

Land at Carvinack Farm, Shortlanesend, Truro, Cornwall

An Archaeological Field Evaluation



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An Archaeological Field Evaluation

for

Galliford Try and DCH

by



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Front cover image: The western field of the Site, from the east. © Context One Archaeological Services 2015

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Non-technical summary

Context One Archaeological Services Ltd (COAS) carried out an archaeological field evaluation through trial trenching on land at Carvinack Farm, Shortlanesend, Truro, Cornwall, over thirteen days between 24 August and 17 September 2015. The project was commissioned and funded by Galliford Try and DCH.

The evaluation was required as a condition of planning consent in advance of the development of 114 dwellings, landscaping, open space and associated infrastructure on the Site. The requirement followed advice issued by Cornwall Historic Environment Planning (Archaeology) (HEP) which highlighted the potential for the presence of buried archaeological features within the development area, due to known heritage assets or presumed sites of archaeological interest nearby.

Previous archaeological investigations within the development area consist of a geophysical survey (Archaeophysica Ltd) and desk-based assessment (Cornwall Archaeological Unit) both carried out in 2014. The desk based assessment demonstrated that the Site lies within an area of Anciently Enclosed Land (AEL); traditionally this would have been the agricultural heartland of Cornwall from the late prehistoric period onwards. The surveys clearly identified a considerable number of features of archaeological interest, including those indicative of prehistoric settlement and associated field systems.

Despite this potential, the results of the evaluation trenching have only revealed evidence for low-key agricultural activity, with a single trench yielding any dateable material. This comprised the base of a Late Bronze Age vessel placed directly on the natural soil. The almost complete absence of other material culture is no doubt partly a result of the highly acidic soils, although certain objects (for example, stone implements) would be expected if there had ever been settlement here. The single Late Bronze Age pottery vessel may have survived the acidic conditions because of its larger surface area, although the presence of two other sherds within the same trench suggest that individual sherds may have survived if they were present. As such, it seems most likely that the Site was purely used for agriculture, with field systems criss-crossing both fields, and small enclosures possibly for penning animals. Indeed, two post-holes adjacent to one of the small circular enclosures may possibly represent a structural element, possibly providing shelter. Two parallel wall bases or track metalling running across the full width of the northern field are likely to be more recent in origin, although both were sealed beneath the subsoil which perhaps suggests a medieval or post-medieval date as opposed to modern.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Context One Archaeological Services Ltd (COAS) carried out an archaeological field evaluation through trial trenching on land at Carvinack Farm, Shortlanesend, Truro, Cornwall (the ‘Site’), over thirteen days between 24 August and 17 September 2015. The project was commissioned and funded by Galliford Try and DCH.
- 1.2 The evaluation was required as a condition of planning consent (Cornwall Council planning application ref. PA14/11470) in advance of the development of 114 dwellings, landscaping, open space and associated infrastructure on the Site. Condition 7 states that the development shall be undertaken in strict accordance with the recommendations set-out in the Archaeological Assessment issued by Cornwall Archaeological Unit in August 2014. This document recommended a programme of archaeological evaluation and recording ahead of any construction works (Fleming 2014, 10). The requirement also followed advice issued by Cornwall Historic Environment Planning (Archaeology) (HEP). The Cornwall HEP comment on the planning application (19 June 2015) stated:

“We have consulted the Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Historic Environment Record, which indicates potential for buried archaeological features within the development area, due to known heritage assets or presumed sites of archaeological interest nearby. We have also read the archaeological assessment and consulted the geophysical survey which clearly identified a considerable number of features of archaeological interest, including those indicative of prehistoric settlement and associated field systems. Therefore, a programme of targeted evaluation trenches and/or controlled topsoil stripping under archaeological supervision to fully record these features before destruction by subsequent development would be appropriate mitigation.”

In summary, the desk-based assessment describes the significance of the findings as follows:

“The desk based assessment has shown that the project area at Carvinack lies within an area of Anciently Enclosed Land (AEL); land that would also traditionally have been the agricultural heartland of Cornwall from later prehistory onwards. It has been shown that areas within this historic landscape character typically contain a substantial time-depth of archaeological remains. The proximity of land at Carvinack to the edges of the higher ground also makes it historically an area of transition, where settlement and land use saw periods of shift and discontinuity concomitant with changes in population densities and pressures on good available arable land and pasture. Within the vicinity of Carvinack Farm there is already evidence, both documentary and physical, for ritual burial monuments and ceremonial landscapes of typically early Bronze Age date and the more settled farming landscapes that followed, characterised by the roundhouses, enclosed settlements (rounds) and field systems of later prehistory (typically ranging in date anywhere from Middle Bronze Age into the early post-Roman period).

The significance of the geophysical results demonstrated at Carvinack is the complexity, variety and time-depth of potentially well-preserved sub-surface remains. These have the potential to shed light on changes within the wider monumental and settled landscape across a large timespan in prehistory. There is potential at Carvinack for a large Bronze Age barrow cemetery to have been superseded by late Prehistoric to Romano-British Settlement associated with a substantial field system. More unusual would be the co-existence of burial sites and roundhouses at the same location.” (Fleming 2014, 9)

- 1.3 The request for archaeological work follows advice given by Central Government as set out in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012) and the Cornwall local plan (2015).
- 1.4 The programme of archaeological works comprised four elements: the production of a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) which set out the project strategy (McConnell 2015); trial trenching; post-excavation and report production; and archive deposition. The WSI was approved by Mr Phil Copleston (Senior Development Officer, Historic Environment) prior to the commencement of any Site works.

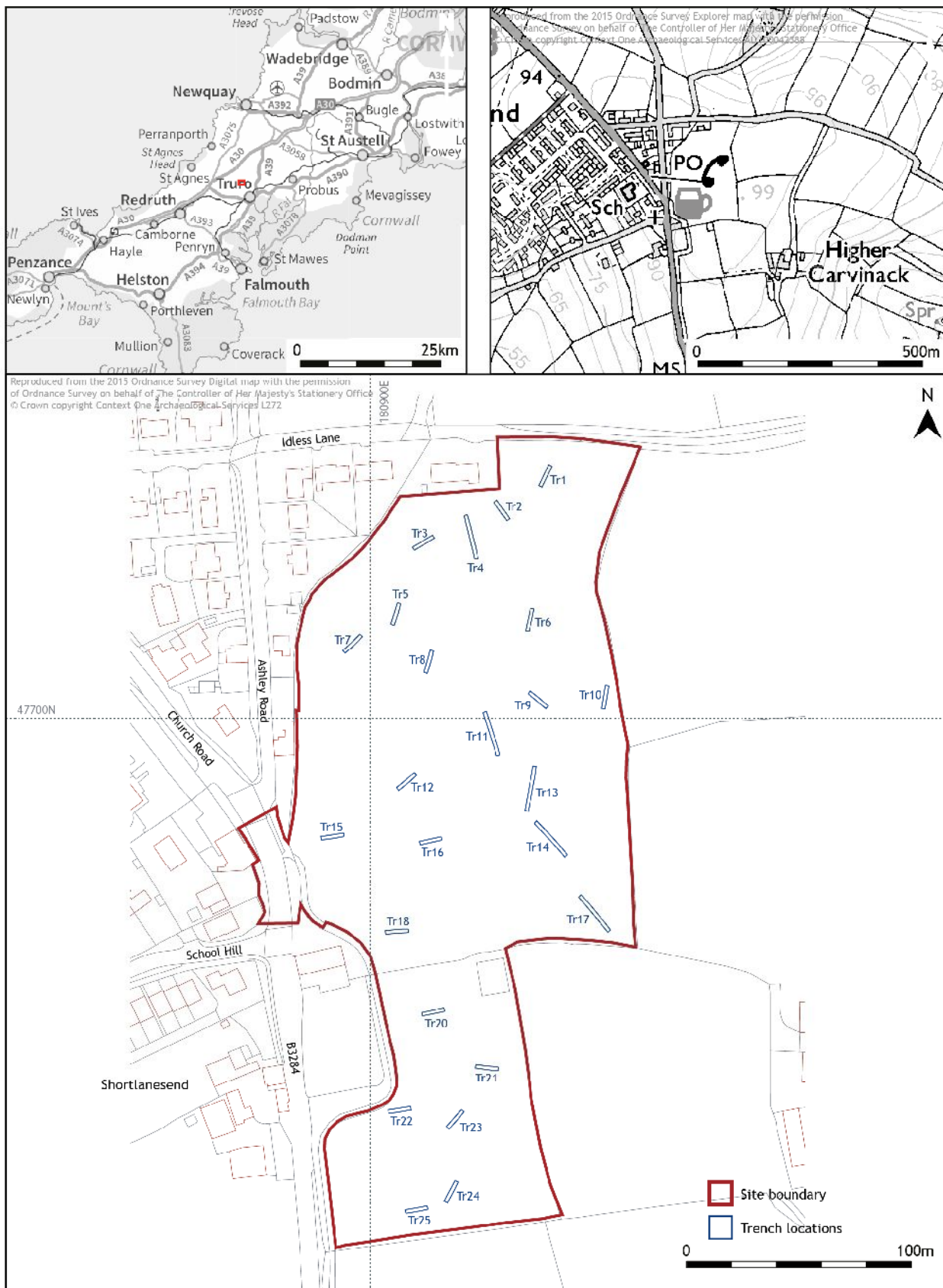


Figure 1. Site setting

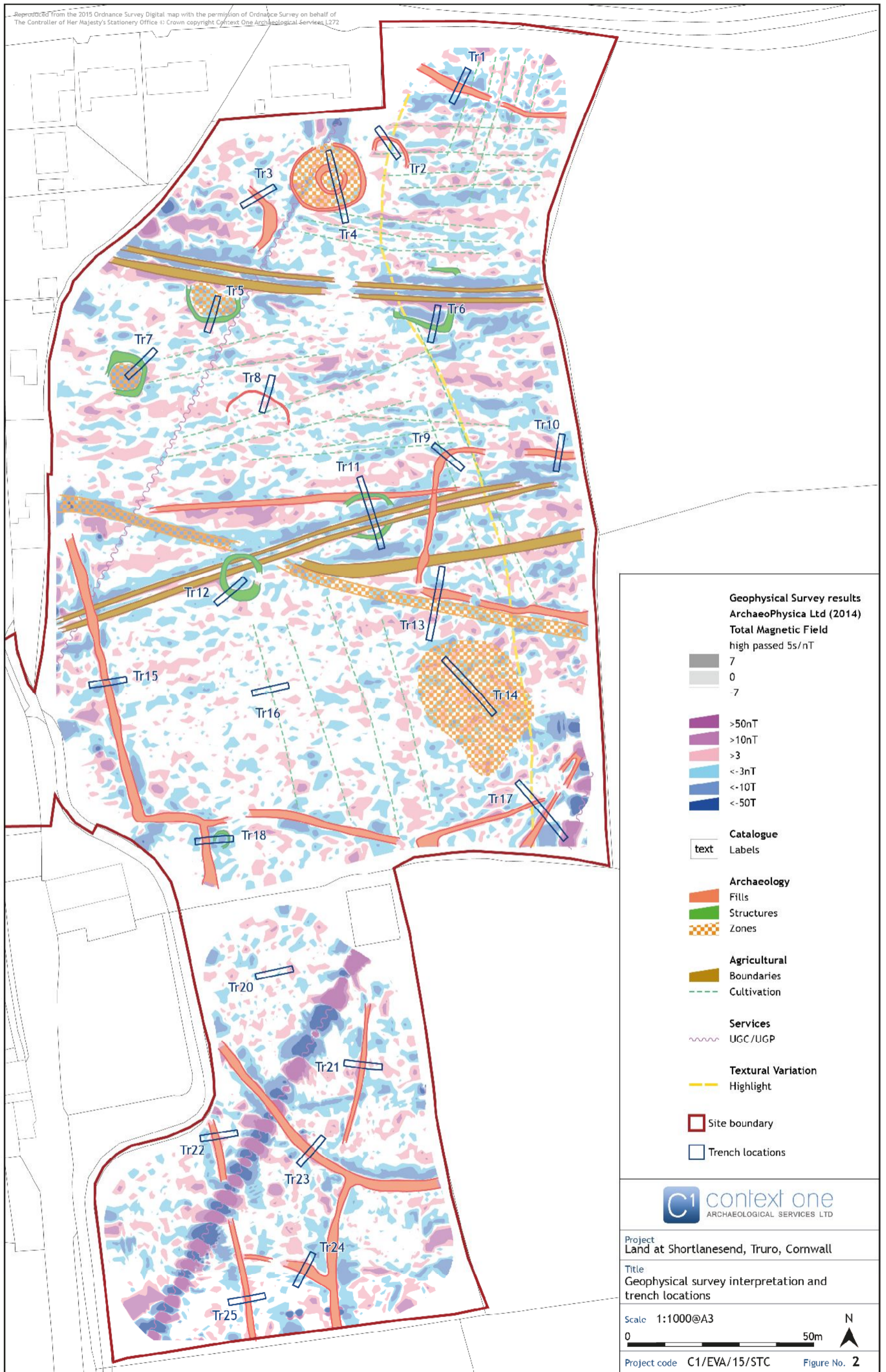


Figure 2. Geophysical survey interpretation and trench locations

2. Site location and topography

- 2.1 Shortlanesend is a village located c. 3km to the north-west of the city of Truro within the district of Carrick, mid-Cornwall. The Site occupies two fields to the east of the village (centred on SW 80936 47697), between 100m and 300m to the north-west of the historic settlement of Carvinack. It comprises two fields, a larger field bounded by Idless Lane to the north and Ashley Road to the west, with gardens from properties along both roads backing on to part of the Site, while to the east and south-east are fields. The smaller field is on the south side of a field boundary and is bordered by the B3284 Truro road to the west with fields to the east and south.
- 2.2 With a combined area of c. 4ha both fields had most recently been used for pasture, although the grass in the northern field was very long. The northern field sloped gently up from c. 95m aOD in the north towards a broad level plateau at c. 99m aOD in the south, the southern field sloping gently downhill towards the south-west at c. 95m aOD at the southern end of the Site. It forms part of a ridgeway above the steep slopes of the Allen River valley to the north-east and the Kenwyn River valley to the south.
- 2.3 The Site overlies Middle Devonian mudstones, siltstones and sandstones of the Porthtowan Formation (BGS 2015). The soils in the valley comprise slowly draining slightly acid loamy soils (NSRI 2015).

3. Methodology

Archaeological methodology

- 3.1 All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with the codes, standards and guidelines set out by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA), formerly the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) (CIfA 2014a, 2014b, 2014c). Current Health and Safety legislation and guidelines were followed on Site. The fieldwork methodology is summarised below.
- 3.2 The archaeological evaluation comprised twenty-four trenches, twenty of which measured c. 10m x 1.6m and five of which measured c. 20m x 1.6m (**Figure 1**). A further trench (Tr19) could not be excavated because the location was inaccessible behind a high fence, the enclosed area covered in dense vegetation and a concrete surface. The rationale for the positioning of trenches was dictated by the results of the previous geophysical survey (Archaeophysica Ltd, 2014) (**Figure 2**). In association with the results of a desk-based assessment (Fleming 2014), the survey indicated that significant prehistoric and possibly early Roman features may have been present across the Site.
- 3.3 A JCB-type machine equipped with a 1.6m wide toothless (grading) bucket was used to remove topsoil/overburden under the supervision of COAS archaeological staff. Machine excavation continued until archaeological features or natural geology was encountered, whichever was the first.
- 3.4 In the absence of archaeological features and deposits, a section of one long face of each trench was cleaned by hand to define the sequence of deposits. A representative section was then recorded using COAS *pro forma* evaluation trench sheets. A digital photograph was also taken of each section as well as the long axis of each trench. All photographs included an appropriate scale.
- 3.5 Where archaeological deposits were exposed machining ceased in that area to allow the investigation and recording of the exposed deposits, in accordance with guidance issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014c). Any archaeological remains encountered were sampled by manual excavation to establish stratigraphic relationships, recover sufficient artefacts to establish 'absolute' dates, and to determine feature/deposit morphology and character. All features/deposits were recorded using standard COAS *pro-forma* recording sheets. Stratigraphic relationships were recorded using a "Harris-Winchester matrix" diagram. Soil colours were logged using a Munsell soil colour chart.

- 3.6 A photographic record of the fieldwork comprised digital images in .jpg format. As a minimum, the record included photographs of individual features with suitable scales, the Site setting and working shots to illustrate the nature of the archaeological operation mounted.
- 3.7 The location, extent and altitude of the trenches, archaeological features and deposits were mapped relative to the National Grid and Ordnance Datum using a TopCon GRS-1 Global Positioning System.
- 3.8 Upon completion of the evaluation, all trenches were left open at the request of the client.
- 3.9 The finds will be retained by COAS until the programme of archaeological work has been completed. The Site landowner will then be contacted with a request to transfer the title of all retained finds to COAS with the option of returning them to him/her as legal owners of the assemblage. Should the finds be transferred to COAS we will seek to deposit the finds with the Royal Cornwall Museum (not accepting archives at the time of writing) or another suitable repository. All finds will be prepared for deposition according to the prevailing museum Deposit Guidelines.

4. Results

- 4.1 The evaluation was carried out during a variety of weather conditions, with some very wet weather but predominantly dry in both sunny and overcast conditions. None of the trenches encountered rising groundwater.
- 4.2 In the text, context numbers for cuts appear in square brackets, e.g. [1004]; layer and fill numbers appear in standard brackets, e.g. (1002). The last two digits refer to a particular context and are prefixed by the number of the trench, except where topsoil, subsoil and natural contexts extend across trenches in which case the trench number is replaced with a dash. Where a feature is discussed, it is referenced with its cut and associated fill numbers. Trench numbers are prefixed by the letters 'Tr' and Feature numbers by the letter 'F'.

General deposit sequence

- 4.3 The general deposit sequence across the Site revealed a generally shallow topsoil above a subsoil which varied in depth and directly overlay the natural (**Plates 1 & 2**). The topsoil (_00) comprised brown (7.5YR 4/4) soft silt clay containing very occasional small mudstone fragments and measured between 0.15m and 0.20m deep. The subsoil (-01) comprised strong brown (7.5YR 4/6) soft silt clay containing approximately 10% small mudstone fragments, occasional fragments of soft red sandstone and the odd charcoal fleck, measuring between 0.15m and 0.35m deep. Both the topsoil and subsoil deposits were noticeably sterile of material culture, with only a few modern sherds of pottery and glass in the topsoil. Beneath the subsoil deposits, the natural (-02) soils comprised reddish yellow (7.5YR 6/6) sandy silt clay with small soft red and yellow sandstone fragments, crushed mudstone and quartz inclusions measuring <0.10m. The proportions of the inclusions varied dramatically across the Site. In some trenches (1, 4, 11, 16, 18, 20, 21, 22 & 23) there were layers of mudstone, which in places were crushed and mixed with the soil matrix (**Plate 3**). In Tr6, Tr15 & Tr17 the geology differed, with platy mudstone in one area and predominantly soil in another part (**Plate 4**). In trenches 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 24 and 25 the soil contained patches or bands of crushed or platy mudstone, with fragments of small soft red and yellow sandstone and quartz inclusions measuring <0.10m (**Plate 5**). In Tr12 the natural soil was far cleaner than elsewhere, with only occasional patches of crushed mudstone, occasional soft red sandstone and occasional quartz (**Plate 6**). By contrast, in Tr13 and Tr14 the natural mudstone was very dense in places with little soil matrix (**Plate 7**).
- 4.4 A number of geophysical anomalies previously suggested as being potential archaeological features (**Figures 2 & 3**) were found to be natural geological features. These coincided with changes in the natural geology, with narrow, shallow soil filled channels or fissures separating two zones of natural. For example, in Tr1 the geology on one side of a channel comprised thin beds of mudstone whereas on the other side it consisted of crushed mudstone (**Plate 8**).



Plate 1. Trench profile, Tr3 (from NW; 1 x 1m scales)



Plate 2. Trench profile, Tr23 (from SE; 1 x 1m scales)



Plate 3. Tr11 (from S; 2 x 1m scales)



Plate 4. Tr6 (from SSW; 2 x 1m scales)



Plate 5. Tr10 (from SSW; 2 x 1m scales)



Plate 6. Tr12 (from SW; 2 x 1m scales)

Archaeological features & deposits

- 4.5 A total of 22 archaeological features were identified across 16 trenches, mostly corresponding to geophysical anomalies already identified as potential archaeological features (**Figure 3**). In addition, a partially complete pottery vessel was also given a feature number. A further four features identified during machining were found to be geological in origin (F4 in Tr5; F11 in Tr11; & F24 in Tr18).
- 4.6 The features are described in **Table 1** including the depth that each feature was encountered below the surface of the topsoil and references to figures and plates where included within this report. Individual contexts are described in **Appendix 1**.



Plate 7. Tr13 (from SSW; 2 x 1m scales)



Plate 8. Tr1 (from SSW; 2 x 1m scales)

Tr No.	Feature No.	Context No's & Description	On geophysical survey?	Depth below modern ground surface	Figure & Plate Refs
2	1	[203] (204). Narrow linear crossing centre of trench from NW-SE, measuring 0.42m wide & 0.15m deep with concave sides & a concave base	Y	0.45m	Figure 3 Figure 4: section 1
4	2	[403] (404) (406). Narrow linear aligned NE-SW measuring 0.58m wide & 0.28m deep with concave sides & a flat base	Y	0.35m	Figure 3 Figure 4: section 2
4	3	[405] (407). Sub-circular feature. Probable tree-throw as opposed to a pit. Straight sloping sides & irregular base with diffuse clarity. Measured 1.07m long x 0.62m wide & 0.35m deep	N	0.40m	Figure 3 Figure 4: section 3
6	8	[603] (604) (605) (606). Wide linear at interface between change in geology. Aligned E-W measuring 1.50m wide & 0.55m deep, with concave sides & a concave base. Initial slumping on N side (604) then basal fill (605) followed by upper fill (606). Horizon with subsoil uncertain due to later truncation	Y	0.45m	Figure 3 Figure 4: section 4
7	5	[703] (704) Small post-hole. Circular in plan measuring 0.45m diam & 0.28m deep with irregular sides (concave & straight) & a concave base	N	0.35m	Figure 3 Figure 4: section 5 Plate 13
7	6	[705] (706) (707) (708) Small post-hole. Circular in plan measuring 0.35m diam & 0.30m deep with concave sides & a concave base	N	0.35m	Figure 3 Figure 4: section 6 Plate 14
7	7	[709] (710) Wide linear crossing centre aligned NW-SW measuring 1.32m wide & 0.36m deep with sloping sides & a concave base	Y	0.50m	Figure 3 Figure 4: section 7
9	9	[903] (904) Narrow linear crossing centre from NE-SW measuring 0.64m wide & 0.13m deep with concave sides & a concave base	Y	0.55m	Figure 3 Figure 4: section 8
11	10	(1106) Loose stone wall of mudstone measuring 0.60m wide & aligned E-W	Y	0.40m	Figure 3 Figure 4: plan 1
11	12	[1103] (1104) (1105) Wide linear crossing from E-W measuring 0.75m wide & 0.18m deep with concave sides & a concave base	Y	0.40m	Figure 3 Figure 4: section 9
11	13	(1107) Loose stone wall of mudstone measuring 0.60m wide & aligned E-W	Y	0.40m	Figure 3 Figure 4: plan 2 Plate 18
12	14	[1203] (1204) Wide linear aligned N-S measuring 1.50m wide & 0.25m deep with gently sloping sides & concave base	Y	0.45m	Figure 3 Figure 5: section 10
13	16	[1303] (1304) Wide linear crossing from E-W measuring 0.95m wide & 0.40m deep with concave sides & a flat base	Y	0.48m	Figure 3 Figure 5: section 11
15	15	[1503] (1505) (1506). Wide linear crossing from N-S measuring 1.5m wide & 0.50m deep. The sides were initially gently sloping then sloped more sharply towards the flat base. Overcut but clearly seen in section. Possibly associated with	Y	0.55m	Figure 3 Figure 5: section 12

		band of gravel to E across centre of trench which may represent base of a bank			
17	17	[1703] (1704) Wide linear crossing from NW-SE measuring 1.00m wide & 0.30m deep with concave sides & an irregular base. Fill contained a very large unworked stone measuring c. 0.20m diameter in the centre of the fill. Possibly associated with dense gravel band to S across centre of trench which may represent base of a bank. Looser rubble band measuring 1m wide on N side of F17	Y	0.42m	Figure 3 Figure 5: section 13
18	23	[1803] (1804) (1805) Wide linear crossing from N-S measuring 1.30m wide & 0.48m deep with concave sides & an irregular base	Y	0.35m	Figure 3 Figure 5: section 14 Plate 17
18	25	[1806] (1807) Curvilinear crossing approximately from N-S measuring 1.00m wide & 0.12m deep with gently sloping sides & a flat base. Very diffuse & fill comprised re-deposited natural	Y	0.38m	Figure 3
18	26	Pottery vessel	N	0.35m	Figure 3 Plates 15 & 16
21	18	[2103] (2104) Wide linear crossing from N-S measuring 1.15m wide & 0.09m deep with gently sloping sides and an irregular base. Possibly associated with 1.50m wide band of gravel to E which may represent base of a bank	Y	0.35m	Figure 3
22	20	[2203] (2204) (2205) Wide linear crossing from NNW-SSE measuring 1.15m wide & 0.45m deep with concave sides & a flat-sloping base. Same as F21	Y	0.50m	Figure 3 Figure 5: section 15 Plate 10
23	19	[2303] (2304) Wide linear crossing from NW-SE measuring 1.10m wide & 0.40m deep with steeply sloping sides & a flat base. Possible base of bank of E side. Narrower than F21 in Tr25 with different profile & narrower base	Y	0.67m	Figure 3 Figure 5: section 16
24	22	[2403] (2404) Narrow linear crossing from NW-SE measuring 0.65m wide & 0.06m deep with very gently sloping sides & a flat base. Possibly associated with 2-3m wide band of gravel to NE which may represent base of a bank	Y	0.75m	Figure 3 Plate 9
25	21	[2503] (2504) Wide linear crossing from NNW-SSE measuring 1.70m wide & 0.56m deep with gently sloping sides & flat base. Same as F20	Y	0.45m	Figure 3 Figure 5: section 17 Plates 11 & 12

Table 1. Feature list

Ditches

- 4.7 A total of four narrow linear features were recorded; two (F1 & F2) in the northern area of the Site (**Figure 4**), one (F9) towards the centre of the northern field (**Figure 4**) and one (F22) at the southern end of the southern field (**Plate 9**). Measuring between 0.06m to 0.28m deep and 0.42m to 0.64m wide, the ditches were aligned either north-west to south-east or north-east to south-west with variable profiles.
- 4.8 A total of 12 wider ditch sections were recorded within 11 trenches across the Site, with the exception of the most northerly area. Measuring between 0.09m to 0.56m deep and 0.75m to 1.50m wide, the ditches were aligned either north-west to south-east (x 5), east to west (x 2) or north to south (x 4) with variable profiles. One of these ditches was a very shallow curvilinear (F25) and was located immediately west of the pottery vessel (F26) within Tr18. This trench also contained a wide linear (F23) located at the opposite end of the trench (**Figure 5**). The other trenches contained only a single, wide ditch, although F20 in Tr22 and F21 in Tr25 belonged to the same ditch (**Plates 10, 11 & 12; Figure 5**).

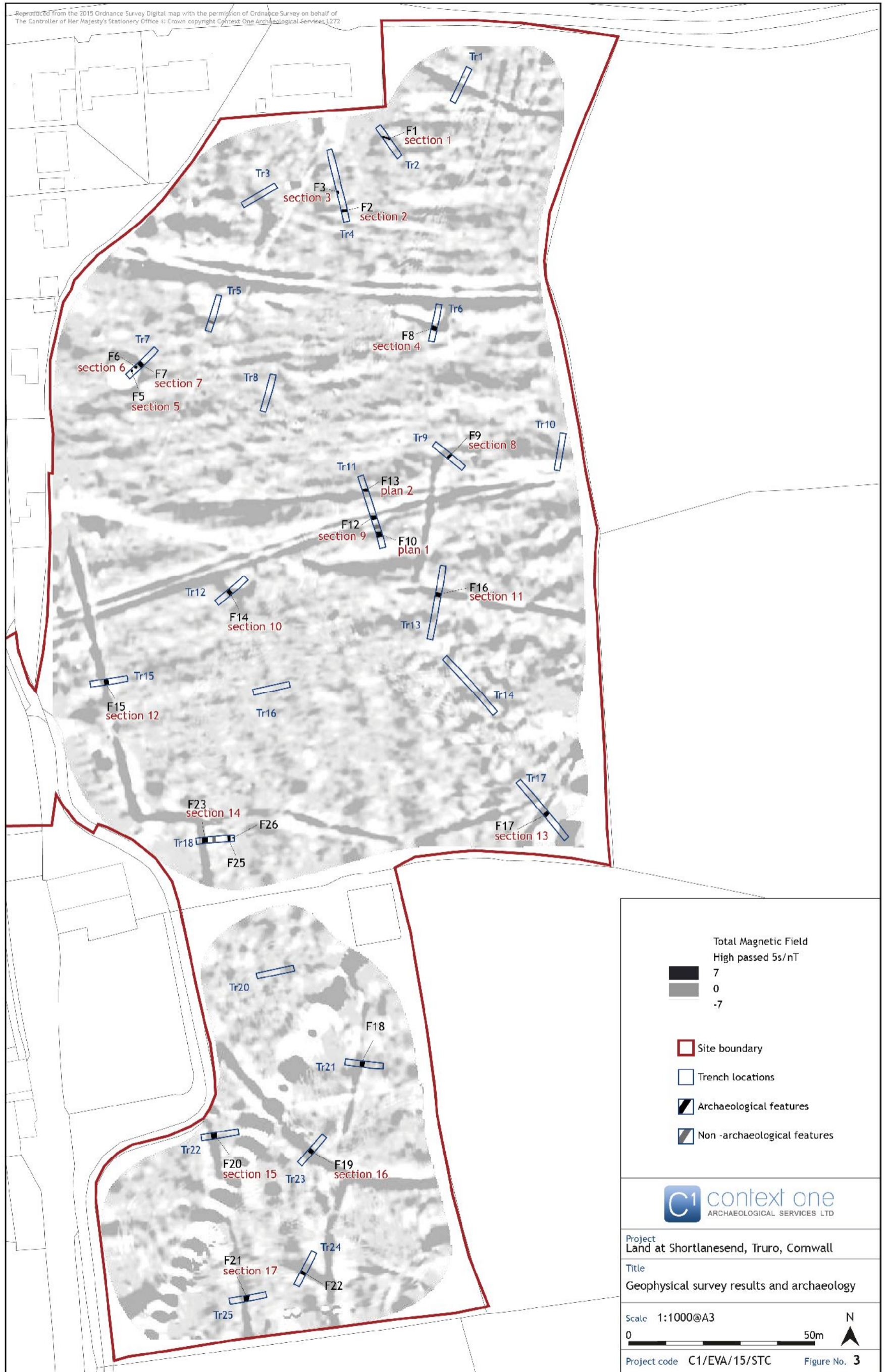


Figure 3. Geophysical survey results and archaeology

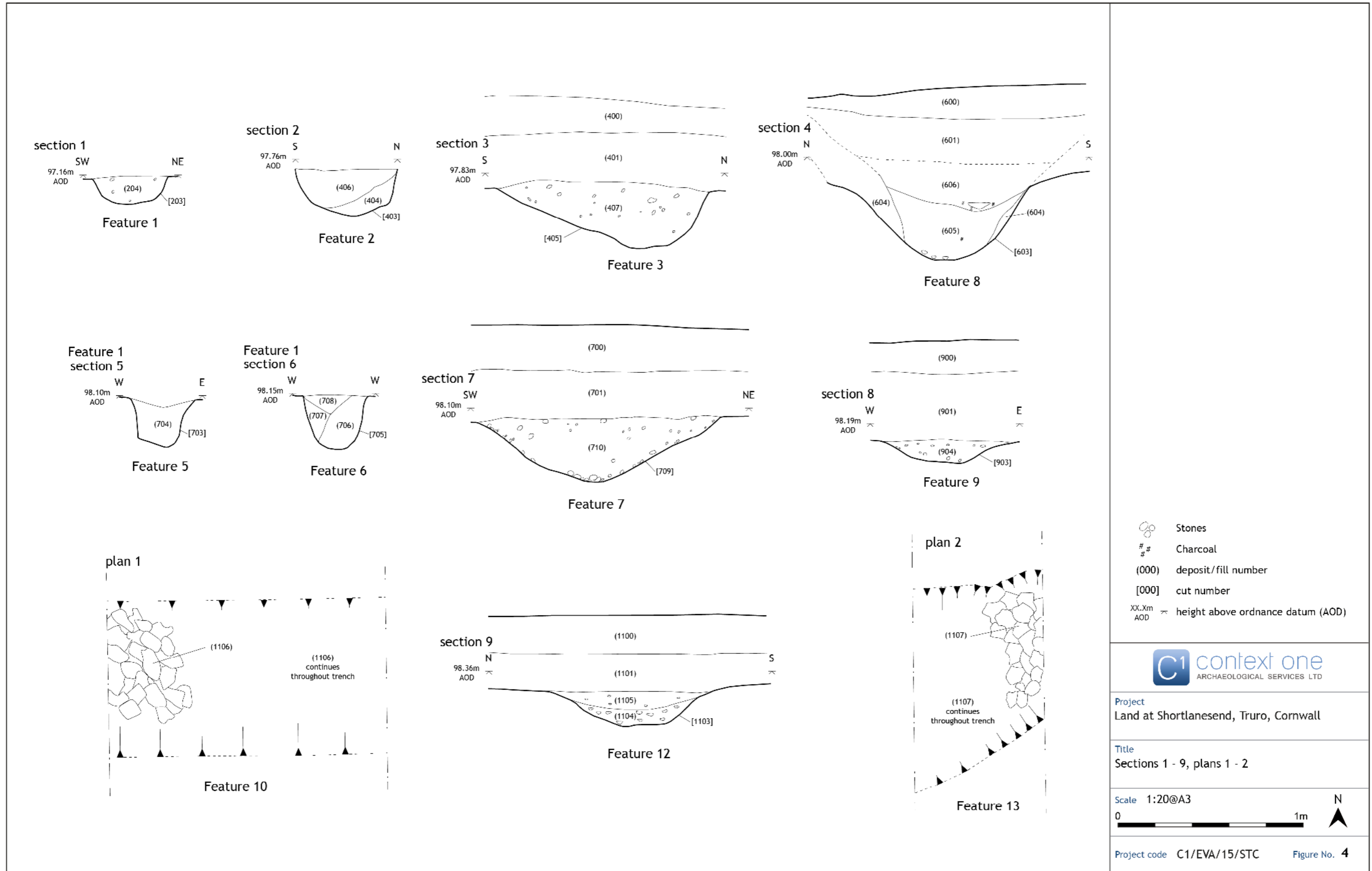


Figure 4. Sections 1 - 9, plans 1 - 2

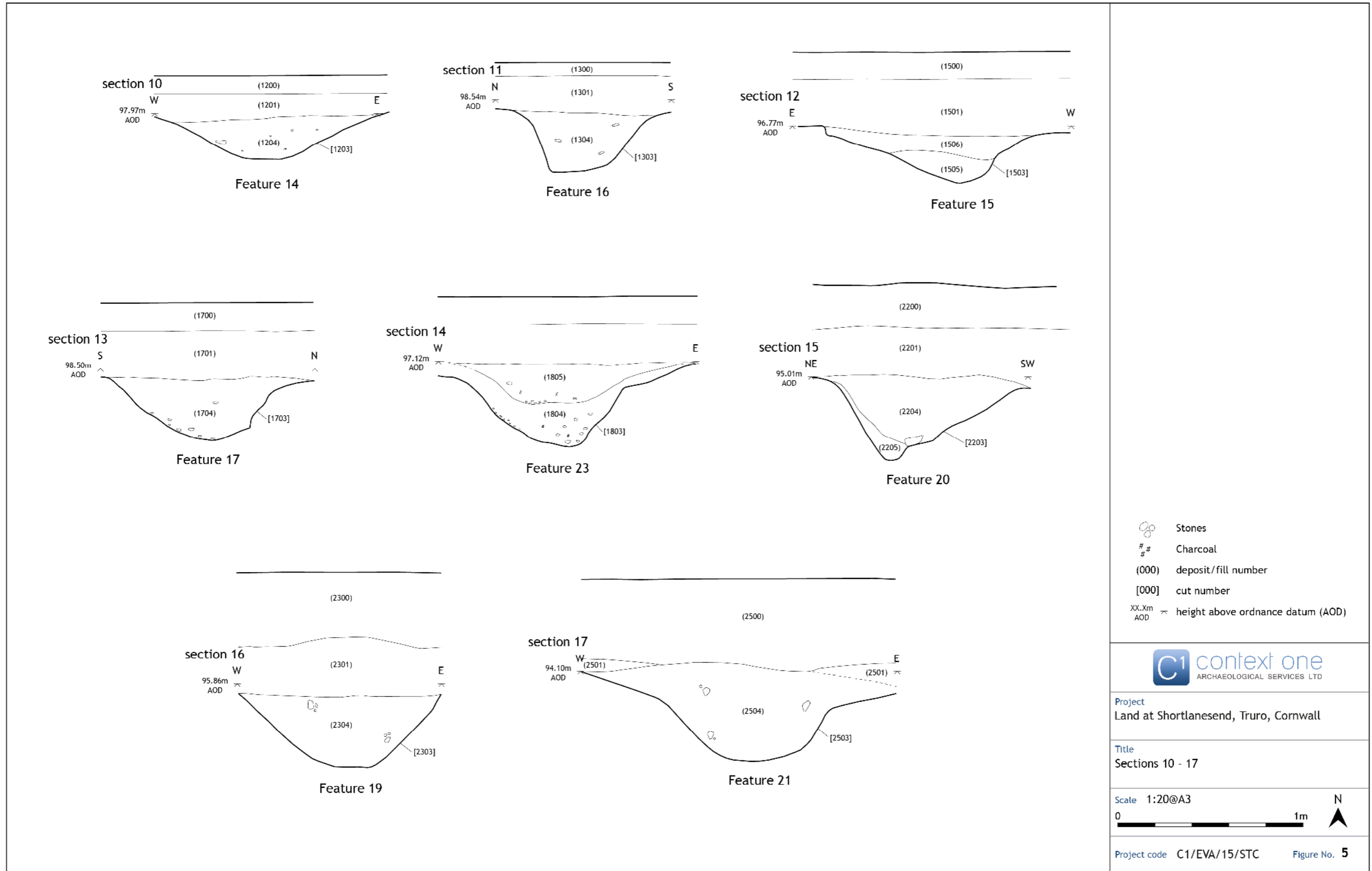


Figure 5. Sections 10 - 17

Post-holes

- 4.9 Two post-holes (F5 and F6) were recorded towards the south-western end of Tr7, measuring between 0.35m to 0.45m diameter and 0.28m to 0.30m deep (**Plates 13 & 14; Figure 4**). These features were similar in shape and were probably associated with the same structure.

Other

- 4.10 A single partially intact pottery vessel (F26) was found at the eastern end of Tr18 (**Plate 15**). The vessel was in an upright position within the subsoil (1801) and was sitting directly above the natural (1802) with no evidence of a cut (**Plate 16**). The vessel was carefully lifted and subsequently excavated in 0.02-0.03m spits to retrieve the sherds for specialist analysis (see section 5). The soil from each spit was examined however no further sherds of pottery were retrieved and the soil was found to be sterile. Previously truncated by ploughing, several sherds from the same vessel were recovered from the trench baulk. This was the only trench to yield finds, although none were recovered from the two ditches F23 and F25 to the west of the pottery vessel (**Plate 17**).
- 4.11 A sub-circular feature (F3) in Tr4 is likely to have been a tree-throw, with an irregular base and diffuse clarity (**Figure 4**).
- 4.12 The loose bases of two identical stone walls (F10 & F11) ran parallel to each other across Tr11 running approximately east to west and constructed of local mudstone (**Plate 18; Figure 4**).
- 4.13 A number of modern land drains were also identified across the Site. In Tr17, a metal water pipe crossed the north-western end and there was also evidence of agricultural moling or deep ploughing.
- 4.14 Eight trenches produced no archaeology, including Tr20 which had been positioned over a blank area in the geophysics results (**Figure 3**).



Plate 9. Tr 24, narrow ditch F22 in plan (from SE; 1 x 1m scales)



Plate 10. Tr22, wide ditch F20 in section (from N; 1 x 0.20m & 1 x 1m scales)



Plate 11. Tr25, wide ditch F21 in plan (from N; 1 x 1m scales)



Plate 12. Tr25, wide ditch F21 in section (from N; 1 x 1m scales)



Plate 13. Tr7, post-hole F5 in plan (1 x 0.50m scales)



Plate 14. Tr7, post-hole F6 in plan (1 x 0.50m scales)



Plate 15. Tr18, exposure of pottery vessel F26 in plan (1 x 0.20m scales)



Plate 16. Tr18, exposure of pottery vessel F26 in elevation



Plate 17. Tr18 pre-ex showing F23 in foreground & pottery vessel location at far end (from W; 2 x 1m scales)



Plate 18. Tr11, stone wall F13 (from E; 1 x 1m scales)

5. The finds

- 5.1 Part of a pottery vessel and a single pottery sherd were recovered from the evaluation, all from Trench 18.

Pottery, by Henrietta Quinnell

- 5.2 **F26 TR18** The base of a vessel was found sitting in the natural with no evidence of a cut feature. It had fractured into c 50 pieces. The vessel base was c 140mm across with the wall sloping slightly outwards. No sherd from its upper part was present.
- 5.3 The vessel was well made, fairly thin-walled, and in a gabbroic admixture fabric. Gabbroic clays come from the Lizard and are the most frequently used for prehistoric ceramics. ‘Admixture’ indicates the addition to gabbroic clays of some non-gabbroic material, usually found in the broad area of a site and indicating the transport of gabbroic clays to an area of inhabitation and activity before potting (Quinnell 2012). The amount of non-gabbroic material in this vessel is small and of some form of igneous rock. (The presence of quartz, which is a prominent feature of this vessel, is usual in gabbroic clays and is thought to have entered these clays during the weathering process from other local geological deposits).
- 5.4 Most gabbroic admixture fabrics belong to the Early to Middle Bronze Age and belong to the distinctive Cornish Trevisker series which terminated somewhere around 1000 cal BC. However, this vessel is thinner than those usual in the Trevisker series. It has a parallel in its form with P45 from a Late Bronze Age Plain Ware pit at Higher Besore which may be 10th -9th century CAL BC in date (Quinnell forthcoming). The LBA Plain Ware assemblage at Higher Besore included a fabric which mixed gabbroic clay with much quartz and with added slate. It would appear probable that the F26 vessel is a variant on this.
- 5.5 Late Bronze Age Plain is comparatively uncommon in Cornwall, partly because its simple undecorated forms have passed unremarked-upon in the past, but recent work is finding new material in small quantities (eg Quinnell 2010, Fig 53).
- 5.6 A sherd from U/S Tr 18 may have come from the same vessel.
- 5.7 **F24 (surface) TR18** A base angle sherd in a similar fabric but from a different vessel.

6. Discussion

- 6.1 Prior to the evaluation, the Site was considered to have high potential for the presence of Prehistoric remains. Located within an area of Anciently Enclosed Land (AEL) dating from the later prehistoric period onwards, the locale has evidence of ritual burial monuments and ceremonial landscapes typifying the early Bronze Age, followed by more settled farming landscapes (Fleming 2014, 9). The latter are characterized by roundhouses, enclosed settlements (rounds) and field systems ranging from the Middle Bronze Age to the early post-Roman period (*ibid.*). The geophysical survey results from the Site appeared to reflect this pattern, indicating potential for the discovery of complex and varied well-preserved sub-surface remains (Fry & Roseveare 2014). In particular, it was suggested that there might be a large Bronze Age barrow cemetery which was superseded in the later Prehistoric to Romano-British periods by settlements associated with a substantial field system (Fleming 2014, 9). Despite this potential, the results of the evaluation trenching have revealed only low-key agricultural activity, with only one trench (Tr18) in the south-west corner of the northern field yielding any dateable material.
- 6.2 The base of a vessel discovered at the eastern end of Tr18 has parallels with plain ware recovered from a Late Bronze Age pit at Higher Besore, possibly dating to the 10th to 9th century BC (Quinnell forthcoming). The vessel was not associated with a feature, and had been placed directly on the natural soil, although a base sherd in a similar fabric was recovered from the surface of a geological feature (F24) within the same trench. Unfortunately, no material was recovered during the excavation of the narrow curvilinear (F25) and the wide linear (F23) also located within this trench.

A recently installed service inspection area immediately south of Tr18 may have damaged or destroyed any further deposits.

- 6.3 A further 15 trenches contained archaeological features, which were spread across the entire Site. The majority correlated with features suggested by the geophysical results. The 11 wider ditches, including two sections (F20 and F21) across the same ditch, were aligned north to south, east to west or north-west to south-east, including three ditches which relate to small circular enclosures (F7, F14 and F25). In addition, there were four narrow ditches or gullies aligned either north-west to south-east or north-east to south-west. While the profiles of all the ditches and gullies were similar and probably relate to the same broad period of field systems, the close proximity and differing alignments of some of the ditches suggests more than one phase. Although there is no dating evidence, the field systems are likely to be later Prehistoric to early Romano-British in date.
- 6.4 Two possible post-holes were recorded adjacent to a curvilinear (F7) thought to be associated with a small enclosure. If these were all contemporary, it would suggest a structural element to this enclosure. Two distinct parallel linears were shown on the geophysical survey crossing the northern field from east-north-east to west-south-west. These were found to be the bases of stone walls or perhaps metalling of a rutted trackway. The remaining linears suggested by the geophysical survey were natural geological features which had formed at the intersections between changes in the natural geology.
- 6.5 In conclusion, the almost complete absence of material culture across the Site is no doubt partly a result of the highly acidic soils, although certain objects (for example, stone implements) would be expected if there had ever been settlement here. It is important to note that with the exception of occasional modern pottery within the topsoil, no material culture was observed within the topsoil or subsoil. The single Late Bronze Age pottery vessel in the south-west corner of the northern field may have survived the acidic conditions because of its larger surface area, although the presence of two other sherds within the same trench suggest that individual sherds may have survived if they were present. As such, it seems most likely that the Site was purely used for agriculture, with field systems criss-crossing both fields, and small enclosures possibly for penning animals. Indeed, two post-holes adjacent to one of the small circular enclosures may possibly represent a structural element, possibly a shelter. The Site was located along the edge of higher ground and it has been suggested that this was an area of transition, with settlement and land use seeing periods of shift and discontinuity (Fleming 2014, 9). The pottery vessel may have been deliberately placed as an offering within this transitional area, or perhaps it was simply forgotten or abandoned due to breakage. It is possible that further vessels remain in the vicinity, however the vessel has been previously truncated by ploughing and the overlying deposits in this area are shallower than elsewhere on the Site. Consequently, any potential further vessels may lie close to the modern ground surface and are likely to have been similarly truncated. The two parallel wall bases or track metalling running across the full width of the northern field are likely to be more recent in origin, although both were sealed beneath the subsoil which perhaps suggests a medieval or post-medieval date as opposed to modern.

7. Archive

- 7.1 An ordered and integrated site archive has been prepared to comply with guidelines set out in *First Aid for Finds* (Watkinson and Neal 2001) and *Standards in the Museums Care of Archaeological Collections* (Museum and Galleries Commission 1992) / *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (English Heritage 1991).
- 7.2 The project archive is currently held by COAS and consists of the following:

Item	Number	Format
Evaluation trench sheets	24	.PDF
Feature summary	1	.PDF
Context summary	2	Paper
Photographic register	2	Paper
Digital photographic register	1	.PDF

Feature sheets	19	Paper
Environmental recording sheets	1	Paper
Graphics register	1	Paper
Levels summary	3	Paper
Digital images	150	.JPG
Drawings	12	Permatrace

- 7.3 The paper archive has been scanned as a single file in .PDF format and will form part of the physical Site archive to be held at the offices of COAS until the Royal Cornwall Museum are able to accept archives.
- 7.4 Copies of this report will be deposited with the client/agent and included as part of the Cornwall Historic Environment Record. A digital copy of the report will also be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service, via OASIS (On-line Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations - <http://oasis.ac.uk/england/>). The OASIS entry will also be completed to include details of the archive contents.

8. COAS acknowledgements

- 8.1 We would like to thank the following for their contribution to the successful completion of this project:

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Appendix 1: Context summary

CONTEXT NO.	FEATURE NO.	PERIOD	TYPE	DESCRIPTION	EARLIER THAN	CONTEMP. WITH	LATER THAN	LENGTH	WIDTH/DIAMETER	THICKNESS / DEPTH
100, 200 etc	-	MOD	Layer	Topsoil (see text)	-	-	101, 201 etc	Across site	-	
101, 201 etc	-	MOD	Layer	Subsoil (see text)	100, 200 etc	-	102, 202 etc	Across site	-	
102, 202 etc	-	Undated	Layer	Natural deposits (see text)	101, 201 etc	-	-	Across site	-	
203	1	Undated	Cut	Curvilinear ditch. Aligned approx NW-SE with concave sides & a concave base	204	-	202	Across trench	0.42m	0.15m
204	1	Undated	Fill	Fill of curvilinear ditch [203]. Strong brown (7.5YR 5/6) silt clay with frequent small mudstones & quartz pebbles, & occasional mudstone pebble	201	-	203	Across trench	0.42m	0.15m
403	2	Undated	Cut	Ditch. Aligned NE-SW with concave sides & a flat base	404	-	402	Across trench	0.58m	0.28m
404	2	Undated	Fill	Fill of ditch [403]. Strong brown (7.5YR 5/6) silt clay with frequent sub-angular gravel to pebble-sized mudstone & rare quartz pebbles	406	-	403	Across trench	0.40m	0.10m
405	3	Undated	Cut	Probable tree-throw. Sub-circular in plan with straight sloping sides & irregular base with diffuse clarity	407	-	402	>1.07m	0.62m	0.35m
406	2	Undated	Fill	Fill of ditch [403]. Strong brown (7.5YR 5/6) silt clay with rare sub-angular pebble sized mudstone	401	-	404	Across trench	0.58m	0.20m
407	3	Undated	Fill	Fill of probable tree-throw [405]. Strong brown (7.5YR 5/6) silt clay with rare charcoal, sub-angular pebbles & cobbles of mudstone & quartz	401	-	405	>1.07m	0.62m	0.35m
603	8	Undated	Cut	Ditch. Aligned E-W with concave sides & a concave base	604	-	602	Across trench	1.50m	0.55m
604	8	Undated	Fill	Basal fill of ditch [604]. Brown (705YR 5/4) firm silt clay	605	-	603	Across trench	0.40m	0.40m
605	8	Undated	Fill	Secondary fill of ditch [604]. Strong brown (7.5YR 5/6) silt clay with occasional sub-angular mudstone & occasional charcoal	606	-	604	Across trench	0.70m	0.40m
606	8	Undated	Fill	Upper fill of ditch [604]. Strong brown (7.5YR 5/6) silt clay with rare cobble sized sub-angular pebble sized mudstone & quartz, rare gravel & charcoal	601	-	605	Across trench	1.40m	0.30m
703	5	Undated	Cut	Post-hole. Circular in plan with irregular sides (concave & straight) & a concave base 0.45m diam & 0.28m deep	704	-	702	-	0.45m	0.28m
704	5	Undated	Fill	Fill of post-hole [703]. Brown (7.5YR 5/3) friable silt clay with rare sub-angular pebble sized mudstone & occasional quartz	701	-	703	-	0.45m	0.28m

CONTEXT NO.	FEATURE NO.	PERIOD	TYPE	DESCRIPTION	EARLIER THAN	CONTEMP. WITH	LATER THAN	LENGTH	WIDTH/DIAMETER	THICKNESS / DEPTH
705	6	Undated	Cut	Post-hole. Circular in plan measuring 0.45m diam & 0.28m deep with concave sides & a concave base	706	-	702	-	0.35m	0.30m
706	6	Undated	Fill	Fill of post-hole [705]. Large angular stone	707	-	705	-	0.20m	0.30m
707	6	Undated	Fill	Fill of post-hole [705]. Strong brown (7.5YR 5/6) compacted clay with no inclusions	708	-	706	-	0.15m	0.25m
708	6	Undated	Fill	Fill of post-hole [705]. Pinkish grey (7.5YR 6/2) silt clay with gravel & frequent pebble & cobble sized angular quartz & sub-angular mudstone	701	-	707	-	0.25m	0.10m
709	7	Undated	Cut	Ditch. Aligned NW-SW with sloping sides & a concave base	710	-	702	>1.50m	1.32m	0.36m
710	7	Undated	Fill	Fill of ditch [709]. Strong brown (7.5YR 5/6) friable silt clay with frequent cobbles & pebbles of quartz & sub-angular mudstone	701	-	709	>1.50m	1.32m	0.36m
903	9	Undated	Cut	Ditch. Aligned NE-SW with concave sides & a concave base	904	-	902	>1.50m	0.64m	0.13m
904	9	Undated	Fill	Fill of ditch [903]. Strong brown (7.5YR 5/6) friable silt clay with frequent sub-angular cobble sized quartz	901	-	903	>1.50m	0.64m	0.13m
1103	12	Undated	Cut	Ditch. Aligned E-W with concave sides & a concave base	1104	-	1102	>1.50m	0.90m	0.20m
1104	12	Undated	Fill	Basal fill of ditch [1103]. Dark brown (7.5YR 3/3) friable silt clay with frequent cobble sized sub-angular mudstone	1105	-	1103	>1.50m	0.75m	0.18m
1105	12	Undated	Fill	Upper fill of ditch [1103]. Not recorded on feature sheet but section drawing shows less sub-angular mudstone than in basal fill	1101	-	1104	>1.50m	0.90m	0.10m
1106	10	Undated	Structure	Loose stone wall of mudstone measuring 0.60m wide & aligned E-W	1101	-	1102	>1.50m	0.60m	-
1107	13	Undated	Structure	Loose stone wall of mudstone measuring 0.60m wide & aligned E-W	1101	-	1102	>1.50m	0.60m	-
1203	14	Undated	Cut	Ditch. Aligned N-S measuring 1.50m wide & 0.25m deep with gently sloping sides & concave base	1204	-	1202	Across trench	1.50m	0.25m
1204	14	Undated	Fill	Fill of ditch [1203]. Strong brown (7.5YR 5/6) friable silt clay with occasional sub-angular mudstone	1201	-	1203	Across trench	1.50m	0.25m
1303	16	Undated	Cut	Ditch. Aligned E-W with concave sides & a flat base	1304	-	1302	Across trench	0.95m	0.40m
1304	16	Undated	Fill	Fill of ditch [1303]. Brown (7.5YR 4/2) soft silt clay with moderately sorted rare angular pebble sized mudstone & quartz. Inclusions became more frequent further down	1301	-	1303	Across trench	0.95m	0.40m
1503	15	Undated	Cut	Ditch. Aligned N-S with gentle sides initially then sloping more sharply (overcut but clearly seen in section) & a flat base	1505	-	1501	0.50m	1.55m	0.25m
1505	15	Undated	Fill	Basal fill of ditch [1503]. Reddish yellow (7.5YR 6/8) soft silt clay with no inclusions	1506	-	1503	0.50m	0.55m	0.16m

CONTEXT NO.	FEATURE NO.	PERIOD	TYPE	DESCRIPTION	EARLIER THAN	CONTEMP. WITH	LATER THAN	LENGTH	WIDTH/DIAMETER	THICKNESS / DEPTH
1506	15	Undated	Fill	Upper fill of ditch [1503]. Brown (7.5YR 4/2) soft silt clay with small angular stones	1501	-	1505	0.50m	1.15m	0.90m
1703	17	Undated	Cut	Ditch. Aligned NW-SE with concave sides & an irregular base	1704	-	1802	>1.50m	1.00m	0.30m
1704	17	Undated	Fill	Fill of ditch [1703]. Light brown (7.5YR 6/3) soft silt clay with occasional moderately sorted sub-angular pebble sized mudstone. Coarser inclusions nearer base of deposit indicating degree of sorting	1703	-	1701	>1.50m	1.00m	0.30m
1803	23	Undated	Cut	Ditch. Wide linear crossing from N-S with concave sides & an irregular base	1804	-	1802	>1.50m	1.30m	0.48m
1804	23	Undated	Fill	Basal fill of ditch [1803]. Brown (7.5YR 5/4) friable silt clay with frequent sub-angular pebbles to cobble-sized quartz & mudstone. Rare charcoal flecks	1805	-	1803	>1.50m	1.30m	0.26m
1805	23	Undated	Fill	Secondary fill of ditch [1803]. Brown (7.5YR 5/4) silt clay with occasional pebbles or sub-angular quartz & mudstone. Rare charcoal flecks	1801	-	1804	>1.50m	1.30m	0.22m
1806	25	Undated	Cut	?Ditch. Very diffuse linear. Aligned N-S with gently sloping sides & a flat base	1807	-	1802	>1.50m	1.00m	0.12m
1807	25	Undated	Fill	Fill of ditch [1806]. Pinkish grey (7.5YR 6/2) soft clay with mudstone gravels. Re-deposited natural (1802)	1801	-	1806	>1.50m	1.00m	0.12m
2103	18	Undated	Cut	Ditch. Aligned N-S with gently sloping sides and an irregular base. Truncated by ploughing	2104	-	2102	>1.50m	1.10m	0.09m
2104	18	Undated	Fill	Fill of ditch [2103]. Reddish brown (5YR 4/3) soft silt clay with no inclusions	2102	-	2103	>1.50m	1.10m	0.09m
2303	19	Undated	Cut	Ditch. Aligned NW-SE with steeply sloping sides & a flat base	2304	-	2302	>1.60m	1.10m	0.40m
2304	19	Undated	Fill	Fill of ditch [2303]. Brown (7.5YR 5/3) soft silt clay with infrequent small to large angular stones	2302	-	2303	>1.60m	1.10m	0.40m
2203	20	Undated	Cut	Ditch. Aligned NNW-SSE measuring 1.15m wide & 0.45m deep with concave sides & a flat-sloping base	2205	2503	2202	Across trench	1.15m	0.45m
2204	20	Undated	Fill	Main fill of ditch [2203]. Strong brown (7.5YR 5/6) soft silt clay with very occasional fragments of stone	2201	2504	2205	Across trench	1.15m	0.40m
2205	20	Undated	Fill	Basal fill of ditch [2203] (confined to E corner). Reddish yellow (7.5YR 6/5) soft silt clay	2204	-	2203	Across trench	0.15m	0.15m
2503	21	Undated	Cut	Ditch. Aligned N-S with gently sloping sides & flat base	2504	2203	2502	>1.50m	1.70m	0.56m
2504	21	Undated	Fill	Fill of ditch [2503]. Strong brown (7.5YR 5/6) friable silt clay with very occasional fragments of stone	2501	2204	2503	>1.50m	1.70m	0.56m
2403	22	Undated	Cut	Ditch. Aligned NW-SE with very gently sloping sides & a flat base	2404	-	2402	>1.50m	0.65m	0.06m
2404	22	Undated	Fill	Fill of ditch [2403]. Brown (7.5YR 5/4) soft silt clay with occasional angular mudstones	2401	-	2403	>1.50m	0.65m	0.06m