Chirton Critical Source (Phase 2), Water Supply Main and Treatment Works, Urchfont, Wiltshire

Programme of Archaeological Works

context one
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES LTD

Chirton Critical Source (Phase 2), Water Supply Main and Treatment Works, Urchfont, Wiltshire

Programme of Archaeological Works

for

Wessex Water plc.

by

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COAS Project Reference: COAS/WBF/11/CCS
Wessex Water Plc scheme reference: B0148
National Grid Reference: SU 02943 55311

OASIS number: contexto1-116243

Wiltshire County Museums Service Accession Number: Site Code & Context No.

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December 2011

Front cover image: Stripping the easement © Context One Archaeological Services 2011

Contents

Non-Technical Summary

Context One Archaeological Services Ltd (COAS) carried out an archaeological evaluation and watching brief as part of a new 4km water pipeline scheme that ran from Market Lavington to Chirton, Wiltshire (centred on NGR SU 02943 55311 in *March, May and June 2011. The work was carried out under a Term Agreement contract with Wessex Water plc. The investigations were required by the Wiltshire County Archaeology Service in mitigation of the pipeline groundworks.*

A considerable number of finds have been previously recorded on either side of the pipeline route, ranging from the Neolithic onwards and including Romano-British, Saxon and Medieval sites and stray finds. The most significant concentration was from the slope overlooking the north west part of the route. There late Iron Age and Romano-British coins and broochs, as well as other finds, are thought to coincide with the presence of a later prehistoric shrine which became a temple. The area is unprotected and has been a focus of metal detecting. A hollow way was noted as a surviving landscape feature of particular interest.

The project identified two probable Neolithic and one Bronze Age pit, two of which included distinctive worked flint, and a fourth pit which may also be prehistoric. Other features including agricultural terracing which is likely to have Medieval origins, and an undated ditch.

Dating evidence for the hollow way also proved elusive. It certainly formed over a long period, probably originating as a path alongside a ditch which eventually became part of it.

1. Introduction

1.1 Context One Archaeological Services Ltd (COAS) carried out an archaeological programme of works between 3rd May 2011 and 13th June 2011 on behalf of Wessex Water plc under a Term Agreement contract. The works comprised an archaeological investigation followed by an archaeological watching Brief during groundworks relating to a new water supply main and treatment works at Chirton Critical Source, Wiltshire (centred on NGR SU 02943 55311) (hereafter referred to as the Site).

1.2 The watching brief was requested by Wiltshire County Archaeology Service (WCAS), the first phase of which was completed in 2008 (COAS 2008). In a consultation letter dated 5th November 2007 Ms Sue Farr (Archaeologist, WCAS) stated:

> *"The proposal falls within an area of archaeological interest. Several finds and features have been recorded in the vicinity and the potential for further discoveries is high. South of West Lavington the proposed pipeline passes through a series of earthworks recorded from aerial photography. Although they remain undated they are indicative of medieval settlement activity. Further east, a number of Saxon finds have been reported by metal detectorists and also several prehistoric finds are recorded along the route."*

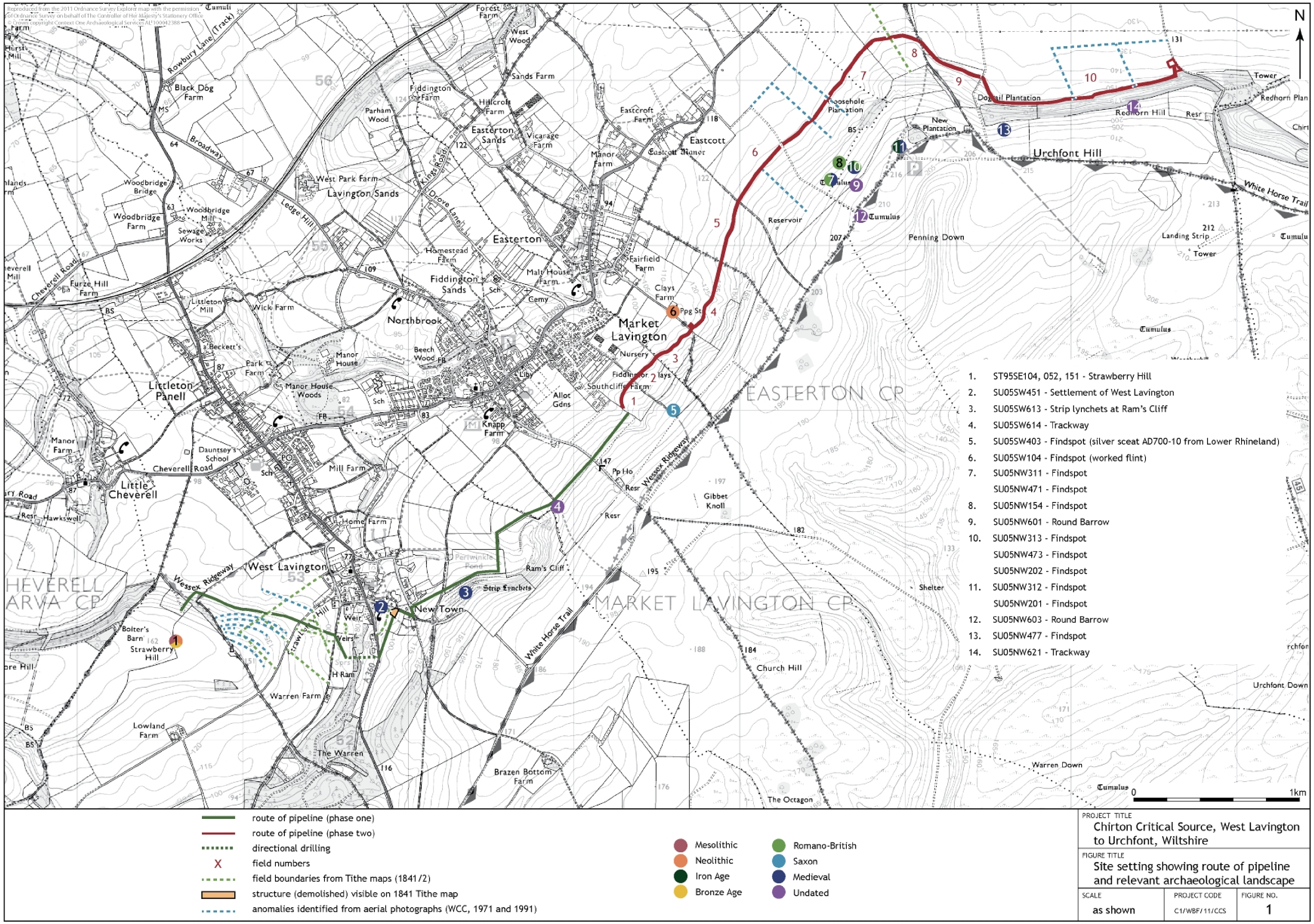
1.3 Following a hiatus the second phase of groundworks commenced in March 2011 and WCAS again advised that a watching brief should be carried out during these works. Further to this, and following a consultation meeting, Mr David Vaughan (Archaeologist, WCAS) advised that a historic boundary (NGR SU 02943 55311), which wouldwill be heavily impacted by the pipeline scheme, should be investigated prior to groundworks beginning on Site. The agreed methodology for this investigation is detailed in Section 2 below.

1.4 The request for the archaeological work follows advice given by Central Government as set out in Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (2010).

2. Site Location, Topography and Geology

2.1 Urchfont is in Pewsey Vale, on the north side of Salisbury Plain, *ca*. 7km south east of Devizes and *ca*. 16km south west of Marlborough. The Site comprises an easement of *ca*. 4km length extending from Redhorn Hill which overlooks the vale (**Plate 1**) from *ca*. 1.8km south east of Urchfont, to Fiddington Hill, *ca*. 700m south east of Market Lavington High Street (**Figure 1**). Its course is along the lower slopes of a steep, mainly north west facing scarp, falling from *ca*. 142m aOD in the north east to *ca*. 108m aOD in the south west. The scarp is bisected by dry combes (**Plate 2**).

2.2 The Site is situated on Melbury Marly Chalk Formation, intermittently bisected by head deposits of clay, silt, sand and gravel. The Melbury Formation is under Zig Zag Chalk formation and over Upper Greensand Glauconitic Sandstone.



1. ST95SE104, 052, 151 - Strawberry Hill
2. SU05SW451 - Settlement of West Lavington
3. SU05SW613 - Strip lynchets at Ram's Cliff
4. SU05SW614 - Trackway
5. SU05SW403 - Findspot (silver sceat AD700-10 from Lower Rhineland)
6. SU05SW104 - Findspot (worked flint)
7. SU05NW311 - Findspot
SU05NW471 - Findspot
8. SU05NW154 - Findspot
9. SU05NW601 - Round Barrow
10. SU05NW313 - Findspot
SU05NW473 - Findspot
SU05NW202 - Findspot
11. SU05NW312 - Findspot
SU05NW201 - Findspot
12. SU05NW603 - Round Barrow
13. SU05NW477 - Findspot
14. SU05NW621 - Trackway
route of pipeline (phase one)
route of pipeline (phase two)
directional drilling
field numbers
field boundaries from Tithe maps (1841/2)
structure (demolished) visible on 1841 Tithe map
anomalies identified from aerial photographs (WCC, 1971 and 1991)
Mesolithic
Neolithic
Iron Age
Bronze Age
Romano-British
Saxon
Medieval
Undated
PROJECT TITLE
Chirton Critical Source, West Lavington to Urchfont, Wiltshire
FIGURE TITLE
Site setting showing route of pipeline and relevant archaeological landscape
SCALE
as shown
PROJECT CODE
C1/WBF/11/CCS
FIGURE NO.
1
N
0
1km
Market Lavington
West Lavington
Littleton Panell
Little Cheverell
Easterton
Urchfont Hill
Penning Down
EASTERTON CP
MARKET LAVINGTON CP

Plate 1. View across Pewsey Vale from Redhorn Hill (from S)

Plate 2. View along scarp (from SW)

3. Archaeological and Historical Background

3.1 The archaeological background for the Site has been drawn from secondary sources. In the main this comprises records held by Wiltshire County Council as part of the Wiltshire Historic Environment Record (HER) and cartographic sources held by the Wiltshire County Records Office. In the following text numbers preceded by '**Figure 1**' refer to records held on the HER and listed in **Appendix 2**. **Figure 1** includes references 1 to 4 from south west of the present Site but have been carried over to allow continuity from phase 1 of work on the pipeline (Mason 2009). They are not included in the appendix.

Prehistoric

3.2 Prehistoric remains are represented from the Neolithic onwards along the scarp above the route of the Site, as might be expected on Salisbury Plain. The earlier period is represented by a flint axe (**Figure 1**, 6) west of the south end of the phase two pipeline route. Two round barrows are situated on the upper scarp to the north west of the route (although L. V. Grinsell lacked confidence in one of them; **Figure 1**, 9, 12) and a fragment of a Late Bronze Age socketed axe downslope from the barrows (**Figure 1**, 8).

3.3 In the same vicinity, unfettered metal detecting has taken place over a possible shrine/temple site (**Figure 1**, 10) leading to the recovery of a comparative wealth of Iron Age Dobunnic coinage and brooches extending into the first century AD, as well as Romano-British material. Five more Dobunnic coins were found *ca*. 250m further north west (**Figure 1**, 11).

Romano-British

3.4 In addition to the material found from the shrine/temple site, a coin hoard was found within the area of the second group of Dobunnic coins, along with fragments of two Bracelets. A tapering bow-form brooch was found *ca*. 150m to the south west of that area (**Figure 1**, 7).

Saxon

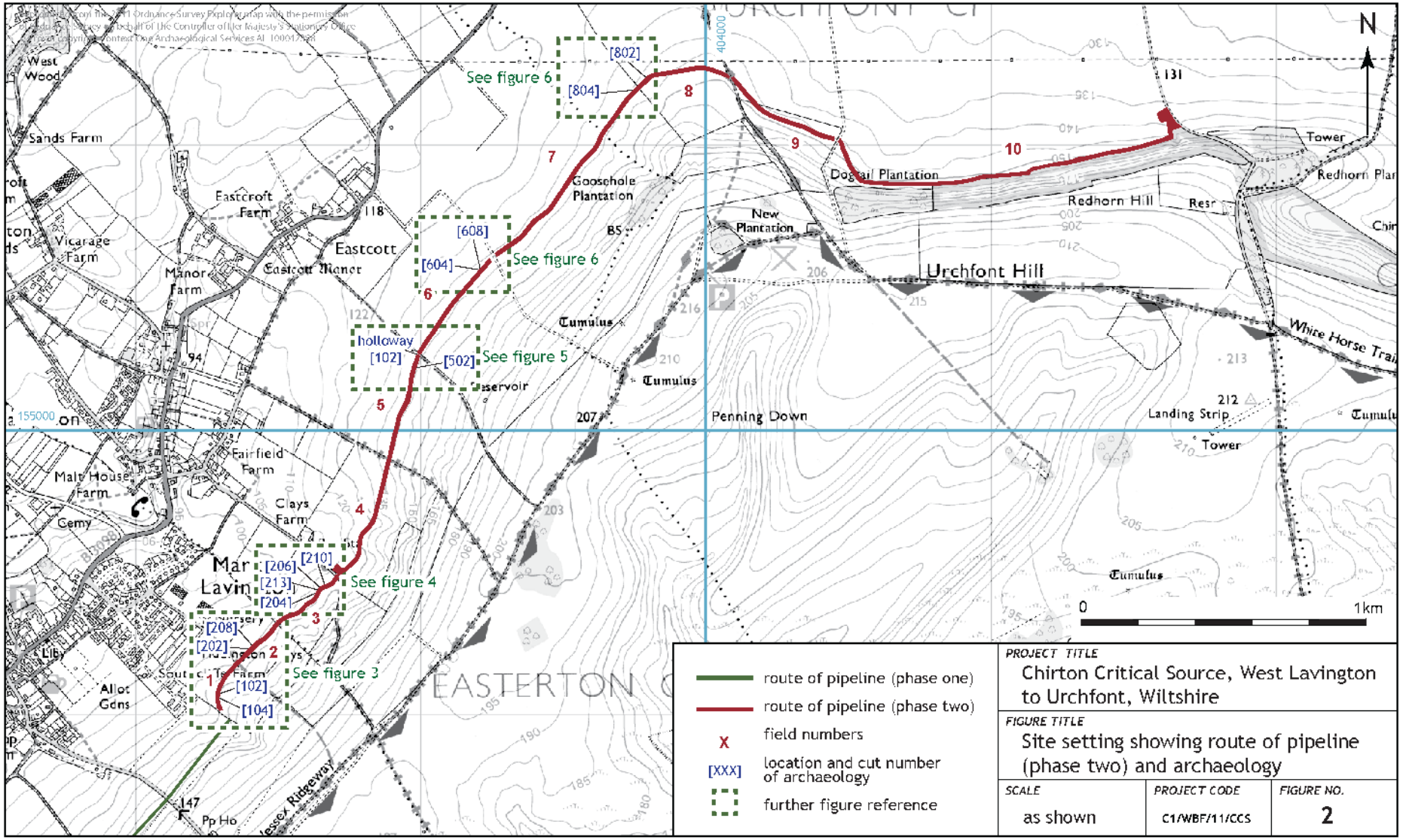
3.5 There have been several Saxon finds from the wider area of which the closest, a Lower Rhineland *sceat*, was found *ca*. 250m east of the south start point of the phase 2 pipeline (**Figure 1**, 5). It dates to first decade of the 8th century AD.

Medieval

3.6 Two Medieval coins from the area of the shrine/temple (**Figure 1**, 10) may indicate a persisting folk-knowledge of its special significance, although it seems more probable that it merely reflects the intensity of metal detecting over a productive area. Another coin of the period was found close to a brooch findspot (**Figure 1**, 7) but most interesting, although isolated, is a Venetian *soldino*.

Undated

3.7 Air photography has identified a track on the north-facing scarp of Redhorn Hill. There is no associated evidence for dating. There remains a hollow way which is bisected by the pipeline route ca. 1km north west of Market Lavington.


N
0
1km
See figure 6
See figure 5
See figure 4
See figure 3
[802]
[804]
[608]
[604]
[102]
[502]
[206]
[210]
[213]
[204]
[208]
[202]
[102]
[104]
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
West Wood
Sands Farm
Eastcroft Farm
Vicarage Farm
Eastcott
Eastcott Manor
Manor Farm
Gooseshole Plantation
New Plantation
Dogtail Plantation
Redhorn Hill
Urchfont Hill
Tower
Redhorn Plan
White Horse Trail
Tumulus
holloway
Penning Down
Landing Strip
Fairfield Farm
Malt House Farm
Clays Farm
Gemy
Mar Lavington
Allot Gdns
Essex Ridgeway
EASTERTON
route of pipeline (phase one)
route of pipeline (phase two)
field numbers
location and cut number of archaeology
further figure reference
PROJECT TITLE
Chirton Critical Source, West Lavington to Urchfont, Wiltshire
FIGURE TITLE
Site setting showing route of pipeline (phase two) and archaeology
SCALE
as shown
PROJECT CODE
C1/WBF/11/CCS
FIGURE NO.
2

4. Methodology

4.1 The proposed new water main and associated works covered a total length exceeding 4km. A 360 degree tracked machine fitted with a toothless grading bucket was used to remove topsoil/overburden along the route of the proposed pipeline to create a c. 15m wide easement. Upon completion of topsoil/ploughsoil removal, a continuous pipe trench was excavated by machine along the route of the pipeline.

4.2 The machine excavation was carried out under archaeological supervision to the required depth for the laying of the pipe.

Archaeological Investigation of a hollow way

4.3 An archaeological investigation of a hollow way perpendicular to the easement comprised a topographical survey and evaluation trenching, with the aim of determining the nature of the feature and if possible, to ascertain the date of its construction. A topographical survey was undertaken along *ca*. 100m of the hollow way, using a TopCon GRS-1 RTK GPS unit. A single evaluation trench was excavated by hand through across a section of it within the line of the proposed easement. The results of the topographic survey were used to assist in its re-instatement. The investigation conformed to appropriate guidelines (IfA 1996).

Archaeological Watching Brief

4.4 Following the archaeological investigation, an archaeological watching brief was carried out for the duration of the phase 2 groundworks, in accordance with the *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (IfA 1994). The fieldwork methodology is summarised below:

4.5 A qualified archaeologist was on site to monitor all groundworks for the purpose of identifying and recording any archaeological remains, features and deposits present. Provision was made for extra time to excavate and record the significant deposits and features revealed. Where possible at least one representative cross-section of features was excavated. Small, discrete, features were fully excavated and larger discrete features were half-sectioned. The extents of long, linear, features were recorded by drawing and photography then sample excavated along their exposed length. The full depth of archaeological deposits was assessed. The Assistant County Archaeologist, David Vaughn (WCAS) was kept informed as work progressed and visited the site on 23rd May 2011.

4.6 All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using standard COAS pro-forma context recording sheets, drawn on stable film and photographed using a digital camera.

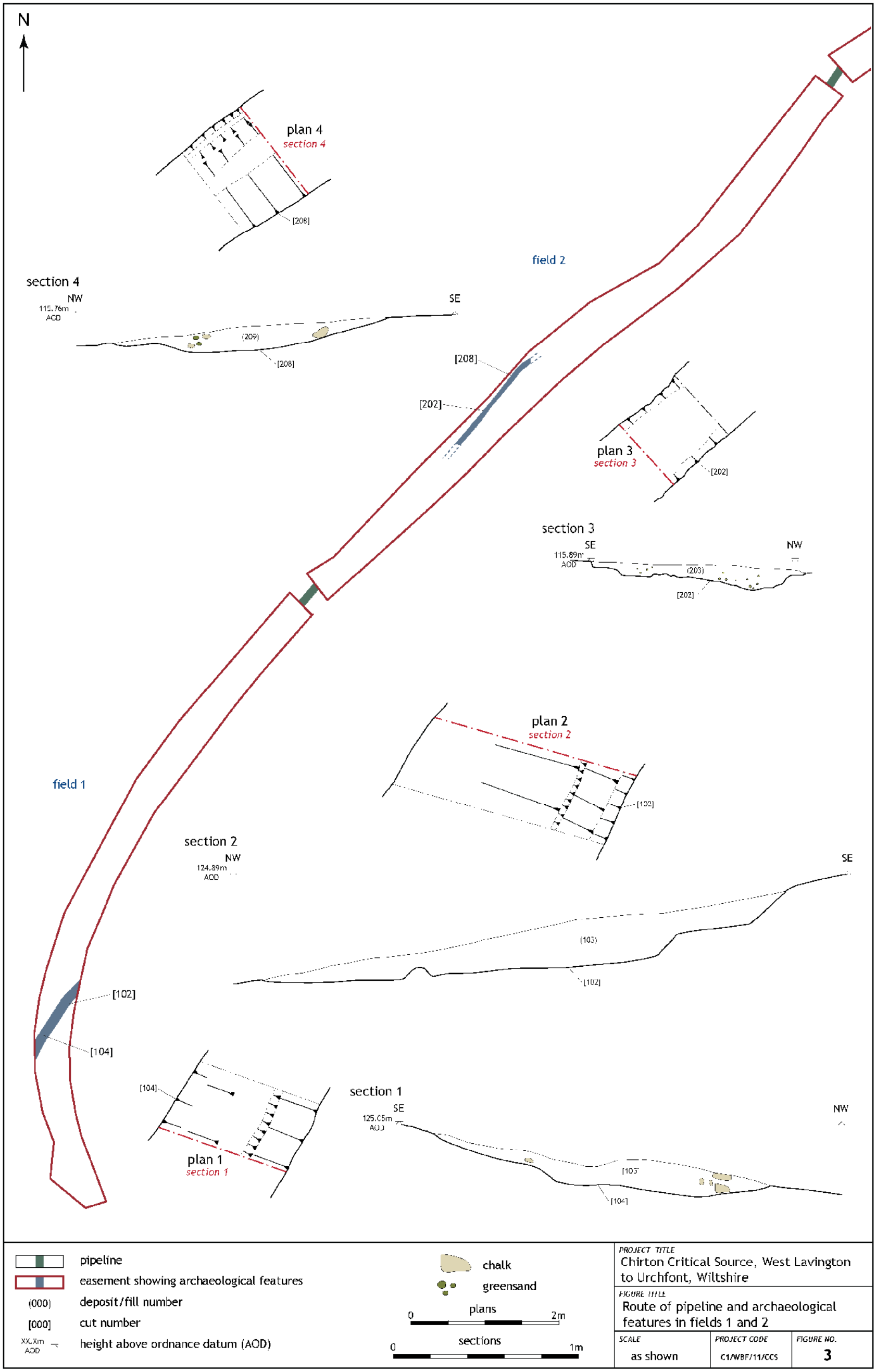
4.7 All work adhered to the *Code of Conduct* and the *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology* (IFA).

5. Results

5.1 The deposits and features encountered during fieldwork are listed and described in **Appendix** 1. In the text, context numbers for cuts appear in square brackets, e.g. [104]; layer and fill numbers appear in standard brackets, e.g. (102). Where a feature is discussed, it is referenced with its cut, and associated fill. The results are presented field by field, from south west to north east, where archaeological deposits were identified.

Soil sequence

5.2 Along most of the length of the easement the moderately compacted topsoil of clayey silt including frequent chalk flecks, with a depth varying between 0.30 to 0.20m, lay directly over abraded natural chalk, implying long periods of aggressive ploughing. All archaeological deposits occurred in cuts or other depressions into the natural surface.


N
plan 4
section 4
[208]
section 4
NW
SE
115.76m AOD
(209)
[208]
field 2
[208]
[202]
plan 3
section 3
[202]
section 3
SE
NW
115.89m AOD
(203)
[202]
plan 2
section 2
[102]
field 1
section 2
NW
124.89m AOD
SE
(103)
[102]
[102]
[104]
[104]
plan 1
section 1
section 1
SE
NW
125.05m AOD
[103]
[104]
pipeline
easement showing archaeological features
(000) deposit/fill number
[000] cut number
XX.Xm AOD height above ordnance datum (AOD)
chalk
greensand
plans
0 2m
sections
0 1m
PROJECT TITLE
Chirton Critical Source, West Lavington to Urchfont, Wiltshire
FIGURE TITLE
Route of pipeline and archaeological features in fields 1 and 2
SCALE
as shown
PROJECT CODE
C1/WBF/11/CCS
FIGURE NO.
3

Field 1

5.3 Approximately 22m of a south west to north east linear cut [104]/[102] was identified, approximately adhering to the contour. Two sample sections, (**Figure 3**, sections 1 and 2) showed the feature to cut into the natural north west facing slope of the lower scarp to give two succeeding terraces filled with an undifferentiated silty clay including occasional small, angular, fragments of chalk. The character of the feature is consistent with its interpretation in the field as a lynchet (**Plate 3**). The only finds within the fill were one Medieval and two Modern small pottery sherds and two lumps of clinker. The latter may indicate that the deposit formation process continued into the late 19th or early 20th century, when steam ploughing was practiced.

Plate 3. Lynchet [102] (from S)

Plate 4. Field 2, lynchet [102] (from S)

Plate 5. Field 2, ditch [202] (from NE)

Plate 6. Field 2, lynchet [208] (from SW)

Field 2

5.4 The field had a similar topography to Field 1. *ca.* 30m of a linear cut [202]/[208], with a south west to north east orientation to [104]/[102], was exposed along the west edge of the easement (**Plate 4**), again tending to follow the contour. Although the profile was stepped in each of two sample sections, the depth was greatest towards the north west at the south end (**Figure 3**, section 3). To the north the greatest depth was to the middle and south east of the cut [208] (**Figure 3**, section 4). The fill was a slow formed clayey silt, which in places included variable amounts of chalk fragments. Unidentified bone fragments were found in both sample sections, two flints were recovered from (203) and two Medieval sherds from (209). Dating was provided by four modern pottery sherds.

5.5 The shallow, irregular, profiles led to a field interpretation that the feature was a trackway, lynchet or gully (**Plate 6**). The character of the cut is consistent with it being a much degraded ditch (**Plate 5**). It is possible that late finds were introduced during its truncation and that the original cut is earlier than the latest pottery in the fill.

Field 3

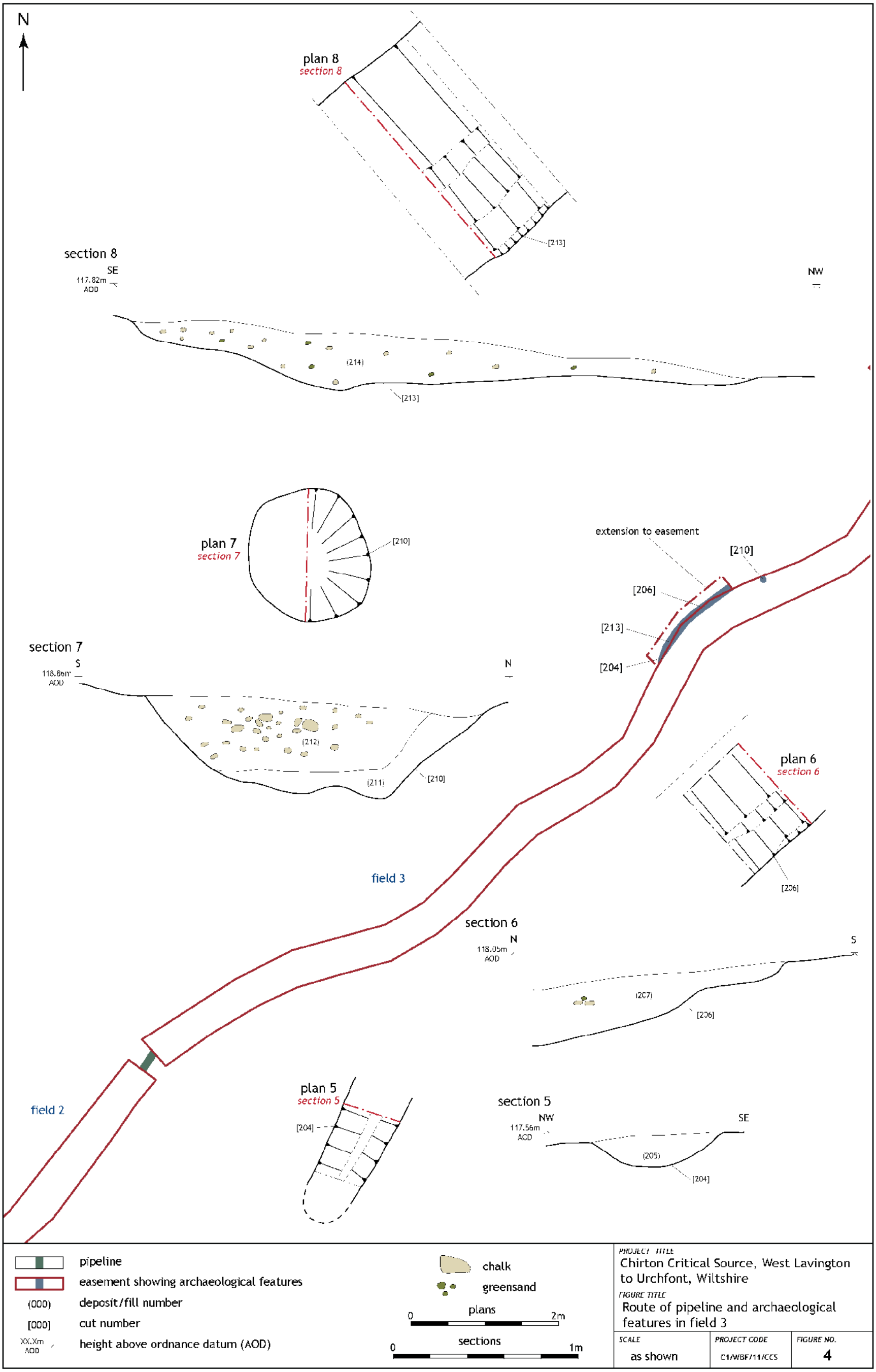
5.6 A further *ca.* 26m exposure of a slightly curving, splayed 'U' profiled shallow linear [204]/[213]/[216], again respecting the contour varied greatly in width, tapered to nothing at the south end, where it either terminated or had been severely truncated. Truncation appears to have been general along the lower valley side, hence it may be the more likely explanation. Given the varied character of the profiles it is possible that an earlier ditch, represented by [204] (**Plate 7**; **Figure 4**, section 5) and the deepest part of [213], was degraded by a later lynchet visible in the shallower extent of [213] and much of [206] (**Figure 4**, sections 6 and 8). The fill (214) is noted as stonier than (205), although the photographic evidence suggests the lower part of the former is less so, hence closer in character to (205). No finds were recovered.

Plate 7. Field 3, linear cut [204] (from SW)

Plate 8. Field 3, linear cut [213] (from SW)

Plate 9. Field 3, pit cut [210] (from W)

Plate 10. Field 5, hollow way (from NW)


N
plan 8
section 8
[213]
section 8
SE
117.82m AOD
NW
(214)
[213]
plan 7
section 7
[210]
section 7
S
118.86m AOD
N
(212)
(211)
[210]
extension to easement
[210]
[206]
[213]
[204]
plan 6
section 6
[206]
field 3
section 6
N
118.05m AOD
S
(207)
[206]
field 2
plan 5
section 5
[204]
section 5
NW
117.56m AOD
SE
(205)
[204]
pipeline
easement showing archaeological features
(000) deposit/fill number
[000] cut number
XX.Xm AOD height above ordnance datum (AOD)
chalk
greensand
plans
0
2m
sections
0
1m
PROJECT TITLE
Chirton Critical Source, West Lavington to Urchfont, Wiltshire
FIGURE TITLE
Route of pipeline and archaeological features in field 3
SCALE
as shown
PROJECT CODE
C1/WBF/11/CCS
FIGURE NO.
4

5.7 An irregular, bowl shaped, pit [210] (**Plate 9**) contained a loamy lower fill (211) along its north edge and base, sealed by a rubble chalk set in silty clay (212). The presence of roots suggested that it might be a treethrow but the upper fill, in particular, appears more pit-like. No finds were recovered from it.

Field 5

5.8 The boundary between Fields 5 and 6 was made up of the well established north west to south east oriented hollow way (**Plate 10**) which had been singled out for investigation before groundworks commenced. A 2m wide section across it was excavated at the proposed intersection with the pipe trench, a point where the width at its base was ca. 2m and over 3m at its upper edges. The steep, blocky south west side (**Plate 11**; **Figure 5**, section 10) suggests that it may have originated as a cut boundary ditch which broadened to the north east through repeated wear once it became a track. A thin turf and dark brown silty topsoil, including moderate amounts of blocky Greensand fragments (varying from 0.0m at the upper edges to 0.15m at the base) sealed, at the base, gley silt which was interpreted as a trample layer.

Plate 11. Field 5, linear cut [204] (from NE)

Plate 12. Field 5, pit [502] in section (from N)

Plate 13. Field 5, pit cut [502] after full excavation (from N)

5.9 To the south of the hollow way a 1m diameter bowl-shaped pit [502] (**Plate 13**; **Figure 5**, plan 9, section 9) was filled with a greyish brown clay (503) including frequent fleck and some lumps of chalk, as well as sparse small lumps and flecks of charcoal and rare orange ceramic (**Plate 12**). The soil quality implied fairly rapid deposition of organically rich material. Thirty-nine bone fragments, varying from splinters to sharp fragments of up to 0.15m, had all suffered surface erosion but were from one or more large mammals, which might be identifiable with specialist analysis. More readily diagnostic was an assemblage of 33 flints which had demonstrably Early Neolithic traits (**Section 6**, below). None of the nine pottery wall sherds had diagnostic traits but the fabric and firing was consistent with the same date.

N

field 6

holloway
[102]

plan 10
section 10

treethrow [602]
not represented

holloway
[102]

section 10

NE

137.93m AOD

(100)

100)

[102]

(101)

SW

(100)

[102]

Baulk

(100)

(101)

field 5

[502]

plan 9
section 9

[502]

section 9

W

138.25m AOD

E

(503)

[502]

pipeline

easement showing archaeological features

(000) deposit/fill number

[000] cut number

XX.Xm AOD height above ordnance datum (AOD)

chalk

degraded chalk

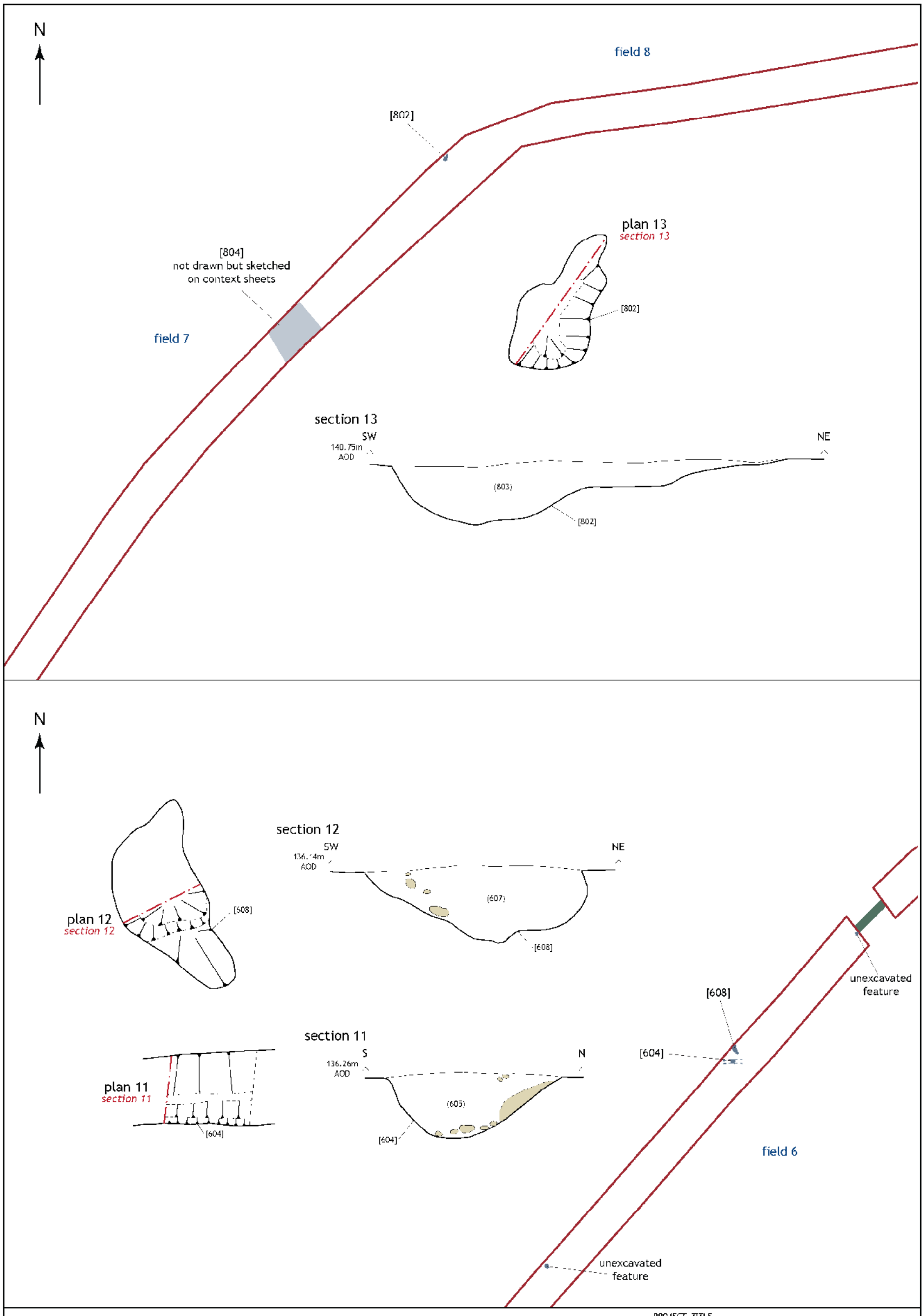
plans 0 2m

sections 0 1m

PROJECT TITLE
Chirton Critical Source, West Lavington to Urchfont, Wiltshire

FIGURE TITLE
Route of pipeline and archaeological feature in field 5 and the holloway

SCALE	*PROJECT CODE*	*FIGURE NO.*
as shown	C1/WBF/11/CCS	5


N
field 8
[802]
plan 13
section 13
[804]
not drawn but sketched
on context sheets
[802]
field 7
section 13
SW
NE
140.75m
AOD
(803)
[802]
N
plan 12
section 12
[608]
section 12
SW
NE
136.74m
AOD
(607)
[608]
unexcavated
feature
[608]
section 11
S
N
136.26m
AOD
plan 11
section 11
(605)
[604]
[604]
field 6
unexcavated
feature
pipeline
easement showing excavated archaeological features
(000) deposit/fill number
[000] cut number
XX.Xm AOD height above ordnance datum (AOD)
chalk
degraded chalk
plans
0 2m
sections
0 1m
PROJECT TITLE
Chirton Critical Source, West Lavington to Urchfont, Wiltshire
FIGURE TITLE
Route of pipeline and archaeological features in fields 6, 7 and 8
SCALE
as shown
PROJECT CODE
C1/WBF/11/CCS
FIGURE NO.
6

Field 6

5.10 Three features were identified in Field 6, although time constraints precluded excavation of a probable pit. A west to east 'U' profiled ditch [604] (**Figure 6**, section 11) had filled slowly with a moderately chalk-flecked silty clay, (605) (**Plate 14**). A very small fragment of post medieval or modern pottery may be intrusive as the ditch's orientation bears no relation to features in the present landscape.

5.11 An irregular, kidney-planned, pit [608] (**Figure 6**, plan 12, section 12) with a varied base level, implying more than one phase of cutting, was interpreted as a treethrow in the field. It seems more likely that it was a pit within which a tree had grown after infilling. The fill of silty clay (607) was probably organically rich at the time of deposition and included spare lumps and flecks of charcoal and rare lumps of orange ceramic (**Plate 15**). The formation process was probably fairly rapid. Ten flints were all struck in a manner consistent with Middle to Late Bronze Age technology, and in the absence of other finds should be regarded as a reliable indicator of the fill's date.

Plate 14. Field 6, linear cut [604] (from W)

Plate 15. Field 6, pit cut [608] (from SE)

Plate 16. Field 7, cut [804] (from NW)

Plate 17. Field 8, cut [802] (from SE)

Field 7

5.12 Due to time constraints the only feature identified in this field was partially excavated only and recorded by photograph and written form only. A straight-sided east to west linear, it was observed along a length of *ca*. 17m. The silty clay silts of the fill (805) (**Plate 16**) were interpreted as alluvial deposits in a dry combe bed. Finds included three sherds of Post Medieval pottery, building material, two fragments of unidentified bone and a small tanged knife blade.

Field 8

5.13 A single, roughly rectangular planned pit [802] with a projection from its north east corner (**Figure 6**, plan 13) was filled with silty clay, including frequent fragments of chalk (803). The fills at the south end included sparse charcoal lumps and flecks and rare orange ceramic fragments and resemble (503) (**Plate 17**). The only finds were fifteen fragments of large mammal bone, including an antler pedicle. The bone was in very similar condition to the material from (503). Photographic evidence suggests that the shallower north east end may have been an earlier cut.

6. Finds

6.1 The finds recovered from the programme of works were washed and, where necessary, will be marked with an accession number issued by Wiltshire Heritage Museum. The finds were separated into artefact types and recorded by context number, quantity and weight in grams. The finds are discussed below and are presented separately in a summary table (**Appendix 3**). A request will be made to the site owner to transfer the title of all finds to the above Museum.

Pottery

6.2 The pottery recovered during the course of the evaluation amounted to 33 sherds (154g; mean 3.62g). All were in moderate to good condition, retaining their inclusions, allowing a relatively straight-forward assessment of their dates.

6.3 Early Neolithic: nine wall sherds (24g; mean 2.67g) were recovered from pit fill (503), all in a thin-walled, moderately well fired black, sandy, fabric including moderate amounts of poorly sorted angular flint fragments (<4mm), most calcined. There were no traces of decoration and no sherds were of diagnostic form; however, the character of the associated flint assemblage within a well-sealed deposit strongly suggests an Early, possibly middle, Neolithic date.

6.4 Medieval: From a total of 8 sherds (45g; mean 5.63g) five were unstratified, from the topsoil (100) in Field 1, one (3g) was from (103) and two (38g) were from (209), both possible lynchet fills. The latter two included an outwardly and slight inwardly, expanded flattened from from a straight sided dish. Both were in a sandy fabric which included moderate fine to medium subangular quartz and sparse flint fragments (<o.4mm).

6.5 Post Medieval: A total of 14 sherds (64g; mean 4.92) were judged to be late Post Medieval to Modern. Three (7g) were from a combe bed fill (805), two (6g) from a ditch or lynchet fill (105), and four (25g) from the fill of a possible track (203). Three other ceramic fragments from the latter two contexts may also be pottery sherds but are too poor a condition to be sure. A very abraded sherd from (605) in a well-fired pinkish red fabric included medium sparse subrounded quartz.

	Early Neolithic		Medieval		Post Medieval		Modern		Other	
Context	no.	wt.	no.	wt.	no.	wt.	no.	wt.	no.	wt.
100			5	4						
103			1	3						
105							6	32	2	3
203							4	25	2	7
209			2	38						
503	9	24								
605					1	<1				
805					3	7				
TOTALS	9	24	8	45	4	7	10	57	4	10

Table 1. The Pottery

Flint

6.6 A total of 46 (363g) chipped flints (35g) were recovered. For the purpose of the analysis secondary flakes are defined as those retaining less than 50% of their cortex, whilst tertiary flakes have no remaining cortex. No primary flakes (retaining 50% or more cortex) were recovered. The isolated, residual, tertiary, Neolithic flake/blades were found in track fill (203) and in (403). The former also produced a tertiary flake. Significant groups were recovered from pit fills (503) and (607).

6.7 The ten flakes (39g) from (607) were divided equally between secondary and tertiary flakes, one which was recorticated on a single facet. The flakes were crudely struck and fairly squat. A single long, sharply pointed, flake showed slight, very localised retouch implying that the point had been deliberately fashioned. The material was either mottled pale grey or dark grey.

6.8 The material from (503) was much more varied, comprising twenty secondary and twelve tertiary struck pieces, one of which had been burnt. Of six distinct flake/blades, five had length:breadth ratios of *ca*. 5:2 or greater and one of greater than 2:1. The group also included a fine rod with a ratio of 5:1. Specific tool-types included a hammerstone and a large distal end scraper (ratio 3:2). One other flake had a slight unilateral notch and wear on the opposing edge. The material was very similar to that from (607).

6.9 The flakes from (607) are too few to date with confidence. They are notably more irregular and tending to be squat (a smaller or inverse length:breadth ratio), from which a middle or later Bronze Age date might be inferred (Woodward 1991, figure 45, 44-48), as would be true for the larger of two flakes from (203). The larger assemblage from (503) is of an altogether different character, including a significant number of long flake blades, large end-scraper and a straight-backed bladelet. The latter is of a diagnostically Mesolithic or Early Neolithic type which might predate the other a material (Healey 1988, figure,41, L29 and L26; figure 25, L54; Butler 2005, figure 50) although an Early to Middle Neolithic date would be entirely in character.

	Debitage		Flake		Bladelet		Scraper		Hammer stone	
Context	no.	wt.	no.	wt.	no.	wt.	no.	wt.	no.	wt.
203			2	12						
403			1	2						
503	13	36	17	66	1	<1	1	30	1	173
607	1	1	9	38						
TOTALS	14	37	29	118	1	0	1	30	1	173

Table 2. The Flint

Animal bone

6.10 A total of 59 bone fragments (259g) were recovered. Of these 5 were so fragmentary that the size of the animal from which they derived could not be determined ((contexts (203), (209) and (805). The two remaining groups from pit fills (503) (39 fragments, 99g) and (803) (15 fragments, 154g) were of potentially greater interest. Both groups were in similarly very poor condition with bleached, depleted, surfaces, but it was clear that the bulk or all of the material was from large mammals. The group from (803) included an antler pedicle and this, together with its comparable condition, might suggest that the context is of a broadly similar date to (503).

Other finds

6.11 A modern rusted iron bracket was recovered from ditch or lynchet fill (105) and a small rusted knife with rivet hole through the tang from a possible old combe bed (805). Two pieces of clinker from ditch or lynchet fill (103) may indicate steam ploughing from the late 19th or early 20th centuries.

7. Discussion and Conclusions

7.1 The research into the archaeological and historical background has revealed a wealth of material for a rural site, ranging through the prehistoric periods, from the Neolithic onwards and including Romano-British, Saxon and Medieval sites and stray finds. The most significant concentration of finds is from the slope overlooking Field 6 where late Iron Age and Romano-British coins and broochs, as well as other finds, are consistent with the presence of a later prehistoric shrine which became a temple.

7.2 Given the area covered by the easement (15m over a distance exceeding 4km) the number of features identified during the project is small, but some of those which are datable have made useful additions to knowledge of the area.

7.3 The flint assemblage provides strong evidence that pit [503] is of early Neolithic date and it is very possible that [802] is also Neolithic. On the other hand, the assemblage from pit [608] is consistent with a Middle to Late Bronze Age date. All three of these pits appear to have been filled fairly rapidly with organically rich soils, lacking the rounded flecks of chalk characteristic of slow, water-induced, formation. The pit [210] may also be prehistoric, although its rapid rubbly fill differs from those of the other pits.

7.4 The hollow way, which was identified as the only known feature to be investigated before fieldwork began, proved resistant do dating. Such features are notoriously difficult to date as during their formation there is a reversal of stratigraphy; the eroding base is late in the sequence and earlier material from sides often collapses over it through weathering. In this instance the thin topsoil and basal trample imply that is has been a well-used path until recent times. The steepness of its south west side suggests that it may first have developed as a path along ditch. Eventually the path cut to the level of the ditch's base, creating a broader track.

7.5 Lynchets a little above the linear features [104]/[102] and [204]/[213]/[206] on the lower scarp remain clearly visible (**Plate 2**). The lynchets and both features are probably products of Medieval cultivation, although the appearances of the latter have been altered by subsequent ploughing which may also have allowed the introduction of later finds. The same may also be true of finds in the fills of ditches [202]/[208] and [604] and neither feature can be securely dated.

7.6 The line of the pipe-trench easement was probably far enough away from Market Lavington to avoid any substantial Saxon deposits and too close to the bottom of the scarp to fall within the areas of more intensive prehistoric and Romano-British activity noted higher up the slope. The presence of at least one early Neolithic pit should be regarded as a significant enhancement of an Historic Environment Record for that period which hitherto had amounted to a stray flint axe fragment.

8. Archive

8.1 The Site archive is currently held at the offices of Context One Archaeological Services Ltd and consists of 240 digital images in .jpg format, 30 drawn plans and sections on stable drawing film and the written paper record – including 29 context sheets and various registers. The archive will be prepared to comply with guidelines set out in *Environmental Standards for the Permanent Storage of Excavated Material from Archaeological Sites* (UKIC 1984, Conservation Guidelines 3)/ *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-term Storage* (UKIC 1990)/ *Standards in the Museums Care of Archaeological Collections* (Museum and Galleries Commission 1992)/ *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (English Heritage 1991). Arrangements will be made to deposit the archive with Wiltshire County Museums Service within 12 months following the submission of this report.

8.2 Copies of the Watching Brief report will be deposited with:

Wessex Water plc.
Claverton Down Road
Claverton Down
Bath
England BA2 7WW

Wiltshire Heritage Museum
Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society
41 Long Street
Devizes
Wiltshire SN10 1NS

9. COAS Acknowledgements

9.1 Context One Archaeological Services Ltd would like to thank the site manager, Neil Allen (for Trant construction, Southampton) for his assistance during the watching brief and Mr David Vaughn (Assistant County Archaeologist, WACS) for curatorial advice.

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Appendix 1. Context Summary

Context no.	Period	Type	Description	Earlier than	Contemp. with	Later than	Length	Width/ Diameter	Thickness / Depth
5100	Modern	Layer	Topsoil. Very dark brown (10YR 3/2) firm silty soil including moderate blocky Greensand fragments (0.40m)	101			7m	2m	2m
5101		Layer	Trample. Greenish grey (1 8/1) soft gley silt	102		100	1m	1m	0.10m
5102		Cut	Holloway cut	103		101		7.10m	2m
5103	Geology	Layer	Natural. Green grey (1 8/1) gley green chalk / blocky Greensand	102					
100		Layer	Topsoil. Light brownish grey (10YR 6/2) compacted clayey silt including frequent chalk flecks			101			0.30m
101	Geology	Layer	Head deposit. Light yellow brown (2.5YR 6/3) compacted silty Greensand including frequent chalk fragments	100					
102	Post Med	Cut	Shallow ditch or strip lynchet. Uneven east to west linear cut	103	104	101	1m	3m	0.22m
103	Post Med	Fill	Ditch or lynchet fill [102]. Pale grey (10YR) firm silty clay including occasional small angular weathered chalk fragments	100	105	102	1m	3m	0.22m
104	Post Med	Cut	Shallow ditch or strip lynchet cut. Uneven north to south linear cut	105	102	101	1m	1.80m	0.15m
105	Post Med	Fill	Ditch or lynchet fill [104]. Pale grey (10YR) firm silty clay including occasional small angular weathered chalk fragments	100	103	101	1m	1.80m	0.15m
106	Geology	Layer	White (2.5YR 8/1) chalk including Greensand	101					
200		Layer	Topsoil. Light brownish grey (10YR 6/2) compacted clayey silt including frequent chalk flecks	201		203			
201	Geology	Layer	Head deposit. Light yellow brown (2.5YR 6/3) compacted silty Greensand including frequent chalk fragments	202		215			

202	Medieval	Cut	Track/Droveway. Irregular north east to south west linear cut, uneven floor	203		201			
203	Medieval	Fill	Track fill [202]. Very pale grey (10YR) soft degraded chalk and greensand, including frequent angular chalk fragments	200		202			
204		Cut	Gully or lynchet. East to west splayed 'U' profiled linear	205	213	201	1m	0.75m	0.15m
205		Fill	Single gully fill [204]. Olive (5Y 4/4) firm clayey silt including occasional small angular weathered chalk fragments. Slow formation (colluvial)	200	214	204	1m	0.75m	0.15m
206		Cut	Ditch cut. East to west straight-sided shallow linear cut	207		201			
207		Fill	Single ditch fill [206]. Pale grey (10YR) firm clay	200		206			
208		Cut	Gully or lynchet. East to west splayed 'U' profiled linear	209		201	1m	1.50m	0.15m
209		Fill	Single gully or lynchet fill [208]. Pale grey (10YR) firm silty clay. Slow formation				1m	1.50m	0.15m
210		Cut	Pit cut. Assymetrical shallow, bowl-shaped cut	211		201		1.80m	0.50m
211		Fill	Lower pit fill [210]. Light grey (10YR) friable loam	212		210		1.80m	0.50m
212		Fill	Upper pit fill [210]. Mid grey brown firm silty clay	200		211			
213		Cut	Probable strip lynchet cut. Irregular sided, shallow 'U' based cut	214	204	201	19m	3.10m	0.30m
214		Fill	Light grey (10YR) firm, clay including frequent medium angular chalk/Greensand blocks. Slow formation (colluvial)	200	205	213	19m	3.10m	0.30m
215	Geology	Layer	White (2.5YR 8/1) chalk including Greensand	201					
300		Layer	Topsoil.			301			0.25m
301	Geology	Layer	Natural.	300					
400		Layer	Topsoil.			401			0.20m

401	Geology	Layer	Natural.	400					
500		Layer	Topsoil. Light brownish grey (10YR 6/2)compacted silty clay loam including frequent chalk flecks			503			0.20m
501	Geology	Layer	Natural. Light yellow/brown (2.5YR 6/3) compacted silt including frequent weathered angular chalk fragments	500		502			
502	Neolithic	Cut	Irregular bowl-shaped pit cut	503		501		1.20m	0.40m
503	Neolithic	Fill	Pit fill [502]. Pale grey (10YR) compacted blocky clay including moderate angular weathered chalk fragments and charcoal	500		502		1.20m	0.40m
600		Layer	Topsoil. Light brownish grey (10YR 6/2) compacted silty clay loam including frequent chalk flecks			603, 605, 608			
601	Geology		Natural. Light yellow/brown (2.5YR 6/3) compacted silt including frequent weathered angular chalk fragments	602, 604, 607					
602		Cut	Irregular shallow bowl-shaped pit (?) cut	603		601		0.80m	0.16m
603		Fill	Single pit (?) fill [602]. Pale grey (10YR) firm silty clay, including frequent medium sized angular chalk fragments. Slow formation (colluvial)	600		602		0.80m	0.16m
604		Cut	Ditch cut. Straight-sided, east to west linear cut	605		601	2m		0.35m
605		Fill	Ditch fill [604]. Pale grey (10YR) compacted silty clay including moderate chalk flecks and occasional chalk fragments	601		604	2m		0.35m
606			Not used						
607	Bronze Age	Fill	Pit fill [608]. Pale grey (10YR) compacted silty clay	600		608	2.40m	1.10m	0.37m
608	Bronze Age	Cut	Pit fill [607]. North west to south east oriented, irregular sided, flat bottomed, kidney-planned cut	607		601	2.40m	1.10m	0.37m
700		Layer	Topsoil. Grey (10YR 5/1) compacted silty loam, including frequent chalk flecks and fragments			701			

701		Layer	Natural. Light yellow brown (10YR 8/3) compacted silt including frequent angular weathered chalk	700					
800		Layer	Topsoil. Grey (10YR 5/1) compacted silt including frequent chalk fragments (<0.20m)			803, 805			
801		Layer	Natural. Light yellow brown (10YR 8/3) compacted silt including frequent chalk fragments (<0.20m)	802, 804					
802		Cut	Pit cut. Irregular sided, north east to south west oriented, tear drop planned cut.	803		801	2.05m	1.05m	0.30m
803		Fill	Pit fill [802]. Pale grey (10YR) firm silty clay, including frequent chalk flecks. Slow formation (colluvial)	800		802	2.05m	1.05m	0.30m
804	Post Med	Cut	Old combe bed (?) . Straight sided, irregular east to west linear	805		801		17m	
805	Post Med	Fill	Combe bed fill [804]. Pale grey (10YR) firm silty clay. Slow formation (alluvial)	800		804		17m	
900		Layer	Topsoil. Grey (10YR 5/1) compacted silt including frequent chalk fragments (0.20m)			901			0.25m
901		Layer	Natural. Light yellow brown (10YR 8/3) compacted silt including frequent angular chalk fragments (<0.30m)	900					

Appendix 2. Wiltshire Historic Environment Record

SMR Nos.	Description	NGR	Figure 1 reference
Prehistoric (– AD42)			
SU05SW104	Flint. Worked flake. Neolithic	SU 026 546	6
SU05NW601	Barrow, bowl. Traces of antiquarian excavation. Bronze Age	SU 0369 5536	9
SU05 NW603	Barrow, bowl (although Grinsell considered might be upcast from nearby pit)	SU03735515	12
SU05NW154	Axe. Bronze, rim of socket axe. Ring; bronze. Late Bronze Age	SU 036 555	8
SU05NW202	Coins, brooch etc. A)An irregular Dobunnic silver coin. B)2 silver coins of Rushall Down Type 1A. C)3 silver coins type as before, one piece of bow brooch; fragment of Colchester type brooch; another brooch fragment and a bronze ?casting sprue. A further 15 coins on a likely temple site.	SU 0370 5545	10
SU05NW201	Coins. Five irregular Dobunnic coins. Iron Age	SU 0395 5560	11
Roman (AD43 - AD450)			
SU05NW311	Brooch. Bronze, tapering bow form	SU 0355 5540	7
SU05NW313	Coins, brooches, pottery, etc. A) Ten AE coins and one denarius found by a metal detectorist. B)Two fragments of a Dolphin brooch, a wine stirrer, 2 fragments of a bronze stirrup and pottery. C) 357 coins found with bronze objects on a likely temple site.	SU 0370 5545	10
SU05NW312	Coins, bracelets. Boxed coin hoard and 2 bracelet fragments	SU 0395 5560	11
Saxon (AD450 – AD1066)			
SU05SW403	Coin. Porcupine sceat struck in Lower Rhineland, AD700-710	SU 026 540	5
Medieval (AD1066 - AD1547)			
SU05NW471	Coin. Silver	SU 0355 5540	7
SU05NW473	Coins. Henry III farthing (London mint); Edward IV penny (York)	SU 0370 5545	10
SU05NW314	Coin. A Venetian Soldino of Doge. Obverse: S MARCUS VENETI; reverse: Doge standing facing left	SU 046 557	13
Undated			
SU05NE621	Trackway. Visible on air photograph (A16/212139, 1971; Wiltshire county Council)	SU 0538 5584	14

Appendix 3. Summary of Finds

Context	Pottery		Flint		Bone		CBM		Metal		Clinker	
	no.	wt.	no.	wt.	no.	wt.	no.	wt.	no.	wt.	no.	wt.
F1, u/s, 100	5	4										
103	4	12			6						2	7
105	6	32					2	2	1	23		
F2, 200	10		1									
203	4	37	2	12	2	3						
209	2	38			3	<1						
403			1	2								
503	9	24	33	310	39	99						
605							1	<1				
607			10	39								
803					15	154						
805	3	7			2	2	4	28	1	7		
TOTALS	43	154	47	363	67	258	7	30	2	30	2	7