



Land off Braybrooke Road, Desborough, Northamptonshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Summary

In March 2019 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by Pegasus Group on behalf of Gladman Developments Ltd to undertake a trial trench evaluation at Braybrooke Road, Desborough, Northamptonshire. The evaluation consisted of 45 trenches arranged across the site, following a geophysical survey. The evaluation revealed an absence of archaeological features in the majority of the site, although a hollow-way, dated by a small quantity of late Iron Age pottery, and eight linear ditches that appeared to form a field or enclosure system were discovered in the central and eastern part of the western field. Five undated pits were also discovered in this area. The putative field system was not dated by any artefactual remains, although one of the ditches truncated the upper fill of the hollow-way and was, in turn, overlain by ridge and furrow cultivation.

Acknowledgements

Oxford Archaeology would like to thank Pegasus Group for commissioning this project. Thanks are also extended to Lesley-Ann Mather who monitored the work on behalf of Northamptonshire County Council.

The project was managed for Oxford Archaeology by Steve Lawrence. The fieldwork was directed by Jim Mumford, who was supported by Emma Winter, Mike Simms, Ashley Strutt and Chris Pickard. Survey and digitising was carried out by Aidan Farnan and Anne Kilgour. Thanks are also extended to the teams of OA staff who cleaned and packaged the finds under the management of Leigh Allen, processed the environmental remains under the management of Rebecca Nicholson, and prepared the archive under the management of Nicky Scott.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of work

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by Pegasus Group on behalf of Gladman Developments Ltd to undertake a trial trench evaluation at Braybrooke Road, Desborough, Northamptonshire.
- 1.1.2 The work was undertaken following refusal of the Planning Application, in part due to the absence of sufficient archaeological information (planning ref: KET/2018/0060). This evaluation will inform the appeal process (planning ref: APP/L2820/W/18/3215362). A brief has been issued outlining the requirements for a programme of archaeological investigation by the planning services for Northamptonshire County Council (NCC 2019a) along with an evaluation-specific brief outlining requirement for the trial trench exercise (NCC 2019b). A written scheme of investigation was produced by OA detailing how it would fulfil the Local Authority's requirements for this work (OA 2019). This was approved by Lesley-Ann Mather, County Archaeological Advisor, prior to the start of the fieldwork.

1.2 Location, topography and geology

- 1.2.1 The site boundary encloses approximately 13.57ha and is located on the north-western periphery of Desborough (Fig. 1). The site comprises three agricultural fields, and the northernmost field contains a track and a pond. The site is bounded by a rail line to the north-east with arable fields beyond; a public right of way to the south-east with residential development beyond this; Braybrooke Road to the south with pasture fields beyond; and arable fields to the north-west. The site is centred on SP 7921 8397.
- 1.2.2 The topography of the site is relatively level at approximately 135m aOD. The surrounding landscape falls to the north-west to a small watercourse before rising once again.
- 1.2.3 The solid geology of the site is mapped as Whitby Mudstone Formation comprising mudstone formed approximately 174 to 183 million years ago in the Jurassic Period. The superficial geology of the site is mapped as Till, Mid Pleistocene, Diamicton formed up to 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period (BGS website).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The archaeological and historical background of the site has been described in detail in the desk-based assessment (Pegasus 2018). The following summarises relevant information from that document.
- 1.3.2 A geophysical survey was undertaken as part of the desk-based assessment. This recorded a circular ring ditch within the southern field with an approximate diameter of 5-6m. It was thought possible that the feature belonged to a Bronze Age barrow, although no upstanding remains of a mound survive. This was targeted in the evaluation.

- 1.3.3 There is sparse evidence for further prehistoric activity in the surrounding area, although a rare Iron Age engraved mirror was found during ironstone quarrying in 1908 c 1.18km south-west of the site.
- 1.3.4 There is very little evidence for Romano-British activity within the site or its immediate surrounding area. No anomalies suggestive of significant remains of this date were recorded during the geophysical survey.
- 1.3.5 Ridge and furrow earthworks are present in the northern part of the site. Further evidence of ridge and furrow cultivation was identified by the geophysical survey across the remainder of the site. Better preserved ridge and furrow is also recorded in the surrounding fields. Possible medieval gullies and a ditch are recorded to the west of the site and an imprecisely-located Saxon cemetery is known to the north-west of Desborough.

2 EVALUATION AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

2.1.1 The aim of the evaluation is to identify any archaeological deposits and the potential impacts upon these. To do this the general aims are to:

- i. establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains,
- ii. determine and confirm the character of any remains present, without compromising any deposits that may merit detailed investigation or preservation,
- iii. determine or estimate the date range of any remains from artefacts or otherwise,
- iv. characterise any underlying archaeological strata down to undisturbed geology without significantly impacting upon younger (overlying) deposits where possible,
- v. determine the geo-archaeological and palaeo-environmental potential of any archaeological deposits encountered,
- vi. make available the results of the investigation to inform subsequent development designs, planning decisions or mitigation strategies,
- vii. recover suitable materials for scientific dating where appropriate,
- viii. produce a factual report, full archive and HER data submission, and disseminate the results of the investigation at a level appropriate to their importance.

2.1.2 The specific aims and objectives of the are to:

- ix. establish the accuracy of the geophysical survey in terms of presence/absence of identification of archaeological features,
- x. and establish the date origin and function of the ring ditch recorded in the southern field.

2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 The evaluation comprised 45 trenches arranged to target identified features from the geophysical survey and to provide a good overall coverage of the area (Fig. 2). The trenches were 50m long and 1.8m wide and opened with a 360° tracked excavator with a 1.8m-wide toothless ditching bucket under direct archaeological supervision. All archaeological features or horizons were hand excavated and archaeologically recorded. After the trenches had been archaeologically excavated and recorded, they were backfilled.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction and presentation of results

- 3.1.1 The results of the evaluation are presented below and include a stratigraphic description of the trenches that contained archaeological remains. The full details of all trenches with dimensions and depths of all deposits can be found in Appendix A. Finds data and spot dates are tabulated in Appendix B.
- 3.1.2 Context numbers reflect the trench numbers unless otherwise stated, e.g. pit 102 is a feature within Trench 1, while ditch 304 is a feature within Trench 3.
- 3.1.3 Trench 19 was not excavated due to the location of a number of buried services within its area.

3.2 General soils and ground conditions

- 3.2.1 The soil sequence between all trenches was fairly uniform. The natural geology of silty clay till was overlain by a mixed reddish brown to yellowish brown silty clay loam subsoil 0.09-0.25m thick. This was in turn overlain by a very dark greyish brown silty clay loam topsoil 0.20-0.25m thick.
- 3.2.2 Ground conditions during the evaluation were poor in the first week due to high rainfall and some flooding. However, in the following weeks the weather improved and the trenches dried out. Despite these problems, archaeological features were easy to identify against the underlying natural geology.

3.3 General distribution of archaeological deposits

- 3.3.1 Traces of ridge and furrow were found across the entirety of the site, and several 19th-early 20th century land drains constructed of ceramic pipe were also found. Apart from these, archaeological features were only found in eight trenches. No archaeological features were discovered in Trenches 1-6, 8, 9, 12, 16 and 20-45, and, with the exception of Trenches 22 and 37, these will not be discussed further.
- 3.3.2 Trench 22 was placed over a small circular geophysical anomaly approximately 5-6m diameter. It was thought possible that this was a prehistoric ring ditch, and a specific aim was to investigate the anomaly. Trench 37 was placed over a group of subcircular geophysical anomalies. No evidence of archaeological features or geological changes were observed and it was thought that the geophysical anomalies originated from probable modern deposits of no archaeological significance (Plates 1 and 2).
- 3.3.3 Archaeological features were only discovered in the central and eastern part of the western field. The main feature was a probable hollow-way encountered in Trenches 11, 15 and 17. This was seen on the geophysical survey and was dated to the late Iron Age. A probable field system in the area around the hollow-way was represented by eight ditches aligned either north/south or east/west. One of these ditches truncated the upper fill of the hollow-way indicating a post-Iron Age date with the ditches subsequently overlain by the ridge and furrow cultivation. None of these field system ditches were clearly seen on the geophysical survey. Five pits were also discovered, again not clearly present on the geophysical survey, and a ditch on the same north-

west/south-east alignment as adjacent furrows. The pits and field system remain insecurely dated.

3.4 Trench 7 (Figs 3 and 4)

3.4.1 A single east/west aligned sterile ditch, 704, was found in the northern part of Trench 7 (Plate 3). The ditch was 0.75m wide and 0.28m in depth and had steep sloping sides and a concave base.

3.5 Trench 10 (Figs 3 and 4)

3.5.1 A single east/west sterile ditch, 1004, was found in Trench 10. The ditch was 60m wide and 0.22m in depth and had steep sloping sides and a concave base.

3.6 Trench 11 (Figs 3 and 4)

3.6.1 The western end of the east/west aligned hollow-way seen on the geophysical survey and also exposed in Trenches 15 and 17 was found in the southern part of Trench 11. This was excavated as 1104 and was broad and shallow, measuring 3.8m wide and 0.20m in depth, and had a single sterile fill (Plate 4).

3.6.2 Immediately to the south-east and also aligned east/west, ditch 1106 was discovered. This had steep sloping sides and a concave base, and measured 0.60m wide and 0.30m in depth. It had a single sterile fill (Plate 5).

3.6.3 At the northern end of the trench another east/west aligned ditch, 1108, was found. This had more gently sloping sides and a concave base, and had a single sterile fill.

3.7 Trench 13 (Figs 3 and 5)

3.7.1 A north/south aligned ditch, 1309, was found in the south-eastern part of Trench 13 (Plate 6). This had steep sloping sides and concave base and measured 0.65m wide and 0.20m in depth. The ditch had a single sterile fill.

3.7.2 Three pits, 1303, 1305 and 1307, were found in the central part of the trench. Pit 1303 was circular and had shallow sloping sides and a flat base and measured 0.52m in diameter and 0.08m in depth. Pit 1305 was immediately to the east of 1303 and was circular with sloping sides and a concave base (Plate 7). The pit measured 0.53m in diameter and 0.18m in depth and had a single sterile fill. The third pit, 1307, was a larger oval-shaped feature to 4m to the south-east. This had steep sides and a flat base and measured 1.10m x 0.78m x 0.30m. The pit had a single sterile fill.

3.8 Trench 14 (Figs 3 and 5)

3.8.1 A ditch terminal, 1404, was discovered in the north-eastern part of Trench 14. This was aligned north/south and had gently sloping sides and a concave base, and measured 0.70m wide and 0.24m in depth. The ditch had a single sterile fill.

3.9 Trench 15 (Figs 3 and 5)

3.9.1 The central part of the hollow-way seen on the geophysical survey and also exposed in Trenches 11 and 17 was excavated in Trench 15 as 1508. This ran east/west and was 3.2m wide and 0.45m in depth with gently sloping sides rounding to a shallow concave

base (Plate 8). This had three fills, the middle fill, 1506, producing ten sherds of late Iron Age pottery weighing 24g and a tooth from a sheep or goat. The upper fill of the hollow-way was truncated by furrow 1504.

- 3.9.2 An east/west aligned ditch, 1512, was found in the southern part of the trench. This had steep sloping sides and a concave base and measured 0.60m wide and 0.18m in depth. The ditch had a single sterile fill.
- 3.9.3 Ditch 1510 was found at the northern end of the trench. This had steep sides and a concave base, measured 0.80m wide and 0.27m in depth and had a single sterile fill. The ditch was on the same north-west/south-east alignment as the furrows in the areas, and may have been related.

3.10 Trench 17 (Figs 3 and 6)

- 3.10.1 Trench 17 exposed the hollow-way seen on the geophysical survey and also excavated in Trenches 11 and 15. Here, it was excavated as 1705 where it was 1.30m wide and 0.26m deep with gentle sloping side and a flat base. The hollow-way had two fills, the lower, 1706, producing three small fragments of bone, small fragments of unworked burnt flint, a small fragment of magnetic slag and small fragments of hammerscale/magnetic material. These finds all came from the only environmental sample taken during the evaluation. The sample also produced a relatively large quantity of charcoal, two charred grains, one of barley, a hazelnut fragment and a charred vetch seed.
- 3.10.2 The upper fill of the hollow-way was cut by north-south aligned ditch 1703 (Plate 9). This had a rounded terminus at its southern end and a concave profile and measured 0.60m wide and 0.20m in depth. It contained a single sterile fill.

3.11 Trench 18 (Figs 3 and 6)

- 3.11.1 Two small adjacent pits, 1804 and 1806, were found in Trench 18. Pit 1804 was circular with irregular sloping side and a concave base, measuring 0.90m wide and 0.30m deep, and had a single charcoal-rich fill. Pit 1806 was also circular, and had moderate sloping sides and a flat base (Plate 10). This measured 0.55m wide and 0.11m deep and also had a single charcoal-rich fill. It is possible that the features were tree-throw holes.

3.12 Finds summary

- 3.12.1 The evaluation produced a very small number of finds, all deriving from two contexts infilling the hollow-way. The finds consisted of late Iron Age pottery, fragments of bone, burnt flint and slag.

4 DISCUSSION

4.1 Discussion and Interpretation

- 4.1.1 The evaluation revealed relatively few archaeological features. All of those encountered were centred in the central and eastern part of the western field.
- 4.1.2 Two of the three geophysical anomalies that were thought to represent archaeological features, one with the appearance of a ring ditch and another that appeared to be a subcircular pit, were shown to not be archaeologically significant. The third feature, an east/west aligned linear exposed in three trenches, appears to have been a late Iron Age hollow-way.
- 4.1.3 Apart from the hollow-way, the other main discovery was eight north-south/east-west aligned ditches, probably representing a field or enclosure system. This was not dated by associated artefacts, although one of the ditches was seen to cut the hollow-way, and the group is earlier than the medieval ridge and furrow system. A Roman date for the ditch system is therefore probable. A further ditch, found in Trench 15, was parallel to the ridge and furrow in the field and may be related, although remains undated. Two groups of undated pits were found in Trenches 13 and 15.
- 4.1.4 The evaluation was successful in determining the presence and character of the archaeological remains at the site. An approximate date could be assigned to most of the features despite a lack of finds, although the groups of pits remain undated.
- 4.1.5 The results from the evaluation show that the majority of the site lacked archaeological features of any significance. A probable late Iron Age hollow-way demonstrates activity of this date in the general area, although the nature of this activity could not be firmly established due to a lack of associated features. However, the absence of any other definable late Iron Age activity elsewhere in the evaluation suggests that this was localised and not very intensive.
- 4.1.6 The putative field or enclosure system and the hollow-way were in the same area of the site and had a shared orientation. They might be related, although one of the ditches appears to be stratigraphically later than the hollow-way, possibly dating the enclosures to the Roman period. This system appears to be of limited extent and distant from any obvious settlement activity. No associated settlement features were discovered.

APPENDIX A TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1						
General description					Orientation	SE-NW
Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.32
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
100	Layer	-	0.19	Topsoil	-	-
101	Layer	-	0.14	Subsoil	-	-
102	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 2						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.40
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
200	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
201	Layer	-	0.20	Topsoil	-	-
202	Layer	-	0.20	Subsoil	-	-

Trench 3						
General description					Orientation	E-W
Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.40
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
300	Layer	-	0.15	Natural	-	-
301	Layer	-	0.15	Topsoil	-	-
302	Layer	-	-	Subsoil	-	-

Trench 4						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.34
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
400	Layer	-	0.14	Topsoil	-	-
401	Layer	-	0.22	Subsoil	-	-
402	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 5						
General description					Orientation	SE-NW

Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.36
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
500	Layer	-	0.20	Topsoil	-	-
501	Layer	-	0.18	Subsoil	-	-
502	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 6						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural feature and geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.35
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
600	Layer	-	0.20	Topsoil	-	-
601	Layer	-	0.18	Subsoil	-	-
602	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
603	Feature	0.70	0.07	Natural feature	-	-

Trench 7						
General description					Orientation	SE-NW
Trench consisting of topsoil and subsoil with trace of ridge and furrow overlying an earlier field boundary ditch cut into natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.32
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
700	Layer	-	0.20	Topsoil	-	-
701	Layer	-	0.16	Subsoil	-	-
702	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
703	Fill	-	-	Fill of ditch 704. Yellowish grey brown silty clay.	-	-
704	Cut	0.75	0.28	Ditch, runs E-W. Steep sloping sides and concave base.	-	-

Trench 8						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.38
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
800	Layer	-	0.15	Topsoil	-	-
801	Layer	-	0.23	Subsoil	-	-
802	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 9						
General description					Orientation	SE-NW
Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.35
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
900	Layer	-	0.15	Topsoil	-	-
901	Layer	-	0.23	Subsoil	-	-
902	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 10						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench consisting of topsoil and subsoil with trace of ridge and furrow overlying an earlier field boundary ditch cut into natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.34
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1000	Layer	-	0.15	Topsoil	-	-
1001	Layer	-	0.15	Subsoil	-	-
1002	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
1003	Fill	-	-	Fill of ditch 1004. Reddish-brown silty clay.	-	-
1004	Cut	0.60	0.22	Ditch, runs E-W. Steep sloping sides and concave base.	-	-

Trench 11						
General description					Orientation	SE-NW
Trench consisting of topsoil and subsoil with trace of ridge and furrow overlying an earlier field boundary ditches and hollow-way cut into natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.30
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1100	Layer	-	0.16	Topsoil	-	-
1101	Layer	-	0.15	Subsoil	-	-
1102	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
1103	Fill	-	-	Fill of hollow-way 1104. Greyish brown silty clay.	-	-
1104	Cut	3.80	0.20	Hollow-way, runs E-W. Broad and shallow.	-	-
1105	Fill	-	-	Fill of ditch 1106. Dark yellowish-brown silty clay loam.	-	-
1106	Cut	0.60	0.30	Ditch, runs E-W. Steep sloping sides and concave base.	-	-
1107	Fill	-	-	Fill of ditch 1108. Yellowish grey brown silty clay.	-	-

1108	Cut	0.60	0.20	Ditch, runs E-W. Gently sloping side and concave base.	-	-
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Trench 12

General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.38
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1200	Layer	-		Natural	-	-
1201	Layer	-	0.20	Topsoil	-	-
1202	Layer	-	0.18	Subsoil	-	-

Trench 13

General description					Orientation	SE-NW
Trench consisting of topsoil and subsoil with trace of ridge and furrow overlying an earlier field boundary ditch and pits cut into natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.32
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1300	Layer	-	0.20	Topsoil	-	-
1301	Layer	-	0.12	Subsoil	-	-
1302	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
1303	Cut	0.52	0.08	Pit. Circular, shallow sloping sides and flat base.	-	-
1304	Fill			Fill of pit 1303. Grey brown silty clay.	-	-
1305	Cut	0.58	0.18	Pit. Circular, sloping sides and concave base.	-	-
1306	Fill			Fill of pit 1305. Grey brown silty clay.	-	-
1307	Cut	0.78	0.30	Pit. Oval, steep sides and a flat base.	-	-
1308	Fill			Fill of pit 1307. Grey brown silty clay.	-	-
1309	Cut	0.65	0.20	Ditch. Steep sloping sides and concave base.	-	-
1310	Fill			Fill of ditch 1309. Grey brown silty clay.	-	-

Trench 14

General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench consisting of topsoil and subsoil with trace of ridge and furrow overlying an earlier field boundary ditch terminal cut into natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.32
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date

1400	Layer	-	0.20	Topsoil	-	-
1401	Layer	-	0.16	Subsoil	-	-
1402	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
1403	Fill	-	-	Fill of ditch terminal 1404. Yellowish-brown silty clay.	-	-
1404	Cut	0.70	0.24	Ditch terminal, runs N-S. Gently sloping sides and a concave base.	-	-

Trench 15						
General description					Orientation	N-S
Trench consisting of topsoil and subsoil with trace of ridge and furrow overlying an earlier field boundary ditches and hollow-way cut into natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.32
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1500	Layer	-	0.20	Topsoil	-	-
1501	Layer	-	0.16	Subsoil	-	-
1502	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
1503	Fill			Fill of Furrow	-	-
1504	Cut	2.80	0.30	Furrow	-	-
1505	Fill			Upper fill of hollow-way. Yellowish-brown silty clay.	-	-
1506	Fill			Middle fill of hollow-way. Greyish brown silty clay.	Pottery, Bone	LIA
1507	Fill			Lower fill of hollow-way. yellowish-brown silty clay. Trampled natural?	-	-
1508	Cut	3.20	0.45	Hollow-way, runs E-W. Gently sloping sides rounding to a shallow concave base	-	LIA
1509	Fill			Fill of ditch 1510. Grey brown silty clay.	-	-
1510	Cut	0.80	0.22	Ditch, runs NW-SE. Steep sides and concave base.	-	-
1511	Fill			Fill of ditch 1512. Grey brown silty clay.	-	-
1512	Cut	0.60	0.18	Ditch, runs E-W. Steep sloping sides and concave base.	-	-
1513	Cut	0.90	0.12	Tree-throw hole.	-	-

Trench 16						
General description					Orientation	E-W
Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.36

Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1600	Layer	-	0.19	Topsoil	-	-
1601	Layer	-	0.16	Subsoil	-	-
1602	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 17						
General description				Orientation	SE-NW	
Trench consisting of topsoil and subsoil with trace of ridge and furrow overlying an earlier field boundary ditch and hollow-way cut into natural geology of silty clay.				Length (m)	50	
				Width (m)	1.8	
				Avg. depth (m)	0.40	
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1700	Layer	-	0.18	Topsoil	-	-
1701	Layer	-	0.22	Subsoil	-	-
1702	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
1703	Cut	0.60	0.20	Ditch, runs N-S. Concave profile, terminal at southern end. Cuts 1707.	-	-
1704	Fill	-	-	Fill of ditch 1703. Grey brown silty clay.	-	-
1705	Cut	1.30	0.26	Hollow-way, runs E-W. Gentle sloping sides rounding to a flat base.	-	-
1706	Fill	-	-	Lower fill of hollow-way 1705. Dark greyish brown silty clay.	Bone, Flint, Slag	-
1707	Fill	-	-	Upper fill of hollow-way 1705. Dark brown silty clay. Cut by 1703.	-	-

Trench 18						
General description				Orientation	SE-NW	
Trench consisting of topsoil and subsoil with trace of ridge and furrow overlying two pits cut into natural geology of silty clay.				Length (m)	50	
				Width (m)	1.8	
				Avg. depth (m)	0.32	
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1800	Layer	-	0.18	Topsoil	-	-
1801	Layer	-	0.14	Subsoil	-	-
1802	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
1803	Fill	-	-	Fill of pit 1804. Dark yellowish-brown silty clay. Frequent charcoal.	-	-
1804	Cut	0.90	0.30	Pit. Circular, irregular sloping sides and a central concave base.	-	-

1805	Fill	-	-	Fill of pit 1806. Dark yellowish-brown silty clay. Frequent charcoal.	-	-
1806	Cut	0.55	0.11	Pit. Circular, moderate sloping sides, flat base.	-	-

Trench 20						
General description					Orientation	SE-NW
Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.36
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
2000	Layer	-	0.25	Topsoil	-	-
2001	Layer	-	0.18	Subsoil	-	-
2002	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 21						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.42
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
2100	Layer	-	0.22	Topsoil	-	-
2101	Layer	-	0.18	Subsoil	-	-
2102	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 22						
General description					Orientation	SE-NW
Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.42
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
2200	Layer	-	0.25	Topsoil	-	-
2201	Layer	-	0.18	Subsoil	-	-
2202	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 23						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.38
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
2300	Layer	-	0.22	Topsoil	-	-
2301	Layer	-	0.20	Subsoil	-	-

2302	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
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Trench 24						
General description					Orientation	SE-NW
Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.42
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
2400	Layer	-	0.25	Topsoil	-	-
2401	Layer	-	0.20	Subsoil	-	-
2402	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 25						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.40
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
2500	Layer	-	0.25	Topsoil	-	-
2501	Layer	-	0.20	Subsoil	-	-
2502	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 26						
General description					Orientation	SE-NW
Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.30
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
2600	Layer	-	0.18	Topsoil	-	-
2601	Layer	-	0.12	Subsoil	-	-
2602	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 27						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.40
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
2700	Layer	-	0.25	Topsoil	-	-
2701	Layer	-	0.15	Subsoil	-	-
2702	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 28						
General description					Orientation	SE-NW

Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.42
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
2800	Layer	-	0.22	Topsoil	-	-
2801	Layer	-	0.20	Subsoil	-	-
2802	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 29						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.38
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
2900	Layer	-	0.25	Topsoil	-	-
2901	Layer	-	0.13	Subsoil	-	-
2902	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 30						
General description					Orientation	SE-NW
Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.42
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
3000	Layer	-	0.25	Topsoil	-	-
3001	Layer	-	0.17	Subsoil	-	-
3002	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 31						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.40
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
3100	Layer	-	0.25	Topsoil	-	-
3101	Layer	-	0.15	Subsoil	-	-
3102	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 32						
General description					Orientation	SE-NW
Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.45

Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
3200	Layer	-	0.25	Topsoil	-	-
3201	Layer	-	0.20	Subsoil	-	-
3202	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 33						
General description				Orientation	NE-SW	
Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.				Length (m)	50	
				Width (m)	1.8	
				Avg. depth (m)	0.32	
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
3300	Layer	-	0.22	Topsoil	-	-
3301	Layer	-	0.10	Subsoil	-	-
3302	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 34						
General description				Orientation	NE-SW	
Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.				Length (m)	50	
				Width (m)	1.8	
				Avg. depth (m)	0.36	
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
3400	Layer	-	0.20	Topsoil	-	-
3401	Layer	-	0.16	Subsoil	-	-
3402	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 35						
General description				Orientation	NE-SW	
Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.				Length (m)	50	
				Width (m)	1.8	
				Avg. depth (m)	0.40	
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
3500	Layer	-	0.20	Topsoil	-	-
3501	Layer	-	0.20	Subsoil	-	-
3502	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 36						
General description				Orientation	SE-NW	
Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.				Length (m)	50	
				Width (m)	1.8	
				Avg. depth (m)	0.32	
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
3600	Layer	-	0.20	Topsoil	-	-
3601	Layer	-	0.12	Subsoil	-	-

3602	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
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Trench 37						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.43
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
3700	Layer	-	0.23	Topsoil	-	-
3701	Layer	-	0.20	Subsoil	-	-
3702	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 38						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.35
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
3800	Layer	-	0.20	Topsoil	-	-
3801	Layer	-	0.15	Subsoil	-	-
3802	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 39						
General description					Orientation	SE-NW
Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.32
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
3900	Layer	-	0.20	Topsoil	-	-
3901	Layer	-	0.12	Subsoil	-	-
3902	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 40						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.42
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
4000	Layer	-	0.30	Topsoil	-	-
4001	Layer	-	0.12	Subsoil	-	-
4002	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 41						
General description					Orientation	SE-NW

Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.29
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
4100	Layer	-	0.18	Topsoil	-	-
4101	Layer	-	0.11	Subsoil	-	-
4102	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 42						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.45
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
4200	Layer	-	0.25	Topsoil	-	-
4201	Layer	-	0.20	Subsoil	-	-
4202	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 43						
General description					Orientation	SE-NW
Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.23
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
4300	Layer	-	0.14	Topsoil	-	-
4301	Layer	-	0.09	Subsoil	-	-
4302	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 44						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.40
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
4400	Layer	-	0.24	Topsoil	-	-
4401	Layer	-	0.18	Subsoil	-	-
4402	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 45						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology but with trace of ridge and furrow across trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.30
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date

Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
4500	Layer	-	0.20	Topsoil	-	-
4501	Layer	-	0.10	Subsoil	-	-
4502	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

APPENDIX B FINDS REPORTS

B.1 Pottery

Identified by Edward Biddulph

Context	Description	Date
1506	Ten sherds: three grog tempered, including two refitting sherds from a jar with short everted rim. Seven shell-tempered sherds. 24g	Late Iron Age

B.2 Bone

Identified by Lee Broderick

Context	Description
1506	1 sheep/goat tooth. 5g
1706	<1> 3 indeterminate fragments including 2 medium mammal. 2g

B.3 Burnt unworked flint

Identified by Geraldine Crann

Context	Description
1706	<1> 20 fragments unworked burnt flint. 6g

B.4 Slag and hammerscale

Identified by Geraldine Crann

Context	Description
1706	<1> 1 small fragment magnetic slag. 1g
1706	<1> c 100 fragments hammerscale/magnetic material. 12g

APPENDIX C ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS

C.1 Environmental samples

By Thomas Bruce

Introduction

C.1.1 A single 40 litre sample (Sample 1) was taken during the evaluation. The sample originates from the lower fill of a late Iron Age hollow-way located in Trench 17, feature number 1705, fill 1706. It comprised a dark greyish brown (10YR, 4/2) silt loam. The sample was taken for the retrieval of charred plant remains and artefacts.

Method

C.1.2 The sample was processed by water flotation using a modified Siraf style machine. The flot was collected on a 250µm mesh and the heavy residue sieved to 500µm; both were dried in a heated room, after which the residues were sorted by eye for artefacts. The dried flot was scanned using a binocular microscope at approximately x 10 magnification. Nomenclature follows Stace (2010).

Results

C.1.3 The sample produced a flot of approximately 250ml, from which 100ml was scanned, consistent with OA guidelines. There was large amount of modern plant root in the flot, alongside smaller amounts of other modern materials (nematode eggs, insects and uncharred seeds).

C.1.4 The scanned portion of the flot contains relatively large quantities of charcoal, with an excess of 150 fragments larger than 4mm. The charcoal is robust in appearance and is generally clean with little signs of external encrustation, but no roundwood fragments were identified.

C.1.5 Two charred grains were present within the scanned portion of the flot. One of these is barley (*Hordeum vulgare*), while the other is indeterminate due to the poor condition of the surviving fragment. It is possible that this is also barley but a definitive identification is impossible. Both grains were in a clinkered and fragmented condition.

C.1.6 One charred vetch (*Vicia*) seed was noted to be present within the scanned portion of the flot as was a fragment of hazelnut (*Corylus avellana*).

C.1.7 The sample also contained a small amount of unidentified, probable inorganic, clinkered material and a small fragment of anthracite.

C.1.8 The dried residues were sorted by eye to 2mm and produced a small amount of finds, including burnt animal bone and metalworking slag, as well as natural flint stone that showed evidence of heating.

Discussion

- C.1.9 The presence of cereal grains and common crop contaminants, such as vetch, within the flot is an indication that arable farming was practised within the surrounding landscape. Cultivation of barley, typically hulled six-row type, was common throughout Iron Age Britain, often alongside the cultivation of glume wheat (van der Veen 1992). The charred nature of these grains and seeds provides evidence that these were probably being processed, but due to the small amount found within the sample it is likely this occurred some distance away. Hazelnuts are also known to be widely consumed during this period and were an important resource during the Iron Age (Lopez-Doriga 2015; Wright *et al.* 2009).
- C.1.10 The nature of the deposit means that any charred remains within it are likely to be accidental inclusions, but the overall nature of the sample suggests that it may derive from hearth waste.
- C.1.11 The condition of the charcoal, seeds and grain within this sample indicates that charred material survives well on this site and if further excavation is carried out, it is recommended that sampling should take place, ideally from a range of datable features across the site. This sampling should be carried out in accordance with the most recent sampling guidelines (e.g. English Heritage 2011; Oxford Archaeology 2017).

APPENDIX D BIBLIOGRAPHY

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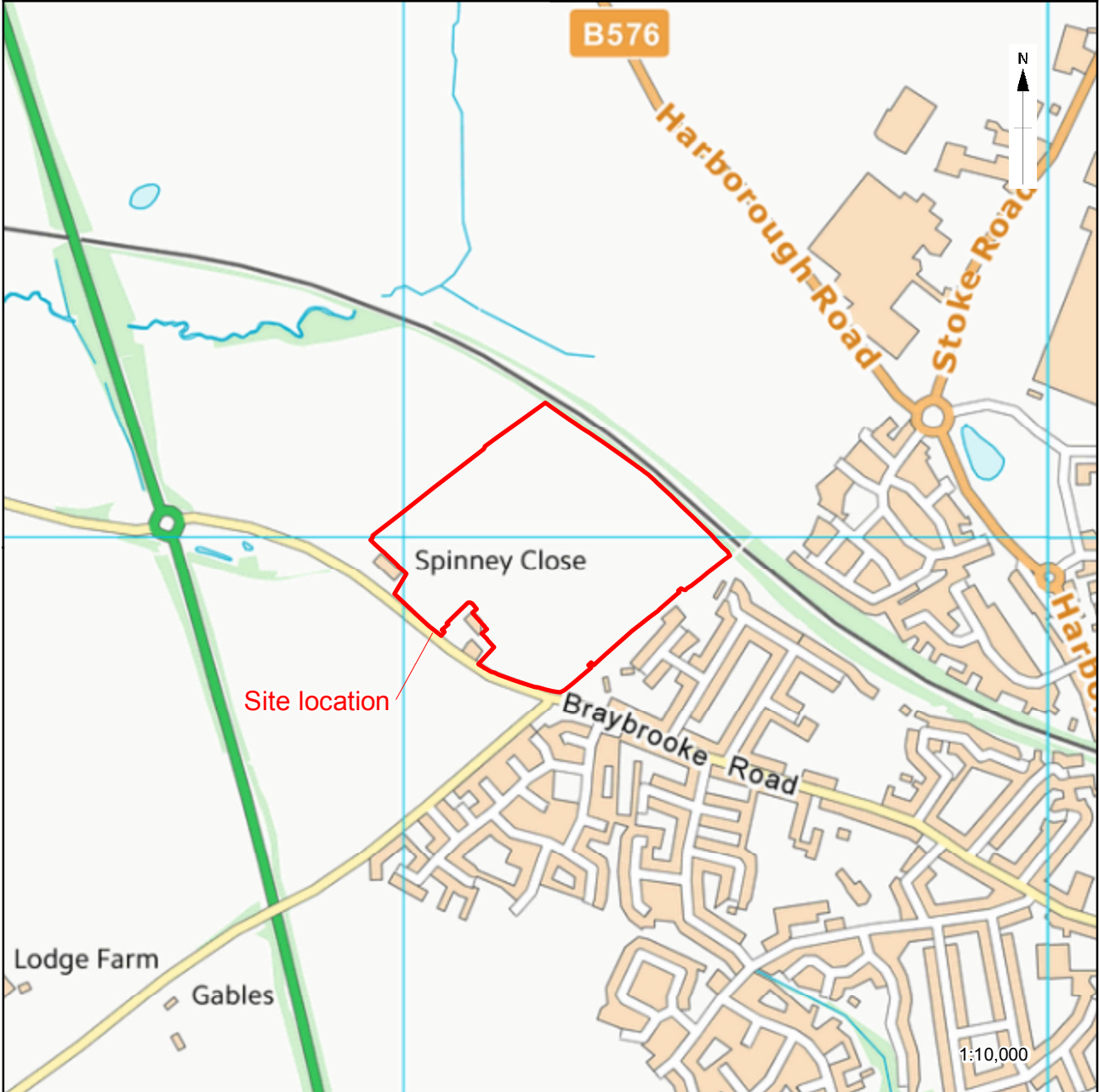
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APPENDIX E SITE SUMMARY DETAILS

Site name:	Braybrooke Road, Desborough, Northamptonshire
Site code:	DEBR 19
Grid reference	SP 7921 8397
Type:	Evaluation
Date and duration:	18th March 2019 to 5th April 2019
Area of site	44 50m x 1.8m trenches
Location of archive:	The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES.
Summary of results:	<p>In March 2019 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by Pegasus Group on behalf of Gladman Developments Ltd to undertake a trial trench evaluation at Braybrooke Road, Desborough, Northamptonshire. The evaluation consisted of 45 trenches arranged across the site, following a geophysical survey. The evaluation revealed an absence of archaeological features in the majority of the site, although a hollow-way, dated by a small quantity of late Iron Age pottery, and eight linear ditches that appeared to form a field or enclosure system were discovered in the central and eastern part of the western field. Five undated pits were also discovered in this area. The putative field system was not dated by any artefactual remains, although one of the ditches truncated the upper fill of the hollow-way and was, in turn, overlain by ridge and furrow cultivation.</p>



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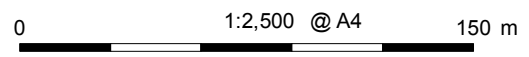
Figure 1: Site location



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Figure 2: Trench location and geophysical survey



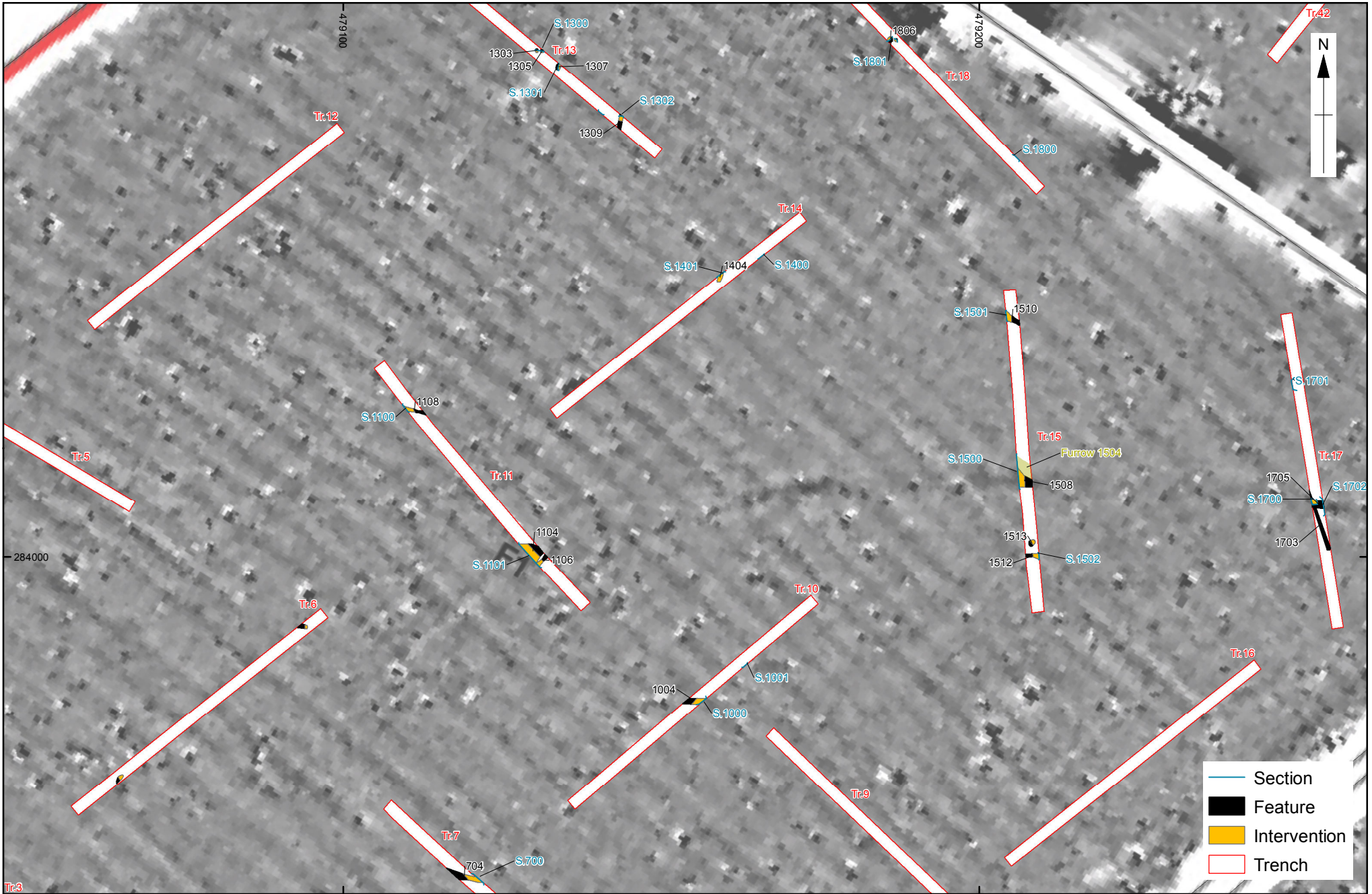


Figure 3: Detail view of archaeological features in trenches 7,10,11,13-15,17 and 18

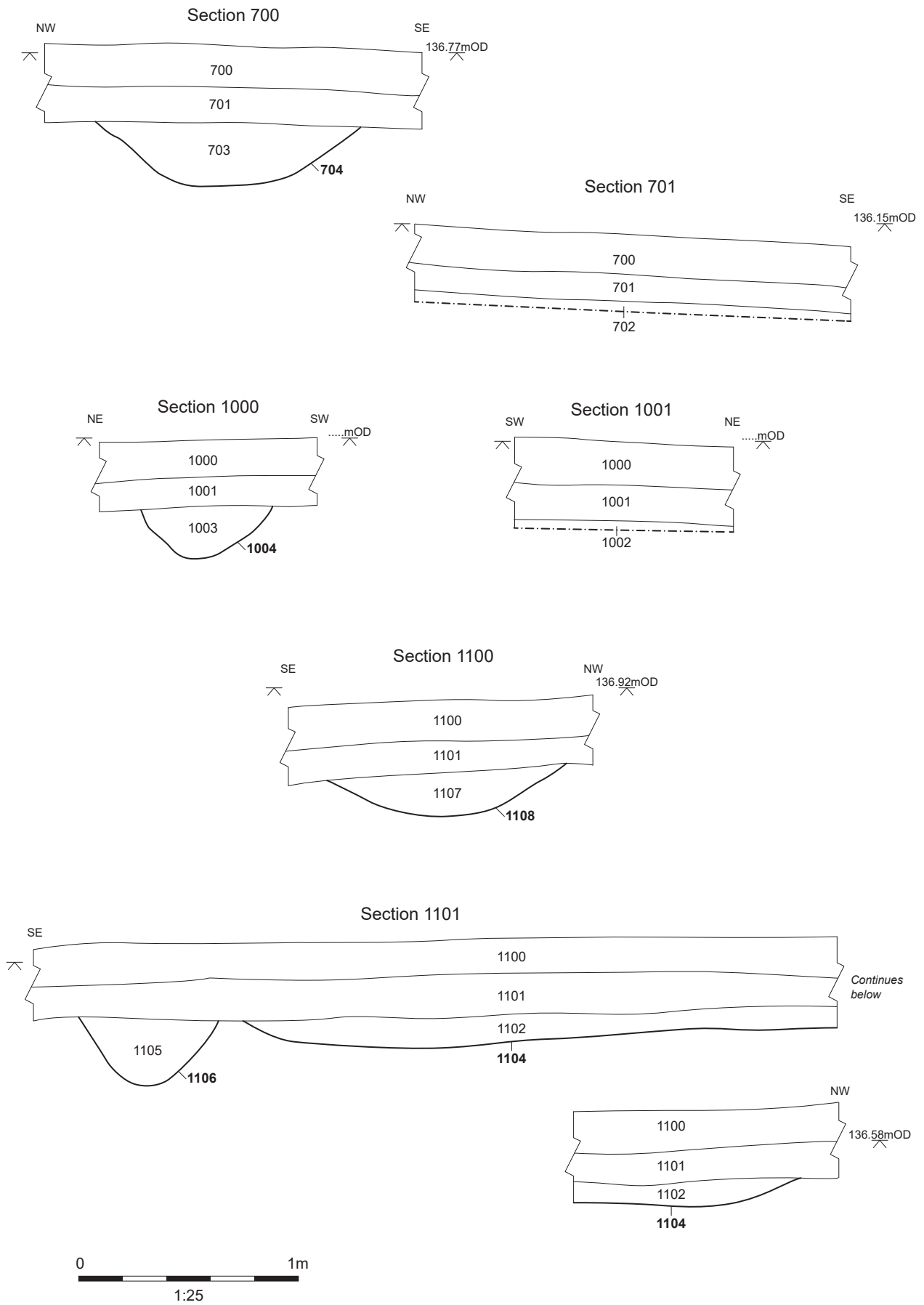


Figure 4: Sections of features from Trenches 7, 10 and 11

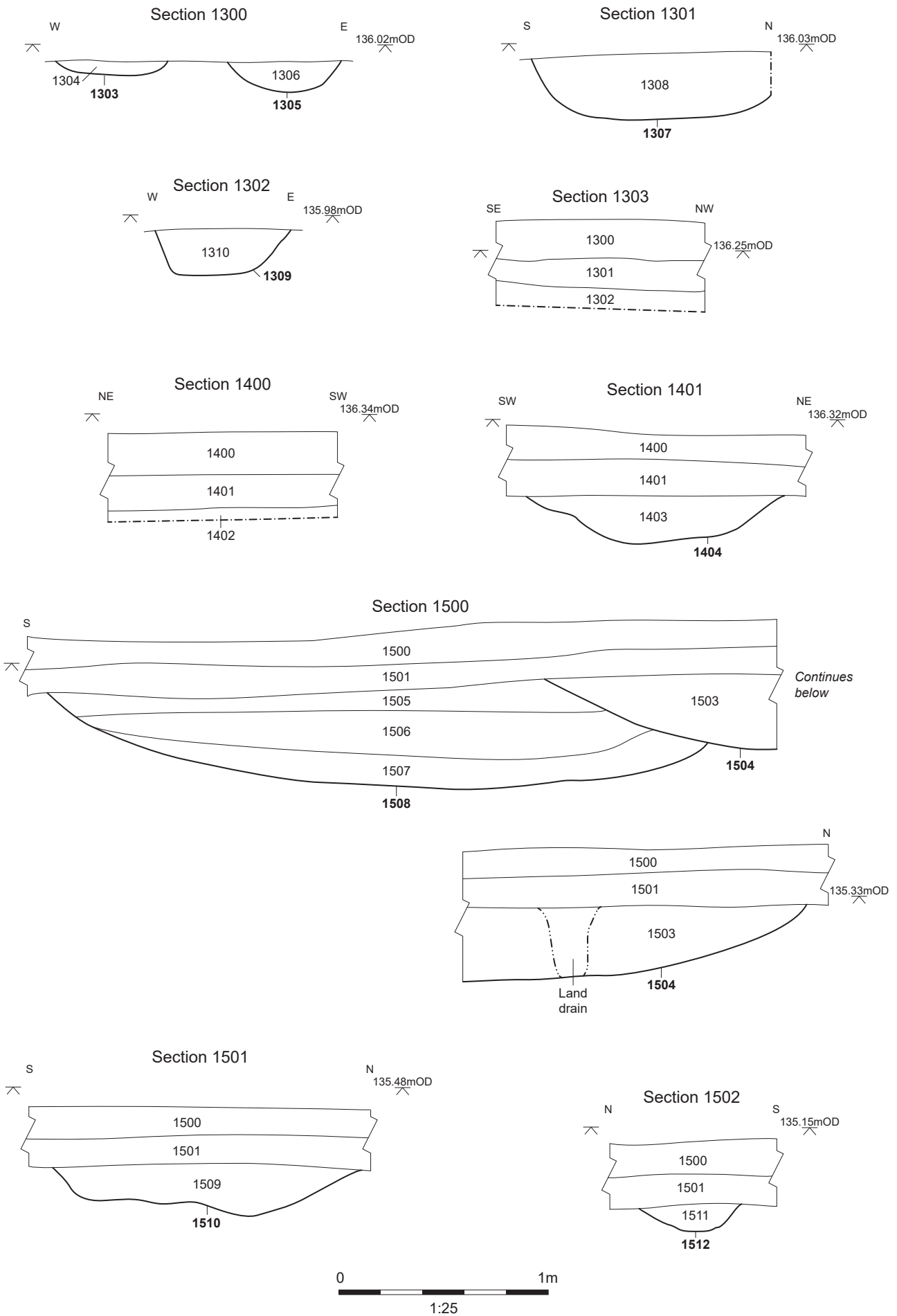


Figure 5: Sections of features from Trenches 13, 14 and 15

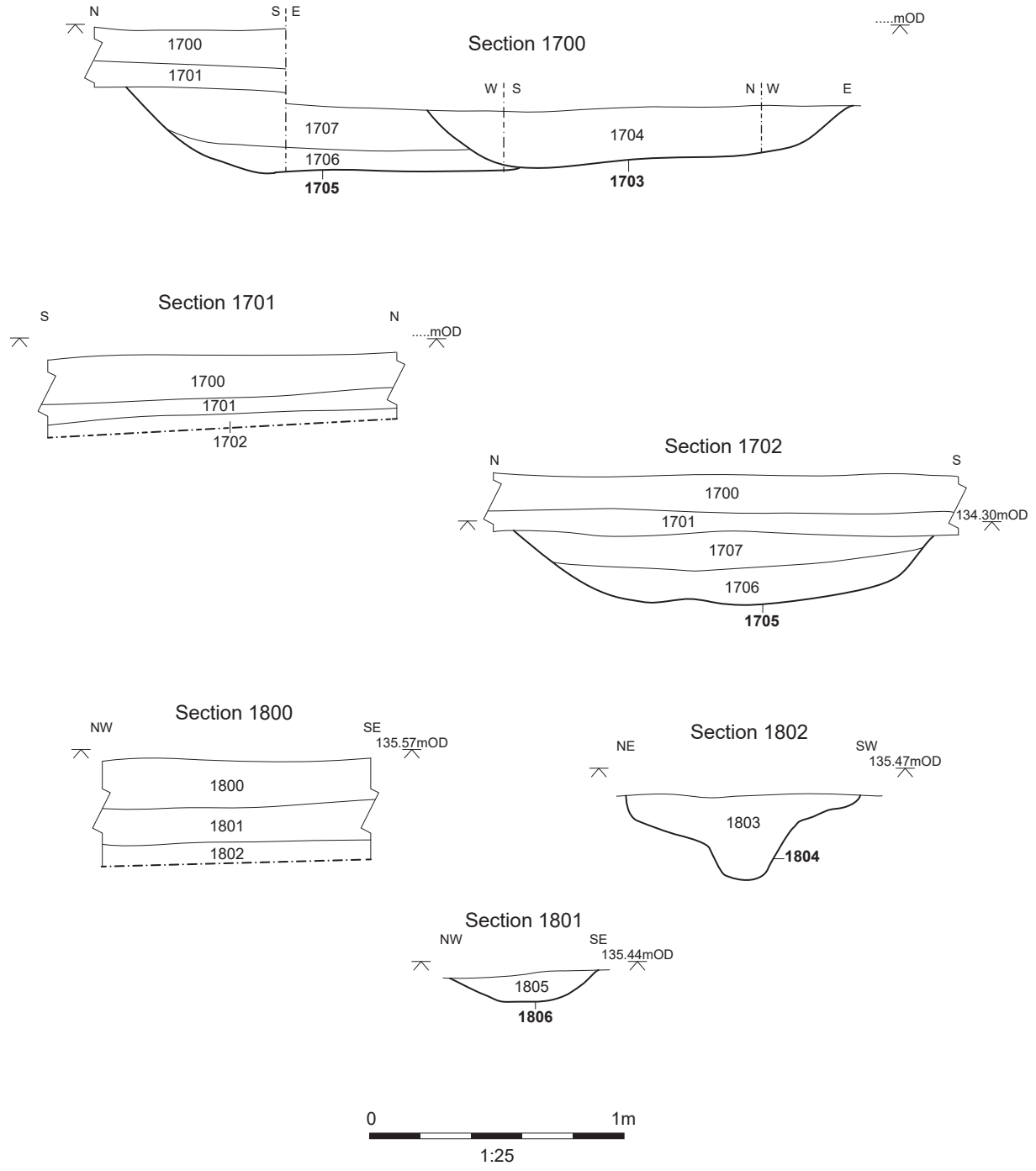


Figure 6: Sections of features from Trenches 17 and 18



Plate 1: Trench 22, looking north-west



Plate 2: Trench 37, looking north-west



Plate 3: Ditch 704, looking north-east



Plate 4: Hollow-way 1104, looking south-west



Plate 5: Ditch 1106, looking south-west



Plate 6: Ditch 1309, looking north



Plate 7: Pits 1303 and 1305, looking north



Plate 8: Hollow-way 1508, furrow 1504 and land drain, looking north-west



Plate 9: Hollow-way 1705 (left) cut by ditch 1703 (right). Looking south



Plate 10: Pit 1806, looking north-east



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