

B0401: Ditchampton to Bulbridge, Wiltshire: Elimination of standalone source

An Archaeological Watching Brief



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for

Wessex Water plc

by



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Non-technical Summary

Context One Archaeological Services Ltd carried out an archaeological watching brief during groundworks relating to a water pipeline between Ditchampton and Bulbridge in Wiltshire) from NGR SU 08971 30013 to SU 08673 32025; respectively north and south of Wilton, an ancient capital of Wessex) from February to April 2012. The project was commissioned and funded by Wessex Water plc.

The route of the pipeline passed very close to two known areas of remnant earthworks on either side of the River Nadder. All features were thought to be natural at the time of the fieldwork, excepting a Post-medieval ditch. It is possible that two broad linear depressions overlooking a Saxon settlement from south-facing slopes above served as agricultural terracing.

A small assemblage of finds was recovered during the watching brief and included a thin scatter of modern and Post-medieval pottery.

1. Introduction

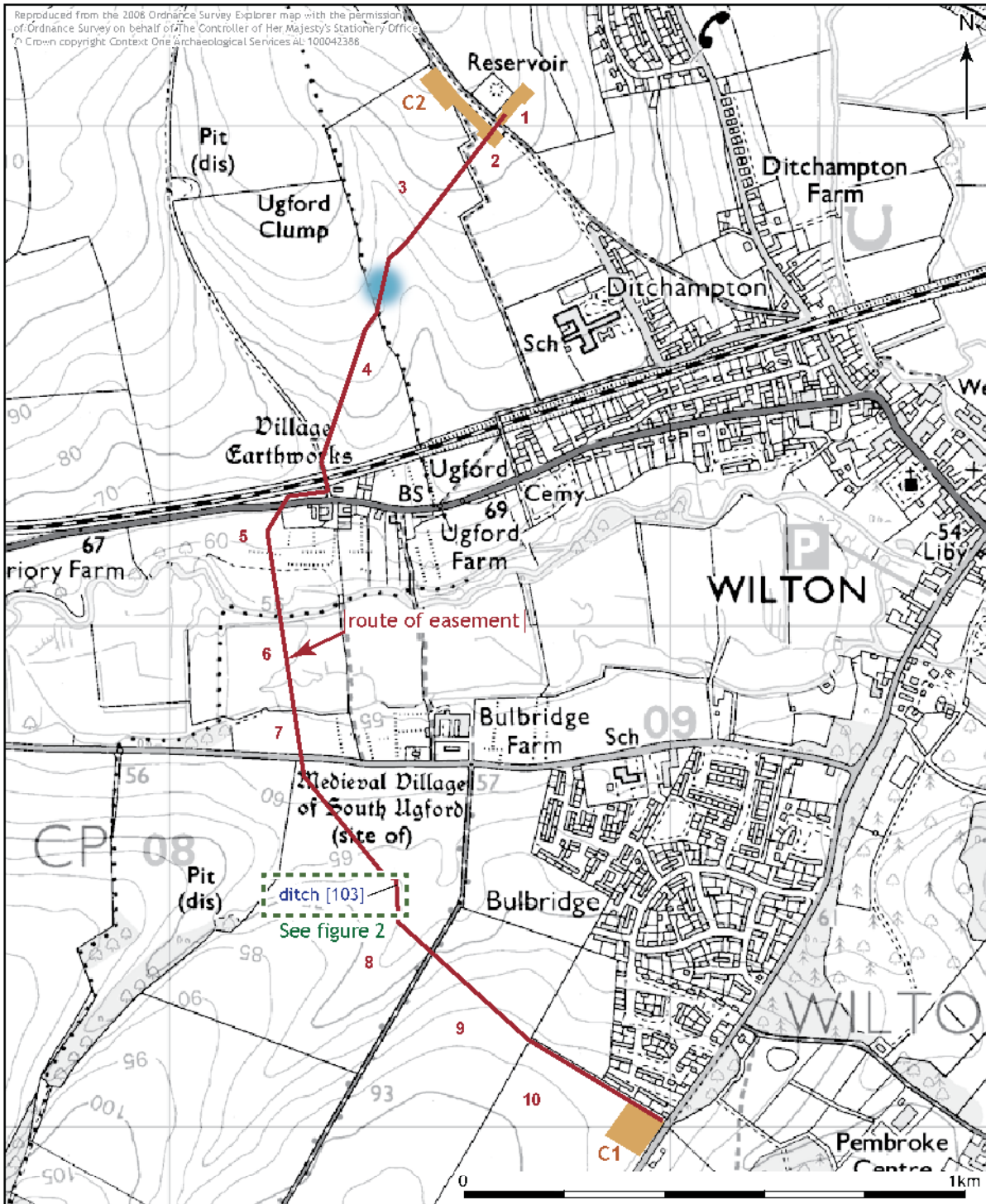
- 1.1 Context One Archaeological Services Ltd (COAS) carried out an archaeological watching brief during groundworks relating to *ca.* 2.5km long water pipeline for the elimination of a standalone source between Ditchampton and Bulbridge in Wiltshire (from NGR SU 08971 30013 to SU 08673 32025; hereafter referred to as the Site). The project was commissioned and funded by Wessex Water plc under a Term of Agreement contract and was carried out over seven days from 27th February to 3rd April 2012.
- 1.2 Following a consultation request from Mr Ollie Williams (Environmental Scientist, Wessex Water), Ms Clare King (Assistant County Archaeologist, Wiltshire Council) noted that archaeological features/deposits, susceptible to damage or destruction by development, could be present on the Site. However, as the nature or presence of such features/deposits had not been proven on the basis of currently available information, it was determined that a reasonable archaeological response would be to carry out a watching brief during all groundworks (Milby 2012).
- 1.3 The request for the archaeological work follows advice given by Central Government as set out Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (2010).
- 1.4 This report summarises the topographical, geological, archaeological setting of the Site, and presents the results of the archaeological investigation.

2. Site Location, Topography and Geology

- 2.1 Bulbridge and Ditchampton are areas south and north of Wilton, Wiltshire, the latter situated *ca.* 4.7km from the centre of the city of Salisbury. The pipeline route, *ca.* 2.5km in length, crossed the valley of the River Nadder. It extended from the southern boundary of the built up area of Bulbridge (*ca.* 1.5km south of the centre of Wilton), via areas west of Bulbridge and Ugford farms (*ca.* 1.4km west of the centre of Wilton) on lower slopes either side of the valley, before rising to the reservoir north of Ditchampton (*ca.* 1.3km north west of the centre of Wilton). The southernmost point of the pipeline is on a north east facing slope at *ca.* 88m above Ordnance Datum (aOD), from where it falls to *ca.* 54m aOD in the valley bottom, before rising to *ca.* 105m aOD where it joins the reservoir.
- 2.2 The route of the pipeline is on cretaceous chalk, crossing Seaford Chalk Formation on the higher ground on either side of the valley, and areas of Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation lower down. It also bisects Quaternary head deposits of clay, silt and gravel (BGS 2012), as well as river terrace of sand and gravel on either side of the Quaternary alluvium of clay, and gravel in the valley bottom.

3. Archaeological and Historical Background

- 3.1 The archaeological background for the Site has been drawn from the Wiltshire Historic Environment online map and from the English Heritage Extensive Urban Survey report on Wilton (McMahon 2004). The general location of known sites and finds is indicated on **Figure 1**.



	<p>— route of pipeline (phase two)</p> <p>■ compound location</p> <p>CX compound number</p> <p>X field numbers</p> <p>[XXX] location and cut number of archaeology</p> <p>□ further figure reference</p> <p>● probable natural features</p>	<p>PROJECT TITLE</p> <p>Ditchampton to Bulbridge, Wiltshire: Elimination of standalone source</p>
	<p>FIGURE TITLE</p> <p>Site setting, route of pipeline and compounds and location of archaeology</p>	<p>SCALE</p> <p>as shown</p>
		<p>PROJECT CODE</p> <p>C1/WBF/12/DBW</p>
		<p>FIGURE NO.</p> <p>1</p>

Prehistoric and Roman (- AD450)

- 3.2 Isolated findspots represent known pre-Saxon activity within 50m of the pipeline route. Periods represented are Mesolithic (Figure 1, field 3), and Romano-British (Figure 1, fields 7 and 9).

Saxon (AD450 - 1065)

- 3.3 Wilton is thought to have been established during the earliest Saxon occupation and by the 8th century AD is known to have been ‘capital of the nascent shire of Wiltshire’ (McMahon 2004, 5). Records show that Bulbridge and Ditchampton were suburbs of the town, lying just outside the *burh* defences, as early the 10th century AD (McMahon 2004, 7). There are references to a mill at Bulbridge from AD956 (McMahon 2004, 27). To the north of the River Nadder the pipe route passed through the west fringe of an area denoted as of Saxon settlement with surviving earthworks at Ugford Farm (Figure 1, field 5; WSMM).

Medieval (AD1066 - 1547)

- 3.4 South of the Nadder the pipeline route passes immediately to the west of Medieval settlement, represented by surviving earthworks (Figure 1, field 7; WSMM) at Bulbridge Farm.

4. Methodology

Archaeological Methodology

- 4.1 A 360 degree tracked or JCB-type machine, fitted with a toothless grading bucket, removed the topsoil along the route of the pipeline to create a *ca.* 10m wide easement, after which a continuous 1m wide and 1m deep pipe trench was excavated by machine along the route of the pipeline. Where the route intersected the A30 road, the railway line and the River Nadder, directional drilling was used to tunnel under these obstacles.
- 4.2 All machine excavation was carried out under archaeological supervision to the depth of formation, archaeological features, *in situ* subsoil or natural geology, whichever was encountered first.

Archaeological Methodology

- 4.3 The programme of archaeological work was carried out in accordance with the *Standards for Archaeological Assessment and Field Evaluation in Wiltshire* (County Archaeological Service (CAS), Wiltshire County Council Libraries Museums and Arts, 1995) and with the codes, standards and guidelines set out by the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 1985, rev. 2010; 1990, rev. 2008; 1994, rev. 2008) at all times during the course of the investigation. Current Health and Safety legislation and guidelines were followed on site.
- 4.4 All features/deposits were recorded using standard COAS pro-forma recording sheets. Stratigraphic relationships were recorded using a “Harris-Winchester matrix” diagram. Drawings on stable film were scaled at 1:10 for sections and 1:20 for plans for A digital photographic record included images of individual features, development excavation areas and working shots to illustrate the nature of the archaeological operation mounted.
- 4.5 The archaeological work comprised entirely of the observation of groundworks. The location, extent and altitude of the features was mapped using a TopCon GRS-1 Global Positioning System receiving real-time calibrations to produce accuracies of 1-2cm.

5. Results

5.1 The deposits encountered during fieldwork are listed and described in **Appendix 1**. In the text, context numbers for layers and deposits appear in standard brackets, e.g. (102) and those for cut features are in square brackets, e.g. [104]. Where a feature is discussed, it is referenced with its cut, and associated fill.

Soil sequence

5.2 The topsoil (100) differed little throughout the length of the easement, comprising a greyish brown silty clay, usually overlying a subsoil (102) of a similarly coloured silty clay. On the slopes either side of the valley bottom this gave way to a surface of weathered chalk.

5.3 The simple and shallow soil sequence on the valley sides reflected episodes of aggressive ploughing which had cut into the natural as exemplified in compounds 1 and 2 and along the easement (**Plates 1 to 3**).

Features

5.4 In field 3 striking broad, west to east, linears followed the contour (**Figure 1; Plate 4**). Machine excavation and cleaning revealed that they were shallow cuts into the natural bedrock (**Plate 5**) which may be natural geological stepping. However, it is also possible that they are the degraded traces of negative lynchets.

5.5 Two smaller, similarly oriented linear cuts, between the broad linears may also have formed naturally, although the truncated 'V' profile of [109] was suggestive of a ditch. It was clearly later than the fill (110) of [111] which was 'U' profiled (**Plate 6**).

5.6 A second truncated 'V' profiled linear feature [103] was identified and sampled in field 8. Two phases of filling appeared to have been gradual and incidental or natural (**Figure 2; Plate 7**), although it clearly had been cut as a ditch. Finds which are probably of Post-medieval date were recovered from the upper fill (104) only.

5.7 Due to the uncertain character and date of the features it was deemed inappropriate to collect environmental soil samples.

6. Finds

Ceramic

6.1 A total of 12 (134g) ceramic fragments were recovered representing two distinct fabrics.

6.2 Fabric 1: Core variously medium grey, pale yellow or pink with pink margins and surfaces, moderately well fired. The sandy fabric included moderate to abundant fine subangular and subrounded colourless quartz with poorly sorted sparse to moderate pale yellow grog and red iron oxide of up to 5mm maximum dimension. The interior surface of one curved sherd was covered thinly with a light yellowish brown transparent glaze. Nine sherds (71g). Post-medieval.

6.3 Fabric 2: Medium to dark reddish orange sandy fabric including moderate to abundant fine subangular and subrounded colourless quartz. Two sherds retained traces of black, pitch-like, concretions on surfaces and edges. Three sherds (63g). Modern.

6.4 All of the Fabric 2 and six of the Fabric 1 finds were unstratified within field 8. Three small sherds in Fabric 1 were recovered from the upper fill (104) of ditch [103] in the same field.

Metal

6.5 One handmade iron nail (43g), 108mm long, tapering from a rectangular head of 15mm by 10mm to a point of 3mm by 1.5mm, was recovered from the upper fill (104) of ditch [103]. Undated.



Plate 1. Compound 2 (from W)



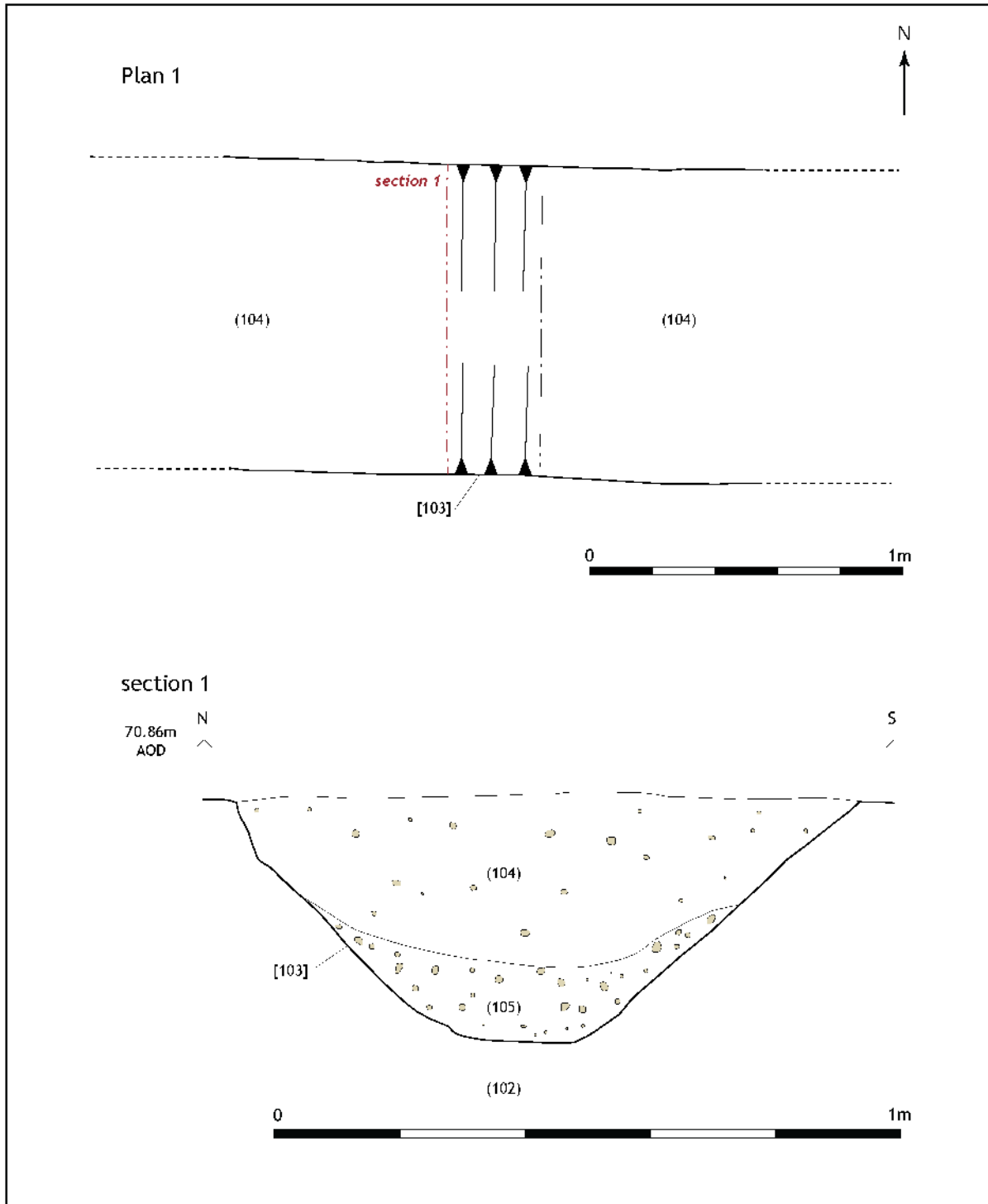
Plate 2. Compound 1 (from N)



Plate 3. Easement at Bulbridge (from SE)



Plate 4. Probable natural features (from S)




<p>(000) deposit/fill number</p> <p>[000] cut number</p> <p>XX.Xm AOD ^ height above ordnance datum (AOD)</p> <p> chalk fragments</p>	<p>PROJECT TITLE</p> <p>Ditchampton to Bulbridge, Wiltshire: Elimination of standalone source</p>		
	<p>FIGURE TITLE</p> <p>Plan 1 and section 1</p>		
	<p>SCALE</p> <p>as shown</p>	<p>PROJECT CODE</p> <p>C1/WBF/12/DBW</p>	<p>FIGURE NO.</p> <p>2</p>



Plate 5. Probable natural linear (from SSE; 1m scale)



Plate 6. Linears [109] and [111] (from E; 1m scale)



Plate 7. Ditch [103] (from E; 1m scale)

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 The most conspicuous known archaeology along the route of the pipeline lies on either side of the River Nadder (**Figure 1**, fields 5 and 7). Although neither archaeological remains or finds were identified in either area, the proximity of the Saxon settlement west of Ugford Farm to the linear features on the south facing slope above it lends circumstantial weight to their interpretation as lynchets.
- 7.2 The single clear-cut ditch in field 8 is broadly in line with the north boundary of fields 9 and 10. However, no boundary across the modern field 8 is marked in on the 1st edition 25" Ordnance survey map or on later maps. Indeed, the north boundary of fields 9 and 10 is shown for the first time in 1901 so the ditch is unlikely to be related to it. It may reasonably be assumed that the ditch is Post Medieval in date.

8. Archive

- 8.1 The Site archive is currently held at the offices of Context One Archaeological Services Ltd and consists of 33 digital images in .jpg format, including five profile and context sheets, two scaled drawings and various registers including four Day Record sheets, two Photographic Register sheets and a single Graphics Register sheet. 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 Heritage Museum Service within 12 months following the submission of this report. The finds are of little archaeological significance and should be discarded.
- 8.2 Copies of the Watching Brief report will be deposited with:

Wessex Water plc
Claverton Down
Bath
BA2 7WW

Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre
Cocklebury Road
Chippenham
Wiltshire
SN15 3QN

9. COAS Acknowledgements

- 9.1 Context One Archaeological Services Ltd would like to thank Mr Ollie Williams (Environmental Scientist, Wessex Water plc) for his assistance during the course of the project. We are also grateful to Ms Clare King (Assistant County Archaeologist, Wiltshire Council) for curatorial advice.

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(Accessed 12th April 2012)

Appendix 1. Context Summary

Context no.	Period	Type	Description	Earlier than	Contemp. with	Later than	Length	Width/ Diameter	Thickness / Depth
100	Modern	Layer	Topsoil. Greyish brown soft silty clay			101			0.20m
101	Modern	Layer	Subsoil. Greyish brown compacted and soft silty clay	100		102			0.15m
102	Modern	Layer	Natural. Creamy white weathered chalk including flint	101		103, 109, 111			
103	Undated	Cut	Ditch. Straight-sided, flat-bottomed, linear cut	105		102		0.98m	0.40m
104	Undated	Fill	Upper ditch fill. Pale greyish brown firm silty clay loam including moderate chalk fragments	100		105		0.98m	0.28m
105	Undated	Fill	Lower ditch fill [103]. Pale greyish brown firm silty clay including frequent chalk fragments	104		103		0.70m	0.12m
106	Undated	Fill	Upper ditch or natural linear fill [109]. Reddish, yellowish, brown, friable loam including moderate gritty to gravelly chalk lumps	100		107		1.15m	0.15m
107	Undated	Fill	Middle ditch or natural linear fill [109]. Yellowish, reddish, brown, friable silty clay including frequent gritty to gravelly chalk lumps	106		108			0.12m
108	Undated	Fill	Lower ditch or natural linear fill [109]. Yellowish, reddish, brown, firm silty clay including frequent gritty to medium chalk lumps, some subangular	107		109			0.30m
109	Undated	Fill	Ditch or natural cut. West to east truncated V-profiled linear	108		110			0.50m
110	Undated	Fill	Ditch or natural linear fill [109]. Yellow brown, friable silty clay including frequent gritty to gravelly chalk lumps	109		111			0.22m
111	Undated	Fill	Ditch or natural cut. West to east U-profiled linear	110		102			0.22m