Long Oat Lands, Little Wittenham, Oxfordshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Long Oat Lands, Little Wittenham, Oxfordshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Summary

Oxford Archaeology carried out an evaluation by trenching of a 15ha field known as Long Oat Lands, Little Wittenham, Oxfordshire, on behalf of the landowners, Church Farm Partnership. Twenty-seven trenches 30m long and 2m wide, representing a 1% sample of the field, were excavated by machine under close archaeological supervision. The work was carried out at the request of Natural England to assist in determining whether an application for reversion from pasture to arable cultivation should be granted.

Potentially archaeological features were found in 14 trenches. In the north-west part of the site two un-urned cremations were found, of which one was excavated and radiocarbon-dated to 1130-930 cal BC. The other had a small flint core on its surface. A small pit containing calcined flint-tempered pottery was found in both Trench 5 and Trench 6, and may represent associated activity. An undated small pit in Trench 1 may also have been related.

Single small pits containing similar pottery were also found in Trenches 22 and 26 at the south end of the field, and these may be of late Bronze Age or middle Iron Age date. Three possible postholes, none dated, were found in Trench 25 adjacent, and may also have been associated.

A north-south aligned ditch containing late medieval ceramic building material was found in Trench 9, and a possible continuation in Trench 13. Undated ditches in Trenches 14 and 21 may represent further boundaries along the east side of the field, parallel to the stream running down the eastern field boundary.

Furrows on a NNW-SSE alignment were found in Trenches 4, 5 and 8 at the north end of the field, and that in Trench 8 contained medieval pottery. An undated ditch on the same alignment was also found in Trench 8, and a ditch or furrow on the same alignment in Trench 26 at the south end of the field.

Undated ditches were found in Trenches 8 and 10 at right angles to this, as was a broad furrow or ditch in Trench 13, and may relate to cropmark ditches plotted crossing the field, though the correlation with that in Trench 10 is not close. These WSW-ENE aligned ditches match the orientation of slight banks shown on the LiDAR survey of this field, and correspond with former field boundaries marked on 19th-century maps. Other slight banks visible on the LiDAR were also confirmed by the evaluation, and presumably mark further former field divisions of medieval or later date, ploughed out in the 20th century.

In three trenches a third layer was found below the topsoil and ploughsoil, which varied in character, but appeared to be a mix of the natural clay or sandy gravel and the subsoil. This may represent either the interface of ploughing and the natural or the remains of an earlier soil, but has clearly been mixed, so even if an earlier soil, probably simply indicates that there was an earlier phase of ploughing. In two cases the survival of this soil may have been related to the slight field banks on the LiDAR, but this was not clear in the third case. No finds were recovered from this soil.

Acknowledgements

Oxford Archaeology would like to thank Sam Haynes of Church Farm Partnership for commissioning this project. Thanks are also extended to Richard Oram of OCC and David Wilkinson of Historic England, who monitored the work on behalf of Dawn Enright of Natural England, for their advice and guidance.

The project was managed for Oxford Archaeology by Tim Allen. The fieldwork was directed by Mark Dodd, who was supported by Chris Richardson. Survey and digitizing was carried out by Conan Parsons. Thanks are also extended to the teams of OA staff that cleaned and packaged the finds under the management of Leigh Allen and the supervision of Geraldine Crann, processed the environmental remains under the management of Rebecca Nicholson and the supervision of Sharon Cook, and prepared the archive under the management of Nicola Scott. The radiocarbon date was obtained through SERC (East Kilbride).

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of work

1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by Church Farm Partnership to carry out an Environmental Impact Assessment for an area of 15.54 ha of land known as Long Oat Lands, at Little Wittenham, Oxfordshire, henceforth known as 'the site'.

1.1.2 This site is subject to an application for arable reversion (reversion of grass field to combinable cropping). An application for a Scoping Opinion (EIA 2554) submitted to Natural England produced a response (dated 12/4/7) which confirmed that the site should be the subject of an Environmental Impact Assessment and should include a Heritage Impact Assessment.

1.1.3 The document contained an outline scope for the Heritage Assessment (see Appendix C). which in outline confirmed that the report should be based upon the results of a desk-based assessment followed by a trenching evaluation

1.1.4 No formal brief was set by Natural England's Archaeological Advisor Dawn Enright, but discussion with her enabled OA to produce a written scheme of investigation (WSI) detailing Natural England's requirements for work necessary to inform their consideration of the Application (OA 2018).

1.1.5 All work was undertaken in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (DCMS 2015), with the Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) Project Manager's guide (Historic England 2015), and in accordance with the Code of Conduct of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, of which OA is a Registered Organisation. The archaeological works were carried out in accordance with the standards and guidance for archaeological excavation and archiving (CIfA 2014a; CifA 2014b).

1.1.6 This report provides the detail of the archaeological and other features found during the evaluation, reviews the evaluation aims in the light of the discoveries, and assesses the significance of the results.

1.1.7 The archaeological work was monitored on behalf of Natural England by Richard Oram of Oxfordshire Archaeological Services and David Wilkinson, Assistant Inspector for Historic England.

1.2 Location, topography and geology

1.2.1 The site is centred on NGR SU 56205 93698, and its location is shown on Figure 1.

1.2.2 The site is located to the north-west of the village of Little Wittenham. It comprises a single field lying at the base of the Sinodun Hills, and slopes gently northwards from 57.5m aOD at the south end to 50m aOD at the north end.

1.2.3 The BGS (2017) records that the bedrock deposit underlying the site is Gault Mudstone (clay), formed in the Cretaceous period. No superficial deposits are recorded overlying the mudstone in the southern half of the site, but Northmoor First Gravel Terrace deposits cover the northern half of the site, laid down in the Pleistocene from movement of material associated with the Thames.

1.2.4 The Thames flows southwards some 320m to the east, and LiDAR suggests that a stream formerly ran down the east edge of the site and turned east to run into the river (Fig. 2).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 The archaeological and historical background of the site was been described in detail in the archaeological baseline report and evaluation proposal (OA 2018), and is not reproduced in full here.

1.3.2 Mesolithic, Neolithic and early Bronze age struck flints were found in fieldwalking in the field immediately north-east of the site (Allen *et al.* 2006), further Neolithic finds within Dyke Hills across the river Thames some 600m to the east, and a Neolithic pit and struck flint on the slope of the Sinodun Hills north of the Earth Trust (formerly Hill Farm), some 800m south of the site (Allen *et al.* 2010). A probably Bronze Age barrow lies within a cropmark complex in the scheduled area some 600m north-west of the site. A late Bronze Age defensible hilltop enclosure was found at Castle Hill (ibid., 22-26).

1.3.3 Extensive cropmarks and geophysical surveys all around the site, together with targeted excavation, suggests a densely occupied landscape in the Iron Age. The Scheduled area around Northfield Farm to the west, north and north-east of the site (UID: 1002925), part of which is shown in Figure 2, includes enclosures, pit alignments and other structures of probable Iron Age date (Baker 2002), and fieldwalking over a cropmark complex in the field immediately to the north-east of the site recovered some late Iron pottery.

1.3.4 The foci of Iron Age activity in this area appear to have been the scheduled sites of Sinodun/Castle Hill hillfort (UID: 1006302), located 1km to the south-east of the site, and Dyke Hills (UID 1006364), 600m to the east. These monuments may have provided political, ritual and/or economic centres for the surrounding communities.

1.3.5 The area around Dyke Hills appears to have held a continued importance after the late Iron Age as the adjacent Roman town that developed at Dorchester-on-Thames was of some significance (Henig and Booth 2000, 39-40, 58-63). West of the Thames within the scheduled area around Northfield Farm are linear features, trackways and square enclosures more indicative of the Roman period.

1.3.6 The most significant Roman cropmark complex is the scheduled group immediately to the north-west of the site (Fig. 2). Features of probable Roman date include a main N-S aligned trackway with perpendicular enclosures, palisade, pits and a triple ditched system. This has been subjected to partial excavations, retrieving material from the 1st-3rd centuries, including cremations and inhumations (Haverfield 1901; Gray 1970; 1977).

1.3.7 An east-west trackway continues both east and west at the south end of the scheduled area, running towards the cropmark complex just north-east of the site, where fieldwalking has recovered much Roman pottery, confirming a probable Roman date for the main cropmark enclosures (Fig. 2; Allen *et al.* 2006, figs 14.16-17). Cropmarks within the site were recorded both by Benson and Miles and in Historic England's NMP (Benson and Miles 1974, 66, map 36; Fenner 1994), and could be related.

1.3.8 The NMP has transcribed cropmarks for the central/northern area of the site, centred on SU 56222 93650 (Fig. 2; Fenner 1994). This comprises two linear features on an ENE-WSW

alignment, possibly forming a trackway, and a parallel linear boundary some 60m north of that. At the west end this boundary joins a short boundary at right angles, perhaps suggesting that these two may belong to a former field or enclosure system. Close to the east edge of the field, another ditch runs NNE from the linear boundary towards the complex of rectilinear enclosures of Roman date in the adjacent field.

1.3.9 Anglo-Saxon settlement is known at Long Wittenham and Dorchester (Crossley and Elrington 1979, 478-91; Dodd in Hey and Hind 2014, 201), and cemeteries at Long Wittenham. Middle Saxon pits were also found at Neptune Wood east of College Farm, some 900m west of the site (Allen *et al.* 2010, 217-35). Two sherds of Saxon pottery have been recovered from the field immediately north-east of the site (Allen *et al.* 2006, fig. 14.18), and one sherd from a trench north of the Manor House in Little Wittenham, suggesting some activity in the immediate vicinity of the site during this time.

1.3.10 Ridge-and-furrow cultivation is evident on the LiDAR survey in the fields immediately south and east of the site (Fig. 2), and it is likely that this was also present on the site in the medieval period, but has now been ploughed out.

1.3.11 The two boundaries joining at right angles match former field boundaries evident on the 1844 tithe map, and so are post-medieval in date (Fig. 2). The possible trackway and the NNE running boundary do not, and so may be of earlier date. These cropmarks are not visible in the field across the road to the west, and geophysical survey of the eastern side of this field (Allen *et al.* 2006, figs 14.7, 14.10 and 14.11) did not continue far enough south to overlie the projected line of the cropmark trackway. No geophysical survey has been carried out within the site itself, partly because of the clay geology of the southern half of the field; sites on clay rarely provide good results.

1.3.12 Aerial photographs were assessed as part of the research into the archaeological baseline of the site (OA 2018). The linear features recognised by the NMP were not clearly observed, and cropmarks were not evident on the majority of the photographs held at the NMR. One aerial photograph taken in 1975, however, does show a number of further linear marks that might be cropmarks of archaeological origin (Fig. 3; SU 5693/15/136). These include linear and curvilinear marks, including examples that differ from the prevailing orientation of the field and that of modern ploughmarks. As these marks were not included as archaeological during the NMP survey, they were presumably judged to have a natural origin, or merely to show areas of crop that have been trampled. However, the possibility remains that some of these marks represent archaeological features, and the evaluation has been designed in part to target potential features shown on the aerial photograph of 1975.

1.3.13 The LiDAR survey also shows a broad hollow running NNW parallel to the curving western site boundary running from the southern end two-thirds of the way up the field, and then returning roughly at right angles north-eastwards to the existing field boundary. This probably marks the edges of a former field boundary within the existing field, and corresponds to the position of the internal division marked on the tithe map of 1844 (Fig. 2). Two similar hollows run from the western field boundary to join the NNW hollow, and probably mark further former field boundaries. A third hollow of similar length runs east from the western boundary close to the north end of the field, fading out in line with the NNW boundary visible further south. It is likely that the NNW boundary continued northwards to meet this at some stage, but has now been masked by later ploughing. None of these other former field divisions

is shown on the tithe map, so these presumably went out of use before the mid-19th century. These slight undulations are former post-medieval field boundaries and have little historic environment interest.

1.4 Potential

1.4.1 Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age activity in the vicinity of the site demonstrates that the environs of the site were attractive to early settlement. Small numbers of struck flints have been recovered in fieldwalking from the field immediately to the north-east of the site (Allen *et al.* 2006, fig. 14.14), and these are the only indication that activity of these periods may have taken place within the site. The potential for evidence of earlier prehistoric activity in the topsoil/ploughsoil was considered to be medium, but for prehistoric features low to medium.

1.4.2 Iron Age and Roman settlement is very well-attested in the area around the site. Numerous cropmark complexes are known, including the groups within the scheduled area north-west of the site. At least two linear cropmarks, possibly representing a trackway, have previously been identified as representing Roman activity, and a further mass of possible, unconfirmed cropmarks can be seen on a single aerial photograph (Figs 2-3). However, the potential of the site to contain significant Iron Age and Roman activity was considered to be uncertain.

1.4.3 The main foci of Saxon activity appear to lie some way to the west and east of the site. Saxon pottery does not tend to survive well in the ploughsoil, so it is possible that the two sherds from the adjacent field are indicative of more activity than is otherwise suggested, but the potential for Saxon archaeology was considered to be low.

1.4.4 It is likely that the site was in agricultural use in the medieval period, although as it is adjacent to the village of Little Wittenham some settlement activity may have extended into the site. Medieval remains are most likely to comprise agricultural boundary features and furrows of negligible historic significance. The potential for medieval activity, other than the furrows of ridge-and-furrow cultivation, was considered to be low.

1.4.5 The site appears to have also been in agricultural use in the post-medieval period. The 1844 tithe map shows further subdivisions of the field, and these are partially visible on the LiDAR survey and in cropmarks. Other than field boundaries, the potential for post-medieval activity on the site was considered to be low.

2 EVALUATION AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 General

2.1.1 The evaluation aims to test and refine the archaeological resource within the site to provide information on whether the proposal to revert the field to arable will negatively affect any remains that may be present.

2.2 Specific aims and objectives

2.2.1 To determine or confirm the general nature of any remains present.

2.2.2 To determine or confirm the approximate date or date range of any remains, by means of artefactual or other evidence.

2.2.3 To establish the date and function of the linear features previously identified within the site from cropmarks, to establish whether this could be a trackway, and to see if this is related to significant archaeological features.

2.2.4 To establish if the possible cropmarks visible on the 1975 aerial photograph are of archaeological or natural origin.

2.2.5 To confirm that the linear undulations in the field indicated by the LiDAR data are post-medieval agricultural boundaries and do not have historic significance.

2.2.6 To help establish the potential impacts of cultivation by establishing the existing depths of topsoil and subsoil across the field.

2.2.7 To provide information on the degree of previous soil erosion and the vulnerability of the field to further soil erosion in the future.

2.2.8 To assess whether the site contains archaeological remains of types not likely to be indicated by cropmark evidence, such as flint spreads or scatters, and for environmental evidence such as charcoal or waterlogged remains. Survival of such evidence may vary depending upon the underlying geology.

2.3 Methodology

2.3.1 Methodology generally followed standard OA guidelines set out in the WSI, Appendix A (OA 2018). This will only be summarised here.

2.3.2 Trenches were laid out using a GPS by establishing points at either end. Thereafter individual trench plans or features within them were drawn by hand, and were then digitised into CAD.

2.3.3 Excavation was carried out using a 360 machine with a toothless bucket. Turf was stripped carefully and stored alongside the trench, and topsoil and subsoil were then stripped in spits no more than 200mm thick, and stored adjacent to the trench.

2.3.4 Soilmarks were cleaned by hand if obscure, and were then photographed, planned and a representative selection sampled by hand excavation.

2.3.5 Discrete soilmarks formed several distinct types, some of which proved either to represent variations in the natural gravel, or tree-throw holes. These types of feature were investigated by hand in one or two trenches, but were not thereafter investigated.

2.3.6 Due to the small numbers of features exposed, all probable archaeological features (other than furrows) were investigated and recorded.

2.3.7 All trenches were left open for several days in order to allow features to weather out. Several trenches initially believed to be empty proved to contain features that only appeared after weathering for a few days.

2.3.8 Following the discovery of a possible human cremation in Trench 4, a licence for the removal of human bones was obtained from the Ministry of Justice prior to investigation of this. In accordance with the terms of the licence, and the advice of David Wilkinson of Historic England, the cremation was subsequently excavated and a radiocarbon date obtained on a sample of the bone.

2.3.9 By agreement with David Wilkinson, an area measuring 12m by 11m was opened up around the cremation in Trench 4 to see whether this was an isolated example, or part of a group. A second cremation was found 4m to the south, but no others within this area. The second cremation was planned and photographed, but was not excavated.

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. All trenches were 30m long and approaching 2m wide. 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.

3.2 General soils and ground conditions

3.2.1 The soil sequence between all trenches was relatively uniform. The natural geology changed from Gault clay in the southern half of the site, to the Northmoor sand and gravels in the northern half of the site. This geology was overlain by a clay-sand subsoil, which in turn was overlain by the topsoil, which consisted of a former ploughsoil topped with turf. Although the topsoil was typically between 0.2m and 0.3m thick, the subsoil thickness was notably more varied, up to 0.5m thick where it had formed a headland to the earlier ridge and furrow.

3.2.2 Ground conditions throughout the evaluation were generally good, and the trenches remained dry throughout. Archaeological features were not always readily visible, with a number only being identified towards the end of the fieldwork, following several days of weathering.

3.3 General distribution of archaeological deposits

3.3.1 In all of the trenches the natural was overlain by a layer of topsoil and below that by a layer of subsoil, which was in fact a ploughsoil from the cultivation of the field in the later 20th century. In parts of a few trenches (Trenches 13, 17 and 22) a third soil was present between the ploughsoil and the surface of the natural geology. This was described variously as the interface layer between the subsoil and the natural, or as disturbed natural, suggesting that it was a mix of both.

3.3.2 The layout of the trenches, and the distribution of archaeological features, is shown in Figure 2. The distribution of archaeological features was generally sparse, but can be divided into two distinct areas. The first of these lies towards the north end of the site, in an east-west band, between and to the north of Trenches 6 and 14. This area of archaeology comprised a combination of boundary ditches, small pits and two un-urned cremations. The second area was located in the south-west corner, and is distinguished by several small pits or postholes in Trenches 22, 25 and 26.

3.3.3 No archaeology was identified in Trenches 2, 3, 11, 15-21, 23, 24 and 27 (Fig. 2). A third layer between the subsoil and the natural, numbered 1702, was however recorded in the north-eastern two thirds of Trench 17. This was a light brown silty clay, midway in colour between the brown of the subsoil and the orange-brown of the natural beneath (Plate 1).

3.4 Trench 1

3.4.1 Trench 1 was orientated from north-east to south-west, and lay at the north-west corner of the field. Only a single small pit (103) was revealed at the south-west end of the

trench. It was sub-circular in plan and approximately 0.39m in diameter, with steep sides leading down to slightly concave base, 0.24m deep (Plate 2). The base of the feature was filled with a light grey sandy silt, overlain by a dark grey sandy silt with occasional charcoal flecks. No artefacts were recovered from this feature.

3.5 Trench 4

3.5.1 Trench 4 was orientated roughly north-east to south-west, and lay almost due east of Trench 1. It revealed probable cremation burial 403 partway along (Plate 3). Feature 403 was sub-circular in plan, 0.37m x 0.43m in plan, with a concave profile, 0.2m deep (Plate 4). It contained a single fill of dark brownish grey, silty sand, with frequent charcoal inclusions and occasional fragments of burnt bone. This was recovered in its entirety as sample <3>. Bone from this cremation was submitted for AMS radiocarbon dating to SUERC, and returned a date range of 1130-930 cal BC (SUERC-80243; 2872±28 BP).

3.5.2 Following excavation of the cremated bone by a human osteologist from OA, and confirmation that the bone was human, the monitoring archaeologists agreed that a 10m square should be opened up around the cremation to establish whether this was an isolated example, or part of a larger group (Plate 5). A second probable cremation burial (405) was found 4m SSE of 403, but no other burials within the 12.5 x 11m area. It was therefore determined that this was unlikely to be part of a clustered cemetery group.

3.5.3 Cremation burial 405 measured 0.6m in length and 0.38m wide (Plate 6). Although it was left unexcavated, its fill (406) was similar to deposit 404 in pit 403. A small flint core was recovered from the surface of 406.

3.5.4 Two broadly north-south aligned furrows were also observed in Trench 4.

3.6 Trench 5

3.6.1 Trench 5 was orientated north-east to south-west, and lay south-east of Trench 1. It contained a ditch junction and two pits or postholes. Feature 503 consisted of two ditches meeting at right angles, orientated north-south and east-west. They measured up to 0.6m wide, but were very shallow (0.05m), and due to this, varied in width depending on truncation (Plate 7). Both arms of the feature had a broad, slightly concave profile with a single fill of mid to dark greyish brown, sandy silt (504).

3.6.2 To the south-west of 503 was a small pit or possible posthole, 508. It was sub-circular in plan, 0.44m in diameter with steep sides and a concave base, 0.22m deep (Plate 8). It was filled by a single deposit of silty sand (509).

3.6.3 Pit 505 was only partially revealed in the trench and extended beyond the south-east edge of the excavation area. It had a slightly irregular edge, with moderately steep sides and a flattish base (Plate 9). Its earliest fill was a deliberate dump of dark grey-brown, sandy silt, with patches of reddish brown burnt material and frequent charcoal flecks (506). A bulk sample of this deposit was recovered (sample <1>). This was overlain by a sterile layer of mid grey silty sand, with frequent small pebbles (507).

3.6.4 Small scraps of red, fine flint-tempered pottery of later prehistoric (possibly middle Iron Age) date were observed in pit 505, but no other finds were recovered from the features in this trench.

3.7 Trench 6

3.7.1 Trench 6 was also aligned north-east to south-west, and lay south-west of Trench 5 on the west side of the site. It contained an east-west aligned ditch (603) at the north-east end of the trench. This measured 1.54m wide and 0.35m deep (Plate 10), and had a single fill of dark grey-brown sandy silt (602), from which a small sherd of later prehistoric pottery was recovered.

3.8 Trench 8

3.8.1 Trench 8 was aligned NNW-SSE, and lay south-east of Trench 4. Like Trenches 7 and 9 to either side, it was targeted upon a cropmark ditch that was plotted running from north-east to south-west across the field (Fig. 2). Ditch 803 was aligned ENE-WSW towards the middle of the trench, and may correlate with the cropmark feature. It had a V-shaped profile, 0.7m wide and 0.26m deep, with a single fill of dark grey-brown, sandy silt (Plate 11). A small fragment of post-medieval ceramic building material (CBM) was recovered from this ditch.

3.8.2 Ditch 808 was aligned broadly north-south, and was just 0.52m wide and 0.15m deep, with moderately sloping sides and a concave base (Plate 12). It contained a single sterile fill of light brown silty clay.

3.8.3 A north-south aligned furrow (805) was recorded in the north of the trench (Plate 13). Its single fill (806) contained a small sherd of medieval Kennet Valley Ware pottery, dating from 1100-1300, and a fragment of CBM.

3.9 Trench 9

3.9.1 Trench 9 was orientated from north-west to south-east, and lay north-east of Trench 8 and east of Trench 4, against the eastern side of the field. It was targeted upon two cropmark ditches, one aligned north-east, the other running into it from the NNE.

3.9.2 There was no sign of the ditch aligned north-east in the trench. Towards the north-west end was ditch 903, which was aligned north-south. This measured 0.92m wide and was 0.52m deep, with steep sides and a slightly concave base. It contained a series of deposits derived from natural silting and erosion of the ditch edges (Plate 14). The lower fills, and deposit 905 in particular, appeared to be slightly gleyed. Presumably this resulted from seasonal waterlogging of the feature; it was below the level of groundwater at the time of excavation. The latest fill (907) contained the remains of a horse radius and a fragment of tile of 13th-15th century manufacture, and was sampled for environmental remains (sample <2>).

3.9.3 A stone-filled land drain was also observed in the trench, cutting through the subsoil layer.

3.10 Trench 10

3.10.1 Trench 10 was orientated from north-west to south-east, and lay south of Trench 8. It contained a ditch at the south-east end. Ditch 1003 measured 1.6m wide and 0.32m deep, and contained a single sterile deposit of light grey-brown, silty clay (Plate 15).

3.10.2 Numerous irregular soilmarks were observed in this trench and were also tested, but were determined to be either alluvial deposits or possible tree-throw holes. None contained any finds.

3.11 Trench 12

3.11.1 Trench 12 was aligned north-west to south-east, and lay south-west of Trench 10. Like Trench 13 to its north-east, it was targeted to cross a parallel pair of linear cropmarks. Large numbers of irregular soilmarks were revealed and were tested, but all contained sterile fills indicating that they were of geological origin (Plate 16). None correlated with the suggested linear cropmarks.

3.11.2 Feature 1205 was recorded and interpreted at the time of excavation as a large pit. It was not fully exposed in the excavation area but measured at least 1.8m x 2.6m in plan, and was 0.6m deep with irregular stepped edges leading to a flattish base. It contained a sequence of sterile, naturally accumulated silty clay deposits (Plate 17). These were similar to the alluvial material observed elsewhere in the gravel geology, and may indicate that it too was a natural feature, although alternatively it may have been a waterhole of unknown date.

3.12 Trench 13

3.12.1 Trench 13 was also orientated north-west to south-east, and lay north-east of Trench 12 and east of Trench 10. Below the topsoil and subsoil a third layer (1302) described as disturbed natural was recorded in the north-western third of the trench (Plate 18).

3.12.2 The trench contained two small ditches (1306 and 1308). These lay in the southern half of the trench, and were roughly at right angles to one another. Both were steep-sided and flat-based with single fills of grey-brown, silty clay, but while 1306 was 0.55m wide and 0.2m deep (Plate 19), 1308 was only 0.25m wide and survived only 0.03m deep. Part of a horse pelvis was found in 1305, the fill of ditch 1306, but no other finds were recovered from these features.

3.12.3 A soilmark over 3m wide was found crossing the trench north of 1306 on a north-east to south-west alignment. This was crossed by a land drain. A small intervention into the northern side of this feature established that it was very shallow, and suggested that it may have been a furrow.

3.12.4 A possible pit (1304) was also recorded in Trench 13, with a single light brown sandy silt fill, and no finds. Its fill was very similar to that of the natural variations viewed elsewhere in the geology, and this feature unlikely to be archaeological.

3.13 Trench 14

3.13.1 Trench 14 was aligned NNE-SSW, and lay east of Trench 13 on the east edge of the field. Towards the north-east end was a single ditch aligned north-west to south-east (1403). This was only 0.35m wide and survived only 0.07m deep, but had a similar profile to the ditches observed in Trench 13 and contained a sterile fill of brown silty clay (Plate 20).

3.13.2 A second curving soilmark numbered 1405 was excavated further south-west. This was larger, 0.6m wide and 0.3m deep, but its irregular profile and fill of reddish-brown silty sand with much gravel suggest that it was of natural origin, probably a tree-throw hole.

3.14 Trench 22

3.14.1 Trench 22 was orientated NNW-SSE, and lay towards the south-west corner of the field. Plough scars from deep ploughing were evident in this trench (Plate 21). Below the

topsoil and subsoil a third layer (2202) was noted in the southern half of the trench, consisting of a light brown silty clay with calcareous flecks (also in Plate 21). There were no finds.

3.14.2 The trench contained a small pit (2204). This was sub-square in plan, and measured 0.36m across and 0.2m deep, with steep sides leading to a concave base (Plate 22). It was filled with a dark grey silty clay deposit with flecks of charcoal (2203). A small sherd of quartzite-tempered pottery of later prehistoric date was recovered from the environmental sample taken from this fill.

3.15 Trench 25

3.15.1 Trench 25, which was aligned north-west to south-east, and lay south of Trench 22 in the south-west corner of the field, contained three small possible pits or postholes: 2504, 2506 and 2509. These followed a roughly north-west-south-east line, with 2504 and 2509 only 3.5m apart, but 2506 some 12.5m further to the north-west. Although they varied in size, between 0.18m and 0.32m in diameter and between 0.09 and 0.2m deep, they all contained similar dark grey-brown, silty clay fills (Plate 23). No finds were recovered from any of these features.

3.16 Trench 26

3.16.1 Trench 26 lay north-east of Trench 25 close to the southern boundary of the field, and was orientated ENE-WSW. It contained a small pit, a posthole and a possible ditch or furrow.

3.16.2 Feature 2603 was only partially exposed at the northern edge of the trench. It was sub-rectangular in plan, with vertical sides and a flat base, and measured 0.64m x 0.4m in plan and 0.24m deep with a single fill of grey-brown, silty clay numbered 2602 (Plate 24). A base sherd of later prehistoric pottery tempered with calcined flint was recovered from this.

3.16.3 At the south-west end of the trench was possible posthole 2605. This was sub-circular in plan, approximately 0.24m in diameter and 0.2m deep, and had a grey-brown, silty clay fill (2604), from which a small sherd of pottery, probably of late Iron Age date, was recovered (Plate 25).

3.16.4 Feature 2607 crossed the middle of the trench on a NNW-SSE alignment. This was 1.2m wide but only 0.2m deep, and had a sterile orange-brown clayey sand fill (Plate 26). This may possibly have been a ditch or furrow, although the very sandy fill may instead indicate that it was a large feature of geological origin.

3.17 Finds and environmental remains summary

3.17.1 Finds were few, and only ten sherds of pottery, most very small, were found. The majority were of later prehistoric date, with two medieval and one post-medieval sherds.

3.17.2 There were four fragments of ceramic building material, three from tiles of medieval or post-medieval date, the fourth an amorphous fragment probably from a post-medieval brick.

3.17.3 Only two pieces of struck flint were found, neither diagnostic of date.

3.17.4 An un-urned human cremation was found in feature 404, and bone from this yielded a radiocarbon date range of 1130-930 cal BC.

3.17.5 A small assemblage of poorly preserved animal bones was recovered from features of various dates, the only specimens of note being two horse bones, one from a prehistoric, the other from a late medieval feature.

4 DISCUSSION

4.1 Reliability of field investigation

4.1.1 The evaluation was carried out in good weather. Although the gravel and clay geology was patchy, investigation of a number of geological anomalies enabled these to be distinguished from archaeological features. Some features were filled with soils similar to the surrounding natural, but trenches were left open for sufficient time for such features to weather out. There is therefore no good reason to doubt the validity of the field investigation.

4.2 Evaluation objectives and results

4.2.1 Within the scope of the evaluation sample, the general character of the remains present (Aim 2.2.1) was determined. A large number of potential cropmarks had been suggested by a 1975 aerial photograph, but these were not confirmed by evaluation, nor were some of the cropmarks previously plotted (Benson and Miles 1972; Fenner 1994). Overall the density of archaeological features was low.

4.2.2 Dating of the revealed features (Aim 2.2.2). Of the twenty one features that were found, artefactual dating was only obtained from a third, and this spanned a wide variety of periods, including the middle-late Bronze Age, middle and late Iron Age, medieval and post-medieval periods. A radiocarbon date was also obtained for one of two un-urned cremations in Trench 4. Apart from a group of three possible postholes in Trench 25, however, the other features were mainly either scattered ditches or small pits.

4.2.3 Aim 2.2.3: Of the three linear cropmarks on a WSW-ENE alignment plotted by Benson and Miles and by the NMP (Benson and Miles 1972; Fenner 1994), none was successfully traced in all of the trenches dug to intersect them. A possible correlation was found for the northernmost of these in ditch 803, which contained post-medieval CBM, but this did not continue in Trenches 7 or 9 to the south-west and north-east respectively. The possible `trackway' investigated by Trenches 12 and 13 did not find any features on the appropriate alignments, suggesting that these features may not have represented archaeological features.

4.2.4 No archaeological feature was found in Trench 9 corresponding to the cropmark running NNE from the northern linear. It is possible that the plotting of these cropmarks was somewhat inaccurate, in which case ditch 903 could correspond to this cropmark, which would suggest that the WSW-ENE ditches should be sought around 10m further north. If so, ditch 1003 could correspond to the more northerly `trackway' ditch, but features corresponding to the other two ditches on this alignment would still be lacking.

4.2.5 Aim 2.2.4: The cropmarks indicated on the 1975 aerial photograph are certainly not of archaeological origin, but it is not clear whether they are geological, or due to vegetation.

4.2.6 Aim 2.2.5: The positive linear features identified in the LiDAR survey were all in the soil profile above the natural into which archaeological features were cut, and are of fairly recent date. In three trenches a third layer was found below the topsoil and ploughsoil, which varied in character, but appeared to represent a mix of the local geology, whether natural clay or sandy gravel, and the subsoil. This may simply represent the interface between ploughsoil and natural, or could represent the remains of an earlier soil. It had clearly been mixed, so even if a separate deposit, appears only to indicate an earlier phase of ploughing. No finds were recovered from this soil. In two of the three cases (Trenches 13 and 17) its preservation could

have been related to slight banks visible on the LiDAR survey, but in the third (Trench 22) no such correlation was evident.

4.2.7 Aim 2.2.6: A table of the depths of topsoil and subsoil across the site is shown below. This shows that, except where enhanced by the positive linear boundaries shown on the LiDAR survey, the depth of soil cover is generally of the order of 0.5m. There is however an area towards the north end of the field, including Trenches 11, 5 and 4, where the soil depth over archaeological features is only 0.4-0.43m, and at the north end of Trench 8 it drops to only 0.35m (Fig. 8).

Trench No.	Topsoil (m)	Subsoil (m)	Combined (min)	Combined (max)	Comment
1	0.3	0.2	0.5		
2	0.25	0.25	0.5	0.6	
3	0.3	0.5	0.8		
4	0.2	0.2	0.4		
5	0.25	0.18	0.43		
6	0.3	0.25	0.55	0.7 S end	Headland
7	0.28	0.32	0.6		
8	0.22	0.13	0.35		
9	0.27	0.32	0.59	0.9 S end	Headland
10	0.3	0.36	0.66	0.8 centre	Headland
11	0.24	0.16	0.4		
12	0.26	0.22	0.48	0.62 N end	
13	0.27	0.2	0.47	0.61 NW end	Third layer
14	0.26	0.24	0.5	0.6 SW end	
15	0.3	0.3	0.6		
16	0.3	0.3	0.6	0.7 SE end	E-W headland
17	0.3	0.3	0.6	0.82 ENE	Third layer
18	0.33	0.22	0.55		
19	0.29	0.31	0.6		
20	0.3	0.23	0.53		
21	0.26	0.22	0.48	0.54 W end	
22	0.3	0.25	0.55	0.72 S half	Third layer
23	0.28	0.3	0.58		
24	0.32	0.27	0.59		
25	0.25	0.23	0.48	0.88 S end	Headland
26	0.31	0.37	0.68	0.72	Headland?
27	0.27	0.2	0.47	0.82 N end	

4.2.8 Aim 2.2 7: From the absence of any undisturbed buried soils surviving over the natural in the evaluation trenches, and the very shallow surviving depth of some of the archaeological features, it appears that ploughing had already truncated the archaeology in this field. Lines

caused by deep, mouldboard ploughing were also exposed in the natural at the base of some trenches (see Plate 21).

4.2.9 The depth of soil cover was generally greater towards the south end of the field, ie in the more elevated part. This would suggest that downslope soil erosion had generally not occurred in the past. The depth of cover may also have been affected by the nature of the soils, the clayey soils being less likely to move than those over the sandy gravel, where there was some evidence of soil accumulation at the east and north edges of the field.

4.2.10 Aim 2.2.8: No evidence of ancient surface activities such as those that produced flint scatters was found in the evaluation, and only a very small number of struck flints were recovered. No evidence of waterlogged deposits or of environmental remains of significance was recovered, although it was clear that animal bones, charred plant remains and molluscan evidence did survive in the northern part of the field due to the generally calcareous character of the underlying natural.

4.2.11 Small features not likely to be identified as cropmarks were found, comprising postholes, cremation burials and gullies.

4.3 Interpretation

4.3.1 The evaluation represents only a 1% sample of the site, and this should be borne in mind when considering any interpretation of the revealed archaeology.

4.3.2 No dense concentrations of archaeological features were found in the evaluation, and finds were very few, even from the ploughed subsoil and topsoil. This strongly suggests that foci of occupation of the Roman or medieval periods do not exist within the site.

4.3.3 The paucity of struck flints also argues against any large-scale foci of occupation of the Mesolithic, Neolithic or early Bronze Age periods, although given the limited area generally covered by individual flint clusters and activity areas, these might still be found in the gaps between the evaluation trenches.

4.3.4 The archaeological features for which there was dating evidence included two un-urned cremations of the later Bronze Age, the radiocarbon date from the excavated example falling between 1130 and 930 cal BC. The middle Bronze Age is generally thought to start at around 1600 BC; the transition from middle to late Bronze Age is not clear cut, but the pottery traditions that most clearly define the middle Bronze Age rarely appear after 1150 cal BC, so this cremation belongs in the late Bronze Age. Cremation burial appears to have been the predominant rite in the later Bronze Age of the Thames Valley, urned burials being fairly common in the middle Bronze Age, and rare in the late Bronze Age (Lambrick with Robinson 2009, 325-7). In consequence, late Bronze Age cremations are often only recognised through radiocarbon dating, as here.

4.3.5 The character of settlement in the late Bronze Age period is varied. Defensible hilltop enclosures and nucleated `villages' begin to appear; there is an example of the former at Wittenham Clumps less than 1km from the site (Allen *et al.* 2010), and of the latter at Cassington West (Lambrick with Robinson 2009, Fig. 4.8), but dispersed settlement, either within systems of large enclosure or fields, or without archaeologically visible boundaries, is much more common. A field or enclosure system ascribed to the later Bronze Age is present within the Scheduled Monument complex around Northfield Farm 1.2km north-west of the

site, though no dating evidence has been found to confirm this (Gray 1977; Lambrick with Robinson 2009, 80-2 and fig. 3.16).

4.3.6 The location and grouping of cremations reflect this variety. Large cremation cemeteries of the middle Bronze Age are known in the Upper Thames Valley, for instance at Standlake and within the earlier barrow at Mount Farm, Dorchester (Lambrick with Robinson 2009), but cremations occur much more often in small groups, or singly, as at Appleford nearby (Booth and Simmonds 2009). Cremations are sometimes closely associated with houses or trackways, but are also found alongside boundaries, or in apparently isolated locations remote from settlement. As radiocarbon dating has only been used since the later 20th century, we have less information about late Bronze Age cremation, but the occurrence of single cremations, and of small groups, remains common.

4.3.7 The occurrence of a pair of cremation burials of this period is thus not surprising in the context of the archaeology known in the landscape surrounding the site. This pair may be isolated from others and from settlement, but others could also occur dispersed over a wider area.

4.3.8 Other features that contain pottery of later prehistoric date were found in Trenches 5 and 6 west of the cremations, and in Trenches 22 and 26 at the south end of the field some 250m away. Either a late Bronze Age or a middle Iron Age date has been suggested for these sherds. Given the presence of the cremations, it is perhaps more likely that the features in adjacent Trenches 5 and 6 are of late Bronze Age date. An undated small pit in Trench 1 may also belong to this area of activity. The features towards the south end of the field comprise two pits, and may be of the same date, representing scattered settlement activity across a wide area.

4.3.9 Alternatively, the two pits may represent unrelated middle Iron Age activity. The presence of a late Iron Age sherd in a posthole in Trench 26 perhaps supports this alternative. If so, the occurrence of fabrics from outside the local area would be of interest as evidence of the southern contacts of the wider Iron Age society living around the hillfort at Castle Hill. The late Iron Age sherd from a posthole in Trench 26 may relate to the settlement known just beyond the north-east corner of the field, and indicate peripheral activity, or may have been spread by manuring and have been redeposited in a later feature.

4.3.10 Three possible postholes, none dated, were found in Trench 25 adjacent, and may have been associated. These appear to be roughly in line, but the large gap between two of them and the third may indicate that this is illusory, and they may not belong to the same structure or structures. These postholes, whose fills were dissimilar from those of the pits, may have been of different date.

4.3.11 No medieval settlement features were found by the evaluation. One piece of probably late medieval CBM came from a ditch in Trench 9, the others from probable furrow 805 and from the subsoil. These finds are unremarkable in the vicinity of the medieval village of Little Wittenham, which is recorded from Domesday Book onwards in documents.

4.3.12 The ditches found on the site were concentrated on the east side of the field, and are aligned north-south (Trenches 9, 13 and 21), NNW-SSE (Trench 8) or north-west to south-east (Trench 14). The north-south ditch in Trench 13 may be a continuation of that found in Trench 9. In Trench 8 ditch 808 was on a NNW-SSE alignment, and was parallel to furrow 805; furrows

on the same alignment were also found in Trenches 4 and 5, and possibly in Trench 26. The furrows follow the direction of slope parallel to the stream, draining from south to north.

4.3.13 The varying alignments of the ditches may relate to the changing orientation of the former stream running along the eastern field boundary, and they may have had boundary and drainage functions relating to this.

4.3.14 The NNW-ESE ditches and furrows are roughly at right angles to WSW-ENE ditches in Trenches 8 and 10, neither of which is dated. These latter ditches may correspond to cropmarks plotted crossing the field on this alignment, although the correspondence for that in Trench 10 is poor. A wide soilmark on a similar alignment in Trench 13 was crossed by a land drain. The part north of this was investigated, and was found to be shallow. The feature was therefore assumed to be a furrow, although on a different alignment from all of the others. It is possible that the soilmark also concealed a ditch, whose northern side had a wide shallow shelf. If so, however, it did not align with the ditch in Trench 10, nor was a continuation seen in Trench 12. These undated ditches, and the ditch or furrow in Trench 13, are most likely to represent drainage ditches associated with the medieval or later furrows or headlands.

4.3.15 The WSW-ENE ditches in Trenches 8 and 10 also align with slight banks evident on the LiDAR survey, some of which correspond to the lines of former field divisions evident on historic maps of the 19th century. These were therefore assumed to represent the remains of field boundaries or headlands. Excavation showed that both the topsoil and subsoil continued across them.

4.3.16 In Trenches 13, 17 and 22, however, thin layers of soil were found overlying the natural below the subsoil, and in two out of three the third soil lay under the line of one of the slight banks evident on the LiDAR. The character of these soils varied depending upon whether the underlying natural was sandy gravel or clay, but were all similar both to the natural beneath and to the ploughsoil above, suggesting that they were themselves mixed deposits rather than undisturbed buried soils. The soil in Trench 22 overlay a posthole containing a sherd of late Iron Age or early Roman pottery. They perhaps represent the remains of an earlier phase of cultivation prior to the banks, which were later largely ploughed out by cultivation in the 20th century. Although no finds were obtained from these deposits, the ploughing was most likely of medieval date.

4.4 Significance

4.4.1 The cremations, one of which is dated to the late Bronze Age, represent a useful addition to the small corpus of dated burials of this period in the Upper Thames Valley. They are not however of more than local significance in themselves.

4.4.2 The identification of further scattered features of later prehistoric date is also of value in relation to the wider context of the Scheduled Monuments at Northfield Farm and at Castle Hill, but these too are only of local significance.

4.4.3 The medieval features identified by the evaluation are of local significance only.

APPENDIX A TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1						
General description					**Orientation**	SW-NE
Trench revealed a single posthole or pit. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of sandy gravel					**Length (m)**	30
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.5
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
100	Layer	-	0.3	Topsoil	-	-
101	Layer	-	0.2	Subsoil	-	-
102	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
103	Cut	0.39	0.24	Pit or posthole	-	-
104	Fill	-	0.17	Fill of 103, light grey, sandy silt with rare charcoal flecks	-	-
105	Fill	-	0.11	Fill of 103, mottled dark grey, sandy silt with occasional charcoal flecks.	-	-

Trench 2						
General description					**Orientation**	NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of sandy gravel. Depth of overburden varied between 0.2 (NE) and 0.6m (SW). Water pipe revealed at northeast end					**Length (m)**	30
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.30
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
200	Layer	-	0.3	Topsoil	-	-
201	Layer	-	0.3	Subsoil	-	-
202	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 3						
General description					**Orientation**	E-W
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of sandy gravel and clay sand.					**Length (m)**	30
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.8
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
300	Layer	-	0.3	Topsoil	-	-
301	Layer	-	0.5	Subsoil	-	-
302	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 4		
General description	**Orientation**	E-W
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of mixed gravel and clay sand.	**Length (m)**	30
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.4

Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
400	Layer	-	0.2	Topsoil	-	-
401	Layer	-	0.2	Subsoil	-	-
402	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
403	Pit			Circular bowl-profiled pit.		
404	Fill			Fill of 403.	Cremated human bone, oyster shell	
405	Pit			Circular pit (not dug).		
406	Fill			Fill of 405.	Flint core frag, cremated bone?	-

Trench 5						
General description					**Orientation**	NE-SW
Trench revealed two boundary ditches, a small pit and part of a larger pit. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of sandy gravel and clay sand.					**Length (m)**	30
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.45
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
500	Layer	-	0.25	Topsoil	-	-
501	Layer	-	0.18	Subsoil	-	-
502	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
503	Cut	0.6	0.05	Ditch		-
504	Fill	-	0.05	Fill of 503, mid to dark, grey brown, sandy silt. Frequent pebbles and occasional charcoal	-	-
505	Cut	2.68	>0.46	Pit (not fully exposed)	-	-
506	Fill	-	0.1	Fill of 505, dark grey brown. With reddish brown patches, sandy silt and frequent charcoal	Animal bones, pottery	Middle Iron Age?
507	Fill	-	0.1	Fill of 505, mid grey silty sand, with frequent pebbles <0.02m	-	-
508	Cut	0.44	0.22	Pit	-	-
509	Fill	-	0.22	Fill of 508, mid brown grey silty sand, occasional charcoal flecks and stones <0.02m	-	-

Trench 6						
General description					**Orientation**	NE-SW
Trench contained one E-W running ditch with a single pot sherd in the fill. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of orangey brown silty clay with outcrops of gravel.					**Length (m)**	30
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.55
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
600	Layer	-	0.3	Topsoil	-	-

601	Layer	-	0.25	Subsoil	-	-
602	Fill	-	0.26	Fill of 603, a firm dark grey sandy silt with 1% gravel inclusions	Pottery	Later prehistoric
603	Cut	1.54	0.35	Ditch	-	-
604	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 7						
General description					**Orientation**	NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of orange sandy gravel.					**Length (m)**	30
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.50
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
700	Layer	-	0.28	Topsoil	-	-
701	Layer	-	0.32	Subsoil	-	-
702	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 8						
General description					**Orientation**	NW-SE
Trench contained 2 ditches and a furrow. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlaying natural geology of					**Length (m)**	30
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.35
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
800	Layer	-	0.2	Topsoil	-	-
801	Layer	-	0.15	Subsoil	-	-
802	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
803	Cut	0.7	0.26	Ditch	-	-
804	Fill	-	0.26	Fill of 803, a mid to dark grey brown sandy silt, with occasional rounded stones and rare charcoal.	CBM	C16-19, roof?
805	Cut	1.2	0.2	Ditch	-	-
806	Fill	-	0.2	Fill of 805, mid to dark grey brown sandy silt with occasional stones.	Pottery and CBM	C12-14th
807	Fill	-	0.15	Fill of 808, a soft light brown silty clay, no inclusions.	-	-
808	Cut	0.52	0.15	Ditch	-	-

Trench 9						
General description					**Orientation**	NW-SE
Trench contained one N-S orientated ditch. Topsoil and subsoil were overlying a natural geology of orange sandy gravel.					**Length (m)**	30
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.65
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**

900	Layer	-	0.25	Topsoil	-	-
901	Layer	-	0.6	Subsoil	Flint flake	-
902	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
903	Cut	0.92	0.52	Ditch	-	-
904	Fill	-	0.08	Fill of 903, a concreted light orangey brown and grey silty sand, containing frequent grit and manganese/iron panning.	-	-
905	Fill	-	0.08	Fill of 903, a frim mid gray clay with no inclusions.	-	-
906	Fill	-	0.2	Fill of 903, a compacted mid brown and grey sandy clay with fine gravel inclusions.		
907	Fill	-	0.2	Fill of 903, a compact mid grey silty clay with rare stones.	CBM flat roof tile, animal bones incl. horse	C13-15?

Trench 10						
General description					**Orientation**	NW-SE
Trench revealed one E-W running ditch and several natural features. The topsoil and subsoil were overlying a natural geology of orangey brown silty clay with calcareous patches.					**Length (m)**	30
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.75
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
1000	Layer	-	0.3	Topsoil	-	-
1001	Layer	-	0.4	Subsoil	Pottery	Later C11-14
1002	Fill	-	0.32	Fill of 1003, a firm light greyish brown silty clay, with occasional pebbles.	-	-
1003	Cut	1.6	0.32	Ditch	-	-
1004	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 11						
General description					**Orientation**	E-W
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of gravel with outcrops of reddish brown silty clay.					**Length (m)**	30
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.55
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
1100	Layer	-	0.24	Topsoil	-	-
1101	Layer	-	0.16	Subsoil	-	-
1102	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 12			
General description		**Orientation**	NW-SE
		Length (m)	30

Trench revealed a possible quarry pit and a natural feature. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying a natural geology of a brownish white sandy gravel partially covered by calcareous clay in places.					**Width (m)**	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.50
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
1200	Layer	-	0.33	Topsoil	-	-
1201	Layer	-	0.22	Subsoil	-	-
1202	Fill	-	0.22	Fill of 1205, firm dark brown silty clay.	-	-
1203	Fill	-	0.2	Fill of 1205, firm light grey reddish brown silty clay, 20% gravel present.	-	-
1204	Fill	-	0.3	Fill of 1205, firm light brown clay with 1% gravel.	-	-
1205	Cut	>1.8	0.6	Pit	-	-
1206	Fill	-	0.25	Fill of 1207, a firm dark grey brown silty clay.	-	-
1207	Cut	0.9	0.25	Natural Feature	-	-
1208	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 13						
General description					**Orientation**	NW-SE
Trench contained one N-S aligned ditch, a plough furrow, a very shallow E-W linear and a possible pit. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying a natural geology of whitish yellow sandy silt.					**Length (m)**	30
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.60
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
1300	Layer	-	0.27	Topsoil	-	-
1301	Layer	-	0.20	Subsoil	-	-
1302	Layer	-	0.14	Disturbed Natural, loose yellow grey silty sand.	-	-
1303	Fill	-	0.05	Fill of 1304, a firm light brown sandy silt.	-	-
1304	Cut	0.72	0.05	Pit	-	-
1305	Fill	-	0.2	Fill of 1306, a firm greyish brown silty clay.	Horse bone	-
1306	Cut	0.55	0.2	Ditch	-	-
1307	Fill	-	0.03	Fill of 1308, a firm light greyish brown silty clay.	-	-
1308	Cut	0.25	0.03	Ditch	-	-
1309	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 14		
General description	**Orientation**	NE-SW
Trench revealed one very shallow N-S linear, and a natural feature. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of reddish brown silty clay.	**Length (m)**	30
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.70

Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1400	Layer	-	0.33	Topsoil	-	-
1401	Layer	-	0.30	Subsoil	-	-
1402	Fill	-	0.07	Fill of 1403, firm brown silty clay.	-	-
1403	Cut	0.35	0.07	Ditch	-	-
1404	Fill	-	0.30	Fill of 1405, a compact reddish brown silty sand with 30% gravel.	-	-
1405	Cut	0.6	0.3	Natural feature	-	-
1406	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 15						
General description					Orientation	E-W
Trench devoid of archaeology. One land drain running length of trench. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of reddish brown silty clay.					Length (m)	30
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.60
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1500	Layer	-	0.30	Topsoil	-	-
1501	Layer	-	0.30	Subsoil	-	-
1502	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 16						
General description					Orientation	NW-SE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of compact mid greyish brown clay.					Length (m)	30
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.7
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1600	Layer	-	0.30	Topsoil	-	-
1601	Layer	-	0.40	Subsoil	-	-
1602	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 17						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil, subsoil and light brown silty clay interface overlying natural geology of orangey brown silty clay. A sondage was machined at the NE end of the trench to confirm the depth of the natural.					Length (m)	30
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.82
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1700	Layer	-	0.30	Topsoil	-	-
1701	Layer	-	0.30	Subsoil	-	-
1702	Layer	-	0.22	Interface	-	-
1703	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 18						
General description					**Orientation**	E-W
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of orangey brown clay. A ceramic land drain was revealed running NE-SW towards the west end of the trench.					**Length (m)**	30
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.82
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
1800	Layer	-	0.33	Topsoil	-	-
1801	Layer	-	0.22	Subsoil	-	-
1802	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 19						
General description					**Orientation**	E-W
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of greyish brown clay with calcareous patches. Two land drains were revealed running N-S towards the west end of the trench.					**Length (m)**	30
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.60
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
1900	Layer	-	0.29	Topsoil	-	-
1901	Layer	-	0.31	Subsoil	-	-
1902	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 20						
General description					**Orientation**	E-W
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of orangey brown silty clay with calcareous lumps.					**Length (m)**	30
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.53
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
2000	Layer	-	0.30	Topsoil	-	-
2001	Layer	-	0.23	Subsoil	-	-
2002	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 21						
General description					**Orientation**	E-W
Trench contained one N-S running ditch. The topsoil and subsoil were overlying a natural geology of mixed reddish brown/grey clay.					**Length (m)**	30
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.54
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
2100	Layer	-	0.32	Topsoil	-	-
2101	Layer	-	0.24	Subsoil	-	-
2102	Fill	-	0.24	Fill of 2103, a firm orange brown sandy silt.	-	-
2103	Cut	0.86	0.24	Ditch	-	-
2104	Layer	-	-	Natural		

Trench 22						
General description					**Orientation**	N-S
Trench revealed one small pit located centrally within the trench. The topsoil and subsoil were overlying an interface layer within the south half of the trench, which in turn overlaid a natural geology of light yellow and grey calcareous clay.					**Length (m)**	30
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.50
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
2200	Layer	-	0.31	Topsoil	-	-
2201	Layer	-	0.25	Subsoil	-	-
2202	Layer	-	-	Interface, compact light brown silty clay with 10% calcareous flecks.	-	-
2203	Fill	-	0.20	Fill of 2204, a firm dark grey silty clay with occasional flecks of charcoal.	Pottery	Later prehistoric, LBA or MIA
2204	Cut	0.4	0.20	Pit	-	-
2205	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 23						
General description					**Orientation**	E-W
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of a mid to light greyish yellow clay with some orange patches.					**Length (m)**	30
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.8
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
2300	Layer	-	0.28	Topsoil	-	-
2301	Layer	-	0.3	Subsoil	-	-
2302	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 24						
General description					**Orientation**	E-W
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of firm yellow and grey clay with calcareous flecks.					**Length (m)**	30
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.63
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
2400	Layer	-	0.32	Topsoil	-	-
2401	Layer	-	0.27	Subsoil	-	-
2402	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 25						
General description					**Orientation**	NW-SE
Trench contained three postholes. Topsoil and subsoil were overlying a natural geology of compact light brown clay with calcareous flecks.					**Length (m)**	30
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.90

Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
2500	Layer	-	0.28	Topsoil	CBM flat roof tile, post-med pottery	C17-19
2501	Layer	-	0.6	Subsoil	-	-
2502	Layer	-	-	Interface, compact light brown silty clay.	-	-
2503	Fill	-	0.11	Fill of 2504, firm dark grey brown silty clay with occasional charcoal flecks.	-	-
2504	Cut	0.28	0.11	Posthole	-	-
2505	Fill	-	0.2	Fill of 2506, firm dark grey brown silty clay with occasional pebbles.	-	-
2506	Cut	0.32	0.2	Posthole		-
2507	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
2508		-	0.09	Fill of 2509, firm dark greyish brown silty clay.	-	-
2509	Cut	0.20	0.09	Posthole	-	-

Trench 26

General description	Orientation	E-W
Trench contained one N-S running ditch, as well as a posthole at the west of the trench and a small pit on the northern baulk. Topsoil and subsoil overlaid natural geology of reddish grey clay with occasional pebbles.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.75

Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
2600	Layer	-	0.32	Topsoil	-	-
2601	Layer	-	0.40	Subsoil	-	-
2602	Fill	-	0.24	Fill of 2603, a firm mid grey brown silty clay with occasional pebbles.	Pottery base	Later prehistoric, LBA or MIA
2603	Cut	0.40	0.24	Pit	-	-
2604	Fill	-	0.05	Fill of 2605, a firm mid grey brown silty clay with occasional pebbles.	Pottery	Late Iron Age/Early Roman
2605	Cut	0.24	0.05	Posthole	-	-
2606	Fill	-	0.2	Fill of 2607, a firm orangey brown clayey sand.	-	-
2607	Cut	1.2	0.2	Ditch	-	-
2608	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 27

General description	Orientation	N-S
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil with a subsoil that thickens to the north as it approaches the boundary. Overlies a natural geology of mixed gravel and clayey sand patches.	Length (m)	30
	Width (m)	1.8
	Avg. depth (m)	0.60

Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
2700	Layer	-	0.25	Topsoil	-	-
2701	Layer	-	0.35	Subsoil	-	-
2702	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
2703	Layer	-	-	Subsoil change.	-	-

APPENDIX B FINDS REPORTS

B.1 Pottery

By Lisa Brown and John Cotter

Introduction

B.1.1 A small collection of 10 sherds of pottery weighing 101g was recovered during evaluation. Seven sherds (68g) are prehistoric, though most are very small, including three no more than crumb-sized from context 602, and the only diagnostic piece is a well-preserved basal sherd from context 2602, weighing 57g. Another two sherds (weighing 10g) date to the 11th-13th century, and one sherd (23g) is post-medieval.

B.1.2 Prehistoric pottery was recovered from contexts 506, 602, 2203, 2602, and 2604. The sherds from 506, 602 and 2602 were all in flint-tempered fabrics; the only diagnostic sherd is a well-finished, well-fired base of a large jar of some type, made in a hard fabric with abundant calcined, crushed flint, and with smoothed surfaces (F1). There was also a slightly sandier, coarser flint-tempered fabric (F2). Fabrics with abundant calcined flint or quartzite are generally characteristic of later Bronze Age assemblages in the Upper and Middle Thames Valley (Lambrick with Robinson 2009, 198-9), though the finish of these sherds was fine, and closely resembled that of the fine flint-tempered wares produced in the Hampshire region in the Middle Iron Age, and found in abundance at sites such as Danebury (Cunliffe 1984, 232; Brown 1991, 277). They appear quite distinct from the Iron Age fabrics described at Castle Hill nearby, even the uncommon flint-tempered examples (Edwards 2010, 47-8). A quartzite-tempered body sherd from context 2203 could, however, be local, as it resembles fabric 17 found in Iron Age features at Castle Hill (Edwards 2010, 47).

B.1.3 A single small sherd with grog temper from context 2604 appears to be a late Iron Age-early Roman type. However, it is a body sherd only 3g in weight, so this remains uncertain.

B.1.4 The three post-Roman sherds are a 4g fragment of Ashampstead Ware dating to AD 1050–1400 from context 1001, a worn 6g Kennet Valley Ware fragment dating to 1100-1300 from 806, and a single fragment of redware (23g) from context 2500.

B.1.5 None of the prehistoric pottery is closely datable, although the fabrics with calcined flint suggest a later prehistoric date, as does the flat basal sherd from context 2602. The prehistoric pottery dates either to the later Bronze Age or middle/late Iron Age.

B.2 Ceramic building material

By Cynthia Poole

Introduction

B.2.1 A small quantity of tile amounting to four fragments weighing 79g was recovered from four contexts in three trenches. It is recorded in the table below. One scrap from context 806 was amorphous and undateable, though it is most likely to derive from the core of a post-medieval brick. The three remaining fragments are all flat roof tile of medieval or post-medieval date.

The material has probably been incorporated into deposits as a result of agricultural activities such as manuring, track maintenance or field drainage.

Table 1: Record of the ceramic building material

Ctxt	Nos	Wt g	Spot date	Form	Fabric	Dimensions	Description
804	1	1	C15-C19	Roof?	Red, fine sandy clay; coarse moulding sand	>5mm th;	Flake from base surface of tile
806	1	2	Undated	Indet	Orange fine sandy clay containing dk red ferruginous grits <2mm	20mm	amorphous
907 <2>	1	16	C13-C15?	Roof: flat	Oxford fabric VIIBB?	>13mm	Fragment with rough base surface
2500	1	60	C17-C19	Roof: flat	Orange-red faintly laminated sandy clay	14mm	Fairly regular finish, fairly angular arrises.
Total	*4*	*79*					

B.3 Flint

By Michael Donnelly

Introduction

B.3.1 Two pieces of struck flint were recovered from this evaluation. Neither piece was diagnostic; one was associated with a crenation pit but was unburnt.

Description

B.3.2 Cremation pit fill 406 contained a core fragment or heavily exhausted complex core. This piece had resulted from the production of quite small flakes, but is of a form found during most phases of Holocene prehistory.

B.3.3 Subsoil 901 yielded a single proximal flake or blade segment. The piece looks to have been thin and regular and there is a hint that the platform may have been faceted.

Discussion

B.3.4 This very small assemblage is of little value, it lacks diagnostic elements and indicates a very limited presence here during prehistory.

Methodology

B.3.5 The artefacts were catalogued according to OA South's standard system of broad artefact/debitage type (Anderson-Whymark 2013; Bradley 1999), general condition noted and dating was attempted where possible. The assemblage was catalogued directly onto an Open Office spreadsheet. During the assessment additional information on condition (rolled, abraded, fresh and degree of cortication), and state of the artefact (burnt, broken, or visibly

utilised) was also recorded. Retouched pieces were classified according to standard morphological descriptions (e.g. Bamford 1985, 72-7; Healy 1988, 48-9; Bradley 1999). Technological attribute analysis was initially undertaken and included the recording of butt and termination type (Inizan *et al.* 1999), flake type (Harding 1990), hammer mode (Onhuma and Bergman 1982), and the presence of platform edge abrasion.

B.4 Human skeletal remains

By Lauren McIntyre

Introduction

B.4.1 Cremated bone was recovered from the fill (404) of a small earth-cut pit (403). The deposit was unurned.

Methodology

B.4.2 Deposit 404 was subject to whole earth recovery and processed by wet sieving, to clean and sort the burnt bone into >10mm, 10-4mm and 4-2mm fractions. The 2-0.5mm residues were also retained where possible from all deposits containing cremated bone. All human remains were examined in accordance with the recommendations set out by the CIfA and BABAO (Brickley and McKinley 2004; Mitchell and Brickley 2017) and English Heritage guidelines (Mays 2004, 3-6).

Results

Bone weight

B.4.3 An osteological summary is presented in Table 1. Cremated bone from context 404 weighed a total of 221.35g. This is below the weight range of both archaeologically recovered cremations (600-900g; McKinley 2013, 154) and modern adult cremations (1000-2400g; McKinley 2000, 26). There is likely to have been some horizontal truncation of the deposit, e.g. by ploughing, since the original deposition was made, although it is difficult to quantify the degree to which this has facilitated bone loss.

B.4.4 A summary of the 2-0.5mm residue weight is presented in Table 2. It was not possible to calculate the weight of cremated bone within this sieve fraction. Although the proportion of cremated bone within this fraction was low (5%), the large quantity of residue compared to the small size of the larger, sorted fractions (2364.2g versus 221.35g) means that bone from the residue has the potential to affect the overall deposit weight substantially.

Table 1: Cremated bone - osteological summary

Deposit	Total weight	Colour	Age	Sex	Non-metrics/ pathology	Pyre Debris/Pyre Goods/GraveGoods
404	221.35g*	White 75%, grey 10%, blue 5%, black 10%	U	U	Periostitis	0.6g Oyster shell (burnt?) 0.2g burnt fossil 17.64g* unid. unburnt shell 8.82g* charcoal

Key: U = Unknown. Note: * denotes total bone weight includes estimated bone weight from the 4-2mm fraction

Table 2: Summary of residue weights

Deposit	2-0.5mm residue (Total Weight)	Total Estimated Proportion of Cremated Bone
404	2364.2g	5%

Fragmentation

B.4.5 A summary of fragmentation is presented in Table 3. The largest bone fragment measured 42.8mm in length, but could not be identified to skeletal element.

B.4.6 The largest proportional bone weight came from the 10-4mm sieve fraction. Almost a third of the bone came from the 4-2mm fraction (although this weight was estimated), and smaller proportion came from the >10mm fraction.

Table 3: Summary of fragmentation

Deposit	Total weight (g)	>10mm	10-4mm	4-2mm	Max. fragment size
404	221.35g	41.3g	118.3g	61.75g	42.8mm, unidentified other

Note: * denotes total bone weight includes estimated bone weight from the 4-2mm fraction

Skeletal representation

B.4.7 A summary of skeletal representation is presented in Table 4.

B.4.8 Overall, of the identified fragments, bone from the skull was the most frequently observed. A high proportion of skull fragments is a pattern often noted in cremation analysis reports because the skull vault is more easily identified than other bones, even within the smaller sieve fractions (McKinley 2004, 11). Smaller proportions of bone from the axial skeleton and upper and lower limbs were also identified.

B.4.9 Over three quarters of the bone (173.35g/78.31% of the total bone weight) recovered was unidentified. Smaller proportions of unidentified bone pertained to the long bones and joint surfaces, but most could not be assigned to an anatomical region. This is not surprising, considering the level of fragmentation.

Table 4: Cremation 1204 - summary of bone weights

	Skeletal Element (g)								
	Skull	**Axial**	**Upper Limb**	**Lower Limb**	**Unid. Long Bone**	**Unid. Hand/ Foot**	**Unid. Joint Surface**	**Unid. Other**	**TOTAL**
TOTAL	31.1g (14.05%)	7.9g (3.57%)	0.7g (0.32%)	8.3g (2.21%)	35.3g (15.95%)	0g (0%)	3.7g (1.67%)	134.35g (60.70%)	221.35g (100%)

Efficiency of cremation

B.4.10 The majority of cremated bone was white in colour (75% of observed bone: Table 1). This indicates a generally efficient cremation process with the majority of bones being burnt

at a temperature in excess of 600ºc. The remainder of the bone was coloured grey, blue and black, indicating that small proportions of bone was charred rather than fully oxidised. It was noted that several fragments of cranial vault and long bone were white on the outside but ranged in colour from black to grey on the inside. This is a common observation in most archaeological cremation burials, and may indicate that the majority of the corpse was placed in a location on the pyre where maximum and consistent heat and oxygen supply was available (McKinley 2013, 158). Areas of the body covered with thicker layers of soft tissue, e.g. the upper arms and legs, may take longer to reach full oxidation as the soft tissue may insulate the bones from heat and oxygen until the soft tissues have burnt away (ibid). Similarly, thicker bone structures may reach optimum temperatures on the outside, but not inside: this may lead to variation in oxidation levels and hence fragment colour (ibid).

Demography and non-metric traits

B.4.11 There was no repetition of identified skeletal elements, this deposit 404 contained a minimum of one individual. There was no evidence pertaining to the age or sex of the individual.

B.4.12 No evidence of non-metric traits was observed.

Pathology

B.4.13 Five fragments of unidentified bone from the 10-4mm fraction exhibited a thin layer of porous, woven bone on the cortical surface. This is consistent with the presence of active periosteal new bone. Periostitis is formed as a response to inflammation of the overlying soft tissue as a result of trauma or pathological conditions including those of a metabolic (e.g. scurvy), neoplastic, or infectious nature (Roberts 2000, 148). As this was only present on a small number of unidentified fragments, it is not possible to characterise or interpret the nature of this pathological evidence any further.

Pyre goods/debris and grave goods

B.4.14 A small, unidentified burnt fossil was present in the 10-4mm fraction of deposit 404 (Table 1). The small size of this object suggests it may be intrusive material that accidentally ended up on the pyre. The same fraction also included several fragments of oyster shell: it is unclear whether these were charred or unburnt. It may be that these were located on the pyre periphery rather than in one of the hotter areas, so do not appear fully burnt. Further unburnt, unidentified shell fragments were present in the 4-2mm fraction, as was a small quantity of charcoal.

Discussion and recommendations

B.4.15 To summarise, the weight of cremated bone deposit 404 (221.35g) falls between the typical weight of “token” burials (the symbolic burial of a small quantity of cremated bone, which typically weigh less than 100g: McKinley 2013, 154) and full cremation burials (>600g; Ibid). The moderate quantity of bone in the deposit, coupled with good skeletal representation indicates that this burial has either lost bone via horizontal truncation (e.g. by ploughing), that the deposit never contained the full quantity of cremated bone, or that both these scenarios have contributed to loss of bone from the original bone weight.

B.4.16 At least one individual was present. There was no evidence of age or sex. Evidence from five small fragments of bone indicated the presence of non-specific inflammation/infection of the periosteum. Periostitis is commonly observed in archaeological populations from all periods. Small quantities of pyre debris (charcoal) and possible pyre goods (burnt shell) may suggest that an attempt was made to deliberately exclude charcoal from the buried deposits, although it is also unclear how much of this would have been lost via truncation.

B.4.17 Sufficient data has been obtained from this burnt cremation deposit. Where possible, observations have been made regarding completeness and preservation, demography, metric and non-metric data, dental and non-dental palaeopathology, pyre technology, and funerary rite. Further contextualisation of the burial will be possible if radiocarbon dating of this deposit is successful. If further burials are recovered from this site in the future, human bone from this site should be considered as part of the wider burial landscape, with a review of similar burials in type and date, within the region.

APPENDIX C ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS

C.1 Animal bone

By Lee G. Broderick

Introduction

B.2.1 A total of 60 animal bone specimens were recovered from the site (Tables C1-C3), mostly through environmental sampling, although some were collected by hand. Samples were sieved at 10mm, 4mm, 2mm and 0.5mm fractions and accounted for 57 specimens (95% of the assemblage). The material from context 506 was associated with a small sherd of pottery of later prehistoric date, tentatively assigned to the middle Iron Age, and that from context 907 was associated with a tile fragment dated to the later medieval period.

Description

B.2.2 The assemblage was in poor condition (Behrensmeyer (1978) stage 5 recorded for both identified specimens, not recorded for unidentified specimen) and featured two specimens of horse (*Equus caballus*) – part of a right pelvis from context 1305 and most of a right side femur from context 907. The femur was fused at both ends, suggesting an age at death of at least 3 years.

B.2.3 The environmental samples contained no material that could be identified to species but four of the eleven specimens recovered from the later prehistoric context had been burned, possibly suggesting that some attempt at waste management through burning.

Conclusions

B.2.4 It is difficult to read anything meaningful into such a small assemblage, particularly one without any specimens that are both identifiable and dated.

Recommendations regarding the conservation, discard and retention of material

B.2.5 The assemblage should not be considered for retention.

Table C1: Total NISP (Number of Identified SPecimens) and NSP (Number of SPecimens) figures per period from hand-collected material from the site.

	MIA	Med	Undated
horse		1	
Horse?			1
large mammal			21
Total Mammal	0		23
Total NISP	0		23
Total NSP	11	1	48

Table C2: Proportions of specimens recovered through hand-collection and environmental samples.

	Sieved	Unsieved
Large Mammal	21	2
indet.	36	1
Total NISP	21	2
Total NSP	57	3

Table C3: NSP and total mass per context.

Context	NSP	Mass (g)
506	11	6
907	48	476
1305	1	59

C.2 Environmental samples

By Sharon Cook

Introduction

C.2.1 Five bulk samples were taken, primarily for the retrieval of charred plant remains (CPR) and artefacts. Sample 1 came from later prehistoric pit fill 506, sample 2 from later medieval ditch fill 907 and sample 3 from cremation deposit 404. Bone from this cremation has been radiocarbon dated to 1130-935 cal. BC (SUERC 80243; 2872 ± 28 BP).

Method

C.2.2 The CPR bulk samples were processed at Oxford Archaeology using a modified Siraf-type water flotation machine. The flots were collected in a 250µm mesh and heavy residues in a 500µm mesh and dried. The residue fractions were sorted by eye while the flot material was sorted using a low power (x10) binocular microscope to extract cereal grains and chaff, smaller seeds and other quantifiable remains.

C.2.3 Identifications were carried out using standard morphological criteria for the cereals (Jacomet 2006), identification of wild plant remains is with reference to the Digital Seed Atlas of the Netherlands (Cappers *et al*. 2006) and by comparison with modern reference material. Classification and nomenclature of plant material follows Stace (2010). Where fewer than twenty-five individuals are present for any material type, these have been fully quantified.

Results

C.2.4 Table C4 lists the charred taxa identified from each CPR sample.

C.2.5 While charcoal has survived well in these features the condition of other charred material is much poorer although this would appear to be more as a result of conditions during burning rather than the preservation on site.

C.2.6 The flot of sample 1 comprises mainly fragments of glume base and grains of wheat (*Triticum* sp.) or indeterminate cereal with a few seeds of typical crop contaminants such as cleavers (*Galium aparine*) and vetches (*Vicia*/*Lathyrus*). The wheat is too fragmentary to identify further.

C.2.7 The relative lack of charred remains other than charcoal within sample 3 is also as expected within the context of a Bronze Age cremation.

C.2.8 Sample 2 contained very little charred material, but is very rich in land snails with in excess of one hundred individuals noted. The majority of the molluscs present are *Trochulus hispidus* which occur in a wide range of habitats and are in themselves not diagnostic of conditions on site. However, a wide range of other taxa are present in smaller numbers which should be more diagnostic.

C.2.9 The heavy residues of Sample 1 contained animal bone and pottery, those of Sample 2 animal bone and a small fragment of CBM, and those of Sample 3 only cremated human bone. These finds are reported upon elsewhere within the specialist reports.

C.2.10 The flots from the samples warrant retention, as there is potential in the future for identification of the charcoal in Sample 1, for further identifications of the snails from Sample 2, and for identifying the species of charcoal used in the later Bronze Age cremation (Sample 3).

Sample no.	Context no.	Area/Trench	Sample vol. (L)	Feature /Deposit	Date	Flot vol. (ml)	Charcoal	Grain	Chaff	Weeds	Molluscs	Other	Notes
1	506	5	28	Basal fill of Pit [505]	MIA	175	++++	+++	++	+++	++		Flot rich in fine modern roots which equal >50% of volume. Small number of land snails including *Cecilioides acicula*. Charcoal is in generally clean condition with minor external encrustation but of small size. Grain is in poor condition with a fragmented and clinkered appearance, 28 indet cereal grains, 6 *cf Triticum* sp., 1 cf *Hordeum* sp., 2 *Avena/Bromus*. 16 glume base fragments (*Triticum* sp.). 14 *Galium aparine*, 1 *Montia minor*, 1 *Juncus* sp., 17 *Vicia/Lathyrus* <4mm.
2	907	9	36	Upper fill of Ditch [903]	U/D	75	+	+			++++		Flot is almost entirely fine modern roots with large quantities of land snails. Almost no CPR. Grain is in poor condition with a fragmented and clinkered appearance, 1 indet grain frag.
3	404	4	20	Cremation [403]	LBA	100	+++				+		Flot rich in fine modern roots which equal >50% of volume. Small number of land snails including *Cecilioides acicula*. Charcoal is in generally clean condition with minor external encrustation but almost all <2mm diameter. Includes oak and diffuse porous, at least 1 frag with bark. Grain is in poor condition with a fragmented and clinkered appearance, 2 indet cereal grains. 2 *Rumex* sp.

Key: +=present (up to 5 items), ++=frequent (5-25), +++=common (25-100) ++++=abundant (>100)

Table C4: The Charred Plant Material

C.3 Radiocarbon dating

By Rebecca Nicholson

C.3.1 A single sample of fully cremated human bone, consisting of a long bone fragment from context 404, was submitted to the Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre (SUERC) for radiocarbon dating by Accelerator Mass Spectrometry (AMS), using the methods described in Dunbar *et al* (2016). The laboratory maintains a continuous programs of internal quality control in addition to participation in international inter-comparisons (Scott *et al.* 2010). These tests indicate no laboratory offset and demonstrate the validity of the precision quoted.

C.3.2 The resulting date, provided in Table C5, is a conventional radiocarbon age (Stuiver and Polach 1977), quoted in accordance with the international standard known as the Trondheim convention (Stuiver and Kra 1986). The calibrated date has been calculated using the datasets published by Reimer *et al*. (2013) and the computer program OxCal v4.3.2 (Bronk Ramsey 1995; 1998; 2001; 2009; 2017). The calibrated date ranges cited are quoted in the form recommended by Mook (1986), with the end points rounded outward to five years as the error is <25 years. The date range has been calculated according to the maximum intercept method (Stuiver and Reimer 1986).

C.3.3 The measured δ13Cvalue of -21.7 (‰) used in the calculation of the result is within the range cited for experimentally calcined bone, which ranged from –16.6 to –28.1‰ (Zazzo *et al.* 2012), suggesting that some carbon exchange from the atmosphere of combustion has taken place during calcination since bone apatite 13C values vary between –8.8‰ and –15.5‰. Consequently the 14C age will only reflect the true age of the bone sample if both the bone and the fuel used in the pyre had the same radiocarbon age, since these experiments have demonstrated the possibility of calcined bone suffering from an “old wood” effect.

C.3.4 In this case the charcoal from sample 3 (404) is very small-sized, mainly <2mm in diameter and unsuitable for species identification. From a scan, however, it appears that although oak is probably present, there is at least a small amount of other, diffuse porous wood(s) such as Maloideae and at least one fragment includes the outer ring(s) and bark. In this case it is therefore considered that any “old wood” effect will be small.

Lab. Number	Sample	Context	Feature Type and location	Material	$\delta^{13}C$ (‰)	Radiocarbon Age (BP)	Calibrated date (at 95.4%)
SUERC-80243 (GU48159)	3	404	cremation	Cremated human long bone fragment	-21.7	2872 ± 28	1127-971 cal. BC (91.1%); 961-935 cal. BC (4.3%)

Table C5 Radiocarbon sample and result

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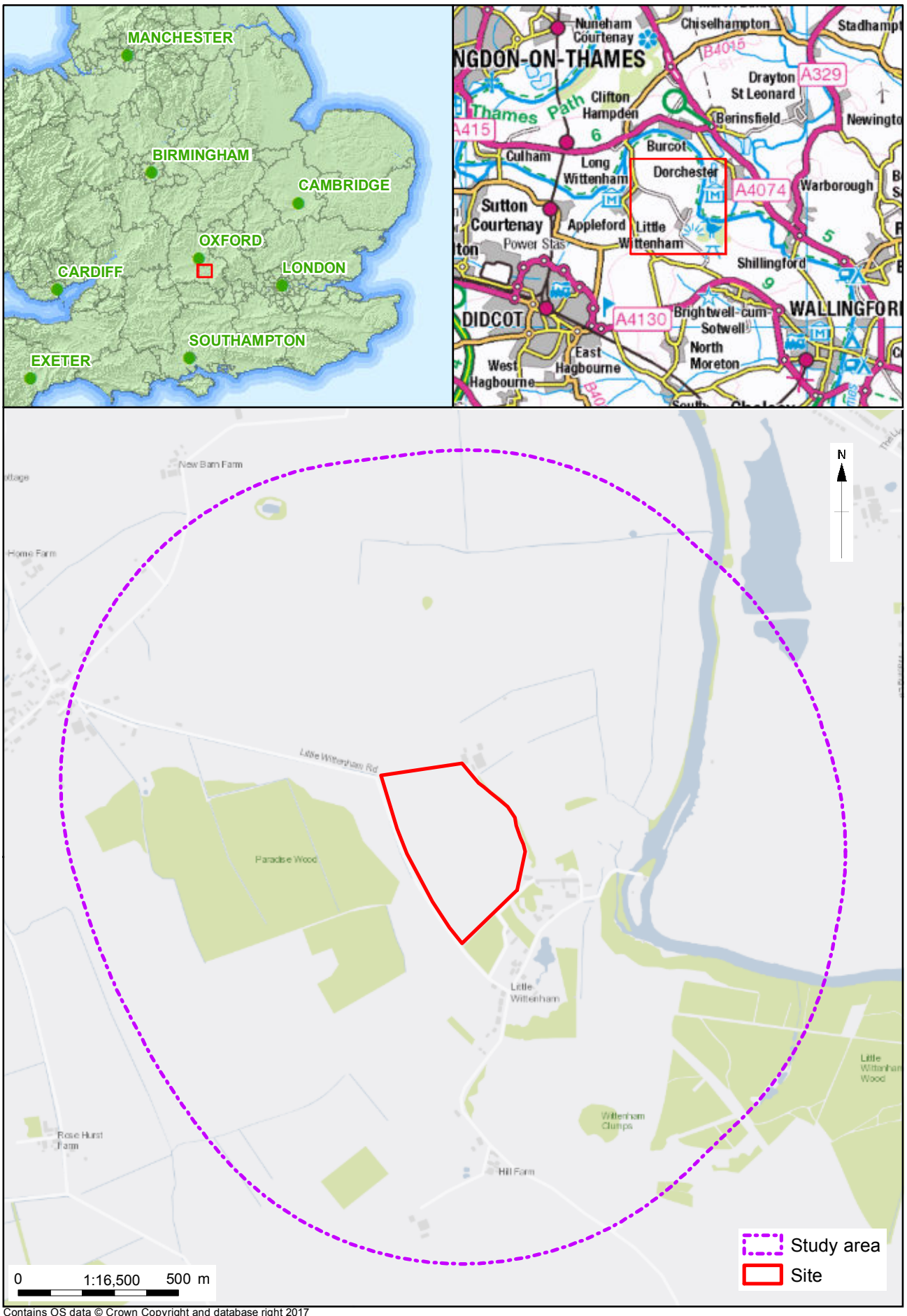
APPENDIX E SITE SUMMARY DETAILS

Site name:	Long Oat Lands, Little Wittenham, Oxfordshire
Site code:	LWLO 18
Grid Reference	SU 56205 93698
Type:	Evaluation
Date and duration:	2 weeks, from 7th to 20th May 2018
Area of Site	15 ha.
Location of archive:	The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museums Service in due course, under the following accession number: OXCMS: 2018.51.
Summary of Results:	Twenty seven trenches 30m long and 2m wide, representing a 1% sample of the field, were excavated by machine using a toothless bucket under close archaeological supervision. Potentially archaeological features were found in 14 trenches. In the north-west part of the site two un-urned cremations, of which one was excavated and radiocarbon-dated to 1130-930 cal BC, were found. The other had a small flint core on its surface. A small pit containing calcined flint-tempered pottery was found in both Trench 5 and Trench 6, and may represent associated activity. A small pit containing similar pottery was also found in Trenches 22 and 26 at the south end of the field, and these may be of late Bronze Age or middle Iron Age date. Three possible postholes, none dated, were found in Trench 25 adjacent, and may possibly have been associated. A north-south ditch containing late medieval CBM was found in Trench 9, and a possibly continuation in Trench 13. On a NNW-SSE alignment, a probable furrow containing medieval pottery and another ditch were found in Trench 8. Undated ditches were found in Trenches 8 and 10 at right angles to this, and may relate to cropmark ditches plotted crossing the field, though the correlation with that in Trench 10 is not close. These WSW-ENE ditches match the orientation of slight banks marked on the LiDAR survey of this field, and correspond with former field boundaries marked on historic maps. Other slight banks visible on the LiDAR were also confirmed by the evaluation, and presumably mark further former field divisions of medieval or later date.



Contains OS data © Crown Copyright and database right 2017

Figure 1: Site location

X:\o\Oxfordshire. Little Wittenham Manor Farm\010Geomatics\03 GIS Projects\Little_Wittenham_Figure1.mxd*conan.parsons*22/05/2018

X:\o\Oxfordshire. Little Wittenham Manor Farm\010Geomatics\02 CAD\LWLOEV Long Oatlands – Little Wittenham – 2018-05-15.dwg(A3 Fig 2)****conan.parsons* 25 May 2018

N

455960 193840

456460 193840

455960 193240

456460 193240

Figure 3

Figure 4

Figure 5

Tr 1
Tr 2
Tr 3
Tr 4
Tr 5
Tr 6
Tr 7
Tr 8
Tr 9
Tr 10
Tr 11
Tr 12
Tr 13
Tr 14
Tr 15
Tr 16
Tr 17
Tr 18
Tr 19
Tr 20
Tr 21
Tr 22
Tr 23
Tr 24
Tr 25
Tr 26
Tr 27

BS
CR
Drain
Def
Church Farm Cottage
Manor Cottage
Pond
Wittenham House
Taylors Cottages
The White Cottage

Excavated trench, archaeology present
Excavated trench, no archaeology present
Crop mark
Base map

CHECKED BY:MB*23/05/18

Survey Data supplied by :
English Heritage, Time Team, GSB, Northmoor Trust, OA, Bartlett, Clark, R. Ainslie

0 100 m

Scale at A3 1:2000

Figure 2: Trench location plan with crop marks shown from LiDAR

X:\o\Oxfordshire. Little Wittenham Manor Farm\010Geomatics\02 CAD\LWLOEV Long Oatlands – Little Wittenham – 2018-05-15.dwg(A3 Fig 3)****conan.parsons* 25 May 2018

N

Trench 1

103
s.100

Trench 4

403
Cremations
405

Trench 5

503
508
s.502
505
s.501

603
s.600

Trench 6

Archaeological feature
Archaeological intervention
Section location
Furrow
Natural feature
Non-archaeological intervention
Crop mark
Evaluation trench, archaeology present
Evaluation trench, no archaeology present

CHECKED BY: MB*22/05/18

Survey Data supplied by :
English Heritage, Time Team, GSB, Northmoor Trust, OA, Bartlett, Clark, R. Ainslie

0 20 m

Scale at A3 1:500

Figure 3: Plan of trenches 1, 4, 5 and 6

X:\o\Oxfordshire. Little Wittenham Manor Farm\010Geomatics\02 CAD\LWLOEV Long Oatlands – Little Wittenham – 2018–05–15.dwg(A3 Fig 4)****conan.parsons* 25 May 2018

N

903
s.900

Trench 9

805

803
s.800

808
s.802

Trench 8

Trench 10

1000
s.1003

Trench 13

1304

1306
s.1302

1308
s.1304

1403
s.1400

1405

Trench 14

1205
s.1201

Trench 12

2103
s.2100

Trench 21

Archaeological feature
Archaeological intervention
Section location
Furrow
Natural feature
Non-archaeological intervention
Land drain
Crop mark
Evaluation trench, archaeology present
Evaluation trench, no archaeology present

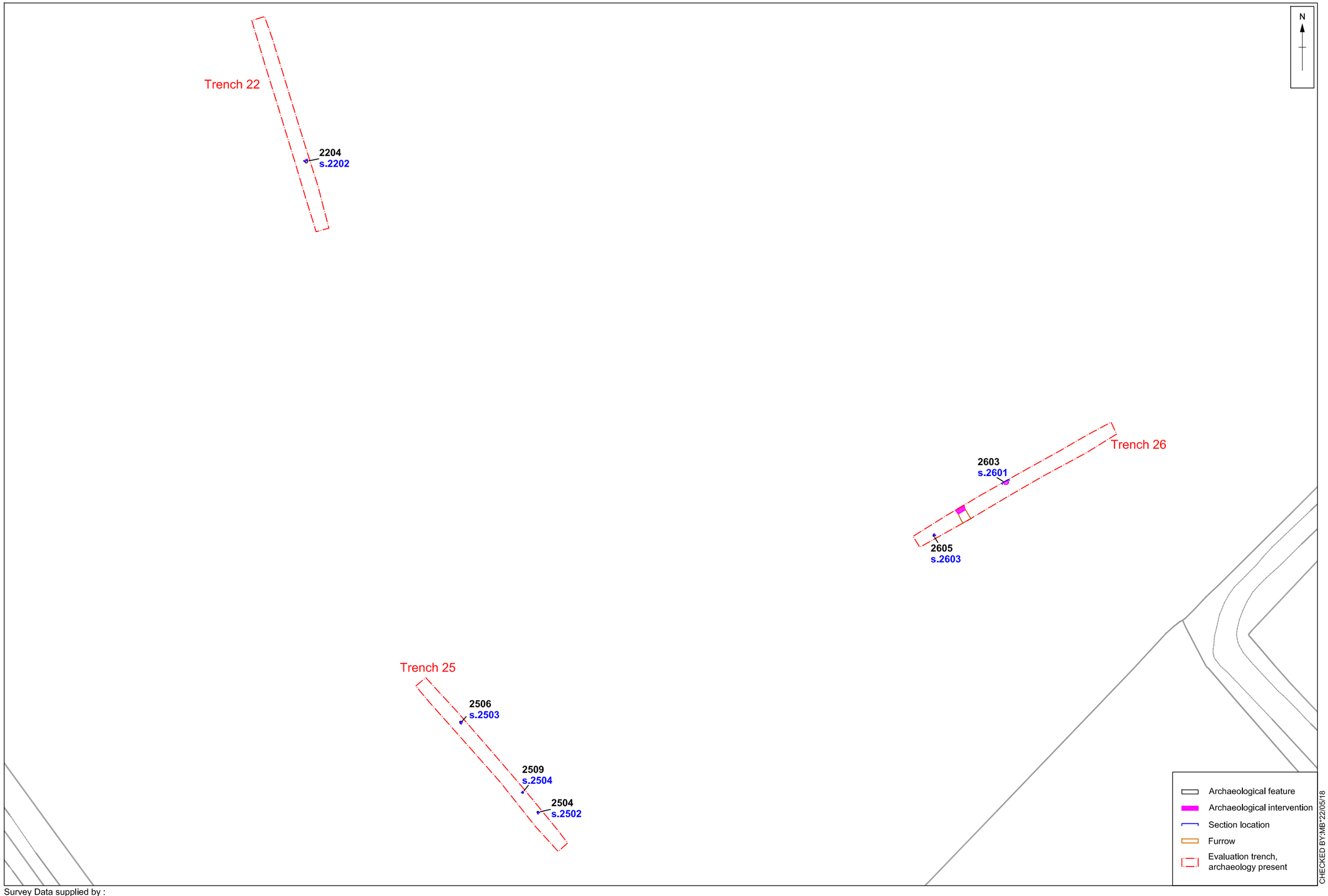
CHECKED BY: MB*22/05/18

Survey Data supplied by :
English Heritage, Time Team, GSB, Northmoor Trust, OA, Bartlett, Clark, R. Ainslie

0 50 m

Scale at A3 1:750

Figure 4: Plan of trenches 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14 and 21



Survey Data supplied by :
English Heritage, Time Team, GSB, Northmoor Trust, OA, Bartlett, Clark, R. Ainslie

0 20 m

Scale at A3 1:500

Figure 5: Plan of trenches 22, 25 and 26

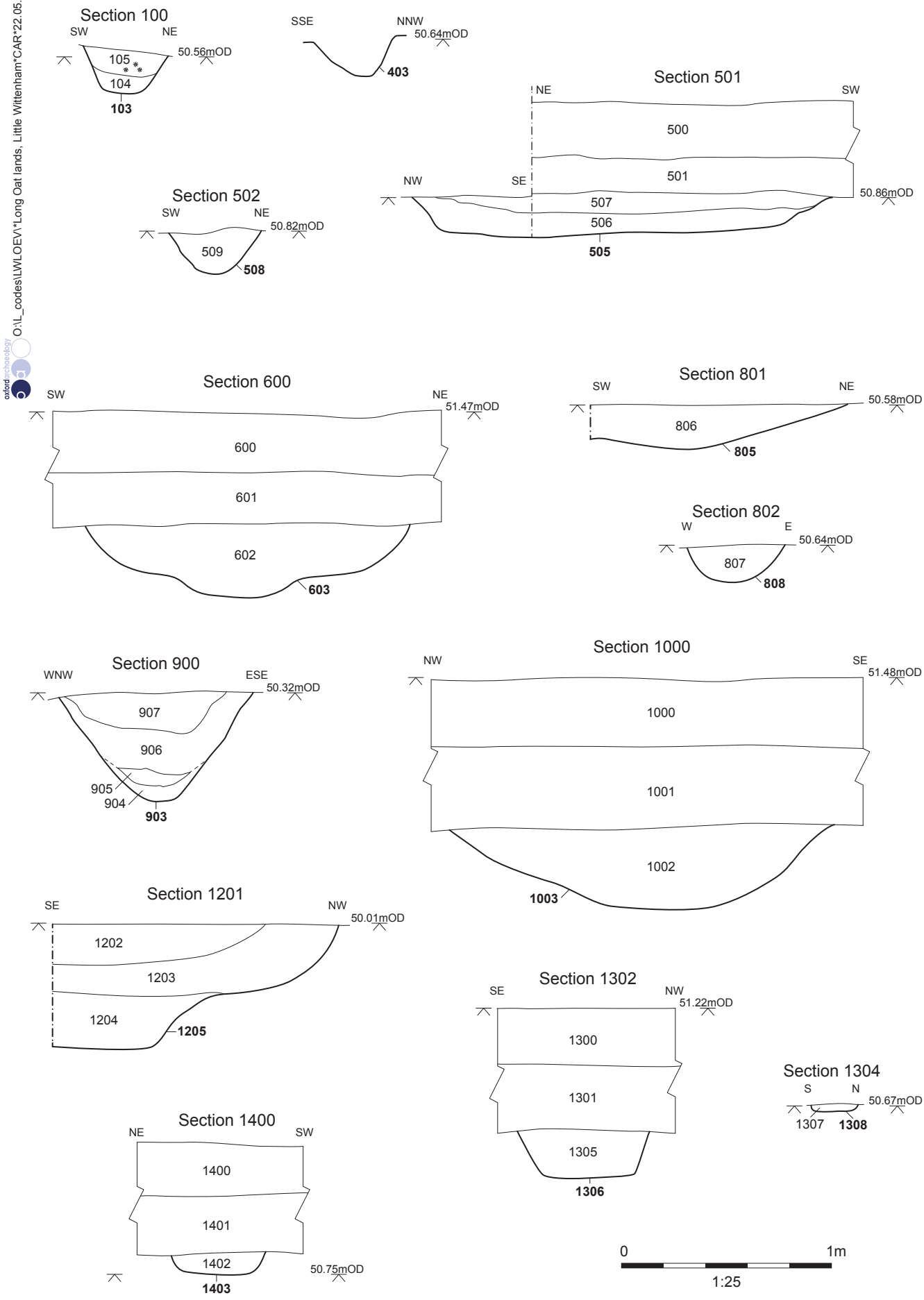


Figure 6: Sections trenches 1-14

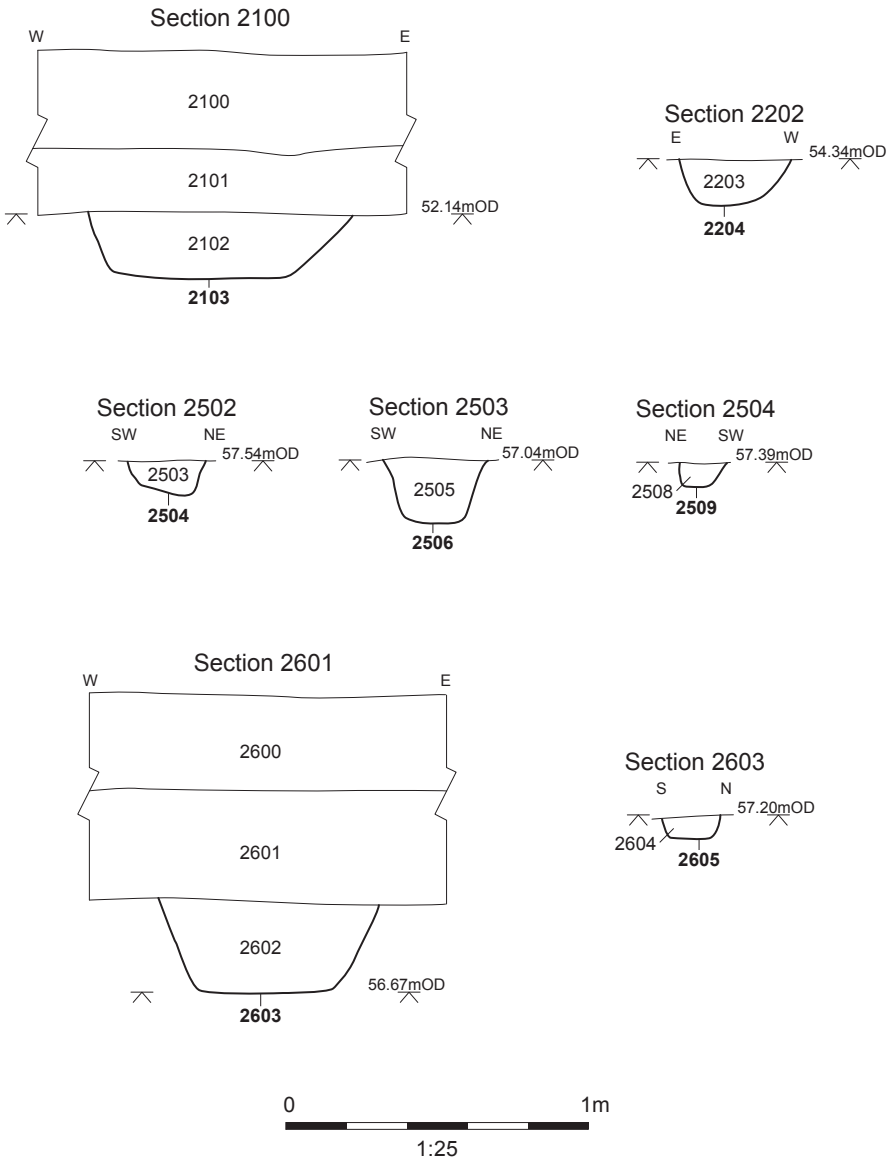


Figure 7: Sections of features and deposits in Trenches 21-26

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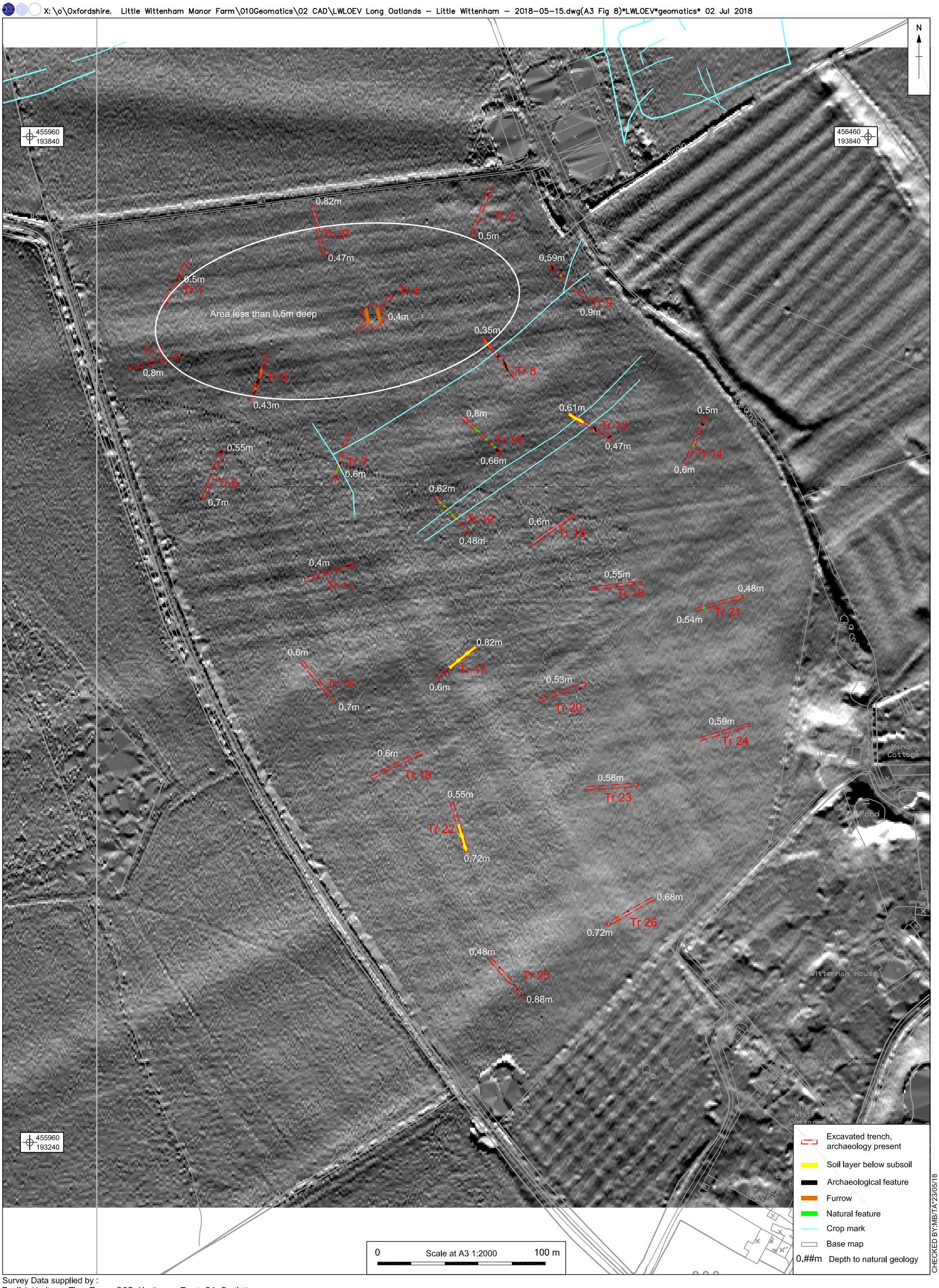

CHECKED BY:MB/TA*23/05/18

Survey Data supplied by :
English Heritage, Time Team, GSB, Northmoor Trust, OA, Bartlett, Clark, R. Ainslie

Figure 8: Plan of depths of overburden in trenches in relation to LiDAR survey, indicating area of least soil cover

Plate 1: Section showing three layers in Trench 17, looking north-west

Plate 2: Trench 1 small pit or posthole 103, looking north-west

Plate 3: Trench 4, cremation 403 before excavation, looking NNW

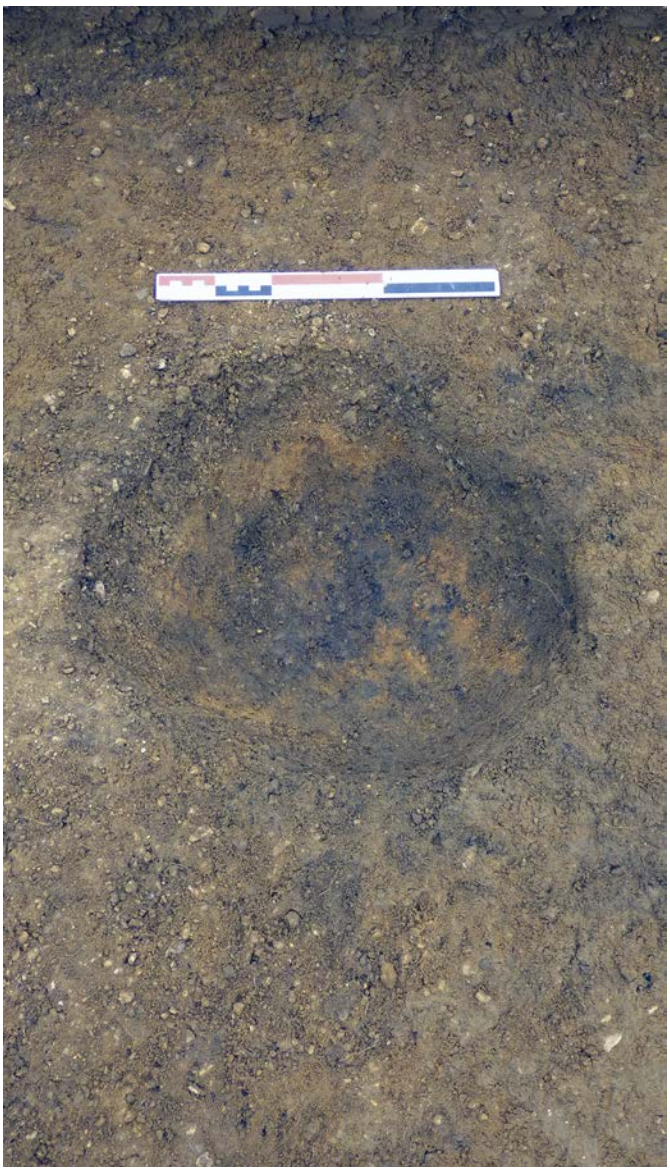

Plate 4: Trench 4, cremation 403 after excavation, looking NNW

Plate 5: Trench 4 showing extension and 405, looking south-west

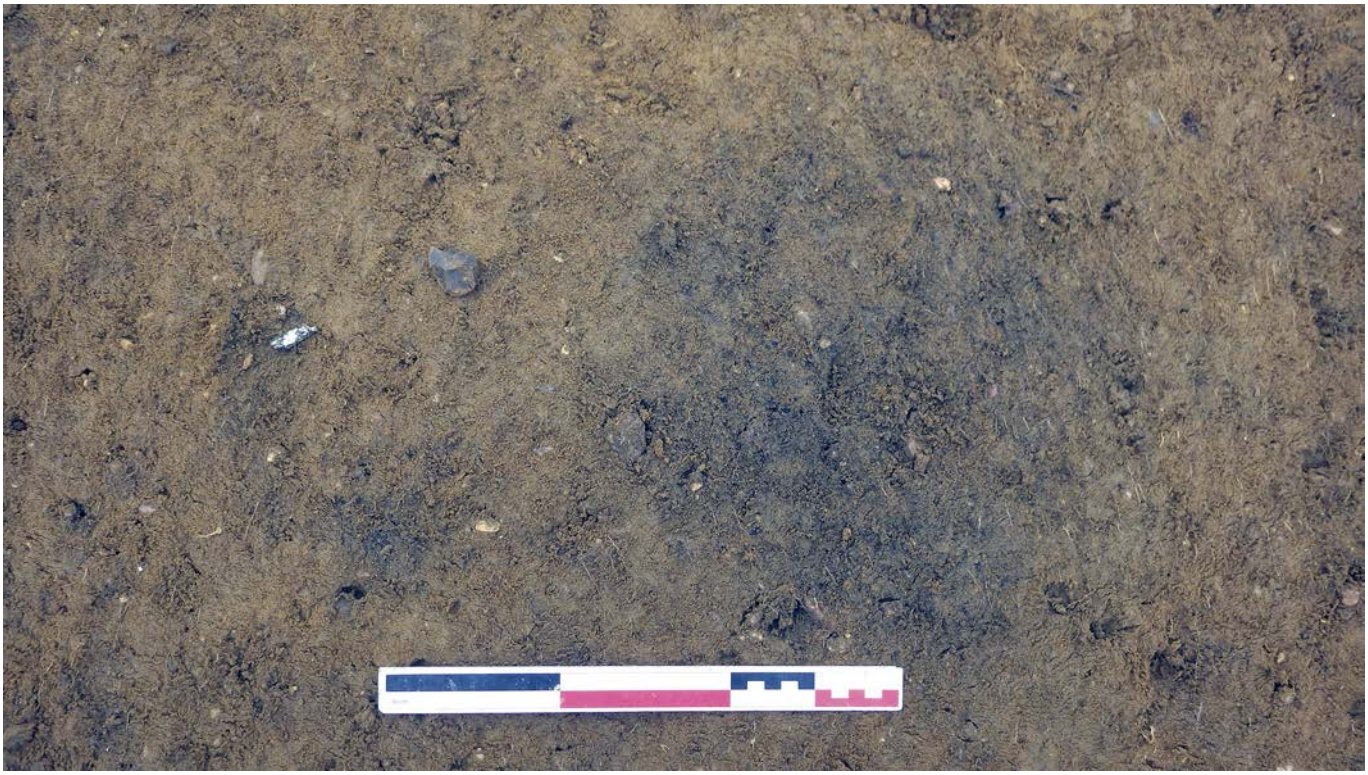

Plate 6: Trench 4, unexcavated cremation 405, looking south-west

Plate 7: Trench 5, ditch 503, looking north-east

Plate 8: Trench 5, small pit or posthole 508, looking north-west

Plate 9: Trench 5, pit 505, looking south-east

Plate 10: Trench 6, detail of ditch 603, looking north-west

Plate 11: Trench 8, ditch 803, looking south-west

Plate 12: Trench 8, ditch 808, looking north

Plate 13; Trench 8, furrow 805, looking north

Plate 14: Trench 9, ditch 903, looking north

Plate 15: Trench 10, ditch 1003, looking west along trench

Plate 16: Trench 12, natural features half-excavated, looking south-east

Plate 17: Trench 12, pit or natural feature 1205, looking south

Plate 18: Trench 13, section showing third layer over natural, looking SSW

Plate 19: Trench 13, ditch 1306, looking south

Plate 20: Trench 14, ditch 1403, looking south

Plate 21: Trench 22 showing plough scars in natural and third layer in section, looking south

Plate 22: Trench 22, pit 2204, looking south

Plate 23: Trench 25, posthole 2506, looking north-west

Plate 24: Trench 26, pit 2603, looking north

Plate 25: Trench 26, posthole 2605, looking west

Plate 26: Trench 26, possible ditch or furrow 2607, looking north

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