705	Furrow	BA-IA
Trench 18		Trench Size 51m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.4-0.45m	Topsoil depth 0.12-0.15m	Subsoil depth 0.16-0.19m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
1804	Furrow	
1805	Cut of pit	
1806	Fill of pit	
Trench 19		Trench Size 52m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.35-0.4m	Topsoil depth 0.1m	Subsoil depth 0.15-0.2m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
1904	Furrow	
1905	Furrow	BA-IA
1906	Furrow	
Trench 20		Trench Size 51m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.36-0.52m	Topsoil depth 0.14-0.3m	Subsoil depth 0.18-0.2m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
2004	Cut of linear feature	
2005	Fill of linear feature	
2006	Cut of linear feature	
2007	Fill of linear feature	
2008	Furrow	
2009	Linear feature (not excavated)	
2010	Furrow	
2011	Linear feature (not excavated)	
Trench 21		Trench Size 52m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.4-0.45m	Topsoil depth 0.12-0.18m	Subsoil depth 0.18-0.3m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
2104	Furrow	
2105	Furrow	

2106	Furrow	
2107	Furrow	
2108	Furrow	
2109	Furrow	
2110	Pit (not excavated)	
2111	Linear feature (not excavated)	
2112	Linear feature (not excavated)	
2113	Linear feature (not excavated)	
2114	Linear feature (not excavated)	
2115	Linear feature (not excavated)	
2116	Linear feature (not excavated)	
2117	Linear feature (not excavated)	
Trench 22		Trench Size 52m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.38-0.55m	Topsoil depth 0.1-0.11m	Subsoil depth 0.2-0.3m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
2204	Cut of linear feature	
2205	Fill of linear feature	
2206	Furrow	
2207	Cut of linear feature	
2208	Fill of linear feature	
Trench 23		Trench Size 49m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.4-0.5m	Topsoil depth 0.12-0.14m	Subsoil depth 0.2-0.25m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
2304	Cut of linear feature	
2305	Fill of linear feature	
2306	Furrow	
2307	Cut of linear feature	
2308	Fill of linear feature	
2309	Cut of linear feature	
2310	Fill of linear feature	
2311	Linear feature (not excavated)	
Trench 24		Trench Size 50m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.27-0.55m	Topsoil depth 0.09-0.15m	Subsoil depth 0.14-0.2m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
2404	Cut of linear feature	
2405	Fill of linear feature	
2406	Linear feature (not excavated)	
2407	Cut of 'posthole'	
2408	Fill of 'posthole'	
2409	Cut of linear feature	
2410	Fill of linear feature	
Trench 25		Trench Size 51.5m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.25-0.45m	Topsoil depth 0.15-0.2m	Subsoil depth 0.1-0.2m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
2504	Furrow	
2505	Furrow	
2506	Furrow	
2507	Furrow	
2508	Cut of posthole	
2509	Fill of posthole	
2510	Cut of linear feature	
2511	Fill of linear feature	
2512	Cut of linear feature	
2513	Fill of linear feature	
2514	Cut of posthole	
2515	Fill of posthole	
2516	Posthole (not excavated)	
2517	Posthole (not excavated)	

2518	Linear feature (not excavated)	
2519	Linear feature (not excavated)	
2520	Posthole (not excavated)	
2521	Posthole (not excavated)	
Trench 26		Trench Size 50.5m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.33-0.55m	Topsoil depth 0.08-0.13m	Subsoil depth 0.2-0.3m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
2604	Cut of linear feature	
2605	Fill of linear feature	
2606	Cut of linear feature	
2607	Fill of linear feature	
2608	Linear feature (not excavated)	
2609	Linear feature (not excavated)	
Trench 27		Trench Size 48m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.6-0.7m	Topsoil depth 0.2-0.3m	Subsoil depth 0.2-0.4m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
2704	Linear feature (not excavated)	
2705	Linear feature (not excavated)	
2706	Linear feature (not excavated)	
2707	Linear feature (not excavated)	
2708	Cut of linear feature	
2709	Fill of linear feature	
2710	Cut of linear feature	
2711	Fill of linear feature	
2712	Cut of linear feature	
2713	Fill of linear feature	
Trench 28		Trench Size 50.5m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.55-0.65m	Topsoil depth 0.2-0.3m	Subsoil depth 0.28-0.4m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
2805	Cut of linear feature	
2804	Fill of linear feature	
2806	Linear feature (not excavated)	
2807	Furrow	
2808	Cut of pit	
2809	Fill of pit	
2810	Furrow	
2811	Pit (not excavated)	
2812	Cut of linear feature	
2813	Fill of linear feature	
2814	Cut of pit	
2815	Fill of pit	
Trench 29		Trench Size 50.5m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.55-0.7m	Topsoil depth 0.25-0.27m	Subsoil depth 0.22-0.35m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
2904	Cut of linear feature	
2905	Fill of linear feature	
2906	Cut of linear feature	
2907	Fill of linear feature	
2908	Cut of 'posthole'	
2909	Fill of 'posthole'	
2910	Cut of posthole	
2911	Fill of 'posthole'	
2912	Cut of 'pit'	
2913	Fill of 'pit'	
2914	Pit (not excavated)	
2915	Linear feature (not excavated)	
2916	Linear feature (not excavated)	
2917	Pit (not excavated)	

2918	Posthole (not excavated)	
2919	Posthole (not excavated)	
2920	Posthole (not excavated)	
2921	Posthole (not excavated)	
2922	Posthole (not excavated)	
2923	Posthole (not excavated)	
2924	Fill of linear feature	
2925	Posthole (not excavated)	
2926	Cut of linear feature	
Trench 30		Trench Size 52m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.5-0.55m	Topsoil depth 0.15-0.3m	Subsoil depth 0.16-0.25m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
3004	Cut of linear ditch	
3005	Fill of linear ditch	
3006	Cut of linear ditch	
3007	Fill of linear ditch	
3008	Linear feature (not excavated)	
3009	Furrow	
3010	Fill of pit (not excavated)	
Trench 31		Trench Size 50m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.45-0.6m	Topsoil depth 0.13-0.27m	Subsoil depth 0.21-0.3m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
3104	Cut of linear feature	
3105	Fill of linear feature	
3106	Furrow	
3107	Linear feature (not excavated)	
3108	Furrow	
3109	Linear feature (not excavated)	
3110	Furrow	
3111	Cut of linear feature	
3112	Fill of linear feature	
3113	Furrow	
3114	Linear feature (not excavated)	
Trench 32		Trench Size 52m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.37-1.1m	Topsoil depth 0.12-0.15m	Subsoil depth 0.1-0.26m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
3204	Furrow	
3205	Cut of linear feature	
3206	Fill of linear feature	
3207	Furrow	
Trench 33		Trench Size 51m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.44-0.53m	Topsoil depth 0.18-0.25m	Subsoil depth 0.26-0.3m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
3304	Linear feature (not excavated)	
3305	Furrow	
3306	Furrow	
3307	Furrow	
Trench 34		Trench Size 50m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.45-0.5m	Topsoil depth 0.2-0.25m	Subsoil depth 0.15-0.2m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
3404	Furrow	
3405	Furrow	
3406	Linear feature (not excavated)	
3407	Furrow	
3408	Cut of linear feature	
3409	Fill of linear feature	
3410	Furrow	
3411	Cut of linear feature	

3412	Fill of linear feature	
3413	Furrow	
3414	Linear feature (not excavated)	
3415	Furrow	
3416	Linear feature (not excavated)	
Trench 35		Trench Size 51m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.3-0.5m	Topsoil depth 0.1-0.3m	Subsoil depth 0-0.17m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
3504	Furrow	
3505	Cut of linear feature	
3506	Fill of linear feature	
Trench 36		Trench Size 24m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.5-0.6m	Topsoil depth 0.2-0.25m	Subsoil depth 0.2-0.4m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
3604	Linear feature (not excavated)	
3605	Linear feature (not excavated)	
3606	Furrow	
3607	Linear feature (not excavated)	
3608	Posthole (not excavated)	
3609	Linear feature (not excavated)	
Trench 37		Trench Size 24m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.5-0.6m	Topsoil depth 0.2-0.3m	Subsoil depth 0.2-0.35m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
3704	Pit (not excavated)	
3705	Linear feature (not excavated)	
Trench 38		Trench Size 26m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.4-0.5m	Topsoil depth 0.15-0.2m	Subsoil depth 0.2-0.25m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
3804	Linear feature (not excavated)	
3805	Linear feature (not excavated)	
3806	Linear feature (not excavated)	
3807	Linear feature (not excavated)	
3808	Furrow	
3809	Furrow	
3810	Furrow	
Trench 39		Trench Size 26m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.45-0.55m	Topsoil depth 0.2-0.3m	Subsoil depth 0.18-0.26m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
3904	Furrow	
3905	Linear feature (not excavated)	
3906	Linear feature (not excavated)	
Trench 40		Trench Size 9m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.35-0.48m	Topsoil depth 0.2m	Subsoil depth 0.1-0.2m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
4004	Ditch cut (0708) (not excavated)	
4005	Ditch fill (0708) (not excavated)	
Trench 41		Trench Size 10.5m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.32-0.4m	Topsoil depth 0.15-0.2m	Subsoil depth 0.05-0.2m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
4104	Curving feature (not excavated), same as 0708?	
Trench 42		Trench Size 18m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.38-0.4m	Topsoil depth 0.2-0.26m	Subsoil depth 0.05-0.1m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
4204	Posthole (not excavated)	
Trench 43		Trench Size 4m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.2-0.4m	Topsoil depth 0.1-0.15m	Subsoil depth 0.1-0.2m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	

4304	Ditch cut (0708) (not excavated)	
4305	Ditch fill (0708) (not excavated)	
Trench 44		Trench Size 12m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.45-0.5m	Topsoil depth 0.2-0.3m	Subsoil depth 0.1-0.18m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
4404	Furrow	
4405	Linear feature (not excavated)	
4406	Furrow	
Trench 45		Trench Size 13.5m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.35-0.48m	Topsoil depth 0.15-0.2m	Subsoil depth 0.15-0.1m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
4504	Furrow	
4505	Furrow	
Trench 46		Trench Size 17.5m x 1.8m
Trench depth 0.35-0.45m	Topsoil depth 0.1-0.3m	Subsoil depth 0.1-0.15m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature Type</i>	
4604	Furrow	
4605	Linear feature (not excavated)	

APPENDIX 2: Pottery Report

Rebekah Pressler, April 2016

Introduction

A total of 239 sherds of pottery weighing approximately 1945.85g was collected from 25 contexts, as shown in the table below. The pottery was examined both visually and under a x20 microscope and using a x15 hand lens.

Condition

The condition of the material varies from being in good to slightly abraded condition, with a few sherds being heavily abraded.

Late Bronze Age to Early Iron age pottery

The earliest dated pottery accounting for approximately 1-2% of the assemblage is probably of late Bronze Age to early Iron Age period (and thus may be attributed to the Post Deverel-Rimbury (Cunliffe 1984) tradition), however this date is tentative due to a lack of diagnostic fragments. Body sherds of a heavily flint-tempered ceramic from ditch deposit 1905 may be either daub or sherds of poorly fired Bronze age pottery. One of the heavily abraded sand tempered sherds from Posthole deposit 1505 have the remains of incised 'dotted' decoration suggestive of a Bronze to early Iron Age date. However the abrasion on the pottery suggests that it is not impossible that the sherds are residual.

Middle Iron Age to early Romano-British Pottery

The largest proportion of pottery (at least 94%) can be attributed to the Middle to Late Iron Age/Romano-British period. Not all of the pottery is not closely dated due to a lack of diagnostic sherds within the contexts; however there are sufficient rims for overall dating. An abraded sandy greyware 'shouldered' jar (Mephram 2000) sherd with external sooting from ditch deposit 1905 can be attributed to the Middle Iron Age (about 3rd- 4th century BC). Wheel made or wheel finished jar rim sherds from ditch deposit 1113 date to the Late Iron Age. A variety of finer pink to orange soft sandy oxidised wares (Cunliffe 1984) are not closely dateable, but can probably be attributed to the late Iron Age. This includes body sherds with occasional quartz and ferrous inclusions from ditch deposit 1206.

A number of the vessels appear to have suspension holes. A coarsely flint-tempered jar (with sherds of a similar fabric in 1305) from primary ditch deposit 1114 appears to have the remains of suspension holes and possibly the remains of iron suspension 'hooks'. One of the body sherds of a very fine partially reduced micaceous orange pottery from ditch deposit 1115 (possibly hand made and wheel finished) also has the remains of a possible suspension hole and iron 'hook'. The fabric from this vessel is difficult to identify, although it is possible it may be an imported (Central Gaulish? (Compton 2015)) fabric and probably dates from the Late Iron Age to Early Roman-British period. Pottery of a similar fabric type has also been noted in Essex. The pedestal base of a possible Gallo-Belgic (Compton 2015) vessel was noted in 0205, although it is not impossible that this may have been more locally produced.

Post Roman Pottery

A total of five sherds of Post-Roman pottery was noted in three of the contexts, including sherds of unglazed red earthenware and an unknown late medieval/transitional red ware (16th to 19th century) from the topsoil 301 in trench 3. A body sherd of pearlware (Coysh & Henrywood 1982) (c1770-19th century) came from the topsoil in trench 12 and the base sherd of a whiteware jardiniere or bowl came from context 1404.

Discussion

An assemblage of this size provides basic dating information. Further work will be necessary in order to establish a chronology of prehistoric to Romano-British pottery, as well as identifying the provenance and fabric types within the assemblage. Parallels to the vessels with suspension holes and ascertaining a provenance to some of the possible imports will also require further research. No further work on the Post-Roman pottery will be required at present.

Context	Quant	Wt (g)	Description	Spot date
0205	45	108	Includes a possible Gallo-Belgic vessel with an out turned pedestal base (sand tempered) and a finer flint tempered ware vessel	IA to Early RB
0301	4	14.81	Body sherds – not closely dateable including UGRE (flower pot), LMT and flint tempered ware	IA to C17 th /18 th
0302	2	18.82	Includes a small fragment of flint tempered ware and a larger body sherd of coarser sand tempered ware	IA to early RB?
0502	13	31.12	Finer and coarser flint tempered fabrics (body sherds)	IA to RB
0602	10	34.9	Finer flint tempered fabric – the same as in 0205, 0301 and 0502	IA to RB
0612	3	1.25	Fragmentary – red/brown oxidised fabric	IA
0802	4	15.41	Flint tempered with some organic inclusions and white mica	BA to RB
1102	1	6	Sandy fabric with a yellow/brown surface and a dark brown reduced core. Hand made. Abraded	IA
1105	2	17.04	Sandy fabric with blackened surfaces	IA
1106	2	10.9	Sooted sandy fabric – 1 a ‘grooved’ rim	LIA
1109	21	220	Various fabrics including	LIA
1113	60	400	Various fabrics, largely wheel finished	LIA
1114	6	200	Coarseware jar with flint and ferrous inclusions	MIA-LIA
1115	4	16.97	Very fine orange partially reduced sandy fabric with white mica. Hand made and wheel finished?	LIA-ERB
1201	1	10	Pearlware body sherd	18 th -19 th century
1202	2	6.29	Flint tempered ware – sooted (jar). Not closely dateable	IA-RB
1205	2	14	Flint tempered fragment and a medium coarse sandy fabric (quartz rich)	IA

1206	4	24.89	Soft oxidised orange sandy fabric – Briquetage?	IA
1305	6	103	Various fabrics including a coarsely flint tempered vessel, possibly of Bronze Age date.	BA-IA
1404	1	200	Large whiteware vessel – jardiniere or bowl?	1860-1900
1505	7	20.52	Sandy coarseware vessel with an orange surface and grey core with rare flint inclusions and incised ‘dot’ decoration. Abraded	BA-IA
1701	4	15.63	Sandy/micaceous fabric. Jar (body sherds – not closely dateable)	IA
1702	1	6.3	Flint tempered reduced fabric with some organic (grass?) impressions shown internally and externally.	BA-IA
1705	25	250	Several different fabrics – including flint, sand and grog tempered ware	BA-IA
1905	9	200	3 of the sherds are either a coarse bronze age oxidised fabric or daub. Sherds of a grey ware sandy jar probably date to the C4 th -3rd BC	BA-IA
Total	239	1945.85		

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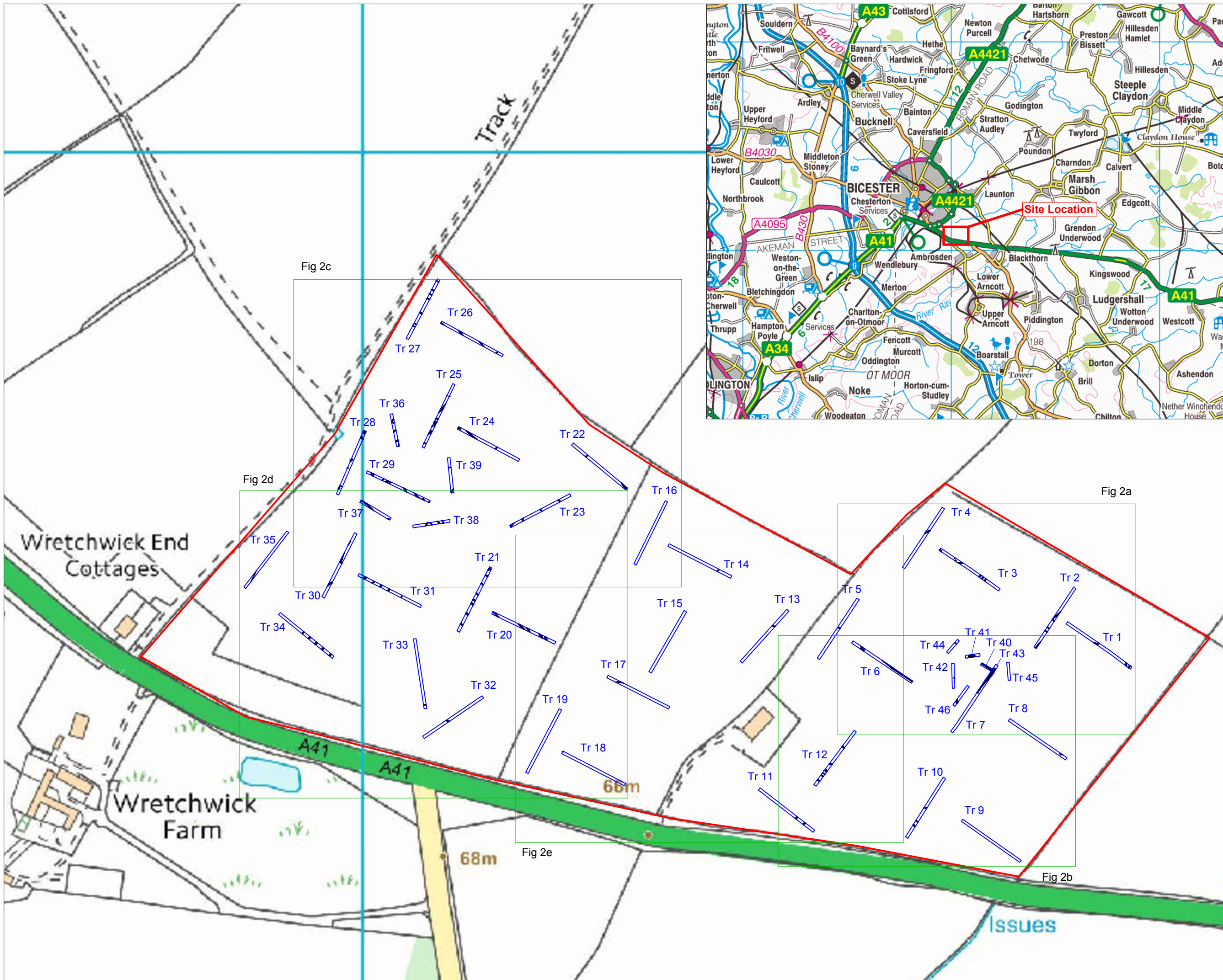
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Key:

- Site Boundary
- Trench Location
- Archaeological Feature



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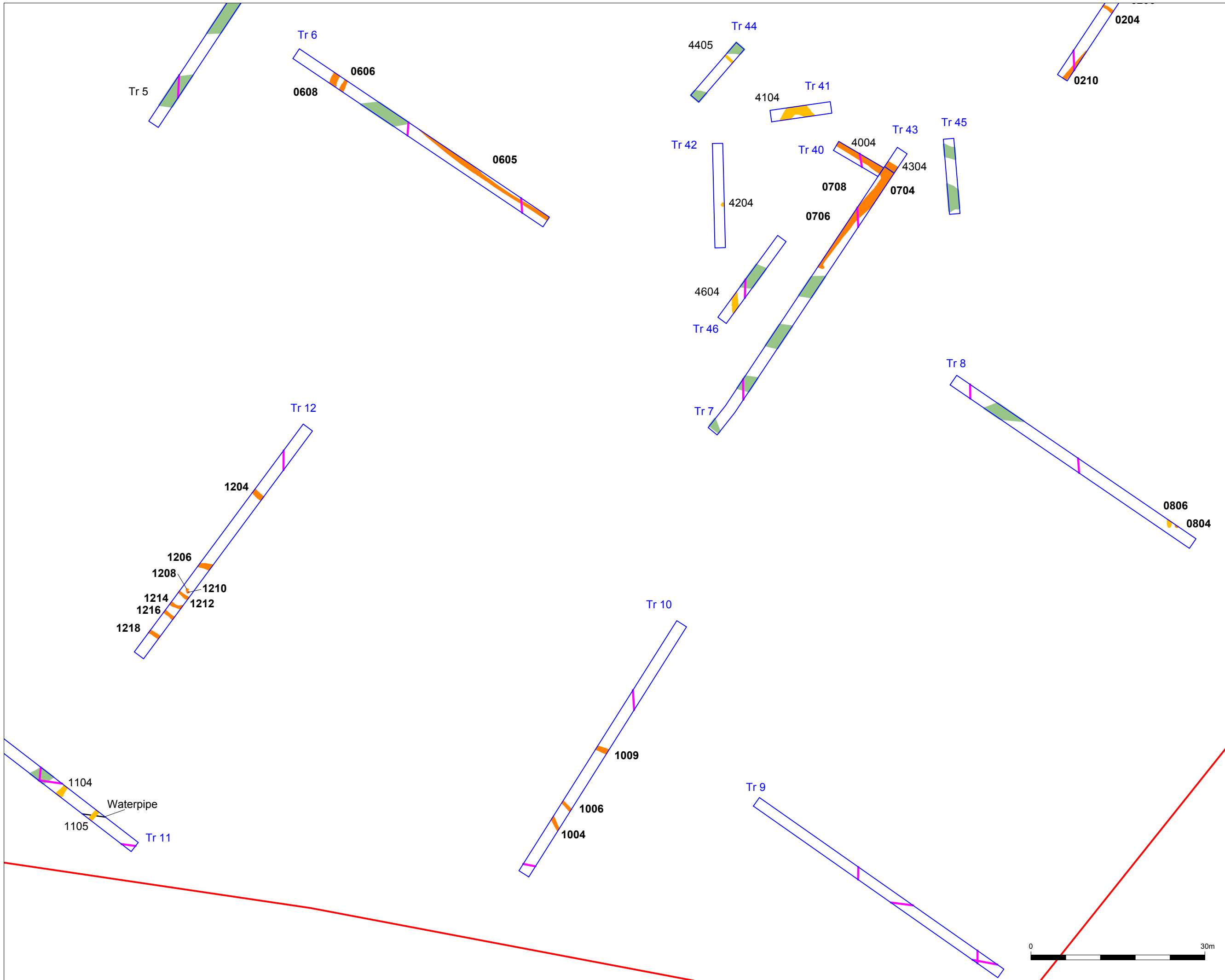
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 Bicester, Oxfordshire -
 archaeological evaluation

Client:
 DBSymmetry

Scale at A3:
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Drawn by: SW	Checked by: TB	Date: 16/05/2016
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Report No: MK050/16	Fig. No: 1
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Key:

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- Unexcavated archaeological feature
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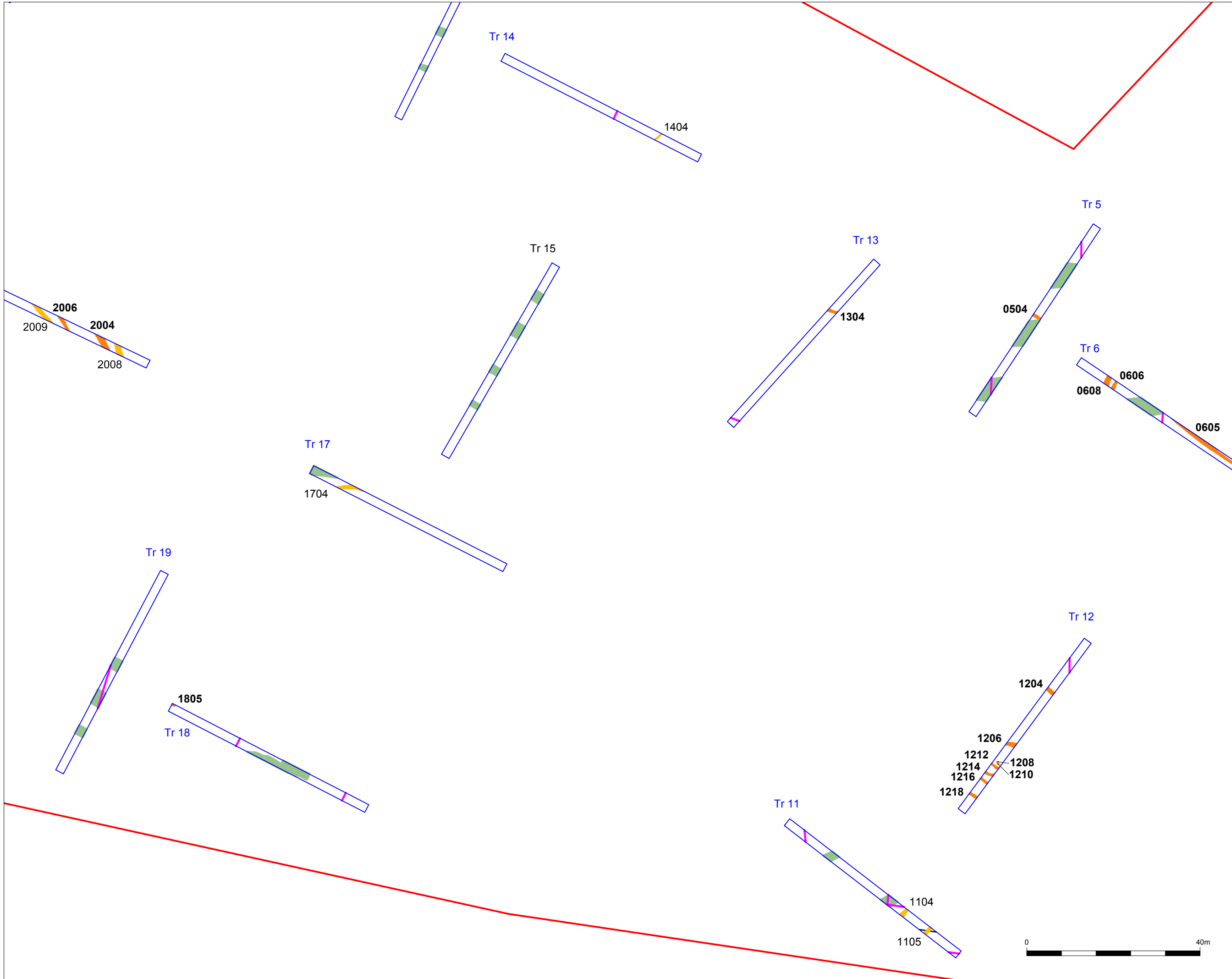
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Report No: MK050/16	Fig. No: 2e
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Fig. 3a - Trench 1

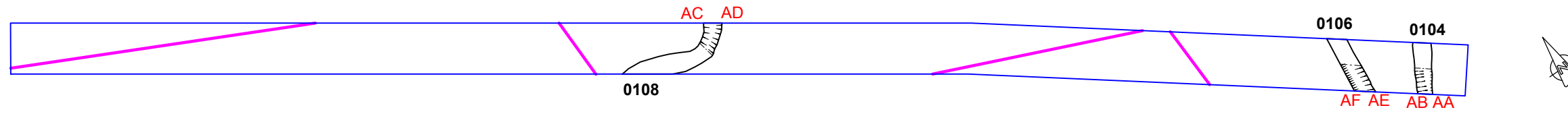


Fig. 3b - Trench 2

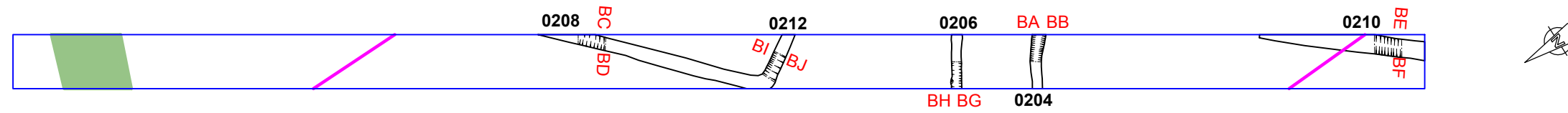


Fig. 3c - Trench 3

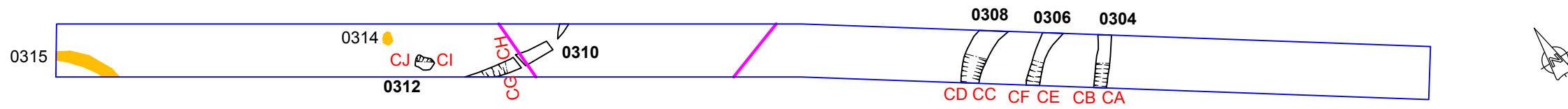
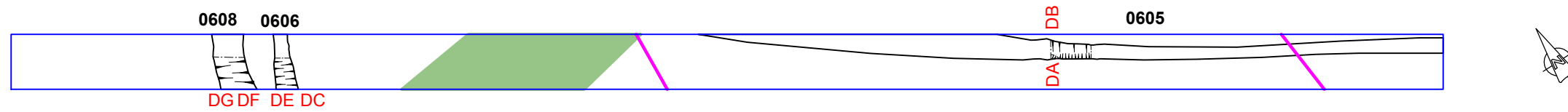


Fig. 3d - Trench 6



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Report No: MK050/16	Fig. No: 3a-d
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Fig. 4a - Trench 7

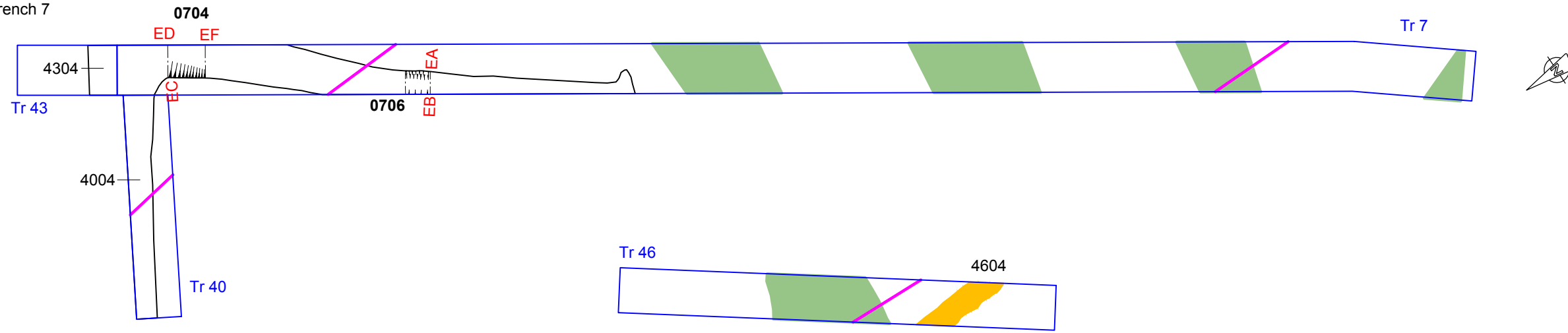


Fig. 4b - Trench 12

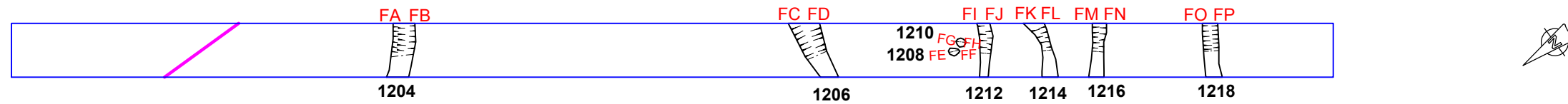


Fig. 4c - Trench 18

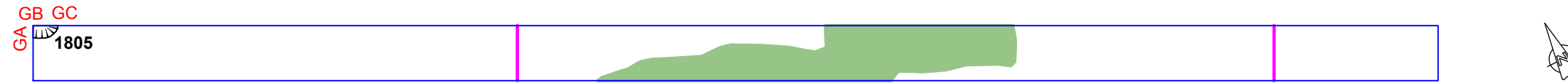
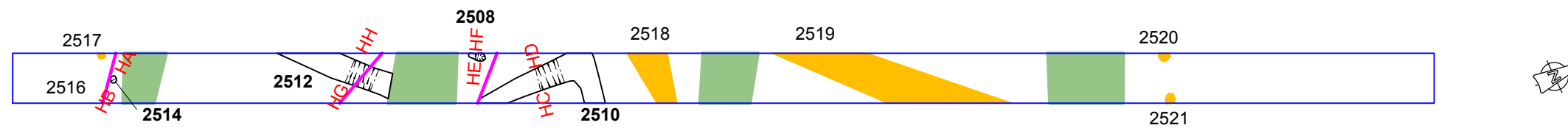


Fig. 4d - Trench 25



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Client:
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Scale at A3:
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Report No: MK050/16	Fig. No: 4a-d
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Fig. 5a - Trench 28

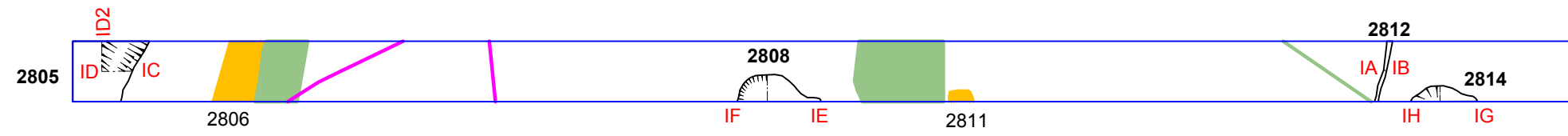


Fig. 5b - Trench 29

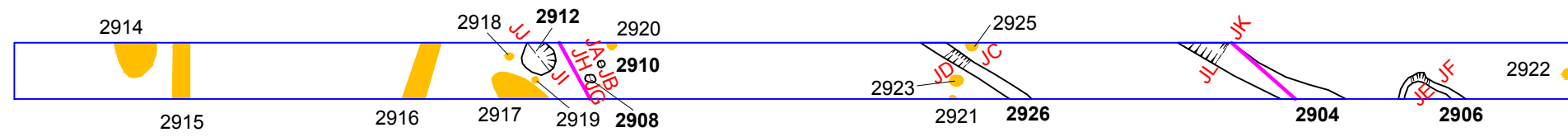
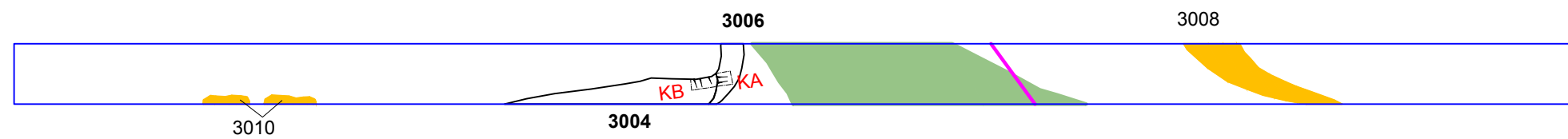


Fig. 5c - Trench 30



Key:

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Fig. 6a - Trench 31

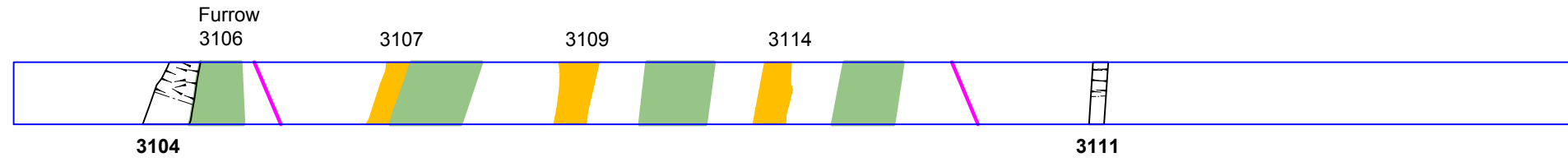
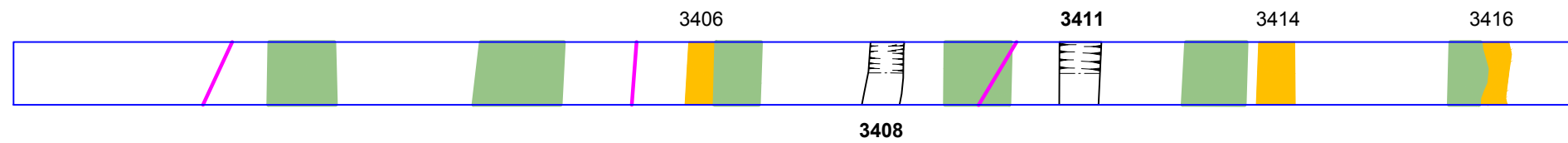


Fig. 6b - Trench 34



Key:

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Report No: MK050/16	Fig. No: 6a-b
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Fig. 7 - Section, Trench 1

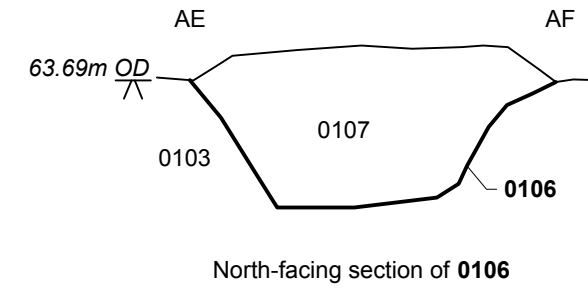
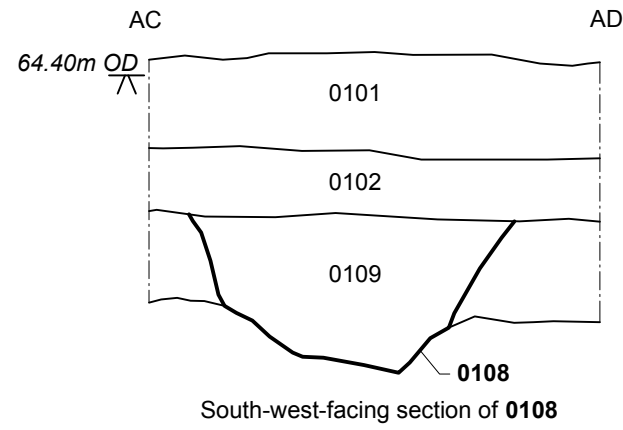
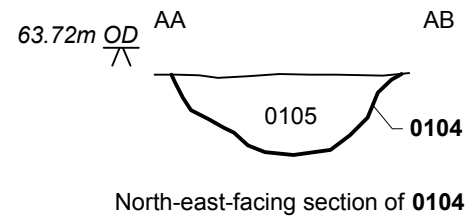


Fig. 8 - Section, Trench 2

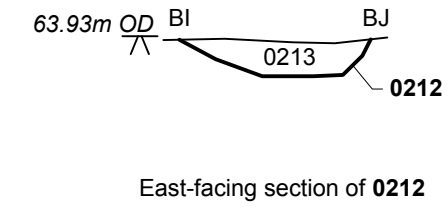
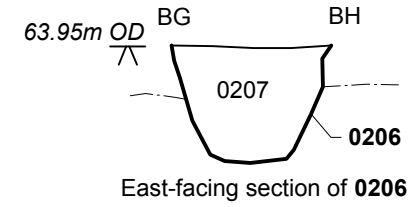
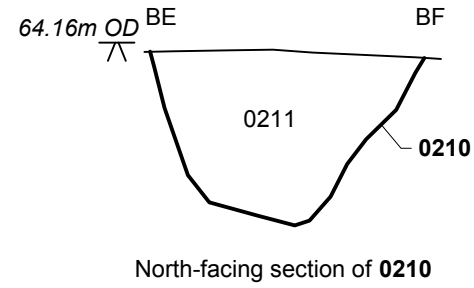
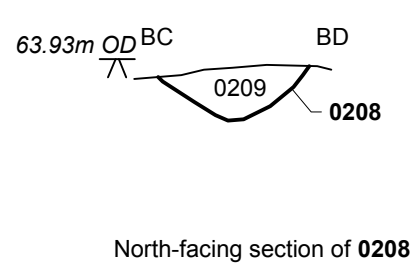
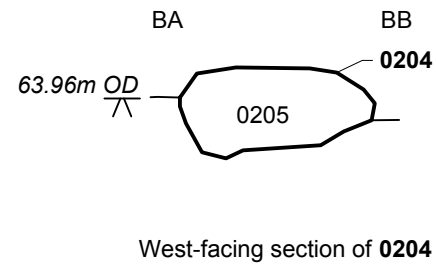


Fig. 9 - Section, Trench 3

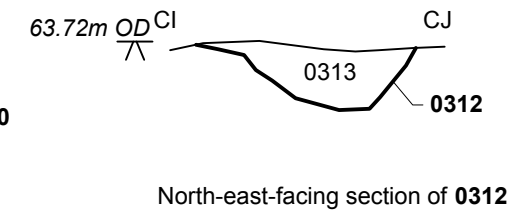
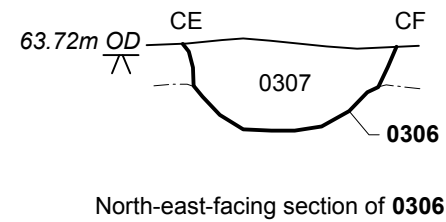
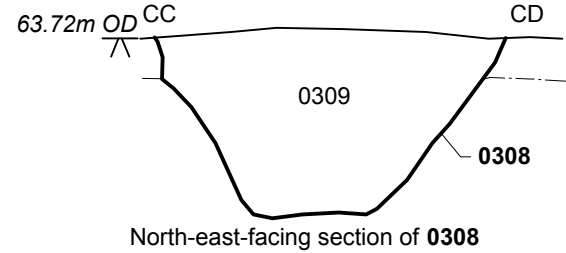
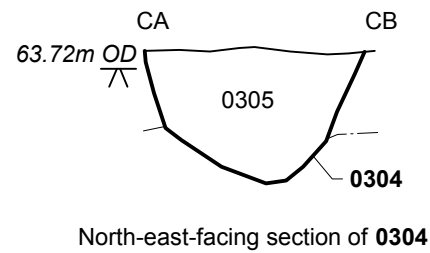
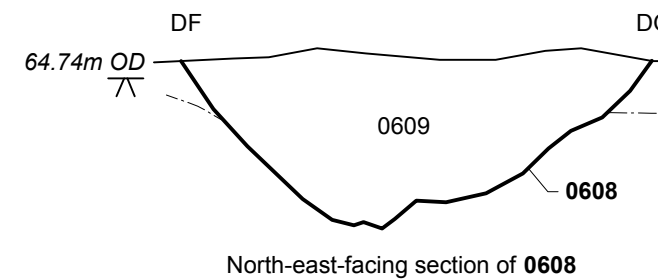
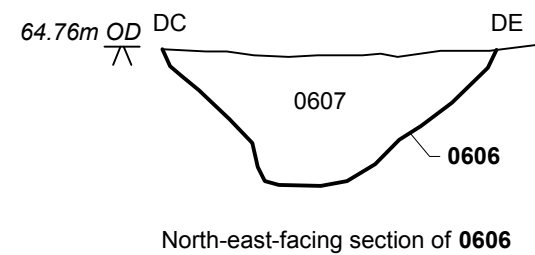
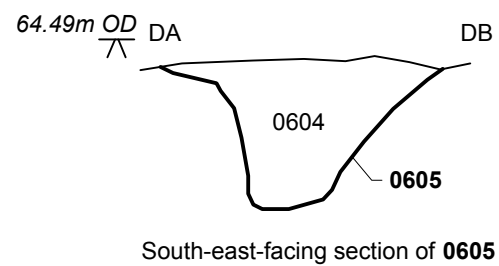


Fig. 10 - Section, Trench 6



Key:

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Fig. 11 - Section, Trench 7

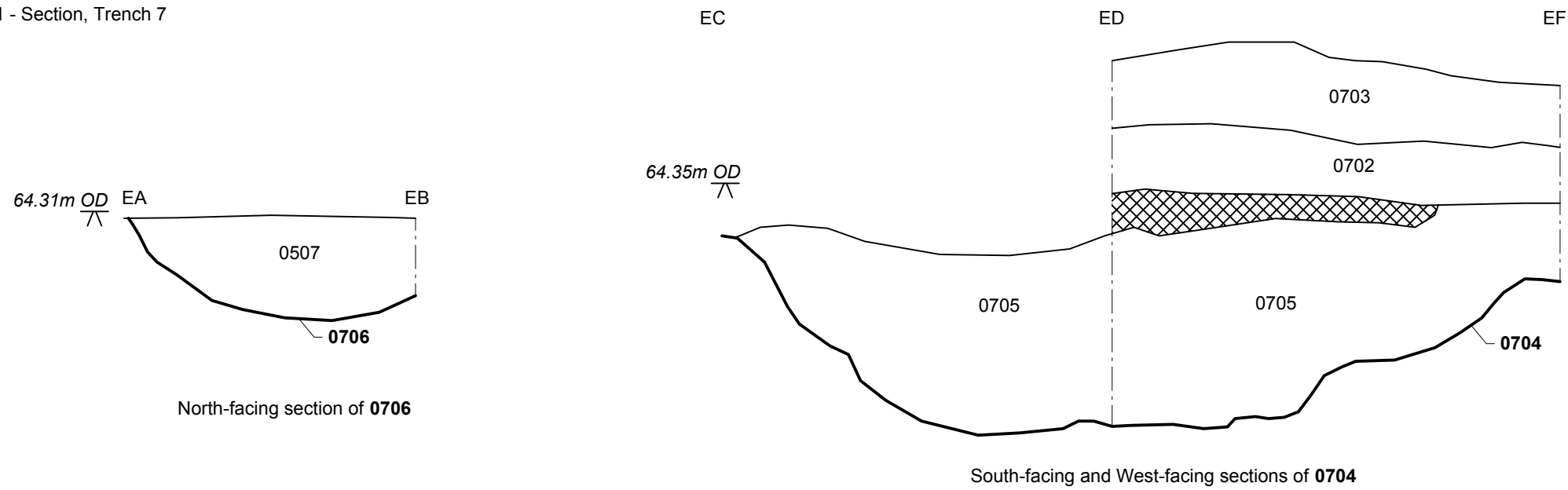


Fig. 12 - Section, Trench 12

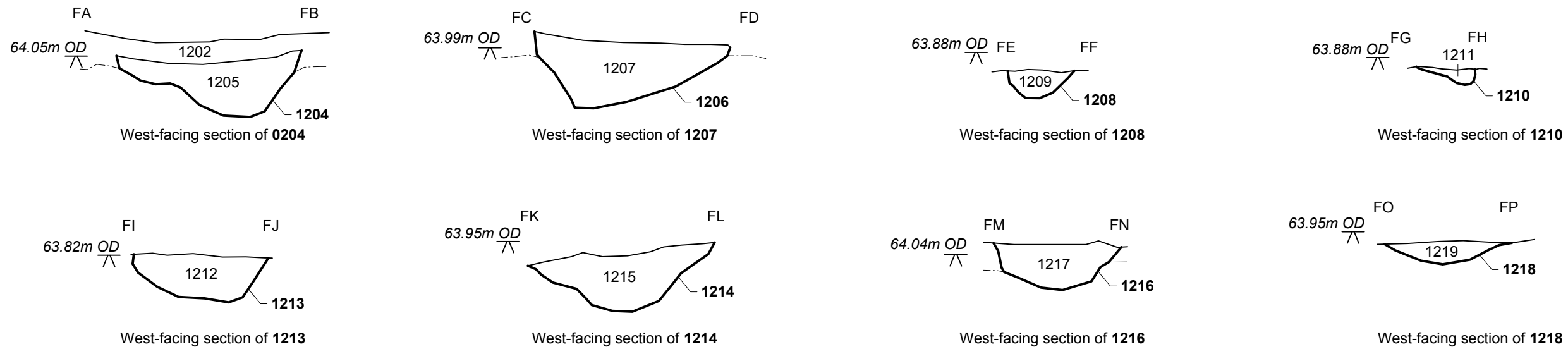
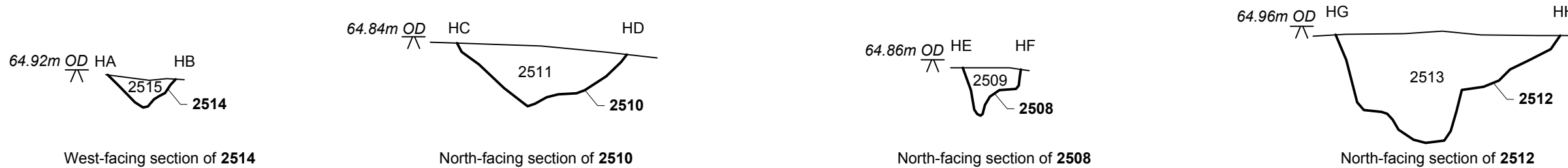


Fig. 13 - Section, Trench 18



Fig. 14 - Section, Trench 25



Key:

- Limit of Excavation
- Layer containing bone and charcoal

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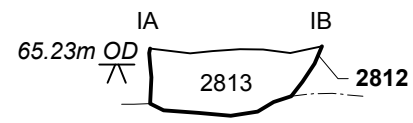
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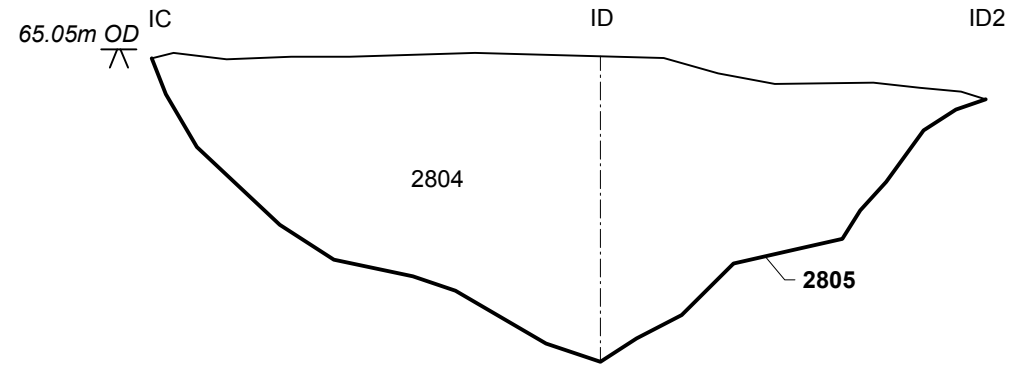
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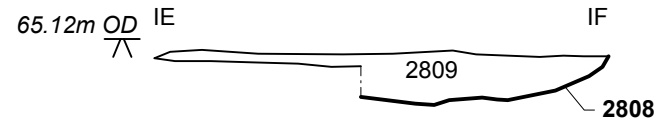
Fig. 15 - Section, Trench 28



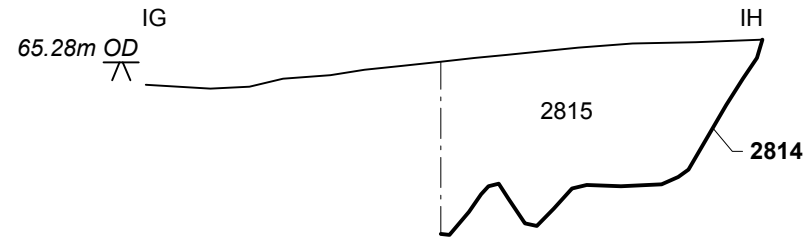
West-facing section of **2812**



South-west and South-facing section of **2805**

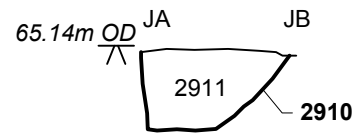


East-facing section of **2808**

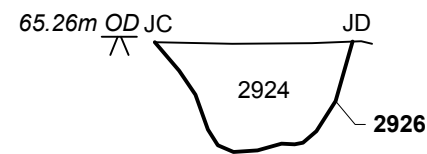


East-facing section of **2814**

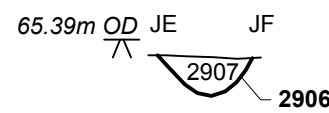
Fig. 16 - Section, Trench 29



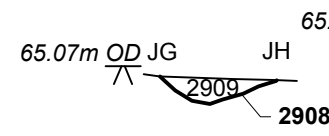
West-facing section of **2910**



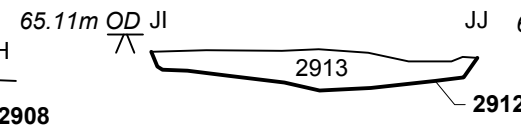
East-facing section of **2926**



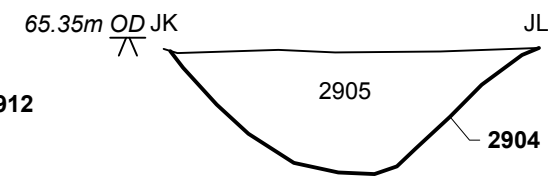
East-facing section of **2906**



West-facing section of **2908**

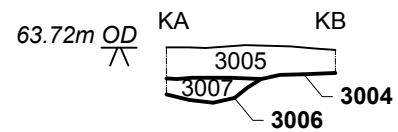


East-facing section of **2912**



North-west-facing section of **2904**

Fig. 17 - Section, Trench 30



East-facing section of **3004 and 3006**

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Fig. 18 - General shot of Trench 6, from the SE



Fig. 19 - General shot of Trench 29, from the NW

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Fig. 20 - General shot of Trench 31, from the NW



Fig. 21 - General shot of Trench 36, from the S

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Fig. 22 - Photo of ditch 0104 in Trench 1, from the NE



Fig. 23 - Photo of ditch 0106 in Trench 1, from the SW

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Fig. 24 - Photo of ditch 0108 in Trench 1, from the SE



Fig. 25 - Photo of large ditch 0708 in Trench 7 turning a corner, from the NE

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Report No: MK050/16		Fig. No: 24 - 25



Fig. 26 - Shot of large ditch 4101 in Trench 7 turning a corner, from the W



Fig. 27 - Shot of pit 0804 in Trench 8, from the SW

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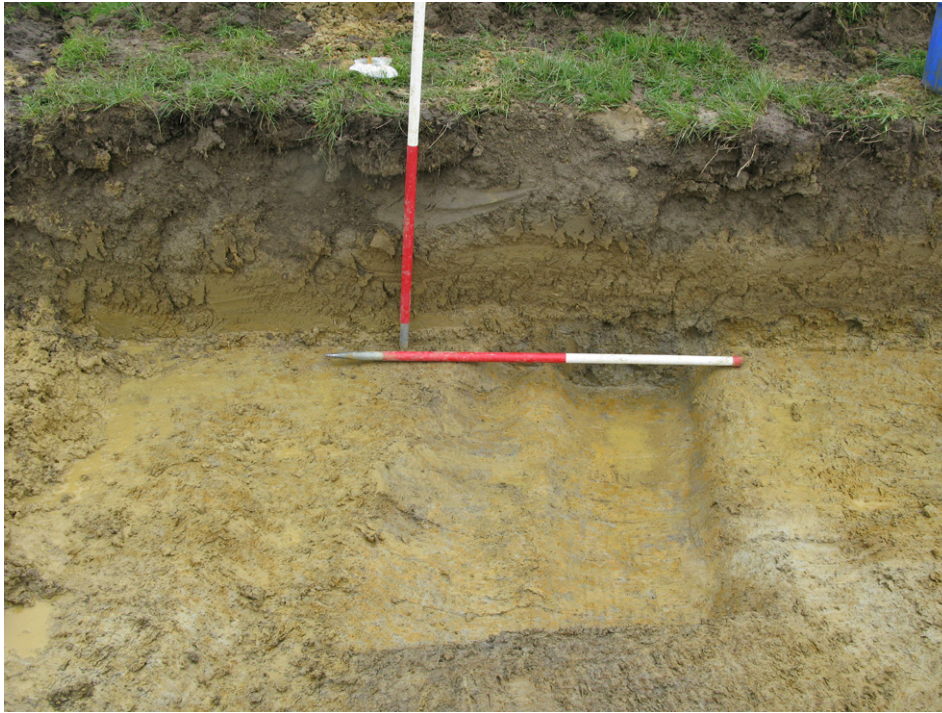


Fig. 28 - Photo of ditch 1204, from the NW



Fig. 29 - Photo of pit 1804, from the SW

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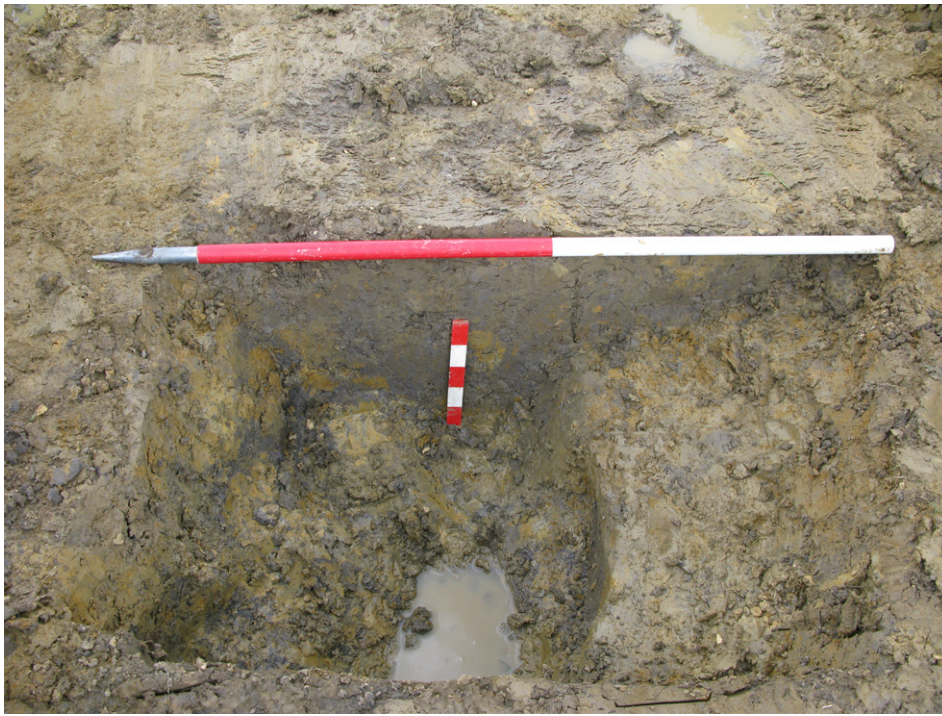


Fig. 30 - Photo of ditch 2512, from the N



Fig. 31 - Photo of ditch 2604, from the SW

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Fig. 32 - Photo of rectilinear gully feature 2906, from the NW



Fig. 33 - Photo of V-shaped ditch 2712, from the SE

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