

MATFORD LAND, SOUTHWEST OF EXETER, DEVON

NGR (Centred on) SX 93267 88808

Results of an archaeological trench evaluation

Prepared by:
Clive Meaton and John Valentin

With contributions from:
Naomi Payne and Henrietta Quinnell

On behalf of:
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AC archaeology

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Summary

An archaeological trench evaluation was undertaken by AC archaeology in November 2012 on Matford Land to the southwest of Exeter, Devon Exeter (NGR SX 93267 88808). The site lies in an area of known prehistoric remains, including settlement and funerary monuments. Bronze Age barrows are also located in the surrounding landscape and a rectangular double ditched enclosure, classified as a Scheduled Monument, is located within the site boundaries, but will not be impacted upon by development. Previous archaeological work on the site included geophysical survey, which identified a number of linear anomalies characteristic of field or settlement boundary ditches.

The evaluation comprised the machine-excavation of 29 trenches totalling 1,237m in length, with each trench measuring 1.80m in width. These were positioned to target the geophysical anomalies, to test the extent of deposits associated with but outside the Scheduled Monument and to provide sample coverage across the site.

Archaeological deposits were recorded in many of the trenches, with the principal areas of activity located in trenches closest to the scheduled monument. These comprised pits, post holes and ditches relating to settlement and agricultural practices of early Neolithic, Bronze Age and late Iron Age/Romano-British date. In many cases features were undated and/or affected by ploughing and or root/animal disturbance, while a number of trenches contained no evidence for archaeological activity.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 An archaeological trench evaluation on land known as Matford Land, southwest of Exeter, Devon, was undertaken by AC archaeology during November 2012. The work was carried out in support of a forthcoming planning application for residential development and was commissioned by Waddeton Park Ltd. The evaluation was undertaken following consultation with the Archaeology Officer, Devon County Council.
- 1.2 The proposed site forms an irregular parcel of arable and pasture fields (Fig. 1). To the north and east it is bounded by the A379 dual carriage, to the west by the Old Matford Lane and to the south and southeast by agricultural fields. The M5 motorway lies a little further to the southeast. Much of the site lies on steep, generally north facing slopes, and is bisected by two well defined, steeply graded dry valleys. These run broadly parallel on north to south alignment. High voltage overhead cables traverse the site, also on a north to south trajectory. From the high ground there are extensive views from the northwest through to the River Exe estuary in the east. The site ranges in height from approximately 20m to 65m AOD.
- 1.3 The underlying solid geology comprises sedimentary Breccia of the Heavitree Breccia Formation. These were laid down during the Permian Period, between 248 and 290 million years ago. Quaternary drift deposits are also recorded across the site, generally following the course of the two dry valleys and their feeder streams. These are Head deposits of sand with clay and gravels.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The main archaeological interest for the site was considered to be its proximity to a prehistoric settlement enclosure recorded from aerial photographs and designated as a Scheduled Monument (SM no. DV953). The enclosure is recorded as having double ditches and a probable entrance on

its northeast side. The monument has not been subjected to any previous archaeological investigations and, as a result of ploughing, there is no surface evidence in the form of surviving earthworks.

- 2.2** The archaeological and historical background of the site has been already assessed in an initial phase of heritage mitigation (Valentin and Hughes 2010) and subsequent geophysical survey (Substrata 2012). This initial work was much broader in scope and area, encompassing some 145 hectares of land to the southwest of Exeter. It identified the potential for later prehistoric settlement and funerary sites, along with Scheduled Monuments including a Bronze Age barrow cemetery and two settlement enclosures. The barrow cemetery lies on a ridge to the north of the development area. Excavations adjacent to the cemetery recorded a small number of pits associated with Bronze Age pottery and worked flints (Tyler, 2009). A number of sites were also recorded as cropmarks from aerial photographs, however, with the exception of a few dispersed medieval farmsteads, there were limited sites recorded dating between the Romano-British and post-medieval periods. Hence, it was concluded that the area is likely to have been part of a largely agricultural landscape from at least the middle ages onwards. Targeted fieldwalking and geophysical prospection were also undertaken as part of this assessment.
- 2.3** This work will not be repeated here but summarised below in relation to the present development area and specifically with reference to the assessed fields contained therein; namely Fields 57, 58, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65 and 68. For the purposes of consistency these designations have been retained, although it should be noted that no trenches were excavated in Fields 62 or 65.
- 2.4** Field 57
No sites were recorded in Field 57. However, rapid fieldwalking in the adjacent field to the west revealed several worked flints. Along its southern boundary Field 57 butts against the Scheduled Ancient Monument contained in Field 58.
- 2.5** Field 58
Two known archaeological sites were identified in Field 58. The Scheduled Monument is located in the northeast quadrant of the field. It forms a double ditched rectangular enclosure, with an apparent entrance on its NE side and was identified from aerial photographs. The second site is a linear feature which runs through the ditch enclosure and is also visible on aerial photographs. This was interpreted as the possible alignment of a gas main. Geophysics was undertaken to the west of the Scheduled Monument. It revealed a series of NE-SW and NW-SE aligned anomalies, possibly forming evidence for early fields, a possible ring ditch in the southern part of the survey area and to the northwest of this a curvilinear anomaly. Additionally, structural remains were noted in the southern corner of the field. They comprised fragments of walls constructed from Breccia, concreted masonry and brick.
- 2.6** Field 60
No known sites were recorded in Field 60. However, geophysical survey produced a large number of anomalies, including a series of NE-SW and NW-SE linear features possibly forming evidence for early fields. The double E-W slightly curving linear was interpreted as a former field boundary, the same as depicted on the 19th century tithe map. It was also noted that some of the linear anomalies corresponded closely with those recorded on aerial photographs.
- 2.7** Field 61
No known sites were recorded in Field 61, although geophysics previously carried out recorded a number of possible linear and curvilinear anomalies within the field.

2.8 Field 62

No known sites were recorded in Field 62.

2.9 Field 63

No known sites were recorded in Field 63. Geophysics recorded possible curvilinear anomalies within the field.

2.10 Field 64

A square raised platform was recorded in the southwest corner of Field 64. Geophysics identified a number of possible linear and curvilinear anomalies.

2.11 Field 65

No known sites were recorded in Field 65.

2.12 Field 68

No known sites were recorded in Field 68.

3. AIMS

3.1 The aim of the trial trench evaluation was to establish the presence or absence, extent, depth, character and date of any archaeological features, deposits or finds within the site. The results of the work as set out in this report will be reviewed and used to inform any subsequent mitigation should planning consent be obtained.

3.2 More specific aims were:

- To establish whether or not the geophysical anomalies represented evidence for buried archaeological remains;
- to ascertain the extent and character of those archaeological deposits associated with the geophysical survey results;
- to ascertain the extent and character of any archaeological deposits associated with the double ditched rectangular enclosure (Scheduled Monument);
- to determine the extent, condition, nature, character, date and significance of any hitherto previously unrecorded archaeological remains encountered;
- to establish the nature of the activity of any hitherto previously unrecorded archaeological remains;
- to recover any environmental or ecofactual evidence from archaeological features and to ascertain the potential for any such preservation;
- to identify any artefacts relating to the occupation or use of any hitherto previously unrecorded archaeological remains; and,
- to provide further information on the archaeology of Devon through any archaeological remains encountered.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 A total of 29 trenches was excavated and these were set out using a hand-held GIS Topcon GMS2 positioning receiver. The trenches ranged in size from 70m long by 1.8m wide to 20m long by 1.8m, giving a final cumulative length of 1,237m. Trench locations (Fig. 1) were designed to provide a representative sample across the proposed development area and to target specified geophysical anomalies. Any alterations to the positioning, size and location of trenches, necessitated by conditions in the field are discussed in greater detail below. However, following on-site discussions with the County Archaeologist, Trenches 11 and 13 were abandoned entirely due to their situation on steep sloping hill sides.

- 4.2** The site of all trenches was checked with a CAT scanner for the presence of buried services prior to excavation.
- 4.3** All trenches were excavated using either a wheeled JCB or a 360° mechanical excavator, both fitted with a 1.8m wide toothless grading bucket. Excavations entailed the removal of topsoil and non-significant overburden down to the top of any surviving archaeological deposits or the natural subsoil. This was undertaken in spits no greater than 100mm in depth and care was taken not to damage archaeological deposits through excessive use of the machine. A constant archaeological presence was maintained during all ground reduction.
- 4.4** The trenches were recorded in accordance with the AC archaeology *pro forma* recording system, comprising written, graphic and photographic records, and in accordance with AC archaeology's *General Site Recording Manual, Version 2*. All plans were drawn at a scale of either 1:50 or 1:20 and sections at 1:10 or 1:20, as appropriate. All levels have been related to Ordnance Datum, while all spoil heaps were scanned for displaced finds.
- 4.5** All trenches were levelled in relation to an Ordnance Datum Bench Mark (48.80m OD), located on the triangulation point in Field 65, on high ground along its boundary with Field 64.

5. RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

A total of 29 trial trenches was excavated across the site, which were excavated to a maximum depth of 800mm, although generally the trenches were much shallower, being between 300mm and 500mm deep. For consistency, the field designations generated as part of the preceding desk-based assessment have been retained. These are as follows:

Field 63: Trenches 1-4
 Field 61: Trenches 5-10
 Field 64: Trenches 11-13
 Field 60: Trenches 14-17
 Field 68: Trenches 18-25
 Field 57: Trenches 26-28 and 30-31
 Field 58: Trench 29

5.2 General stratigraphic profile

The general stratigraphic sequence revealed in the evaluation trenches was as follows:

- Plough/Topsoil

Generally between 100mm and 300mm deep, forming a friable dark reddish brown sandy loam containing occasional weathered Breccia gravels and occasional marls

Contexts – 100, 200, 300, 400, 500, 600, 700, 800, 900, 1000, 1200, 1400, 1500, 1600, 1700, 1800, 1900, 2000, 2100, 2200, 2300, 2400, 2500, 2600, 2700, 2800, 2900, 3000 & 3100

- Colluvium/Subsoil

Generally between 100mm and 400mm thick, forming a friable mid reddish brown silt sand clay containing frequent Breccia gravels, occasional Breccia nodules and occasional marls.

Contexts – 101, 201, 301, 401, 501, 511, 601, 701, 801, 901, 1001, 1201, 1401, 1501, 1601, 1701, 1801, 1901, 2001, 2101, 2201, 2301, 2401, 2501, 2601, 2701, 2801, 2901, 2902, 3001 & 3101

- **Natural Breccia (Permian)**

Generally encountered between 250mm and 500mm below the ground surface; forming weathered Breccia gravels in a light brownish red clay sand matrix, giving way in places to solid Breccia bedrock.

Contexts – 102, 202, 302, 402, 512, 602, 702, 802, 902, 1004, 1202, 1402, 1503, 1613, 1702, 1802, 1902, 2002, 2102, 2202, 2302, 2402, 2502, 2609, 2703, 2802, 2903, 3002 & 3114

As might be expected, those fields recently cultivated (57, 58 and 68) revealed a greater depth of ploughsoil than those being grazed under pasture (Fields 60, 61, 63 and 64). Additionally, Quaternary Head deposits were encountered in Trenches 27, 28, 29, and 5. These are discussed in greater detail below in relation to specific trenches. Likewise, further descriptions of site wide stratigraphic sequences are only provided where they digress markedly from the general profile outlined above.

5.3 Field 63 (Trenches 1-4)

Field 63 comprised pasture encompassing a ridge with steep slopes falling away to the east and west. From the high point of the ridge there is excellent visibility towards Exeter in the north and northwest and towards the River Exe estuary in the east. The field was being grazed by cattle prior to the evaluation. Previous geophysical prospection identified potential buried curvilinear features within the field and Trenches 3 and 4 were positioned so as to investigate these anomalies.

5.3.1 Trench 1 (Plan Fig. 2a, section Fig. 2b)

The original location of Trench 1 was shifted so as to avoid mechanical excavation on the steep valley side. It was repositioned on top of the ridge and orientated broadly north to south, measuring 30m long by 1.8m wide with a maximum depth of 300mm. The topsoil was recorded as context 100, being 150mm thick and overlying the subsoil (101), which formed a relatively thin horizon, measuring up to 80mm thick. The natural substrate was encountered from 220mm below the ground surface and was recorded as context 102. It comprised compacted bedrock Breccia.

One feature was encountered in Trench 1, recorded as F103. It was located close to the north end of the trench, being sub oval in plan with steep sides, a flattish irregular base and measuring 750mm wide by 200mm deep. The primary fill was context 104; a friable brownish black sandy silt clay with pink brown mottling, containing frequent weathered Breccia gravels and very frequent charcoal. The upper fill was context 105; a light pinkish brown sandy silt clay containing abundant Breccia gravels. This feature was interpreted as either a discrete pit, or a gully/ditch terminus.

Artefacts recovered from the topsoil (100) were all post-medieval in date. No finds were recovered from F103.

5.3.2 Trench 2 (Plan Fig. 2c, section Fig. 2d)

Trench 2 was also repositioned along the ridge top, so as to avoid excavating on the steep valley slope. It was orientated broadly north to south, measured 30m long by 1.8m wide and attained a maximum depth of 350mm. The topsoil context (200) was up to 120mm thick and overlay the subsoil context (201), which was up to 200mm thick. The natural substrate was recorded as

context (202), comprising compacted bedrock Breccia and encountered from 250mm below the ground surface.

One linear feature was identified at the southern end of the trench, (F203). Its full width was not fully revealed within the trench, although c.6m was exposed in length as it continued beyond the trench baulks on a southwest to northeast trajectory. Excavation revealed a shallow cut measuring 80mm in depth with a steep side and flat base. It was filled by context 204; a mixed material, forming friable dark brown sandy silt clays with lenses of yellowish brown and containing frequent Breccia gravels. Finds from 204 included post-medieval pottery and glass. This feature was interpreted as a possible shallow post-medieval field boundary, although it may have equally represented a thin spread of material extending beyond the trench to the east.

A few metres to the north of F203 another possible linear feature was exposed running on a parallel northeast to southwest alignment. It was recorded as F205, which had very irregular edges with a maximum surviving depth of 10mm. The fill was recorded as context 206; a friable light brown sandy silt clays containing frequent Breccia gravels. It is possible that these features represent flanking ditches alongside a former hedgebank.

5.3.3 Trench 3(Plan Fig. 2e, section Fig. 2f)

Trench 3 was orientated northwest to southeast, measured 30m long by 1.8m wide and attained a maximum depth of 600mm. It was located so as to investigate a geophysical curvilinear anomaly. The topsoil context (300) was up to 280mm thick and overlay the subsoil (301) which was up to 300mm thick. The natural geology was exposed from 380mm below the ground surface and comprised weathered Breccia (302).

There was no clear evidence of the geophysical anomaly within Trench 3. However, a small sub circular pit or post hole was revealed to the southeast of the trench, being recorded as F304. It was only partially exposed in the trench, but had steep sides with a flat base and measured 400mm wide by 90mm deep. The single fill was recorded as context 303; a mid greyish brown, dark blackish brown and mid reddish brown mottled sandy silt containing frequent charcoal and frequent Breccia gravels.

No finds were retrieved from F304, although post-medieval pottery was recovered from the topsoil (300).

5.3.4 Trench 4

Trench 4 was positioned so as to investigate a potential curvilinear identified during geophysical prospection. The trench was orientated northeast to southwest, measured 30m long by 1.8m wide and attained a maximum depth of 440mm. The topsoil (400) was up to 240mm thick and the subsoil (401) up to 240mm thick. Natural weathered Breccia was recorded as context (401) and exposed from a depth of 440mm below the ground surface.

No archaeological features were identified within Trench 4 and there was no evidence of the geophysical anomaly. Post-medieval pottery was recovered from the topsoil (400).

5.4 **Field 61** (Trenches 5-10)

Field 61 comprised pasture on steep north and east facing slopes overlooking the deeply incised dry valley or combe below. The field was being grazed by cattle prior to the evaluation. Previous geophysical prospection had identified potential buried linear features within the field and Trenches 5, 6, 8, 9 and 10 were positioned so as to investigate several of these anomalies.

5.4.1 Trench 5 (Plan Fig. 3a, sections Fig. 3b-c; Plate 1)

Trench 5 was orientated broadly northwest to southeast, measured 50m long by 1.8m wide and attained a maximum depth of 700mm below the ground surface. It was located so as to target three possible geophysical anomalies. The topsoil (500) was up to 250mm thick and overlay subsoil contexts 501 and 510 which were up to 200mm thick. For the large extent of the trench, the natural substrate comprised context 511, forming a Quaternary Head deposit of friable orange brown sandy silt clays containing frequent gravels. However, the northwest end of Trench 5 revealed a diffuse interface between the Head deposit and the older, weathered Breccia, recorded as context 512. The solid geology was encountered from 350mm below the ground surface.

On the Quaternary Head, a northeast to southwest aligned linear feature was exposed in plan, being located toward the southeast end of the trench and continuing beneath both baulks. It was recorded as F502 and measured 700mm by 630mm deep with steep, almost vertical sides and a flat base. Its primary fill was context 503, which measured 270mm thick and comprised friable mid brown sandy clay. Above 503, context 504 was present forming a 150mm thick friable light yellow brown sandy silt clay with frequent gravels. This was overlain by context 505, a mid brown sandy silt clay up to 120mm thick, also containing frequent gravel, and overlain by context 506 which formed mid yellow brown silt sand clays, containing frequent gravels and measuring 200mm thick. The upper fill was context 507, being a friable dark brown silt sand clay with common gravels and measuring up to 100mm in thickness. Presumably, feature F502, relates to the most south easterly of the geophysical linear anomalies, although the other two were not identified in plan.

Of some additional interest in Trench 5 was a faint sub-circular feature identified on the Breccia (512), close to the interface with the Quaternary Head (511). This posthole or small pit was recorded as F508, measuring roughly 550mm in diameter and 130mm deep with moderately steep sloping sides and a rounded base. It was filled by context 509; a friable mid brown sandy silt clay containing common pea sized gravels. Several sherds from a single pot were recovered from this fill, being associated with a number large stones. Notably, it was the artefacts and stones that were initially identified, rather than the cut of the feature itself.

The pottery retrieved from F508 is dated to the Bronze Age, whilst prehistoric flint work was also recovered from the upper fill (507) of the linear feature F502.

5.4.2 Trench 6 (Plan Fig. 4a & 4g, section Fig. 4b-f, 4h-k; Plate 2)

Trench 6 was located so as to investigate three geophysical anomalies. It was orientated broadly north to south, measured 50m long by 1.8m wide and attained a maximum depth of 450mm below the ground surface. The trench was excavated as two discrete segments so to avoid machining beneath overhead power lines. The topsoil (600) was up to 160mm thick and the subsoil context (601) up to 220mm thick. The substrate was recorded as context 602, encountered from 350mm below the ground surface and comprised weathered upper Breccia.

Several features were recorded in the northern part of Trench 6. A curvilinear gully was recorded as F613. Measuring 810mm wide and 440mm deep, it was broadly east to west aligned and continued beneath the trench baulks in both directions. Excavation revealed steep sides to a flat narrow base with a primary fill recorded as context 614; a compacted brownish red sandy silt clay containing frequent Breccia gravels and stones. The upper fill (615) comprised friable orange brown sandy silt clays with abundant Breccia gravels and sub angular stones. Approximately 5m further to the north a small sub-circular pit or post hole was identified (F623). This was 430mm in diameter and 110mm deep, with a concave dished profile filled by 624; a friable mid brown sandy

silt clay containing frequent Breccia gravels and moderate sub angular stones. Close to the northern end of Trench 6 a second linear feature was excavated. Recorded as F616, it was aligned broadly northwest to southeast with irregular edges in plan and terminating within the trench. On its northeast side it revealed moderate sloping sides, although on its opposite edge, heavy rooting made interpretation difficult. Its primary fill was context 617; a brownish orange sandy silt clay containing frequent sub angular stones and Breccia gravels, which was overlain by context 618, an orange red silt clay sand containing abundant Breccia gravels and moderate sub angular stones. Context 618 was very mixed and included bioturbated material from the southwest edge of the feature. Two possible stake holes were revealed adjacent to the probable ditch terminus. The first, F619 was sub circular in plan with a diameter of 150mm and depth of 110mm. The sides tapered to a narrow concave base and it was filled by 620; a friable dark brown and black silt clay containing abundant charcoal, moderate angular stones and occasional Breccia gravels. Next to it was F621, which measured 170mm in diameter and 90mm deep, with moderately rounded sides to a concave base. It was filled by context 622, a friable mottled black and dark brown silt clay containing frequent charcoal, moderate angular stones and frequent Breccia gravels.

It seems likely that both linear cuts F616 and F613 relate to the anomalies identified during the geophysical investigations. Notably, pottery recovered from the upper fill (615) of the curvilinear feature F613 is dated to the Bronze Age period.

In the southern half of Trench 6 two ephemeral and undercutting bioturbated features were investigated (F603 and F604). However, several discrete cut features were also identified. F605 was sub circular in plan, measured 490mm in diameter and 290mm deep and revealed steep rounded sides to a rounded base. It was filled by context 606; a friable reddish brown silt sand clay containing rare sub angular stones and abundant Breccia gravels. Two similarly sized and shaped features were located immediately to the west. Both were partially exposed within the base of the trench. F609 measured 810mm wide and 230mm deep, with steep sides to a flat irregular base. It was filled by context 610; a reddish brown sandy silt clay mottled with black charcoal flecks, containing occasional sub angular stones and Breccia gravels and frequent charcoal. Adjacent to the north, F611 was located. It measured 770mm wide and 290mm deep, with steep rounded sides, a flat base and filled by context 612; a friable orange brown sandy silt clay containing moderate stones and Breccia gravels. Both cut features F609 and F611 were interpreted as discrete pits, although given that each continued beneath the trench baulk it is also possible they represent terminating linear features. Another small pit was located approximately 3m to the north, recorded as F607. This was sub circular in plan, measured 370mm in diameter and 90mm deep and was filled by context 608, a friable brownish red sandy silt clay with frequent Breccia gravels and stone. No finds were recovered from any feature in the southern section of the trench.

5.4.3 Trench 7 (Plan Fig. 5a, sections Fig. 5b-e; Plate 3)

Trench 7 was located immediately to the east of the Scheduled Monument. The trench was orientated broadly north to south, measuring 50m long by 1.8m wide and attaining a maximum depth of 600mm below the ground surface. The topsoil (700) was up to 150mm thick and the subsoil context (701) up to a maximum of 300mm thick. The natural substrate was recorded as context 702 and comprised weathered Breccia gravels encountered from 460mm below the ground surface.

Three discrete features were identified in Trench 7. At the south end of the trench, pit cut F703 was recorded, being 2m long and 800mm wide and continuing beneath the west trench baulk. It was irregular in plan, with moderately steep sides and a flat base breaking to a secondary, deeper

element on its northern edge. A single fill was recorded (704), forming a friable red brown sandy silt clay containing frequent charcoal and Breccia gravels. Approximately 2m to the northeast another irregular pit was identified and recorded as F705. Its exposed length measured 2m and its width 500mm, although this pit continued beneath the east baulk. It was 350mm deep with moderately sloping irregular sides breaking to a slightly round base and was filled by context 706; a friable mid red brown sandy silt clay containing occasional charcoal and frequent Breccia gravels. At the north end of Trench 7 a small discrete feature was identified. It was recorded as F707, being 600mm in diameter and 120mm deep with a shallow bowl shaped profiled. The single fill (707) was a friable mottled red-brown and grey-black sandy silt clay containing frequent Breccia gravels and charcoal.

Worked flints of prehistoric date were recovered from the fill (704) of the irregular shaped pit F703.

5.4.4 Trench 8

Trench 8 was located in the southwest corner of Field 61 and positioned so as to investigate a geophysical linear anomaly. It was orientated northwest to southeast, measured 30m long by 1.8m wide and attained a maximum depth of 330mm. The topsoil (800) was up to 100mm deep and the subsoil (801) a maximum of 200mm thick. The natural Breccia was recorded as context 802 and formed compact bedrock, particularly at the southeast end of the trench where it was encountered from notably shallow depths.

No archaeological features were identified in Trench 8 and no finds recovered. Moreover, there was no evidence of the geophysical anomaly.

5.4.5 Trench 9

The original position of Trench 9 was located so as to investigate a northeast to southwest aligned geophysical anomaly. However, on the ground it became clear this feature was a modern water pipe and so Trench 9 was shifted further to the northwest. In its revised position it was orientated broadly northeast to southwest, measuring 30m long by 1.8m wide and attaining a maximum depth of 550mm below the ground surface. The topsoil (900) was up to 160mm thick, and the subsoil context (901) between 210mm and 230mm thick. The substrate was recorded as context 902 and comprised weathered Breccia gravels.

No archaeological features were identified in Trench 9 and no finds recovered.

5.4.6 Trench 10(Plan Fig. 6a, section Fig. 6b)

Trench 10 was located on high ground, overlooking the head of the dry valley in the southeast corner of Field 61. It was positioned to investigate a northwest to southeast aligned geophysical anomaly and measured 30m long by 1.8m wide, attaining a maximum depth of 550m below the ground surface. The topsoil context (1000) was up to 100mm deep and the subsoil context (1001) up to 200mm thick. They overlay weathered Breccia recorded as context 1004 encountered from a depth of 300mm.

A positive topographic feature was recorded in Trench 10 as F1002. It crossed the width of the trench and was orientated northwest to southeast, measuring approximately 150mm deep and 800mm wide. Down slope, against its northeast face, context 1003 had accumulated, comprising friable mid yellowish brown silt sand clays containing frequent Breccia gravels and occasional marls. This deposit wedged thinner to the northeast, and extended for roughly 10m before giving way to the general stratigraphic sequence. Positive feature F1002 was certainly the geophysical anomaly targeted and most likely represents a natural topographic undulation subsequently

utilised as a field boundary, thus giving rise to the lynchet-type profile and associated deposit (1003). No finds were retrieved from Trench 10.

5.5 Field 64 (Trench 12)

Field 64 crested high ground in the southeast corner of the site. The field was under pasture and being grazed by cattle prior to the evaluation. Much of its extent was formed by the very steep northwest facing slope of the dry valley below, with a small triangular area of relatively flat, high ground located in its extreme southeast corner. From here there are extensive views towards the River Exe estuary in the east and northeast and to the city of Exeter in the north and northwest.

5.5.1 Trench 12 (Plan Fig. 6c, section Fig. 6d)

Trench 12 was originally positioned to investigate a geophysical curvilinear anomaly. However, this trench was situated obliquely across a very steep valley slope and was unsafe to excavate, therefore it was re-located to the higher ground, targeting an alternative geophysical anomaly. It was orientated approximately east to west, although given the limited area was reduced in length from 50m to 20m with a width of 1.8m and maximum depth 450mm. The topsoil context (1200) was up to 150mm thick and the subsoil context (1201) up to 350mm thick. They overlay the weathered Breccia which was recorded as context 1202 and encountered from a depth of 350mm.

An irregular feature was partially exposed in the west end of the trench. Recorded as cut context F1203, it was rectangular in plan and measured 2m long by a minimum of 800mm wide and up to 200mm deep. It had moderately sloping sides to a flat base, with an upper fill recorded as context 1204, comprising a friable mid reddish brown sandy silt clay containing frequent Breccia gravels. This overlay the basal fill context 1205; a thin multi coloured horizon of fine to medium Breccia gravels. Notably, the north edge of this feature was associated with an irregular gully which trailed away to the northeast, undercutting its own edges and so interpreted as a root cast or animal burrow. Likewise the possible pit cut F1202 was considered equally likely a tree throw. No finds were recovered from Trench 12.

5.6 Field 60 (Trenches 14-17)

Field 60 formed grass pasture on a comparatively gentle, predominantly east and north facing slope. Its southern third was bisected by a shallow tributary valley, running broadly east to west and formerly debouching into the more substantial dry valley immediately to the east. Geophysics undertaken across the area revealed a large number of intercutting linear features, possibly indicative of a co-axial field system. Therefore Trenches 14 through 17 were positioned so as to investigate these anomalies. Prior to the evaluation the field was being grazed by cattle.

5.6.1 Trench 14

Trench 14 was located to investigate two geophysical linear anomalies. It was orientated broadly north to south, measuring 30m long by 1.8m wide and attaining a maximum depth of 1.8m below the ground surface. The topsoil (1400) was up to 100mm deep.

No archaeological features were identified in Trench 14. However, the subsoil was recorded as context 1401 and formed a thick colluvium. It comprised mixed mid reddish brown silt sand clays, containing frequent Breccia gravels and occasional marls. At the extreme south end of the trench, weathered Breccia was exposed and recorded as context 1403. It presented a hard defined edge against the excavated depth of the colluvium at approximately 800mm below the ground surface. Therefore, at the far north end of the trench an exploratory sondage was excavated. The colluvium was found to be 1.2m deep and overlay Quaternary Head comprising compacted mid yellow brown sandy silt clays with occasional siltstones and frequent manganese flecking. This was

recorded as context 1403 and excavated to a depth of 1.8m below the ground surface where it was not bottomed.

Clearly, Trench 14 locates the edge of the feeder valley which is significantly infilled with hillwash derived from the surrounding Breccia slopes. Notably, neither linear anomaly was identified. However, this is unsurprising given that the natural substrate was not exposed across the extent of the trench.

Post-medieval pottery was recovered from the topsoil (1400) in Trench 14.

5.6.2 Trench 15 (Plan Fig. 7a, sections Fig. 7b-f; Plates 4-5)

Trench 15 was positioned to investigate four separate geophysical linear anomalies. It was orientated broadly east to west, measuring 60m long by 1.8m wide and attaining a maximum depth of 400mm. The topsoil context (1500) was up to 120mm deep and the subsoil context (1501) up to 200mm thick. Weathered Breccia was exposed from a depth of 250mm below the ground surface (1503).

Four linear features and one discrete were identified in Trench 15. At the east end of the trench a northwest to southeast aligned ditch was recorded as F1504. It was 1.6m wide and 600mm deep, with moderately sloping sides and a slightly rounded base. The upper fill was recorded as context 1505, comprising friable mid reddish brown silt sand clay containing occasional Breccia gravels. Context 1506 was the basal fill, which formed a dark reddish brown clay sand, with abundant Breccia gravel giving way to a hard manganese layer panning at the bottom of the feature and defining its base. Along its northeast edge, linear feature F1505 was re-cut by F1507, which was approximately 600mm wide and 140mm deep, with a shallow dished profile and filled by context 1508; a friable dark reddish brown silty sandy clay containing occasional Breccia gravels.

Approximately 20m to the west of ditch cut F1504, a linear gully was recorded as cut F1509. It was orientated northeast to southwest and traversed the width of the trench measuring 800mm wide and 220mm deep, with moderately sloping sides and a narrow rounded base. This ditch or gully was filled by context 1510; a friable light brown silty clay sand containing frequent Breccia gravels. Approximately 4m further to the west a small truncated pit, or post hole was excavated. Recorded as F1516, it was sub circular in plan measuring 400mm in diameter and 100mm deep with a shallow dished profile and filled by context 1517; a friable mid reddish brown silt sand clay containing abundant Breccia gravels and occasional charcoal. Large stones were present in the top of the fill, possibly representing remnant post packing.

At the west end of Trench 15, two further linear features were excavated. By far the larger of these was F1511. This ditch was aligned northeast to southwest, crossing the width of the trench obliquely, measuring 5m wide by 850mm deep and revealing moderately sloping sides to a flat base. Its primary fill was context 1518, which measured up to 250mm thick and formed a firm reddish brown sandy silt clay containing frequent Breccia gravels. At the interface with the underlying natural, a horizon of hard oxidised manganese was noted. Above 1518, context 1515 was recorded, measuring up to 450mm thick and forming friable mottled red brown sandy silt clay containing frequent Breccia gravels. The upper fill was recorded as context 1512, and measured up to 500mm thick, comprising soft to firm reddish brown sandy silt clay with frequent Breccia gravels and occasional sandstones, mudstones and charcoal.

Just over 3m to the west and on a similar northeast to southwest alignment another linear cut was identified (F513). It was 850mm wide by 200mm deep, crossing the width of the trench obliquely. It

revealed moderately sloping irregular sides and an irregular flattish base. The basal fill was context 1519, measuring up to 100mm thick and comprising stiff, mottled, red-brown sandy silt clay containing frequent Breccia gravels and occasional mudstone and sandstone. The upper fill was recorded as context 1514 and measured 150mm thick, forming soft mid reddish brown sandy silt clay containing frequent Breccia gravels and occasional mudstone and sandstone.

Linear cut features F1504, F1509 and F1511 correspond well to the geophysical survey. However, linear cut F1513 does not, whilst the northwest to southeast aligned geophysical anomaly was not identified in the west end of Trench 15. Middle Bronze Age pottery was recovered from the basal fill (1506) of ditch cut F1504 as well as from the fill (1508) of its re-cut (F1507). Pottery of a probable early Neolithic date was also retrieved from the fill (1514) of the linear feature F1513 located at the opposite end of the trench.

5.6.3 Trench 16 (Plan Fig. 8a, sections Fig. 8b-e & Fig. 9a-g; Plates 6-7)

Trench 16 was located to investigate two geophysical anomalies. It was orientated broadly east to west, measuring 70m long by 1.8m wide and attaining a maximum depth of 550mm. The topsoil context (1600) was up to 300mm thick and the subsoil context (1601) up to 200mm thick. The natural Breccia was recorded as context 1613 and encountered from a depth of 400mm.

Four linear features, one possible linear terminus, and five discrete post holes were revealed in Trench 16. At the west end of the trench, a northwest to southeast aligned linear feature which traversed the width of the trench obliquely was recorded as cut F1602. It measured 760mm wide by 290mm deep, revealing steeply sloping sides to a narrow rounded base. The upper fill (1604) comprised friable medium brown sandy silt clay, containing common Breccia gravels and stones and measured 200mm thick. It overlay basal fill context 1603; a friable medium reddish brown silty sand clay measuring 100mm thick and containing common Breccia gravel. Approximately 8m to the east, linear cut F1605 was recorded. This ditch was aligned approximately northwest to southeast and traversed the trench obliquely exposing roughly 6m of length. It revealed steep irregular sides to a flat sloping base and was filled by 1506; a friable mid reddish brown silty clay sand containing frequent Breccia gravels and stones.

Approximately 19m further to the east another linear feature was recorded as F1614. It was aligned broadly northeast to southwest, measuring 3.3m wide and 130mm deep with shallow gently sloping sides and an irregular base. The fill was recorded as 1615; a friable mid red-brown silty sand clay containing frequent Breccia gravels and mudstones and sandstones. Two separate cuts were recorded in the base of F1614. Cut context F1617 was only partially exposed but appeared sub-circular in plan measuring 800mm long by 300mm wide and 200mm deep. It revealed moderately steep sides to a flat base and was interpreted as a possible pit or ditch terminus relating to a separate cut event. Extending away from F1617 to the northeast a shallow linear gully was recorded as cut F1619. It measured 450mm wide by 100mm deep with a shallow dished profile. This was interpreted as a possible structural element to the adjacent cut F1617. Both were filled with the same material as F1614; recorded as fill contexts 1618 and 1620 respectively.

Approximately 8m further to the east, probable ditch cut F1628 was recorded terminating within the trench. It measured 1.2m wide and 130mm deep, revealing moderately sloping sides to a flat broad base. The single fill was recorded as context 1627; a friable mid orange brown sandy clay containing abundant Breccia gravels. At the extreme east end of Trench 16, ditch cut F1607 was recorded. It traversed the width of the trench obliquely, being aligned northeast to southwest and measuring 800mm wide by 540mm deep with an exposed length of 3.5m. It revealed very steep

sides tapering at depth almost to the vertical and breaking sharply to a flat narrow base. The profile resembled that of defensive 'ankle breaker'. The basal fill was context 1608, measuring up to 110mm thick and comprising pink brown sandy silt clays containing moderate Breccia gravels and stones. Above 1608, fill context 1609 was recorded measuring up to 90mm thick and comprising friable mid orange red silty sand clay containing abundant Breccia gravels. Also above 1608, fill context 1610 measured up to 130mm thick, forming mid orange red silty sandy clay with abundant Breccia gravels. Both contexts 1609 and 1610 were interpreted as slumping episodes and both were overlain by fill context 1611; a friable light brown pink sandy clay silt measuring up to 230mm thick and containing moderate Breccia gravels and stones. The upper fill was context 1612; a friable reddish brown sandy clay silts measuring up to 270mm thick and containing moderate Breccia stones and rare charcoal.

Five post holes were confined within an area measuring roughly 6m by 1.8m, being located between linear feature F1607 and the linear terminal F1628. They were recorded as cut contexts F1616, F1622, F1624, F1630 and F1632 and were generally similar in shape and size, measuring between 300mm-400mm in diameter and up to a maximum of 300mm in depth. They all revealed steep sides, tapering to either a flat or gently rounded base. The fills were recorded as 1621, 1623, 1625-1626, 1629 and 1631 respectively, and consistently comprised friable red-brown silty sandy clays containing frequent Breccia gravels and stones. No obvious post packing material was recovered and whilst aggregated the post holes displayed no obvious spatial pattern.

Both geophysical linear anomalies were identified, most probably as southwest to northeast aligned linear feature F1614 and west northwest to east southeast aligned linear feature F1605. Notably however, the geophysics failed to locate three additional linear cuts and five associated post holes. Prehistoric flint work was recovered from fill 1604 of linear feature F1602, whilst fill 1606 of the adjacent linear feature F1605 produced pottery dating to the Late Iron Age. A worked pebble was also recovered from fill 1621 of post hole cut F1616.

5.6.4 Trench 17 (Plan Fig. 10a, sections Fig. 10b)

Trench 17 was positioned so as to investigate a geophysical curvilinear anomaly. It was orientated broadly north to south, measuring 22m long by 1.8m wide and attaining a maximum depth of 580mm. The topsoil context (1700) was up to 350mm thick and the subsoil up to 250mm thick. The Breccia substrate was recorded from 450mm below the ground surface and recorded as context 1702.

At the south end of the trench a linear feature was recorded as cut F1703, being aligned northeast to southwest and crossing the width of the trench obliquely. It revealed moderately steep sides with a broad flat base, and was filled by context 1704; a reddish brown firm sandy silt clay containing frequent Breccia gravels and sandstones and mudstones. It is unlikely that this feature relates to the geophysical anomaly, as their positions do not closely correspond. The curvilinear should have been located mid trench, whereas cut F1703 was located in the south end, and only fully exposed after a 2 metre extension of the trench to the south.

Prehistoric flint work was retrieved from the fill 1704 of linear feature F1703.

5.7 **Field 68** (Trenches 18-25)

Field 67 forms the southwest boundary of the current site. It occupies the highest ground with extensive views to the east, north and northwest. It was harvested of its maize crop immediately prior to the evaluation. No geophysics was undertaken in Field 68 and the trenches were laid out in a standard sample pattern.

5.7.1 Trench 18 (Plan Fig. 10c, sections Fig. 10d-e)

Trench 18 was orientated broadly northwest to southeast, measuring 50m long by 1.6m wide and attaining a maximum depth of 500mm below the ground surface. The topsoil context (1800) was up to 250mm thick and the subsoil context (1801) up to 200mm thick. The Breccia substrate was encountered from a depth of 400mm and recorded as context 1802.

Two possible features were identified in Trench 18. A sub-circular pit was recorded as cut F1803, being partially exposed in the trench and measuring 700mm wide by 200mm deep. It had steep sides to a flat base, with a second sharp break of slope to a secondary deeper element which revealed undercut edges indicative of a possible animal burrow. The fill context (1804) formed mixed material, predominantly of light red-brown sandy clay containing frequent Breccia gravels. Approximately 11m to the southeast an irregular gully was also investigated, aligned broadly north to south and crossing the width of the trench obliquely. It was recorded as cut F1805, measuring 600mm wide by 200mm deep with steep irregular sides to a flat base and filled by context 1806; a friable light reddish brown sandy clay containing frequent Breccia gravels. Both features were interpreted a plausibly archaeological, but were more likely animal burrows and/or root casts.

No finds were recovered from Trench 18.

5.7.2 Trench 19 (Plan Fig. 11a, sections Fig. 11b-e)

Trench 19 was orientated northwest to southeast, measuring 50m long by 1.8m wide and attaining a maximum depth of 450mm. The topsoil context (1900) was up to 250mm thick and the subsoil context (1901) up to 300mm thick. The Breccia substrate was encountered from 500mm below the ground surface and recorded as context 1902.

Three probable postholes and a possible gully terminal were identified in Trench 19. At the northwest end of the trench post hole F1908 was excavated, which measured 360mm in diameter and 140mm deep, revealing moderately steep sides to a rounded base. It was filled by context 1607; a friable mid orange brown sandy silt containing abundant sub angular stones and pebbles (50%). These were interpreted as remnant post packing and defined the posthole in plan. Approximately 2m to the southeast, post hole F1910 was recorded, which measured 550mm in diameter and 190mm deep with moderately sloping sides tapering to a rounded base. It was filled by context 1909; a friable light reddish brown sandy silt containing frequent Breccia gravels. Roughly mid trench, post hole F1904 was excavated, which measured 330mm in diameter and 110mm deep with steep sides to a flat base. It was filled by context 1903; a friable light brown sandy silt containing occasional charcoal and frequent Breccia gravels. A possible gully terminus was located a little further to the southeast. It was recorded as F1904, which measured 1.16m wide and 170mm deep, revealing a shallow dished profile filled by context 1905; a friable mid orange brown sandy clay containing frequent Breccia gravels.

No finds were recovered from Trench 19.

5.7.3 Trench 20 (Plan Fig. 12a, sections Fig. 12b-d)

Trench 20 was orientated broadly northeast to southwest, measuring 50m long by 1.6m wide and attaining a maximum depth of 550mm. The topsoil context (2000) was up to a maximum of 460mm thick and the subsoil context (2001) up to 70mm thick. The Breccia substrate was encountered from a depth of 380mm below the ground surface and recorded as context 2002.

A number of features was identified in Trench 20. Located mid trench, post hole F2004 was excavated, which measured 190mm in diameter by 70mm deep, with a shallow bowled profile filled by context 2003; a friable dark reddish brown silty sand containing very abundant Breccia gravels and stones. Approximately 3m to the southwest of this post hole a possible gully terminal was recorded as F2006. It measured 1m wide and 200mm deep, with moderately steep sides and a flat base, being filled by context 2005; a friable mid to light reddish brown silty sand containing abundant Breccia gravels. Another gully terminal was located near the southwest end of the trench. It was recorded as F2008 and measured 800mm wide and 140mm deep, with a gentle dished profile filled by context (2007); a friable mid red brown silty sand containing frequent Breccia gravels. Ditch cut F2011 was located towards the northeast end of the trench, crossing its width on a northwest to southeast alignment. It measured between 460mm and 620mm wide and up to 300mm deep, revealing steep sides breaking sharply to a flat base, with the basal fill context (2009) comprising a mixed friable mid to dark red brown silty sand containing frequent Breccia gravels. The upper fill (context 2010) was a friable mid reddish brown silty sand containing frequent Breccia gravels.

Two possible features remained unexcavated. Context 2012 was a nebulous feature with diffuse uncertain edges, measuring c.1 wide and continuing beneath the baulk to the east. Its surface fill was a friable mid brown sandy clay containing frequent Breccia gravels. A possible curvilinear feature was located mid trench and recorded as context 2014. It was 600mm wide and crossed the width of the trench on a broadly northeast to southwest alignment. Its exposed fill was recorded as a friable mid reddish brown sandy silt clay containing frequent Breccia gravels. Due to their diffuse irregular edges, both features 2012 and 2014 were considered probable bioturbation.

No finds were recovered from Trench 20.

5.7.4 Trench 21

Trench 21 was orientated broadly northeast to southwest, measuring 50m long by 1.6m wide and attaining a maximum depth of 500mm. The topsoil context (2100) was up to a maximum of 250mm thick and the subsoil context (2100) up to 160mm thick. The Breccia substrate was encountered from a depth of 350mm below the ground surface and recorded as context 2100.

Much of Trench 21 was flooded with ground water. The possible locations of three features were bailed and planned, although constantly rising ground water precluded excavation. A possible gully terminus aligned northwest to southeast, measuring c.600 wide was recorded as context 2103. Similarly, immediately to the southwest, two more possible linear features were identified. The first was recorded as context 2104, measured 600mm wide and the second as context 2105 measuring 500mm wide. Both ran perpendicular to the trench and so were aligned northwest to southeast.

No finds were recovered from Trench 21.

5.7.5 Trench 22 (Plan Fig. 13a, Section Fig. 13b)

Trench 22 was orientated broadly northeast to southwest, measuring 50m long by 1.8m wide and attaining a maximum depth of 590mm. The topsoil context (2200) was up to a maximum of 340mm thick and the subsoil context (2201) up to 290mm thick. The Breccia substrate was encountered from a depth of 510mm below the ground surface and recorded as context 2202.

A single linear feature was identified in Trench 22, recorded as cut F2204. It ran perpendicular to the trench on a northwest to southeast alignment, measuring 990mm wide by 240mm deep with

moderately sloping sides to a flat base and filled by context 2203; a friable mid orange brown sandy silt containing frequent Breccia gravels. Two further possible linear features were investigated in Trench 22, but both proved to be variations in the local geology.

No finds were recovered from Trench 22.

5.7.6 Trench 23 (Plan Fig. 14a, sections Fig. 14b-d; Plate 8)

Trench 23 was orientated broadly northwest to southeast, measuring 50m long by 1.8m wide and attaining a maximum depth of 500mm. The topsoil context (2300) was up to a maximum of 245mm thick and the subsoil context (2301) up to 210mm thick. The Breccia substrate was encountered from a depth of 460mm below the ground surface and recorded as context 2302.

Several possible discrete features and at least two linears were investigated in Trench 23. At the northwest end of the trench, F2303 was excavated, continuing beneath the northeast baulk. It was 740mm wide by 330mm deep revealing steep, almost vertical sides to a flattish irregular base. It was filled by context 2304; a mid brown clay silts containing moderate Breccia gravels. F2303 was interpreted as either a terminating linear, or possible a partially exposed pit. Approximately 4m to the southeast an irregular, almost nebulous feature was recorded as F2305, filled by 2306. Its shape, combined with undercutting edges and an irregular base was thought indicative of bioturbation. Further to the southeast, linear feature F2309 was excavated and recorded. It was aligned roughly north to south, traversing the trench width obliquely and measuring 820mm wide and 260mm deep, with moderately sloping sides that broke gently to a flat base. The single fill (context 2310) formed friable mid to light brown reddish brown sandy silt clay, containing abundant Breccia gravels and frequent large stones. In plan, ditch F2309 clearly truncated another northwest to southeast terminating linear, recorded as F2307. This measured between 600mm and 700mm wide by 150mm deep and revealed a similar dished profile to F2309. It was filled by context 2308; A friable mid brown sandy silt clay containing frequent Breccia gravels and moderate large sub angular stones.

No finds were recovered from Trench 23.

5.7.7 Trench 24 (Plan Fig. 15a, sections Fig. 15b-f)

Trench 24 was orientated broadly northeast to southwest, measuring 50m long by 1.8m wide with a maximum depth of 550mm. The topsoil context (2400) was up to a maximum of 250mm thick and the subsoil context (2401) up to 250mm thick. The Breccia substrate was encountered from a depth of 470mm below the ground surface and recorded as context 2402.

Several possible features were investigated in Trench 24. At the northeast end, a linear cut aligned broadly northwest to southeast with very irregular, amorphous edges was recorded as F2403. It ran perpendicular to the trench and in plan bulged out from a width of c.700mm to a poorly defined 1900mm. The sides were steep with an irregular undulating base and undercutting edges. The feature was interpreted as a gully or ditch significantly impacted by root action and/or animal burrows. It was filled by context 2404; a soft mid reddish brown sandy silt clay containing frequent Breccia gravel, and moderate sandstone and mudstone. Approximately 12m to the southwest a discrete post hole was exposed and recorded as F2405. It measured 400mm in diameter by 90mm deep, revealing moderately sloping sides tapering to round base filled by context 2406; a friable mid reddish brown sandy silt clay containing frequent Breccia gravels and occasional sandstone and mudstone. At the southwest end of the trench pit F2411 was recorded. It was only partially exposed in the trench, measuring 2m by 1.1m and 250mm deep with stepped, moderately sloping sides to a flat base, being filled by context 2412; a friable mid reddish brown sandy silt clay

containing frequent Breccia gravels and occasional mudstone and sandstone. The edges were noted as heavily bioturbated.

Several other areas of bioturbation were also investigated in Trench 24, and a further two possible linear features were unexcavated. Context 2409 formed an amorphous northeast to southwest linear feature, whilst context 2407 was also aligned northeast to southwest but appeared to terminate within the trench. On the basis of adjacent areas of bioturbation both were considered probable root casts or former animal burrows.

No finds were recovered from Trench 24.

5.7.8 Trench 25

Trench 25 was orientated broadly northwest to southeast, measuring 25m long by 1.8m wide and attaining a maximum depth of 430mm. The topsoil context (2500) was up to a maximum of 300mm thick and the subsoil context (2501) up to 100mm thick. The Breccia substrate was encountered from a depth of 400mm below the ground surface and recorded as context 2402.

Two areas of bioturbation were investigated in Trench 25 but no archaeological features were identified and no finds recovered.

5.8 **Field 57** (Trenches 26-28 & 30-31)

Field 57 was recently harvested of its maize crop. It encompassed a north to south aligned dry valley, with both northeast and northwest facing slopes. Conversations with the current landowner indicated that his predecessor in-filled the valley base with up to 2m of made ground.

5.8.1 Trench 26 (Plan Fig. 15e, section Fig. 15f)

Trench 26 was orientated broadly east to west, measuring 50 long by 1.8m wide with a maximum depth of 650mm. The topsoil context (2600) was up to a maximum of 300mm thick and the subsoil context (2601) up to 100mm thick. The Breccia substrate was encountered from a depth of 400mm below the ground surface and recorded as context 2609.

A sheep burial pit was recorded in the western half of the trench. It appeared broadly rectangular in plan, although only partially exposed, measuring 550mm wide by 400mm deep with steep sides to a gently rounded base. The base fill was recorded as 2603; a friable medium brown sandy silt clay up to 250mm and containing occasional stones and rare charcoal. The upper fill was 2604, being up to 50mm thick and comprising a friable reddish brown sandy silt clay.

The topsoil (2600) in Trench 26 was comparatively rich in artefactual material including post-medieval pottery, glass, clay pipe as well as prehistoric worked flint. Post-medieval pottery was also recovered from the fill 2603 of the sheep burial pit F2602.

5.8.2 Trench 27

Trench 27 was orientated broadly east to west, measuring 50m long by 1.8m wide and attaining a maximum depth of 650mm. The topsoil context (2700) was up to a maximum of 300mm thick and the subsoil context (2701) up to 200mm thick. The east half of the trench extended into the base of the dry valley where made ground was encountered directly beneath the subsoil. It was recorded as context 2702, forming a mixed deposit of re-deposited natural with modern contamination including plastic pipes and hoses, plastic bags and glass. The made ground was excavated down to a depth of 550mm below the ground surface, but due to rising water was not bottomed. In the western half of the trench the natural substrate was encountered from a depth of 450mm below

the ground surface and formed weathered Breccia beds (2703) interbedded with Head deposits (2704) forming mid yellowish brown silty clays.

No archaeological features were identified in Trench 27 and no finds recovered.

5.8.3 Trench 28

Trench 28 was orientated broadly north to south, measuring 50m long by 1.8m wide and attaining a maximum depth of 650mm. The topsoil context (2800) was up to a maximum of 250mm thick and the subsoil context (2801) up to 350mm thick. The Breccia substrate was encountered in the southern half of the trench from a depth of 400mm below the ground surface; recorded as context 2802. In the northern half of the trench there was a diffuse contact between the weathered Breccia and a firm mid yellowish brown silty clay natural Head deposit which was recorded as context (2803); encountered from a depth of 500mm below the ground surface.

No archaeological deposits were identified in Trench 28. However, material recovered from the topsoil (2800) included quantities of post-medieval pottery as well as glass.

5.8.4 Trench 30

Trench 30 was orientated broadly north to south, measuring 50m long by 1.8m wide and attaining a maximum depth of 720mm. The topsoil context (3000) was up to a maximum of 300mm thick and the subsoil context (3001) up to 200mm thick. The Breccia substrate was encountered from a depth of 300mm below the ground surface and recorded as context 3002.

No archaeological deposits were encountered in Trench 30 and no finds recovered.

5.8.5 Trench 31(Plan Fig. 16a, sections Fig. 16b-d; Plates 11-12)

Trench 31 was orientated broadly north to south, measuring 50m long by 1.8m wide and attaining a maximum depth of 550mm. The topsoil context (3100) was up to a maximum of 300mm thick and the subsoil context (3101) up to 200mm thick. The Breccia substrate was encountered from a depth of 500mm below the ground surface and recorded as context 3102.

Two linear features were recorded at the south end of trench, not far from the northern boundary of the Scheduled Monument in the adjacent Field 58. Linear cut F3102 was aligned broadly east to west, running perpendicular and traversing the width of the trench. It measured up to 1.43m wide and 450mm deep, revealing moderately sloping edges to a narrow rounded base. The primary fill was recorded as context 3103, measuring up to 110mm thick and forming a friable grey reddish brown sandy clay with frequent Breccia gravels. Above 3103, context 3104 was recorded, being up to 140mm thick and forming a friable mid reddish brown sandy clay with frequent Breccia gravels. The upper fill was context (3105), being up to 200mm thick and comprising medium reddish brown sandy clays with frequent Breccia gravels.

Approximately 8m further to the north, another broadly east to west linear feature was exposed. It was recorded as F3106, measuring up to 1.65m wide and 370mm deep, with moderately sloping sides to a flat base. The primary fill (3107) measured up to 160mm thick and formed a friable mid reddish brown sandy silt clay with frequent Breccia gravels. Above 3107, fill context 3108 was up to 160mm thick, comprising a friable medium brown sandy silt clay with frequent Breccia gravels. Above 3108, but only visible in the east facing section context 3111 was recorded. It measured up to 100mm thick, being a mid greyish brown sandy silt clay with frequent Breccia. Similarly, both fill contexts 3112 and 3113 were only visible in the east facing section and not the west facing baulk section. Context 3112 overlay 3111 and was up to 150mm thick, comprising friable dark grey black

silty sandy clay with frequent Breccia gravels and occasional charcoal. The upper fill was 3113, measuring up to 90mm thick, forming a light medium brown silt sand clay with frequent Breccia gravels. Generally the deposits within ditch cut F3106 became considerably shallower to the east and it is possible that the feature was terminating just beyond the east baulk. Notably however, within the trench and alongside the east baulk, the basal deposits of the ditch were cut by a likely post hole. It was recorded as F3109 and measured 600mm by 400mm in plan by 450mm deep, with steep sides to an irregular base. Some undercutting around its edges indicated the likely presence of animal burrows. The fill (3110) formed a friable medium brown silty sand clay with frequent Breccia.

Pottery dating to the Romano-British period was recovered from the primary fill (3103) of linear feature F3102.

5.9 Field 58 (Trench 29)

Field 58 was recently harvested of its crop prior to the evaluation. It encompassed the steep headland slopes of the north to south dry valley which continues into Field 67 to the south. The northeast quarter of Field 58 incorporates the rectangular enclosure recorded on aerial photographs, and designated as a Scheduled Monument. This area was unploughed and clearly defined by a thick growth of stinging nettles. Only one trench was located in Field 58. It targeted a linear geophysical anomaly and was simultaneously located so as to test the possible extent of any significant archaeological deposits pertaining to the enclosure.

5.9.1 Trench 29

Trench 29 was orientated broadly north to south, measuring 50m long by 1.8m wide and attaining a maximum depth of 750mm. The topsoil context (2900) was up to a maximum of 300mm thick and the subsoil context (2901) up to 200mm thick. At the north end of Trench 29 an additional horizon of colluvium was recorded measuring up to 700mm below the ground surface and recorded as context 2902. The Breccia substrate was encountered from a depth of 450mm and was recorded as context 2903.

Several features were identified in Trench 29. At the southeast end of the trench a shallow linear feature was excavated, being aligned broadly northeast to southwest and terminating within the trench. Two interventions were recorded, the initial as cut F2904 and the terminus as cut F2912. This linear measured 380mm wide by 3.5m long and up to 90mm deep. It revealed a shallow dished profile filled by reddish brown sandy silt clays containing frequent Breccia gravels being recorded as contexts 2905 and 2913. Linear F2904 was truncated on its northwest edge by a small pit recorded as cut context F2906 and revealing one straight side measuring 220mm deep. It was filled by 2907; a friable brownish red sandy silt clay with frequent Breccia gravels. However, this pit was almost entirely truncated by a re-cut, recorded as F2908, which continued beneath the baulk and measured up to 520mm wide by 330mm deep, revealing steep sides to a concave base. Its primary fill was context 2916; a friable mid brownish red sandy silt clay with frequent Breccia gravels. The upper fill was context 2909; a friable mid red brown sandy silt clay with abundant Breccia gravels. Approximately 700mm to the northeast of the linear terminus F2912, another possible pit cut (F2910) was identified. It measured approximately 590mm in diameter by 230mm deep, revealing steep sides to a flat irregular base, containing a single fill recorded as (2911); a friable reddish brown sandy silt clay with frequent Breccia gravels.

Finally, located mid trench, another pit was recorded as cut F2914. It continued beneath the west trench baulk, but measured 2.3m long by 600mm deep with an exposed width of 1m revealing steep sides to a flat base. The single fill (2915) comprised a friable reddish brown sandy silt clay

containing frequent Breccia gravels. However, around the north edge there was significant bioturbated material present associated with a noteworthy level of undercutting. This was considered to be animal and/or root action but recorded as context 2917.

Pottery recovered from the fill (2909) of the re-cut pit F2908 was dated to the Late Iron Age.

6. THE FINDS, by Naomi Payne and Henrietta Quinnell

6.1 Introduction

Just over half of the 29 evaluation trenches produced artefacts, although six of the 16 productive trenches only contained finds in the topsoil and/or subsoil. Much of the material recovered was undated or of post-medieval date, but there was also a reasonably large assemblage of prehistoric pottery. The finds are summarised in Tables 1 and 2 below.

Context	Context Description	Prehistoric Pottery		Roman pottery		Post-medieval pottery		Worked flint		Iron		Animal bone	
		No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt
100	Trench 1 topsoil					16	110						
204	Fill of probable ditch F203					2	13						
300	Trench 3 topsoil					5	14	3	141				
400	Trench 4 topsoil					12	56						
401	Trench 4 subsoil					2	24						
500	Trench 5 topsoil					2	8	2	2				
501	Trench 5 subsoil							1	1				
507	Upper fill of linear ditch F502							2	10				
509	Single fill of pit F508	64	1015										
510	Trench 5 subsoil	1	1										
615	Fill of curvilinear ditch F613	10	206										
704	Fill of possible pit F703							2	4				
1400	Trench 14 topsoil					1	8						
1506	Basal fill of prehistoric field boundary F1504	1	12										
1508	Fill of F1507, recut of prehistoric field boundary F1504	1	33										
1514	Upper fill of ditch F1513	3	11										
1517	Fill of post hole F1516							1	1				
1600	Trench 16 topsoil							1	2				
1604	Fill of linear ditch F1602							3	9				
1606	Single fill of ditch F1605	1	3										
1704	Fill of linear feature F1703							1	1				
2600	Trench 26 topsoil					10	45	3	97				
2601	Trench 26 subsoil							1	6				
2603	Basal fill of sheep burial within F2602					1	1					134	493
2800	Trench 28 topsoil					48	596						
2900	Trench 29 topsoil					7	29	2	101	1	6	1	1
2909	Fill of F2908, recut of pit F2906	1	12										
3100	Trench 31 topsoil					8	38	2	22				
3101	Trench 31 subsoil							1	2				
3103	Basal fill of ditch F3102			4	65								
Totals		82	1293	4	65	114	942	25	399	1	6	135	494

Table 1. Summary of the pottery, worked flint, iron and animal bone finds (weights in grams)

Context	Context Description	Clay pipe		Shell		Glass		CBM		Worked Stone		Burnt Stone		Slag	
		No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt
100	Trench 1 topsoil			3	30	4	56	1	62						
204	Fill of probable ditch F203					3	81								
400	Trench 4 topsoil			1	4	2	6								
401	Trench 4 subsoil					1	4							1	15
500	Trench 5 topsoil					1	1								
1508	Fill of F1507, recut of prehistoric ditch F1504											2	65		
1621	Fill of post hole F1616									1	497				
2600	Trench 26 topsoil	1	1	1	1	3	9	6	51	1	50				
2800	Trench 28 topsoil					2	12								
2900	Trench 29 topsoil	1	1	2	4	1	1	3	71						
3100	Trench 31 topsoil	1	1	1	1	2	31	3	112						
Totals		3	3	8	40	19	201	13	296	2	547	2	65	1	15

Table 2. Summary of the clay pipe, shell, glass, ceramic building material (CBM), worked stone and burnt stone finds (weights in grams)

6.2 Prehistoric pottery by Henrietta Quinnell and Naomi Payne

A total of 82 sherds (1293g) of prehistoric pottery was retrieved from eight contexts within five trenches. The single small and abraded sherd from the subsoil in Trench 5 is possibly of Bronze Age date. The largest group, 64 sherds, was from context 509 (the single fill of pit F508). This was thought by the excavator to have been a (near) complete pot, possibly deliberately crushed or broken, perhaps using one of several large stones also present in the pit. The sherds, which certainly appear to share a similar fabric, are all of Bronze Age type. They are largely an oxidised mid orange-brown, with reduced grey-brown cores. There are no surviving rims or base sherds and all the sherds are undecorated. The fabric appears to be an Exeter volcanic mix. One sherd is not immediately obviously from a vessel, and could possibly have formed part of a mould, perhaps for a ferule (see below).

The ten body sherds from context 615 (the fill of curvilinear ditch F613) are likewise all of Bronze Age type and appear to be made from an Exeter volcanic fabric. Oxidation/reduction is varied across the group, but generally the sherds have moderately reduced mid greyish-brown cores and patchy oxidation the external surfaces. About half are also oxidised on the internal surface. There are traces of residue on the internal surface of three of the larger sherds. The sherds have no surviving formal or decorative traits.

In Trench 15, three contexts produced pottery of prehistoric date. Context 1514 (the upper fill of ditch F1513) contained three body sherds: two were of gabbroic fabric and the third, probably of a Devon-sourced clay, had crushed white vein quartz temper. The two gabbroic conjoining sherds have a reduced dark greyish-black external surface, a slightly lighter core and a more oxidised mid-brown internal surface. The third sherd is a fully reduced dark grey/black. These sherds are likely to be of early Neolithic date; this is based only on the nature of the fabrics. Contexts 1506 and 1508 each produced a sherd of Middle Bronze Age Trevisker type pottery. The rim sherd from context 1508 (the fill of a recut of prehistoric field boundary) is from a small plain vessel made from an Exeter volcanic fabric. The sherd is moderately oxidised, with a mid-orange-brown internal surface, a reddish-brown core and a slightly more reduced external surface. There are traces of a black deposit on the external surface which may be a residue. The fabric is broadly similar to that of a Trevisker storage jar excavated nearby at the former Royal Navy Stores Depot, Exeter (Pearce, Steinmetzer and Quinnell 2011, pp. 39-41). The fabric of the body sherd from context 1506 is similar but has fewer inclusions.

A single body sherd was recovered from context 1606 (the single fill of ditch F1605) within Trench 16. The sherd is a fully oxidised dark grey/black and appears to be a fragment of South West Decorated pottery of later Iron Age date. The fabric contains granitic components, which probably derive from the volcanics of the Exeter area. There are two lines of lightly incised decoration on the external surface, but the sherd is too small to discern the overall decorative scheme. The single body sherd from context 2909 (the fill of context 2908, a recut of pit F2906) is likely to be of a similar date. It is also completely reduced and the fabric is probably an Exeter volcanic fabric.

6.3 Possible mould fragment from pit F508 (context 509)

The fragment of a possible mould measures 45mm by 35mm. The upper surface is of fine, almost inclusion-free clay, and has part of a depression 15mm across and 2-3mm deep: this appears to have parallel sides and be part of a long matrix for casting a cylindrical artefact. The piece is rather more abraded than the sherds from the context. The presence of the apparent finer clay supports the identification as a mould. However the rest of the piece is apparently made from Exeter volcanics fabric with large inclusions which is less appropriate. The most likely Bronze Age artefact would be a long ferule of the Wilburton complex, Late Bronze Age, c. 1150 -1000 cal BC. Good comparanda for the mould fragment may be found in the reports on the group of Wilburton mould fragments from a pit a Dainton near Newton Abbot (Needham 1980a Figs 7 and 8; 1980b Fig 13). If the Wilburton identification is correct it provides a broad date for the context and its finds. If it is a mould it has never been used.

6.4 Roman pottery

Four sherds (65g) of Roman pottery were recovered from context 3103 (the basal fill of ditch F3102). The sherds are all grey ware fabrics of the 1st to 3rd century AD.

6.5 Post-medieval pottery

A total of 114 sherds (942g) of post-medieval pottery was recovered during the evaluation, most of which was from topsoil and subsoil contexts. As would be expected on agricultural fields manured with local rubbish in recent centuries, a variety of 18th to 20th century industrially made wares are represented, including creamware, transfer print, shell-edge, porcelain, glazed red earthenwares and stonewares. There are no sherds certainly from the 16th or 17th century vessels. Just three post-medieval sherds derived from the fills of cut features. The stoneware jar sherd (possibly from a marmalade jar) and an elaborate base sherd from a porcelain sweet dish or similar, both from context 204 (the fill of probable ditch F203), are later 19th or early 20th century in date. A small body sherd of white glazed earthenware from context 2603 (the basal fill of the sheep burial within F2602) is most likely to be late 18th or 19th century.

6.6 Clay tobacco pipe

Three small clay pipe fragments (3g) were recovered, all from topsoil contexts. Two are stems and the other is part of a bowl. None can be more closely dated than c. 1650-1900.

6.7 Ceramic building material (CBM)

A total of 13 fragments of CBM (296g) was recovered from four topsoil contexts. Most of the fragments are post-medieval red tile but there is also a single piece of reasonably coarse brick. All of this material is 18th or 19th century in date.

6.8 Glass

Most of the 19 post-medieval glass fragments (201g) were recovered from topsoil and subsoil contexts. The assemblage is a mixture of English green bottle glass, industrially-made bottle glass and post-medieval window glass. One English green bottle glass sherd, from the topsoil in Trench

1 is from the base of a hand blown bottle and could be as early in date as c. 1650-1700. The only glass derived from a cut feature is from context 204 (the fill of probable ditch F203) which produced three fragments of later 19th or early 20th century industrially made bottles.

6.9 Worked flint and chert

A total of 25 pieces (399g) of worked flint and chert was recovered. Over half of this material was present in topsoil and subsoil contexts. The majority of the material relates to a flake industry (13 flakes, one of which is retouched; 2 flake cores) as opposed to blade production (6 blades, one of which is retouched; 1 blade core). There was also a single tool, a fairly coarse scraper, and a possible hammerstone fragment. This small assemblage probably reflects activity in the vicinity during the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age.

6.10 Other worked/burnt stone

Context 1508 (the fill of F1507, recut of prehistoric field boundary F1504), produced two pieces of a coarse-grained red sandstone (65g), which appear to have been burnt. One of the fragments has a curving end, which has possibly been deliberately shaped. The other fragment has one smooth side which may also have been shaped. The other surfaces of both fragments are uneven. Context 1621 (the fill of post hole F1616) produced an additional piece of worked stone (497g). This is a smooth elongated pebble made from a fine-grained sandstone. One side of the pebble is broadly flat. Part of the opposite side is flattened, apparently worn during use, resulting in a wedge-shaped end. The opposite end and the two long edges are all slightly faceted, again apparently through use. This object appears to be a hone or rubbing stone. On the worn flat face, slightly further along the pebble, there is another facet which conveniently accommodates the thumb. This object is not closely datable typologically and it could date from the Bronze Age through to the early-medieval period.

6.11 Slag

A single piece of ironworking slag (15g) was found within the subsoil in Trench 4. This has a honeycomb internal texture and is likely to have been produced industrially, possibly in a water-powered bloomery.

6.12 Animal bone

Apart from a small undiagnostic fragment from the topsoil in Trench 29, the vast majority of the animal bone came from context 2603 (the basal fill within cut F2602) in Trench 26. This cut contained the burial of an immature sheep. The skeleton was probably originally articulated but was truncated during machining. A sherd of pottery dated this animal burial pit to the late 18th or 19th century.

6.13 Iron

A single well-preserved iron object (6g) was recovered from topsoil within Trench 29. This is a U-shaped fitting with a circular cross-section. The external face of both terminals is narrowed. This is possibly a furniture fitting and is very likely to be recent in date.

6.14 Shell

Eight shell fragments (40g) were recovered during the evaluation, all from topsoil contexts. Half of the fragments are from oysters and half are from cockles.

7. SOIL SAMPLE ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 A total of 14 samples ranging in volume from 0.5 to 30 litres were collected from features in Trenches 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 15, 16, 29 and 31. These were mainly taken due to the presence of charcoal or for artefact retrieval. They are considered to not provide any meaningful information for the purposes of the report, but have been retained at the offices of AC archaeology in the unlikely event that no further archaeological investigations will be undertaken on the site. However, based on the character of fills, the disturbance by ploughing and/or root/animal disturbance in some parts of the site, the general environmental potential of the site is considered low, with the possible exception of charcoal for radiocarbon dating and where deeper colluvial soils are likely to be present in the valley bottoms.

8. DISCUSSION

- 8.1 A total of 29 evaluation trenches was excavated and was largely successful in achieving its stated objectives, which were ascertaining the extent, depth, character and significance of archaeological deposits encountered. Many of the trenches revealed either discrete or linear features, whereas Trenches 4, 8, 9, 25, 27, 28 and 30 were entirely devoid of archaeological remains. Only one possible post-medieval field boundary was recorded (Trench 2). The following discussion will address each field in turn:

8.2 Field 57 (Trenches 26, 27, 28, 30 & 31)

On the whole, excavations in Field 57 revealed relatively few significant archaeological features. Indeed, none were identified in Trenches 27, 28 or 30 and all three were recorded as 'negative'. Moreover, the made ground exposed in the east end of Trench 27 is thought to have some considerable depth, possibly up to 2m. It appears the dry valley here, which is aligned broadly north to south, was partly in-filled in relatively recent times, with the material recovered clearly indicative of a late 20th century date. Therefore, it seems likely that any surviving archaeological deposits will be sealed at some depth beneath the ground surface, potentially below the impact of any groundworks associated with the residential development. More generally, the overburden in these trenches was found to be between 400mm and 600mm deep, while the Quaternary Head deposit recorded in Trenches 28 and 27 conforms closely to that mapped by the British Geological Survey.

The single feature recorded in Trench 26 comprised a partially exposed sheep burial, for which the associated artefactual evidence indicates a post-medieval date. Of greater interest, however, were the two linear features (F3102 and F3106) and the possible post hole (F3109) recorded at the southern end of Trench 31. These were located approximately 30m from the northern edge of the Scheduled Monument which is situated in the adjacent Field 58. This double ditched rectangular enclosure is recorded from aerial photograph and thus its date has remained uncertain. However, given the relative proximity, it seems highly probable that the features identified in Trench 31 are associated with and peripheral to the enclosure. If so the Romano-British pottery recovered from the fill of linear feature F3102 would suggest a contemporary date for the enclosure, which in view of its morphology and rectangular outline, would be unsurprising. On the basis of findings, the majority of Field 57 is considered to have **Low** archaeological potential, but in the vicinity of Trench 31 the potential is considered **High**.

8.3 Field 58 (Trench 29)

Only one trench was excavated in Field 58 and this was located along its west boundary, approximately 100m west from the Scheduled Monument. It targeted a geophysical linear

anomaly. This possible feature was not identified in the trench, although several other features were. A single sherd of Late Iron Age pottery was obtained from re-cut pit F2909, which truncated both an earlier pit (F2906) and the north to south terminating linear F2904/2912, indicating that the features in this trench might also be associated with the nearby enclosure, perhaps relating field systems and small scale external settlement. Based on the results from this trench and the presence of the scheduled enclosure the archaeological potential is considered as **High**.

8.4 Field 60 (Trenches 14-17)

There were no archaeological features present in Trench 14, while in Trench 17 only a single probable prehistoric ditch was present. There were, however, a number of features in Trenches 15 and 16 which appear to relate to early settlement and field systems, including post holes, pits and a number of probable ditches. The ditches were predominantly aligned either NW-SE or NE-SW, and appear to broadly correspond with the geophysical anomalies.

In Trench 15, three of the four linear anomalies were present. At the east end of the trench NW-SE aligned ditch F1504 revealed a probable Middle Bronze Age date. A re-cut event in this ditch (F1507) would seem to suggest a degree of reuse and maintenance. Unfortunately the two linear features aligned NE-SW and located mid trench were undated, being recorded as F1509 and F1511. Interestingly the defined linear anomaly aligned NW-SE at the west end of the trench was not located, although close to the position where it should have traversed the trench another NE-SW aligned ditch was recorded, which produced three sherds of probable early Neolithic pottery.

In Trench 16 both linear anomalies were revealed. The NW to SE anomaly was recorded as cut F1605 and produced a single sherd of Romano-British pottery. The NE-SW aligned linear anomaly was most probably recorded as F1614 and given its width it is likely to have formed a continuation of the similarly aligned F1511 in Trench 15. Several additional features were recorded in Trench 16, most notable were the five grouped post holes, a steeply profiled adjacent ditch (F1607) and the nearby terminating linear feature (F1628), none of which were identified by the geophysics. No strong dating evidence was recovered from any of these features, however; taken together, even in part, these elements indicate evidence for in situ early settlement in the eastern part of this trench. The archaeological potential of the majority of this field is generally considered to be **Low**, but in the vicinity of Trenches 15 and 16 it is considered **High**.

8.5 Field 61 (Trenches 5-10)

Trenches 5 and 6 are located next to the boundary with Field 60. Both revealed linear and curvilinear features as well as post holes and pits. However, it was difficult to exactly correspond any of these with the geophysical anomalies. Notably though, pottery recorded from pit F508 in Trench 5 and from curvilinear [613] in Trench 6 is dated to the Middle Bronze Age. Therefore, it seems reasonable to conclude that Trench 5 and 6 define the continuation of the Middle Bronze Age evidence identified in Field 60.

Trench 7 was located within 20m of the scheduled rectangular double ditched enclosure in Field 58. Three discrete features were excavated, and whilst no dating evidence was recovered, it seems reasonable to conclude that they relate to the Late Iron Age to early Romano-British settlement enclosure.

Trenches 8 and 9 were devoid of archaeological features. Trench 10 might have contained a lynchet, although this may also be interpreted as a natural topographic undulation.

The results indicate that there is **High** archaeological potential in the northern part of the field, with the southern part considered to be of **Low** archaeological potential.

8.6 Field 63 (Trenches 1, 2, 3 and 4)

The four trenches excavated in Field 63 were comparatively shallow. In fact Trenches 1 and 2 were excavated onto hard Breccia bedrock from around 300mm below the ground surface. Two small burnt features were excavated; one in Trench 1 (F103) and the other in Trench 3 (F304). Neither contained dating evidence. Conversely, the possible ditch F203 exposed in Trench 2 was on a NE-SW alignment and contained post-medieval glass. It also adheres closely to a post-medieval boundary shown on the 2nd edition Ordnance Survey map of 1907 so is probably the remnant footprint of that former landscape feature. Combined with the post-medieval finds recovered from the topsoil in this area (100, 300 and 400) it seems likely that features F103 and F304 are also post-medieval in origin. The general paucity of features identified within trenches in this field means the archaeological potential is considered **Low**.

8.7 Field 64 (Trench 12)

Although there were several geophysical anomalies identified in Field 64, they were primarily located on steep valley slopes and as such are most likely considered geological in origin. Due to the challenging topography only Trench 12 was excavated in this field. It was located on a small area of flat ground in the southwest corner of the field and positioned so as to target a possible geophysical curvilinear anomaly. Whilst this feature was not revealed, another irregular pit (F1203) with an associated narrow linear gully was excavated. It was situated in the extreme west end of the trench and interpreted as a probable tree bole and root cast. No finds were recovered from Field 64.

The square raised platform identified during the archaeological and cultural heritage assessment (Valentin and Hughes 2010) was visible on the ground as an upstanding earthwork. It was positioned next to the triangulation point in the adjacent field, but its purpose and date was not clear.

The general paucity of features in this trench and the steep sloping ground indicates that this field is of **Low** archaeological potential.

8.8 Field 68 (Trenches 18-25)

A total of eight trenches were excavated in Field 68. Although a number of both linear and discrete features were present in some of the trenches, none produced any dateable evidence and there was no obvious structural patterning or coherence. Many of the features had clearly been truncated by ploughing and there was also a high frequency of bioturbation investigated. On the whole, it appears that archaeological deposits survive partly intact in this field, but the date of these is not known. There were a number of archaeological features within trenches in this field, but a number of these had clearly been disturbed and no finds were recovered. On this basis, this field is considered to be of **Medium** archaeological potential.

9. CONCLUSIONS

9.1 Based on the results of the evaluation there is clearly some archaeological interest to the site. On morphological grounds the double-ditched scheduled enclosure is likely to be Late Iron Age to Romano-British in date and many of the features identified are likely to be related to but external to this settlement. Pottery recovered from features in Trench 31 and 29 were of this date and although the features in Trench 7 failed to produce any similar material, simple proximity points to

their association with the enclosure. The features identified (including some of the geophysical anomalies not targeted) were mainly linear ditches, which probably relate to associated fields, although some evidence for possible small scale external settlement of this date was also identified.

9.2 As well as features probably relating to the scheduled enclosure, evidence for earlier activity was identified, including features dating to the early Neolithic and Bronze Age periods. These were found in Trenches 5, 6 and 15.

9.3 Based on present evidence, the most interesting areas of archaeological activity are clustered in trenches around the margins of the enclosure, most notably Trenches 5-7, 15-16, 29 and 31. Elsewhere, some of the trenches contained features which were either undated and/or were clearly disturbed by ploughing and root or animal activity, while in others generally negative results were recorded.

10. ARCHIVE AND OASIS

10.1 The paper and digital archive and finds are currently held at the offices of AC archaeology Ltd, at 4 Halthaies Workshops, Bradninch, near Exeter, Devon, EX5 4LQ. The archive will ultimately be deposited under the relevant accession number at the RAMM, Exeter, at the earliest in 2013 when the current museum non-acceptance policy will be reviewed.

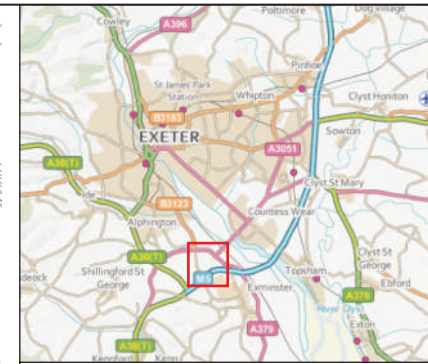
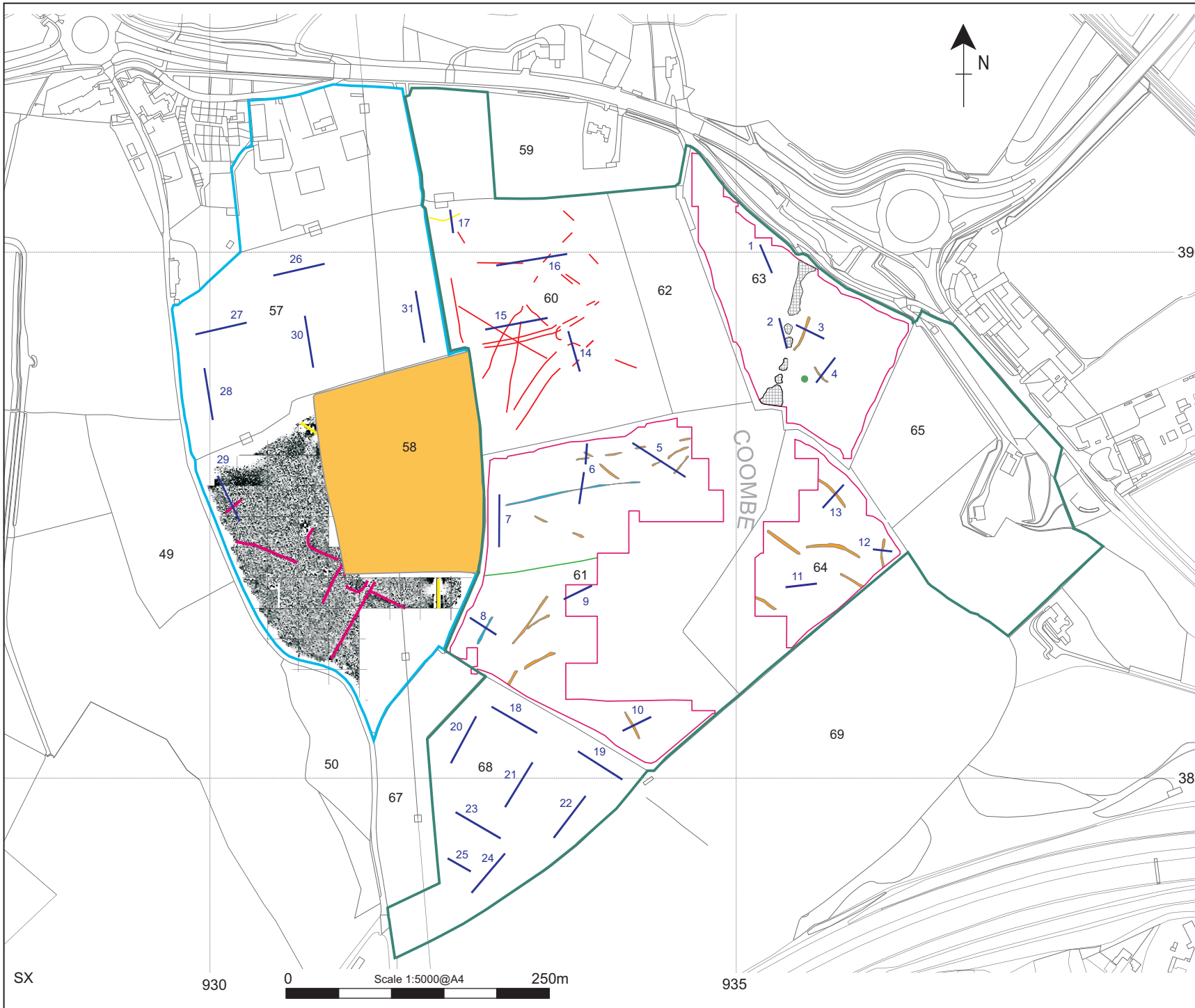
10.2 An online OASIS entry has been completed, using the unique identifier 139186 and includes a digital copy of this report.

11. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Key

- Site boundary
- Adjacent ownership
- Scheduled Monument
- 1 Trenches

✂ Geophysics carried out previously

57 Plot numbers from previous assessment

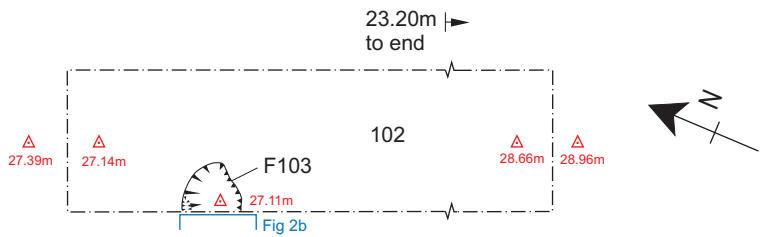
PROJECT
Matford Land, SW of Exeter

TITLE
Fig. 1: Location of site and position of trial trenches in relation to the geophysical surveys

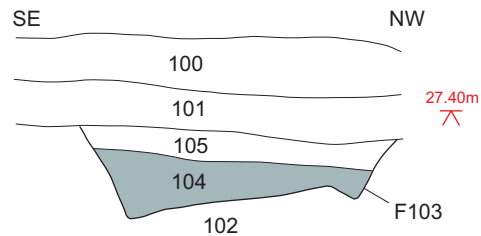


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a) Trench 1, plan



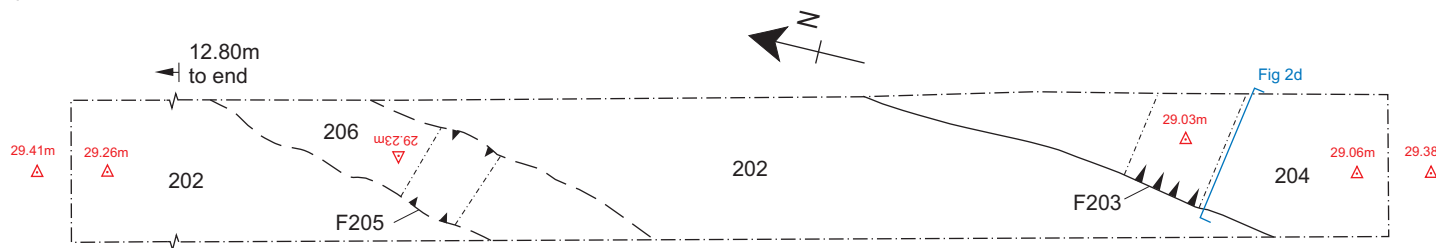
b) East facing section of pit/terminus F103



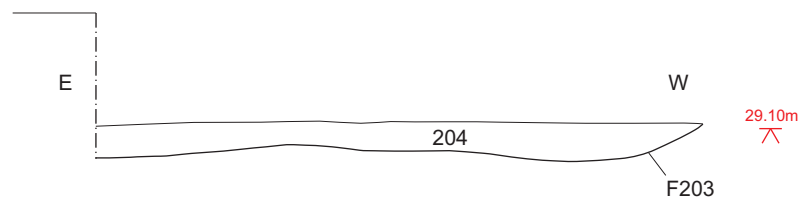
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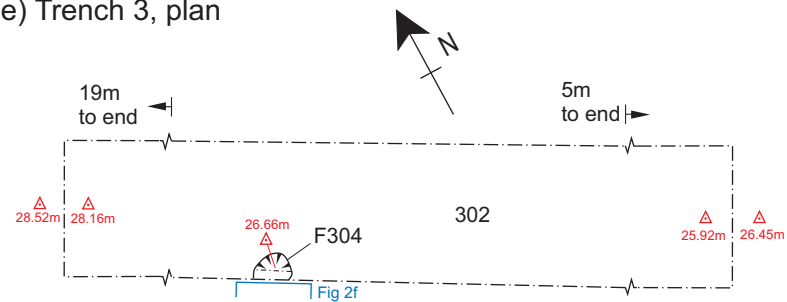
c) Trench 2, plan



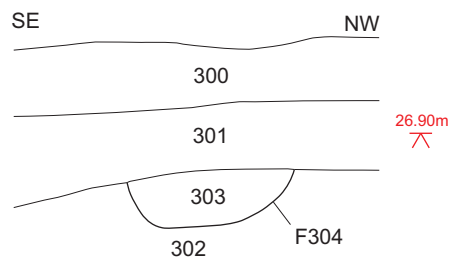
d) North facing section of F203



e) Trench 3, plan



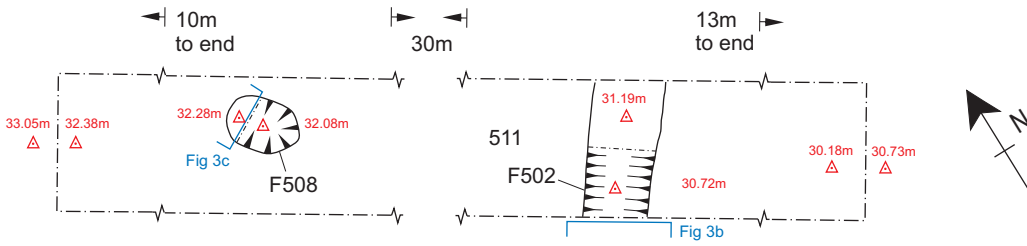
f) Northeast facing section of posthole F304



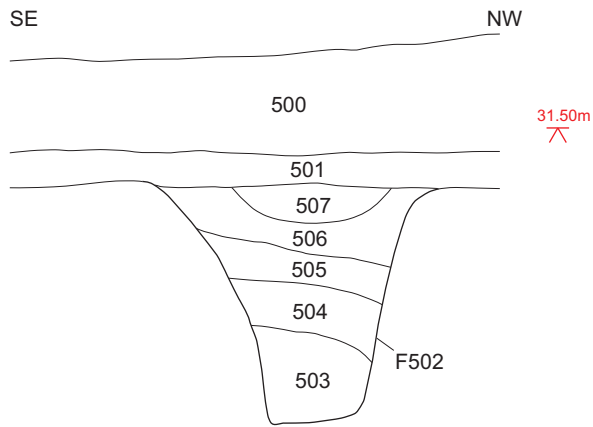
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Matford Land, SW of Exeter

TITLE
Fig. 2: Trenches 1, 2 and 3, plans and sections

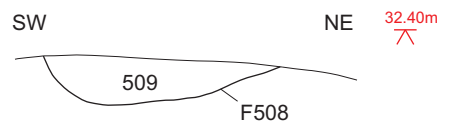
a) Trench 5, plan



b) Northeast facing section of ditch F502



c) South facing section of pit F508

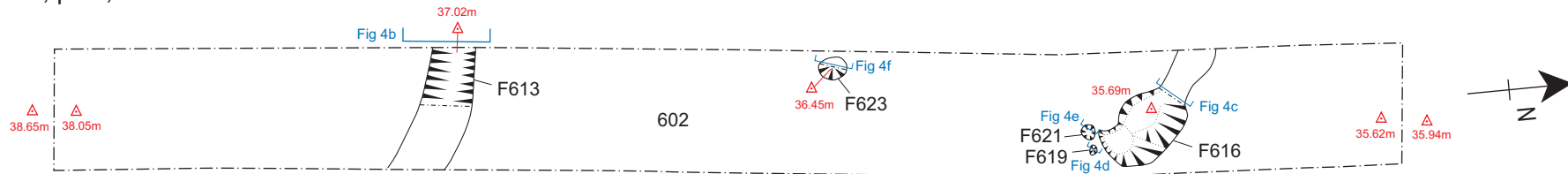


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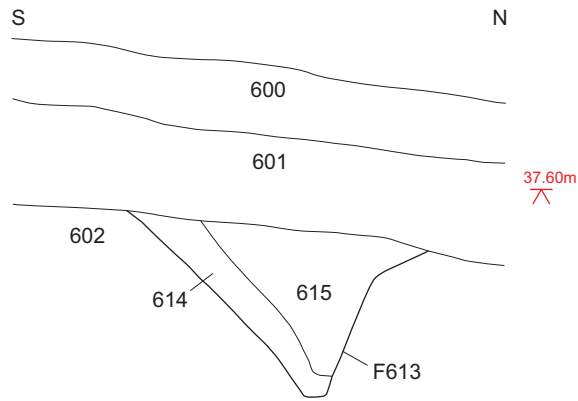
TITLE
Fig. 3: Trench 5, plan and sections



a) Trench 6, plan, northern half



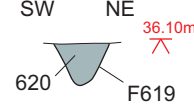
b) East facing section of curvilinear ditch F613



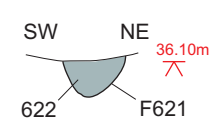
c) Southeast facing section of ditch terminus F616



d) Southeast facing section of stakehole F619



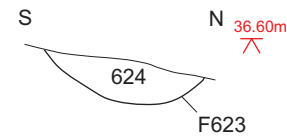
e) Southeast facing section of stakehole F621



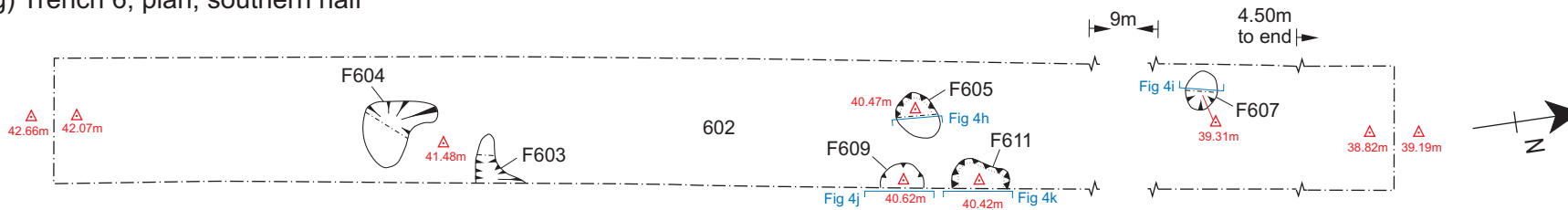
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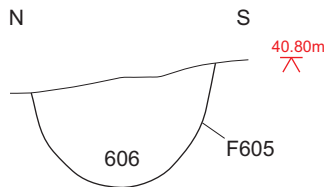
f) Southeast facing section of pit F623



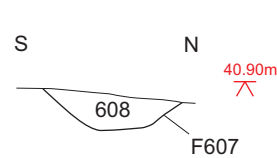
g) Trench 6, plan, southern half



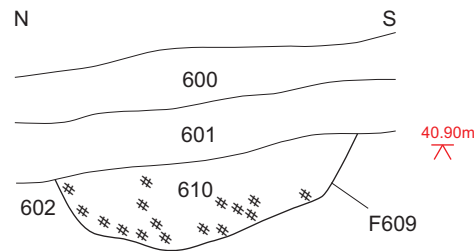
h) West facing section of pit F605



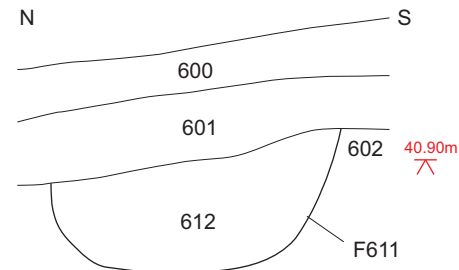
i) East facing section of pit F607



j) West facing section of pit F609



k) West facing section of pit F611



PROJECT

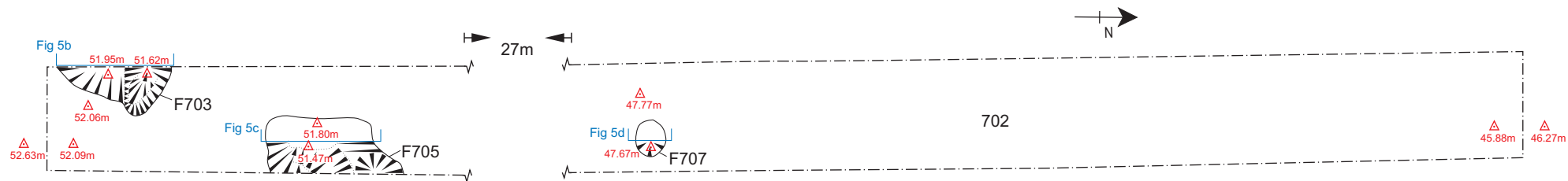
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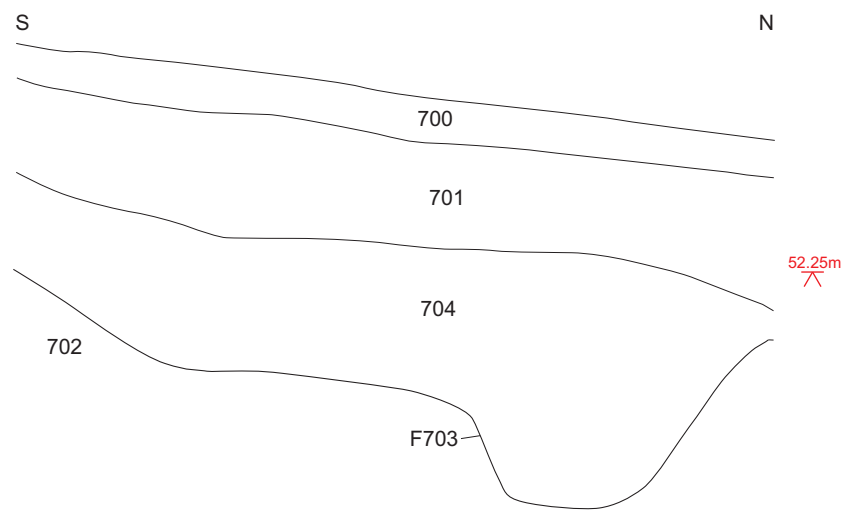
Fig. 4: Trench 6, plans and sections



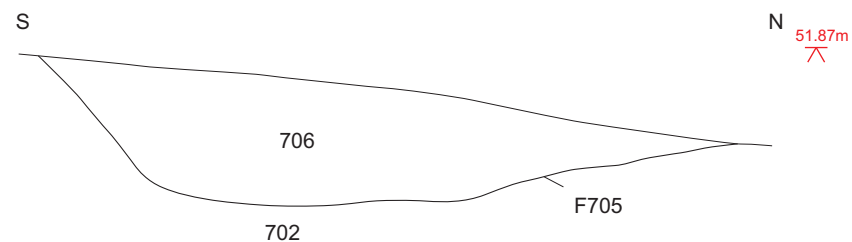
a) Trench 7, plan



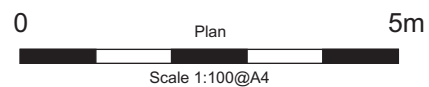
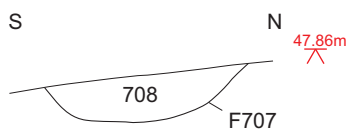
b) East facing section of pit F703



c) East facing section of pit F705



d) East facing section of posthole F707

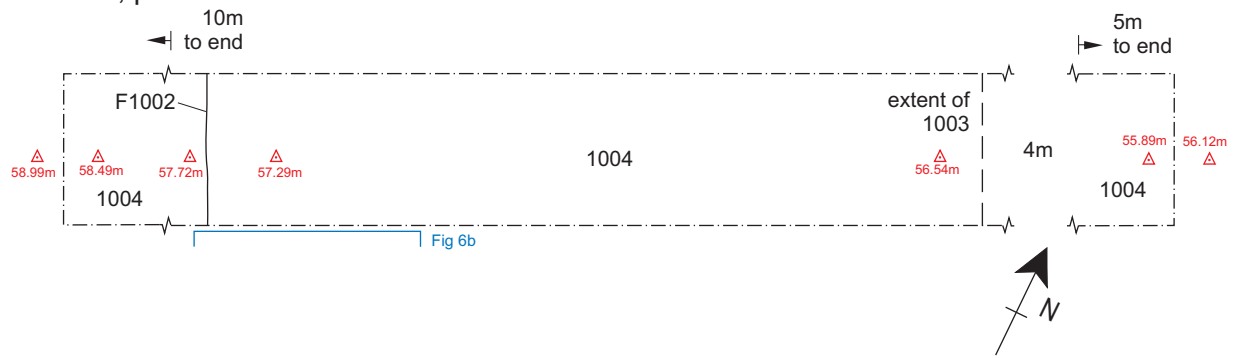


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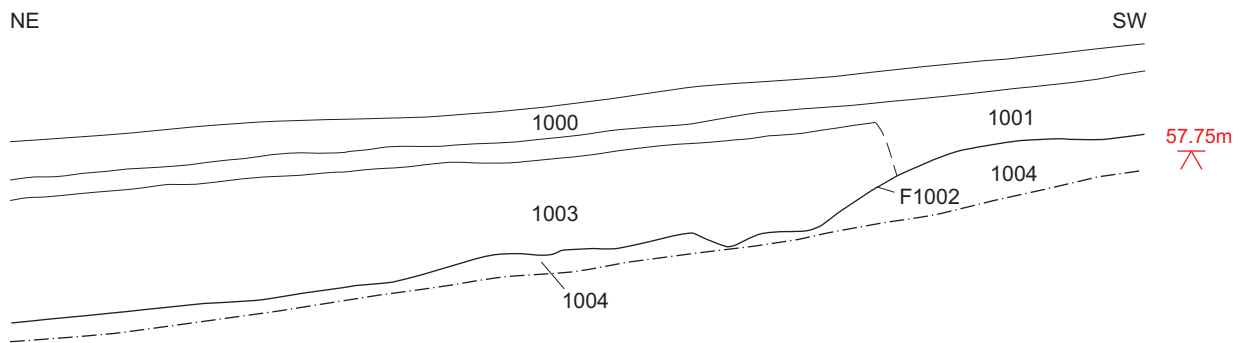
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Fig. 5: Trench 7, plan and sections



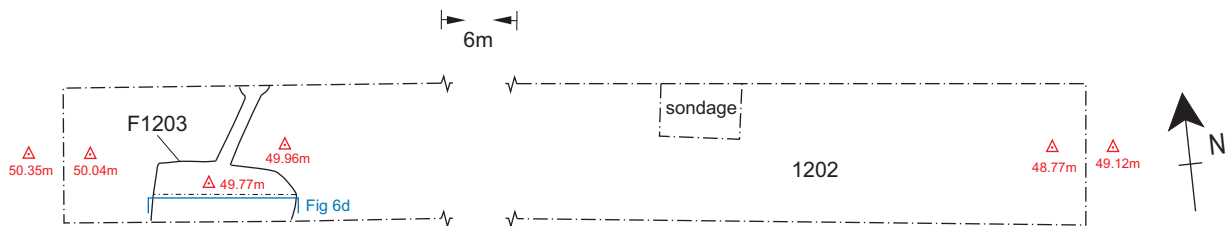
a) Trench 10, plan



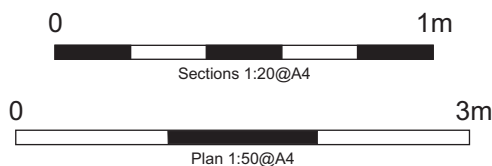
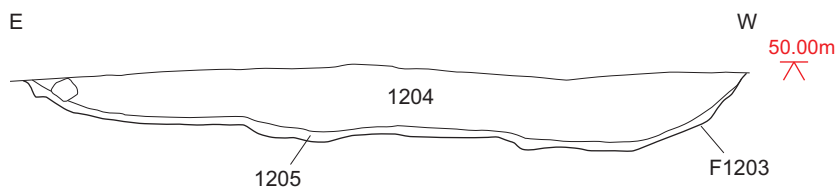
b) Northwest facing long section through lynchet



c) Trench 12, plan



d) North facing section of F1203

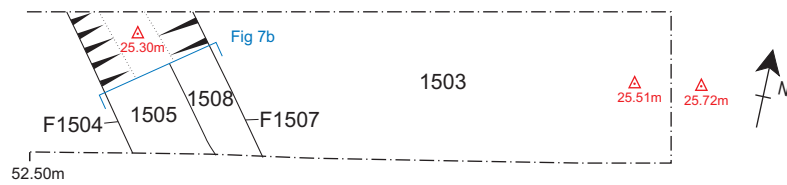
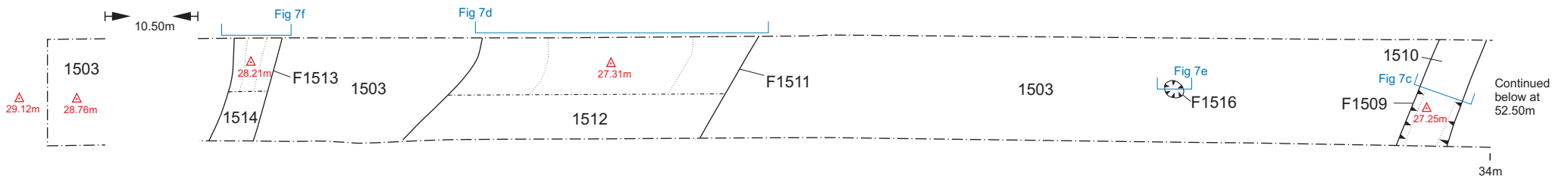


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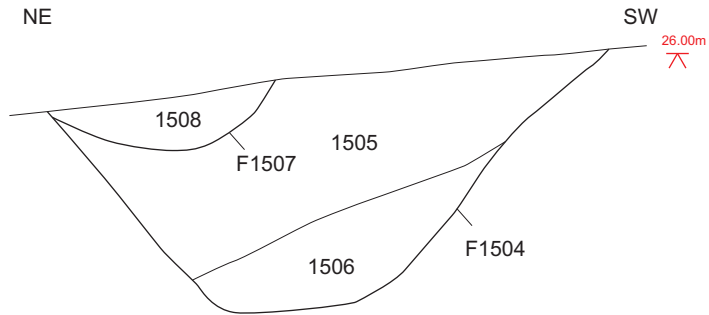
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Fig. 6: Trenches 10 and 12,
plans and sections



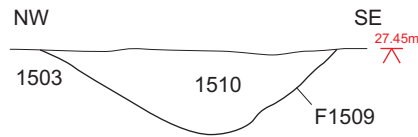
a) Trench 15, plan



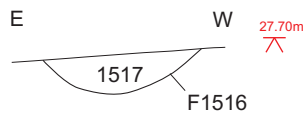
b) Southeast facing section of ditch F1504



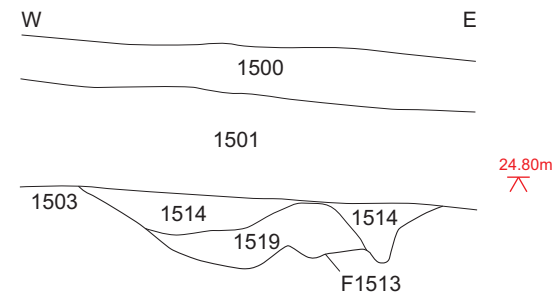
c) Southwest facing section of linear feature F1509



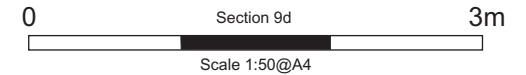
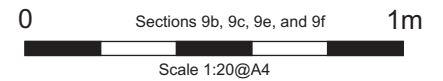
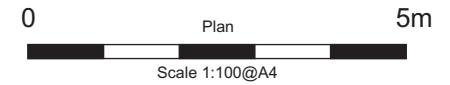
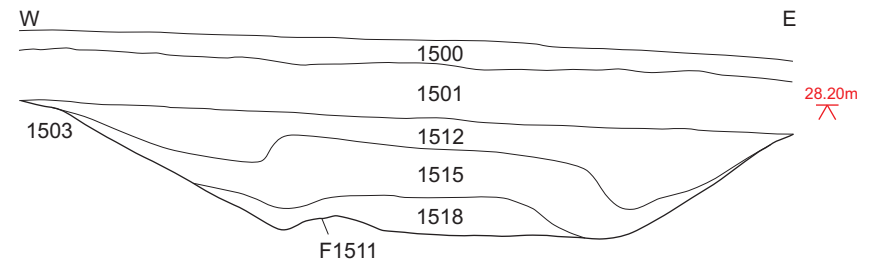
e) South facing section of pit/posthole F1516



f) South facing section of linear feature F1513



d) Trench 15, south facing section of linear feature F1511

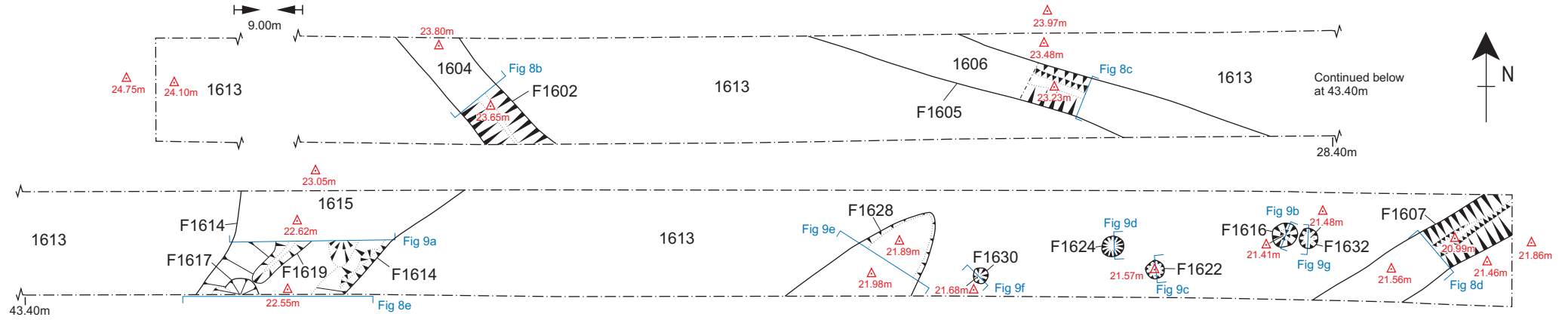


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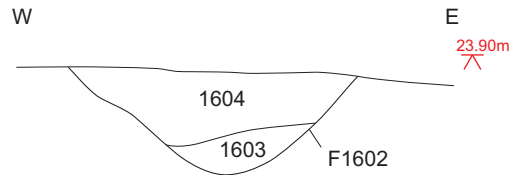
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Fig. 7: Trench 15, plan and sections



a) Trench 16, plan



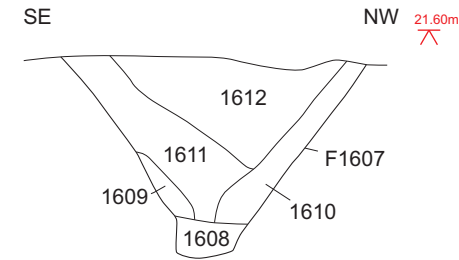
b) Southeast facing section of ditch F1602



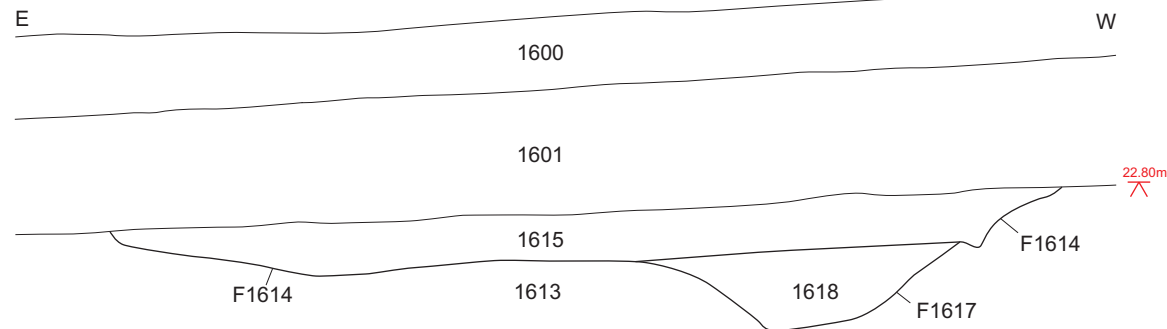
c) Northwest facing section of ditch F1605



d) Northeast facing section of ditch F1607



e) North facing section of F1614 and F1617



0 Plan 5m

Scale 1:100@A4

0 Sections 1m

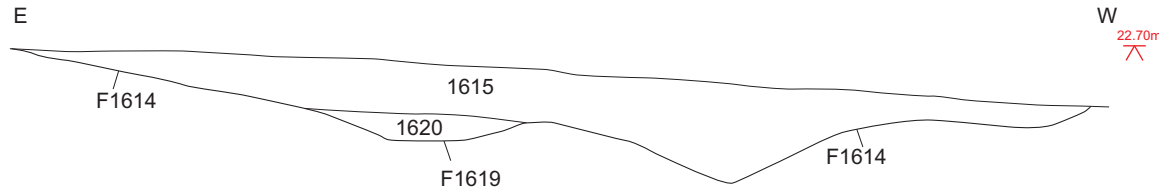
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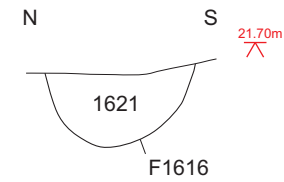
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Fig.8: Trench 16, plan and sections



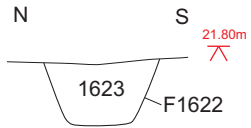
a) South facing section of F1614 and F1619



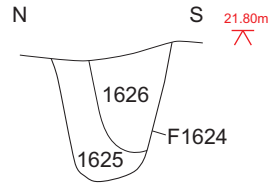
b) Northwest facing section of posthole F1616



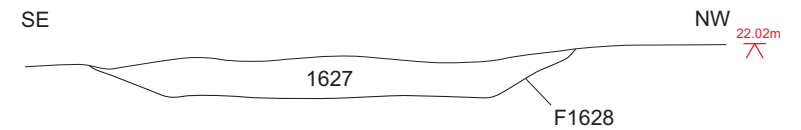
c) West facing section of posthole F1622



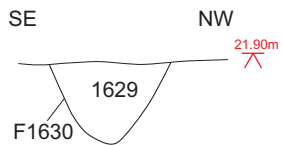
d) West facing section of posthole F1624



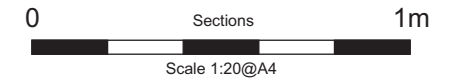
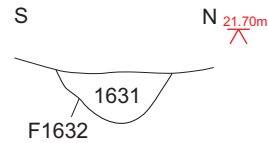
e) Northeast facing section of ditch terminal F1628



f) Northeast facing section of posthole F1630



g) East facing section of posthole F1632

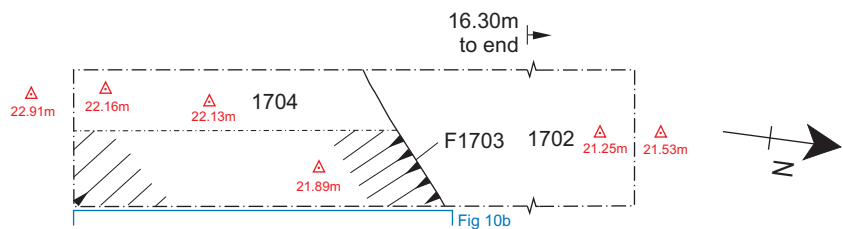


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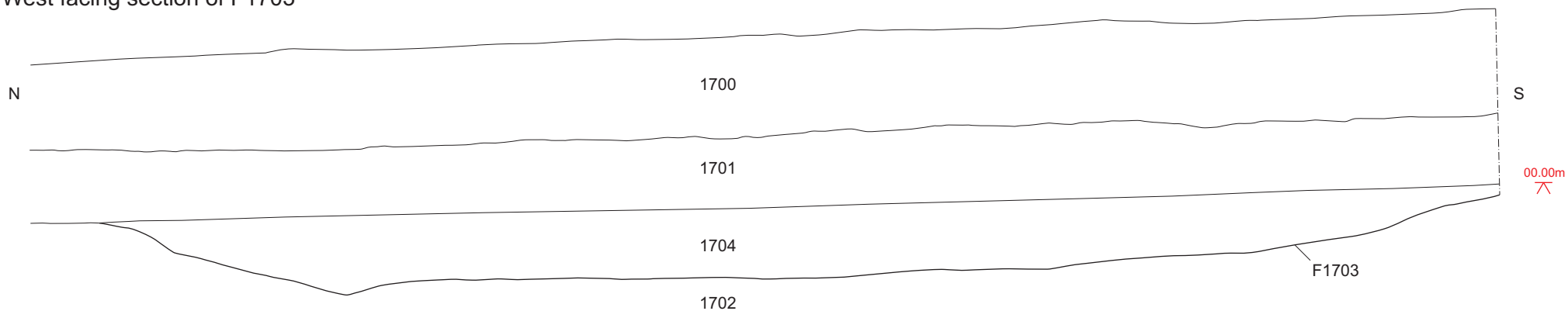
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Fig.9: Trench 16, sections



a) Trench 17, plan



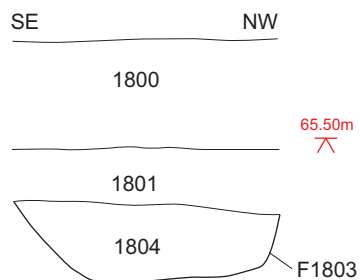
b) West facing section of F1703



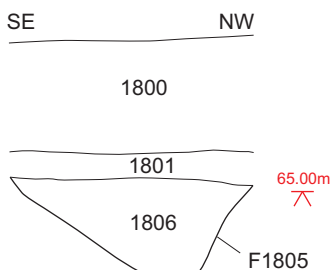
c) Trench 18, plan



d) Northeast facing bulk section of F1803



e) Northeast facing bulk section of F1805

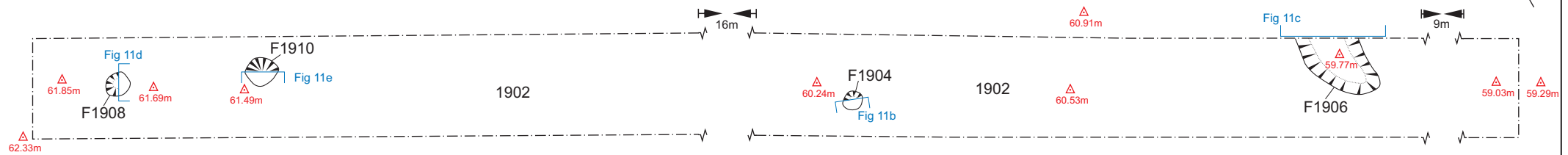


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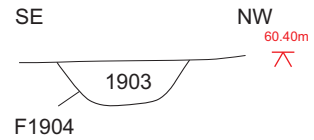
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Fig.10: Trenches 17 and 18, plans and sections



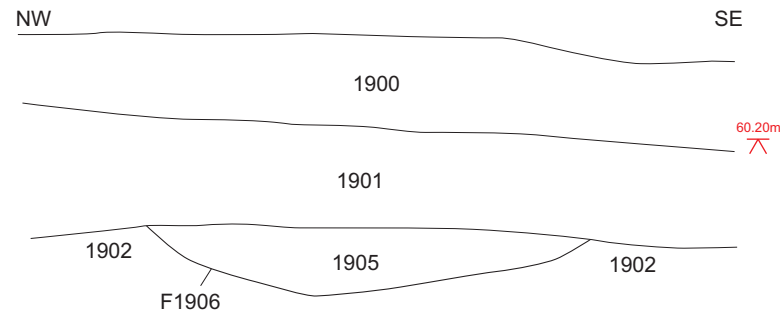
a) Trench 19, plan



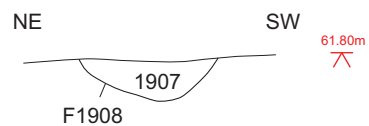
b) Northeast facing section of F1904



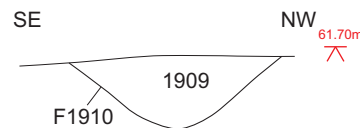
c) Southwest facing section of F1906



d) Northwest facing section of posthole F1908



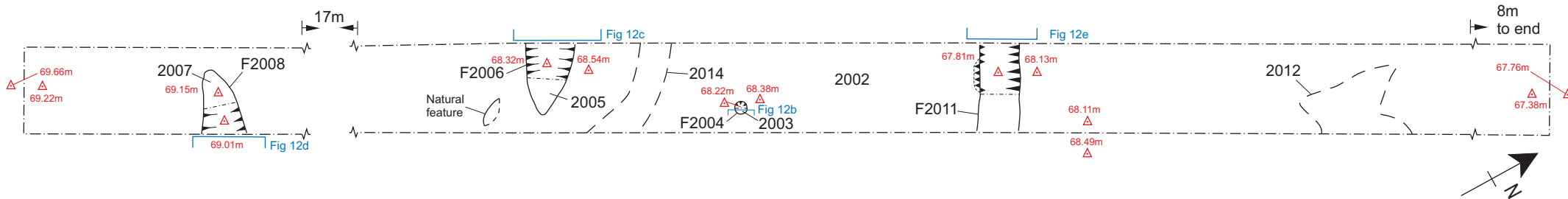
e) Northeast facing section of posthole F1910



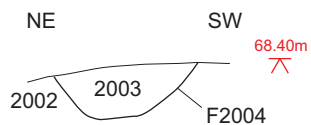
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Fig.11: Trench 19, plan and sections

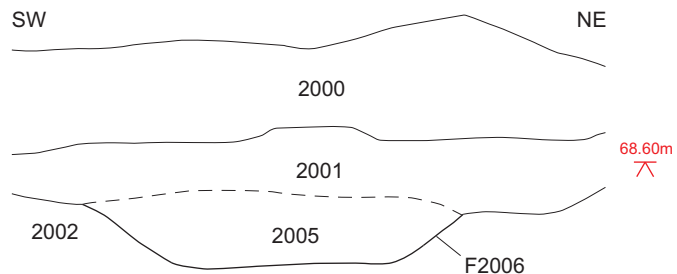
a) Trench 20, plan



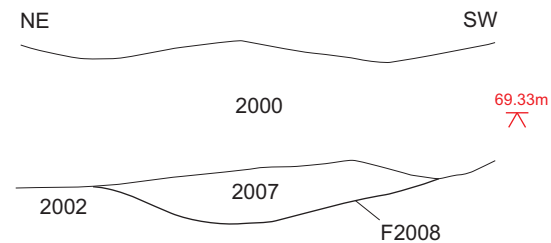
b) Northwest facing section of posthole F2004



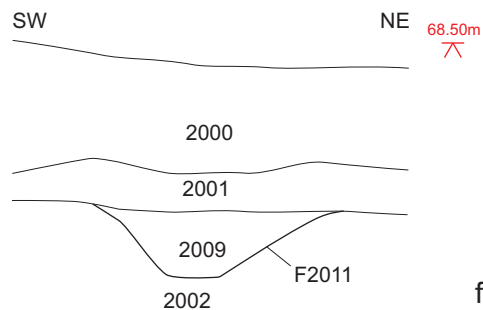
c) Southeast facing section of linear feature F2006



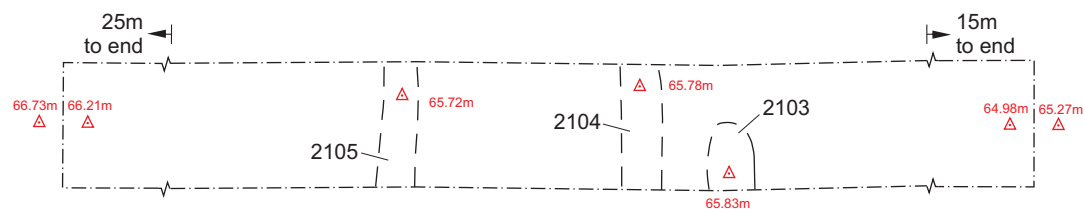
d) Northwest facing section of linear feature F2008



e) Southeast facing section of linear feature F2011



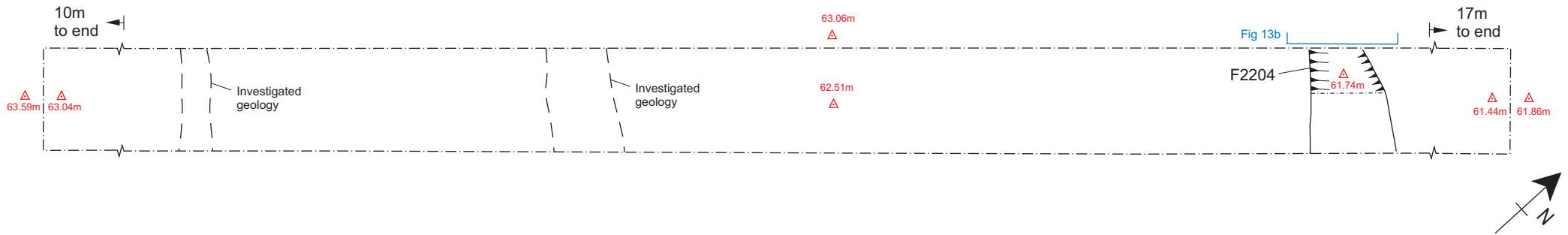
f) Trench 21, plan



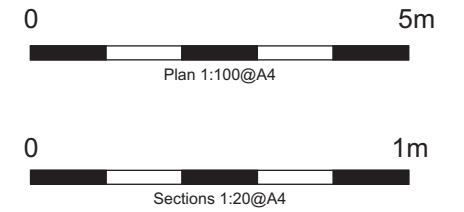
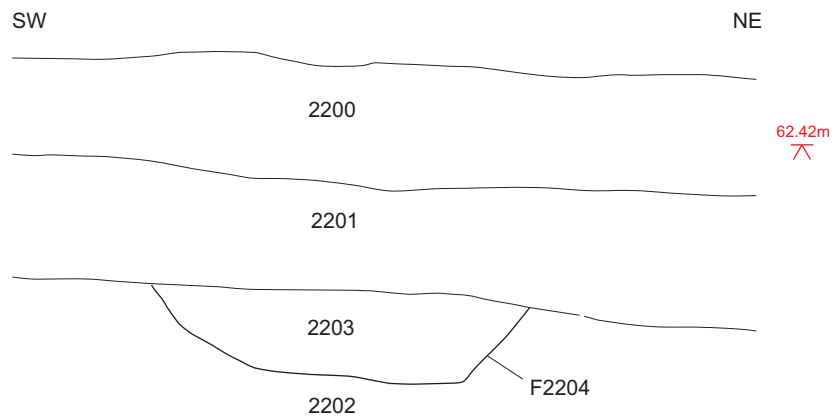
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Fig.12: Trenches 20 and 21, plans and sections

a) Trench 22, plan



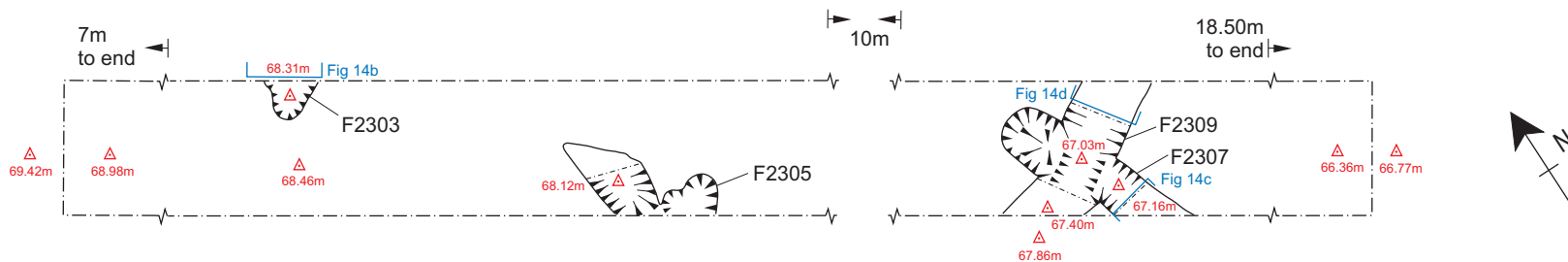
b) Southeast facing section of linear feature F2204



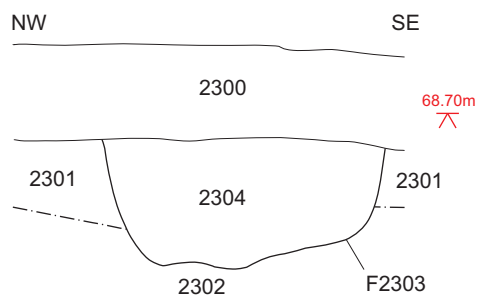
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Fig.13: Trench 22, plan and section

a) Trench 23, plan



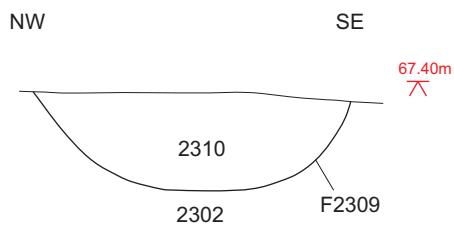
b) Southwest facing section of terminus/pit F2303



c) North facing section of ditch F2307



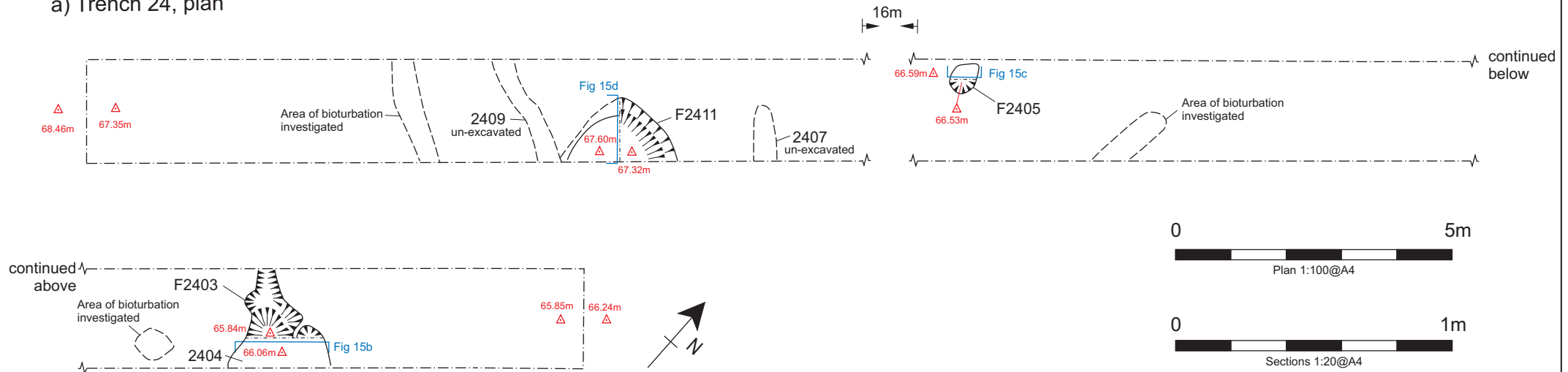
d) Southwest facing section of ditch F2309



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Fig.14: Trench 23, plan and sections

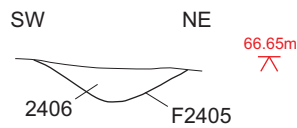
a) Trench 24, plan



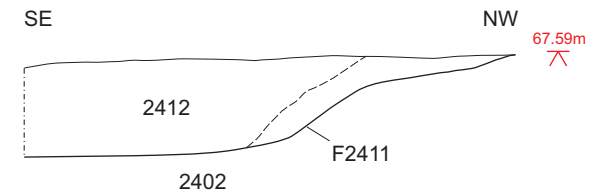
b) Southeast facing section of linear feature F2403



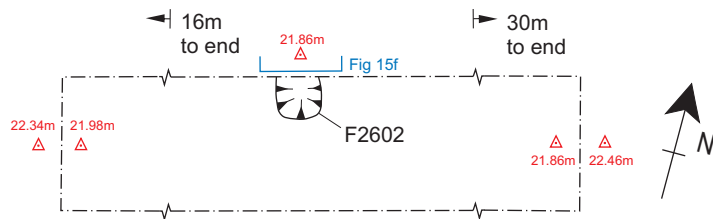
c) Southeast facing section of posthole F2405



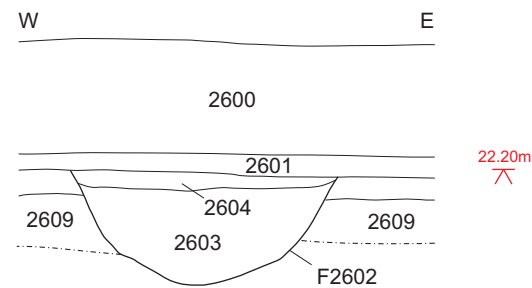
d) Northeast facing section of pit F2411



e) Trench 26, plan



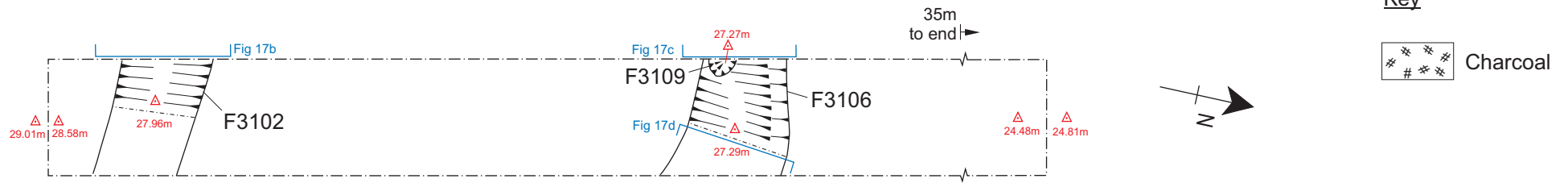
f) South facing section of animal burial F2602



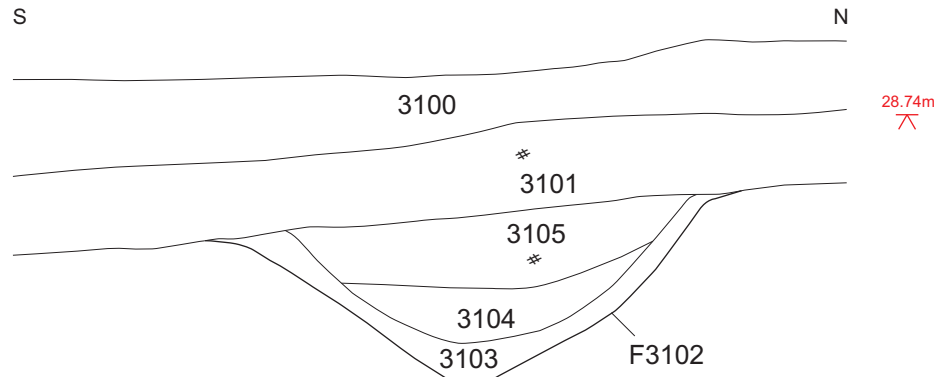
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TITLE
Fig.15: Trenches 24 and 26, plans and sections

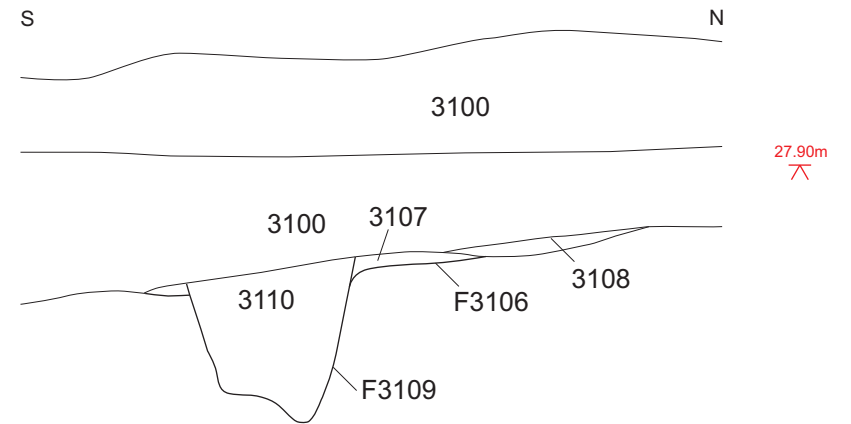
a) Trench 31, plan



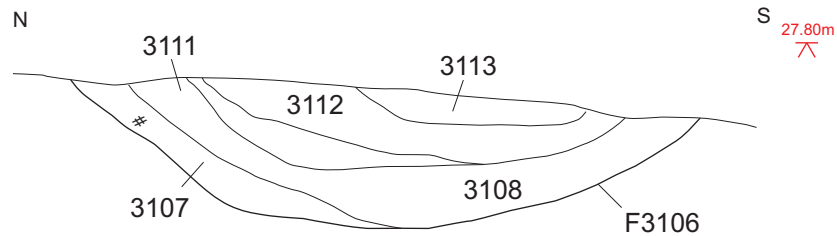
b) West facing section of ditch F3102



c) West facing section of ditch F3106 and possible posthole F3109



d) West facing section of ditch F3106



0 5m



Plan 1:100@A4

0 1m



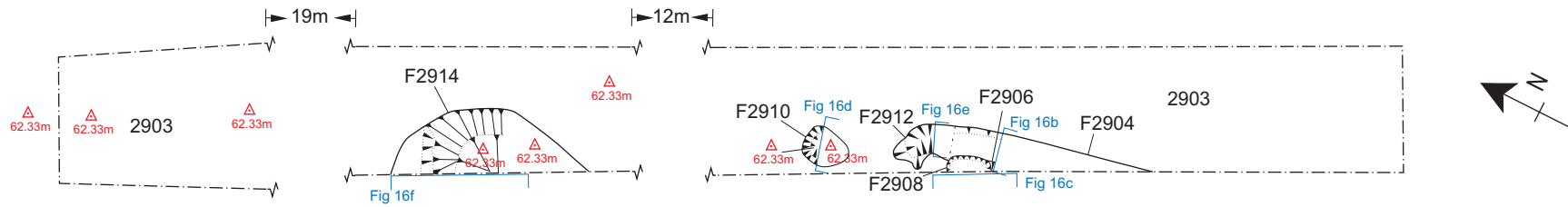
Sections 1:20@A4

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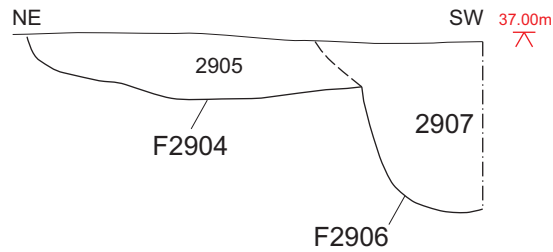
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Fig.16: Trench 31, plan and sections

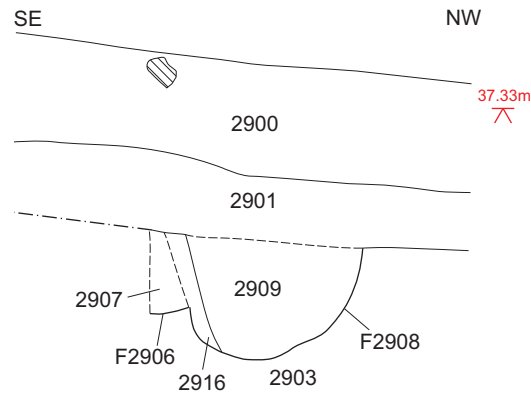
a) Trench 29, plan



b) Northwest facing section of pit F2906 and linear F2904



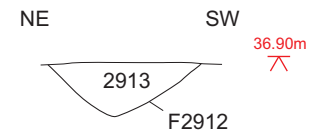
c) Northeast facing section of pit F2906



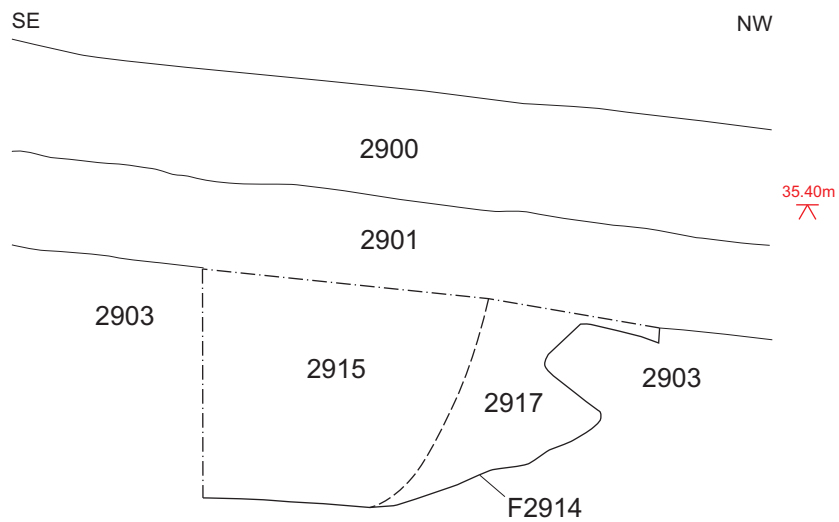
d) Northwest facing section of pit F2910



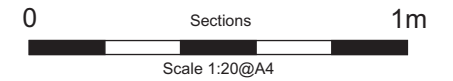
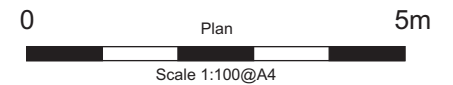
e) Northwest facing section of terminal F2912



f) East facing section of F2914



Key
 Flint



PROJECT
 Matford Land, SW of Exeter

TITLE
 Fig.17: Trench 29, plan and sections



Plate 1: Trench 5, linear feature F502, view to south. Scale 1m



Plate 2: Trench 6, curvilinear feature F613, view to west. Scale 0.5m



Plate 3: Trench 7, pit F703, view to west. Scale 0.5m



Plate 4: Trench 15, linear features F1504 and F1507, view to east. Scales 2 x 1m



Plate 5: Trench 15, linear feature F1511 and F1513, view to west. Scales 2 x 1m



Plate 6: Trench 16, linear feature F1607, view to southwest. Scale 1m



Plate 7: Trench 16, posthole grouping F1616, F1622, F1624, F1630 and F1632, view to west. Scale 1m



Plate 8: Trench 23, intercutting linear features F2307 and F2309, view to southwest. Scale 1m



Plate 9: Trench 29 – intercutting features F2908 and F2904, view to southwest. Scale 1m



Plate 10: Trench 29, pit F2914, view to southeast. Scale 1m

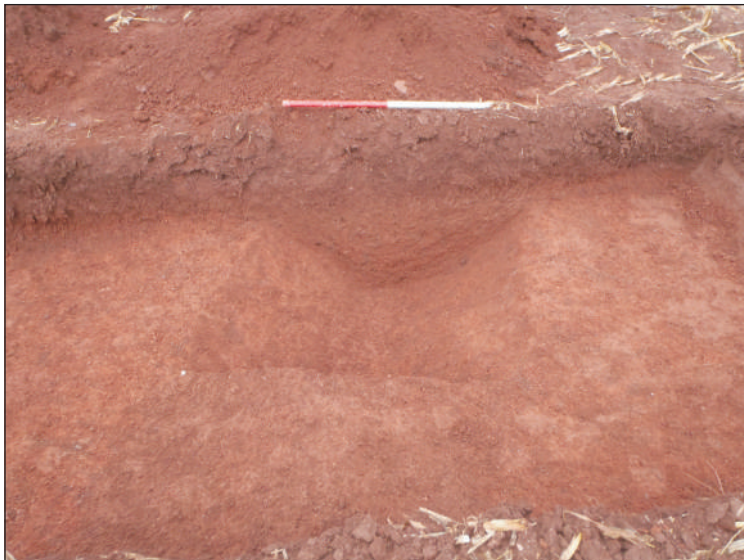


Plate 11: Trench 31, Linear feature F3102, view to west. Scale 1m

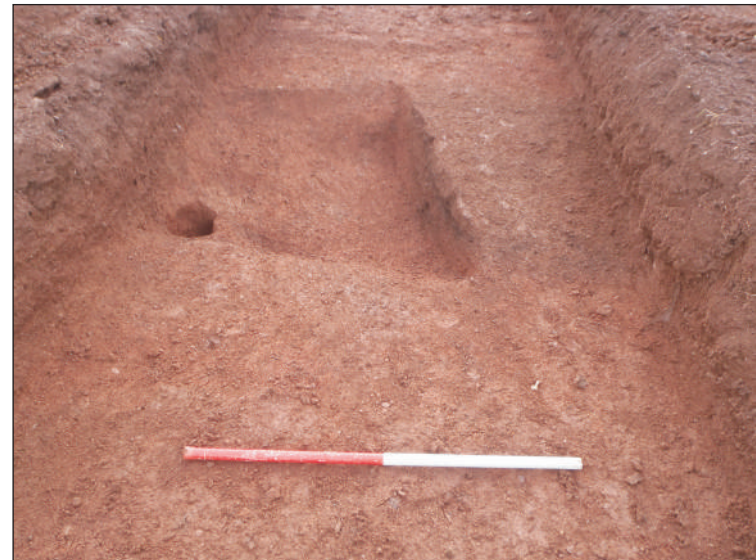


Plate 12: Trench 31, linear feature F3106 and post hole F3109, view to north. Scale 1m

Devon Office

AC archaeology Ltd
Unit 4, Halthaies Workshops
Bradninch
Nr Exeter
Devon
EX5 4LQ

Telephone/Fax: 01392 882410

Wiltshire Office

AC archaeology Ltd
Manor Farm Stables
Chicklade
Hindon
Nr Salisbury
Wiltshire
SP3 5SU

Telephone: 01747 820581
Fax: 01747 820440

www.acarchaeology.co.uk